

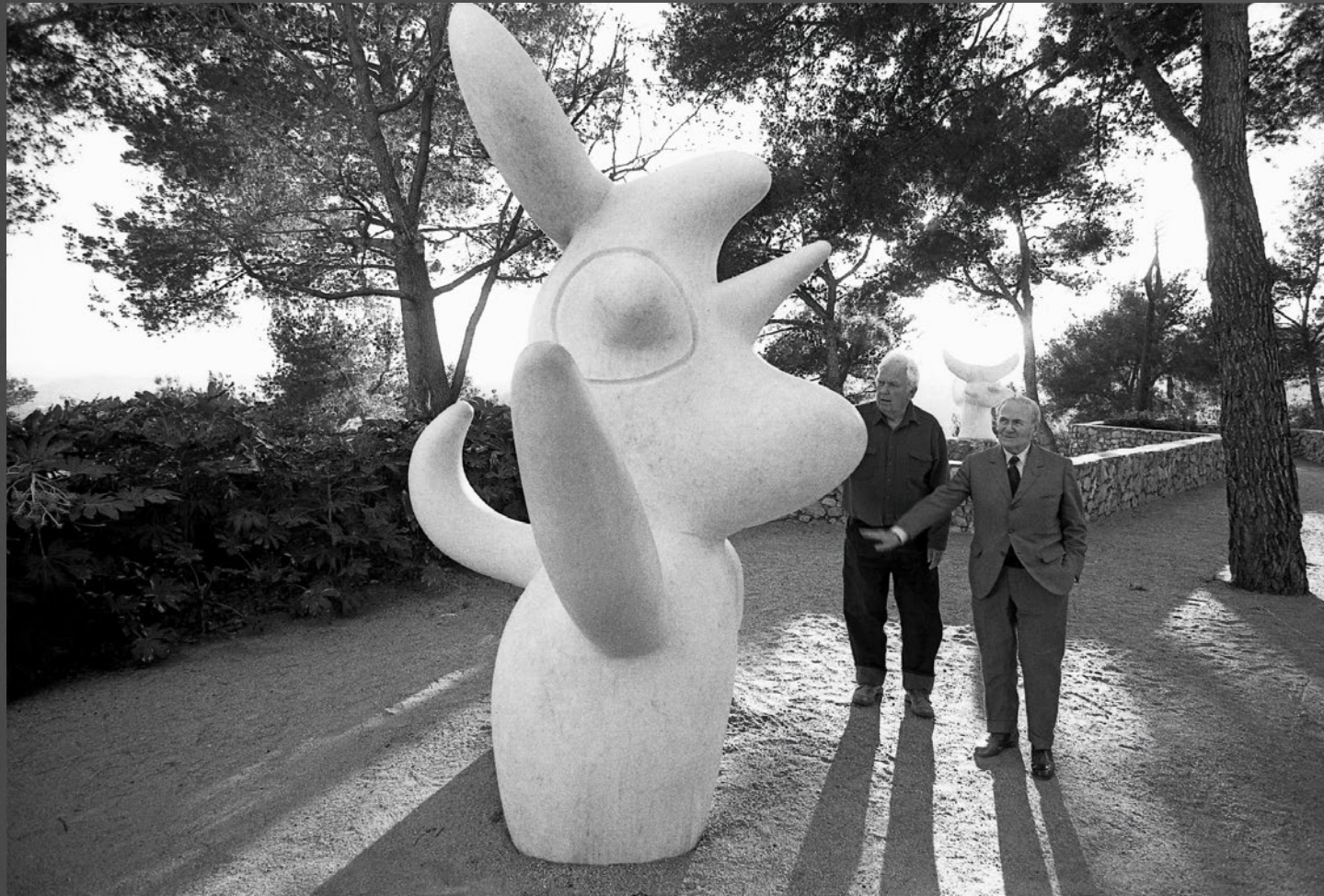
# Kindred Spirits



Joan Miró  
Alexander Calder

OPERA GALLERY





GILLES DYAN  
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## Foreword

Opera Gallery is pleased to present ‘Kindred Spirits: Joan Miró and Alexander Calder,’ a major exhibition that explores the visual and personal affinities between the landmark American and Spanish artists Alexander Calder and Joan Miró.

Presented as an exploration of their shared interest in color and movement—and, just as compellingly, their collective fascination with the absence of color and movement—the exhibition is a discourse between generations that celebrates the pair’s friendship and their extraordinary experiences as artists who were shaped by significant periods of time spent living in Paris.

Over the two floors of the Opera Gallery building on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, a dynamic exchange between two virtuosic talents will take shape. Though emerging in very different contexts—Miró was born in Barcelona in 1893, Calder in Lawnton in 1898—the two artists forged a lasting friendship after first meeting in 1928.

The works on display suggest intriguing intersections, animated by the tension between figuration and abstraction. Inherently dynamic, with energetic lines and organic shapes, the oscillation between two- and three-dimensionality (which, in Calder’s case, extends to four-dimensionality) is remarkably present as an element of each artist’s oeuvre.

The aesthetic dialogue between Calder and Miró extends through an attendant display of art directly exchanged as gestures of friendship and mutual artistic rapport. Comprising approximately two dozen paintings and sculptures made over a forty-year period, Calder’s mobile *New Old Universe* (1953) and his stabile *Crag with Red Heart* (1974), with Miró’s paintings *Femme, oiseaux, étoile II* (1967) and *Personnage* (1974) will be among the works on view.

Presented with archival imagery of the pair’s time in Varengeville-sur-Mer in Normandy ‘Kindred Spirits’ illuminates a relationship where creativity and high personal regard were beautifully intertwined. The works speak to the artists’ individual pursuit of essential form and space, sitting in perfect union next to each other.



