

The SCIENCE FICTION Book Club News

Enigmatic rituals: Alien rites... a devastating new novel by a major modern writer

TRANSFIGURATIONS

MICHAEL BISHOP

'Great grey-fleshed creatures, their heads heavy with violent drapings of fur, milled about me, turned about one another, came back to me . . . I could do nothing but wait. I waited. My temples pulsed . . . Hovering, then moving away, averting their murky eyes, the Asadi made their decision and that first indispensable victory was in my grasp: I was ignored.'

Thus Egan Chaney, cultural xenologist, enters into the mysterious world of the Asadi - the alien humanoids whose enigmatic rituals throw up so many unresolved questions.

When Chaney returns to civilization, he brings back some of the answers - or so he claims. Others believe him to be mad, and his sudden return to the depths of the Asadi jungle suggests they may be right.

Are the Asadi the degenerate remnants of a once intelligent race? Can the sickening hints

of cannibalism be believed? And what of the strange ceremony of Death and Designation - the blind batlike 'huri' - the weird and monstrous pagoda in the depths of the jungle wilderness?

Fantasies or fact? Chaney's daughter and Tom Benedict, his old partner, take on the difficult task of finding out - and find themselves involved in a complex and bizarre investigation of an alien nightmare . . .

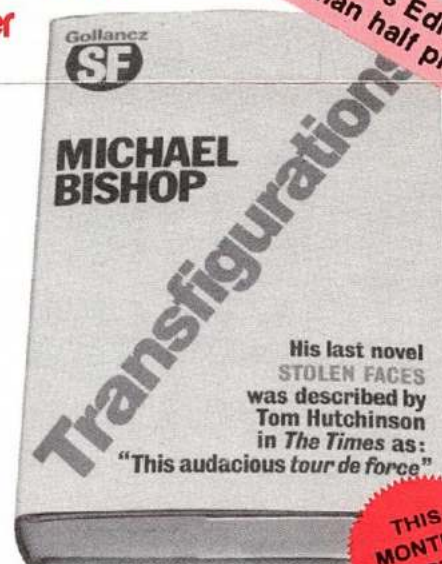
An impressively talented sf discovery, Michael Bishop (described by *The Encyclopedia of SF* as 'one of the significant new writers of the 1970s') already has no less than four Hugo and five Nebula nominations to his credit - including ones for 'Death and Designation among the Asadi', the short story that forms the prologue to this astounding new novel. 7 3/4 x 5 in | 362pp

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