

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET

EDUCATION RESOURCE

ORIGINALLY PREPARED BY DEBORAH VANDERWERP, UPDATED BY TIM RYAN

**Victorian Opera respectfully acknowledges the Gadigal people
of the Eora Nations as the traditional owners of Tubowgule,
the land on which the Opera House stands, where we honour
the continuation of the oldest music practice in the world.
We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.**

Sovereignty never ceded.

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**“A man that studieth revenge,
keeps his own wounds green”**

FRANCIS BACON

**“When you begin a journey of revenge, start
by digging two graves; one for your enemy
and one for yourself”**

JODI PICOULT

“The Best Revenge is massive success”

FRANK SINATRA

**“If you prick us do we not bleed? If you tickle us do we not
laugh? If you poison us do we not die? And if you wrong us
shall we not revenge?”**

SHYLOCK, THE MERCHANT OF VENICE BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

**“Weak people revenge, strong people forgive,
intelligent people ignore”**

ALBERT EINSTEIN

“I will have vengeance, I will have salvation”

SWEENEY TODD, SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET BY HUGH WHEELER AND STEPHEN SONDHEIM

**“Man must evolve for all human conflict a method
which rejects revenge, aggression and retaliation. The
foundation of such a method is love”**

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

“Revenge is a powerful motivator”

MARCUS LUTTRELL

“In moments of pain, we seek revenge”

AMI AYALON

**“Revenge is like politics, one thing always leads to another until
bad has become worse, and worse has become worst”**

JONAS JONASSON

ABOUT THE COMPANY



Victorian Opera is the state opera company of Victoria. We make creative, accessible and affordable work for everyone while adventurously evolving our art form.

Since the company was founded in October 2005, Victorian Opera has entertained hundreds of thousands of people with our imaginative approach to opera and musical theatre. Each year, we premiere at least one new Australian opera and have commissioned 32 new works since our formation.

We employ hundreds of people across the creative industries, recruit some of the finest local singers, and collaborate with Australia's leading companies, venues and learning institutions.

The next generation of talent is developed from the ground up through the Victorian Opera Youth Chorus Ensemble (VOYCE) and our innovative Access All Areas: Livestream Program.

We also stage opera in Tasmania biennially to share the joy of our art form even further.

Recognised for our unique contribution to the country's operatic landscape, Victorian Opera proudly became an Australian Major Performing Arts company in 2019, and transitioned to the National Performing Arts Partnership Framework in 2021.

As the world went into lockdown, we got to work; sharing our passion far and wide with a range of web series and online performances. Returning home to the stage, we embrace the new normal and will continue to perform in Victoria's finest theatres and concert halls to give our audiences the best possible and safest Experience.

We exist to reimagine the potential of opera and musical theatre for everyone.

SYNOPSIS

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street is a musical thriller set in 19th Century England. It tells the story of a barber – Sweeney Todd / Benjamin Barker, who returns to London after being wrongfully charged and shipped off to a penal colony, Australia, for 15 years. He returns to wreak vengeance upon Judge Turpin, who had originally sentenced him to exile, and the Judge's accomplice, Beadle Bamford.

Sweeney Todd discovers that his wife is missing, presumed dead, and his now coming-of-age daughter, Johanna, has been raised all this time by the evil Judge Turpin. The Judge intends to now make his 'ward' Johanna, his wife. On the boat back to London, Sweeney Todd befriends a young man, Anthony Hope, who inadvertently falls in love with Johanna and sets about attempting to rescue her from the clutches of Judge Turpin.

Upon his return to London, Sweeney Todd rents a room above Mrs Lovett's dismal pie shop, whereas Benjamin Barker he had previously conducted his business as a barber. Sweeney Todd's desire for revenge turns to murderous psychopathology which he and Mrs Lovett conveniently conceal by converting the bodies of the victims into meat for the increasingly popular pies.

After the murder of Signor Pirelli, Mrs Lovett takes his helper, Tobias, under her wing. Tobias is afraid of Sweeney Todd and swears to protect Mrs Lovett. In the end Tobias brings about the death of Sweeney Todd.

Although *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* is a thriller, it is at times humorous and is also a tragic love story.

BACKGROUND

The story of Sweeney Todd began as a Penny Dreadful in the 1830's in a story called *The String of Pearls* by Thomas Peckett Prest. It was turned into a number of plays during the next 40 years in England and the USA, and thereby Sweeney Todd became a popular character for those living in the Victorian era. There is evidence that suggests some people from this era thought Sweeney Todd was a real person.

There have been many adaptations of the story since the 1900's, including a 1926 silent film, a 1936 film – *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, a 1959 musical and a 1960 ballet.

Sondheim based his musical on a 1973 play by Christopher Bond. Bond, borrowing from *The Count of Monte Christo*, Shakespeare, and *The Revenger's Tragedy*, recreates a character in Sweeney Todd that is a tragedy of circumstance, and is more sympathetic. Sondheim saw the play that year and realised the potential of the story as a horror musical.

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street was first performed on Broadway in 1979 and in London in 1980. It won seven Tony Awards for the production and starred Len Cariou as Sweeney Todd and Angela Lansbury as Mrs Lovett.

STEPHEN SONDHEIM (1930 - 2021)

Stephen Sondheim (pictured) was born in New York but after his parents divorced, he moved with his mother to Pennsylvania. By chance his neighbour was Oscar Hammerstein II, the legendary composer of *Oklahoma*, *The King and I*, *The Sound of Music* and many other musicals.

Hammerstein became Sondheim's teacher and mentor. Sondheim is quoted as saying,

"I hear the word teacher and I start to get teary...the word teacher is to me that thing that to religious people God and saints are."

He has composed many musical works including *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962), *A Little Night Music* (1973), *Sunday in the Park with George* (1984), *Into the Woods* (1987), and was a lyricist for *West Side Story* and other musical theatre works. He is considered the most important composer and lyricist in modern Broadway history.

HUGH WHEELER (1912 - 1987)

Hugh Wheeler was a playwright, screenwriter, and novelist – writing over thirty mystery novels in his lifetime. He collaborated with Sondheim, writing the book for *A Little Night Music*, *Pacific Overtures* and *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and contributing on *Candide*. He also wrote the screenplay for *A Little Night Music*.



Stephen Sondheim

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

"The terror still thrills".

In 1978 as a young stage manager and recently converted Sondheim 'tragic' (a friend had given me the double LP Side by Side by Sondheim– addicted), I had devoured the then extraordinary output of this giant of musical theatre, from West Side Story to Pacific Overtures. Sweeney Todd was my first opportunity to discover a new Sondheim. Knowing not a word of it, with no performance history to guide me, no YouTube, no videos, no libretto – just vinyl and photos on the sleeve – I listened, and listened loud. Nothing prepared me for the visceral feeling of terror I experienced: the Gothic organ voluntary, the piercing factory whistle, the power of the chorus interjections, the painful and horrific storytelling, the tunes, the black humour. My response has not diminished in the 30-odd years since that 'road to Damascus' experience. The terror still thrills.

From the first words – 'Attend the tale of SweeneyTodd' – we know this is a period piece, an allegory, a 'tale' that has of been told across the generations, an urban myth, a cautionary tale... And it's deliciously scary; dark, sinister... and thrilling.

