

# HANNAH JAYE »»»»AND THE«««« HIDEAWAYS

# BIOGRAPHY

Three-time Wammie Award nominee and DC Americana/folk band favorite Hannah Jaye and the Hideaways are steeped in the folk storytelling tradition, creating an artful fusion of rootsy acoustic Americana, bluegrass and country music while weaving compelling contemporary musical narratives that speak to the challenging day-to-day realities of the millennial experience.



Since forming in March 2018, the band has performed over 80 shows at DC-area venues such as Union Stage, Songbyrd, Gypsy Sally's, Big Bear Café, Hill Country Live and the legendary DIVE, where budding stars from Bonnie Raitt and Al Green to the Ramones have held court. The group has also played at numerous local festivals, including in 2019 alone at the Kingman Island Bluegrass Festival, HERA Festival, and Takoma Park Folk Festival.

Led and creatively propelled by DC singer/songwriter Hannah Jaye and featuring Giacomo Fornasini (mandolin, banjo, harmonica), fiddle player Rebecca Weiss and bassist Greg Mulley, the band's self-titled debut album, set to drop February 28, explores various themes





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of a generation that is navigating the transition to independence and adulthood—and seeking to break free from traditional societal expectations—through rich storytelling couched in the dynamic, resonant sound of traditional acoustic instruments. The new album is a watershed work exploring hard-hitting themes that reflect the life challenges faced by millennials.

All of the songs reflect this exploration, ranging from the plucky, socially aware “Second Fiddle Husband” and incisive, blues-country protest anthem “Mr. Monetizer” to the deeply thoughtful, hard-hitting looks at relationships with friends (“Only You”), family (“Queen Anne’s Lace”) and lovers (“The Show”). Complementing the eight tracks penned by Hannah are two compelling tunes by Giacomo: the buoyant, break-free-to-the-open-road “Exit to the Right,” and “That Bottle,” a lively yet poignant bluegrass-fired primer on how to tackle life’s uphill battles. The group worked with Grammy-winning DC-based engineer Charlie Pilzer from Tonal Park and Nashville-based mix-and-master engineer Jared Anderson from Evergreen Productions.

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**The new album is a true snapshot, song by song, of the dilemmas facing millennials. It both reflects and expresses a conversation they are having with themselves, weighing promises of greater prosperity and unlimited potential against realities of how life is turning out. Many millennials are saddled with student debt and forced to work low-paying jobs, including at underfunded startups.**

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“Mr. Monetizer” is a perfect example of these dashed hopes and broken promises. Penned by Hannah about her frustration during her first job after graduating from Yale, the song is about the maddening, soul-crushing day-to-day work routine many young people face when they enter the corporate world fresh out of college. It captures her longing to find a higher purpose in her work. The optimistic solution to this sense of bleakness is Giacomo’s





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“Exit to the Right,” a song about the fascinating process of escape and discovery of one’s deeper passions and destiny. Though the lyrics are cinematic, capturing the magic of depicted destinations like the Blue Ridge Mountains, the song is not simply about a journey for its own sake, but speaks to the freeing effect that traveling freestyle can have in both liberating one’s soul from the 9-to-5 routine and committing to a life of true self-discovery.

Along the way, Hannah Jaye and the Hideaways navigate the twists, turns, hopes and disappointments of various personal relationships—and affirm through “Guardians of Song” that while they are sharing stories unique to their generation, they are also keepers of a powerful folk storytelling tradition that started decades ago. With shout-outs to Bob Dylan and Joni Mitchell, Hannah conveys her band’s humble sense of connection to the great tradition they are a part of, with a promise to use music as a means to improve people’s lives: “Our gospel fights injustice and we speak to those unseen.”

