Graven with diamonds: the many lives of Thomas Wyatt: poet, lover, statesman, and spy in the court of Henry VIII, Nicola Shulman (book review)

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Cookbook columnist Lisa Campbell is both a literal and figurative tastemaker for the library market. She stays up to date on the latest trends in food and cooking, and puts that knowledge to work as she sorts through scores of new releases to determine which ones will be best for library patrons. She makes the additional effort to prepare at least one recipe from every cookbook she reviews, in the process judging the clarity of the directions and the quality of the finished dish. Her reviews are smart and engaging, and, most of all, useful for her fellow librarians, since she has a knack for distilling what sets a cookbook apart from its peers and expressing that clearly and succinctly. Almost all of her reviews suggest other titles that support the book’s content and could be displayed with it. Lisa thinks big, pays attention to the details, and does it all cheerfully and efficiently. I’m delighted to suggest her as a Reviewer of the Year.—Stephanie Klose

PERFORMING ARTS

Alleyne, Mike. The Encyclopedia of Reggae: The Golden Age of Roots Reggae. Sterling. 2012. 332p. photos. index. ISBN 9781402785832. pap. $24.95. MUSIC Reggae has been evolving and growing in popularity since the early 1960s. Alleyne’s (recording industry, Middle Tennessee State Univ.) authoritative look at the entire genre includes comprehensive articles on 25 major reggae stars and features 14 sidebars explaining everything from dub to dancehall. David Moskowitz’s Caribbean Popular Music: An Encyclopedia of Reggae, Mento, Ska, Rock Steady and Dancehall offered a good start on this subject, but its solid information was paired with only a few black-and-white photos. This new book is much more visually appealing, in full color and with vibrant four-color artwork that makes it a fun browse as well as a useful reference title. VERDICT This well-written and informative book covers most, if not all, of the main performers of reggae’s golden era, and should be included in all comprehensive music and reggae collections.—Bill Walker, Stockton-San Joaquin Cty. P.L., CA

Ankerich, Michael G. Mae Murray: The Girl with the Bee-Stung Lips. Univ. of Kentucky.

2012. 392p. ISBN 9780813136905. $40. ebk. ISBN 9780813140384. FILM If one silent-film superstar personifies the iconic Norma Desmond (Gloria Swanson of Sunset Boulevard), it would be Mae Murray. Beautiful, talented, vain, glamorous, famous, and infamous: Murray, with her “bee-stung lips,” had one of the great faces of the silent era. Beginning her career as a dancer on Broadway in the early 1910s, Murray made an easy transition from the Ziegfeld Follies into film and found great success and stardom that lasted throughout the silent era. The arrival of sound film, along with an unfortunate marriage and bad career decisions, led to the inevitable fading of Murray’s star—a common Hollywood story. Murray herself, however, was very uncommon. Ankerich (Broken Silence: Conversations with 23 Silent Film Stars) has managed to capture lightning in a bottle, piercing the fog of time and faded memories to create a compelling and haunting biography of one of film’s long-forgotten lights.

VERDICT In what will surely become the actress’s definitive biography, Ankerich captures a glittering, elusive Murray, who lived in a self-created bubble of everlasting fame and who spun faster and faster until one day “she was gone.” Recommended for all fans of silent film and Old Hollywood glamour.—Teri Shiel, Westfield State Univ. Lib., MA


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