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“Sadly, this debut of “The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing” had just two performances... it deserves to be remounted both in Chicago and beyond in coming seasons.”

At ALT, we say that Great Operas Don't Just Happen.

Audience and critical response to Chicago Opera Theater's world premiere production of Justine F. Chen and David Simpatico's remarkable new opera has been exceptional. Musical America called the opera "...a surrealistic and sometimes zany account of the multihyphenate's life" with "an engaging narrative" and a "potent score that flings the drama aloft with an appealingly broad expressive palette." The Chicago Reader said that the opera is "a gut-wrenching piece in a well-crafted production, with two major themes that couldn't be more contemporary: the LGBTQ+ struggle for justice and our rapidly evolving relationship with artificial intelligence." The Hyde Park Herald proclaimed that "this new opera is one of the strongest I've seen..." and WTTW PBS Chicago celebrated the premiere calling it "emotionally stirring", sharing that "it deserves to be remounted both in Chicago and beyond in coming seasons." We certainly hope that will be the case!

Thank you for your support of ALT, and for joining us over the past ten years as - together - we supported Justine and David's vision. Your support of **THE LIFE AND DEATH(S) OF ALAN TURING** has helped us introduce an extraordinary new work to the American operatic repertoire - and, we have more exciting projects that we think you'll be interested in following as they develop... **so stay tuned for our announcement later this week about our upcoming workshops of our newest ALT commissions in NYC!**

All photos by Michael Brosilow, courtesy of Chicago Opera Theater.



“The idea for an Alan Turing opera originated with librettist David Simpatico over a decade ago as part of an American Lyric Theater program where Simpatico met composer Justine F. Chen. Meticulous collaboration and numerous workshops followed over the years... From its opening notes, Chen’s music is compelling and captures the ambiguity of the worlds Turing was caught up in... The brilliance of the finale of “The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing” is that it leaves open the question of how Turing passed by showing every possibility as if Turing himself had thought through each one of them in much the same manner as he calculated and solved equations. The conventional explanation remains possible, if not plausible, given the music and the staging. But given the thrilling journey we have made with Turing and his fascination with energy living on and the body being just a shell, it does seem spiritual metamorphosis may be most viable. Even if one doesn’t want to take such a transformation literally, the ways in which Turing continues to influence subsequent generations is a powerful form of transfiguration.”

New City Stage



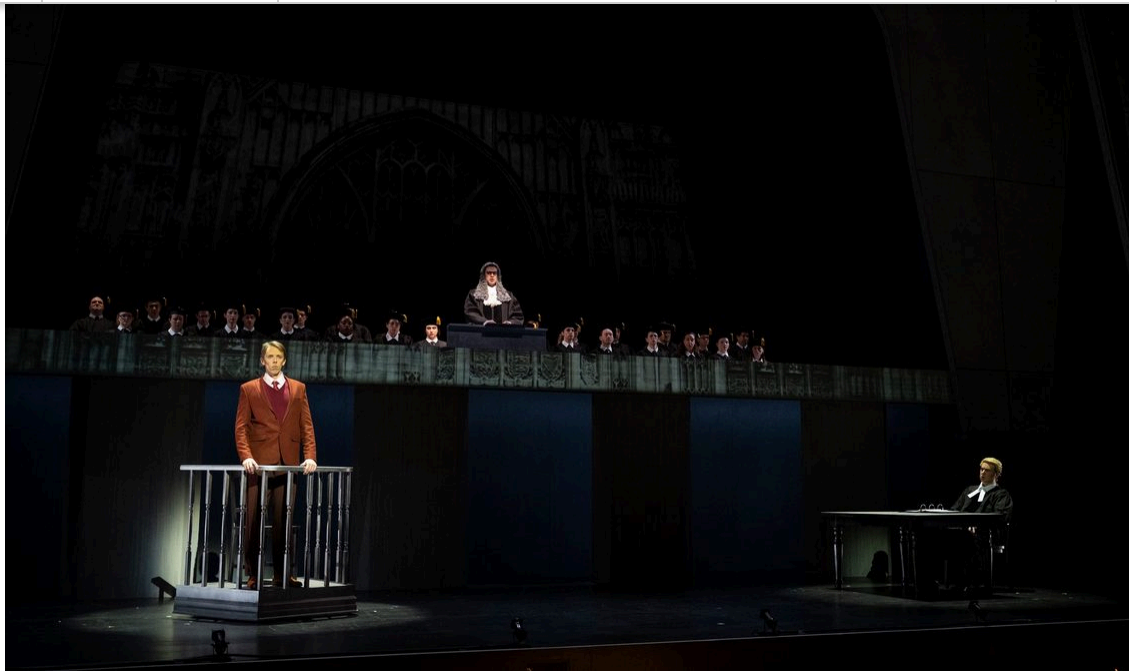
“...a gut-wrenching piece in a well-crafted production, with two major themes that couldn’t be more contemporary: the LGBTQ+ struggle for justice and our rapidly evolving relationship with artificial intelligence... Chen’s orchestral and choral music is, by turns, innovative and lyrical, and the rest of her vocal score... is dramatic. Baritone Jonathan Michie fully projects Turing’s social awkwardness and his emotional pain - sharply drawn by librettist David Simpatico...”

