

The large standing form of *Robert Nesta* is covered entirely in hand-felted wool, from the flat expanses upholstered over its body to its carefully curved horns and hairy mane. Climbing through the circular portals, the sitter finds comfort and seclusion inside the animal's sheepskin-lined form, with porthole-like openings for visibility or tiny bodies to wriggle through. The gnu (as it is known in North America) is named after reggae pioneer Bob Marley (full name Robert Nesta Marley) – Hefer's "all-time favourite musician and life influence". In South Africa, the animal is known as a wildebeest (meaning "wild beast" in Dutch) and is a common sight in game reserves. The annual migration of more than 1.5 million wildebeest in Tanzania's Serengeti is regarded one of the "Seven Wonders of the Natural World". Covering around 1,600 km a year, wildebeest herds possess what is known as "swarm intelligence", meaning that they share information and make collective decisions about their movements, overcoming threats and thwarting prey almost as a single organism would.

Hefer points out some unique navigation tactics: "They use cloud formations for orientation, as storm clouds can be seen at great distances. They can also detect thunder showers from afar, predicting them with their delicate sense of smell and hearing."

*Robert Nesta*

2024

Felt, steel, sheepskin, timber

168 x 201 x 109 cm | 66.1 x 79.1 x 42.9 in.

Edition 1 of 3

