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## AN EXPANDING WORLD OF CREATIVITY COMES TO THE MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLEART™ AWARDS STAGE

Folds and folds of the world's creative fabric are lining the dressing rooms of WOW® this year, with more than double the number of international entries in the Montana\* World of WearableArt™ Awards Show.

More than 100 garments were sent to New Zealand from international designers for the first round of judging for the 2010 Montana WOW® Awards as the world's leading creative showcase blend of fashion and art comes into its 22<sup>nd</sup> year.

A stunning exhibition of creative ingenuity, the Montana WOW® Awards Show brings to life artworks designed for the human form, showcasing a near-boundless display of imagination that builds on the anthropological aspiration to be more than we are.

The 2009 Supreme Award was won by an international designer, David Walker from Alaska, who received more than NZ\$25,000 in prizes for his classical gown entry *Lady of the Wood*.

Garments from India and the US were top two garments in the 2009 Shell Student Section, adding to a number of highly commended international entries in the finalists, as well as a winning design from the United Kingdom in the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section.

Highlights from the 2010 Montana WOW® story so far...

- The 191 garments chosen for the stage is the largest contingent ever
- The level of artistry grows year on year with incredible materials ranging from hundreds of individually styled metal parts to 17,900 metres of yarn.
- One in three garments chosen for the show are from international designers across four continents, including a record 23 from India.
- WOW® designers range from dentists to architects, jewelers to sculptors, fashion designers to business analysts, students and retirees
- Designers compete for \$100,000 in prizes including the Supreme Award and the highly coveted Weta Award selected by Oscar-winning designer Sir Richard Taylor

Joining WOW® Founder Suzie Moncrieff on the panel this year is New Zealand kinetic sculptor Phil Price, and fashion designer Doris de Pont who is synonymous with the New Zealand fashion scene.

For further information, including imagery, please go to the online media room at [www.worldofwearableart.com](http://www.worldofwearableart.com) or e-mail [media@worldofwearableart.com](mailto:media@worldofwearableart.com)

"The judging process for WOW has been totally captivating," says Phil Price. "It is a privilege to witness the sophistication of this art genre and the designers are really demonstrating the synthesis of elements that any good design requires. We are seeing really inventive solutions that are playful and intelligent."

The choreography for the 2010 show will showcase 191 finalists who have been chosen to compete in the Montana WOW® Awards Show from an array of more than 300 entrants from all over New Zealand and the world.

It is the first year China has been a significant part of the international community for WOW®, boosted by a visit from WOW® Founder Suzie Moncrieff to Hong Kong and Shanghai and sponsorship from Mainfreight to transport the garments to New Zealand for judging.

Moncrieff also visited India on the same trip, where the number of entrants is growing. A record seven entries from a sole designer came from renowned New Delhi artist Vivan Sundaram, and student entries increased too, encouraged by the relationship between WOW®, Tourism New Zealand and the Fashion Design Council of India.

"Many of the students were already making incredible innovative works of wearable art and it was heartening to see how original and inventive their works were," Moncrieff says. "They really understand the concept of WearableArt™ and relish the opportunity that the Montana WOW® Awards provides to compete and exhibit their work on a world stage.

Shanghai student Jia Shan Gu knitted a stunningly colourful pair of garments named *Travel of Self Exile* for the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section, creating shapeliness around her garment with bold asymmetrical patterns that are almost space-like in their own right.

From a reptilian inspiration to an extraterrestrial one, British artist and illustrator Jonathon Wood's creation *Levitation Communication Annihilation* brings an otherworldly dimension to the Illumination Illusion® Section. Built from polystyrene, foam and intricately painted, Wood says the multitude of appendages comprising the insect-like artwork means the garment has the same surface area as a small car; a significant challenge to paint with a small brush!

Literally carving a enviable reputation for his talent in WearableArt™, David Walker builds on his 2009 Montana WOW® Awards Supreme Award with *Wood, Wire and Fire*, a stunning array of wood wired to sparkle on stage. The seven-piece garment is styled on a mix of Las Vegas showgirls and a second hand chandelier, with each piece wired separately to light up as part of the Gen-i Creative Excellence Section: The Art of Light.

Showcasing the fun and freedom WearableArt™ brings out in people are the children's toy-inspired entries in the American Express Open Section from Dutch costume designer Theodora Hillenaar. *Flowerdoll*, *Gingerbread Man* and *Tumbler* are based on toys scaled to adult size and taught to dance, a reflection of her own nostalgic playfulness, the first time WOW® entrant says. "A world reminiscent of our own childhood in which grownups can act freely."

Returning Australian WOW® entrants Bonnie Begg and Christina White have taken a different spin on the "beauty within" creating *Ecdysis*, a curling peel of polyester, framed on irrigation tubing and wire, mimicking the shedding of an animal's or insect's exoskeleton. Playing on the innuendo of a dead and discarded shell, the garment is a wonderful example of the capability of WearableArt to inject life into static materials to make captivating artworks that come to life on the WOW® stage.

The effort and inspiration that goes into the incredible garments that make it to the final stage of the Montana WOW® Awards is the backbone of the event.

WOW® then creatively weaves these painstakingly crafted garments of a world's worth of designers' dreams and epiphanies into an eleven show season opening 23 September. This choreographed dramatic live performance is seen by an audience of more than 43,000 people in Wellington, New Zealand's creative capital and the ultimate place to tell the global story of the weird and wonderful World of WearableArt™.

For further information, including imagery, please go to the online media room at [www.worldofwearableart.com](http://www.worldofwearableart.com) or e-mail [media@worldofwearableart.com](mailto:media@worldofwearableart.com)

For more information, releases and imagery from previous shows go to the WOW® online media library at [www.worldofwearableart.com](http://www.worldofwearableart.com) or contact us at [media@worldofwearableart.com](mailto:media@worldofwearableart.com)

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\*Montana Wines from New Zealand are avid supporters of creativity, and are the naming partner of the WOW® Awards Show.

*EDITORIAL NOTE : Please initially refer to the show as the Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show which can then be shortened to the Montana WOW® Awards Show. Please publish the full names for sections and awards i.e.: the Air New Zealand South Pacific Section.*

**Described as a rebellion against the mundane, the Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show bends traditional perceptions of art and fashion by choreographing garments into a visceral extravaganza that dazzles the senses and lifts the spirit. Bob Haven, Professor in Costume Technology & WOW Designer at Kentucky University, United States, says, "Athletes have the Olympics, actors have the Oscars, musicians have the Grammys, designers and costume creators have WOW®."**

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