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Cooper wears many hats: journalist, producer, professor. And on *Mission Door*, he sports his finest songwriting cap. This 12-track effort rejuvenates like a hot mineral spring, with each song hoisted up by a plainspoken honesty and delivered via Cooper's no frills vocals. Session steel man Lloyd Green co-produces and, as he has many times over the years, has outdone himself with masterful pedal steel work that never overpowers but provides punch. On "One By One," Cooper recounts the tale of a broken man with a gut-churning sorrow; it'll leave you with a heavy sigh, a little down, but getting up to press "repeat" again and again. It's just one of the many nuggets to unearth here; "Boy Genius" with its sing-along chorus, the bittersweet irony in "Couple of Lies" and the common sense spiked with a little pain on "Wine." *Mission Door* is Cooper's diploma from the Tom T. Hall School of Damn Good Songwriting.

-Matthew W. Shearon, *American Songwriter Magazine*