The grizzly story of a homicidal barber appears as early as 1825 in a pamphlet entitled The Tell Tale, based on an earlier account in Joseph Fouché's Archives de la Police. In these early versions the details of the crimes are the same: a Parisian barber cuts the throats of his clientele, steals their worldly goods, and then has a pastry chef mince their bodies into pies. In 1846 he turns

up as Sweeney Todd in a serialised novel The String of Pearls, A Romance, capturing the popular Victorian imagination. Even Charles Dickens mentions the tale in Pickwick Papers, warning his readers to only buy pies from cooks they know.

The theatrical ancestor to our Sweeney was a 1847 melodrama by George Dibdin-Pitt titled The String of Pearls, or the Fiend of Fleet Street. For today's audiences the term 'melodrama' has judgmental connotations and is associated with mawkish sentiment, delicious villainy and a high-minded moral. The cast are stock standard: the sweet heroine, a black-hearted villain, the buff hero and, of course, goodness triumphs in the end.

Stephen Sondheim and his librettist Hugh Wheeler used as their starting point a 1973 reworking of the melodrama by Christopher Bond. Here SweeneyTodd has a cause: just revenge. This Sweeney murders for reasons other than monetary gain, a man at the mercy of a brutal society and forced to seek out an existence in the underbelly of human suffering that was Victorian London. Only after his just pursuit for vengeance is foiled, and he realises his impotence against the Victorian social system, does he crack and transform into a charismatic homicidal maniac, aided and abetted by a totally charming accomplice who is prompted by two of those great deadly sins: lust and greed.

Although officially subtitled a 'Musical Thriller', Sweeney Todd has been categorised as an opera, amusical, a musical play, an operetta and almost every other musical or dramatic form.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE CONTINUED...

Sondheim himself describes his Sweeney as 'a musical horror'. Does it matter? Perhaps not. The piece is without doubt one of the most powerful, dramatic and theatrical horror tales ever set to music. And all the more thrilling in that for all its melodrama, blood and gore, it tells a very universal human story – revenge, obsession and lust, yes, but also pain, yearning, even love. In a society where the weak get weaker and the powerful more powerful, how easy is it for a man to revert to his base instincts? Violence and brutality are often the result. Not all turn into homicidal maniacs of course, but we still 'get' this tale. The language is archaic, the musical is operatic in scale, the setting is Victorian England but in this most thrilling of musical treatments we can make the leap – this is a tale for our times.

Stuart Maunder AM
Director



CREATIVE TEAM



SIMON HOLT
Conductor

Simon is one of Australia's most renowned Musical Directors with a wealth of international experience.

Recent credits include Musical Director for *Into The Woods* (Belvoir St Theatre), Rodgers & Hammerstein's *Cinderella and Evita* (China Tour) and Associate Musical Director for the Australian tour of *Evita*. Additional credits include Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Woman In White*, the UK Premiere of *Tenderly–The Rosemary Clooney Musical*, Tim Rice's revamped production of *Blondel*, the West End production of *Judy!*, the UK/European Tour of *Cats*, the World Tour of *The Phantom Of The Opera*, *A Funny Thing Happened On The Way To The Forum*, and *Love Never Dies*.



STUART MAUNDER AM
Director

Beginning his career in stage management at the then Australian Opera, Maunder has a long history in opera, as a director and arts administrator. He served in senior management roles at Opera Australia from 1999 to 2008 before being appointed General Director of New Zealand Opera in 2014. He was appointed Artistic Director of State Opera South Australia in 2018.

In his time at State Opera, Maunder has proved a passionate advocate for finding a distinctive Australian voice, championing Australian repertoire, developing the next generation of Australian artists while still pursuing a balanced repertoire designed to reach the widest possible audience.

His acclaimed work as a director has ensured Maunder has remained a consistent presence on Australian stages for over three decades. A frequent collaborator with Victorian Opera, Maunder has directed several popular productions including four musicals by Stephen Sondheim (*Sunday in the Park with George*, *Into the Woods*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, *A Little Night Music*), *Janacek's Cunning Little Vixen* and a co-production of Richard Meale's *Voss* with State Opera South Australia.

Maunder's production of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, was co-produced with New Zealand Opera and toured New Zealand and Australia following its debut in 2015. Stuart Maunder AM has been named the next Artistic Director of Victorian Opera, and will commence in the role in October 2023.



ROGER KIRK
Set & Costume Designer

Roger Kirk is a Tony Award-winning set and costume designer for theatre, film and television. He has designed costumes for productions such as *The Boy From Oz* with Hugh Jackman, *The King and I* and *King Kong the Musical*. Roger was the costume designer for the film *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Other credits include Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Whistle Down The Wind* (London), *The King and I* (London Palladium), Hugh Jackman's *The Boy from Oz Arena Spectacular*, *Silver Rose*, *Le Corsaire* for Munich Opera House, *Dusty–The Original Pop Diva*, and *Shout!*. His Broadway credits include *The King & I* (Tony Award), *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and *42nd Street* (Tony Award Nomination).

Roger's most recent credits include *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* for Victorian Opera, *Miracle City* for Luckiest Productions, *King Kong on Broadway*, *42nd Street* in London and the sell-out Australian tour of *Hugh Jackman's Broadway to Oz: Hugh Jackman Live in Concert World Tour 2019*.



PHIL LETHLEAN
Lighting Designer

Philip Lethlean designs lighting for projects across Australia, Asia, Europe and America including, theatre, opera, dance, circus, puppetry, large cultural events and architecture.

Commissions include the *Melbourne International Comedy Festival*, the opening ceremony of the Pacific Games in PNG(2015), *Clusters of Light* in Sharjah UAE (2014), *How to Train Your Dragon* for Dreamworks/Global Creatures (2012), *White Night Melbourne* (2013/2014), the Australian Pavilion at Expo Shanghai and the opening of Hamer Hall.

Theatre works include the English National Ballet, The Australian Opera, MTC, Circus Oz and *Into the Woods*, *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and *The Sleeping Beauty* for Victorian Opera.



JIM ATKINS
Sound Designer

Jim Atkins designs and mixes sound for a host of live, installed and recorded situations nationally and internationally.

Recent highlights include *La Boheme* on the Beach (State Opera South Australia); *The Pearl Fishers*, *Elektra* and *Butterfly Lovers* (Victorian Opera); *Four Winds Festival* (Bermagui); *Acoustic Life of Sheds* in Lavender Bay (Sydney Festival); *One Infinity* (Melbourne, Sydney and Perth Festivals); *Pleasure Garden* (Sydney Festival, Norfolk and Norwich Festival, City of London Culture Mile), *24 reasons to Party* (Kate Ceberano /Adelaide Symphony Orchestra); *Setan Jawa* (AsiaTOPA/Humboldt Forum Kultur, Berlin); *Between 8 & 9* (Chamber Made, Castlemaine Festival, Chengdu China); *National Geographic*, *Symphony for our World* (Adelaide Festival).



JASON MORPHETT
Lighting Realiser

Jason Morphet's professional career started in the West End, London's theatreland, during his college years. He soon graduated from follow spot operator to charge hand electrician to programmer and onto Chief Electrician and Lighting Designer. In that time he has run the lighting departments for Birmingham Royal Ballet, London City Ballet, Royal New Zealand Ballet, New Zealand International Arts Festival, New Zealand Opera and Australian Opera.

During his tenures with these companies, he has designed for all of them and dealt with all the relighting of the company's repertoire. He is currently freelancing as a Lighting Designer based out of Sydney, Australia.

