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## Editorial

Editor **Erlingur Einarsson**  
erlingur.einarsson@futurenet.com  
01202 586200

Techniques Editor **Mark White**  
Senior Designer **Sarah Bellman**  
Group Editor in Chief **Chris George**  
Group Senior Art Editor **Rebecca Shaw**

## Contributors

Jonathan Bail, Abbi Castle, Jo Cole, Sarah Cousens, Rebecca Greig, Rebekka Hearl, Moe Hezwani, Harriet Knight, Rodrigo Marinelli, Sarah Maynard, John Ross, Daniel Sinoca, Andre Villanueva

## Advertising

Media packs are available on request

Commercial Director **Clare Dove**

clare.dove@futurenet.com

Advertising Manager **Mike Pyatt**

michael.pyatt@futurenet.com

01225 687538

Account Director **George Lucas**

george.lucas@futurenet.com

Advertising Sales Executive **Chris Mitchell**

chris.mitchell@futurenet.com

## International

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International Licensing Director **Matt Ellis**

matt.ellis@futurenet.com

## Subscriptions

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## Production

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Production Project Manager **Clare Scott**

Advertising Production Manager **Joanne Crosby**

Digital Editions Controller **Jason Hudson**

Production Manager **Frances Twentyman**

## Management

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Commercial Finance Director **Dan Jotcham**

Group Content Director **Paul Newman**

Head of Art & Design **Rodney Dive**

**Printed by** William Gibbons, 28 Planetary Road, Willenhall, WV13 3XT

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Blend modes are a massively useful feature of any Photoshop project, but being the creatures of habit we are, we all probably have three or four we tend to stick to for the most part.

This issue, however, you can confidently strike out on a quest to add to your favourites, because we'll be showing you how to master *every. single. one.* of them. All 27 can offer something special to a project, so use this issue to experiment like never before!

In addition, we've got tutorials spanning the spectrum from a digital/real-life paper-collage crossover and how to make the most of Smart Objects, to a healing tools photo masterclass. Also, make sure to check out our expert reviews, insightful interviews and beautiful galleries. We hope you enjoy the issue.

Erlingur Einarsson **Editor**  
[erlingur.einarsson@futurenet.com](mailto:erlingur.einarsson@futurenet.com)

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# FileSilo

## YOUR FREE PHOTOSHOP RESOURCES ARE HERE!

- ✓ This issue: patterns, textures, a pop-art generator and more
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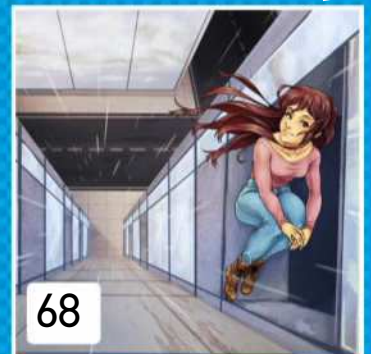


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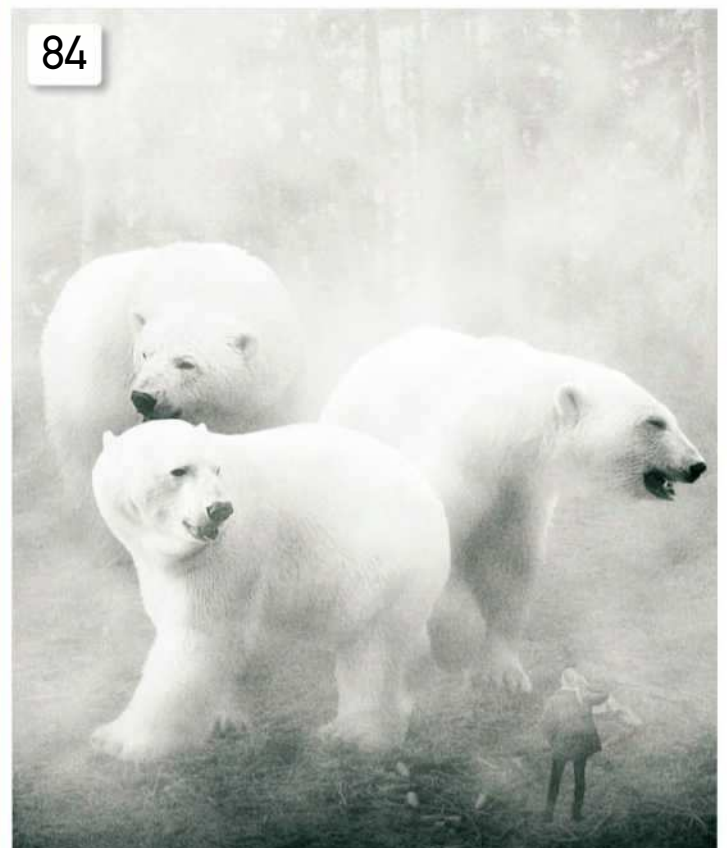
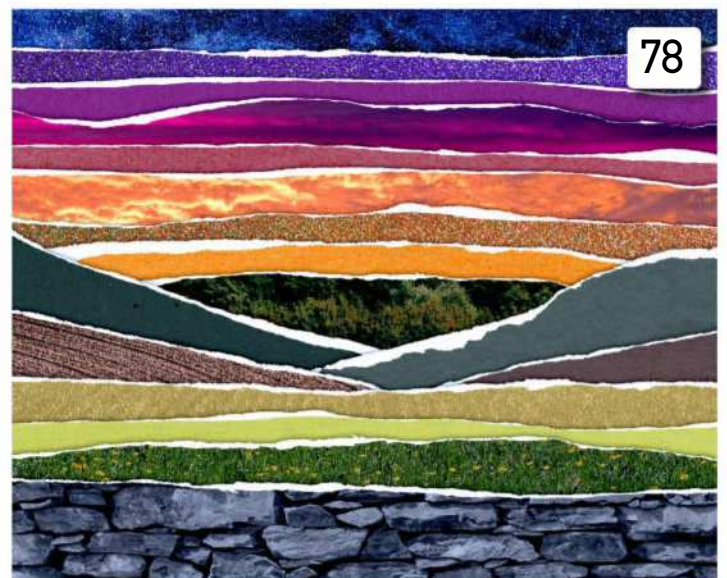


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# READERS' CHALLENGE

Upload your images to [photoshopcreative.co.uk](http://photoshopcreative.co.uk)

## We challenged you...

In Issue 163, we challenged you to get creative with the set theme of hope. You were allowed to create whatever you wanted, so long as it incorporated the theme somehow.



## Trevor Budd

[The Perception of Hope](#)

Layers and masks were key in bringing this piece together. The blending of the image is really what makes it and the combination of surreal imagery creates an intriguing scene.

## This issue's challenge...

Think you can do better?  
Prove it!

Next issue, the theme is **music**. We don't mind how you incorporate it into your image, just be as creative as you possibly can! Head to [www.photoshopcreative.co.uk](http://www.photoshopcreative.co.uk) and simply hit the Challenge link. Closing date: 5 June.



## THE PRIZE...

### Contour Design Unimouse

This issue, we're giving away a Contour Design Unimouse to one lucky winner of the challenge! This isn't like your average mouse – it has far more functions and is perfect for any Photoshop user to multitask when designing.

WORTH  
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**Honourable mentions** See some honourable mentions from this issue's challenge at [facebook.com/photoshopcreative](https://facebook.com/photoshopcreative)



# 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.



**Višnja Mihatov Barić**

[www.instagram.com/teetotka\\_illustrations](http://www.instagram.com/teetotka_illustrations)

The process of creating each of my illustrations is really simple. Sketching is really important. When I'm satisfied with the final drawing, I scan it and then edit it in Adobe Photoshop. I usually start with adjusting the Levels and contrast.



Višnja's watercolour portraits are striking and beautiful; while the majority of this brilliance is done by hand, Photoshop is just used to fine-tune, as it is for many traditional artists. Višnja has over 2,000 appreciations on Behance.

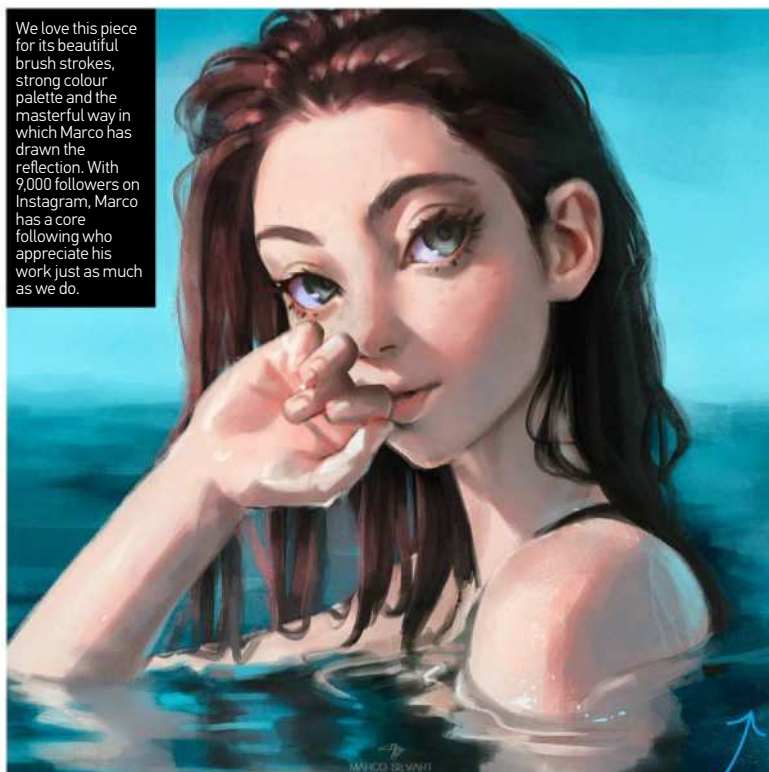


**Oleh Dihtiarov**

[www.instagram.com/flyagulaka/](http://www.instagram.com/flyagulaka/)

I'm not especially attached to any drawing style, I just experiment all the time, and it turns out spontaneously. Photoshop is a cool program; personally I use a few brushes and layers. This is dedicated to drummer Masha Sorokina of the group ONUKA.

We love this piece for its beautiful brush strokes, strong colour palette and the masterful way in which Marco has drawn the reflection. With 9,000 followers on Instagram, Marco has a core following who appreciate his work just as much as we do.

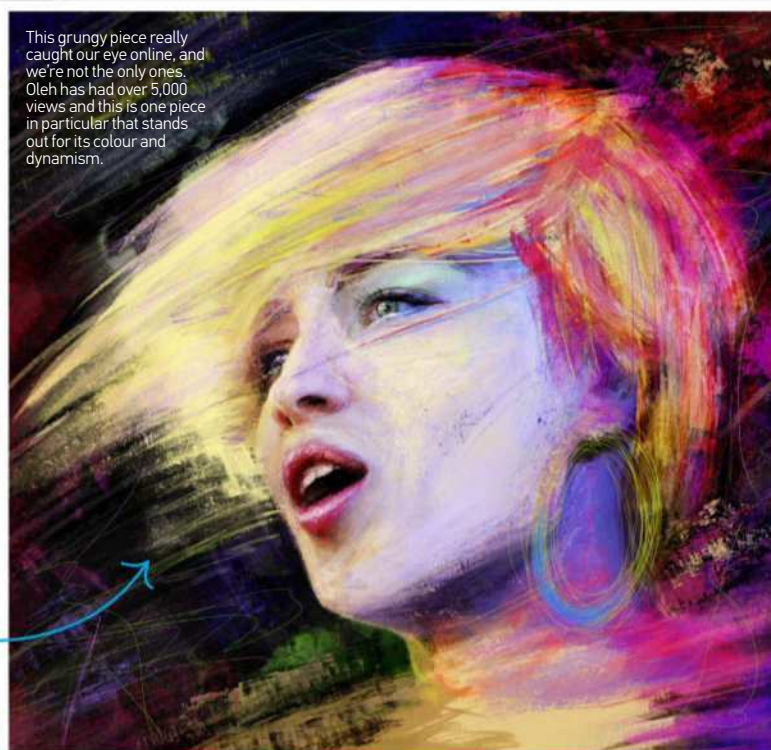


**Marco Aurélio Silva**

[artstation.com/marcosilva](http://artstation.com/marcosilva)

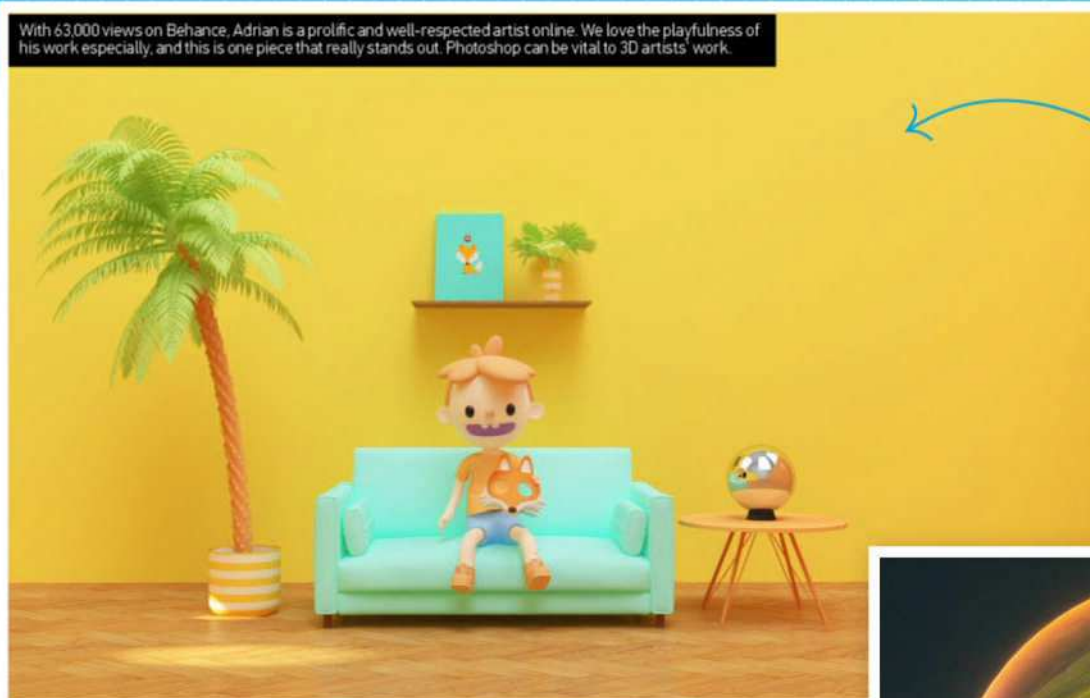
I started using a picture as reference, then I made the line art on a new layer and filled with the colours; to create light and shadows, I used another layer. Finally, I finished the work with some texture brushes, to give it a canvas painting appearance.

This grungy piece really caught our eye online, and we're not the only ones. Oleh has had over 5,000 views and this is one piece in particular that stands out for its colour and dynamism.





With 63,000 views on Behance, Adrián is a prolific and well-respected artist online. We love the playfulness of his work especially, and this is one piece that really stands out. Photoshop can be vital to 3D artists' work.



## Adrián San Vicente

[www.behance.net/AdrianSanVicente](http://www.behance.net/AdrianSanVicente)

This was an image created with the help of Maxon Cinema 4D, Photoshop and Illustrator. Photoshop is really useful for adding colour and texture to images that have been created in 3D software.



## Andy Veilski

[www.behance.net/veilski](http://www.behance.net/veilski)

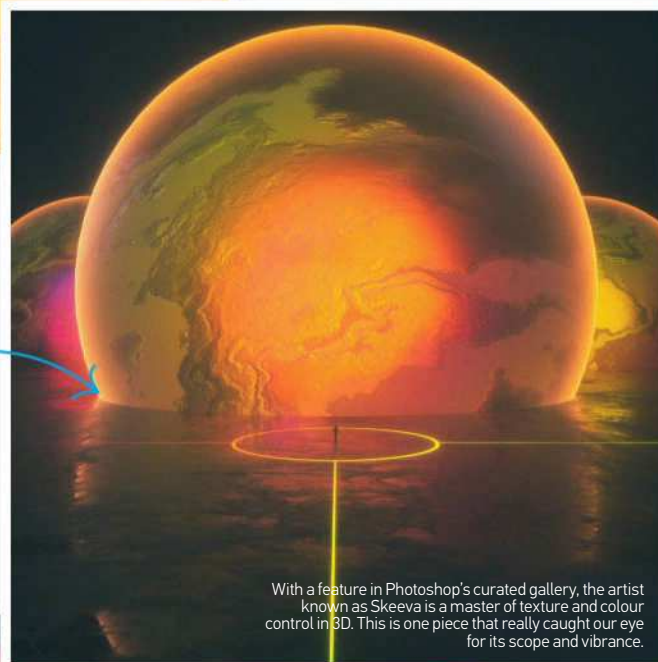
I found the idea of a spy looking out of the blinds directly from the screen of a tablet amusing, and made a collage of photos in Photoshop. Then all the line art was painted with an ink brush that I created. I made colour corrections and used adjustments to finish.



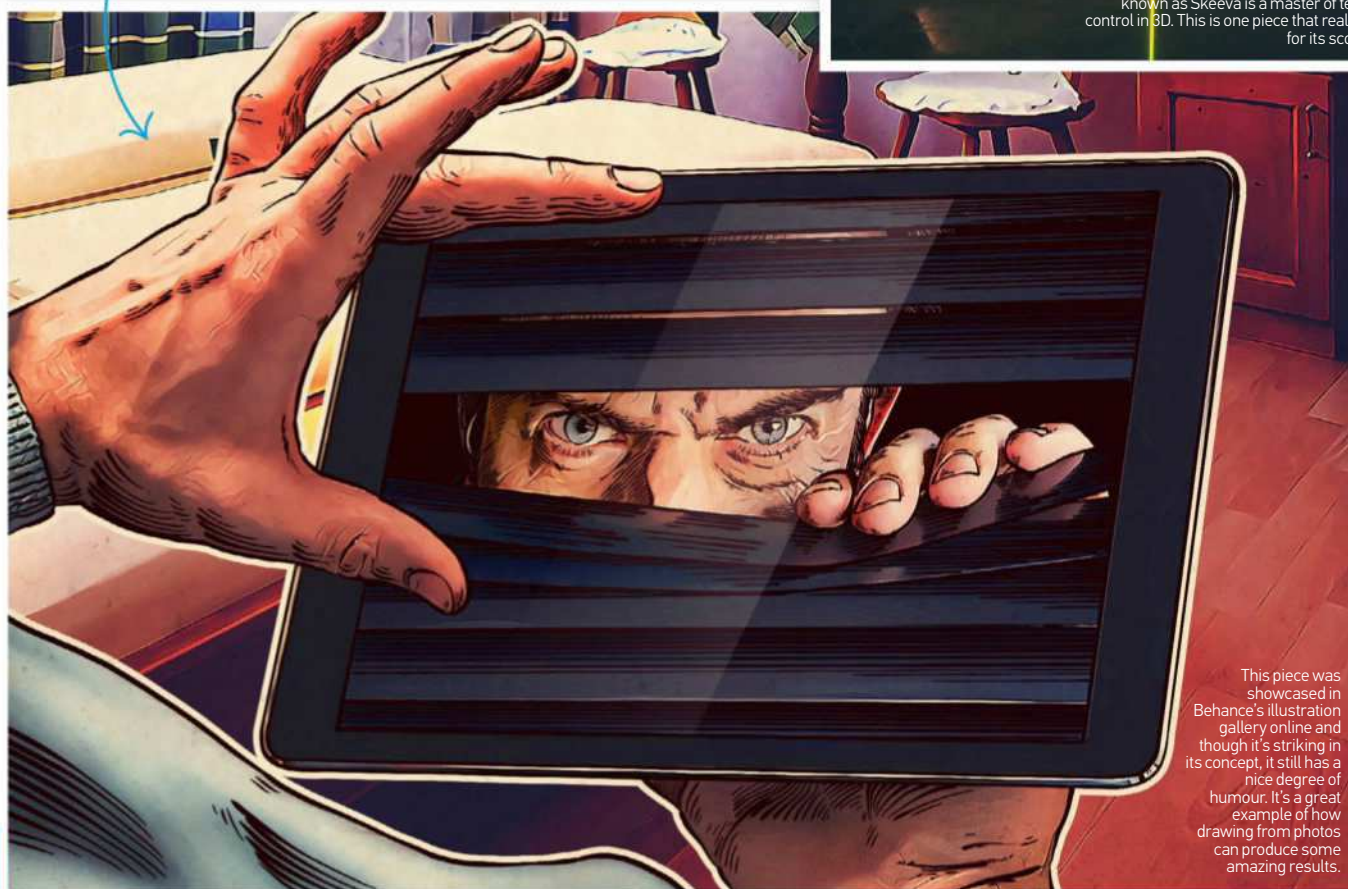
## Skeeva

[www.theskeeva.com](http://www.theskeeva.com)

Most of my images are created in 3D applications, but Photoshop always helps me to achieve that final feel I'm looking for. In this particular work I was using Photoshop to do colour grading, colour correction, and atmospheric elements.



With a feature in Photoshop's curated gallery, the artist known as Skeeva is a master of texture and colour control in 3D. This is one piece that really caught our eye for its scope and vibrance.



This piece was showcased in Behance's illustration gallery online and though it's striking in its concept, it still has a nice degree of humour. It's a great example of how drawing from photos can produce some amazing results.





# READERS' IMAGES


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

## GET IN TOUCH

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

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Search [PhotoshopCreative](#)

 Tweet us your creative artwork  
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Alternatively, you can email:  
[markwhite03@futurenet.com](mailto:markwhite03@futurenet.com)



**Patrik Gama**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/  
user/patrikgama](http://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/patrikgama)

I created the shadow in this image by changing the Color Overlay to black and reducing the layer's Opacity. For a final touch, I added a Gaussian Blur and Motion Blur filter to the shadow.



**Elissandro Pinto**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/  
user/Elissandro](http://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Elissandro)

This image was created by combining a number of elements including the sky, the hands and the figure in the foreground of the picture. A reflection was created using Distort filters once everything was in place.



**Ann Wehner**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Anjel](http://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Anjel)

This piece was partly created on my iPad Pro using iColorama and Superimpose before bringing it into Photoshop CS6 where more elements were added. It was then tweaked using Curves, Levels, Color Balance, Vibrance and Color Lookup.







**Julio de Carvalho**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/JulioDeCarvalhoArt](https://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/JulioDeCarvalhoArt)

I wanted to capture a moment where on a great journey, the travelling animals' hope is rewarded. I used Terragen 3D software to generate the terrain and photos for the animals and the sky. I painted on top of the photos, to integrate and achieve the mood I wanted.



**Rijad Smajlovic**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/RijadBiH](https://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/RijadBiH)

Sometimes I try and get inspiration from my imagination, but it doesn't always happen. So I go back to my old pictures and sit there looking at them, trying to combine parts into a new image. That's how this one began!



**Mary Spencer**

[photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Peach](https://photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Peach)

I enjoy creating winter images; I like using the snow and ice textures. This composition used many textures and blend modes to give the effect of winter. Along with fog and mist brushes it gives the effect of being dreamy.



# M J Faint Design Co

Studio frontman Marcus on Photoshop, being your own boss and how to get into design



## ABOUT THE STUDIO



M J Faint Design Co  
[www.mjfaintdesign.co/](http://www.mjfaintdesign.co/)  
@MJFainty

Marcus has previously worked on a number of international consumer publications. He now runs M J Faint Design Co in Bath, where he continues as an art editor for a film/TV magazine as well as producing illustrations, logos and infographics for a number of clients.

**M**y dad is a very creative guy, and that definitely rubbed off on me," says Marcus Faint, who runs M J Faint Design Co. "I think the moment I realised I wanted to make design my career was while undertaking a magazine design module at university. That's when I thought, this is something I could see myself doing day-in, day-out."

That's also when Marcus discovered Photoshop, and since then he's worked as a designer and art editor on magazines, before setting up his own studio. "Well I've been an art editor on a couple of international magazines and it's always nice to see your work on the shelves in shops. I've also loved the illustration work I've done with *net* magazine," he says. "Aside from the

## Offline Design: *net* magazine

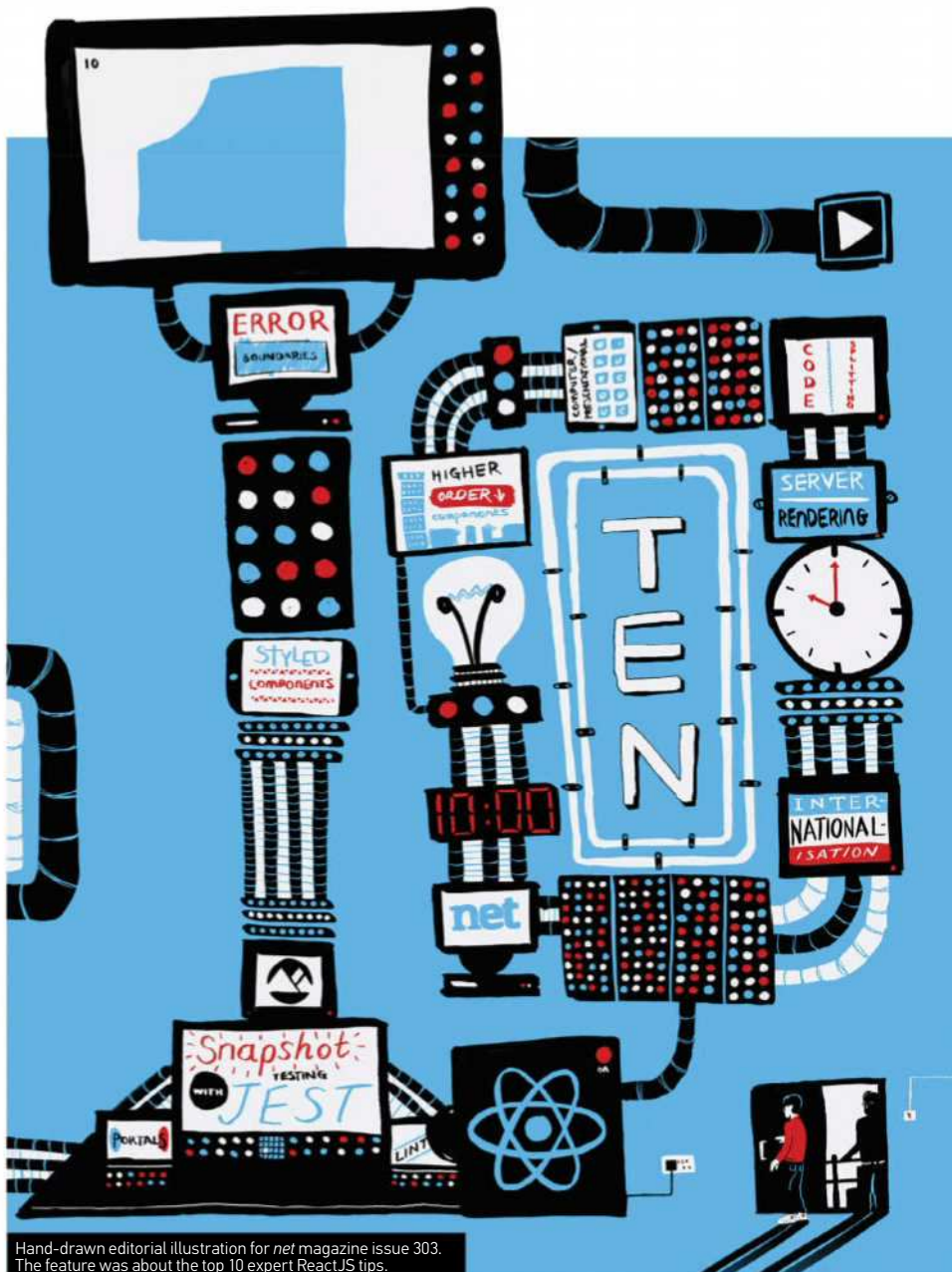
This was an editorial illustration created for *net* magazine for a feature about offline design





# Three great projects

Quality images from Marcus



Hand-drawn editorial illustration for *net* magazine issue 303. The feature was about the top 10 expert ReactJS tips.

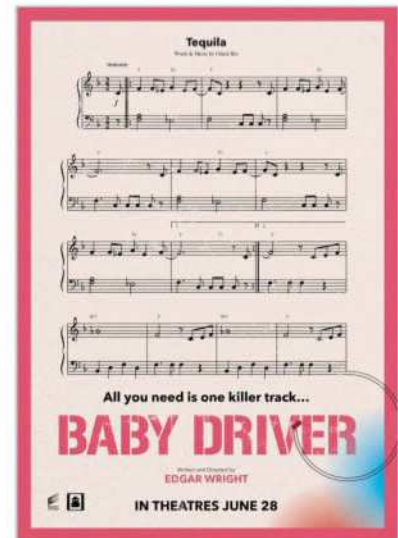
magazine work, the *Film Club Friday* personal project I undertook is also something I really enjoyed, and has been commented on by others in the industry."

Now Marcus runs his own studio from his base in Bath, and has his daily schedule organised and ready to go. "Always a coffee to start the day!" he says, "Then I'll fire up the computer and see what work is in. I'm a big believer in lists, so I tend to write one out at the start of each day and I'm only happy once everything is ticked off it. As far as starting the studio was concerned, it was my dad and my sister that inspired me. They both run their own businesses and I think that 'own boss' mentality is something very inherent in our family."

Though Photoshop is a constant for the studio, it's not the only tool that goes into the work. "It's something I use every day, predominantly to edit images ready for print, but other times it'll be an integral part of an illustration I create," Marcus explains. "The

big three are Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign for me. Perhaps my most important tool is the pen and paper." And what would his most-used tools in Photoshop be? "A lot of what I do revolves around image correction, [so] I tend to use adjustment layers an awful lot," he reveals. "And from the illustration side of things, it's got to be the Brush Tool along with custom brushes that suit the job."

He may run the studio himself, but when it comes to offering advice for beginners who might want to do what he does for a living, Marcus is refreshingly laid back for someone with a lot of responsibility. "Don't get too bogged down with finding 'your style,'" he suggests. "Some clients actually like someone who is adaptable and can offer them multiple solutions to a problem. Aside from that, don't underestimate the importance of being an organised person who can communicate well with clients, even when they may be being difficult!"

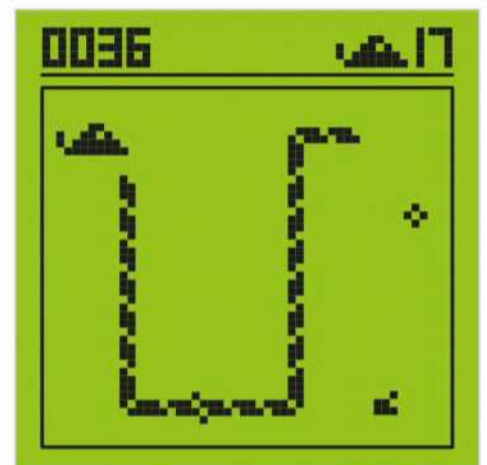


## Baby Driver:

This was a movie poster created for a PosterSpy creative brief. Taking the musical notations from one of the film's trailers, I chose to have the image be a mix of this music with the thrill of a high-speed car chase – hinted at by the skid marks and red/blue police lights toward the bottom of the image.



**Olympics Infographic: All About History:** This was a vector editorial illustration created to showcase some of the amazing events that have happened during the Olympic games – from Jesse Owen's memorable win to the Berlin tragedy.



**36 Days of Type: U:** An exercise in consistency! This was a project in which each day was spent creating a new letter of the alphabet before posting to social media.



# MASTER ALL 27 BLEND MODES

## Learn how to use every one of these amazing features to put some bounce into your artwork

**E**very Photoshop user benefits from blend modes. Digital artists employ them for a better mix in their artwork, photomanipulators switch blend modes for realism and retouchers can add a new layer with a different blend mode for a subtle rework of a portrait. With this in mind, there's no reason to sit this feature out!

Over the next few pages, we're going to show you how you can use every single one of these 27 ingenious little options: we know you've only ever stumbled across some

of the blend modes by mistake once or twice, but that's not going to stop us from using them in these projects. Not all blend modes were created equal, but all of them have their uses. Yes, even that one you're thinking of.

Let's dive right into the artwork. We're going to be creating popping portraits, basketball compositions, light trails and out-of-bounds madness, and none of it would be possible without blend modes. They're essential to your work and everybody needs them!

### Meet the experts...



#### RODRIGO MARINELLI

The secret of the out-of-bounds image opposite is to duplicate the

kangaroo and place it above the Screen layer. I love to use this technique because it always gives a cool depth effect to a scene.



#### ANDRE VILLANUEVA

Blend modes are absolutely fantastic for digital artists. Feel your

way with a semi-random lottery of modes, apply them scientifically, or mix and match for a dynamic, best of both worlds approach.



#### MARK WHITE

One of my first memories of Photoshop is cycling through

the blend modes on a new layer, learning how pixels work with each other. That's exactly what I did with the bokeh image on page 16.



**MULTIPLY**

This blend mode is perfect for creating shadows, as with this bird, close to the frame. It blends the layer with the scene.

**SCREEN**

Screen does the opposite to Multiply: It replaces a dark pixel with as much brightness from your layer as it can.

**SOFT LIGHT**

With the Soft Light mode, it's possible to create layers to make the scene look brighter. We did this in the light areas surrounding the kangaroo.

**LINEAR BURN**

This blend mode is useful for enhancing the darkest part of a picture, such as the kangaroo's face.

