A Pulitzer Prize-winner in 1988 for his 12 New Etudes for solo piano, **WILLIAM BOLCOM** (b.1938) commands a deep knowledge of musical styles from Mozart to cabaret to ragtime. Vocal music and theatrical works have been a mainstay since his early professional years; along with composing dozens of cabaret and art songs, as a pianist he has performed both genres with his wife, the singer Joan Morris, for decades. Among his largest projects is a setting of William Blake’s *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*, which he embarked upon as a teenager and completed only in 1982. He returned to Blake for his Boston Symphony Orchestra-commissioned Eighth Symphony in 2008. Further BSO commissions have included his *MCMXC Tanglewood*, for the Tanglewood Music Center’s 50th anniversary in 1990, and his *Circus Overture*, written for the 70th birthday of conductor Leonard Slatkin, who led the premiere with the BSO at Tanglewood in 2014. He has also written for the Boston Pops: his *Ragomania* was premiered by the Pops under John Williams’s direction in 1982. Other major pieces include three operas for Lyric Opera of Chicago: *McTeague, A View from the Bridge*, based on Arthur Miller’s play, and *The Wedding*, based on Robert Altman’s film.

Bolcom wrote his nine-movement **Suite No. 2** for solo violin in 2012 for Gil Shaham, whose repertoire includes the composer’s Violin Concerto as well as the *Graceful Ghost Rag*. The two brief movements from the suite performed in this concert are characteristically evocative. “Dancing in Place” requires Shaham to add his own percussion by tapping the violin’s fingerboard with his left hand. “Lenny in Spats”—a reference to Leonard Bernstein—begins its jazzy swing with high, whistle-like harmonics.