

# Mastering Model Rail roading

*Getting the results you want*

## Plastering Mountain Scenes

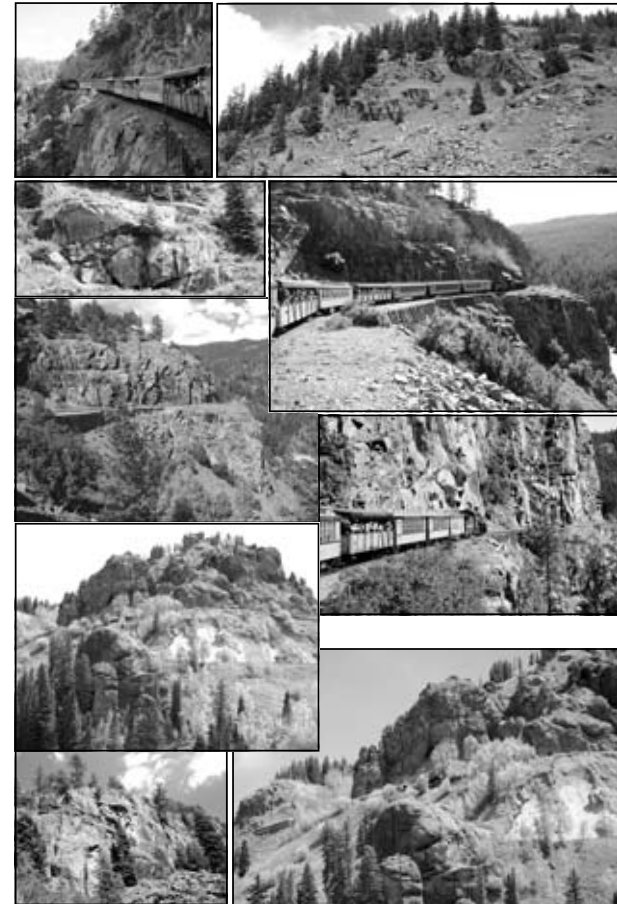
by Randy Meyer, MMR



Taking you from raw benchwork & subroadbed to a finished and realistic appearance.



Scenery - Volume 1



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*Mastering Model Railroading  
Scenery Vol. 1*

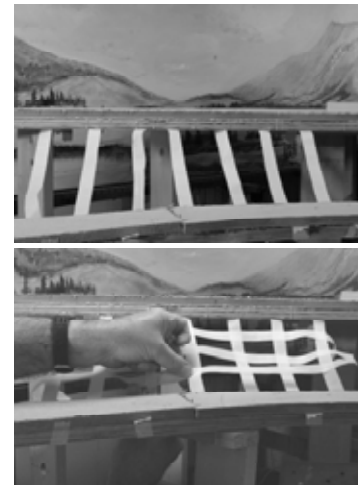
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**Scenery Base Structure**

The scenic base provides two major factors that will help create the scenic effect that you wish to create. The first and most important factor is to rough in the general shape. The scenic base also provides support for the rock castings that will follow. Also, the scenery base will keep plaster from falling through to the floor. The base can be built in many different ways, from wadded up newspaper to poly foam insulation. I will discuss and demonstrate some of these methods and will share my ideals of the pros and cons of each method.



The masking tape and newspaper scenic base has been around a long time. As the name implies that is all that is needed to form the scenery base which is the major advantage for this type of scenery construction. Start by running strips of masking tape from one point on the layout framework or roadbed to another. More tape is then added along side of the first tape strip across the area to be filled in so that they are spaced about two to three inches apart. The sticky side of the tape should be up. Now place other strips of tape at right angles to the first strips, again with  
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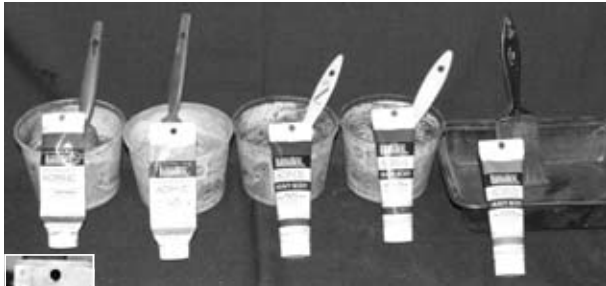
## Coloring Rock Castings

The coloring of the rock castings will really bring the scenery to life. As I heard in a clinic given years ago by Jim Wild and Dwain Esterling, "Nature is not monotone."

