

Pianist Tanya Gabrielian to bring the healing power of music to NAMI Mercer's Weekend of Wellness Activities in October



Tanya Gabrielian believes art is a symbol of hope and artists are uniquely positioned to effect positive change – both in individuals and communities. Her conviction grew out of a particularly challenging personal experience.

While studying abroad at London's Royal Academy of Music, Gabrielian slipped during martial arts training and twisted her spine. A month-long ordeal followed, during which a teenager had to navigate a foreign medical system alone, undergoing two serious operations and landing in nine different hospitals. She found comfort in listening to recordings of Bach's unaccompanied works.

The music not only helped her transcend physical pain and psychological isolation, it moved her beyond immersion in the *practice* of music, focusing her instead on the pure *experience* of music. Gabrielian was transformed as an artist. *The London Times* describes her as "a pianist of powerful physical and imaginative muscle." Gabrielian truly is remarkable in her ability to use her musical talent to awaken listeners' deepest emotions, helping them embrace the struggles and triumphs that shape our humanity.

On September 12, Gabrielian is releasing a debut album on MSR, *Remix*, featuring piano arrangements of Bach solo cello and violin works, the music that profoundly influenced her recovery and her development as an artist. A nine-date tour will accompany the album's release, to include Gabrielian's participation in a Weekend of Wellness activities with NAMI Mercer NJ, a robust local affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

The weekend's activities, part of Mental Illness Awareness Week, will commence with a Master Class at The Pennington School on Thursday morning, October 5th. On Friday afternoon, October 6th, Gabrielian will perform a community outreach concert for the patients and staff at Trenton Psychiatric Hospital. As part of Harvest of Hope, NAMI Mercer's Annual Wellness Conference, on Saturday, Oct. 7th, Gabrielian will team up with John Haag, executive director of Pro Musicis, to lead a Music and Wellness Workshop. Finally, on Sunday afternoon, October 8th at 3:00 pm, Gabrielian will perform a Benefit Concert for NAMI Mercer. The event is being held at the Pennington School Campus Center in Pennington, NJ. The Public is invited to attend. Goodwill Offerings will be solicited, with all proceeds going to support NAMI Mercer programs and services. The Pro Musicis Foundation and The Pennington School are partnering with NAMI Mercer to make all this possible. For more information, you can visit namimercer.org or call 609.799.8994.