



WELLINGTON FINALISTS GET CEREBRAL FOR THE MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™ AWARDS SHOW

What really lies beneath the Eiffel Tower, the building blocks of the universe, a thrifty Queen, the recession, the futility of war and Da Vinci's Vitruvian man are some of the captivating ideas behind the Wellington finalists selected for the 21st Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards Show.

"There are more finalists from Wellington than any other city in the world this year and the concepts behind the garments are political, philosophical, environmental and challenging - just what you'd expect from the creative capital," says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "There is also wonderful use of recycling - something WOW® has encouraged from the beginning - and it's incredible to see what people can make out of old coins, mattresses, possum fur, cane furniture and flooring vinyl."

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 40 entries are from Wellington.

Leonardo Da Vinci's many talents as a skilled painter, sculptor, inventor, mathematician, draughtsman, fashionista and scientist are honoured in Heather Wallace's extraordinary entry, *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." Wallace was runner up in the 2007 CentrePort Shades Of White Section.

Hundreds of coins from different countries have been hand stitched into the bodice of Kate Smith's garment, *Do Your Arrears Hang Low?*, to symbolise the importance of holding onto your cash in an economic downturn. The art and fashion student believes the recession, "is a big problem, yet people are still spending and ignoring it" and has created a large white elephant's head on her garment to hammer home this point.

Abraham Lincoln is the inspiration for a Wellington businesswoman's garment, *Abe Lincaned*. Rachel Curtin says her period costume resembles the style of the Lincoln chair, made from cane and wood, which became popular following the American President's assassination in the 1800's. The outfit sports the ubiquitous stove pipe hat - apparently where Lincoln carried his important letters - and the iconic beard made from possum fur.

250 blocks of polystyrene were used by Samantha Murray to convey a miracle of the

universe, matter, which “can never be created or destroyed, only transformed.” The Wellington fashion student’s beguiling piece, *Stumbling Block* will invert and transform its shape on stage.

17-year-old Kayla Christensen and Renee Louie are passionate about conserving and protecting New Zealand’s native flora from introduced pests, such as deer. The Paraparaumu College students have created a garment, *Points Of Conversation*, replete with deer antlers, as a reminder “to protect our native plants and prevent them from becoming extinct.” The first time entrants decided to enter the Montana WOW® Awards Show after winning their school wearable arts competition last year and receiving tickets to the show.

In Japan, the crane symbolises fortune, longevity, happiness, fidelity and peace and if you fold 1,000 of them, apparently, you will be granted your greatest wish. Wellington graphic designer Nicky Dyer could be in for some good fortune as she folded 1,000 cranes out of calico and wire netting for her elegant, kimono inspired garment, *A Secret Wish*.

Lucy Moore has been thinking about her entry for 15 years, which is also how long she has been studying the ongoing effect of World War One on New Zealand. Her garment, *The Long Shadow*, honours not only those who died, but those who remained. It is made out of plaster of paris and adorned with a long cloak of hand-made poppies. The Wellington illustrator discovered that if she made one poppy for every New Zealander killed it would be well over 50 metres long -too large even for the drama of the WOW® stage!

The unveiling of a magnificent tower - the Eiffel - according to Lisa Holmes, was a cover up for political flaws in France, and this is what inspired her curious ensemble, *Ei - Ffel In Love In Paris*, made from flooring vinyl and rope. The fashion design student’s entry is just like the Eiffel Tower in that it disguises its true intentions by being alluring.

Emma Whiteside was smitten with the English Queen Adelaide (1830 - 1849, who, surprisingly for royalty, hated unnecessary expenditure) and has fashioned a regal 18th Century gown out of discarded automotive radiator copper. The industrial design student at Victoria University has been creating things out of radiator parts for years as her parents used to operate a radiator manufacturing plant. “I used to polish up the best pieces with nail polish. The men in the factory thought I was crazy,” confesses Whiteside, who spent over 200 hours sewing together individual copper radiator rosettes for her garment, *Queen Adelaide*.

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 WOW® 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.