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PHOTOSH...
& ELEME...

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Discover the power of frequency separation for editing your shots

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Learn to supercharge your images with paint-splat effects and colour

7 PROJECTS TO MASTER

FILTERS

COMPLETELY TRANSFORM PHOTOS AND DIGITAL ART

PLUS! 18 pages of Elements guides

ADD NOISE

OIL PAINT

Oil Paint
OK
Cancel
Preview
100%
Brush
Stylization: 10.0
Cleanliness: 10.0
Scale: 10.0
Detail: 10.0
Lighting
Angle: 90
Shine: 0.0

ACCENTED EDGES
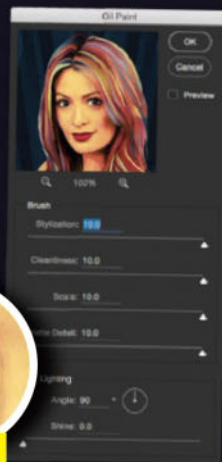
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Composite fantasy artwork with layer masks, brushes and more

ACHIEVE REALISM
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Future

ISSUE 148

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FIRST PLACE
CREATIVE MARKET AWARDS
Most Inspiring
Design Magazine
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Welcome

Filters tend to have a bad reputation among digital artists, as admittedly Photoshop boasts far more complex features. However, you might be surprised to learn that many of the most impressive-looking pieces of digital art have used filters in one way or another. This issue's opening feature looks at the ways filters can be used for creative effects, whether it's to make final enhancements or totally transform an image. Turn to p18 and discover their full potential. If you'd rather learn how to get even more from layers and masks, there is plenty in the way of step-by-step tutorials inside. Create fantasy effects, add drama to compositions, retouch portrait shots and much more. There is also an advanced guide on using Photoshop with third-party programs, as more and more of us are recognising the benefits of doing so. Enjoy the issue!

Sarah Bankes

Sarah Bankes **Editor**
sarah.bankes@futurenet.com

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www.photoshopcreative.co.uk

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FILTERS

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Textures
From leaf textures to grunge and watercolour textures

Patterns
Use the rose patterns as backgrounds and a whole lot more

Tutorial files
The assets and start photos you need to follow our tutorials

On the FileSilo this issue...
- 500 brushes by Future Publishing
- 83 actions by ArtPlanet and SparkleStock worth $15
- 75 textures by Hugh Adams, Vecster and Vetre Antanaviciute worth $41
- 70 patterns by Ekaart worth $13
- 17 templates by SparkleStock worth $15
- 14 mockups by Go Media worth $74
- 7 backgrounds by NKate worth $9
- 5 plug-ins by Airnauts, Dominik Levitsky, GrutBrushes, Made by Vadim and Pixnub worth $5
- A font by Emanuele Papale
- Plus all the files to follow the tutorials!

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Get started

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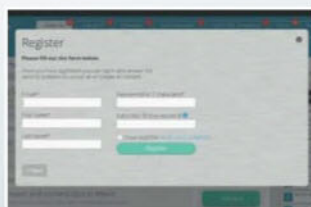
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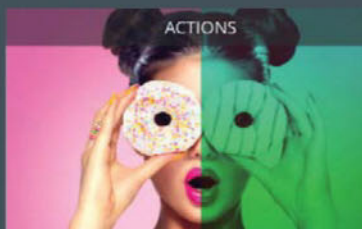
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TRENDING IMAGES

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.

Behance's Illustration gallery recognised this project, and it's easy to see why. We love not just the colour, but also the use of texture across the piece, especially in the finger-like trees in the background.

This image was used as the splash screen for Premiere Pro CC, and we love the cinematic look. It is a perfect example for anyone wanting not only to master lighting, but also to composite natural elements.
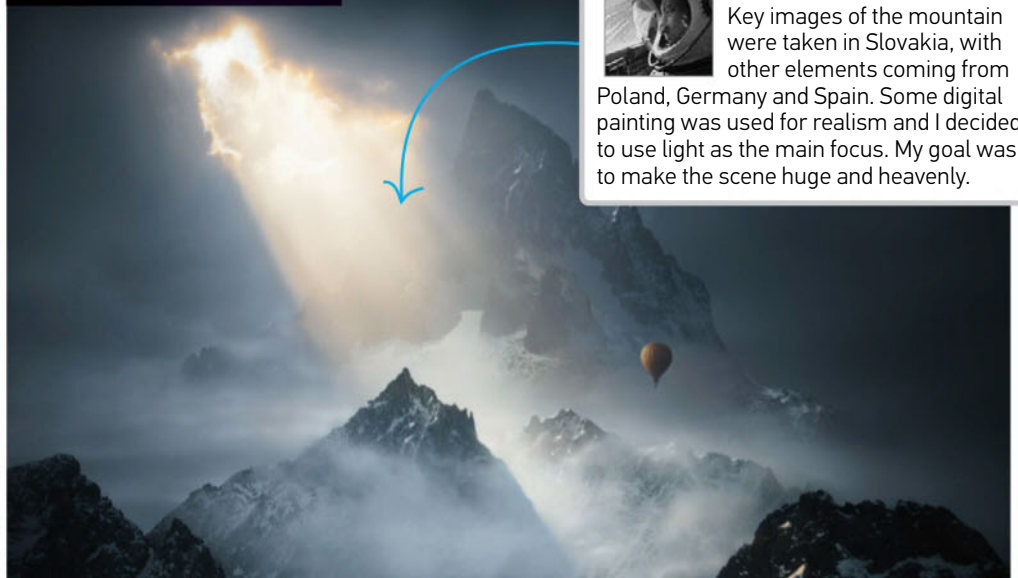
Michał Karcz
www.michalkarcz.com
Key images of the mountain were taken in Slovakia, with other elements coming from Poland, Germany and Spain. Some digital painting was used for realism and I decided to use light as the main focus. My goal was to make the scene huge and heavenly.

Kostis Keritis
www.behance.net/ kostiskeritis
This is just one piece of a larger collection called 'Artifice Phase Two: Luminescent'. A group of artists all contributed a piece to this project, and this one in particular was created in Photoshop, using brushes, adjustments and colour control prominently.

Manuel Peter
www.manuel-peter.com
The image was created with the open source software Blender. After rendering I brought it into Photoshop to add some dust layers and noise. Furthermore, I worked with colour curves to tweak the contrast and overall colour balance.

Although this image looks like a photomanipulation, it shows how Photoshop is perfect for enhancing your 3D work. Manuel's surreal tortoise has been viewed thousands of times online, and it's testament to his eye for detail.

We love the hidden face in this image, and the detail that has gone into all the individual branches and distant trees. This image has trended online and earned comic artist Rafał plaudits for his illustration style.
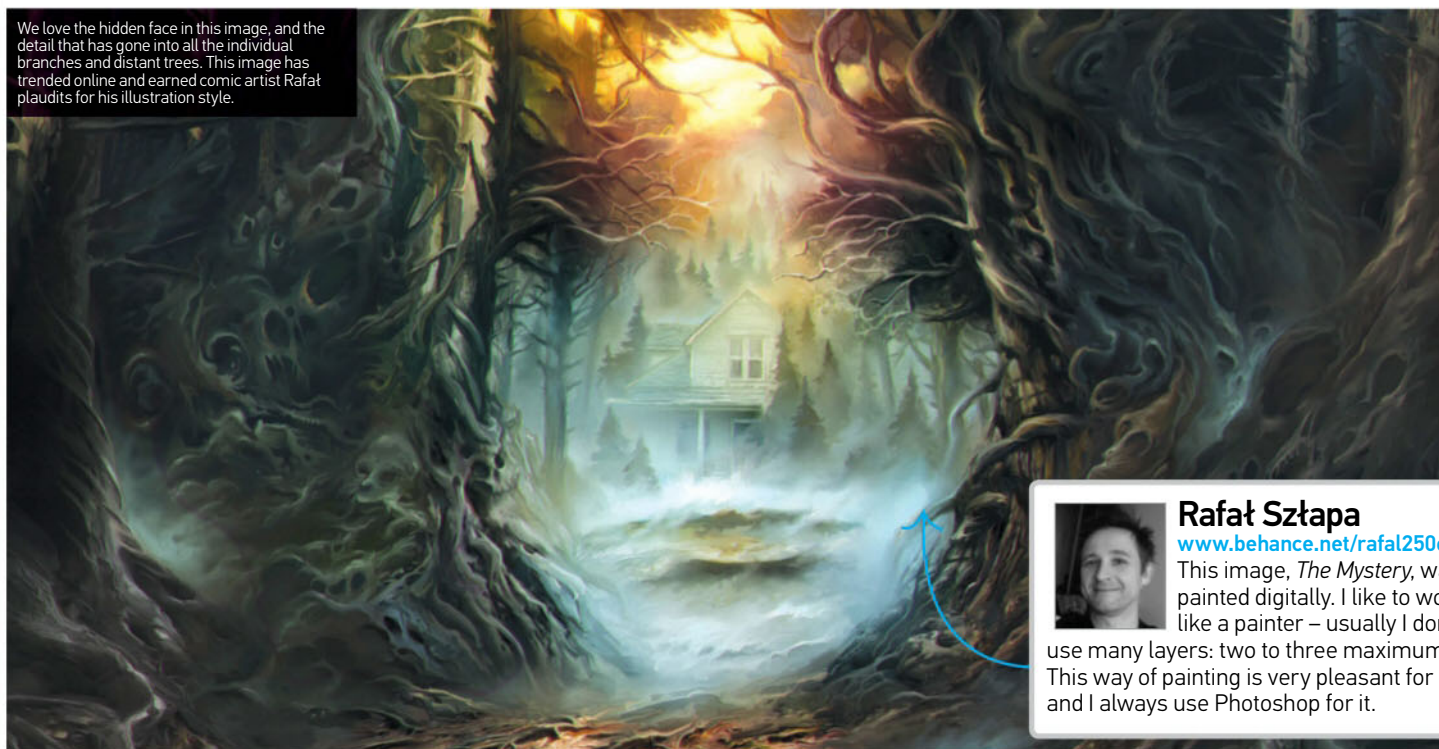
Rafał Szłapa
www.behance.net/rafal250e
This image, *The Mystery*, was painted digitally. I like to work like a painter – usually I don't use many layers: two to three maximum. This way of painting is very pleasant for me, and I always use Photoshop for it.

Paloma Rincon
www.palomarincon.com
Sweet Style is a self-initiated project playing with the idea of the aesthetic similarities of hairstyles and desserts. Thorough Photoshop work had to be done to retouch the hair, and in some cases it had to be carefully drawn into the images.
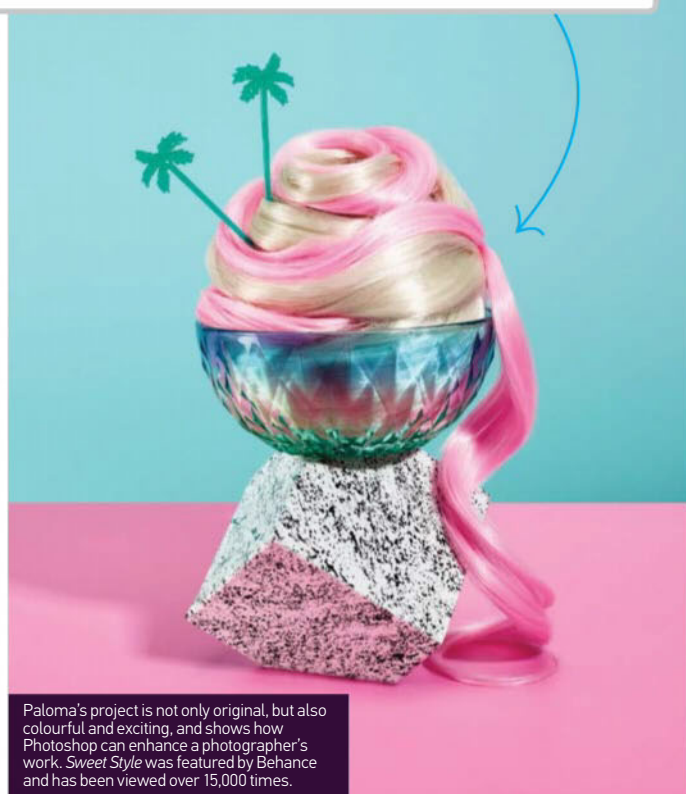
Paloma's project is not only original, but also colourful and exciting, and shows how Photoshop can enhance a photographer's work. *Sweet Style* was featured by Behance and has been viewed over 15,000 times.

Ruslan's work has been viewed over 1,000,000 times online, and he's worked for the likes of Adobe and *GQ* magazine. This piece embodies his unique abstract style, and is part of a bigger, neon-inspired project.

Ruslan Khasanov
www.ruskhasanov.com
To make this photo, I mixed water, oil and fluorescent acrylic paint. For the light source I used a fluorescent lamp, but Photoshop was used to correct colour, clean up the picture and correct the composition.

READERS' IMAGES

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

Anthony Mwangi
www.photoshopcreative.
co.uk/user/Antodezigns
Image of the issue
I used a drawing of a
woman as a base for this work. I used
fish references to draw a few fish,
duplicated several layers, and used
Puppet Warp to copy them across. I
used the Oil Paint filter for a wet feel.

Emad Helail
www.photoshopcreative.
co.uk/user/emad%20helail
This image was
composited with leaf
stock photos, and colour correction
was used to blend the image together.
The finishing touches were made to the
image with the help of filters.

David Zuker

www.photoshopcreative.
co.uk/user/davidzuker
I created this image with Photoshop and Google's Nik software; 95% is made with collage and photomanipulation techniques, with 5% of the work being digital airbrushing.
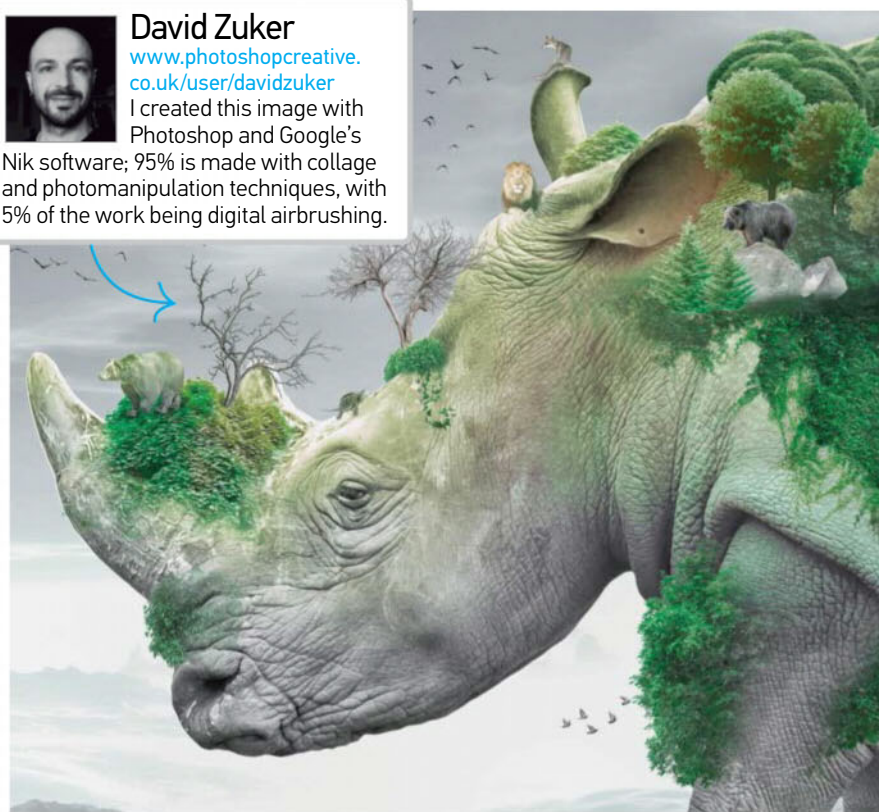
Anders Wik

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/WikMedia
With a copy of the original image, I used tools like Clone Stamp and the Patch tool to remove the lower part of the dress, then by using the original image, with the help of masks and brushes, I painted the dress back to create a splatter effect.

Jonathan Maurin

photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Aeon-Lux
This digital painting tells a story. Here, I was trying to mix the fantasy style [found in] the bottom of the picture with a sci-fi universe at the top. Brushes were important in bringing out the colour, composition and light in this image.
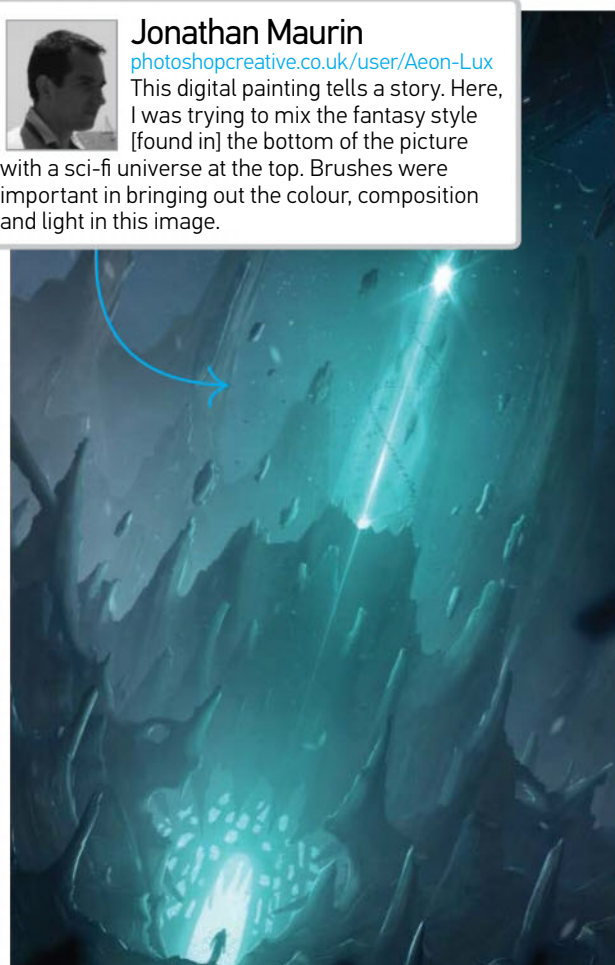
Olivier Gros

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Gros
I mainly used the Polar Coordinates filter for the spinning sea, and Liquify for the details. I added all sorts of elements to give depth to the image. I finished with Curves, gradients and Levels adjustments.

READERS' CHALLENGE

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

We challenged you with these

In Issue 146, 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 Trevor Budd
The Power of a Lion's Stare
To create this abstract image, I mainly used blend modes, colour manipulation, multiple layers, scale and warp tools. Just the four images supplied for the challenge were used to make this artwork.

2 Corine Spring
Pink Lion
This image was created with all four of the pictures. Adjustment layers were used for both blending the lion and the image as a whole.

3 Joshua Mason
The Lion Painting
This purple lion painting was created using brushes, all four of the images and masking to make the lion visible in the image. The colour comes from the sunset image.

4 Mirella Guida
He is the Nature
This image incorporates each of the supplied start images. The lion is, of course, the focus, with the powder and paintbrush featuring, and the sunset image forming the lion's mane.

Readers' Challenge WINNER

1

2

3

4

THE PRIZE...

ON1 Photo 10

This issue, one lucky winner will receive a copy of ON1 Photo 10, a software package that can be used either as a standalone program or plug-in for Photoshop. ON1 Photo 10 lets you enhance colour and detail, improve portraits, add effects, and share or swap faces and backgrounds easily: perfect for photography enthusiasts.

RUNNERS'-UP PRIZE...

Cosmonaut Capacitive Stylus

This issue, three lucky runners-up, along with the winner, will receive a Cosmonaut stylus! The wide-grip stylus is comfortable to use and perfect for any touch screen.

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 simply hit the Challenge link. Closing date: 2 Feb 2017.
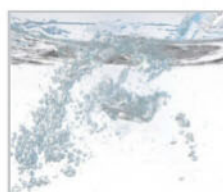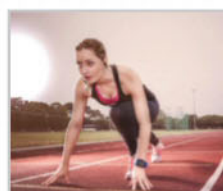
Drive Creative Studio

Drive Creative Studio lets us into its creative space and reveals how Photoshop forms an essential part of the work it produces

In the summer of 2013, a special creative collaboration ignited between three driven individuals. Working out of their kitchens initially, this small home-run operation quickly turned into something much bigger. Now called Drive Creative Studio (or Drive for short), they wasted no time finding a dedicated premise to call home. Surrounded by peaceful Devonshire countryside in southern England, with its very own office dog called Jasper, Drive has already cemented itself as an award-winning studio, most notably for the recent website-design work it created for film production company Seadog Productions. On top of this, Drive fronts an impressive list of clientele, grown primarily through word-of-mouth and positive recommendations. Big names include Helly Hansen, the UK's very own Met Office, and online investing platform Crowdcube.

Being a multi-disciplinary studio, Drive caters for a range of design solutions, from brand identity to web design, promotional campaigns and motion graphics: there's not much the studio isn't prepared for. With a strong focus on providing quality content, the team at Drive consistently pushes forward its creative standards while keeping a level-head. Creative Director Jon Price explains: "We aim to stay boutique, with an emphasis on quality, intelligent design, and an understanding of a client's business. Although there's a down-to-earth atmosphere and we enjoy what we do, it's still fast-paced and professional." He adds: "We're a compact team, so we don't enforce a strict hierarchy, and prefer roles to be assigned based on strengths."

For Drive, choosing clients isn't based upon a need to build a portfolio as quickly as possible. The formation of work comes from a shared desire to create something bespoke and new: "We love to work with people who are passionate about what they do, and share our enthusiasm for trying new things – this is how we grow long-term relationships with like-minded clients. We have the philosophy that high-quality work attracts more high-quality projects."

So where does Photoshop fit into it all? For Drive, Photoshop plays an integral part of the production process, for projects ranging from brochures, advertising, websites and brand
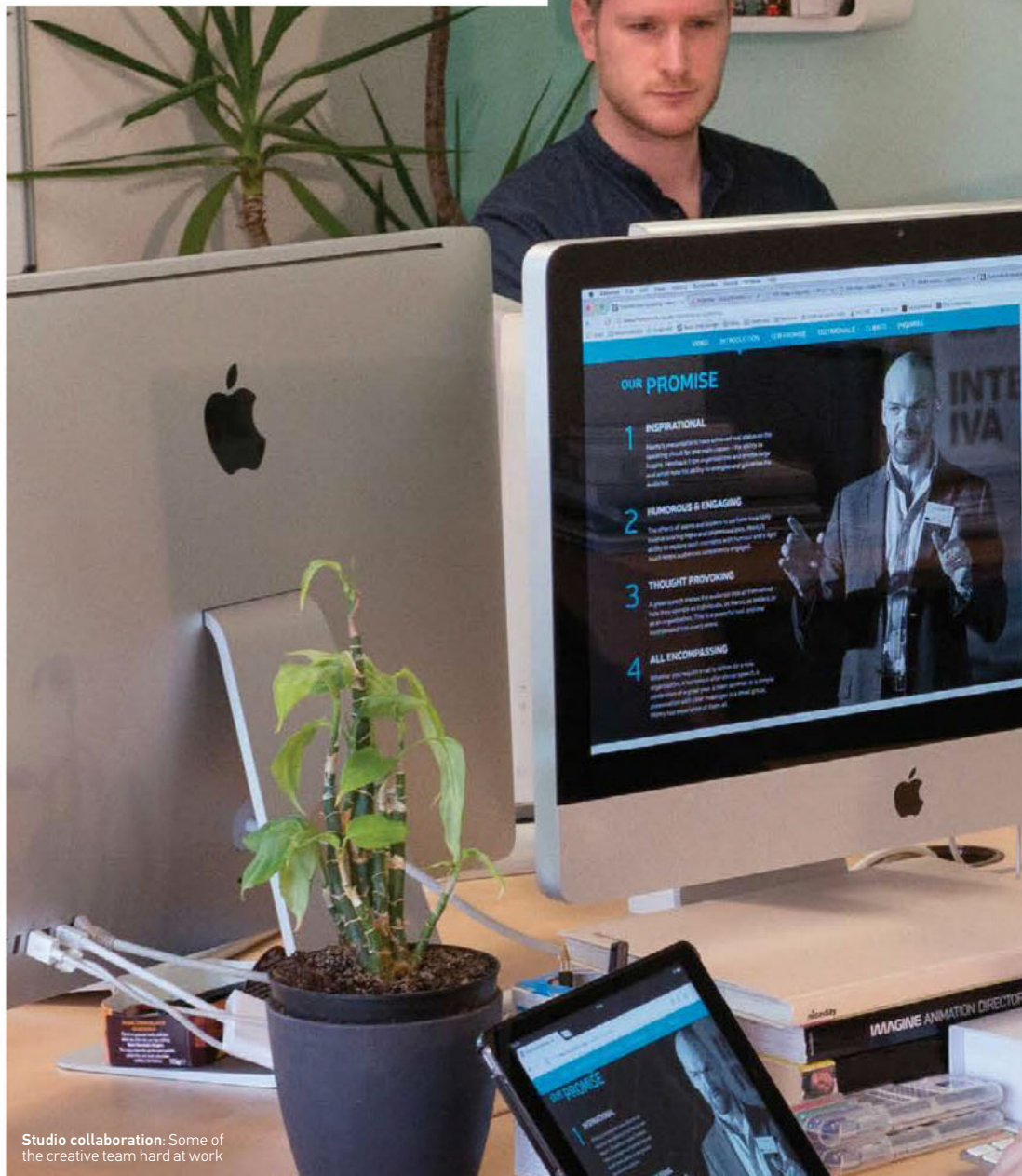
Studio collaboration: Some of the creative team hard at work

ABOUT THE STUDIO

Drive Creative Studio
www.drivecreativestudio.co.uk
@DriveStudio

Drive Creative Studio is an award-winning design studio based in Exeter, amidst rolling hills and countryside air. Drive's multi-disciplinary experience in creative design means its team has the perfect blend of services, considering all media options to best build and connect with audiences.

Jon Price
Creative Director

Simon Farrow
Digital Director

A day in the life of Jon Price

How Creative Director Jon Price manages his time...

Morning rituals

08:45 While browsing tech and design blogs, I outline the day's design and management priorities before getting to work with the first of many coffees and zoning out with retrowave music.

Team briefing

10:00 We each provide an overview of our work in progress, any new developments, pitches, proposals and projects that need scheduling, or where input is needed from others – generally sweating about how we'll fit it all in.

Get cracking!

10:30 Working as a team or solo, the nature of work is fluid and the perfectly planned day rapidly deviates to accommodate urgent requests, unexpected deadlines and those pesky amends. Working on multiple projects means priorities are juggled during the day. It rarely goes to plan.

Client meetings

12:00 Designers meet directly with clients to take new briefs, discuss marketing plans and present ideas. We ask a lot of pertinent questions about their business objectives and project goals to get under the skin and produce a truly unique and informed response to the brief.

Much-needed reflection

13:30 If it's a Friday, the team will often nip out with office dog Jasper to our local for a pint and a much-deserved burger. Taking breaks helps me to reflect objectively when I get back to my desk.

Project reviews

14:30 We get our heads together to delve into an exciting new project to commence the following day, outlining any outstanding questions and carving a route forward. I continue to work with the team on various projects, reviewing work and getting jobs on proof.

TOP 5 TIPS

1. Get organised Groups are infinitely useful. You can add masks or layer styles to them, and they help with naming, organising and supplying tidy layered files. Found in your Layers palette, the filtering options, complete with an on/off toggle switch and the ability to find layers of a particular kind, will help you to stay on top of those complex projects.

2. Stay flexible Adjustment layers, masks, Smart Filters and Smart Objects should be a staple of every Photoshop designer's toolkit. The ability to edit, discard and create variations of your image adjustments is key to a flexible project.

3. The Crop tool The trusty Crop tool in Photoshop CC allows for non-destructive cropping (by unchecking Delete Cropped Pixels), so your artwork remains outside the Artboard for repositioning. The Perspective Crop option can also be overlooked.
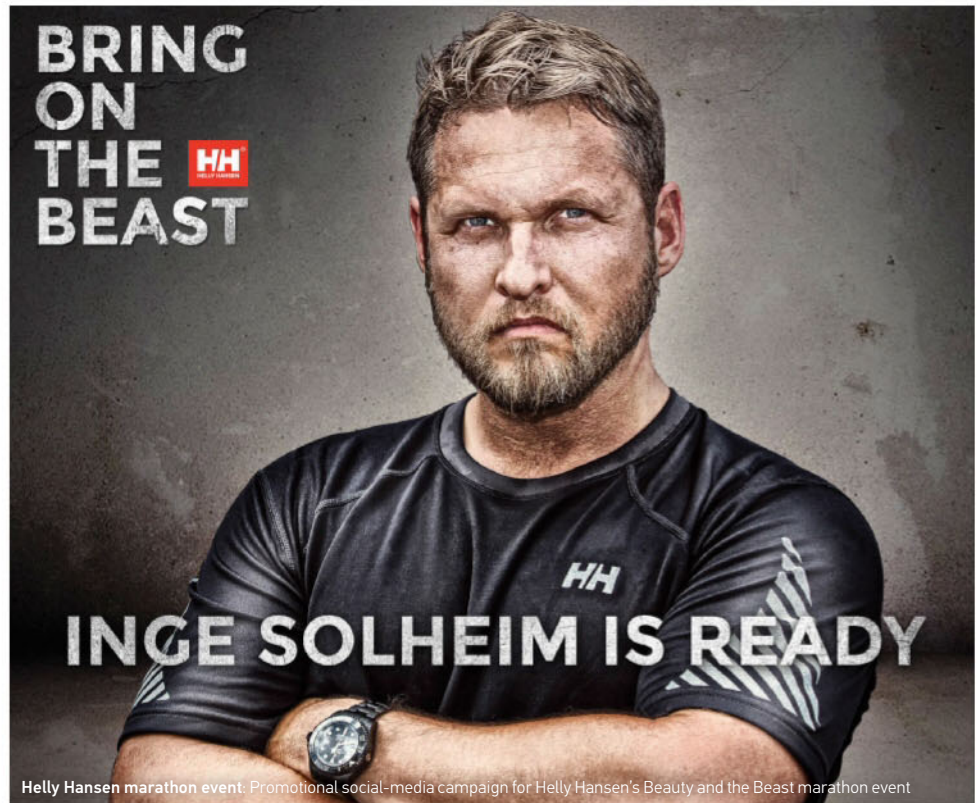
4. Blending modes If you know the effect you're after, but not sure if it's Screen, Overlay or maybe Linear Light, with your chosen layer selected press Shift+ or Shift- to cycle through blending modes. This way you can discover alternative and experimental results. When looking to achieve experimental effects, try working in the wider RGB colour space before flattening and switching to CMYK for print.

5. Layer controls Cmd/Ctrl-clicking a thumbnail in the Layers palette creates a selection based on the pixels in that layer. What's special about this is that it also retains transparency, so a selection can be created from it.

Helly Hansen marathon event: Promotional social-media campaign for Helly Hansen's Beauty and the Beast marathon event

Studio setting: Drive HQ situated in Exeter, amidst Devon's rolling hills and countryside air

identity. "Because of the varied work Drive produces, we use a huge array of creative software in a single day – and Photoshop is always in the mix!" explains Jon.

Furthermore, being a multi-disciplinary studio demands the latest software, and it is Adobe's Creative Cloud package that gives Drive the room and freedom to attain just that: "Creative Cloud gives us access to all of Adobe's essential programs, which work with each other to create a seamless workflow through a production's pipeline," explains Jon. But what exactly does it mean for Drive Creative Studio to be a part of Adobe's subscription-based service? Jon tells us more: "The Creative Cloud also adds sought-after Photoshop software updates like Artboards, the latest auto-detecting Liquify filters, and the new Select and Mask interfaces, for starters. The ability to share libraries and the ease of integration of services such as Adobe Typekit is also a huge bonus."

Photoshop also does much more of the legwork in other areas of Drive's pipeline too, for example using custom shortcuts and actions to tidy rough scamps, or mock up draft concepts. "It forms an intrinsic part of the digital work we produce with every website being designed and refined in Photoshop. Even when designing in InDesign, or animating in After Effects, we can dynamically control a PSD's object layer options," describes Jon.

Like any studio environment, where creative freedom follows no particularly fixed pattern, there are outstanding moments that define creative collaboration, as Jon details: "Projects that utilise a broad skillset and involve more of the team always feel the most epic when you emerge from the other side. When concepts are passed around and refined, when we're creating illustrations and animations, designing interfaces and brand identities, and implementing web technologies to deliver a single vision, this is when we're at our best, tackling a creative challenge."

The project for Seadog Productions provided the perfect platform for the creative minds at Drive to collaborate and bring together their core strengths. The challenge lay in creating a brand-new website for a film-production company, coming up with a coherent relationship between image and type to successfully convey strong messages to broadcasting commissioners and commercial

brand managers. And when it manages to come together, it really pays off: "Not only should it be a beautiful and functional end product, we find truly collaborative projects result in the most thoughtful and successful outcomes," says Jon.

So what does the future hold for Drive Creative Studio? There are potentially several different avenues that exist for this still-burgeoning studio. Whether Drive follows the growing demands for work in the field of motion graphics, or follows its passion for creating digital content for the media and entertainment industries, the future looks very promising. "One thing we're set on is continuing to work on projects that interest us with brands we have a real passion for," explains Jon. There are also outlets for collective work, as Jon concludes: "We also have some creative side-projects and agency collaborations up our sleeves!"
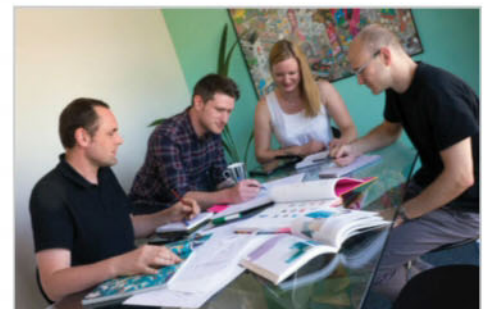
Bringing ideas together: A meeting of minds, as the team makes some creative decisions
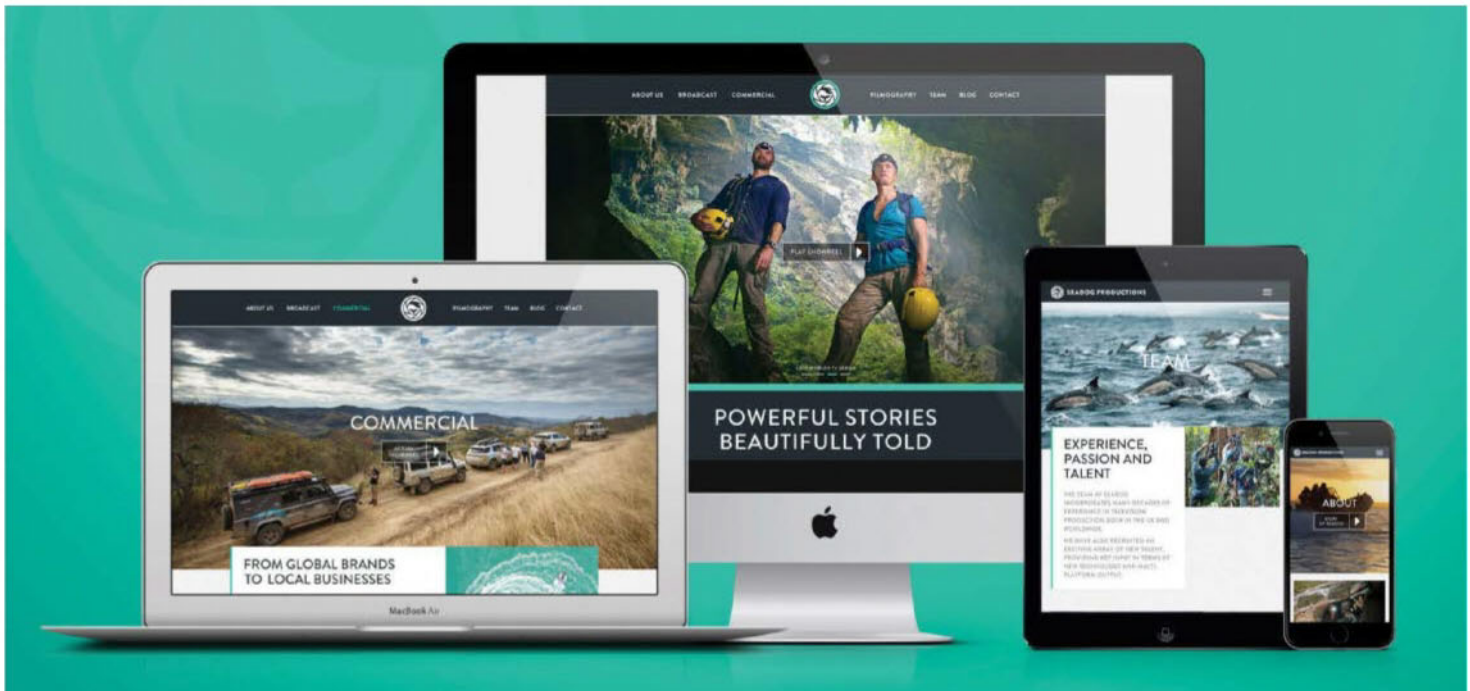
Seadog Productions website Simon Farrow takes us through this exciting project
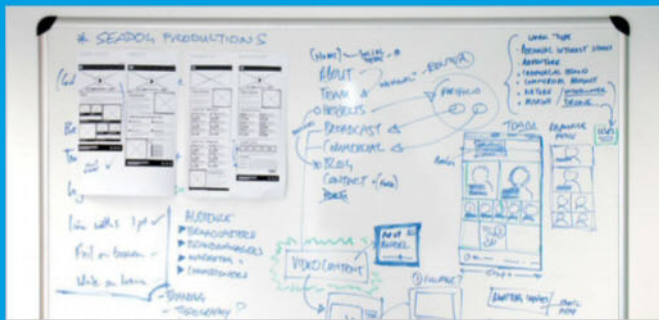
Green light

01 After a fact-finding client meeting, we outlined the creative brief and timelines, and presented a proposal. We crossed our fingers that the hard work pays off! After client sign-off, we produced sketches and wireframes, while scrutinising the user journey as well as the hierarchy of the navigation.

Into Photoshop

02 In this project we needed to undertake some brand identity development, looking at colours, typography and messaging as we laid out primary and secondary page designs to establish a feel for the site. Working to a Bootstrap grid, we produced many initial design variations, and began to see it all come together.
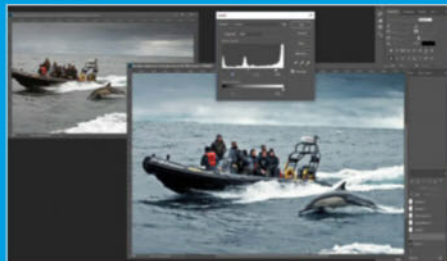
Polish and touch-up

03 Upon client feedback we produced further revisions while considering multiple devices. We also began curating the hundreds of images supplied, cropping and retouching imagery for the various pages. All images were evaluated, and new ones selected and enhanced in Photoshop.
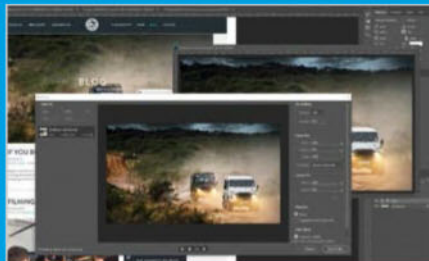
Secondary pages

04 Deeper page designs were created and reviewed before trimming, slicing, compressing and exporting assets at retina size (x2), or by scaling up Smart Objects. We used Photoshop to trial Cinemagraphs in page headers, but compromised on this for site load speed.
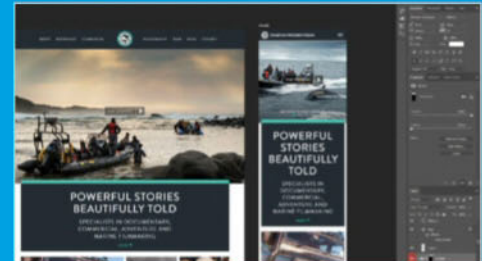
Bring on the build

05 We began front and back-end development, while hopping to Photoshop to retouch and export images and page headers, and produce digital marketing components. We added transitions, elegant JavaScript animations and parallax for polish. The site bagged us a Roses Creative Award!

