

A BILL FOR BINDING (17th century).

Roger Payne

Harmony of the World, by Haydon : London, 1642. Bound in the very best manner; the book sewed in the very best manner with white silk, very strong, and will open easy; very neat and strong boards; fine drawing paper inside stained to suit the colour of the book. The outsides finished in the Rosie-Crucian taste - very correct measured work. The inside finished in the Druid taste, with Acorns and SS. studded with Stars, Etc., in the most magnificent manner. So neat, strong, and elegant - as this book is bound, the binding is well worth 13s; and the inlaying the frontispiece, cleaning and mending, is worth 2s. To Dr. Mosely's great goodness, I am much indebted, that my gratitude sets the price for binding, inlaying, cleaning, and mending at only 0/10/6d.



THE ALCUIN SOCIETY'S AWARDS
FOR EXCELLENCE IN CANADIAN BOOK DESIGN
FOR THE YEAR 1993 (1992?)

Ronald Hagler

For this, the Society's eleventh annual presentation of design awards, the undersigned judges spent much of April 17, 1993 examining and discussing the visual merits and deficiencies of 244 books submitted by their publishers and/or designers. This is a few more books than were submitted last year. Some books of great design merit published in Canada are not, for one or another reason, submitted to this competition, but we celebrate those listed and described below as evidence of the notable standard of excellence. Many of them would be equally remarkable when compared with examples of the very best produced anywhere. The categories, as most recently revised by the Society's Design Awards Committee in 1989, are: 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 Textbooks.

The person submitting is invited to check one of these categories on the entry form accompanying each book but a book is occasionally assigned to a more appropriate category by either the Society's Committee or the judges. First, second, and third prizes are available in each category, with ties permitted. Honourable mention is awarded to a book exceptionally noteworthy in some feature(s) but not as a whole of prize-winning standard. Judging is based on the suitability and harmony (both in the text block and for the binding/covering/wrapper) of type, illustration (if any), layout, and materials used; all in relation to the book's subject matter, intended audience, etc.

General Trade Books: Prose (includes Fiction and Nonfiction)

1st Prize: *Good Bones* [by] Margaret Atwood. Toronto: Coach House Press. ISBN 0-88910-442-5. [Designer: Stephanie Power (Reactor); Printer: Best Gagne]

2nd Prize: *Chinese Canadians: Voices from a Community* [by] Evelyn Huang with Lawrence Jeffery. Vancouver: Douglas &

McIntyre. ISBN 1-55054-034-3. [Designer: RayMahDesign;
Printer: D.W.Friesen & Sons]

3rd Prize: Costumes and Scripts in the Elizabethan Theatres [by] Jean McIntyre. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press. ISBN 0-88864-226-1. [Designer: Marian Banties (cover: Kerry Watt); Printer: John Deyell Co.]

Hon. Men.: Living the Moment: A Sacred Journey [by] Lance H.K. Secretan; illustrated by Carolyn MacLeod Megill. Alton, Ont.: The Thaler Corp. [Designer: Corporate Lines Design Group; Printer: Tri-Graphics Printing]

Hon. Men.: The Puppeteer: A Novel [by] Robert Kroetsch. Toronto: Random House of Canada. ISBN 0-394-22037-4. [Designer: Linda Gustafson (Counterpunch); Printed in the U.S.A.]

In the case of the two novels and McIntyre's book, the choice of type and the text layout are critical. Being unillustrated, they must catch the reader's eye and carry it along without graphic aids. In addition to superior quality in this respect, Atwood's and McIntyre's books are much enhanced by the consistent and suitable use of colour in their covers, jackets, and endpapers (Atwood is responsible for her own jacket illustration). The book of interviews with Chinese Canadians is unified by a well used symbolic decorative motif. Secretan's book is remarkable for its bold illustration based on first-nations motifs and for its treatment of use of small decorative elements in page numbering, text dividers, etc.; Kroetsch's for its integration of jacket and chapter openings.