**NORMAL**

The Normal blend mode was used to compose the scene. With it, the top layer always appears above all others.





# MASTER ALL 27 BLEND MODES

## DARKEN

Darken shows the darker colours over the lighter ones on layers below.

## LIGHTEN

Lighten will show the lightest colour over the dark ones on layers below.

Blend modes are fun to experiment with, but they can also be used to switch up your photos for great effects.

For a bokeh effect, create a pink to blue gradient on a new layer and set to Darken; duplicate, set to 30% Opacity and set to Hard Light. Create new layers and with brushes of various hardnesses and sizes, add more colour. Vary the Opacity of these and change the blend modes to either Linear Dodge, Lighten or Darken.

For a city image, create a new layer and fill with orange; set to Hue. Create a dark grey/blue, set to Lighter Color. Select brighter spots on the buildings and fill with a bright colour on a new layer, before setting that layer to Saturation.

## LINEAR DODGE

Linear Dodge is like a toned down Colour Dodge; it brightens and adds colour.

## HARD LIGHT

Hard Light uses a combination of the Linear Dodge and Linear Burn for a harsh effect.

## HUE

Hue will change only the hue, and not the saturation or lightness.

## LIGHTER COLOR

Lighter colour will only display the lighter colours over the layers below.

## SATURATION

Use Saturation to brighten up the vibrance of the buildings.

"Select spots on the buildings and fill with a bright colour"



**HARD MIX**

Hard Mix blending results in a loss of detail and severe reduction in colour range... perfect for lo-fi effects!

**DISSOLVE**

Add some easy, colourful grit by painting with a soft-edge brush on a layer set to the Dissolve blend mode.

**COLOR BURN**

Color Burn tends to result in the one-two punch of darkening and pushing contrast, producing a more dramatic effect than Multiply.

**DARKER COLOR**

This lets the darker colours between the base and blend prevail. So, anything darker than your blend won't be touched.

**DIFFERENCE**

With Difference, you can end up with psychedelic inverted colour. Certainly cool, but can be tricky to use in everyday edits.



# MASTER ALL 27 BLEND MODES

## OVERLAY

Use the Overlay layer to brighten and darken sides of shape.



## LINEAR LIGHT

When you create a High Pass layer to sharpen, set it to Linear Light for a

## Apply texture to an object



### Create the box

**01** Create a new layer with a square and fill with #808080. Hit Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and Skew; duplicate and flip horizontal, to create a V shape with the two sides. Then create a square box and Free Transform to skew it so it looks like the lid of the box.



### Alter the lightness

**02** Flip all three sides vertically to turn it upside down. Select each side of the box and hit Cmd/Ctrl+U. Change the Lightness of the right-hand side to -15 and then change the Lightness of the bottom one to -30.



### Add the texture

**03** Add the supplied basketball texture and set to the Overlay mode. Merge your basketball layers and then hit Mask. Lower the Opacity to 50% temporarily and mask out the string and the front of the hoop.



**SUBTRACT**

The Subtract blend mode is the opposite of Divide. The blend results will get darker as the blend values get brighter.

**DIVIDE**

Using the Divide blend mode on the darkly checkered spheres results in them turning light, enabling them to pop more.

**VIVID LIGHT**

This is a contrast mode that's more intense than Overlay. If the blend is too strong, mask or lower Opacity.

**LUMINOSITY**

Luminosity only lets the luminance of the blend layer affect the base image. This keeps unwanted colour shifts at bay.

**EXCLUSION**

Exclusion produces a lower contrast version of the Difference blend mode's interesting, sometimes spectral effect, where lighter colours invert colour.

**"Exclusion produces a lower contrast version of the Difference blend mode"**





## Create dramatic light trails



### Draw out a path

**01** Select the Pen Tool. In the options bar, set to Shape, disable Fill, and set Stroke to white. Choose an appropriate stroke width. On the canvas, drag out your path.



### Apply glow

**02** Use the Direct Selection Tool to adjust the path if needed. Then, add a glow by clicking the fx button in the Layers palette and choosing Outer Glow. Adjust the settings like Spread and Size to create a nice glow. Here, #e70e0e is used as the glow colour.



### Finalise

**03** Add multiple light trails. Blend in an existing light trail photo and experiment with blend modes. Apply various colours via blend modes. Add a vignette and different adjustments to pump up the drama.

#### COLOR

Colour will alter the hue and saturation of the layers below.



"Adjust the settings like Spread and Size to create a nice glow"

**PIN LIGHT**

Pin Light combines Lighten and Darken to remove all midtones.

**COLOR DODGE**

Colour Dodge is a dramatic blend mode to add tone to your image.



## Tutorial Create a harbour twilight composition

### Expert

Rodrigo  
Marinelli



I love to observe nature, especially sunlight and how the light is reflected in different areas. Creating a landscape scene is a fun challenge because it needs to look as real as possible, so it always turns out to be a great learning experience.

I'm an art director and have 13 years of experience in advertising agencies. I learned and am still learning to use Photoshop through following tutorials.

### Essentials

#### Works with



CS



CC



Elements

#### What you'll learn

How to create a realistic twilight composition using layers, brushes and masks



**Time taken**  
4 hours

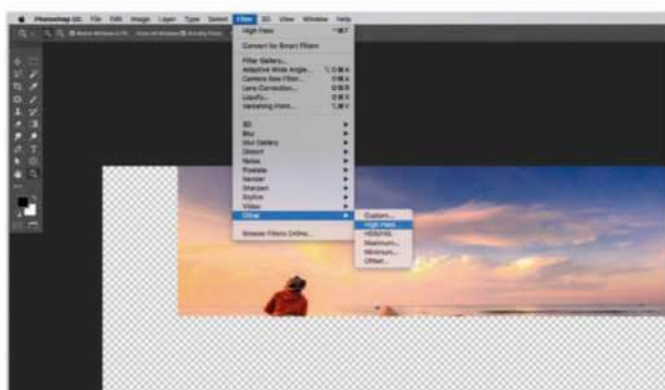
# Create a harbour twilight composition

Use masks and layers to create a twilight effect and blend modes to set the right tone

The inspiration to create is everywhere, all you have to do is keep your eyes open to what's around you. Sometimes simple things can turn into a unique scene, such as a tranquil harbour landscape. If you observe, nature always give us the information we need to create a new image. Look closely and you will see where the lights should be, what colours we need to use to set the tone, and the right location for the shadows.

To create this image, we will focus on two different tasks, first to compose the scene and then to set the colour tone. To do that, we'll use layers to sort the composition and masks to blend them into the same scene. Then we'll use the Brush Tool to create lights and shadows that will be placed in specific parts of the scene, use blend modes to set the right tone and also link adjustment layers to set the overall colour balance of the scene. Let's get started.





## Enhance the details

**01** First, create a new document with the dimensions 444x190mm. Then add 'sky.psd' and place it as shown. To enhance the sky's details, duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J), apply the High Pass filter (Filter> Other> High Pass) set at 1px and change the blend mode to Soft Light.



## Create a layer group with masks

**02** Add 'bridge.psd'. Activate the layer's selection (Cmd/Ctrl-click on the layer thumbnail), create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), create a layer group (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and select Add Layer Mask. Use the Brush Tool (B), set the Foreground colour to white, change the blend mode to Soft Light and gently paint the house's roof.





# Tutorial Create a harbour twilight composition

## Expert tip



### Use quick masks

One of the most important things to do when creating a realistic scene is setting a layer's mood. To do that, you can use the Quick Mask option, but it's important to know the colour settings will be made on the original layer. First, select the boat\_front layer, press Q, use the Brush Tool, set the Opacity to 40% and paint in. Then press Q again, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I) and apply Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) at 0, 1.00, 223, Brightness/Contrast (30, 34) and Color Balance (0, +36, -56).



### Link adjustment layers

**03** Add 'palm.psd' and place it behind the bridge layer. Go to the adjustment layer menu, choose Hue/Saturation, hold Alt+Cmd/Ctrl, click on the palm layer and set it to 0, -100, 0. Repeat the procedure, linking a Levels adjustment layer (0, 1.00, 201). Change the blend mode to Multiply.



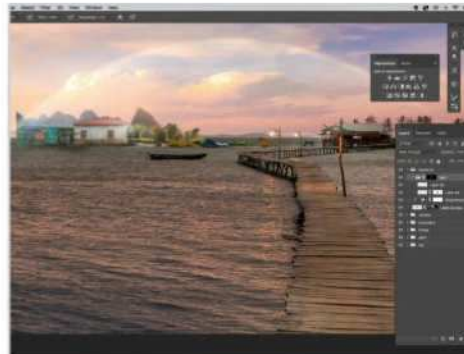
### Use the Feather command

**04** Add 'mountains.psd'. To enhance the details, change the blend mode of the layer to Multiply. Then select the mountain layer, activate the selection (Cmd/Ctrl-click on the layer thumbnail), apply a Feather (Shift+F6) of 1px, invert the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+I), press Delete two times and disable the selection (Cmd/Ctrl+D).



### Make masks

**05** Add 'rainbow.psd', place it as shown and change the blend mode to Screen. Select Add Layer Mask, set the Foreground colour to black, pick the Brush Tool (B) set the Opacity to 40% and gently erase the rainbow's base.



### Compose the scene

**06** Add the layer house\_02 from 'house\_01\_02.psd' and place it in front of the mountains. Link a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer (15, 0) and apply a Feather (step 4) set to 1px. Then create a layer group with a mask in the shape of the house and gently paint the roof (step 2).



### Add shadows

**07** Add the layer house\_01 from 'house\_01\_02.psd' and create a layer group with the mask in the shape of the layer (step 2). Set the Foreground colour to #262238, change the blend mode to Multiply, use the Brush Tool (B) and paint around the mountain's edge.



### Set the tone

**08** Add 'boat\_kids.psd'. Link a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer (0, -18, 0) and create a layer group with the mask in the shape of the boat. Create a new layer, pick the Brush Tool, set the Foreground colour to #262238, change the blend mode to Multiply and paint by the boat's edge.



### Some colour

**09** First add 'boats\_front.psd', then create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), set the Foreground colour to #d9b19b, select the Brush Tool (B), go to the Brush Preset Picker, select a Soft Round brush at 70%, paint behind the boats and change the blend mode to Soft Light.



### The details

**10** Add 'right\_boats.psd' and place it as shown in the image. Select the layer shadow, make a mask (step 5) to erase the unnecessary parts and link a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer (step 3) set to 0, -32, 0.





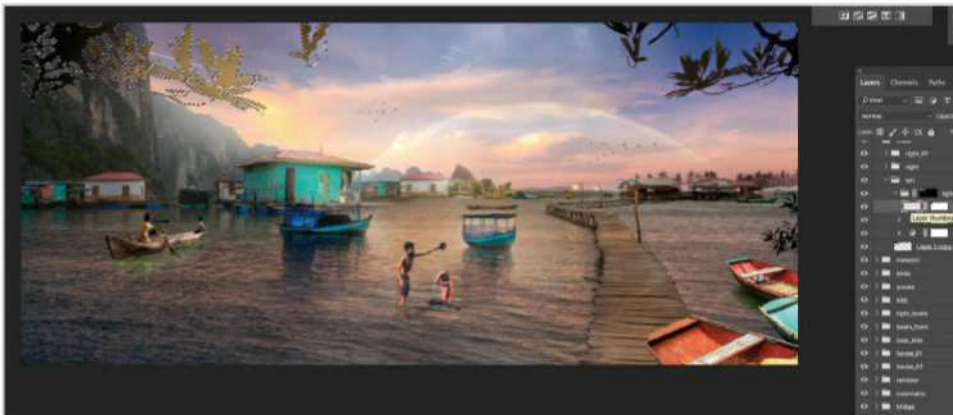
## Realistic effect

**11** Add 'kids.psd' and place as shown in the image. To make the water drops look real, select the layer water\_drops and link a Levels (85, 1.00, 255) and Hue/Saturation adjustment layer (0, -72, 0). Change the blend mode to Screen.



## Gradient mask

**13** Add 'birds\_01.jpg', select Add Layer Mask, set the Foreground colour to black, select the Gradient Tool (G), go to the Gradient Picker, choose Foreground to Transparent, set the Opacity to 20% and gently erase the image. Add 'birds\_02.psd' and follow the same procedure.



## Tree border

**15** Add the layer Left from 'trees\_green.psd' (trees folder). Make a layer group with the mask in the shape of the layer (step 2), use the Brush Tool (B), set the Foreground colour to #af9360, paint and change the Opacity to 20%. Add the layers Right and right\_02, and repeat the procedure.



## Add fog

**12** Let's add some fog onto the water. To do that, add 'smoke.psd', place it above the kids' layer and change the blend mode to Screen. Finally, make a mask (step 5) to erase the unnecessary parts.



## Make it glow

**14** Add 'meteors.psd', place as shown, change the blend mode to Screen and make a mask (step 5) to erase the unnecessary parts. To add a glow effect, link Brightness/Contrast (38, 10) and Levels (0, 1.31, 255) adjustment layers (step 3).

## Expert edit

### Set the tone



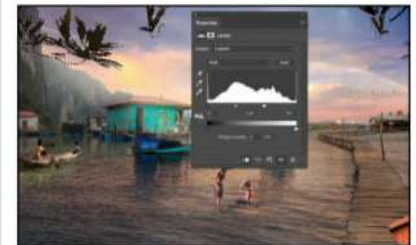
### Add lights

**01** Create a new layer, set the Foreground colour to white, change the blend mode to Soft Light and paint on the house's front as well as on the mountain's top.



### Colours

**02** Create a layer group with the mask in the shape of the kids' layer (step 2). Set the Foreground colour to #3b3254, change the blend mode to Soft Light and paint it.



### Link adjustment layers

**03** Select the layer 01 (Right group), link Brightness/Contrast (127, 0) and Levels (0, 1.00, 163) adjustment layers. Repeat with the layer 01 from Left group.



### More details

**04** Link Brightness/Contrast (10, 20) and Curves. Create a new layer, paint it black, apply a lens flare effect (Filter> Render> Lens Flare) and change the blend mode to Screen.





## Tutorial Create a harbour twilight composition

### Expert tip



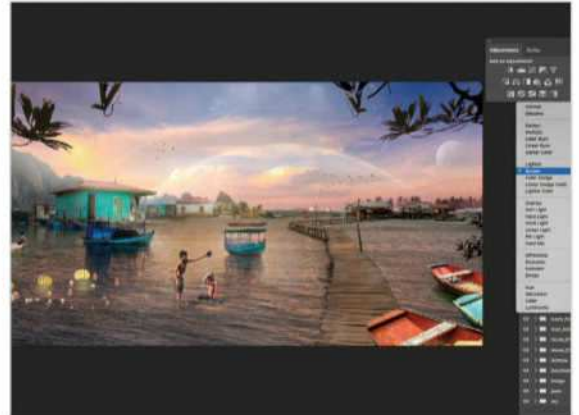
#### The perfect balance

To create this image, it's very important to keep in mind that as the sun is in the middle of the scene, the shadows must be on the corners. This simple rule makes a real difference to the final result. The transition between lights and shadows must be soft, so always use the Brush Tool with the blend mode to find the best balance. To add the final touch, create a new layer, set the Foreground colour to #343b5c, change the blend mode to Soft Light, use the Brush Tool and paint on the scene's corner.



#### Use the Motion Blur filter

**16** Add 'water\_lights.psd' and change the blend mode to Screen. Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), set the Foreground colour to #67502a, use the Elliptical Marquee Tool (M), make a circle and paint (Alt+Del). Change the blend mode to Screen and apply Motion Blur (Filter> Blur> Motion Blur) with the Angle at -90° and Distance at 115px.



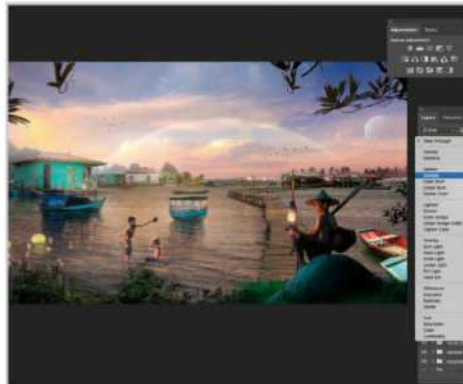
#### Add more details

**17** First add 'dust.jpg', place it on the left side of the scene and change the blend mode to Screen. Then add 'moon.jpg' and 'white\_details.jpg', place them on the right side of the scene and change the blend mode to Screen.



#### The Burn Tool

**18** Add 'boy\_lamp.jpg', place it in the right corner of the scene and apply the High Pass filter (step 1) set to 1px. Use the Burn Tool, set it to Size: 60px and Exposure to 50%, then gently paint in the darker parts of the boy's face.



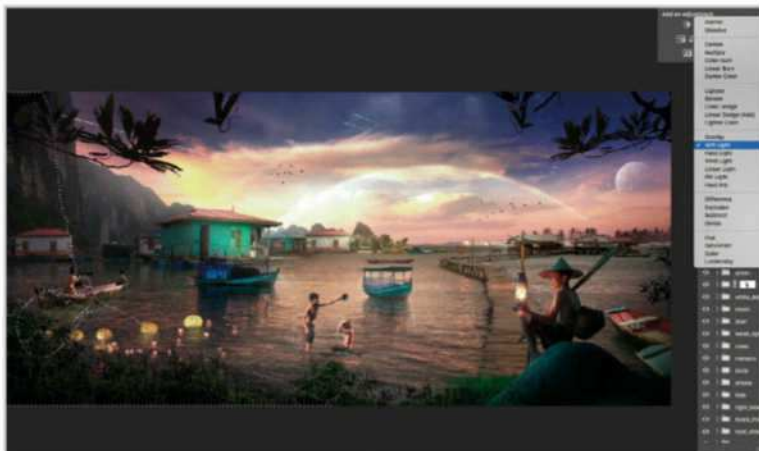
#### Place the grass

**19** Let's add the last photo to compose the scene. Add the Green group from 'trees\_green.psd' and place it at the base. To blend it into the scene, change the blend mode to Multiply.



#### Set the scene's mood

**20** Go to the Adjustment menu and use Color Lookup 3Strip.look (40% Opacity); Candlelight.CUBE (30% Opacity); FoggyNight.3DL (20% Opacity); Levels (0, 1.00, 235); Levels again, with the same setting and 40% Opacity; Curves (as shown) and Photo Filter (Cyan) with 70% Opacity.



#### Create shadows

**21** Create a new layer, set the Foreground colour to black, change the blend mode to Soft Light, use the Brush Tool to paint on the top of the sky. Repeat the procedure and paint above the 'right\_boat' and 'boy\_lamp' layers and in the bottom-left corner of the scene.



#### Light placement

**22** Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N), set the Foreground colour to #fec3b0 and paint (Alt+Del). Change the layer Opacity to 30% and make a gradient mask (step 13). Create a new layer, use the Brush Tool, change the blend mode to Soft Light and paint as shown in the image.





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## Essentials

### Works with



Elements



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### What you'll learn

Remove objects, retouch images and use Smart Objects



**Time taken**  
2 hours

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## Expert

**Daniel Sinoca**



I love working with Smart Objects and Filters. They let me try different settings and effects without worrying about destroying the original image. If I'm not satisfied with the result I can simply apply new adjustments.

I started to get involved in the digital world over 15 years ago and have been working as a freelance artist ever since, creating all kinds of multimedia projects and tutorial guides.

# Get Smart with editing

Advance your skills and learn essential techniques while creating a humorous scene using Smart Objects and Filters

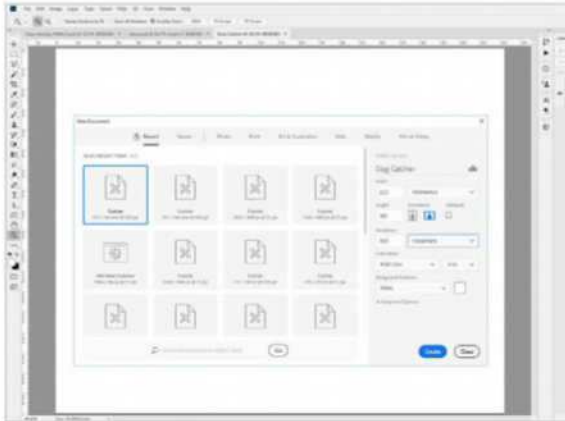
In this tutorial, we'll show you how to use several tools and techniques to create a funny image of a giant puppy chasing the dog catcher. Among the techniques and tools you are about to learn are Smart Objects, Clone and Healing tools as well as the Camera Raw filter.

Smart Objects preserve the original characteristics of an image while you are editing it. The effects and adjustments are automatically transformed into a Smart Filter, enabling you to perform non-destructive editing while keeping the original image intact. For even more control, use

the Smart Filter mask to define the exact areas the effect will target.

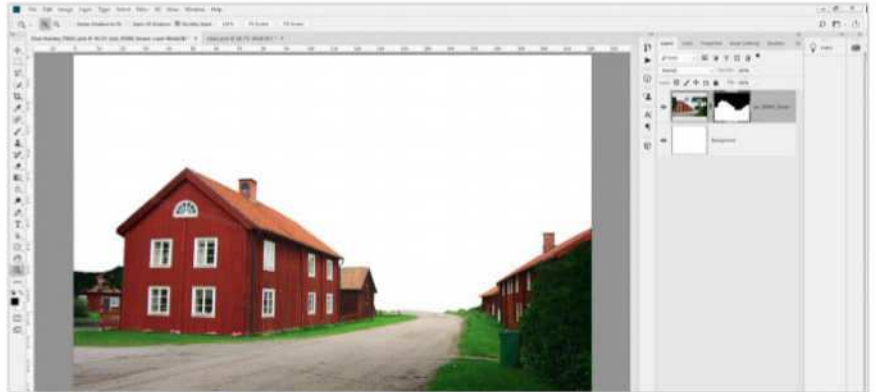
The Clone and Healing tools are ideal for retouching and repairing the images; you will learn how easy it is to remove an object from a scene and correct imperfections with these tools. Finally, you'll work with the Camera Raw filter, which enables you to make edits like colour corrections, sharpening, noise reduction and much more. These techniques and tools are essential to any serious designer; mastering them will give you an edge and confidence to work on more advanced projects.





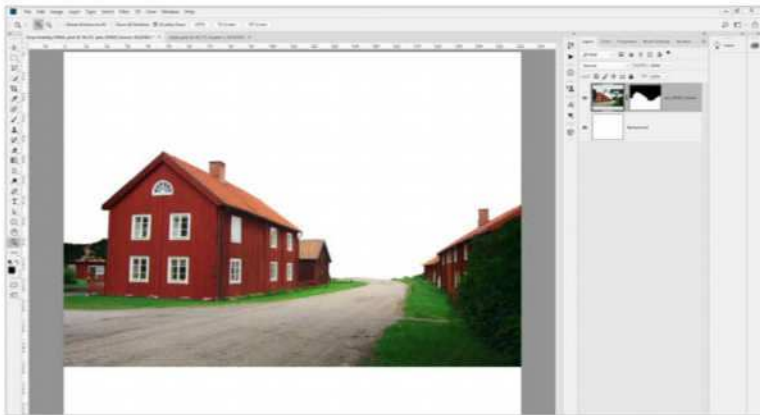
## Set the stage

**01** To begin with, let's create a new document (Cmd/Ctrl+N). Name the new project Dog Catcher. Set the Width to 222mm, Height to 180mm, and Resolution to 300ppi, then press Create.



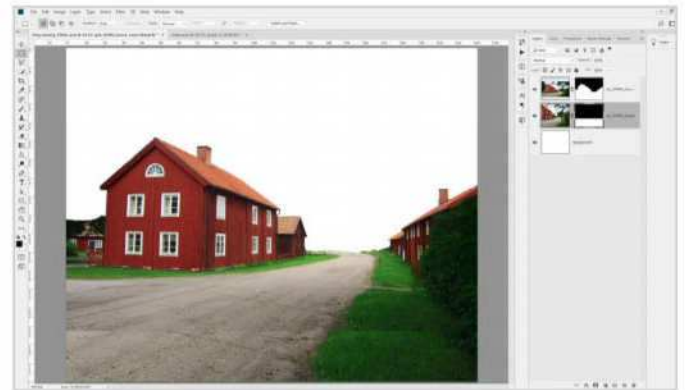
## Place a new image

**02** Place 'pix\_95960\_house.jpg'. Rasterize the layer (Layer> Rasterize> Smart Object). Grab the Quick Selection Tool (W). Select the sky, the branches in the foreground and the trees in the background. Invert the selection (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+I) and create a layer mask (click the Add Layer Mask button at the bottom of the Layers panel).



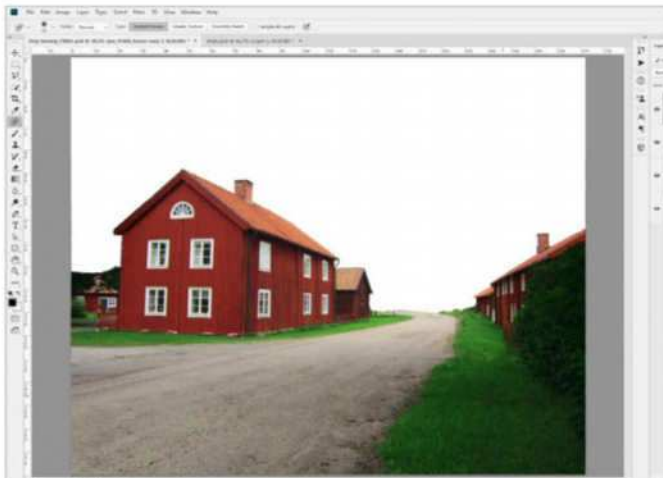
## Enhance the image

**03** Let's remove the rubbish bin and the power lines. Click on the layer thumbnail. Grab the Polygonal Lasso Tool (L). Select the bin and go to Edit> Fill (Shift+F5). Set Contents: Content-Aware and click OK. Grab the Spot Healing Brush (J) and start removing the power lines.



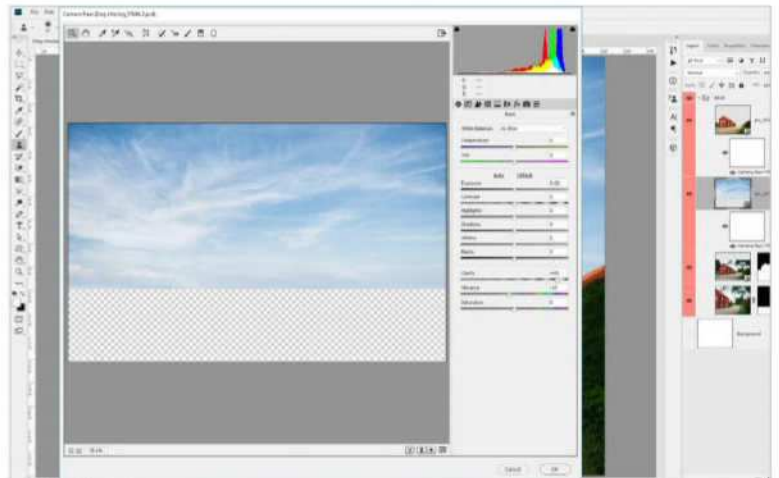
## Extend the road

**04** Duplicate the layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Click on the original layer. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize the image until you connect the road at the bottom. Hold Shift and select the two layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it again. Merge the layers by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+E to merge. Hide the extra layers.



## Fix the road

**05** Grab the Lasso Tool (L), select the area around the hard line connecting the road, then press Shift+F5 and click OK. Now grab the Clone Stamp Tool (S). Define the clone source and start retouching the road.



## Place the sky

**06** First, go to Filter> Camera Raw and set the Temperature to 20. Place 'pix\_2179361\_sky.jpg' behind the houses and adjust its size. Now to make a quick colour correction. Open the Camera Raw filter (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+A) and set Clarity to 80 and Vibrance to -10, then click OK.





## Expert edit

### Tips and tricks



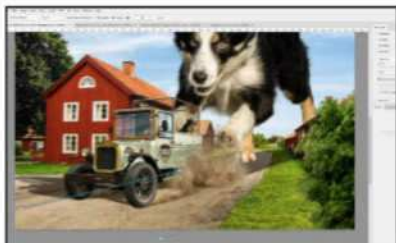
#### Smart Filter mask

**01** After adding the Spin Blur on the left wheel (step 13), grab a brush and paint the Smart Filter mask to hide the effect on the bumper and other parts.



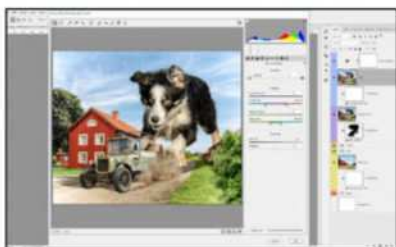
#### Select and Mask

**02** The Select and Mask command (step 17) is a very powerful feature in Photoshop. Tweak the Smart Radius and the Refinement controls to create a perfect mask around the subject.



#### Path Blur

**03** In step 21, add more paths to create interesting motion effects. Click-and-drag to add points and then adjust the path shape. Tweak the speed to define the blur amount.



#### Camera Raw

**04** In step 22, after tweaking the settings adjust the perspective again (Shift+T), then go to Lens Correction and apply a subtle Vignette effect (set Amount +100).



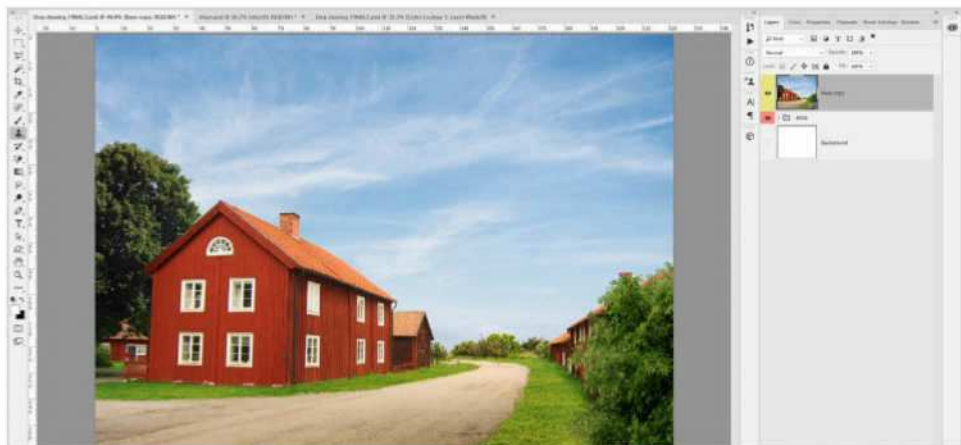
#### Bring the trees

**07** Place 'pix\_2303840\_tree2.png.' Resize the image to around 150% and move to the left. Open the Levels (Cmd/Ctrl+L) and set the Inputs to 0, 1.00, 190. Now place 'fo\_bushes.png.' Reduce the size to around 15%. Move it behind the road, showing the image partially. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and set to 0, 0.70, 230.



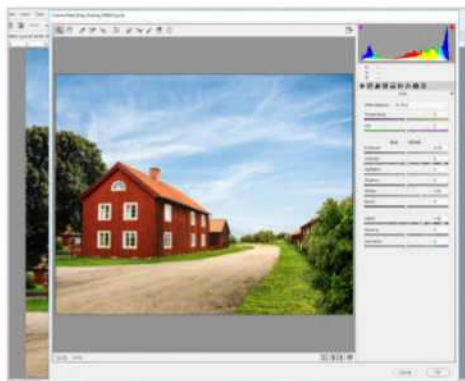
#### Replace the grass

**08** Place 'pix\_3228826\_grass.' Hide the layer temporarily. Grab your favourite selection tool and select the grass surrounding the houses. Unhide the grass layer and add a layer mask. Now place 'pix\_2515748\_tree.png.' Resize and move to the right in the foreground. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and set the Inputs to 30, 0.65, 207 and the Output to 163.



#### Group and merge

**09** Hold Shift, select all the layers and then press Cmd/Ctrl+G to create a group. Name the new group Base. Now create a snapshot by pressing Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E. Convert it into a Smart Object; go to Layer> Smart Objects> Convert to Smart Object.



#### Camera Raw filter

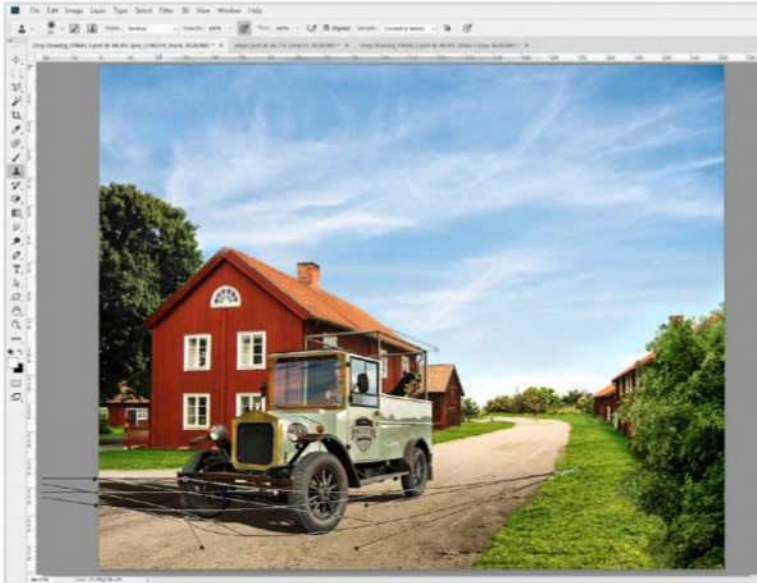
**10** Let's apply the Camera Raw filter to correct the perspective and increase the mid-range contrast. Go to Filter> Camera Raw. First set the White to 35 and Clarity to 40. Now grab the Transform Tool (Shift+T) and in the Control panel, press Auto to correct the perspective.