Recent Lighting Design credits

Australian Opera: *Maria Stuarda*, *Mefistofele*, *Satyagraha*, *Tannhauser*.

Royal New Zealand Ballet: *Coppelia*, *Verge*, *Concerto*, *Equisses*, *Si Superious*, *Bierhalle*, *Of Days*, *Anatomy of a passing cloud*, *Passchendaele*, *Dear Horizons*, *Salon Desir*, *Wizard of OZ*.

New Zealand Opera: *Cavalleria Rusticana*, *Pagliacci*, *Rigoletto*, *Tosca*, *Brass Poppies*

NZAF/New Zealand Symphony Orchestra: *Ainadamer*

Amici Productions: *Phantom of the Opera*

LEAD ROLES



BEN MINGAY
Sweeney Todd

Sweeney Todd A vengeful barber who returns to London after fifteen years of unjust servitude in an Australian penal colony. He seeks revenge first on the corrupt judge who sent him there, and then on all of his clients.

An actor, musician and international musical theatre performer, Ben was originally a construction worker from Newcastle who fell into classical music when he was dared to audition for the Conservatorium of Music by his mates. He subsequently won a scholarship and went on to train in Opera Voice for several years – a twist of fate that changed the trajectory of his life forever.

Recently delighting screen viewers around the world in the acclaimed ABC/Sky UK/HBO Max series *Frayed* with Sarah Kendall, Ben's screen credits include Mel Gibson's *Hacksaw Ridge* playing the role of Grease Nolan and on the small screen playing Alan Bond in Nine Network's *House of Bond*, Jim Delaney in *Amazing Grace*, Trystan Powell in *Home and Away*, Buzz in *Packed to the Rafters* for the Seven Network and prior to that Ben starred for three seasons as Rob Duffy in the Network 10 series *Wonderland*.

Ben's stage credits include Shrek in *Shrek The Musical* (GFO), Sweeney Todd in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (WAO & SOSA), the Pirate King in *Pirates of Penzance* (SOSA) Evan in *Vivid White* (MTC), Jud Fry in *Oklahoma* (TPC), Achilles in *Paris - A Rock Odyssey* (MTM) and numerous concerts around Australia with the hit singing group Swing on This. Other stage credits include Thomas in *Rolling Thunder Vietnam*, The Phantom in *The Phantom of the Opera*, Zack Mayo in the World Premiere production of *An Officer and a Gentleman*.

In 2011 Ben received rave reviews for his portrayal of Tommy DeVito in the award-winning musical *Jersey Boys*, which was his first Australian performance since he originated the role of Billy Kosteki in the World Premiere of *Dirty Dancing* in 2004. In *Dirty Dancing*, Ben's unique vocal ability won him the same role in every English-speaking production worldwide for almost 6 years, including the West End, Canada, Chicago, Boston and Los Angeles.



ANTOINETTE HALLORAN

Mrs Lovett

Mrs Lovett A cheerful, talkative, amoral pie shop owner, Todd's landlady, and (arguably) in love with him. She hides the fact that Sweeney Todd's wife is still alive.

One of Australia's most accomplished and best-loved sopranos, Antoinette Halloran performs regularly with all the major Australasian opera companies and symphony orchestras and appears frequently on national television and radio.

In 2021/2022, she sang Mrs Lovett in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and Olive in *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll* for State Opera South Australia, *Lorelei* for Opera Queensland and Victorian Opera, Brunnhilde in *Die Walküre* and Jenny in *Mahagonny* for Melbourne Opera and *A Christmas Carol* for Victorian Opera. Earlier this year, she starred as Brunnhilde in Melbourne Opera's landmark production of *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Recent appearances include the title roles in *Tosca* for West Australian Opera and *The Merry Widow* for State Opera South Australia, The Fox in *The Cunning Little Vixen* in Melbourne and Adelaide and Lady Macbeth (*Macbeth*) in Perth; she was also associate artist for José Carreras' National Tour. For Opera Australia, Antoinette has performed the title roles in *Madama Butterfly* and *Rusalka*, Mimi in *La bohème*, Stella in *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Green Room Award); for Opera Queensland—the title role in *The Merry Widow*; for New Zealand Opera—Mimi, Cio-Cio-San and Mrs Lovett; for Victorian Opera – Fiordiligi in *Così fan Tutte*, Adina in *L'elisir d'amore* and Mrs Lovett.

In concert, she has sung with Elvis Costello and the Brodsky Quartet for the Sydney Festival, Mozart's *Requiem* with the Hong Kong Philharmonic and Nick Cave with the Melbourne Symphony. Antoinette featured as a guest judge and panelist on the ABC television series *Operatunity Oz* and has appeared regularly on the hit show *Spicks and Specks*; she was a presenter for ABC's *Art Nation* – covering stories on opera and musical theatre. Antoinette has also been a regular visitor to Japan, China and Indonesia where she is much in demand as a guest artist. She recorded *Puccini Romance* for ABC Classics with tenor Rosario La Spina and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.



HARRY TARGETT

Anthony Hope

Anthony Hope A young, naïve sailor who rescues Todd at sea. He falls in love with Johanna Barker, Todd's daughter.

Harry Targett is a graduate from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), completing both a Certificate IV in 2016 and a Bachelor of Arts in 2019.

In 2019, Harry was the recipient of the Leslie Anderson Showcase Award for Musical Theatre and Harry's musical theatre credits include the leading role, Scott Hastings, in *Strictly Ballroom* and Drew Boley in *Rock of Ages*. Harry's additional musical theatre credits include the Australian tour of *Hairspray* in the role of Sketch, the iconic production of *A Chorus Line* at the Sydney Opera House and Parramatta Riverside Theatre playing the role of Don Kerr and a regional tour with *The Fairies*, as the Elf.

Harry's screen credits include work on Paramount+ TV series *Last Kings of the Cross* and the Robbie Williams biopic *Betterman* for director Michael Gracey. Harry has extensive training in dancing, acrobatics as well as classical and contemporary singing.



ASHLEIGH RUBENACH

Johanna

Johanna Todd's beautiful young daughter, claimed by the corrupt Judge Turpin as his 'ward'.

Sydney Theatre Award-winner Ashleigh Rubenach most recently toured as Milo Davenport in GWB Entertainment's *An American in Paris*. Other credits include Billie Bendix in *Nice Work If You Can Get It* (MGP), Allison Vernon-Williams in *Cry-Baby* (LPD/Hayes Theatre Co), *Anything Goes* (GFO/OA), *The Sound of Music* (GFO), *My Fair Lady* (OA), *Funny Girl* (SSO) and *Muriel's Wedding* (Global Creatures).

Ashleigh is a graduate of WAAPA, a Talent Development Project alumni and a proud member of MEAA Actors Equity.



JEREMI CAMPESE

Tobias Ragg

Tobias Ragg A simple soul who works firstly for Pirelli and then for Mrs Lovett in her pie shop. He is suspicious of Todd.

Jeremi Campese is an actor, singer and musician. His theatre credits include: *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *In a Nutshell* and *The Players* in 2019 for Bell Shakespeare; *Godspell* for Hayes Theatre Company; understudy in *Photograph 51* for Ensemble Theatre; *Still, I Rise* for Darlinghurst Theatre Company; *Romeo and Juliet* and *Twelfth Night* for Sport for Jove; *Lysicrates Prize* for Griffin Theatre Company; *Intersection: Chrysalis* for ATYP/Griffin Theatre Company; *A Clockwork Orange*, *Moth* and *Oedipus Doesn't Live Here Anymore* for ATYP; *Yen*, *Rosaline* and *DNA* for KXT Bakehouse; *Nosferatu: A Fractured Symphony* and *If This Be Nothing* for Montague Basement.

