

BRAINTREE & WITHAM TIMES

Sweeney Todd

Razor sharp, Sweeney was far from bloodless

Sweeney, Todd,
Witham Public Hall,
Witham Amateur Operatic Society

Sweeney Todd is not your average musical from the outset. It is dominated by hatred, revenge, and murder. It is not an easy ride for cast crew or audience, but thankfully WAOS maintained a fine balance that prevented the show becoming either a bloodbath or a farce.

Sweeney Todd was powerfully portrayed by David Slater, whose voice acting skills and mannerisms, combined to create a sinister and arranged stage presence as Mrs Lovett. Liz Watson was both maternal and manipulative. She combined well with Todd and provided some of the genuinely funny moments of the show.

All the other figures were perfectly characterised and added much to the quality of the production. These included Marcus Churchill, (Pirelli), Joshua Reed (Tobias), Nicolas Clough (Judge Turpin), Michael Mundell-Poole (Beadle Bamford), Callum MacKenzie (Anthony Hope), Zoe Rogers (Joanna) and Rachel Clapp (Beggar Woman)

In addition, the chorus told the tale of a Demon Barber with razor sharp precision. The whole ensemble was in top form and made mincemeat of the technicalities of Sondheim's score, the orchestra was expertly handled by Phil, Toms, and the Director, Nikki Mundell-Poole had full control of her forces with everything delicately choreographed, and not a drop of blood to be seen.

Despite the nature of the story, it was all done in the best possible taste. A challenging show which was brilliantly executed.

David Wood