Preface

THIS YEAR SAW A SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE in the process of adjudicating the entries in the annual Alcuin Book Design competition. In the previous eighteen competitions, judging had been confined to a single day. For the year 2000 both the number of entries and the number of participating publishers increased by twenty-five percent over the previous year. In anticipation of a more exacting process we therefore planned to spend two days.

Thus, on a sunny Friday morning in late April, this year's judges, Karin Oest, George Maddison, Gordon Robertson and George Vaitkunas, were each handed an identical list of 286 entries arranged into nine categories specified by the submitting publishers. Their task for the first day was to select independently the finalists in each category. It was a long, quietly thoughtful day, and in the end 106 finalists had been chosen.

On Saturday, the four judges, assisted by Roberto Dosil, exchanged opinions on the relative merits or deficiencies of the previous day's selections. The ideal of a symphonic blending of all aspects of design and materials proved elusive. Rarely did unanimity of opinion occur among the judges. Ultimately the final selections necessitated compromise.

This year it was the intention of the Alcuin Society, our benefactor Dr. Yosef Wosk and the Design Committee, to increase the visibility of the competition. Through advertising to the industry, creating bilingual entry forms, inviting experienced and recognizable judges from across Canada and a national exhibition schedule for the winning entries, we have taken another in a series of planned steps. We look forward to further challenges in next year's competition.

MARK STANTON
Design Committee Chair