Jeremi is a proud MEAA member.



BENJAMIN RASHEED

Signor Pirelli/ Jonas Fogg

Signor Pirelli/ Jonas Fogg An Irish trickster and former employee of Benjamin Barker. He adopts the persona of a flashy Italian barber and attempts to blackmail Todd.

Benjamin has established himself as one of Australia's finest character actors in the world of opera. He studied at the Elder Conservatorium of Music and the Australian Opera Studio, Perth. He was most recently seen as Mr Snow in State Opera of South Australia's *Carousel* as well as Njegus in *The Merry Widow* for Opera Australia, for which he received a Green Room Award nomination, as well as a sold-out season of Kurt Weill's *Sins & Mahagonny* at the Old Fitz.

Performing the role of L'Incredibile alongside Jonas Kaufman in *Andrea Chenier* is a particular career highlight. Other Opera Australia roles include Don Basilio - *The Marriage of Figaro*, Pang - *Turandot*, Goro - *Madama Butterfly* and Monostatos - *The Magic Flute*.

Benjamin recently represented Opera Australia as a principal artist in the *Opera Up Late* series for World Pride at the Sydney Opera House.

Musical theatre credits include Jamie/Freddy Eyensford Hill - *My Fair Lady*, starring Richard E Grant, Mr Erlanson - *A Little Night Music* (Opera Australia) Harry the Horse - *Guys and Dolls* & Maltby and *Shire's Take Flight* (Adelaide Cabaret Festival).



DEAN VINCE

Judge Turpin

Judge Turpin A corrupt judiciary official who becomes infatuated with Lucy Barker, and later with her daughter, Jo

Dean graduated from WAAPA with a Bachelor of Arts (Musical Theatre) in 2002. His credits include: Dr Kitchell in *Bells Are Ringing*; Mr Braithwaite in *Billy Elliot*; Standby Jafar/Sultan in *Aladdin*; Wreck in *Wonderful Town*; Sergeant of Police in *The Pirates of Penzance*; Bobby/Giorgio in *Sondheim on Sondheim*; Officer Krupke in *West Side Story*; The Narrator in *Into the Woods*; Mr Marks/Scott in *The Producers*; Mayor of Merano in *Chess*; Stan in *Promises, Promises*; Plato/Macavity in *Cats*; Smokey in *Damn Yankees*; Fogarty/Judge in *Chicago* (Green Room Award-Ensemble Performance); Pancrazio in *The Venetian Twins*; Sheriff Vallon in *Show Boat*; Ensemble in *Evita*; and the World Premiere productions of *Dirty Dancing* as Stan, *King Kong-Live On Stage* as Zekey and *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*. Dean also played Munkustrap in Harvest Rain's record-breaking Arena production of *Cats*. Dean played Gangle in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Love Never Dies* (Green Room Nomination) and features in the hugely successful film version of the production. He can be heard on the Original Cast Recordings of *Dirty Dancing*, *Priscilla*, *Queen of the Desert* and *Love Never Dies*. Most recently Dean appeared in Rodgers and Hammerstein's *Cinderella*.



KANEN BREEN

The Beadle (Bamford)

The Beadle (Bamford) Judge Turpin's right-hand man and accomplice. He considers himself responsible for the moral compliance of the social classes below him.

Kanen's past engagements for Victorian Opera include the premiere seasons of *'Tis Pity*, *Banquet Of Secrets* and *Through The Looking Glass*, Uncle Ernie in *The Who's Tommy* and The Beadle in previous Melbourne seasons of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

Roles for Opera Australia include Camille in *The Merry Widow*, Nanki Poo in *The Mikado*, Ralph Rackstraw in *HMS Pinafore*, Marco Palmieri in *The Gondoliers*, Caius in *Falstaff*, Alfred in *Die Fledermaus*, Monostatos in *The Magic Flute*, Sellem in *The Rakes Progress*, Pong in *Turandot*, Andres/Cochennille/Pittichinaccio/ Frantz/Nathanael in *The Tales Of Hoffmann*, Pirelli in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, Albert Herring, and Johnny in *Bliss* at the Edinburgh Festival.

Other engagements include Andy Warhol in the Brisbane Festival season of *The Perfect American*, a Helpmann Award winning performance as The Witch Of Endor in the Glyndebourne production of Handel's *Saul* for the Adelaide Festival. Other roles include Rodolfo in Baz Luhrman's *La Boheme* on Broadway and Willy Wonka in the national season of *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory*.



MARGARET TRUBIANO

Beggar Woman

Beggar Woman A mad crone whose interruptions go unheeded. She is eventually identified as Todd's wife, Lucy, who was attacked by Judge Turpin.

Hailed as 'stunning' by the New York Times, American mezzo-soprano Margaret Trubiano graduated with Bachelor's and Master's Degrees from Manhattan School of Music. She played to sold out crowds in her 'NY Girl' cabaret at Claire's Kitchen & Kurt Weill's *Sins & Mahagonny* at the Old Fitzroy Theatre.

On the operatic stage, she's performed Mercedes *Carmen*, Princess Clarissa *Love For Three Oranges* (Opera Australia), Maddalena *Rigoletto* (DiCapo Opera NYC), Kate *The Pirates of Penzance* & 3rd Lady *The Magic Flute* (New Jersey Opera), Second Fairy *Midsummer Night's Dream* (NYC Ballet), Second Witch *Dido & Aeneas* (Macau Opera). Carnegie Hall debut: Gonzales' *Missa Azteca*.

Concert appearances include Zurich Opernhaus's Opera Gala, Durufle's *Requiem* for New Jersey Symphony and Mahler's *Symphony No. 2*, Vivaldi's *Gloria* for the Phoenix International Festival of the Voice and Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* for The Australian Ballet.

Equally at home in musical theatre, she covered Madame Giry in *The Phantom of the Opera* World Tour, title role in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, Baker's Wife *Into the Woods* & performed Off-Broadway in *Beautiful Girls*.

ENSEMBLE



RACHAEL CUNNINGHAM

Cover: Beggar Woman

Rachael began her performing career in New Zealand touring *Chess*. She then joined Opera Australia in 1998 and has performed in many productions with them (including *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*) in Sydney, Melbourne, Edinburgh and China. Roles include Peep Bo (*The Mikado*), Nurse (*Bliss*), Barbarina (*Le nozze di Figaro*), First Page (*Lohengrin*), Witch (*Dido and Aeneas*), Strawberry Seller (*Death in Venice*), Papagena/Queen of the Night/First Lady in *The Magic Flute* (OA Touring Schools Company).

Roles for Opera Queensland include Adele (*Die Fledermaus*), Dew Fairy/Sandman (*Hansel and Gretel*). Other roles include Chloe (*Daphnis and Chloe*) for Pacific Opera, Sister Catherine (*Dead Man Walking*), Serving Girl (*Elektra*), Belinda (*Dido and Aeneas*), Juno (*The Faery Queen*), Norina (*Don Pasquale*), Elsie (*Yeoman of the Guard*), Arlena (*The Gypsy Baron*), Josephine (*HMS Pinafore*).

