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20 INCREDIBLE WAYS TO USE BRUSHES

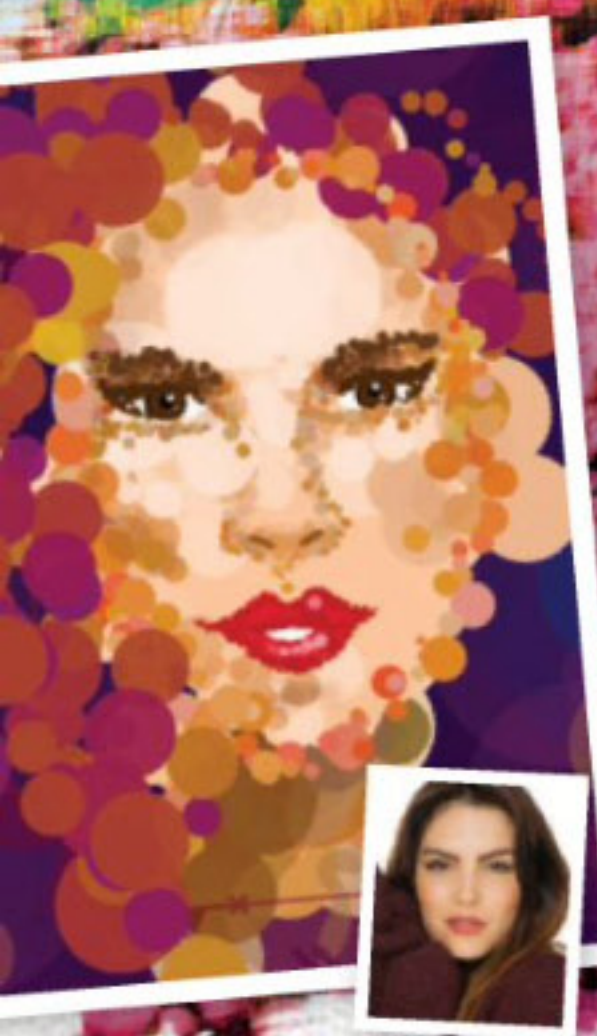
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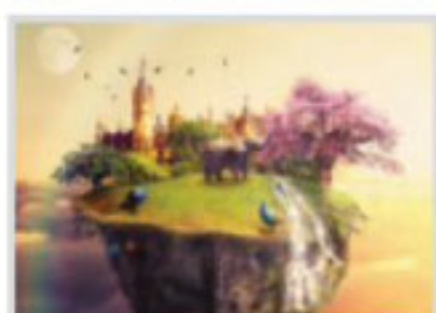
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Welcome



When a traditional artist hears 'brushes', they're likely to think of paintings and little else. But when a *digital* artist hears 'brushes', they're more likely to think of art in a broader sense. In Photoshop, so much can be achieved with brushes that you

wouldn't typically associate with brushes, and we explore 20 of these things in this issue's feature. Turn to p14, and you'll even learn how to create your own brushes. There are some great tutorials this issue on giving photos a gothic makeover, designing a movie poster, comic-book art and digital illusions, as well as creating a Pointillist image, a neon light effect and much more! There are also 14 pages worth of beginner tutorials, your questions answered, fantastic prizes to be won, and a bundle of freebies on the FileSilo.

Sarah Banks

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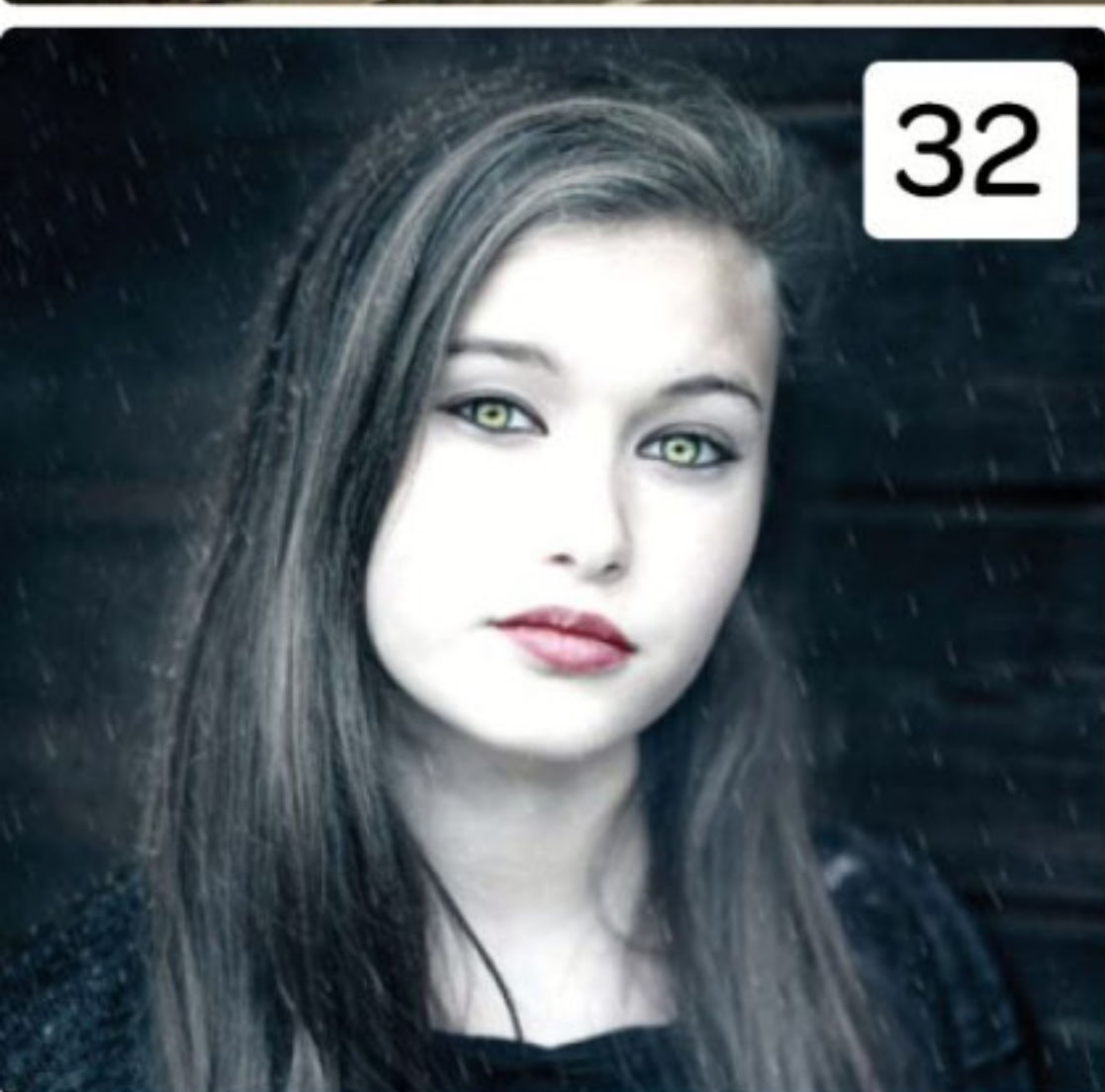
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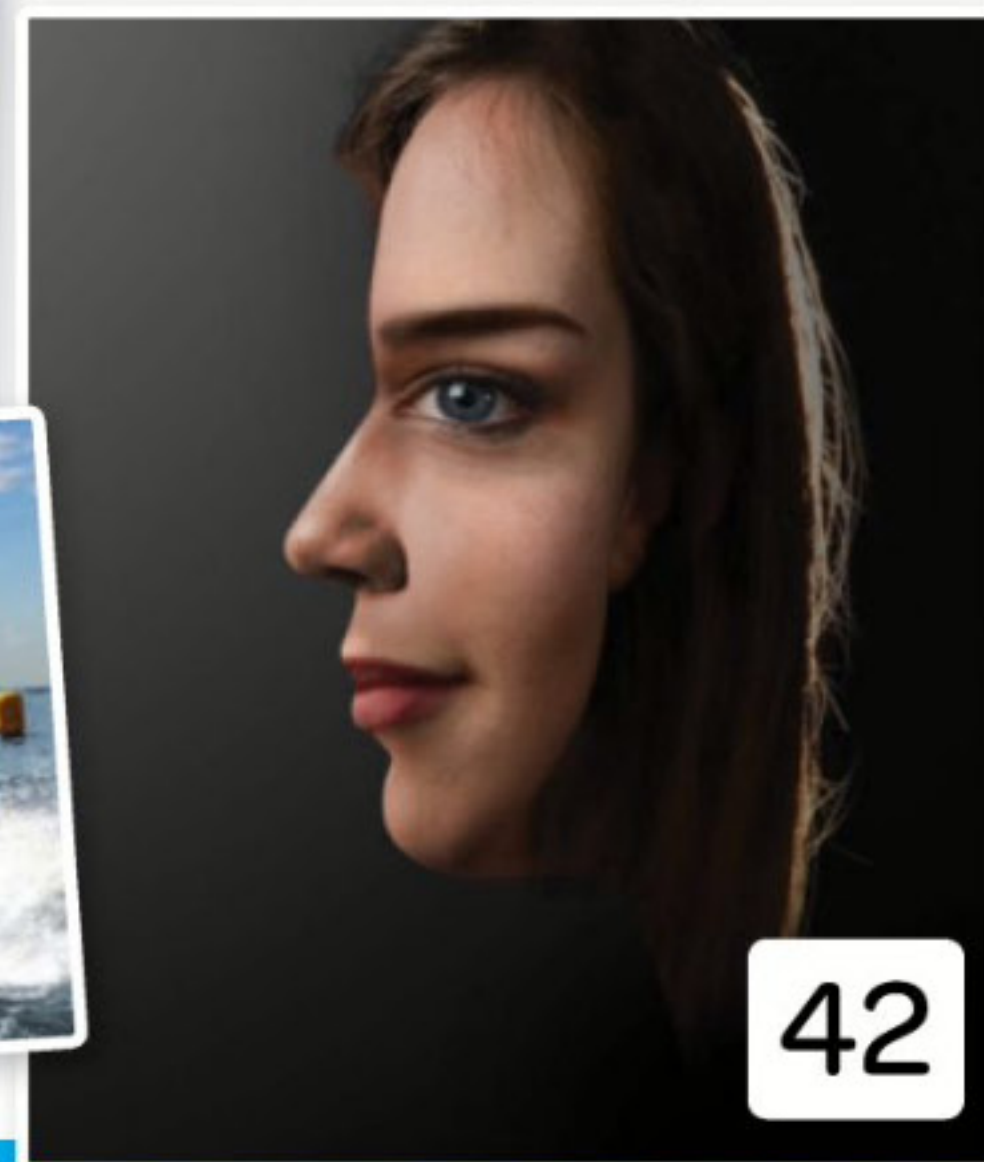
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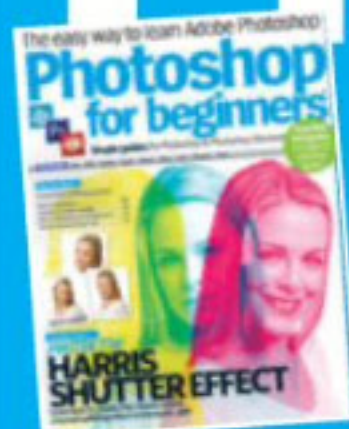
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Create this classic colour-channel-splitting effect

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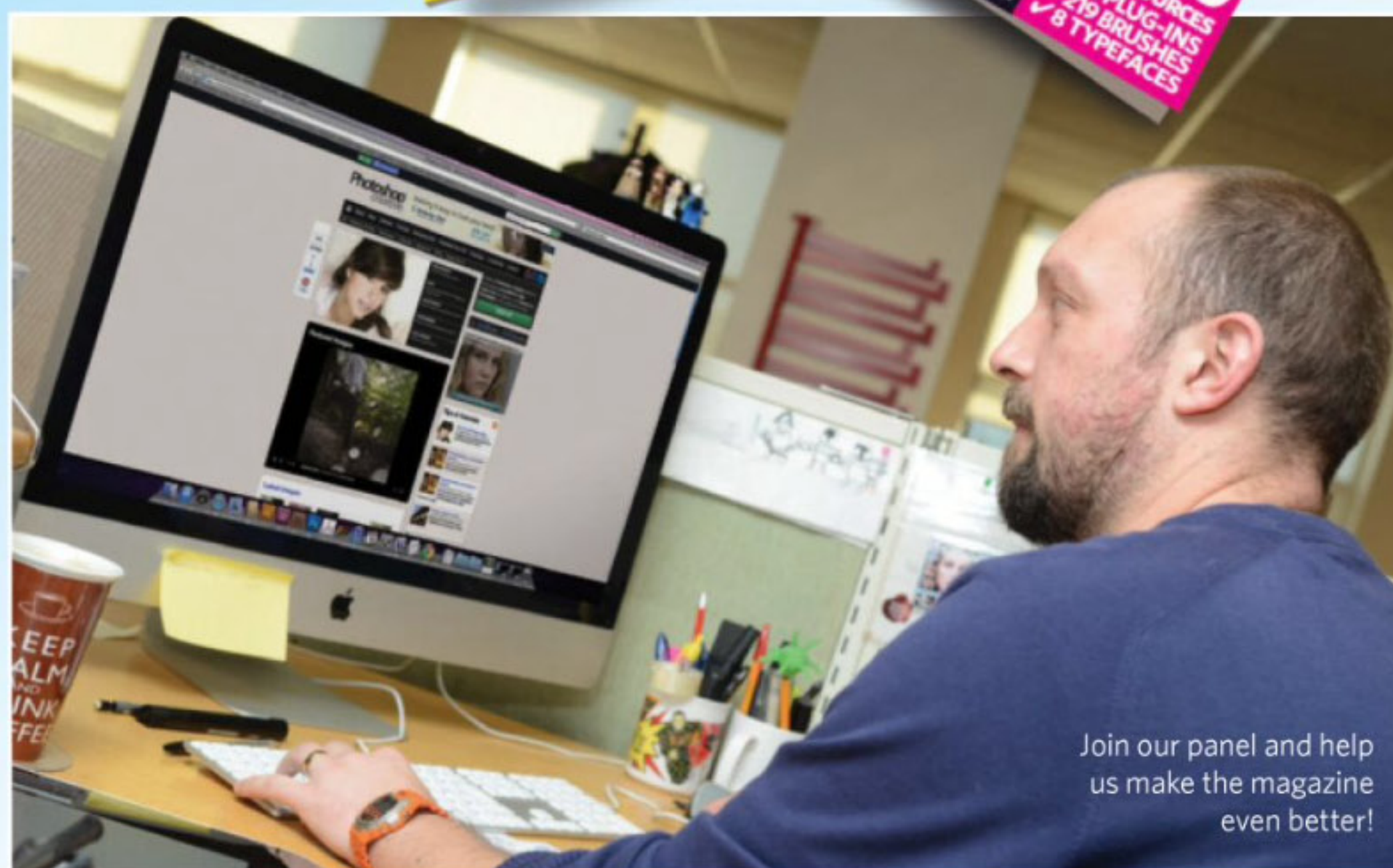
Take our 3-minute survey at
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and win a place on our panel



Hi. We love making Photoshop Creative and hope you love reading it too. But this year we want to make it even better, so we're asking for your help. By answering a few questions, you could be selected to join our first ever Photoshop Creative panel. I'm so excited to hear what you have to say and can't wait to learn more about you.

Sarah Bankes

Sarah Bankes
Deputy Editor

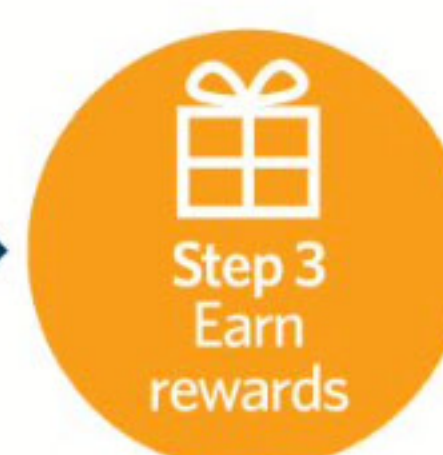


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us make the magazine
even better!

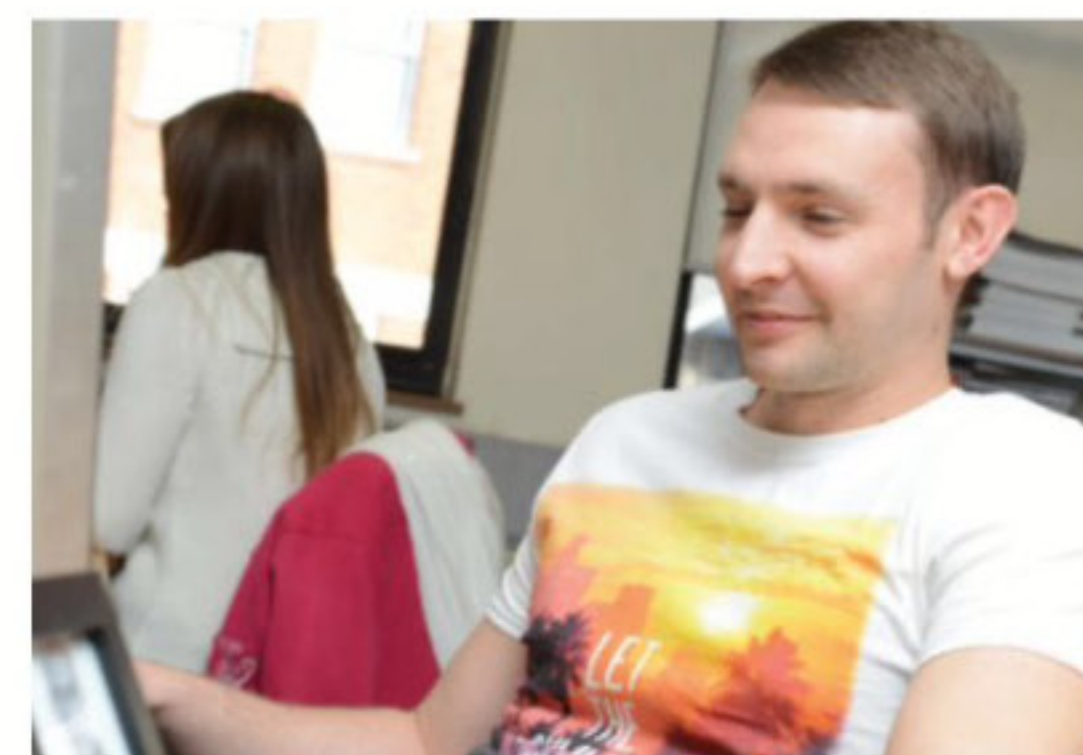


Complete our survey to join our **Photoshop Creative** panel and:

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- Get a chance to meet the Photoshop Creative team
- Shape the future issues of the magazine
- Enter into exclusive competitions



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READERS' IMAGES

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



BE A PART OF IT!

Over the next few months, we're going to be selecting our favourite magazine and online entries from the Readers' Gallery to showcase in a digital 'Hall of Fame'. To be in with a chance of featuring in the Hall of Fame, submit your best digital art today!



Genivaldo Souza

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/genivaldo

Image of the issue

"This image is a tribute to all women who face various difficulties in order to win their battles, and it was created for Women's Day. I paid special attention to lighting."



Mike Parker

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/gbvparker

"I found some great graffiti that I liked and distorted it to match the piano. I then added the piano into the alley scene and readjusted its perspective."



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Paulo Roberto

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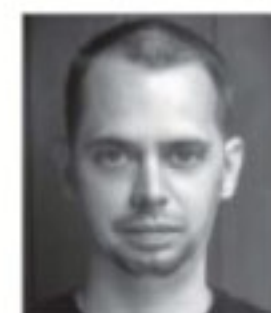
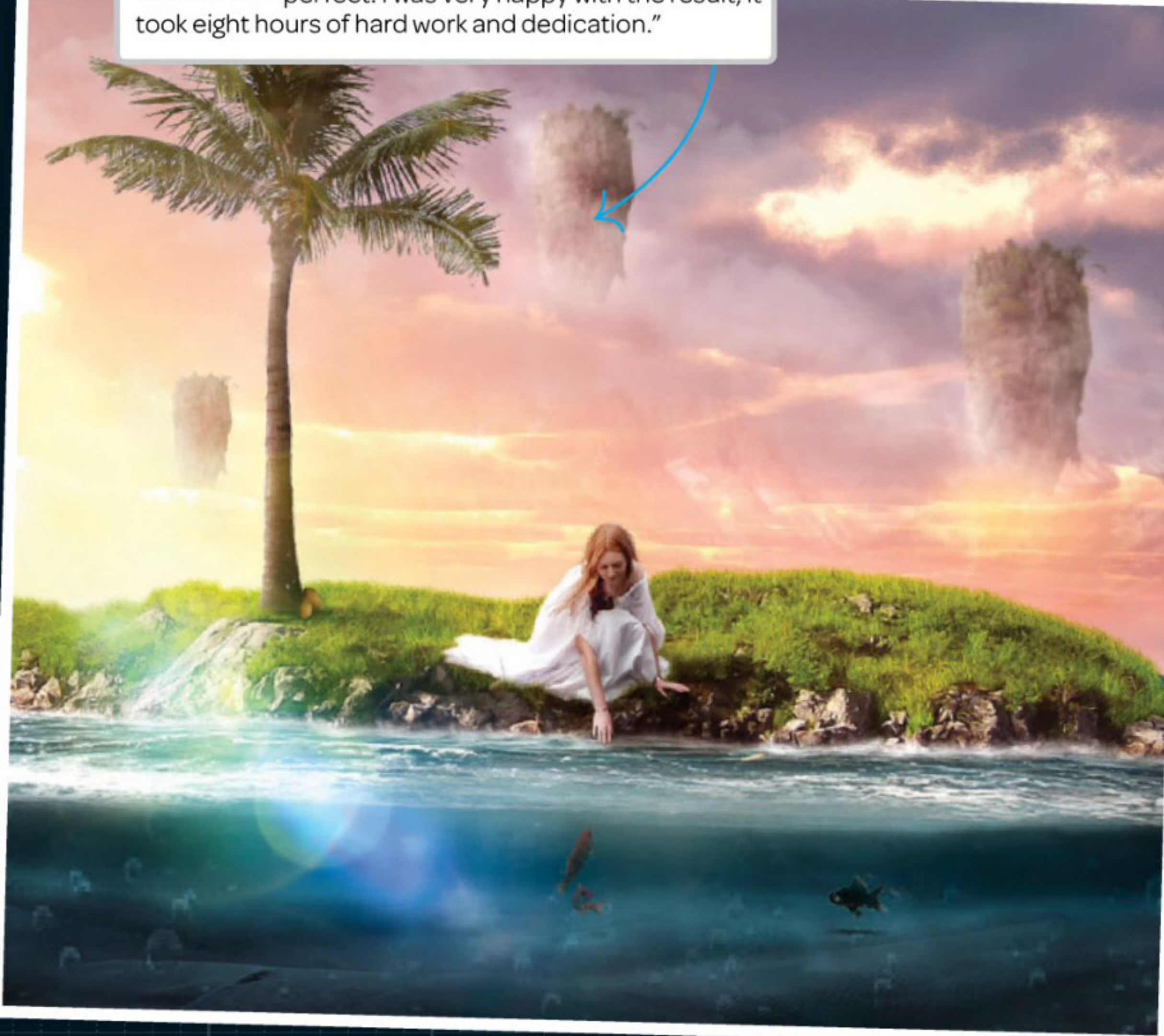
"This picture was created using lots of layers and masks, and was finished off with simple lighting techniques. The original idea behind the picture was to show how close we are to beauty and nature."



Uiljan Pinto

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Uillsam

"The most difficult aspect of this picture was trying to get the lighting and colours perfect. I was very happy with the result; it took eight hours of hard work and dedication."



Pierre Pachi

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Pierre%20Pachi

"This is a picture that I used the Camera RAW filter on. I gave it a cold mood with the Color Temperature (white balance), and put the slider to -32."





César Oliveira

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/blogcesaroliveira@gmail.c

oliveira@gmail.c

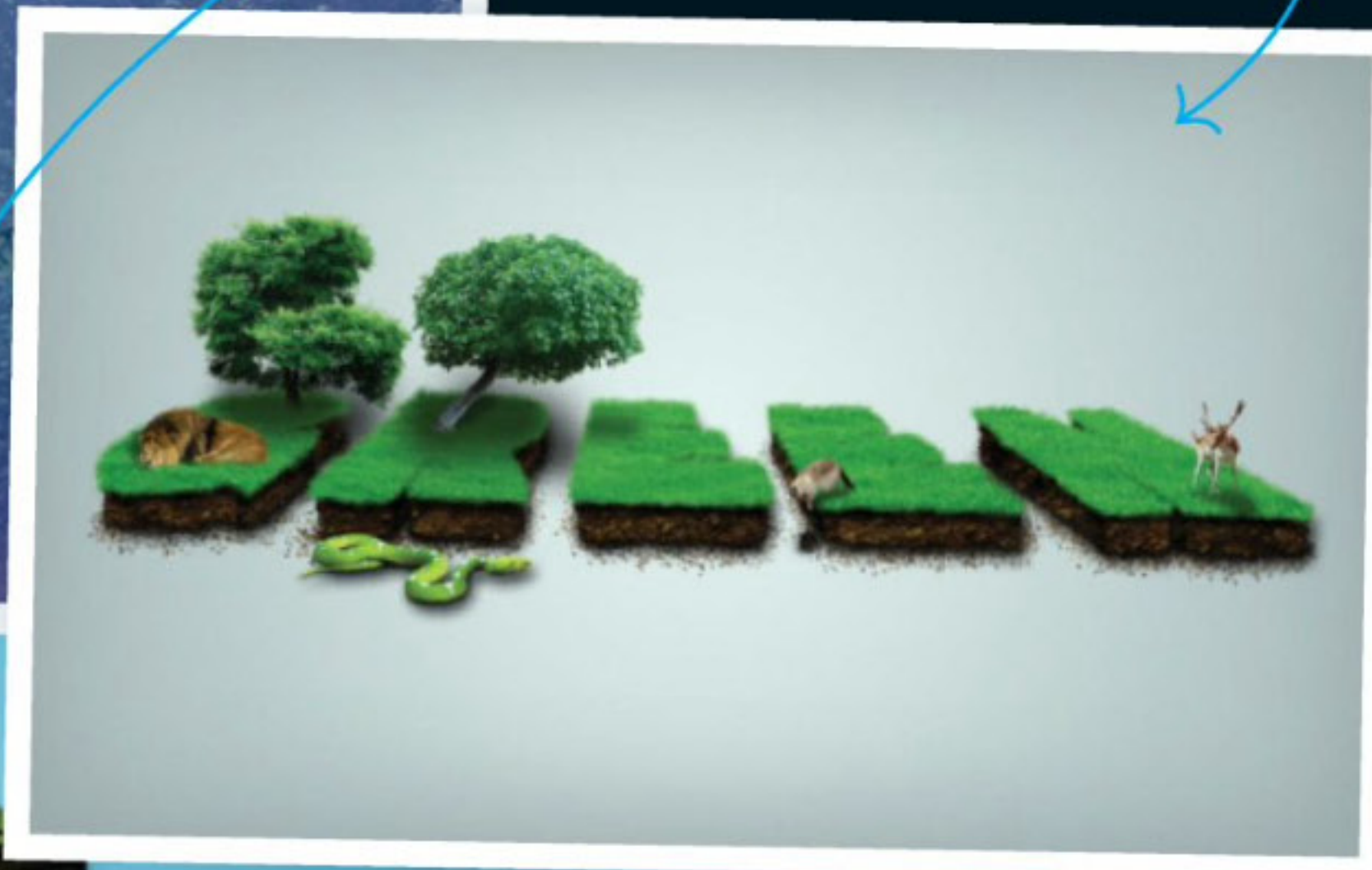
"For this animal-adventure photomanipulation, I used a total of eight images. Layers and masks were very important, as were colour adjustments and filters. Finally, I blurred the landscape."



Memry Tehubijuluw

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/rexragon

"I love nature-themed digital art. I made the top image by shaping the trees, grass and soil textures into the letters, and the bottom using a world map, a font and a 3D Photoshop action."





Hélène Marie

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/H%C3%A9l%C3%A8neM

"I used the Mixer Brush in Photoshop to paint this illustration. The fishes I created from scratch using my imagination, and I referenced some pictures for the cat."



Rogério Sousa

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Rog%C3%A9rio

"I love to manipulate images, and create lots of different effects on subjects' faces. I love using blend modes, and this picture is really archetypal of the kind of art I create."



Oral Rolle

www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/SwayGFXDesigns

"I created this for a social-media post, and it's designed to capture your attention. I like continuously pushing the boundaries of my art further and further."

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READERS' CHALLENGE

Upload your images to photoshopcreative.co.uk

Challenge entries

The best entries and overall challenge winner

1 Jacques Erasmus

The Lost Island

"I created a canvas painting depicting a lost island with the dog on there. I used various Photoshop techniques to blend each of the images into the one picture."

2 Paul Cresswell

Treasure

"I duplicated the rock picture and added the sky and water. After this I added an overlay, plus different textures."

3 Riaz Du Preez

The Two Worlds

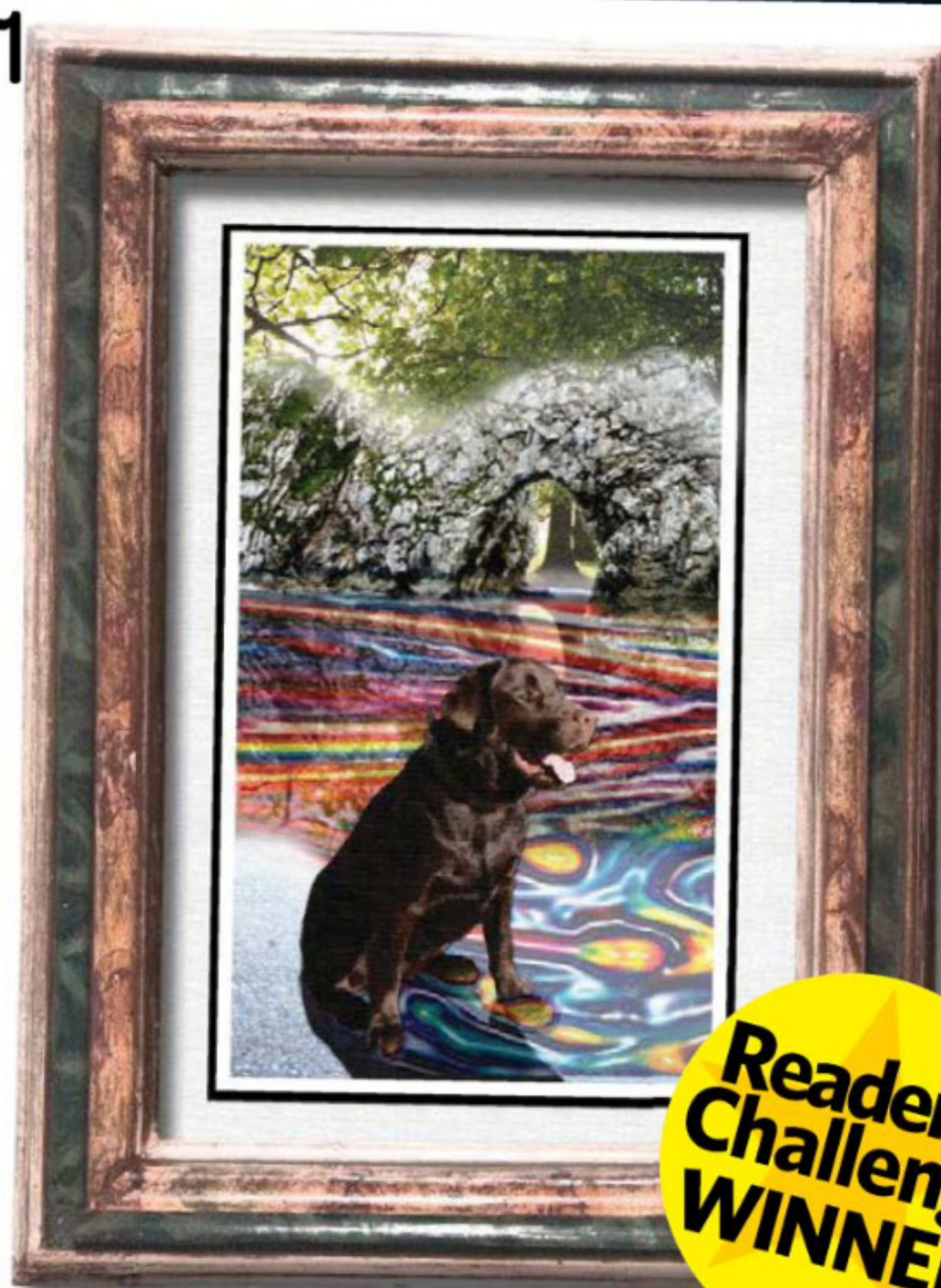
"I decided to separate the two places to create the two worlds. Then came blending, shadows, and tons of layers!"

4 Kaspars Berzins

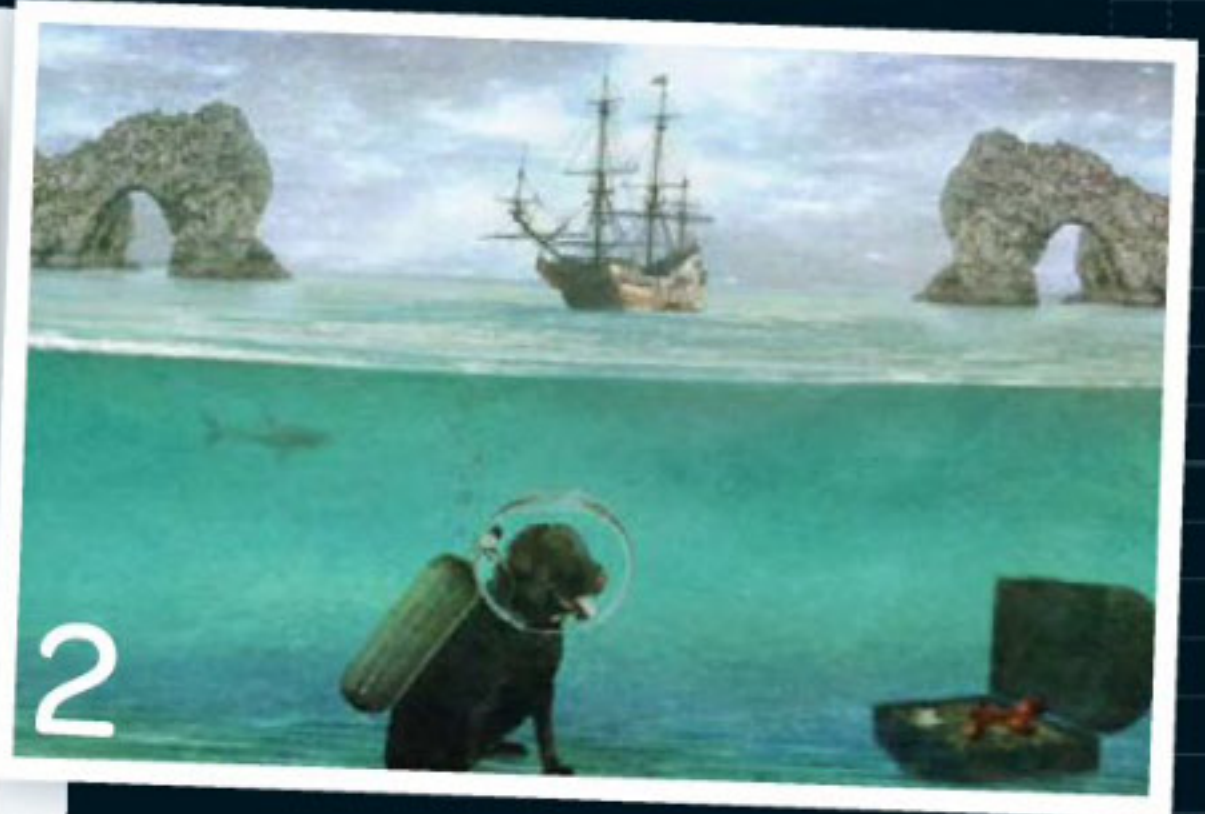
Barking at the Moon

"I decided to use the pictures to create a magical floating island, and added some other elements to help add to the surreal feeling."

1



Readers' Challenge WINNER



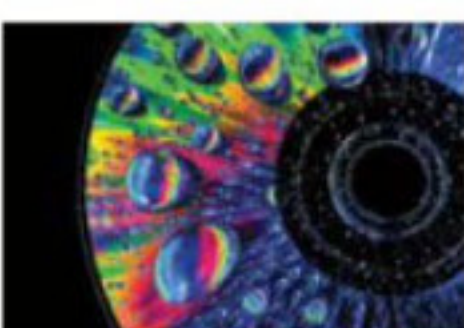
Images used to create these entries:



Download our images

Think you can do better? Prove it!

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



THE PRIZE...

Auto FX Software Product Line Bundle

One lucky winner will receive a bundle of software from Auto FX! This selection of effects includes Mystical Tint, Tone and Color, Mystical Lighting & Ambiance, Mystical Focus, Photographic Edges, AutoMagic Pro Effects, DreamSuite Ultimate and AutoEye. The bundle is worth \$500 and boasts thousands of instant effects.

WORTH \$500!



RUNNERS'-UP PRIZE...

Moleskine Smart Notebook

The winner, along with three runners-up, will each receive an amazing Moleskine Smart Notebook. Sketch on the go, and the Moleskine app will render your pictures perfectly into fully workable digital files.

I ♥ PHOTOREALISM

"MODO was the perfect solution for this project. With its realtime preview, I was able to instantly see my lighting and material setups, which was key to blending the CGI with the photography. Plus, its super fast render speeds helped me meet my very tight deadline!"



Mike Campau
Creative Director / Digital Artist
WINNER PHOTOSHOP WORLD GURU AWARD 2014 - COMMERCIAL

**THE
FOUNDRY.**

 **MODO®**

Client: Lifeproof - www.lifeproof.com CGI/Digital Art: Mike Campau - www.mikecampau.com Photography: Tim Tadder - www.timtadder.com





— 20 INCREDIBLE WAYS TO USE — BRUSHES

See what Photoshop's brushes are capable of, and discover how they can do more than just paint

When we hear the word 'brushes' our minds tend to immediately think of paintings. We might even visualise incredible impressionist pieces by Monet, surreal works of art by Dali and epic masterpieces from the likes of Michelangelo and other great artists. Traditional art has meant that brushes and paintings have always gone hand in hand. But this isn't necessarily the case. Digital art has opened up a plethora of creative possibilities to imaginative souls, and with more of us turning to Photoshop to create art, we have more tools than ever at our disposal.

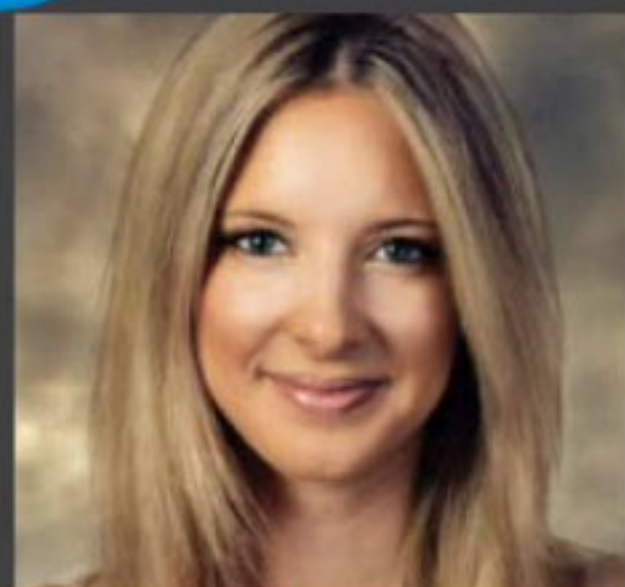
It's true that Photoshop's brushes can assist us in producing incredible paintings, but they can also help us to

achieve things not typically associated with brushes. And that's exactly what we are going to explore in this feature. Are you getting the most out of Photoshop's brushes? Do you even know just how much they are capable of doing? Over the following pages, you will learn how to apply effective photo fixes using brushes. You'll discover the possibilities when it comes to light and colour, and see how a few brush strokes can add stunning lighting effects or colour enhancements. We also show you how to inject some fun into your creative projects, thanks to the many brushes on offer in Photoshop.

In addition to that, if you fancy making your own brushes and creating unique textures, we show you how.



WHAT YOU WILL LEARN...



MAKE HANDY PHOTO FIXES

Learn how to add hair, heal skin, mask objects, make selections, and add clouds and grass.



ADJUST LIGHT AND COLOUR

Add sunbeams, light leaks, shadows and glows. Re-colour and create bokeh effects.



ADD FUN AND EASY EFFECTS

Create a kaleidoscope, type and a signature, add and scatter stars, and use dual brushes.



MAKE YOUR OWN BRUSHES

Learn how to make and turn images into brushes, then use them in your own work.

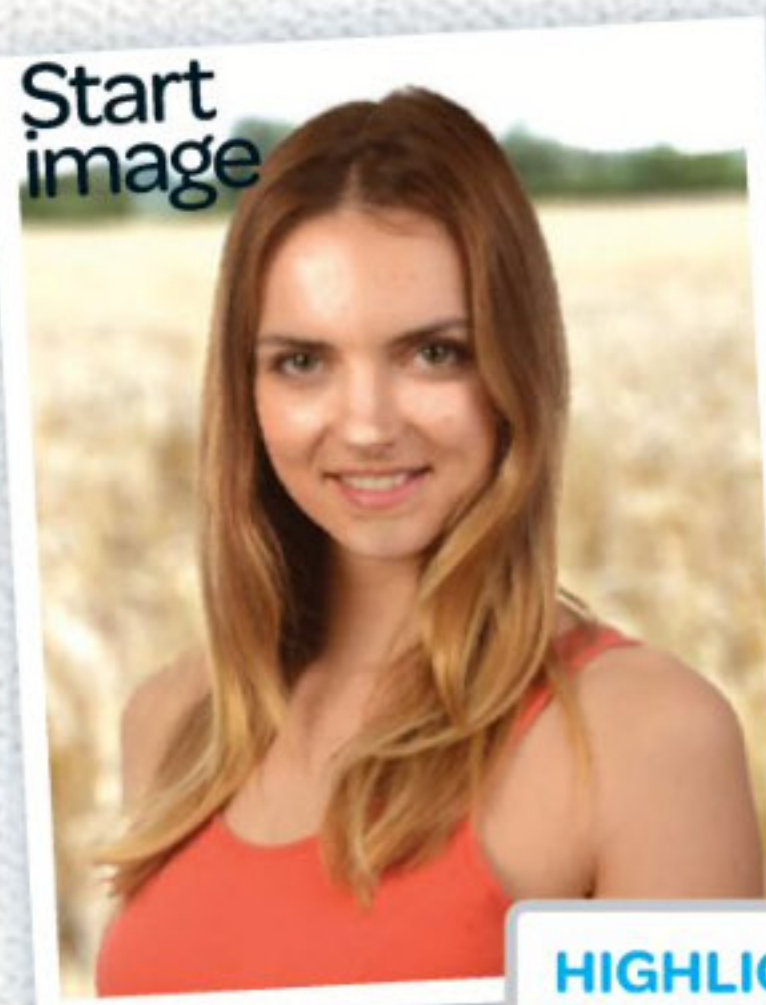


CREATE AND ADD TEXTURES

See how you can find textures around you then transform them for use in your projects.

PHOTO FIXES

The Brush tool is the Photoshop classic; no matter what project you are working on you will almost certainly use the Brush at some stage, whether it's to fill in a mask, draw in some details, or even to make selections. The following tips and tricks will help to demonstrate the usefulness of the Brush when it comes to fixing photos, demonstrating different ways that it can be used to help your photography and any of your future Photoshop projects. By looking at how you can edit photos with the Brush tool, you get a good sense of how flexible it is.



01 ADD HAIR

VARY THE TONES

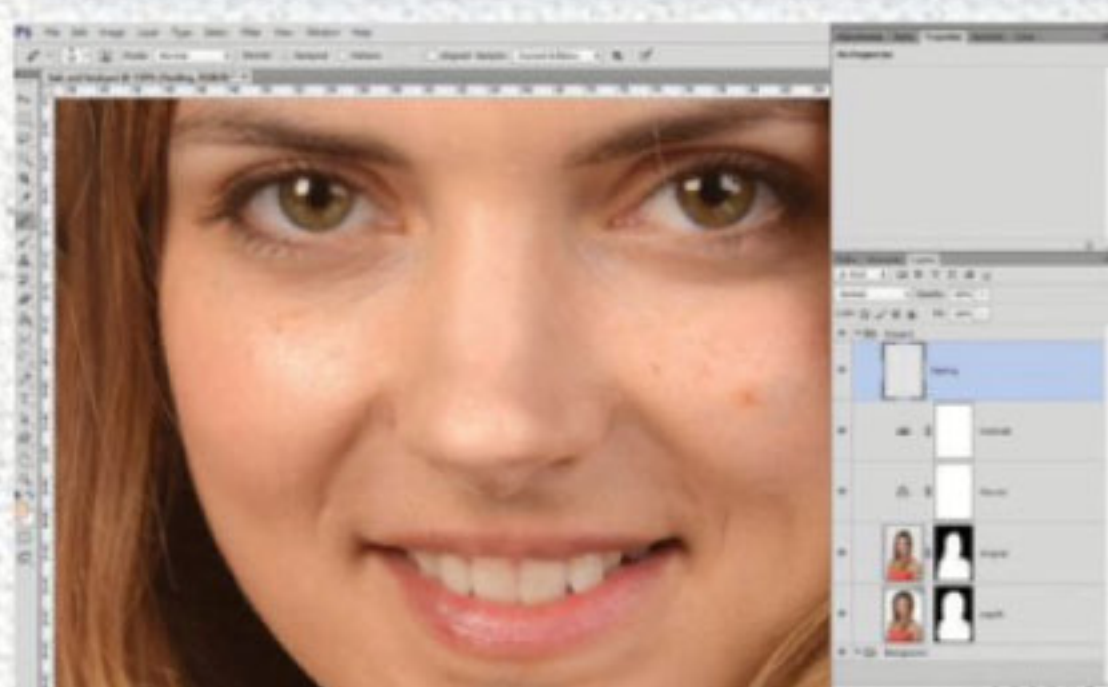
Hair has a lot of shades and tones. Make sure you change your brush colour often, sampling from the photo.

HIGHLIGHTS AND SHADOWS

Add bright highlights or dark shadows – these exist in real hair too! Use a low opacity to build them up.

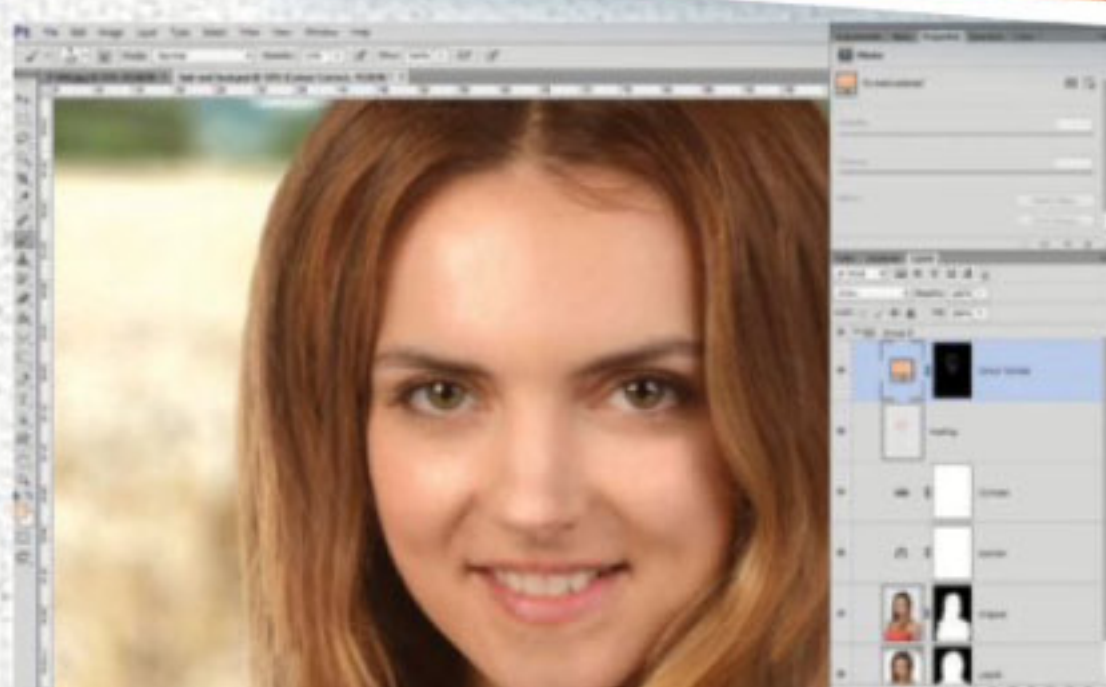


02 HEAL SKIN



Select the Healing brush

01 Select Healing tool (J). Create a new layer above the photo with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N. On the top toolbar, change the Sample drop-down from Current Layer to Current and Below. Hold Alt+click to select a sample point, and paint areas you want to heal. Keep brush size small and strokes short.



Adjust colours

02 Skin can appear blemished around the cheeks, eyes and chin. Create a Solid Color adjustment layer and use the Eyedropper (I) to sample an area of ideal skin. Set the blend mode to Color. Fill the mask in black, use a low opacity white brush to paint in areas that need correcting.



Correct tones

03 Create two Curves adjustment layers: drag one up to lighten, the other slightly down to darken. Fill both masks in black and use a low opacity, soft brush to fill in areas on the respective layers to lighten or darken areas of skin that might need correction, like under the eyes.

03 MASK

Masking is an essential part to all Photoshop work, controlled by the brush. Masking enables you to non-destructively cut out people or objects accurately, add adjustments to colour, content and more. Use black, white and all greyscale shades in between to hide or show layer content.



04 DRAW CLOUDS

BEGIN WITH WHITE

On a fresh layer, draw basic shapes of clouds with a low opacity white brush, brighter at the cloud centre.

LOW OPACITY BRUSHES

You don't need custom brushes to draw clouds. Use the standard circle brush at a medium hardness, 10% Opacity.

Start image

06 MAKE SELECTIONS

REFINE SELECTION

Click the Refine Edge button to tweak your selection, and when you're happy you can combine it with layer masks!

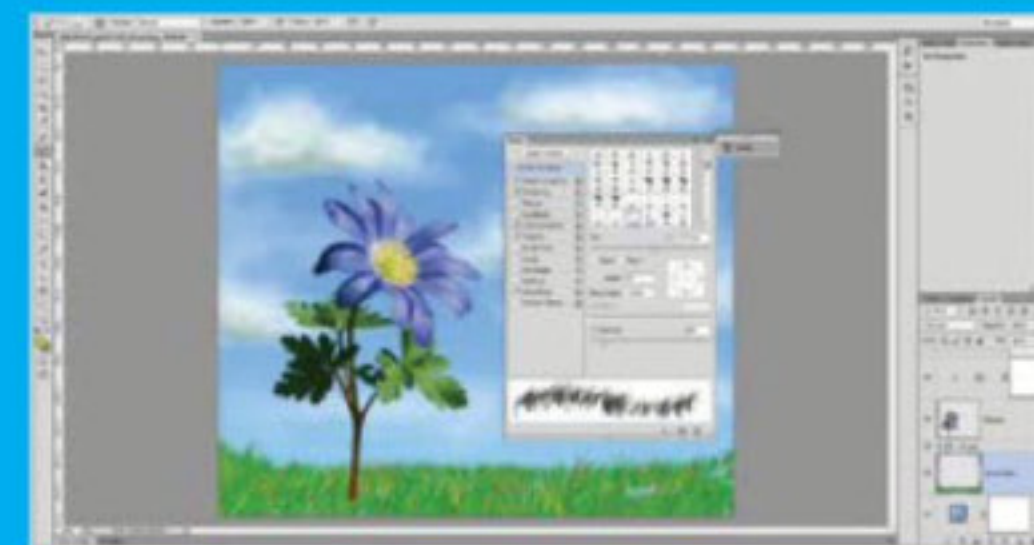
QUICK SELECTION BRUSH

Use the Quick Selection Brush (W) to make quick selections. Hold Alt if you want to subtract any selected areas.

Start image

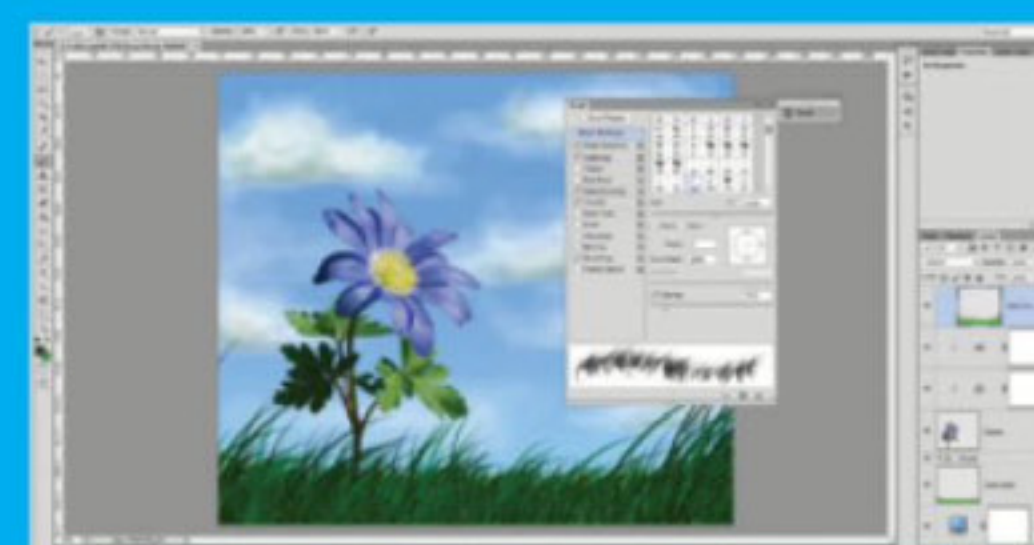
The main brush isn't the only useful brush option in Photoshop. In Photoshop CS3 and above, sat alongside the Magic Wand tool (W) you can find the Quick Selection brush. This tool is great for keeping some control over your selection, while at the same time using tricky algorithms to help make selections easy. Simply begin painting over areas that you'd like to add to your selection, as if you would on a mask, and it will detect the edges of values such as similar colours and tones, making selections easier.

05 LAY GRASS



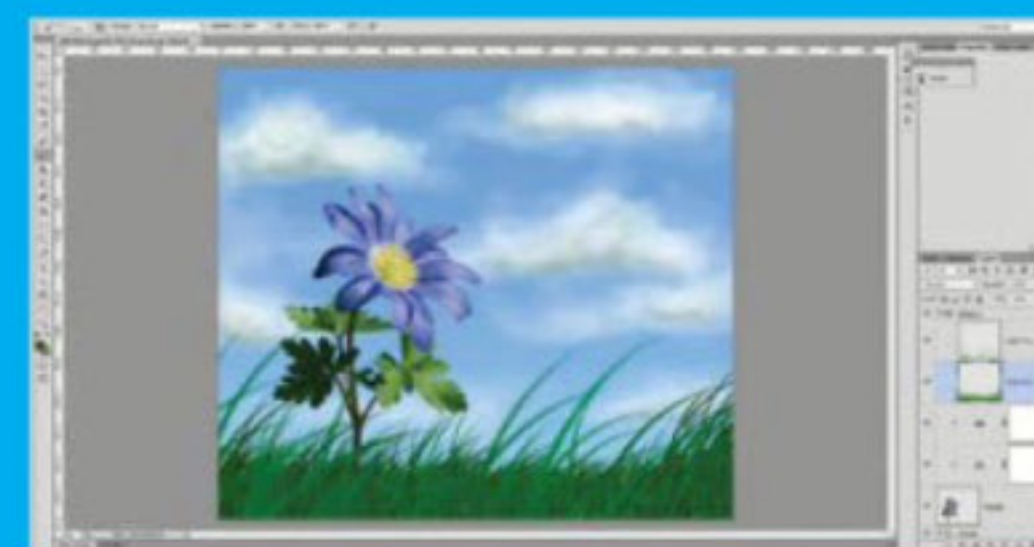
Background blades

01 Select the Brush tool (B) and click the brush preview. Select the single blade of grass brush. Set your Foreground colour to a bright green. Paint in large sweeping strokes across the base of the image. This will mostly be hidden so doesn't need to look realistic.



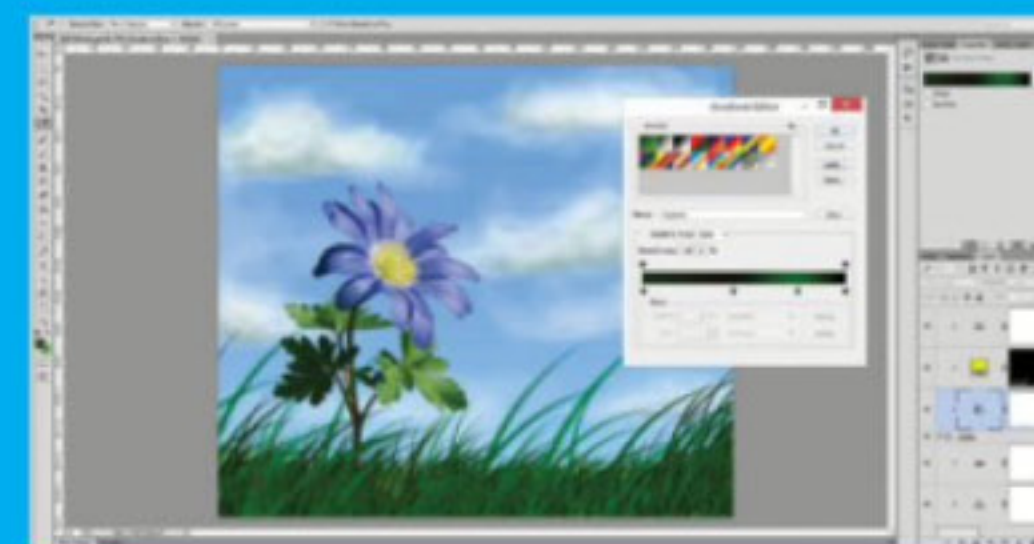
Add main grass detail

02 Set a more conservative green as your Foreground colour and on a new layer, start painting more carefully. This will help you control the Jitter and Scattering effects that are applied to the brush. Vary your green while you're painting, for realism.



Blur some

03 Create a new layer and increase the size of your paint brush. Paint blades of grass in the foreground, using single clicks. Go to Filter>Blur>Lens Blur and apply a blur to these front blades, setting the Radius to about 30, Curvature: 94, Rotation: 360.



Make final tweaks

04 Make colour tweaks to integrate the grass. Try adding a Gradient Map adjustment layer. Use dark greens and blacks and make that adjustment layer a clipping mask to a group containing your grass layers. Set blend mode to Hard Light.

LIGHT AND COLOUR

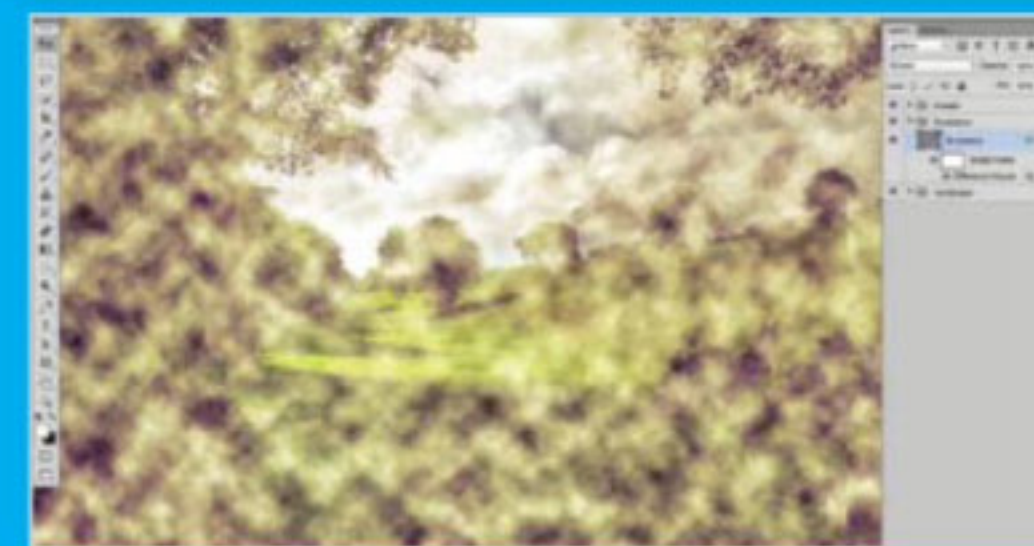
Arm yourself with brushes and get ready to introduce splendid light and colour effects to your visuals. Getting manual with brushes grants you the finesse that adding overall effects sometimes lacks. Using brushes in tandem with other features such as blend modes and adjustment layers really opens up new ways to make your work dazzle. Create regal sunbeams using brushes with filters and masks. Twiddle with brush settings to produce a bokeh effect. Brush with blend modes to add glows and stylish light leaks, and to re-colour at will.

USE WARM COLOURS

Pick yellows, reds, oranges and pinks in light leaks for an authentic feel and also to introduce warmth.

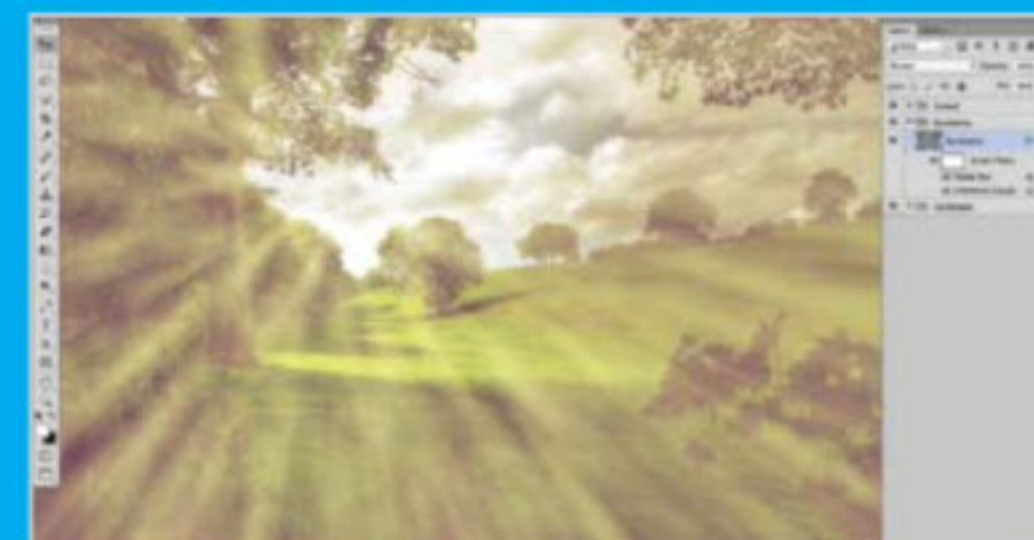
Start image

08 SUNBEAMS



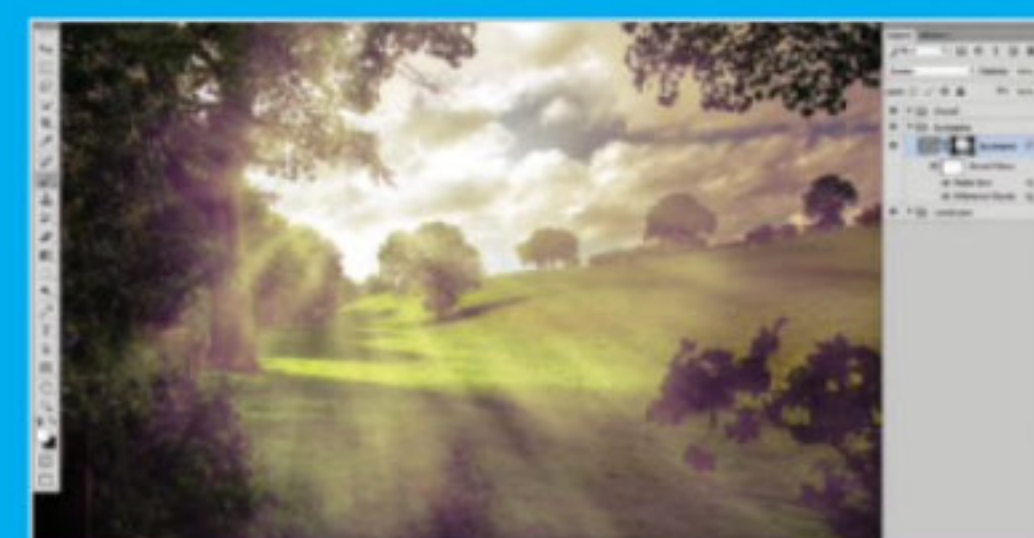
Choose Difference Clouds

01 Create a new layer. Go Edit>Fill, set Contents to Black. Click OK. For non-destructive edits, right-click the layer, choose Convert to Smart Object. Press D for default colours. Go to Filter>Render>Difference Clouds. Set blend mode to Screen.



Select Radial Blur

02 Go to Filter>Blur>Radial Blur. Set Amount: 100, Blur Method: Zoom, Quality: Good. Set Blur Center to the right. This will be the origin point for the sunbeams. Since we're using a Smart Object, we can edit this later if needed. Click OK.



Draw sunbeams

03 Hold Option/Alt, click the layer mask button. Select a soft round brush. Set Foreground to white. Starting at a low opacity, paint the beams. Build to higher opacities. Paint with black to remove excess.

07 LIGHT LEAKS

Adding light leaks is in vogue, especially within the context of vintage and retro styles. Adding these is really quite easy. Create a new layer above and change the blend mode to Screen. Start painting colour with a soft-edged brush.

09 SHADOWS

Just like most tasks in Photoshop, adding shadows and darkening parts of an image can be done in a number of ways. Here we've introduced a dark shade using a Color Fill layer above set to Color Burn, darkening and intensifying the blues. We inverted the mask by clicking on it and pressing Cmd/Ctrl+I. We then painted back with white using a soft-edged brush to apply.



COLOR BURNS

These Color Fill layers are set to Color Burn to both darken and intensify areas of the water and sky.

10 RE-COLOURING

COLOR MODE

Create a blank layer above the layer you want to re-colour. Set to the Color blend mode. Simply paint to re-colour.

COLOR FILL ALTERNATIVE

Create a Color Fill layer, set to Color blend mode, invert the mask (Cmd/Ctrl+I). Now paint with white to apply.

LIGHTEN MODES

Paint with lighten blend modes like Lighten and Screen to add basic glows. Color Dodge, though tricky, can add fabulous glares.

Start image

11 GLOWS

Glow effects are applicable in a variety of settings. Adding anything from subtle glows in a UI design to ethereal illumination in a fantasy painting can help elevate the mood and atmosphere. Painting with blend modes from the lighten family is a great way to start incorporating glows in your work, since the glows are lighter than the base. You can then work with the darken and contrast modes to diversify the effects. Keep colours on separate layers to make it easier to backtrack and adjust.

12 BOKEH

Bokeh shots are everywhere in design and photography. While there are a good number of stock photo options, sometimes you simply just want to add the effect to an existing image. Start creating a bokeh brush by choosing a basic round brush and setting both Hardness and Spacing to 100%. In Shape Dynamics, increase Size Jitter. Adjust the Scattering settings, and under Color Dynamics, increase Foreground/Background Jitter. When satisfied, save your brush.

Start image

OTHER MODES

Continue building up using other modes, including darken modes like Color Burn, and contrast modes like Overlay and Linear Light.

