

Glass Heart String Choir - Full Bio

At first listen, one might assume that the intricate music created by these friends-in-arms, reveling at the intersection of classical virtuosity, existential poetics, and art-film surrealism, would require careful discussion between musical partners, but songs are the one thing Ian Williams and Katie Mosehauer never talk about.

While occasionally verbose when discussing the nuances of nature (especially birds) or poetry, Ian is a person who generally prefers to stay silent. He's someone prone to long pauses while searching for the perfect word or metaphor to describe his own inner mechanics—you may have an uncomfortable, indefinite wait for sentences that never finish or metaphors that remain unfound. It is songwriting that allows him ample time to plumb the more faceless emotions of life and dredge for exactly the right words to capture them. "When I can refine my emotions through these songs, I feel like I can speak with eloquence and complexity," Williams says. "And when Katie and I communicate, whether performing live or in our letter-exchange of evolving recordings, there's always a sense that we're weaving a tapestry, an elaboration... it's a language that I feel I can speak better than that of everyday conversation."

And in these exchanges, Katie constructs finely-detailed visions that weave a unique counterpoint and architecture to his lyrics and songs. Greatly inspired by monolithic artists like Werner Herzog, Leonard Cohen, and Salman Rushdie, and their "beautiful impracticality and complete disregard for convention", Katie takes their boldness to heart in her pursuit of the arts. She's not only the composer, multi-instrumentalist, and engineer for the duo, but also the dreamer and director responsible for the band's music videos and other artistic output. While her journey as an artist began as a classically-trained violinist, it has spiraled and blossomed into multiple disciplines. The path to big ideas is rarely paved with small efforts and safe choices; Katie takes the intrepid nature of her mentors as a blueprint for her explorations, both sonic and visual. "Werner Herzog dragged a literal ship over a mountain for a film and walked half-way across Europe in the hopes that the sheer force of will would extend the life of a friend. Leonard Cohen abandoned the world to live in solitude with monks and only after an epiphany, reemerged, simultaneously anew and unchanged. Salman Rushdie wrote a book that was so incendiary, he was forced to live in hiding for years," she states. "I take example from them that more women should pursue these impractical dreams, these 'so-crazy-it-just-might-work' schemes." And with Ian's lyrics and the songs they write together, she found the emotional core around which to build and sculpt these prodigious ideas.

Always ambitious in their quest to create unique compositions that stand out from other string-heavy chamber-pop, their latest release *California* (releases July 21st 2021) is a beautiful art-song reminiscent of Damien Rice or Joanna Newsom. Departing from the massive, 100+ string-sections and near-operatic highs of previous releases, *California* is newly surrounded by Katie's own vocals, an airy, Enya-esque choir that haunts the piano-driven bridge, and then boldly carries the song forward in its latter half. The song begins immediately in warm orchestral depths, with Williams' delivering the song's hook, "Do you remember?...", in delicate yet sanguine tones, setting us up for the tug-of-war between fond recollection, consolation, and sorrow that permeates the compact 2'30" song, floating upon multi-instrumentalist and producer Katie Mosehauer's elegant violin melodies and choral soundscapes suggestive of contemporary soundtrack composers Yann Tiersen and Jocelyn Pook.

Arriving into a new and changed world, as we all emerge together from our joint isolation, the song presents itself as a wistful indulgence, a melancholic, heartfelt dive into the *saudade* vibes that have permeated the last year. "I spend my long days recalling old dreams/ I spend my short nights dreaming old dreams/ Crossing the borders of your heart". As the afflictive memory hangs in the air, the choir, now the elemental structure tenuring the song, carries us forward into a new reality, redolent of the last, as Williams rearticulates the opening verses, a little more wistful, a little less corporeal, a present less substantial than the past that it displaces. We've all been pining for people, places, and the normalcy of things past, with an earnest concern that those things may never be recovered or revisited in the same way. What that we hold dear has gone, is now a myth or a mirage? As we reach back towards the things we love, we remember them as they were, on the brink of knowing how much they, and we, have changed.

The video for *California*, conceived and directed by Mosehauer, finds Glass Heart String Choir unraveling the complexities of memories and dreams, where the borders of the real world and the mythical one of our recollections are intertwined, slipping between remembrance and history. Filmed with specialty lenses that accentuate light and refract and reflect the edges of our visual field, the video serves as a metaphor for myth, hallucination, mirage; a cognate of the heart, imagined, speculated, remembered, both in stunning detail and hazy, alluring beauty.

California releases world-wide July 21st, 2021 on all streaming platforms, and a limited-edition CD-single containing unique remixes not found online can be pre-ordered at www.glassheartstringchoir.com.