

P.D. Brody to play in Dover on March 6

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(Photo: Mel Berardesco)

P. D. Brody loves being backed by a band. He enjoys the sound of percussion and an electric guitar behind him.

But when the time came for Brody to record the four songs on his debut EP, "Find a Way," he opted to go the solo acoustic route. "We tried doing it with a full band, but nothing sounded quite right," he says.

Though Brody does not rule out future dates with a band, he has been concentrating on his solo performances. His next gig will be at Table 42 in Dover tonight.

Brody, who is based in Union, considers himself a singer-songwriter in the folk tradition. But he also cites an eclectic array influences, including Rob Thomas of

Matchbox 20, Ed Sheeran, and Sam Smith. "I listen to anybody," Brody says with a laugh. "I feel like I'm still working on who I am."

Another musician figures prominently in his life: his late father, Don Brody. In the 1980s and 1990s, the older Brody was a fixture in the Hoboken music scene as a solo artist and as one-half of a duo called the Marys.

Songs such as "Hey Maryanne" and "The Day Roy Orbison Died" give the Marys a profile among independent musicians.

Don Brody and his wife Cheryl adopted P.D. Brody, who had been born in Indiana, when he was an infant. The Brodys also adopted a younger daughter, Molly.

However, Don Brody had always suffered from health issues; he had contracted polio as a child. He died in 1997 at age 44.

P.D. Brody was five at the time, but he still has memories of his father as a performer. "I grew up in the Hoboken area, and I'd hear him play," he says. "I always wanted to emulate my dad. Music always seemed like something I'd want to do."

The younger Brody wrote his first song — a tune about a Jersey Shore romance — when he was 14. "I found that I could write about things that I've experienced," he says.

Over the next nine years, Brody honed his songwriting and his guitar playing. He began playing clubs, open mic nights, and restaurants in New Jersey. In 2013, he was nominated for a Jersey Acoustic Music (JAM) Award.

His debut EP, "Find a Way," consists of three original songs and a cover of his father's "99 Years." In concert, he performs other Don Brody compositions, such as "Mr. Woods," based on a resident of Hoboken.

"I love playing songs from my dad's repertoire," Brody says. "He was a great writer, just brilliant."

Brody adds that he has received nothing but support from other members of his family. His mother Cheryl designs his website and the cover art for his EP. His stepfather, Roy Yokelson, serves as his engineer.

Brody says he is looking forward to the 8th Singer-Songwriter Cape May music festival at the end of March. "That's going to be a great opportunity," he says.

Between gigs, Brody concentrates on his education. He received his associate degree from the County College of Morris last year, and he is currently studying special education at Kean University.

Brody says he feels grateful for his New Jersey upbringing. "There are so many people and so many outlets," he says. "New York City is only 20 minutes away. I can't imagine being anywhere else."