# Kindred Spirits: Joan Miró and Alexander Calder

By Phyllis Tuchman

Alexander Calder and Joan Miró were kindred spirits. The two artists first met shortly before Christmas 1928 in Paris, a city both expatriates loved. Calder, an American, was thirty years old; his Catalan friend was thirty-five. The multi-hyphenate artists remained close friends until Calder's death in 1976, almost a half century later.

They were an unlikely pair. Calder was a big guy; Miró was small of stature. Neither spoke the other's language; they communicated in halting French. Over the years, they visited one another in Paris, Normandy, Catalonia, New York, and Connecticut. They often traded artwork. That's how Calder's *Mercury Fountain*, first created for the Spanish Loyalist pavilion at the Paris International Exposition of 1937 came to be owned by the Miró Foundation in Barcelona. By the end of their lives, each owned significant works by the other, and they shared a host of memories.

Initially, Miró was the more accomplished artist. He painted a number of remarkable canvases during the 1920s. His subjects included tables on which still-life components rested; whimsical landscapes featuring comical creatures like a stick-figure hunter smoking a pipe, replete with a beating heart, or a tree trunk with a detached ear; a festive carnival showcasing inventive critters; pseudo-portraits of Catalan peasants; and a topsy-turvy interior based on a Dutch old master scene. In 1925, Miró painted *The Birth of the World*, a practically abstract canvas with a black triangle, a red circle, an abbreviated figure, and some black lines, with lots of drips. The painting is now considered one of the twentieth century's finest.

Even though talent ran in Calder's family—his father was an admired “old school” sculptor, his mother a painter—Calder's signature style evolved more slowly. As an adolescent, he had his own workshops where he would transform a milk crate into a lion's cage, turn a packing box into a castle, make toys for himself, and produce jewelry for his sister's dolls. He made his first sculptures—a dog and a duck that he trimmed from a brass sheet and bent into formation—at eleven years old. In the mid-1920s, he enrolled at the Art Students League, where his classes included pictorial composition and portrait painting, and started earning extra cash drawing illustrations for the *National Police Gazette*.

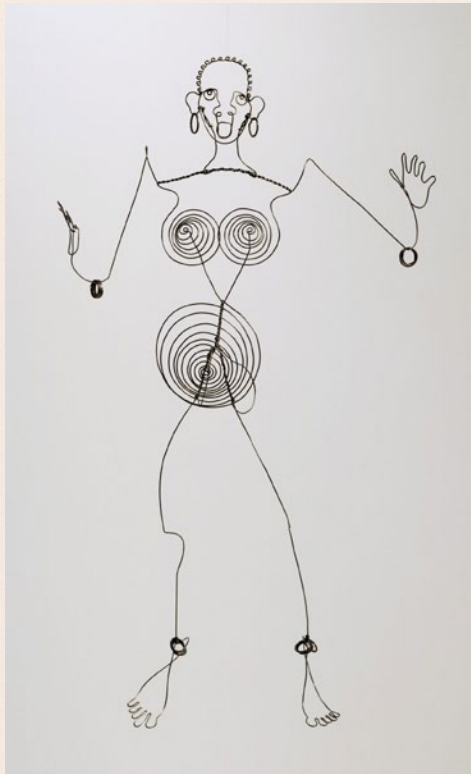
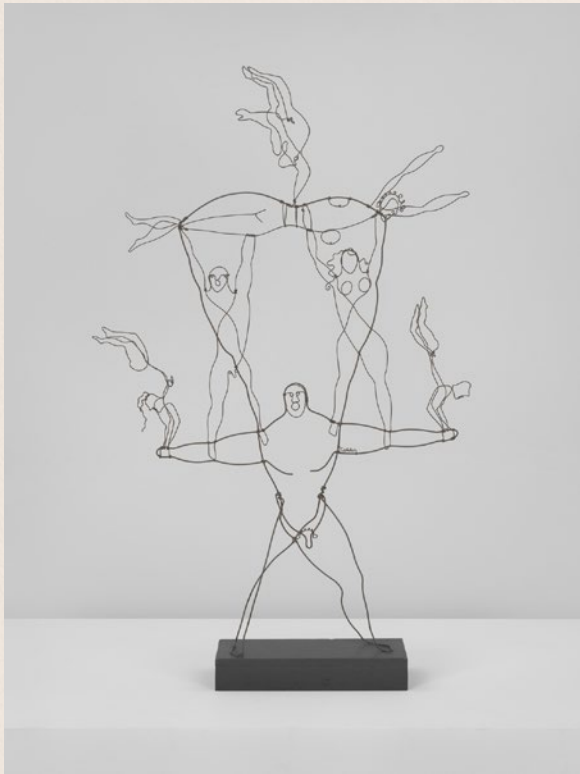
Alexander Calder with Trapeze act performing *Cirque Calder* (1926–31), Galerie Maeght, 1953, Photograph by © Agnès Varda © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York



Joan Miró, *The Tilled Field* (*La terre labourée*), 1923–24. Oil on canvas, 26 x 36 ½ inches (66 x 92.7 cm), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. © 2024 Successió Miró/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris







Alexander Calder, *Spring*, 1928, Wire and wood, 93 x 24 x 22 ½ inches (236.2 x 61 x 57.2 cm), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, Gift of the artist, 1965, Accession 65.1739 © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Alexander Calder, *The Brass Family*, 1929, Wire and wood, 67 x 41 ⅛ x 8 ⅞ inches (170.2 x 104.5 x 22.5 cm), Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, Gift of the Artist (no. 69.255) © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Alexander Calder, *Josephine Baker (III)*, c. 1927, Steel wire, 39 x 22 ¾ x 9 ¾ inches, 99 x 56.6 x 24.5 cm, Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of the artist, Object number 841.1966 © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Still, Calder and Miró were moving along parallel paths. Between 1926 and 1931, with wood and metal plus flotsam and jetsam (cork, rubber tubing, buttons, bottle caps, and such), Calder created a mesmerizing miniature *Cirque Calder* with movable parts. Calder himself was the ring master for this complex body of performance art. At first, he could pack the elfin performers and props into two suitcases; eventually, he needed three more. In terms of scale and size, spontaneity and *joie de vivre*, Calder’s version of Barnum & Bailey could be likened to Miró’s *The Tilled Field* or his *Catalan Landscape (The Hunter)* (both 1923-24). It seems natural that these two artists would become life-long friends.