#### Place the truck

**11** Place 'pix\_2746379\_truck.png.' Resize it to 40% and press Return/Enter. Now, go to Filter> Camera Raw. Set the Temperature to 20, Highlights: -35, Shadows: -35, Clarity: 40, Vibrance: 30, then click OK.





## Create the shadow

**12** Go to Layer> Layer Style> Drop Shadow. Set Opacity to 75%, Angle to 90°, and Distance to 150. Go to Layer> Layer Style> Create Layer. Select the shadow's layer and press Cmd/Ctrl+T. Shrink and skew the image to the left. In Options, switch to Warp Tool and drag the meshes until you find the correct perspective.

## Expert tip



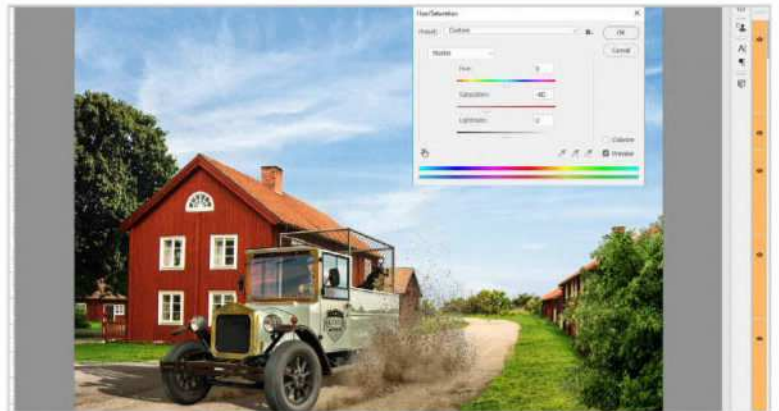
### Camera Raw interface

The Camera Raw filter is much more than a simple filter; it's a sophisticated image processor. Although intended for Raw files, it works with other image formats too and isn't as complicated as it looks. Quickly perform colour corrections or more complex editing with just a few clicks. The key is to explore the interface, get to know each tool and experiment with new settings in the control tabs. You will be amazed at what you can do with this software.



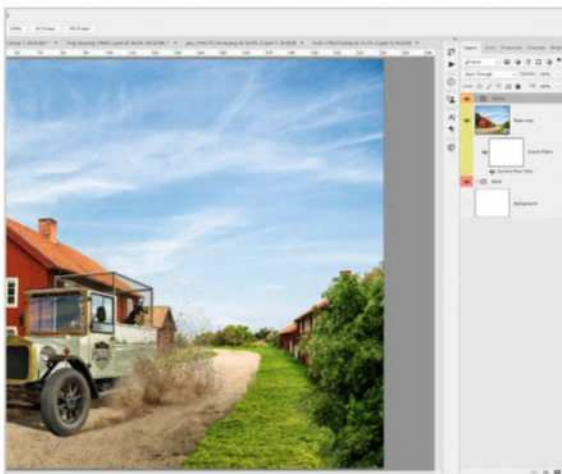
## Spin the wheels

**13** Grab the Elliptical Marquee Tool (M) and select the right wheel. Go to Select>Transform Selection and adjust the selection. Duplicate it (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Transform into a Smart Object. Go to Filter> Blur Gallery>Spin Blur. Adjust the size and set the Blur Angle to 10°. Repeat the process for the left wheel.



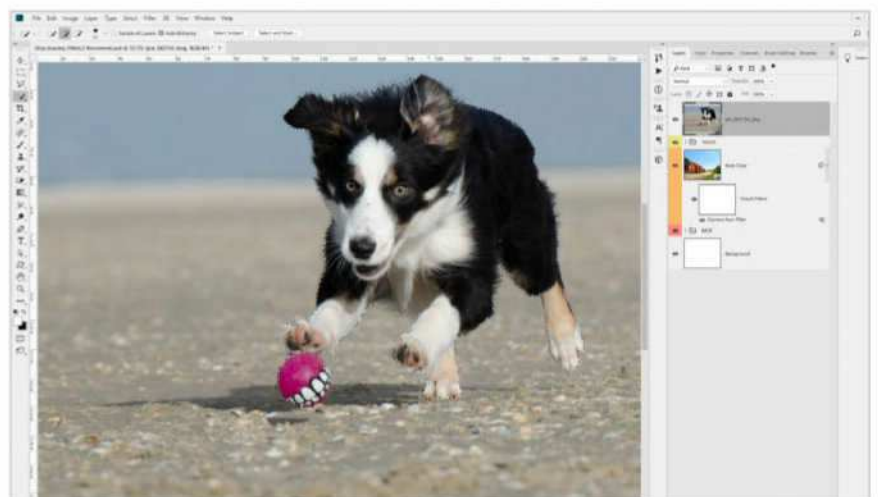
## Place the dust

**14** Place 'fo\_dust.png' over the wheels. Adjust the size and perspective, then click Return/Enter. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and set the Inputs to 0, 0.90 and 225. Now, press Cmd/Ctrl+U and set Saturation to -40. Duplicate the layer and drag under the wheel on the left.



## Group layers

**15** Keep the Layers panel organised by creating a group for the truck. Hold Shift and select the truck, shadow and dust layers, then press Cmd/Ctrl+G to create a group. Name the new group Truck.

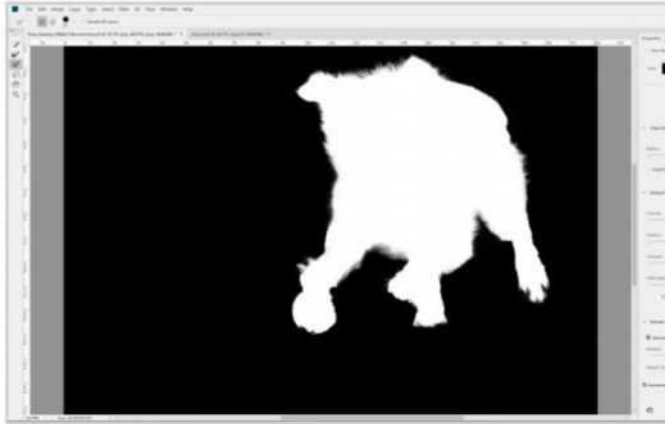


## One-click selection

**16** Place 'pix\_662716\_dog.jpg.' Grab the Quick Selection Tool (W). In the tool Options, click Select Subject – Photoshop automatically selects the puppy for you with just one click. Use the Quick Selection Tool to refine the selection if needed.

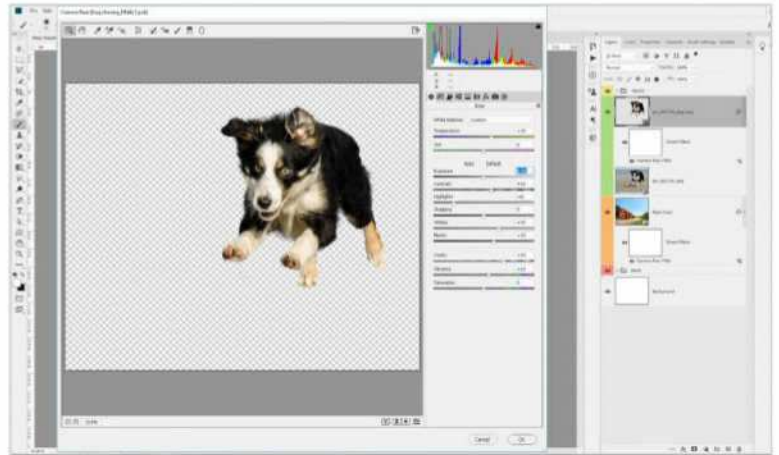






## Select and Mask function

**17** With the selection ready, click on the Select and Mask button or press Opt/Alt+Cmd/Ctrl+R. Grab the Refine Edge Tool (R) and paint around the edges. Change the View Mode to Black and White. Hold Opt/Alt and refine the selection again. Select Output To: New Layer with Layer Mask.



## Camera Raw filter

**18** First, go to Layer> Smart Objects> Convert to Smart Object. Now go to Filter> Camera Raw. Let's make a quick adjustment. Set the Temperature to 15, Contrast to 15, Highlights to -60, Whites to 30, Blacks to 20, Clarity to 40 and Vibrance to 10, then click OK.



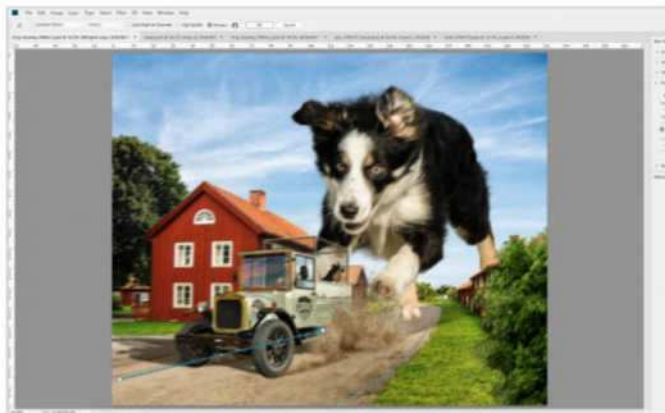
## Movement with layer masks

**19** Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, resize the dog a bit and place into position. Add a layer mask by going to Layer> Layer Mask> Reveal All. Grab a Soft Brush (B) and mask the back paw to give the impression the dog is jumping over the houses.



## Paint the shadow

**20** Create a new layer (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N) and name it Shadow. Drag the layer underneath the puppy layer. Grab a Soft Brush (B) and start painting the shadow underneath the dog, then reduce the layer's Opacity to 60%.



## Path Blur filter

**21** Click on the top layer and press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E. Convert into a Smart Object. Go to Filter> Blur Gallery> Path Blur. Adjust the path direction, tweak the speed and click OK. Grab a Soft Brush (B) and paint on the Smart Filter mask to hide the effect over the truck and the dog.



## Final adjustments

**22** Create a new flattened copy (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+Opt/Alt+E) and convert into a Smart Object. Go to Filter> Camera Raw. Set Exposure to 0.40, Contrast; -35, Highlights: -35 and Clarity: 30. Finally, go to Layer> New Adjustment Layer> Color Lookup. Check 3DLUT, choose Fall Colours and set the layer's Opacity to 50%.



## Essentials

 **Time taken**  
2 hours

## The artist

### Olivier Gros



I am a French graphic designer and an autodidact when it comes to Photoshop

software. I trained with tutorials on the internet and specialised magazines like **Photoshop Creative**. Now I'm a specialist in image editing, my creations evoke imaginary worlds, poetic or magical. I currently work in France as a web designer and packaging photographer and remain open to any collaboration for various creative projects.

You can see my gallery on my website at [www.oliviergros.com](http://www.oliviergros.com)



## Lady's Birdcage **How I Made**

# Lady's Birdcage

How Olivier used masking, blending and shading to create a striking composition

**T**o have more freedom in the creation, I chose a surrealist style," reveals Olivier Gros. "I worked with the mouse rather than a graphics tablet, because I didn't have one, and I use Photoshop CS5, which is enough for this kind of exercise."

Despite Olivier's lack of CC and a tablet, this image doesn't feel limited by technology. "The main tools I used in Photoshop were the masks and adjustment layers, which were predominantly Levels and Hue/Saturation. I also used Puppet Warp, which was very handy for

altering the legs of the birds and the ribbon." Puppet Warp is something many artists turn to for control, and it's a favourite of Olivier; "it is a practical tool and it complements fluidity in my work."

Despite how complex this image looks, Olivier says "only about ten layers were needed. The only [difficult part was cutting] out the bars of the cage and the hair of the acrobat." Shadows helped aid realism; "I create my shadows on a separate layer, I colour them according to where they are. Shadows add depth to the image" Olivier explains.



### Background

**01** I created a radial gradient, added clouds with a brush and I cut out the cage as precisely as possible with the Pen Tool before placing in the middle of my composition.



### Set out elements

**02** I cut out the birds, ribbon, hats, ivy and the acrobat with the Feather Tool and placed them in the composition. I used a mask with a soft brush for the hair.



### Finalisation

**03** To finish, I used the Eraser to delete parts of the acrobat so she looked like she was in the cage. I added shadows and to finish off, I used a Curves adjustment to harmonise colours.



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## Essentials

### Works with



### What you'll learn

🖌️ Use Photoshop brushes, layer masks, clipping masks and blending modes

🕒 **Time taken**  
4 hours

## Expert

**Sarah Maynard**



This tutorial outlines my usual process for drawing characters. Don't be put off if you have trouble, I erase and redraw the same lines multiple times to get it right.

I'm a freelance web designer and illustrator. I started drawing in Photoshop 15 years ago when I got my first tablet, and I haven't stopped since.

# Illustrate freehand with Photoshop

Learn some essential digital art techniques for crisp linework, smooth colouring and easy shading

**P**hotoshop isn't all about photos! It's a powerful tool for digital artists too, and with the help of a drawing tablet, you can draw just as easily as on paper (plus you get an undo button and no messy hands).

This tutorial will guide you through how to sketch, line, colour and shade an illustrated subject in Photoshop, with some helpful tips on how to get the most out of the tools provided to save yourself time while still achieving a smooth finish. All you need is a tablet and some basic Photoshop brushes, with a dash of artistic license.

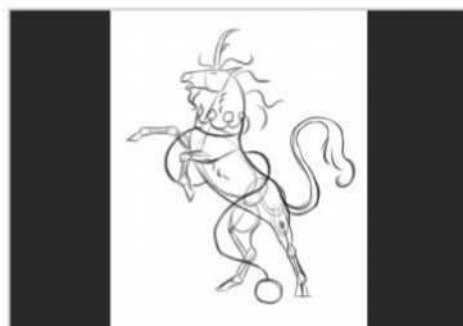
The style here is crisp and minimalistic. The linework makes for a 'cartoony' feel and means colouring is a doddle, with hard lines to colour inside. The shading is a combination of gradient and crisp for a two-level effect. Adapt it easily to your style, with thicker or thinner lines, bolder colours or with more contrast on your shading. Experiment with Photoshop brushes, shapes and layer styles to make an easy background.

Photoshop has everything you need out of the box to complete this tutorial, so grab your tablet and get stuck in!



### Sketch a framework

**01** Create a new transparent layer on top of a solid background. Using a round brush with 'Pen pressure for opacity' toggled on, roughly sketch out the framework for your piece. Use construction lines and circles to build shapes and contours and work out your rough proportions.



### Build on the sketch

**02** On another layer, using the circles and lines, construct outlines. In this example, the line and circles play the role of skeleton and muscle, the lines are placed where the skin would complete the outline. Define joints with squares or triangles and keep bones straight to avoid wobbly limbs.



### Define sketch details

**03** Using another layer, define the shapes and details, adding details that add depth to the subject later. Don't worry if it looks messy, at this stage the shape and outlines are more important than exact details. Hide any previous sketch layers to neaten the final sketch.







## Prepare for lining

**04** Set your sketch layers to 30% Opacity – you need to be able to see the details of the sketch. Select a hard round brush and turn off 'Pen pressure for opacity' for crisper lines, or keep it on for soft or fading lines. Create a new layer ready to apply the lines to.



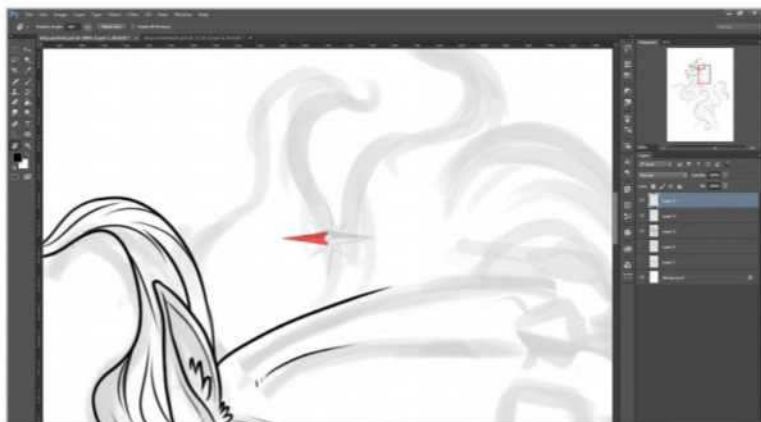
## Start lining

**05** Following your sketch outline, correcting where you need to, trace in your lines. Use pen pressure to taper lines or for adding finer details. Thicken the outmost lines for a bolder style and appearance. You may need to redraw a line a few times to get it just right.



## Lining on multiple layers

**06** Create a new layer for lines whenever you need to work on objects that intersect. When drawing continuously from origin to destination, it creates a more fluid line. You can then erase the lines that will be hidden by other objects without risking the intersecting lines.



## Rotate the canvas

**07** Use the R shortcut to bring up the Rotate Tool. Click and drag to spin the canvas without rotating the actual image. This is useful for drawing lines that would be at an awkward angle otherwise. Hold Shift to rotate by 45° increments.



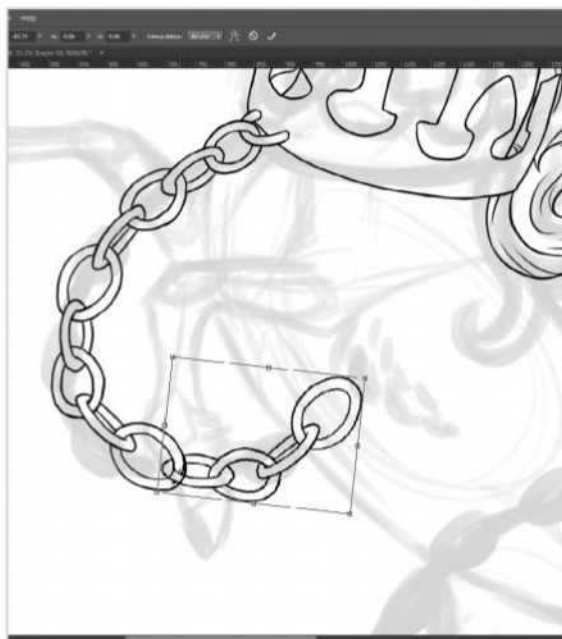
## Objects on new layers

**08** Drawing objects on new layers gives you freedom to move them afterward. The crown here looks like it is sitting uncomfortably on the neck, so using the Move Tool (V), click and drag a short distance from the corner markers to spin the object and move it down a little.



## Repeating elements

**09** For objects that have repeated elements, like chains, you can duplicate parts of your work. As long as the section you copy isn't used too close to the original, it can still look natural. Use the Lasso Tool (L) to select the part you want to copy.



## Arrange the copied part

**10** Press Cmd/Ctrl+C and Cmd/Ctrl+V to paste the selected part. It will automatically create a new layer. Use the Move Tool to rotate and manipulate the part to fit your sketch. Erase and redraw any parts that need to look seamless next to the original.





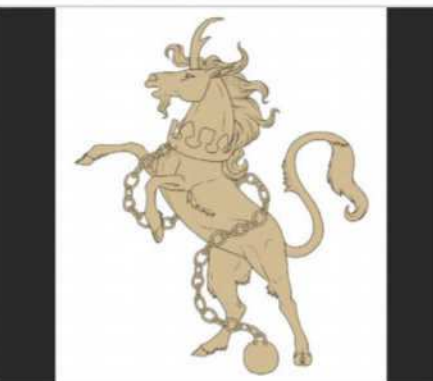
### Keep lining!

**11** Lining can take a long time, so take frequent breaks, and zoom out from time to time to make sure you're happy with the overall result. Zooming out can help you spot errors, or highlight things you might want to add or change.



### Invert and contract selection

**13** To select the subject rather than the background, use Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert the selection. Go to Select> Modify> Contract. Choose a pixel value that is half the width of your lines and confirm. The marching ants should now be following your outer lines.



### Create block colour base

**14** Make a new layer and create a layer mask using your selection. Using the Bucket Tool (make sure the layer is selected, not the mask) fill the layer with any midtone colour. Zoom in and on the mask layer, remove any of the colour that has escaped from the lines.



### Get ready to colour

**12** Merge your working line layers (or make a copy of all the layers and merge them if you want to save the parts for later). Using the Magic Wand Tool (W), select white space outside the lines, and any non-contiguous areas that will show the background behind the subject later.



### Start colouring

**15** Fill your block-base colour with the base you'll need for your subject. Fill the background with a midtone colour for contrast. Create a new layer above the block colour base, Ctrl/right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. Using a brush, colour in an element such as the mane and tail.



## Expert edit

### Bevel shading details



### Choose light direction

**01** Before shading, choose a light direction. This light source will determine where the shadows and lighting will be stronger. Use this light for the global light angle for layer styles.



### Prepare layer

**02** Delete colour that expands outside the base. Cmd/Ctrl-click the layer mask for the base, invert selection and delete those pixels from the layer to emboss, eg the chain colour layer.



### Add layer style

**03** Open the layer styles for the chain layer and add a Bevel and Emboss effect. Choose Inner Bevel and adjust until your layer has a suitable lighting and shading effect.



### Manual details layer

**04** Add a new layer for shading and highlights. Accentuate the bevel with manual details, especially useful for metals when they have an extra sheen. Use Overlay for a glossier contrast.







## Add element detail

**16** Lock the transparent pixels, and then use brushes and gradients to add detail to that piece without straying over the part you've already blocked out. Try a Radial gradient to add a deeper colour to the hair tips, and a brush to draw lighter streaks at the base.



## Finish colouring

**17** Use a new layer and clipping mask for each element, eg another for the chain and eyes/hoves/horn. For best effect, blend colours using the Smudge Tool at 16% and a brush set to Hardness: 0%, Scatter: 40% (both axes), Count Jitter: 65%, Smoothing and Transfer toggled on.



## Soft shading

**18** On a new layer, use black to mark out the shading. Use the Blur Tool to blur the edges. Set the layer to Soft Light or Overlay and adjust the Opacity depending on the contrast with the colour below. Do the same with white on a new layer for highlights.



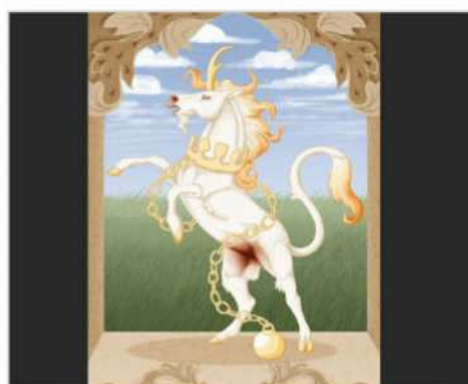
## Cell and detail shading

**19** Create another Soft Light or Overlay layer for additional shading and highlights where needed. This time use crisp edges to make cell shading for deeper shadows and details. Duplicate a shading or highlight layer if the contrast of one is not enough on very light or dark colours.



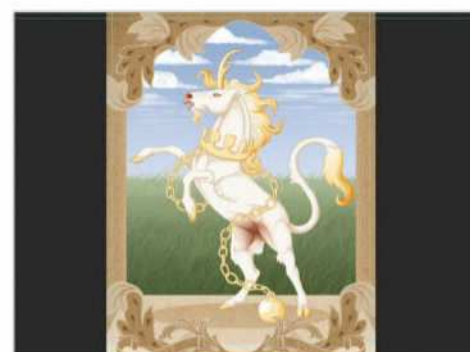
## Line colour

**20** Lock the transparency of your lines layer. Fill with a colour a little darker and more saturated than your main base colour. Use additional layers with a clipping mask to colour the rest of the lines to match the other colours.



## Add a background

**21** Using hand-drawn elements combined with brushes, gradients and vector shapes, construct a background to support the subject. For this piece, the subject is the main focus so the background is simple and draws the eye to the centre using a border and muted colours.



## Finishing touches

**22** Make any final adjustments. The shading has been reduced where it was too dark, background elements have been added to balance the composition, the hair colour has shifted hue to better match and the clouds have added detail. Focus on changes to better complement the composition, colour balance and shadows.



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## Essentials

### Works with



### What you'll learn

Use healing tools to make subtle and natural retouching adjustments

**Time taken**  
30 minutes

## Expert

**John Ross**



Removing blemishes should always be done subtly to keep your image from looking plastic and fake. In this tutorial, I'll teach you how to use healing tools professionally and naturally.

With 20 years' experience, I educate photographers and retouchers by expanding their knowledge through my website [www.TheArtOfRetouching.com](http://www.TheArtOfRetouching.com)

# Retouch professionally with the healing tools

Learn how to correct blemishes and skin imperfections subtly and naturally with Photoshop's healing options

**D**espite your best efforts to shoot the perfect photo, there will always be blemishes and skin corrections you will inevitably have to edit out during retouching. Still, you need to find the right balance between correcting glaring errors and leaving minor imperfections as they are. Be as subtle as you possibly can – it is, after all, our flaws that make us human.

In this tutorial, you will learn how to use the different aspects of Photoshop's healing tools in order to retouch photos naturally and professionally. These healing tools can be extremely powerful, but if not used with control

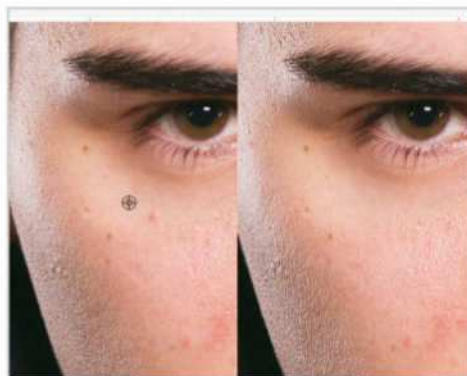
and extreme caution, your images might end up overdone and looking fake. Your retouching needs to produce an end result that looks desirable but still believable and realistic.

The important thing to remember when it comes to healing is that you should never work directly on your image's Background layer. Working on the Background layer itself replaces original pixels and yields permanent results that you cannot undo further on, so if you want the option to go back and forth between adjustments, open up a new layer in your Layers palette and make your non-destructive changes there.



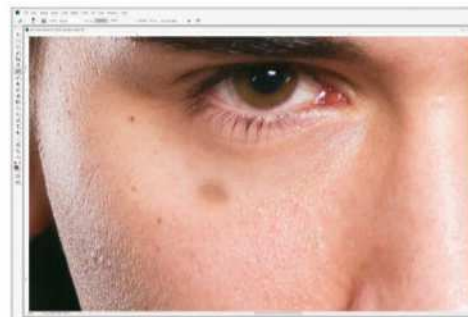
### Cloning vs healing

**01** When it comes to skin, healing actually works best. As opposed to the one-to-one pixel match of cloning, healing matches the colour, tone and texture from the source area with the target destination. It fixes your pixels by blending together the source and the destination.



### Using the Healing Brush

**02** Like the Clone Stamp, the Healing Brush clones your source point with an Opt/Alt-click. Then simply paint over the area you want to replace, and it will blend the two at the destination.



### Healing Brush size

**03** Remember that you can choose the size of your brush for healing. When possible, make sure you use a small brush size so you do not contaminate your source or destination with nearby pixels that are different. They can bring in dark or light tones and smudge the healing area.

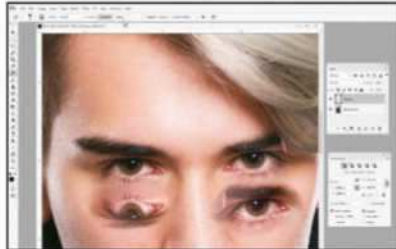






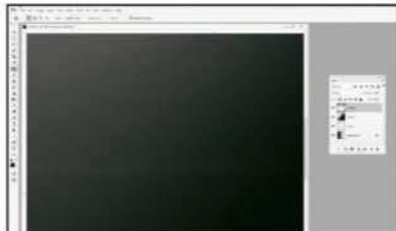
## Expert edit

### Strokes and layering



#### Clone Source

**01** Use Window > Clone Source to give yourself more healing and cloning options. You can use mirror horizontal and vertical, as well as rotate at any angle.



#### Cross gradients

**02** When working with gradients, sometimes the Healing Brush becomes confused, and you just can't get it to blend right. When in doubt, try the Patch Tool for a different approach.



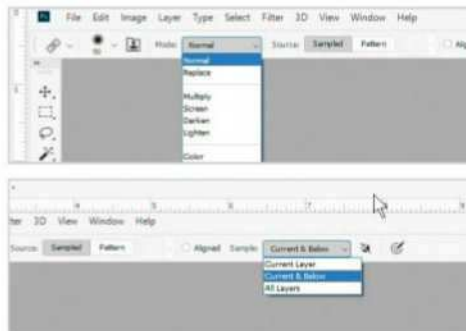
#### Blank layers

**03** Always perform your corrections on a new blank layer. This helps you undo adjustments with ease. When working this way, make sure to set Sample to Current & Below from the options bar.



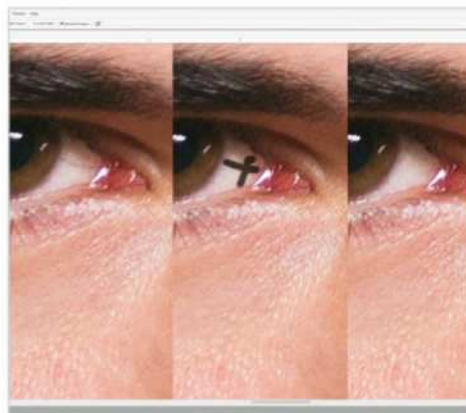
#### Untouched Background layer

**04** Make it so that when you hide your Background layer, you'll see all the changes made on the blank layer. Notice that you haven't affected your original image permanently.



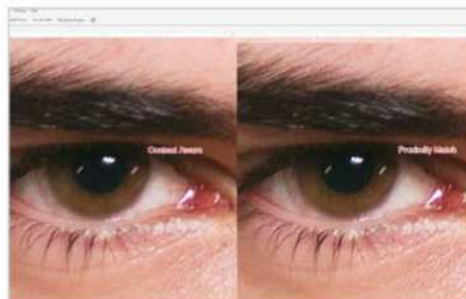
#### Healing Brush options

**04** Hold down Mode to display different blending modes (usually leave as Normal). If using layers, set Sample: Current and Below. Uncheck Aligned for speed, as you can do many heals from a single source. Sampled uses pixels from an image while Pattern uses pixels from a pattern.



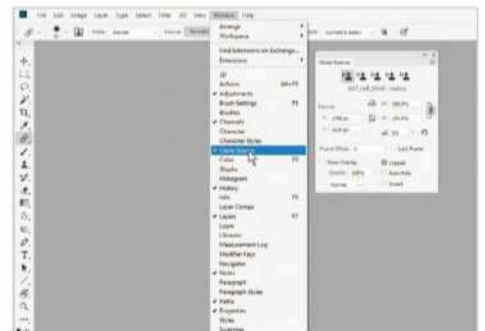
#### Spot Healing Brush

**06** Contrary to the Healing Brush, Spot Healing has no point of reference. Best used for simple spot imperfections, it's highly effective on tight areas like the veins of the eyes where there isn't enough space to set the source and destination points.



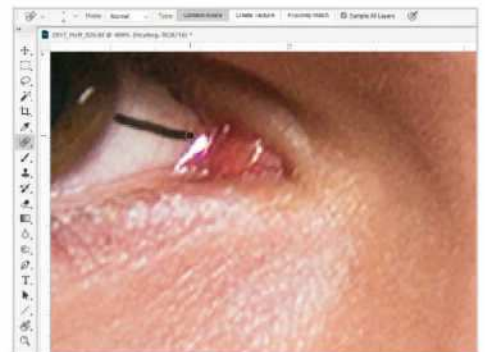
#### Proximity Match mode

**08** While Content Aware lets Photoshop automatically match the surrounding areas with your adjustment, Proximity Match automatically searches for the best pixels to sample from when you retouch, essentially using the most suitable texture as a source. Try them both in tight spaces, you never know what you will get.



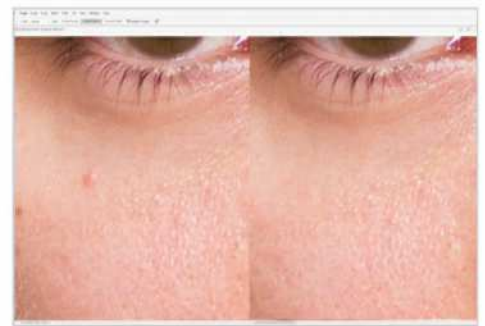
#### Speed increase

**05** If you have an older computer that is slow between your click and the result, here is a huge time saver. Open Window > Clone Source and uncheck Show Overlay. You will no longer be able to see a Live View of your healing, but the performance will be much faster.



#### Spot Healing options

**07** In the options bar, make sure to select Content-Aware and Sample All Layers. This ensures that any adjustments you make are non-destructively reflected on the healing layer without causing any permanent damage. Use a relatively small brush size that's just enough to cover your tight image area.



#### Create Texture mode

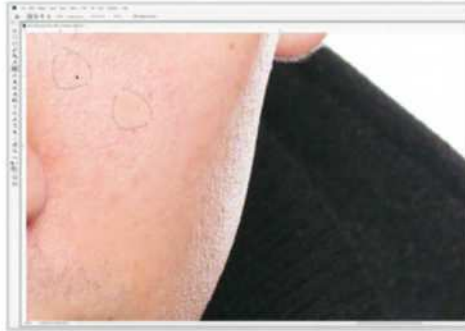
**09** The Create Texture option intelligently reads data from the surroundings of the problem area, then creates a texture pattern. It works in a similar way to Proximity Match, but uses a texture pattern generated in real-time from the sampled data.





