FREE 60 QUICK-FIX ACTIONS
PLUS: ✔ BRUSHES ✔ BACKGROUNDS ✔ TEXTURES ✔ IMAGES ✔ MOCKUP ✔ FONT

VALUED AT **$200**

Photoshop® creative

THE WORLD'S NO.1 FOR PHOTOSHOP & ELEMENTS

IMPROVE CREATIVE PORTRAITS WITH

BLEND MODES

✔ Mix colours ✔ Combine multiple images
✔ Achieve realism ✔ Create stunning art

PEN TOOL MADE EASY

Discover 20 simple ways to master this versatile tool from making basic selections to drawing incredible illustrations

PLUS! All new Elements 15 updates

HAVE FUN WITH FILTERS

Experiment with filters and the new Select and Mask tool

GET CREATIVE WITH LAYERS

Build up compositions using layers, masks, adjustments and much more

PLAY WITH PERSPECTIVE

Practise using transform controls and dodge-and-burn techniques

ip IMAGINE PUBLISHING
DigitalEdition
GreatDigitalMags.com
ISSUE 145

Create fantastic works of art—with just a few clicks!

Pastello

PASTEL • CHALK • CHARCOAL • CONTE • PENCIL • CRAYON
and Da Vinci Photo Sketch Effects

Pro Workflow allows Photographers & Artists to Composite **MEDIA** Styles with **Layers** for Impressive **Results!**

PLUGIN Ps Lr

Receive **15% off purchase** at **jixipix.com** with code **CRTV15**

JixiPix

Creative Tools for Creative Types

Photography | Artistic | Graphic Software

Photoshop creative

Imagine Publishing Ltd
Richmond House 33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth Dorset BH2 6EZ
☏ +44 (0) 1202 586200
Web: www.photoshopcreative.co.uk
www.greatdigitalmags.com

Magazine team

Editor Sarah Bankes
sarah.bankes@imagine-publishing.co.uk
☏ 01202 586252
Designer John Ndojelana
Editor in Chief Amy Hennessey
Senior Staff Writer Mark White
Photographer James Sheppard
Senior Art Editor Will Shum
Publishing Director Aaron Asadi
Head of Design Ross Andrews

Contributors
Julie Bassett, Paul Champion, Jo Cole, Sarah Cousens, Rudi Gundersen, Moe Hezwani, Joshua Kelly, kittozutto, Vivek Mandrekar, Rodrigo Marinelli, Kirk Nelson, Jenni Sanders, Daniel Sinoca, Simon Skellon, Andre Villanueva and Caroline Watson

Advertising
Digital or printed media packs are available on request.

Head of Sales Hang Deretz
☏ **01202 586442**
hang.deretz@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Account Manager Simon Hall
☏ **01202 586415**
simon.hall@imagine-publishing.co.uk

FileSilo.co.uk
Assets and resource files for this magazine can be found on this website.
Register now to unlock thousands of useful files.
Support: filesilohelp@imagine-publishing.co.uk

International
Photoshop Creative is available for licensing. Contact the International department to discuss partnership opportunities.

Head of International Licensing Cathy Blackman
☏ **+44 (0) 1202 586401**
licensing@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Subscriptions
For all subscription enquiries:
pcreative@servicehelpline.co.uk
☏ **UK 0844 848 8415**
☏ **Overseas +44 (0) 1795 592 871**
www.imaginesubs.co.uk

Head of Subscriptions Sharon Todd

Circulation
Circulation Director Darren Pearce
☏ **01202 586200**

Production
Production Director Jane Hawkins
☏ **01202 586200**

Finance
Finance Director Marco Peroni

Founder
Group Managing Director Damian Butt

Printing & Distribution
Printed by Southernprint Ltd, 17-21 Factory Road, Upton Industrial Estate, Poole, Dorset, BH16 5SN

Distributed in the UK, Eire & the Rest of the World by: Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU
☏ **0203 787 9060 www.marketforce.co.uk**

Distributed in Australia by: Gordon & Gotch Australia Pty Ltd, 26 Rodborough Road, Frenchs Forest, NSW 2086, Australia
☏ **+ 61 2 9972 8800 www.gordongotch.com.au**

Disclaimer
The publisher cannot accept responsibility for any unsolicited material lost or damaged in the post. All text and layout is the copyright of Imagine Publishing Ltd. Nothing in this magazine may be reproduced in whole or part without the written permission of the publisher. All copyrights are recognised and used specifically for the purpose of criticism and review. Although the magazine has endeavoured to ensure all information is correct at time of print, prices and availability may change. This magazine is fully independent and not affiliated in any way with the companies mentioned herein. Photoshop is either a registered trademark or trademark of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries and is used with express permission. If you submit material to Imagine Publishing via post, email, social network or any other means, you automatically grant Imagine Publishing an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free license to use the material across its entire portfolio, in print, online and digital, and to deliver the material to existing and future clients, including but not limited to international licensees for reproduction in international, licensed editions of Imagine products. Any material you submit is sent at your risk and, although every care is taken, neither Imagine Publishing nor its employees, agents or subcontractors shall be liable for the loss or damage.

© Imagine Publishing Ltd 2016
ISSN 1747-7816

IMAGINE PUBLISHING

recycle
When you have finished with this magazine please recycle it.

Free step-by-step tutorials online
photoshopcreative.co.uk

Join thousands of like-minded creatives
search for photoshopcreative

Tweet us your Photoshop questions
follow us @pshopcreative

The Pen tool evokes mixed emotions from Photoshop users. Some love it, others loathe it; some shy away from using it, while others couldn't live without it. Whatever your stance, there's no denying it is an extremely versatile tool. And it's really not difficult to master once you've learnt the basics. Turn to page 18 and discover just what the Pen tool is capable of, from making simple selections to illustrating incredible works of art. Also in this issue, we show you how to get more from layers, masks, blend modes, filters and brushes. Whether you want to make creative portraits or eye-catching photomanipulations, there are step-by-step guides to satisfy all your Photoshop needs, including an advanced tutorial on digital painting. Plus, we take a look at the most exciting updates to Elements 15 – turn to p86 and see for yourself. Enjoy the issue!

Sarah Bankes

Sarah Bankes **Editor**
sarah.bankes@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Contents

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk

Subscribe today and you'll SAVE 30%
Turn to page 108 to get this amazing deal.
US page 84

Essentials

06 Reader Survey
Take our three-minute survey and you could enjoy fantastic benefits

08 Trending gallery
Check out some of the most popular artwork that's trending

10 Readers' gallery
Have a look at what your fellow readers have been up to this issue

12 Readers' challenge
A chance for you to win Escape Motions' Rebelle or AKVIS Sketch

14 Inside the studio
We take a look behind the scenes of award-winning Platinum FMD

18 Feature: Pen tool made easy
Master everything from making selections to drawing illustrations

60 Resource project
Learn how to safely create authentic burnt edges

64 Project focus
Exploring Adobe apps with Dan Mumford and Dan Cederholm

104 Reviews
Corel Painter 2017 software and the Wacom Bamboo Spark

110 FileSilo
This issue there are more than 600 free resources worth $200

112 Portfolio interview
We discuss isometric compositions and more with Jack Usephot

114 Reader interview
Anton Forsberg shares his Photoshop secrets

Tutorials

24 Draw vector shapes with the Pen tool
Create an illustration with the Pen, shapes and Custom Shape tool

28 Lift creative portraits with blend modes
Make portraits pop thanks to colour adjustments and blend modes

34 Composite with layers and selections
Use Photoshop's tools to place entire cities in boxes

40 Make fun compositions with masks
Put a bear in a bottle with masks, blend modes and adjustment layers

46 Play with perspective
Create an extraordinary image with layers and transform options

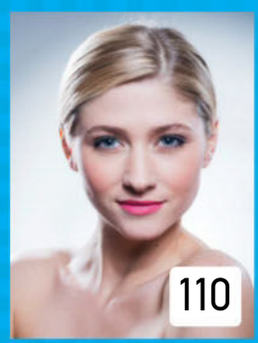
52 Create a glowing text effect
Set text alight with blurs, glows, masks and blend modes

56 Have fun with filters
Create a colourful urban portrait using layers, masks and filters

FileSilo

YOUR FREE PHOTOSHOP RESOURCES ARE HERE!

- ✔ This issue: brushes, stock images, actions, backgrounds, textures and more
- ✔ Plus files to follow the tutorials
- ✔ Free and ready for you to download today!

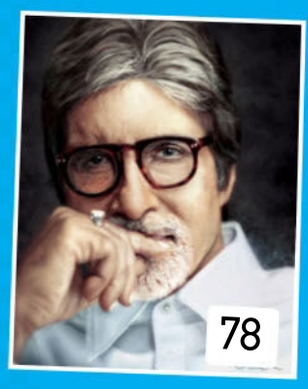


Advanced Photoshop

66 10 pro photo effects
Add impact and creativity to your photo compositions

72 Design a stylish film poster
Make a print-ready alternative movie poster all in Photoshop

78 Paint a realistic portrait
Create a hyper-realistic portrait from scratch using brushes

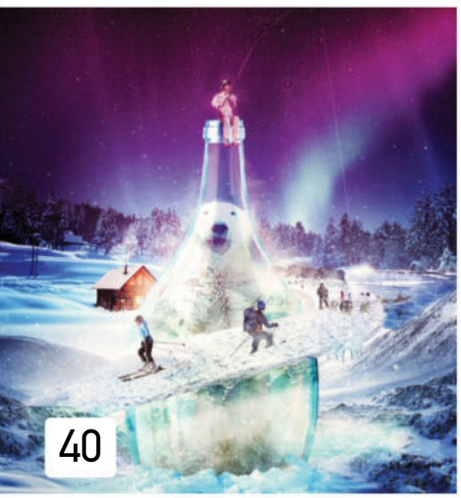


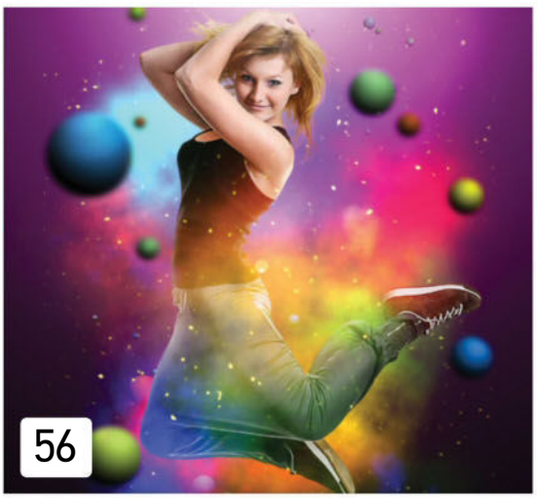
Take a look at our fantastic online shop at
imagineshop.co.uk
for back issues, books and merchandise

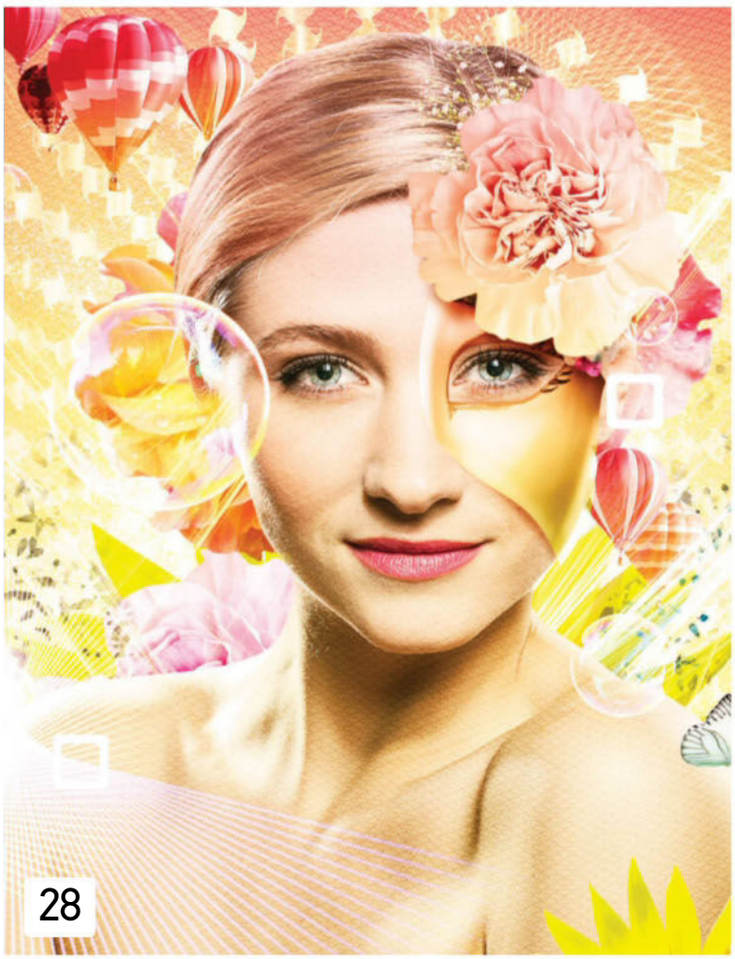
18

THE PEN TOOL MADE EASY

Learn how to select, draw and do so much more with these 20 tricks, from the first point in your path to the last







Elements creative

86 Tool focus: What's new in Elements 15?
Discover the latest features to check out in Elements 15

88 Creative project: Craft a phone wallpaper
Bring life to a lockscreen, with brushes, shapes and blending

92 Photo edit: Master stylish blurring effects
Mimic depth of field by controlling your blurs

94 Surreal art: Create a magical composition
Composite a fantasy flying boot with brushes, masks and more

98 Digital art: Design embroidered text effects
Make text appear to be embroidered onto fabric

102 Q&A: Common problems in Elements
We answer your questions and find solutions to your problems

Have your say!

Join our team today!

Take our three-minute survey and…

- ☑ Get 10% off our books and magazines
- ☑ Get access to an exclusive monthly subscription offer
- ☑ Become eligible for exclusive competitions & free gifts

We love making **Photoshop Creative** and hope you love reading it too. But we want to keep making it better, so we're asking for your help. By answering a few questions, you could be selected to join our latest **Photoshop Creative** panel. We're so excited to hear what you have to say and can't wait to learn more about you.

Sarah Bankes
Editor

Photoshop creative

Take part in our 2016 reader survey and you can enjoy these fantastic benefits

Exclusive discount subscription to the magazine

Incredible savings for new and existing subscribers
Plus Free delivery direct to your door

Exclusive savings on mags and books

Get a 10% discount code to use at our online shop

Competitions

Get the chance to enter exclusive competitions for money-can't-buy prizes

Free gifts

Become eligible for free gifts including digital editions for phones and tablets

Have your say

Gain a place on our reader panel, giving you regular input on the magazine

Step 1 Complete survey → **Step 2** Get involved → **Step 3** Earn rewards

Complete our survey & join the team today

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/survey2016

Four changes you asked for in 2015…

Last year we used your input to make some fantastic improvements, including…

1 More for Elements users

We launched a new Elements-only section that includes basic tool guides as well as challenging tutorials for Elements users.

2 More on 3D

You wanted to understand Photoshop's 3D capabilities, so we regularly include tutorials on how to create 3D art using just Photoshop.

3 Industry insight

We increased the size of the magazine to feature expert guides, advanced tutorials, and interviews with professional artists and studios.

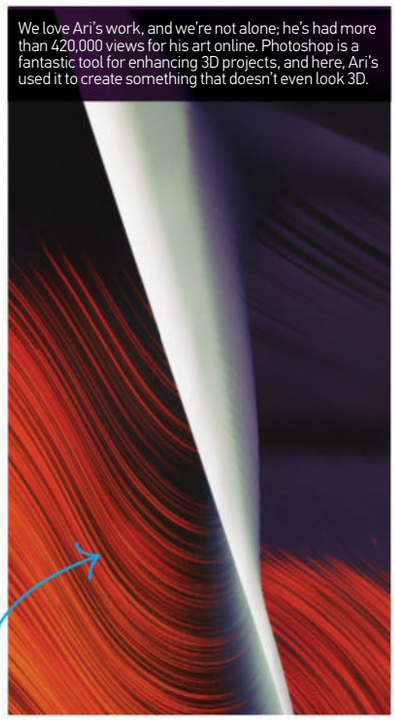
4 Resource projects

Every issue now includes a resource project that shows you how to make your own assets in the real world to take into Photoshop.

TRENDING IMAGES

Check out some of the most popular artwork that's been rocking the internet over the last few weeks, and take inspiration from what's currently trending

There's nothing more inspiring than surfing the internet and seeing what other artists are creating, and we encourage you to do so. Here are some of our favourite pictures that caught our attention recently, from some of the world's most exciting artists and designers.



We love Ari's work, and we're not alone; he's had more than 420,000 views for his art online. Photoshop is a fantastic tool for enhancing 3D projects, and here, Ari's used it to create something that doesn't even look 3D.

Ari Weinkle

ariweinkle.com

The base of this artwork is a 3D render that I created. Photoshop helped me to enhance the brushed look of the image by using a combination of Surface Blur and colour correction.

Lewis has had more than 80,000 views on Behance, and this is one of the most imaginative pieces in his portfolio. The Warp tools are some of Photoshop's most famous features, and here they're used to perfection.

Lewis Moorhead

www.flewdesigns.com

This image was created using various techniques. I found I could use flame photos to morph into a hand. I used Puppet Warp and the Perspective Warp tool to bend it together. The surrounding scene was created using different nebula lighting.

Compositing one image into another is straightforward, but getting it to look as good as this takes a lot of time and attention. Christoffer's incredible blending skills and detailed approach has seen him featured by Behance's Advertising and Graphic Design galleries.

Christoffer Meyer

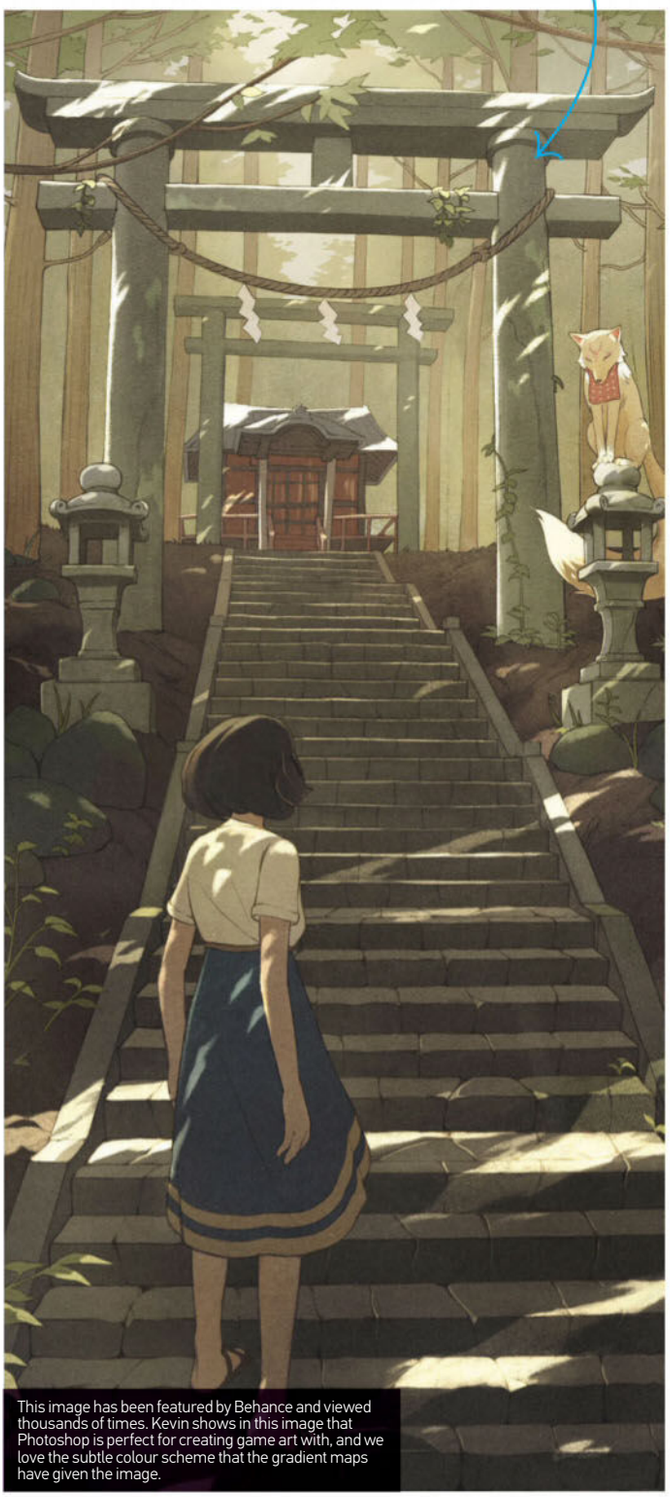
www.kindnorway.com

This is a composite of two images. The drummer was shot separately in a studio, masked out in Photoshop with the Pen tool, and then placed into the environment. Then some final adjustments with Curves were added to make him blend in perfectly.

Kevin Hong

www.kevinhong.com

Miyamori is an illustration created for an upcoming indie game of the same name. It utilises gradient maps, which help to create harmony between monochrome drawing layers and colour layers. Artificial grain is placed on top to give the image a printed, traditional look.



This image has been featured by Behance and viewed thousands of times. Kevin shows in this image that Photoshop is perfect for creating game art with, and we love the subtle colour scheme that the gradient maps have given the image.

Kristina's work has captured the imaginations of DeviantArt users, and we are also fans of her brushwork. We like how this particular image uses very clear strokes, and it's a fine example of how to master lighting and shade in digital art.

Kristina Gehrmann

www.kristinagehrmann.com

Depicted are the Royal Navy ships HMS Erebus and HMS Terror of the doomed Franklin expedition which left England in 1845. I paint all my digital paintings from scratch in Photoshop using a Wacom tablet and Photoshop brushes.

Fadi's surreal photomanipulations have seen him featured by the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. The use of focus and blurring is what pulls the composition together, and we love the sparse use of colour.

Fadi Ajjan

www.behance.net/Fadi-Art

When I use Photoshop, I like to unleash my imagination, and create extraordinary photos that are far from the familiar. With this image, I tried to blend reality with imagination; the biggest challenge was dealing with gravity and taking the fish out of their natural environment.

READERS' IMAGES

Welcome to an inspirational round-up of great Photoshop artwork created by none other than your fellow readers

GET IN TOUCH

Send us your images now for the chance to appear in future galleries

Create your own gallery online
PhotoshopCreative.co.uk

Upload your images to Facebook
Search PhotoshopCreative

Tweet us your creative artwork
@PshopCreative

Alternatively, you can email:
pcr@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Jonathan Maurin

photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Aeon-Lux

Image of the issue

With this piece I was trying to create the origin of a fantasy universe. This was created mainly with brushes, and control of colour was important in creating a cohesive scene.

Alina Sliwinska

photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/lady%20amarillis

A photo of the sky, which I took on a return home from a long trip, formed the basis of this picture. The rest of the photos were blended to match the lighting and colour of the setting sun. I made only minor adjustments after that.

Bruno Gomes

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/BrunoArts

I created this picture firstly thinking of a simple island in the clouds. But in the process I had another idea of adding a castle along with the island. Adding the clouds, the sunset and everything else created an interesting result.

Luigi Gallo

photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Gallus

I started by searching for individual images, modifying them and giving them the right shading. In the end, I balanced the tone and colours to give the finished piece the right visual impact.

Genivaldo Souza

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/genivaldo

This image shows an impossibly surreal atmosphere created with raining watches. Several effects were used to make the scene look as real as possible, such as blurring and blending the scene together with adjustments.

Zaid Tariq

photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/2aidTariq

This is one of my personal, non-commercial works, and it is about sadness and hopelessness, created in Adobe Photoshop with a Wacom Intuos tablet. For this, I used a photo of a woman, and painted over it with various brushes.

READERS' CHALLENGE

Upload your images to **photoshopcreative.co.uk**

We challenged you with these

In Issue 143, we challenged you to get creative with these four images. You were allowed to use any or all of the pictures, and whatever other resources you chose. Here's what you created.

Challenge entries

The best entries and overall challenge winner

1 Daryl Frakes

Sunflower

A simple but powerful idea came to mind when I saw these images. With a few filters and some masking, the powder image was incorporated into the subject's eye, with the sunflower laid out behind.

2 Alexandre Perez

Garden of Sunflowers

I worked on the lighting and the model's skin in this picture. The sunflowers are used in the field behind the model, the deckchairs are placed in the field and the powder texture is used on the roofs.

3 Andrew Di Maggio

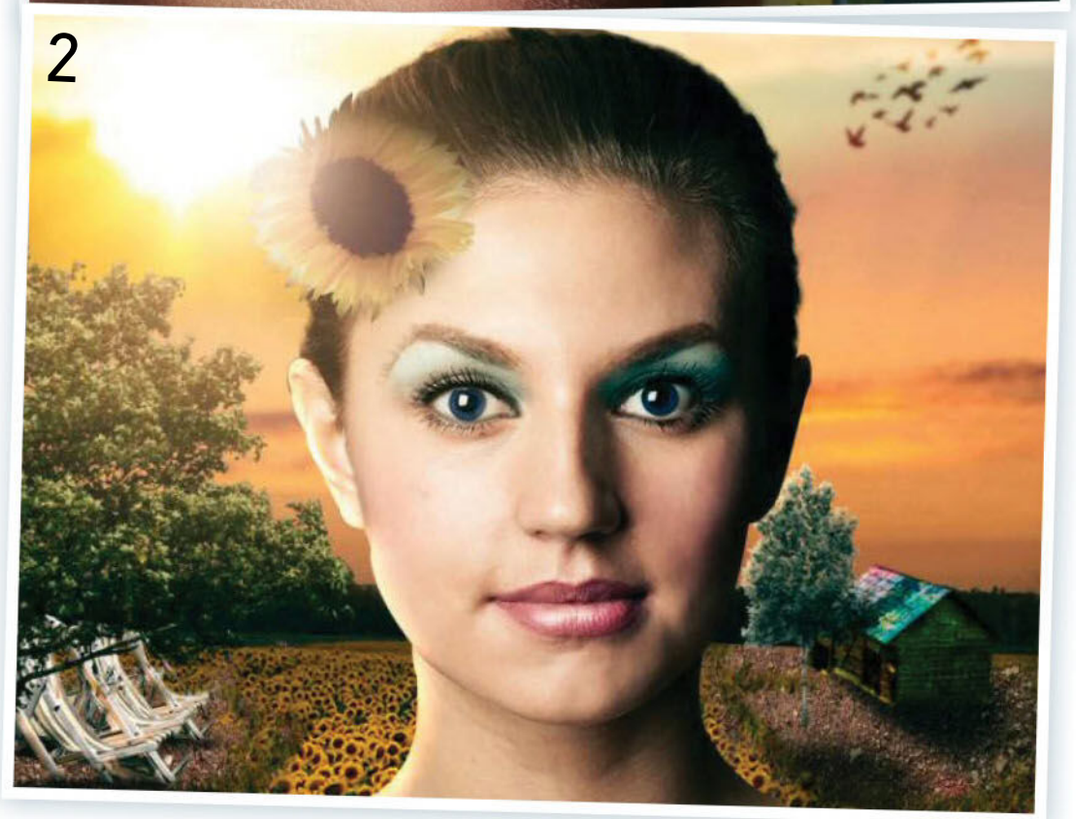
Fade Out

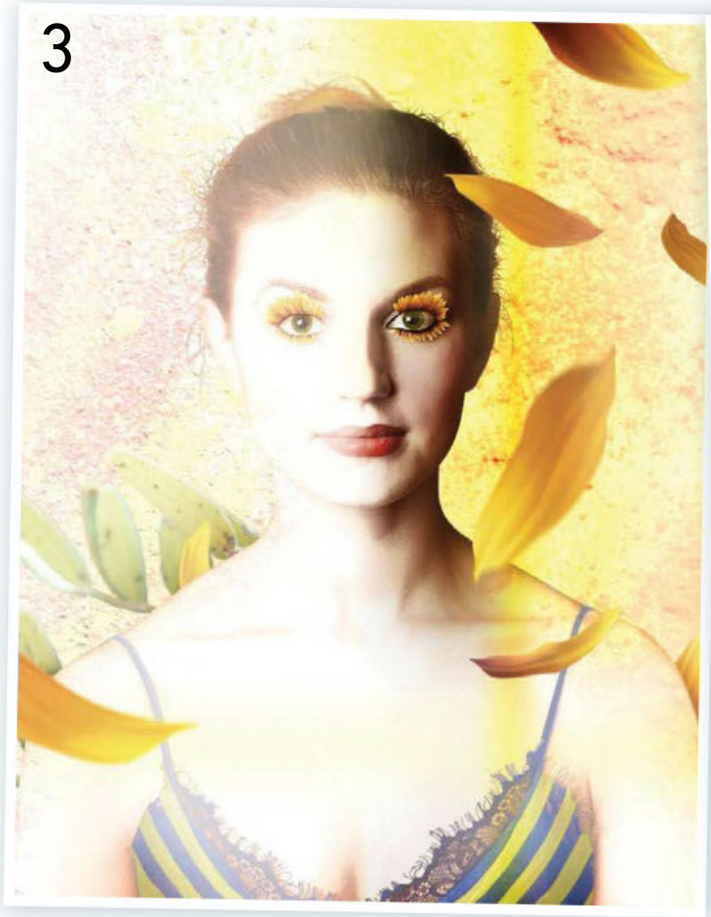
I really wanted to challenge myself and just keep to the four supplied images. Clean and accurate masking was a big part of creating this image. I also used adjustment layers and I used Warp a lot.

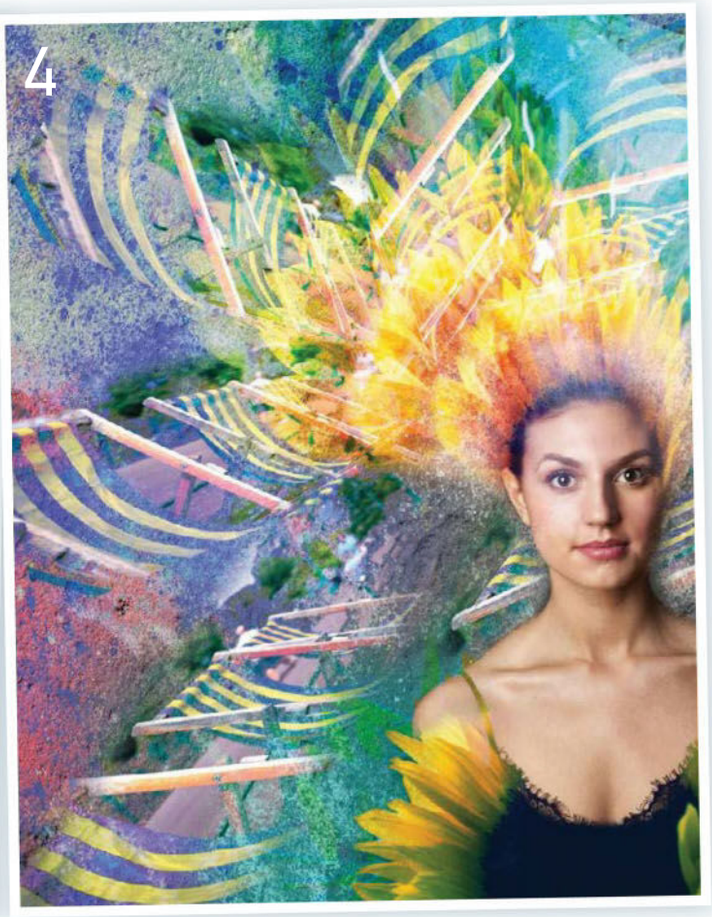
4 Antonieta Pedroso

Dulcineia

This composition was made with a lot of blend modes and layer masks. All four images were weaved into the image and the sunflowers were used on the subject's clothes and her hair.







This issue's challenge

Think you can do better? Prove it!

Get creative with the supplied images and you could win a fantastic prize! Use as many of the images as you like (from previous issues too!) and include your own photos if you wish. Head to **www.photoshopcreative.co.uk** and hit the Challenge link. Closing date: 10 Nov 2016.

THE PRIZE...

Escape Motions' Rebelle

This issue, one lucky winner will win a copy of Escape Motions' Rebelle! Rebelle is fantastic for creating digital paintings, with its real-media effects, awesome canvas textures and innovative tools for you to get the best out of brushes. It boasts real-world colour blending, wet diffusion and drying, making it a must-have for digital artists looking to improve their work, and a fantastically fun software package to boot.

WORTH $59.99!

RUNNERS'-UP PRIZE...

AKVIS Sketch

Three runners-up, along with the winner, will receive a copy of AKVIS Sketch! Sketch enables you to transform any photo into a pencil-style drawing using sliders and presets, and can create incredibly high-quality effects.

WORTH $72!

Platinum FMD

Still high on the triumph of the Olympics, Rio's Platinum is a studio with big ambitions

All eyes have been on Rio de Janeiro for the last couple of months, but it's not just the feats of athleticism that Brazil should be proud of; its creative scene is flourishing, too. And one of the brightest lights is Platinum, an 'image conception' studio that's now 25 years old. "There were many estimates done for the Olympics," says Director of Post Production Flávio Albino "and we've landed jobs with it. It has certainly warmed the market."

The Olympics posed challenges too, though. Albino says: "It was hard getting to work because so many streets were closed and there were so many holidays declared by our mayor. We decided to give a short time off to our employees, so it was hard work for the three of us, but it was fun." The "three of us" is Albino, Leonardo Vilela and Luciano Honorato. Way back in 1991, Leonardo Vilela returned to Rio after spending three years in Paris studying photography. He set up Platinum and worked alone to begin with, being joined by graphic designer and digital artist Albino in 1997, and by illustrator and 3D artist Luciano Honorato in 2001. Their combination of skills clicked, and now Albino says: "We offer photography, post-production and CGI separately, but we always prefer to do everything, from beginning to end."

With a client list that includes Hyundai, Mastercard and Mitsubishi, Platinum has also won plenty of awards, notably five Lions in Cannes, three NY festival Clios, three London Festival awards, and two golds from EPICA. And if that's not enough, one of its images – *The Kangaroo* – is also part of the Louvre Museum's permanent archive.

Albino puts the company's success down to the fact that it pioneered the fusion of digital photography with CGI, "a technique that consists of using all available resources on an image composition, such as photography, illustration, 3D and CGI, mixing all seamlessly together. With this new approach, Platinum took sway of the local market, and rapidly expanded its activity all over the world," he explains to us.

As well as Vilela, Honorato and Albino, Platinum has a core team of six artists – all with different backgrounds and specialities – to ensure that, whatever the brief, the

ABOUT THE STUDIO

Platinum FMD
www.platinumfmd.com.br
@Platinum20Years

An award-winning photography, retouching, CGI and post-production studio, Platinum was founded in 1991 by photographer Leonardo Vilela. He was later joined by Flávio Albino and Luciano Honorato, and the three continue to create world-class work from their Brazilian base.

Flávio Albino
Director of Post-Production

F. Teixeira
Senior Retoucher

A day in the life of F. Teixeira

The senior retoucher explains how a typical day unravels

Feet under the desk

09:00 The first thing I do when I arrive at work is check my emails, specifically I check to see if there are any emails from Flávio regarding a job, maybe something I need to do before he arrives.

Brainstorm and briefing

10:00 We always have a meeting when a new job comes along. We decide which techniques we are going to use, because Leonardo can solve many things in photography, but if that's not possible, we need to figure out what our resources for that image are going to be.

Getting stuck in

11:00 Some projects are only possible if we have previous images in the image bank. Sometimes that's due to time; other times it's due to budget. My job is to find these images.

Down to the actual work

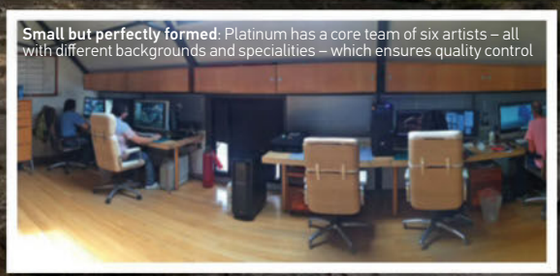
12:00 Finally, I get to work on the image, but how long this takes will greatly depend on the image itself. Sometimes I create something out of nowhere, and sometimes I only have to retouch a photo.

Sending for feedback

17:00 Depending on the schedule, we have to create a work in progress that needs to be sent to the client. Usually they come with feedback and things to change – that's normal.

Getting back to the grindstone

18:00 It is very rare to have a work that is approved first round. It usually takes a couple of rounds with the agency and client for changes and perfecting everything (or ruining, but don't tell them I said that!). When the client gives the okay, we make the final touches and upload it.



Small but perfectly formed: Platinum has a core team of six artists – all with different backgrounds and specialities – which ensures quality control

© Platinum FMD

TOP 5 TIPS

1. Look at things differently "Few people use the Rotate View option, but it really is an excellent tool to select and illustrate with, so give it a try. The keyboard shortcut for this tool is R, and you can hit Escape to return your image canvas to normal." Flávio Albino

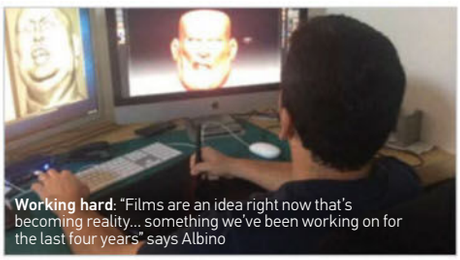
2. Organisation is everything "Always make sure the layout is in a layer in your document and, even more importantly, always name your layers to make sure your document is as organised as it can be. That saves a lot of working time. You can even colour-code your layers for more organisation." Flávio Albino

3. Transform Again "Most people only have a small pool of keyboard shortcuts so firmly in their head that they can use them regularly, but Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+T is certainly one to add to that pool. You can use it to Transform Again, or to repeat the same effect you've done before on another layer or object." Flávio Albino

4. Puppet power "The Puppet Warp tool enables you to dramatically distort areas of your image, and in certain cases it's better than the Liquify tool because it doesn't distort the pixels themselves." Flávio Albino

5. Keep it simple "Use Alt and click a layer's eye icon to see that one layer only. This way you can do the work you need to do, without anything else distracting you." Flávio Albino

Bedtime reading: Platinum created this fantasy image for Itau



Working hard: "Films are an idea right now that's becoming reality... something we've been working on for the last four years" says Albino

company can come up with the goods. Also, Albino adds: "We work with a few handpicked freelancers. Over the years, we've learned that it is harder to find people we can count on than people with talent. Talent without responsibility is just no use for us. We had cases of people dropping a work in progress and simply disappearing. Luckily it wasn't something we couldn't do ourselves, so all we had to do was work overnight; that's why we always prefer to do things in-house. Plus, there's the quality control. We have high standards, and people expect a certain level of quality from us, our input, Leo's light, our identity. Even when we use freelancers, we have to give a final touch."

The control that the three of them keep over their work also extends to the way the company is run. There can be a lot of pressure with deadlines, and Albino says that one of their main concerns is to "keep the pressure outside the studio, between me, Leo and Luciano. That's not always possible, but most times it is. And we try to keep the atmosphere laid back, informal and fun because creativity comes when it's not expected."

Of course, all that creativity would not be possible were it not for Photoshop. Albino has been working with Photoshop since version 2.5, when "it didn't even have layers!" he explains. "It wasn't for image manipulation then. I was working as a designer and I first used it in an internship. I had to create a screen for a project presentation. We used Corel mostly, but I needed to use a photo. I had read about this program in a magazine, I think. So I decided to give it a try, and it worked really well. I instantly knew that it would change the way I worked."

Now the company uses a mix of MODO, Lightwave and Photoshop. "Every image that comes out of Platinum, comes out of Photoshop," Albino says. "It is the main tool because it blends everything together and makes it look real." Even as the studio has grown over the years, its core principle of blending photography, CGI and retouching has remained, as has its working practices and spirit. "We've added people," says Albino, "but that's it. Leonardo is still the photographer, I'm still in post-production with Photoshop, and Luciano is still the CGI and illustrator guy. Nothing important has changed."

But Platinum does have new ambitions, and they're to be found in the arena of film. "We are starting with films," explains Albino. "We've just purchased a Phantom 4K and new lighting equipment, and expanded the studio with another building. Luckily our first film was applauded at the agency. So we are really excited about this.

"We want to become a publicity film producer, and that's what all our recent investments have been targeting on," says Albino. "Of course we will never stop producing still images... We just can't simply start shooting, because people will expect the same quality in the film as we produce in the still images. And that's why we are taking such a long time with it. We need to make sure it will meet the standards."

Even so, "we are just having a blast," adds Albino. "It's refreshing to start something new, and it is improving the images we create. Creativity is like a snowball; once you start, it grows and grows. We look at films, study them, and we end up having ideas for an image we are working on. It's a win/win situation." Which is appropriate, considering Rio's recent sporting event.

Birthday time: The Platinum bosses try to ensure that the stress isn't passed on to their employees (but the cake is)

© Platinum FMD

A Meat Splash One of Platinum's iconic pieces of work, this images was created for Exito Water

Capturing the raw materials

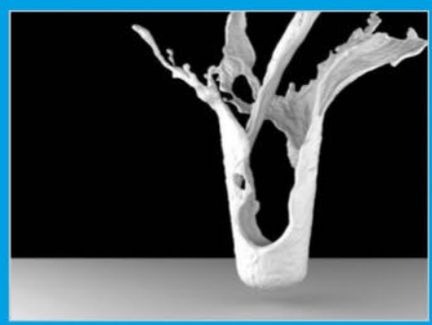
01 The first thing the Platinum team had to do was gather real-world textures. "The meat was the main hero of the image," says Albino. "It had to look absolutely realistic, so we needed to shoot pieces to get a realistic texture. That was crucial. We also shot a wooden texture for the kitchen table."

Shooting the glass

02 Next, Albino says: "We shot the glass with a print of the kitchen on the background. This way we had all the realistic distortion and reverberations." And then the "3D glass was rendered to be mixed with the photographic one. We take all the best details from each one."

Setting up the stock

03 Platinum chose a stock image of a kitchen for the background. "We needed to have this background selected to use for the shot and 3D scene. It helps us to set up the light, angle and lens," he adds.



Working in 3D

04 3D came into play in a big way at this point, with the shape and size of the meat splashing into the glass needing to be created. This is the "clay model from the meat splash."

Taking it into Photoshop

05 "This is how the image comes from 3D," says Albino. "There is a long way to the final image. In Photoshop we blended the stock image, real shots and CGI. We set up the colour, blurred the background, increased details, worked on general improvements and then added the final effects."

THE PEN TOOL MADE EASY

Learn how to select, draw and do so much more with these 20 tricks, from the first point in your path to the last

When Photoshop users think of the Pen tool, they think of precision. Whether you're cutting out a subject from a picture, or creating an ornate illustration, the Pen offers something for everyone. It's one of the most accurate tools in Photoshop, and it's versatile too.

However, the Pen tool takes practice to master. It's capable of producing both straight and curved lines, and getting the balance between the two takes time. Holding Shift can create lines at perfectly straight angles, and it's worth using the grid (Cmd/Ctrl+') to help map out your work. This ability to create all kinds of shapes makes the Pen a great tool for illustrations. It enables you to stroke your brushes along paths you create, or fill with colour, and it's no wonder that digital artists use it for all kinds of projects.

But the Pen tool isn't just for digital art. Its meticulousness makes it excellent for selecting objects and creating embellishments. With its incredible power, there's no limit to what the Pen can do.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

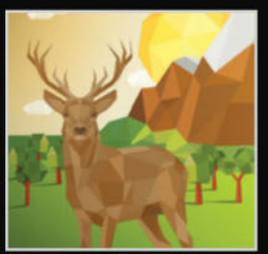
WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...

HOW TO WORK WITH PATHS

Save a path, create text, and clone and erase along a path.

ILLUSTRATE A 2D CITY

Fill with gradients, blend modes and patterns, and create dotted lines.

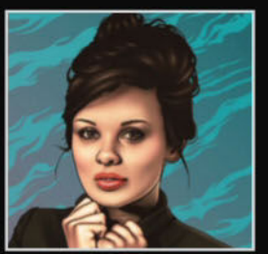


MAKE LOW-POLY EFFECTS

Create low-poly artwork and learn to use gradient maps.

SIMULATE BRUSHES

How to create a cutout effect by simulating brush pressure.



SELECT AND USE BRUSHES

Learn how to select before filling and use brushes with the Pen.

01 DRAWING STRAIGHT LINES

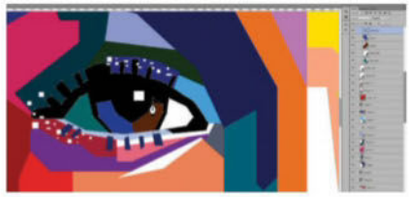
To draw a straight line, use the Pen tool and click to create a point. Move along and click again to make a second anchor point and create a path made of a straight line connected by these points. Do not hold down and drag the Pen tool, as it will create a curved line instead.

02 DRAWING CURVED LINES

To create a curved line, use the Pen tool to click on a point. Continue clicking a second anchor point, only this time you need to click and hold, then start dragging out to set the slope of the curve you're creating. Release the mouse button or stylus when you are done.

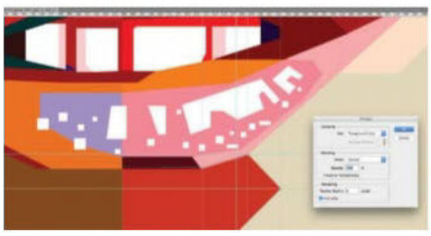
03 CHANGING PEN DIRECTION

Click on the anchor points you wish to change and hold down and start dragging to change the direction of the anchor points. For curved lines, Cmd/Ctrl-click on the direction line. Hold down and start dragging to change the direction of a curve.



04 FILLING A PATH

Select the path in the Paths panel. Click the Fill Path button at the bottom of the Paths panel to fill it with the Foreground colour. Alternatively, Alt/Option-click the Fill Path button to bring up the dialog box to specify options such as using Foreground or Background colour, the blending mode, or the opacity.

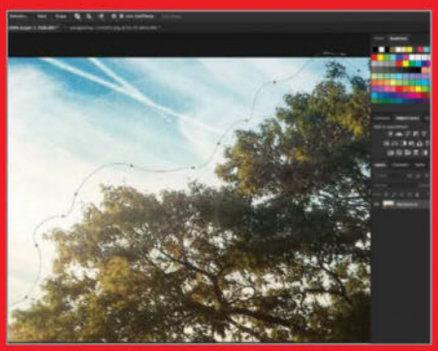


05 CREATING A VECTOR MASK

On the layer you wish to mask, select a desired path in the Paths panel. Cmd/Ctrl-click on the mask button in the Masks panel. This creates a vector mask to your selected layer. To edit the vector mask, simply Cmd/Ctrl-click and drag the anchor points to change the shape of the mask.

06 Removing unwanted objects

The Pen tool is known for making precise selections, which means it is a perfect instrument for rudimentary photo editing. Paths actually have the capability to edit photos themselves, using the Fill or Stroke options. Content-Aware is just one such feature that can transform your photos, so combining its power with the accuracy of the Pen makes for even better edits.

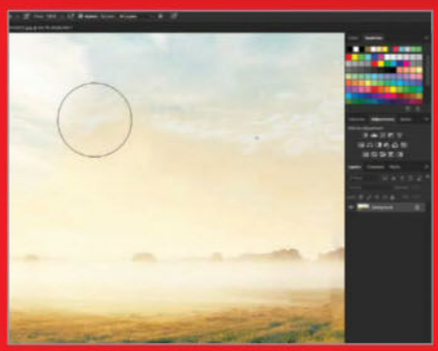


Make the path

01 Grab the Pen tool and start drawing around the tree in your image. Click and drag the cursor to create soft curves around the branches and don't worry too much about getting really close to the leaves.

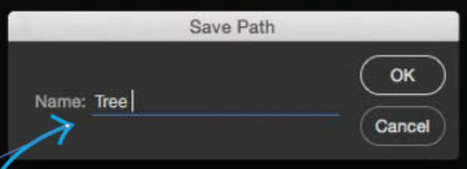
Fill the path

02 Click on the Paths tab in the Layers panel. Ctrl/right-click on the path and choose Fill Path. In the drop-down menu choose Content-Aware; Blending: Normal and Opacity: 100%. Click OK to apply the edit.



Tidy the edit

03 The Content-Aware tool will completely remove the tree from the image, but there's always more that can be done after a Content-Aware edit. Grab the Clone Stamp tool and touch up a little further.

