

Te Kopu Awards — Open to all

Not every organised group travels along a smooth path, and for the awards committee of Te Kopu Awards Tu Tangata Fashion Show the rough part of their travels has been the accusation of racial discrimination in their second fashion show last year.

A shaky start, but the committee's aim was to encourage Maori design and develop a Maori fashion industry with all garments to be made by Maoris.

This restriction consequently triggered off a howl of protest and the committee was told it was seen by the Auckland Race Relations office as being in breach of the Race Relations Act.

However this year they are throwing open their doors to all and the contest now aims "to promote Maori design and motif by New Zealand people of all ages."

It also aims to boost Maori art forms in fashion and to encourage the kaumatua (elders) to pass on their knowledge of traditional Maori motif design to their people and the people of New Zealand.

A youth section has also been added to the 1982 awards and the prize will be a sponsorship to the Auckland Technical Institute's design course.

The awards association are looking to opening a boutique of Maori fashions, as well as establishing a prospective market overseas. Director of Fashion, Mr Philip Munroe was in Europe recently with a Rotorua Cultural group looking at fashionwear trade.

Enthusiastic

Response for the Te Kopu Awards to be held at Trillos in Auckland, Sunday April 18th, has been enthusiastic. Support from the Maori Womens Welfare League has been tremendous and the committee has received entries and queries from even the remotest marae.

A major sponsorship drive for prizes has been launched throughout New Zealand to business firms.

The show looks to be a boomer if the participation of a seventy year old woman, and a young eighteen year old dressmaking student is any indication. Heard tell the seventy year old, young at heart, was cutting down on calories so as to be in a better shape to wear the dress she was embroidering.

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The contest has been divided into five categories: Te Kopu casual wear with a first prize of a greenstone pendant and certificate, Te Kopu Knitwear with the prize of a Maori carving plus a certificate and Te Kopu High Fashion Day Wear meriting a Memorial silver tray, goblets and a certificate.

Fourth section Te Kopu Evening Wear, wins a wooden dinner set and a certificate, and the fifth section, open only to youth, is the Te Kopu Costume design with first prize a trophy.

Entrants names will be called out as the garments are modelled by a modelling team selected by the director of the Award programme.

Already Te Kopu Fashion awards are proving popular. Following a very successful fashion show staged at the Maori Businessmen's Conference recently, Te Kopu has been swamped with requests and orders from organisations in the country.

Kia ora kotou katoa.



Te Kopu fashion at Trillos.

