

PROGRAM

SWEENEY TODD

The Demon Barber of Fleet Street
A Musical Thriller

Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim
Book By Hugh Wheeler

From an Adaptation by Christopher Bond
Originally Directed On Broadway by Harold Prince
Orchestrations by Jonathan Tunick
Originally Produced on Broadway by Richard Barr, Charles Woodward, Robert Fryer, Mary Lea Johnson, Martin Richards in Association with Dean and Judy Manos

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ACT I

-INTERMISSION-

ACT II

Pacific Symphony Pops underwritten by the Sharon and Tom Malloy Family

SWEENEY TODD: THE DEMON BARBER OF FLEET STREET

Friday, Jun. 14, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Saturday, Jun. 15, 2024 @ 8 p.m.

Adam Turner, guest conductor
Curt Olds, stage director

Bernard Holcomb, Beadle Bamford
Daniel Sumegi, Judge Turpin

Quentin Earl Darrington, Sweeney Todd
Glen Seven Allen, Pirelli/Fogg/Bird Seller
Liz Pearce, Mrs. Lovett

Michele McConnell, Beggar Woman
Michael Kuhn, Tobias Ragg

Dan Hoy, Anthony Hope
Francesca Mehrotra, Johanna
Pacific Symphony

Aaron Sanko, producer

Matthew Stephens, music director
Adrienne Boris, associate stage director

This production of SWEENEY TODD was licensed by Music Theatre International.



SYNOPSIS

Act I

We find ourselves on the London docks. Anthony Hope, a young sailor, and Sweeney Todd enter. They both express their feelings about being back in London. Anthony is genuinely happy to be back in the city, but Todd's response is full of grim irony ("No Place Like London"). While Todd thanks Anthony for saving his life at sea, a ragged, crazed Beggar Woman appears and begs for money; she offers sexual favors in return. She thinks she recognizes Sweeney, but he fends her off. Anthony inquires about Sweeney's circumstances, worried that he has no place to go now that they are in London. Sweeney dismisses his offer of money. He tells Anthony that, if he needs him, he can find him around Fleet street.

Sweeney travels to find Mrs. Lovett's Pie Shop and stands outside the building, gazing at it. He enters and sees Mrs. Lovett chopping suet and flicking flies off the trays of pies with a dirty rag. Excited to have a customer, she offers him a pie, but she recognizes that they are disgusting. She apologizes and explains that times have been hard and meat is hard to come by ("The Worst Pies in London"). Sweeney asks why she doesn't rent the room above her shop if times are so tough. She replies that no one wants it because of the awful thing that happened there. Mrs. Lovett then recounts the fate of Benjamin Barker, a foolish young barber who was shipped to Australia by an evil judge. The Judge coveted the Barber's pretty young wife, Lucy. Once the Judge and his Beadle had Barker removed, Lucy was left alone to care for her one-year-old daughter, Johanna. The Judge and Beadle invited her to a party at the Judge's mansion, got her drunk and then raped her in the midst of a masked ball ("Poor Thing"). When Sweeney Todd shouts in anguish, Mrs. Lovett realizes that he is Benjamin Barker.

Demanding to learn the fate of his family, Barker hears that his wife Lucy took arsenic and that Judge Turpin adopted his daughter. Todd swears to take revenge on the Judge and the Beadle. Mrs. Lovett then brings him his razors, which she has kept hidden away for all these years; Todd is thrilled to be reunited with his razors, and Mrs. Lovett is thrilled to be reunited with Todd ("My Friends").

The scene shifts to Judge Turpin's mansion, where Johanna is imprisoned. She calls out to the caged birds of a passing bird seller, imploring them to share their secret for singing so sweetly when they, too, are kept captive ("Green Finch and Linnet Bird"). Anthony appears on the street, sees Johanna and instantly falls in love with her ("Ah, Miss"). Suddenly, the Beggar Woman appears and tells Anthony that he is standing in front of Judge Turpin's house and should beware of trespassing. Anthony buys a bird for Johanna. He calls to her and presents the bird ("Johanna"). They stand, absorbed with each other, not noticing the approach of Judge Turpin and the Beadle. The Judge orders Johanna into the house. The Beadle cautions Anthony to stay away and strangles the bird as a warning.

