

Rich Haddo sound rivals Scottish Opera

REVIEW

By Alan Cooper

THIS year's opera production by Haddo House Choral and Operatic Society is of Bellini's romance of the English civil war *I Puritani*, or *The Puritans*. Surely one of Haddo's best ever this year, the music rivalled Scottish Opera's performance on Tuesday.

The Haddo orchestra conducted by Ben parry was certainly as good and some of the singing was better.

The large Haddo chorus, augmented by a team of top singers from the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, produced a consistently rich reverberant wall of sound.

The principals - all of them superb - were led by sparkling soprano Simone Sauphanor as Elvira and a brilliant young American tenor Bradley Williams as Arturo with a voice of magical star quality.

Above all, June Gordon and her team are to be congratulated on choosing an opera which is slightly off the beaten track, giving it a colourful production with lavish costumes and an ingenious set rather than resurrecting the old war-horses in ever more gloomy guise.