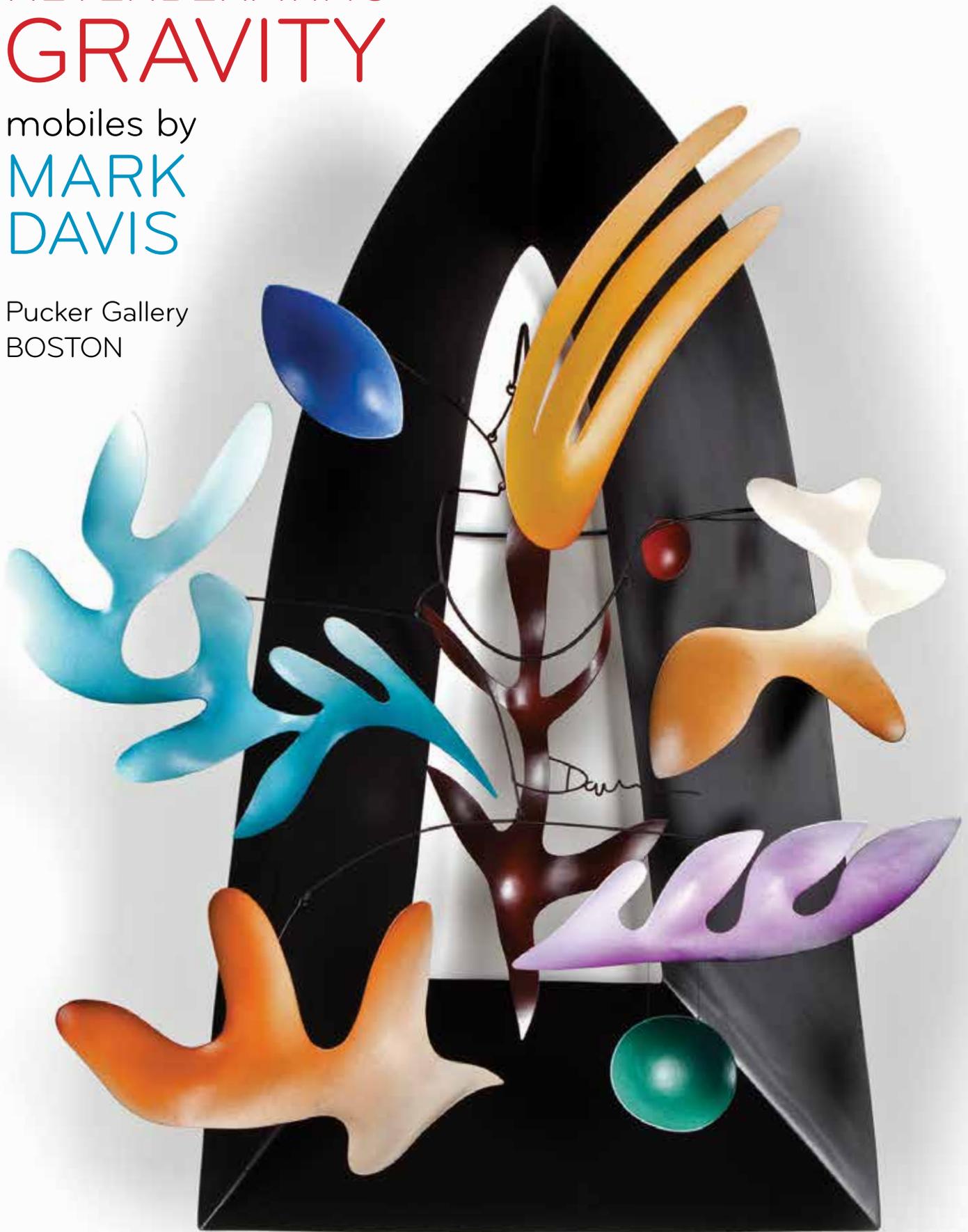


REVERBERATING GRAVITY

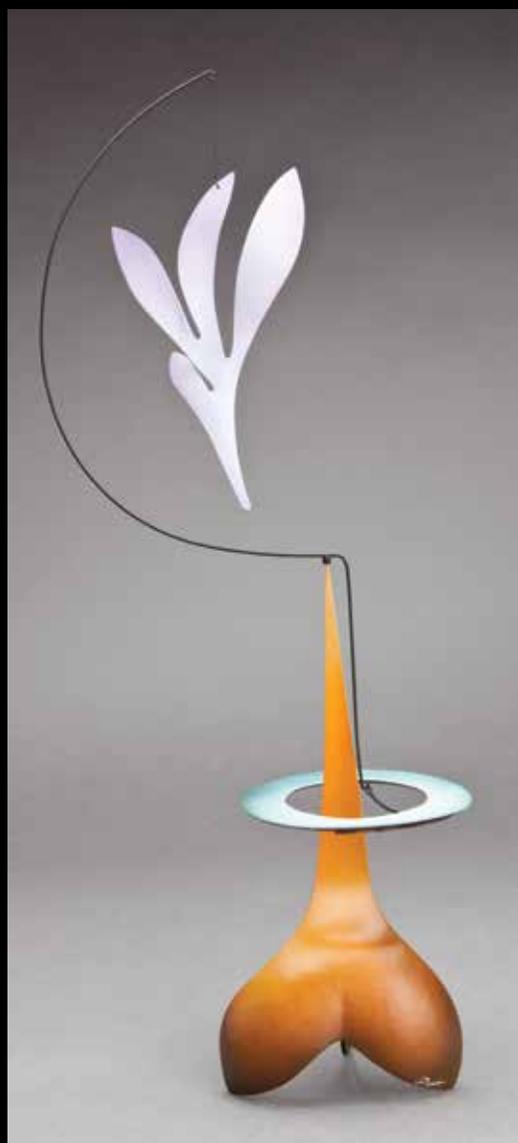
mobiles by
**MARK
DAVIS**

Pucker Gallery
BOSTON



REVERBERATING GRAVITY

mobiles by
**MARK
DAVIS**



Above and right:
AN EVER-BRIGHT FLAME
Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel
wires, oil and acrylic colors
21 x 9 x 5"
MD663

When Mark Davis entered the world of mobiles, the genre had a notable art historical pedigree, but few accomplished contemporary practitioners. The term "mobile" was coined by Dadaist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) in 1931 to describe Alexander Calder's (1898-1976) earliest moving creations. Calder's aesthetic was very much *du jour*, an active and dimensional take on the abstract paintings of artists like Piet Mondrian (1872-1942) and the Surrealist paintings and sculptures of Joan Miró (1893-1983). Kinetic art reached a crescendo of popularity post-World War II, when the Bauhaus philosophy toward design catalyzed an international exploration of the style. In 1955 French gallerist Denise René staged the watershed exhibit *Le Mouvement* featuring artists such as Duchamp, Calder, Victor Vasarely (1906-1997), Yaacov Agam (b. 1928), and Jean Tinguely (1925-1991), among others. Published during the exhibition, Vasarely's "Yellow Manifesto" served as a founding document for the movement, announcing the death of easel painting and proclaiming that art should bring joy and beauty to human beings and create peace and harmony. By the 1960s, kinetic art came stateside, with Howard Wise Gallery organizing numerous exhibitions in the 1960s and 1970s and The Nelson-Atkins Museum organizing *The Magic Theater* exhibition in 1968. Already by that time, kinetic art had developed from Calder's manual engineering to a more technologically-driven approach.

In many ways, Davis's mobiles are an homage to the interwar period in Modern Art and celebrate the essential beauty of an art form where balance is achieved solely through the genius of the artist and movement comes only from the breath of air or the gentle touch of another human being. The artist composes motion through the thoughtful interplay of individual