



## JAPANESE PRODUCTION OF THE GLOBAL SENSATION TO PREMIERE IN TOKYO, JAPAN IN SUMMER 2022!

The internationally acclaimed, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, will make its Japanese premiere in the summer of 2022, it was announced today by producers Sonia Friedman, Colin Callender, Harry Potter Theatrical Productions, along with Japanese partners TBS and HoriPro, and the Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG). Currently enjoying sold out runs in London, New York, Melbourne and San Francisco, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* will be presented in Asia for the first time. The Japanese production will be the second non-English version of the play, after the German premiere next month. *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* will be produced in Japan by HoriPro (Billy Elliot the Musical, Mary Poppins) and will run at TBS Akasaka ACT Theater as part of TBS's 70th anniversary celebration. In anticipation of this event, TBS Akasaka ACT Theater will undergo major renovation beginning in 2021 and re-open as a site-specific venue for *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. For more information about the on-sale please check [HarryPotterOnStage.com/JP](https://HarryPotterOnStage.com/JP)

A continuation of the beloved best-selling novel series by British author **J.K. Rowling**, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* takes place nineteen years after the final novel, *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*, and is the only official Harry Potter story to be presented on stage. Based on an original new story by **J.K. Rowling**, **Jack Thorne** and **John Tiffany**, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is a new play by **Jack Thorne**, directed by **John Tiffany**.

Receiving universal acclaim for its breathtaking magic and stage wizardry, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* is the most awarded play in theatre history, winning 25 major U.S. awards, including six Tony Awards with one of those for Best Play. It also won 24 major theatre awards in the U.K. and is the most awarded show in the history of Britain's Olivier Awards, winning a record-breaking nine awards including Best New Play.

*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* features movement by **Steven Hoggett**, set by **Christine Jones**, costumes by **Katrina Lindsay**, music & arrangements by **Imogen Heap**, lighting by **Neil Austin**, sound by **Gareth Fry**, illusions & magic by **Jamie Harrison**, music supervision & arrangements by **Martin Lowe**.

The Japanese version will be the seventh production of the play following productions in London, New York, Melbourne, San Francisco, Hamburg (opening 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2020), and Toronto (opening in Autumn 2020).

This production will be celebrating TBS's 70th anniversary.

Further information will be made available on <https://www.harrypottertheplay.com/>

### **The Story**

Hogwarts welcomes you home. Experience **J.K. Rowling's** magical universe like never before at *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. The story of Harry, Ron and Hermione continues on stage—where the magic is real.

*It was always difficult being Harry Potter and it isn't much easier now that he is an overworked employee of the Ministry of Magic, a husband and father of three school-age children. While Harry grapples with a past that refuses to stay where it belongs, his youngest son Albus must struggle with the weight of a family legacy he never wanted. As past and present fuse ominously, both father and son learn the uncomfortable truth: sometimes, darkness comes from unexpected places.*

Producers **Sonia Friedman** and **Colin Callender** said in a joint statement, "Tokyo is one of the most exciting and vibrant cities in the world, and it's fair to say that Japan has some of the most dedicated and loyal fans of Harry Potter and the Wizarding World. This is why it makes complete sense and gives us so much joy that our multi award-winning, spectacular and thrilling production of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* will be opening in Tokyo's TBS Akasaka ACT Theater in 2022. We look forward to working closely with Mr Horii of HoriPro, Mr Sasaki of TBS and of course our partners at ATG on bringing the magic to life."

**Takashi Sasaki**, CEO, TBS Television: "It is a privilege that we are able to present *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* as TBS's 70th Anniversary Production. I am sure that millions of Japanese fans would be thrilled to know about this upcoming production, which has marked huge successes in many cities in the world. We promise it is going to be fantastic."

**Yoshitaka Hori**, President & CEO, HoriPro Inc: "It's an honour for us to work with the decorated creative team of *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* to produce the first Japanese version of this global phenomenon. We are very excited to present this magnificent theatrical experience for many years to come, to audiences of all ages from all over Japan."

**Mark Cornell**, Chief Executive Officer, Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG): "We're thrilled to continue our partnership with the global phenomenon that is *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Because Japan has such a huge and dedicated community of Harry Potter fans, we've set the bar very high and we're delighted to be partnering with HoriPro and TBS, who are simply the best producers and venue operators in Japan."

**SONIA FRIEDMAN PRODUCTIONS (SFP)** is an international production company responsible for some of the most successful theatre productions in London and New York.

Since 1990, SFP has developed, initiated and produced over 170 new productions and together the company has won a staggering 55 Olivier Awards, 30 Tonys and 2 BAFTAs.

In 2019, Sonia Friedman OBE was awarded 'Producer of the Year' at the Stage Awards for a record breaking fourth time. In 2018, Friedman was also featured in TIME 100, a list of Time magazine's 100 Most Influential People in the World.

