



HONORARY DEGREE CITATION

Heidi Grant Murphy

DOCTOR OF FINE ARTS

Growing up in a musical home in Bellingham, singing in church and school choirs, it's no surprise that you would pursue a life of song. Your Mother, a nurse, and your Father, a minister and self-taught guitar and marimba player, made sure that you and your sisters had every opportunity, and every reason, to sing. When you chose to major in Music Education at Western Washington University, it made perfect sense that you would aspire to share your love of song as a high school choir director.

And yet you were destined to share your musical gifts on a much grander stage, not as one voice among many, but as an internationally renowned soloist and performer. The first step came when teachers and friends persuaded you to audition for the graduate program at Indiana University, but it was your selection as a finalist in the Metropolitan Opera's National Council Auditions, and a subsequent invitation to join the Lindemann Young Artist Development Program that launched you on a trajectory to being one of the most acclaimed sopranos of your generation.

Since then you have appeared with many of the world's finest opera companies, including the Metropolitan Opera, the Salzburg Festival, Frankfurt Opera, the Opera National de Paris and the Santa Fe Opera, and as a soloist with symphonies, orchestras and philharmonics throughout the U.S. and around the world.

Praised for your extraordinary musicianship and technical control, your voice elicits ethereal descriptions from critics and audiences alike: Heavenly. Angelic. Shimmery. Silvery. As more than one enraptured critic has noted, your performances are timeless reminders of why people have adored and worshipped the human voice. That is due not only to impeccable vocal technique, but an equally uncommon ability to project your natural warmth and spirit through song.

And now, having recently completed more than two decades with the Metropolitan Opera you have returned to your original goal of teaching, joining the faculty of Indiana University's Jacobs School of Music as an adjunct professor of practice.

For your internationally celebrated contributions to opera and vocal performance, which inspire audiences and students alike with virtuosity of technique and authenticity of expression, Western Washington University is proud to confer its first honorary doctorate to an alumna, the degree of Doctor of Fine Arts, *honoris causa*.

Dated this 18th Day of August, 2012

Bruce Shepard, President



Peggy A Zoro, Chair, Board of Trustees