

Donizetti – LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR

Donizetti – LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR, New London, CT

“Teatro Lirico D’Europa made its annual return to the Garde Arts Center Thursday night to stage Donizetti's vocal showpiece **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** with a cast well worth showing off. The heart of the opera – the tale of poor Lucia, forced into marriage and forced to abandon her true love, Edgardo – is the third act mad scene, one of the touchstones of the operatic repertoire and perhaps the greatest coloratura showpiece in the repertoire. And in the mad scene, Yudina was superb. In the mad scene, Lucia appears in her bloodstained nightgown before the guests who have attended her forced marriage, having used a few dagger thrusts in the wedding chamber to lose both her new husband and her marbles. In a long spellbinding sequence, Yudina traversed the spectrum of bel canto technique, from pinpoint staccato coloratura to long, liquid lines in her gorgeous mid-voice. At her most dramatic, gasping “il fantasma” again and again in horror, she was riveting, and at her most winsome, recapping the tenderness of the earlier love duet “Ah! Verranno a te sull'amore,” she brought the emotional cycle full circle. In every featured moment, the attractive soprano never once cut corners, never cheating the audience out of a thrilling finish. Yudina pushed to the top of her range in the finale to every aria, duet and set piece and was as solid at the top as she was flexible in her mid-range. The other key principals were nearly as fine as Yudina. American baritone Theodore Lambrinos was vocally winning and Ukrainian tenor Igor Borko was strong and effortless as Edgardo. Russian basso Mikhail Kolelishvili of Marinnsky Theatre dominated the stage and rattled the foundations as Raimondo.”

THE DAY – Milton Moore

Gifted Russian Singers lift Teatro's LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR - BOSTON

"There were two gifted singers from the Kirov Opera as the star-crossed lovers, soprano Larissa Yudina and tenor Evgeni Akimov. Yudina's voice boasts an unusual coloration, ample and accurate flexibility, a neat trill, and flaming top notes. In the Mad Scene she was both spectacular and touching. Akimov is a real find, the best. He's got a strong, attractive lyric voice and sings and acts with persuasive passion. Bass, Viacheslav Pochapsky made a sonorous and sympathetic priest. As the villain Enrico, American baritone James Bobick strode with malevolent swagger and sang forcefully. The cheering audience was clearly happy." *BOSTON GLOBE – Richard Dyer*

VOICES TRIUMPH! LUCIA sends opera lovers to Scotland, 1835 - BOSTON

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa delivered handsomely last night where it really in the voice department. They sure did sing! The lovely, supple voice of Soprano Larissa Yudina suited the role so well delivering Lucia's pearl-like notes with confidence ease, beauty and real style. Tenor Evgeny Akimov as her true love, sang handsomely and with a forceful passion. Baritone James Bobick, as Lucia's greedy brother Enrico, made a strong, positive impression, and Viacheslav Pochapsky filled the role of Raimondo vividly with his black-as night bass. Conductor Topolov led the music with real spirit and a strong understanding of the singers needs."

BOSTON HERALD – T. J. Medrek

TOWERING PERFORMANCES ELEVATE LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR SCORING ANOTHER BIG SUCCESS FOR TEATRO LIRICO - BOSTON

"Singing the role of Lucia was Larissa Yudina, a lovely coloratura soprano with a set of pipes and manner of punctuated delivery that was perfection in every way. Her Lucia displayed, both vocally and through her gestures, an emotional attachment to the role that, when joined with the manner of her fluid, flawless

delivery, cast a spell over the audience that remained unbroken to the very end. Cast in the lead of her lover, Edgardo, was Russian tenor, Evgeni Akimov. This grand singer; this grand voice is what going to opera is all about. When he sings the walls shake and the ceiling lifts, and the audience is simply swept away in the power and grandeur of perfect tone and technique that is virtuosic in its sheer luminescence. I saw this fine singer perform in Teatro's earlier production of LA BOHEME and noted that his performance went "thermonuclear". Nothing has changed. Akimov acts. He moves. He gestures. He emotes feeling. He is the character – and that is what cements a performance and elevates a production, particularly when it is shared by every other performer on stage. Also, doing a superb job last night was Russian basso Viacheslav Pochapsky. Mr. Pochapsky has a solid stage presence and last night delivered a powerful vocal performance with a deep, resonant and remarkably melodic bass that was nothing short of commanding. Cast in the role of Lucia's scheming brother, Enrico, was baritone James Bobick, who displayed fine singing form and a strong, solid voice. The score was rendered well and the orchestra performed just fine under the apt direction of Krassimir Topolov. This production was marked by fine sets and even, moody lighting that played off the backgrounds nicely and gave this production warmth. This is a production worth seeing because of the remarkable singing and a score that is, at times, hypnotic. Towering performances elevate this "Lucia," scoring another big success for Teatro Lirico D'Europa!"

