

For Immediate Release

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**TONY AWARD-WINNING MUSICAL
DEAR EVAN HANSEN
ANNOUNCES FULL CAST
FOR CANADIAN PRODUCTION**

**STEPHANIE LA ROCHELLE, JESSICA SHERMAN
CLAIRE RANKIN, SEAN PATRICK DOLAN, EVAN BULIUNG
ALESSANDRO COSTANTINI AND SHAKURA DICKSON
JOIN ROBERT MARKUS
FOR FIRST INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION**

**PERFORMANCES BEGIN MARCH 5
AT THE ROYAL ALEXANDRA THEATRE IN TORONTO**

Toronto, ON (January 16, 2019) – *Dear Evan Hansen* producers **Stacey Mindich** and **David Mirvish** are pleased to announce complete casting for the Canadian production of the multi Tony Award-winning musical. Performances begin **March 5, 2019** at Toronto's historic **Royal Alexandra Theatre**.

Jessica Sherman, seasoned Toronto actor and singer who has worked extensively in the U.K. will play 'Heidi Hansen', Charlottetown and Stratford Festivals favourite, **Claire Rankin** will play 'Cynthia Murphy', and Stratford and Shaw Festival actor **Evan Buliung**, recent Dora Award winner for The Musical Stage Company/Mirvish Productions' *Fun Home*, will play 'Larry Murphy'. **Sean Patrick Dolan** (CBC/Netflix' *Schitt's Creek*, *The Detectives*, *Workin' Moms*) and Canadian country music singer/songwriter **Stephanie La Rochelle** (CBC's *Heartland*, *Over The Rainbow*) round out the 'Murphy' family (as 'Connor' and 'Zoe', respectively), with **Alessandro Costantini** (Segal Centre's *Prom Queen*) as 'Jared Kleinman', and **Shakura Dickson** (Outside The March/Crow's *Jerusalem*) as 'Alana Beck' completing the on-stage company. They join the previously announced **Robert Markus** in the title role.

The cast also includes **Zachary Noah Piser** (as the 'Evan' alternate) along with understudies **Erin Breen**, **Malinda Carroll**, **Jay Davis**, **David Jeffery**, **Laura Mae Nason** and **Kaitlyn Santa Juana**.

"It is with great joy and pride that we announce the cast of the Canadian production of *Dear Evan Hansen*, which also happens to be the first international production of our show," says lead producer **Stacey Mindich**. "We conducted extensive auditions all throughout Canada over an eight-month period to find the perfect actors to embody *Dear Evan Hansen's* authentic characters and I am confident that we've assembled an amazing and talented group of artists, almost all of whom are Canadian. In fact, almost every province is represented in our cast. This is a very important and exciting chapter in the life of *Dear Evan Hansen*."

Dear Evan Hansen tickets are on sale through June 30, 2019. For ticketing information, please go to www.mirvish.com

The winner of six 2017 Tony Awards, including Best Musical, *Dear Evan Hansen* features a book by Tony Award-winner **Steven Levenson**, a score by Academy Award, and Tony & Grammy Award-winning composers **Benj Pasek & Justin Paul**, and direction by 4-time Tony® Award nominee **Michael Greif**. The Grammy Award-winning Original Broadway Cast Recording of *Dear Evan Hansen* produced by Atlantic Records, was released in February 2017, making an extraordinary debut on the Billboard 200 and

entering the chart at #8 – the highest charting debut position for an original cast album since 1961 – and went on to win the 2018 Grammy Award for Best Musical Theatre Album. A new deluxe version of the cast recording, including six bonus tracks and a pop cover from Katy Perry of “Waving through a Window” is now available digitally.

Declared “One of the most remarkable shows in musical theater history” by the *Washington Post*’s Peter Marks, **Dear Evan Hansen** opened at the Music Box Theatre to rave reviews on December 4, 2016, where it’s broken all box office records and has struck a chord with critics and audiences alike. The first national tour is currently underway with performances scheduled across America, and international productions have been announced for Toronto (March 2019) and London (Fall 2019). The Broadway production recently celebrated its two-year anniversary with a special donation to the Smithsonian, where the show’s iconic blue polo and arm cast will now be part of the permanent collection of the National Museum of American History in Washington, DC.

Rolling Stone calls **Dear Evan Hansen**, “a game-changer that hits you like a shot in the heart” and *The New York Times* raves “a gut-punching, breathtaking knockout of a musical.”

