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PREVIEW  
NOTES

**Bolcom & Morris**  
**Saturday, May 21 • 8:00 PM • Curtis Institute, Field Hall**

**Background**

*The Chicago Sun-Times* calls Bolcom & Morris “the best thing to happen to American popular song since the invention of sheet music.” Traversing Broadway, vaudeville, music hall, ragtime and more, the husband-and-wife duo of William Bolcom (piano) and Joan Morris (mezzo-soprano) has been delighting audiences for nearly 40 years. They have 25 recordings to their credit, including their Grammy-nominated debut “After the Ball” and “Someone Talked”, their latest recording of classics from the World War II era. In addition to his duties in Bolcom & Morris, William Bolcom is also a Pulitzer Prize-winning composer.

**Program**

Cabaret and American songs from the 1900s through the 1930s

Featured composers include:

**Irving Berlin**

*Born: May 11, 1888 in Tyumen, Russia*

*Died: September 22, 1989 in New York, NY*

This quintessential American songwriter was born Israel Baline in Siberia, of all places. He never learned to read music and could play the piano in only one key and only on the black notes. Nevertheless he is responsible for some of the best-loved entries in the Great American Songbook. His greatest hits include "God Bless America," "Blues Skies," "Puttin' on the Ritz," "White Christmas" and "There's No Business like Show Business".

**George Gershwin**

*Born: September 26, 1898 in Brooklyn, NY*

*Died: July 11, 1937 in Beverly Hills, CA*

Influenced by jazz and blues, George Gershwin bridged the worlds of classical and popular music more successfully than perhaps any American composer. Working primarily with his brother Ira, he penned Broadway hits such as *Lady Be Good* as well as classical works, the most famous of which is *Rhapsody in Blue*.

**Jerome Kern**

*Born: January 27, 1885 in New York, NY*

*Died: November 11, 1945 in New York, NY*

Often called the “father” of modern American musical theater, Jerome Kern wrote or contributed to 37 Broadway and Hollywood shows during his lifetime. The most beloved of them include *Showboat* (with songs such as “Ol’ Man River” and “Can’t Help Lovin’ Dat Man”), the Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers vehicle *Swing Time* and *Annie Get Your Gun*, which Kern was working on at the time of his death.