

SATURDAY, 7:30 P.M., AT TOWNSEND CENTER

KEITH KNIGHT

He's finger-picking good

Critics say that with his acoustic guitars, dobros, and mandolins, Keith Knight breathes new life into the traditional genres of Appalachian, ragtime and delta blues.

You can judge for yourself. Knight, an acclaimed solo finger-style guitarist who has been performing across the U.S. since 1993, will perform at the Townsend Center for the Performing Arts Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

Knight's influences span from Blind Blake and Leadbelly to Leo Kottke and Ry Cooder. Knight has shared the stage with national acts such as the Smothers Brothers, Scott Ainslie, and the Freight Hoppers.

Knight's high-energy finger picking and sophisticated melodic compositions bridge the gap of music listeners. A reviewer with *The Mountaineer* in Waynesville, N.C. declared Keith "the illegitimate son of Bill Monroe and Eddie Van Halen."

Both of Knight's solo CDs, "Hammer Thru the Silence" and "Tear It Up," have received rave reviews.

Knight recently received a fellowship through the South Carolina Arts Commission to develop his songwriting and guitar playing.

"When you get recognition with a fellowship like that, it really charges your batteries," said Knight. "The grant is a sign I am doing something right."

Others think he is doing it right, too. He's been named the "Top Ten Best" at the Austin Music

Awards and his music has been featured on over 75 folk music radio shows around the world.

Knight's passion for music began as a child listening to the "Jailhouse Rock" by Elvis Presley on the family record player. A Bill Monroe song converted him from rock and roll to the music he performs today. Monroe is considered by most as the father of bluegrass.



Acclaimed guitarist and songwriter Keith Knight will perform Saturday at the Townsend Center for the Performing Arts on the University of West Georgia campus.

Originally a solo acoustic guitar performer in Los Angeles, he also co-founded the electric pop band, The Panic Choir, where he utilized his electric acoustic guitar, mandolin and dobro playing. Knight and The Panic Choir released a debut CD titled "Soul and Luna" on the Crystal Clear label in late 1993.

In 1997, Knight relocated to Charleston where he formed Bear Claw Music and was

soon included in the South Carolina Arts Commission's roster of touring artists. He is currently one of South Carolina Arts Commission's residency instructors in its Arts in Education program.

His performance will resonate with audiences young and old, said Robert Jennings, director of the Townsend Center.

"This is a great occasion for the university and the community to come together and enjoy a fabulous show," said Jennings. "It's perfect entertainment for families and students alike."

Knight's itinerary includes master classes at UWG and performances around Carrollton.

"It's the longest residency we've ever had," said Jennings. "He's going to be all over Carrollton."

Knight's schedule includes performances at Merrill Gardens, Lakeside Prep Academy, the Carrollton Senior Center and the Neva Lomason Memorial Library. The library performance is a special children's show, designed to introduce children to the instruments and the styles of music that Knight performs. The children's concert is scheduled at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Neva Lomason Memorial Library. The concert is free and open to the public.

Children and adults will enjoy the instruments Knight plays because they are works of art in themselves. Handcrafted with chrome and brass, ebony, German spruce, aged mahogany and other

woods, the flawless construction of the guitars, mandolins and dobros create beautiful sounds.

Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$7 for seniors, \$5 for UWG students, and \$3 for children. Reservations are recommended because of limited seating. Call the Townsend Center box office at 678-839-4722 for reservations or for more information.