General Trade Books: Adult Picture and Photography Books

1st Prize: Our Chiefs and Elders: Words and Photographs of Native Leaders [by] David Neel. Vancouver: UBC Press. ISBN 0-7748-0411-4. [Designer: Robin Ward; Printer: D.W. Friesen & Sons]

2nd Prize: Canada and the Battle of Vimy Ridge: 9 to 12 April, 1917 [by] Brereton Greenhous and Stephen J. Harris. Ottawa: Canada Communication Group - Publishing. ISBN 0-660-14401-8. [Designer: Art Global; Printer: Imprimerie Gagne]

3rd Prize: Sabine's Notebook [by] Nick Bantock. Vancouver: Raincoast Books. ISBN 0-920417-10-8. [Designer: Nick Bantock; Printed in Hong Kong]

Last year, gallery/museum exhibition catalogues won all three prizes in this category; this year, only one such catalogue was even submitted in competition, possibly because the financial pinch on galleries and museums has reduced the necessary subsidies for such publications. Still, the first two prizes go to books which acknowledge subsidies from public sources: these are expensive productions but fortunately the money has been well spent in them. First prize recognizes attention to every single detail of presentation that is evident in the Neel volume: layout of contents, caption markers, running footers and page numbers, paragraph dividers, linkage of text and portraits, and subtle background colouring for some portraits all contribute to the elegance of this book. That two similar books can look very different but be equally suitable for their content is emphasized by a comparison with the second-prize winner in the prose category (placed there because its design emphasizes text over photographs). Federal government publications are not generally noted for their design, but second prize in this category goes to a beautifully produced tribute to the soldiers at Vimy Ridge, whose design recalls the spirit of the age. Third prize goes to a commercial publication. Even its text is illustration, whereas the other two prize winners have traditional textual components; and everything is in full colour. Sabine's and Griffin's postcards and letters (envelopes included) to each other constitute a journey in time and space whose impact would be impossible in a conventional medium.

General Trade Books: How-To-, Cook-, Craft- and Hobby Books

1st Prize: *The Compact Garden* [by] Brian Fawcett. Camden East, Ont.: Camden House Publishing, distributed by Firefly Books, Willowdale, Ont. ISBN 0-921820-43-7. [Designer: Linda J. Menyes; Printer: D.W. Friesen & Sons]

2nd Prize: *Discovering Spiders, Snails and Other Creepy Crawlies* [by] Gilles Brillon; translated by Christina Richards; illustrated by Doris Barrette. Young naturalist [series]; 1. Waterloo, Quebec: Quintin Publishers ISBN 2-920438-53-0. [Designer: Le Groupe Fletidee; Printer: Imprimerie Gagne]

Hon. Men.: *Prints* [by] Judy Ann Sadler; illustrated by Marilyn Mets. Toronto: Kids Can Press. ISBN 1-55074-083-0. [Designer: Nancy Ruth Jackson; Printer: Wing King Tong Co., Hong Kong]

Books in this category tend to be produced either very well or very poorly; it has not been uncommon for some prizes to go unawarded. This year, two thin "nature" books (one for younger people) meet award standards for the suitability of their co-related treatment of text and illustration which is always necessary in this category. The adult gardening book may be more elegant and enlivened by colour, but the children's book, all but its cover in black-and-white, serves its purpose as a visual do-it-yourself teaching guide excellently; yet being inexpensively produced it is a very good buy in relation to slicker but less effective competitors. Sadler's craft book for younger children ("printing" with eraser, sponge, string, potato, etc.) is notable for its whimsical pastel marginal reproductions of the desired effects.

General Trade Books: Poetry

1st Prize: *Seascape with Figures: Poems Selected and New* [by] Gilean Douglas. Victoria: Sono Nis Press. ISBN 1-55039-015-5. [Designer: Bev Leech; Printer: Morriss Printing]

2nd Prize: *La Balance du Vent* [by] Yves Boisvert. Montreal: Editions du Noroit; distribution: Diffusion Prologue inc. ISBN 2-89018-243-6. [Designer: Claude Prud-Homme; Printer: Imprimerie Marquis ltee.]

3rd Prize: *Short Talks* [by] Anne Carson. [London, Ont.]: Brick Books. ISBN 0-919626-58-0. [Designer: Tim Inkster; Printer: The Porcupine's Quill]

Hon. Men.: *La Fin du Jour* [par] Daniel Guenette. Montreal: Editions du Noroit; distribution: Diffusion Prologue inc. ISBN 2-89018-250-9. [Designer: Claude Prud-Homme; Printer: Les Ateliers graphiques Marc Veilleux]

Hon. Men.: *The Queens* [by] Normand Chaurette; translated by Linda Gaboriau. Toronto: Coach House Press. ISBN 0-88910-448-4. [Designer: Gary Stuber (Orbit); Printer: Metrolitho]

