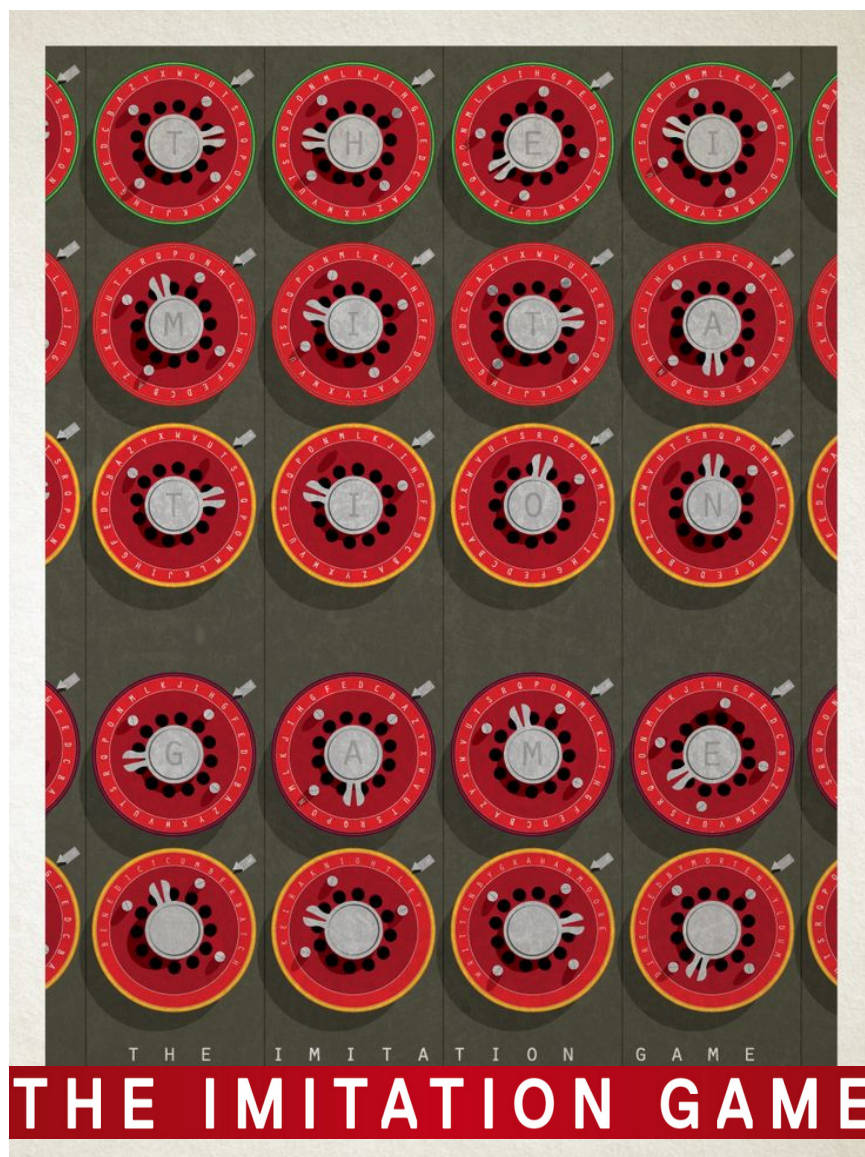


Berklee
College of Music

Valencia

Paolo Annunziato Minardi

Master in Scoring for Film, Television & Videogames



Culminating Experience

SOUNDTRACK ANALYSIS

The Sound of Psychological Thriller

The Imitation Game

Music by *Alexandre Desplat (2014)*

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One last bit of acknowledgments goes to the man behind the story. I pledge all my admiration and my esteem to you Mr. Alan Turing.

LIST OF CUES

FROM OST COLLECTION [C.D. Reference Required]

<u>TITLE + CUE NAME IN REEL</u>	<u>TIMECODE IN + DURATION</u>
1) Alan A (1m1).....	(01:00:02:21)
2) The Imitation Game (1m2).....	(01:04:32:07)
3) U-Boats (1m5).....	(01:14:47:00)
4) Carrots & Peas (2m1).....	(01:23:18:12)
5) Crosswords A (2m2).....	(01:25:43:11)
6) Crosswords B (2m3).....	(01:29:56:11)
7) Joan A (2m7).....	(01:37:13:11)
8) Night Research (2m8).....	(01:40:22:07)
9) Headmaster (3m3).....	(01:48:53:21)
10) The Machine Christopher (3m4).....	(01:50:57:10)
11) A Different Equation A (3m5).....	(01:55:22:14)
12) A Different Equation B (3m7).....	(01:59:47:15)
13) Alan B (4m1).....	(02:04:09:04)
14) Joan B (4m3).....	(02:12:19:05)
15) A Different Equation C (4m5).....	(02:13:23:20)
16) Mission (4m6).....	(02:16:44:13)
17) The Apple A (4m7).....	(02:21:33:03)
18) Becoming A Spy A (4m8).....	(02:24:59:10)
19) Becoming A Spy B (5m1).....	(02:26:02:10)
20) Becoming A Spy C (5m2).....	(02:28:06:02)
21) End of War A (5m6).....	(02:34:19:15)
23) End of War B (5m7).....	(02:37:02:09)
24) Farewell To Christopher A (5m8).....	(02:39:32:17)
25) Farewell To Christopher B (5m9).....	(02:43:10:06)
26) The Apple B (5m10).....	(02:45:11:08)
27) Alan C (6m2).....	(02:49:05:07)
28) Alan Turing's Legacy (6m3).....	(02:51:37:13)

ADDITIONAL CUES

1) 1m3.....	(01:09:57:12)
2) 1m4.....	(01:14:08:17)
3) 1m6.....	(01:18:05:16)
4) 2m4.....	(01:32:56:11)
5) 2m5.....	(01:34:42:17)
6) 2m6.....	(01:35:46:04)
7) 3m1.....	(01:42:43:20)
8) 3m2.....	(01:47:21:22)
9) 5m3 (Becoming A Spy D).....	(02:29:22:17)
10) 5m4 (Crosswords C).....	(02:33:24:07)

11) 5m5 (Crosswords D).....	(02:33:24:07)
12) 6m1	(02:47:02:02)

ADDITIONAL SOUNDTRACK

1) 3m6 (<i>Opportunity</i> – Alexander Norris).....	(01:56:27:17)
2) 3m8 (<i>Eddies Boogie</i> – Eddie Palermo).....	(02:01:13:03)
3) 3m9 (<i>Time to Go</i> – Andrew Snitzer & Tom Gloia).....	(02:03:40:11)
4) 4m2 (<i>Coffee Meditation</i> – Milan Svoboda).....	(02:09:28:15)

LIVE RECORDINGS

Film Symphony Orchestra, *The Imitation Game Suite*, Recorded at the *Palau de la Música* in Valencia, 10/28/2015

OTHER CUEs FROM OST C.D. (not used in the film)

1) Enigma (Track #02 in OST C.D.).....	
2) Alone With Numbers (Track #10 in OST C.D.).....	
3) Running (Track #12 in OST C.D.).....	
4) Because Of You (Track #20 in OST C.D.).....	

