

'David, Live' — a disillusionment

By JOHN VANORE
I hate to do this. I really do! I've been a Bowie freak for over two years, and, despite the fact that he's an admitted fag, I always thought he played great music.

So now I'm disillusioned. I sat and listened to "David Live" and tried real hard to like it. And sometimes I succeeded. But most of the times I wished that RCA had plugged the spindle holes with No-Doz. "Sweet Thing," the longest cut on the four sides (8:48), seemed to drag (no pun intended) on forever. This is also a wimpy rendition of "All the Young Dudes," but Mott's version, which is getting a lot of airplay, is vastly superior.

Ya wanna know what's wrong? Plenty! For starters, the album is flat — no dimension. The band, ten artists from various points in Bowie's recording career and road musicians, fades into the background and Bowie stands out in the fore, smothering the others. This performance is where he really needed Mick Ronson, his outstanding former lead guitarist, who set out first as a solo artist and most recently signed on to play lead with Mott the Hoople.

And if you ever listened to "Get Yer Ya-Yas Out," the live Stones album, you'd know how a live album should sound. Give the originals a swift hop in the pants and turn them inside out. Change 'em around some. Even considering the less-

than-professional recording quality, I have a bootleg double by Bowie recorded about two and a half years ago that really sounds great. It's one of my favorite albums because of the new light he shines on his older material.

Next gripe — he pushes the new stuff too much. Fully six songs out of the seventeen are from his most recent album, "Diamond Dogs." C'mon, Davie, you could have done more of the older numbers rather than plug your latest release.

Finally, Bowie and his band seem to be playing "What's That Song?" with the listeners. I barely recognized one of the intros, and the vocals often sounded rushed or slurred. Of course the album has its good points — I always liked "Rebel Rebel" and "Width of a Circle," and it would take a conscious effort to ruin those songs. "Changes" here is vastly superior to the studio version, but that's like saying that platinum is more valuable than granite. "Suffragette City" and "Rock and Roll Suicide" also shine through, especially since the latter is well suited to be done solo. So here Bowie doesn't come across as a grandstander.

When I got this album to write it up, I pulled out all my Bowie material, both legit and bootleg, for comparison. Where I had three recordings of the same song, I listened to each in succession to form some sort of evaluation. It came out like this:

where the original framework was set up in the studio, the bootleg made the song jump out crisp and fresh. But, on "David Live," the songs were about as limp as David's wrist by comparison. However, as I said before, he's pushing a lot of new stuff, so such triple comparisons were possible in only a half-dozen cases. But the point was not lost on me.

This concert was obviously done with the specific objective of cutting an album in mind. It's too restrained, too predictable, whereas

the bootleg is far more free-wheeling. Bowie, in the latter instance, just wasn't aware that his performance was being preserved for posterity. Another thing is that the whole album was recorded at two shows at the Philadelphia Tower. On the other hand, the Doors' "Absolutely Live," for instance, was culled from eleven months of touring, so that only the best cuts were used.

My opinion is to shake this album off. You'll only get to hear a shadow of what the originals sounded like.

Stick with the originals you already have and keep your eyes peeled for the bootleg — it's on the Trade Mark of Quality label.

By the way, on the album jacket you'll see Bowie wearing a 40's-style zoot suit in place of his usual sequined leotards. But nothing underneath has changed. He's still the same old bisexual Bowie.

I realize that the tone of this article may offend those of you in the Gay Liberation Movement. If you are among this group, don't gripe at the Batt — they only print what I write. If you care to, you can take issue with me, once you get past the Claymore mines.

I-told-ya-so Dept. . . . Who went to see Olivia? Great, huh? But what I really want to point out is the third song she did. It's called "Love Song," and it's off "Tumbleweed Connection," and you may recall that about a week ago I made a big stink about it in my Elton John review. Most people who really appreciate music prefer something like "Love Song" over the "Honky Cat" genre. Like Olivia-baby.

Campus briefs

Drill, shooting matches held

The State Championship Drill Meet and Texas Aggie Junior Invitational Rifle Match will be held this Saturday and Sunday. Marching competition will be held Saturday on the MSC drill field from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The rifle matches will be held at the Kyle Field 12-point range from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and on Sunday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

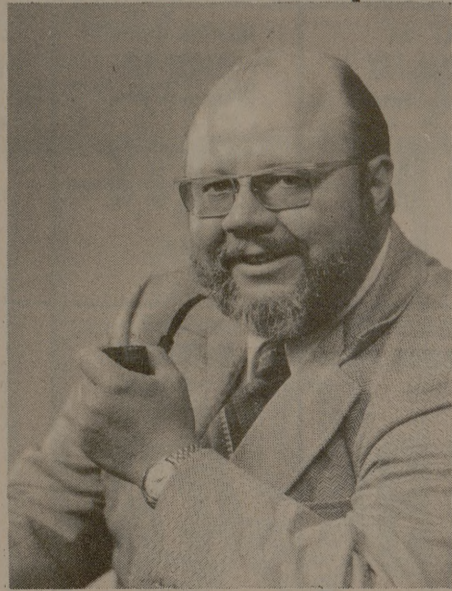
Poetry prizes awarded

Winners of the top four prizes in A&M's first poetry contest will be announced at 8 p.m., March 12, in Rudder Forum. Also featured at the awards program will be a reading by poet Greg Kuzma.

Spring break trips

Trips to Big Bend National Park and Buffalo River/Boston Mountains area of Arkansas have been planned by the Outdoor Rec. Committee for spring break. Those interested in the Big Bend trip should meet in rms. A, B and E in the Student Programs Office of the MSC at 7 p.m. on March 6. Those interested in the Arkansas trip should meet in rms. N & O in the Student Programs Office at 7:30 p.m., March 6.

This man is special.



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Tower blocks radar

By T. C. GALLUCCI
Staff Writer

Not only is the new water tower blue, but it also obstructs radar.

The tower extends 19 feet and 4 inches up into the radar beam, said Dr. Vance E. Moyer, Meteorology department head. As a result, it blocks out 20 percent of the beam from the Oceanography and Meteorology Building.

The tower is right on our compass bearings to Rockdale, Texas. If a severe storm hit there, to us it would appear as a moderate one. A moderate one would seem to be a slight one, and a slight one might not appear at all," said Vance.

J.O. Adams, director of future planning and construction, explained that after considerable discussion among members of the Board of Directors, they decided this was the only acceptable location.

"I'm not sure if it was known ahead of time, but I don't consider it a real bad situation as it is. This water tower is not taller than the existing tower. After all, it is only 20 percent of 360 degrees," said Adams.

The problem was realized before the tower's construction, but at that point it was too late to change any plans, said Moyer.

"What I don't understand is that they spent all this time constructing a 15 story building to avoid obstructions and now they start building obstructions," said Moyer.

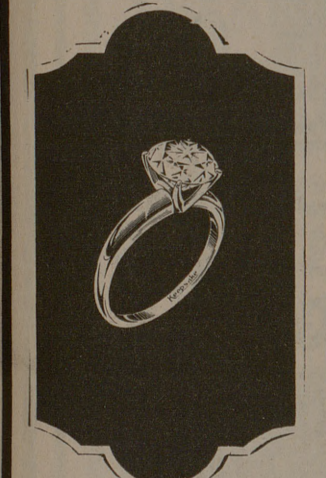
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