7 PROJECTS TO MASTER
FILTERS

In seven projects that use more than 20 different Photoshop filters, get creative and composite posters, comic book art, packaging design and more

OIL PAINT FILTER
Apply the Oil Paint filter (Filter>Stylize>Oil Paint). Leave the Lighting box unchecked. Tweak the Brush settings to create smooth strokes.

FIND EDGES FILTER
Use the Find Edges filter (Filter>Stylize>Find Edges). Press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+U to desaturate the image and change the blend mode to Multiply.

© Rudi1976 | Dreamstime.com

Before

ACCENTED EDGES FILTER
Create a subtle white chalk edge in the image with the Accented Edges filter (Filter>Filter Gallery>Brush Strokes>Accented Edges). Adjust the Edge Brightness to taste.

GLOWING EDGES
The Glowing Edges filter (Filter Gallery>Stylize>Glowing Edges) can reinforce the edges. Desaturate it and press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Change the blend mode to Soft Light.

CAMERA RAW FILTER
Open the Oil Paint filter and check Lighting to visualise the bristle textures. Use the Camera Raw Filter to fine-tune colours and contrast.

On the FileSilo
Download your free resources at www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative

1 CREATE A VIBRANT POSTER

Photoshop's filters can help add details to your artwork. Here we are going to turn a simple illustration of a lion into an exciting poster. We have introduced some halftone dot patterns and set the layer to Soft Light to blend with the artwork. We also created subtle dark outlines to shapes by applying a Glowing Edges filter, inverting the layer and setting it to Multiply. We finished off with some textures by applying a Noise filter overall on the image. The text effects can be created using a combination of Bevel and Emboss, Stroke, Color and Gradient Overlay, plus the Outer Glow options under Layer>Layer Style>Blending Options.

DOT PATTERNS
Introduce graphical elements, such as dot patterns, by using the Color Halftone filter. Fill the areas you want to affect with grey or black.

TEXTURES
Incorporate textures using the Noise filter. Blur the Noise a little and keep it subtle using a Soft Light blend mode at low opacity.

OUTLINES
Create outlines with the Glowing Edges filter. These outlines give another level of detail to the artwork.

EXPERT TIP
Blend If sliders
Use the Blend If sliders to control an area. Applying the Color Halftone filter resulted in black dot patterns on a white background. Under Blending Options, Alt + drag one end of the White Blend-If slider under 'This Layer'. This will only use the dark and black portion of this layer.
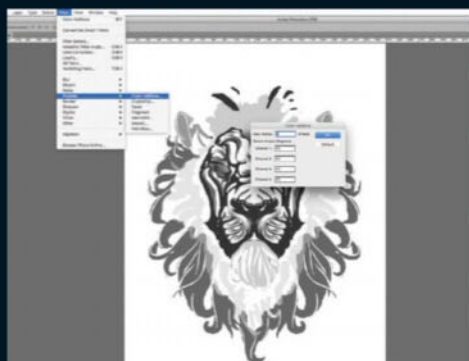
Color Halftone filter
01 Copy merge your shadings onto a new file. Cmd/Ctrl+U to desaturate the layer. Go to Filter>Pixelate>Color Halftone. Set Max Radius at 8, and then Channels 1-4 at 45 degrees. Drag this layer back onto your artwork and then set the blend mode to Soft Light, Opacity at 50%.
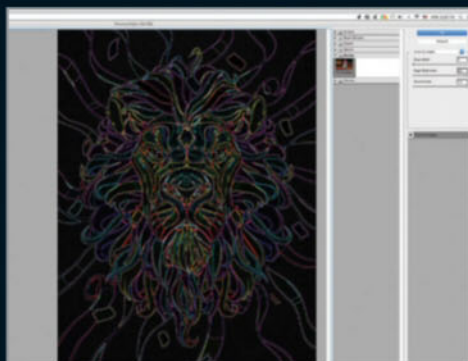
Glowing Edges filter
02 Select all and copy merge the layers. Paste this merged layer and go to Filter Gallery>Stylize>Glowing Edges. Set Edge Width to 1, Edge Brightness to 20, and Smoothness to 20. Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert this layer. Set the blend mode to Multiply; your artwork will now be outlined.
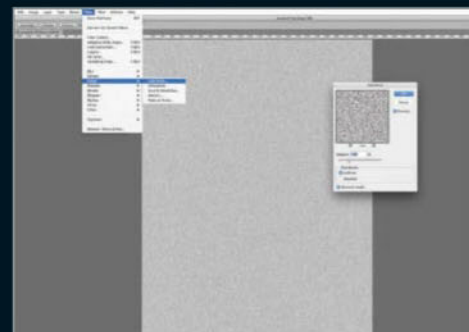
Noise filter
03 On a new white layer, go to Filter>Noise> Add Noise. Set Amount to 100%, Distribution to Gaussian and check Monochromatic. Cmd/Ctrl+T to transform, set Width and Height at 150%. Go to Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set Radius to 0.5px. Set this layer's blend mode to Soft Light, Opacity at 25%.

MAKE GRITTY COMIC BOOK ART

Before

THIS TOWN NEEDS A HERO...

Creating a comic book is a project that can use lots of filters; not just for adding the cartoon and halftone effects, but for building your character, too. Use Liquify to help shape the subject and Field Blur to add depth of focus to the background. When you have your composition, use the filters shown at the bottom of the page to give your image a real comic-book feel.
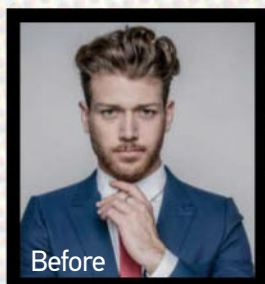
Comp the hero

01 Use the Pen to cut sections of the stock images of the suited man and Clone to blend together. Use Filter>Liquify to bend the two sides of the shirt open and place the t-shirt stock image below. Insert 'logo.psd' and use Filter>Distort>Displace to blend it into the t-shirt.
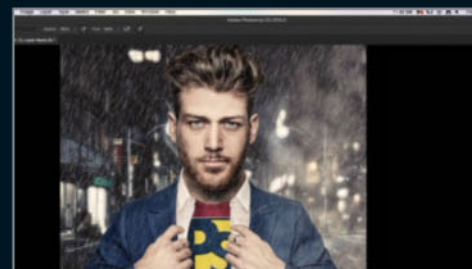
Blend with filters

02 On a new layer, go to Filter>Render>Clouds; set to Screen, invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I) and brush with a soft, white brush. Again create a new layer; go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise and choose 400%, Monochromatic. Set to Screen, then go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and choose 70px, Distance: 72. Use Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) to reduce the white.

COLOR HALFTONE

FILM GRAIN

POSTER EDGES

3

PRODUCE A PACKAGING DESIGN

Filters can be just the solution for adding some character to your packaging artwork, especially if you want your design to be eye-catching and grab attention.

Taking a drawing as the start point, this technique makes the most of the Smart Object function inside Photoshop, which retains all information about the original layer (non-destructive editing) in addition to information on the filters you apply. This means that you can go back and adjust your filter parameters at any time. Also remember that the Filters Gallery enables you to layer many filters to get unique effects.

Build your label design
01 Create a Solid colour layer using #303030. Start drawing elements with the Pen tool. Draw a shape, close the path, Ctrl/right-click and pick Fill Path, or Make Shape to create a sharp design. Add in text, mixing strokes and fills. Or download 'Wildfire.psd' from the FileSilo.
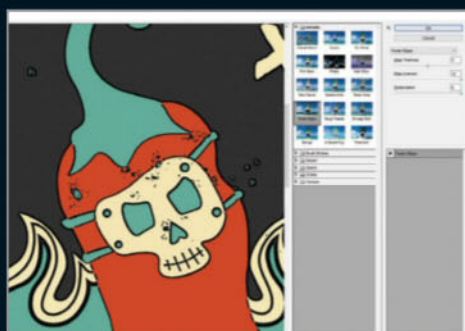
Filters and Smart Objects
02 Select all your layers, Ctrl/right-click> Convert to Smart Object. This will keep all filter parameters editable. Go to Filters>Filter Gallery. Add the Poster Edges filter from Artistic, with Thickness: 5, Intensity: 10 and Posterization: 6. Then click the New Layer icon at the bottom.
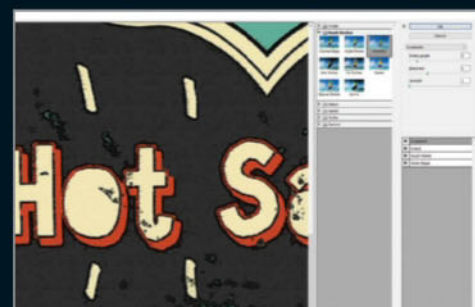
Layering filters
03 Add Rough Pastels from Artistic; Stroke Length: 7, Detail: 5, Texture: Burlap, Scaling: 146%, Relief: 5 and Light: Bottom. Add a new layer. Select the Cutout filter; Levels: 7, Simplicity: 1 and Fidelity: 2. Finally, add Crosshatch from Brush Strokes; Length: 9, Sharpness: 6 and Strength: 1.

4

ADD FINAL EFFECTS TO COMPOSITIONS

After performing basic retouching on a portrait, filters can be applied to take it to the next level. Here the Camera Raw Filter was employed to put some additional polish on the model. Contrast, clarity and sharpening were pumped up, and shadows and blacks were increased to unearth detail buried in the dark areas. Light streaks, fireworks, a Ferris wheel and additional bokeh were mixed with the background via layer masks and blend modes, then processed with filters. Twirl, Motion Blur and Radial Blur added doses of fun energy, and selective Gaussian Blur de-emphasised the surrounding areas and managed to soothe harsh edges throughout.

TWIRL
Distort filters let you bend and warp images and elements in interesting ways. Here, Twirl creates arcing streaks from fireworks and rays.

BLURS
Motion Blur and Radial Blur bring energy to the image by setting a Ferris wheel and a duplicate of the model in beautiful motion.

CAMERA RAW
The mighty Camera Raw Filter is great for fine-tuning or finalising the look of an entire composition (apply to merged layer at top).

Before

IMITATE ICONIC ART
Use filters to mimic famous pieces of art, like Van Gogh's *The Starry Night*

3. LIQUIFY
The Liquify filter enables you to create peaked, wavy trees using the Forward Warp tool, and swirled stars with the Twirl Clockwise tool.

4. COLOUR CORRECTION
Add a bright blue colour fill layer, with blend mode set to Color Dodge and Opacity: 70%. Add a layer mask and obscure it from the stars.

1. SIMPLIFY THE COLOURS
Start by going to Image>Adjustments>Posterize and enter a value appropriate to your image (we used 10 Levels).

2. THE PAINTED EFFECT
Apply the Angled Strokes filter with Sharpness: 0, followed by the Oil Paint filter, then Dark Strokes with Black Intensity: 1 and White Intensity: 2.

Before
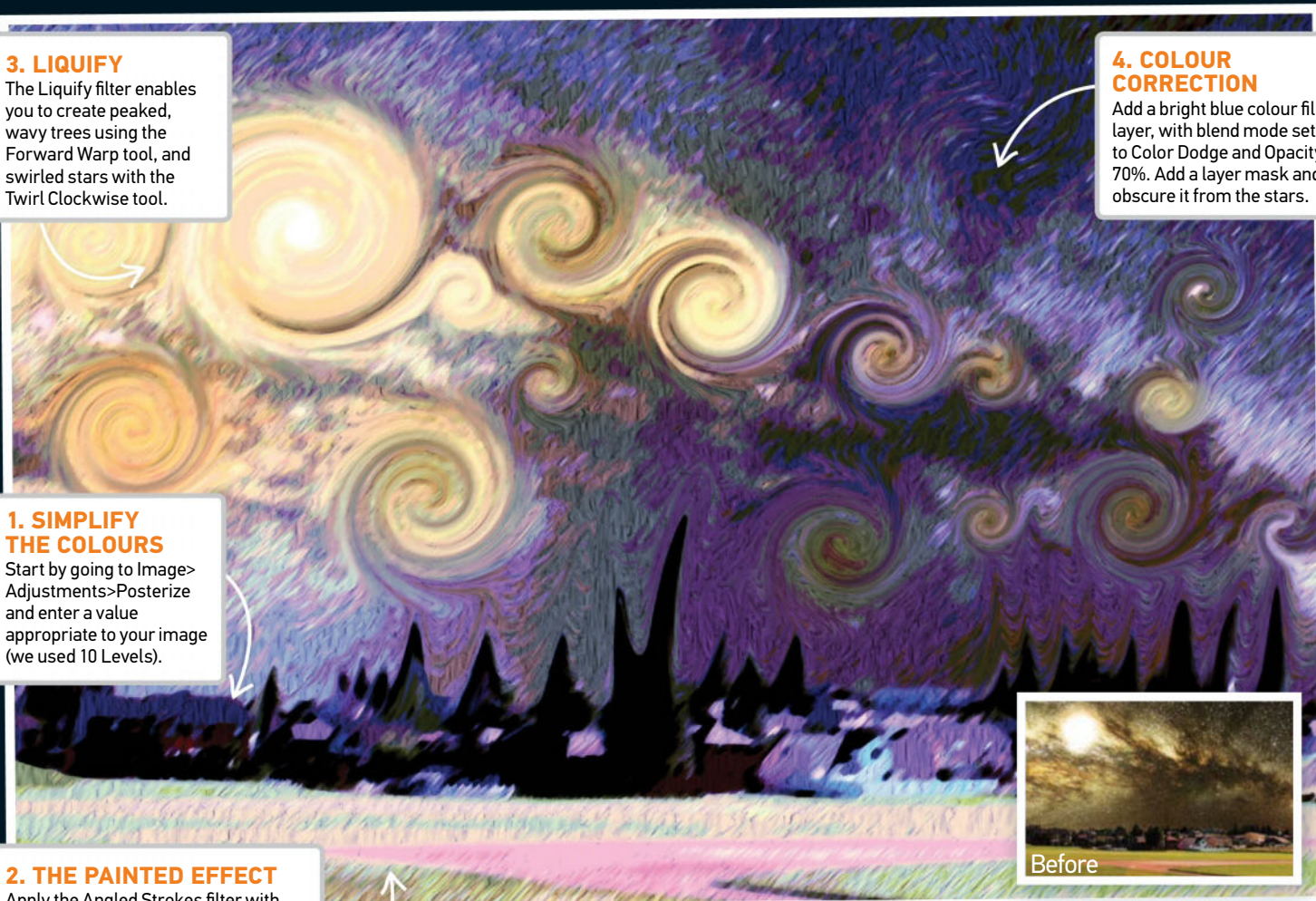
6 TURN A PHOTO INTO A PAINTING

Try mixing filters together for a unique painted finish to your photos.

Start off by duplicating your background layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Go to Filter>Filter Gallery>Cutout and choose Number of Levels: 8, Edge Simplicity: 6 and Edge Fidelity: 2. Click OK, head back the Filter Gallery and pick Dry Brush, with Brush Size: 5, Brush Detail: 10, Texture: 3.

Duplicate your original image. Use the Poster Edges filter (Thickness: 4, Intensity: 2, Posterization: 3), clip a Threshold adjustment and set this to Multiply before finishing with Dry Brush, using the same settings as before.

Essentials

Works with

Elements   CS   **CC**
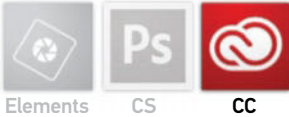
What you'll learn

How to use filters to create a Prisma-style portrait effect

Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Mark White

"I love mobile technology, and edit all the photos on my phone with apps. Prisma is one of the most interesting apps on the market, because it creates amazing digital art effects. So this tutorial combined some of my personal favourites!

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

Start image

Make a Prisma-style image

Following on from the feature, in this final project you'll combine filters to create a colourful portrait in the style of the Prisma app

You'll find at least one filter useful for your project, no matter what you're creating. Filters are often considered one-click options for basic effects, but they're far more interesting. By layering filters, you can create something stunning; in this case, we've used so many filters that the final artwork looks almost painted, rather than generated by filters.

There are so many different filters that can apply various effects, too. You may use High Pass for sharpening and Add Noise as a finishing touch to most projects, but this tutorial uses the Oil Paint filter for smoothing, the Poster Edges filter for giving a quick outline to your image, and the Cutout filter for simplifying your work a little.

Experimenting with different filters is the best way to discover new effects, and it can be great fun to start with an image and see where you get just by applying these options.

The Prisma app creates Filter Gallery-style, painted effects to photos on your smartphone, but it doesn't allow for too much personalisation. With the help of filters, though, Photoshop can assist you in going a step further.
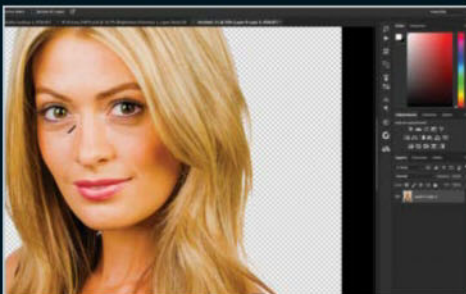
Retouch the portrait

01 Start by cutting out your subject using the Pen tool, and grab the Spot Healing brush (J) to fix blemishes and the bags under the subject's eyes. Create a Curves adjustment, invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I) and mask in the eyes with a soft, white brush. Increase the contrast of the eyes.

Outline with the Pen

02 Select the Pen tool again. On a new layer, select around the face and fill with #e4b5a3. Select the eyes on a new layer and fill in with black, then create an outline for each body part. Hide these layers for now; they will provide detail later.

Work on the shadows

03 Create a 50% opaque layer, and again with the Pen, select and fill some of the shadows with black. Create another 50% opaque layer and do the rest of the shadows. Merge these layers, then go to Filter>Filter Gallery>Dry Brush, set to Brush Size: 2, Brush Detail: 8, Texture: 1.

Run the Poster Edges filter

04 Hide your shadows layer along with the body parts you outlined with the Pen. Duplicate your portrait layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and go to the Filter Gallery again. Go to Poster Edges and choose Edge Thickness: 10, Edge Intensity: 10, Posterization: 6.
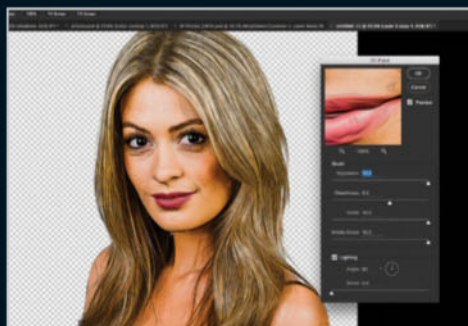
Apply the Oil Paint filter

05 With your Poster Edges effect applied, you'll have a subtle outline to the entire portrait. Go to Filter>Stylize>Oil Paint and choose Stylization: 10, Cleanliness: 6, Scale: 10, Bristle Detail: 10, Lighting Angle: 90 degrees, Shine: 0. This will soften and blend your portrait to give a more painted feel to the image.

Make the Cutout effect

06 Go to the Filter Gallery once again. Choose Cutout, but instead of following a set rule of what you should type for each value, experiment with what would work best for your subject. Keep Simplicity low and Fidelity high for clearest results.
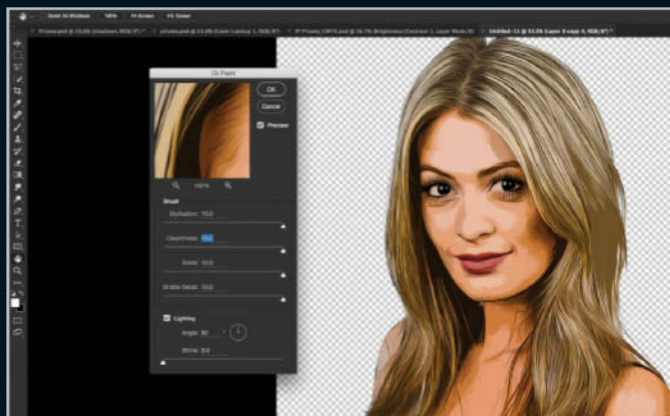
Re-apply the Oil Paint filter

07 Once again, go to the Oil Paint filter. Run exactly the same values as you did before – Photoshop will automatically load the last ones that you used – only this time, slide the Cleanliness up to 10 for even more of a smudged effect.
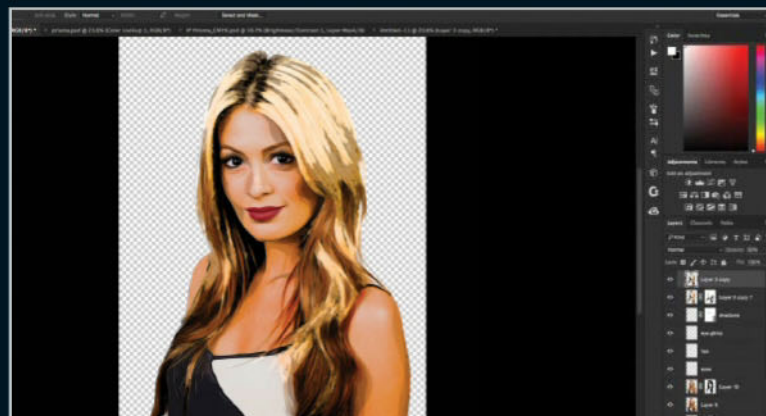
Filter the hair

08 Hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to merge everything to a new layer. Select the hair with the Pen, and hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate to a new layer. Go to the Filter Gallery; choose Paint Daubs (Brush Size: 20, Sharpness: 40), Palette Knife (Stroke Size: 7, Stroke Detail: 3, Softness: 10).

Draw over the hair

09 On a new layer above the hair, select strands of hair with the Pen tool. Fill these in with #642215 and set this layer to Multiply. Because we filtered the hair in the previous step, it should be easier to select blocks of colour.
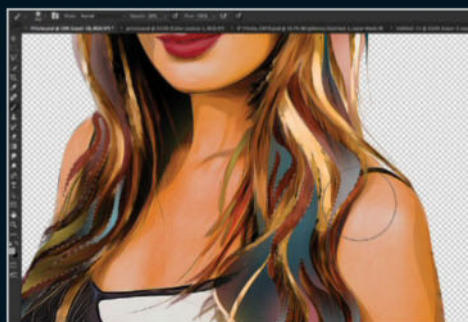
Brush over the hair

10 Cmd/Ctrl+click on the preview window of the hair layer you just created. Create a new layer, select a big, 0% hard brush, and using the colours from the supplied swatches on the FileSilo, add touches of different colours for a multicoloured, gradient-like effect.
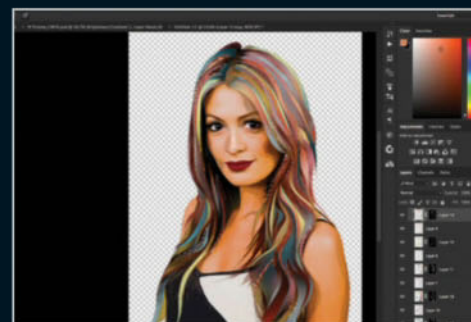
Repeat the hair effect

11 Repeat this effect until the majority of the hair is covered with these bright colours. You may wish to experiment with different blend modes, such as Screen, Soft Light and Color Dodge. Unhide the Pen outline layers you created, and drag them to the top of the layer stack.

Touch-up the hair

12 Again, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to merge everything to a new layer; Cmd/Ctrl+click on the preview window of the layer on which you filtered the hair in step 8, and hit Mask. Use Smudge to blur colour into the roots, then go to Filter>Filter Gallery>Paint Daubs, with Brush Size set to 20 and Sharpness: 40.

Adjust the piece

13 At this stage, start to adjust your image with a Curves adjustment (as seen), Vibrance (Vibrance: +50, Saturation: +10) and add a Gradient Map. We've supplied a gradient that you can apply to the piece; just turn the Gradient Map to Soft Light for optimum effect.
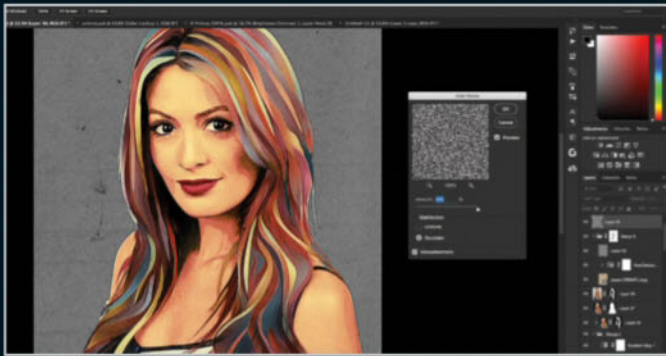
Add noise

14 Create a new layer. Go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise and choose Amount: 400%, Distribution: Gaussian and check the Monochromatic box. Click OK, set to Soft Light, 30% Opacity. Insert the paper texture, desaturate (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+U) and set this to Overlay, 40% Opacity. Insert your background at the bottom of the layer stack.

Sharpen and cartoonise

15 Finally, merge everything to a new layer twice more. On the first of these two layers, go to Filter>Noise>Reduce Noise; choose Strength: 10, Preserve Details: 100%, Reduce Color Noise: 100%, Sharpen Details: 0%. On the second, go to Filter>Other>High Pass; choose 6px, click OK and set to Overlay to sharpen.

On the FileSilo

Using the action

Although the values for the individual filters will vary slightly for different images, we've provided a basic action that can help apply a Prisma-style effect, complete with Curves adjustment to heighten the colours, as in the tutorial.

Simply load it into Photoshop and hit Play with your Background layer selected to run it. From there, you may wish to apply further adjustments or add the effect with the hair. Remember that this action doesn't work with all photos, though, and that the tutorial can help you to refine certain areas of your portrait.

GRADIENT MAPS
Apply colourful gradient maps set to Soft Light to scatter different hues across the individual tones of your Prisma-style image.

VIBRANCE
Add a Vibrance adjustment layer and increase the Saturation slightly to help bring out the natural colours.

Essentials

Works with

Elements   CS   CC

What you'll learn

Discover some essential techniques for realistic compositing

Time taken
5 hours

Expert

Rodrigo Marinelli

"Creating a composited scene where all elements look realistic is always a big challenge because it makes you consider all the details of the scene, and it forces you to be more creative and ensure aspects such as lighting and shadows look realistic.

"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."

Achieve realism in compositions

Master lighting and create more depth with masks, blurs and adjustment layers to make even the most unrealistic scenarios look believable

Before you open up Photoshop, it is really important to have a good idea in your mind. A helpful tip to enhance your creative potential is to pick up some paper and start to write or draw surreal situations. It may take a while to come up with anything that can be used, but don't give up; with time and practice this will get easier and great ideas will appear. In this case, let's create an

image of a man swinging across a lake on a rope, passing over some scary crocodiles.

To create this image, we're going to implement a realistic style. This means that during the creative process it will be necessary to focus on every detail of the scene, such as lights, shadows, proportions and depth. The idea is to make the final image look as real as possible, giving the impression

that this crazy fool is actually crossing a very dangerous lake using just a rope.

We'll learn how to use the Gaussian Blur to give depth to the scene, masks to blend different images into the scene, blend modes to erase the background of the photo with just one click, and many other tools.

Although there are no supplied files, we have provided links for the images we used.

Make it sharper

01 Create a new document (Cmd/Ctrl+N) at 460x310mm and 300ppi. Add the mountain photo from Shutterstock (**http://shutr.bz/2gdTFBb**) and to sharpen it, duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and use the High Pass filter (Filter>Other>High Pass), set to 2px. Change the blend mode to Soft Light.

Create a layer group with mask

02 Let's replace the sky. Add **http://shutr.bz/2fBD9Yo**, make a layer group (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and add a mask by clicking on the Add Layer Mask button. Now click on the layer group, use the Brush tool (B) with the black colour selected and erase the unnecessary parts, leaving only the sky.

Link the adjustment layer

03 With the Crop tool (C), crop the sky and use only the lake of **http://shutr.bz/2fUSy98**. Make a layer group with a mask and erase the unnecessary parts. Use the Adjustments panel, select the Levels tool, press Alt+Cmd/Ctrl and click on the lake layer, then use 18, 1.00, 246 for the settings.

Draw the shadows

04 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), use the Elliptical Marquee tool (M) to make a circle and paint it black (black colour+Alt+Del). Use the Gaussian Blur at 120px and change the blend mode to Multiply with 60% Opacity. Duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and place it on the right side of the scene.

Erase the unnecessary parts

05 Use only the base of **http://shutr.bz/2f2Ymho**. Duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J), name it base_02, put it below the base layer and change the blend mode to Multiply. To erase the unnecessary parts, select the layer base, press the Add Layer Mask button, select the Brush tool (B), the black colour and start to erase.

Use the Feather command

06 Use the photo **http://shutr.bz/2fZjNN6** and place it as shown above. To make the edges of the photo look softer, activate the selection of the man layer (Cmd/Ctrl+click in the layer), use the Feather (Shift+F6) at 2px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) and press delete three times.

Apply the Pen tool

07 Now, use the Pen tool (P) and draw the shape of the highlights, as above. After that, activate the layer selection, paint it white (white colour+Alt+Del), disable selection (Cmd/Ctrl+D), use the Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) at 10px and change the blend mode to Soft Light.

Find the perfect colour

08 Use the Elliptical Marquee tool to make a circle then, to find a perfect colour for the man's shadow, use the Eyedropper tool (I) and click in the lake. Paint the selection (step 7), disable the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+D), use the Gaussian Blur (10px) and change the blend mode to Soft Light.
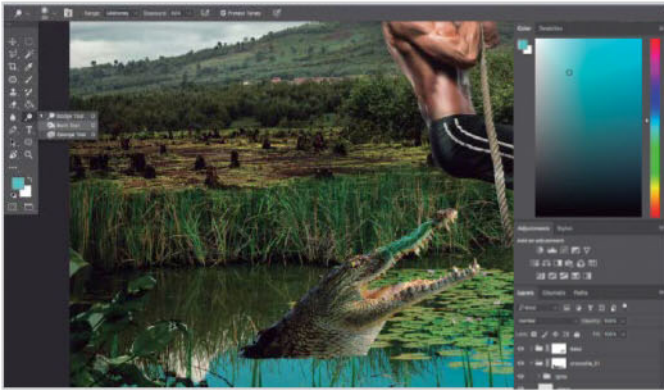
Enhance the shadows

09 Add **http://shutr.bz/2gDFWo6** and with the Pen tool, make a selection around the crocodile, press Cmd/Ctrl+Enter, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) and press delete. To enhance the shadows, use the Burn tool and click in the darkest parts of the image. Finally use the High Pass filter set to 2px.

Add the water shadow

10 Now use **http://shutr.bz/2gDFWo6** again and place it under the crocodile layer. Make a mask (step 5), go to the Brush tool (B), choose a soft round brush at 400px and 70% Opacity, then erase the unnecessary parts.

Work with blend modes

11 With the Pen tool, make a selection around the first and second splashes (step 9) from **http://shutr.bz/2flo6Mu**. Change the blend mode to Screen, then place around the crocodile. Add the fifth splash from **http://shutr.bz/2gDFs19**, follow the same procedure, and place it behind the crocodile's face.
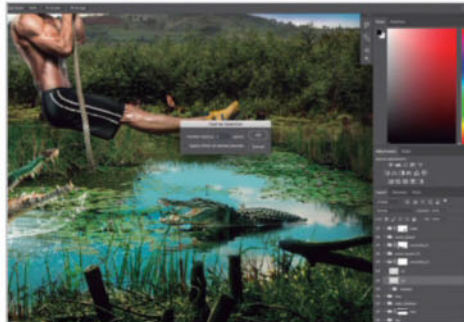
Compose the scene

12 The composition of the scene is very important for the final result, so let's make the lake a little scarier. Add **http://shutr.bz/2gpayGK** and follow the same procedure as in steps 9 and 10. To make the edges of the photo look softer, use the Feather command (step 6) at 2px.

Make colour adjustments

13 To alter colours on the crocodile image, go to the Adjustments panel, choose Brightness/Contrast and link it with the crocodile layer (step 3). Set it to 16, 13, then link another adjustment layer. To do that, select Levels, hold Cmd/Ctrl+Alt, click above the Brightness/Contrast layer, then set to 11, 1.00, 238.

Use Smart Objects

14 Add **http://shutr.bz/2f2SPY6**, then Ctrl/right-click on the bird layer and choose the option Convert to Smart Object. This makes it possible to change the size of the image without losing the original resolution. Use the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T) to set the birds to the right size.

Flip the layers

15 More elements need to be added to the scene; start with **http://shutr.bz/2gGlv9C** and place it on the left side. To make the edges of the photo look softer, use the Feather (step 6) at 1px. Then duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J), flip it horizontally (Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal) and place it on the right side of the scene.

Work with depth

16 Let's add some unfocused leaves to give the idea that the scene is taking place really close to the viewer. Cut out the top-right leaf from http://shutr.bz/2gcBqsi, use the Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur) set to 10px. Duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and with the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T), arrange the leaves as shown above.

Use the Motion Blur

17 Use the birds image as if it were leaves falling down. To do this, first place http://shutr.bz/2f2SPY6, then apply the Motion Blur (Filter>Blur>Motion Blur) and set the Size to 34px and Angle to -40. Finally, make a mask (step 5) and erase the unnecessary parts.

Set the colour tone

18 Use the Adjustments panel to set the colour tone of the scene. Use two layers of Brightness/Contrast (one set to 5, 10, and one at 22, 10), two layers of Photo Filter (Sepia, 25% Density) and finally two layers of Hue/Saturation (set to 0, 17, 0).
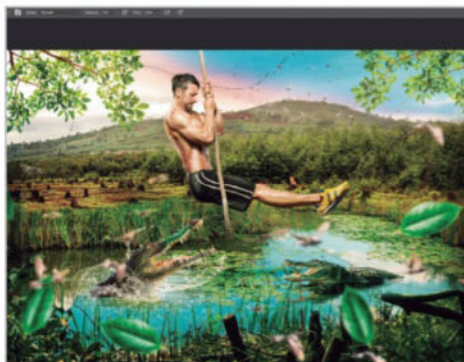
Add more colour

19 To make the scene more colourful, use the Brush tool (B), pick a Soft Round brush (step 10), set the colour to yellow (#fefac8) and paint the middle of the scene, as shown in the image above. Change the blend mode to Soft Light.

Burn the edges

20 Duplicate all the layers (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and merge (Cmd/Ctrl+E). Use the Rectangular Marquee tool (M) and make a square, as shown above. Use the Feather (Shift+F6) at 400px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I), press delete three times and change the blend mode to Multiply.

What you'll learn

Create a realistic adventure scene

LINK THE ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
Use the Adjustments panel and link it with the layer. This way it's possible to make non-permanent edits.

USE BLEND MODES
Blend modes are always useful. In this case, to make the black background of the water-splash photo disappear, change the blend mode to Screen.

WORK WITH DEPTH
Add some leaves and use the Gaussian Blur to give an impression that the scene is happening near the viewer. This trick adds a great depth effect.

MAKE THE HIGHLIGHTS
Use the Pen tool (P) to draw highlights, the Gaussian Blur to make it look softer, and change the blend mode to Soft Light.

Start image

Essentials

Works with

Elements   **Ps**   **CC**
            CS

What you'll learn

How to use layers, create brushes and use layer masks

Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Vicki-Lea Boulter

"The idea behind this image is to encourage children to explore their imagination through play.

"I am a creative portrait photographer from Devon. I make images mostly of women and children that express their personalities through artistic storytelling. I use Photoshop to layer my art, photographs and other mediums, fusing several ideas to form one concept."

Use layers to build fantasy art

Explore a child's imagination through layers, and bring their dreams and creative ideas to life

The idea behind this image is to create a fantasy composite child's portrait that captures the imagination and ideas of children in a picture, using layers, masks and brushes (plus a little bit of magic!). By building up the layers, we will not only create a more exciting image than using a simple one-layer flattened image, but we will also create a fantasy setting that will bring our story to life.

We will explore how Photoshop's Camera Raw adjustments can not only give our subject more depth, but also create a simple HDR effect that will help to draw attention to the subject and give our cake boy more character. We will also explore how to make our own brushes for that magical sparkle, as well as learn how to adjust the brushes supplied to create new layers of detail.

If you plan to photograph your own image instead of using the one on the FileSilo, place your camera in a plastic bag and be prepared to get covered in flour yourself, because children love to create a mess, as we found out from this session!
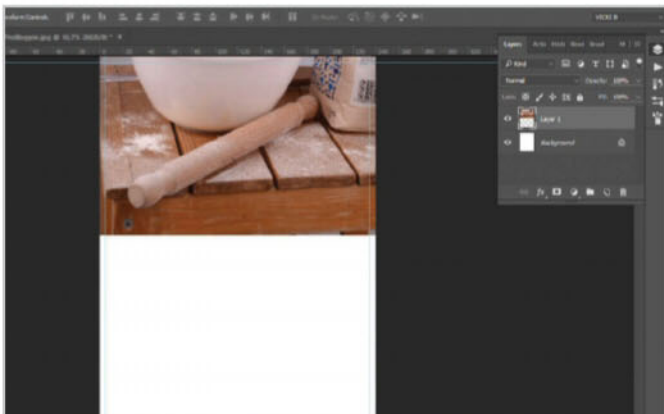
Create your background

01 Place 'Rolling pin.jpg' on to your page, creating a new layer, to cover approximately half of the page. Make the rolling pin central and re-name this layer Rolling Pin.
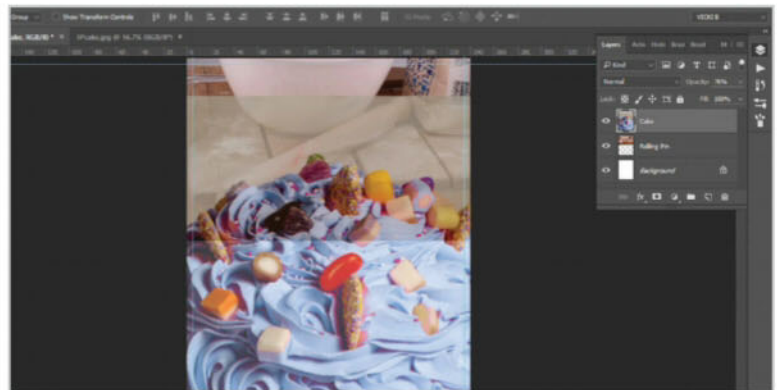
Place the cake image

02 Place the cake image over the rolling pin image, and resize it so that it fills the bottom of your page and overlaps the rolling pin slightly. Reduce the Opacity to around 76% so you can see the image below. This will help you to be more accurate when positioning the image.

Expert tip

Create your own brushes

During step 14 we suggested using the brushes provided to create the effect of flour, but if you would like to create your own brushes, the process is very simple. Create a square document that is white and 1500 pixels in width and height. Then lay down the marks you wish to make the brush out of onto the page in black. Now go to Edit> Define Brush Preset and save. Voila! You now have your own custom brush ready to get creative with!

Remove the background

03 Create an adjustment mask on the cake layer and, using a black brush, paint away any of the background from the cake image. This will expose the rolling pin image underneath.
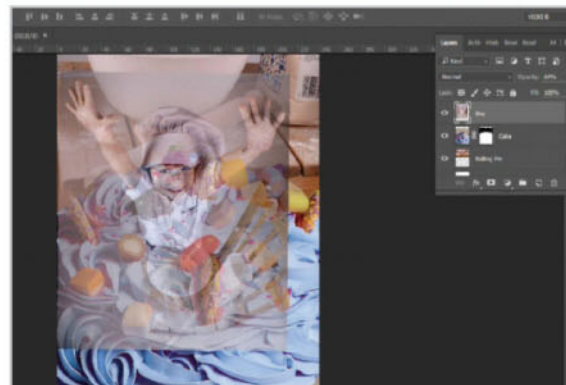
Place the boy

04 Place the image of the boy on top of your cake layer. Reposition and resize the image of the boy until his hands come halfway up the bowl, and his waistline is halfway down the page. Reduce the Opacity to 64% to see the positioning.

Delete the background

05 Create a layer mask on the boy image and use a black brush to remove all the background behind the boy, but leave the tiny bowl and sack of flour.