Meanwhile, in St. Dunstan's Marketplace, a painted caravan announces the presence of Signor Adolfo Pirelli

and his baldness-banishing miracle elixir. Tobias, Pirelli's simple-minded assistant, beats a tin drum to attract a crowd ("Pirelli's Miracle Elixir"). Todd and Mrs. Lovett are among them. Although the crowd responds to Tobias' pitch, Todd and Mrs. Lovett begin a slander campaign against the elixir, and people demand their money back. Tobias tries to distract them, but to no avail. Pirelli arrives and silences the crowd, demanding to know who denies his excellence as a barber. Todd steps forward and challenges Pirelli to a shaving contest. Todd gets the Beadle to judge the match and, being of superior skill, wins easily ("The Contest"). Todd and Pirelli then have a tooth-pulling contest, which Todd also wins ("Contest II"). The Beadle is very impressed and gets the address of Todd's shop, promising to appear soon. When the Beadle thinks that he recognizes Todd, Mrs. Lovett assures him that this is not possible. The company explains how Sweeney methodically plotted his revenge ("The Ballad of Sweeney Todd").

Judge Turpin is in his quarters while Johanna sews in an adjoining room. Unable to control his desires for Johanna, the Judge holds a Bible and whips himself, praying ("Johanna"). When he is done, he visits Johanna and announces that he plans to marry her to keep her safe from the venal young men of the street.

After an encounter with the Beggar Woman, Mrs. Lovett climbs the stairs to Todd's quarters, where he is waiting eagerly for the Beadle to appear. Mrs. Lovett tells him to be patient as she plans the redecoration of his drab quarters with daisies and other homey touches ("Wait"). Despite her entreaties, Todd is also impatient for the Judge to visit. Anthony appears at Todd's door and tells him of his encounter with Johanna, unaware that she is Sweeney's daughter. He plans to steal Johanna and asks if he can bring her to Sweeney's for safekeeping. Having secured Todd's assistance, he leaves. Mrs. Lovett suggests that Sweeney kill Anthony and keep Johanna with him. She promises that she will be a splendid mother to Johanna.

Pirelli and Tobias appear. Mrs. Lovett takes Tobias downstairs for a meat pie. Pirelli reveals his real identity as Benjamin Barker's former apprentice. He tries to blackmail Todd by threatening to reveal that Todd is really Barker. They struggle, and Todd renders Pirelli unconscious. Todd stuffs him in a chest, when Tobias appears. Todd persuades the boy to go to the kitchen for more meat pies and some gin. Once Tobias has gone, Todd pulls Pirelli out of the chest and slashes his throat ("Pirelli's Death").

The company transitions to the next scene, remarking on Sweeney's treatment of hypocrites ("The Ballad of Sweeney Todd"). Leaving court, the Judge announces to the Beadle his intention to marry Johanna. At the same time, Anthony proposes to Johanna ("Kiss Me"). As the Judge continues on his way home, the Beadle delicately suggests that Turpin pay more attention to his personal appearance to heighten his appeal to Johanna ("Ladies in Their Sensitivities"). Recalling Sweeney's excellent work,

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the Beadle suggests to the judge that he make a visit to Sweeney's shop.

