

'Dear Evan Hansen Blue': A Bespoke Shade to Commemorate the Production's Iconic Hue



The Pantone Color Institute announces “Dear Evan Hansen Blue”, a commemoration of the iconic shade emblematic of the Tony & Grammy Award winning musical Dear Evan Hansen. Dear Evan Hansen Blue represents the brilliant energy and uplifting emotional journey experienced by this key character.

Laurie Pressman, VP Pantone Color Institute sat down with Dear Evan Hansen’s producer Stacey Mindich, to discuss the significance of the shade.

Laurie Pressman (LP): What was the inspiration behind Dear Evan Hansen Blue?

Stacey Mindich (SM): Coming up with the color wasn’t something we initially set out to do, it happened more organically and was truly a result of so many things coming together. This show is very personal for me and I like the color blue very much – I live in a blue house, my dog wears a blue collar, etc. This was my first time producing a show on my own and wanted as much good luck as possible, so I chose my favorite color. The costume designer did too – and now you see everyone waving through a window wearing blue.

**DEAR
EVAN
HANSEN**
THE TONY AWARD-WINNING BEST MUSICAL

I remember the first time I walked into the office of the ad agency working on the show to talk about the logo in 2014, I immediately gravitated towards one version on the wall. It had different shades of blue in it, but there was one shade in particular that just struck me. I had just come from a meeting with the authors of the show – they were young and right away I thought of youth. The authors wanted to create a show that was contemporary, fresh, authentic and modern; one that reflects the way we live today. When I saw those blues, it felt fresh, modern and the beginning of Dear Evan Hansen.

LP: Those blues do resonate so strongly. Dear Evan Hansen Blue is not a cool blue – it’s energizing, fresh and modern with a youthful appeal. Why was it important to Dear Evan Hansen to have their own unique shade?

SM: In the beginning, the show had started to brand itself. In some ways, it was a ‘happy accident’ that the main character’s polo shirt was a blue that matched the logo. By the time we got to Broadway, the visuals evolved into a blue mosaic of sorts, which also represented all of the people Evan could not connect to. After receiving many great reviews and winning the Tony Award, we felt more confident the show would run for a while so we started going different ads, bus wraps, pole banners in Central Park, even an aerial banner over the beaches in the Hamptons. It felt crisper to just have this one blue, especially as more and more people were telling us it was Dear Evan Hansen Blue, and that when they saw it, they immediately associated it with the show.

LP: Blue is the most universally-loved color – known for truth, constancy, credibility. The radiant blue we see in Dear Evan Hansen is active, playful and energizing, a shade of blue that radiates intensity and luminosity and is generally preferred by those young in spirit; a blue that is vivid, strong and brilliant. Where do you see the connection between the color message and the Dear Evan Hansen story?

SM: Dear Evan Hansen is a coming of age story, and that is, at its very core, all about youthfulness crossing over into maturity. How better to express Evan's youth than through this Dear Evan Hansen Blue? The luminosity of this blue relates to catharsis – as an emotional journey with twists and turns, there is nothing about the show that isn't cathartic. People go back to their lives energized about the show – ready to talk to their kids, families and friends about topics they may not have been open to before.

There's also a connection to electricity, which comes through right at the beginning of the show. At the core of our story is an online world, where social media is viral and spreads like electricity. Evan is a lonely boy looking for electricity himself, something to light up his life.

People have a strong reaction to the show. There is a brilliant moment at the end of the show where everyone is bathed in a blue light, almost like being engulfed in the blue sky. For all of us, the blue sky conveys optimism and hope – after an emotional journey, it's very important to us that we send the audience out with feelings of hope.

LP: How have you used Dear Evan Hansen Blue throughout set design, product and marketing elements to create the public association between your signature blue shade and the show, Dear Evan Hansen?

SM: Dear Evan Hansen Blue can be seen across all elements of the production – all of the Dear Evan Hansen merchandise is blue, the front of our theater and our lighting throughout the show is blue. The use of the color extends behind the scenes to lesser known theater elements including a blue room (instead of a green room) backstage, blue striped carpets on premier nights, and more. It became part and parcel of our identity as a musical.

One of the elements we are proud of is our “blue hat night,” born out of our very first Broadway preview. I wanted everyone in the city to have our merchandise, so we decided to give everyone who came to the 1st Broadway preview our limited-edition blue baseball cap, marked with the date. There were 1,000 people at that preview and we didn’t let anyone leave without a hat. What followed was 1,000 blue hats walking out of the theater and down 45th street – all you saw was a sea of blue -- it was a way to celebrate the journey to Broadway. As we embark on our national tour – covering 50 cities in the next two years – we plan to have more ‘blue hat nights’ in select cities.

LP: How can you use Dear Evan Hansen Blue to spread the message to those who have not seen the show?

SM: We have used the color to really build the show’s identity. It’s an instinctual reaction such that when people think of Dear Evan Hansen, they think of the blue and vice versa. I’ve seen fans outside the theater see the blue and feel at home. People can relate to this blue, as they do to the show, so the public association is organic and makes perfect sense.