

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

# Orange County premiere of *Edges*

**Chance Theater returns to live in-person performances for the first musical written by the award-winning songwriters of *Dear Evan Hansen*, Benj Pasek & Justin Paul**

**ANAHEIM, CA:** Chance Theater is excited to announce that the Orange County premiere of Pasek and Paul's musical, *Edges* will be the third show in its 23rd Anniversary Season, and the first show presented live and in-person since shutting its doors on March 13, 2020. This clever and charming musical is directed by Resident Artist James Michael McHale and music direction is by Resident Artist Robyn Manion. The show is performing July 9 - August 8, 2021.

Before they wrote *Dear Evan Hansen*, *La La Land*, *The Greatest Showman*, *Dogfight*, and many other modern musical classics, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul wrote a thrilling song cycle about four burgeoning adults asking classic coming-of-age questions about love, commitment, identity, and meaning. For the first time in Orange County, see how the Oscar, Grammy, Tony, and Golden Globe Award-winning song team started their journey — with a charming, witty and honest examination of adulthood that explores what happens when we're teetering on the edge of the rest of our lives. Please note that this show contains adult language.

Back in 2005, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul were undergraduates at the University of Michigan who were feeling dissatisfied with the roles they were being cast in for their college shows. Deciding to do something about it, Pasek and Paul (who had casually written only a couple of songs together at this point) decided to produce their own show -- an original piece called *Edges* that would be made up entirely of songs they would write and would star fellow college students. They said in an interview with Musicnotes that they produced the show so their parents would have something more to watch when they flew out to visit them. The response to *Edges* was very positive and it was decided to continue developing the piece. After 30 productions at colleges across the United States -- and detailed feedback from established composers Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*) and Jeff

Marx (*Avenue Q*) -- the show had its professional premiere in 2007 at the Capital Repertory Theatre in New York. The show has since been performed all over the U.S. and on five different continents.

Pasek and Paul's career trajectory began to sharply rise soon after. In 2006, the pair became the youngest recipients to have ever won the Jonathan Larson Award for emerging songwriters. They wrote the scores for *James and The Giant Peach* and *Dogfight* (both of which have been previously produced at the Chance), among others, and were nominated for their first Tony Award for contributing to the score of *A Christmas Story, A Musical*. But the world really became aware of the dynamic duo with the 1-2-3 punch of *Dear Evan Hansen* (6 Tony Awards, including Best Original Score), *La La Land* (6 Academy Awards, including Best Original Song), and *The Greatest Showman* (Golden Globe for Original Song, Academy Award nomination).

Director James Michael McHale said, "All of the songs in this show feature characters that are on the figurative edge of an important moment in their lives. Many of them are facing an important decision or reeling from a decision that was just made for them. *Edges* is a show that reminds us that there are always many stories. It's a show full of real, complicated humans coming from different places, different backgrounds and circumstances, that I think are all ultimately filled with hope for connection and meaning." McHale went on to say, "What a way to celebrate coming back to live theater with a show that is so filled with stories that we can really relate to. Oh, and I think the music is incredible."

In addition to McHale and music director Robyn Manion, the production team for *Edges* includes scenic designer Bradley Kaye, lighting designer Chris Henrriquez, costume designer Christine Perez, sound designer Hunter Moody, and stage manager Nicole Schlitt. The production will star Sarah Pierce (*Ragtime*), Elizabeth Curtin (Chance debut), Jewell Holloway (Chance debut), and Tyler Marshall (*James and The Giant Peach*).

*Edges* will be performed within the existing state, county, and city health mandates. As such, we will be operating at full capacity with no social distancing. Through self-attestation, un-vaccinated patrons are required to wear appropriate face coverings. It is recommended for fully vaccinated patrons to do so as well. To read full details about our current health and safety guidelines, visit [www.ChanceTheater.com/safety](http://www.ChanceTheater.com/safety).

For those who are more cautious, the Chance is also offering a select number of Fully Vaccinated performances that will require proof of vaccination with photo ID, minimal social distancing, and face-covering when indoors. Check the website for more details.

Any questions can be directed to (888) 455-4212, or by sending an email to [info@chancetheater.com](mailto:info@chancetheater.com).

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## ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER has received the National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing for “nurturing a community of artists in ways that strengthen and demonstrate the quality, diversity, and dynamism of American theatre.” The Chance recently won the Ovation Award for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for the intimate revival of *Fun Home*. Previously, Chance Theater has won seven Ovation Awards, including three for Best Production of a Musical (Intimate Theatre) for its regional premiere of *Lizzie, The Musical*, the West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical*, and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the Official Resident Theater Company of Anaheim” in 2014, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization.” Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group and OC Theatre Guild, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

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## CALENDAR LISTING

### WHAT: **Edges**

Before they wrote *Dear Evan Hansen*, *La La Land*, *The Greatest Showman*, *Dogfight*, and many other modern musical classics, Benj Pasek and Justin Paul wrote a thrilling song cycle about four burgeoning adults asking classic coming-of-age questions about love, commitment, identity, and meaning. For the first time in Orange County, see how the Oscar, Grammy, Tony, and Golden Globe Award-winning song team started their journey — with a charming, witty and honest examination of adulthood that explores what happens when we’re teetering on the edge of the rest of our lives.

*Please note: This show contains adult language.*

WHEN:

**Preview Performances:** July 9 - 16, 2021. Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturday at 8 p.m., Sunday at 7 p.m.

**Regular performances:** July 17 - August 8, 2021.

Thursdays at 7:30 p.m., Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 3 p.m. and 8 p.m., Sundays at 3 p.m.

*\* All audience members will be required to wear a face-covering*

**Fully Vaccinated Performances:** Saturday, July 10 at 8:00 p.m., Saturday, July 17 at 8:00 p.m., Sunday, July 25 at 3:00 p.m., Sunday, August 1 at 3:00 p.m., and Saturday, August 7 at 8:00 p.m.

*\* Proof of vaccination, photo ID, and a face-covering are required for "Fully Vaccinated Performances"*

**REVIEWERS and OTHER PRESS PERSONNEL are encouraged to attend:**

**Opening Performance on Saturday, July 17th at 8:00 p.m.**

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage  
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$39.00 - \$49.00.

Call (888) 455-4212 or visit [www.ChanceTheater.com](http://www.ChanceTheater.com). NO WALK-UPS for this production.

Discounts available for children (ages 4-12), seniors, students, and military.

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