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### Media Release

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## South High School Students Craft Opera-Inspired Costumes for Theater Production

In a unique fusion of fashion and theatrical storytelling, students from South High School (SHS) have been creating costumes inspired by the richness of Chinese Opera for their upcoming play, "The Emperor's New Clothes."

Over the past few weeks, students in the master class explored the visual splendor and cultural significances within the Chinese Opera. They learned to decode the intricate symbolism that is characteristic of these historical performances—where every hue, pattern and fabric choice narrates part of the story.

Instructor Shilind Wheaton watched her students creatively engage with the materials, techniques and stories. "Each designer was able to decide their path for the costume but was given boundaries to keep them within the director's vision," shared Wheaton.

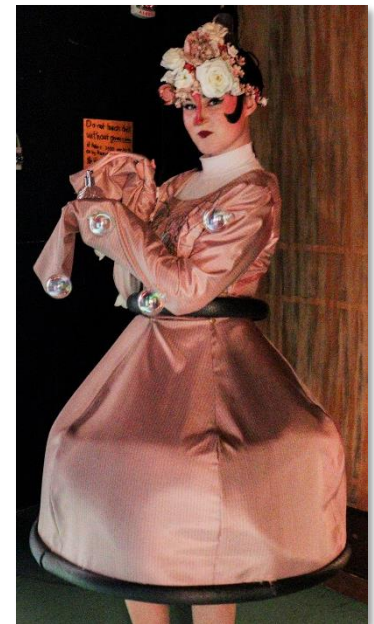
Their creativity wasn't the only trait being stitched and hemmed—so too were their research skills. Students balanced cultural traditions with the narrative needs of their school play. They encountered inevitable challenges with

varying levels of sewing experience. Regardless of their starting point, they all persevered, even when facing obstacles and mistakes.

The anticipation of wearing these garments in the actual performance is building self-assurance among the young designers. Wheaton proudly added, "The designers will each model their original creations in the play which will hugely impact the look of the production, but more important is the impact on their own confidence as they walk the runway in an outfit they designed and constructed."

The project also highlights students' abilities to exceed expectations when provided the right opportunities and resources. "This project shows that if given the opportunity and the artist is willing, you can do amazing things," Wheaton remarked.

Wheaton and her students invite the entire Salina community to experience the visual feast and witness the students' talent firsthand during the school's presentation of "The Emperor's New Clothes." It



promises to be a cultural tapestry that's as educational as it is beautiful—woven with threads of diligent research, cultural awareness and youthful imagination.

Be sure to reserve April 4, 5 or 6 at 7:00 p.m. to see *The Emperor's New Clothes* at the South High School auditorium. Tickets will be available at the door. Some photos courtesy of Matea Gregg with For Greater Glory Photography.

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