In addition to winning six 2017 Tony awards and a 2018 Grammy Award, **Dear Evan Hansen** has won numerous other awards, including the 2017 Drama League Award for Outstanding Musical Production and for the off-Broadway production, two Obie Awards, a Drama Desk Award, and two Outer Critics Circle Awards and two Helen Hayes Awards.

Dear Evan Hansen features scenic design by **David Korins**, projection design by **Peter Nigrini**, costume design by **Emily Rebholz**, lighting design by **Japhy Weideman**, sound design by **Nevin Steinberg**, and hair design by **David Brian Brown**. Music supervision, orchestrations and additional arrangements are by **Alex Lacamoire**. **Ben Cohn** is the Associate Music Supervisor. Vocal arrangements and additional arrangements are by **Justin Paul**. **Danny Mefford** is the choreographer. U.S. Casting by **Tara Rubin Casting/Xavier Rubiano**. **Sash Bischoff** and **Adam Quinn** are the Associate Directors. **Judith Schoenfeld** is the Production Supervisor.

CAST BIOS

Robert Markus – *Evan Hansen*

Robert is thrilled to be joining the *Dear Evan Hansen* company. Recent credits include: Riff Raff in *The Rocky Horror Show*, Tommy in *Tommy*, *The Music Man*, *Fiddler on the Roof* (Stratford Festival), *Our Town*, *Sweeney Todd* (Shaw Festival), *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Theatre Aquarius), *James and the Giant Peach*, *Seussical*, *Jacob Two Two Meets the Hooded Fang* (Young People’s Theatre), *UnCovered: Queen and Bowie*, *UnCovered: Simon & Garfunkel* (The Musical Stage Company), *Dream a Little Dream*, *Shrek* (Grand Theatre), *Chicago*, *Twist and Shout* (Drayton Entertainment), *Next to Normal* (Citadel Theatre/Theatre Calgary co-production), *The Rocky Horror Show*, *A Christmas Carol* (Citadel Theatre), *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Chicago* (Mayfield), *Hunchback* (Catalyst Theatre). Robert is a graduate of the University of Alberta’s BFA program. Follow him on instagram at rjbmarkus. Robert would like to thank his family, friends, TH and Jen for their constant support.

Stephanie La Rochelle – *Zoe Murphy*

Stephanie is absolutely thrilled to be making her Mirvish debut in such a remarkably moving piece. Previous theatre credits include: *The Sound of Music* (Theatre Aquarius); *A Different Kind of Job* (Theatre Aquarius Workshop). Selected TV/Film credits include: *Heartland* (CBC); *Backstage* (Family Channel); 1st Runner Up - *Over the Rainbow* (CBC); *In The Dark* (CW); *Copper*(BBC); *The Preacher’s Sin*, *Zombie@17* (Lifetime); *Played* (BlackPills); *Satisfaction* (CTV). Stephanie is a Canadian Country Music Association Award nominated singer-songwriter. Huge thanks to the team at *Dear Evan Hansen*, The Talent House, and Stephanie Gorin for this incredible experience, and her incredible parents for their outstanding support. You will be found. Let’s erase the stigma. www.stephlarochelle.com
[@steph_larochelle](https://www.instagram.com/steph_larochelle)

Jessica Sherman – *Heidi Hansen*

A Toronto native, Jessica studied singing at UWO before moving to England to study acting at RCSSD. UK-based credits include *Rock 'n' Roll* (Duke of York's), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Baracura Gardens) *Batman Live* (World Tour), *Lend Me A Tenor* (Vienna's English Theatre), *John and Jen* (Guildford Fringe Theatre), *The Stationmaster* (Tristan Bates), and *The Sound of Music* (UK Tour). Since returning she has had the honour to workshop and perform *Heart of Winter (Storefront)*, *Pollyanna* (Yonge Street Theatricals), *Rumspinga Break* (Next Stage), *The Last Party* and *The Preposterous Predicament of Polly Peel* (Toronto Fringe), *Angel Street* (Perth Classical Theatre) and recently filmed *Le Dindon* (Cinéfrance). Huge thanks to her family (chosen and born), 3G and the UK gang, Penny, Michael and JBR, and especially M.R. for starting her down this path.