Poetry is a category, like the paperback novel, in which a successful design can be fairly closely copied in many different books (never exactly, of course, especially in the case of the covers). Previous years' prize winners have seen Brick, Coach House, Noroit, and Sono Nis publications close in general appearance to those honoured this year. Repetition does not, however, detract from the high quality of these basic designs. Considering the low

profit margin (excluding grants, in fact a high loss margin) involved in the publishing of poetry, it is commendable that these publishers continue to add expensive features such as a good quality of paper and original commissioned art work. Features such as these invite the poems to be treated with more respect than xerographed output from a word processor (itself a cut above the stencil-printed typescript once prevalent as a regional poet's first appearance). Poetry appears particularly to invite variation: this year, each of the five books honoured is printed on paper of slightly different colour, only one being pure white; and all five are of different page proportions. The two Noroit books have unillustrated covers on notably textured papers (one includes a charming embossed motif) while the other three rely on coloured cover (or jacket) illustrations for some of their effect.

Text and Reference Books

1st Prize: *The Elements of Typographic Style*, by Robert Bringhurst. Vancouver, Point Roberts: Hartley & Marks. ISBN 0-88179-110-5 (hardcover); 0-88179-033-8 (paperback). [Designer: Robert Bringhurst; Printer: Data Reproductions Corp., U.S.A.]

2nd Prize: *Business Communication: Strategies and Skills* [by] Richard Huseman [et al.]. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada. ISBN 0-03-922855-X. [Designer: Dennis Boyes (Q.E.D. Design Associates); Printer: John Deyell Co.]

3rd Prize: *Trees of Vancouver*, by Gerald B. Straley. Vancouver: UBC Press. ISBN 0-7748-0406-8. [Designer: George Vaitkunas; Printer: D.W. Friesen & Sons]

Hon. Men.: *Strategy: Writing at Work* [by] Peter Saunders. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada. ISBN 0-7747-3061-7. [Designer: Dennis Boyes (Q.E.D. Design Associates); Printer: John Deyell Co.]

Last year's first prize in the trade prose category went to a translation of a classic monograph on typography by Jan Tschichold. This year, the same team is responsible for designing an original text on the same subject based on Tschichold's visual inspiration but with considerable added attention to the presentation of extensive and some times complex examples, marginal glosses and marginal running heads. Discreet touches of red in the printing of the first signature and the jacket are highlighted by the

red endpapers and a red cloth pagemaker. Second prize and a mention go to books very similar in content and from the same publisher/designer/printer (but before a publisher merger, one originated with a different firm). Both present prose exposition and sample letters, reports, etc. in a coherent whole using contrasting type and spatial relationships on the page. One, however, is markedly superior to the other. Third prize goes to an identification guide of a type now common in Canadian publishing but uncommon in its clarity of presentation. The choice of a black background for the section of small colour illustrations is sombre but effective.

Limited Editions

Hon. Men.: *A Force de Silence* [par] Michel Cote. Montreal: distributed by Editions du Noroit. [Designer: Jacques Fournier; Printer: Gilles Bedard] Possibly again because of the economic climate, only one limited edition was submitted in competition this year. While in typography and presswork it is more the work of an amateur than of a full-time craftsman, its paper, the imaginative cover treatment, and the unusual choice of embedded matter for "blind" design on pages facing the poems all make it worthy of honourable mention.

Juvenile Books

1st Prize: *Hickory, Dickory, Dock* [by] Robin Muller; illustrated by Suzanne Duranceau. Richmond Hill, Ont.: North Winds Press (division of Scholastic Canada Ltd.). ISBN 0-590-73616-7. [Designer: Yuksel Hassan; Printer: South China Printing Co., Hong Kong]

2nd Prize: *Gilgamesh the King*, retold and illustrated by Ludmila Zeman. Montreal: Tundra Books. ISBN 0-88776-283-2. [Designer: Dan O'Leary; Printer: South China Printing Co., Hong Kong]

2nd Prize (tie): *Mademoiselle Moon*, written and illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay. Toronto: Stoddard. ISBN 0-7737-2653-5. [Designer: Marie-Louise Gay; Printer: Book Art Inc., Hong Kong]

3rd Prize: *The Magic Flute*, text by Linda Rogers based on the opera by Mozart; illustrated by Catherine Marcogliese. Erin, Ont.: The Porcupine's Quill, distributed by University of Toronto Press.

