

FOR THIS THE SOCIETY'S seventeenth annual presentation of design awards the panel of four judges spent Saturday, May 1st examining some 225 books published in Canada during 1998, each entered into competition by its Canadian publisher or designer. This was a decrease in numbers from the previous year's competition, down some 150 entries from the 375 submitted last year. The judges and organizers are at a loss to explain this drop in numbers.

Have increasingly hard times hit the Canadian publishing industry? Or has the Alcuin Society done a poor job in publicizing the competition?

If anyone out there has any suggestions please contact us with your ideas.

Whatever the answer we are not resting on our laurels. Thanks to a generous donation by Dr. Yosef Wosk the Design Committee has been able to make several significant improvements to the competition during 1999. These include:

- strengthening the Design Committee by including more representatives from the Canadian publishing and design communities;
- bringing judges in to the competition from other parts of Canada to develop a better geographic representation;

DESIGN AWARDS FOR CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS OF 1998

- producing a more substantial catalogue of the award winning books;
- producing for the first time an award citation for the book designer as well as for the publisher;
- initiating work on the design of a seal for award winners to display on their books;
- displaying the award winning books more widely including Word on the Street Vancouver and at the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada, BC Chapter trade show.

Some of the improvements the Committee plans for the year 2000 include:

- continuing to develop closer relationships

with the Canadian publishing and design communities both to direct and to publicize the competition;

- continuing to increase the geographic representation of judges from across Canada;
- developing a student award for book design;
- audio or videotaping the actual judging to more fully represent the comments of the judges in forthcoming catalogues.

So in the spirit of the new millennium the Alcuin Society Design Competition Committee aspires to have a bigger and even better national book design competition. Wish us luck!