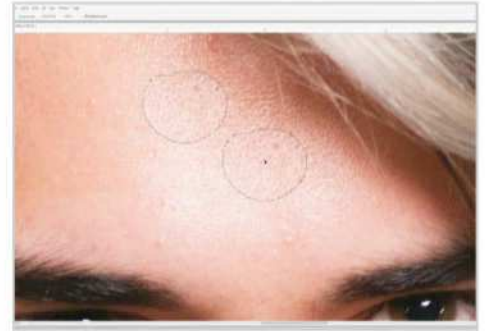
## Patch Tool vs Healing

**10** The Patch Tool also matches the lighting, shading and texture from source to destination; however, it makes use of selection-defined data rather than a brush. With the Content-Aware option, you can use the Patch Tool on an empty layer just like the Healing and Spot Healing brushes.



## Using the Patch Tool

**11** With the Patch Tool, make a selection as you would using the Lasso by drawing a circle around an area. Adobe removed the Source or Destination options in recent versions, just leaving Source To Destination. However, this often gives blurrier results than other options.



## Patch Tool options

**12** In the options bar, change Normal to Content-Aware, and check Sample All Layers. The old options under the Adaption drop-down menu (not used in 2018) lets you choose how much blending you need, from Very Strict to Very Loose. Play with the options to see which is best.



## The new Healing Brush

**14** CC 2015 launched a redesigned Healing Brush that didn't sit too well with most retouchers. Despite graphical issues at the time (referred to as salting), the way the brush behaved in general was just not as good. Back then, we had to hack Photoshop to get our tool back.

## The best healing tool

**13** Knowing which healing tool to use depends on what your image needs. Spot Healing is best used for small and tight areas, while the Healing Brush is used for small blemishes on the skin. On the other hand, the Patch Tool works best on gradients.



## Diffusion Sliders

**15** With the new Healing Brush, the options bar offers Diffusion. A value of 1 has a sharper drop off and can leave a band around the perimeter, while 7 has a better feathered edge, but it often results in stranger colours and tones. Neither is ideal.



## Legacy Healing Brush

**16** What does all this mean for you as a retoucher? Generally, professional retouchers prefer the old behaviour of the Healing Brush from 2015 and earlier. You can go to Preferences>Tools>Use Legacy Healing Algorithm to switch back to the old Healing Brush's behaviour.



## Smudging vs alignment

**17** If you are healing and get too close to a different colour or tone, all of these Healing tools can pull in contamination, and the result looks like a smudge. Instead, use a Clone Stamp along the edge, and then use Healing Brush to blend colour and texture.





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### Essentials

#### Works with



Elements CS CC

#### What you'll learn

Use Smart Objects to create a seamless repeating pattern quickly and easily



**Time taken**  
1 hour

### Expert

**Jenni Sanders**



When it comes to Photoshop, I always try to find the quickest way to make something. And Smart Objects are usually the answer! I love their versatility and endless applications.

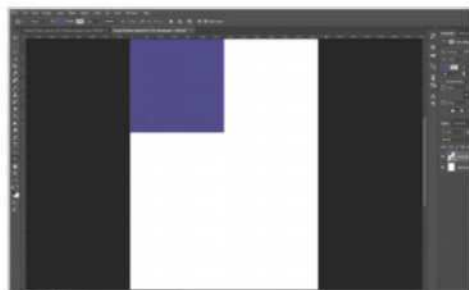
My first experience with photomanipulation was watching my dad clone out holidaymakers from our family photographs. From that moment I was hooked.

# Make a cute repeating pattern

Use Smart Objects to quickly create a seamless, tiling pattern while only having to draw once!

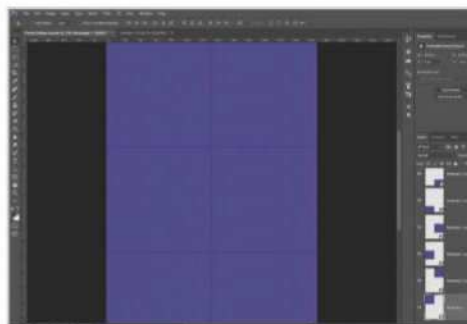
**M**aking your own repeating patterns in Photoshop has never been easier thanks to the power of Smart Objects. When you create a Smart Object inside an image, you can then duplicate it as many times as you want, just like a normal layer. But what makes them really special is that these instances are linked to each other. Editing the content of one of them will update all of them, meaning we only have to draw our pattern once, in one place, and it will always update across any duplications we make! This enables us to make interesting patterns quickly.

In this tutorial, we're going to draw four different pandas made up of basic shapes and then paint them. Once drawn, we'll learn how to position our panda friends effectively for tiling, and how to seamlessly join the drawings across different tiles. Instead of having to manually position every repetition, our Smart Objects will duplicate these pandas for us, making it very quick and easy work to get a flawless result. Once you've learned the basic principles of how Smart Objects update, you can swap out the pandas for any other drawings you may have done!



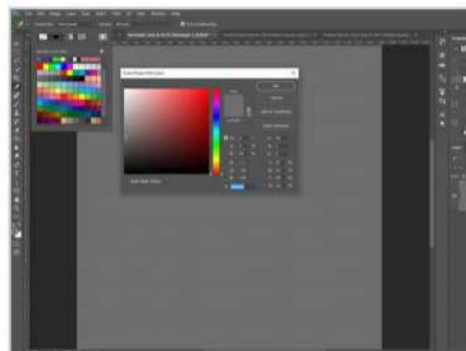
### Set up your canvas

**01** Create a new document in Photoshop; this can be any size you like as it will be your final, full repeated pattern. Select the Rectangle Tool (U) and hold Shift to draw a square on your canvas – it doesn't matter where or how big, as long as it's a square.



### Duplicate your Smart Objects

**02** Ctrl/right-click the rectangle layer and pick Convert to Smart Object. Now duplicate this with Cmd/Ctrl+J as many times as you need to fill your canvas with them in a grid. Make sure they don't overlap, but that the top, bottom, left and right edges line up perfectly and leave no gaps.



### Pick a background colour

**03** Double-click any of the rectangle Smart Objects (they are duplications, so changes in one will change across all). A new tab will open with your Smart Object as a new canvas. Change the rectangle Fill to #6f6d6d and no Stroke.







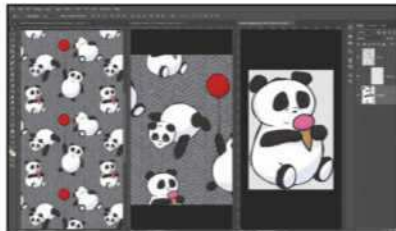
## Expert edit

### Link your layers



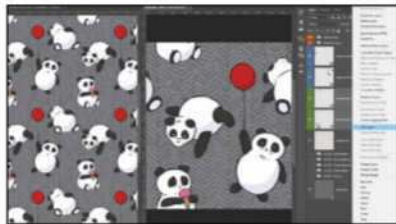
#### Try different positions

**01** It might take a few goes to get a good repeating position, so don't get hung up on details like cut-off edges straight away. Avoid different pandas on opposite edges, though.



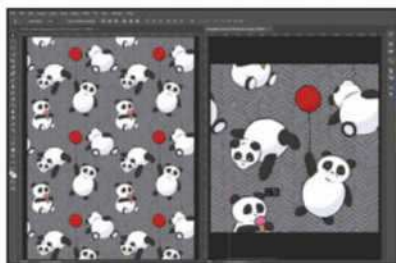
#### Smart Object instances

**02** When you're happy, convert any cut-off pandas to Smart Objects, as mentioned in the tutorial, so that if you need to edit it, changes will be made on both instances.



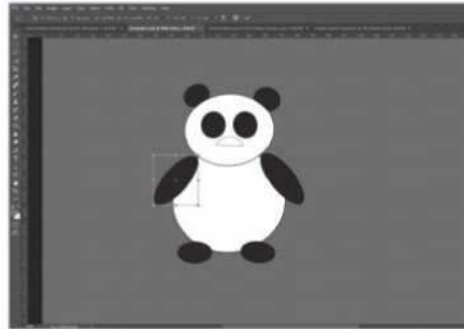
#### Link the layers

**03** Once you have positioned the second instance to stop cutoffs, you may need to move it again. Select both instances of the panda, Ctrl/right-click and select Link Layers.



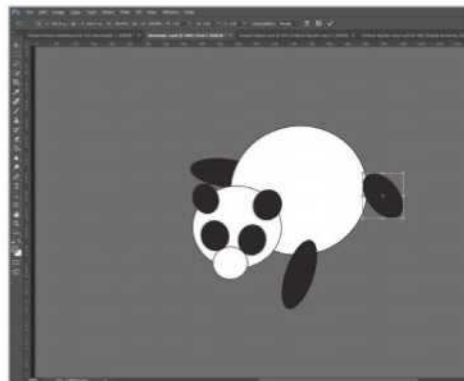
#### Automatic tiling

**04** Now your two linked layers will always remain the same distance apart! Moving one will move the other automatically, so they will always line up seamlessly along that edge.



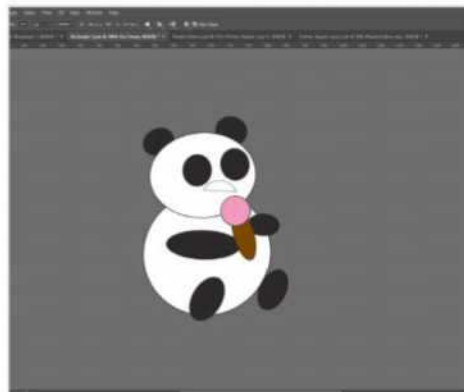
### Create a panda guide

**04** We will be drawing four versions of the same character, so we need a guide to make sure they look similar. Use the Circle Tool (U) to draw a very rough panda shape. Adjust the Fills to roughly reflect the colours and use Cmd/Ctrl+T to transform/resize the circles.



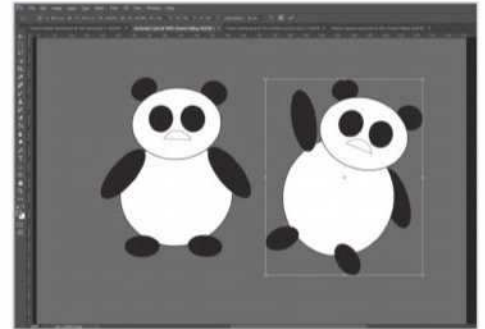
### The second panda

**06** Duplicate your Panda Guide group again; you can hide the other two groups with the eye icon in the Layers panel so you can clearly focus on the new one. This panda will be lying on its tummy, reaching down. You won't see its right foot, so that shape can be turned off completely.



### Greedy panda

**08** Duplicate your Guide group for the last time. Arrange the shapes to make a seated panda shape, eating an ice cream. You can add the extra ice cream shapes using the Circle Tool (U).



### Make your first panda

**05** Group all your shapes and name it Panda Guide. Duplicate with Cmd/Ctrl+J and start to rotate and rearrange the shapes to form a new panda! In this case, it will be hanging from a balloon. Try not to resize the shapes, unless there are big changes in perspective.



### Sleeping panda

**07** Duplicate your Guide group again. The sleeping panda will require layer order changes to give the correct perspective. You also won't need the right eye or ear, so turn them off. Clip the left eye to the head by placing it above the head layer, Ctrl/right-click and select Create Clipping Mask.



### Begin your drawing

**09** Hide all groups except for the falling panda, and drop its Opacity to 30%. Create a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N and call it Lines. Select the Brush Tool (B) and pick a small brush (around 6px), Opacity: 100%, Hardness: 90%, colour: #2c2929. Draw over your guide shapes.



 **Remember to save** both your Smart Object and main canvas!



### Finish the line drawing

**10** Continue drawing around your guide shape until you've completed the panda. Try and make your own lines, rather than following the guides perfectly – you want it to look cartoony and organic. Use the Eraser (E) and some varying brush sizes for extra detail. Don't forget to add in a balloon!



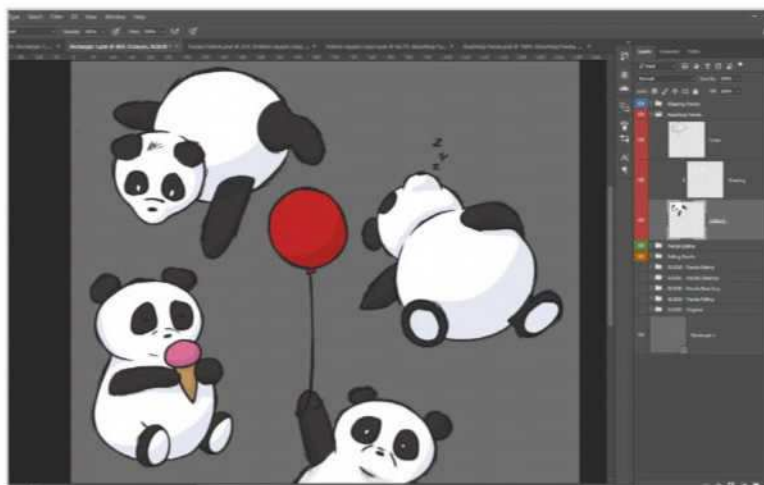
### Colour it in

**11** Create a new layer and drag it underneath your Lines layer, call it Colours. Increase your brush size and paint the whole panda in white. Then change your colour to #3c3838 and fill in any dark areas, such as the ears, eyes and limbs, plus red for the balloon.



### Paint in simple shading

**12** Create a new layer called Shadow and put it between Lines and Colour. Ctrl/right-click and select Create Clipping Mask onto the Colour layer and set the blend mode to Multiply. Change your brush colour to #e5e8f2 and paint blocks of shadow on the panda via the Shadow layer.



### Repeat for other pandas

**13** Repeat steps 9-12 for the other three pandas. You can move them around the canvas to draw, or simply hide all the others while you draw one. Group the line, colour and shading layers for each one and name them.



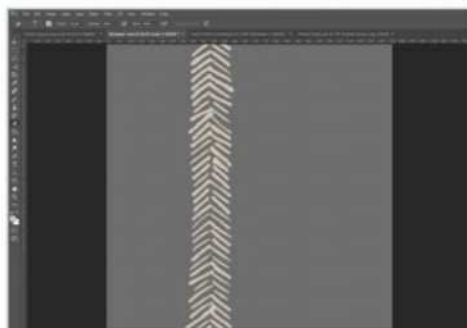
### Check your pattern

**14** Save (Cmd/Ctrl+S) and go to Window>Arrange>2-up Vertical. This puts your pattern tile and full pattern next to each other. Move your panda groups around on your pattern tile, hit Save and see what happens! If they go outside the square, they will be cut off in the full pattern.



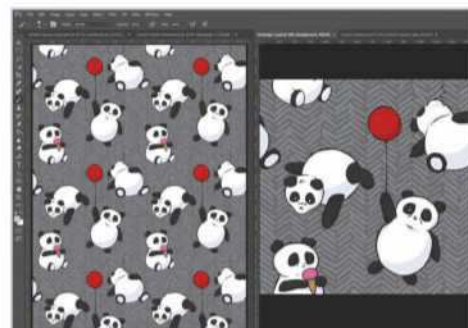
### Fix cutoffs

**15** Having the pandas going off the edges makes a much more interesting tiling pattern. To fix any cut-off pandas, in your pattern tile, Ctrl/right-click the Panda group and select Convert to Smart Object. Duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and position it on the opposite face at the exact point where it is cut off.



### Start the background

**16** Fix any other pandas that get cut off using the same method, checking on your full pattern that they line up properly. Hide all your layers and create a new layer. Start painting some lines in rough chevrons with a 100% hard brush using a colour of #d3c9ba.



### Complete the background

**17** Draw another set of chevrons, and then duplicate them until you fill the canvas. Spend some time working on the edges and positioning so that in the full pattern the background tiles seamlessly. When you're finished, set the blend mode to Divide and turn the pandas back on!









## On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at [www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative](http://www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative)

## Essentials

### Works with



Elements CS CC

### What you'll learn

📌 Create a geometric portrait with shapes, masks and blend modes

**Time taken**  
2.5 hours

## Expert

**Andre Villanueva**



I love colour but am lazy when it comes to creating and sticking to a palette. Of course, this has gotten me in trouble with exacting art directors... One of my favourite exercises involves just randomly stacking and masking colourful images, and then making use of blend modes and masks to chance upon some gorgeous convergences of colour.

# Enhance with shapes and masks

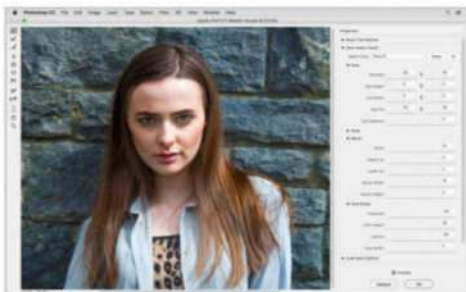
Amass shards and polygonally saturated imagery, toss in a model and a rainbow of colour, then go absolutely shape-crazy!

**N**eed to inject some interest into your latest promotional image? Enamoured with shapes and colour? Check out this multi-layered treatment that is just the thing for elevating a portrait from a 'might-look' to a 'must-see' proposition.

The shapes used will be an alliance of stock imagery and shapes you make from scratch. Starting with stock can help you kick-start the art process, while adding your own shapes will enable you to tailor the final result to your specifications. Of course, you can alter the balance when working on your own shape-tastic imagery. Want to use

mostly stock for a streamlined job? Prefer to deploy more of your own shapes and patterns for supreme personalisation? You can certainly favour either side in your future projects.

As you merge photo and shapes throughout this tutorial, you'll find masks and blend modes to be all-star partners in creativity. Clipping masks let you easily confine layers using what's on another layer, while layer masks are great for hiding unwanted areas and fading edges. Blend modes facilitate the melding of stacked layers. With all the colours being intermixed, you're bound to generate some curious and unexpected chromatic clashes.



### Alter facial features

**01** Open 'model.psd' [Elements: use Filter> Distort> Liquify to alter facial features. Click OK. Skip to next step]. Ctrl/right-click on model layer, choose Convert to Smart Object. Go to Filter> Liquify. [Photoshop: use tools to alter features. Click OK. Skip to next step.] Use Face-Aware Liquify settings to alter features. Click OK.



### Mask model

**02** Use Pen Tool (set to Path in Options bar) to outline model. Follow natural curvature, or make it blocky [Elements: use Lasso (Polygonal Lasso for blocky selection)]. If using the Pen, press Cmd/Ctrl+Return/Enter after creating path to convert to selection. Press the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette to mask.



### Enhance eyes

**03** Click the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' button in the Layers palette, choose Levels. Adjust the sliders, focusing solely on enhancing/lightening eyes. When satisfied, press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert mask. Paint white in the mask with a soft-edged brush at 60-80% brush Opacity on the eyes to apply.





## Expert edit

### Apply multiple masks



#### Perform initial masking

**01** To enable masking on the model, select the layer and click the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette. Add black/shades of grey to the mask to hide/fade areas.



#### Use clipping mask

**02** Place 'terrain.jpg' above the model. Option/Alt-click between the layers. Mask another 'terrain.jpg' by placing above and Option/Alt-clicking between the two terrain layers. You can still move/adjust any of the layers.



#### Group and mask

**03** Select the layers, group them (Cmd/Ctrl+G), add a layer mask to the group. You can mask independently from the initial layer masking. Essentially, you're masking in stages.



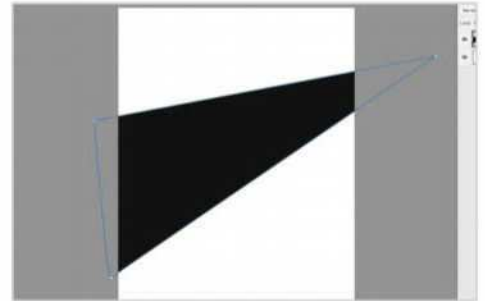
#### Group/mask again

**04** Place the group in another group, mask out shards with polygonal selections. If you ever need to go back or re-edit this masking stage, you can without upsetting previous masking steps.



#### Colour eyes

**04** Click the 'Create new fill/adjustment layer' button again, choose Solid Color. Pick #458cdc. Set to Color blend mode, drop Opacity to around 40%. Option/Alt-click and drag the Levels layer mask to the Color Fill layer to replace its mask. Adjust mask and/or adjustment layer opacity. When satisfied, save and close.



#### Create background shard

**05** Open 'start.psd'. Set Foreground colour to black. Use the Pen Tool (set to Shape in Options bar) to plot out a large shard, with the ends extending beyond the canvas bounds [Elements: instead use the Polygonal Lasso Tool to create shape on new layer, then fill with black using Edit>Fill. Deselect (Cmd/Ctrl+D)].



#### Place model and mask

**06** Go to File> Place [CC: Place Linked], grab the model PSD. Scale and position before committing the place. With the Polygonal Lasso Tool, create a slanted shape selection encompassing the bottom edge of the model. Now Option/Alt-click the Add Layer Mask button from the Layers palette.



#### Use clipping mask

**07** Go to File> Place [CC: use Place Embedded from here on out], grab 'terrain.jpg'. Set to Pin Light blend mode, scale and position above model before committing the place. Option/Alt-click between the top two layers to mask. Repeat steps to add a second masked 'terrain.jpg'.



#### Further mask model

**08** [Elements: Click model mask. Paint black with soft-edged brush to further fade bottom corner. Skip to next step] Cmd/Ctrl-click to select the model and terrain layers. Press Cmd/Ctrl+G to place in group. Click the Add Layer Mask button to add a mask to group. Paint black to further fade the bottom.





## Mask edges

**09** [Photoshop/CC: with the group selected, press Cmd/Ctrl+G again to contain the group within another group. Add a mask to it] Use Polygonal Lasso to create a jagged shard at the edge. Using Edit> Fill, fill selection with black. Click OK. Press Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect. Create some more shard cutouts.



## Lighten up

**10** Create a new layer at the top. Click the 'Create new fill/adjustment layer' button, choose Solid Color. Pick white. Drop layer Opacity to 50%. Click mask, press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Paint with soft-edged brush at 10-20% Opacity to lighten up a bit [Photoshop/CC: Place layers from steps 10-15 in new group].



## Blend shapes

**11** Place 'diagonals.jpg'. Set to Color Dodge blend mode, scale up before committing the place. Press the Add Layer Mask button. Paint black in the mask at 40-60% brush Opacity to reduce a bit just around the face.



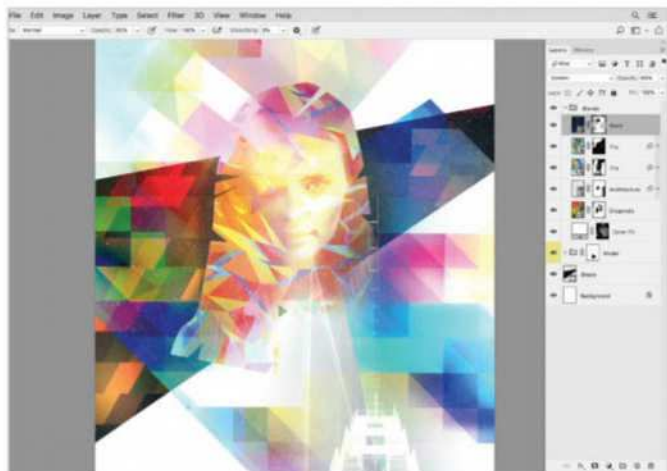
## Borrow architecture

**12** Place 'architecture.jpg'. Set to Hard Light blend mode, rotate, scale and position before committing the place. Press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Add layer mask. Paint black in the mask at 90-100% brush Opacity to fade edges.



## Merge more shapes

**13** Place 'tris.jpg'. Set to Hard Light blend mode, scale, rotate and position before committing. Press Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert. Add layer mask, paint black (40-80% brush Opacity) to reduce. Add another instance of 'tris.jpg', blend with Hard Light. Drop Opacity to 50%. Using Hue/Saturation (Cmd/Ctrl+U), adjust Hue. Mask to blend.



## Add stars

**14** Place 'stars.jpg'. Set to Screen blend mode, drop Opacity setting to 65%, scale, rotate and position before committing. Add a layer mask. Paint black in the mask (30-60% brush Opacity) to reduce in areas.



## Edit the colour

**15** Add a Solid Color layer, pick #46f7dc. Set to Color Dodge blend mode. Click mask, invert. Paint white (20-50% brush Opacity) to apply lightening. Add another Solid Color layer with #143e5e. Set to Overlay blend mode. Invert mask, paint white to apply darkening [If you grouped steps 10-15, mask if needed].





## Tutorial Enhance with shapes and masks



### Apply the Cutout filter

**16** Option/Alt-click and drag the model layer to the top for reinforcement. Set to Soft Light blend mode. Trash the layer mask. Go to Filter> Artistic> Cutout. Set settings to (from top to bottom) 4, 4, 2. Click OK. Option/Alt-click the Add Layer Mask button. Paint white (80-100% Opacity) to reveal.



### Reinforce model

**17** Option/Alt-click and drag the model layer to the top again. Set blend mode to Pin Light. Paint black in the mask to reduce. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J. Set blend mode to Normal to get more of the natural face. Drop Opacity to around 30%. Adjust mask to reduce further.



### Overlay more shapes

**18** Place 'terrain.jpg' for more blending on the face. Set to Overlay blend mode, scale and position before committing. Option/Alt-click the Add Layer Mask button, then paint white at 60-80% brush Opacity to reveal the shape texturing.



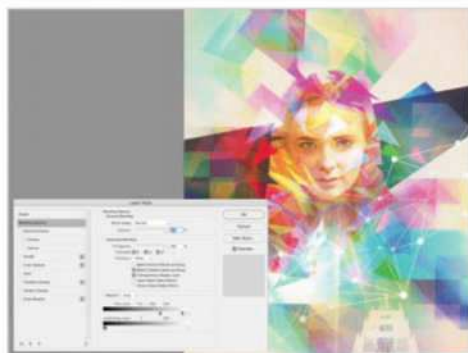
### Mask group (Photoshop/CC)

**19** If needed, place the model reinforcement layers and terrain layer from steps 16-18 in a group. Add a mask to the group, then paint with black to fade and reduce a smidgen in areas.



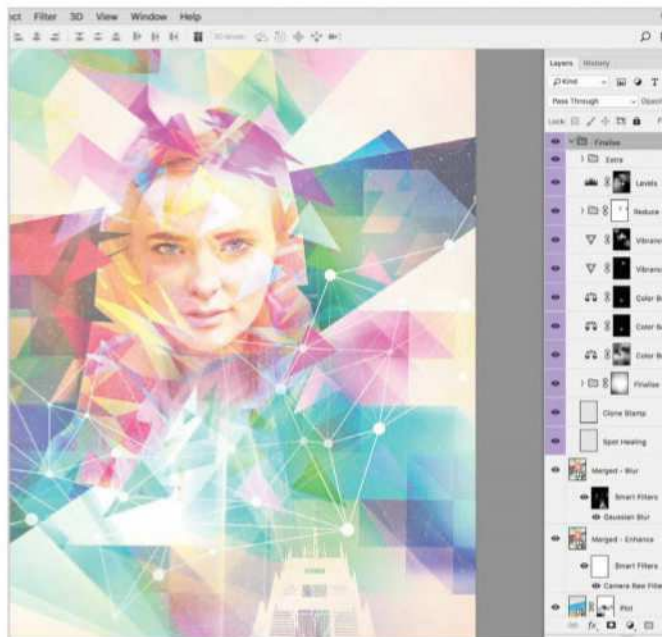
### More shapes

**20** On new layers, use Pen Tool (set to Shape) to create shard shapes of various colour [Elements: use Polygonal Lasso on separate layers, fill with colour]. Grab existing colour with the Eyedropper Tool. Continue adding shapes. In Photoshop/CC, use groups to corral shapes so you can more easily control them.



### Add detail

**21** Place 'plot.jpg'. Scale up, rotate and position before committing [Elements: set to Overlay blend mode] [Photoshop/CC: double-click empty area of layer. Drag dark slider under This Layer rightward. Option/Alt-click and drag to split, smoothing the transition. Click OK]. Add layer mask, paint black to fade edges.



### Finalise

**22** Use adjustments such as Vibrance, Color Balance and Color Lookup to tweak the colour in Photoshop/CC. Try Hue/Saturation and Photo Filter in Elements. Merge layers (Cmd/Ctrl+Option/Alt+Shift+E), convert to Smart Object (Photoshop/CC) and utilise the Enhance menu in Elements or CC's Camera Raw Filter (under Filters) to finalise.



**Essentials****Time taken**  
75 hours**The artist****Harshil Prayag**

I am Harshil Prayag, a digital designer. I like to take my creativity to the next level every time.

I am 26 and am from Mauritius. I am passionate about image editing and I like to convert my imagination into pictures.



# The Hidden Valleys

How did Harshil create a fantasy world within Photoshop from his imagination?

I am very passionate about ancient Indian and mythological architecture," reveals Harshil Prayag, a designer from Mauritius. "I like to play adventure games like Tomb Raider. These games are filled with ruins, and provided the inspiration for my own fantasy world."

A lover of surreal landscapes and impossible compositions, Harshil valued Photoshop for this, and his other images; "The only tool to make my dream place a reality was Photoshop," he says. "I spent hours gathering all the assets. Then I started to construct the artwork, piece

by piece. I had to use the Pen Tool to cut out many shapes. I used the Clone Stamp to create the grass effect on the mountains; masks to position the temples in the mountain; and lots of blend modes for the waterfall and sun effect."

With the bulk of the editing done, Harshil used adjustments to finish up. "Adjustment layers are good for toning. And I used the Free Transform Tool to manipulate shapes. I also used the Smudge Tool for some shaping, plus the Dodge and Burn tools for lighting effects."

**Mountain and valleys**

**01** I gathered some 3D rocks and used the Pen Tool and masks to create the mountains and position them where I wanted. I also gave them realistic toning with the help of the Dodge and Burn tools.

**Temple and floating land**

**02** I duplicated the mountains and moved them to create the floating land. By masking, I positioned the temple ruins on the mountains and with the Pen Tool, I drew some shapes for the sky and lake.

**Grass and waterfall**

**03** I took a forest picture and with a spray brush, I cloned the green part on the mountain. Then I added a waterfall and used blend modes to fit it into the scene. I also used Warp for some waterfall shapes.



## On the FileSilo

Download your free resources at [www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative](http://www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative)

## Essentials

### Works with



### What you'll learn

Build a composition with basic 3D and thorough blending techniques

**Time taken**  
7 hours

## Expert

**Mark White**



This image doesn't look like well over 600 layers, but I guess those smaller spheres look deceptive! This is a project that I enjoyed doing in blocks of a couple of hours, as I always came back to it with fresh eyes.

As Techniques Editor on **Photoshop Creative**, I've learned all kinds of tips to help with even the most impressive-looking pictures.

# Create an impossible tree composition

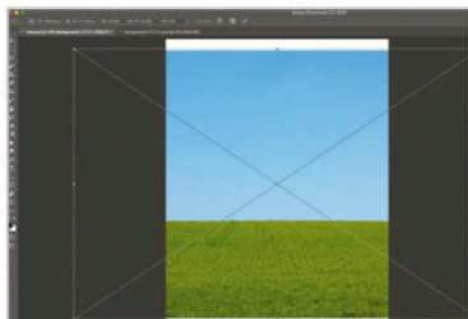
Master a surreal composition and use simple 3D techniques to improve your skills right sphere, right now

**P**eople often assume 3D is the most difficult part of Photoshop to get to grips with. And who's to say they're wrong? The 3D workspace is certainly a completely different beast to the rest of Photoshop; the great white shark to the aquarium of other Photoshop features, if you will. But while many advanced users of Photoshop spend hours fiddling in the 3D workspace of the program with materials, shading, mesh presets and planes, this tutorial doesn't require anything like as much focus there.

In this project, we'll be spending most of our time on the little details, from cutting out the tree

perfectly, to making duplicates of all the spheres in the image and blending them seamlessly into the scene. This is a project that requires patience and attention, as it's not one that's going to feel realistic without a lot of time and care. It's highly doubtful you'll achieve it in one sitting, so prepare!

By creating this impossible tree, though, you can learn numerous editing skills that are vital for all kinds of Photoshop users. This is a project that teaches you how to mask in a number of ways, how to adjust a composition and how blend modes can be really important in bringing a scene together. Handy skills for all sorts of images.



### Set up the base

**01** Start by creating your document via File> New and enter a Width of 230mm and a Height of 300mm. Click OK and bring in the background photo; this isn't really going to show up much in the final image but it's a good base to start on to get compositing with.



### Cut out the tree

**02** Bring in the tree image, dragging it on to the base. Double-click it to open as a Smart Object in another document. Go to Select> Color Range and select the sky and background before you start masking it out. Use a small brush in order to touch-up the selection.



### Desaturate the branches

**03** It's inevitable that you're going to end up with blue edges on the branches; create a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer with -100 Saturation. Invert the mask (Cmd/Ctrl+I) and with a soft, white brush, touch over the blue to fix the colour.







