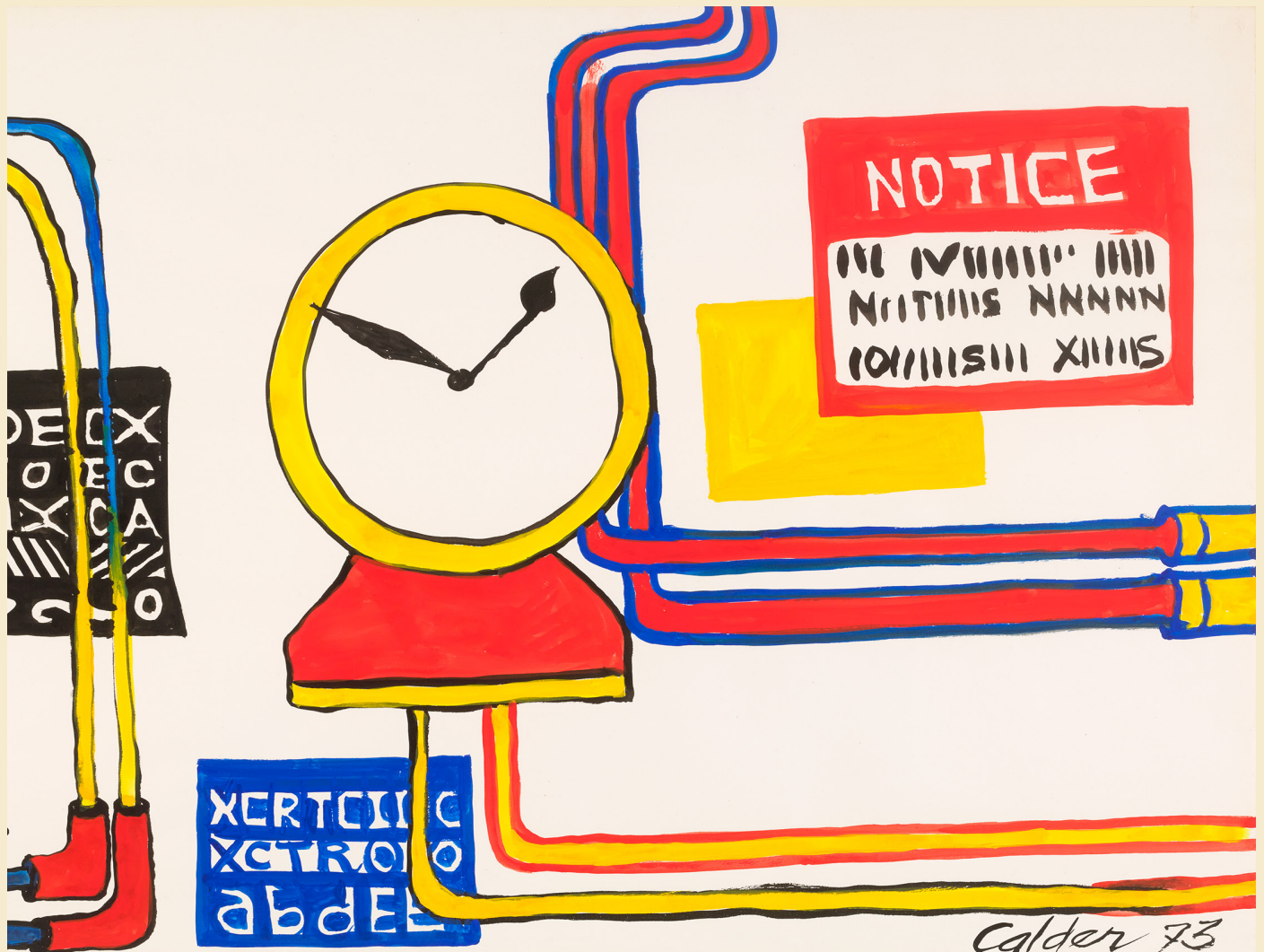


Alexander Calder



1898-1976 | AMERICAN

Plumbings II

M.S. Rau
FINE ART • ANTIQUES • JEWELS

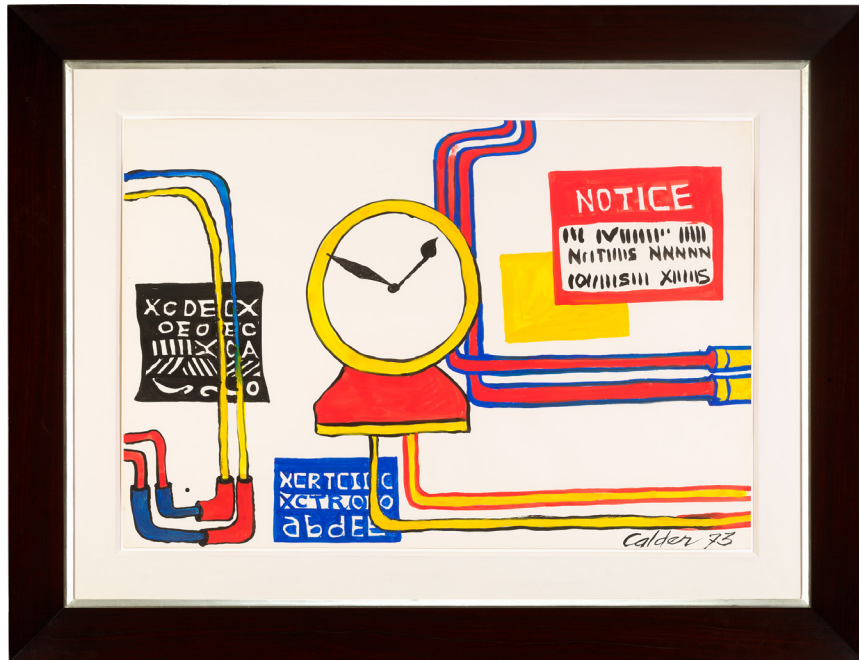
“

The simplest things
in life are often the
most beautiful.

- Alexander Calder

”





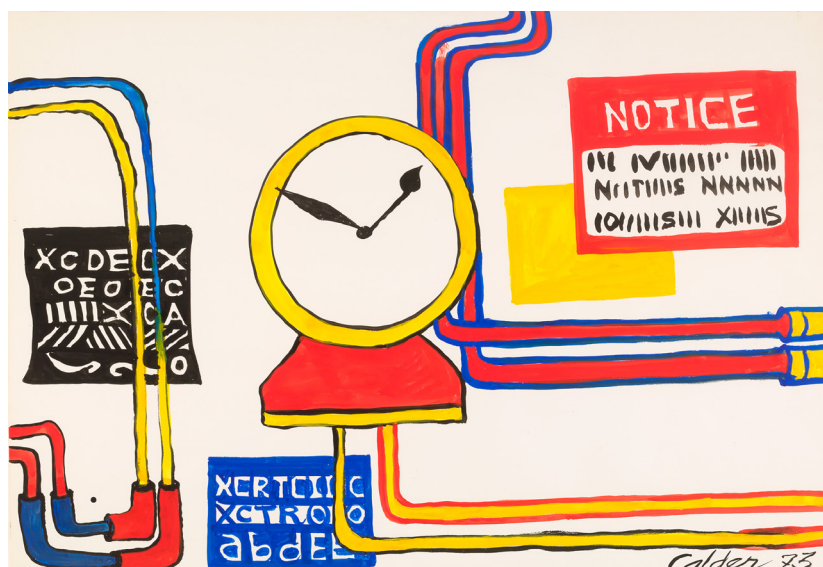
It is rare to find a complete large-scale painting by the great Alexander Calder. He was one of the 20th century's most important visionaries, revolutionizing sculpture at a monumental scale. This painting, *Plumbings II*, reveals his genius in two dimensions, showing the boundless nature of his creativity. Exceptionally large and fully realized, it marks Calder's return to the industrial materials that first ignited his artistic vision.

Calder was renowned for his ability to transform the ordinary into the extraordinary, often at an awe-inspiring scale. In the final years of his life, he remained devoted to the grand sculptures and mobiles that defined his career. During that time, he created very few paintings, and only a rare handful feature the whimsical plumbing motif seen here. *Plumbings II* transforms pipes, clocks and signs into a colorful symphony of form and motion. The bold primary colors and fluid lines evoke the dynamic energy found in his iconic kinetic sculptures while offering a more intimate glimpse into Calder's playful and inventive spirit.

Calder's journey as an artist began with a foundation in mechanical engineering, a discipline that profoundly influenced his artistic perspective as well as the subject of this painting. After visiting the great Piet Mondrian's Paris studio in 1930, Calder shifted his focus to abstraction, leading to his groundbreaking invention of the mobile. These ingenious works redefined the laws of sculpture, introducing transformative elements of motion, volume and space. *Plumbings II* brings these very ideas into two dimensions, pulsing with the same vitality and ambiguity that animates Calder's mobiles.