1) Introduction – *A Premise and a Purpose*

“Sometimes it is the very people no one can imagine anything of who do the things that no one can imagine.”

Alan Turing

Alan Turing is to be recognized as the direct and indirect creator of modern society.

Turing broke the German Navy, Air force and Army Enigma codes and handed the allies an advantage in the Second World War, which are rightly his most remembered and celebrated accomplishments.

But he's also the father of computer science and he significantly advanced the field of artificial intelligence, a phrase that hadn't even been coined until after his death.

Before continuing I'd like to state 3 main purposes relative to my research.

Firstly I want to pledge honor and gratitude to the man behind the machine that changed the world forever. To us, aspiring film composers living in the 21st century, the computer is our closest ally and without it our craft simply would not exist.

As a second point I'd like to point out that during my research I figured out that, as I appended more and more about the immense vastness of Turing's work, I recognized a pattern of similarity between his world and the world of the composer for motion pictures. We are often left to our own devices of creativity in taking important decisions. Arranging intricate harmonies to best suit the film in a certain way feels like decrypting a secret message. We have an undisclosed job, hidden behind the more distinct picture on the screen, which however deviates the audience's experience into a specific direction. The same way that Alan Turing's contribution to winning the war was pure secrecy occulted behind the way more palpable action on the field of the allied forces. For this reason I felt greater compassion for Alan Turing as a Character, and I believe that any aspiring composer might feel the same attachment to this personage.

Last but not least, another reason for which I decided to study this film was because of my great recognition of Alexandre Desplat as a Composer. I began to appreciate his style and his signature sound fairly later on in my academic studies, and I really wanted to go in greater depths upon discovering this great artist and the way he approaches the score. In addition to that, this movie is an absolute crucial one to compose for, since a the majority of the events take place in Alan Turing's mind and requires a considerable amount of research on the character and on his groundbreaking achievements in science. I retain this film the perfect opportunity to study the great music of Alexandre Desplat.

There's one last thing to mention before we continue. In this paper I will be discussing the similarity between *The Imitation Game* and the 2001 classic *A Beautiful Mind* in terms of plot, character development and soundtrack. *The Imitation Game* is therefore a terrific film to analyze considering the fact that it could be studied in parallel with the aforementioned acclaimed classic from 2001 as a modern day take on the following topic:

Does the score of the film *The Imitation Game* successfully portrays the internal struggles, thoughts, enlightenment and ingenious mind of Alan Turing?

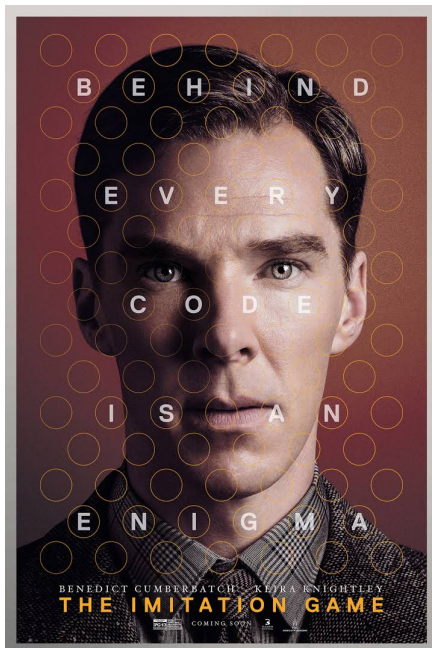


Figure 1.1: The Imitation Game poster from IMDB page

Figure 1.2: Alan Turing portrait, http://www.pointofinquiry.org/deciphering_alan_turing_with_andrew_hodges/

2) The Imitation Game: Synopsis - *W.W.II, 1939 to 1945*

Based on the real life story of legendary cryptanalyst Alan Turing, the film portrays the extraordinary race against time at Britain's top-secret Bletchley Park facility during the darkest days of World War II.

Three specific time periods in the life of Mathematics professor Alan Turing are presented. The first is the beginning of WWII. A skilled cryptographer is hired by the British intelligence to work in a unit, whose secret program is to hack what is considered as the unbreakable secret code behind the Nazis' communications machine, Enigma. There are 159,000,000,000,000,000 possible codes that could be input into Enigma. Having decoded said machine the Allied forces gained an enormous advantage that led to war to be shortened of several years.

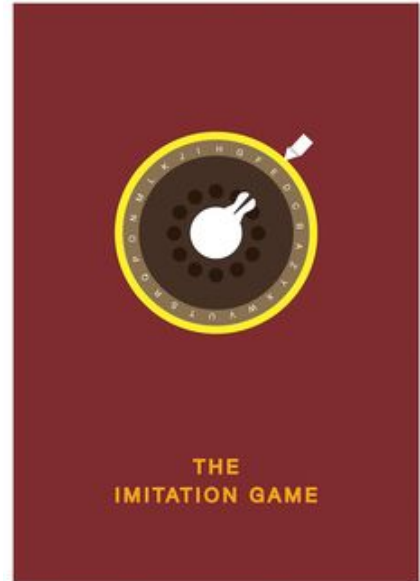


Figure 2.1: Illustrative Panel of Imitation Game, One of the rotors belonging to the Machine that defeated Enigma, official *The Imitation Game* website

Alan (Benedict Cumberbatch) is an arrogant, antisocial and solitary man that end up being the burden of the team's existence. While the rest of the team works on simpler and more practical approach, believing that being the only solution to learn the secret of Enigma, Alan works by himself on developing a machine which he believes is what is required not just to break a daily code, but break immediately any code upon input into Enigma. Funding the machine to the tune of £100,000 seems to be the only problem. After having had his funds denied several times by commander Denniston (Charles Dance) and Hugh Alexander (Matthew Goode), who is hired as the team's initial leader, Alan decides to write a letter directly to Winston Churchill seeking a promotion. Turing finds himself in charge of the task force and redesigns the organization of the work unit, firing incompetent cryptographers and looking for fresh staff through a bizarre method. A crossword puzzle is published anonymously on the

newspaper. Whoever solves it quickly enough will receive an interview leading to a position in the Enigma task force. Joan Clarke (Keira Knightley), a twenty-something gifted woman fresh