OPERAONLINE.US – Paul Walkowski

BOSTON LUCIA

"After the Boston Lyric Opera's arty production of Donizetti's French revision of his most famous opera, **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**, it was refreshing to have the familiar Italian version back. With a strong cast, Lucia is as foolproof as LA BOHEME. Young coloratura Larissa Yudina has an extremely pretty, expressive voice that rises into the stratosphere, with real trills. Her "Mad

Scene," was a vocal and dramatic triumph. Tenor Evgenyi Akimov's voice combines power and color with good dramatic instincts. Baritone Vladimir Samsonov, hilarious as Rossini's barber last season, was equally effective as a snarling villain. Bolshoi bass Viacheslav Pochopsky, Teatro Lirico's unforgettable Boris Godunov, sang magnificently as Lucia's confessor. And Bulgarian mezzo, Viara Zhelezova, so winning as Rossini's Rosina, made something real and touching of the tiny role of Lucia's maid. They all sang their hearts out. What fun!" *BOSTON PHOENIX – Lloyd Schwartz*

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR AT THE NAPLES PHIL

“As the tormented Lucia, Larissa Yudina handled the famous coloratura runs during the wedding reception scene when Lucia, bloodstained and totally bonkers, matches notes with a nightingale in a deluded wedding song. It’s an aria so difficult some productions whack it if they can’t find a soprano up to its rigors. Teatro Lirico created its best touring stage yet for the production and put the strongest principals they have in it. Evgeni Akimov is foremost among them as the lovesick Edgardo with a strong dramatic presence to match a powerful, fluid tenor voice. As Lucia’s shameless brother Enrico, Vladimir Samsonov’s strong baritone is a good fit for this role. So is Viacheslav Pochapsky’s Raimondo. Lucia has all eyes however, for her thrilling solos.”

NAPLES DAILY NEWS – Harriet Howard Heithaus

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR at The Touhill Perf. Arts Center - Saint Louis

“**LUCIA DI LAMERMOOR** is one of Donizetti's most famous and tragic operas. Based on Walter Scott's novel *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the opera takes place in Scotland during the late 17th century. Lucia and Edgardo, the opera's two young lovers, come from families in the midst of a bitter feud. After promising herself to Edgardo, Lucia finds herself forced to marry another,

Arturo, chosen by her brother Enrico. By forging a letter from Edgardo to Lucia, Enrico convinces Lucia to marry Arturo. Just as the two are married and the wedding papers are signed, Edgardo arrives to witness the signing. Edgardo curses Lucia and staggers away emotionally, with Lucia overcome by sadness. The wedding celebration comes to a sudden halt when it is learned that Lucia, in a fit of rage and grief, has killed her husband. She enters the stage in her blood soaked gown, muttering incomprehensively and madly. She ultimately falls to her death from madness. Edgardo, upon learning of Lucia's death, determines that his only relief to be to join Lucia in heaven, and plunges a knife into his chest. Much of the success of a production of **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** is dependent upon the climactic Act 3, in which Lucia breaks down completely into madness. Soprano Larissa Yudina's doomed heroine was tragic and chilling. Yudina's Lucia staggered across the stage in agony after killing her husband, portraying the young woman's madness with passion and honesty. Yudina did an excellent job of portraying Lucia's full range of emotions, from love-struck to furious to coming completely undone. Yudina truly stole Saturday's show. Tenor Igor Borko's Edgardo is strong and competent; his vocal range was impressive and his tone melodic and clear. Baritone James Bobick easily dominated his scenes as Enrico, providing a rich and robust voice to the character. **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR's** set design serves the tragic production well. The lighting design was excellent, and the costumes beautiful." *THE CURRENT – St. Louis – Kelly Levins-Moore*

PRESCOTT, AZ LUCIA

"Teatro Lirico's **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** production was very good. The singers had excellent voices. Thanks for all your good work! The orchestra was very good. Only positive reports on the entire troop!"

