

WILLIE NILE

The Innocent Ones

RIVER HOUSE

★★★★

On a roll: latest in dark-horse New York songwriter's remarkable renaissance

Few, if any, rock'n'rollers are still writing the kind of stirring anthems Willie Nile comes up with – check “Cell Phones Ringing (In The Pockets Of The Dead)”.

But *The Innocent Ones*, with its buzzing melodies, harmonies, and heart-of-gold sentiments, presents almost nothing but. Third in a guitar-centric trilogy that started with 2006's *Streets Of New York*, Nile here sharpens the pop sense, softens the politics with love songs, and throws in a hard-driving, Stonesy rocker (“Topless Amateur”) for good measure. “One Guitar” is the would-be hit, emblematic of a restless, righteous enthusiasm.

Luke Torn

