



WASTE-NOT WANT-NOT IS THE THEME BEHIND U.S. ENTRIES SELECTED FOR NEW ZEALAND'S MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™ AWARDS SHOW

Used ear plugs, old mattress springs, bicycle tyres, coffee filters, discarded aluminum screen doors, a sofa, neck ties and wood veneer are some of the recycled materials used in the garments selected as finalists in the 21st Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards in New Zealand.

"It seems a global recession has set people's creative spirits alight with fresh ideas," says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "Necessity is the mother of invention and it's rewarding to be inspired by people's innovative approaches."

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. Simon Ungless, Director of Graduate Fashion from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, said of WOW®, "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®."

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 USA, Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, the Netherlands, United Arab Emirates, India, the UK, Canada and New Zealand, which will all grace the stage in September and October in Wellington, New Zealand. Nearly a third of international finalists are from the USA.

Winner of the 2008 WOW® Factor Award, Sean Purucker, from Toluca Lake, California has created a three piece ensemble, *Atomic Cactus Patch*, out of 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 has a terrible effect 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*.)

Angela Bright drank a lot in the creation of her avant garde garment, *Let Them Drink Tea*, made out of use 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."

Old mattress springs have been used to create the startling garment, *Spring Bride*, by Rose Sellery. "Watching young girls in their imaginary games, they always seem to choose to be the bride - never a wife or mother. The dress epitomises these fantasies and alludes to what may come after the enchanted walk down the aisle," explains Rose. The Santa Cruz artist has another inventive entry, selected as a finalist in the 2009 Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section that is made out of men's neck ties and fabric from a discarded sofa.

The construction site next to AmyJean Boebel provided the material - discarded aluminum screens - for her three-garment entry, *Screen Play*. The Telluride sculptural artist worked alongside Sue Hobby, and they found the biggest challenge was getting the screen to respond in the right way and having enough band-aids on hand!

A giant parachute mesmerised Grace Johnston and she played underneath it for hours with fellow students from VCU School of the Arts, before it was finally cut up and fashioned into three versatile garments, *Three Seasons: Exhale Nylon*. The trio of garments are designed for a night of dancing, then they transform into a tent, pillow and sleeping bags. "Together they are a haute couture camping party," explains the Richmond, Virginia student.

Bicycle tyres snapped many a sewing machine needle for Drew Kleiner in the creation of his little black dress, *Couture Attire*, which would swivel heads at an urban cocktail party. The fashion student from San Francisco is drawn to creations that have a sophisticated edge with a sustainable influence, using recycled materials.

Winner of the 2007 Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section, David Walker, has created a stunning 17th century ball gown, *Lady Of The Wood*, made entirely out of mahogany and lacewood with 52 strips of maple and cedar veneer for the hooped skirt. The pièce de résistance is the 17th century wig made out of wood shavings. A carpenter by trade, this Alaskan artist has been creating wearable art for ten years and his considerable talent won him the much coveted 2007 WETA award, judged by Richard Taylor of Weta Workshop and Lord Of The Rings fame. (see attached image of Walker's 2007 winning entry, *Prehistoric Princess*.)

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. Long running BBC correspondent Michael Peschardt was blown away after seeing the 2008 WOW® 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, please refer to the on-line media room at www.worldofwearableart.com or e-mail media@worldofwearableart.com