

'Butterfly' appeals to audience

by Cary Stegall
Battalion Staff

"Madame Butterfly," performed by San Francisco's Western Opera Theater Thursday night in Rudder Auditorium, was well cast and remarkably "big-budget" for a traveling show.

Review

The opera was presented by MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society.

"Madame Butterfly," a 20th century opera written by Giacomo Puccini, is set in turn-of-the-century Nagasaki, where a young Navy Lieutenant, Ban-

jamin Franklin Pinkerton, has a marriage arranged with a young Japanese girl named Madame Butterfly. Pinkerton is just conscious that he has an arrangement while Butterfly is deeply in love, even after Pinkerton leaves her for three years.

Pinkerton does return, but only to tell her that he has remarried. Butterfly reacts as her father did years before, killing herself with her young son nearby.

There are very few opera companies in the world that can tour because of the enormous expense involved. The Western Opera Theater, an offshoot of the San Francisco Opera, is one of those. Fortunately for this year's troupe, the "Butterfly" set

is minimal, primarily because of its Japanese scenario.

WOT tries to appeal to an audience of veterans and laymen through its young performers. The group uses the English translation in order to accomplish this. The English is more vulgar than the original Italian, and this proves detrimental to the vocal lines, especially during the faster comedic sections.

The cast was well-rounded, but not nearly so adept as the orchestra at rendering the depth of Puccini's score. The only looming exception to this was Maria Russo, who performed the title role. The audience was consistently centered on her voice because of its clarity throughout her range and compassionate reactions to the dynamic motion. Dolora Zajic as Suzuki, the servant, also is very strong, especially when she shares the limelight in the second and third acts.

The first act was slightly hectic, even considering the amount of plot covered. It is not until Butterfly enters with her relatives that a proper mood can be set. The timbre of the ensemble also provides a deep counterpoint to the individual lines when the full stage begins a sectional fugue. Russo then interjects her soprano line to top off the harmony and bring the first act to a close.

Act two was an improvement



staff photo by Mike Davis

Suzuki, played by Dolora Zajic, discusses her treasures with Pinkerton, Daniel Harper.

over the first in look and sound, with a better balanced set and more complementary costumes. Butterfly's joy at her husband's return comes across in her smooth lines. This rebirth moves quickly into a duet with Suzuki about the unfolding of spring.

The third act relies strongly on the orchestra to set the som-

ber mood of the new morning, which it does admirably. The extremes of emotion on stage allowed the performers to finally cut loose with some fiery lines. Butterfly's death is staged quickly, with realism.

For a touring company the quality was outstanding, and the cast contained more than the usual fair of energy. WOT's performance showed a nice collaboration between the voices, orchestra and staging that was warmly received by the full house.

(Editor's note: Stegall is a senior anthropology major who studied music for six years prior to attending Texas A&M. He has sung with the Century Singers and is a regular reviewer of albums and movies for the At Ease supplement to The Battalion.)

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What's Up

FRIDAY

MSC CAMERA COMMITTEE: The Fall Photo Contest will be on Nov. 5. Prints may be entered in the MSC Student Center hallway from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Oct. 31, Nov. 4. The contest is open to all non-professional students in the Bryan-College Station area.

DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES: If you are a student having completed one semester at Texas A&M, you should think about applying for the 1984 Cotton Bowl representative. Applications will be available in the Student Activities Office Nov. 1.

ASC/AIA-ASLA (HAUNTED HOUSE PROMOTION): Come to the Haunted House on the first floor of the MSC Building on Oct. 30 from dark to 10 p.m. and on Oct. 31, dark to 11 p.m. Admission is \$1, and open to the public.

MSC AGGIE CINEMA: "An Officer and a Gentleman" show at 7:30 p.m. and 9:45 p.m. in Rudder Theater. The same times on Saturday in Rudder Auditorium. "Let's Get the Night Together" is the midnight movie both nights in the Theater, and if you wear your p.j.'s you get in free. Admission for all shows is \$1.50 with a Texas A&M I.D.

INTER-VARSITY CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: Gortis will speak on her summer in Japan at 7 p.m. in Rudder Tower.

MSC CEPHEID VARIABLE: Film polls for Spring '84 taken today and Monday in the main hallway in the MSC Building. **CATHOLIC STUDENT ASSOCIATION:** Catholic students will meet to go out for dinner at 6 p.m. at the student center.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT: Voting for freshman government positions will be Monday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. in the first floor Pavilion and MSC lounge.

SATURDAY

MSC VIDEO: There will be a training session open to all interested in video at 2 p.m. in 352 MSC.

CHI ALPHA CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP: Chinese refugee and missionary to free China, will speak at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder Tower.

SUNDAY

MSC AGGIE CINEMA: The movie "Britannia Hospital" begins at 7:30 p.m. in Rudder Theater. Tickets are \$1. **METHODIST STUDENT MOVEMENT:** We will have a service at 6 p.m. and a vesper worship service at 7 p.m. at the A&M Wesley Foundation.

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New club for former students

by Tricia Parker

Former students in Houston may be unable to attend the 1983-84 graduation, join an MSC Club or go to the Dixie Chicken Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, but they do have something to keep them in the spirit.

They can join "the Twelfth."

The Houston Twelfth, brainchild of Randi Mays of '79 and Carla Sutter of '82, is an unofficial club of Aggies from the Houston area, and South A&M clubs.

Mays said the organization has about 650 to 700 members, mostly from the Classes of '79 and '82. The organization sponsors parties much like the ones held at the Quonset House, a little life to the Houston clubs.

But this weekend students don't have to wait until the next weekend to join the group's first weekend students are in the "First Annual Pre-gradie Chicken Reunion."

The event begins Friday with yell practice at the Guard, a Houston club party begins at 9:30 p.m. free beer and hotdogs continues until the yell lead arrive, around 10:30 p.m.

The Dixie Chicken Reunion starts Saturday on the campus behind the tennis courts. For a \$5 fee the organization will provide the beer, cokes and tamales can consume. The proceeds go to a scholarship fund.

Tickets to the party ends at 1:30 p.m., can be in Rudder Tower or at the MSC in Houston.

And if it rains? "We're gonna have a way," Sutter said, "no matter what. A little rain never ruins an Aggie from partying."

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Film Polls will be taken in the MSC Friday, Oct. 28 and Monday, Oct. 31 11:30-4:00