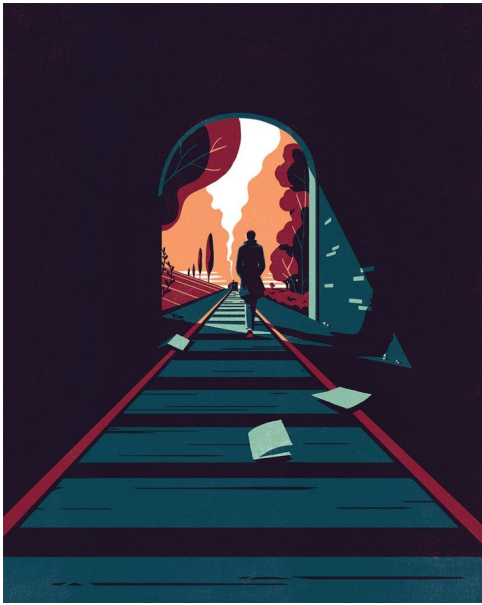


Figure 2.2: Illustration of Alan Turing walking in a railway tunnel, official *The Imitation Game* website

out of university is one of the lucky winners of the selection. With the inclusion of Joan Clarke, the only female character in the movie, the tone of the film changes significantly. Joan provides Alan with the right behavior socially to get things accomplished in a team setting. Joan's participation in the project is threatened by traditional values, not by chauvinistic thoughts from her male team members, but that of her parents, who see her place in the world as someone's wife.

The second installment of the film is 1928, when Alan is a youth attending boarding school. Even then, he is seen as being different and is bullied because of it. His only real friend at the school is Christopher Morcom, "Christopher" which is what he would end up naming his machine, more than just because Christopher Morcom was his friend.

The third is 1951, after Alan's Manchester home is reported burgled by his neighbor. Alan is quickly to dismiss the police since nothing was stolen, but lead investigator, Detective Robert Nock, believes Alan is hiding something. What the police discover has tragic consequences for Alan's life, but not without Nock wanting first to know what is hidden beneath the information on the surface. The investigation leads to Alan Turing telling detective Nock the entire story on how he was involved as a massive deterrent during WWII. However, nothing saves Alan from the cruel destiny that awaits him once a male escort (which happened to have spent the night with Alan) confesses his own involvement in the burglary thus revealing Alan Turing's homosexuality. He's eventually sentenced to a forced treatment with hormonal

therapy.

Alan killed himself in 1954, after a year of government-mandated hormonal therapy. Between 1885 and 1967, approximately 49,000 homosexual men in the UK were convicted and imprisoned of gross indecency under British law. In 2013, Queen Elizabeth II granted a posthumous royal pardon, honoring Alan Turing for his achievements during the war. Historians estimate that breaking Enigma shortened the war by more than two years, saving over 14 million lives. It remained a government-held secret for more than 50 years. Turing's work inspired generations of research into what scientists called "Turing machines", now known as computers.

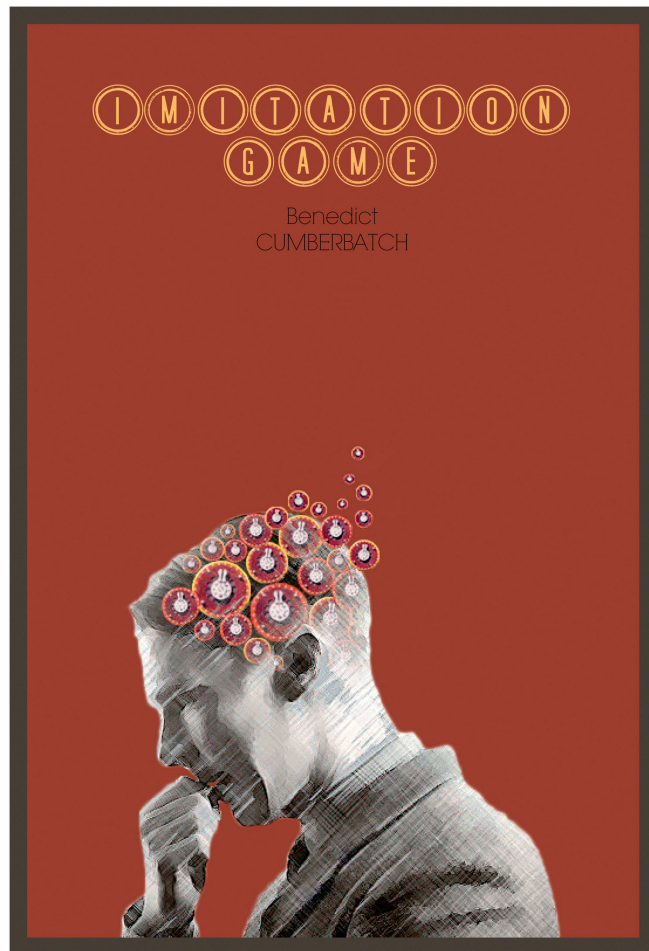


Figure 2.3: Alternative stylized movie poster, official *The Imitation Game* website

3) Alexandre Desplat - *A Short Biography*

Composer, orchestrator and conductor, Academy Award winner, Alexandre Desplat, eight-time Academy Award Nominee, with over hundred scores and numerous awards to his credit is one of the most worthy heirs of the French film scoring masters.

His approach to film composition is based on his understanding of Cinema, which allows him to intimately communicate with directors. Inspired by the works of Maurice Jarre, Bernard Herrmann, Nino Rota or Georges Delerue, he expressed his desire to compose for Cinema early on.

Raised in a musical and cultural mix with a Greek mother and French father who studied and were married in California. He studied piano and trumpet before choosing the flute as main instrument and enriched his classical musical education by studying Brazilian and African Music. While composing for Cinema and Television he started writing a lot for Theater companies such as *La Comédie Française*, which allowed him to understand the importance of dramaturgy and how to adapt carefully his music to actors performances.



Figure 3.1: Alexandre Desplat, <http://deadline.com/2015/02/alexandre-desplat-imitation-game-grand-budapest-hotel-oscar-double-nominee-1201374722/>

During the recording of his first feature film, he met a rare violinist, Dominique "Solrey" Lemonnier, starting an exceptional artistic exchange. She became his favorite soloist, concertmaster, artistic director and wife. With her special sense of interpretation and her creative spirit, she has inspired Desplat's compositions, influencing his music at its core.

After scoring 50 European films, with legendary French directors such as Philippe de Broca or Francis Girod, he burst in 2003 onto the Hollywood scene with his evocative score to Peter Webber's *Girl with a Pearl Earring* which earned him nominations at the Golden Globes, BAFTAs and European Film Awards.

Desplat then started to expand his U.S. career keeping his European collaborations by composing for Stephen Gaghan's *Syriana*, Jonathan Glazer's *Birth*, Florent Siri's *Hostage*, and Jacques Audiard's *A Prophet*.

In 2007 he received his first Academy Award nomination for Stephen Frears' *The Queen*. The same year he won the Golden Globe, the Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award and the World Soundtrack Award for his score to John Curran's *The Painted Veil*, performed by Lang Lang.

