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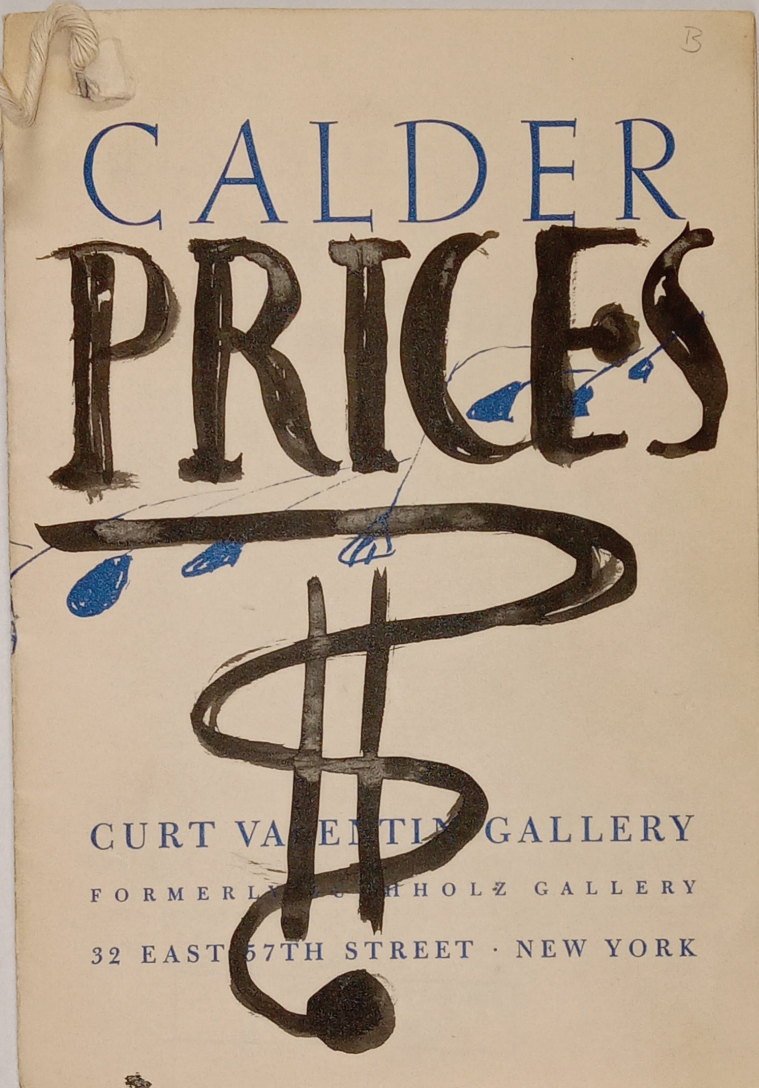
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ALEXANDER CALDER

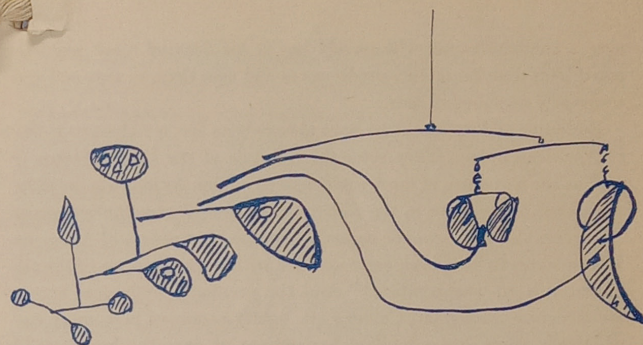
GONGS AND TOWERS

January 15 — February 10, 1952

CURT VALENTIN GALLERY
FORMERLY BUCHHOLZ GALLERY
32 EAST 57 STREET • NEW YORK 22

Museum of Modern Art Library
Curt Valentin Papers

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[2] Triple Gong

ALEXANDER CALDER'S MOBILES

by James Johnson Sweeney

Through the mobiles of Alexander Calder we realize that the machine age has come to maturity: it is finally able to take itself lightly—to laugh and play in the forms, materials and devices that a century ago it regarded with a pragmatic respect—reaching at times almost the proportions of superstitious awe. Calder has accepted as the material of his art some of the most crude and obvious features of our mechanical heritage and forged them into a graceful, individualized sculptural expression. He has taken the principle of the cumbersome machine and employed it as the basis of his delicate “toys”; he has taken the toy and built it on the scale of the machine.

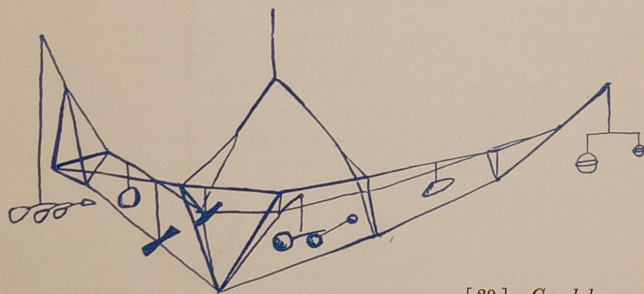
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age: a craftsman who merely has at his disposal more sophisticated tools than his artisan predecessors and uses them to personal and frequently unorthodox ends.

Burlesque and exaggeration have always been the key characteristics of American humor. They color the folk tale of the United States as well as the anecdotes of most sophisticated circles. As long ago as 1838, a puzzled Englishman in the *London and Westminster Review* wrote "The curiosity of the public regarding the peculiar nature of American humor seems to have been early satisfied with the application of the all-suffering word 'exaggeration.'" And the peculiarly individual humor we recognize throughout Calder's art, lightly enounced here, more emphatically there, has a kindred foundation: at once the burlesque of the machine, the exaggeration of the toy. Even when a reminiscence of some natural form is evident—that of a flower, plant, animal or human being—the fusion with it of mechanical principles or machine materials, or both, brings us always back to this burlesque of the machine which we have finally the courage to accept and enjoy in our day.

