

Horses for Chinese New Year

Happy New Year of the Wooden Horse!!!

Artist's life-size beach sculptures made from driftwood from the Philippines

These majestic horses galloping through the sea may look real but are in fact made from thousands of pieces of driftwood salvaged from the shore.

The life-size sculptures are the work of Birmingham-based master craftsman James Doran-Webb, 46, who spent a painstaking six months assembling them as part of celebrations to mark Chinese New Year in Singapore.

Each of the three sculptures stands at around 6ft tall - or 16 hands as horse lovers might say - and is made from roughly 400 pieces of driftwood of varying sizes built around a stainless steel skeleton.



Majestic: These horses may look real but are in fact made from thousands of pieces of driftwood salvaged from the shore. Each of the sculptures stands around 6ft tall



Birmingham-based master craftsman James Doran-Webb (pictured on horse) spent a painstaking six months assembling the sculptures as part of celebrations to mark Chinese New Year in Singapore

Each horse weighs around half a tonne and can take the weight of five people.

Doran-Webb made all three with moveable limbs and neck so they can be arranged into lifelike poses, as these stunning photographs show.

The intricate trio of horses were constructed for the Gardens by the Bay in Singapore, a nature park similar to Cornwall's Eden Project.

They will take pride of place in one of the Gardens' glass domes as part of its Chinese New Year celebrations on January 31, which fittingly marks the coming Year of the Wooden Horse.

Doran-Webb comes from Birmingham but has been living in Cebu City in the Philippines for 26 years where he runs a workshop.



James Doran-Webb made all three with moveable limbs and neck so they can be arranged into lifelike poses



Each horse is made from 400 pieces of driftwood of varying sizes built around a stainless steel skeleton

The wood he uses in his sculptures has been salvaged from beaches and rivers around Cebu by a network of locals who Doran-Webb pays to collect it.

For every kilo of wood salvaged, he plants a seedling at one of several sites around the city.

He said: 'The three thoroughbred horses are my latest driftwood creation... Each horse took two months to make and contains about 400 pieces of driftwood of varying sizes.'

'By the time they are finished each one weighs 500kgs and can be the weight of four or five people,' he added.

Doran-Webb went on to say: 'I started off collecting the driftwood myself in my kayak but now I have a network of locals who I pay to collect it for me which helps put money back into poor communities.'



The trio of horses were constructed for the Gardens by-the-Bay- in Singapore. They will take pride of place in their Chinese New Year celebration, which fittingly marks the coming 'Year of the Wooden Horse'



James Doran-Webb pays locals in his adopted hometown of Cebu, Phillipines, to collect the wood from nearby beaches. For every kilo of wood salvaged, he plants a seedling at one of several sites around the city

The wood Doran-Webb uses for his sculptures is around 50 years old, and according to the craftsman it is ideal to work with.

He said: 'It is an oily wood so it withstands weather and it is very tensile - it's a dream to work with.'

'I started out with sketches of the horses then once I was happy with them I made miniature models of them, which took a month on its own,' he added.

Doran-Webb said the next step was to make a large plywood template to weld the stainless steel frame onto.

He said: 'Putting the driftwood onto the sculpture took about three months. The large bits go on first followed by the more intricate pieces.'