At the pie shop, Mrs. Lovett discovers Pirelli's fate. When Todd wants to kill Tobias, too, she protests. The Judge appears. Mrs. Lovett goes downstairs to distract Tobias. The Judge confides his marriage plans. Todd prepares to slit the judge's throat, but he takes his time, savoring the moment before his anticipated revenge; meanwhile, the Judge anticipates his future with Johanna ("Pretty Women"). Just as Sweeney is about to kill the Judge, Anthony rushes in, blurted out the news of his planned elopement. The Judge leaves in a fury, announcing his intention to lock Johanna away and telling Todd that he will not be back. Enraged at losing the chance to kill the Judge, Sweeney throws Anthony out of the shop and announces his intention to kill everyone he can to get ready for the inevitable destruction of the Judge ("Epiphany"). Mrs. Lovett reminds him that they have to dispose of Pirelli's body. She has an inspiration; they can recycle his victims into meat pies. Sweeney sees the genius of this plan and they celebrate ("A Little Priest").

Act II

Thanks to her newfound prosperity, Mrs. Lovett has expanded her shop to include an outdoor eating garden. She now wears a fancy gown, and Tobias wears a waiter's apron. Her shop is mobbed with customers who crave the new pies ("God, That's Good!"). The Beggar Woman lurks around. An elaborate new barber chair is moved into Todd's quarters. Todd and Mrs. Lovett set up a complicated system by which Todd sends his victims down a chute, directly into the bake house, where there is a grinding machine. Anthony searches the streets for Johanna. At the same time, Todd dreams of his daughter and systematically kills the customers who sit in his chair. The Beggar Woman tries to warn passersby about the strange odors and smoke coming from Mrs. Lovett's bake house. In the lunatic asylum where the Judge has placed her, Johanna dreams of the moment when Anthony will free her ("Johanna Act II Sequence").

Anthony hears Johanna's voice and discovers that she is in the asylum. He tries to rescue her, but the Beadle stops him and tells the police to bash his head. Anthony escapes. Mrs. Lovett sits in the parlor, playing the harmonium ("I Am a Lass"). She fantasizes about a married life with Todd on the seashore, but he is too fixated on his revenge plot to notice her ("By the Sea"). Anthony appears, asking Todd to help him free Johanna. Todd makes Anthony over as a wigmaker, knowing that the asylum will sell inmates' hair to the highest bidder. He gives Anthony a gun and tells him to bring Johanna to the barbershop after the escape ("Wigmaker Sequence"). Todd then writes to Judge Turpin, telling him that he can find Johanna and Anthony at the barbershop that evening ("The Letter").

Mrs. Lovett sits with Tobias. As she knits him a muffler, they exchange words about their warm feelings for each other. He is devoted to her and promises that no one will

harm her ("Not While I'm Around"). He then suggests that something about Sweeney Todd is suspicious. When Mrs. Lovett pulls out Pirelli's purse, he recognizes it. She says that Todd gave it to her, which only further feeds Tobias' doubts. She invites Tobias into the bake house, where he is usually forbidden to go. He is delighted. Once there, she allows him to grind the meat for pies, and he forgets his concerns. She leaves him grinding and locks the door to the bake house. As she returns upstairs, she finds the Beadle at the harmonium in her parlor ("Parlour Songs Part I"). He has come in response to complaints about a foul smell from her chimney. She says that she can't take him into the bake house until Mr. Todd comes home. He says that he'll wait and continues playing the harmonium ("Parlour Songs Part II"). Todd arrives. He takes the Beadle upstairs for a free shave before his inspection of the ovens.

In the bake house, Tobias begins to suspect that the remains of humans are used for the pies just as the Beadle's body comes down the chute. He realizes that he is locked in and, whimpering, disappears down the cellar steps. Mrs. Lovett tells Todd that Tobias suspects them. She wants Todd to dispense with Tobias at once, but Todd is focused on extracting his revenge from the Judge.

Anthony comes to save Johanna at the asylum, but, when the owner tries to stop him, he cannot bring himself to shoot. Johanna grabs the gun and kills the owner ("Fogg's Asylum"). They escape. The lunatics are freed from the asylum and spill with euphoric excitement into the street ("City on Fire"). Mrs. Lovett and Todd look for Tobias. The Beggar Woman, suspicious of Mrs. Lovett, searches for the Beadle ("Searching I"). Anthony and Johanna arrive at the barbershop. She wears a sailor suit. At Anthony's insistence, Johanna stays behind as he leaves to hire a coach for their escape to Plymouth. The Beggar Woman appears. Johanna hides in a trunk. The Beggar Woman surveys the room; being there stimulates something within her. She cradles and begins singing to an imaginary infant ("Searching II").