Calder’s concurrent burst of new works—including full-length wire figures, such as *Spring*, *The Brass Family*, and *Josephine Baker III*, not to mention portraits of Fernand Léger, Amédée Ozenfant, Jimmy Durante, and Calvin Coolidge, dating from the years 1926-31—had a passing resemblance to the reductive visual language of Miró’s Catalan peasants. While the Spaniard’s visages were not solely comprised of silhouettes or outlines, they had a horizontal/vertical orientation to which Miró tethered eyes, hats, and beards. The dynamic was strikingly similar.

Meanwhile, on a visit in 1930 to Piet Mondrian’s studio, Calder had an insight that changed the trajectory of his career. “It was like the baby being slapped to make his lungs start working,” he said. In response to the environment of the studio, he “felt” abstraction for the first time. The American suggested that Mondrian could animate the brightly colored cardboard rectangles, tacked on a wall of the atelier for compositional experimentation, to “oscillate in different directions and at different amplitudes.” Mondrian passed, so Calder pursued the idea himself. With modifications, the mobile was born.

Once Calder became “Calder,” he and Miró occupied equal footing. As modernists, they designed art for the same public sites: the Spanish Loyalist pavilion at the 1937 World’s Fair in Paris and the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati a decade later. They spoke a similar visual language, regularly executing biomorphic shapes in a bold palette of red, blue, yellow, and green.



Joan Miró painting *The Reaper* (*El Segador* in Catalan, *Le faucheur*, in French), Paris, 1937. Photo: Roness-Ruan. © 2024 Successió Miró/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris

At the Loyalist pavilion, Miró painted *The Reaper* on a staircase leading to the second floor, and Calder fabricated his *Mercury Fountain*. While Calder was visiting Miró, the architect of the exhibition space had expressed disappointment with a fountain a Spanish artisan had executed. Calder was asked to create a replacement. His fountain was located near Pablo Picasso’s *Guernica*, which was painted for the pavilion.

Then, in 1947, Calder fabricated a large mobile, *Twenty Leaves and an Apple*, and Miró painted an impressive mural, *The Spaniard*, for a hotel in Cincinnati. Calder’s sculpture was hung horizontally in the lobby, while Miró’s mural adorned the restaurant wall. The mural featured various abstract shapes, which included faces with eyes and lips, against a blue background. The black lines that stitched everything together in the painting were reminiscent of the wires of Calder’s mobiles.



In Varengeville-sur-Mer, where Miró resided at the beginning of World War II, he painted his initial *Constellations*, which became part of one of his most plentiful and riveting series. He began them in 1940 and completed the 23 small works two years later in Spain. They call to mind medieval illuminations. According to Miró, “The night, music, and the stars began to play a major role in suggesting my paintings. ... Now music in this period began to take the role that poetry had played in the early twenties, especially Bach and Mozart.”<sup>1</sup> Among the meandering lines and the shapes and patterns that serve as stars in a night sky, faces and the like can be discerned, as if they were, well, constellations.

Calder exhibited his own *Constellations* in New York in 1943, a term proposed by James Johnson Sweeney and Marcel Duchamp. There were twenty-nine pieces, and he carved their wood elements and attached them to one another with metal spokes. Some in the series have moving parts; many are affixed to the wall. To anyone who has ever assumed that the magic of Calder’s art rests with the bobbing, turning mobiles, these *Constellations*, many of which are stationary, suggest otherwise; their design could not be more explosive.

Calder and Miró shared a visual language predicated on shape and color. Both men were masters of improvisation. The American fashioned forms that were so small, they could fit in a tiny box of matches. But his outdoor stables often were huge, and the exteriors of the Braniff airplanes he painted were gargantuan. Besides sculpture, Calder painted and made gouaches, prints, tapestries, rugs, illustrated books, and theatrical sets. He even executed acoustical panels for a concert hall in Caracas and designed the pavement outside his dealer’s Madison Avenue gallery. Miró also worked in all sizes. He painted handheld stones and designed immense ceramic walls. His canvases are small, medium, and large. Besides gouaches, prints, and posters, he executed massive bulbous bronze sculptures.

At the Opera Gallery, you’ll see how varied the imagery and media associated with Miró and Calder could be. There are biomorphic figures, unusual creatures, abstract landscapes, birds, stars, spirals, and discs rendered in red, blue, yellow, green, and black. There are fish, an octopus, an unlikely combination of a half moon and a starfish, and a circus tableau, not to mention two men who look as if they belong in the 2022 miniseries Irma Vep. Both artists rendered these forms with gouache, pastel, pencil, ink, watercolor, crayon, charcoal, and oil applied to colored papers and grounds. A mobile and a stabile with moving parts are also displayed, and they add another dimension to the exhibition.

These improvisations dazzle.

Phyllis Tuchman writes for artnews.com, Artforum, and The New York Times. In the summer of 2018, she curated the exhibition Ellsworth Kelly in the Hamptons for Guild Hall, East Hampton, and lectured on Helen Frankenthaler at the Provincetown Art Association. She is currently working on *This Is the Land: The Life and Times of Robert Smithson*.

