

FASHIONABLY RUSHED

Summer program builds sense of style, tests deadline focus for 12 girls

By Phaedra Haywood

The New Mexican

Whipping wind and hail drove their fashion show inside Friday, but inclement weather wasn't the only challenge faced by the budding young designers who took part in a fashion design camp last week at The Santa Fe School for Arts and Sciences.

The 12 pre-teen and teen girls who participated in the *Project Runway*-themed workshop also had to complete three design challenges with limited time and resources, just as on the cable television show that inspired the camp.

"We were definitely pushing them this week," said Traci Hatico, one of the course's instructors. "One of the things we wanted them to learn in the camp is time management and how to manage your anxiety when you've got a deadline."

The students got some guidance on that front from Elisa Jimenez, a fashion designer who taught the camp with Hatico. Jimenez was a contestant on season four of *Project*

Runway, a reality TV show that pits aspiring fashion designers against one another in a series of challenges for a grand prize of \$100,000 with which to create their own fashion line.

Jimenez, who was the sixth person eliminated during her stint, now lives in Santa Fe. She said she still is creating couture and showing her collections in New York and Los Angeles. Her ready-to-wear garments can be purchased at Block Mercantile in Santa Fe.

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Luis Sánchez Saturno/The New Mexican

Hannah Sachs, 13, from Santa Fe, shows off an outfit based on Tinker Bell as she walks the runway in front of parents Friday at The Santa Fe School for the Arts and Sciences. 'I'm not sure it will be a career,' Hannah said.

Style: Weeklong camp starts again Monday

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In the first challenge, "Everybody has one," the students were given an hour to redesign a T-shirt without using thread.

The second challenge, "Wardrobe basics," required them to make patterns for an A-line shift, a pair of pants, a T-shirt and a camisole. In the final challenge, the girls were asked to pick a character from literature and design an outfit their character might have worn.

The young designers, some precocious, some shy, modeled their creations during a fashion show at the school Friday.

Hannah Sachs, a 13-year-old who dressed as Tinker Bell from the book *Peter Pan*, said the class inspired her to make her own clothes. But she said she also faced frustrations trying to handle the two "slippery" fabrics she had chosen to work with. "I'm not sure it will be a career," she said.

Most of the girls chose to create clothing for characters not necessarily well-known in literary circles.

Elle Jansen, 13, created a stunning blue and black evening gown meant to represent a kitten with blue eyes, the main character in the book *Gobolino, The Witch's Cat*. "The waves represent the path she goes on," Elle said of the undulating pattern on her dress.

"And it's abstract, because she is unique and different." Elle said she's always been interested in fashion and dancing, and hopes to do both one day.

Misha, from the graphic novel *Pita-Ten*, inspired Jende Cohen, 11, to create a colorful dress that matched the rainbow-colored bands on her braces. "She's colorful and happy," Jende said of Misha.

"She always messes up. But she's positive and says, 'I can do it. I can help.'" Sara Hartse, 13, made a flared-sleeve blouse using remnants of a blue brocade to represent Eowyn, a powerful female character from the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy. "I admire her because she was always very strong," Sara said.

Arryel Andraud, 11, created a hooded coat with tails that she imagined might have been worn by Willy Wonka. "It was amazing how much you could get on a \$20 budget," Arryel said. She said she wasn't sure if fashion would be a career for her. "Maybe," she said. "I'm not that far into my life that I know exactly what I want to do."

Megan Belzner, 14, said she had gotten the idea of creating an ensemble for Ophelia from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* from reading a graphic novel adapted from the classic play.

Megan said she also intends to read "the real one" for comparison.

The weeklong camp will start a new cycle Monday. The cost is \$225, said Rayna Dineen, the school's principal, but she said many scholarships are available, thanks to the Santa Fe Rotary Club. To sign up for the camp, call her this weekend at 920-9709.

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