Technique '77: good mix of print and photo

By Mark James

A yearbook can take on many tasks to be either a photographic record of events, an outlet for artistic expression through photographs, or a creative mix of words and pictures. Technique '77 combines the best of all of these purposes together into the best yearbook published here in recent years.

The hallmark of Technique in recent years has been a tremendous devotion to photographs of excellent technical quality, often slanted toward the artistic rather than the portrayal of human emotions. This lack of "people pictures" was remedied fairly well by last year's book, and Technique '77 continues this trend.

A new element is introduced this year, however, which adds greatly to the meaning of the book: words. Text has been noticeably absent in many past Technique photos without words can say many things, but there is also much that is better said.

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Another departure from the recent past is the use of color. There isn't very much of it, but what there is makes me think there was more. Several of the color photographs are very striking, although there are two of them that miss their target slightly, probably due to the rush with which the color work was shot.

In black and white, the Technique staff upholds its reputation for quality. There are a few especially strong images, but for the most part the book's strength comes from the consistent high quality of almost all the photographs. This is coupled with a very enthusiastic approach to the book by its photographers and designers.

Their enthusiasm comes out in many ways: an imaginative photo essay on student's rooms from the next to the messy, the effective use of special graphics on the divider pages, and the clean, lively layouts throughout the book.

The book is made up of very diverse elements, but it possesses a unique continuity. The experience of being an MIT student runs through most of these elements, and ties them together.

Technique '77 is both beautiful and readable. It is a difficult task to put out a book that is both elegant and human, but the staff of Technique has done well towards meeting this goal.