

EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Calder portraits display humor, insight

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Current Correspondent

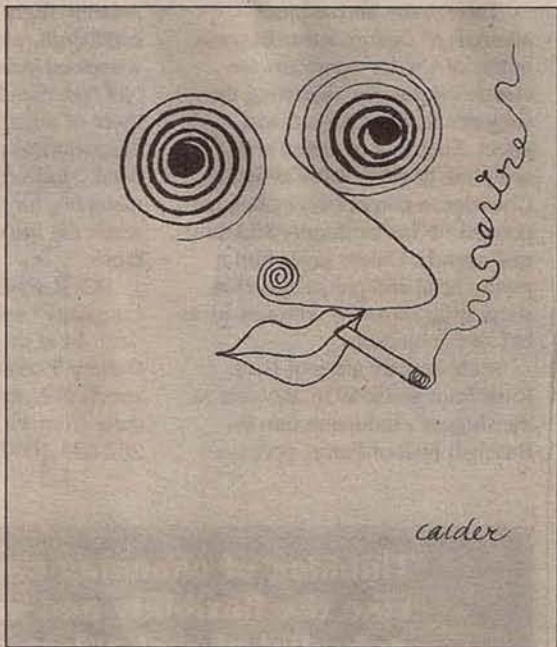
Best known for his mobiles and stabiles, Alexander Calder also made many portraits, including whimsical airy wire sculptures — drawings in space, some that hang from the ceiling and change shape with the slightest breeze.

For the first time, these creations have been corralled and put on view, comprising a celebrity-studded exhibition now at the National Portrait Gallery titled “Calder’s Portraits: A New Language.” It features 75 sculptures, drawings, paintings and photographs by Calder and others, many of famous artists, entertainers, composers, sports figures and politicians in the early- to mid-20th century.

“Such was the genius of Calder that he was able to infuse his portraits with acuity and humor, with poetry and humanity,” curator Barbara Zabel said during a tour. He also was able to bring spontaneity and life to ordinary wire and in so doing create what one critic called “a new language.”

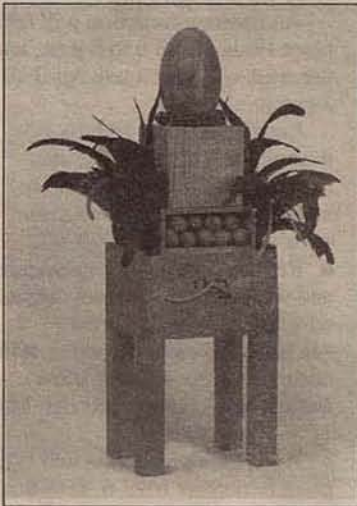
Calder began making wire portraits after moving to Paris in 1926 as a 28-year-old newly awakened artist with a degree in mechanical engineering. He focused

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“Jean-Paul Sartre,” 1947, ink drawing on paper by Alexander Calder

Touchstone shows feature grasses and nests



Janet Wheeler’s mixed-media assemblages are on exhibit at Touchstone Gallery.

Touchstone Gallery will open two shows today and continue them through May 1.

“Grasses” presents etchings, screenprints, monotypes and

On EXHIBIT

mixed-media prints by Mary D. Ott with grasses as their theme.

“Nests With a Twist” features mixed-media assemblages described as “spirit boxes” by Janet Wheeler.

An opening reception will be held Friday from 6 to 8:30 p.m., and an artist talk with coffee and cake will take place April 10 from 2 to 4 p.m.

Located at 901 New York Ave.

NW, the gallery is open Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. 202-347-2787.

■ **Studio Gallery** will open three shows today and continue them through April 23.

“Uncommon Boundaries” presents new abstract paintings by Joyce McCarten that show her delight in pigment.

“Rectangle Revisited” explores the power and depth of simple forms in paintings by Bud Hensgen.

Veronica Szalus’ “transition” is a site-specific installation made from newspapers and reeds and exploring the concept of transition.

A “First Friday” reception will

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