



Under embargo until 11.30pm NZT, Friday, 28 September 2018

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday 28 September, 2018

SEVEN CHINESE DESIGNERS WIN AWARDS IN PRESTIGIOUS WORLD OF WEARABLEART (WOW®) COMPETITION

Seven Chinese designers have won awards at the prestigious World of WearableArt™ (WOW®) Awards in Wellington, New Zealand. The 2018 show features 140 finalist garments by 147 designers from 17 countries and regions, vying for 39 awards.

Lau Siu San & Cathy, Sin Wei Chow of Hong Kong's garment *The Wise Athena* was the winner of Reflective Surfaces Section and the International Award: Asia Design Award; Guo Xiao Tong from Beijing won the Weta Workshop Emerging Designer Award for *Spirit Bone*; Zhang Qiyao from Shanghai won the Student Innovation Award for *Shell*; and Xia Tian, Yang Mengtong & He Fangyu of Shanghai were runner up for the Dame Suzie Moncrieff Award for *Feminine Hell*.

Of *The Wise Athena*, WOW Founder and Head Judge Dame Suzie Moncrieff says it is "a garment that the judges thought fitted the section brief perfectly and was beautiful in its simplicity; a kinetic sculpture with a magical quality."

Of *Spirit Bone*, Dame Suzie says it is a "piece that Weta Workshop Founder Sir Richard Taylor described as the perfect balance of form, aesthetic and incredible craftsmanship. A garment that both illuminates and reflects the outstanding capabilities of this young designer."

Of *Shell*, Dame Suzie says it is "an entry that the judges thought captured a modern silhouette, presenting a unique, fresh form."

New Zealand's largest theatrical performance, WOW is celebrating its 30th anniversary season in 2018. WOW combines the world's leading wearable art design competition with a spectacular stage show that attracts an annual audience of around 60,000 people - over 40,000 of those travelling to the capital city from across New Zealand and around the globe.

Launched by Dame Suzie Moncrieff in 1987, WOW takes art off the wall and onto the human form. Over the past three decades, WOW has attracted some of the most cutting edge creative designers from across the globe. This year entries from 44 countries and regions vied for a coveted spot onstage. A record 17 countries and regions were represented in the show, showcasing designs by professionals from the fashion, art, design, costume and theatre industries, alongside students and first-time enthusiasts. WOW provides an opportunity for these creatives to experiment, push boundaries and explore design, materials and techniques.



This year's show is presented as a series of six worlds, each with its own design provocation that designers have responded to. Along with the recurring Avant-garde, Aotearoa and Open sections are Under the Microscope, Reflective Surfaces and the biennial Bizarre Bra.

WOW's 2018 judging panel consisted of WOW Founder Dame Suzie Moncrieff; Margarita Robertson, Creative Director of iconic fashion label NOM*d; Sam Gao, Weta Workshop Art Director and Business Development Manager; Weta Workshop Co-founder and CEO Sir Richard Taylor; Cirque du Soleil's Nathalie Bouchard and International Guest judge Mary Wing To.

Garments go through a three-stage judging process to end up onstage, beginning in July. The garments are assessed for detail as well as their performance on stage.

This year's Supreme WOW Award winner was *WAR sTOry* by Natasha English and Tatyanna Meharry of Christchurch, New Zealand. The sisters are the first ever two-time Supreme WOW Award Winners, having taken the top award in 2013 for *The Exchange*. This year's Supreme garment commemorates the more than 128,000 New Zealand men and women who served in World War I, of which more than 18,000 never returned home. It was created using recycled objects such as old army and household blankets, salvaged rimu from demolished houses, old collected plastic toy soldiers, broken crushed red bricks and traded pieces of pounamu to create the garment.

World of WearableArt is on at TSB Arena, Wellington from September 27 until October 14. Tickets and more information at worldofwearableart.com.

