

Move Aside, Armani



While most 18-year-olds are deciding whether or not to attend senior prom, Alexander Sanchez is busy designing Alice Cooper's costumes and submitting extravagant outfits for the revered design contest, A Royal Fashion Competition to benefit Pink Ribbons Crusade and Sentebale, His Royal Highness Prince Harry's Personal Charity. In his final year at the New School for the Arts and Academics (NSAA) in Tempe, the fashion-designing teen is redefining what it means to dress to impress.

"People don't understand how far I've come at such a young age, so it kind of hinders a lot," Sanchez says. "But it's also an accomplishment that I'm so young, yet so far."

At a young age, Sanchez was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). After transferring schools in a fight to flourish through adolescence, he was enrolled in NSAA at the age of 14. His ADD has influenced the way he looks at traditional school subjects (like science and history), taking a creative, fashion-influenced approach to his studies. "Because of my ADD, I can never not be doing something," says the Carefree resident. "It really took a positive impact because [ADD is] looked upon negatively because you are slower, but I felt more creative with whatever I studied. Like with history, you always see different types of trends coming back."

Sanchez is currently designing his last show with NSAA, calling on a theme that's "very based on if Jacqueline Kennedy was in the golden age with Queen Elizabeth, and then went to the future." Guests of the show, set to take place at the Phoenix Art Museum in April, will be graced with flowing gowns stitched with royal colors and even some men's fashions. Just last month, Sanchez designed the costumes for Cooper's 12th Annual Christmas Pudding charity event.

After NSAA, Sanchez plans to attend the Fashion Institute of Design and Marketing in Los Angeles. With his team of seamstresses, the student's New Year's resolutions are to open a shop and participate in a Fashion Week in New York or Paris.

Even in his free time, when he's watching classic films and eating at Café Bink or Rokerij, this young man is constantly thinking fashion. "This is my life," Sanchez says. "Fashion is my life; the arts are my life. When I design, I always think, 'Where is she going and what is she doing?' The type of woman I would like to design for is the woman who can wear a ball gown and go grocery shopping."

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Alexander Sanchez Designs www.alexandersanchezdesigns.com.