

SL-and-N construction blog

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Bill_Gill
Senior Member

Join Date: Dec 2014
Posts: 4253

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06-08-2024, 09:03 AM #1291

Dave, Like Mike wondered, the printed image taped to back backdrop looks out of scale to me too, despite actually being HO sized. The storefronts and row houses all look proportional to each other and look right with the distant background houses, but the image in between seems like a giant even compared to the fancy cast iron facade on the far left.

The door on the ground floor of the image is same height as the building flats in front and the height of the windows themselves are ok. So just scaling the whole image down probably wouldn't be the best solution. Is it possible to fiddle with the image by removing some courses of bricks between the storeys and below the cornice, then *perhaps* scale the whole image *slightly* smaller since it's farther away so the door could look shorter from that perspective? Could you try a resized test in B&W?

The faded look of the image also makes it jump out between the backdrop and flats. Maybe a little additional saturation and/or contrast would take care of that.

Last edited by **Bill_Gill**; 06-08-2024, 09:09 AM.

1 comment

deemery commented 06-08-2024, 10:28 AM #1291.1

I scanned and adjusted contrast, and got a better result, even though I lost some resolution in the process. (Not quite sure where that happened, I think it's with the printer, though.) It's legal (and I think also morally defensible) to cut up, scan, and reprint the backdrop components for my own use.

BUT one thing I noticed is that the Merchants Row II structure is actually -undersized- by 5-10% When I put other buildings up to that, the lack of height between the floors was noticeable.


deemery
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007
Posts: 11493

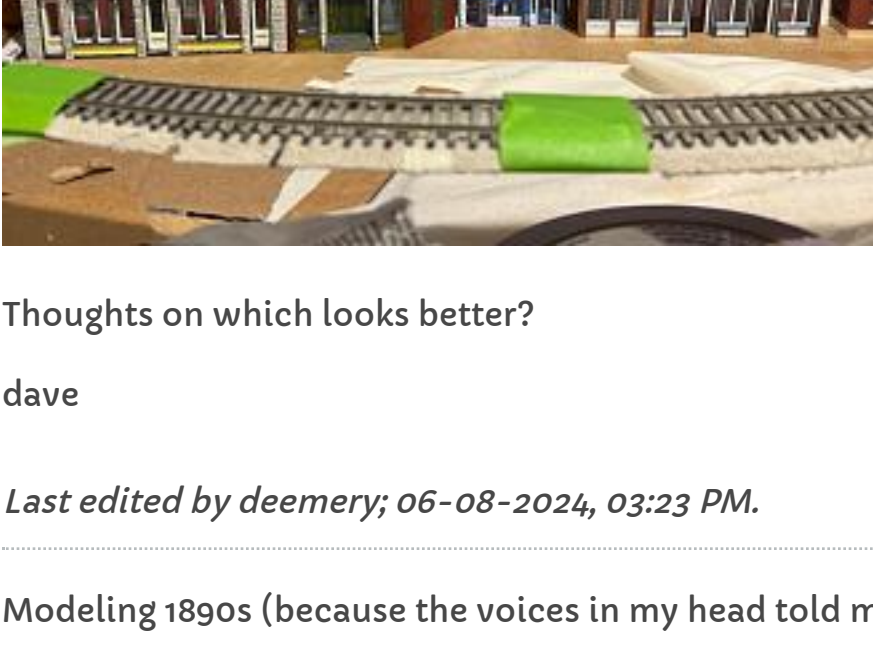
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06-08-2024, 02:52 PM #1292

I scanned, color-adjusted and printed the backdrop building in the middle. First at 90%



And then at 95% (Note where the overhanging bay hits the backdrop)



Thoughts on which looks better?

dave

Last edited by **deemery**; 06-08-2024, 03:23 PM.

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

Rick
Administrator

Join Date: Apr 2002
Posts: 29972

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06-08-2024, 04:48 PM #1293

Dave, I like the first one better. Seeing more of the church roof is why I think that.

Follow along as my dog and I travel the country in our van. FaceBook link: <https://www.facebook.com/A-Dog-A-Van-and-A-View-108345371976229> YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@RickS727>

mark_dalrymple
Senior Member

Join Date: Jan 2008
Posts: 2173

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06-08-2024, 06:07 PM #1294

Looking good, Dave.

The first for me. I like the symmetry of the canopy in the centre going right across and the asymmetry of the red brick building in the background not meeting its neighbour in the same place as the foreground structures. Also the church roof.

Cheers, Mark.

