

World of Wearable Art® (WOW™) MEDIA KIT

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World of WearableArt

- an annual international design competition
- an annual awards show in Wellington
- the National WOW Museum in Nelson
- an international touring exhibition programme

1. World of WearableArt (WOW) Boilerplate

World of WearableArt (WOW) combines an international wearable art competition with a spectacular stage show. Celebrating its 30th year in 2018, New Zealand's single largest theatrical production attracts entries by designers from all around the world working at the cutting edge of fashion, art, design, costume and theatre, alongside students and first-time entrants. The 2018 Awards Show will feature 140 finalist garments by 147 designers from 17 countries. The National WOW Museum in Nelson houses a collection of the most extraordinary garments selected from WOW's past seasons, and maintains an expanding international exhibition touring and presentation programme.

2. WOW Beginnings

WOW is one of New Zealand's creative success stories.

The original WOW concept was founded and created by Dame Suzie Moncrieff in 1987. The first WOW Awards Show was staged in rural Nelson as a promotion for a

rural art gallery for an audience of just 200 people. Dame Suzie, who was a sculptor at the time, had the vision to take art off the wall and exhibit it as a live theatrical production.

In its third year, the WOW Awards Show moved into Nelson's Trafalgar Centre, establishing itself as a must-see annual event, before moving to Wellington in 2005. By the end of the 2018 show season, almost 770,000 people will have seen a WOW Awards Show.

After 30 years, Dame Suzie continues to be a driving force behind WOW, acting as a guide and mentor to the wider creative team.

"To take art off the wall and out of static display. To adorn the body in wildly wonderful ways. To celebrate creativity in a lavish and unique on-stage spectacular that will inspire us all." Dame Suzie Moncrieff, WOW Founder

3. WOW Key Facts

- 2018 is the 30th WOW Awards Show
- The 2018 show season is from 27 September to 14 October
- An anticipated 60,000 national and international show-goers will attend the three-week show season
- By the end of this year's show season, almost 770,000 people will have seen a WOW Awards Show since 1987
- By the end of this year's show season, WOW will have showcased more than 4,877 finalist garments on its stage
- The judging process is in three stages: the first in Nelson in July; and the second and third in Wellington in September
- Since 1987, a total number of 10,200 people have worked on a WOW Awards Show including cast and crew
- Almost \$2,430,000 in prizes (cash and in-kind) has been awarded to finalist designers since 1987
- In addition to the Show, WOW has a large-scale touring exhibition that has toured in Australia and most recently in the United States including the Bishop Museum Hawaii, MoPoP in Seattle, and Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. It will open next at the Erarta Museum of Contemporary Art Museum in St Petersburg, Russia.
- The National WOW Museum in Nelson has an historical collection of 430 garments with an annual exhibition of the previous year's finalists. The Museum attracts more than 40,000 people each year

"A fabulous event that is equal part couture, choreography and craziness."

Time Magazine

4. WOW Biographies

DAME SUZIE MONCRIEFF | Founder

Dame Suzie Moncrieff is the creator and founder of the original WOW concept. She was Artistic Director and Scriptwriter for the show for 22 years and continues to be the driving force behind the WOW phenomenon and an inspiration to the WOW team. Dame Suzie remains hands on in the development of the show's vision and story each year as well as acting as a guide to the show's creative and production teams. Dame Suzie has received a number of awards for her achievements and contribution to the arts. She was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit in 1998, and made a Dame in 2011, when she was also awarded Wellingtonian of the Year for her contribution to the arts. In 2014 Dame Suzie was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Massey University for her contribution to the field of art and design. In 2015 Dame Suzie was named New Zealand's Deloitte Top 200 Visionary Leader for the Year.

"WOW celebrates a huge variety of designers and ideas. It creates a competition that rewards people for being brave with their creativity, while also giving something spellbinding and magical to audiences."

Dame Suzie Moncrieff

HEATHER PALMER | Competition Director

Heather Palmer has been WOW's Competition Director since its inception in 1987, playing an instrumental part in the success of the WOW Awards Show. She is the main point of contact for designers, and acts as a design mentor. Over the years, Heather has been integral in managing the awards process, looking after backstage show activities and managing WOW's extensive historic garment collection. Her role also sees her keenly involved as a guest lecturer at design schools, collaborating with training institutions both nationally and internationally, and promoting WOW offshore.

GISELLA CARR | Chief Executive

Gisella Carr has been the CEO of WOW since xx Gisella's career has seen her leading organisations and major projects across the creative industries sector, most recently as Chief Executive of Film New Zealand and as Director of Funds Development at the National Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, as well as earlier senior roles at Creative New Zealand and The Royal New Zealand Ballet. Major projects include work for The Gibson Group on Vaeggen for the Museum of Copenhagen, as originating strategist and creator of the Arts Laureate Awards for

New Zealand's Arts Foundation, and as an advisor to New Zealand Trade & Enterprise, Auckland and Wellington City Councils. Carr has also taught management and cultural policy at both Auckland and Victoria Universities.