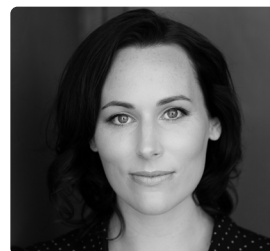


JARROD GRIFFITHS

Cover: Anthony

Jarrod is an actor, singer, and dancer residing in Sydney, Australia and graduated from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, with a Bachelor of Arts (Music Theatre) in 2018. Making his professional debut on the Australian stage in 2019, Jarrod is known for his "bumbling but charming" and "utterly adorkable beau" performance as Brice Nobles in the Australian National Tour of *Muriel's Wedding The Musical* (Global Creatures), directed by Simon Phillips.

Jarrod has proudly performed the Australian National Anthem for Cricket Australia at the SCG, appeared in various TVC's in Australia and overseas, and is a singer for various corporate events.



KATIE MCKEE

Cover: Mrs Lovett

Katie graduated from WAAPA with a BA in Music Theatre. Her credits include Grandma Josephine u/s Mrs Bucket & Mrs Gloop in *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Marian/Chiara in the Australian premiere of *The Bridges Of Madison County* (Matthew Management & Neil Gooding Productions), Shen Shen u/s Madame Morrible in the Australasian tour of *Wicked* (GFO), The Bakers Wife in *Into The Woods* (Bloom Creative), u/s Baroness and Sister Sophia in *The Sound of Music* (GFO), Nancy in *Oliver!* (Packemin), *My Fair Lady* (OA) and the Australian premiere of *Floyd Collins* (Meredith Shaw Productions).

Katie can also be seen in the true crime television series *Deadly Women* (Beyond Productions), playing convicted murderer, Shanna "Liz" Golyar.

Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street holds a special place in Katie's heart and she is thrilled to be performing this incredible show at the iconic Sydney Opera House.



JOSHUA ROBSON

Cover: Sweeney, Judge

Since graduating from the VCA in 2011, Joshua has forged a highly successful career on stage, winning the Rob Guest Endowment Award in 2014. Joshua most recently played to role of Joh Fredersen in *Metropolis* (Hayes Theatre) and prior to that, starred as the titular role in *The Phantom of the Opera* with Handa Opera on Sydney Harbour, for which he was nominated for Best Lead Performance in a Musical at the Sydney Theatre Awards. He has also toured nationally in *Shrek the Musical* (GFO), *Muriel's Wedding the Musical* (Global Creatures), *My Fair Lady* (Opera Australia/GFO), *Les Misérables* (Cameron Mackintosh), *Dream Lover: The Bobby Darin Musical* (GFO) and *King Kong: Live on Stage* (Global Creatures). Joshua is the proud director/ founder of Joshua Robson Productions. JRP has staged and toured *Guilty Pleasures*, *Violet*, *Songs for a New World*, *Bonnie & Clyde* and the multi-award winning *In the Heights*.



ANNA STEPHENS

Cover: Johanna

27-year-old Anna Stephens studied Opera at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, and at Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London. Anna made her operatic debut with Opera Australia, singing the roles of Pamina, Papagena, and the Queen of the Night in the Schools Tour production of *The Magic Flute*. She toured again with Opera Australia's Schools Tour production of *By the Light of the Moon*. Other operatic credits include Naiad (*Ariadne auf Naxos*) under the baton of Simone Young. Anna won the Fine Music 102.5 Young Virtuoso Award (2018) and recently placed third in the Sydney Eisteddfod Opera Scholarship (2022). Anna made her musical theatre debut understudying Carlotta and as female swing in the recent Australian production of the *Phantom of the Opera* (Opera Australia and the Really Useful Group, in association with Cameron Mackintosh).



LOUIS VINCIGUERRA

Cover: Tobias

Louis and his family moved to Australia from England in 2008 and it was shortly after that he soon discovered his passion for musical theatre and classical voice. Louis graduated from the National Institute of Dramatic Arts (NIDA) in 2021 with a Diploma in Musical Theatre. He is currently undertaking a Bachelor of Music Honours in Classical performance at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music under the guidance of Dr Simon Lobelson. Last year Louis portrayed the role of Jørn Utzon, the Architect of the Sydney Opera House in a new Australian musical *Work of Art* presented by Little Triangle. In March this year, Louis had his professional musical theatre debut accompanying Philip Quast AM and maestro Anne-Maree McDonald performing a duet of Lily's Eyes in *The Road I Took* at the Ensemble Theatre. Louis is thrilled to be performing in his first professional musical at the Sydney Opera House and would like to thank his family and friends for their endless support over the years.

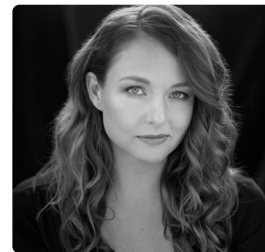


ELIAS WILSON

Cover: Beadle, Pirelli

Tenor Elias Wilson is a Biripi man and performer of opera, chamber music, and musical theatre. Elias studied opera at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music and was the 2022 recipient of the Harold Blair Opera Scholarship with Melba Opera Trust.

An accomplished chamber singer, Elias has performed with The Song Company, and toured nationally as a concert soloist. On-stage, Elias' roles have included Lysander in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Nemorino in Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore*, Chorus in Cavalli's *The Loves of Apollo & Dafne*, and his drag debut as Madame de la Haltière in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Elias makes his principal debut with Victorian Opera later this year in *The Visitors*.



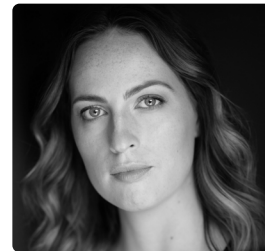
MICHAELA LEISK

Michaela holds a Bachelor of Music with Honours in vocal performance from the Royal College of Music, London.

Recent performances include *Amadeus* at the Sydney Opera House, *The Phantom of the Opera* on Sydney Harbour with Opera Australia, and the UK and Ireland tour of *The Phantom of the Opera*.

In Sydney, she performed in *Aspects of Love* at the Hayes Theatre, understudying the role of Giulietta. Other roles include Calisto in Offenbach's *Daphnis and Chloe* with Pacific Opera, Lucille in Rossini's *The Silken Ladder* with Sydney Independent Opera, Orlenda in Charody Productions' circus opera *The Carnival*, and Rose Pickles in the creative development of *Cloudstreet: The Opera*.

Michaela was also a member of the 7 Sopranos, and sang on their debut, self-titled album with ABC Classics.



JESSICA MILLS

Originally from Adelaide, Jessica graduated from the Queensland Conservatorium in 2016 with a Bachelor of Musical Theatre. She is a recipient of the Friends of State Opera of South Australia's Emerging Artist's Grant and is a past Semi-Finalist for the Rob Guest Endowment Award. She has performed in Australia and internationally.

Her stage credits include: Isabel – *Pirates of Penzance* (State Opera of South Australia), Swing/Angela alternate – *Love Burns* (SOSA), Nella – *Gianni Schicchi* (CoOpera), U/S Mary Maguire, Ensemble - *The Beautiful Game* (Manilla Street Productions), Choreographer and TweedleDee – *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland* (ACOCO), Kay Anderson – *Songs From Stage And Screen* (The 7 Sopranos), *Messa da Requiem* (Adelaide Festival), *Bright Lights and Big Dreams* (SOSA), *La Traviata* (SOSA), Voss (SOSA), *La Bohème* (SOSA), actor/ dancer – *Don Giovanni* (Opera Australia), actor – *Il Viaggio a Reims* (Opera Australia).