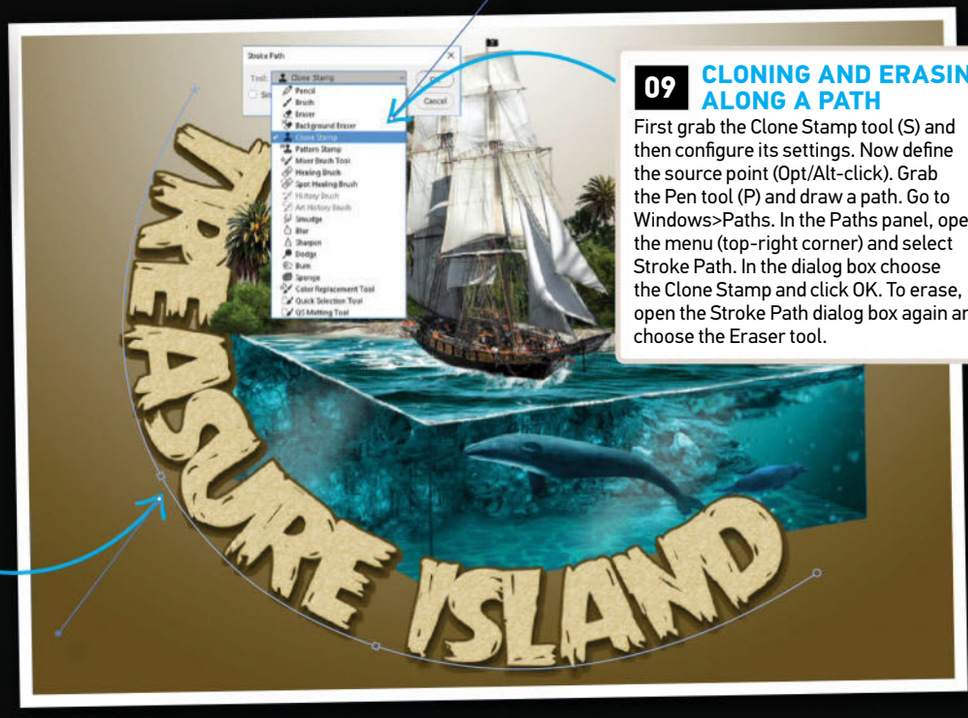


07 SAVING A PATH

You might want to use the same path multiple times, especially if you're creating multiple objects from it. It's really easy to save your path for later should you want to; go to the Paths panel and double-click Work Path. Giving your path a name will save it in the Paths panel for later.

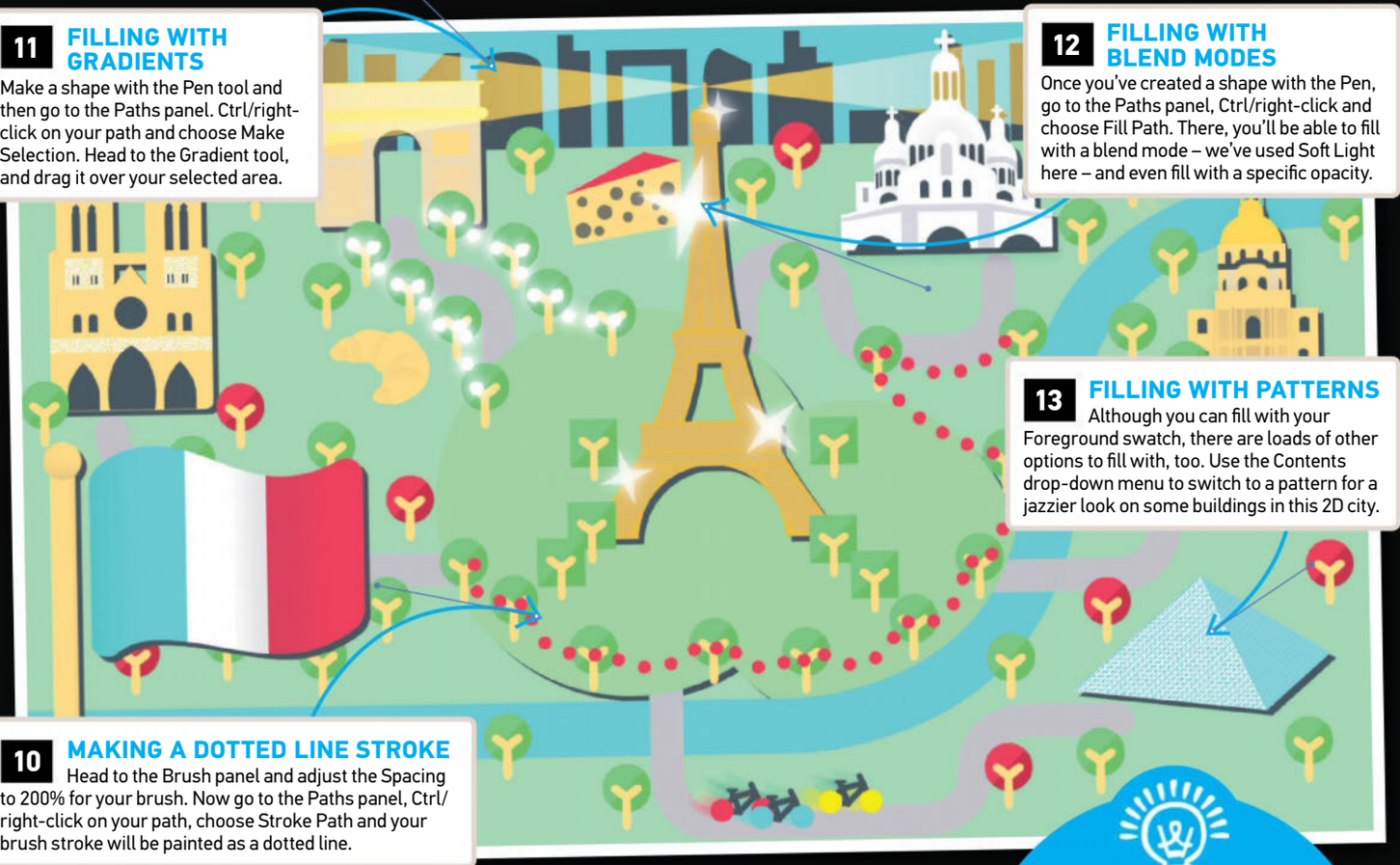
08 CREATING TEXT ALONG A PATH

Grab the Pen tool (P). In the Options Bar select Paths and start adding the anchor points to draw the path. Grab the Horizontal Type tool (T) and pick a font, size and colour. Hold the cursor over the path until it changes to a curly line and then click – the Type tool will automatically stick on the path. Now type the text.



09 CLONING AND ERASING ALONG A PATH

First grab the Clone Stamp tool (S) and then configure its settings. Now define the source point (Opt/Alt-click). Grab the Pen tool (P) and draw a path. Go to Windows>Paths. In the Paths panel, open the menu (top-right corner) and select Stroke Path. In the dialog box choose the Clone Stamp and click OK. To erase, open the Stroke Path dialog box again and choose the Eraser tool.



11 FILLING WITH GRADIENTS

Make a shape with the Pen tool and then go to the Paths panel. Ctrl/right-click on your path and choose Make Selection. Head to the Gradient tool, and drag it over your selected area.

12 FILLING WITH BLEND MODES

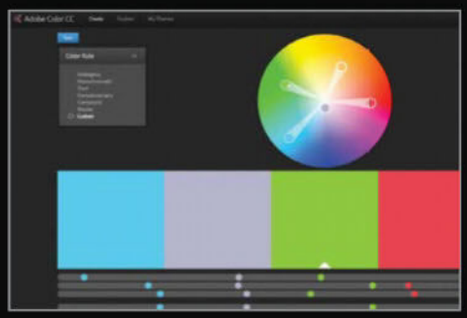
Once you've created a shape with the Pen, go to the Paths panel, Ctrl/right-click and choose Fill Path. There, you'll be able to fill with a blend mode – we've used Soft Light here – and even fill with a specific opacity.

13 FILLING WITH PATTERNS

Although you can fill with your Foreground swatch, there are loads of other options to fill with, too. Use the Contents drop-down menu to switch to a pattern for a jazzier look on some buildings in this 2D city.

10 MAKING A DOTTED LINE STROKE

Head to the Brush panel and adjust the Spacing to 200% for your brush. Now go to the Paths panel, Ctrl/right-click on your path, choose Stroke Path and your brush stroke will be painted as a dotted line.



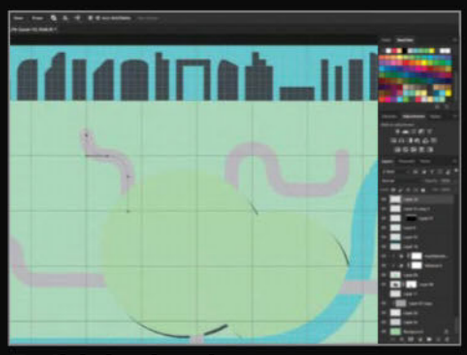
Pick your palette

01 Before you start your 2D city, it's important to pick a selection of shades to work with so that you can create a cohesive and consistent picture; with this project, we won't even use adjustments to bring all the colours together. Head to **http://color.adobe.com/** to pick the hues you want from a colour wheel, and use the hex codes in Photoshop to get exact shades. Alternately, use the supplied resources that we've put on the FileSilo.

EXPERT TIP

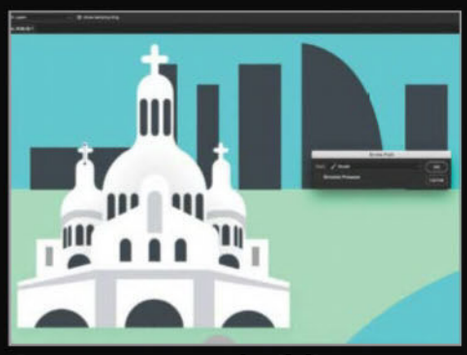
Use other tools

There are all kinds of tools that work with the Pen. The Marquees are great for selecting circles and easy rectangles; the Brush can also be used for embellishments. Use drop shadows to add depth to your Pen work, and remember masks can be useful, too.



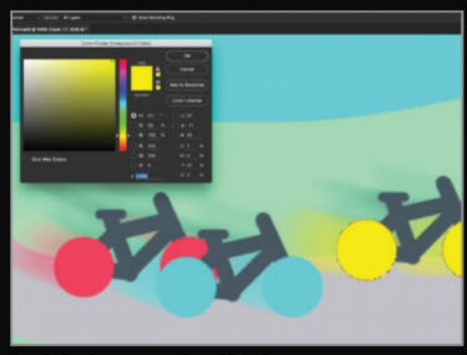
Build the landscape

02 With your colours selected, build the basis of the city. Fill in the background green, the sky blue and with the Pen, select a skyline of buildings on the horizon: fill in grey. Select the path of a river and stroke blue. Then, create roads leading off from a park in the middle.



Construct your buildings

03 The Pen tool is adept at making both straight and curved lines, meaning that you can have real control when you create buildings. Use lots of layers, filling in shapes to build up your landmarks. Use reference pictures to make sure you capture all the details.

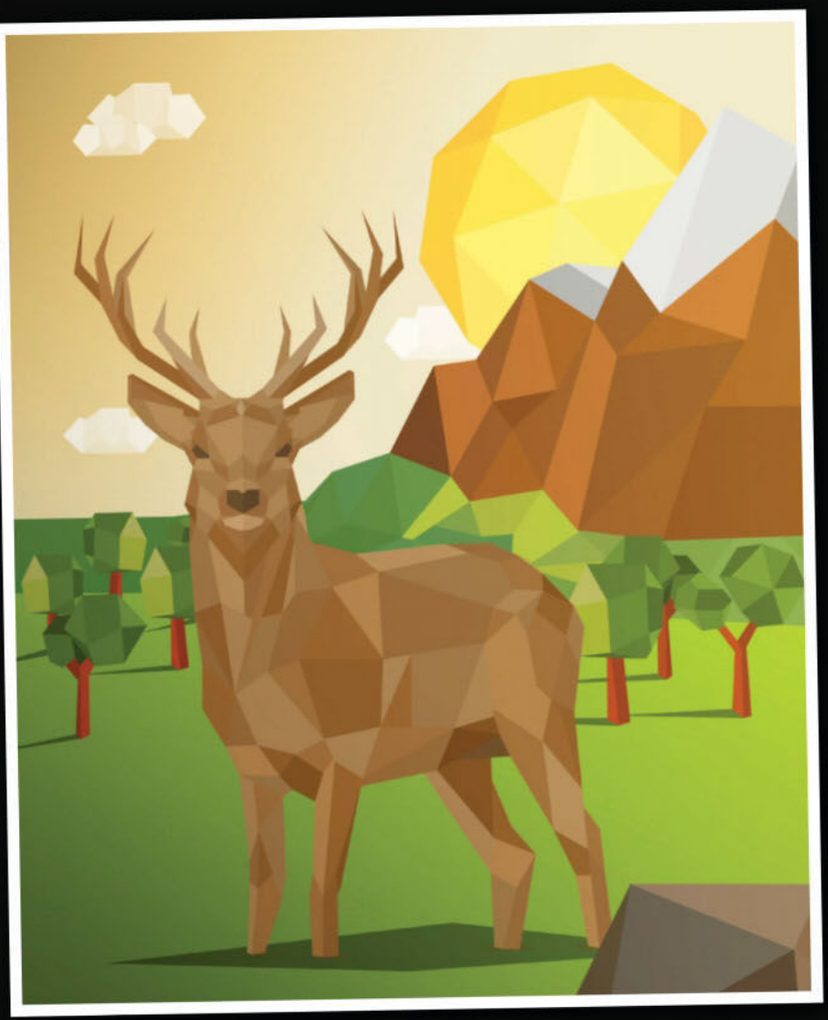


Add the embellishments

04 A 2D city isn't complete without little extras. Use the Pen tool to stroke cultural icons, and even a flag. Don't be afraid to vary the colour scheme a little in special cases, and use blurs to add flourishes to certain objects, such as bikes and balloons.

14 Creating low-poly effects

To create a low-poly effect you need to draw a triangular mesh; the easiest way is to draw it by hand, then scan your sketch and trace over it using the Pen tool. Before you start drawing the triangles make sure you have Shape Layers selected. For each time you draw a triangle, ensure you're changing the Foreground colour to the colour you need that triangle to be. Remember that small parts of your illustration require smaller triangles and larger sections need larger triangles; make a few quadrilaterals if necessary.

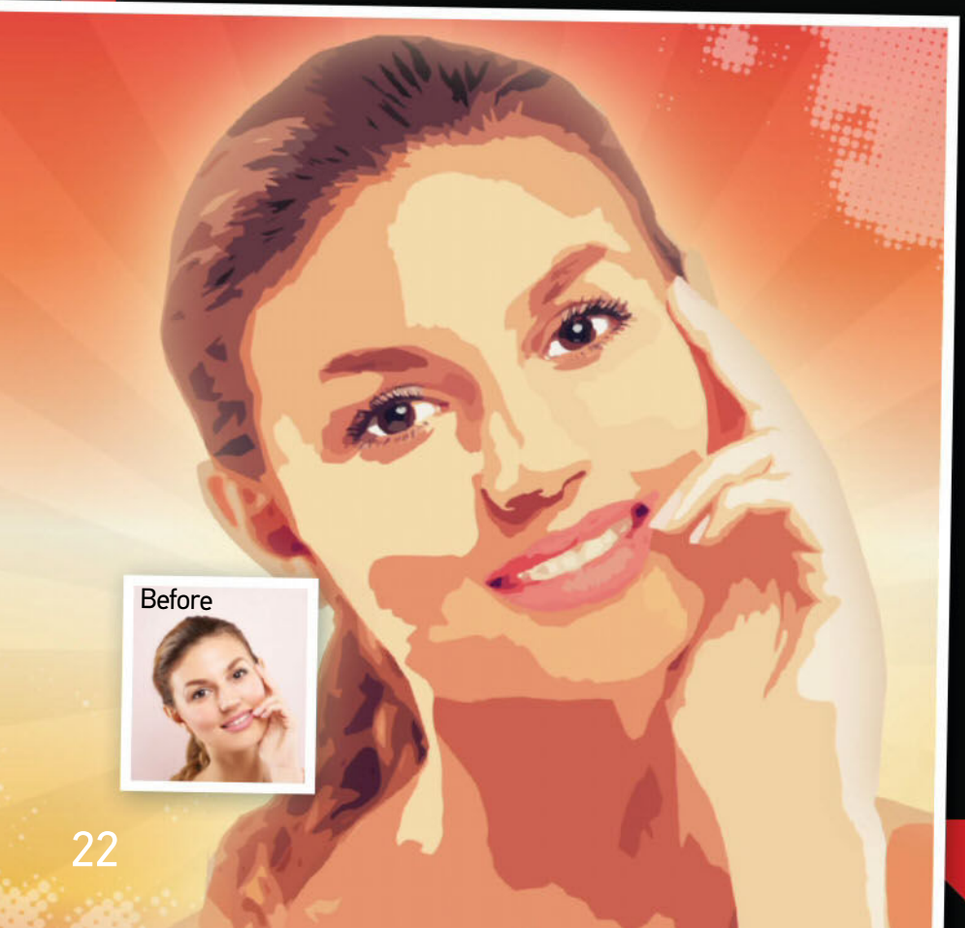


15 Using gradient maps

If you're not 100 per cent happy with the colours you have chosen, there's a really easy way to colour-correct your illustration using gradient maps.

Use the Pen tool to draw around the area you want to correct, ensuring Paths are selected before drawing. Once drawn, in the Paths panel, click on the Working Path thumbnail to make a selection.

Then go Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Gradient Map and double-click the gradient in the Properties panel. Select the markers and pick a range of colours to use. The darker tones are on the left-hand side, while the lighter tones can be found on the right.



16 Creating cutout effects

Create a new layer above your base image and trace around the main shapes, such as the face and hairline, with the Pen tool. Fill these shapes with colours from the photo using the Eyedropper tool (I). Reduce the shapes' opacity and repeat; this time with slightly smaller blocks of colour. Repeat until you've got a few levels of detail. Keep your lines long and use only basic shapes.

17 Simulating brush pressure

Adding brush-simulated pressured strokes to Pen lines is great for adding smaller details. Set your Brush (B) to how you want your line to appear, for example Opacity, Hardness, Color, Size and so on. With the Pen tool (P) selected, create your line as normal, right-click and click Stroke Path. In the dialog box, select Brush from the drop-down and check the Simulate Pressure box.

18 SELECT BEFORE FILLING

With the Pen tool selected, click to create the edges of your shape. It could be a star or triangle shape to get started, for example, then you can begin creating more complex shapes. When you have your shape, you will see a little O if you hover over the first point. Click on that first point to close the shape. And if you want to make this into a selection, right-click and pick Make Selection.

19 USE BRUSHES WITH THE PEN TOOL

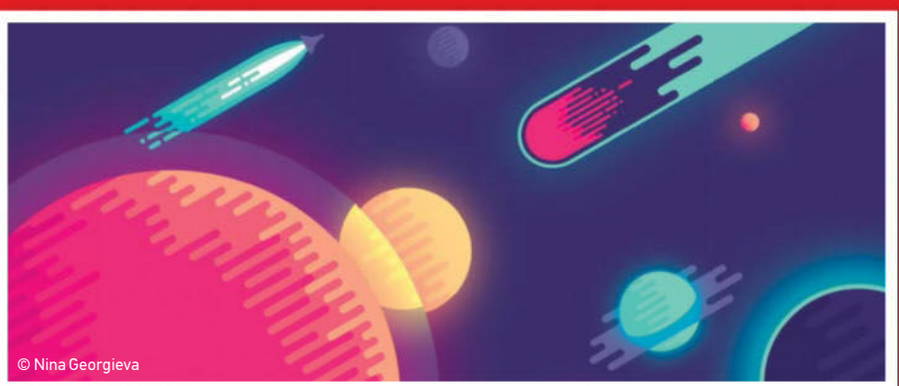
Brushes can totally transform your Pen-tool creations. Create individual layers to keep control of colours, select an area and start shading with brushes. In this case you could use a blurred brush to create lines to fit the traced outlines. Add some hard white dots to her eyes, nose, lips and eyebrows with a hard brush to give depth to your Pen-tool portrait.

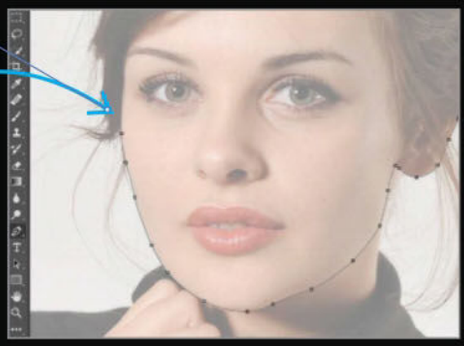
20 Using Illustrator and Photoshop

Many Creative Cloud users talk of whether to use Illustrator or Photoshop, but there's no reason why a digital artist can't embrace both software packages in their work.

Illustrator is intended for graphic design and its main focus is on its own Pen tool. It's perfect for creating vectors, which can be resized without loss of quality, and it's a program that lots of designers use to trace their sketches, before they translate them into Photoshop for colouring.

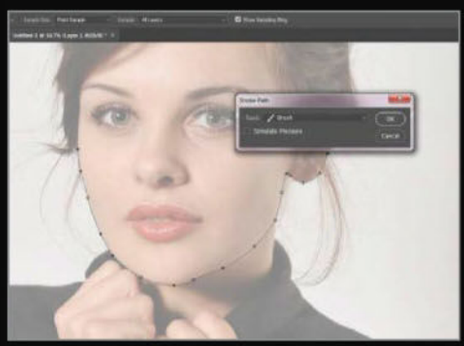
Photoshop, on the other hand, is great for photo-based illustrations, photomanipulation and can't be beaten for adjustments. Try out both, and see how each program can actually complement the other in your work.





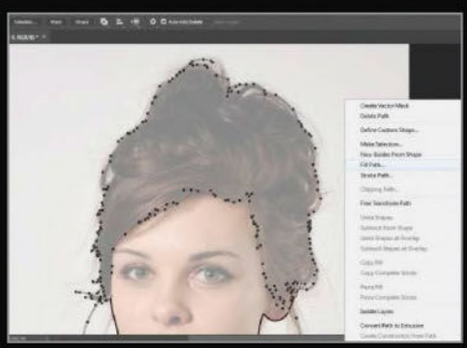
Trace the image

01 Before you begin tracing the image, you will have to set the Opacity of your image to around 30-40%. This will make it easier to see the lines you are about to follow using the Pen tool. Make sure you zoom in on the part you will trace, to make it easier to get your lines right and of good quality.



Stroke the path

02 Right-click on your image (still using the Pen tool), and select Stroke Path to create the stroke. In this case, you will have a clean and even stroke, so make sure you do not select the Simulate Pressure button. Remember to use the Brush tool when stroking.



Fill the path

03 When working with the hair, eyelashes and eyebrows, you will want to zoom in closely using the Pen tool to make sure you manage to trace all of the details. Instead of creating a bulky stroke and then filling, it is best to fill the whole path. Right-click on the image (with the Pen tool) and select Fill Path set to the colour of your choice.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

How to use the Pen tool, and combine and subtract from shape areas

Time taken

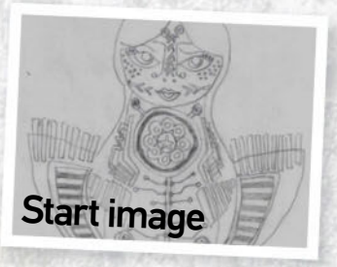
1 hour

Expert

Moe Hezwani

"I really enjoy experimenting in Photoshop; I can easily spend an entire day finding new ways to bring my hand-drawn sketches to life. People are often intimidated by the Pen tool, but playing with it helps to familiarise yourself with how it works, which makes it less daunting.

"I'm a professional graphic designer/illustrator, and Photoshop is my go-to platform for my designs."

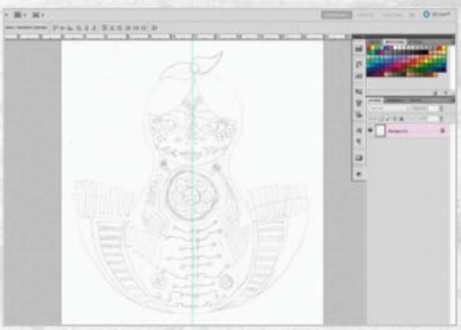


Draw vector shapes with the Pen tool

Amp up your imagination and create a not-so-ordinary illustration with the help of the Pen tool, shapes and the Custom Shape tool

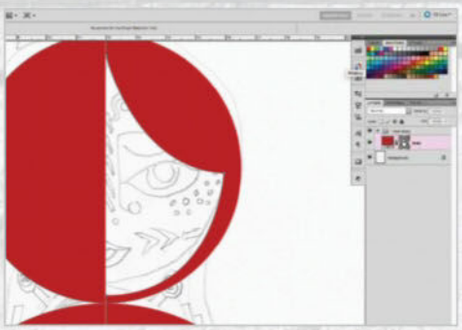
You're probably aware by now that the Pen tool can be used to create more than just paths for selections; you can also use it to make vector shapes. A vector is made up of mathematical points, connecting to each other by either a straight line or a curve. All these points, lines and curves make up what you see as the shape. Another great fact about a vector shape is that each time you resize or reshape it, you won't lose the image quality or resolution; it's the perfect go-to tool when it comes to illustrating.

You don't just have to use the Pen tool when creating vector shapes; you can also use the Shape tool and the Custom Shape tool. In this tutorial you'll learn how to use all three to bring your hand-drawn sketch to life. Discover how to combine shapes together inside one shape layer, and how to use a shape to cut out another shape by subtracting from a shape area. If that's not enough, you'll learn how to add a bit of texture and bring your illustration to life with the help of layer styles and blend modes.



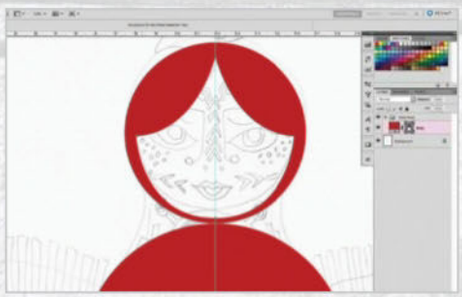
Create a guide

01 Open 'Start Image.jpg' from the FileSilo and create a guide in the centre of the canvas to ensure symmetry. To create a guide, hit Cmd/Ctrl+R to bring up your rulers, then click and drag from the left-hand ruler and move to the centre.



Make the base

02 Use the Ellipse tool to create two circles for the body and head. Then grab the Pen tool, making sure 'Subtract from shape area' (-) is selected from the top Options bar. Now draw one half of the inner shape of the face.

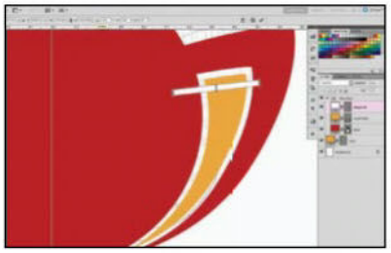


Reflect a path

03 After you have drawn the first half of the inner part of the face, grab the Direct Selection tool, hold down Alt/Shift and drag your new path to duplicate it. Go to Edit> Transform Path>Flip Horizontal. With the Direct Selection tool still selected, move the duplicate path to place, using the guide.

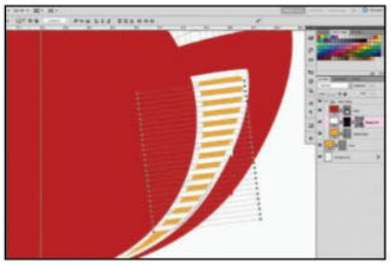
Expert edit

Adding and subtracting shapes



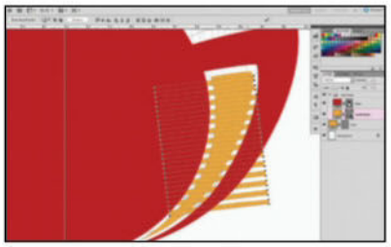
Create a rectangle

01 Once you have drawn the inner shape of the wing, draw a long thin rectangle using the Rectangle tool, then go to Edit>Transform Path>Rotate. Rotate your shape to about -6.5°.



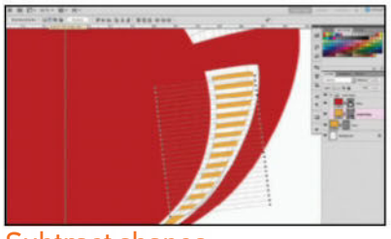
Duplicate shapes

02 Use the Path Selection tool to select it and then, while holding Alt, click and drag to duplicate your shape. Repeat this a few times to create a stripe effect.



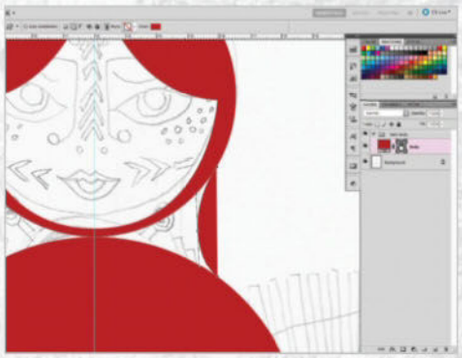
Add shapes

03 Select your rectangles and cut them out of their shape layer. Then go to the wing shape, click to select it, and paste the rectangles into its shape layer.



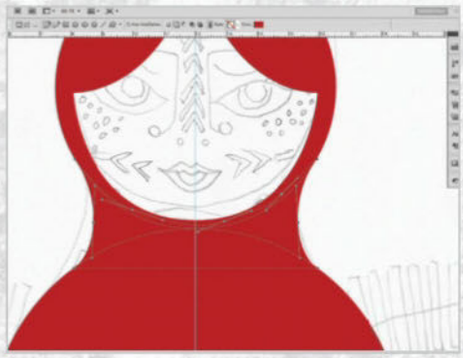
Subtract shapes

04 With the rectangles still selected, click the 'Subtract from shape area' icon from the top of the Path Selection tool Options bar to cut out the rectangles from the wing.



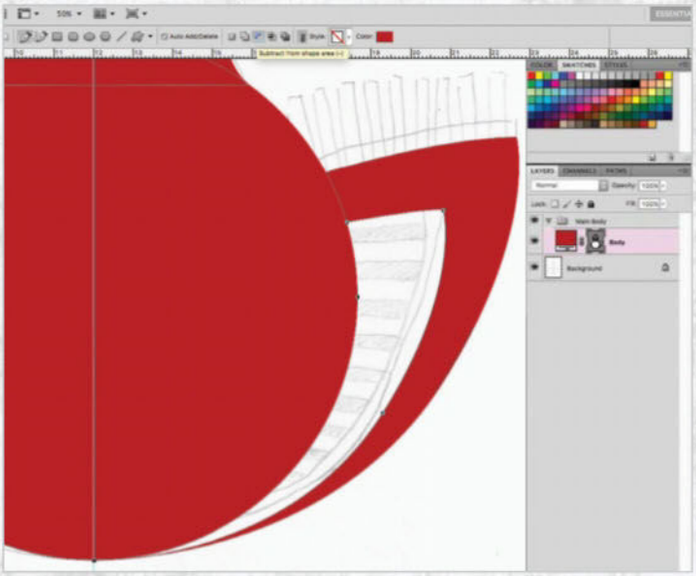
Draw the neck

04 Grab the Pen tool and create your first anchor point from the bottom half of her face. Make a second point between the head and body. When creating the second point, click and drag your mouse round to create a curve. Next, make the third curve point around the top half of the body.



Complete the neck

05 Once you've made your third anchor point for the doll's neck, click on it while holding down Alt to change the direction of the point. Now, as in step 3, you want to duplicate, flip and move your duplicated path to place. Use the Pen tool to link the two curved paths together.

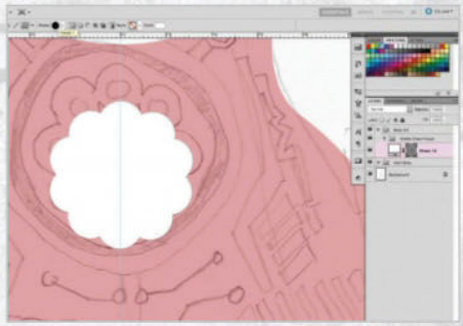


Plot the body wings

06 Using the Pen tool, trace around the sketch to draw the right wing of the doll; use the techniques from step 4 to help create the curved edge. Next, draw the inside part of the wing, ensuring 'Subtract from shape area' (-) is selected to cut it out from your first shape.

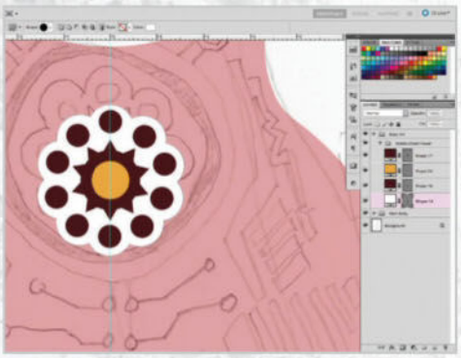
Finish the body wings

07 Make the Foreground colour a golden-yellow and use the Pen tool to draw a smaller wing to fill the inner part of the wing cutout area. Once you've drawn one wing, duplicate the shape layers (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and go to Edit>Transform Path>Flip Horizontal. Move the duplicated shape layers into place using the Move tool.



Make body shapes

08 Start by lowing the opacity of the body to 40% so your sketch is visible. Start with the flower chest piece; instead of drawing a flower use one from the Custom Shape tool. In the Custom Shape drop-down menu, select Flower 1 and draw it onto your doll in white.



Finish the flower

09 Use the Ellipse tool and a dark red to draw circles in the flower, then head back to the Custom Shape tool and draw in nine triangles around the middle of the flower. Then draw a final yellow circle in the centre of the flower to complete it.

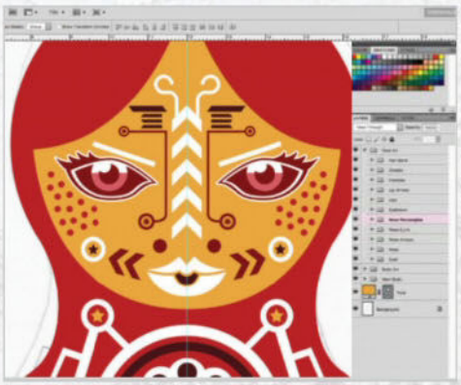
Complete the body art

10 Use the Pen, Custom Shape and Shape tool to finish off the doll's body art. The good thing about an illustration like this is that you only have to draw one half, then simply duplicate and flip to the other side (use the techniques from step 7 to help).

Expert tip

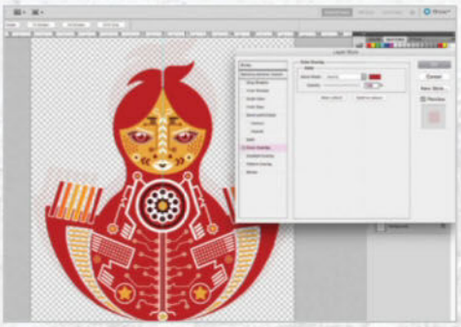
Don't have the Pen tool?

Unfortunately Element users do not have access to the Pen tool, but do have access to the Shape tool and Custom Shape tool, so there is still an opportunity to create a vector illustration. A huge part of this illustration uses basic shapes to build it up, and there are alternative methods for steps that use the Pen tool. For example, when creating the doll's eyes, use an oval shape for the base of the eye and then employ triangles to create her eyelashes.



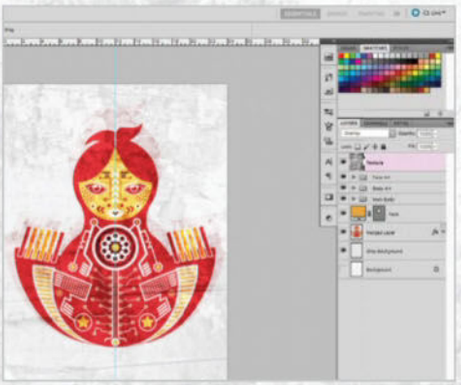
Draw the face

11 With the help of the Pen tool, draw around the base of the right eye using a dark red. Once you have closed the path, open up the Layer Style window for the shape layer, select Stroke and change the size. Now draw out the rest of her face.



Merge together

12 Start by hiding the sketch and hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E to merge the shapes together. Move the new layer to the bottom of the Layers palette. Then go to Edit> Transform>Scale and make it 10% bigger. Open the Layer Style box and change the colour of the layer to red using Color Overlay. Make the layer Opacity 15%.



Add texture

13 Create a new layer and make sure it's at the bottom of the Layers palette. Fill it with a light grey. Next, open 'Tree Texture.jpg' from the FileSilo, copy and paste it into your illustration canvas, and change the blend mode to Overlay.

What you can do with it

Create your own phone case

There are hundreds of different phone cases out there, but wouldn't it be great if you could have your own personalised case that no one else had? What a fantastic way to show off your artwork by placing it onto your phone; you can share your creation with your friends and family by making them one, or keep it just for yourself as your own original. There are plenty of cheap online applications that will help you to place your artwork onto a customised phone case, so do some research and make your phone special!

FIND THE RIGHT APP

Finding the right price and the right application to upload your artwork is important to achieve the best quality phone case; **www.createmycase.co.uk** is a handy app to help create your own custom phone cases.

HIGH RESOLUTION ARTWORK

Before sending your artwork to be printed, make sure it has a high resolution; 300ppi should do it. If it has a low resolution, your phone case may come back with blurry artwork.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

- Techniques for mixing different photos to create a vibrant portrait

Time taken

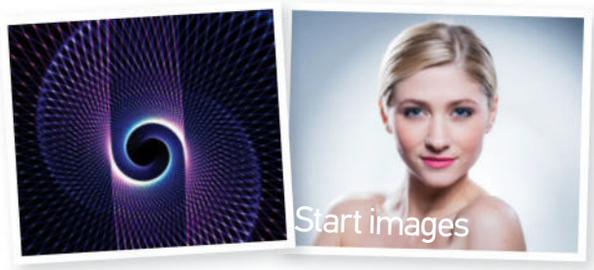
3 hours

Expert

Rodrigo Marinelli

"When I began creating images for my portfolio, this was one of the first art styles I tried. It helped me develop my own style because I could experiment with many tools to create the scene, and came to understand blend modes.

"I'm an art director and have 11 years of experience in advertising agencies. I learned and am still learning to use Photoshop through following tutorials."



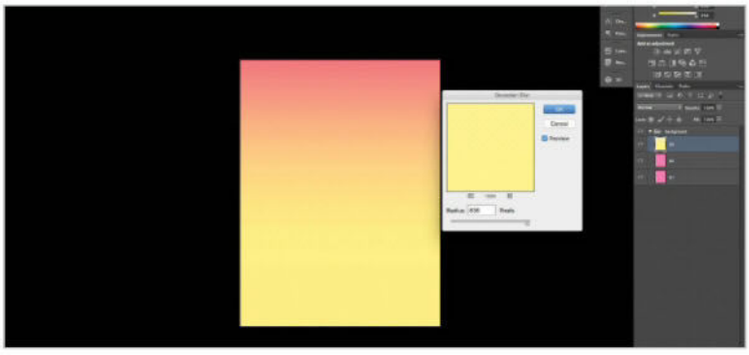
Lift creative portraits with blend modes

Use colour adjustment tools, blend modes and various other commands to create a vibrant portrait

An important part of being a Photoshop artist is about creating your own style. There are many art styles to explore but with time and practice, you will learn to apply certain skills, develop preferred techniques, and study the tools to discover the best way to create a unique image.

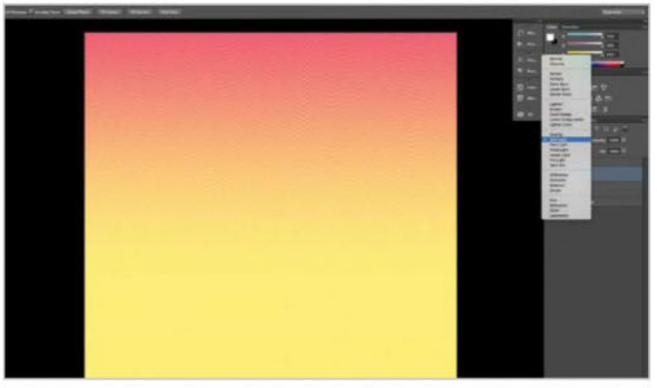
Here we're going to use Photoshop to create a composition that mixes design, photomontage and a vibrant finish. This is an interesting style to explore because it's very experimental. It's possible to do anything because you don't have to worry about reality – all you have to do is keep in mind that all the images must interact with each other.

To achieve a vibrant style, after finishing the composition we'll use the adjustment layers to make necessary colour edits without losing any of the vital colour information from the original. We shall also use blend modes to mix the photos with the scene.



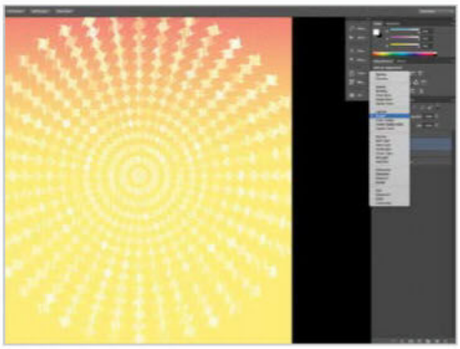
Set the background

01 Create a new document (Cmd/Ctrl+N) at 230x310mm. Fill the background with #f27cb0, then duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and change the blend mode to Multiply. Make a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), paint the background with #fff387, and apply a Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) at 836px Radius.



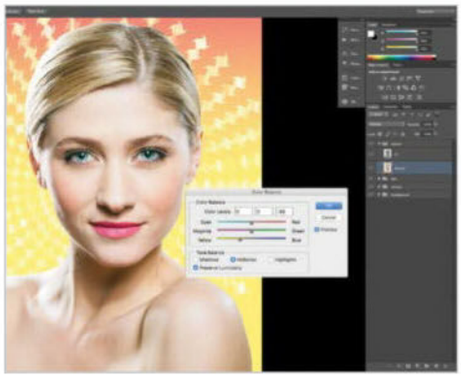
Add the background texture

02 Now let's start to play with the blend modes, firstly on the background texture. For that, use 'texture.png' and change the blend mode to Soft Light. Then, to make it more evident, duplicate the layer.



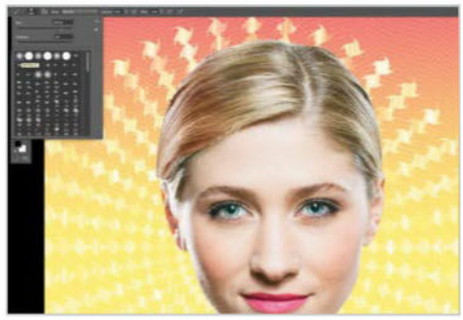
Change the background

03 The blend modes make it possible to do many things. In this case, let's use them to make the black background disappear with just a click. Use the image 'sun.png' and place it as shown above, then change the blend mode to Screen.



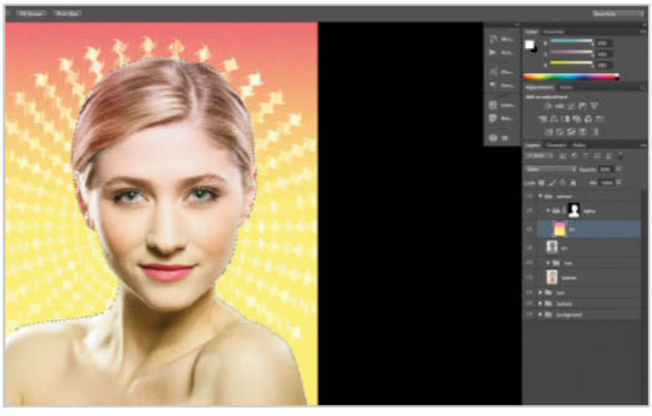
Colour tone adjustments

04 Place 'woman.jpg', and make some colour adjustments; use the Levels tool (Cmd/Ctrl+L) at 0, 1.00, 231, the Color Balance tool (Cmd/Ctrl+B) at 0, 0, -33 and finally the Brightness/Contrast tool at 0, 10.



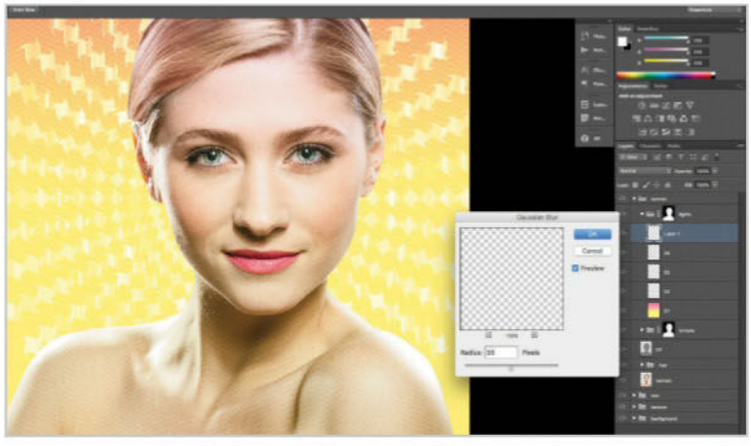
Fix her hair

05 With the Pen tool (P), make a selection on the right side of the hair, activate the selection, select the Polygonal Lasso tool (L), Ctrl/right-click and select Layer via Copy. Flip it horizontally (Edit> Transform>Flip Horizontal), make a mask and erase the edges with a soft brush.



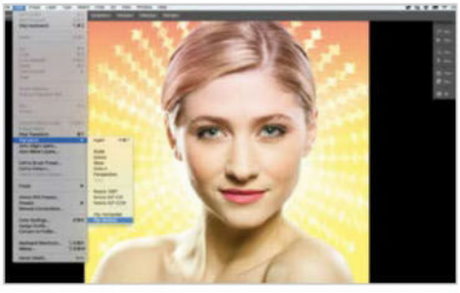
Layer group with mask

06 Make a new layer, activate the woman's selection, create a layer group (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and press the Add Vector Mask button. Then duplicate the background folder, merge it (Cmd/Ctrl+E), put it inside the woman's folder and change the blend mode to Color.



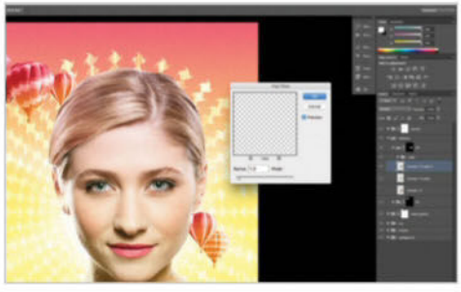
Add highlights and texture

07 Make a layer group with the woman's shape mask, then with the Pen tool, draw highlights, paint them white, change the blend mode to Soft Light and use a 35px Gaussian Blur. Create another layer group, add 'texture.png' and change the blend mode to Soft Light.



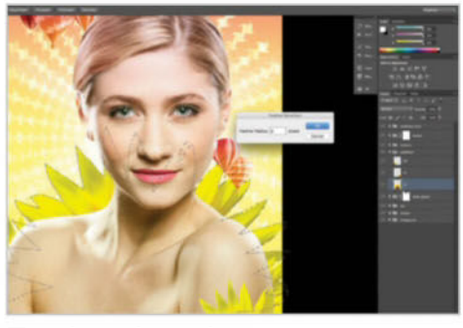
Flip horizontally and vertically

08 Make a layer group, add 'water_ splash.jpg', use Hue/Saturation (Cmd/Ctrl+U) at 0, -100, 0 and change the blend mode to Screen. Place behind the woman layer. Duplicate it and flip it horizontally (Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal), then duplicate the layer folder and flip it vertically (Edit>Transform>Flip Vertical).



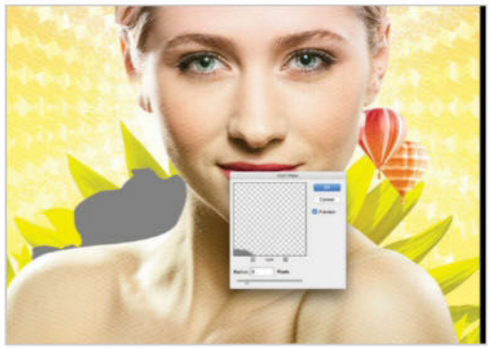
Place the hot air balloons

09 Use the Balloon_01 layer from 'hot_air_balloon.psd' and apply Hue/ Saturation (0, -100, 0). Make a layer group with the balloon shape mask (as in step 6), duplicate and merge the background, place it inside the folder and change the blend mode to Color. Add the Balloon_02 layer and repeat the same procedure.



Feather the edges

10 Bring in 'sunflower.jpg' and place it behind and in front of the woman, as shown above. To make the edges of the photo softer, use the Feather command. Activate the sunflower selection, open Feather (Shift+F6) set to 2px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) and press delete.



Apply the High Pass filter

11 Add 'rose_01.psd' and place it behind the woman. Adjust the colour tone using the Levels at 0, 1.00, 235, and apply a feather as in the previous step. Now duplicate the layer and use the High Pass filter (Filter>Other>High Pass) at 3px, and change the blend mode to Overlay.

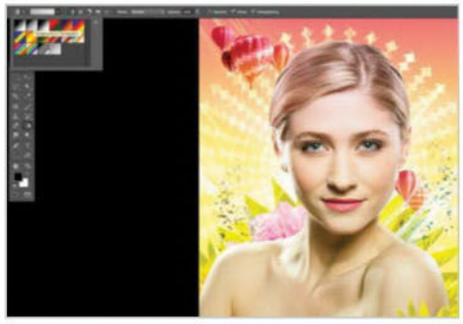
Add background lights

12 Now let's add some lights to make the image more interesting. Use the photo 'lights_02.jpg' and change the blend mode to Screen. Duplicate the layer, flip it horizontally and finally place it behind the woman, as shown above.

