

## KATHRYN MAYO

*Ryan Bergeron, 33, 2017*  
Wet collodion ambrotype, 11 X 14 in



COURTESY THE ARTIST

## LAURA HEFFINGTON

### Ventura

Sometimes I went to stay at Graham's house while he was on tour, which was most of the time. I'd been doing this for years. Before this he had lived in an apartment I'd found him in Highland Park, but this place was about an hour and a half away in Ventura. One time I looked up the meaning of the word *ventura*, and it said, "fortune, luck, or chance." Then there were some examples of the word used in sentences.

This apartment looked a lot like the other one. The same kind of built-ins, the same record collection. He'd used the same paint colors. He had the color swatches taped to the inside of a kitchen cabinet door along with all of his passwords and personal information: his social security number, etc. He'd always been very deliberate and well organized. For a brief flash I thought of all the things I could do to him with this information. But I wouldn't do any of that. We were friends.

Since I had known him, he'd been in six different bands, worn suits and then stopped wearing them, gained and lost weight, grown a beard, gone through three different trucks, been through the death of his father. I'd said I loved him, and then I'd said I hated him. I'd seen him cry, known what positions he slept in. I'd punched him in the face, knocked two teeth loose, pretended to forgive him, then finally given up and really done it. By the time he had said he loved me, it had been much, much too late, and anyway, he didn't. But all of that was a long time ago. Most people who know him now probably don't know I ever existed, and most of the people who knew him back then hadn't known either. That part had always stayed the same.

I walked through the place. It was a two-bedroom house behind another house. Nothing in the refrigerator but a container of honey. He was away playing guitar in some hippie band with a guy who had been famous in the nineties, one of those bands with fans who follow them around all over the place. They have a special connection to the music. It speaks to them, personally. Such a thing seemed vaguely embarrassing to me, but I'd had far less rational preoccupations than that.

I used to wait for when he would be finished touring, but he didn't like to stay in one place, and I realized that the sequence of temporary situations was, in a sense, permanent.