

Music Review: *David Bowie*

BY ETHAN LANGEMO

CELEBRATING ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY this year, David Bowie's *David Bowie* is not the first David Bowie released by David Bowie. In fact, the first David Bowie was released in 1967, but due to poor sales, 1969's *David Bowie* is regarded as the "true" version, as well as being considered as his official debut album.

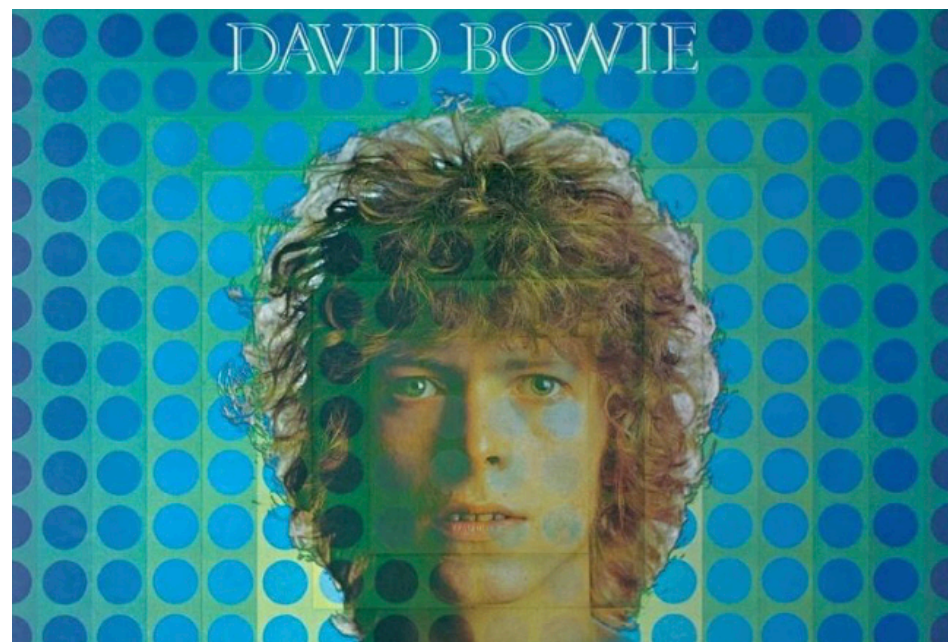
One of the things that made this album kickstart Bowie's career is that the album holds many of the styles and sounds found in later hit albums such as *Hunky Dory*, *Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders From Mars*, and *Heroes*. The opening track, "Space Oddity," is one of his biggest hits out of his career spanning half a century. Right off the bat, we are introduced to Bowie's incredible storytelling about an astronaut lost in space. This is followed by "Unwashed and Somewhat Slightly Dazed," a more traditional 60's rocker complete with bluesy harmonica, and "Letter to Hermione," a soft, sweet, surreal ballad.

One of the most underrated Bowie tracks, "Cygnet Committee," is track four. At nine and a half minutes, it is one of his longer songs and is chock full of intense, interesting imagery that seems to have multiple stories and musical themes rolled into one magnificent masterpiece. "Janine" is another rocker, almost like a stripped back "Unwashed." "An Occasional Dream" has a similar sound to "Space Oddity," with soft lyrics floating over a swirling myriad of acoustic guitars, strings, and flutes.

"Wild Eyed Boy from Freecloud" is another story-based song filled with gorgeous orchestral sweeps of horns, strings, and harps which tells of the fantastical adventure of a boy on Freecloud Mountain. The catchy melodies of "God Knows I'm Good" are sure to get stuck in your head, along with its words of an old woman stealing and hoping God will not notice their actions and her following consequences.

The album closes out with the epic, reverberant, "Memory of a Free Festival," introduced by a reed organ which sounds very similar to one which I have in my dorm. The song descends into chaos, and slowly but surely, Bowie gives a beautiful image of people gathering for a party at night marches out of the noise: "The sun machine is coming down, we're gonna have a party."

No doubt, David Bowie had an enormous impact on David Bowie's career, as well as the entire music industry. It is indeed a "debut album" to be reckoned with. The experimentation present on the album lasted throughout his career and did not end with his death in 2016, as his music continues to inspire musicians like me to experiment and be open to using odd and unconventional sounds. †



The Hobbit Review

BY MATTHEW IUNG

THE CHILDREN'S THEATER PRESENT'S J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit: A* show was adapted and directed by Greg Banks. The show has a cast of five actors who play a range of roles throughout. The show does its best to condense the long book into just two hours for kids. This means that the story is being boiled down to its base elements. *The Hobbit* is a story about stepping outside of your comfort zone, and that's something that we all struggle with at times. At the close of the tale, there is also a moral that teaches about greed and how it not only drives people apart but to hate as well. These are not preached at the audience, but they are made clear through the development of the characters. Of those characters, Orin and Bilbo are the center pieces, and these actors play off one another expertly. Each of the actors also plays the part of an ork or a troll or an elf, and they do this through smooth transitions and body language shifts.

The music in addition to being performed live was immersive and could really draw in the listener. What the show may have lacked in what most viewers would have considered spectacle after possibly seeing Peter Jackson's vision of the same story in theaters. Composer Thomas Johnson says "I like to think of it as a magic carpet ride that the actors sit on, sweeping them (and the audience) away from the first moment of our story to the end."

It's worth noting the design aspects of the show because it's unlike anything I have seen accosted with Tolkien's vision of middle earth. For this adaptation, the whole production had a steampunk and depression- era feel. The set was all meant to look like rotting iron and condemned mines and factories, which gives the show a distinct feeling that sets it apart from the more Traditional visions of Peter Jackson and Ralph Bakshi. The set was as versatile as the actors on it, providing plenty of room to have chases, jail cells, and mountain climbing.

This adaptation is not only a good way for kids to get in to authors like Tolkien, but it also acts as a way to reenvisioning a story that for most have been firmly defined in their own minds and by others. As well as showing audiences the essentials of what makes this story timeless and applicable to more than just the time it was written, it. †

Things to see at MCAD and the MIA

BY MATTHEW IUNG

Women & Museums

Sara VanDerBeek's career has allowed her to examine that museums interrupt the past through objects of history. The MIA describes the excitement as a collaboration with "staff to select and photograph collection objects that resonate with her experiences as an artist, mother, and woman." Her photography is placed across from pieces that act as a sort of raw inspiration material as well as examples as other work done by women. These objects are from the MIA's collection and range from masks to sculptures to woven baskets and even clothing. Two that caught my eye were Wellington Lee's Magic Eye and the woven basket done by an Inde (Apache) artist.

Though only six of VanDerBeek's photo works were on display, they are the beginning begging of "Women & Museums" as a larger photographic work. That has placed her working with institutions such as the National Archeological Museum in Naples, The Ashmolean Museum of Oxford and the Warburg Institute in London. The Mia describes VanDerBeek's work as, "a poetic and associate view into the evolving lives and forms of women, as well as an exploration of Institutional authorship."

I recommend going to see what this exhibition has to offer because for the majority of what we consider history women have been portrayed and evaluated by men.