

# JSMA Creates

Lesson 3: Fourth Dimensional Drawings

JORDAN SCHNITZER MUSEUM OF ART

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A series of object based art lessons to do at home. These projects are developed by museum educators for artists and adventuresome kids of all ages and skill levels. Tag your final art with **#JSMAcreates** for a chance to be featured in a virtual exhibition.

## Lesson 3: Fourth Dimensional Drawings

**Artist:** Alexander Calder

**Title of Inspiration Work of Art:** Fish

*“To an engineer, good enough means perfect.  
With an artist, there’s no such thing as perfect.”*  
— Alexander Calder



Alexander Calder. **Fish**, 1952. Hanging mobile - painted steel rod, wire, string, colored glass, and metal objects, 15 ½ x 44 ½ x 3 ¼ inches. Private Collection. L2019:91.1

# MATERIALS

- **Writing instrument such as pencils, colored pencils, crayons or markers**
- **Paper for drawing an outline of your animal, mammal, or insect**
- **craft paper, paper bags, gift wrap paper, or old magazine paper**
- **Sequins, beads, bottle caps, ornaments, or other small and light decorations**
- **Rubber bands, paper clips, twine and/or string**

## RECOMMENDED

- **hot glue gun**

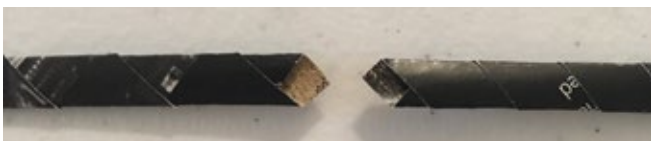
## OPTIONAL

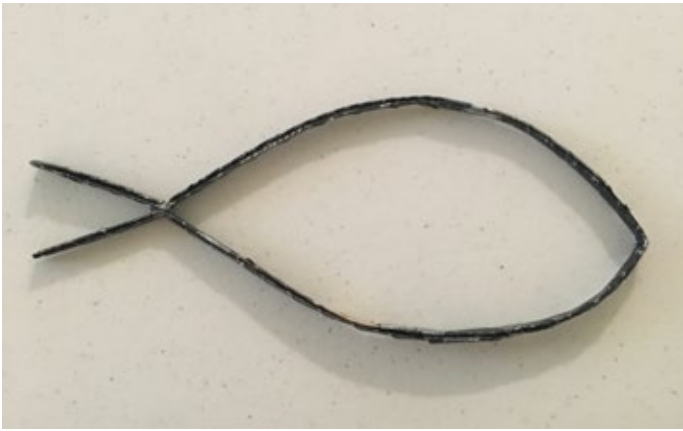
- **fine gauge wire**
- **tape**



# STEPS

- 1 Using a pencil or marker, draw an outline of an animal, mammal or insect. Fill the entire surface of your paper with your drawing. This is just to keep you on track when molding your frame.
- 2 Gather your mobile supplies and begin to construct your object.  
Cut your paper into strips at least 8 inches long so they are manageable to twist. Roll the paper around a pencil or paintbrush handle. Take the roll off of the handle and flatten it to create a strip. You can tape or glue the pieces together to create on long strip. Continue to add pieces until you have the desired length. You can stack multiple strips together to create a more sturdy frame.





- 3 Mold your long, stacked strips into a frame using the outline as a guide if needed.
- 4 Next, you can begin filling the inside of your object by tying pieces of string to the outside of your structure and filling the middle as Calder did (see illustration). Adhere them to one another and think about how they will balance the piece when it hangs. You can thread beads or sequins with a sewing needle if you have one.
- 5 Use multi colored paper from soup cans or canned food for your insert, and ask your parents first! You can also use junk mail and other magazines for a colorful effect. Find objects that will stand out or reflect light well.
- 6 Experiment with coloring different pieces of paper and use them as your inserts to fill up the inside of your creature. Think about how the shapes can illustrate texture and three dimensions in your structure.
- 7 After you have filled the inside of your mobile, try to hang it from a surface such as the edge of a desk or table top, or ask an adult to tape it to a doorframe and suspend.
- 8 If your object leans too much to one side or does not balance, use your science skills and remove or add pieces to create an equal balance.
- 9 Observe the shapes and reflection your mobile has at different times of the day, depending on the light in the room or light from outside.
- 10 After you complete your work of art, use **#JSMACreates** and tag **jsmauo** on social media for a chance for your artwork to be featured.

## Adaption for children with fine motor challenges:

Create the outline of your animal, mammal or insect as described above.

Instead of hanging multiple pieces of string or paperclips within the structure of your object, tear junk mail, soup can labels or magazines into the palm of your hand. Tape them around the inside structure of your object frame and suspend them at different lengths inside the body of your object.

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