



# LAURA VIRELLA

MEZZO-SOPRANO

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Hailed as “a compelling singer and actor” (*LA Times*) with a “rich, attractive, plush sound” (*Washington Times*), “flirtatious, sensual, sympathetic, full of fire and stellar in her vocal performance” (*Daze Magazine, Canada*), and “a powerful Carmen” (*La Vanguardia*), Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano and Helen Hayes Award Winner Laura Virella was recently engaged as **Frida** in the world premiere of *El último sueño de Frida y Diego* by Grammy Award-winning composer Gabriela Lena Frank and Pulitzer Prize librettist Nilo Cruz, in a co-production of San Diego Opera and San Francisco Opera. Her international solo career has taken her around the world to theatres and iconic venues including Carnegie Hall and Stefaniensaal, where she performed excerpts as *Rosenkavalier*’s **Octavian** opposite Kammersängerin Linda Watson.

2023 included an incursion into musical theatre as **Maria** in *West Side Story* with Olney Theatre in DC, after her acclaimed debut as **Mari Pepa** in the zarzuela *Revoltosa* with GALA Hispanic Theatre, which earned her a Helen Hayes nomination for Outstanding Lead Performer in a Musical and a Helen Hayes Award for Best Ensemble. It's the second time Virella has been recognized for her zarzuela work in DC. In 2012, she was nominated for Best Actress in Opera by the DC Theatre Scene Awards for her portrayal of the title role in *Luisa Fernanda*, winning second place to international star Patricia Racette in the audience choice.

**In the world of contemporary chamber and experimental opera**, she was **Alicia** in the New York premiere of Laura Kaminsky, Marc Campbell and Kimberly Reed's *Some Light Emerges*; appeared in the New York premiere of *Elizabeth Frankenstein* by Edmund Cioneck; and has been an avid collaborator at The American Opera Project, workshopping Ellis Ludwig-Leone’s *The Night Falls* and recently joining the cast (as diplomat **Ronnie**) and production team for Pete Wyer and Melissa Salmon's immersive theatrical experience *Ga Sho*, a powerful piece originally commissioned by the Royal Opera House that has since morphed and expanded into new performance practices to tell the moving story of the Drapchi nuns.

**In new chamber music**, she sang with the Baroque-inspired ensemble Consortium in the world premiere of *¡Victor, Catarina!* by Gilbert Galindo – a piece set to words of praise for Catherine of Alexandria by Baroque Mexican nun Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, mostly known for her mystical poetry. She has also appeared in concert with ArtsAhimsa in the New York premiere of *Homesick* by David Karp and *¿Cómo he de irme?* by Jack Délano.

Her voice is featured in the Puerto Rican award-winning short film *Dream of Vermilion*, for which she composed the theme song “Época de grito.” This and her debut album of songs by Ukrainian-born Puerto Rican composer Jack Délano, *Al menos cantos* (Lexicon Classics), are currently available on all major streaming platforms worldwide.

**Professional principal-artist affiliations include** San Diego Opera, El Paso Opera, Detroit Opera, Long Beach Opera, the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice, Carnegie Hall, Mercury Opera, Festival de Santa Florentina (Catalunya), Theater Rudolstadt, Ópera de Puerto Rico, Wolf Trap Opera, Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra and the Queens New Music Festival.

Ms. Virella is an alumna of the Coro de Niños de San Juan, where she studied under Evy Lucío for 13 years, starting at the age of 5. She holds a BM in Voice from the Peabody Conservatory, where she apprenticed under Thomas Grubb, and an MM in Voice from Manhattan School of Music, where she studied with Edith Bers and was influenced by Kathryn LaBouff. She’s a recipient of the Peabody Opera Award and is a First Place winner of the American Golden Voices Competition. Passionate about languages, she’s fluent in Spanish, English, French, Italian and German.

