

BOOKS

The Praise Singer, by Mary Renault

Well-known for her books on ancient Greece, Mary Renault once again recreates the world of a man who lived in those exciting and eventful years. This novel, *Praise Singer*, centers around Simonides the poet. Born on the island of Keos, Simonides has a talent for music which goes unnoticed until he attracts the notice of a visiting bard, Kleobis. Simonides leaves his home to begin his apprenticeship with Kleobis and so begins his life in a society where the arts are an important part of everyone's life.

Simonides lived in sixth-century Greece in the age of the Tyrants. Artists of all kinds depended on the tyrants and other wealthy men of the period for their livelihood. Artists were special people and Simonides was one of the best. His life was more remarkable than most of the bards of his time. In that age a great deal of importance was attached to beauty, and Simonides was not a beautiful man. In fact, he was considered ugly, so all his fame was based on his great talent for music and poetry.

Mary Renault's skill in making the past come alive is again demonstrated in this novel. Anyone with an interest in ancient Greece or the world of the poet should enjoy this book.

—Dian Christilles Pfeil
Library Assistant
University Library

Early Man and the Ocean, by Thor Heyerdahl

Heyerdahl's theories that reed ships and balsa rafts were used for pre-Columbian voyages from the Old World to America and for colonization of Polynesia from America are spelled out in detail in his latest book.

It may not prove as popular as the semi-adventure stories of "Kon-Tiki" and "The Ra Expeditions," in which he told of his east-to-west crossings of the Atlantic on the reed-built Kon-Tiki in 1947 and of the Pacific aboard the balsa raft Ra II in 1970, but "Early Man and the Ocean" is the first time he has spelled out all his theories in a single book. It consists mostly of updated speeches and articles, some fairly technical.

What Heyerdahl's voyages showed was that Old World explorers — using the same sort of craft he did — could have reached Central America thousands of years before Columbus, and that American civilizations could have colonized much of Polynesia and even New Zealand.

This turned pre-Columbian and Pacific archaeology upside down. The prevailing wisdom until then was that such voyages were impossible, and therefore pre-Columbian civilizations were of necessity home grown or Asian influenced, and that all the islands of the Pacific must have been peopled from Asia.

Heyerdahl's theories about Polynesia are pretty well accepted today. But there still is considerable resistance to his ideas that pre-Columbian civilizations from Mexico to Peru were the result of deliberate colonization from the Old World as long ago as 3000 B.C.

"Early Man and the Ocean" allows the layman to examine Heyerdahl's reasoning and "evidence," but be warned that the book tends to turn far-out theories into proven fact, and avoids some problems altogether.

—Glenn Currie (UPI)

Bestsellers

Fiction

1. *Chesapeake* — James A. Michener
2. *War and Remembrance* — Herman Wouk
3. *Overload* — Arthur Hailey
4. *The Stories of John Cheever* — John Cheever
5. *Evergreen* — Belva Plain
6. *Second Generation* — Howard Fast
7. *Coup* — John Updike
8. *The Sixth Commandment* — Lawrence Sanders

9. *Dress Gray* — Lucian K. Truscott IV
10. *Fools Die* — Mario Puzo

Nonfiction

1. *Lauren Bacall: By Myself* — Lauren Bacall
2. *Mommie Dearest* — Christina Crawford
3. *The Complete Scarsdale Medical Diet* — Herman R. Tarnower and Samm Sinclair Baker

4. *American Caesar* — William Manchester
5. *How To Prosper During the Coming Bad Years* — Howard J. Ruff
6. *A Distant Mirror* — Barbara Tuchman
7. *Linda Goodman's Love Signs* — Linda Goodman
8. *In Search of History* — Theodore White
9. *If Life Is a Bowl of Cherries, What Am I Doing in the Pits* — Erma Bombeck
10. *Nurse* — Peggy Anderson

MUSIC

Cooper's career turns 'straight' after a difficult bout with alcohol

By Jeff Wilson

United Press International

Whiskey almost drowned out the colorful career of Alice Cooper before the grand ghoul of theater rock finally checked into an asylum. Now it's Schwepps on the rocks and sobriety and a painful look at the past.

It took three months of excruciating withdrawals in a White Plains, N.Y., asylum before Cooper dried out and was able to redesign his life and his career.

