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## **Wearable Art Show coming to Port Townsend**

By Diane Urbani de la Paz

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PORT TOWNSEND — While Trisa Chomica works with Greek yogurt lids, Aliina Lahti is marshaling the cedar curls.

The women are two of the designers taking part in the Wearable Art Show, a live, on-the-body art display Saturday.

Dozens of people from across the North Olympic Peninsula and beyond are working with unconventional materials, all in the name of putting on two eye-popping fashion shows — at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. — at the Port Townsend Elks Lodge No. 317, 555 Otto St.

This third annual show is a benefit for the Jefferson County Fund for Women & Girls, a nonprofit group.

Chomica, an interior designer known for her fashion-forward sense, will send model Kristen Chittick of Port Angeles down the runway in a gown made of bottle caps and yogurt container lids.

Lahti, an alumna of the Port Townsend School of Woodworking, was sewing together curly cedar shavings from a wood planer into a 1920s-style flapper frock — and naturally, model Christine Hulburt will dance the Charleston in the show.

Another 22 artists are finishing their Wearable Art Show entries, to compete for awards including Best in Show and People's Choice, the prize presented by the event's spectators.

Tickets to the Wearable Art Show vary depending on where you want to sit: At the matinee, general seating is \$20, while a front-row spot is \$35. For the evening performance it's \$25 for general and \$75 for the front row. The premium seat-holders will also be treated to a reception with the artists at 6:30 p.m. Saturday.

Tickets to either Wearable Art Show performance are on sale at Quimper Sound, 230 Taylor St., and at the Jefferson County Community Foundation website, [www.JCCFGives.org](http://www.JCCFGives.org).

For her piece of wearable art, Chomica is using more than 400 yogurt lids and bottle caps; she collected many of them, while friends contributed even more.

The lids come in purple, red, pink and orange, with lots of white accents, Chomica said, adding that a gown she saw in Vogue magazine also inspired her.

For Chittick's sashay down the runway, Chomica chose violinist Lyndsey Stirling's "Crystallize," a tune mixing a classical sound with dub-step.

“I wanted something romantic, since it’s a ball gown,” she said, “but a little bit edgy.”

The Wearable Art Show is a good party, Chomica feels, as “it raises money and you get to be creative at the same time.”

Lahti, for her part, said the show is a great motivator for artists to stretch out and make something far outside the mainstream. She finished at the school of woodworking this spring, and works as an artist while serving as volunteer coordinator at the nonprofit ReCyclery bike center.

Some 34 artists submitted entries, and Seattle fashion designer Michael Cephress and University of Washington School of Art professor Layne Goldsmith selected two dozen, including designs from students and mother-daughter teams.

Artists whose work will appear on the runway include: Linda Abbott-Roe, Judith Bird, Kelsey Bush, Bo Choi, Lauralee DeLuca, Lynn DiNino, Heather Gale, Tamara Halligan, Kelly Matlock, Margie McDonald, Amanda Melbostad, Galadriel Nichols, Teri Nomura, Paula Pay la Renta, Marsha Wiener and Joyce Wilkerson, plus students Carly Davies, Ruby Gale, Hana McAdam, Anna Moore and Annalise Rubida.

The show has attracted capacity crowds in the past, said Debbi Steele, chairwoman of the Fund for Women and Girls. With its music, gowns, frocks and suits, it is a spectacle.

In past years, “our models wore incredible pieces,” Steele said. Materials included recycled ties, sailcloth, handwoven material and vinyl records.

For Chomica, the show is a celebration of design and of seeing what’s possible.

“It’s so fun,” she said, “to see it come together.”

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