

Hanna PK

Hanna PK is a vocalist, pianist, and band leader born in South Korea, currently residing in Rochester NY. When meeting Hanna, it's not uncommon to wonder how a young woman born and raised in Korea plays the Blues. But her music makes it clear she is not only touched by it, but also dedicated to this great art form. Hearing her strong left hand bass rocking steady with her swinging right hand on the piano, one cannot deny she has done her homework and is carrying on the tradition. Her soulful voice often surprises the 'first timer.'

One evening in 2014, when she first heard local blues legend **John Cole** and his band, she found what she was looking for. All along, it was the blues calling for her, or maybe it's the other way. Either way, she then totally immersed herself in this music, to which she felt so strongly called, by listening and later playing in clubs and jam sessions, and by collecting and hearing the recordings. From those records, she came to love and be inspired by so many of the great blues pianists like Otis Spann, Hersal Thomas, Little Brother Montgomery, Big Maceo, and Memphis Slim. Through all these experiences she learned (and is still learning) the language and the meaning of the blues. It was her luck that even though Rochester isn't exactly in the Delta region, the area's blues scene is still carried on with authenticity by nationally-recognized bluesmen like **Joe Beard** (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_sIJ6LquoVk) and **John Cole** (<https://johncolebluesband.com/>). In fact, the first time she got a chance to play with Joe Beard was at a **festival celebrating Son House** (<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/arts/music/son-house-inspires-a-rochester-blues-festival.html>), and just a few years later, she is subbing on Joe's band, and has performed with him in several duo shows.

On stage, **Hanna's** seemingly sweet and soft-spoken appearance belies her commanding voice and presence at the piano and as a band leader. You will hear a soulful singer who can accompany herself on the piano, with an impeccably steady and strong left hand bass, and a swinging and shuffling right hand freely cascading over it. This all-in-one package allows her the flexibility of being able to play in any ensemble small or big, and even solo performance completes the spectrum.

In the summer of 2015, she formed **Hanna and the Blue Hearts** (http://hearhanna.com/blue_hearts.shtml), and she released her 1st CD "**Rearview Mirror**" (<http://hearhanna.com/>

cd.shtml)" which includes Hanna's original songs showing that she's not only a traditionalist but also a creative songwriter. In 2018, she released the new CD "[The Blues Is Here To Stay](http://hearhanna.com/cd.shtml)" which includes classic blues tunes like *Worried Life Blues*, two versions of boogie woogie classic, *Honky Tonk Train*, story telling, and soulful originals like *Dirty Dishes* and *Love Keeps Walking In*. In June 2018, [Hanna](#) and guitarist [Aleks Disljenkovic](#) won 1st place at Memphis Bound and will be going to Memphis to represent Western New York at the International Blues Challenge in January 2019.

But words, and even recorded samples, cannot fully convey the essence of [Hanna's](#) music — to really understand it and feel it, you have to hear her perform live. Her music continues to evolve and reflects the very moment she is living in — the happenings and vibe in the room, the reactions of her listeners, the musical contributions of each band member, and even the events of the week in the world, all combine to inspire a new and different performance of each song. As is the case with all true blues performers, she works from and in the tradition of the music while bringing her own stamp of creativity and originality to it. Her music tells a story, sometimes an age-old one, but she tells it in her way from her perspective, which in turn informs and expands our experience.