



JON BUCK
CODED FOR COLOUR



Recalling the Dog
in progress at
Pangolin Editions

INTRODUCTION

My first memories of colour are the bleached yellows and earthy pinks of the craggy landscape surrounding Athens where I spent my early childhood. Returning to a more monotone London, and taking an early interest in Greek mythology, I childishly perceived myself as having a special connection to the art and culture of this ancient civilization; envisaging stark white togas set against azure seas with clean open spaces and cool white marble. So I was shocked to learn years later that the Acropolis, the very epitome of my personal myth, had once been painted in gaudy reds, yellows and greens.

I imagine that for many people the discovery that Jon Buck's brightly painted and patinated sculptures are bronze elicits similar surprise. In their mind's eye bronze is an ancient material still constrained by a traditionally dull palette of verdigris greens, burnished browns and glossy Victorian blacks. They are forced to recalibrate their mental imagery and associations and look again.

Taking the time to look again at Buck's work offers rich reward. Those that dismiss simple form for simple ideas will overlook the diverse lines of enquiry that Buck engages to explore the world around us. From Nickolaas Tinbergen's theories of 'superstimuli' in the natural world and VS Ramachandran's applications of it in art, to prehistoric cave paintings, anthropology and a love of poetry, Buck's voracious reading informs and feeds his passion for exploring sign and symbol through sculpture.

Whilst these interests have remained fairly constant over the past three decades Buck's making process has been relentlessly re-developed and refined, at times taking great leaps forward and at others enjoying a period of consolidation whilst he takes time to gain a fuller understanding of the impact on his sculptural language. *Coded for Colour* offers the perfect opportunity to gain an overview of Buck's exciting adventure with form, surface and colour. In its most distilled sense this can be seen as a detailed naturalism steadily pared down to the brink of abstraction in an attempt to capture what Buck calls 'the essence of the thing' and ultimately to delight the viewer and stimulate the senses to maximum effect.

Whilst Buck's work has seen a gradual reduction in form over the past three decades his mark-making has become more complex and has evolved through imprints and incised line into personal lexicons of symbols and raised glyphs. It is these glyphs that have most recently transcended their original surface to find form in their own self. For example Buck's most impressive new monumental work *Recalling the Dog* has an ancestry that can be traced back over two decades of work through the *Eidos* works, *Repository*, *Deep Down Dog* to *He-Dog*.

Alongside this evolution has been Buck's extraordinary journey with colouring bronze which he developed partly through necessity (to make early resins more permanent) and partly through his special collaborative relationship with Pangolin Editions to discover new patinas and techniques. From a restricted palette of standard patination emerged fleshy pink, midnight blue and rich red patinas which Buck combined with contrasting painted pigments and gold leaf. This led to a desire to experiment with brighter and more vibrant colours which only painted bronze could offer.

Marked Cat and *Recalling the Dog* shown here for the first time illustrate two new techniques that Buck has developed to continue his exploration of colour as an important fourth dimension in his sculpture. *Marked Cat* uses uniform stickers to mark out,



(LEFT)
Mind Map (detail)
 2009, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 45 x 51 x 37 cm

(ABOVE LEFT)
Recalling the Dog
Maquette
 2014, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 37 x 50 x 20 cm

(ABOVE RIGHT)
Deep Down Dog
 2009, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 45 x 25 x 49 cm



rather like masking tape, the areas he does not want painted and to give regulated pattern to an abstract organic form. In contrast, *Recalling the Dog* uses multiple layers of paint rubbed back in areas to give an almost thermal image of the sculpture which at once makes it throb and fade, challenging our senses of sight and touch. The technique also seems to give an instant timelessness leading us to question whether the layers of paint have been worn back and eroded over millennia. Like the Acropolis what is revealed beneath the surface of Buck's work is innately beautiful but to enjoy it with colour we can relish the full impact and savour the delight.

