

ARTS & CULTURE

weekender.

Dive into project Iron Shark

BY LISA ROCKMAN

WHEN Newcastle chocolatier Dean Gibson and industrial designer Jon Pryer put their heads together, anything can (and frequently does) happen.

Gibson is a world-renowned pastry chef and Team Pastry Australia's coach. He has also mentored many of Australia's greatest pâtissiers, including Adriano Zumbo, and has a passion for art and turning his trade into masterpieces.

Pryer started award-winning Newcastle business, neo industrial design, in 1985 and is also a sculptor fascinated by anthropomorphism.

Their aim is to turn their respective trades into art and build respect and recognition for all tradespeople across the country.

Their first invention was The BoneShaker, the world's first moving chocolate sculpture. The steampunk-inspired robotic rhinoceros was unveiled at the 2017 Smooth Festival of Chocolate at The Rocks, had a total of 149 working parts, and weighed 180 kilograms.

Their second was The Raven's Voyage, a Viking boat inspired by a 19th century theatre set.

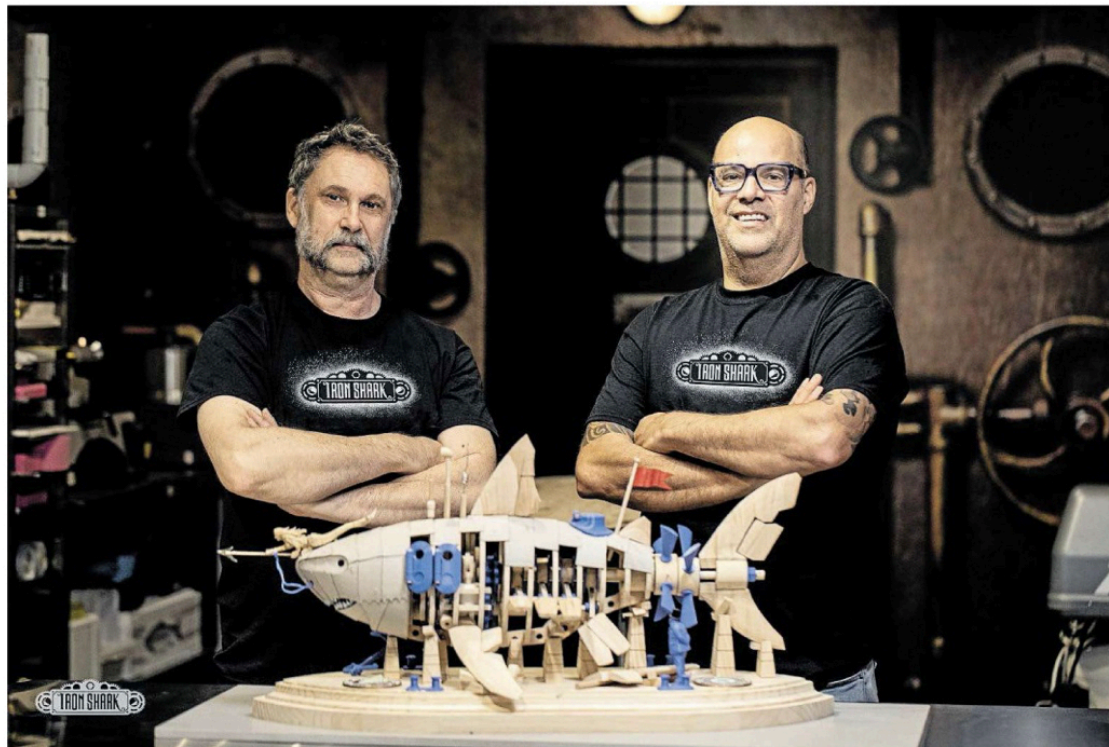
This time the pair are hoping to construct a kinetic chocolate sculpture with the most moving parts - ever.

They have called the project *Iron Shark*.

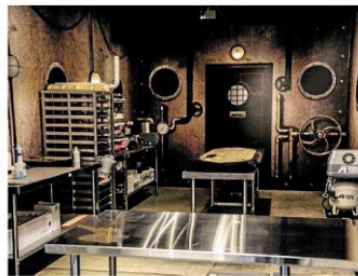
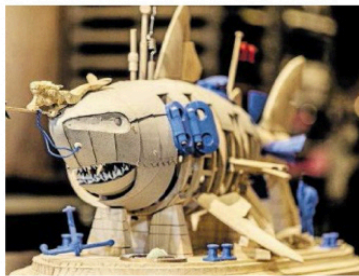
For the next month they will be holed up in a room at Hamilton North's The Creator Incubator, building a 2.5-metre-long, steampunk-inspired shark made entirely of Italian Ircra chocolate.

Every cog, screw, shaft and fin will be engineered from chocolate using food grade silicones, lathes, a CNC cutter, and other tools treated with food-grade oils. They have spent months planning, designing, building 3D models and refining the construction methodology so that the end product comes together seamlessly.

With support from project partners Fivespice Creative, the four-week construc-



RECORD ATTEMPT: Jon Pryer and Dean Gibson with their Iron Shark model at The Creator Incubator. Picture: Fivespice Creative



tion of the *Iron Shark* will be live-streamed throughout July, and The Creator Incubator space open to visitors to watch their progress.

Once completed, the giant shark will be presented to the public at the Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley on August 6. From there, Gibson is unsure how and where he will dismantle the giant structure. Time will tell.

"What we're doing is crazy, I mean we will have a 150-kilogram shark that we have to transport, and that's if we even get it done in time," Gibson says.

"But it's all part of the challenge.

"Chocolate sculpture is a creative expres-

sion and a crazy way of showing what can be achieved if you put your passion, your love of art, and a good industrial engineer together."

The room they are working in at The Creator Incubator has been transformed into the dark belly of an old-school submarine.

"Being in an art gallery is part of the experience. The shark aside, the room is crazy - there's smoke machines, sounds of submarine pings and red alerts, and flashing lights," Gibson says.

"We can come and go 24 hours a day throughout the month - it allows us to be as creative as we can."

Vanessa Williams from Fivespice Creative designed the room and Hamilton North business Inteliprint jumped at the opportunity to bring her ideas to life.

"We tried to make the project as local as possible," Shane Williams from Fivespice explains.

"Rather than painting the space we're working in, we can peel it all off the walls and walk out of the room with it."

So, why a shark? It fit in well with the steampunk submarine theme, says Gibson.

"It's actually a megladon, with lots of moving gears and cogs," Williams adds.

And this time, Gibson is using Italian rather than Belgian chocolate.

"I've been known as the Callebaut guy for such a long time but this time we're using Ircra chocolate, they're pretty new in the market," he says.

"I'm such a proud Novocastrian and I'd love nothing more than the local community to get behind this project, come and check it out and see just how incredible, and edible, this shark will be once it's finished.

"Nobody in the world is doing what we are doing now. And if they can base a television show on Lego, why not chocolate?"