With his score for Roman Polanski's *The Ghost Writer* in 2010, starting an inspiring relationship, he won a second César and a second European Film Award. The same year, he wrote the music for *Twilight-New Moon* by Chris Weitz, a platinum record, Anne Fontaine's *Coco Before Chanel* and for Tom Hooper's *The King's Speech* for which he won the BAFTA, the Grammy Award and receives his fourth Academy Award nomination and his fifth Golden Globes nomination.

As eclectic as prolific he wrote nine score in 2011 including Terence Malik's *Tree of Life*, Roman Polanski's *Carnage*, Wes Anderson's *Fantastic Mr Fox*, Daniel Auteuil's *The Well's Digger Daughter* and George Clooney's *The Ides of March*.

He signed in 2013 the scores of *The Monuments Men* by George Clooney, Roman Polanski's *Venus in Fur*, Stephen Frears' *Philomena*, for which he received his seventh BAFTA and his fifth Oscar nominations.

In 2014 he scored Gareth Edwards's blockbuster *Godzilla*, and received a rare double Academy Award nomination for his scores of Morten Tyldum's *The Imitation Game* and Wes Anderson's *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, which earned him a BAFTA, a Grammy and his first Oscar.

Member of the jury at the Festival de Cannes 2012, he became the first composer President of the Jury at the *Mostra di Venezia* in 2014. Celebrating their longtime partnership he has conducted the London Symphony Orchestra for a concert of his works at the Barbican Theater in London in December 2014. A suite version of *The Imitation Game* was performed the same night.



Figure 3.2: Alexandre Desplat recording the score for *The Imitation Game* (Getty Images) <http://deadline.com/2015/02/alexandre-desplat-imitation-game-grand-budapest-hotel-oscar-double-nominee-1201374722/>

4) The Approach To The Score

The approach to the score for the Imitation Game came in separate sections: on one hand there was a great and delicate work happening during the pre-production. Before Alexandre Desplat was even approached in the first place, the production team worked very closely with L.A. based Music Editor Richard Ford.

“I came on during the early stages. It’s a kind of sacred time when the director and the editor put together their vision of the film. I worked closely with Morten Tilden and picture editor Billy Goldenberg. I try different musical approaches to various scenes - I usually pick about 8 or 10 scenes throughout the film - and then when I’ve found music that feels like it works, I’ll finesse those to the scene and play for the director and editor. To get feedback, good or bad, is a great place to start honing the temp score and ultimately influencing the final film score.”

He carries on similar lines regarding the assemblage of the temp score:

“I used Mychael Danna, Johann Johannsson and Thomas Newman. Something orchestral and appropriate for the time period the film was set in. I can’t remember all off the scores I used - though I did use Johannsson’s ‘Prisoners’ and Newman’s ‘The Debt’. It’s always good to try things a little outside the box as well, to push the envelope and hopefully steer things away from the obvious or typical ‘movie music’ that can get a bit stale.”¹

Alexandre Desplat was contacted several times to score this film but it wasn’t until the third attempt that he finally accepted to score the movie.

“So then I read the script, and I cannot do the film, and I pass, because I had another commitment coming and I said that I couldn’t do it. Then they gave me the film and I watched it. I thought to myself how fantastic the film was. But I can’t do it and I pass again. And then, the movie that I’m committed to gets pushed back a little and I can finally say yes. And we have 3 weeks to write and record!”²

¹ Email correspondence with Richard Ford, Appendix A.

² Radio Interview *Song Explorer* 02/09/2015.

When we start analyzing the actual fundament of the film we could take some assumption regarding how the *Pre-Scoring* must've worked out, since it is clearly an extremely intricate film to score due to the clashing timeline of events (as of we've already discussed in the synopsis). Here's another interview by Desplat talking about the various challenges he had to face during the spotting session:

“In this particular film, the structure is extremely complex. It seems clear and simple, but it's actually complex. There are a lot of flashbacks that resonate with something in the flash-forwards and I needed to get a handle on the person. I think that's almost one of the most extensive things I do when I start working on a film is to find how I'm going to start and how I'm going to end, and how I'm going to be able to run this thread that's all along the film and find the musical expression, whatever the mood is. It could be darker or more tragic or more heroic. There's a sense of continuity.”³

In terms of sound palette utilized for this film, considering the previous assumption by Richard Ford on the temp score, there are quite a few things to talk about. We have to keep in mind first of all that this is a War Movie, but at the same time it's a Biographical take on the life of the mathematician. Therefore it is quite interesting to imagine how Desplat generated a universe made of Mathematical War without losing the intimacy with the character:

*“The war is just a pretext for the whole story, because the bulk of it is Alan Turing's trauma, his genius, his dream for an invention of the century, and the way this theme comes together and his relationships with other human beings that I think is the crucial thing to do. I never thought the orchestra should be big. I thought we should focus on him and that's it. There are those moments where we have a bit more scope for the film, but it had to be focused. The other thing is that it's very hard to understand what's happening in someone's brain and what goes into their experience and their death, and the music has to say a lot. There's something else I've learned doing movies like *The King's Speech* where the characters can't express themselves very well or vaguely. Alan Turing's brain is*

moving so fast. I just wanted to convey that feeling. That's why we have this very fast, computerized piano playing and arpeggios all over the place and then have an orchestra around that, because I felt the electronic stuff was not sufficient to express the period. Otherwise, what we see on screen will seem too cold, too gimmicky, and too trendy somehow. So, it wasn't a big size orchestra, but it's what you need to give movement and exploration. You move the depth of field to express more depth and more scope.”³

Some of the topics discussed in this last part of the interview will be discussed in greater depths in the following chapters. For the moment, this assumption are focused enough to understand which direction the scoring was ending up towards; digital piano, Medium sized Orchestra and a general feeling of intimacy with the character without loosing too much focus on the main issue of the Enigma machine and the war.

Throughout my research I managed to get in touch with various member of the “*Desplat Scoring Team*”, and this networking helped me understand how the organization and communication works like in a top-notch film composition environment to the point that I managed to create a conceptual scheme of how the team works (Appendix C).

In a recent E-mail correspondence with Romain Allender (Alexandre Desplat's Assistant) I managed to obtain the following information:

“Here is how we work all together at Desplat's team. Everything goes in concentric circles: Alexandre Desplat is the composer. His wife Solrey is also involved in project as a music producer. I am his main assistant, and Xavier Forcioli coordinates all the music. Pete Cobbin is the responsible for the recording/mixing at Abbey Road Studios. Kirsty Walley is the main music editor and Jean- Pascal Beintus is the head of orchestration. In addition we have Peter Clarke responsible of the Auricle and printing parts, and finally Marc Stevens is the contractor.”⁴

³ Interview: Collider, “Composer Alexandre Desplat Talks THE IMITATION GAME”

Here we can analyze how the team seems to be constructed around a specific hierarchy; the composition on top, then the assistantship, the orchestration, and finally at the end, the music editing and recording/mixing.