Todd discovers her. She tries to warn him about Mrs. Lovett and again wonders if she knows him. He turns on her, slits her throat and releases her down the chute. The Judge enters. Sweeney pretends that Johanna is safely with Mrs. Lovett and is longing to be reunited with him. Todd convinces the Judge to have a shave to prepare for his meeting with Johanna. Sweeney reveals himself as Benjamin Barker and slits the Judge's throat ("The Judge's Return").

Todd starts out of the room to deal with Tobias as Johanna emerges from the trunk. Mistaking her for a sailor because of her disguise, Todd tries to attack her, but she escapes. He runs to the bake house. Mrs. Lovett tries to kill the Judge, who is still clinging to life. She then notices the Beggar Woman. She frantically tries to drag the Beggar Woman to the oven. Todd sees the woman in the light and realizes that she is his wife, Lucy. He accuses Mrs. Lovett of deceiving him; she claims that she never told him that Lucy died, only that she took poison ("Final Scene Part I"). She tries to stem his anger, and he

feigns forgiveness by waltzing with her... over to the oven, shoving her inside. He then cradles the Beggar Woman in his arms ("Final Scene Part II"). Tobias appears, his hair now completely white from shock. He kills Sweeney with the razor, which has fallen on the floor. Constables, Anthony and Johanna appear. Tobias has lost his mind; he cannot stop turning the handle on the grinder.

Epilogue

The company reenters and claim to see the Sweeney in each of us. At the end, Sweeney glares at the audience malevolently and he slams the iron door ("The Ballad of Sweeney Todd").

ABOUT THE CONDUCTOR/ PRODUCTION TEAM/ ARTISTS

Adam Turner (guest conductor) is currently in his sixth season as Artistic Director of Virginia Opera (following four seasons as Principal Conductor and Artistic Advisor).

He has garnered critical acclaim for the breadth of his repertoire, artistic vision, and polished technique. Of his performance of *Street Scene* with Virginia Opera, *Opera News* hailed the "sensitive conducting" of Adam Turner "who demonstrated an affinity for a score as stylistically diverse as the characters in the plot" and of his conducting of *Der Freischütz*, *Opera News* hailed: "Conductor Adam Turner... ensured crackling rhythms as much as lyrical spaciousness, resulting in a performance that felt vital and spontaneous throughout."

During the 2023-24 Season at Virginia Opera, Turner was on the podium for productions of *Siegfried* and *Madama Butterfly*, in addition to leading workshops of the world-premiere commissioning of *Loving v. Virginia* by Damien Geter and Jessica Murphy Moo. Further appearances this season include a return to Toledo Opera conducting *Roméo et Juliette*, and Central City Opera's *Street Scene*. Also this season, Turner will conduct Virginia Symphony's *To Whitney with Love*, featuring American Idol-finalist LaKisha Jones in a celebration of the great ladies of soul.

Curt Olds (stage director) has experienced success in both classical music and musical theater.

He has built an impressive career specializing in these two distinct art forms, both onstage as performer/director and behind the scenes as producer/consultant for organizations



interested in combining operatic, musical theater, and symphonic elements into innovative programming for today's audiences. Additionally, he leads workshops in artistic development and is a sought-after clinician at universities, production companies, and young artist programs, recently working with Seoul National University, American University at Sharjah UAE, New England Conservatory, and Hawaii Opera Theatre. Onstage, his performances have been seen around the world, including work on Broadway, at Lincoln Center, and at Carnegie Hall. On the concert stage, Olds has appeared with over 40 symphony orchestras and as a voice-over artist, he has recorded for clients including Planet Hollywood Casinos, Books Beyond Pages, Ethan Allen Furniture, and the syndicated PBS feature *Northwest Explorer*.

