

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART

SAN JOSE MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS
CALDER: AT HOME, AMONG FRIENDS OPENING SEPTEMBER 6, 2024



For Immediate Release

San José, CA (July 9, 2024)— The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is proud to present *Calder: at home, among friends*, a long-term installation and exhibition of 28 works by Alexander Calder (1898– 1976). The exhibition will highlight the intimate side of the innovative and revered artist, featuring works and small objects that filled his home and were shared with close friends and relatives. The exhibition is on view from September 6, 2024, through August 3, 2025.

“Calder’s rigorous and dynamic inventiveness resonates with a Silicon Valley ethos, well before one existed,” said Lauren Schell Dickens, chief curator. “*Calder: at home, among friends* provides a glimpse into the personal side of an artist’s life. We hope visitors will be inspired by the dynamic spirit of a thoughtful and prolific artist.”

Primarily drawn from SJMA’s collection, *Calder: at home, among friends* will highlight the artist’s mobiles, works on paper, and a selection of recent gifts of handcrafted jewelry, personal adornments, and household objects from the collections of Megan L. Hayes and Reed Zars and the Lipman Family Foundation. A number of the recent gifts carry connections to the city of San José, such as jewelry that was originally worn by Janet Gray Hayes, the artist’s niece-in-law, during her term as San José’s mayor. The exhibition will also include generous loans from the collection of the Calder Foundation, New York.

“We are incredibly thankful for the generosity of the Hayes family and the Lipman Family Foundation for their gifts to SJMA and to the Calder Foundation for their partnership on this exhibition,” said S. Sayre Batton, Oshman Executive Director. “Alexander Calder is linked deeply to the Museum’s history. We hosted an exhibition of his painting and sculpture in 1971, soon after the Museum opened, and have held several exhibitions of his work since. SJMA is honored to present these

intimate and storied objects and introduce Calder to a new generation of Bay Area audiences. Featured works from SJMA's permanent collection include *Big Red* (1957), a hanging mobile originally given to Calder's sister Margaret Calder Hayes as she recovered from an operation. Small objects to be shown include Three buttons (ca. 1950), *Wire Horse* (1926), Spiral ring (ca. 1938), Neckpiece (1959), Baby rattle with bells (1920), as well as mini-mobile earrings, belt buckles, and brooches.

Calder: at home, among friends joins a history of solo exhibitions and retrospectives of Calder at SJMA which includes *Sculpture and Paintings by Alexander Calder* (1971), *Calder's Universe* (1978), *Flying Colors: The Innovation and Artistry of Alexander Calder* (1997), and *Alexander Calder: Color in Motion* (2009). The exhibition nods to the 1989 exhibition *Calder Intime* at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

Calder lived in the Bay Area during his childhood, moving to San Francisco in 1912 and then Berkeley in 1914 with his parents and sister. During that time, Calder attended high school at Lowell High School, San Francisco. The artist retained connections to the Bay Area through his sister Margaret "Peggy" Calder Hayes, who settled in Berkeley after attending University of California, Berkeley, and his nephew Dr. Kenneth Hayes, who moved with his young family to San José in 1958.

ALEXANDER CALDER

Alexander Calder (1898–1976) utilized his innovative genius to profoundly change the course of modern art. Born in a family of celebrated, though more classically trained artists, he began by developing a new method of sculpting: by bending and twisting wire, he essentially "drew" three-dimensional figures in space. He is renowned for the invention of the mobile, whose suspended, abstract elements move and balance in changing harmony. Coined by Marcel Duchamp in 1931, the word mobile refers to both "motion" and "motive" in French. Many of the earliest mobiles moved by motors, although these mechanics were virtually abandoned as Calder developed mobiles that responded to air currents, light, humidity, and human interaction. He also created stationary abstract works that Jean Arp dubbed stables.

From the 1950s onward, Calder turned his attention to international commissions and increasingly devoted himself to making outdoor sculpture on a grand scale from bolted steel plate. Some of these major commissions include: *.125*, for the New York Port Authority in John F. Kennedy Airport (1957); *Spirale*, for UNESCO in Paris (1958); *Teodelapio*, for the city of Spoleto, Italy (1962); *Trois disques*, for the Expo in Montreal (1967); *El Sol Rojo*, for the Olympic Games in Mexico City (1968); *La Grande vitesse*, which was the first public art work to be funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), for the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan (1969); and *Flamingo*, for the General Services Administration in Chicago (1973).

Major retrospectives of Calder's work during his lifetime were held at the George Walter Vincent Smith Gallery, Springfield, Massachusetts (1938); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (1943–44); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (1964–65); The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (1964); Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris (1965); Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence, France (1969); and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1976–77). Calder died in New York in 1976 at the age of seventy-eight.

SUPPORT

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The San José Museum of Art (SJMA) is a modern and contemporary art museum dedicated to inclusivity, new thinking, and visionary ideas. Founded in 1969 by artists and community leaders, its dynamic exhibitions, collection, and programs resonate with defining characteristics of San José and the Silicon Valley—from its rich diversity to its hallmark innovative ethos. The Museum offers lifelong learning for school children and their educators, multigenerational families, creative adults, university students and faculty, and community groups. SJMA is committed to being a borderless museum, essential to creative life throughout the diverse communities of San José and beyond.

SJMA is located at 110 South Market Street in downtown San José, California. The Museum is open Thursday 4–9pm; Friday 11am–9pm; Saturday–Sunday 11am–6pm. Admission is \$20 for adults, \$15 for seniors, and free to members, college students, youth and children ages 17 and under, and school teachers (with valid ID). Admission is free from 6–9pm on the first Friday of every month. For up-to-date information, call 408.271.6840 or visit SanJoseMuseumofArt.org.

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Press Images

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Image Credit

Alexander Calder. Baby rattle with bells, c. 1921. Brass wire and bells, 9 ¼ x 4 ½ x ½ inches. Collection of San José Museum of Art. Gift of Megan L. Hayes and Reed Zars in Memory of Margaret Calder Hayes and Kenneth and Janet Gray Hayes, 2022.16.06. © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo by Johnna Arnold, Impart Photograph.