

The difficulty of pricing books to sell in a small market after paying for authorship, illustration, editing, etc. means that publishers willing to concern themselves also with fine design and good production values should be singled out for a courage which the philistine might call foolhardiness. Good design is not necessarily lavishly expensive, but it does require the thoughtful application of a trained eye, something which is becoming less and less evident particularly in type composition. The fault lies not merely in the computerization of this process, which is now almost universal, but with the choice of program and the operator. A simple word-processing program is almost incapable of producing aesthetically excellent output yet small firms appear often to resort to a typist's camera-ready copy, perhaps not realizing that a difference ever existed between the typewriter and hand-set type with respect to those qualities which make a page a joy to read. Desktop-publishing software, too, is only as good as the sophistication of the operator. If choice of typeface, word- and line-spacing, line-length, margins, etc. are all left to the program's default settings, the homogenized result is likely to be less than ideal for a particular text, page size, match with illustrations, expected audience, etc. To pay more attention to the eye-catching factors of illustration, colour, layout, and covers is not bad; to neglect the reason a high proportion of all books exist for (the text) is.

The Society's requests for submissions to this competition go to every known Canadian publisher and as many designers and design companies as are known to its Awards Committee to work on books. The judges would always like to see more submissions; some fine Canadian design is surely being missed in these awards.

JUDGES

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This year, Professor Bartl joined the other three judges who have served on this panel for several years. Professor Hagler trusts that his compilation of hours of the comments of his fellow judges constitutes a balanced summary of their views as well as his own.