

# GAGOSIAN

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## CALDER

To mark the opening of Gagosian's new gallery at rue de Castiglione in Paris, Alexander Calder's monumental sculpture *Flying Dragon* (1975) will be installed in Place Vendôme as part of FIAC Hors les Murs. The new gallery, which is in the 1st arrondissement, steps away from Place Vendôme, will open with an exhibition dedicated to the history and importance of *Flying Dragon*. Selected works by Calder will be presented at Gagosian's gallery at rue de Ponthieu, in the 8th arrondissement, and a new steel sculpture by Richard Serra, *Transmitter* (2020), is on view at Gagosian Le Bourget.

Alexander Calder, *Flying Dragon*, 1975, installation view, Place Vendôme, Paris © 2021 Calder Foundation, New York/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo: Thomas Lannes

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### ***Calder: 1975 and "Flying Dragon"***

**Inaugural Exhibition at Gagosian, 9 rue de Castiglione, Paris**

**Opening reception: Tuesday, October 19, 3–8pm**

**October 19–December 18, 2021**

The inaugural exhibition at the rue de Castiglione gallery will underscore the unique visual language of *Flying Dragon*, presenting diverse archival materials related to the sculpture and its original maquette alongside additional works from 1975.

*Flying Dragon* exemplifies the dynamism and structural ingenuity that propelled Calder's work to become a fixture of modern art. Due to its enormous size and sturdy makeup, the nonobjective sculpture is weighty; yet its limited points of contact with the ground suggest a body in flux, about to take to the air. The work attests to Calder's intuitive sense of scale and his ability to conjure compositional harmony from diverse formal elements. Using elegant lines, boldly reductive forms, and a restricted palette, he was able to summon an exquisite balance of weight and mass.

Calder produced two maquettes for *Flying Dragon*. The larger of the two is held in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago; the smaller one, black in color, is featured in this exhibition. On view

alongside the maquette—and archival material related to *Flying Dragon*—are a quartet of very rare unpainted sculptures that have not been previously exhibited.

In 1975—just one year before his death—Calder was energetically engaged in multiple large-scale public projects. These included a monumental sculpture for the city of Jerusalem (*Jerusalem Stabile*, completed and installed in 1976); *L'Araignée rouge*, a commission for the Paris business district La Défense (completed and installed in 1976); and the monumental stabile that inspired this exhibition, *Flying Dragon*. *Flying Colors*, the DC-8 jet that Calder designed for Braniff International Airways in 1973, was exhibited at the Paris Air Show in May—a commission whose concept echoes the soaring forms of *Flying Dragon*, which was fabricated in Connecticut that summer.

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### **Calder**

**Exhibition at Gagosian, 4 rue de Ponthieu, Paris**

**Opening reception: Tuesday, October 19, 3–8pm**

**October 19–December 18, 2021**

At the rue de Ponthieu gallery, selected works by Calder emphasize his inimitable visual language and stress the interplay between nature and abstraction, stillness and motion, and monumentality and ephemerality in his practice. Standing mobiles such as *Caged Stone and Fourteen Dots* (c. 1948), *Three White Dots on Orange Stalk* (1952), and *Double Headed* (1973) represent a bridge between the static sculptures of Calder's early production and the later free-hanging mobiles for which he became so widely known. The term *mobile* was coined by Marcel Duchamp in 1931 to describe Calder's kinetic abstract objects, while *stabile* was suggested by Jean Arp as a designation for Calder's stationary works.

The exhibition also features entries from Calder's *Crags* series of 1974. In *Crag with White Flower and White Discs* (1974), his decades-long investigation of kinetic and fixed components culminates in a dynamic synthesis of painterly and sculptural idioms. Originally made for the exhibition *Crags and Critters of 1974* at Perls Galleries, New York, the sculpture embodies Calder's singular employment of color and shape in a silhouette-like form surrounded by suspended elements that float in energetic and unpredictable ways.

Also on view are the stabile *Triangles* (1957), the mobile *Black Circle, Black Triangle* (1961), and several gouache paintings whose exploration of abstract and natural motifs in bold colors transcribe the vocabulary of Calder's sculpture into a more immediate medium.

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**Extended through March 20, 2022**

**Calder: *Flying Dragon*, 1975**

**Public Installation for FIAC Hors le Murs, Place Vendôme, Paris**

**Opening reception: Tuesday, October 19, 3–8pm**

**October 19, 2021–January 2, 2022**

Calder's monumental sculpture *Flying Dragon* (1975) will be on view at Place Vendôme beginning October 19 as part of FIAC Hors les Murs, which presents artworks in emblematic public spaces throughout the city.

*Flying Dragon*—which exemplifies Calder's capacity to invest a powerful visual dynamism in his work regardless of scale—is among the last of the monumental works he made. While static, the striking sculpture transforms when viewed from different angles. Constructed from massive planes of sheet metal, it is physically imposing but appears delicate due to its minimal points of contact with the ground.

Blending the organic with the architectonic, the highly ambitious *Flying Dragon* epitomizes Calder's compositional genius. Fusing elegant lines with simple forms and vibrant color, it is a distinctive and evocative form that activates the elegant space around it. Due to its immense size, it leaves viewers with the sensation of an otherworldly being imbued with legendary strength.

*Gagosian would like to thank the City of Paris for its support with the installation of *Flying Dragon* in Place Vendôme.*