

Dimensions of living

Creativity pays off with release of CD

Latest album blends rock and roll and pop

By LISA MANCUSO

Matthew Tully, 37, of Kings Park, has always been involved in something creative. Since he was a young boy growing up in East Northport, he acted in school plays and sang in school choirs. He even spent a year at the prestigious Carnegie Mellon University as a student in the acting department. But the trauma of his parents divorce left him feeling unsettled and unsure. He left college and spent the next few years traveling the country looking for answers.

Although he didn't find everything he was searching for, Mr. Tully did rediscover his love for music. He eventually realized acting wasn't for him, but music definitely was. He found his way back home and is now settled in Kings Park. Along the way, he formed and played with different bands and under the stage name Matthew Jameson, has released a number of albums. His latest is called South Shore Girls, which is released by Olive Records, Inc., Mr. Tully's own, newly formed record label.

The singer performed as Matthew Jameson this past weekend at The Long Island Vinyl Exchange (LIVE) in East Northport as part of the store's "Live at Live" summer concert series that takes place on the third Thursday of each month. Although his roots are definitely rock and roll, Mr. Tully said he is influenced by many different types of music, including classical, which he learned to appreciate as a choir student at Northport High School. "I was in the high school choir and I recall it as one of the most defining things I've done. Mr. Sandy Valerio was my choir director and he taught me to appreciate great music, music by the masters," he said. "I work as a carpenter and I often listen to classical music as I work."

Mr. Tully also recalls a teacher at Carnegie Mellon who exposed him to Peruvian music and "the power of feeling the beat in your head." Although he was in the theater department at the university, he said he mostly hid out from his teachers and played his guitar instead of attending classes. He said his parents divorce when he was 17 left him feeling confused and unfocused. He left college after one year and traveled around but he said he felt lonely and eventually headed back to Long Island. "I knew it was time to go home and be with my family," he said.

The singer and songwriter said he classifies his music as rock and roll and a little pop and describes it as "Tom Petty meets the Goo Goo Dolls." Music was always a part of his life and Mr. Tully said he grew up listening to his father's favorite do-op music and his mom's favorite singer Jimmy Buffet. He said he likes "music that moves me" and cites Ryan Adams ("the new Neil Young"), Roger Waters, Paula Cole, Emmylou Harris, Jim



Matthew Tully, of Kings Park, is settling into his career as a successful artist with the release of his latest album, South Shore Girls.

Croche and Kiss as some of his biggest influences. He said his songs are "stories I tell from my heart" and he said although sometimes his music is hard to define, he believes that allows the listener to interpret it the way they want. Recently engaged, Mr. Tully said he finally feels settled and happy in his life. He and his fiancé have even started a campaign to clean up the trash that collects near their home along Old Dock Road in Kings Park. He is hopeful that his new record label, Olive Records, will soon sign on other artists and he will be able to devote all of his time to music. "My ultimate goal is to make a living writing, recording and performing, anything music related." Visit www.jamesonband.com for more information. (Mr. Tully said he will mail free cd's to anyone who sends him a message through his website.)

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BANKING ON ARTISTIC TALENT: The winners of a Bank of Smithtown sponsored Art Contest, held in partnership with King Park's School District, are congratulated for their winning work by (top row, from left) Bonnie Luisi, Bank of Smithtown Kings Park Branch Manager; Nicole McNamara, Kings Park Art Teacher; VJ Hannemann, Art Teacher; Rudy Massimo, RJO Intermediate School Principal and Richard Ritchie, Bank of Smithtown District Manager. Students, frontrow: 2nd Place Davis Keenan; 1st Place Alexa Rine and 3rd Place Timothy Hughes. All artwork was on display at the Bank of Smithtown's Indian Head branch and voted on by members of the community.

Dancing for shot at summer workshop...

St. James based, the not-for-profit Ballet Education and Scholarship Fund, Inc. (BESFI) will hold its 2010 Intensive Summer Workshop scholarship competition on May 23. Celebrating the summer program's thirtieth anniversary, \$7,000 dollars in scholarship money has been set aside. The scholarships will be awarded by a select panel of judges will include veteran adjudicators: Mary Carpenter, Lesli Lyon Theobald, JoAnn Blechman-Hertzman, Steven Melendez and Vicky Simeiatos.

Universally regarded as Long Island's premiere ballet workshop, the BESFI Workshop runs from July 19 to August 27. It features an internationally acclaimed staff headed by former American Ballet Theatre standouts Eleanor D'Antuono, Michael Cusumano, Rhodie Jorgenson and Eileen Houghton; Sandra Balestracci of the New York City Opera in addition to Trian Karamandis and Vaso Kikna of the Greek National Opera Ballet.

"The BESFI Summer Workshop continues to break new ground. The Summer Intensive now offers three programs tailored to younger dancers in addition to the original program for pre-professional dancers," according to BESFI President Dimitri Papadakos. "We are delighted that BESFI surpassed the \$220,000 plateau in cumulative scholarships and stipend grants in 2009."

Competitors will be graded into two age categories based on their age as of the date of the competition: Juniors (10-13 years of age) and Seniors (14-18 years of age). Juniors are scheduled at 1 p.m. and seniors at 2:15 p.m. The competition is held by BESFI in the studios at 7 Flowerfield Suite 16, St. James. Complete details on scholarship eligibility requirements, applications and a full brochure are available on-line at www.besfi.com. For additional information, call (631) 584-0192 or e-mail BESFI at info@besfi.com.

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This event is open to all Smithtown Central, East and West graduates (you don't have to show your diploma).

We hope to see you there!

Please share this with your friends. It promises to be the first of many such events where we can reconnect ourselves with each other and celebrate Smithtown!

