



**Hello June - *Artifacts*  
Biography  
Out on October 6, 2023**

Hello June's songs are so emotionally open and resonant that they sometimes feel like leaps of faith. The West Virginia indie rock outfit fronted by songwriter Sarah Rudy thrives on interrogating a feeling with a disarming, scalpel-like precision. It's this clarifying honesty that's garnered the band rave reviews from NPR and No Depression. It's also the driving force behind their forthcoming album *Artifacts*, which is out October 6 via 31 Tigers Records. Across 11 gorgeous and raw tracks, Rudy sings about death, birth, hope, and despair with grace and nuance. "I landed on the title because if there's one thing we're left with, it's memories of other people: artifacts that we take with us through life," says Rudy. "It's not just about one thing so if this were just a breakup album, it would be a lot easier. But that's not the way that life works."

That *Artifacts* is so unflinching and raw is no accident. Following the release of 2018's critically acclaimed *Hello June*, Rudy knew she needed to revamp the way she wrote music. "Those old songs are more a collection of almost poems but I wanted this record to be stories that could be told straightforwardly," she says. "It was definitely scary: the songwriting process this time definitely pushed me in ways that I just wasn't necessarily pushing myself in the past." For Rudy, the biggest hurdle was allowing herself to be vulnerable and write unselfconsciously about what was going on in her life. On this LP, Rudy trades abstraction and flowery language with clarity and depth. Here, she finds power in saying what she means.

Lead single "Interstate" encapsulates Rudy's newfound courage. It's the first song explicitly about her father's death six years ago after a long battle with addiction. On the track, Rudy hones in on a sweet moment of laughing on a road trip with her dad. "And I don't remember what it was that you last said to me / But I should have said I love you / I'm tied up to you - knotted forever / I should have said I love you, either way," she sings over soaring guitars. It's the sort of song that stops you in your tracks: one that finds catharsis in understanding regret. *Artifacts* is an album of urgency and connection to family and to home. "West Virginia is just a piece of who I am," says Rudy. "Being raised in Appalachia, most everybody has known someone who has been affected by the drug crisis. A big thing that weaves through this album is when you grow up in such an area, you realize life is short." A melancholic and haunting cover of John Denver's "Take Me Home, Country Roads" captures this complicated feeling.

Life is finite so you might as well make the most of it and tell people how you feel about them. On the opener "Sometimes," Rudy nails this sentiment by writing a hopeful song to her newborn nephew. "Sometimes they'll break your heart and sometimes you'll break your own / Sometimes it's an idea that we're after," she sings. It's a roadmap for life and captures the promise of youth. Like "Interstate," this song came about from a revelation on a highway drive where the promise of her sister's child and the loss of her dad weighed heavy. "I wanted to be able to articulate myself in a way that I think I had been afraid to write about it in the past," says Rudy. "I wanted

to capture a feeling of hope, in a way, and insight into the fact that life is full of ups and downs, but usually, things pass.”

Hello June recorded the LP in Nashville at Bell Tone Recording with producer Roger Alan Nichols. “Roger was able to push me in a songwriting sense,” says Rudy. “He’s very lyric-focused and a good listener. He wanted these songs to be the best that they could be too.” The textures and arrangements the band experiments with on *Artifacts* are warm and adventurous. Take “California,” which introduces New Wave synths to color in the song. It’s a sprawling track that finds Rudy singing, “You called me pretty under street lights / I caught you lookin’ now we can’t look away.” Elsewhere, songs like “Honey I Promise” and “23” are propulsive rockers that evoke both early Big Thief and Drive-by Truckers.

*Artifacts* is a brave statement from a songwriter unafraid of reinvention. It’s a testament to pushing yourself further and letting yourself be open. Human connection is the most important thing and these songs are about striving for it, even when it’s fleeting. “If you were to take little bits of my life and put them into mason jars on the wall, it would feel like this album,” says Rudy. “These are stories from different pieces of my life. I was just allowing the songs to define the journey.”