“Alexandre is involved in ALL parts of the process. First of all, he writes all the music; no one else created music for him for this specific movie. He’s also the only one linked to director Morten Tyldum during the composition process. He discuss things with everybody then submit on his own the ideas to discuss with the director.”

“The workflow is extremely fast. Between the beginning of the composition to the end of the recording it took approximately 1 month/1 month and a half. So everything has to go really quick and everybody works very hard. It is intense! I am close to him from the very beginning. We discuss about all technical problems we will encounter; line up, delays, orchestrations, reels, etc...”⁴

The best way to analyze in more depths the music from *The Imitation Game* would be taking a look at the Main Theme from the score, which is played in a somehow operatic way at the very beginning of the film. It works as an overture to the whole story and it encases the main motifs that will be revisited in different cues along the film.

Going back to the correspondence with Allender, this is what he had to say about the main theme:

“The main theme (the opening) is the first cue I've heard, even before watching the film. The first thing I thought was: what a wonderful theme, very lyrical! I loved it. But couldn't figure out how this kind of theme would have worked on a war movie. It was very unusual. Then I watched the movie and I understood where Alexandre wanted to bring it: to the human side. There are very few scenes where we are confronted with actual war in the movie in a visual way. The feeling of war is far more important than the war itself. It sets up frame and tension, but the two redundant things, to me, are the true story of the cryptanalysis of Enigma, and the homosexuality of Turing, and the whole score reflects that.”⁴

⁴ Email Correspondence with Romain Allender. Appendix A.

This affirmation contains quite a lot of issues with the narrative of the film. In other words, the opening cue needs to enhance the feeling of sympathy towards the character and towards the adventure he’s about to embark on.

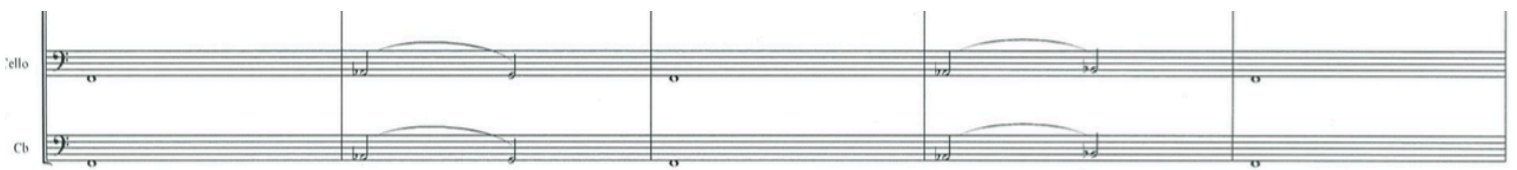


Figure 4.1: Filming of the Opening scene in King's Cross, London by Keith Mayhew

Figure 4.2: Benedict Cumberbatch as Alan Turing during the opening shots, [http://wayves.ca/sites/wayves.ca/files/2014-12_turing.jpg]

Alexandre Desplat explains extremely carefully the main concept behind the thematic material contained in the opening scene. In this section of the chapter we will omit the consideration to be made regarding the piano part, which will be discussed later on. This is another extract from the radio interview with *Song Explorer*:

“The Main Theme is a Mix of Joy and Melancholia. I used to turn the picture off and work without looking at it, and then I tried to picture the theme anywhere in any point of the film. If it works anywhere then it means that you’ve found the tone of the film. A piece of theme should be playing at any point, even from the beginning to the end and still make sense. [...] I wanted to have something with some “Gravitas”. Something solemn, in a certain way something that serves like a hymn to the picture. This motif carried by the Bass, Cello and French Horns is the base of the Main Theme.”²



Example 4.1: Cello and Contrabass line from Main Theme

The consideration made regarding the Theme to be considered as a hymn is quite fascinating. Even the second line, which is a tiny bit more complicated than the Bass part, is extremely simple and memorable.



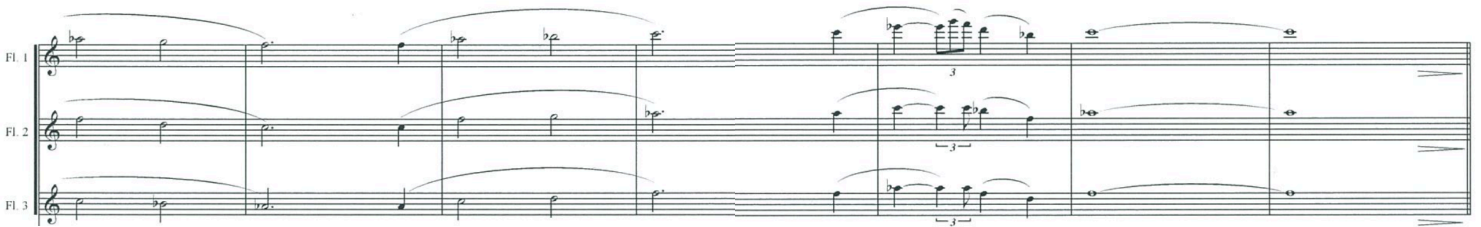
Example 4.2: Second part of the Main Theme played by the first Violins and flutes.

On this second section of the theme, Romain Allender, can give us some more insight regarding the thought in the making. Again, this is another one of his contributions from the email correspondence:

*“I always deplore, nowadays, the absence of significant theme in movies. Usually, when leaving the cinema no one can sing the main theme he has heard. For many reasons in many movies we have lost the desire to score a recognizable and defined theme. In *The Imitation Game* the main theme comes back countless times, and is very different from the rest of the music. A different color which is always easily identifiable.*

We can feel the flautist Alexandre is in it. It has got something in it beautifully dramatic, like a very sad smile, full of hope. Because this is dramatic, Alan is dramatic, the story is dramatic, and we know it has we walk between past and present during whole movie.”⁴

The next part of the theme is quite a crucial one. The scene follows Alan Turing inside the train carriage until he spots a young kid (children were being deported from London to avoid the bombings by the Germans) who's studying math, unlike the rest of the other boys. The uniqueness of this kid reminds Alan Turing of his own childhood, which, as the film goes on, we will apprehend that it is indeed a tragic one. The short thematic variation that plays on top is the following.



Example 4.3: Flute line in Main Theme Variation

In Alexandre Desplat's words from the same radio interview:

“In this opening title we see Alan Turing getting on a train. We don't know anything about him yet. Not much. And we see as he walks down the corridor of the train as he looks in the compartments. In one compartment there's a group of young boys, and there's one of the boy who's not included in the group. He's scribbling some mathematics on his pad. Alan is looking at this boy with some sort of kindness and compassion. I thought that the orchestra had to be quieter there and I decided to give it a little breath. I had 3/4 playing this short variation. This little motif here is the one we'll be hearing during the flashbacks to Alan Turing's childhood, and it'll be really important. I didn't want to stop the continuity of the arpeggios in the main theme. But at the same time I wanted the listener to feel that the music keeps on being intriguing and it keeps on going on.”



