

Bruce Brooks Holiday reading

I hope that this list may provide or aid ideas for holiday reading and/or giving by calling attention to several new paperbacks I have found superior.

"**Doctor Faustus**" by Thomas Mann (Vintage, \$2.45). This is a new paperback publication, being heretofore available only in The Modern Library. The story of a composer, the novel is an epic part of Mann's man-art continuum with the usual result that ramification on its content eventually relates one half of all experience to the other. Mann's genius is technically exhaustive and thematically exhausting.

"**Remembrance of Things Past**" by Marcel Proust (Vintage, approx. \$1.95 apiece for 7 vols.). The very first complete paperback edition of Proust's magnum novel of Paris, Love, and Time; also the only current American

publication of Proust. One of the greatest of all works, its surface density and patient complexity are worthy of worship, to say nothing of its amazing beauty. C.K. Scott Moncrief's translating skill has made Proust's brilliance accessible for English readers; this is among the best prose I have ever read.

"**El Aleph**" by Jorge-Luis Borges (Bantam, \$1.95). One of the least-noted and most deserving figures of contemporary world literature, Borges has published this volume especially for English readers in his own translation. For that point alone it is quite important, but its content is even more satisfying than this academic appreciation. The brevity of Borges' stories are not just examples of skillful distilling, but also illustrations of the richness of moments. Included is a fine and indispensable autobiography previously unpublished.

"**Inside the Third Reich**" by Albert Speer (Avon, \$1.95). This book must be read with pre-acceptance of the fact that it proves: Adolf Hitler was not the only interesting Nazi. Speer has written mostly about himself and the Reich, so this isn't another simple inside view of Hitler's fascination. It is a satisfying saga of Speer's life and the Reich's workings and personalities. Its personal view is the cause of this: Speer has tried to be no more than one man, and so for once we have no compulsive over-theories about the cause of Nazism.

"**Radical Chic, and Mau-Mauing the Flak-Catchers**" by Tom Wolfe (Bantam, \$1.25). Tom Wolfe is probably the best contemporary American writer, and essays like these two earn him such hyperboles. Here are two examinations of interracial-class clashes in which the Whites desperately seize defeat. No Black could be proud of such sloppy victories, but who needs pride along with and squashed honkies? Very funny, very perceptive, very important.

"**The Rolling Stone Interviews**" by the Editors of Rolling Stone (Paperback Library, \$1.50). Here are 17 often revealing interviews with the leaders of rock music. Frequently the talk of the stars is disappointingly unfantastic for those who expect Chuck Berry to talk like Frank Zappa; but it is always at least interesting to find out the secret-origins type of esoterica. There is much musical thought laid down here, and we are seldom shown that the musicians do not deserve the fabulous success they have had.

'Pooh' set as Readers end season

"Pooh and Company," the Carolina Readers' final production of the semester, premieres tonight at 8 p.m. in 103 Bingham for a two-day run.

Performances Friday will be 4:30 and 8 p.m. Admission is 50 cents for adults and students and 25 cents for children.

"Pooh and Company," adapted from A.A. Milne's stories of Winnie-the-Pooh and directed by Candy Carter, features four of Milne's stories, which deal with Pooh, the personified stuffed bear, (Sara Brooks), and his friends: Tigger (Jan Stafford), Piglet (Karen Diving), Eeyore (Mary Ruffin), Roo (Julie Davis) and Rabbit (David Holden).

The production format uses a narrator (Harriet Cherberg) telling stories to Christopher Robin (Chan Hardwick).

Other productions by the Carolina Readers this semester were "Boy, Girl, Boy, Girl," "Roman Fever," and "Corn Squeezin's and Wry."

Faculty advisor Dr. Howard Doll and president Kim Coburn are now accepting scripts for next semester's Readers Theatre season. They also invite students and townspeople to join the group next semester.

On Records

Santana's efforts tedious

by Norman Draper

Santana Columbia KC30595

Santana's structuring of a rock tune has generally followed this basic formula: take some speed freak, metallic-sounding lead guitar riffs, back them up with the vibrato-ridden chordal underpinnings of an organ, and let the percussionists go wild in the background. Add a little ethnic flavor and plenty of interspersed solos to all this and you get the archetypal Santana sound that has succeeded so well on such numbers as

"Persuasion," "Hope You're Feeling Better," and "Gypsy Queen."

Yet such a formula carried to the repetitive extreme has resulted in Santana's third album — an album that, despite a few exciting moments, reeks of monotonous uniformity and pseudo-exoticism. Santana has fallen into the "Latin-rock rut" — a syndrome that threatens to destroy their capacity for making hot, innovative music.

