Changing lives: Sanna has designs on the world of



An aspiring costume maker is looking to bigger stages after recreating her late grandmother's wedding dress more than four decades on from the ceremony.

Sanna Javid was bullied at school and had been shy and unconfident before taking part in the Yesterday's Dreams HLF Young Roots project run by Friction Arts in Birmingham. The 18-year-old has grown in confidence after making the exquisite cerise dress without any photographs, relying on descriptions given by her 72-year-old grandfather, Manzoor, over the phone.

Sewing from an early age

The teenager, from Bournville, Birmingham, began sewing at the age of 10 but gave hints of her talent at an even earlier age by stitching doodles into nursery books. She became involved with Friction Arts more than three years ago.

At the time Sanna rarely left the house and at home her love of making clothes was viewed as a hobby rather than a serious career choice. "I grew up lacking confidence," she says. "When my sister told me about Friction I had to pluck up the courage just to phone them. I was really nervous about going along but in the end I loved it. I don't know where I'd be now without it."

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Without National Lottery players, Sanna would not have had the chance to join Yesterday’s Dreams, which asked young people to explore their family heritage.

Recalling the big day

“My grandad is amazing, he’s the most chilled person in our family,” she says. “He was in his twenties when the wedding happened but he was able to remember the dress was shiny and it was a cerise colour with a floral design and she was wearing a lot of gold.”

The pensioner, who is a hit in the family with his warm and playful character, lives in Lancashire and was still a young man when the ceremony took place in Pakistan. But Sanna used interview skills gained through the project to help him recall the big day and went on to exhibit the finished replica outfit at Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery (BMAG).

Bringing the family together

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“Because my grandmother passed away 13 years ago it has been difficult to speak to him about her but he remembered every aspect of the wedding and how happy she made him. In a way it has brought my family together and for my relatives who have seen the dress it was quite an emotional experience because the original did not survive and there are no photographs of the wedding. I felt proud to see the finished piece and I know my late grandmother would be too.”

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Exhibiting at BMAG

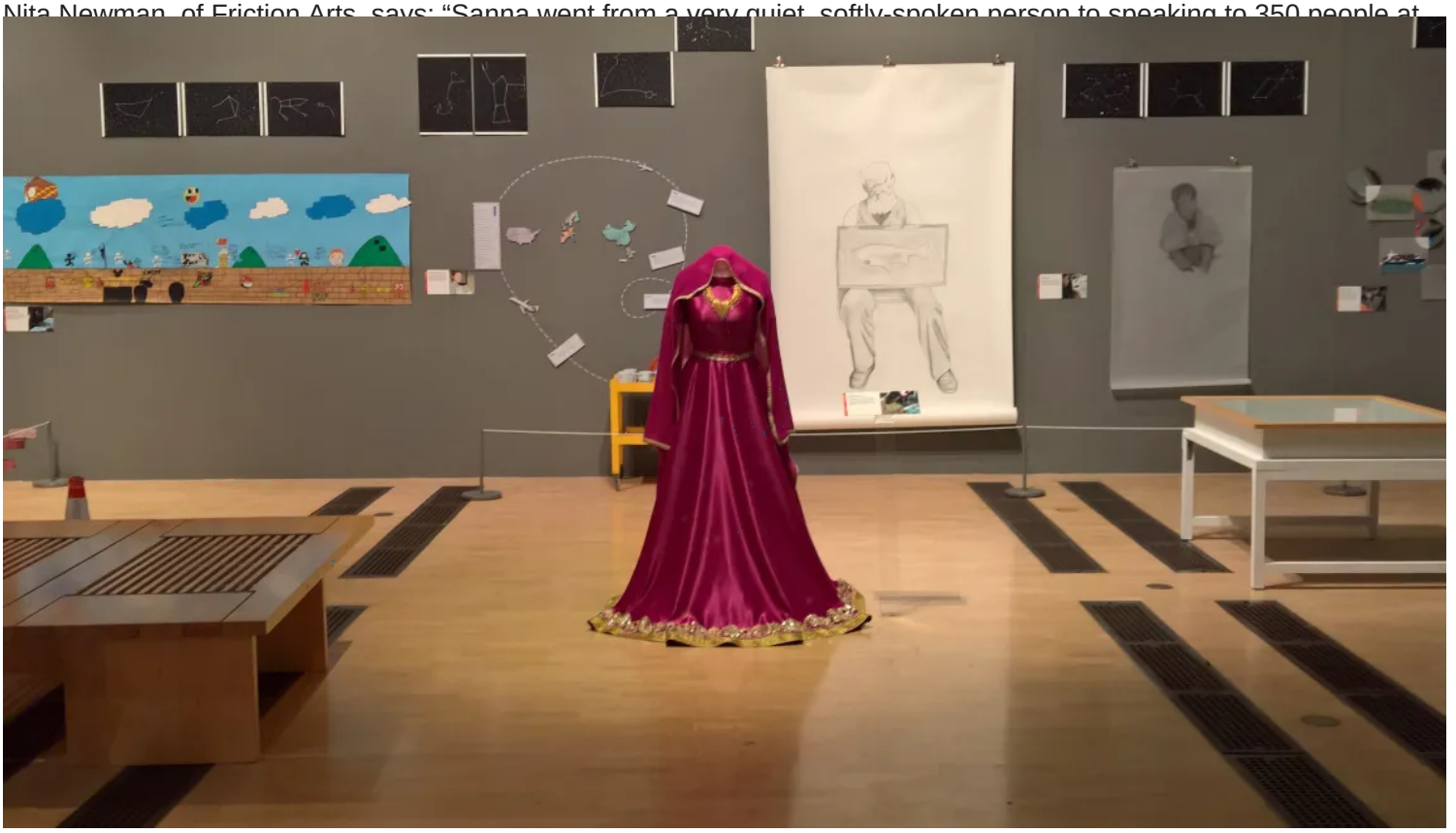
More than 13,000 people visited the exhibition over the summer, where they were able to admire Sanna’s dress. She made contemporary tweaks which included hand-printing delicate roses – her grandmother’s favourite flower – onto the outfit.

“I’d made things for one or two other exhibitions but never anything like this, it was a massive confidence boost,” Sanna says. “I’ve had an amazing time on the project and created something that I never thought I would have been able to. I’ve learnt so much along the way and I’ve been able to find things out about my family history that would have been difficult to talk about in other ways. I now get people asking if I can make things for them and where I would have had doubts before, now I know I can go away and do it.”

Growing confidence

As Sanna's confidence grew she led and performed in a fashion theatre show called *Pigs Can Fly If You Believe*. She works part-time at McDonald's to fund her way through a theatre studies degree at Birmingham City University, with the aim of working in costume-making after graduating. The university student's CV also includes a triple distinction in BTEC Art and Design from Bournville College and an internship at The Blue Orange Theatre.

Nita Newman, of Friction Arts, says: "Sanna went from a very quiet, softly-spoken person to speaking to 350 people at









Sanna's wedding dress recreation features hand printed roses - her grandmother's favourite flower Ken Bhogal