One of the most celebrated and influential modern artists in history, Alexander Calder has been featured in more than 100 exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art alone. His sculptures, mobiles and paintings can be found in many other prestigious institutions, including the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Guggenheim and the Centre Pompidou. His monumental sculptures have been some of the most iconic public commissions of the 20th century, including *Flamingo* in Chicago's Federal Center Plaza and *El Sol Rojo*, created for the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City.





Alexander Calder

1898-1976 | American

Plumbings II, 1973

Signed and dated "Calder 73" (lower right)
Gouache and ink on paper

Paper: 29 ³/₄" high x 43 ¹/₂" wide | 75.57 x 110.49 cm
Frame: 45" high x 58 ³/₄" wide x 2 ¹/₈" deep | 114.30 x 149.23 x 5.40 cm

This work is registered in the archives of the Calder Foundation, New York, under application #A12274

PROVENANCE

Galerie Maeght, Paris

Private collection, acquired from the above in 1977

M.S. Rau, New Orleans



AUCTION COMPARABLES



Alexander Calder
Mostly Spirals
gouache and ink on paper
Height 78.7 x Width 57.2 cm.
Height 30.984 x Width 22.52 in.
1944

16 November 2017 *about 7 years ago*
Christie's New York
Post-War & Contemporary Art Morning Session – [Lot 00680]
est. 40,000 - 60,000 USD **438,500 USD** ⓘ
↑ 631% est



Alexander Calder
Le Buveur d'Eau
ink on paper
Height 109.2 x Width 74.3 cm.
Height 42.992 x Width 29.252 in.
1967

13 May 2021 *over 3 years ago*
Sotheby's New York
Contemporary Art Day Auction – [Lot 00203]
est. 50,000 - 70,000 USD **378,000 USD** ⓘ
↑ 440% est



Alexander Calder
Les Palmiers
ink and gouache on paper
Height 74.4 x Width 109.5 cm.
Height 29.291 x Width 43.11 in.
1974

22 November 2024 *about 2 months ago*
Christie's New York
Post-War and Contemporary Art Day Sale – [Lot 00717]
est. 40,000 - 60,000 USD **277,200 USD** ⓘ
↑ 362% est



Alexander Calder
Untitled
ink and watercolor on paper
Height 78 x Width 58 cm.
Height 30.709 x Width 22.835 in.
1933

08 March 2017 *almost 8 years ago*
Christie's London
Post War & Contemporary Art Day Auction – [Lot 00163]
est. 30,000 - 50,000 GBP **221,000 GBP** ⓘ
est. 36,452 - 60,753 USD **268,529 USD** ⓘ
↑ 342% est



Alexander Calder
Ducks and Seals
gouache
Height 75 x Width 109.5 cm.
Height 29.528 x Width 43.11 in.
1971

09 December 2015 *about 9 years ago*
Christie's Paris
Art Contemporain vente du jour – [Lot 00116]
est. 40,000 - 60,000 EUR **217,500 EUR** ⓘ
est. 43,931 - 65,897 USD **238,879 USD** ⓘ
↑ 263% est



AUCTION COMPARABLES



Alexander Calder

UNTITLED

gouache and ink on paper

Height 74.9 x Width 109.2 cm.

Height 29.488 x Width 42.992 in.

1973

17 November 2017 *about 7 years ago*

Sotheby's New York

Contemporary Art Day Auction – [Lot 00273]

est. 40,000 - 60,000 USD

212,500 USD ©

↑ 254% est



Alexander Calder

GIANT SUNFLOWER

gouache and ink on paper

Height 75.6 x Width 109.2 cm.

Height 29.764 x Width 42.992 in.

