

Organization wants NYC's Central Park Carriage-Horse Operators to Trade in Mr. Ed for Mr. EV

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NY-Class is a not-for-profit organization on a mission to replace the Big Apple's venerable (though some say inhumane) carriage-horse industry with clean, **electric-drive "show cars"**.

These "21st Century Horseless Carriage" may look like something from the turn of the twentieth century, but behind the white walls and running boards sit five modern lithium-ion battery packs good for 8 to 10 hours travel time on a 2 to 3 hour charge.

NY-Class - an acronym for New Yorkers for Clean, Livable And Safe Streets -

commissioned the Fort Lauderdale, FL based **Creative Workshop** to produce a two-foot-long model of their proposal. The lime-green miniature is said to have cost US\$12,500 (€9,335), which is an achievement in itself.



Jason Wenig of Creative Workshop describes the look of the finished product thusly: "Brass is going to be everywhere, and it's going to be shiny and beautiful."

It will have a convertible top, room for six passengers and a cruising speed of 5 mph (8 km/h). NY-Class hopes that 68 of these cars could soon replace Central Park's carriage horses altogether. Each unit is expected to cost between US\$125,000 to US\$175,000 (€93,346 to €130,685) compared to roughly US\$15,000 (€11,202) for a new horse and carriage.

NY-Class proposes that the cars could be leased, rather than bought, for US\$21,000 (€15,682) a year.

Ed Sayres, NY-Class co-president and president of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) had this to say about the proposed cars: "They're guaranteed not to urinate or defecate in the middle of your romantic moment."

Despite the fact the cars would meet all government safety regulations, probably require less upkeep than their mammalian equivalents and offer both riders and passengers the same levels of liability coverage as rickshaws and yellow cabs, the carriage-horse industry has staunchly resisted NY-Class's proposal.

Cornelius Bryne, who owns one of the New York's four carriage horse stables, had this to say about it: "I don't think there are any kids out there that are going to want to pet and kiss the fender of a car."

This just goes to show he's never met any of our younger readers [...]. Still, NY-Class is not deterred, as one can see from this comment by organization co-founder Steve Nislick:

"New York City has long awaited this change. By incorporating 21st century technology and 19th century nostalgia, this eco-friendly car will create vast improvements in the industry. Together with the Department of Consumer Affairs, this business can be regulated, similar to the yellow cab industry, and prevent these systemic abuses."

If approved, Mr. Sayres believes the organization "show cars" could be on the roads within twelve months.

Whether or not NY-Class can get buy in from New York's US\$15 million (€11 million) per year carriage-horse industry, however, is another matter.

By Tristan Hankins

Story References: NY-Class via NY Times , Photo Credits: The Creative Workshop [Thanks to Jason W. for the pictures]