



Welcome from the Director

Here we are again with another classic to present at the Cambridge Arts Theatre, in my 5th year working with CaOS. This year we're doing Sondheim's classic musical Sweeney Todd which was recently seen in London in the West End's Adelphi theatre starring musical legends Imelda Staunton and Michael Ball. Then more recently there has been a site specific production in an actual pie shop, bringing audiences right into the action.

Alas at the Arts Theatre, we're in a proscenium theatre, so we will have our limitations and we are going to be using a set this year, which is really exciting and is a hybrid design of the recent West End and original Broadway Production.

Sweeney Todd, whilst known for its gruesome story, is actually a story of Love and every character in the show only acts as a result of love. In a time warped with injustice, poverty and filth we meet two desperate people who create a successful pie shop. The only downside is that the meat is sourced from humans who have been murdered by Sweeney Todd. The show is based on a fictional story which was first published between 1846 and 1847 as a Penny Dreadful serial entitled The String of Pearls. Sweeney Todd has a lot of truth in the characters and the Tim Burton film allowed the truthful characters to come to life.

For those who know me, a musical is all about the truth of the story, not just the singing and dancing. I'm interested in looking at the framework of the story that was taken out of the movie but is something that is really important to me to explore and find out how this fits into our company.

This year I'll be working with Scott Hunter, who's been my associate for a few productions this year as well as being an actor, who appeared in my production of YANK. We'll be working together on the show. He will be at some of the auditions as well as myself.

For anyone wanting to audition, I'm really interested in seeing **your** version of the character. I'm not interested in seeing a version of Angela Lansbury or Helena Bonham Carter. Be yourself and your age. If you're auditioning for the chorus there will be a vocal workshop to see how you blend and an acting one with me for you to see what we'll be doing with the show. James is also asking that you sing by yourself, this is to hear what vocal part you fit into and how you hold a harmony line. It's not an audition in the same way the principal parts are.

For anyone new to me, you'll see from the audition piece that you don't have a dialogue piece. Singing in a musical is acting through song and therefore I'm really MUCH more interested to see how you deliver the song. You might also be asked to say the words of the song as a piece of text.

Thanks and I look forward to meeting you.

Chris