Bernard Holcomb (Beadle Bamford) is a versatile performer equally at home in the worlds of opera, musical theatre, and jazz.

With a dynamic range and captivating stage presence, Holcomb has captivated audiences in a variety of roles and musical styles. Most notably, Holcomb brought depth and emotion to the role of Collins in *Rent* showcasing a powerful voice and heartfelt performance. Additionally, he recently made his Metropolitan Opera debut, earning accolades for his exceptional vocal talent and dramatic interpretation. This summer, audiences can anticipate Holcomb's portrayal of Henry Davis in Kurt Weill's *Street Scene* at Central City Opera, where he will once again demonstrate his versatility and artistry on stage. Beyond the stage, Holcomb has also made a mark on the small screen, having been featured in an episode of *Law and Order: SVU* during its current 25th season, showcasing his acting prowess and charisma. Throughout his journey, Holcomb is grateful for the unwavering love and support of his family and friends, whose encouragement fuels his passion for performing and inspires him to continue pushing artistic boundaries.



Daniel Sumegi (Judge Turpin) boasts an impressive career, having performed more than 110 operatic roles on some of the world's most prestigious stages, including the Metropolitan Opera, San Francisco Opera, Los Angeles Opera, Washington National Opera, Seattle Opera, and Opera Australia in his native country.

Known for his dynamic acting skills, Sumegi's vast repertoire spans across different musical periods, from Monteverdi and Mozart to contemporary composers like Michael Tippett and Kevin Puts. He embodies diverse roles such as Strauss' Baron Ochs, Mozart's Sarastro and Commendatore, Verdi's Grand Inquisitor and Sparafucile,



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Offenbach's *Four Villains*, and Puccini's *Scarpia*. He has been part of Ring Cycles in major cities like New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Cologne, Tokyo, Buenos Aires, Seattle, Melbourne, and Adelaide. Recent career highlights include his debuts as Wotan in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and Bluebeard in *Bluebeard's Castle (Opera Australia)* and the title role in *Der fliegende Holländer* (Malmö Opera in Sweden). In 2019, he ventured into music theater, making his debut as Judge Turpin in Sondheim's *Sweeney Todd* (TEG/LifeLike Touring), and welcomes the opportunity to reinhabit this villain.

Quentin Earl Darrington (Sweeney Todd) was most recently seen as Don Cornelius in the San Francisco world premiere of Hippest Trip-The Soul Train Musical, which lands on Broadway Spring 2025.

He also recently originated the dual role of Rob/Joe Jackson in the Broadway mega-hit, *MJ the Musical*. Previously, he received a GRAMMY nomination for his acclaimed performance as Agwe in the Tony Award-winning revival of *Once On This Island*. Other Broadway credits include: the Tony-nominated revival of *Ragtime*, starring as Coalhouse Walker Jr., and as Old Deuteronomy in the Broadway revival of *CATS*. Broadway national tours include *Memphis*, *The Color Purple*, *The Lion King*, and *Ragtime*. Darrington has also starred in productions at The Kennedy Center, NY City Center, Papermill Playhouse, The MUNY, Cincinnati Playhouse, Sacramento Music Circus, and Goodspeed Opera House, among others. In addition to his stage career, Darrington has recently guest starred on *Blue Bloods*, also guest starred on *NCIS NOLA*, *The Blacklist*, *Elementary*, *Madam Secretary*, *The Good Fight*, and recurs on the CBS drama *The Code*.



Glen Seven Allen (Pirelli/Fogg/Bird Seller) is known for his work on Broadway and in leading theatres throughout the country. Allen appeared as Giuseppe in the Tony-winning Broadway run of Adam Guettel's The Light in the Piazza.

