

THE
SANTA FE
OPERA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



The Santa Fe Opera presents the
**American premiere of *Lili Elbe* on
August 1 and “Transformative Voices,”**
a series of ancillary events
throughout July

4 June 2026

For Inquiries or imagery, contact: Emily Doyle Moore | media@santafeopera.org | 505-986-5908

Santa Fe, NM - From **August 1**, the Santa Fe Opera’s 2026 Season culminates with the American premiere of *Lili Elbe*, a two-act opera based on the true story of Lili Elbe, one of the first individuals to undergo gender affirmation surgery in the early 20th century with the support of her wife, artist Gerda Wegener. With music by Grammy Award-winning composer **Tobias Picker** and a libretto by **Aryeh Lev Stollman**, *Lili Elbe* features baritone and former Apprentice Singer **Lucia Lucas**, who brings lived experience and artistry to the dual role of dramaturg and title character. Recipient of the 2023 OPER! Award for Best World Premiere, *Lili Elbe* explores a deeply human story set in 1920s-30s Copenhagen, Paris and Dresden, and is the first full-scale opera about a transgender protagonist written for a transgender singer.

In conjunction with the American premiere of *Lili Elbe*, the Santa Fe Opera will present “Transformative Voices,” a series of conversations, performances and film screenings in Santa Fe and Albuquerque **throughout July** exploring themes of identity, artistry, history and representation in partnership with the **Lensic Performing Arts Center, Center for Contemporary Arts, CHATTER, Guild Cinema** and **Jean Cocteau Cinema**. The series culminates in a **free, day-long Symposium, “Lili Elbe: Art, Life and Opera,”** on **Sunday, July 26** at the **Lensic Performing Arts Center** in downtown Santa Fe.



Lucia Lucas (Lili Elbe) and Sylvia D'Eramo (Gerda Wegener) star in the American premiere of LILI ELBE, opening August 1, and perform at the “Transformative Voices” Symposium on July 26.

Photo by Bronwen Sharp for the Santa Fe Opera.

FOR CALENDAR KEEPERS

Transformative Voices Symposium: *Lili Elbe, Art, Life and Opera*

An all-day event kicks off with a talk by the Transgender Cultural Resource Center of New Mexico, followed by a panel with the creative team of the opera, including composer Tobias Picker, librettist Aryeh Lev Stollman, director James Robinson, set designer Allen Moyer, and performances by singers Lucia Lucas (Lili Elbe) and Sylvia D'Eramo (Gerda Wegener). The day ends with a panel of scholars reflecting on the life of Lili Elbe, the paintings of Lili and her wife, Gerda Wegener, and the gender fluidity of the operatic voice.

When: Sunday, July 26 | 10 AM - 3:30 PM

Where: Lentic Performing Arts Center | Santa Fe

211 W San Francisco St, Santa Fe, NM 87501

Admission: Free; Reservations required

Reservations: <https://official.santafeopera.org/13156/13185>

10 - 10:30 AM | Transgender Cultural Fluency

Adrien Lawyer, Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico

11 AM – 1 PM | Panel Featuring the Creative Team of *Lili Elbe*

Moderated by Alexis Corbin of KHFM

Panelists: Tobias Picker, Aryeh Lev Stollman, Lucia Lucas, Sylvia D'Eramo, James Robinson, Allen Moyer

2 – 3:30 PM | Scholars Respond to *Lili Elbe*

Panelists:

[Pamela Caughie](#) (Loyola University Chicago), editor of *Man Into Woman: A Comparative Scholarly Edition*

[Kirstin Ringelberg](#) (Elon University), on the paintings of Lili Elbe & Gerda Wegener

[Sasha Geffen](#), author of *Glitter Up the Dark: How Pop Music Broke the Binary*

Edward and Maria Gale, Presenting Sponsors

OTHER LILI ELBE EVENTS

Film Series: *Documenting Musical Lives*

A series of films focused on the lives of trans and non-binary performers, featuring after-screening conversations and cocktails.

