



ALEXANDER  
CALDER



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# ALEXANDER CALDER (1898-1976)

## *Prelude to Man-Eater*

1945

Signed with the artist's monogram on the uppermost element, "CA"  
sheet metal, wire, paint  
59 x 42 x 18 in. (149.8 x 106.6 x 45.7 cm)



**WATCH VIDEO**

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### PROVENANCE

Estate of the Artist  
M. Knoedler & Co., New York  
Galerie Internazionale, Milan  
Arnold Herstand & Co., New York  
Meshulam Riklis, New York  
Christies New York, May 1997, lot 127  
Private Collection, acquired from the above sale  
Christies New York, June 2001, lot 1103  
Private Collection  
Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York  
Private Collection

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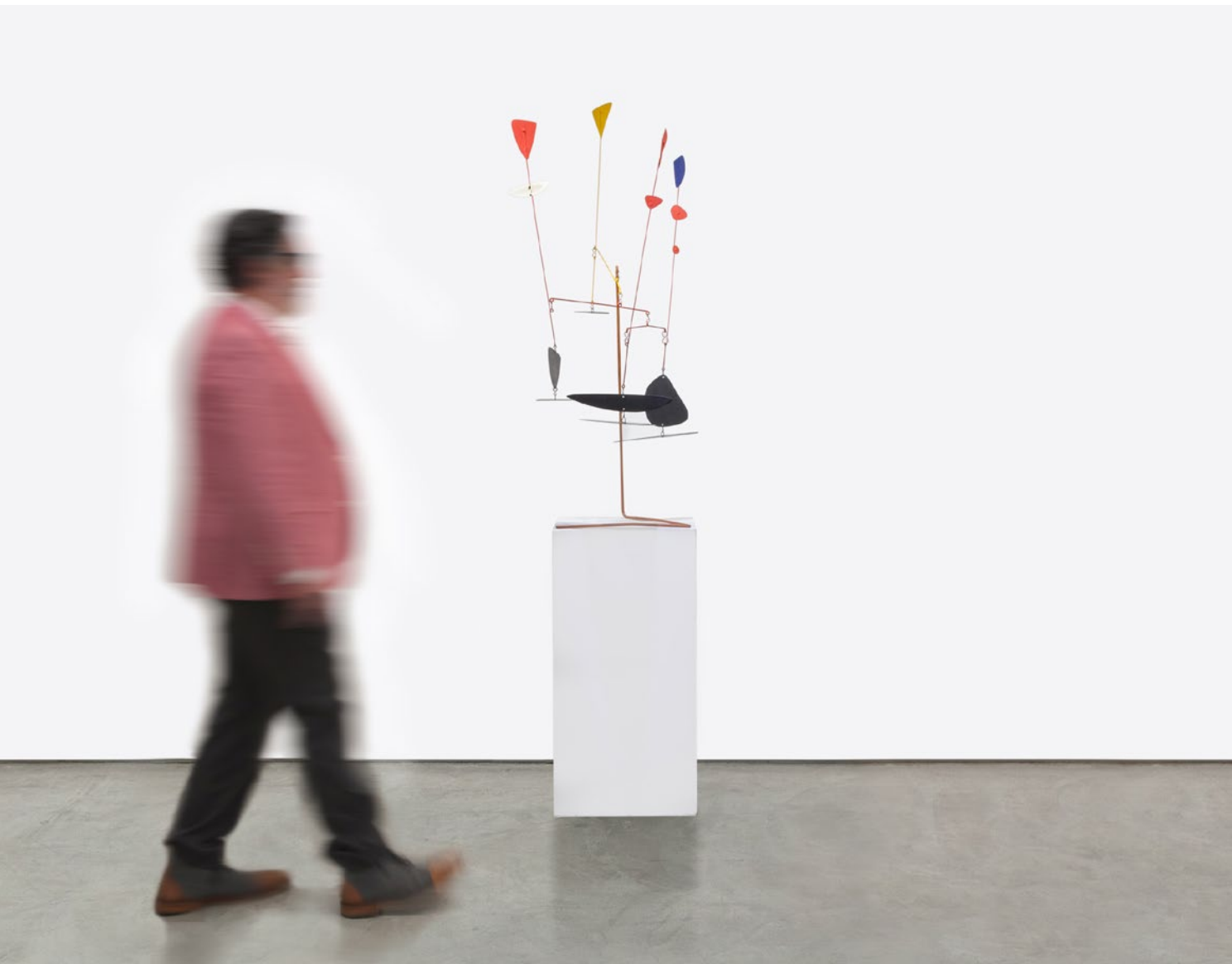
### EXHIBITION

New York, Buchholz Gallery, *Alexander Calder*, November-December, 1945  
Detroit, Detroit Institute of Fine Arts, *Origins of Modern Sculpture*, January - March, 1946  
New York, M. Knoedler & Co., *Alexander Calder / Fernand Leger*, October 1979, p. 9, no. 5 (illustrated)  
New York, M. Knoedler & Co., *Alexander Calder Standing Mobiles*, December 1980-January 1981  
Barcelona, Spain, Fundacio Joan Miro, *Calder*, November 1997-February 1998, no. 73  
Beverly Hills, California, Gagosian Gallery, *Alexander Calder*, May - June, 2003  
Los Angeles, California, L&M Arts, *Alexander Calder*, April - June, 2012  
Michelle Rosenfeld Gallery, New York, *Spring Group Show*, March - May 2013

