



PRESS CONTACT: Natalie Genter-Gilmore

503.445.3765

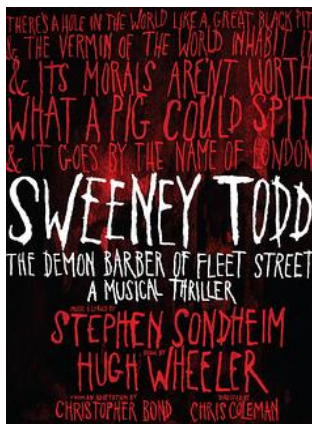
natalieg@pcs.org

## M E D I A R E L E A S E

*PORTLAND CENTER STAGE KICKS OFF 25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON*

*WITH STEPHEN SONDHEIM MASTERPIECE*

**SWEENEY TODD, THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET: A MUSICAL THRILLER**



**August 30, 2012 – PORTLAND, ORE.** What better way to celebrate 25 years of theater in Portland than with a masterpiece by America's foremost musical theater genius? Portland Center Stage's production of *Sweeney Todd, The Demon Barber of Fleet Street*, with music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim and book by Hugh Wheeler from an adaptation by Christopher Bond, begins preview performances on Tuesday, September 18, opens on **Friday, September 21** and runs Tuesday through Sunday through **October 21, 2012**. Tickets **start at \$39**, with discounts available for students and those under 25. Rush tickets are \$20.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Saturdays and Sundays and matinees at noon on select Thursdays. See the show calendar at [www.pcs.org/sweeney](http://www.pcs.org/sweeney) for the complete performance schedule. Tickets can be purchased online at [www.pcs.org](http://www.pcs.org), by phone at 503.445.3700 or by visiting the box office located at 128 NW Eleventh Avenue.

Widely acknowledged as Stephen Sondheim's musical masterpiece, *Sweeney Todd* is set amongst London's seedy side streets and laced with Sondheim's characteristically brilliant wit and dark humor. This landmark musical depicts the barber Sweeney Todd's savage quest for justice and retribution after years of false imprisonment. Aided by harridan pie shop owner Mrs. Lovett, who is secretly in love with him, he sets out to avenge the wrongs done to him and his family. Combining comic turns and chilling

drama, music hall-style numbers and hauntingly beautiful romantic songs, *Sweeney Todd* offers a fascinating portrait of a man driven to madness by injustice.

An all-star cast of Broadway veterans, vocal dynamos and a local chanteuse populate the world of Sweeney's London. The role of Sweeney is played by Aloysius Gigl. A graduate of the Yale School of Drama, Mr. Gigl's favorite roles include Younger Brother in *Ragtime*, Carl-Magnus in *A Little Night Music* and Oberon in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Mrs. Lovett will be played by Portland's own Gretchen Rumbaugh. Ms. Rumbaugh was most recently seen in *The Drowsy Chaperone* at the Broadway Rose Theater and is the Lead Chantoozie in the monthly *Cabaret Chanteuse* at Tony Starlight's Supper Club. Broadway veteran Michele Ragusa joins the cast as the Beggar Woman. Louis Hobson, Rita Markova, Eric Little, Matthew Alan Smith, Martin C. Hurt, Eric Scott Kincaid, Tim Smith, Bruce Blanchard, Matthew Hayward, Robert Koutras, Dru Rutledge, Nicole Tori and Leah Yorkston complete the cast.



*Aloysius Gigl as Sweeney Todd.*

*Photo by Patrick Weishampel.*

This inaugural production of Portland Center Stage's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary season is directed by Artistic Director Chris Coleman. The grimy streets of Industrial Revolution-era London are brought to the stage by Scenic Designer **William Bloodgood** and Lighting Designer **Diane Ferry Williams**. Period costumes are designed by **Jeff Cone**. **Rick Lewis** acts as musical director and conductor of the orchestra. Sound Designer **Casi Pacilio** and Stage Managers **Mark Tynan** and **Emily N. Wells** round out the creative team.

Additional support for this production is provided by **Troutman Sanders**, **CTA Labs**, **Helen & Jerry Stern** and **Paul & Tasca Gulick**. Portland Center Stage's 2012/2013 season is funded in part by **Umpqua Private Bank**, our lead corporate champion; the **Regional Arts & Culture Council** and **Work for Art**; the **Oregon Arts Commission**; the **Paul G. Allen Family Foundation**; **The Oregonian**, and **Tim & Mary Boyle**. The Mark Spencer Hotel is the official hotel partner for Portland Center Stage.

[PORTLAND CENTER STAGE](#) inspires our community by bringing stories to life in unexpected ways. Established in 1988 as a branch of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, PCS became an independent theater in 1994 and has been under the leadership of Artistic Director Chris Coleman since May 2000. The company presents a blend of classic, contemporary and original productions in a conscious effort to appeal to the eclectic palate of theatergoers in Portland. PCS also offers a variety of education and outreach programs for curious minds from six to 106, including discussions, classes, workshops and partnerships with organizations throughout the Portland metro area.

**THE GERDING THEATER AT THE ARMORY** houses a 599-seat Main Stage and the 200-seat black box Ellyn Bye Studio. It was the first building on the National Register of Historic Places, and the first performing arts venue, to achieve a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Platinum certification. The Gerding Theater at the Armory opened to the public on October 1, 2006. The capital campaign to fund the renovation of this hub for community artistic activity continues.

###