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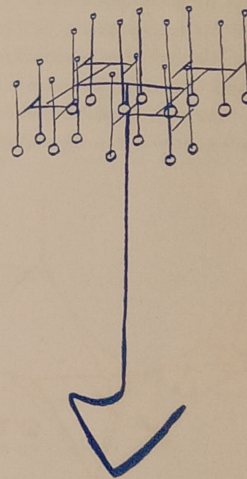


[30] Gondola

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[3] Thirty-two Discs

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CALDER

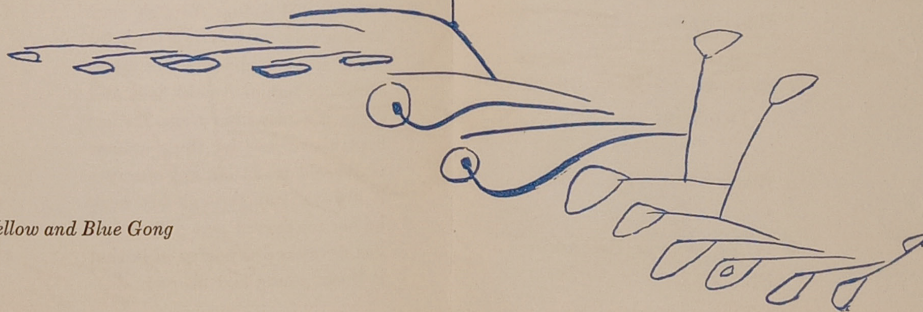
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Translation by Dolly Chareau



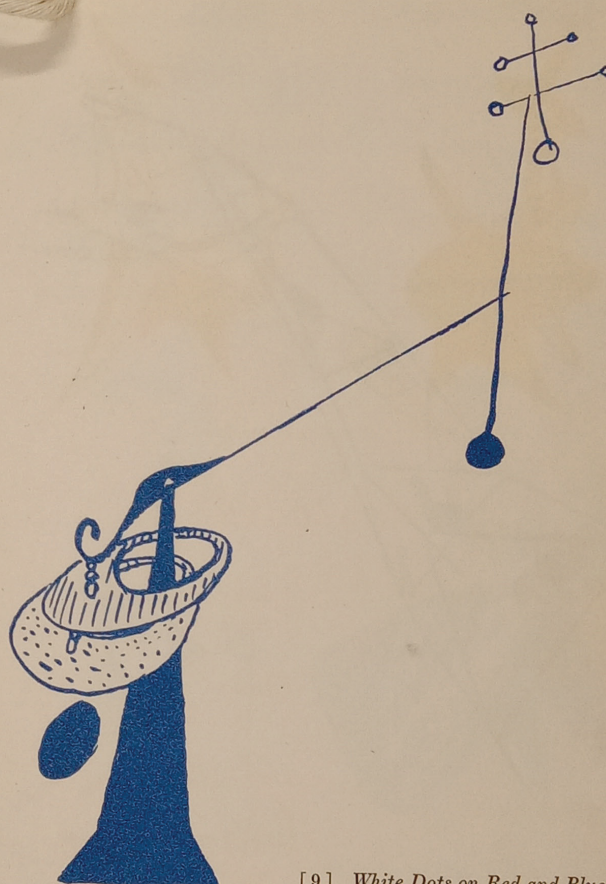
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[25] *Horns on Platforms*

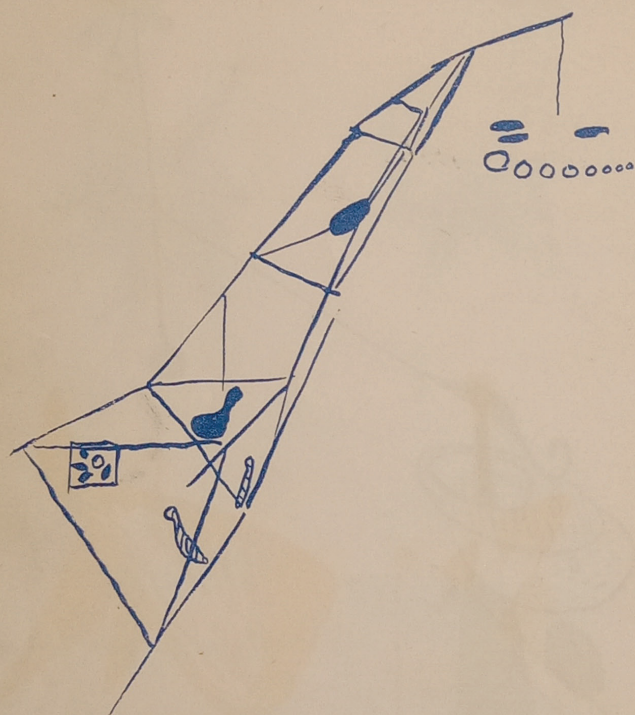
CATALOGUE

- 13631 1 Tower with Pinwheel 1800-
35
- 13632 2 Triple Gong 1800-
64
- 13633 3 Thirty-two Discs 1600-
90
- 13634 4 Black Spread 2000-
67 x 13'4
- 13635 5 New Bleriot 1400-
43
- 13636 6 Small Gypsophila on Black Spike, 1750-
352
- 13637 7 Red—One Yellow—Black
—Two White
- 13638 8 Black Side, White Side 950-
69
- 13639 9 White Dots on Red and Blue 1800-
69



[9] *White Dots on Red and Blue*

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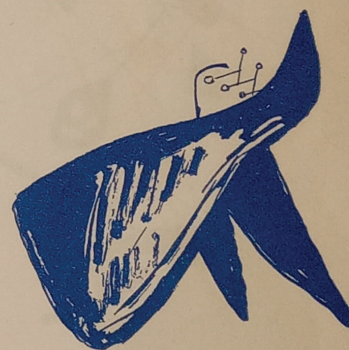


[17] *Tower with Painting*

- 13639 10 Streetcar 2400-
 13640 11 Laocoön 3000-
 13641 12 Vertical out of Horizontal 1200-
 13642 13 Yellow and Blue Horizontal 1500-
 13643 14 Red, Yellow and Blue Gong 2200-
 15 Triple Gong
 13644 16 Bifurcated Tower 1700-
 13645 17 Tower with Painting 1500-
 13646 18 Tower-Orange Band 1500-
 13647 19 Three Legged Triangle 850-
 13648 20 Large Gypsophila on Black Spike 900-
 13649 21 Long Red Wire 950-



[27] *Loop on Platform*



[24] *Gypsophila on Black Chair*

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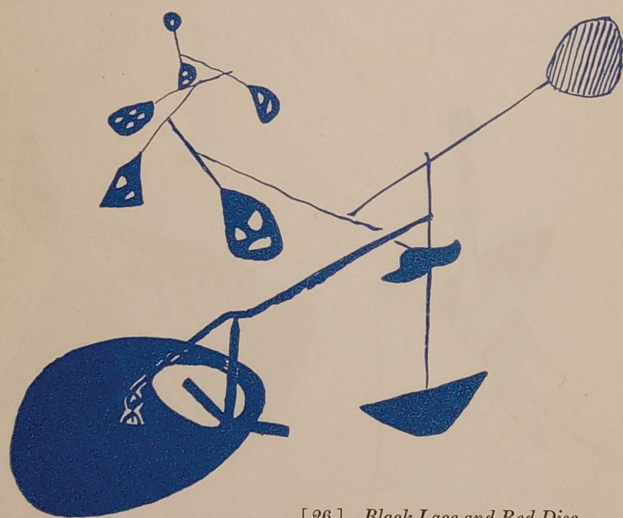
13650 22 Black Crescent 31 750 13651 27 Loop on Platform 28 900

