

Copier art

Artists use latest technology

By PATRICK PETERSON
Staff Writer

Artists often express the alienation of our high tech society. Now they have forged new uses for the latest technology.

A Virginia Beach business has given four artists a chance to use the newest copy machine technology to produce art. Copy Data Group loaned the artists a full-color copier to use in their studios during December and January.

The result, "Four Sharp Artists," will be on display through April in the Sol B. Frank Photography Gallery at the Chrysler Museum.

With a Sharp full-color copier, Sharon Garrison, Ronn Ives, Martin Johnson and Fay Zetlin produced distinctive and original artwork. Yet each took a different direction.

In prepared statements, they commented about their work with the copier.

"The arbitrary colors, which resulted from reflections and from all shiny surfaces, were one of the most pleasing effects of the machine," said Ms. Garrison, a Norfolk artist with a studio in the d'Art Center.

"These machines suddenly create an affordable means that allows anyone to spread their message with no advisers, editors or censors 'impeding' their efforts. ... The reality that the copier machines are the 'poor man's printing press' makes them a powerful social tool," said Ronn Ives, founder and editor of *Thermos International Artists' Magazine*.

"Anyone — all can cause beautiful picture(s)," said Martin Johnson, who has a masters of fine arts degree from the University of North Carolina.

"New worlds for artists now in our time," said Fay Zetlin, adjunct artist in residence at Old Dominion University.

These artists have created new uses for the machine, expanding the boundaries of what was considered possible for a copying machine.

The \$11,000 copier uses a computer to record images and print them on regular paper. There are no chemicals to change, only a color ribbon, said Steve Swiney, Copy Data sales representative. It will reduce copies to 50 percent and enlarge to 400 percent, printing on a standard-sized sheet of paper.

"Most reproductions look so much like the image, we hate to call it a copier," he added.

Using the machine, Ms. Garrison dealt with the theme of prized possessions. "For each, I photographed a friend and asked them to lend me six to 10 of their favorite documentary pieces; it was my intention to reveal more about my subjects than a portrait could alone."

Ms. Zetlin said, "I was working on a series in which I fused the most ancient art of mankind with pictures of the galaxies that I got from NASA's voyager. I wanted to have the oldest and newest all in one."

"There's a lot you can do to

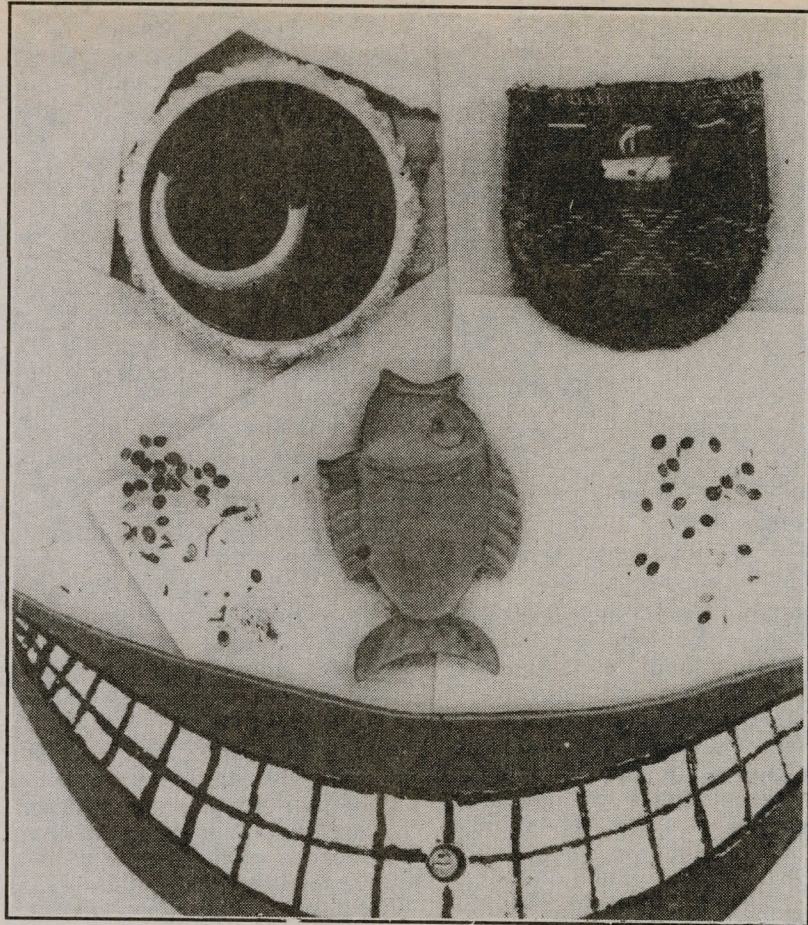
change the image." For one creation, she held a photograph of a galaxy on the copy machine. The machine made an image that looked like someone was pulling apart the heavens.