Chicago Reader



“This British genius is the subject of a new and gripping opera. The world premiere of “The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing” was a clear audience success for Chicago Opera Theater. Chen has created a gorgeous musical backdrop to Turing’s story, and presents his life through stirring music, roiling with excitement. Her musical vocabulary is tonal and accessible as well as imaginative and well thought out, offering musical and dramatic detail. The libretto is by David Simpatico, who clearly has deep respect for his subject. “The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing” was commissioned by American Lyric Theater with additional support from COT’s Vanguard Initiative. Both institutions can be delighted with the results, as this new opera is one of the strongest I’ve seen in a few years.”

Hyde Park Herald



“...a surrealistic and sometimes zany account of the multihyphenate’s life. Simpatico wisely glosses over the finer points of Turing’s research in service of an engaging narrative, and Chen’s potent score flings the drama aloft with an appealingly broad expressive palette. She places a special emphasis on extended techniques: string players bow on the side of their instruments and wind players breathe tonelessly through their instruments; choristers drum their fingers on their music folders to mimic the muted sound of rain. Chen’s vocal writing likewise brims with inventive word-painting: The words “chat,” “chit,” and variations thereof recur in choral interludes throughout the opera, their crackling consonance echoing the clicking sounds of Turing’s code-breaking machines. The opera’s economical, elegant use of those choral interludes is particularly ingenious. Jonathan Michie, part of the project since its inception, played Turing’s eccentric charm to the hilt. The opera is a near unbroken two-hour showcase for the title role, and Michie’s big, handsomely blooming baritone seized the occasion... Turing was first commissioned by American Lyric Theater in 2012, then incubated there and at COT over the intervening decade. Those extra years were apparently put to good use.”

Musical America



“...emotionally stirring... with decidedly modern music by Justine F. Chen and a libretto by David Simpatico, the production, directed by Peter Rothstein, featured a strong cast and an excellent orchestra conducted by COT’s ever adventurous music director, Lidiya Yankovskaya... at the center of this production was the powerfully acted and ideally sung performance by Jonathan Michie as Turing. A tall, gaunt baritone, Michie captured the workings of Turing’s extraordinary brain that enabled him to break the Nazi Enigma code (and a great deal more). At the same time, Michie suggested Turing’s personal turmoil and the formidable but catastrophic honesty that would ultimately lead to his destruction. Sadly, this debut of “The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing” had just two performances... it deserves to be remounted both in Chicago and beyond in coming seasons.”

WTTW PBS Chicago

**VIEW THE PROGRAM FROM THE COT
WORLD PREMIERE**

WITH GRATITUDE

Charitable Lead Trusts, and the American Composers Forum with funds provided by the Jerome Foundation.

The Life and Death(s) of Alan Turing was developed under the auspices of the Composer Librettist Development Program at American Lyric Theater in New York City, made possible through lead funding from the Mellon Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, The Howard Gilman Foundation, The New York State Council on the Arts, The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music.

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO SO
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