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**“The album truly highlights each of our individual talents while telling stories of the lives we’re living and our struggles and hopes as millennials,”**

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says Hannah. “Songs like ‘Mr. Monetizer’ and ‘Exit to the Right’ are all about seeking escape from traditional roles, the work we must do to survive versus the creative paths we want to follow. As I allude to in ‘Guardians of Song,’ we feel it’s important to be just that: keepers of the flame for our generation, telling important stories reflective of what we are facing, overcoming, triumphing over, dreaming of and celebrating—all, hopefully, while putting a clever or fresh slant on these issues.”

One of Hannah’s most personal and heartfelt expressions on the album is the traditional folk-styled “Queen Anne’s Lace,” a beautiful tribute to the legacy of music passed on by her grandmother who died before Hannah was born. While growing up in the folk music mecca of Takoma Park, MD, Hannah spent many fond days at her family’s rustic summer house in Westport, MA, fascinated by the stories





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about strong-willed and rebellious women in her family lineage, including her grandmother Anne who (along with music legend Peggy Seeger) played a major role in the 1950s revival of folk music in Boston. It was not easy for Anne to be an artist in a traditional academic family whose view of success was more conventional and unrelated to the arts. Hannah's own musical journey was inspired by hearing these stories about her grandmother's beautiful voice and turbulent life, as she struggled with the pain of living as a shadow artist and thus experienced much sadness and bitterness.

Inspired by these tales, Hannah began singing at a young age during summers in Westport, belting out tunes in the barn and in the fields. She grew up idolizing artists from Mariah Carey and Celine Dion to Aretha Franklin, Joni Mitchell, Bob Dylan and Joan Baez. Hannah's first foray into the spotlight was at her sixth-grade talent show at Takoma Park Middle School, where she sang Aretha's "Respect" while sporting a blue sparkly wig—a flashpoint moment recounted on the album's highly autobiographical "Sing Your Song." It was truly the moment in which a shy, insecure girl finally found her spotlight. Since then, there has been no stopping her. Hannah says,

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**"It's the song I wrote to tell the world who I am and to set out my origin story, to explain what a revelation it was to do that first big performance and hear people say, 'Damn, that girl can sing!'"**

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Hannah continued singing throughout her high school years at progressive and arts-focused Georgetown Day School in DC. Though she initially resisted folk as "music my dad likes," her multifaceted musical experiences at Yale University ultimately inspired her to embrace it as the focus of her creative pursuits. She majored in American Studies but spent most of her free time performing in Yale's renowned folk band ensemble, Tangled Up In Blue, as well as singing in various a cappella groups, including the acclaimed senior female ensemble, Whim 'n Rhythm. Moving back to the DC area after college, Hannah was eager to keep the music, and this important part of her identity, alive. After unsuccessful postings on Craigslist and Facebook, and no leads from her network of singer-



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songwriter friends, Hannah resorted to the dating application Coffee Meets Bagel to recruit her first two band members in early 2018. Giacomo, one of those musicians, met his fiancée two weeks later on the same app. For millennials, it turns out that the internet serves as a platform to form not only relationships but also successful bands.

Although all four members of Hannah Jaye and the Hideaways are highly educated and have demanding professional day jobs, several of them dream of pursuing music full-time. Hannah admits, “My family members have always been incredibly supportive of my music,” but adds that she “still feels torn between the demands that come with traditional success and a corporate work life” and her “incredible desire to pursue a music career. I think many of our fans are navigating the same or similar competing dreams and demands.”

“I have numerous friends playing music full-time now, and their bravery and success is truly an inspiration to me and sparked my interest in taking that plunge with no regrets,” she adds. “I think what makes Hannah Jaye and the Hideaways work so well is that we’re all at similar places in our lives, have personalities and passions that mesh, and share a democratic approach to both recording and performing. I might be the lead singer and songwriter, but all four of us are involved in every step of the process. We were all eager to prove to ourselves that we could accomplish this and get these songs out into the world.”

**For more information about Hannah Jaye and the Hideaways’ debut album, visit:**

 [www.hannahjaye.com](http://www.hannahjaye.com)

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