1 James Johnson Sweeney, “Joan Miro: Comment and Interview,” Partisan Review 15, no. 2 (February 1948): 208-12.

Alexander Calder with Dolores, Pilar, and Joan Miró, Varengeville-sur-Mer, summer 1937.  
Photograph by Hans Hartung © 2024  
Hans Hartung / ADAGP, Paris



Alexander Calder, *Constellation*, 1943, Wood, wire, and paint, 33 × 36 × 14 inches, Calder Foundation, New York © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Joan Miró, *Constellation: Toward the Rainbow*, 1941, Gouache and oil wash on paper, 18 × 15 inches (45.7 × 38.1 cm), Jacques and Natasha Gelman Collection, 1998, Accession Number: 1999.363.53 © 2024 Successió Miró/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris





# Artworks



Joan MIRÓ  
*Femmes dans la nuit*  
1942  
Gouache, pastel, pencil and watercolour on paper  
Signed 'Miró' on the lower right; signed again, titled, dated  
and situated 'Joan Miró / Femmes dans la nuit / x / Barce-  
lone, 24-12-1942.' on the reverse  
25.2 x 18.9 in | 64 x 48 cm

**Provenance**  
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, USA  
Hilda Sutton collection, January 1958  
Private collection, by descent  
Private collection, Switzerland, 1993  
Christie's, New York, 7 May 2009, lot 141  
Private collection

**Exhibited**  
Bern, Kunsthalle Bern, 'Joan Miró', April–May 1949,  
exh. cat., No. 48, p. 10  
London, Helly Nahmad Gallery, 'Joan Miró: A Retrospective',  
October 1999–January 2000, exh. cat., No. 20, ill. in colour p. 30

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud,  
*Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. II: 1938–1959,  
Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2010, No. 1042, ill. in colour p. 129





Alexander CALDER  
*New Old Universe*  
1953  
Wood, wire, string and paint  
42 x 73 x 3.3 in | 106,7 x 185,4 x 8,3 cm

**Provenance**  
Alfred and Anne Hentzen collection, Hamburg, Germany, 1957,  
gift from the artist  
Private collection, Germany, 2001, by descent

**Exhibited**  
São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, ‘Il Biennal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo’, 15 December 1953–28 February 1954, exh. cat., No. 35, p. 146  
Berlin, Akademie der Kunst, ‘Alexander Calder’, 21 May–16 July 1967, exh. cat., No. 23, p. 40





Joan MIRÓ  
*Personnage*  
1974  
Oil on canvas  
Signed 'Miró' on the lower left; signed, titled and dated  
'MIRÓ. / 3/I/74 / Personnage' and dedicated  
'à Jean Leymarie, / bien affectueusement Miró. 20/XII/75.'  
on the reverse; dated '3/I/74.' and titled 'Personnage'  
on the stretcher  
24.4 x 19.7 in | 62 x 50 cm

**Provenance**  
Jean Leymarie collection, Paris, France, 1975, gift of the artist  
Private collection, France, by descent

**Bibliography**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. VI: 1978–1981, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2019, No. A20, ill. in colour, p. 340

The ADOM has confirmed the authenticity of this work.