Create depth with shadows

06 Create a new layer between the boy and the cake layers. Call it Shadows. Using a 1000px soft brush, paint in a shadow behind both arms and the pack of flour. Reduce Opacity to 70%. Use a Gaussian Blur to soften edges if required.

Introduce the flour

07 Create a layer above your Shadows layer. Call it Background Flour. Load the brush set called 'Cake Boy.abr', and use brushes Flour 1 and Flour 2 to paint in flour using white. You can vary the size of these brushes, depending on how fine you want your flour spray.

Add movement to the flour

08 To add movement to the flour and give your image a more three-dimensional look, go to Filter>Blur>Radial Blur, and set to 10. This will make the flour look as though it is being flung about.

Mask out the flour

09 Create a mask on your Background Flour layer, and use a soft brush to take some of the flour out, until it looks more realistic. You can also adjust the opacity of this layer to make the flour look less harsh.

Add depth to the boy

10 Select your Boy layer and go to Camera Raw. We can use Camera Raw to create depth by accentuating the light colours, increasing the shadows and increasing the Clarity slider. The Clarity slider is great for creating a subtle HDR effect.
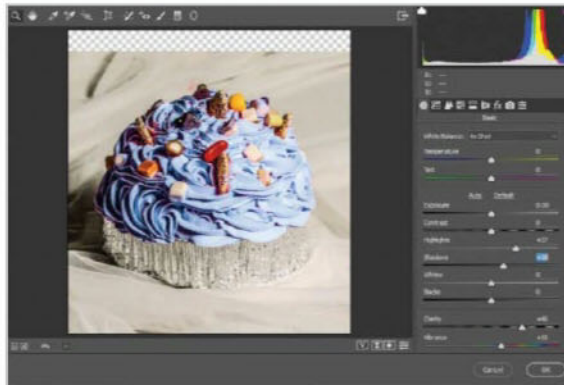
Create depth on the cake

11 Select your Cake layer, and just as you did in the previous step, go into Camera Raw. Again, adjust your sliders accordingly to create depth in your cake. Enhance the shadows and highlights until you feel you have the right balance.

Expert tip

Adjust colours

During step 20 we mentioned adjusting the colours. Rather than doing this by just using the Saturation or Vibrancy slider in Camera Raw, go into the HSL/Greyscale slider. Here you are not only able to alter the saturation of individual colours, but you can tweak the hues and lightness for each colour. This gives you more control over the colours you select, because if you increase skin tones too much, you may find the subject looks like they have a rather bad suntan!

Fill the bag with flour

12 Create a new layer and call it Bag of Flour. Using a large flat brush and selecting white, fill the bag with flour. We used a 1400px brush to make the flour look much softer with no harsh edges.

Tidy the flour bag

13 To tidy up the flour coming out of the bag, create a mask on the Bag of Flour layer, and use a brush to take away what you do not need. By taking the flour from the front up to the lip of the bag, you will create a glow effect emerging from the inside of the bag.

Add more flour

14 Create a new layer on top of all the other layers and, with the flour brushes you loaded earlier, create more flour over the top of the boy. Build the flour up more densely over his hands to make it look as though it is being thrown.

Remove excess flour

15 Create a layer mask on the top flour layer, and use a small brush to take out any excess flour. Pay particular attention to the area around the arms and face, as we don't want anything to distract from the expression on the boy's face.
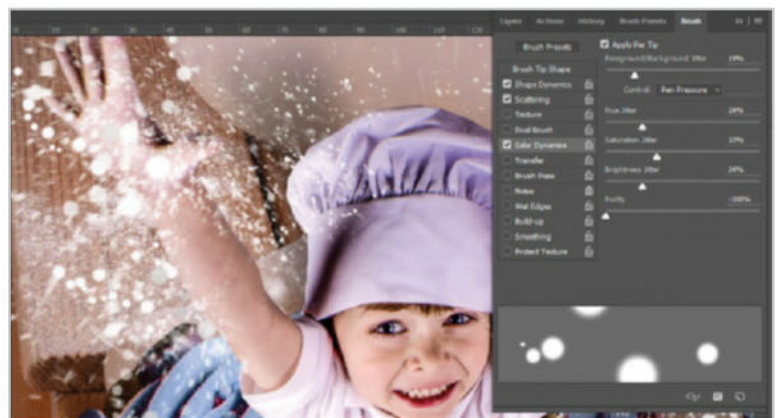
Create magic orbs

16 Select a standard round brush and open your Brush Presets. In here, you can adjust the settings to create an orb trail by adjusting the shape, colour and how much you want the brush to scatter. This effect is great to create a little magic in children's images.

37

Expert edit

Adjusting in Camera Raw
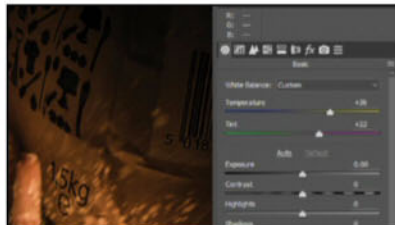
Adjust temperature

01 The Temperature adjustment is used in photography to correct white balance. But it is also good if you want to add warmth to your creative work.
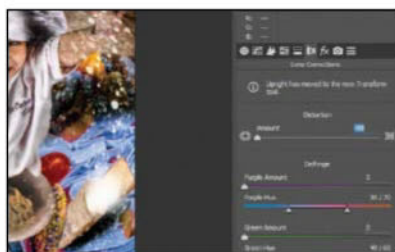
Use the Distortion tool

02 Make the subject pop out of the page by using the Distortion tool to create a bulge, bringing the subject out of the picture more.

Position the subject

03 Be sure to position your subject between any raised areas on the cake, and add shadow from the raised area to make your image look more authentic.
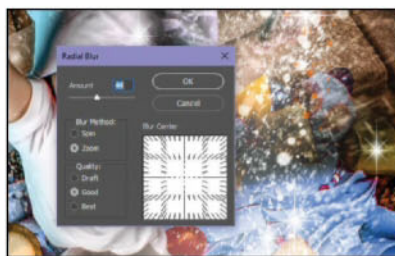
Add movement

04 We suggested using a Radial Blur for movement, but to make the flour look as though it's coming out from your page, try using the Zoom Blur too.

Create a whirl

17 Create a new layer and call it Whirl. The Shapes menu has a whirl shape. Place this over the top of your hand (make sure it is white). This is to create a sense of movement in the hand. Apply a Gaussian Blur, selecting Rasterize when prompted.

Go to Camera Raw

20 With your flattened layer selected, go back to Camera Raw. For this image, the colour was tweaked, the Clarity and Shadows were changed to create a 3D effect, and a vignette was added to reduce the brightness of the background, drawing the eye to the central image.

Flatten the layers

18 To create a flattened layer to work on the overall feel of your image, select all of your layers by holding down the Shift key, and drag into the New Layer icon at the bottom-right of the Layers palette. Then go to Image>Merge Layers.

Further edits

19 Now we have a flat image, we can work on the overall feel of the picture. But by keeping the layers separated underneath, you can always mask anything through the flattened layer at anytime should you wish to make changes at a later date.

Add some light

21 We are going to add some direction to our image by creating a light source from the bottom right, heading towards the subject. This is created with a soft white brush, feathering it and changing its opacity.

Dodge and Burn

22 Use the Dodge and Burn tools to accentuate highlights where the glow hits the boy and to deepen shadows. Create a blue glow on parts of the skin, creating a new layer, painting on blue, changing the Opacity to 75% and masking out any unwanted areas.

Apply finishing touches

23 Finally, using the orb brush and sparkle brush in your set of brushes, add some finishing touches. Pick out the highlighted areas with a sparkle. And, using colours you have picked out from the sweets in the cake, create a few orbs. While you are at it, add a few for flour sprinkles if you wish!

What you'll learn Areas of consideration

PHOTOGRAPHING DEPTH
If you are going to follow this tutorial using your own image, try using a fisheye attachment like we did with the boy, to create depth to the image.

CREATING MAGIC WITH BRUSHES
Using the generic Photoshop brushes, but altering them in the Brush Presets, can create sparkles and light trails, giving your image a little magic.

MAKING YOUR IMAGE POP
Using the Camera Raw Clarity and Shadow sliders can quickly create an HDR-style finish.

HAVING FUN
Remember that colourful, vibrant and action-packed elements will make your children's image look fun – and if you enjoy creating it, it will show in the final result!

Essentials

Works with

Elements   **CS**   **CC**

What you'll learn

Basic photo-blending techniques using layer masks and colours

Time taken
3-5 hours

Expert

Igor Šćekić

"When I was younger I used to play a game in my head – I would imagine two or more objects and visualise how they would look if they were connected in the same object. My discovery of Photoshop's blending techniques means I can play that game in reality.

"I am an illustrator and graphic designer who gets to use Photoshop every day while working on client projects, but also in my personal experiments."

Start images

Composite illustrative effects

Boost your creativity by learning how to combine multiple photos into a single composition using photomanipulation techniques

Photomanipulation techniques are used to combine many different photos into one seamless composition. It is a common element in graphic-design tasks, and its usage can vary from simple tasks like changing colours and contrast in a photograph, to more advanced techniques for making complex and highly detailed surreal illustrations.

In this tutorial, you will learn how to blend elements from different photos into a surreal light-bulb head composition. You can follow the tutorial directly using the supplied materials, or take a more creative road and use it as inspiration for making something new and unique. You will learn techniques that can be used for blending two objects into one; layer masks for erasing some parts of the object, then the Pen tool for cutting out areas, lighting and colouring. These techniques are most relevant to blending glass or transparent objects, but the majority of the techniques shown here (with slight modifications) can be used for blending any kinds of objects together.
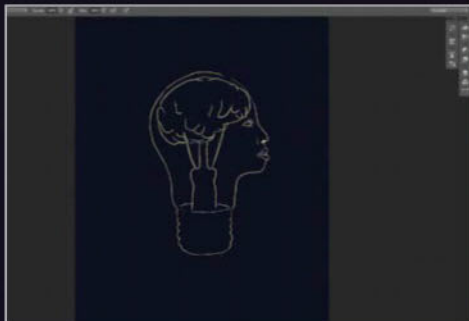
Make a sketch

01 Define the basic composition and shape of the light-bulb head with a brain inside. The sketch doesn't need to be detailed; just block the positions of the main elements. Draw a sketch on a new layer above a dark blue (#00031f) background.

Cut out the light bulb

02 Open 'Light bulb.jpg' in Photoshop. Draw a path around the object that needs to be cut out and choose Make Selection from the Pen tool options. Copy (Cmd/Ctrl+C) and paste (Cmd/Ctrl+V) the light bulb in a PSD file.

Divide it into two parts

03 The light bulb has a glass area and a non-transparent metal area, and is therefore divided into two parts. Use the Pen tool to make a path around the metal, and cut (Cmd/Ctrl+X) and paste to a new layer. Leave this as Normal blending mode, but set the glass part to Screen. Group the layers (Cmd/Ctrl+G) into a Light Bulb layer group.

41

Expert tip

Erasing on masks

Using layer masks for erasing on a layer is a non-destructive technique that enables you to refine the mask whenever you need to. It is the equivalent to hiding certain parts of the layer and bringing them back if needed. Erasing on a mask can be done with the Brush (B) or Eraser (E) tool. If using the Eraser, white is used for erasing and black is for bringing back parts. With the Brush tool, black is used for erasing and white is for bringing back erased parts.

Add a face onto the light bulb

04 Use step 3's technique to cut out the face from 'Face.jpg'. Copy and paste the face cutout into the working PSD above the light-bul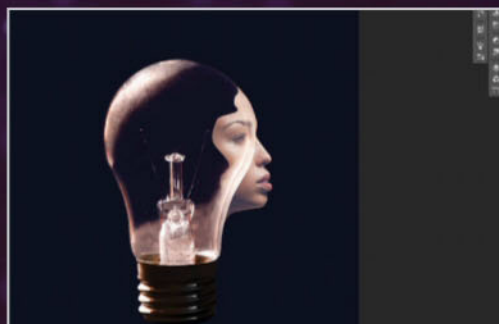b layers and flip horizontally. Set the layer with the face to Screen to achieve a 'glass' effect. Use the Warp transform on the face so it better connects with the light bulb.

Warp the back of the head

05 The back of the light bulb should be a bit more curved to match up with the head shape. Use Warp transform to make it more rounded. Be careful not to overdo it; it should be just a bit more curved than it is at the moment.

Blend the face and light bulb

06 After both objects are aligned, some parts should be erased to blend them better together. Add layer masks to both layers and delete unnecessary parts with a soft brush. Use the Blur tool on the face layer to smooth it a bit and make it look more like glass than skin.
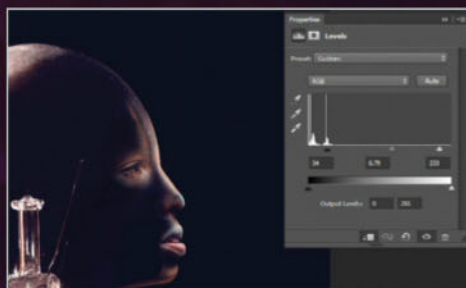
Add more contrast

07 The face needs stronger contrast. Add a Levels adjustment layer above the Face layer by holding Alt and with the Face layer selected, press the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button in the Layers panel. Choose Levels (use settings above). In a New Layer dialog box, select the 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' option.

Lower saturation

08 Adjusting the contrast of the face also requires desaturation of some parts to blend it better with the light bulb. Add a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer to the Face layer. Set Saturation to -90 to desaturate. Do the same on the light bulb.
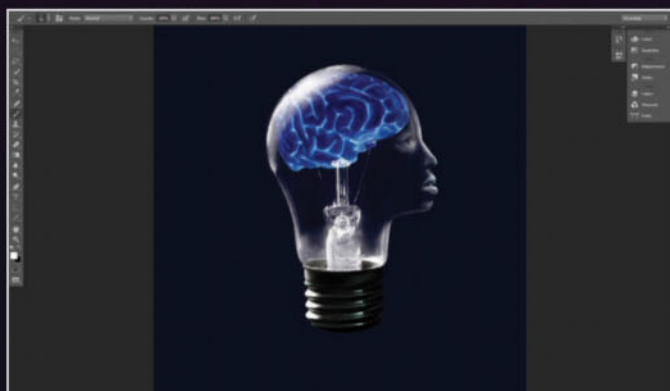
Cut and transform the brain

09 Use the same technique that was used for cutting out the light bulb and face to cut out the brain from the stock photo. Copy and paste the cutout into the working PSD. Invert colours of the brain (Cmd/Ctrl+I) and set its blending mode to Screen for a transparent effect. Use various Transform options (Cmd/Ctrl+T) to place the brain where it should be.

Make a bright edge on the head

10 Since the idea is to achieve a glass effect, the edges of the light-bulb head should be lighter/brighter. Group the light bulb and face with clipping mask layers into the same group. Add a new clipping mask to that group. Select a bright blue colour (#c1fff4) and paint along the edges to make them brighter. If you think that some areas need to be brighter, paint on them with the same colour on a new layer underneath the light bulb and face group.
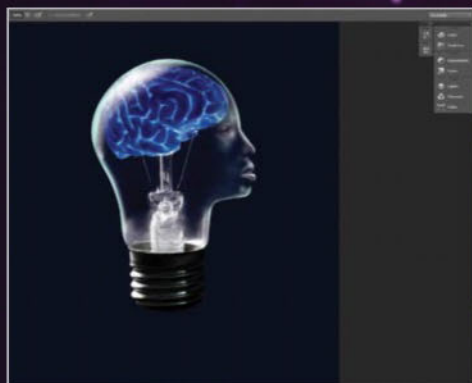
Connect the brain

11 To make a better connection with the brain, erase parts around the tungsten filament of the light bulb. Use the Brush tool or Eraser tool with hard edges and delete them on the existing layer mask.

Work on the background

12 Open 'Background.png'. Copy and paste it into the working PSD. Rotate and upscale to cover the background. Set its mode to Lighten, Opacity: 59% and add a new Color Balance adjustment layer as a clipping mask. Make another layer above it. Create a circular gradient (G) from the centre of the light bulb with #1feede using Foreground to Transparent gradient, Opacity: 30%.

Add colours to the brain

13 Make a new clipping mask above the brain. Set this layer to the Color blending mode and paint with a soft brush and different colours. Use pink, green, blue and yellow tones to add more colour variance to the brain.

Add colours to the light bulb

14 Make a new clipping mask above the light-bulb head. Set this layer to Color blending mode and paint with a soft brush and different colours to add more variance. Use the same colours as on the brain, but also some orange tones around the eye.

Create additional highlights

15 Make a new layer above everything. Use the Pen tool to make paths for additional reflections. Add a layer mask and paint inside the selections with light-blue tones to create some additional reflections on the light bulb.

Make it glow

16 On a new layer, use a soft round brush with light blue (#c1fff4) to paint glow on the eye. Download the supplied brushes by 123brushes.com (**http://all-free-download.com/photoshop-brushes/skip_star_and_sparkle_brush_39825.html**). Paint glow on the eye with a light blue and then paint a few glows on the light bulb.

Expert tip

Working with the Pen

To be able to use the full potential of Photoshop, it is important to master the Pen tool (P). The Pen tool is used for making paths that can be later turned into selections, vector shapes or vector masks.
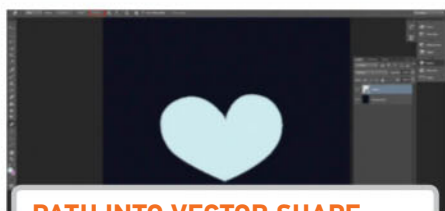
PATH INTO VECTOR SHAPE
The Pen tool can be used for creating vector shapes. When you close a path, press the Shape option in the Pen tool options (upper left). Now the path is turned into a vector shape that can be modified without losing quality.
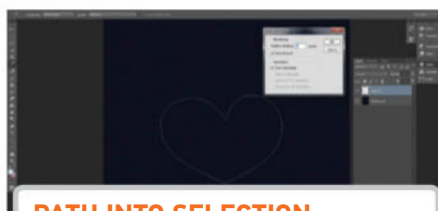
PATH INTO SELECTION
When you close a path, press the Selection option in Pen tool options. A dialog box appears. If you want edges to be soft/blurry, use Feather. Now you have an active selection that can be used to cut out selected parts or make a mask.
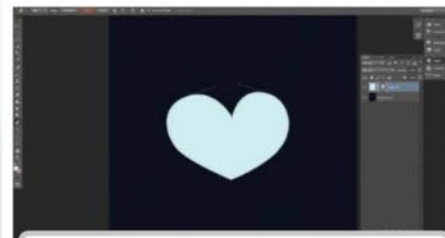
PATH INTO VECTOR MASK
When you close a path, press the Mask option in the Pen tool options. Now you have a vector mask that defines the shape of the object. A whole layer can be filled with colour, but only areas inside the vector mask will be visible. Vector masks are different to a regular layer mask because it is not possible to erase with the Brush or Eraser tool.
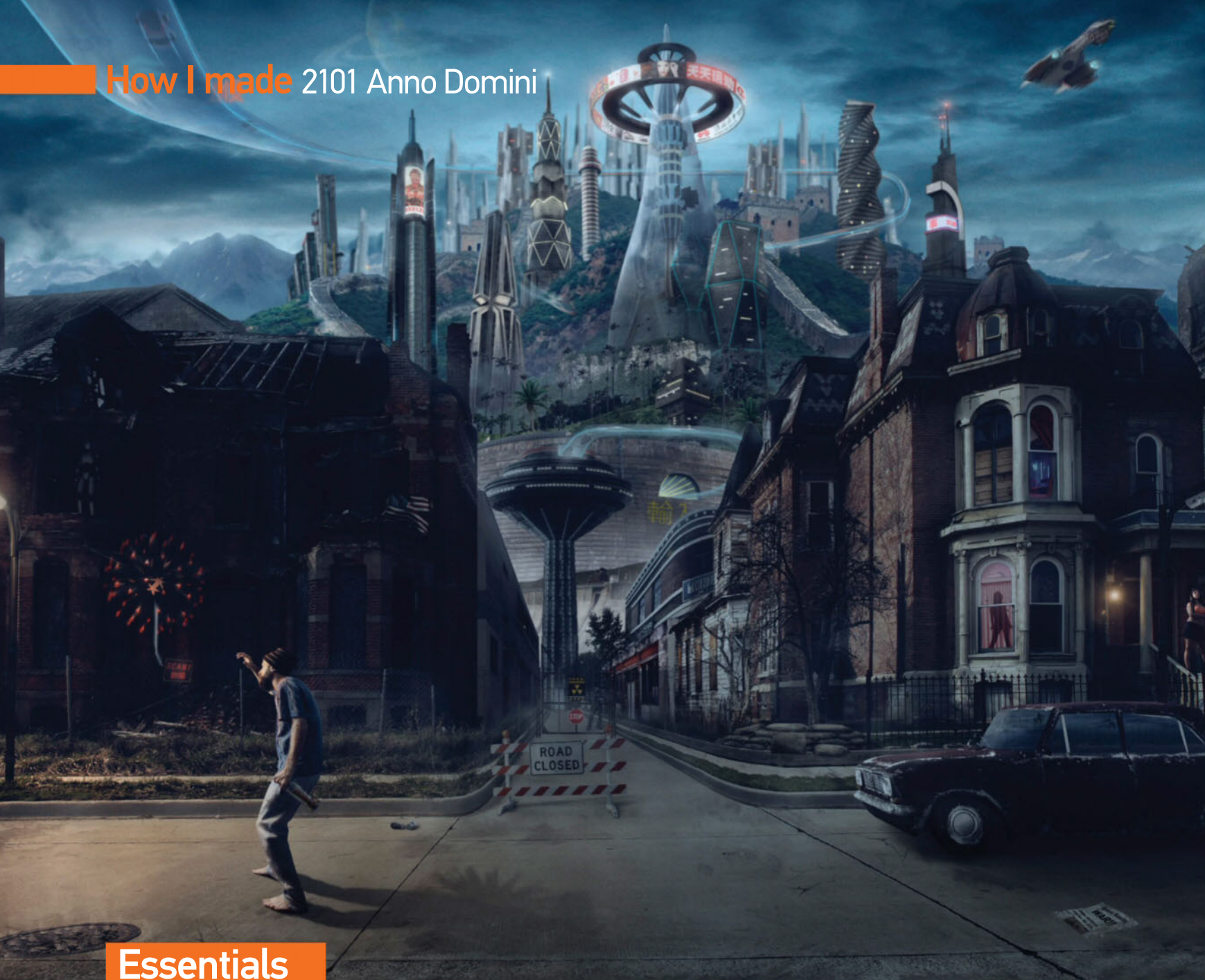
The artist

Mikel Camara "I'm a London-based freelance digital artist. I began my career studying cinematography, but moved into photography and retouching. However, most of my images are still inspired by film, with a growing interest in 3D work."

See more of Mikel's work at **www.mikelcamara.com**.

How I made

2101 Anno Domini

Find out how Mikel used Photoshop to create a futuristic world

Mikel Camara's sci-fi-inspired *2101 Anno Domini* is set in a dystopian future. Finding the right inspiration for this composition was essential in creating a narrative.

This composition led Mikel to develop his creativity in the 3D art realm: "It is the first image in which I integrated 3D elements, and it was mostly built from stock images," he says. To help plan the image, Mikel kept notes and created rough sketches, before moving into Photoshop. Once he'd sourced the perfect images, it was a matter of piecing them together, and matching perspectives.

Making notes and sketches

01 It was very important to start with a rough sketch of what I wanted to achieve. I wrote notes on the side about what the plot of the image was going to be, and its mood and feel. Looking for inspirational images helped me in the process.

Transforming the perspective

02 I did an intensive search for stock images, or used my own photography. I put the main objects together in Photoshop and used the Transform tools, such as Warp and Perspective, to match them to the perspective lines in the image.

Masking elements together

03 I added the street elements, which I photographed. I then used the Pen tool to create an accurate path, and the Refine Mask option to get rid of hard edges to blend in the picture. Sometimes I used the Blur tool to soften the edges of a cutout.

Blending 3D objects

04 I looked for 3D models online that would match the perspective of my composition. I created a simple model for the main tower in the background and the drone in the foreground. I enhanced them by applying reflections from the environment, and then applied some contrast using the Curves adjustment.

Adding realism

05 I painted a floating highway, and created a path and filled the selection with 50% grey. By double-clicking on that layer, I could open the Layer Style menu and play around with the Bevel & Emboss adjustments until I achieved a realistic 3D effect. I used the Dodge and Burn tools to refine the effect, and applied some colour and reflections.
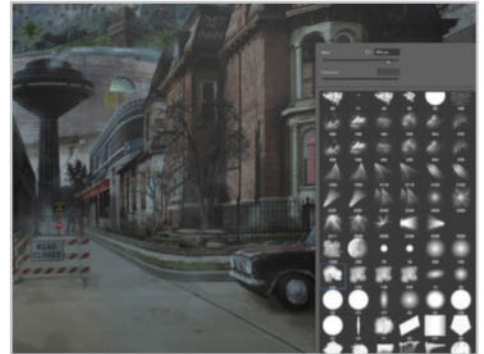
Painting with brush presets

06 I downloaded a set of fog-like smoke brushes and started applying them on a new layer with a light brush across the image. I went to my Brush Presets and turned on the Shape Dynamics, which enabled Size and Angle Jitter. This way I was able to avoid creating repeated patterns.

Telling the story

07 I added lights and details to the buildings, which helped to tell the story. In this case I created most of the windows using a square-shaped brush with Spacing set to 200%. To make them more realistic, I duplicated the layer and applied a Gaussian Blur filter of 4px to achieve a glowing effect.

Applying final filters

08 For the final adjustments, I used gradient maps in the Soft Light blend mode, Selective Color to add a cyan hue to the blacks, and added a 5% Noise filter to achieve a more organic feel. It's useful to take a break from colour correction and come back with fresh eyes to be able to notice any discordance.

On the FileSilo

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

Essentials

Works with

Elements   **Ps** CS   CC

What you'll learn

How to create masks and enhance images using the Camera Raw filter

Time taken
3 hours

Expert

Daniel Sinoca

"Creating masks is one of the most time-consuming tasks, but thanks to Photoshop and the new Select and Mask tool, I can easily create tricky selections and masks.

"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."

Create a dramatic sport scene

Combine photos, create masks, and apply adjustment layers and filters to create an eye-catching sport composition

In this tutorial, we'll show you techniques to create a dramatic sports composition. You'll learn how to combine several images using a series of masks and adjustments to make tonal and colour corrections, then you'll work with layers and blending modes to create shadows and highlights. Finally, you'll apply non-destructive techniques to add contrast and effects for an eye-catching result.

You will learn how to create selections using layer channels and also the new Select and Mask feature in Photoshop. Creating a mask is one of the most important tasks when you're working with many different images. It enables you to hide and show parts of an image, and also control the level of transparency by gradually painting the layer.

Another important technique covered in this tutorial is the Camera Raw filter. It is an incredible yet easy-to-use editor that enables you to enhance saturation, brightness, contrast and much more. Plus, it can be used not only for Raw images but also almost any other format. Don't hesitate to explore this fantastic filter to learn how to improve your photo edits. For now, though, download the images and files from the FileSilo and start creating this amazing image.
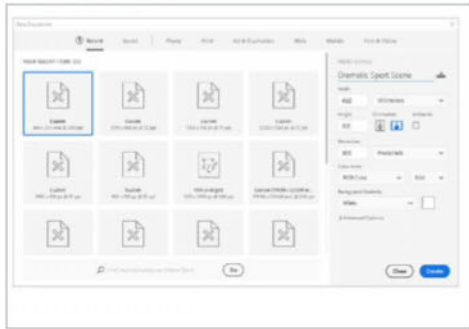
Create a new document
01 Go to File>New (Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Dramatic Sports. Set Width to 460mm, Height to 310mm, Resolution to 300ppi and click Create. Open the Ruler (Cmd/Ctrl+R). Right-click on the ruler and choose Millimetres. Now go to View>New Guide, set the Orientation to Horizontal, Position to 155mm and click OK.

Place the images
02 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Sky.jpg' at the top. Now drag the centre bottom handle to squeeze the image, placing it above the guideline. Insert the stadium by going to File>Place Embedded 'Stadium.jpg', then press Return/Enter.

Use a channel mask
03 Go to Window>Channels. Duplicate the Blue channel (right-click on the Blue channel layer and choose Duplicate Channel). With the Blue copy channel active, press Cmd/Ctrl+L. Drag the sliders to create a high-contrast black-and-white image. Grab the Brush tool (B) and paint the extra spots.

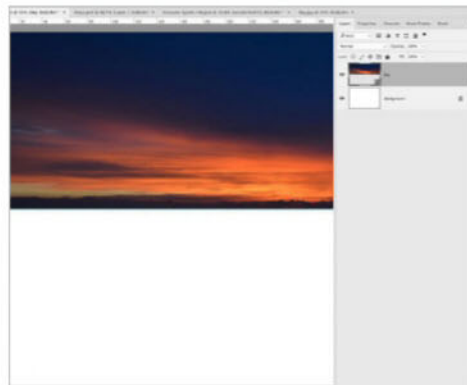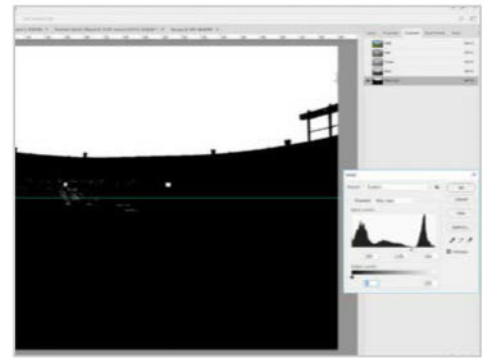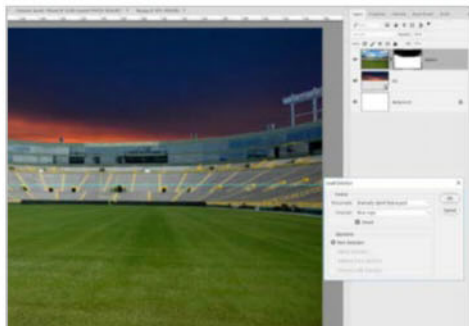### Apply the mask
04 In the Channels panel, click RGB. Now press F7 to go back to the Layers panel. Go to Select>Load Selection. In the Load Selection dialog box, choose Channel: Blue Copy, check Invert, Operation New Selection and then click OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection.
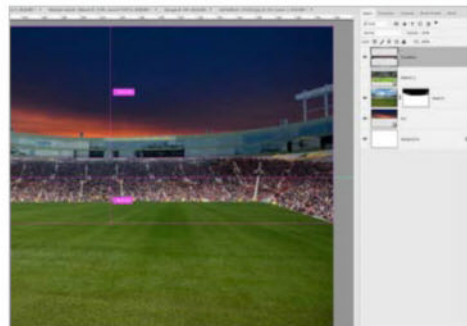
Introduce spectators
05 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Stadium2.jpg', resize the image, then press Return/Enter. Grab the Polygonal Lasso tool (L) and select the spectators. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it. Name the new layer Spectators, then delete the Stadium 2 layer.
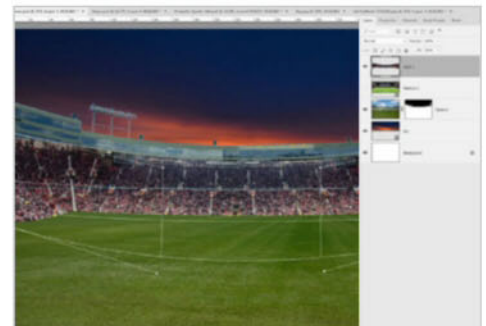
Add a layer mask
06 Open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T), switch to Warp mode, drag the handles and transform the image to match the stand underneath. Now create a layer mask, go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a hard-tip brush and paint around the image to refine the contours.
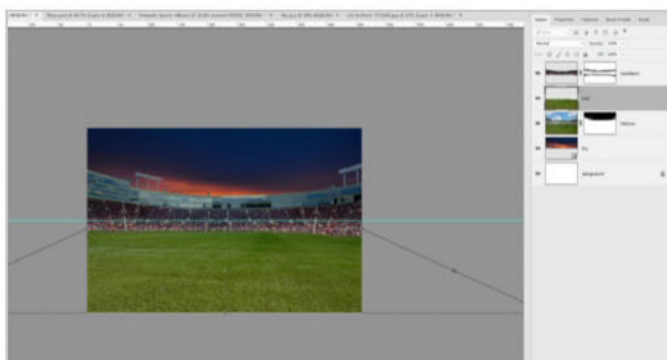
Change the perspective
07 Click on the Stadium layer. Grab the Quick Selection tool (W) and select the field. Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and name it Field. Zoom out (Cmd/Ctrl -). Go to Edit>Transform> Perspective. Drag the bottom-corner handles outwards to adjust the perspective and press Return/Enter. Add a layer mask and hide the hard edges.
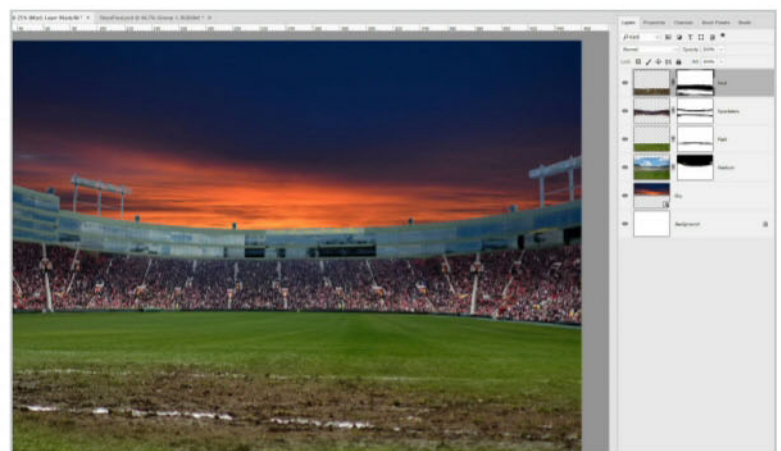
Make some mud
08 Go to File>Place 'Mud.jpg'. Resize the image and press Return/ Enter. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a soft-tip brush and paint over the mask to get rid of the hard edges.
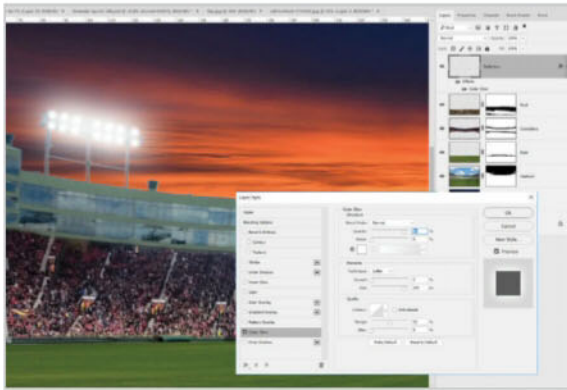
Create the stadium lights

09 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Reflectors and click OK. Zoom in (Cmd/Ctrl +). Grab a small soft-tip brush. Paint the lights over the reflectors. Now go to Layer>Layer Style>Outer Glow. Set the Opacity to 90%, Color: White, Spread: 2%, Size: 220 pixels and click OK.
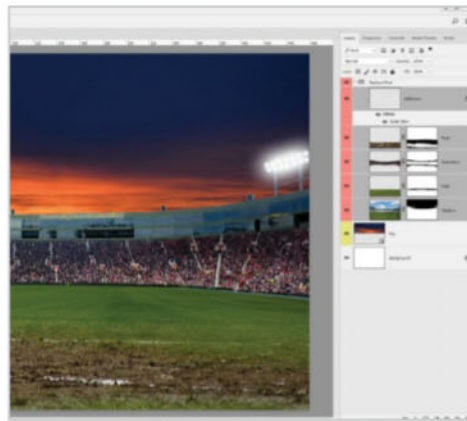
Make a group

10 To keep the layers organised, let's create a layer group. Hold Shift and click on the Reflectors, Mud, Spectators, Field and Stadium layers. Now press Cmd/Ctrl+G to create a group and name it Stadium Final.
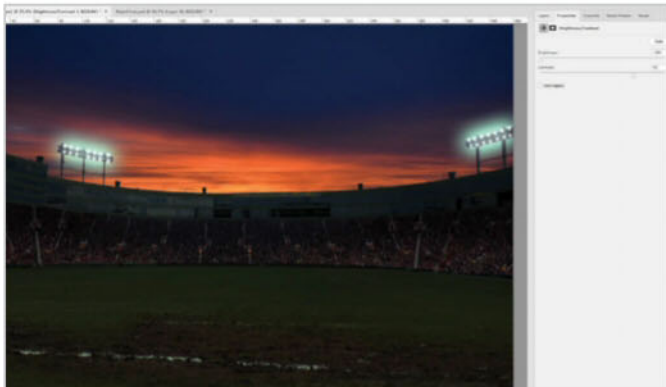
Apply adjustments

11 Now let's apply an adjustment over the Stadium Group layer. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast. In the dialog box, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask' and click OK. Set the Brightness to -150 and Contrast to 50.
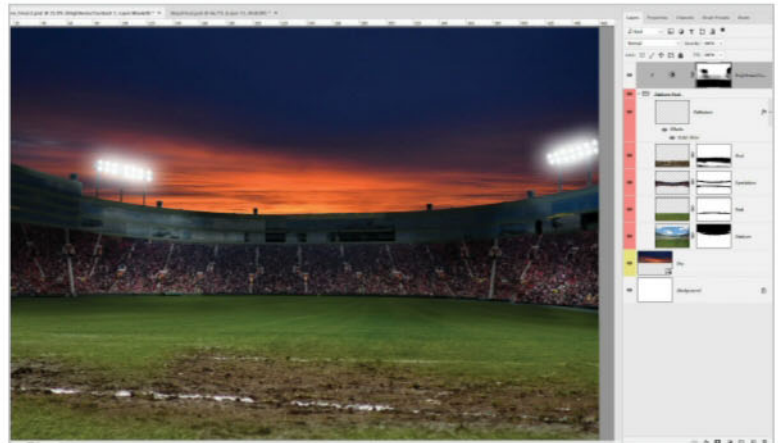
Bring in some highlights

12 Grab the Brush tool. Choose a large soft-tip brush, Size around 800 pixels, then click on the Brightness/Contrast layer mask. Start painting over the field and light reflectors to reveal highlights underneath.
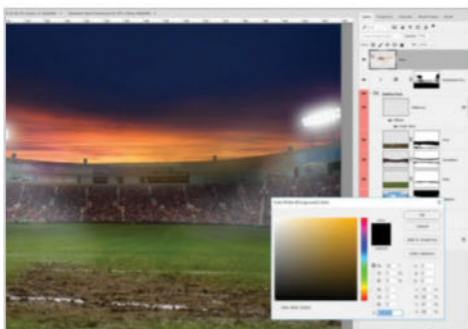
Add more glow

13 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Glow, set the blend mode to Linear Dodge (Add), Opacity: 70% and click OK. Grab a large soft brush. In Options, set the Opacity to 20%. Using white, orange and yellow colours, start painting over the stadium to add a subtle glowing effect.

Place the players

14 Go to File>Place Embedded 'Player1.jpg', then hit Return/Enter. Go to Select>Select and Mask. Change View to Overlay and select the player. Check Decontaminate Colors and change the Output to 'New layer with layer mask'. Adjust the Global Refinements to enhance the mask even further.

Enhance the player's shadows

15 First, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels and click Auto. Now create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Shadows, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', change Mode to Soft Light and click OK. Grab a soft brush and using a dark brown, paint some shadows on the player.