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## ROLES PREPARED AND/OR PERFORMED

Alicia – Some Light Emerges  
Angelina – La Cenerentola  
Aurora – Doña Francisquita  
Bianca – The Rape of Lucretia  
Carmen – Title Role  
Charlotte – Werther  
Cherubino – Le nozze di Figaro  
Desideria – Saint of Bleecker Street  
Dorabella – Così fan tutte  
Dritte Dame – Die Zauberflöte  
Dryad – Ariadne auf Naxos  
Enfant – L'enfant et les sortilèges  
Frau Reich – Die lustigen Weiber von Windsor  
Frida – Title Role  
Frida – El último sueño de Frida y Diego  
Hänsel – Hänsel und Gretel  
Idamante – Idomeneo  
Lola – Cavalleria rusticana  
Luisa Fernanda – Title Role  
Maddalena – Rigoletto  
Mari Pepa – La Revoltosa  
Mercedes – Carmen  
Mrs. Grose – Turn of the Screw  
Niklausse/La Muse – Les contes d'Hoffmann  
Old Lady – Candide  
Paquette – Candide  
Prince Charmant – Cendrillon  
Rosette – Manon  
Rosina – Il barbiere di Siviglia  
Tisbe – La Cenerentola  
Waltraute – Die Walküre  
Wellgunde – Das Rheingold  
Zanetto – Title Role  
Zweite Dame – Die Zauberflöte

## ROLES IN PREPARATION

Lorca – Ainadamar  
Paula – Florencia en el Amazonas  
Octavian – Der Rosenkavalier



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## ONSTAGE PERFORMANCE (HIGHLIGHTS)

<b>Carmen</b>	<i>Carmen</i> (Card aria/trio)	Litha Symphony	2024
<b>Lola</b>	<i>Cavalleria Rusticana</i>	Regina Opera	2024
<b>Maria</b>	<i>West Side Story</i>	Olney Theatre	2023
<b>Frida</b> (Cover)	<i>El último sueño de Frida y Diego</i>	San Diego Opera	2022
<b>Mari Pepa (La Revoltosa)</b>	<i>Revoltosa</i>	Teatro Gala	2022
<b>Frida</b> (Cover)	<i>Frida</i>	El Paso Opera	2022
<b>Ronnie</b>	<i>Ga Sho</i>	The American Opera Project	2022
<b>Tisbe</b>	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Mason Opera	2022
<b>Frida</b> (Cover)	<i>Frida</i>	Detroit Opera	2021
<b>Carmen</b>	<i>Carmen</i>	Mercury Opera (Alberta tour)	2019
<b>Alicia</b>	<i>Some Light Emerges</i>	New York Opera Fest	2019
<b>Mercedes</b>	<i>Carmen</i>	Phoenicia Voice Festival	2018
<b>Angelina</b>	<i>La Cenerentola</i>	Opera Nova	2018
<b>Rosina</b>	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Amore Opera	2017
<b>Frida</b>	<i>Frida</i>	Long Beach Opera	2017
<b>Mrs. Grose</b>	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	DC Public Opera	2017
<b>Mrs. Grose</b>	<i>The Turn of the Screw</i>	Miami Music Festival	2016
<b>Maddalena</b>	<i>Rigoletto</i>	Amore Opera	2016
<b>Dorabella</b>	<i>Così fan tutte</i>	Teatro Comunale di Narni	2015
<b>Carmen</b>	<i>Carmen</i>	Festival de Santa Florentina	2015
<b>Frau Reich</b>	<i>Die lustigen Weiber</i>	Theater Rudolstadt	2015
<b>Maddalena</b>	<i>Rigoletto</i>	Lüneburg Opernstudio	2014
<b>Octavian</b>	<i>Der Rosenkavalier</i> (Aria/Trio)	Lüneburg Opernstudio	2014
<b>Luisa Fernanda</b>	<i>Luisa Fernanda</i>	Teatro de la Luna	2011
<b>Old Lady</b>	<i>Candide</i>	coópera: POM	2011
<b>Angelina</b>	<i>La cenerentola</i>	DiCapo Opera for Kids	2011
<b>Desideria</b> (Cover)	<i>The Saint of Bleecker St.</i>	DiCapo Opera Theatre	2011
<b>Hansel</b>	<i>Hansel and Gretel</i>	Opera Camerata of Washington	2010
<b>Enfant</b>	<i>L'enfant et les sortilèges</i>	coópera: POM	2009
<b>Zanetto</b>	<i>Zanetto</i>	coópera: POM	2009
<b>Bianca</b>	<i>The Rape of Lucretia</i>	coópera: POM	2008
<b>Luisa Fernanda</b>	<i>Luisa Fernanda</i>	Zarzuela Di Si	2008
<b>Cherubino</b>	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Project Opera of Manhattan	2006

