

A midsummer night's traffic controller



Rod Bennett

THE adage "she couldn't direct traffic" is clearly untrue in the case of Narrabeena's Hayley Schumann-Mitchell.

She makes her directorial debut tonight at Manly's Star of the Sea Theatre. And for her day job she has spent the past year as a traffic controller, complete with hard hat and work boots.

"I prefer the term 'traffic controller' to 'lollipop lady'," she joked. "You've got to keep your head when you're on the road - it's the same with the theatre, I suppose."

Schumann-Mitchell has directed before, but nothing on this scale: the production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has a cast of 16 and is 2½ hours long. It is being presented by the Rough Hewn production company.

Schumann-Mitchell said she enjoyed her daytime role because of the array of different people she met.

"I work on construction sites and I get to meet pedestrians who ask me about what I do," she said. "And the labourers try to chat you up - that's pretty funny."

She has been working as a traffic controller to pay for her university fees while studying for a bachelor of communications, theatre and media, at Bathurst's Charles Sturt University.

A Midsummer Night's Dream is on tonight and over the weekend, and from Wednesday to Saturday next week (February 27-March 1).

Tickets \$15, concessions \$10. For more information or bookings, phone 9976 1806.

Hayley Schumann-Mitchell is making her theatre directorial debut tonight with *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Picture: VIRGINIA YOUNG TJP86589