

L Dimensions of i v i n g

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Moon croon

Musician, teacher releases
latest CD, performing Saturday
at Stony Brook University

By
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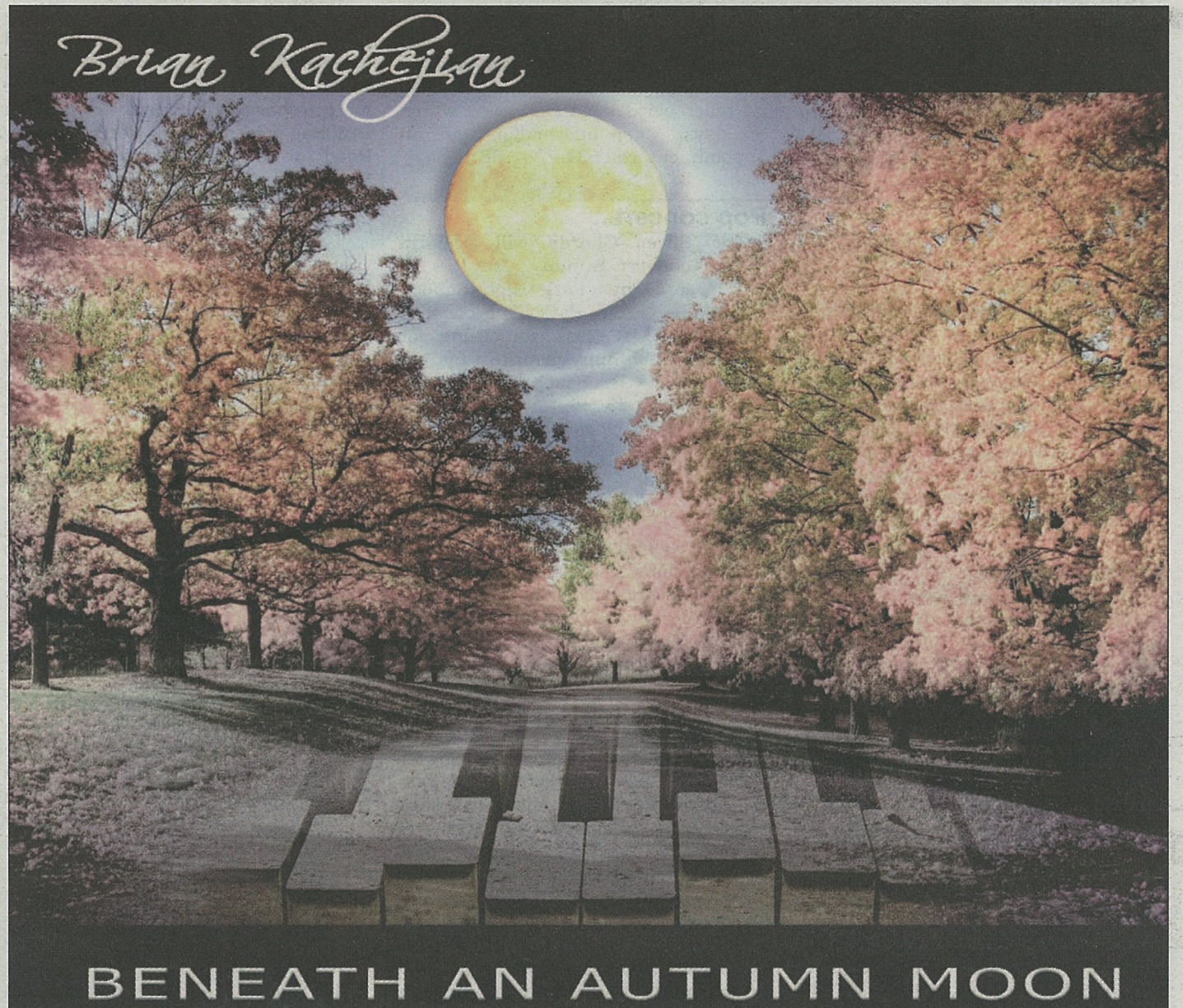
Whether naming songs on his new CD after local landmarks, teaching students the piano throughout town or substitute teaching history and music in the

Smithtown School District, Brian Kachejian's musical influences come from all over Smithtown.

The Smithtown resident released his fourth instrumental CD April 15 titled *Beneath an Autumn Moon*, which features 14 original piano compositions written and performed by Mr. Kachejian and blending classical, jazz and new age genres. The arrangements feature solo piano accompanied by synthetic orchestrated sounds imitating other instruments alongside the piano.

