

In May 2024, Azabudai Hills Gallery will open the first solo exhibition of Alexander Calder's work in Tokyo in nearly 35 years

—approximately 100 works pieces from the Calder Foundation, including the artist's signature mobiles, will be on display

Azabudai Hills Gallery (Azabudai Hills Garden Plaza A MBF) will host *Calder: Un effet du japonais*—the artist's first solo exhibition in Tokyo in nearly 35 years—from Thursday, May 30, 2024 to Friday, September 6, 2024.

Calder: Un effet du japonais will explore the enduring resonance of the American modernist's art with Japanese traditions and aesthetics. Curated by Alexander S. C. Rower, President of the Calder Foundation, New York, and organized in collaboration with Pace Gallery, the exhibition will comprise approximately 100 works from the collection of the Calder Foundation that span the 1930s to the 1970s, ranging from the artist's signature mobiles, stabiles, and standing mobiles to his oil paintings and works on paper.

While Calder never traveled to Japan himself, he was embraced by many of the country's artists and poets during his lifetime. Today, more than two dozen of his works can be found in 18 museums across Japan. In the spirit of Calder's collaborations with the greatest architects of his time, New York-based Stephanie Goto—longtime Calder Foundation collaborator—has created a bespoke exhibition design rooted in the geometry of a 3:4:5 triangle that features elegant and modern references to Japanese architecture and materials.

Calder: Un effet du japonais is organized as part of a new curatorial partnership between Azabudai Hills Gallery and Pace Gallery, which will open a permanent space in July 2024 in Tokyo's Azabudai Hills. Pace has worked closely with the Calder Estate since 1984 and has presented numerous exhibitions of Calder's work at its galleries around the world—including Hong Kong and Seoul. Pace Publishing will release a new catalogue in English and Japanese to accompany the upcoming show in Tokyo.



Un effet du japonais, 1941
Sheet metal, wire, rod, and paint
203.2 x 203.2 x 121.9 cm.

Artist profile



Calder with Red Disc and Gong (1940) and Untitled (c. 1940) in his Roxbury studio, 1944. Photograph by Eric Schaal © Life Magazine

Alexander Calder

Calder (b. 1898, Lawnton, Pennsylvania; d. 1976, New York City) is widely regarded as one of the most important artists of the 20th century. Born into a family of celebrated, though more classically trained artists, he began his artistic practice by developing a new method of sculpting: by bending and twisting wire, he essentially “drew” three-dimensional figures in space. Calder is best known for his invention of the “mobile,” in which suspended, abstract elements move and balance in changing harmony. Coined by Marcel Duchamp in 1931, the term “mobile” refers to “motion” and “motive” in French. Some of the earliest mobiles moved by motors, although these mechanics were virtually abandoned as Calder developed objects that responded to air currents, light, humidity, and human interaction. Using movement as a key element in his hanging mobiles, he was among the first practitioners of kinetic art making. He also created stationary abstract works that fellow artist Jean Arp dubbed “stabiles.”

While he is most renowned for his mobiles, which transformed the modern conception of sculpture, Calder also worked across painting, drawing, printing, and jewelry making. From the 1950s onward, he turned his attention to international commissions and increasingly devoted himself to making outdoor sculpture on a grand scale from bolted steel plates—today, these monumental works can be found in public spaces around the world.

In relation to *Calder: Un effet du japonais*

See below quotes from Alexander S. C. Rower, President of the Calder Foundation and Calder's grandson, and Marc Glimcher, CEO of Pace Gallery, in conjunction with the opening of this exhibition.

Alexander S. C. Rower says:

"There's a subtlety and grace in my grandfather's work that resonates with Japanese traditions—and a deep regard for all things sublime and ephemeral. *Calder: Un effet du japonais* will celebrate the ways in which his mobiles, stabiles, and standing mobiles create a space for contemplation and acts of self-creation. The curatorial process was an intuitive one, guided by Calder's lifelong admiration for Japanese aesthetics and culture—and the ways in which he worked with the freedom of disparity, asymmetry, and a kind of approximation."

Marc Glimcher says:

"Alexander Calder is one of the most important figures in our gallery's history and in the history of Modernism itself. Pace's first exhibition dedicated to Calder's work was presented in New York in 1985, and we're so grateful to have maintained a strong relationship with the Calder Foundation over the past 40 years. *Calder: Un effet du japonais* will be a historic exhibition in its own right, and it will also kick off our special partnership with Azabudai Hills Gallery. We look forward to many future curatorial collaborations that bring our artists' work to new audiences in Tokyo, where we're thrilled to open our first permanent gallery this summer."

About Pace Gallery

Pace is an international leading art gallery, home to the estates of today's most influential contemporary artists and leading writers of the 20th and 21st centuries. Since our establishment in 1960, we have been active in a wide range of areas, with offices in seven cities around the world, including our home base in New York, as well as in Asia such as Tokyo, Hong Kong, and Seoul. Located in Azabudai Hills, our first base in Japan, the gallery will introduce artists active around the world to the Japanese public through unique and art-historical exhibitions.



Image of Pace Tokyo © DBOX for Mori Building Co., Ltd - Azabudai Hills

Highlights



Black Beast, 1940
Sheet metal, bolts, and paint
261.6 × 414 × 199.4 cm.
Photograph by Ken Adlard
© Calder Foundation, New York.