Pruitt
Senior Member

Join Date: May 2007
Posts: 739

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06-08-2024, 08:20 PM #1295

Dave,

You may have said somewhere already and I didn't see it, but where's the backdrop from? Kinda reminds me of the view of Conshohocken, PA from I-76 (the Schuylkill - "Sure-kill" - Expressway).

3 comments

deemery commented 06-09-2024, 08:31 AM #1295.1

I think it's Western PA. The original printer had "Duquesne" in its name, if I remember right.

George_D commented 06-09-2024, 10:36 AM #1295.2

It sure looks like western PA to me.

Orionvp17 commented 06-11-2024, 11:10 AM #1295.3

Mine says "704-11 Small Town." Original is from Realistic Backgrounds, © 1996, Duquesne Quick Copy Inc., 704 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15219. It's printed on 15pt CIS Board. Yinz kin make whatcher will from dis....

Orionvp17
Senior Member

Join Date: Feb 2007
Posts: 8839

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06-08-2024, 09:09 PM #1296

That's not the church roof... it's an industrial building on this side of the road/river. That said, they both work well, so it will be a toss-up. One question is whether you like the sign on the center building in the "gap" at full length or partially cut-off. But either way, you have a winner there!

Pete in Michigan

Michael_Hohn
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2012
Posts: 1238

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06-09-2024, 08:35 AM #1297

Dave,

The reduction to 90% looks better. I agree that the one building appears to be undersized for HO. That doesn't help.

To my eye, your structures look nice against the backdrop and the photo flats don't add much to your scene. If you were standing at track level you wouldn't even see them except in the gap, which I'd consider eliminating by rearranging the buildings. Streets leading into a backdrop are always a challenge.

Mike

I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now *Bob Dylan*

3 comments

deemery commented 06-09-2024, 09:07 AM #1297.1

Of course, if I don't have a street going back into the backdrop, the building with the bay on the corner doesn't fit. I've done long rows of structures, and they do need a break (both visually and in terms of 'prototypical appearance.')

Bill_Gill commented 06-09-2024, 09:20 AM #1297.2

Hmm, I agree again with Mike. The reduced photos images look 'better', but overall they don't really improve the scene. There doesn't appear to be any room for a street to run behind the building flats and in front of the photo building. What if you narrowed the gap a bit and put a brickwall against the photo backdrop. It would represent the rear of a building on the other side of the block, facing a not visible street between it and the photo backdrop. That way it could actually abut the building flats facing the front. You could add a normal sized door that opens into the very short alley, add a couple garbage cans or discarded crates.

I wouldn't worry too much about the Walthers building appearing a bit small. Looking at old photos of city streets, there was/is a lot of differences in heights of doors and windows and spacing between floors.

deemery commented 06-09-2024, 10:38 AM #1297.3

I measured the approximate distance between floors on the Merchants building. It's about 10", which would be reasonable for 8' ceilings. But Victorian buildings, particularly ground floor stores, tended to go for higher ceilings (10-12 or more), both for 'grandeur' and because they don't have A/C. I might see if I can raise that a little bit on an additional foundation.

I'll also post a photo without any backdrops. The problem there (independent of the fact that there's a 3" gap at the bottom of the backdrop to the street level in this scene) is that you go from urban directly to distant buildings in the woods. And that looks kinda funky to me.

TRAINS1941
Senior Member

Join Date: Mar 2005
Posts: 17112

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06-09-2024, 11:12 AM #1298

I agree with Rick. I like the roof of the church showing.

Jerry

"And in the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years." A. Lincoln

deemery
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007
Posts: 11493

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06-09-2024, 11:31 AM #1299

Well, *bleep!* I was going to remove the photo buildings and take a picture with just the models and backdrop, but I discovered the backdrop cement caused the mat board panels to warp and pull off the wall. This is Not A Good Thing. I do have stronger mounting tape, but I'll need to figure out if I can pull some of the warp out of those panels before I try mounting them to the wall. (The reason for gluing the backdrops to the wallboard rather than directly to the wall was to make it feasible to remove the panels without major damage to the wallboard behind the backdrops.)

At this point, this entire project is on hold until I decide what to do next. That's about 8' of run all-told, and replacing the mat board (taped together) will require more than 2 hands.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

Bill_Gill
Senior Member

Join Date: Dec 2014
Posts: 4253

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06-09-2024, 11:34 AM #1300

Yeah, and Victorian buildings often had taller windows to let in more light.