Current productions include: the UK premiere of *The Book of Mormon*, West End and UK & European tour, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in London, New York, Melbourne, San Francisco & Hamburg, *Mean Girls* at the August Wilson Theatre, New York, *The Inheritance*, New York, *Uncle Vanya* at the Harold Pinter Theatre, London, the world premiere of Tom Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt* at Wyndham's Theatre, London.

Forthcoming productions include: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in Toronto, *To Kill a Mockingbird* at the Gielgud Theatre, London, *Baby Reindeer* at the Ambassadors Theatre, London, *The Watsons* at the Harold Pinter Theatre, London, *The Shark is Broken* at the Ambassadors Theatre, London, *The Doctor* at the Duke of York's Theatre, London, *Semmelweis* starring Mark Rylance at Bristol Old Vic, *Dreamgirls* UK Tour, *Sunny Afternoon* UK Tour and *Oedipus* starring Helen Mirren and Mark Strong.

Previous theatre productions include: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Rosmersholm*, *The Ferryman*, *The Inheritance*, *Summer and Smoke*, *Dreamgirls*, *The Jungle*, *All About Eve*, *Consent*, *The Birthday Party*, *Ink*, *Hamlet* starring Andrew Scott, *Our Ladies of Perpetual Succour*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *Travesties*, *The Glass Menagerie*, *Nice Fish*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Funny Girl*, *Farinelli and The King*, *Hamlet* starring Benedict Cumberbatch, *1984*, *Sunny Afternoon*, *Bend It Like Beckham*, *The Nether*, *The River*.

For a full details of SFP's theatre productions, please visit [soniafriedman.com](http://soniafriedman.com).

**Sir Colin Callender** is an award-winning theatre, television and film producer who founded the New York and London production company Playground in 2012.

Playground's recent Broadway productions include: Nora Ephron's Tony nominated *Lucky Guy* directed by George C. Wolfe starring Tom Hanks in his Broadway debut, Harvey Fierstein's Tony-nominated *Casa Valentina* directed by Joe Mantello, the Tony Award-winning revival of musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, Kenneth Branagh and Rob Ashford's critically-acclaimed production of *Macbeth* at The Park Avenue Armory in New York, and the Tony Award-winning musical *Dear Evan Hansen*.

Television productions include: the BAFTA and Golden Globe winning six-part BBC miniseries *Wolf Hall* directed by Peter Kosminsky starring Mark Rylance, Damian Lewis and Claire Foy, Richard Eyre's acclaimed adaptation of Ronald Harwood's *The Dresser* for the BBC starring Ian McKellen and Anthony Hopkins, Kenneth Lonergan's award-winning adaptation of EM Forster's *Howards End* for the BBC and Starz, Heidi Thomas's adaptation of *Little Women* for the BBC and Masterpiece on PBS, Richard Eyre's acclaimed adaptation of *King Lear* starring Anthony Hopkins and Emma Thompson for BBC and Amazon Prime Video, Lucy Kirkwood's adaptation of her Olivier Award-winning play *Chimerica* for Channel 4, and the upcoming adaptation of James Herriot's *All Creatures Great and Small* for Channel 5 and Masterpiece on PBS.

Callender began his career as stage manager at London's Royal Court Theatre working with David Hare and Sam Shepard. He won an Emmy for his work as producer of the television adaptation of the RSC's *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby* for Channel 4, a Tony Award for *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* and a Golden Globe and a BAFTA award for *Wolf Hall*. As the long-time president of HBO Films, he was responsible for an unprecedented award-winning slate of movies and miniseries, including Mike Nichols' celebrated adaptation of *Angels in America* starring Al Pacino, Meryl Streep and Emma Thompson, and Gus van Sant's Cannes Film Festival Palme d'Or winner, *Elephant*.

Callender is a Trustee of the New York Public Theater and the NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He received a knighthood in the Queen's 2016 New Year's Honours list for his services to British film, theatre and television in the US.

For full details of Playground's television and theatre productions, please visit [playgroundentertainment.com](http://playgroundentertainment.com)

**Harry Potter Theatrical Productions** was founded by J.K. Rowling and Neil Blair in 2013 to develop and produce the stage play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, the original new story by J.K. Rowling, Jack Thorne and John Tiffany. The team from Harry Potter Theatrical Productions Ltd have worked closely with Sonia Friedman Productions and Colin Callender to produce the play, and also in controlling the international rights for the production.

#### **Tokyo Broadcasting System Television, Inc. (TBS)**

TBS is one of the major television networks in Japan. Wholly owned by Tokyo Broadcasting System Holdings, TBS is producing and televising news programs, dramas, sports and variety programs on their 28-affiliate network called JNN (Japan News Network), cable and satellite channels throughout Japan. In 2021, TBS will celebrate its 70th Anniversary.

