

“Attend the Tale of Sweeney Todd”

-Alex Kerai

The English Victorian barber Sweeney Todd is the stuff of urban legend: a barber who slit the throats of his customers and had his landlady, Mrs. Lovett, bake them into the pies that Londoners adored. Originally referenced in Charles Dickens’s *Pickwick Papers* and later the subject of Stephen Sondheim’s chilling musical *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, the story of Sweeney Todd has been scaring children away from meat pies and barbershops for centuries. He has been brought back to life this year in Marblehead High School’s interpretation of Sondheim’s dark operetta. However, MHS’s show is more unconventional than the original staging of *Sweeney Todd* for it embodies the principles of ‘Steampunk’ – a combination of punk hair and makeup, as well as historical Victorian period costumes and industrial scenery.

For the past three months, the cast of *Sweeney Todd* – which includes Joe Boyce as Sweeney Todd, Libby Jancsy as Mrs. Lovett, Jacob Sundlie as Anthony Hope, Alec Glass as Judge Turpin, Tatiana Dalton as Johanna, Sam Frej as the Beadle, Addy Sleeman as the Beggar Woman; Dan Gawrys as Pirelli, Drew Welch as Tobias Ragg, and a huge ensemble – have been rehearsing tirelessly for this coming weekend. Directed by Steve Black, with musical direction by Amanda Roeder and technical direction by Greg Dana, *Sweeney Todd* tells the tale of barber Sweeney Todd, who comes back to London vowing revenge on the evil Judge Turpin, who had taken Todd’s wife and daughter and exiled him. Soon Todd’s rage turns to the whole world.

Sweeney Todd is playing this weekend only at the Marblehead High School theatre at 2 Humphrey Street in Marblehead. When asked why people should come and see *Sweeney Todd*, director Steve Black replied, “Because it’s an exciting new take on a classic story.” Come see for yourself Friday or Saturday night at 7 p.m. or on Sunday at 2 p.m., and see why this performance of *Sweeney Todd* should not be missed!

Alex Kerai is a member of the technical crew for *Sweeney Todd*.