EXHIBIT 2

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IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
SAN JOSE DIVISION

- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x
CONCORD MUSIC GROUP, INC., et al.,
Plaintiffs,
v.
ANTHROPIC PBC,
Defendant.
- - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - x

Highly Confidential
Attorneys' Eyes Only
Pursuant to the Protective Order

Videotaped Deposition of BEN ZHAO, Ph.D.
Chicago, Illinois
Friday, February 20, 2026
9:06 a.m. CST

Job No.: 621063
Pages: 1 - 462
Stenographically Reported By:
Michelle M. Yohler, CSR, RMR, CRR

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Deposition of BEN ZHAO, Ph.D., held at the location of:

ARNOLD & PORTER
70 West Madison Street, Suite 4200
Chicago, Illinois

Pursuant to notice before Michelle M. Yohler, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, Registered Professional Reporter, Registered Merit Reporter, Certified Realtime Reporter, and a Notary Public, CSR No. 84-4531, in and for the State of Illinois.

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APPEARANCES

ON BEHALF OF THE PLAINTIFFS:
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APPEARANCES CONTINUED

ALSO PRESENT:
Mr. Ian Chen,
In-House Counsel for Anthropic
Mr. James Porter, Videographer

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E X A M I N A T I O N S

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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE VIDEOGRAPHER: Here begins Media Unit 1 in the video deposition of Ben Zhao in the matter of Concord Music Group Inc., et al., versus Anthropic PBC in the United States District Court, Northern District of California, San Jose Division, Case Number 5:24-cv-03811-EKL-SVK.

Today's date is February 20th, 2026, and the time on the video monitor is 9:06 a.m.

The videographer today is James Porter representing Planet Depos.

This video deposition is taking place at Arnold & Porter in Chicago, Illinois.

Would counsel please voice-identify themselves and state whom they represent.

MS. MEHTA: Good morning. Sonal Mehta from WilmerHale on behalf of Anthropic.

MR. HOWELL: Good morning. Keith Howell from Oppenheim & Zebrak on behalf of the plaintiffs.

THE VIDEOGRAPHER: And do we have counsel on Zoom?

MR. GRUBOW: Jared Grubow from WilmerHale on behalf of Anthropic.

MR. CHUNG: Good morning. Timothy Chung on behalf of Publishers.

MS. MEHTA: And then I believe we have in-house counsel from Anthropic also on the line.

THE VIDEOGRAPHER: The court reporter today is Michelle Yohler representing Planet Depos.

Please swear in the witness.

(WHEREUPON, the witness was duly sworn.)

BEN ZHAO, Ph.D.,

called as a witness herein, having been first duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:

EXAMINATION

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Good morning.

A Good morning.

Q Dr. Zhao, could you please state your first -- or full name and your address for the record, please.

A Sure. Ben Zhao, my -- I'm sorry. You said my address?

Q Yes.

A 130 North Garland Court, Chicago, Illinois, 60602.

Q What do you understand this case to be about?

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MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A I understand this case is about Anthropic's training of data and Anthropic's design of its large language model and its mechanism to operate that model.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q What legal claims do you understand to actually be at issue in the case?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form. Calls for a legal conclusion.

BY THE WITNESS:

A I am not here to speak to the legality of the claims; I'm here as a technical expert, so, as such, I speak to the technical components of the case.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Understood. But you understand that in courts of law, the people actually make claims based on legal challenges and then defend on legal challenges --

A Yes.

Q -- right?

A Yes.

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

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BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Was there any part of the reports that she drafted?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A I believe she edited some paragraphs. Again, I don't believe I singled those out in any way, so, you know, sometimes there are edits to portions of the -- of the report, and I always make sure that I read through carefully and that they represent my opinion.
And I, generally speaking, do not -- am not mainly making a mental note as to who put that edit down or who, you know, edited a certain verbiage.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Do you have any formal training in linguistics?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A I guess it depends on what you define by formal training. I've certainly taken classes that might be relevant to -- to the topics of linguistics.

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BY MS. MEHTA:
Q You're not offering an expert opinion with respect to linguistics in this case; is that fair?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A I believe we have a separate -- I believe there might be other experts on the case who might be offering those opinions.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Right. But my question is: For you, you're not offering an opinion with respect to linguistics in this case, are you?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Again, it really depends on your def- -- definition of linguistics. I offer lots of opinions that are relevant to language and the generation of words and topics as I understand them in the field of AI and language models.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Do you consider yourself an expert in linguistics?
A I consider myself an expert in the opinions that I've offered.
Q Right. That wasn't my question, sir.