Other theatrical credits include *Girl Crazy* at City Center as part of their Encores season, *Casino Paradise* with Lincoln Center, Lancelot in *Camelot* at the Arvada Center, Rutledge in 1776 at Goodspeed, Pontius Pilate in *Jesus Christ Superstar* at North Carolina Theatre, Assistant D.A. Kramer in the world premiere of *Bonfire of the Vanities* at The Process Studio Theatre, *Carousel* with the NY Philharmonic for PBS *Great Performances*, and Clifford Bradshaw in *Cabaret* at the Arena Stage in Washington, DC (Helen Hayes nomination, Best Actor). Allen recently performed with New York City Opera in *All is Calm*; created the role of John in *Southern Crossings* at Barnard College; and sang Rodolfo in Soo Theatre's *La Bohème*.



Liz Pearce (Mrs. Lovett) is thrilled to return to the role of Mrs. Lovett after being part the acclaimed Tooting Arts Club production of Sweeney Todd at the Barrow Street Theatre in New York City.

Up next, Pearce will be playing the role of Jean in the U.S. premiere of the new musical *Maggie* at the Goodspeed Opera House, CT. Broadway and Off Broadway credits include: Original Broadway Cast of *Billy Elliot* at the Imperial Theatre (U.S. Mrs Wilkinson/ Mum) *Kinky Boots* (Trish) at Stage 42, and *SUFFS* (Maude) at The Public Theater. London's West End: Original West End Cast of *Metropolis* (Tan) Piccadilly Theatre. National Tours: *Little Shop of Horrors* (Audrey), *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Seussical*, *Scooby Doo!*. Regional Theatre: *Becoming Nancy* (Mrs Boswell) Alliance Theatre, *Mary Poppins* (Mrs Banks) Engeman Theatre, *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles) Cincinnati Playhouse and St Louis Rep, *Sense and Sensibility* (Fannie) Denver Center, *Something's Afoot* (Lettie) Goodspeed, *City of Angels* (Alaura Kingsley/ Carla) Goodspeed, *Peter Pan* (Peter Pan) Alabama Shakespeare, *Jekyll and Hyde* (Emma) Sacramento Music Circus, and *The Who's Tommy* (Mrs. Walker) Bay Street Theatre.



Michele McConnell (Beggar Woman) has enjoyed a career spanning more than 30 years of vast performance experiences, including theater and concert venues across the country.

After making her Broadway debut in *The Phantom of the Opera* ensemble, McConnell took over the starring role of Carlotta for a record-breaking 6 1/2 years. She was privileged to perform as Carlotta for the 10,000th Broadway performance and the 25th Anniversary performance, giving her the distinction to be the longest-running Carlotta in Broadway history, with over 2,200 performances in the role. Other notable credits: *My Fair Lady in Concert* (The Utah Symphony), *The Music Man in Concert* (Pacific Symphony), *Festival of Carols* (Guest Soloist, Indianapolis Symphonic Choir & Chamber Orchestra), *Camelot* (Nat'l. Tour w/Robert Goulet), *Beauty and the Beast* (Montreal/Las Vegas), NYGASP, Milwaukee Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, Palm Springs Gay Mens' Chorus (Guest Soloist), Mobile Opera, San Diego Repertory, and Sacramento Music Circus.



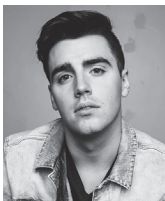
Michael Kuhn (Tobias Ragg) has been described as "an artist of almost terrifying magnetism" (The Observer) and praised for his "clear and robust tenor" (Opera News). Kuhn is a versatile singer and actor who has appeared on the stages of Broadway, Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and more.



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his Broadway debut in the revival of *Sweeney Todd* starring Josh Groban and Annaleigh Ashford, where he performed in the ensemble and understudied the role of Adolfo Pirelli. In New York City, Kuhn has appeared Off-Broadway as Basel in *iFigaro 90210!*, and as Romano in the world premiere of *Stonewall* at Jazz at Lincoln Center; performed in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall Riots. In addition to his work in theatre, Kuhn has enjoyed an expansive career in opera and classical music.

