

## *Editorial: On Awards*

Canadian writers, illustrators, and publishers of books for children can compete for a rich range of awards: for best fiction, best poetry, best informative writing, best illustrated book, best design, best in French, best in translation, best in a particular region, best by a first-time author. Presented with less hoop-la than the Oscars or the Grammys or the Emmys, these awards nevertheless act beneficently. They encourage aspirations and reward achievements. In this issue of *CCL* we have been particularly concerned with the question of awards.

One of our articles is on the London Ontario writer who topped all entries in a new competition, co-sponsored by the Canadian publisher Groundwood and by publishers in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Brazil. Welwyn Wilton Katz's novel *False face* won this first International Children's Fiction Contest. Her prizes included a trip to the International Children's Book Fair in Bologna, Italy. At that great fair, with its six buildings, each the size of a hockey-rink, Canadian publishers display their wares, along with over 1200 other producers of books for children, from 56 countries.

In our lead article, Ronald Jobe argues that participation in such fairs is one avenue toward the improvement of Canadian quality, an avenue as important as the awarding of prizes. Another such avenue, he argues, is participation in coproductions — a point again illustrated by Wendy Katz's prizewinning novel.

In the field of entertainment, the much-publicized awards often seem to go to established stars, offering accolades to people who are already successful. In children's literature, the list of awards is always filled with refreshing surprises: new people pop up with winners, unknown designers emerge with unexpected charmers.

Getting published is itself an award for many ambitious artists. Our annual bibliography for 1983 lists 425 of these "award winners". Over the years, as we watch the steady growth in numbers in these annual bibliographies, we note the remarkable range in Canadian channels. Here are the big internationally famous firms like Macmillan and Oxford, the flourishing general Canadian presses like McClelland & Stewart and Hurtig, the strong specialist children's publishers like Tundra or Annick, and the more fragile basement or back-room operations of the little presses. The total production forms a critical mass, a quantitative base from which quality can emerge by the processes of comparison, competition, and reward.