Expert tip

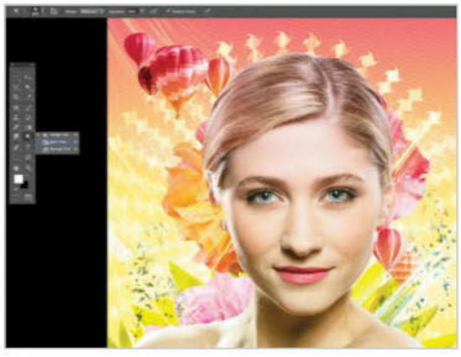
Control colour edits

Colour adjustments are very important in this image because all the photos must be of the same tone. There are many Photoshop tools to make theses kinds of adjustments, but to keep control over the results, use the Adjustments commands linked with the layer. This way you can make the adjustments without losing the original colour of the photo. Simply choose the Adjustment tool you want, press Cmd/Ctrl+Alt and click in the layer.



Create a gradient mask

13 Add 'leaves.psd', change the blend mode to Multiply and use Levels at 0, 1.00, 200. Duplicate the layer, flip horizontally and place it behind the woman. To make the leaves blend with the background, make a mask and use the Gradient tool set to the Foreground to Transparent option.

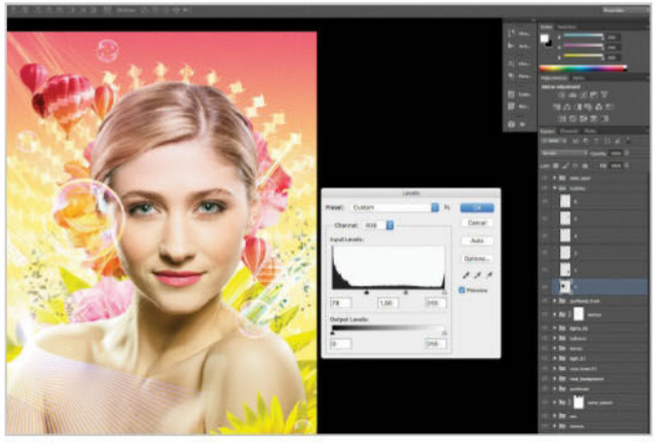


Use the Burn and Dodge tools

14 Let's bring more colour to the scene; add 'colorful_roses.jpg' and place it behind the woman's head. Use the Dodge tool to enhance the highlights on the edges of the rose and then the Burn tool to enhance the shadows.

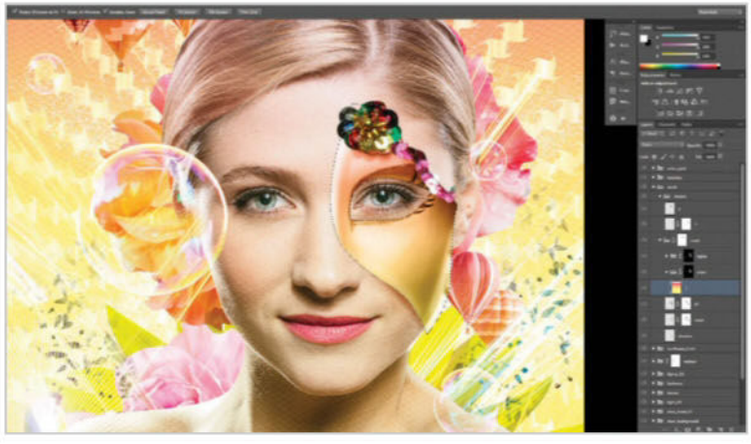
Warp it

15 Time for another element to give more movement to the scene; use the image 'lights.jpg', place it next to the woman's shoulder and change the blend mode to Screen. Then, to make the image follow the shoulder, use the Warp command (Edit>Transform>Warp).



Add bubbles

16 Use 'bubble.jpg', change the blend mode to Screen and make a colour adjustment using the Levels command set to 78, 1.00, 255. To make the scene more interesting, duplicate the layer and place a few bubbles around the woman.



Apply a mask

17 Add 'rose_01.psd'. To set the tone, make a layer group with a mask, as you have in previous steps. Make the shadow, change the blend mode to Overlay, use a 5px Gaussian Blur and then warp. Add 'flower_detail.psd', place behind the flower and change the blend mode to Screen.

Place the big flower

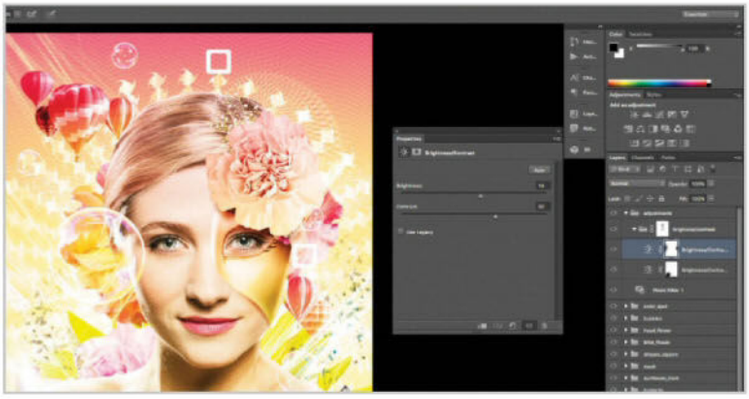
18 Add 'rose_01.psd'. To set the colour tone, make a layer group with a mask. Create the shadow, change the blend mode to Overlay, use a 5px Gaussian Blur and the Warp command. Add 'flower_detail.psd', place it behind the flower and change the blend mode to Screen.

Work with shapes

19 Let's add a few design details. Create a new layer, click on the Custom Shape tool, click on the drop-down menu icon and pick All, then set the colour to white, choose the rounded square frame and place it around the image.

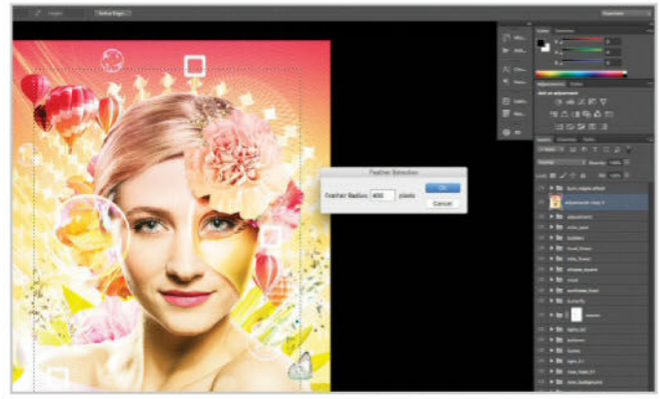
Bring in some details

20 First use 'pink_rose.jpg' and place it behind the woman, then add 'butterfly.jpg' and place it over the woman's shoulder. Finally add 'light_spin.jpg', place it behind the woman's head, change the blend mode to Screen and make a mask to erase the unnecessary part.



Make colour adjustments

21 Let's edit the colour of the image. Use a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer set to 14, 30, then another set to 5, 10 and 70% Opacity. Mask to erase any parts that the colour adjustments overexpose. Add a Photo Filter adjustment layer, set to Warming Filter 85, Density: 25%.



Create the edge effect

22 Merge and stamp all of the layers, use the Rectangular Marquee tool and make a square, as shown above. Apply a 400px feather, press delete three times and change the blend mode to Multiply. Make a mask and erase the bottom part.

What you'll learn

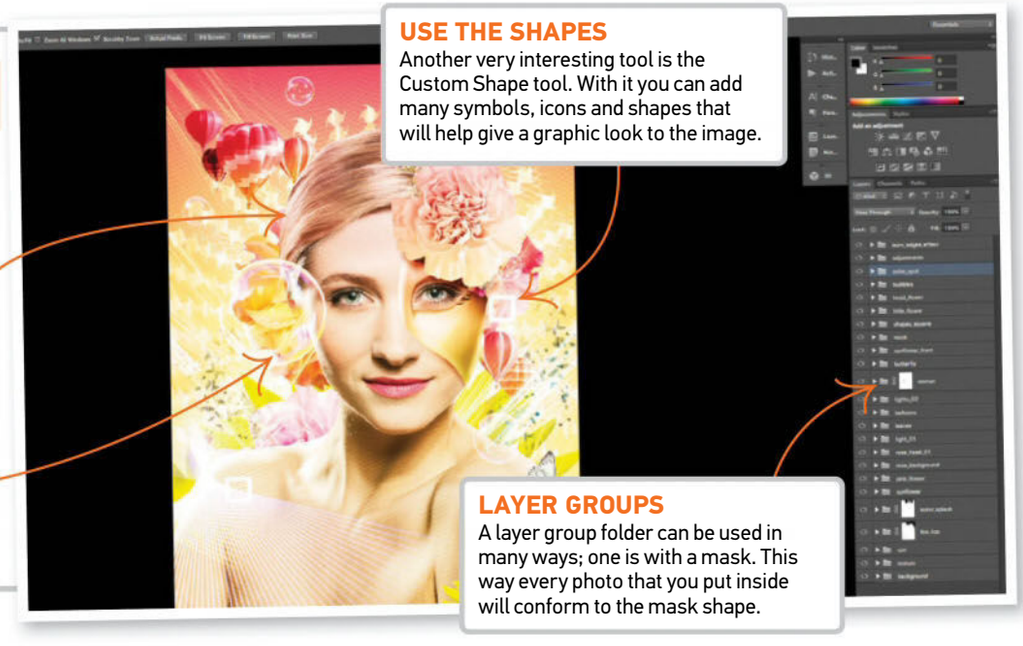
Creating a vibrant image

THE FEATHER

A very important tool to use when you create an image made up of many photos is the Feather. It makes the edges look softer, so it is easier to create the scene composition.

THE BLEND MODES

With this feature it is possible to achieve many things, such as erasing a background with just a click, or merging images in new, creative and sometimes unexpected ways.



USE THE SHAPES

Another very interesting tool is the Custom Shape tool. With it you can add many symbols, icons and shapes that will help give a graphic look to the image.

LAYER GROUPS

A layer group folder can be used in many ways; one is with a mask. This way every photo that you put inside will conform to the mask shape.

Filter Forge

Special offer for Photoshop Creative readers

80% discount

coupon: PsCreative

Powerful software for Mac and PC that lets you apply effects to your images and generate seamless textures.

- 11,000 free filters – best offer on the market
- Up to 30,000 variations per filter
- Free fully-functional 30-day trial version
- Use existing and create your own filters
- Seamlessly tiled and resolution independent
- Standalone application and Photoshop plugin

www.filterforge.com

Composite with layers and selections

Think outside the box using selection tools, blending and old-fashioned photomanipulating

The best thing about Photoshop is that it makes the impossible, possible. Placing landmarks into a cardboard box is surely a project that tests the limits of your imagination as much as your photomanipulation skills, but by immersing yourself in a project like this, you can learn more than just how to create a composition.

The skills in this tutorial are skills you can apply to a range of projects, whether you primarily use the software for editing photos, or you're a digital-art pro. Creating the fairy lights, for example, requires studying how lights react with materials. Once you know how to add fairy lights, you can apply this skill to any dark scene.

Displace is a useful skill to master, not only for applying text to cardboard boxes, but also for adding any image to any surface.

The technique of creating the cardboard box is similar to how 3D artists create models before they apply textures. By learning to build objects you can't find stock images for, you can make anything.

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

- How to use layers, blending and selections to create a busy composition

Time taken
12 hours

Expert

Mark White

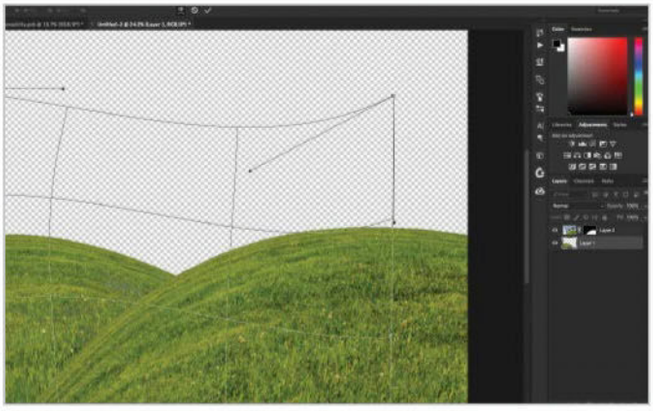
"This image was great fun to create. I photographed the image of Wembley on my phone after a concert, and my dad found the toy train set in our loft. It shows that mobile technology can really help with desktop Photoshop compositions, and that inspiration is all around us.

"As senior staff writer on **Photoshop Creative**, I've learned all kinds of quick tips to help with even the most impressive-looking pictures.

On the FileSilo

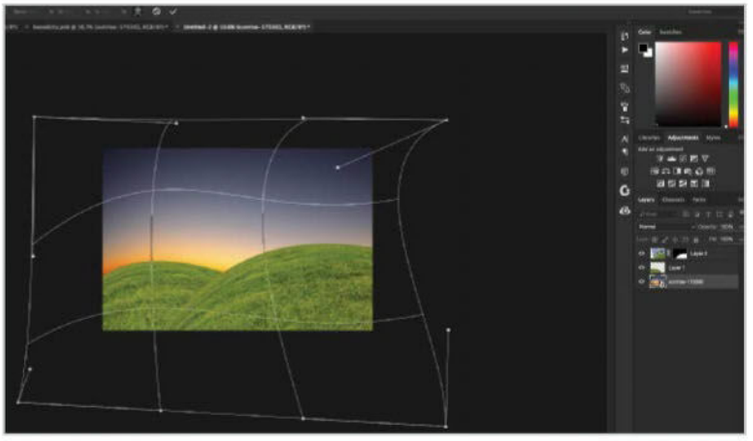
Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

LONDON
THIS WAY UP
TELEPHONE
UNDERGROUND



Create the hills

01 Start off by placing 'grass.jpg'. Select just the grass, mask, hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to Transform and then Ctrl/right-click>Warp. Bend the grass to form a hill on the right, and then do the same on the left. On a new layer, brush a 10% opaque black colour onto the left-hand hill for shade.

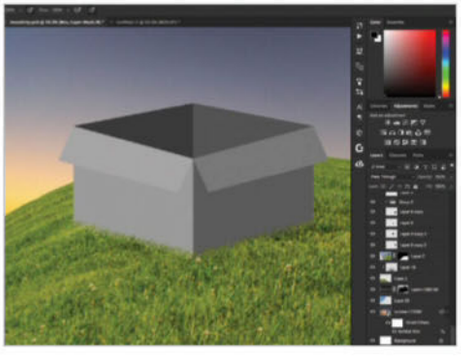


Warp the sky

02 Add 'sky.jpg' behind your hills. Using the same warping techniques, bend the sky so that it fits nicely in the backdrop, with the warmer yellows towards the left of the picture. Place 'stars.jpg', desaturate (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U) and set to Screen.

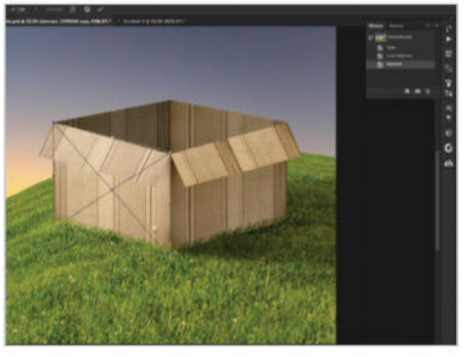
Start on the box

03 Draw a rectangle with the Marquee. Fill with #808080, and then hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to transform again. Holding Shift, Cmd/Ctrl+drag the right-hand handle and drag upwards. Duplicate, flip vertically and using Hue/Saturation, darken by -20. This will form the front of your cardboard box.



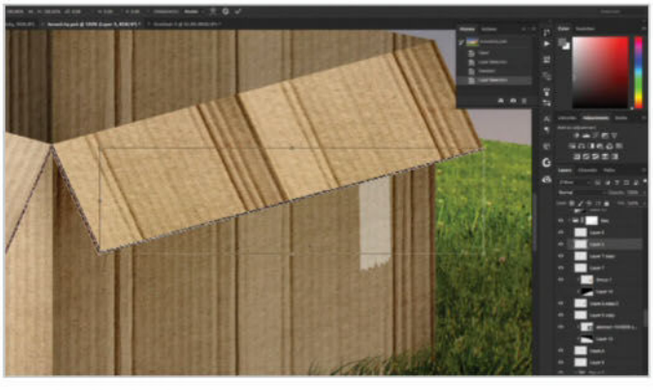
Complete the box

04 Duplicate the two layers at the front of your box, move these layers below and flip horizontally and vertically. Darken by -20 again. Select a flap for either side of the box with the Polygonal Lasso and fill in slightly lighter greys.



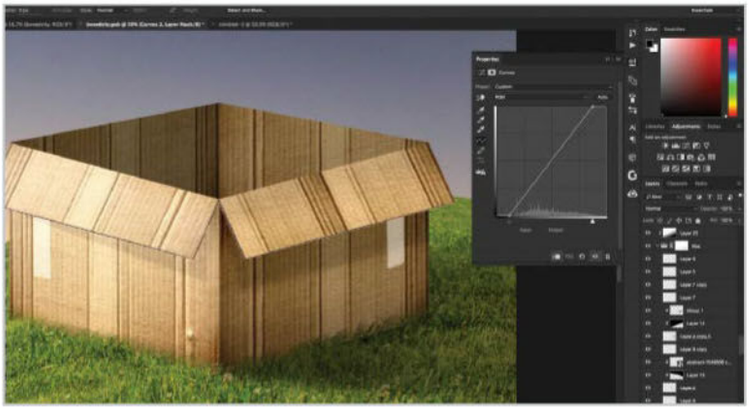
Place the texture

05 Drag 'cardboard.jpg' into the image and set to Overlay. Transform it, drag it over a side of the box, and then Alt/Opt-click the layer to Create Clipping Mask to one of the sides. Do this for each side and the two box flaps.



Embellish the box

06 Place 'cardboardedges.jpg' and crop one edge of the cardboard. Drag it and place over the flaps of the box. On a new layer with the Polygonal Lasso, select a rectangle with a jagged edge; fill in white and then set to 50% Opacity to look like tape.



Play with shading

07 Group your box layers. Clip a Curves adjustment and tweak contrast, and clip a black-to-white gradient. Using a soft black brush, create new layers, clip them to the sides of the box and shade under the flaps. Change the Opacity of these layers to 20-30%.

Write some text on the box

08 Save your work as a PSD. Use the Type tool (T) to add the word 'London', and change the text to the Gunplay font by Typodermic Fonts, supplied on the FileSilo. Go to Filter>Distort>Displace and choose: 10, 10, Stretch to Fit and Wrap Around Pixels, and then choose your current PSD.

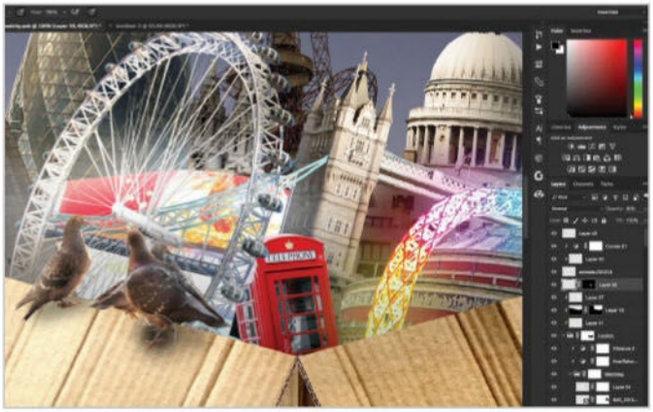
Place the buildings

09 Find the 'London' folder in the supplied resources and place the buildings into the scene. Cut each one out (this will take a while!), organise them and group them. Mask the group so they appear in the box, and shade onto the scene where necessary.

Expert tip

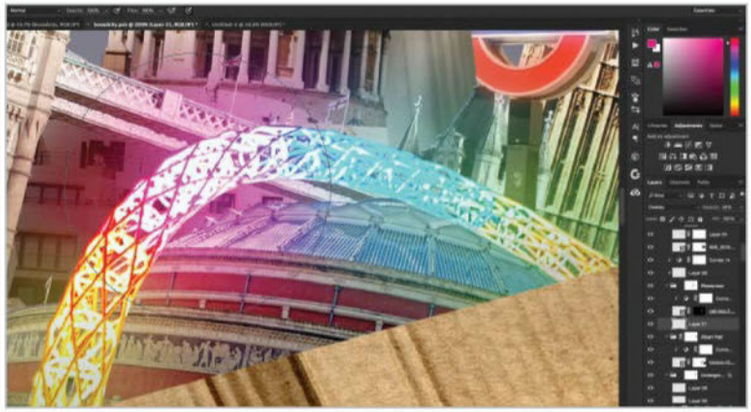
Cutting out buildings

The Pen is the best selection tool to use for cutting out buildings, but it's certainly not the only option. The Pen can help to painstakingly select around Big Ben or the Gherkin, but Select>Color Range can help select the Orbit; likewise, use the Pen to mask out the London Eye, and then get the Polygonal Lasso to mask spokes back in. However, it is worth spending a few hours cutting out buildings in order to make sure they are perfect, so avoid cutting corners (pardon the pun).



Add the pigeons

10 Using the same techniques, place 'pigeons.jpg' onto the scene, cut them out with the Pen tool, and then on a new layer below them, brush a soft black colour onto the side of the box for shadow.



Master the lighting

11 With the light sources in the box, such as Piccadilly Circus and the Wembley arch, create a new Overlay layer, set to 50% Opacity, and brush colour onto the image. Clip adjustment layers such as Curves to each of the buildings to harmonise the tone of the piece.

Set off some fireworks

12 Drop in 'fireworks.jpg' and set to Screen. To get the best out of them, add a Vibrance layer (Vibrance: +0, Saturation: +100), and Curves, then mask the effects just over the fireworks. Tweak individual colours – such as changing reds to orange for example – with the Hue/Saturation adjustment.

Draw the fairy lights

13 Choose a white, 60px, hard brush and add dots for fairy-light bulbs. Set the size to 10px, select the Pen and stroke a path that connects these dots. On a new Screen layer, 80% Opacity, choose a 200px, soft brush and in bright colours, draw in the glow of the lights.

Blur the glow

14 On a layer above the glow you've just drawn, select a 70px, 50% hard brush and in each colour, touch over each light. Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and choose Angle: -60, Distance: 251px. Use a Bevel/Emboss layer style (Ctrl/right-click the layer) on the pen-drawn chain to give it a 3D look.

Expert tip

Blending together

There's no set way to blend a group of objects together in Photoshop, but clipping colour and adjustments to individual layers can definitely help. Add Curves to try and change the brightness and tone of an image, then clip a Hue/Saturation layer to bring the saturation in line with the scene. Finally, add a new clipped layer set to Color and brush subtle colour from the scene – such as the oranges of the sunrise – to make a building look more natural in the picture.

Repeat with Dubai

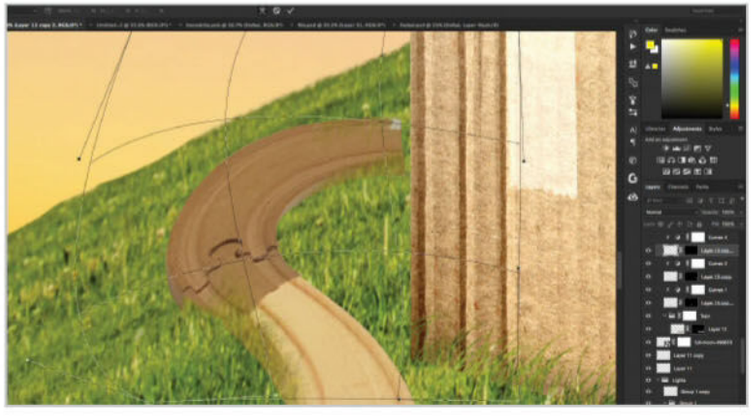
15 With London complete on the right-hand side of the image, experiment with what you can create for Dubai, using the 'Dubai' folder on the FileSilo. Use the same techniques to create the box and cut out the buildings, then save as a new PSD.

Make a Rio box

16 Create a box for Rio de Janeiro too, using the bunting, confetti (cut out using Select>Color Range and masking out the light blue), the football and the parrots. Save this as a PSD, and then insert Dubai and Rio onto the left-hand side of your original project.

Place the track

17 Place 'train2.jpg' into the image. Cut out the train, the carriages and the track using the Pen tool, mask and then hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to Transform the layer. Stretch it like you can see in the image above.

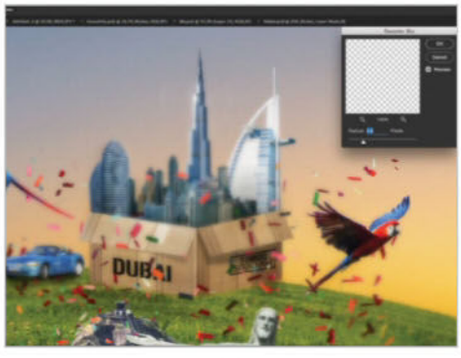


Extend the line

18 Using 'train3.jpg', insert bits of the train line into the image and then warp so that the track extends around the London box. Use clipping masks again to blend different bits of track together. Place 'train3.jpg' around Rio and add 'train1.jpg' to the track.

Retouch the train

19 Use the Spot Healing tool to touch-up the scratches on the train and the carriages. Brush soft, 20% opaque green onto the silver of the wheels to suggest the grass is reflecting onto them. Brush red, blue, green and yellow onto where the carriages shine too brightly.



Create depth of field

20 Duplicate your Dubai box and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur; choose 4px and hit OK. Set this layer to 80% Opacity; this will create the illusion that it is in the distance. Do the same for Rio and choose 30% Opacity.

Dodge and burn

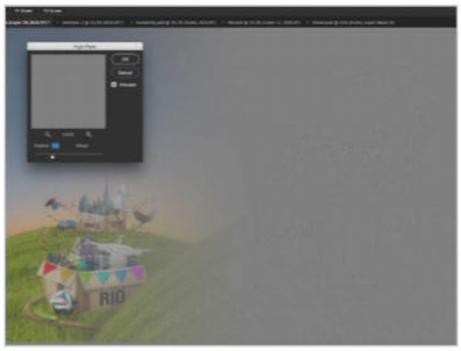
21 Create a new layer and fill it with #808080 before setting the layer to Overlay at 50% Opacity. With the Dodge and Burn tools, manually brush in extra lighting and shading to the entire piece, such as on the trains and the sides of buildings that need light and shade.

Add a lens flare

22 Photoshop's default lens flares can look a bit clichéd if you use them too often, but we've supplied two that you can add to your composition. Place either of them into the piece, over the Shard and set to Screen, 25% Opacity.

Create a soft focus

23 Merge everything into one layer at the top of the stack (Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E). Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and choose 50px; hit OK, reduce to 50% Opacity, set to Soft Light and then clip a Hue/Saturation adjustment of -20 Saturation. This is great for blending the image a little further.

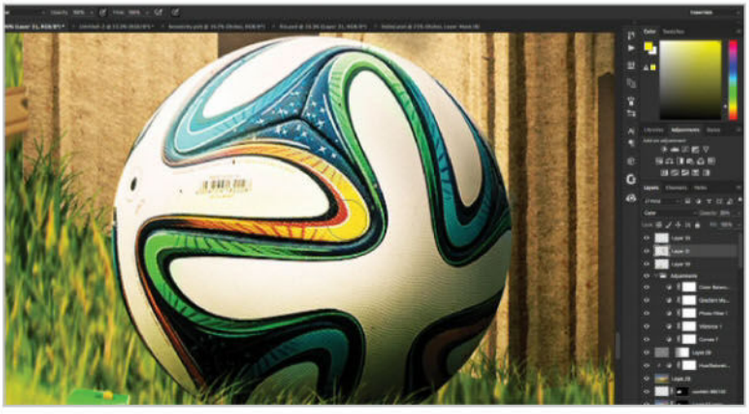


Sharpen up

24 The soft focus blurs things, but we can bring out the details again. Go to Filter>Other>High Pass, choose a Radius of 5px and then set to the Overlay blend mode. Add a mask and drag a #808080 to white gradient from left to right to keep Rio and Dubai a little blurrier.

Adjust colours and tones

25 Adjustment layers can be fantastic fun to experiment with, as you try and unify the colours and tones of your piece. Play with the Curves, Gradient Map, Photo Filter and Vibrance; we've supplied the adjustments we made as an action on the FileSilo.



Recolour objects

26 Finally on a new layer, set to Color and at 30% Opacity, brush soft colour onto the brighter aspects of the picture to bring out some of the saturation that might have been lost in the adjustments, such as the football, the train around Brazil or the phone box in the London scene.

Closer look

Mastering the details

PLACE THE MOON

Add in 'moon.jpg', set it to Screen, and reduce to 30% Opacity. Select a black, 50% opaque, soft brush and draw over one side.

MASK GRASS

Group all your box elements together, hit mask then select the default Photoshop grass brush. Select black and brush along the bottom; do this for the train track, too.

REFLECT THE FIREWORK

Duplicate your fireworks, set to 50% Opacity, and go to Filter>Distort>Ripple. Choose Amount: 200% and clip to the Gherkin layer to make it look like it's being reflected.

MAKING BUILDINGS GLOW

For brighter landmarks such as Piccadilly Circus and Wembley, duplicate and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Choose 10px and set to Screen, 50% Opacity.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

How to use masks, blend modes and adjustment layers

Time taken

5 hours

Expert

Rodrigo Marinelli

"I always like to mix different kinds of styles, like surrealism with realism. This gives me the possibility to create something absolutely new and is a great exercise because it makes me find new ways to make the image more interesting.

"I'm an art director and have 11 years of experience working in advertising agencies. I learned and am still learning to use Photoshop through following tutorials."

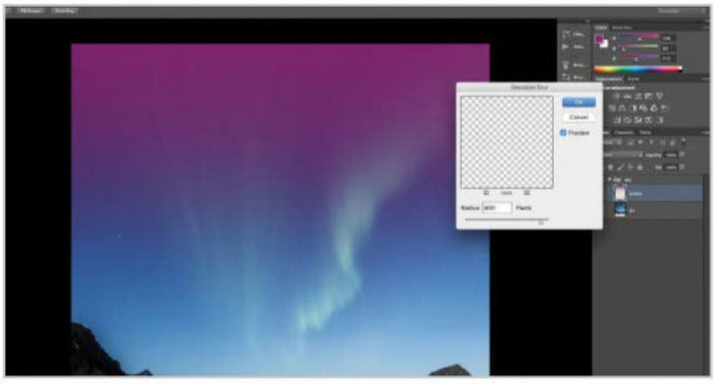
Make fun compositions with masks

Use masks, blend modes, adjustment layers and many other tools to place a polar bear in a bottle!

With Photoshop it is possible to explore many art styles. In this case, let's explore the surreal style with realism. This is a fascinating world because it's possible to make amazing scenes and learn new ways to develop your own style. Incorporating realism into your art is also a great creative exercise – you need to generate the highlights, shadows and all of the details using just your imagination.

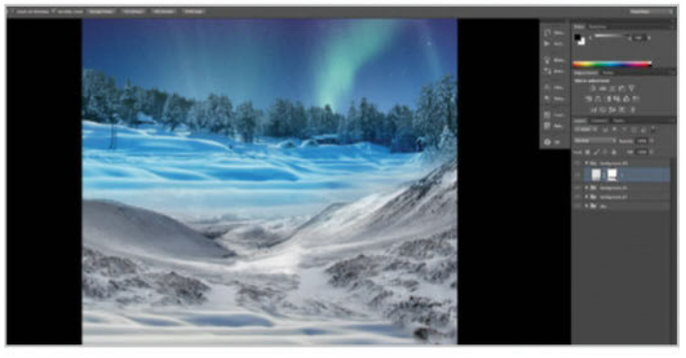
In this tutorial we're going to create a very interesting scene. We're going to put a polar bear into a bottle and make a piece of art with many things happening, such as a fisherman on top of the bottle fishing in a frozen lake and skiers playing around the bear in the bottle.

To create this tutorial we'll be using a whole range of tools, such as the Pen tool to create a ski track, the Warp tool to squeeze the bear into the bottle, the various blending modes to add textures and to make light effects, and adjustment layers to make the final image nice and vibrant. Plus, we'll be masking in order to incorporate all of the images. So, grab your coat and let's place a polar bear into a bottle!



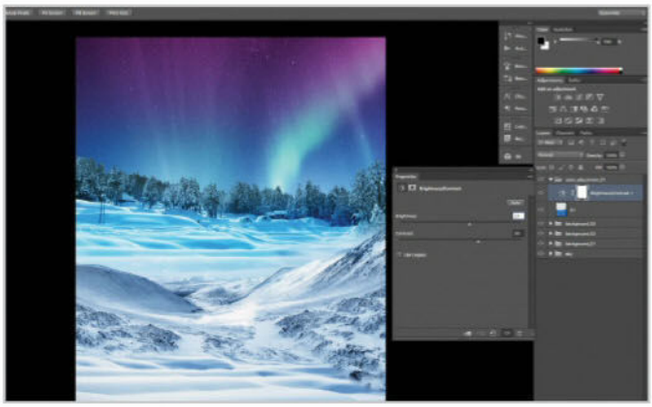
Place the sky

01 Create a new document at 230x310mm and add 'sky.jpg'. Make a new layer, draw a rectangle, fill with #891c71 and place it at the top of the image. Use the Gaussian Blur filter (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) at 600px and change the blend mode to Color, 80% Opacity.



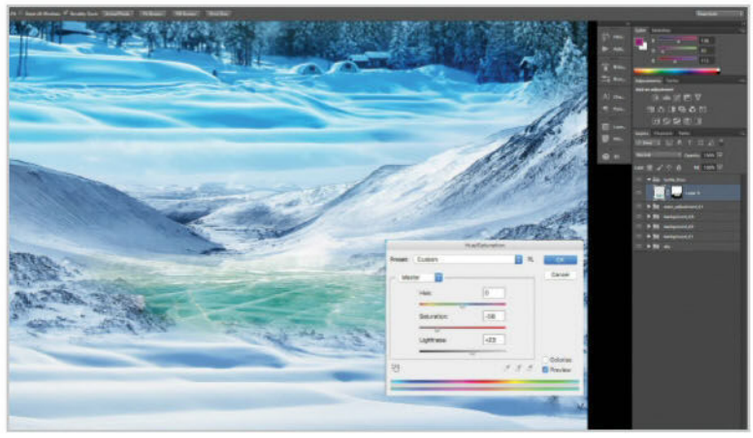
Mix the background

02 Add the 01 layer from 'snow_background.psd', the 01 layer from 'mountain.psd' and the 02 layer from 'snow_background.psd'. To blend the images select the layer, press the Add Layer Mask button, pick black as your colour and use the Brush tool to erase the edges of the photo.



Set the colour tone

03 Let's use a colour adjustment layer to set the colour tone. Use a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer set to 24, 30. Make a new layer, set the colour to #2c63c2, change the blend mode to Color at 30% Opacity, pick a soft brush and paint the base of the scene.

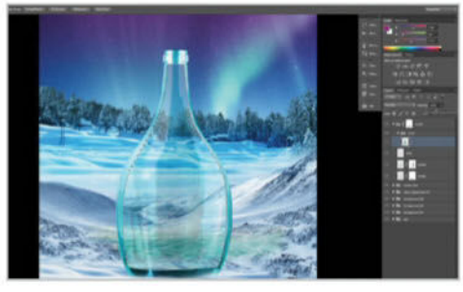


Add frozen details

04 Add 'frozen_river.psd' and place it in the centre of the scene. Make a mask to erase the unnecessary parts and use Hue/Saturation set to 0, -58, +23. Pick white as your colour and with a soft brush, make some highlights in the centre of the scene.

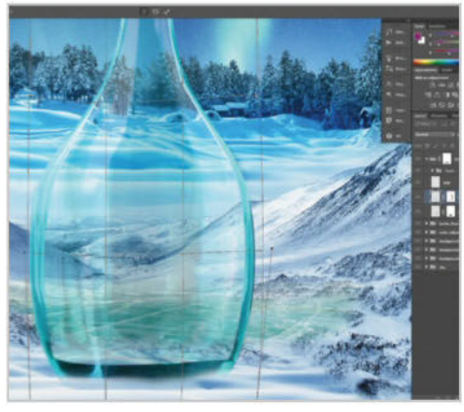
Place the bottle

05 Add 'glass.psd', change the Opacity to 70%, and use Warp (Edit>Transform>Warp) to make the shape of the bottle. Make some colour adjustments using Color Balance (-100, 0, 50) and Levels (0, 2.40, 202). Finally, make a mask and erase the unnecessary parts at the base of the bottle.



Tweak the front of the bottle

06 Activate the selection of the bottle, use the Contract command (Select>Modify>Contract) set to 30px. Select the Polygonal Lasso tool, Ctrl/right-click and choose Layer via Copy. Activate the selection of the new layer, select the bottle layer and press delete. Change the opacity of the new layer to 30%.



Work on the bottle details

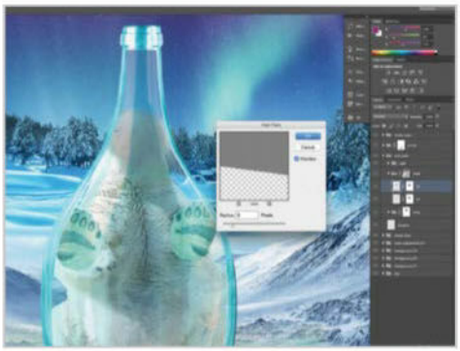
07 To give more depth, duplicate the bottle layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and use Warp to adjust the shape, as shown. This will enhance the highlights on the side.

Use the Feather command

08 Use 'snow_base.psd' and place it in front of the bottle. Activate the layer selection, use the Feather (Shift+F6) set to 3px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) and press delete four times. Make some colour adjustments with Color Balance (-100, 0, 0) and Brightness/Contrast (55, 30). Finally, make a mask to erase the unnecessary parts.

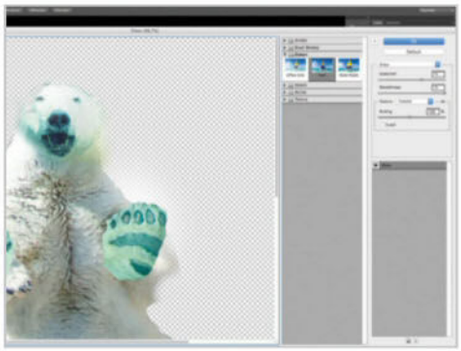
Introduce the polar bear

09 Add 'polar_bear.psd' and place it behind the bottle. Use the Feather command at 3px, Color Balance (-100, 0, +52) and Levels (0, 1.00, 224). Use the Warp tool to make the polar bear body fill the bottle shape, then use masks to erase the unnecessary parts.



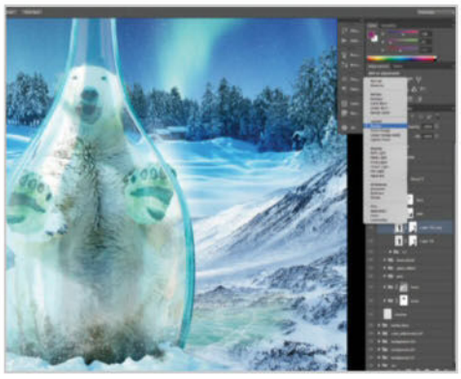
Add the head and paws

10 Add 'polar_bear_head.jpg' and make a mask to blend it with the image. Duplicate the layer, apply the High Pass filter (Filter>Other>High Pass) at 3px and change the blend mode to Overlay. Finally, add the layers 01/02 from 'bear_paw.psd' and place as shown above.



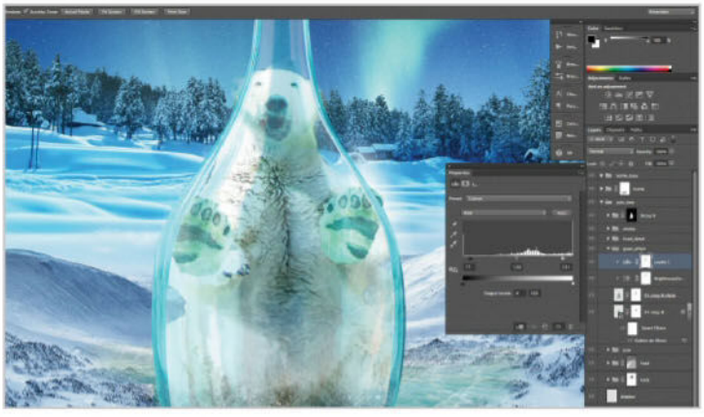
Create a glass effect

11 Duplicate all the polar bear layers and merge (Cmd/Ctrl+E). Go to the Filter menu and choose the option 'Convert to Smart Filter', then go to the Filter Gallery, choose the Distort filters and pick the Glass filter, with Distortion: 13, Smoothness: 15 and Texture: 120%.



Blend the scene

12 Let's add elements to blend the polar bear and the bottle with the background. To do that use 'smoke.psd', change the blend mode to Screen and place it in front and around the bottle layer. To enhance the details, see the Expert Edit.

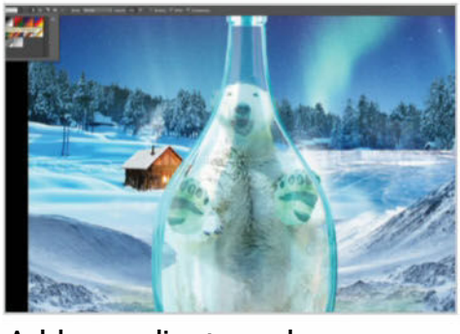


Add vibrancy

13 To make the bear look more vibrant, go to the Adjustments panel, choose Levels (17, 1.00, 231). Place above the glass effect layer, hold Cmd/Ctrl+Alt and click on the glass effect layer. Repeat this procedure to link a Brightness/Contrast layer (0, 44).

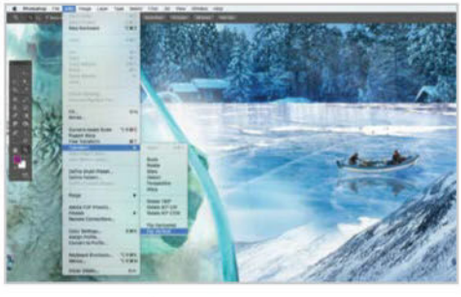
Compose the background

14 Let's start to compose the background. Add 'log_cabin.jpg' and place it behind the bear bottle. Use the Burn tool to enhance the shadows of the image, and the Dodge tool to enhance the highlights, especially the window light.



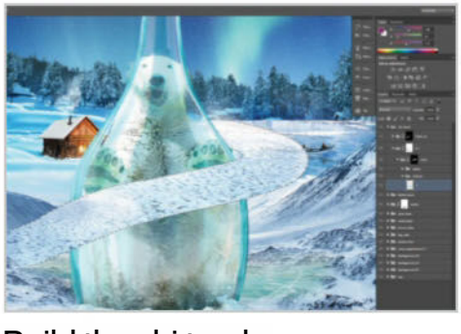
Add a gradient mask

15 Add 'frozen_river.psd' to the scene, make a colour adjustment using Hue/Saturation set to 0, 0, 21. To blend the image with the scene, make a mask, choose the Gradient tool, go to the Gradient Editor and choose the option Foreground to Transparent with 40% Opacity. Erase unnecessary parts.



Place the fishing boat

16 Add 'boat.jpg' and place it in the frozen lake, change the colour tone with Hue/Saturation (0, -40, 0) and apply a feather set to 3px. To make the reflection of the boat, duplicate the layer, flip it vertically (Edit> Transform>Flip Vertically), change the Opacity to 50%. Then apply the Gaussian Blur filter set to 1px.



Build the ski track

17 With the Pen tool, draw the shape of a ski track, activate the selection, create a layer group (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and press the Add Layer Mask button. Place 'ice_texture.psd' inside the layer folder and make some adjustments with Levels (0, 1.00, 202) and Color Balance (-66, 0, 0).

Expert edit

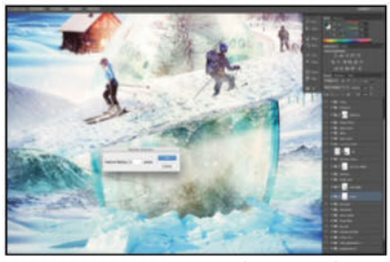
Finalise the extra details

Add textures (step 12)

01 Make a layer group with the bottle shape mask, add 'glass_texture.jpg', 'glass_texture_01' and 'glass_texture_02.jpg', use Hue/Saturation (0, -100, 0), use Levels to enhance the shadows, and change the blend mode to Screen.

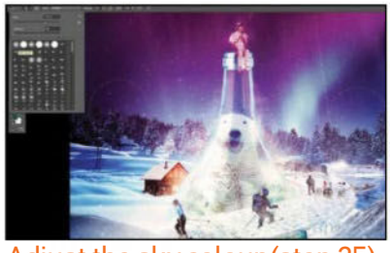
Make a track shadow (step 20)

02 Draw the shadow and paint it with #1e444d, change the blend mode to Soft Light, use the Warp tool to adjust the shape and add a Gaussian Blur of 26px.



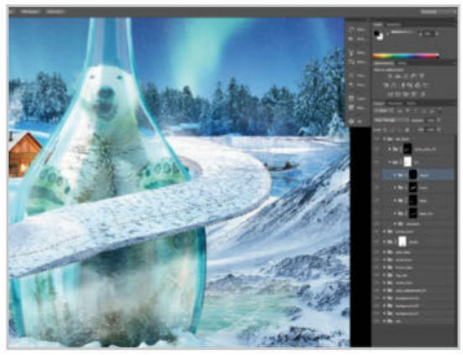
Create a mountain (step 20)

03 Add the 02 layer from 'mountain.psd' and place it as shown above. Use the Feather command at 3px and Color Balance set to -50, 0, 0.



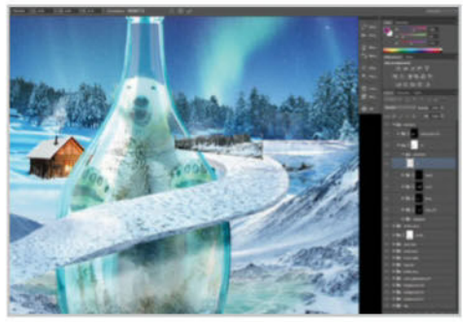
Adjust the sky colour (step 25)

04 To mix the sky colour with the trees, use a soft brush with the colour #1e444d, paint the top of the trees and change the blend mode to Color.



Give depth to the ski track

18 To give more depth to the ski track, use the Pen tool and draw the shape of the track's bottom, make layer groups with masks as you did in the previous step, and place 'ice_texture.psd' inside. To contrast with the top of the track, use the darker part of the photo.

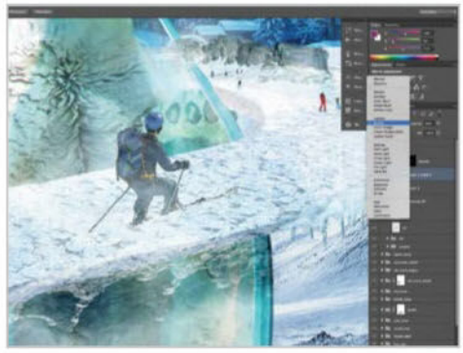


Add a mountain and highlights

19 Add 'ski_track_mountain.psd', use Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T), hold the Cmd/Ctrl button, adjust the angle as shown in the image above, and set the colour tone with Levels (0, 1.52, 255). Now for the highlights; add the 'smoke.psd' image, change the blend mode to Screen and place it above the ski track and the mountain.

Create details

20 Add 'ski_track_detail.jpg', make a colour adjustment using Levels set to 115, 1.00, 255, change the blend mode to Screen and place it as shown here. Adjust the angle of the photo as you did in the previous step. Also add 'ice_detail.psd'. Make masks to blend the images with the track and see the Expert Edit for even more details.



Add skiers

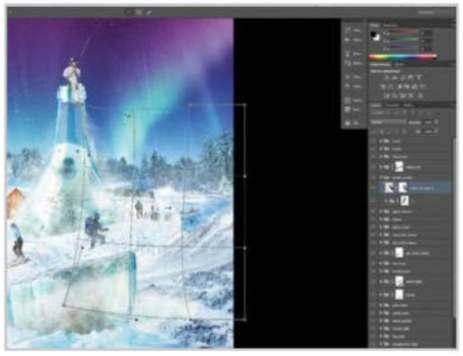
21 Now add 'skier.jpg' and 'skier_02.jpg' to the scene. First use the feather with 2px, then activate the selection of the skiers and make a layer folder with mask, just like step 17. Place inside the folder 'smoke.psd' and change the blend mode to screen.

Fill the track

22 Add a few more images to fill the ski track. First add the husky.jpg and use the feather with 2px, then add 'ski_track_people.psd' and place it just like the image. Make a mask to blend the image with the scene and use Levels (0/1,00/212) and Color Balance (-48/0/0).

Place the fisherman

23 Now add 'fisherman.psd' and place it in the top of the bottle. With the Rectangular Marquee tool, make the fishing line and change the blend mode to Soft Light. Add 'water_splash.psd' and place it in the frozen river, giving the impression that he is fishing.



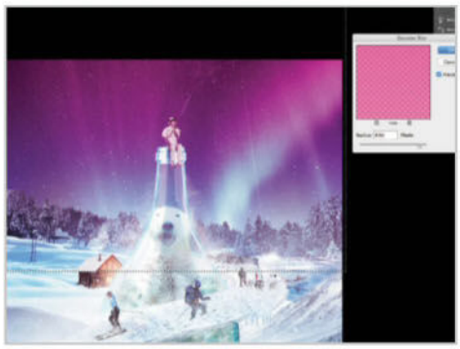
Work on the scene's details

24 First add 'smoke.psd', change the blend mode to Screen and place it at the side of the bottle. Use the Warp tool to adjust the shape. Add a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer (6, 15). Now add 'snow.psd', and change the blend mode to Screen.