## CONCERT & ORATORIO

<b>El amor brujo</b> , Falla	Mo. Francisco Miranda	New York City	2025
<b>Cómo he de irme</b> , Déllano	Chamber ensemble	Arts Ahimsa	2021
<b>Homesick</b> , David Karp	Chamber ensemble	Arts Ahimsa	2021
<b>Chansons Madécasses</b> , Ravel	Chamber ensemble	Third Street Music School	2019
<b>Soloist</b>	Amigos de la Zarzuela Gala	Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall	2019
<b>Songs of Perception</b> , Boustead	Chamber ensemble	Queens New Music Festival	2019
<b>¡Víctor, Catarina!</b> , Galindo	Chamber ensemble	Queens New Music Festival	2019
<b>Shéhérezade</b> , Ravel	Chamber ensemble	Conciertos en Familia, CAMPR	2019
<b>Chansons Madécasses</b> , Ravel	Chamber ensemble	Steinway Society of Puerto Rico	2018
<b>Rosenkavalier finale</b>	Mo. Gerrit Priessnitz	Stefaniensaal	2012
<b>Misa San Ignacio</b> , Zipoli	Mo. Jorge Parodi	Zipoli Ensemble (CA Tour)	2007
<b>Magnificat/Infantes</b> , Jerusalem	Mo. Jorge Parodi	Zipoli Ensemble (CA Tour)	2007

## AWARDS

**National Finalist**, New York Lyric Opera Vocal Competition, 2013  
**1<sup>st</sup> Runner-Up**, Best Actress in Opera, DC Theatre Scene Awards, 2012  
**1<sup>st</sup> Place**, AFAP Golden Voices, 2011  
**Out 100 Honoree**, *Out Magazine*, 2008

## EDUCATION

Manhattan School of Music: Masters in Music, Voice  
Peabody Conservatory: Bachelor of Music, Voice

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"Laura Virella's portrayal of the supposed 'agitator and troublemaker' [Mari Pepa] was well-developed to show the character's inherent understanding of her control and humor. Ms. Virella shone in the passionate duet with Joselu López as Felipe." *Broadway World*, 2022

"The central love story wins our hearts in the music, thanks in great part to the beautiful voices of the two leads Joselu López as Felipe and Laura Virella as Mari Pepa, who excel in both singing and acting chops." *DC Theatre Arts*, 2022

"Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella [Carmen] hits all the right notes—she's flirtatious, sensual, sympathetic, full of fire and delivers a stellar vocal performance." *Daze Magazine*, 2019

"The company has found in Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella an instantly believable Frida, a capable singer and actor, compelling onstage." Mark Swed, *LA Times*, 2017

"Virella is a spectacular Frida, absolutely eloquent in her feminist, liberal, and revolutionary sermons, and fully convincing in her representation of the physical and mental pain that were inseparable parts of Frida's existence." Sergio Burstein, *Hoy LA*, June 26, 2017

"Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella is vibrant in the title role [Frida]." Falling James, *LA Weekly*

"Laura Virella plays the role of Frida with a conviction and vocal power worth hearing in person." Sergio Burstein, *Hoy LA*, June 14, 2017

"The fine Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella, making her LBO debut, is almost always on stage in the title role, negotiating not only the music but moving around both on her own two legs and by wheelchair. She totally looks and inhabits the part." Eric A. Gordon, *People's World*, June 22, 2017

"Laura Virella is a vibrant Frida with an attractive, plush sound." Michael Van Duzer, *ShowMag*, 2017

"Laura Virella [Frida] was exceptional in her leading role." Julie Riggott, *Culture Spot LA*, June 28, 2017

"Laura Virella in the title role possesses a bright, luminescent mezzo that at once conveys Kahlo's passion and her pain. [She gives] completely realized performances, singing and acting with both beauty, when called for, and intensity." Jim Ruggirello, *Gazettes*, June 23, 2017

"The fabulous Laura Virella's Carmen is excellent, as she powerfully begins her career." Jorge de Persia, *La Vanguardia*, Catalunya, July 2015

"Worldwide beloved Kammersängerin Linda Watson impressed with her precise phrasing and interpretation, as did Laura Virella, from Puerto Rico, with her fervent Octavian." Apa Hansjörg Spies, *Kleine Zeitung*, 2012 (Graz)

"Mezzo-soprano Laura Virella, as Luisa [Fernanda], demonstrates an impressive emotional range in her acting as she effortlessly projects nuance from ebulliance to melancholia in her phrasing." Rosalind Lacy for *DC Theatre Scene*, 2011

"As the Old Woman, mezzo Laura Virella was the greatest standout of this show...She gave us singing that was beautiful and acting that was just histrionic enough. Her comic timing was the best of the evening...It was clear Miss Virella was having tremendous fun." *Taminophile*, 2011



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