

# HYPNOTIC WONDERS

10 MCM hanging mobiles with flair and gentle motion

By Adriene Biondo

A MOBILE OR KINETIC SCULPTURE is a wonderful way to bring art and interior design into your mid-century home.

These delicately balanced pieces of art catch the slightest air current and bring mesmerizing, playful motion to a quiet corner, living area, or children's room.

The history of the modern art mobile dates back to the early 20th century when artist Man Ray experimented with an early hanging kinetic sculpture design assembled with abstract pieces of sheet metal.

But the most pivotal of all suspended modern art sculptures are Alexander Calder's famous stabiles that the artist/engineer began experimenting with in the 1930s.

Calder's breakthrough work utilized his own intricate design of swivel connectors, allowing the individual elements to rotate independently from each other. At the end of

each arm of the stable he placed a lobe represented by an organic form or abstract shape. Calder's body of work includes mobiles that range in size from miniature to 100 feet.

Today, mobiles remain popular with a new generation of designers, including international artist Marco Mahler, who custom designs some of the largest 3-D mobiles in the world.

Below we present an assortment of ten affordable hanging mobiles by numerous artists who draw from the world of mid-century modern design with hints of contemporary.

Together they represent a diverse bunch for sure—from a model of wire geometrics to another featuring a sci-fi galaxy to several inspired by Calder's original designs. Whichever you choose, we are sure you and your family will enjoy accenting your home interior with one or more of these hypnotic wonders of art in motion.

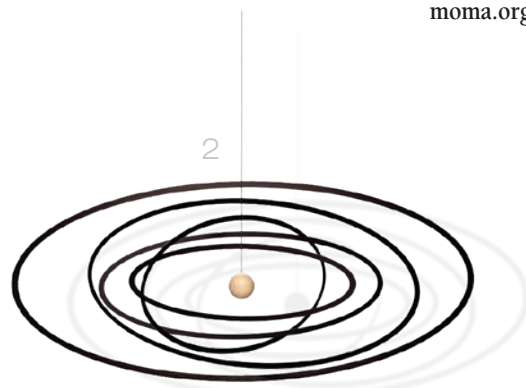
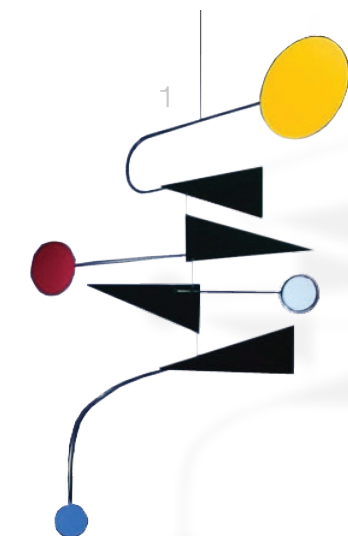


HOVERING ART. Eichler X-100 of the San Mateo Highlands is home to this custom mobile by MODmobiles (see #4 below).

## 1 TRAVERSE

by Hotchkiss Mobiles

Originally designed and presented in *Artnews* magazine in the mid-'80s, the Traverse and its red, white, yellow, and blue nylon circles create a contrast to the inner movements of black triangular vanes. Aluminum rods, neatly riveted to the vanes, reveal a sleek, modern appearance. Signed and dated by Joel Hotchkiss. 38 inches high x 28 inches wide. No assembly required. For interior display only. \$395. [artmobiles.com](http://artmobiles.com)



## 2 SCI-FI ELLIPSE

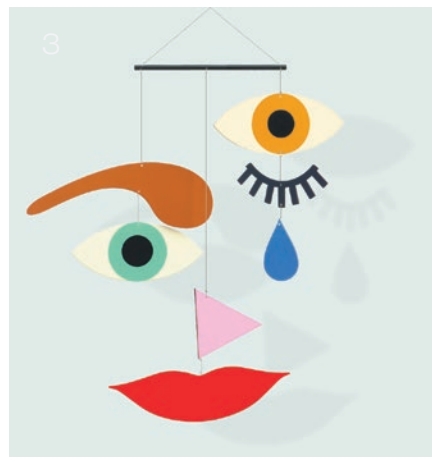
by Flensted & Lindner

Science Fiction Ellipse is German designer Johannes Lindner's reinterpretation of Christian Flensted's original 1955 design. Like planets orbiting the sun, the Ellipse's aluminum spheres revolve around a center ball made of Beech wood. Handmade in Denmark. Colors are black and natural wood. Dimensions: 23 centimeters high x 53 centimeters diameter. \$145. [finnishdesignshop.com](http://finnishdesignshop.com)

