

# The Museum of Modern Art

72

West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

No. 15

FOR RELEASE:

Wednesday, February 1, 1967

PRESS PREVIEW:

Tuesday, January 31, 1967

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

CALDER: 19 GIFTS FROM THE ARTIST, an exhibition of mobiles, stabiles, wood and wire sculptures and jewelry recently given to The Museum of Modern Art by the famous American artist, Alexander Calder, will be on view at the Museum from February 1 through April 5. The works in the exhibition range from Calder's early wire portraits of the 1920s, through various other periods and media, to a monumental mobile-stabile made in 1964.

The 19 works by Calder, added to those already owned by the Museum, make this the largest and most complete collection by the artist in any museum. This very generous gift came about in May 1966 when Calder invited the Museum to make a choice from the contents of his Connecticut studio in recognition of the Museum's having given him in 1943 his first large retrospective exhibition.

The major piece among Calder's recent gifts is Sandy's Butterfly, 1964, a great mobile-stabile of stainless steel painted red, white, black and yellow and standing nearly 13 feet high. Too tall to be shown indoors with the rest of the exhibition, this piece stands on the terrace just outside the Museum's Main Hall; it will later be moved to the upper terrace of the Sculpture Garden.

Another work of the 1960s in the exhibition is a 24-inch Model for "Teodelapio", the great steel stabile made in 1962 for the Festival of Two Worlds at Spoleto, Italy. The final work, some 60 feet high, stands like a gateway to Spoleto with people and cars passing under its arches. It was the first of Calder's towering steel monuments to which he has devoted his energies in recent years.

The other works given by Calder to the Museum represent him in various styles and media of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s. Among his earliest sculptures, which made up his first one-man show in 1928, where the works in iron or brass wire, of which the 39-inch figure of Josephine Baker, 1926 or 1927, is a superb example. Calder

(more)

made five or six versions of this figure inspired by the renowned American dancer who was so popular in Paris at the time. Two lifesize portrait heads, Marion Greenwood and Man with Eyeglasses, date from the late 1920s, as do three delightful miniature pieces, a wire girl on a soda fountain stool, a wire cat which becomes a lamp, and a tin elephant which makes a chair and whose trunk conveniently holds a lamp.

Two well-known wood sculptures of the 1930s are included, Shark Sucker, 1930 and Gibraltar, 1936. Both were in the Museum's 1943 exhibition and have been seen in Calder's major shows since then, at the Venice Biennale, 1952, the São Paulo Bienal, 1953, the Tate Gallery, London, 1962, the Guggenheim Museum, 1964, and the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris, 1965.

The Whale, Calder's famous stabile of 1937, is one of his best-known works. It has been almost continuously on exhibition in the Museum's Sculpture Garden since 1941. Originally a loan from the artist, it was given to the Museum by Calder in 1950. Through the years this thin steel sculpture suffered much from the weather, and in 1964 Calder proposed that he make a new Whale in heavier steel. Thus Whale II, the second version of this sculpture, was made in 1964 and is included in this exhibition of Calder's gifts.

Two classic metal mobiles of great delicacy and grace are among the new acquisitions. The black-painted Spider of 1939 stands on the floor and measures some 6 1/2 feet high. Snow Flurry, 1948, hangs from the ceiling, a spray of small white disks held by thin black rods. Calder made four versions of Snow Flurry: one is in the Yale University Art Gallery, one in the Chateaubriand Museum, São Paulo, one in the artist's own collection.

Morning Star, 1943, is a slender black steel stabile, angular and tense, with rods tipped by bright wood spheres which seem to diagram a constellation. It stands over 6 feet high and like other works here it has been seen in Calder's major exhibitions through the years.

Finally, five pieces of jewelry in brass and silver, two brooches, two belt

(more)

buckles and a comb, have been chosen to supplement two necklaces and a bracelet already in the Museum Collection. Calder started making jewelry in the 1920s along with the wire sculptures and he continued this highly individual art well into the 1940s. Two large exhibitions in New York have been devoted to Calder jewelry, one in 1940 and one late in 1966.

Calder first showed at the Museum 37 years ago when four wood sculptures were included in PAINTING AND SCULPTURE BY LIVING AMERICANS in 1930. The first acquisition was a motorized mobile called A Universe, purchased for the Museum Collection in 1934; next, several wire sculptures were acquired, and a large mobile, Lobster Trap and Fish Tail, was commissioned to hang in the stairwell of the Museum's building when it opened in 1939. Other acquisitions followed, culminating in the Black Widow, a large stabile of 1959, purchased for the Sculpture Garden in 1963.

The bibliography on Calder's work is a lengthy one, but the first careful, comprehensive study was the Museum's catalog, with text by James Johnson Sweeney, which accompanied its 1943 exhibition. Unfortunately this is out of print. However two handsomely illustrated and documented books on Calder were published in 1966: his autobiography and a critical biography by H. H. Arnason. THREE YOUNG RATS, a book of nursery rhymes illustrated by Calder and first published in 1944, has been reissued by the Museum. These books are available in the Museum bookshop.

The present exhibition, directed by Dorothy C. Miller, Curator of the Museum Collections, is one of a continuing series of showings which report on recent acquisitions to the Museum Collections.

The newly acquired Calder's were of course chosen for their quality as works of art, but they also round out the Museum's Calder collection. To demonstrate this, a single checklist including both new and previously owned works by Calder has been made, with the new acquisitions so designated.