Example 4.4: Celesta part playing in call and answer with the flutes line

“So it was a necessity to have this answer on the celesta, which is nothing more than an excerpt of the piano ostinato that plays since the very beginning. I just took some notes off so it's pretty much the same thing but simplified.”²

The main theme plays throughout the entire length of the opening sequence setting up the mood quite nicely for the story that is about to be told. In a short sequence Alexandre Desplat manages to convey various emotions and sets up the mood quite nicely.

The viewer establishes a relationship with the main character way before he has even spoke a word, and we assume a series of statements about him: he's an outcast scientist of some sort who's not fighting the war, unlike the men of his own age (he's taking a train full of children to evacuate a warzone), and he's got some sort of attachment to the childish figure of himself that reminds him of a troubled nurture he's had. That is already quite a large chunk of information that the composer sets up for us.

The final part of the opening cue contains a few more details to point out. Here's some development in the motif.



The image displays a musical score for two instruments: Piano (Pno.) and Synth. The score is divided into two systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The Piano part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The Synth part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The music is in a minor key, indicated by the key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score shows a development of a piano ostinato motif, with the Piano part playing a more melodic line and the Synth part playing a more rhythmic, ostinato-like line. The music is divided into two systems, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The Piano part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The Synth part features a melodic line in the treble clef and a bass line in the bass clef. The music is in a minor key, indicated by the key signature of one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score shows a development of a piano ostinato motif, with the Piano part playing a more melodic line and the Synth part playing a more rhythmic, ostinato-like line.

Example 4.5: Development of the Piano Ostinato towards the end of the Cue

“There’s a new motif played by the Piano now. There’s something lighter now, something more flourished. This variation lets us now that we’re watching a dark story but there’s some lightness to it.”²

At this point of the sequence Alan is approaching the secret facility of Bletchley Park and the overall tone of the music goes down in favor of the mysterious entrance into this war building full of secrecy and occult.

“We turn the character a little bit more towards the suspense and the anticipation. We bring in the Vibraphone dirtying the pretty sound of the Piano”



Figure 4.3: Alan Turing approaching Bletchley Park for the first time, screenshot of the film.

The following is a final observation from Alexandre Desplat regarding the overall tone achieved in the opening sequence of the film. The overall consideration of the main theme should reflect the events that take place during the rest of the film. He’s opinion on the matter is the following:

“The music had several layers of storyline dispersed in time. There are many flash-backs and flash-forwards. The movie allows the music to play several different counterpoints. It’s the movie that gives me the path to follow with the story of Alan Turing who is an unsung hero. Someone that everybody should have praised for what he did, for many years. And he was persecuted instead.”²

5) The Decoding of *Enigma*

A specific function of the music in *The Imitation Game* is to represent the insurmountable endeavor that took place during the various years of attempt at decoding the *Enigma* machine. Obviously we might concentrate our focus on *Alan Turing* in particular, but it is also important to acknowledge that, in various chunks of the picture, the unscrambling of the German device is actually a shared enterprise between a collective equipé.

Let's take in account the cues *Crosswords & End Of War*, which represent sections of the film where the encrypting is a collaborative job, instead of being a personal mind-crusade embarked by Turing alone. It is vital that the reader has understood the difference between being a participant in the decrypting or being a spectator to Alan's personal thoughts, which most of the times are in fact narrated.

Going back to our initial intent, we are discussing whether or not the music successfully portrays the collaborative effort of two characters, a small team, a top-secret institution or even an entire Nation towards the resolution of Enigma.

In *Crosswords* the main aim of the music is to describe the recruitment process in which the Bletchley Park team seeks newer elements to add to the Enigma task force. In my Pro Tools session this cue is named 2m2 (25 minutes from the beginning). The pictures show a series of ordinary British citizens involved in the solution of a crosswords puzzle on a newspaper. The music here gravitates mainly on

TELEGRAPH CROSSWORD 5,062
13 JANUARY 1942

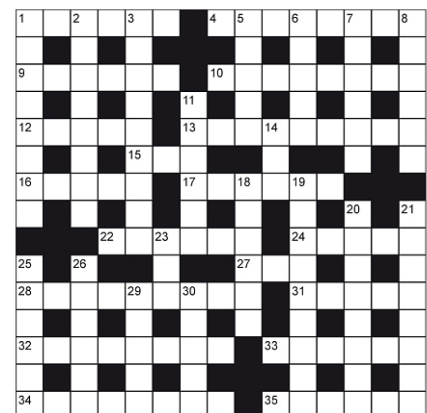


Figure 5.1: Original Crossword Puzzle used as a Turing test for scouting staff, published on The Telegraph in 1942, image by The Telegraph

the communal effort of a nation that, through war, still manages to find the strength and the will to pursue the day-to-day life, whilst patiently waiting for the conclusion of its sufferings.

The cue begins with a recognizable ostinato in 6/8 played on the Celesta and layered with Glock and synths.

The image displays two systems of musical notation in 6/8 time. The first system consists of two staves: the upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the lower staff is in bass clef with a key signature of two flats. The upper staff features a melodic line with a slur over the first two measures and a fermata over the second measure. The lower staff contains a rhythmic ostinato pattern starting with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second system, starting at measure 5, follows the same structure but includes a key signature change to one flat (B-flat) in the second measure of both staves, indicated by a sharp sign over the B-flat in the upper staff and a sharp sign over the B-flat in the lower staff.

Example 5.1: Celesta, Glock and Synth ostinato played in *Crosswords*

The main accompaniment of the cue is composed of a pretty interesting layering of pizz double bass and bass synth that provide a great fulfillment of the low register. The sound achieved is pretty thick although the orchestration is pretty much empty. Surely the cue benefits from an incredible mix provided by Peter Cobbin and Tony Hulbert, the main two mixing engineer who have been working on this film.

Before continuing with the analysis of the cue I would like to take a moment to analyze the typical ostinatos in 6/8 that Alexandre Desplat uses in his cues. There's an

taken on by the English horn and concludes with a settling finale. The scene ends with Alan welcomed by MI6 agent Stuart Menzies (Mark Strong) at the recruiting facility in central London where the candidates for Bletchley Park are waiting to be examined. During the exam there's a timid reprise of the theme of *Crosswords* (nominated 2m3 in the cue list), which is narrowed down to having only the celesta and the glock playing (Example 1).

