

CHILDREN | LIVRES POUR ENFANTS

**Mixed Beasts.** The illustrations are superb. There is real creative thinking in this book. The text pages do a fine job in keeping up with the illustrations, the paper is well chosen, there is excellent imitation marbling on the endpapers, cases are well made and designed. The typeface itself is ordinary but the designer has handled it well.

**Ten Counting Cat.** The typography in this book is very creative, very playful; the type and the illustrations are wonderfully integrated. The book is printed in only two colours, where almost everything else in this category is printed in four: but with two colours, the designer has managed to do everything that it was necessary to do.

**By a Thread.** What drew us to this book is the wonderfully playful typography, very skillfully done, and the thoroughgoing integration of the text and illustrations. It has a very fine cover, but the endpapers contribute less than they might.

**The Highwayman.** The overall production quality is high, good case, good endpapers, good paper and printing. The book is made to feel like a film: the illustrations remind us more of Raymond Chandler than of Alfred Noyes. They are very well done, and are part of the book, just as they are intended to

be. The choice of type seems uninspired, and it is not set as well as one would wish.

**A Brazilian Alphabet for the Younger Reader.** This book is very well printed on very good paper. It is also a lesson on how to do an historical book for children, using nineteenth century engravings, nice old typeface and old-fashioned spellings.

**Nannycatch Chronicles.** The cover of this book and the jacket did not impress us. The type is not very well set, but the pages are nicely designed, and the pages and the text nicely interwoven. There is a good, and playful, table of contents.

**Picturescape.** This is a story told entirely in pictures. These pictures are full of allusions to Canadian painters: Emily Carr, Tom Thomson, Alex Colville, Lawren Harris, and others. What it does, it does very well.

LIMITED EDITIONS |  
ÉDITIONS À TIRAGE LIMITÉ

**Il Bosco dei tamarindi = The Tamarind Wood.** This is a trilingual book handled with great skill, and produced with a high level of craftsmanship. Trilingual books are notoriously difficult to do, because books consist of two-, not three-page spreads. Here the problem is solved by making the Italian text primary and both the English and

French secondary: one text on one page, two on the other. It is very handsomely produced. The jurors had one typographic complaint, which is that the small caps are not letterspaced, as we would wish them to be.

**Gallipoli.** Some, and perhaps all, of the jurors, would steal this book if we were free to steal any one book from all the submissions. The poems are wonderful to read; the typographic prints that accompany them are exciting additions to the text, but the one thing that troubles us is that the text type seems a little weak in comparison with the graphic elements. The poems, although they are very strong, seem to float a bit insecurely on the page.

**Life, Still & Otherwise.** This is a digital book, but a very fine example of the use of this technology. The typography, quite simply, is superb. The challenge posed by the text is quite simple compared to that posed by *Il Bosco dei tamarindi*, but everything that is done here is done well. The essential problem with digital books is that, of course, the ink adheres to the paper by a kind of glorified static electric charge, and it will sooner or later leave the paper behind. In other words, digital printing is impermanent in comparison with letterpress. But for as long as it lasts, this ink is in exactly the right place.

**Emily : Opposites Attract.** The letterpress work in this book is absolutely superb: magnificent printing, excellent handsetting. All of us, however, were troubled by the lack of integration between the wood engravings and the text. The engravings are tipped into the book, but they often seemed to us to be tipped in the wrong place and to be in danger of flying off on their own. With one or two exceptions, the engravings are very lively pieces of work, interesting in themselves, yet the book itself, strange to say, might be more satisfying if all those images were omitted. Once a decision is made to include illustrations with the text, it is always necessary to find some way of integrating the two.

**10 Steps to a Life Uniform.** In the relatively staid world of letterpress, zany books are always welcome. This is a zany book twice over, because it comes in two editions. The craziness of the text and the irreverence of the typography belong very well together. The presswork is not strong, but the text demands no more.

PICTORIAL | BEAUX LIVRES

**Wild Prairie.** This book has a lovely jacket. Inside, spread after spread is very well balanced. There is an excellent balance between the text and the images, and the book is a model of its kind, except for the printed

case, which is fortunately hidden by the dust jacket. The case resembles a cheap blank book and bears no relation to the book that it contains, or to the jacket by which it is contained. The title spread is also undistinguished. The other spreads, from the copyright page to the final photograph, look very carefully considered, and many of the photographs in this book are in themselves very impressive work.

**Saskatchewan : Uncommon Views.** This book seems to us very sensitive to its subject matter. The sparseness of the page spreads, the small sans serif type, the very considerable white space, allow the images to breathe. The colour has an excellent light-heartedness; so do the title spreads; and all of this suits the subject. So does the overall format and scale of the book. The spreads are refreshingly asymmetrical; the photographs are often very funny, and, at the same time, quite poignant. It is difficult for typography to keep up with images like this. The designer has dealt with the problem by making the type as unobtrusive as possible.