\*\*\*\*\*

Photographs, checklist and additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Lynn Traiger, Assistant Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Circle 5-8900.

# The Museum of Modern Art

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Circle 5-8900 Cable: Modernart

## CALDER: 19 GIFTS FROM THE ARTIST

An Exhibition of Recent Acquisitions, February 1 - April 5, 1967

### Checklist

In addition to the 19 works in the exhibition, this checklist includes works by Calder previously owned by the Museum, exclusive of drawings and prints. The newly acquired works are so designated in the left margin.

Unless enclosed in parentheses dates appear on the works themselves. In dimensions height precedes width; the third dimension is depth.

- Gift 1966 Josephine Baker. (1927-29, Paris) Iron wire, 39 x 22 3/8 x 9 3/4".  
382.66
- The Hostess. (1928) Wire, 11 1/2" high. Gift of Edward M. M. Warburg. 319.41
- Sow. (1928) Wire, 7 1/2 x 17". Gift of the artist. 5.44
- The Horse. (1928) Walnut, 15 1/2 x 34 3/4". Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. 747.43
- Gift 1966 Soda Fountain. (1928) Iron wire, 10 3/4" high. 381.66
- Gift 1966 Elephant Chair with Lamp. (1928) Painted sheet metal, iron wire, cloth, painted paper, 7 7/8 x 3 1/2 x 4 1/8". 384.66
- Gift 1966 Cat Lamp. (1928) Iron wire, paper, 8 3/4 x 10 1/8 x 3 1/8". 385.66
- Gift 1966 Marion Greenwood. (1929-30, New York) Brass wire, 12 5/8 x 11 1/8 x 11 3/8". 383.66
- Gift 1966 Man with Eyeglasses. (1929-30) Brass wire, 12 7/8 x 8 3/4 x 13 1/2". 387.66
- Cow. (1929) Wire, 6 1/2 x 16". Gift of Edward M. M. Warburg.  
318.41a-d
- Cow. (1929) Wire, wood, 3 1/2 x 8". Gift of Edward M. M. Warburg.  
499.41
- Gift 1966 Shark Sucker. (1930, New York) Wood, 10 3/4 x 30 7/8 x 10 1/4".  
389.66
- A Universe. (1934) Motorized mobile: iron pipe, wire, string, wood, 40 1/2" high. Gift of Abby Aldrich Rockefeller (by exchange).  
163.34
- Gift 1966 Gibraltar. (1936, Roxbury, Conn.) Lignum vitae, walnut, steel rods, 51 7/8 x 24 1/4 x 11 3/8". 380.66

(more)

- Gift 1964 Whale II. (1937; this is the second version, 1964) Stabile: painted sheet steel, 68 x 69 1/2 x 45 3/8". Gift of the artist (by exchange). 1.65
- Lobster Trap and Fish Tail. (1939) Mobile: painted steel wire and sheet aluminum, about 8'6" x 9'6". Commissioned by the Advisory Committee for the stairwell of the Museum. 590.39a-d
- Gift 1966 Spider. (1939, Roxbury, Conn.) Standing mobile: painted sheet aluminum, steel wire, 6'8" x 7'4 1/2" x 36 1/2". 391.66
- Gift 1966 Morning Star. (1943, Roxbury, Conn.) Stabile: painted sheet steel, steel wire, wood, 76 3/4 x 48 3/8 x 45 3/4". 386.66
- Constellation with Red Object. (1943) Wood, steel wire, 25 1/2 x 12 1/2". James Thrall Soby Fund. 746.43
- Untitled. (Early 1940s) Stabile-mobile: painted aluminum, 14 5/8 x 9 x 10 7/8". Kay Sage Tanguy Bequest. 1122.64
- Man-Eater with Pennants. (1945) Mobile: painted steel rods, sheet iron, 14' x about 30'. Purchase. 150.45
- Gift 1966 Snow Flurry I. 1948 (Roxbury, Conn.) Hanging mobile: painted sheet metal, steel wire, 94" high x 70 1/4" diameter. 390.66
- Black Widow. 1959. Stabile: painted sheet steel, 7'8" x 14'3" x 7'5". Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund. 557.63
- Gift 1966 Model for "Teodelapio," Spoleto. (1962) Stabile: painted sheet aluminum, 23 3/4 x 15 1/4 x 15 3/4". 392.66
- Gift 1966 Sandy's Butterfly. 1964 (Roxbury, Conn.) Mobile-stabile: painted stainless steel, 12'8 1/4" x 9'2 1/4". 388.66

## JEWELRY

- Gift 1966 Brooch. (1930s or 1940s) Hammered silver, 12 1/4 x 11 7/8". 746.66
- Gift 1966 Brooch. (1930s or 1940s) Hammered silver, 12 3/8 x 9 1/2". 747.66
- Gift 1966 Buckle. (1930s or 1940s) Hammered brass, 3 1/8 x 4 7/16". 748.66
- Gift 1966 Buckle. (Before 1943) Hammered brass, 5 3/8 x 4 7/8". 749.66
- Gift 1966 Comb. (Before 1943) Hammered brass, 6 1/2 x 3 7/8". 745.66
- Necklace. (1941) Hammered silver, inner circumference, 26"; outer circumference, 43". James Thrall Soby Fund. 748.43
- Necklace. Hammered brass, inner circumference, 32"; outer circumference, 56 3/8". Purchase. DSC 1/55
- Bracelet. Hammered silver, 2" deep. Purchase. DSC 2/55