

By Aubrey Lash

GUITAR PRODIGY

HUMBLE & HIP

In the South, where guitar players are a dime a dozen, a new name has found the spotlight. Matthew Davidson, a 14-year-old guitar prodigy and Shreveport native, has created quite a name for himself. He has been playing in multiple shows and festivals across the country, endearing fans with his soulful style and capturing attention with the recent compilation of The Matthew Davidson Band.

Armed at the early age of three with a toy guitar, Matthew strummed away and unknowingly started shaping his musical future. By seven he was in his first structured music lesson, learning as much through his mentor as he did by ear. With introductions from his dad, Matthew acquired a taste for musical heavyweights like the Beatles, John Fogerty, Creedence Clearwater Revival, BB King and Eric Clapton. From there, he began to find a rhythm and adoration for both rock and blues.

Although Matthew enjoys listening to and playing covers of these musical legends, he's wasting no time in developing his own songs. Having written three songs already and equipped with nine guitars in his collection, he's sure to add lots of new music to his repertoire, especially with his upcoming time in the studio. When asked about what genre he'll be

focusing on,

Matthew responded that's he's looking forward to trying his hand at "pop rock." He hopes to use his musical stylings, both new and old, to generate awareness about his band, create relatable music that moves people and ultimately become a full-time professional musician, much like another idol of his and fellow Shreveport celebrity, Kenny Wayne Shepherd.

In addition to his growing local and regional fame, this newcomer also has several musical accolades under his belt. He's competed in the 2011 International Blues Challenge, the Texas 10 Under 20 Showcase at the Dallas International Guitar Festival, been hand selected (among 300 other contestants) to be the guitarist in the 2011 Kid Kraddic in the Morning Rock Band Camp and most recently won the 2012 Robert Johnson New Generation Award.

Along with his incredible talent also comes a kind demeanor, infectious smile and solid drive and determination. Matthew's focus is clear and although his ambition seems uncharacteristic for his age, his personality, professionalism and sound continue to catapult him forward to new heights.

You can see the incredible talent of Matthew Davidson next at the legendary New Orleans JazzFest — his set begins at 5:15 p.m. and runs until 6. Additional opportunities to take in his music include:

Saturday, May 12 — "Music in the Park" at Southern Hills Park — 1-2:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 22 — T-Bone Walker Blues Fest in Linden, Texas — 8:30 p.m.