Susan Garner, Artistic Programming Coordinator

Yavapai College Community Events-Prescott, AZ

LUCIA - Saint George, UTAH

“**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** was absolutely marvelous! I have had more comments on this opera than at any other time. Both nights the soprano role of Lucia (Olga Orlovskaya and Magda Nieves) was stunning! One lady came out of the audience on the 2nd performance literally in tears and said she had never been so moved by a performance. Please thank everyone involved. It truly was a remarkable and memorable experience. Thank you very much. Take care, have a great holiday and thanks again for a great opera.”

Gail Bunker, CELEBRITY CONCERT SERIES - St. George, UT

WILMINGTON, NC LUCIA

“I was captivated by the voices (**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**)! Lucia (Olga Orlovskaya) was unbelievable! The orchestra: Perfection (they were stretched out from ear to ear in our narrow space between the end of the stage and the first row of seats...and yet they stayed together in a 'grand coup de precision.' The costumes were gorgeous...A Huge Success!”

*Risa Kell, Marketing Director, Wilmington Concert Series
Performance - Keenan Auditorium - Willmington,*

REVIEW - LUCIA DI LAMMEMOOR - Wilmington, NC

“The Wilmington Concert Ass. deserves a hand for all it does to bring great performances of classical music and dance to our community. This production of **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** belongs to Teatro Lirico D’Europa, the touring opera company brought to town by the WCA that travels with a full orchestra, chorus, sets and costumes – everything that would also accompany a touring Broadway show except that the singing is of primary importance and that’s what

shows up on stage. Olga Orlovskaya sang the demanding title with courage and admirable musicianship. Her interpretation of Lucia as an emotionally fragile person came through in coloratura – passages of fast notes covering a wide vocal range – possessed of a slippery dream-like quality. Orlovskaya’s best singing came in duets, first with tenor Igor Borko (Edgardo) in act one’s love scene, with baritone Plamen Dimitrov (Enrico) in the act-two letter scene. Borko finessed Edgardo’s music, giving a well-paced performance with plenty of power – vocal, musical and dramatic – that had a sense of wholeness from his act-one entrance to the final scene before Edgardo kills himself at his family’s tomb on hearing that Lucia has died. Dimitrov’s baritone was solid enough to give Enrico’s music plenty of bite, but the greatest example of dramatic singing I’ve heard in some time came from bass William Powers, singing Raimondo, Lucia’s tutor, a priest and the voice of reason. Powers singing was like taking master class, so perfect were his use of breath, tone, diction and expression as heard in the act-two admonition and plea for calm after Edgardo crashes Lucia’s wedding and challenges Enrico to a duel. Hats off to the Teatro Lirico chorus, a group of men and women sang with heart and spot-on musicianship that strengthened its role throughout the opera. The most famous ensemble in **LUCIA** is the act-two sextet in which the thoughts and emotions of all the principals pour out through Donizetti’s inspired writing. Here the cast and chorus rose to the music’s demands aided by the superb pacing of conductor Krassimir Topolov.”

THE STAR NEWS – Wilmington, NC

WILINGTON, NC LUCIA

“Everybody raved about **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** last night, not just the wonderful **OLGA ORLOVKSAYA**, but the whole production! I introduced the evening with a paragraph about how wonderful **LIVE** opera is, and the audience proved it—warm bursts of applause throughout the evening. Thank you so much!”
June Davison, GM – Wilmington Concert Series

BALTIMORE LUCIA

“Many, many, many thanks for yesterday’s miracle **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**! I do not have words...!!!! Our senior citizens were very happy. Lots of thanks on behalf of them. I'm going to advertise the upcoming **LA TRAVIATA** every Sunday on our radio show. Again, many thanks and good wishes.”
Albert Plaks – A STAR OF DAVID RADIO PUBLICATION
Baltimore, MD

LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR at Boston's Emerson Majestic Theatre

