



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sept. 25, 2018

Contact: Sarah Mills Bacha
614.563.1066
smbacha@earthlink.net

CATCO, Evolution Theatre Co-Produce *Breaking the Code* Oct. 24-Nov. 11

Drama explores the genius, complexities of Alan Turing, computer science pioneer and WWII code breaker

Mathematical genius Alan Turing was a pioneer in the field of computer science and artificial intelligence, whose work breaking Nazi code during World War II saved countless lives and contributed to the Allied victory. His enormous contributions were classified, and therefore virtually unknown, when he was prosecuted for his homosexuality in 1952, a crime in the United Kingdom at the time.

He ultimately plummeted into ruin after his secret life was discovered and died at age 41. He was posthumously pardoned in 2013; the 2017 law that retroactively pardoned those prosecuted under the previous gross indecency law is referred to as the Alan Turing Law.

Next month, CATCO and Evolution Theatre Company will introduce central Ohioans to the stage version of Alan Turing's story, in a co-production of *Breaking the Code* by Hugh Whitmore. Turing also was the subject of a bestselling book, *Alan Turing: The Enigma*, by Andrew Hodges, and a 2014 blockbuster film, *The Imitation Game*, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Keira Knightley.

"Breaking the Code explores the complexities of Alan Turing, revealing a brilliant scientist who made indescribable contributions to computer science, mathematics and humanity during World War II, while at the same time wrestled with his homosexuality and the norms that society demanded," said Joe Bishara, *Breaking the Code* director and associate producing director at CATCO.

"Fascinating and multifaceted, *Breaking the Code* reveals the many sides of Turing through his relationships with co-workers, his mother and his lovers, adding dimension to one of history's most misunderstood and mistreated geniuses," said Mark Phillips Schwamberger, Evolution Theatre producer, managing artistic director and executive director.

Breaking the Code, first produced in 1986 in Britain, was nominated for three Tony Awards and generated much praise from critics after it arrived in New York City. "Elegant and poignant," said *Time* magazine, while the *New York Daily News* called *Breaking the Code* "Powerful,

riveting drama.”

The co-production of *Breaking the Code*, which will be performed at the Van Fleet Theatre, Columbus Performing Arts Center, 549 Franklin Ave., Oct. 24-Nov. 11, is a first for the two theatre organizations, although CATCO and Evolution have collaborated in the past, most recently in 2017 when Bishara directed Evolution’s production of *Corpus Christi*.

Ian Short, a 1993 graduate of Otterbein University and a founding company member of Available Light Theatre, will perform the role of Alan Turing. Short’s theatre credits include *Comedy of Tenors*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, *Assassins* and *The Full Monty*.

He is joined by William Darby IV (Ron Miller), who appeared in CATCO is Kids’ productions of *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, *The Jungle Book* and *Isabella e la Bestia* and also performed in SRO’s production of *The Sound of Music* and in CATCO’s production of *Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike*. Becca Kravitz (Pat Green), a recent transplant from Chicago, is making her CATCO debut in *Breaking the Code*. She recently performed at Actors' Theatre of Columbus this past summer.

Josie Merkle (Sara Turing) has performed with many different Columbus theatre companies, among them Red Herring Productions (*The Road to Mecca*, *Chapatti*), Gallery Players (*Becoming Dr Ruth*), CATCO (*Steel Magnolias*), Evolution Theatre (*Sticks and Stones*), and Short North Stage (*Cabaret*, *Divine Sister*, *Die Mommie Die*). Dave Morgan (Delwyn Knox) has appeared on Columbus theatre stages for 50 years. He most recently performed in *Fool For Love* at Columbus Civic and *The Outgoing Tide* at Westerville Curtain Players. He is an adjunct English instructor at Columbus State Community College and artistic director at Original Productions Theater (OPT).

Andrew Protopapas (Nikos) is a former CATCO acting apprentice, who now works as CATCO and CATCO is Kids’ staff Artist Educator. Acting credits include *A Christmas Carol*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* and *Master Class* (CATCO); *Jungle Book* and *Honk!* (CATCO is Kids); *Les Misérables* (Star Players Theatre); and *Company* and *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* (Capital University). He directed *A Seussified Christmas Carol* at CATCO is Kids. Ralph Scott (Mick Ross), a graduate of The Second City in Chicago, has performed in *The Realistic Joneses*, *Baskerville*, *The Three Trials Of Oscar Wilde*, *The Final Table*, *Next Fall*, *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo*, *My Name Is Asher Lev*, *Evie’s Waltz*, *The Foursome* and *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee* at CATCO. In addition to numerous regional and national commercial works, Ralph is active in independent movies in Columbus and throughout the Midwest.

