

# Allow for change to achieve goal

ON ONE side of the fan I carefully placed a stack of folded towels. Against the other side, I leaned a storm window. Building a wall with whatever's handy (junk in the basement), Adam and I labored for hours.

"Here, Dad," Adam chirped, as he hauled some suitcases over to me. Our wall of suitcases stretched from the furnace, around the water heater and chimney, over to the laundry tubs. What was all this for? To catch Adam's gerbils.

Every once in a while the little hairballs would break out of their habitat. Much to our surprise, they would always return within an hour or two. But this time they just turned rogue. The two-dance rebels laid claim to the laundry room and my work room.

After chasing "Thumper" for approximately an hour, he finally came out with his paws up and surrendered; we threw him in the slammer. But "Bumper," now there's one tough gerbil "nude." Our makeshift walls were no problem to this spring-loaded rodent. He even landed on my shoe and then bounded away before I could grab him. We still haven't caught him. But Adam and I are flexible. We're trying new plans every day.

SOMETIMES in art, our plans for excellence go awry just like the wall Adam and I built. But flexibility is really just creativity. When things don't go right, an experienced artist usually, with little hesitation, just tries something else.

Often that altered route turns out to be a successful journey that will someday be part of a future calculated procedure. One way to allow for a change is to work on a large piece of paper. Many times students are frustrated as their picture drifts too close to one side, top or bottom.

If you're working on just a layout, then simply tape on another piece of paper. There is something threatening, however, about the edge of a



artifacts  
**David Messing**

piece of paper. We artists tend to distort whatever we are drawing just to keep the whole image on the paper. Always work on large paper so your drawing can grow or so (if you need to) you can add more to the picture later.

ANOTHER WAY to stay flexible is not to limit yourself to the model.

If your rendering varies from the model, ask yourself, "But does it really matter?" If it varies in color, size or detail, it may not be as important as if it varies in structure, proportion or perspective. Of course, certain subjects are much more critical than others. Landscape and still life are usually less restrictive and more open to creative expression.

When rendering animals, you enter a more critical stage as you are restricted by the physical requirements of the animal. At the top of the critical list is rendering people. If your model has eyes that slant downward and you (the artist) slant the eyes upward, then a features likeness has been sacrificed. And eyes—someone's subvocal critique will be, "Something in the eyes is just not right."

So be especially careful in the subject that you pick. One less restrictive way to draw humans is not to try for likeness, just try for human proportions. Then as an occasional likeness happens, you will gain confidence in your ability.

David Messing has been an art teacher in the area for more than 10 years. He is also the owner of, the Art Store & More in Livonia.

# Make shadows work for you

Shadows can be so pronounced that they can be the main subject in your viewer's eye and reward you with many exciting and different shots.

Where can you look for shadows? Begin with people. Shadows cast by people can be light and playful such as a child playing on a sunlit sidewalk or ominous and threatening such as a figure in a forbidding doorway.

People's shadows are anonymous and, when captured on film, can lead a feeling of mystery to your photo. Try using your imagination, too, by shooting some self-portraits using only your shadow.

Nature is another area to look for shadow subjects. Early morning or late afternoon sunlight will cause large, bold shadows in a stand of trees or delicate shadow patterns in a flower bed.

Architectural subjects have shadow possibilities. Sunlight streaming through an opened beamed ceiling will produce an exciting pattern on the floor. Much of the new construction on major office complexes in the area provides opportunities for shadow pictures.

Light whispering through a slatted fence or paneled window will give you dramatic shadow designs to shoot.

Look closely at things such as a sandy beach, a textured log or a bed of rocks for intimate shadow detail. Make sure the time of day is right in order to maximize the shadow detail.

You can even make your own shadows indoors. With a photo flood lamp and props such as a vase, figu-



photography  
**Monte Nagler**

**Shadow pictures are most effective when the shadow is contrasted against a light background. If you underexpose your shot slightly, the shadows will deepen.**

rine or a household utensil, you can photograph your own shadow creations.

Shadow pictures are most effective when the shadow is contrasted against a light background. If you underexpose your shot slightly (about 1/4 stop), the shadows will deepen.

Further, for black and white shooters, if you overdevelop the negatives a little, you'll increase shadow to background contrast, giving greater impact in your picture.

Shadows will add a new dimension to your photography.



Scalloped edge shadows form a dramatic pattern on the stone floor of Belver Castle in Spain. Monte Nagler waited for the sun to move into the exact position to provide the effect he wanted.

# Nagler to introduce 'Southwest' color series

Photographer Monte Nagler will be featured in an exhibition, "Images of the Southwest," June 5-17 in Jacobson's Livonia store. He will introduce the collection of color photographs at a reception 6-9 p.m. Thurs-

day, June 8. Nagler left an established career in the automotive field six years ago to begin a professional career in photography. After studying with Ansel Adams, Nagler said he realized "that

making photographs is a way to experience beauty instead of just looking at it." Nagler writes a photography column for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers and teaches photogra-

phy classes at The Community House in Birmingham, the Farmington Community Center and conducts seminars for Cranbrook P.M. Nagler lives in Farmington Hills.

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