MU Student Union presents the Union House Theatre production of

THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET

10–18 September 2010
Union Theatre

Directed by Tom Gutteridge
Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book by Hugh Wheeler
From an adaptation by Christopher Bond
By arrangement with Hal Leonard Australia Pty Ltd
Director’s Note

Sweeney Todd is a complex and demanding musical with particular design problems such as sending bodies down chutes and quick shifts of location that tend to lead to expensive and occasionally clumsy solutions. We made the decision to make a virtue of our limited resources and this has led us down a particular and peculiar theatrical alleyway. We are not amplifying the singers, partly because we couldn’t afford to do it well and partly because I think that the drama of Sweeney Todd benefits from the immediacy and intimacy of hearing the direct (and strenuous!) efforts of the performers. We have built the stage right out into the middle of the audience, not only to help with vocal potency, but even more because we want to implicate and enlist the audience in our bloody and gleeful escapade. There are other design and performance choices, as you will see as the show unfolds, which also grew from our desire to make a virtue of a rough, improvised, story-telling approach to the production. I hope you enjoy our take on Sweeney and finish up as impressed as I am at the energy, talent and inventiveness of the students who are performing, musically directing, designing and operating this huge, unruly beast.

Tom Gutteridge
Artistic Director
Union House Theatre

Ensemble
Scott Dunsdon
Amy Dyke
Ella Francis
Camilla Gorman
Stephanie John

Shyamini Naidu
Benjamin Riley
Nathan Trevitt
Isobel Yates

Musicians
Morna Hu
Justina Lui
Anthony Cardamone
Suzanne Zhou
James Hodson
Stephen Spencer
Jonathan Tosio

repertoire/keyboard
violin
French horn
clarinet
trumpet
double bass
cello

Special Thanks
Peter Bailey, Iona Bernina, Evie Bicos, Scott Campbell, Stephanie Chudiak, Functions@Melbourne, Louise Hall, Alex Hammond, Joshua Hart, Jarrod Hughes, Anneliese Klotz, Jan Leishman, Kelly Manning, Qawe Mbalu, Bhavani Nadarajah, Bradley Redmond, St. Monica’s College, Trinity College, Peter Turley and the Union House Theatre casuals.

Union House Theatre

‘An engine room of student arts in Australia’, Union House Theatre has helped nurture generations of playwrights, directors, performers and technicians. Union House Theatre engages students in a wide range of professionally-led performing arts experiences, as well as assisting with student-run productions and initiatives.

Cultural Services Manager: Josephine Byrt
Artistic Director: Tom Gutteridge
Theatre Admin & Development Officer: Erin Adams
Production Manager: Gus Macdonald
Head Technician: Clynton Jones
Stage Carpenter/Mechanist: Simon Smith
Sondheim's Sweeney Todd

The legend of Sweeney Todd, a London barber whose clients wound up in his neighbour's meat pies has its origins in the 'penny dreadful' novels of the Victorian era. Some frisson kept this tale alive well into the twentieth century in various incarnations. Perhaps it is the unavoidable vulnerability of a man having his face and throat shaved with a cut throat razor. Anyway, Sondheim encountered the story in Christopher Bond's 1973 non-musical stage adaptation and immediately saw its potential. His version opened on Broadway in March 1979, directed by Harold Prince with Angela Lansbury as the enterprising pie-shop owner, Mrs Lovett and Len Cariou as Sweeney. The production won 8 Tony Awards and since then Sweeney Todd has seen many revivals around the world. The musical's combination of theatricality and its Grand Guignol delight in horror and madness have a particular appeal that keeps on attracting new generations of performers and directors. Union House Theatre's new version will continue this long, bloody but exhilarating tradition.

‘What distinguishes Sweeney Todd from simple Victorian dramaturgy is its deliberate theatricality, its desire not just to scare us, but to invest the horror with irony. 19th century realism assumed its audience was naive and innocent: post-Brechtian theater presumes its audience is theatrically knowing and socially guilty.’

— Howard Kissel about the original Broadway production
Sweeney Todd
Scene Breakdown and songs

ACT I
Prelude
Ballad of Sweeney Todd
Scene 1 - London Docks
No Place Like London
Scene 3 - Mrs Lovett's Pie Shop
Worst Pies In London
Poor Thing
My Friends
Scene 4 - Judge Turpin's House
Green Finch & Linnet Bird
Ah, Miss
Johanna
Scene 5 - St Dunstan's Marketplace
Pirelli's Miracle Elixir
Pirelli's Entrance/Contest
Ballad of Sweeney Todd
Scene 6 - Judge Turpin's House
Johanna
Scene 7 - Sweeney Todd's Torsorial Parlour
Wait
Pirelli's Death
Ballad of Sweeney Todd
Scene 8 - The Court. Then London's streets and Judge Turpin's House
Kiss Me
Ladies In Their Sensitivities
Scene 9 - Sweeney Todd's Torsorial Parlour
Pretty Women
Epiphany
A Little Priest

Interval - 15 mins
Food and drink are available for purchase at the Theatre Bar

ACT II
Scene 1 - Mrs Lovett's Pie Shop
God, That's Good!
Scene 2 - Sweeney Todd's Torsorial Parlour and surrounding streets
Johanna
Scene 3 - Outside Fogg's Asylum
Scene 4 - Mrs Lovett's Parlour
By the Sea
Wigmaker Sequence
The Ballad of Sweeney Todd
The Letter
Scene 5 - Mrs Lovett's Pie Shop then The Bakehouse
Not While I'm Around
Scene 6 - Mrs Lovett's Parlour
Parlour Songs
Scene 7 - Fogg's Asylum and surrounding streets
The Ballad of Sweeney Todd
City On Fire
Scene 8 - Sweeney Todd's Torsorial Parlour
Searching
Pretty Women – Part II
My Friends - reprise
Scene 9 - The Bakehouse
Final Scene
Epilogue
The Ballad of Sweeney Todd