The attempt to make this album a successful blend of heavily percussive Chicano music and modern American

rock fails. It becomes symptomatic of the affectedness and self-indulgences that are becoming characteristic faults of Santana.

Side one of this album is awful — no redeeming qualities whatsoever. "Batuka" and "Taboo" both hint strongly of Hendrix, just as "Jungle Strut" (on side two) bears a striking resemblance to the Allman Brothers' "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed."

"Taboo" is a weak attempt at a sort of exotic "dream effect" song. It loses hands down in comparison with something like Hendrix's "Little Wing" and "One Rainy

Wish." Gregg Rolie's misused vocals add to the feeling of presumptuousness that surrounds this song. "No One to Depend On" is just as slow and cumbersome as its progenitor, "Evil Ways."

Side two starts out promising. "Everybody's Everything," a number that's been getting plenty of AM airplay recently, really moves (thanks in part to the borrowed Tower of Power brass section). Gregg Rolie's rough, scratchy voice is perhaps the strongest point in Santana's favor. Here his vocals, which are kept to a minimum on the rest of the album, are strong and relentlessly soulful. Dave Brown, who has never struck me as being a particularly skilled bassist, has some conspicuous riffs on this track that are quite impressive.

The rest of side two is, to put it mildly, disappointing. "Guajira," probably the worst cut on the album, sounds like a band of electrified mariachis experimenting with jazz a la Brubeck and Ellington. Ordinarily, this would be laughable, but almost six minutes of such garbage is unbearable. Two songs that really take off at the beginning, "Para Los Rumberos" and "Jungle Strut," become nothing more than the blasé sequels to "Soul Sacrifice" — that monstrous Santana instrumental of repetitive rhythms and dragging solos.

Santana is a good group with a terrible penchant for replicating everything they've done, good and bad. This new album is little more than a rehash, with some sparse and disastrous attempts at experimentation. Santanas was, is, and always will be Santana — the same old group doing the same old thing.

Leaven Cabal

'Bananas' fragmented

The best moments in Woody Allen's "Bananas," and there are a number of them, rank with the best of any American comedian now working in film. Allen, who directed, co-wrote and starred in the film, knows how to seize on the familiar patterns of everyday living and, as Elaine May or Carl Reiner often do, inject just enough of the totally absurd to thoroughly devastate them. Unfortunately, he is unable to make a movie, and although the "moments" alone make seeing the film worthwhile, one leaves the theater wishing Allen had devoted as much time to his plot and pacing as he did to the individual gags.

"Bananas" begins with the assassination of the President of a small Latin American nation. Narrating the scene for ABC's Wide World of Sports is Howard Cosell, who treats the event as though it were arranged purely for the entertainment of ABC's viewing audience. The humorous juxtaposition of Cosell's familiar style with the rather violent assassination falters at moments, perhaps because we are just not ready yet to take assassinations quite that lightly, but the idea is good, and the scene is a bright and irreverent beginning.

The character Allen plays, part schlemiel and part schnook, is nothing new to anyone familiar with his work. Trying to inconspicuously purchase a

pornographic magazine, Fielding Mellish (Allen) places copies of Time, Newsweek, Saturday Review and Harpers on top of his choice — only to hear the cashier yell across the store, "Hey Ralph, how much is ORGASM?"

Although the film is neither consistent nor serious-minded enough to be called a satire, it does contain frequent satiric flourishes. Allen takes pot shots at movie conventions (Mellish actually hears the stylized musical score and locates it in his closet where a harpist is practicing); at literary pretensions ("It was pithy," the girlfriend says about a book, "It had great

pith"); and at television advertising (a priest suggests New Testament cigarettes to a man choking on a wafer: "I smoke them; He smokes them").

But the satire is too wide-ranging to have any real impact, and when the fragments don't work comically, as in a dinner scene in which the President and others begin debating the bill, they simply don't work at all. The scene changing from Latin American to New York is confusing, and the story, instead of providing an opportunity for cumulative development, serves merely as a loose framework for Allen's gags.

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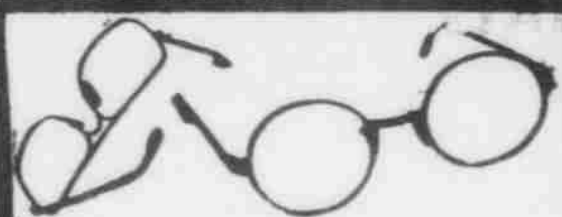
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