## Tutorial Create an impossible tree composition



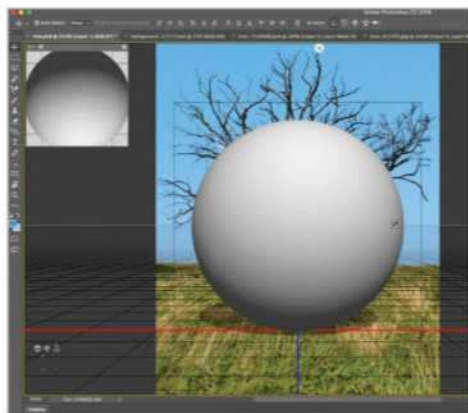
### Widen the trunk

**04** Back in your main document, duplicate your tree. Make the duplicate layer bigger (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and mask the new trunk so you have a wider trunk for your subject to lean on later. This is why Smart Objects are necessary: making the trunk wider won't distort the image.



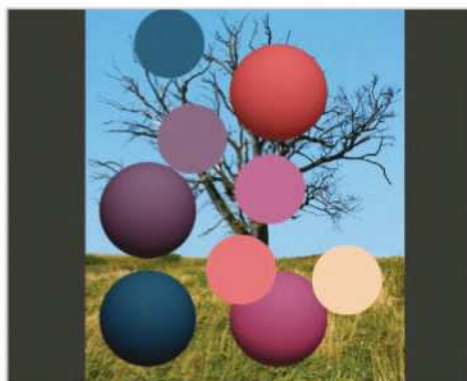
### Grow some grass

**05** Bring in the long grass image and place it below the tree layers. Mask it into place with Color Range again and on the tree layers, use a tiny brush to make upward strokes. This will mask grass in front of the tree.



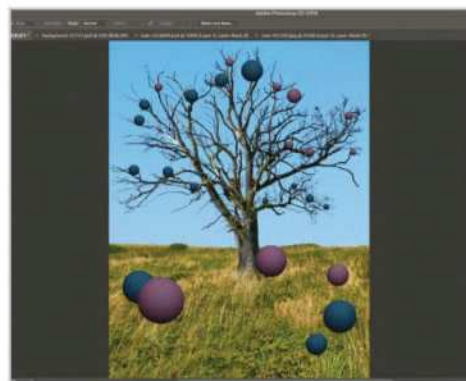
### Create a 3D sphere

**06** Now for all the spheres in the image: go to 3D>New Mesh From Layer> Mesh Preset> Sphere and uncheck the Shadows checkbox. Finally, Ctrl/right-click this layer and Rasterize it: it really is as simple as that!



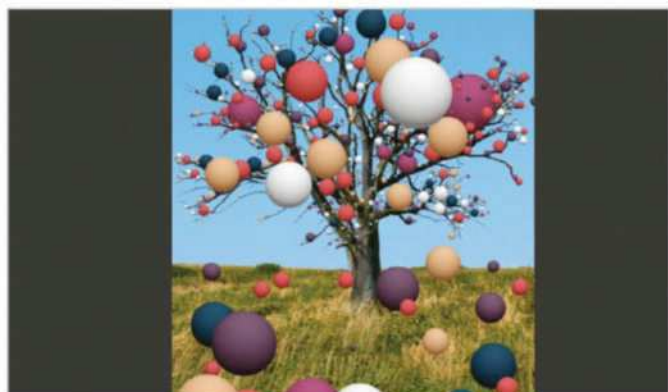
### Set your colour palette

**07** Create a colour palette on a new layer for your spheres; we went with navy (#18597d), dark purple (#885e81), light purple (#c65b90), red (#fb6a6a), and yellow (#fccb96). Duplicate your sphere and clip Multiply layers to them with these colours to prepare for the next stage.



### Duplicate the spheres

**08** Begin just with the navy sphere; merge the Overlay layer with the 3D layer and then duplicate it a few dozen times, resizing each one. Move these layers between the branches of the tree and on the grass in front. Group these layers and then move onto the purple spheres.



### Populate the scene

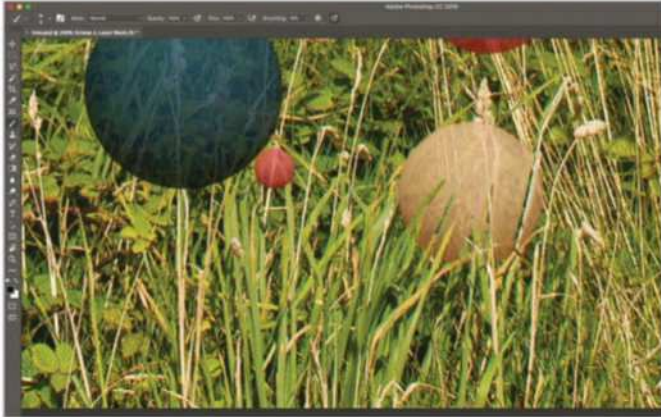
**09** As you duplicate the spheres, you'll start to really fill the scene with colour, so duplicate more of the colours you want to see, remembering to group certain colours. Place these spheres all over the tree, and vary the size from the huge spheres to the tiny.



### Mask through the spheres

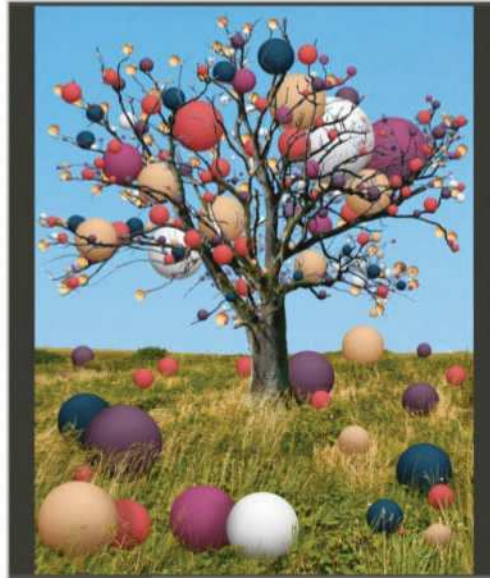
**10** Hit Mask on each of the groups of spheres. Cmd/Ctrl-click the tree's layer preview to select where the branches are. With a small black brush on the sphere group masks, fade in the branches in front of some of the spheres, to give the impression they're between branches.





### Blend the grass

**11** Just as you faded the branches in, proceed to fade individual blades of grass over the spheres on the ground. This will give the impression that the spheres are actually on the floor among the grass, rather than just placed in front.



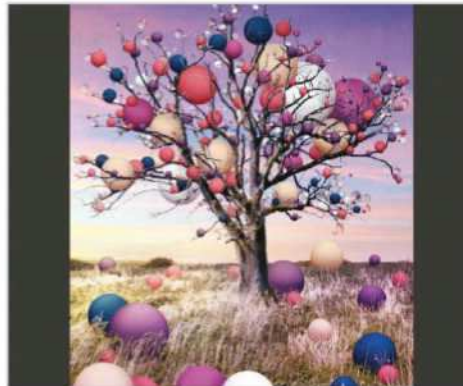
### Shade the spheres

**12** Your picture's beginning to look a little more realistic. Continue grouping all the spheres, and clipping a 30% Opacity layer. With a soft, low Opacity black brush, add shading to the spheres wherever necessary, such as where they touch, by the branches and behind the tree.



### Bring in a sunset

**13** Create a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer. Fade the Saturation down to -100 and bring in the sunset stock image. Set to Overlay to recolour. Clip a layer on top of the sunset layer and by selecting colours from the sunset, recolour the lower part of the image.



### Recolour the scene

**14** Group the layers you created in the last step. Mask out the recolouring over the tree and the spheres, and then create a gradient map – set to Soft Light – with the sunset's hues to equalise the scene a little. Increase the Vibrance to +60 with an adjustment layer.



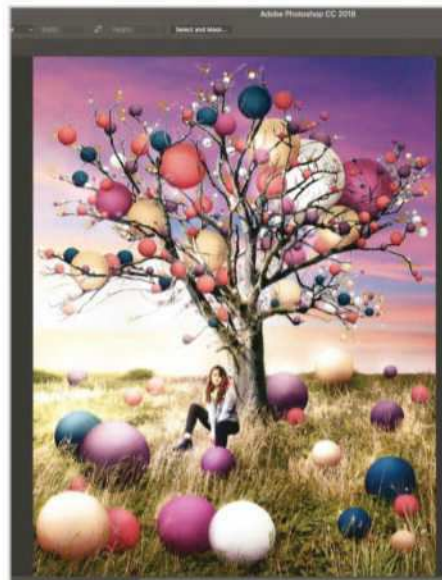
### Insert a subject

**15** Place a subject into the image, below the recolouring layers. Cut out using the Pen Tool and a soft brush, and blend the subject in with the same technique you used for blending the spheres into the grass.



### Blur everything and mask

**16** Create a stamp layer by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E, and duplicate. Go to Filter > Blur > Blur Gallery > Field Blur for one; set to Screen, hit mask, invert (Cmd/Ctrl+I) and mask in the highlights. For the other, set to Overlay, 40% Opacity, go to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur, choose 20px and reduce the Saturation to -30 (Cmd/Ctrl+U).



### Adjust the scene

**17** Finally, adjust the scene with High Pass, Curves, Color Balance or whatever adjustments you favour. We made a stamp layer of the image pre-recolouring and faded this back in for a more realistic grass and sky colour.





# An underground success

La Boca is a world-renowned studio with a client list that spans across the globe, but this set of posters brought the company's artwork right back to its home city

## The studio



**La Boca**  
[www.laboca.co.uk](http://www.laboca.co.uk)  
[@LaBocaDesign](https://twitter.com/LaBocaDesign)

La Boca is a London-based design studio specialising in illustration and image-making for a wide and eclectic mix of international clients. The studio's output is often retina-teasing and tactile, occasionally with one foot in the past, one foot in the future, but always with a twinkle in the eye.

**Name of the project**  
*London Transport Posters*

**L**a Boca has created artwork for publishing houses, awards ceremonies and even stadium rock gods Muse, but studio chief Scot Bendall achieved recognition a little closer to home when his team worked with Transport For London on a series of safety posters, to be displayed around the city.

"It's a tangible project I can point out to my mum," says Scot, a Londoner himself, "[With these posters] she can finally begin to understand what I do for a living without a 'proper' job!"

We caught up with Scot to talk about his relationship with both Photoshop and London, and how these beautiful posters were designed.

## What was the brief for this project, Scot?

Many of the safety messages, such as Mind The Gap, are already quite familiar to travellers in London, so the brief was really about finding ways to communicate these important messages in a new and engaging way. We were asked by the agency VCCP to create posters that were dynamic, but at the same time would communicate [the campaign message] as clearly and concisely as possible.

We knew we needed to incorporate the typography within the illustrations, but overall we were given a fair amount of space to be creative within the brief.

## Does the process start off with some sketches?

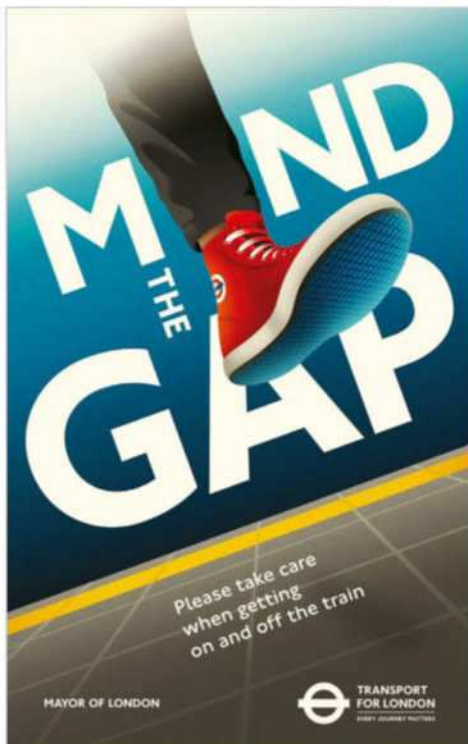
We always try to start projects with very loose sketches (that are usually not very well drawn in my case!). It's just a quicker way to throw ideas around before moving to the computer. The ideas will still develop further once we get into Photoshop, but we usually have a rough idea on what we're doing before getting in there.

## And from there, you took them to Photoshop, presumably?

Usually on large-format graphics we would create the artwork at a percentage of the actual printed size, but on this project we were asked to create everything at actual size. This meant we were working with PS files in the 4-6GB region, which often got some interesting reactions from the Macs. The illustrations were all created to be flexible, as they are printed in many different formats. We made use of Smart Objects to be able to work on separate parts of the designs outside of the main composition, and to also make it more manageable when adapting details to different sizes. All of the airbrush work was created with the standard brush tools and a Wacom tablet.

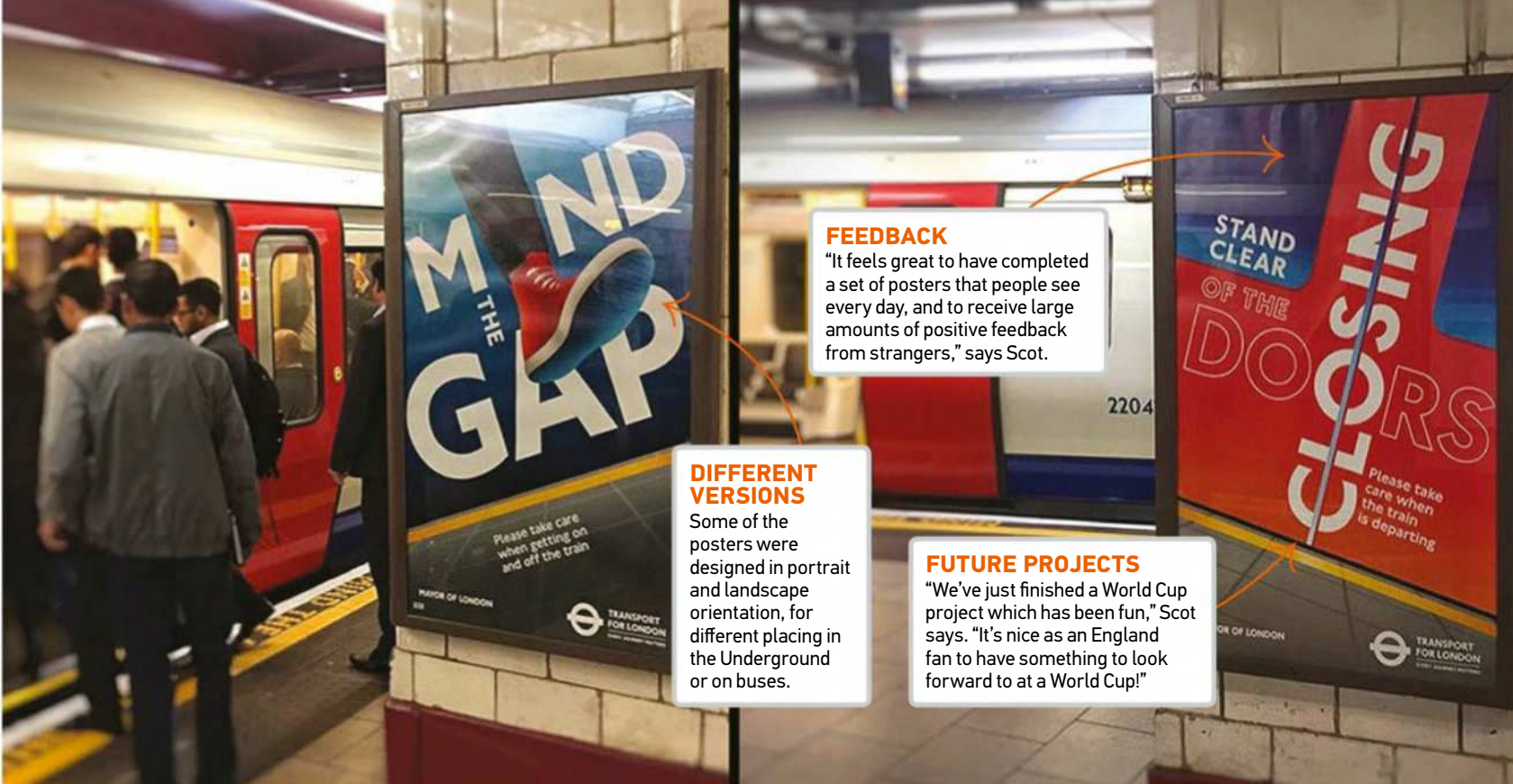
## Did you learn anything new?

Despite having used Photoshop for over 20 years I always have the nagging feeling that I only just scratch the surface of what it's capable of.



All images © La Boca





#### FEEDBACK

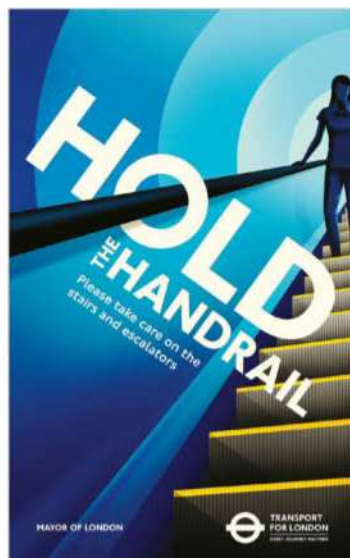
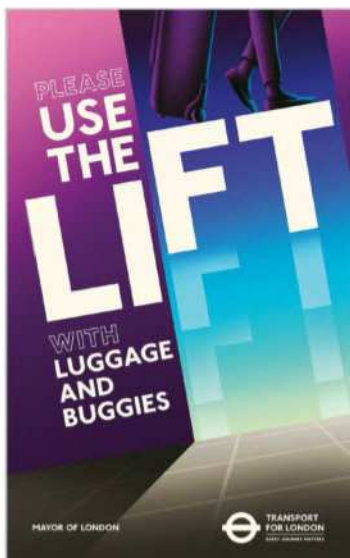
"It feels great to have completed a set of posters that people see every day, and to receive large amounts of positive feedback from strangers," says Scot.

#### DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Some of the posters were designed in portrait and landscape orientation, for different placing in the Underground or on buses.

#### FUTURE PROJECTS

"We've just finished a World Cup project which has been fun," Scot says. "It's nice as an England fan to have something to look forward to at a World Cup!"



### Perspective is really strong in all of these posters. Is there a reason for that?

Yes, we wanted to use perspective as a device to draw people's eyes into the posters. Generally we've used bright colours and sharp angles on the posters to create dynamism and to allow the typography to be as visible as possible in the various formats.

There are over 27 million journeys made on the network every day, and the posters are seen in very busy environments, both in terms of people numbers and the amount of traditional advertising they compete for eyeballs with.

It was really important to us that the posters should try to be distinctive within these conditions.

### These posters feel modern and very London-centred. Was it intentional to tap into TFL's strong visual identity?

We worked very closely with VCCP to formulate the ideas between us. We probably created between three and five ideas for each poster before going on to refine them into final designs. We were given vintage travel posters as a visual reference, but with a warning not to make the designs appear historical. The posters have a slightly nostalgic feel, but they are still very much designed to be contemporary. There wasn't any external pressure to do this, but I think it's fair to say the rich history of graphics created for London transport was always at the back of our minds. It's a privilege to be involved, but also extremely daunting as the visual heritage is so rich!

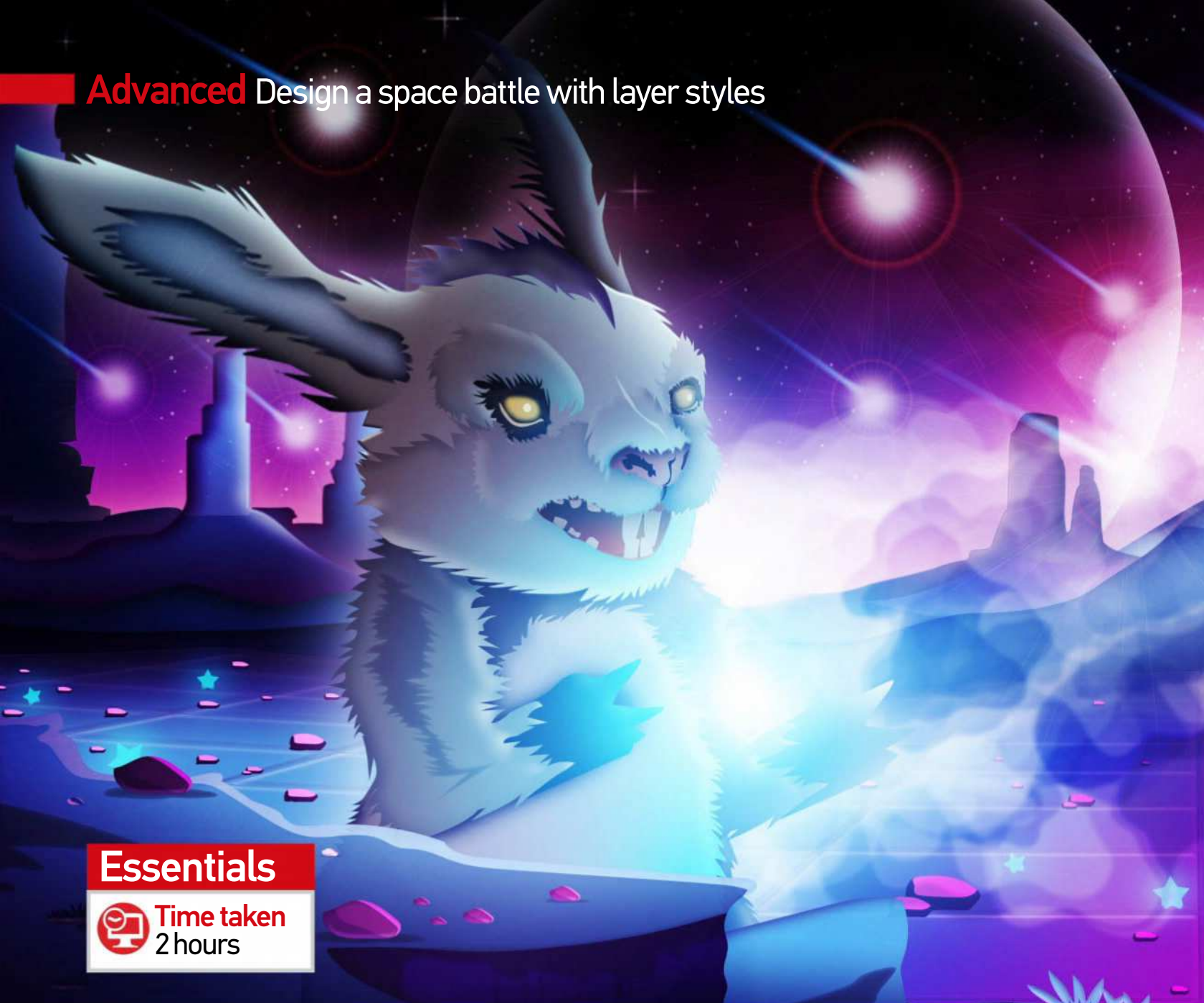
We wanted the imagery to be direct but friendly, because the content of the messages is quite serious. In a way, I see the TFL posters as belonging to all of us Londoners, so I hoped the posters would be viewed as positive and warm rather than shouty or authoritative.

### As a London-based studio, this project must have been extra special to you!

I'm born and raised in London, so in many ways this was a dream project for me. I grew up surrounded by TFL messages on the bus and Tube, and never dreamt I would get the chance to create some myself. It's always nice to receive positive feedback, but it's been touching to receive so many comments from people simply saying they enjoy seeing the posters on their daily commute. I just hope some of the messages have sunk in too!







## Essentials



**Time taken**  
2 hours

# Design a space battle with layer styles

Become the master of layer styles, while learning little tricks to create a vibrant illustration

**H**ave you ever sketched out a drawing by hand and wondered what it would look like if it was in digital form? When it comes to making any sort of digital drawing, the best tool to achieve a decent result is the Pen Tool.

There are three options to choose from with the Pen Tool; Shape, Path or Pixel. You can pick which one you want via the options bar along the top of your screen, using the three icons near the left-hand side of the bar. Each icon represents one of the options. The first is the Shape option and this creates vector shapes.

However, there is more to this tutorial than just drawing with the Pen Tool. You'll learn how to mask in textures to your shapes after drawing them using the Pen Tool. We'll also be revealing how layer styles, such as Gradient Overlay, Outer Glow, Inner Glow and Inner Shadows, can all help to create a light source within your illustration to bring your scene to life. If that wasn't enough, we'll look at how to add Curves to enhance depth by including some adjustment layers, and since our subject matter is an action-packed space battle, we'll show how to adapt Smart Filters to create light beams.





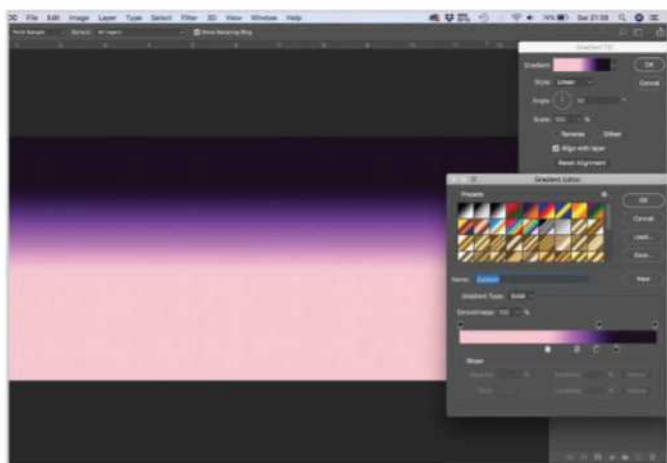
## Expert

**Moe Hezwani**



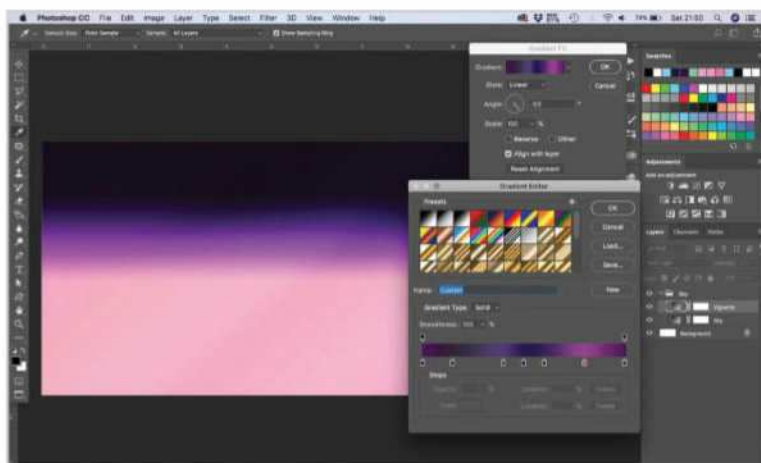
One of my favourite layer styles is Gradient Overlay; I can spend hours experimenting with different gradients, adjusting the scale, angle and even blend mode to fit my illustration.

I'm a professional graphic designer/illustrator and Photoshop is the go-to platform for my designs. I enjoy mixing a composition between photography and illustration to build up a piece of artwork.



### A gradient sky

**01** Make a new canvas at 1500x661px, then create a gradient background sky by going to Layer> New Fill Layer> Gradient. Pick a light pink, location 45%, a light purple, location 60%, a deep purple, location 70% and a dark purple, location 80%. Set the gradient Angle to 90°.



### Enhance the sky

**02** Create depth to the sky by creating another Gradient Fill layer. Pick out the following shades of purple: #4b015a, #32233b at 15%, #513a78 at 40%, #280f52 at 50%, #3b1f5d at 60%, #943e90 at 80% and #4b015a. Then set the Angle to -50°. Finally, set the layer's blend mode to Soft Light with Opacity: 70%.



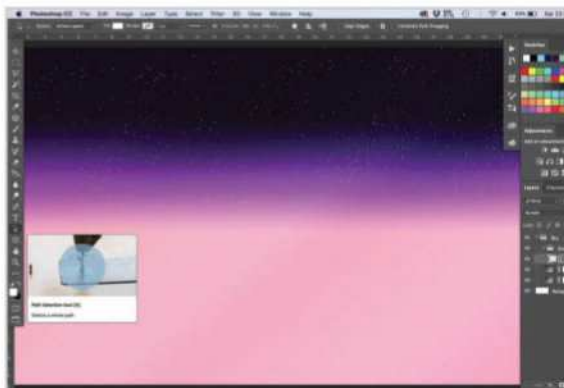


## Expert tip



### Grouped layer folders

With this kind of artwork, expect to generate quite a few layers – in fact, you will probably find that your Layers palette becomes quite cluttered. A really handy tip is to group your layers together into folders. It will also be a lot easier to duplicate groups of layers if they are in folders. To do this, select the layers you want to place into one folder then from the Layers palette, select Layer > New Group from Layers. You will notice that the layers you selected have now been placed into a folder.



### Draw little stars

**03** Start by using the Ellipse Tool to draw a number of white stars; draw them in a selection of different sizes. Use the Path Selection Tool and hold down Alt to easily duplicate your shapes within the same shape layer. Then set the shape layer's blend mode to Screen with Opacity at 50%.



### Bigger stars

**04** Make a new layer and use a Paths Pen to draw a cross, next select a Soft Round Pressure Opacity Brush, Size: 7px and Opacity: 100%. In the Paths palette, select Stroke Path from the drop-down-menu. Pick the Brush Tool and tick Simulate Pressure. Draw some stars, and then make the layer blend mode Screen and Opacity: 60%.



### Create the planet

**05** Begin by creating a large circle using the Ellipse Tool, and set the Fill to 0%. Bring up the Layer Style window and select Inner Shadow. Use the following settings: Blend Mode: Normal, Color: White, Opacity: 100%, Angle: 30°, Distance: 13px, Choke: 0% and Size: 45px.



### Make a texture

**06** Using the Rectangular Tool, draw a black square, next with the Pen, draw dagger shapes within the square. Use Subtract Front Shape from Path Options to cut out the shapes and then make the layer Opacity 11%. Now draw another 12 squares with different dagger shapes within them, each layer Opacity set to 11%.



### Add texture to the planet

**07** Add the squares to a group, then go to Edit > Transform > Rotate, rotate by 50°, then place it over the planet. Make a selection around the planet by Cmd/Ctrl-clicking on the planet layer's thumbnail. With the group folder still selected, add a layer mask. Now change the folder's blend mode to Soft Light.



### Circular glow

**08** Start by using the Ellipse Tool to draw a circle. Next, bring up the Layer Style window, select Gradient Overlay and use the following settings: Blend Mode: Normal, Opacity: 100%, Style: Radial, tick Align with Layer, Angle: 0° and Scale: 107%. In the Gradient Editor, create a black/orange/white gradient.



### Continue the glow

**09** Duplicate your circle and go to Edit > Transform > Scale, select Maintain Aspect Ratio and scale the circle at 55%. Now make the duplicated shape's Fill: 0% and in the Gradient Overlay layer style, set the Blend Mode to Screen. Place both circles into a group and set the blend mode to Screen and Opacity to 70%.







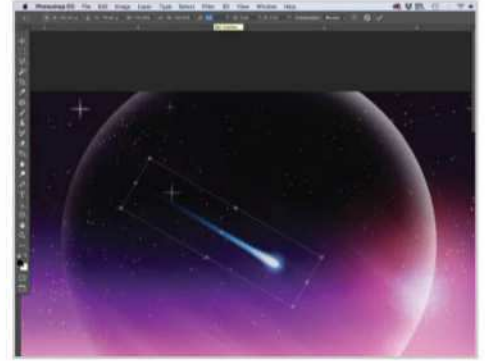
### Create a shooting star

**10** Create an oval using the Ellipse Tool; in the Layer Style window select Gradient Overlay and use these settings: Blend Mode: Normal, Opacity: 100%, Style: Linear, Angle: -90°, Scale: 107% and create a black/white/blue/black gradient. Select Inner Shadow and use these settings: Blend Mode: Normal, Color: Black, Opacity: 100%, Choke: 70% and Size: 40px.



### The star's trail

**11** Make a circle and give it a blue/black Radial gradient, Scale: 50%. Now draw a long rounded triangle, with a white/blue/black gradient, Angle: 94°, Scale: 140%. In Inner Shadow, set Blend Mode: Linear Light, Angle: -90°, Distance: 15px, Choke: 15%, Size: 15px. In Inner Glow, Black, Blend Mode: Multiply, Opacity: 61%, Choke: 9%, Size 18px.



### Finish the shooting star

**12** Create a long oval with the same Gradient settings as step 10. In Inner Shadow, make Blend Mode: Linear Light, Choke: 45% and Size: 20px. Now convert each shape layer into Smart Objects and make their blend modes Screen. Place the shapes into a group and rotate them 120°.



### Star's lens flare

**13** Make a circle on the end of the shooting star with a Fill of 0%. Add a black/maroon/black Radial gradient, make Blend Mode: Screen, Opacity: 15%, Scale: 100%. Make a smaller circle, Fill: 0% and add a white/maroon/dark/orange/dark Radial gradient, make the Blend Mode: Lighten, Opacity: 40%.



### Lens flare angles

**14** Draw a smaller circle, Fill: 0% and a white/black gradient, Blend Mode: Screen, Opacity: 100%, Scale: 100%. Next, using a Shape Pen, draw different angled lines. With the Path Selection Tool, make the Fill: no colour, Stroke: white and Width: 0.27px. Finally make the layer blend mode Screen and Opacity 10%.



### Duplicate and scale shapes

**15** Place all the shooting stars and lens flare layers into a group and hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it. Now go to Edit> Transform> Scale and scale it by 55%, ensure Maintain Aspect Ratio is selected. Grab the Move Tool and move it to place. Repeat five times, either scaling them bigger or smaller around the planet.



### Draw a soft cloud

**16** Create a group and use a Shape Pen to draw different size wiggly purple shapes; give each shape an Opacity of 30%. With the wiggly shape group selected, go to the Layers palette drop-down menu, select Convert to Smart Object. Make the Smart Object blend mode Screen and Opacity 70%. Now go to Filter> Blur> Gaussian Blur, make Radius 21.4px.





