

# Mauro Barreto

## *Love Line*

September 12 – October 25, 2025

**Institute 193**



Mauro Barreto  
*Hunter and Mary*, 2022  
Inkjet print  
40 x 50 inches



Mauro Barreto  
*Blake and Lacy*, 2021  
Inkjet print  
24 x 30 inches



Mauro Barreto  
*Paula and Nicky*, 2024  
Inkjet print  
40 x 50 inches



Mauro Barreto  
*Cait and Kylie*, 2023  
Inkjet print  
32 x 40 inches



Mauro Barreto  
*Max and Addie*, 2023  
Inkjet print  
40 x 50 inches



Mauro Barreto  
*Juli*, 2019  
Inkjet print  
24 x 30 inches

Works are available for purchase, price list available upon request.

## *Love Line*

September 12 – October 25, 2025

*Love Line*, a collection of nine portraits from Nashville-based photographer Mauro Barreto, explores the intangible emotional residue laced within the romance of youth. Set in unadorned, everyday environments, Barreto's models are situated firmly in the confusing depths of longing. Not exactly posed, yet clearly aware of themselves as the object of the camera's gaze, they inhabit zones of indistinction between profundity and frivolity, or serenity and angst.

Some of Barreto's subjects stand with shoulders hunched, hands clasped, and gazes averted or unfocused, while others implicate the photographer and viewer more directly, staring back into the camera. The relationships between them are ambiguous but intense, suggesting unclear or unfulfilled expectations, without resolving into a clear narrative. At first glance, they depict self-assured embodiment, but the bodies collapse upon perception into the artifice of performance.

Looking upon these photos might make one think of their own youth (was it yesterday? last year? longer?) and remember the ache of potential which suffused even the most banal of moments. Potential which opened equally upon triumph and satisfaction as upon despair and loneliness. Some past has led to these moments, and some future awaits. But that's hardly important now.

## Mauro Barreto

Mauro Antonio Barreto is a Nashville, TN, based photographer. He has presented his work in solo exhibitions at Künstlerhaus Dortmund, Dortmund (DE), The Java Project (Brooklyn, NY), Random Sample (Nashville, TN), and Spellerberg Projects (Lockhart, TX), and in 2024, he participated in the Biennale for Visual and Sonic Media düsseldorf photo+, Düsseldorf (DE). His work is in the permanent collection of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art (New Orleans, LA) and the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (Richmond, VA). He is a member of the artist collective Tiger Strikes Asteroid and directs Neue Welt, an artist-run project space.

*New Models* is a series of portraits of young people in fast-growing Southern cities like Nashville and Austin. The images depict intimate encounters between pairs, charged with yearning, desire, and melancholia, and shaped by melodrama and anachronism. The process begins on Instagram, where Barreto finds models and ask them to invite a friend, creating a dynamic of collaboration and intuition. Together, they navigate poses and gestures, arriving at compositions that feel both staged and spontaneous.

The resulting photographs are steeped in ambiguity—moments of breakup, reconciliation, or unrequited love are suggested but never resolved. Dressed in vintage clothing and set against nondescript backdrops, the figures seem to exist outside of time, suspended in a “perpetual now.” The work reflects on youth as both an ideal and a fleeting reality, mirroring photography's ability to capture the present as it slips into the past. Through these portraits, Barreto explore the beauty, intensity, and contradictions of youth, as well as its inevitable passing.