Some people suggest that the scenery base and castings be painted an Earth color and then covered with ground foam while it is still wet. Go outside and look around. Is all the dirt you see the same color? The trees? The grass? Of course they aren't.

The coloring of the rock casting and the gypsolite plaster needs to follow the ideal that all things have different colors and shades of the same color.

To accomplish the varied colors I use artist acrylic paints. Acrylic paints have the advantage of mixing and cleaning up with water, being nontoxic, and not having much odor. The brand of acrylics that I use is Liquitex heavy body paints. There are other brands available and I am sure they would be perfectly acceptable, however, I have not tried them. **Jerry's Artarama** at [www.jerrysartarama.com](http://www.jerrysartarama.com) has Liquitex and several other brands of acrylics as do many basic artist supply stores in most major cities (such as **Michael's & Hobby Lobby**) as well as all over the Internet.



This shows basically everything you need to color the rock castings. Left to right are the five colors that I use: Burnt Sienna, Yellow Oxide, Raw Umber, Burnt Umber, and Raw Sienna. Along with the colors are the plastic containers and brushes that I use to mix stains of these colors.

The enlarged photo to the left shows one of the tubes which are all about 4" tall. Some say **High Viscosity** and others **Heavy Body** but either way they are highly concentrated paint that looks like

..... Continued .....

## Ground Cover and Tree Planting

Because this chapter more so than the ones before are showing the blending of colors, more of the photos in it will be in the color section at the rear.

The top photo on C-3 shows how a little ground foam and a few extra touches makes a lot of difference to the scene and it does not take long to add. It took me almost more time to take the photo than it did to add the ground foam & turf.

From the picture you can see that I used different colors of ground foam and two textures plus a tree. As was stated in the coloring chapter "Nature is not monotone." Scenery is also not smooth and all of one texture. Because of these natural rules

I use a variety of materials from commercial ground foam to natural rocks and plants for ground cover on my layout. I also apply these "natural texture clumps" in odd numbers because odd numbers appear more natural.

Some of the natural materials that I use are pictured here.



In the front on the black plastic from left to right is play sand, dirt and sand from the roadside below Windy Point outside of Chama, NM, decomposed granite from just east of Steamboat Springs, CO, and broken plaster pieces that were stained with the five scenery colors that I use. The back row has a bag of Sweetwater's "Medium Deciduous #202 Armatures" and bags of natural rock material from Arizona Rock and Mineral Co. (which can be found at the web site [www.rsscenery.com](http://www.rsscenery.com)). When I travel to an area I model I take along some containers to bring home some samples of the rocks and soil to use on the layout. .... Continued .....

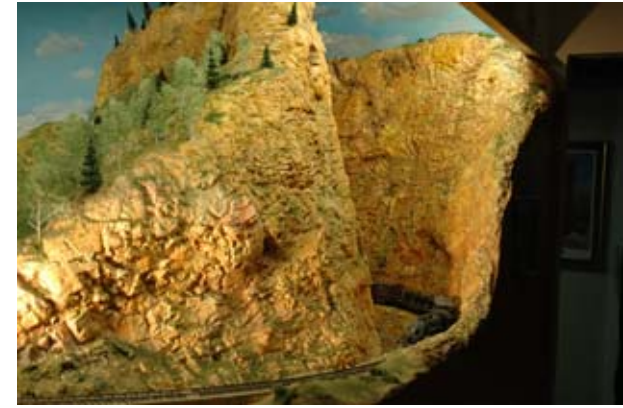


This is how the area looks after all the ground cover has been glued on but before the trees have been planted.

The left half of this photo below shows the area we just finished from above.



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These next 4 images show how a difference in lighting colors, angles, and intensities can make dramatic changes in the way a scene is perceived. All of the rock work was done with the exact methods described in this book.

The two on this page have a lower angle of the light which casts additional shadows to show off the rockwork better.



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