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# Mira J. Spektor

## Composer



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# Biography

Poet/composer/lyricist Mira J. Spektor is Founder/Artistic Director of [The Aviva Players](#). Born in Europe, Ms. Spektor graduated from Sarah Lawrence College, and studied at Mannes College and Juilliard. She has written chamber music and operas including *The Passion of Lizzie Borden*, *Mary Shelley*; songs and music for theater, film and TV; and has recorded for Concert Hall, Westminster and Gilde International du Disque, Original Cast Records, Capstone and AirPlay. Music scores (Georgina Press, BMI, Hildegard) include feature film *Double Edge* (Faye Dunaway) and PBS documentaries, *Art in Its Soul* and *Serious Comics*. Her recent CDs include: *The Housewives' Cantata*, *Lady of the Castle*, *Mira Chante/French Love Songs*, and *Lullabies and Lovesongs*.

A member of The League of Professional Theater Women, BMI, Dramatist Guild, and a published poet (from *Seaside Houses*), Ms. Spektor has a new poetry collection, *The Road to November* now available in selected bookstores.

## Poet

Her poems have been published in:

*Black Tie Press, California State Poetry Quarterly, Comstock Review, Jewish Women's Literary Annual, Georgina Press, BMI, Haworth Press, Seems, Tukumcari Reviews, Without Halos and NY Women's Business Calendar, and From Seaside Houses (Pudding House).*

## Composer/Lyricist

Mira J. Spektor has written songs and music for theater, film, TV, translated French & German poetry and lyrics, recorded for Westminster, Concert Hall, Gilde du Disque, Original Cast Records, Capstone and AirPlay. Her music scores include: the feature film *Double Edge* with Faye Dunaway, PBS-TV Documentaries *Art in its Soul* and *Serious Comics*. Musicals: *The Housewives' Cantata* (lyrics by June Siegel) and *Give Me Time*; Chamber Operas; *Lady of the Castle* (composer's libretto based on Israeli poet, Lea Goldberg's play — heard in the US, Germany & London; *The Passion of Lizzie Borden* (libretto by Ruth Whitman) and *Mary Shelley* (libretto by Colette Inez).

# Critical Acclaim

The Road to November

"In her poetry collection Mira Josefowitz Spektor writes about loss but she also tells stories of parallel lives. Inner time trips are accessed through elevators, trains, music and dreams."

(Helen Papell)

"Honest and unflinchingly poetry, beautifully bittersweet in tone, European in its sensibilities and memories. A work showing a fine ear for subtle tones and for cadences - haunting reverberations of Europe, WWII"

(Colette Inez, Columbia University)

"Lyrical and sensitively written... perceptive and powerful... All of he work is filled with future."

(Pearl London, The New School)

"...so poignant that one is left with a phrase or two echoing in your head long after putting the poems down."

(Cynthia Navaretta, Publisher, Midmarch Arts Press)

"Your poem ("Of Voyagers") gives wonderful and so accurate expression to the sense of loss that accompanies the death of someone close to you - even the smells remain. It's like a lost limb."

(Dr. Alice Shalvi, Hebrew University, Founder, the Israel Women's Network)

"I have used Mira Spektor's thought-provoking poems in readings and workshops; they invariably evoke powerful memories and emotions." (Rachel J. Siegel, MSW, Psychotherapist, Writer, Editor.)

"The setting was attractive and tonal and recalled some of the more graceful music in Bernstein's *Trouble in Tahiti* - particularly appealing was a duet between Mary and Percy Shelley: *There Is No Heaven but my Love*."

(Allan Kozinn in *The New York Times* about the chamber opera *Mary Shelley*)

Film score for *Double Edge*: "**The powerful, moving music was composed by Mira J. Spektor.**" —The Jewish Week.

*Give Me Time*: "**A mini miracle of a musical**" —New Choices.

*The Passion of Lizzie Borden*: "**Ms. Spektor... an interesting composer**" —John Rockwell, The New York Times.

*The Housewives' Cantata*: "**A sprightly song-fest**" —The New York Times.

*Lady of the Castle*: "**... this musical work is moving and poignant... lyrical and subtle...**" —Doris Gold, Biblio Press.