FILM SERIES SANTA FE

Where: Jean Cocteau Cinema | Santa Fe

418 Montezuma Ave, Santa Fe, NM 87501

July 9 at 7 PM

No Ordinary Man ([The Life and Death of Jazz Legend Billy Tipton](#))

Introduced by Emerson Corley, Entourage Jazz

July 16 at 7 PM

Keyboard Fantasies ([A Black Transgender Musician Becomes a Cult Icon](#))

Introduced by Adrien Lawyer, Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico

July 23 at 7 PM

The Sound of Identity ([Lucia Lucas Performs as Don Giovanni](#))

Pre-screening panel with Lucia Lucas and post-screening DJ hosted by 505omatic

July 30 at 7 PM

Any Other Way ([The Jackie Shane Story](#))

Introduced by D'Santi Nava, a New Mexico musician

FILM SERIES ALBUQUERQUE

Where: Guild Cinema | Albuquerque

3405 Central Ave NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106

When: July 25 at 1 PM

The Sound of Identity ([Lucia Lucas Performs as Don Giovanni](#))

Introduced by Adrien Lawyer, Transgender Resource Center of New Mexico

CHATTER: Del Sol Quartet Centering Tobias Picker's opera *Lili Elbe*, this program explores the inner and outer landscapes of transformation, with chamber music by Picker, initi figgis-vizueta and world premieres by Aeryn Santillan & Andromeda Wen.

SANTA FE

When: Saturday, July 18 | 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Where: CHATTER NORTH (Santa Fe)

1050 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Admission: \$5 - 17

Tickets and Information: <https://www.chatterabq.org/product/july-18-2026-chatter-north/>

ALBUQUERQUE

When: Sunday, July 19 | 10:30 - 11:30 AM

Where: CHATTER (Albuquerque)

912 3rd St NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Admission: \$5 - 17

Tickets and Information: <https://www.chatterabq.org/product/july-19-2026-chatter-sunday/>

Transformative Voices: *Culture and Cabaret*

An evening of conversation, music and celebration featuring artists and cultural workers from trans, non-binary and two-spirit communities.

When: Saturday, July 25 | 6 - 10 PM

6:15 PM – 7 PM | Panel

Panelists

[Peshawn Bread](#)

[Marx Cassity](#)

7:15 PM – 8:45 PM | Transformative Voices Cabaret Performance

Cabaret Performers

[Marx Cassity](#)

[Lucia Lucas](#)

[Entourage Jazz](#)

9 PM – 10 PM | DJ and Dancing

DJ: The Muse

Where: The Center for Contemporary Arts (Santa Fe)

1050 Old Pecos Trail, Santa Fe, NM 87505

Admission: Free; Reservations required

Reservations: <https://official.santafeopera.org/13156/13184>

Contact Us

The Santa Fe Opera is located at **301 Opera Drive, Santa Fe, NM 87506**. Questions? Call the Box Office Monday through Saturday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm at **800-280-4654** or **505-986-5900** or email boxoffice@santafeopera.org.

About *Lili Elbe*

Director **James Robinson** leads a production featuring scenic design by **Allen Moyer**, costume design by **Marco Piemontese**, lighting by **Marcus Doshi** and projections by **Greg Emetaz**. Wig and makeup design is by **David Zimmerman**, choreography by **Seán Curran** and fight and intimacy direction by **Andrew Kenneth Moss**. **Susanne Sheston** is the Chorus Director.

Maestro **Roberto Kalb** leads the Santa Fe Opera Orchestra and a stunning cast including former Apprentice Singer **Lucia Lucas** making her company debut in the title role, **Sylvia D’Eramo**, former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Singer, as Gerda Wegener, **Josh Lovell** as Claude LeJeune, **Lindsay Ammann** as Mother Wegener and former Apprentice Singer **Andrew Harris** as Professor Warnekros.

Says General Director **Robert K. Meya**, “At the heart of any thriving society is the freedom to live truthfully — to seek self-realization without fear or denial. *Lili Elbe* is more than a powerful new opera;

it is a poignant reminder of what it means to fight for authenticity, dignity and love. We are honored to bring this extraordinary true story to our stage and to continue championing works that reflect the full spectrum of the human experience.”