elements, always cognizant of the synergy of the compiled elements with their surroundings. Each shape is like a stanza in a poem or a phrase in a song—economically crafted yet highly expressive, beautiful when unaccompanied but exponentially more powerful when taken in concert with its cohorts. Davis's artwork embodies many of the characteristics in Vasarely's manifesto: joy, beauty, peace, and harmony.

Lao Tzu philosophized that "knowing others is wisdom, knowing yourself is Enlightenment." The path to self-knowing is neither divined, nor straight, nor singular. Each individual must determine his or her own route, acknowledging the journey instead of focusing on the destination. For Mark Davis, art-making is an avenue of self-discovery and a vehicle for expressing his hopes and dreams. Joy has been born from his art, and through his art he delivers that joy to us. He once said, "my real training has been to follow and listen to my inner intuition, allowing my mind to open up to inner secrets." In his deepest understanding of himself, and in the outward expression of his artwork, Davis has chosen to privilege joy over everything else.

Davis's mobiles are an apt metaphor for the artist himself. Being an artist is the stable underpinning, the fulcrum, around which his world swirls. Energy shoots out from that concrete point, like from the soul. A playful tension emanates between balance and motion, strength and delicacy. He has written that, "through abstract shapes I play with the concepts of space. My ideas come from organic life, the human form, and the external landscape, while deeply reflecting my internal landscape and dialogue. The work is playful, joyful, and always changing, and that is the way I see and experience life in all its complexities." Such bold and spirited artistic self-expression is the public face of a modest and private man who, like all of us, has experienced his share of setbacks and suffering. As thirteenth-century Persian poet and Sufi mystic

Rumi wrote, “why should I stay at the bottom of a well when a strong rope is in my hand?” This kind of purposefulness takes effort, though Davis is humble about his own accomplishments in this way.