Now he cruises Sunset Boulevard in his \$15,000 1957 Chevy sober as a judge. He's got a new album, a new stage show and a grasp on his life.

"It's the difference between being back in the business and being in neutral," Alice says. "I've redesigned Alice. We're going to see a new Alice."

His new concept LP ("my first straight album") is based on his 90-day lockup and Alice says "From The Inside" is his most

personal recording.

"But it's not depressing," Alice says. "The LP is not down. It's a heavy subject, asylums and alcoholism. It could easily get depressing if you let it. I'm confessional in my lyrics — if something happens to me I put it into my music and tell the world. But I don't preach."

Long-time drinking buddy Bernie Taupin, Elton John's former lyricist, helped pen all 10 songs.

"Alice and I go everywhere together — we're buddies," says Taupin.

Cooper candidly tells of falling in and out of bars on Sunset Boulevard with his pal and "getting plastered every night."

"I'm talking about drinking orgies," says Alice, recalling the daily binges. "We were absolutely absurd. One night we were at the Roxy (nightclub) and we were so drunk we started pouring drinks down each others' boots. When we left, I was knee-deep in vodka and Bernie reeked of whiskey. We were obnoxious."

But the peak in his 10-year drinking career hit in 1977, which Alice says "was an absolutely awful year for me."

"The alcohol really got to me. I didn't want to work. I didn't want to do anything. I was really addicted. I was drinking, really, two bottles of whiskey a day. When I got to the point where I wasn't producing anything on any level, I committed myself to get rid of this ridiculous thing."

So the drunken sojourns through Hollywood are over?

"Yep, now I'm hooked on ginger ale," he says. "I would never start drinking again — ever. I wouldn't touch anything. I got rid of something I hated and I'm thankful. I feel 10 times better now."

Fans will get a look at the "new Alice" next week when his latest traveling rock music show, "Madhouse Rock," hits the road.

It's based on the daily asylum routine. Promoters call it "a highly surrealistic piece of rock theater that emulates the fantasies and actualities of being in a mental institution."

In other words — blowing your mind in a nuthouse.

"We've taken the audience through the whole 'Welcome to my Nightmare' thing and now we're going to take them through the asylum. We take the whole audience and place them inside as though they were in an asylum. We have giant whiskey bottles and giant doctors. Everything's exaggerated — a real Cooper-esque show."

For Cooper, the asylum was a sanctuary.

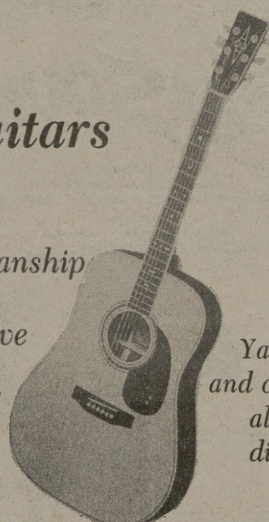
"Once you're in there you look at the place as a sort of sanctuary. Most people say, 'Wow, you're locked up inside an asylum.' But that's not the way it is. Believe me, most of those people would rather be in there because it's safe."

"This (the outside world) is the asylum."

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Preview

Some of the best names in jazz will be at the University of Texas Special Events Center March 23 for the Pablo Jazz Festival.

Heading the list is Ella Fitzgerald, a talented vocalist known for her wide vocal span and her acute harmonic ear. She performs all kinds of music well, including swing, pop, bossa nova, Broadway sound and soul.

Also appearing will be jazz pianist Oscar Peterson, guitarist Joe Pass and Paul Smith.

Tickets went on sale Feb. 21 at the SEC East Side terrace level ticket windows. The prices are \$10.50, \$8.50 and \$7. For more information call the ticket charge line at 512-477-6060.

Top 10 Albums

1. Rod Stewart — *Blondes Have More Fun*
2. Bee Gees — *Spirits Having Flown*
3. Village People — *Cruisin'*
4. Blues Brothers — *Briefcase Full of Blues*
5. Billy Joel — *52nd Street*
6. Dire Straits — *Dire Straits*
7. Olivia Newton-John — *Totally Hot*
8. Dobbie Brothers — *Minute by Minute*
9. Toto — *Toto*
10. Gloria Gaynor — *Love Tracks*