***Black Beast* (1940)**

Calder created his iconic large-scale stabile *Black Beast* (1940) to barely fit inside Pierre Matisse's gallery in Midtown Manhattan, where he had a solo exhibition the same year that he made the sculpture. Nearly 14-foot wide and nine-foot tall, the work is a precursor for the artist's monumental outdoor sculptures of the 1960s and 1970s that grace city plazas around the world.



Un effet du japonais, 1941
Sheet metal, wire, rod, and paint
203.2 × 203.2 × 121.9 cm.

***Un effet du japonais* (1941)**

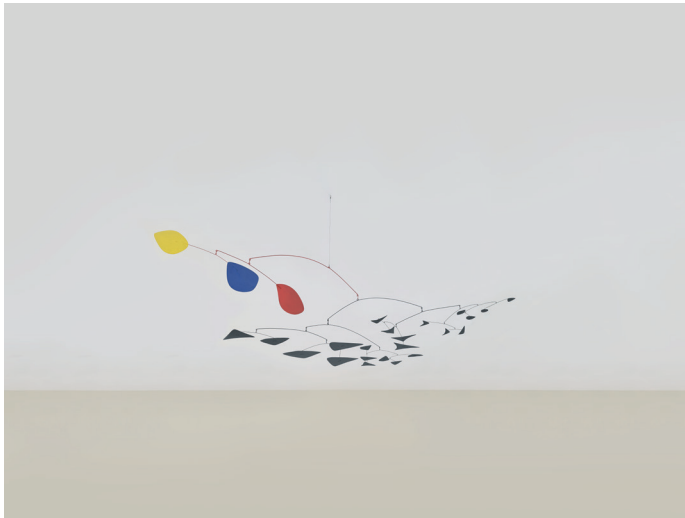
This exhibition takes its name from the standing mobile *Un effet du japonais* (1941). While there is no known record of Calder discussing the title of this sculpture, his general practice was to title works after their creation as a means of identification rather than to instill any specific meaning. This sculpture exudes a certain Japanese sensation or sensibility.



Seven Black, Red and Blue, 1947
Oil on canvas
122.2 × 153 cm.

***Seven Black, Red and Blue* (1947)**

The vibrant, large-scale oil painting, titled *Seven Black, Red and Blue* (1947), made its debut in a survey of contemporary art at the Nihonbashi Takashimaya Department Store in Tokyo in 1956 alongside *My Shop* (1955), a painting of Calder's studio interior in Roxbury, Connecticut. Both works will be on view in this exhibition.



Untitled, 1956
Sheet metal, wire, and paint
88.9 × 304.8 × 162.6 cm.
Photograph by Tom Powel Imaging
© Calder Foundation, New York.

Untitled (1956)

The polychrome hanging mobile *Untitled* (1956) hung for many years in the dining room of François Premier, the 17th century house built adjoining a cliff where the Calders lived in the Loire Valley. “To me the most important thing in composition is disparity,” the artist wrote in 1943. “Thus black and white are the strong colors, with a spot of red to mark the other corner of a triangle which is by no means equilateral, isosceles, or right. To vary this still further use yellow, then, later, blue. Anything suggestive of symmetry is decidedly undesirable, except possibly where an approximate symmetry is used in a detail to enhance the inequality with the general scheme.”



The Pagoda, 1963
Sheet metal, bolts, and paint
312.4 × 200.1 × 159.4 cm.

***The Pagoda* (1963)**

The large-scale stabile *The Pagoda* (1963) similarly resonates with Japanese aesthetic vocabularies. While its title shouldn't be used as a means of interpretation, Calder's abstract composition of stacked triangular forms recalls the tiered towers found in Japan.

All works by Alexander Calder © 2024 Calder Foundation, New York / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York
All photos courtesy of Calder Foundation, New York / Art Resource, New York

Exhibition Overview

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| Exhibition Title: | <i>Calder: Un effet du japonais</i> |
| Organizer: | Azabudai Hills Gallery in collaboration with Pace Gallery |
| Curated by: | Alexander S. C. Rower (President of the Calder Foundation) |
| Exhibition Period: | Thursday, May 30, 2024 - Friday, September 6, 2024. |
| Closed Day: | To be determined. As soon as a decision is made, it will be announced on the exhibition website. |
| Venue: | Azabudai Hills Gallery (Azabudai Hills Garden Plaza A MBF, 5-8-1 Toranomon, Minato-ku, Tokyo) |
| Opening Hours: | As soon as a decision is made, it will be announced on the exhibition website. |
| Admission Fee: | As soon as a decision is made, it will be announced on the exhibition website. |
| Website: | Scheduled to open to the public in mid April 2024 |
| Preview: | Scheduled for Thursday, May 29, 2024 (Press and invited guests only. We will inform you about the preview separately) |
| Tickets Sale period: | Scheduled to open to the public in mid April 2024 |
| Inquiries: | azabudaihillsgallery@mori.co.jp |

Detailed information about the event will be provided in the next press release scheduled for April.

Links

Azabudai Hills Gallery social media accounts

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/azabudaihillsgallery/>
TikTok https://www.tiktok.com/@az_gallery

Calder Foundation social media accounts

Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/calderfoundation/>
Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/calderfoundation/>
X (formerly Twitter) <https://twitter.com/calderfdn/>

Press Inquiries

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