

predicament necessarily places a good deal of strain on any publisher who cares what he or she is doing. Perhaps all of us — typographers, authors, publishers and readers — may find solace in the remark of one of the finest typographer/printers of this century, Victor Hammer, who said: "The work itself is what matters, and when it is authentic, the condition of its accomplishment will necessarily be adverse."

Poetry

The books submitted in this category covered a considerable range, from the sloppy and thoughtless to the joyful and knowledgeable creations of designers who have learned their trade and who practice it with honor. There were good books from Porcupine's Quill, Exile, General Publishing, and Aya as well as from Coach House Press, which in the end won all the acknowledgements in this category. A couple of the judges were impressed by the titles submitted from General Publishing's Spectrum Series, but the typographical quality of the books was very uneven, and their necessary fealty to the series design prevented them competing successfully one by one against the books from Coach House or Porcupine's Quill which are individually designed.

The Coach House books impress with their application of sophisticated typography to commercial paperback production — a feature long associated with Penguin Books, but maddeningly scarce in Canadian trade publishing. The Coach House books impress too with their range, from the traditional to the experimental in design, and they give clear evidence that each title is designed from the text out, not from the cover in. (Surprisingly, however, all the Coach House books in the contest, if they were perfectbound, as many of them were, suffered from vertical alignment problems.)

The merits of the winning book ought, I think, to be obvious to anyone handling it. The Fitzgerald won our attention in spite of its bad cover, because of the immaculate typography of the insides. The Cookshaw was particularly impressive to me personally, because of the designer's thorough yet inventive fidelity to the theme and title, and because of the understated but great technical skill evident in its execution.

Prose

The submissions in this category were disappointing. Many of the books were badly bound (the action of the pages poor, the spine margins haphazardly calculated, if they were calculated at all) and the design quality overall was dull. Many of the books were caught be-