

with a dark Gothic setting and period costumes from L'Opéra de Montréal's recent production. More unusually, the conductor and the entire orchestra could be seen by most of the audience.

Canadian coloratura Nikki Einfeld proved a sympathetic and convincing Lucia. Taking a lyrical approach, rather than a dramatic one à la Callas, Einfeld drew the audience into Lucia's tormented soul with a supple voice and, despite some sharp high notes, a tender vocal expressiveness.

American tenor Scott Ramsay was a heroic Edgardo. Although his voice

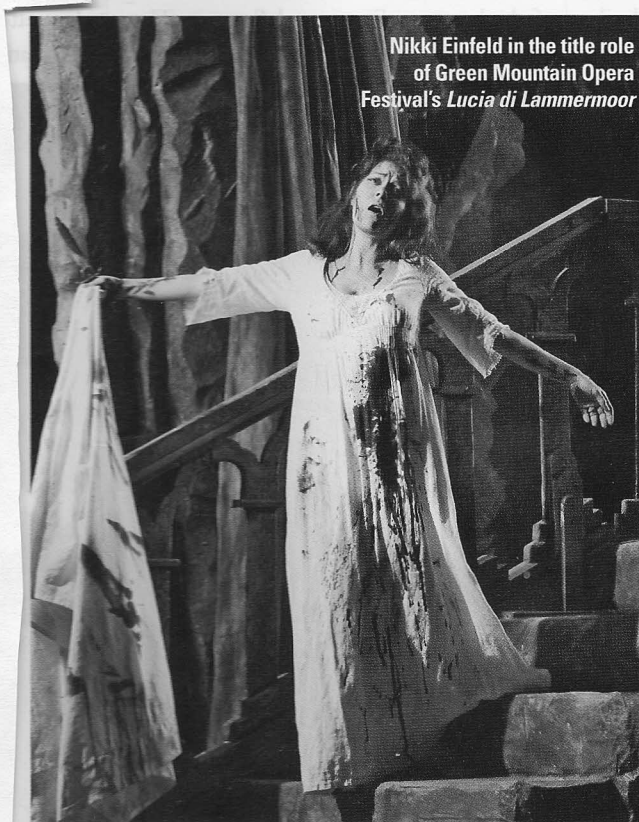
ica during the Mad Scene.

The supporting cast was largely strong. Bass Gustav Andreasson was powerful as well as tender vocally as Raimondo, but theatrically a bit wooden. Soprano Samantha Grenell-Zaidman was a rich-sounding and lyrical Alisa, Lucia's confidante. Although he lacked the vocal presence of the others, tenor Cameron Schutzsa sang beautifully as Arturo. Tenor Adam Caughy also sang effectively as Normanno, Enrico's lieutenant.

The important, and largely local, chorus, directed by Tim Tavcar, sang well and effectively, and interacted seamlessly with

the principals. However, at the opening-night performance, it took both the soloists and the chorus a bit of time to warm up.

Theatrically the production, directed by Garnett Bruce, was traditional but the action felt natural and the result was powerful. Eerily beautiful Gothic set pieces designed by Gary Eckhart and effectively lit by Jeff Brucknerhoff were moved about by members of the cast and contributed greatly to the production's power. —By Jim Lowe/Barre Montpelier Times Argus



Nikki Einfeld in the title role of Green Mountain Opera Festival's *Lucia di Lammermoor*

BARRE, VERMONT

There is something special about grand opera in an intimate 650-seat theatre, and even more so with a dark and tragic opera like *Lucia di Lammermoor*. **Green Mountain Opera Festival**, a regional Waitsfield-based company now in its fifth year, presented a musically potent and visually beautiful production of Donizetti's *bel canto* masterpiece Jun. 19 at the restored 1899 Barre Opera House that proved all the more powerful because of its intimacy. The audience virtually had the action in its lap, flavored

strained a bit in the beginning, his delivery in the final scenes was heart-wrenchingly tender and beautiful. American baritone Jordan Shanahan made a powerful and dastardly Enrico, delivered darkly and lyrically.

Italian-born Leonardo Vordoni conducted the rich-sounding and spirited, albeit somewhat stiff, performance by a quite fine orchestra. Although a pick-up ensemble, it included members of the Metropolitan Opera and Vermont Symphony orchestras. A special treat was Cecelia Brauer of the Metropolitan Opera performing on the eerie glass armon-