

Title of artwork: Wishbone

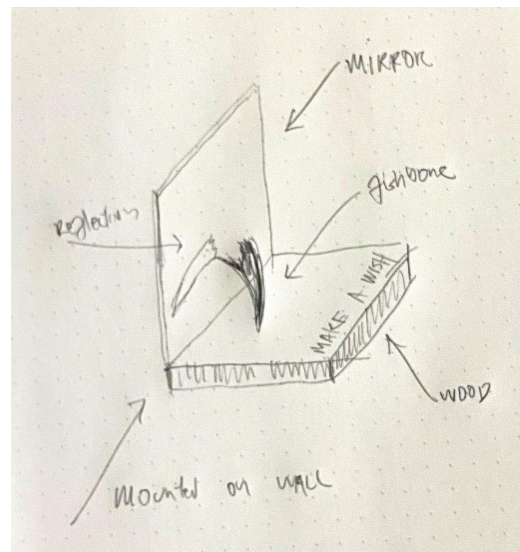
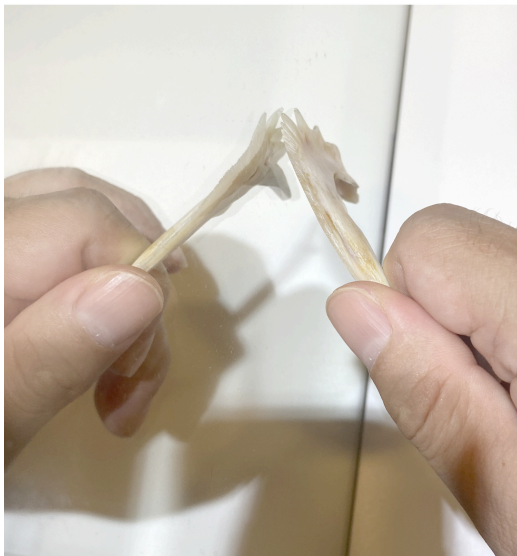
In the back of my mind, I kept thinking of the wishbone after initially bringing this found object back. It was placed in an altar setting, displayed with the rest of my collection of artworks on a small shelf.

Secretly I have wished for it to be a wishbone for the last few months, and finally, I thought of a possible way to make it so. A fishbone could absolutely serve as a "wishbone" in a conceptual or symbolic context.

Traditionally, wishbones come from birds, specifically the furcula bone found in poultry, which holds cultural and ritual significance. However, using a fishbone as a wishbone in artwork or storytelling can create a unique narrative, especially given that fish are often symbols of transformation, intuition, and mystery in various cultures.

In my artwork, the fishbone represents an alternative type of wishbone—one that connects with themes of memory, the ephemeral, and the transformation of desires or dreams. The fishbone's delicate, almost skeletal structure could even intensify the idea of wishes being fragile, fleeting, or even bound to the intangible nature of memory and myth.

This reinterpretation challenges traditional symbols, aligning well with the conceptual goals of longings in the contemporary world. If the bone cracked evenly in half, both people would have their wishes come true. The mirror setup of the found bone.



mimics the shape of the wishbone, and if observed closely, it could be seen as 1 or broken in equal halves. There will be simple text prompts that encourages/hint for people to interact with the artwork.

Title: Make a Wishbone

Size: 30 x 30 x 30 cm

Medium: Mirror, wood, fishbone, mounted on wall

HISTORY BEHIND BREAKING THE THANKSGIVING WISHBONE

Have you ever wondered why breaking the wishbone is a Thanksgiving tradition and where it originated?

It turns out, the wishbone has a much more ancient origin than you might have guessed, and even though the tradition came to America via the pilgrims at Plymouth Rock, it began thousands of years earlier in the ancient Etruscan civilization.

THE ETRUSCANS

The Etruscans were a civilization in ancient Italy (from at least 800 BCE) who practiced bird divination, or using birds as oracles who were a source of predicting the future. They used live chickens who pecked at Etruscan letters on the ground to divine the answers to questions about the future, and when chickens were killed, they would put the wishbone (officially known as the furcula) on the ground in the sun so the people could touch it and continue to use the chicken's oracle power even after its death. People would touch the bone and make a wish as they did, which is why we now commonly call it the "wishbone."

THE ROMANS

The Romans absorbed some of the Etruscan's cultural traditions, including bird divination and using the wishbone as a source of granted wishes. Over time, instead of wishing on bones on the ground, the Romans would grapple over the wishbone and break it, with the victor being the person who broke the larger part of the bone.

ENGLAND

The first record of a wishbone being used in England as a means of divination happened in 1455; a goose wishbone (called a "merrythought") was used to divine the weather on St. Martin's Day, which is a harvest celebration that falls in November, just like Thanksgiving. Merrythoughts were sometimes broken between two single people, and the person who got the longer side of the bone was then predicted to be the one to get married first.

As the Romans traveled around the known world, they spread their culture and traditions, and when they reached the British Isles, the wishbone tradition caught on with people living in Britain. The English colonists who came to America brought this tradition along with them, just in time to introduce it as part of the first Thanksgiving.

UNITED STATES

In 1842, the merrythought was called a wish-bone in an article in *The Sun* newspaper of Baltimore, Maryland, and is the first known mention of the word, referring to the bone in the turkey.

Next time you face off with someone to break a wishbone, you will be continuing to participate in a tradition that is thousands of years old and spans continents. This Thanksgiving, may you break the larger part of the wishbone!

THANKSGIVING® CO.

Source:

<https://www.makeitgrateful.com/living/celebrate/thanksgiving/breaking-the-thanksgiving-wishbone-a-history/>