



FERRUCCIO FURLANETTO AWARDED SAN FRANCISCO OPERA MEDAL

Italian Bass, Who Made His San Francisco Opera Debut in 1979, Honored in
Onstage Presentation Following September 25 Opening of *Eugene Onegin*



Ferruccio Furlanetto (Photo: Sacharov); Ferruccio Furlanetto received the
San Francisco Opera Medal on September 25, 2022 (Photo: Stefan Cohen)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (September 26, 2022) — Immediately following the September 25 opening performance of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, bass Ferruccio Furlanetto, who performed the role of Prince Gremin in the opera, was presented with the San Francisco Opera Medal.

In the onstage ceremony with the audience still present, San Francisco Opera Tad and Dianne Taube General Director Matthew Shilvock said: "In your artistry you carry forward the tradition of the most wonderfully resonant basses like Cesare Siepi, whom you once called 'the most luminous model to follow.' You likewise are a luminous model for singers to follow, showing how to marry a depth of vocal beauty with incisive characterizations, all while being one of the most kind, caring and supportive of colleagues. At this opening of *Eugene Onegin*, we celebrate your 43 years of spectacular artistry on this stage. With heartfelt gratitude from the whole San Francisco Opera family, it is a great honor to present you with the San Francisco Opera Medal."

Addressing the audience, Furlanetto said: "I am extremely touched and proud to receive this honor from the Opera House where I started my international career ... quite a while ago. But this is, once more, proof that this profession of mine has been and still is the most amazing and unique privilege. I thank you all from the deepest of my heart."

Ferruccio Furlanetto, who hails from the small Northern Italian town of Sacile, made his professional debut in Lonigo in 1974 as Sparafucile in Verdi's *Rigoletto*. Within a few years, he had embarked on what has become a legendary operatic career, giving remarkable performances in the world's leading theaters over a span of nearly five decades. Shortly after his American debut in New Orleans, Furlanetto made his San Francisco Opera debut on opening night of the 1979 season. Portraying Alvisè in Ponchielli's *La Gioconda*, he starred alongside Luciano Pavarotti and Renata Scottò in a production that was seen worldwide through live telecast. Furlanetto returned to San Francisco Opera two years later for the new production of Verdi's *Aida*, a keystone event of Kurt Herbert Adler's final season as general director. Furlanetto joined the cast as Ramfis on the same night that soprano Leontyne Price dramatically stepped in for an ailing colleague on short notice.

On June 29, 2016, Furlanetto brought arguably his most renowned operatic role to life on the War Memorial Opera House stage: the tortured King of Spain, Philip II, in Verdi's *Don Carlo*. Since 1979, San Francisco Opera audiences have witnessed the great Italian bass in eight iconic portrayals: Alvisè (1979); Don Diègue in Massenet's *Le Cid* (1981); Ramfis (1981); Raimondo in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1981); the title role of Verdi's *Attila* (2012); Philip II (2016); Don Alfonso in *Così fan tutte* (2021); and Prince Gremin in *Eugene Onegin* (2022).

The San Francisco Opera Medal was inaugurated in 1970 when former General Director Kurt Herbert Adler awarded the first medal to soprano and Company prima donna Dorothy Kirsten. The Opera Medal is the Company's highest honor and has been awarded for distinguished service to San Francisco Opera. Past awardees include vocal soloists such as Samuel Ramey, Marilyn Horne, James Morris and Birgit Nilsson, former music directors Donald Runnicles and Nicola Luisotti, composer John Adams, artist David Hockney and dramaturg Dr. Clifford "Kip" Cranna.

#

San Francisco Opera is sponsored, in part, by Norby Anderson, Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson, The Dolby Family, Carol and Dixon Doll, Bertie Bialek Elliott, Peter Fenton and Kate Greer, Keith and Priscilla Geeslin, Gordon Getty, John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn, Burgess and Elizabeth

Jamieson, Franklin and Catherine Johnson, Edmund W. and Jeannik Méquet Littlefield Fund, Steven M. Menzies, Bernard and Barbro Osher, Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem, Dianne and Tad Taube, Phyllis C. Wattis Endowment Funds, Diane B. Wilsey, and Barbara A. Wolfe.

Eugene Onegin is made possible, in part, by Jerome L. and Thao N. Dodson; John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn; the San Francisco Opera Guild; and Jan Shrem and Maria Manetti Shrem.

San Francisco Opera is supported, in part, by a grant from Grants for the Arts.



OFFICIAL AIRLINE



San Francisco Opera is a member of



For further press information, including photographs of Ferruccio Furlanetto receiving the San Francisco Opera Medal and archival photos of his roles at San Francisco Opera since 1979, please visit sfopera.com/press:

San Francisco Opera Communications:

Julia Inouye (415) 565-6430 / jinouye@sfopera.com

Jeffery McMillan (415) 565-6451 / jmcmillan@sfopera.com

Teresa Concepcion (415) 565-6470 / tconcepcion@sfopera.com