## 3 EXPRESSION

from MoMa Store

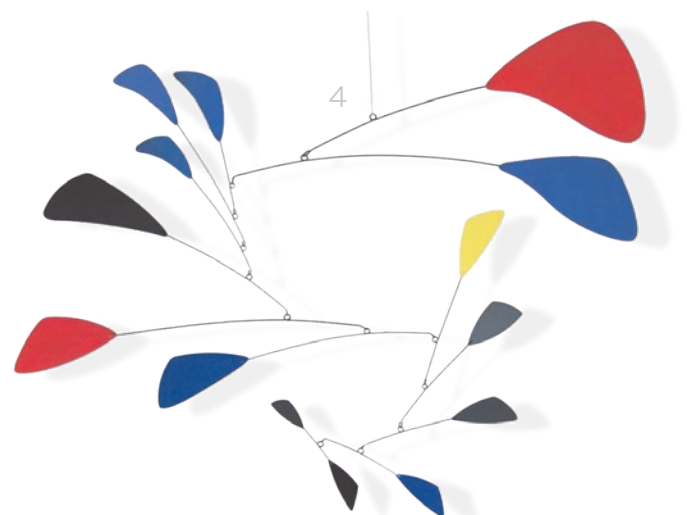
A colorful display of eyes, mouths, noses, eyebrows, and lashes features ever-shifting expressions. Each colorful wooden element is arranged to captivate, and is equally at home in a child's room, workspace, or living room. 9 inches high x 9 inches wide x 1 inch diameter. Imported. \$24. [moma.org](http://moma.org)



## 4 GANYMEDE

by MODmobiles

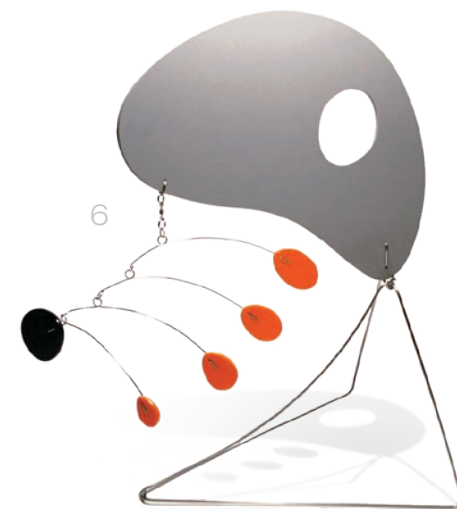
This beautifully made three-dimensional mobile features red, yellow, and blue painted-aluminum lobes connected by steel rods powder-coated in matte black. Dimensions are 40 inches high x 42 inches wide. Mod Mobiles can create a custom mobile to suit your preference in any color and any size. Made in Napa. \$795. [modmobiles.com](http://modmobiles.com)



## 5 FLOATING FISH

by Flensted

This suspended school of frolicking fish was created by the Flensted family on the Island of Funen in Denmark. The Flensteds have been designing mobiles since the 1950s, carefully assembling and balancing their designs by hand. No assembly required. 16 inches high x 16 inches wide. Pine wood, wire. \$119. [nova68.com](http://nova68.com)



## 6 GUYPOD

by Frithstables

This dramatic yet compact tabletop kinetic sculpture is perfect for a desk or dresser. Features polished plastic with a stainless-steel base and arms. Handmade in the USA by artist Julie Frith, who has been creating mobiles for 40 years. 12 inches high x 12.5 inches wide. \$150. [frithmobiles.etsy.com](http://frithmobiles.etsy.com)