ISBN 0-88984-129-2. [Designer: Tim Inkster; Printer: The Porcupine's Quill]

As in previous years, this category is dominated by books printed abroad where multicolour work on large pages can be produced less expensively, if no longer necessarily better, than in this country. The clock motif in the first-prize winner is delightfully carried through both illustrative and decorative components and the tilting of the illustration on some of the pages gives a sense of movement; the parodies on Dali and Magritte may be missed by the child but the observant parent will get a charge out of them. The two second-prize winners share a common sense of appropriate colour: one to the hot near-eastern desert and the other to a Canadian winter. For the baroque story of the Magic Flute, its illustrator has updated the style of mediaeval illumination and historiated initial letters; the designer has carried it out consistently except for the disappointing cover/spine.

Concluding Comments

The second decade of Alcuin Design Awards begins with further honours for two designers and presses that have dominated the first decade. Tim Inkster and his Porcupine's Quill Press in Erin, Ontario are unique in having appeared on every awards list since the beginning. Victoria's Bev Leech and the firm of Morriss Printing with which he is associated have also appeared more often than not. The only two names to appear almost as frequently are Gordon Robertson and the children's-book designer Michael Solomon, who are perhaps only temporarily absent this year (we hope they have not retired!). We welcome the reappearance of the children's illustrator Marie-Louise Gay and Vancouver's typographer/poet Robert Bringhurst after an absence of a number of years from the awards lists (the latter also served as a judge a decade ago). Indicative of the health of Canadian design is the fact that each year brings new names. The designers among them are now often freelancers rather than staff members of publishing houses or printing firms. More and more are identified by the design company they either own or work for (these corporate names appear above in the "designer" slot in parentheses following the name of the person cited as individually responsible). The proportion of Canadian printers continues to increase: this year, almost all winners except in the juvenile category were printed in Canada. Once again, D.W.

Friesen and Sons of Altona, Manitoba stand out among high-production commercial printers meeting quality and cost-efficiency standards over a wide variety of stylistic designs. Hard economic times and the effects of increased taxation and reduced grants are making themselves felt: as noted above, there have been fewer submissions in some categories. Yet with some ingenuity and with their priorities in the right place, publishers continue to ensure that the state-of-the-art in Canadian book design remains praiseworthy and highly competitive within the book world at large.

Judges

The judges for this year's Alcuin Society Design Competition were: *Roberto Dosil* (Praxis Design, Vancouver) *Ronald Hagler* (Professor, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, The University of British Columbia) *Dennis Nagy* (Studio Allsorts, Vancouver).

PRIVATE PRESS NEWS

Bridge Under the Water, by Maria Krisztinkovich, translated from the Hungarian by Kenneth and Zita McRobbie; illustrated by Susanne Lansonius; published by the author, with the help of Glen Hyatt, The Typeworks, The Alcuin Society, and Benwell Atkins.

This book, in the form of a novel/memoir, is a compelling testimony not only to the power of love but also to the courage which enabled her to survive the twin tyrannies of Nazis and Communists. The latter aspect gives the book historical significance.

A long-time member of The Alcuin Society, Maria Krisztinkovich has generously made 20 copies of her book available to members of the Society at a special price of \$ 25, with proceeds to Society funds. Orders should be sent to The Alcuin Society.