Expert edit

Make a lens flare

Create a new layer

01 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) on top of the layer stack. Name it Lens Flare. Change the blend mode to Screen, check 'Fill with screen-neutral color (black)' then click OK.
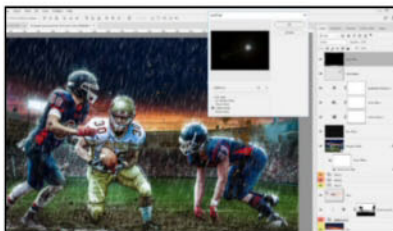
Apply the filter

02 Now go to Filter>Render>Lens Flare. Set the Brightness to 60% and choose the Lens Type: 105mm Prime. Click in the preview window and position the light, then press OK.
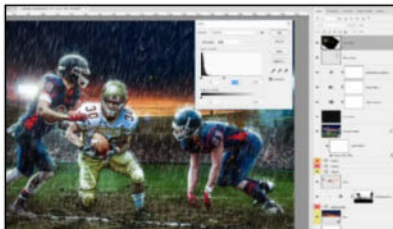
Edit with Levels

03 Press Cmd/Ctrl+T to rotate the image, and place it on top of the light reflector on the left. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L to open Levels and drag the slider to control the intensity of the light.
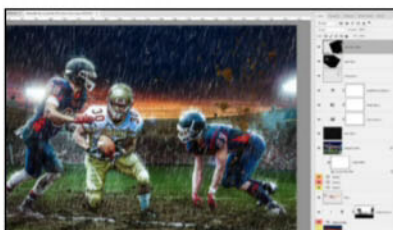
Duplicate the image

04 Duplicate the image (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Now open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and rotate the image. This time, place the image on top of the reflector on the right.
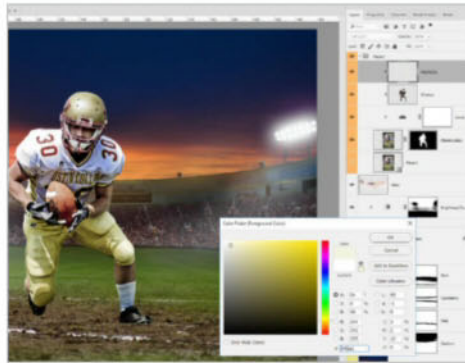
Improve the highlights

16 Repeat the last step. Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name it Highlights, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', change the blend mode to Soft Light and click OK. Grab a soft brush and, using a light yellowish colour, paint the highlights around the player.
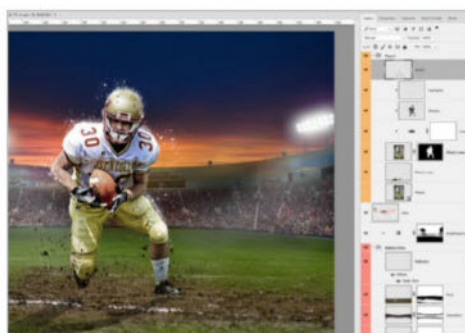
Paint the splashes

19 Create a new layer and name it Splashes. Set the Foreground colour to white. Keep the brush size at 100 pixels and paint the splashes around the player. Press Opt/Alt and sample the colour from the mud. Vary the brush size and paint more splashes over the feet and legs.
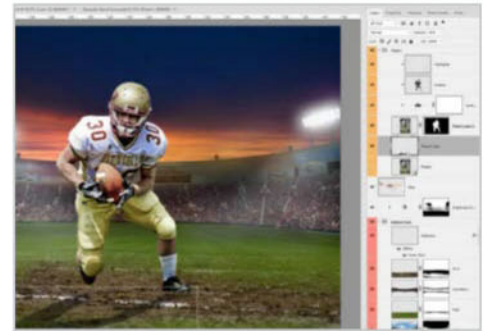
Create more shadows

17 Let's create shadows over the field. Duplicate the Player1 copy layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Right-click on the Player1 copy mask and choose Apply Layer Mask. Press Cmd/Ctrl+U and set the Lightness to -100. Go to Edit>Transform>Flip Vertical. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, skew the image and place it under the player. Change the Opacity to 45%.

Custom brushes

18 Go to Edit>Presets>Preset Manager and click Load. Locate the 'Splash_Brush.abr', click Load and press Done. Grab the Brush tool and press F5, then select the splash brush. Check Shape Dynamics. Set Size Jitter to 60% and Angle Jitter to 50%. Check Scattering. Set Scatter to 100 and check Both Axes.
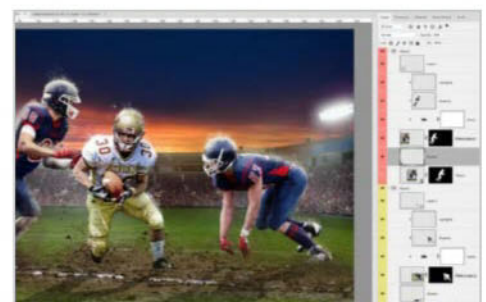
Place more players

20 Go to File>Place 'Player2.jpg' and 'Player3.jpg'. Repeat steps 14 through to 19. First, apply a Levels adjustment and create the layers for the shadows and highlights. Place the shadows over the field and paint the splashes. Place each player into groups. Hold Shift, select the layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+G.
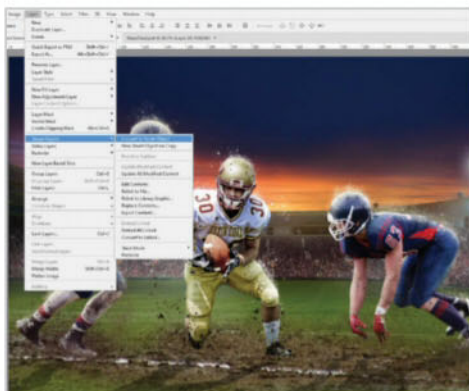
Merge the layers

21 In the Layers panel, make the top layer active. Press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E to create a merged copy of all the visible layers. Now transform the layer into a Smart Object. Go to Layer>Smart Objects>Convert to Smart Object.
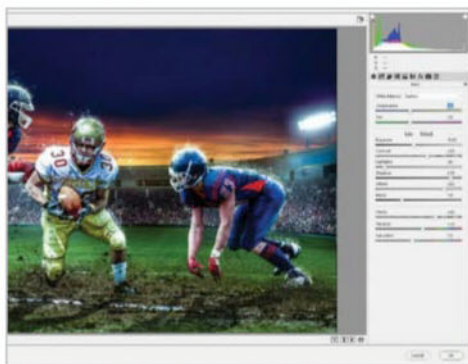
Apply the Camera Raw filter

22 Let's use the Camera Raw filter to enhance colours and tones. Go to Filter>Camera Raw filter. Set Temperature and Tint to -20. Change the Exposure to -0.60, Contrast: +20, Highlights: -80, Shadows: +75, Whites: +60, Blacks: -39, Clarity: + 40, Vibrance: +10, Saturation: -15 and click OK.
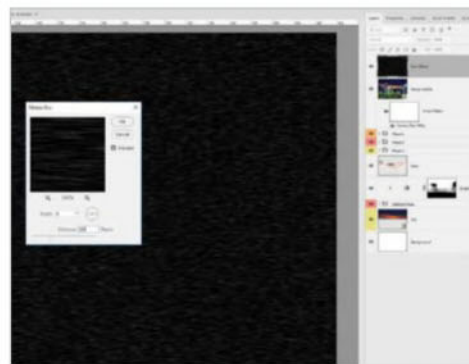
Create a rain effect

23 Create a new layer and fill it with black. Go to Filter>Pixelate>Mezzotint. Choose Type: Short Lines and click OK. Now go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set Angle to 0° and Distance: 50 pixels, then click OK. Now apply the Gaussian Blur filter and set the Radius to 2 pixels.
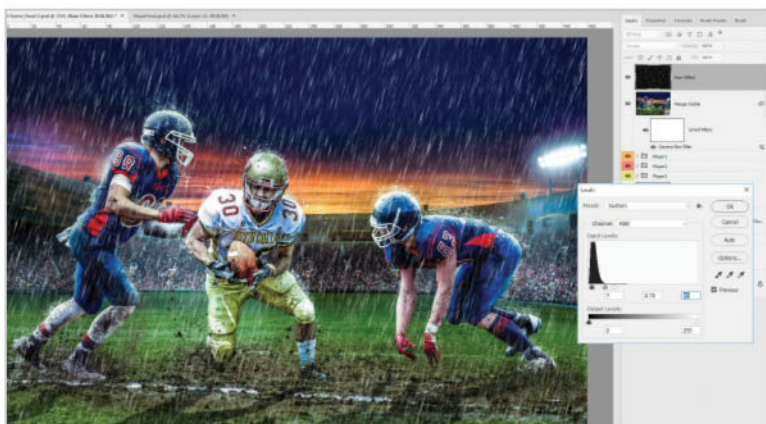
Complete the effect

24 Open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T), and scale and rotate the image around 45°. Change the blend mode for the layer to Screen. Now open Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) and adjust the inputs to control the intensity of the raindrops.
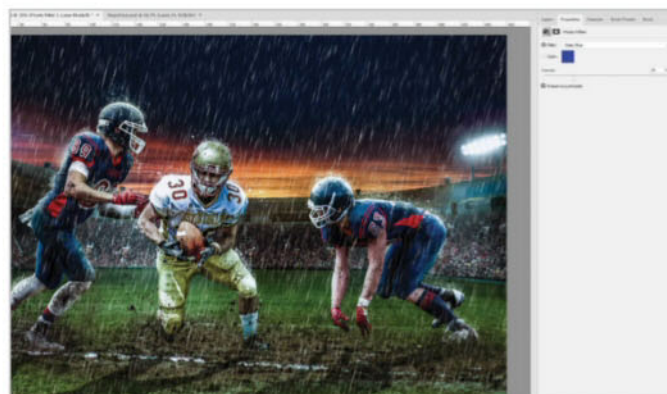
Make final adjustments

25 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Color Lookup. Check Device Link and choose Smokey. Now go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Photo Filter and choose Deep Blue. Finally, add a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer, and set Brightness to -10 and Contrast to 35.

Closer look

Making creative edits

LENS FLARE
Fill a new layer with black, then apply the Lens Flare filter. Change the blending mode to Screen and adjust the Levels.

CLONE TOOL
Grab the Clone tool and choose the 'Splash_Brush.abr'. Clone the 'mud.jpg'. In a new layer paint the mud and resize it, then apply the Gaussian Blur filter.

LINK LAYERS
Link correlated layers, then move, resize or apply transformations to them. Select the layers and click the link icon at the bottom of the Layers panel.

CAMERA RAW FILTER
Explore the Camera Raw filter panel to make further adjustments to your image. You can, for example, control the Luminance and Saturation for each colour to enhance the composition.
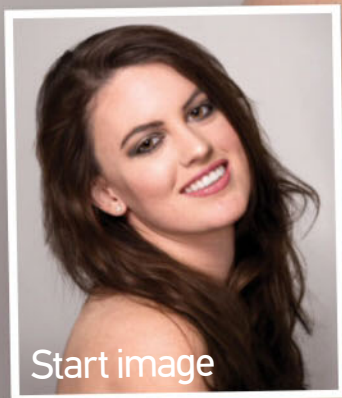
Start image

Essentials

Works with

Elements   **CS**   **CC**

What you'll learn

◣ How to retouch colour corrections without damaging skin textures

Time taken
1 hour

Expert

John Ross

"If you can master frequency separation, you can make your adjustments more seamless than ever.

"With 20 years' experience in the field, I educate photographers and retouchers by expanding their knowledge through my website **www. TheArtofRetouching. com**. I also carry out comprehensive live classes in New Haven, Connecticut."

Retouch with frequency separation

Learn this technique for retouching colour corrections without losing the natural texture and beauty of an image

Nothing is more breathtaking than the natural beauty of an image. While it's your job as the retoucher to tone down blemishes, removing the imperfections completely makes your image look dull and fake. So how do you determine if you're on the right track with your colour and texture corrections, and how do you know if you've gone too far?

Achieving subtle adjustments that retain natural transitions is something that frequency separation can definitely help you with. Frequency separation gives you the ability to split an image in two different layers – the texture and colour components. This means that you can isolate everything that is related to colour and light on one layer, and everything that has to do with texture on another. The high frequency is your texture, while the low frequency contains the colour and light information of your picture – both frequencies collectively form your image.

Take your Photoshop skills to the next level with this technique, and get ready to master frequency separation. Subtlety is key; after all, it's the natural flaws that make a model more enchanting.

Create merge visible stamp

01 Frequency separation is usually done after you've already made initial adjustments to your photo. Once satisfied, you need to take a snapshot of everything you've done so far. Press Shift+Alt+Cmd/Ctrl+E. Rename the new layer to Colour.
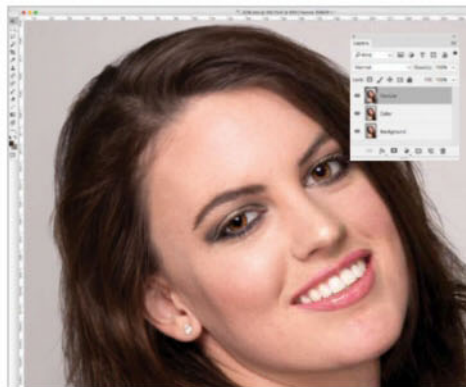
Duplicate merge visible stamp

02 Create a duplicate of Colour and place it on top, naming it Texture. These two copies will serve as your high and low frequency layers that we will work on.
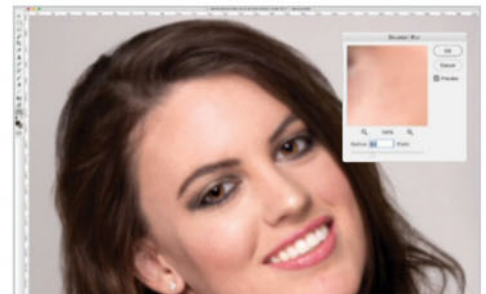
Apply a Gaussian Blur

03 To create the layer that will contain all the colour and the light information on your image, select Colour and go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. This will throw away the texture. There's some judgment here, as you review the preview on the dialog box that pops up.

Expert tip

Make careful edits

Be wary not to overdo step 4 by going beyond 3.0 pixels. Increasing the pixel radius too much will result in a bad frequency split, where colour and light information may seep in to your texture layer. Frequency separation must not be overdone. Because this technique tends to be more of a trend, most retouchers overuse the tool and go overboard with it. Toning down your use of frequency separation helps you avoid the pitfall of making the technique the sole focus of your picture.
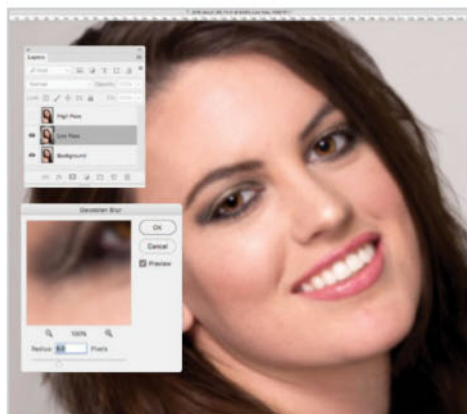
Find the blur balance

04 Adjust the blur by increasing the pixel radius (slide the slider to the right) until all the texture is gone based on the preview. This number is usually around 2.0 pixels to 5.0 pixels. This image needed 6.0.
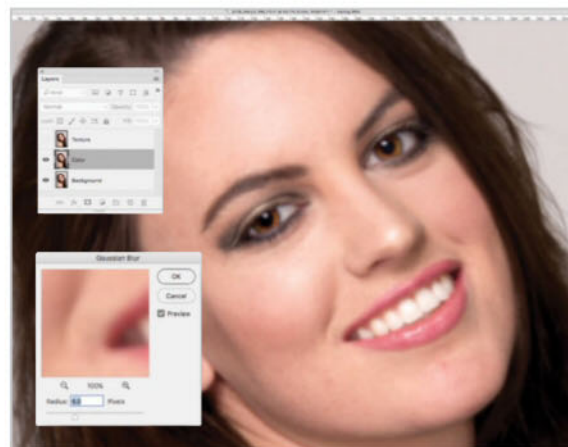
Create the texture layer

05 To create the texture layer, select Colour, as we still need to retain everything we've just thrown away. Go to Image>Apply Image, and on the layer drop-down menu, select Colour.
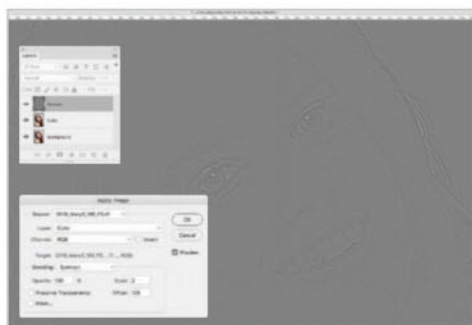
Set 8-bit parameters

06 There is a slight difference when it comes to frequency separation regarding your image bit size. For 8-bit images, select Subtract for the Blending drop-down menu. Set the Scale to 2 and Offset to 128, and make sure the Invert tickbox is unchecked.
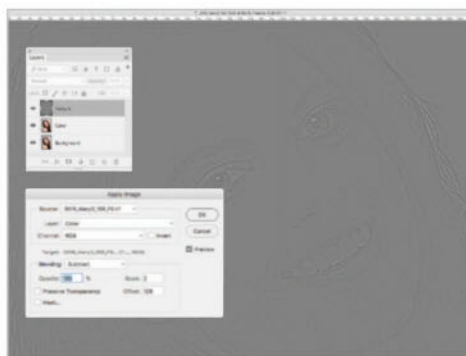
Set 16-bit parameters

07 For 16-bit images, select Add for the Blending. Ensure the Scale is set to 2, Offset is 0, and the Invert tickbox is checked. Remember it's best to make adjustments according to the bit size that your client wants from you. Afterwards, click OK.
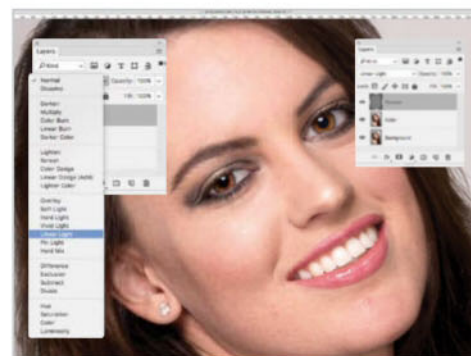
Separate your layers

08 For your layer's blending mode, select Linear Light. We have now effectively separated the two frequencies. It should look exactly as it did before. If, for whatever reason, it doesn't look the same, go back and start over.
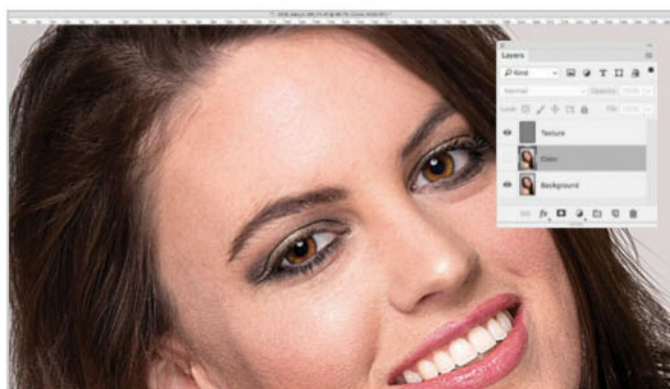
Test the texture layer

09 Now that you have successfully separated frequencies, you might want to see exactly what you have accomplished. Click the eye icon on your Colour layer to make it invisible. This will show you an image that has no colour and light information, but retains all the texture of your image.
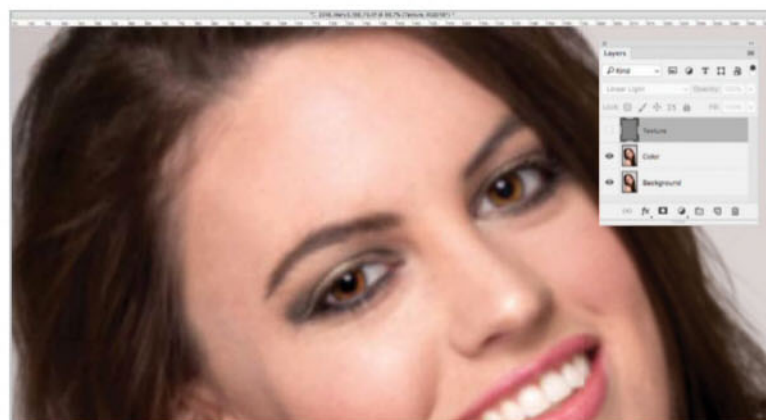
Test the colour layer

10 This time, to see what your Colour layer looks like on its own, simply click on the Texture layer's eye icon to make it invisible. This in turn shows you an image that's devoid of texture, yet has all the colour and light information in your image.
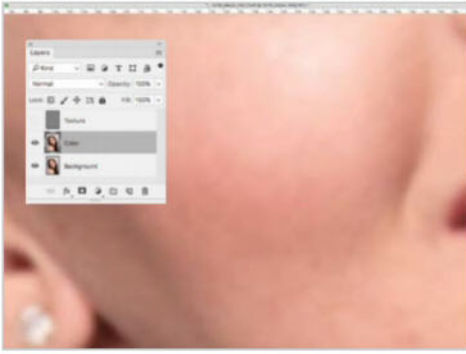
Make colour corrections

11 Why would you separate frequencies in the first place? It is so you can adjust your image information independently. For instance, by selecting your Colour (or Lowpass) layer, you can effectively Heal out the colour of a model's blemishes without damaging or affecting the texture.
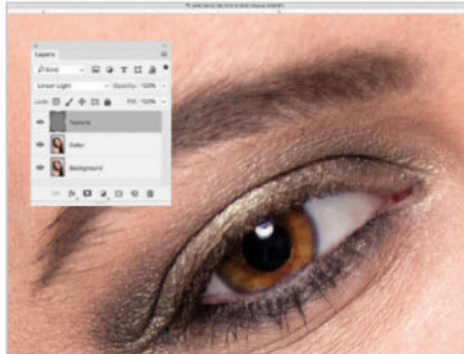
Make texture corrections

12 Likewise, you can Heal or Clone the texture of a blemish separately by selecting the Texture (or Highpass) layer. Select your Healing Brush or Clone Stamp tool and work on the Texture layer, then correct a section of the skin while retaining its original colour.
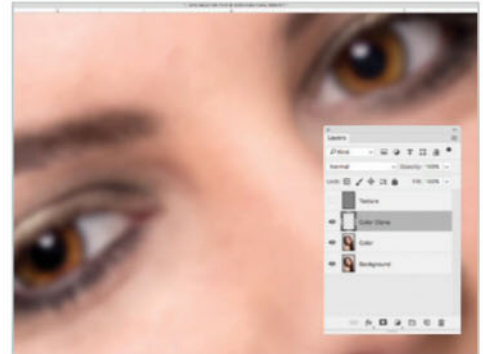
Blend skin colours

13 Create a blank layer between the Colour and Texture layers. You use a Healing Brush or Clone Stamp to even out the colours. Alternatively, set the Brush tool Hardness to 0 and Opacity to 10%, hold down the Alt/Option key, and sample a colour from a shiny skin patch.
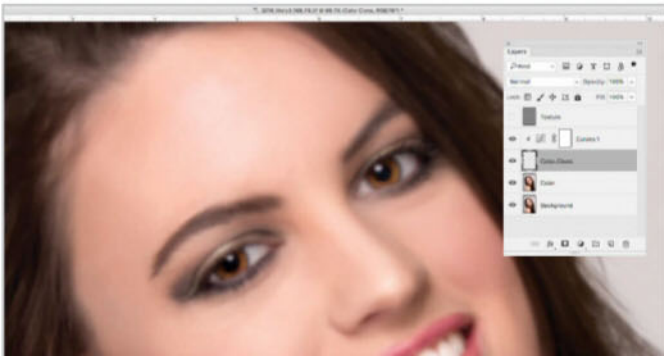
Flatten and smooth colours

14 Once sampled, paint this highlight just outside that area. Then sample an area that's outside of the highlight, and paint over the highlighted area. This way, you can transition skin tones and make those shiny skin colours blend better. You can also apply some adjustments to either your Colour or Texture layer independently.
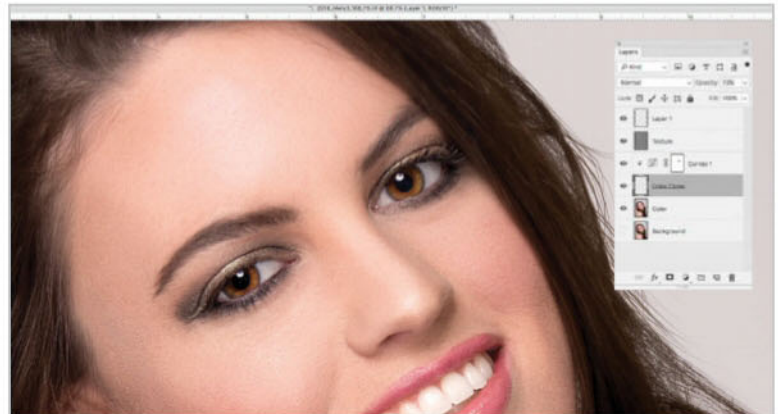
Modify the texture layer

15 Because this is a special type of layer, you can use the Burn tool at 5% Opacity to darken any textures that are too light. You can also hold down the Alt/Option key, and when the cursor changes to the Dodge tool, you can lighten any textures that are too dark.

Expert tip

Facial contouring with frequency separation

You can use the Dodge and Burn tool, the Healing Brush, or the Clone Stamp tool for more refined facial contouring. Because frequency separation enables you to edit textures and colours independent of each other, making facial contouring is simpler. This technique works when toning down the make-up of a model, as well as making colour transitions more seamless. However, be careful when you're contouring. Going too far may lead you to the point of damaging your overall image.

CLIPPING ADJUSTMENTS
Clipping adjustments help affect just the colours or just the texture of your image. You can set blend modes and opacities of adjustments accordingly to have more control over all of your revisions.
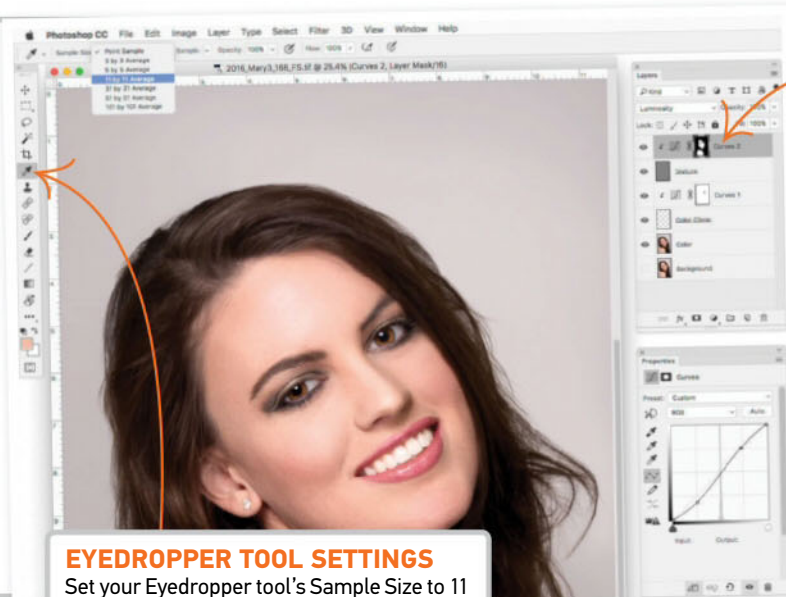
EYEDROPPER TOOL SETTINGS
Set your Eyedropper tool's Sample Size to 11 by 11 or 31 by 31 to sample a more general colour area instead of point-by-point.

Essentials

Works with

Elements   CS   CC

What you'll learn

How to play with paint using layer masks, blend modes and the Liquify filter

Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Andre Villanueva

"I crave the puzzle-play of piecing together a digital composition. Paint (whether it has been carefully applied, carelessly dripped or savagely tossed) is one of my absolute favourite elements to incorporate.

"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."

Enhance with masks and filters

Start image

Supercharge a portrait with splatterific effects and colour using layer masks, blend modes and filters

Ready for a splash-tastic good time? Tossed paint is perfect for adding colourful dynamism to an image. You'll have plenty of creative ammunition as you mix a model with flowing colour and messy splats to produce beautiful chaos.

There is an array of splats and splashes available, which you'll select and mask. For added flexibility, you can desaturate to more easily apply colour with something like a Color Overlay layer style.

A bit of touch-up via painting and the Spot Healing Brush will get the model primed for showtime. Use the paint you prepped to build up the colour above, behind and all around the model. Position, scale and rotate the paint with the Move tool and Free Transform. To further customise, recolour with Color Overlay or Hue/Saturation, and twist and bloat with the Liquify filter.

Take your image further with elements from resources such as **pixabay.com** and **mediamilitia. com**, or add your own. After completing the tutorial image, use what you learned to create your own splashy compositions. Then upload your creations to your **Photoshop Creative** gallery.

Select the paint

01 Open 'Paint1.psd'. With the Quick Selection tool, continually click or click+drag to select the paint*. Resize the brush with [and]. To remove from the selection, hold Option/Alt as you use the tool. *You might find it easier to select the white space (try Magic Wand), then invert selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I).

Prepare the assets

02 Click the Layer palette's Add layer Mask button. Save/close. Repeat selection/masking for 'Paint 2-6', 'Drips' and 'Toss'. To make an asset easier to recolour with Color Overlay later, click 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette and choose Hue/Saturation. Set Saturation to -100. Save as an alternate PSD.

Pick the model

03 Open 'Model.psd'. Use the Quick Selection tool to select the model. Get as decent a selection as possible. Don't worry about refining the hair edges. You'll work on that next.

Refine the selection

04 Go to Select>Select and Mask (non-CC: Refine Edge). Paint with the Refine Edge Brush (non-CC: Refine Radius Tool) along the edges of the hair to fine-tune. Resize the brush with [and]. When done, set Output To to Layer Mask. Click OK.
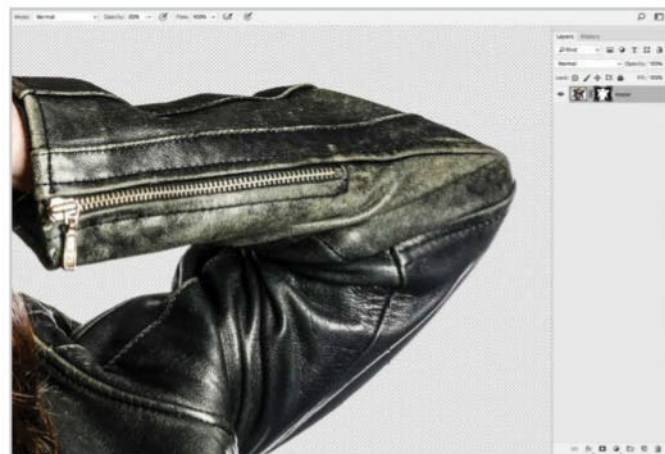
Clean up the mask

05 (Elements: click Mask). Using the Brush tool and a Soft Round brush, paint black to hide and white to restore areas. Use the Zoom tool to get close. Adjust brush size/opacity as needed. Decrease/increase brush hardness with { and }.
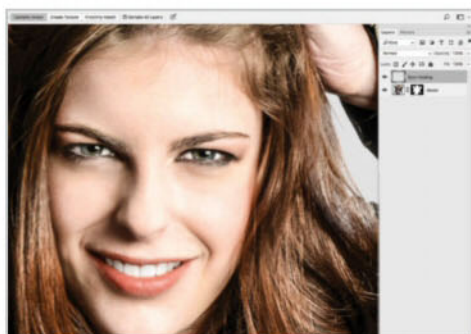
Use the Spot Healing Brush

06 Create a new layer. Select the Spot Healing Brush. In the Options bar, set to Content-Aware and tick Sample All Layers. Click or click+drag small areas to zap blemishes and even out rough spots. Resize the brush with [and]. If you don't like a result, back up with Cmd/Ctrl+Z.
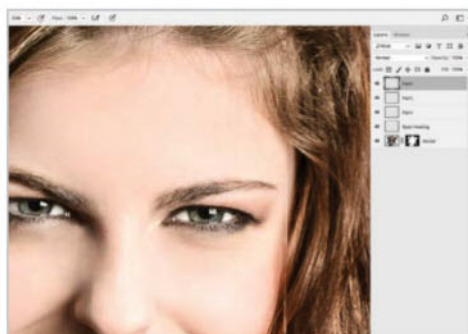
Smooth the skin

07 Create a new layer. Select the Brush tool set to a low brush Opacity (10-20%) and 0% Hardness. Option/Alt+click skin to get a proximate colour. Paint. Continue to sample colours as you paint to even out the skin. If needed, lower the layer opacity to tone down overall.
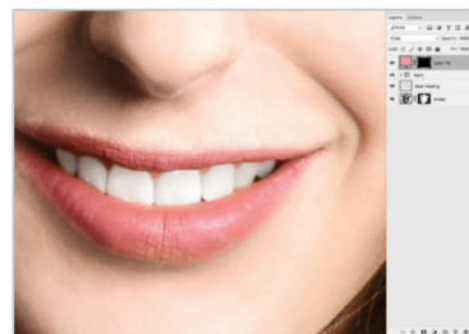
Subtly enhance the lips

08 Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette and choose Solid Color. Pick a rosy colour (#f09fa8). Set the blend mode to Color. Click the mask and press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Now paint with white (60% brush Opacity) to add the colour.
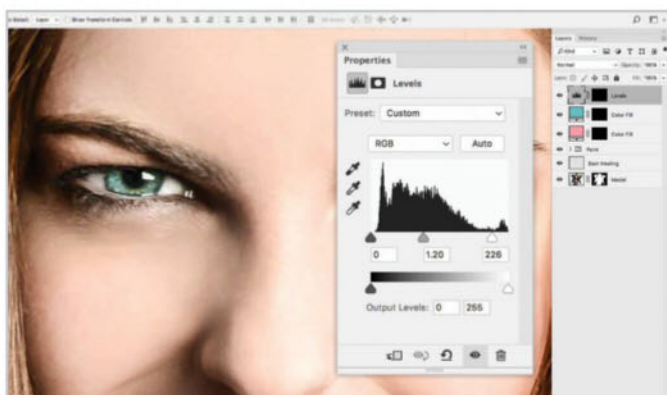
Boost the eyes

09 To boost eyes, follow the previous step's instructions, but use dull aqua (#87bbc0) and Overlay. To lighten eyes, click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette and choose Levels. Slide midtones and highlights leftward. Invert the mask and paint white on the eyes.
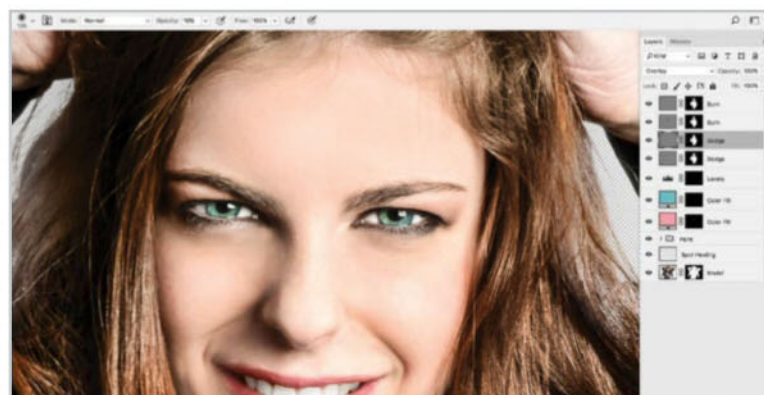
Dodge and burn

10 Add a new layer. Go to Edit>Fill (Elements: Fill Layer). Choose 50% Gray and click OK. Set to Overlay. Add a layer mask, and paint black (100% brush Opacity) on everything but the face/hands. Click layer thumbnail (Elements: double-click). Paint (10-25% Opacity) black to darken, white to lighten. Use separate dodge/burn layers for increased control.
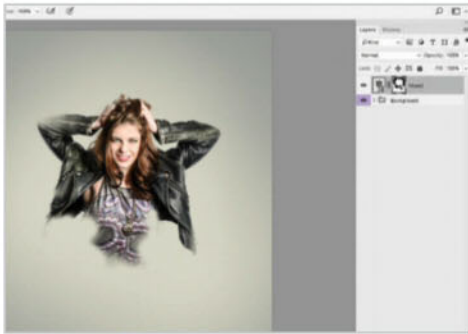
Place the model

11 Save/close 'Model.psd'. Open 'Start.psd'. Go to File>Place (CC: Place Linked) and grab 'Model.psd'. Scale down and move up a bit before committing. Add a layer mask. Paint black (40-100% brush Opacity) to fade the bottom, some edges and any odd bits you may have missed while blacking out any mask(s) in the previous step.
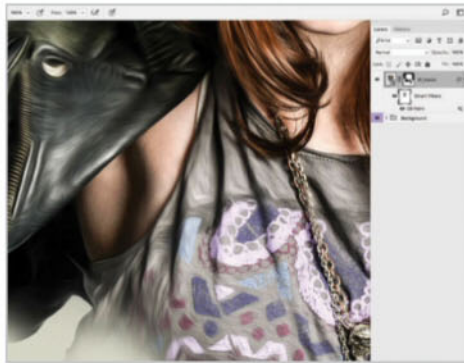
Apply Oil Paint

12 In Photoshop/CC, click the layer thumbnail and go to Filter>Stylize>Oil Paint. Set to (from top to bottom) 10, 4, 10, 10, tick Lighting, -60, 1.3. Feel free to adjust. Click OK when done. Paint black (60-100% brush Opacity) in Smart Filters mask to reduce/remove on skin.
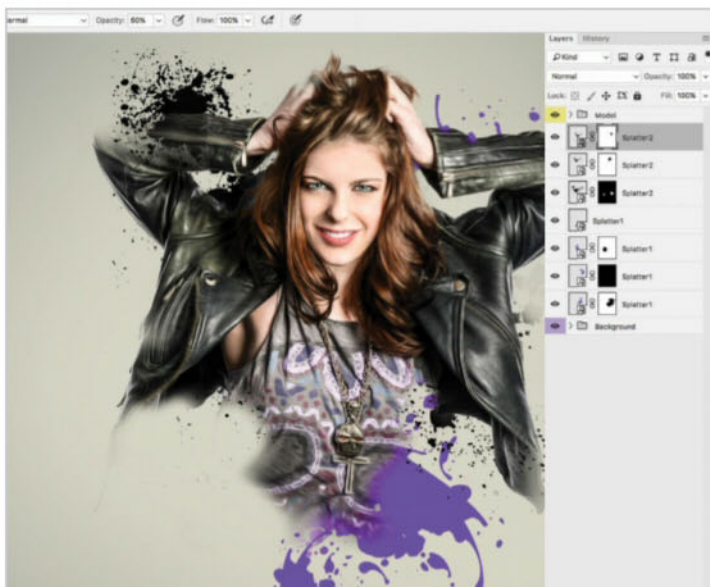
Add splatters

13 Select the Background layer. Add 'Splatter1.png' and 'Splatter 2.png' via File>Place (CC: Place Embedded). Position, scale and rotate with Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T). Re-place or duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) to add more splatters. Add layer masks and paint with black to hide/fade areas wherever needed.
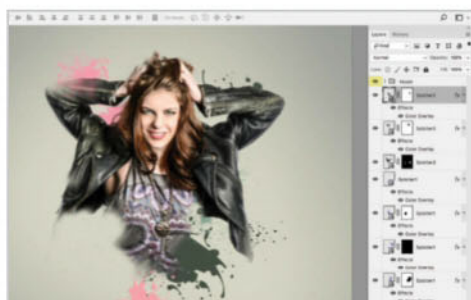
Use Color Overlay

14 Use Color Overlay layer styles to quickly apply new colour. Select a splatter layer. Click the Layers palette's fx button, choose Color Overlay. Try light pink (#ff9ead) and morose green (#434e42). (Elements: use Hue/Saturation instead (Cmd/Ctrl+U). Adjust Hue. For black splatter, tick Colorize, increase Lightness and Saturation.)
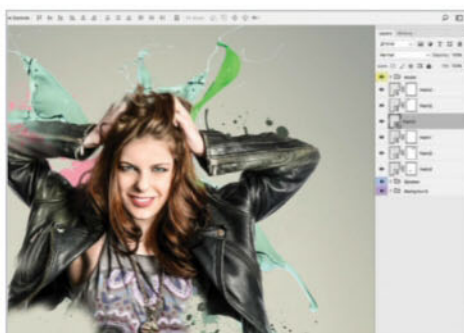
Add more paint splashes

15 Start placing (CC: use Place Linked in case you need to fine-tune a mask) the paint assets you masked in steps 1-2. Position, scale and rotate with Free Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T). Add layer masks and paint with black to hide/fade areas. Re-place or duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) the paint.

