

The Connells "ring" in new album

Erick Gill
Managing Editor

It is finally here. After two long years, local legends The Connells have released their fifth album, *Ring*.

Ring, released on TVT Records, is reminiscent of The Connells earlier days. Their music finally has returned to the sounds of *Darker Days* and *Boylan Heights*.

Ring has regressed from the upbeat, pop songs that The Connells used in their 1991 release, *One Single Word*.

One thing the band has not lost is that nasty, over polished sound in the studio. Whatever happened to the recordings of that raw, spontaneous combustion?

"Slackjawed," the first single off the album, is one of the tracks that proves the band's diversity.

Songs like "Carry My Picture" and "Hey You" carry that later sound The Connells had on *One Simple Word*.

Ring is a compilation of The Connells entire musical career.

Cuts like "Disappointed" and "Burden" sound a lot like the dark, lofty songs that once appeared on *Boylan Heights*.

The band even meets a happy medium between their earlier alternative style and their later pop sound. Tracks like "Any Day Now" and "Running Mary" fall somewhere in the middle.

It's obvious that in their two years off the band has had time to mature.

Doug MacMillan's vocals combined with Mike Connell's writing ability is at its best. The

two have found the sounds' that work best for the band.

David Connell's bass and Peele Wimberley's drums lay

down beats that pick the listener up and add life to otherwise dead songs.

Special surprises like George Huntley on mandolin and Steve Potak on piano and keyboards also appear on the album.

Now that the band has had time off from the limelight, maybe they will start moving into the right direction. *Ring* is definitely the first step down that road.



The Connells

File Photo

Solar Circus produces rhythms

Chris Munday
Staff Reporter

The tie-dyes, Guatemalan skirts and dilated pupils were out in full force when Solar Circus performed at The Lighthouse last Friday.

The band, which describes their sound as "cosmic dance music," played about two and a half hours worth of psychedelic rhythms and twangy guitar licks.

Unlike previous performances at The Lighthouse, Solar Circus played mostly original material from their two studio albums,

Juggling Suns and Step Right Up. Both are on the Relix Records label.

The band drew a good crowd, but it was obvious from their late start that they were hoping for a larger turnout.

Students had mixed opinions about the band's sound and style. "I left, and when I came back, the place was full and the band was jamming," student John Bailey said.

Mark Tall said, "The music has good bass but really standard chords and changes."

"I just don't like this kind of music," said student John

Boggiano.

"The band really likes playing at Elon," lead guitar player Mark Diomede said.

"Elon was the first place we drew a really good crowd in the South, and it acted kind of like a spring board for us," he said.

Solar Circus is close to signing a new record deal with Megaforce Records and hopes to have an album out sometime next spring.

As for the band's future, Diomede said, "We want to expand in as many musical directions as possible and try to keep it fresh."

New & Recommended

Paperbacks

Crossing The Danger Water, by Deidre Mullane, Ed. (Anchor, \$16.00.) Comprehensive collection of three hundred years of African-American writing.

The Way Things Ought To Be, by Rush Limbaugh. (Pocket Star, \$6.50.) If the issue is controversial, if the topic touches a raw nerve, that's Limbaugh territory - and here, he puts it all in writing.

The Silver Hand, by Stephen R. Lawhead. (Avon, \$4.99.) Second book in the *Song of Albion* trilogy set in a Celtic Otherworld.