



**Pop the Bubbly!**

**Boston Theatre Icon Shana Dirik Launches New Theater Company  
Theater UnCorked**

**Debut Benefit Event:**

***Sweeney Todd in Concert – A Pop-Up Musical***

**Saturday, June 2 – First Church of Cambridge, Harvard Square, 7:30 pm**

Acton, MA . . . Shana Dirik, **Producing Artistic Director** of Theater UnCorked – Boston’s newest small theater company – announces their debut event: *Sweeney Todd in Concert – A Pop-Up Musical*. This one-time-only benefit performance will take place on Saturday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 at First Church in Cambridge (11 Garden St, Cambridge, MA 02138) at 7:30 pm. The production will star Ms. Dirik reprising her 2009 IRNE Award winning role as “Mrs. Lovett”, Paul Farwell reprising his role as “Judge Turpin,” and Ben DiScipio reprising his IRNE Award winning role as “Sweeney Todd.”

The company’s debut is headed by an all-female production team including IRNE nominated Director Allison Choat, Music Director Gina Naggar, Stage Manager Nicky Carbone and Producing Artistic Director Shana Dirik. Presented in collaboration with IDP.

Tickets for *Sweeney Todd in Concert – A Pop-Up Musical* go on sale March 1, 2018; \$30 and \$40 per person. Tickets can be purchased online at <http://www.ticketstage.com/THEATERUNCORKED>.

**Boston’s Newest Small Theater Company**

Theater UnCorked represents a 40-year journey for Producing Artistic Director Shana Dirik. The three-time IRNE-award winning singer and actress has garnered critical praise for her work on Boston’s stages. She made her regional debut in the role of “Mrs. Lovett” in 2009 with the Cambridge-based Metro Stage Company. The actress, who had been performing in community theater for 25 years prior to that performance, nabbed the IRNE Award for Best Actress in a Musical and her Boston theater career began. Dirik eventually earned her Actors Equity card and has been a working member of Boston’s close-knit theater community ever since, forming bonds with theater professionals both on and off stage.

Dirik has gathered those contacts together for Theater UnCorked, a new venture built on collaboration. With a 18-member Advisory Board in place and a successful [Indiegogo](#) campaign underway, all the pieces of Dirik’s vision have fallen into place.

"After 40 years of performing I am thrilled to launch Theater UnCorked with the piece that actually marked my debut in Boston – *Sweeney Todd*," said Dirik. "I have had the honor of working with so many talented individuals and there is no better inspiration than working with those that inspire us. From "Pop Up" one-day musical events, to work-shopping new pieces, Staged Readings, Comedies, Dramas and Theater Camps for young adults, our goal is to produce works that not only audiences can appreciate but that we, as artists, feel passionate about performing!"

Dirik's plans include producing a staged reading in Fall 2018, and then a full production in the spring of 2019 and through collaboration, bring exciting new events to the area.

"It's a wonderful feeling to now be able to produce and promote shows I feel passionately about," she said. "I am grateful to our Board of Advisors and to the many individuals who have stepped up to support this new vision – I look forward to celebrating with you on opening night."

### **About Sweeney Todd**

The eight-time Tony Award-winning *Sweeney Todd* is the infamous tale of an unjustly exiled barber who returns to nineteenth century London seeking vengeance against the lecherous judge who framed him. After opening a new barber practice above a failing meat pie shop owned by the resourceful Mrs. Lovett, Todd and Lovett's paths merge and their fortunes begin to change. One unsavory ingredient added into the meat pies has the people of London lining up ... and the carnage has only just begun! *Music and Lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, book by Hugh Wheeler.*

TheaterUnCorked's *Sweeney Todd* will feature Ben DiScipio in the title role as "Sweeney Todd," Shana Dirik as "Mrs. Lovett," Paul Farwell as "Judge Turpin," Jason Hersom as "Pirelli", Christopher Porth as "Beadle," Audrey Clark as "Joanna," Alex Boyle as "Tobias," Jordan Reynolds as "Anthony" and Catherine Christie as "Beggar Woman." Additionally, *Sweeney* will feature 21 ensemble members and 6 youth ensemble members, rounding out a full cast of 36.

*Sweeney Todd* is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. 421 West 54th Street, New York, NY 10019 Phone: 212-541-4684; Fax: 212-397-4684. [www.MTIShows.com](http://www.MTIShows.com)

### **Artistic Bios**

#### **Shana Dirik (Producing Artistic Director/Mrs. Lovett):**



Shana Dirik is thrilled to be premiering her first "Pop Up Musical" production of *Sweeney Todd in Concert* with her new small theater company Theater UnCorked as the Producing Artistic Director. She is excited to reprise her IRNE winning role of Mrs. Lovett along with a very talented production crew and cast. Most recently seen as Mona Kent in Greater Boston Stage Company's *Dames at Sea*, her other credits include Miss Andrews in *Mary Poppins* (IRNE Nom); *Wild Party* Dolores; (ArtsImpulse/IRNE Nom); *Kimberly Akimbo/Debra* ;(IRNE for Best Sup Actress); *the Little Mermaid/Ursula*;(IRNE Nom); *The Little Princess/Minchen*; (IRNE Nom); *Annie/Miss Hannigan* ; *Into The Woods/Witch* (NH Theater Nom),

*The Full Monty/Jeanette* ; *XANADU/Melpomone*; (IRNE Nom); *Nine/Mama Maddelena*; *Chicago/Mama Morton*; *Sunset Boulevard/Norma*; *Nunsense/Mother Superior*; *A Little Night Music/Charlotte*; (IRNE) & *Sweeney Todd/Mrs Lovett*; (IRNE) ; *The King and I/Anna and Evita/Eva*.

**Allison Choat (Director):**



Allison is Co-Founder and Associate Artistic Director of Cambridge-based Moonbox Productions, where she most recently directed this winter's critically-acclaimed *The 39 Steps*. Other directorial collaborations include *Amadeus* (IRNE winner, Best Actor), *Kimberly Akimbo* (IRNE winner, Best Actress, Best Supporting Actress; IRNE nominations, Best Director, Best Production), *Floyd Collins*, and the IRNE- and Elliot-Norton-Award-nominated *Of Mice and Men*. Allison also designed the sets for Moonbox's *A New Brain* and the IRNE-Award-winning *The Wild Party* (Best Musical - Fringe). As an independent director, designer, and movement coach, her local collaborators include Flat Earth Theatre (*He is Dead, Terra Nova, Pygmalion, What Once We Felt*), Wax Wings Productions (*The Man from Willow's Brook* - world premiere at the Boston Playwrights' Theatre), Blue Spruce Theatre, Guerrilla Opera, and Boston Opera Collaborative. When not backstage, Allison is a voice and movement educator whose teaching practice focuses on the unique needs of athletes and performing artists.

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