Davis has always enjoyed the discipline of working with a single material—metal—and is particularly drawn to its elemental and lasting qualities. He uses sheet metals of different weights and compositions like steel (the heaviest), brass (the most difficult to manipulate, it needs to be softened by heat then quenched in an acid bath repeatedly throughout the working process), aluminum (the lightest), and gold and silver (the easiest to shape, hence its popularity in jewelry). Flat sheet metal is formed by traditional silversmithing methods such as planishing, whereby the piece of metal is hammered out on an old railroad tie with different depressions creating different contours. Rolling the metal back and forth through the English wheel (a tool originally made for the auto industry) shapes and smooths the metal. His is not a spontaneous art, which makes it all the more impressive that the final product feels so effortless and expressive.

Ideas and inspiration come from everywhere, and since almost anything can trigger his imagination he keeps a sketchpad in the car for getting shapes down on paper. When he begins a new work, he might sketch something rough or use an old castaway as a new beginning, thinking about a few strong sets of shapes then adding lyrical counterparts. Often this stage is done in cardboard to allow for maximum fussing, and more often than not the final product deviates greatly from the basic concept or sketch from which it was born. According to Davis, “the balancing is done by intuition at first, and then as the piece progresses, I am able to fine-tune the balance. Initially, my vision is to see the various elements floating in space, relating to, but not anchored to the earth. By completion, each piece becomes its own very personal universe.” At first, all the pieces are finished with temporary joining arms so that Mark can adjust them to fine-tune the aesthetics and the mechanical balance. He finds the center of gravity, then a pinpoint or dimple is needed and the weights of the pieces keep everything perfectly balanced. This creative process is emblematic of the virtuosity of Mark Davis and metaphorical to his life—taking something heavy and countering it with lightness, appreciating how separate elements must work in tandem to create balance, and bringing something colorful and joyful into the world. Art is the “pinpoint” or the “dimple” around which Davis’s life is kept in balance.

Henri Matisse once wrote, “What I dream of is an art of balance, of purity and serenity devoid of troubling or depressing subject matter—a soothing, calming influence on the mind, rather like a good armchair which provides relaxation from physical fatigue.” Mark Davis literally achieves this balance in his varicolored mobiles, paying homage to subjects from nature to the human gesture, deftly playing substance against grace, carefully considering the reciprocity of stillness and movement, positive and negative, light and shadow. Davis also achieves this balance with his humanity—funny and sincere but tough, he is a man of simultaneous strength and fragility, afflicted by his struggles, but mindfully choosing to see joy all around him. Through his mobiles, Davis communicates the many complexities of the human spirit in a way that words never could, helping the viewer to achieve their own inner balance, then tipping our scales towards a more contented place.

—JEANNE V. KOLES

Jeanne Koles is an independent consultant who does project management, design, and writing for museums and the cultural sector.



ORION

Standing mobile in brass
and aluminum with oil
and acrylic colors and
23K gold leaf
70 x 60 x 37"
MD654