# Advanced Design a space battle with layer styles

## Expert tip



### Save your gradients

You can use the gradients provided on the FileSilo for this illustration ('stretched\_landscape\_gradients.grd'). Alternatively you could make and save your own gradients. Start with one of Photoshop's existing gradients and modify it to your needs or you can start from scratch. To create and save a customised gradient, select the Gradient Tool, the Gradient Overlay layer style or Gradient Fill. Create your desired gradient, give it a new name and finally click New.



### Create some ground

**17** Begin by grabbing the Pen to draw your ground shape, then add a blue to purple Linear gradient, Scale: 150%, Angle: 124°. Next, in Inner Shadow, use the following settings: Blend Mode: Multiply, Color: deep purple, Opacity: 76%, Angle -172°, Choke: 15% and Size 70px.



### Add glowing lines

**18** Grab the Pen and draw checkered lines over your ground shape, then make the layer Fill: 0% and Opacity: 70%. In the Layer Style window, select Bevel & Emboss and amend the following settings: Style: Pillow Emboss, Depth: 120%, Direction: Up, Size: 6px, Soften 2px, Angle: 80°, Highlight Mode: Normal.



### Make shadows

**19** Start by creating a new layer and grab a deep purple soft brush, make a selection around the ground shape by Cmd/Ctrl-clicking on its shape layer thumbnail and apply a mask over the new layer. Then simply paint along the back edge of the ground to darken it.



### Draw the mountains

**20** Using the Pen, draw a selection of different mountains then add a dark blue/light blue or a light purple/dark purple gradient. Use the blue gradient around the planet and the purple gradient for any mountains directly in front of it. Then, make Blend Mode: Normal, Style: Linear, Scale: 69%. Set the Opacity on all shapes 80%.



### Apply depth to mountains

**21** Add Inner Shadow to all the shapes and amend the settings: Blend Mode: Multiply, Color: deep purple, Opacity: 65%, tick Use Global Light, Distance: 7px, Choke: 8%, Size: 20px. For each shape create a new layer, blend mode: Color Burn, pick a deeper purple and brush areas that need extra shadowing.



### Place highlights to mountains

**22** Add extra highlights to areas of the mountains that the light from the planet would hit. First make a new layer and add a mask of the mountain shape. Then grab a soft light blue brush and paint the areas that need highlighting. Make all the layers' blend mode Color Dodge, Opacity: 70%.

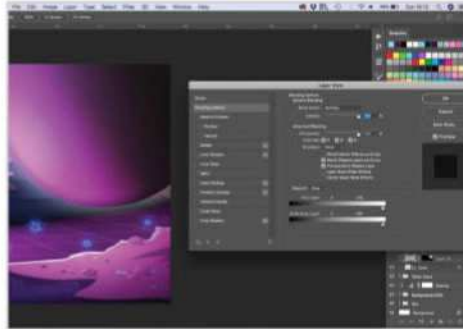






### Extra details to landscape

**23** Using the techniques from step 17 to 22, use the Pen to draw some rocks, foreground mountains and some fallen stars. For the fallen stars, apply an Outer Glow layer style with the following settings: Blend Mode: Color Dodge, Opacity: 60%, Color: blue, Spread: 15%, Size: 30px.



### The android

**24** To draw the body of the android, use the Ellipse Tool and add a purple to black Linear gradient, Angle: 34°, Scale: 77%. Then, Inner Shadow: Opacity: 50%, Distance: 4px, Choke: 2%, Size: 35px. Finally, Bevel & Emboss: Depth: 50%, Size: 13px, Soften: 7px, Highlight Mode Opacity: 26%, Shadow Mode Opacity: 81%.



### Complete the android

**25** Draw the face, beginning with a larger circle then decrease in size a couple of times. Add Inner Shadow and Bevel & Emboss using the same settings as the body. Plus add a Stroke: Size: 2px, Position: Inside, Blend Mode: Color Dodge, Color: purple. Draw the extra details of the android with the same layer style settings.



### Make a laser beam

**26** Create a new layer, blend mode: Screen, then use the Pen to draw a white non-parallel rectangle. Rasterize the layer then go to Filter> Gaussian Blur and set Radius to 20px. To create a fog effect, copy the techniques in step 16, only this time use white/grey shapes, Radius: 5px, Blend Mode: Hard Light, Opacity: 90%.



### Draw the bunny

**27** Using the Shape Pen, draw the basic shapes of the bunny rabbit, use warm greys to colour it. Now start to add layer styles to give the bunny some depth, eg Bevel & Emboss. Create new layers, using the Brush Tool with a darker warm grey for the shadows and bright cyan for highlights.



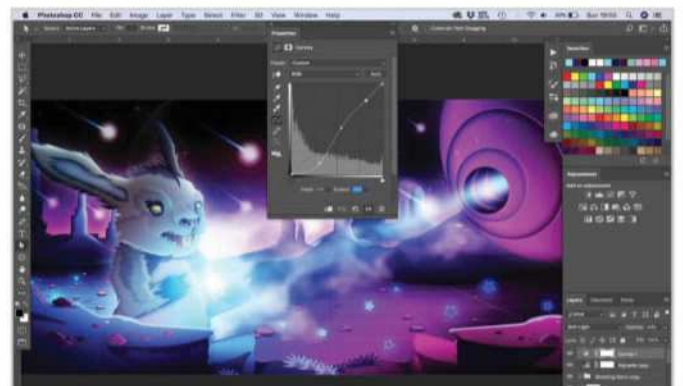
### Add glow to the bunny

**28** Start by placing all the bunny shapes in a group then add an Outer Glow layer style, Blend Mode: Hard Light, Opacity: 50%, Size: 70px. To enhance the glow, add a new layer (Blend Mode: Hard Light), attach it to the group using a clipping mask, set your colour to cyan and brush around its edges.



### Create the power glow

**29** To make the bunny's power orb, simply create a very large circle (Fill: 0%) and add a white/blue/black Radial gradient, Blend Mode: Screen, Opacity/Scale: 100%. Now duplicate it and scale it down 70% and amend the gradient Scale setting to 46%.



### Final adjustments

**30** Start by duplicating the Gradient Fill layer from step 2, bring it to the top of the Layers palette and amend its Opacity to 100%. Next add a Curves adjustment layer and use Point 2: Input: 79 Output: 31, Point 3: Input: 140 Output: 131 and Point 4: Input: 210 Output: 209.





**Advanced** Illustrate using rules of perspective



**On the FileSilo**

Download your free  
resources at [www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative](http://www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative)





## Essentials



**Time taken**  
5 hours

## Expert

**Rebekka  
Hearl**



As a graduate of two arts courses, I am well versed in professional art techniques, and the use of perspective has been imperative in my personal comics work.

I've been using Photoshop since my teens, and it is still a vital part of my workflow to this day. I don't know how I survived so many years without my Cintiq 13HD, and my favourite Photoshop tool without a doubt has to be the Brush Tool.





# Illustrate using rules of perspective

Discover how to use the Line and Transform tools in conjunction with perspective techniques used by the pros

**L**earning to draw in perspective is usually a challenge for amateur artists. Applying perspective in your work can be a gateway to achieving major improvements in the quality of your illustrations, though, so it's well worth doing. In this tutorial, we'll be covering some techniques that are as simple to remember as they are to apply using Photoshop's Transform tools. So whether you're new to perspective, or an old hat looking for helpful tips, this tutorial will be of use to you.

But learning to draw in perspective isn't just about drawing three-point perspective grids. One of the best things you can do to help your

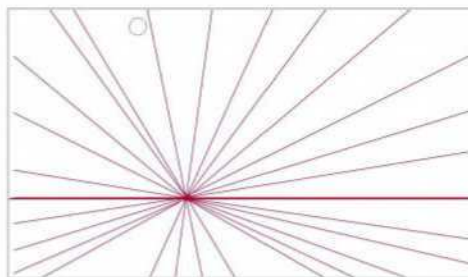
growth as an artist is keep a collection of reference images. If you see something interesting while you're out in town, take a photo of it. If you see some inspiring art online, save a copy somewhere so you can refer to it when needed.

Here's an example for how to use reference images. We'll be working on a piece that features a bird's eye view perspective. If you can't find a picture from that perspective, find one of a tall building taken from worm's eye view at a steep angle, flip it vertically, and you'll have the perfect reference!



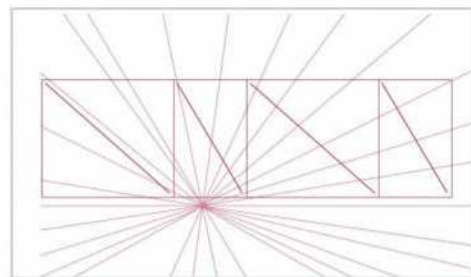
## Find the horizon line

**01** A good way to start with perspective is to find the horizon line and use it as a starting point. An easy way to find the horizon is to obey the law of thirds. We'll be using high perspective, so we'll draw the horizon across the lower third.



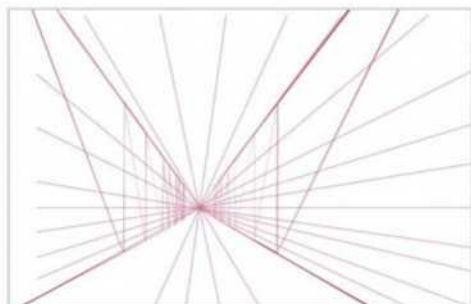
## Perspective grid

**02** Next is to set up the origin point: the spot from which all perspective lines will originate. We find this by looking to the law of thirds again. Place the origin point where the horizon line and the second vertical line intersect. Draw perspective lines from this point.



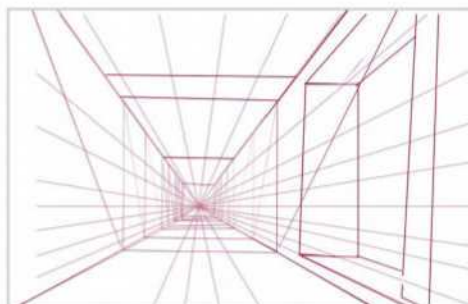
## The train-tracks trick

**03** Use this technique to draw the buildings' windows in perspective. Using the Square Tool, draw a rectangle and a square, and use the Line Tool to draw a diagonal line across each shape. Duplicate the layer and line up the squares. Combine the layers.



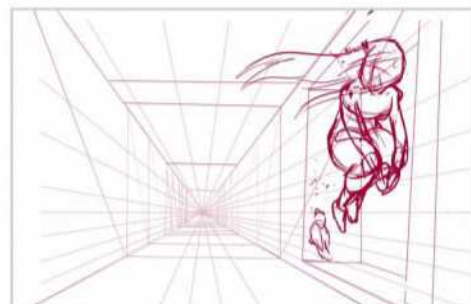
## Transform the tracks

**04** Use the Move Tool to line up the train tracks with the bottom corner of the left building. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and set the mode to Perspective. Adjust the corners of the transform box until they line up with the building's perspective. Duplicate for the building on the right.



## Background perspective

**05** Now we'll add the final perspective lines we'll need. Using the Line Tool, create a new layer beneath the buildings' layers and draw in the pavement, road, and the building on the other side of the street. Also draw a window high up on the building on the right.

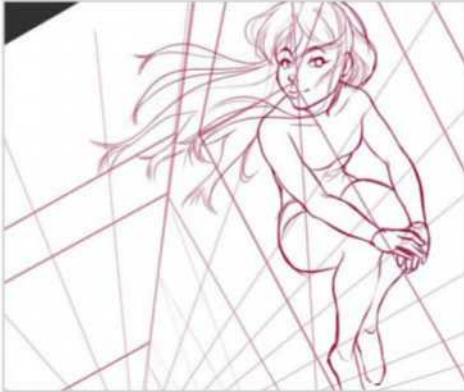


## Sketch the character

**06** Create a new group folder above the perspective grids. On a new layer, use the Brush Tool to sketch your character. They'll be sitting on the sill of the window you drew earlier, at a slight angle to the viewer, so keep the perspective of the image in mind as you draw.







### Finalise the sketch

**07** Once the loose sketch is complete, use the Move Tool to move the character around in space, and the Transform Tool to resize them, if they don't fit the perspective. Then add in details like the hair, face and clothing.



### Flat colours

**08** Set the perspective grid group to Multiply and reduce Opacity to 30% or below. Create a new group beneath that one, then a new layer, and use the Shape Tool to draw in the flat colours of the buildings. Avoid grey; use grey-browns instead.

## Expert tip



### Foreshorten objects

Foreshortening anatomy goes hand-in-hand with perspective, but can be tricky. Not to worry! The coil technique makes the process easier. It involves sketching circles in the direction the limb will be facing. This method is very loose and rough, so it takes away the pressure of getting it right first time. Try to imagine yourself sculpting the limb to help you visualise it. Working digitally, you can undo and redo these coils indefinitely until you draw a shape that works.



### Character lines

**09** Reduce the Opacity setting of your character sketch to 30% or below. Create a new layer above, select a hard brush at 7px, set it to black and draw your character's final lines. Try keeping them thin so they won't overpower the colours later.



### Character flat colours

**10** Create another new layer beneath the lines. Bucket-fill the layer with blue. Use the Magic Wand Tool to select outside the lines. Go back to the blue layer and Delete. Instant flats! Turn on transparency masking and colour in the character's palette.



### Lighting source

**11** Add some basic lighting as a guide for when you come to shade the scene later. Create a new layer above all others and set to Soft Light at 30% Opacity. Use a large airbrush at 300px+, set it to a light blue and sketch in some light direction.



### Basic shading

**12** Again, this is just a guide, so no need to go into detail yet. Following the perspective and the train tracks, use the Shape Tool to block in some shadows on the buildings. Follow the light direction you sketched earlier.



### Make it rain

**13** Create a new layer beneath the light layer, and select a hard brush at 10px. Select a near white with a hint of blue. Following the perspective grid, draw drops of rain. They should get smaller nearer to the ground. To add motion, go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur.



### Building details

**14** This is the last step we'll need the grid for. Using the Line Tool set to 7px, draw dark blue lines on the sides of the buildings, following the grid, and draw windows. The lines should get thicker the closer they are to the viewer.





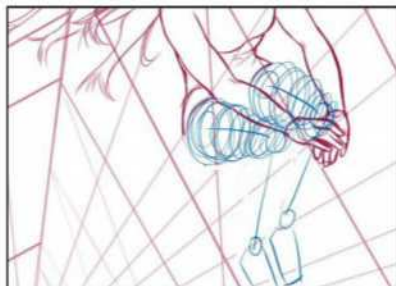
## Expert edit

### The coil technique



#### Start and end points

**01** Start by drawing a rough sketch of the limb's joints. This will give you positions to aim for while drawing. We'll use the hip, the knee and the foot.



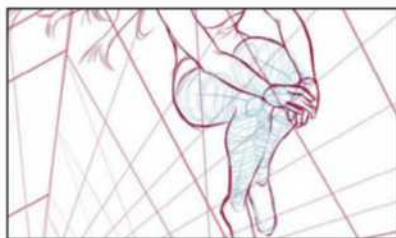
#### First coil

**02** Draw loose coils out from the hip to the knee. Draw around the shape of the thigh; start thick at the hip, tapering off toward the knee.



#### Second coil

**03** Next, draw from the knee to the foot. Just like last time, feel out the shape of the leg: thicker around the calf, tapering off around the ankle.



#### Fill in the limbs

**04** Finally, go back to your character sketch layer and draw in the foreshortened limbs, using the coils as guides. Repeat this technique for the second leg and you're done!



### Select and shade

**15** Select a soft brush at 35px. Create a new layer above the character flats layer, Ctrl/right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. Set the layer to Multiply at 60% Opacity. Use the Magic Wand Tool to select the hair on the flats layer, and shade on the clipping mask layer.



### Character lighting

**17** Create two new clipping mask layers attached to your character. Set one to Multiply and the other to Overlay. Using an airbrush at 50-100px, add shadow to the character's right side using a desaturated blue, and light to the left side using a soft yellow.



### Check the lighting

**19** Remember the lighting guide we made earlier? Now's the time to adjust it to suit the piece. Increase the Opacity of the lighting layer to 60% and set to Overlay. The colours will pop more, but some detail will be lost. Keep this in mind when painting later!



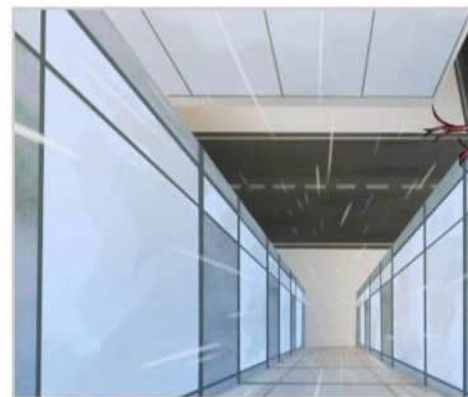
### Final shading and details

**16** Repeat this process until the character is complete. No need to worry too much about lighting for now; we'll add that later. Have fun adding little details like stray hairs and shines in the eyes using a 4px hard brush.



### Background texture

**18** Apply a grunge texture image to the buildings and the road. Create clipping mask layers above your building flat layers, set them to Soft Light and paste in the texture images. Reduce the Opacity to 70%. Repeat this process for the road layer.



### Shade the windows

**20** Switch off the lighting layer, go back to your windows layer and select a soft brush at 50px, 70% Flow and Opacity. Use a medium desaturated blue to paint in a light shadow gradient on the windows. Keep it light near the top of each window.





### Happy little clouds

**21** Create a new clipping mask attached to the window. Using the shade brush settings (or a cloud brush if you have one), use light blues and whites to paint reflections of clouds on the windows. Shade with a desaturated blue.



### Additional texture

**22** Go back to the clipping mask layer you used to shade the buildings. Using a small round hard brush at 10px (or a scatter brush if you have one), dot some light and dark blue spots on the building to give it a concrete texture.



### Pavement and road details

**23** Still using the small hard brush at full opacity, create a new layer above the road and pavement layers and set it to Multiply, 60% Opacity. Select the pavement colour with the Eyedropper Tool and draw tiles using the Line Tool. On the road, draw white lines to define the road lanes.



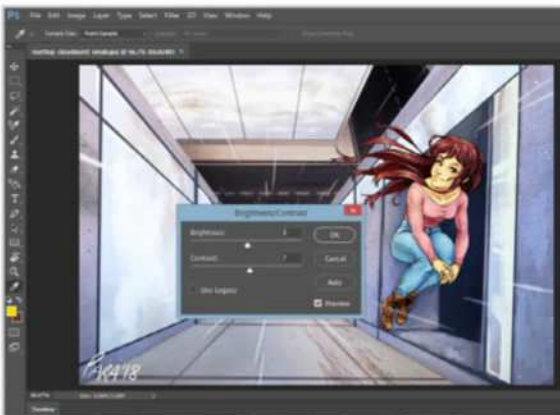
### Adjustments

**24** With the global light layer switched on, make some final shadow and detail adjustments to make sure the buildings don't blend together (like they did in the second lighting test). Use an airbrush on a Multiply layer to add extra shadows to the building and road across the street.



### Gradient Map adjustment

**25** Flatten all the background layers. Drag the layer onto the new layer icon to duplicate it. Select a light yellow and a deep purple. Go to Image> Adjustments> Gradient Map. Set the layer to Soft Light at 40% Opacity.



### Combine all layers

**26** You're nearly done! Clean up your layers by separating the background and character layers, and arrange them into groups. Flatten the character layers and go to Image> Adjustments> Brightness/Contrast. Increase both by 7.



### Final touches

**27** Save your image as a JPEG. Open this JPEG and apply the final colour adjustments. Repeat the Brightness/Contrast adjustment used in the last step. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L to bring up Levels. Move the middle and right sliders by 7 points each.





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# Elements creative



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LEARN HOW TO

# CREATE A TORN- PAPER COLLAGE

Combine effects and methods for textured art on p78



## MASK TO SAVE

If you want to save a selection to use over again, create a new layer and hit Mask. Now, it's there to select again later if you need.

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## Tool focus...

# Master Auto Selection



## What does it mean?

**CONSTRAIN SELECTION** – This option is a checkbox in the bottom bar of Elements that you can check while you're using Auto Selection. If you check it, your selection will stay within the bounds of the selection you've made. If you uncheck, it will select other pixels further out from your selection.

Making a selection is often the most time-consuming part of a project. If you're anything like us at **Photoshop Creative**, you spend hours meticulously tracing your edges over and over again to get the right cutout, before tweaking with Refine Edge, and even touching over the mask with a brush. It's a case of trial and error, working and re-working your selection to grab exactly the right pixels.

There are plenty of selection tools that can do the job, though, and with the latest version of Photoshop Elements, Adobe added another. The Auto Selection Tool is designed for speed and ease, with intelligent measuring of the edges just by loosely clicking around the outside your object. It's a good way to get a really thorough selection without having to spend as much effort tracing

the edge, and it's really easy to use. What's even better is that you can use any kind of selection tool with the Auto Selection; whether you're someone who uses marquees or lassos, this is a tool that can aid anyone.

Selecting is something that pretty much everyone needs to learn at some point or another in Elements too; there's barely a project in which you don't need to isolate an object from a scene. You'll probably use the Auto Selection as an alternative to Quick Selection; it's still not the most thorough of options but it's more than capable of providing a decent result.

Let's dive into how to use this tool, and take the effort out of a key part of your Elements workflow.

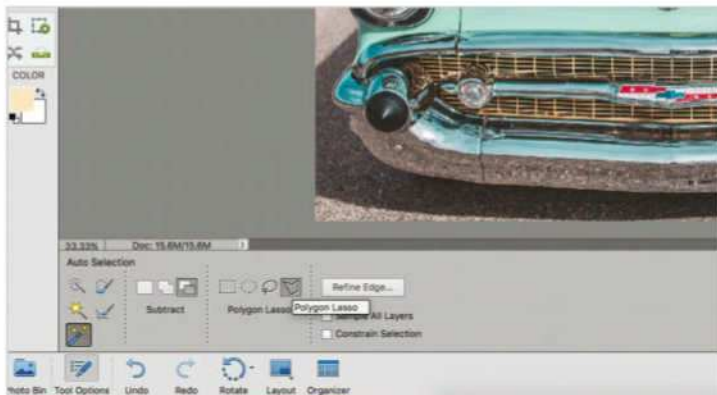




## Straightening up

Grab pixels easily with a quick drag

**Shortcut**  
Hit Cmd/Ctrl+D to deselect everything on a layer



### Choose your tool

**01** Click on the Auto Selection Tool on the left-hand side of Photoshop Elements. You'll see four options: Rectangular Marquee, Elliptical Marquee, Lasso and Polygonal Lasso. Choose one of these to make your selection with.

### Make the selection

**02** Use your chosen selection tool to make a rough outline around whatever you want to select in your image. We went for the Lasso and were sure not to trace right up to the edges of the car, as to allow for the Auto Selection to work.



### Perfect the selection

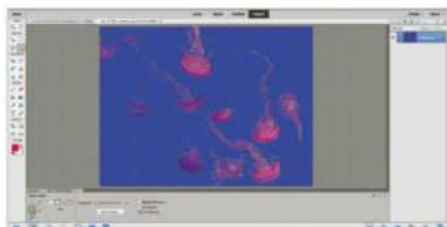
**03** Auto Selection will then do its thing, and select other pixels of similar colours near to the selection you've just made. Of course, this isn't foolproof; select an ordinary Lasso and select more or less in the selection to get it just right.

### Refine Edge

**04** To improve a selection, use Refine Edge to smooth, feather and touch-up edges. This can help iron out some of the more jagged edges of your selection. The Refine Edge box is located in the bottom bar of Elements when the Auto Select tool is in use.

## Other selection tools

Which other features are best for picking pixels?



### Magic Wand

**01** The Magic Wand doesn't quite work on fairy dust, but is pretty adept at selecting pixels of a similar colour. The Tolerance slider can pull either more or less into its orbit. Check the Contiguous box to select colour across the whole image.



### Quick Selection

**02** This is a simple drag-to-grab feature. Its main advantage is its speed – as the name does suggest – and it's an efficient way to select whole objects in Elements before you perfect these selections. Alter the Size for more accuracy.



### Selection Brush

**03** This works in a similar way to an actual brush: you drag it over an area to select pixels, and it won't select anything the brush doesn't touch. Alter the Size and Hardness to be more precise when you select.





### What does it mean?

**MAGIC WAND TOOL** – Accessed by pressing A to cycle through Elements' selection tools. It makes selections with a single click, by picking adjoining pixels with a numeric colour value within a range set by the Tolerance level. The Magic Wand can add to or subtract from a selection.

### Creative project...

# Create a torn paper collage

Mix handmade resources and photos to build this vibrant collage

Traditional paper collages are so fun to make, especially when it comes to creating the resources and getting hands-on with ripping and tearing paper. The first stage in this technique is to create some rough torn edges of paper that give the artwork an authentic handmade look. Combining this traditional paper craft with the convenience of digital editing means that, unlike with a real paper collage, your digital artwork remains fully editable. If you decide you don't quite like the shape of one of the pieces, or you want to change their order within the layout, then you have the freedom to

shift things around as much as you want. There is also the option to alter the colour of your photos and textures, which isn't possible with a traditional paper collage. So if you have a particularly nice night sky image that you want to include but it doesn't fit the colour scheme, it's no problem; a quick adjustment layer and your perfect collage piece is good to go.

You can also reuse the same textures, but with different Hue/Saturation settings, so you will never be stuck when it comes to finding the exact colour you need to complete your collage.





## STAGE 1

# Make torn paper resources

Get hands on; tear paper to use in your collage

Start by creating the white torn paper edges that will be applied to the digital textures and photos in your collage. To make your own torn paper resources, the best paper to use is coloured poster paper, which is white on the underneath, as this creates a distinct white jagged edge. This edge can then be isolated using selection tools, ready to be copied and pasted onto other photos and textures. Alternatively, you can use the torn poster paper images supplied on the FileSilo.

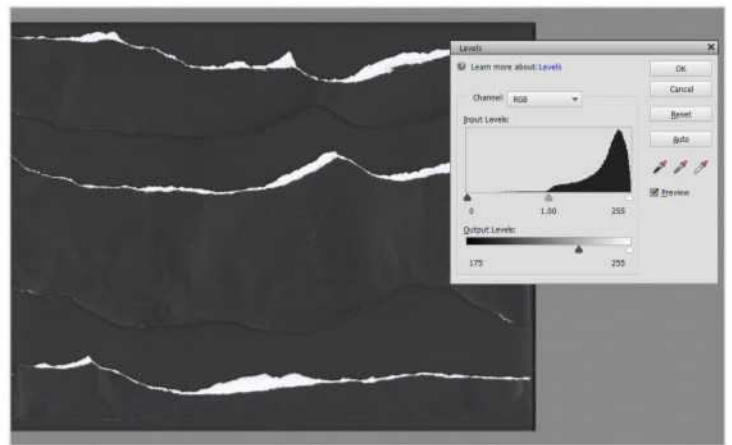
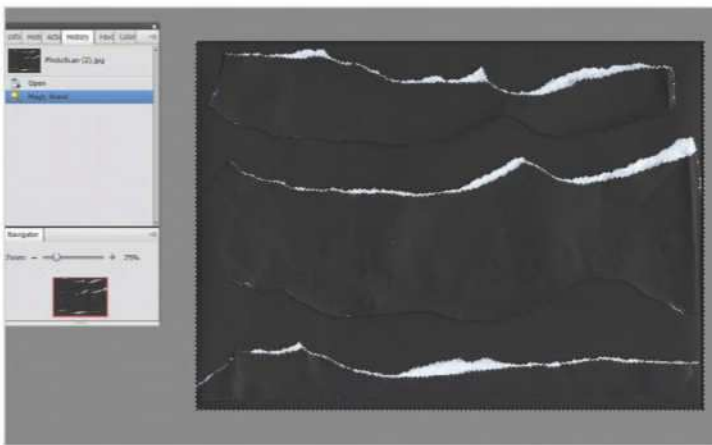
### On the FileSilo

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### Tear and scan

**01** Tear some black poster paper in strips, with a variety of curves, angles and thickness of white edges. Scan them face down, with a sheet of matching paper laid over the top as a background, at 300ppi. Open them in Elements.



### Select the background

**02** Select the Magic Wand Tool (press A), with Tolerance set to around 80. Click the black area so that all but the white edges are selected. Use the Selection Brush, set to Add, to remove any stray pixels from the selection, eg flecks of dust.

### Isolate the white

**03** Press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+I to invert the selection, then Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate the selection onto its own new layer. Press Cmd/Ctrl+L and under Output Levels, drag the black slider right to around 175 to reduce the amount of grey in the white paper.

**Shortcut**  
Hold Shift when using the Wand to add to a selection

**ADD TO SELECTION**  
With the Selection Brush set to Add, anything you brush over will be added to the existing selection.

#### EASY SELECTIONS

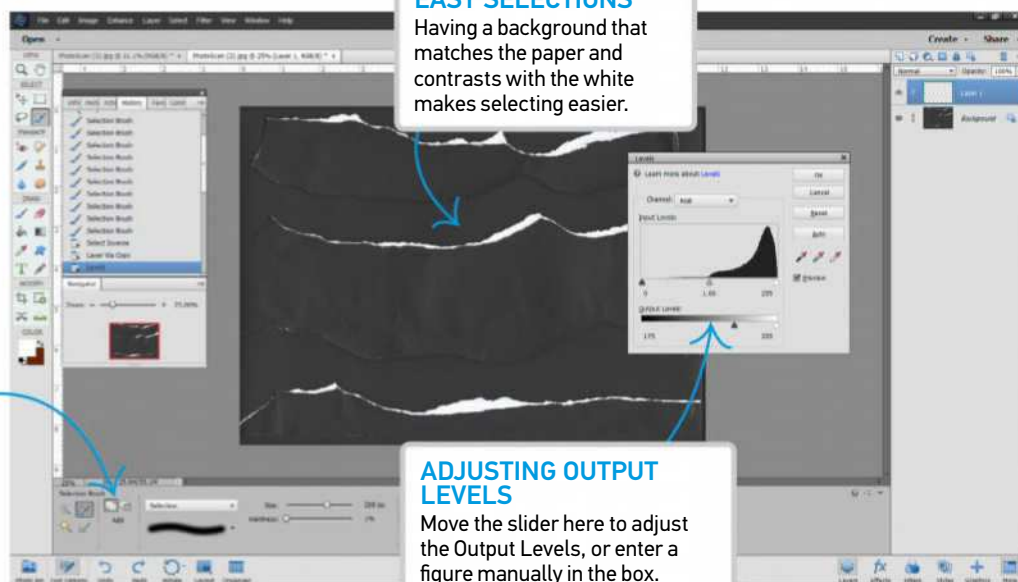
Having a background that matches the paper and contrasts with the white makes selecting easier.

#### ADJUSTING OUTPUT LEVELS

Move the slider here to adjust the Output Levels, or enter a figure manually in the box.

#### DUPLICATED EDGES

The white edges are now isolated on their own layer, ready for you to copy and paste into the collage image.



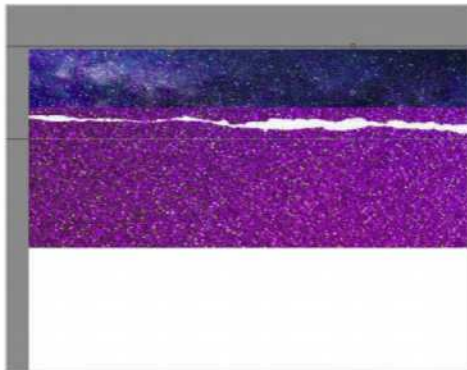


## STAGE 2

### Begin building the collage

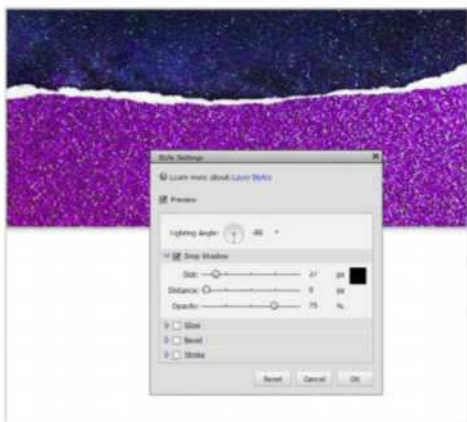
Create the first layers with masks and adjustments

Open all the texture and photo files you plan to use in your collage. These can be the ones provided on the FileSilo, some of your own photos, or scanned textures. To build the collage, work from the top of the canvas downward. The first image you paste in is at the bottom of the layered collage. The second image will be layered on top of it, and the method for creating a torn edge effect is applied.



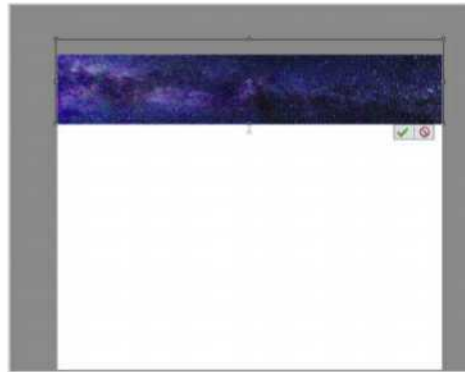
#### Add a torn edge

**03** Use the Lasso Tool (press L) to select a section of white edge from one of the torn paper files. Copy and paste it into your collage. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T and stretch it across the width of the canvas, positioned a small distance from the top, over the glitter.



