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## SMC Staging the Musical Sweeney Todd

By Andrea A. Firth



SMC Performing Arts Department students Katherine Cooper as Mrs. Lovett and Andrew Galindo as Sweeney Todd Photo Michael Cook

"It's a thriller. Very intense, very creepy, and very funny," says Saint Mary's College (SMC) Professor Reid Davis about SMC's upcoming production of Stephen Sondheim's musical *Sweeney Todd, The Barber of Fleet Street*. "It's a gorgeous show. The actors are remarkable, and the singing is beautiful," adds Davis who will provide stage direction alongside San Francisco-based musical director Armando Fox.

*Sweeney Todd*, based on the urban legend of the murderous barber seeking revenge and his entrepreneurial neighbor, Mrs. Lovett, who seizes upon the corpses to bolster her meat pie business, is a play that everyone can relate to according to Davis. "Sondheim said that Sweeney's a very human character," notes Davis. "He is all of us when we seek revenge. Sweeney's tragedy is everyone's tragedy. Who hasn't been betrayed?" he adds.

Davis believes the production has provided a rich educational experience for his student performers as he has pushed them to be introspective and explore the

deeper meaning of what he describes as a witty satire on human consumption. Plays with challenging themes and a humorous twist are familiar turf for Davis who also directed SMC's Performing Arts Department performance of Urinetown in 2007 and Twelfth Night last year. The Sweeney Todd cast will be led by SMC senior and veteran actor Katherine Cooper, as Mrs. Lovett, and freshman standout Andrew Galindo as Todd.

Performances will be held in LeFevre Theatre on the Saint Mary's College campus in Moraga on April 16-18 at 8 p.m.; April 23-25 at 8 p.m.; and a Sunday matinee on April 26 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$12 for non Saint Mary's students, and \$15 for general admissions. For further information, contact the Performing Arts Department at (925) 631-4670.

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