20 INCREDIBLE WAYS TO USE BRUSHES

FUN EFFECTS

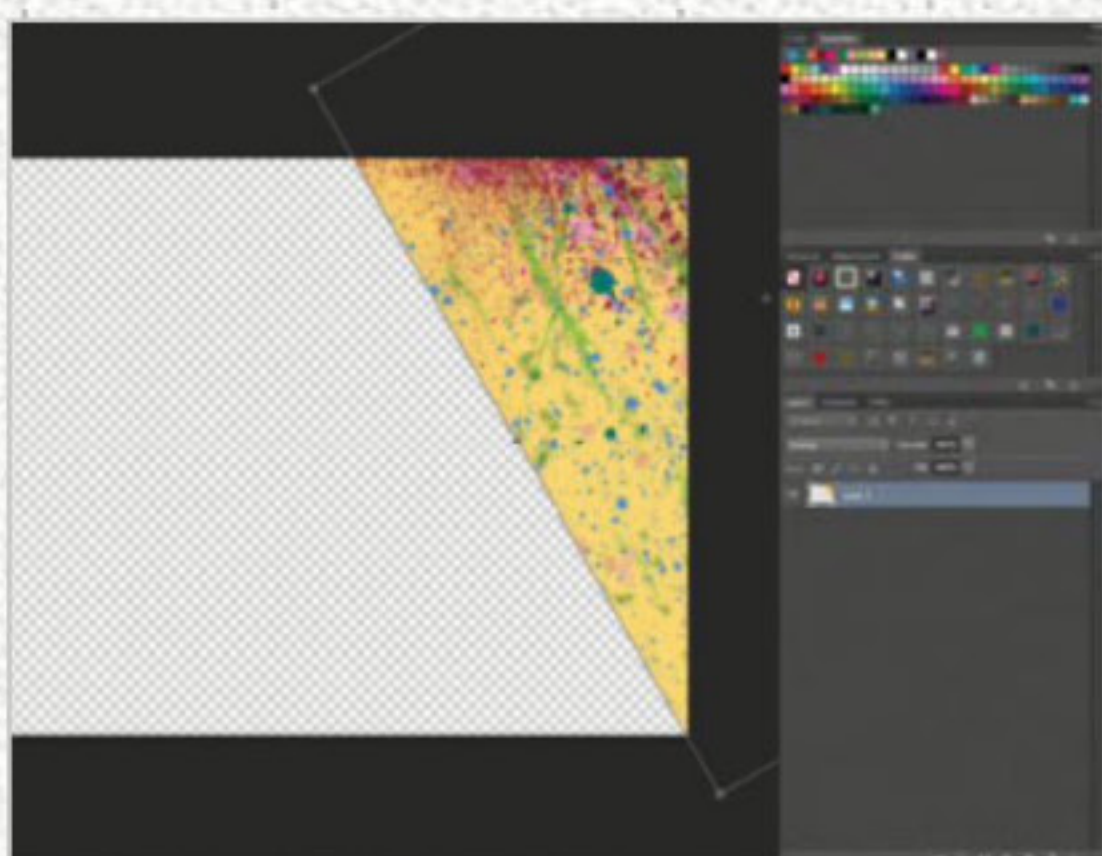
With the power of Photoshop's brushes you can create all kinds of fun effects, from adding elements to an image to creating cool text styles. Creating effects using brushes is fun and easy. Brushes are a very powerful tool and once you learn how and when to use them you will improve your productivity and efficiency at the same time. The effects that you can create from brushes are unlimited, so it's a skill that can always be developed further.

USE STARS TO LIGHTEN A SKY

Add a touch of romance to night shots by using the star brush to light up the sky with stars.

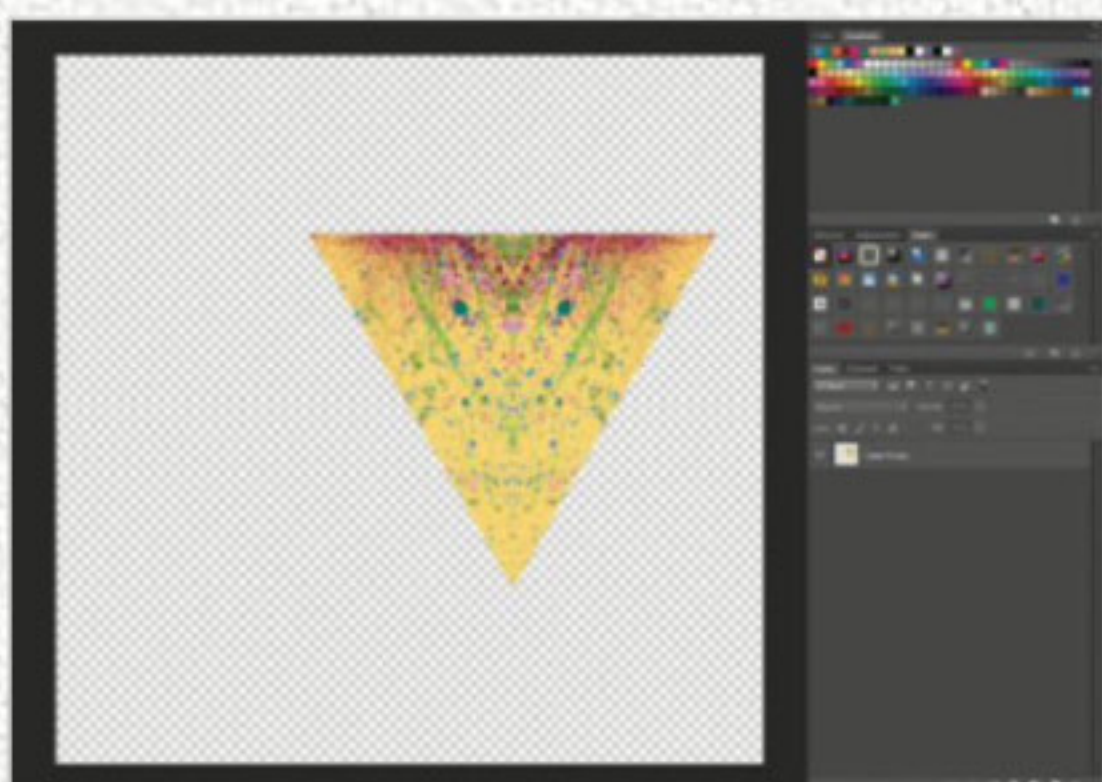


13 CREATE A KALEIDOSCOPE



Create a texture

01 Create a new landscape A4 document and using different brushes, start to paint over the canvas, using a combination of different colours with different brushes. Go to Edit>Free Transform and rotate the layer to 60 degrees. Position it over one corner of the canvas, making sure one side of the image's sides crosses two sides of the canvas.



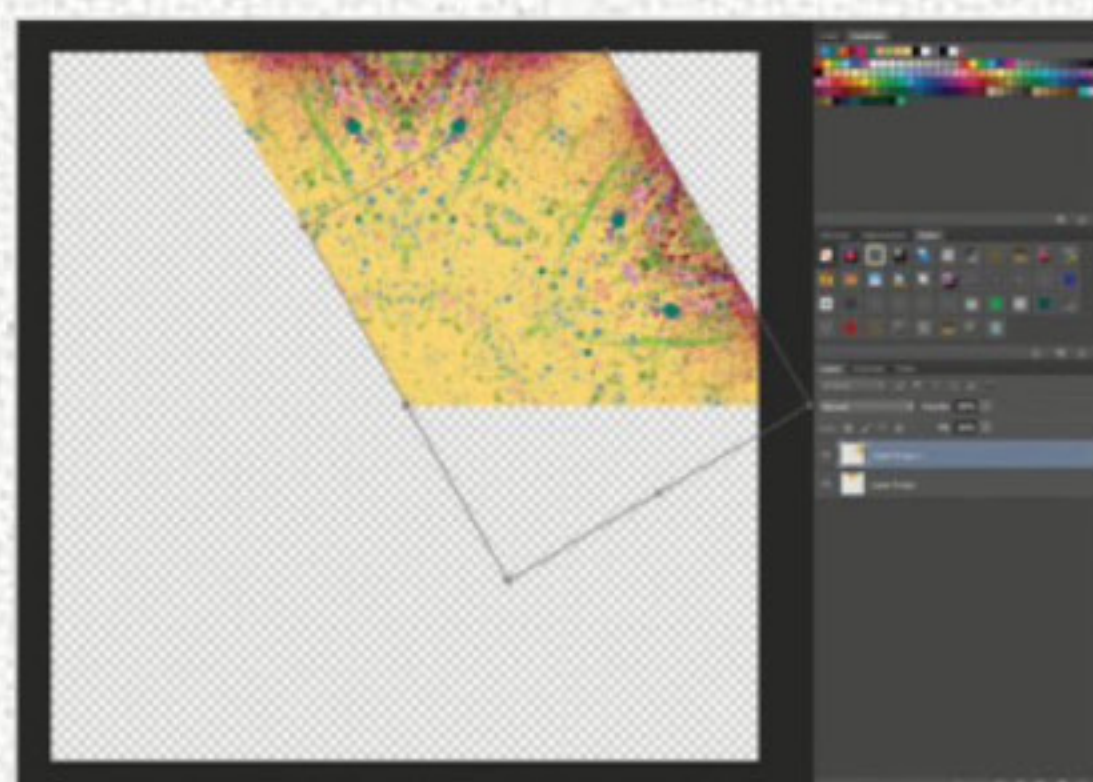
Duplicate the layer

02 Go to Image>Trim and trim the transparent pixels. Go to Image>Canvas Size and make the canvas 5000 pixels x 5000 pixels. Duplicate the layer and go to Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontally. Move the new layer to the right so it lines up with the previous layer. Select both layers and merge them together (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+E).

14 MAKE PIXEL TYPE

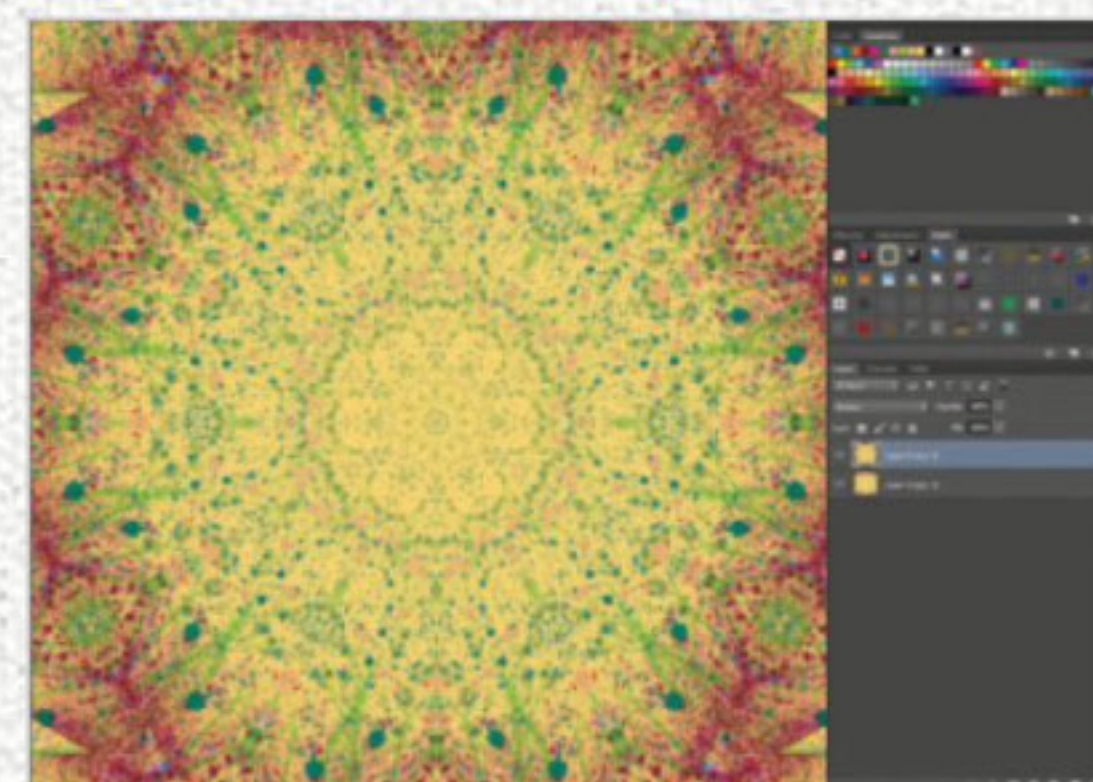
There are millions of ways to arrange and design text; only be limited by your imagination. With the Brush tool, you can easily create an awesome custom text effect. Creating something new from just using brushes is very satisfying and it's also unique. Create a new document and select a brush and colour of your choosing. Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+shift+N) and start to draw out the letters to create your custom font.

PHOTOSHOP



Repeat the process

03 Move the merged layers to the top of the canvas and duplicate (Cmd/Ctrl+J) this merged layer, select the top layer and choose Edit>Free Transform. Select the middle-bottom of the 9-point grid to fix the point around which the shape rotates. Set the Rotation to 60 degrees. Press Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Option+Shift+T four times to copy and redo the effect.



Change blend modes

04 Repeat the last step until the canvas is full. For an added effect, merge all the layers together and duplicate them (Cmd/Ctrl+J). Go to Edit>Free Transform and resize the bottom layer to 150% and rotate it by 90 degrees. Set the blend mode to Darken. Repeat steps 1-4 using different brushes and colours to add interest to the overall effect.



I spy with my
little eye **domains**
ending in...

.black .buzz

.care .club

.guru .ink

.host .london

.ninja .party

.press .rocks

.science .social

.website .wiki



Think
Different
Think
Context
Think
Available

15 ADD STARS

Brushes are great for adding details to an image, for example adding a starry night. Open the 'Night Sky.jpg' image and create a new layer. Load up the star brush and select a colour of your choice; bright is best. Click once on the layer to add a large star. You can add multiple stars if you wish, or change the colour to vary the stars.

16 APPLY SCATTERING

You can use the same star brush to scatter lots of small stars on images. Set the Brush Size to 60, tick Shape Dynamics, Size Jitter: 100%, now tick Scattering. In the Scattering settings, use 500% for Scattering. Tick the Transfer option and use 50% for the Opacity Jitter. Create a new layer and paint to add small stars.

17 WRITE A SIGNATURE

Create a new document using a size of 500 pixels wide and 200 pixel high with a white background. Use the Type tool and type out your name in black. Flatten the image and select all, go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Now you can add this signature brush to any image.

Stewart Wood

18 USE DUAL BRUSHES

Dual brushes are very interesting in that they add a new level to the effects that can be done. Dual brushes let you use a brush within a brush. The main brush will act as a mask for the second brush that you define in the Dual Brush settings. Open the Brush palette and select any brush. Click on the Dual Brush option. You can then choose another brush that will paint inside of the main brush.



MAKE BRUSHES & TEXTURES

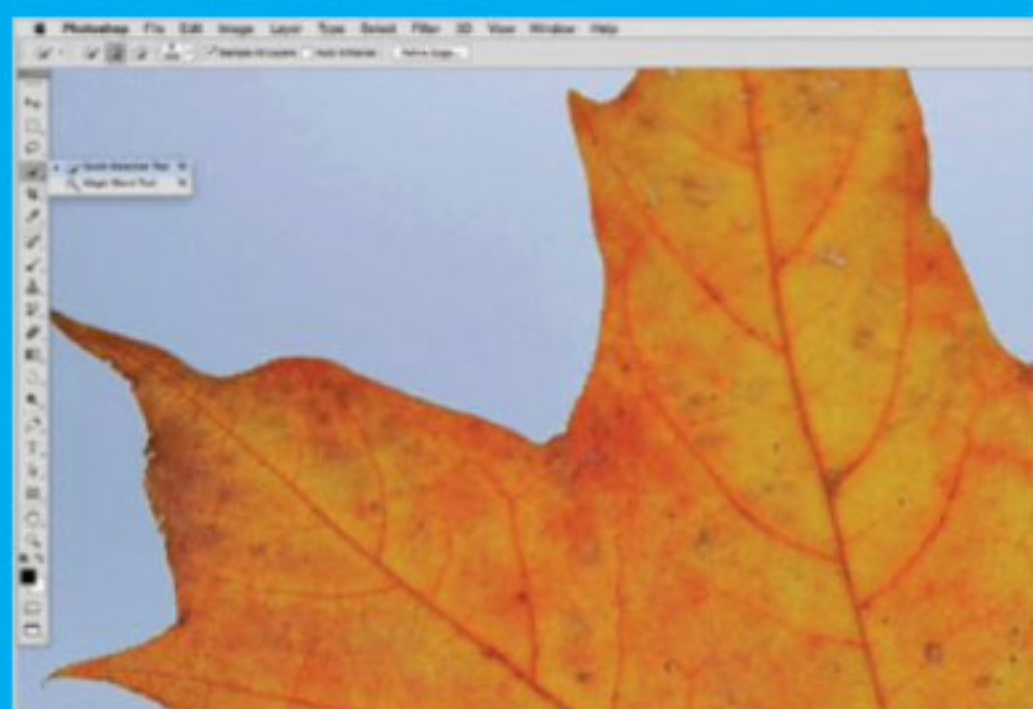
Once you start exploring Photoshop's Brush palette, you will find yourself in a limitless realm of creativity where each brush is editable via a dizzying array of settings. There are also countless brush packs available online (search for 'Photoshop brushes'). If all of this isn't enough and you want something more bespoke, you can create your own brushes, either inside Photoshop or through the sweet Adobe Brush app.



APPLY THE BRUSH

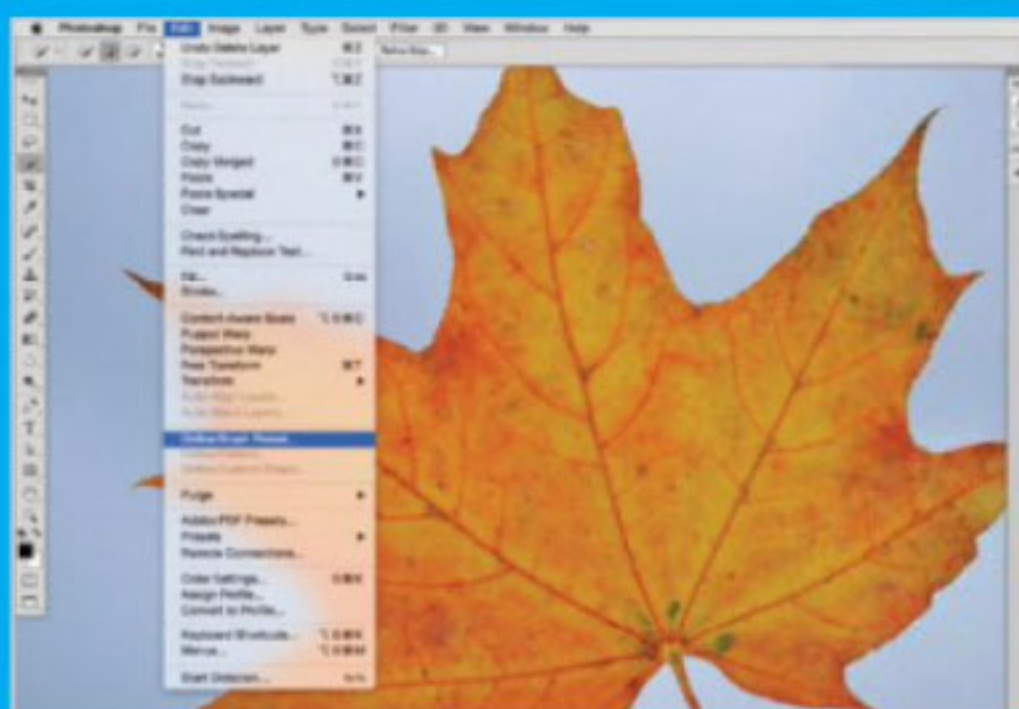
The leaf brush can be applied to any project in order to create stunning effects, like the one created here.

19 TURN IMAGES INTO BRUSHES



Make selection

01 To create a brush from an object in a photo, you'll have to first remove the surrounding area. We start with a photo of a leaf atop a simple background. Use the Quick Selection tool to click and drag on the leaf to select it. Use the Zoom tool to get up close if you want to see the edges better.



Create brush preset

02 You can use the [and] keys to resize the Quick Selection tool. When the selection is finished, go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. In the Brush Name dialog, name your brush and click OK. Your new brush is now saved in Presets. Select the Brush tool and you'll see the cursor change to the leaf shape.



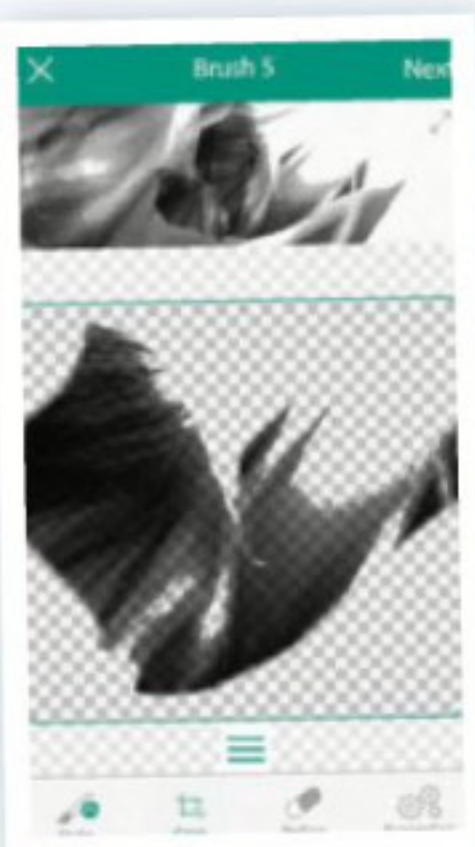
Adjust brush settings

03 Select the Brush tool. Press F5 to bring up the Brush palette. Play around with the settings to create the perfect brush for your project. When you see a setting with the word Jitter, it signifies something that can be randomised, which can usually give a brush some welcome character.

EXPERT TIP

Use the Adobe Brush app

Create and play with brushes while on the go with the free Adobe Brush app, available for iPhone and iPad. Create a brush based on a photo in your Camera Roll, or snap a new photo directly from within the app. You can also grab something from your Creative Cloud files or browse the Market. Once you have a photo, crop, refine, and adjust properties. Test the brush in the preview area, which can be maximised. When satisfied, save it. You can now access the brush from the Photoshop Libraries palette.



USE REAL PAINT SPLATTERS



Prepare

01 Remember that brushes can be a maximum of 2500 pixels by 2500 pixels, so ensure that the area of the brush shape falls within those dimensions. Always keep the size as large as possible – your current project may not need such a substantial brush, but your next project might.

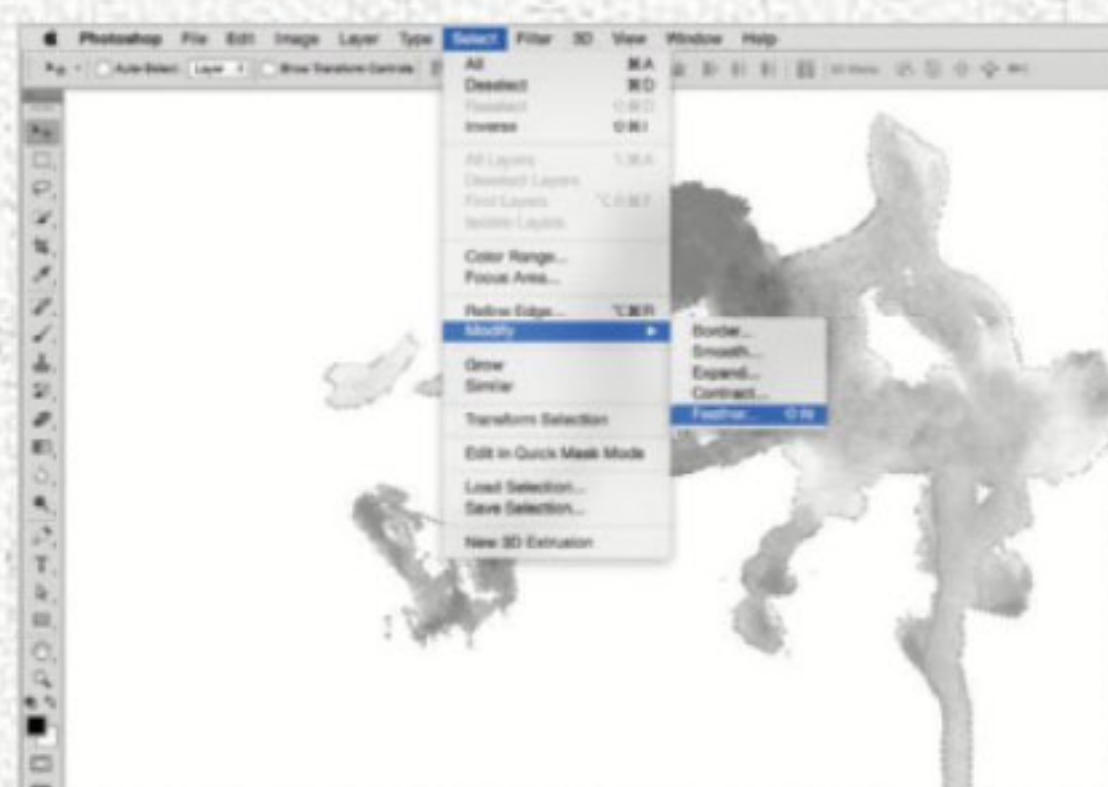


Convert to grayscale

02 Colour will be converted to grayscale, so if you would like to have a better idea of how the brush will look, you can convert to grayscale. It's advisable to save a separate document just for the brush. Go to File>Save As, and choose a different filename. Then, go to Image>Mode>Grayscale.

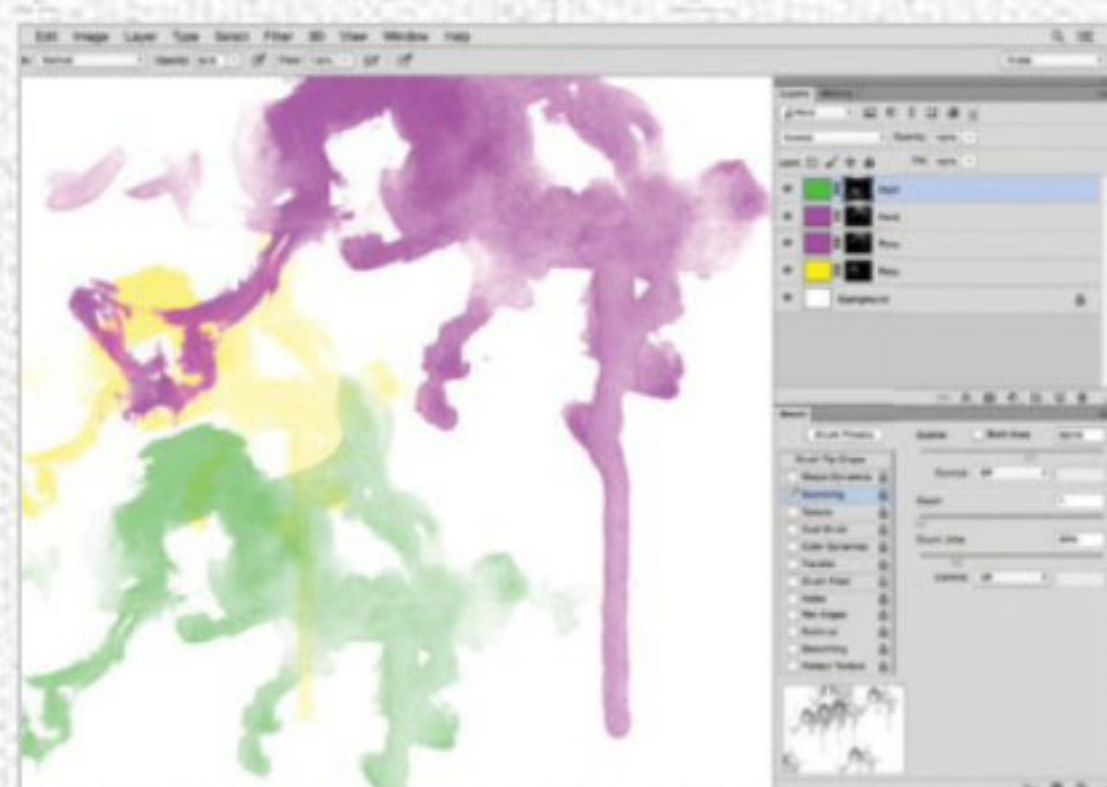
20 ADD TEXTURES

Textures



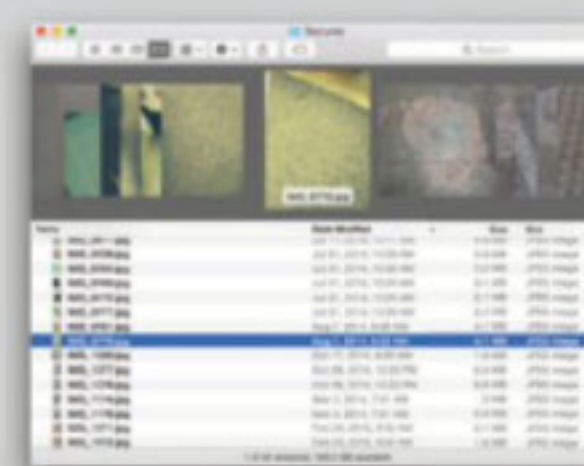
Make selection

03 Use a selection tool, such as the Quick Selection, to select the area you want to turn into a brush. With sampled brushes, you can't adjust Hardness. So if you want a soft-edged brush, apply an appropriate amount of feathering via Select>Modify>Feather. For crisp-edged brushes, don't apply any feathering.



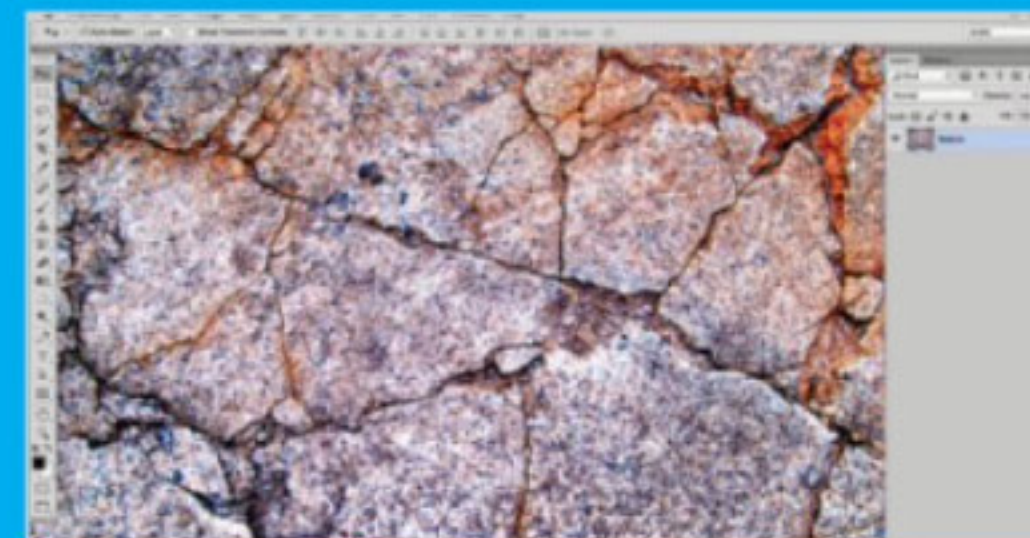
Create brush

04 Once you finalise the selection, go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Name your brush in the subsequent dialog, then click OK. At this point you can start brushing away with your new brush, or you can edit its properties in the Brush palette. If you edit it, save it by going to New Brush Preset from the Brush palette menu.



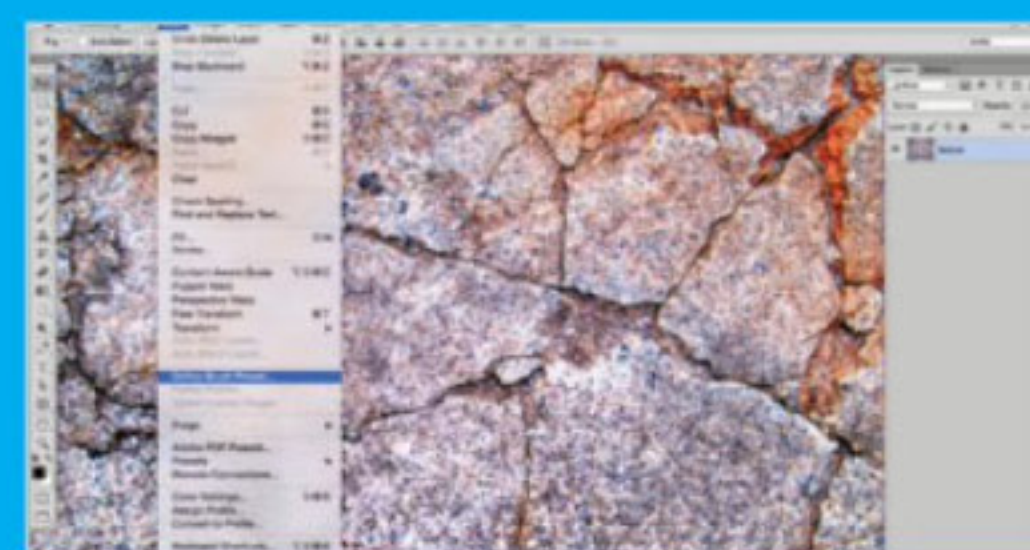
Find texture

01 When preparing texture brushes, search for photos that have the desired texture. Do you need spots, cracks, or grunge? Grab photos from Pixabay.com, or snap your own. Ideal photos will have the texture you want as a unique colour or tone which you can easily select.



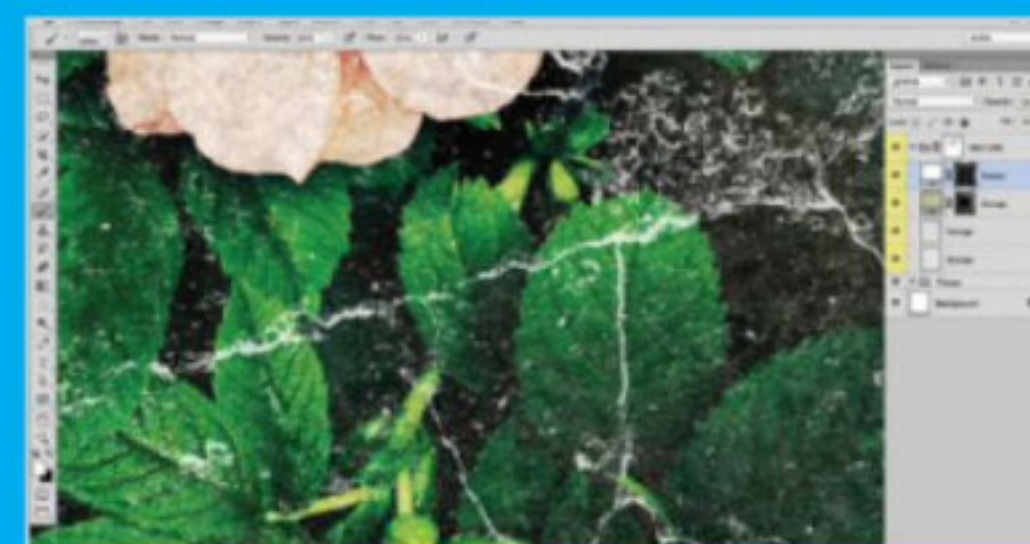
Use Color Range

02 With the photo open, go to Select>Color Range. Click on the area of the image you want to sample. Use the Fuzziness slider to increase or decrease the selection range. Click OK. You'll return to the document with the selection active. You can continue to refine with a selection tool if needed.



Create brush

03 Once you've finalised the selection, go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Name the brush, click OK. To edit the brush's properties, make sure the Brush tool is selected, then go to the Brush palette. If you make changes, save by choosing New Brush Preset from the Brush palette menu.



Add texture

04 Open the image to decorate with texture. Create a new layer above, then ensure the Brush tool is selected, and that your brush preset is chosen. Set the Foreground colour. Adjust brush settings in the Options bar. For the most part, you will want to apply these textures with one click instead of a brushing motion.

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied file

Essentials

Works with



What you'll learn

Use different settings to make a Pointillist portrait with the Brush tool

Time taken
45 mins

Expert

Jenni Sanders



"Photoshop's most basic and maybe most used tool is the Brush tool. But do you use it to its full potential? It is capable of amazing results and I always love exploring the Brush tools and settings, playing around and seeing what new effects I can find."

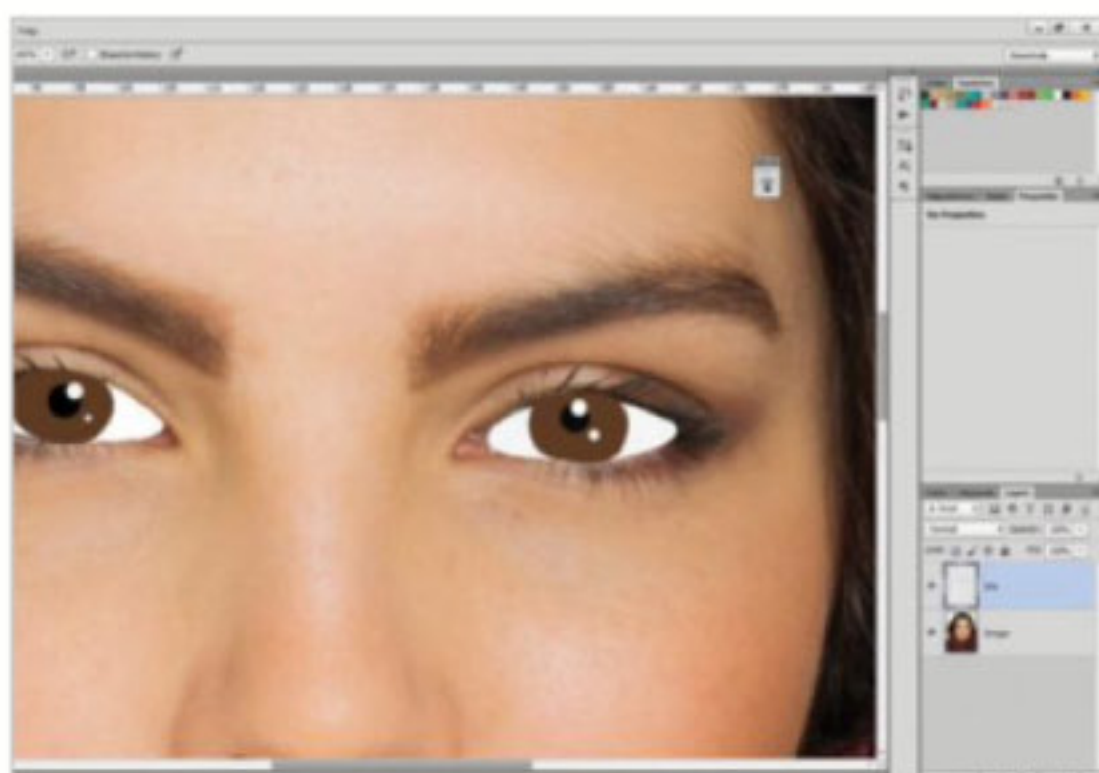
"From the moment I saw my dad manipulate photos as a child, I was hooked and have since worked entirely within the industry of photography and Photoshop."

Paint an abstract portrait

Turn an ordinary portrait into a colourful and abstract Pointillist image using only the paint brush

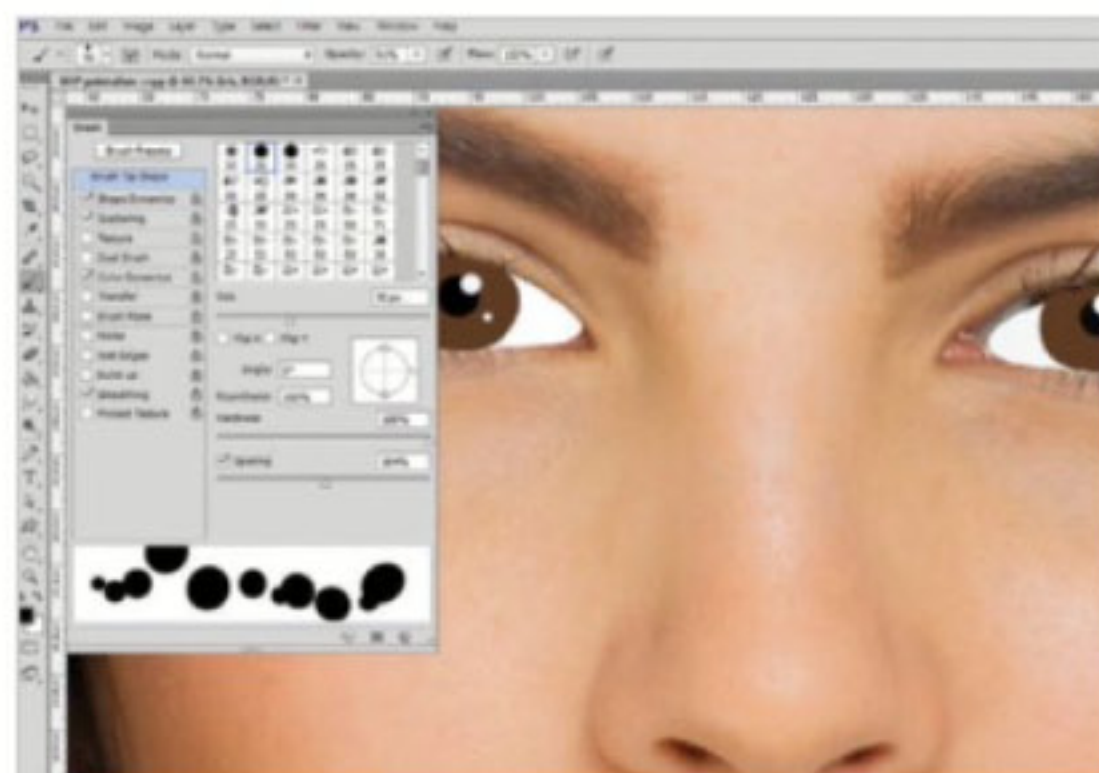
There are a lot of ways to cheat in Photoshop, and one of my favourites is using the Brush tool options. These are found by clicking the icon that looks like a pot of brushes, or going to Window>Brush. This palette will allow you to manipulate the Brush in all sorts of fun ways, but this tutorial will concentrate on Spacing, Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics. Using these together allows for a random appearance of brush strokes, without the need to draw each circle individually. Using this technique will help capture

the Pointillist style of a portrait drawn using dots of varying size and colour. Throughout the tutorial, you'll be adjusting the strength of each adjustment depending on which area you're working on, so it's recommended to keep the Brush window open on your interface to allow for quick access. Remember that this portrait is going to be abstract, so details don't have to be perfect and don't be worried when the Scattering adds an erroneous circle a bit too far away. It will take a few attempts to get each section perfect, but there's always the Eraser!



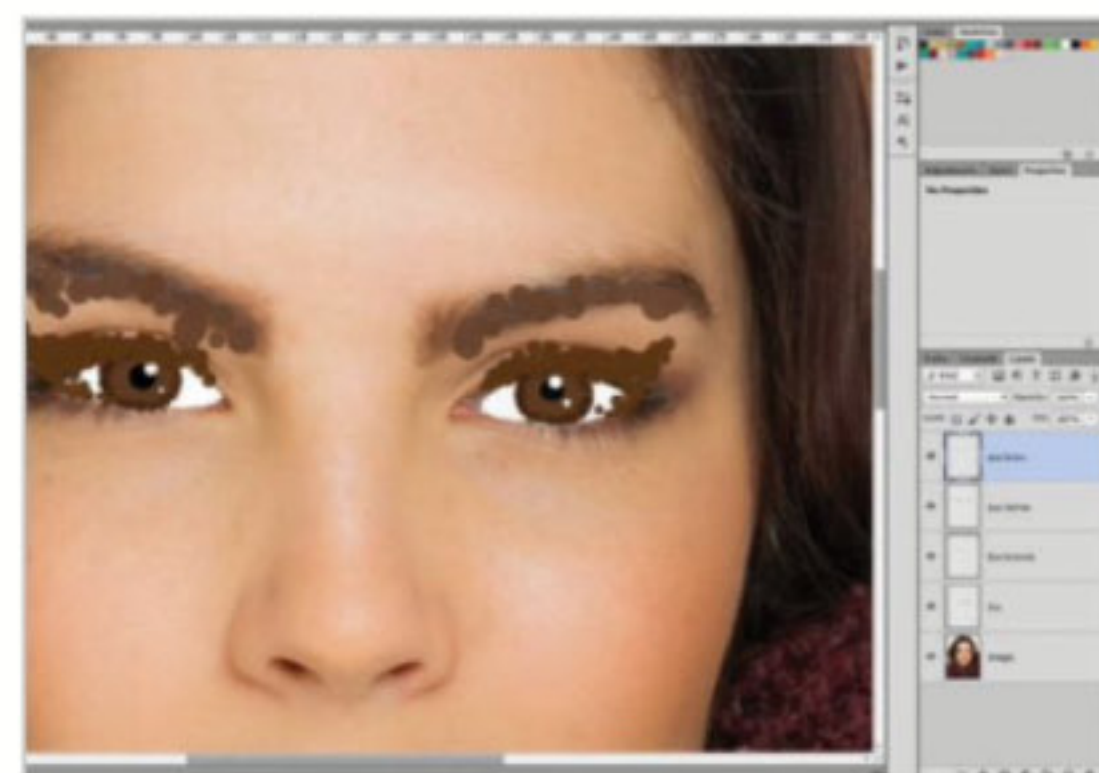
Begin to paint

01 Open up 'pointalist-portrait.jpg' and create a new layer with Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+N. Select the Brush (B), Hardness: 100%. Use the Eye Dropper (I) to grab brown from her eyes, and on the new layer, draw in new irises, then add pupils and shines.



Set up the Brush

02 To give the rest of the portrait a random feel, we're going to use Brush Dynamics. With the Brush selected, open the Brush palette. Select the Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics options. Look at the Expert tip for more info.



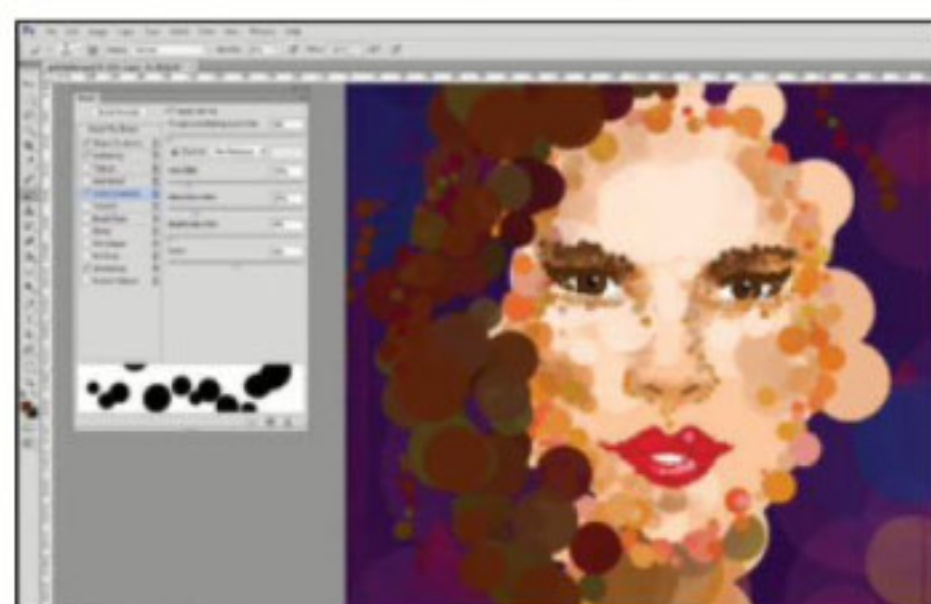
Add eye details

03 Create a new layer, and using a brush with light Scattering and slight Hue Jitter, draw a line for eyebrows in brown. Repeat on the other side. Now select a slightly darker brown colour, unselect Color Dynamics and draw in eyelashes.



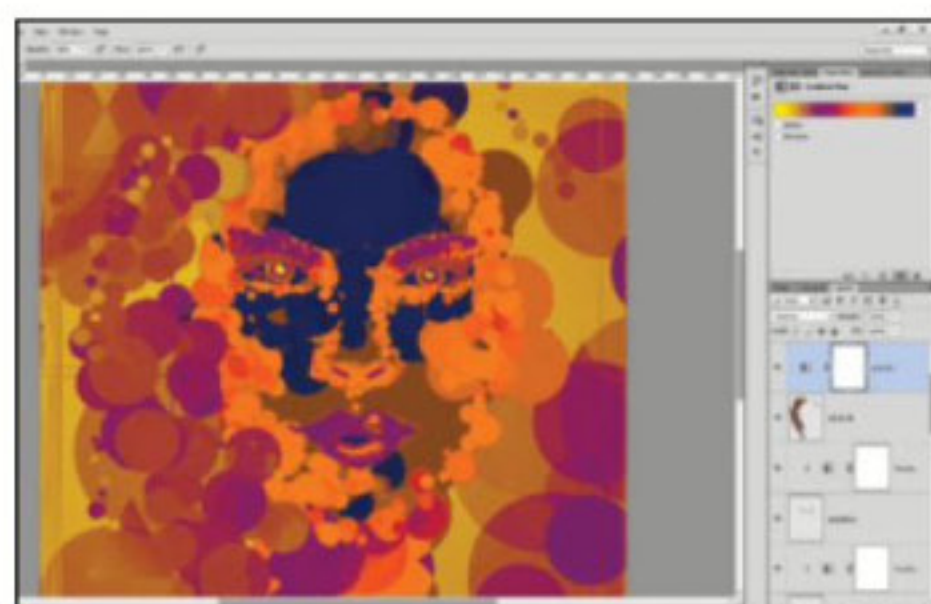
Expert edit

Gradient Mapping



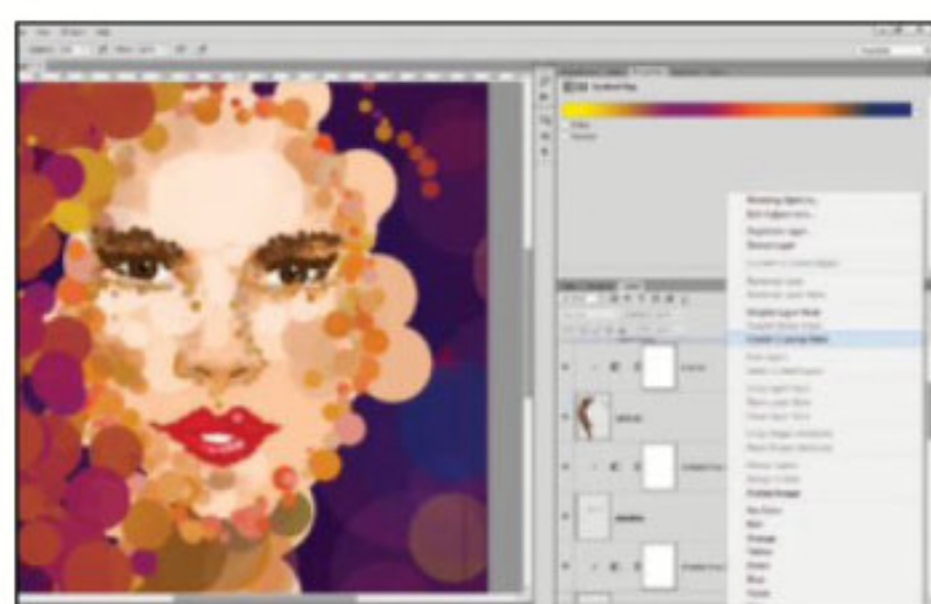
Create the layer

01 Create the layer you want to affect, for example the hair in this tutorial. Make sure you add some colour variance for the effect to work.



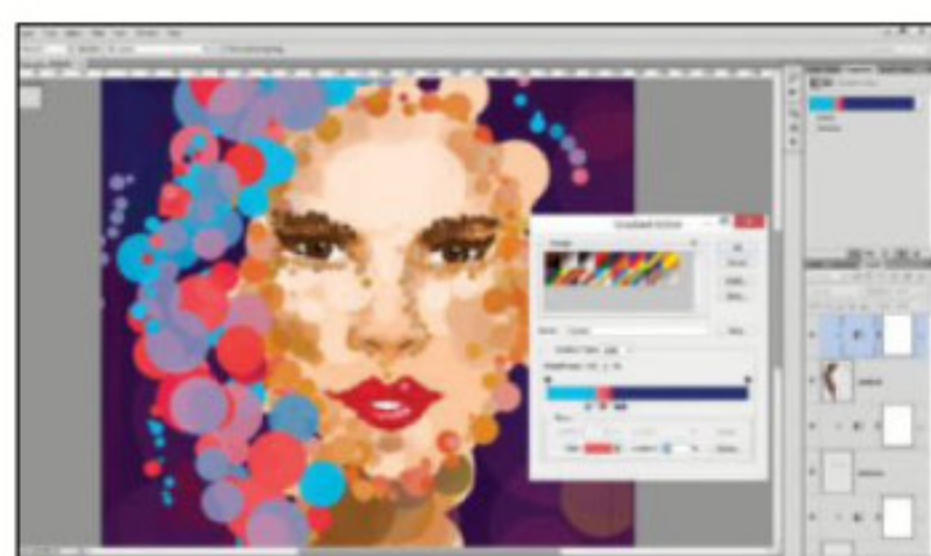
Add the gradient

02 Add a gradient map from Layers>Adjustment Layers>Gradient Map. Choose a preset or create your own colour scheme. It will affect any layers underneath.



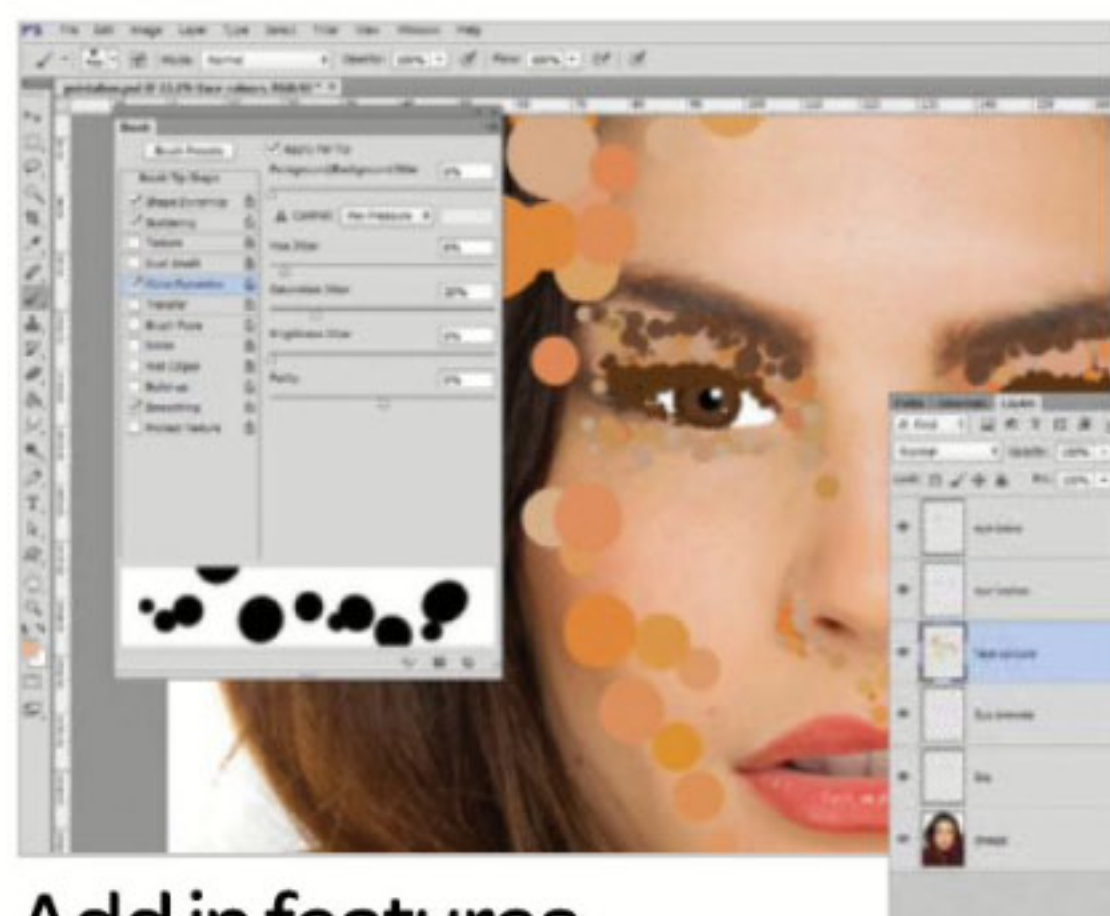
Control the map

03 Keep your gradient selective by simply placing the Map layer above the layer you want to affect. Right-click and select Create Clipping Mask. Clip to multiple layers by grouping them.



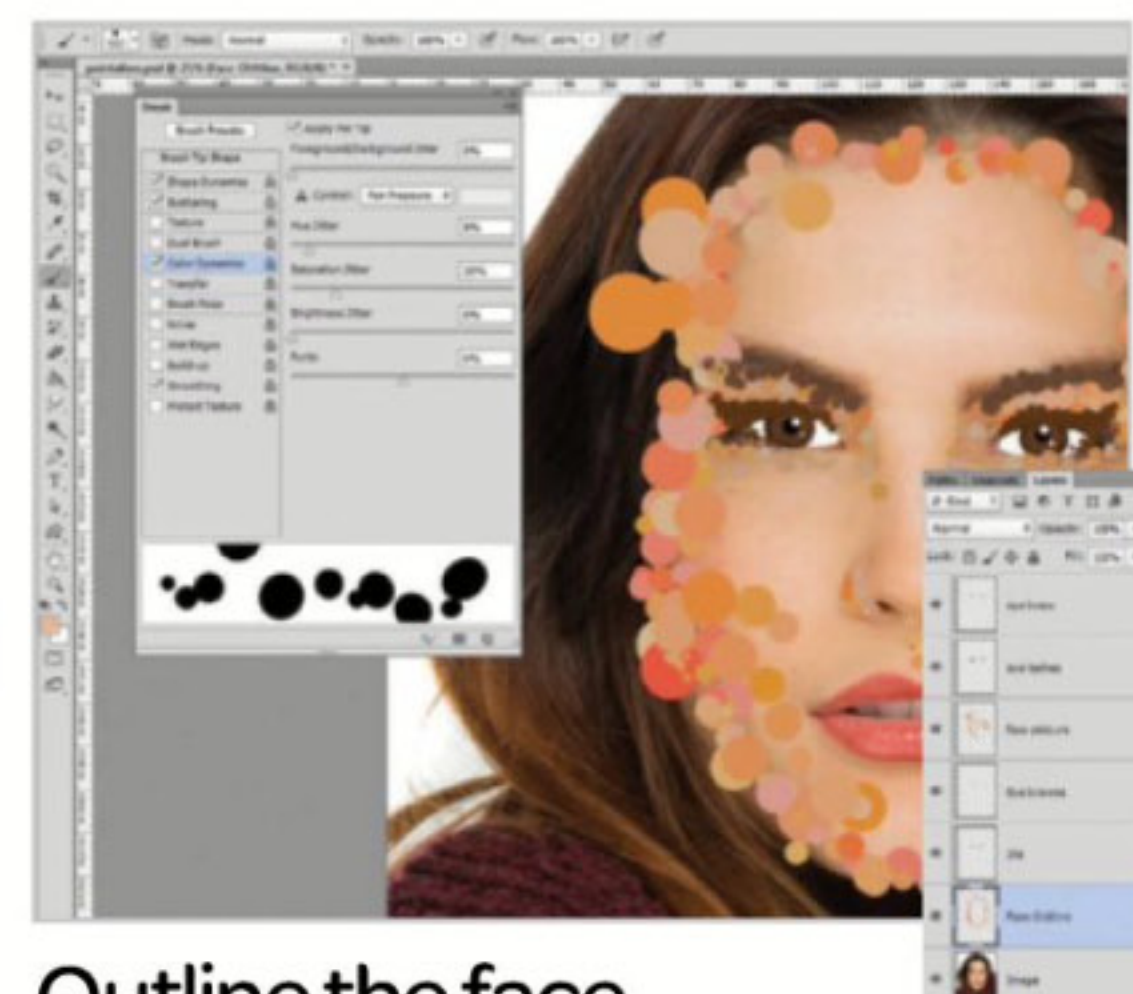
Adjust your colours

04 By using an adjustment layer, you can change the colours at any time by double-clicking the gradient map and making tweaks or applying a completely new gradient!



Add in features

04 Adjust the settings to add back a stronger Hue Jitter, and decrease the brush size. Create a new layer and begin to paint with browns around the eyes, and down the edges of the nose. Keep lines simple, adding breaks to create the suggestion of shapes.



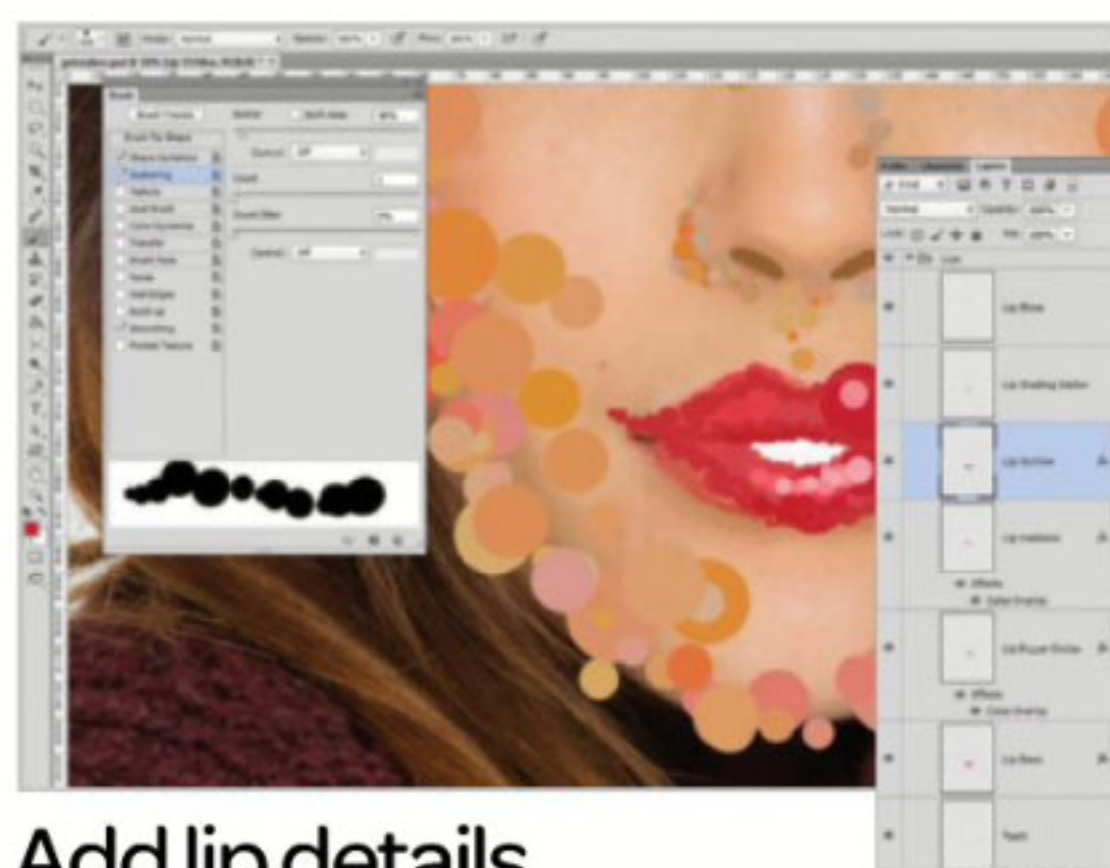
Outline the face

05 Increase your brush size and add a larger outline to her whole face, using the Size Jitter, Spacing and Hue to create a random effect. Draw in cheekbones with one or two circles, and create the shape of her chin.



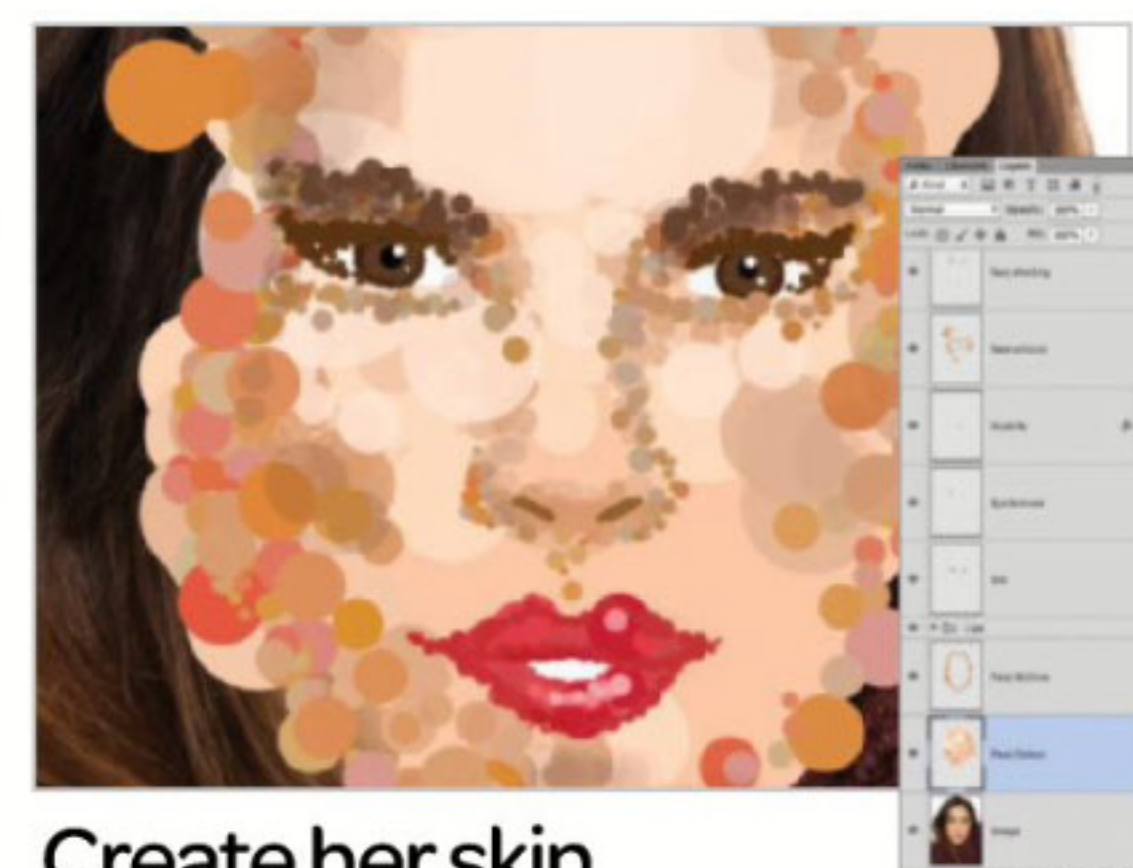
Draw the lips

06 Create a new layer. Use a red paint brush, no dynamics selected, to draw lips. On a layer above, use a darker brush with light Scattering to gently add an outline. On another new layer, add some lighter details to give the impression of a shine.



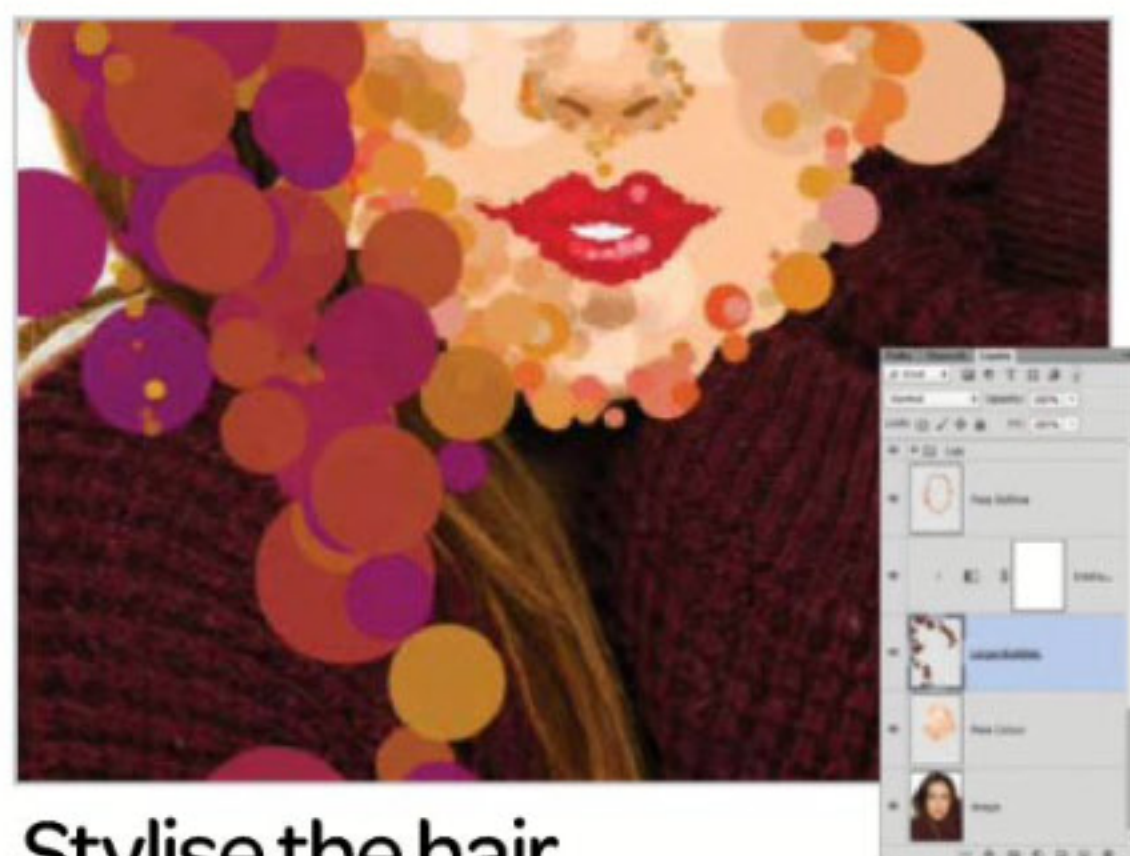
Add lip details

07 Now add a layer just above the base red, so it's underneath the lighter and darker layers. Use different shades of pink/red, and add circles one at a time around the lips for more depth in the shading. This may take a few attempts in order to get things looking right.



