

Puccini mass given two performances

REVIEW by Alan Cooper

TO COPE with audience demand, Sunday afternoon's performance of Puccini's *Messa di Gloria* by Haddo House Choral and Operatic Society in Haddo House Chapel had two performances one at 2.30pm and a second at 4pm.

The Mass was the main feature but several of the concert highlights preceded it. First there was beautifully clean, well focused part singing from the girls of Haddo Junior Choir directed by Alice Dennis, then tenor Neil Mackie's unaccompanied singing of music by Britten and Maxwell Davies followed by *The Lord's My Shepherd* to the tune of *The Rowan Tree* - absolutely incomparable singing.

Neil Mackie's wife, soprano Kathleen Livingstone, gave us Dvorak's lovely version of the 23rd Psalm, then she joined Neil in *Panis Angelicus* and Rutter's *The Lord Bless Thee* - a glorious blend of voices.

The tenor soloist in the Mass was one of Neil Mackie's young pupils, Oliver White.

Impeccable diction and relaxed clear phrasing were the hallmarks of his singing.

He was joined by Jerry Dennis, whose rich smooth baritone voice was perfectly cast.

The chorus got across the joyful brightness of Puccini's melodies with tremendous enthusiasm, responding to conductor Tim Tricker, while the Organ accompaniment played by Tom Johnstone was an artistic achievement in itself, making the Haddo organ ring out like a cathedral instrument.