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'American Idol' notes: Alejandro Aranda (ScaryPoolParty) interview, Kelly Clarkson, Lauren Alaina, Diana DeGarmo



“American Idol” season 17 runner-up **Alejandro Aranda**, who goes by ScaryPoolParty, is neither scary nor a pool. But he can certainly create a party. He’ll be at Buckhead Theatre for a sold-out show Thursday, November 7 as part of a 30-date tour that wraps November 22. ([Resale tickets available here.](#))

Aranda provides an emotive, electronica sound that connected immediately with a huge swath of the “Idol” audience. He didn’t have the best voice or the best stage presence. But he possessed that X factor, as **Simon Cowell** might have said.

Though Aranda didn’t win, he was able to parlay that fame into a headlining tour under his stage name. Previously, he had been working with his mentor **Twin Shadow**, which performed at Music Midtown in 2018.

Now Twin Shadow opens for him. ScaryPoolParty has already played at Lollapalooza and Austin City Limits.

“It’s going to be an ambient, acoustic jazz show,” Aranda said, of the show in Atlanta. “I have some amazing people playing with me that brings it all to life.”

And Twin Shadow was his savior. “He started my producing career,” Aranda said. “He’s an amazing dude.”

Aranda in fact played more original music on the show than anybody in the show's 17-year history. But he still had to do covers. Fortunately, again, he said the producers allowed him to make his own versions. "It wasn't a problem," he said. "It was just different. It was honestly this weird bizarre state of mind. I'd never done this before."

He also learned about performing on TV, about video blocking and such. "I also learned patience," he said. "Filming is time consuming."

Aranda, 25, was a relative latecomer to the music business. He picked up a guitar a mere five years ago. (**Laine Hardy**, the winner this season, is just 19.)

"I had to learn faster about everything," Aranda said. "Just understanding what I needed to accomplish and what makes me happy and what doesn't make me happy. When I was 22, I realized how hard it was. The music industry is not easy at all. It's not something you can take lightly."

By going in at age 25, he came onto the show as a fully formed artist, not a work in progress. That helped him stand out immediately.

Since the end of “Idol,” he signed a deal [with Hollywood Records](#) and has an album is coming out November 22 called “Exit Form.” They gave him wide berth to do what he needed without creative interference. He wants his album to take listeners on a journey from “aggressive” and “brutal” at the start to something more beautiful at the end.

Aranda said music comes to him pretty easily but the lyrics are harder to piece together “I need to read more so I can build my vocabulary” he said. Lately, he’s been binging **Stephen King** novels.