Claire Rankin – Cynthia Murphy

At age 9, after seeing her first musical at the Charlottetown Festival, Claire promptly told her Mom "If I had some lessons, I could do that." At age 16, Claire was performing on that very stage and subsequently the national tour of *Anne of Green Gables*. Four seasons with the Stratford Festival followed, where she performed Shakespearean roles, Miranda in *The Tempest*, and a pas de deux, Louise in *Carousel*. On screen, she's worked extensively with the likes of Aaron Sorkin, Kevin Costner, Tony Shaloub and Dick Van Dyke (whom she had the pleasure of singing with between takes!) Claire's happy to get back to her roots after a two-decade hiatus from the theatre. And she wants to thank her Mom and Dad for getting her those lessons. [instagram/twitter@iamclairerankin](#)

Sean Patrick Dolan – Connor Murphy

Sean is honoured to be joining the *Dear Evan Hansen* family. He is also very excited to be a part of his first Mirvish production. Sean began performing at a young age with the Stratford Festival's productions of *The Sound of Music* and *Fiddler on the Roof* and the original workshop of Bartram and Hill's *Something Wicked This Way Comes*. Aside from theatre Sean has spent the past few years portraying a variety of roles on television with credits including *Schitt's Creek*, *The Detectives* (CBC/Netflix), *Workin' Moms* (CBC), *Wayne* (Youtube Premium), *Taken* (NBC) and *In The Dark* (CBS). Love and thanks to Bruce, Daniel and the Talent House team, as well as to Mom, Dad and Nick. Instagram: [@heyimsean](#)

Evan Buliung – Larry Murphy

Evan has performed across the country and in the states for the past 20 years. He recently won the Dora Award for Best Male Performance in a Musical in the role of Bruce Bechdel in *Fun Home* for the Musical Stage Company. 12 seasons with the Stratford Festival, highlights include Sky Masterson in *Guys and Dolls*, *Pericles*, Mercutio, Petruchio, Edgar in *King Lear* opposite Christopher Plummer. 4 seasons at the Shaw Festival; Jack Worthing in *The Importance of Being Earnest*, Stanhope in *Journey's End*, *Man and Superman*, and *Major Barbara*. For the Mirvish organization, Aragorn in *The Lord of the Rings*, Khashoggi in *We Will Rock You* and *The Audience*. Evan's film and television credits include *Suits*, the new mini-series *Departure*, Bob Hobby in *Holly Hobby* for Hulu in the US and the family channel in Canada, *Damnation* for Netflix among others. He was nominated for a Canadian Screen Actors award for *The Adventures of Pericles*. Evan is thrilled and very proud to join the *Dear Evan Hansen* family.

Alessandro Costantini – Jared Kleinman

Born and raised in Sudbury Ontario, Alessandro is the co-founder and Artistic Director of YES Theatre in Sudbury, currently celebrating its 10th anniversary. Select Credits include: *Hair*, *Rent*, *Spring Awakening*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *Hairspray*, *Merrily We Roll Along* (YES Theatre), World Premiere of *Prom Queen* (SEGAL Centre, META nomination Outstanding Lead Performance), and the Canadian Premiere of Pasek and Paul's *James and the Giant Peach* for YPT. Training: George Brown Theatre School. We don't all have the privilege to do this as professionals. Please support your local arts community and youth! My Loves and Thanks to my family, YES, dear friends, Bruce and TH... and legit anyone I've ever met. What a tremendous blessing. Insta: [@alessandro1028](#)

Shakura Dickson – Alana Beck

Shakura would like to extend her endless gratitude to the DEH team. She is honoured to be making her Mirvish debut as "Alana Beck". Recent credits include: *Jerusalem* (Outside the March/Crow's), *Girls Like That* (Tarragon), *The Story* (Common Boots/Soulpepper) and *Other Side of the Game* (Obsidian/Cahoots). She also appears in Season One of CBC's *Coroner*. Shakura is a graduate of the

Sheridan College Music Theatre program. She would like to thank her Mom, Sandie, Yanick, the ancestors and the universe for having her back.
Thanks to Gina, Anwyn and Jess for helping me along the way. This one is for my Ma.

