



73-400 El Paseo  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

760 346 4661  
contact@codagallery.com  
www.codagallery.com

## Mark Davis

American, b. 1954

For most people, epiphanies strike when they are adults with an accumulation of life experiences. For Mark Davis, such a moment arrived when he was a 14-year-old living in Indiana and saw a picture of an Alexander Calder mobile.

"I felt like it was a part of me," he recalls. "I went to the hardware store for wire, roof flashing, and cutting shears and created a mobile like his with no knowledge of how to do it. I glued the pieces together because I didn't know how to solder and made a beautiful copy of Calder's *Snow Flurry* with white dots. "My parents loved it so much that they hung it over their bed. But each night, some of the glued dots dropped off and woke them up," he adds laughing over the imagery from his naïve beginnings.

Mark continued copying Calder, but eventually found his own voice, hand-forming organic shapes and airbrushing them with color to give them three-dimensional depth. "Now my work is more like a painting in space, where everything moves and, as it moves, the shapes and colors change."

Though his parents were academics, he says, "I did a better job of figuring things out for myself — looking at art and learning from doing it." Nevertheless, for a long time, he felt bad about lacking the formal training that other artists had. "I realize now that was a benefit, because I just follow my own instincts, and that seems the best path for me," he says.

In his 20s, Mark moved from the Midwest, which he did not like, to New England, which he does. For the first 15 years of his career as a professional artist, he created high fashion, sculptural jewelry for clients such as *Vogue* magazine and prestigious department stores in New York City like Bloomingdale's and Macy's.

In time, he reverted back to his initial inspiration and passion: mobiles. "Usually, I envision something almost like a gesture," he says of his process. "It's not about one shape, but form and movement."

He cuts cardboard to experiment with shapes and placement and then cuts metal pieces one section at a time until he has elements that "create movement in space." He then adds wire to make the various pieces relate to each other in what he calls a "constellation." "Sometimes I start with a vision; but a lot of times, a piece evolves as I finish each section. It is really a lot of playing until I feel I have got something," he explains. The final step involves airbrushing the metal, taking the color deeper and deeper to the edges to emphasize each shape and give them additional dimension.

"The most labor-intensive part is pounding out the shapes to make them organic and fluid. It takes tricky maneuvering with hammering and sanding," Mark says. "That's when I get into my Zen thing, as I tap, tap, tap away with my earphones on [usually listening to upbeat pop or alt pop music] — and I am in heaven."

In 1999, Mark bought his 1883-built Boston house. He removed walls on the second floor, fixed up the attic, and added skylights to make a large, open, "bright and cheerful" studio/workshop ("The attic is where the dirty work happens," he says). He gets an early start there and then takes an early-afternoon break to hit the gym, run errands, and make phone calls. After that, he works a few more hours, into the evening. He calls that routine "a really good day."

Over the years, Mark has added to his repertoire to include a range of sizes of hanging and standing mobiles; then wall-mounted mobiles; and, most recently, mobiles with C shaped arms attached to bases and measuring 2 feet around and 2 feet high. His largest work features LED-rimmed shapes and measures 70 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 10 feet tall. The installation, *Healing Waters*, hangs above the driveway entrance to Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago. Another substantial commission is an outdoor sculpture, 19 feet long and 14 feet high, for the private estate of the famed Pritzker family.

Mark's earliest commissions, which spanned 1988-1995, came from Tiffany & Co. to make mobiles for its window displays in New York and Boston. He sold a few of them, including one to the CEO of General Motors and another to actor Richard Chamberlain. Other notable collectors include Gary Trudeau, Julie Andrews and Blake Edwards, Howard Stern, Lexus, Liberty Mutual Insurance, and The Rose Art Museum at Brandeis University. Mark needs no external inspiration to continuing creating mobiles. "It feels like it's what I am made for — to wake up every morning excited about the next step of a piece I am working on or trying a new idea," he says. "It's what I live for."

## **Resume**

### **Exhibitions**

**1980** Solo Exhibition at Bloomingdale's, Chestnut Hill MA of Jewelry and Masks  
**1982-1985** Jewelry shows in New York City at Artwear, Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Ave, Macy's and Henri Bendel featured in Vogue Magazine, New York Magazine, Harper's Bazaar.  
**1988** Tiffany & Co of New York commissions mobiles to be used as window displays.  
**1988-1995** Commissioned to do window display mobiles for Tiffany's in New York and Boston.  
**1991-1992** Solo exhibitions of mobile with Judith N Wolov Gallery, Design Center, Boston, MA  
**1993-1996** Created mobiles for The L-S Collection on Madison Ave and Soho  
**1995** Group exhibition, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**1997** Solo exhibition, Nature in Motion, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**1999** Solo exhibition, Movement within Space, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2001** Solo exhibition, Color and Form in Motion, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2003** Solo exhibition, Boldly Balanced Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2005** Solo exhibition, Energy in Motion Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2005** Solo exhibition, Revisiting Nature Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2009** Solo Exhibition, Gathering Energy Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2011** Solo Exhibition, Phase Transformations, Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA  
**2012** Exhibitor: AD20/21 Cyclorama, Boston, MA  
**2013** Exhibitor: AD20/21 Cyclorama, Boston, MA  
**2013** Solo Exhibition, Form-Color-Balance, Pucker Gallery, Boston MA  
**2015** Solo Exhibition, Reverberating Gravity Pucker Gallery, Boston, MA

### **Public Collections**

Richard Chamberlain, New York, NY  
Gary Trudeau, New York, NY  
Julie Andrews and Blake Edwards, Los Angeles, CA  
Howard Stern, New York, NY  
Lexus Corporation  
Liberty Mutual Corporation  
Rose Museum, Brandeis University  
University of Chicago Comer Children's Hospital, Chicago, IL  
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, IL  
Good Samaritan Hospital, Brockton, MA  
Congregation Kehillath Israel, Brookline, MA  
Temple Emmanuel, Andover, MA  
The Farm, Libertyville, IL