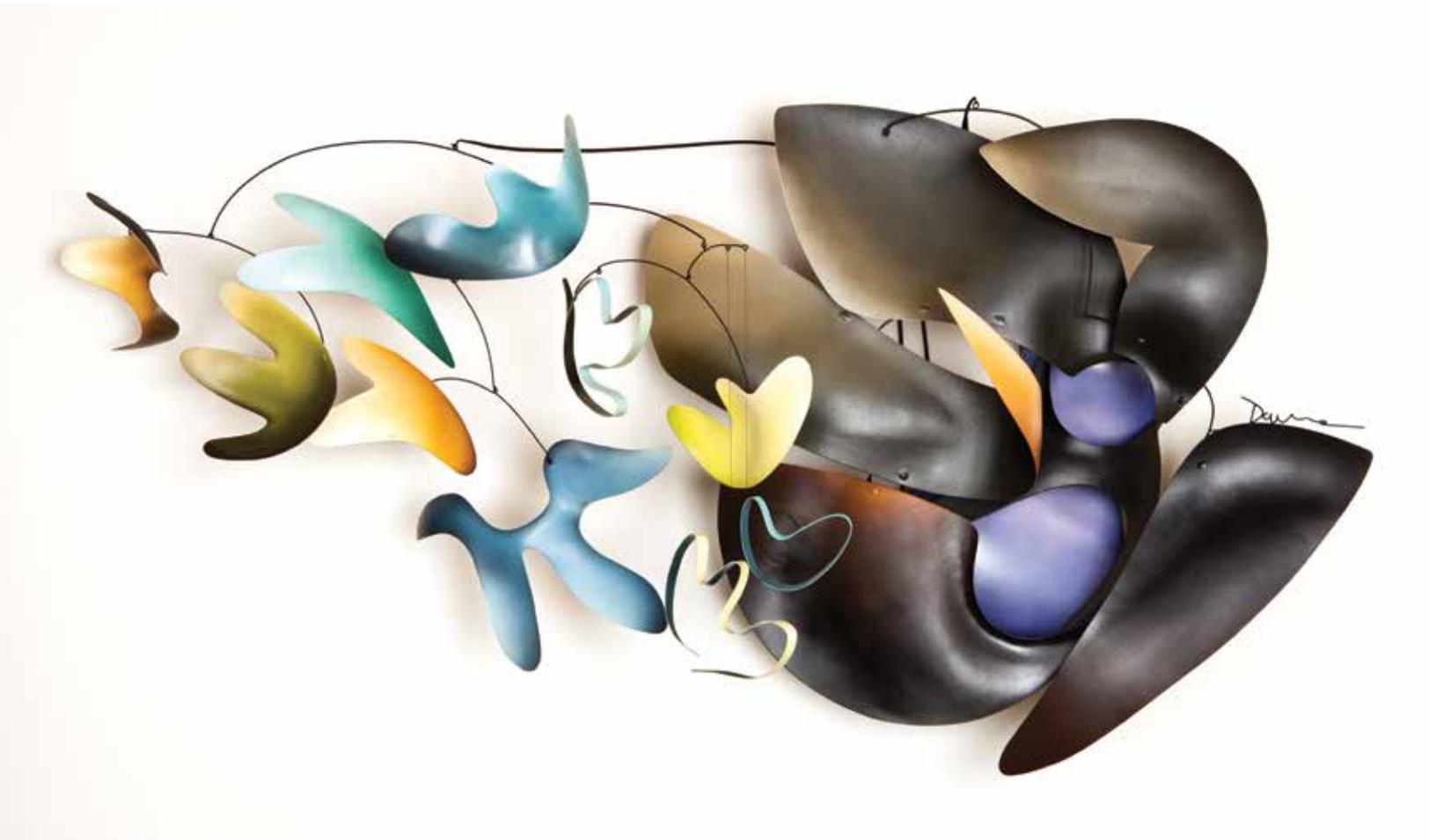
RHYTHM OF THE SAINTS

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
18 x 18 x 20"
MD700

**CHARMING CHARMER**

Standing mobile in brass with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
7 x 18 x 6"
MD704

THE CENTAUR
Standing mobile in steel
wire and sterling silver
13 x 16 x 10"
MD686



CONTRASTING OPINIONS
Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
27 x 53 x 15"
MD662