Five performances are scheduled for August 1, 5, 14, 18 & 27.

Lili Elbe

Music by Tobias Picker

Libretto by Aryeh Lev Stollman

Premiered October 22, 2023, Konzert und Theater St. Gallen, Switzerland

American premiere and a new co-production with Seattle Opera

Used by arrangement with European American Music Distributors Company, sole U.S. and Canadian agent for Schott Helicon Music Corporation, New York, NY

5 performances — August 1, 5, 14, 18 & 27, 2026

Sung in English with opera titles in English and Spanish

Approximately 2 hours 25 minutes; includes a 25-minute intermission

Production support generously provided by

Anonymous

Wyncote Foundation, as recommended by Frederick R. Haas & Rafael Gomez

TAWANI Foundation

David A. Kaplan and Glenn A. Ostergaard – Brautigam-Kaplan-Ostergaard Foundation

Robert L. Turner

Additional artistic support provided by

The Edgar Foster Daniels Foundation

Henry R. Muñoz III

The General Director’s Premiere Fund in honor of Richard Gaddes

Carol Franc Buck Foundation

The performances of Roberto Kalb are supported by

Roma Wittcoff

The performances of Lucia Lucas are supported by

The Bob Ross Foundation

The performances of Sylvia D’Eramo are supported by

The Peter B. Frank Principal Artist Fund

Creative Team

Composer Tobias Picker
Librettist Aryeh Lev Stollman
Conductor Roberto Kalb
Director James Robinson
Scenic Design Allen Moyer
Costume Design Marco Piemontese*
Lighting Design Marcus Doshi
Projections Greg Emetaz
Wig & Makeup Design David Zimmerman
Chorus Director Susanne Sheston
Choreographer Seán Curran
Fight & Intimacy Director Andrew Kenneth Moss
Dramaturgy Lucia Lucas+

Cast

Lili Elbe Lucia Lucas+*
Gerda Wegener Sylvia D'Eramo+
Claude LeJeune Josh Lovell
Mother Wegener Lindsay Ammann
Professor Warnekros Andrew Harris+
Dagmar Deanna Ray Eberhart^
Matron Alexis Seminario^*
Hélène Allatini Anna Kelly^*
Orpheus/Anna Larssen Lindsay Martin=*
Eric Allatini Kyle White^
Marius Wegener Ryan Wolfe^
Major Fernando Porta Joshua Klein^*

The Santa Fe Opera Orchestra & Chorus

**Santa Fe Opera Debut, +Former Santa Fe Opera Apprentice, ~American Debut,
=First-year Apprentice Singer, ^Second-year Apprentice Singer*

About The Santa Fe Opera

Recognized in 2022 as “Festival of the Year” at the **International Opera Awards**, the Santa Fe Opera annually draws 70,000 people from New Mexico and around the globe. Nestled atop a mountain vista in northern New Mexico, the company’s iconic **Crosby Theatre** is open on three sides, allowing visitors to enjoy performances complemented by the elements. Since 1957, the company has presented over 2,000

performances of 180 operas by 92 composers spanning five centuries of opera, creating a legacy of 45 American premieres and 19 world premieres.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility at the Santa Fe Opera

Opera has the power to speak truth, broaden perspectives and invite empathy. The Santa Fe Opera is committed to the continuous work of becoming an antiracist and anti-oppressive organization and incorporating the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility. Our goal is to create a joyful and engaging environment in which a diverse community of artists, staff, volunteers and audiences alike belong.

The mission of the Santa Fe Opera is to advance the operatic art form by presenting ensemble performances of the highest quality in a unique setting with a varied repertory of new, rarely performed and standard works; to ensure the excellence of opera's future through apprentice programs for singers, technicians and arts administrators; and to foster an understanding and appreciation of opera among a diverse public.

Discover More: [SantaFeOpera.org](https://www.santafeopera.org)

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