

# daytoday

CHARLOTTEVILLE'S GUIDE TO CULTURE

## buzz BOX

### Farewell? Is Jump saying goodbye?



**JUMP.** Little Children started as a folky combo from the North Carolina School of the Arts in the '90s. After reorganizing into a rock band with strings, a more mainstream version of the band emerged as one of the most unlikely mid-Atlantic underground success stories, eventually making a bid for stardom with the help of Atlantic Records, which marketed 1998's *Magazine* to radio on the strength of pop morsels like "B-13" and "Cathedrals."

It didn't work.

Unfortunately, "underground" is usually just code for "not financially viable." By the time the ball drops for 2006, this highly original rock-popstring contraption will be gone, flattened by the weight of their own recording contract and inexplicable niche appeal.

Surprisingly, cellist Ward Williams doesn't sugar-coat it. Actually, he goes completely Eeyore on us.

**The Hook:** So, is this a farewell tour or not?

**Ward Williams:** It is. The only reason we're putting any sort of disclaimer on it is that so many bands say it's their last tour, and then they do another—like KISS or Cher or whatever. We don't want to be that guy. We don't have any irreconcilable differences; we're just tired. For every two hours we spend on stage, that represents ten to 12 hours spent in a truck that's rapidly deteriorating, or doing sound checks, or waiting for sound guys, or whatever else. It's very taxing.

**The Hook:** How did this decision come about?

**Ward Williams:** When we were making *The Dim and the Dark*, we were at the point where we were internally thinking that if this record sold less than or the same as *Vertigo*, it

was going to be our last record. Anything can happen, but we're tired of waiting for things to happen, and it seems to have run its course.

**The Hook:** Why do you think your deal with Atlantic didn't work out?

**Ward Williams:** Right when we released *Magazine*, which was our major label debut, Kid Rock released his album, and the Backstreet Boys and NSync were just starting to hit. So *Magazine* came out at what was, in my opinion, one of the bleakest points in the history of music. Now we're starting to come out of it, and if *Magazine* had been released today, we might have had a lot better luck. It has sold about 50,000 copies, and "Cathedrals" was a minor radio hit in some places, but by industry standards it wasn't considered successful. Gold at this point isn't even considered success. You have to go platinum to be a success—anything less than a million copies doesn't mean anything to a record company.

**The Hook:** So it's because of bubblegum pop?

**Ward Williams:** Well, I know it wasn't because of the songs, because we're awesome.

**The Hook:** Why did you shorten your name to "Jump" for the last tour?

**Ward Williams:** We tried to see if we could just do it casually. We didn't really want to change the name... a lot of our fans call us "Jump" anyway, so we decided to try it. We thought, "Maybe the DJ's just didn't want to say 'Jump, Little Children.'" Well, I guess that wasn't it. ■

*Jump, Little Children and Jim Boggia at Starr Hill Tuesday, September 13. \$10/\$8, 9pm.*