

Jessye Norman
Doctor of Music

Jessye Norman is one of America's most celebrated performing artists. The size, power and luster of her magnificent soprano voice has made her one of the world's most sought-after interpreters of Wagner's Sieglinda, Strauss's Ariadne, Mozart's Countess Almaviva and Stravinsky's Jocasta. Norman is equally at home on the opera stage, the recital hall, chamber music ensembles and jazz quartets. Her landmark recording of Strauss's "Four Last Songs" sets a standard to which generations to come will aspire. Norman was born into a musical family in Augusta, Georgia, learned the piano when she could barely walk and sang "Jesus is Calling" in public when she was only six. She pursued formal musical studies at Howard University, then later at the Peabody Conservatory and the University of Michigan. Norman made her operatic debut in a 1969 production of "Tannhäuser" at the Deutsche Oper Berlin. Her recordings have won such awards as France's Grand Prix National du Disque, London's Gramophone Award and Amsterdam's Edison Prize. In 2006 Norman became only the fourth opera/classical music singer to be presented the Recording Academy's Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award for Classical Music. The President of the French Republic named her to the Légion d'honneur and she is also a commander of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. Norman is an honorary fellow of Harvard and Cambridge universities, and has received honorary doctorates from, among others, Julliard, Howard, Harvard and Yale. In 1990 Norman was made an honorary ambassador to the United Nations by U.N. secretary general Javier Perez de Cuellar. She has also been named a "Living Landmark of New York City" by the Landmarks Conservancy and has received the Nelson A. Rockefeller Award for artistic achievement from the State University of New York's Purchase College.

For outstanding contributions to humanity through the performing arts, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill is pleased to confer on Jessye Norman the degree of Doctor of Music, *honoris causa*.