



Quakers Hill High School In the Media 2010



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Little maids (and lads) from school are we



Finishing touches: Cassandra Said (left) helps fellow cast-member Christina Egger get into character.

By Callan Lawrence

QUAKERS Hill High School is set to wow audiences with its largest-ever stage production.

The school has raised nearly \$15,000 to fund its contemporary adaptation of the Gilbert and Sullivan opera *The Mikado*.

About 130 students have been involved in producing the century-old opera comedy, which has been planned since late last year.

School staff have even managed to get authentic costumes for the opera made in Vietnam to the student's measurements.

The spectacular production involves students of all ages and isn't limited to those who revel in drama.

English and Drama teacher Deborah Franco, who wrote and directed the adaptation, said the



Dazzling display: A handful of the *The Mikado* cast during a dress rehearsal.

Pictures: Michael Szabath

theatre production offered plenty of opportunities for the students. "It's a way to connect with the other kids who don't take drama but like to sing and dance," she said.

"It's also an outlet for kids who want to learn more about sound and lighting and the hands-on stuff."

The Mikado, which was written by opera producers W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan in 1885, is set in Japan and was a vehicle for the writers to ridicule Victorian England. They wanted to criticise the

society they saw as full of hypocrisy and contrived niceties but knew they could not directly ridicule their own homeland.

Ms Franco said she had rewritten some of the demeaning language and added some contemporary characters and music.

She said she hoped the students would learn while enjoying the theatrics.

"If we don't take heed of the past then we can't move forward and, hopefully, that's what the kids will take from it."

The school's production of *The Mikado* will run from Tuesday, June 22, to Friday, June 25. The shows will start at 7pm.

Details, tickets: Quakers Hill High School, 70 Lalor Road, quakershil-h@schools.nsw.edu.au or quakershil-h.schools.nsw.edu.au or 9837 1533 or fax 9837 1747.

Strike a pose: Christina Egger (from left), Cassandra Said, Vicky Bryan and Sahand Mohammadi.

