

Qdos Pantomimes and Michael Harrison Entertainment formalise pantomime partnership as joint owners

The World's largest Pantomime producer has today announced that Michael Harrison Entertainment will become a 50% shareholder in the 37-year-old business.

Qdos Pantomimes is part of Qdos Entertainment Group, which is owned by Nick Thomas MBE and his wife Sandra. The Group's pantomimes business produces over 30 productions annually that generate sales in excess of £50 million. The majority of its producing contracts have been in place for over 20 years, and the firm has recently renewed its contract to produce eight key pantomimes for Ambassador Theatre Group.

Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs and this year *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, all of which he also devised and directed.

Thomas said, "Michael has been a transformative influence over our pantomime business for nearly two decades. There is exactly 20 years between us, so it is a natural progression that he becomes co-owner of the pantomime business to ensure its long term future."

Harrison said, "I am delighted to join Nick as co-owner of Qdos Pantomimes, a company I am hugely proud to have been a part of for the past 17 years. The new arrangement will allow me to continue creating world-class pantomimes as an integral part of my theatre producing work, and I look forward to a continued close collaboration with Nick, who has grown Qdos' pantomimes business so successfully over the past 37 years."

Nick Thomas' other businesses include HQ Theatres, the largest UK owned regional theatre operator that recently acquired its 13th venue, the New Theatre Cardiff; Q Talent/Phil Dale Management & Agency; Adverset Media Solutions, the print & design firm, and the HQ Collection, an eclectic portfolio of restaurants, rooms and luxury houses in Yorkshire.

Michael Harrison Entertainment has produced and co-produced numerous successful shows in the West End, regionally and internationally. Harrison, who will continue to produce independently, has already announced four West End musicals for 2020, including the return of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* to The London Palladium; a major revival of *Hello, Dolly!* starring Imelda Staunton, at the Adelphi Theatre; *The Drifters Girl*, starring Beverley Knight, at the Garrick Theatre, and a revival of Jonathan Church's production of *Singin' in the Rain* at Sadler's Wells.

The new partnership commences in spring 2020 to coincide with a business relocation for Qdos Pantomimes and Michael Harrison Entertainment to new premises in Covent Garden.

The Qdos Pantomimes 2019 Season opened on Tuesday 26 November at Newcastle Theatre Royal with *Beauty and the Beast*, which is the longest running pantomime in the UK, the 31st consecutive pantomime produced at the Theatre Royal by Qdos Entertainment and the 16th created by Michael Harrison, marking one of the longest collaborations ever between a commercial producer and regional theatre.

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Photographer: Pamela Raith

Nick Thomas and Michael Harrison receive the Olivier Award for Best Entertainment and Family (Dick Whittington, 2017)

The Qdos Pantomimes 2019 Season this week has 22 venues in rehearsal, 12 more venues to begin rehearsals and one in performance.

Thomas, who turns 60 in December, was awarded the MBE for services to Entertainment and Charity in HM The Queen's Birthday Honours, which he collected from The Queen at Buckingham Palace on Thursday last week. He fulfilled a lifelong career ambition in 2016 by returning pantomime to the London Palladium, after a 30-year absence. Harrison, 40, has been associated with Qdos Pantomimes for 17 years, and its Managing Director for 8 years. Over this time, he has personally produced over 100 pantomimes for Qdos, including The London Palladium productions of *Cinderella*, *Dick Whittington* (winner of the Olivier Award for best Entertainment and Family),

