

# Phoenix Art Museum

News Release

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## Phoenix Art Museum presents rarely- and never-before-seen lithographs by Alexander Calder *Alexander Calder: An Outburst of Color draws on Museum collection to exhibit rare prints*

**PHOENIX (August 15, 2017)** – Beginning on September 9, Phoenix Art Museum will present a selection of rare prints by celebrated American artist Alexander Calder (1898-1976). *Alexander Calder: An Outburst of Color* will feature approximately 20 lithographs from the Museum’s permanent collection, many of which have never been exhibited to the general public. Although the artist is widely recognized for his mobiles (a term coined by Marcel Duchamp), *An Outburst of Color* is the second exhibition at Phoenix Art Museum dedicated exclusively to the artist’s prints. Largely produced during the 1960s and 1970s, the featured lithographs examine the ways in which Calder adapted his lifelong exploration of movement, space, and color to a two-dimensional medium in the later years of his career. The exhibition will be on view through April 1, 2018.

“Phoenix Art Museum is excited to draw on our collection to present this rarely-seen side of Alexander Calder,” said Amada Cruz, the Sybil Harrington Director and CEO of Phoenix Art Museum. “It is a privilege for the Museum to be the steward of these remarkable works, and we look forward to sharing these treasures with our community.”

*An Outburst of Color* reveals the artist’s exploration of the dynamic possibilities of movement and space, vibrant colors, and natural motifs, through many prints. For example, *Red and Black* (1959) explicitly depicts a stabile (the name for Calder’s static sculptures, coined by artist Jean Arp to distinguish them from his mobiles). Another work, a composition of spontaneous moments entitled *Flies in the Spider Web* (1974), is an artist’s proof. *Elephants* (1976) invokes Calder’s lifelong interest in the energetic possibilities of his subjects, including animals and the circus. Perhaps most representative of the exhibition’s title, *Nids d’araignées* (c. 1975) displays how the artist continued to emphasize elements of motion and balance in his two-dimensional works, creating a lively sense of tension that ultimately erupts into unexpected bursts of color.

“As most of these works were created in the last two decades of Calder’s life, they serve as a fascinating window into the artist’s translation of three-dimensional structures to a two-dimensional medium,” said Rachel Zebro, curatorial associate of modern and contemporary art and curator of the exhibition. “The boldness of shape and color, as well as the dynamic, lively composition, make these lithographs as engaging for lifelong Calder admirers as for those yet unacquainted with his work. We are fortunate to be able to count these insightful works among our own collection, as they broaden our knowledge of the scope of Calder’s career.”

*Alexander Calder: An Outburst of Color* will be on view through April 1, 2018. The lithographs on view will include those mentioned above as well as images from two portfolios, one of which was commissioned by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and created by Calder in 1973. The Museum also counts several of Calder’s stables in its collection, including *Constellation with Orange Anvil* (1960) and *Moon and the Oar* (1974), both of which are currently on view in Rineberg Gallery.

### About the Exhibition

*Alexander Calder: An Outburst of Color* will be on view from September 9, 2017 through April 1, 2018 in the Orientation Gallery. This exhibition is organized by Phoenix Art Museum. It is made possible through the generosity of donors to the Museum’s annual fund. For more details about the exhibition, please visit [bit.ly/CalderColor](http://bit.ly/CalderColor).

Admission is free for Museum Members; veterans, active-duty, and retired military; Maricopa Community College students, staff, and faculty (with ID); and youth aged 5 and under. Entrance to the exhibition is included in general admission for the general public. During voluntary-donation, free-access times, the exhibition is offered free to the general public. Free-access times include Wednesdays from 3 – 9 pm, the first Fridays of every month from 6 – 10 pm, and the second weekend of each month (Saturday from 10am – 5pm and Sunday

from Noon – 5pm). For a full breakdown of general admission prices and hours, see [bit.ly/VisitPhxArt](https://bit.ly/VisitPhxArt).

To request interviews and high-resolution photography, contact Phoenix Art Museum's Marketing and Communications Office, at 602.257.2105 or email [margaree.bigler@phxart.org](mailto:margaree.bigler@phxart.org).

#### **About Phoenix Art Museum**

Phoenix Art Museum has provided access to visual arts and educational programs in Arizona for more than 50 years and is the largest art museum in the Southwestern United States. Critically acclaimed national and international exhibitions are shown alongside the Museum's permanent collection of more than 18,000 works of American, Asian, European, Latin American, Western American, modern and contemporary art, and fashion design. The Museum also presents festivals, a comprehensive film program, live performances and educational programs designed to enlighten, entertain and stimulate visitors of all ages. Visitors also enjoy vibrant photography exhibitions through the Museum's landmark partnership with the Center for Creative Photography, University of Arizona. To learn more about Phoenix Art Museum, visit [phxart.org](https://phxart.org), or call the 24-hour recorded information line at 602.257.1222.

#### **About Alexander Calder**

Alexander Calder (b. 1898, Lawnton, Pennsylvania – d. 1976, New York City), whose illustrious career spanned much of the twentieth century, is the most acclaimed and influential sculptor of our time. Born in a family of celebrated, though more classically trained artists, Calder utilized his innovative genius to profoundly change the course of modern art. In the 1920s, 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. From the 1950s onward, Calder devoted himself to making outdoor sculpture on a grand scale from bolted steel plate. Today, these stately titans grace public plazas in cities throughout the world.

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