**Arborealis.** This book has a very impressive slipcase. It is an extravagant work, with beautiful photographs beautifully printed. We are disturbed by the positioning of the poems on most of the spreads. The pages are extremely wide, as they must be to

suit the photographs. The poems that accompany the photographs, however, are written in very short lines, and these poems are almost invariably positioned so close to the gutter that even when it is wide open, the book seems to swallow the text. The book would be greatly improved by the simple expedient of repositioning the text block on every spread where a poem and image are combined. While this is an unusual book of unusual dimensions, the problem from which it suffers is one that is actually very common in book design. It appears that the book was designed without any consideration for the fact that it would ultimately be bound. A bound book is a three-dimensional object, quite different from the perfectly flat spreads the designer works on as he sits at a drafting table or a computer screen. It is necessary to envision the book as the bound three-dimensional object that it will become.

**Cape Dorset Sculpture.** The book is handsomely printed, the typography very spare, an allusion, perhaps, to the Arctic landscape. But in this book, as in many exhibition catalogues nowadays, there is a fundamental inconsistency between the illustrations and the typography of the captions and other bits of text. By and large, the works of art reproduced in this book are free of any artistic pretension or arrogance. They emerge from a world that has more to do with television

than it has with the classic rigour of museum culture. The typography, however, remains as cold and formal as one would expect in a catalogue of classical Greek sculpture. What we have in the illustrations is, in effect, a kind of soapstone soap opera: polar bears playing accordions, wolverines posing for journalists, and so on. The typography, however, never cracks a smile.

**Takao Tanabe.** This is a book we all wanted to like. It has one serious flaw, and that is the vertical skew of the text spreads. Over and over again, there is a jarring disjunction between the recto and verso pages. If this bore any relation to the images or the underlying character of Tanabe's painting, it could be welcome, but there is no such relation that we are aware of. The spreads that are dominated by illustrations are in general very successful; the dust jacket is handsome; but the spreads where there is nothing but type always have an arbitrary character. The type itself is well set, the typeface well chosen. The captions are unobtrusive and comfortable to read.

#### POETRY | POÉSIE

**Signs of the Times** is the most graphically ambitious of the books submitted. The illustrations are a very important part of the overall effect. The type is very carefully set. It is

curious that the typographer chose to use eighteenth-century decorative ligatures, "st" and "ct" ligatures, for example, and yet could not be bothered to find a decent set of text figures. While the type and the images seem to us well chosen, they do not always seem to be balanced against one another or integrated with one another. The elements sometimes seem out of scale with the page and with the book.

**Ligatures.** The cover is disappointing. There is, however, some sophisticated and intriguing typographic play inside the book. Whether or not there is any real relationship between this typographic play and the content of the poetry is not quite clear. The illustrations seem to be graphic interruptions more than they are graphic amplifications or additions to the text.

**The Sleep of Four Cities.** This has one of the best covers we saw in this category. The letterspacing of the capitals is well done. The typography, otherwise, is undistinguished. The book was set without ligatures, which it does need. There is, however, adequate spacing between and around the lines, which helps considerably to make a book inviting to read. More attention to typographic detail would have been very welcome.

**Stormy Weather.** A pleasant little book, handsomely diminutive in size. The typographer has gone to the trouble of getting real musical symbols where they were required. The justification, however, is poor. This is a difficulty because this book of poetry is written almost entirely in prose.

#### PROSE FICTION | ROMANS ET NOUVELLES

**Return from Africa.** This book is distinguished by a handsome and understated cover, simple but handsome and careful chapter openings, an excellent text spread, and simple attention to typographic detail. The type is adequately leaded, the ligatures are used where required, the small caps are true small caps and properly spaced. There is nothing extravagant or fancy in this book, and nothing fancy or extravagant is required. There is nothing here that doesn't need to be here, and nothing that needs to be here is missing.

**Disappearing Moon Café.** This is the reissue of a much-loved Canadian novel, and it is a model of its kind. As a rule, paperback reprints of successful novels are cheaper, smaller, and uglier than the first editions. In this case, the type is better, the margins more ample, and the attention to detail is greater in this reprint than it was in the original edition. The type is well-

leaded, well set, well justified; the small caps are real and well spaced, chapter openings are simple but very effective. The cover is pleasant, and the result is just what it should be: a nice book, comfortable to read.

**The Jade Peony**, like *Disappearing Moon Café*, is a reissue of a much-loved Canadian novel. It shares with *Disappearing Moon Café* the generous margins and the generally good typography. We placed it lower in our hierarchy because the chapter openings are less successful than those in *Disappearing Moon Café*. The cover is not unpleasant; at least, it is an improvement over the original first edition. It is, again, a pleasure to see a publisher who will improve a book when reissuing it, instead of making it uglier and cheaper.

**Yesterday, at the Hotel Clarendon**. This could have been a prizewinning book, except for the lack of attention to detail. The margins and the text spreads are needlessly stingy and irrational: the binding is unsatisfactory. It is a square binding, with the spine board too large for the book block, making it difficult to open, and impossible to keep open. The justification is poorer than in the books to which we gave first and second prize. The paper is superior, but the type is not up to the standard set by the paper on which it is printed.

