

The drama was felt throughout, though the climax was a bit disappointing. What was happening on stage did not co-ordinate well with the music, though overall it was a powerful and beautiful production. The look was traditional, with an effective, minimal set designed by Shane Kelly and Luedloff, and very dramatic lighting by Julie Duro. The orchestra, made up of local and imported professionals, was quite good, and the local chorus, prepared by Piero Bonamico, acquitted itself well.
—*Jim Lowe/Times Argus*

UNITED STATES

BARRE

Now in its second year, the **Green Mountain Opera Festival** succeeded in delivering the power of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* with excellent young singers and a fine orchestra. Conducted by Pacific Opera Victoria Artistic Director Timothy Vernon and directed by Brian Kay Luedloff, the production looked and sounded beautiful. Having orchestra and conductor so visible (due to the shallow pit) gave the performance an immediacy and intimacy not normally found in grand opera.

This was Dutch soprano Annemarie Kremer's first Butterfly. Though her voice is a bit darker than those usually associated with the role, she sang passionately in the exalted moments. American Theodore Chletsos was well cast as Pinkerton, which he sang beautifully with his light, passionate tenor, appropriately portraying him more as a weak character than a hero.

Two performances were consistently successful both vocally and dramatically. Canadian baritone Jonathan Carle's Sharpless was deeply felt and expressed. Canadian mezzo Julie Nesrallah as Suzuki had a powerful presence without ever becoming obtrusive. She used her rich, dark voice with a subtle emotional power. Baritone Simon Chaussé, a Montreal native, made a colorful and effective cameo as Prince Yamadori.