

World of Wearable Art™ (WOW™) MEDIA KIT

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1. An introduction to World of WearableArt

World of WearableArt™ (WOW™) is a unique combination of the world's largest wearable art competition and a spectacular stage show held in Wellington, New Zealand.

World of WearableArt attracts cutting-edge talent from across the globe, from the garment designers to the show's dancers, aerialists, musicians and performers and the creative team who spend 18 months bringing each bespoke World of WearableArt Awards Show to life.

World of WearableArt is New Zealand's single largest theatrical production and a not-to-be-missed event for an audience of around 60,000 people each year as well as a coveted competition for designers across the world working in radical and innovative ways in the mediums of fashion, art, design and costume, including students and emerging designers.

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

2019 World of WearableArt Awards Show

In 2019 you are invited to explore the beauty and grandeur of a frozen land, dive into hidden realms where ancient monuments are waiting to be revealed and experience surreal landscapes that unfold before you. Journey out of this world and encounter the unimaginable at the 2019 World of WearableArt Awards Show.

The 31st season of World of WearableArt is on in Wellington from 26 September to 13 October. Directed by Andy Packer.

‘I’m thrilled to be collaborating with this team of exceptional artists as we construct surprising and delightful worlds to invite our audience into. Expect visions of ancient monuments, ice-caves and a visit to the furnace of creativity.’

Andy Packer, 2019 Show Director

What is World of WearableArt?

THE COMPETITION World of WearableArt (WOW) combines an international wearable art competition with a spectacular stage show. For over 30 years 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 SHOW For three weeks every year, World of WearableArt showcases the best of these creations in a spectacular show that takes over New Zealand’s vibrant capital city of Wellington in an explosion of creativity.

THE EXHIBITIONS The National WOW Museum in Nelson, New Zealand, houses a collection of the most extraordinary garments selected from World of WearableArt’s past season and currently houses the 2018 World of WearableArt Exhibition, with over 60 finalist garments on display.

‘Part Cirque du Soleil, part Broadway play, and part avant-garde couture show, New Zealand’s annual World of WearableArt Awards Show (WOW) is, in a word, mesmerizing.’

Coveteur

‘Undeniably impressive and something that one must see to believe.’

Fashion Quarterly

2. Fast Facts

- 2019 is the 31st World of WearableArt Awards Show
- The 2019 show season is from 26 September to 13 October
- WOW will have performed to an audience of almost 830,000 people at the end of the 2019 WOW Awards Show season
- World of WearableArt will have showcased 4985 finalist garments on its stage at the end of the 2019 WOW Awards Show season
- The judging process is in three stages: the first in Nelson in July; and the second and third in Wellington in September
- Over 10,500 people will have worked on a WOW Awards Show (cast and crew) at the end of the 2019 WOW Awards Show season
- Almost NZ\$2,618,000 in prizes (cash and in-kind) will be awarded to finalist designers after the 2019 WOW Awards Show

- In addition to the Show, WOW has a large-scale touring exhibition that has toured Australia and the United States including the Bishop Museum Hawaii, MoPoP in Seattle, and Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. In 2018 it travelled to the Erarta Museum of Contemporary Art Museum in St Petersburg, Russia, and in June 2019 the exhibition opened in Colorado Springs Fine Art Centre.
- The National WOW Museum opened in 2001 in Nelson, New Zealand, allowing visitors to experience incredible works of wearable art up-close. The Museum hosts an annual exhibition of over 60 finalist garments, featuring previous year's finalists on display. The Museum attracts around 40,000 people each year

3. 2019 Creative Team

The World of WearableArt creative team changes every year. Some of the best and brightest creative minds from both sides of the Tasman have been brought together to create this year's World of WearableArt (WOW) Awards Show.

The 2019 creative team includes talent new to the world of World of WearableArt as well as returning World of WearableArt® alumni. The team has been hard at work creating this year's Show since June 2018.

