

REVIEWS

SICK PUPPIES

**Connect**

[Kirtland]

Connect is the fourth full-length effort from the Aussie-born, Cali-based Sick Puppies, whose 2006 single “All the Same” was adopted by the Free Hugs Campaign, sparking a meteoric rise in the band’s notoriety. With the Puppies back from a six-year touring binge, co-founder Shimon Moore reflects on how “the world vomited a whole new culture while [they] were out playing rock ‘n’ roll.” As the world “vomits” onward, Moore has remained nostalgic enough to use a guitar riff he composed while learning the instrument back in high school. The guitars can range from the solemnly tender on “Poison” and “Healing Now” to the boisterous on “Gunfight,” a track involving such imagery as conquistadores bringing smallpox-infected blankets to indigenous peoples. Less historical is the track “There’s No Going Back,” in which the speaker seems dead-set on forever forsaking his past. Despite a good deal of sporadic angst, there are moments when these Sick Puppies seem to enjoy themselves. –Ray Cavanaugh

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