

ZOLLA/LIEBERMAN GALLERY INC.

JOHN BUCK

Born: Iowa, 1946

My sculptures are highly detailed and are intimate references to contemporary, social and art related issues. I maintain a clear relationship with the craft and tradition of wood carving while focusing on the formal elements of composition, structure and balance. I also include abstract forms in my work and the diversity of the images encourages the viewer to explore and to make personal associations.

My sculpture is accomplished by hand-carving individual wooden elements. They are assembled to create an aggregated complete work. The development of a kinetic sculpture requires a period of trial and error where some elements have to be reworked, sometimes over and over again, to ensure the reliability of the various interrelated mechanisms of the sculpture.

Much of the imagery in my work is derived from research of historical events and the artist, scientists, explorers, and scholars involved in their pursuits. I feel very strongly about historical references being central to the content in my art.

My mechanical works are an extension of previous figurative work that has included an implied movement through the dynamics of form. The kinetic pieces explore mechanical movement through the use of motors, pulleys, and belts.

Printmaking has a history of using popular imagery, humor, and politics to critique society. My work is an extension of that tradition and I frequently study art history and the work of other artists who have pursued these issues in their work. The compositions and images that I combine with the human figure are intended to illustrate concepts and ideas within the human experience. My development has flowed from three to two dimensional, back again. They feed one another. As I continue, my three dimensional work has become much more grounded in the tradition of sculpture in the round and my prints, more illusionistic. Initially, the woodblocks were not preconceived, but were open and spontaneous diaries of ideas. One thing led to another. Eventually a central image would evolve from the drawing and that form would be inlaid into the surface of the block. Now, my woodblocks are predetermined by themes that I choose which govern imagery and format. Keeping this process as intuitive and spontaneous as possible is one of the challenges that I focus on.

- John Buck, 2021