MONOCLE BAND

"Topnotch Folk Pop...a harmonic choir steeped in Americana. Music to touch the gentle soul."
– No Depression

The angelic voice of a Colorado choir girl turned earthy roots songstress. The gritty stories of an intellectual outlaw who has found a home in folk music. The pulse and flow of a seasoned five-piece band that can turn from yearning country ballad to electrified rock soundscape to stomping bluegrass romp in the drop of a downbeat. This is the sound of **Monocle Band**.

Rooted in a rustic sound as natural as the Rocky Mountains, Monocle Band has embraced an approach to Americana that is as varied and striking as their Colorado home. The band was born when **Monica Marie** met **Bill Huston** in **Boulder, Colorado**. His head full of Kafka and Kerouac, Huston had trained as an author of short stories at Stanford University, the same program that gave rise to Ken Kesey and his band of Merry Pranksters. Born into a musical family and imbued with the sound of the greats - from the Beatles to Emmy Lou Harris - Monica had honed her pristine voice and pure musical feeling by singing in Colorado choirs. From these divergent backgrounds a striking musical collaboration was born. Marie's heartfelt melody convened with Huston's sepia-toned realism; a voice as pure as the mountain snow found it's foil in plaintive tales of our quiet doubts and secret dreams. The two embraced their unique perspectives and, fired by a shared belief in the redeeming power of music, began writing songs together.

Since the band's inception in 2010, Monocle Band has relentlessly kept its creative fire alight. Initially taken with the stark beauty of the music of Gillian Welch and the free-spirited bluegrass picks that abound in Colorado, the group has grown to embrace a holistic approach to **American roots music**. Muddy blues, keening old-time fiddle tunes, country rock rave ups, and impressionistic folk songs all play equal part as sources of inspiration. The group released their first, eponymous album in 2013. Recorded in the roots music capital of Lyons, CO, the record was quickly met with national radio play and acclaim from prominent media outlets and Americana fans alike. From sun-kissed bluegrass festivals to intimate house concerts to packed dance floors of prominent clubs and theaters, the band has performed hundreds of times since. And there is no sign they'll be slowing down anytime soon.

In 2017, the band headed into the studios at **eTown Hall** in their hometown of Boulder, CO to begin work on their second full-length record. Joined by acclaimed producer **John McVey**, the group drew inspiration from the space of eTown itself, a musical destination that has played host to many of the band's heroes: from Steve Earle to Taj Mahal, Doc Watson to Koko Taylor. The result - **"The Clearing"** - is an earnest collection of songs destined to enchant Monocle Band's longtime fans and turn the ear of a new crop of listeners. The characters who populate these songs are as evocative a cast as one will find in the world of contemporary music. Townspeople cling to hope as wildfire rages around them. A man gropes his way through a darkened swamp. Lovers' prayers are answered on a rain-soaked creekside. A hapless romantic finds hard truth on the streets of the old west. Nameless figures meet with wonder in a moonlit clearing. And through all these tales floats Monica Marie's crystalline voice, soaring above the grounded upright bass of **Dave Weinand**, darting through the playful lines of violinist **Emily Rose Lewis**, dancing with the crisp beats of drummer **Todd May** and Huston's impassioned guitar. What we're left with is a glimpse of the depths and heights of the human spirit, a roots music portrait of our hardest struggles and our dearest hopes. And, in the unfiltered earnestness and shimmering arrangements of these tunes there is a glimmer of something else: the chance that pure melody, the ability to look to the sky and lend our voices to song, might yet lead us home.

www.MonocleBand.com

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MONOCLE BAND (at a glance)

- Americana from Boulder, Colorado
- Soaring female vocals and acoustic rhythm section
- New album *The Clearing* out October 20, 2017
- Release celebrated with sold-out show at Planet Bluegrass in Lyons, CO
- Over 400 shows since 2011
- opened for The SteelDrivers, The Black Lillies, Jeff Austin Band, Ralph Stanley

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