

**THEATRE REVIEWS BY ANDREW EDLIN**

**Way Off Broadway's Powerful Miss Saigon at the Sondheim**

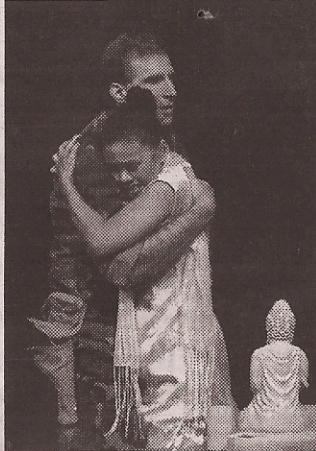
This is likely the most powerful and well executed musical ever presented in Fairfield.

Bring Kleenex. Way Off Broadway steadily raise the bar, but *Miss Saigon*, led in a tour-de-force performance by the astonishing voice (and heart-stopping truthful acting) of Nicole Santiago-Barredo as Kim, is a rare event of the 'Yes, I saw it, I was there' class.

Chaz Williams-Ali as John and Robert Kemp as Chris both sing like angels. Diana Upton-Hill as Ellen (nicé dramatic role for Diana!), and Kevin Ray Johnson as the Engineer were excellent. But Nicole as Kim is something else, off-the-charts special.

The choreography was tight and incisive, the ensemble well drilled in dance, singing and set changes. Everybody doing their job—and doing it well. And the music! With the same composer/lyricist there are hints of *Les Miz* everywhere, especially in duets, such as the beautiful 'Sun and Moon' and the touching 'I Still Believe.'

The story is adapted from Puccini's *Madam Butterfly*. A tragic love triangle,



orbiting an American-Vietnamese child, set in Saigon, America and Bangkok. There is the iconic gut-wrenching scene, brilliantly staged, of the last helicopter leaving the Saigon embassy as Chris and Kim are separated. There are too many great moments to list. This is powerful musical drama of the highest caliber, and we are very lucky to have the opportunity here. Take it. Don't be a faint heart who says next week 'Oh I meant to go, but...'

Bravo! Bravo to all concerned. Did I mention to bring Kleenex?

*Miss Saigon* is directed by Randal K West, music direction by Chaz Williams-Ali, conducted by Jim DePriest, choreography by Roy Lightner and produced by Paul Praither. Wednesday, July 3, Friday July 5, Saturday July 6 at 7:30 p.m. with final matinee Sunday, July 7 at 2 p.m.

**Arms and the Man by G.B. Shaw, adapted by Steve White**

Arms is George Bernard Shaw's most we have war hero Sergius (the chiseled