13651 23 Red Pyramid 54 1100- 13655 28 Various Shapes, Colors, Planes 60 950

13652 24 Gypsophila on Black Chair 21 1/2 950- 29 Only Only Bird 1000-

13653 25 Horns on Platforms 44 1/2 1200- 30 Gondola 2300-
13656 1600

26 Black Lace and Red Disc



[26] Black Lace and Red Disc

31 Big Gong 8' 2400- 13657

32 Red Crescent 65 1/2 1200- 13658

33 Little Tower 24 700- 13659

34 Demi Gondola 1600 4400 13660 52

May

13661 35 Sumac 40 1800- 13662

36 Red Base 18 350- 13663

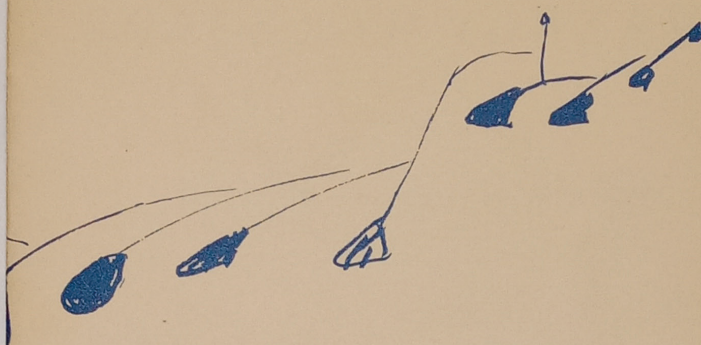
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CALDER



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ALEXANDER CALDER

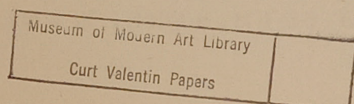
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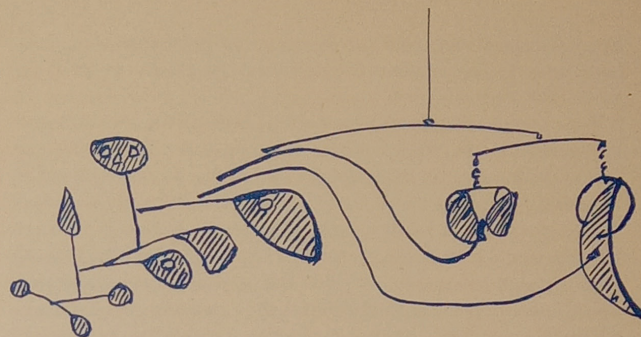
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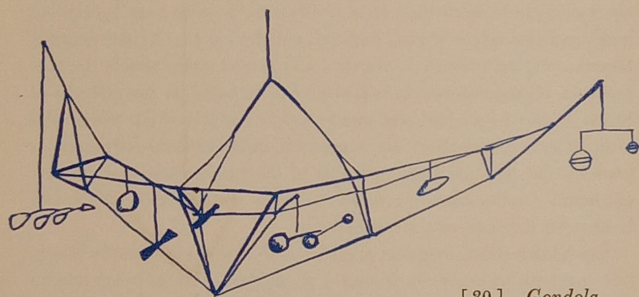
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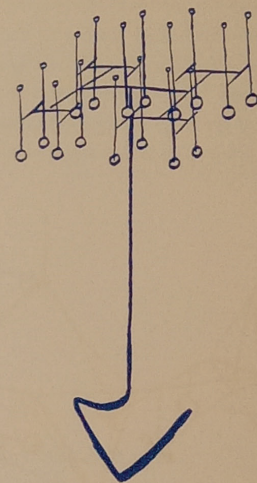


[30] *Gondola*

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[3] *Thirty-two Discs*

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CALDER

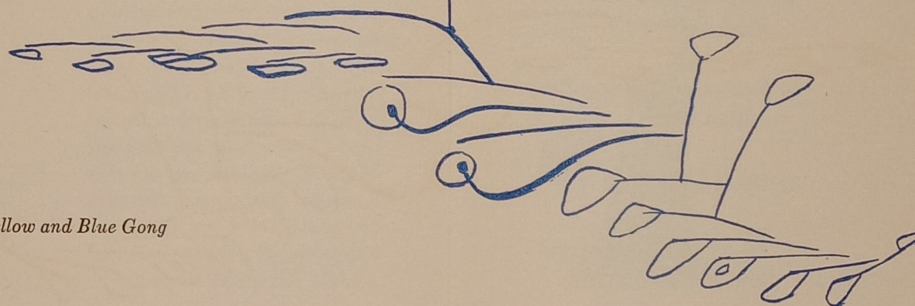
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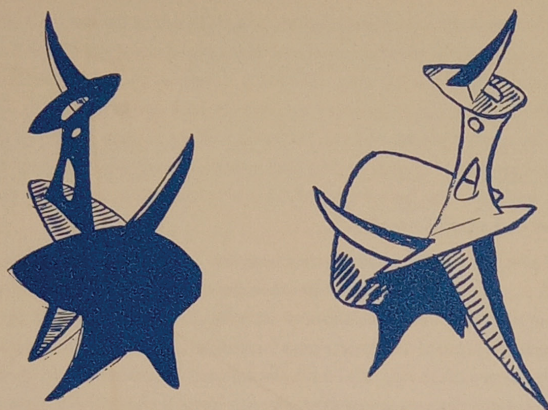
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Translation by Dolly Chareau



