

Haddo do themselves proud once more

REVIEW

By Alan Cooper

VERDI'S opera *La Traviata* has its share of lavish chorus scenes, but the central story is one of overwhelming intimacy.

This year's production at Haddo House, which opened last night and continues tomorrow and on Saturday, managed to present both aspects of the opera to spectacular effect.

The production by Benjamin Twist, designed by Fiona Watt, and lit by Martin Palmer, extended the

action from the stage to include the whole auditorium. Dazzling colour and finely choreographed movement filled the chorus scenes and the chorus itself nearly lifted the roof with the power and intensity of their singing. This is exactly what you would expect with Ben Parry of the Dunedin Consort as conductor.

Sadly Nicola Sharkey, who played a fragile and beautiful Violetta on stage, was struck by a virus so her voice

was 'dubbed in' absolutely magnificently by soprano Fiona O'Neill singing from the side of the stage.

Tenor Jason Bridges was a convincing young Alfredo and Tom McVeigh as his father was superb. Another fine production from the musical director June Gordon and her Haddo team.