

NODA Review

SWEENEY TODD

Directed by Nikki Mundell-Poole

Musical Director Phil Toms

Performed at the Witham Public Hall 28th October 2010

Sweeney Todd the Demon Barber of Fleet Street billed as a musical thriller. This production came at a most apt time of the year i.e. "Halloween" and certainly gave the audience the thrill of a show which was played to perfection and as close to a professional production as one could get.

David Slater as Sweeney Todd played this character in a very strong defined style which was very powerful and compelling, and coupled with Liz Watson as Mrs Lovett these two made a really strong pairing. Liz gave a tremendous character, very well sung with a real sense of humour in some of her songs, but also a compassionate motherly style also which was moving.

Rachel Clapp as the Beggar Woman really made the most of this part which turned out to be a very important character in the story line. Very well sung and really convincing as someone who had literally no life but just got by day to day with a few scraps here and there.

Nick Clough as Judge Turpin was imposing and confident as the guardian of Johanna, but with a rather more dark side in his affections towards her. Zoe Rogers as Johanna had a beautifully top soprano voice which had a real unique quality, and played her character in a sweet gentle manner.

Michael Mundell-Poole as Beadle Bamford was suitably controlled by Judge Turpin and reached new heights with his falsetto singing. Well done on a demanding range for the voice. I really enjoyed Marcus Churchill as Adolpho Pirelli, again with a good high singing voice and strong dialogue in a fun character.

The chorus, soloists and other characters in the production added much to the overall enjoyment of the evening. Very strong difficult chorus work ably led by Phil Toms and an orchestra which was balanced very well with the voices. The orchestra's scores must also have been very demanding but were very well played throughout the production.

The sets were excellent, especially with the inclusion of the very scary "hot seat" in Act II where the prospective customers were dispatched in a very quick exit. Lighting and sound as aforesaid excellent. Costumes, wigs and make up I thought gelled together in this production so well.

Another imaginative exciting show from Nikki Mundell-Poole. The whole company worked their socks off in this show to achieve the firstrate production it was.

Review by Ann Patten