



## India wins WOW with 'Loops'

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An Indian design using interlacing merino wool felt has taken the top award at New Zealand's world-renowned Montana World of WearableArt (WOW) in Wellington.

First-time entrants Yogesh Chaudhary and Manas Barve, students of India's National Institute of Design, not only won the Supreme Award but also the American Express Open Section and \$30,000 worth of prizes for their sustainable, innovative garment 'Loops'.

Their design was one of a record 23 entries from India - 21 of which were chosen as finalists.

International designers took out 13 of the 35 prizes at this year's WOW Awards in Wellington on Friday night (24.09.2010) - in a mesmerising show that had the audience on its feet.

### 22nd WOW Awards

The 2010 WOW Awards Show exceeded its already colourful reputation as an extravaganza of weird and wonderful artistic creations, with this year's event described as an "opulent explosion of creativity that mesmerised audiences".

The show featured haunting music, an eruption of geysers, a floating book that became a castle, a circus tent rimmed with old world circus lights, an acrobatic troupe, self-illuminating iron suits and a high energy Carmen Miranda finale-inspired display of colour music and dancing.

International guest judge, New Zealander Mark D'Arcy who is a Creative Arts and Media expert living in New York said: "The Montana WOW Awards Show makes Lady Gaga look like a librarian and has more originality and creativity per minute than any other show I've ever seen."

### Winning Loops

The Indian designers' Supreme Award winning creation was made entirely of merino wool felt using laser-cutting and seamless knitting - no thread or glue was utilised in its construction. Interlaced panels covered the model's whole body.

Chaudhary said he and Barve both valued sustainability. "Loops is a garment which demonstrates an organic sense of wholeness," he said.

WOW judge and New Zealand kinetic sculptor Phil Price said the winning garment was an extremely complete work that had been taken right through from conception to reality.

"So singularly strong and such a unique piece of wearable art," he said.



'Loops' by Indian designers Yogesh Chaudhary and Manas Barve, won the 2010 Supreme Award at WOW.

Chaudhary and Barve, both in their mid 20s, said they "couldn't believe" their win and were already talking about coming back to WOW again."

The winners said they had been aware of the awards since 2005. "We waited a long time before entering and worked really hard," said Chaudhary.

### **Indian designs**

Other Indian entrants included well-known designer Vivan Sundaram and his partner Pratima Pandey who entered seven pieces - the highest number of garments from a single entrant in the show's history.

WOW has had a relationship with the Fashion Design Council of India, in conjunction with Tourism New Zealand, for six years and WOW founders Suzie Moncrieff and Heather Palmer have been to India three times to publicise the event.

Moncrieff said Chaudhary and Barve's 'Loops' was "unlike anything WOW had ever seen before".

### **Lady of the Wood**

It is the second consecutive year an international designer has won the top prize at WOW. In 2009 Alaskan carpenter David Walker became the first foreign Supreme Award winner with 'Lady of the Wood'.

Walker's 2010 entry, 'Wood, Wire and Fire' was commended in the Gen-I section 'The Art of Light'. An array of wood wired to sparkle on stage, the seven-piece garment was styled on a mix of Las Vegas showgirls and a second-hand chandelier.

The 22nd WOW awards featured 191 garments from around the world, 130 were New Zealand entries and 61 came from Germany, Australia, China, Hong Kong, India, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Mexico, Sri Lanka and the USA.

Moncrieff said that although international designers had won 13 of the 35 prizes, further cementing WOW as the world's ultimate costume design competition, Kiwi entrants still had the competitive edge.

"They know WOW," she said.

### **New Zealand winners**

The Gen-i Creative Excellence Section was won by Auckland designers Dinah and Mark Walker with 'Lady La La' - based on a lilac marching costume with a futuristic twist.

Aucklander Violet Oliver won the Bizarre Bra section, literally welding a link between maternity and botany with her entry 'Every Rose has its Thorns'.

The Air New Zealand South Pacific section was won by Nelson designer Olivia Hall who created 'Mana Uha', a stylised Maori cloak using plastic as the medium.

Another Nelson designer took the Children's section: The Magic of Books. Jane Ewers created 'Victus Libri' (Who needs computer games) as a tribute to her entomologist father.

### **Weta Award**

'Put a Cork in it' was one of 13 garments selected from the USA, and the Sean Purucker design of Toluca Lake, California, won the highly coveted Weta Award.

Purucker was also the recipient of the 2008 Wellington International Award and had two other garments named as finalists in the 2010 show.

Lynn Christiansen of San Francisco put hours of labour into her gleaming reptilian-inspired garment 'Horridus' and won runner up to the Supreme Award and runner up in the American Express Open section.

Her intricate design combined 465 individual copper, gold and silver plates, 230 screws and nearly 1500 jump rings, and was considered one of the more difficult constructions in this year's awards show.

Australian designers took out both international awards. Canberra teacher and repeat WOW entrant Bonnie Begg and fellow designer Christina White created a curling peel of polyester, framed on irrigation tubing and wire, that mimicked the shedding of an animal's or insect's exoskeleton.

Their 'Ecdysis' creation won the Wellington International Award which acknowledges the best international entry.

### **Other internationals**

China was represented at WOW for the first time and entrants Ru Xiang and Tang Wenjie achieved commended in the American Express Open section with their garment 'Breathing' - a blend of military equipment, arms and pop clothing.

The Netherlands continued their strong support of the Awards with four garments selected as finalists, one placed runner-up and another which won the CentrePort Illumination Illusion section.

'The Cycle of Fungus' was the winning entry by woodcarver Dimitri Jagtenberg, who turned one of his own carvings into a dramatic first-time entry.

UK student costume designer Richelle Dynae Rudeen played on the peril of the circus with her garment 'The Ring Mistress', which won the Tourism New Zealand Avant Garde section. She said it drew a connection between "the twisted world of the circus and the twisted expectations of women in society."

WOW has an 11-show season and will be seen by an audience of more than 43,000 people.

Next year's show will be held in August to fit in with the Rugby World Cup. The show will be a week longer and prize money will total more than NZ\$100,000.