



The Han Caves domain now allows visitors to discover the closed-off areas thanks to Speleogame, the virtual journey realised by de pinxi.

As of 31 March 2006 the Han Caves domain offers visitors a thrilling new attraction realized by *de pinxi*: Speleogame. Using the most advanced digital technology, the project allows visitors to discover the 80% of the cave network that only the most experienced cavers have been able to explore until now!

As a first stage in this project, initiated by the non-profit making organisation Grottes de Lorette-Rochefort, *de pinxi* completely reorganised the "La Ferme" site which now houses the new virtual installation.

Active queueing!

View a hundred years of images of the Han Caves on a giant fresco... Scan the panoramic image of the 70 most visited tourist caves in Europe and Belgium.... and then advance into the Speleobox to share the experiences of the caver, squeezing through the narrowest openings in the underground network: the queueing area ensures that visitors are far from inactive while they wait!

The interactive journey

How do caves form? What animal life do they support? What equipment does a diver need to explore an underground watercourse? What wealth of archeological information have the Han Caves yielded up? What can we do to protect these natural sites that are so often threatened by man's activities?

Once the visitor enters the themed area with its twenty interactive terminals he can discover 1001 facts about "Caves, man and the river" in his own language and at his own pace.

The show

This is a first for Belgium! The interactive 4D show is the highlight of the Speleogame.

We follow Maria, a journalist for Télé-Lesse, as she reports on events that are in turn disturbing, scientific and fantastic, set within the inaccessible Han cave network. Maria and her colourful guests, Jehan the computer and the other characters in the tale, guide us into the darkest, most secret depths of the Han Caves. But the real protagonists, as in all *de pinxi* productions, are the spectators, who interact with the events of the story as a team.

A number of surprises await them: all of their senses are put to the test to elude the traps and solve the mysteries! To come safely through the adventure, the visitors must row a boat forward with oars, for example, and shout themselves hoarse in the caves, and must not mind a bit of water (courtesy of special effects)!

Scientific and technical support

Thanks to the efforts of a large team of scientists and technologists and many cavers who are passionate about the site, the public can see striking images of the areas to which they would not normally have access, such as the la Lesse underground tunnel, the old network formerly open to the public, the South network and other closed chambers. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Messrs Quinif, Deflandre, Timperman, Evrard, Haesen, la Calestienne Caving Club and the Han Caves guides for their assistance.

Technical notes

The above journey has been developed and installed in its entirety by *de pinxi*, who also realized the audiovisual production, the scenography, the information technology, the engineering and the control electronics.

- over 300m2 of frescoes and posters.
- Speleobox, a physical journey of 15 metres simulating a caving expedition, automated photography.
- 18 interactive booths developing the themes of the caves in four languages (FR,NL, EN,DE):
 - the river, water management, layout;
 - the geology of the cave;
 - the concretions as recorders of climate;
 - the visual dictionary of the concretions;
 - underground diving;
 - the fauna of the caves;
 - the caves through history, their archeology;
 - the caves as a source of inspiration for the plastic arts, literature and cinema.
- Projection table 12m2, aerial view of the route of the river.
- General automation of the route, central piloting of 40 IT and projection systems.
- Monitoring of all equipment in real time; operation and temperature.
- Over 3000 metres of cabling and pipework!
- 5 different lighting techniques: LED, PAR, cutout, TL, flatlight.
- All signage, internal and external.
- 3D lenticular imagery.
- DMX512 control.
- Remote maintenance.

The auditorium is based on the exclusive group interaction technology developed by *de pinxi*, *argoGroup*TM. In the theatre, which can accommodate 115 people, each seat is equipped with a console allowing individual interaction: joystick, buttons, display and sound module. The system combines social experience with highly individual interaction.

Thanks to *argoGroup*TM, the show is also multilingual: French, Dutch, German and English, allowing speakers of different languages to all interact together!

*argoGroup*TM was named best new show product at IAAPA 2001!

The theatre's special effects include vibrations, flashes and (individual) sprays, and 5.1 spatialised sound.

The show combines interactive synthesised images with real high definition photography. To film in the depths of the caves in HD *de pinxi* developed a new version of its 3D camera, dpCam3dv3, and machinery solutions specially adapted to the constraints of the location (absence of light, narrow openings etc.).

Documents available

Photos and plans of the installation.
"Making of" images.
Taped advertisement for 4D interactive show.

Stop press

At the Laval Virtual Fair the Speleogame show won an award from the ACM Siggraph Committee for "originality of a system offering interaction to a group"!

The attraction will be part of the "Emerging Technologies" demonstration at Siggraph 2006, to be held in Boston in July!

About *de pinxi*

www.depinxi.be

Ever since 1993 *de pinxi* has been developing leisure and educational systems that seek to immerse the audience in their interactive content. Over 60 interactive installations have been realized worldwide. These experiences involve the creation of virtual worlds (infographics and sound), videos, special effects, information technology and control electronics which are placed in the audience's hands. Our job is to translate an idea, a scenario, a museum trip into a shared interactive experience which is far from ordinary!

Please contact us for more information about our interactive group experiences and virtual voyages.

info@depinxi.be