ORCHESTRA

Conductor
Simon Holt

Keyboard
Craig Renshaw

Violin
Heather Burnley

Cello
Steve Meyer

Double Bass
Mark Harris

Clarinet
Ian Sykes

Bassoon
Jack Cremer

Horn
Ben Jacks

Trumpet
Sophie Spencer

Percussion
Blake Roden

The organ prelude in this performance was recorded on the Melbourne Town Hall Grand Organ, performed by Calvin Bowman.



SUPPORT YOUR EXPERIENCE

Theatre Etiquette written by Claire Wearne

ARRIVE EARLY

Please try to arrive at least 20 minutes before the show starts to find the closest door to your seats and to use the bathrooms- theatre waits for no-one!

BE AISLE KIND

Be aware of people who may already be seated in the row where your chair is, and kindly thank them for making room for you to pass

DON'T KICK SEATS

You might already know how much this sucks when you are on the school bus, so please, don't be that person

NO FOOD IN THE THEATRE

Please eat before or after the performance

SWITCH OFF PHONES AND DIGITAL WATCHES

Be here, with us, in the theatre during the performance. But feel free to take selfies in the foyer, outside on Circular Quay or even a pre-show set photo. And don't forget to tag us! **#victorianopera** @victorianopera

DON'T TALK OR CALL OUT DURING THE PERFORMANCE

Wait until afterwards to share your thoughts about it

GIVE BACK TO THE PERFORMERS

Feel free to laugh and cry when the performance moves you to, and make sure you clap loudly when you are impressed, especially in the curtain call when the performers take a bow

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

Prepare for the performance by equipping yourself with the following contextual information and talking points. Here is the link to the promotional page for you to explore before reading about the characters and their context: <https://www.victorianopera.com.au/production/sweeneytodd/>



CONTEXTUALISATION

VICTORIAN ERA LONDON

The Victorian Era corresponds with the reign of Queen Victoria who ruled the British Empire from 1837 - 1901, the second longest ruling British Monarch. It was a period of moral conservatism but also one of financial, political and social development.

Britain was a powerful nation on the world stage with a far reaching empire and healthy economy fueled by the Industrial Revolution and a population that was three quarters working class. The Industrial Revolution was propelled by advances in science that led to cities like London being densely populated. The East End of London became the centre of the working class as prevailing winds made the air quality in this area undesirable to the aristocracy and wealthy middle class.

Whilst there were significant advances in science during this period, the living conditions in the East End were little improved from medieval London. Homes were small and cramped and often experienced infestations of lice and rats. The average diet consisted of bread, cheese and potatoes and this lack of a balanced diet combined with poor sanitation and filthy air led to many dying young from treatable diseases. Universal health care was not in place at this time and this lack of public health care led to many questionable techniques being employed often from traveling sales people.

The wealthier classes believed the poor deserved their fate due to a lack of motivation and laziness and transportation to Australia was still used as a punishment up until 1857. The use of a salaried law enforcement was a relatively new concept in London in 1840 and officials were often corrupt and serving their own interest. The introduction of a paid police force in 1829 saw a reduction in police patrolling streets and patrols were concentrated in the wealthier suburbs, leaving the poorer eastern suburbs to fend for themselves.

This is the world of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.



Victorian Era West London



Victorian Era East London

OPERA OR MUSICAL THEATRE?

The features that distinguish musicals and operas are complex. This is largely due to the evolution of both of these forms over several centuries, and due to the interpretation of those styles in the contemporary context.

Opera is a musical form that has existed in Europe since the late sixteenth century. Over many years it has undergone a number of transformations. Many great operatic composers have developed the art form including Mozart, Verdi, Wagner and Puccini. The most significant stylistic conventions include a narrative almost entirely sung, the use of an orchestra, grand scenic art and a singing technique that does not require the singer to need amplification. The form has evolved to include a wide variety of styles ranging from comic opera to tragedies and was popular until the Twentieth Century, when the modern musical became the presiding popular music/drama form.

Musical Theatre is a genre that emerged from the operetta in the late Eighteenth Century through which content is conveyed through song, dialogue, dance, acting, and scenic arts. In Musical Theatre dialogue becomes prominent as do dancing sequences, this style of theatre also requires its performers to be highly skilled in all areas, especially those playing lead roles. Musical Theatre responded to the emerging sound technology of amplification which allows singers to sing more softly, allowing for a greater range of dynamics whilst dancing which required adjustments to the vocal technique. Amplification also led to smaller orchestras, use of different instruments and sounds as well as the ability to place musicians in other locations rather than directly in front of the stage.

Some of the discussions around the differences and similarities of musicals and opera include features like actor or singer, the style of singing used, the use of through-composition or dialogue, popular (low-brow) or classical (highbrow), commercial or art. A feature of opera is that the words are almost always all sung, whereas in Musical Theatre, the story is told through dialogue interspersed with songs. *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* is one of only two of Sondheim's works to be listed in *The New Kobbé's Opera Book*, edited by The Earle of Harewood and Anthony Peattie, however it utilises stylistic conventions from both genres.

THE MUSIC

THE SCORE

Sondheim creates the particular mood and atmosphere of Sweeney Todd using a variety of musical devices including dissonance, repetition, ostinato, and leitmotifs. Leitmotifs are a common operatic device that Sondheim has used in previous theatrical compositions. These leitmotifs are heard in both the orchestration and vocal parts. This technique is often used by other composers to identify a character or emotion. In the case of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, Sondheim assigns a motif to specific characters.

Opera uses devices such as love duets and revenge arias. In *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* there is an example of each of these, "Green Finch and Linnet Bird" and "Epiphany". He also brings in elements of the popular in songs such as "By the Sea". Sondheim uses the sound of the organ in the Prelude to create a familiar gothic horror mood. Sondheim's leitmotifs are introduced in the prelude. He also references the "Dies Irae", from The Sequence - Mass for the Dead, a Gregorian Chant.

Sondheim rapidly changes pace and rhythm throughout the score which emphasises the changeability of Sweeney Todd's nature. This also underscores the diverse nature of the characters, their personalities and the complex nature of the situation they are all in. Sondheim uses repetition as a device in his scores which is also played out in the lyrics. Repetition is demonstrated in the ostinato that he uses in the opening ballad which returns later in the work.

Sondheim was aware of the power of music and sound in the traditional horror film. He scores sounds and percussive actions to be acted out by the cast as part of the score rather than acting direction, for example in Worst Pies in London. The sound of the screaming factory whistle almost as a Foley Music device, is used to both shock the audience and later to accompany the murders. He writes sensual and romantic music to underscore the violent and uncomfortable dramatic action, this also plays out the complexity of Sweeney Todd's emotional state and foreshadows impending dramatic action. He used the through-composed form to maintain tension and drama.

SONG LIST

ACT 1

Prologue - The Ballad of Sweeney Todd (Company)

This summarises the story of Sweeney Todd, the man who owned a barber shop where men were shaved but whose souls weren't saved. He served a dark and vengeful God.

No Place Like London (Anthony, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman)

The story begins with the arrival of Sweeney Todd and Anthony in London. We learn of Anthony having saved Sweeney Todd's life and of Sweeney Todd's gratitude. The Beggar Woman appears. Eventually Sweeney Todd tells the story; there was a barber and his wife and she was beautiful but a vulture of the law... removed the barber from his plate.