[14] Red, Yellow and Blue Gong

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[25] *Horns on Platforms*

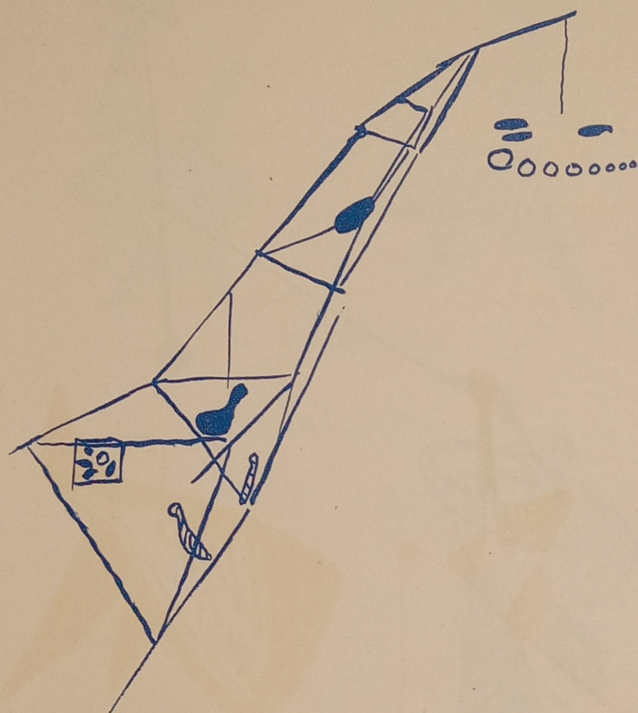
CATALOGUE

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Tower with Pinwheel | 6 Small Gypsophila on Black Spike |
| 2 Triple Gong | 7 Red—One Yellow—Black—Two White |
| 3 Thirty-two Discs | 8 Black Side, White Side |
| 4 Black Spread | 9 White Dots on Red and Blue |
| 5 New Bleriot | |



[9] *White Dots on Red and Blue*

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[17] *Tower with Painting*

10 Streetcar

11 Laocoön

12 Vertical out of Horizontal

13 Yellow and Blue
Horizontal

14 Red, Yellow and Blue
Gong

15 Triple Gong

16 Bifurcated Tower

17 Tower with Painting

18 Tower-Orange Band

19 Three Legged Triangle

20 Large Gypsophila on
Black Spike

21 Long Red Wire



[27] *Loop on Platform*



[24] *Gypsophila on Black Chair*

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22 Black Crescent

23 Red Pyramid

24 Gypsophila on Black
Chair

25 Horns on Platforms

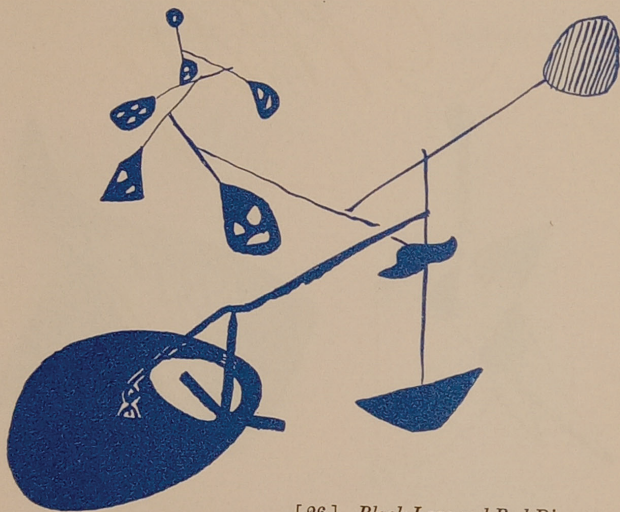
26 Black Lace and Red Disc

27 Loop on Platform

28 Various Shapes, Colors,
Planes

29 Only Only Bird

30 Gondola

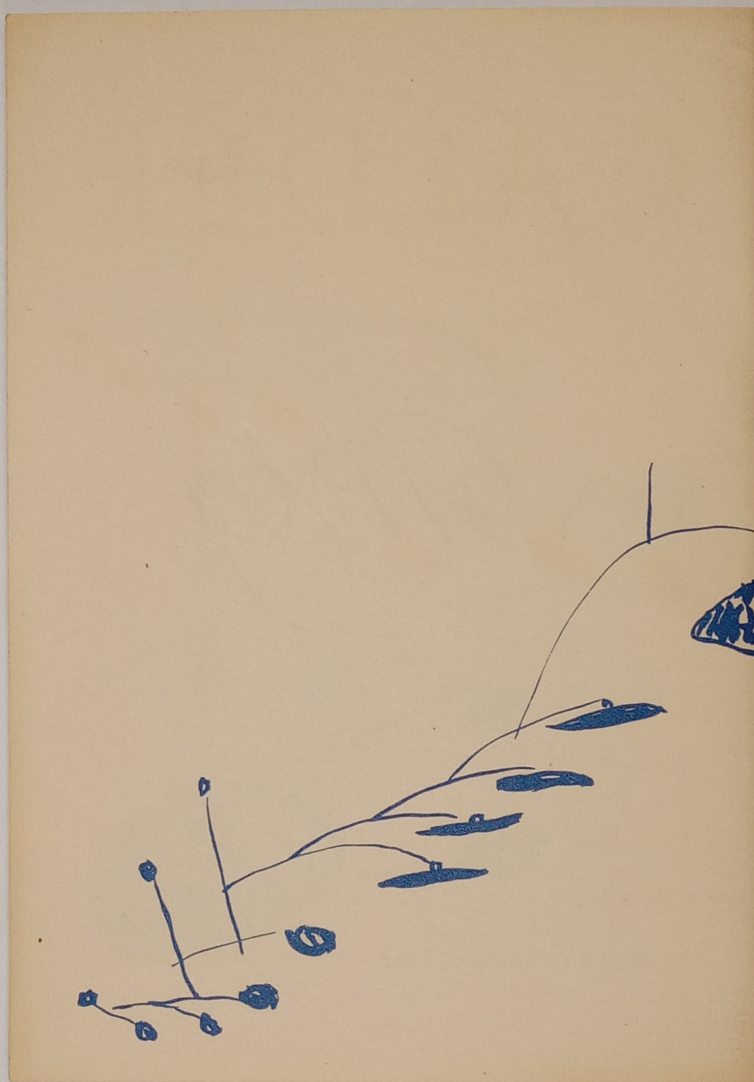


[26] *Black Lace and Red Disc*

Emy

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ALEXANDER CALDER'S MOBILES

9/10
498+23
ml+11

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INSERT X

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- 2 -

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JAMES JOHNSON SWEENEY

3-6-50

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ALEXANDER CALDER
(Born in Philadelphia, July 22, 1898)

Alexander Calder lived in an atmosphere of art from birth. His mother was a painter, his father and grandfather were sculptors. But a self-portrait, drawn in crayon in 1907, shows Calder as a little boy using a ^{coping} ~~big~~ saw while a brace and bit, a hammer and pliers are lying conveniently close by. From 1915 to 1919 he studied engineering at Stevens Institute of Technology and until 1923 he worked as an engineer.

