

JON BUCK

PATTERNS OF CHANGE

Let it also be borne in mind how infinitely complex and close-fitting are the mutual relations of all organic beings to each other and to their physical conditions of life; and consequently what infinitely varied diversities of structure might be of use to each being under changing conditions of life.

Charles Darwin, *The Origin of Species*, 1859

For as long as Jon Buck can remember he has been interested in the natural world and its magnificent diversity of form and colour. Unlike many artists however, Buck's inspiration to create art that celebrates this diversity is not purely focused on visual representation but richly informed by our scientific and cultural evolution.

Jon Buck's own evolution as an artist has seen his work develop over the past four and a half decades from his first 'hyperreal' highly-coloured resin sculptures to pared back forms cast in bronze. At first, the surfaces of the bronzes were inscribed with repeating patterns or simple lines which Buck discovered could convey a clearer expression and illicit a more powerful response. In recent years, the lines Buck inscribed into the surface have transitioned into shapes or glyphs that protrude from it, initiating a personal yet universal lexicon of animals and symbols. In this exhibition these have evolved still further into bold, cellular patterns that Buck has adapted according to the shape of its closest neighbour as a metaphor for the evolutionary processes that have led to the diversity of life on earth.

Humans use pattern both to understand and recognize our complex existence and interpret our sensory experiences. Indeed, recent research suggests that it is our Superior Pattern Processing abilities that have given humans a unique advantage over all other species. In *Patterns of Change* Buck uses the profound importance of pattern to delight our eyes but also to challenge our perception with his playful approach to positive and negative binary shapes and his allusions to camouflaging or aposematic animal markings.



These patterns not only enliven the surfaces of Buck's two- and three-dimensional works but make us look more closely to reveal the cryptic symbols within. In the new series of large, striking wall-reliefs which have been made specially for Kings Place, along with their associated woodblock prints, Buck has sought out symbols that reinterpret the way science adopts cultural metaphors to explain complex evolutionary theories. For example, the dynamic, striding figure in *All the Running You Can Do* refers to Leigh Van Valen's universal rule for evolutionary change which he entitled *The Red Queen Hypothesis*. This was an allegorical nod to the counter-intuitive chess game depicted in Lewis Carroll's '*Alice Through the Looking Glass*' where Alice is instructed that 'it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place.'

Another biologist who has inspired Buck's work is Anthony Barnosky who introduced the Court Jester as a new player to this hypothetical, evolutionary chess game to represent the occasional catastrophic events that interrupt gradual change with mass extinction or rapid transformations. In both the monochrome wall relief *Fooling Around* and the unusually patinated sculpture *Becoming the Fool*, Buck develops the character of the Court Jester to become The Fool who is symbolised by his instantly recognisable cap. The important difference for Buck is that where Barnosky's cataclysmic event can be random we humans have become the fool of the Anthropocene era as we continue to ignore our effect on the planet. In these potent works Buck offers us powerful visual metaphors to explore our secular evolutionary creation story

(ABOVE LEFT)
All in the Blood
2022, Bronze
Edition of 10
26 x 30 x 7.5 cm

(ABOVE RIGHT)
Red Queen V
2020, Bronze
Edition of 10
30 cm high

(FAR LEFT)
Just So You Know (detail)
2021, Pastel on paper
Unique
56 x 71 cm framed

as so many cultures have done for millennia in order to explore their belief systems. He says:

Artists have always been inspired to depict the great creation stories of their day attempting to explain our existence and make conjectures of what the future might hold. My images are in essence no different but also draw inspiration from Science's contemporary narrative of Evolution as well as our shared history.

In *Patterns of Change* Buck presents us with a multi-layered experience, both visual and thought provoking which celebrates the diversity of life but also carries a pertinent message for our generation living in the Anthropocene era to respect 'the delicate balance that is the web of life'.

POLLY BIELECKA
Pangolin London

Jon Buck has created a new series of ceramics for this exhibition which can be seen in the five windows at the front of Kings Place.

