Black Dancer by Robert Perless

Recognizing the contribution art has had in the Mayo Clinic environment since the original Mayo Clinic Building was finished in 1914, Mayo Clinic Proceedings features some of the numerous works of art displayed throughout the buildings and grounds on Mayo Clinic campuses as interpreted by the author.

Robert Perless (1938-) was born in Brooklyn, New York, overlooking Sheepshead Bay. He attended Cheshire Academy preparatory school, and studied art and engineering at the University of Miami in Florida.

He became a self-taught welder while working on a farm in Iowa for many years. In 1965, he began working with motorized kinetics and around 1972 to 1973, he began creating wind-powered works. By 1976, he mainly created site-specific constructs and in 1990, he added prisms to his metalworks.

Perless has had numerous one-man shows and commissioned work throughout the United States, and has held a lifelong fascination with the sea. Through his art, Perless strives to make a connection between nature and technology — demonstrated by the style and placement of his constructs.

Black Dancer stands tall and is reminiscent of spars and sails, rabbit ears, a ballet dancer in black leotards bowing to thunderous applause, or airplane wings: All things in motion. Standing in a tree-shaded lawn, it bridges the nature and technology gap Perless seeks. Black Dancer is made of welded aluminum and spins on a central axis at the touch of the lightest of breezes.

Black Dancer was donated to the Mayo Clinic by Rawleigh and Mary Ann Warner and is located outdoors adjacent to the Davis
Building on the Mayo Clinic campus in Jacksonville, Florida.³

ACKNOWLEDGMENT
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