



GLOBAL RECESSION IGNITES CREATIVE SPIRIT FOR THE MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™ AWARDS

Plato once said, “necessity is the mother of invention” and history has proven that innovation always springs from hard times. The judges at the annual Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards in Wellington, New Zealand have been thrilled to see so many exceptional entries come in from ten different countries this year.

“Stories of dedication and passion behind every entry are often just as inspiring as the garment itself,” says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. “For instance, one young designer from India had to forgo transport money - and walk for miles - to save enough to be able to buy materials for his garment.”

Described as, “a rebellion against the mundane”, the Montana WOW® Awards Show is a prestigious arts event on the international design, fashion and costume calendars, and has a growing reputation for inspiring and encouraging recycling. Long running BBC correspondent Michael Peschardt was blown away after seeing the 2008 show, “I’ve seen major cultural and fashion shows around the world and this is unlike anything I’ve ever witnessed before.”

Designers are challenged to create something original, which has impact on a 40-metre arena stage and can withstand detailed inspection. The 2009 panel of judges have selected 165 garments from the UK, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, India, the Netherlands, United Arab Emirates, the USA, Canada and New Zealand, which will all grace the stage in September and October in Wellington, New Zealand.

Winner of the 2008 WOW® Factor Award, Sean Purucker from Toluca Lake, C.A., has created a three piece ensemble, *Atomic Cactus Patch*, embellishing it with hundreds of earplugs. The Universal Studios stitcher grew up in Alaska where he was surrounded by nature and beauty and questions man’s harnessing of power with his thought-provoking, frenzied entry, “Power is beautiful, but testing in the desert might have terrible effects on the lands’ vegetation and its people.” Sean painstakingly hand sanded and painted the tiny earplugs, to create a cactus effect. (see attached image of Purucker’s 2008 winning entry *Punk Bird Family*.)

A big bag of white rubber rings was the catalyst behind Maartja Dijkstra’s surreal garment from the Netherlands, *Bulged Being*, also made with wires, refextionfabric and metal. The Rotterdam designer confesses, “Fashion is more than wearable things, it’s all about making things you want to make. I will try to enter WOW® every year from now on!” (see attached image of Dijkstra’s 2008 entry, *Illustre Shoe-Machine*, runner up in the WOW® Wellington International Award.)

3000 charger pins were used in Ragini Ahuju's entry, *Multi-Plug* to demonstrate people's obsession with their mobile phones and the panic they feel when the battery runs out. Fortitude was needed for the New Dehli student to complete the garment, as each pin had to be attached through two eyelets - 6000 in total!

Kim Kui Tang from Hong Kong knitted an avant garde garment, *Seamless Octopus*, entirely out of wire using 3D hand looping techniques. The fashion design student found the low-density wire surprisingly easy to knit with, giving the garment great elasticity and shape.

Hundreds of recycled drinking straws were used in the creation of Justine Pizzey's ancient Egyptian outfit, *Hatshepsut*. The New Zealander was delighted with the versatility of the ordinary straw and its ability to be transformed into an elegant costume, fit for a great female Pharaoh!

Poly-lurex tissue and medicated cotton went into the creation of, *The Walk Of A Statue*, by Vikas Verma from the UAE. The Dubai design professor wanted to celebrate the beauty of a woman's body and create a garment that looked like a carved statue. The finished product mysteriously has no raw edges or visible seams inside or out.

Mitsuko Makino from Japan used traditional Japanese origami techniques to express her idea "of blossoms on the human body" in *The Origami Blossom*. The Kyoto artist fashioned daphnes, chrysanthemums, peonies and magnolias out of recycled paper and non woven cloth. (See Makino's commended entry in the 2008 CentrePort 'Inspired By Architecture' Section, *The Structure Of Beauty: Aotearoa*).

Angela Bright drank a lot in the creation of her garment *Let Them Drink Tea* made out of used tea bags, coffee filters, recycled dishes and sweaters. The Port Moody resident from Canada wanted to juxtapose the excess of the French court during the 18th century with today's garbage and admits "Loved ones don't necessarily appreciate it when you leave tea bags and coffee filters to dry for days all over the kitchen."

The line up of high calibre judges for 2009 are British Associate Royal Sculptor Max Patte, New Zealand fashion designer and businesswoman, Annah Stretton, and Suzie Moncrieff. Oscar winning film-maker, Richard Taylor of WETA Workshop will judge the Special WETA Award for the garment that best crosses the boundaries of film and WearableArt™.

"My expectations were blown out of the water," says Max Patte, who is currently working at WETA Workshop in New Zealand. "I was amazed - really, really impressed. The diversity and standard of entries should ensure a knockout show."

There is nothing quite like the Montana WOW® Awards Show for designers and artists to showcase their creativity, where their selected garments are brought to life in a theatrical extravaganza entwined with every facet of performance: music, dance, lighting, drama and comedy. The Montana WOW® Awards Show is set to thrill again with an incredible array of garments made from a plethora of weird and wonderful things, beginning Thursday September 24 at the TSB Bank Arena in Wellington - New Zealand's creative capital.

*Montana Wines from New Zealand are avid supporters of creativity, and are the naming partner of the WOW® Awards Show.

New Zealand's Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show bends traditional perceptions of both art and fashion by cleverly choreographing garments into an extravaganza that blasts all the senses and uplifts the spirit. Simon Ungless, Director of Graduate Fashion from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco said, "It's the most important event I have seen in years. I am always looking for something new, and felt I was witnessing the phoenix rise from the flames of fashion, in the creativity and energy that is WOW®."

For further information, including imagery, please refer to the on-line media room at www.worldofwearableart.com or e-mail media@worldofwearableart.com