

ARENA STAGE MEDIA RELEASE

Molly Smith Artistic Director Edgar Dobie Executive Producer Zelda Fichandler Founding Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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March 9, 2015

WORLD-PREMIERE MUSICAL *DEAR EVAN HANSEN*
TO STAR BEN PLATT
AT ARENA STAGE AT THE MEAD CENTER FOR AMERICAN THEATER
JULY 10 – AUGUST 23, 2015

SINGLE TICKETS GO ON SALE MARCH 13, 2015

(Washington, D.C.) Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater announces **Ben Platt** (*Pitch Perfect*, *The Book of Mormon*) will star in the title role of *Dear Evan Hansen*, the original world-premiere musical debuting this summer. The production, by Tony Award-nominated composing duo **Benj Pasek** and **Justin Paul** (*Dogfight*; *A Christmas Story*, *The Musical*) and Outer Critics Circle Award-winning playwright **Steven Levenson** (*Masters of Sex*), is directed by Tony Award nominee **Michael Greif** (*If/Then*, *Next to Normal*, *Rent*) and will run **July 10-August 23, 2015 in the Kreeger Theater**.

“I couldn’t be more excited to be a part of this very special piece,” shares Platt. “Benj, Justin, Steven and Michael have created a bold, moving and completely original modern musical. It’s an honor and a dream come true to lead this cast, and a gift to be portraying Evan Hansen, such a beautifully complicated and exceedingly human character. I can’t wait for the world to see it.”

Platt (Evan Hansen) is best known for starring as Benji Applebaum in Universal Pictures’ smash hit *Pitch Perfect* and will reprise his role in *Pitch Perfect 2* to be released in May. This summer, Platt can be seen alongside Meryl Streep in the film *Ricki and the Flash*. He most recently made his Broadway debut as Elder Cunningham in *The Book of Mormon*, for which *The New York Times* called his performance “sensational.” Platt first took on the role to critical acclaim in the show’s Chicago run in 2012, earning him a Broadway World Chicago Award for Best Actor in a Touring Production. This past fall, Platt sold out his first solo cabaret show at 54 Below. National Tours: *Caroline, or Change* (directed by George C. Wolfe and Tony Kushner). Regional Credits: *The Black Suits* (Barrington Stage Company), *The Power of Duff* (New York Stage and Film, Stephen Belber), *Dead End* (directed by Nicholas Martin, Ahmanson Theatre), *The Music Man*, *Mame*, *Camelot* and *The Sound of Music* (Hollywood Bowl, directed by Gordon Hunt). Workshops/Readings: *Breaking Bobby Stone* (directed by Peter Scolari), *Murder at the Gates* (directed by Peter Dubois, Steven Sater), *Alice By Heart* (Steven Sater and Duncan Sheik), *Irma La Douce* (directed by Rob Ashford, starring Katie Holmes) and *Bridges of Madison County* (directed by Bartlett Sher, Jason Robert Brown).

Additional casting to be announced at a later date.

To hear a preview of the song “Waving Through a Window” as sung by Ben Platt, and for creative team biographies, visit arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/productions/dear-evan-hansen/.

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Ben Platt to star in world-premiere musical *Dear Evan Hansen*—Page 2

Dear Evan Hansen

World-premiere musical

Book by Steven Levenson and Music and Lyrics by Benj Pasek & Justin Paul

Directed by Michael Greif

Choreographed by Danny Mefford

Musical direction by Alex Lacamoire

In the Kreeger Theater / July 10-August 23, 2015

A letter, a lie, a life he never dreamed he could have. Evan Hansen (*Pitch Perfect*'s Ben Platt) is about to get everything he's ever wanted: the girl of his dreams, the perfect family he's always longed for and a chance to finally fit in. He just has to hope that his chance to connect isn't blown by the secrets he has to conceal. Featuring a score by Tony Award nominees Benj Pasek and Justin Paul (*A Christmas Story*, *Dogfight*), a book by Steven Levenson (*Masters of Sex*) and directed by three-time Tony nominee Michael Greif (*Rent*, *Next to Normal*), *Dear Evan Hansen* is a moving and original musical about more than how we share, like or friend; it's about how we love, feel and survive in the modern world.

Subscription packages, including *Dear Evan Hansen*, are currently available. Single tickets for *Dear Evan Hansen* go on sale March 13, 2015. Patrons may call the Arena Stage Sales Office at 202-488-3300 or visit arenastage.org.

For complete 2015/16 Season details, visit: arenastage.org/shows-tickets/the-season/index-15-16.shtml.

Arena Stage at the Mead Center for American Theater, under the leadership of Artistic Director Molly Smith and Executive Producer Edgar Dobie, is a national center dedicated to American voices and artists. Arena Stage produces plays of all that is passionate, profound, deep and dangerous in the American spirit, and presents diverse and ground-breaking work from some of the best artists around the country. Arena Stage is committed to commissioning and developing new plays through the American Voices New Play Institute. Arena Stage impacts the lives of over 10,000 students annually through its work in community engagement. Now in its seventh decade, Arena Stage serves a diverse annual audience of more than 300,000. arenastage.org.

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