# Curriculum Vitae

## Operas

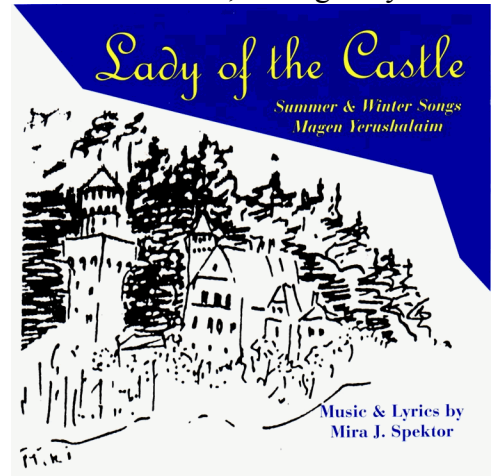
### 101 **Lady of the Castle** 8-17210010-1

Music & Lyrics by Mira J. Spektor based on a play by Lea Goldberg. T. Carmi's translation, Dialogue by Andrea Balis & Patricia Heuermann. Chamber opera in One Act, two scenes, approx. 60 min.

The time and place: an old European castle, September 1947.

Scored for coloratura-soprano, mezzo-soprano, baritone, flute, cello, continuo (keyboard or guitar). Voice & Piano score available © 1982.

The original version was scored for four voices, flute, cello and 12-string folk guitar. In the voice & piano score the piano or harpsichord continuo was realized by Harry Fuchs. Flute & cello parts are available. If possible a folk guitar or zither could double the keyboard.



The play and opera are based on a true story about one of the “Hidden Children,” a teenage girl who was hidden by an old man in a crumbling European castle after the Holocaust. She is found on a stormy night by Dora, a social worker who rescues children. The chamber opera **Lady of the Castle** was heard in NYC, Long Island, Massachusetts, Berlin and London. The British production is available on an Original Cast Recordings CD.

### 102 **Passion of Lizzie Borden** 8-17210010-2

Music by Mira J. Spektor. Libretto is based on two poems by Ruth Whitman, *My Daughter the Cypress* & *The Passion of Lizzie Borden*. 15 minutes. A short opera about the famous murder case. Videotaped by Pratt Institute for cable TV.

Cast: Lizzie Borden's Mother, contralto.

[Narrator & voices; spoken role.

Lizzie Borden, soprano.

Lizzie's sister Emma, mezzo-soprano.

Scored for piano, violin or flute & cello.

“A ‘very short opera’ to evocative poetry by Ruth Whitman... (Ms. Spektor) an interesting composer... an impassioned duet for Lizzie and her sister was well done by Barbara Ann Peters and Constance Beavon.” (The New York Times, John Rockwell, 11/1985)

### 103 **Mary Shelley – Scenes from her Life**

8-17210010-3

Music by Mira Spektor. Libretto by Colette Inez. 30-minute version. 1993.

Cast: Mary Shelley, soprano.

Percy B. Shelley, tenor.

Byron & Frankenstein's Monster, bass-baritone.  
Piano, solo viola (for the Monster's aria only).

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## Mini Operas

119 **Casino** 8-17210010-19

A 7-minute opera about a mother and a daughter. Scored for soprano, mezzo-soprano and piano—on poems by the composer. Music by Mira J. Spektor. 1997.

120 **Ladies of Romance** 8-17210010-20

Seven minutes. A mini opera-buffo about some heroines and their heroes in literature. Music by Mira J. Spektor. Lyrics by June Siegel. 1980.

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## Musical Theatre

104 **The Housewives' Cantata** 8-17210010-4

The first funny feminist musical 1800-1999.  
Music by Mira J. Spektor. Lyrics by June Siegel. 20 Songs. 1975.

### Reviews:

“A sprightly song fest” - The New York Times

“The humor is fresh and pointed” - The Daily News

“A feminist musical... light and frothy on the outside with a stinging bit inside” – Long Island Press

“The music ranges from rag to romantic. The lyrics are pointed and witty” – South Shore Record

“Revue cause for delight... Sharp, funny... spares no one” – St. Paul Pioneer Press

105 **Give Me Time** 8-17210010-5

A 17-minute musical. Music by Mira J. Spektor. Lyrics by June Siegel, Mira J. Spektor and Caroline Crippen. 1996.