The Worst Pies in London (Mrs Lovett)

Sweeney Todd enters Mrs Lovett's pie shop, a filthy business producing terrible pies.

Poor Thing (Mrs Lovett)

Mrs Lovett tells the tale of the barber Benjamin Barker, and realises that Sweeney Todd is in fact him. When he was exiled she saved his razor blades and now presents them to him. He rents the room above the shop once more.

My Friends (Sweeney Todd, Mrs Lovett)

Sweeney Todd sings of the glory of his tools, the razor blades.

Green Finch and Linnet Bird - Johanna –

Johanna implores the birds to teach her to sing as a relief from her caged existence.

Ah, Miss (Anthony, Beggar Woman)

Anthony sees Johanna and falls for her instantly, but Johanna is spooked by the appearance of the Beggar Woman and leaves them. Anthony discovers the identity of the beautiful Johanna and buys her a bird.

Johanna (Anthony)

The Judge and Beadle destroy Anthony's moment with Johanna.

Pirelli's Miracle Elixir (Tobias, Sweeney Todd, Mrs Lovett, Company)

In a market place the 'Italian' barber Pirelli's wares are touted by his assistant Tobias. Sweeney Todd sees a chance to re-establish his own reputation as a barber and challenges Pirelli to prove who the better barber is.

The Contest (Pirelli)

A contest ensues with Beadle Bamford as adjudicator. Sweeney Todd wins the contest and Beadle's trust.

Wait (Mrs Lovett)

Mrs Lovett calms Sweeney Todd as he anxiously awaits the arrival of his intended victims and his chance for revenge.

Pirelli's Death

His first customer/victim is Pirelli. Mrs Lovett meets Tobias and to distract him she takes him under her wing.

Kiss Me/Ladies in Their Sensitivities (Johanna, Anthony, The Beadle, Judge Turpin)

Johanna reveals to Anthony that the Judge is intending to marry her and a plan is hatched for Johanna to marry Anthony instead. Beadle soothes the Judge and encourages him to consider his appearance to attract his future bride.

Pretty Women (Sweeney Todd, Judge Turpin)

Sweeney Todd savours the fact that he has the judge in his barber's chair. They both sing of pretty women.

Epiphany (Sweeney Todd, Mrs Lovett)

Sweeney Todd rages about the loss of the opportunity to kill the Judge.

A Little Priest (Sweeney Todd, Mrs Lovett)

Mrs Lovett comes up with a unique way to dispose of Pirelli's body. Sweeney Todd enjoys the mad idea she presents, and they sing of future victims.

ACT 2**God, That's Good (Tobias, Mrs Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Company)**

The 'new' version of Mrs Lovett's pies have created a great deal of prosperity for her, and Tobias who now works for her, enthusiastically spruiks her wares.

Johanna (Anthony, Sweeney Todd, Johanna, Beggar Woman)

Sweeney Todd and Anthony sing of their love and despair.

By the Sea (Mrs Lovett)

Mrs Lovett fantasises about her future with Sweeney Todd.

Wigmaker Sequence (Sweeney Todd, Anthony, Company)

After the Judge confines Johanna to the asylum, Anthony devises a plan to rescue her. He pretends to be a wigmaker and seeks hair from the inmates of the asylum.

The Letter (Sweeney Todd, Company)

Sweeney Todd writes a letter to the Judge to draw him to the barber's chair.

Not While I'm Around (Tobias, Mrs Lovett)

Tobias sings of his devotion to Mrs Lovett and implies his suspicions about Sweeney Todd.

Parlour Songs (The Beadle, Mrs Lovett, Tobias)

Beadle Bamford comes to the bakehouse to investigate the complaints of the foul smells that have been reported. Sweeney returns and gets his revenge on Beadle Bamford. Tobias discovers the foundation for his fears.

Fogg's Asylum (Company)

Anthony manages to release Johanna from the asylum, along with all of the inmates.

City on Fire (Lunatics, Johanna, Anthony)

The inmates run through the streets of London

Searching (Mrs Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Anthony, Judge Turpin)

Sweeney Todd and Mrs Lovett go searching for Tobias. Anthony and Johanna (dressed as a sailor) arrive at the bakehouse and await Sweeney Todd.

The Judge's Return (Sweeney Todd, Beggar Woman, Anthony, Johanna)

Sweeney Todd finally gets his revenge on the Judge.

Final Scene (Mrs Lovett, Sweeney Todd, Tobias)

The Beggar Woman is killed, and Sweeney Todd nearly kills Johanna, not recognising her in her disguise. He then discovers that his precious Lucy was the Beggar Woman and that Mrs Lovett knew all along. He kills her. Tobias then kills Sweeney Todd.

Epilogue: The Ballad of Sweeney Todd (Company)

THEATRE VOCABULARY

Alienation: A theatrical convention used to alienate the audience from the emotions of a narrative and remind them that they are watching a piece of theatre.

Beadle: An appointment by the Church of England to oversee charitable works and make reports on public order.

Foley Sound: The reproduction of everyday sound effects added to a film in post production.

Fourth Wall: The invisible wall between the audience and the performers on the stage.

Jacobean Tragedy: A style of theatre where the dominant narrative arc is centered on revenge.

Melodrama: A style of theatre that has exaggerated characters that explore heightened emotions rather than refined or realistic characterisation.

Metaphor: A figure of speech or symbol that identifies hidden similarities between two different things.

String of Pearls: A Victorian Era fictional story upon which Sweeney Todd's story is based on.

The Count of Monte Cristo: A novel written by French author Alexandre Dumas, believed to have influenced the story of Sweeney Todd. It follows the lead character, Edmund Dantes, through his imprisonment, freedom, and revenge spanning nearly his entire life.

Ward: A child or someone who is incapable of self care, appointed to the protection of a guardian or government agency.

MUSIC VOCABULARY

Andante: translates to at a walking pace, tempo of 73 - 77 BPM.

Aria: A song for one person, or solo. The character gets to sing about their inner emotions and turmoils.

Dissonance: Sounds played together that are not pleasing and clash making the listening uncomfortable.

Gregorian Chant: A style of religious music from the medieval period sung in unison and without accompaniment.

Leitmotif: A melodic phrase that is attached to a character. When this is played, we know that character is either on stage or being thought of.

L'istesso tempo: A direction in music to keep the tempo at the same pace when the meter, or time signature changes.

Misterioso: Play the music in a mysterious way.

Moderato: Meaning to play the music at a moderate tempo of 86 - 97 BPM.

Ostinato: A repeated rhythmic pattern.

Piu Mosso: A direction to a performer that the music should move more quickly.

Prelude: An introductory piece of music to a larger piece, often played on a keyboard instrument. Preludes include motifs and ideas from the larger piece. Similar to an overture.

Rubato: An expressive tempo marking giving the performer license to slightly speed-up and/or slow-down to bring further meaning to lyrics.

Through Composition: A style of music form where each verse is different and carries no melodic similarities.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

IDENTIFYING STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS: WORKSHEET ACTIVITY

Read the Theatre Style descriptions and identify the conventions of each style by listing these in dot points in the third column. Once you have done this, identify which conventions apply to *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* and list these, in dot points, in the fourth column. Which style does this production belong to, or does it cross all the three styles?

