

# Thea Dispeker

Artists' Representative

59 East 54th Street  
New York, NY 10022

(212) 421-7676

Cable: THEADISPEK NEWYORK

WU Telex: 141126

# Lucia casts a spell at Shea's

BY THEATRICAL CORRESPONDENT  
for The Tribune

**BUFFALO, N.Y.** — In the star-studded world of grand opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor* must rank up there with the best of them.

This week, the Greater Buffalo Opera Company, in residence at Shea's Buffalo Centre, cast a spell on an appreciative audience, as presented Gaetano Donizetti's exquisite music set against the fire-curling, misty moors of Scotland.

*Lucia di Lammermoor* is a dazzling masterpiece by any standards. While it may not be as familiar to some, as other grand operas of the standard repertoire, it is indeed the exceptional work of prolific and exceptional genius, Gaetano Donizetti.

*Lucia di Lammermoor* tells a tangled tale of secret love, deceit, murder and madness. The three-act opera is sung in Italian, with English surtitles flashed on a screen above the stage.

Sixteenth century Scotland with its decaying castles and ravine-ravens, feuding clans and blood-soaked moors provides the setting for its work based on Sir Walter Scott's immensely popular romantic novel, *The Bride of Lammermoor*.

The performance featured massive sets provided by the Michigan Opera Theatre and an ensemble dressed in luxurious period costumes supplied by Costa Diva. The audience experienced the love and frustration between Lucia and Edgardo, and the seething hatred between Edgardo and Lucia's brother, Enrico.

## Performance

Donizetti's music was supplied by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra, with conductor Raymond Harvey at the podium.

Under the stage direction of Gary Burgess, the production manages to achieve an uncluttered atmosphere of intrigue, though not without a bit of a crush in the ensemble scenes.

The atmosphere is buoyant during the charming wedding reception scene. With its Highland dancing and echoes of Scottish music, it's even lightly frivolous. But not for a moment does the director loosen his grip on the atmosphere of inevitable doom that hangs over Lucia.

Soprano Tracy Crane brings to her character Lucia a dramatic richness that only an artist of the highest rank could sustain. This is an actress with a voice of splendid purity. She explores new depths in her passionate duet with Edgardo and especially in her lament during her moments of madness.

Tenor Dale Smith portrays the brooding Edgardo. Wretched with heartbreak and chilled by rejection, his voice cries out in pain.

Baritone David Arnold was sold as Enrico, Lucia's brother. His dramatic style of projection and his easy, pointed focus of sound lent both clarity and poignancy to his singing.

Bass Frank Curtis portrayed Raimondo. His riveting presence and singing endurance magnified the dignity of his role as the chap-

lain. Other outstanding members of the cast were mezzo-soprano Beth Barrow-Titus, tenor Daniel Windnagle, and tenor Phillip Quinn.

During the final act, a lengthy

interval between scenes caused the audience to leave the theatre. Nevertheless, the opera as a whole was spectacular and stimulating.



Daniel Windnagle (Arturo), left, and David Arnold (Enrico) star in *Lucia di Lammermoor*

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