# — IMPORTANT FACTS

- *Prelude to Man-Eater* is a delicately balanced standing sculpture that responds to air currents, creating a constantly changing and dynamic visual experience.
- The present work is a formal study for a commissioned work, *Man-Eater With Pennants*. *Prelude to Man-Eater*, like the sculpture in MoMA, is designed to be viewed from multiple angles, encouraging viewers to walk around and interact with it.
- Often, these maquettes existed in the smaller size for decades before enlarging or simply existed at their size and never made into larger works.

# — DETAIL IMAGES









# MARKET ANALYSIS

## Alexander CALDER

### Statistical Analysis

Number of lots	1710
Change from 1/1976 - 3/2024	+11907.8%
Compound Annual Growth Rate	10.3

### Revaluation

Input value	0 USD
Revalue date	01/1976
Revaluation	0 USD

100% (median)-USD (Nominal terms)

AMR | Art  
Market  
Research

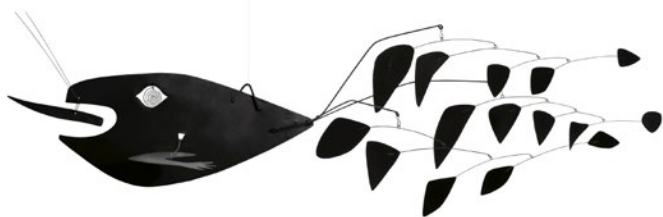


Alexander Calder's sculptural works rarely appear on the market. Mostly prints, drawings and wire sculptures emerge- very rarely do the mobile and stabile works.

There is a compound annual growth rate of 10.3% for Alexander Calder.

The institutional interest in Calder's work is rising, with new Asian and Middle Eastern museums seeking to own examples from the 1930's and 1940's.

# TOP ART SOLD AT AUCTION



*Poisson volant*

1957

hanging mobile--painted sheet metal, rod and wire

24 x 89 x 40 in.

(60.9 x 226.0 x 101.6 cm)

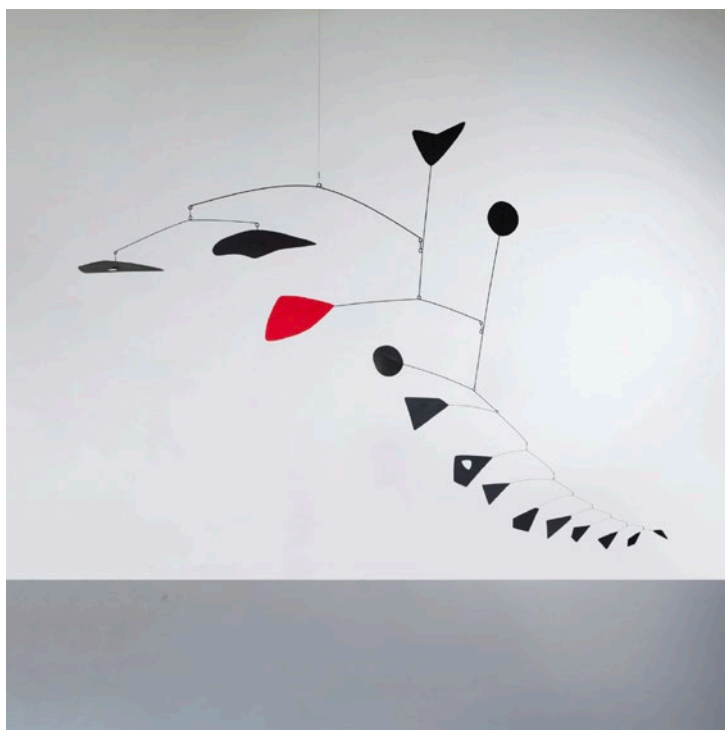
**Sold at Christie's New York:  
July 2014 for \$25,925,000**

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*Untitled*  
1949  
painted sheet metal and wire  
128 x 168 in. (325 x 426.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:  
November 2021 for \$19,682,000**

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# TOP ART SOLD AT AUCTION



## *Lily of Force*

1945

standing mobile--painted sheet  
metal, rod and wire

91  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 81 x 89 in.

(233 x 205.7 x 226.1 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:  
November 2018 for \$18,562,500**

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# COMPARABLE ART SOLD AT AUCTION



*Untitled*

1942

painted sheet metal, glass, wire  
and string standing mobile

32  $\frac{3}{4}$  x 23 x 10  $\frac{1}{2}$  in.

(83.2 x 58.4 x 26.7 cm)

**Sold at Sotheby's New York:  
May 2016 for \$8,314,000**

Smaller than *Cantilever*

Similar stabile composition/ format

Comparable date of execution

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*Black II*

1949

standing mobile--painted sheet  
metal and wire

40 x 33 x 18 in.

