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San Diego Museum of Art Hosts Only West Coast Viewing of *Calder Jewelry* Exhibition

San Diego, Calif. — For the first time, jewelry created by the great American sculptor Alexander Calder is the subject of a comprehensive exhibition entitled *Calder Jewelry*. This special exhibition will be on view at the [San Diego Museum of Art](#) (SDMA) from July 25, 2009 to Jan. 3, 2010.

Calder Jewelry brings together approximately 90 works by the famed modernist — including necklaces, bracelets, brooches, earrings and tiaras — that demonstrate the artist's love of abstraction and his unique mastery of this wearable art form. The works in the exhibition were all worn by family and close friends of the artist, as well as by some of the most celebrated figures in 20th-century cultural history.

"Alexander Calder is today best known for his powerful, monumental sculptures. The works in this show are miniature mobiles and stabiles, related to and no less beautiful than the work that is so familiar to us from its siting in civic plazas. They are, at the same, unquestionably intimate and intensely personal expressions. In the end, Calder's jewelry pieces are exquisite demonstrations of this major artist's contributions to the history of art, which should not be missed," said Derrick R. Cartwright, SDMA's executive director.

Calder (1898-1976) was born into a family of well-known artists and made his first wire sculpture in 1925. In 1930, he began to experiment boldly with abstraction and in 1931, occasionally added moving parts to his works. He later coined the term "mobiles" to describe these unprecedented sculptures. Major examples of Calder's sculpture can be seen throughout the world, including at the National Gallery of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, as well as at SDMA. Calder's large work, entitled *Spinal Column* (1968) will be resituated at the front of SDMA, following extensive conservation treatment, in conjunction with the opening of *Calder Jewelry*.

Conceiving of his objects as "wearable mobiles," Calder individually hammered, chiseled, shaped and composed more than 1,800 pieces of jewelry, each in a fashion that precisely echoed the linear yet three-dimensional aspect found in his sculpture. He made his works of jewelry by combining non-precious material and found objects with brass, silver and gold.

The exhibition at SDMA includes jewelry made from a recipient's monogram and jewelry created by shaping an individual's name into a decorative pattern. Among those presented with such pieces were Louisa James Calder, the artist's wife; the artist's close friend, Georgia O'Keeffe; Pilar Miró and Teeny Matisse Duchamp, the wives of Surrealist artists Joan Miró and Marcel Duchamp; Jeanne Buñuel, wife of the filmmaker Luis Buñuel; and Bella Chagall, wife of Marc Chagall.

Calder Jewelry comes to San Diego after having been on view at the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin. Following its stay in San Diego, it will travel to the Grand Rapids Art Museum.

“SDMA is honored to serve as the exclusive West Coast location for two landmark exhibitions of such popular appeal and intellectual significance, first with *Richard Avedon: Portraits of Power* and now *Calder Jewelry*,” said Cartwright. “By bringing work of this caliber to San Diego, SDMA affirms the city’s place as a top art destination in the U.S.”

Calder Jewelry, a collaboration between the Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach, Florida, and the Calder Foundation, New York, was co-curated by Mark Rosenthal and Alexander S.C. Rower, director of the Calder Foundation. *Calder Jewelry* is curated locally by Julia Marciari-Alexander, SDMA’s new deputy director for curatorial affairs. Rarely seen works from important local collections will be the subject of a simultaneous focus modern art exhibition, *Picasso, Miró, Calder in San Diego*, also curated by Marciari-Alexander.

Calder Jewelry is accompanied by an impressive companion book of the same title, which is published by the Calder Foundation.

Museum Information:

San Diego Museum of Art is located at 1450 El Prado in Balboa Park, San Diego, Calif., 92101.

General Information, (619) 232-7931, Group Sales: (619) 696-1915, Website: www.sdmart.org, Twitter @SDMA.

Museum Hours: Tuesday – Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday, noon – 5 p.m. The Museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. for SDMA Summer Nights Thursdays between May 28 and Sept. 3.

General Museum Admission: Adult \$10; Senior (65+) and Military with ID \$8; Student \$7; Youth (6-17) \$4. Children 5 and under are free. (Specially priced tickets may be required for certain exhibitions. Please contact the Museum for more information.)

To become a member of SDMA, call 619-696-1941, visit www.sdmart.org/membership.html or inquire in person at the Museum.

The San Diego Museum of Art provides a rich and diverse cultural experience for 400,000 visitors annually. Located in the heart of beautiful Balboa Park, the Museum’s nationally renowned collections include Spanish and Italian old masters, South Asian paintings, and 19th- and 20th-century American paintings and sculptures. In addition, the Museum regularly features major exhibitions of art from around the world, as well as an extensive year-round schedule of supporting cultural and educational programs for children and adults, as well as a research library. At SDMA, exhibition text is always in English and Spanish.

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