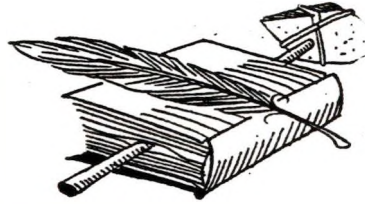


## THE ALCUIN SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

### DESIGN AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN CANADIAN BOOKS IN THE YEAR 1993



The undersigned judges spent much of April 9, 1994 examining and discussing the merits and drawbacks of visual characteristics of the books submitted for these twelfth annual design awards by the Society. Books bearing an imprint date of 1993 had been solicited from Canadian publishers and/or designers and nearly three hundred were received, a significantly larger number than the 244 submitted last year. Most submissions consisted of one or a few chosen titles from among a publisher's annual output for the year; some smaller houses or designers appear to submit everything produced. Despite the Society's efforts to publicize these awards, we are aware that there is meritorious work produced which is not submitted to this competition. Yet we recognize the "winners" listed and described below as evidence that excellent design and production work remain possible in Canada at a time when some publishers are sufficiently demoralized to decry the "collapse" of all or part of our book market. Through these awards, we cheer on those who feel able and compelled to attain results which continue to be remarkable even when compared with examples of the best produced anywhere.

The following categories for judging were revised by the Society's Design Awards Committee most recently in 1989:

- General Trade Books: Prose (includes Fiction and Nonfiction)
- General Trade Books: Adult Picture and Photography Books
- General Trade Books: How-To-, Cook-, Craft- and Hobby Books
- General Trade Books: Poetry
- Text and Reference Books
- Limited Editions (numbered and/or signed)
- Juvenile Books other than Texts.

The person submitting is invited to check one of these categories on the entry form accompanying each book but the Society's Committee and the judges reserve the right to assign it to a more appropriate category (as was done in some cases of award winners this year). First, second, and third prizes are available in each category, with ties permitted. A book is judged as a whole on its suitability and harmony (in respect of both the text block and the binding/covering/wrapper) in respect of the choice of types, illustration (if any), layout, and materials used. Their appropriateness is also considered in relation to the book's subject matter, intended audience, etc. This year, a few submissions were received with the suggestion that only part of the book (usually the cover) be considered for an award. This practice would contradict the basis of judging specified above but "honourable mention" has always been a

ranking available to the judges to acknowledge exceptionally noteworthy feature(s) in a book (for example an excellent cover) even if as a whole the book does not attain prize-winning standard. Where a cover-designer is named in the following listing, it does not imply that the cover was separately judged or is better than the rest of the book, but only that the person responsible for that part of the design work was separately, or alone, acknowledged within the book or on the submission papers.

### General Trade Books: Prose (includes Fiction and Nonfiction)

**1st Prize:** *Born Naked* [by] Farley Mowat. Toronto: Key Porter Books. ISBN 1-55013-501-5. [Designer: Scott Richardson; Printer: Friesen Printers]

**2nd Prize:** *Wisteria: A Novel* by Victoria Stoett. Stratford: The Mercury Press; distributed by General Publishing. ISBN 1-55128-000-0. [Designer: Gordon Robertson, TASK; Printer: Coach House Printing]

**3rd Prize:** *Maxwell Bates: Biography of an Artist* by Kathleen M. Snow. Calgary: University of Calgary Press. ISBN 1-895176-25-5; 1-895176-45-X. ((one of these is for ltd.ed. with Courtland Benson binding and portfolio of original prints; in slipcase)) [Designer: Cliff Kadatz; Printer: Friesen Printers]

**Hon. Men.:** *The Emily Carr Omnibus*, introduction by Doris Shadbolt. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre. ISBN 1-55054-031-9. [Designer: Barbara Hodgson; Printer: Friesen Printers]

The use of small photographs as chapter-captions is only one of the pleasing touches in the finely crafted Mowat memoirs. Among the almost one hundred books submitted in this one category (the largest), many of them competent but ordinary, this one stood out because of its careful blending of all the design decisions. The Mercury Press had far more modest sales hopes for its *Wisteria* and economized by using a novel kind of "hard" binding of flush-trimmed raw cardboard but this is redeemed with a tasteful dustwrapper. Its type composition and layout are excellently designed for a short novel. The University of Calgary Press issued the Maxwell Bates biography in both a trade and a limited edition, the latter with a portfolio of four original prints and in a special binding and slipcase. The judges decided that the superior quality of those features common to both editions - treatment of chapter heads, margins, placement of illustrations, etc. - stood out more among the other trade products in this large category. The almost nine hundred pages of Emily Carr's seven books, originally published separately, include both very short "chapters" and full-length illustrated books. Reproducing this diversity in one unified (if not quite sleek) volume was quite a challenge. Although top and