

Name _____



Alexander Calder: The Master of Mobile Art

Alexander Calder, a renowned American sculptor, left an indelible mark on the world of art with his innovative creations. His sculptures, characterized by their mobile and kinetic nature, have fascinated and delighted audiences for generations. This reading passage will delve into the life and works of Alexander Calder, shedding light on his artistic journey and his significant contributions to the world of sculpture.

Early Life and Artistic Beginnings

Born in 1898 in Lawnton, Pennsylvania, Alexander Calder hailed from a family of accomplished artists. His father and grandfather were both sculptors, and his mother was a painter. It was in this creative environment that Calder's artistic talents began to flourish. He studied mechanical engineering before pursuing his true passion: art.

Invention of the Mobile

One of Calder's most iconic contributions to the art world is the invention of the mobile. In the early 1930s, inspired by the movement of the heavens and the beauty of the circus, Calder started creating sculptures that could move with the slightest breeze. These delicate, balanced structures seemed to defy gravity and became known as "mobiles," a term coined by Marcel Duchamp.

Exploring Abstraction and Kinetics

Calder's mobiles were not his only artistic experiments. He also delved into creating "stabiles," which were stationary sculptures characterized by abstract, geometric shapes. His use of primary colors and bold, sweeping lines gave his work a distinct and recognizable style. Calder's art often blurred the line between sculpture and performance, as his mobiles and stabiles invited interaction and motion.

Aesthetic Evolution

Over the years, Calder's work evolved, and he began to create larger, outdoor sculptures. These monumental pieces, often commissioned for public spaces, added a new dimension to his artistic legacy. His "Flamingo" sculpture in Chicago and the "Three Disks" in Philadelphia are prime examples of his enduring influence on urban landscapes.

Legacy and Impact

Alexander Calder's legacy extends far beyond his lifetime. He revolutionized sculpture by introducing movement and interaction, captivating viewers with the ever-changing dynamics of his mobiles. His playful and innovative approach to art continues to inspire contemporary artists, and his influence can be seen in various forms of kinetic and abstract art around the world.