POLLY BIELECKA
 Pangolin London

A film by Distant Object Productions has been produced to illustrate Jon Buck's evolution through colour. Please see our website for further details:
www.pangolinlondon.com/artists/jon-buck

The background features a large, solid black triangle that points towards the top right corner. The rest of the image is filled with a marbled pattern of white and light blue on a dark blue background. The word "CATALOGUE" is written in white, uppercase letters, positioned to the left of the black triangle.

CATALOGUE



*One Can't Two Can
Version II*
1983, Painted resin
and steel
Unique
160 x 50 x 40 cm

(RIGHT)
Family
1991, Bronze
Edition of 8
47 x 33 x 32 cm

(NEXT PAGE)
Primal Woman
1999, Bronze
Edition of 10
45 x 38 x 12 cm



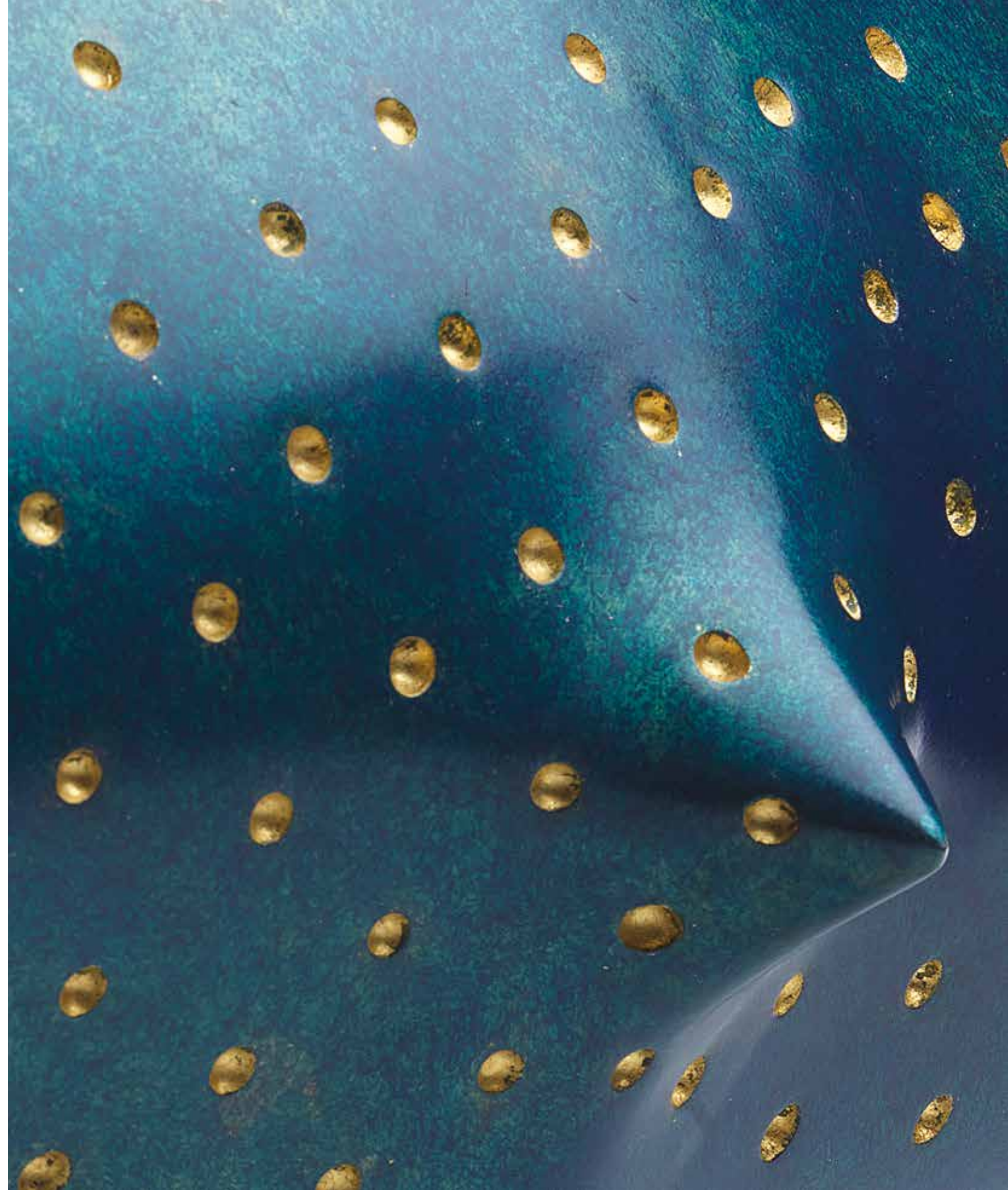






(THIS PAGE)
Aurora
 2003, Bronze
 and gold leaf
 Edition of 10
 50 x 54 x 20 cm

(PREVIOUS PAGE)
Back to Back
 1999, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 29 x 67 x 15 cm





Pink Lady
