



WISHBONE

for voice, nine-piece ensemble, and electronica

Rein Vaska

Williams College Department of Music

Rein Vaska '25, Senior Thesis Recital



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for voice, nine-piece ensemble, and electronica

Drumset	Rein Vaska '25
Keyboard/Synthesizer	Emmanuelle Monahan '25
Bass Guitar	Liam Giszter '25.5
Electric Guitar	Kai LaMothe '27
Tenor Saxophone	Elena Lowe '25
Alto Saxophone	Sachin Kirtane '26
Flugelhorn	Artie Carpenter '25
Cello	E.B. Diallo '25
Violin	Jazmin Morenzi '27
Voice	Ben Sapovits '25

Friday, March 14, 2025

7:30 p.m.

Chapin Hall

Williamstown, Massachusetts

Please turn off cell phones.

No photography or recording is permitted.

Songs

- I. Song on the Policeman's Radio
- II. Cities Under Crowns of Snow
- III. Names Called Out Across the Water
- IV. Boy on the Bridge
- V. Riverbed, Waiting (Interlude)
- VI. Visible World
- VII. Meanwhile
- VIII. Ash and Dirty Rain
- IX. Lucidity/Prayer

Program Note

Wishbone sets poems from Richard Siken's *Crush* (2005), a collection that came after the death of his boyfriend to AIDS in the 1990s. Siken's poetry is visceral and urgent, driven by fragmented storytelling and extended dreamlike passages.

The nine-song cycle is written in an experimental style that draws influence from folktronica, dreampop, shoegaze, and Romantic and contemporary classical music. The singer and nine-piece ensemble perform alongside a distorted pre-tracked electronic soundscape created with analog synthesizers, guitar pedals, digital effects, vocoders, and vintage hardware emulators.

Wishbone is a place to remember a love. A place for grief and wreckage, a place of quiet, glowing moments, and a place to be finally reunited. The work confronts the vulnerability of loving in a world that is chaotic and often cruel, depicting the way love consumes—how it exhilarates and devastates in equal measure.

In the final poem of *Crush*, Siken writes:

"I crawled out of the window and ran into the woods.
I had to make up all the words by myself. The way
they taste, the way they sound in the air.

I made this place for you".

“Scheherazade” from *Crush* (2005)

Tell me about the dream where we pull the bodies out of the lake
and dress them in warm clothes again.
How it was late, and no one could sleep, the horses running
until they forget that they are horses.
It's not like a tree where the roots have to end somewhere,
it's more like a song on a policeman's radio,
how we rolled up the carpet so we could dance, and the days
were bright red, and every time we kissed there was another apple
to slice into pieces.
Look at the light through the windowpane. That means it's noon, that means
we're inconsolable.
Tell me how all this, and love too, will ruin us.
These, our bodies, possessed by light.
Tell me we'll never get used to it.

Rein Vaska is a composer, multi-instrumentalist, and producer from Northern California. His style blends alternative rock with contemporary classical music, incorporating influences of R&B, jazz, folk, electronic, and ambient music. In 2024, Rein wrote, recorded, and released a self-titled psychedelic indie album with his duo project, *Montara*. At Williams, Rein has played drums in jazz ensembles, Cap and Bells theater productions, and independent student bands, as well as been the music director for Purple Rain a capella.