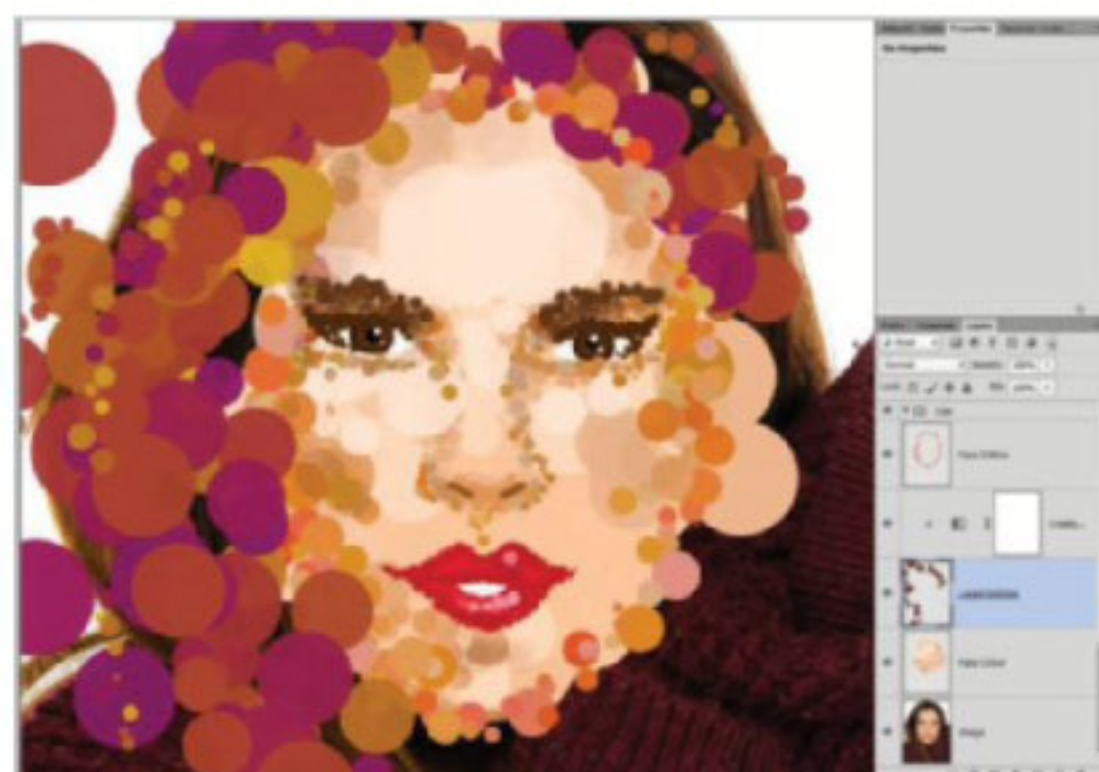
Create her skin

08 Create a new layer underneath all your painted layers so far. Make your brush large with a low Hue Jitter and moderate Scattering and Size Jitter. Use the Eyedropper (I) to choose a skin colour and begin to draw in skin. Add lighter tones to the forehead and cheekbones.



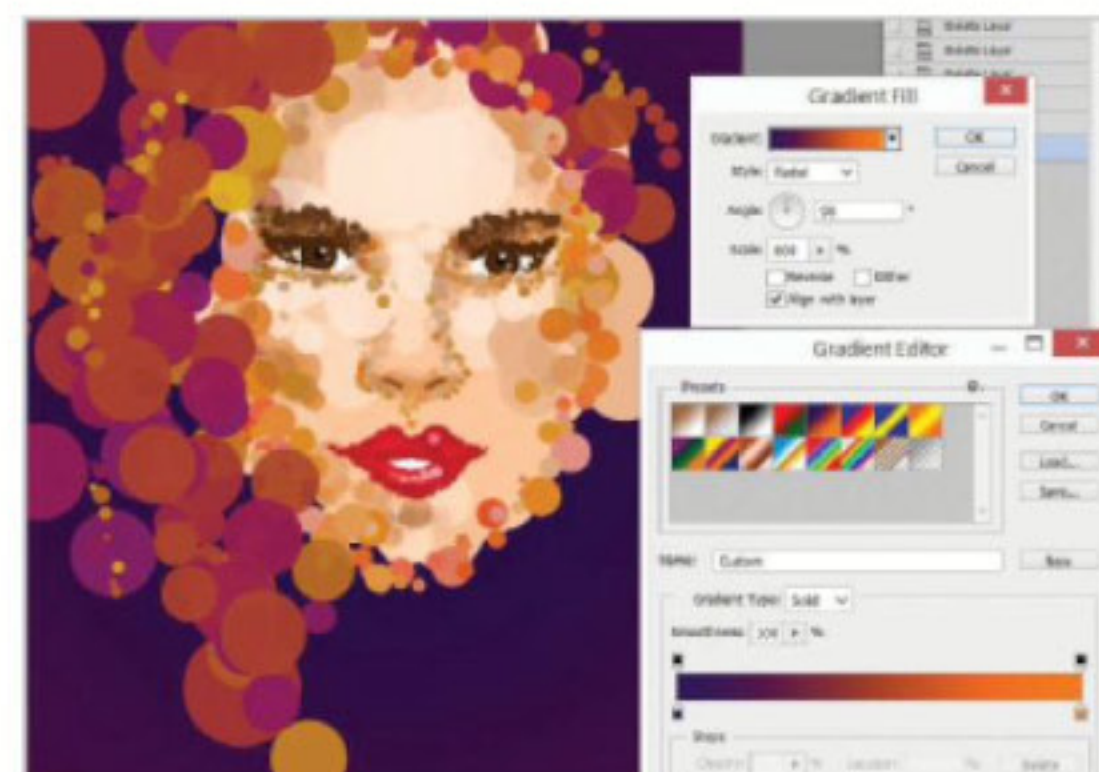
Stylise the hair

09 Select a dark brown with a Hue Jitter of around 10%. Draw a sweeping curve of hair around her face. Use large circles at first, and then add some smaller details more sparingly. Add a Gradient Map adjustment layer for more interesting colours. See the Expert Edit for more details.



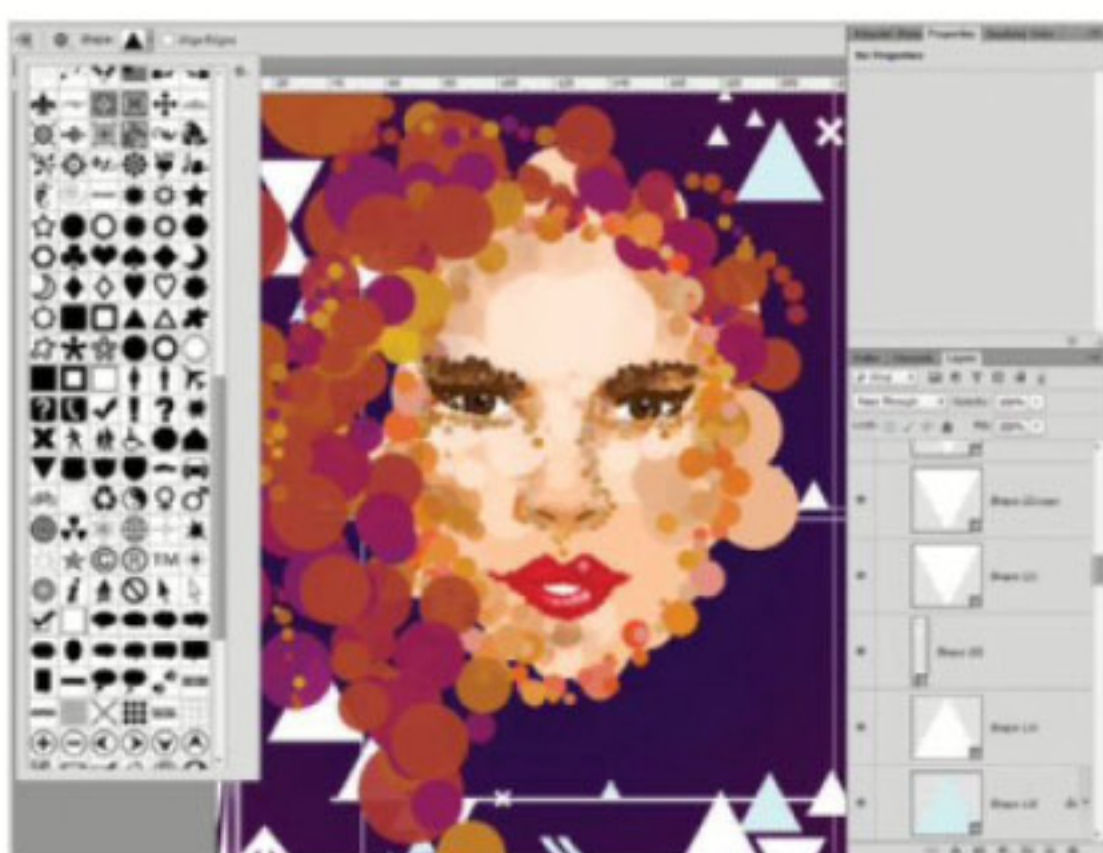
Add more volume

10 Create a new layer and add in some larger circles for more hair. Keep these circles looser around the hair shape of the original image, and again add a Gradient Map adjustment layer. On a separate layer, use larger, low-opacity circles to draw in an abstract neck and other circles.



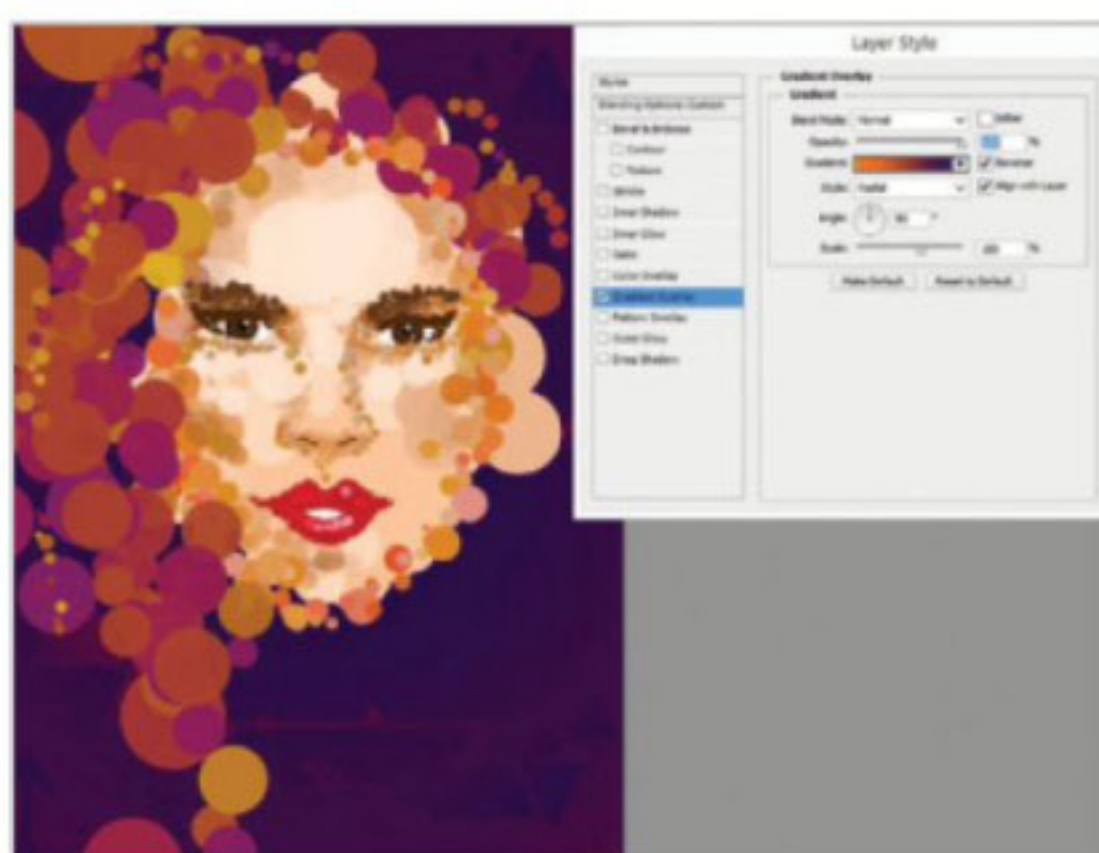
Create a background

11 Create a new gradient layer from Layer>New Fill Layer>Gradient. Drag it to be the very bottom layer of your image. Select the Dark Purple to Orange preset gradient, and set the style to Radial, Scale: 604%. Hit OK. Create a group called Background Shapes.



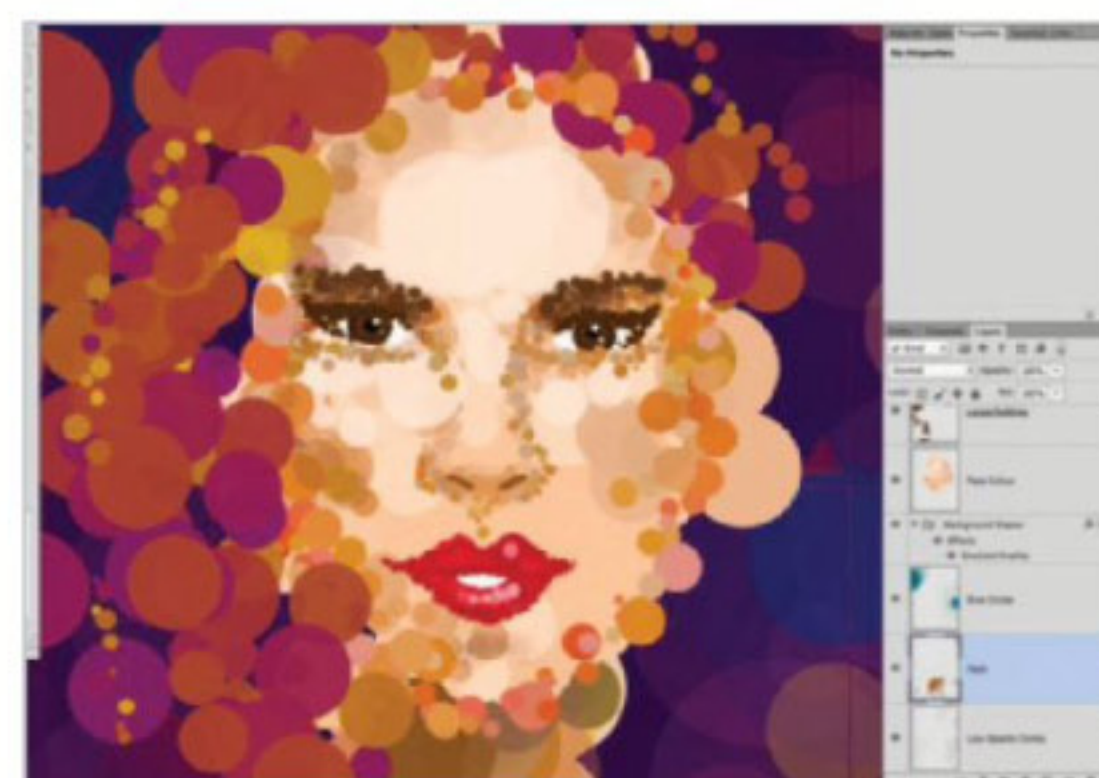
Add background shape

12 In your new group, begin using the Custom Shapes tool (U) to add a selection of lines, triangles and crosses to the background. Vary the size and angle of the shapes using Transform (Cmd/Ctrl+T) and for now, keep the shapes white.



Group Blending Options

13 Right-click the group containing your shapes, and click Blending Options. Add a Gradient Overlay. Add the same purple and orange gradient as before, set the style to Radial, but leave the Scale at 100%. Set the group's Opacity to 50%.



Add some final shapes

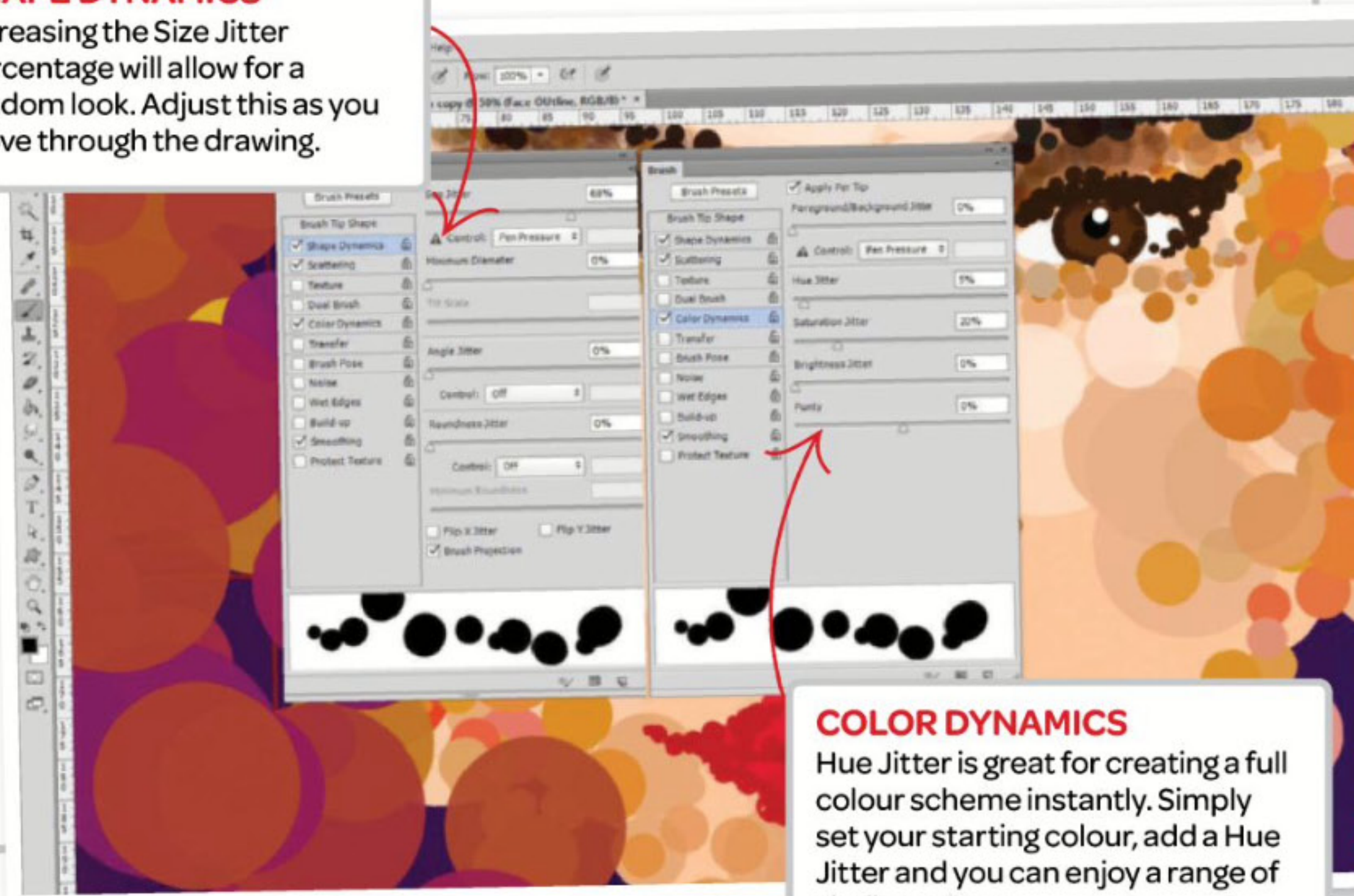
14 Grab the Brush tool again and on a new layer underneath the Background Shapes group, draw in some low opacity (10-15%) large circles. Use contrasting colour such as blue, and then some really low opacity (5%) circles in a lighter skin tone to finish off the background.

Expert tip Brush Dynamics

This tutorial makes use of three main settings in the Brush palette: Shape Dynamics, Scattering and Color Dynamics, as well as adding a 115% increase to the Spacing option from Brush Tip Shape. Inside Shape Dynamics, you'll tick Size Jitter, generally not going above 55% to avoid too much variance. Scattering will depend on which area of the image you're working on. For facial features, stick to a low value of 5-25%, but for large areas such as hair and the background, increase to around 100-150%. In Color Dynamics, increase Hue Jitter and Saturation Jitter. Again, lower the value in order to achieve a subtle effect.

SHAPE DYNAMICS

Increasing the Size Jitter percentage will allow for a random look. Adjust this as you move through the drawing.



COLOR DYNAMICS

Hue Jitter is great for creating a full colour scheme instantly. Simply set your starting colour, add a Hue Jitter and you can enjoy a range of similar colours.

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

How to use filters and masks to create a dream-like composition



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Daniel Sinoca



"I love creating surreal compositions mainly because it pushes my creative limits, especially when I have a blank canvas and all the Photoshop tools at my disposal. I started to get involved in the digital world more than 10 years ago, and have been working as a freelance artist ever since, creating all kinds of multimedia projects and tutorial guides."



Create surreal art with filters

Design a surreal scene by combining stock images and filter effects

The idea behind the Surrealism movement was to liberate the creative potential of the unconscious mind, for example by creating illogical and dream-like images. This tutorial is all about that. You'll unlock your inner creative potential to create a surreal road and travel around space using Photoshop's tools.

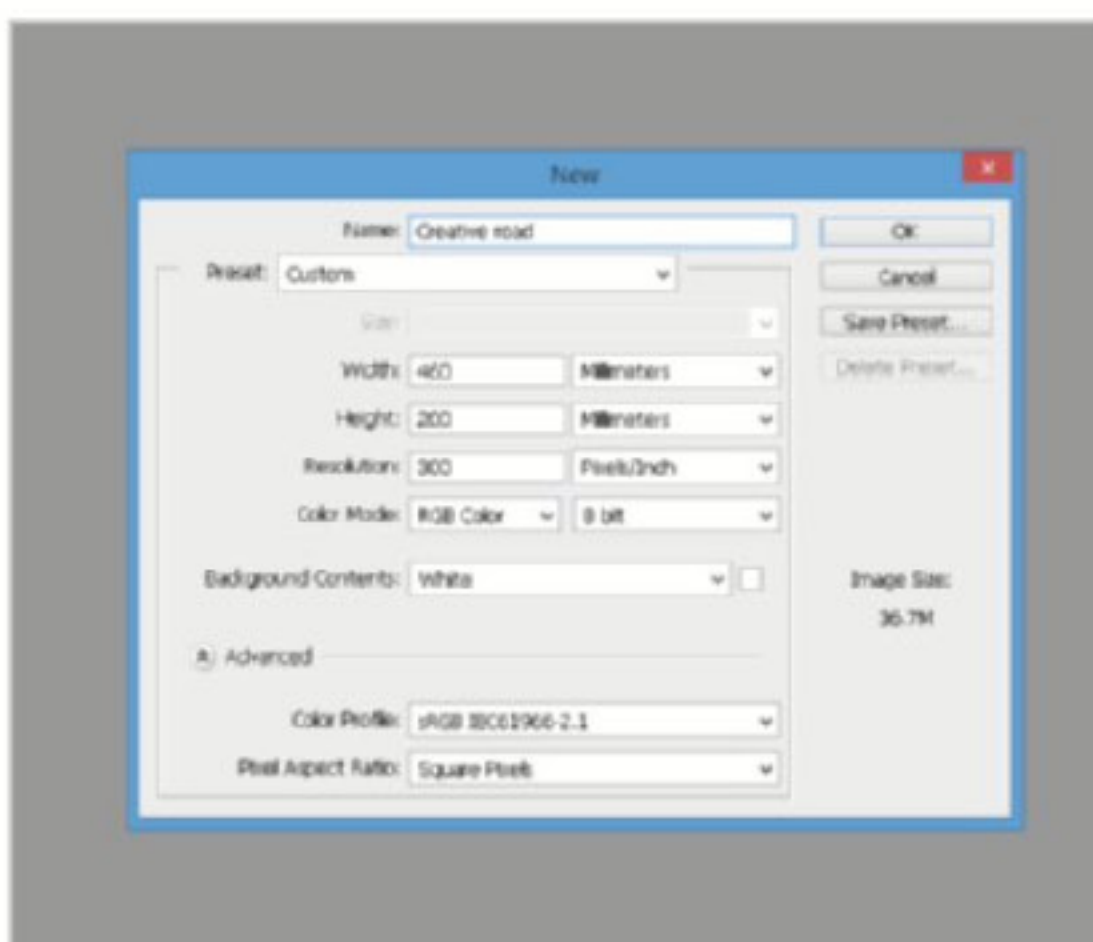
Learn how to create a fantastic space scene using filters and layer styles, and master simple

techniques, such as gradients, masks and the Warp tool to create a dreamy composition. We'll use layer masks, which are undoubtedly one of the most important features in Photoshop. Although they are commonly used to hide or reveal areas of a layer, we can paint with shades of grey to partially hide some areas. Another technique is using adjustment layers to make colour correction or tonal changes in any image.



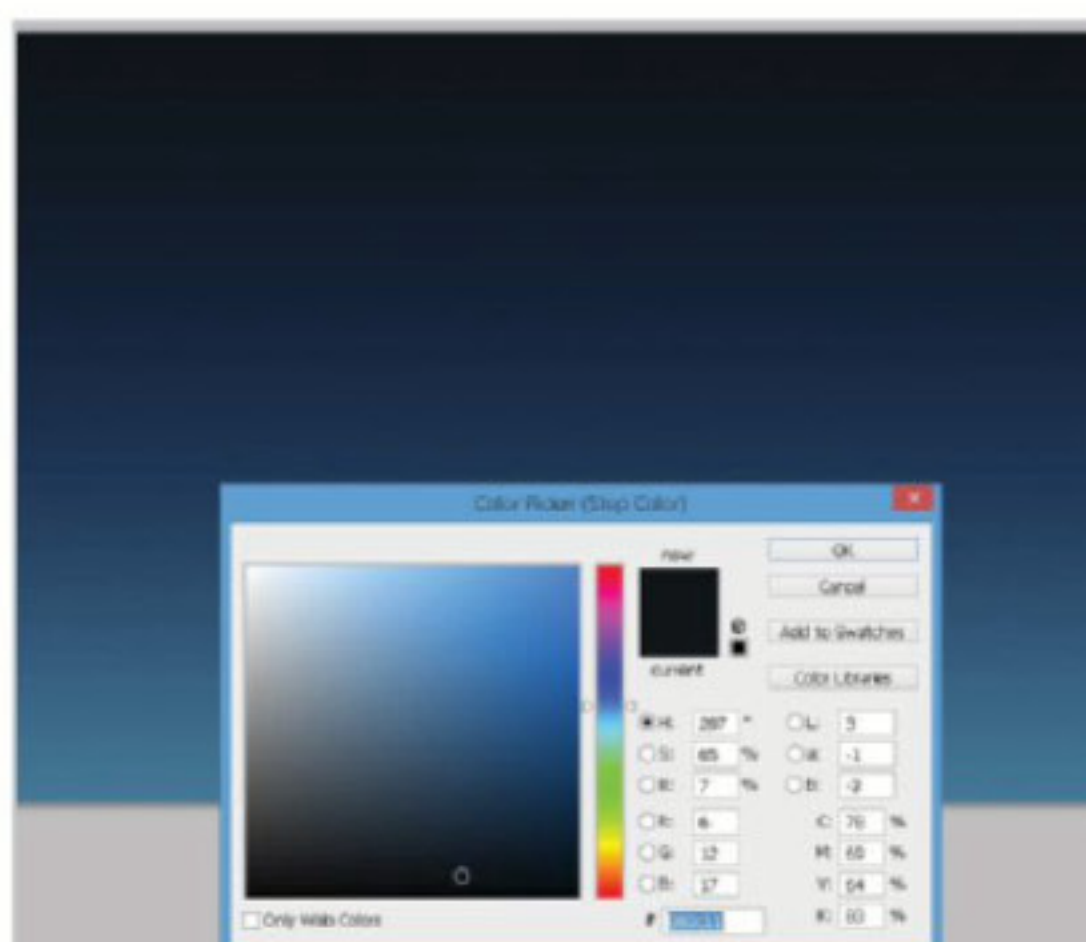
On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files



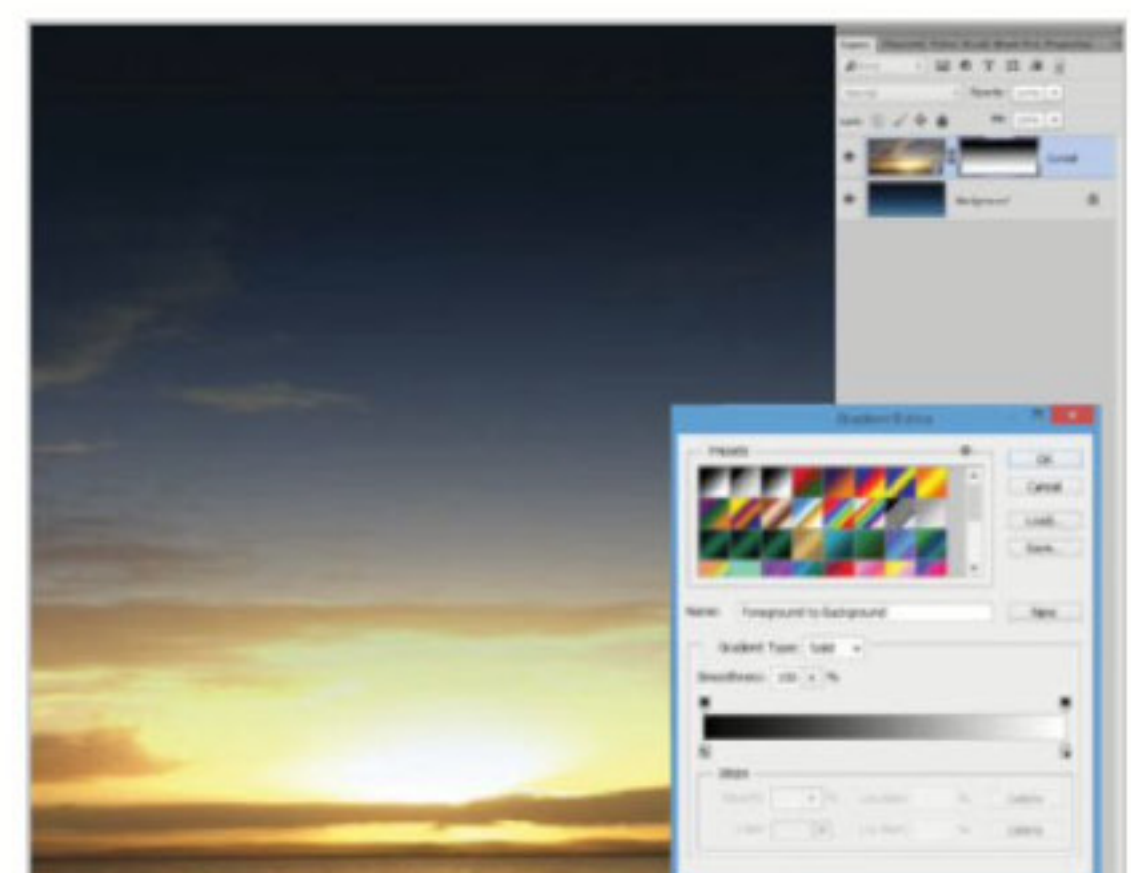
Set the stage

01 Create a new document via File>New>Blank File or by hitting Cmd/Ctrl+N. In the New window, enter the name Creative Road and set the Width to 460mm, the Height to 200mm and the Resolution to 300ppi. Click OK.



Create the sky

02 Grab the Gradient tool (G) and open the Gradient Editor. Create a three-stop gradient colour #060c11, #11304f, #3b7f9e and click OK. Select the Linear Gradient, hold Shift and drag the gradient from top to bottom.



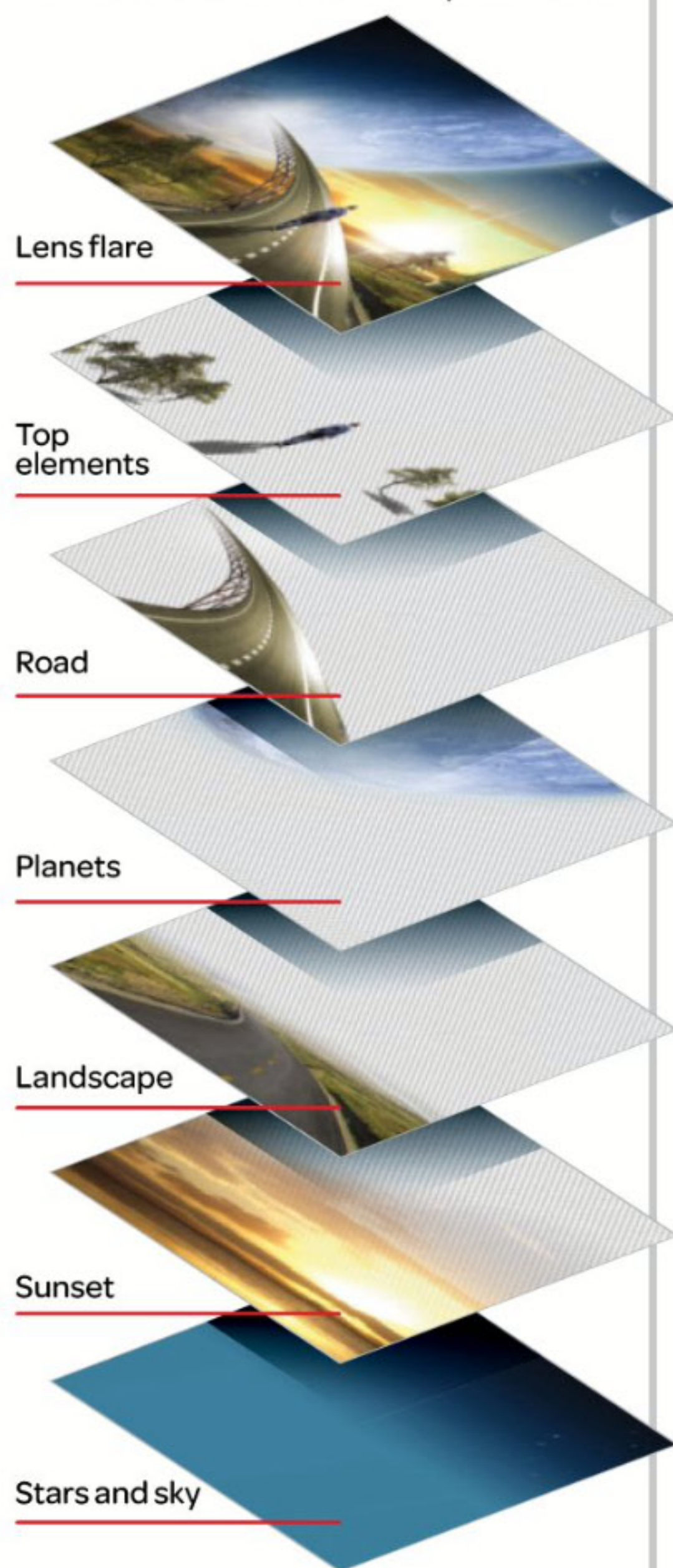
Add a layer mask

03 Go to File>Place 'Sunset.jpg'. Drag the handles to resize the image and hit Return/Enter. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab the Gradient tool (G) and open the Gradient Editor, choose the Foreground to Background Preset and click OK. Drag the Gradient over the layer mask.



Layer structure

A breakdown of the process



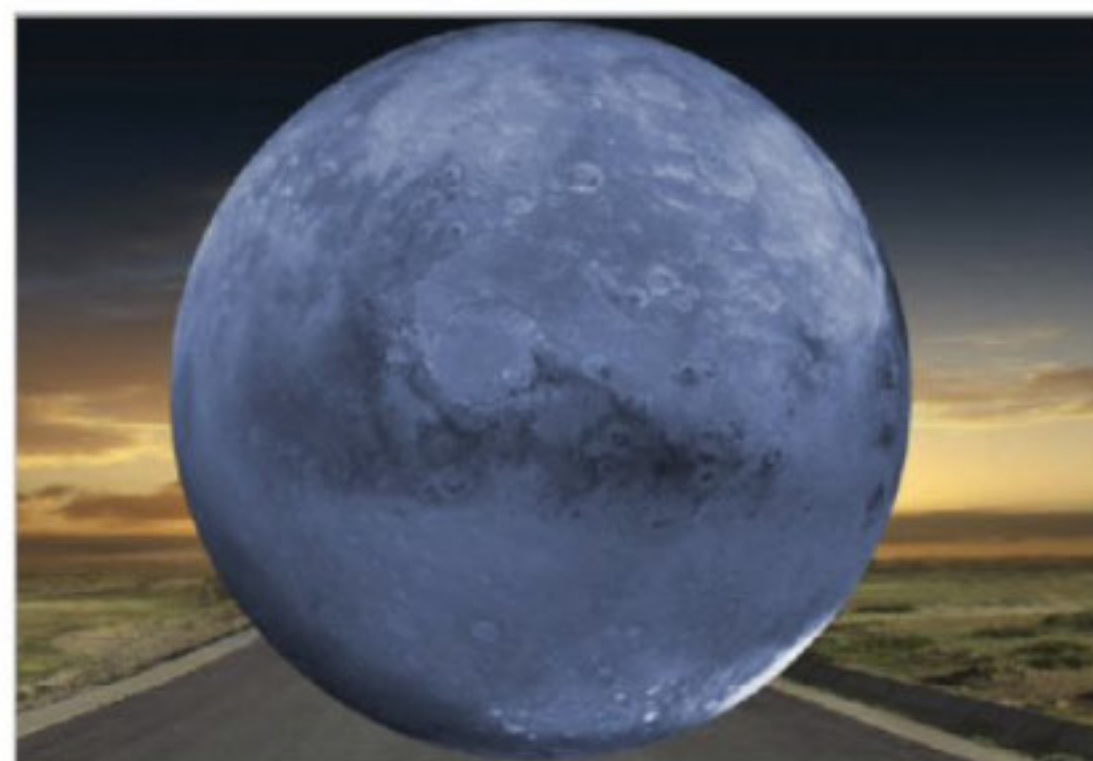
Place the landscape

04 Go to File>Place 'Landscape.jpg'. Resize and hit Return/Enter. Create a new layer mask. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Now grab a large soft tip Brush (B) and paint above the horizon line (you may need to move the Sunset layer to create a seamless transition).



Add adjustment layers

05 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Check Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask and hit OK. Set the Input Levels to 0, 0.85 and 220. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation and hit OK. Set Saturation to 25.



Create the planet

06 Go to File>Place 'Planet.jpg'. Go to Layer>Rasterize>Smart Object (Elements users choose Simplify). Grab the Magic Eraser tool (Shift+E) and click on the planet's background to erase it. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+U to open the Hue/Saturation, check Colorize, set Hue to 220 and click OK.



Add layer styles

07 Go to Layer>Layer Style>Inner Glow. Set the Opacity to 75%, change the colour to #9bbcc8, Size: 70px. Now check the Outer Glow and set the Opacity: 70%, colour #9bbcc8, Size: 100px and click OK. Go to Layer>Rasterize>Layer Style (Elements users choose Simplify).



Add a planet shadow

08 Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All. Grab a large soft tip brush (B), make sure the Foreground colour is set to black and start painting over the mask like a crescent moon. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize the image around 160%. Create a second planet. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J and resize it.



Work on the road

09 Go to File>Place 'Road.jpg' and hit Return/Enter. Now rasterize the layer. Rotate 90 degrees and resize to fit. Go to Edit>Transform>Perspective and drag the top corner inwards and the bottom corners outwards. Now go to Filter>Distort>Shear. Check Wrap Around, set a few points to create a curved shape and hit OK.



Warp it

10 Go to Edit>Transform>Warp. Drag the meshes to adjust the curve (Elements users use the Liquify filter). Now go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Clip the layers and set the Inputs to 20, 0.70, 225. Add the Hue/Saturation, clip the layers and set the Hue to 50 and Saturation to 20.



Place the buildings

11 Head to File>Place 'Building'.jpg and hit Return/Enter. Now Rasterize (Simplify) the layer. Grab the Quick Selection tool (W) and select the buildings. Click Refine Edges. Set Smooth: 1, Shift Edge: -20%, check Decontaminate Colors, Amount: 100% and then click OK. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+T and resize.



Apply shadows and highlights

12 Click on the Building mask. Grab the Brush tool. Paint the bottom to blend with the landscape. Press Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N. Name the new layer Neutral, check Create Clipping Mask, mode: Overlay and check Fill with 50% grey. Grab the Dodge/Burn tool and paint the highlights and shadows around the buildings.



Enhance the composition

13 Go to File>Place 'Trees.png'. Rasterize (Simplify) the layers and go to Layer>Matting>Remove White Matte. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate. Open the Free Transform tool to resize and move around the landscape. Use the Dodge/Burn tool to add highlights. Place the 'Bridge.png' under the Road layer.



Add a human

14 Go to File>Place 'Man.png'. Grab the Pen tool (P) (Elements users pick the Polygonal Lasso) and create a path around the figure. In the Options bar, click Selection and then hit OK. Now add a layer mask. Resize the image and apply the layer mask.



Add a final shadow

15 Go to Layer>Layer Style>Drop Shadow. Set the Distance: 0px, Size: 10px and hit OK. Now go to Layer>Layer Style>Create Layer. Click on the Drop Shadow layer and go to Edit>Transform>Flip Vertical. Press Cmd/Ctrl+T, drag the handles to adjust the perspective and hit Return.

Closer look

Combine composition techniques

CUSTOM BRUSHES

Custom brushes are always an essential tool in any type of composition. Use them with different sizes and opacities to add a unique effect to enhance the final artwork.

DODGE AND BURN

Lighten or darken areas in an image using the Dodge and Burn tools. They are very handy tools, especially when used over a neutral layer.

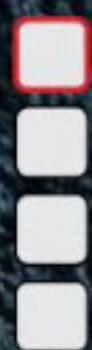


LENS FLARE

Create a new layer and fill with black colour. Now add the Lens Flare filter and change the blending mode to Screen to create a nice special effect.

FREE TRANSFORM

Use the Free Transform tool to scale, rotate, stretch and warp an image. Switch to Warp mode to manipulate the control points to apply distortions.



On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

Use adjustment layers, filters and brushes to create a gothic portrait



Time taken
1 hour

Expert

Stewart Wood



"I love altering an image to turn it into something new and exciting, especially when it comes to playing with the mood of an image. Being able to create feeling and atmosphere from an image is something that Photoshop is great at doing."

"I'm a professional photographer and space artist, and the power of Photoshop is used in all of my work. I definitely couldn't live without it!"

Give portraits a gothic makeover

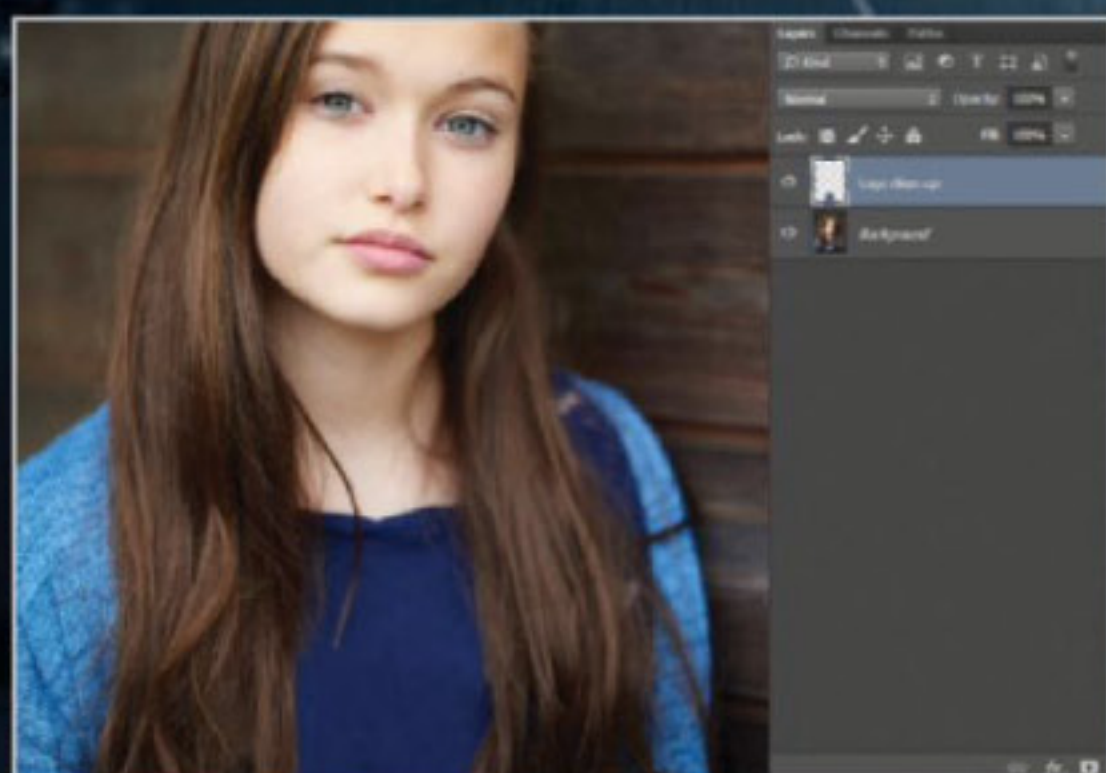
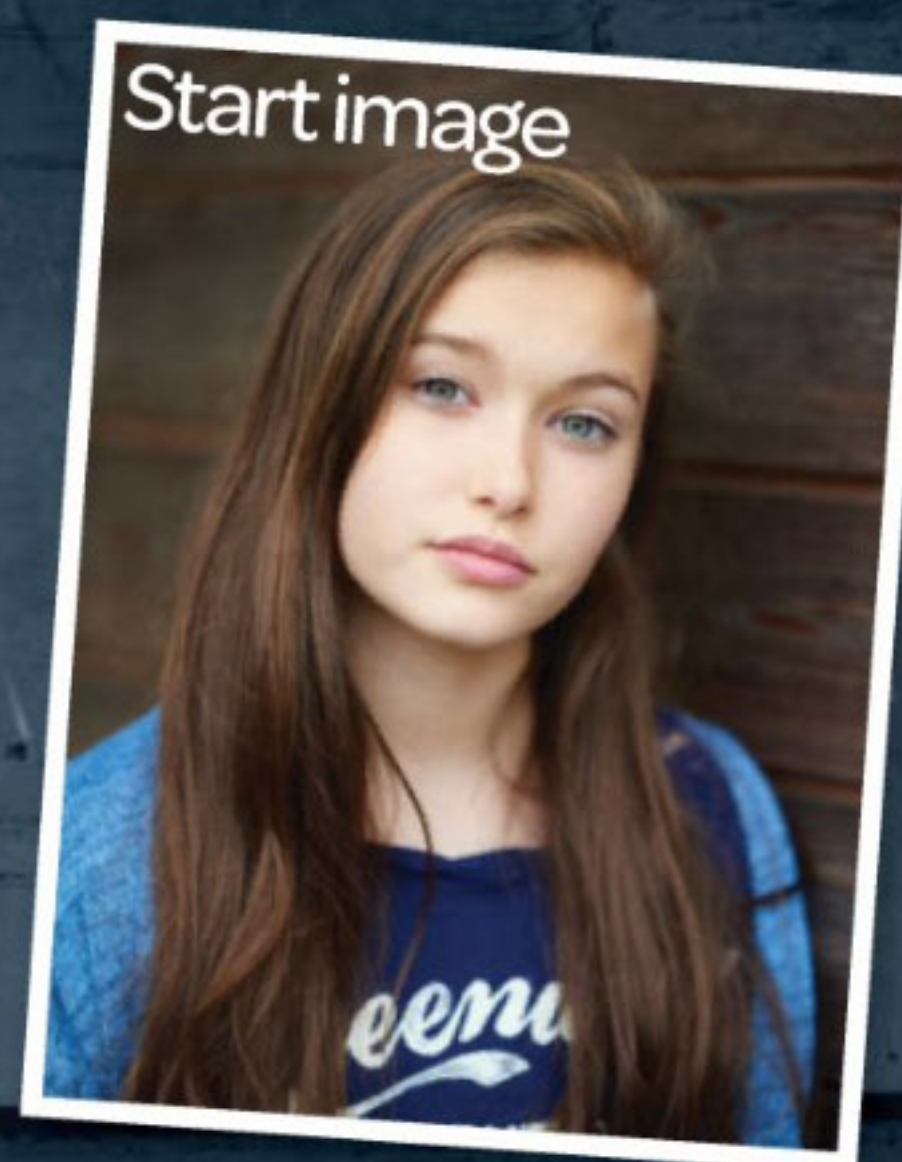
Take an ordinary image and transform it into a dark and moody gothic portrait

Creating a dark and moody portrait image is something that is fun and simple to do with Photoshop. We can take an ordinary image and, using basic photo-retouching techniques and utilising blending options with the power of adjustment layers, filters and brushes, we can create a very powerful gothic portrait.

In this tutorial, we'll be starting with an ordinary portrait image of a young woman and apply some powerful adjustments to it. We'll start by removing the logo from her top using the Clone Stamp tool. Next, we'll add some colour corrections followed

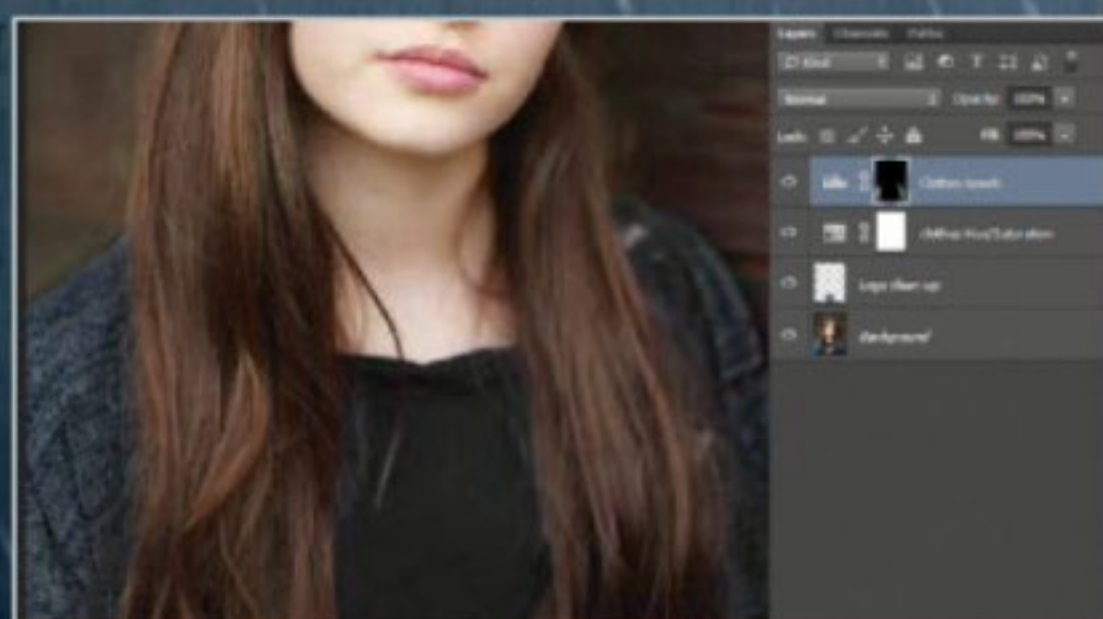
by some gothic make-up effects to the face. Using some custom brushes, we'll add realistic rain effects to the scene, as well as little splashes of water where the rain is hitting her.

You don't have to use the start image that is supplied with this tutorial if you don't want to – in fact we encourage you to try this tutorial on your own images. It's all about how we get to the end result. The basic techniques we are using will work for most images, but you may find you have to adjust the odd number here or there to get the same result.



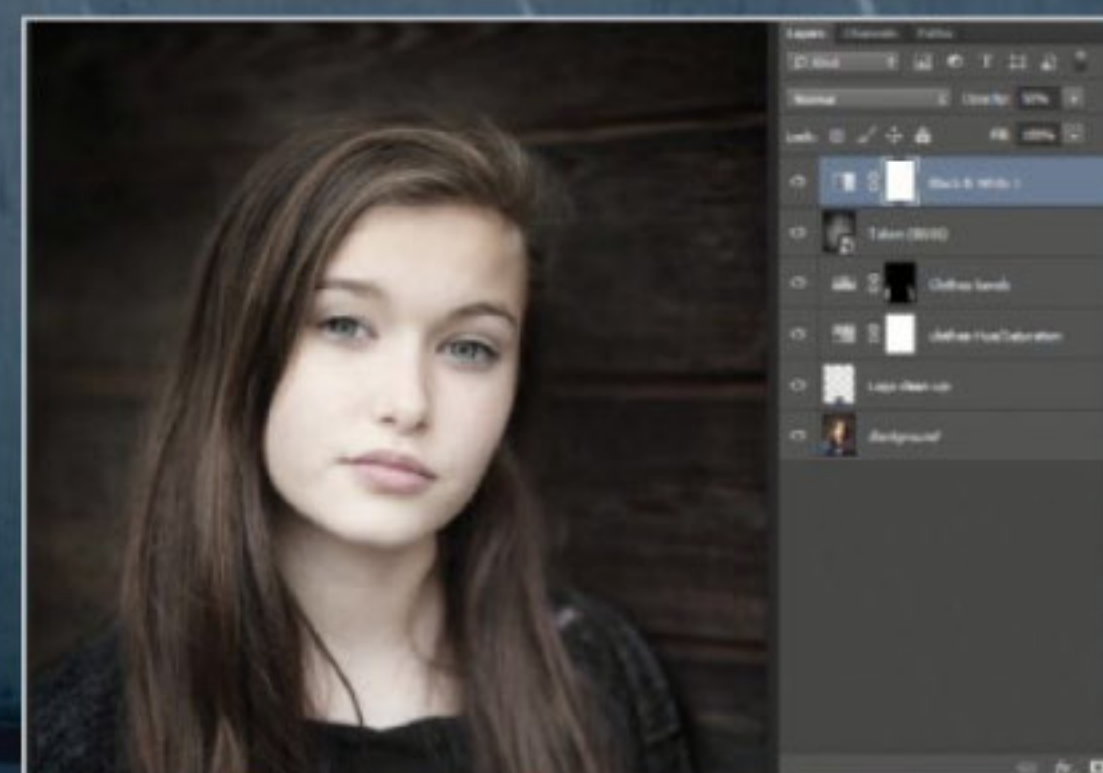
Remove the logo

01 Open the file 'gothic portrait.jpg'. Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and select the Clone Stamp tool (S). Hold down Alt/Option and click on a clean area of the clothes. Proceed to clone out the logo, changing the clone source often.



Darken the clothes

02 Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Hue/Saturation. Select the Blues from the drop-down menu and set Saturation and Lightness to -100. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels. Set the midtone level to 0.50 and the highlight output to 197. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All and paint the effect on the clothes.



Alter the background

03 Go to File>Place Embedded and choose 'Taken (B&W).jpg'. Resize/position the layer to fit. Change the blend mode to Soft Light. Go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Black & White. Select the green filter, click OK, reduce Opacity to 50%.



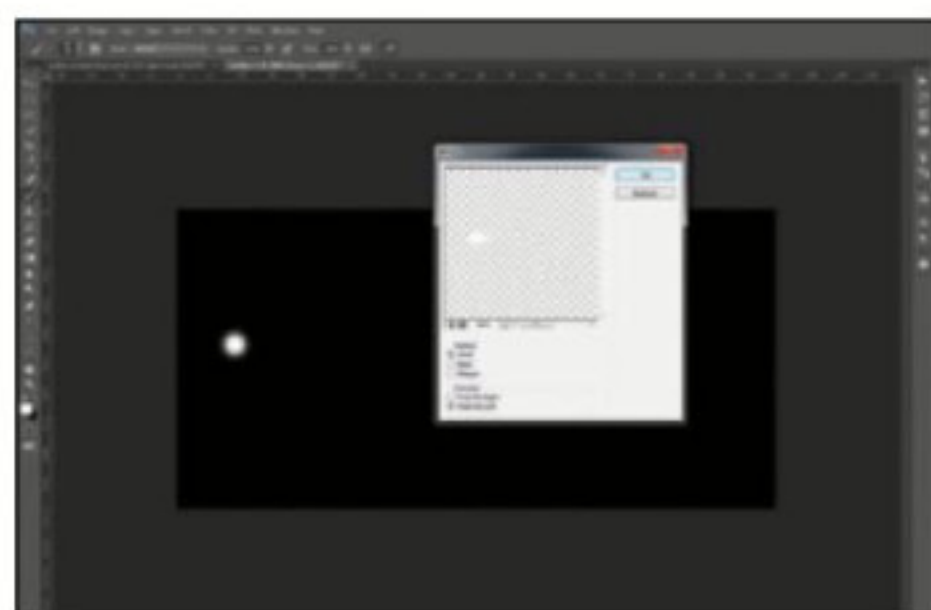
Expert edit

Make realistic rain



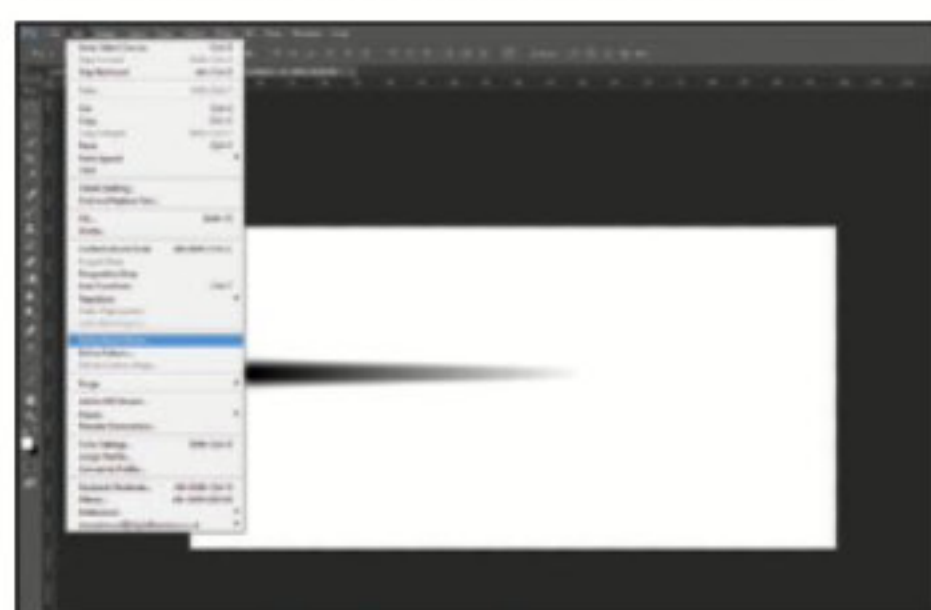
Create a document

01 Create a new Photoshop document of Height: 250px and Width: 500px. Fill the background with black and create a new layer on top. Select a soft, round brush.



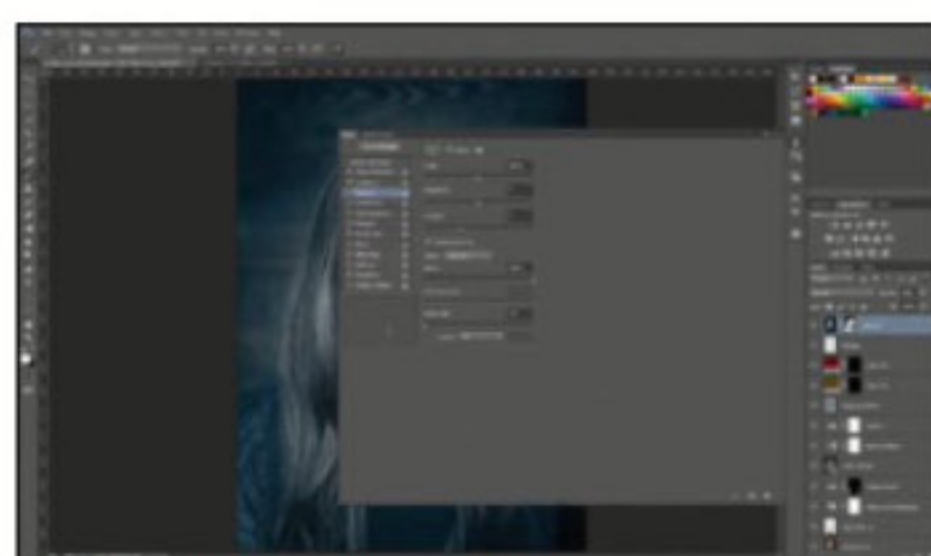
Paint a dot

02 Paint a single dot towards the left of the image and go to Filter>Stylise>Wind. Set the Method to Wind and the Direction to from the left. Repeat this four times (Cmd/Ctrl+F).



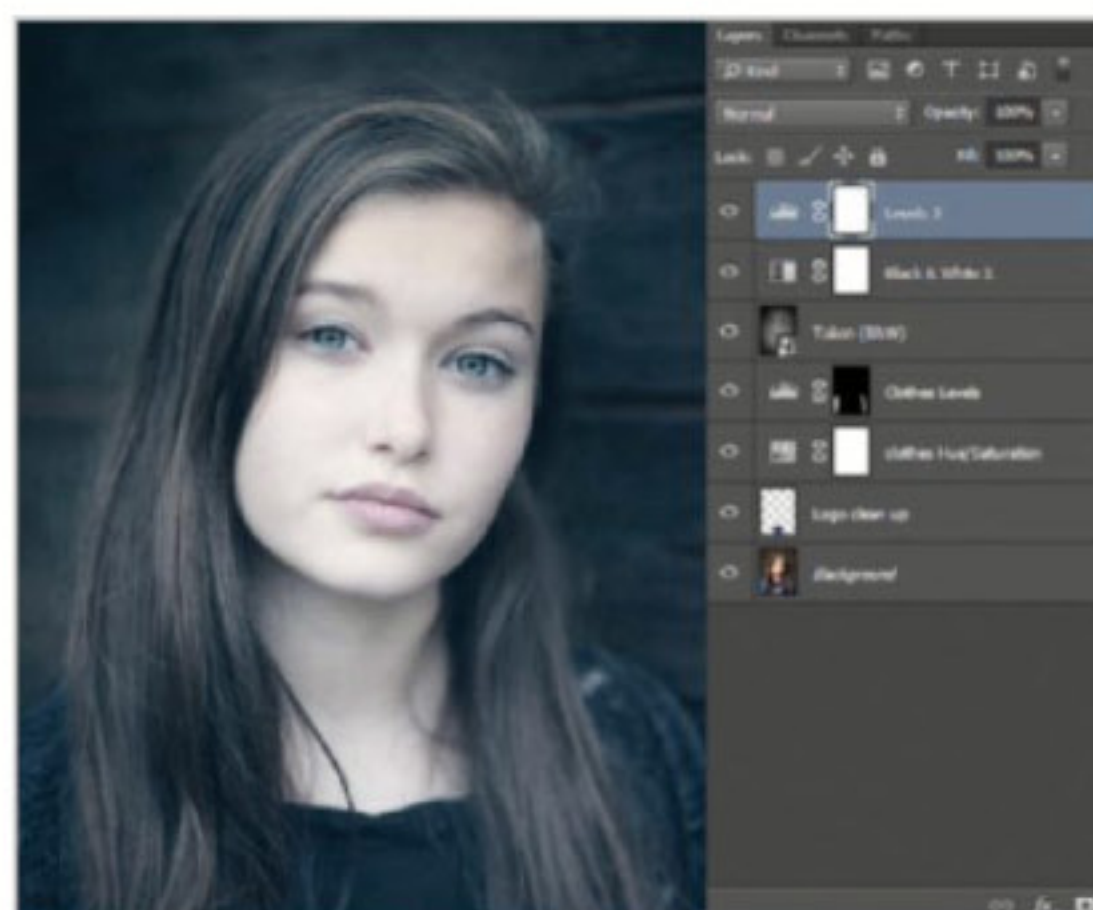
Create the brush

03 Flatten the image and then invert it (Cmd/Ctrl+I). Press Cmd/Ctrl+A to select the entire image and then go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Select the new rain brush.



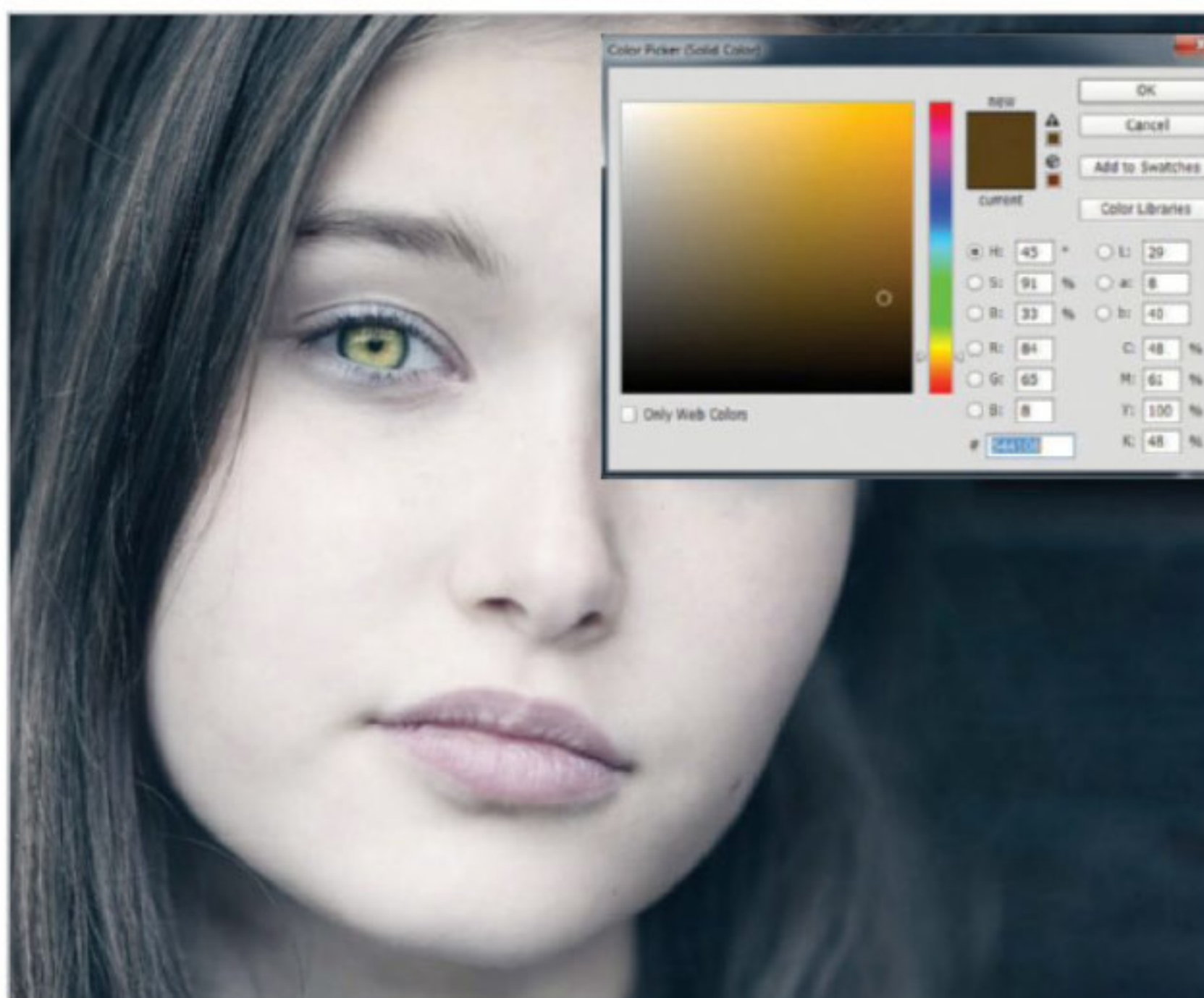
Adjust the brush

04 Open the Brush palette, set the Spacing to 300%, Angle to 110, Size Jitter to 100%, Angle Jitter to 2% and the Scatter to 1000%. Click Texture and set the mode to Color Burn.



Change the colour tone

04 Next, add a new Levels adjustment layer, select the Green channel and enter 1.10 for the midtones and 9 for the shadow output level. Select the Blue channel and enter 1.25 for the midtones and 12 for the shadow output level.

