

Pittsburgh In Tune

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James Lee Stanley still going strong with 'The Apocaloptimist'

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'The Apocaloptimist'
James Lee Stanley (Beachwood)
3.5 stars out of 5

Though not a household name, singer/songwriter James Lee Stanley has spent the past 40 years forging a long and respected career. He and Cliff Eberhardt teamed up for 2011's "All Wood and Doors," an unexpectedly terrific acoustic tribute to The Doors, and the 68-year-old Philadelphia native shows no signs of slowing down with the release of 27th

album "The Apocaloptimist."



"(The album title is) a combination of the words apocalypse and optimist," Stanley says. "I think the world is going in a bad direction, but I believe in my heart it's going to turn out all right. And I work at making that a reality with every day I am blessed with being here."

Stanley focuses on his own material on the 12-track release (though there's also an inspired cover of The Beatles' "Drive My Car," featuring Chicago blues legend Corky Siegel) and his guitar playing and vocals remain fresh and vibrant throughout. Among the standouts here are "Living the Part Life," "Gypsies in the Hallway," "Highway 23," "Any Other Way" and "Twinkle in Your Eye." Good stuff. (*Jeffrey Sisk*)

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