

LAURA VIRELLA

mezzosoprano

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"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

"Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella [is a] capable singer and actor, compelling onstage."
~Mark Swed, *LA Times*, June 18, 2017

"The fantastic Laura Virella offers an excellent Carmen, powerfully launching her career."
~*La Vanguardia*, 2015

"Mezzo Laura Virella made a strong impression as Carmen. She presented a very sexy, defiant femme fatale, indeed."
~*Opera Canada*, 2019

"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

"A capable singer and actor, compelling on stage" (LA Times), "flirtatious, sensual, sympathetic, full of fire and stellar in her vocal performance" (Daze Magazine, Canada), Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella is currently best known on the operatic stage for her collection of complex, strong, independent and outspoken Latin women: Carmen, Frida, Luisa Fernanda, Rosina, Desideria (*The Saint of Bleecker Street*), Maddalena—indeed, roles that seem tailor-made for her temperament.

But the mezzo-soprano is more interested in the nuance of the very real people she represents on stage and in the way stories are told and by whom, an interest that draws her to meaningful chamber music, themed and interdisciplinary recital collaborations, and the unique sense of adventure in discovering previously overlooked or newly written works.

As a recitalist, she has sought to champion the vastly underperformed classical repertoire of her country of Puerto Rico. She's put together several programs with friend and collaborator Nathaniel LaNasa, presenting art song from the island on its own, or interwoven within a theme alongside standard literature by Fauré, Strauss, Debussy, Korngold, Schubert, Schumann.

In chamber music, she has worked with pianist Ernesto Busigó and flutist Josué Casillas to present accessible performances in Puerto Rico, including Ravel's *Chansons Madécasses* and *Shehérézade* – works framed in colonial circumstances and a fascination with exoticism. In New York, she collaborated with the Baroque-inspired Consortium ensemble to premiere *iVictor, Catarina!* by composer 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; two women who went down in history for being ahead of their times.

In the world of contemporary opera, she performed the role of Alicia in the New York premiere of *Some Light Emerges* by Laura Kaminsky, Marc Campbell and Kimberly Reed. She also workshopped Ellis Ludwig-Leone's *The Night Falls* with The American Opera Project.

She has collaborated in cinema, composing and performing the theme song "Época de grito" for the award-winning short film *Dream of Vermilion* by Robert Alexander García Cooper and Heixan Robles.

In the realm of Spanish classical music, she debuted at Carnegie Hall's Weill Hall in the 34th annual gala of Amigos de la Zarzuela, the first of several performances she will give in New York City in this genre over the next two years, including Falla's *El amor brujo*, Granado's *Goyescas* and Falla's *La vida breve*. She is the recipient of a second place award (second to Patricia Racette) as Best Actress in Opera by the DC Theatre Scene Awards for her portrayal of Moreno Torroba's Luisa Fernanda.

Professional principal-artist affiliations include Long Beach Opera, the Phoenicia International Festival of the Voice, Mercury Opera, Festival de Santa Florentina (Barcelona), Theater Rudolstadt, Ópera de Puerto Rico, Wolf Trap Opera, Puerto Rico Symphony Orchestra, Dicapo Opera and the Queens New Music Festival. She's a graduate of the Manhattan School of Music, the Peabody Conservatory and an alumna of the Coro de Niños de San Juan.



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ONSTAGE PERFORMANCE

Abuela	<i>La vida breve</i>	Vocal Productions NYC	2021
Pepa	<i>Goyescas</i>	Vocal Productions NYC	2021
Carmen	<i>Carmen</i>	Mercury Opera	2019
Alicia	<i>Some Light Emerges</i>	New York Opera Fest	2019
Mercedes	<i>Carmen</i>	Phoenicia Voice Festival	2018
Lola	<i>Cavalleria rusticana</i>	Private performance	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 (Aria/Trio)</i>	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
Nancy Ford (Cover)	<i>The Village Singer</i>	MSM Opera Studio	2007
Rosina	<i>Il barbiere di Siviglia</i>	Project Opera of Manhattan	2006
Cherubino	<i>Le nozze di Figaro</i>	Project Opera of Manhattan	2006

CONCERT & ORATORIO

El amor brujo	Mo. Francisco Miranda	New York City	2020
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, AFAF 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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"The company has found in Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella and Venezuelan American baritone Bernardo Bermudez an instantly believable Frida and Diego. Both are capable singers and actors, compelling onstage."

Mark Swed, *LA Times*, June 18, 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*

"And already, the focus of attention was on Laura Virella, who 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*

"Venezuelan-American lyric baritone Bernardo Bermudez and Puerto Rican mezzo-soprano Laura Virella were exceptional in their leading roles."

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

"Mezzo-soprano Laura Virella is compelling as Frida, and Bernardo Bermudez, a lyric baritone, is a fine match. They don't sing many arias together, but when they do it's hard to resist being pulled in and embraced by their voices."

Bondo Wyszpolski, *Easy Reader News*, June 23, 2017

"The fabulous Laura Virella [...]. 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

"All, especially the rich mezzo-soprano Laura Virella, are gifted singers."

The Washington Times, 2004

"Laura Virella's Carmen couldn't have been much more sensual without inviting a police raid."

Tim Smith for *The Baltimore Sun*, 2002



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