TBS has become very popular in Japan, airing numerous variety programs, news, and dramas. They produced the "Takeshi's Castle" game show, which has been dubbed and rebroadcasted all over the world including the United States (under the name "MXC: Most Extreme Elimination Challenge"). Notable drama series include "Hanzawa Naoki," which aired from July – September 2013, and earned the highest rating for a Japanese commercial drama series in over 30 years, with the finale drawing a staggering average rating of 42.2% in the Tokyo area, and a record high rating of 50.4% in the Osaka. Not only television, but TBS has expanded and taken a large role in production of musicals, films, and music concerts in Japan. TBS Akasaka ACT Theater is the stage for an impressive array of shows throughout the year, with a focus on original Japanese musicals, including many performances by the world-famous Takarazuka Revue, and a stage adaptation of a popular comic book series, *Haikyuu!!*, as well as many productions by K-Ballet, Japan's leading ballet company TBS's presenting credits (in English) include "*Rent*," "*Chicago*," "*West Side Story*," "*A Chorus Line*," "*Dreamgirls*," "*Xanadu*," "*Million Dollar Quartet*," "*War Horse*," and "*Singin' in the Rain*" just to name a few. Recent Japanese language productions include "*Mary Poppins*," "*Billy Elliot*," "*Chicago*," "*Romeo and Juliet*," "*Scrooge*" and "*Love Never Dies*". They have also presented numerous music concerts with Udo Artists, Inc. including Elton John, The Who, Simon & Garfunkel, Van Halen, Bon Jovi, etc. Having produced over 100 films, in 2009, TBS found success in film with "*Departures*," winning an Academy Award for the Best Foreign Film.

TBS also operates a theater called "IHI STAGE AROUND TOKYO" in Toyosu which is a newly developed area and is close to Olympic and Paralympic village. The audiences sit in a 360-degree rotating auditorium, which is surrounded by the extended stage areas; and 4 large rotating screens are hung between the auditorium and the stage area which help the transition from one scene to another. IHI Stage Around Tokyo is the 2<sup>nd</sup> StageAround theater in the world, being Asia's first. TBS serves as a

great example of how in Japan, utilizing a major television network as a producer for theatre and multiple-venue owner has become a beneficial tool, broadening the theatre audience by taking advantage of their television audience

#### **HORIPRO INC.**

Founded by Takeo Hori in 1960, HoriPro Inc. has been an entertainment industry leader in Japan for over half a century. Headquartered in Tokyo and currently run by the founder's son, Yoshitaka Hori, the Company oversees a range of businesses throughout the entertainment world, including a full-service artist agency, music division with songs in every major genre, film and television producing activities, and producer and presenter of high-quality musical and theatrical performances of acclaimed productions, as well as producer of new and original theatrical content.

The Live Entertainment Division of HoriPro works with world-renowned artists including Jonathan Kent, Gregory Doran, and Maria Friedman, as well as producers of internationally successful plays and musicals to provide a wealth of entertainment options that attract attention in Japan and abroad.

From classics to new productions, HoriPro has produced the Japanese versions of popular Broadway and West End titles including *Parade*, *Sweeney Todd*, *The Miracle Worker*, and *Billy Elliot*. With Disney and Cameron Macintosh Limited, HoriPro recently produced *Mary Poppins*, and worked with Really Useful Group on *Love Never Dies*, *Sunset Boulevard* and the upcoming *School of Rock*. In addition, this year marks the 40th anniversary of HoriPro's annual summer production of the musical *Peter Pan*, which has been delighting generations of theatregoers from around Japan.

In the U.S., HoriPro has presented various theatrical productions in New York and Washington, D.C. through its long-standing relationships with Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, Brooklyn Academy of Music, and The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. In recent years HoriPro has become active on Broadway through co-producing, including the multiple award-winning *The Band's Visit*.

In the UK, HoriPro and Thelma Holt have enjoyed a decades-long partnership on numerous acclaimed Shakespearean productions directed by the legendary Japanese director Yukio Ninagawa, at venues including The Barbican, The National Theatre and Royal Shakespeare Theatre. HoriPro has also presented Matthew Bourne and his company New Adventures' groundbreaking productions to audiences in Japan over the past fifteen years.

HoriPro continues to produce a wide array of globally popular works. Recent productions include an acclaimed stage adaptation of Haruki Murakami's international best-seller *Kafka on the Shore*, which toured six countries, as well as a successful adaptation of the Nobel Prize-winning author Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. Both productions were directed by Yukio Ninagawa. Recent successful original musicals include *Death Note*, based on the best-selling manga, which has enjoyed successful runs in Japan and South Korea, as well as an acclaimed stage adaptation of *Ikiru*, based on the film by legendary filmmaker Akira Kurosawa.

#### **The Ambassador Theatre Group, ATG**

Ambassador Theatre Group is the world's number one live-theatre company with nearly 50 venues in the UK, the United States and Germany, including many historic West End, Broadway and regional theatres. ATG covers every discipline in the theatre industry, from operating venues to ticketing platforms and producing award-winning shows. Its ambition is to help great shows find the largest possible audience.