### Two Microbes from Mars

A short sci-fi musical. Music by Mira J. Spektor. Commissioned by Golden Fleece Ltd., 2002.

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## Song Collections

Sixty art songs and duets, approx. three minutes each (title list available) scored for voice and piano, composed to English, French and German poems and lyrics by various writers including Caroline Crippen, William Dickey, Phyllis McGinley, Wolfgang von Goethe, Contesse de Noaille, Lily Nussbaum, Rutebeuf, Percy Shelley, June Siegel, Mira J. Spektor.

106 **Three Songs for Baritone** 8-17210010-6

*The Monster's Song.* Text by Colette Inez. Baritone & solo viola (viola part available).

*Sunday Psalm.* Poem by Phyllis McGinley. Voice & piano.

*Indian Summer.* Poem by Mira J. Spektor. Voice & piano.

Georgina Press BMI.

107 **Indian Serenade** 8-17210010-7

*On Poem by Percy B. Shelley for tenor and piano.*

Georgina Press BMI. © 1998. Voice & piano.

108 **Two Songs on Poems** by Lilly Nussbaum (a young poet) for soprano or mezzo-soprano and piano. 8-17210010-8

*Paracheech Tea.*

*Quiet.*

109 **Two Bedtime Songs** 8-17210010-9

110 **Two Songs on Poems by William Dickey** 8-17210010-10

**Trois Chansons Française - Three French Songs** for mezzo-soprano and piano

111 **Emerveillement** - *Poem by Anna Comtesse de Noaille (1876-1933)* 8-17210010-11

112 **La Complainte de Rutebeuf** - *Poem by 13th Century Poet Rutebeuf* 8-17210010-12

112a **Il Neige dans mon Coeur** *Lyrics by Mira J. Spektor*

113 **Drei Neue Lieder - Three German Songs** *New Settings of Poems by Wolfgang von Goethe for Soprano and Piano* 8-17210010-13

*Geheimnis*

*Soll last mich scheinen*

*Der Mussensohn*

## Vocal Chamber Music

115 **Four Songs on Poems** by Ruth Whitman 8-17210010-15

Four Songs. For medium voice, flute or violin and cello. (Performed at the residence of Prime Minister Menachem Begin in Jerusalem). 11 minutes. 1973.

116 **Love is More Thicker Than Forget** 8-17210010-16

A 3-minute song on poem by e.e. cummings. For three women's voices or 3-part chorus, violin and piano. Music by Mira J. Spektor.

117 **Voice in the Wind** 8-17210010-17

A 4-minute vocalise for mezzo-soprano and cello or tape. (from film score Double Edge). Music by Mira J. Spektor. 1982

118 **Magen Yerushalaim** 8-17210010-18

A 3-minute piece for two-part children's chorus or solo soprano and mezzo-soprano. 1980. Music and Lyrics by Mira J. Spektor. 1980.

### **The Monster's Song**

A 4-minute song from the chamber opera **Mary Shelley**. Music by Mira J. Spektor. Text by Collette Inez. Scored for baritone and viola. 1993.

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121 **Summer & Winter Songs** 8-17210010-21

Six Songs. Music, Lyrics & Poems by Mira J. Spektor. Mezzo-soprano, harp or piano.; Narrator optional. Voice/piano score available. Georgina Press BMI. © 1997. 12 minutes.

from *The Cold Seashore* (poem)

*Sea-song* (song)

*Candles Bright* (song) – Lyrics by Rabbi Louis I. Newman

*Summer* (song)

*Hotel* (poem)

*Winter Lullaby* (song)

*Call Me* (a bedtime song)

*the hole in the ceiling* (poem)

*The Dance* (song)

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## Songs by Mira

A program for voice and piano (15 songs and two duets) Music by Mira J. Spektor to lyrics by Carolyn Crippen, William Dickey, Phyllis McGinley, Wolfgang von Goethe, Lilly Nussbaum, Anna Comtesse de Noaille, Rutebeuf, June Siegel, Mira J. Spektor.