Expert tip

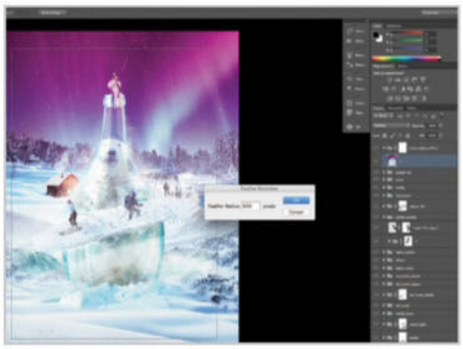
Darken the edges

Darkening the edges of an image is a very useful technique, no matter what style you are working in. This helps to keep the main focus in the centre of the image and to enhance the details of the scene. To have more control, use the Pen tool to draw the parts that you want to darken. Pick the Eyedropper tool, select a colour from where you want to darken, make the shape, use Gaussian Blur at 600px and change the blend mode to Multiply.



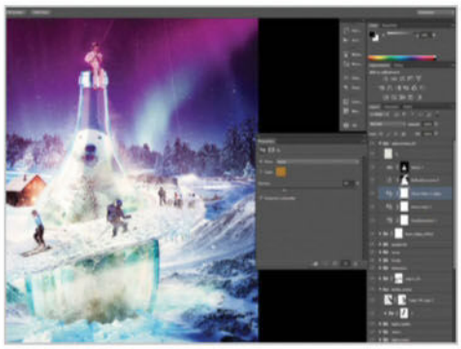
Turn the sky purple

25 With the Rectangular Marquee tool, make a rectangle and paint it with #dd028b, change the blend mode to Color at 50% Opacity, then use the Gaussian Blur filter at 530px. To blend the colour with the sky, use the Gradient tool to make a mask, just as you did in step 15. See the Expert Edit for more.



Darken the edges

26 Duplicate all the layers and merge (Cmd/Ctrl+E). With the Rectangular Marquee tool, make a square in the centre of the image, use the Feather command at 500px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I), press delete three times and change the blend mode to Multiply.



Make final adjustments

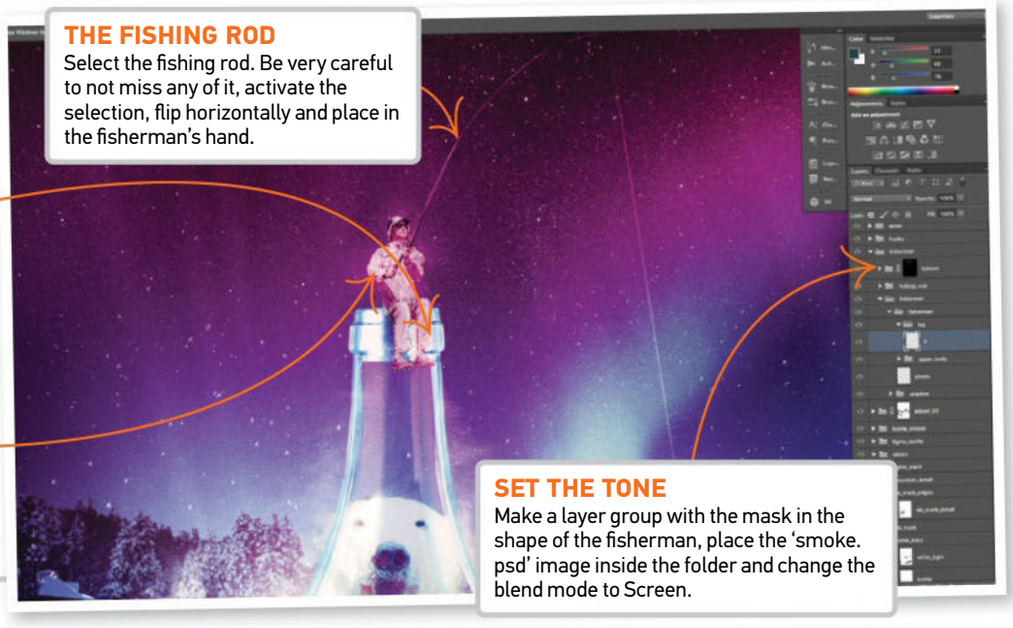
27 Go to the Adjustment menu and use Hue/Saturation (0, +30), Photo Filter (Sepia, Density: 25%), Brightness/Contrast (0, 43), Levels (63, 1.00, 255). Pick the colour #fbf9c7 and use the Brush tool to paint the centre of the image. Change the blend mode to Color at 15% Opacity.

Closer look

Adding the fisherman

DUPLICATE THE LEG
Add the photo 'fisherman.jpg', and then use the Pen tool to make a selection of the leg. Select the Polygonal Lasso tool, Ctrl/right-click and choose Layer via Copy.

THE UPPER BODY
Duplicate the upper body. Activate the selection of the new layer, choose the original layer and press delete. Finally flip the upper body horizontally using Edit>Transform.



THE FISHING ROD
Select the fishing rod. Be very careful to not miss any of it, activate the selection, flip horizontally and place in the fisherman's hand.

SET THE TONE
Make a layer group with the mask in the shape of the fisherman, place the 'smoke.psd' image inside the folder and change the blend mode to Screen.

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

How to use blur filters, Transform controls and selection techniques

Time taken

3 hours

Expert

Simon Skellon

"Creating a scene like this is a really great way to explore layers and how it's possible to transform them to create perspective from the foreground to background.

"I have been working with Photoshop for more than 10 years, and even to this day I find myself learning new techniques and discovering new things in the program."

Play with perspective

Create an extraordinary image with layers and transform options

The techniques involved in creating this composition go back to the basics. From making selections with tools including the Quick Selection, Magic Wand and Brushes, to using dodging and burning techniques to blend layers. The trick is in the lighting and making sure everything that appears in the image matches in terms of highlights and shadows. Once this has been fixed, the fun can begin!

The Transform controls enable us to alter the size and angles of images, but the trick is choosing the right ones to start with. Images that have a similar perspective already will be much easier to composite into a larger scene like this.

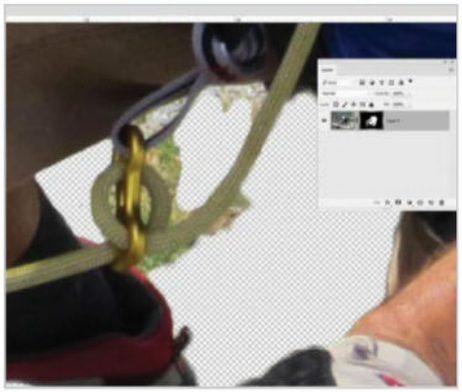
The options for an image that plays with perspective are endless, so grab your own images or use the ones we've supplied and then follow along step by step.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Select the climber

01 Open up the image of the climber from the FileSilo, and begin by selecting the man using the Quick Selection tool. If the selection goes over onto the background, hold Opt/Alt to remove those bits. We can also use the Brush tool to tidy up the selection later on.



Tidy the selection

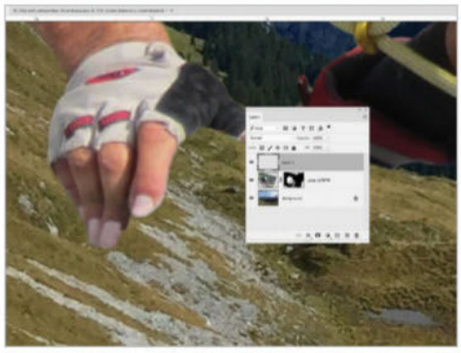
02 Press the Layer Mask button in the Layers palette. The Quick Selection is not perfect, so use a black brush (B) at 75% Hardness to tidy up the rough edges of the selection area (use a Soft Round brush in Elements). Be sure to edit on the layer's mask and not the pixels.

Transfer to landscape

03 Open the landscape image. Go back to the climber, Ctrl/right-click on its layer and select Duplicate Layer. Choose the landscape image from the drop-down menu and hit OK. The climber should now appear on the landscape.

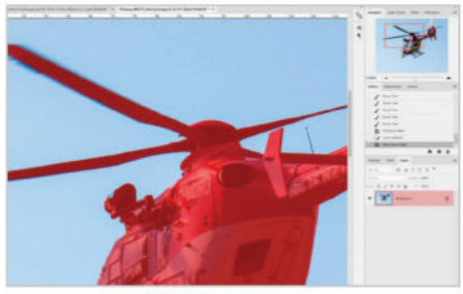
Position the climber

04 Press Cmd/Ctrl+T to load Transform and go to Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal to change the way he is facing (Image>Rotate in Elements). Then use the corner points of the transform box, holding Shift, to shrink the man and rotate to fit into place on the landscape. Press Enter to confirm the transform.



Rebuild the fingers

05 To reconstruct the ends of the fingers on his right hand, add a new layer and select the Clone Stamp tool (S). In the Options bar, set the tool to Sample All Layers. Holding Opt/Alt, click on a part of existing nail, then gently brush over the missing ends.

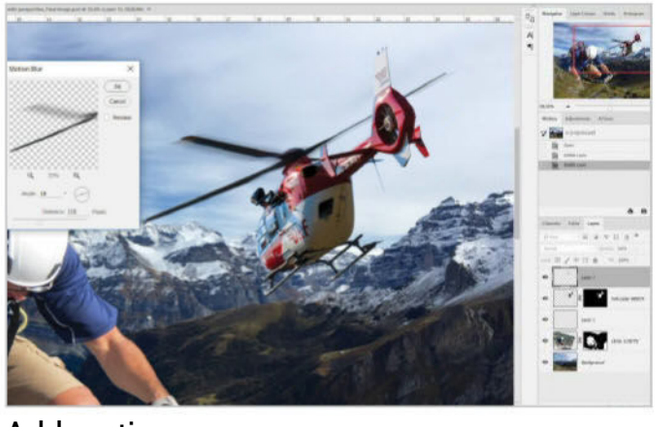


Select the helicopter

06 Load up the helicopter file from the resources and use the Quick Selection tool, set to a small diameter of 15px, to select the helicopter from the sky. Pressing Q (backslash in Elements) during the selection process will bring up the Quick Mask mode (a red overlay) and enable you to use brushes to paint on the selection in smaller areas.

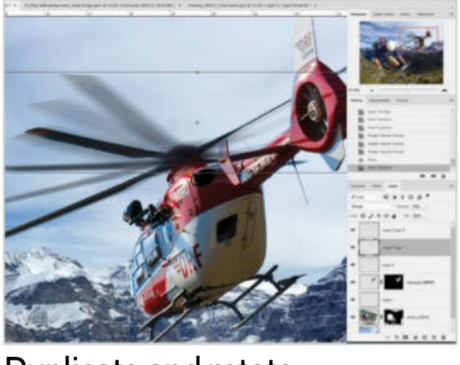
Lasso the blades

07 Add a new layer mask and then duplicate the layer onto the landscape image (as we did for the climber). To make the blades blurry, first use the Polygonal Lasso tool (L) to make a selection area around just the blades. Press Cmd/Ctrl+C then Cmd/Ctrl+V to copy and paste them onto a separate layer.



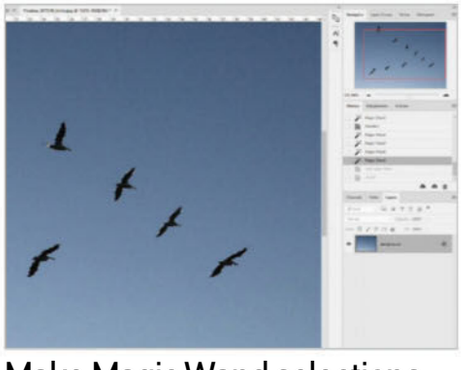
Add motion

08 Go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and set Distance to 110 and Angle to 18. Press OK and then press Cmd/Ctrl+J three times to duplicate the layer (if you're using Photoshop CC, try out the Spin Blur filter under Filter>Blur Gallery).



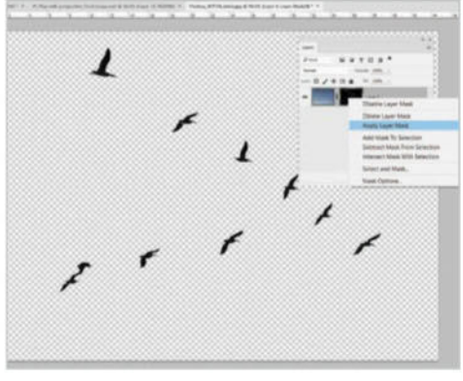
Duplicate and rotate

09 For each of the duplicate layers, use the Free Transform command to rotate their position so it looks as though they are spinning. Use the Distort transform to make them appear more natural by reshaping the perspective.



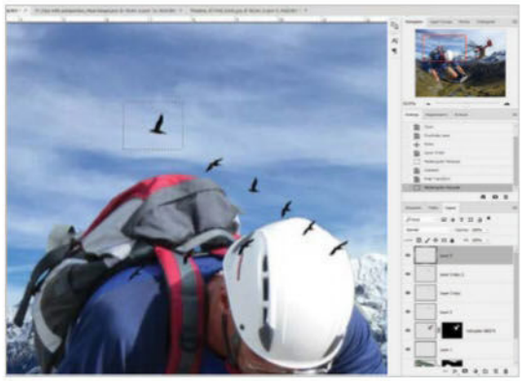
Make Magic Wand selections

10 Open up the image of the birds and select the Magic Wand tool (under the Quick Selection tool). Set the Tolerance value to 34 in the Options bar and click on the sky to select around the birds. Hold Shift to select additional areas.



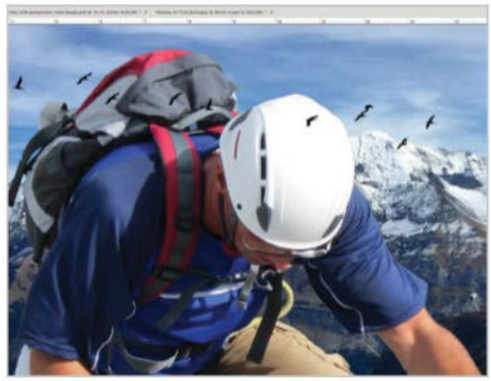
Invert and apply mask

11 Add a layer mask to the bird's layer, then press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert the area. The birds should now be showing and the sky hidden. Ctrl/right-click on the layer mask's thumbnail, then select Apply Layer Mask.



Shrink the birds

12 Ctrl/right-click the layer and duplicate it into the main image. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and use a corner point to shrink the size of the birds slightly, holding Shift to constrain proportions. Press M for the Rectangular Marquee tool and draw a selection around one of the birds.



Separate the birds

13 With the selection active, press Cmd/Ctrl+X and then Cmd/Ctrl+V to cut and paste the bird onto its own layer. Repeat this for each of the birds on this layer. This will enable each bird to be repositioned across the sky to fit around the climber.

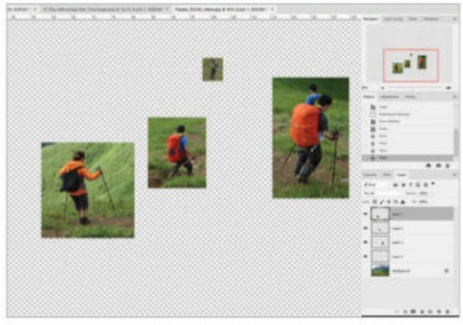
Expert tip

Soften the harsh edges

When cutting out subjects from their backgrounds and placing them on new backgrounds, the edges can more often than not appear jagged or sharp. This instantly prevents the overall composition from looking realistic, so you really want to do all you can to avoid harsh edges. You can easily soften harsh edges around cutouts using the Blur tool set to 50%. Simply run the tool around the edge of the subject, such as the people, to blend them into the image.

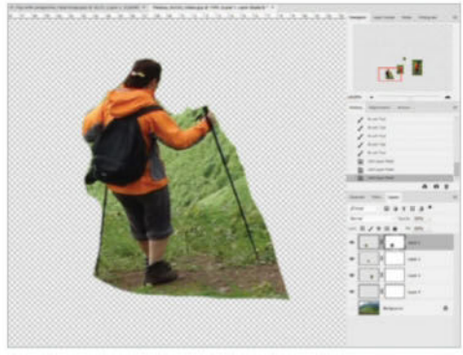
Add a motion blur effect

14 Group the bird layers together by Shift-clicking on the first and last layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+G. Go to the Filter menu and down to Convert for Smart Filters (in Elements, press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge). Go down to the Blur filters and choose Motion Blur. Set Angle to 12 and Distance to 5 pixels. Hit OK to add movement.



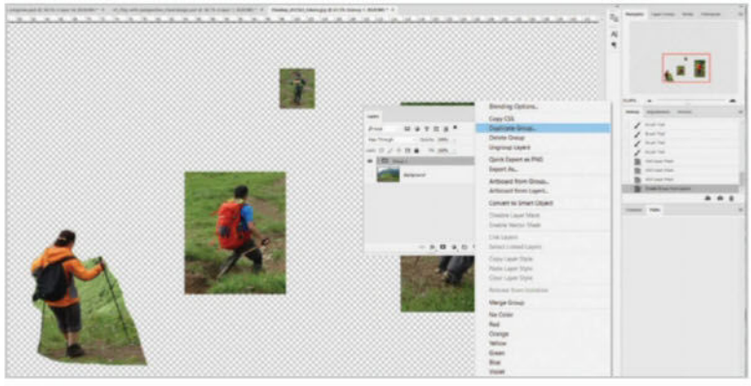
Introduce more hikers

15 Open up the image of the people hiking from your resources. Use the Rectangular Marquee tool to draw a selection around a person in the foreground. Copy and paste the person onto its own layer. Do this for three or four of the other people, then hide the Background layer.



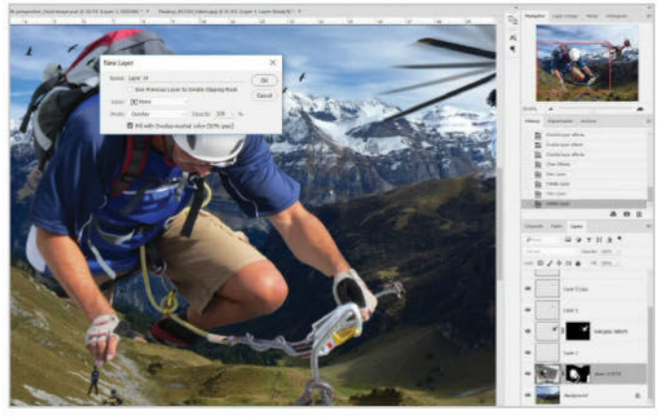
Mask away the background

16 Select the Brush tool (B) and set its Size to 25px, Hardness to 75% and Opacity to 100%. Add a layer mask to each layer and using black, use the Brush tool to remove the remaining grass areas around the people.



Add the people

17 Select the layers (minus the Background) and press Cmd/Ctrl+G to group them together, and then Ctrl/right-click on the group and select Duplicate Group. Select the main image under Destination to transfer them into the composition (in Elements, you need to duplicate the layers separately).

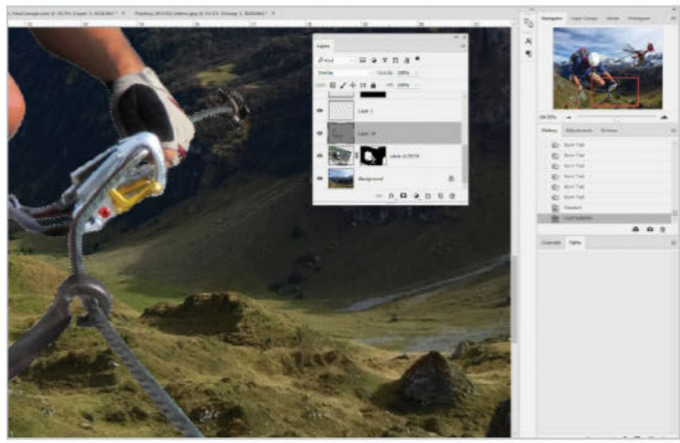


Blend the scene

18 Now all the objects are in place, we can start blending. Click on the climber's layer, and go to Layer>New>Layer. In the New Layer dialog, set Mode to Overlay and tick the 'Fill with Overlay-neutral color (50% gray)' box. Hit OK to add.

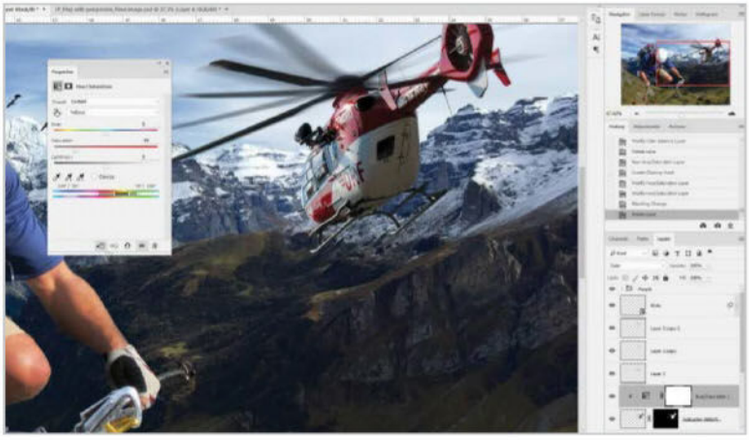
Add depth

19 Locate the Burn tool and set its Range to Shadows and Exposure to 40%. Cmd/Ctrl-click the layer mask of the climber to activate it as a selection. On the layer created in the previous step, brush under the climber's arms and hands to darken the shadows.



Precision burning

20 Use a smaller size brush with the Burn tool for the small sections between the ropes to blend them into the scene. Keeping the selection active will help prevent the burn effect from spilling onto the background.



Blend the helicopter

21 Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer above the helicopter's layer. Inside the adjustment, change the colour from Master to Blues and reduce the Saturation slider down to -90. Do the same for Yellows.

Blend the people

22 Select all the people layers and go to Edit>Transform> Flip Horizontal. This will help to match the light sources within the scene. Add a new layer below the people, and use a soft brush set to 10% Opacity to brush in faint shadows away from the people's feet.

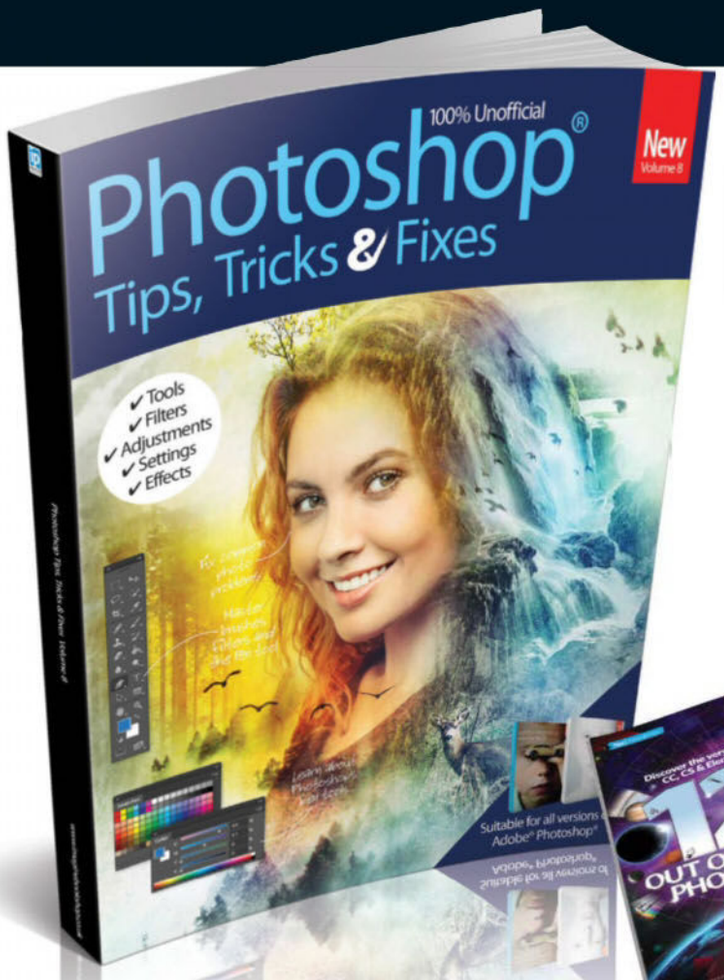
What can go wrong

Direction of light

What can make or break a composition such as this is the direction of the lighting that falls onto each subject. Because we're adding new people and objects into the scene, we want to make sure that the lighting for each layer is the same. Observing which side the highlights fall onto will soon tell us where it needs to sit.

Sometimes this problem can be fixed by simply flipping the object on its horizontal axis. But this will obviously change the way the subject is facing as well, so it doesn't always work. Instead, we can use a combination of the Levels adjustment and the Dodge and Burn tools to add highlights and darken one side to match the overall scene.

From the makers of Photoshop creative



Photoshop Tips, Tricks & Fixes

The new volume of Photoshop Tips, Tricks & Fixes will demonstrate the full spectrum of what this amazing program can achieve. Packed with top tips, from those first photo edits all the way through to beautifully rendered paintings.

Also available...

A world of content at your fingertips

Whether you love gaming, history, animals, photography, Photoshop, sci-fi or anything in between, every magazine and bookazine from Imagine Publishing is packed with expert advice and fascinating facts.

BUY YOUR COPY TODAY

Print edition available at www.imagineshop.co.uk

Digital edition available at www.greatdigitalmags.com

Print Tablet Phone Desktop

Light

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

How to use Outer Glow, masks and blend modes for a fun text effect

Time taken

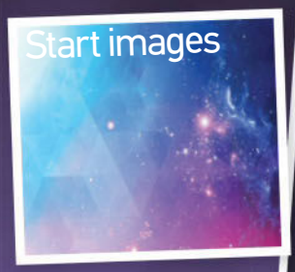
1 hour

Expert

Andre Villanueva

"I love adding glow effects to my compositions. Layer styles, blend modes and the trusty ol' Brush tool are my favourite ways to apply them. They can add such a magical element to an image, and create fun text effects.

"I discovered Photoshop when studying web design. I'm now art director for a tech company, soothing my inner instructor by sharing techniques with readers."



Create a glowing text effect

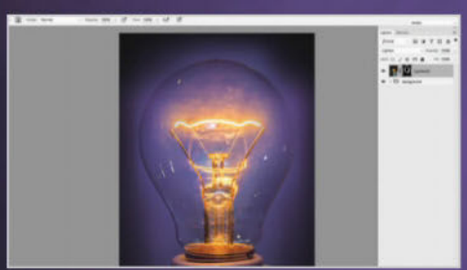
Replace a light bulb's filament with text, then set it alight with Gaussian Blur, Outer Glow, masks and blend modes

Lighting effects are great. Whether it's introducing subtle light to a scene or adding intense atmospheric illumination, lighting is usually a welcome (and oftentimes necessary) part of the composition equation.

Here you'll have a little fun with a light bulb photo (don't be alarmed – the filament has been widened to allow for larger text). You'll place other bulb photos and mask them to borrow some reflections. Next, you'll paint out the central part of the filament and add text. Make sure you use a font where the letters connect. You may also manually make connections. Use a hard-edged brush to paint white, or use the Pen tool to create white shapes. Merge the pieces before moving on.

After transforming the text with Free Transform to make it fit, you'll blur with Gaussian Blur and apply an Outer Glow. After adding the glow, you'll notice it appears around the edges where the text connects with the filament ends. You'll copy the original photo above the text, mask out everything, then paint white to smooth out the connections.

To finalise, you'll enliven things with blended images and Solid Color layers.

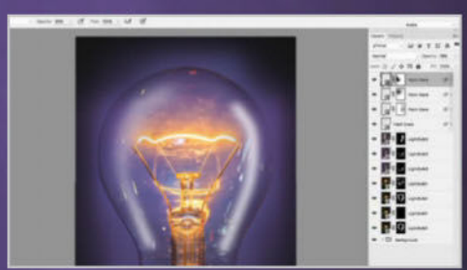


Borrow reflections

01 Open 'Start.psd'. Go to File>Place (CC: Place Embedded), grab 'LightBulb1.jpg'. Set to Lighten blend mode. Using Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T), scale up and position reflections on the bulb. Add a layer mask using the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette. Paint black with a soft-edged brush to reduce/remove areas.

Add more reflections

02 Continue to add reflections. Re-place or duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) 'LightBulb1.jpg' multiple times. Free Transform the instances to vary. Adjust the masks as needed. You may also deploy 'LightBulb2.jpg' for extra variation.



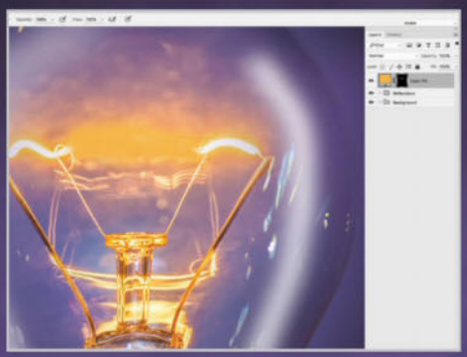
Paint glares

03 Create a new layer at the top. Set Foreground colour to white. With a soft-edged brush, paint some glares. If they're too hard, try Filter>Render>Gaussian Blur. Adjust the blur's Radius until sufficiently blurred. Click OK. To fade/remove some parts, add a layer mask and paint with black. Lower the opacity to tone down the effect.

Expert tip

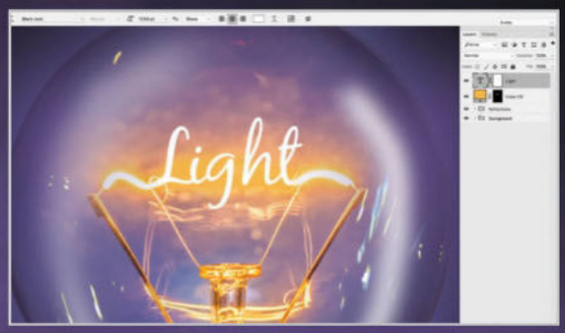
Masking layer styles

When masking out portions of a layer that has layer styles such as Drop Shadow or Outer Glow applied, you'll find that the styles will flow around the masked area. But what if you wanted to hide the layer styles along with the fill instead of having them reflow? In Photoshop/CC, you can place the layer in a group and then simply mask the group. You can also go to Layer>Layer Style>Create Layers. This creates a layer for each style, which you can then mask as you wish.



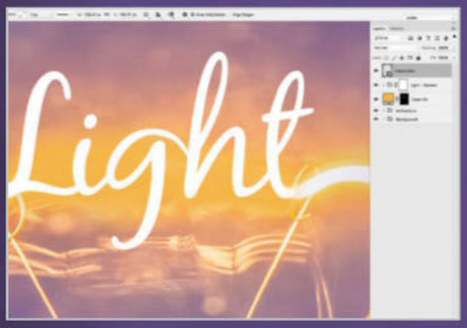
Paint out the filament

04 Create a new layer at the top. With the Eyedropper tool, click in the glow around the filament. Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button, choose Solid Color. Click OK. Click the mask. Press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Paint white at 100% brush Opacity on the filament centre to hide it.



Add the text

05 Create a new layer. Set the Foreground colour to white. Add the text. Here, the font Black Jack by Typadelic is used (www.fontsquirrel.com/fonts/blackjack). Free Transform to connect the end letters with the filament. If needed, go to Filter>Liquify (Elements: Filter>Distort>Liquify) to manipulate. In Photoshop, right-click the layer and choose Convert to Smart Object before applying. Mask out excess areas.



Connect the letters

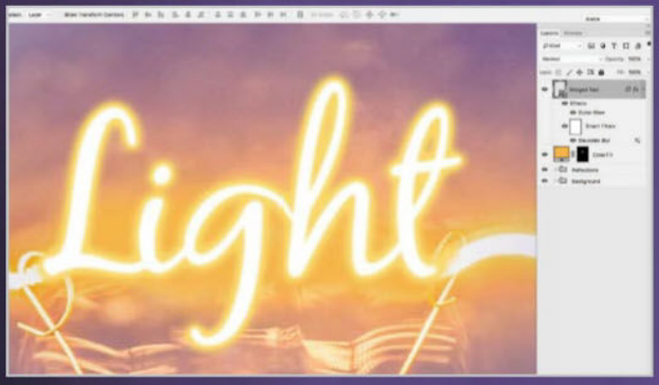
06 Bridge any gaps between letters. Create a new layer above or below the text. You can use a hard-edged brush to paint white to connect the letters. In Photoshop, you can employ the Pen tool (set to Shape in the options bar) to plot out the letter connections.

Merge text layers

07 Cmd/Ctrl+click all text and 'connection' layers to select them. (Elements: Press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Skip to next step.) Right-click on the selected layers and choose Convert to Smart Object.

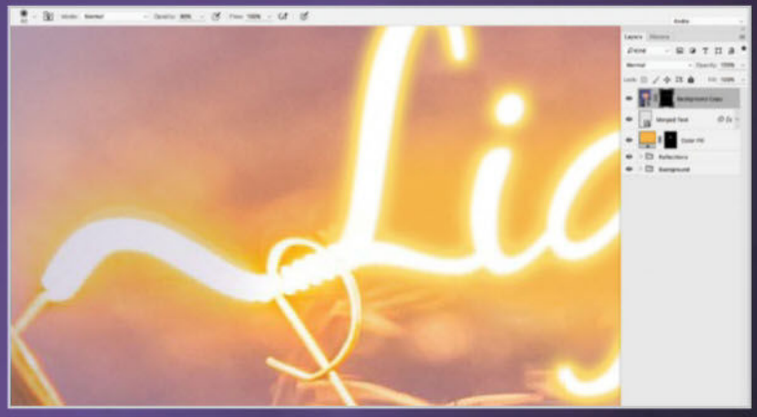
Blur the text

08 To prevent the text from looking too crisp and digital, you can blur it. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set Radius to 2.5 pixels. Click OK. Next you'll add a glow.



Use Outer Glow

09 Click the fx button in the Layers palette. Choose Outer Glow. Set Blend Mode: Normal, Opacity: 100%, colour to #fad86b, Spread: 6%, Size: 24px. Click OK. (Elements: start with the Simple preset under Styles>Outer Glows. Click the style settings icon at the top right, set Opacity, Size and colour.)



Copy the background

10 Select the background layer. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate. Move it to the top of the layer stack. Option/Alt+click the Add Layer Mask button. Paint back with white to clean up the connections between filament and text.

Apply particles

11 Place 'Particles.jpg'. Set the blend mode to Screen. Free Transform to scale and position so the particles fall around the text. Option/Alt+click the Add Layer Mask button. Paint with white using a soft-edged brush to add the particles.

Feel the Color Burn

12 Place 'Stars.jpg'. Scale up to blanket the canvas before committing. Set the blend mode to Color Burn and drop the Opacity to 40%. Add a layer mask. Paint black in the mask to remove the effect from outside the bulb. Reduce a bit from inside the bulb as well.

Use Color Dodge

13 Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button, choose Solid Color. Pick #cc6c0a. Set to Color Dodge blend mode. Click the mask, press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Now paint with white to add hot spots. Try a large brush size with low opacity, and a smaller brush size with higher opacity.

Self-blend

14 Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button and choose Levels. You won't actually adjust the Levels settings. Change the blend mode to Multiply. Drop Opacity to 30%. Paint in the mask if needed.

Enliven with colour

15 Brighten up the image with additional colour. Add Solid Color layers as in step 13, but use Overlay and Screen. Try yellow (#fbed07), orange (#efcc29) and white. Reduce the opacity to tone down. When done, save your image.

Take it further

Create light rays

Quickly form light rays using two filters and an adjustment! Start by creating a new layer at the top of the layer stack. Set to default colours (black and white) by pressing D. Go to Filter> Render>Clouds. Go to Image>Adjustments> Threshold (Elements: Filter>Adjustments> Threshold). Set the Threshold Level to 128 and click OK. Go to Filter>Blur>Radial Blur. Set Amount: 90, Blur Method: Zoom and Quality: Good. Click and drag in the Blur Center pane to set where the light rays will emanate. Click OK. Set layer to Overlay and drop the opacity.

Essentials

Works with

Elements CS CC

What you'll learn

- Combine filters and use the new Select and Mask workspace in Photoshop

Time taken

1 hour

Expert

Daniel Sinoca

"Working with filters is such fun. You can create amazing effects by combining and applying them to compositions. All you need is a great image and the filters will create beautiful effects.

"I started to get involved in the digital world more than 10 years ago and have been working as a freelance artist ever since, creating all kinds of multimedia projects and tutorial guides."

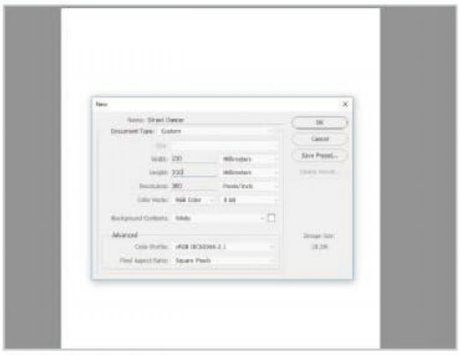
Have fun with filters

Start image

Create a colourful urban portrait using layers, masks and basic filters to create astonishing digital effects

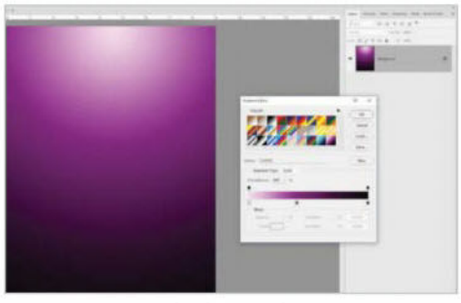
You don't need a lot of images to create a beautiful composition; sometimes all you need is a good start photo and the powerful tools and filters in Photoshop. In this tutorial you'll create a fantastic colourful portrait effect. The new Photoshop CC 2016 has some great features, and in this tutorial you'll explore the new Select and Mask tool. Now you have an exclusive workspace with more precise tools and controls to create perfect selections, masks and to help streamline your work. This feature replaces the Refine Edge tool in previous versions of Photoshop. If you are using an earlier version, you are still able to follow this tutorial – just use Refine Edge instead of the Select and Mask tool.

Another technique we'll cover is how to convert an image into a Smart Object. This simple but powerful command enables you to add effects and adjustments without affecting the original pixels in an image, which means you can edit the image at any time. Finally, you're going to explore the Filters menu and apply adjustments to create beautiful digital effects. Download the start image from Dreamstime (ID: 11773683) and follow along.



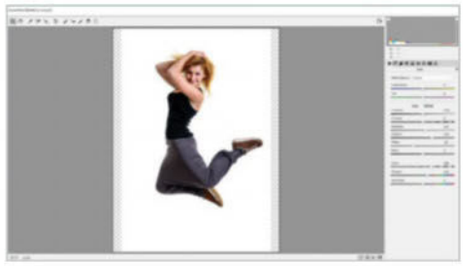
Set the stage

01 Create a new document via File>New or by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+N. In the New Window dialog, name it 'Street Dancer', set the Width to 230mm, Height to 310mm, Resolution to 300 pixel/inch, and click OK.



Create a radial gradient

02 Grab the Gradient tool (G). In the Options bar, click Radial Gradient and then open the Gradient Editor. Create a three-colour stop gradient. Set the first stop to #fedcfd, the second to #842880 and the third to #0c040c, then click OK. Hold Shift and drag it from top to bottom.



Place the dancer

03 Download the start image from Dreamstime (ID: 11773683). Go to File>Place Embedded and place the image. Now enhance the image. Go to Filter> Camera RAW Filter. In Basics, set Highlights to +10, Shadows: +30, Whites: -30, Clarity: +25, Vibrance: +15. Click on Detail and set the Luminance to 50, then click OK.

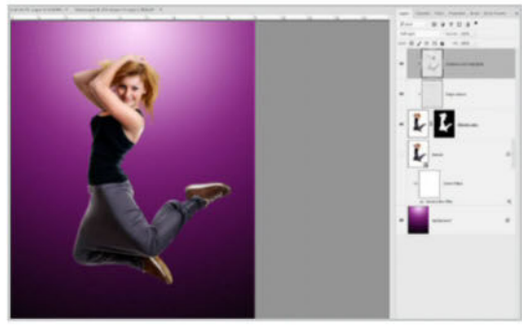
Expert tip

Remove pixels

When masking hair, we usually have residual pixels around the selection, and in some cases the Refine Edge or the Decontaminate Colors tools won't be able to get rid of them. Here is a quick tip to deal with this problem. Add a new layer on top of the original and then create a clipping mask (Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+G). Now grab a soft-tip brush. Press Opt/Alt and sample the colour adjacent to the edges and then start painting over the extra pixels.

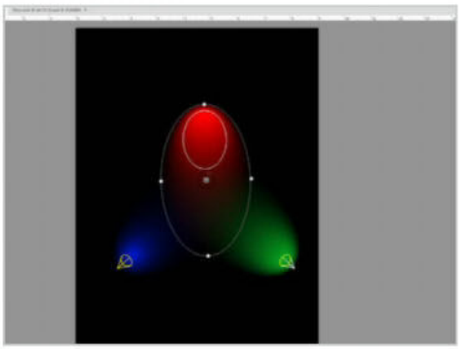
Select and Mask

04 Now go to Select>Select and Mask (Opt/Alt+Cmd/Ctrl+R). Change View to Onion Skin and set the Transparency to 50%. Grab the Quick Selection tool (W) and remove the background. Now grab the Refine Edge Brush tool and refine the hair. Click Invert and check Decontaminate Colors, then press OK.



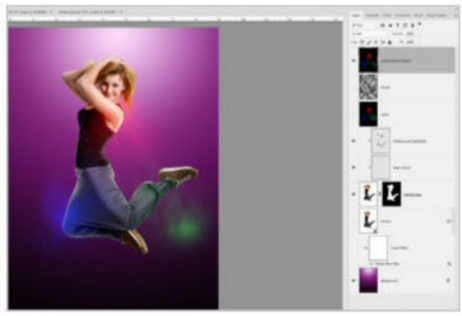
Boost the shadows/highlights

05 Create a new layer, press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name it Shadows/Highlights, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', change the blend mode to Soft Light and click OK. Grab a soft-tip brush (B). Set the Foreground colour to black and start painting over the shadows. Switch to white and paint the highlights.



Create a colourful light

06 Create a new layer, press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name it Lights and fill with white. Go to Filter>Render>Lighting Effect. In Presets, choose RGB Lights. In the Properties panel boost the Intensity to 25, Hotspot to 40 and keep the other options at 0, then click OK.

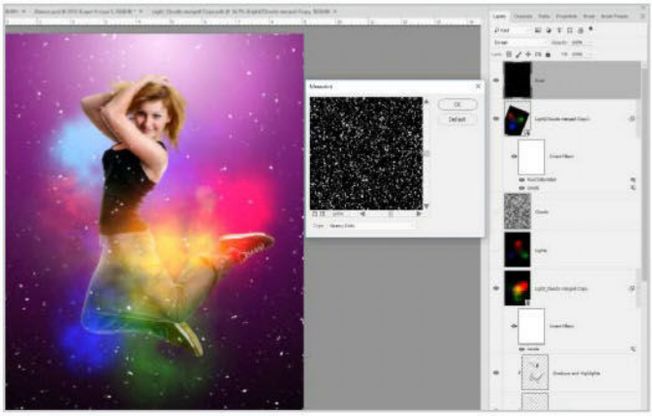


Add more filters

07 Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set the Radius at 100 pixels. Create a new layer and name it Clouds. Go to Filter>Render>Clouds and change the blend mode to Overlay. Hold Shift and select the Lights and the Clouds layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Change the blend mode to Screen.

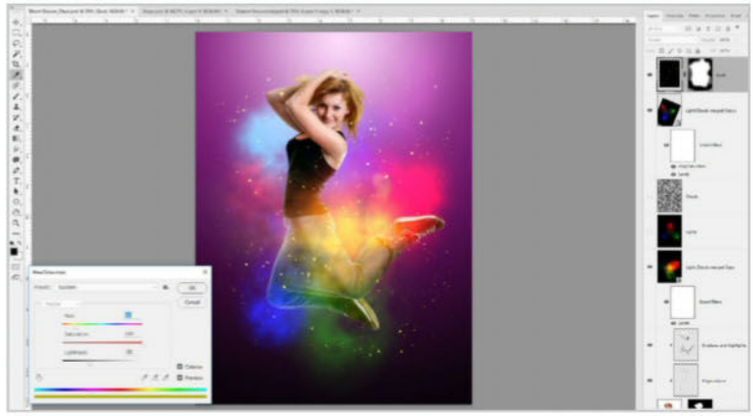
Adjustment layers

08 Go to Layer>Smart Objects>Convert to Smart Objects. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+L to open the Levels. Adjust the Inputs to boost the colours. Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Now press Cmd/Ctrl+U to open Hue/Saturation and adjust the Hue to change the colours. Duplicate, rotate and scale the layer to create a colourful effect.



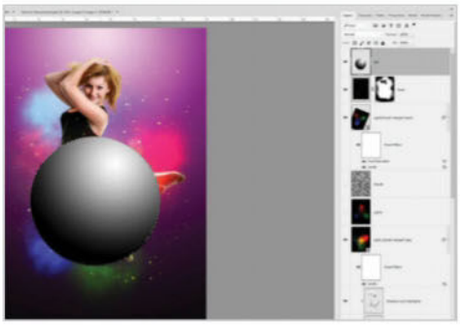
Sprinkle some dust

09 Create a new layer. Name it Dust and fill with black. Go to Filter>Pixelate>Mezzotint. Choose Type: Grainy Dots and click OK. Now go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set the Radius at 10 pixels. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and adjust the Inputs to 20, 0.10, 45. Now change the blend mode to Screen.



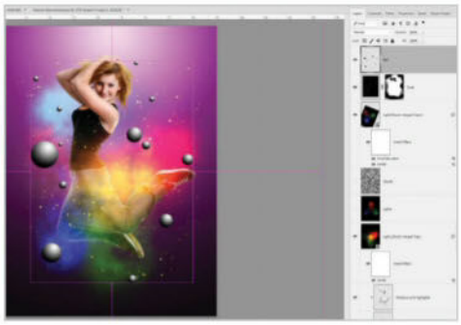
Use a layer mask

10 Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize the Dust layer around 80%. Now create a layer mask – go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a large soft brush (B) and paint around the mask to hide the hard edges. Press Cmd/Ctrl+U and adjust the Hue to 60, Saturation to 100, Lightness to -30 and click OK.



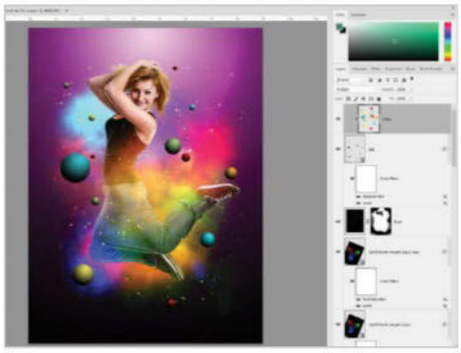
Create colourful balls

11 Create a new layer on top of the layer stack and name it Ball. Grab the Elliptical Marquee tool (M), hold Shift and create a selection. Grab the Gradient tool (G). Choose the Foreground to Background preset and set it to Radial. Drag the gradient inside the selection.



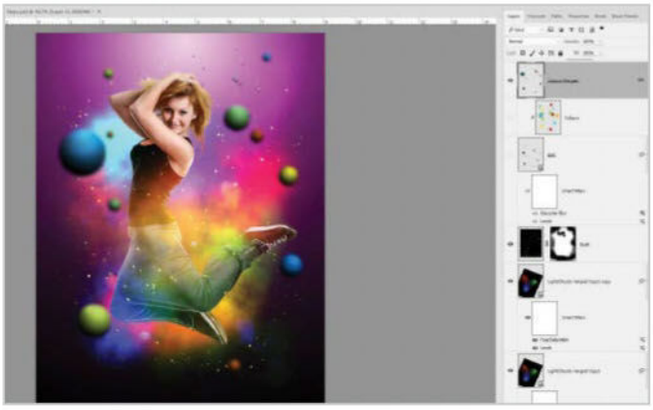
Duplicate the selection

12 First press Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize the selection. Click on the Move tool (V) and keep the ball selected. Now press and hold Opt/Alt and drag the ball to duplicate it. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize the selection again. Repeat this step several times to create more balls within the layer.



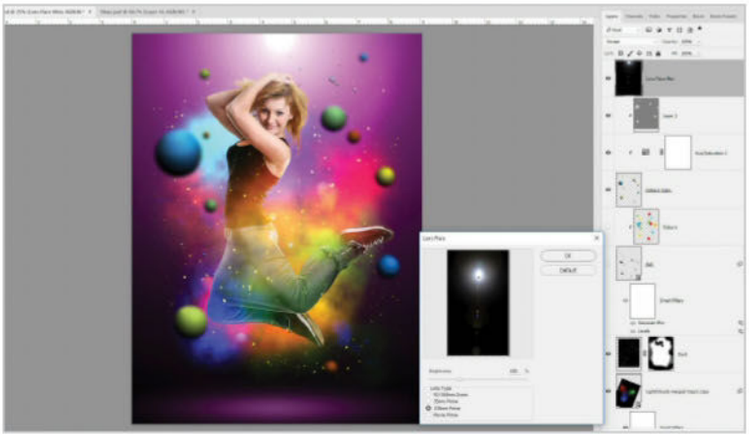
Colour the balls

13 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Colours, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', change blend mode to Multiply and click OK. Grab a soft brush (B). Press F6 to open the Color panel, pick different colours and paint over the balls.



