



MEDIA CONTACT:

Sarah Straub

Associate Director of Marketing

301-924-4485 ext. 105

sstraub@olneytheatre.org

**2024 BEGINS AT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER WITH A GENDER-SWAPPED VERSION OF
TONY AWARD-WINNING COMEDY BY DC-AREA PLAYWRIGHT**

***Lend Me A Tenor* Becomes *Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano* As Vocal Ranges And
Laughs Are Turned Up A Few Notches**

OLNEY, MD — January 2, 2024 — *Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano*, a gender-swapped adaptation of his 1989 Broadway hit, *Lend Me A Tenor*, runs in the Roberts Mainstage at Olney Theatre Center February 7 - March 10, 2024. The new production is directed by **Eleanor Holdridge**, who also directed the World Premiere of the comedy at Houston's Alley Theatre, which the [Houston Chronicle](#) called "**a screwball delight, fast, furious and consistently funny.**" The generation of the gender-swapped adaptation was previously workshopped as part of Olney Theatre's Vanguard Arts Fund before the World Premiere.

Note for Editors: Press can request two tickets to the opening on Saturday, February 10 at 8:00 pm by emailing sstraub@olneytheatre.org.

Olney Theatre's Artistic Director Jason Loewith says, "**Ken Ludwig and Olney Theatre have long been a match made in theater heaven.** When Ken approached us about helping to transform *Lend Me A Tenor* into a woman-centered story, **we were thrilled to provide the artistic R&D space through the Vanguard Arts Fund.** And with Eleanor Holdridge - who directed the show's world premiere at the Alley - at the helm, *Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano* is going to be sheer comedy delight." ***Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano* becomes the 4th project of the Vanguard Arts Fund to see a full Olney Theatre production**, following *The Joy That Carries You*, *A.D. 16*, and *The Music Man*.

Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano is set in 1934, when world-famous Italian soprano Elena Firenzi (**Carolann M. Sanita**), the biggest star of her era, is in town for a one-night-only concert with the Cleveland Grand Opera Company. The gala performance is the apex of general manager Lucille Wylie's (**Tina Stafford**) career, and she's given her assistant Jo (**Rachel Felstein**) one job – keep Elena away from men and liquor until the curtain rises. That's not so easy as Elena quarrels with her husband Pasquale (Dylan Arredondo), charms Jo's fiancé Jerry (**Maboud Ebrahimzadeh**), and offers a road out of Cleveland for star tenor Leo (**Tom Patterson**). Meanwhile, Lucille has the opera's president, Julia (**Donna Migliaccio**) breathing down her neck and a star-struck bellhop (**Natalya Lynette Rathnam**) getting in the way.



Inevitably, events spiral out of control, but Jo and Lucille take one crazy chance to try and set everything right. **Graciela Rey** and **Benjamin Topa** are swings for the production.

Joining Eleanor Holdridge's creative team are **Chris Youstra** as Music Director, **Andrew Cohen** as Set Designer, **Sarah Cubbage** as Costume Designer, **Alberto Segarra** as Lighting Designer, and **Matt Rowe** as Sound Designer. **Robb Hunter** is the Fight Choreographer; Larry **Peterson** is the Wig Designer; Helen **Aberger** is the Intimacy Choreographer; and **Melissa Flaim** is the Dialect Consultant. **Ben Walsh** is the Stage Manager, and **Tori Niemiec** is the Assistant Costume Designer.

Headshots of the cast and key creatives are [here](#).

DETAILS

Ken Ludwig's Lend Me A Soprano

By Ken Ludwig

Directed by Eleanor Holdridge

February 7 - March 10, 2024

Previews: February 7, 8, & 9

Invited Press Opening: Saturday, February 10, 2023 at 8:00 pm

Regular performances are Wednesday-Saturday at 7:30 pm; matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 1:30 pm; and Wednesday matinees at 1:30 pm on February 14, 28, and March 6; Sunday evenings at 7:00 pm on February 25 and March 3. There is no Saturday matinee on February 10.