THE ALCUIN SOCIETY

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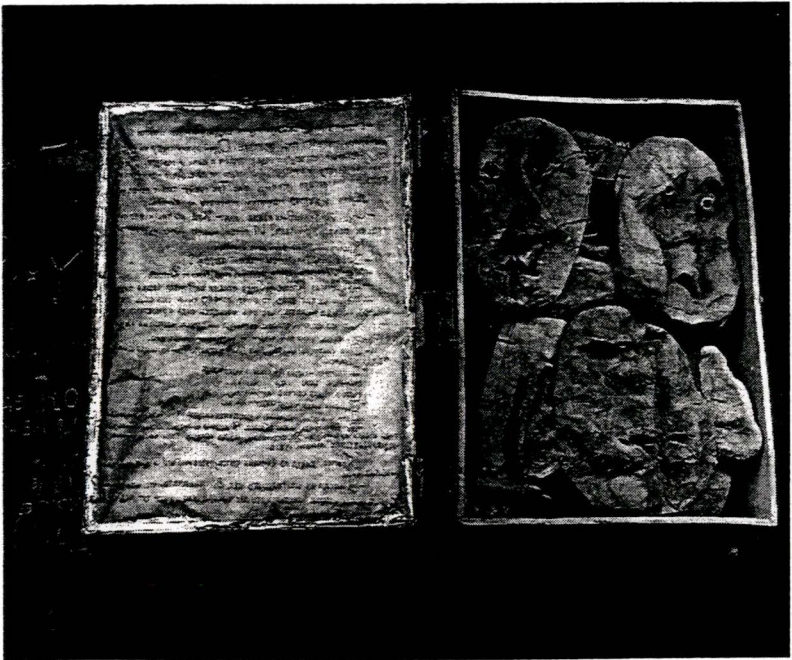
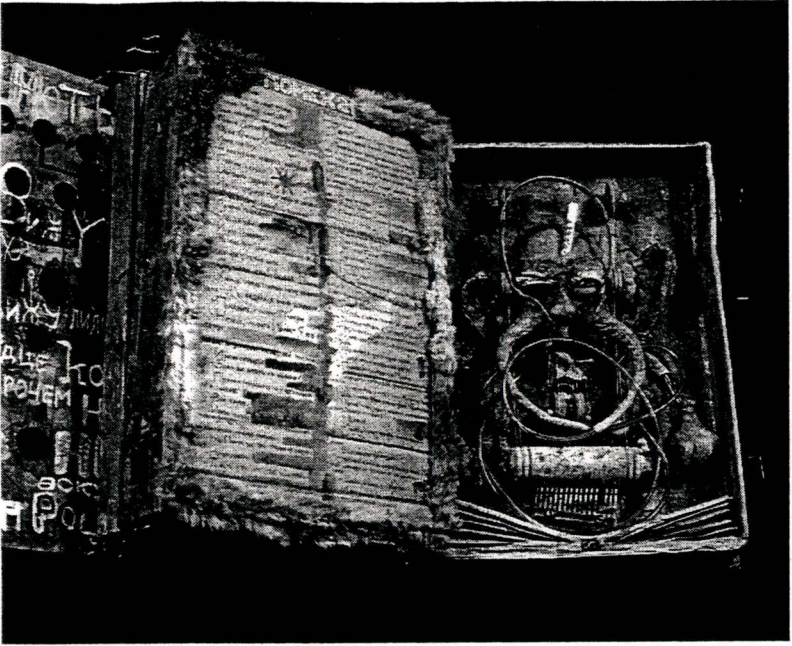
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The editor welcomes submissions of articles of interest to bibliophiles, which should be sent to the Society.

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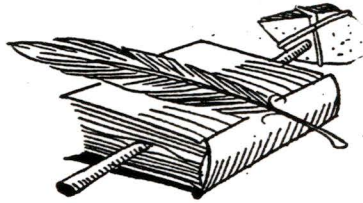
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THE ALCUIN SOCIETY, VANCOUVER

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

bottom margins are skimpy, the space is generally well used and the type face and captions are inviting.

General Trade Books: Adult Picture and Photography Books

1st Prize: *Robert Davidson: Eagle of the Dawn*, edited by Ian M. Thom. Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery in association with Douglas & McIntyre. ISBN 1-55054-075-0. [Designer: Barbara Hodgson; Printer: Hemlock Printers]

2nd Prize: [no award this year]

3rd Prize: *Eadweard Muybridge et le panorama photographique de San Francisco, 1850-1880* [par] David Harris en collaboration avec Eric Sandweiss. Montreal: Centre canadien d'architecture/Canadian Centre for Architecture. ISBN 0-920785-41-7 (hardcover) 0-920785-43-3 (paperback). [Designer: Glenn Goluska; Printer: Steinhour Press]. Also published in English.

