Cowboy Junkies play a characteristically s-s-slow show

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Connecticut Rock Critic

What is slow? Is it a lush bomb? A baseball
roaring on a super slow-thro. A ma in
Quabbin
All of these seem to wish, though, when
compared with, say, a ballad by the Cowboy
Junkies

In a return engagement at Tau's Place in
New Haven Wednesday, the Canadian band
didn't exactly step up the beat to kick off a
new American tour.

On the contrary, it seemed to strop them
even deeper in mélange.

Of course, this is much of the appeal of the
Toronto quartet. While most bands speed up
tunes and crank the volume, the Cowboy
Junkies insistently do the opposite.

Guitarist Michael Timmins, a barely
accepting man, sits in an electric guitar in an
early Velvet Underground mode. Bassist
Alan Anton and drummer Peter Timmons
have not yet been seen in a non-folk band.

So we would give the ensemble a second
name, though, if not for the Timmon's sister,
Margo.

And she was in fine voice on the sparse
tunes about the music, mostly written by her
brother Michael. Best known for being ap-
pealing to some antholgy records of late
Renaissance 'Sweat Jane' and Patsy Cline's
'Walking After Midnight' with which she
opened and close (the show), most of the 80-
minute set was original material, including
several new, as yet unrecorded songs.

Margo Timmons was self-effacing enough
to recognize the show with 'The Buck and
The Bear' as the band's 'dance time,' which is
to say that it has a fairly beat replacing the
usual fading

What makes it universal in concert
are the four sidemen the band depends on
even as strongly as it does the singer. Ac-
cidental Jim Currivan adds a sweet wash
on most of the band's one-guitar, one
drummer, one bass. But Kim DeChamps, hidden in the back of the stage, is
the standard on pedal and lap steel guitar

This time out, the band also had a percussion-
ist, for some reason. Used mainly to jingle
the wind chime, David lotion is perhaps the
first in his profession set to break a sweat
during a show.

The band, which sells a T-shirt that says
'jerk,' has a problem existing in quintains
love, especially in a sold-out tour with who's the idea of being there but have
no intention of listening. The constant she
seemed to raise the volume more than the
band, though.

If things were noisy for the Junkies' set,
they were out of control for the opening set by
Twos Van Zandt. As a result, the nightly
crowd raised the best-written song of the
evening, as done acoustically by the busy
Timmons songwriter, best known for his
'Little Baby's Blue Eyes' and 'Here Comes
The Sun.'

Looking at a later day version of young
Alex Lahey, Van Zandt offers songs that are
broad, precisely drawn and affecting. The
audience crowded into the stage and
continued the band's usual dry between-song
humor, however, as he ran through his half-
hour set.

There was one consolation, though: 'With a
crowd like this, you don't have to worry about
tuning,' he said.

No doubt, things will be suitably more quiet
when the show moves from the harmonica to a
theater atmosphere at the Paramount Per-
forming Arts Center in Springfield Saturday.