There's one small detail regarding the orchestration of the cues in general that I would like to point and its very well specified in the correspondence I had with Romain Allender. There's absolutely no brass at anytime in the entire soundtrack. This should be specified in correlation to the estrangement of the French horn from the Brass, but it surely picks another meaning once the matter is shared directly with the composer assistant, which discuss the meaning of the complexity of the music contrasting the small size of the ensembles recorded:

“All the tension moments, as in Enigma, U-Boats, Crosswords or the Machine Christopher, seem to be there just to support the scene in a rather discrete way, just to give the right feeling and at the same time to always be extremely elaborate nevertheless. The sound is searched and investigated; like using fewer instruments in order to say what it has to be said. There is no brass tone in the whole movie. Woodwinds, Strings and Piano are the main tones, which actually makes the whole score sounding extremely sweet. Even the Synths, and there is a lot, are just coloring the soundscape. All of that creates a relief, an other lecture of the film. This is, to me, a very intelligent way to score a movie, unexpected.”⁴

6) The Piano Machine – *A Digital Ostinato*

One of the most peculiar characteristics of the *Desplatian* ostinato in this minute example of the score for *The Imitation Game* is the case that, as a matter of fact, it isn't a real player performing it, but a rather imperceptible sequenced digital Piano instead. Although the actual ostinato is an agglomerate of Piano, Harp, Violas, Vibraphone, Marimba and Glockenspiel (as we've already discussed in chapter 4), the actual Piano part is indeed fabricated and utilized as a Stem during the recording. The French composer gives us a clear reason for this unorthodox choice.

In the Radio interview from Song explorer he stated:

“Alan Turing invented the computer; it's as simple as that. I wanted to have computerized elements without being too electronic, or too cheesy. Because it would've taken us away from what the film is offering. Intellectually you could say –oh, it's about computers, therefore we should score with only machines-. But then you watch the film and it's addressed to the 1930's. There's nothing trying to bring them to our modern world, so if the music would've been completely computerized (and I did try, because I wasn't sure) it was taking you away from the film instead of taking you inside. And the Pianos, I knew that if they'd been played by real musicians they wouldn't have been as stiff as a computer would do.”²

This is already a somewhat intriguing consideration, forasmuch as the majority of the Hollywood blockbuster's composers would never substitute a digitalized performance from the one of a genuine musician, but there are clear explanations to this imaginative choice that have both anecdotal and practical backgrounds.

Desplat carries on:

“Piano is a percussion. I mean; in this piece in particular it is percussion, it's not a melodic instrument. But the sound of the Piano is precise, and I needed that, and with a real piano it'd been difficult to get the evenness of the touch. It also conveys this capacity that a genius like Turing has to enjoy calculation, the research, etc. I wanted the audience to feel that too.”²



Example 6.1: Piano ostinato from the main theme

This particular ostinato is the one played in the main theme, and , although there are various different ostinatos in the other cues, this particular one will serve as a perfect example to our analysis.

The piano ostinato was sequenced by Romain Allender (Composer Assistant) and Jognic Bontemps (Score Programmer) using the Ivory patch from Synthology and was quantized on purpose to 100% in order to maintain this computerized feeling. It is quite interesting to take a look at the suite version of the score played by the *Film Symphony Orchestra*.

Example 6.2: Piano and Synth Part from the suite adaptation of the main theme

As in this case the part is played by an actual player, the score editor decided to split the piano part. The top line is now played in octaves whereas the lower part is transferred to a Synth. If we listen to the live recording of the performance we can slightly distinguish a proper lack of perfection in the keyboard parts, which surely works for the purpose of a live performance, but doesn't really provide the actual meaning of having the 100% robotic quantization. As we already stated in a previous quote of the French composer:

“Alan Turing’s brain is moving so fast. I just wanted to convey that feeling. That’s why we have this very fast, computerized piano playing and arpeggios all over the place and then have an orchestra around that, because I felt the electronic stuff was not sufficient to express the period. Otherwise, what we see on screen will seem too cold, too gimmicky, and too trendy somehow. So, it wasn’t

*a big size orchestra, but it's what you need to give movement and exploration.
You move the depth of field to express more depth and more scope."*

There aren't many other sections that differ in terms of how the piano is utilized. Some cues are extremely elaborate and it is clear that only a computerized piano would have made it possible to play the cue in such a way.

7) Conclusions - *Alan Turing*

I hope I've been able to describe how Alexandre Desplat managed to compose music exclusively dedicated to the pure description of Alan Turing inner state of mind. This is a different topic to talk about since in this particular area of interest we'll be talking about Opera-like themes and leitmotif which belongs more to an old-school scoring technique

This time, Desplat choses to score conceptually, writing for the character and not the scene. For all the time in which the scenes reveals the brilliancy of the inner workings of Alan Turing's mind. There are sections of the score that are patterned after Turing's logically scattered thought process, and are repeated whenever he interacts with his calculations. It is as if the whole outside world is put on hold and nothing else exists, and a melody plays lost in the vastness of the figurative unknown, as is the mathematician himself.

The score for *The Imitation Game* connotes feelings of wonder, pity, and finally, admiration for Alan Turing. We stand in awe of Alan's ability to manage his misunderstood illness, and we gain a new respect for Joan, who through good times and bad remained faithful to her husband and his care. This film demonstrates the definition of true love and sacrifice. It is a subject worthy of an inspiring score, which Alexandre Desplat delivered in such a magnificent way.

It'd be appropriate to at least understand how Homosexuals were seen and perceived by general European society during the 30's and the 40's in order to actually embrace the state of constant denial that the tormented mind of Alan Turing had to go through. I'm not necessarily talking about the point made in chapter 7 regarding the psychological trauma of losing Christopher. This is about the actual individual who lives in a repressed society in which the mere existence is illegal to gays.

REFERENCE and BIBLIOGRAPHY

AUDIO C.D.

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- Film Symphony Orchestra – *La Mejor Musica de Cine* © 2015 Warner Music.
- Alexandre Desplat – *The Ghost Writer* © 2010 Varese Sarabande.

YOUTUBE LINKS

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- Alexandre Desplat Interview The Imitation Game Premiere.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bsze12nbcto>
- The Imitation Game Supervisor Lindsay Fellows. https://youtu.be/MD0XKiv_owY
- DP/30: Alexandre Desplat 2014, The Imitation Game, Unbroken, Godzilla, The Grand Budapest Hotel. <https://youtu.be/qVsg9bTzLXY>
- The Imitation Game. Behind the scenes making of the film, starring Benedict Cumberbatch. <https://youtu.be/C7G6mcNI0-4>
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APPENDIX A - CORRESPONDENCE



Paolo Annunziato <pannunziato@berklee.edu>

Berklee Research - Academic Enquire • The Imitation Game Richard Ford <richard.ford@mac.com>

Sat, Apr 16, 2016 at 8:56 PM

To: Paolo Annunziato <pannunziato@berklee.edu>

Hi Paolo,

actually I didn't have any interaction with Lindsay Fellow. He might have started after I was around or was located in the UK and didn't start supplying music till later.