2005, Bronze
Edition of 10
52 x 38 x 15 cm



(LEFT)
Black Wings, Red Fields
 2015, Woodblock print
 Edition of 10
 50 x 65 cm

(RIGHT)
Wishbone Bird
 2005, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 58 x 48 x 17.5 cm





Long Dog
2005, Bronze
Edition of 5
140 x 172 x 26 cm

You and Me
2009, Bronze
Edition of 5
215 x 271 x 47 cm





(LEFT)
Double Take
 2005, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 34 x 43 x 6 cm



(RIGHT)
Field of Vision
 2013, Woodblock print
 Edition of 10
 65 x 50 cm

Drawn In
2009, Bronze
Edition of 10
52 x 67 x 17 cm





Right in Time
2009, Bronze
Edition of 10
63 x 92 x 14 cm



Mind Map
2009, Bronze
Edition of 10
45 x 51 x 37 cm



Night Bird
2011, Bronze
and gold leaf
Edition of 10
47 x 47 x 8 cm





(LEFT)
Dancing to Time
 2014, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 54 x 32 x 15 cm



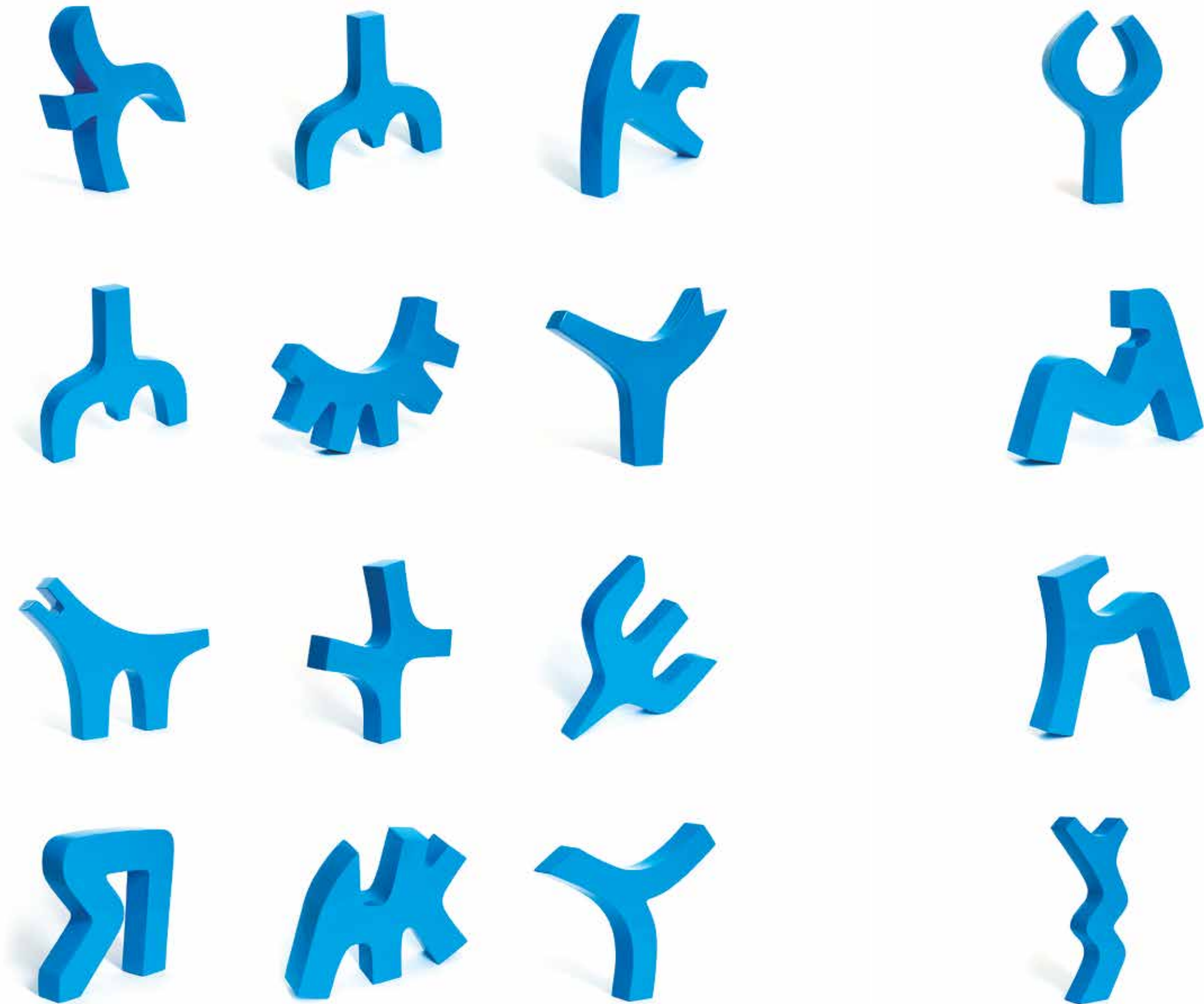
(RIGHT)
On Reflection
 2014, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 44 x 53 x 9 cm