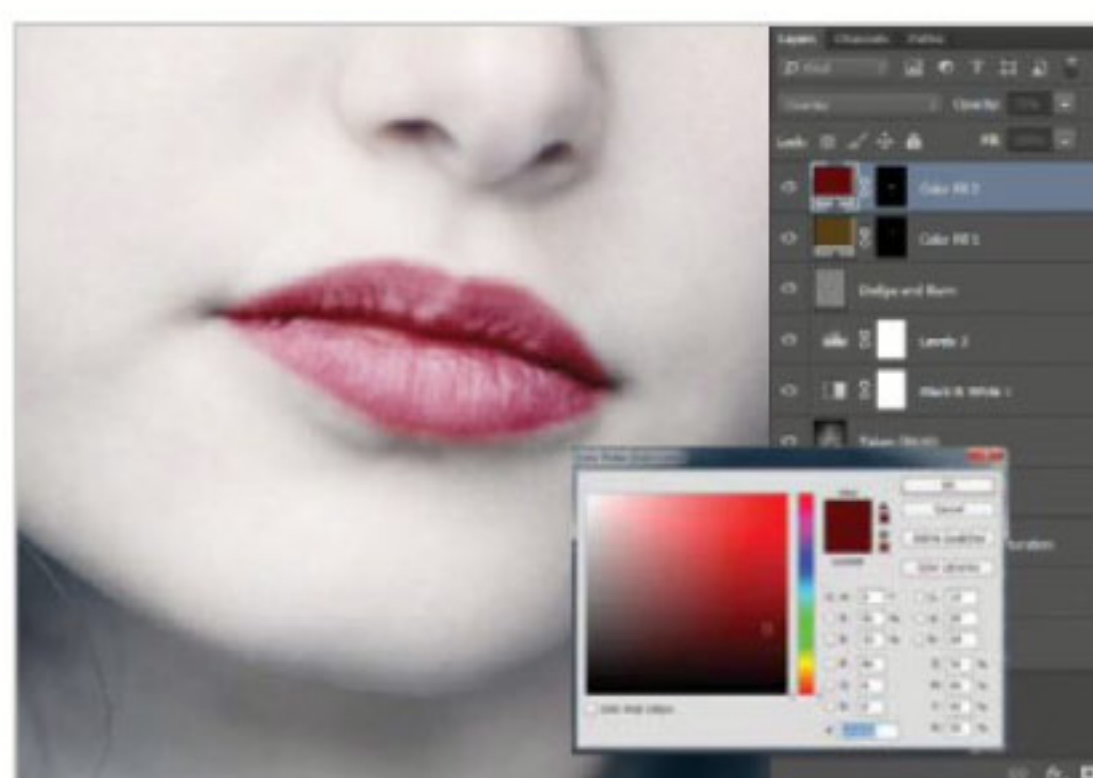


Dodge and burn

05 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and go to Edit>Fill. Select 50% Gray from the Content drop-down menu, click OK and change the blend mode to Soft Light. With a white brush, paint over the highlights and paint black on the shadows to give some depth to the subject.

Change the eye colour

06 Go to Layer>New Fill Layer>Solid Color. Now enter the colour value of #544108, or choose your own, and set the blend mode to Color Dodge. Go to Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All and with a white brush, paint the effect onto the eyes.



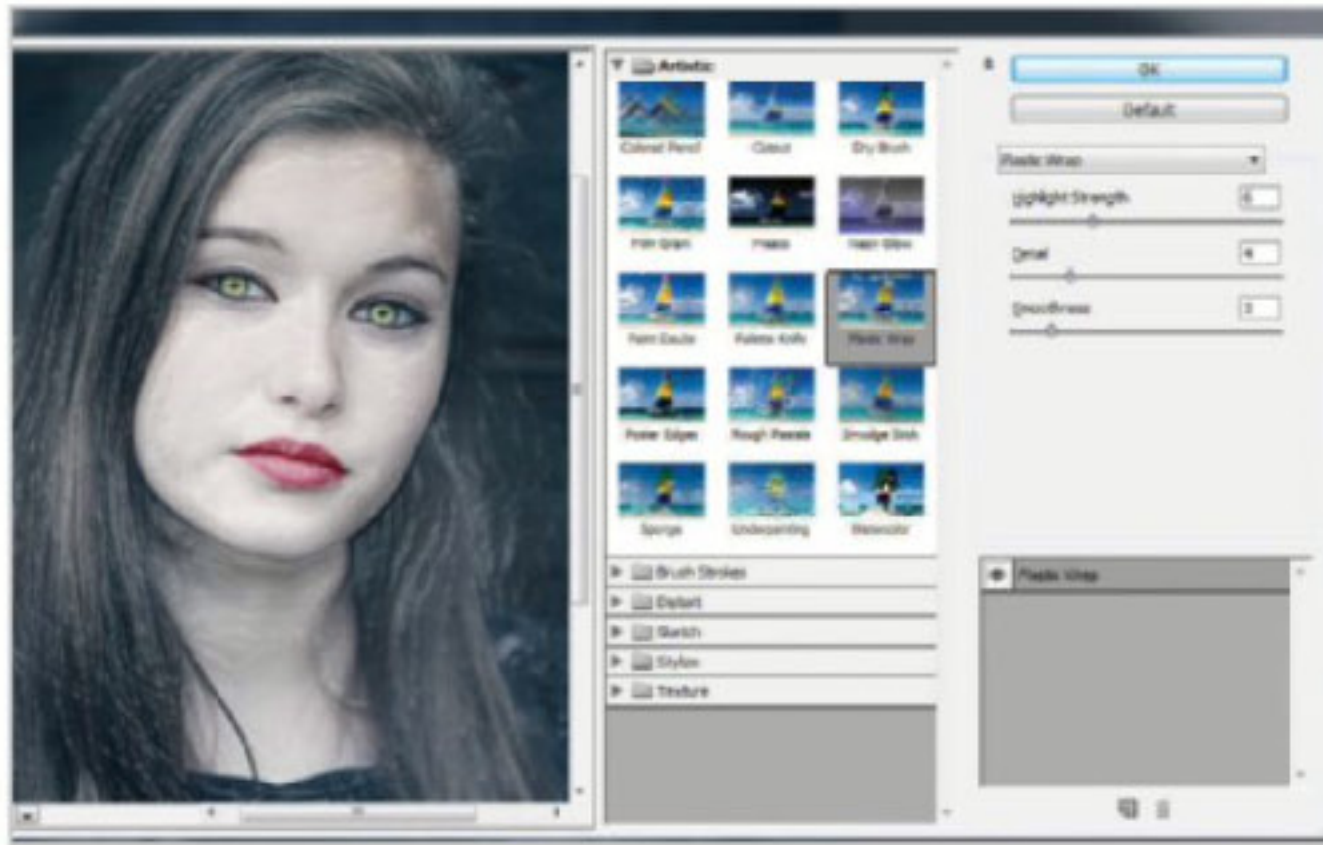
Change the lip colour

07 Add a new colour fill adjustment layer just as before and use a red colour (#540808). You can change the colour if you wish to. Change the blend mode to Overlay and reduce the Opacity to 75%. Add a layer mask and paint the effect onto the lips.



Add make-up

08 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and select the Brush tool, painting with black and a Flow of 10% to add some make-up. If you're using a mouse then change the brush Opacity to between 10% to 20% and keep painting over the same areas to build up the effect.



Make a wet look

09 Press Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Option+Shift+E to create a new stamped layer. Go to Filter>Filter Gallery. Select the Artistic folder and then choose the Plastic Wrap filter. Use 6 for Highlight Strength, 4 for Detail and 3 for the Smoothness. Add a black layer mask and paint the effect onto the hair and clothes.



Load some brushes

10 Next we need to load up some brushes into Photoshop. Select the Brush tool (B) and open up the Brush Presets palette, click on the small gear icon and select Load Brushes. Select the 'rain brushes.abr' file and click OK.

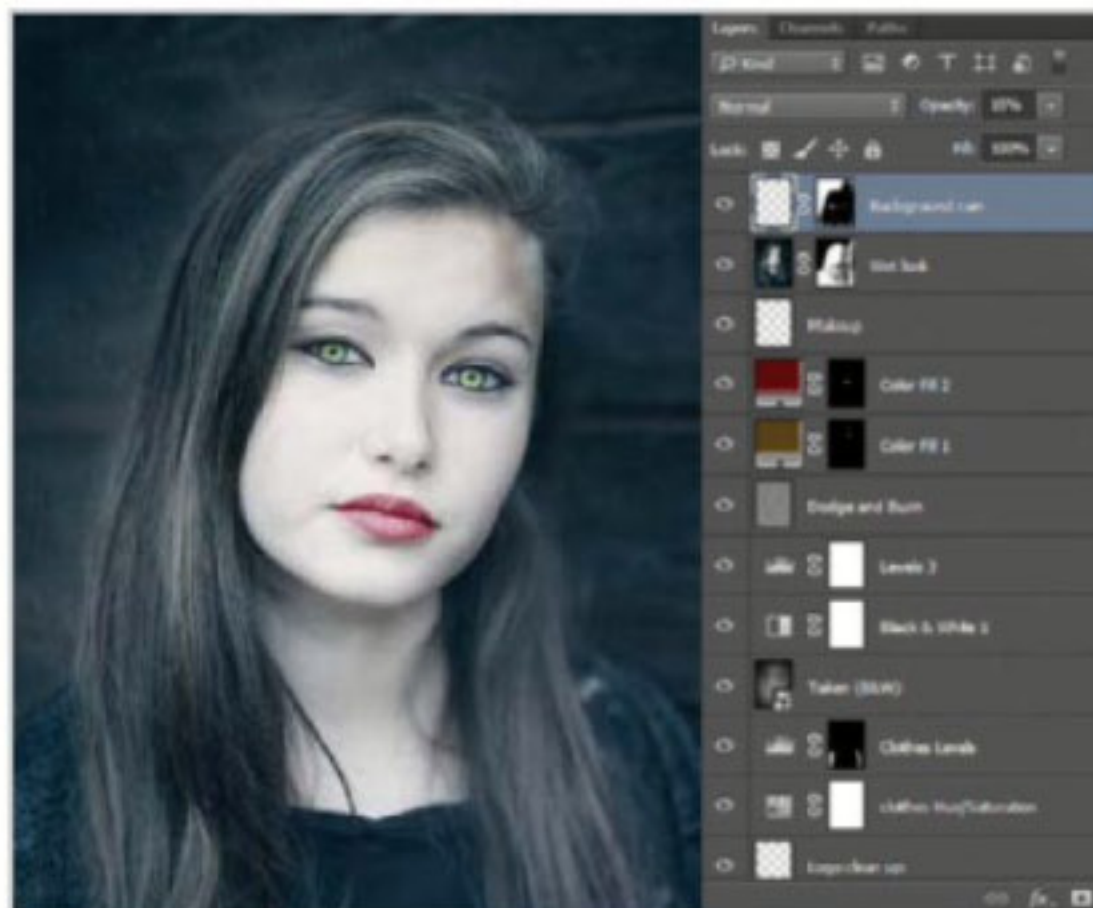
Expert tip



Add realism

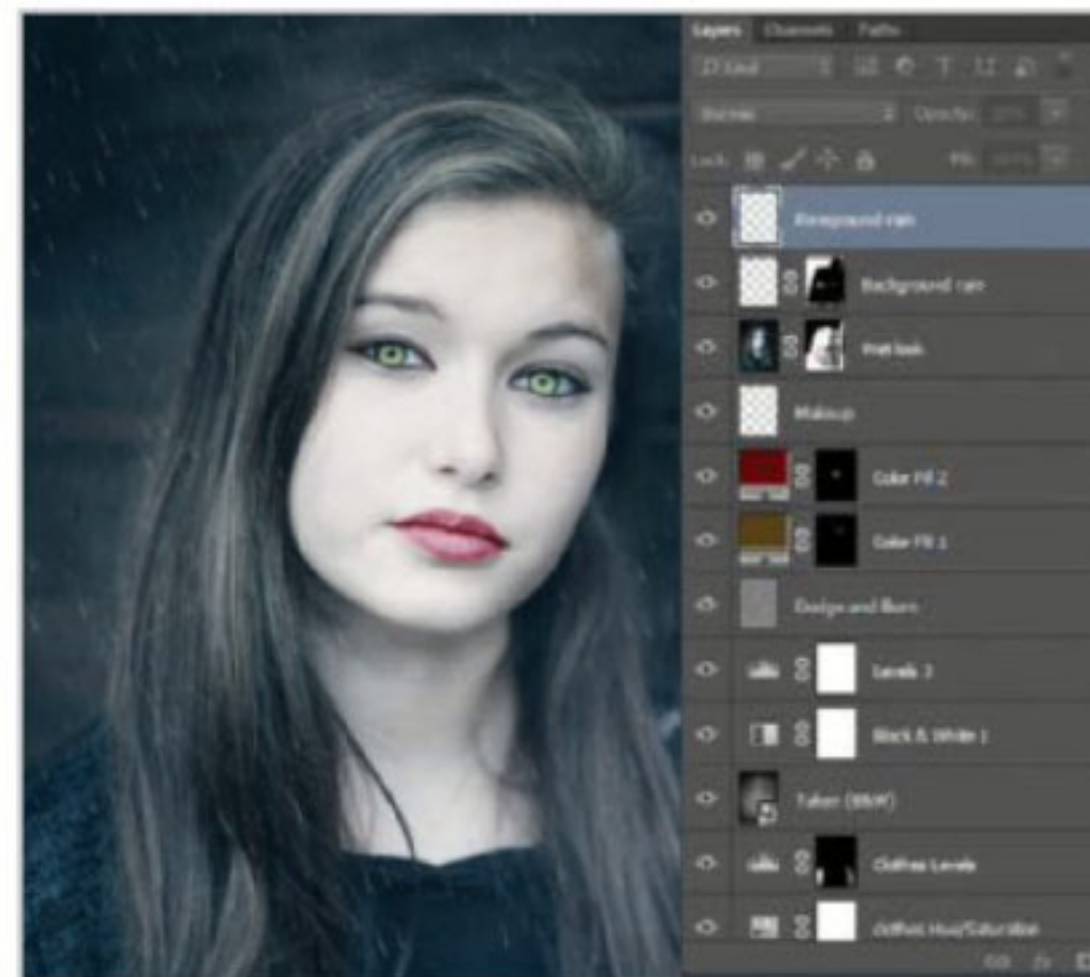
If you feel as though your rain isn't looking quite right, there is a trick you can employ. To further add to the realism of the rain it can sometimes help to add a little motion blur to the rain layers.

Select the rain layers (not any of the splash layers) and go to Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Set the Angle to match the rain's angle (in this case it is about -65 degrees), and set the Distance to 15 pixels. Click OK to finish off and enjoy the final effect.



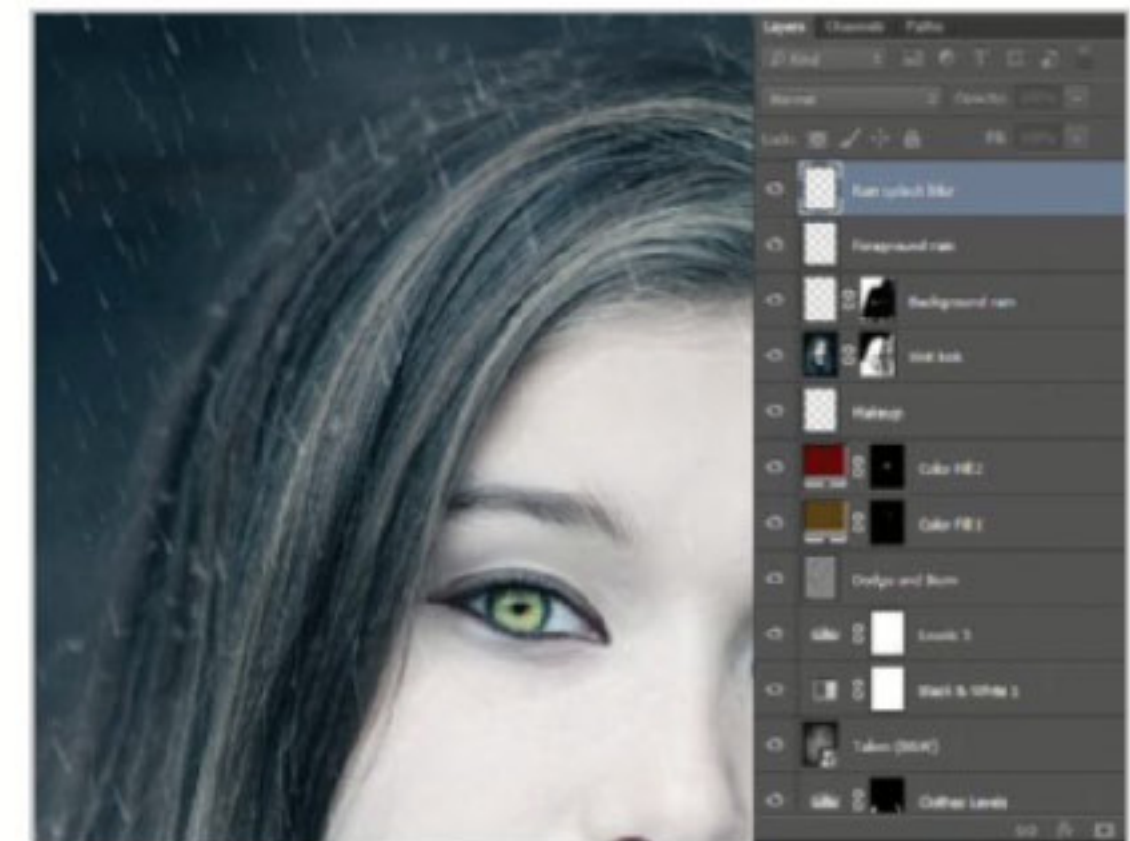
Add background rain

11 Create a new layer and select the rain brush. Using a brush size of 100, paint over the image. Add a new layer mask and mask out the rain from the foreground. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and add a 1 pixel blur. Set the layer Opacity to 15%.



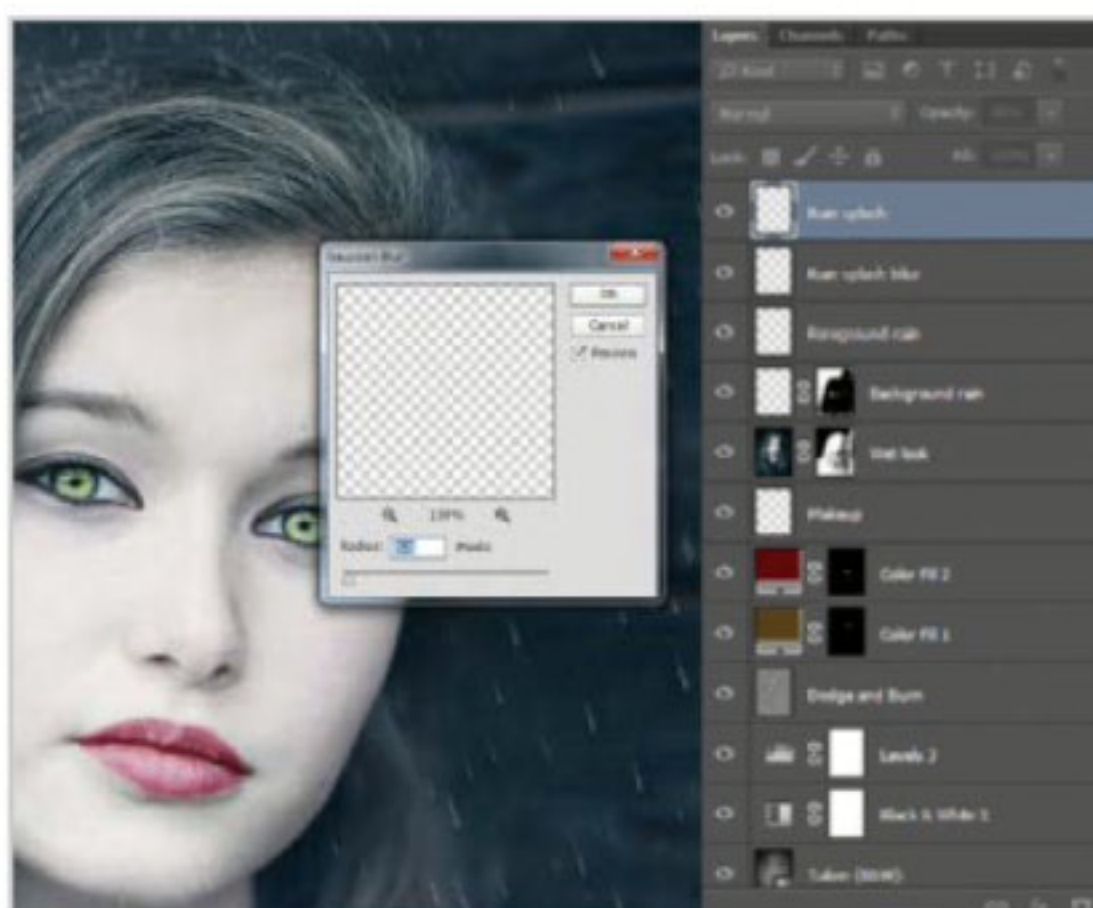
Add foreground rain

12 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and using a brush size of 120, paint over the image again to add more rain. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and add a 0.5 pixel blur. Set the layer Opacity to 25%.



Add rain splashes

13 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and select the rain splash brush. With a brush size of 100, paint on the subject's shoulders and hair, or anywhere you believe the rain would be hitting her. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and add a 1 pixel blur. Set the layer Opacity to 25%.



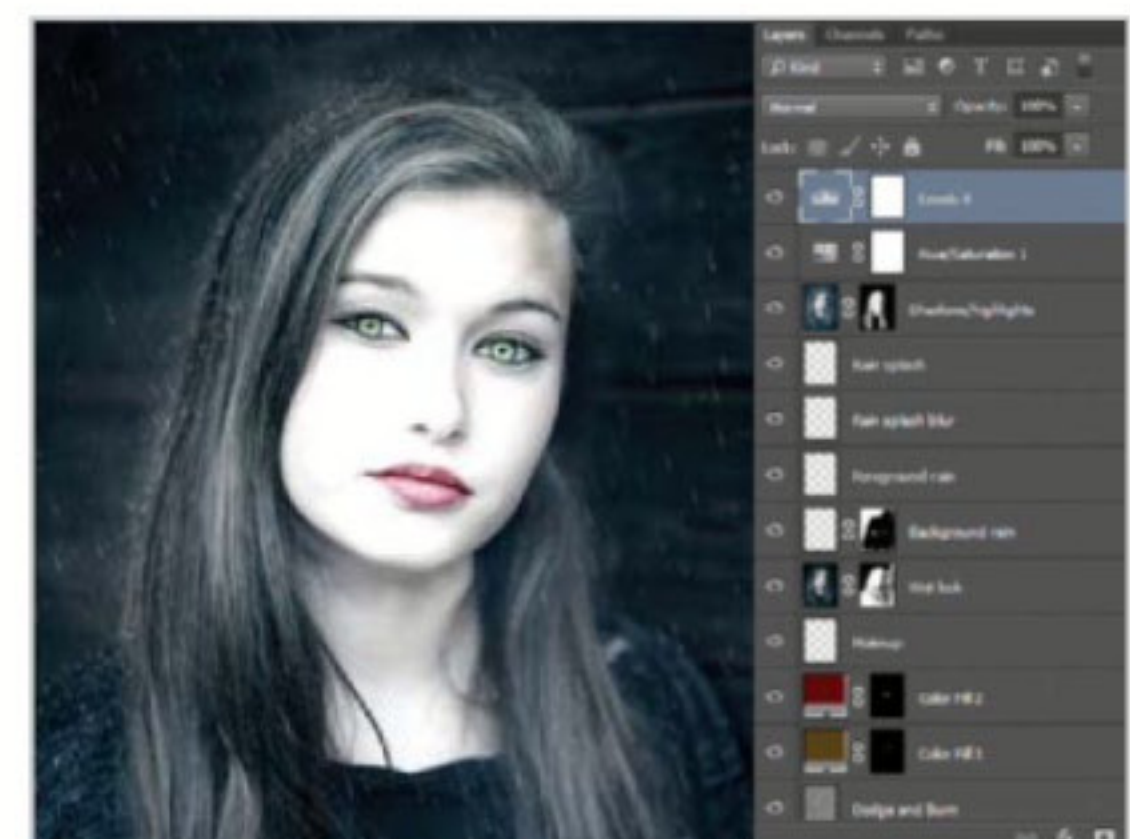
Add more splashes

14 Create a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+J) and with a brush size of 80, paint in the same places as before. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and this time add a 0.5 pixel blur. Set the layer Opacity to 50%.



Adjust shadows

15 Press Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Option+Shift+E to create a new stamped layer. Go to Image>Adjustments>Shadows/Highlights. Set the Shadows to 15%, leave the Highlights at 0%. Add a new layer mask and paint the effect onto the subject.



Adjust colour and contrast

16 Create a new Hue/Saturation adjustment layer, reduce the Saturation to -35 and set the Brightness to +5. Next, create a new Levels adjustment layer and choose the Increase Contrast 3 option from the preset menu.



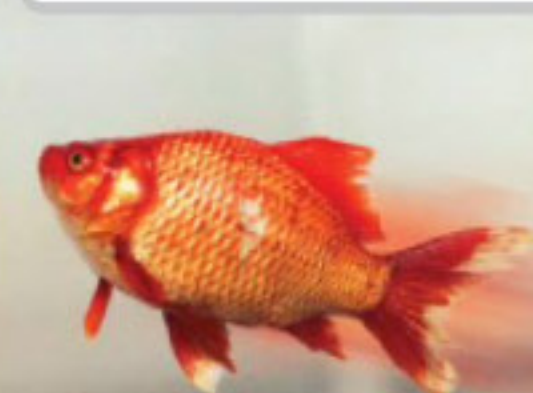
10 OF THE BEST...

Creative effects to use with water

Master the art of working with liquid

01 CAUSTIC WATER

When water hits a flat surface, it creates wavy lines; this is called caustic water, and it's a good idea to overlay these kinds of images over a comped seabed.



04 BLEND IT WELL

If you've a picture of water taken against white, here's a tip to blend it. Invert the picture and change the Hue to +180. Then use Screen to remove all the black.



05 ADD REALISTIC RAIN

Insert a new layer over your picture. In the Styles menu next to Adjustments, choose Image Effects, and look for the Rain style. This can add realistic-looking rain to your photos; choose the Overlay blend mode for added effect.

06 ENSURE REFLECTIONS ARE BELIEVABLE

Getting the perfect reflection can be tricky: how can you reflect an object onto a bumpy water texture? Use the Displace filter, set to 100 on both the Horizontal and Vertical scale, and watch your reflections stretch across water perfectly.

07 USE WATER-SHAPED BRUSHES

Custom brushes can be a saviour in Photoshop, and if you have some water-shaped brushes, it can save you so much time cutting splashes out of a picture. Search online; there are some great ones out there.

08 MAKE YOUR OWN BUBBLES

If you want to add bubbles to a picture, there's no better method than to build your own. Select a space with an Elliptical Marquee, and then use brushes and gradients to create the bubble effect. Study photos for inspiration, too.

09 CALL UPON LIQUIFY

The Liquify tool is a must-have command for water compositions, if only for underwater subjects. Use it to make hair look as if it's floating, wavily above your subject's head, and just have fun with the rest of the distortion effects.

10 CREATE SUPER SMOOTH SHAPES

It's a filter that you might not immediately associate with water, but the Plastic Wrap filter creates smooth shapes with watery highlights and shadows. Use it to turn a subject to water, or even just add some droplets to a picture.

02 CREATE RIPPLES

There are many ways to create a ripple or a reflection but the Ocean Ripple filter is perhaps the best one to use. Find it in the Filter Gallery and toggle the settings for a perfect ripple.

03 MASK & COMP

Perhaps the most effective water effects are created from water pictures. To use them effectively, paste them into your picture, add a mask layer and invert. Then, with a soft white brush, paint the water back into the picture.



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On the site

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What you'll learn

How to use layers, masks and distortion tools for surreal landscapes

Time taken
3 hours

Expert

Mark White



"I love starting with a blank canvas, using existing pictures and a little imagination to create an original composition that looks magical. Spectacular compositions are the ones that grab our attention, and often these striking pictures are easier to create than they look. I've been experimenting in Photoshop as a hobby for years, and understand the importance of having fun while you edit."

Build a fantasy flying island

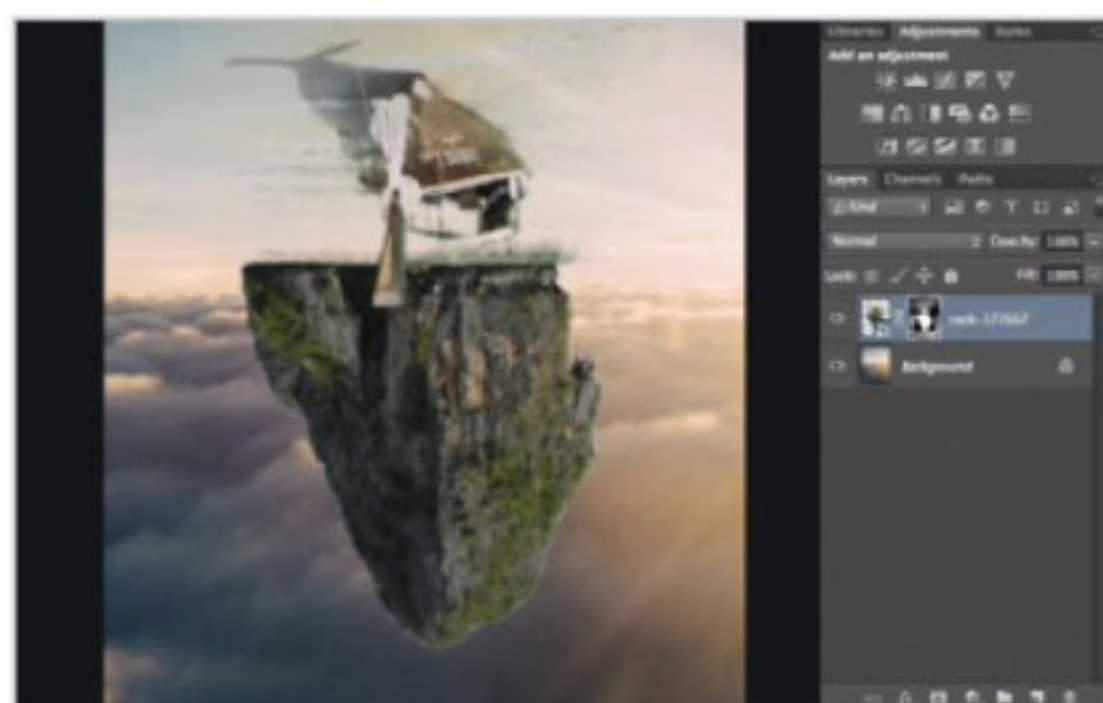
Bring the surreal to life and use layers, masks and distortion to build a beautiful floating rock in the sky

Learning and honing basic Photoshop skills is vital to improving as an artist, but the most fun you can ever have in Photoshop is just letting your creativity run wild.

Even the most complicated pictures rely on the simplest techniques, and creating a fantasy island is no different. Only the rainbow on this particular island is created from scratch (you can even be original with your rainbow and choose exotic or bizarre colours) – everything else in this picture is just an existing image that has been warped or masked into place.

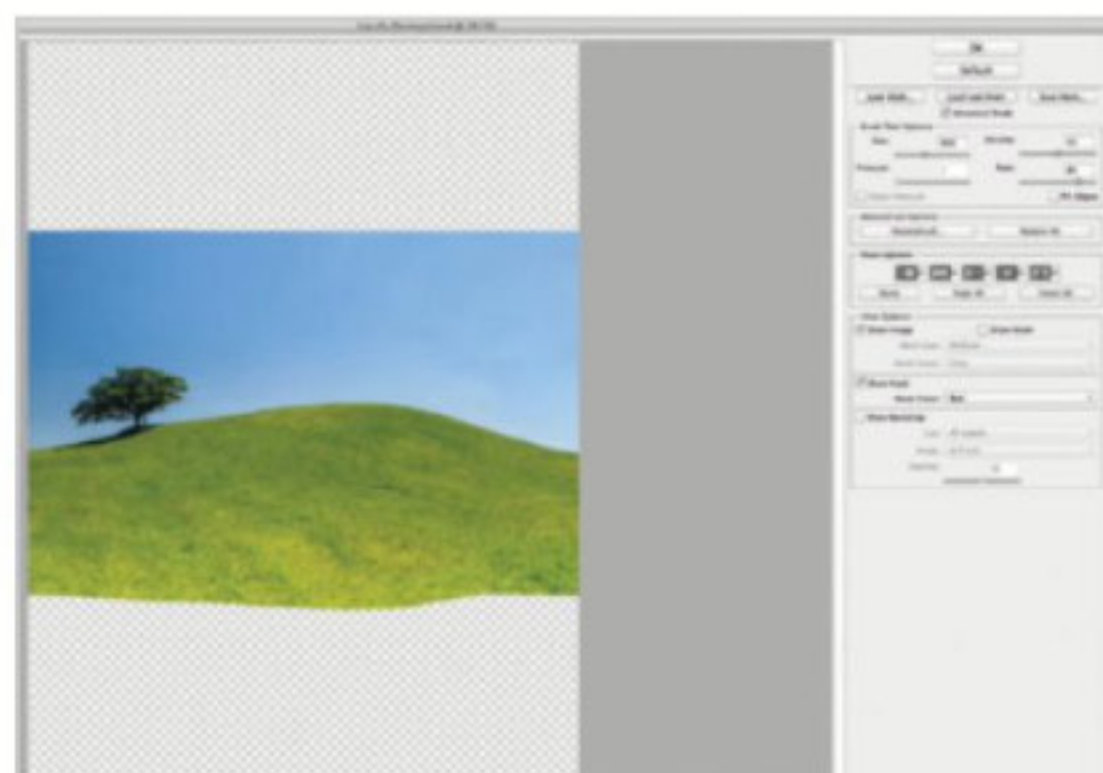
Once you learn the basics of what makes a fantasy island, the rest is up to you. This is where creativity can become so important: the only requirements are that you create a rock floating through the sky, but you can edit anything on there. You can use beaches instead of cliff-tops, picnicking families instead an elephant, or you can even place an entire city on the top of your island.

The potential is infinite for this project, but first let's delve into what makes this particular fantasy island. Even the most complex compositions are constructed with simple techniques.



Create a basic island

01 Open the start pictures and place the rock. Rotate it upside down and go to Select>Color Range. Use the plus eyedropper to select all of the colours on the rock and press OK. With your selection made, Ctrl/right-click, pick Refine Edge, and click the mask icon.



Add the hill

02 Mask out the top of your newly created island, and place your hill. Head to Filter>Liquify and use the Pucker and Bloat tools to shape the hill. Click OK and use Color Range to choose only the green in the picture, and again, mask.



Place the castle

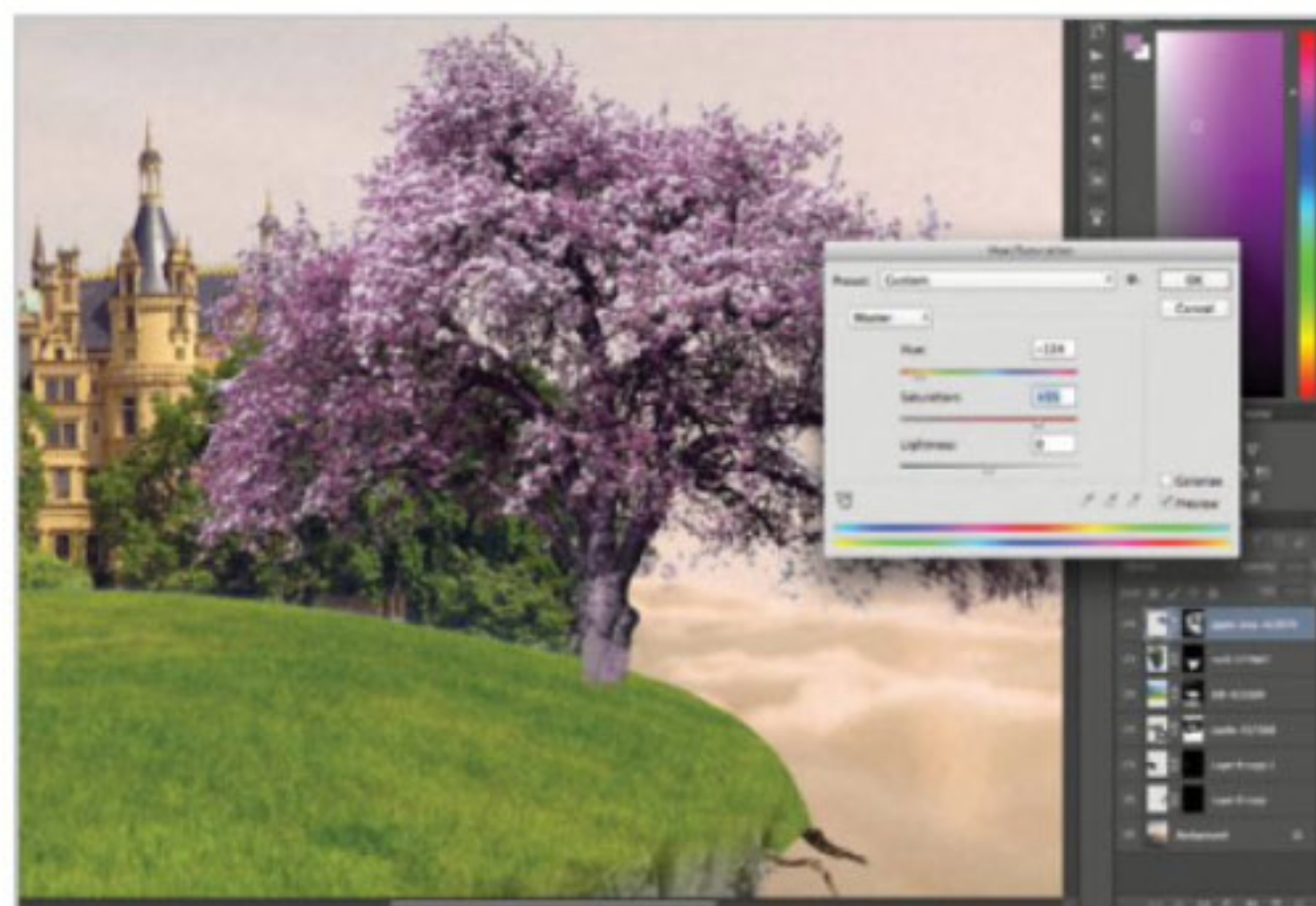
03 Insert your castle and use Color Range to mask out the sky, as with the previous images. Place this layer behind the hill layer. Place the dead tree, mask with Color Range, and use these branches as roots sticking out the sides of the island.

Expert tip



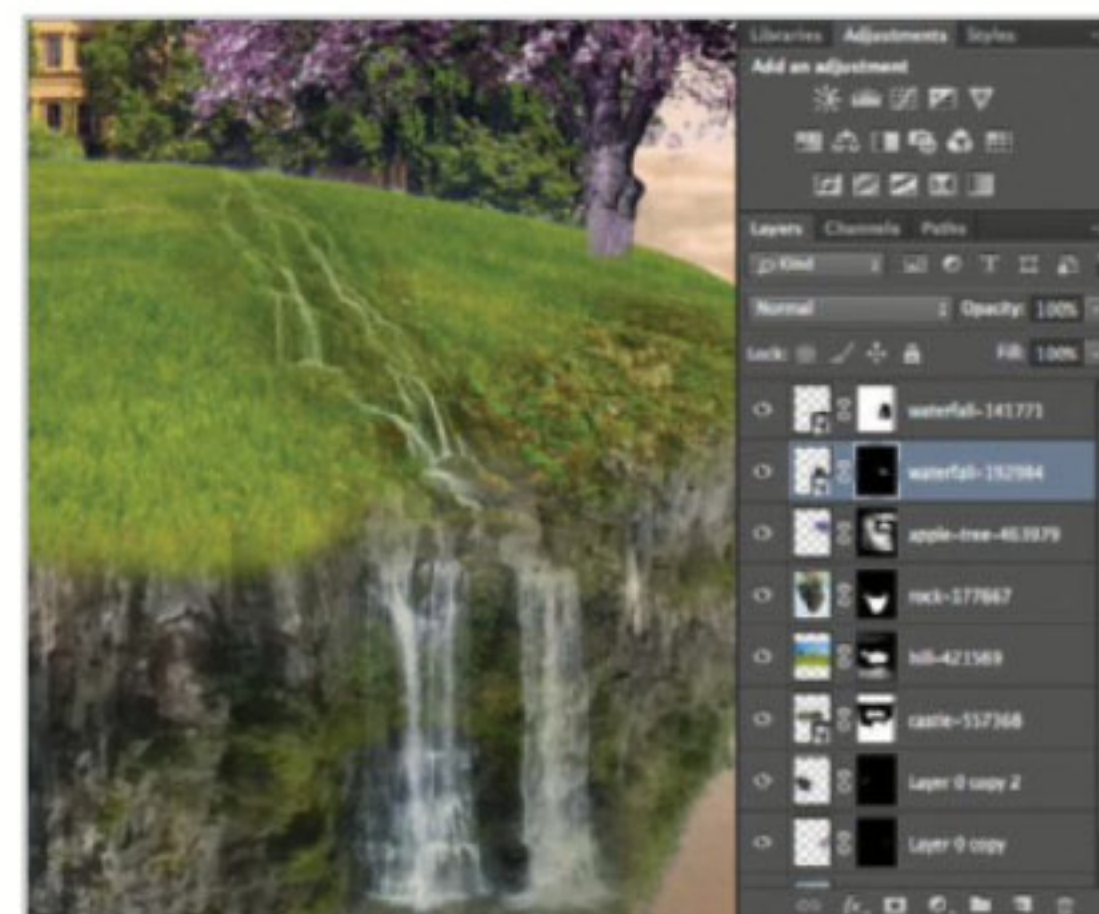
Comp the right images

A composition is only as good as the start images it is made up from. It's therefore imperative to choose the right pictures to include, otherwise you'll leave yourself with a lot of work to do when you're editing. Also look at how objects can be used differently, for example, dead trees look like great roots when you turn them upside down, and cliffs can make great rocks. The better the start images, the more impressive your fantasy island will be.



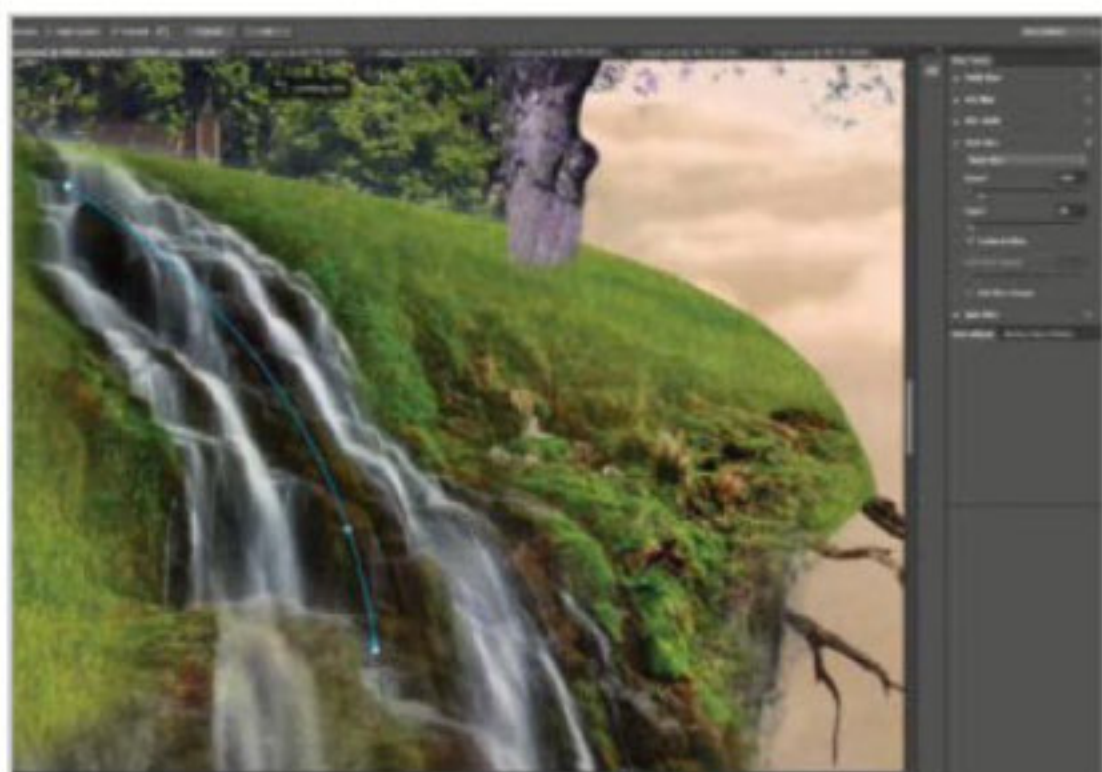
Create a focal tree

04 Place your other tree picture and again, use the Color Range tool to mask. Press Cmd/Ctrl+U and change the Hue of the tree to around -120 and the Saturation to +50. This will turn the tree pink, like a cherry blossom, to help break up all the green in the composition.



Bring the water in

05 Liquid material is more difficult to mask than solid material. Insert waterfall images wherever they will look best – you can even Liquify them into place – create a mask for each layer, and use a soft, white brush at 20% Opacity to fade it in.



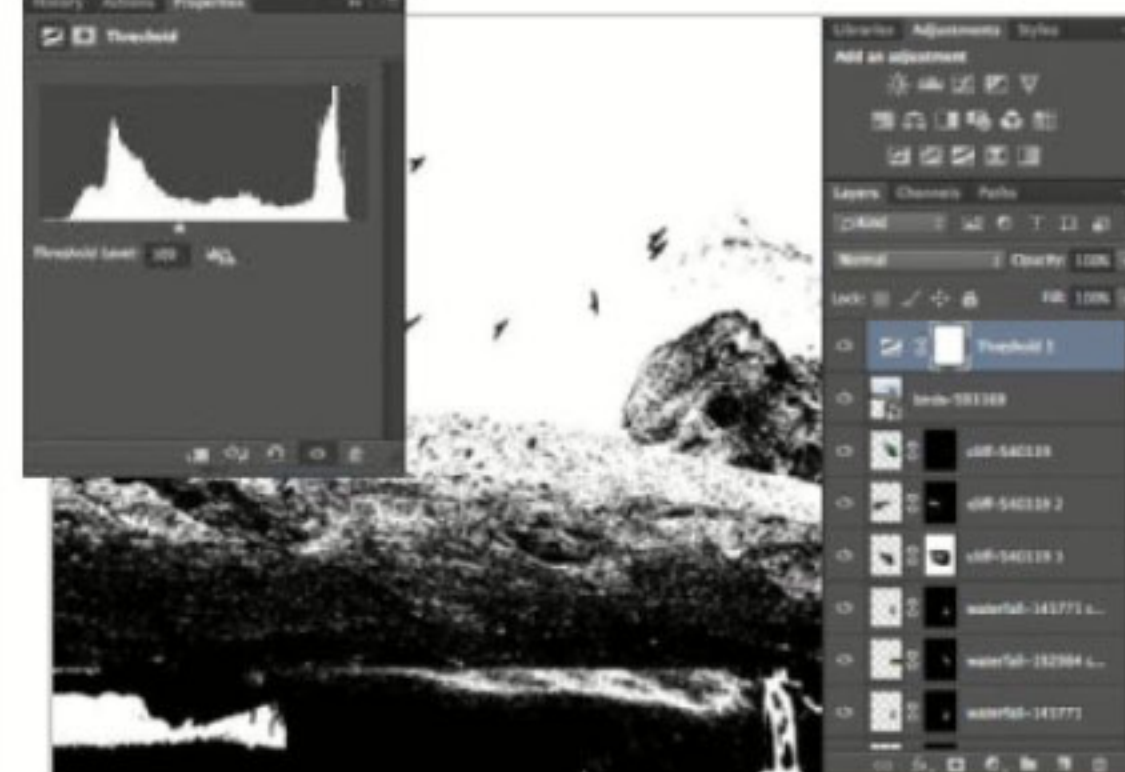
Blur the water

06 To give the effect that the water is flowing, duplicate your waterfall layers and go to Filter>Blur Gallery>Path Blur. The Path Blur gives the effect of motion, but has an advantage over the Motion Blur in that it can travel in multiple directions. Set these layers to 50% Opacity.



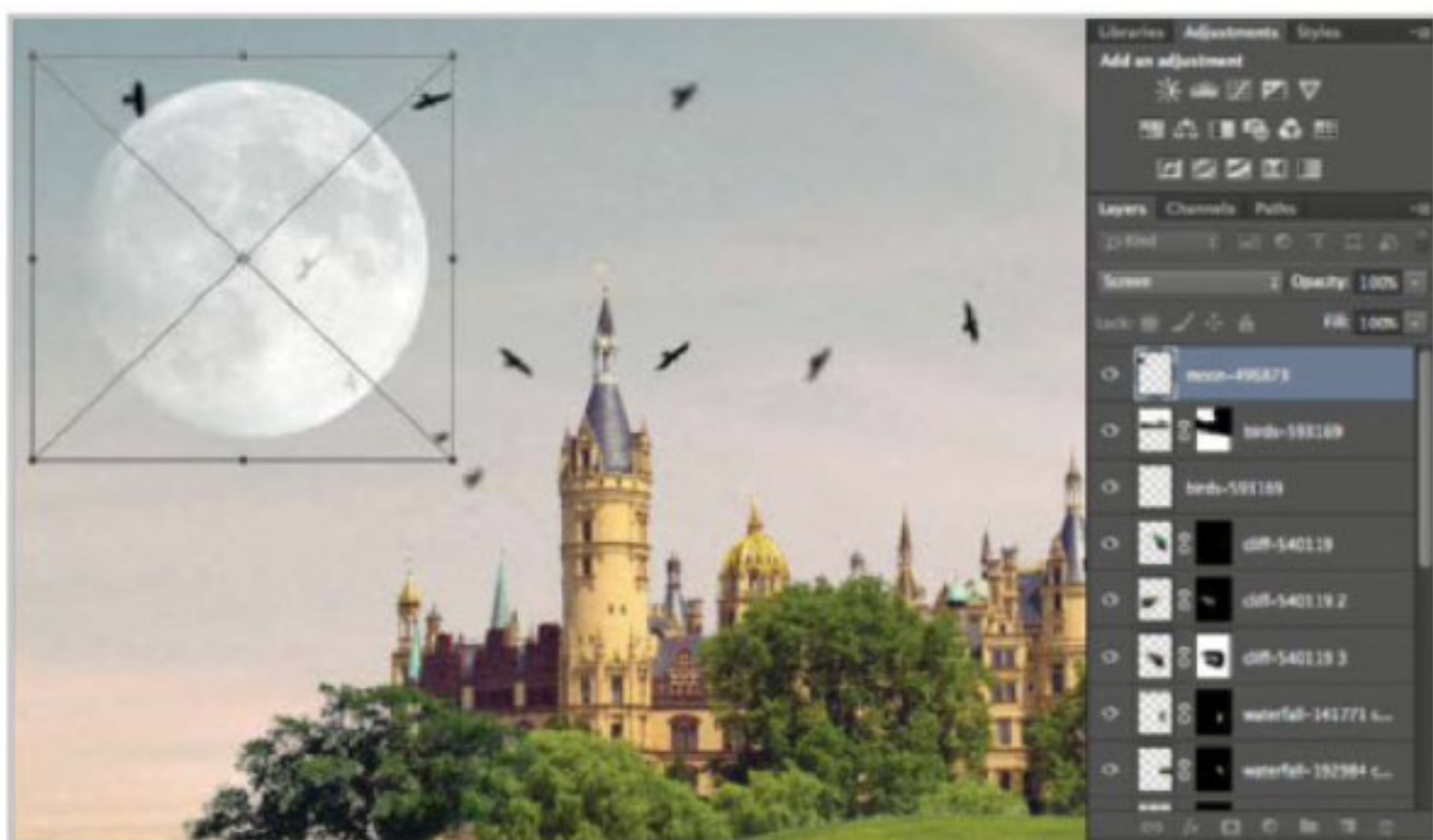
Line the cliffs

07 To connect the grass to the rock, insert your cliff image and mask out everything, except the longest edge of the cliff. Use the same masking technique as the water to capture the texture, and use the Forward Wrap tool in Liquify to reshape if need be.



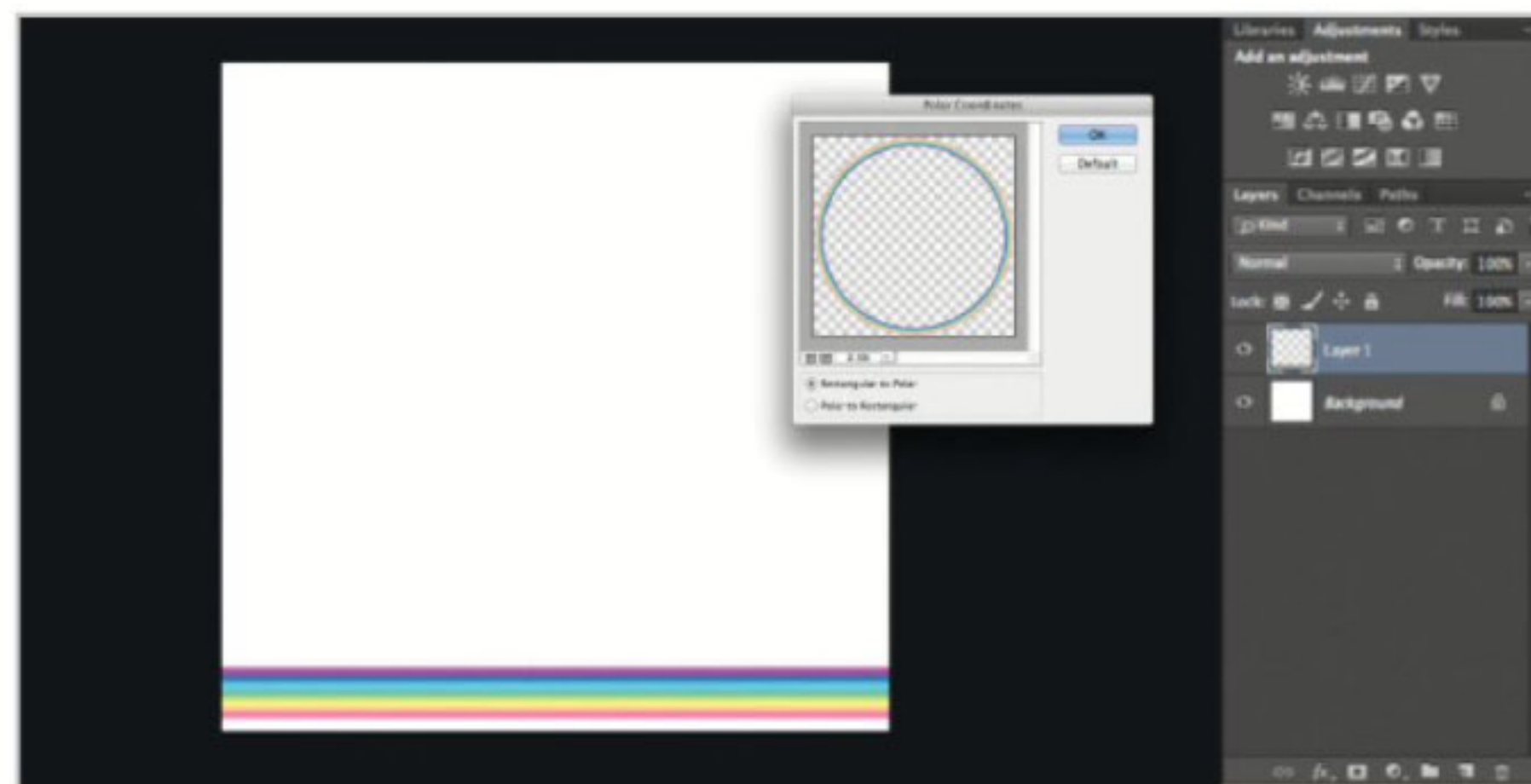
Add some birds

08 Once you've duplicated your cliff and repeated the masking process along the island, add some birds to give your composition a real cliff-top feel. Insert the birds, and use the Threshold to isolate them, as you only need their silhouettes. Blur the occasional one with the Blur tool.



Add a moon

09 With your bird layer set to Multiply, place a moon picture into the composition. Resize it to make it smaller and set the blend mode to Screen; this will automatically create a realistic-looking moon. Set the Opacity of the layer to 80%.



Create a rainbow

10 Create a 9000x9000 document to be big enough, and create a new layer. Add a rainbow gradient on this layer, close to the bottom of the document as we have here. Go to Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates. Copy this curved rainbow into your picture, set Opacity to 40% and set to Screen.



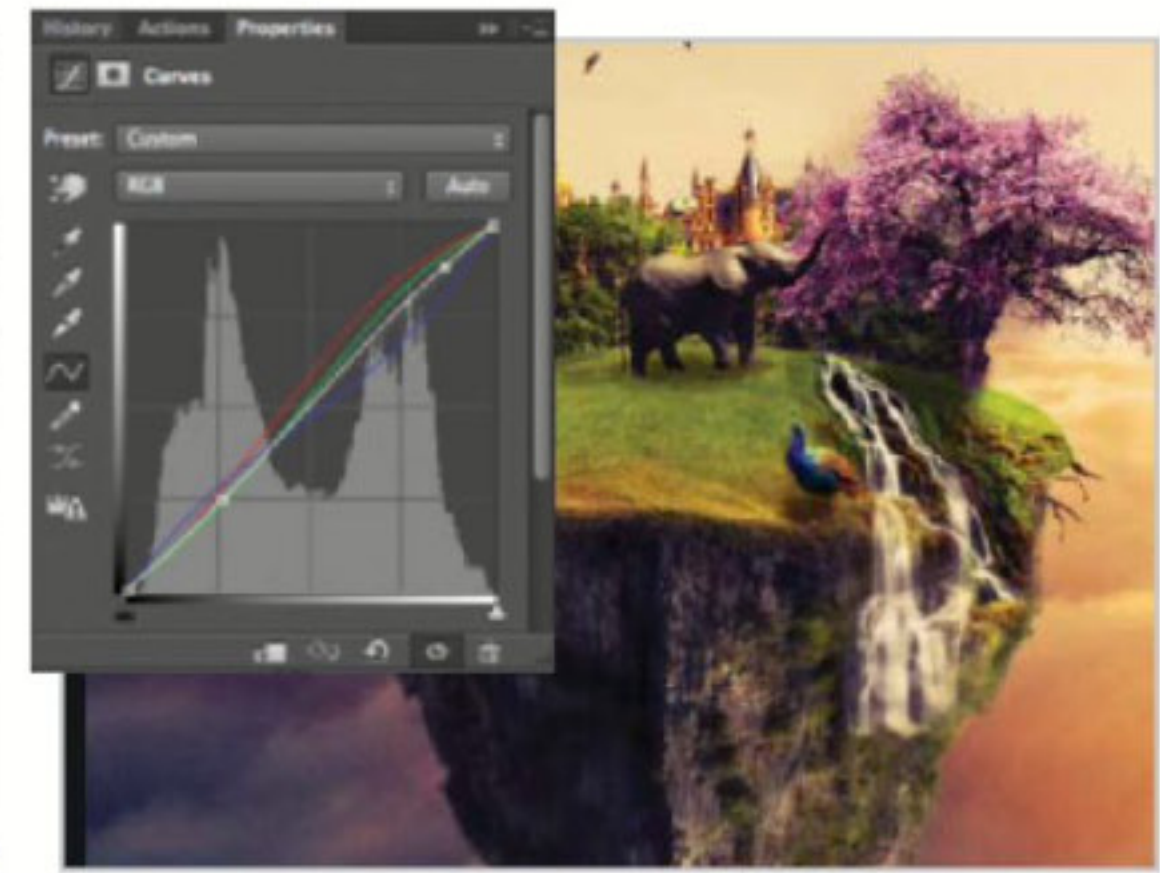
Add animals

11 Place the elephant and peacocks into the composition and use the Quick Selection to select them, before masking out. Use a soft, black brush on the feathery peacock tails to give translucence, and mask the end of the elephant trunk to suggest it's foraging in the tree.



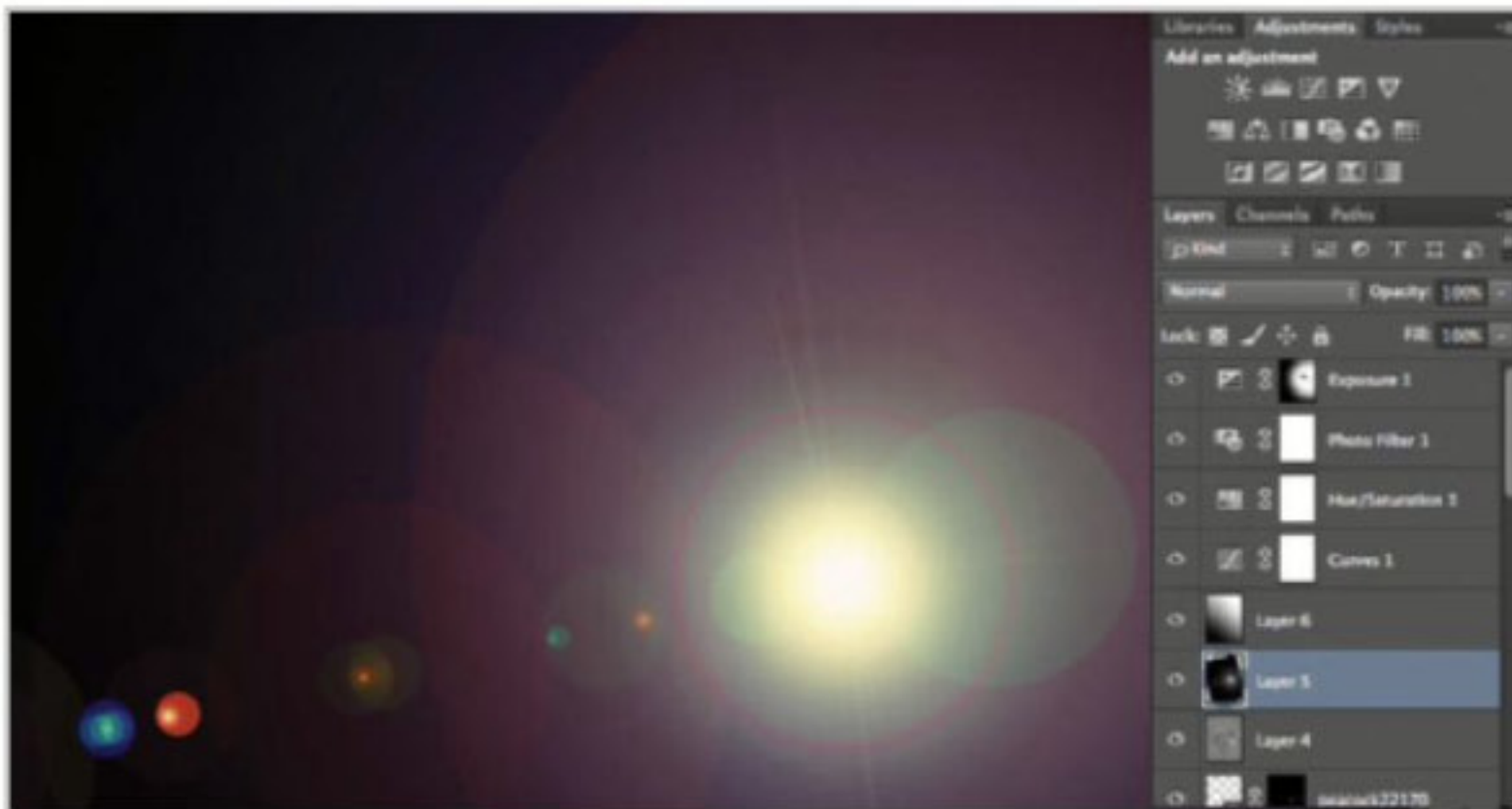
Shade, dodge and burn

12 Add a 50% opaque layer to the top of the stack, fill with neutral grey (#808080) and set to Overlay. Use the Dodge and Burn tools to add highlights and shading. Add layers beneath the subjects and the trees, set to 20% Opacity and shade with a soft black brush.



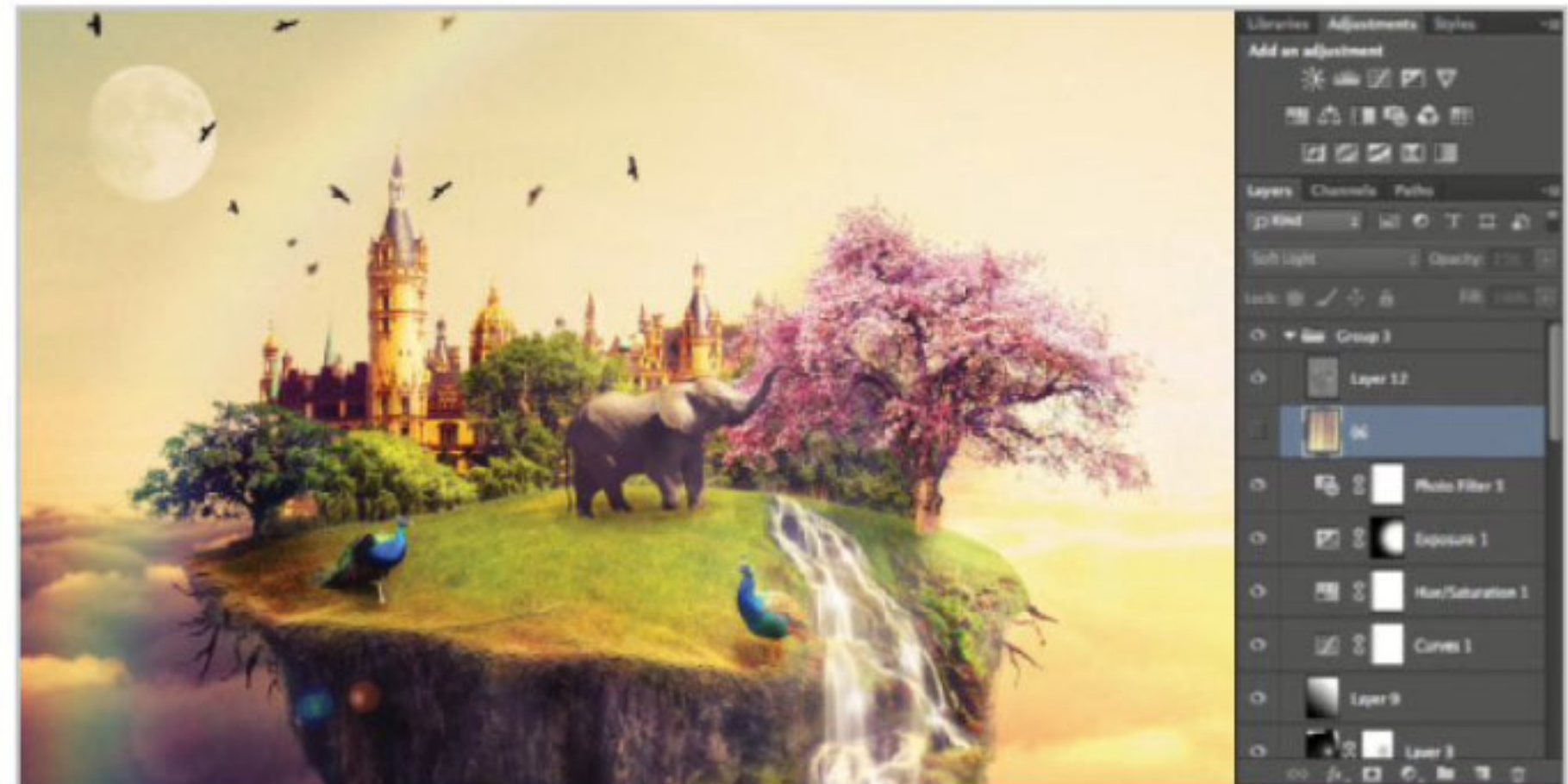
Add colour adjustments

13 Now we're going to add colour adjustments to give the effect of sunrise. Add a Curves layer, and tweak the individual channels as shown. Up the Saturation to +20 with Hue/Saturation and then add a subtle Photo Filter (Warming Filter 85, Density: 20%).



Make lighting adjustments

14 Brighten up the picture with an Exposure adjustment (+0.38), a black-to-white gradient layer (set to Soft Light) and then add a new black layer. Create a Lens Flare, set this layer to Screen, and position so the flare hits the water. Set each of these to 60% Opacity.



Add finishing touches

15 Complete your picture with some subtle touches. Add a light leak set to Soft Light and 25% Opacity, cut one of the birds to a new layer, move it behind the rainbow, and then Perspective Transform (Ctrl/right-click, Free Transform) the rainbow to make it wider at the bottom.