Hon. Men.: *If You're Not from the Prairie ...*; David Bouchard, story; Henry Ripplinger, images. Vancouver: Raincoast Books [and] Summer Wild Productions. ISBN 0-9696097-4-4. [Designer: Ken Budd; Printer: Friesen Printers]

There were notably few exhibition catalogues in last year's competition, probably because galleries were shying away from the financial risk of producing high quality ones. It is good to see two excellent examples among this year's award winners. First prize goes to one co-produced by a gallery and a commercial publisher, which gives it a potentially wider market and may represent a trend for the future. Its generous layout leaves a wide margin for captions and quotations; the three-dimensional nature of many of the objects is suggested by the carefully toned backgrounds in the illustrations. Colour is used as necessary rather than routinely: an economy which comes out as a "plus" rather than an indication of cheapness. The catalogue of the Muybridge exhibition recreates the look and feel of the nineteenth-century photograph, often because a mounting is also reproduced; the final foldout juxtaposes the thirteen photographs of the great panorama stunningly. Finally, Raincoast and Summer/Wild must be complimented on their pleasing juxtaposition of prairie poems and paintings for non-prairie people.

General Trade Books: How-To-, Cook-, Craft- and Hobby Books

Hon. Men.: *The Canadian Traveller's Diary* [Wendy Bond, editor]. Vancouver: Raincoast Books. ISBN 1-895714-23-0. [Designer: Dean Allen; Printer: Kromar Printing]

Fewer than a dozen books were submitted in this category, one which in the past has seen more than its share of disappointing entries. The only one to attract the judges' attention at all is this almost-blank book consisting mostly of lined pages for a traveller's day-by-day "diary" and notes of restaurants, hotels, museums, etc. visited. The minimal text, a travel checklist and reference information, is effectively presented. The cover is attractive and its plastic wrapper useful in the rain.

General Trade Books: Poetry

1st Prize: *Lo Specchio di Peltro; The Pewter Mirror; Le Miroir d'Etain; poesie/poems/ poemes* [di] Carlo Toselli. Victoria: Sono Nis Press. ISBN 1-55039-039-2. [Designer: Bev Leech; Printer: Morriss Printing]

2nd Prize: *Dwell* [by] Jeff Derksen. Vancouver: Talonbooks. ISBN 0-88922-328-9. [Designer: Kelly Wood; Printer: Hignell Printing]

3rd Prize: *Truth, a Book of Fictions* [by] bp nichol, edited by Irene Niechoda. Stratford: The Mercury Press; distributed by General Publishing. ISBN 0-920544-98-3. [Designer: Gordon Robertson, TASK; Printer: Metropole Litho]

Hon. Men.: *Marigolds in Snow* [by] Jocelyne Villeneuve. Waterloo, Ont.: Penumbra Press. ISBN 0-921254-55-5. [Designer: Stan Bevington; Printer: Coach House Press]

Hon. Men.: *Storm Dancer; Poems* [by] Wayne Keon. Stratford: The Mercury Press. ISBN 0-920544-97-5. [Designer: Gordon Robertson, TASK; Printer: Metropole Litho]

Most of the approximately fifty books of poetry submitted are slim, ordinary, and produced as inexpensively as the limited market for poetry would suggest. It remains the brave publisher, or the more-than-usually subsidized one, who risks the cost of better cover design, higher-quality paper, etc. The trilingual book of Toselli poems is a casebound book with dustwrapper, generous in its spacing on the page: a careful, superior - and expensive - production. Yet *Dwell*, a more clearly commercial book, shows as much attention to details of cover, type/spacing, and layout; the use of the title with each page number is a pleasing subtle touch. The presentation of the work of the late bp nichol is totally in keeping with his original manner and mannerisms in poetry and print. Two honourable mentions are primarily for their books' externals: the cover/endpaper/icon motif of the marigold immediately recommends the presentation of Jocelyne Villeneuve's poems; *Storm Dancer* has a particularly suitable and attractive cover treatment in the context of a standardized, if quality, text treatment.

Text and Reference Books

- 1st Prize:** *Exploring Vancouver: The Essential Architectural Guide*, text by Harold Kalman, Ron Phillips, and Robin Ward; photographs and book design by Robin Ward; additional photography by Ron Phillips. Vancouver: UBC Press. ISBN 0-7748-0410-6. [Designers: George Vaitkunas and Robin Ward; Printer: Friesen Printers]
- 2nd Prize:** *Financial Accounting: An Introduction to Concepts, Methods, and Uses* [by] Brian G. Gaber [et al.]. Toronto: Dryden, a division of Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada. ISBN 0-03-922934-3. [Designer: Dave Peters; Printer: John Deyell Co.]
- 3rd Prize:** *Les oiseaux aquatiques du Quebec, de l'Ontario et des Maritimes* [par] Marc Surprenant. Guides nature Quintin. Waterloo, Quebec: Editions Michel Quintin. ISBN 2-920438-82-4. [Designer: Le groupe Flexidee; Printer: Imprimerie Trigraphic]
- Hon. Men.:** *Proceed with Care: Final Report of the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies*. Ottawa: Canada Communications Group - Publishing. ISBN 0-660-15359-9 (2 vols.). [Designer: Quorum Graphics; Printer: Canada Communications Group Printing Services]

