

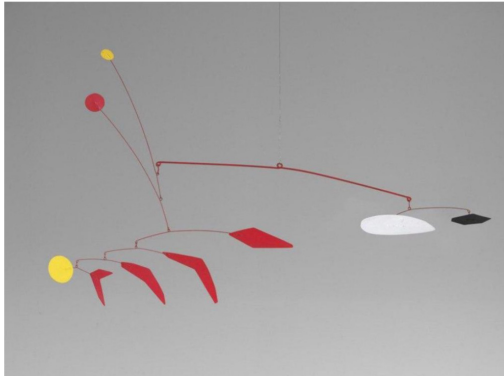


FINE ART
L.L.C.

EDWARD TYLER NAHEM

Alexander Calder (1898 – 1976)

Boomerangs and Targets, 1973



Alexander Calder's *Boomerangs and Targets* is among the artist's most striking mobiles. Colorful forms, suspended in space, jostle for attention as they constantly move in an ever-changing arrangement. In contrast to his large-scale outdoor 'stables,' the kinetic sculptures underscore the relationship between Calder's works and their immediate environment. Hanging from a series of metal 'arms,' each individual element is in turn suspended by a delicate metal wire allowing each to move independently from its neighbor. Executed in

1973, towards the end of Calder's long and distinguished career, the sculpture is the result of almost half a century of innovation in which the artist sought to mobilize the sculptural medium.

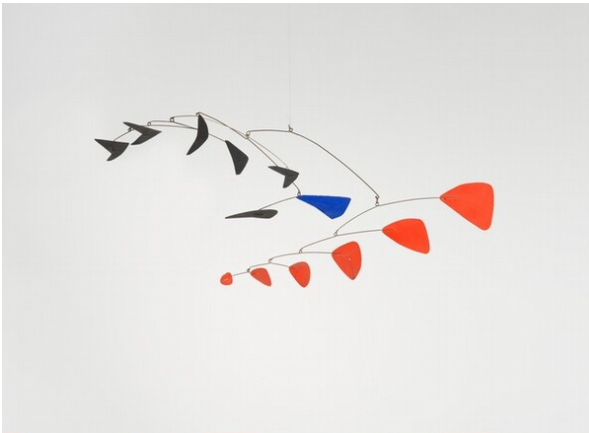
Grouped into three bands of color, an ensemble of individual elements are arranged into an elegant, dynamic composition. Beginning at the top, and supported by a steep arc of red metal wire, a delicate yellow circle crowns the composition. Next, as the eye descends, a white oval and black six-sided element anchor the middle of the mobile, before arriving at a row of six asymmetrical shapes that act as the foundation. Each element is carefully considered, both for its aesthetic role in the composition and from an 'engineering' standpoint to ensure that the entire work hangs, balanced and effortless, as an organic whole.

Boomerangs and Targets is a superb example of Calder's unique ability to produce exquisitely balanced works, which retain their harmony when moved by the merest breath of wind. His interest in movement can be traced back to Calder's childhood and his lively imagination. Among his first sculptures, made at age eleven, was a duck made of brass sheet metal that rocked back and forth when tapped. He later professed that the grandeur and immensity of nature's dynamics moved him. "The first impression I had was the cosmos, the planetary system. My mother used to say to me, 'But you don't know anything about the stars.' I'd say, 'No, I don't, but you can have an idea what they're like without knowing all about them and shaking hands with them.'" (A. Calder quoted in J. Lipman, *Calder's Universe*, London, 1977, p. 17).

In *Boomerangs and Targets*' form float by in a slow, graceful dance that echoes the movements of the heavens, bringing them to life on the ceiling, and in turn, underneath the wider canopy of the cosmos. Calder emphasized this relationship: "Since the beginning of my work in abstract art, and even though it was not obvious at that time, I felt that there was no better model *for me* to work

from than the Universe... Spheres of different sizes, densities, colors, and volumes, floating in space, surrounded by vivid clouds and tides, currents of air, viscosities and fragrances—in their utmost variety and disparity” (A. Calder, quoted in C. Giménez & A.S.C. Rower (ed.), *Calder: Gravity and Grace*, London, 2004, p. 52).

Similar works to *Boomerangs and Targets* can be found in museums around the world including *Model for East Building Mobile*, 1972, in the collection of The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. and *Lone Yellow*, 1961 in the collection of The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.



Alexander Calder, *Model for East Building Mobile*, 1972, The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Alexander Calder, *Lone Yellow*, 1961, The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art