Full list of winners

***WAR sTOry* by Natasha English and Tatyanna Meharry (Christchurch, New Zealand)**

Winner: Supreme WOW Award

Winner: Aotearoa Section

***Ernst Haeckel's Bride* by Nika Danielska (Wroclaw, Poland)**

Runner Up: Supreme WOW Award

Winner: Under the Microscope Section

***Mind the Synaptic Gap* by Grace DuVal (Chicago, United States)**

Winner: Dame Suzie Moncrieff Award

***Feminine Hell* by Xia Tian, Yang Mengtong & He Fangyu (Shanghai, China)**

Runner Up: Dame Suzie Moncrieff Award

***Ancient Dreamscape* by Kayla Christensen (Wellington, New Zealand)**

Second: Aotearoa Section



***Tar'White* by Ali Middleton (Wellington, New Zealand)**

Third: Aotearoa Section

***Foreign Bodies* by Dawn Mostow and Ben Gould (Seattle, United States)**

Winner: International Award: Americas Design Award

Winner: International Design Award

Second: Under the Microscope Section

***Coccinelle* by Svenja (Brisbane, Australia)**

Third: Under the Microscope Section

***Underling* by Gillian Saunders (Nelson, New Zealand)**

Winner: Open Section

***WOW Tools of the Trade* by Shelley Scott (Auckland, New Zealand)**

Second: Open Section

***Ajaw Eamanom* by David Walker (Eugene, United States)**

Third: Open Section

***Uplifting* by David Kirkpatrick (Waikato, New Zealand)**

Winner: Bizarre Bra Section

***Le Spectacle!* by Erna Van Der Wat and Karl Van Der Wat (Auckland, New Zealand)**

Second: Bizarre Bra Section

***Abreast of Time* by Janice Elliott (Christchurch, New Zealand)**

Third: Bizarre Bra Section

***Echoplex - Goddess of Reverb* by Natalie Hutton (Melbourne, Australia)**

Winner: Avant-garde Section

***Axminstress* by Kate MacKenzie (Hawkes Bay, New Zealand)**

Second: Avant-garde Section

Runner Up: Sustainability Award

***Tangka* by Qiongwen Zhang (London, United Kingdom)**

Third: Avant-garde Section

***The Wise Athena* by Lau Siu San & Cathy, Sin Wei Chow (Hong Kong, China)**

Winner: Reflective Surfaces Section

Winner: International Award: Asia Design Award

***Hilandera* by Julio Manuel Campos Lopez (Madrid, Spain)**



Second: Reflective Surfaces Section

***Lady Ethereal* by Dawn Mostow (Seattle, United States) and Snow Winters (Tacoma, United States)**

Third: Reflective Surfaces Section

***Eye See you Fluffy Kōwhai* by Tina Hutchison-Thomas (Christchurch, New Zealand)**

Winner: New Zealand Design Award

***Absinthium* by R.R. Pascoe (Blue Mountains, Australia)**

Winner: International Award: Australia and Pacific Design Award

***Blue Star* by Adam McAlavey (London, United Kingdom)**

Winner: International Award: United Kingdom and Europe Design Award

***Quantum* by Annabelle Widmann (Santa Eulalia, Spain)**

Winner: Cirque du Soleil Invited Artisan Award

***Hide and Seek* by Mingzhang Sun (London, United Kingdom)**

Winner: First-Time Entrant Award

***Baroness of Vortex 6* by Laura Thapthimkuna (Chicago, United States), Stephen Ions (Biddulph Moor, United Kingdom) & Patrick Delorey (New York City, United States)**

Runner Up: First-Time Entrant Award

***Shell* by Zhang Qiyao (Shanghai, China)**

Winner: Student Innovation Award

***Under the Skin* by Louise Byford (London, United Kingdom)**

Runner Up: Student Innovation Award

***Something Fishy: A Man-Eater Double Feature* by Wendy Moyer (San Miguel de Allende, Mexico)**

Winner: Sustainability Award

***236 Maiden Lane* by Lynn Christiansen (San Francisco, United States)**

Winner: Wearable Technology Award

***Tangible Duality* by Hanna Smith (Avoca Beach, Australia)**

Runner Up: Wearable Technology Award

***Spirit Bone* by Guo Xiao Tong (Beijing, China)**

Winner: Weta Workshop Emerging Designer Award



***Kākāpō Queen* by Stephanie Cossens (Wellington, New Zealand)**

Runner Up: Weta Workshop Emerging Designer Award

China winner stories

Lau Siu San and **Cathy, Sin Wei Chow's** (Hong Kong, China) garment *The Wise Athena* was created to honour the courage of self-reflection. Playing on Socrates' quote 'knowing thyself is the height of wisdom', Lau and Chow used PVC, mirror and gemstones to create the garment that reflects the beauty of Athena and her own universe - represented by the headpiece. The pair aimed for the simplest structure for the garment that wouldn't crack or break under its own weight, settling on polycarbonate mirror. "It is able to reflect light from the environment during movements but avoids material fracture," Lau says. The headpiece was lasercut in 2D, which naturally fell to create a 3D element resembling the universe. The garment's nude element symbolises human energy and life, as well as the way the naked form has been celebrated and chastised at various points of human history since Ancient Greece.

Guo Xiao Tong's (Beijing, China) garment *Spirit Bone* represents the enduring power of bone. While our appearance ages and changes, bone remains firm and immortal, long after the spirit leaves the body. This is Guo's second World of WearableArt entry, having first created *Born to Die* in 2013.

Zhang Qiyao's (Shanghai, China) garment *Shell* is described as a "sharp defense shell formed by an external stimulus to protect the soft body." Qiyao is a first time World of WearableArt designer and a recent graduate of Donghua University.

The inspiration for **Xia Tian, Yang Mengtong** and **He Fangyu's** (Shanghai, China) garment *Feminine Hell* is the Chinese legend of Shura hell. "This dress symbolises the sacrifice of innocent women swallowed by the hell monster," Tian says. The legend says that after death prisoners will be banished to 18 different hells to suffer different punishments by monsters who swallow their souls, becoming part of the monster, she says. The garment is made from silica gel to create 400 different pained female bodies.