There is much more "design" explicitly noticeable in books in this category than in general fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. A text/reference book is made up of a diversity of elements and often has to struggle to keep its reader's interest which is not normally to read it consecutively. Lack of care is tempting since these books typically sell themselves to a large or small, but motivated, target audience. The Vancouver architectural guide is not a coffee-table book but an expanded version of a successful handbook/field guide, of somewhat smaller page size than those now popular for several cities. The typical page contains three photographs reproduced about the size of a slide accompanied by a caption/description of about ten lines set in Gill Sans. The detail and clarity of the photographs, (even the angles and lighting from which they were taken), are a credit to both the photographer's and the printer's art, the visual separation of all these elements in an exceedingly full but never crowded book belies the most careful design allowing excellent value for its price. The accounting textbook shares the same qualities in very different subject matter. Table layout, discreet but effective use of colour, and the use of margins in which to print definitions all show attention to the problems of making a textbook of over a thousand pages more useful and less dull and/or intimidating. The guide to eastern Canadian water birds shares many of the excellent features of the books just described. Most of its illustrations are photographic (half- or full-page in colour); the problems of their selection and reproduction were doubtless significant: birds don't stand as still as buildings do!

The text is clearly separated into sections for quick reference using colour and header-icons (shades of Windows and Macs). Through its Canada Communications Group, the federal government is demonstrating awareness of a need to present its important publications in a more attractive way than was typical of the government document of yore. A decade ago, a two-volume Royal Commission report would still have been designed almost to repel. In the way this one highlights statistics, quotations, and recommendations, and treats its captions, bibliographies, etc., it goes a long step toward meeting the quality standards of attractive commercial work.

Limited Editions

1st Prize: *Anatomy* [by] Michael Torosian. Toronto: Lumiere Press. ISBN 0-921542-07-0.
[Designer, printer, and binder: Michael Torosian]

2nd Prize: *The Articulation of Time, a Commonplace Book*, selected by William Rueter.
Toronto: Aliquando Press. [Designer, printer, and binder: William Rueter]

These two very different books are of almost identical size and share a traditional cover treatment of marbled paper (Rueter's, in three different-sized layers), one speckled with silver, the other with gold. Torosian's continues to produce limited editions containing his own creative work; in this, tipped-on duotone reproductions of his photographs are accompanied by some twenty pages of text set and spaced just as its Optima type demands. The colouration of the gelatin-silver frontispiece, an original photograph, is carried through the endpapers, title page, and slipcase. Bill Rueter, longtime designer for the University of Toronto Press, celebrates thirty years of his private Aliquando Press with an anthology of short poetic and prose texts each set in a different but appropriate style, on different paper, using different typefaces and colours: a sampler of the techniques of traditional printing.

Juvenile Books

1st Prize: *Brewster Rooster*, written by Berny Lucas; illustrated by Russ Willms. Toronto: Kids Can Press. ISBN 1-55074-109-8. [Designer: Russ Willms; Printer: Everbest Printing Co., Hong Kong]

2nd Prize: *Last Leaf First Snowflake to Fall* [by] Leo Yerxa. Toronto: A Groundwood Book, Douglas & McIntyre. ISBN 0-88899-183-5. [Designer: Leo Yerxa; Printer: Everbest Printing Co., Hong Kong]

3rd Prize: *Day Songs, Night Songs*, by Robert Priest; pictures by Keith Lee. Toronto: A Groundwood Book, Douglas & McIntyre. ISBN 0-88899-179-7. [Designer: Michael Solomon; Printer: Everbest Printing Co., Hong Kong]

Hon. Men.: *The Ferryboat Ride* [by] Robert Perry; illustrations by Greta Guzek. Gibsons, B.C.: Nightwood Editions ISBN 0-88971-155-0. [Designer: Greta Guzek and Roger Handling; Printer: Friesen Printers]

