

Michigan Opera Theatre brings culture to kids



Getting ready for the big show is Steve Kleiff who helped to carry in some of the props for the operatic performance. (Staff photo)

The fine art of opera usually reserved for a highbrow downtown audience came to Farmington Hills Friday where 400 students at Hillel Day School enjoyed a performance of "Rumpelstiltskin" performed by the Michigan Opera Theatre.

"The kids thought it was fantastic," said Miki Berg, Hillel spokeswoman. "It was an original performance and they threw in a couple of Jewish expressions."

Based on the familiar Grimm's fairytale, six singers, an accompanist

and stage manager staged the 40-minute production for an audience of kindergarten through ninth-graders.

After the show, the performers joined the junior high students for a discussion of the opera.

The visit was sponsored by the school's parent-teacher organization as part of a year-long cultural series that will bring Dance Alive, a group of interpretive dancers from the Birmingham Unitarian Church, to the school May 30.



David Gloff prepares for the performance by putting on make-up for the prime minister's character. (Staff photos by Randy Borst)



Performing the opera is the best part, especially after all the rehearsals and make-up. Showing the students how an opera looks and sounds is, from left, David Herendeen, Davis Gloff and Nora Bostaph. (Staff photo)



The children of Hillel watch the pros with various reactions. (Staff photo)



Denise Coffey delighted the audience with her performance as the princess. (Staff photo)



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