Heading the 2019 show is Show Director Andy Packer, an Adelaide-based director of theatre, music theatre and opera who has also worked as a creative producer on multidisciplinary arts programs, large-scale outdoor events and festivals around the world. Andy's theatre productions have toured to 12 countries including USA, Canada, Spain, Norway, China and India, including two seasons on 42nd Street, New York, two seasons in the Dublin Theatre Festival and five seasons at the Sydney Opera House. He has worked with screen icons including Barry Humphries, Kristen Chenoweth and Molly Ringwald. As Show Director, Andy is creating the show's overarching story.

'WOW is unique in the world; a true celebration of creative potential and the revelatory role art, theatre and performance can play in our lives.'

Andy Packer, 2019 Show Director

Sarah Foster-Sproull, Director of Choreography

Acclaimed Choreographer Sarah Foster-Sproull is this year's Director of Choreography. The Auckland-based creative has worked with the Royal New Zealand Ballet and Footnote New Zealand Dance in New Zealand as well as companies in Edinburgh, China, Singapore and Fiji. She's currently Creative New Zealand's Choreographic Fellow for 2017-2019. Sarah's role is to set the dance and movement for each world, working closely with the Show Director and specialist choreographers.

Paul McLaney, Music Director

Kiwi music legend Paul McLaney returns for a second year as Music Director for World of WearableArt. McLaney's career has spanned acoustic music as a solo artist, rock and pop with Gramsci and ambient electronica The Impending Adorations. He is the Director of Music for the Pop-up Globe. McLaney first worked with World of

WearableArt in 2018 and will bring together a medley of talented Kiwi musicians spanning genres from drum and bass and electronica to symphony, jazz and blues to create music for each section of the show.

Chris Petridis, Lighting Designer

Lighting Designer Chris Petridis hails from Adelaide and has worked on dozens of stage performances developing his experience across theatre, dance, and other live events in Australia and internationally. This is Petridis' second year working with World of WearableArt, having worked as a lighting programmer last year.

Sophie Ham, Head and Co-Designer of Costume

Sophie Ham returns as the Head and Co-Designer of Costume. Sophie has been working on World of WearableArt Awards Shows since 2011 and is tasked with creating all the costumes that adorn the dancers and special performers onstage. Sophie has worked with top theatre and dance companies including New Zealand Opera, Auckland Theatre Company, Indian Ink Theatre Company and the Touch Compass Dance Company.

John Strang, AV Designer

AV Designer John Strang has developed a wide range of visual storytelling skills in his more than 15 years in the industry working on large scale projects across multiple platforms and countries. The Wellingtonian also VFX supervised film and television projects and was the creative director for many motion graphics projects. John previously worked on World of WearableArt from 2012-14.

Dan Potra, Show Concept Designer

Joining Andy from Australia is Show Concept Designer Dan Potra, an award-winning designer for his work in opera and theatre who has designed many large-scale sporting and cultural events including the Olympic and Commonwealth Games, and a stage adaptation of How to Train Your Dragon. Dan has been working in collaboration with Andy on the show's overall story.

4. The Awards Show

The Awards are divided into six sections: three recurrent sections, and three specific to 2019.

Recurrent sections

- **Aotearoa** has its own deep sense of place. This section draws on that to celebrate who we are as people and what makes us proud. From our rich cultures and history to our landscapes, from our independence to our inventions, designers show us New Zealand and New Zealanders as they see us.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

- **Open** is a world with no thematic boundaries, designers have complete freedom to explore and create their own design. The only limit is their

imagination.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

- **Avant-garde** is a world that is experimental, radical and unorthodox; a rebellion against the norm. Daring to defy the boundaries of fashion, designers create work that is cutting-edge, rejecting the ordinary and nurturing originality.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

Sections specific to 2019

Mythology is about other worlds and dimensions; fantastical stories of fearsome monsters and creatures, gods and goddesses, demigods and supernatural humans. Designers gather their inspiration from a vast treasure trove of tales. Dark and mysterious; exuberant and outlandish; ethereal and dreamy.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

- **Transform** challenges designers to create a work that changes in form, nature and appearance. To play and innovate with different mechanisms to reveal unexpected aspects of their garment. The transformation can be playful and humorous, striking or startling.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

- **White** Representing a spectrum of emotions, white can be associated with peace, light, love, perfection, purity and spirituality. In some parts of the world, white can also represent death and mourning; in others it is associated with angels, good health and time. Inspiration may be found in sheer simplicity, sculptural boldness, intricate detail or experimenting with layers, light and shadow, proportion and scale.