What you'll learn

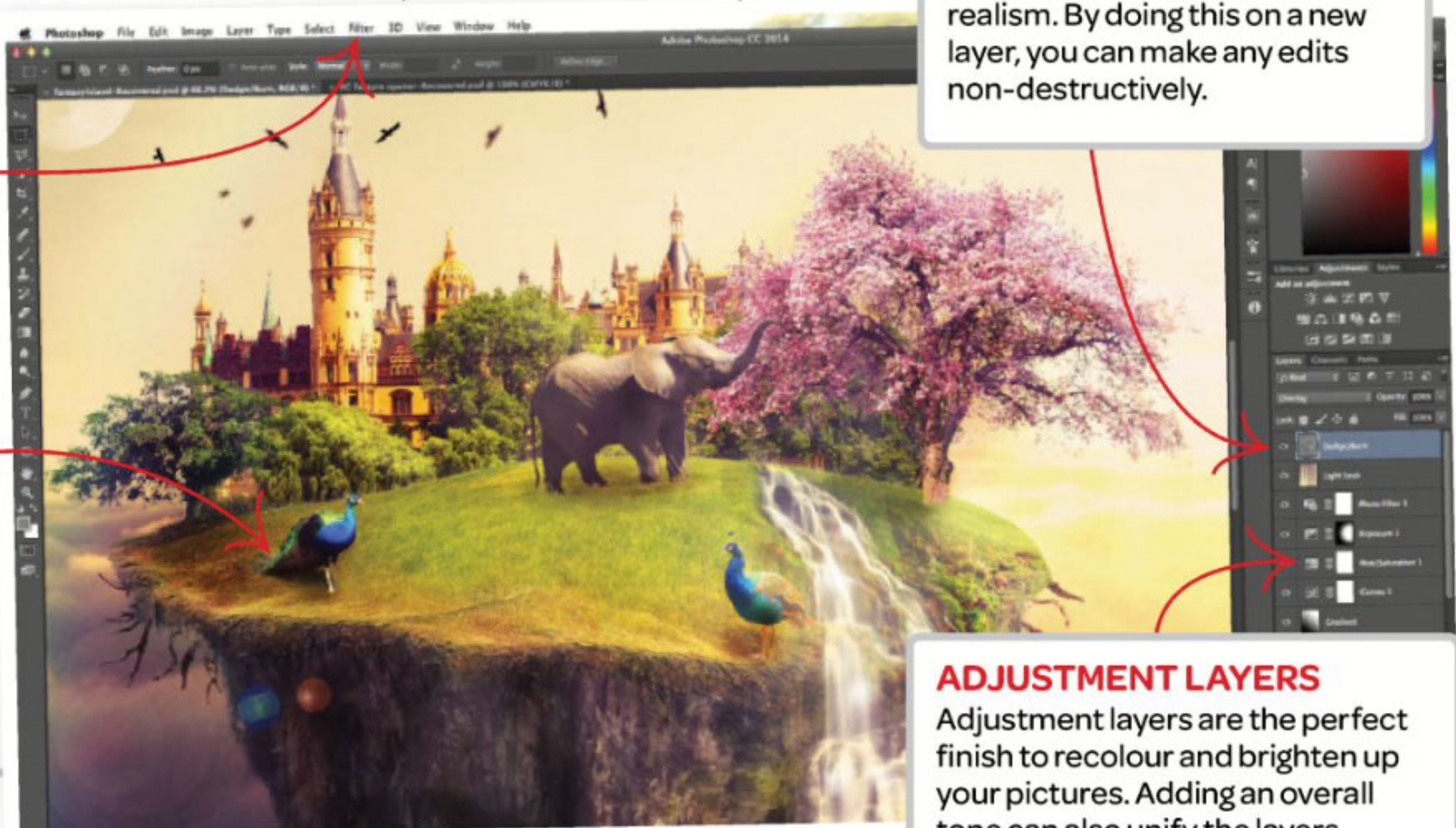
Combine composition techniques

WARP

Go to Filter>Liquify and then you can reshape anything in your picture that needs it. Make sure you warp before you mask, though, as the mask won't warp with the layer on its own.

MASK

Use various selection techniques to isolate your subjects. Soften edges with the Refine Edge tool to blur them, and even mask manually with a soft, black brush.



DODGE AND BURN

Add lighting and shading to your composition to enhance the realism. By doing this on a new layer, you can make any edits non-destructively.

ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Adjustment layers are the perfect finish to recolour and brighten up your pictures. Adding an overall tone can also unify the layers.

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

Use transformations, masking and 3D elements for visual illusions



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Kirk Nelson



"There really is nothing that I find more fun in digital art than creating pieces that make people look twice. Crafting digital illusions can be rewarding and captivating.

"I'm a professional graphics artist with nearly 20 years of experience in photomanipulation and digital illustration. At the heart of it, though, I'm just your friendly neighbourhood graphics geek!"

Make your own digital illusions

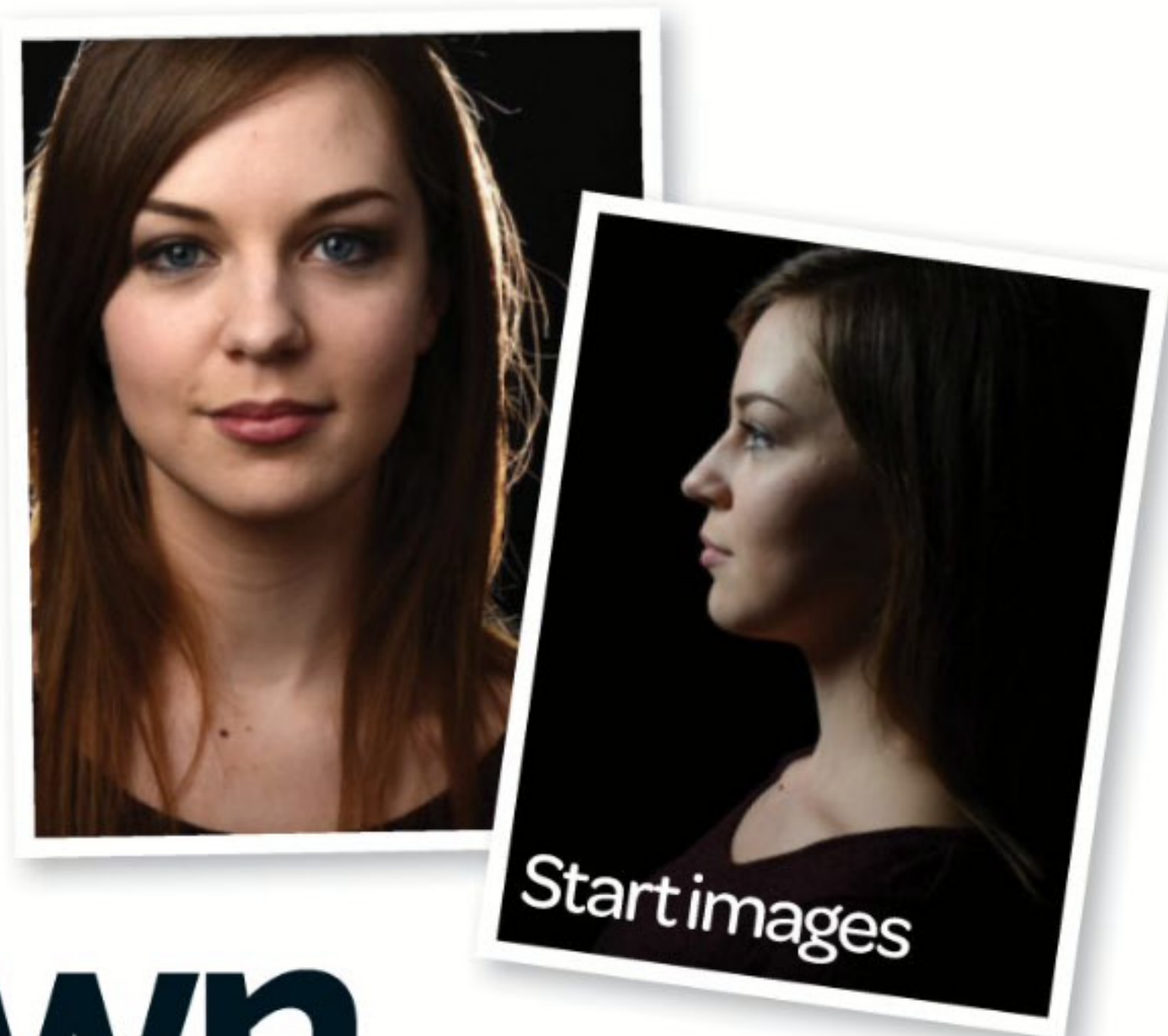
Learn how to defy the laws of perspective and reason by creating illusions that confuse and amaze

One of the greatest benefits of designing artwork is that the natural laws don't need to apply. MC Escher is well known for exploring ways of drawing mind-bending illusions that can't exist in the physical world, but appear to work when drawn out on paper. In these two projects we will follow in that inspiration and create two different illusions that defy all logic!

First we will create a two-faced illusion that is only possible due to the unique symmetry of the human face. The fact that a profile curve fits so nicely against a front-faced shot portrays a confusing beauty that is as fun to explore as it is

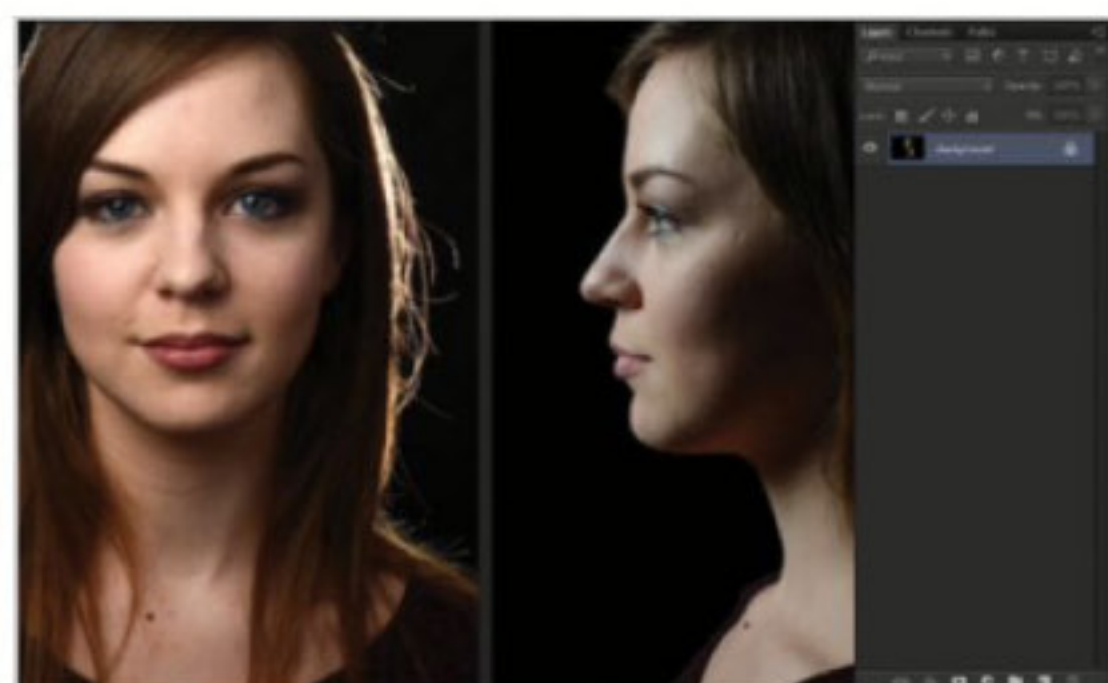
mysterious. Learn the technique with our images, and then try it on your own. Create two-faced illusions of your friends and family!

The second project will have your friends wondering which way is up, as we create a chessboard that appears to be the top and bottom at the same time. This is accomplished with some simple camera tricks while using digital 3D elements. Although the angles are crucial to the illusion, it's really the subtle visual clues that make the effect work. We will be revealing all of the best techniques for crafting an illusion that manages to work both ways.



PROJECT 1 Two faces in one

Make a face that looks forward and sideways



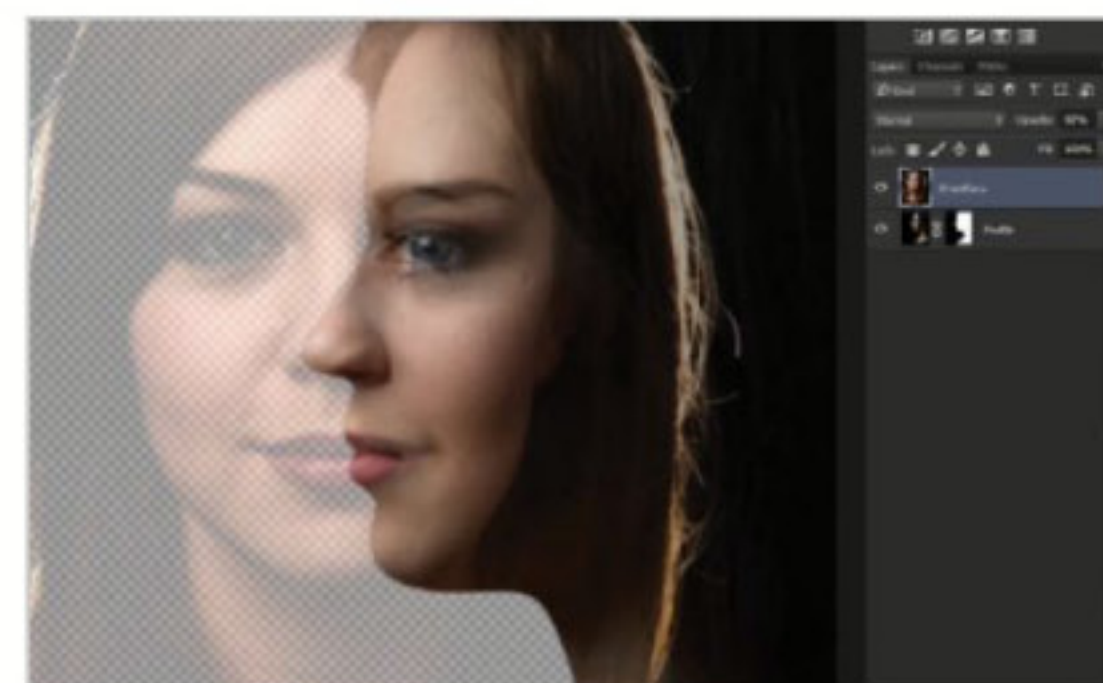
Choose your images carefully

01 In order for this to work, you need two shots of the same model with the same facial expression, in very similar lighting. The only difference between the shots should be the pose. One needs to be a strict profile, the other a direct front-face shot.



Isolate the profile

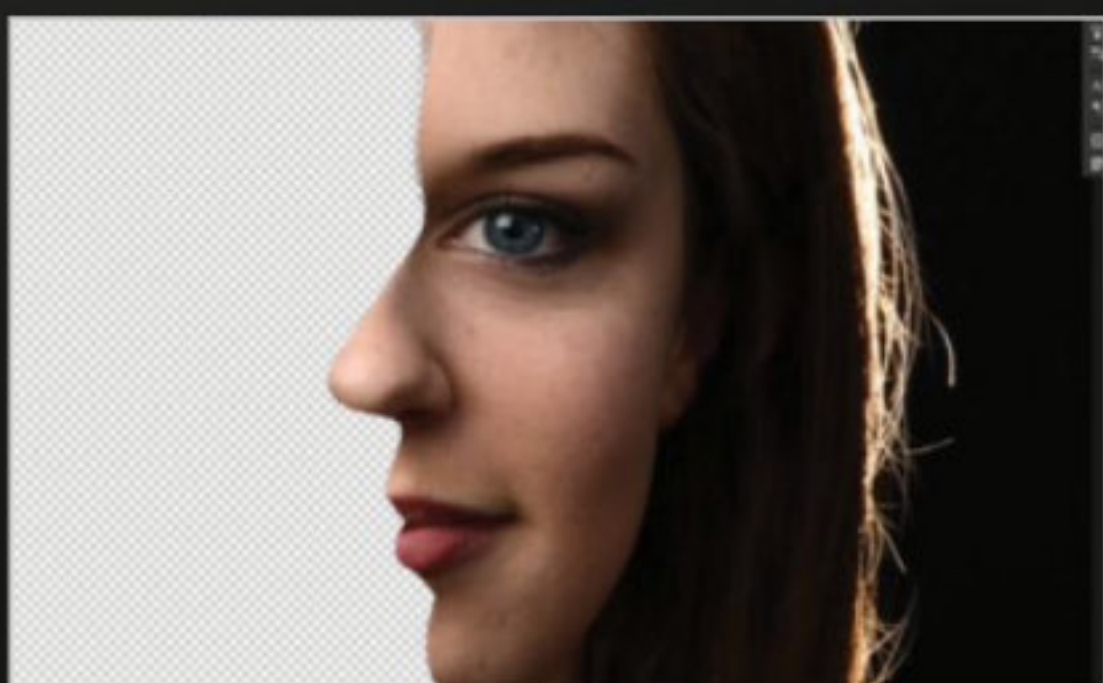
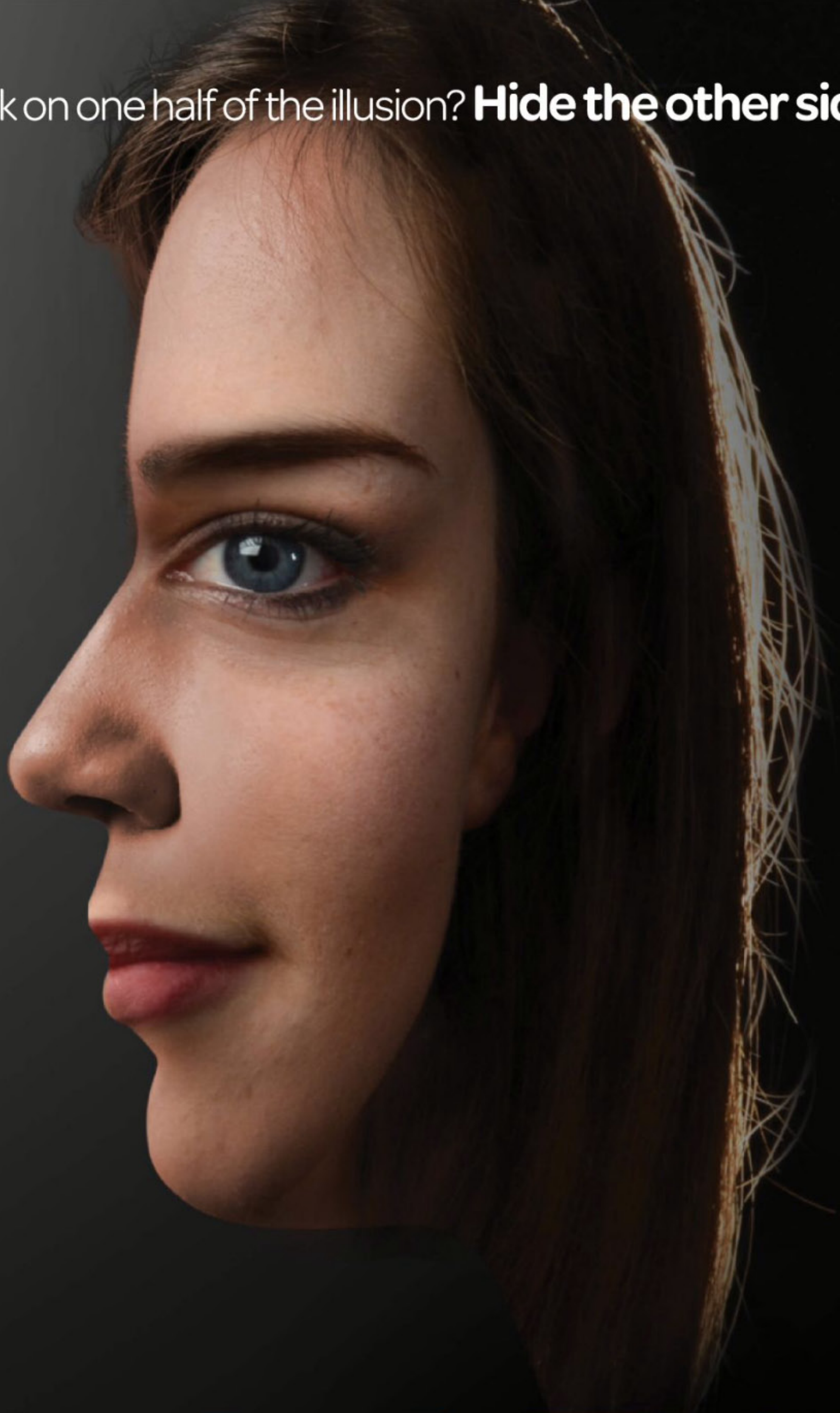
02 Create a selection around the profile shot. The Quick Selection tool will work well for her hair, but the Pen tool will give more accurate results around the contour of her face. Use the selection as a layer mask.



Position the faces

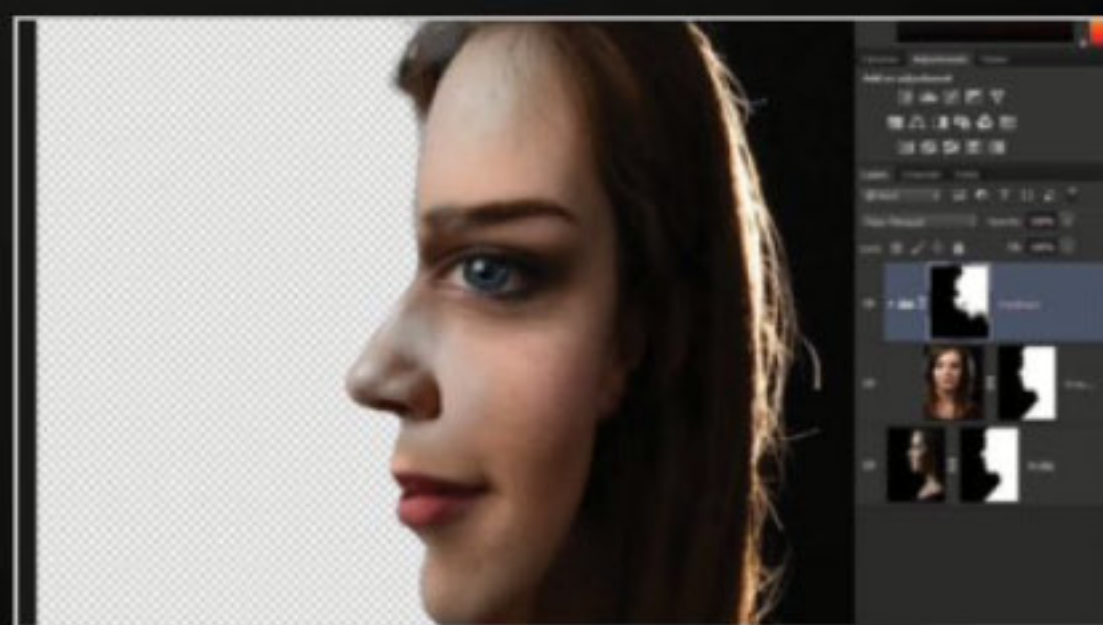
03 Drag the profile face over onto the front-face image. Unlock the front-face Background layer and reduce the Opacity to 60%. Position the profile beneath the front face, and scale and rotate it until the eyes and lips align.

💡 Struggling to work on one half of the illusion? **Hide the other side!**



Copy the mask

04 Hold down the Alt/Opt key and drag the mask thumbnail up to the front-face layer to copy the mask to that layer. Verify that the major structures of the front face, the brow, lips and chin, align with the profile curve.



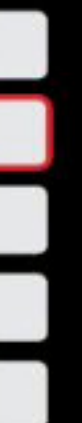
Group mask

05 Create a layer group containing the front-face layer, add a layer mask to the group. This way the front face will inherit the mask properties without disrupting its own layer mask. Use a soft, round brush to mask out the nose and forehead area, revealing the profile elements beneath.



Apply a colour adjustment

06 The skin colours do not match, so add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer over the profile layer. Check the Colorize box and set Hue: 16, Saturation: 33, and Lightness: -4. Use a soft, black brush on the mask to remove colourisation from the hair areas.

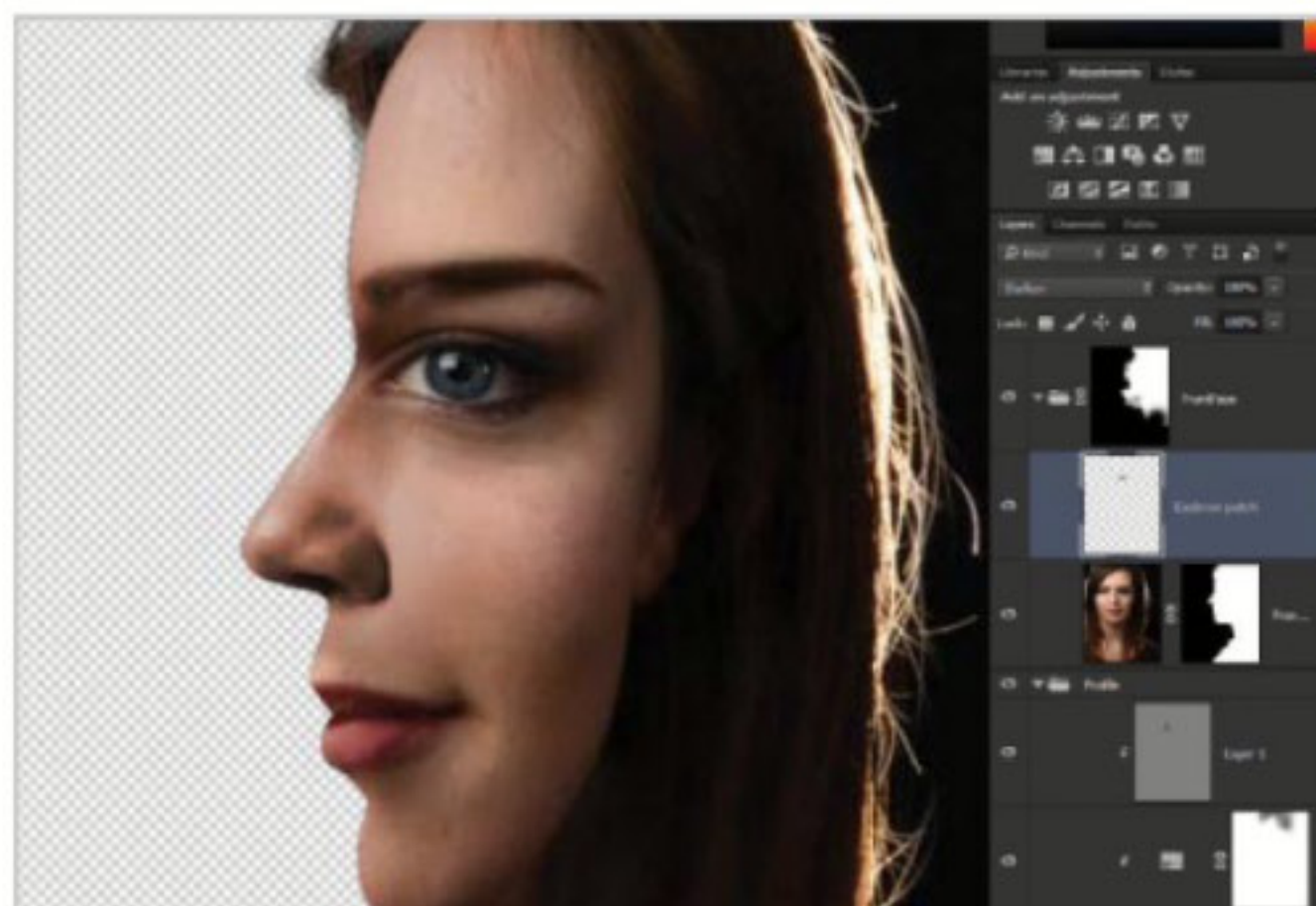


Expert tip



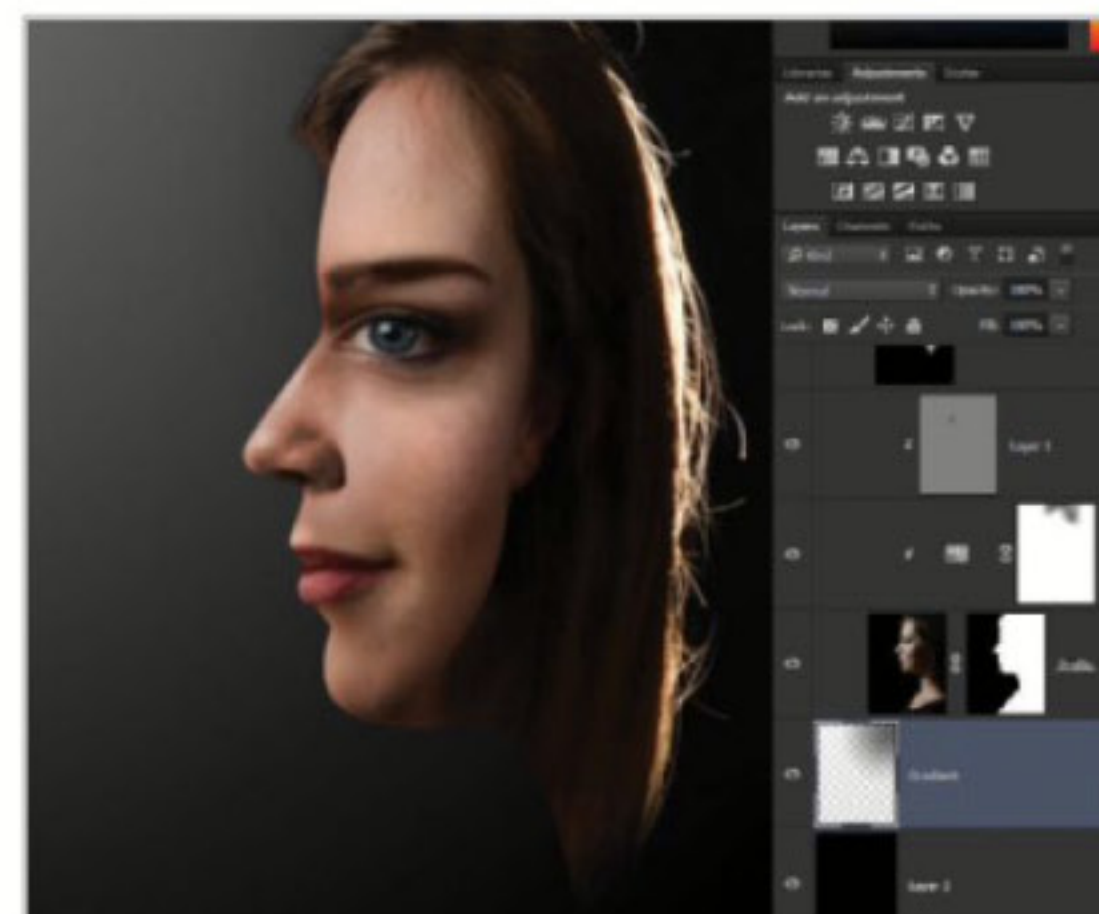
Align facial features

For the facial illusion to work, the main structural elements must align perfectly. Pay close attention to the brow, lips, and chin. This may be difficult to accomplish if the images were not originally shot for this purpose. One of the best ways to make very small, very precise adjustments is with the Puppet Warp tool. This can be used as a Smart Filter and is an excellent option for making slight adjustments without creating obvious warps in the image.



Patch up

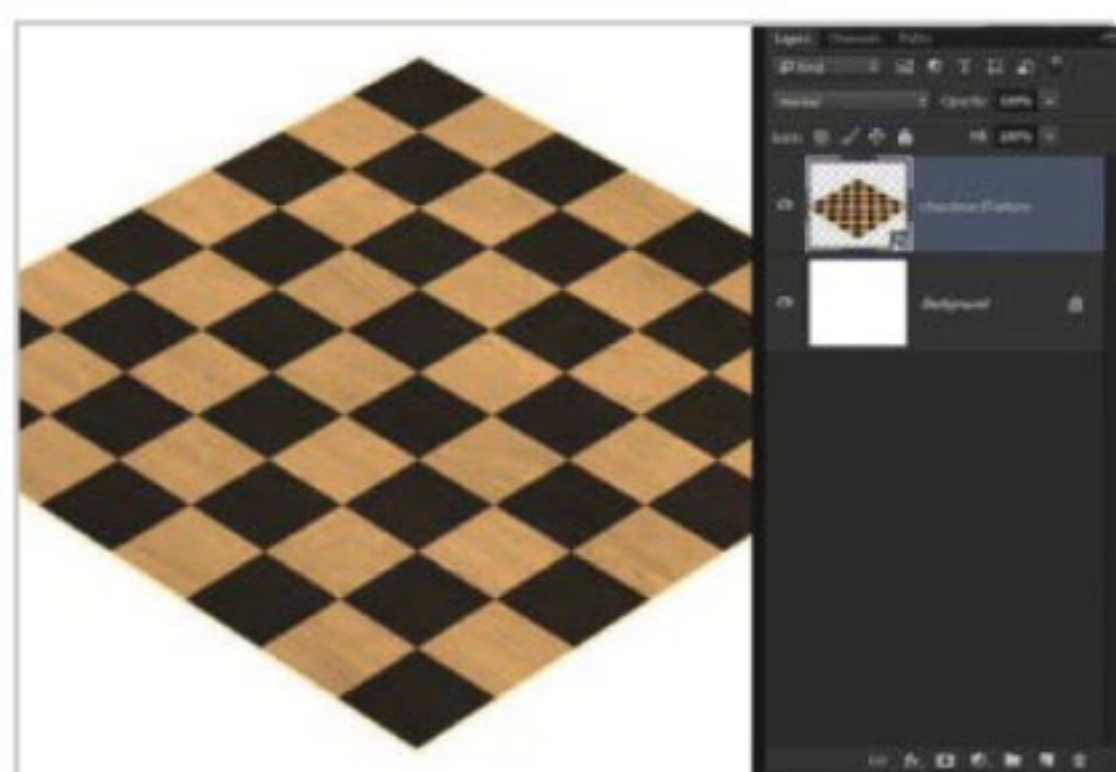
07 If there are any problem areas with the transitions between the two images, a good solution is to create a new blank layer above the others, then use the Clone Stamp tool or the Patch tool, using the Sample All Layers option, to swiftly correct the issues.



Add background effects

08 Group the Profile layer and any associated adjustments together into a Profile group. Use a mask on this group to fade out the bottom portion of the illusion. Then add a black filled layer and a grey gradient for the background.

PROJECT 2 Two directions Design an intriguing directional illusion



Set up the chessboard

01 Create a new file at 2835x2480 pixels. Go to File>Place Embedded and select the 'chessboardTexture.jpg' file from the FileSilo. Use Edit>Transform>Distort to turn the chessboard into a diamond shape that is wider than it is tall.



Turn the chess set 3D

02 Now go to 3D>New 3D Layer from File and select the file 'Chess N080710.3DS' from the FileSilo. Photoshop automatically switches to the 3D workspace and then will add the chessboard and pieces as 3D elements.



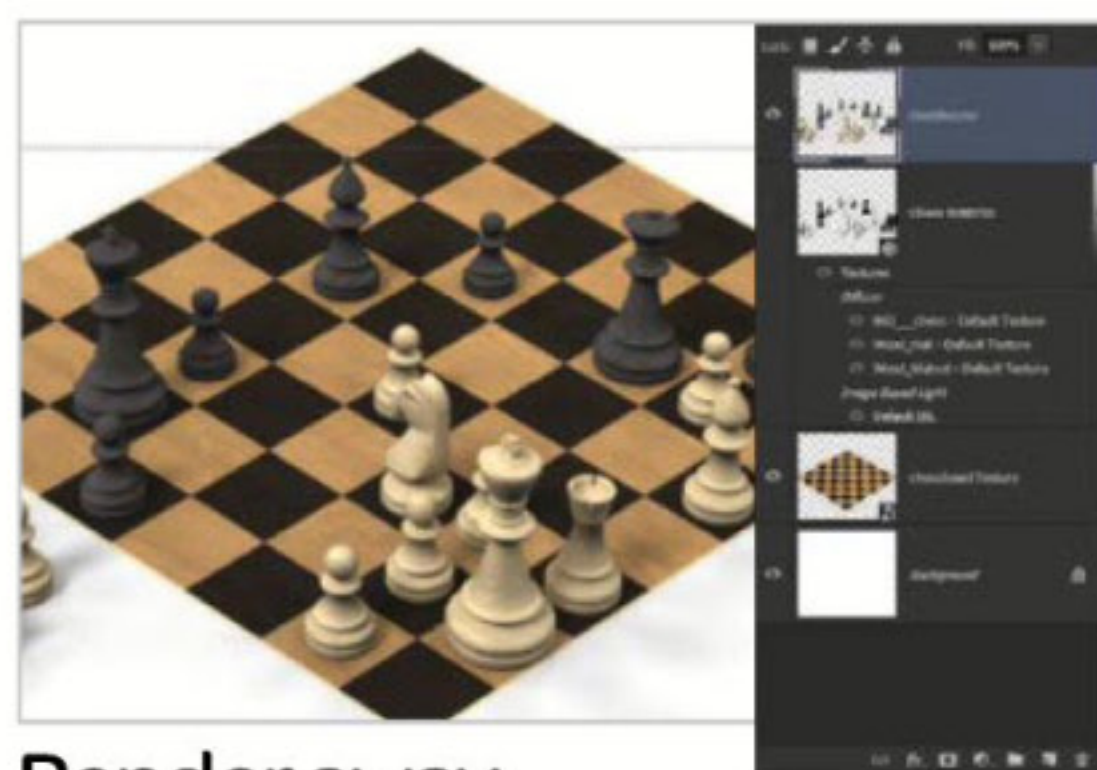
Adjust camera angle

03 In the Layers panel, move the chessboard over the 3D layer, reduce the Opacity to 60%, select the 3D layer again and return to the 3D panel. Select the Current View item and adjust the camera view so the bottom of the 3D chessboard lines up with the texture.



Set the stage

04 Move the chessboard layer back down below the 3D layer and return the Opacity to full 100%. In the 3D layer again, hide the box meshes and move the individual pieces to fit on the squares shown by the chessboard texture.



Render away

05 Assign any materials desired, and adjust the lighting to have soft shadows at around 35%. Create a selection around all the pieces and hit the Render button. When the render is finished, copy it to a new layer to preserve the pixels before moving forward.



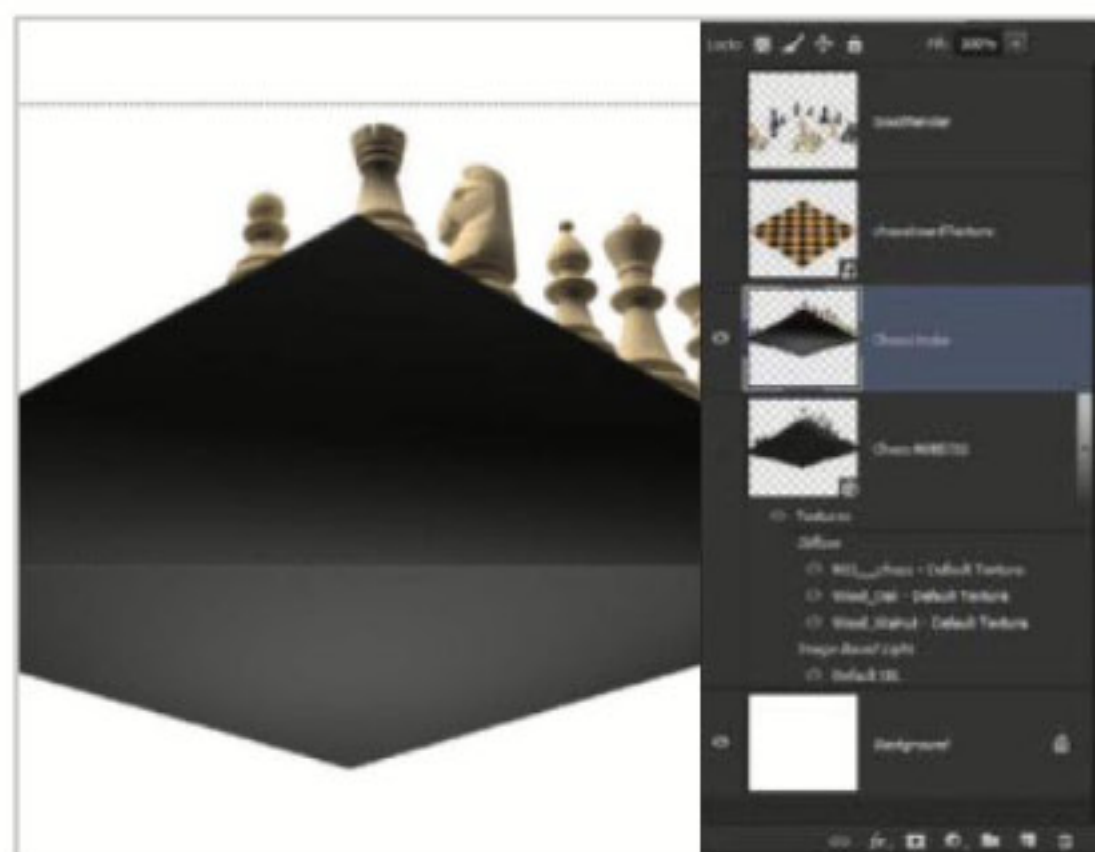
Choose an alternate angle

06 Now reveal the 3D game board again and readjust the camera angle so that you can view the underside of the board. Tilt the view so the top corner of the board aligns with the corner of the chessboard texture.



Align the pieces

07 Move the game pieces to their starting positions. Make use of the top view in the secondary window to help align the pieces. Using the very familiar starting lineup of the chess pieces actually helps the illusion become more believable.



Render again

08 Create a selection surrounding the pieces again. This time keep the board visible, as it will make alignment easier. Render out the top game pieces and copy the render pixels to a new layer.



Assemble layers

09 Reveal both the rendered layers and the chessboard texture layer. Make certain everything lines up correctly, then add any required adjustment layers in order to correct the colour and contrast of the image elements.

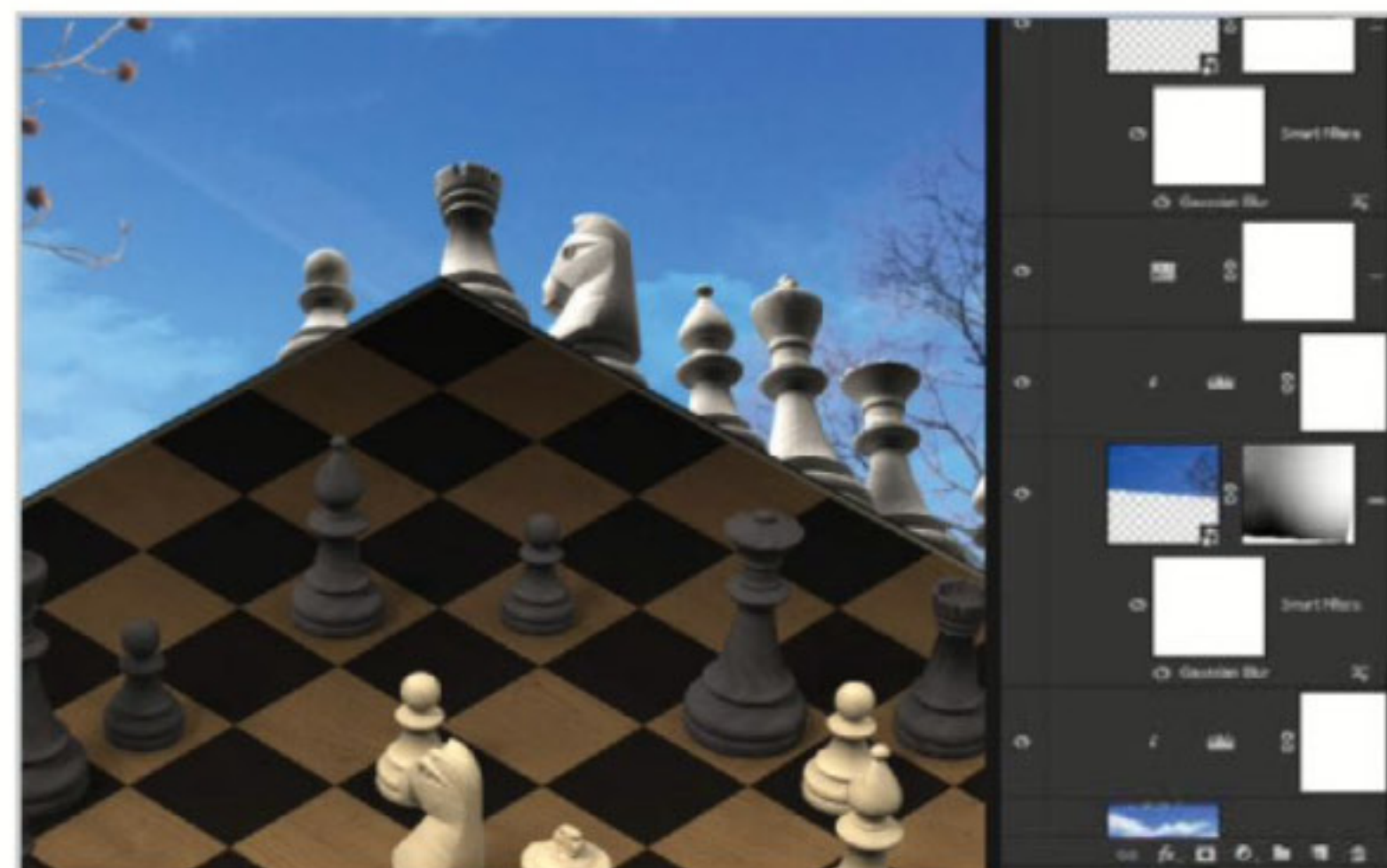


Tutorial Make your own digital illusions



Set the table

10 Add in a tabletop texture to the lower half, as well as additional elements like an open book and some thickness to the game board. These details help create the illusion that the lower game is actually on a tabletop.



Look upwards

11 The upward angle is more challenging because it is less familiar. Compensate for this by including elements that are usually seen in an upward angle, such as the sky, clouds and tree limbs.

RESOLUTION

Bear in mind the resolution of your artwork if you intend to print it and want sharp images. Go for a minimum of 300ppi.



What you can do with it

Make a book of illusions

Publishing your own book of illusions is a rewarding way to add a practical use to your digital artwork, and makes a wonderfully personal alternative to a coffee-table book. There are several online services that provide the ability to upload your artwork and have the printing and binding done for you. There

are a few things to keep in mind when aiming for a printed output; resolution is the most important. Design your work with a minimum of 300ppi for sharp prints. Check your work with a CMYK colour mode to prevent any surprising colour shifts, and always include a 'bleed' if you want to print to the edge.

PROFESSIONAL PRINTING

There are so many online companies out there that will print your artwork in stylish books. Check out www.blurb.com, www.photoworld.com and www.snapfish.com to name a few.

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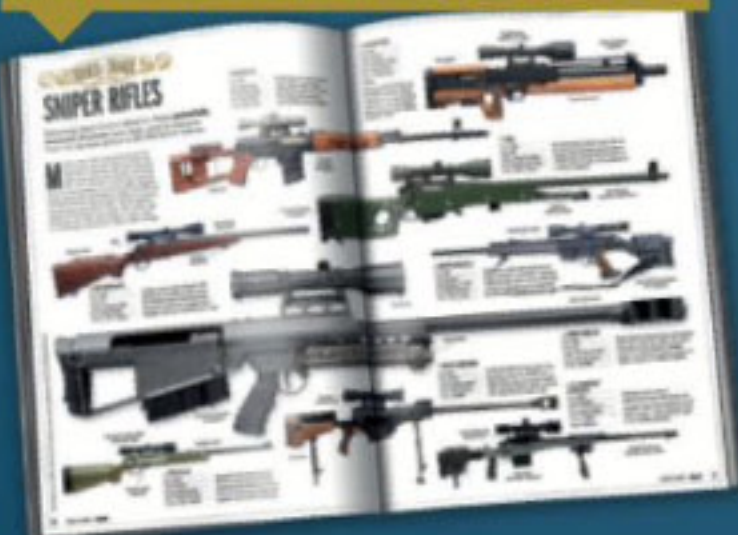
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Tutorial Control your compositions

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Learn this technique using the supplied files

Essentials

Works with



Elements



CS



CC

What you'll learn

How to work with multiple images using masks and new techniques



Time taken
2 hours

Expert

Daniel Sinoca



"I love working with different images to create fun artwork, and Photoshop has all the necessary tools and filters to help me accomplish the most unusual work."

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

Control your compositions

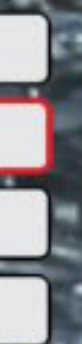
Create a composition using the Clone Stamp tool, warp mode and custom brushes

When you're working with multiple images for building up a composition, it is important to keep everything organised. Always name your layers, link them or create layer groups to help expedite the process. In this tutorial you will learn how to work with different images, make adjustments, apply effects and organise the layers. You'll learn how to

use the Warp tool to reshape the images and much more.

After completing the tutorial you'll understand the process involved in creating a composition and the tools and techniques needed. This tutorial works with Photoshop CC and CS, but we'll show you some alternative methods to use if you're working with Elements.

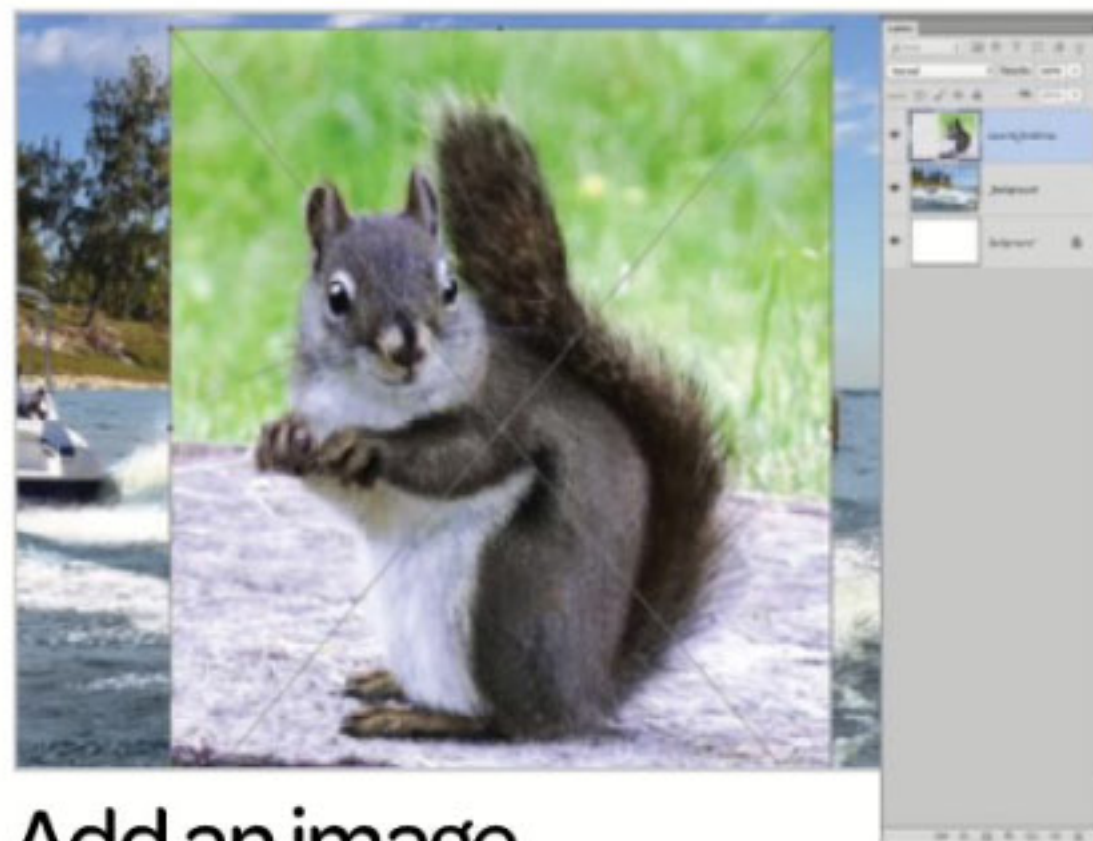
Download the supplied images and brushes from the FileSilo and open the full PSD file to check how the layers are distributed. A quick tip before we get started: when you're adding adjustments or neutral layers, always add a clipping mask, as this will prevent the adjustments from affecting other layers. Check the Expert tip for more on this.





Create a blank file

01 Create a new blank file. Go to File>New (Cmd/Ctrl+N), name your project Water Ski and set the Width to 460mm, Height to 310mm and Resolution to 300pixels/inch. Confirm this by clicking OK. Now go to File>Place 'Background.jpg'. In the tool options bar, increase the Width/Height to 190% and hit Return/Enter.



Add an image

02 Go to File>Place 'Squirrel.jpg'. Resize the image to 125% and hit Enter. Go to Layer>Rasterize>Smart Object (Elements users choose Simplify layer). Grab the Pen tool (P) and create a path around the squirrel (Elements users grab the Polygonal Lasso). On the tool options bar click Make: Selection and hit OK.



Use custom brushes

03 Go to Select>Inverse (Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+I) and hit Delete to extract the background. Go to Edit>Preset>Preset Manager (Elements users go to Edit>Preset Manager>Append) and load the 'Fur brushes'. Now create a new layer, name it Fur and grab the Clone Stamp tool (S).



Set up the brushes

04 Hit F5 and choose Fur_907. In the tool options bar, set Flow to 50%, check Aligned and select Sample: All Layers. Now in the Brush panel, click Shape Dynamics and Scattering. Click on Brush Tip Shape and alter the Spacing. Adjust the brush Angle and Size as needed.



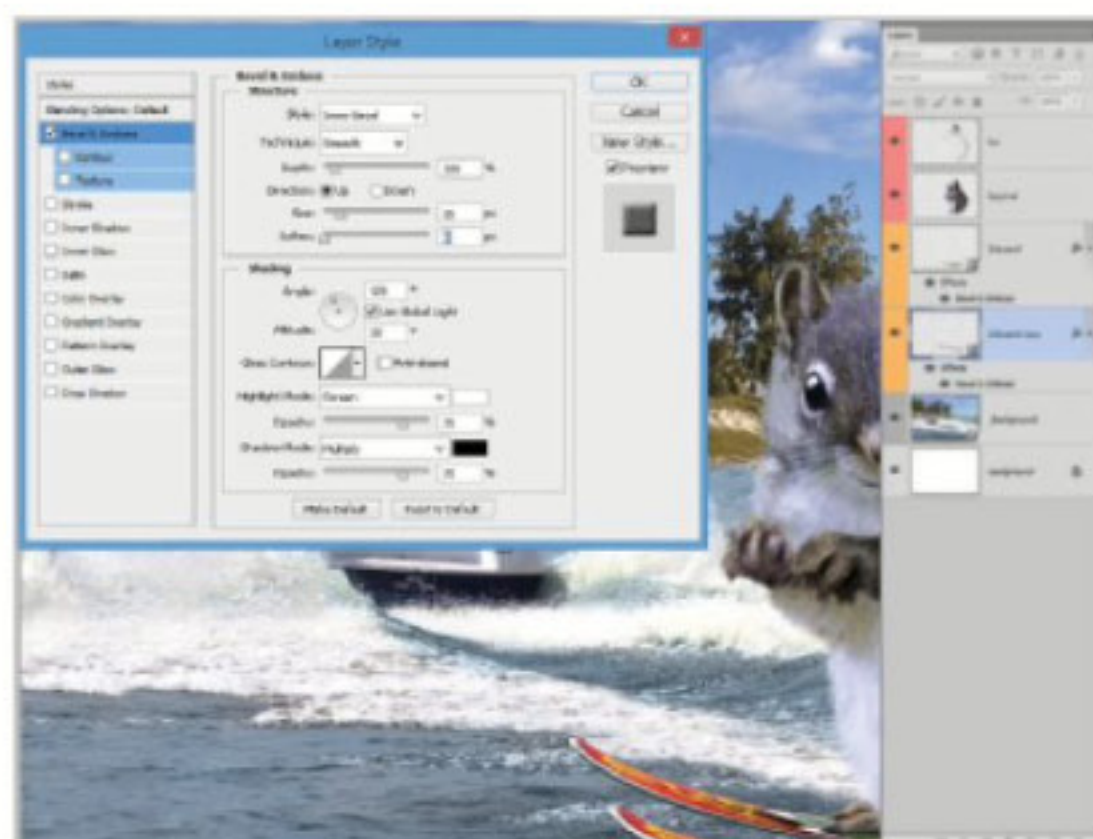
Create the fur

05 Choose an appropriate brush size. Hold down Opt/Alt and click on the area of the image to sample it. Release Opt/Alt and start to paint the fur around the image. Remember to change the Angle and Size to try to match the same direction and angle of the original fur.



Add the ski boards

06 Go to File>Place 'Skiboard.png' and hit Return/Enter (place it under the Squirrel layer). Open the Free Transform tool (Cmd/Ctrl+T). Drag the handles to scale horizontally, switch to Warp mode and bend the tip to create a curved shape.



Choose a Layer Style

07 Now go to Layer>Layer Style>Bevel and Emboss. Choose Style: Inner Bevel, Depth: 100%, Direction: Up, Size: 25px, Soften: 0, Angle: 120, Altitude: 30 and click OK. Hit Cmd/Ctrl+J to duplicate it and place under the other foot.



Place the life jacket

08 Go to File>Place 'Life jacket.png'. Rasterize/Simplify the layer. Grab the Rectangular Marquee tool, select each side of the jacket and cut/paste in its own layer. Go to Edit>Transform>Warp. Drag the handles to shape the jacket. Add a layer mask and paint the hands and arm to hide.



Add the ski handle

09 Go to File>Place 'Ski handle.png'. Adjust the size and hit Return/Enter. Add a layer mask (Layer>Layer Mask>Reveal All). Grab a soft tip brush, set the Foreground colour to black and paint over the handle bar to hide it.



Puppet warp

10 Now head to File>Place 'Rope.png' and hit Return/Enter. Go to Edit>Puppet Warp (Elements users head to the Liquify filter instead). Click on the warp mesh to set a pin, set one in each extremity and one in the middle. Drag the middle pin to create a nice curve.



Add more images

11 Head to File>Place 'Splash.jpg'. Resize and hit Return/Enter. Place on top of the layer stack. Now change the blending mode for the layer to Screen. Use a Levels adjustment layer (Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Levels) to enhance the contrast.



Group layers

12 Now all the elements are in place, it is time to create groups to add the final touches. Select the Squirrel and the Fur layers and press Cmd/Ctrl+G, name the new group Squirrel. Repeat it for the handle/rope, water ski and life jacket (Elements users duplicate the layers and then merge).



Add shadows

13 Open the Water Ski group and create a new layer, name it Shadow. Grab a small brush and paint the shadows under the ski. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Set Radius: 20px and hit OK. Repeat to add shadows under the arm and the life jacket.



Add more fur

14 Create a new layer on top of the layer stack and name it Extra Fur. Grab the Clone tool and repeat step 5. Add extra fur, especially over the life jacket. Grab the Brush tool, hit F5, choose the whiskers2 brush and add the whiskers.



Add highlights

15 Hit Shift+Cmd/Ctrl+N and name it Neutral. Check the Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask option, set the mode to Overlay, check Fill Overlay Neutral Colour and hit OK. Grab the Dodge/Burn tool. Set the Range to Midtones and paint over the images (place it over the squirrel and life jacket groups).

Expert tip



Adjust and clip

The adjustment layers are an important element in enhancing any composition. For example, you can use them to make tonal adjustments to your image without permanently changing the pixels. The adjustment layer command is also available in Elements. To add an adjustment layer, go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer. Don't forget to add a clipping mask. To do this, select the layer you want to clip and go to Layer>Create Clipping Mask.



5 OF THE BEST... Text effects

Make your type stand out with some cool and quirky effects

01 MASKING

Masks work on text layers just like any other. Click the mask icon and use brushes to erase parts of your text, and your edits will remain regardless of whether you change the text itself. You might want to edit the text characters or just add a pattern, as we have.



02 DROP SHADOWS

Layer styles can provide a host of text options, and drop shadows are the perfect way to accentuate a layer subtly. Ctrl/right-click your layer and select Blending Options, before locating the Drop Shadow option. Here, you'll have the choice of distance spread and size, along with direction, opacity and even colour. Separate the text from the shadow slightly by setting a wide distance, and choose the Multiply mode to blend in your shadow with the background.

04 CLIPPING MASKS

Changing the colour of your text can bring your type to life, but clipping masks are a great option for adding patterns, textures or gradients. Simply add whatever you're looking to use as a new layer just above the text layer, before Ctrl/right-clicking the layer and choosing Add Clipping Mask. This gives you more control than using the Pattern or Gradient Overlay options on the Layer Styles menu, as you can build up overlays and blend them together.

03 STROKE

To add an outline around your text, choose Stroke from the Layer Styles menu. Rather like a drop shadow, a stroke can give your typeface a little clarity from the background, though it's a little less subtle than a simple blurring behind the text. Strokes can be used to quickly push attention to your headline, or to keep the pattern on your text from blending with the background. Alter Opacity and the blend mode for a slightly more understated effect.

05 SPACING

The spacing between the characters of your text can actually add to or detract from the effect you're searching for. Widely-spaced text is great for minimal headlines or classy posters, whereas setting the slider to minus digits, so the characters are almost touching, might be a good idea if you're putting a whole paragraph over a picture. Go to the Text menu and slide from left to right with the 'VA' icon to toggle. Use the icon above to toggle line spacing.

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What you'll learn

How to use layer styles, blend modes and Gaussian Blur



Time taken
45 mins

Expert

Andre Villanueva



"Layer styles are among my favourite features in Photoshop. I love discovering new combinations, like those explored in this tutorial."

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

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied file

Make a neon light effect

Set your text alight with a combination of layer styles, blend modes and Gaussian Blur

Just as flickering neon signs beckon nighttime travellers to midnight destinations, neon effects can really draw viewers to your message or brand. The pairing of a gloomy, gritty backdrop and intense neon lighting is definitely potent. Let's create this effect with the help of layer styles, blend modes and Gaussian Blur.

We'll begin with a brick wall and dress it in the shadows of night. Next, we'll add a bit of text using an appropriate font – we used BP Neon. The core

styling will come from Bevel & Emboss and Outer Glow layer styles, with Inner Shadow and Drop Shadow rounding things out. We'll duplicate and use blend modes and Gaussian Blur to provide an increasingly illuminated look. A few adjustment layers up the top will finalise the look.

After the tutorial, we'll provide a little insight into putting the techniques to work in a mock website. Being able to repurpose your print-ready visuals into 72ppi web-friendly assets is definitely handy.



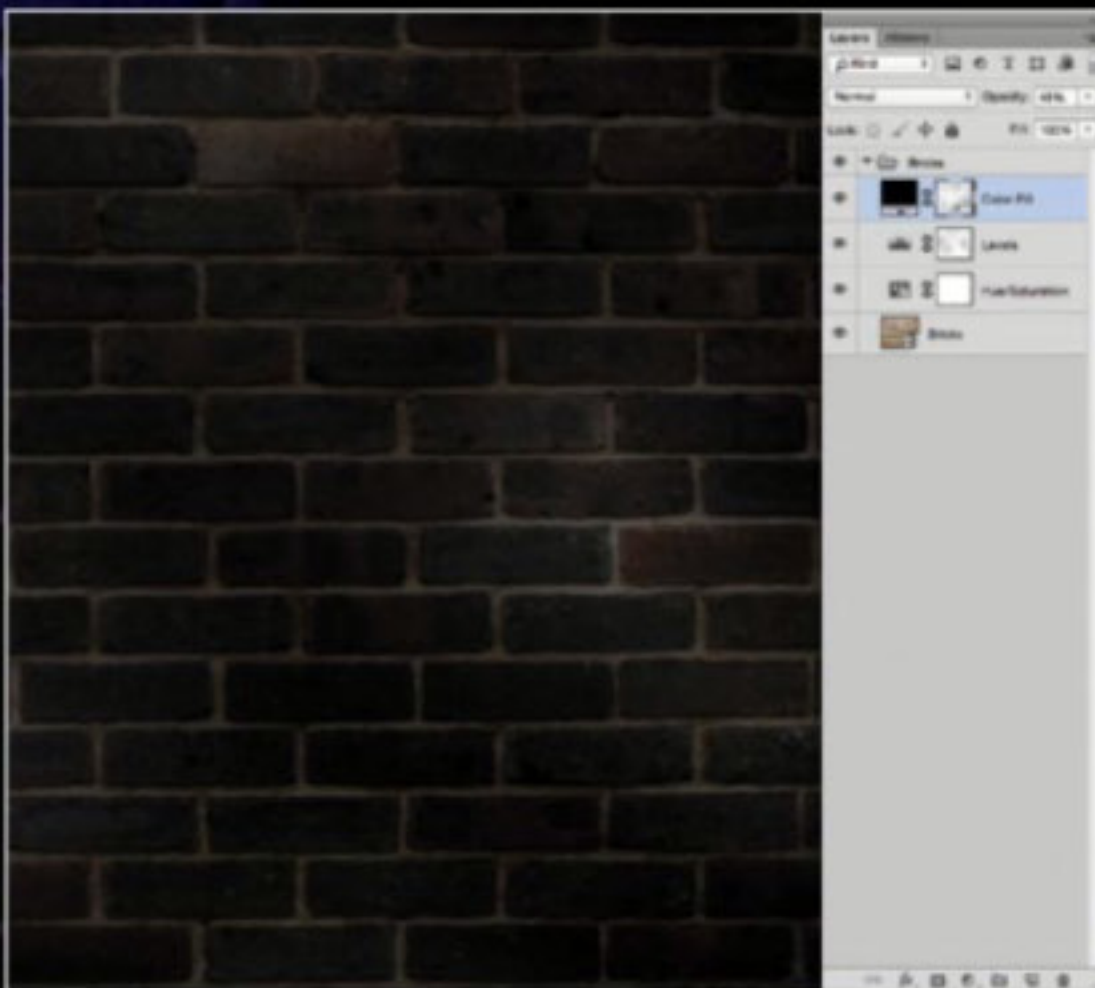
Desaturate

01 Open 'Start.psd'. Click the Create New Fill/Adjustment button in the Layers palette and choose Hue/Saturation. Slide Saturation left to -60. Click the Create New Fill/Adjustment button again and choose Levels.



Adjust levels

02 Slide Midtones under the histogram to the right, and for Output Levels, slide Highlights to the left. Adjust until suitably dismal. Set the Foreground colour to black. With a Soft Round Brush at 20%, paint to reduce darkening in areas.



Increase darkness

03 Click the Create New Fill/Adjustment button again and choose Solid Color. Pick black (#000000). Lower the adjustment layer's Opacity to 45%. Click on the layer mask. Paint black to reduce in areas.



Create text

04 Click the Create a New Layer button in the Layers palette. Select the Horizontal Type tool. Pick an appropriate font (we used BP Neon) and large font size. Set Foreground colour to #928bf0. Type out text, then confirm. Drop Fill to 75%. Adjust with Character palette. Position with the Move tool.



Add a drop shadow

05 Let's add a drop shadow to help letters pop off the wall. Click the fx button in the Layers palette, choose Drop Shadow. Set to Opacity: 90, Angle: -90, Global Light: ticked, Distance: 19, Spread: 27 and Size: 90.



Add an Outer Glow

06 With the dialog option still open, let's get our glow on. Choose the Outer Glow from the left. Set the Blend Mode: Color Dodge, Opacity: 100. Noise: 10, Colour: #ffffbe, and Size: 250.



Add an Inner Shadow

07 Let's add a bit of inner shadow to assist with dimension. Choose Inner Shadow from the left. Set to Blend Mode: Color Burn, Opacity: 100, Use Global Light: ticked, Distance: 5, and Size: 24. And now for some added heft...

Expert tip



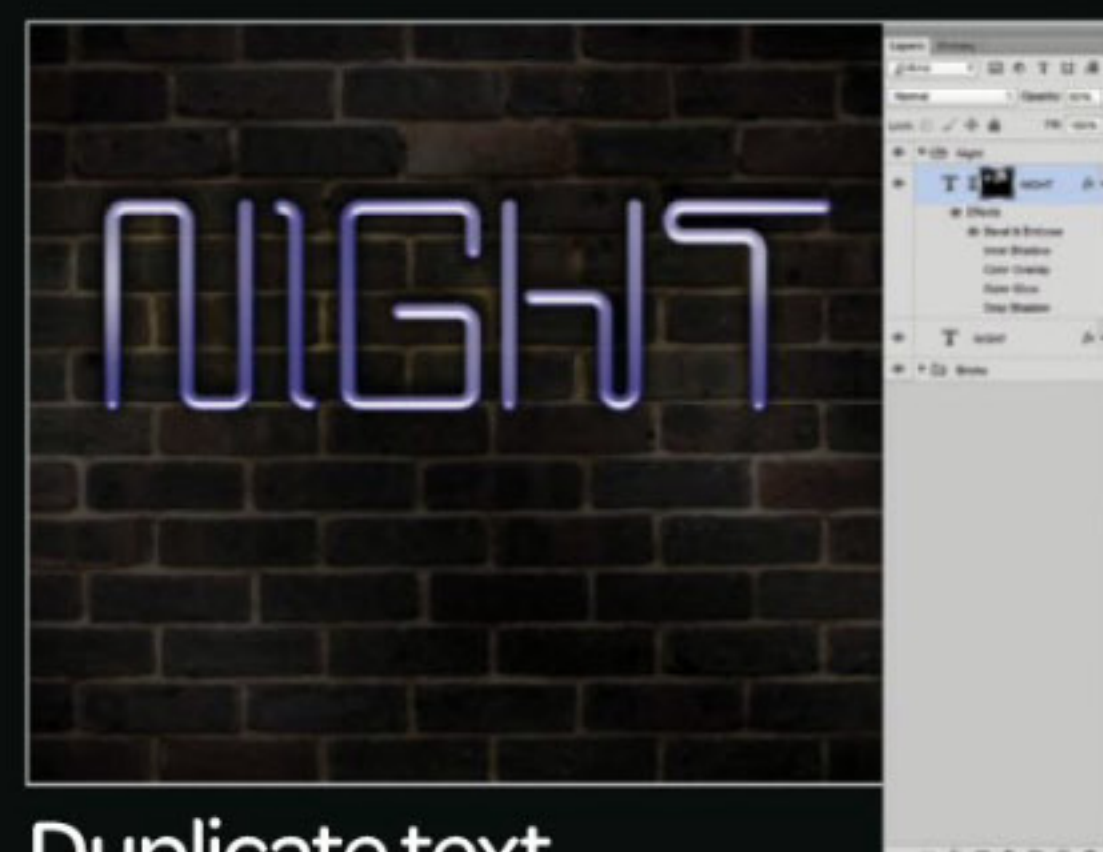
Experiment with styles

As you've witnessed in this tutorial, layer styles are a straightforward and effective method of transforming pixels from ordinary to outstanding. Take some time to experiment with combinations of styles. To save your styles, have the decorated layer selected, then click the Create New Style button at the bottom of the Styles palette. Be on the lookout for style packs online (they have the .asl extension). Load them via the Styles palette menu.



