

CAVE

WHITE NIGHT

Words and Pictures: Rebecca Leyden

Standing in an underground car park, outside New World in Remuera at 11 pm on a Friday night; is not exactly where you would expect to see the latest creation from two of New Zealand's most prominent artists. But that is exactly what I found myself doing on a Friday night. The artists in question are Iain Cheesman and Chris Hargreaves. And this new project is called 'Cave'.

The concept is this - An array of skeletal drawings have been embellished with LED lights which gives the effect of a dull lit neon sign, a Contemporary Urban Cave if you will. The drawings range from referencing prehistoric cave paintings with the use of a Bison all the way to a comment on New Zealand history with

"For God! For King! And For Country! To the process of stepping out of our cars and then taking the short, if not slightly treacherous, march from the car park to the 'New World'. In preparation you gather your cell phone, your wallet and your shopping list... Go the hunt go!"

This was one of my favourite pieces of Art in all of White Night, so I had to catch up with Iain and Chris and asked them about the fascinating installation piece. Here's what they had to say:

How long did this project take you both to install?

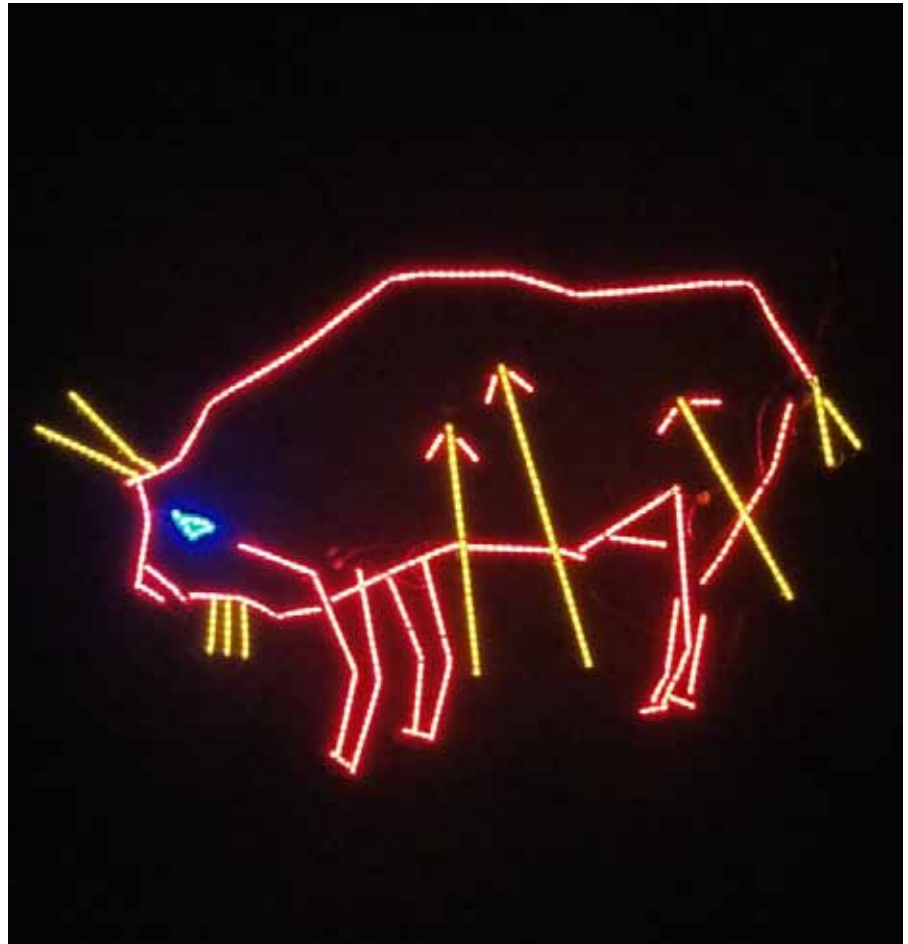
L: About 30 hours in total. Though we did the majority of the work in the workshop.

How did you come up with the idea for 'Cave'?

L: When we walked under here, the Remuera New World underground car park, our instant reaction was that it was like a cave. We wanted to add something interesting to it. The small text and symbols is a good way to engage with an instantaneous and short-lived audience. The idea itself came very quickly to us.

Very interesting! How long would you say you two have been working together?

L: This is actually the first time we have done a project together! (laughs) We first met in 2003 at a showing we were both



involved in at Art Space. It was called Follow The White Rabbit. Straight away after meeting, we had an affinity with one another. This project was incredibly easy and fast to do together because we were able to flip ideas off one another and add to it quickly.

So let me ask about the symbols - what do they all mean?

L: We have both been to caves separately and been blown away by the evolution (of the cave paintings). We wanted to drag the idea of cave paintings into the modern era using LED lighting - low tech trying to be high tech, that's the intention, though everything is so slick these days. The text is in pigeon English in format; we start with an image of a Bison, which is a well-known symbol in cave drawings. Then the words 'Bully-Beef'. This is a poetic aspect.

C: There is a formal element to the sayings. Then the formal undoes itself then does itself back up again. It's good that the residents of Remuera keep their cars so clean (laughs) looks good reflected in a Porsche.

How long will Cave be up and open to the public?

L: Cave is up for as long as it lasts. Hopefully we will get some funding to make it bigger!

Cave is an installation timed for White Night in Remuera, held on Saturday 16 March. The piece is on exhibition for an extended amount of time so make sure you check it out!

For more information on the artists involved check out Chris Hargreaves website: www.chrishargreaves.co.nz