[View the inspiration video here.](#)

5. The Competition

Entries to the 2019 World of WearableArt Awards Competition closed on 29 March. On 24 July finalist designers were announced who will have their garment/s on display at the Awards Show in September/October, brought to life by models and performers in a collision of creativity!

**108 FINALIST GARMENTS CREATED BY
115 FINALIST DESIGNERS REPRESENTING
22 COUNTRIES AND REGIONS**

6. The Judges

Each year finalist garments and award-winners are selected through three rounds of

closed judging. The judging panel comprises of World of WearableArt 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 2019 the first round of judging took place in early July in Nelson where Dame Suzie Moncrieff was joined by Gregor Kregar and James Dobson.

In the second and final judging stages, the panel will be joined by Sir Richard Taylor CEO and Creative Director of Weta Workshop, Melissa Thompson from Cirque du Soleil and international guest judge B. Åkerlund from The Residency Experience.

7. The 2019 Awards

The World of WearableArt Awards Show brings artists and designers together to compete for a prize pool totaling more than NZ\$187,500. 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 NZ\$30,000
- Runner-up receives NZ\$15,000

Dame Suzie Moncrieff Award

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

- Winner receives NZ\$6000

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 NZ\$6000 + 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.

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 NZ\$5000 and will undertake a four-week residency at Cirque du Soleil in Montreal, Canada. Flights from anywhere in the world and

accommodation are included.

The Residency Experience Award

The winner of this Award is chosen by revolutionary fashion activist, stylist and costume designer, B. Åkerlund. This award is presented to a designer whose entry exemplifies exceptional cutting-edge design.

- The winner receives NZ\$5000 and the opportunity to show up to five pieces of their work at the exclusive Residency Experience showroom in Los Angeles for a three-month period, during which time their work will be given exposure through the Residency social channels.
- The winner will also receive a travel prize of NZ\$2500 to enable them to visit the Residency showroom in LA.

“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*

8. History

World of WearableArt is one of New Zealand’s creative success stories. The original World of WearableArt concept was founded and created by Dame Suzie Moncrieff in 1987. The first World of WearableArt 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 World of WearableArt Awards Show moved into Nelson’s Trafalgar Centre, establishing itself as a must-see annual event, before moving to Wellington in 2005. At the end of the 2018 show season, almost 770,000 people saw a World of WearableArt Awards Show. After 30 years, Dame Suzie continues to be a driving force behind World of WearableArt, acting as a guide and mentor to the wider creative team.

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

World of WearableArt’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 670,000 visitors in Australia, Russia and the United States, including Bishop Museum Hawaii, MoPOP in Seattle and Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. The International Travelling Exhibition is open

at Fine Arts Centre in Colorado Springs from June – September 2019, before returning home after a five year journey overseas.

‘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

9. 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 the first 25 years and continues to be a driving force behind the WOW phenomenon and an inspiration to the WOW team. Dame Suzie acts 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, WOW Founder

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 a key point of contact for designers. 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.

‘The Competition gives designers the opportunity to be original, to push the boundaries of their own skills and of art itself.’

Heather Palmer, Competition Director

GISELLA CARR | Chief Executive

Gisella Carr has been the CE of WOW since 2016. 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.

10. 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 Ltd

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

For more details, please email charlotte@worldofwearableart.com

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®

For New Zealand Media:

- The ® symbol follows WearableArt®
- The ® symbol follows WOW®

WOW Social Media:

@worldofwearableart

www.worldofwearableart.com

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

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

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'WOW really is the only word to describe it.'
NZ Herald

'The avant-garde event of the year.'
Concrete Playground