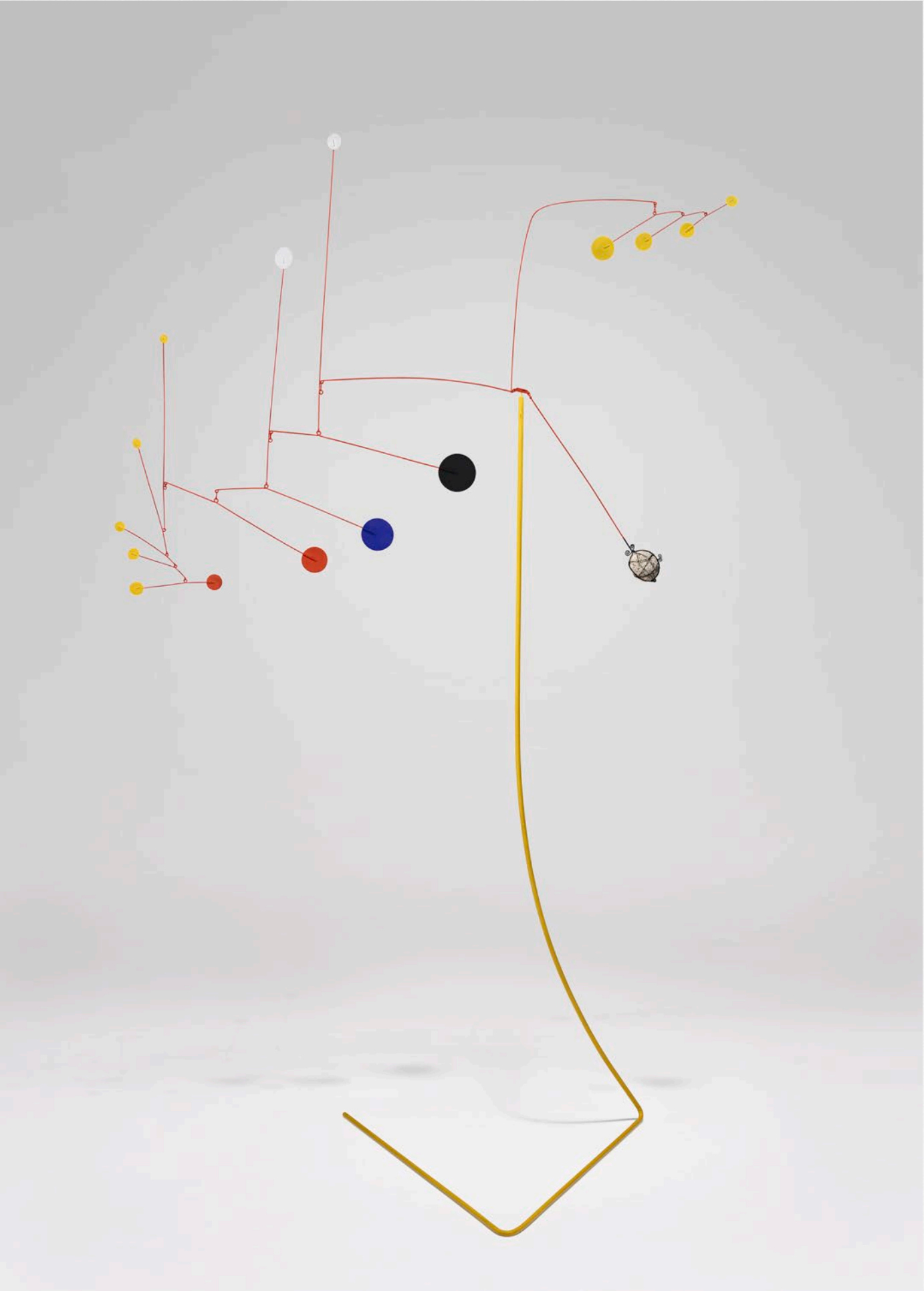




Alexander CALDER  
*Caged Stone on Yellow Stalk*  
Circa 1955  
Sheet metal, rod, stone, wire and paint  
Incised with the artist's monogram 'CA' on the black element  
75 x 42 x 24.5 in | 190,5 x 106,7 x 62,2 cm

**Provenance**  
Perls Galleries, New York, USA  
Ruth Page, Chicago, USA  
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, USA, 1983  
Jeffrey Hoffeld and Co. Inc., New York, USA  
Private collection, New York, USA, 1984  
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago, USA  
Gerard Fineberg collection, 2010

**Exhibited**  
Pittsfield, Berkshire Museum, 'Mobiles by Alexander Calder', July 1966, exh. cat., n.p. (titled *Caged Stone on Red Stalk*)  
Chicago, Richard Gray Gallery, 'Modern and Contemporary Masters: Paintings, Sculptures, and Drawings', February–March 1984, exh. cat., n.p., No. 13 (ill. as *Caged Stone on Red Stalk*)





Joan MIRÓ  
*Femme, oiseaux, étoile II*  
1967  
Oil on canvas  
Signed 'Miró' on the lower right; signed again  
and dated '11/I/67', titled and numbered 'II' on the reverse  
32 x 21.4 in | 81,3 x 54,4 cm

**Provenance**  
Galerie Maeght, Paris, France  
Galerie Urban, Paris, France  
Tajan, Paris, 12 June 2003, lot 38  
Paul Yeou Chichong collection, France

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Paintings*, vol. IV: 1959–1968, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2002, No. 1251, ill. in colour p. 195





Joan MIRÓ  
*Sans titre*  
1950  
Oil, gouache, pastel, ink and charcoal on cardboard  
Signed and dated ‘Miró. / 1950’ on the reverse  
23.2 x 17.1 in | 59 x 43,5 cm

**Provenance**  
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, USA  
Galería Theo, Madrid, Spain  
Private collection, Japan  
Russeck Gallery, New York & Palm Beach, USA  
Private collection, USA  
Private collection, USA, 2002  
Sotheby’s, New York, 8 May 2014, lot 360

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Paintings*, vol. III: 1942–1955, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 1999, No. 881, ill. in colour p. 169  
Jacques Dupin, *Miró*, Flammarion, Paris, 1961, No. 770, p. 542





Joan MIRÓ  
*Sans titre*  
1934  
Gouache on black paper  
Signed and dated 'Miró / 2/6/34' on the reverse  
25.6 x 19.7 in | 65 x 50 cm

**Provenance**  
Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, USA, acquired by the late 1930s  
Private collection, Florida, USA  
Sotheby's, New York, 5 November 2014, lot 128

**Exhibited**  
Wilmington Museum of Art; University of Pittsburgh; Illinois, Springfield Art Association; Des Moines, Des Moines Association; Durham, Duke University, 'Classic and Romantic Traditions in Abstract Painting' (touring exhibition organised by the Museum of Modern Art, New York), 1939–1940

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. VI: 1978–1981, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2019, No. A37, ill. in colour p. 345

The ADOM has confirmed the authenticity of this work.





Joan MIRÓ  
*Paysage*  
1975  
Wax crayon, pastel, crayon, pencil and traces of oil wash on creased paper (back of a poster)  
Signed 'Miró' on the lower right; titled and dated 'Paysage / 8/VIII/1975' on the reverse  
25.2 x 36.2 in | 64 x 92 cm

**Provenance**  
Galerie Lelong, Paris, France  
Private collection, Spain

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. IV: 1973–1976, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2013, No. 2740, ill. in colour p. 177

The ADOM has confirmed the authenticity of this work.