In 1921 he took an evening course in charcoal drawing and in the autumn of 1923 he left engineering and enrolled as a full time student in the School of the Art Students' League where he studied with Luke, DuBois, John Sloan and Robinson.

Calder did free lance work in those days in order to earn money. One of his jobs was with the National Police Gazette for which he had to provide regularly a half page of drawings with captions. When the Barnum-Ringling Circus came to New York in the spring of 1925, Calder was given a pass to it for a period of two weeks in order to cover his Police Gazette assignment. The movement of the circus so fascinated him that he sketched there every night. The next year he again had a pass and in May 1926 he published a book, Animal Sketching. In this book Calder identifies action with animals and says that many animals, even when asleep, will move their ears in the direction of a sound that may be inaudible to us, that there is always a feeling of perpetual motion about them.

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In 1926 Calder had an exhibition of his oils. That summer, he left the United States for Paris.

The circus had so intrigued him that Calder, in order to amuse himself in Paris, made several animated toys out of bits of wire, wood, cork and leather. Gradually he built a miniature circus in which the acrobats, tumblers, trained dogs, dancers and aerialists could give amazing performances. His circus even included a sword swallower, a knife thrower and a lion tamer. The circus was operated by Calder in his room on a piece of green carpet with a spot lit ring laid out on it. The charm of the acts lay in their spontaneity. The aerialists at one time might perform with perfect balance. At another moment they would falter and either fall into the outstretched net below or enjoy a miraculous recovery of equilibrium. An air of freshness, change and reality surrounded Calder's toys.

Through these private performances of his circus, Calder's fame in Paris started. From the use of wire in forming the heads, legs and arms of his performers came his wire sculptures.

In 1928 he returned to New York, had a one man show made up for the most part of wire sculptures and started to carve in wood again. During the next few years Calder worked in Paris, returning often to the United States. He had exhibitions in Paris, Berlin and New York.

It was in Paris in 1930 that a friend of Calder's brought Piet Mondrian to a performance of the circus. Soon after this Calder visited Mondrian's studio. Mondrian's studio was large and light with

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-1-4-

relationship between positions in space, was developed for its own rectangles of primary colors on the white walls and with a red cube, a sphere. Sometimes the energy for the motion was generated by small hand-cranked a phonograph, in the center of the room. It was a Mondrian painting on wheels and electric motors. The resulting repetitiveness of the with a third dimension. To Calder it seemed wonderful, but he felt that everything ought to move to be right.

that changed shape as the elements changed position, controlled only by the unconscious of the unregulated force of a breeze.

After painting for only a few weeks, he turned once more to metal and wood, but he had left representational art behind. He had become an the wind driven mobiles, one step closer to the ideas of wire and abstract sculptor. A synthesis of his years of study, both in engineering and in art, had been achieved. In 1931 Calder exhibited his this point on. Departures from geometric form were in. Paris began new work at the Galerie Percier in Paris. The gallery had insisted to be suggested by the materials at hand. The resulting form often on the inclusion of some of his wire portraits, but Calder felt that suggested subjective reality.

the important works were his new abstract constructions. To these In 1933 Calder returned to live in the United States. He Arp gave the name stabiles. From flat bases, many of which were brought a form in Connecticut where he worked on mobiles which were often painted white, rose wires in suggestively geometric spatial forms. extremely large, in sharp contrast to his necessarily small Paris studio. Strongly colored spheres and discs were integrated with the wires. sculptures. The forms of the elements of his new work were from three Calder's naturalism was rechanneled into the fifty drawings illustrating the Fables of Aesop which was printed in 1931 by Harrison of Paris. sculptures were more imaginatively corrective.

While Mondrian's influence had introduced color and abstract form into the stabiles, Calder's love of motion in space resulted in In the late thirties Calder designed two fountains. In 1937, he designed a spraying-sputtering fountain for the Spanish Pavilion at his mobiles, so named by Duchamp, the painter of motions. Calder's The Exposition in Paris for which Miro and Picasso were doing the experiments with changes in position in space ranged from the simplest marble. In 1939, he designed a water fountain for the New York World's movement of a single object fixed at one point to the complex movement Fair. This fountain had streams of water thrown by revolving wheels of many parts of a sculpture. The motion and form of his circus toys in a complex choreographic pattern to suggest a "water ballet." Both had mimicked living things, but now in his mobiles the motion as well fountains exposed the combined artist and engineer in Calder. as the elements of the construction had become abstract. Motion, the

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relationship between positions in space, was developed for its own sake. Sometimes the energy for the motion was generated by small hand cranks and electric motors. The resulting repetitiousness of the patterns of motion led Calder to construct wind-mobiles, sculptures that changed shape as the elements changed position, controlled only by the casualness of the unregulated force of a breeze. In space, Calder had first met Miro in 1926. With the development of the wind driven mobiles, one sees how close to the ideas of Miro and how far from those of Mondrian the ideas of Calder had come. From this point on, departures from geometric form crept in. Form began to be suggested by the materials at hand. The resulting form often suggested subjective reality.

In 1933 Calder returned to live in the United States. He bought a farm in Connecticut where he worked on mobiles which were often extremely large, in sharp contrast to his necessarily small Paris studio sculpture. The forms of the elements of his new work were freer three dimensional shapes, the materials were more unusual and the moving sculptures were more imaginatively perceptive.

In the late thirties Calder designed two fountains. In 1937, he designed a mercury-spouting fountain for the Spanish Pavilion at the Exposition in Paris for which Miro and Picasso were doing the murals. In 1939, he designed a water fountain for the New York World's Fair. This fountain had streams of water thrown by revolving nozzles in a complex choreographic pattern to suggest a "water ballet." Both fountains exposed the combined artist and engineer in Calder.

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Calder also made jewelry and in 1940 had his first all-jewelry exhibition. This work combined and reflected his love of spatial curves and surfaces, of motion and its special case of rest in the same way that his sculpture did.

All through the years Calder had been making and exhibiting stabiles as well as mobiles. After the first abstractions in space, made soon after his visit to Mondrian's studio, the stabiles had become heavier and larger, less idealized in form, less geometric and regular. During the years of the last war, Calder's beautiful stabiles called constellations were made. It was as though his experimentation with motion had shown Calder what the absence of motion meant. It seemed to denote the impossible-to-move with its achieved, asymptotically approached limit of ever diminishing motion on the one hand and an object in a surprised, single position in time and space on the other hand. But even a stabile seems to display variation in space, the variation and movement given to its shadow by the seemingly slow moving sun. The stabiles have the same feeling of almost imperceptible perpetual motion that Calder noticed in sleeping animals.