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My question was: Do you consider yourself an expert in the field of linguistics?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Again, that is depending on your definition of linguistics. Much of the space of large language models now is heavily, sort of, interacting with the field of linguistics, and so in the sense that you want to call all of those topics relevant to linguistics, then I guess I would be.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Would you -- would you ask the jury to consider you to be an expert in linguistics for the purposes of its evaluation of this case?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form. Calls for a legal conclusion.
BY THE WITNESS:
A I will not ask the jury to put any sort of hat on me. My credentials are all clear; my publications are clear; my work in the field is clear; so they can form their own opinion about what areas I'm an expert in, but --
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Do you --

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A -- clearly an expert enough to speak on issues related to large language models.
Q Do you consider yourself an expert in musicology?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A No.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Do you consider yourself an expert in medicine?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A No.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Do you consider yourself an expert in neuroscience?
MR. HOWELL: Same objection.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Again, with this whole line of questioning, you know, the whole point here is to put hats and to define buckets. Research and science, in general, is, by definition, interdisciplinary, so to the extent that I have knowledge from interactions and from reading scientific articles and from engaging in research

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MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Not a commercially produced commercial one, no.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Have you ever written a song for your own private --
A Yes.
Q -- enjoyment?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q And how many songs have you written?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A A handful.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Have you ever shared them with anyone?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Mostly in the context of kids and babies, and so I don't believe they would have active knowledge of such songs, so for whatever that's worth, yeah.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Have you ever actually written down the

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music or the lyrics of a song, as opposed to writing a song and -- in the moment when you're, you know, singing your kid to sleep or something?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Boy, many, many years ago, I might have written something down. I -- I don't recall. I mean, and if I had written it down, I'm not sure where it would be at this moment.
But, you know, I mean, if you're trying to get at, you know, am I a professional lyricist or songwriter, for sure then the answer is no.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q I'm not trying to get at anything, I'm just asking --
A Okay.
Q -- questions.
When you -- I inferred from your answer that you, like many of us, have made up songs to sing to children. Is that what you were thinking of when you said in the context of kids and babies?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Yes.

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BY MS. MEHTA:
Q And have you ever made up your own lyrics to the tune of a well-known nursery rhyme or kids' song?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Probably yes.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Did you think that there was anything wrong with doing that?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form. Calls for a legal conclusion.
BY THE WITNESS:
A In the context that I wasn't sharing it with anyone or doing it for a commercial purpose, I thought it was fine.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q If you had been doing it for a commercial purpose, would you have thought that was wrong?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form. Calls for speculation. Calls for a legal conclusion.
BY THE WITNESS:
A I've never considered that question because I've never sought to design or write a song for commercial purposes.

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BY MS. MEHTA:
Q In preparation for -- of your opinions in this case, did you personally inspect any of Anthropic's source code?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A And when you say "inspect source code," can you be more specific what you consider inspecting source code?
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q You understand that Anthropic made substantial volumes of source code available for inspection at its offices?
A Yes.
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY MS. MEHTA:
Q Did you visit Anthropic's offices to do any kind of source code inspection?
A No.
Q Have you looked at any of Anthropic's source code for purposes of your opinions in this case?
MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.
BY THE WITNESS:
A Not that I can recall. There's a large

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volume of supporting documentation, and I don't recall exactly whether there are snippets of source code inside which might -- I might have glanced through at some point, but, you know, at the high level, especially when you're talking about inspecting source code, no.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you evaluate or look at any of Anthropic's training data for purposes of your opinions in this case?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A You mean -- at what scale are you referring to? Are you referring to looking at large-scale datasets?

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Yes.

A No, I believe that was Dr. Shan's purview, and so I relied on him and his report to form my understanding of what was and was not in the datasets that he found.

Q Did you yourself look at any of the code underlying Anthropic's guardrails?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

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BY THE WITNESS:

A No, I don't believe so.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you look at, yourself, any of the code relating to Anthropic's Content Compare System, or CCS?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A No, I don't believe so. I relied on reports from Dr. Shan for that.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you look at, yourself, any of the code relating to Anthropic's Copy Fairy?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A Same answer.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you look at yourself any of the code relating to Anthropic's Prompt Shield?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A Same answer.

Again, my expertise as -- in the field of machine learning is not formed based on code inspections; it's based on research and

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experimentation and, you know, opinions held by the scientific community.

