



MEDIA RELEASE

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Jemaine Clement Stars In WOW®'s 2016 Show

Jemaine Clement from Flight of the Conchords is lending his distinctive voice to one of the central characters in the World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards Show, which opens in Wellington next week. Clement will bring to life an as yet-to-be revealed creature built by Weta Workshop, although WOW® gives a pretty big hint in behind-the-scenes footage released today.

WOW® is an international phenomenon that attracts entries every year from designers from over 40 countries, and showcases the finalists in what has become New Zealand's largest single theatrical show. The show employs more than 350 cast and crew and will play to an audience of 58,000 over its three-week Wellington season. The 2016 show starts next week and runs from Thursday 22 September to Sunday 9 October.

WOW® creates a new theatrical world each year as Chief Executive Gisella Carr explains.

"Audiences come to see WOW over and over because each year is excitingly different from the one before," Carr says. "This year, the innovation and beauty of the work of 163 designers is matched by a glittering theatrical setting inspired by artist Reuben Paterson, which is unlike anything WOW has put on stage before. This will be a magical experience to delight WOW's tens of thousands of fans."

Jemaine Clement and Weta Workshop join a creative team headed up by artistic directors Mike Mizrahi and Marie Adams. This year, WOW® Awards Show performance collaborators also include composer Don McGlashan, a contingent of accomplished New Zealand musicians including Annie Crummer, Anika Moa, Sean James Donnelly (SJD), the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra and choreographers Ross McCormack and Victoria Colombus.

Mizrahi says he approached Clement about the role because of his voice's versatility. As well as experimenting with his speaking and singing voice on stage, and playing a European vampire in the movie 'What We Do in the Shadows', Clement has voiced a number of animated characters including a minion, an alien, a cockatoo, and a crab, for various international and local productions.

"Jemaine is a great comedic talent with an incredibly sexy voice - perfect for our creature," says Mizrahi. "This beast acts as a dangerous but impish link through the show and Jemaine brings him to life beautifully. We could not have asked for a better match."

The creature itself has been created by Weta Workshop. Weta have been integrally involved in WOW® for many years sponsoring the Costume and Film section and also offering a winning WOW® designer an internship each year. Weta Workshop CEO and Co-founder Sir Richard Taylor says:

"Weta Workshop has been a proud supporter of WOW for many years. Several of our talented crew, past and present, are previous WOW winners and entrants. To be involved in this year's show is an incredible honour and an equally incredible challenge. We've given it our all to create something that is a little bit special for this year's WOW show as, for the very first time, our support will extend into the show itself."

The behind-the-scenes footage of the WOW®/Weta Workshop/Jemaine Clement collaboration is one of a number of pieces that WOW® have released about the making of this year's show. Gisella Carr says WOW® will be doing more of this next year, as the show's fans love glimpses of what is coming up.

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About WOW®'s Creative Directors

Inside Out Productions' Mike Mizrahi and Marie Adams first directed a WOW® Awards Show in 2015. Mizrahi and Adams have staged some of the most spectacular theatrical productions for some large international brands, including Louis Vuitton, David Jones, and the Rugby World Cup. For WOW® they have created a script based on the competition's seven sections, aligning their ideas to each mood, theme, and design brief, creating a world for the garments to inhabit.

About The World of WearableArt™

One of New Zealand's cultural success stories is the spectacular World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) created by Dame Suzie Moncrieff.

At the core of WOW® is an international design competition that attracts entries from all over the world. The range of garments produced for each year's WOW® competition is simply breathtaking, as the rules of competition mean that anything that is in any way wearable can find a place on stage, as long as it is original, beautifully designed and well-made. This also results in garments that are constructed from an extraordinary array of materials, pushing the boundaries of expectation.

Now staging its 28th production, the annual WOW® Awards Show presents selected designs in what is New Zealand's largest and most technically challenging theatrical production, brought to life by 350 cast and crew. For the 2016 show, 133 garments will be seen in performance by an audience of 58,000 over a three-week season in Wellington, New Zealand.

The winning garments from each year's show are then seen up close by more than 40,000 people at the iconic World of WearableArt™ and Classic Car Museum in Nelson, New Zealand.

WOW®'s international exhibition is currently being held at Seattle's EMP Museum until January 2017 after which it will travel to the Peabody Essex Museum in Boston and is expected to remain in the USA until 2019. The travelling exhibition showcases 32 award-winning garments curated to present the best of New Zealand's creative activity to the world.

Links to WOW®'s online channels

1. www.worldofwearableart.com - Website
2. <https://www.facebook.com/WorldofWearableArt/> - Facebook
3. <https://twitter.com/WOWAwardsShow> - Twitter
4. <https://instagram.com/WOWAwardsShow> - Instagram
5. <https://www.youtube.com/user/WorldofWearableArt> - YouTube
6. <https://nz.pinterest.com/wowawardsshow/> - Pinterest