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**A New Musical's World Premiere in an Award-Winning LGBTQ+ Series in Houston**  
*Thunderclap Productions presents the world premiere of Aaron Alon's "The Chosen Ones"*

**Houston, Texas (November 24, 2024)** From August 28 to September 6, 2025, Thunderclap Productions will present the world premiere production of Houstonian Aaron Alon's musical *The Chosen Ones* at the Midtown Arts & Theater Center Houston (MATCH). This is Thunderclap's fifth production in its award-winning John Steven Kellett Memorial Series, which presents LGBTQ+ plays, musicals, and films.

*The Chosen Ones* tells the story of a group of six LGBTQ+ teens that are part of the same small group in a summer conversion therapy camp. We get to know the six teens and their camp counselor, an "ex-gay" pastor, and we see what happens to all of them during one summer at this camp. While this is a serious subject, there is also a certain joy that comes from isolated queer people finally being around others who are like them, so the musical spans a broad range from the joyful to the tragic.

"Conversion therapy" refers to a broad set of practices that attempts to "cure" or "repair" a person's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The practice is legal to use on minors in most of the world and in most US states. This is despite the resounding rejection of its premises and approaches by many of the major medical, psychological, pediatric, and psychiatric organizations in the US.

"A lot of my work originates in some sort of social activism," said writer and composer Aaron Alon. "To engage others with a social justice issue, I feel our best tool is to approach our fellow humans with how most of us tend to learn best: from storytelling. I never want to be didactic and I'm allergic to two-dimensional villains, so I hope to tell honest stories and let audiences respond to them, rather than asking them to grapple with some abstract notion of a social ill."

Director Aisha Ussery added, "I'm drawn to *The Chosen Ones* as I am an advocate for those who are marginalized. My core belief is that all people should be seen, heard, valued, and embraced for the unique way they journey through life. This piece urges us to do just that—to lean into honoring, not judging, how others authentically live. I believe audiences will find this message deeply meaningful and resonant."

The musical was written in 2023. In January 2024, Thunderclap presented the first seven songs from the show at the inaugural MixMATCH festival at the MATCH. A Concept Cast album of the full musical is slated to be released by Aaron Alon Productions, LLC in early 2025. Auditions for the full production will also conclude on March 1, 2025, with performances scheduled at the MATCH from August 28 to September 6, 2025.

This musical is the fifth production of the award-winning John Steven Kellett Memorial Series. This production series was created in memory of John Steven Kellett, a Houston-based retired Exxon executive and philanthropist who passed away in 2018. Mr. Kellett founded the John Steven Kellett Foundation, which has awarded Thunderclap Productions numerous grants, including a large grant in support of this memorial series that was part of their final grant cycle. Thunderclap has used the grant to produce a series of plays and musicals dealing with equality and pushing back against LGBTQ+ discrimination.

Thunderclap Productions ([thunderclapproductions.com](http://thunderclapproductions.com)) is a Houston-based nonprofit production company dedicated to producing new and under-recognized plays, musicals, and screenplays. They have a

commitment to making the arts accessible to all patrons and a special interest in producing works that highlight issues of social justice and inequity. Thunderclap is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

The musical is written by Aaron Alon, an award-winning composer, writer, director, filmmaker, and teacher based in the greater Houston area. He was one of six international finalists for the 2022 Fred Ebb Award and his musical *The Great White Way: the Bert Williams Musical* was one of three international finalists for the 2023 Stanley Drama Awards. The film musical *Bully*, which he wrote and directed (and which Thunderclap Productions also produced), was screened at over two dozen film festivals internationally, including the Manhattan Film Festival, and won over a dozen film festival prizes, including Best Picture at the Los Angeles Underground Film Festival and Best Narrative Feature at the Frame4Frame Film Festival.

*The Chosen Ones* runs August 28-September 6, 2025 in Matchbox 3 of the Midtown Arts and Theatre Center Houston at 3400 Main St., Houston, TX 77002. Tickets are \$25 (\$15 students), with Pay-What-You-Can ticketing on opening night, in support of the company's mission of accessibility. Further information about the production, including a link to buy tickets, is available at <https://thunderclapproductions.com/thechosenones/>.

#### **About THE CHOSEN ONES**

*The Chosen Ones* is a world premiere production of the musical by Aaron Alon. A partial staged reading was performed on January 13, 2024 at the MATCH and a full Concept Cast album is due to be released by early 2025.

RUN TIME: 90 minutes (no intermission)

GENRE: Drama, Dramey, LGBTQ+

DATES & TIMES: Aug. 28-Sept. 6, 2025, with evening (7:30PM) and matinée (2:30PM) performances available.

TICKETS: \$25 (students: \$15); opening is Pay-What-You-Can.

To learn more, visit [thunderclapproductions.com/thechosenones](https://thunderclapproductions.com/thechosenones) or [thechosenonesmusical.com](https://thechosenonesmusical.com).

#### **About Thunderclap Productions**

Thunderclap Productions is a Houston-based nonprofit production company dedicated to producing new and under-recognized plays, musicals, and screenplays. They are committed to making the arts accessible to all patrons and have a special interest in producing works relating to social justice and equity. Thunderclap is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. The board of directors is composed of five members: Aaron Alon, DMA; Justin Doran, MFA; Erin Rodgers, JD; Russell Sarre, DMA; and Tamara Siler.

To learn more, visit [thunderclapproductions.com](https://thunderclapproductions.com).

#### **About the John Steven Kellett Memorial Series**

Thunderclap Productions is proud to present the John Steven Kellett Memorial Series, an annual production of a play, musical, or film dealing with equality and pushing back against LGBTQ+ discrimination. This production series was created in memory of John Steven Kellett, a Houston-based retired Exxon executive and philanthropist who passed away in 2018. Mr. Kellett founded the John Steven Kellett Foundation, which has awarded Thunderclap Productions numerous grants, including a large grant in support of this memorial series that was part of their final grant cycle.

To learn more, visit [thunderclapproductions.com/kellettseries](https://thunderclapproductions.com/kellettseries)