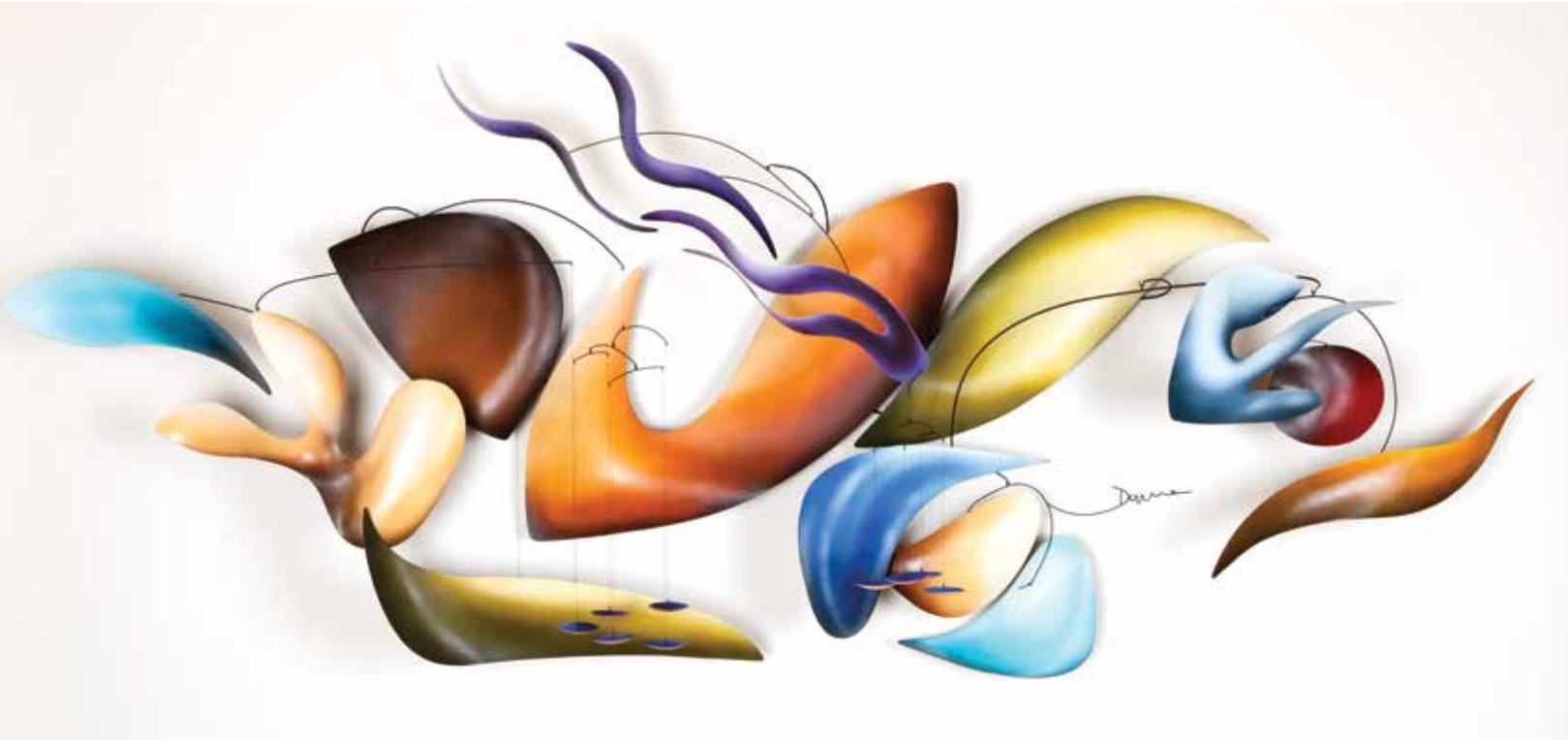


VIGOROUS GROWTH

Standing mobile in brass, steel, and
aluminum with oil and acrylic colors
60 x 32 x 24"
MD655

SWEEPING TERRAIN

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires and oil and acrylic colors
44 x 98 x 17"
MD669



SERENE OUTLOOK

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
4.5 x 6 x 3.5"
MD664

SEA AND FOREST

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
8 x 8 x 8"
MD671



MODERN MOVEMENT

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
8 x 4.5 x 4"
MD674



A STURDY BUILD

Standing mobile in oil painted brass and sterling silver
15 x 16 x 14"
MD721

STARRY, STARRY NIGHT

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
13 x 24 x 11"
MD719

**FRESH START**

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires and nylon cord, oil and acrylic colors
9 x 16 x 10.5"
MD702

**BLUE DANUBE**

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors, and 23K gold leaf
8 x 12 x 12"
MD692

**BELLE EPOQUE**

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
24 x 61 x 11"
MD687



A SLOW AND SUBTLE MANEUVER

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires and oil and acrylic colors

34 x 60 x 17"

MD644

THE NOBLE HOUR

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum
with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
11 x 8.5 x 9"
MD685

**THE ORIGINAL**

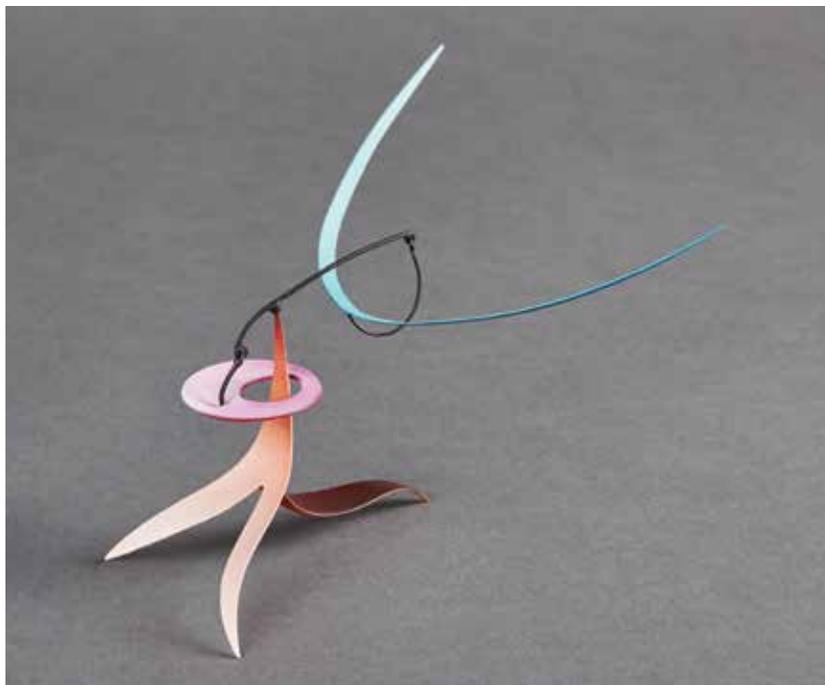
6.5 x 9 x 4"
Standing mobile in brass with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
MD706