Expert edit

Liquify in Elements
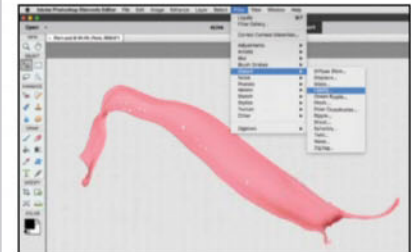
Start liquifying

01 Select the layer you want to use Liquify on. Go to Filter>Distort>Liquify. The Liquify tools are at the left. Use the Brush tool options at the right to customise brush size and pressure.

Use Liquify tools

02 Use the Warp tool to push pixels as if they were goo. Rotate pixels with the Twirl tools. Pucker and Bloat, well, pucker and bloat pixels.

Use more tools

03 Use Shift Pixels to move pixels to the left as you drag (hold Option/Alt to move right). Use Reconstruct to gradually reverse the gooey edits you've made.
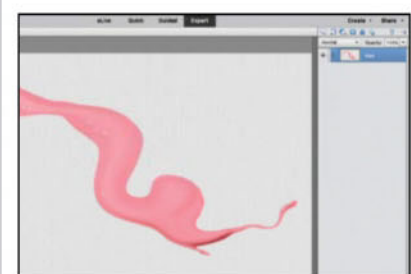
Revert or confirm

04 If you need to quickly revert back to the original state when you opened the Liquify dialog, click Revert. To accept your edits, click OK.
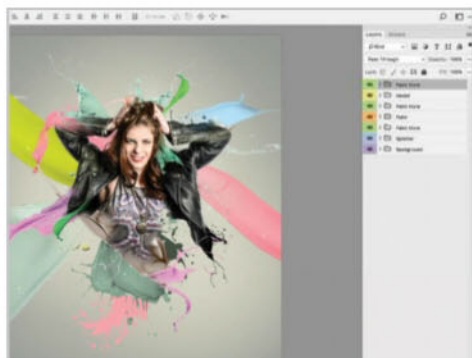
Add more splashes

16 Continue to add more paint. Place above and below the model. As you introduce new paint, continue to edit any existing elements (including the model) to maintain harmonious flow and blending. Change colour as in step 14 (for Color Overlay, set to Overlay or Color blend mode).

Liquify splashes

17 Some splashes might need a bit more splashiness. Liquify is the perfect fix. Select a too-stiff paint layer and go to Filter>Liquify (Elements: Filter>Distort>Liquify). Use the tools on the left to make gooey edits to the paint. Adjust Brush tool Options on the right as needed. Click OK when done.
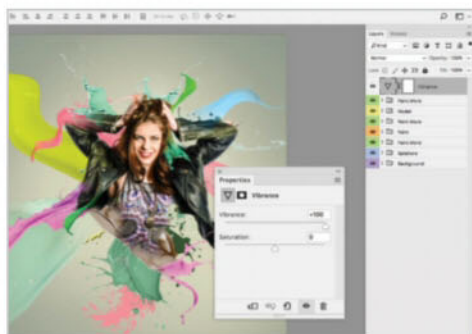
Apply Vibrance adjustment

18 Select the top layer. Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button, choose Vibrance (Elements: Hue/Saturation). Push Vibrance rightward to +100 (Elements: carefully increase Saturation). If you need to tone down any areas, simply paint black in the mask.
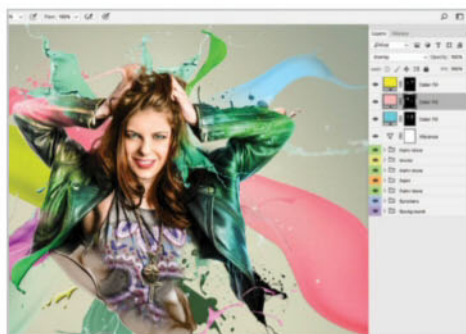
Paint with Overlay

19 Click the 'Create new fill/adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette and choose Solid Color. Pick aqua (#41e7ed). Set to Overlay blend mode. Click mask and invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I). Paint with white (40-80% brush Opacity) to colour areas like the jacket. Also try pink (#fab8b8) and yellow (#f5f817).
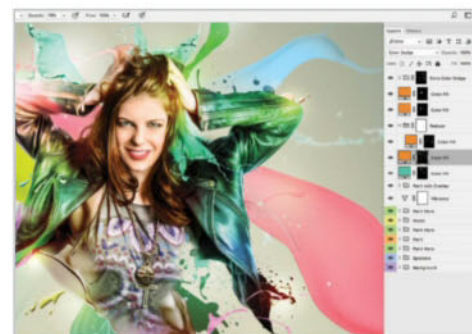
Create hotspots

20 Click the 'Create new fill/adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette and choose Solid Color. Pick turquoise (#37cfad). Set to Color Dodge blend mode. Click mask and invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I). Paint with white (60-100% brush Opacity) to add bright touches. Also use orange (#ee8b32).

Take it further

Add more effects

LENS FLARES
Add hot flares with the Lens Flare filter. Merge layers at the top (Cmd/Ctrl+Option/Alt+Shift+E), convert to Smart Object in Photoshop/CC, then go to Filter>Render>Lens Flare.

EXTRA ELEMENTS
Add more elements to your composition. Throw in some shapes (flat or 3D), textures, typography and more. Here, patterned spheres from **mediamilitia.com** were added.

TAKE A BREAK!
When you're stuck artistically, it's good to take a break from the composition. Come back later to survey your work with fresh eyes.

ADDITIONAL ADJUSTMENTS
Have fun with additional adjustments to get just the right colouring. In Photoshop/CC, try Color Balance and Color Lookup. In all versions, test Gradient Map and Photo Filter.

MERGE AND BLUR
Merge layers at the top (Cmd/Ctrl+Option/Alt+Shift+E), convert to Smart Object in Photoshop/CC, then go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Add a layer mask and paint black to restore clarity.

MORE PAINT
Continue to duplicate and transform/liquify your paint to build up your composition. For increased variety, try the supplied extra paint courtesy of **mediamilitia.com**, or alternatively source your own.

PAPER PIECES
When folding paper for origami, you have to make sure the paper is not too thick. Construction paper is a good choice for objects of this complexity.

STUCK TO PERFECTION
Though origami typically does not require glue, you may need to glue flaps down for stability. Use pH neutral glue so it doesn't discolour the paper.

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

CRISP FOLDS
Use a wood-folding tool or bone folder to get sharp folds so all the pieces fit together perfectly.

Take paper craft into Photoshop

Learn how to make origami shapes and composite them into a scene in Photoshop

Origami began in the 1600s in Japan during the Edo period. The word itself is the Japanese word for paper folding. The overall goal of origami is to make a sculpture from a single square sheet of paper. Usually, cutting, gluing or otherwise marking the paper is disapproved of. Though origami is traditionally Japanese, Europeans had a similar folding tradition through napkin folding.

Origami has a specific language of techniques. There are about five bases, and then around six types of folds. There are also different types of origami, including action origami, modular origami, pureland origami, tessellations and kirigami. Folding paper and origami is often symbolic of patience, tradition and creativity. It can be done cheaply, and the variety of objects to be made is constantly being expanded through the internet and computer origami programs. In this tutorial, you will learn how to make three basic origami forms, photograph them, and then composite them in Photoshop. The advantage of this is being able to scale the objects without having to make them at different sizes to begin with. You can then create an entire scene from the pieces you create.

Make a basic cube Learn how to make a simple cube out of paper
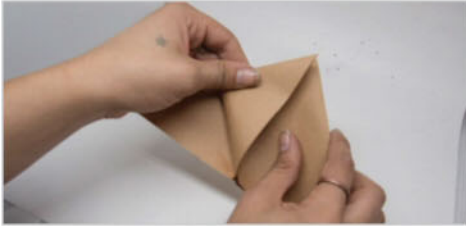
Create the first folds

01 To make a box (also known as a water bomb), fold the paper in half in every direction: horizontal, vertical and both diagonals. Fold it in half on a diagonal with the other side tucked in to make a triangle. Fold the triangle corners to each other to make a square.

Make an almost-box

02 Fold the side corners of the square into the centre line. Then take the top triangles and fold them into the slot created by folding the side corners. Remember to use your bone folder to keep all the folds sharp when you have paper this thick.

Inflate it

03 Holding the box lightly, blow into the hole on the corner of the flat box. It will inflate and create a cube, though you may need to shape it with your hands to make it even more cube like.

Get it photo-ready Prep your origami for photography

Stick it together

01 Use a pH neutral glue to adhere the flaps to the rest of the box. Though this is not a traditional origami step, it does make the object sturdier and better to photograph from every angle.

Draw a face

02 Draw a little face on the best side of your cube. This will be the head of your character. If you need the cube for another part of your final piece, don't draw it on the cube directly; draw it on digitally later.
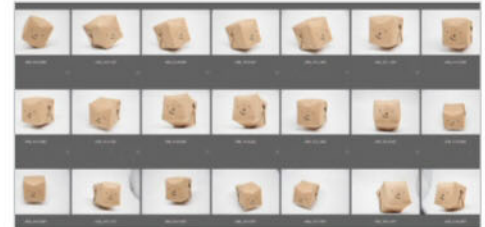
Shoot different angles

03 When using real objects in composites, angles are very important. Make sure your lighting is fairly even all around. Then try to get every possible angle of your cube. Left angle, right angle, from above, from below, straight on… cover your bases.

Various origami How to get started with origami

THE BASIC WATER BOMB
The water bomb base in origami leads to many more complex projects, including butterflies and stars. It is also a good base geometric shape.

FLOWER BLOOM AND GROW
Origami can also be made from multiple segments being attached to each other. For this flower, each petal is made separately and then glued together.

THE GREAT PYRAMID
In the steps on the next page, the pyramid was used both as the character's dress and the diamond she's holding. This is another good basic geometric shape and similar to the water bomb in its creation.

Origami character creation Use basic origami objects to make a character

Create a girl

01 Open all the images of your geometric shapes in Photoshop. Next, like a paper doll, just scale each piece and assemble them to create your little character. You may need to add arms, legs and other pieces, but those don't need to be 3D and can just be cut from paper.
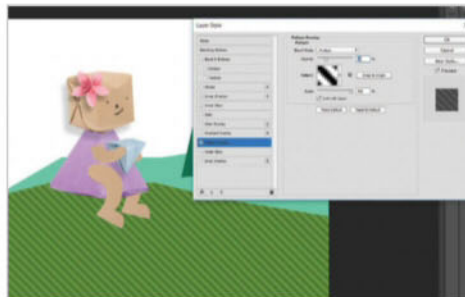
Set the scene

02 To make a scene for your character, use the Polygonal Lasso to make some shapes for trees, grass and the sky. Don't worry about being too realistic because it has to match the character and its paper-made quality. Then apply a pattern layer style to add interest.
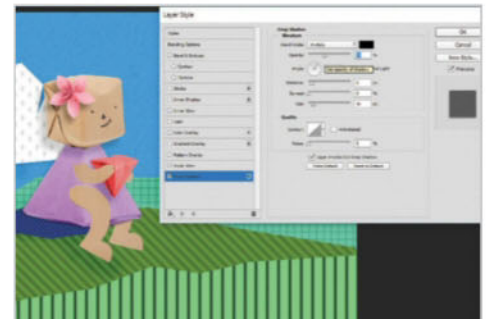
Apply finishing touches

03 To finish everything off, add some slight drop shadows to mimic the thickness of layered paper. You can also dodge and burn areas to add contrast. If you feel the image is lacking, change any colours of pieces to create a better composition.

FileSilo

3D origami objects
Feel free to use our 3D paper character head! These are freely available for you to use in your own personal project.

Designing for Adobe

Steve Simpson was given an open brief when Adobe asked him to create accompanying artwork for its online tutorials. This is what he created

"I think Adobe, like many other brands, is interested in collaborating with illustrators and photographers who create original content and have a professional online presence," says Steve Simpson. "I think to get noticed by anyone, you need to practise and strive to create the best work you can."

Steve's unique illustration style has seen its way into restaurants, animated television and even *The Beano*, so when Adobe asked for artwork for its online tutorials, Steve jumped at the chance to create something new, yet familiar to his work. We caught up with him to find out what went into these pieces, and how he creates his amazing illustrations.

Can you tell us about your background in design?

I studied technical graphics (pre-digitally) in the mid-Eighties, but never graduated, instead going on to work on cartoons. I also had my own character in *The Beano* called Even Steven for a short time before he was killed off! I discovered illustration about 20 years ago, and have been working on the design side of the business ever since. Currently I'm concentrating on packaging design with a heavy influence on hand lettering, illustration and illustrated barcodes.

How did Adobe approach you, and what was the brief it gave you for these backgrounds?

Adobe found my work on Behance. The brief was very open; I was given a link to the tutorial and a template to work within. The first commission was for five illustrations, and they asked for a choice of two pencil roughs for each banner to pick from.

Would you recommend Behance to artists who are looking to get their work seen?

I think Behance is an amazing shop window for creatives of all disciplines – I've been touting my wares there for the past six years with great success!

What were influences behind these banners?

As the briefs were so open, they needed in some way to hint at the subject matter rather than describe it fully, I could therefore slant my illustrations towards the things I enjoy exploring myself. So I picked up my sketch books and flicked through them – there are so many ideas that I never get the time to take past that first sketch. Many of the ideas came directly from there. I'm also very interested in surface patterns, and rarely get the commissions to fully explore them. This project gave me the chance to do just that.

Does all of your work begin with making a sketch?

I get through about four sketchbooks a year. I start from both ends – the personal ramblings from the front, the commissioned work from the back – and it's always interesting to see which has the most pages for that period. With commissions it's more about the exploration of all possibilities before cementing an idea digitally. I usually scan my

Recovering files in Illustrator

Building compositions with layers in After Effects

PATTERN
I went back to my sketchbooks and found a pattern I really wanted to work up. This is what formed the basis of the image.

WORKFLOW FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS
This was the image designed to illustrate the tutorials exploring Creative Cloud's workflow for photographers. I'm always looking for an excuse to use a pattern.

SHUTTER ICON
I added a shutter icon to make it more photography-themed; you can see this in the ship wheel at the sides of the image.

Placing Images in Table Cells in Adobe InDesign

Working with 3D layers in After Effects

Enhancing typography in Dreamweaver

sketchbook into Photoshop (by using VueScan), but if I'm travelling, I will use an app called Scanner Pro.

So were all of these images approached differently according to what the tutorials were about?
Each of the illustrations in some way references the tutorial somewhat (some more obviously than others), but I thought (and Adobe thought) it was important to get some visual clue in there. I still used Photoshop, even for the one for Illustrator.

As an artist who uses Photoshop over Illustrator, how does Photoshop help realise your work?
I'm still using a mouse; I haven't been able to adapt my technique to a tablet yet. I think it's because my drawings are fully formed before I bring them into Photoshop, and I want to re-create the quirks of my pencil line, and that's why Photoshop works for me! I always use the Path tool, working over each segment and filling the paths on their own layer.

How important would you say colour is in your work?
I'm never too worried about colour at the beginning. Initially, and most importantly, it's about tone. When I started working in animation, the government still sold both colour and black-and-white TV licenses; we needed to be sure that when viewed in black and white, colours would still give definition, and characters wouldn't blend into the background. I remember having a viewing glass to check my work. I guess this thinking (if not the glass) has remained with me – once the tone is working I will start adding a limited palette of colours. These often reflect either the product or emotion I'm trying to convey. Finally I'll add texture with an adapted brush and scanned-in overlays.

What has the feedback from this project been like from both the public and Adobe?
The feedback has been wonderful – lots of exposure on Behance, and Adobe returned for two more after the initial five so I guess they were happy! Adobe gave me a lot of freedom with these, which makes it an absolute pleasure to work on.

USE PHOTOSHOP WITH OTHER SOFTWARE

Discover how Photoshop is a fantastic companion to many other creative programs

There can be no doubt that Photoshop is a powerful tool, capable of creating so many different types of art spanning all genres. Combine it with other software programs, though, and the possibilities expand even more. These days many artists will use a combination of programs to achieve their desired outcome, playing each to their strengths perfectly.

Photoshop and Illustrator is one example of the perfect marriage in software terms. Both being from the Adobe stable, they are like each other in many ways. They also integrate well, so artists can flip between them as needed. Other programs from the Creative Cloud suite work in the same way, with familiar interfaces and perfect interaction between each program, so whether you're designing a website, building an illustration or creating animations, it's easy to switch back to Photoshop to work on your project at any time.

But you can roam beyond Adobe's fold – there is plenty of third-party software that works well with Photoshop too, particularly in the 3D field. Cinema 4D is a popular option for 3D illustrators, whereas ZBrush offers advanced sculpting tools. Photoshop can handle the renders with ease, and it opens up a whole world of texturing, lighting and special effects.

Throughout this feature, we'll take a look at some of these programs in more detail, discover how they work alongside Photoshop, and gather some essential tips from the artists who use them.

TOP PROGRAMS TO USE WITH PHOTOSHOP
Here are some of the most popular software that the pros use alongside Photoshop in their workflow

ADOBE ILLUSTRATOR
Illustrator is the go-to tool for drawing intricate and complex vectors that have a myriad of potential uses. Vectors can be imported into Photoshop to add texture, lighting effects and so on, or to incorporate them into mixed-media designs.
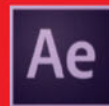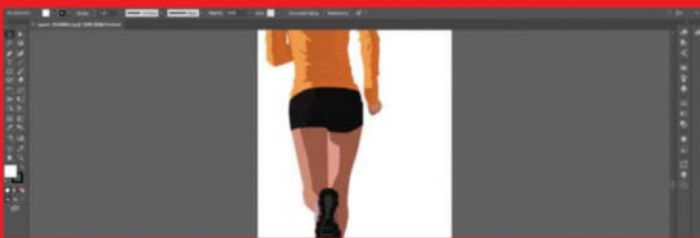
ADOBE AFTER EFFECTS
After Effects is Adobe's package for creating high-end motion graphics and visual effects. It works seamlessly with Photoshop, plus layers, styles, masks and so on all translate well from one to another.
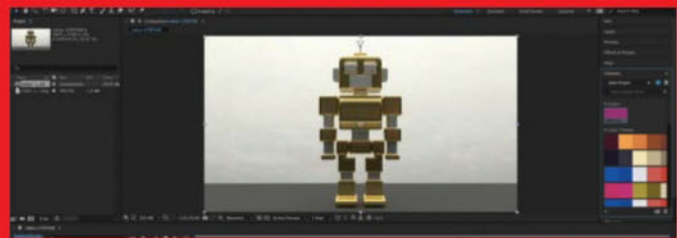
MAXON CINEMA 4D
A popular choice for creating advanced 3D graphics, Cinema 4D is a good program for those new to 3D design as well as professionals in the field. It is common for renders to be taken into Photoshop for post-production.
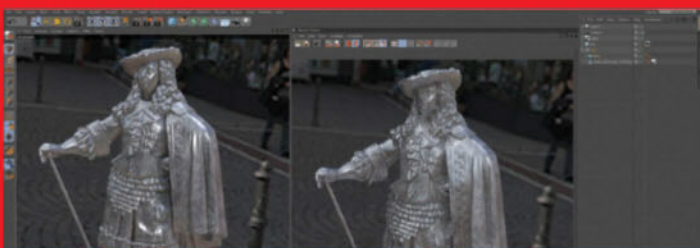
PIXOLOGIC ZBRUSH
ZBrush is the tool of choice for digital sculpting and creating amazing characters. Photoshop textures can be created and applied to models, as well as performing post-production tasks on renders.
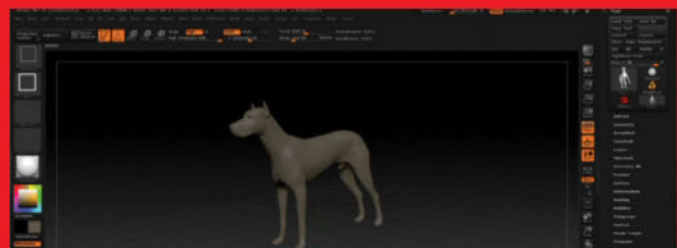
INTRODUCING PROJECT FELIX

Ever since Adobe announced Project Felix (www.adobe.com/uk/products/project-felix.html), artists have been excited about its potential. Project Felix will give anyone the power to combine 3D and 2D assets into photorealistic scenes, using advanced algorithms to help texture, light and compose the perfect scene. It will be a great starting point for compositions, and with a smaller learning curve than other 3D programs. Once the scenes have been put together, they can be opened easily in Photoshop where they can be refined and edited to generate the perfect visual, resulting in a powerhouse combination of softwares. The Beta version is now available to Creative Cloud users!

THE ADOBE FAMILY

The most common programs that get used alongside Photoshop are those from the same family. The software in the Creative Cloud suite is all designed to work together seamlessly, which means that they can happily nestle in your workflow together for when you need one of their special skills.

Photoshop is very much at the centre of this workflow, with a key role to play in the generation of content in other programs, as well as post-production. The most common combination of programs is Photoshop and Illustrator. Illustrator is exceptional at producing vector graphics, but they can sometimes look too 'clean' and rendered, which is where Photoshop comes in, adding texture, lighting and other effects. "Adobe Illustrator is the perfect companion to Photoshop for illustrators looking to add textures to their illustrations or prepare files for print," agrees freelance illustrator and animator Michael William Lester (michaelwilliamlester.com).

One of the key advantages of vector graphics is that they are editable and scalable, without loss of quality. Therefore, it's important to maintain the editable nature of vectors imported from Illustrator. Because the two programs work so closely together, you can simply opt to Copy your graphic in Illustrator, switch to Photoshop and hit Paste. This will bring up the Paste dialog box, from which you can choose Smart Object. This retains the vector's properties so you can transform and scale it to your heart's content in Photoshop. It also means that if you need to go

Michael Lester exports .mov files from After Effects and imports them into Photoshop to craft and export a final GIF animation

© Michael Lester

RAW RENDER   DEPTH PASS   FINAL IMAGE

For extra control over the final look, Ben White prefers to add Depth of Field in Photoshop, either manually or using an explicit depth/Z-pass from the renderer

© Ben White

BEFORE   AFTER

George Stoyanov uses Photoshop to create all of his textures for use in Cinema 4D, as well as all the post-production

© George Stoyanov

CREATING A GIF ANIMATION

Freelance graphic designer and illustrator Alisa Zaytseva (**https://alisazaytseva.myportfolio.com**) created this ballerina GIF with a combination of Photoshop, After Effects and Illustrator, using each program to its individual strengths.
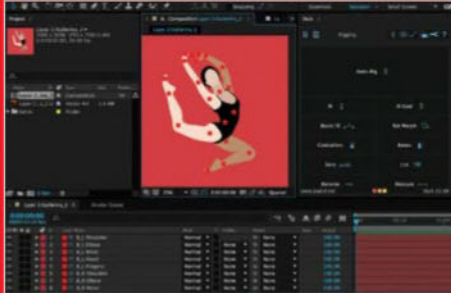
Illustrator and After Effects

01 I prepared the vector illustration in Illustrator, then made the animation from it in After Effects. I exported it as a video file, then imported it into Photoshop using File>Import>Video Frames to Layers so that I got each frame on a separate layer.
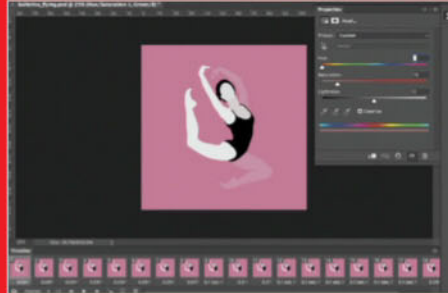
Photoshop adjustments

02 I deleted the frames I didn't need, leaving about 10, then I copied those, pasted them after my existing frames, and reversed them to create a smooth movement. I wanted to change colour settings with adjustment layers, to change all frames at once.

Before and after Photoshop

03 For this particular project, I had two adjustment layers: Curves and Hue/Saturation. I like to use Colorize in Hue/Saturation, as it can sometimes help to bring the elements of the image together.

© Alisa Zaytseva

back to Illustrator after adding Photoshop effects, you can pick up right where you left off. "Vector Smart Objects in Photoshop keep your illustrations editable in Illustrator, so you can add textures and brush masks while retaining control over your vectors at all times," explains Lester.

This ability to switch back and forth between programs also extends to Adobe's motion graphics offering, After Effects. Not as commonly thought of as a companion to Photoshop, there is actually a lot of synergy between the two. Michael William Lester uses the two programs together extensively, particularly when he needs to create GIF files for use on the web, for example. "Photoshop is an integral part of any animator's workflow. Exported .mov files from After Effects can be imported to Photoshop to craft and export your final GIF animation, giving you control over frame duration, looping and file size. I also use this program combination the other way around too, using Photoshop to create textures to drop into animation files in After Effects."

Freelance graphic designer/illustrator Alisa Zaytseva (**https://alisazaytseva.myportfolio. com**) is in complete agreement, and often uses a combination of Creative Cloud softwares in harmony to put together her work, with Photoshop being very much at the forefront: "Photoshop is my go-to software," she explains. "Whether I'm making a GIF by exporting footage from After Effects, or putting a finished design on a mock-up product for a client to see, Photoshop would often be the very first or the very last step in my design process. If I am designing a flyer in InDesign, the images I'm using would have been edited in Photoshop first.

© Michael Lester

Michael Lester shows how Photoshop can be used to add grungy textures to Illustrator designs to add more impact

If I need to trace an image in Illustrator, I would first enhance it in Photoshop and only then import in Illustrator."

WORKING IN THREE DIMENSIONS

For artists who want to work in three dimensions, that means leaving the comfort of the Adobe family and exploring other options, but there is no less reliance on Photoshop's skills. Maxon's Cinema 4D is probably one of the best-known 3D software packages for creating 3D illustrations. Renders are incredibly high resolution, crisp and clean, but post-production in Photoshop is an essential step in adding realism to raw renders. "Photoshop gives me the freedom to do things that are more complicated in 3D," explains 3D artist and designer George Stoyanov (http://georgestoyanov.com). "Things like colour correction, shadows and highlights, adding textures, photos, gradients and much more. For me, it's impossible to achieve good results without [these touches]."

As well as post-production techniques, Photoshop is a great way to generate textures for use within Cinema 4D. As Stoyanov explains: "I take a photo of, for example, a wood material. I work over the image and make it seamless. First I start with Levels and Curves, then Selective Color. After that I start with the Clone Stamp tool and edit my photo. I have to make it as clear as possible. I retouch my image to be ready for use in 3D and rendered in very high resolution. I always use layers for this because it's really easy and flexible."

Paolo Giandoso uses Octane to render still images and utility passes (masks, lighting passes and so on) of 3D models to import into Photoshop and assemble a finished piece

© Paolo Giandoso

Concept artist Paolo Giandoso (www.behance.net/paolo_giandoso) is another fan of Photoshop for post-production work on his 3D renders. His program of choice is Pixologic's ZBrush, which is a sculpting program that works almost like hand rendering in clay, building characters and creatures using the built-in brushes and tools. Giandoso's choice of render engine is OTOY OctaneRender: "I use Octane to render still images and utility passes (masks, lighting passes and so on) of my 3D models that I can import in Photoshop and assemble to create a finished piece". He tends to generate his 3D images as fast as possible, saving all of the refinement work for within Photoshop. "With 3D software I mostly focus on finding the right layout, choosing a good camera angle and lens, and defining the lighting of the scene. I leave the application of texture details, atmospheric and optical effects (fog, volumetric shadows, flares, chromatic aberration and so on) to Photoshop, and this gives me a great range of versatility. I often alter the shape and the silhouette of the subjects I rendered (using the Puppet Warp or the Liquify tools), or simply mix together parts of different renders with photo elements and paint

BUILDING SCENES WITH CINEMA 4D AND PHOTOSHOP

MAXON's Cinema 4D is a popular choice for combining with Photoshop as part of a 3D workflow. Freelance motion designer Michael Tierney (www.tierney.tv) uses Cinema 4D for modelling, lighting and texturing his detailed scenes. He takes his renders into Photoshop in order to place additional textures and fine details, and work on colour grading the overall scene to produce his striking final images.

© Michael Tierney
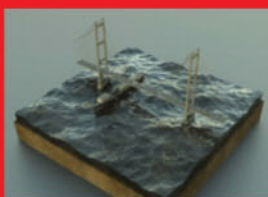
THE CINEMA 4D RENDER

I began by using primitive geometry to mark out the core elements of the bridge. Using noise displacement, I was able to create a realistic water surface. The idea behind creating this model was to capture a slice of my home town.

PHOTOSHOP DETAILS

I wanted to give extra detail and depth to the diorama. I added clouds, waves crashing into the feet of the bridge, a concrete texture on the bridge, and extra paint on the cargo ship, then created lamps along the road for atmosphere.

FINAL TOUCHES IN PHOTOSHOP

I then focused my attention on the final touches, such as colour grading and compositing my final image. I envisioned warm comforting colours, as I wanted to capture the feeling I get every time I see the Humber Bridge on the train.

strokes to break the stiffness of 3D, and create a more natural feeling."

Growing in popularity in the 3D arena is Blender, an open-source 3D graphics and animation software. It's no wonder that its use is increasing – it's both free and capable of producing professional-standard models, which can be taken into Photoshop for further refinement. Freelance illustrator Ben White (**workbyben.com**) is a fan of this combination of software: "On most projects I will have Photoshop open during development, and paste in low-quality renders to quickly test composition ideas and colour grading. Tone balancing and colour grading are two areas where Photoshop is indispensable. Doing this stuff inside Photoshop gives me more freedom and flexibility for future changes."

His key technique for Photoshop on his Blender-created models is to create depth of field (DOF). While this can be achieved in the 3D software itself, White prefers the extra control that comes from using Photoshop. He either adds the depth of field by hand or uses an explicit depth/Z pass from the renderer to achieve this: "Adding it by hand I might duplicate the image, blur it and then remove focal areas using the Lasso tool and Eraser tool together. Just using the Blur tool itself can be enough if you only want a subtle effect. For a more consistent and accurate DOF, I export a depth layer from the renderer (this is the data the renderer also uses for DOF), which inside Photoshop can be used with Lens Blur. The depth pass needs to be on its own channel, which can be automatic with some formats but otherwise just needs to be pasted in, and then it can be selected in the drop-down as the blur source image. This approach gives a look closer to that of a physical camera, but can be trickier to control, and might need some manual editing of the depth map with the Brush tool. With
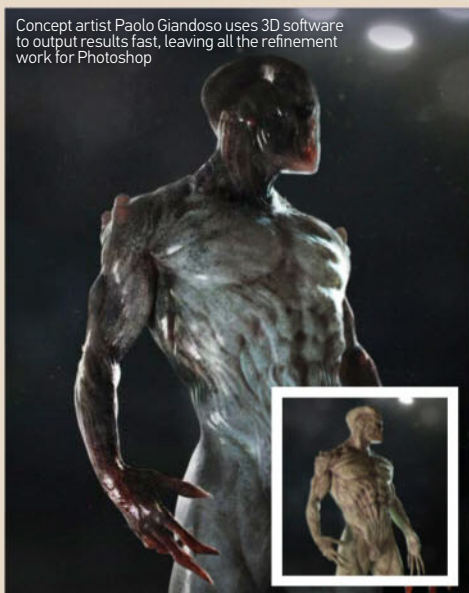
Alisa Zaytseva used InDesign to create the catalogue layout, and then Photoshop to put it on a brochure mock-up to show off the design

© Alisa Zaytseva

either approach, post-production DOF keeps your options open and avoids a costly re-render to change later."

ON-THE-GO DESIGN

The Photoshop companion programs we've looked at so far are great for when you're working on projects on your desktop, but sometimes inspiration strikes on the go or in a meeting. Luckily, the Adobe range of mobile apps has been expanded over the years, and each of these integrates well with Photoshop when you're back at the computer.

They are all linked through Creative Cloud Libraries, which enables assets to be shared from device to device, and program to program, which makes switching so effortless. Adobe Capture CC, for example, lets you capture any image that you see on your travels and turn it instantly into a colour theme, pattern or brush for on-the-go content creation. These assets are saved within the Libraries, making them instantly available when you are back in Photoshop to refine them or use them within projects.

Adobe Comp CC is a perfect companion to a creative meeting with a client, for example. It enables you to create layouts on your tablet using assets from the Creative Cloud Libraries to put together a mockup right there in front of your client. Via Adobe CreativeSync, the layout is then available instantly for further refinement in Photoshop.

If digital painting is more your line of work, Adobe Photoshop Sketch is a mobile drawing app that offers a range of natural brushes, pencils, pens and markers that you can access from your tablet to make sketches whenever inspiration strikes. When you send them to Photoshop on your desktop, they are imported as layered PSD files for ease of editing.

No matter how you create your content, and whatever program you choose to use, you can be sure Photoshop brings everything together in harmony, and helps you to create exceptional artwork, whatever your style.

Concept artist Paolo Giandoso uses 3D software to output results fast, leaving all the refinement work for Photoshop

© Paolo Giandoso

DO MORE WITH PLUG-INS

Plug-ins are a great way to expand the functionality of Photoshop even further

The third-party plug-in market is exploding with options to help expand and enhance the capabilities of Photoshop. Using Photoshop in combination with these can result in new functionality that can take your work to the next level. Here are five plug-ins that are worth a look at, and they're all available for free on this issue's FileSilo:

1. GrutBrushes
These Photoshop brushes are realistic and responsive, which gives a natural painting experience if you want to replicate traditional media quickly and easily.

2. GlamourGlow Lite
www.pixnub.com
Add quick glamour effects to photos, with a choice of style and customisation options. A great way to quickly edit photos without having to do it manually.

3. Layrs Control
http://madebyvadim.com/layrs/
This is a great addition to any busy artist's toolset! The Layrs Extension collects together seven essential scripts that save you hunting through the options to perform day-to-day tasks.

4. Render.ly
https://render.ly/about-us
Such a handy little plug-in, you'll wonder how you got along without it. It quickly extracts screens with alternate versions, webfonts and assets to help speed up your web designs.

5. Titlemizer
http://titlemizer.levits.ky/
Rather than using lorem ipsum as placeholder text in designs, this plug-in generates relevant but random text to fill space, from three key categories.

Paint with Photoshop and Adobe Capture

Create brushes and paint on the go with Adobe Capture, then export to Photoshop

On the FileSilo

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

Essentials

Time taken
9 hours

Expert

Rebekka Hearl

"Concept art for animation has always fascinated me, especially environment and scene design, and I enjoy learning and practising the techniques used in animation by applying it to my digital painting work.

"As a professional designer and illustrator, and comic artist in my spare time, I use Photoshop as part of my daily routine. It's my program of choice for image editing of any kind, due in no small part to its versatile brush settings and the coveted Undo command, and Adobe's iOS range of programs has enabled me to continue working even when I'm not at my desk. I'm a 3D animation graduate who has illustrated for books, animated shorts, comics, magazines and games, and my digital drawing tool of choice is a Cintiq 13HD."

P hotoshop has secured itself as one of the most powerful digital image-editing tools on the market, but outside of installing a copy of Photoshop on your laptop, it would never have been praised for its portability. Until the Adobe Suite was made available for free on iOS, that is. The suite offers some powerful tools for digital artists who want to work on the go, or are looking for a supplement to their desktop image-editing tools. In this tutorial, we'll be looking at how to use Adobe Capture CC to greatest effect, not only on your iPad, but your desktop Photoshop as well.

Make sure you have a sketchbook, 2B pencil and grey marker to hand, as we'll be using those to create brush shapes in Capture CC, and later export into Photoshop. We'll also be looking at some drawing and compositional techniques, so you can use your custom-made brushes for some creative wizardry in your paintings.

You can download Capture CC to your iPad or iPhone for free from the App Store, and if you're new to using it, don't worry: creating and exporting brushes is a very simple process, and this tutorial will get you started.
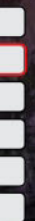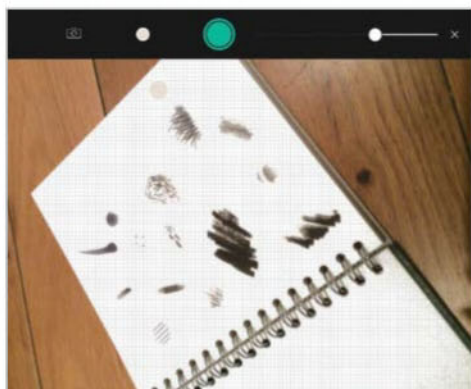
Prepare your brushes

01 Grab some paper or a sketchbook, as well as a 2B pencil, a grey marker and a black marker. Use the pencil to draw in dirt and rock shapes, as well as some rough textures. Use the grey marker for grass, and the black marker for coarse textures.
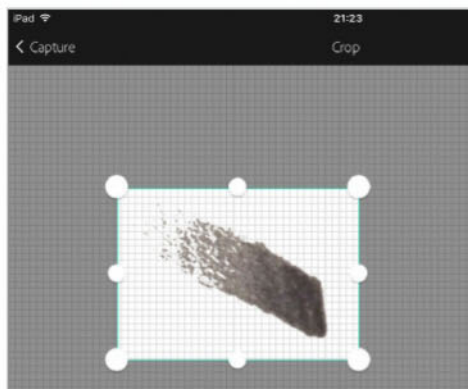
Photograph a brush in Capture

02 Open up Capture CC on your iPad and take pictures of the brushes one at a time. Use the colour removal tool to remove the white of the paper. This will enable Capture CC to define the edges of your brush. Hit the Capture button.
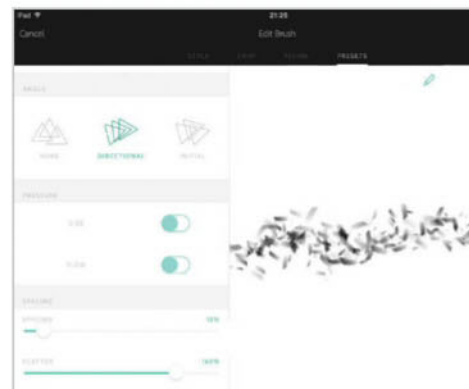
Format the brush

03 Capture CC offers several ways to format your brushes. For this brush, which we will be using for scattered texture, select the Scatter option and adjust until there is a comfortable distance between each brush stroke (140-160% will do).
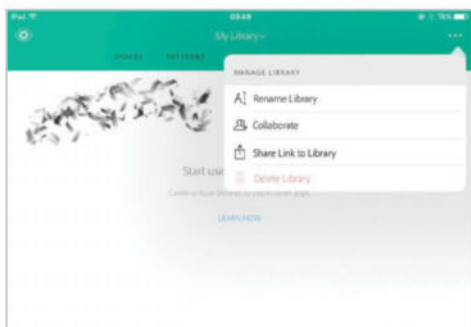
Export the brushes

04 Repeat the capture process for the other brushes you've sketched. You can access your brushes automatically through your CC Cloud, or use the Export option in the Brushes menu to email a share link to yourself and others. You're now ready to begin work in Photoshop!
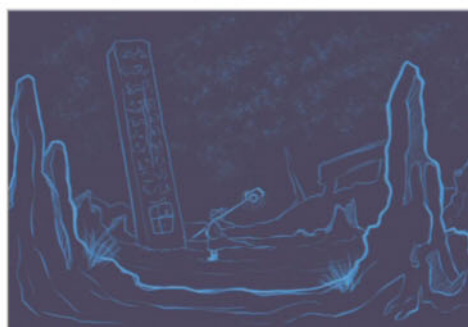
Sketch your scene

05 Keep your drawing loose as you set up your scene's composition. Use the foreground to frame the subject, standing just off-centre of the shot, but be careful that the rocks don't touch the edge of the image. This will lead the viewer's eye out of the picture. This sketch is available on the FileSilo.
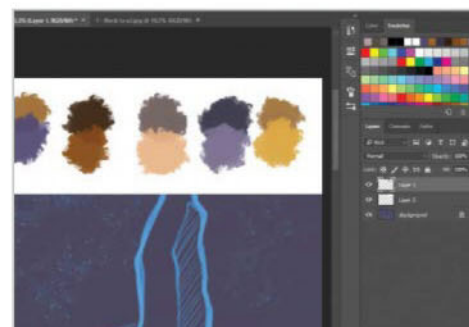
Set up your palette

06 We'll be working up a night scene with several dark and desaturated colours, and a few bright, contrasting colours, which we'll later apply to areas of importance. The scene calls for earthy colours, but include a range of reds, oranges, yellows and purples to keep things visually interesting.
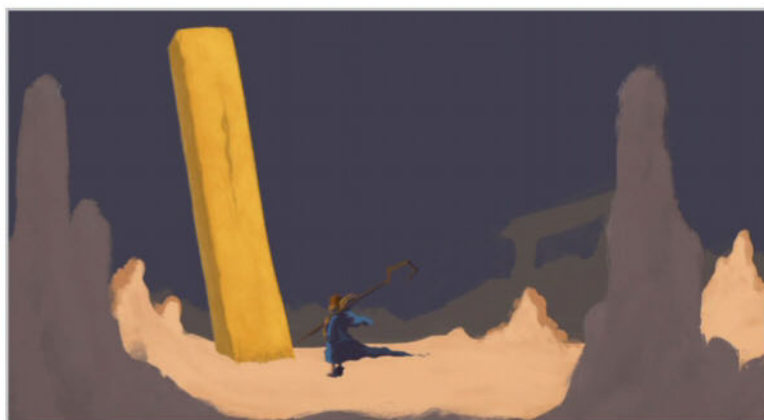
Block out the scene

07 Create a new folder underneath your sketch layer, as well as a set of new layers. Label them Traveller, Middle Ground, Monument and Background. Use a large angled brush with Transfer off, and paint in the base colours of your scene.
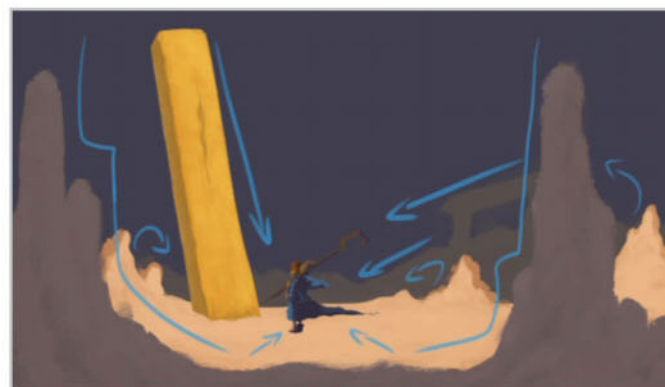
Check your composition

08 Now that you've blocked in your scene, create another layer above all the others, and with a hard brush set to cyan, draw lines across the most important areas of your scene, including the background. Check that these lines all point to the subject. If they're pointing elsewhere, redraw that section.
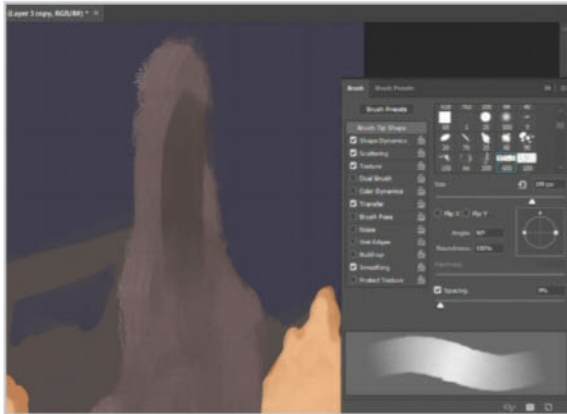
Start at the beginning

09 Create a new folder and layer above all the others. Start by painting the foreground: two rock peaks. The light source is in front of them, so from the viewer's angle, the rocks will be mostly in shadow. Keep this in mind as you loosely paint them in.