I came on during the early stages of picture editing, during the director's cut of the film before the producers and studio got involved, or saw anything. It's a kind of sacred time when the director and the editor put together their vision of the film. I worked closely with director Morten Tilden and picture editor Billy Goldenberg. Billy had started putting some temp music in the avid and I got a feel for what he was looking and expanded on it.

I try different musical approaches to various scenes - I usually pick about 8 or 10 scenes throughout the film - and then when I've found music that feels like it works, I'll finesse those to the scene and play for the director and editor. I try and find 3 or 4 different options for each scene if I can, though that isn't always possible. When I feel like I have enough material to play to the director I'll schedule a meeting and show my ideas. When things work for the director I have dictation to move in. Sometimes when things don't work for the director it can be as useful as when they do. To get feedback, good or bad, is a great place to start honing the temp score and ultimately influencing the final film score.

One of the big challenges for the temp was that Morten wanted a percussive piece of score to play the machine, Christopher, when it was working. I can't remember exactly what I used but I know I used two pieces, one for the percussive momentum and another which played at the same time to play the emotional make up of that particular scene.

Mainly I used Mychael Danna, Johann Johannssen and Thomas Newman scores for the temp score. Orchestral and appropriate for the time period the film was set in. Can't remember all off the scores I used - though I did use Johannssen's 'Prisoners' and Newman's 'The Debt'.

I have a large library of film scores and I go thru to find a few scores that I can pull from in the genre. But it's always good to try things a little outside the box as well. To push the envelope and hopefully steer things away from the obvious or typical 'movie music' that can get a but stale.

I know this does not exactly answer your questions but I hope it's useful insight into my process. I have an old email for Kirsty hopefully she will be able to help you out.

kirstywhalley@mac.com

Best of luck. Regards, Richard



Paolo Annunziato <pannunziato@berklee.edu>

Imitation game Romain Allender <romain.allender@gmail.com>

To: Paolo Annunziato <pannunziato@berklee.edu>

Mon, May 16, 2016 at 2:26 PM

Hi Paolo,

I only now find some time to reply to you, sorry for the delay. This is thoughts, You will

have to sort out.

Here is how we work all together as Desplat's team. Everything goes as concentric circles : - Alexandre Desplat is the composer, his wife Solrey is also involved in project, as a musical producer, I am his musical assistant, and Xavier Forcioli is coordinate all music. Then Pete Cobbin, master in recording/mixing at Abbey Road Studios, Kirsty Walley as music editor and Jean- Pascal Beintus, the head of orchestration process. After, Peter Clarke doing the Auricle, librarian to print and Marc Stevens to plan the line-up with London Symphonic Orchestra.

Alexandre is involved in ALL parts of the process. First of all, he writes all the music, no one else has created music for him for this movie. He also is the only one linked to the director Morten Tyldum during the composition process. He discuss things with everybody then submit on his own the idea to discuss with the director. The workflow is very speed, between the beginning of creation and the end of recording, I would say 1 month, 1 month and a half. So everything has to go fast and everybody works very hard, it is intense. I am close to him from the very beginning, We discuss about all technical problematics we will encounter : line up, delays, orchestrations, reels, etc..... I am his right arm, I do everything to make him comfortable, having only music to think about and focus. This is, to me, the most important part of my job : Let his mind free of technical problems. I am also the link between him and the studio/orchestrators. I take care of the programming, which is building all Protools sessions (Alexandre works on Digital Perfomer) from DP sessions, having it right in tempo/ metering, the same thing as orchestrators to be sure that we won't loose time in recording studio (which costs a lot of money). I print all the sounds/synths that will be used in addition to the orchestra (for example Celesta in Night Research) Everything has to be perfect. Finally, I am for Alexandre like a Memory card. I remind every idea that we could have discussed, and put it on the table when it is appropriate. Always to free his mind. I am with him and his wife during recordings, advising him, building the list of recording order (which cue follows, to optimise time, musicians comfort...) and knowing all the movie and the music by heart, as I am here from the beginning, having worked on the scores, the scenes, the sessions.... It is very comfortable for him and we go fast as LSO players are remarkable players. Also, having Pete Cobbin and his team behind the desk is also very easy. We did a lot of films as a team and always very happy to be all together, it is very fun. No pressure if the preparation work has been well prepared. After recording, there is mixing. We approve mixes from Pete. As always, I give him an opinion.

The main theme (the opening) is the first cue I've heard, even before watching the

film The first thing I thought is : what a wonderful theme, very lyrical, I loved it. But couldn't figure out this kind of theme on a war movie. It was very unusual. Then I watched the movie and understood where Alexandre wanted to bring it : to the human side. There is a very few scenes where we are confronted to war in the movie, i mean visually. One with the U boats, an other with Bombings, but the feeling of war is far more important than the war itself. It sets up a frame and a tension but the two redundant things, to me, are the true story of the cryptanalysis of Enigma, and the homosexuality of Turing, and the whole score reflects that. the tension moments, as in *Enigma*, *U-Boats* or *the Machine Christopher*, seems just here to support the scene. Very discrete, just to give the right feeling, always very elaborate, searched, like using the less instruments to say what he had to say. There is no brass tone in the whole movie. Woodwinds, Strings and Piano are the main

tones; which actually makes the whole score very sweet. Even the Synths, and there is a lot, are just colouring. All of that creates a relief, an other lecture of the film. This is, to me, a very intelligent way to score a movie, unexpected. I always deplore, nowadays, the absence of significant theme in movies. Usually, when leaving the cinema, no one can sing the main theme he has heard.

For many reasons, in many movies, we have lost this desire to score a recognizable, defined theme. In IG, the main theme comes back like 4 or 5 times, and is very different from the rest of the music. A different colour, very identifiable. We can feel the flautist Alexandre is in it. It has got something in it beautifully dramatic, like a very sad smile, full of hope. Because this is dramatic, Alan is dramatic, the story is dramatic, and we know it has we walk between past and present during whole movie. I know music could be scary for a director but Morten trusted Alexandre, and the result is brilliant. I did a lot of movies with him, have a lot of his music in mind, love a lot of stuffs he did, but IG is definitely the one that touches me the most.

Good luck for your thesis. Let me know how it went!

Romain

APPENDIX B: LIST OF SCORES

TRANSCRIPTIONS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>TYPE + STATUS</u>
1) The Imitation Game (p.16-20).....	PIANO ARRANGMENT - T.B.R.
2) U-Boats (p.21-24).....	HAND TRANSCRIPTION - T.B.C.
3) Crosswords (p.25-31)	FULL ORCHESTRAL – T.B.C.

FULL SCORES

Film Symphony Orchestra, *The Imitation Game Suite* [Copyright Issues] (p.32-50)

APPENDIX C – “DETECTIVE MAP”