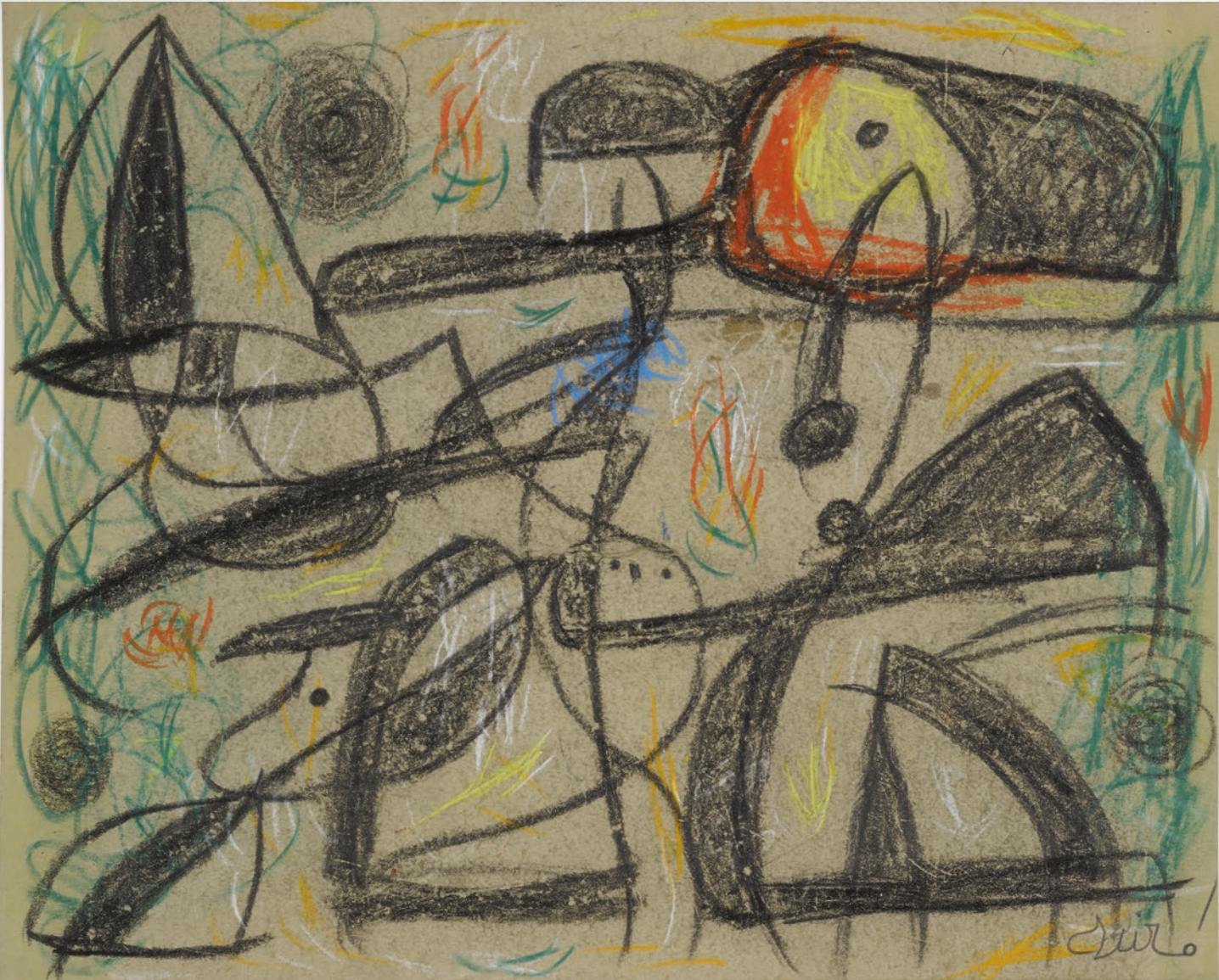




Joan MIRÓ  
*Femme, oiseaux*  
1977  
Wax crayon and pastel crayon on green blotting paper  
Signed 'Miró' on the lower right; titled and dated  
'27/I/77 / Femme, oiseaux' on the reverse  
15.4 x 19 in | 39 x 48 cm

**Provenance**  
Galerie Pierre Lévy, Paris, France  
Private collection

**Literature**  
Jacques Dupin and Ariane Lelong-Mainaud, *Joan Miró. Catalogue raisonné. Drawings*, vol. V: 1977, Daniel Lelong and Successió Miró, Paris, 2015, No. 3193, ill. in colour p. 24





Alexander CALDER  
*Crag with Red Heart*  
1974  
Sheet metal, wire, and paint  
Incised with the artist's monogram and dated 'CA 74'  
on the base  
42.5 x 43.7 x 27 in | 108 x 111 x 68,5 cm

**Provenance**  
Perls Galleries, New York, USA  
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Alsdorf collection, Chicago, USA, 1974  
Private collection, Paris, France  
Christie's, London, 30 June 1994, lot 45  
Michael Haas collection, Berlin, Germany  
Sotheby's, London, 24 October 1996, lot 47  
Private collection

**Exhibited**  
New York, Perls Galleries, 'Alexander Calder: Crag and Critters of 1974',  
October–November 1974, No. 7  
Basel, Galerie Beyeler, 'Wer Hat Angst Rot', June–September 1995, No. 12  
London, Helly Nahmad Gallery, 'Love', March–May 2000, No. 29  
Beverly Hills, Gagosian Gallery, 'Alexander Calder', May–June 2003  
New York, Hammer Galleries, 'Objects in Space: Léger, Miró, Calder',  
November 2012–January 2013, exh. cat., ill. pp. 70-71 and 86





Alexander CALDER  
*Flyball Governor*  
1961  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Signed and dated 'Calder 61' on the lower right  
29.3 x 41.5 in | 74,3 x 105,4 cm

**Provenance**  
Nicholas Guppy collection, London, UK, acquired directly from the artist  
Brook Street Gallery, London, UK  
James Goodman Gallery, New York, USA  
Paul Kantor Gallery, New York, USA, 1976  
Jeffrey Horvitz, Los Angeles, USA  
Private collection, 1978  
Private collection, by descent  
Phillips, New York, 30 September 2020, lot 65  
Private collection, USA





Alexander CALDER  
*Brothers, Right*  
1965  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Signed and dated 'Calder 65' on the lower right  
29.5 x 42.5 in | 74,9 x 108 cm

**Provenance**  
Perls Galleries, New York, USA  
Mr. and Mrs. Eugene John Lewis collection, Philadelphia, USA, 1971  
Hilary Dixon Lewis collection, New York, USA, by descent  
Private collection, by descent





Alexander CALDER  
*Highway*  
1973  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Signed and dated 'Calder 73' on the right  
29.5 x 43.3 in | 74,9 x 109,9 cm

**Provenance**  
Galerie Maeght, Paris, France  
Galerie Bel'Art, Stockholm, Sweden, 1974  
Private collection, 1974  
Sotheby's, New York, 12 November 2014, lot 223  
Private collection





Alexander CALDER  
*Eagle and Fish*  
1975  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Signed and dated 'Calder 75' on the middle right  
23 x 30.5 in | 58,4 x 77,4 cm