Calder's magic lies in his ability to reveal the world of space and time to us, to show us its essence and at the same time to show us its change.

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PLAZA 3-0916

Calder

Leger

It's impossible to find a greater
contrast than Calder the man
who weighs 200 lbs and his mobile
delicate transparent creations.

a sort of tree trunk in movement.
he stirs up a lot of speculation
talk,
gets in the way of the mind, he's
not born to go unseen.

~~He's part of nature itself, surveying
an element of nature~~

Smiling & curious he
surveys in the air, part of nature
itself. Left to himself in an

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appartement, he's a real danger
to any fragile object. His place is
rather outside in the air, the wind &
the sun. You wouldn't think
it, but he has a sharp eye, nothing
escapes him he sees everything.

We have often roamed along the
~~dead ends~~ ^{certain} extremes of the New York
streets together looking for picturesque
elements: there where the american
disorder begins. The crudity of
the discarded object, ^{the brazen quality} the
scraps ~~in the garbage cans~~ that are
often plastically ^{valiant} worthless, of
garbage cans entwined with wire
& blooming with ^{vegetables} green stuff.

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If you look up you ^{can} see on the
 top of the roofs geometric fantasies
 Thousands of metallic structures
 are silhouetted in the sky & play with
 the light. Calder has his eye on them
 also. I have already written somewhere
 that Calder is a realist. He ^{includes} uses ^(his work)
 all these elements ^{strewn} scattered through
 our daily life & it is wonderful that
 this big guy, this 100 percent american
 should be the one to realize it. He
 has amalgamated ^{which there he has} and coordinated
 everything ^{created} plastic objects, then
 still smiling he puts his finger on
 a magic push button & quietly & gracefully
 everything ^{moves} turns... mobile sculpture
^{moves around}

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has been ~~was~~ oriented. This was some time ago. Is he going to give us ^{anything} ~~for nothing~~ else?

Calder's work is bound to stay popular: why not? With his reminder of an amusing story about another geometric ^{lord} master of ceremonies, Mondrian.

I had bought a luncheon adorned with geometric designs visibly inspired by ~~his~~ his paintings. It is I think a sign of creative authenticity to inspire ~~decorative art~~ a second hand ~~launch~~ a minor

decorative art. When I saw Mondrian ^{to him} I said "Mondrian did you know that you are very popular? He looked

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at me with surprise & I told him
the story of the lions. Well strangely
enough he didn't seem at all pleased.

But ~~now~~ ~~very~~ ~~sure~~ all the same I
am very sure that on the sly he went
to the shop where I had found the lions,
and everybody thought like I did.

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215 East 57th Street

New York 22, N. Y.

Langier 7

Calder the builder

If the hazards of life take you one day to Connecticut in the United States don't fail to visit Alexander Calder's house at Roxbury. It will delight you: It is situated on the slope of one of the hills in this region where all the hills resemble one another. Discreet & modest it is no different, when you look at it from ^{the} outside, ~~so~~ many of the houses built in this quiet countryside of meadows, hillocks & valleys, where ^{enlightened} privileged Americans ~~fleeing~~ to escape from the frantic pressure of New York, come ~~here~~ to seek the peace that is in nature & in the fields. ~~to meditate and~~ in search of that peace

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thus isolated
~~Solitary~~ ^{in better} to meditate & pursue their
 dreams ~~of~~ ^{as} painter, sculptor,
 architect or composer. Enter his
 house and you will receive the immediate
 hearty, picturesque jovial and fraternal
 greeting of this wonderful exuberant
 welcome

explosive engineer, artist, & magician.
 This wonderful guy Alexander Calder.
 It really is
 In reality it's the most curious house
 to be that exists in the United States

In this country of mass production
 & furniture made in series it is a
 realisation that individual and above
 all human. There is not one object,
 not a table, not a chair, not even a lamp
 or a kitchen gadget, not a vase that has not

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215 East 57th Street

New York 22, N. Y.

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been imagined by an artist in
 close with the object, and executed
 by the subtle and powerful hands
~~for~~ of the craftsman, expert in
 the handling of sheet iron, wood,
 iron or colour. and it is a } dream
 } delight

of colour, of outline, of material in
 this house that is at the same time
 authentically american (comprising as it
 does all the practical } ^{comforts} gadgets for daily life)
 and yet is so strange & ~~unusual~~ ^{so different} ~~to the~~ ^{from the}
 american way of living, because everything
 is the individual creation of craftsmanship
 by an engineer & artist.

Later on, ~~then~~ go outside, ~~with~~ take a few
 steps through the meadow & ~~go in~~ ^{enter} Calder's
 { workshop } studio where the mobiles that have made
 Calder famous throughout the world, are

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215 East 57th Street

New York 22, N. Y.

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designed and constructed:
made: } It has
there

been said that art is man plus
a saying

nature. Calder's mobile is man

plus technique, man plus the science
of the engineer, creating objects where

in a subtle balance, pillars, hanging
equilibrium, ~~articulation~~ suspended
objects, colored disks of sheet iron

articulated by their center of gravitation,
jointed

loving, ever changing, ever stable
harmonies in space. In this workshop

where Calder the builder welds the
anvil, the hammer, shears & sheet iron;

dozens and dozens of polychrome
mobiles drowse immobile in an

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215 East 57th Street

New York 22, N. Y.

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outburst of outline colors,
& balance, awaiting the breach
the puff of wind

that will revive them. But
as soon as Calder opens the door of
the studio all these steel objects
his workshop ~~begin to~~ ^{move} each ~~beginning~~ ^{to live} its own
Separate life, each element following
the orbit that ^{dictates} ~~prescribes~~ to ^{each} its own
law. The Connecticut air that has
penetrated into Calder's Workshop
has given ~~experiencing in a tremor~~
a life of ^{governing} harmony & equilibrium
to the forest of steel

On the Bank of the East River, a
proud building lifts up its lofty silhouette
to the New York sky. Silhouette of marble

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215 EAST 57 ST., N. Y. C. 22

PLAZA ~~Steel~~ ^{Steel} -

Its forty storeys are dedicated
to the establishment of a collaboration
among all nations never before has
man conceived such a universal
undertaking. This skyscraper,
monumental achievement of the
most advanced science and technique,
Headquarters of the Organization of
the United Nations. ~~Shelters~~ ^{Shelters} is
the ~~refuge~~ ^{shelter} ~~home~~ ^{protects} the efforts
of nations; ~~in the near future~~ ^{soon} of every
nation ~~in the world~~ ^{in the universe} to secure a future
of Peace for the World. At a time
when every government is trying
to solve the difficult problem they have
before them of choosing ^{an emblem} ~~to~~ ^{an emblem}
in keeping with its ~~grandeur~~ ^{grandeur} ~~magnitude~~ ^{magnitude}

