



LAURA VIRELLA

MEZZO-SOPRANO

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 Cionek; 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)

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

CONCERT & ORATORIO

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

AWARDS

National Finalist, New York Lyric Opera Vocal Competition, 2013
1st Runner-Up, Best Actress in Opera, DC Theatre Scene Awards, 2012
1st 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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