

## director's notes

*Sweeney Todd* is the story of a murderous barber, based on an 19th Century English legend. The musical version originally appeared on Broadway in 1979 with the story based on a play written in 1973 by Christopher Bond. It is one of the only pieces written by Stephen Sondheim that he actually initiated. This is my favorite musical. I have wanted to participate in a production of *Sweeney Todd* for many years and am very honored now to have directed it. What attracts me to the piece are the blurred lines between good and evil. Sweeney is a sympathetic character in that he is a victim of circumstance. He is not an inherently evil person but is controlled by his past and driven to obsessive revenge by deep grief and loss. It interests me philosophically and psychologically what it would take for any of us to be driven to the point of madness.

It is a difficult piece to produce and contains some of the most "fiendishly difficult" music (as Rosie, the musical director says) ever written but the journey has been worth it. I find the story dark, sad, humorous, and the characters rich in that all are flawed. It is a disturbing piece at times, but it is my hope that we have told the story with honesty. We have not pulled any punches in this production, and I think that is what the story deserves. I thank the very talented cast and crew for taking this journey with me...especially Jenna, Michael, and Rosie for their tireless dedication. So Attend the Tale of *Sweeney Todd*...

## acknowledgements

Special thanks to Mayor Peter Fosselman and the Kensington Town Council, Mark Pack and Signature Theatre, Rich Ley and Silver Spring Stage, Brian Dettling and Stage Armament Solutions, Jane MacFarlane, Tory Shaw, and especially Dr. Ann Laprade and the Potomac United Methodist Church for the use of their rehearsal space.

## cast / orchestra

<b>Sweeney Todd</b>	Michael Nansel
<b>Mrs. Lovett</b>	Linda Wells
<b>Judge Turpin</b>	Darryl Yeagley
<b>Beadle Bamford</b>	Harv Lester
<b>Johanna</b>	Laura Wehrmeyer
<b>Anthony</b>	Ryan Manning
<b>Tobias</b>	Sam Ludwig
<b>Beggar Woman</b>	Malinda Ellerman
<b>Pirelli / Ensemble</b>	Eric Burgan
<b>Criminal / Little Girl</b>	Nina Clemente, Claire Borthwick
<b>Ensemble</b>	Bill Brown, Aaron Gage, Sarah Hirschman, Cathy Johnston, Renée Rabben, James Raby, Erica Suzanne Reinsch, Michael Schlesinger, Lora Sullivan, Laurie Tvedt, Stephen Yednock
<b>Conductor</b>	Rosemary Dyer
<b>Keyboard</b>	Ariel Baer
<b>Violin</b>	Michele Jacobs
<b>Cello</b>	Virginia Gardner
<b>Clarinet</b>	Dana Gardner
<b>Bassoon</b>	Richard Sargeant
<b>Horns</b>	Damon Nelson, Mark Deal
<b>Percussion</b>	Noah Friedman

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