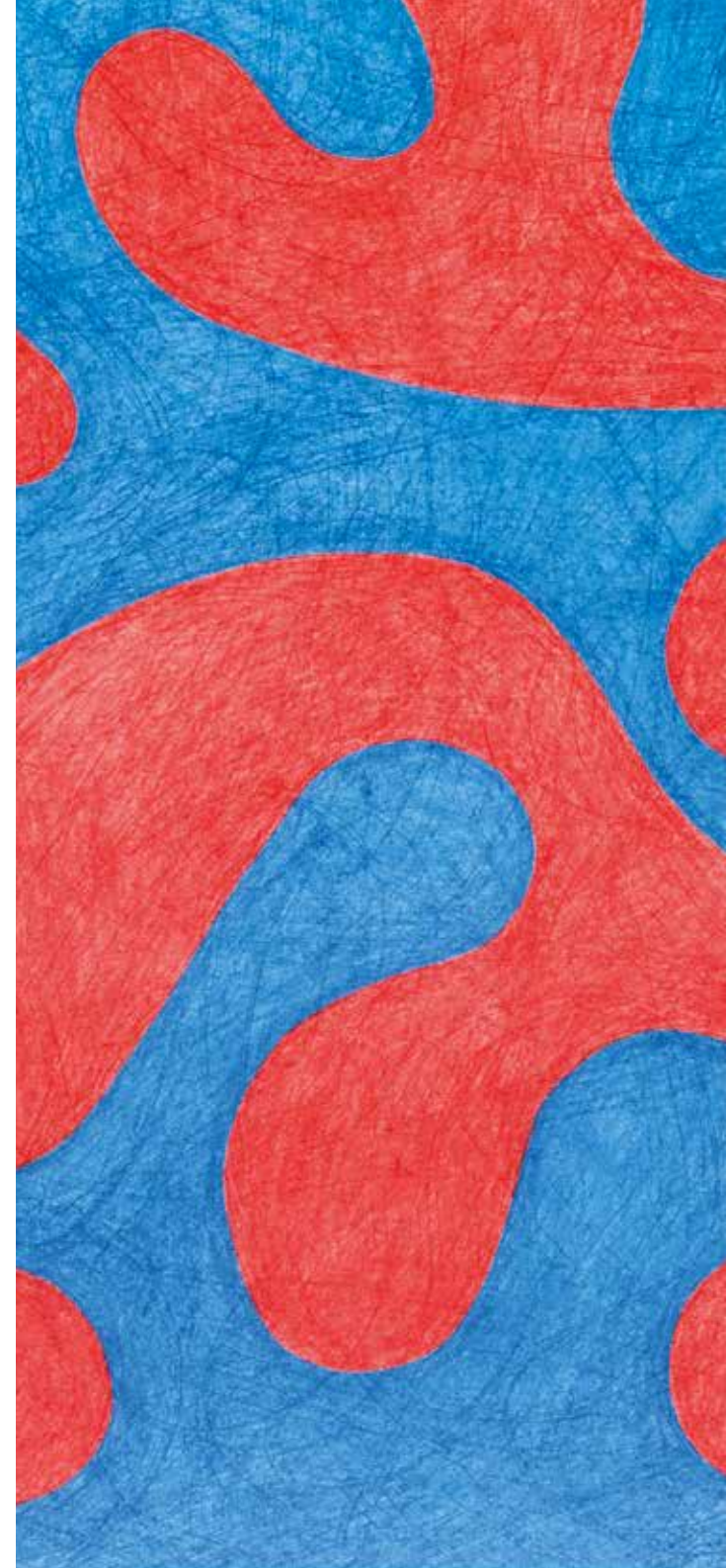


(LEFT)
Goldilocks
2022, Bronze
Edition of 10
32 x 31 x 21 cm

(RIGHT)
Symbiosis ii (detail)
2021, Pastel
Unique
56 x 71 cm

For sales enquiries,
please call the gallery on
020 7520 1480 or email
galler@pangolinlondon.com

PANGOLIN LONDON
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(TOP LEFT)
Making a Difference ii
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 30 x 60 cm

(CENTRE LEFT)
Inverted Proof
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 30 x 60 cm

(BOTTOM LEFT)
All the Running You Can Do ii
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 35 x 60 cm

(TOP RIGHT)
Fooling Around
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 30 x 60 cm

(CENTRE RIGHT)
Bottle Neck
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 35 x 60 cm

(ABOVE)
Making a Difference iii
 2022, Woodblock print
 Edition of 15
 40 x 60 cm

(BELOW)
All the Running You Can Do (Render)
 2022, Birchwood relief
 Unique
 240 x 360 cm





(TOP)
Startled Tiger
 2021, Pastel
 Unique
 56 x 71 cm



(ABOVE)
Out of Kilter (Ceramic)
 2022, Ceramic
 Unique