

PRITAM SINGH AND VISHNU RAMESH, students at the National Institute of Design (NID), Ahmedabad, won the coveted Spyglass Creative Excellence Section at this year's World of WearableArt (WOW) Awards in Wellington. *Bazaar* spoke to the duo about their design and difficulties.

HOW DID YOU CRAFT YOUR WINNING GARMENT, 'MAI'?

Pritam Singh: We originally wanted to source reflective material such as mirrors from Gandhinagar, but those ended up being heavy. Eventually, we worked with reused foam and non-woven felt, both recycled elements.

Vishnu Ramesh: We even tried polyvinyl sheets and spheres but they didn't work out. Finally we used felt, and hand sewed every element, before attaching it to the main garment.

WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES BEHIND CREATING 'MAI'? HOW LONG DID IT TAKE?

PS: There was a great amount of technicality involved and we had two failed attempts in a month.

VR: I study transportation and automobile design, but an idea like ours, translating it into reality was a challenge that I had never experienced before. It took us a month to just select materials. The design was so complex that we had to first create a 3-D model for others to visualise it, followed by stitching, creating the right dimensions and resolving all sorts of ergonomic issues.

THE THEME OF YOUR CATEGORY WAS SURREALISM, CUBISM, AND EXPRESSIONISM. WHAT MADE YOU ATTEMPT THIS?

PS: Cubism allows various perspectives and an abstract presentation through lines, angles, and geometric shapes. The story of our garment is philosophical, and is inspired



Pritam Singh with Dame Suzie Moncrieff, founder of WOW Awards

TEN MINUTES WITH PRITAM SINGH AND VISHNU RAMESH

The winners of the Spyglass Creative Excellence Section at this year's World of WearableArt



The winning entry, Mai, at the WOW Awards in Wellington

by Farhan Akhtar's film *Lakshya* (2004), which is about the younger generation seeking direction in life. With this wearable art, we tried to make a live painting of a man who tries to find his path. **VR:** Cubism challenged me because it is about drawing people in with different viewpoints, so they can take away their own perspective. It's how we can view the world, or even simple objects. Every individual's struggle and journey is unique to them.

TELL US ABOUT THE EXPERIENCE OF PARTICIPATING IN THIS INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION.

PS: Vishnu and I heard of the competition through others who had applied previously from our college, NID, Ahmedabad. I've also keenly followed the work of award-winning designers like Sean Purucker (United States). Attending the show this year was a magical experience, and we were thrilled to have engaging conversations with talented designers from all around the world.

HOW HAS THE WIN IMPACTED YOUR FUTURE PLANS? WHO ARE YOUR DESIGN ICONS?

PS: I'm thinking of pursuing costume design. I love telling a story through garments; it is more than just an artistic expression. I admire designers such as Alexander McQueen, Iris Van Herpen, Mark Fast, and Johan Ku.

VR: I love working with different disciplines. And this time, collaborating with Pritam on apparel was a unique, exhilarating experience. My icons are Ian Callum and Giorgetto Giugiaro, both of whom are renowned automobile designers. I also love watching David Attenborough's documentaries, as he beautifully explains the science behind nature. It inspires me. ■

By Naina Hiranandani