

BY ANNA ROSE

that I had never seen back home in Australia,” Matty said.

“Not to say that we don’t sport an incredible amount of amazing players here in Australia, but my musical head and mind near exploded every time I heard Eddie say to me: ‘Matty. Sit down here and listen to this guitarist ...’

“It could have been **MICHAEL KELSEY, PAT KIRTLEY** or **TODD HALLAWELL**, or any other monster guitarist he had lined up for me to hear.”

Knowing how much the brothers loved their music, Eddie invited them to the **CHET ATKINS** Appreciation Concert.

“Over two incredible days I have never seen so many gifted players in the one are than at the Marriott in Nashville,” Matty said.

Then came that life-changing phone call when Eddie asked if Matty would perform on the bill as an Acoustic Guitar Master.

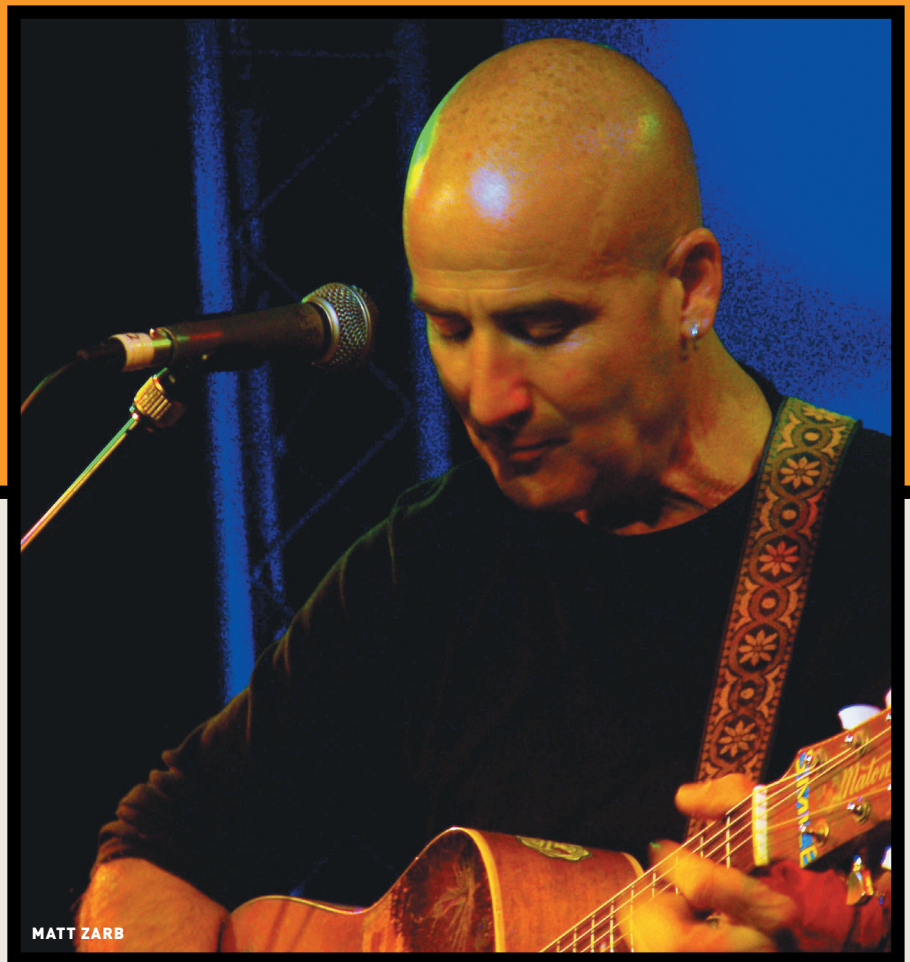
“When I said yes I felt way out of my depth and, to be quite honest, I still feel a bit that way, but nevertheless I played my spot on the bill of Acoustic Guitar Masters and something amazing happened at the end of the concert.

“My thought patterns changed forever. I was in a really hard time of my life and the fact that Eddie believed in me and my guitar playing enough to offer me a spot made me finally believe in myself and my guitar playing.

“I knew I could become even better and play tunes I only dreamed of playing. This is the sort of thing he does in his stride and I learnt so much from him and Carol.

“He gave me the best piece of advice one day when I rang him feeling down, homesick and lousy. Eddie said: ‘Matty. The only fella who failed was the one who gave up!’

“I always think of that in anything I do now and thank old mate Eddie for such a great quote. There are few guitarists of any note in the world of acoustic guitar playing who do



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Matty has a number of significant new projects he’s hatched in recent times, starting with a new son for him and his beautiful wife Lesley – Marli, born May 27; a new live album recorded at Lizottes on June 17; and now the Acoustic Guitar Masters Australia concert series.

“It was a dream for me to be able to set up a series like Eddie and Carol did that supported amazing virtuoso acoustic players

with environments that could feature them in an intimate situation,” Matty said.

“This is different in that we will have venues from Sydney to the Gold Coast to host the concerts – and not only coastal regions. I’ve had a lot of interest from venues inland, including the Crossing Theatre in Narrabri.”

Matty said the Australian series would feature guitarists from Australia, the United States, and from other parts of the world.

“This series is dedicated to the development and support of younger Acoustic Guitar Masters, the likes of 16-year-old **MINNIE MARKS**, virtuoso guitarist 17-year-old **STEPHEN O’HERN** and 16-year-old **TULLARA CONNORS**.

Matty plans to launch Acoustic Guitar Masters Australia in an unforgettable way in January 2011 at the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

He’s invited special guests Todd Hallawell and **ROBIN KESSINGER** from West Virginia to help launch the concert series.

Visit the website, www.acousticguitarmastersaustralia.com and watch the number of participating venues and guitarists grow before your eyes.