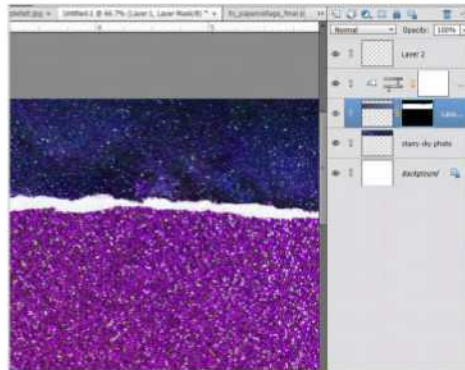
#### Drop shadow

**06** Go to the Styles palette, choose Drop Shadows from the menu, and then Low Drop Shadow. Click the cog icon to access settings, and change the Lighting Angle to -90, Size to 27 and Distance to 0.



#### Place the first image

**01** Create a new file with your required dimensions and a resolution of 300ppi. Use the Rectangular Marquee Tool to select a section from 'pix\_2695569\_starry\_sky.jpg', copy and paste it into your black canvas, resize and then position it at the top of the canvas.



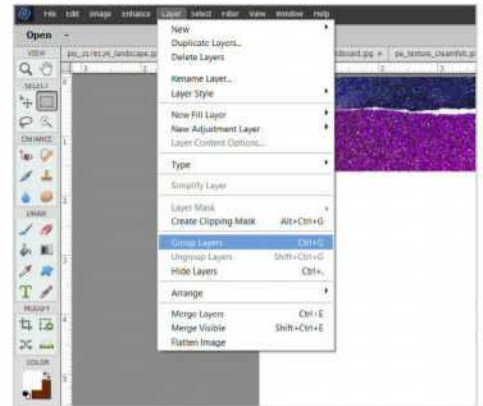
#### Select and mask

**04** Go back to the glitter layer and use the Quick Select Tool (press A), with Sample All Layers ticked to select the area of glitter below the white edge as well as the white edge itself, then add a layer mask to the glitter layer.



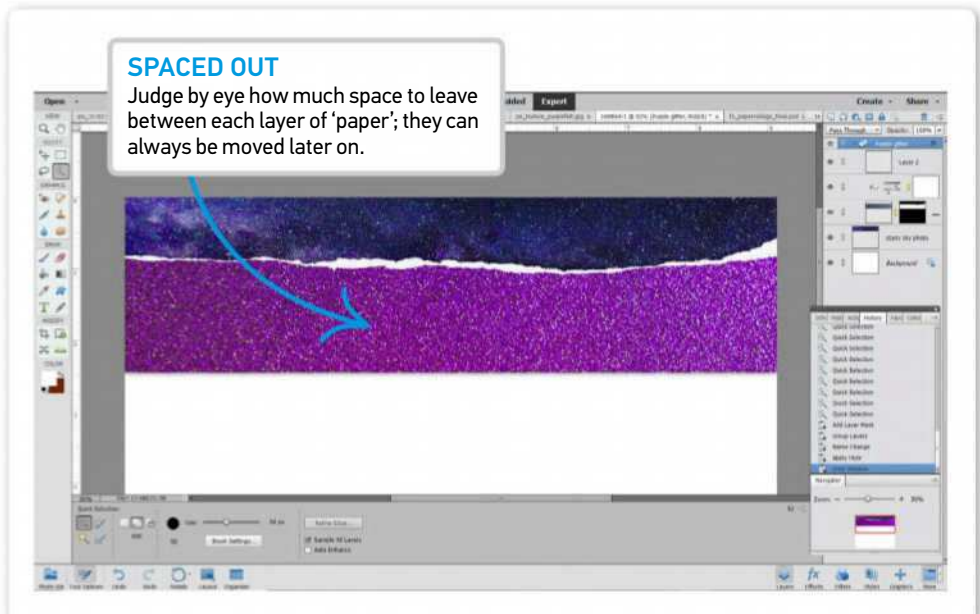
#### Overlap the next

**02** Copy and paste in a section from 'pix\_1913661\_glitter.jpg', position it near the top of the canvas, overlapping the starry sky. Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer, and click the Clip to Layer icon at the bottom left of the window. Enter Hue: +63, Saturation: +75, Lightness: 0.



#### Group the glitter layers

**05** Hold Shift and Cmd/Ctrl-click the torn edge and glitter layers in the Layers palette to select them both, then go to Layer>Group Layers (or press Cmd/Ctrl+G) to group them. Rename the group Purple Glitter.





## STAGE 3

### Complete the collage

Add the remaining images and finish the layout

Now that the first section of the collage is in place, this method can be repeated to create more layers of torn textures and photos. From here, it is a case of deciding which image to use where, and what colours to make them. Some of the textures can be used multiple times, with different Hue/Saturation adjustments to vary their colour. Continue working your way down the canvas from top to bottom, overlapping the textures to create the layered effect.

#### INTERESTING COMPOSITION

Sloped fields add some variation to the layout; press Cmd/Ctrl+T and rotate the torn edge before applying the mask.

#### COLOUR ADJUSTMENT

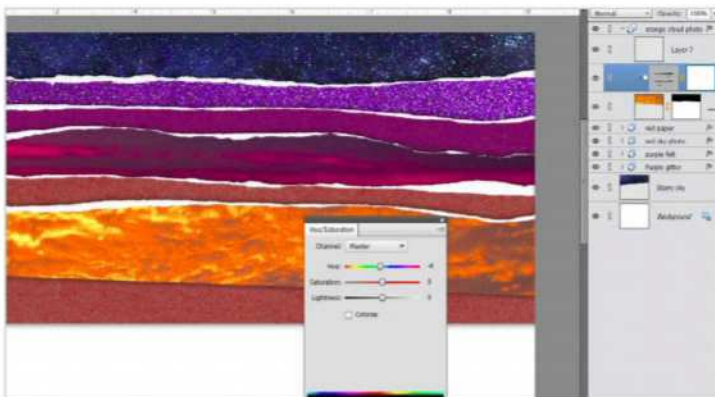
A Photo Filter adjustment layer can help tie all the separate parts of your image together and unify colours.

#### UNLINK

Click the chain icon between a layer and its mask to unlink them, so they can be edited independently.

#### Shortcut

Alt-click the fx icon and drag on a layer to copy effects



#### Add more layers

**01** Repeat the process used to create the Purple Glitter group with the rest of the textures and images: paste in a texture; position it; adjust Hue/Saturation as desired; add a torn edge; create the layer mask; group them and add a drop shadow.

#### Mix it up

**02** Alternate types of images, switching between photos and paper textures. For sections such as the trees, clouds and ploughed field, select these areas from the relevant photos with the Lasso and then paste them in.



#### Refine the layout

**03** Once all the layers are added, tweak the layout either by moving/resizing groups as a whole or just the texture within the group by unlinking it from its mask. For example, you may want to resize or reposition a photo so that a particular area of it is visible.

#### Final adjustments

**04** Give your image a boost by adding some adjustment layers at the top of the layer stack; try adding a Photo Filter or a Levels adjustment layer and editing the Input Levels.





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## SHARPEN UP

Merge your whole document, duplicate and go to Filter> Other> High Pass; choose 4px and set to Overlay. This will sharpen the feathers a little.

## What does it mean?

**REFERENCE POINT LOCATION** – You can rotate or resize anything in Elements from any point on the object. For example if you have a triangle, rotate it around any point by clicking the reference point location in the bottom bar. This ensures the object stays where you want when transformed.

## CHOOSE GOOD COLOURS

Pick a triangle that has as many textures and colours on show as possible; this will create a brighter, more exciting final image.

## Photo edit...

# Create a kaleidoscope

Bring psychedelia back from the 1960s with a trippy take on an otherwise ordinary photo

Sometimes there's nothing more satisfying to create in Photoshop or Elements than a big, bright, colourful picture. For all the exciting ambitious projects that you can create, there are times when it's more fun to just sit back and relax with something a little more straightforward. A kaleidoscope certainly falls into that category.

A kaleidoscope isn't just a fun project to relax with; it's also a great way to learn about transforming images. In this project, we're going to be working with the Transform Tool, discovering how to measure angles as well as using layers to build up our picture.

While this is a project that might not seem too difficult, the real skill with it comes in placing the triangular segments against each other like a trippy jigsaw.

This is a tutorial that you can try with different shaped triangles too; so long as the angles all add up to 360 degrees, you'll be able to create a wheel of colour based on the shapes all connecting together. Who knows: you may even be able to animate the kaleidoscope in a program such as After Effects! Whatever you do with this project, it's definitely one that you can relax with.





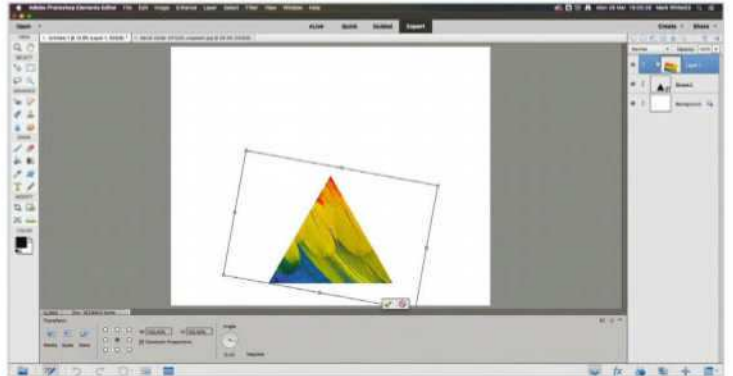
# Connect the colours

Create a triangle from an image and project it across the page



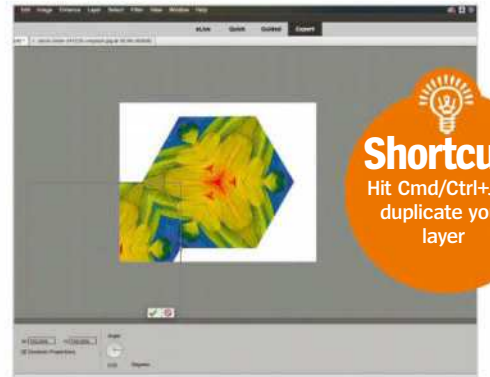
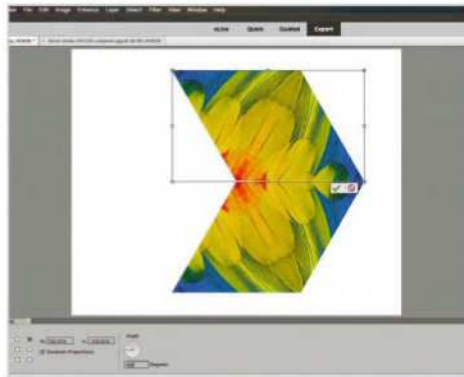
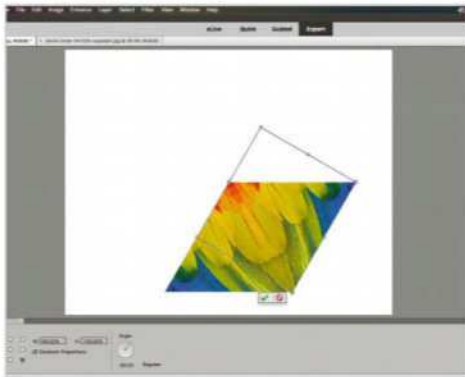
## Choose your image

**01** Start off by importing our supplied image of the feather texture, or use your own image for your kaleidoscope. It's a good idea to pick an image that won't be obvious when you turn it into a kaleidoscope, as that's part of the fun! Natural images look great, too.



## Clip to a triangle

**02** Create a triangle using the Custom Shape Tool (U). Clip your feather image to it and then use the Free Transform Tool to position it over the triangle in such a way that you get the best section of the pattern.



**Shortcut**  
Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate your layer

## Duplicate and rotate

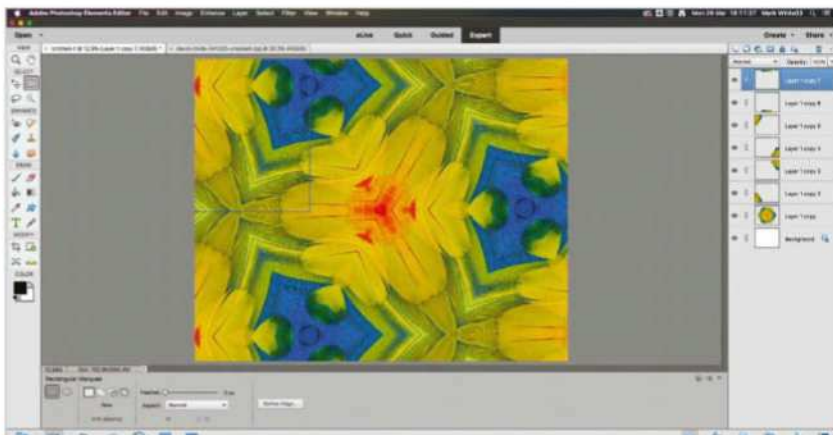
**03** Merge your triangle to the feather texture and duplicate it. Go to the bottom bar where the values are, and choose the bottom-right reference point location. Then change the Height to -100, and the Degrees to -60. This will rotate it to the right perfectly.

## Rotate some more

**04** Merge the two triangles and duplicate. Set the reference point location to the top-right and rotate this diamond shape 180 degrees to almost reflect it upward. If 180 degrees isn't the right amount, edit the rotation by turning the top-left rotation handle.

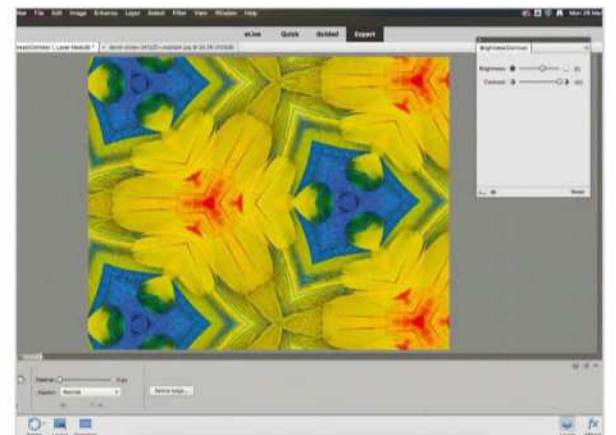
## Complete the pattern

**05** Duplicate the diamond again and holding down Shift, rotate and position it in the space between the two diamond layers you've inserted already. Duplicate this layer again and then place at the corner of one the sides.



## Fill the space

**06** Continue duplicating these diamond layers and placing them across the document until it's full of the pattern and looking a little more like a kaleidoscope. Merge these layers and move it left or right a little to show some more of the pattern than just the middle.



## Adjust

**07** Finally, apply whatever adjustments you want to the image to boost the colours, the brightness and the tone of the piece. Find whatever adjustments you need under the Fill Layer icon above the Layers palette.





Start images

## What does it mean?

**TRANSFORM** – The Transform Tool is really useful when it comes to photomanipulation; you can rotate, skew and resize your layers. You control the edit by the handles in each of the corners and on each side. It can also be used to tweak the sizing of specific objects in your projects.



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## Surreal art...

# Create an impossible, atmospheric scene

Learn essential photocompositing skills with this fun image

Imagine yourself finding a gigantic polar bear in the forest – now imagine finding three. Well, you don't have to imagine it if you can edit such a surreal piece as this together!

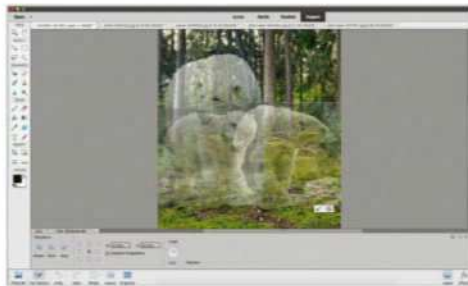
The thing with surreal artwork is that the techniques you use to put the piece together are basically applicable to any kind of image. If you're building a realistic night-time piece, then building the mist covered in this project will come in useful; likewise if you're looking to cut out furry edges in other projects, there are plenty of skills to

be learned from this polar bear piece. And you never know, you may well be presented with an opportunity where you really do need to composite a realistic scene that involves giant polar bears in the woods. Ahem.

Either way, this is a fun tutorial that can help teach you about the basics of photocompositing, and you'll have a great picture at the end of it. Who knows what it will lead to: giant penguins? At least you'll have the editing skills to make it a reality!

## The bear necessities

Cut out the polar bears and transform the scene



### Organise the composition

**01** Start off by creating your document and dragging on the supplied grass image. Resize (Cmd/Ctrl+T) so that it fits the scene and then place the polar bears into the document. Reduce their opacity so you can see how they overlap.



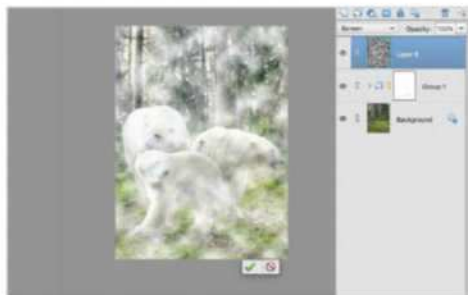
### Cut out the bears

**02** Grab the Auto Selection Tool and use the Polygonal Lasso to draw around each of the polar bears. Fix the selection with the ordinary Lasso Tools (L) and use Refine Edge to paint the fur back in. Mask each one.



### Mask and blend

**03** Group all the polar bears (Cmd/Ctrl+G) and with a soft black brush, touch over the paws to integrate them a little better into their grassy surroundings. Create clipping masks over each one, and add soft black to give a little shade against each other.



### Render clouds

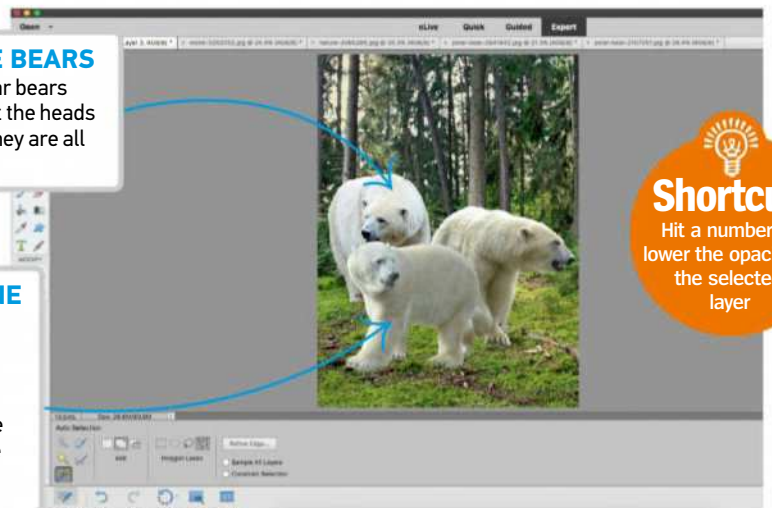
**04** Create a new layer and set your swatches as black and white. Go to Filter> Render> Clouds, then resize this cloud layer. Set to Screen, hit Mask and Invert the mask (Cmd/Ctrl+I). With a soft white brush, mask in the clouds over the polar bears.

### ARRANGE THE BEARS

Move the three polar bears into position so that the heads are all visible and they are all the same size.

### EQUALISE TONE

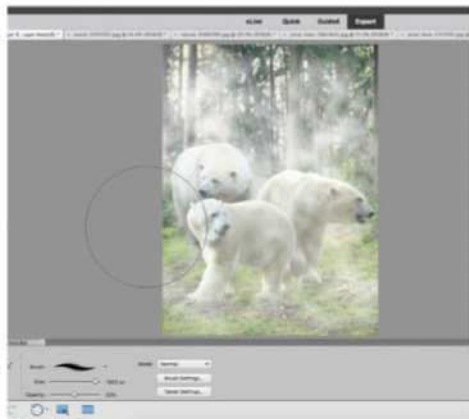
If needed, create clipping masks and clip adjustments to each of the bear layers to make sure they're all the same tone and shade.



**Shortcut**  
Hit a number to lower the opacity of the selected layer

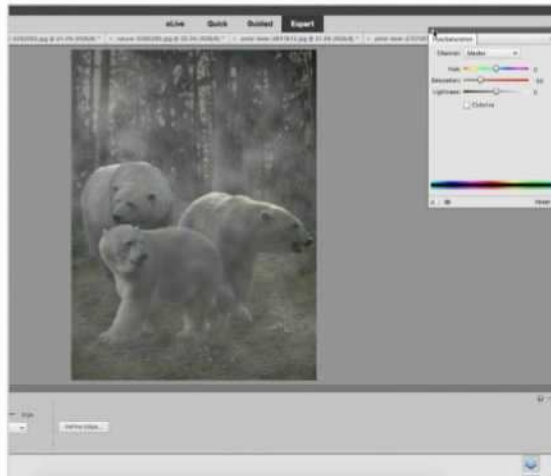






## Create more clouds

**05** Repeat this cloud-rendering technique on another layer, and go to Filter> Blur> Gaussian Blur; choose 10px and hit OK. Again, mask the clouds in different places on the canvas to the last cloud layer. Start building up a bit of mist in the scene to make it a little more atmospheric.



## Reduce the tone

**06** We're going to dull the image a little before we build it back up again. Create a Hue/Saturation adjustment with Saturation set to -50 and add a Brightness/Contrast adjustment with Brightness set to -150, Contrast set to -50.

## Expert tip

### Control edges

When you cut out the edges of the polar bear, you'll need softness in some places and a harder finish in others. This can be difficult to do, but it's not impossible thanks to the Refine Edge option.

Even with using Refine Edge, you might have a situation where the edge still proves tricky, or you might not have the time to do it properly. Luckily in this project that's not really an issue in a foggy atmosphere, but there are other ways you can disguise a poorly cut edge. Use the Smudge Tool to blur edges and place items in front of the offending cutouts if need be.



## Boost the tone again

**07** Cmd/Ctrl-click on one of the polar bear masks, and then click on the Brightness/Contrast mask. Use a soft black brush to mask some of the brightness back into the polar bears. Start at the top of them and work downward.



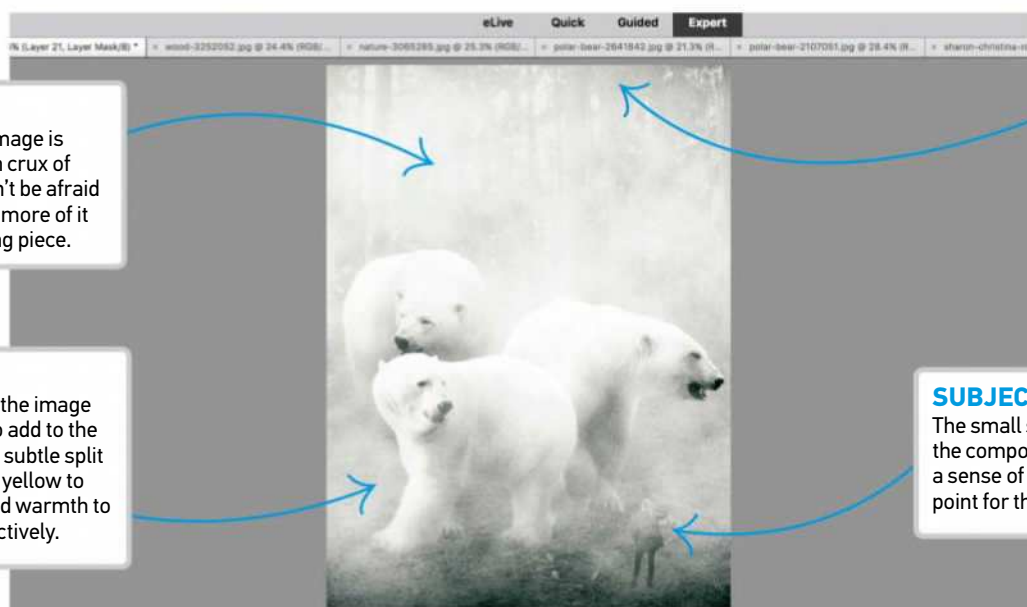
## Paint in mist

**08** Create a new layer and with a soft, white brush, touch in some white colour over the top of the scene to create even more mist. You can also render some more clouds and set them to Screen to add extra atmosphere to the scene.



## Add in contrast

**09** Group all your mist layers. Cmd/Ctrl-click to select the mask layers of the polar bears again, and with soft black brushes, mask out some of the mist over the bears' faces for a little more clarity.



### MIST

The mist in the image is used as the main crux of atmosphere; don't be afraid to add more and more of it for a more chilling piece.

### COLOURING

The colouring of the image can really help to add to the feel of it. Use the subtle split tone of navy and yellow to give coolness and warmth to the image respectively.

### TREES

The trees in the image are great for adding to the atmosphere; they give the piece an almost horror movie feel.

### SUBJECT

The small subject at the front of the composition can not only give a sense of scale but provide a focal point for the picture.





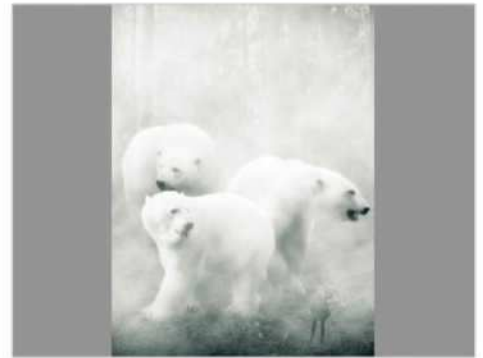
## Gradient map

**10** Create a gradient map. Set the colours to #052e3e and #d5d1b8 and click OK; you can also download this from the resources as a gradient. Set this layer to Soft Light and reduce the Opacity to 30%.



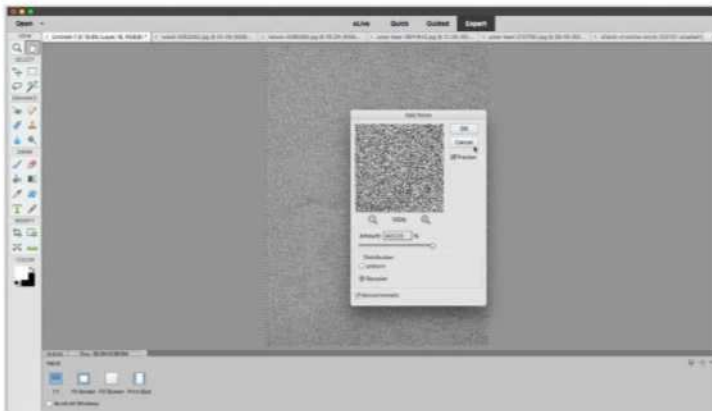
## Place a figure

**11** Add in the image of the subject looking up at the bears. Place this layer below the mist and gradient map layers and use the Auto Selection Tool to cut it out, just as you did with the polar bears.



## Blend the scene

**12** Create a stamp layer of everything so far by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E. Go to Filter> Blur> Gaussian Blur and choose a Radius of 20px. Hit OK and reduce the Saturation to -25 by using Hue/Saturation (Cmd/Ctrl+U). Set this layer to the Soft Light blend mode.



## Bring the noise

**13** Create a new 20% Opacity Overlay layer and fill with white; set the swatches to black and white once more. Go to Filter> Noise> Add Noise and set Amount: 400%, Distribution: Gaussian, before checking the Monochromatic box. Hit OK. Duplicate this and blur with Gaussian Blur by 5px.



## Finish the scene

**14** Create another stamp layer and go to Filter> Filter Gallery> Smudge Stick; choose Stroke Length: 5, Highlight Area: 8, Intensity: 5, then hit OK. Set the Opacity to 30%, Soft Light. Add a Levels layer and Photo Filter to correct colour and tone if needed.

# Managing contrast

Make sure that your image really pops

It can be tempting to think the images you create should always be big, bright and colourful to catch attention. But that's not always true: sometimes you can create just as powerful effects by omitting colour from your work altogether.

That's definitely the case with this composition. The contrast in this piece is really important because in the absence of saturated colour, the focus is drawn to the darker parts of the image. This is partly why it's important to bring a little more contrast into the faces of the polar bears, and also why there's less mist around the subject in the image.

You can use the Brightness/Contrast adjustment as a finishing touch to complete your image and control just what kind of tone you'd like in your final picture. The Levels adjustment is also good for this, and can help to inject a little more colour into the image, too.



**Shortcut**  
Hit Cmd/Ctrl+F to redo the last filter that you applied



## Essentials

### Works with



Elements



CS



CC

### What you'll learn

Use the vector brushes in Adobe Draw to illustrate



**Time taken**  
40-60 min

## Expert

### Jonathan Bail



Recently I've worked on getting better with my drawings. I like to draw by hand but I don't have a wide range of markers. With this method I try to combine the best of both worlds.

I am a digital designer based in Germany. Right now, I am studying digital media and will soon begin my bachelor's degree. I picked up Photoshop when I was 12.



# Vectorise your hand-drawn sketch

Adobe Draw is the perfect tool to vectorise and colourise your hand-drawn sketches; read on and discover how to go from analog to digital!

## On the FileSilo

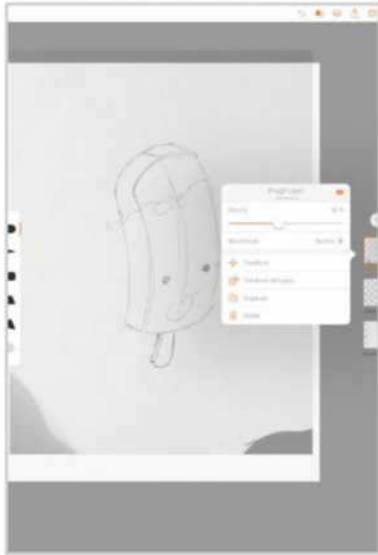
Download your free resources at [www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative](http://www.filesilo.co.uk/photoshopcreative)

**D**o you want to start your illustration career or to take your hand drawings to the next level? Then put your seatbelts on and get ready to start the journey to creating a digital art piece. The optimal device to do this tutorial would be an iPad Pro with the Apple Pencil. You can try it without a stylus, but trust us, you will need a lot of patience and skill to draw with your finger. A huge benefit of your mobile device over a computer is the integrated camera. It's super easy and convenient to take a picture of your analog sketch with your mobile device and use the

vector brushes to translate it to the digital world. This way you can enjoy all the benefits of a digital workflow, like changing colours as often as you want, using blend modes for easy shadows, organising your piece in layers and erasing whenever the need arises.

In the following few steps we will show you how this simple illustration of an ice pop was created. Don't be afraid if you are not too good at drawing or your drawing skills don't even exist. Just start with a few simple lines, as with this illustration, and try to improve every time.





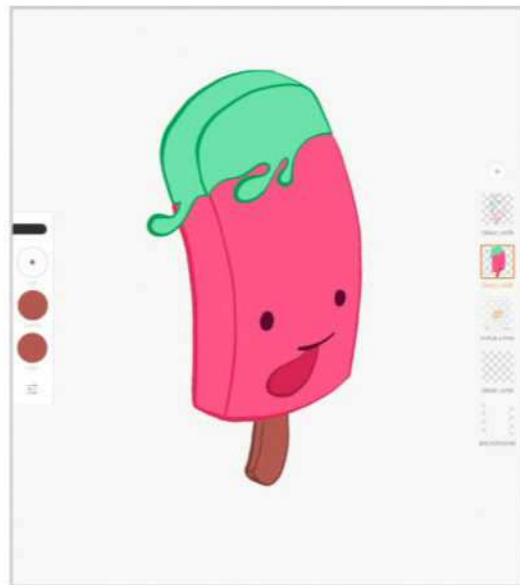
### Bring in the sketch

**01** Take a picture of your sketch with your device. Open Adobe Draw and create a new project. Tap the plus icon on top of the layer stack. Choose Image Layer and locate the picture of your sketch. Position the picture. Tap the layer and choose the right opacity for you.



### Draw the lines

**02** Create a new Draw Layer with the plus icon. Choose the round brush with a small size and full Opacity. Follow your sketch with the brush and try to be as precise as possible. Create your linework with the colours you want your final piece to be, but slightly darker.



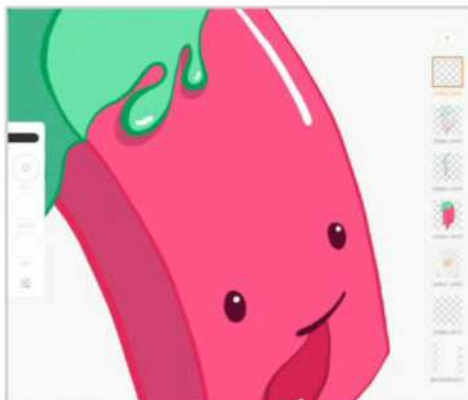
### Fill in the colours

**03** Tap on your linework layer and choose Duplicate. Select the bottom one of your line layers. Choose the brush and your fill colour. Hold down your finger on an empty space for a short time for the space to be completely filled. Go through your lines and fill all areas.



### Create the shadows

**04** Create a Draw Layer on top. Tap the layer and change the blend mode to Multiply. Choose the round brush and a light grey with a slight blue tint. Paint in the shadows. The lines on top will help to cover up jagged edges.



### Add highlights

**05** The Multiply setting lets you paint shadows without worrying about picking the right colours. Now it's time for highlights. Create a layer on top of everything. Choose the round brush and a pure white colour. Draw in the highlights where you imagine the light hitting.



### Make a background

**06** Create a new layer and move it with a long press beneath your fill layer. Choose your background colour. Long press on the empty layer to fill the entire layer. Create a new layer on top and draw a few lighter dots with your round brush.