**PRELUDE**

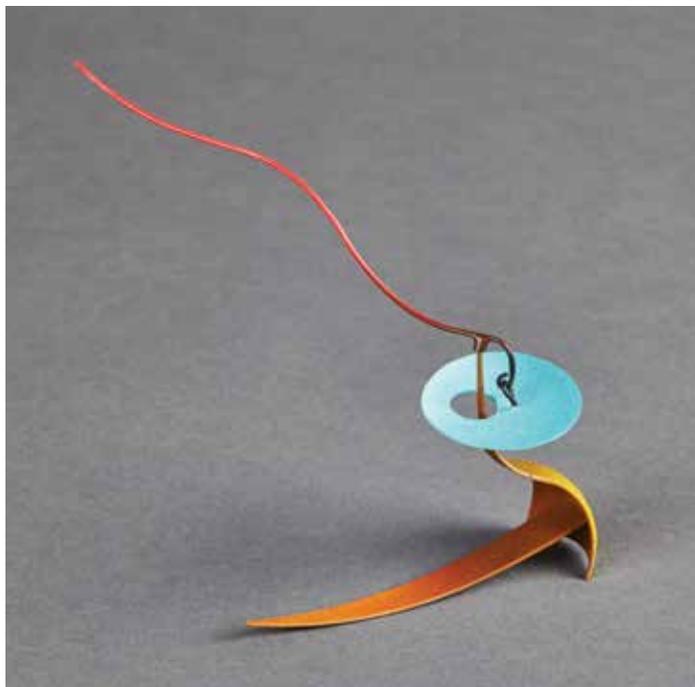
Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors and 23K gold leaf
21 x 40 x 10"
MD676

THE LIGHT TOUCH

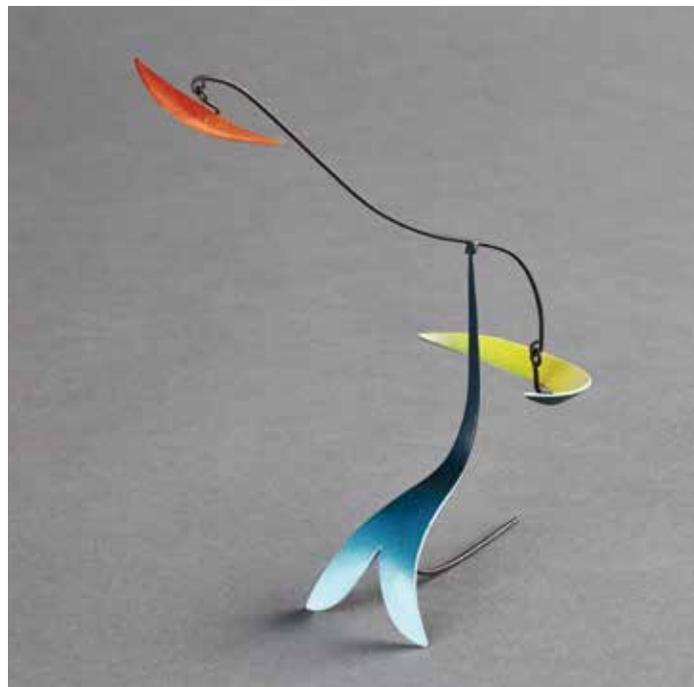
Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires,
oil and acrylic colors
6 x 8 x 7"
MD714

**LITTLE SOLDIER**

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum
with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
10 x 9 x 5"
MD703

**GOING AHEAD**

Standing mobile in brass with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
7 x 9 x 2.25"
MD715