Matthew Sierra (Christopher Morcom) was an acting apprentice at CATCO during the 2016-17 season. He performed in *Sex With Strangers*, an edgy, smart comedy and regional premiere at CATCO, and played one of the leads in CATCO’s 2016-17 season opener, *Gross Indecency: The Three Trials of Oscar Wilde*.

Bishara has worked at regional theatres in Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and Florida as an actor, director, producer, and administrator. At CATCO, he directed *Sex with Strangers*, *The Realistic Joneses*, *Master Class*, [title of show], *I Love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change*, *Forbidden Broadway’s Greatest Hits, Vol.1*, and *A Christmas Carol* and appeared in *Daddy Long Legs, I Do! I Do!*, *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *Forbidden Broadway*, *The Story of My Life* and *Evil Dead: The Musical*. Other acting credits include *Titanic*, *The Rocky Horror Show* and *The Last Five Years*. Additional directing credits include *Corpus Christi*, *The Spitfire Grill*, *Bat Boy: The Musical*, *Sticks and Stones*, and *Ferguson: Truth Matters*

After more than 20 years in the corporate world, Schwamberger returned to The Ohio State University in 2007 to complete his degree, majoring in theatre. After graduating in 2008, he decided to remain in Columbus, to revitalize his theatrical career. Being no stranger to the struggles of “life in the theatre” after spending years in NYC, seasons in summer stock and traveling with various companies in the East, South and Midwest, he made a bold move in 2011, establishing Evolution Theatre Inc., a non-profit corporation specializing in producing new or seldom-seen works. In 2015, he decided to make an even bolder move, re-branding the company and establishing a new mission. Now Evolution Theatre Company is central Ohio’s only LGBTQQIA theatre company, and the only theatre in the area dedicated exclusively to presenting works that celebrate the community’s past, present and future, as well as presenting works that strive to bring dignity to and tolerance and acceptance for LGBTQQIA individuals.

Breaking the Code ticket prices are Wednesdays, \$20; Thursdays, \$30; Sunday, \$35; and Fridays and Saturdays, \$40. Student tickets can be purchased for \$15 for any performance based on availability and valid I.D. All tickets can be purchased online at www.catcoistheatre.org, at the box office at 39 E. State St. next to the Ohio theatre, by calling 614.469.0939, visiting ticketmaster.com or calling or visiting any central Ohio Ticketmaster location.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids’ 34th season is sponsored by support from The Ohio Arts Council, which helps fund the theatre with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, education excellence, and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans, and supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

CATCO also appreciates the support of the Helen E. Sandfort Arts-in-Education and Florence E.K. Hurd Funds of The Columbus Foundation, assisting donors and others in strengthening our community for the benefit of all of its citizens, and the Greater Columbus Arts Council, supporting the city’s artists and arts organizations since 1973. Other supporters include The Shubert Foundation Inc. and Nationwide Insurance Foundation.

CATCO and CATCO is Kids’ season sponsor is L Brands; season partner is the Columbus Metropolitan Library; and media sponsor is WOSU public media. CATCO is Kids’ presenting partner is The City of Columbus Recreation and Parks. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org.

About CATCO

CATCO is central Ohio’s professional Equity theatre company, providing quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatre organization has adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development. For more information, visit catcoistheatre.org. Together, CATCO and CATCO is Kids provide quality theatre and educational programs for all ages. The theatres have adopted an innovative strategy, building creative alliances that can sustain growth and development.

CATCO Mission Statement

Theatre is a shared experience that illuminates the mysteries of our humanity. Its magic has the power to transform us whether on stage, in the classroom or in our diverse communities. CATCO creates theatre that delights, challenges, and transports.

About Evolution Theatre Company

Evolution Theatre Company is central Ohio’s award-winning LGBTQQIA professional theatre company, dedicated to supporting the area’s lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex, ally community. Sponsors are the Greater Columbus Arts Council, Ohio

Arts Council, Legacy Fund of The Columbus Foundation, The Columbus Foundation and Arch
and Bruce Brown Foundation.