

# EMERGING ARTIST JERRY DEMEO

## 'Music Is Who and What I Am'

By Victoria Caruso



Singer, songwriter and musician Jerry DeMeo is proving it is never too late to pursue your dreams. Knowing firsthand how difficult it is to make it as a full-time musician, the Huntington resident pursued a professional career in the corporate world but continued to practice and play acoustic guitar and jot down lyrics in his spare time.

It wasn't until about seven years ago that the senior vice president/senior portfolio manager for Morgan Stanley came to the realization that if artists such as BB King were still jamming at the ripe young age of 80, there should be nothing stopping him. Inspired by a German musician and Clapton fanatic he found online, DeMeo downloaded endless pages on the musician's style and technique.

"I would come home from the office, work out,

eat dinner and then lock myself in my room and just play for hours," said DeMeo, who refers to his musical style as multi-genre with traces of country, jazz, rock and classical.

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DeMeo's practice and determination began to pay off three years ago when he started booking numerous gigs, making a name for himself. "All the pieces began to fall into place and I was encouraged to go into the studio and lay down some tracks," he said.

And the rest, as they say, is history! In February 2013, the singer/songwriter's debut album, *Headin' East Headin' West*, was released. DeMeo sings lead vocals and plays acoustic guitar on all 10 of the album's original tracks, which he penned over the years.

Described as country tinged with hints of rhythm and blues and other styles, the album also features the musical talents of DeMeo's brothers Dennis and Pete along with Neal Ferraro (who also co-produced the album), Frank Vilardi, Jimmy Rosica and Kurt Uzbay. Additionally, Joe Ruvio and former Brooklyn Bridge bandleader and Long Island Music Hall of Fame inductee Tommy Sullivan can be heard singing background vocals.

When it comes to songwriting, DeMeo said he prefers to write about everyday situations

and experiences people can relate to. "I write about issues and situations that appeal to a broader audience," he said. "I try not to get too deep or too out there; I want my lyrics to be interpretable."

Although he has no plans to give up his day job just yet, DeMeo is working on material for his next album and enjoying his success. In addition to solo gigs throughout Long Island and in Florida, DeMeo recently teamed with Aztec Two Step and Jim Dawson, Frank Carillo and Peppy Castro (Barnaby Bye) and The Funk Filharmonik. In May, he joined up-and-coming singer/songwriter/actress Consuelo Vanderbilt Costin, comedian/radio personality Jackie Martling and the band Soul Be It for a special performance at 25A magazine's May 2013 cancer fundraiser. And in November, he will share the stage with Toby Walker at Glen Cove's Page One Restaurant and Cabaret.

DeMeo, who credits artists such as Leo Kottke, Stephen Stills and Jorma Kaukonen among others as his greatest influences, describes himself as an emerging artist who is living his dream. "Music is so much a part of me – it is who and what I am," he said, adding, "It just comes naturally and, most recently, it has taken on a life of its own. I am very fortunate to be able to do something I love."

Tracks from *Headin' East Headin' West* can be heard on such streaming Internet radio stations as Jango.com, Spotify.com and Pandora.com. Additionally, the album and/or individual songs can be purchased online at [jerrydemeo.com](http://jerrydemeo.com), [CDBaby.com](http://CDBaby.com), [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) and iTunes.