Hon. Men.: *Rabbit Blue*, written and illustrated by Marie-Louise Gay. Toronto: Stoddart. ISBN 0-7737-2750-7. [Designer: M.-L. Gay; Printer: Book Art Ltd., Hong Kong]

Many features of *Brewster Rooster* call for recognition: the earth colours, the two-page-bleed spreads alternating with more traditional page layout, the choice of an unusual but appropriate typeface always shown clearly even against coloured background (how often does the type of a picture book get lost as if it were not important?). Leo Yerxa's pictorial art is already well known; here, the understated leaf and snowflake motifs and the silhouette graphic elements of the large initial capital letters recommend his sense of design as well. The tall, narrow format and bright colours just suit the Priest/Lee book of short-line poems. Two books called for honourable mention from among the remaining seventy-plus entered in this category. *The Ferryboat Ride* is exemplary for its coherent use of bold colour in both illustration and decoration. Marie-Louise Gay, no stranger to these awards, designed a book full of motion from first to last page.

Concluding Comments

The Alcuin Design Awards continue to be dominated by names now familiar in Canadian book production. Two who were absent last year, Gordon Robertson and the children's-book designer Michael Solomon, happily return to this award list. Victoria's Bev Leech and Morriss Printing appear yet again; the Manitoba printing firm of D.W. Friesen continues to be responsible for more excellent printing than any other on the list, spanning an ever greater variety of styles as Canadian designers exercise their originality. Almost all winners except in the juvenile category are again printed in Canada. In hard economic times and with new taxes and reduced grants, publishers are becoming more skilled at knowing where they can cut some production costs while continuing to ensure that the state-of-the-art in Canadian book design remains praiseworthy.

Judges

The judges for this year's Alcuin Society Design Competition were:

Roberto Dosil (Praxis Design, Vancouver)

Ronald Hagler (Professor, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, The University of British Columbia)

Dennis Nagy (Studio Allsorts, Vancouver).

Professor Hagler compiled the above comments as, he hopes, a reasonable summary of the hours of discussion involved.

TRAVELING BOOKS:

A fellow member of the Society, when visiting the island of Maui in Hawaii, was also struck by the small wayside open-air library (vide Amphora-96) on the quay of Lahaina put there by the Kamani Tree Yacht Club Library. He has sent us a photograph, which catches the charmingly unorganized spirit of the thing.



BOOKS TO AVOID READING - *The Art of Instant Rejection*



Peter Andrews

In the face of the avalanche of publishing that engulfs us, the reader is almost, but not entirely, defenceless. However, traditional methods such as skimming or speed-reading are of little value in today's fast-moving society.

Even a moment spent reading a book you don't want to is a moment lost forever. No. Bad books must be fought at the water's edge; at the very bookstore shelf itself. The reader must learn to master the art of Instant Rejection: the ability to look at nothing more than the dust jacket and pick out those little signs that tell him he doesn't want to read another word.

I discovered the value of Instant Rejection quite by accident when I decided not to buy a book simply because the cover announced that it was "destined to become a classic of our time." Since then, I have not read one single classic of our time and I cannot tell you how much better I feel for it.

As I developed my skills, I found that almost any part of the jacket can be used to form the basis of an I.R. For example, books with a colon in the title (as in *Bulgaria at the Cross-roads: The Illusion and the Dilemma*) can always be safely skipped. Artwork should be checked and the book immediately dropped at the first sign of an oil painting of a Southern mansion - especially if there is a lady in a ball gown standing in front.

Even plugs from other writers can be grist for the mill. I have always tried to steer a middle course between the recommendations of both Earl and Edmund Wilson and have spared myself God knows how much heartache.

I have developed my system until it is now ready for publication as a public service. Keep one copy with you at all times and post another inside the medicine cabinet where the whole family can readily refer to it.

DO NOT READ:

Any book entitled *Notes on*

Any book by someone who has personally known Henry Kissinger, Judy Garland, the Kennedys, the Reagans, Clintons, or Hugh Hefner.

Any book that promises to raise your consciousness or lower your weight.

Any book that reads like a veritable *'Who's Who'* of show business.

Any book by an author who has inherited the mantle of either Damon Runyon or Macaulay.

Any serious book of poetry by a Latin-American author who has won the National Book Award in the past five years. (In the case of Nobel Prize winners, it is best to wait at least seven years.)

Any book by Norman Mailer that purports to be about women.

Any book illustrated by tarot cards or signs of the zodiac.