“The singing, the sine qua non of bel canto opera, was terrific – full-blooded and deeply committed. The international cast of soloists sang their hearts out. There were more than a few moments of thrilling vocalism. It was just another night for Teatro Lirico d’Europa, the longest running road show in international opera. Created in 1988 by a Frenchman and a Bulgarian and based on singers who had been excellently trained in Bulgarian conservatories, the company hit the road as the Soviet Union and its satellites fell apart. They put on 250 performances a year in European theaters, and then, under the direction of the indefatigable Giorgio Lalov, they moved on to the United States, where they’ve performed in 108 venues all over the country during the past 11 seasons. (I heard them a couple of times in St. Louis, where in the winter

season they were the only opera in town.) Boston has been one of the group's regular stops. Lucia was fearlessly sung by Olga Orlovskaya, a young Russian soprano. A glamorous redhead, she suggested Lucia's emotional fragility from her first appearance. Orlovskaya excelled at coloratura. She totally nailed the mad scene, negotiating the perilous changes in tempo and dynamics and hitting all the high notes without apparent effort. Her performance was heartbreaking. As Edgardo, Ukrainian Igor Borko, was the real thing, an Italianate tenor with the requisite ping. A soloist with the National State Opera in Kiev, one wonders why he doesn't have more of a presence in major houses in the United States. I've heard far less persuasive tenors on the stages of supposedly major American companies on many occasions. In the gorgeous Act I duet with Lucia, in which the two promise to exchange vows of love on the eve of Edgardo's departure for France, Borko's and Orlovskaya's voices mixed beautifully, creating a sound greater than the sum of its two (excellent) parts. In the minor role of Raimondo, Lucia's tutor and spiritual advisor, veteran American bass William Powers was powerful and brought attention to his subtlety and skill whenever he sang. Other principals, including Plamen Dimitrov as Lucia's brother Enrico, Arseni Arsov as captain of the guards, Viara Zhelezova as Lucia's maid, and Yuri Nikolov as Lucia's ill-fated husband – all Bulgarians – were all fine, with Dimitrov especially deserving of praise. Krassimir Topolov, a Bulgarian who has been the company's principal conductor since 1995, kept the proceedings moving with a propulsive beat."

David Bonetti – BERKSHIRE FINE ARTS

NEW LONDON, CT - LUCIA

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa staged a winning **LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR** at the Garde Arts Center, New London, CT last night with a standing ovation from the appreciative audience. A very welcome debut with TLE this season as Lucia is Russian soprano Olga Orlovskaya, aptly dubbed in the program "dramatic coloratura." Her solid, round-toned voice beamed in the first-act

duet with Edgardo and second-act duet with Enrico, soared where it should in the sextet, and thrilled with nimble fioriture, clearly placed high notes, and trills in the mad scene. She acted all moods of her role most convincingly: deep affection with Edgardo, consternation with Enrico, and derangement in the mad scene and even in the first act "Regnava del silenzio," where she was clearly frightened by her vision of the ghost of the slain woman in the well. Her looks are as lovely as her voice. Another star of the performance was Ukrainian tenor Igor Borko as Edgardo. His rich voice had all the right dynamics, including pp at several key moments. He was justly bravoed after "Fra poco a me ricovero." A handsome man, he looked and acted his part very well. The third star was American basso William Powers. Plamen Dimitrov was adequate as Enrico. Bulgarian mezzo, Viara Zhelezova sang a strong-voiced Alisa in Act I, making a good case for Lucia's handmaiden's case against her mistress's romance with a Ravenswood. TLE's usual conductor Krassimir Topolov led the fine TLE orchestra in a well-synchronized performance. Giorgio Lalov, as always, created very persuasive stage direction. His unit set-panels at right and left with stained-glass windows and a staircase in the middle-- effectively supported changes of scene, with the good lighting of Gueorgui Bajukliev. Another fine production from Teatro Lirico."

OPERA-L – John Deredita

BALTIMORE LUCIA

"The opera (**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**) was wonderful and the patrons loved it!" *Nancy Goldberg, GM - Gordon Center for Performing Arts
Owings Mills, MD*

REVIEW: BOSTON LUCIA DI LAMMEMOOR

"Teatro Lirico D'Europa's visit, with **LUCIA DI LAMMEMOOR** had the sine qua non for the required vocal and dramatic fireworks in the abundantly red-

haired Russian coloratura, Olga Orlovskaya, who mowed down the famous Mad Scene. Her closest matches were Met and City Opera bass-baritone William Powers as Lucia's sympathetic priest Raimondo and the always-winning Bulgarian mezzo-soprano Viara Zhelezova as Lucia's faithful companion.” *BOSTON PHOENIX – Lloyd Schwartz*

DAYTONA LUCIA

“Fabulous!!! Our Lucia (**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR**) (Olga Orlovskaya) was amazing. Many said it was our best opera yet. We can’t wait for BUTTERFLY!! Thank you so much, Jenny.”

Carolina Anderson, GM-Daytona Beach Symphony Society