Add more balls

14 Hold Shift and select the Ball and Colour layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Now duplicate the layer (Cmd/Cmd/J). Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and reduce or increase the size of the balls, placing them around the canvas. Use the Gaussian Blur filter to create a sense of depth.



Apply a Lens Flare

15 Apply the Lens Flare filter. Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Lens Flare and fill with black. Go to Filter>Render>Lens Flare. Choose 1005mm Prime and in the Preview window, drag the lens 90° and click OK. Now change the blend mode to Screen.

Take it further

Extra editing tips

SHARPEN THE IMAGE

Duplicate the Dancer layer and change the blend mode to Overlay. Go to Filter>Other>High Pass and adjust the Radius to help sharpen the image.

BLENDING MODES

The overall effect on the image can be dramatically changed by switching the layer's blend mode. Try out the different modes until you get the results you want.

GRADIENT TOOL

Apply the Gradient tool to create backgrounds or a smooth effect in an image. You can also use it to add a gradual transition over a layer mask.

ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Use a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer to change the colours in your image and apply the Levels to make tonal corrections.

CLIPPING MASK

Use clipping masks to apply an adjustment or effect only to the layer directly below it. This will avoid affecting other layers.

SMART OBJECTS

Convert an image into a Smart Object and then resize it or add effects and adjustments without affecting the original pixels.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Produce your own burnt-edge resources

Learn how to safely create authentic burnt edges to use as digital assets

In times before digital screens, or even electric lighting, most printing was done on parchment paper. This was easier than carving in stone, but had the distinct drawback of being rather susceptible to flames. The fact that most illumination came in the form of small open flames was particularly unfortunate for anybody attempting to read printed parchments. Hence the appearance of a burnt edge on paper gives the document the distinct feel of being old and well used.

Creating your very own burnt edges is not difficult; it's simply a matter of burning the paper! But that can get out of hand very quickly. Be certain to do this project in an environment where small flames can be quickly dealt with. Safety is paramount. There are some safety guidelines that will help to ensure your burnt-edge project is fun, productive and safe. Using thick cardstock is ideal since it doesn't burn as quickly as regular paper. Use a sponge to moisten the card stock before applying the flame. The water will dry, but it also helps to control the spread of the burn if the material does ignite.

This project shows how to create interesting burn and scorch marks. We want you to enjoy the project and develop useful resources, but more than anything, we want you to be safe!

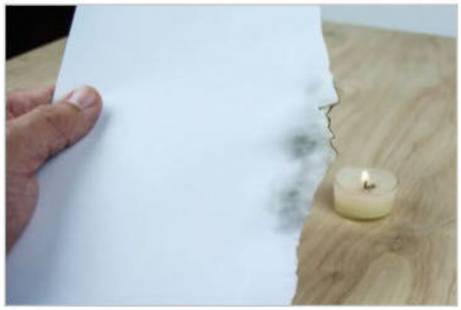
Burn the card Safely control the burning edge

Prepare the paper

01 Tear a piece of cardstock in half and use a wet sponge to dampen the torn edge. The moisture will help prevent the paper catching fire and spreading out of control.

Fire along the edge

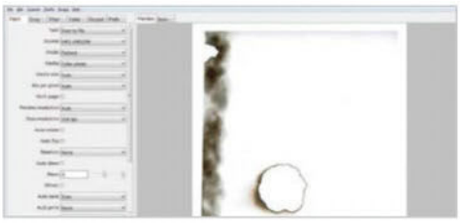
02 Gently run the edge of the paper over the flame. Don't allow the paper to ignite – just discolour. Watch for scorch marks showing through to the top side of the paper.



Check the opposite side

03 The best scorch marks will be from the side where the flame makes direct contact with the paper. If the paper does ignite, just be ready to extinguish it quickly!

Digitise the burns How to scan and prepare your burnt-edge resources

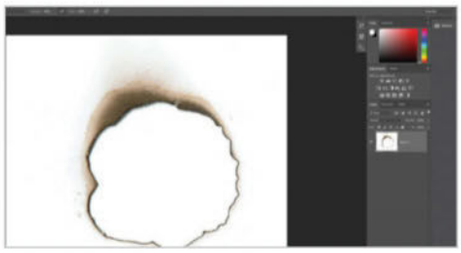


Scan it

01 The paper will likely curl as a result of both the water and the scorching, so scanning the burns is a better option than photography. Be sure to clean the scanner surface between scans; the burns will produce a delicate ash that can leave a mess.

Clean cut stencil

02 Open the scan in Photoshop and use a selection tool to isolate a particular burn area. Copy that portion to a new document by going to Edit>Copy (Cmd/Ctrl+C) then File>New (Cmd/Ctrl+N) and Edit>Paste (Cmd/Ctrl+V).

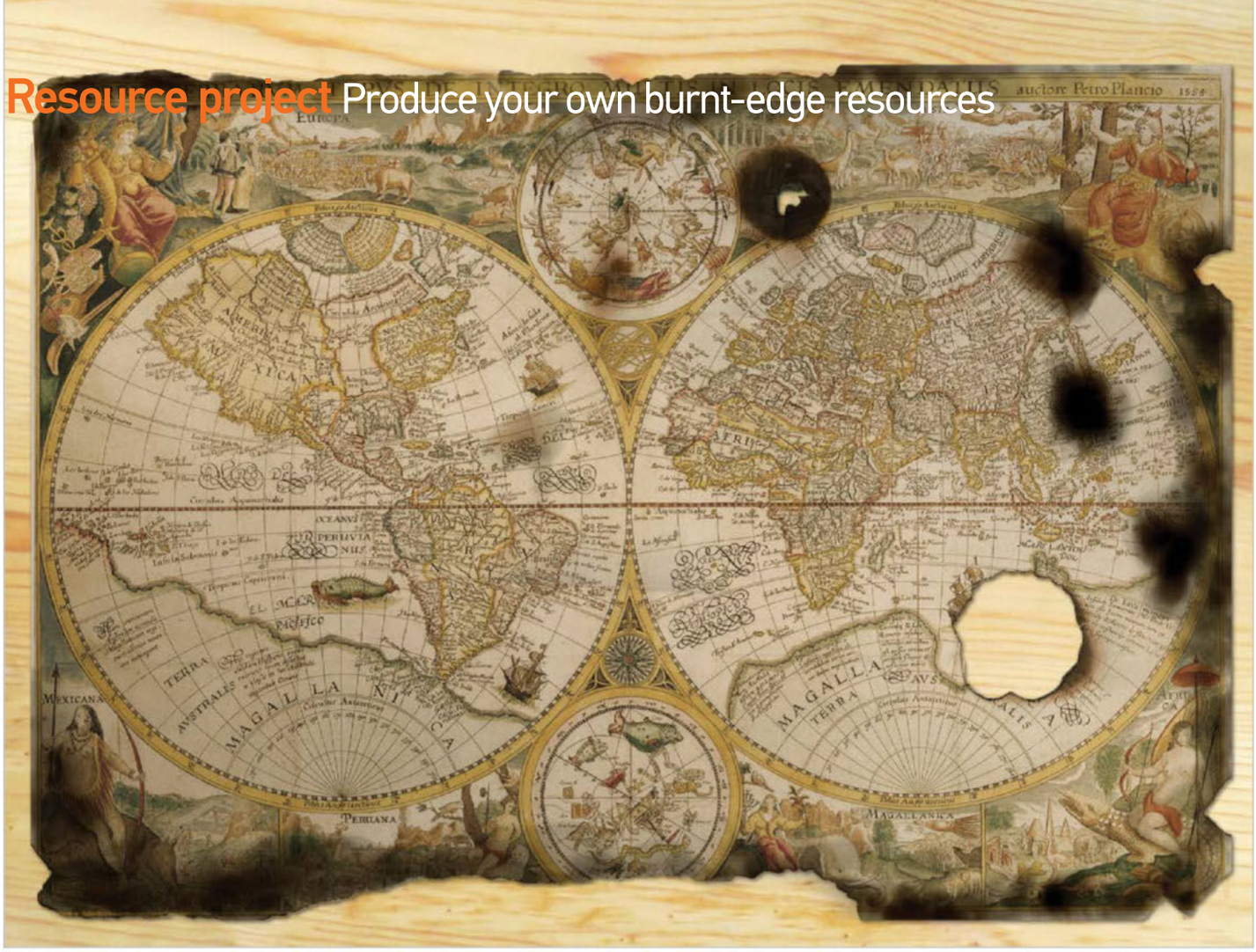


Touch up the scan

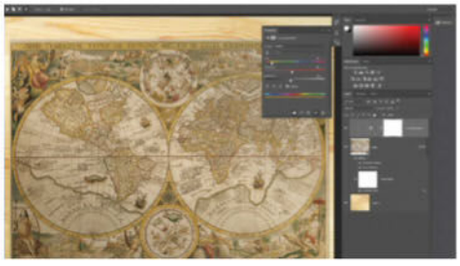
03 Use the Brush Tool (B) with white paint and a soft, round tip to paint out any marks or edges that are unwanted. It's important that the non-burnt areas are pure solid white.

Burns and scorches Each attempt gives different results, so it's easy to build a library of effects

 Produce your own burnt-edge resources

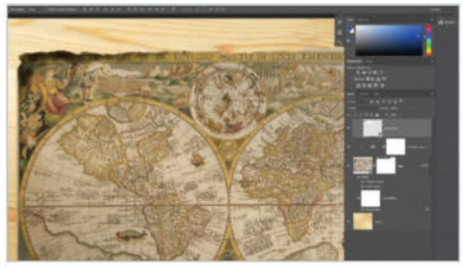


Make an old map Apply burnt edges to an old parchment map



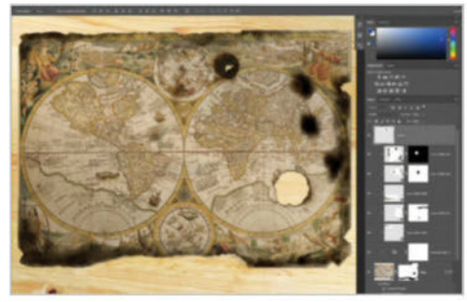
Layer up

01 Begin with a map on a single layer over a wooden desk image. Add a slight Drop Shadow and Gradient Map layer style to create the appearance of realistic paper. Give the paper an old ink colorisation with a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer.



Blending mode and mask

02 Place a scan of a burnt edge over the map layer. Clip the burn texture to the map and set the blending mode to Multiply. Then use a layer mask on the map layer to hide the areas of the map that are outside the burnt edge.

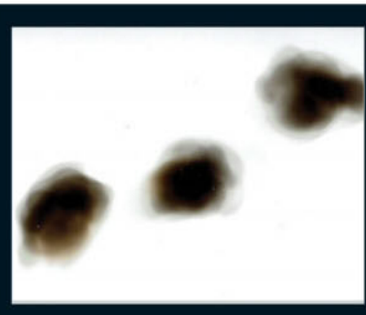


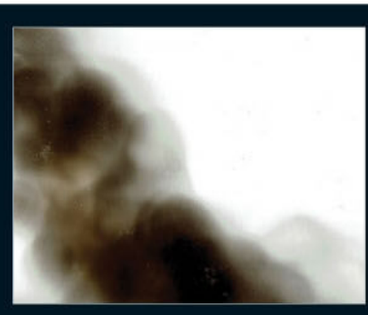
Repeat for the other edges

03 Continue to layer the burnt-edge textures to create additional burnt areas of the map. Resist the urge to burn every part of every edge. Leave some edges intact for a more realistic final effect.

FileSilo

Burnt Edges
Use our burnt-edge resources to age and destroy your own digital papers!





LEARN TO INSPIRE

www.dphotographer.co.uk

FREE EVERY ISSUE • FREE RESOURCE DOWNLOAD

Digital Photographer™

Available from all good newsagents and supermarkets

ON SALE NOW

> The power of perspective > Black and white > Backyard wildlife

LANDSCAPE TIPS	SHOOTING ADVICE	WILDLIFE PHOTOS	PORTRAIT GUIDES	CAMERA REVIEWS

BUY YOUR ISSUE TODAY

Print edition available at www.imagineshop.co.uk

Digital edition available at www.greatdigitalmags.com

Available on the following platforms

Print | Tablet | Phone | Desktop

facebook.com/DigitalPhotographerUK twitter.com/DPhotographer

Exploring Adobe apps

When Dan Cederholm and Dan Mumford were challenged to create posters with Adobe apps, they learned just how mobile devices could help their own creative processes

About the artists

Dan Mumford
dan-mumford.com
@danmumforddraws
Dan Mumford is a freelance illustrator based in central London, mainly working within the pop culture scene creating screenprints, posters, album covers and more. Clients include Disney, Sony, Iron Maiden and CBS.

Dan Cederholm
dribbble.com
@simplebits
Dan Cederholm grew up as a musician. He is now the co-founder of Dribbble and previously ran a freelance design business for ten years.

Name of the project
Make it on Mobile

Apps are changing everything about our lives, from the way we control household appliances to the way we make friends. Designers are also incorporating mobile technology into the way they work. Adobe has launched a series of apps that are perfect for using with Photoshop, and this year, the company invited artists Dan Mumford and Dan Cederholm to test out these apps and create artwork using them.

"We brought Dan and Dan to a creative summit exploring how mobile changes the way we work and the work we make," said David Macy, director of product marketing at Adobe. "It was two exciting days of learning tools and collaborating to make posters."

We caught up with the artists to discover more about the experience.

What are your initial thoughts about this project? Had you ever worked with Adobe's apps before?

Dan Cederholm: I've used Photoshop for my entire career. I'm a minimalist, and I use it for everything from photo editing to vector art. I hadn't worked with Adobe's mobile apps before the event, but was excited to give them a whirl – especially with the Apple Pencil.

Dan Mumford: I too have pretty much exclusively worked with Adobe applications on a desktop Mac for the whole of my freelance career, so I was quite comfortable with the general feel of Adobe products, but I hadn't had much of a chance to create work on the iPad or try out the mobile apps. This was a brand new experience for me, too.

How did you start the creative process of your projects?

DM: I started by taking some photos of the gardens around the Smithsonian where we were based. I really love natural structures, and there were some beautiful vines and trees that captured my eye. I then took those images and created a rough composition in Adobe Mix. After that, I mainly created the illustration in Adobe Draw, as that worked really nicely with the smoother linework I like to create.

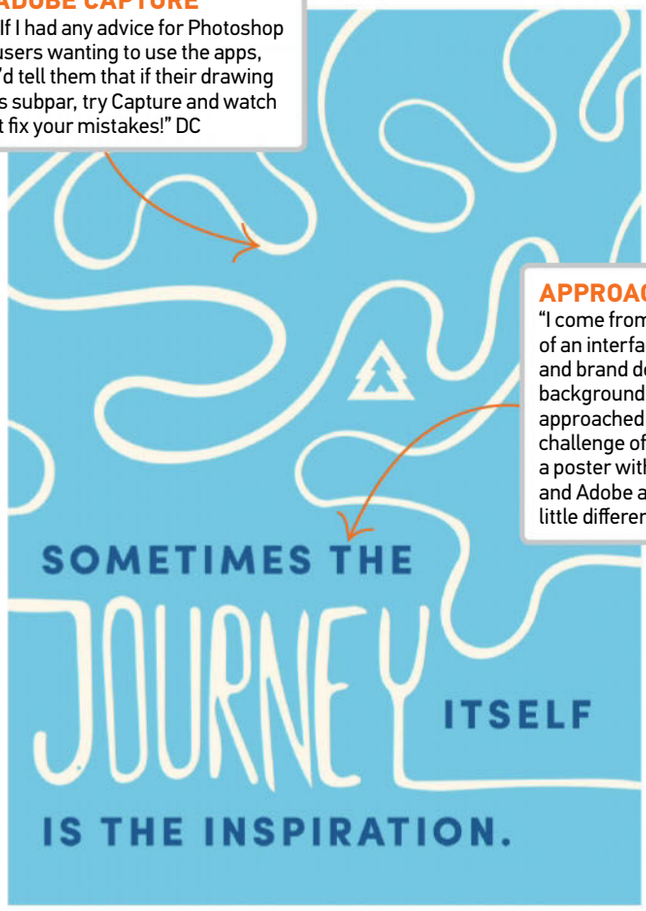
DC: I started with the phrase 'sometimes the journey is the inspiration itself'. The inspiration was simple colour and type, like a great book cover from the early 1960s. I used Adobe Capture to take hand-lettering and the squiggle art from notebook to vector. Capture is fantastic for 'cleaning up' rough lines from pencil or pen into smooth vector shapes. I also used Comp to lay out the type and poster. Comp is incredibly intuitive and easy to use, and it makes page layout very quick and easy.

Which were your favourite apps to use?

DM: Draw was, for me, the key app that I worked with. I primarily use Photoshop on my desktop Mac, but Draw ended up working really nicely with the subtle smoothing it applies to your linework.

DC: Capture and Comp, for me. Capture is also fantastic for cleaning up rough lines into smooth vector shapes.

DM: Also, Photoshop Mix was a great way to create rough compositions of pictures I'd taken, to then drop into Adobe Sketch or Adobe Draw to use as a template for more finalised work.



ADOBE CAPTURE
"If I had any advice for Photoshop users wanting to use the apps, I'd tell them that if their drawing is subpar, try Capture and watch it fix your mistakes!" DC

APPROACH
"I come from more of an interface and brand design background, so I approached the challenge of creating a poster with the iPad and Adobe apps a little differently." DC

EXPERIMENTING
"I found playing around with bringing elements from one app into the other worked nicely. I created some really nice watercolour gradients in Sketch and then dropped them in Draw, and that enabled some good dynamics between texture and hard line." DM

CREATING FINISHED WORK
"For me I was able to re-create my work and style with just the apps. It certainly made me appreciate how possible it was to make work on the move now, which was not something I had ever considered really possible in the past." DM

All images © Adobe

You also mentioned the iPad Pros and Apple Pencils; would you recommend them?

DM: It was my first time using both the iPad Pro and the Apple Pencil, and I thought they were great. The fidelity between screen and pencil didn't have any lag at all, and that's the thing that's perhaps held me back in the past.
DC: They were both a joy to use. As a lefty, my palm has to rest on the surface in order for me to draw anything interesting. The fact that the Pencil will cancel that out is huge. I don't think we'll ever replace pencils on paper, however, this clearly is the future of digital art, and seeing what the group created at the event with often little or no experience with the apps beforehand was incredible, and we're only scratching the surface.
DM: Yes, I think the iPad Pro will sit nicely alongside desktop platforms for artists to create work; it integrates pretty seamlessly into the workflow, allowing you to send files over to your desktop instantly if need be, so it seems to be quite a natural partner.

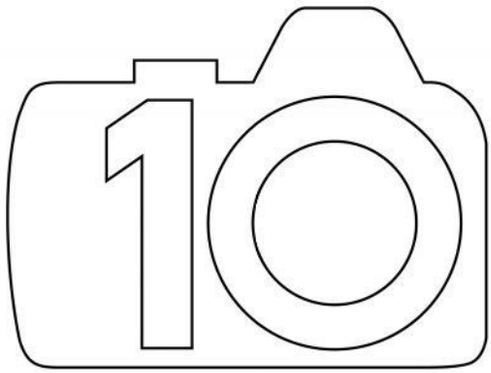
As two artists/designers who have used the apps, how would you both recommend Photoshop users incorporate them into their design process?

DC: Because of Photoshop's incredibly dense feature set, I think the desktop is still going to be first choice. However, for many tasks, the mobile versions will do the job, and often easier/quicker than on the desktop. The old saying 'the best camera is the one you're carrying' certainly applies to creating with apps as well.
DM: I've started integrating the apps into my creative process after this project! I've found myself using my iPad to work up rough ideas or sketches while out of the studio or at home, but I'm also using it to create complete pieces when I am away from the desktop.
DC: Oh, I'll be using Lightroom on the go for editing mobile photos from now on, Capture for taking sketches into vector, and giving Comp a whirl for UI sketching.

NO 1 SUBTLE DOUBLE-EXPOSURE EFFECTS

Double exposure can be very effective, especially when used subtly, as on the model's neckline in this image. Digital artist Kevin Roodhorst (**www.kevinroodhorst.com**) blended a lot of different techniques to create this striking photo composition. As well as the aforementioned double-exposure effect (see the steps), he used a combination of adjustment layers to blend everything together, including Color Balance, Selective Color and Curves for overall grading and toning.

© Kevin Roodhorst



PRO PHOTO EFFECTS

Add impact and creativity to your photo compositions with our look at the best effects you can apply in Photoshop

Photoshop is king when it comes to adding photo effects to your compositions and retouches. It is packed with tools, features and filters that help you to create hundreds of different looks. It is easy to go overboard with effects, and too many can ruin an artwork, but applied sensitively and professionally, photo effects can transform your designs.

In this feature we look at 10 of the best effects for you to master in Photoshop, with examples from digital artists, creative retouchers and photographers to show you how it is done. You can apply the effects to your own photo composites using the advice on these pages.

Many of these effects will need customising to suit your own image, as the delicate settings will need tweaking to get your image looking as good as it can. However, these tips give you a good base to work from, and the best results often come from experimentation. You can achieve these photo effects using just the tools in Photoshop – we'll be looking at the adjustment layers, brushes, transform tools and more, to help you achieve each look.

PREPPING THE BACKGROUND

01 "To create the effect on the model's back, I used custom aquarelle brushes to get a nice fade. For the background, I combined textures on Overlay and Lighten, and added coloured spots with a Color Balance adjustment."

DOUBLE-EXPOSURE EFFECTS

02 "For the base of the neck I added a snowy mountain landscape and set it to Lighten, brushed in the parts I thought looked nice, and gave it a cool colour effect with Color Balance and Curves."

ADDING MORE DETAILS

03 "I placed the paint swooshes on-screen and used a Curves adjustment to add more contrast. I also created more detail in the neck area by placing some buildings around the snowy landscape, also on Lighten mode."

№2 BUILD ATMOSPHERIC LIGHTING

Composite photographer and creative retoucher Clinton Lofthouse (**www.clintonlofthousephotography.com**) enhanced and added the lighting and smoke effects to this image using the Brush tool, blending modes and editing options.

A good base

01 "I knew I would need a good base to start from. So with the help of the model's cigarette, we blew a little smoke in front of the strobe, which had an orange gel on. This left us with a good starting point for post-processing."

Paint more smoke

02 "I added in some more smoke with a brush on a low Flow of 7%. I used the Eyedropper to sample the smoke colour, then painted it on a new layer. On another layer, set to Soft Light, I also painted in a little orange."

© Clinton Lofthouse Photography

Curves and colours

03 "I added to the atmosphere of the image by darkening the right-hand side of the image with Curves. I created a blue colour tone to complement the orange, masking it away from the left side, leaving us with the atmospheric lighting you see in the final image."

№3 MONOCHROME LIGHTING EFFECTS

If you choose to create an artwork in black and white (as opposed to converting it at the end – see Effect 10), lighting effects can be used to add impact and depth in the absence of colour. Freelance digital artist Elizabeth Hinders (**www.andaelentari.net**) prefers to work from the start in monochrome rather than desaturating later as "this gives me a better idea of the contrast and brightness than a lot of colour would do." Hinders explains the importance of getting the lighting effects right in this kind of work: "It's important to adjust the lighting to focus on the exact area of the work you want to be brightest, to focus on the most important part of your art. To adjust lighting, I use the Gradient Map adjustment layer, and work with the way the lighting is on the model's face, or wherever I want to focus the attention."

© Elizabeth Hinders

© Emi Haze

Applying ink splatters to the eye area, building out from the make-up

№4 MIXED-MEDIA TEXTURES

Bringing a mixed-media element into your composites can enhance the overall effect and add a tangibility to your work. Freelance digital artist and illustrator Emi Haze (**www.emihaze.com**) is known for creating photo-based art full of texture, inspired by his love for traditional media. He tries to keep his manual skill evident in his digital works, which is what gives them such a unique look. To emulate this, you need to build up a large collection of textures, created by hand (for example, brush strokes, ink marks, spray painting and so on, created on textured paper). These can then be scanned in at a high resolution to keep for future work. "I merge all of these elements with the [photo] using appropriate blending modes like Multiply, Overlay, Soft Light," explains Haze. "With these elements I can also create my own brushes; the Brush tool allows me to use different tricks, like experimenting with Opacity, Flow, brush assets and variable options. I love using some of these brushes to give the subject a dispersion or splatter effect, and to create an incredibly dynamic image with the help of various masks and selections. Finally, by using adjustment layers, I aim to make the colours more vivid and vibrant, and bring up the contrast."

ORIGINAL LIGHTNING
The lightning for this was created using an After Effects plug-in called Advanced Lightning before adding the glow effect in Photoshop.

ADD A BLUE TONE
To get the blue tone on the glow effect, a Hue/Saturation layer was clipped to the lightning group and set to Colorize.

NO5 BRILLIANT GLOW EFFECTS

Creating glow effects is popular in photo compositions, and the effect can be applied to all kinds of objects, including lightning as shown here. You can easily add lightning to your composition by drawing it with a steady hand, importing stock photography, or using a plug-in or an additional software program to generate it. Photographer Derek Johnston (**www.derek-johnston.co.uk**) used Photoshop to build up a glow effect over the lightning he added to his photo composite. The lightning strikes were grouped together and set to Screen. "The glows were painted over the top on a black-filled layer set to Color Dodge, with a very soft brush and low Flow of around 8-10%."

© Derek Johnston Photography

NO6 ADD COLOURED LIGHTING

Raul Ferran, creative director for 343 Creative (**http://343creative.com**) took the original photograph, retouched it and then added a coloured lighting effect in Photoshop to change the look and add impact. He explains how he did it.

Adding the base colour

01 "I retouched the original photo of the model before any of the coloured effects were added – it is best to be finished editing before starting on the photo effects. With this done, a magenta glow was added to the background."

Color Balance adjustment

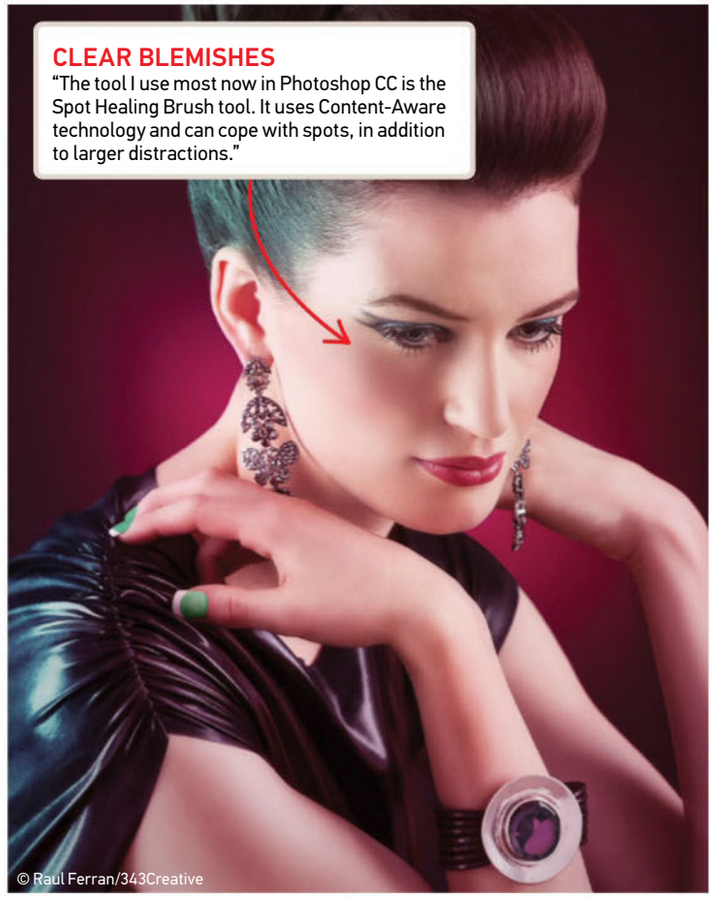
02 "I placed a Color Balance adjustment layer on top of the photo and adjusted it using the Midtones, Highlights and Shadows controls in the Properties panel. The Magenta colour used in the background was kept as the main overall colour."

Green contrast layer

03 "Next, I added a 24% and a 100% green layer set to Overlay, placed on the left side to add contrast to the photo. I added a 46% black vignette to the edges of the photo to add to the overall mood of the photo."

CLEAR BLEMISHES

"The tool I use most now in Photoshop CC is the Spot Healing Brush tool. It uses Content-Aware technology and can cope with spots, in addition to larger distractions."



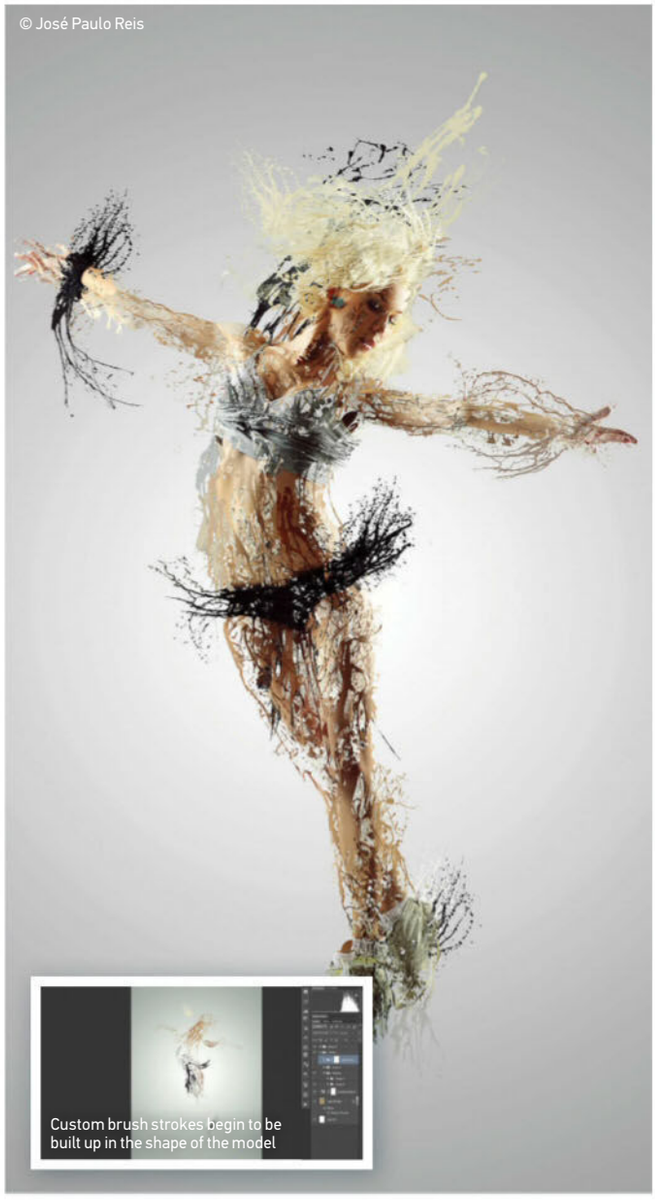
© Raul Ferran/343Creative

© Retouching by Lewis Moorhead; Photo by Ashley Murrell

NO7 CREATIVE BLUR EFFECTS

Photoshop has added many different blur options to its arsenal over the years, and using them correctly can add great effects to your photos. Lewis Moorhead (**www.flewdesigns.com**) is a creative retoucher and he used a combination of different blur techniques for the overall effect shown here. He started with a Radial Blur, achieved by converting the image into a Smart Object and using Filter>Blur>Radial Blur, with the Method set to Zoom and Quality to Best. "Testing the amounts is always the best way. That is why you use Smart Objects: so you can re-edit your filter," explains Moorhead. "On this image, I had to move the blur centre to the end of the road. It took a few goes to get it directly in that spot to create the most realistic blur."

A second technique utilised in this image is to select an area using the Lasso tool and feather it by 20px before applying Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. "The benefit of Motion Blur is you can see the result before applying," explains Moorhead. When you're happy with the blurs to this point, you can add a general depth-of-field blur to the image edges (Filter>Blur>Blur Gallery>Iris Blur), says Moorhead: "Expand the circle radius to past the edges and increase the blur to 20px on the right." Finally, a Spin Blur was used on the wheels using a feathered selection for each wheel.



No8 STRIKING LIQUID EFFECTS

Photographs can be completely transformed through the use of custom brushes, to create all kinds of different effects. Digital artist José Paulo Reis (**http://www.madartistgroup.com/jose-paulo-reis**) created this liquid dancer by making his own brushes. It's a straightforward process, but can give great results. Create some splatters or ink marks, bring into Photoshop, convert to black and white, select the shapes of the splatter/ink and use Edit>Define Brush Preset. You will then be able to name your new brush as you wish to use on your projects. Repeat these steps to get as many brushes as you want to build up your effect. To apply it to an image, choose your photograph and isolate the model with the Pen tool to cut out from the background. Create a new layer and begin to add brush strokes with one of your custom brushes, using the model image as your guide. Keep repeating with all of your different splatter and ink brushes to build up the shape of the model. "You have to do this dozens of times in order to achieve the result that you want from this technique," explains José Paulo Reis. "The mixing of the layers has to be very specific and careful to respect the shape of the dancer."

No9 CREATE REALISTIC REFLECTIONS

There are many times when you may need to add a reflection to your image for impact or to add realism. This image by graphic designer Ahmed Atef El-Gezery (**http://behance.net/ahmedelgezery**) uses the reflection in the helmet visor of the main astronaut to fix the character in his environment. This was achieved by copying the appropriate section of wall and using Flip Horizontal. "I used the Luminosity blending mode and made it fit with Edit>Transform>Warp option."

No10 CONVERT TO BLACK AND WHITE

One popular photo effect is to convert your image into black and white. How you choose to convert your artwork can make a big difference to its effectiveness, as some monochrome methods leave an image flat in tone, especially the Desaturate option. Digital artist Sulaiman Almawash (**www.instagram.com/sulaiman_almawash**) created this composition before converting it to black and white for impact. To apply the mono effect, he used a Black & White adjustment layer with the following settings applied: Reds: 240, Yellows: 300, Greens: 40, Cyans: -38, Blues: 4 and Magentas: 62. You will need to play with the sliders to get the best out of your own image, as no two images will use the same settings. Almawash then selected the sky and duplicated the Black & White adjustment layer, keeping all of the same settings, but applied only to the sky selection. To enhance the sky layer, he set it to Soft Light at 84% Opacity, which darkened just the sky to give it more atmosphere. He finished the artwork with a Levels adjustment, controlling it to give the best contrast over the whole image.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Essentials

Time taken
5 hours

Expert

Joshua Kelly

"I love using the Brush tool to create my illustrations; I feel like it gives more freedom and character to my artwork. I like the rough, hand-drawn effects that it provides. The Lasso tool makes the filling in process a lot quicker and can give a vector look!

"I am a freelance illustrator and have been using Photoshop since the day I started drawing professionally. I have been creating alternative movie posters in Photoshop for the past three years for films such as *Lost River*, *Suicide Squad* and *American Psycho*. I am still learning new techniques every day to constantly progress and improve my style of work."

To view more of Joshua's poster art visit **www.behance.com/jmonsterart**.

Design a stylish film poster

Start image

Learn to use some of Photoshop's most essential tools to create a print-ready alternative movie poster

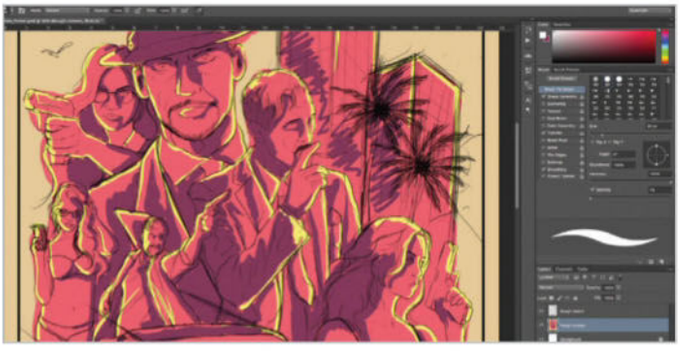
We're going to start with a basic rough sketch and transform it into a clean illustrative styled movie poster. Feel free to create your own base sketch to work with, or download ours from the FileSilo. The Brush tool mainly features throughout this tutorial. You will also learn a few basic Photoshop tools to help speed up the process such as Lasso, Wand and Eyedropper, as well as blending modes, layer styles and filters to give the poster depth. You'll also learn how to effectively use a limited number of colours (three to six), ideally used for screen-printing.

Creating an alternative movie poster enables you to interpret your vision of a film in a completely different way. Don't be afraid to try your own unique style. This poster was created in Photoshop CC but you'll find that the tools are available in most versions from CS3 onwards. This Photoshop project does require a graphics tablet, however.

These techniques can be applied to other forms of illustration, not just poster art. So give this tutorial a go and if you make mistakes along the way don't worry about it – layers are there for a reason so have fun!

Open the sketch

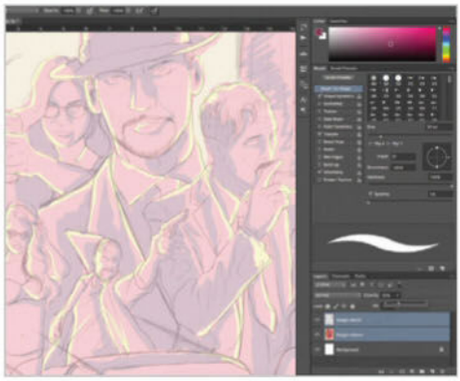
01 Begin by downloading the sketch from the FileSilo. Alternatively, you can apply these techniques to your own sketch. Create a new layer by going to New>Layer or hit Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N.



Plan the colours

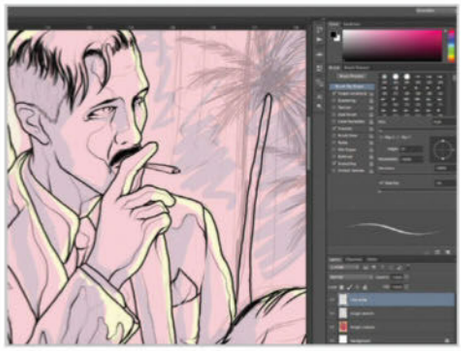
02 This new layer will be a rough colour layout. Load the Colour Palette file from the FileSilo and pick a palette to work with. Click the Brush tool (B) and make sure the Spacing is set to 1% and Hardness is 100%. Now roughly plan the colours however you want.

Vice City
STUDIO NAME PICTURE PRODUCERS NAME SCRIPT WRITER ACTOR ONE ACTOR TWO "MOVIE TITLE"
THE MUSICIAN DESIGNER NAME EDITORS NAME DESIGNERS NAME CINEMATOGRAPHER
EX PRODUCERS PRODUCERS NAME STORY WRITER
SCREEN WRITER NAME DIRECTOR NAME



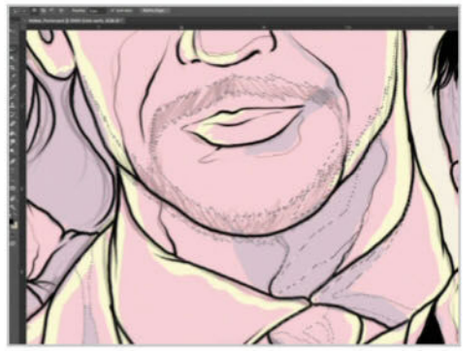
Turn down the opacity

03 Once you are happy with the colours, select both layers by holding Shift and clicking on the layers. Turn the Opacity down to a percentage where they are slightly visible; 30% will be enough.



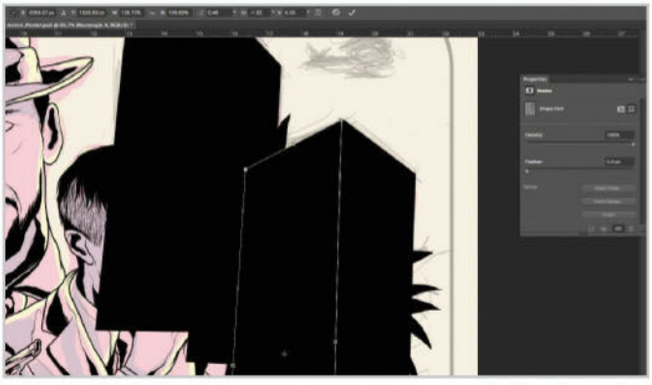
Draw the outline

04 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N) for the outline. Select your brush tool with black as the colour. Start by drawing the outline of the whole illustration with Size set to 5-4px. Also have your brush Spacing at 1%.



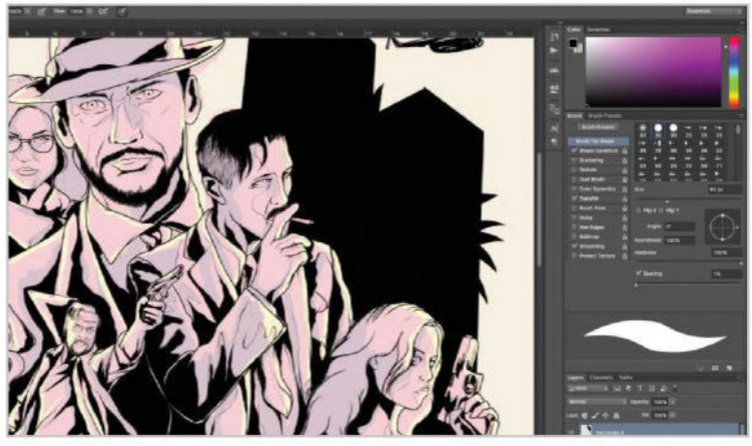
Fill with Lasso tool

05 Start filling out large areas of the outline. You can use the Brush (B) tool for this but it can take a while. Select the Lasso (L) tool and begin drawing out the areas to fill. Hold Shift to draw multiple sections, then Shift+F5 to fill with colour.



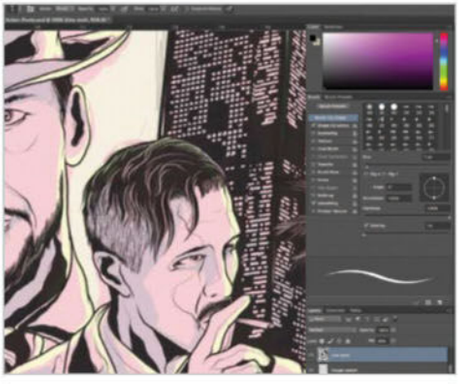
Create buildings

06 Create the buildings by using a filled Rectangle tool (U) and the Distort Transform to get the perspective angle you want. Merge (Cmd/Ctrl+E) and rasterize the shape layers together. Turn the Opacity down and erase (E) any excess that overlaps the original line work.



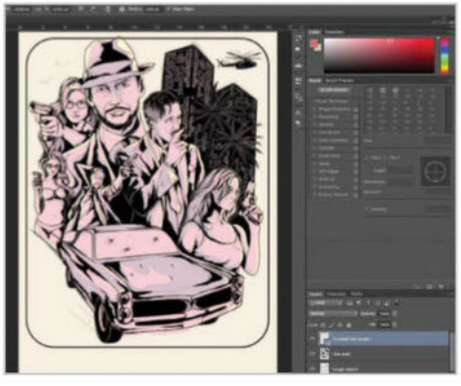
Merge line work

07 Merge (Cmd/Ctrl+E) the building and outline together to create one full outlined illustration layer. Doing this will make the next step easier. Rename this new merged layer as Line Work.



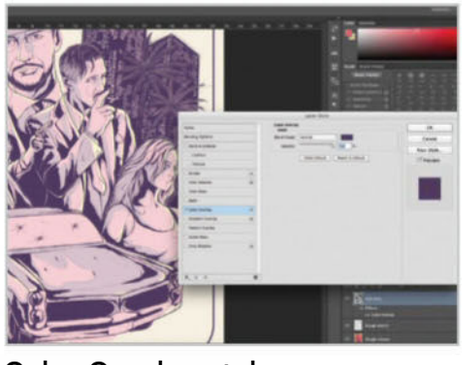
Add and erase detail

08 Once again, turn down the Opacity on the new line work layer. Around about 80% will be enough to see the rough sketch. Erase (E) or brush (B) in any details you want to pick out using the rough sketch as a guide.



Make a border

09 Select the Rounded Rectangle tool (U). Your settings should be no fill colour with a 3.2px Stroke and a Radius of 300px to get the rounded edge. Free Transform to fit around the artwork then rasterize and erase (E) overlapping parts.

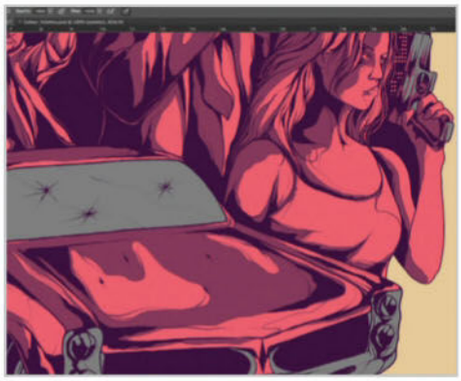


Color Overlay style

10 Merge your border to the previous Line Work layer. This is your final outlined illustration. Click on the fx icon at the bottom of the Layers panel to open the Layer Style window. Choose the Color Overlay option and replace the black with a colour that matches the rest of the colour scheme.

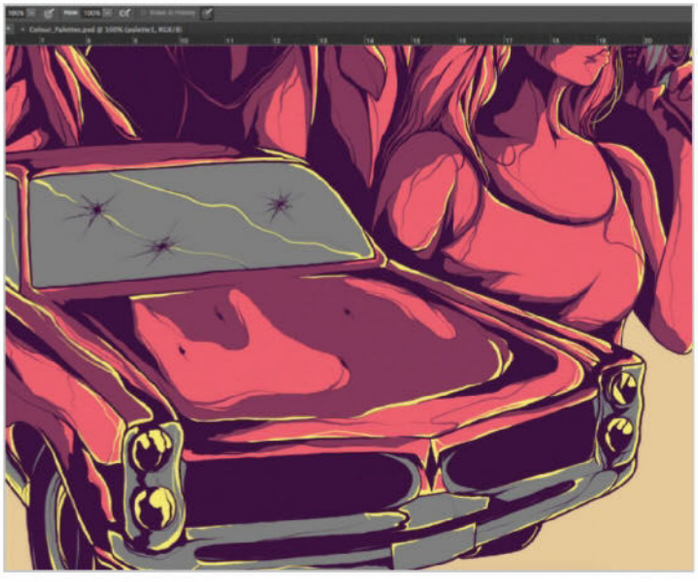
Background and base colour

11 Create new layers behind your Line Work layer. Fill the background with the Paint Bucket tool. Select the Brush (B) tool and fill in the outline on the Base Colour layer. When posters are screen-printed they tend to go in order of lightest to darkest.



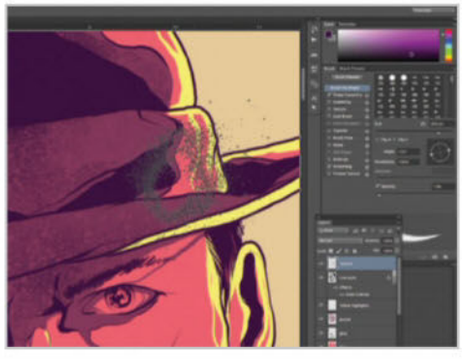
Dark tones

12 Above the base colour layer is where you will add your dark tones of colour. Again, work from lightest to darkest. Use the 'Colour_Palette.psd' as a guide and use the Eyedropper (I) to select between colours.



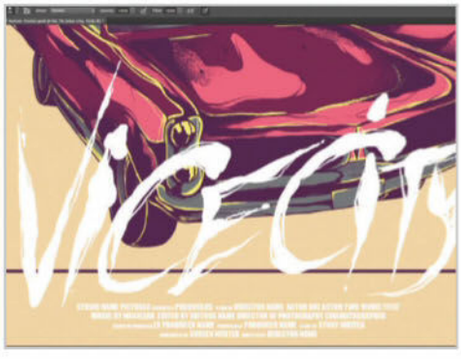
Highlights

13 Two layers are going to be needed for the highlights. Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) your pink layer and then Color Overlay it with the highlight colour. Erase (E) any pink where you want the yellow to show through. Above the dark tones, create a layer for the same colour of highlights.



Texture

14 On a new layer, roughly fill out areas you want to texture with the Brush (B). There is no need to be neat. Select the Eraser (E) and spray style brush from the free 'Spoon Graphics Spray Paint Brushes.abr' set (http://bit.ly/24vtmqi). Begin erasing parts of the fill you want textured.

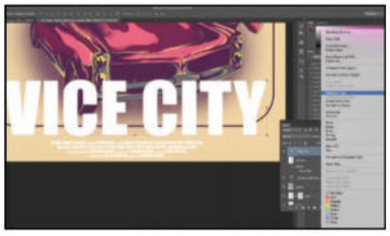


Create text

15 Create a custom hand-drawn font using the Brush (B) tool. Select the Type (T) tool and click the area where you want your credit text. The film credits are in the pre-installed font called Impact. Replace the film credit text with some proper names and studios.

