

Fashion event highlights Maori designers

Fashion runway event Te Wero has not let COVID-19 keep it down.

The red-carpet fashion runway event, originally scheduled to be held in April but postponed due to lockdown, will go ahead in Rotorua in August, now that government regulations around events have been relaxed.

Te Wero (the challenge) brings together a collaboration of emerging and established Māori designers in one event. Organisers Peter Duncan and Taongahuia Maxwell say it will highlight the incredible design talent among Māori New Zealanders.

“Māori fashion design is fast becoming a major contender on the global stage. It's a field that goes against the grain of traditional European thinking when it comes to fashion, putting masterfully created and contemporary and unique design in the spotlight.

“Te Wero presents the beauty of masterfully created and generational design techniques, paired with contemporary and unique design innovation,” Peter says.

“It’s going to be a fantastic event.”

Lead designer Taongahuia Maxwell owns Iti Gifts online and shares a retail store in Rotorua. Although new to the fashion industry, she completed a Bachelor of Māori Art in 2017 and established her label Kahu Huia (Huia Clothing) in 2019. Other participating designers include the renowned Jeanine Clarkin, who has been leading the field in Māori fashion since 1994, popular jewellery and fashion designer Nichola Te Kiri, who has various accolades under her belt, emerging designers Paulette Teatai-Ariki and local favourite Wairata Warbrick, and 2019 Miromoda Avante Garde section winner Chermene Castle. Jewellery designer Brady Walker will also join the team, providing his unique stainless steel pieces to adorn their garments.

Te Wero is on from 6.30pm on August 15, at Rotorua’s Energy Events Centre. Tickets are on sale now from Ticketmaster.

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