PROSE NON-FICTION |  
ÉTUDES ET ESSAIS

We chose three books for Honourable Mention. The first of these is **ReCalling Early Canada**. It was refreshing to come across this book, because it is okay. However, the title page is disappointing; the illustrations are predominately historical photographs, and therefore one accepts a low and inconsistent level of quality. The designer has done what could be done with such poor illustrative materials. The text spread is good, and legible; the type itself well-set, and well printed on the page.

**The Windshift Line**. This, we think, is the best of the three books we chose for Honourable Mention in this category. Pleasant to read, the paper has a decent colour. The introductory material is quietly competent and understated, has a reasonable title page, and the mixture of serif and sans serif types is handled well. The script type employed for visuals at the beginnings of chapters is not so successful.

**Jean Béliveau**. The cover is a grave disappointment, but the text pages are well set, well designed, the margins ample; all of these things are quite unusual in a sports book. The chapter openings, with hockey pucks carrying the chapter numbers, are quite successful, but the title page is not.

PROSE NON-FICTION ILLUSTRATED |  
ÉTUDES ET ESSAIS ILLUSTRÉS

**The Bedside Book of Birds**. This is a lovely book, handsomely designed, handsomely produced. The typographic design, the choice of type, the positioning of images, the relation of text and image, the handling of colour, the choice of paper: all are exemplary. The designer, however, has chosen a typeface that requires the use of ligatures, and the ligatures are absent. It makes an enormous difference. There are some other indications of typographic carelessness. The justification is poor; the paragraphs are often too loose; the quotations are sometimes handled in an inefficient or careless way; and there are defects, such as that on page 180, where the text block has been knocked 3,5 picas (that is, more than half an inch) out of position. In fact, the only thing on page 180 that is where it belongs is the page number. It is also highly unfortunate that this book is not Smyth-sewn. It is a book that will, no doubt, find itself on many bedside tables and will be frequently consulted by interested readers. It ought to be sewn so that it will stay in one piece, and so that it will behave as books must; that is, so that it will open and lie flat, and then open and close again without falling to pieces.

**Crows : Encounters with the Wise Guys of the Avian World.** This has a very handsome dust jacket. The printed case is not nearly as sophisticated as the jacket. The typography inside the book is generally well done, chapter openings nice but a bit fussy, the spacing of the illustrations good, though many of the images themselves are disappointing. Indeed, what ails this book is that the quality of the images varies so drastically. If you compare the illustrations in this book with those in the inexpensive paperback guide called *Hiking the West Coast of Vancouver Island* (to which we awarded a prize in the reference category) you see what is missing in *Crows*; that is, technical attention to the quality of the illustrations.

**Safety Gear for Small Animals.** This is happily tongue-in-cheek, the type nicely set, the pages excellently designed. The type is printed on paper that suits the type. The pictures are well-integrated with the text, the ligatures are present as they need to be; and it is refreshing to see a bilingual book in which the French and English do not compete with one another, spread after spread, and are not forced to share a single page, nor forced to share a single set of illustrations. The cover is disguised as the cover of a naturalist's pocket book; the paw prints on the endpapers prove that the small animal referred to in the title has survived from the begin-

ning of the book, in English, to the end, in French.

**The Company of Others.** This is a friendly, unpretentious, honest and warm book; simple and dignified, a non-elitist presentation of non-elitist subject matter. The design pays respect to the people who are the subjects of the book. The focus is placed clearly on the illustrations rather than the text, as, no doubt, it ought to be.

REFERENCE |  
OUVRAGES DE RÉFÉRENCE

**Les produits du marché au Québec** This is a very ambitious book and does contain an enormous amount of information. The typography is of uneven quality; the designer neglected to use the ligatures that the typeface requires, and the absence of any paragraph indents renders sequential paragraphs confusing to read. The type is frequently overwhelmed by the illustrations, partly because the type is often printed on coloured backgrounds in a small size, while the illustrations are supercharged in size and intensity.

**Hiking the West Coast of Vancouver Island.** This is a less ambitious book, but it goes a long way in achieving what it set out to do. The type is well set; ligatures are present, as they need

to be; the black and white illustrations are quite superb, considering the paper on which they are printed and the press that must have been used. The technical work – the scanning and photoediting – for this book is the best we have seen, in any of the titles in any category in this competition. One defect in the typesetting is that the justification is poor. What this means is that the designer did not give the software the instructions that it needs to make good type into even paragraphs. The summary pages and tables, however, are very well done and inviting to use.

**L'Appareil.** Here we have a very nice typographic design undermined by the use of grey ink with a small face in a light weight. The result, even on good paper, is that the book is very difficult to read. It is not clear to us what may be the intended relation between the comic book illustrations and the recipes. Much space is devoted to these comics, but the real content of this book is a series of recipes created by illustrious chefs. These comic book elements do come as a kind of relief after a page of essentially unreadable, although handsomely set, type, but it is not at all clear what other contribution they make to the book.