Expert edit

Creating your own hand-drawn text

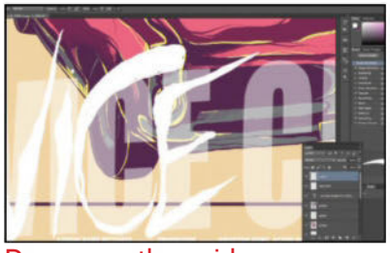


Set up guide text

01 When drawing text, it can be hard to work without guides; any pre-installed font will work. Rasterize this layer once the text is laid out.

Transform the text

02 Go to Edit>Transform>Distort to position your text into a perspective you like by dragging the square marks. Rasterizing the layer makes it possible to Distort the text.

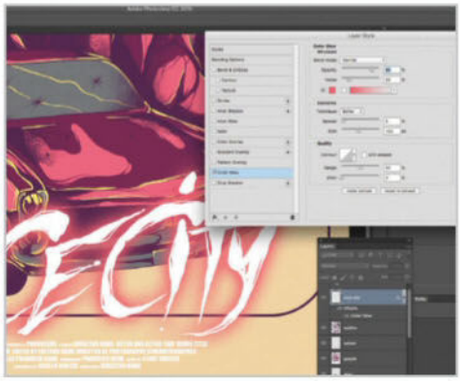


Draw over the guide

03 Now that the guide is set up, turn down the Opacity of that layer. Create a new layer over it and begin drawing your custom text with the Brush (B) tool.

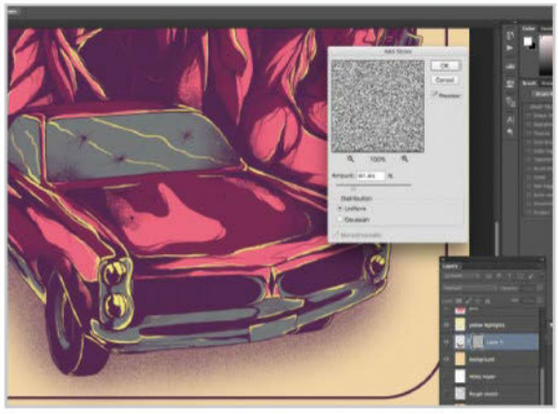
Remove/move layers

04 After completing the custom font, you need to delete or move any guides you have made. This is so they don't get in the way of the final few steps of organising layers.



Text effect

16 Select the layer of text you want to add an effect to. In this case it's the title. In the Layer Style window, add an Outer Glow. Make it a colour that matches the rest of the colour scheme. Increase the Noise to achieve a speckled texture.



Background shadow

17 When your illustration is nearly complete you will have a better idea of what's missing. Create a new layer between the background and yellow highlights. Select a soft brush (B) and create a shadow beneath the car. Add a Noise filter for a speckled effect.

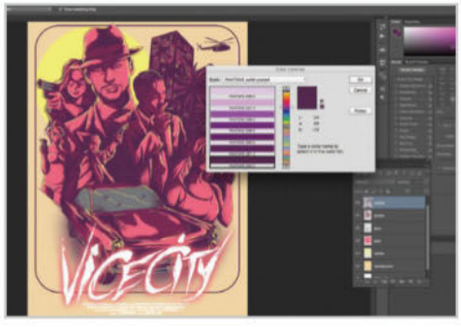
Expert tip

Using layer masks

Before applying the Noise filter to a layer, it's a good idea for you to make a layer mask. By using a layer mask to add the filter to, you don't risk messing with the work on the layer, making it easier to delete or change back to its original state. This also helps keep to one colour when adding noise because without this mask, you will get a white background along with your colour. To add a mask to your layer, simply click on the Add a Mask tab at the bottom of the Layers panel.

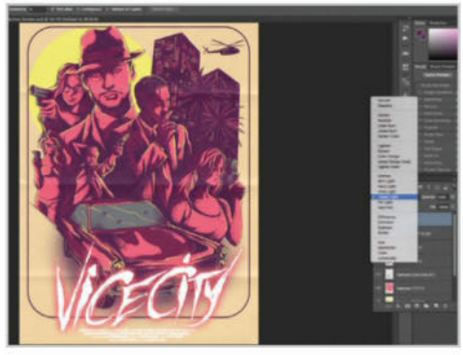
Organising layers

18 Make sure all your layers are in order from lightest to darkest. You want any duplicate coloured layers as one layer. Select the Wand (W) tool to select the colour, and delete the selected areas from other layers so the colour shows through.



Pantone colour reference

19 Before completing the illustration for print, you want to do a Pantone colour check. Load the colour library from the Palette selection. Use the Eyedropper (I) tool to select the colour you want to check. Pick the closest Pantone colour and name your layer its reference number.



Poster fold effect

20 Download SparkleStock's 'Fold-6.jpg' from Brusheezy.com (http://bit.ly/2cGZDHQ) and insert it on a top layer of your file. Change the blending mode for that layer to Linear Light, and reduce the Opacity for a more natural effect.

What you can do with it

Make prints

Now you have a completed poster illustration, there are loads of possibilities for what you can do with it. However, the obvious thing is getting prints made either digitally or screen-printed. The final size is down to you but the most popular poster sizes are 18"x24" or 24"x36". Always make sure that your document resolution is 300dpi or higher for the best quality when printed.

SIZING THE POSTER
To easily change the size of your poster to any print size, go to Image>Image Size and set the desired dimensions. This method will keep the same layout of your poster without cutting parts out.

RGB TO CMYK
If you worked in RGB mode you will need to convert it to CMYK mode, as this is the format for printing. Go to Image>Mode>CMYK Color. Do not flatten the image when asked.

BUILD A BETTER WEB

www.webdesignermag.co.uk

FREE RESOURCE DOWNLOADS EVERY ISSUE

web designer

Available from all good newsagents and supermarkets

ON SALE NOW

Smarter CSS animation techniques | Unleash the power of Node.js | 20 Best WordPress plugins

BUY YOUR ISSUE TODAY

Print edition available at www.imagineshop.co.uk

Digital edition available at www.greatdigitalmags.com

Available on the following platforms

Print | Tablet | Phone | Desktop

facebook.com/webdesignermag twitter.com/webdesignermag

Essentials

Time taken
22 hours

Expert

Vivek Arvind Mandrekar

"In this tutorial, you will learn techniques for painting a hyper-realistic portrait. I recommend using a graphics tablet, experimenting with Photoshop's brushes, and even creating your own. It's up to you how strictly you follow the steps – it's important to learn the basics and experiment.

"I am a Mumbai-based, self-taught artist and senior art director for Movie Posters and have been creating digital paintings for the past five years. In my youth, drawing was the only thing I was good at. I was introduced to traditional and digital art in the 1990s, and then Photoshop in 2001. It has been an incredible voyage."

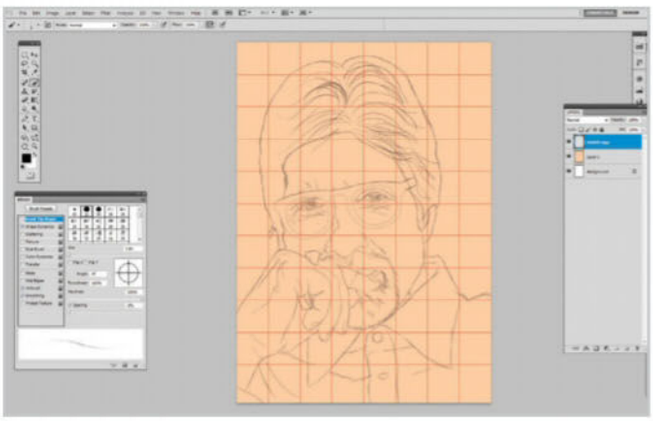
For more of Vivek's art, visit **https://www.behance.net/vivekmandrekar**.

Paint a realistic portrait

How to create a hyper-realistic portrait in Photoshop from scratch

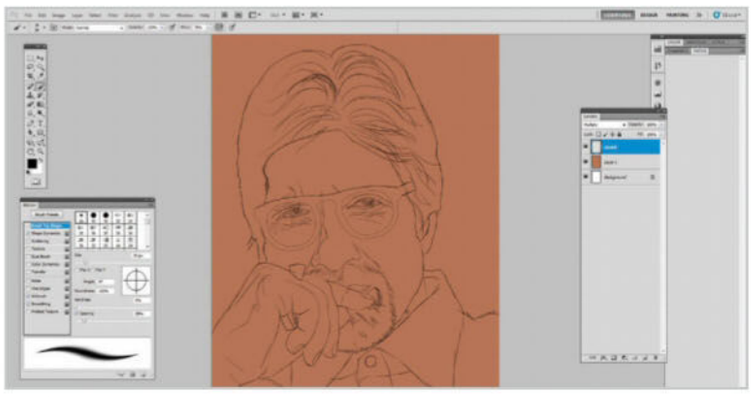
Hyper-realistic paintings are not interpretations of photographs, nor are they accurate illustrations of a specific scene or subject. Instead, they utilise picturesque elements in order to create the magic of realism, which in fact either does not exist or cannot be seen by the human eye.

The painting of Amitabh Bachchan used as the focus of this tutorial has been inspired by artists such as Vincent Fantauzzo, Chuck Close, Joongwon Jeo, Sheridan J and many others. In this tutorial, you will follow the process of creating a hyper-realistic portrait painting with the help of Photoshop and a Wacom tablet, where you will learn how to build up layers; create skin texture using brushes; tackle midtones, shadows and highlights; plus set the right colour temperature to achieve the desired effect. Painting a hyper-realistic portrait takes some time – there really is no shortcut. You just have to go in and keep painting each detail a piece at a time. Be patient and the result will be worth it. Always make layer groups; they make it easier and fun to work on. Check out the Expert Tips for more guidance.



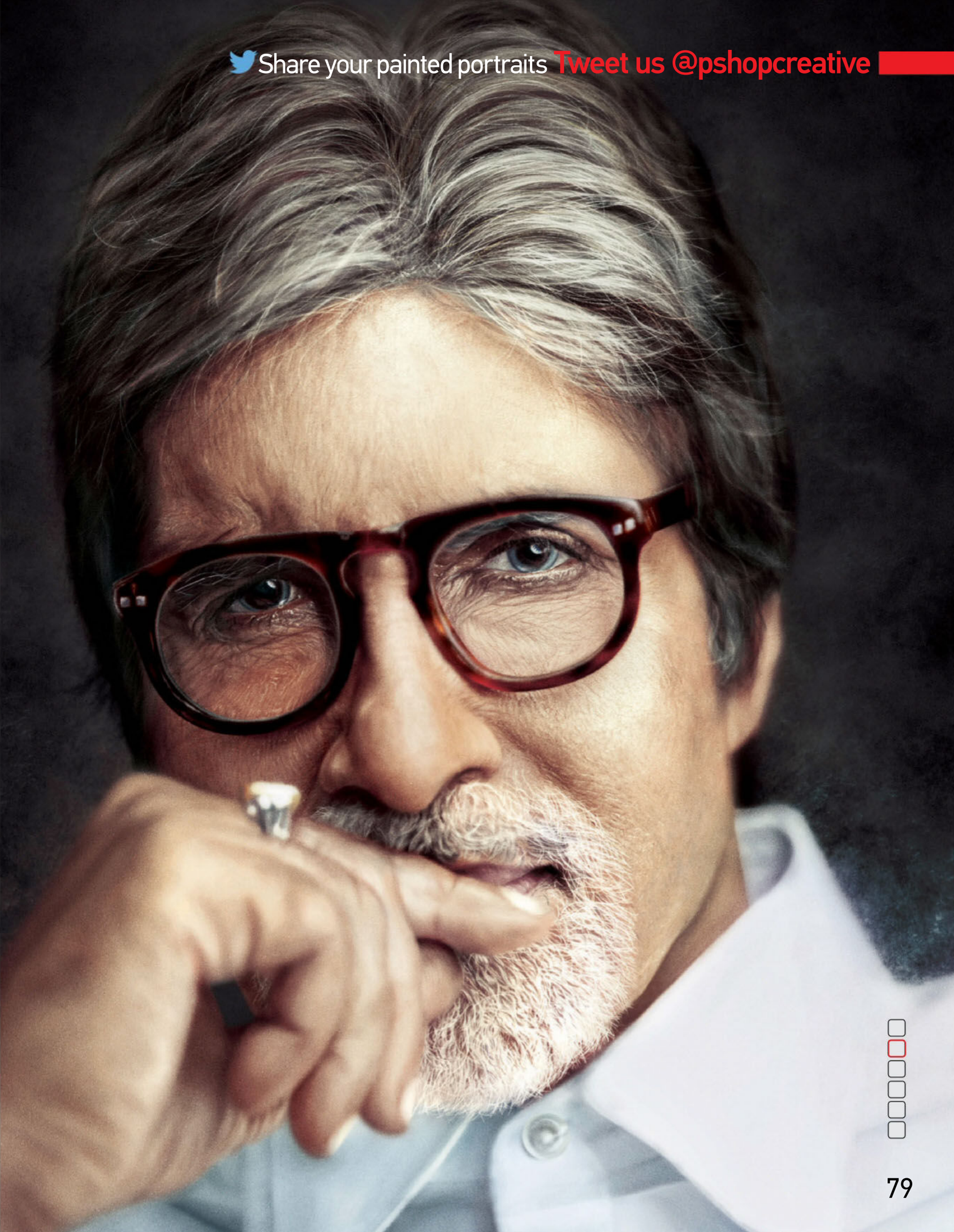
Create a grid for the sketch

01 Create a grid based on the reference picture and match it to your document, then draw the line art using the grid as the reference point. Ensure the grid lines are above the sketch.



Refine the sketch

02 Refine the line art, using a brush with a Hardness of 0, and change the Shape Dynamics in Size Jitter and Control to Pen Pressure with a Hardness of 0 to mimic the stroke of a pencil sketch. Refine the sketch, adding detail, which will be helpful when colouring.

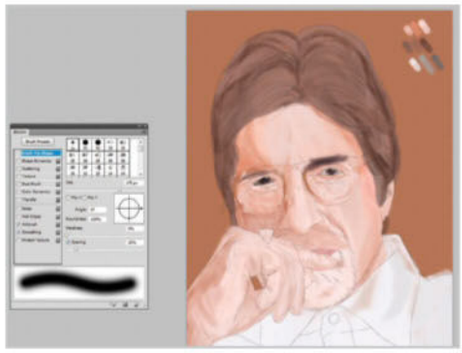


Expert tip

Image size and groups

Before beginning your painting, always set the Image Size (Pixel Dimensions) to around 80MB for a fine printing. Don't get it confused with file size – Image Size is different. Color Mode can be CMYK or RGB, depending on what gamut you are looking for and what platform the painting is destined for.

Always create layer groups while painting – name the specific group and gather the required layers in it. This makes it much easier to find or correct anything.

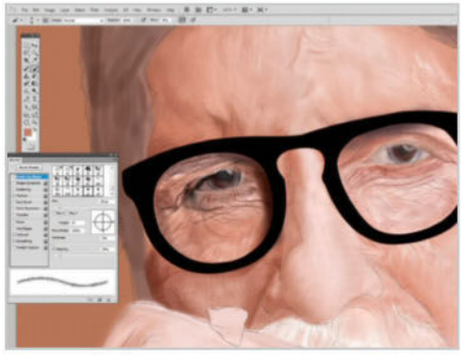


Choose the base colours

03 Make a shade palette for the shadows, midtones and highlights, and pick the colour from there. For instance, here the palette is only for the face, hair and shirt. Block the base colours using the sketch as a guideline, and use a hard round brush by keeping the Shape Dynamics settings off.

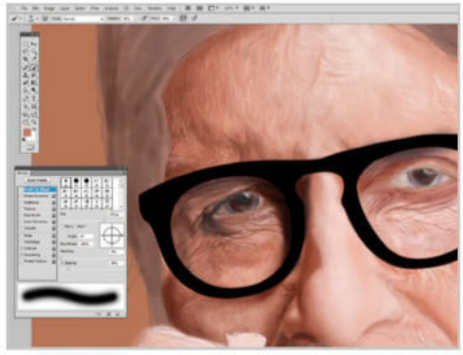
Draw and fill the glasses

04 Don't try to paint glasses with a brush; the shape will have bumps, which won't look good. Instead, create them in a new layer with the Pen tool for a better shape, then fill the path and adjust the shape with the anchor points if needed.



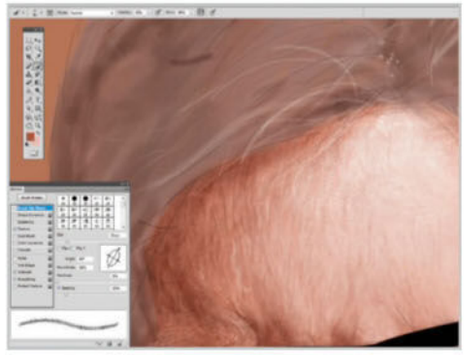
Colour the skin

05 Start with a soft brush of low opacity and paint all over the face. Now create a new layer for the textured skin details. Use a brush with 0% Hardness and the Texture setting on. Any default texture will work.



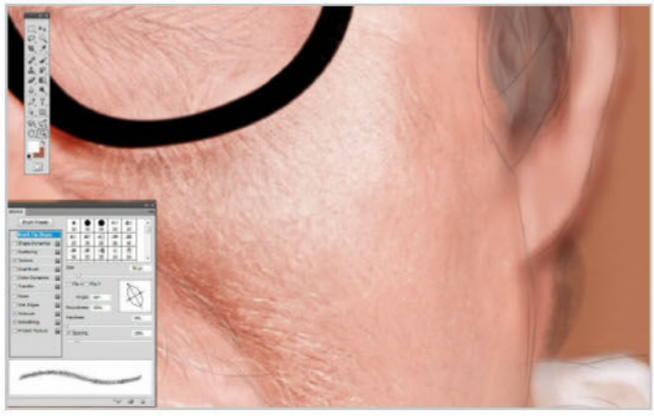
Blend the skin

06 After your skin detailing is over, take a soft brush and paint it with an Opacity of 40% and Flow of 58% above the textured layer. It will blend and smooth out the texture with your blocking of shadows, midtones and highlights.



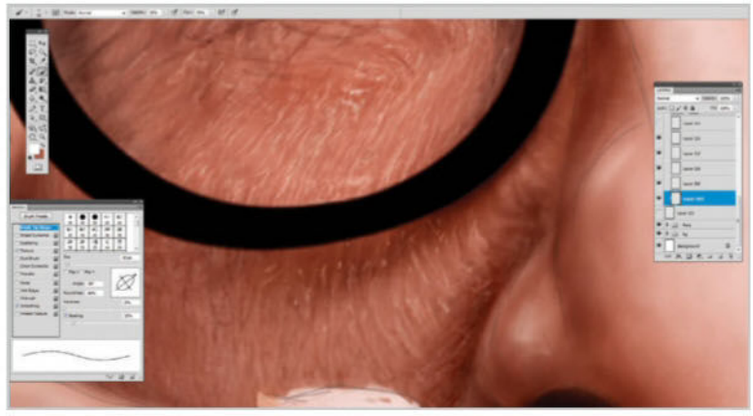
Paint the forehead

07 Now in a new layer, paint the wrinkles and skin details using your default texture brush on the forehead. Change the brush Hardness to 0%, Angle to 60% and Roundness to 56%. Use only two colours, with an Opacity of 43% and Flow of 56%.



Add pores and age spots

08 Change the brush Hardness to 0%, Angle to -60% and Roundness to 56%. Start painting the pores and age spots. Change the angle and size of the brush each time, and experiment with brush pressure.

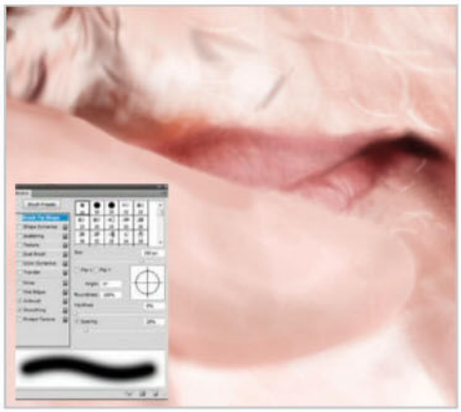


Paint wrinkles and the nose

09 Using the same brush technique as the previous two steps, carry on painting over the skin. Keep the layer as Overlay and use a soft brush with the flow on. For the nose, use a soft brush for smooth blending of the shadows and highlights.

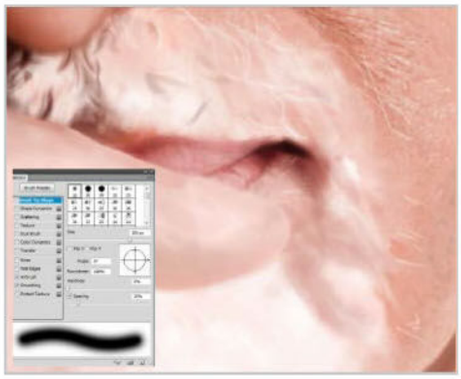
Paint the details

10 Change the brush Angle to 38% and Roundness to 60%, and keep the Texture setting on. Paint this in, keeping the layer as Overlay and use a soft brush. Now paint in more detail, creating new layers and blending to achieve a desired result.



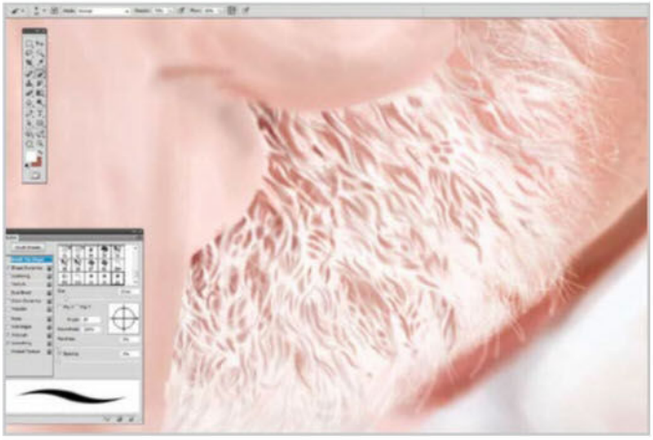
Work on the lips

11 There is only a small amount of lip seen here. Paint it with a soft brush by lowering the opacity and using only two colours, then on a new layer paint in Overlay mode, and then add detail.



Add facial hair

12 Block and underpaint the base tones of the facial hair using the Medium Round Brush. Roughly paint the hair strands by changing the Angle and Roundness of the brushes. Keep the Flow on for a smooth brush stroke.

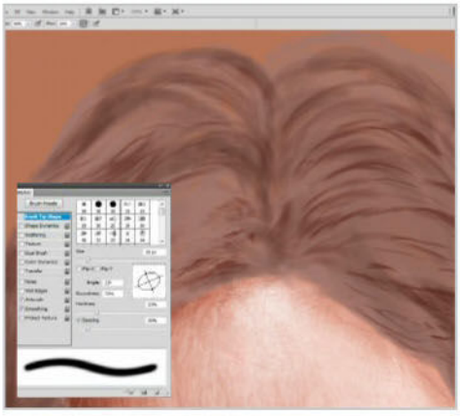


Refine each facial hair

13 Now change the Shape Dynamics to Pen Pressure, Opacity to 73% and Flow to 62. Paint each hair by altering the brush Size, Angle, Opacity and so on in new layers.

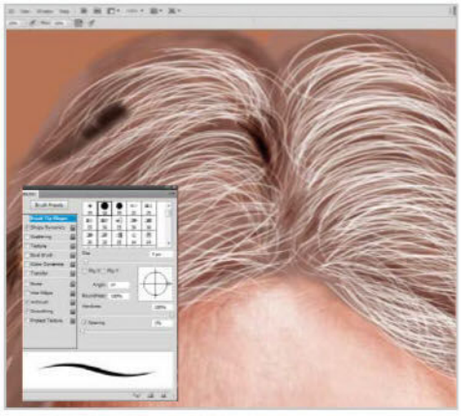
Paint the beard strands

14 Once you have completed detailing the facial hair, in a new layer paint each strand by using a brush Hardness of 63% and keep the Flow setting on to get a sharper result.



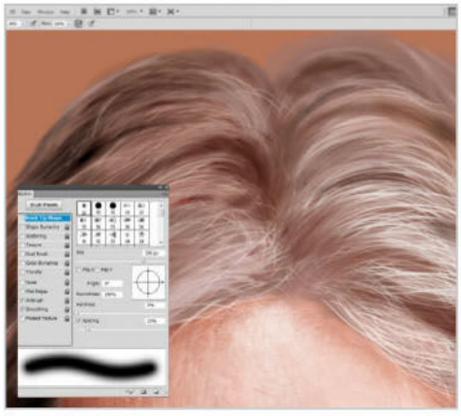
Start the hair

15 Underpaint the hair and block the lighter and darker tones by using a brush with a Hardness of 23%. Change the Angle and keep the brush Flow on.



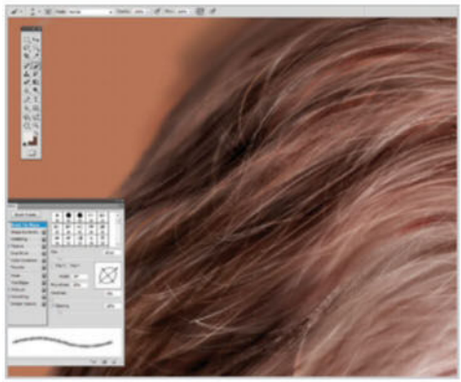
Add some hair strands

16 In a new layer, paint each strand with a hard brush, keeping the Shape Dynamics to Pen Pressure. Stroke it by changing the Angle and Flow.



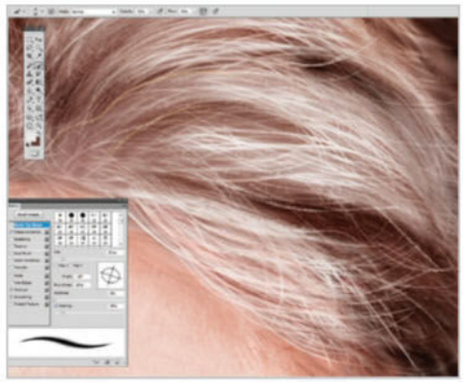
Smooth the hair strands

17 Paint over the hair with a big soft brush by picking the nearest colour using the Color Picker and lowering the layer Opacity to 80% for a smooth effect.



Texture each strand

18 Paint with a default Texture setting brush and change the Angle by keeping the Flow setting on. You can experiment with the brushes, texture settings, brush pressure and patterns.

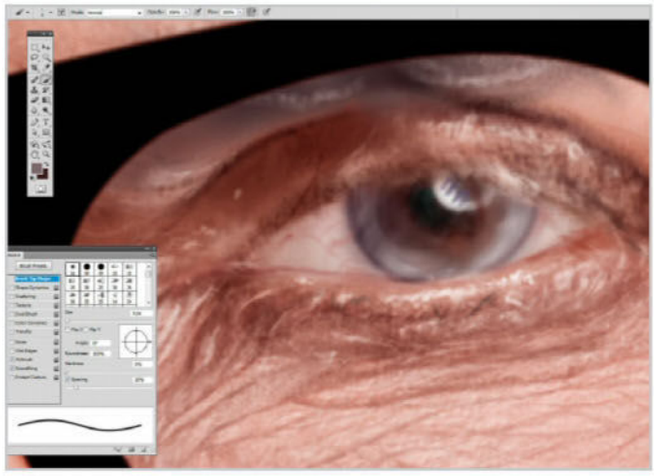


Refine the strands

19 On a new layer, lower the Opacity to 70%, set to Overlay mode and paint each stroke by shifting the brush Angle and Size for a better blend. For a smooth effect, keep the Flow setting on.

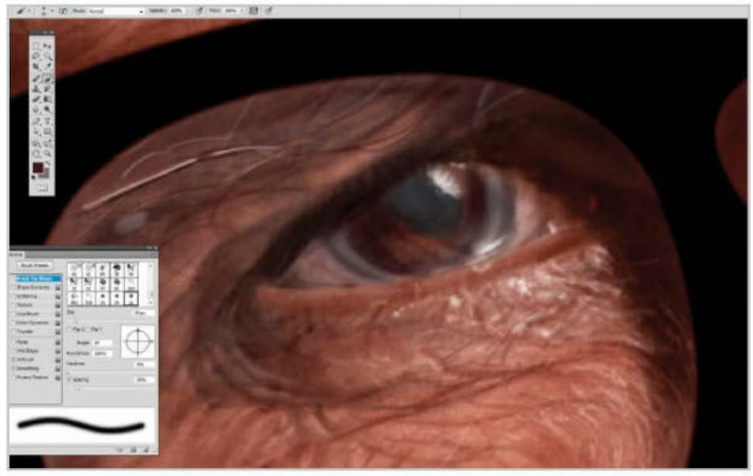
Paint the eyes

20 Paint with a soft brush to outline the iris. Use a new layer for the eyeballs and paint using the same techniques as before. Keep zooming in when adding details.



Work on the sclera and iris

21 Focus on one part of the eye and use the same soft round brush to paint by altering the Size and Opacity. Compare both left and right eyes and see how it looks.



Detail the pupils and skin around the eye

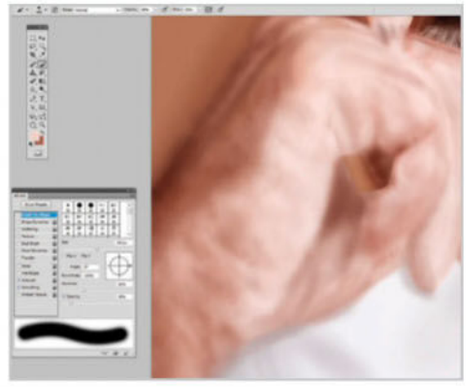
22 Paint the pupils with a soft round brush of 0% Hardness and alter the Size and Opacity. For the texture under the eye, paint with a default texture brush.

Add shadows and highlights

23 Clip a layer mask to the glasses created with the Pen tool. Paint the details on various layers within the clip mask using a soft brush. Concentrate on the highlights and shadows first.

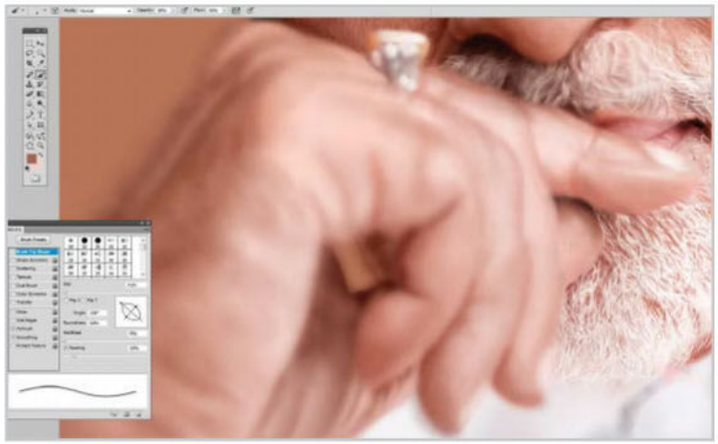
Apply details to the glasses

24 Now set your layer to Overlay and paint some shine on the frame with a medium brush. Keep altering the blend mode to Hard Light or Screen.



Paint the hand

25 Block the colours in for the hand and then paint the shadows and highlights using a brush with a Hardness of 31%. Change the Pressure, Opacity, Angle and Flow frequently.



Make out-of-focus fingers

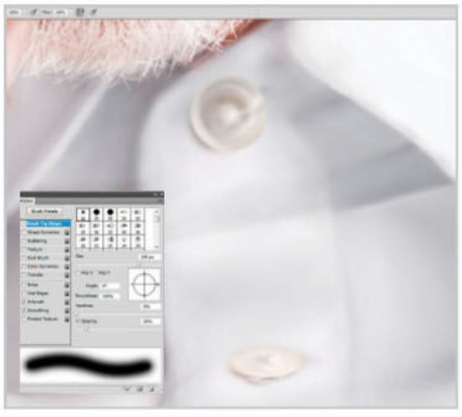
26 Paint the ring and entire fingers with a soft brush to achieve an out-of-focus effect, then paint the smaller details if necessary. Add a layer set to Overlay for a shiny effect on the ring.

Paint the clothing

27 Fill in the shirt using tones and shadows, following the sketch as a reference. Paint it with a soft brush and block with shadows and highlights. Grey and white are the only colours you need here.

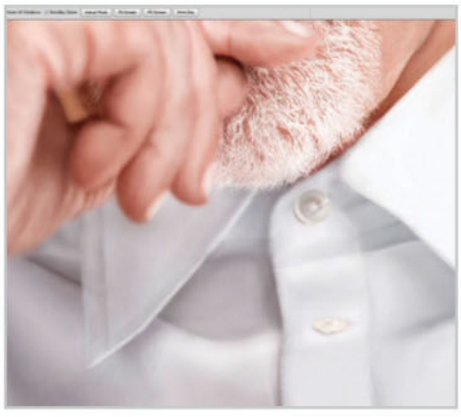
Apply stitches

28 Use a brush with Hardness set to 14% and Spacing set to 292%. When you paint you will get a spaced stitch effect. Lower the layer Opacity to 70% and apply the stitches wherever they are needed.



Add some shiny buttons

29 For a round button, use a brush with a Hardness of 52% and a Roundness of 100%. In a new layer, apply the button shading. For the lower button, change the Angle of the brush before painting.



Finish the clothing

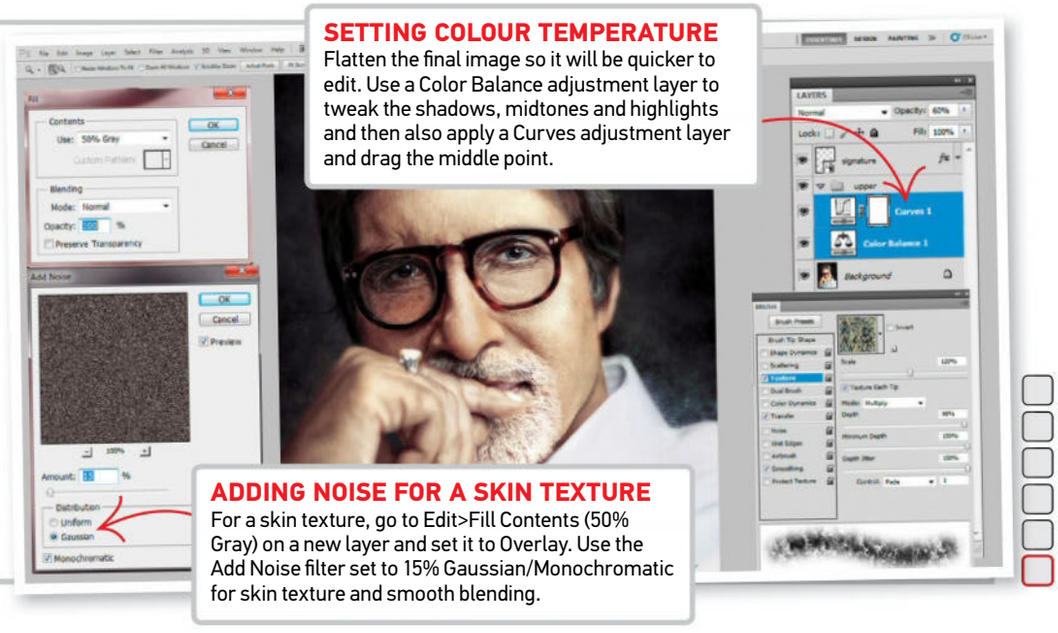
30 Once everything is complete, paint the shirt details like shadows, highlights, creases and folds with a soft brush. Keep using layers set to Overlay or Soft Light to paint on.

Expert tip

The final touches

Always paint the background when you have finished with the rest of the painting. Paint it on a new file and then drag it across to your final painting.

Take a soft brush, change the Texture Pattern to Rock Pattern and then paint all over the background. Use various sizes and angles. Then in a new layer, apply a vignette with the Gradient tool, keeping the Dither and Transparency option on. Play around until you get the results you want. Use the Hue/Saturation command to change the colour of the background.



SETTING COLOUR TEMPERATURE
Flatten the final image so it will be quicker to edit. Use a Color Balance adjustment layer to tweak the shadows, midtones and highlights and then also apply a Curves adjustment layer and drag the middle point.

ADDING NOISE FOR A SKIN TEXTURE
For a skin texture, go to Edit>Fill Contents (50% Gray) on a new layer and set it to Overlay. Use the Add Noise filter set to 15% Gaussian/Monochromatic for skin texture and smooth blending.

Special offer for readers in **North America**

6 issues FREE

When you subscribe*

FREE resource downloads in every issue

"The world's best Photoshop inspiration, tutorials and advice"

Order hotline **44 (0) 1795 592 871**

Online at **www.imaginesubs.co.uk/pcr**

Quote **USA** for this exclusive offer!

* Terms and conditions: This is a US subscription offer. You will actually be charged £80 sterling for an annual subscription. This is equivalent to $105 at the time of writing, exchange rate may vary. 6 free issues refers to the USA newsstand price of $15.50 for 13 issues being $201.50, compared with $105 for a subscription. Your subscription starts from the next available issue and will run for 13 issues. This offer expires 31st December 2016.

Elements creative

18 pages of practical guides

Essential techniques
Follow the step-by-step tutorials

Create more in Elements...

What's new in Elements 15? 86
Craft your own phone wallpaper 88
Master stylish blurring effects 92
Design digital embroidered text 98
Q&A: Common problems in Elements 102

On the FileSilo

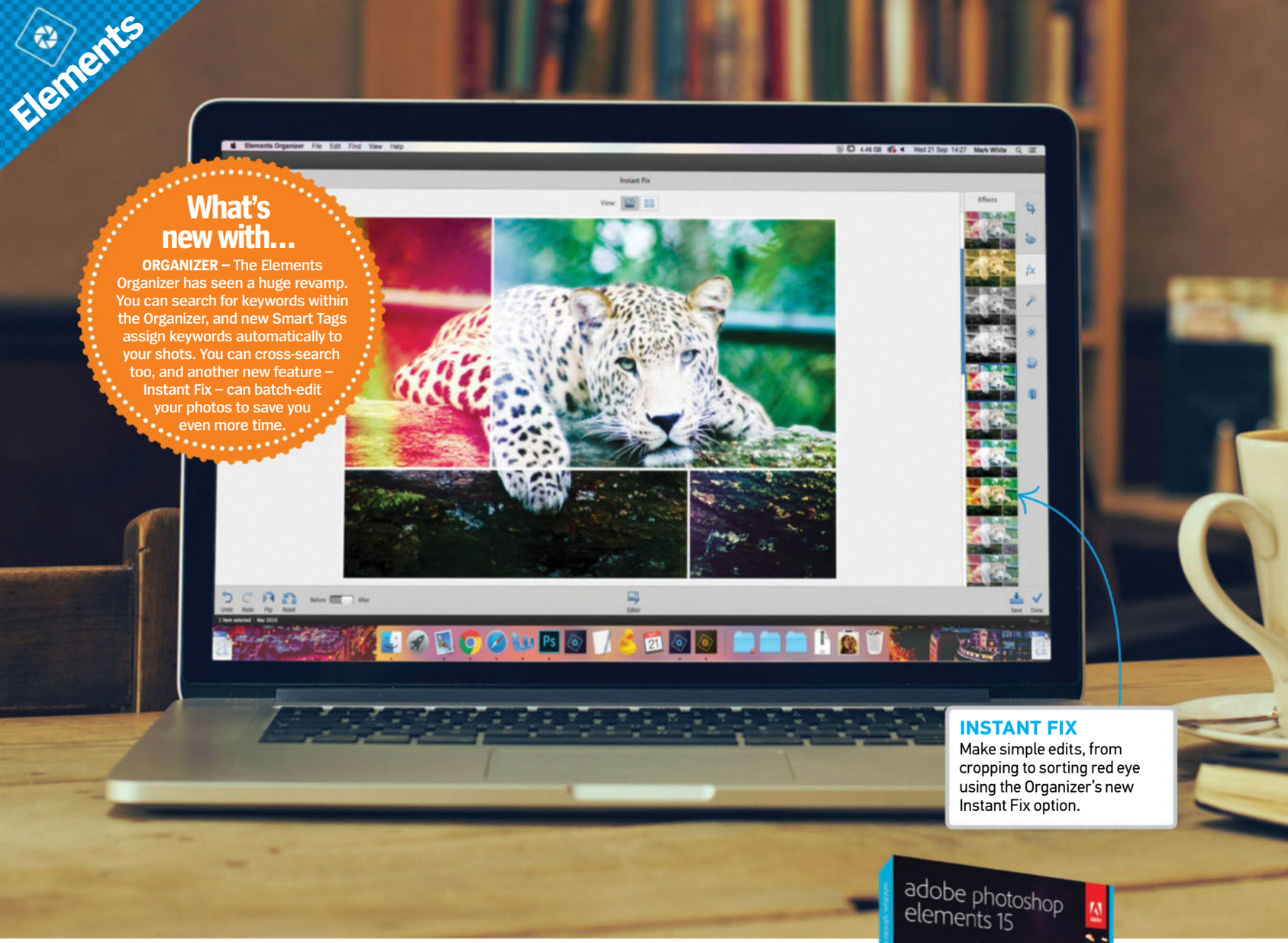
Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Surreal art...

LEARN HOW TO

CREATE MAGICAL COMPOSITIONS

Use custom brushes, masks and adjustment layers to composite fantasy artwork p94



What's new with...

ORGANIZER – The Elements Organizer has seen a huge revamp. You can search for keywords within the Organizer, and new Smart Tags assign keywords automatically to your shots. You can cross-search too, and another new feature – Instant Fix – can batch-edit your photos to save you even more time.

INSTANT FIX
Make simple edits, from cropping to sorting red eye using the Organizer's new Instant Fix option.

Tool focus...

What's new in Elements 15?

Discover the latest features to check out in Elements 15

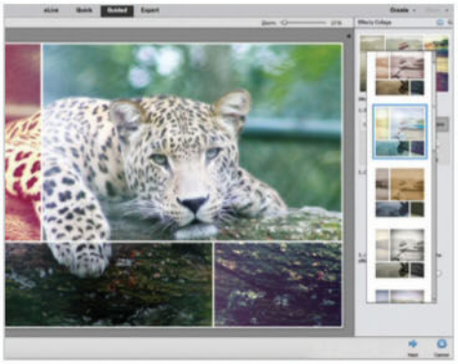
Just as technology evolves every year and design trends change, Photoshop Elements aims to stay one step ahead of the pack with a new annual release. Now in its 15th version, Elements has been streamlined again for even better ease of use, and boasts a fair few cool new tools.

It's not just Elements that has seen a revamp – the Elements Organizer has some awesome new search functions to help keep track of photos. This is where the editing process begins; you can pick photos to edit in batch now, or take them in for further editing.

Photoshop Elements has always been aimed at those who want user-friendly yet high-quality edits, and Elements 15 only enhances that experience. The layout of the Expert workspace has been tweaked to make your workflow quicker; there are five new Guided Edits; and frames have been added for you to create, collect and share with your friends. The panels across the bottom right of the software now include filters; there are advanced options in the Guided tab; and the brand new Adjust Face Features tool is a breakthrough for fixing expressions in photos.

While there's plenty more to get stuck into with Elements 15, it still feels as easy to use as ever: but how can you get the best out of the latest features, and how could the latest version improve your work? Check out our guide to find out.

Check out the updates Take a look at the latest tools and features added to Elements



Effects Collage

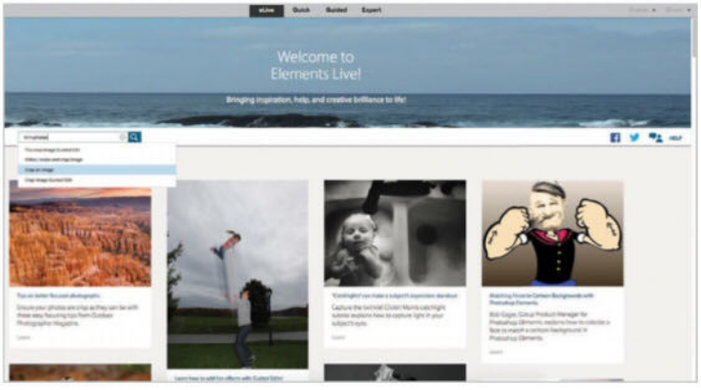
01 One of five brand new Guided Edits, you can now create an Effects Collage in Elements. Located under Fun Edits, choose your layout, before picking from the preset options available, which divide your picture into different windows of filters. You can alter opacity, too.

Adjust facial features

02 Adjusting facial features has only just become available to Photoshop users, and via the Adobe apps, so its inclusion in this latest version of Elements is exciting. Go to Enhance>Adjust Facial Features and you can tweak everything from eyes to lips, and also head width.

The Painterly effect

03 As well as photo editing and compositions, Elements can be a fantastic tool for digital-art pieces. Create digital paintings in a matter of clicks using this new Guided Edit, which can be found under Fun Edits; brush onto your picture yourself and even select a canvas when you're done.



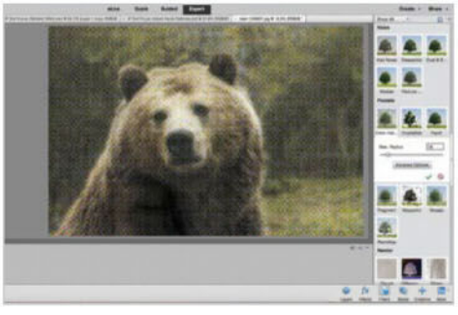
eLive search function

04 eLive in Photoshop Elements is where you can catch up with all the latest news and updates from Adobe. New to Elements 15, there's an intelligent search function that enables you to find content based on similar terms; for example, searching for 'Trim photos' will bring up articles on cropping.

Shortcut
Now touch-enabled for devices like the Microsoft Surface

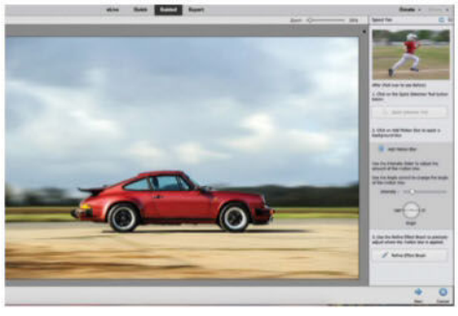
Frame Creator

05 Adobe is constantly embracing the social side of designing, and with the new Frame Creator function, you can too. Create a frame from a photo in Special Edits using the Selection tools, import more frames from online and share them with your friends.



Filters panel

06 The Filter menu is still available along the top of Photoshop Elements, but with Elements 15, you can now access every filter available using the panel along the bottom right of your window. It will help speed up your work, and keep everything in one place for one-click filter edits.



Speed Pan

07 Elements 14 brought in the hugely popular Speed Effect, and with Elements 15, there's another awesome tool for bringing motion into your photos. Speed Pan blurs your background but keeps your subject still, using Quick Selection. Find it under Fun Edits.

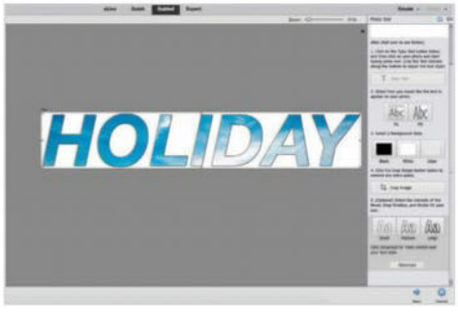


Photo Text

08 Text can really brighten up a project, but brightening up text itself has just become a lot easier. Photo Text – under the Fun Edits section of Guided Edits – enables you to clip pictures to your text, just by typing and selecting a background. You can crop and resize from here, too.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Creative project...

Craft your own phone wallpaper

Bring life to a lockscreen, with brushes, shapes and blend modes

Choosing a background is a tricky decision for anyone who's just bought a new phone. Every model offers the user plenty of default options, and you can of course simply search the internet for a stylish picture. But if you're looking for something a little personal, and for something that won't just be hidden by the date and time on your lockscreen, creating your own wallpaper in Elements can be a fun and creative task.

The best thing about creating a wallpaper is that it can be as original as you'd like. Most people pick something that has personal significance to them, so while we've used a stock image, you may want to use a picture of a landmark you took on holiday, or even a family member or loved one. The possibilities are endless, from the low-poly background to the painted style of the subject, and you can use this tutorial as more of a checklist of things to add to your wallpaper, should you wish to be really creative.

It's vital to remember to create something that is high in resolution so that it shows up nicely on your phone – just because it's a small screen, it doesn't mean it can be low quality! Also be sure to follow the template you create to keep everything organised. When you're finished, simply export it to your phone!

STAGE 1

Make a template

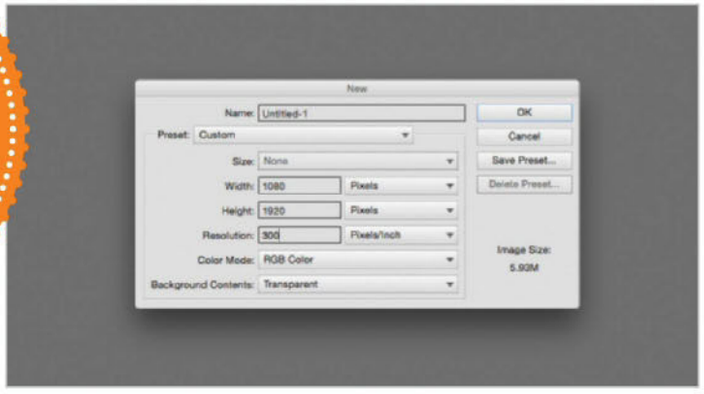
Keep your project organised with a simple template

What does it mean?