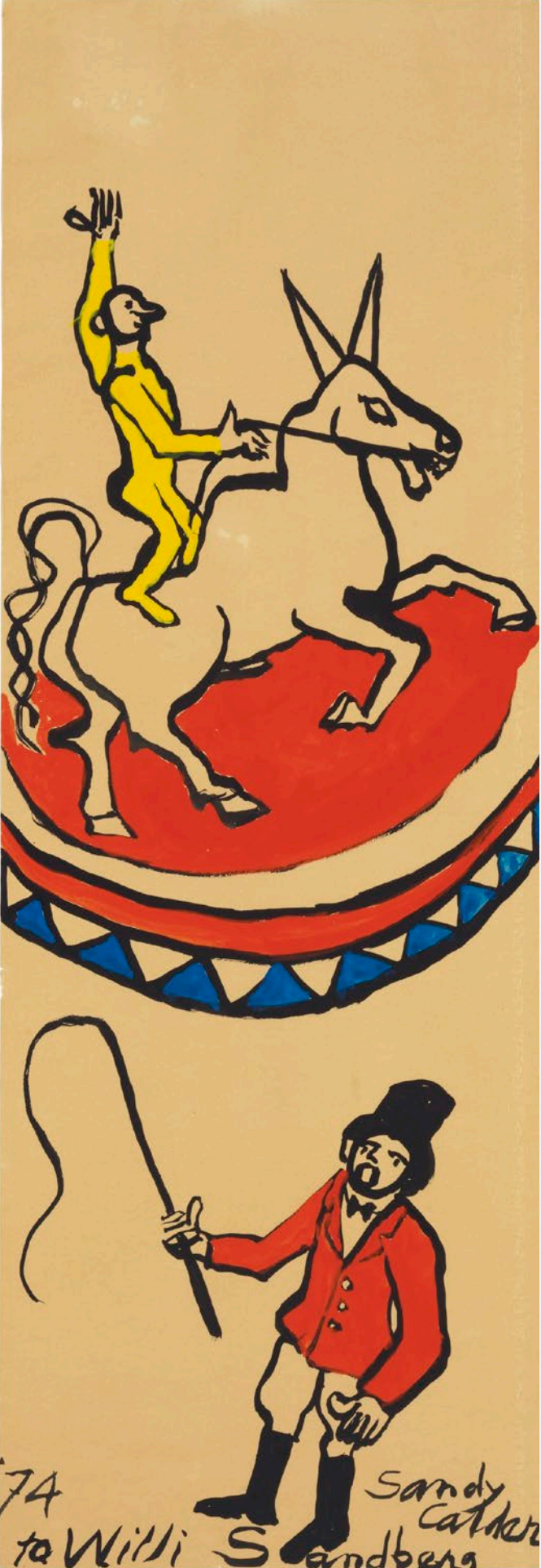
**Provenance**  
G. Goodstadt collection, Westport, USA, gift of the artist  
Private collection, Switzerland  
Christie's, New York, 4 May 1989, lot 236  
Crane Kalman Gallery, London, UK, 1989  
Sotheby's, New York, 11 October 2006, lot 265  
Private collection, Geneva, Switzerland  
Private collection, 2008  
Christie's, New York, 14 May 2014, lot 280





Alexander CALDER  
*Untitled*  
1974  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Dated and inscribed '74 / To Willi Sandberg' on the lower left, inscribed 'Sandy Calder' on the lower right  
43.2 x 14.8 in | 109,8 x 37,7 cm

**Provenance**  
Willi Sandberg collection, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 1974, gift from the artist  
Private collection, Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Private collection, 2013  
Christie's, New York, 13 November 2013, lot 281





Alexander CALDER  
*Red Octopus*  
1971  
Gouache and ink on paper  
Signed and dated 'Calder 71' on the lower right  
29.5 x 42.9 in | 75 x 109 cm

**Provenance**  
Perls Gallery, New York, USA  
Private collection, Spain  
Art Trade, Spain





# Joan Miró

A painter, sculptor and ceramicist, Joan Miró was a major figure of twentieth century art, who was born in 1893 in Barcelona, Spain. After graduating from business school, he attended two art academies in Barcelona, including the Escola d'Art. From 1920 onward, he lived and worked alternatively in Paris and in Spain, where he finally settled in 1956. He passed away aged 90 in Palma, Spain in 1983.

Early works by Miró reflect his focus on Fauvism and Cubism and the influence of the powerful, flat two-dimensionality of Catalan folk art and Romanesque church frescoes of his native Spain. In his mature style, which soon became a hallmark of Surrealist art, Miró drew on memory, fantasy, and the irrational to create works of art that are visual metaphors of surrealist poetry, paintings that became known as *peinture-poésie*. These dreamlike visions, with gestural abstract signs and symbols as well as written words, have a whimsical or humorous quality. The amorphous amoebic forms seen in works of this period, also collectively termed as biomorphic, were usually painted in a limited range of bright colors, primarily blue, red, yellow, green, and black.

Miró's fame and recognition became international during the 1930's and during his lifetime, retrospectives took place at the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1941), Musée national d'Art Moderne, Paris (1962), Grand Palais, Paris (1974), and in 1978 the Musée national d'Art Moderne, Paris, exhibited over five hundred works in a major retrospective of his drawings. Miró's works in public spaces include the *Miss Chicago* sculpture and *Figure and Birds*, both in Chicago; *Project for a Monument*, Milan; the ceramic mural on the front of the Palacio de Congresos, Madrid; two ceramic murals, *Wall of the Sun* and *Wall of the Moon*, at UNESCO headquarters, Paris; and *Lovers Playing with Almond Blossom* in La Défense, Paris. Other works can be found at the Fondation Maeght, in Saint Paul-de-Vence; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, MoMA and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; the Philadelphia Museum of Art; the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; and the Centre Pompidou, Paris, among others. In 1975, he founded the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona with the idea of encouraging younger artists to experiment with contemporary art. In October 2018, the Grand Palais in Paris opened what was until then, the largest retrospective devoted to the artist.