### Finish with a drop shadow

**07** Create a new layer on top of the dots with its blend mode set to Multiply. Brush in a drop shadow with the same grey colour from step 4. You can edit the shadow to your liking by tapping the layer, choosing Transform, then scaling and positioning it.



## HARDWARE

Price £599 / \$599.99 Web [www.benq.com](http://www.benq.com)Photoshop  
creative  
**EDITOR'S  
CHOICE**

## The specs

## Company

BenQ

## Features

- 27-inch IPS LCD panel
- 2,560x1,440 native resolution
- 100 per cent sRGB colour coverage
- 1,000:1 contrast
- Eight-bit per channel colour
- Two DisplayPorts, one Mini DisplayPort, one HDMI video connectivity
- USB Type-C with DisplayPort alternate mode
- USB hub
- Tilt, height and rotate stand
- Low blue-light mode

## System

## Requirements

PC: DisplayPort, HDMI or USB Type-C connectivity  
Mac: DisplayPort, HDMI or USB Type-C connectivity

PACKED WITH  
FEATURES

BenQ's latest LCD monitor boasts a slick, slim-bezel design with a base unit that incorporates a range of inputs.

FIX UNWANTED  
REFLECTIONS

The 27-inch screen comes with an anti-glare, matte finish that will help to reduce distracting reflections.

# BenQ PD2710QC monitor

BenQ's latest semi-pro LCD panel combines colour accuracy with MacBook-friendly USB Type-C connectivity

**H**igh-quality IPS LCD panel? Check. Generous 27-inch proportions? All present and accounted for. Expansive 2,560x1,440 native resolution? Affirmative. One hundred per cent sRGB colour space support? You got it.

From the get-go then, BenQ's new PD2710QC is an appealing LCD panel packed with features to please graphics professionals. But then there are plenty of

other similarly equipped monitors to choose from. Happily, however, the PD2710QC has one or two additional tricks up its sleek, minimalist sleeves.

For starters, it packs a USB Type-C dock with full support for DisplayPort alternate mode plus charging. The upshot, importantly, is that you can connect this monitor to a laptop computer via a single USB Type-C cable and both drive the screen at full native

resolution and charge the laptop at the same time. You can also connect and use peripherals courtesy of the monitor's multi-port USB hub.

USB Type-C is popping up on all manner of portable computers, of course. But the PD2710QC's capabilities will be of particular appeal to owners of Apple's 12-inch MacBook system. That laptop has but a single USB Type-C port for everything: video out,





The BenQ PD2710QC's IPS panel makes for accurate colour control

"It's no slouch in the looks department, thanks to a slim bezel minimalist design and high-quality construction"



The display base includes a USB hub, video out and even an option for ethernet network connectivity



You can adjust the height and angle of the monitor, but the base design means that there's no swivel option available

charging, attaching peripherals, the works. So the PD2710QC solves all your MacBook connectivity problems in one fell swoop.

As for anyone who isn't planning to make use of the fancy new USB Type-C interface, the PD2710QC also sports a pair of conventional DisplayPort sockets, a Mini DisplayPort input and an HDMI port. It's also a very simple screen to set up thanks to the full range of tilt, height, rotate and swivel adjustments, and a particularly user-friendly on-screen menu.

It's no slouch in the looks department either, thanks to a slim bezel minimalist design and high-quality construction. All of which just leaves the not-so-minor matter of image quality. Out of the box and without any calibration, the PD2710QC is distinctly usable, with nearly perfect contrast, little to no evidence of colour compression together with all the usual benefits of an IPS panel,

which include superb viewing angles, decent response and vibrant colours.

It's even better after calibration and achieves very low deltas to target values in terms of gamma, colour space and colour temperature. All of which means the PD2710QC makes for an extremely appealing overall LCD panel package.

The downsides are two-fold. First, this isn't a truly high-end professional display. Its colours are 8-bit per channel, not 10-bit per channel, and it doesn't fully support the latest super-sized colour spaces. And yet it's a serious investment, even if the price is broadly in line with similar monitors.

For sure, you can get more screen inches and pixels to work with for the same money if you're willing to give up further colour accuracy. But if you're after a production-quality display with top-notch connectivity, the new PD2710QC is well worth a look.

## Standout feature

### Contrasting fortunes

The perfect contrast, even before fine calibration, makes the PD2710QC an ideal companion for detailed graphic illustration and photo-editing projects.



## The verdict

9

A great mid-range option for those wanting great clarity and perfect contrast from a relatively affordable desktop monitor. Duly recommended.



### HARDWARE

Price £13.58 / \$14.99 Web [www.evileylens.com](http://www.evileylens.com)



#### DISTORTION

Unfortunately, unwanted distortion is present in all images taken with this lens kit.

#### REDUCED QUALITY

The lenses tend to degrade the quality of your smartphone captures.



# Apexel Deluxe 5-in-1 Lens Kit

This cheap lens kit will add some creativity to your captures, but is it worth the trouble?

The quality of smartphone cameras is becoming more and more impressive, and the fact you carry them pretty much everywhere you go means that photography is increasingly accessible. Having the ability to get creative and push the possibilities of your smartphone camera is invaluable. The Apexel 5-in-1 camera lens clip means you can take your photography to the next level.

The clip secures itself over the camera on your smartphone easily and securely. It will slip a little, if nudged, but during most of our tests it stayed in place. It comes with five different lenses that will enable you to vary your captures. Unfortunately, changing lenses with the clip in place over the camera forces it to move around, and although the clip does feel reasonably sturdy, we are concerned it will loosen with frequent use. The lenses are also quite tricky to screw onto the clip, which is frustrating.

The 5-in-1 lens kit comes in a structured case, which is nice and sturdy and will protect the lenses when they are not in use. It also has a clip that will enable you to fasten it to a bag or your belt, which is extremely handy. Not only that, but it also comes with a cleaning cloth that will help ensure that each of the lenses are kept in optimum condition.

The lenses in the kit include a creative fish-eye lens, a wide-angle lens, a macro lens, telephoto lens and CPL lens. Each lens is clearly labelled and comes with a lens cap for added protection.

Our favourite lens in this kit is the fish-eye lens, as it adds an artistic level of distortion to the imagery that you take with your smartphone camera. The only bad thing about the fish-eye lens is that it creates a circular image with a black

border, which can become uneven if the clip is knocked slightly out of place – if it isn't positioned centrally it is very obvious.

Unfortunately, when in use the lenses do cause some unwanted vignetting and distortion at the corners of the images, which is quite problematic.

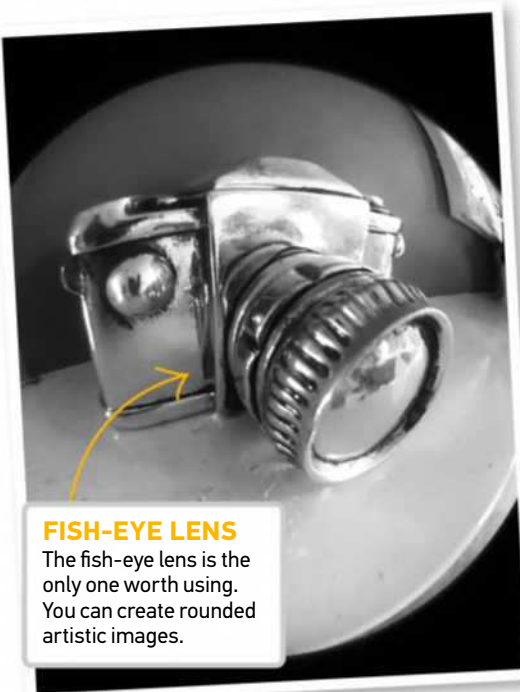
If you are a serious photographer then this is not the kit for you. If you are only looking to add a little creativity to your captures, though, it might just be worth it. However from our tests, we would say the fish-eye lens is the only part of the kit worth using.

### The specs

**Company**  
Apexel

#### Additional features

• Telephoto lens • Macro lens  
Fish-eye lens • Wide-angle lens



#### FISH-EYE LENS

The fish-eye lens is the only one worth using. You can create rounded artistic images.

### The verdict

# 5

It's cheap, but this kit doesn't offer enough quality or function to make it a worthwhile purchase. It's probably more suited to young children.



## SOFTWARE

Price £50 (approx) / \$69 US Web <http://akvis.com/>**SLIDERS**

The sliders are where the magic happens, and all of them are easy to use and adjust as you see fit.

**PREVIEW AREA**

The main preview image only shows your work through a small preview area, but this can be worked around by using the After tab at the top of the window.

**PROGRESS STEPS**

Watch your work take shape with the step-by-step images that add more strokes to your picture.

## The specs

**Company**  
AKVIS

**Additional specs**

Windows XP and above  
macOS 10.12 and above  
Photoshop CS3 and above  
Photoshop Elements 6 and above

## The verdict

8

With plenty of cool effects, AKVIS Points is a great add-on for a range of different Photoshop users, but a must-have for digital artists.

# AKVIS Points

Explore pointillism with this simple to use Photoshop extension

**D**igital art is something you can spend hours creating because unlike photo editing or photomanipulation, it's a lot more idiosyncratic, and all about your own expression as an artist, rather than trying to create something realistic.

The drawback of this is that digital art can take forever to get right, and that's why AKVIS's range of plug-ins for all sorts of styles and types of artwork can be a useful aid to getting artistic in Photoshop.

AKVIS Points tackles pointillism, a dot-based style of art, which grew from impressionism. What AKVIS Points does isn't that revolutionary; it simply converts your

pictures into a series of painted dots rather like a Photoshop filter. It's what you can do with the plug-in as a whole that's impressive.

Points has a plethora of preset options for your image, all ranging in dot size and colour. From there, there are handy sliders for altering everything about your artwork that you may wish to. You can add a canvas or a frame to your piece, and the styles that you can generate range from watercolour-based images to thick, oily dots. One of the best things about Points is that you can vary certain sliders such as Color Variety and Complementary Colors, and create effects that are more fiddly to do in Photoshop itself.

These styles can not only be used on their own as a quick fix for your image, they can be used as a basis for you to build upon, whether with the Brush or Mixer Brush tools.

It's Points' versatility that makes it such a great add-on to Photoshop. It's not just a digital art plug-in, it's a tool for you to begin digital art with, it's a Photoshop filter, and it's an extension to add extra flourishes to your work. Points is extremely easy to use, yet capable of helping to create all kinds of powerful art effects that transcend pointillism. While it isn't the most precise or exciting plug-in that you'll use, it can certainly provide you a lot of options for digital art or otherwise.

## Five great presets

Ready-made effects that are worth exploring in AKVIS Points

**Crayons**

**01** Creates bright colours and simple brushstrokes. It works well as an Overlay layer on images to produce a bit more noise.

**Eggshell**

**02** Perfect for reducing detail in an image and giving you a selection of thicker dots to then build upon in a digital painting.

**Impressionist Painting + Frame**

**03** Gives a classic final effect with a little colour variation and a regal outline.

**Soft Brush**

**04** Works a little like a painterly blur. It's good for building on but equally, it's handy for turning photos into slightly smudged final pieces.

**Watercolor**

**05** Deals with bold colours, strong strokes and block tones. It has a classic feel to it, but can also be the start image to build upon.



## SOFTWARE

Price £34.99 / \$49.99 US Web [www.painterartist.com/en/](http://www.painterartist.com/en/)

# Painter Essentials 6

Get a taste for the most realistic painting software available

**BRUSHES GALORE**  
With more brushes than you could possibly use along with the ability to make custom brushes, Essentials will keep you painting for a long time.

**PAPER OPTIONS**  
Essentials gives you the option of different paint and canvas textures that react realistically with the type of paint and brushes you choose to use.

**The specs**  
Company: Corel  
Features: Updated UI, Symmetry Painting, Tablet support, Image Tracing

**FEELS FAMILIAR**  
Many of the features feel familiar to a regular Photoshop user, making it easy to get to grips with.

**Photoshop creative GREAT VALUE**

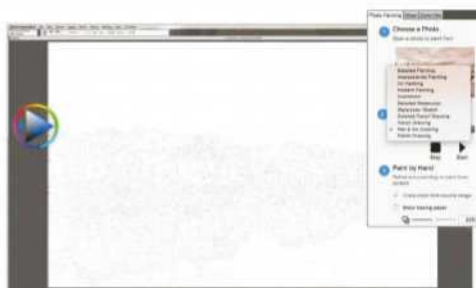
## Get to know Auto-Paint

It might seem like a novelty, but this is an excellent design tool



### Load your image

**01** Go to File> Open and select the image you want painted. Think about colour and the kind of painting technique you want from your finished work. Go to Window> Photo Painting to open the panel. Now choose Use Open Image.



### Sketch it out

**02** Your image will appear in the preview window. In the Layers panel, create a new layer above your photo. Back in the Photo Painting panel, choose Pen & Ink Drawing from the drop-down menu and hit Play to give your image a sketched outline.



### Begin painting

**03** Make a new layer under your pen and ink sketch layer. Now is the time to select the painting style you want for your image. This image was created using the Detailed Watercolor style. Hit Play and watch the magic happen.



**T**he joy of painting is something keenly felt. With the latest Painter Essentials from Corel, we get the best of digital combined with the experimental fun of painting by hand.

Corel has put an awful lot of thought into what the artist is missing in the digital painting experience. Features like auto brush tracking and wet-into-wet painting gives an uncannily realistic feel to working with traditional materials. It's the award-winning Natural Media brush collection that really sets it apart, though. You would struggle to find a media not covered, even in this Essentials collection. Your toolbox includes dry media, such as pencils, chalks and pastels, and wet media like acrylics, watercolour and oils.

There are also built-in surface textures that will react distinctly when paint or pencil is applied. These include rough and smooth paper, canvases and wood. The variety of experience on offer is incredible and gives you the functionality of a fully kitted art studio right on your desktop.

As well as painting from a blank canvas, you also have the option to paint from a photo. With an improved Cloning brush, you can sample colour directly from the image and paint over it using any 'brush' you prefer. There is also the option to Auto-Paint (detailed below), where you can render your photograph using any medium you'd prefer.

The scope for creating design assets is vast. With the Mirror tool you can, not surprisingly, mirror your strokes to create symmetrical art, making illustrations a cinch to produce. Similarly, the Kaleidoscope tool will duplicate your work in several segments to create geometric patterns or decorative elements.

When moving your work into Photoshop, you can save your work as a PSD rather than Essential's RIF format. This will preserve plenty of the editing functionality, such as



layers. While Photoshop obviously has loads of downloadable brushes available, Essentials boasts the Natural Media collection, which works dynamically to mimic real-life media in a way Photoshop can only dream of. Wet-on-wet in particular is a joy. Not only can you blend colours in a separate panel as if you were mixing on a palette, you can watch as your wet paint strokes blend and merge right on the canvas. Also, the F-X brushes give that extra edge to your illustrations with pre-calibrated brush presets that create texture for everything from hair to sparkles. In addition, with the blend tools and airbrushes, it couldn't be easier to add distinct refinement and texture to your work.

Corel has an extensive learning community with regularly updated tutorials and blogs to give you the best learning experience from a non-subscription software. Want to learn how to paint like Bob Ross? There's a tutorial!

Painter Essentials 6 is updated with improved UI, which greets you on launch with inspiring project examples and tutorials. The performance speed has also been improved from previous versions. However, you might find that some of the new brushes will still test your computer.

With Painter Essentials 6, you get a great glimpse of the functionality that the Painter software offers, at a fantastic price. Those who purchase the Essentials software will also get a discount should they choose to move onto the Painter package.

## The verdict

9

The extensive libraries of brushes and tools available, even in the Essentials version, will keep you creating – with only slight delays in load times.



### Refine

**04** Once the auto-painting is finished, you have the option to make some refinements or additions such as adding texture or sketch elements. Go to File> Place to select a texture. Place at the top of your layer stack and convert to Multiply.



### Export to Photoshop

**05** The default file type is a RIF. This preserves all Essentials editability but is not compatible in Photoshop. When you are ready to migrate to Photoshop, you must save as a PSD. This will retain your separate layers.

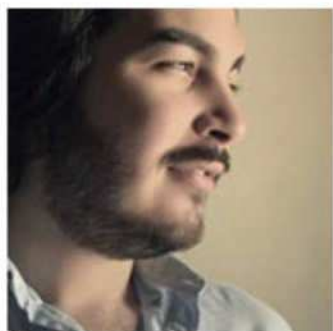
## Standout feature



### Wet-into-wet painting

The wet-into-wet feature lets you paint like Bob Ross; blending colours on the canvas. This works especially well with a tablet as you can set how you paint in the Brush Tracking panel, so the program recognises the speed and pressure of your strokes.





# Journeying through Photoshop

Ahmed Nabil has been using Photoshop for seven years now, and has discovered so much about art and design in that time

**I** am an adventurer in the art universe," says Ahmed Nabil. "No adventurer knows where he or she is going or what is next, and this is the most interesting part of the life of artist."

Over the years, Ahmed has journeyed through photomanipulation, surreal art, and even created artwork used by Adobe's website. We asked him all about his work and also what it is that he loves about Photoshop.

## Have you always been interested in art, Nabil?

Most people have an artistic background starting from being a kid, and that includes me for sure; so yes, I've always been into art from the very beginning and I become more attracted to it every day!

My background in art started when I was young, and as I got older and started to understand art more, I took the decision to go to art school and choose art for [my] living. I studied classic art and I was blown away. Artists like Da

Vinci and Michelangelo inspire me so much in my work.

## How long is it that you have been using Photoshop?

Since the Arab Spring revolution of 2011. It changed a lot for a lot of people, and gave us a hunger to become better. At the time I wanted to pursue my art further, so I started to teach myself Photoshop around that time because I believe that there's no better way to learn than to teach yourself.

## Can you tell us what your favourite tools are?

For me, Photoshop is like a Swiss Army Knife that can do literally everything you may imagine but I really love the Camera Raw Filter and the Brush Tool. Those are my two most-used tools. Also, I must admit when I first saw the 3D functions, I never thought I'd use it over more specialised 3D software. The 3D tool is the most underrated tool in Photoshop though; it's really powerful and without it, I would never have been able to complete so many projects, including my particle explosions.

## Those *Particle Explosions* pieces are really unique. Can you tell us a bit about how you made them?

I downloaded some hi-res images of space and landscapes from Shutterstock to start with, then began to open every image in Photoshop and started colour correcting and adjusting [the] saturation, contrast and exposure of each one of them using the Camera Raw Filter. When my source images were ready, I made the magical shift effect by creating a depth map to every image using the 3D options in Photoshop. The final step was retouching and refining the result because it's not perfect most of the time. The idea came from watching a video of an explosion in slow motion, and it's safe to say my mind was blown as well!

## How important are adjustments in your pieces?

They're always important when it comes to tying projects together, and I find that they can really help to enhance the tone and colour in my work, even if the original pictures are good as they are. For the *Particle Explosions* pieces, for example, I used beautiful images to create this project but that doesn't mean that I had to use the colours of those images. I played with the hue, saturation and vibrance of every image to get what I wanted. It's not a realistic project anyway; I wanted the colours to be bright, beautiful, and pleasing to the eye. I have a deep belief in the power of art and colour, so I was lucky that with this project I had the freedom to manipulate colours as much as I wanted.

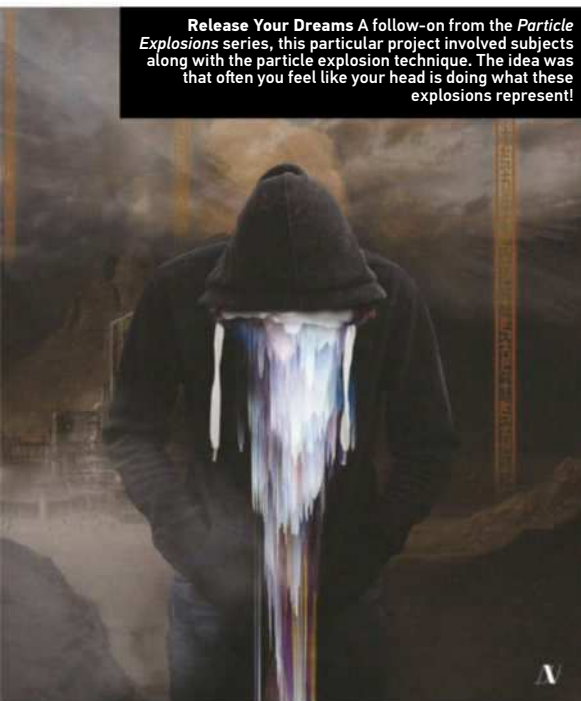
## What projects have you created that you're really proud of?

I'm really proud of every project that I've made, but there is a project I made a long time ago that I'm particularly proud of called *Release Your Wings*. It was a project dedicated to women, about violence and women's rights, and so I found that my duty as an artist was to dedicate a project to a cause that really deserved attention.

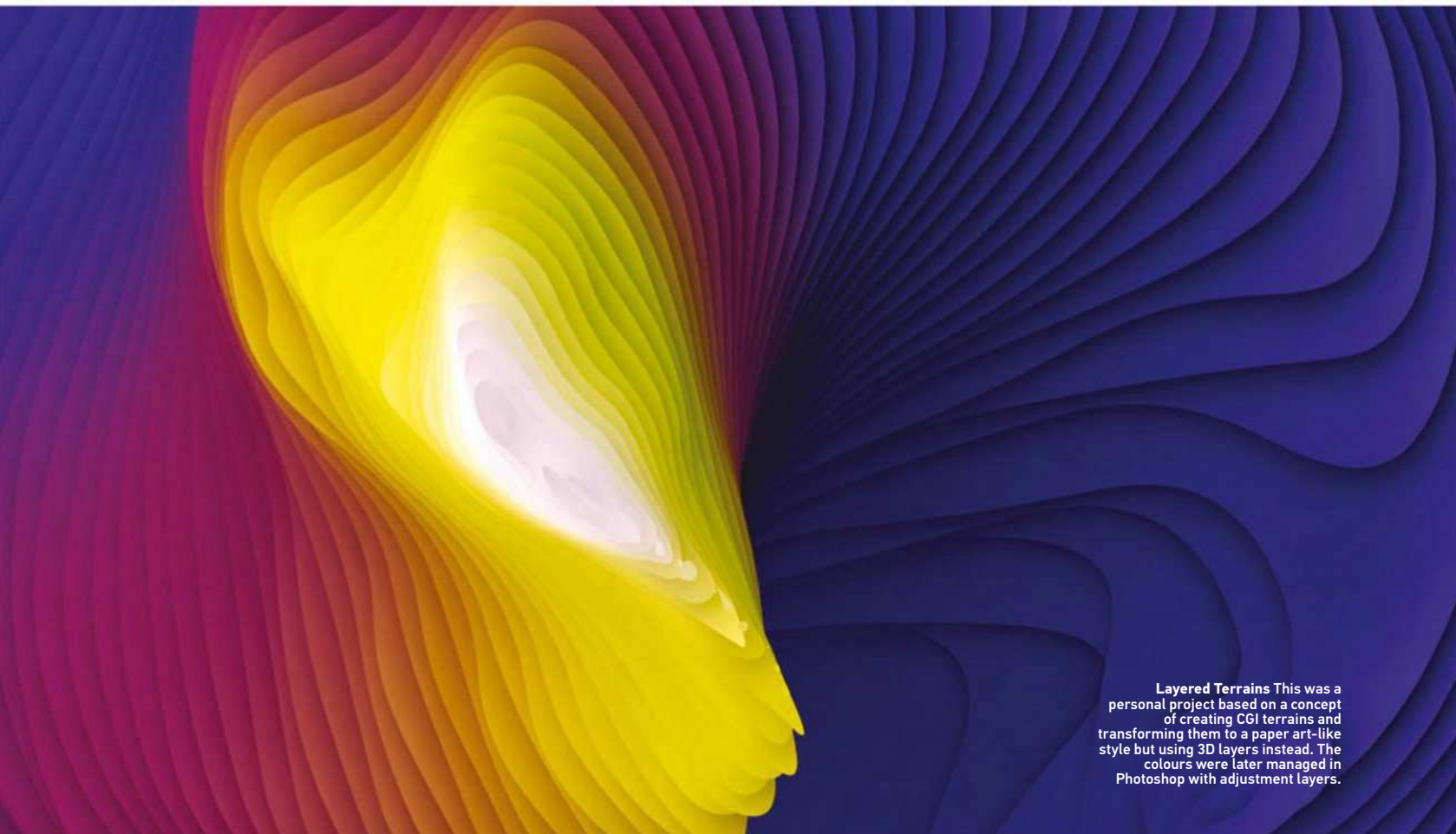
## Do you have any tips for Photoshop beginners who might want to create artwork like yours?

I don't want to say anything too clichéd here, but really the best and most honest advice I could possibly ever give Photoshop users – but also anyone creative – is to believe in their talent and power of imagination in the first place. Then [it is about understanding] that the first thing you have to learn is how to use your mind, not [your] software. That's something that I've come to learn myself. Photoshop specifically is limitless and can really help you to create things you'd never imagined it could do. But ultimately, it's all about you!

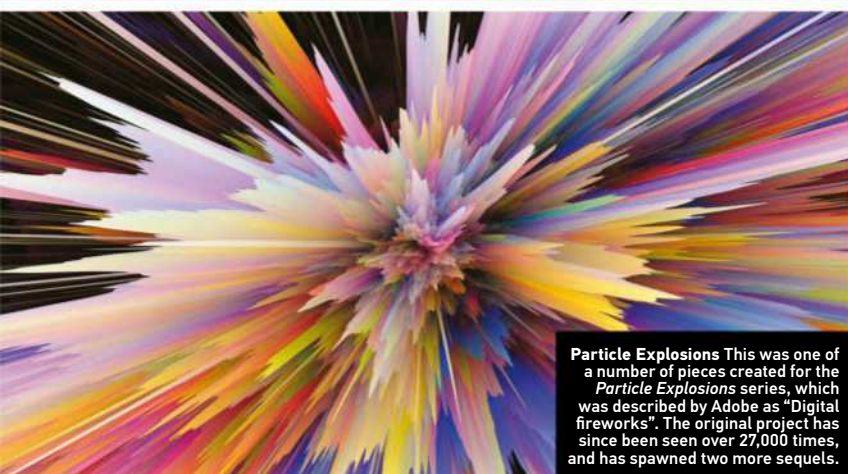
**Release Your Dreams** A follow-on from the *Particle Explosions* series, this particular project involved subjects along with the particle explosion technique. The idea was that often you feel like your head is doing what these explosions represent!







**Layered Terrains** This was a personal project based on a concept of creating CGI terrains and transforming them to a paper art-like style but using 3D layers instead. The colours were later managed in Photoshop with adjustment layers.



**Particle Explosions** This was one of a number of pieces created for the *Particle Explosions* series, which was described by Adobe as "Digital fireworks". The original project has since been seen over 27,000 times, and has spawned two more sequels.



**Burning Heart** This was a photomanipulation comprised of a 3D heart and other layers that were arranged around it in the background. The black and gold on the heart and the spheres were added before they were imported into Photoshop.



**Monks' Valley** This was a photomanipulation that was created by combining lots of stock images, including the trees, the clouds and the big clock in the middle of the image. It was put together in Photoshop with additional elements made in Illustrator.

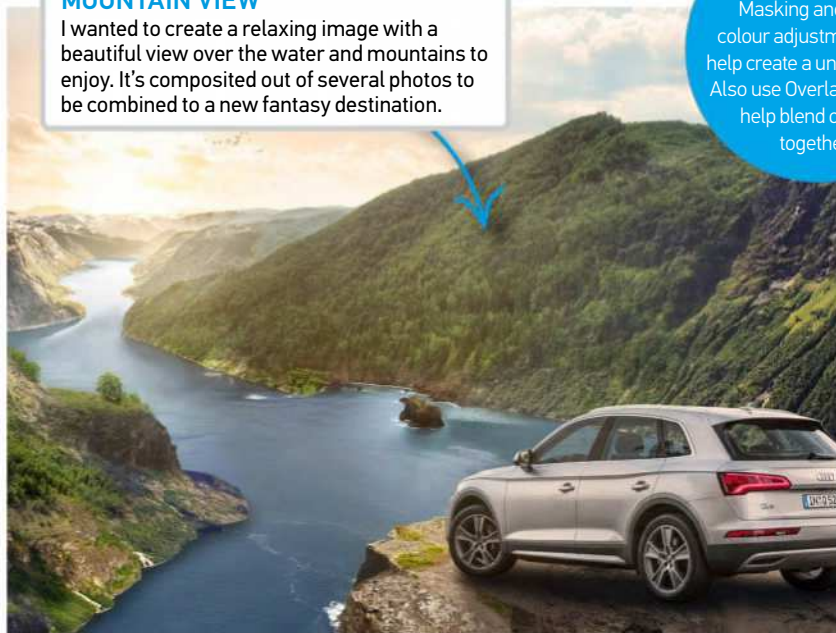


**Over Horizon** This was a simple composition made of a beach image, some mountains, a few clouds and nebula. The whole thing was masked together in Photoshop using a Wacom Intuos tablet.



## MOUNTAIN VIEW

I wanted to create a relaxing image with a beautiful view over the water and mountains to enjoy. It's composited out of several photos to be combined to a new fantasy destination.



## Hilde's tip

Masking and using colour adjustments can help create a uniform look. Also use Overlay layers to help blend objects together.



## Hilde Mommen

[www.hildemommen.com/](http://www.hildemommen.com/)

"I am a freelance digital / CG artist from Belgium. My career started in graphic design, but I've always had a great passion for photomanipulation. Whenever I'm not working, I like spending quality time with my two dogs. Nature and animals inspire me a lot, I always get a lot of ideas during the walks with my dogs."

Visit Hilde's Photoshop Creative gallery at [www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/HildeM](http://www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/HildeM)



The Lion King



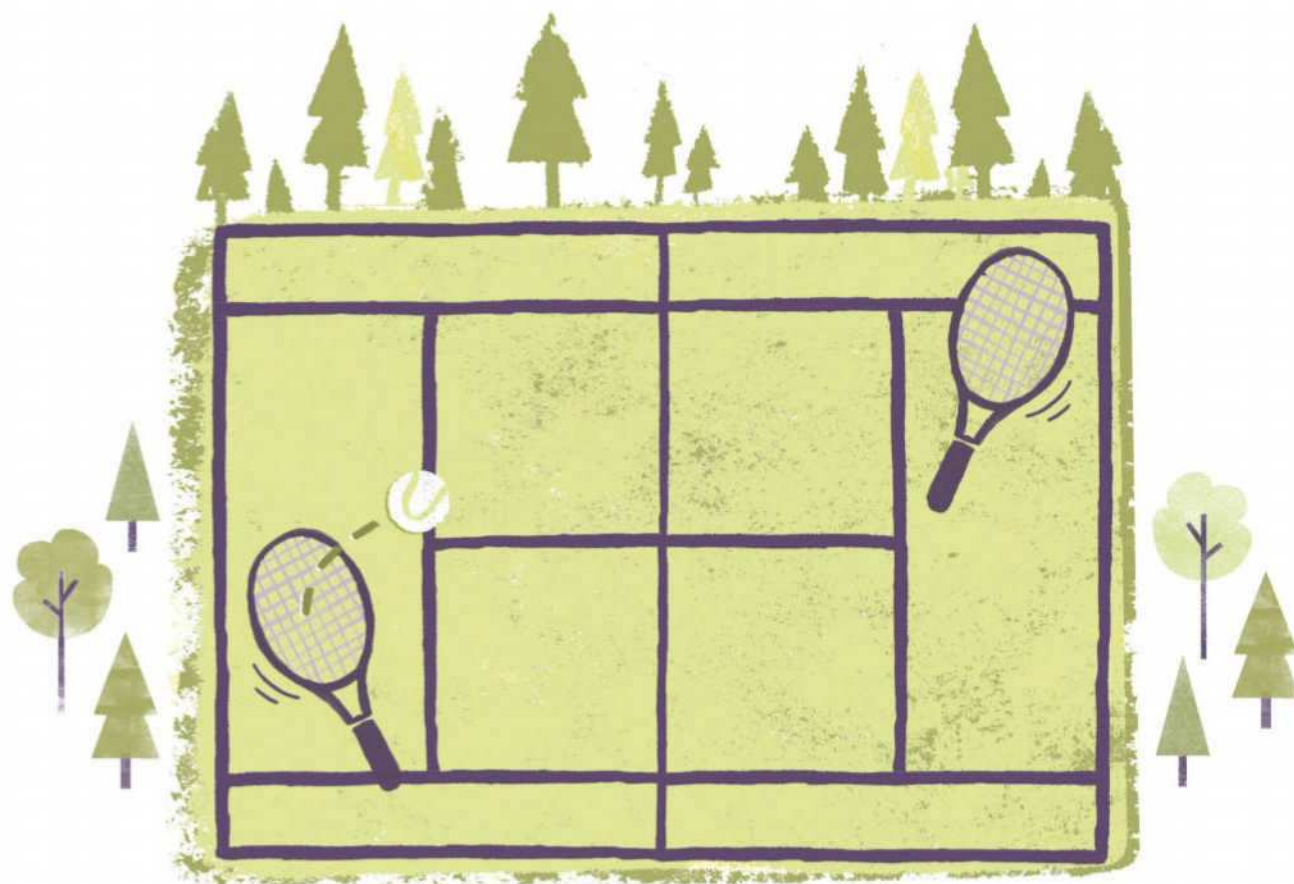
## COKE X ADOBE X YOU

This image was made for the 'Coke x Adobe x You' campaign. Core elements of the brief were Coca-Cola, sport and circle. I had the idea of sports disciplines emerging from cola splashes into a circle.





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