Zachary Noah Piser – Evan Alternate

Words fail! Broadway: *Wicked*. Off-Broadway: *Sweeney Todd* (Barrow Street Theatre, West End transfer), *Mad Libs Live* (New World Stages). Favorites: *The Heart of Rock & Roll* (The Old Globe, world premiere), *Godspell* (Marriott Theatre). Workshops: *Tiananmen*, *The Heart of Rock & Roll*, *October Sky*, *Eastbound*, *Postcard American Town*. Zachary has performed at various NYC venues including Feinstein's/54 Below, Lincoln Center, Merkin Hall, Green Room 42, Symphony Space, & Joe's Pub. Zachary is a Bay Area native and Northwestern grad. Many thanks to the DEH team, Tara Rubin Casting, The Mine, Dave, Adam, and of course, Mom & Dad. @zach_piser

Erin Breen – Understudy – Cynthia/Heidi

Erin could not be more excited to be joining the *Dear Evan Hansen* family. After graduating with a Masters Degree in Musical Theatre Performance from The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Erin has spent the last 10 years working around the world. Canadian credits include: *Seussical* (YPT), *City of Angels* (Theatre By The Bay), *Seussical* (Alberta Theatre Projects) *A Christmas Carol*, and *Enron* (Theatre Calgary), *Chariots of Fire* (The Grand Theatre), and [title of show] (Forte Musical Theatre Guild) which earned her a Betty Mitchell Award nomination for Best Leading Female in a Comedy/Musical. Erin has also had the pleasure of workshopping new musicals in New York, London and Glasgow.

Malinda Carroll – Understudy – Alana/Zoe

Being part of *Dear Evan Hansen* with such an amazing and talented team is a dream come true for Malinda. Past credits include: *All Shook Up* and *Soul Sistas* (Mayfield Dinner Theatre), *The Rocky Horror Show* (Lower Ossington Theatre), *Pajama Game*, *Oklahoma* (St. Clair College). Malinda would like to thank her unshakable support system of both family and friends.

Jay Davis – Understudy - Larry

Jay is thrilled to be making his Mirvish debut as part of the *Dear Evan Hansen* family. Toronto credits: *Next to Normal* (Tarragon/Clearwater), *I Love You Because* (Angelwalk), and *Assassins* (Birdland). West End credits: *Miss Saigon* (Cameron Mackintosh) and *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Really Useful Group). Selected Canadian credits: *Bittergirl - The Musical* (Charlottetown/Citadel), *Floyd Collins* (Talk Is Free/Patrick Street), *Mamma Mia!* (Neptune). TV credits: *Designated Survivor*, *The Handmaid's Tale*, and Warner Bros. *Titans*. Jay would like to thank The Talent House, Stephanie Gorin Casting, and sends his love to all his friends and family.

David Jeffery – Understudy – Evan/Connor/Jared

Mirvish debut! David is beyond excited to join the incredibly talented company of *Dear Evan Hansen*. Recipient of the "Outstanding Achievement in Drama" Award, David comes from Alberta, where he recently finished his run as Jack Kelly in *Newsies*. Alberta theatre credits include Roger in *Rent*, Melchior in *Spring Awakening*, Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors* and Gabe in *Next to Normal*. Joining *Dear Evan Hansen* has been a dream come true for him, and he is eternally grateful to everyone involved who gave him this opportunity. Hi Mom!

Laura Mae Nason - Understudy – Cynthia/Heidi

Laura is so delighted to be joining the *Dear Evan Hansen* family! Theatre credits include *Million Dollar Quartet* (Mirvish, Drayton Entertainment, Stage West Calgary), *Hairspray* (Drayton Entertainment, Charlottetown Festival, Mayfield & Rainbow Stage), *Anne of Green Gables*, *British Invasion* (Charlottetown Festival), *Sister Act*, *Marathon of Hope*, *Twist & Shout* (Drayton Entertainment), *Legally Blonde* (Theatre Aquarius), *The Wedding Singer*, *Chicago*, *Top of the Pops* (Mayfield), *Cabaret*, *Guys & Dolls* (Stage West). Thank you to the DEH team, to Bruce and the Talent House, family and friends for their endless love and support. "This one is for the two lights of my life, Gerrad & Elliott." Instagram: @lauramaenason

Kaitlyn Santa Juana – Understudy – Alana/Zoe

Kaitlyn is beyond grateful to be making her Toronto debut with this cast of *Dear Evan Hansen*. This past year, she set sail in the Caribbean and performed as 'Jasmine' in Disney Cruise Line's production of *Aladdin: A Musical Spectacular* along with a few of their other Broadway styled shows. Originally from Langley, British Columbia, a town just outside of Vancouver, Kaitlyn moved to New York City to pursue an education in the performing arts. She recently graduated from the musical theatre conservatory at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy. Kaitlyn would like to thank her family, friends and everyone involved in *Dear Evan Hansen* for providing an endless amount of opportunities to chase her dreams.

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