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GWU Department of Theatre Arts Presents 'Sweeney Todd,' a Musical Thriller

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GWU Department of Theatre Arts Presents ‘Sweeney Todd,’ a Musical Thriller

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Office of University
Communications

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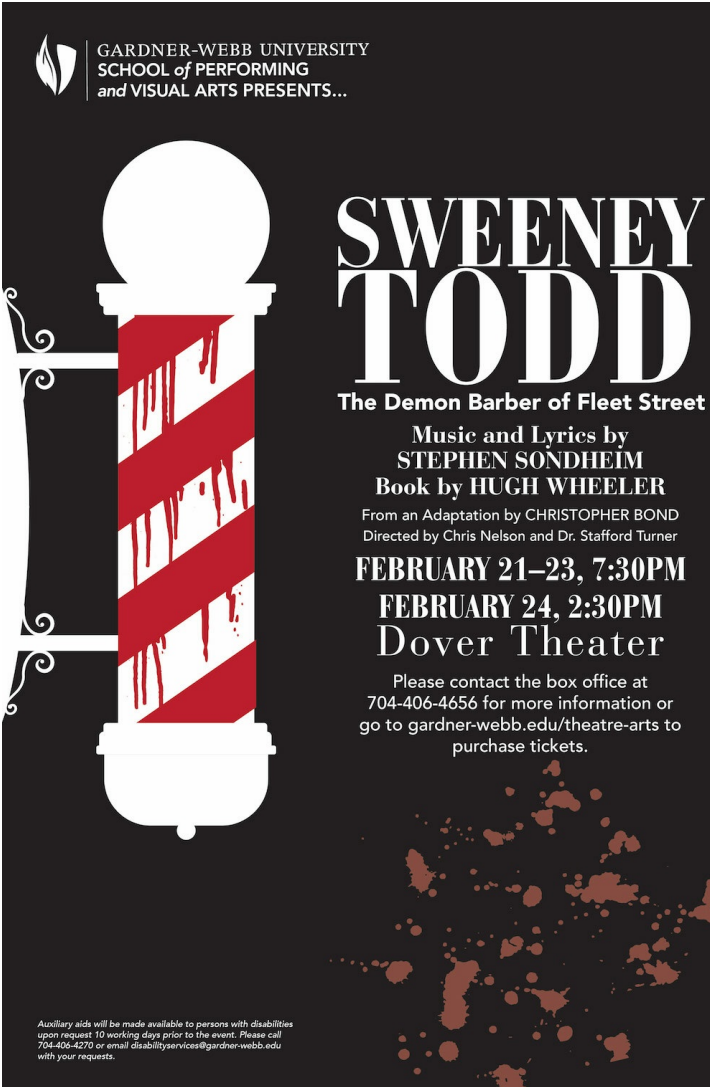
Revenge Tale Features Plot Twists and Intrigue

BOILING SPRINGS, N.C.—The Gardner-Webb University Department of Theatre Arts presents “Sweeney Todd” Feb. 21-24 in Dover Theatre inside the Lutz-Yelton Convocation Center. The musical thriller is directed by Dr. Chris Nelson, assistant professor of theatre and department chair, and Dr. Stafford Turner, associate professor of music. The GWU Orchestra, directed by professor of music Dr. Patricia Sparti, will provide accompaniment.

A 1979 Tony Award-winner for Best Musical, “Sweeney Todd” features music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and is based on the 1973 play “Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street” by Christopher Bond.

“If you like spectacle—costumes, lights, sets, music, thrilling plot twists and intrigue, for instance—you’ll hopefully like Sweeney Todd,” assessed Nelson. “It’s an intense revenge tale with a very interesting mix of what you’d expect in a musical and a few things you might not expect.”

The story involves Sweeney Todd, whose real name is Benjamin Barker. He was wrongfully sentenced to life imprisonment by the corrupt Judge Turpin. Barker uses his alias to resume work in his barber shop, which is located above Mrs. Lovett’s struggling pie shop.



GARDNER-WEBB UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL of PERFORMING
and VISUAL ARTS PRESENTS...

SWEENEY TODD

The Demon Barber of Fleet Street

Music and Lyrics by
STEPHEN SONDHEIM
Book by HUGH WHEELER
From an Adaptation by CHRISTOPHER BOND
Directed by Chris Nelson and Dr. Stafford Turner

FEBRUARY 21–23, 7:30PM
FEBRUARY 24, 2:30PM
Dover Theater

Please contact the box office at
704-406-4656 for more information or
go to gardner-webb.edu/theatre-arts to
purchase tickets.