Add Bevel & Emboss

08 Choose Bevel & Emboss from the left. Set to Style: Inner Bevel, Technique: Chisel Hard, Depth: 667, Size: 30, Soften: 16, Use Global Light: ticked, Altitude: 11, Highlight Mode: Color Dodge, Highlight Opacity: 100, and Shadow Opacity: 40. Choose Contour on the left and pick Cone-Inverted. Click OK.



Duplicate text

09 Duplicate with Cmd/Ctrl+J. Change colour to white in the Character palette. Turn eyeball icons off for all styles, apart from Bevel & Emboss. Set Opacity to 50% and Fill to 100%. Click the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers palette. Paint black with a Soft Round brush at 80% Opacity to reduce.



Duplicate and blur

10 Select the original text and duplicate it. Adjust: Drop Shadow: Opacity: 75, Spread: 0, Size: 32. Bevel & Emboss: Technique: Smooth, Depth: 50, Size: 5, Shadow Opacity: 85. Click OK. Right-click layer and choose Convert to Smart Object. Move to the top. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, use 100 pixels. Click OK.



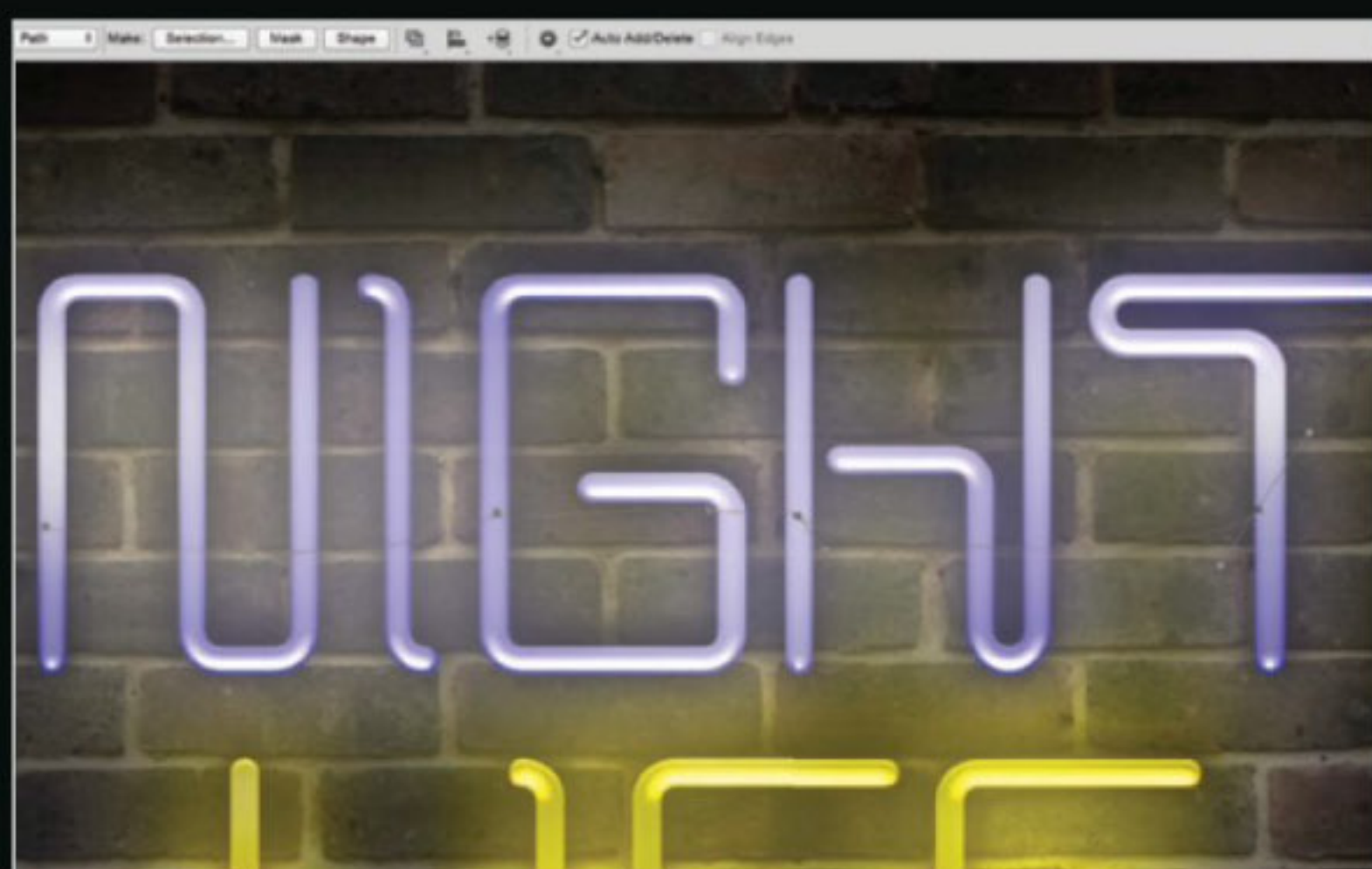
Brighten up

11 Change the blend mode to Linear Light. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J again to duplicate the current layer. Change the blend mode to Screen. Drop Fill to 50%. Feel free to experiment with Fill to add more or less glow.



Repeat steps

12 Now go through and repeat steps 4 through to 11 to add another bit of neon text below. Use the same colour or try a different one (here we used #ffe400 for the text).



Create a path

13 Select the Pen tool. Set to Path in the options bar. Click and drag to create several smooth points, resulting in a slightly curving path. If you need to adjust the path, select the Direct Selection tool, then click and drag on the path to refine.

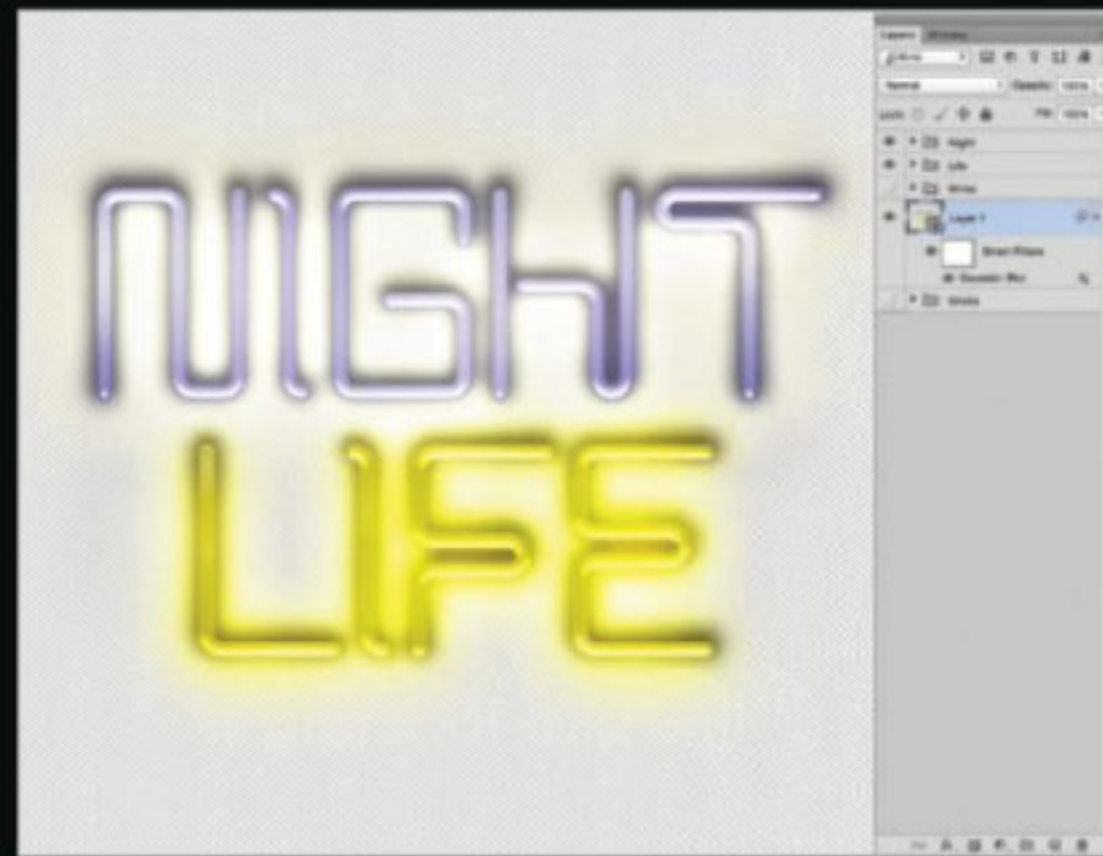
Stroke path

14 Add a new layer, move it below the neon letter layers. Select the Brush tool. Set Foreground colour to #414141. Choose a Hard Round brush, set to 10px, 100% Opacity. In the Paths palette, name the work path Wire. Click Stroke Path at the bottom of the palette.



Style the wire

15 Apply Bevel & Emboss. Set to: Technique: Smooth, Depth: 199, Size: 8, Use Global Light: ticked, Highlight Opacity: 20, Shadow Opacity: 0. Click OK. Create another wire using the same steps. Use the Move tool to position the wires.



Merge text

16 Turn off all layer visibility except the text layers. Add a new layer, move below wires. Press Cmd/Ctrl+Option/Alt+Shift+E. Right-click, choose Convert to Smart Object. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, use 40 pixels. Click OK. Turn visibility back on for hidden layers.



Duplicate merge

17 Duplicate a few times with Cmd/Ctrl+J. Position where they can add extra lighting. Reduce by lowering the Opacity (try 10-20%). You can also apply layer masks and paint with black using a Soft Round brush to reduce/remove in areas.



Boost colour

18 Select the top layer. Click the Create New Fill/Adjustment button, choose Solid Color. Pick # 9cf7af. Set blend mode to Divide, and drop Opacity to 80%. Click the layer mask, paint black using a Soft Round brush at 60% Opacity to reduce in areas.



Tweak colour

19 Click the Create New Fill/Adjustment button again, choose Color Balance. For Midtones, set to (from top to bottom) -60, -30, +60. Invert the mask. Paint black in the layer mask using a Soft Round brush at 60% Opacity to reduce in areas.

FADED EDGES
To incorporate graphics into responsive websites and backgrounds that fill the screen, use layer masks to fade edges. The bricks faded to black.

What you can do with it

Create for the web

Since the web has become intertwined with our lives, it's imperative as artists and designers to be able to prepare our work as web-friendly assets. It's a good idea to keep base PSDs at 300 ppi so they can always be deployed for print. When ready to put them online, go to File>Save for Web, and choose the appropriate format: JPEG for photographic images, PNG for images with transparency, and GIF if you've created animation via the Timeline palette. Adjust image size as needed, and play with compression to strike a good balance between file size and quality. Click Save.



STARRING

HARRY HARMAN

DEREK PARKER

THE MAGICIAN

A JIMMILAZERS PRODUCTION

DIRECTED BY HARRY DEVANE

**STARRING: HARRY HARMAN, THUMBS MCGRAW,
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AND DEREK PARKER AS "THE MENTOR"**

On the site

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Essentials

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What you'll learn

How to use tools and techniques to turn photos into dramatic posters

Time taken
1 hour

Expert

James Sheppard



"Being a fan of pop culture and Photoshop, I love to create dramatic imagery that can be used in composites. I am the in-house photographer at Imagine Publishing and have over a decade of commercial experience as well as 20 years' experience in Photoshop. I shoot Raw, edit in ACR, export to DNG and play with Smart Objects."

Design a stylish movie poster



Turn your images into dramatic, punchy movie poster-inspired composites

Everyone loves a great movie and dreams of being in one, so why not create a stylised movie poster with your own images? Drawing influence from Eighties' action movies, we will show you how to create a dramatic poster. By using creative composite techniques and unlocking Camera Raw's batch-editing abilities, you will see how straightforward creating a poster can be.

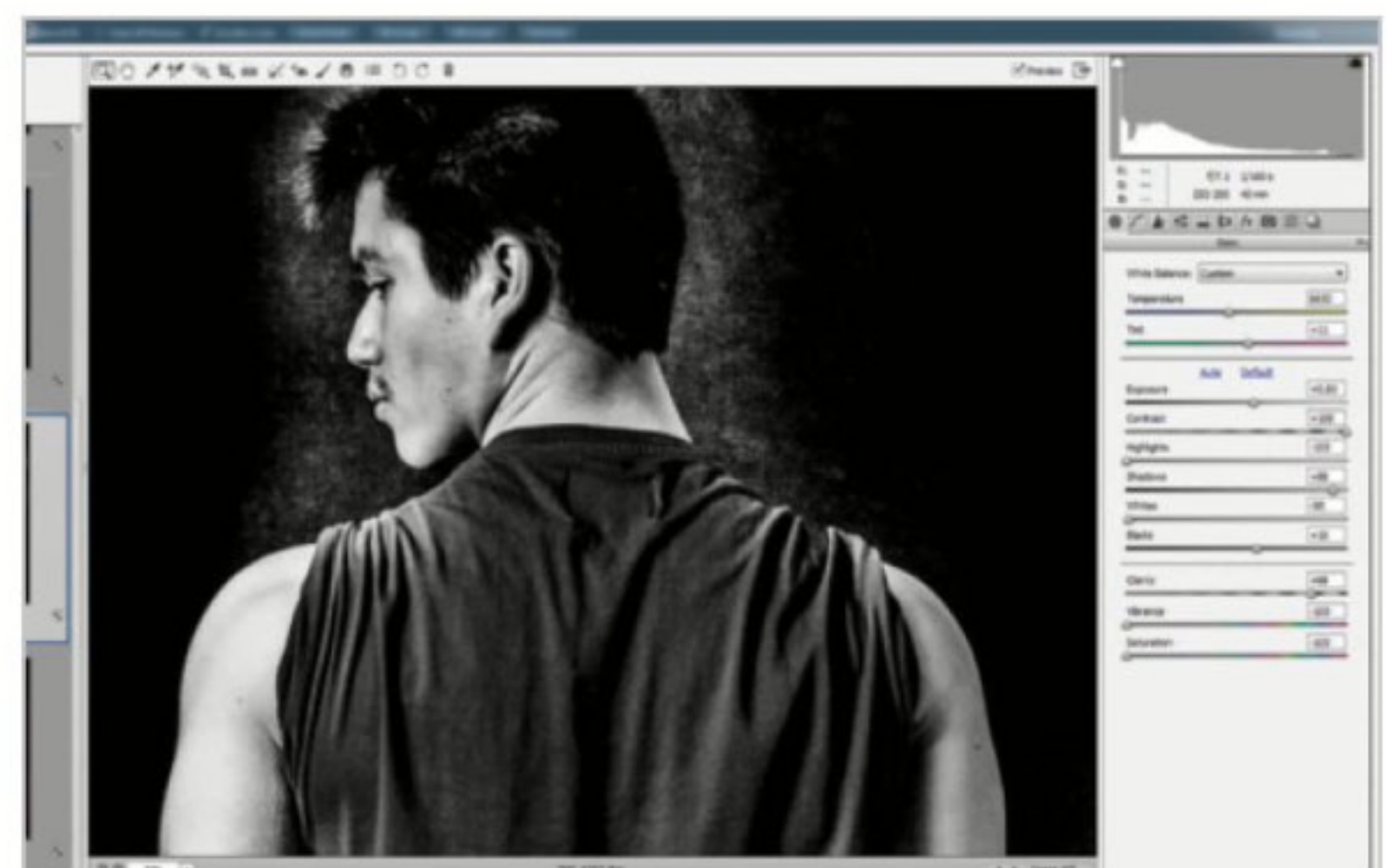
When you are looking to create an effective composite, it isn't enough to simply place an image onto another; you need to consider angle and content. Do the images' angles and perspectives

match? Is the lighting and tone appropriate and similar? These are questions you really have to ask when selecting which images to work with. As Photoshop is such a diverse suite with numerous ways to achieve one result, it's worth experimenting with as many methods as you can, and finding the ones you prefer. So, with this in mind, take into account where your inspiration is coming from, what you are looking for in terms of the final edit, as well as your movie's title, because that will help you when choosing fonts, levels of contrast and colour schemes.



Open up in Raw

01 Use Adobe Bridge to view and select images. As Bridge is an underrated element of Photoshop, use it to select the three main images that will comprise the bulk of the composite by clicking the Open in RAW option.

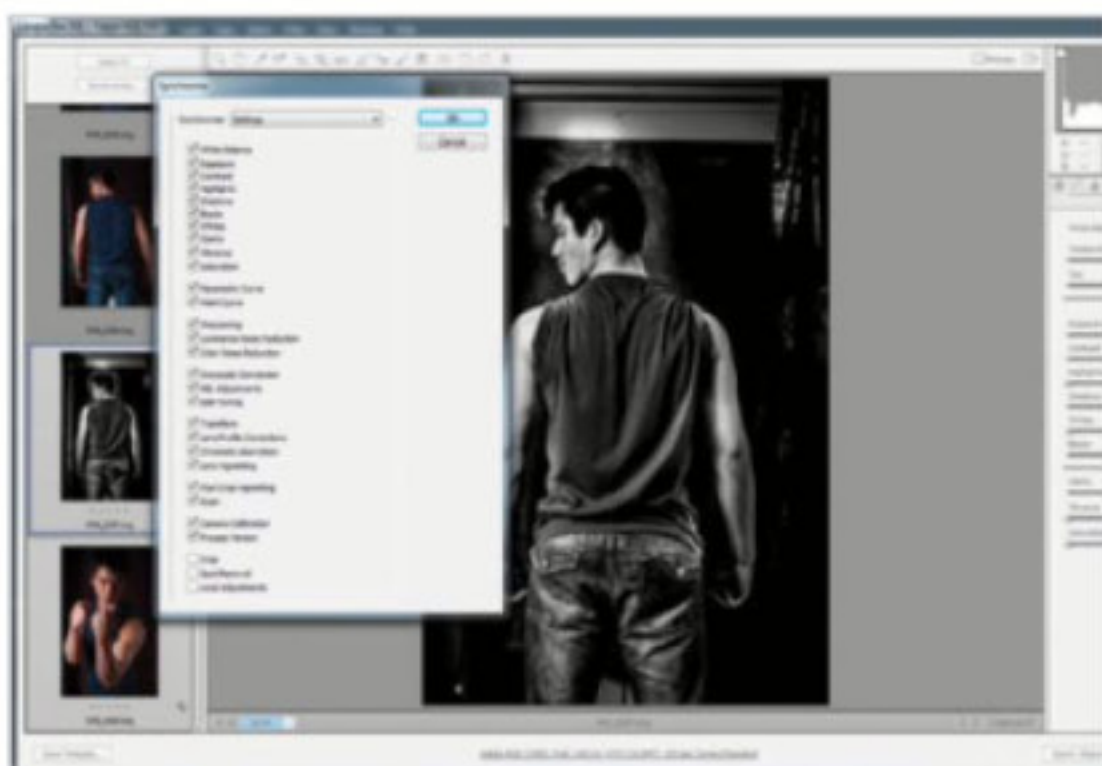


Turn it monochrome

02 Our main goal in Raw is to create black-and-white imagery. Use the basic edit panel and adjust the following: Temperature: 6650, Tint: +11, Exposure: +.80, Contrast: +100, Highlights: -100, Shadows: +88, Whites: -98, Blacks: +18, Clarity: +68, Vibrance and Saturation to -100.

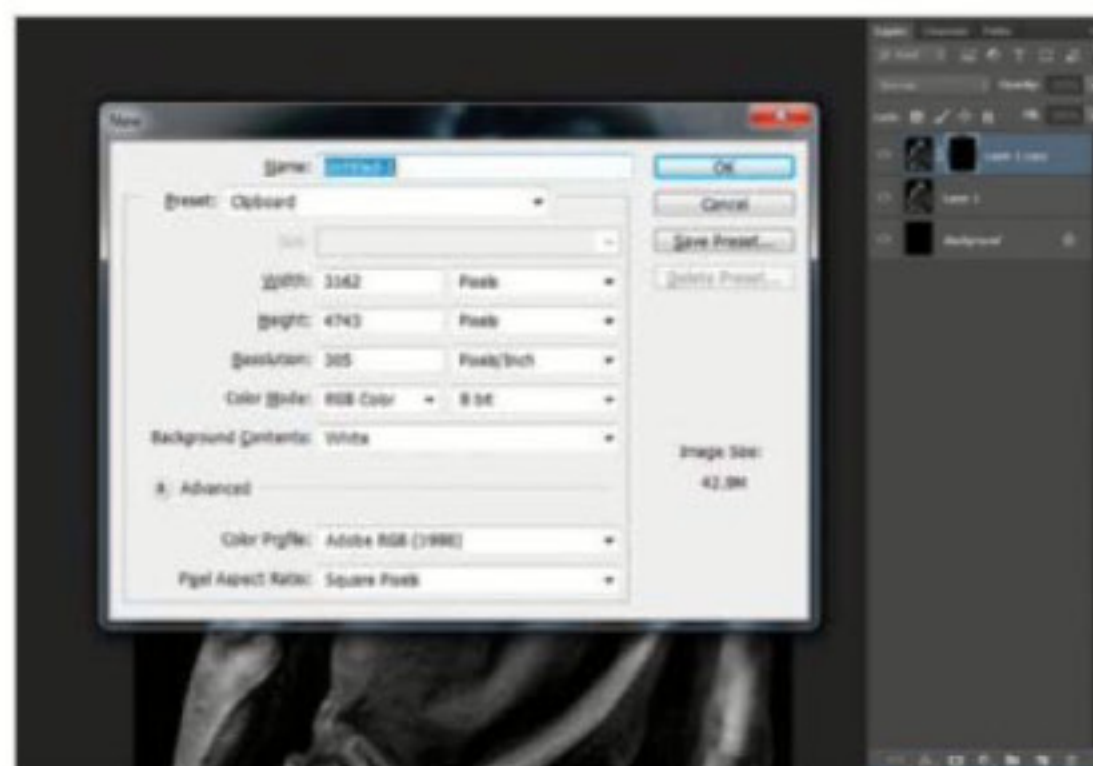


Tutorial Design a stylish movie poster



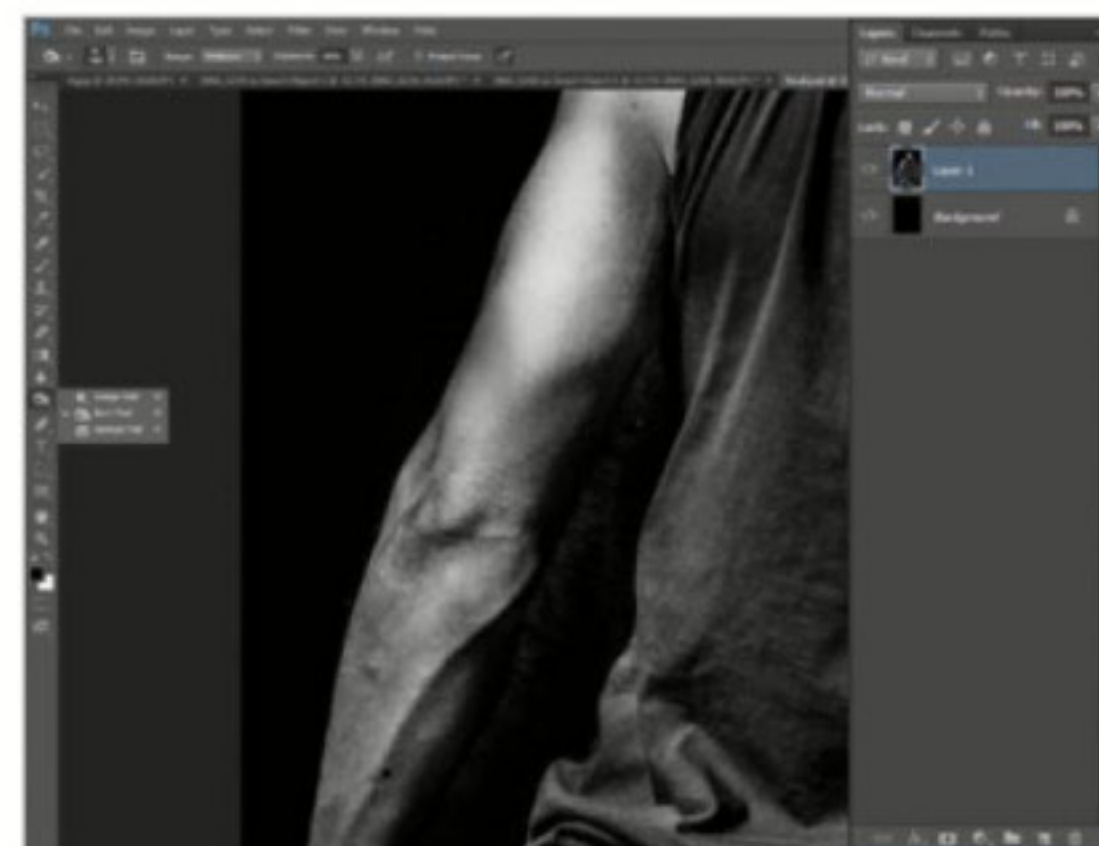
Synchronize and open

03 Now that your main image has been given the correct treatment, find the other images you wish to edit, and select them as well as your main image. Make sure your main image is the one displayed. Now, select the Synchronize button, tick all the relevant boxes and OK your decisions.



Create a base template

04 Once in Photoshop, create a new document (File>New Document). Make sure the new document is black. Now copy your base image onto the new document. Select the Burn tool and set it to Midtones, Opacity: 50% and untick the Protect Tones option.



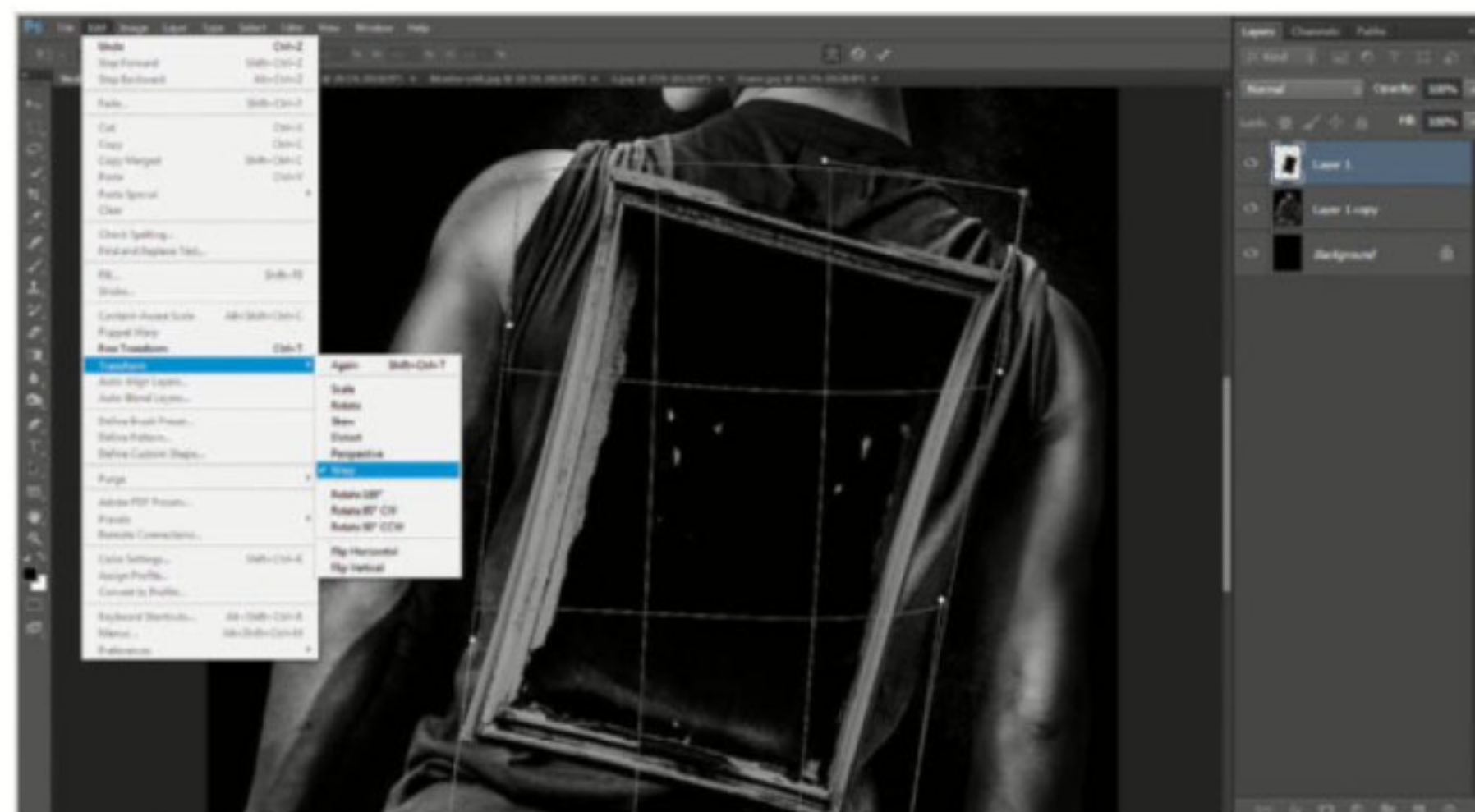
Burn the muscles

05 With the Burn tool selected, use a soft-edged brush to burn in the detail around the man's arms, neck and face to emphasise shadow and shading. This will add to the drama of the image as well as enhance the muscle detail.



Prepare for a composite

06 Repeating the previous steps, but on 'Mentor.jpg' and 'Puddemup.jpg', your images should be looking stylistically similar. Now, consider how to build your composite. For this step go to your main image and use the Pen tool to path an area at the top-right of the image.



Put him in the picture

07 Open up 'frame.jpg' and copy and paste onto your main image. Here you will need to warp the layer by clicking Edit>Transform>Warp. Now you will need to warp the frame over the back for the man. Once done, change the blend mode of the layer to Darken and add a curve.



Path the mentor

08 Select 'Mentor.jpg' and now choose the Pen tool. Carefully, path around the figure and create a path that you will next turn into a selection by right-clicking the finished path and choosing Make Selection. Now you can either harden or soften the selection's edge; choose 3px.



Copy the mentor

09 Repeat the last step, but this time on the 'fighter.jpg'. Copy the 'Mentor.jpg's' selection, paste it onto the main image and transform it so it looks right on the main image. Now copy and paste the fighter layer, but be sure to move the frame layer above everything so it frames everything nicely.



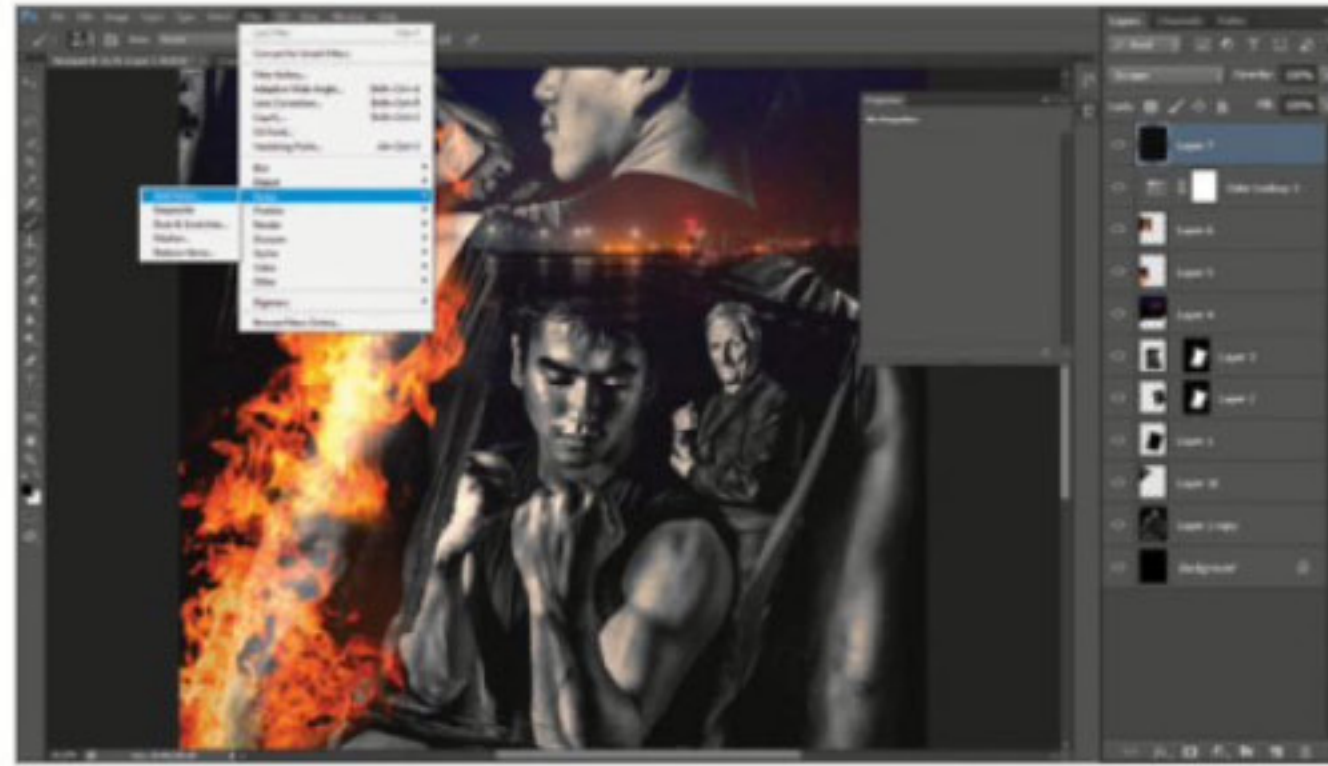
Add some elements

10 Open 'Fire5.jpg' and 'Fire 6.jpg' and copy the fire onto the main image. Change each layer to a Lighten blending mode. Free transform the image to look like fire on his arm. Open and copy and paste 'Sea lights.jpg' on the top, and change it to a Lighten blend mode. Repeat with 'cards.jpg' and fill the top-left corner.



Add tone

11 In the Adjustment Layers palette, you will find a tab called Color Lookup. Select this adjustment, and in the 3DLut file drop-down, select the Crisp_warm.look. Now select this adjustment layer and changes its blend mode to Lighter Color and drop Opacity to 85%.



Add noise

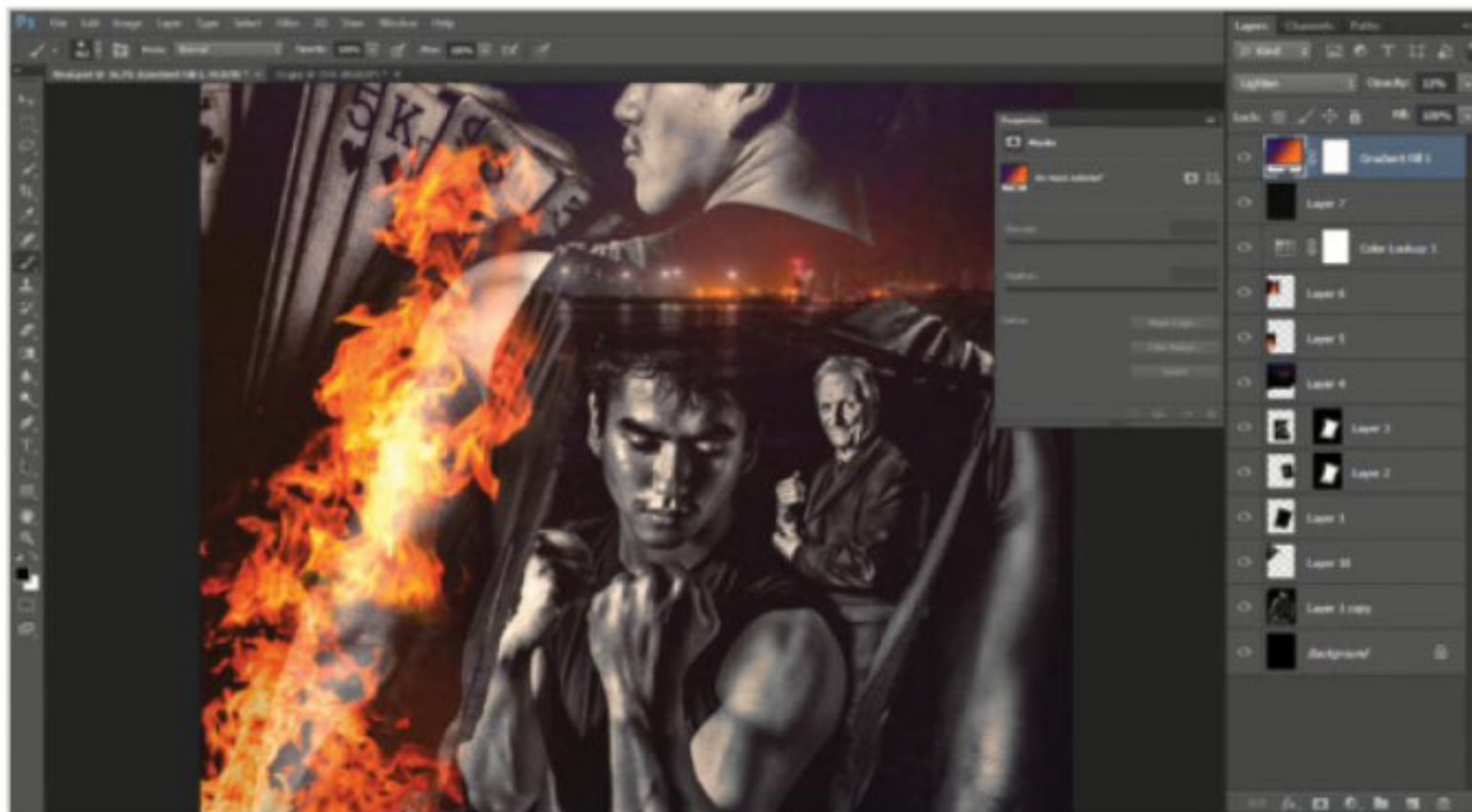
12 To add a sense of grit, add some noise. As your image is layered, you will need to create a new layer. Fill this layer with solid black. Now go to Filter>Noise>Add Noise. Select your Amount to be around 20, set it to Uniform and then tick the Monochrome option. Set the layer blend mode of your noise layer to Screen.

Expert tip



Adjustment brushes

When you are working in Raw, it's easy to focus on the main basic edit options, and lose track of how powerful Adobe Camera Raw is. Not only can you make a lot of pre-Photoshop tweaks, such as colour saturation and sharpness, but you can also add vignettes, gradients and adjustment brush work. It's that last point that can really help; using an adjustment brush means you can dodge, burn, sharpen or even paint colour into specific areas.



Add a gradient

13 Now to add some retro colour toning by selecting the Gradient option in your Adjustment Layer panel. Choice of colour is up to you, but we have gone for a nice complementing orange and purple. Once you have selected your choice in style, change the blend mode to Lighten, and drop the Opacity to around 15%.

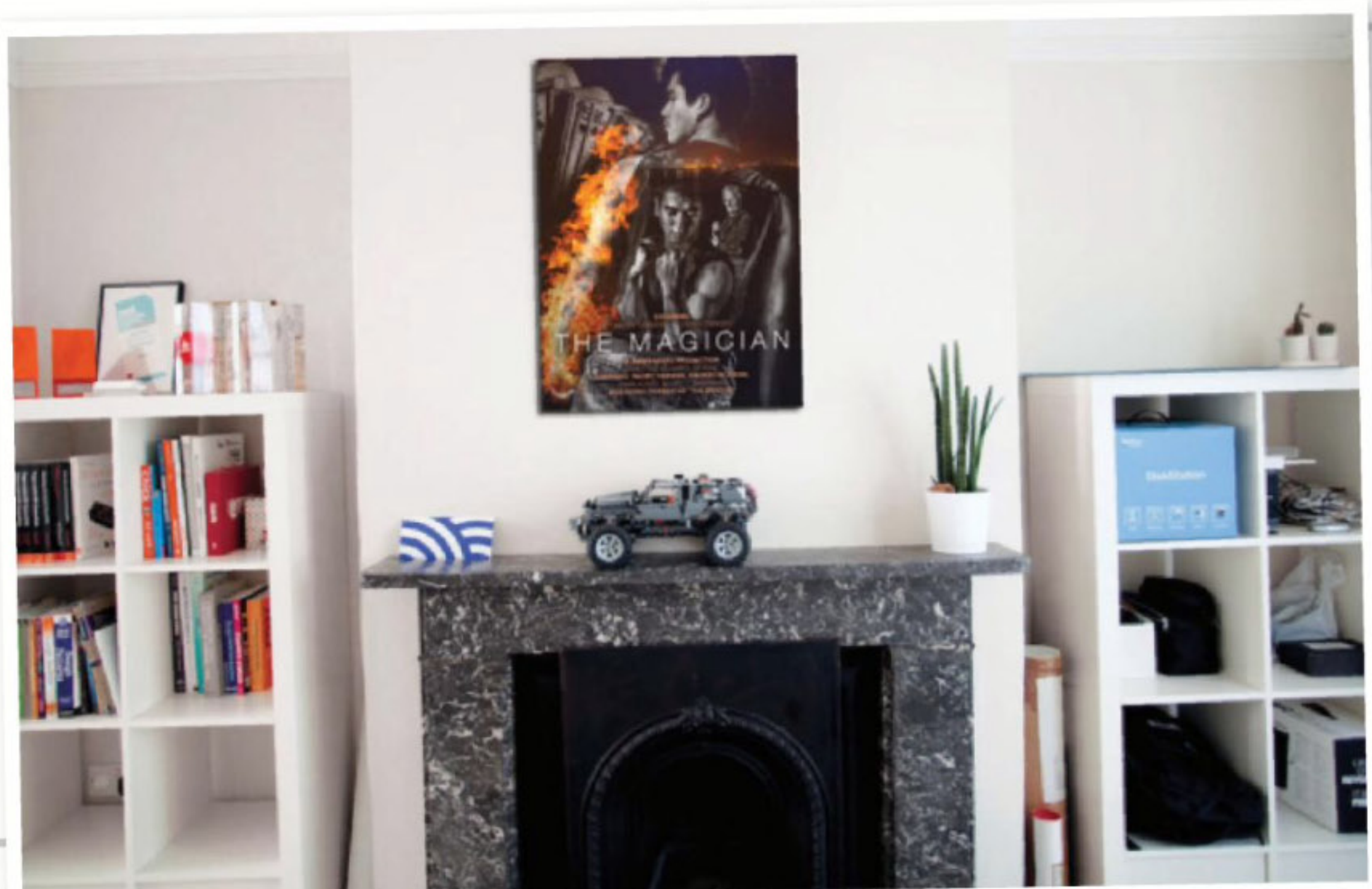


Give it a name

14 Now your poster is almost set, all you need to do is add some text. Here you will need a title, maybe some actors' names, whatever you want really, but take into account where you are drawing your inspiration from and use a suitable font.

What you can do with it... Print the poster

When creating a themed piece, why not consider your methods of presentation? Wall hanging is the obvious choice when dealing with movie paraphernalia. To have the option of a borderless print on a block, a hanging framed image or just a basic clip frame is great, but pushing the thought boat out, what about a mug or even a t-shirt? All of these are great options, but bear in mind that most print houses will require a hi-res JPG or PSD at around 300ppi, so remember that when starting your project.





Online

Download the start image for free from <http://bit.ly/1aFCu5j>

Essentials

Works with



What you'll learn

How to master the Cutout, Glowing Edges and Color Halftone filters to create comic art, then refine it with layer masks

 **Time taken**
2 hours

Expert

April Madden

"I'm a huge fan of comic books and I love to recreate the art styles featured in them. Photoshop's Color Halftone filter is perfect, used in conjunction with others, for achieving this effect."

"I'm the editor of **Advanced Photoshop** magazine and have been using the program since version 7. I absolutely love CC for the sheer range of tools available."



Turn photos into comic art

Add some extra action to your photos with these easy filter tricks for heroic images

Comic-book characters are everywhere at the moment – on TV, in movies, and still in their original home, the printed comic. While there's no doubt that digital art and modern printing technology have transformed the way that comics are presented, when most of us think of comic art we still think of the brightly coloured, cheaply printed and iconic art of the Golden and Silver Ages. We're talking about the look that the Pop Art artists of the Sixties adored and reproduced extensively in their own work.

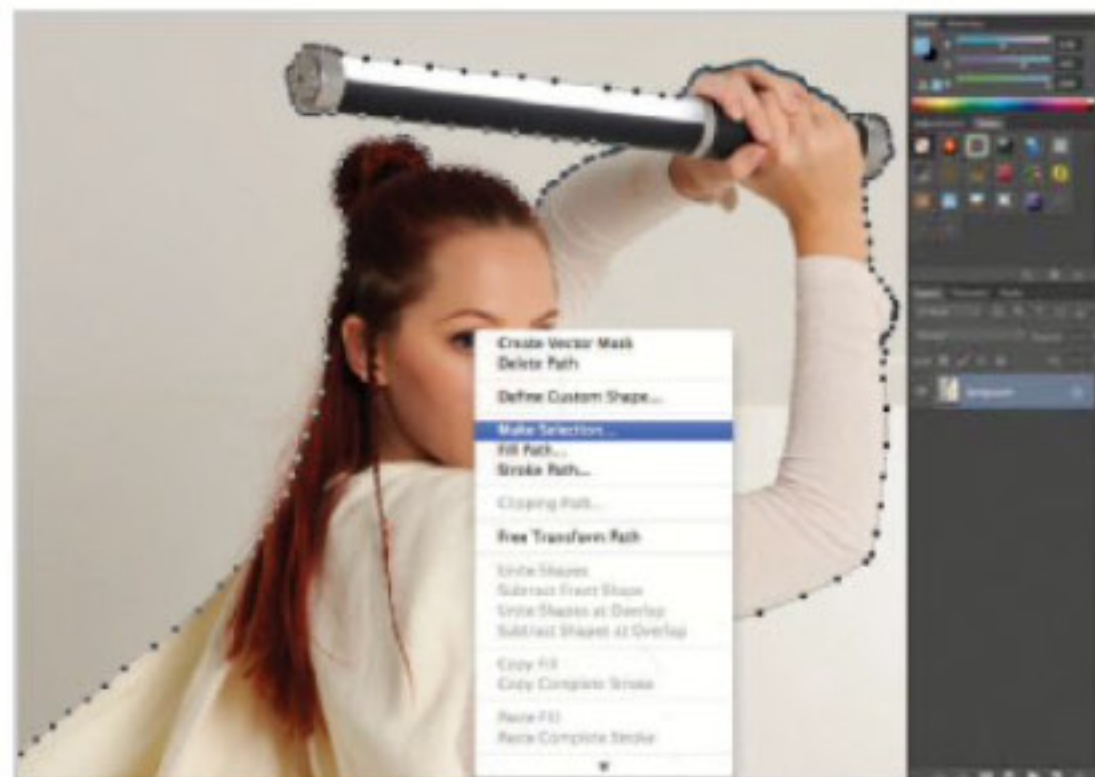
This tutorial focuses on recreating that look with the help of a few Photoshop filters and other tricks, rather than the elaborate process of pencilling, inking, 'flattening' and colouring that comics artists traditionally use to create their pieces. We'll certainly be drawing in elements of that as we create the look, but this is primarily about achieving the style of a classic comic – cheap, pulpy, but perennially popular. So without further ado, let's fire up Photoshop and show how to get your photos to reveal their secret superhero identity!

Want to add colourful shapes? Use the Custom Shape tool!



Cut out the character

01 First isolate the person in your photo. Use the Pen tool to click around their shape—each click will make a point on the Pen tool's path. This is a slow process (it takes about 20 minutes) but the results are much better than those from other selection tools.



Make a selection

02 Use more clicks for curvy or fiddly areas and less for straight ones, until you come back to where you started. Click on your first path point to close the path. Cmd-click/right click and choose Make Selection. Copy and paste into a new document with a transparent background.



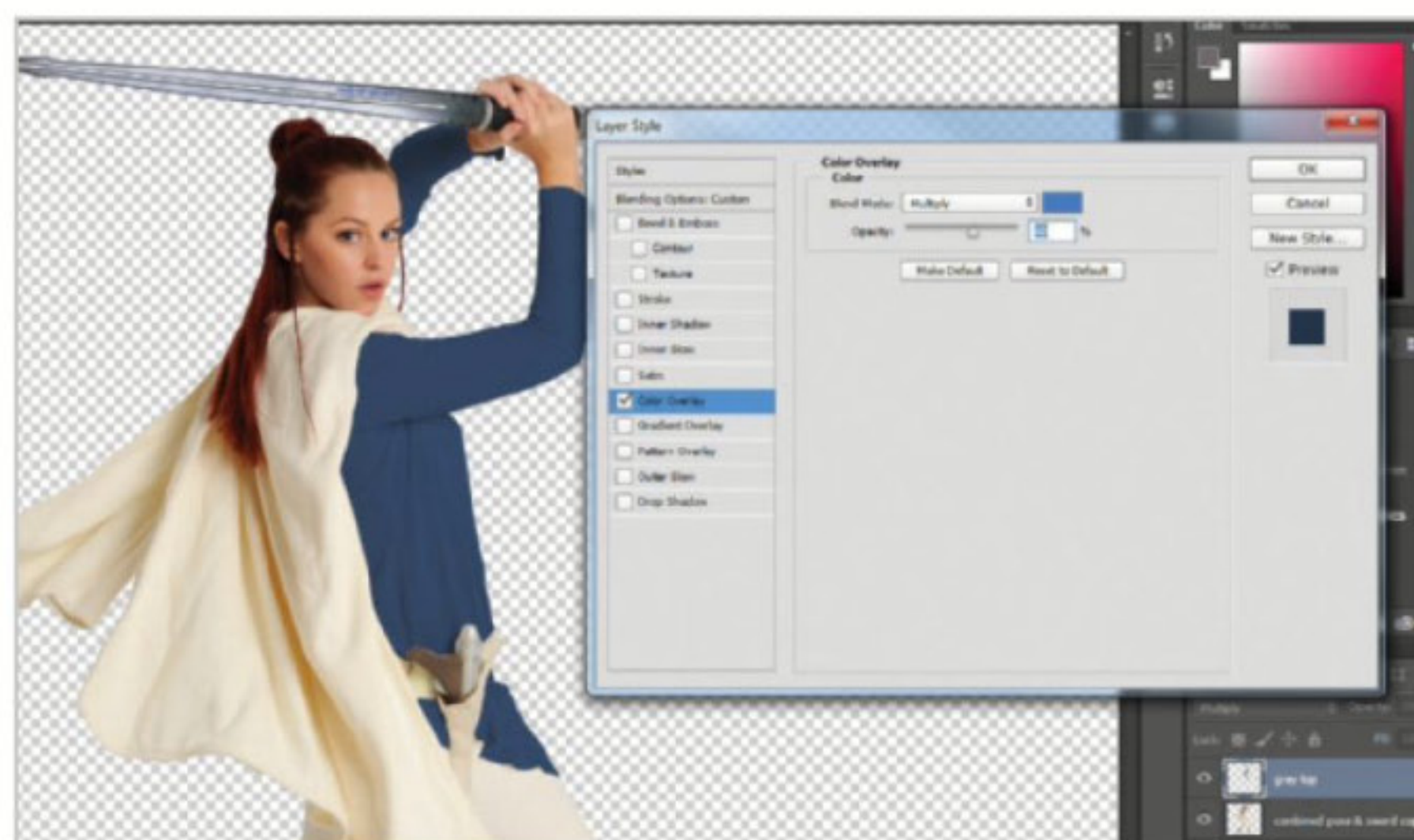
Add weapons

03 Repeat steps one and two to cut out and place a weapon. Use the Transform and Warp tools to position correctly and clean up any overlap between the two photos with layer masks. Merge into one layer and make and hide a duplicate of it (which you'll use later in step 10).



Make the costume

04 Grab the Pen tool and trace the shape of the clothing. Make a selection, go to a new layer and use the Paint Bucket to fill the selection with plain grey. Set to Multiply so you can still see the highlights and shadows underneath.



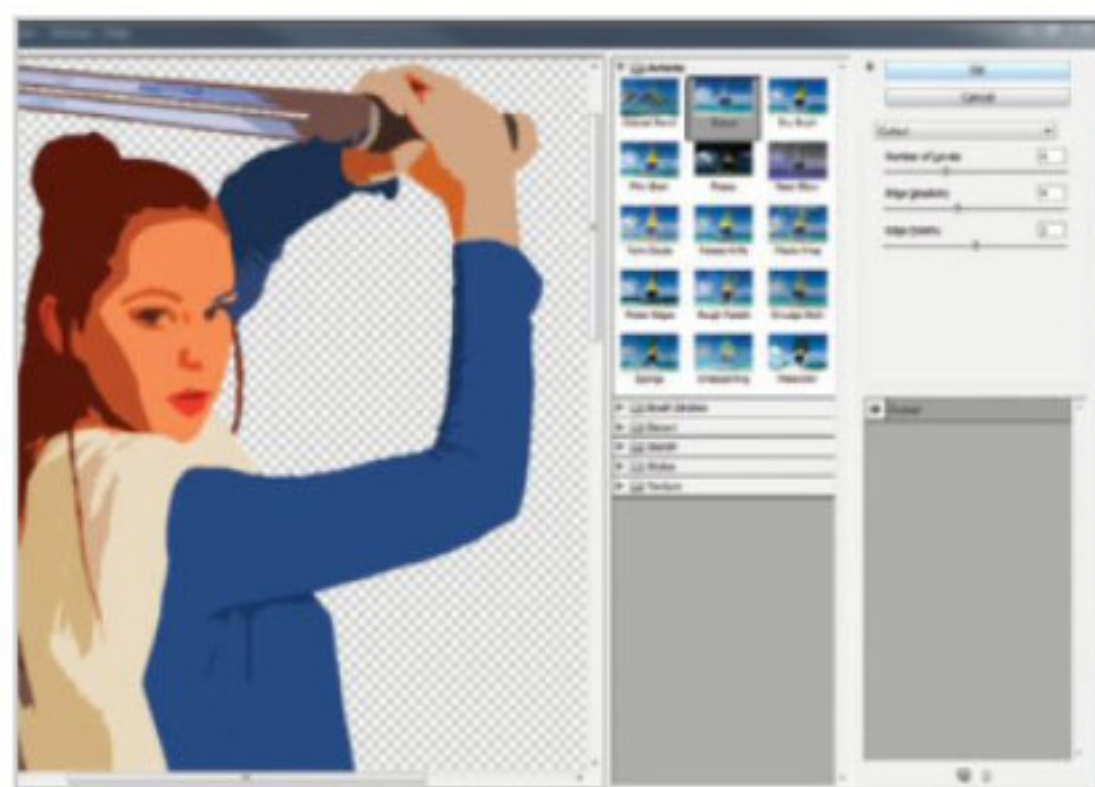
Colour the costume

05 Go to Layer Style > Color Overlay. Pick the colours you want and apply a Color Overlay, setting it to Multiply. Comics characters usually have bright costumes, but if you want a dark one, then don't go for black as it won't show up very well. Try grey, violet and purple instead.



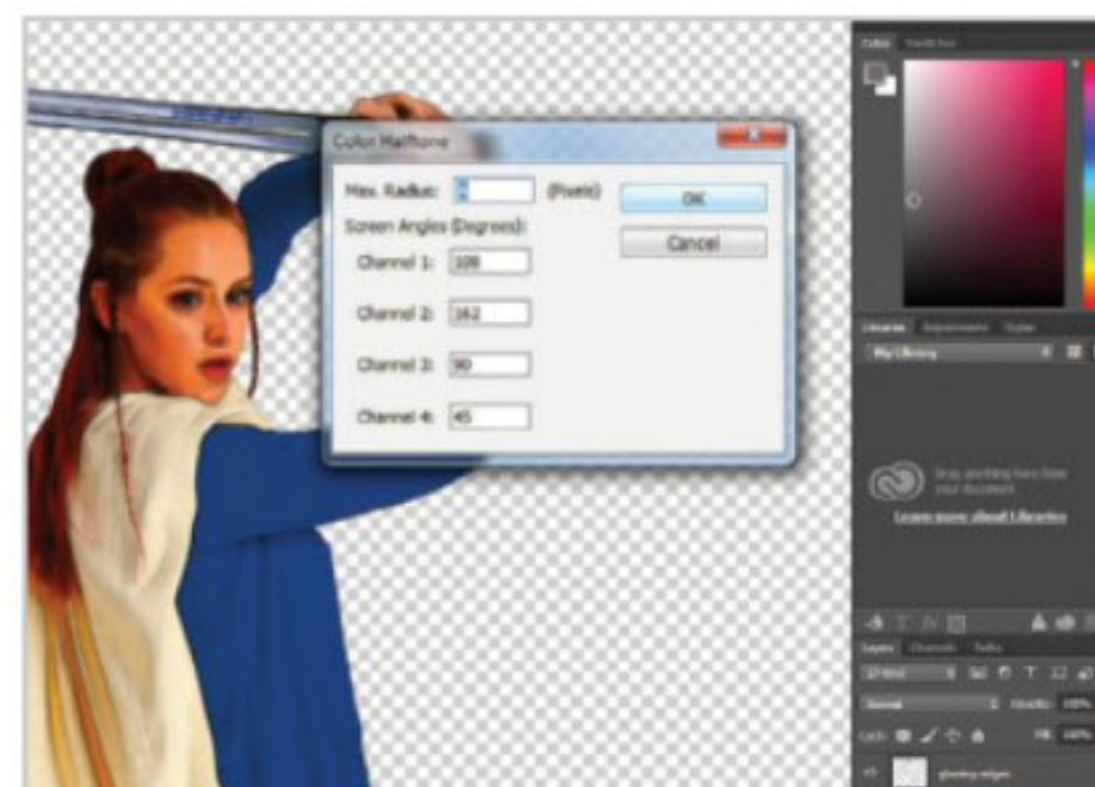
Stamp and saturate

06 Press Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+E to create a new layer of everything you've done so far. Now we need to create the bright, attention-grabbing colours of a classic comic book. Go to Image > Adjustments > Hue/Saturation and increase the Saturation to +50.



Create a Cutout

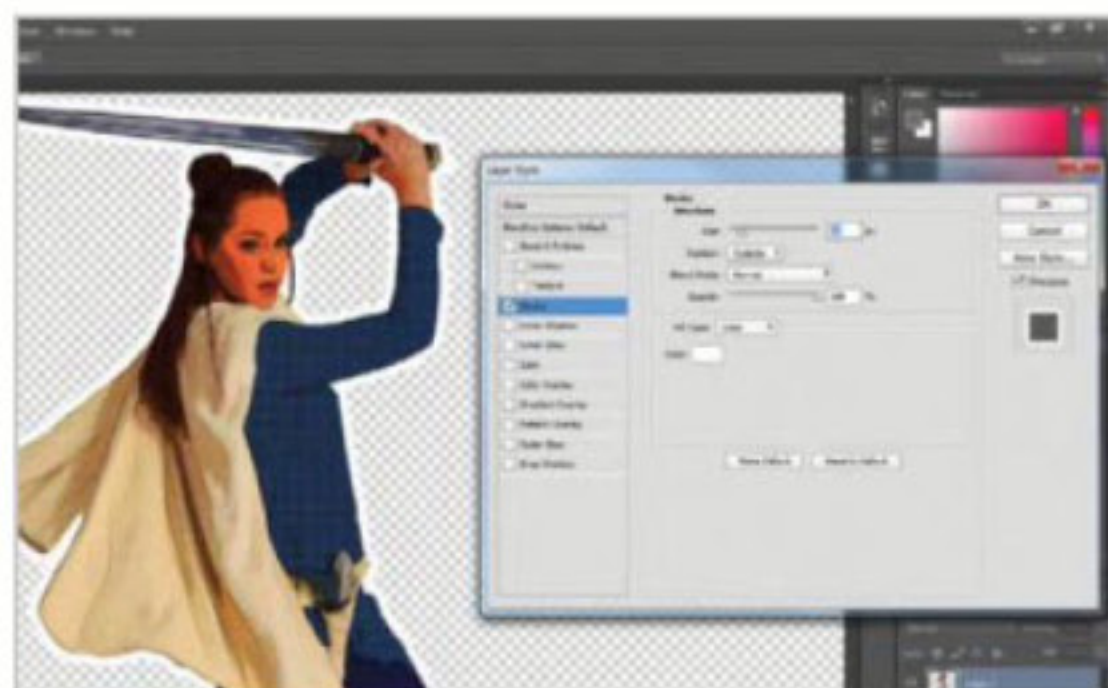
07 Hide all other layers for now and duplicate the stamped, saturated layer. Now go to Filter > Filter Gallery > Artistic > Cutout. Set Number of Levels to 4, Edge Simplicity to 4 and Edge Fidelity to 2 and click OK. Name this layer Cutout, then duplicate it.



Halftone effect

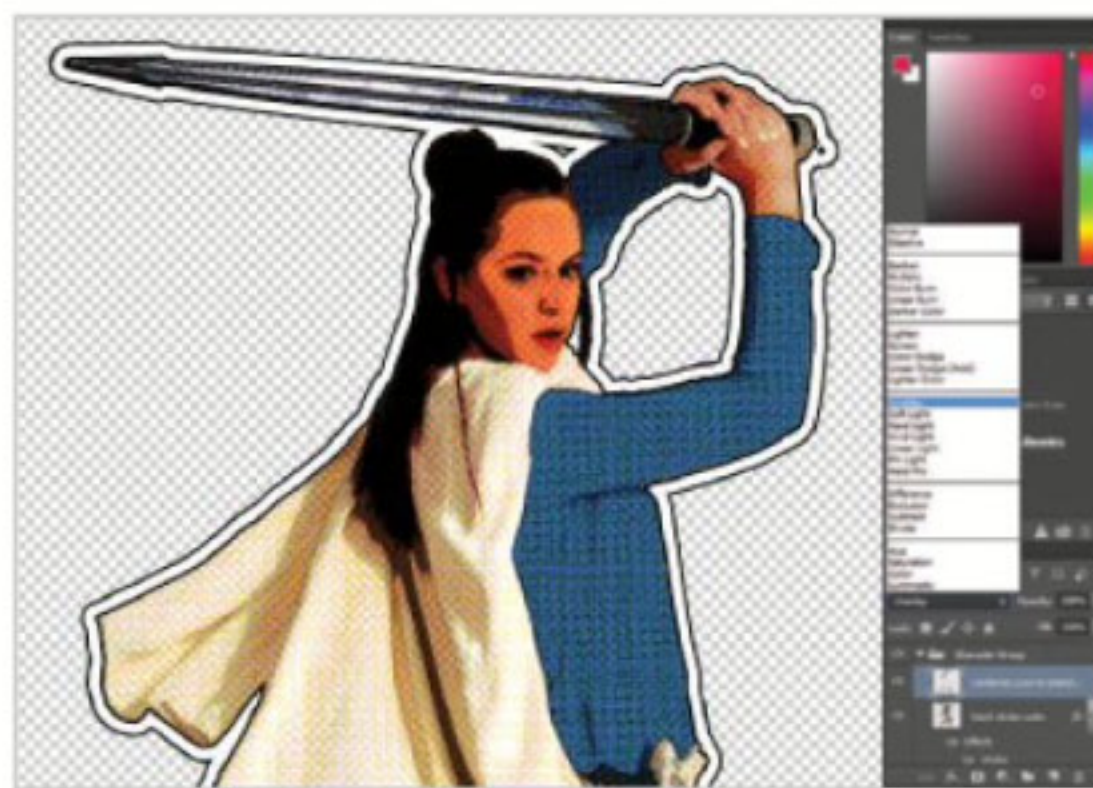
08 On the duplicated Cutout layer, go to Filter > Pixelate > Color Halftone. Set Max Radius to 4 but leave the other settings at the defaults. Set it to Darken and adjust the Opacity and Fill to suit your photo.

Tutorial Turn photos into comic art



Add a stroke

09 A stroke round the edges of your figure is a classic trick for making them stand out. Use Cmd/Ctrl+Shift+Alt+E to make a new stamped layer, then Layer Style>Stroke set to white, 20px, Outside. Change the Stroke settings on duplicate layers to get multiple strokes in different colours and weights.



Boost colours with Posterize

10 Remember the duplicate of the merged photo layer made in step 3? Move it to the top of the layer stack, unhide it and go to Image>Adjustments>Black and White. Use the default settings. Now go to Image>Adjustments>Posterize and set Levels to 4. Set to Overlay at 45% Opacity.



Add some pow!

11 Choose the Custom Shape tool and make a Starburst, then place it behind your character. Colour it yellow with a red stroke and follow step 8 to add a halftone effect. Then add a sound effect in a suitable font (we used Bangers from 1001Fonts) and repeat the halftone process.

BLACK AND WHITE

Many cheaper comics were printed in black and white. Go to Image>Adjustments>Black and White, then run a Color Halftone over your photo.



COLOUR POP

Colour can be used to add emphasis, as we've done here. Like the other images, this was placed on its own layer below the panel layer.

What you can do with it Create a comic book

Many comics fans, kids and adults alike, would love to be the star of their own comic book. If you know someone who is a fan, build up comic book art from photos using the techniques described in this tutorial and then add it to a comic-book format. You can make your own comic book panels in Photoshop using the Rectangular Marquee with a black stroke, or download free-to-use ones from the internet. Remember that the way that

the panels are set out dictates the pace of the story. Important things happen in big panels; time passes more quickly across lots of little ones. Big, full-colour panels should not distract the reader with too much text; save this for set-up shots or conversations between characters. 'Between-panel action' describes things that are suggested but not made explicit. For example, in this comic book we know that the heroine has heard footsteps

behind her, and we know that in the next panel she turns to face the unknown person and draws her sword on them – but each reader fills in what happens between these two panels from their own imagination.

Once you've created your comic, printing services like Blurb (www.blurb.co.uk) are a great way of printing it without having to worry about the logistics of printing and binding a book or comic yourself.



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Photoshop File Edit Image Layer Select Filter View Window Help

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Start images

Creative colour...

MASTER THE HARRIS SHUTTER EFFECT

Learn how to create this classic colour-channel-splitting effect in Elements p80



DODGE

Dodge slightly over the eyes, just to bring out the rest of the darkened effect.

What does it mean?

RANGE: The Range option determines which areas are going to be darkened. Choosing the Midtones – the default option – basically means that the picture as a whole gets darkened. By choosing Highlights and Shadows, though, you can be more precise with the areas to darken.

Tool focus...

Burn tool basics

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files

Add darkness and saturation in controlled measures, just by using a simple, brush-like tool

The Burn tool is one of a pair. With dodging and burning, you can add perfect contrast to any photo, even digital paintings, by brushing over the areas you want to improve. You've probably used them one after the next; the Dodge tool to lighten and the Burn tool to darken, but can they be used apart?

The Dodge tool is a must-use in many photo fixes; it can correct the whites of eyes, yellowy teeth, and even just give a shine to an object. The Burn tool, however, is perhaps less used. It darkens pictures, applies a bit of colour to a dark area, and can be used to create HDR-style finishes, make subjects stand out from their backgrounds, and even give a vignette to a picture. It's just as versatile as the Dodge tool, and it's a simple feature that can be used in almost any kind of picture.

