



Katherine Balch, *composer-in-residence*



California Symphony Season Finale

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California Symphony presents season finale SOMETHING OLD, SOMETHING NEW at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek on Sunday May 6th at 4pm. The concert sees Music Director Donato Cabrera reunite with internationally acclaimed and award-winning pianist Haochen Zhang, who performs the grand and virtuosic Brahms Piano Concerto No. 2. Also on the program is Sibelius' Symphony No. 3, plus the debut of Composer-in-Residence Katherine Balch's first commission for the California Symphony, like a broken clock. This is the final concert in the Symphony's 2017-18 Larger Than Life season, which has seen the California Symphony continue to buck industry trends, expanding audiences by 16% and increasing subscription sales by 14% over last year.

Starting the season finale program is the world premiere of California Symphony composer-in-residence Katherine Balch's like a broken clock - the first of three scheduled commissions for the California Symphony during her three-year tenure, 2017-20.

Balch was invited to workshop the piece with the orchestra in January. In this respect, the California Symphony's Young American Composer-in-Residence program is quite different from other residencies where composers are expected simply to deliver the finished piece, and where opportunities for interaction and feedback are limited.

"Katie's approach to composition is full of inventiveness and whimsy. I think our audience will not only hear the implications that the title of the piece implies, but will also be surprised by how she goes about creating these sounds."-Music Director Donato Cabrera

The title of the work is taken from a Joanna Newsom song, In California. Balch explains: "She sings in one line 'like a little clock / that trembles on the edge of the hour / only ever calling out Cuckoo Cuckoo.'" The text piqued her interest in "off-kilter, delicate tapping/clicking rhythms" and inspired her to create a set of digitized wave forms of the sound of the chiming of a grandfather clock, which she manipulated for like a broken clock. Balch says her music is "often influenced by extra-musical arts, philosophy, and literature," and she describes like a broken clock as "sputtering, ticking, clanging, summoning the minutes and seconds that jitter and dance."

Katherine Balch, 26, is the California Symphony's current Young American Composer-in-Residence

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(2017-2020). Often influenced by the extra-musical arts, literature, and philosophy, she pursues a heterogeneous yet formally cohesive aesthetic characterized by gestural lyricism. Also Composer-in-Residence at Young Concert Artists, her music has been commissioned and performed by the Albany Symphony Orchestra, the New York Youth Symphony, Ensemble Intercontemporain, International Contemporary Ensemble (ICE), Alea III, Antico Moderno, FLUX Quartet, New York Virtuoso Singers, Yale Philharmonia, American Modern Ensemble, wildUp, Tokyo Symphony Orchestra and others in such venues as Carnegie Hall, Disney Hall, Wiener Konzerthaus and the Suntory Hall in Tokyo. A 2017 Charles Ives Scholarship winner from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, she has been recognized by fellowships from IRCAM Manifeste, Fontainebleau, Aspen and Norfolk music festivals, several ASCAP Morton Gould Awards, New England Conservatory's Donald Martino Prize, Fontainebleau's Prix du Composition, the Grand Prize in the International Society of Bassists Composition Competition, Yale's Alumni Association Prize, and the Woods Chandler Memorial Prize.

Katherine completed her B.A./B.M. in the Tufts University/ New England Conservatory joint-degree program, where she double majored in history and political science at Tufts and studied composition at NEC. During her M.M. at Yale School of Music, she studied with Aaron Kernis, Christopher Theofanidis (a former California Symphony Young American Composer-in-Residence), and David Lang. She recently began her D.M.A. at Columbia University, studying with Georg Haas. Passionate about education at all levels, she is a faculty member of Bard College-Conservatory's preparatory division and the Walden School, a renowned summer program for young composers in Dublin, NH.

California Symphony hosts the highly competitive Young American Composer-in-Residence program, which this season welcomes its first female composer, Katherine Balch. California Symphony has launched the careers of some of today's most-performed soloists and composers, including violinists Sarah Chang and Anne Akiko Meyers, cellist Alisa Weilerstein, and composers such as Mason Bates, Christopher Theofanidis, and Kevin Puts. The Orchestra performs at the Leshner Center for the Arts in Walnut Creek.

For more information, please visit californiasymphony.org.