



PASSION & SPIRIT BEHIND SOUTH ISLAND FINALISTS FOR MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™ AWARDS SHOW

The American dream, making a wish with a dandelion, Mother Nature's dark and light sides, the intuition of indigenous navigation and the randomness of life are some of the engaging ideas behind the South Island finalists in the 21st Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards Show.

"The stories of dedication and passion behind the entries are often just as inspiring as the garments, for instance, an artist from Leeston has created a mesmerizing piece that requires six dancers to bring it to life on stage and the whole thing was designed from a wheelchair," says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "And another designer from India had to forgo transport money - and walk for miles - to save enough to be able to buy materials for his garment and ship it to New Zealand."

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 47 entries are from the South Island.

Winner of the highly coveted 2008 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 World of WearableArt™ & Classic Cars 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 *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.

Mary Atkinson's entry, *Life's A Ball*, is made up of six lively balls that will entertain the audience in the dark. The Leeston designer believes that our lives are like random balls, where sometimes we get the bounce of the ball and sometimes we don't. She admits to being hooked on the design process, "I can hardly wait for the Montana WOW® Awards to begin each year."

A first time entrant, Tammy Irvine from Havelock, has hand crafted a dancing garden tutu for her entry, *Back Of Beyond*. The serene garden, like many things in nature,

has a dark side and sports a large troll made from a second hand stocking and stuffed with an old pillow.

Watching her granddaughter play with dandelions and enjoying the grace of the seeds in flight is the impetus for Suzanne Allen's garment, *Make A Wish*. The Leeston baker has cleverly crafted a giant life-like dandelion that will glow and dance under UV lighting, entered in the CentrePort Illumination Illusion® Section.

A story published in the *Otago Daily Times* about Pacific outrigger canoes gave Aahmes Quince the idea for his entry, *Vaka Moana*. The Dunedin sculptor wanted to celebrate the vast knowledge of indigenous navigation and has fashioned a glorious double canoe with hints of Eastern and Polynesian influence which will float down the stage in the dark.

After three months in Fiji Rosy Harray decided the Nautilus shell - a symbol of beauty and growth - would be an ideal starting point for her 2009 entry, *Poly-Prop*. The Dunedin artist and mig welder wanted to create a walking expression of pacific art from steel and she's pulled it off!

A massive bag of baling twine from a farm entertained Gillian Saunder's cat for hours as she went about untangling, then weaving it into her intricate entry, *Tikini*. The Nelson wardrobe technician and venerable WOW® entrant admits, "I have always admired the work of harakeke weavers and thought that their level of skill and workmanship was totally beyond me, so I avoided the Air New Zealand South Pacific Section for years. Then I had an idea - I'll cheat!" The cleverly woven entry is made entirely from twine with a few strategically placed picture hooks and curtain rings (see attached image of Saunder's 2007 entry *Equus: Behind Closed Doors* - winner in the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section).

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.