

KATHERINE BALCH, composer

As a writer of playfully inventive and engaging music, composer Katherine Balch (b. 1991) deftly captures the magic of everyday sounds, inviting audiences into a sonic world characterized by imagination, discovery, and a rich diversity of styles. Ms. Balch is often inspired by literature, nature, and science, aptly reflected in the *San Francisco Chronicle's* description of her as “some kind of musical Thomas Edison – you can just hear her tinkering around in her workshop, putting together new sounds and textural ideas.”

Ms. Balch's facility in elevating ordinary sounds through large-scale orchestration and dramatic narrative arcs has led to commissions and performances with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra Philharmonique de Radio France, International Contemporary Ensemble, Brooklyn Art Song Society, Ensemble Intercontemporain, and the symphony orchestras of Minnesota, Oregon, Albany, Indianapolis, and Tokyo. She has been featured on IRCAM's ManiFeste, Fontainebleau Music Festival, and Festival MANCA in France, Suntory Summer Arts and Takefu Music Festival in Japan, and the Aspen, Norfolk, Santa Fe, and Tanglewood music festivals in the United States. Her work has been championed by the Argus Quartet and Departure Duo and has been presented in major global venues including Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus, and Tokyo's Suntory Hall.

Ms. Balch recently completed her tenure as the first female composer-in-residence for the California Symphony, where she drew the attention of the *Mercury News* as a “superbly gifted composer [with] a compositional voice that is truly unique and full of wonder.” She has also served as composer-in-residence for Young Concert Artists, who commissioned her to write works for the Kennedy Center and Merkin Hall debuts of flutist Anthony Trionfo, pianist Albert Cano Smit, and cellist Zlatomir Fung.

Nominated by violinist Hilary Hahn, Ms. Balch was just announced as the recipient of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra's 2020 Career Advancement Award. She has also been honored by ASCAP, BMI, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Chamber Music America, the Barlow Foundation, and the International Society of Contemporary Music. In 2021, she will be in residence at the American Academy in Rome, completing an album of music for double bass and ensemble as the Elliot Carter Rome Prize Fellow.

Ms. Balch is deeply committed to developing inclusive, engaging pedagogical practices that empower students through creative music-making, and she maintains an active teaching studio at Mannes School of Music. Currently a doctoral candidate at Columbia University, she counts George Lewis, Georg Friedrich Haas, and Marcos Balter among her mentors. She is a proud alumna of the Yale School of Music, where she studied with David Lang, Christopher Theofanidis, and Aaron J. Kernis. Her chamber works are published by Schott PSNY.

Ms. Balch documents her lived experiences on the page, with each composition serving as a diary of what has captivated her curiosity. Fueled by her peers' creative practices, she has been using her time in quarantine to pick up fiddling and learn more about American improvisational traditions. When she's not creating, she's actively collecting inspiration from the nearest botanical gardens, Rimbaud's poetry, or her feline sidekick, Zarathustra.

NOTE: When editing, please do not delete references to Young Concert Artists, nor special prizes. Please do not use previously dated biographies.

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