

◆Master◆ of 12-string guitar to return for performance on AU stage

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Award-winning musician and composer, Neil Jacobs, considered to be a master of the 12-string guitar, will return to entertain Alfred University audiences at 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, in Holmes Auditorium, Harder Hall, on the AU campus. The concert is open to the public, free of charge. With his own style of playing that the St. Louis Riverfront Times calls "mesmerizing," Jacobs covers the full spectrum of styles and dynamics. Touching on music as diverse as gypsy, world, Balkan, jazz, and finger-style guitar, Jacobs maintains his own refreshing and energetic style. A self-taught musician, he draws inspiration from his world travels and experiences. Most recently, his focus has been the gypsy music of Eastern Europe and the folk music of the Balkans. After the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, Jacobs' fascination with Eastern European folk music drew him back to Europe. Traveling by train with a backpack and two 12-string guitars, Jacobs was invited to perform throughout Europe. He played for Polish army and school children in Olstyn, Poland, at the rejuvenated club scene in Prague, villas in Italy, and in war-torn Zagreb, Croatia, Slovenia, and Macedonia. In 1994-95, Jacobs was selected as a cultural representative to Spain, performing throughout the country and studying the gypsy music of Seville. In 1996, Jacobs returned to the war-ravaged Balkans on an extended bus tour, performing for refugee camps and orphanages throughout Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia, culminating in an emotional concert with Zivili in Central Sarajevo. Upon completion of his third CD, "American Gypsy," Jacobs began a whirlwind tour performing at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and on the Capitol steps in Washington, D.C.; in Italy and the Czech Republic; and accompanied Zivili, attended a UNESCO Balkan Youth Reconciliation Seminar in Plodiv, Bulgaria. Jacobs says his most memorable performance was at the gypsy camp at Plodiv, a Gypsy community of over 30,000. Jacobs continues to tour nationally with "American Gypsy," solo, and also with Zivili.