

# LAURA (MIRTA) VIRELLA (RODRÍGUEZ)

(Word Wizard)

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## Who am I?

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First things first: I'm an opera singer. That's what I do. But, I also have kind of a love affair with words. I grew up fully bilingual (although I did hate English for a while), and in a family of lawyers (so talk about learning how to build an argument!).

My fascination with words and all dorky things surrounding them came to its ultimate peak in undergrad, when I was introduced to diction, phonetics and poetic translation. Since I trained à la Callas (is Renée Fleming more recognizable now?), I specialized in French, Italian and German.

There's an art to sensing language-family nuances. You either have it or you don't. I guess being an opera singer while working with words does matter after all. Working to convey message, style and tone from one language to another is the absolute greatest brain-tickling experience for me. (Ok, I do love math too, but that's another story.)

So, what have I done? 13+ years of creative and academic writing in Spanish and English—from short stories (youngest award-winner ever[!] in *El nuevo día's* "Certamen literario para jóvenes"), to essays and reviews, to artist statements and bios; fifteen years of freelance Spanish to English translation, including fun stuff like affidavits, property titles, university transcripts and letters of recommendation; nine years of poetic French/Italian/German to English/Spanish translation—think Schubert, Schuman, Massenet, Fauré, Goethe, etc.; nine years of English-Spanish marketing translation, including, of course, legal and pharmaceutical copy; and now seven years of English/Spanish copywriting for marketing, advertising and communications.

So! What do you want to say? (And in what language?)

## Where have I used my magical word-talent?

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### Arts & Literature Translator

July 2017-Present

-Spanish Language Signage Writer for Madison Square Park Conservancy's Public Art series.

-Translator for Red Sugarcane Press' *Voces desde Puerto Rico* | *Voices from Puerto Rico*, a literary collection of essays, poetry and short stories written in Spanish or English by various authors and published bilingually in February of 2019.

### Freelance Word Wizard

July 2010-Present

Language Consultant, Writer, translator, copyeditor and copywriter in English/Spanish. Clients: Natural Resources Defense Council, Athletics, Novo Nordisk, El Pollo Loco, Sunrun, Berliner Benson, SocioFabrica, The Vidal Partnership, BSSP, cupani, Romano Film and Photography, Centra360, Horizon Media, Michael Cohen Group, Somos Arte, El Puente, coópera: Project Opera of Manhattan, photographers Shirley Miranda-Rodríguez and Armando Zubieta, and many more.

**Copywriter at The Vidal Partnership**

February 2010-July 2010

Radio, TV, print and digital bilingual copywriter for MasterCard, Johnnie Walker, Heineken, Sprint, Wendy's and The Home Depot. Most notable TV spot: "Bla, bla, bla" for Sprint.

**Language Specialist at The Vidal Partnership**

July 2008-March 2010

Translator, proofreader and copy editor, Spanish/English: Spanish translation of campaigns, brochures, manuals, press releases, commercials, letters, emails and websites of major brand clients such as Sprint, The Home Depot, Tylenol, Zyrtec, Diageo, Wendy's, Aveeno, J&J Baby, Desitin and Oscar Mayer; English translations of copywriters' Spanish work; proofreader of internal and external agency communications; client-specific glossary development to aid with language and branding-relevant consistency; lots of experience in pharmaceutical and legal terminology.

**Founder and Artistic Director at coópera: project opera of manhattam May**

2006-Present

Responsible for all libretto translations (for supertitles), program notes, editing of artist bios and all web content.

**Leasing Specialist at Southern Management**

July 2003-July 2005

Responsibilities: corporate and individual leasing in a multicultural market, creating marketing tools and campaigns, participating in the creation of resident retention programs, networking.

**Assistant Teacher to Thomas Grubb at The Peabody Conservatory, JHU**

2002-2003

Class teacher (French Diction) / Assistant (Advanced Vocal Repertoire): follow Thomas Grubb's curriculum in his book *Singing in French*; teaching advanced IPA at graduate level; assisting students in IPA transcription, and literal and idiomatic translation (from French, Italian, Spanish and German into English) for studying and publishing purposes; grading, performance printed program layout design and proofreading.

## I did go to school

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**Manhattan School of Music**

Master in Music, Opera; IPA Transcription: French, Italian & German, 2005-2007 **Activities:**

Tutor in diction, ear-training, theory and writing

**Peabody Conservatory of The Johns Hopkins University**

Bachelor of Music, voice/opera; languages; writing, 1999-2003

**Activities:** Writing tutor, diction coach, theory tutor, ear-training tutor

**Academia del Perpetuo Socorro**

High School Diploma, 1995-1999

**Activities and Societies:** Head Editor of *Alias*, multilingual literary magazine; Forensics; Spanish Forensics; UN Club; Theatre Club

## Not to brag, but...

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- Named one of 100 most influential people by *Out Magazine*, 2008
- Luisa Aparicio medal for excellence in languages, 1999
- 2nd Place and Honorable Mention: separate submissions to “Certamen literario para jóvenes” sponsored by *El nuevo día* newspaper in San Juan, PR, 1999
- Who's Who in America, 1998-2003