Rick Reimer had a very similar situation on his Ruphe & Tumbelle RR, although he also had more actual depth to play with - but he also had to deal with apparent size of a background wall. Here's a link to what he did: (The project begins near the bottom of this page, down at 10 NOV 2014. It may give you some ideas) <https://forum.mrhmag.com/post/the-ru-...990?trail=3200>

And in the December 2014 MR Gerry Leone had an article where he used mirrors to increase the depth of scenes. In one, it might give you an idea. <https://www.trains.com/vid/modeling/...-train-layout/>

deemery
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007
Posts: 11493

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06-09-2024, 02:52 PM #1301

Well, I went out to the lumber store and bought a 4x8 sheet of styrofoam insulation. That's something that's both flat and waterproof. I laid the mat board face down on the styrofoam, and lightly sprayed it with my mister sprayer. Then I put flat bricks on the misted mat board, to hold it flat. We'll see how that turns out.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

deemery
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007
Posts: 11493

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06-11-2024, 10:42 AM #1302

I took the weights off the mat board yesterday, the warp was reduced. So I misted again and replaced the weights. This morning I checked, and the warp is mostly gone. But I'll let it sit all day without any weights to see if it returns. In the meantime, I'll wait for the new backdrop pieces to show up before deciding what to do next.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

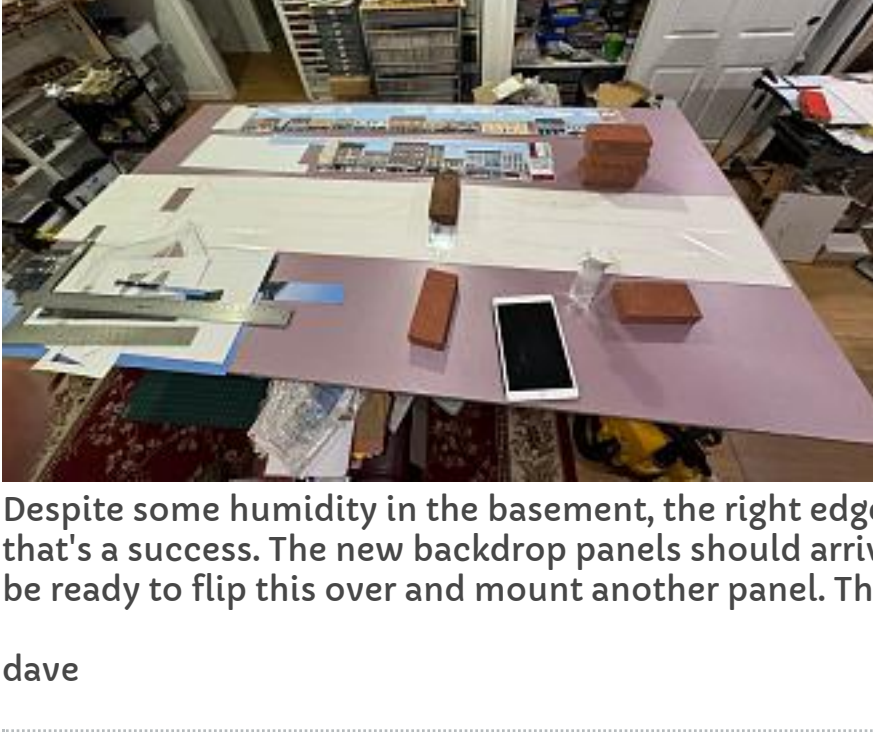
deemery
Senior Member

Join Date: Sep 2007
Posts: 11493

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06-12-2024, 10:50 AM #1303

The backdrop assembly facility:



Despite some humidity in the basement, the right edge of the backdrop is now flat (there's maybe 1/8" bow, easy to take out with stronger mounting tape). So that's a success. The new backdrop panels should arrive Saturday. I need to spray them with Golden Matte Finish, let that dry (overnight), so maybe Sunday I'll be able to flip this over and mount another panel. Then I'll flip it back, mist the back, and add more weights to let that section "cure." At least that's the plan.

dave

Modeling 1890s (because the voices in my head told me to)

railman28
Senior Member

Join Date: Mar 2010
Posts: 6713

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06-12-2024, 03:54 PM #1304

I don't know how you guys deal with that humidity! We went to DC and NYC once in July. Never again. I'm eager to see your results here.

Bob

It's only make-bev again

1 comment

deemery commented 06-12-2024, 04:11 PM #1304.1

I don't deal with it very well at all. We have central air and I have a dehumidifier in the basement. Some days (now that in northern VA) there couldn't pay me enough money (literally) to move south of the Mason-Dixon line.

PRR Modeler
Senior Member

Join Date: May 2022
Posts: 2114

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06-13-2024, 06:59 AM #1305

Probably late to the dance but I like either one. Interesting techniques to flatten the backdrop.

Curt Webb

Freelanced PRR Bellevue Sub

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