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215 EAST 57 ST., N. Y. C. 22

PLAZA ~~Steel~~ ^{Steel}

Its forty storeys are dedicated
to the establishment of a collaboration
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undertaking. This skyscraper,
monumental achievement of the
most advanced science and technique,
Headquarters of the Organization of
the United Nations. ~~It is~~ ^{It is}
the ~~refuge~~ ^{shelter} ~~for~~ ^{protects} the efforts
of nations, ~~in the near future~~ ^{soon} of every
nation ~~in the world~~ ^{in the universe} to secure a future
of Peace for the World. At a time
when every government is trying
to solve the difficult problem they have
before them of choosing ^{an emblem} ~~to~~ ^{an emblem}
in keeping with its ~~grandeur~~ ^{grandeur}

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PLAZA 3-0916

for this "Conservatoire de la Paix"
~~I would~~ ^{what I} ~~my wish is~~ ^{my desire would}
 be that a mobile of Calder,
 designed and built ~~according to~~
^{on scale} ~~in the proportions~~ adapted to this
 audacious ~~monumental~~ architecture
 should ~~be~~ placed on the top of this
 building, ^{animated} ~~impelled~~ by the slightest
 gust of wind, sensitive to the
~~strongest~~ ^{lightest} pressure coming to it from
 every corner of the ~~earth~~ horizon
 transforming all the tumults
~~transmitted~~ ^{coming} from the Universe into
 a harmonious movement ^{in keeping with} ~~according~~
 to its own laws of science & reason

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This mobile of Calder's
maintaining and radiating
a perfect living balance, everlastingly
renewed and rebuilt around L.
would be a powerful symbol
in the sky of this great and
vibrant city, of what are, or
in any case what should be, what
one day will be, if the United
Nations are wise enough to
will that the world survive.

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PLAZA 3-0916

Happenot

These { shooting stars
 { meteors } dropped
 { fallen
from the skies : - -

On the confines where art & play
meet, in a space where the
indispensable & the indeterminate
are { bound together, Calder
 one

has { dispersed this fluid, dual
 { separated
universe, this unforseen that
oscillates { among the fixity of the
 { between
constellations. He has gathered up
 he has { picked up
stems & thread, a bit of broken glass
stalks & thread, a bit of broken glass
the { Patched^a fragment- of earthenware

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the chip of a brick, a crank pin;
 all these shooting stars that have
 fallen from the sky of human
 wear & tear on the waste land
 of abandonment. Or else he
^{out}~~cut~~ ~~this~~ has ~~carved~~ shaped this disk
 out of the hardest metal, thinning
 the sheet iron, expanding the
 cylinder, forcing this delicate
 indestructible flora with the
 bellows of his forge. Like a plant
 torn between ^{the} earth & light, the
 object, its weight distributed on
 the ^{entire} ~~whole~~ perfect balance of
 equilibrium of
 its articulations, is delivered up

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to the god of Hazard: If³
there comes, ah Valery! this
blissful surprise, a woman
{ who passes by; a half open door,
passing by ~ contours of the
and then the whole space ~~between~~
these dark { ^{algae} seaweeds ~~completely~~
changes infinitely; the void
lengthens as hairs together between
these gliding immobilities. and what
comes to life before our eyes as it
dissolves, is not the outline of a branch
or the design of a flight (of birds) but
{ engendered by the branch or the wing
produced
all the curvatures and metamorphoses
of absence.

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Fated to be everlastingly what
 they had ceased to be, realising
 themselves through their
 perpetual differences, the
 "Calderien" forms move in
 the^a maximum of possibilities
 and ^{needs} demands. These tremors, ^{impossible} ~~impossible~~
 to foresee, are governed by the
 gravitation of the ^{Universe} worlds
 any Canvas or Statue could
~~be~~ ^{changed} they slightly, but if the smallest
 of its leaves were ^{to} detach itself from
 the mobile, if one of its nervures were
 ever so slightly to lengthen or shorten

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and you would see it change into
 a pile of scrap iron. In this way.
 Calder once showed me an enormous
 dark ~~evigoking~~ ^{evigoking} contraction that
 each ^{puff of wind} breath of air sent whirling
 furiously around. If you touched
 a knot; hidden as if it were a set;
 ever so lightly with your finger
 it collapsed with a crashing
 noise like ^{the noise of} thunder in the wings
 (backstage)

For the first time from the
 new World a man brings us a
 world that is new. Calder of
 Connecticut, Calder of Paris

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Dear Calder who was close to
us in our ^{time} days of exile

His outlook went far beyond
drawing rooms and chanceries, and
I remember the evening when in
benefit of the Free French he
gave a performance of his famous
Circus in a humble hall in
dingy

Washington. Sitting on the floor
and bending over the tiny circus
he set up the masts & the benches,
the springboard and the tightropes
directed the parade & the whole
company was present, and the entire
menagerie, amazing creatures

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~~made of~~ in twisted wire; ~~stop~~ The
 trapeze artists swinging in the air
 the tightrope dancer glided forward,
 the circus rider was about to jump
 on her horse, the acrobat was readying
 himself for his somersault,
 hallucinating circus people from
 the most ^{poorest} poverty stricken outskirts
 of Paris, & all of them so miraculously
 human in this world of automata
 & robots, that more often than not
 they missed their stunts.

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CALDER THE BUILDER

If the hazards of life take you one day to Connecticut in the United States don't fail to visit Alexander Calder's house at Roxbury. It will delight you. It is situated on the slope of one of the hills in this region where all the hills resemble one another. Discreet and modest it is no different on the outside from many of the houses built in this quiet countryside of meadows, hillocks and valleys where enlightened Americans escaping from the frantic pressure of New York come ~~in~~ ~~seek~~ in search of that peace in nature and in the fields, and thus isolated to meditate and pursue their dreams whether painter, sculptor, architect or composer.

Enter his house and you will receive the immediate, hearty, picturesque, jovial and fraternal welcome of this exuberant, explosive engineer, artist and magician. This wonderful man Alexander Calder. It is really the most curious house in the United States. In ~~this~~ this country of mass production and furniture made in series it is a realisation that is individual and above all human. There is not an object, not a table, not a chair, not even a lamp or a kitchen gadget, not a vase that has not been imagined by an artist in love with the object, and executed by the subtle and powerful hands of the craftsman, expert in the handling of sheet-iron, wood, wire or color. And it is a delight of color, of outline, of material in this house that is at the same time authentically American (comprising as it does all the practical comforts for daily life) and yet is so strange and so different from the American way of living because everything is the individual creation of craftsmanship by an engineer and artist.