(101.6 x 83.8 x 45.7 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:  
November 2014 for \$4,309,000**

Created at the same time as our example

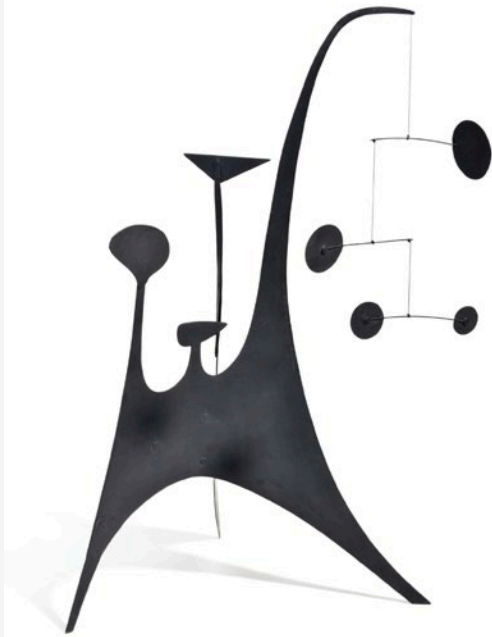
Comparable scale

Similar format composition

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# COMPARABLE ART SOLD AT AUCTION



*Stabile with Mobile Element*

1940

standing mobile—sheet metal,  
string and paint

24 x 24 x 15 in.

(60.9 x 60.9 x 38.1 cm)

**Sold at Christie's New York:  
November 2015 for \$4,085,000**

Smaller than *Cantilever*

Similar stabile composition/ format

Comparable date of execution

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# CALDER ART IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



## The Museum of Modern Art New York

*Man-Eater with Pennants*

1945

Painted steel rods and sheet iron

168 x 360 in.

(425 x 915 cm)

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## The Museum of Modern Art New York

*Spider*

1939

Painted sheet aluminum, steel rod,  
and steel wire

80 ½ x 88 ½ x 36 ½ in.  
(203.5 x 224.5 x 92.6 cm)

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# CALDER ART IN MUSEUM COLLECTIONS



## The Tate, London

*Untitled*

1937

painted steel stabile

90 x 102 in. (228 x 203 cm)

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## Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

*Yucca*

1941

painted sheet metal and wire

73 x 23 x 20 in.

(186.7 x 58.4 x 50.8 cm)

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“Above all, art should be fun.”

**Alexander Calder**

# HISTORY



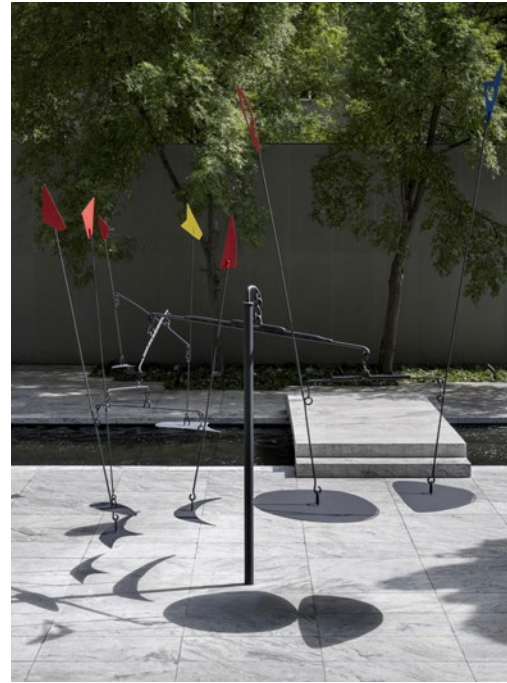
Alexander Calder, 1946

Alexander Calder was a key figure in the development of abstract sculpture and is renowned for his groundbreaking work in kinetic art; he is one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. *Prelude to Man-Eater* is a delicately balanced standing sculpture that responds to air currents, creating a constantly changing and dynamic visual experience.

Calder's standing mobiles were a result of his continuous experimentation with materials, form, and balance. Alfred Barr, the first director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, commissioned Calder to create a new standing mobile in 1945. The present work is a formal study for that

commissioned work, *Man-Eater With Pennants*. *Prelude to Man-Eater*, like the sculpture in MoMA, is designed to be viewed from multiple angles, encouraging viewers to walk around and interact with it. In both pieces, the different metal components move around a central post. Maquettes and studies played a vital role in Calder's practice as it gave him the opportunity to understand scale and balance before scaling up the piece. Often, these maquettes existed in the smaller size for decades before enlarging or simply existed at their size and never made into larger works. In *Prelude*, we can see Calder thinking more vertically compared to the final piece at MoMA.

*Prelude to Man-Eater* is also represented in Calder's preparatory drawing, *Sketches for Mobiles: Prelude to Man-Eater; Starfish; Octopus*, which is in the permanent collection of the Harvard Fogg Museum.



Alexander Calder, *Man-Eater With Pennants*, 1945  
Museum of Modern Art, New York  
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Alexander Calder, *Prelude to the Man-Eater; Starfish; Octopus*, 1945  
Harvard Fogg Museum  
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