For direct code and data inspection, Dr. Shan was on-site for all of those things.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you yourself look at any of Anthropic's fine-tuning data aside from the Hugging Face data that you included in your report?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A I don't believe so.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you look at any code relating to Anthropic's constitution?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A Again, not in a code-inspection format. Not in a, sort of, collected aggregated format. I believe there's been references and perhaps even some quotes to that effect from depositions and other documents related to the case, but not in an inspection format.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you do any empirical testing of

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Anthropic's guardrails for purposes of your work in this case?

MR. HOWELL: Objection. Form.

BY THE WITNESS:

A I believe I did experiment with Anthropic's systems at an (indiscernible) level, so I guess --

(Reporter clarification.)

THE WITNESS: End-to-end level.

BY THE WITNESS:

A So I guess the answer would be yes because interaction with them directly goes through the guardrails, both pre and post inference.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q When you say you experimented, you mean you personally put prompts and outputs into the system?

A Yes.

MR. HOWELL: Objection --

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q Did you --

MR. HOWELL: -- form.

BY MS. MEHTA:

Q -- record each of the prompts and outputs that you personally put into the system over the

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MICHELLE M. YOHLER, a Certified Shorthand Reporter within and for the County of Will, State of Illinois, do hereby certify:

That previous to the commencement of the examination of the witness, the witness was duly sworn to testify the whole truth concerning the matters herein;

That the foregoing deposition transcript was reported stenographically by me, was thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction and constitutes a true record of the testimony given and the proceedings had;

That the said deposition was taken before me at the time and place specified;

That I am not a relative or employee or attorney or counsel, nor a relative or employee of such attorney or counsel for any of the parties hereto, nor interested directly or indirectly in the outcome of this action.

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I do hereunto set my hand and affix my seal of office at Chicago, Illinois, this 24th day of February, 2026.

Michelle M. Yohler

Michelle M. Yohler, CSR, RMR, CRR
Certified Shorthand Reporter
CSR No.: 84-4531

No. 621063

Re: Deposition of **Ben Zhao, Ph.D.**
Date: 2/20/2026
Case: Concord Music Group -v- Anthropic
Return to: transcripts@planetdepos.com

Errata

Page: Line	From	To
10:4-6	It's a long claim with a lot of complaints that I read three years ago.	It's a long **complaint** with a lot of **claims** that I read three years ago
26:19-21	I'm not going to get into my personal opinion about what are these issues called.	I'm not going to get into my personal opinion about what **all** these issues **are**.
36:18-19	I meant that if I have a form – fully formed definition	I meant that if I **had a fully** formed definition
81:79-81	we make sure that there is no offensive or legal content	we make sure that there is no offensive or **illegal** content
132:24	what current models do, and current models behave	what current models do, and **how** current models behave
177:15-17	The definition of a data retrieval system is incredibly expensive	The definition of a data retrieval system is incredibly **expansive**
188:23-25	There's cureration, there is weighting, there is all sorts of things that may or may not happen	There's **curation**, there is weighting, there is all sorts of things that may or may not happen
190:20	cureration	**curation**
191:1	tokenize table	**tokenizer** table
194:18	cureration	**curation**
222:25-223:3	I'm sorry. I assume including that is with the research documents but it also includes things like public press and, you know, newspaper and whatnot.	I'm sorry. I assume **included in** that **is the** research documents but it also includes things like public press and, you know, newspaper and whatnot.
289:1:	cureration	**curation**
293:17	cureration	**curation**
293:23	cureration	**curation**
294:3	cureration	**curation**
295:7	cureration	**curation**
295:10	cureration	**curation**
297:12	cureration	**curation**
297:15	cureration	**curation**

No. 621063

Re: Deposition of **Ben Zhao, Ph.D.**
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Errata Cont'd

Page: Line	From	To
328:6	cureration	**curation**
449:19	cureration	**curation**
452:7	cureration	**curation**

4/1/26
(Date)

(Signature)

No. 621063

Re: Deposition of **Ben Zhao, Ph.D.**
Date: 2/20/2026
Case: Concord Music Group -v- Anthropic
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DEPONENT

I, Ben Zhao, Ph.D., do hereby acknowledge that I have read and examined the foregoing testimony, and the same is a true, correct and complete transcription of the testimony given by me and any corrections appear on the attached Errata sheet signed by me.

4/1/26 _____
(Date) (Signature)