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B. G.

2 Notable New Waxings by Soul Stylists

A FEW NEW: In recent weeks, a flood of new albums — pop, rock, jazz — has kept this listener waist-high in the larger-than-usual backlog. Among the most notable of these waxings are, in the soul-R&B vein, "Come As You Are" (Warner Bros.), by singer-songwriters Nickolas Ashford and Valerie Simpson, a duo responsible for some of the most successful and enduring tunes of the Motown era; and "For All We Know" (Kudu Records), by the dynamic soul-jazz vocalist Esther Phillips. The album co-stars guitarist Joe Beck, who's also responsible for the lushly orchestrated arrangements. Also new are in-concert albums by two pop artists of markedly different musical energies. "On the Road" (Varner Bros.) is a fine compilation of live tracks by singer-writer Jesse Jlin Young, whose fusion of folk, soft-rock and jazz remains one of the slowest and most listenable formats on the scene; "Robin Trower VE!" (Chrysalis Records) is the latest in mind-bending power rock from Britain's sweepingly popular electric guitarist Robin Trower, whose style continues to pay tribute to the sonic inventiveness and textural range of the late Jimi Hendrix.

BOWIE WRAP-UP: Rock superstar



... on
Records
Matt
Damsker

David Bowie spent last Tuesday afternoon at Philadelphia's Sigma Sound Studios with perennial protege Iggy Pop, former lead singer of the defunct Detroit group, The Stooges, and one of rock's legendary and (to date) most unsuccessful outrages. Bowie is producing an album for Iggy, and the Sigma sessions revolved around a new tune, "Sister Midnight." That night at the Spectrum, Bowie closed out his Philly engagement with another electrifying performance and, by way of plugging Iggy, included a version of the song. Of surpassing interest, however, was Bowie's surprise announcement that he would be returning in about nine months for a series of shows at Upper Darby's Tower Theater, where he began bowling over Philly audiences in 1972. Speculation

has it that next time around Bowie will also be returning to the lavish theatricality of his earlier stage concepts.

POPDRIPS: Atlantic Records has announced the signing of former Beatle Ringo Starr to a long-term recording contract. Dollar details aren't available, but Ringo's consid-

erable post-Beatle success as a solo artist would seem to assure a fat figure. The signing took place in the Presidential Suite of the Amsterdam Hilton... Bill Bruford, former drummer with Yes and King Crimson, will join with British progressive-rock group Genesis for their upcoming American tour (which will bring them to the Tower Theater on April 7).

FURTHERMORE: Bette Midler will make her Las Vegas debut on April 15 — kicking off a two-week engagement — at Caesar's Palace... E.P. Dutton is bringing out a paperback edition of "Mystery Train" (subtitled "Images of America in Rock 'N' Roll Music"), rock critic Greil Marcus' acclaimed socio-musical study of how America has shaped rock and vice versa. The book has been called, among other superlatives, "the first masterpiece ever devoted to rock 'n roll." 3