GUIDES – The guides are blue lines that will remain in place on your document without being moved, so you can build your picture around them. They're great if you're creating a picture with bleed, for example. They're best used with the Grid (Cmd/Ctrl+'), which breaks your document into small squares.

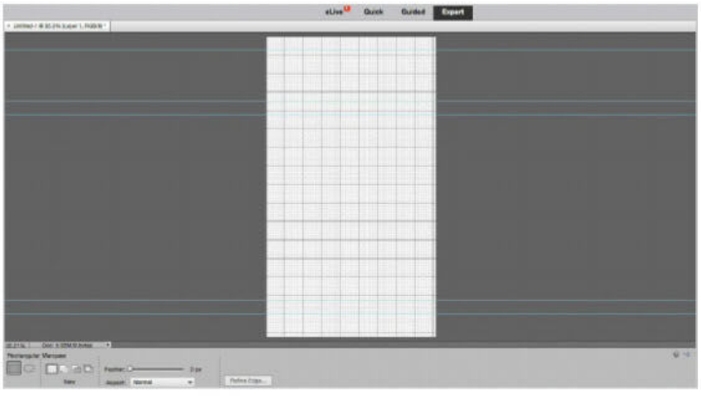
Creating templates before actually being creative might seem boring, but it can help to make your wallpaper even better. In this case we're going to measure where the phone's date and time fall in order to make sure that we don't create a masterpiece that's hidden by text.

By creating a template, you can actually be even more creative. Once we know where the text will interfere with the final picture, we can then create embellishments that complement the date and time nicely, with paint flicks in stage two.



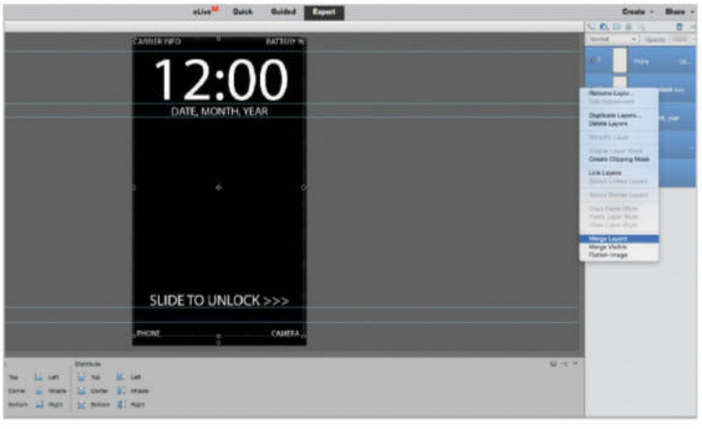
Create a new document

01 Head to File>New>Blank File. Choose Width: 1080, Height: 1920 and Resolution: 300. This is the default size for most smartphone backgrounds, though yours might differ slightly. It's important to work with a decent resolution, such as 300, so that the image is as clear as possible.



Add in guides

02 We're going to make sure the image we create doesn't clash with the date, time and 'unlock' text that's displayed. For iOS 7 onwards, add horizontal guides at 0.75cm, 3.5cm, 4.25cm, 14.25cm and 15cm. For other phones, screenshot your lockscreen and place temporarily in your document, before adding the guides.



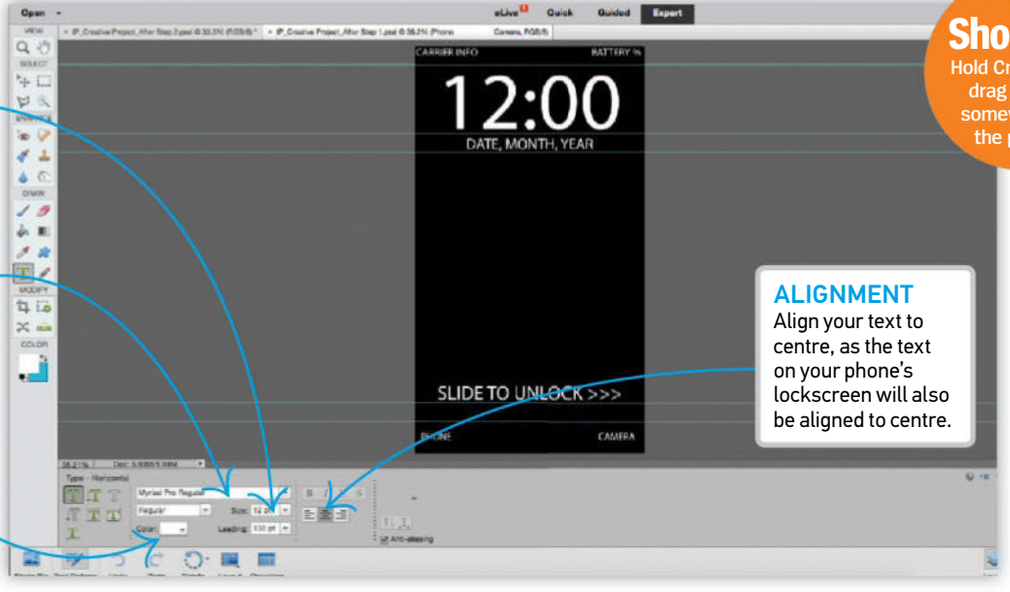
Set up the template

03 Select the Text tool by hitting T. In any font, write out some placeholder text that you might see on your phone background, as we have in the image above. Select all these text layers, Ctrl/right-click and Merge Layers. This will form your guide to build around.

SIZE
Vary the size of your text by clicking on the word Size and simply dragging left or right of the drop-down menu.

FONT
Though the font isn't important for the template, you can change it by using the drop-down menu.

COLOUR
Turn your background to black and the text to white so that it stands out over the image you're creating.



ALIGNMENT
Align your text to centre, as the text on your phone's lockscreen will also be aligned to centre.

Shortcut
Hold Cmd/Ctrl to drag a guide somewhere in the project

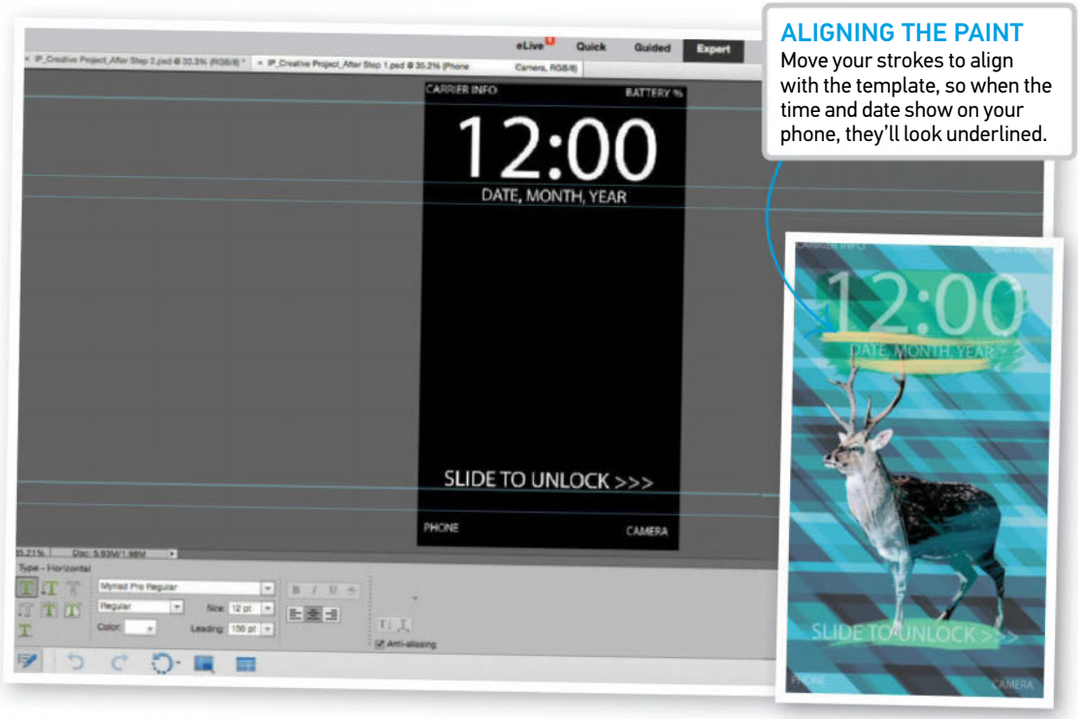
STAGE 2

Build up the image

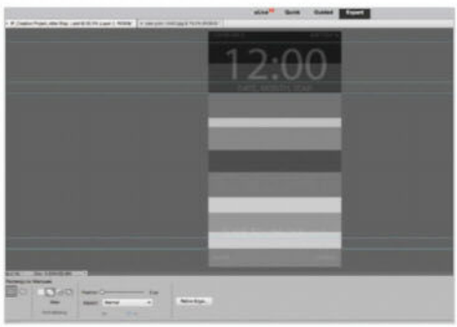
Add various elements to the wallpaper to finalise the image

This is where the creativity really starts; with your template sorted – and ever-present at the top of your layer stack – you can really start to build your picture below.

We're going to create a low-poly background that will look great on a phone screen, and then we're going to use a stock image of a deer. You can use pictures of your own though; the important thing is to bear the template in mind.

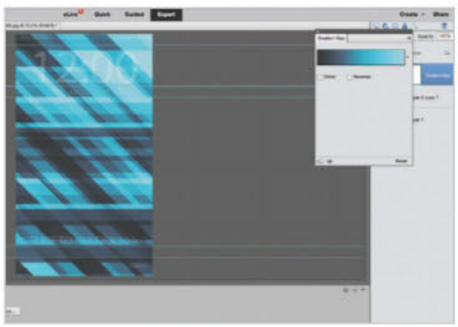


ALIGNING THE PAINT
Move your strokes to align with the template, so when the time and date show on your phone, they'll look underlined.



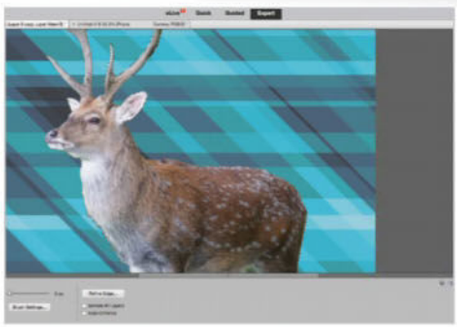
Make some stripes

01 Select the Marquee tool (M). In various shades of grey, fill in some horizontal stripes on a new layer. Duplicate this layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), and rotate by 45 degrees. Set this layer to Overlay and duplicate again. Nudge it slightly. Merge all these layers.



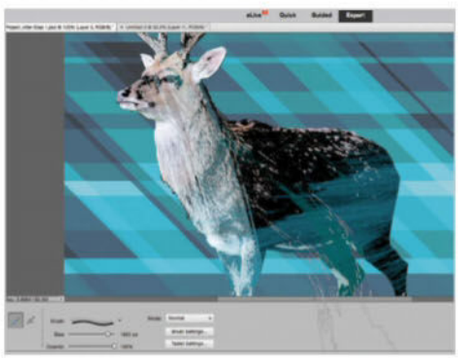
Create a gradient map

02 Go to the Adjustment/Fill layer icon, the half blue, half white icon next to the Mask icon. Choose the Gradient Map option, and select a set of colours; we went for #3a3a3a, #4b667d, #3b9aa3, #3cb6d0 and #a4d2df.



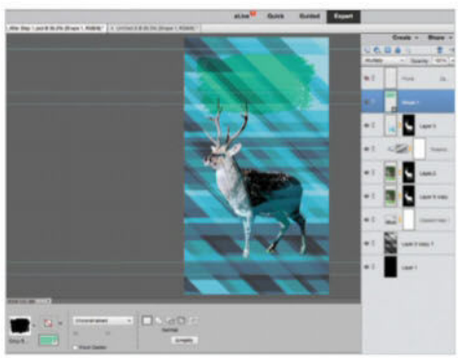
Place the deer

03 Drag 'deer.jpg' into the image and select the Quick Selection tool (A). Select the whole deer and use the Refine Edge tool if you need to tidy up the edges. When you're happy, click the Mask icon and position in the centre of the image.



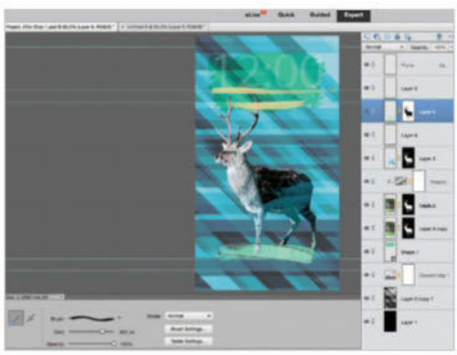
Give it a painted feel

04 Duplicate your deer and go to the Fill Layer icon, as you did to create the gradient map. Choose the Threshold, and Alt/Opt-click to clip it to the second deer. Set to Multiply. Then use the supplied brushes on a new layer to add some strokes to the image.



Add a shape

05 Select the colour #52eab2. Click on the Shape tool (U) and find a painted shape (we chose Crop Shape 20). Drag it over where the date and time will be displayed on the screen, set to Multiply and place this layer below the deer.



Paint some strokes

06 Select the colour #e7d194. Click on the Brush tool (B) and choose some of the supplied brush strokes that you added to Elements earlier. On a new layer, draw two strokes under where the date and time will be. Add a #71f3c1 stroke over the 'unlock' text.

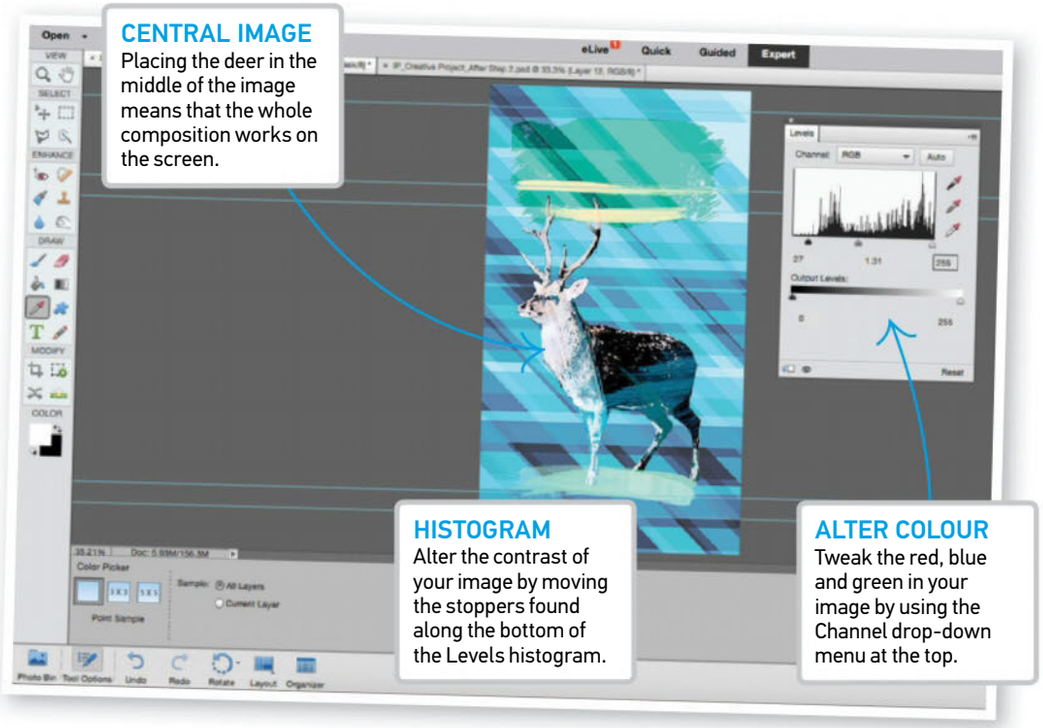
STAGE 3

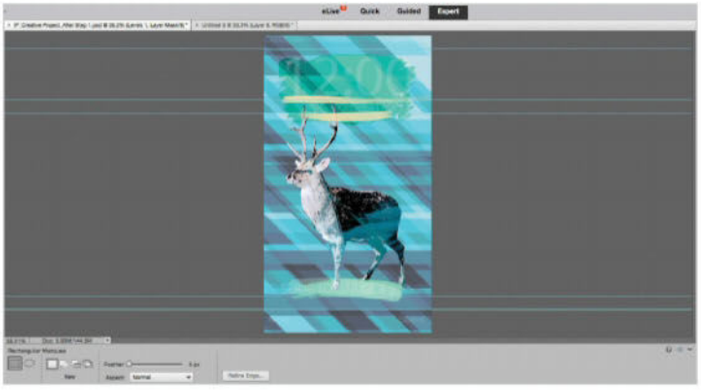
Adjust the image

Now make sure you get the best out of what you've created with adjustments

Putting in the effort to create something that looks amazing can sometimes only be half of your work in Elements. The other half is getting it to look as good as the effort that was put in.

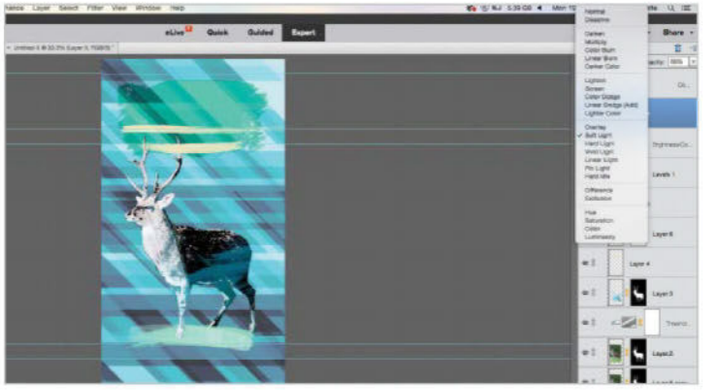
By using adjustments and filters, we can sharpen images, tweak the colours and brightness, and generally improve the overall look of the project so far. This is a vital stage, and one that can turn good images into outstanding ones.





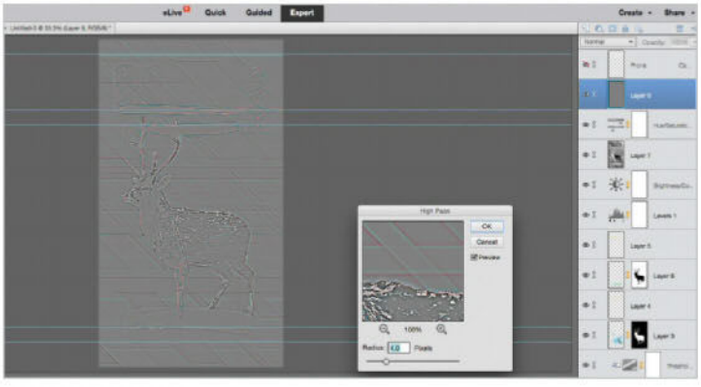
Make subtle adjustments

01 Go to the Fill/Adjustment icon again and choose Levels. Adjust the stoppers slightly to alter the contrast and go to the drop-down menu to tweak the Red, Green and Blue channels. Edit the Brightness, Contrast and Saturation from the same menu if need be.



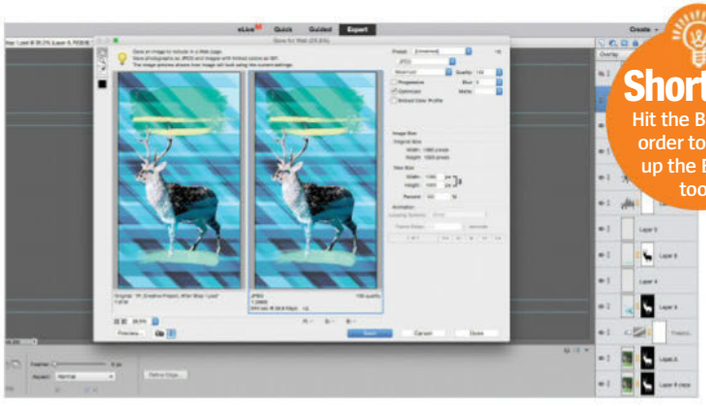
Create soft focus

02 Hide your template layer and hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to merge everything into a snapshot. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and choose 40px. Turn the layer Opacity to 60% and blend mode to Soft Light. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+U and alter Lightness: +20, Saturation: -20.



Sharpen up

03 Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to merge everything into a snapshot again. Go to Filter>Other>High Pass and choose 4px. Change the blend mode to Overlay. This will sharpen up your image and make it look even better when it's actually on a screen.



Shortcut
Hit the B key in order to bring up the Brush tool

Export

04 Have a good look at the image to see if it needs any finishing touches. If you're happy with it, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+S to bring up the Save For Web dialog. Save in high resolution and then download to your phone to use.

What does it mean?

REFINE EDGE – The Refine Edge tool is a useful feature for editing tricky selections like hair, but also for smoothing the edges of any object you've selected. It can feather your selections and it can smooth edges, so it's an idea to use the tool before you hit the mask icon to ensure perfect selections.

BLUR SOME MORE
Grab the Blur tool (R) to go over your background with more blur in specific areas.

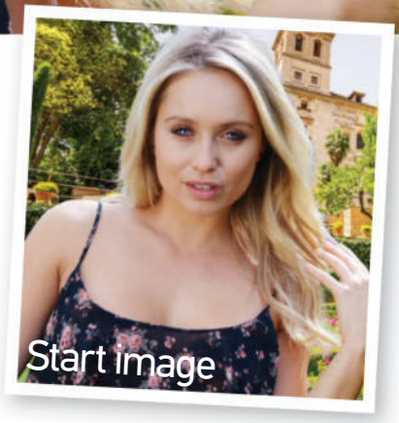
SHARPEN THE SUBJECT
To add a little more detail to the subject, duplicate the layer, go to Filter>Other>High Pass, choose 5px, set to Overlay and clip to the subject layer.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Photo edit...

Master stylish blurring effects



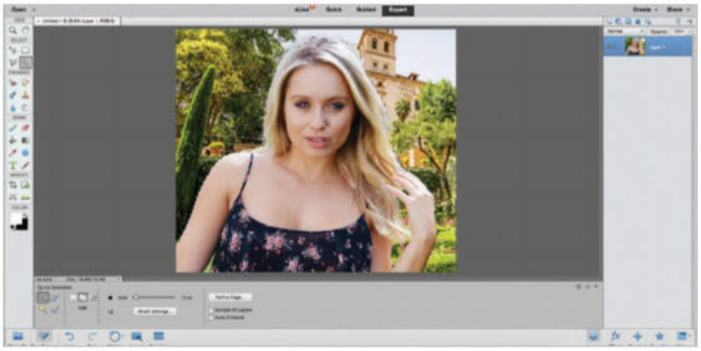
Mimic depth of field by controlling foreground and background blur

Often, it's the simplest effects that really complete your photos, and whether something is in or out of focus is really important. A busy shot that either has loads of clashing colours or is teaming with different objects can be calmed down with just a bit of a blur applied to the background. This helps the eye gloss over the blurred areas, and so draws attention to the subject left in focus.

Considering it's such a subtle, yet powerful effect, you'll be pleased to hear that it's really easy to alter the depth of field in your photos. All pictures comprise a foreground and a background, so the key is simply to isolate the two so that they can be edited separately. It might be that you want to add just a touch of blur with a smaller radius, or create a really hazy background; it can be a nice touch to merge the picture when you're finished, duplicate your layer, set to Screen and then apply more of a blur to give a soft focus to the finished image.

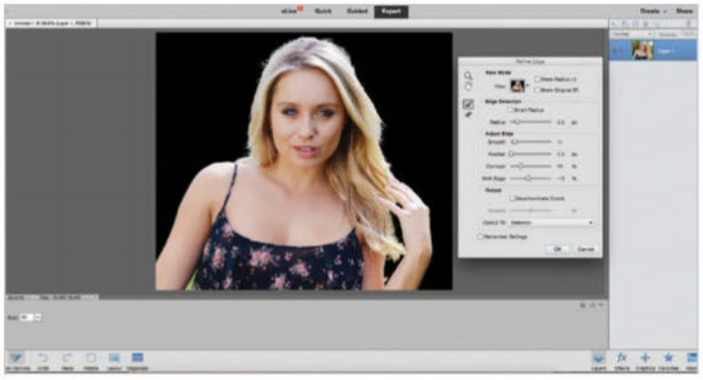
This isn't just a tool for photo editors, either. Photomanipulations look much more lifelike when you apply a touch of depth of field, and even digital art can benefit from this technique.

Create depth of field
Isolate your subject and blur the background for more focus



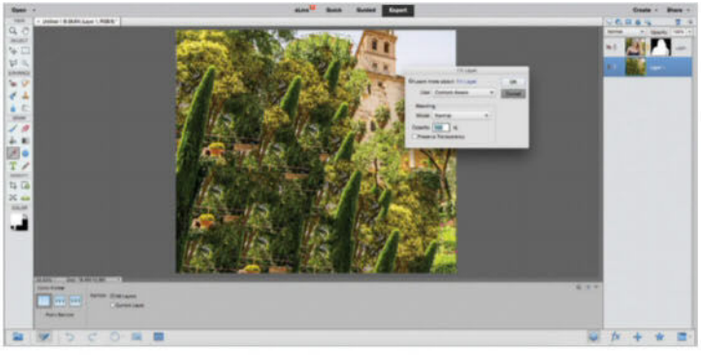
Select the subject

01 Start off by grabbing the Quick Selection tool. You can use any kind of selection tool for this, but the Quick Selection is better for selecting hair. Drag the tool over the entirety of the subject, making sure you get all the stray pieces of hair and reach the edges of the subject with the cursor.



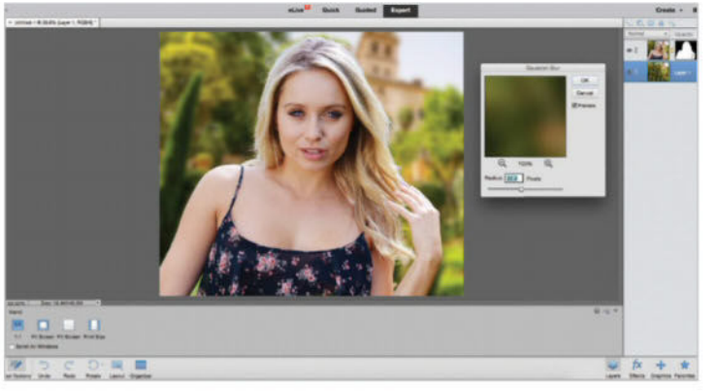
Refine Edge

02 We want to smooth over the edges of the subject so hit Ctrl/right-click>Refine Edge. Here, you can brush over the edges of the subject to add more to the selection and use the sliders to tweak the selection. Click OK, hit Mask then Ctrl/right-click>Layer Via Copy.



Use Content-Aware

03 Now we have the subject lifted from its background, but when we blur the background, the outline of the subject will blur with it. To avoid this, Cmd/Ctrl+click the preview window of the subject's mask, then click on the background layer, Ctrl/right-click and choose Fill Selection>Content-Aware.

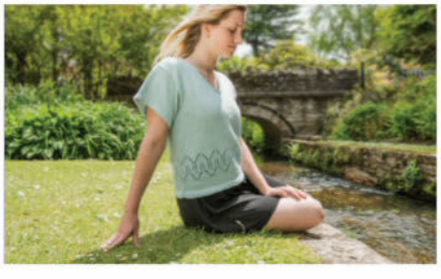


Blur the background

04 With the subject and background now entirely separated, we can blur the background to draw more attention to the subject. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and choose the Radius setting depending on how blurry you want it to be.

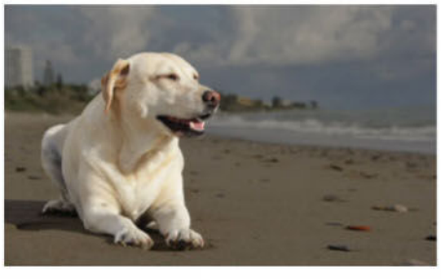
Taking it further
What other effects can you achieve with this technique?

Shortcut
Hit Cmd/Ctrl+F to apply the last filter that you used again



Faded blur

If the ground is visible in the image that you're trying to blur the background of, your depth of field may look unrealistic, as you'll be blurring the ground in the foreground with that in the background. To rectify this, duplicate the background before you blur, hit Mask and then add a black to white gradient.



Dark background

The Average blur is different to other blur tools as it fills in the space with an average shade of colour, determined by all the colours in that space. Again, duplicate your background layer, go to Filter>Blur>Average and set to Multiply to darken the background with a colour that suits the scene.

Radial Blur

The Radial Blur is perfect for speeding effects, and just in the same way as with the Gaussian Blur, can be applied as a depth of field effect to suggest movement. Follow the same technique, but try duplicating your background layer, applying the Radial Blur (Filter>Blur>Radial Blur) and then reducing the opacity of the layer to keep the effect subtle.

PHOTO FILTER
Apply the Photo Filter adjustment layer and change its blending mode to create more consistent and harmonious colours.

CUSTOM BRUSHES
Create custom brushes and adjust the Brush Settings to quickly add special effects to your compositions.

What does it mean?

FREE TRANSFORM TOOL – This lets you scale, rotate and skew an image. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T to open it. Hold Shift and drag the corner handles to scale the image proportionally. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and drag the handles to skew the image or place the mouse cursor outside the boundaries to rotate the image.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Surreal art...

Create a magical composition

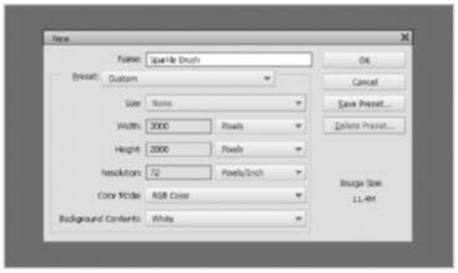
Learn new tricks and techniques to advance your editing skills

Photoshop Elements has powerful tools to create amazing artworks. In this tutorial you'll learn how to create magical compositions using custom brushes, masks and adjustment layers. This tutorial is divided into two parts. The first part shows how to create a custom brush. The second part uses adjustment layers and masks to create lighting effects, add colours and make tonal corrections.

Learning how to create brushes can be very useful. You can use them to create unique textures, creative shapes, special effects and so on. Adjustment layers enable you to change the appearance of an image by adjusting brightness, colours and tones. You'll also learn how to create shadows and highlights by painting over an adjustment mask. You'll take advantage of the masks to control the adjustment intensity and define the areas affected by them.

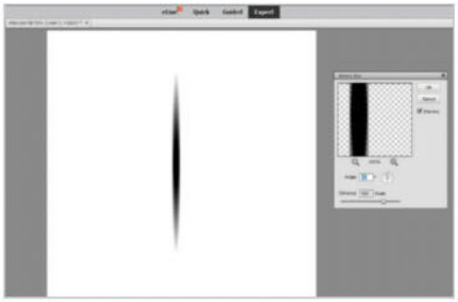
There are lots of tips and techniques in this tutorial to improve your skills. Don't forget to check the boxout to get some extra advice and tips. Now download the start images from the FileSilo and have fun!

Creative compositions Design your own brushes for perfect effects



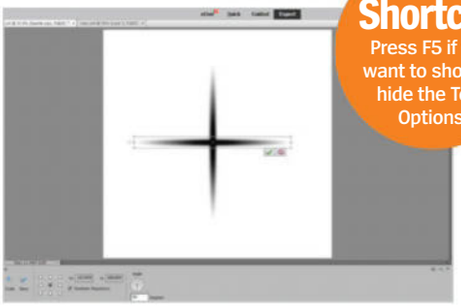
Set up a blank file

01 Go to File>New>Blank File or press Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name it Sparkle Brush. Set the Width and Height to 2000 pixels, Resolution to 72ppi and hit OK. Now add a new layer. Go to Layer>New>Layer or click on the 'Create a new layer' button at the top of the Layers panel.



Create the sparkle shape

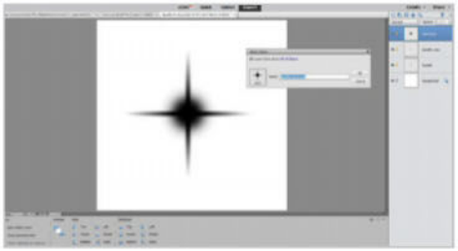
02 Grab the Elliptical Marquee tool (M). Create a vertical and narrow selection and fill it with black. Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect, then go to Blur>Motion Blur. Adjust the Angle to 90°, Distance to around 500 pixels and click OK.



Shortcut
Press F5 if you want to show or hide the Tool Options

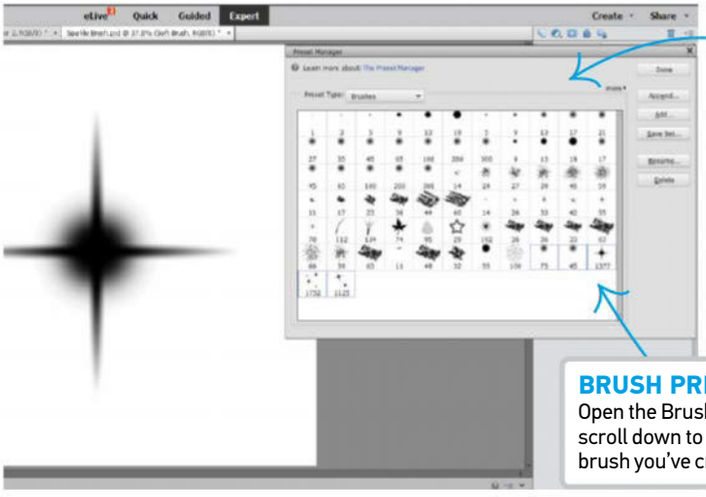
Duplicate and rotate

03 Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and rotate the image 90 degrees. Add another layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Grab the Brush tool (B), choose a soft-tip brush, vary the size and paint a circle in the middle of the shapes.



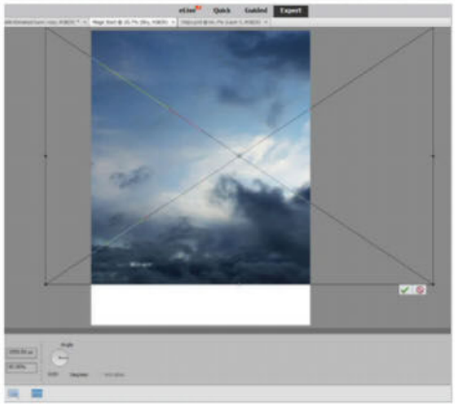
Make the brush

04 To create the brush, go to Edit>Define Brush. Enter a name and click OK. To create variations of the brush, hold Shift and select the layers, now press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J), then rotate and scale the images. Go to Edit> Define Brush to create the new brush.



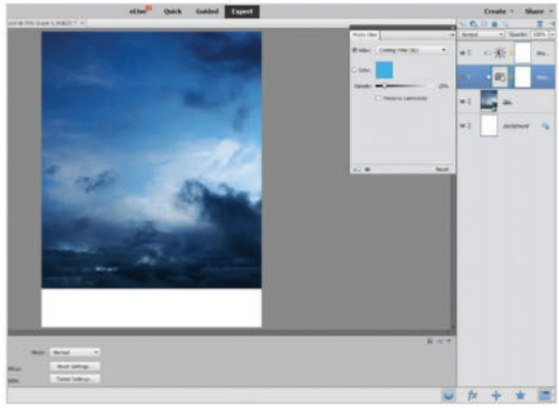
PRESET MANAGER
To save the new brushes, go to Edit>Preset Manager. Hold Shift and select the brushes, then click Save Set.

BRUSH PRESETS PICKER
Open the Brush Preset Picker and scroll down to find the new custom brush you've created.



Set the stage

05 Go to File>New>Blank File or press Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name it Magic Boot. Set the Width to 230mm, Height: 310mm, Resolution 300ppi and click OK. Now go to File>Place 'Sky.jpg'. In the Tool Options, check Constrain Proportions, scale the image around 90% then click Enter.



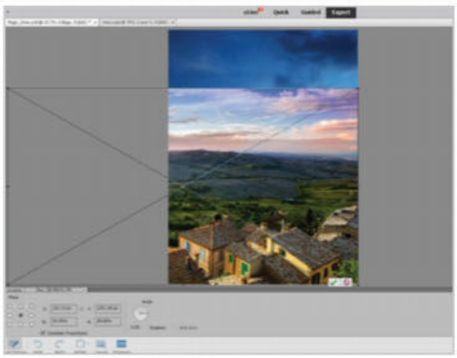
Enhance contrast and colour

06 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter. Choose Cooling Filter (82) and Density: 15%. Now clip the layers. Click on the clip button at the bottom-left of the Photo Filter panel. To adjust the contrast, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast. Set Brightness: -10, Contrast: 50 and then clip the layers.

Expert tip

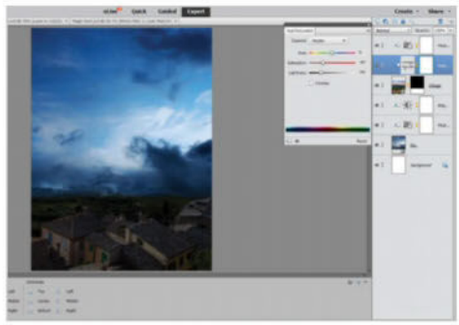
Working with masks

When you apply an adjustment layer, Elements automatically creates a mask for the layer. Paint over the mask in order to control how the adjustment affects the image. First add a new adjustment layer and then clip the layers; this limits the adjustment to the base layer. Next, grab a soft brush, reduce its opacity and start painting over the areas to hide them. Controlling the opacity creates a gradual transition between the layers. Painting with black will hide the area, white will reveal the area, and using grey will create a semi-transparent effect.



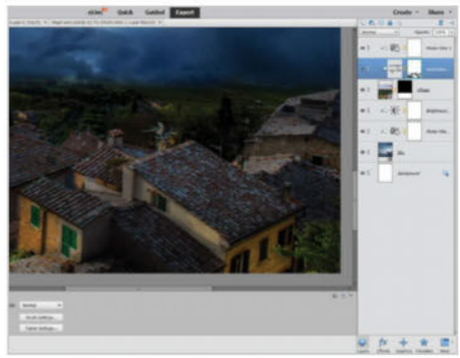
Place the village

07 Go to File>Place 'Village.jpg'. In Options, check Constrain Proportions, scale the image around 20% and then press Enter. Now add a layer mask. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a large soft-tip brush (B) and hide the sky and mountains.



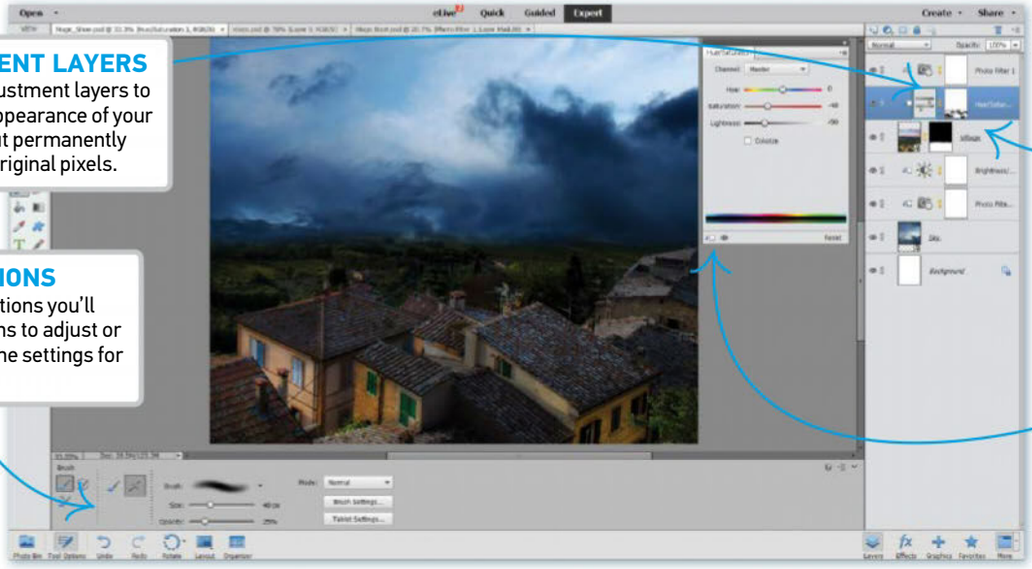
Make adjustments

08 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Adjust the Hue to 0, Saturation to -40, Lightness to -50 and clip the layers. Now make the image look more blue. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter. Choose Deep Blue, Density: 40% and clip the layers.



Add a lighting effect

09 Click on the Hue/Saturation mask. Now zoom in (Z) and grab a soft-tip brush (B). Set the Opacity to 25% and vary the brush size. Make sure the Foreground colour is black and start painting over the walls and roof to reveal the colours from the base layer.

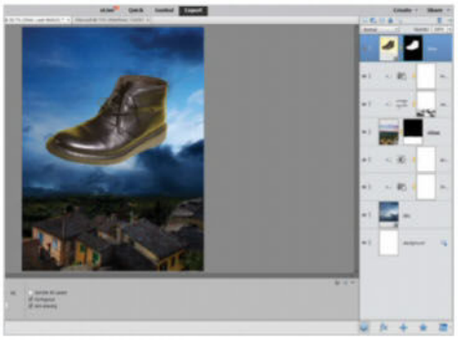


ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
Apply the adjustment layers to change the appearance of your image without permanently affecting its original pixels.

TOOL OPTIONS
In the Tool Options you'll find the options to adjust or personalise the settings for each tool.

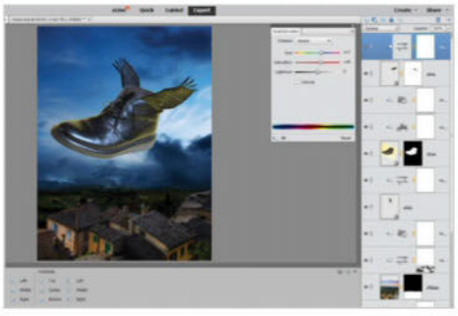
ADJUSTMENT LAYER MASKS
Use the adjustment masks to hide or show the effect in a specific area of an image.

CLIP TO LAYER
Click on the button at the bottom of the adjustment layer panel to limit the effect to the layer below.



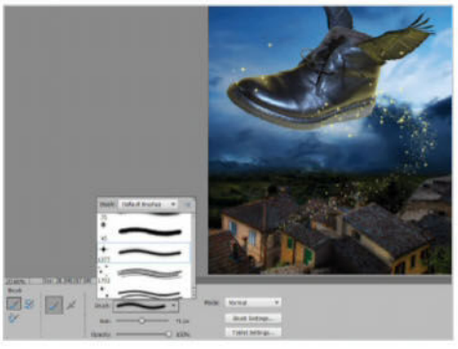
Place the shoe

10 Go to File>Place 'Shoe.jpg' and hit Enter. Grab the Magic Wand tool (A). In Options, set the Tolerance to 50 and check Contiguous and Anti-aliasing. Click on the yellow area and then press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Now create a layer mask. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.



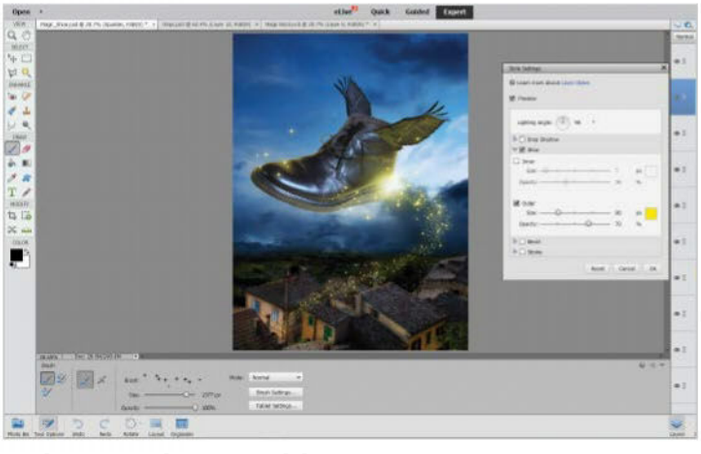
Apply more adjustments

11 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer> Levels. Set the Input to 0, 0.90, 220. Now go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer> Photo Filter. Choose Cooling Filter (82), Density: 30% and clip the layers. Place the 'Wing.png' and use the adjustment layers to tweak the colours. Apply a layer mask and blend the images.



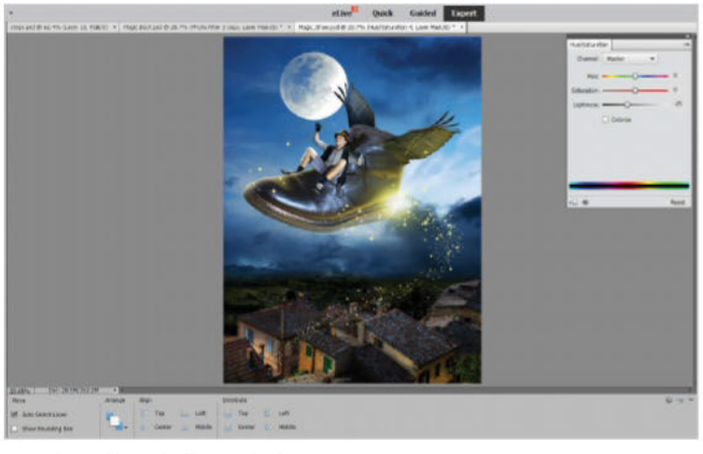
Paint the sparkles

12 Create a new layer. Grab the Brush tool (B). In Options, open the Brush Preset Picker and choose the sparkle brush you created earlier. Now open the Brush Settings and adjust the Scatter and Spacing. Pick a yellowish colour, vary the brush size and paint the sparkles.



Enhance the sparkles

13 Go to Layer>Layer Style>Style Settings. Click Glow and check Outer. Adjust Size to 80 pixels, Opacity: 100%, select a yellow colour and click OK. Add a new layer and fill with black. Go to Filter> Render>Lens Flare. Choose 105mm_prime and click OK. Change the blend mode to Screen and reposition the image.



Make final flourishes

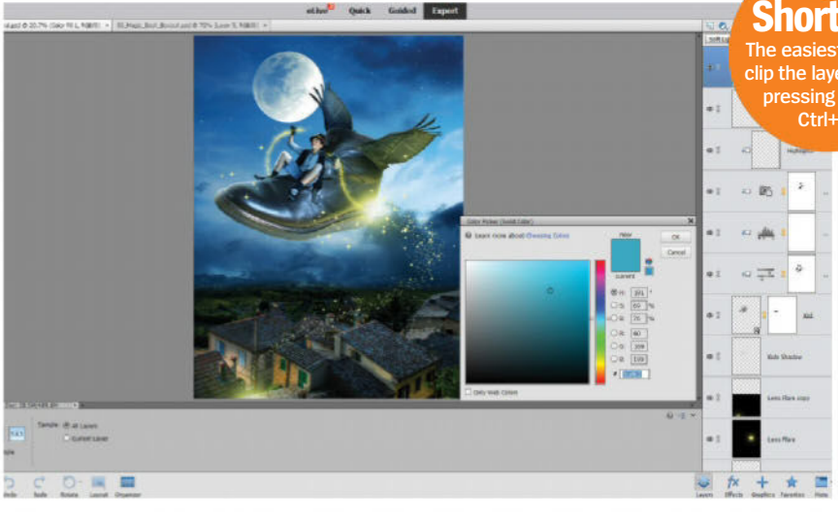
14 Go to File>Place 'Kid.png'. Resize the image at 45% and hit OK. Now apply a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer and set the Lightness to -25 and then clip the layers. Add a new layer and paint the shadows and highlights. Place the 'Moon.jpg' and then change the blend mode to Screen.