Cast:

Elena Firenzi - Carolann M. Sanita

Jo - Rachel Felstein

Mrs. Wylie - Tina Stafford

Julia - Donna Migliaccio

Leo - Tom Patterson

Pasquale - Dylan Arredondo

Jerry - Maboud Ebrahimzadeh

Beverly - Natalya Lynette Rathnam

Swing - Graciela Rey

Swing - Benjamin Topa

Accessibility



There will be an **Audio-described performance** for the blind and visually impaired on Wednesday, March 6, at 7:30 pm and a **sign-interpreted performance** on Thursday, March 7, at 7:30 pm.

Tickets are \$40 - \$90 and are available at olneytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office (301-924-3400). [Discounts](#) are available for groups, seniors, active military, and students.

RELATED EVENTS

OPENING NIGHT CONVERSATION WITH PLAYWRIGHT KEN LUDWIG

Join playwright Ken Ludwig and Artistic Director Jason Loewith for an Opening Night Discussion of Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me A Soprano*.

Saturday, Feb 10, 5:00–6:00 p.m.

Location: Robert's Mainstage Tickets: \$10 / Free for members

SOCIAL MIXER WITH COMEDIAN ROBERT MAC

Thursday, Feb 15, 2024, 6:15-7:15 p.m.

Location: Actors Hall, Olney Theatre Center

Tickets available for purchase soon: \$45 (includes admission to the social mixer and a ticket to Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Soprano*)-

Drinks and snacks are available for purchase.

Are you looking for a fun night out filled with laughter? Well, you're in luck. Join us at Olney Theatre Center for a night of comedy featuring comedian Robert Mac. Following his set, please stay for a small reception before joining us at the evening performance of Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Soprano*.

FOOD TRUCK SATURDAYS: FLIPSIDE GASTRO

Saturday Dates: Feb 17, 24, Mar. 2, 9, 3:30-7:00 p.m.

Location: Omi's Pavilion, Olney Theatre Center

FlipSide Gastro features the highest quality ingredients. From artisanal sandwiches and burgers to hearty salads and sides, every dish is carefully crafted to satisfy your taste buds.

ACCENT WORKSHOP

Sunday, March 3, 2024, 4:30-5:30 p.m.

Location: Actor's Hall, Olney Theatre Center Tickets: \$10

Ever wonder how actors can switch in and out of accents on the fly? Have you ever wanted to do it yourself? Well, here's your chance. With the help of Voice Dialect Coach Zach Campion,



you, too, can acquire the skills to switch between Italian and Dutch accents, just like Jo in Ken Ludwig's *Lend Me a Soprano*.

ABOUT OLNEY THEATRE CENTER

Mission

Olney Theatre Center for the Arts produces, presents, and tours extraordinary performances for a diversity of audiences, and educates and inspires the next generation of theater-makers.

Vision

We strive every day to unleash the creative potential of our artists and audiences, and in so doing, become a nationally-prominent destination for the most impactful theater performance and education.

History

Once a summer stock retreat in rural Maryland, Olney Theatre Center is now an award-winning, year-round regional theatre surrounded in a 15-mile radius by 1.6 million people representing three of the most ethnically diverse counties in America. Since our founding in 1938, some of the biggest names in theatre have appeared on our stages: from "Golden Era" stars like Helen Hayes and Tallulah Bankhead to contemporary artists like Sir Ian McKellen, Robin De Jesús, and many others. Olney Theatre Center welcomed Artistic Director Jason Loewith and Managing Director Debbie Ellinghaus in 2013 and 2014, respectively, who established a new artistic strategy to broaden programming with the goal of nurturing a diversity of voices and audiences. Olney Theatre Center now produces musicals and plays under the three rubrics of Classic, Contemporary, and Family programming. Since 2013, Olney Theatre Center has twice won the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Musical Production, and the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding New Play and presented six world premieres. Complementing this work, Olney Theatre Center fulfills its mission as a teaching theater with educational programs like the Our Play program in local 5th-grade classrooms, a summer camp, and a year-round professional apprentice program.

For more information, please visit olneytheatre.org.

Follow Olney Theatre Center on Twitter and Instagram @olneytheatre and on Facebook at facebook.com/olneytheatre.

###