



ALASKAN CARPENTER TAKES OUT SUPREME AT MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLEART™ AWARDS SHOW IN NEW ZEALAND

David Walker, a carpenter from Alaska won the Montana Supreme WOW® Award in Wellington, with awards also going to designers across New Zealand, India, the USA and the UK.

The 21st Montana World Of Wearableart™ (WOW®) Awards were announced last night after another spectacular show with an international designer winning, for the first time in WOW®'s history. 165 incredible garments graced the stage across seven unique sections in and around graffiti art, magic gardens, super heroes, dancing cowboys, charming creatures from the dark and a parallel universe. Award winning comedic maestros, The Topp Twins entertained the audience along with New Zealand's premiere percussion group, Strike and high-octane hip-hop dance troupe, Legacy.

The Supreme Montana WOW® Award went to David Walker from Alaska for his sensational, 17th Century ball gown *Lady Of The Wood*. The Alaskan artist created the piece entirely out of mahogany and lacewood with 52 strips of maple and cedar veneer for the hooped skirt, topped off with a glamorous wig made out of wood shavings. A carpenter by trade, Walker has been creating WearableArt™ for ten years and can't get enough of the Montana WOW® Awards Show, attending for the third year in a row and scooping the highly coveted WETA Award in 2007. *Lady Of The Wood* was also winner of the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section.

Associate British Royal Sculptor and 2009 WOW® judge, Max Patte said of the Supreme Montana WOW® Award, "It works on every level - original design and beautifully executed and something that can be appreciated by everyone. Once again, it raises the game and expectations for next year's WOW®!"

"It was very exciting for an international designer to win, reflecting how truly global the event has become, and a great result for the creative capital," said Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "There were more finalists from Wellington than any other city this year with an incredible array of interesting and creative concepts using challenging materials."

First time Wellington entrants, Hayley May and Fiona Christie were runners up to the Montana Supreme WOW® Award and also scooped the Gen-I Creative Excellence Section - Fold, with their intricate garment, *Second Skin*. The film-maker and architect wanted to create a piece that, “resembled a reptile as it sheds its skin” and embedded over 2000 pleats into the fabric of their garment, folded in three directions to form scaled plates of armour. The detail in the finished piece was absolutely breathtaking.

A love of gardening inspired Catherine Anderton to create her daunting piece, *Lagarus Ovatus En Masse*, which took the Booker Spalding First-Time Entrant Award and was also runner up in the American Express Open Section. The garment is made from over 2000 cotton tails or bunnies (*Lagarus Ovatus*), which were hand glued into a dramatic cloak, fit for a sinister creature to adorn. The Wellington gardener grows Christmas Trees, “when I’m not murdering cotton tails.”

Emma Whiteside won the Shell Sustainability Award for the best garment to use recycled materials, with *Queen Adelaide*. The Wellington industrial design student was smitten with the English Queen Adelaide (1830 - 1849, who, surprisingly for royalty, hated unnecessary expenditure) and fashioned an amazing, regal 18th Century gown out of discarded automotive radiator copper. “My parents used to operate a radiator manufacturing plant and I used to polish up the best pieces with nail polish. The men in the factory thought I was crazy,” confessed Whiteside.

Leonardo Da Vinci’s many talents as a skilled painter, sculptor, inventor, mathematician, draughtsman, fashionista and scientist were honoured in Heather Wallace’s three piece entry, *Da Vinci’s Dandies*, commended in the World of WearableArt & Classic Cars Museum Man Unleashed® Section. The Wellington industrial designer modeled her entry on the Vitruvian Man, “celebrating Da Vinci’s amazing and diverse talents in a theatrical and elegant way.”

Winning a primary school prize for ‘Best Bloom’ in 1976 was the impetus behind Paula Rowan’s entry, *My Big Bloomer*, runner up in the Children’s Section. The medical representative used a casting product she sells to nurses to set 900 pinecone scales into the centre piece of her wonderful big bloom. The first time entrant said, “I felt inspired that I didn’t have to be a professional designer to enter.”

Driftwood, pumice and shells from the Raumatī south coast went into Rita Schrieken’s intricate garment, *Tidal Traveller* - commended in the Air New Zealand South Pacific Section. The Paraparaumu artist said she found inspiration from “the treasures found on the coastlines that are smoothed and polished by the constant tumbling of sea and sand.”

Winner of the prestigious 2008 WETA Award, Sarah Thomas, took out the 2009 WETA award too, as well as winning the American Express Open Section with her remarkable piece, *American Dream*, modelled on the 1950’s car. 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. Richard Taylor of WETA Workshop judged the award blind, so did not realize Thomas was the recipient again until he presented it to her on stage.

"Winning one of the most coveted awards on consecutive years was an incredible triumph," said Moncrieff.

The line up of high calibre judges for 2009 were British born, Associate Royal Sculptor Max Patte, fashion designer and savvy businesswoman, Annah Stretton, Suzie Moncrieff and Mr. Tsai Kang Yung, who judged the Wellington International Award. Oscar winning film-maker, Richard Taylor of WETA Workshop judged the Special WETA Award for the garment that best crossed the boundaries of film and WearableArt™.

37 International designers and over 100 global media were visiting Wellington to attend the 2009 Montana WOW® Awards Show, alongside many New Zealand designers. The show season runs until Sunday October 4th and nearly 40,000 people will experience it.

 *Montana Wines from New Zealand are avid supporters of creativity, and are the naming partner of the WOW® Awards Show. Founder of World of WearableArt™ Ltd, Suzie Moncrieff, and Montana's managing director, Fabian Partigliani, announced that their 12 year partnership will continue for a further three years until 2012 on stage at the 2009 Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards show on Friday 25th September.

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 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 Loren Aberhart, Media Liaison media@worldofwearableart.com or phone: 021 2753 853

** 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.