(LEFT)
Red Queen Rules
 2011, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 70 x 51 x 11 cm



(RIGHT)
Matrilinear
 2014, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 58 x 38 x 18 cm



(TOP LEFT TO RIGHT)
*Eidos XII, X, VIII, IX, XI,
 IV, II, XIV, VII, XIII, VI, I,
 XVI, V, III, XV*
 2012, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 24 - 42 cm high each

Displayed in *Coded for
 Colour* as *Eidetic Wall*
 200 x 250 cm



(ABOVE LEFT)
Eidos IV
2012, Bronze
Edition of 10
27 x 39 x 8 cm

(BELOW LEFT)
Eidos VII
2012, Bronze
Edition of 10
30 x 40 x 8 cm

(RIGHT)
Repository
2011, Bronze
Edition of 10
70 x 38 x 17 cm





Recalling the Dog
Maquette
2014, Bronze
Edition of 10
37 x 50 x 20 cm



Recalling the Dog
2015, Bronze
Edition of 5
246 x 294 x 46 cm



Red Dog Angry
2015, Pastel and
charcoal on paper
Unique
50 x 65 cm



Blue Dog Lost
2015, Pastel and
charcoal on paper
Unique
50 x 65 cm



(LEFT)
Cat in the Night
 2015, Pastel and
 charcoal on paper
 Unique
 50 x 65 cm

(RIGHT)
Marked Cat
 2015, Bronze
 Edition of 10
 28 x 45 x 20 cm





(THIS PAGE)
Yellow Bird
2015, Bronze
Edition of 15
16 x 21 x 8 cm

(NEXT PAGE)
Beastiform: Blue,
Cuff: Yellow,
Beastiform: Red,
Cuff: Orange
2015, Resin
Edition of 20
12 - 20 cm high
including stand



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pangolin London would like to thank Jon and Jane Buck for embracing the concept of this exhibition and bringing together this remarkable body of work. Our thanks also go to Pangolin Editions for their skill and dedication in bringing the artist's vision to life and to Distant Object Productions for creating an exceptional film exploring Jon Buck's work. We are grateful to Steve Russell for his beautiful photography.

All photography unless stated below is by Steve Russell:
Image of *Long Dog* on pages 22-23 is reproduced courtesy of the University of Leicester.

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