## 7 ALINGSAS MOBILE

by Control Brand

A striking mobile that features multi-color stainless-steel components that are individually hand-cut, painted, and balanced one at a time. Impressive size with dimensions of 27 inches high x 40-44 inches wide. Custom made by hand. Assembly required. \$229. [wayfair.com](http://wayfair.com)



## 8 MODERN MOBILE #11

by NIZUart

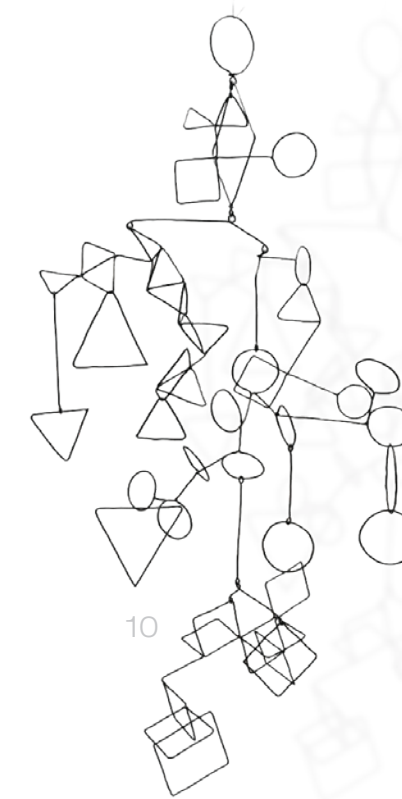
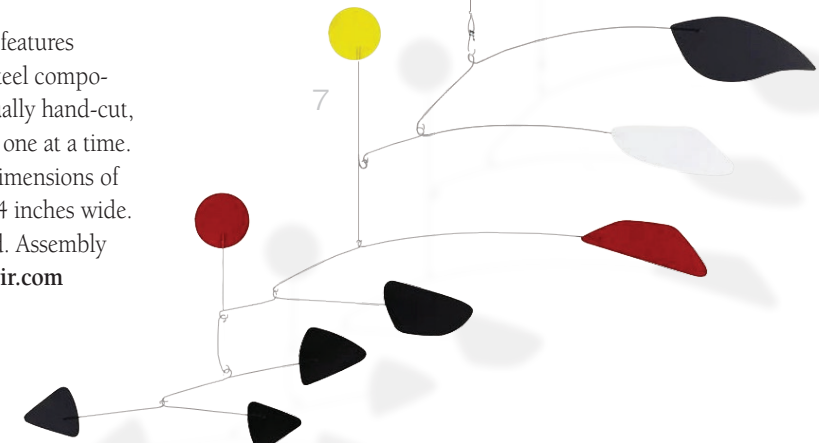
Inspired by Bauhaus and Constructivist art, this playful mobile in antique gold and copper colors will fit comfortably into most interior spaces. Metal ceiling suspension ring allows the individual elements to rotate. Made of biodegradable eco-plastic, with a metal chain and ring. Created by Nika Zusin. \$150. [nizuart.etsy.com](http://nizuart.etsy.com)



## 9 MOD EARRINGS STABLE

by Atomic Mobiles

Coolsville! Atomic Mobiles presents this groovy pair of '60s-style earrings that hang in their own stable holder. Perfect pop of color for a vanity or dresser. Materials are plastic and titanium/ear wires. Choose from an array of color combinations that are custom made to order. \$99. [atomicmobiles.etsy.com](http://atomicmobiles.etsy.com)



## 10 ISOLATION WIRE GEOMETRICS

by Frithstables

Fantastic one-of-a-kind piece of wire geometrics designed by artist Julie Frith. Comes completely assembled and ready to hang with easy hanging instructions, hooks, and line. Made of bailing wire, it will rust if hung outside. Handmade in the USA. 27 inches high x 16 inches wide. \$200. [frithmobiles.etsy.com](http://frithmobiles.etsy.com)

Photography: Sabrina Huang; and courtesy mobile suppliers