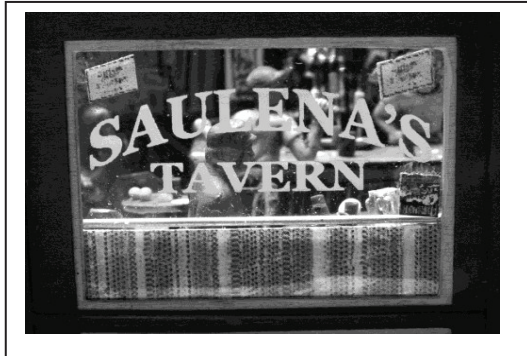


Quick Interiors

Magicians refer to themselves as Illusionists; the audience is made to believe it sees that which is not. The most effective work on a model display is often not really what it seems, but merely a few deft strokes to convey the illusion of more than there is.



After I had built a few detailed interiors, complete with tiny pencils on the desks and tiny rolls of toilet paper in the rest rooms, I found I never removed the roof to look at all this work. Interior lighting showed something was in there, but the detail was all but lost to the eye. The little world inside the structure was so much more satisfying than the blankness of a “Hollywood Flat” model.

It took a while to get away from the literalness of carefully modeled furniture, but I eventually realized that all we were really seeing inside the structure were shapes. Bright colors seemed to enhance the feeling of bright interiors, and better set the objects off from each other. Soon I was rapidly cutting furniture-like shapes from scrap cardstock and coloring them to resemble vague interior objects. And I found that, almost no matter what I did, the viewer’s imagination turned these into a believable environment.



In the larger scales, especially foreground models with large store windows, the illusion would break down. Photographic interiors are not new, but digital photography and desktop color printing makes it simple to add photographic walls and cutouts to these techniques. The computer is also invaluable for churning out sheets of floor and wall textures.

The techniques shows here may not win many points in a contest, but they are an effective way to include the feeling of life to the interior of your model railroad structures.

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