1970

02 March 2018 *almost 7 years ago*

Sotheby's New York

Contemporary Curated – [Lot 00090]

est. 40,000 - 60,000 USD

200,000 USD ©

↑ 233% est

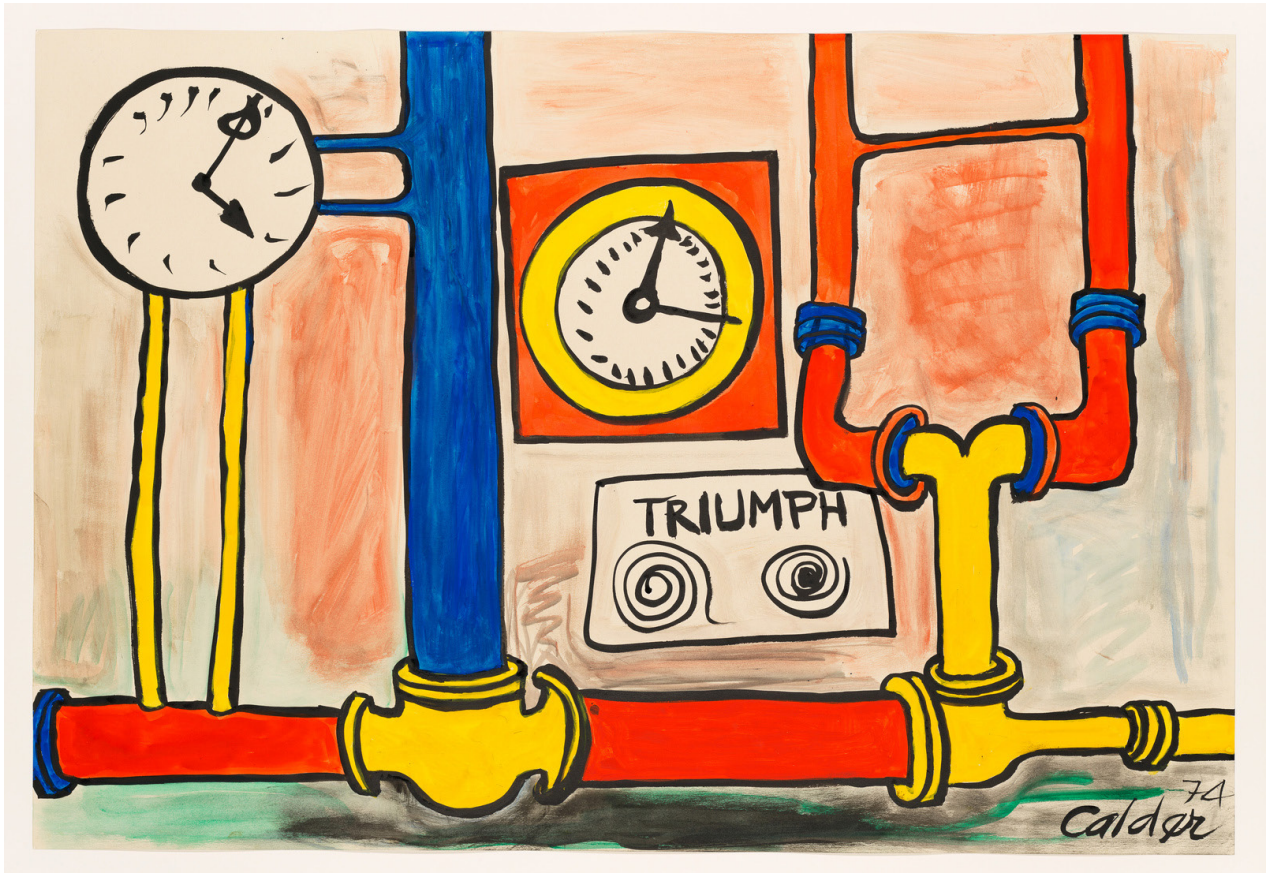


Alexander Calder | *Triumph*

1974

Medium: Opaque watercolor and brush and ink on paper

Dimensions: 29^{1/2} x 43^{1/8} inches | 74.9 x 109.5 cm



Whitney Museum of American Art
New York, NY, United States



Alexander Calder | *Menagerie*

1975

Medium: Opaque watercolor and brush and ink on paper

Dimensions: 29^{1/2} x 43^{1/4} inches | 74.9 x 109.9 cm



Whitney Museum of American Art
New York, NY, United States



Alexander Calder | *Fish at Sunrise*

1974

Medium: Opaque paint on paper

Dimensions: 29^{1/2} x 43^{3/8} inches | 75 x 110 cm



**HIRSHHORN
MUSEUM**
© Smithsonian

Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden
Washington, D.C., United States



Alexander Calder | *Untitled*

1971

Medium: Gouache on paper

Dimensions: 29^{3/8} x 43^{3/8} inches | 74.6 x 110.1 cm



GUGGENHEIM

Guggenheim Museum
New York, NY, United States



M.S.  Rau
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