

DROPSHOP

CURATED BY PHILLIPS

PRESS RELEASE

PHILLIPS ANNOUNCES LIMITED RELEASE OF ALEXANDER CALDER CHESS SET THROUGH DROPSHOP

Deluxe First Edition Published by Cahiers d'Art in Collaboration with the Calder Foundation

Each Set to be Accompanied by a Pair of Prints from the Artist's *Chess Knightmares* Series



Calder Chess Set

NEW YORK – 28 JANUARY 2026 – Phillips is proud to announce its latest Dropshop release: the deluxe first edition of Alexander Calder's iconic chess set, published by Cahiers d'Art in collaboration with the Calder Foundation. Meticulously recreated from high resolution 3-D scans of the original and precisely milled from solid wood, the deluxe edition, which is limited to 750 sets, preserves the texture, scale, and spirit of the original version Calder created in 1944. Each edition, available from 3 February, is accompanied by two inkjet prints of drawings from the artist's 1944 *Chess Knightmares* series, which offers collectors a rare insight into Calder's mischievous interpretation of the game. From 3-7 February, visitors are invited to play chess onsite in Phillips' New York galleries using one of the limited-edition sets, while a second will be on view in Phillips' London galleries from 6-24 February.

Calder originally conceived this chess set in 1944 for *The Imagery of Chess*, a groundbreaking exhibition organized by Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst at Julien Levy Gallery in New York. The artist's design challenges the game's traditional visual language, raising the queens a full head above the kings, while four oversized knights with elongated snouts disrupt the board, command attention, and invite a reconsideration of the game's prescribed hierarchy. Departing from traditional black and white, Calder selected vivid red and blue for the chessmen, with a bright yellow case to house them when not in play.



The original chess set conceived by Calder for *The Imagery of Chess*.

Christine Miele, Phillips' Retail Sales Director, Ecommerce, said, "Calder's chess set reflects a rare convergence of his formal thinking and daily life. Offering the deluxe edition of a set he lived with and played with personally is deeply meaningful for Dropshop and only possible through Cahiers d'Art's collaboration with the Calder Foundation. This edition brings a historic, museum-level work into people's homes allowing them to use and enjoy it as the artist intended. We see this Drop as an important contribution to the conversation around how collectors engage with Post-War masters today, and we're excited to offer an edition that feels as relevant now as it did when Calder first created it."

Alexander S.C. Rower, President, Calder Foundation, said, "In addition to great works of art, my grandfather's homes were filled with many practical tools he created. Included among these was his fascinating chess set. Calder planned to make a multiple of this set, so it gives me great pleasure to realize his intention by making it available to art and chess lovers alike."

Staffan Ahrenberg, Publisher, Cahiers d'Art, said, "Our latest collaboration with the Calder Foundation extends a long legacy of artistic friendship and shared vision between the artist and Cahiers d'Art into the third dimension. It continues Cahiers d'Art's mission to bring timeless works into contemporary life, uniting art, design, and play in a dialogue that remains as vibrant today as ever."



Alexander Calder
*Untitled ("Sir!" in Duchamp's hand
on verso), 1944*



Alexander Calder
*A pawn being "bawled out" by his
mother-in-law, 1944*

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Alexander Calder (b. 1898, Philadelphia—d. 1976, New York City), whose illustrious career spanned much of the twentieth century, is the most acclaimed and influential sculptor of our time. Born in a family of celebrated, though more classically trained artists, Calder utilized his innovative genius to profoundly change the course of modern art. He began in the 1920s by developing a new method of sculpting: by bending and twisting wire, he essentially "drew" three-dimensional figures in space. He is renowned for creating the mobile, whose suspended, abstract elements move in changing harmony. From the 1950s onward, Calder increasingly devoted himself to making outdoor sculpture on a grand scale from bolted steel plates. Today, these stately titans grace public plazas in cities throughout the world.

ABOUT CAHIERS D'ART

Founded in 1926 by Christian Zervos at 14, rue du Dragon, in the heart of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Cahiers d'Art encompasses a publishing house, a gallery, and a revue. The Cahiers d'Art revue was entirely unique when it was introduced: a journal of contemporary art defined by its combination of striking typography and layout, abundant photography, and juxtaposition of ancient and modern art. Between the 1920s and the mid-1970s, Cahiers d'Art published ninety-seven issues of the Cahiers d'Art revue and more than fifty books of fine art and architecture, as well as the catalogue raisonné of Pablo Picasso in thirty-three volumes. Since its relaunch in 2012, Cahiers d'Art has presented unique exhibitions and published revues, art books, and limited editions devoted to Ellsworth Kelly,

Alexander Calder, Pablo Picasso, Rosemarie Trockel, Hiroshi Sugimoto, Gabriel Orozco, Thomas Schütte, Frank Gehry, Christo, and Arthur Jafa, among many other artists.

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As Phillips marks its 230th anniversary in 2026, the house celebrates more than two centuries at the forefront of the global market for Modern & Contemporary Art, Design, and Luxury. Founded in 1796 by the charismatic auctioneer Harry Phillips, the company has, since its earliest days, offered a distinct and forward-looking approach to sales and collecting. Over the centuries, Phillips has delivered record-breaking results and landmark offerings, while also pioneering new modes of collecting via the likes of Dropshop. Through its partnership with Bacs & Russo, Phillips continues to lead the industry in watches, setting new benchmarks for excellence, innovation, and connoisseurship. Today, Phillips remains true to the entrepreneurial spirit of its founder while redefining the role of a 21st century auction house.

ABOUT DROPSHOP

Dropshop, Curated by Phillips, offers exclusive Drops by creators, for collectors. Dropshop's limited-edition releases of primary market art and objects are exclusive to the company's digital platform and conceived in partnership with the artists, collaborators, and brands shaping contemporary culture. Items are available through a timed "buy now" e-commerce model at www.phillips.com/dropshop. By redefining the dynamics of the traditional art market framework, Dropshop's goal is to connect artists, galleries, curators, institutions, and non-profit organizations with a global collecting community. Further, creators will receive a resale royalty commission for any work purchased from Dropshop that is subsequently re-offered at Phillips — an industry first.

ABOUT PHILLIPS

Phillips: where the world's curious and bold connect with the art, design, and luxury that inspires them. As a leading global platform for buying and selling 20th and 21st century works, Phillips offers dedicated expertise in the areas of Modern and Contemporary Art, Design, Photographs, Editions, Watches, and Jewels. Auctions and exhibitions are primarily held in New York, London, Geneva, and Hong Kong, with representative offices based throughout Europe, the United States, and Asia. Phillips offers a regular selection of live and online auctions, along with items available for immediate purchase. Phillips also offers a range of services and advice on all aspects of collecting, including private sales and assistance with appraisals, valuations, and financial planning.

Visit phillips.com for further information.

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