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**Attend the Twisted Tale of *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*
at the University of Florida October 24 Through November 2**
Special Halloween performance includes costume contest.

Gainesville, Fla., October 8, 2014 — The University of Florida (UF) School of Theatre + Dance will present *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* Friday, Oct. 24, 2014 through Sunday, Nov. 2, 2014 at the Constans Theatre located in the Nadine McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion on UF's campus. Direction and musical staging is by School of Theatre + Dance Professor Tony Mata, and musical direction is provided by School of Music Associate Professor Anthony Offerle. Performance times are 7:30 p.m. Oct. 24-25 and Oct. 28-Nov. 1 and at 2:00 p.m. Oct. 26 and Nov. 2. Guests are invited to come in costume for the Halloween performance on Friday, Oct. 31 and stay after the performance for a costume contest and photos with some members of the cast.

Set in 19th-century London, this thrilling musical tells the story of ousted barber Benjamin Barker, also known as Sweeney Todd, and his revenge on the scheming judge who exiled him for 15 years. When the bloodthirsty Sweeney joins forces with the failing pie shop proprietress Mrs. Lovett, the two introduce a new, carnal ingredient to Lovett's meat pies that sends the people of London straight to the shop — and new victims to Sweeney's barber chair.



With music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Hugh Wheeler, the show has become a musical theatre staple since its Broadway premiere at the Uris Theatre in 1979, directed by Harold Prince. The original Broadway production of *Sweeney Todd* starred Len Cariou as Sweeney Todd and Angela Lansbury as Mrs. Lovett and won eight Tony Awards, including Best Musical. The show has been remounted multiple times, including a Tony Award-winning Broadway production in 2005 starring Michael Cerveris and Patti LuPone. The most recent London revival in 2012 featured Michael Ball and Imelda Staunton in the leading roles.

Stephen Sondheim is a name synonymous with musical theatre, as he has written the music and lyrics for a number of quintessential, award-winning works, including *Company* and *Into the Woods*. Hugh Wheeler was an American playwright and librettist who is noted for both his work with Sondheim and a series of mystery novels and short stories. The duo also collaborated on 1973's *A Little Night Music*.

“Our *Sweeney Todd* offers a different twist on a familiar story,” said Mata. “Audience members can expect a version that is more contemporary than most. The production contains a solid balance of both contemporary and Victorian aspects.”

School of THEATRE + DANCE

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA / COLLEGE OF THE ARTS

The *Sweeney Todd* cast includes Grace Abele, Rachel Beal, Brittany Bennett, Chelsea Brinda, Rachael Cain, Bradley Cloverette, Jason Collins, Daniel DiCola, Sergio de la Espriella, Brandon Good, Daniel Gray, Sami Gresham, Brooke Heffernan, David Leppert, Jake Lesh, Emily Lewis, Tony Lupi, Chaz May, Orlando Mendez, Thomas Nightingale, Ariel Reich, Yael Reich, Christie Robinson, Lauren Robinson, Hunter Rothstein, Matthew Ruff, Erica Scaglione, Dean Thomason, Kasie Wagner, Daniel Womack, Jamey Wright and Sydney Zaruba.

Tickets are \$17 for the general public, and are \$13 for students, UF faculty/staff and senior citizens. Group rates are available for parties of eight or more. Tickets are available through the University Box Office located at Gate 1 of the Stephen C. O'Connell Center, by calling 352-392-1653 or at ticketmaster.com. The University Box Office is open Tuesdays through Fridays: 12-5:30 p.m. and Saturdays: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Tickets can also be purchased at the Constans Theatre Box Office starting 45 minutes prior to the performance.

The Nadine McGuire Theatre and Dance Pavilion is located at 687 McCarty Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611. Parking is available across the street from the UF Bookstore & Welcome Center on the University of Florida located on Museum Road.

This event has been funded in part by a Tourist Development Tax Grant from the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners in conjunction with the Alachua County Tourism Development Council.

About the School of Theatre + Dance

The School of Theatre + Dance is one of the University of Florida College of the Arts' three fully accredited schools. Undergraduate students can pursue a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in acting, dance, musical theatre, theatre production—including costume design, lighting design and scenic design—or a Bachelor of Arts degree in dance studies or general theatre. Minors are also offered in dance and theatre as well as certificates in arts in medicine and dance in healthcare. Student organizations, showcase programs and other intensives provide students with invaluable professional experiences. UF is home to three School of Theatre + Dance performance venues, including the Constans Theatre, Black Box Theatre and G-6 Studio. To learn more about the School of Theatre + Dance, including upcoming performance dates and ticket information, visit www.arts.ufl.edu/theatreanddance.

About the College of the Arts

The College of the Arts, previously known as the College of Fine Arts, is one the 16 colleges and more than 150 research centers and institutes at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. The College of the Arts offers baccalaureate, master's and Ph.D. degree programs in its three fully-accredited schools — the School of Art + Art History, School of Music and School of Theatre + Dance. The college is home to the Center for Arts in Medicine, Center for World Arts, Digital Worlds Institute, University Galleries and the New World School of the Arts in Miami. More than 100 faculty members and more than 1,220 students work together daily to engage, inspire and create. The college hosts more than 300 performances, exhibitions and events each year. Faculty and students also exhibit and perform at other local, national and international venues. To learn more, visit www.arts.ufl.edu.

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Caption: Yael Reich, left, as Mrs. Nellie Lovett, and David Leppert as Sweeney Todd. Photo credit: TF Guntrup.