5. National WOW Museum, Nelson

The winning garments from each year's show are exhibited at the iconic **National WOW Museum** in Nelson, which attracts more than 40,000 visitors each year. The exhibition allows people to see the garments up close, and truly appreciate the level of detailing and expertise needed to create an award-winning work of wearable art.

6. WOW International Travelling Exhibition

WOW's international programme includes its **International Travelling Exhibition**, showcasing 32 award-winning garments curated to present the best of WOW's creativity to the world. With support from the New Zealand Government, the current travelling exhibition has attracted more than 600,000 visitors in Australia and the US, including Bishop Museum Hawaii, MoPOP in Seattle and Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. It's due to open at Erarta Museum in St Petersburg, Russia, in October 2018.

7. WOW Judges

Each year the finalist garments and award winners are selected through three rounds of closed judging. The judging panel comprises of WOW Founder and Resident Judge, Dame Suzie Moncrieff, and two guest judges, from the worlds of art and fashion, who are invited to be part of the panel.

In 2018 the first round of judging took place in early July in Nelson. This year, alongside Dame Suzie Moncrieff, the judges are Margarita Robertson, Creative Director of iconic fashion label NOM*d, and Sam Gao, Art Director and Business Development Manager with Weta Workshop.

In the second and final judging stages, the panel will be joined by Sir Richard Taylor CEO and co-founder of Weta Workshop, and a guest judge from Cirque du Soleil and an international guest judge who are yet to be announced.

8. WOW 2018 Competition Sections

The Awards are divided into six sections: three recurrent sections, and three specific to 2018.

Recurrent sections

- **Aotearoa** is inspired by New Zealand's own deep sense of place. From our rich cultures to our landscapes, our independence to our inventions, this is a callout to show us New Zealand and New Zealanders as you see us.
- **Open** is a world where there are no boundaries, themes or rules, giving designers complete creative freedom to explore. Concept, construction, materials – the only limit is the imagination.
- **Avant-garde** is for wearable works of art that are experimental, radical and unorthodox. The challenge is to dare to defy the boundaries of fashion and create a work that is unique and innovative.

Sections specific to 2018

- **Reflective Surfaces** is the joy of light brought to life. This is an opportunity to make use of materials that glimmer, sparkle and glow – anything that allows the body to shine.
- **Under the Microscope** encourages designers to enter into the unforeseen invisible universe where populations gather, thrive and compete. It's a world of trillions, where the results range from the gorgeous to the grotesque.
- **Bizarre Bra** is one of WOW's most anticipated recurring sections. Bring it out, make it shine, give it new meaning, and best of all, use creativity and wit to transform what is usually hidden.

9. WOW 2018 Prizes

The World of WearableArt Awards Show brings artists and designers together to compete for a prize pool totalling more than NZD 170,000. An example of the coveted prizes available are listed below.

Supreme WOW Award

The most prestigious award of all; given to the entry that the judges consider to be the most exceptional overall.

- Winner receives NZD 30,000
- Runner-up receives NZD 10,000

Dame Suzie Moncrieff Award

Chosen by WOW Founder, Dame Suzie Moncrieff, as the garment that epitomises the WOW spirit.

- Winner receives NZD 5,000
- Runner-up receives NZD 1,000

Weta Workshop Emerging Designer Award

Weta Workshop is a five-time Academy Award®-winning conceptual design and physical effects manufacturing facility that services the world's creative industries. The winner is chosen by Sir Richard Taylor, CEO and co-founder of Weta Workshop.

- Winner receives NZD 5,000 + four-week internship at Weta Workshop, including flights from anywhere in the world to and from New Zealand plus accommodation in Wellington for up to four weeks.
- Runner-up receives NZD 1,000

Cirque du Soleil Invited Artisan Award

Chosen by a judge from Cirque du Soleil, this award is presented to an established designer whose entry demonstrates outstanding use of new techniques or technologies.

- The winner receives NZD 5,000 and will undertake a four-week residency at Cirque du Soleil in Montreal, Canada. Flights from anywhere in the world and accommodation are included.

“Athletes have the Olympics, actors have the Oscars, musicians have the Grammys, designers and costume creators have WOW!” - Bob Haven, Professor in Costume Technology, Kentucky University, 2007 WOW Designer

10. WOW 2018 Creative Team

Malia Johnston - Show Director

Malia's role as show director means coordinating everything that happens on stage - the music, lighting, AV design and performance. Malia also works with choreographers, dancers and specialists in areas such as cultural movement, aerial work and musicians, to weave their unique skills and talents into the show. For inspiration, Malia turns to film, visual art, design, writing, to name a few. During WOW, she draws additional inspiration from the creative team and from the fabulously creative garments that designers from all over the world enter into the show.