# Alexander Calder

Alexander Calder, an American sculptor and painter born in 1898 in Lawnton, Pennsylvania, came from a family of artists, with his father and grandfather being sculptors and his mother a painter. From an early age, Calder displayed a talent for creating. In 1909, at the age of eleven, he gifted his parents with his first sculptures, a tiny dog and duck made from a brass sheet. Even at a young age, Calder showcased his skill in handling materials, and the duck sculpture was kinetic, rocking back and forth when tapped.

Calder enrolled at the Art Students League in 1923, when he moved to New York. During this time, he worked as an illustrator for the *National Police Gazette* and had the opportunity to sketch circus scenes at the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus. The circus became a lifelong interest for Calder, and after relocating to Paris in 1926, he created his renowned *Cirque Calder*, a unique body of art including acrobats, animals, and props made of wire and a spectrum of found materials. *Cirque Calder*, predating the concept of performance art by forty years, was designed to be manually manipulated by Calder and could be packed into five suitcases for performances anywhere.

In addition to his circus-inspired work, Alexander Calder sculpted wire portraits of friends and public figures. His inventive artistry gained attention, and in 1928, he had his first solo gallery show at the Weyhe Gallery in New York. Numerous exhibitions in New York, Paris, and Berlin soon followed, leading to frequent travels across the ocean - during which he met Louisa James, who he married in January 1931. During his time in Paris, Calder met other influential artists and intellectuals, including Joan Miró, Fernand Léger, James Johnson Sweeney, Marcel Duchamp, and Piet Mondrian. A visit to the latter's studio in 1930, where he was impressed by the studio environment, had a profound impact on Calder, pushing him toward creating abstract paintings. He soon shifted his focus from painting to sculpture, finding that he preferred sculpture to painting. He created his first truly kinetic sculpture in 1931, giving birth to a new form of art that were named "mobiles" by Duchamp. These early mobiles were often motorised, but Calder realised he could create sculptures that undulated on their own with the air's currents. To differentiate his stationary abstract sculptures, artist Jean Arp coined the term "stabiles" for Calder's non-kinetic works. Despite his preference for sculptures, Calder never ceased painting and drawing. He enjoyed working with gouache, which allowed for spontaneous expression.





Installation photograph, II Bienal do Museu de Arte Moderna de São Paulo, Museu de Arte Moderna, São Paulo, Brazil, 1953

His works on canvas and paper blurred the boundaries between presence and absence, often with gestural undertones. In 1933, Calder returned to the United States with his wife Louisa and settled in Roxbury, Connecticut. There, he converted an icehouse into a studio and continued to create art. Calder's association with the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York began in 1934, and he exhibited his works there. He also designed sets for ballets by Martha Graham and a symphonic drama by Erik Satie. During this time, Calder explored outdoor sculptures, and in 1937, he crafted his first bolted stabile, *Devil Fish*, enlarged from a maquette. His notable commissions included the *Mercury Fountain* for the Spanish Pavilion at the Parisian World Fair and, in 1939, *Lobster Trap* and *Fish Tail* for the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Calder applied to join and was rejected by the Marine Corps during World War II, thus he continued creating art. As metal became scarce during the war, he turned to wood as a sculptural medium, resulting in a series of works called *Constellations*. These sculptures, anchored by wire and carved wood elements, were exhibited in 1943, at the Pierre Matisse Gallery.

The 1940s and 1950s were highly productive years for Calder, with major retrospectives of his work at the George Walter Vincent Smith Gallery in 1938 and the Museum of Modern Art in 1943. He also created small-scale works using scraps of metal trimmed from larger pieces. As Calder's international fame grew, he received numerous exhibition invitations and public commissions. Notable commissions from this period include *International Mobile* for the Philadelphia Museum of Art, sets for theatrical productions, and large-scale sculptures like *Flamingo* in Chicago and *La Grande vitesse* in Grand Rapids.

Alexander Calder's artistic recognition continued to flourish throughout the 1960s. He received retrospective exhibitions at the Guggenheim Museum in 1964 and the Fondation Maeght in France in 1969.

Calder's works inspired and influenced contemporary artists, leaving an unquestionable impact on art history. In 1976, Calder attended the opening of his retrospective exhibition, "Calder's Universe", at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Just a few weeks later, he passed away at the age of seventy-eight, leaving behind a remarkable artistic legacy that forever changed the rules of visual arts. He is widely considered to be one of the most important American sculptors of the 20th century, known for innovative kinetic sculptures powered by air currents, the "mobile" and his static abstract monumental sculptures, or the "stabile".

Calder's public commissions are on view in cities all over the world and his work has been the subject of numerous museum exhibitions, including the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. (1998, travelled to San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, California); The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. (1998–99); Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford (2000); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2000); Iwaki City Art Museum, Japan (2000, travelled to The Museum of Modern Art, Japan; Hokkaido Obihiro Museum of Art, Japan; The Museum of Art, Japan; Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum, Japan; Nagoya City Art Museum, Japan); Storm King Art Center, New York (2001–03); Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (2003, travelled to Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, through 2004); Fondation Beyeler, Switzerland (2004, travelled to Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., through 2005); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California (2013); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2014); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2014); Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2015); and Pulitzer Arts Foundation, Saint Louis (2015).



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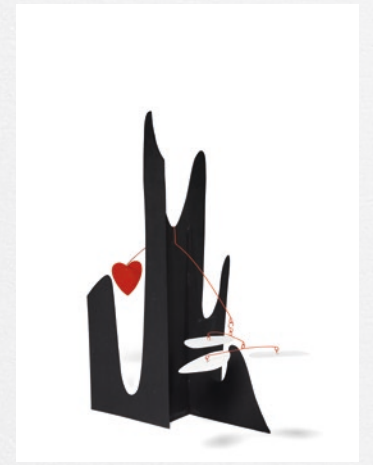
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	BACK COVER Alexander Calder and Joan Miró with <i>Les Triangles</i> (1963) at the opening of <i>Calder</i> , Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France, 1969. Photograph by Ugo Mulas © Ugo Mulas Heirs.

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