



— Star photo by Alice Bixler

"I NEVER tire of photographing those I'm closest to," says 24-year-old artist Barbara Astman, who is constantly on the lookout for ways of displaying her sense of irony

and humor, says Star art critic Gary Michael Dault. Miss Astman explored possibilities of color Xerox machine and the results are spectacular, says Dault.

## Young artist's sense of humor comes through in Xerox prints

By GARY MICHAEL DAULT

Barbara Astman is a 24-year-old artist who uses photography extensively in the making of her art.

Miss Astman studied silversmithing at the Rochester Institute of Technology, came to Canada in 1970, began to study at the Ontario College of Art where she grew interested in photography as a serious medium of expression, was graduated last year from the college (where she now teaches), and has just opened a show of color Xerox photographic prints and photographic constructions at the gallery of Ryerson's Photo Arts Building, 122 Bond St. (third floor). The show runs until the end of November.

Miss Astman says, about the 2½ years in which she has been using photo images in her work, "one thing that has remained constant . . . is my need to photograph people that I love, I never tire of photographing those I'm closest to . . ."

### Anything but sweet

Lest this sound a bit sentimental, let it be quickly pointed out that Miss Astman's photos of those she's closest to are anything but cloying or sweet. On the contrary, she is constantly on the lookout for and constantly finding ways of displaying her considerable sense of irony and her delightful sense of humor that are tough, responsive, inventive, and beautiful to look at.

One of Miss Astman's recent investigations into the problem of how to make the pictures of her friends and loved ones both handsome (pretty sometimes) and, at the same time, un sentimentally distanced and objectified, was to explore the possibilities of the color Xerox machine.

This was no easy matter. Color Xeroxers are, to many of us, a part of our popular technological mythology. We know that they exist and that they will soon be among us. But up until now nobody in Canada has one or has used one.

In order that Miss Astman might use one it was necessary that she return briefly to Rochester, to Xerox Square, where she obviously exerted upon Xerox a winning combination of charm and administrative efficiency that got the job done.

The results are spectacular.

Adjustable in its color mixing, the way a color TV is,

### Art

the Xerox has transformed the artist's already hand-tinted or otherwise previously colored and collaged photos into color prints that are the closest thing yet to what print-outs from a color TV screen might look like. To this technological capability Miss Astman has added a provocative and delicate sensibility. Don't miss it, as they say.