"They are addicting," she said, laughing. "Like a one-armed bandit."

The Sharp full-color copy machine has been on the market for three months. Businesses have expressed a good deal of interest in it. Swiney is well-versed in the ways advertising agencies, architectural firms and companies who rely on color printing may put the machine to use. But the developments of the artists caught him by surprise.

"We didn't really have any idea what they would come up with."

"Four Sharp Artists" will run through April at the Chrysler Museum, Olney Road and Mowbray Arch. Hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1-5 p.m. Sunday. Admission and parking are free. Call 622-1211.

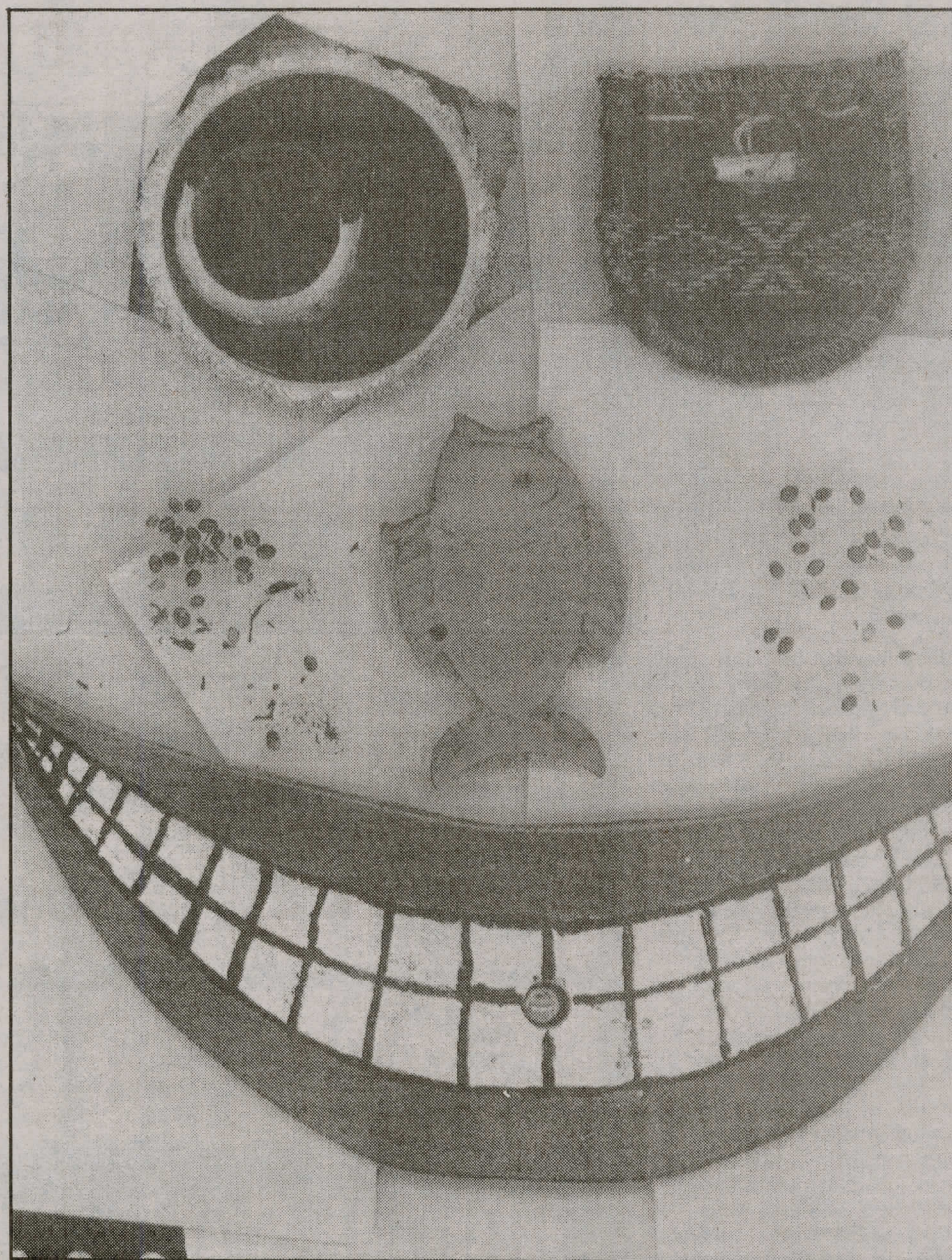


This untitled work was done on a Sharp copier by Martin Johnson.



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Weekend Happenings



Untitled work by Martin Johnson in the "Four Sharp Artists" exhibit at the Chrysler Museum, Olney Road and Mowbray Arch, Norfolk. Through May 3.

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