

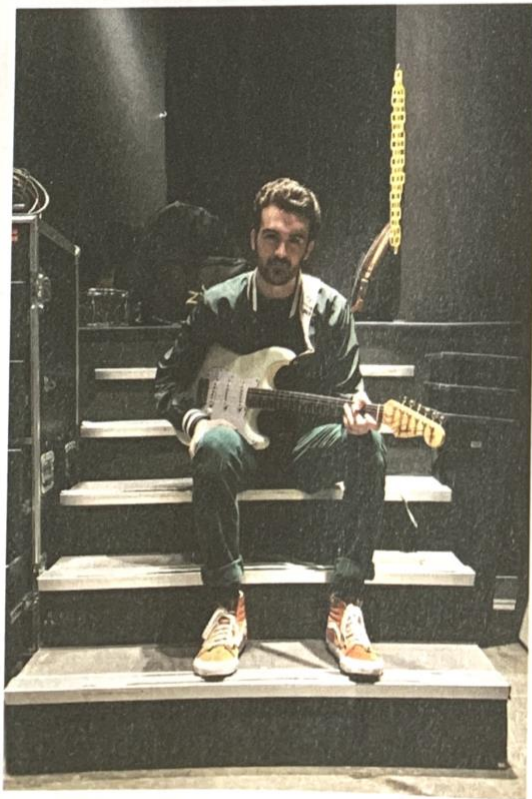
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BEN SPARACO AND THE NEW EFFECT NASHVILLE, TENN.

The “Guitar Kid” Comes of Age

To a legion of Allman Brothers Band fans, **Ben Sparaco** is best known as the Florida-based teenage guitar sensation who toured with Butch Trucks and his Freight Train Band in the summer of 2016. The gigs with the late Brothers’ drummer were a dream fulfilled for the young Sparaco, who was reared on the blues-rock sound pioneered by Cream, Led Zeppelin and, of course, the Allmans. Yet, thanks to a recent move to Nashville and a growing affinity for the Grateful Dead, Sparaco has gracefully transitioned from Sunshine State gunslinger to Music City singer-songwriter. And, adding to a nascent catalog that contains both an EP and a full-length solo release—the latter including a guest appearance from Luther Dickinson—Sparaco is now prepping a forthcoming album with his latest group, **The New Effect**. In November of 2018, the trio, featuring drummer **Anthony Quirk** and bassist **Adam Discipio**, issued their first single, “Scared of the Dark,” previewing Sparaco’s conscious move away from jam-laden exercises to more concise songcraft. “In the past year, I’ve pictured myself less as a guitar player and more as a songwriter,” says Sparaco. “This is the voice I hear in my head.” The Coral Springs, Fla. native flourished as a prodigious slide guitarist in the mold of Derek Trucks but, after his



Nashville relocation, this self-described “guitar kid” found himself in a new city surrounded by plenty of current and former guitar kids. A Facebook posting led Sparaco to Quirk, and then to Discipio, the drummer’s old friend from the Berklee School of Music, inspiring a shift in focus to more group-based songwriting. The three quickly developed a repertoire of original music and prioritized working out material on the road rather than in the studio. This spring, they signed on as direct support for G. Love and Special Sauce during a national run of shows, and booked a series of headlining appearances leading into the summer festival season. Sparaco anticipates another national tour after the album’s autumn release, and possibly augmenting the trio with a keyboardist. The guitarist still answers calls as a hired gun, but mostly for local appearances with a Grateful Dead cover band, The Stolen Faces. “That is some of my favorite music to play right now,” says Sparaco. “It’s a nice creative reset in between shows with my band.”

bensparaco.com **Larson Sutton**