Demo CD of this collection available.

All music published by Georgina Press BMI

Tele (212) 362-2277 Fax (212) 799-5967 or email [mirajspektor@earthlink.net](mailto:mirajspektor@earthlink.net)

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## Chamber Works

### Provincetown Suite

An 11-minute instrumental suite for flute, viola and piano, based on the score for TV documentary entitled *Art in Its Soul*. 1987.

### Trio: Voices

1. *Voice in the Wind*
2. *Round & Lullaby*
3. *Duo per Tre Voce*

This short Trio for violin, clarinet and cello, was written for the Lumina Quartet, it starts on a somber note, doesn't allow itself to cry, and ends on a joke. 10 minutes long. 2001.

### Inbal's Cello Song

A short piece with an Israeli flavor. A cello and piano begin a lyrical song—it becomes a joyous and then a frantic Hora-dance before the memory of the song returns.

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## Film Scores

Feature film *Double Edge* starring Faye Dunaway. 1992.

Feature film *High Stakes*, 1999. Music, lyrics and “end credits” Theme Song by Mira J. Spektor.

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## Television Scores

### PBS Documentaries:

**Art in Its Soul** 1987. Commissioned by the Cape Museum of Fine Arts, seen at the Whitney Museum and WGBH-TV, Silver Apple Award.

**Serious Comics.** 1994. Written for WNYC-TV and shown on PBS Channel 13, in 1996.

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## Theatre Music

### Equity Showcases:

**Galina lives.** 1993, 2002. This theatre music was written for Bernice Lee’s play.

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## Recent CDs

### Lady of the Castle

### Mira Chante/French Love Songs



### Lullabies & Lovesongs

### The Housewives' Cantata

About the new CD of **The Housewives' Cantata**

“...the tale of three women, one of whom goes from housewife to becoming the first woman President of the United States. But it’s the songs which constitute the backbone, songs with perception and real bite... Ms. Siegel’s trenchant lyrics... the brush of whit. Ms. Spektor’s music is a furtive lesson in eclecticism, soaking up styles from Kibbutz clap to Stainless Steelware Alley... There is always a nice balance between the touching and the tart and the important gift of compatibility with the lyrics. She also sings with a vocal resonance uniquely hers, floating somewhere between Lottye Lenya and Shoshana Damari, a vast space to be sure... The other singers, well-trained, are assets... particularly the sweet soprano of Ms. Lowin... Mr. Chelsi, the sole male voice sings all the masculine roles well.” – The Music Connoisseur.



Original Cast Records, Box 496, Georgetown, CT 06829. \$14.95

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## Recording / CD Labels

Concert Hall

Westminster

Guilde International du Disque,

Original Cast Records

Capstone

AirPlay

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## Music Publishers

Georgina Press

BMI

Hildegard Press

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## List of Available Published Music by Mira J. Spektor

**Product #   Product Name   ISBN**

101	Lady of the Castle	8-17210010-1
102	Passion of Lizzie Borden	8-17210010-2
103	Mary Shelley	8-17210010-3
104	The Housewives Cantata	8-17210010-4
105	Give me Time	8-17210010-5
106	Three Songs for Baritone	8-17210010-6
107	Indian Serenade	8-17210010-7
108	Two Songs on Poems by Lily Nussbaum	8-17210010-8
109	Two Bedtime Songs	8-17210010-9
110	Two Songs on Poems by William Dickey	8-17210010-10
111	Emerveillement	8-17210010-11
112	La Complainte de Rutebeuf	8-17210010-12
113	Drei Neue Lieder	8-17210010-13
114	Three Cabaret Songs	8-17210010-14
115	Four Songs on Poems by Ruth Whitman	8-17210010-15
116	Love is more Thicker Than Forget	8-17210010-16
117	Voice in the Wind	8-17210010-17
118	Magen Yerushalaim	8-17210010-18
119	Casino	8-17210010-19
120	Ladies of Romance	8-17210010-20
121	Summer & Winter Songs	8-17210010-21

