



MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™ FINALISTS INSPIRED BY SOME OF THE GREATS

Leonard Da Vinci, Joan Miro, Cliff Whiting, Salvador Dali, M.C. Escher, Pablo Picasso, Colin McCahon, Edgar Degas and Charles Goldie are behind some of the ideas for the finalists selected for the 21st Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards Show.

"It's really exciting to see people tackle big, audacious ideas, taking inspiration from some of the great artists this year," says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "There is also wonderful use of recycling - something the Montana WOW® Awards Show has encouraged from the beginning - and it's incredible what people can make out of earplugs, cricket pads, a lawnmower, circuit boards, tea bags, venetian blinds, wetsuits, mattress springs and a recycled 2007 WOW® entry!"

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. Out of these, 117 entries are from New Zealand.

Winner of the 2006 Montana Supreme WOW® Award and 2008 CentrePort 'Inspired By Architecture' Section, Rodney Leong, has created a three piece ensemble, *AM I I AM*, based on one of Colin McCahon's famous paintings *Victory Over Death 2*, which questions faith and strength. The Trelise Cooper pattern maker has transformed acrylic sheeting into an illusion of flicking through books on svelte black dresses and says, "it's a statement about one's self - living with the fear of doubt." (see attached image of Leong's 2008 winning entry *Conversations With Guggenheim*.)

Leonardo Da Vinci's many talents as a skilled painter, sculptor, inventor, mathematician, draughtsman, fashionista and scientist are honoured in previous successful entrant Heather Wallace's extraordinary piece, *Da Vinci's Dandies*. The Wellington industrial designer has fashioned an entry that needs to be worn by three men, modeled on the drawing of the Vitruvian Man, "celebrating Da Vinci's amazing and diverse talents in a theatrical and elegant way."

Norelle Kendrick won the 2008 Planet Award for the garment that best used recycled materials and has gone one step further this year by unpicking her 2007 WOW® entry and knitting it into something completely different, *Miro Miro Quite Contrary*. The knitwear designer has created a divine, walking garden out of wool and wire in true Miro form with bold colours, thin black lines and plenty of circles. Norelle, a mother of autistic children, made the entire thing between midnight and 6am and admits, "it was a creative way of staying awake with our restless baby!" (see attached image of Kendrick's 2008 winning entry *A Song And Dance at Dinnertime*.)

Salvador Dali's surreal melting clocks have been recreated by Bex Morris in *The Persistence of Dali*. The newly graduated Christchurch visual arts student wanted to take the 2D pocket clocks from Dali's famous painting, *The Persistence of Memory*, and turn them into fluid, life-size 3D works, and admits, "this is wearable art that really is wearable art!"

The mobius strip is a loop formed to make an infinite fold from a twisted strip - a favourite of M. C. Escher's, and an ideal construct for a Nelson teacher's entry into this year's section titled 'Fold'. Mary Turner has created two perfect mobius strips in her dramatic garment that is made completely from venetian blinds.

Cliff Whiting's amazing talent to produce traditional designs using modern materials inspired Judith Keith to fashion a garment into a giant tiki using glass beads. The Auckland housewife had to hand sew and knot together approximately 60,000 beads to make *Tiki Touring*, - a glamorous cross country outfit and a terrific juxtaposition of traditional and bling!

After seeing Degas' paintings on hessian, Margaret Johnston was motivated to do the same using old coffee sacks. The Nelson artist likes her Impressionists and drew inspiration from Picasso's collection of African masks and sculptures to create her two-piece entry, *Huntress Chic*. "I wanted it to be a statement about recycling and saving our environment from waste, but I also wanted it to be fun," explains Johnston.

A husband and wife team from Auckland, Dinah and Mark Walker have created a captivating male suit, also using venetian blinds, inspired by New Zealand's 1970's artist Bill Culbert and his stunning use of light. The piece is designed to "bring the full spectrum of colour to the dull and boring suit." The Walkers were commended in the 2007 Shell Man Unleashed® Section.

Winner of the highly coveted 2008 WOW® WETA Award, Sarah Thomas has created another remarkable piece modelled on the 1950's car, *American Dream*. The Timaru artist was inspired after visiting the WOW® car museum in Nelson and her entry celebrates the notion that cars are often regarded as female with perky tail fins, extravagant bumpers and mounds of well-placed chrome. (see attached image of Thomas' 2008 winning entry *A Loco-Notion* - the best entry that crossed the boundaries of film and *and WearableArt™*.)

Jann Hook from Kenepuru Sound has produced a magnificent two-piece creation, *The Faces Of Moko - Nga Mata a Moko*, based on a childhood game of folding canvas pieces. The resort owner has used photos of some of Charles Goldie and Mark Kopua's (a Moko specialist) famous works in a cascading cloak that comes with a walking canvas, easel and paint brushes - a fine example of art that has been taken off the wall to grace the catwalk.

Every designer lovingly hands over their garment when entering the Montana WOW® Awards Show and how that piece is interpreted and brought to life in the two hour spectacular interwoven with every facet of performance, from music, dance, lighting and theatre to comedy, is what makes the show so unique every year.

The line up of high calibre judges for 2009 are British born, Associate Royal Sculptor Max Patte, 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 Wellington. “I was amazed - really, really impressed. The diversity and standard of entries should ensure a knockout show.”

Limited tickets are available for this year’s show on-line at www.worldofwearableart.com. The show is poised to be another extravaganza with special nightly performances from the comedy duo, the Topp Twins, from 24th September to 4th of October at the TSB Bank Arena.

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

Described as, “a rebellion against the mundane”, the Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show bends traditional perceptions of both art and fashion by choreographing garments into an extravaganza that blasts all the senses and uplifts the spirit. Esteemed BBC correspondent Michael Peschardt said, 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.”

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

** Footer:*

When publishing content please ensure you refer to the show as the Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show which can then be truncated to the Montana WOW® Awards Show. Please also ensure you publish the correct names for sections and awards ie: the Air New Zealand South Pacific Section.