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Bowie combines English rock with soul



By JOHN VANORE Music Reviewer

I'll bet this is my most timely review. Just as TAMU's very own Secret Society of Swishes writes in to Listen Up, looking for acceptance, another release by our favorite twinkie, David Bowie, hits the record racks. About two months ago I told you how Bowie's stage act, when transferred to vinyl, sounded like nothing more than

eighty minutes or so of heavy breathing. Well, he has a new album, this one hot out of the recording studios, and I thought I'd see if he could redeem himself after "David Live.

"Young Americans," the new pearl of wisdom, shows darling David on the jacket looking about as masculine as Olivia Newton-John (Sorry, Olivia!). As usual. His PR men have been telling writers lately that he is

not, was not, and never has been queer, hoping to help change his image. But the pretty face, bracelets, and effeminate grasp on the cigarette (probably a Virginia Slim) make him look like more of a queer than before.

Back to the album itself. The title cut is all over the airwaves, for better or worse. Musically, it's not bad. The run-on lyrics sound like some sort of off-thewall socio-political commentary on American life. Personally, I think it's too heavy on the saxes and congas, since I'm accustomed to Bowie's forte being rock and roll, rather than a reggae/soul sound.

Win" is like nothing Bowie has ever done before. Soft guitars and Negro blues-style back-up vocals in a nice slow song make for a fine ballad. 'Fascination" has got to be

the best selection on the album, and his best offering since "Rebel Rebel." It shows a lot of Stevie Wonder influence, which is not bad at all, and it is also reminiscent of some older Foghat. The lyrics actually sound intelligible. Considering some of the turkey tongues on this LP, listening to "Fascination" was a sheer delight.

"Right," which closes Side One, is an attempt at copying



pure, undiluted soul, and it doesn't come off well. It ends up as one of those songs that floats in a sea of mediocrity. Some flashy guitar playing in an instrumental interlude halfway through the song falls sadly short of salvaging the song.

Side Two opens with "Som body Up There Likes Me," afair tune very strong on saxes (a la Bowie) and vocal back-ups. Bowie seems to be losing confi dence in his ability to hold his songs together by virtue of hi own singing, and he needs help

Beatles' number, and to callita total abortion would be to overplay guitar on this mess. 'Nuff

through in "Fame," which is a

is a mixture of two styles, stirred