**FAR REACH**

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
7.5 x 7 x 3"
MD716



OVER THE PRECIPICE

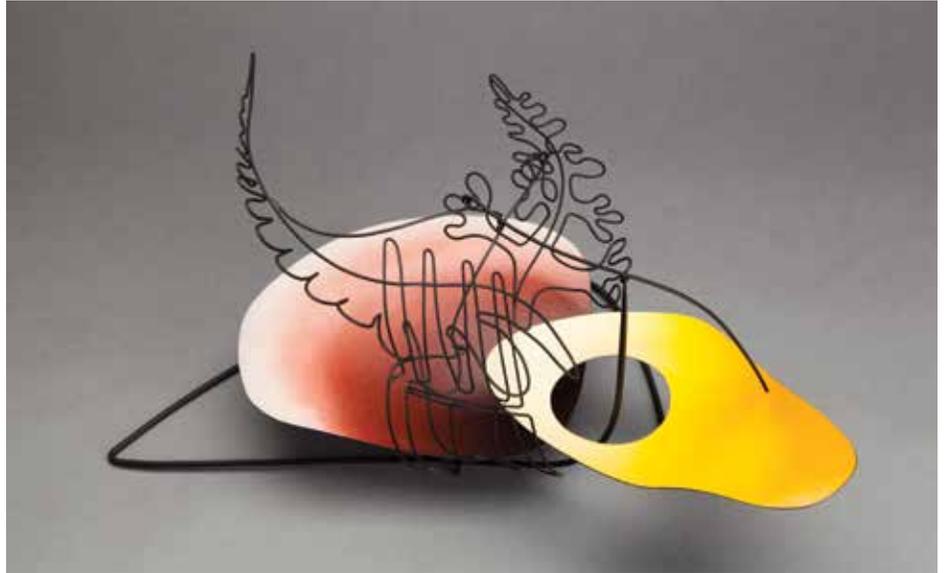
30 x 22 x 23"

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors

MD678

THE BREAKTHROUGH

Standing mobile in brass and steel
wires, with oil and acrylic colors
10 x 13 x 13"
MD681

**EARLY MORNING RAPTURE**

Standing mobile in brass
and aluminum with steel
wires, oil and acrylic colors
30 x 20 x 20"
MD693

RIVERBED

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum
with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
32 x 25 x 19"
MD653

**FAR AND AWAY**

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires and nylon cord, oil and acrylic colors
21 x 66 x 14"
MD675



A PLACE IN THE CLOUDS

Hanging mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors

21 x 55 x 55"

MD711



GLORY BOUND

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum
with steel wires, oil and acrylic color and
23K gold leaf
19 x 21 x 11"
MD712



A NEW GENTLE FORCE

13.5 x 12 x 10"

Standing mobile in brass and aluminum
with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
MD705

CLASSICAL DISSONANCE
Standing mobile in brass
and aluminum with steel
wires and oil color
11 x 13 x 10"
MD701



TURNING ANGELS
Standing mobile in brass with oil color and 23K gold leaf
8 x 14 x 7"
MD660



UNIVERSAL LAW OF ATTRACTION
 Standing mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors, and 23K gold leaf
 19 x 22 x 23"
 MD720



MEDIUM BOWL

Brass with patina and wax finish
 2.25 x 4 x 4"
 MD697

TINY BOWL

Brass with patina and wax finish
 1.25 x 1.75 x 1.75"
 MD699

LARGE BOWL

Brass with patina and wax finish
 2.75 x 4.75 x 4.75"
 MD695

SMALL BOWL

Brass with patina and wax finish
 1.75 x 3 x 3"
 MD698

MEDIUM THREE FOOTED BOWL

Brass with patina and wax finish
 2.5 x 3.75 x 3.75"
 MD696

biography

MARK DAVIS



personal & exhibitions

- 1954 Born in New Haven, CT
- 1972 Attended Goddard College in Plainfield, VT
- 1980 Solo exhibition of sculptural jewelry and masks in sterling silver and brass at Bloomingdale's at The Mall at Chestnut Hill, Chestnut Hill, MA
- 1982-1985 Sculptural jewelry exhibitions at Artwear, Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Avenue, Macy's and Henri Bendel in New York City
Articles in *Vogue* magazine, *New York* magazine and others
- 1988 Tiffany & Co. of New York commissioned mobiles to be used as window displays
- 1989-1995 Bi-annual commissions of mobiles and sculptures for Tiffany & Co. window displays
- 1991, 1992 Solo exhibition of mobiles with Judith N. Wolov Gallery, Design Center, Boston, MA
- 1993-1996 In conjunction with Tiffany & Co. on Fifth Avenue, began creating small and medium size mobiles for the L:S Collection on Madison Avenue and in Soho, New York City
- 1995 Featured in a group exhibition at Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 1997 Exhibition, *Nature in Motion*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 1997-2015 Created many significant commissions mobiles for public and private collections
- 1999 Exhibition, *Movement within Space*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2001 Exhibition, *Color and Form in Motion*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2003 Exhibition, *Boldly Balanced*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2005 Exhibition, *Energy in Motion*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2007 Exhibition, *Revisiting Nature*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
Exhibition, Harrison Gallery, Williamstown, MA
- 2009 Exhibition, Harrison Gallery, Williamstown, MA
Exhibition, *Gathering Energy*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2011 Exhibition, *Icarus*, Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton, MA
Exhibition, *Phase Transformations*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2013 Exhibition, *Mark Davis*, Harrison Gallery, Boston MA
Exhibition, *Form. Color. Balance: Recent Work by Mark Davis*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA
- 2015 Exhibition, *Reverberating Gravity: Mobiles by Mark Davis*, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA

selected public & private collections

- Congregation Kehillath Israel, Brookline, MA
- Gary Trudeau, New York, NY
- Healing Waters*, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital, Chicago, IL
- Howard Stern, New York, NY
- Julie Andrews and Blake Edwards, Los Angeles, CA
- Lexus Corporation, New York, NY
- Liberty Mutual Corporation, Boston, MA
- Richard Chamberlain, New York, NY
- Rose Museum, Brandeis University, Waltham, MA
- Temple Emmanuel, Andover, MA
- The Farm, Libertyville, IL
- University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital, Chicago, IL

credits

- design: Leslie Anne Feagley
- editor: Destiny M. Barletta
- photography: Simon Simard and John Davenport



ACROSS THE UNIVERSE

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors

33 x 86 x 19"

MD710

PUCKER
GALLERY

ESTABLISHED 1967 BOSTON

Pucker Gallery

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E-mail: contactus@puckergallery.com

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Please visit www.puckergallery.com to view current and past exhibition catalogues, read artist biographies, and subscribe to the *Artwork of the Week* and *Pottery of the Week* e-mail lists.

Gallery Hours:

Monday through Saturday 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM

Sunday 10:30 AM to 5:00 PM

We offer one free hour of validated parking at the 200 Newbury Street Garage. The garage driving entrance is located on Exeter Street between Newbury and Boylston Streets. The nearest MBTA stops are Hynes Convention Center and Copley Station on the Green Line. Pucker Gallery is a member of the Boston Art Dealers Association and the New England Appraisers Association.

**REVERBERATING
GRAVITY**

mobiles by

MARK DAVIS

dates:

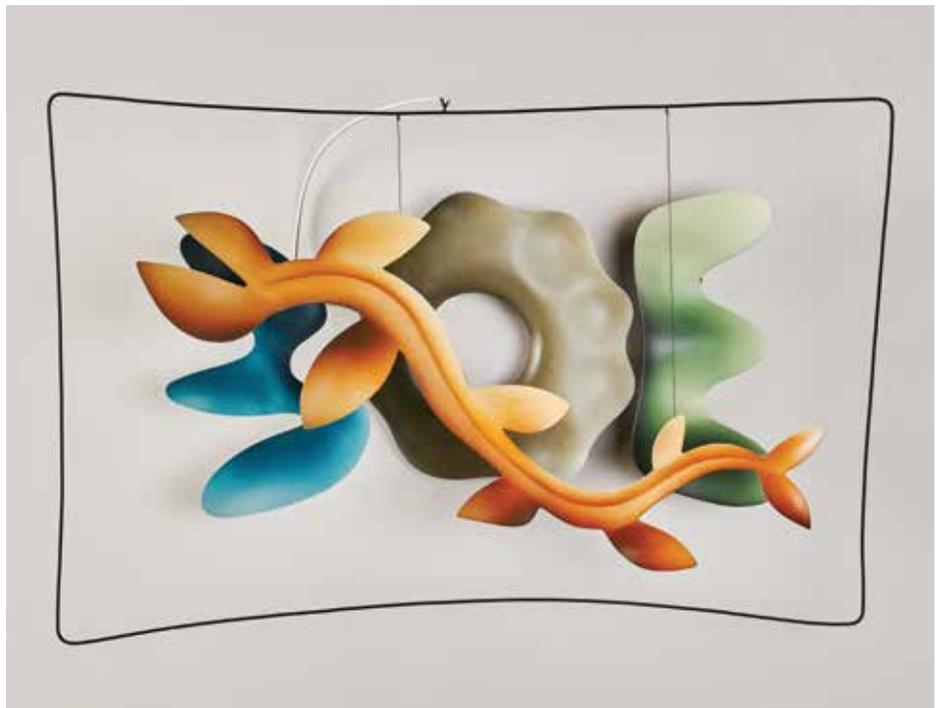
31 October through
30 November 2015

opening reception:

31 October 2015,
3:00 PM to 6:00 PM

The public is invited to attend.

The artist will be present.



Front Cover: **JARDIN DE MONSIEUR M**

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires and nylon cord, oil and acrylic colors
33 x 26 x 12"
MD709

PIONEER

Wall-mounted mobile in brass and aluminum with steel wires, oil and acrylic colors
19 x 29 x 9"
MD694