THEATRE STYLE	DESCRIPTION	STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS OF THE THEATRE STYLE	WHICH STYLISTIC CONVENTIONS APPLY TO SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET
OPERA	Opera is a significant art form that has its origins in Asia from approximately the third century CE and began to appear in European Music in the late sixteenth century CE. It combines music and dramatic elements for storytelling requiring writers, composers, librettists, and designers to elevate their skills to successfully engage an audience. This style of theatre is completely sung with minimal to no dialogue and generally covers stories of high emotion and serious themes. In the European tradition it has an orchestra playing the music in a pit in front of the stage with the conductor at the centre. Singers would not use microphones to amplify their voices, requiring great skill in projection to get their sound over the orchestra and also meaning minimal movement as they sing. Grand opera's would generally be three to four acts long.		
OPERETTA	This style of theatre began to emerge in the nineteenth century CE as people became more mobile and financially independent. It combined music and dialogue in the art of telling stories and the subject matter is generally light and humorous and this is reflected in the style of music that was composed. In operettas we see the length of the performance shortened, the size of the orchestra reduced and the introduction of dancing. This style is closely related to Opera Buffa, a style of opera that was funny and looked at the everyday life of ordinary people.		
MUSICAL THEATRE	Operetta and Musical Theatre are very similar styles of theatre; both contain music, singing, spoken dialogue and dancing. In Musical Theatre the dialogue becomes more prominent as do the dancing sequences, this style of theatre also requires its performers to be highly skilled in all areas, especially those playing lead roles. Musical Theatre responded to the emerging sound technology of amplification which allows singers to sing more softly, allowing for a greater range of dynamics and adjustments to the vocal technique required. Amplification also led to smaller orchestras, use of different instruments and sounds as well as the ability to place musicians in other locations rather than directly in front of the stage.		
WHICH STYLE DOES SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET BELONG TOO?			

LEARNING THE MUSIC OF *SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET: ELEMENTS OF MUSIC*

Listen to the links in the table below and use up to 5 descriptive words to explain how you feel the Elements of Music have been manipulated by Sondheim in his writing for this piece. Using this analysis of Music Elements, in the final column describe the mood created in each piece. These recordings come from the original 1979 Broadway cast recording.

	MELODY	RHYTHM	HARMONY	TEXTURE	MOOD
ACT 1, PRELUDE https://open.spotify.com/track/1cLlmK3FxeKC1T-fbkWtM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
ACT 1, PIRELLI'S MIRACLE ELIXIR https://open.spotify.com/track/6RL40sdT4qBhXX-oILZbquR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
ACT 2, BY THE SEA https://open.spotify.com/track/7lcyT1nlu52HuhoX-KnF00f	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	
ACT 2, FINAL SEQUENCE https://open.spotify.com/track/7vsxzjwinuqzM9lx-1Sx6TQ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 	

LEARNING THE CHARACTERS OF *SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET*: CHARACTER PROFILES

Follow the process below to create a profile for one of the characters from *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. When you have completed the character analysis, record yourself being the character you have chosen in the form of a meme or social media introduction.

1. Choose one of the following characters: Sweeney Todd, Mrs Lovett, Anthony, Johanna, Judge Turpin, Lucy/Beggar Woman, Beadle, Pirelli or Toby.

2. Using the character descriptions found in the cast section of this resource on pages 11 to 14 as a guide, but also using your own ideas, complete the character analysis in the table opposite.

3. Explore the physicality of your chosen character through body language, gesture, facial expression and walking.

4. Explore the voice of your chosen character to ensure the accent reflects the time period and the relevant social class, as well as the key emotion they experience in this story.

5. Develop a 20 second introduction for the character. Be sure to include their name and what the audience needs to know about them.

6. Film yourself performing this character introduction, feel free to use stagecraft elements of costume, props, hair and make-up.

7. As a class, play all the Character Profiles as a way of meeting and understanding the characters of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*.

Character name:	
Gender:	Age:
Social class:	
Accent:	
Pitch of voice:	
Career:	
Gestures:	
Facial Expressions:	
Emotions experienced:	
Outlook on life:	
Relationship to other characters:	
Motivation:	

CHARACTER IN COMPOSITION: MUSIC ANALYSIS

Manipulating music elements in different ways allows a composer to draw out a character's motivation, which aids the audience in understanding character and character relationships. Consider the examples below from Judge Turpin and Anthony when they sing about Johanna.

EXAMPLE 1: ANTHONY

https://soundcloud.com/victorianopera/anthony-s-johanna?si=e9e46d58836e4f5490537edc-70deef3d&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

1. What is the full musical term for the time signature?

2. What is the key signature?

3. What is the tonality?

4. What is the dynamic level?

5. What is the tempo?

6. Describe the rhythm of the melody?

7. What articulation is used?

8. Is the accompaniment simple or complex?

9. With these manipulations in mind, what do you think the relationship between Anthony and Johanna is like and what is motivating Anthony at this time?

EXAMPLE 2: JUDGE TURPIN

https://soundcloud.com/victorianopera/turpins-johanna?si=e9e46d58836e4f5490537edc-70deef3d&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing

1. What is the full musical term for the time signature?

2. What is the key signature?

3. What is the tonality?

4. What dynamic levels are being applied?

5. What is the tempo?

6. Describe the rhythm of the melody?

7. What articulation is used?

8. Is the accompaniment simple or complex?

9. With these manipulations in mind, what do you think the relationship between Judge Turpin and Johanna is like and what is motivating Judge Turpin at this time?

MELODRAMA AND STOCK CHARACTERS: EXPLORING CHARACTER

The Victorian Era shone a light on the distinct differences between the social classes of British society. In *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, we are exposed to the destitution and poverty of the lower classes compared to the social affluence of the upper middle class. An emerging theatre style in this era was Melodrama which used exaggerated characters or caricatures called Stock Characters of which the six main types are found below.

STOCK CHARACTER	DESCRIPTION	APPLIES TO WHICH CHARACTER IN SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET
The Hero	Always saves the day, has moral authority is courageous and good looking.	
The Hero's Faithful Servant	Assists the hero to save the day, but is often clumsy and thoughtless. Provides some comic relief.	
The Villain	Is powerful but morally corrupt and evil. Competes for the heroines attention but always fails.	
The Villain's Accomplice	They assist the Villain and similar to the Faithful Servant, they are clumsy and often thoughtless thereby providing comic relief.	
The Persecuted Heroine	Is often depicted as beautiful and young but always in peril at the hands of the villain.	
The Aged Parent	Often the parent of the heroine, they are old, frail and sick.	

1. As a class read through the descriptions of the Stock Characters and then refer to the character description for *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* found on pages 11 to 14 of this resource. Discuss how the Stock Characters of Melodrama can be applied to the characters in this production and then list these in the third column of the above table.

2. As a class, discuss Sweeney Todd's motivations and action and debate whether he is a Hero or a Villain?

3. In groups of six create a tableau displaying the Stock Characters found in *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*. Be sure to use levels, body language, gesture and facial expression in an exaggerated way to bring out the character traits as well as what social class they belong to.

**“There's a hole in the world like a great black pit
and the vermin of the world inhabit it
and its morals aren't worth what a pig could spit
and it goes by the name of London.
At the top of the hole sit the privileged few
Making mock of the vermin in the lonely zoo
turning beauty to filth and greed...
I too have sailed the world and seen its wonders,
for the cruelty of men is as wonderous as Peru
but there's no place like London!”**

SWEENEY TODD

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET BY HUGH WHEELER AND STEPHEN SONDHEIM

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