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Whether he's covering it in *The Tennessean*, discussing it on CMT or teaching about it in a college course, Peter Cooper is always associated with high-quality country, bluegrass and other tradition-steeped music. But his way with words isn't just limited to the printed page—he's also a sharp singer-songwriter in his own right. Cooper just released a new country-tinged folk collection, *Mission Door*, that's rife with vividly detailed, down-to-earth storytelling. He co-produced the album with steel guitar legend Lloyd Green, and Green's keening, fluid notes are evident throughout. Against a primarily acoustic backdrop—from pensive story-songs to harmonica-laced roots rock—Cooper delivers literary yet plainspoken narratives in his scruffy tenor. As one might expect, or at least hope to hear, from an accomplished, multi-disciplinary writer like Cooper, substantial and well-crafted lyrics occupy their due place of honor throughout the album.

-Jewly Hight