“I get excited by the opportunity to create a choreographic and performative platform that presents the garments entered into the competition. I love the creativity of the garments and am blown away by the skill and work that has gone into them.” - Malia Johnston

Biography:

A choreographer and performance director, Malia Johnston has a repertoire spanning 20 years. With her own company Movement Of The Human, Johnston has collaborated with an incredibly diverse range of performers and arts organisations, creating new work for both the national and international stage.

Johnston has worked on 14 previous WOW Shows, including 8 as Artistic Director (2007-2014). She directed WOW's debut show at the 2012 Hong Kong Arts Festival.

In 2018, Johnston was commissioned to create a new work for the Commonwealth Arts Festival in Australia; presented a piece at the inaugural Asia Pacific True Colours Festival in Singapore; had her show RUSHES feature at New Zealand Festival in Wellington; and toured a solo work, MEREMERE, with artist Rodney Bell across New Zealand. In 2017 she was an Associate Artist for Auckland Theatre Company, where she began developing a new work, MOON. Johnston is an Arts Ambassador for Te Auaha NZ Institute of Creativity and teaches choreography at tertiary institutions across NZ.

Geoff Cobham - Set and Lighting Designer

This year, Geoff is designing the set and lighting, collaborating with Suzie and Malia to make backdrops to support each section - creating a world for the garments to live in. Geoff describes WOW as "Like working on six big dance shows at once. Each section is its own unique adventure". Geoff's love of light and dance has led him to work with many of Australia's top choreographers, and allowed him to explore the endless combinations of colour, angle, intensity and movement, of light. With his company Bluebottle he has designed many lighting installations and lit public artworks, buildings, landscapes and freeways. Cobham has won numerous awards in Australia including a Helpmann, Ruby, Green Room and Sydney Theatre Awards.

Biography:

Geoff Cobham has worked as an event producer, production manager, lighting designer, set designer, and venue designer. His work ranges from many smaller innovative productions at some of Australia's best independent theatres and non-theatre venues (tents, warehouses, etc), to large scale theatre/dance productions, festivals, exhibitions, events, museums and venue creation. Cobham's love of light and dance has led him to work with many of Australia's top choreographers and allowed him to explore the endless combinations of colour, angle, intensity and movement, of light. With his company Bluebottle he has designed many lighting installations and lit public artworks, buildings, landscapes and freeways. Cobham is currently resident designer with State Theatre Company of

South Australia. Cobham has won numerous awards in Australia including a Helpmann, Ruby, Green Room and Sydney Theatre Awards. 2018 marks his first time working with World of WearableArt.

Paul McLaney - Music Director

Paul is WOW's Music Director for the 2018 show. It is a little different this year as each section will feature the talents of an individual New Zealand composer covering a wide range of genres. His role is to facilitate, steer and direct those compositions into the body of a consolidated show. In a recording and performance career spanning 20 years, Paul's music offerings have spanned the acoustic music of his solo career, the rock and pop of Gramsci, and the ambient electronica of The Impending Adorations.

“The WOW Awards Show lives outside a strict narrative arc, and to my mind that suggests a sort of dreamstate logic where multiple aesthetics and suggestions are made. I believe that’s a huge part of its success – it really is like a dream from which you don’t want to wake up.” - Paul McLaney

Biography:

In a recording and performance career spanning 20 years, Paul McLaney's music offerings have spanned the acoustic music of his solo career, the rock and pop of Gramsci, and the ambient electronica of The Impending Adorations. Added to this is his ever-expanding body of work for theatre. There is a common thread: “I believe that the essential ingredient for a piece of music to work is empathy. One mind speaking to another, and for there to be a consensus of thought and feeling in that conversation. It follows then that within this there must be a fundamental truth that is communicated honestly.”

To find out about the rest of the 2018 WOW Creative Team, please click here:

<https://www.worldofwearableart.com/creative-team/>

11. WOW Image, Video & Brand Guidelines

Image and Video guidelines:

- Images and Video must only be used for the stated purpose
- Images must be credited in print and online in the following way:

The Isobra, Janice Elliott, New Zealand

Photo: World of WearableArt

This credits the garment name, designer name and country of origin.

For more details, please email sophie@sputnik.co.nz or bridget@sputnik.co.nz

Brand guidelines:

- WOW – abbreviation for World of WearableArt
- ‘Garment’ – a wearable art piece designed by a WOW Finalist Designer
- ‘Costume’ – performance wear for characters, actors and dancers within the WOW Awards Show
- WearableArt is **one** word – no ‘s’
- The ® symbol follows WearableArt®
- The ® symbol follows WOW®

12. WOW Social Media

www.worldofwearableart.com

<https://www.facebook.com/WorldofWearableArt>

<https://www.instagram.com/worldofwearableart>

<https://twitter.com/wowawardsshow>

12. Media contacts

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