Later, go outside, take a few steps through the meadow and enter Calder's workshop where the mobiles that have made him famous throughout the world are devised and constructed. It has been said that ~~an~~ art is man plus nature. Calder's mobile is man plus technique, man plus the science of the engineer, creating objects where in a subtle balance hanging objects, colored discs of sheet iron articulated by their center of gravitation, living, ever changing,

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ever stabile harmonies in space, In this studio where Calder the builder weilds the anvil, the hammer, shears and sheetiron, dozens and dozens of polychrome mobiles drowse immobile in an outburst of silhouette, color, and balance awaiting the breath that will revive them. And as soon as Calder opens the door ~~of~~ these metal objects begin to move each living its own separate life, each element following the orbit that prescribes to each its own law. The Connecticut air that has penetrated into Calder's workshop has given a life of quivering harmony and equilibrium to this forest of steel.

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On the bank of the East River, a proud building lifts its lofty silhouette to the New York sky. Silhouette of marble, glass and steel. Its forty storys are dedicated to the establishment of a collaboration among all nations. Never before has man conceived such a universal undertaking. This skyscraper,, monumental achievement of the most advanced science and technique, headquarters of the Organization of the United Nations shelters the efforts of nations, soon of every nation, to secure a future of peace for the world. At a time when every government is trying to solve the difficult problem they have before them of choosing an emblem in keeping with its magnitude for this "Conservatoire de la Paix" my wish is that a mobile of Calder's, designed and built on a scale adapted to this audacious architecture, should be placed on the top of this building, animated by the slightest gust of wind, sinsitive to the slightest pressure coming to it from every corner of the horizon, transforming all the agitation transmitted from the Universe into a harmonious movement according to its own laws of science and reason. This mobile of Calder!s maintaining and radiating a perfect living balance, everlastingly renewed and rebuilt around it, would be a powerful symbol in the sky of this great and vibrant city, of what are, or in any case what should be, what one day will be, if the United Nations are wise enough to will that the world survive.

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Leger

CALDER

It is impossible to find a greater contrast than Calder the man who weighs two hundred pounds and his mobile, delicate, transparent creations. A sort of tree trunk in movement he stirs up a lot of talk, gets in the way of the wind - He's not born to go unseen! Smiling and curious he sways in the air as part of nature itself. Left to himself in an apartment he is a real danger to any fragile object. His place is rather outside in the air, the wind and the sun. You would not think it, but he has a sharp eye. Nothing escapes him. He sees everything. We have often roamed along the dead ends of certain New York streets looking for picturesque elements. There where the American disorder begins the brazen quality of the discarded objects, the rubbish, the scraps(that are often plastically valid) of garbage cans entwined with wire and blooming with green stuff. If you look up you can see on the top of the roofs geometric fantasies - thousands of metallic structures are silhouetted in the sky and play with the light. Calder has his eye on them also. I have already written somewhere that Calder is a realist. He uses all these elements scattered throughout our daily life and it is wonderful that this big man, this 100% American should be the one to realize it. He has amalgamated and coordinated everything. With them he has created plastic objects, then still smiling he puts his finger on a magic push button and quietly and gracefully everything moves! Mobile sculpture has been invented. This was some time ago. Is he going to give us anything else?

Calder's work is bound to stay popular. Why not? This reminds me of an amusing story about another geometric master, Mondrian. I had bought a linoleum adorned with designs visibly inspired by his paintings. (It is I think a sign of creative authenticity ~~of~~ to inspire a minor decorative art.) The next time I saw Mondrian I said to him, "Mondrian, did you know that you are very popular?" He looked at me with surprise and I told him the story of the linoleum. Well strangely enough he didn't seem at all pleased. But all the same I am very sure that on the sly he went to the shop where I had found the linoleum. And everybody else thought as I did.

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These Shooting Stars dropped from the Skies-----

157 On the confines where art and play meet, in a space where the indispensible and the indeterminate are one, Calder has separated this fluid dual universe, this unforsen that oscillates between the fixity of the constellations. He has gathered up stems and thread, a bit of broken glass, the fragment of earthenware, the chip of a brick, a crank pin; all these shooting stars that have fallen from the sky of human wear and tear on the wasteland of abandonment. Or else he has shaped this disk out of the hardest metal, thinning the sheet iron, expanding the cylinder, forcing this delicate indestructable flora with the bellows of his forge. Like a plant torn between the earth and light, the object, its weight distributed on the entire perfect balance of its articulations, is delivered up to the God of hazard.

113 If there comes, ah, Valery! this blissful surprise, a woman passing by, a half open door, and then the whole contour of the space between these lurk seaweeds changing infinitely. The void lengthens or draws together between these gliding immobilities and what comes to life before our eyes as it desolves is not the outline of a branch or the design of a flight (of birds), but produced by the branch or the wing all the curvatures and metamorphoses of absence. Fated to be everlastingly what they had ceased to be, realizing themselves through their perpetual differences, the "Calderien" forms move in a maximum of possibilities and demand these tremors, impossible to foresee, are governed by the gravitation of the universe.

103 Any canvas or statue could be changed slightly but if the smallest of its leaves were to detach itself from the mobile, if one of its nervures were ever so slightly to lengthen or to shorten, you would see it change into a pile of scrapiron. In this way, Calder once showed me an enormous dark evil looking contraption that each breath of air sent whirling furiously around. If you touched a knot, hidden as if it were a sex, every so lightly with your finger it collapsed with a crashing noise like the noise of thunder in the wings.

180 For the first time from the New World a man brings us a world that is now. Calder of Connecticut, Calder of Paris, Dear Calder who was close to us in our days of exile---his outlook went far beyond drawing rooms and chanceries and I remember the evening when in benifit of ~~the~~ the Free French, he gave a performance of his famous circus in a humble hall in Washington. Sitting on the floor and bending over the tiny circus, he set up the masts and the benches, the springboard and the tightropes, directed the parade and the whole company present and the entire menagerie---amazing creatures made of twisted wire. The trapeze artists swung in the air, the tightrope dancer glided forward, the circus rider was about to jump on her horse, the acrobat was readying himself for his somersault; halucinating circus people from the most poverty stricken outskirts of Paris---all of them so miraculously human in this world of automations and robots that more often than not they missed their stunts.

Henri Hoppenot