

**Jim Hoehn:  
Three-Chord Barbecue**

MONDAY, June 19, 2006, 3:43 p.m.

**Peter Cooper: Pen to paper,  
prose to performing**

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I'd like to say I've had a bad case of blog clog, but the simple fact is, I've just been musically lazy. Not so much in terms of listening, but in writing. It's time to get off my B-side.

I'll start with Peter Cooper. I stumbled across his music somewhat by accident recently when he was the unannounced opener for Todd Snider. I didn't know who Peter Cooper was. I do now and, in my not-so-humble opinion, so should you.

First and foremost, Cooper is a writer. A good one. He's perhaps best known as a highly-respected music writer for the Nashville Tennessean. For music writing of another level, check out Cooper's mesmerizing and comprehensive liner notes for the recently released tribute recording, "The Pilgrim: A Celebration of Kris Kristofferson."



Peter Cooper

But, as good as Cooper is at prose, he might be even better as a songwriter. For one thing, he can hold his own as a storyteller, both on stage and in song, next to Snider, which is no small feat.

Five of Cooper's songs are featured on his recording, "The Clown Juice E.P.", well-served by the spartan guitar-vocal approach that is tastefully augmented by legendary steel guitarist Lloyd Green, whose playing not only is featured on dozens of No. 1 country hits, but also The Byrds' "Sweethearts of the Rodeo" album.

One song not on the E.P. that Cooper, a self-admitted baseball junkie, performed at Shank Hall was about the racial discrimination faced by home run king Henry Aaron after the Milwaukee Braves won the World Series in 1957.

After his Shank Hall show, Cooper said he hopes to record a full-length CD in the fall, with Snider producing. That's a lot of literary ability.

As always, I like to let the writing speak for itself.