



NORTHLAND FINALISTS FIND RECESSION AN INSPIRATION FOR MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLE ART™

A shop closing down, spending a lot of time on the couch, recycling possum fur and spending time in the garden are the ideas behind the Northland finalists selected in the 21st Montana* World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards Show.

"It seems a global recession has set people's creative spirits alight with fresh ideas and it's rewarding to be inspired by people's innovative approaches," says Suzie Moncrieff, WOW® Founder and Director. "There is also wonderful use of recycling - something the Montana WOW® Awards Show has encouraged from the beginning."

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.

Winner of the 2007 Man Unleashed Section, Alan Gale, has created a verdant creature, *Lounge Lizard*, made from rawhide and painted fabric. The South Hokianga artist wanted to capture the form of a large sedentary man, who "develops some of the contours of a couch". (see attached image of Alan's 2007 winning entry, *Ten Breasted Suitcase*.)

The history and textures of the Maori cloak inspired Dutch immigrant, Annelies Leeuwenburg, to create her own, *Koru Cloak, A New Beginning*, out of possum fur, paua, flax and feathers. The self-taught felt artist from Waipu says the influence of light and colour in Northland played a huge role in her creative process and says, "being able to use New Zealand's resources is an absolute privilege."

A Bay Of Islands naturopath has a penchant for red and black and was struck by some cardboard boarding up a closed shop for her entry this year. Jackie Stoddard says the hardest part in the creation of her warrior garment, *Ruber Atrus*, was finding a name until she searched the Latin meaning for red (ruber) and black (atrus).

Tegan Montgomery-Williams was inspired by the humble praying mantis in her mother's garden for her first entry into the Montana WOW® Awards Show. The year 13 Otamatea High School student from Maungaturoto spent a lot of time playing with different materials to replicate the multifarious creature and settled on foam, lycra and painted mesh, and the resemblance is stunning. Montgomery-Williams hopes to study fashion and textile design at Massey University next year.

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.