During an interview this week, Mr. Kachejian, a 1979 Smithtown High School East graduate residing in Smithtown with his wife Malinda Kachejian and two sons Jagger and Cole, said his hometown has had a major influence on his newest CD. Some of the tracks have been used in several documentaries that aired on the Smithtown television channel, on Cablevision's channel 18 and Verizon channel 27. In the case of his previous CD, titled *Mood Piano* and released in 2009, the entire CD was used as the soundtrack music to a photographic expose of Smithtown currently airing on those same channels.

The eleventh song on the *Beneath an Autumn Moon* CD, titled "On Gibbs Pond Road," pays tribute to a popular local landmark that Mr. Kachejian was very fond of during his time growing up in Nesconset. "I think Gibbs Pond is one of those landmarks that never gets mentioned. It's probably one of the most significant landmarks



in Nesconset," he said, adding that the title of that song is also representative of its particular mood and sound. He also recruited some former Smithtown East classmates to assist with the production of his newest CD, including professional photographer Thomas Neikleous, who created the artwork for not only his most recent CD, but also the 2009 *Mood Piano* CD and his 2011 *Mood Christmas* holiday CD. "I like to use Thomas Neikleous in designing my CD covers because he has a unique creative ability to present a true visualization of the music," Mr. Kachejian said.

In choosing a mastering professional to complete the final steps of his newest release, Mr. Kachejian turned to John Tabacco, another former classmate and well known in the music industry as a highly capable audio engineer, mastering professional and recording artist.

SMITHTOWN'S OWN PIANO MAN: Smithtown resident, substitute teacher and piano teacher Brian Kachejian has released his new CD, *Beneath an Autumn Moon*, and will perform this Saturday, May 11 at 8 p.m. at Stony Brook University in the Bob Dylan Tribute Concert. The front cover artwork of the *Beneath an Autumn Moon* CD was created by 1978 Smithtown High School East graduate Thomas Neikleous.

Thomas Neikleous photos

Those interested in his music can visit Mr. Kachejian's website at moodpiano.com, and his CDs are available on iTunes, Amazon.com and all leading internet music retailers.

Beginning a professional career in the music industry in the early 1980s, performing with several popular bands, playing on many studio recordings and composing music for radio and television throughout the past thirty years, Mr. Kachejian discovered his biggest passion in 1990 when he began teaching piano part time in the Smithtown area. He soon became a full time private piano teacher, drawing from his extensive performance experience to teach

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S'town's own piano man has new CD

(Continued from page 1A)

developing young artists both the skill set required for mastering the piano and theatrical concepts to master the art of performing for a crowd. Since 2003, his students have performed annual piano recitals at the Charles B. Wang Center on the grounds of Stony Brook University. Mr. Kachejian also brings his students to local restaurants around Smithtown to gain further performance experience.

Mr. Kachejian said many of the songs on his newest CD were initially written as piano compositions for his students to perform in various concert halls. "I have had many talented students that loved to play music but struggled with reading," Mr. Kachejian said. "As a teacher, you have to find a way to connect with your students using alternative techniques if standard teaching methodology is not working. I would write songs for students to play based on their ability. The songs I wrote for them kept them interested in music and helped them develop a passion for playing. You never give up on a student, you just find another way to help them realize that their goals can be achieved if they don't quit." After using his songs as teaching aids, Mr. Kachejian brought them to a new level of complexity before recording them for his newest CD.

Mr. Kachejian continues to teach

piano full time throughout the Smithtown area and he said his greatest sense of accomplishment comes from seeing his former students go on to win academic awards and often become teachers and music professionals themselves. "My main thing is teaching and trying to inspire kids," Mr. Kachejian said. "That lasts a lifetime. You write a song, people listen to it, and that's it, but when you have an impact on a student, you have an impact on their entire lives." He regards his release of *Beneath an Autumn Moon* as a celebration of his students' success and that lasting impact he has been able to have on so many of them. "It feels great. I had a student once go on stage at a recital and say, 'I'm going to school for music because of Brian,'" he recalled, adding that that student is now a music teacher.

With B.A. and M.A. degrees from Stony Brook University, Mr. Kachejian holds New York State Teacher Certification in the fields of music and history and works part time as a substitute teacher for those subjects in the Smithtown School District. "I enjoy substitute teaching in the Smithtown School District, and every day that I work I try to utilize my academic and professional experience in a manner in which I will have an extremely positive influence

on the different students I meet every day," he said. "Even if I meet a student only one time, I want to have a positive impact."

Still performing locally as a solo artist, Mr. Kachejian will perform Saturday, May 11 at 8 p.m. in the Bob Dylan Tribute concert held annually at Stony Brook University alongside well-known artists such

as Pete and Maura Kennedy, Rod McDonald, Russ Seeger, Steve Kaplan and Bill Herman. The concert is part of the Sunday Acoustic Café concert series produced and promoted by former Smithtown High School teacher and current Stony Brook professor Charlie Backfish. For tickets and more information, visit universitycafe.org.



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