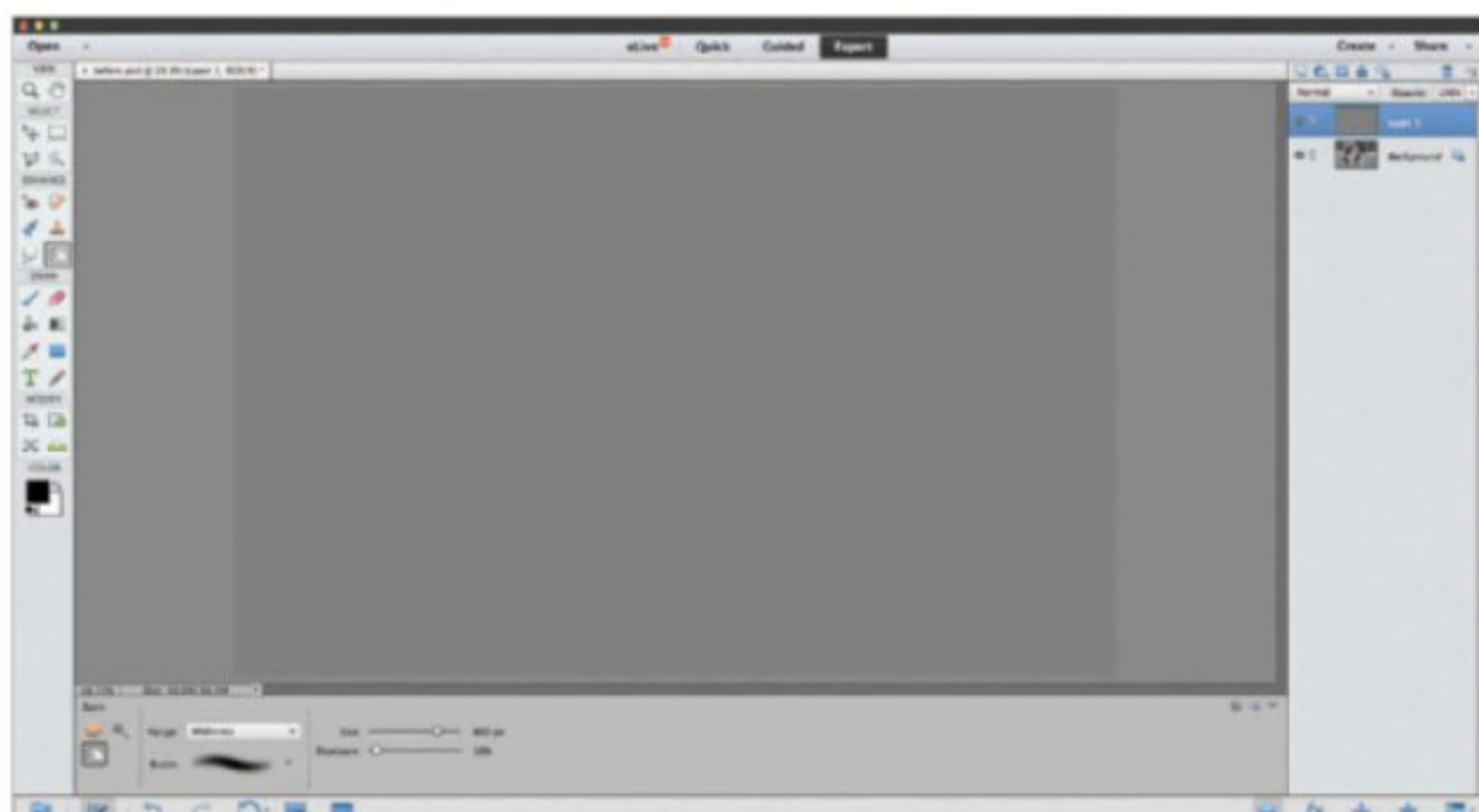


But how can you get the best out of this simple tool? Let's take a look at the basics of the Burn, and a few instances in which you can apply it.





Apply the Burn tool Apply dark shades in controlled areas by brushing



Create a grey layer

01 To edit non-destructively, create a new layer to burn on, rather than burning the actual photo itself. Fill your new layer in with a neutral grey colour #808080 and set this layer to Overlay. Now, any burning will show up on the layer below, but won't edit directly onto it.



Adjust settings

02 Get familiar with the Burn settings by experimenting with the brushes and the hardness settings, as well as the Range and Exposure of the tool. The lower the Exposure, the more subtle the effect, so pick between 10-20%, and set the Range to Midtones.



Think about your strokes

03 When using a large brush, it's okay to raise the Exposure, but be careful not to make multiple strokes, one over the next. This will mean that you'll have patches of differing darkness that will stick out in the final piece.



Add finer details

04 Use a smaller brush and a low Exposure for the fine details. In a portrait, be sure to burn over the eyebrows, the space between the eyebrows and the eyelids, and parts of the hair. Don't burn over lines on the face, as this can make a subject look aged and wrinkled.

Additional uses When else does the Burn tool come in handy?



Bring out colour

The Burn tool is great for darkening, but it also saturates a picture. By using the same neutral grey layer technique, try burning over bright skies in your picture to reveal more colour and give them a bit of vibrancy.



Make subjects pop

Darkening and shading is a standard technique used by artists for making other things stand out and for adding contrast. Apply a burn all over a picture, except for over a subject, to make people stand out from their backgrounds.



Add a vignette

Vignettes can give a classic effect and draw attention to the centre of your pictures, simply by adding darkness to the edges. Add your neutral grey layer and burn around the outside of your picture to create one in a hurry.



JAGGED EDGES

Cutting out edges with the Polygonal Lasso gives the effect of the pictures being hand-cut.

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files

Creative project...

Create a Tumblr collage

Have fun re-living memories and transforming your pictures into a quirky collage using the power of Elements

There are so many creative and exciting ways to collate pictures of you and your friends, but one of the most fun options out there has to be a Tumblr collage. You can get creative with styles, colours and picture positioning, but actually precision isn't key with this particular project, so it is perfect for some no-stress editing.

Anyone starting out with Photoshop or Elements could learn a lot from creating rough collages. Such a process covers all the necessary aspects of how to layer a composition, but you don't have to be an expert in selecting or refining edges to make it look great. A

Tumblr collage is more about the pictures you've taken and the positioning and ordering of your pictures, than it is about neatness. This means that every one is unique, and you can tailor the look of your picture according to the images you have.

Another great thing about the process is that Tumblr collages make fantastic printouts. So this is a tutorial that you can use to create gifts or greetings cards for friends, or just a simple collage for you to share on your blog. Check out our three techniques, and then gather your images to create your own!

TECHNIQUE 1

Make the classic collage

Use lassos and gradients to create the typical collage effect

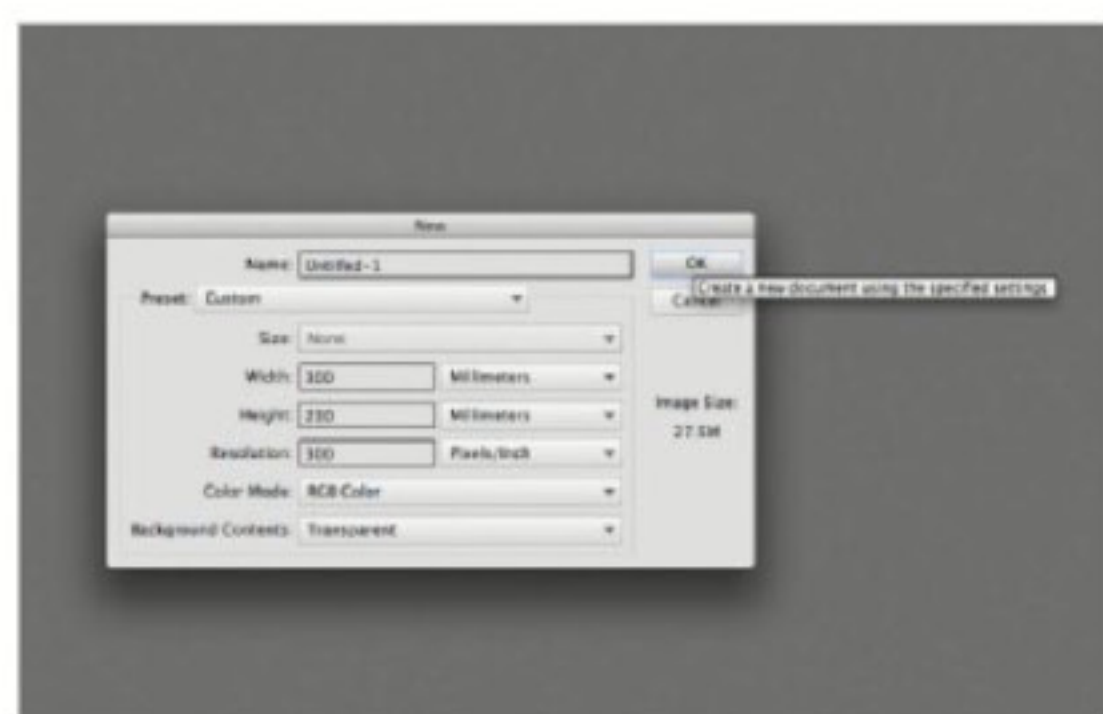
The recognisable Tumblr collage is easier to create than it looks. It's the simplest of compositions, and it's really a digital equivalent of cutting up pictures from old magazines to create one big picture.

Just remember to experiment with gradients, layer order and blend modes with your layers to create something individual.



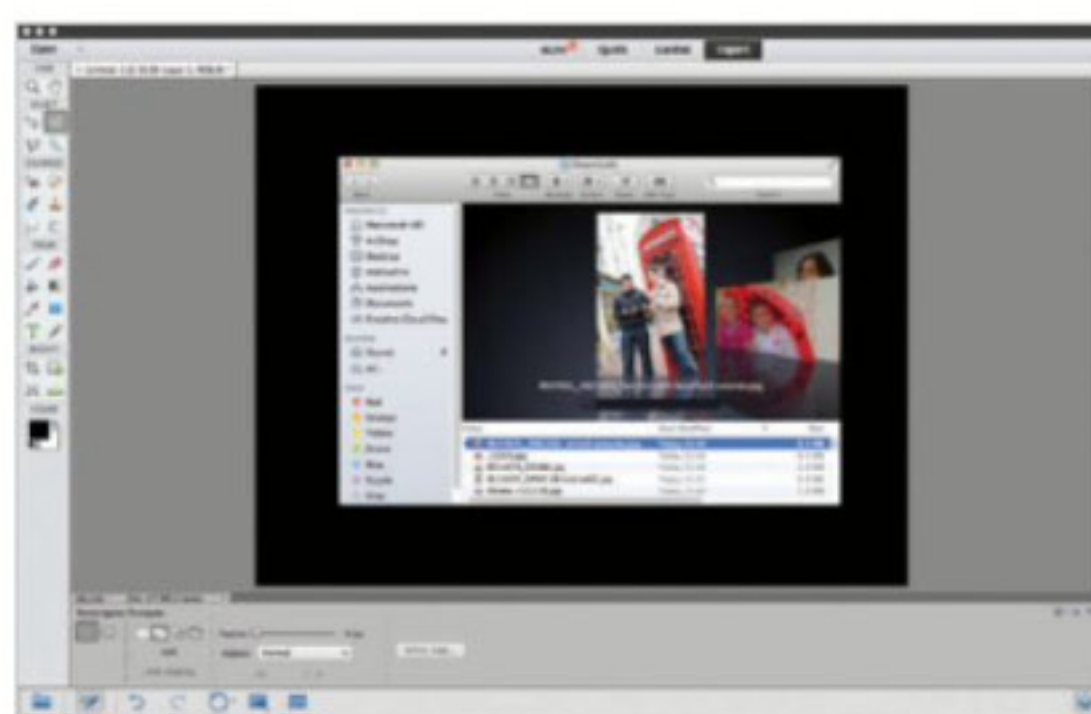
POSITIONING

Move pictures that are towards the bottom of the collage to the top of the layer stack to show them clearly.



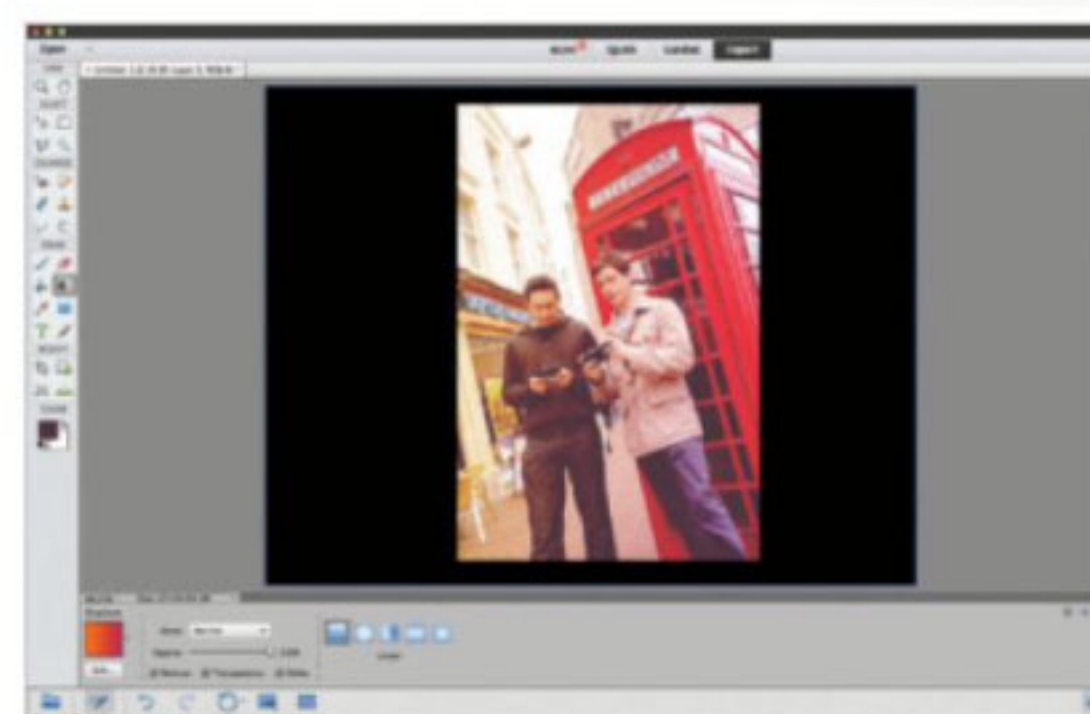
Create your document

01 Start by opening Elements and creating a new document. You're going to need to make it big enough to include all your pictures in, so we've gone for 300mm x 200mm. Bear in mind the size of it if you want to print it out. Fill the background black.



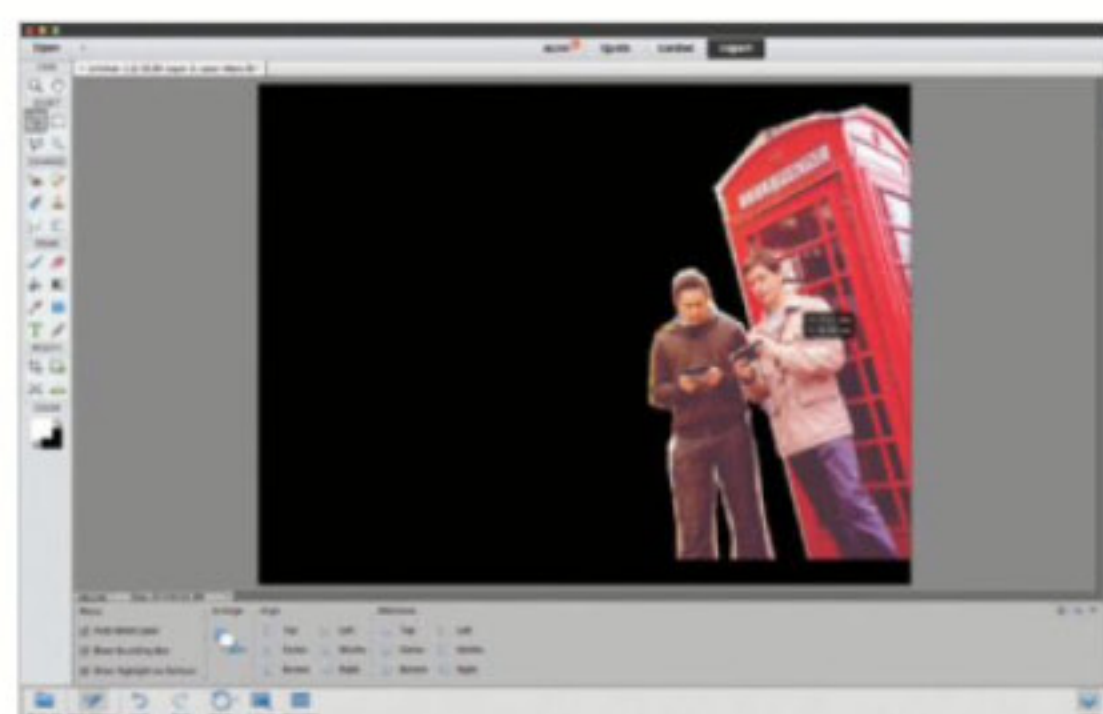
Source some pictures

02 Find a collection of pictures that you want to use. Many Tumblr collages focus on a celebrity, but you might want to create a collage of your friends, even a specific place or landmark. Keep your pictures in one folder, ready to drop in.



Add colour effects

03 Drop your first picture in. Add a retro effect by creating a new layer and adding a gradient; we've gone for orange to pink. Set layer to Soft Light and add a Lighten layer, filled with dark purple. Set these layers as clipping masks by Ctrl/right-clicking them.



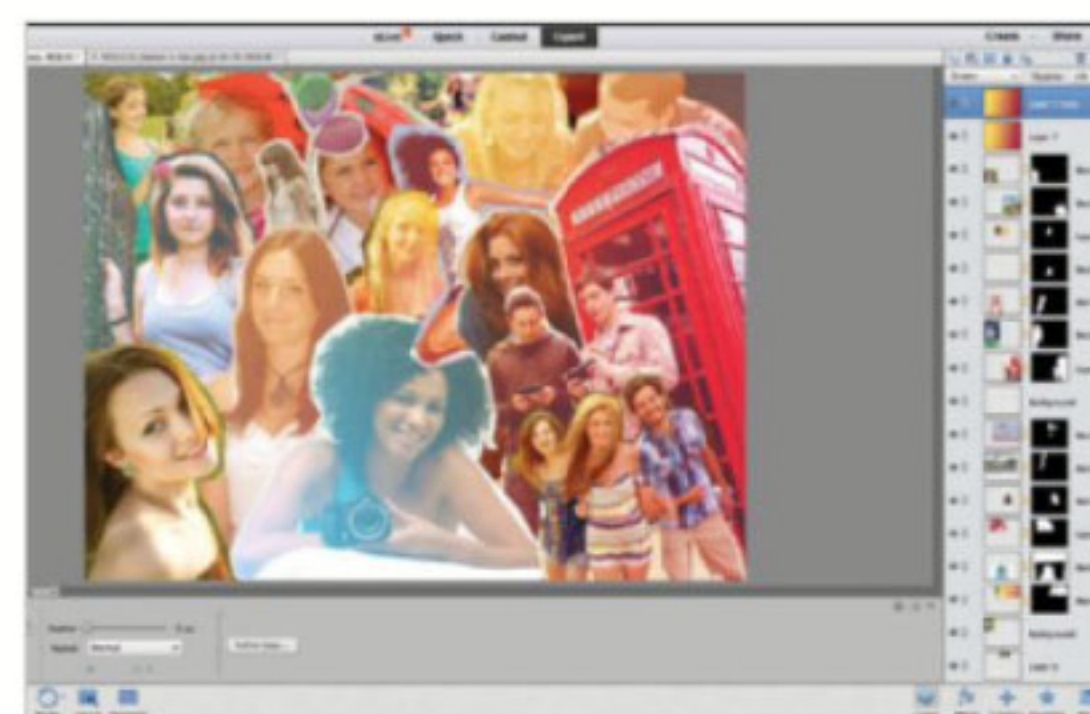
Cut out and move

04 Once you've added filters, merge your layers. Then, using the Polygonal Lasso, cut out your subjects from the photo, click the mask button and then position in the picture. Don't worry about neatness, as this adds to the quirky finish later on.



Add more pictures

05 Repeat and begin building up your picture. Add various gradients as filters and experiment; place your subjects all over the picture, and re-order layers to give some images more prominence. Check out the FileSilo for 200 gradients to play with.



Finish off the image

06 Build up your picture so that no black space can be seen. Reposition and reorder layers if need be, and finish off with a couple of final gradients. Remember to keep filter Opacity between 20 and 50% and use Soft Light and Screen for best results.

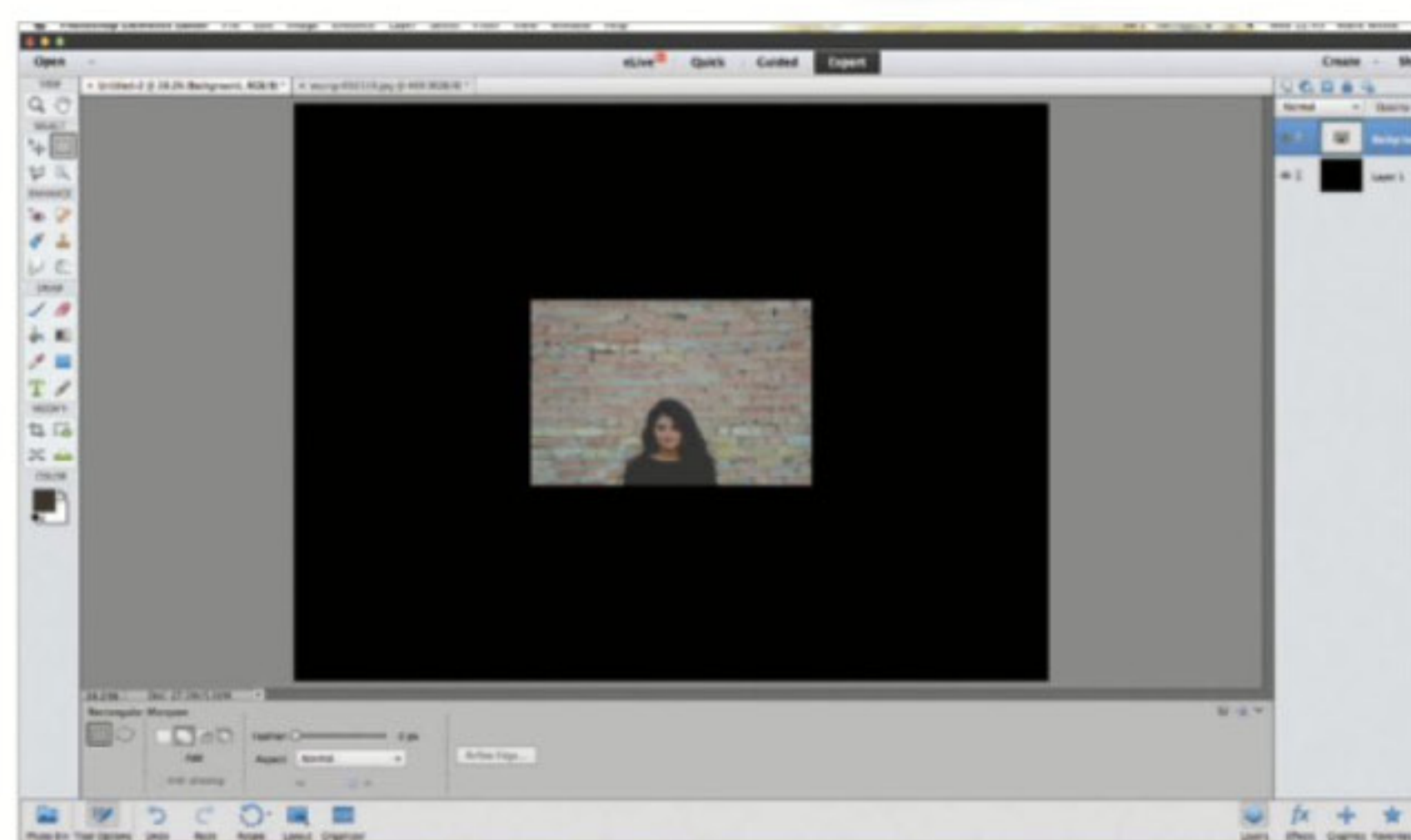
TECHNIQUE 2

Try the Polaroid style

Give a retro camera effect to your pictures

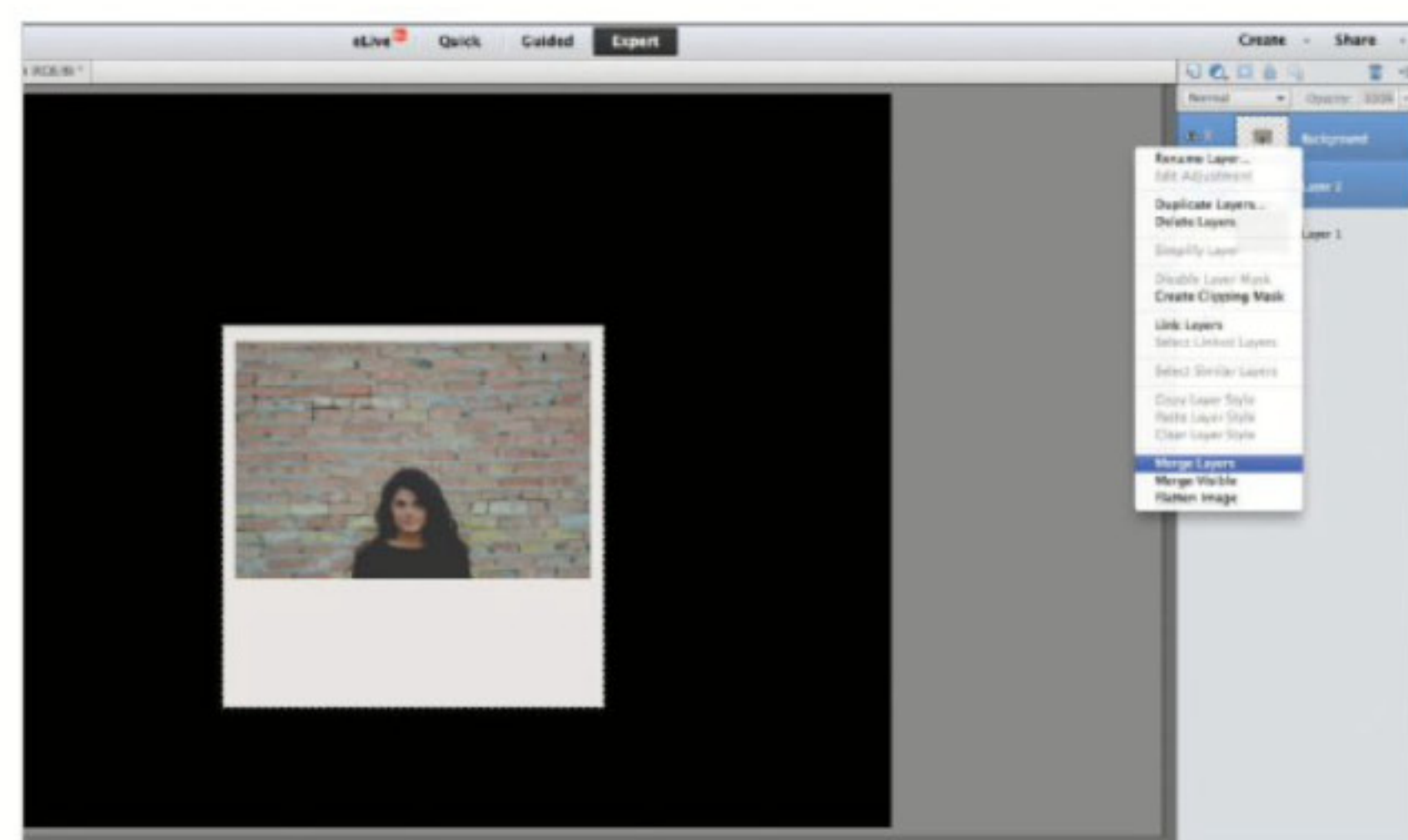
The freeness of the classic Tumblr collage can be fun to play around with, but perhaps you're after something a little less messy.

The Polaroid effect is just as easy to master, but it gives a classy, vintage feel to your collage. Best of all, you don't have to be particularly precise with this tutorial either.



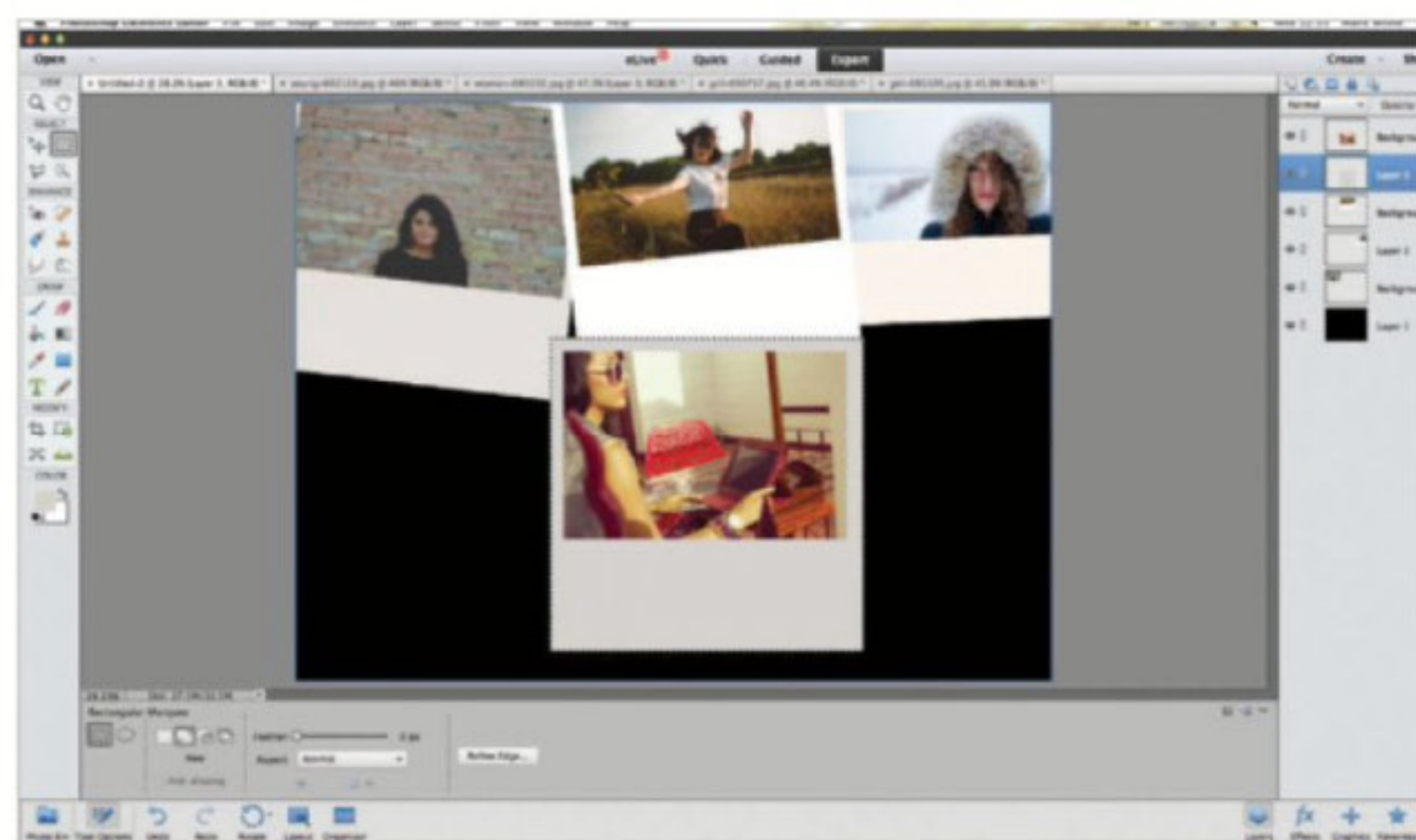
Insert your first picture

01 Create a new document as you did in the previous collage. Drag your first picture into the document and resize to make it smaller; add filters if you like. Create a new layer behind this picture and select a square using the Shift key to retain the exact ratio.



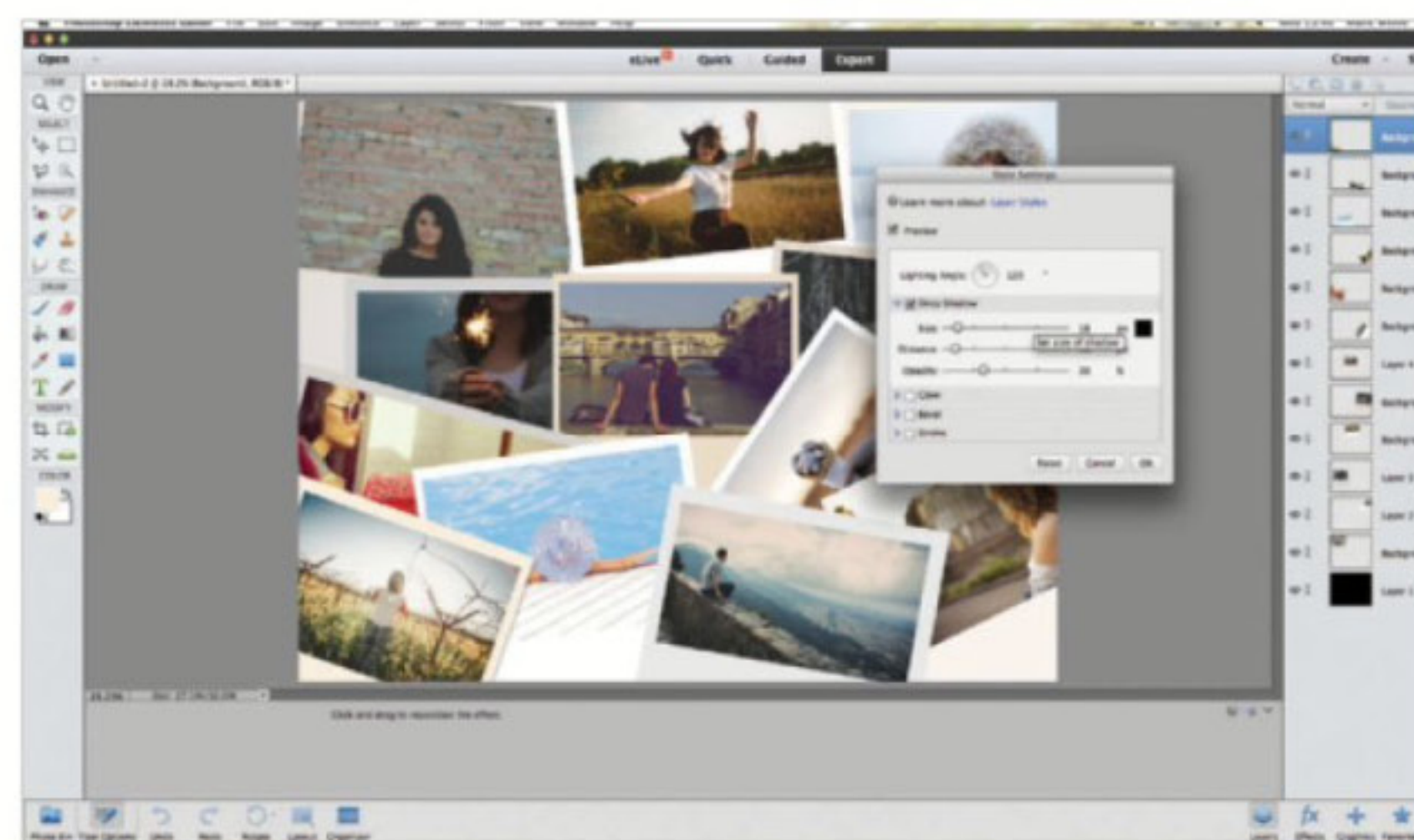
Create your Polaroid

02 With your square selected, choose a white/beige colour from the colour swatches and press Alt/Opt-Backspace to fill it with colour. Move the square to create what looks like a Polaroid, like we have, and merge these two layers.



Build up the picture

03 Repeat this process for all the pictures for the collage. We've chosen to vary Polaroid size and colour, and not to add filters, but it's up to you; you might want to create more colourful Polaroids. Ctrl/right-click and Free Transform to position, resize and rotate.



Add shadows

04 Cover the black space with Polaroids that you've created and then head to Layer>Layer Style and add a Drop Shadow. Set the Size to 18px, the Distance to 10px and the Opacity to 30%. This will add a depth to the collage and finish it off nicely.

TECHNIQUE 3

Add extra elements

Embellish your collage with shapes, text and all sorts

If you can fit any more space into your finished piece, custom shapes and text can be cool extras to consider. It's really easy to add some flourishes to a collage, and these are embellishments that you can save separately and add into any collage you like.



Add shapes

01 Go to the Custom Shapes icon along the left-hand side of Elements. You can add all kinds of shapes, but we're going for hearts. Create a new layer for each one if you want to vary colour.



Insert text

02 Text is another great final touch that you can give to a collage. A lot of Tumblr collages use handwritten fonts, but any typeface can look great; write words relating to the pictures, and use striking fonts to grab attention.



Inject some style

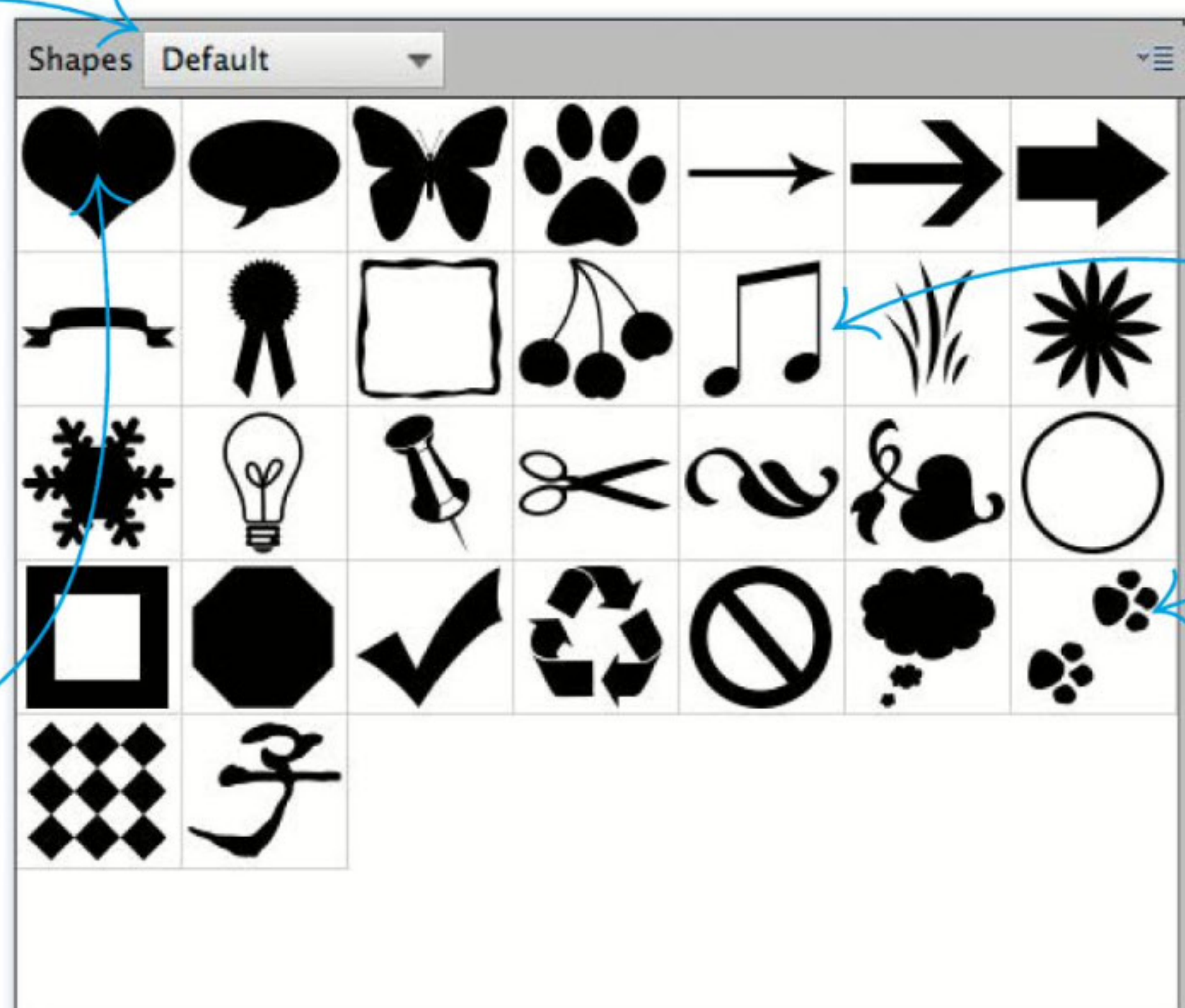
03 Head to Layer>Layer Style. Here, you can add drop shadows to your text and colourful outer glows to your shapes; experiment with what effects look good before positioning the embellishments over the collage.

MORE SHAPES

Discover even more in this drop-down menu; there's everything from flowers to fruit and even talk bubbles.

HEARTS

Hearts are a staple of Tumblr collages, and a great addition if it's a collection of friends or loved ones.



MUSICAL NOTES

Musical notes are another symbol that look great, and there are a few options to choose from in the Shapes menu.

PAWS

If you're creating a pet collage, the paw print options are a must-use, and there are even more animal shapes available to use.

On the siteLearn this technique
using the supplied files**Photo edit...**

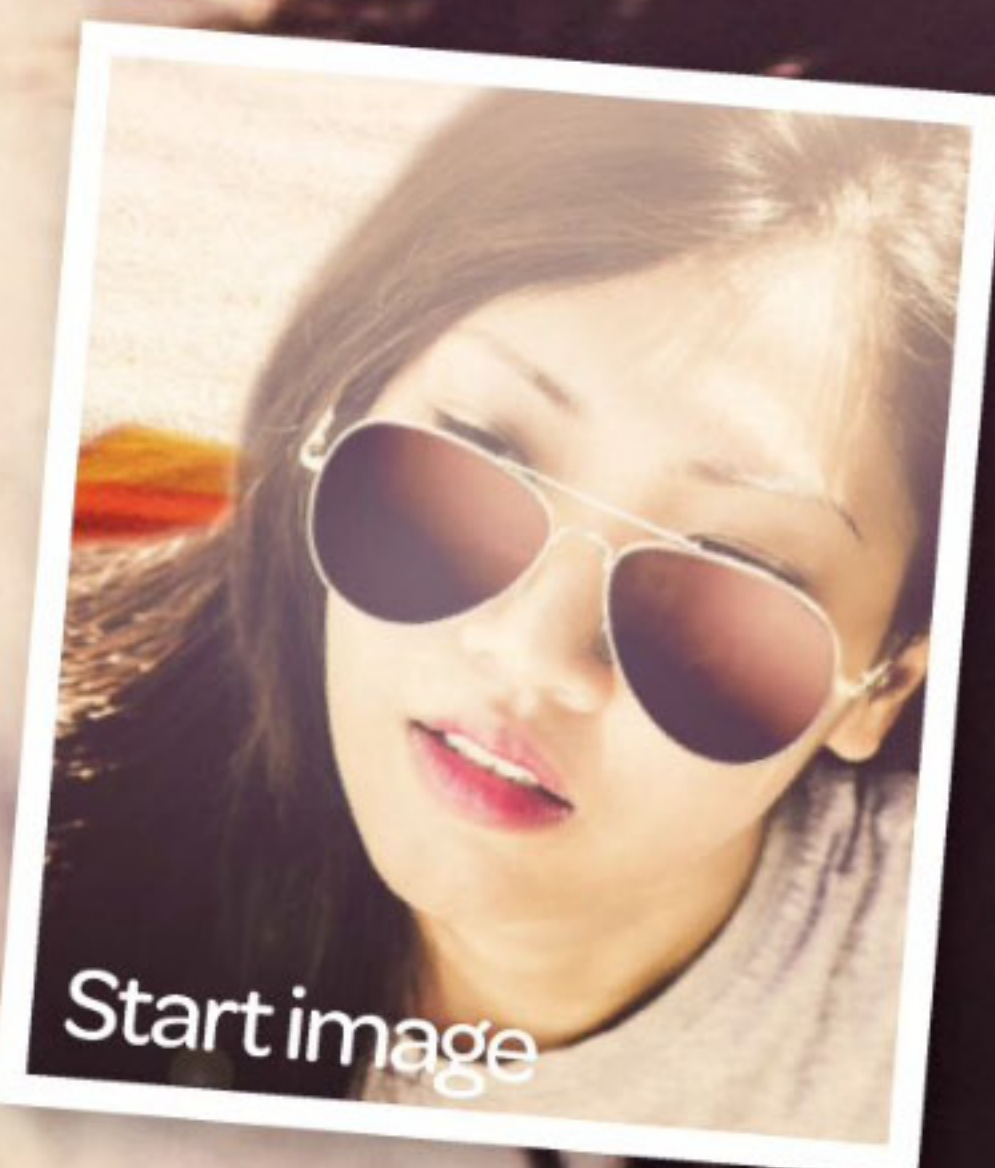
Add a reflection to sunglasses

Use Elements to add a landscape to a subject's glasses

If you're trying to work out if an image you've found has been manipulated in Photoshop, one of the key areas to check for is in the shadows, lighting and reflections. Often, if an artist has forgotten these surrounding areas, a picture doesn't quite look convincing, so it's important to add these little details whenever you're crafting a composition.

Reflections are not just a vital part of a photo's realism though; they're also a creative extra that can enhance a picture, a bit like giving a subject a backdrop. Adding a reflection can transform a photo, as it can add colour, brightness and excitement, as well as give a sense of place.

By using simple composition techniques, it's easy to distort a photo, blend it in with the rest of the picture and use it as a reflection. Check out how to add a reflection to a surface in just four steps, and experiment with different amounts of distortion and opacity to adapt your reflection to your subject.



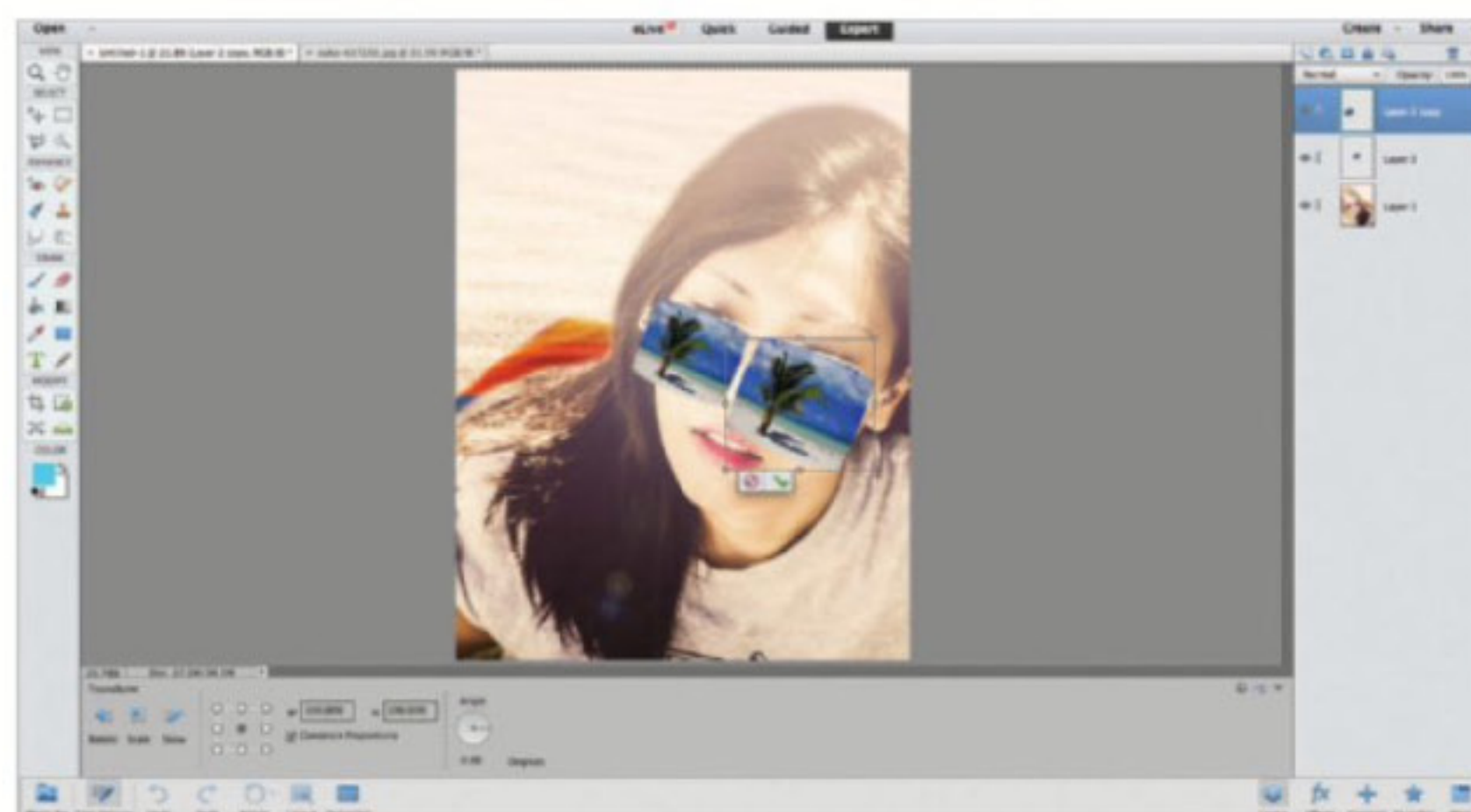
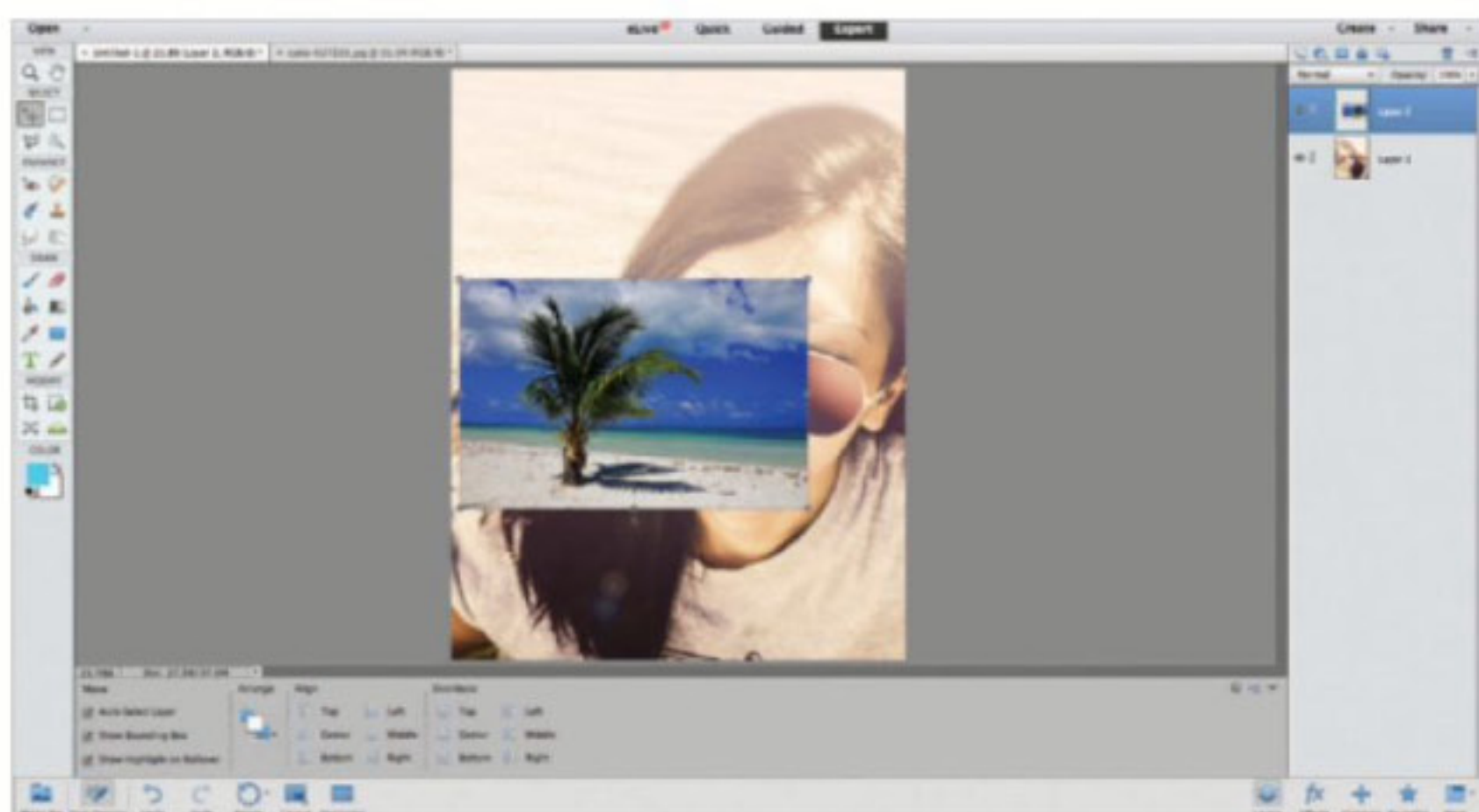
What does it mean?

SPHERIZE: The Spherize option in the distort menu bulges an image into a sphere – great for creating round objects that need depth and shape, but also to draw images in the opposite direction by sliding the Amount to negative figures. In Photoshop, the Pucker and Bloat tool can do these in Liquify.



Reflect your landscape

Use sunglasses to mirror your composition's surroundings

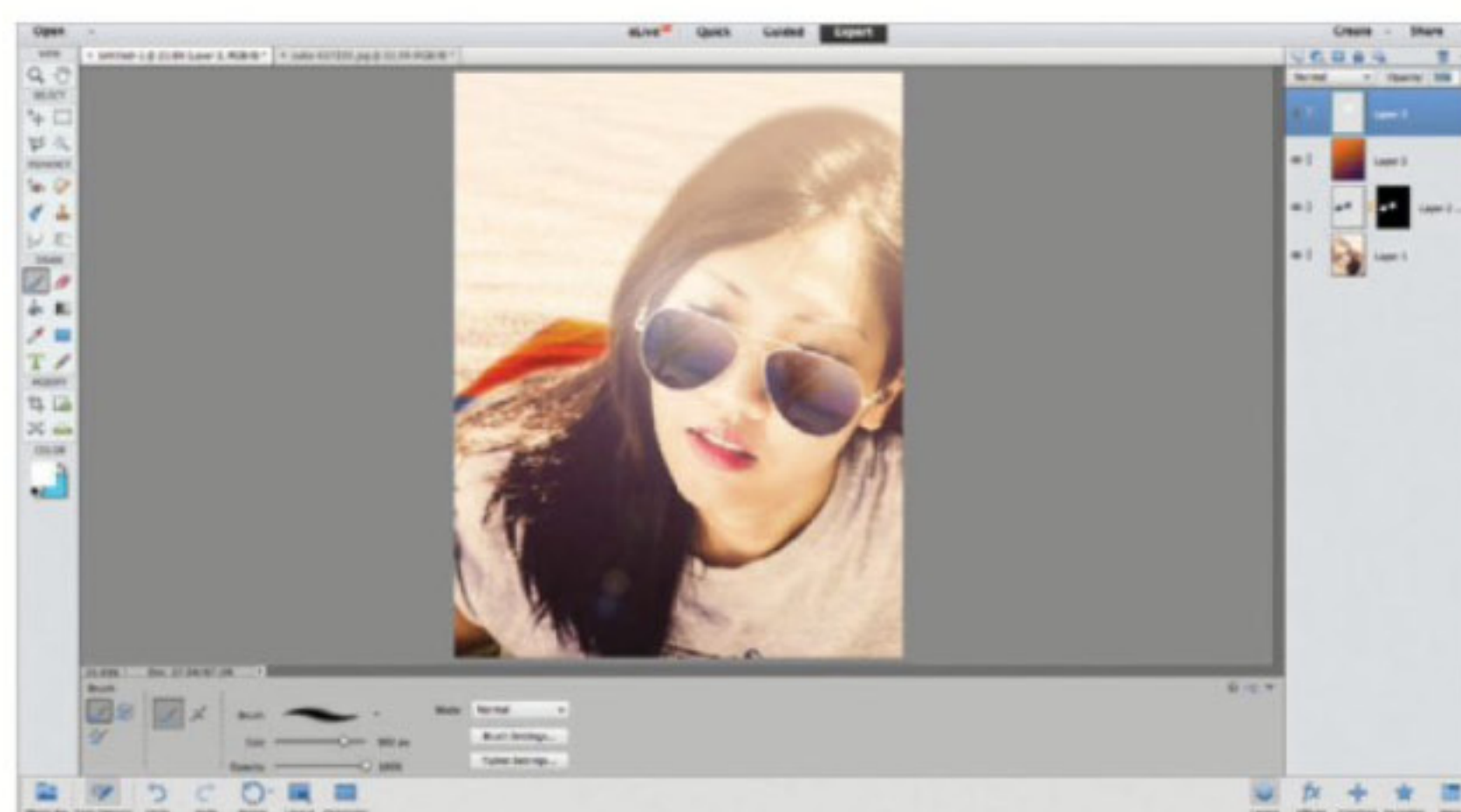


Find your reflection

01 First, find a reflection that you want to add to the sunglasses. Choose one that fits the aesthetic of the image, as it will have to be a view the subject is likely to see. Paste the image into the picture, and move it to the centre; this means that it will distort cleanly.

Distort and duplicate

02 Go to Filter>Distort>Spherize: 100%. This is usually enough to curve an image for glasses, but if the glasses are thick, press Cmd/Ctrl+F to repeat. Duplicate the layer and resize both images. Ctrl/right-click, Transform, rotate reflections and place over the glasses.



Blend

03 Ctrl/right-click the reflection layers and merge: set to Soft Light. Add a mask and invert it by pressing Cmd/Ctrl+I. With a soft, white brush, mask in the reflections. Turn the Opacity down to 50% so you can see where you're masking.

Add filters

04 To unify the reflections and the original subject, add a gradient on a new layer, Orange to Violet, from top to bottom. Add another new layer and with a big soft white brush, add a 50% opaque, white dot on a lens to suggest shine.

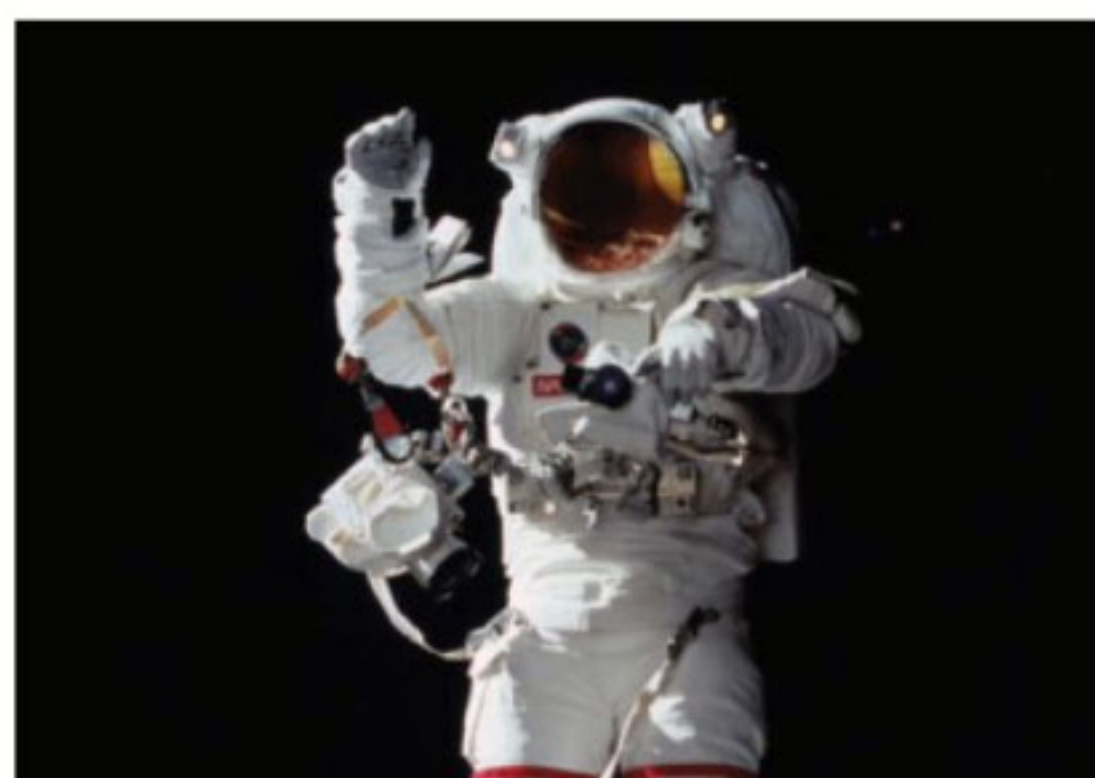
Other surfaces

How do you create reflections for these items?



Bevelled surfaces

When reflecting an image on a surface curved inwards – such as the inside a spoon – the reflection has to be distorted in the opposite way: instead of spherizing to 100%, move the slider the other way to -100%. Rotate the reflection to set it upside down, too.



Low-light reflections

If you want to create a reflection in a low-lit environment, you might want to keep the opacity high. Different reflections need different opacities, but usually if there's less light around, such as in space, you can see more in the reflections of shiny objects.



Flat surfaces

When reflecting flat surfaces, there's less need, sometimes no need, to distort. Simply add your reflection layer as you would usually, and set to Soft Light; your opacity will depend on the brightness of the room you're reflecting against the surface.



Learn this technique using the supplied files

What does it mean?

SOFT FOCUS: A soft focus is used in photography to gently soften harsh edges. This makes it the perfect finishing touch for any project in which you've had to use the Brush tool or the Clone Stamp; you can disguise the editing you've done slightly, and give a dreamy finish to your picture.

MIMIC TONE

Make sure that you vary the shades and hues of the hairs that you are adding to the beard if you want it to feel realistic.

STUDY SUBJECTS

Take a look at people with facial hair in order to give you a better idea of where it should sit on your subjects.

Photo fix...

Remove or add facial hair

Use brushes and cloning in Elements to have full control over beards

Hair is famously difficult to select, but it's a lot easier to edit and create facial hair on a subject. While there are theoretically plenty of ways to create a beard, one of the easiest is a less obvious choice. By creating a brush and adjusting the Scattering and Spacing in its settings, you can paint hair over a subject in a matter of seconds, without having to individually place every single hair.

Getting rid of a beard is just as simple. The Clone Stamp can be used for all sorts of photo-fix edits, but it's a great option when it comes to replicating hairless skin in a bearded area.

By learning the first two techniques of adding and removing stubble, you can reshape the facial hair on just about any subject. With a little help from the third tutorial, you might choose to replace the facial hair in a subject or change the style of beard completely. So while it may seem like a tricky task to work with hair, facial hair need not be. Read on and discover how to take control of beards with our top tips and techniques.

Start image





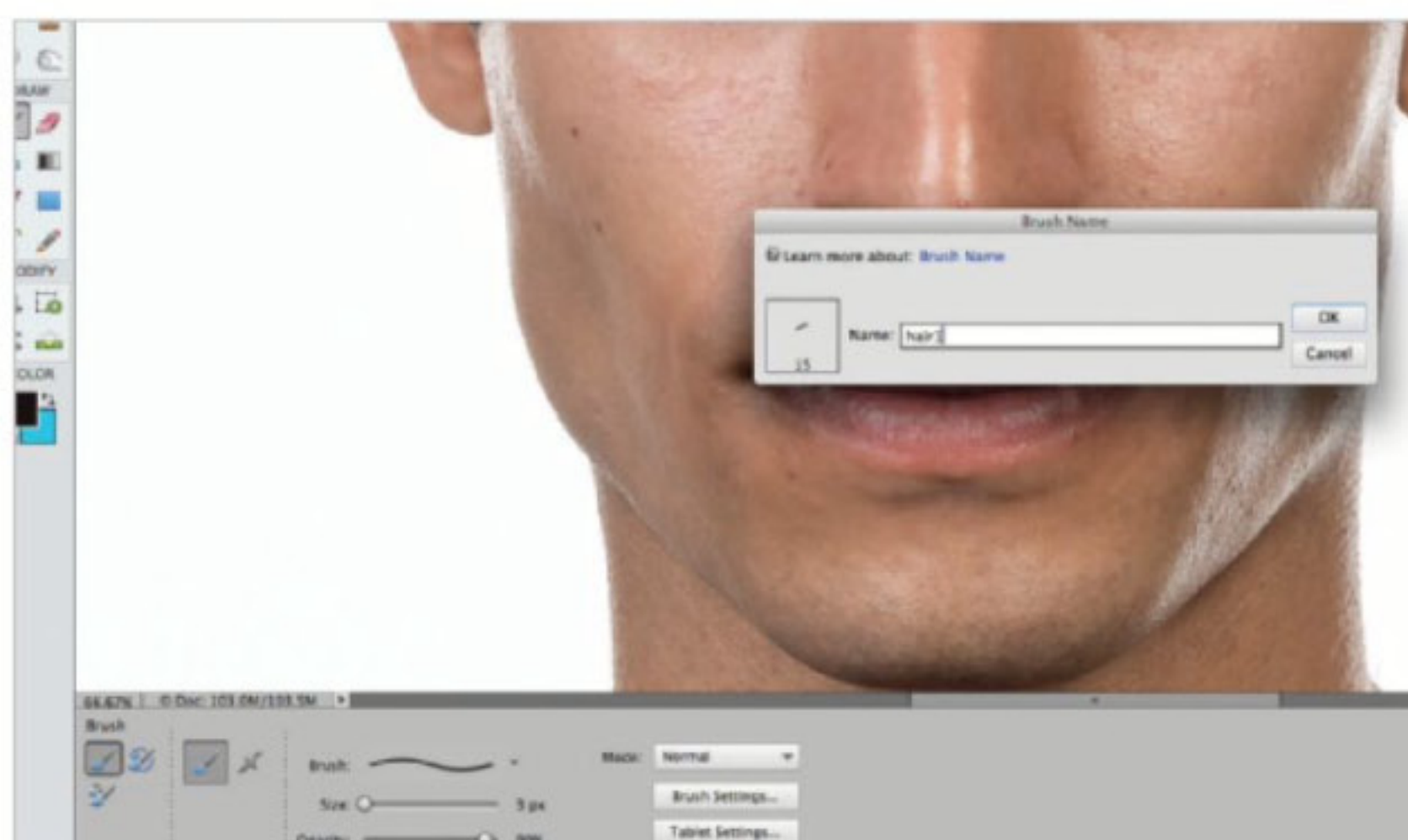
TECHNIQUE 1 Add facial hair

Give a subject a beard by duplicating a single hair



Draw your first hair

01 Start off by using the Eyedropper tool to select the colour of your facial hair. Pick your colour from the hair or eyebrows for this with a brush of about 2 pixels and make a small stroke to create a single hair, on a new layer.



Save as a brush

02 Hold Cmd/Ctrl and click the preview of the layer. This will select only the pixels you've brushed with. Go to Edit>Define Brush from Selection and choose a name for your new custom brush. This is what you're going to use to paint the facial hair with.



Adjust brush settings

03 Before we start using the brush, we must change the settings so that the brush scatters hairs across the face, and not just in clumps. Set the Fade to 35, Hue Jitter to 2%, Scatter to 40% and Spacing to 152%.



Start brushing

04 With this new brush, paint a little in the direction of wherever the brush points; adjust the angle in Brush Settings to change this, and tweak the Roundness of the brush to change the size of the brush slightly.



Brush in different directions

05 Change the angle of the brush and start painting in different directions around the mouth and cheeks according to where the hair in that area grows. Remember hair above the lips grows outwards, and hair on cheeks and below the chin grows downwards.



Finish and touch up

06 Complete the facial hair and use the Eraser to just lightly touch up any stray hairs that might have scattered away from the face. Reduce the layer's Opacity down to 90% to keep the hair subtle and even add a new layer for another shade if need be.



