



FOR RELEASE:

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FINALISTS FOR MONTANA WOW® AWARDS SHOW SELECTED FROM MAUNGATUROTO TO MUMBAI.

The first round of judging for this year's Montana World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards is complete and once again, people have been inspired from all over the world to enter. It seems a global recession has set many people's creative spirits alight with fresh ideas. As Plato once said, necessity is the mother of invention, and according to Suzie Moncrieff (WOW® Founder) the judges were highly impressed with the array of innovative entries.

"After 21 years it's very rewarding to still be inspired by the richness of people's imaginations," says Moncrieff.

The judges for 2009 are: British born, Associate Royal Sculptor Max Patte, fashion designer and businesswoman Annah Stretton as well as Suzie Moncrieff. Oscar winning film-maker Richard Taylor joins them at the second judging in September to decide the WETA Award.

"Having seen the standard of previous years' garments my expectations were high," says Max Patte. "Those expectations were blown out of the water. I was quite honestly amazed...really really impressed... wow. The diversity and standard of entries should ensure a knockout show."

The panel of judges selected 165 finalists to grace the stage in September. Finalists have come from the breadth and length of the country - from Maungaturoto to Dunedin, and internationally across nine markets with particularly high numbers from Australia, India and the USA.

"We have some extreme talent in New Zealand and WOW® provides a perfect platform to showcase and award this," says Annah Stretton. "Evaluating the garments close up gave me great insight into the huge levels of creativity and excellence of execution and simply reinforced what a truly exceptional event this is."

Entries flocked in from the film, fashion, photography, craft, textile, design, sculpting, saddlery and art worlds and designers were challenged to create something that would have impact on a 40-metre arena stage, in one of seven sections.

"The Centreport Illumination Illusion® section, which is unique to WOW®, is very challenging as you have to design from the negative to create something that works under ultra violet light," explains Suzie. "We had record entries this year which had to work with the theme 'float, fly, flow' and they're going to be mesmerizing on stage."

The Children's Section themed 'At the bottom of the garden' encouraged designers to weave magic into the beauty of our natural flora and fauna. The Air New Zealand South Pacific Section had an added layer of complexity requiring designers to work with 'patterns of the pacific'; drawing inspiration from Maori and South Pacific artists, carvers and weavers such as Michael Tuffery, Ralph Hotere, Cliff Whiting and Robyn Kahukiwa. The Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section challenged designers to create something revolutionary and extravagant, yet stylish and made with skill - no easy task. The crowd pleasing Man Unleashed Section - running alternate years with Bizarre Bra - is themed 'Magnificent Men' and entrants had to be flamboyant, risky, inventive and "lift men out the drabness of today's fashion" says Suzie.

All 165 garments will be showcased in the Montana WOW® Awards Show - a mind bending, sensory feast of drama, music, lighting, construction, dance, theatre and comedy.

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. The show season runs from 24th September to 4th of October at the TSB Bank Arena in Wellington.

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

New Zealand's Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show is one of the most prestigious art competitions on the planet, described as a glorious rebellion against the mundane.

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