Dan Hoy (Anthony Hope) is a New York-based actor and vocalist. He has been praised by critics across the country for his "incredible voice," "heartrending performances," and "rousing" stage presence. His theatrical credits include Broadway: *Harmony* (OBC - u/s Lesh, Harry, Bobby; Swing; Assistant Dance Captain). Tour: *Cats* (1st National/Revival - Munkustrap). Off-Broadway: *Between the Lines* (u/s Oliver, Frump, Martin; Dance Captain). Select Regional: *Beautiful* (Gerry), *Carousel* (Billy), *Rock of Ages* (Drew), *Next to Normal* (Gabe), *Pippin* (Pippin), *The Last Five Years* (Jamie), *The Glass Menagerie* (Jim) and, *The Seagull* (Trigorin). In concert, Hoy has appeared internationally with programs ranging from solo shows at 54 Below to composer debuts at Crazy Coqs to symphonic premieres at Carnegie Hall. In addition to public performances, Hoy regularly works with acclaimed composers and writers in the development of new works.



Francesca Mehrotra (Johanna) is an Indian-American soprano who has been hailed as "a talented and warm actor and singer" with "clear, deft and nimble tone (Glens Falls Chronicle)."

Mehrotra recently completed a residency with Opera Colorado, where she appeared as Gilda in *Rigoletto*, Mabel in *The Pirates of Penzance*, and Juliette in *Die Tote Stadt*. She has also performed with Central City Opera, where she sang Ida in *Die Fledermaus* and covered Clara in *The Light in the Piazza*. Previous roles include Gretel (*Hansel & Gretel*) with Fort Worth Opera's Children's Opera Theatre, Susanna (*Le Nozze di Figaro*) and Cleopatra (*Giulio Cesare*) at Seagle Festival, Zelda '18 (*The Ghosts of Gatsby*) with Opera Birmingham at the Opera America New Works Forum, Atalanta (*Senso*) at Opera NEO, Norina (*Don Pasquale*), and Mukhtar Mai (*Thumbprint*) at Boston Conservatory.



Aaron Sanko is a performing arts executive and consultant. As CEO of UIA Talent Agency and UIA Presents, he represents diverse talent in Broadway, film, and concert venues worldwide. He founded Cruxory Group, offering consulting and production services to performing arts organizations.

Sanko's production credits include *Whiskey Pants...* and *Fatty Fatty No Friends* (Best of Fest, NYMF 2018) with Mind the Art Entertainment and *The Wiz* in Liberia, the country's first musical. He also contributed to the Tony-nominated revival of *Spring Awakening* and *Merrily We Roll Along* at *The Wallis*.

A frequent public speaker, he has led seminars for organizations like Opera America and The Broadway League's Commercial Theatre Institute. Sanko studied at the Eastman School of Music and Full Sail University.



Matthew Stephens, a versatile music director, pianist, and conductor, has performed at venues like Lincoln Center and Club Cumming alongside luminaries like Mary Testa, Norm Lewis, Deborah Voigt, and Natalie Dessay. He's a musician for the Tony-nominated Broadway musical *Illinoise*, created by Justin Peck and based on Sufjan Stevens' album.

His credits include the national tour of *The Sound of Music* (associate conductor) and off-Broadway productions like *The Perfect Game* and *The Body Politic*. Stephens holds a Master of Music from UNC School of the Arts and is an advocate for new works, collaborating with groups like the American Opera Project and the National Alliance for Musical Theatre. @maspianist



Adrienne Boris, a talent agent at UIA Talent Agency, specializes in concert, recital, and special projects bookings.

She champions artists while fostering transparent relationships with companies and producers.

Before becoming an agent, she directed productions like *Don Giovanni* for Long Island Lyric Opera and the premiere of Benjamin Perry Wenzelberg's *Nighttown* at Harvard University. She's also co-founder and chief strategic officer of Helios Opera, known for its innovative digital opera work.

Boris holds an MFA from Boston University and a BA from Kenyon College. She coaches young singers on branding, repertoire, and auditions.