Final tips and tricks

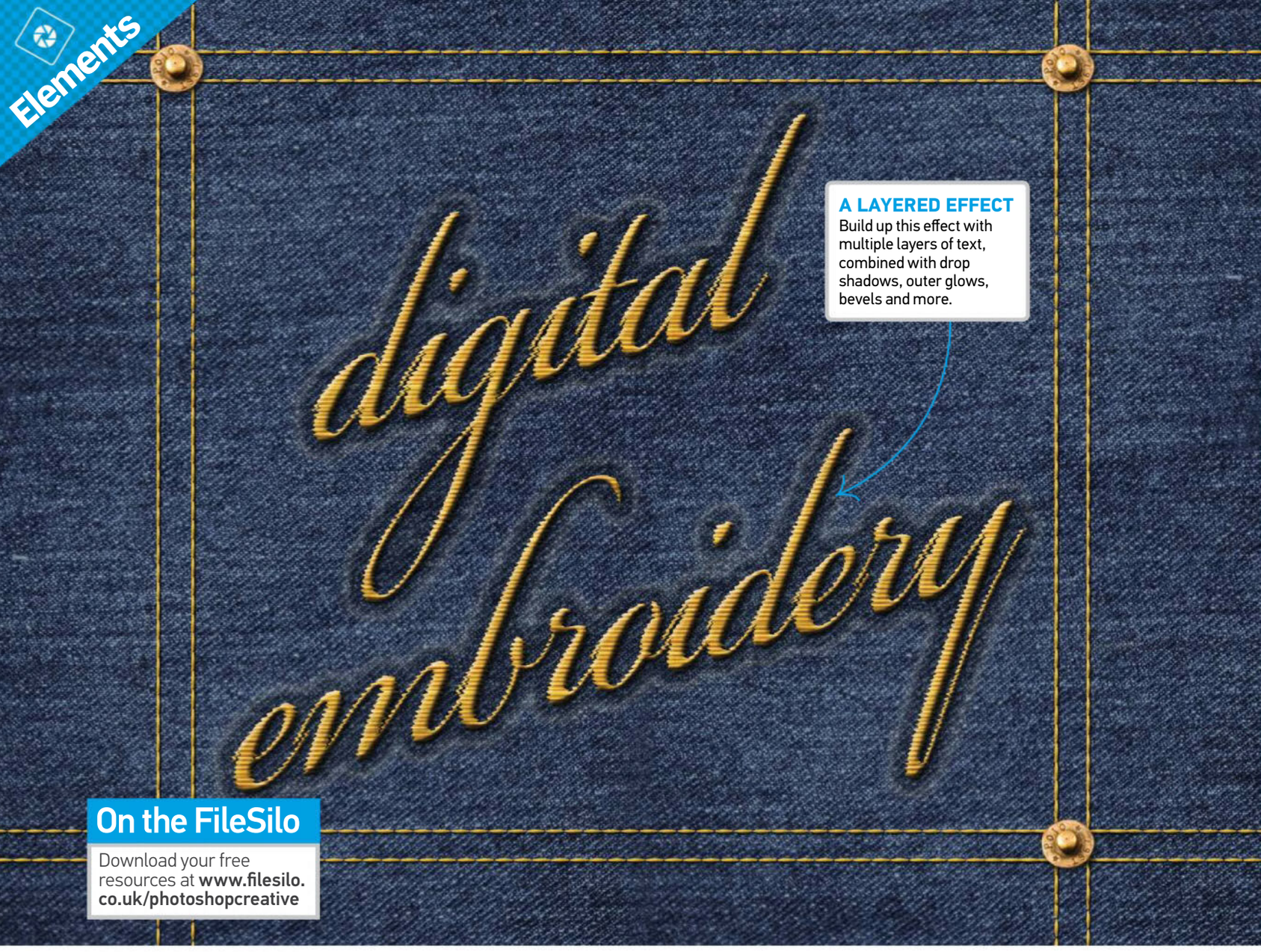
Apply adjustments, paint shadows and highlights, and tweak the colours

Apply more adjustment layers to each image to boost and balance the colours or add more contrast. The Photo Filter adjustment layer works as a colour filter placed in front of a camera lens to balance the colours and temperature. In the Adjustment panel, turn the Preserve Luminosity option off; this will change the brightness of the image, making the colour stronger.

Add shadows and highlights to the wings, around the boot and the kid. To do this, create a new layer and change its blend mode to Soft Light. Now clip the layers and use a soft-tip brush to paint the shadows and highlights. Apply a bluish Solid Color adjustment on top of the layer stack, change its blend mode to Soft Light and reduce the Opacity to 35%. This will balance the colour of the entire scene.



Shortcut
The easiest way to clip the layers is by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+G



A LAYERED EFFECT
Build up this effect with multiple layers of text, combined with drop shadows, outer glows, bevels and more.

On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at **www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative**

Digital art...

Design embroidered text effects

Learn how to make text appear to be embroidered onto fabric

If you're not too handy with a needle and thread (or even if you are!), this quick digital method of embroidering could be just what you're looking for. This tutorial will show you how to take plain text, typed onto a fabric background, and use layer styles, patterns, displacement maps and more to transform it into a realistic embroidered design. To achieve this effect, we've provided a custom thread pattern to apply to the text. We will also be using this thread pattern to create our own displacement map; a handy distortion technique that will quickly give our embroidery the appearance of being made of individual threads.

Once you have finished the main effect, you can add some extra embellishments. We have provided a custom stitch brush to create realistic stitching. There is also a metal stud to add to your design, but feel free to scan or photograph elements of your own. Although we will be applying this embroidery effect to text, it would also work on solid shapes (such as a heart or star) and simple logos. Start with a solid black shape, follow the steps of this tutorial, and then change the colours if necessary.

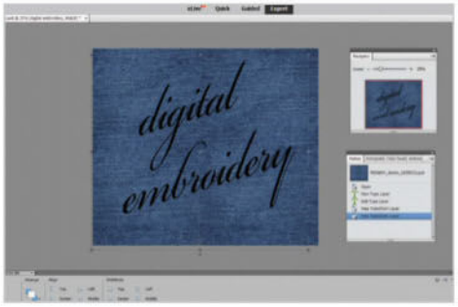
So, grab all the tutorial files, load up the custom brush and pattern, and decide what phrase you would like to embroider.

Begin embroidering

Type out your text, then transform it with patterns and layer styles

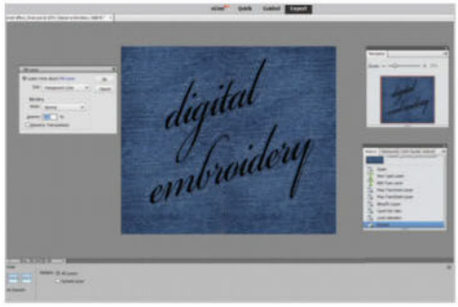
Type the text

01 Open 'Denim.jpg', select the Text tool (T) and choose the Bickham Script Pro Regular font. Set the Size to 240pt, the Leading to 180 and click Italic. Type your text onto the canvas.



Simplify and duplicate

02 Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, angle it clockwise slightly and resize it as desired to fit the canvas. Right-click its layer name in the Layers palette and click Simplify. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the text layer, and hide the duplicate (click the eyeball next to it in the Layers palette).



Expand the text

03 On your original text layer, hold Cmd/Ctrl and click its thumbnail in the Layers palette to select its contents. Go to Select>Modify>Expand, enter 40px. Press Shift+Backspace, choose Use: Foreground colour (which should be set to black) and then hit enter.

Apply the Gaussian Blur filter

04 Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect, then go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and enter 10px. Change the layer's Opacity to 22%. Double-click the layer's name and change it to Indent Shading. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it and rename the copy Indent Glow.

Add an outer glow

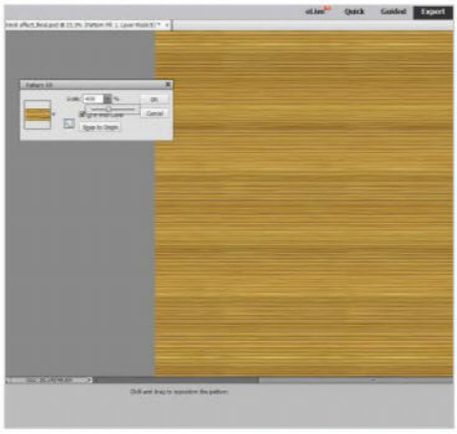
05 Click on the Effects palette in the lower navigation bar, go to Styles and choose Outer Glows from the fly-out menu. Click the Simple outer glow to apply it. Go back to Layers and change the blending mode to Screen and Opacity to 40%.

Shortcut
Shift+Backspace fills areas; pick content-aware or colour

MAKE SPACE
Be sure to leave a space around the edge of the text for adding embellishments and stitching later on.

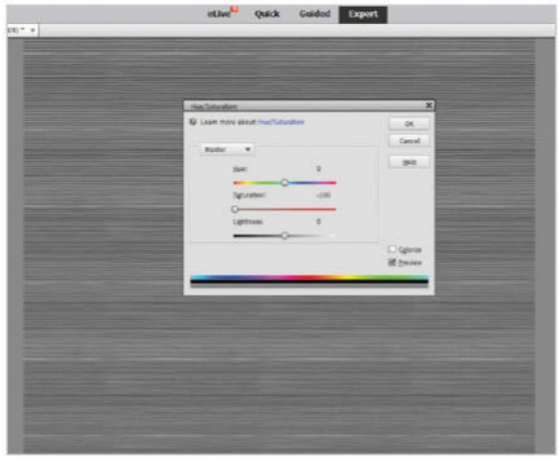
What does it mean?
OUTER GLOW – The Simple outer glow applies a soft, off-white glow around the outside of the layer's contents. The size can be adjusted via the Style Settings window; accessed by clicking the cog in the Effects palette, or double-clicking the 'fx' icon next to a layer's name in the Layers palette.

INDENTATION EFFECT
These two layers have created a soft indentation effect on our denim fabric, using blurs and layer styles.



Apply the thread pattern

06 Make the top text layer visible (click the eyeball again) and rename it Embroidered Text. Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' icon at the top of the Layers palette and choose Pattern from the fly-out. Apply the CS Thread pattern, Scale: 400%.



Create a displacement map

07 Right-click the pattern layer's name and click Simplify. Duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and on the duplicate layer press Cmd/Ctrl+U. Reduce Saturation to -100. Go to File>Save As and save the file as a copy named 'embroidery effect displacement map.psd'.

Expert tip

Displacement maps

Creating and applying a displacement map is a great way of making convincing distortions. They move the pixels of a layer using a black-and-white map as a guide. The map's black pixels will move the pixels of the target layer one direction, and the map's white pixels will move them in the opposite direction. The amount and direction of movement can be adjusted via the Horizontal and Vertical scale. Almost any image can be made into a displacement map, and interesting effects can be achieved by editing the map using blurs, for example.

Displace the text

08 You can now delete the desaturated pattern layer. Right-click the original pattern layer's name and click Create Clipping Mask. On the Embroidered Text layer, go to Filter>Distort>Displace, enter Horizontal Scale: 5, Vertical Scale: 0, tick Stretch to Fit and Repeat Edge Pixels. Click OK.

Create a drop shadow

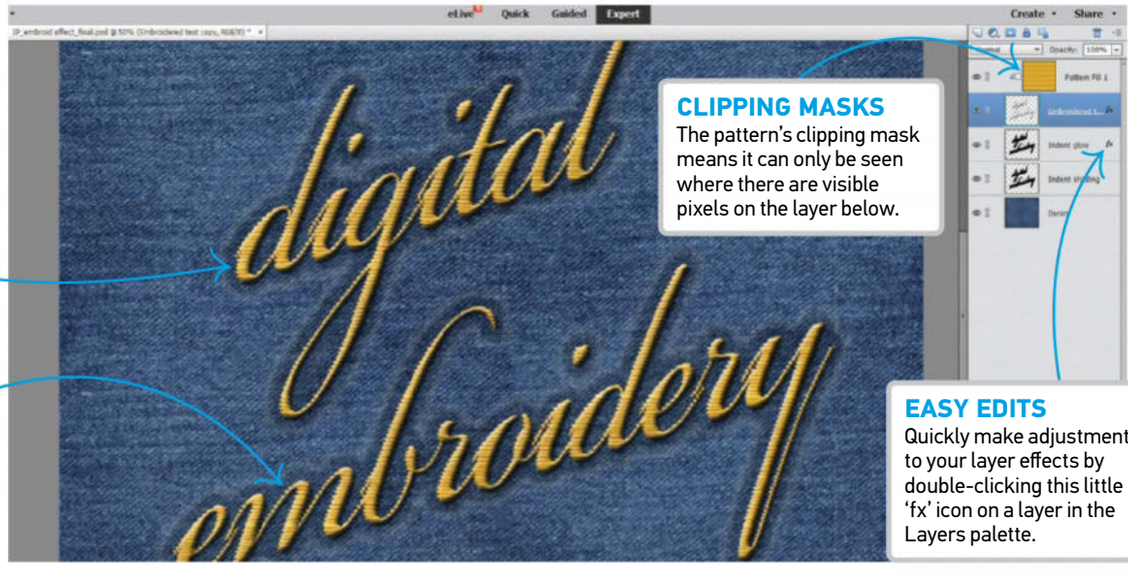
09 Go to the Effects palette. Under Styles choose Drop Shadow from the drop-down menu. Add a Low drop shadow to the Embroidered Text layer. Click the cog in the top-right corner to access Style Settings.

Add inner bevel

10 Change the Lighting Angle to 137 degrees, Size to 10px, and Distance to 10px. Now go to Bevels in the drop-down menu and add a Simple Inner Bevel. Go to Style Settings and change the Size to 10px. Go back to Layers, press Cmd/Ctrl+U and increase Saturation to +20.

3D STITCHING
By building up a combination of layer styles on different layers we are creating a slight 3D effect.

SUBTLE DISPLACEMENT
Using a scale of only 5px means the impact of the displacement filter should be noticeable, without being too extreme.



CLIPPING MASKS
The pattern's clipping mask means it can only be seen where there are visible pixels on the layer below.

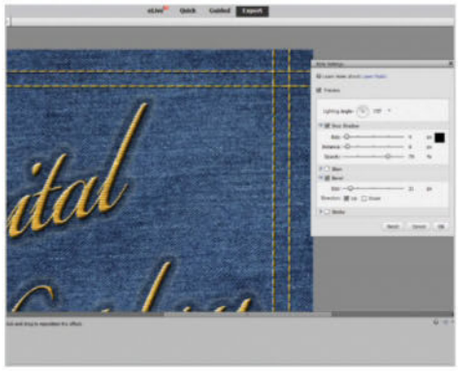
EASY EDITS
Quickly make adjustments to your layer effects by double-clicking this little 'fx' icon on a layer in the Layers palette.

Select the Stitch brush

11 Add a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) at the top of the layer stack and name it Stitching. Select the Brush tool (B) and choose the CS Stitch brush. Click Brush Settings and increase the Spacing to 580%. Change the Size to 50px and choose a colour of R:236, G:193, B:61.

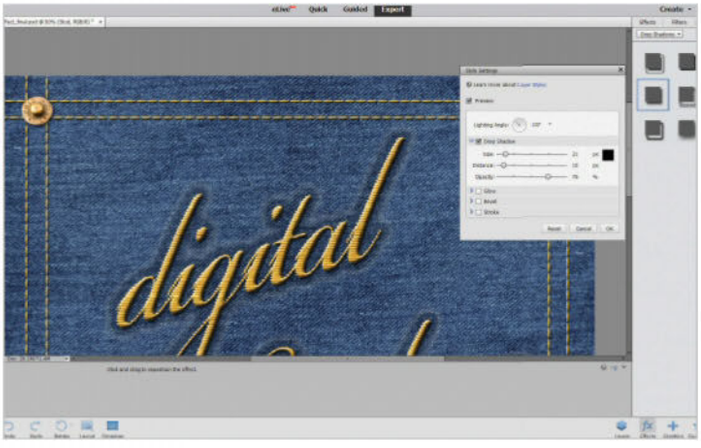
Draw in stitching

12 Use the brush to add horizontal lines of stitching across the top and bottom of the canvas. Hold Shift while clicking and dragging to draw perfectly straight lines. Click Brush Settings and change the Angle to 90 degrees, then add vertical lines of stitching at either edge.



Add layer effects

13 Add a Simple Inner Bevel to the Stitching layer. Add a Low drop shadow, and in Style Settings, change the Size to 4px and Distance to 6px. Open 'Stud.jpg', copy (Cmd/Ctrl+C) the stud and paste (Cmd/Ctrl+V) it into your artwork.



Duplicate the studs

14 Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize and position the stud in one of the corners, where the stitching overlaps. Add a Low drop shadow and in Style Settings, change the Size to 21 and Distance to 10. Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) it three times, then move one stud to each corner of the canvas.

Make final adjustments

15 At the top of the layer stack, add a Photo Filter adjustment layer, choose the Sepia filter and set the Density to 40%. Add a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer, and set the Brightness to -16 and Contrast to 48.

Change colours

Simple ways to alter the embroidery's colour

If you'd like to try out a different colour for your embroidery, this can be done very easily with a couple of different methods. For a quick overall colour change, simply press Cmd/Ctrl+U on the pattern layer and alter the Hue by moving the slider. To make colour changes to individual areas, such as one or two letters only, then the Color Replacement brush works well. Press B, select it within Tool Options, set Tolerance to 100% and load your chosen colour in the Foreground colour palette. Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click the text layer's thumbnail to select its contents, then paint on the pattern layer to apply the new colour.

Shortcut
Add multiple layer styles by ticking them in Style Settings

Q+A COMMON PROBLEMS IN ELEMENTS

Get in touch Ask on Twitter @PshopCreative | Post on Facebook PhotoshopCreative | Alternatively, you can email: pcr@imagine-publishing.co.uk

IS THERE A QUICK WAY TO CREATE A MOSAIC?

The Filter Gallery is great for creating all kinds of different effects in your photos, from turning them into sketched pictures to converting them into low-poly masterpieces.

As well as converting your pictures into digital art though, the Filter Gallery offers textures to overlay onto your images. The Mosaic filter is a particularly popular option for converting your image into separate squares to give the illusion that you've printed it across tiles.

Before you add the tile texture to your image, go to Filter>Pixelate>Mosaic. This will turn your picture into slightly bigger pixelated squares, so now when you go to Filter>Filter Gallery>Mosaic, the image will look more realistically spread across these tiles. Remember to keep the sizes of each fairly similar to keep the two effects aligned, and feel free to duplicate your original image, drag it to the top of the layer stack and reduce to 30% Opacity to bring in a little more detail.

TILE SLIDERS
Alter the size, width and lightness of the grout with the sliders on the right in the Filter Gallery.

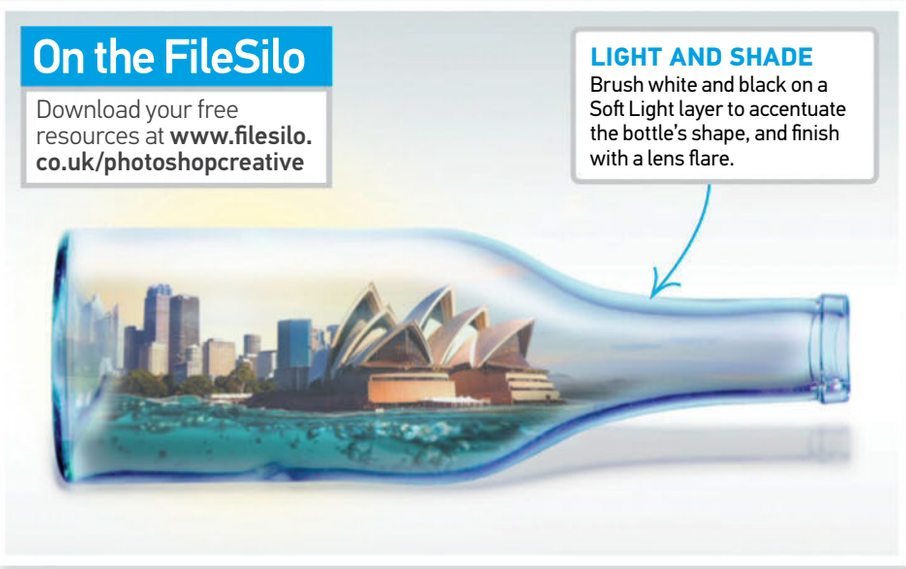
CREATE A BORDER
Use the Marquee to select around the edge of your poster before filling with a new colour to create a border.

WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO CREATE A LONG SHADOW EFFECT?

Long shadows are very common on the internet right now, and they're a simple way to brighten up your text or icons for use on the web. Though the layer styles that Elements offers can create great drop shadows for all kinds of projects, they don't offer anything as long as this; luckily, it's easy to create the effect using the Polygonal Lasso.

Create your text on a background and zoom in to the first letter, in our case, the 'G'. Click on the top right of the letter with the Polygonal Lasso, and holding Shift, click off to the bottom right of the page to create a perfectly straight line. Join up the Polygonal Lasso at the bottom left of the letter. Create a new layer beneath the text layer and fill this with a colour.

Do this for every single letter on separate layers. To create the effect that we have, with each of the letters' drop shadows overlapping each other, lower the Opacity of each drop shadow to around 30-40%. Instead of filling in with block colour, you can also fill with a gradient; experiment to see what will look best.



HOW CAN I CREATE A CITY IN A BOTTLE?

Placing a city in a bottle is an easy, yet exciting project that can really bring out your creative side.

Start off by opening 'bottles.jpg', selecting the middle bottle and using Filter>Distort>Liquify to reshape it; isolate it, delete the white background around it using the Magic Wand, and then duplicate twice. Use a soft black brush to mask out the centre of the first layer, set the second layer to Screen, 32% Opacity and the third layer to Multiply, 50% Opacity.

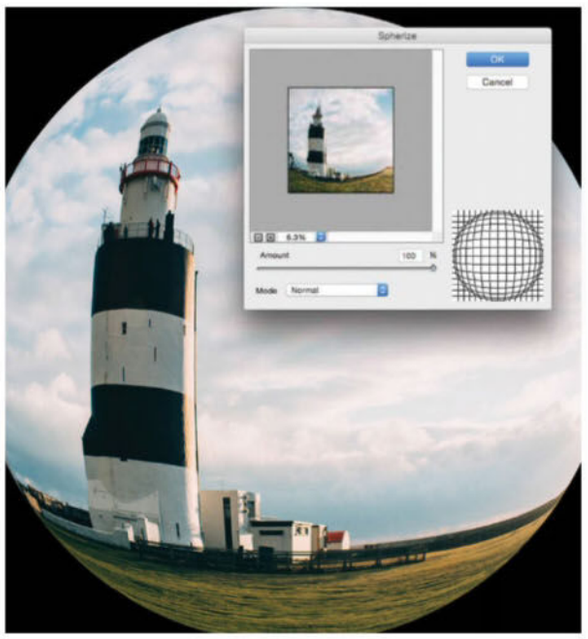
Add in 'sunset.jpg' and 'sydney.jpg' below the bottle layers; mask out the sky of Sydney. Then add 'wave.jpg' and mask out the white, before masking all of these layers to keep them within the bottle shape. Add soft yellow with a brush and create the shadow to complete.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO CREATE A FISHEYE EFFECT TO PHOTOS?

The Fisheye effect is a photographic technique that relies on distortion. Analogue cameras originally created the effect, but it only takes a couple of steps to re-create digitally.

Find a landscape image and paste onto a square canvas. Resize it so that it fits the square background, and don't worry just yet about changing the aspect ratio of your shot. Go to Filter>Distort>Spherize and choose Amount: 100. This will make the image look as though it is bulging out from the centre.

Click OK. On a new layer, grab the Elliptical Marquee tool and holding Shift, drag from the top left of your canvas to the bottom-right corner to create a perfect circle. Ctrl/right-click on your image, choose Select Inverse and then fill with black. You can reset your swatches to black and white by hitting D.

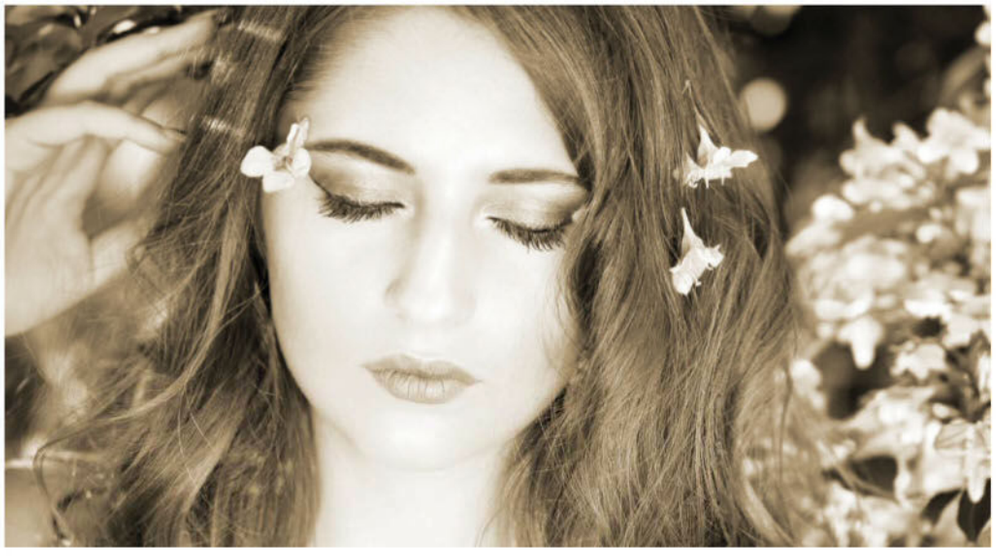


Quick tip

Using clipping masks

Clipping masks are used for sticking pixels from one layer to the layer below. They're great for embellishing text and adding adjustments to individual layers, and can help to keep everything cohesive.

It's very easy to apply a clipping mask; simply Alt/Opt-click a layer. This will create a clipping mask, which you can then unclip by Alt/Opt-clicking again. You can alter blend mode and opacity as normal for clipping masks.



HOW CAN I CREATE A SEPIA TONE?

A sepia tone effect is a great way to add a little vintage colour to your picture, and can be applied in Elements using one of two methods.

Open your photo and go to the Quick tab at the top of Elements. There you'll find all kinds of different photo filters that only take one click to apply to your shot. Go to Tints and you'll see four options to add colour to your picture: choose Sepia, which is located on the top-right corner of these, and then click back on the Expert tab to apply.

Alternatively, go to Filter> Adjustments>Photo Filter and select Sepia from the drop-down menu.

SOFTWARE

Price Full version: £314 / $429 US. Upgrade: £159 / $229 US Web www.painterartist.com

Corel Painter 2017

Corel's natural media painting application gets updated with the launch of Painter 2017

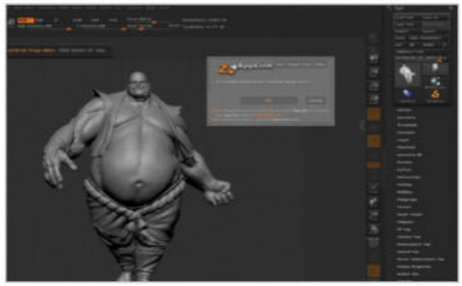
The specs

Company
Corel

Additional specs
Windows 10 (64-Bit), Windows 8.1 (64-Bit), or Windows 7 (64-Bit), with the latest updates
Mac OS X 10.11, 10.10 and 10.9, with the latest revision
2 GB RAM (8+ recommended)
1280 x 800 screen resolution (1920 x 1080 recommended)

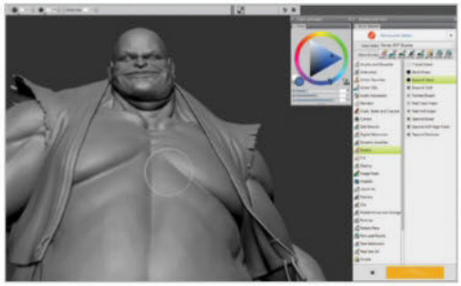
Painting flattened 3D models

Painter gains pipeline integration via its ZAppLink plug-in



Use ZAppLink

01 ZAppLink enables you to integrate ZBrush with Painter or other programs such as Photoshop. Resolution is based on your document size and SubDivision Level, so increase both to your preferred high resolution for best results. Hit Document>ZappLink.



Send to Painter

02 The Set Target App button in the ZAppLink dialog enables you to 'connect' your preferred image editor (which must be able to open .psd files). Hit OK and the image editor will launch and load the flattened 3D model.

Adjust layers

03 You'll need to adjust the layers ZAppLink creates in preparation for painting. Begin by moving the mask on Layer 1 to the ZShading layer. You can now delete Layer 1. Then duplicate the ZShading layer and invert its mask.

Following the same trend as the last few releases, Painter 2017 includes useful improvements to make the UI more user-friendly and less bloated. These include the Enhanced Properties Bar, which is context sensitive, automatically updating for the brush that's selected with some options appearing as fly-outs and others as pop-out palettes. This keeps the working area uncluttered. Palette Drawers have been added to further keep clutter to a minimum while working.

The Palette Drawers feature enables you to open and close palettes by double-clicking the grey name label. This gives quick access to tools and settings without taking up valuable canvas space. Custom Palette Drawers to suit working habits are quick and easy to set up, too. Tailored UI Artist Layouts have been added for common project types covering Concept Art, Fine Art, Illustration, Photo Art and Manga. For first-time users, the New to Painter layout is particularly useful for learning how Painter works, as it opens a dialog containing tips about selected features. Getting to grips with Painter's new features is also less daunting thanks to the tutorials immediately available on the welcome screen.

New brushes this release include Glazing Brushes, Dab Stencils and Texture Painting Brushes. The pressure-sensitive Glazing Brushes offer translucent paint transitions. They mirror traditional acrylic painting by gradually building up paint as you brush, and serve as a great solution to combat any harsh transitions. Switching between thick and thin paint is very responsive with a stylus, and overlaying colours and building up tints gradually produces convincing results that are accurate to traditional practice.

The Dab Stencils enable you to mask texture over the canvas or in specific areas before applying paint to the canvas. In a traditional context, it's mimicking a result similar to putting paper on a surface and taking a rubbing. This can be combined with textured paper to produce complex yet natural-looking results. The Texture Painting Brushes are similar in scope to the Dab Stencils. They work with a texture source to blend imagery into your work with a variety of effects and the ability to distort its shape and tweak colour, luminance and placement.

Painter has finally gained an Interactive Gradient tool that's simple to use. Artists can also make gradients transparent more easily, and stock and custom gradients can be accessed from the UI. One particularly useful setting found via the Properties Bar is the option to make the gradient repeat across a canvas. The new Express Paint feature combines with a gradient, enabling you to add a variety of different brushed effect presets. This creates a painterly 'brush stroked look' nearly instantly that's particularly well suited to skies and backgrounds. Enabling the Preview Effect lets you see the tool in action but gave us some stability issues when working on a very large canvas.

Smaller (often requested on the forums) enhancements have been added for vital tools such as the Dropper, where sampling has been improved; the Magnifier, which is a lot more precise to use; and layer management, with merging down streamlined. But there's still a way to go for some areas including text, vector tools, further UI upgrades such as tabbed pages and much needed improvements to the colour wheel. Also GPU acceleration would help considerably as the program can lag on large canvases.

The verdict

8 Painter continues to excel as a production-level toolkit but is hampered outside of its core strengths where there's still room for improvement.

Texture setup

04 Go to Window>Brush Selector Panel, then choose a Texture Brush category and Brush. Via the Property Bar, click the Texture Selector and choose a texture, then click Show Texture (also in the Property Bar) to view it.

Texture blending

05 Click the Move and Size button then position the texture over your character. A range of stylus-compatible expressions are available to control how the texture blends. Having a dedicated texture painting toolset makes Painter a worthwhile alternative to Photoshop for this kind of work.

Standout feature

Interactive Gradient

Like Photoshop's Gradient Editor, after drawing a gradient with the Interactive Gradient tool, you can tweak it by adding, reversing or removing 'Nodes' on the gradient line, and redefine each node colour with the colour wheel. Nodes can also be slid along the gradient line for real-time repositioning.

HARDWARE Price £75 (approx) $99.95 US Web www.wacom.com

Wacom Bamboo Spark

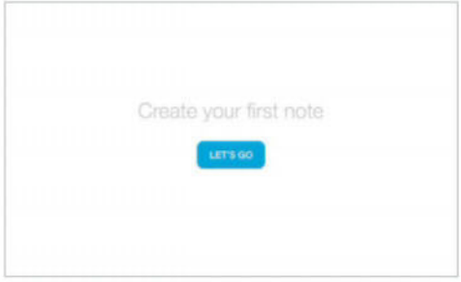
Get back to basics with pen and paper, using Wacom's super-smart notepad

The specs

Company Wacom

Additional specs
Bluetooth compatible
Android/Apple
Requires the Inkspace app

Using the Spark From the page to Photoshop, how to turn your sketches into digital assets



Create a note

01 Start off by downloading the Inkspace app to your iPad, then follow the connection setup to your Spark device. Setting up an account with Wacom is optional and can be done via Facebook or Twitter. When you're ready, hit Let's Go.

Write on the Spark

02 When you hit Let's Go, you'll be greeted with this screen. This will prompt you to start writing on your notepad, and this is where the process begins; anything you draw from now on will be recorded, ready to be exported.

Sync the artwork

03 Once you've finished drawing on the Spark notepad, hit the central button. This will indicate to the Inkspace app that you've completed the drawing, and it will start syncing your physical drawing to the digital app.

More than ever before, mobile devices are being used as a key part of the creative process for so many designers around the world. It seems that with every year of new technological updates, mobiles become more entwined with desktop software, to the point where artists are having to stick up for the old-fashioned pen and paper as a relevant tool in the 21st Century.

The Bamboo Spark is an ingenious idea, as it incorporates a traditional pen and paper setup with the exciting app technology of 2016. Just as you'd expect from Wacom's mobile technology, it's easy to set up, sleek, stylish, and easily portable to take on the move. The traditional notepad feel of it, though, with its folio cover and suede lining, makes the Spark feel comfortable and familiar to work with; the Spark is simple to turn on and start working with, so it hardly feels like a gadget at all.

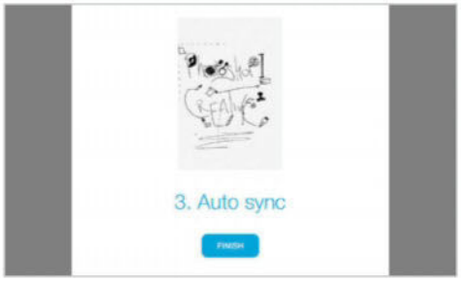
Connecting to your iPad or iPhone takes just seconds, with the power switch – relatively hidden away at the bottom of the Spark – and the main, central button being the main control of the device. From there, you have literally a blank canvas to draw onto the notepad; when you're finished, press the central button and your work will magically appear on your iPad. It's quick to get the hang of, the pen feels as comfortable as Wacom's best styluses, and the paper feels high in quality. What's also fantastic is that you can not only choose the orientation you'd like to draw onto the notepad with, but you can also decide whether you want to draw onto the pad left-handed or right-handed.

If you're someone who likes to draw at a slight angle though, be careful to tilt the entire Spark device as opposed to just the notepad, otherwise your design will be created at that slight angle. This is just one of a few minor niggles of using the Spark; you have to align the notepad exactly straight with the device to avoid any cropping around the edges of your work, and perhaps most frustratingly, there isn't all that much interaction between the notepad and your iPad. Once you've made your drawing, that's it: it's complicated to go back and edit it, and you can't view how the image is looking on the iPad while you're creating it. Wacom offers a variety of Bamboo products, particularly the Paper app, which is superb for creating sketches straight onto your iPad. If you're the kind of artist who likes sculpting work and erasing as you go, making the transition onto the Bamboo Spark probably isn't worth it.

However the Spark isn't intended for artists who want to work up the perfect image and then transfer it to the digital world. In many ways, it's good that you can't keep going back, perfecting your work as you draw: that's what creating with a pen and paper is all about. The Spark brings that experience right back to basics, and though it's great for anyone who loves working with traditional media before exporting it for Photoshop, it can work for a range of artists. Doodlers might want to use it, artists brainstorming ideas together and even the Photoshop users looking to add those hand-created embellishments into their work – maybe even a signature to finish it off – can all benefit from this gadget. The Spark is extremely fun to use, and though it won't replace the mobile technology that already aids your work, like Bamboo Paper or the Adobe Capture apps, it's a great addition to your creative process.

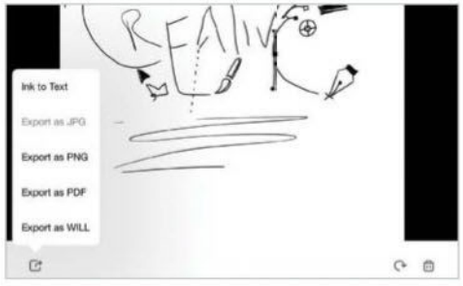
The verdict

8 Despite being reliant on an ordinary pen and notepad, the Bamboo Spark feels fresh, and is genuinely useful for all kinds of projects.



Check and finish

04 When you've done that, you'll see the image you just created on the screen in front of you. That's the final image now; anything you add to it will be created as a different page. Hit the Finish button to complete the process.



Export

05 Now to export the image, click on it and find the arrow in the bottom-left corner to export your image as a picture. From here, you can bring it into Creative Cloud to begin using the design you created with your Photoshop projects.

Standout feature

The pen

Wacom's styluses are always of a fantastic quality, and this Bamboo pen is no different to the digital pens already offered by the company. It feels comfortable in your hand, is heavy enough to use, and the nib feels smooth on the page. It comes with a clip too, to keep it attached to the folio.

Photoshop creative ENJOY MORE OF YOUR FAVOURITE PHOT

SUBSCRIBE & SAVE UP TO 37%*

*US Subscribers save up to 40% off the single issue price.

See more at: www.greatdigitalmags.com

OSHOP MAGAZINE FOR LESS WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE!

Every issue packed with...

- In-depth features covering layers, filters, masks, blend modes, brushes and more.
- Step-by-step tutorials to guide you through photo editing and digital art projects
- Your questions answered on all the essential tools, techniques and commands
- Free downloads including textures, brushes, fonts, stock images and more

---

Why you should subscribe...

- Save up to 37% off the single issue price
- Immediate delivery to your device
- Never miss an issue
- Available across a wide range of digital devices

Subscribe today and take advantage of this great offer!

Download to your device now

Free with your magazine

Instant access to these incredible free gifts...

Textures

This issue there are watercolour, marble, stone and soft textures

Backgrounds

Use this issue's abstract and marble backgrounds in style

Tutorial files

All the assets and start photos you'll need to follow our tutorials

On the FileSilo this issue...

- 2 creative packs containing a total of 323 assets by ArtPlanet and True Grit worth $25
- 134 textures by Cassandra Cappello, Ekaart, Hugh Adams and Imago Collectico worth $68
- 65 backgrounds by Art of Sun and Divin worth $15
- 60 actions by SparkleStock worth $19
- 10 brushes by GrutBrushes worth $10
- 5 mockups by Go Media worth $37
- A stock image by SPQR.online worth $28
- A font by Imagine Publishing
- Plus all the files to follow the tutorials!

Log in to www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

Register to get **instant access** to this pack of must-have creative resources, how-to videos and tutorial assets

Free for digital readers too!
Read on your tablet, download on your computer

An incredible gift for subscribers

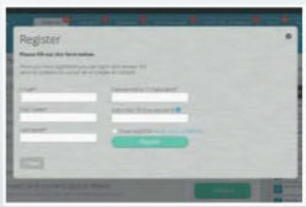
FileSilo

The home of great downloads – exclusive to your favourite magazines from Imagine Publishing

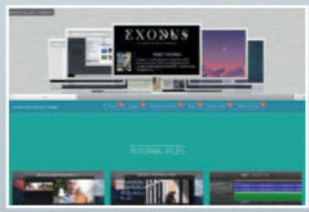
- Secure and safe online access, from anywhere
- Free access for every reader, print and digital
- Download only the files you want, when you want
- All your gifts, from all your issues, in one place

Get started

Everything you need to know about accessing **your FileSilo account**



01 Follow the instructions on screen to create an account with our secure FileSilo system. Log in and unlock the issue by answering a simple question about the magazine.



02 You can access FileSilo on any computer, tablet or smartphone device using any popular browser. However, we recommend that you use a computer to download content, as you may not be able to download files to other devices.

03 If you have any problems with accessing content on FileSilo take a look at the FAQs online or email our team at the address below

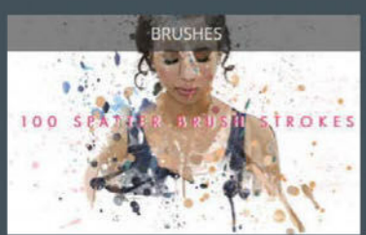
filesilohelp@imagine-publishing.co.uk

Subscribe today & unlock the free gifts from more than 30 issues

Access our entire library of resources with a money-saving subscription to the magazine – that's more than $10,500 worth of free resources

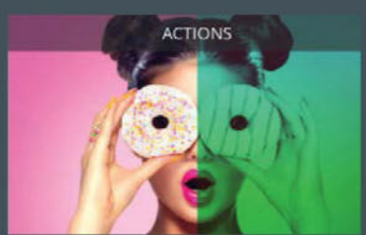
Over 4,600 amazing brushes

Get creative with a wide range of brushes



More than 1,700 actions

Speed up your workflow with time-saving actions



Over 4,800 stunning textures

Give depth to your artwork with all sorts of textures

Head to page 108 to subscribe now

Already a print subscriber?
Here's how to unlock FileSilo today...

Unlock the entire **Photoshop Creative** FileSilo library with your unique Web ID – the eight-digit alphanumeric code that is printed above your address details on the mailing label of your subscription copies. It can also be found on any renewal letters.

Thousands of reasons to subscribe

+ More added every issue

Creating incredible isometric art

www.behance.net/jackusephot
@JackUsephot

We discuss isometric compositions, tips for Photoshop beginners and Photoshop splash screens with Brazilian artist Jack Usephot

"I would tell Photoshop beginners to never give up on dreams: just keep working," says Jack Usephot. In a few short years, Jack has gone from having an interest in design to being featured on the splash screen for Photoshop CC 2015.5. But how did he turn his dreams into the reality of 230,000 people viewing his work on Behance? We caught up with Jack to find out his design secrets.

How did you get into digital art?

I came from a poor family so I've always had to work hard to achieve things. I have always loved technology, but I didn't have the money to study for a degree, so I had to learn how to create by myself. Three years after teaching myself, I started working as a graphic designer in my city, and this is where I really started using Photoshop properly to create ads and push myself with the software. But I wasn't satisfied as I knew that I could go even further and improve my skills to get an even better job. That's when I discovered Behance and all the great work from artists all over the world on the site. I found myself addicted to manipulation and retouching. Since then, it's not just been my work, but also my passion.

How would you describe your creative process?

I love all kinds of styles and genres. I find matte painting really exciting, and nowadays I'm really focused on that. The process always starts through inspiration though, and everything can inspire me, from places I've travelled to, to watching a movie. The next step is to get the materials; assets make your vision possible and bring it into reality. Then, start creating and let your Photoshop skills craft the scene.

Who are the biggest influences on your work?

I have so many! I recommend names like Milton Menezes and Rafael Vallaperde, my friends from Lightfarm, Anton Egorov, Erik Johansson, Peter Jaworowski and Tomás Müller. They are all outstanding in their work and inspire me a lot. I also couldn't forget to mention Cauê Andrâde and Hugo Ceneviva from Veil; they're masters of Photoshop!

What are your favourite tools to use in Photoshop?

Well, I think I can say that my favourite tool is certainly the Brush, simply because I use it in everything I do, especially matte painting, but also for retouching and the details in photomanipulations. The tool that I use most often, though, would have to be Curves. It's an awesome adjustment for shadow and light, but also for colours and contrast.

Can you tell us how your image, *The Impossible Sea*, led you to work with Adobe ?

The Impossible Sea is what we call an 'isometric composition'. I created a piece called *Isometric Tsunami*, which used many assets and isometric concepts, so I already had some knowledge about how to create work like that. Then I thought I could do something even more interesting, mixing the isometric style with optical illusions. I got a book about M C Escher from a friend, and I loved it. I played around with the idea of combining the two and created *The Impossible Sea*; Adobe saw it and asked if they could use it for the Photoshop 2015.5 splash screen.

It must be overwhelming for your work to have been seen by so many people

For sure it is! With everything that's happened, I thought that the only way to keep my feet on the ground was to stay working and studying hard. I'm really glad for the feedback and kind words I've been receiving from a lot of nice people and creative individuals all over the world.

What advice would you give to artists who are just starting out with Photoshop?

Photoshop is a tool that can help you to create incredible works of art, but only if you get to know the basics, and learn how to use the most simple tools that the software has to offer first. This will help you to improve: take your references and ask yourself what you want to get across to your audience. You will have to spend hours of hard work and study in front of your computer. There's no magic or mystery with Photoshop; things only look really good if you spend as much time as you can working on your art. I would suggest submitting your work to other artists who can help give you feedback. Use their suggestions, and don't be afraid of the critics. Comments are how you can get better as an artist.

How has being featured on the Photoshop splash screen changed your life?

It's unthinkable to have been featured, but there's not much free time to make personal work anymore! I do have so much cool stuff in mind that I want to create, mainly realistic landscapes and matte paintings. I really hope I find time this year!

The Impossible Sea: When I first saw the fantastic work of M C Escher, I couldn't have been more impressed! His work has given mine awesome possibilities and Photoshop is the perfect tool to bring such surreal ideas to life.

All images © Jack Usephot

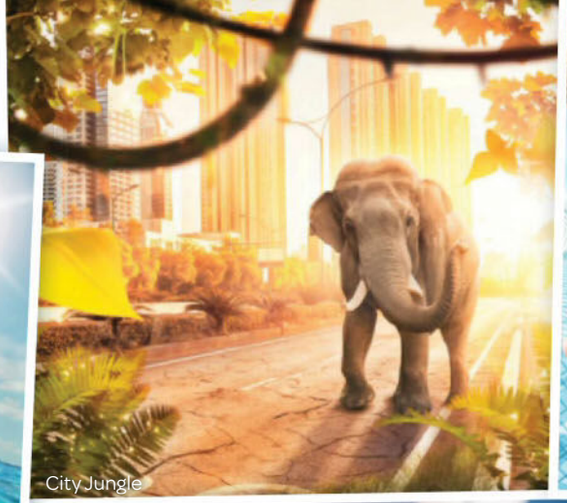
LUMA Pictures Isometric Composition: LUMA Pictures asked me about having its logo look like an isometric composition. It was taking its studio from California to Fiji for the summer, so I was inspired to create a whole little world using the idea of isometric compositions.

Isometric Tsunami: This is a digital-art project that combined a number of stock photos to create the effect. The blending for this image was one of the most important steps, with various layers being masked and blended with soft brushes.

Muscle Racing: This is a simple composition that incorporated eight images into the one project. The blending was key with this image, bringing out the colour of the blue sky and harmonising the colour of the car with the backdrop.

Summerwhere: This image was created from various assets that I collected before arranging them onto the page. A special thanks needs to go to my friends, Anton Egorov and Caue Ândrade, for their generosity in giving me some precious tips and advice in creating this image!

Newland: This was a personal piece created from various stock images that were blended together with masks. Perfecting the colours in the picture was important to create a cohesive-looking image; there's a video on Behance that explains how this image was created.



Anton Forsberg

How does Sweden-based, professional retoucher Anton Forsberg create such exciting work in Photoshop?

"Like most kids, I had a very vivid imagination and I loved to draw anything that popped up in my head," says Anton Forsberg. This is a passion that's carried on into adult life for Anton, whose fantastic photomanipulations have a playful feel.

We caught up with Anton to ask him for some of his tips and techniques.

Can you tell us a bit about how your creative process starts?

When I start a new project I usually already have a pretty worked-out sketch in my head of what I want to accomplish. It could either come from an idea that has been developed over time, or it could come from an idea I got two minutes ago browsing through stock photos.

What do you think makes a good Photoshop composition?

The lighting, shadowing and colouring are all crucial. To make an image look great, however, I think it all comes down to how you choose to compose your image and how much detail you put into your work.

Do you have any favourite tools or Photoshop techniques?

One of the features I use in almost every image to create a smooth and cartoonish effect is the Reduce Noise filter. Once everything is in place and the image starts to feel finished, I create two merged copies of all my layers. On the first layer I apply a Reduce Noise filter with the Strength set to 10 and everything else to 0 to smooth everything out. The second layer is set to Overlay and turned into black and white before I apply a High Pass filter to bring back some sharpness.

Finally, what tips would you like to share with beginners?

Take help from others! Photoshop Creative and YouTube are both great sources for Photoshop tutorials. There is a huge amount of great artists and Photoshop wizards out there who are willing to help you out, so don't be afraid to ask.

Check out Anton Forsberg's gallery at http://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/SoftlightStudio

Oreo

Creating the perfect composition with filters, warping and even a selfie of Anton himself

Starting with the background

I started of with a background which then had the Radial Blur filter applied. I added the first element of the flying subject, which was a selfie.

Adding the elements

I then added all the other images to the composition. The rope was created from a couple of seamless rope copies bent with the Puppet Warp tool.

Dodging and burning

In this stage I created a 50% grey layer set to Overlay and then brushed with the Dodge and Burn tools in order to increase the shadows and the highlights.

Finishing touches

Last of all I coloured everything and made it all more vibrant. I also added some lens flares and used the Reduce Noise technique to bring everything together.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 10 NOV 2016!

AKVIS Pastel

Turn Photos into Paintings! Photoshop Plugin

akvis.com

Our PCs come recommended, ready & with next day delivery!

Chillblast Fusion Core i7 Custom Video / Photo Editing PC

BEST FOR: Photo and video editing, power users, gaming after hours!

£1599.99 INC VAT
Monthly Payment Options Available

For full specs visit:
www.chillblast.com/FusionCorei7

Next Day Delivery!

Fusion Photo OC VII Photo Editing PC

- Intel Core i7-6800K Processor
- 32GB DDR4 Memory
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX 1070
- 256GB M.2 PCIe Solid State Drive
- Windows 10 Home

£2139.99 INC VAT

For full specs visit:
www.chillblast.com/photooc7

Fusion Photo OC Lite II Photo Editing PC

- Intel Core i7-6700K Processor
- 16GB DDR4 Memory
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX 750Ti
- 128GB M.2 PCIe Solid State Drive
- Windows 10 Home

£1299.99 INC VAT

For full specs visit:
www.chillblast.com/photooclite2

Chillblast Photo OC Mobile 3 Laptop

- Intel Core i7-6700HQ Processor
- 16GB DDR3 Memory
- NVIDIA GeForce GTX 950M
- 128GB M.2 PCIe Solid State Drive
- Windows 10 Home

£999.99 INC VAT

For full specs visit:
www.chillblast.com/ocmobile3

Chillblast

The UK's most awarded PC manufacturer

www.chillblast.com

Prices are correct at time of going to print (20-09-16) E&OE