Work on the rocks

10 Pick a hard brush with Transfer, an 80-degree angle and 80% Opacity. Use a dark colour to paint in the shadows, and a light colour for the highlights. Shape the rock, and prepare it for texturing.

Expert tip

Capture everything

Capture CC is the perfect addition to an artist's iPad. If you're out and about and you take a picture of a texture or an object you'd like to turn into an art asset, you no longer have to go through the monotonous task of grappling with Photoshop's Brush settings to transform it into a brush that works the way you want it to. Capture CC takes all of the headaches out of brush creation, so get into the habit of always keeping it with you! You never know what you might find.
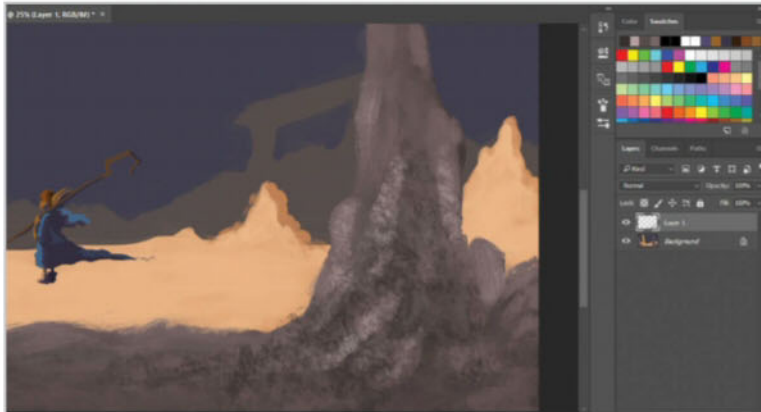
Texture the rocks

11 From the Brushes window, click the Settings icon and load the brush set you made earlier. Use the rock texture brush, set to Scatter (details) and 10% Opacity, and lightly paint in the texture. Use dark colours for the shadows, and a brighter colour to lightly texture the tip of the rocks.

Add grass and shoots

12 Use your grass brush to paint in some grass. Set Scattering to 3 and Color Dynamics to the following settings: 5%, 10%, 10%. This will not only scatter the grass, but automate colour difference, too. Use a dark green first, then a lighter one. Remember to keep contrast low.
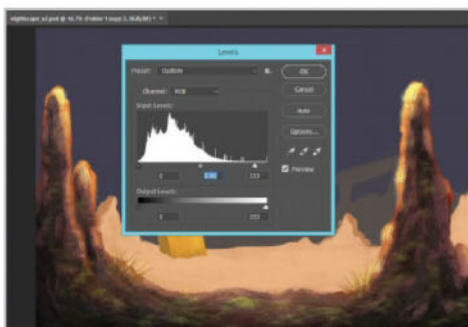
Check shadows

13 Now the details are painted in, adjust the contrast by painting in hard highlights on the top of the rocks nearest the monument (light source), and add shadow around the edges to vignette the rocks. Use Levels to adjust the contrast. Remember: don't make it too dark!
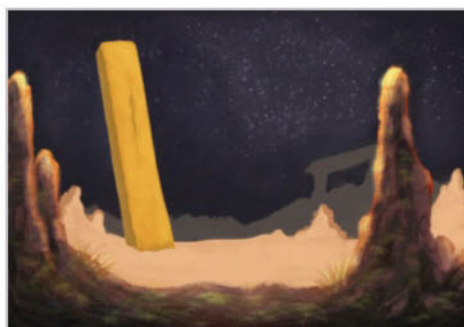
Paint the night sky

14 Create a new layer below all others. Bucket fill the layer with the light purple from your palette. With an airbrush set to 1500px+, dark purple, Opacity 60%, paint around the edges of the picture. Use the dot scatter brush you made in a purple-white to make the stars.
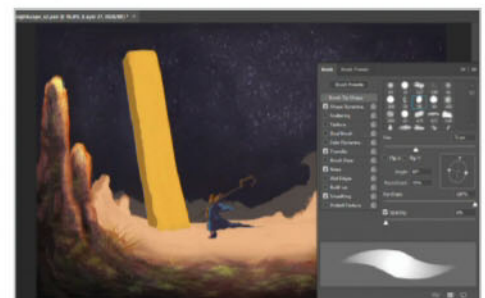
Enhance the monument

15 The subject of this painting has journeyed a long way to find this mystical, glowing stone 'monument'. Use a yellow brush (70px and at 80 degrees) with Transfer applied to refine your sketch, and use the darker brown-yellow for the shadows. Reduce the size of your brush to paint in cracks.

Add texture and text

16 Switch to your rock texture brush and reduce Opacity to 10-15%. Lightly paint over the bright side of the monument, then switch to the lighter yellow to add texture to the shadowed side. Finally, use the vivid purple and your previous brush setting to draw in the ancient text.

Paint the middle ground

17 Paint the rocky ground using a large angled brush with Transfer, using the light and dark browns from your palette. To make the sand look windswept, paint back and forth in an arcing motion. Add some little footsteps to show where the subject has walked into the scene.

Create sand

18 With the same brush, select the darkest brown to paint the shadowed areas of the rocks. Keep the light source (the monument) in mind as you paint. Use the scatter brush set to 200px+ and Opacity 50%, select yellow-white. Brush over the middle ground to create a sand texture.

Work on the traveller

19 Using the character colours you laid out in your palette, set up a hard brush with Transfer and a 70-degree angle applied. Refine the sketch, but keep the purple shadows: this will help with lighting and contrast later. Focus on highlighting the lit areas of the character.

Make the staff's orb

20 Using the same brush at full opacity and a warm yellow, draw in the orb on a separate layer. Give it a warm orange centre, and a few highlighted areas. Introduce some extra flair by reducing your brush size to 15px, and add some sparks falling from the orb.

Add some glow

21 Create a new layer above the traveller, Ctrl/right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. Set the blend mode to Overlay. Prepare a large airbrush (100px+), select your warm orange, and set brush Opacity to 50%. Lightly paint over the lit areas of the character – make them glow!
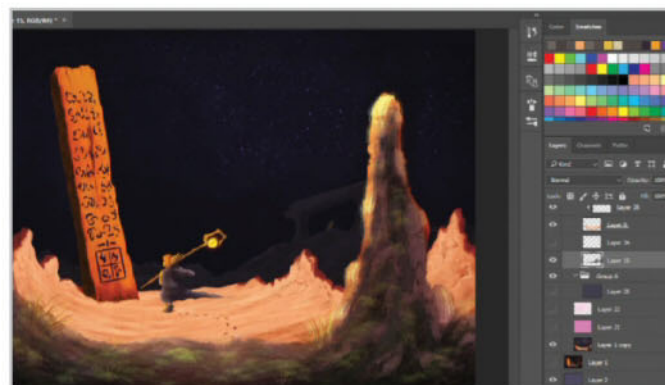
Blend the colours

22 We've painted a lot of earthy colours, but the dominant colours in this piece are yellow and purple. Apply a new layer beneath the foreground folder, set it to Overlay, Opacity: 70%, and bucket fill it with the same purple you used for the night sky. This will make the colours more cohesive.

Have fun with Color Dodge

23 This is the best bit. Select the bright orange we picked earlier. Create a new layer above the monument, and set the blend mode to Color Dodge. With a 200+px airbrush, paint over the monument and traveller to light them up. Refine the glow with a smaller airbrush eraser.

Adjust according to lighting

24 We'll need to make some amendments to previous layers to suit the new lighting. Go back to the layer you used to make the writing on the monument, reduce the Opacity to 40%, and set the blend mode to Color Burn. Adjust contrast on the traveller using Levels.
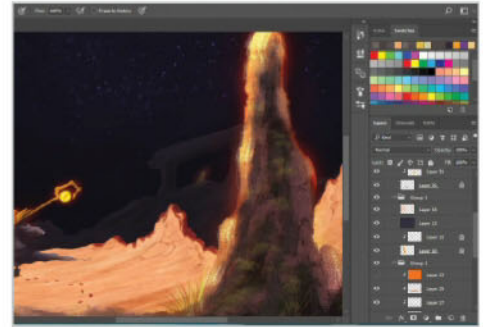
Paint the background

25 To paint the far background, use a hard brush with Transfer, and at 20% Opacity, to lightly shade in greyed-out browns and purples, to paint in more desert hills and ruins. And with a grey-yellow, paint in another smaller monument, to hint at where the traveller might journey to next.

Apply finishing touches

26 Now all the essentials are complete, go back and refine any areas that need it. Increase the brightness of the night sky, and have fun with a white scatter brush to add more stars. Paint around the silhouette of the traveller to make sure she stands out.
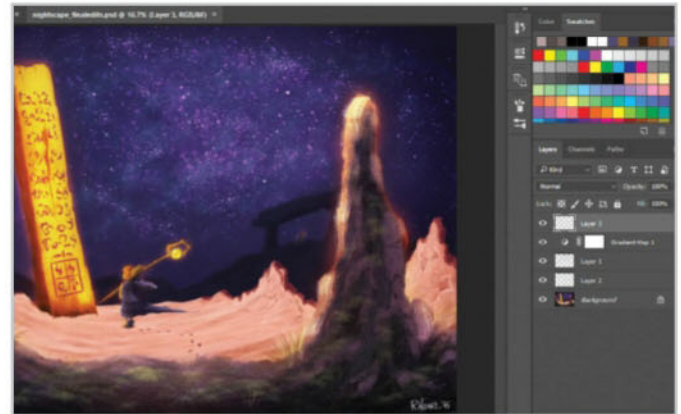
Make final colour edits

27 Use a gradient map, with a mid-blue set for the shadows, and a saturated lilac for the highlights. Set the layer to Overlay and reduce the Opacity to 15%. Watch the colours pop! Use a scatter brush set to 300+px, Opacity 20%, to paint in some light-blue nebulae in the sky.

What can go wrong

Using too many dark colours

When working with low-light or night scenes, it can be tempting to increase contrast to such a point that the piece becomes awash in dark colours. It really makes the brighter colours pop! But be careful: if you're preparing this image for print, too many dark colours could destroy any detail you put into the low-light areas of your painting. What would be even worse is that the colours may bleed into one another.

A good way to avoid this is to make sure the colours of your screen are calibrated correctly. A colour calibrator is a quick fix. If you're working with a Cintiq, they're set to an accurate colour profile right out of the box. Paint with contrast in mind, and print your image periodically to check if it's too dark.

Wrong

Right
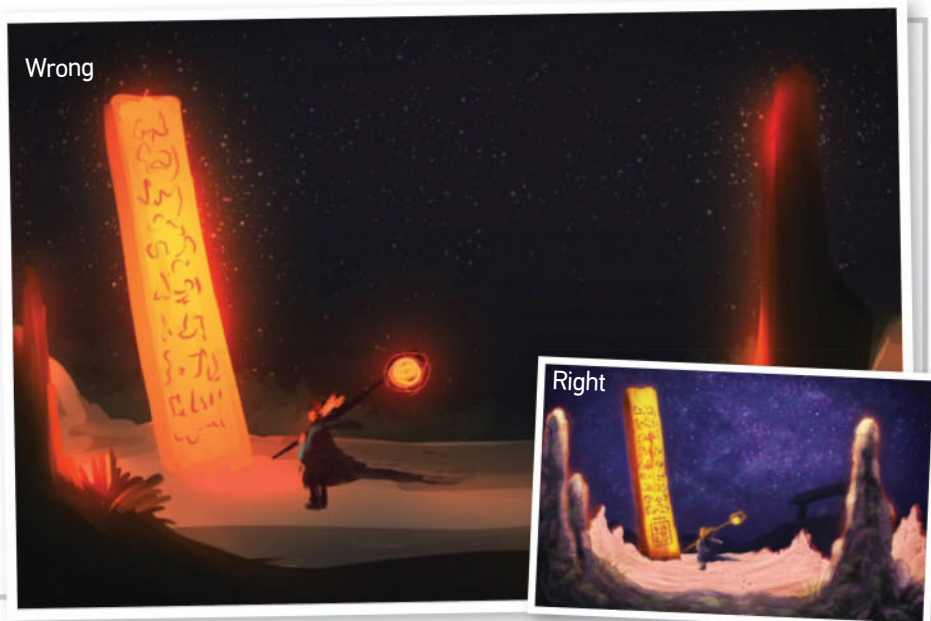
Travelling the world has never been so easy.

Design a creative advertising campaign

Let's take a trip around the world and create a vibrant advert for a travel company

An advert needs to be eye-catching and have impact, no matter what it's advertising. This fictional advert for a travel agency also needs to be vibrant and inviting to engage with potential travellers looking for adventure.

Over the course of this tutorial, you will learn how to achieve uniformity across all elements. We will use the essential Photoshop correction tools (Color Balance, Vibrance, Hue/Saturation and more) to create a uniformity of colour and lighting across all elements; transform options for realistic sizing of objects; and non-destructive

adjustment layers. We will also be working with layer masks and clipping masks; layer masks enable you to add effects only to the desired area; erasing unnecessary areas on the layer mask lets you return to the appropriate part if necessary.

As with all compositions, a knowledge of cutting out images is essential to its success. When assembling the composition, you also need to be very careful with the proportion, brightness, contrast and lighting of pictures. Use the photos we have supplied, or add more tourist spots that you have already visited or still want to visit.

www.gotravel.com

GoTravel
Travel Agency

Get set up

01 Go to File>New (Cmd/Ctrl+N), and set Width to 390mm, Height to 190mm and Resolution to 300ppi, then click OK. Drag a guideline to set the horizon line. Insert 'road.jpg' in the middle, remove the unnecessary parts of the image using a layer mask, and create a new Color Balance adjustment layer set to Cyan: +7, Yellow: -7.
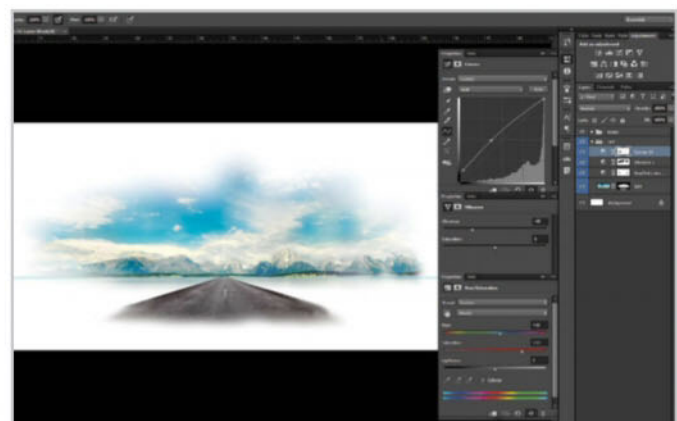
Create the sky

02 Place 'sky.jpg' to follow the horizon line, remove the unnecessary parts with a layer mask, and apply the following adjustment layers: Hue/Saturation (Hue: +10, Saturation: +53); Vibrance (Vibrance: -45 (leave the correction active only in the sky and mountains)); and Curves (drag the line up a bit). Mask as needed.

Place the first locations

03 Insert 'taj mahal.jpg' in the middle, 'arc de triomphe.jpg' on the left (flip it horizontally), and 'colosseum.jpg' and 'pasteum.jpg' on the right (again, flip them horizontally). Use the Clone Stamp tool (S) to remove the light post from the Colosseum.

Introduce the vehicles

04 Insert 'bus.jpg' and 'transit.jpg' on the left, then 'service bus.jpg' and 'suv.jpg' on the right. Decrease the size of 'transit.jpg' and 'suv.jpg', because they are further away than the other vehicles.

Add some height

05 Insert 'Big ben.jpg', 'pisa.jpg' and 'Dubai build 1.jpg' above the vehicles on the left. Flip the Pisa and Big Ben images horizontally. Put 'Shanghai builds.jpg' and 'Dubai build.jpg' above the Taj Mahal; 'new York.jpg' above the Colosseum.

Create a beach

06 Place 'beach.jpg' first on the left side, then 'beach 1.jpg' and 'beach 2.jpg' in front of 'beach.jpg'. Use a layer mask to remove the unnecessary parts and merge the images. Create a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer set to Hue: +26 for 'beach.jpg', leave the adjustment active only for sand.
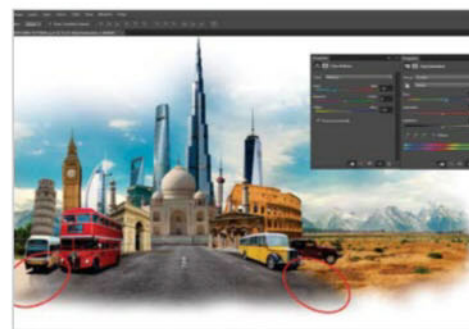
Make the earth

07 Insert 'earth.jpg' on the right side, create a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer set to Hue: +10, then a Color Balance adjustment layer set to Red: -35, Yellow: +15. Use the Clone Stamp tool (S) to increase the area of the road and merge with land and beach. Use a layer mask to remove excess.

Build more locations

08 Place 'china.jpg' near the Tower of Pisa and 'china castle.jpg' in the middle of the trees. Insert 'china wall.jpg' behind all of the buildings, create a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer set to Hue: +2, Saturation: +5. Then apply a Curves adjustment layer and drag the line down a little. Duplicate the layer and drag to the side.
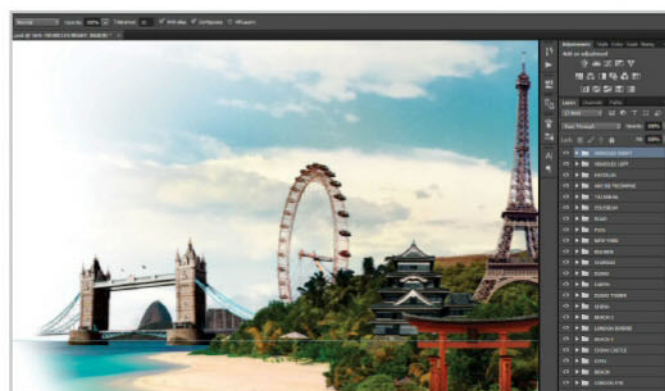
Merge new tourist attractions

09 Place 'london eye.jpg' behind the forest, 'eiffel.jpg' between the Tower of Pisa and the castle of China, 'london bridge.jpg' on top of the water and behind the trees, and 'rio de janeiro.jpg' behind London Bridge. Make this smaller because it is further away.

Insert more attractions

10 Place 'moscow.jpg', 'castillo.jpg' and 'Las vegas.jpg' near the Colosseum; 'Statue of liberty.jpg' and 'Christ the redeemer. jpg' near Castillo; 'pyramids.jpg' behind Christ the Redeemer; 'San francisco.jpg' behind the pyramids. Keep the bridge's mountains.

Give life to earth

11 Next place 'palms 1.jpg' near the Colosseum; 'trees.jpg' in front of Christ the Redeemer; 'palms.jpg' in front of the Statue of Liberty; 'elephant.jpg' and 'giraffe. jpg' in front of the tree; and 'camels.jpg' below the pyramids.

Create the mountains

12 Insert 'snow mountain.jpg' and 'mountain.jpg' behind all the layers except the sky. Put 'birds.jpg' near the snow mountain. Place 'hot air balloon.jpg' and 'hot air balloon 1.jpg' above the Statue of Liberty and Christ the Redeemer.

Increase the scene

13 Insert 'man.jpg' front and centre. Put 'guard.jpg' on the right side near the service bus. Put 'underground.jpg' on the left side near the London bus. Place 'palm tree.jpg' between the Tower of Pisa and the London bus, and 'parrots.jpg' between the London Eye and Eiffel Tower.

Add some sunlight

14 Insert 'sun.jpg' behind all the layers except the sky. Remove unnecessary parts using a layer mask. Following the guide lines shown above, create a new layer, use the Brush tool (B) with #fbf7ee and paint over parts of the layers, adjusting the opacity. Don't forget to create a clipping mask for this layer.

Apply adjustment layers

15 Rio: Color Balance: Red: +15, Green: +15, Yellow: -4. Apply a Curves layer; drag the line up a bit. Eiffel: Color Balance: Red: +7, Yellow: -21. Open Curves and drag the line down. China castle: Color Balance: Red: +16, Yellow: -14. Open Curves and drag the line up. Erase adjustment on the right. London bridge: Open Curves and drag the line up, leaving adjustment only in dark parts.

Apply more adjustment layers

16 Pisa: Color Balance: Red: +18, Yellow: -9. Apply a Curves layer and drag the line up slightly. Colosseum: Hue/Saturation: Saturation: -38. Open Curves and drag the line up. Taj Mahal: Hue/Saturation: Saturation: +35. Open Curves and drag the line down. Arc de Triomphe: Hue/Saturation: Hue: -9. Open Curves and drag the line down.

Keep working on adjustments

17 Shanghai builds: Color Balance: Red: +19, Yellow: -9. Dubai tower: Color Balance: Red: +13, Yellow: -12. Man: Color Balance: Red: +12, Yellow: -28 (leave the adjustment only on the left side). Open Curves and drag the line up. For both vehicles on the left, use Hue/Saturation with Hue: -7.

Make final adjustments

18 San Francisco: Color Balance: Red: +12, Yellow: -28. For the mountains, open Curves and drag the line up. Christ the Redeemer: Color Balance: Red: +18, Yellow: -15. Open Curves and drag the line up. Statue of Liberty: Color Balance: Red: +12, Yellow: -17. Camels: Color Balance: Cyan: -3, Yellow: -21 and Hue/Saturation: Hue: +2, Saturation: -23.

Create shadows

19 Create a new layer and use the Brush tool (B) with colour #000000 to create shadows under the images and between some buildings. Adjust the Opacity and Size according to each layer.

Apply finishing touches

20 Create a new adjustment layer>Color Lookup. Choose 3DLUT File: 'filmstock_50.3dl'. Change Opacity to 30%. Type 'Travelling the world has never been so easy' in the upper left. Use colour: #3d4a7a, font: Exo Extra Bold Italic. In the lower right insert the supplied logo and type 'www.gotravel.com'. Colour #3d4a7a, font: Exo Italic.

What you can do with it

Use it in a travel brochure

The idea here was to create a composition with impact, conveying the message that travelling around the world is really easy thanks to the facilities of the company. The composition was created at a large size and resolution because this way it can be used on different types of billboards, such as outdoor, a bus stop or on the subway. It can also be used in specific locations such as social media, newspapers and magazines.

COLOURS
Advertising is all about communication, and colours play an important role in communicating messages. Strong, vibrant colours were chosen to engage with people.

IMAGE SIZE
If you're designing an advert for a brochure, like the travel brochure here, make sure you work in 300ppi to ensure the best image quality.

Discover another of our great bookazines

And save 20% on your first order when you buy direct from us

Elements creative

adobe photoshop
elements 15

18 pages of practical guides

Essential techniques Follow the step-by-step tutorials

File   Edit   Image   Enhance   Layer   Select   Filter   View   Window   Help

Create more in Elements…

On the FileSilo

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

Photo Edit…

LEARN HOW TO
ENHANCE PHOTOS WITH BRUSHES

Discover how you can use brushes to transform a photo into a colourful masterpiece p94

ARCTIC

What does it mean?
LEADING – The leading of a font refers to the spacing between lines. The higher the leading, the bigger the spacing, or you can set the leading just to Auto to leave it at the optimum spacing, no matter the size of the font. Make sure you check the leading if you are writing more than one line of text.

On the FileSilo

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

Start image

Tool focus…

Wield the Photo Text tool

Add excitement to lifeless text using one of the latest Guided Edits

Making text readable is one of the most important tasks a designer will face. Having legible text isn't just desirable, it's a necessity, and there are all kinds of techniques to get the best out of type.

But while there are multiple ways to make text stand out, there aren't nearly as many ways to make text look more exciting. The latest version of Elements has a brand new feature, Photo Text, which aims to make this a thing of the past; all you have to do is open a picture and use the tool to brighten up type with an image and whichever layer styles you choose.

The process basically creates a text layer and applies your photo as a clipping layer over this text. This is something that you could do

manually in Expert mode should you wish, although you can use the Guided Edit and then tweak the image further in Expert mode when you've completed the effect. Adjustment layers such Levels, Brightness/Contrast and Hue/Saturation can also be added to the text; just Alt/Opt-click them to clip to the type layer along with your photo. Also in Expert mode, you can alter the layer styles that you applied in the Guided Edit simply by double-clicking the 'fx' logo on the layer itself.

Remember to experiment with images, styles and effects. This is a versatile tool that can bring a little colour to any picture, and it's a great way to liven up your type; gone are the days of boring text!

Create the effect
Use the power of clipping masks for this simple edit
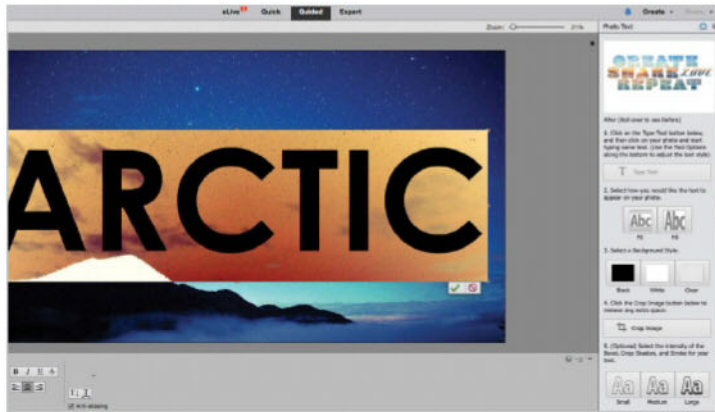
Enter your text
01 Start by going to the Guided section at the top of Elements. Click on the Type tool on the right, click and start typing. We set the size to 350pt to make it big enough to cover the image.

Place and crop
02 Once you've created the text you want to use, select a Background style – we went for clear – and position your text on the backdrop until you're happy with it. Click Crop Image to crop perfectly to the size of the text.

Select a layer style
03 Click on one of the three preset layer styles to give your text more of a three-dimensional feel. By hitting the Advanced button below that, you can alter your text further; we set the Lighting Angle to 130 degrees and chose Drop Shadow, Size: 48, Distance: 4, Opacity: 100%.

Apply it
04 Click on Next and you'll be ready to edit your text in Expert mode. The text Guided Edit applies the photo as a clipping mask over your letters; select both of these layers and Ctrl/right-click, Duplicate and choose the supplied arctic image to place the text onto this background.

Making text stand out
Get the best out of Photo Text with these tips

Choose contrast
If you have light-coloured text, place it onto a darker background; if you have darker text, place it onto a lighter background. It's a basic rule of design but one that should be adhered to when working with Photo Text. There's the option to choose either black or white backgrounds, and if you need to change contrast further, use Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) in Expert mode.

Place text wisely
While there is the option to fit or fill your text in the entire workspace, you may just want to move it so that a selected area of the image is present in the text. With this example, we've moved the text until the fish in the picture appear in the text. Reduce the size of the text to make it easier to move it around your canvas.

Select Fill
The Fit option in the Photo Text tool will enable you to expand the text to the edges of the canvas, yet retain the aspect ratio. By hitting Fill, though, you will lose the aspect ratio, and the text will stretch as high and wide as the canvas. This is the best option for text that you want to display the entire photo through.

Pick your colour!

FINISH

Go to next
Magic Wand!

INK SPLAT!
Go back 3 spaces

Go to next
Magic Wand!

Double your
next roll!

Cross the
bridge!

PATH ERASED!
Back to start

Go to next
Magic Wand!

PAINT BRUSH!
Swap places with
any other player
on the board

On the FileSilo

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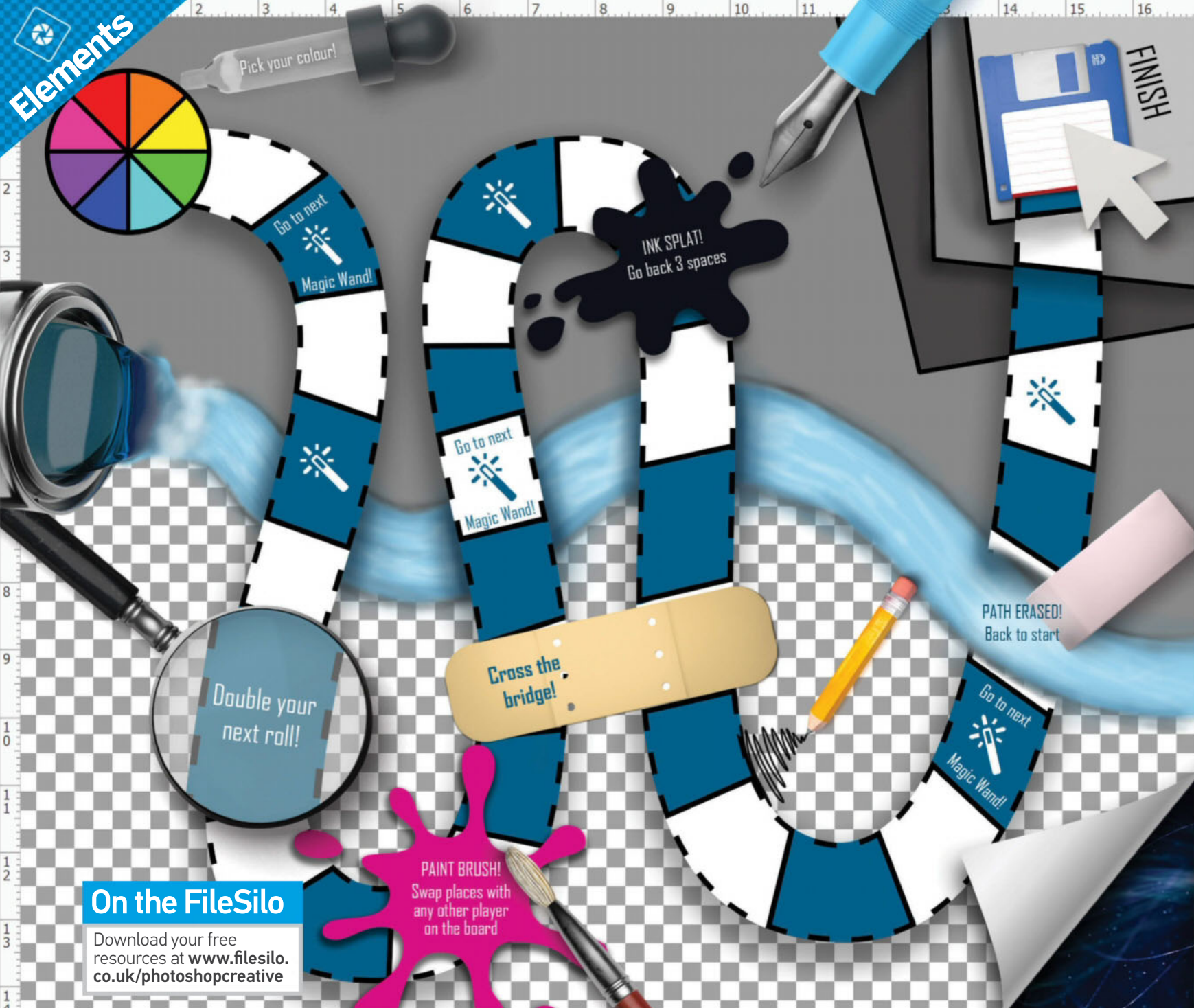
Creative project…

Design a board game

Combine built elements and your own creativity to make a game

**Making your own board game is not only a great way to get creative,
but also something that you can bring into the real world and easily
share with your friends and family.** True to form, the game that you
create in this tutorial revolves around Elements and includes all of
the tools you'll find in there. You have the Eyedropper, the Brush tool,
the Heal tool and more. However, watch out for the pesky Pen tool;
it's a tool not found in Elements so it sends you back three spaces!

All of the tool icons are pre-built and cut out from their
backgrounds, so you can easily add them in and move them around

to make variations of the game. You can also add in your own
elements, either by drawing them or photographing and masking
them for extra obstacles. The track itself is also pre-built and
provided on the FileSilo, but again, drawing your own track is another
way to create an entirely new game – even with the same objects!

So get imaginative, see if you can get in any more of Elements'
tools, or create an even more perilous track for players! There are no
limits with this project – you can even create player characters to
print off and play with.

STAGE 1

Lay it all out

Using a sketch and the Brush, set up the project

This first stage is a big one, as it sets the tone for the rest of the board game. Here you can use the pre-built track provided with the customised squares for the Magnifying Glass and Eraser later on, or you can draw your own using the Brush or Shapes, creating whatever track you like! It's important that you spend a bit of time making sure that you get your plan ironed out in this stage, so that you don't end up drawing a track that doesn't fit the pieces you want to use later on.

What does it mean?

EXPERT MODE – Expert mode isn't anything to be intimidated by; it simply means that you have access to more tools than you can see in the Quick or Guided modes. By working in Expert, you have more control and a better feel for the program, which enables you to make some much cooler edits!
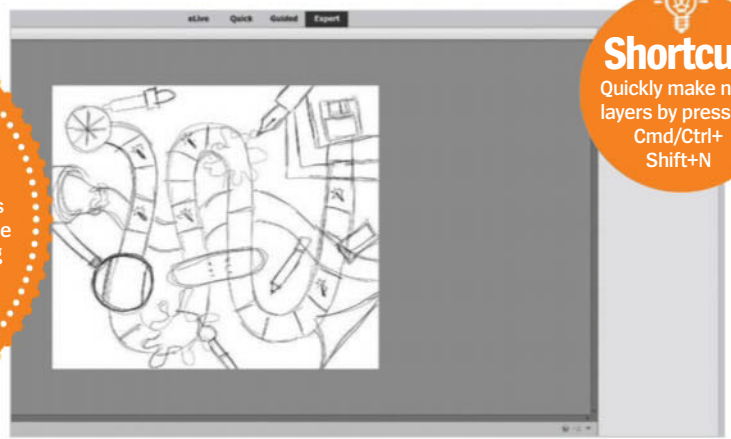
Make a sketch

01 Create a new document in Expert mode of Elements. Create a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N. Grab the Brush tool (B) and make a rough sketch of your board game – including the shape of the track and main surrounding elements. Download our sketch if you like.
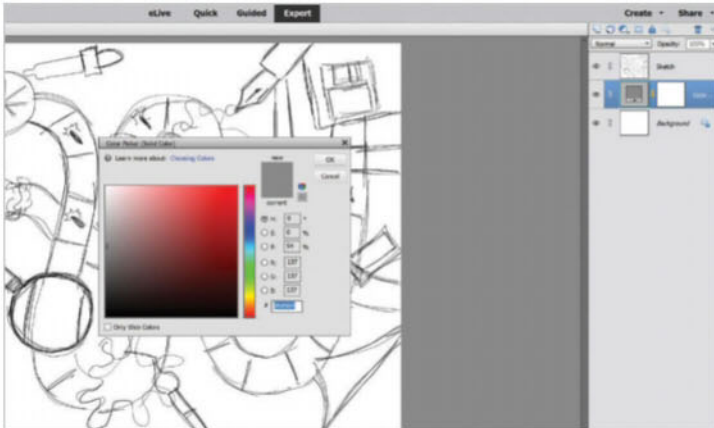
Fill the background

02 Select the Background layer. Click the black-and-white circle at the top of the Layers panel and select Solid Color from the drop-down menu. With the Color Picker window open, click on the grey background surrounding your canvas and hit OK to fill the layer in grey.
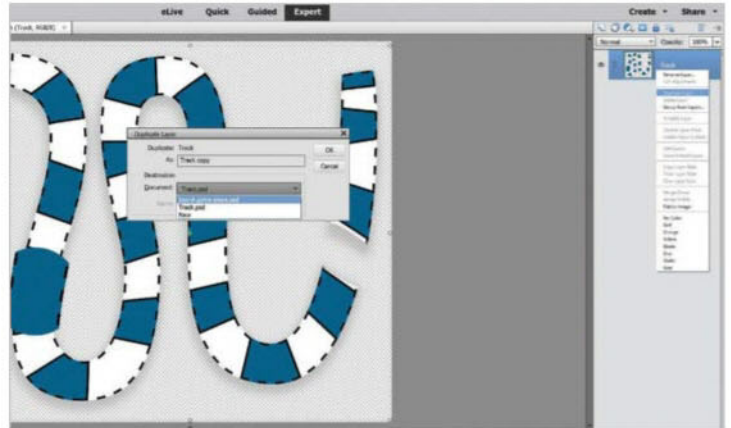
Add in the track

03 Open the file 'Track.psd' from the FileSilo into Elements. Right-click the Track layer and click Duplicate Layer. Inside the menu, select your board game canvas from the drop-down. Go back to your board game and position the track with the Move tool (V).

SKETCH REFERENCE
If your sketch layer gets in the way, you can reduce its Opacity from 100% to 50%.

