



For Immediate Release

CONTACT: Erica Hobbs  
(313) 237-3403  
ehobbs@motopera.org

**Michigan Opera Theatre to Present "Sweeney Todd"**

*Sondheim classic stars Michigan native, features famous score, original Broadway set*

*Nov. 16 - 24 at the Detroit Opera House*

DETROIT, Nov. 4, 2019 – Michigan Opera Theatre's (MOT) 2019-20 opera season continues with Stephen Sondheim's "Sweeney Todd," Nov. 16-24 at the Detroit Opera House. Considered one of the greatest pieces of musical theater of all time, the production features operatic singing, a thrilling story and dramatic special effects and costumes. It will be MOT's first presentation of 'Sweeney Todd' since 1985.

"After an absence of more than 30 years, we are excited to return 'Sweeney Todd' to the Michigan Opera Theatre repertoire," said MOT President and CEO Wayne S. Brown. "This highly-anticipated production is sure to please opera and Broadway fans alike."

"Sweeney Todd" is the story of a barber out for revenge after being unjustly imprisoned by a judge who wanted to steal his wife. After returning to London, he teams up with Mrs. Lovett, a meat pie baker, in an insane partnership intended to bring him vengeance and her, riches.

Though originally a Broadway musical, "Sweeney Todd" features operatic singing and is considered a crossover piece. It is considered one of Sondheim's best works with a famous score that includes "Johanna," "The Worst Pies in London" and "Not While I'm Around," in addition to its titular "Ballad of Sweeney Todd."

The production features steampunk costumes and elements from the original 1979 Broadway set, complete with a trap door barber chair.

The cast includes notable stars in both opera and musical theater, including Stephen Powell in the title role, Tony award-winner Karen Ziemba as Mrs. Lovett and Tony and Emmy award-nominee Ron Raines, also famous as Alan Spaulding on CBS's "Guiding Light" soap opera, as Judge Turpin. Ziemba is a Michigan native born in St. Joseph and later raised in Farmington

Hills. The cast also includes Nathaniel Hackmann as Anthony Hope and Amy Owens as Johanna. It is conducted by Rob Fisher and directed by Ron Daniels.

It is sung in English with English supertitles. MOT will offer a free opera talk one hour before the performance.

This production is made possible by 2019 Fall Opera Season Sponsor, Ford Motor Company.

Ticket prices range from \$39 to \$160. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.MichiganOpera.org](http://www.MichiganOpera.org), by calling (313) 237-7464 or in person at the Detroit Opera House (1526 Broadway, Detroit).

For full casting and additional information visit <https://michiganopera.org/season-schedule/sweeney-todd/>.

“Sweeney Todd” is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).

### **“Sweeney Todd”**

Music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, Book by Hugh Wheeler, Based on the play by Christopher Bond

Performed at the Detroit Opera House, 1526 Broadway, Detroit

Saturday, Nov. 16, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 20, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 22, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 24, 2:30 p.m.

###

### **About Michigan Opera Theatre**

Michigan Opera Theatre, one of the nation’s most vibrant nonprofit arts organizations, is committed to presenting opera and dance of the highest artistic caliber. Founded in 1971 by Dr. David DiChiera, the company’s mission is to serve as a major cultural resource to the state of Michigan and the city of Detroit. The organization is led by President and CEO Wayne S. Brown and Chairman of the Board R. Jamison Williams. Visit the website at [www.michiganopera.org](http://www.michiganopera.org).