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REGIONAL NEW ZEALAND TURNS OUT A SPECTACULAR EFFORT FOR THE MONTANA WORLD OF WEARABLEART™ AWARDS

From Bay of Islands to the east coast and deepest Manawatu, regional North Island designers have added a record number of entries to the Montana WOW® Awards, including a skeletal display of pest control.

The Montana World of WearableArt™ Awards Show is in its 22nd year and is a world-renowned design and art event attracting ever-growing interest and amazing works of art from across the globe.

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.

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

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

With the initial selection complete the 2010 Montana WOW® Awards judging continues on two more occasions in September before opening night on 23 September at TSB Arena in Wellington.

For further information, including imagery, please go to the online media room at www.worldofwearableart.com or e-mail media@worldofwearableart.com

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

"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.

International designers from 25 countries submitted entries for the Montana WOW® Awards and 61 garments from Germany, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, Mexico, Netherlands, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, and USA were selected to join local entries on the WOW® stage.

After a woman's own heart, Palmerston North kindergarten teacher Noeline Gifford, with fellow designers Emily Gifford and Beverley Stilborn, styles recycled materials into a materialistic theme with *A Girl Can Never Have Too Many Bags*. The American Express Open Section garment is made from collected plastic bags, recycled garden netting and bamboo offcuts, making it eligible for the Shell Sustainability Award. Combining knitting and rug-making techniques the artworks ended up a handbag-styled reflection of the designers' personalities, Noeline Gifford says.

Keryn Whitney from Hastings showcases her effort in ridding the Hawkes Bay of hares in *Just Hare-Say*. Six hare skulls and countless bones are combined with pelts from the fast-running pests to create a hunter-gatherer ensemble for the American Express Open Section. The strength of structure the bones provide as well as the look of the garment lends itself to challenging the expression that "beauty is only skin deep", Whitney says.

Using another collection of animal products is Rotorua warehouse assistant Rachael Galuszewski, with a garment made from the hair of slaughtered horses. The arduous process of removing, cleaning and working the hair into a pliable material was the main battle in making *Epona*, entered in the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section. Constructed with recycled leather from saddles, the equine inspiration is representative of the Gallo-Roman goddess of the same name, Galuszewski says.

Bay of Plenty fashion design tutor Donna Dinsdale brings a tribute to WOW this year, with her garment *Mme Loyal* inspired by the great French 18th century circus performer Anselme-Pierre Loyal, reputedly the first true ringmaster. The Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde Section entry recycles bed coverings and curtains into a feline inspired circus artwork.

Picking up the pieces of aluminium left over from a trailer project in her garage, Hawkes Bay teacher Mercia Paaymans taught herself to anneal the metal and fashion it into different shapes. The result is *Enarmoured*, entered in the Air New Zealand South Pacific

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Section with a strong tribal emphasis as the metal plates comprising the garment symbolise tattoos as modern day to day armour. "Our tattoos or clothes are our expression of what we do or who we are."

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 (including the newly released matinee at 2pm on Saturday 2 October) 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 more information, releases and imagery from previous shows go to the WOW® online media library at www.worldofwearableart.com or contact us at media@worldofwearableart.com

For further comment please call:
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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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