TRACK COLOUR
You can change the track colours by using the Paint Bucket (K), selecting your Foreground colour and clicking the segments.

THE LAYERS PANEL
If you can't see the Layers panel, make it visible by clicking the Layers button here.

ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
This is the home of adjustment layers, such as the Solid Color layer we used to add colour to the background.

STAGE 2

Create track instructions

Add more details and give your game some structure

This is the stage that covers the parts of the board game that need drawing or typing manually, so the parts that can't be done without Elements. It's a great idea to lay down all of your game instructions in this stage so that you know exactly where any bigger elements that you want to insert later are going to go, while also giving you a much better idea of sizing and the angles required.

GAME INSTRUCTIONS
Be careful that your text isn't too small to read when printed; keep it above 7pt.
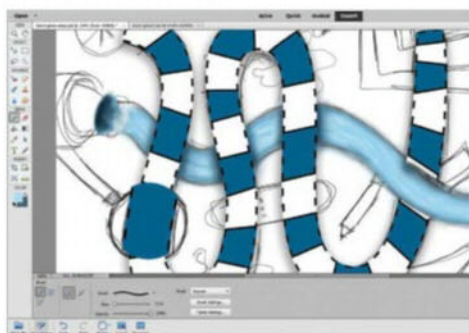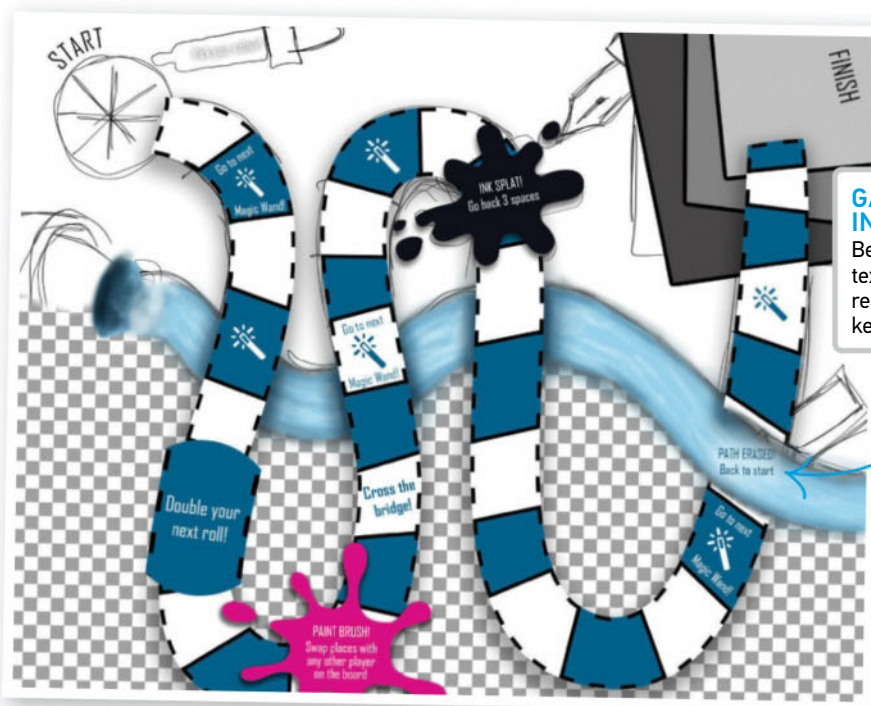
Paint a river
01 Create a new layer and drag it underneath the track. Grab the Brush tool (B) and draw a big, blue line across the canvas. Make your brush size small and paint in some lighter and darker details – especially underneath where the 'waterfall' will be.
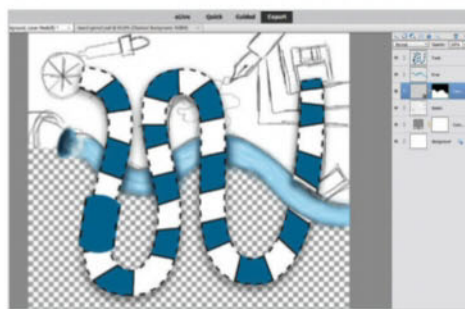
Add a checked background
02 Open 'Checkered background.jpg' from the FileSilo. Duplicate the layer onto your game (see stage 1) underneath the River layer. Add a layer mask with the 'circle inside a rectangle' button. Paint black on the mask to hide any of the layer that's above the river; white brings it back.
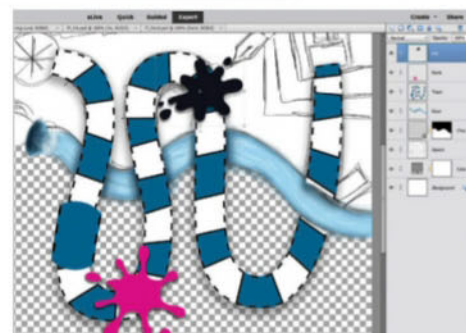
Insert some splats
03 Open 'Ink.psd' from the FileSilo. Duplicate it into the game and position it using the Move tool (V) at the top of the track, using the sketch as a reference. Do the same with 'Paint.psd', positioning it at the bottom of the track.
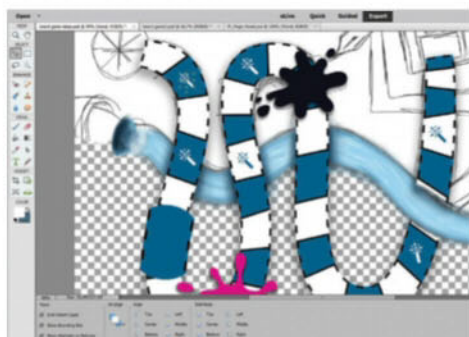
Make Magic Wand squares
04 Open and duplicate in the 'Magic Wand.psd' file. Make it smaller by dragging a corner 'handle' in while holding Shift. Position it on a segment of the track. Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J), put another on another segment and repeat. Some need to be white, so fill them with the Paint Bucket (K).
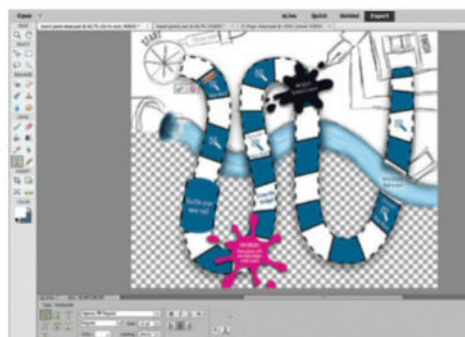
Give instructions
05 Select the Text tool (T). Click on the canvas to create your starting point, and type out some game instructions. Change the type, colour and size of your text by double-clicking the layer thumbnail on the right-hand side and using the tools found at the bottom of the screen.
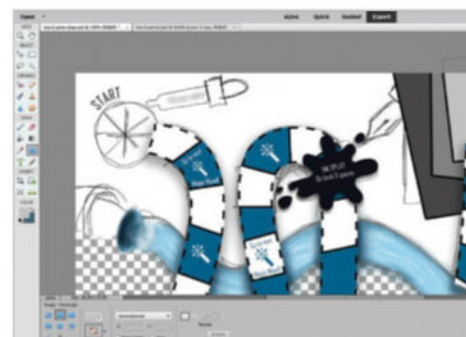
Draw shape layers
06 Select the Shape tool (U) and draw three squares on top of each other. Drag the layers underneath the Track layer. Select all three layers by holding Shift and clicking their layer thumbnails. Go to Styles at the bottom, select Stroke from the drop-down menu and click 10px Stroke.

STAGE 3

The finishing touches

Add in all the large elements and fine details

Now is where the real fun begins! Use the pre-built elements provided on the FileSilo or create your own and begin to add them in. This is where the Elements theme really grabs hold, so if you're creating your own board game, make sure that your additional objects all help to reflect the style. You'll find at this stage that organisation suddenly becomes very important as more layers get added in. Keep naming and grouping your new layers to keep your workflow effortless.

ELEMENTS DETAILS
Feel free to add in any other Elements-y details to the canvas – see how creative you can be!
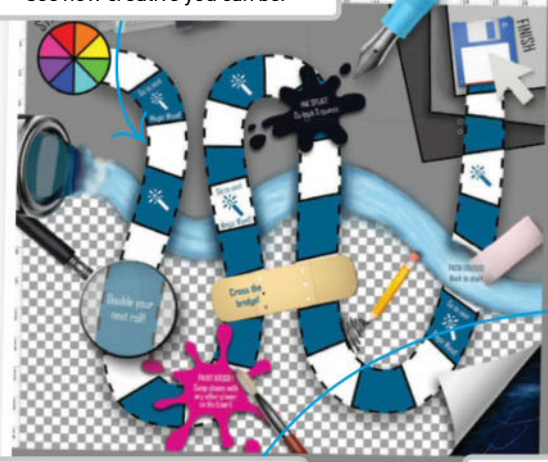
GROUPING LAYERS
To keep your layers organised, anyone with Elements 6.0 or above can group layers with Cmd/Ctrl+G.

TOOL SHADOWS
Be sure to copy in the entire group for each tool; it holds a subtle shadow for the tool.
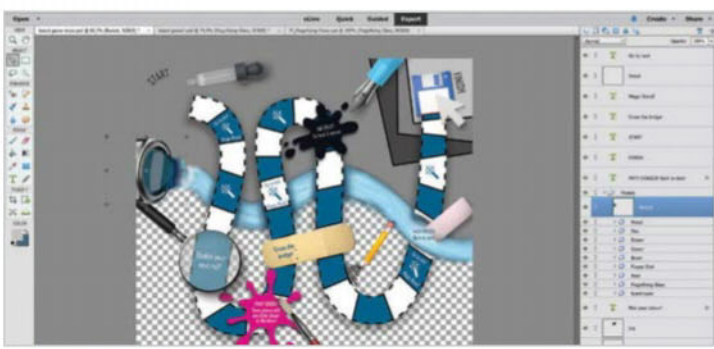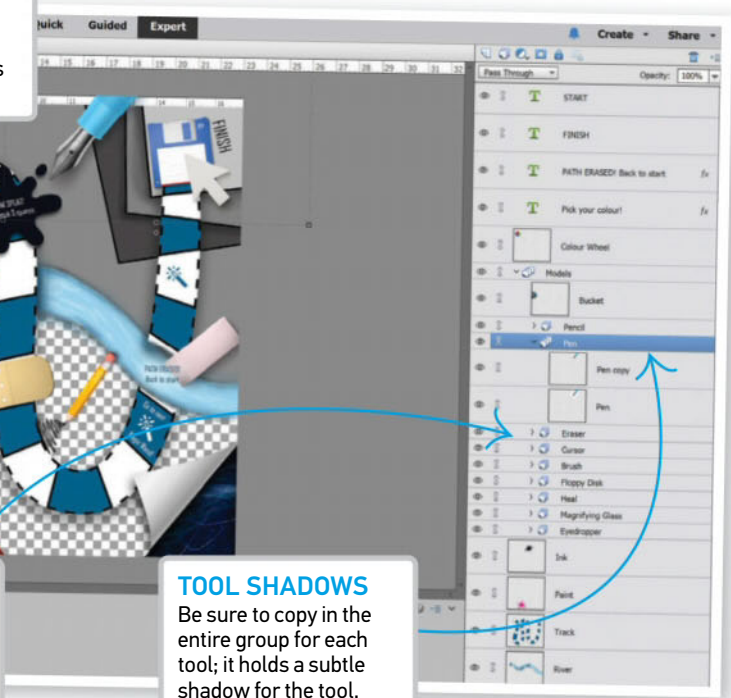
Add in tools

01 Open: 'Brush.psd', 'Cursor.psd', 'Eraser.psd', 'Eyedropper.psd', 'Floppy Disk.psd', 'Heal.psd', 'Magnifying Glass.psd', 'Pen.psd', 'Pencil.psd' and 'Bucket.psd' and duplicate them all into the board game, positioning and resizing as required with the control handles. Make sure they are all underneath your text layers. You can also turn off your sketch when you're finished.

Draw a colour wheel

02 Hit U and pick the circle shape. Hold Shift as you click and drag on the canvas. Add a stroke using stage 2, step 6. Use the Line tool (U) at 10px to divide the circle. Select your shape layers, right-click and pick Merge Layers. Use the Bucket (K) to colour in.

Turn the page

03 Open 'Corner.psd' and duplicate it into the canvas. Position in the bottom-right corner. Inside the group is a layer called YOUR IMAGE HERE. If you want, you can add your own image by deleting that layer, placing your own above Base, right-click>Create Clipping Mask.

Include the rulers

04 For a finishing touch, add 'Rules.psd' into the canvas and position them in the top-left corner. Play with the layer order so that some objects go above the rulers and some things are positioned underneath them.

Shortcut
To keep layer proportions when scaling, hold Shift
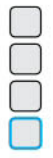
What does it mean?

SCATTER – The Scatter option in the Brush Settings places your brush stroke across the whole image; Spacing separates the next stroke from the last one, and Scatter randomises where it appears. For a chaotic image, choose high Scattering. For strokes following a vague path, keep it lower.

SHARPEN

As a finishing touch, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E, go to Filter>Other>High Pass, choose 5px and set to Overlay to sharpen.

ADD CONTRAST

Use the Levels panel (Cmd/Ctrl+L) to improve the contrast and tone in your finished image.

On the FileSilo

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

Start image

Photo edit…

Enhance photos with brushes

Use brushes to transform a photo into a colourful masterpiece

Brushes are perhaps where you can be most creative with Elements. Most associated with digital painting and artwork, it is true that you can build a whole image from scratch just by using brushes to paint, but this is by no means the only use of the tool.

Brushes can embellish any kind of photo by adding colour and excitement on new layers. There are all kinds of effects that you can coax from brushes by altering the Brush Settings, and adding clipping masks and using Gaussian Blur, you can really take brushes even

further. This tutorial is one that will produce a unique result every time you try it too; the effect relies on you being creative with the brushes rather than creating a specific look.

But this tutorial is also useful for teaching you how to create brushes. Once you know how to create them, you'll be able to use these to turn any shape into a brush to apply to your work like this. It's really easy to do and as you'll find, brushes can help bring ordinary images to life.

Introduce colour Create a brush, apply it and add effects
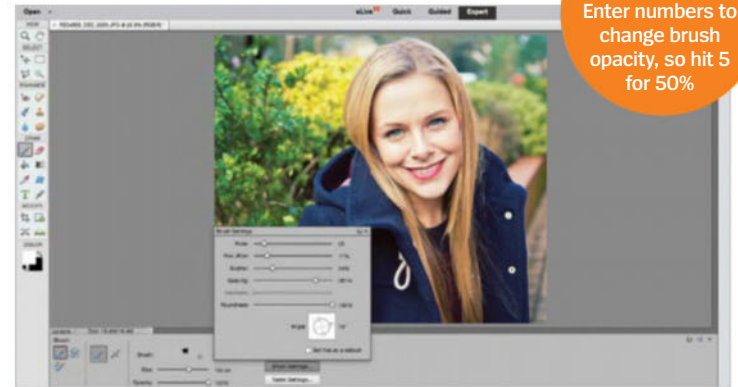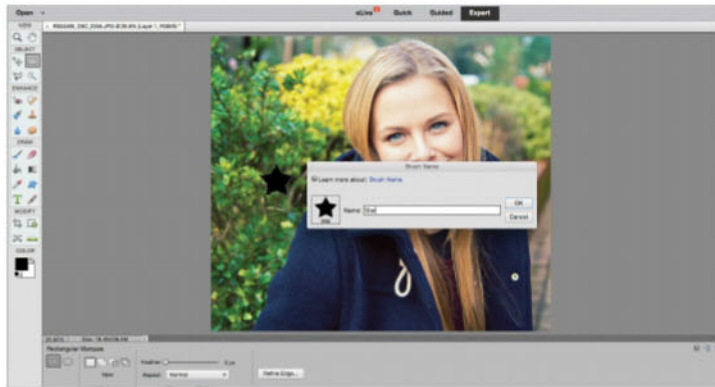
Create a brush

01 Go to the Shape tool (U). Choose a star from the options and drag it onto the canvas. Create a new layer, Cmd/Ctrl+click the Shape 1 layer's preview window to select the star, and fill in black. Go to Edit>Define Brush and save as Star.

Tweak brush settings

02 Select the Brush tool (B) and go to Brush Settings. Choose your star brush and the following settings: Fade: 25, Hue Jitter: 17%, Scatter: 24%, Spacing: 281%, Roundness: 100%. Also tweak the Angle slightly – between 10 and 30 degrees.
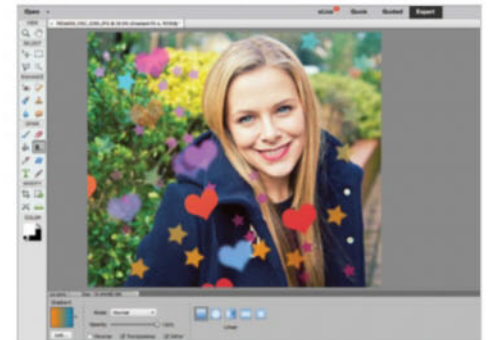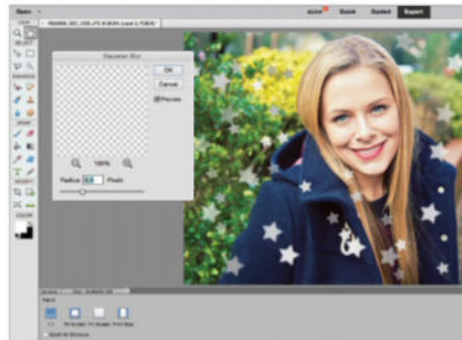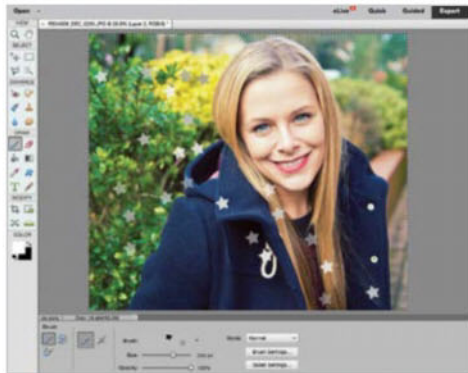
Scatter over the image

03 Select white in your swatches. Create a new layer and drag the brush over the image to create a smattering of stars across the picture. Because of the brush settings we've entered, some of the stars will be lower in opacity.

Blur some strokes

04 Do the same thing again on a new layer, only increase the brush size by using the] key, and change the Angle to -20 degrees. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and choose a Radius of 5 pixels. Create as many brush strokes as you like; you can even create different-shaped brushes.

Add colour

05 Go to the Fill Layer icon and choose Gradient. Choose a gradient and an angle, and click OK; we've supplied 50 gradients for you to choose from on the FileSilo. Do this above each brushed layer, and Alt/Opt-click to clip the gradients to the brushes. Set each brush layer to Screen.
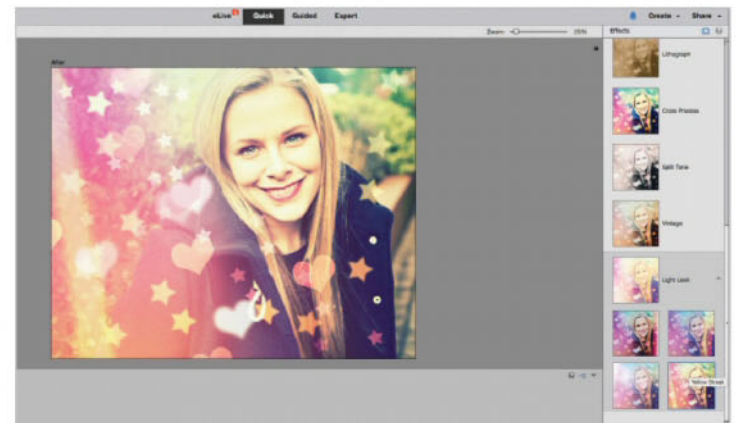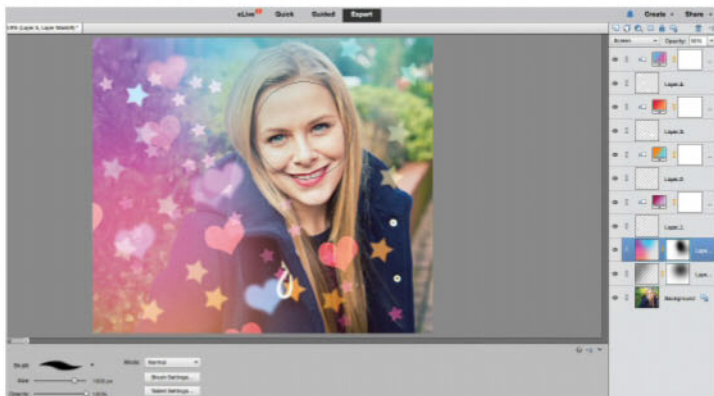
Brush coloured edges

06 Choose colours in the swatches – we chose #ff9e36, #fa82b2, #9b52d9 and #24f0f7 – choose a 2000px soft brush and brush on the left-hand side; set to Screen. If you need to, brush soft black beneath the colour to bring it out further. Mask the colour from the subject's face.

Apply finishing flourishes

07 Finally, bring all the colours together with adjustments. Merge everything into one layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E) and go to the Quick tab. Choose a Light Leak that suits the image. Go back to Expert and reduce the Opacity to 75% to soften the effect.

On the FileSilo

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

What does it mean?

VIEW MODE – The Refine Edge 'View Mode' provides different modes to preview the selection and compare it against different backgrounds. Check Show Radius to only see the selected areas, or check Show Original to view the original selection. Open the pop-up menu and hover over a mode for a tip.
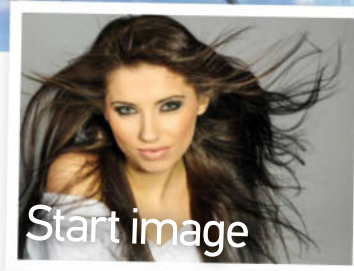
Start image

Surreal art…

Get creative with Refine Edge

Merge a human and an animal in a surreal union

One of the coolest tools in Photoshop Elements is the Refine Edge tool. You can use it to make complex selections like hair and fur simply by painting along the edges, while Elements gets busy automatically analysing the content to detect all the details.

In this tutorial, you'll get to grips with the Refine Edge command and learn new tricks for creating an amazing surreal artwork. You'll start using the selection tools to isolate the subject, then open the Refine Edge dialog box to access the tools and commands to fine-tune all the details and extract the background, making the hair more realistic. Each image has its own sets of quirks; in some

situations, you can just use the Smart Radius to grab all the details, but in others you may need only the Refine Edge tool, or as in this tutorial, you will need both.

After cutting out the hair, you'll learn how to use the Free Transform tool to resize the images; adjustment layers to enhance the colours and tones; and masks to blend the images. Before you get started, remember that when you're working with complex selections, it is a good idea to keep a duplicated copy of the layer before you apply the mask. Now download the stock images from the FileSilo and let's start learning!

Essential skills
Master the selection tools and adjustment layers to advance your skills
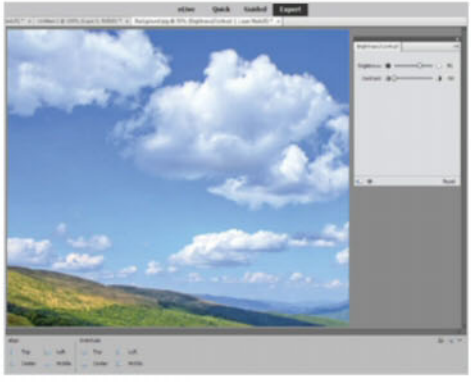
Set the stage
01 To begin, go to File>Open 'Background.jpg'. Now let's make the image a little brighter. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Brightness/Contrast and click OK. Set Brightness to 60 and Contrast to -50.
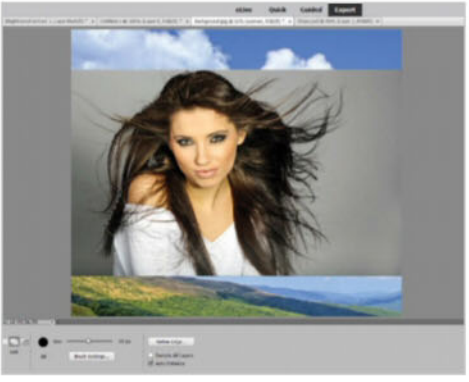
Place the woman
02 Now go to File>Place 'Woman.jpg' and hit Return/Enter. Grab the Quick Selection tool (A). In the Tool Options, set the Brush Size to 65px and create a rough selection around the woman.
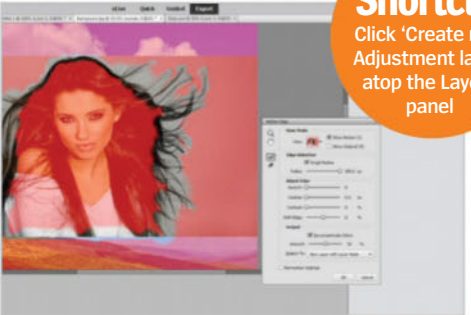
Use Refine Edge
03 In Options, click on Refine Edge. Change View to Overlay, check Show Radius, then check Smart Radius and set it to 250 pixels. Grab the Refine Edge tool (E) and paint the remaining hair. Now check Decontaminate Colors, set the Output to 'New layer with layer mask' and click OK.

Duplicate and resize
04 Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and hide the Woman Copy layer by clicking on the eye icon. Right-click over the Woman Copy 2 mask thumbnail and choose Apply Layer Mask. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T. In Options, check Constrain Proportions and set the Width to 130% and drag to the left, then press Return/Enter.

Select and transform
05 Grab the Lasso tool (L). Select only the hair from the right side. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, drag and rotate the handles to resize the image, making the hair larger. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Use a soft brush to blend the hard edges.

SELECTION TOOLS
There is a variety of selection tools at your disposal. Look in the Tool Options bar to see the available settings.

TOOL OPTIONS
The Tool Options bar is located below the work area. Click on the Tool Options icon to display the settings.

ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
Apply Brightness/Contrast to make subtle brightness corrections, and use the Levels to adjust the tones.

REFINE EDGE
Use the Refine Edge 'Output to' option to automatically create a new layer, complete with a layer mask.
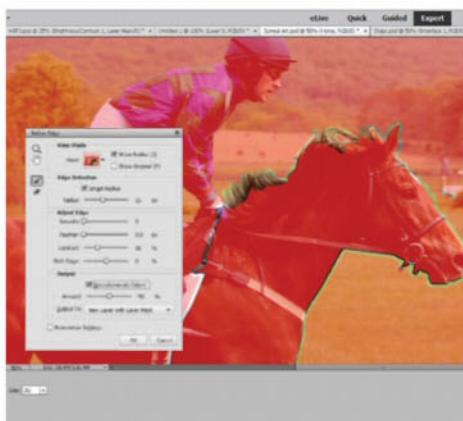
Place the horse

06 Go to File>Place 'Horse.jpg' then hit Return/Enter. Grab the Quick Selection tool (A) and select the crest, head and neck. In Options, click Refine Edge. Use the same settings and follow the directions in step 3. Only this time, change Edge Detection Radius to 15 pixels and Contrast to 30%.

Make adjustments

07 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. In the pop-up window, check 'Use previous layer to create clipping mask', and in the Levels panel, click Auto. Now add a Hue/Saturation adjustment, create a clipping mask and click OK. Change the Channel to Reds, and set Hue to +10 and Saturation to -30.

Duplicate and merge

08 Hold Shift and select the adjustment layers and the Horse Copy layer. Duplicate the layers (Cmd/Ctrl+J), then press Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Rename the layer Horse Final. Now hide the Horse Copy layer and the remaining adjustment layer.

Now transform

09 Duplicate the Horse Final layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Now press Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize and rotate the image. Place on top of the hair. Add a layer mask and go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a small soft rounded brush and start painting over the mask to blend the horse with the hair.

Add more layers

10 Duplicate the layer a few more times and repeat the previous step. Paint over the mask to hide the hard edges and place the horses all over the hair. Press X on your keyboard to toggle between the Foreground and Background colours when you're painting the mask.

CHANNELS
Use the Hue/Saturation channels to make adjustments to specific colours. Open the pop-up menu and choose the target colour.

LAYER VISIBILITY
Turn the layer visibility on and off by clicking on the eye icon in the Layers panel.

LAYERS PANEL
Use the buttons on top of the Layers panel to add masks and adjustment layers, and make new layers.

MASKS
Use masks to hide or show specific areas of an image. Use a soft brush to hide the hard edges.
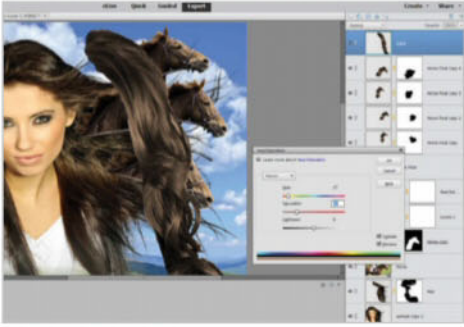
Make more hair

11 Go to File>Place 'Hair2.jpg'. Now go to Layer>Simplify Layer. Grab the Quick Selection tool and select the hair from the right side. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal Selection. Right-click over the mask thumbnail and choose Apply Layer Mask. Press Cmd/Ctrl+U and check Colorize. Set Hue: 27, Saturation: 22, and click OK.

Duplicate the layer

12 Duplicate the layer, then use the Free Transform tool to resize and rotate the image. Place it over the base image, then create a layer mask. Paint the mask to blend the images. Duplicate and transform the layers several times, and fill the image with the new hair.

Add shadows and highlights

13 Click on the top layer and press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E to create a snapshot. Grab the Burn tool (O), set Range to Midtones and Exposure to 50%. Paint over the hair to reinforce the shadows. Now grab the Dodge tool (O) and, using the same setting as the Burn tool, enhance the highlights.
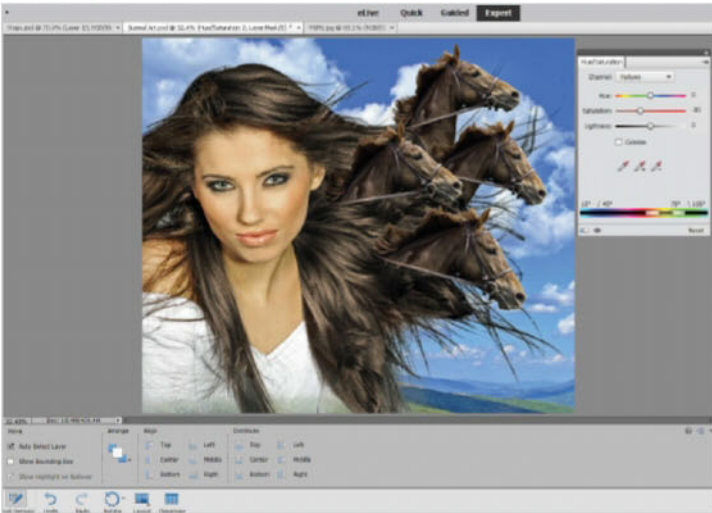
Correct colours

14 Go to Enhance>Adjust Smart Fix (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+M). Set Fix Amount to 90%. Click OK. Go Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Choose Channel: Yellows and set Saturation to -30.

Add a vignette effect

15 Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N). Fill it with white. Press Cmd/Ctrl+A. Now go to Select>Transform Selection. In Options, check Constrain Proportions and set Horizontal Scale to 90%. Press Return/Enter and fill it with black. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+D. Apply the Gaussian Blur filter at 100 pixels. Change the blend mode to Linear Dodge.

Refine Edge tools
Understanding the dialog box

There are various options and tools available to you when using the Refine Edge command, which help you to get a better result. The Zoom and Hand tools enable you to zoom in and out and move the image. The Refine Radius tool lets you expand the detection area, while the Eraser Refinement tool restores the original edges.

The View Mode helps you to select a background to preview the results you created. The Smart Radius automatically adjusts the border according to the Radius amount you choose. The Adjust Edge enables you to fine-tune the selection. You can smooth jagged edges, use the Feather to blur the edges, increase the contrast to make the selection sharper, and use Shift Edges to compress or expand the selection. Check Decontaminate Colors to remove the colour fringes around the border. Then choose the desired Output.
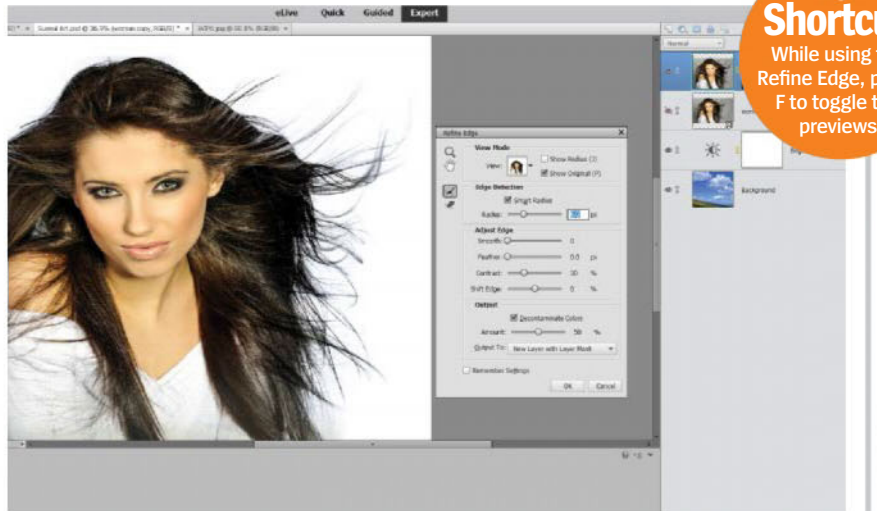
Shortcut
While using the Refine Edge, press F to toggle the previews

What does it mean?

STROKE – This feature applies a line of your choice across a selected area, by going to Stroke (Outline) Selection. There are other ways to create a circle in Elements, but this is the quickest, and will leave you with a circle to an exact pixel size. Stroke is also available in the Layer Style palette.

APPLY TEXTURES
Using paper or metal textures set to Multiply can help place your engraving, should you wish to take it further.

USE WHITE BACKGROUNDS
Images with white backgrounds work best for this tutorial, as the Threshold adjustments do not interfere with the backdrop.

On the FileSilo

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

Start image
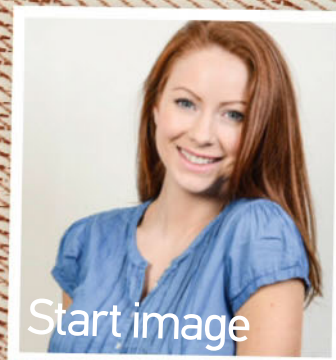
Digital art…

Turn a photo into an engraved illustration

Use layers, adjustments and patterns to create a vintage engraving

Adjustment layers aren't just for finishing off your image; they're perfect for scattering through your working process to improve the individual layers. The better your individual layers look, the better the image will be as a whole, and that's exactly how this tutorial comes together to create the perfect final image.

The Threshold might seem a limited tool, as it only consists of the one slider to turn your images into black-and-white block colours. But it's exactly the kind of adjustment that can be used throughout a project to create an amazing final image. It is crucial for using in this tutorial; by clipping the Threshold adjustment along with a portrait to multiple wave patterns, you can build up an engraved-style picture, with varying degrees of detail over the different tones in your image.

This image might look like a filter from the Filter Gallery, but the pattern is created from scratch and applied with far more control; as each layer is fully editable, you can decide how much tone you want where in your picture.

Create the engraving
Make a pattern and apply it to your work using clipping masks

Shortcut
Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to Transform; use Angle to rotate 45 degrees
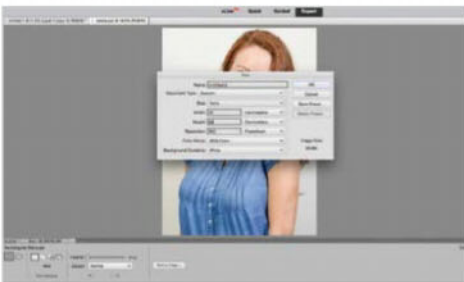
Set out your documents

01 Open 'before.psd' from the FileSilo, or use a portrait of your choice. Before we start building the image, we're going to create the engraved wave pattern; go to File>New>Blank File and create a document 50 centimetres high and wide, with a resolution of 300 pixels/inch.
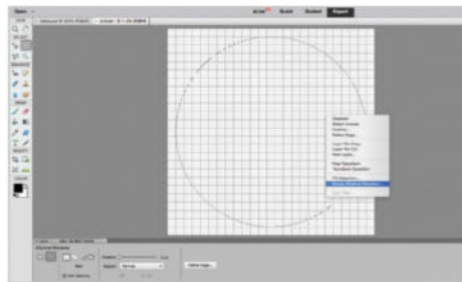
Create a circle

02 Hit Cmd/Ctrl+' to bring up the grid. Select the Elliptical Marquee (M), hold Shift and create a perfect circle in the centre of the document. This is going to form the basis of the wave pattern; create a new document, Ctrl/right-click and choose Stroke (Outline) Selection.

Stroke the circle

03 Choose a Width of 5px and leave the colour as black. Click OK. This will make a black outline of a circle, which we will proceed to turn into a wave. By creating a pattern this big, it will be easy to overlay different parts of it across the portrait.
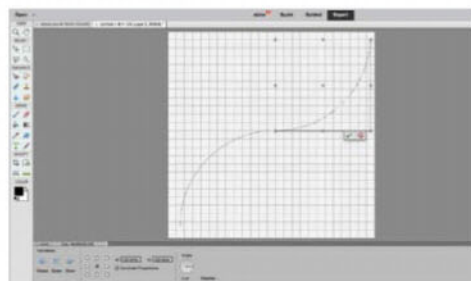
Transform into 'S' shape

04 Select the top left of the circle, Ctrl/right-click and pick Layer Via Cut; do the same with the bottom right of the circle and delete the rest. Position the two parts of the circle into a wave shape, merge both and rotate 45 degrees.
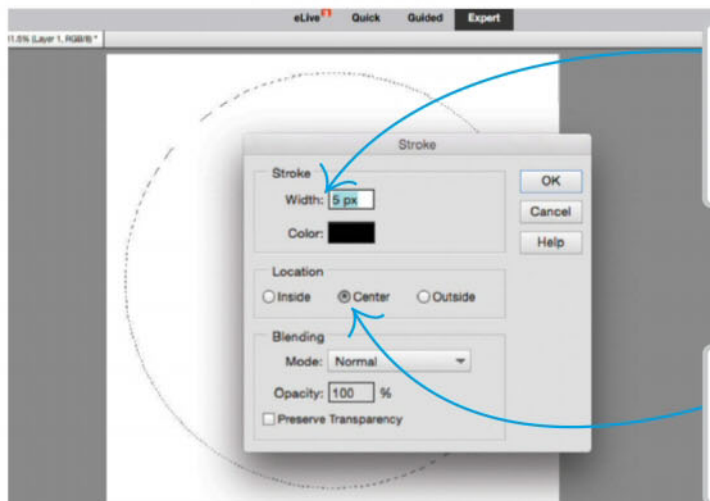
STROKE
Set your stroke width to 5px to keep the circle thin enough so it can be duplicated across the whole document.

LOCATION
The location of the stroke refers to where it's applied in relation to the selection of the circle.

101
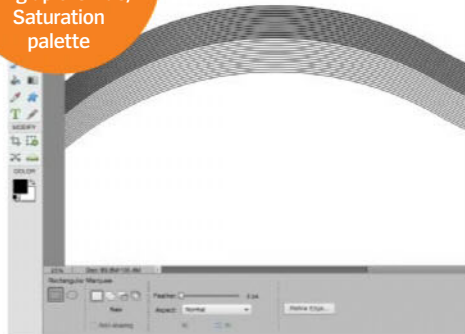
Layer the waves

05 Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the wave, then hold Shift and nudge up twice. Repeat, merging your wave shapes as you go until you cover the document in this wave pattern. By merging before you duplicate each layer, you can save a lot of time.

Work over the portrait

06 Go back to 'before.psd', create a new layer and fill with white. Head back to the document with your completed wave pattern, and Ctrl/right-click the layer; Duplicate to 'before.psd'. The wave layer should be considerably bigger than the canvas size.

