

Hope & Therapy To Perform In Alton On Friday, December 29

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ALTON - Alton creative music staples Hope & Therapy will emerge from the shadows to perform on Friday, December 29 for Kooliverse Night, located at The Conservatory (554 E Broadway, Alton). It has been 5 years since the band has performed at this location. After a planned break in 2019, and unplanned hiatus throughout the 2020 and 2021 shutdowns, the band picked back up in 2022. They have a new perspective and

new songs, hatched from the brain of songwriter Hope Mader. The band is focused on refining this new music with intentions to record a new album in 2024, which promises to be a full-circle culmination of the band's unique voice and sonic exploration throughout their decade and a half together.

Hope & Therapy's sound has evolved since their inception, yet it remains decidedly their own. Drawing influence from 1960s Motown/blues, 1970s prog/psychedelia, and 1990s post-punk/math-rock/early Midwestern emo, their sound has been decades in the making. The band's goal has been to produce a timeless, but limitless sound, always exploring sonic curiosities.

Hope Mader has been writing songs on the piano for as long as she can remember. In 2008, she was encouraged to take those songs out in front of an audience when drummer Drew Mader began hosting Open Mic at the now-closed Chez Marilyn. Listeners often likened the trio's early sound to acts such as Catpower and Portishead. It made sense with Hope's soulful, bluesy vocals over her atypical, inventive, jazz-tinged piano chord progressions and riffs, backed by Dan Deck's smooth, thumpy bass lines, and Drew's dynamic, jazz-rock approach to the drums. After a few Open Mic nights, the trio realized they were onto something special. They officially took on the name Hope & Therapy and began booking shows regionally. They brought in friends and touring bands from all over the Midwest and beyond to share shows with them at the venues in town. Along with adding to the scene in Alton pubs and taverns, Hope & Therapy headlined the Riverfront Amphitheater stage for the 2009 Big Gig Local Music Showcase, produced by Alton Main Street, and was invited back to play there again in 2010.

The band's debut record, "Heavy Dose" (2010), led them to extensive touring and landed them as local support for nationally renowned acts like Paper Route, Cory Chisel & The Wandering Sons, and Miles Nielsen & The Rusted Hearts. As time passed, Hope & Therapy began exploring heavier sonic territory, delving into fuzzed-out, distorted bass guitar tones, overdriven vintage electric piano and synth sounds, and heavier drumming. This sound manifested into their sophomore release, 2016's "Webs". Following this release, the band was afforded the opportunity of sharing the stage with bands of similar unorthodox approach and evolving style including Tortoise, Brick + Mortar, Maserati, and Company of Thieves. In 2016, Hope & Therapy was named one of the best indie pop bands in the St. Louis region by the Riverfront Times Music Awards.

In addition to Hope & Therapy, prolific Alton-based solo musicians Steph Plant and Ian Whitmore, as well as Saint Louis-based post-punk, jazz fusion wizards They Need Machines To Fly? will all perform as part of Michael Snider's Kooliverse Night at The Conservatory, where Snider's eye-popping, larger-than-life artworks adorn the walls 24

/7. The event is a powerful gestalt, featuring the work of additional visual artists, vendors of artisan goods, unique food offerings, and live music, of course. It's a monthly mini-festival of sorts, which always draws a diverse, fun crowd with a warm and inviting vibe.

Everyone is indeed invited, as the event on December 29th will have no cover charge. Doors open at 6 p.m., and Steph Plant will be the first musical act, followed by Ian Whitmore at 8:00, Hope & Therapy at 9:00, and They Need Machines To Fly? at 10:00.