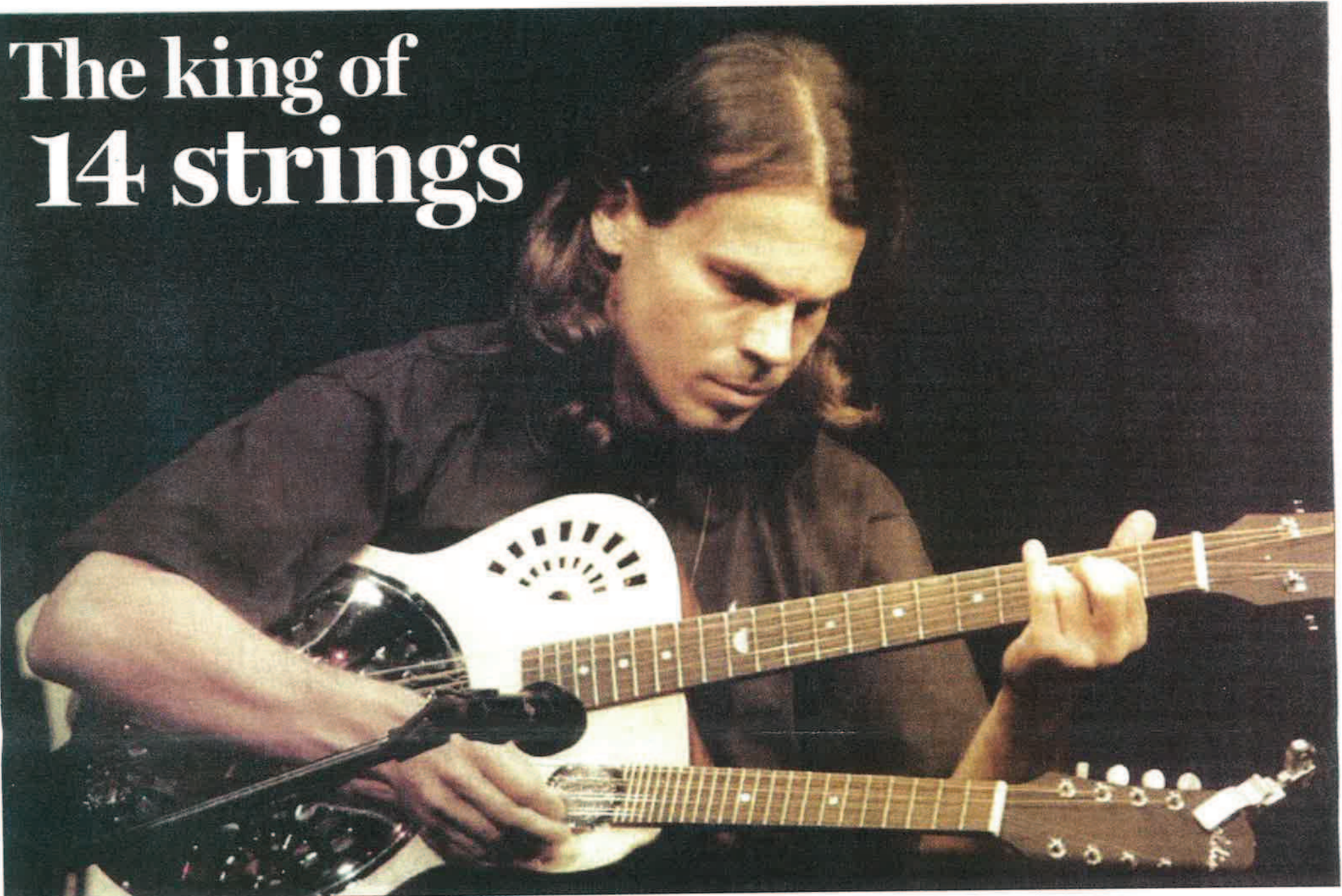


CAPE EXPERIENCE

MUSIC PREVIEW

The king of 14 strings



Attila Vural performs Saturday night at the Cultural Center in South Yarmouth. COURTESY PHOTO

Guitarist Attila Vural comes to Cultural Center

By Joe Burns

Even before the music begins, you're taken by the uniqueness of the 14-string instrument, a one-of-kind work of art, known as a dobromandola, with two necks jutting out from its body like a peace sign.

Next, as the musician picks it up and begins to play you find yourself mesmerized by his movements; his left wrist moving from neck to neck, curling above and below, his fingers hopping like fleas from fret to fret, his right hand, moving at blurring speed, beating out a rhythm on the resonator.

Then, as the melody and rhythm take form you're struck by the beauty and originality of the music the musician has composed.

What you're seeing and hearing is a performance by Attila Vural, a Swiss musician whose artistry will be on display June 6 at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod in South Yarmouth.

Explaining Vural's music by examining its components is somewhat like laying out the colors that went into painting a masterpiece and expecting to see the same beauty. But if there is a base color to Vural's music it's blues and jazz.

"I grew up with jazz and blues music, and began playing electric guitar when I was 17 years old. Fifteen years ago," says Vural in an email exchange.

Other influences were soon to follow.

"I played with Brazilian musicians and I played darbuka (a single head membranophone with a goblet shaped body used mostly in the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia, and Eastern Europe). Eleven years ago I began with my solo (acoustic guitar) project," Vural says.

Vural credits the innovative German guitarist Claus Boesser-Ferrari with showing him how to apply what he learned on the

darbuka to the acoustic guitar. One can see and hear reflections and echoes of Boesser-Ferrari in Vural's percussive use of his instrument. Vural's original composition "Zucco's Blues" is a dedication to Boesser-Ferrari's album "Stageplay." The piece also hints at the blues of Jimi Hendrix and Stevie Ray Vaughan, two other guitarists Vural cites as influences, along with Eric Clapton, Dominic Miller and J.J. Cale.

Vural has also drawn upon the music of non-guitarists such as pianist Thelonious Monk, trumpeter Miles Davis, saxophonist Branford Marsalis and bassist Marcus Miller.

"I like to listen to other instruments and take them as an influence for my guitar," Vural said in his DVD "Not Without my Guitar."

"Something that is very important for my style is the bass line. In Thelonious Monk's playing I always find these elements of

rhythm, bass line and melody," Vural said.

Vural's technique of moving over and under the guitar neck is something he taught himself.

"I played in a funk band before I started with my solo project. The chords were easy to play and I began to catch the chords over the neck of my guitar. Later I developed this kind of playing," he says.

Vural who also performs with a more conventional eight-string guitar, has made some adaptations to that instrument as well to accommodate his style, adding a 'piknboard' a washboard like device, invented by Judd Baker, that allows Vural to add a rasping rhythm with his right hand as he strokes the guitar.

Both the eight-string guitar and the dobromandola were built by Mitgel Noldin. The dobromandola is Vural's own design and is based on the Picasso guitar built by luthier Linda Manzer for Pat

In performance

Attila Vural performs Saturday, June 6, at 8 p.m. at the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, 307 Old Main St., South Yarmouth.

TICKETS: \$20. Call 508-394-7100 for reservations.

Metheny, and combines the qualities of a mandolin and Dobro.

"The sound of the two necks (mandolin and dobro) is untypical. The Dobro has a warm and the mandolin an oriental sound. This was important for me. I wanted to combine two different sounds in one instrument. The necks need to be playable at the same time, that's why they are angled that way," Vural says.

Like the instruments he plays and the way he plays them, Vural's music is a genre unto itself.

"My music has neither a tag nor a name. I like every style of music and for me is important to play every style. So I say my music is a mixture of my musical encounters,"