Auxiliary aids will be made available to persons with disabilities upon request 10 working days prior to the event. Please call 704-406-4270 or email disabilityservices@gardner-webb.edu with your requests.

After swearing vengeance against the judge that tore his family apart, Todd and Lovett hatch a unique plan that helps them both, but leads them down a dangerous path.

Nelson described this musical as the most ambitious production he has staged since he's been at Gardner-Webb. "It's always a lot of work doing any production, but in a musical, you usually have bigger sets, more costumes and props, more rehearsals to incorporate music, and dance, if there is any," he observed. "Musicals are often longer than most plays and so there's more material. You have to try to balance all these things so there's enough time to work on all of it. I urge folks to come and support our students and our program."

Show times are Feb. 21-23 at 7:30 p.m. and Feb. 24 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for adults, \$10 for students, senior citizens and GWU faculty and staff, and free for GWU students with ID and children under 12 years. For more information, please contact Andy Rich at 704-406-2777 or email arich2@gardner-webb.edu.

Cast/Principles:

Mrs. Lovett – Marissa Helms, of Mebane, N.C., sophomore theatre major

Sweeney Todd – Christopher Nelson, of Birmingham, Ala., chair of the GWU Department of Theatre Arts and assistant professor

Johanna – Brittany Polburn, of Charlotte, N.C., second year theatre major, English minor

Tobias – Harrison Burnette, of Asheville, N.C., 10th grader at Carolina Pines Academy

Beggar Woman – Angela Meade, of Lowell, N.C., ESL teacher at H.H. Beam Elementary

Judge Turpin – Jonathan Foust, of Winslow, Ind., bachelor's in theatre, master's in teaching

Anthony – Chris Adams, of Belmont, N.C., sophomore, music major

Beadle – Christopher Chase Thornhill, of Perry Hall, Md., sophomore music education major

Pirelli – Kordell Hemphill, of Pacolet, S.C., music major with emphasis in business and the music industry

Fogg – Joe Bragdon, of Coral Springs, Fla., theatre major with concentration in performance

Ensemble:

Jenna Mason, of Gaffney, S.C., junior theatre major, art minor

Sarah Bragdon, of Anderson, S.C., nursing major

Lindsey Halliday, of Forest City, N.C., sophomore at Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy

Harrison Williams, of Concord, N.C., freshman communication studies major, video and film editing

Cheyenne McCall, of Hendersonville, N.C., sophomore worship leadership major

Rebekah Bridges, of Kings Mountain, senior music major

Mekenna Rae Boswell, of Mocksville, N.C., sophomore music major

Marshall Townsend, of Charlotte, N.C., freshman theatre major

Noah Blanton, of Ellenboro, psychology major

Joshua Clarke, of Shelby, N.C., Associate in Arts, A.A.S. in Emergency Medical Science at Cleveland Community College, sophomore actor at The Dinner Detective: a Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre Company

Megan Johnson, of Rock Hill, S.C., theatre major

Crew/Tech/Etc.

Costume designer – Megan Johnson, of Rock Hill, S.C., theatre major

Assistant director, makeup/hair designer, props master – Jenna Mason, of Gaffney, S.C., junior theater major, art minor

Production state major – Marsden Murray, GWU alum

Assistant stage manager – Grace Kelley, of Fayetteville, N.C., freshman

Props assistant – Marshall Townsend, of Charlotte, N.C., theatre major

Coach, rehearsal pianist, orchestra member – Rebecca Turner, professor of music at Converse College, Spartanburg, S.C.

Orchestra roster:

Violin – Billy Norton, Hannah Bledsoe, Sarah Covington, Emma Carroll

Viola – Davis Westbrook, Hannah Green

Cello – MacKenzie Quattlebaum, Elyssa LaRock

Bass – Brooke McCurry, Skylar Moesteller

Flute – Amy Griffith, Brittany Morgan

Oboe – Beth Bill

Clarinet/Bass Clarinet – Malcolm Cline, Jake Litton
Bassoon – Omar Wingo
Horn – Hannah Edwards
Trumpet – Michael Brotherton, Garrett Chitwood, Tanner Shelton
Trombone/Tuba – Matthew Pennell, Micah Zehnder, J.D. Biggers
Percussion – Aaron Jackson, Corey Byers
Harp/Synthesizer – Jay Seagrave
Conductor – Patricia C. Sparti

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Located in the North Carolina foothills, Gardner-Webb University is a private, Christian, liberal arts university that prepares students to become critical thinkers, effective leaders and compassionate servants. Emphasizing a strong student-centered experience and rigorous academics, Gardner-Webb is a place where Christian character meets global engagement. Ignite your future at Gardner-Webb.edu.