

Entertainment

The Real McCoy

by Amy Cash

A beautiful female bank-robber. A dim-witted, handsome man. The general villains, typecast as usual. Eighteen-million dollars and gratuitous violence scenes. What more could a person want from a movie, except some true artistic talent?

The Real McCoy starring Kim Basinger and Val Kilmer is not a film for true art lovers, although it will entertain large crowds. This is a mediocre film whose saving aspects are the emotional ties between characters. The most touching scenes occur when McCoy (Basinger) relates to her son on a personal level, even though he believes his true mother is dead. It is heart-wrenching to watch Basinger struggle for control of her emotions and examine the propriety of her actions.

The movie touches upon important social themes such as sexual harassment, yet it dismisses these subjects as easily as it portrays them. This movie could be amazing, depicting the plight of a female criminal who attempts to re-enter society upon her parole. Instead, it wastes its talents to become a regular action-thriller, in the fashion of another Kindergarten Cop. Val Kilmer and Kim Basinger portray their characters admirably, although another vehicle would have done their talents more justice.

One good thing about this movie is its portrayal of McCoy as a strong, intelligent woman. McCoy is not only calculating and shrewd, she has scientific knowledge as well. Hollywood has produced one female who is not afraid to fight any man—either physically or mentally. As strong female characters go, McCoy is one of the better—neither domineering nor the typical family matriarch. Instead, she is more a nineties' woman, whose career just happens to be robbing banks.

Despite its faults, The Real McCoy is a pleasant way to spend an afternoon. Full of the usual humorous lines, it amuses its audiences. The movie does contain violence, yet not enough to mar its PG-13 rating. It is an accurate portrayal of what can happen to ex-convicts upon release from prison. Having no other choice, they often resort to criminal activities. Although the circumstances are different in the movie than are usually true of real life, the message remains the same.

The Connells' fifth album has a familiar Ring to it

Every college band hopes that the future holds hit albums and screaming fans, but very few "local band turned hit" dreams come true. The Connells, who originated in the Raleigh-Durham area, are on the verge of making their dreams come true. With five albums in the stores, *Darker Days*, *Boylan Heights*, *Fun and Games*, *One Simple Word*, and, their newest addition, *Ring*, the Connells have built a decent following of fans. Although, to date, the Connells have not been considered a formidable power in the music world, *Ring* could prove to be the album that propels them into mainstream American music.

Since their debut album, *Darker Days*, the Connells haven't changed their style of music. Their sound could be defined as a melodic, preppy, college sound. There are no gripping solos, no "flip-out" vocals, and no complicated chord progressions, yet the Connells music is like a fresh, frothy glass of root beer. (Don't ask me what that means.) It combines a mixture of rhythmic melodies and introspective vocals. One of the Connells' most popular songs, "Over There," actually features a trumpet.

El Rodeo

905 W. Main St., Durham NC
(919)683-2417

by Brad Oaks

The best part of my dining experiences is most always the company, but the restaurant does have some influence on the event.

Last year I began going to El Rodeo and have returned many times. The restaurant is located in Bright Leaf Square which maintains the tobacco-warehouse architecture of its past. Someone has tried to make the style more like that of our southern border; colorful ponchos, as well as 'Three Amigo'-like hats, adorn the interior. The atmosphere is complimented by the waiters' poor knowledge of our language.

There are nacho chips and salsa on the tables—not particularly great ones, but they don't cost extra. When it comes time to order, the prices and portions are reasonable for a student's budget. The food which I have purchased has been excellent; however, one or two of my friends have wimpily complained about the food being too hot. My previous residence in New Mexico started my strong affinity for the recipes which have come to us from the Mexican people.

While I'm at NCSSM, El Rodeo often serves as the cure for my gustatory longings. (Even though I don't have yearnings for bad Mexican music, they also would be quenched at El Rodeo . . . if such desires existed.) For desert I often have "fried ice cream." Those of you who've not eaten this before should do so. Besides the vanilla ice cream being rolled in something like corn-flakes and then fried, it is served with whipped cream and a small amount of chocolate sauce on a crisp tortilla.

There is a pronunciation guide on the back of the menu if you want to TRY to sound Mexican. Personally I abstain from pronouncing the ones I haven't learned from exposure. The names aren't that difficult to say, but pointing also works. When the meal comes, the waiter rattles off something between English and his native tongue, and he seems emphatic. He's telling you that the dishes are hot. Try not to burn yourself on the first trip.

Other well-known Connells songs are: "Stone Cold Yesterday," and "Sal." *Ring* conforms to the Connells traditional musical style. It provides a mix of "turn-up-able" electric jams, such as

"Slackjawed," and soothing acoustic songs, such as "Spiral." Overall, *Ring* is the Connells' best showing yet, surpassing all of their previous albums in style, diversity, and lyrics. With this album, the Connells have the potential to finally become a "well-known" band outside of the Raleigh area.