Expert tip

Using Levels

The Levels adjustment is used to alter highlights, midtones and shadows by using the stoppers at the bottom of the histogram. You can bring more light and shade into your image by using it, and by choosing a Levels adjustment via the Fill Layer icon, you can apply it non-destructively.

If you need to, apply the Levels adjustment on your final image to touch-up the tones of your picture, because this can bring out the best of the individual layers you've applied the wave pattern to. Simply slide the three sliders, then experiment with what looks good.

Apply the Threshold

07 Duplicate your background layer (Cmd/ Ctrl+J). Move it above your wave layer, and Alt/Opt+click it to clip it to the pattern. Hit the Fill Layer icon and choose Threshold. Choose a slider value of 200 to start off with.

Duplicate Threshold layers

08 Duplicate the top three layers in the Layers palette. Select the duplicated wave pattern; nudge it to show a different part of the pattern, so that the lines intersect. Double-click the duplicated Threshold adjustment and alter the slider value to 160.
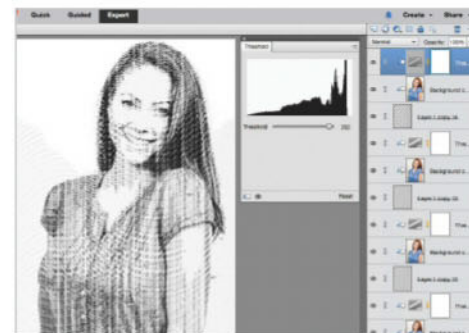
Build the effect

09 Repeat this process to show a different section of the wave pattern across different tones of the portrait. Duplicate the Threshold layers to the top of the palette and choose a Threshold slider value of 232; set the wave pattern layer to 50% Opacity.

THRESHOLD ADJUSTMENT
The threshold dictates which tones should be shown through the wave pattern, and which shouldn't.

SLIDER AND HISTOGRAM
Alter which tones appear on your wave layer by double-clicking on the Threshold adjustment.

WAVE PATTERN
The wave layer forms the basis for you to clip your portrait and Threshold edit to, as they will only show over the pattern.

PORTRAIT LAYER
The portrait has to be clipped to the wave first, in order for you to be able to see it through the pattern.
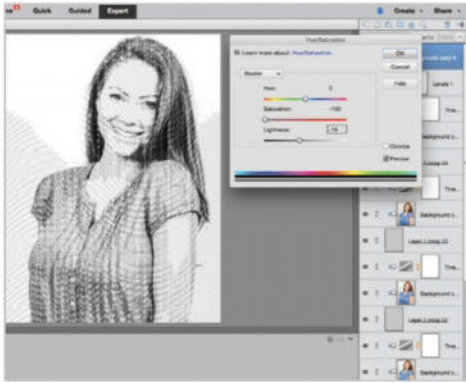
Re-tone the effect

10 Duplicate your background layer and move it to the top of the layer stack. Call up Hue/Saturation (Cmd/Ctrl+U) and reduce Saturation to -100, Lightness to -15 and set to Lighten; this will apply the tones of the original portrait across the engraving.
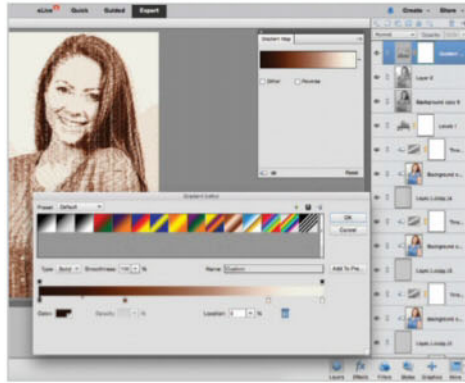
Add some colour

11 Go to the Fill Layer icon and choose Gradient Map. Click on the '+' icon and load the supplied gradient from the resources. This will apply the colour scheme across your photo; you can adjust the stoppers to suit the photo you're engraving though.
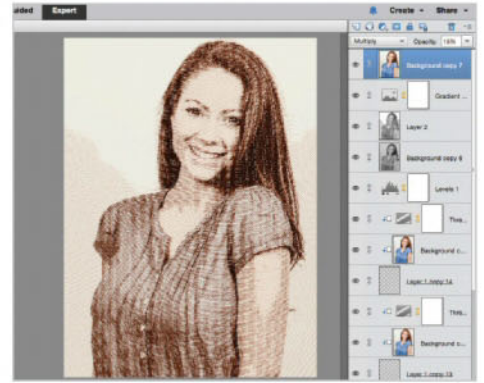
Overlay the original

12 Duplicate the original background layer again, and once more drag it to the top of the layer stack. Set to Multiply and give it an Opacity of anything between 10 and 30% to add a touch of the original colour to the finished engraved pattern.
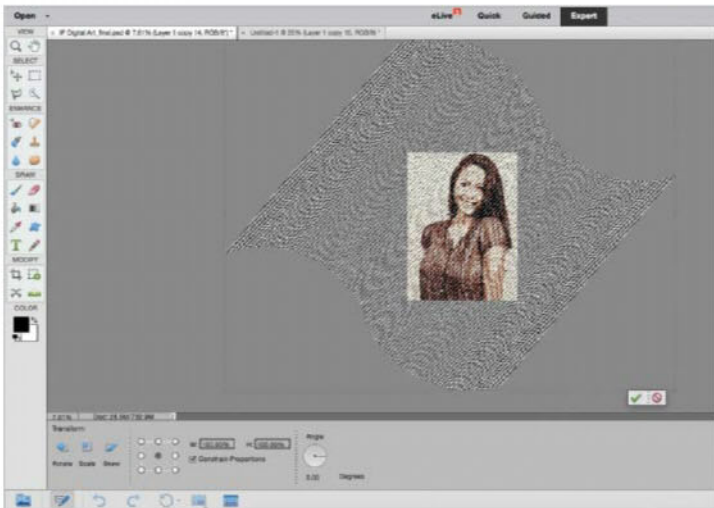
Adjust the waves

13 Click on the wave layers. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T to open the Transform tool, and make sure that the patterns intersect nicely with each other. You may want to rotate them or move them across the page.
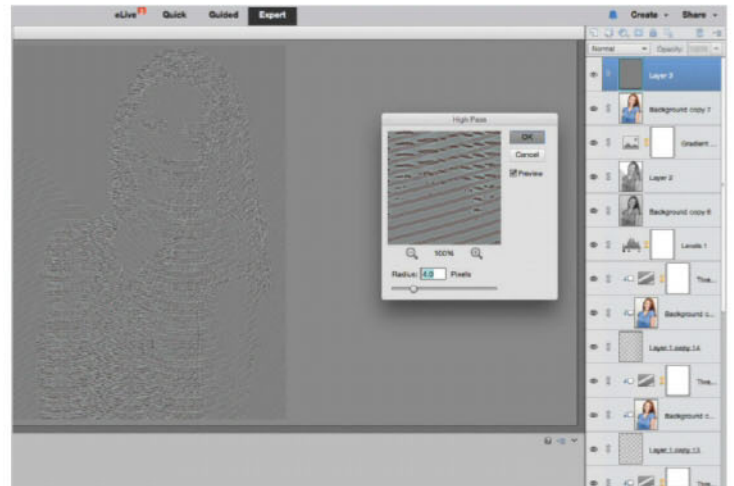
Sharpen

14 Finally, hit Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E to merge everything into one finished layer, before going to Filter>Other>High Pass and entering a Radius of 4 pixels. Hit OK, and set the layer to Overlay to give a final sharpening to the image.

Apply natural colours instead

Engraved texture without the effect

The purpose of the Threshold adjustment is to reduce an image to just two colours (black and white) based on one slider, which determines the balance between the two shades. Because this tutorial uses the Threshold filter a lot, it automatically reduces the colours in your image to just these two colours, which we later rectify by applying the Gradient Map adjustment.

This isn't too much of a problem for an engraved image, as actual engraved images often feature a subdued colour scheme, usually sepia. Should you wish to apply the texture of this effect but not the colour of an engraved image, duplicate your original layer and move it to the top of your layer stack. Set this layer to Lighten and it will show up over the darker tones of the image.
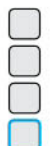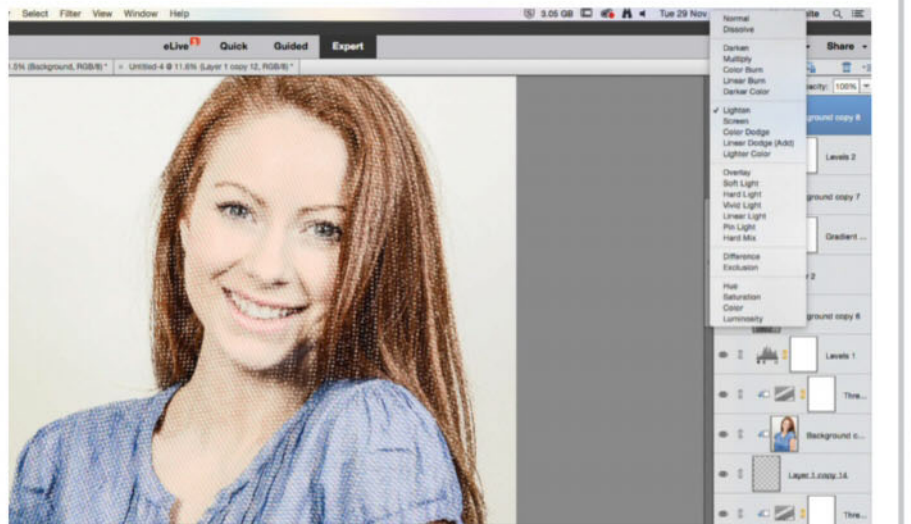
Q+A COMMON PROBLEMS IN ELEMENTS

HOW CAN THE PENCIL TOOL BE USED CREATIVELY?

The Pencil tool (N) is similar to the Brush tool in Elements, only it just has the one setting: a 100% hard edge. While it's mostly used for making preliminary sketches, like any tool, it can be used in other ways.

To create a pencil-style image with the Pencil tool, open an existing portrait in Elements and create a new layer above it. Fill this layer with white, and set to 50% Opacity. This will act almost as a tracing layer; on a layer above this, use the Pencil to outline the subject, drawing over all of the darkest areas. Create a new layer above this and sketch over another shade in the image, before reducing the opacity accordingly.

Build up your image simply by drawing in black with the Pencil but using layers of varying opacities to generate different shades of grey. Finish everything off with a Brightness/Contrast adjustment (go to the Fill Layer icon) to tweak the final tones.

USE A TEXTURE
Insert a paper texture and set to Multiply to finish off the image; use the supplied lined paper texture for a real sketch effect.

Before

WHITEN TEETH
Yellow teeth in photos is caused by lighting, rather than the model in the picture.

IS THERE A TOOL THAT CAN HELP WHITEN TEETH IN ELEMENTS?

No matter the project, all photos could do with a little retouching, especially pictures of people. Whether you're using a subject image in a bigger composition, or you just want to edit the snaps that you've taken of your friends, Elements offers a number of simple retouching tools to improve your portraits.

For whitening teeth, the easiest method is just to use the toothbrush icon that's located in the Quick tab. Open your image, go to Quick on the far left and make sure you click on Adjustments. There you will be prompted to select across the smile using the Quick Selection tool. Simply select all the teeth and Elements will automatically whiten them without you having to do anything more.

You may wish to leave the edit there if you're satisfied with the results, or use the other tools to edit the picture further. Should you wish to whiten the smile even more though, you can head to the Expert tab, grab the Dodge tool (O) and touch-up the teeth a little further.

On the FileSilo

ADJUST TO FINISH
Finish your image by using a Levels adjustment to tweak the colours in your painting. Use the drop-down colour channels.
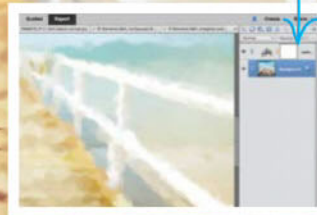
WHAT DOES THE IMPRESSIONIST BRUSH DO?

There are plenty of ways to create stunning digital art in Elements, and most of them involve using brushes to create a painting. Should you wish to turn an existing photo into a work of art though, you can either draw on a new layer with brushes, or use Elements' Impressionist brush.

The Impressionist brush turns your photo into brush strokes, with the size depending on how big you choose the brush to be. Simply draw over your photo completely to create the brush strokes over the details of the original picture. You can resize your brush using the [and] keys too; choose a finer brush for certain details that you wish to remain sharper than others.

WHY IS THE MULTIPLY BLEND MODE USEFUL?

Each blend mode changes the way that your layer will react to the layers below. They are, as their name suggests, what helps blend various elements of a composition together, and each one will have a different effect in your photo.

The Multiply blend mode is one of the more popular choices in Elements. It is one of the simpler blend modes in the program, as it just combines the pixels of your layer with whatever's below. Any image with white in will lose the white to blend into the other layers; in the image here, we've combined an orange gradient with a skyline to create a sunset effect.

Make sure you experiment with all of the blend modes to find out where they're best employed. Screen, for example, does the opposite job to Multiply, so the two will often be used together.

Before
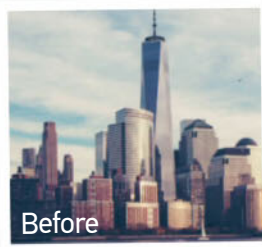
Quick tip
Changing the layout of Elements

Elements is designed to display windows across the top of your screen. But should you wish to tweak this layout to suit your own ease of use, you have the ability to activate the Layout button at the bottom of your window, which is situated next to the Organizer icon.

By clicking this icon, you can choose to either display individual windows as tabs across the top of Elements – as is the default – or display them in rows, columns, grids or even floating.

WHAT'S THE QUICKEST WAY TO ROTATE OR STRAIGHTEN A PHOTO?

It's only natural that a few of your photos will need a manual straightening in post-production, especially if they were taken by hand. Luckily, Elements contains a Rotate and Straighten tool, found in the Guided Edit section of the program.

It is very simple to get going. Just use the two rotate tools to turn the picture 90 degrees in either direction, then drag the Straighten tool across your picture's horizon to automatically level it out. You can maintain image or canvas size by using the options below, as well as checking the Autofill Edges box to use Content-Aware to fix the corners of your finished image.

105
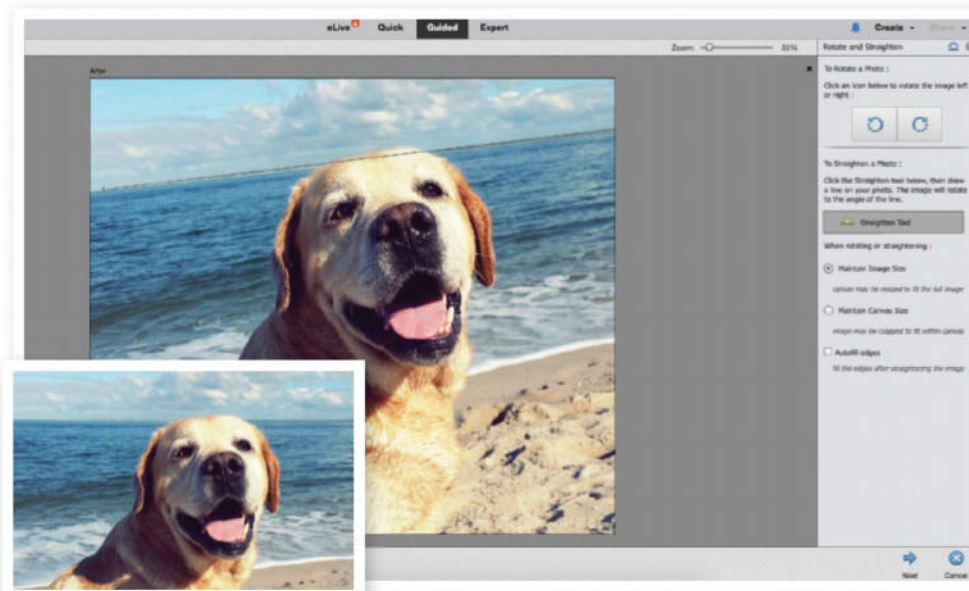
PLUG-IN   **Price** £31 (approx) $39 US   **Web** www.akvis.com

AKVIS Neon

Bring vibrancy and electricity to your photos with this awesome Photoshop plug-in from AKVIS
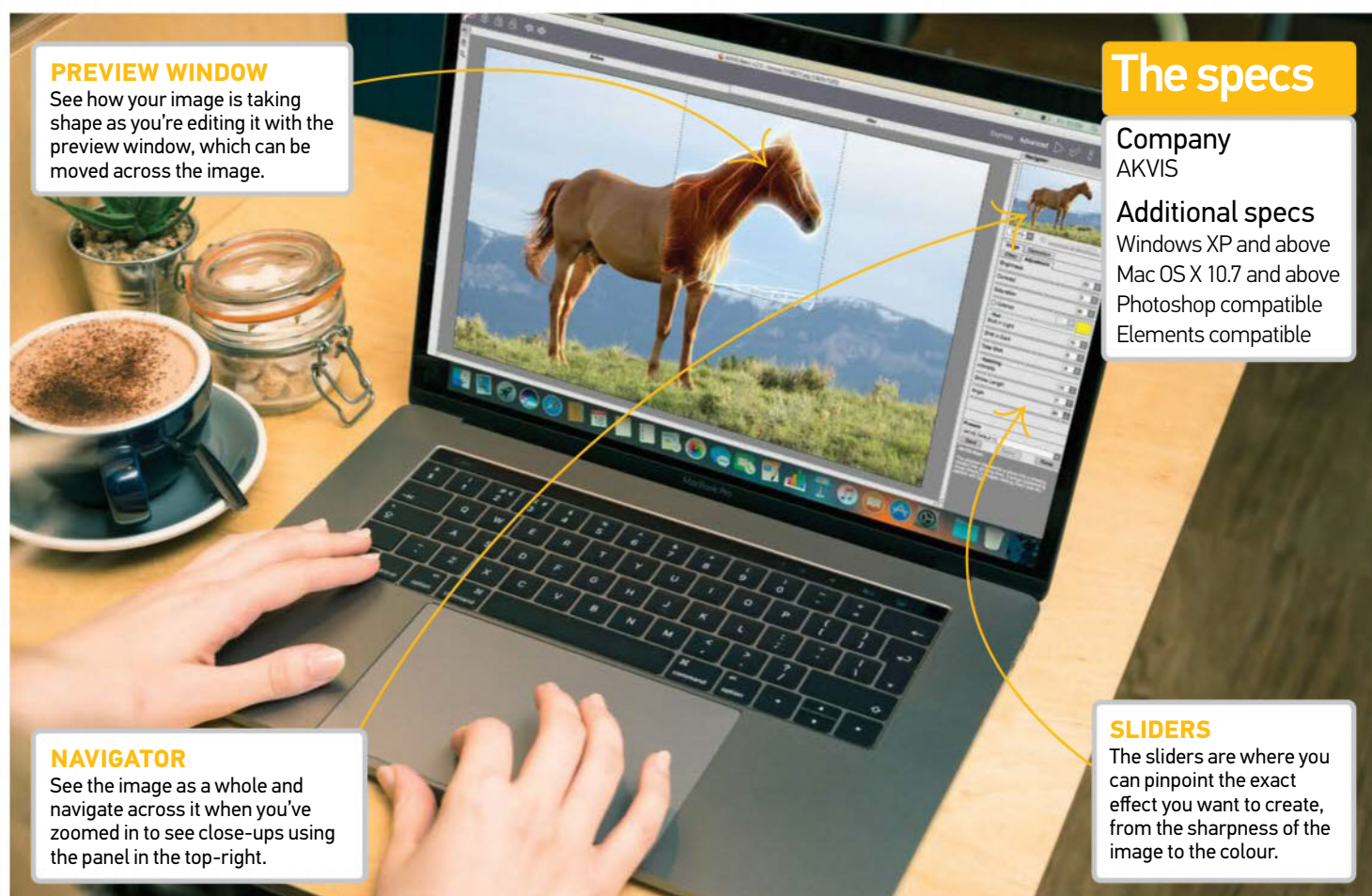
PREVIEW WINDOW
See how your image is taking shape as you're editing it with the preview window, which can be moved across the image.

The specs

Company
AKVIS

Additional specs
Windows XP and above
Mac OS X 10.7 and above
Photoshop compatible
Elements compatible

NAVIGATOR
See the image as a whole and navigate across it when you've zoomed in to see close-ups using the panel in the top-right.

SLIDERS
The sliders are where you can pinpoint the exact effect you want to create, from the sharpness of the image to the colour.

Useful presets Some of the most useful options from the preset menu

Evening Dream

01 Evening Dream creates a noisy final image with a lot of saturation and little contrast, but it can be perfect for refining brightness streaks in images, particularly lightning in rainy night shots.
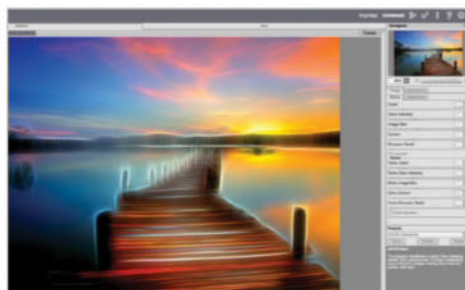
Iridescence

02 Iridescence is good for softening colours, making it great for bright images and landscape shots that could do with a subtle blurring. It also works well at harmonising clouds, which makes it a useful step in creating digitally painted sunsets.
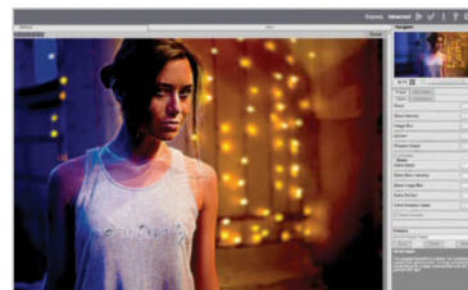
Plastic Planet

03 Plastic Planet is one of the subtler presets that AKVIS Neon offers; it sharpens your image slightly, brightens up the highlights and gives your picture the titular plastic effect. It is a good alternative to Photoshop's Plastic Wrap filter.

The Filter Gallery is one of the first features in Photoshop that most of us experiment with to create artwork, as it contains loads of fun options for turning work into an artistic masterpiece, a simple sketch or even just enhancing the tone and feel of a photo. But the Filter Gallery is rarely used as a one-click fix for your pictures, and the effects that you can create from the Gallery are usually part of a bigger project.

AKVIS's Neon plug-in, however, has the feel of a Filter Gallery effect, but it can be used as a one-click picture transformer. Whether you're using the Plastic Wrap filter in a water project or the Sketch filter in a digital illustration, you may just use the Filter Gallery sporadically; Neon is a very specific effect that will completely change the look of an image. The effect is distinctive; colours are heightened, brightness is increased and there are clear edges to your work. It looks a little like the Glowing Edges filter, but the effects that Neon produce are artier, more electric

and crucially, far more in-depth when it comes to photo editing.

Rather than the two or three sliders that come with the Filter Gallery options, Neon offers the ability to sharpen, intensify, blur, darken, lighten and even invert the effect, along with a host of other choices. There are presets to pick from, adjustments you can make, and everything loads quickly, making Neon easy to use as well as very accurate. But while Neon may create big, bright effects, the sliders mean that you can also create really subtle edits; you can use Neon as a final effect for your photo, but it does also work as an overlaying layer to place over your original picture to boost the colours or tones. It's a versatile plug-in, and there are enough options that mean you will be able to tweak the effect with no problem.

In terms of previewing your effect, Neon is actually less impressive. There isn't a full window view to display the changes you're making to an image; there's only a small box

for you to see a square of your image being edited, which you can move across the picture. This is a bit of a disappointment; it does make the plug-in a lot quicker than you'd expect but on the other hand, it's difficult to get a good feel for the effect you're working on if you can only view small segments of it at one time. The closest you can get to seeing a full view of Neon's effect is by scrolling through the presets.

The presets, though, are all of superb quality. There are dozens to choose from, with an array of different effects for each of them. As with any plug-in, some are more useful than others, but the important aspect is that you can build on them using the sliders, once you've picked a starting point from the presets menu. Many of them may not need any further tweaking either; effects such as Vintage and Soft Rays are perfect to use as Soft Light or Color layers over your work, and it takes less than 30 seconds to apply.

The ease of AKVIS Neon means that it slots into Photoshop nicely, and doesn't feel like an external piece of software so much as an extension. The effects are high quality and simple to tweak, and can really enhance your work; on the whole, this isn't a plug-in that you can't possibly live without, but it's certainly a good addition to Photoshop, and it brings back the fun that you would have originally had playing with filters.

The verdict

8

AKVIS Neon may come across as a novelty but it's a powerful tool for all kinds of Photoshop projects. It's simple to use, and great fun to experiment with.

Soft Rays

04 While there are limitless possible effects that Neon can create, Soft Rays is perhaps the quintessential AKVIS Neon preset. The strands of light, saturation and brightness make it fantastic for turning photos of animals into artier images.

Vintage

05 Vintage works nicely as an overlay. Duplicate your image (Cmd/Ctrl+J), use the Vintage preset, and it will lower saturation, apply a sepia effect and boost the contrast. Set this to Soft Light for a classic HDR effect.

Standout feature

Presets

With over 50 preset options in AKVIS Neon, there's a chosen style for any possible picture, whether you're looking for subtlety, a final effect or just a boost of certain tones or colours. The presets are great because they provide a little editing to start with, but leave you to do more editing should you wish; they're absolutely perfect for beginners, but also useful for experienced Photoshop users.

HARDWARE **Price** £20 (approx) $25 US **Web** www.studioneat.com/products/cosmonaut

Cosmonaut Capacitive Stylus

Make sketches with comfort and precision, using the marker-pen-like Cosmonaut stylus

BIGGER STROKES
The Cosmonaut stylus excels at creating bigger strokes. This is perfect for watercolour washes or backgrounds.

AMBIDEXTERITY
Given its round shape and wide grip, the Cosmonaut stylus works equally well in either hand.

The specs

Company
Studio Neat

Additional specs
Aluminium core
Rubber coating
5-inches long

FINER DETAILS
Though it's primarily intended for quick sketches rather than nuanced detailing, the Cosmonaut stylus is capable of creating fine lines in your artwork.

Five great drawing apps
Discover the perfect apps to accompany the Cosmonaut stylus

Adobe Sketch
01 Free for anyone with a Creative Cloud subscription, Adobe Sketch's brushes are now compatible with Photoshop, and you can send projects straight to your desktop with just a single click. The Cosmonaut stylus writes cleanly on the app.
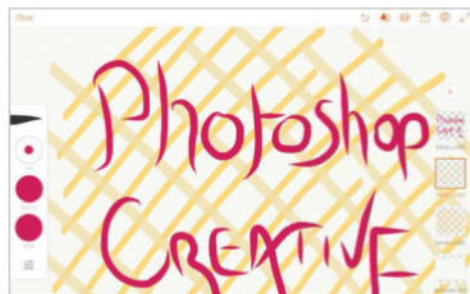
Adobe Draw
02 Adobe Draw is intended as a companion to Illustrator, but the range of brushes makes it worth trying out as an app in its own right. The ability to draw vectors is also useful, and suits the Cosmonaut's smooth gliding across the screen.

Drawing Desk
03 A free app with multiple functions, Drawing Desk isn't compatible with Photoshop but you can share to Facebook using the icon on the right of the program. It's easy to draw with, and the perfect app to make a quick sketch to share with friends.

Apple co-founder Steve Jobs famously once claimed that the iPad should never be used with a stylus. He thought that fingers were more than adequate for using with his devices; a few years down the line, however, and Apple released the Apple Pencil, proving that as technology develops, consumers' needs change.

For digital artists using touch screens, a stylus has now become a must-have accessory, and with so many on the market there's one for every kind of artist and every kind of need. The Cosmonaut stylus from Studio Neat looks considerably different to most other styluses on the market, though. In an age of multipurpose gadgets and graphics-tablet pens rammed with the latest features, the Cosmonaut stylus is bigger than most, rubber, black and looks like an oversized crayon. It's refreshingly different to look at, but how does it compare in use to the other styluses that are available?

While many styluses on the market – including the Apple Pencil – feel extremely lightweight, the first thing you notice about using the Cosmonaut stylus is how bulky it is. It's thick, designed with a wide grip, and while many competitors' products might need to be kept in a case or not left at the bottom of your bag in case they break, there are no such worries with the Cosmonaut stylus. It's sturdy enough to cope with travel, unusually for a stylus it's even waterproof, and it comes in a biodegradable tube.

The Cosmonaut stylus isn't designed to fit the shape of your hand, and doesn't have a padded part towards the nib for you to hold while you draw. Despite this, it does feel extremely comfortable in your grip. The rubber feels pleasing to hold and won't slip out of your hand; the weight of the actual stylus too is perhaps unsurprisingly fairly heavy, and it feels like using a white-board marker rather than a pen or pencil. The lack of any smaller parts makes it great if you have young children, too.

It may look a little boring or unspectacular, but the Cosmonaut stylus is about low maintenance and high quality. The smoothness with which it draws onto a touch screen is superb; you need to press down a little harder than you would with some styluses, but such is the white-board marker feel of the Cosmonaut stylus, that it doesn't feel uncomfortable to do so. As you may expect, the stylus excels with bigger, painted brush strokes, and is perfect for quick sketches. It struggles a little more with finer outlines that you make – though it is possible to create more detailed artwork with the Cosmonaut stylus – and one big advantage is that unlike many styluses, the Cosmonaut doesn't feel awkward to use with non-drawing apps that you might want to flick between.

While the Cosmonaut stylus doesn't feel particularly precise or subtle, it does feel extremely easy to use, and it's a lot more accurate than it looks. If you are an artist who often works on the go and need a pen to make quick sketches of first drafts before you flesh out your work in Photoshop, the Cosmonaut stylus is perhaps perfect for you; it can create controlled curves just as easily as it can quick flicks, it's not likely to get lost, and it doesn't need to recharge, either. Technology may have advanced quickly since the first ranges of iPads, but the Cosmonaut stylus is timeless; it's a good option for most projects you'll undertake on an iPad, and it's one of the comfiest styluses you'll hold.

The verdict

8

The Cosmonaut might not be the most stylish, but what it lacks in gimmicks it makes up for in durability and comfort. The perfect tablet stylus.

Standout feature

Comfort

Most styluses are built for a smooth touch on a tablet, rather than ease of use. The Cosmonaut stylus has both in abundance; it drifts across an iPad nicely, and the wide, rubber grip feels comfortable in either hand. There are no parts that could be easily lost, and it's hard wearing enough that it doesn't need a case.

Notes
04 The default iOS Notes app was previously only for text. Since the advent of drawing tools, it's been useful for the quick sketches that the Cosmonaut excels at. The ruler is a fantastic addition too, and something that most apps don't have.

Bamboo Paper
05 If you're typically a Wacom user, the Bamboo Paper app may well be a drawing tool you already have on your iPad. The responsive pen strokes work nicely with the Cosmonaut stylus, and the ability to add images to your work is also useful.

Embellishing type in Photoshop

www.jansarts.com
instagram.com/
jansarts

Alejandro Solórzano discovered calligraphy two years ago and set about mastering his own style – with a little help from Photoshop

"For me, the best fonts are those that are expressive and detailed," says Alejandro Solórzano. "Typography is not a math problem with one correct answer; it will always vary!"

Alejandro is a celebrated type artist online with thousands of followers, but he's completely self-taught. So how did he reach the level he is today, and how does Photoshop help?

Why did you get into calligraphy?

I started calligraphy two years ago. I bought a calligraphy marker with a square tip, then I downloaded some worksheets with basic exercises and strokes, which I started to practise every single day. Once I understood each letter structure and form, I changed the tool to a brush pen to start developing my own style. I didn't study any graphic-design course, but I took some packaging, branding and calligraphy courses.

Would you say the way you learned is the best way to learn about calligraphy?

If you are interested in learning calligraphy, I highly recommend taking some customised courses; it's always helpful to have a guide from the experts. Be patient and practise at least 15 minutes a day; that's how you can improve your skills on a short-term basis. Look for inspiration – these days you can find a lot of calligraphy blogs to follow.

How does Photoshop help bring to life what you create on the page?

Photoshop has become my best friend when it comes to digitising my type work. I use it to import my files directly from the scanner; to isolate type and place it on different backgrounds with lots of colours; to add shadows and lights; and to make fixes. Most of the time I try to keep all the hand-written details to give a more precise look and feel. I love mixing analogue skills with our digital world. Photoshop is really helpful when the postproduction process starts. You can add letters, change forms, rotate text and do whatever you can imagine to create a good composition.

Which are your most-used tools?

The tools I use the most are the Brush and the Pen tools, as these make the shadowing and editing process easier. I also use different blend modes depending the effect I'm looking for, in addition to the Quick Mask mode to isolate type from the sketch paper background. Talking of the Brush tool, it's also important to mention that it allows you to create your own customised brushes with distinct features, which makes it easier to emulate a calligraphy broad-edged pen directly into Photoshop.

Is it difficult to make your text stand out against its background in Photoshop?

I often make the text stand out from its background by highlighting it, making a few colour adjustments and placing shadows between the letters. If you have a dark background you might want to use a light text; if you have a light background, try darker colours. It's just as simple as that. It gets a little harder when you try to add a quote to a photo because of its colours and elements, so when it's necessary, I add a black layer and then adjust the opacity so that the text can be clear and legible: that's definitely a good tip for beginners!

Do you have any other tips you could share?

After years of working with typography and calligraphy, I can say that everything boils down to practice and experimentation, both on paper and digitally. Buy lots of different tools, try new letters and watch the result. Be grateful for any positive comments and learn from negative feedback. Once you enjoy what you're doing, it will be easier to share your passion with others, and you'll instantly start to see the results. Believe in yourself!

How do you go about getting your work seen by others to generate this feedback?

Instagram! Instagram allows you to see exactly what inspires people, and how creativity is applied in their everyday lives. There are plenty of awesome designers out there to provide some creative inspiration, and many of them have bet on Instagram as a place to expose their portfolio and let people know what they're capable of, and for me it's an awesome way of sharing your creative process. It has become a great platform for connecting with other creatives and receiving feedback from some of your favourite artists.

What projects do you have lined up for the future?

I'm currently working on the development of an online lettering course in which I'll be teaching the whole process from sketching through to digitising your works and uploading them to your favourite social design networks. Hopefully it will be available soon, so stay tuned. I'll also continue to post on my personal blog, and start developing my own full calligraphy font, which is planned to be launched in March 2017.
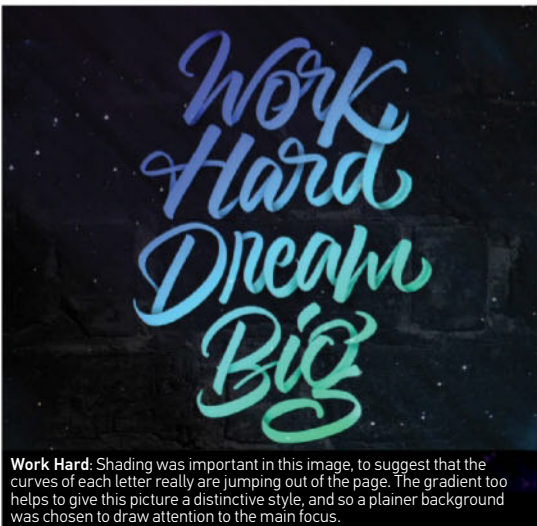

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Aspire: This is one of my favourite images that I have created for my personal Instagram feed, which is part of a set based on letters, fun moments and quotes that I've found in my daily life. I enjoy sharing different techniques, materials and lettering styles. I think that this is the best way to share your own professional experience.
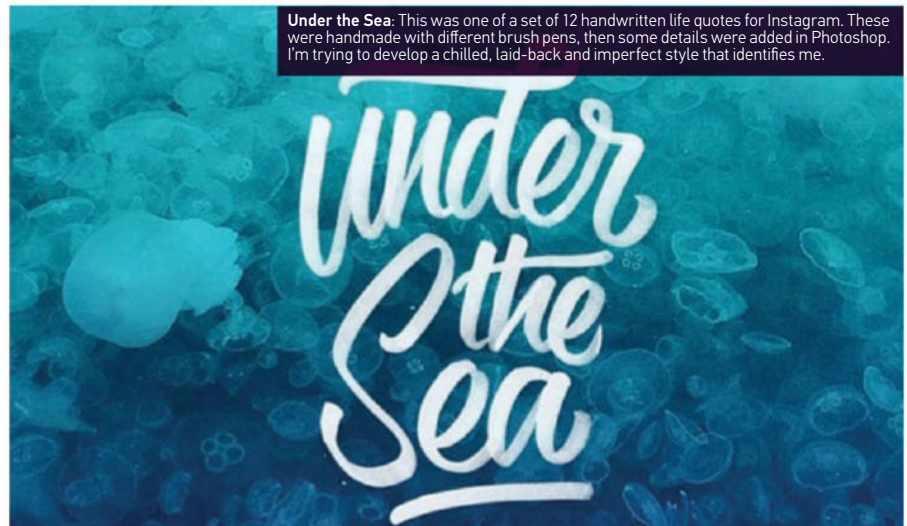
Para Bailar La Bamba: I enjoy using brush and calligraphy fonts because now I can understand all the hard design work that's behind a full handmade font. I've always wanted to create my own customised typography.

Summer Breeze: In this image, the typography is part of a bigger composition. The 3D aspect of the text is what makes it stand out from its background; the shadowing and lighting are what make this image different to other calligraphy pieces in the portfolio.

Under the Sea: This was one of a set of 12 handwritten life quotes for Instagram. These were handmade with different brush pens, then some details were added in Photoshop. I'm trying to develop a chilled, laid-back and imperfect style that identifies me.

Work Hard: Shading was important in this image, to suggest that the curves of each letter really are jumping out of the page. The gradient too helps to give this picture a distinctive style, and so a plainer background was chosen to draw attention to the main focus.

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Makers Production

Skull

Gorilla

Rhino

Army Double Exposure

Aly Bassam

How does Aly Bassam create his unique style in Photoshop, and what tips does he have for Photoshop beginners?

"I started working in Photoshop when I was 12 years old," Aly Bassam explains to us. "It was my hobby to manipulate my parents' pictures, especially after having my brother's work in his photography studio provide the inspiration."

Nowadays, Aly is developing his own artistic style that combines photomanipulation with double exposure. But what are his Photoshop secrets? We caught up with him for some of his tips and techniques.

How do you start an image?
I do not start sketching in a sketchbook as others do. In fact, I start by opening a blank art board, collecting my elements as a draft, and coming up with a good composition, then I start designing my work as I am planning. Sometimes it takes too much time to initially come up with a good concept.

You create amazing double exposures. Can you share any tips for readers who are wanting to create them?

It's a style based on creativity in linking elements. I decided to introduce photomanipulation to my double exposure, mostly on portrait profiles. I advise beginners to follow tutorials and speed-art videos to widen their creativity and understand the principles of photomanipulation.

What do you look for in a good Photoshop composition?
Everything has to be organised well in the photo. Sometimes a messy design is good to create a scene, but I prefer a simple background with a main element to focus on.

What are your favourite tools?
Take help from others! **Photoshop Creative** and YouTube are both great sources for Photoshop tutorials. There is a huge number of great artists and Photoshop wizards out there who are willing to help you out, so don't be afraid to ask.

Check out more of Aly's work at **www. photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Alybassam**

The making of Gorilla
Discover the process Aly used to put together this fun composition

Creating the background
I started designing the background and organising my composition in the photo by combining layers to create a new background. I worked on colours and added the damaged car that the gorilla was sitting on.

Introducing the gorilla
I combined several features from several gorillas to come up with a new gorilla. Then I made him wear a certain costume to approach my visual goal and the mood of the design.

Adding the clothes
I manipulated his clothes and edited them using Puppet Warp to fit his body. The process included adding some shadows, dodge and burn, and fixing the colours and the light to develop the visual's mood.

Creating final flourishes
I added the gorilla's kids to clarify the concept. In addition, I used certain colours, light and fire because it is a night scene. I added a foreground to complete the photo and show it through its entire perspective.

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 2 FEB 2017!

AKVIS Pastel

Turn Photos into Paintings! Photoshop Plugin