Technique '76: a photographic slice of life

By Mark James

In his postscript to Technique '76, Editor-in-Chief Paul Hertz says, "I like to think that this book represents a slice out of the past year, trying to capture a little bit of everything. Perhaps you will agree with me when I say that I have succeeded, perhaps you won't."

This year's book succeeds by the simple taste of placing people first. Hertz continues: "I have tried to pay special attention to the people who inhabit, occupy, and just show up around the Institute. Everything else is secondary to the people, and exists only to put them in perspective."

Of course, the book's success is not measured by its promises, but by its photography and layout. In this year's book the promises are well executed.

Technique has always had high technical standards for its photography, so the lack of grainy or out-of-focus photographs is not surprising. The content of the photographs, on the other hand, is much improved over last year's.

People are shown in photographs more often than in past Techniques. More importantly, those "people" photographs are among the best in the book, instead of being second-choice pictures thrown in for balance. Many pictures show interaction between photographer and subject, which brings much more life to the book, and reminds the reader that the photographer is also both human and a student at MIT.

The sports photography is also excellent. The intensive competition of varsity sports, even at the "participation oriented" MIT, is brought out well in fine action photographs.

Special sections: "Over the River," a look at the glories of the Harvard Bridge and living on the Boston side of it; "Snow," a selection of photographs showing both the beautiful and the slushy aspects of a Boston winter; and "Esoteric Architecture," a well-composed view of the sometimes painful diversity of MIT buildings, all demonstrate the capabilities of the Technique photography staff.

Layout throughout the book is done well. The senior photos are combined with "candid" photographs to relieve the boredom of the traditional "mug shot gallery"—an idea that works well except for the somewhat distracting use of white space around the senior portraits.

The book manages to touch on almost all of the major events of the year—the photographs of theatrical events are especially good.

The best feature of the yearbook is its straightforwardness and informality, both in text and photographs. The staff, instead of trying to prove their superiority to the rest of the world, seems intent on providing a book that everyone can identify with—"the yearbook function that has in the past been often neglected by Technique. This is photography used in one of the best ways possible."

CAN YOU DRAW? * *

The Tech has an immediate opening for an artist. Pay is negligible, but the opportunities are great. Interested? Stop by The Tech any Wednesday or Sunday evening.

The simple geography of Something Better™ banking:

If you're heading back to school anywhere in the Cambridge area, there are six BayBank Harvard Trust offices ready to serve you there. The map and addresses shown here will tell you which is closest to your campus.

You'll find the answers to your money questions are really Something Better: Something Better N.O.W. that pays 5% interest (with a $200 minimum balance) and Something Better Checking that's free. Either way you qualify for a BayBank Cash Card that enables you to cash a personal check up to $100 at any of 16 offices—as well as 136 other BayBank locations in Eastern Massachusetts.

Come on by. We'd like to meet you. And help you get Something Better for your money.