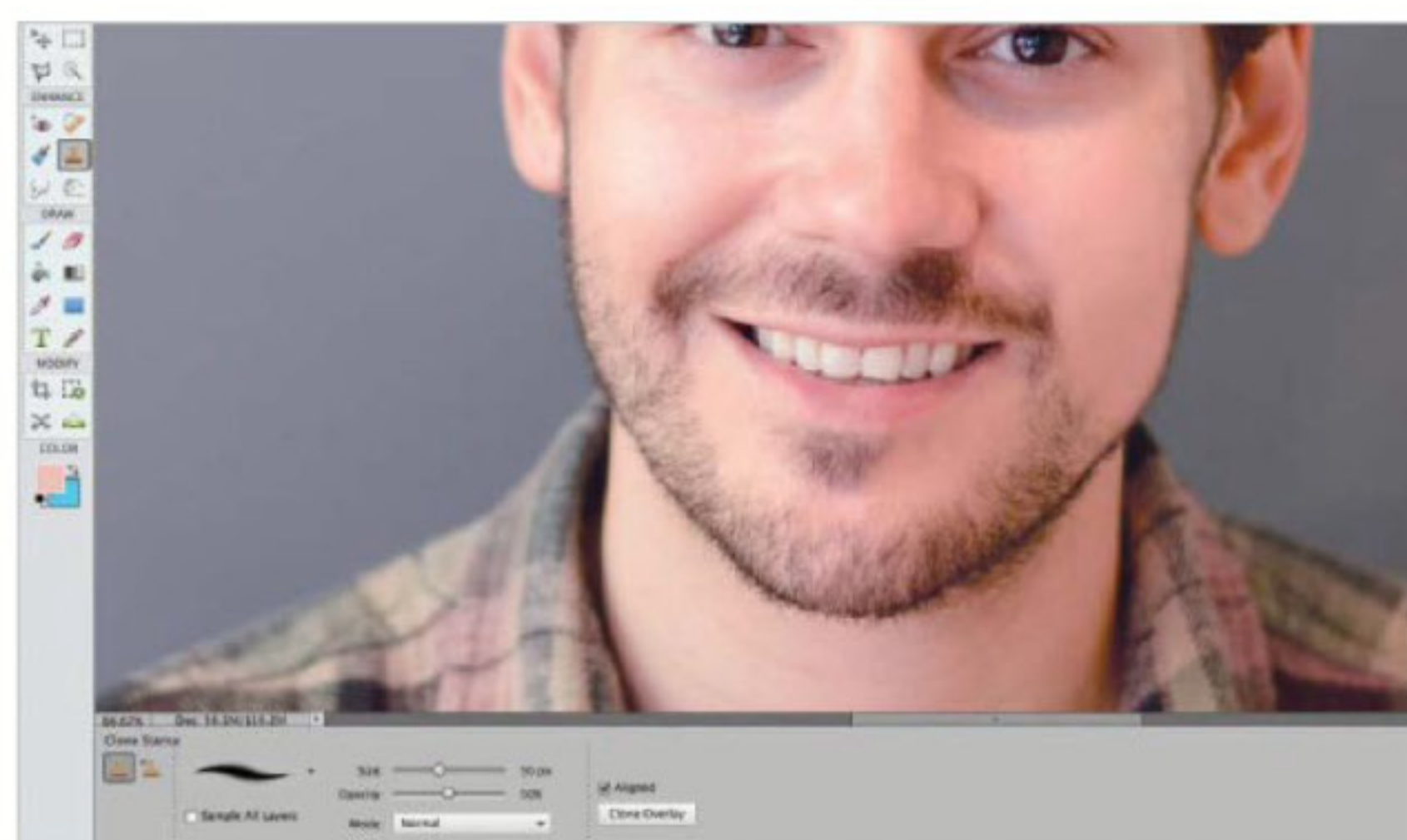
TECHNIQUE 2

Remove facial hair

Shave a subject using the power of the Clone Stamp tool

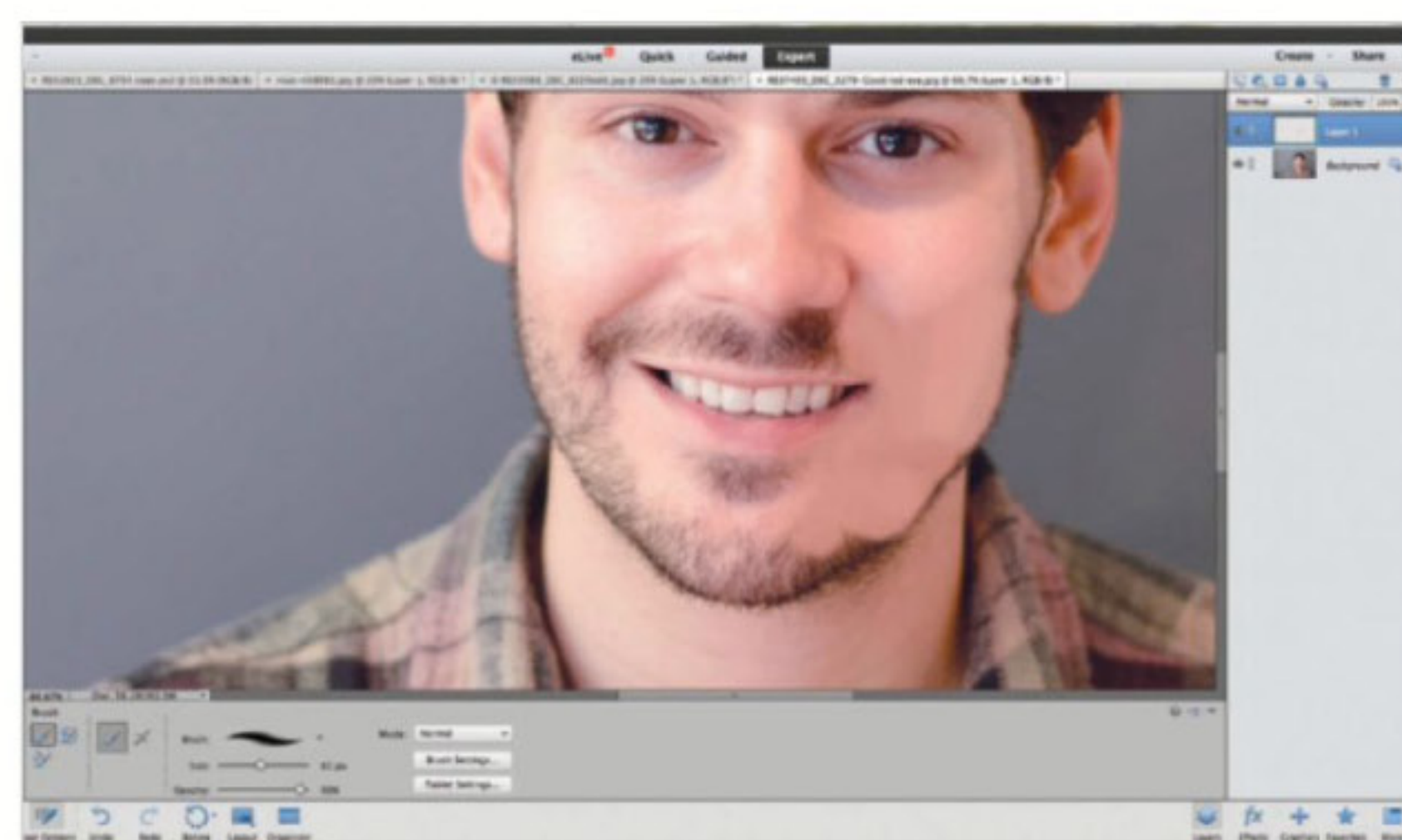
Now that we've added hair to a subject's face, what about doing the opposite to an image?

Removing hair is just a simple photo fix for the Clone Stamp to handle; erasing an entire beard is a little more difficult. It's important to be subtle with opacity and brush size of the Clone Stamp tool in order to keep a natural finish.



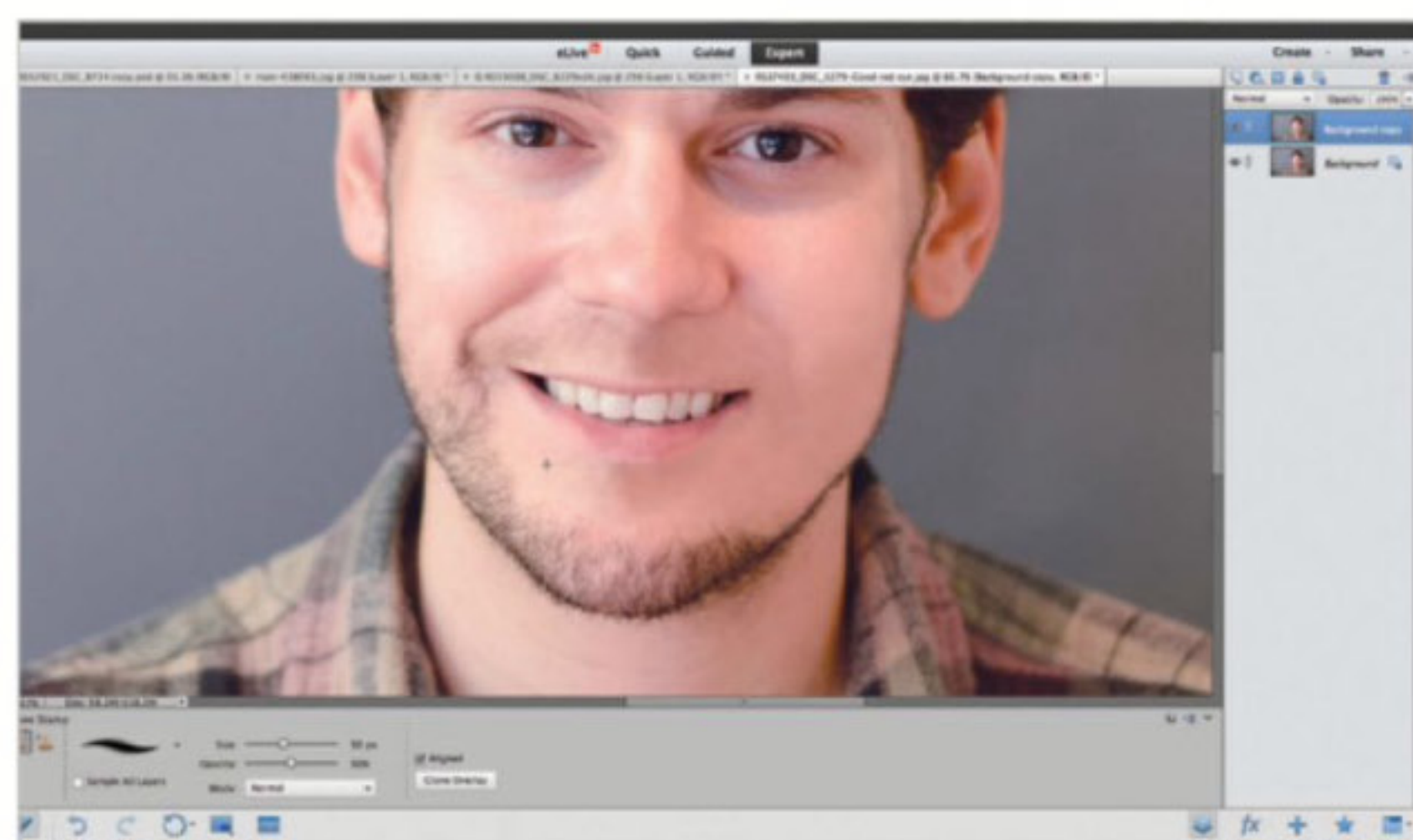
Begin cloning

01 Begin by selecting the Clone Stamp tool and gently cloning from the cheek over the facial hair. Use Alt/Opt to select a patch of skin, and set the Opacity to 50% to make small strides with it, so that you don't clone too much at once.



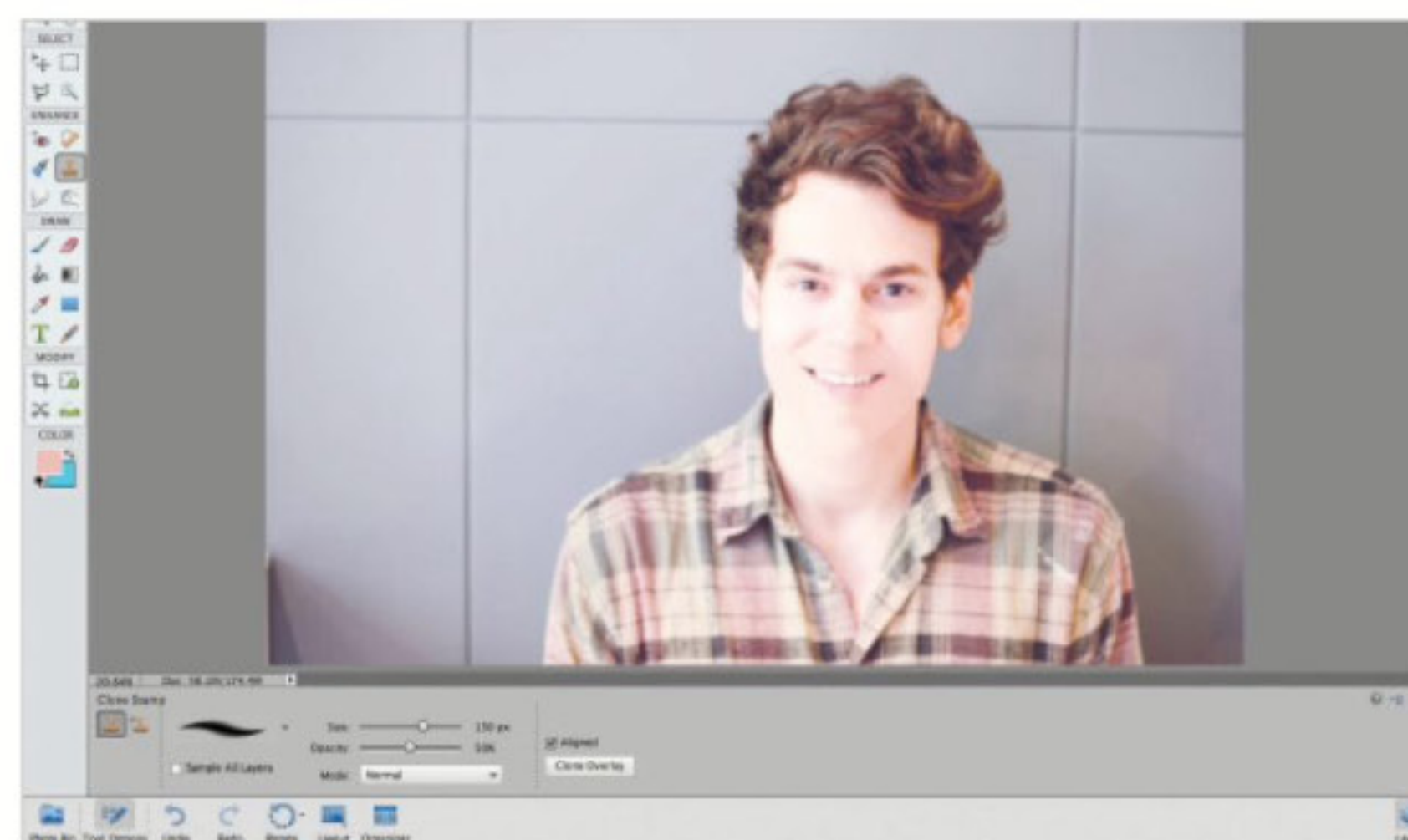
Clone bigger areas

02 Start cloning bigger areas by increasing the size of the brush. It will look patchy to begin with, but we're going to fix that in a minute; just make sure you copy the colour, light and shade to keep the face looking natural.



Smooth over

03 With an even bigger brush and an Opacity of just 20%, clone big areas over the patchier parts of the face to even and smooth out the skin texture. You might even want to fetch the Dodge and Burn tools, just to touch up the shading on the newly-shaved areas.



Give a soft focus

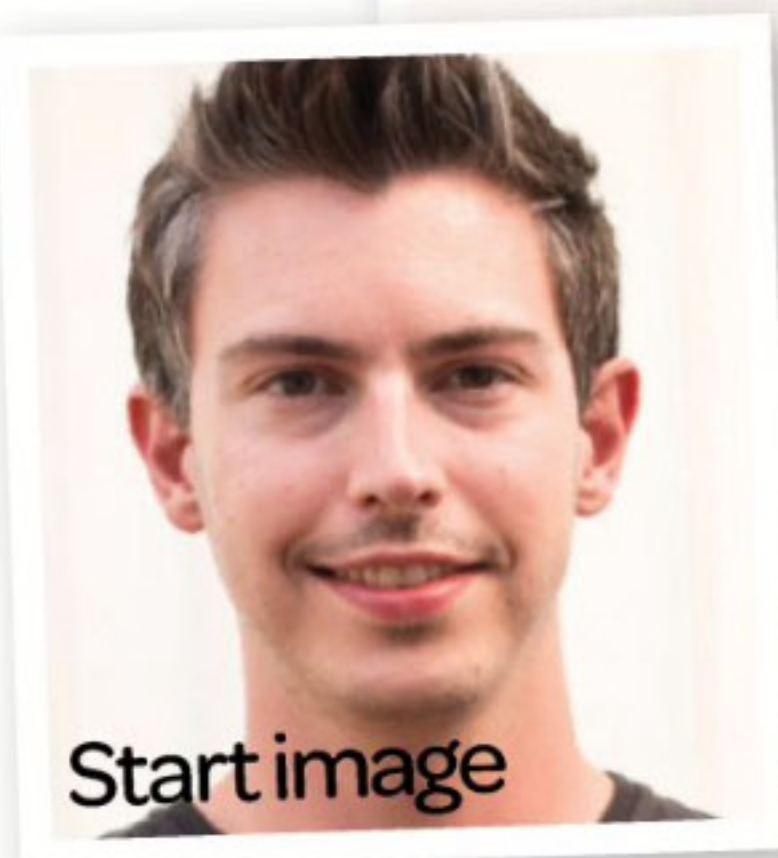
04 Merge your entire picture into a new layer (Cmd/Ctrl+Alt/Opt+Shift+E) and add a Gaussian Blur of 8 pixels by going to Filter>Blur. Set layer to Screen and reduce the Opacity to 50%. This will give another overall smoothing to finish off your image.

TECHNIQUE 3

Add and remove

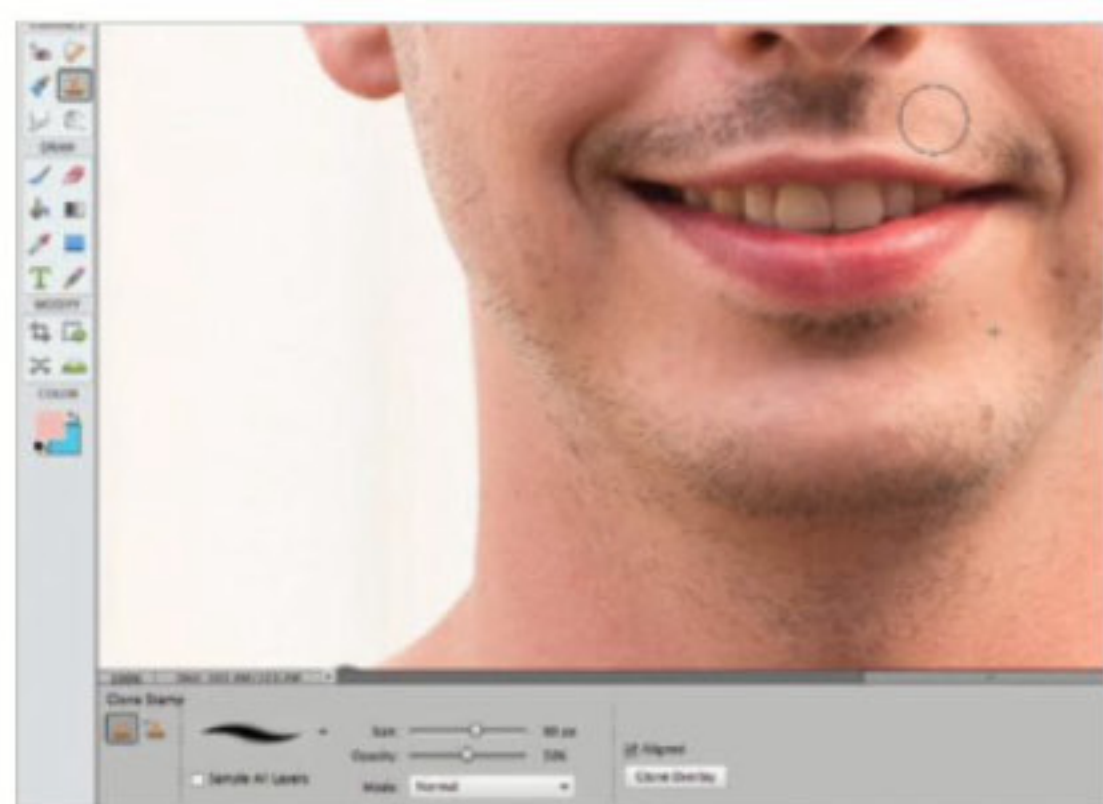
Combine both of the techniques to re-craft facial hair onto a subject

Now that you've mastered how to add and take away facial hair, use both techniques to fix up any subject. You might want to give a different style of beard as we've done here, but why not replace all the facial hair on a subject, to give them a light shave? The choice is yours.



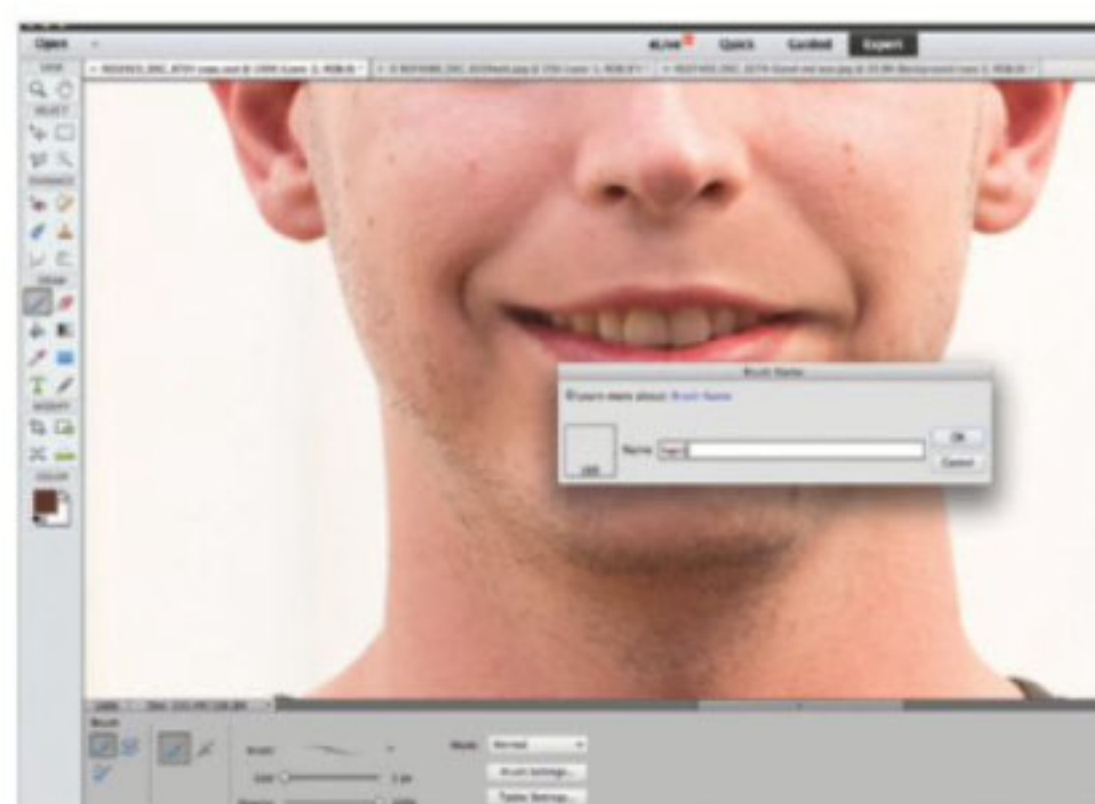
CLONE TEXTURE

The Clone Stamp is a very good tool for duplicating skin texture. To only duplicate colour, use a soft, round brush.



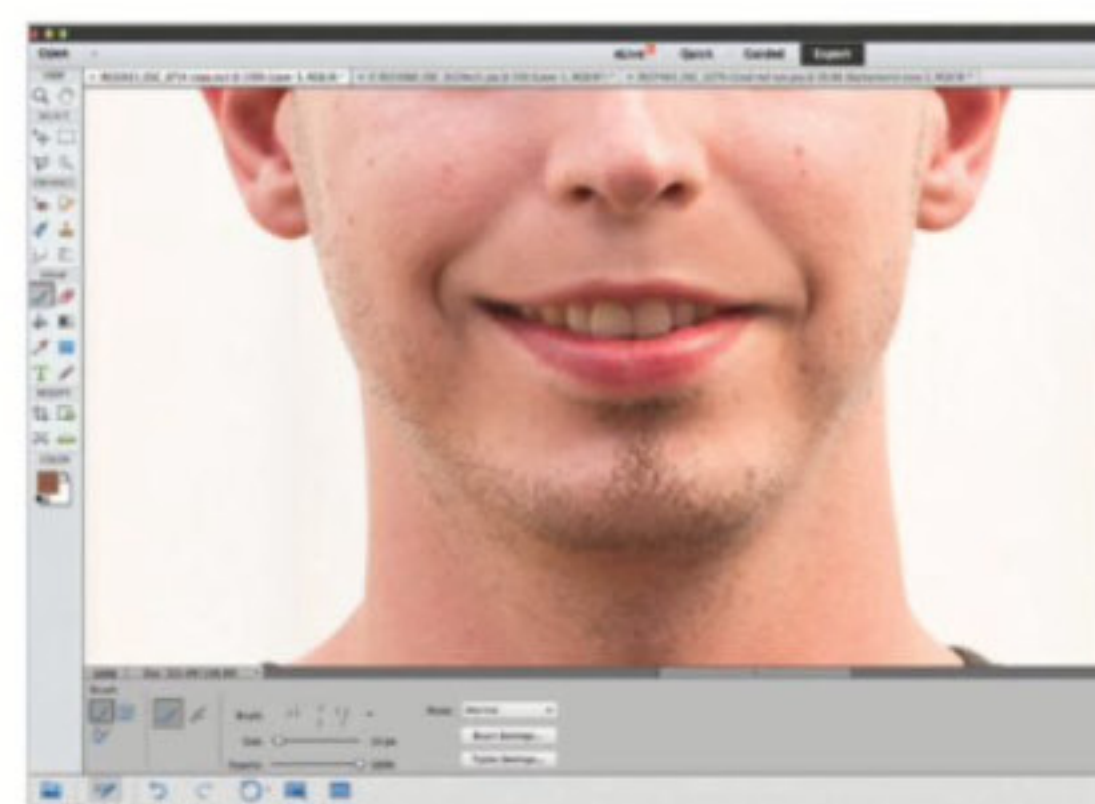
Clone

01 Remove the existing hair you want to by using the simple cloning technique from before. Clone patches from the cheek to the upper lip to retain the texture of the subject's face, and remember to keep a low opacity to avoid duplicating specific patches.



Create hair

02 On a new layer, create a single strand of hair as you have done before, select the layer's contents by Cmd/Ctrl+clicking the preview box and go to Edit>Define from Selection. Set the brush's Scatter at 40% and Spacing at 152% with Brush Settings.



Brush a beard

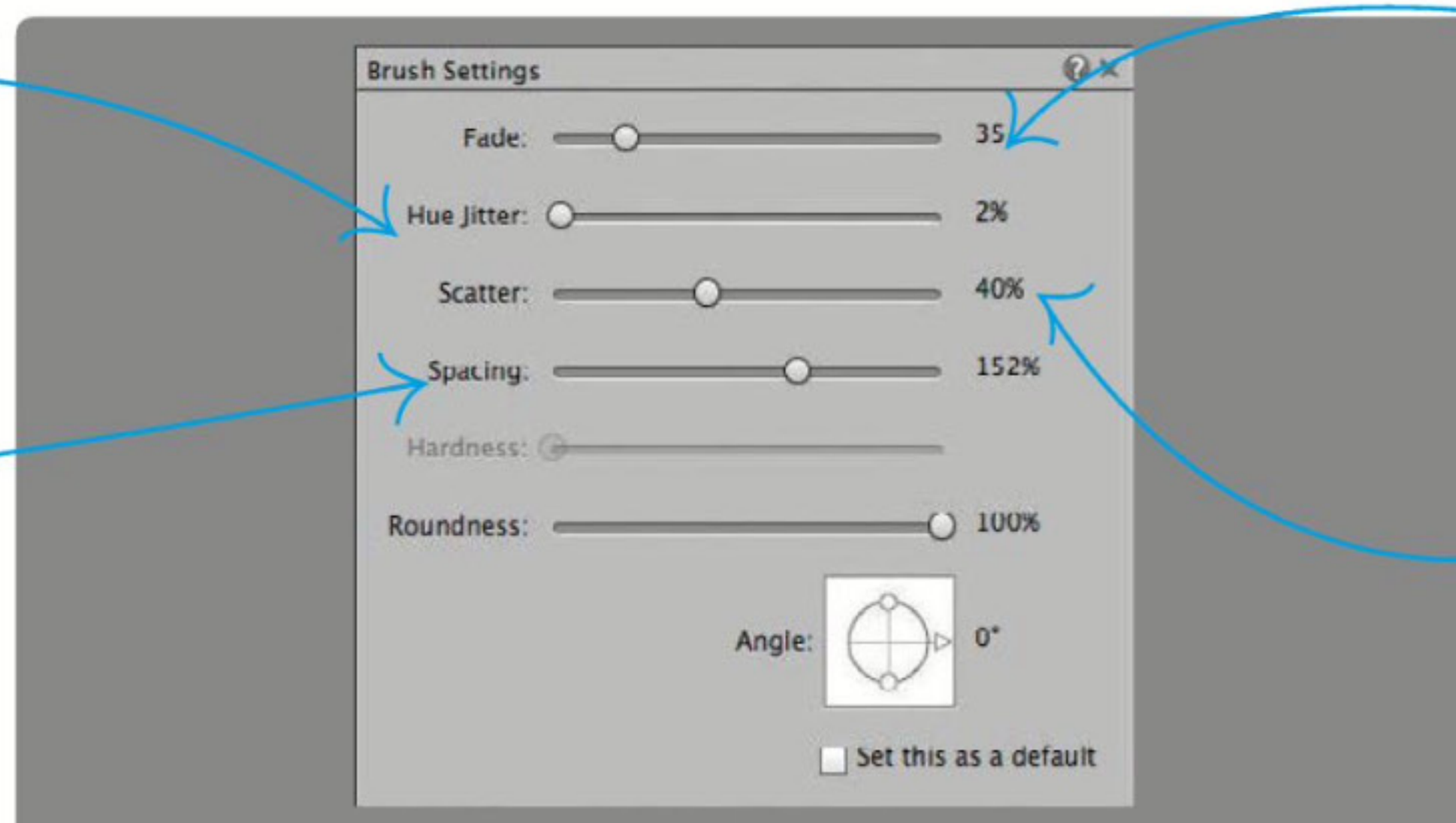
03 You may wish to brush over the space you've just cloned, as this way you can have complete control over every single facial hair. If you want to create a new beard, however, just brush as you would over the face, and tidy with the Eraser.

HUE JITTER

Choose to vary the hue of your strokes as you scatter them across the subject.

SPACING

Spacing sets the distance between the scattered brush strokes according to the brush's size.



FADE

Fade determines how many brush strokes will be clear and opaque before they fade away.

SCATTER

Scatter your brush strokes instead of placing them in crowded clumps over one area.



Creative colour...

On the site

Learn this technique using the supplied files

Master the Harris Shutter effect

Create this classic colour-channel-splitting effect in Elements

So many Photoshop and Elements effects rely on colour and movement, but few are as simple to create as the Harris Shutter effect.

Originally invented by photographer Bob Harris, the effect involved taking three pictures at different times and exposing various colours for each. When blended as one photo, it was possible to see each colour, for each to overlap, and for each picture to be visible within the one. Any three pictures can be comped together to create this cool effect, but it's best to use similar pictures, preferably from the same angle. Similar or identical colours cancel themselves out, and the bright colours are left to shine.

You can create this in Photoshop by altering the colour channels within your pictures, but you can create the same effect by using blend modes and merging layers in Elements. In fact, Elements also gives you more control of the colouration and saturation of your layers. Let's check out how to inject vibrant animation into your pictures.

PINK/RED

Set your two overlap layers to Color Burn (50% Opacity) and Screen to create a vibrant, well-saturated pink layer.

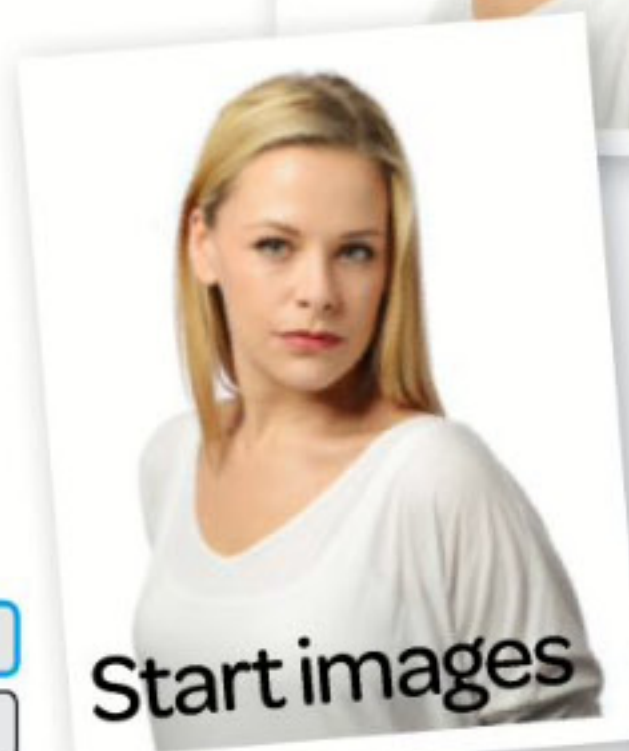
What does it mean?

MULTIPLY, SCREEN & SOFT LIGHT
– Each blend mode has a different functionality. Multiply is great for mixing colours, and ignores white in the picture, whereas Screen attaches coloured pixels to dark layers. Soft Light is great for subtly blending coloured pixels as a finishing touch.



POSITIONING

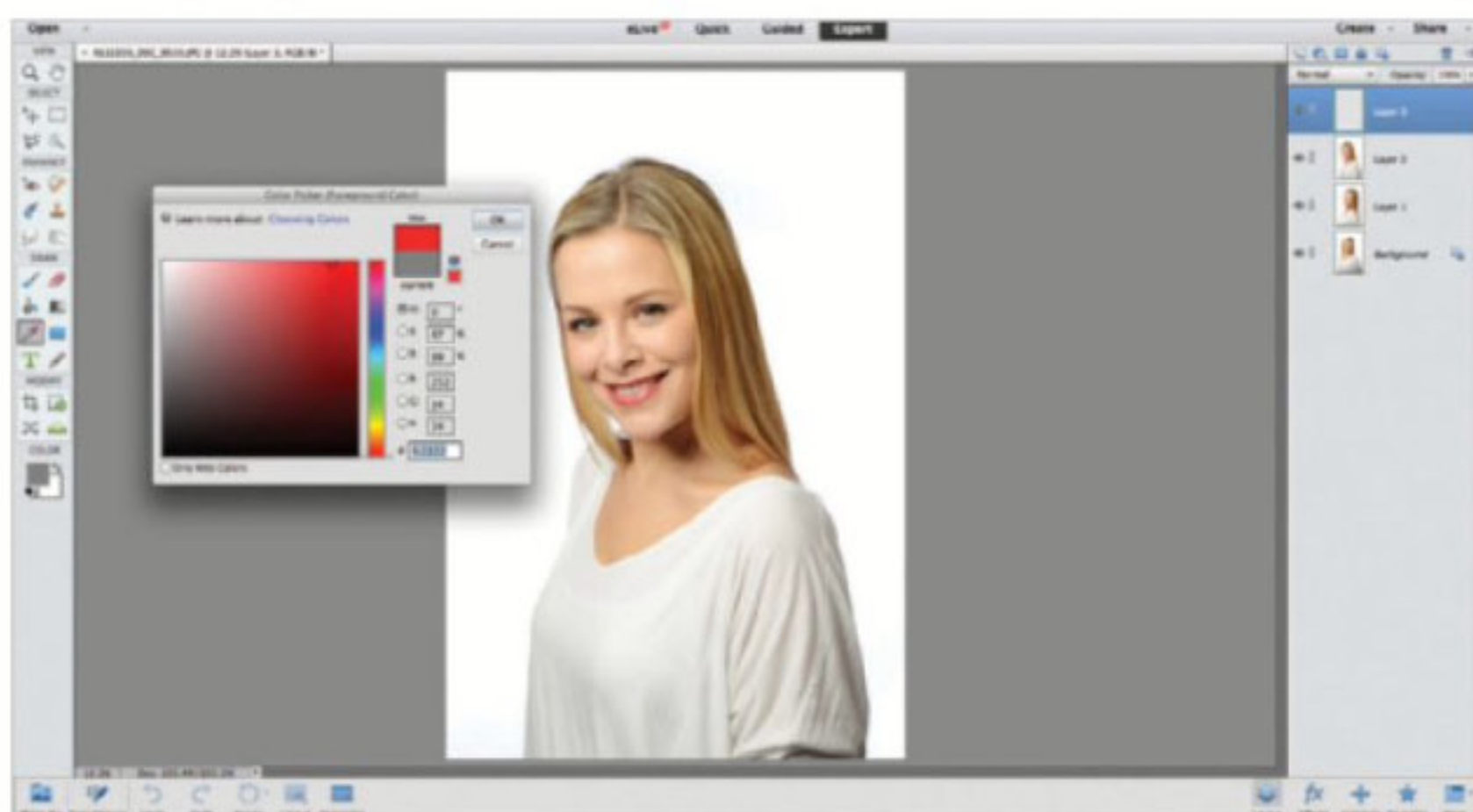
Try to keep each of your layers both close enough together and far enough apart to blend in colour and stand alone.



Start images

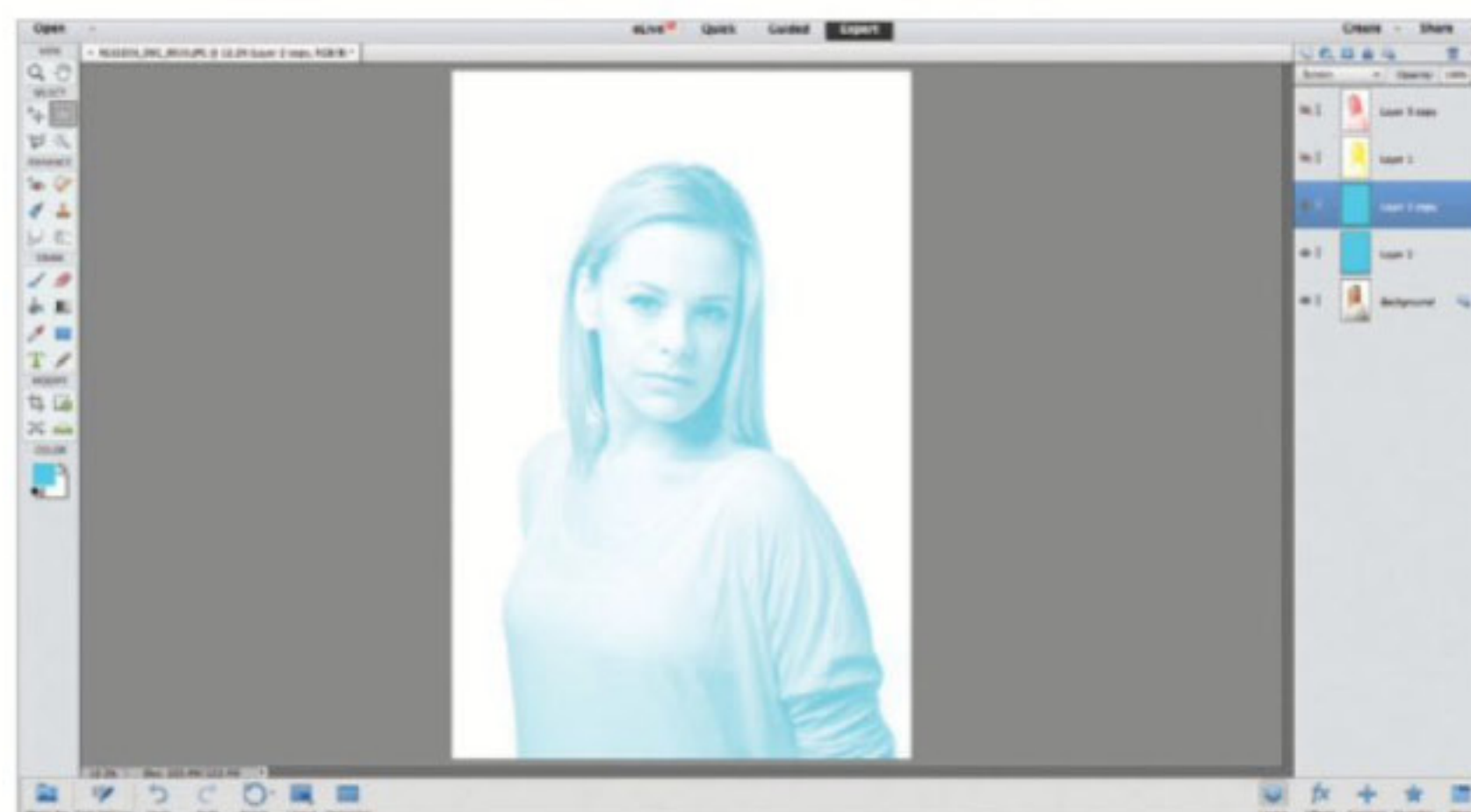


Split the colours Get creative using primary hues and layers



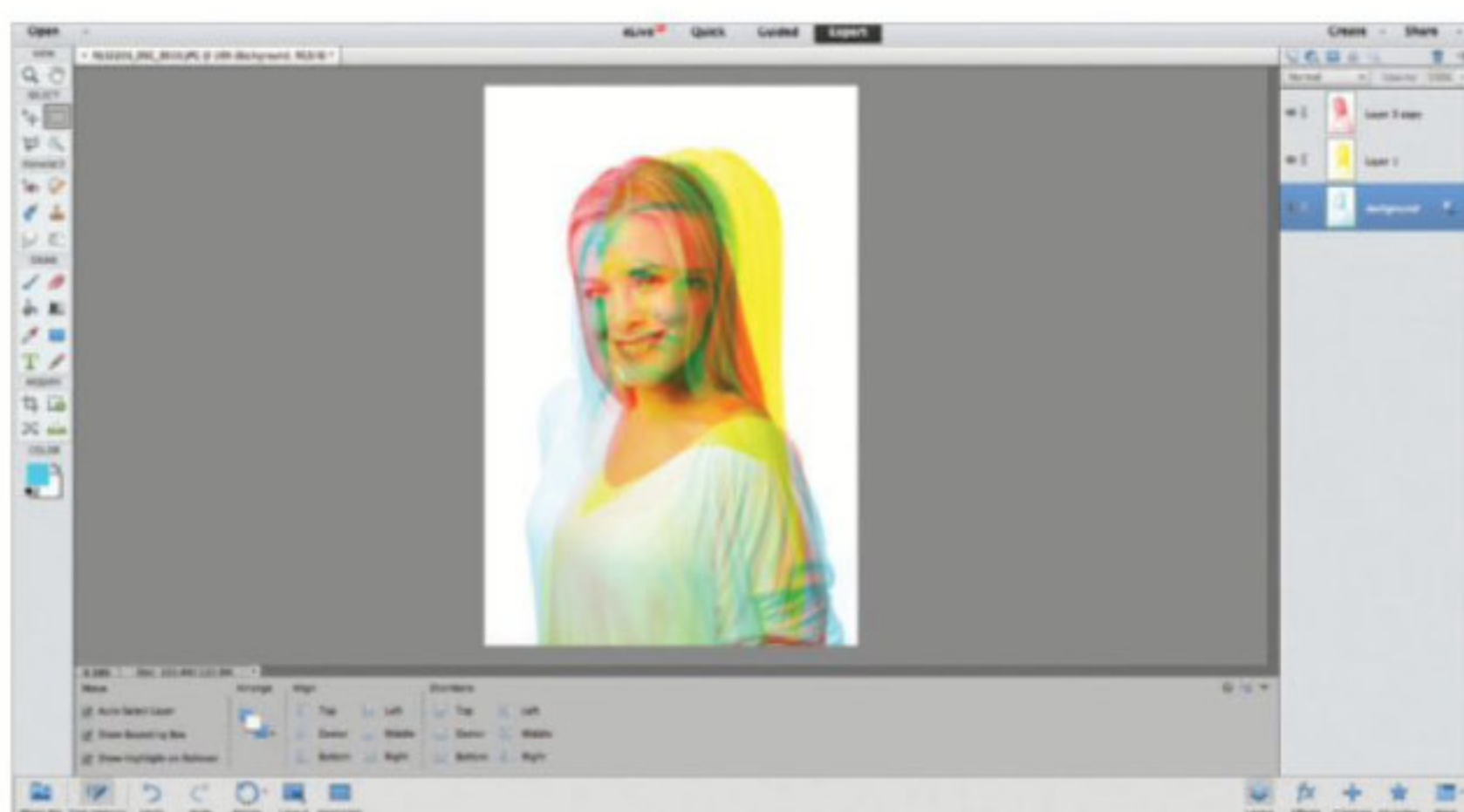
Add red

01 Find three pictures of a subject in slightly different poses. Put into one document, each with a different layer, and create a red (#FC2222) layer above your top layer. Set the blend mode to Multiply: this will blend the coloured pixels of the subject with your colour.



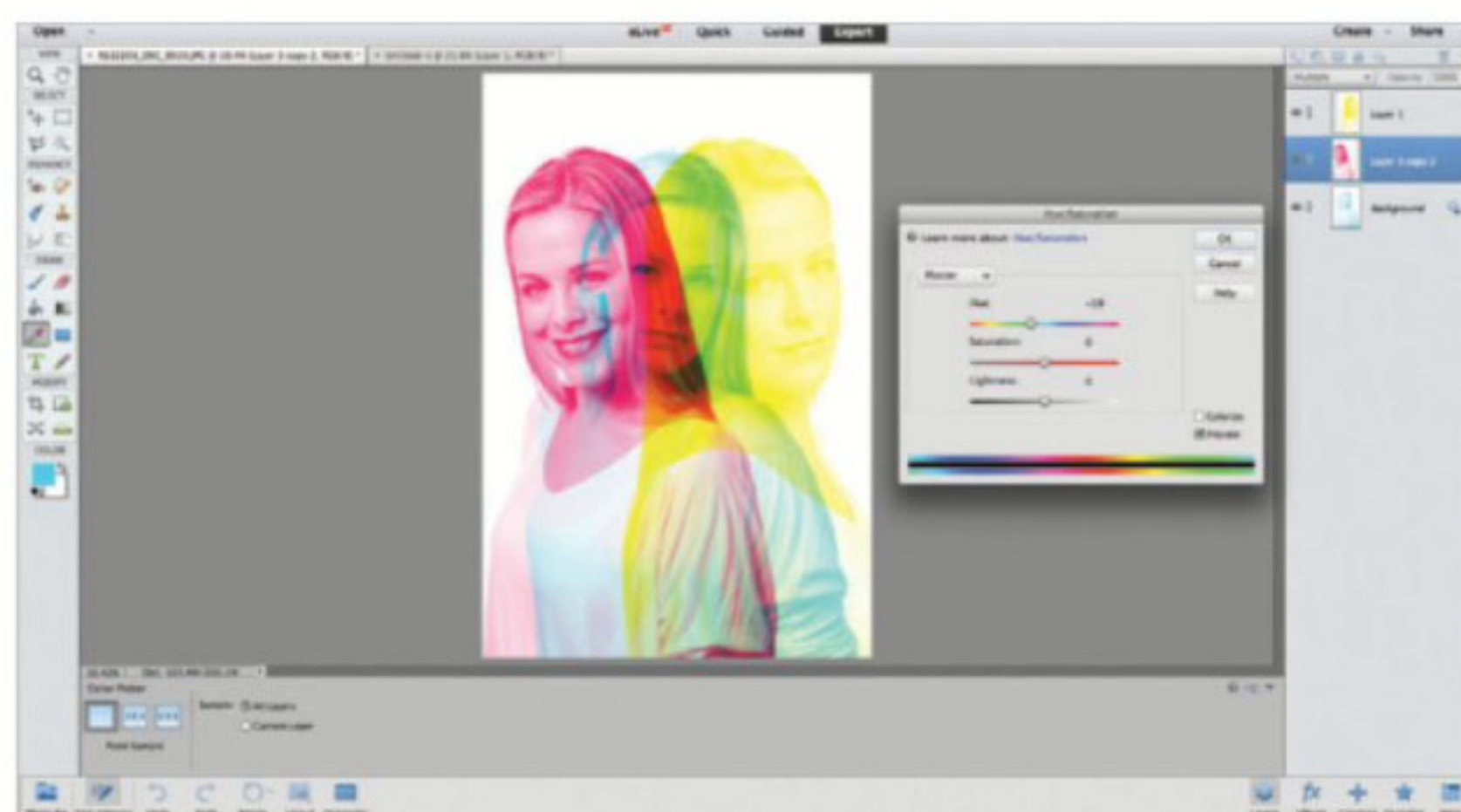
Complete other layers

02 Merge your red layer to the subject and hide. Repeat with the other layers, choosing cyan (#FCFF00) and yellow (#00DF9). You may want to experiment with blend modes: Color Burn, Color and Screen all give slightly different finishes to the coloured portrait.



Multiply and arrange

03 Merge your coloured layers to the respective subject layers and turn all the blend modes to Multiply. This will let each picture shine through one another. Rearrange layers if needed to show equal amounts of red, blue, yellow and mixed colour.



Apply finishing touches

04 Finally, you can edit any of the colours if need be by going to Ctrl/Cmd+U; we decided to turn the red to a pinker hue by moving the slider to -20, but you can always turn your three channels to any colour you like.

Other effects Where else can I use the Harris Shutter effect?



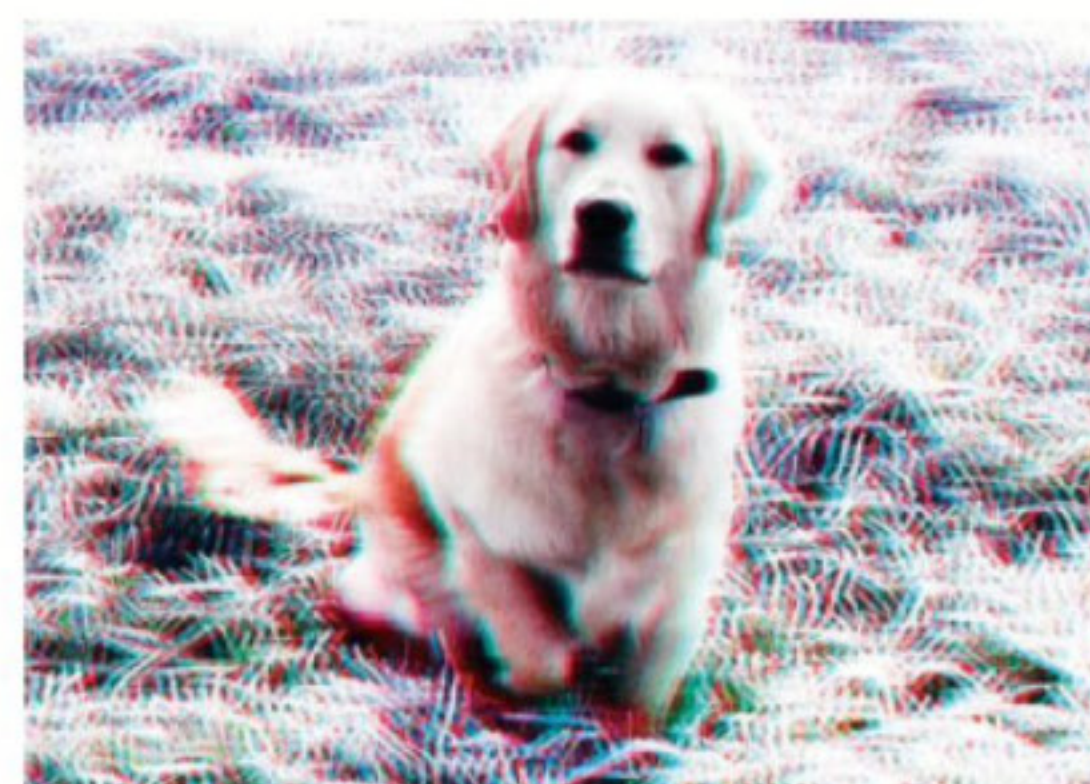
Motion shots

The Harris Shutter effect is great for multiple pictures of a moving vehicle, taken from the same angle. If you don't have enough of these, though, copy your vehicle to new layers, apply colourful Screen layers and use varying degrees of Motion Blur.



Liquid images

Photos of waterfalls make particularly good subjects for this effect, because like vehicle images, a waterfall has plenty of motion. Liquid in general, though, is great for applying the effect to, as you can use different colours for all the droplets and splashes.



3D effects

Why not use just two colours to create a 3D effect? Pick one picture, duplicate it twice and turn one layer cyan and one red, with Screened layers. Then, set both layers to Soft Light and shift them each 20 pixels in the opposite direction from each other.

CAMERA

Price £349.99/\$599.99 US Web www.olympus.co.uk

Olympus PEN E-PL7

Does the third camera in this successful series build on the groundwork of previous models?

The specs

Company Olympus

Additional specs

- 3-axis image stabilisation
- 16 megapixels
- Wi-Fi compatible
- 180° flip touchscreen

Olympus is a manufacturer that's never been short of advocates and ambassadors. Many of the most legendary photographers ever to wield a camera have captured their most iconic images using an Olympus, from Jane Bown's portraits of celebrities to Don McCullin's work in Vietnam. The series of cameras with which they were associated was the OM line, a hugely respected model which has now given birth to a digital version in the form of the OM-D series. It's this line of cameras that has contributed to something of a renaissance for Olympus, with a certain hipster modishness attached to its considerable reputation.

But there's more to Olympus than the OM-D. The PEN Lite range, though not as iconic as the OM-D, offers both very good image quality and appealing value. Olympus says that the E-PL7 boasts "basic performance inherited from the OM-D", but the feature that the press release seems most keen to emphasise is something that Bailey, Bown or McCullin would be neither familiar with nor interested in; namely a 'selfie' mode for capturing the self-portraits that social media has somehow managed to make a central

tenet of the imaging zeitgeist. This seems a slightly surprising feature to be grandstanding when launching a camera, but there it is. It works just fine, but surely there's more to the camera than this?

Well, yes, but it's intriguing how many of these are geared around selfies in Olympus' literature. There's the same 3-axis VCM image stabilisation system as found in the OM-D E-M10 (there to ensure your selfies are sharp) and the built-in Wi-Fi can be used in combination with the OI.Share smartphone app for wireless sharing of your, well, selfies.

The camera is relatively compact but isn't markedly lightweight with the 14-42mm lens attached. In the hand, the camera feels balanced enough but the nature of the camera's layout and design – particularly the posting of the front and back grips – means that gripping it with the right hand forces you to hold the camera close to its edge, which feels neither comfortable nor secure. Needing to support a camera of this size with two hands seems frustrating. This is because the screen takes up so much room at the back (the buttons are also small and fiddly as a result) but those with bigger hands may find

this awkward. That said, the manufacturer's marketing for this model seems to indicate a female target audience, so perhaps it's assumed that this isn't going to be an issue.

Ergonomic irritations aside, this is a very good camera from an imaging perspective. The wide range of Art Filters on offer is impressive, particularly as these have been expanded to include Vintage and Partial Color on the E-PL7. These can be customised effortlessly so you can produce attractive-looking images straight out of the camera without any additional editing time required. The touchscreen makes focusing really easy, especially as you can adjust the size of the focusing area. Not being able to interact with the menus (or change settings such as the ISO) via the touchscreen feels like a missed opportunity, though.

The verdict

7 1/2 There's much to admire here, including some top-drawer features and excellent image quality, but it feels aimed at a small market, which limits its appeal.

Capture a self-portrait

Use the E-PL7's touchscreen selfie mode to capture a photo of yourself



Choose an Art Filter

01 Head into the menu and select the Art Filter that you want to use. Olympus recommends the second of the three vintage options in order to produce flattering skin tones, but it's up to you.



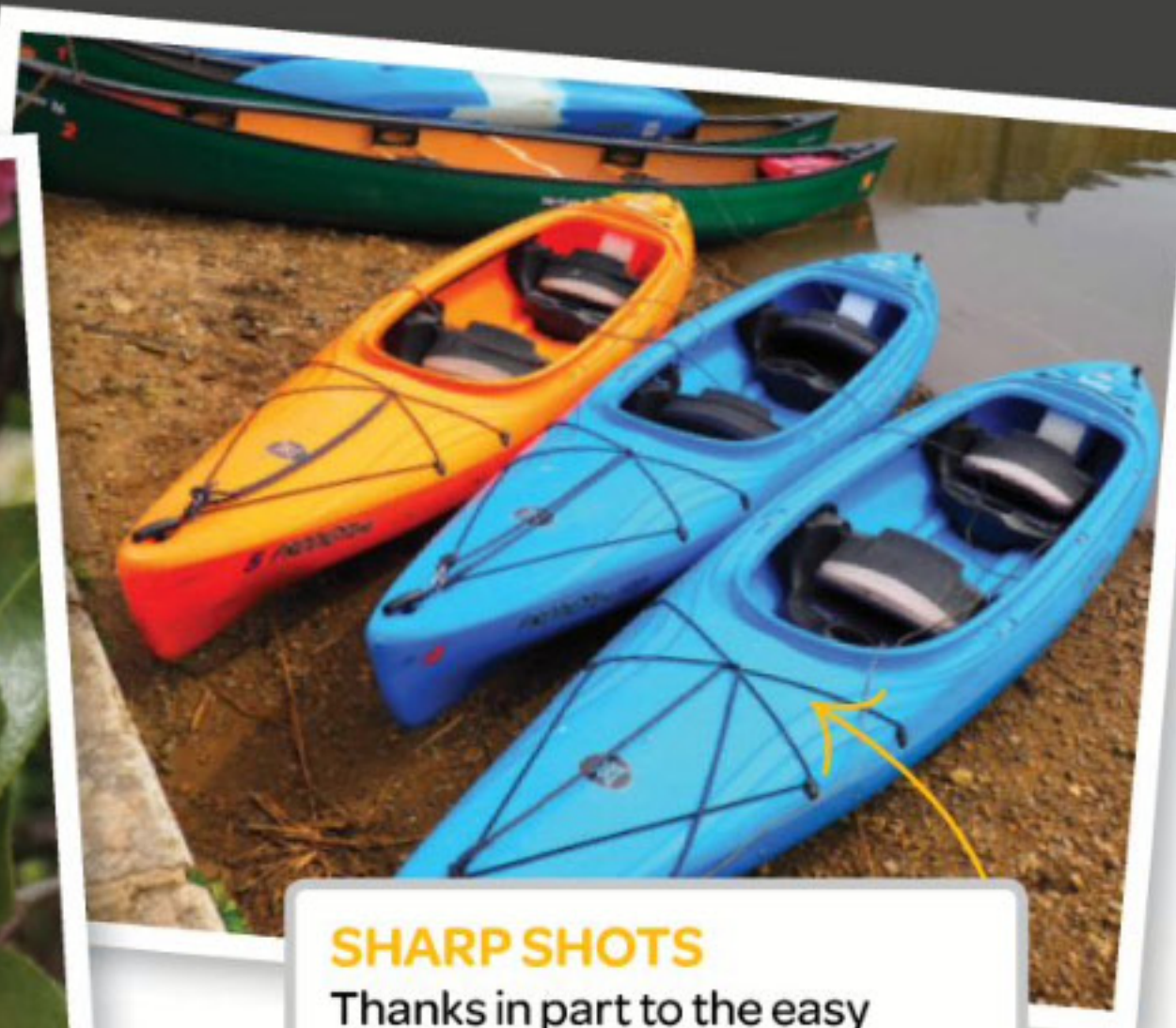
Flip the screen

02 Turn the camera round so that the lens is facing you, flip the downward-opening LCD to 180 degrees so it's facing you and you will be presented with a touchscreen shutter button.



Take the shot

03 Pressing the touchscreen shutter symbol gives a one-second delay (enough time to perfect your smile but not so long as to be embarrassing if posing with someone else) before your shot is captured.



SHARP SHOTS

Thanks in part to the easy focusing offered by the camera's touchscreen, the images achieved are very sharp and crisp.

CONTROL DIALS

The two main dials sit next to each other on the top of the camera. One is the main mode dial and the other is the command dial, which also houses the shutter button.



CRAMPED BUTTONS

The screen dominates the back, which means the buttons and the thumb grip are all rather crowded together over the right-hand side.

OLYMPUS PEN

M.ZUIKO DIGITAL 14-42mm 1:3.5-5.6

COLOUR OPTIONS

The camera boasts a very classic-looking design in black or silver, but less so in white.

NO VIEWFINDER

There's no viewfinder included, so you will be composing all of your images using the flip-down touchscreen.

Standout feature

The appealing range of Art Filters on offer in the E-PL7 means that you can capture a broad spectrum of styles without the need to spend lots of time on your computer. It's great to be able to quickly and easily select different variations of these and to also apply art effects, such as framing and star light effects, all within the camera.



Create a duplicate layer

04 Head into Photoshop and create a duplicate layer. This is important when using the Healing, Patch or Clone tools as it enables you to correct any mistakes quickly and easily.



Use the Patch Tool

05 The Patch Tool, set to Destination at the top of the screen, is effective for correcting skin flaws. When you're finished, lower the Opacity on the duplicate layer slightly to create a more naturalistic effect.

The specs

Company
FX Home

Additional specs

Mac OS X 10.6 +
Windows Vista +
Photoshop CS5 +

PREVIEW WINDOW

Watch your picture shape and use the scrollwheel on your mouse to zoom in or out as you edit.

IMPORT

This is the basis of the software: PhotoKey combines two pictures and then makes a simple cutout of your subjects so that the background shows through.

SOFTWARE

Price £229/\$229 US **Web** www.fxhome.com

FX Home PhotoKey 6

Want to photograph and isolate your own subjects? We find out if the PhotoKey software can provide a solution

When it comes to getting the perfect selection, the number of subtle edges can make it a difficult job, and the Refine Edge tool can only go so far. If you're photographing your own subjects one of the obvious solutions is to use a green screen, but it can be just as difficult to erase a green background!

PhotoKey 6 can help. It clears a green background and overspill, while balancing out the tone of a picture and even offering cool options like overlays. It is both a simple piece of editing software and a place to make more advanced edits, and can run as a standalone program, or a Photoshop plug-in.

Making the basic green-screen edit couldn't be easier. Go to the Edit tab, import your foreground and background, and PhotoKey

will automatically erase all the green in the first picture. In some cases that might be enough, but there is a range of basic editing tools for further tweaks. Edge Colour is a quick fix for tuning the edges of a subject; Spill Settings can correct any green lighting that's shone onto the subject; and Light Wrap is useful for matching the lighting from the original green screen to its new background.

Delving deeper into the features, there are plenty of touchups that you'd expect to see in Photoshop. The Filters tab gives the ability to control temperature, levels, blur and focus, and even change the transparency of the foreground, for if you want to give a ghostly effect. Unfortunately though, there isn't the option to tweak both foreground and background as a pair. The Effects tab offers

the option of a Tint or a Vignette, and there's even a Text tab for if you want to add a caption to images.

Despite all these added extras, you may not ever need to use the more advanced commands, as Photoshop can handle a lot of the filter options. It's still great at what Photoshop can't do, though. It may be tricky when you first use it, but its basic tools make it a great addition to any photographer's life.

The verdict

8

The green-screen capabilities are some of the best on the market. Combine this with the Filters and Overlay tools, and this is a great package for any photographer.



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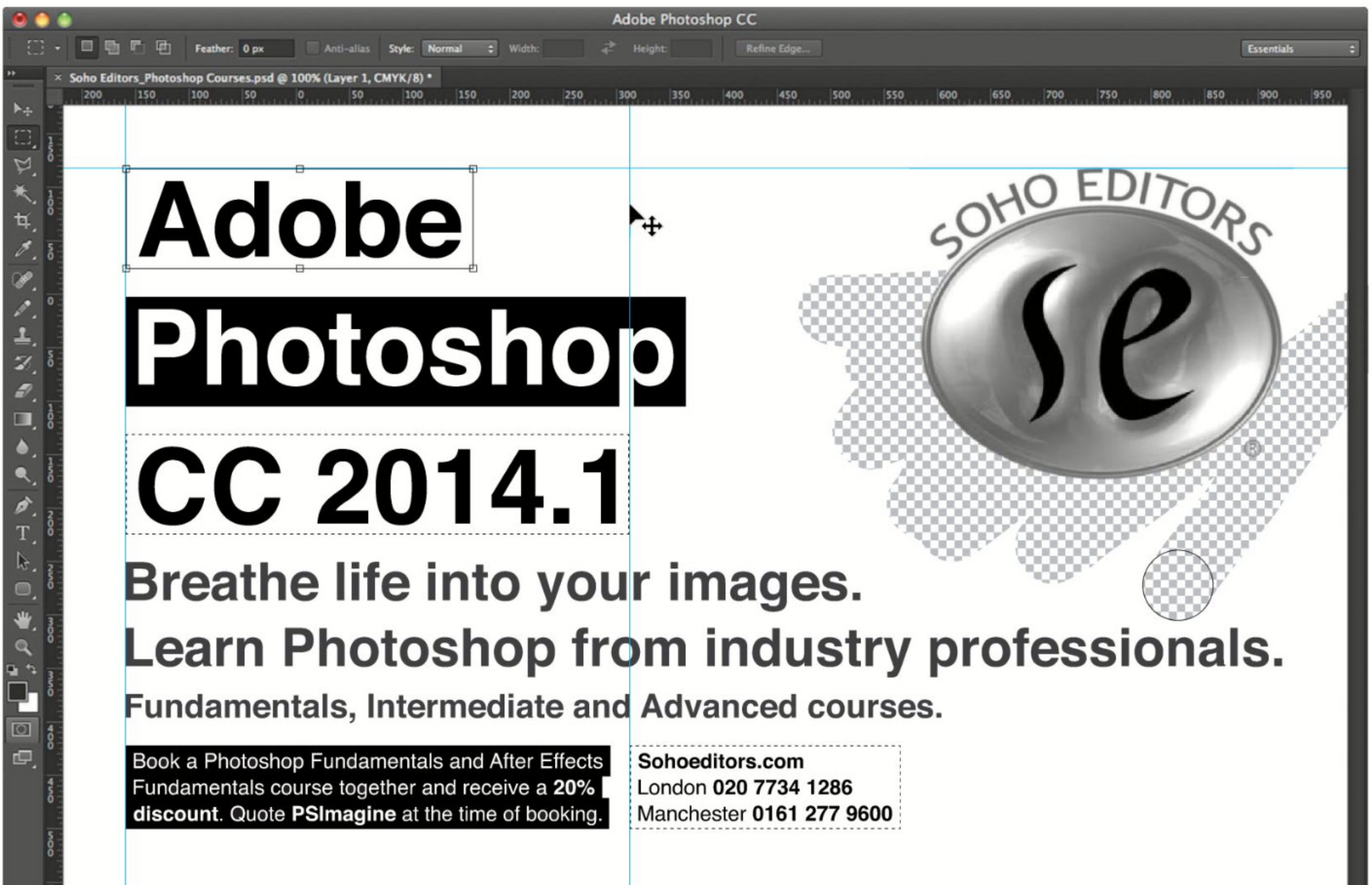
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Mystical Suite

With enough effects to make your eyes water, does Mystical Suite deliver in terms of image quality and ease of use?

The Mystical Suite from Auto FX rubs shoulders among a fairly expansive range of image-editing programs. Of course, Adobe Photoshop has long been the daddy among image-editing programs, and there's little need for an explanation as to why. But for all its undisputed greatness, what Photoshop doesn't particularly offer is an expansive array of pre-prepared, quick-fire effects. Photoshop is aimed at those who want to cook something from the ground up, using their own set of ingredients and their own bespoke recipe, rather than those who'd prefer the instant gratification offered by a ready meal. Though its results are certainly worth the extra investment of patience and skill required, Photoshop isn't necessarily ideal for those who just want to get to the product that much quicker.

Sensibly, Mystical Suite borrows some key features from Photoshop – notably the fact that there's a Layers palette that enables you to develop your effects step-by-step. Don't like the way a particular effect is making your image look? Simple – just delete the layer it's on, or make it inactive if you're still unsure. Additionally, there's a Brush palette to assist with making the localised adjustments that many of the effects can be adapted to. Oh, and Mystical Suite installs as both a standalone application and a Photoshop plug-in, which is very helpful.

It's not all good news on the interface front, however. Auto FX hasn't done an exactly exemplary job of making Mystical Suite look particularly sophisticated. Sadly, the interface looks a little gaudy and suffers from a design and font selection that isn't very high-end. Not everything in the software and apps world needs to look ultra-slick, but the interface here is just a little too kitsch, which is a shame, as it gives a slightly false first impression of what is, otherwise, an impressive package.

Mystical Suite essentially boasts three different bits of software all-in-one. The Effects button provides the option to choose from three subsections: Mystical Focus, Mystical Lighting & Ambiance and Mystical

Tint Tone & Color, with the third of these especially expansive.

There's not a lot that you can't achieve with Mystical Suite and the effects here are suited to a wide range of subjects. A high percentage of these effects would take much longer to achieve in Photoshop, so there's plenty of value on offer here. Some effects, though, such as Reshape, are a mere rebadging of tools and filters in Photoshop.

The only problem that was encountered relatively frequently during testing was that the program didn't seem particularly fast. Running on a machine that runs the latest update of Photoshop CC without any appreciable speed issues, Mystical Suite often needs to be given time to think; if you click something and then immediately click something else a second later, before the program has processed the first command, be ready for a 'not responding' message or a spinning wheel to occur. Similarly, any of the effects that you apply are not always instantly previewed; there can be a slight delay while

the effect churns away being processed. This is further exacerbated if you increase the preview quality. These frustrations do not spell disaster by any means, but frustrations they remain, nonetheless.

Generally, though, this is a very attractive suite that will definitely appeal to those who want to create striking effects that are high quality enough to give the impression that they required much more time and skill than Mystical Suite demands. Speaking of saving time, the ability to save presets based on the combined result of effects you've added to an image means that you can return to an effect you particularly like with ease.

The specs

Company

Auto FX software

Additional specs

- Over 100 dynamic filters
- Combines three applications
- Works as a plug-in and standalone

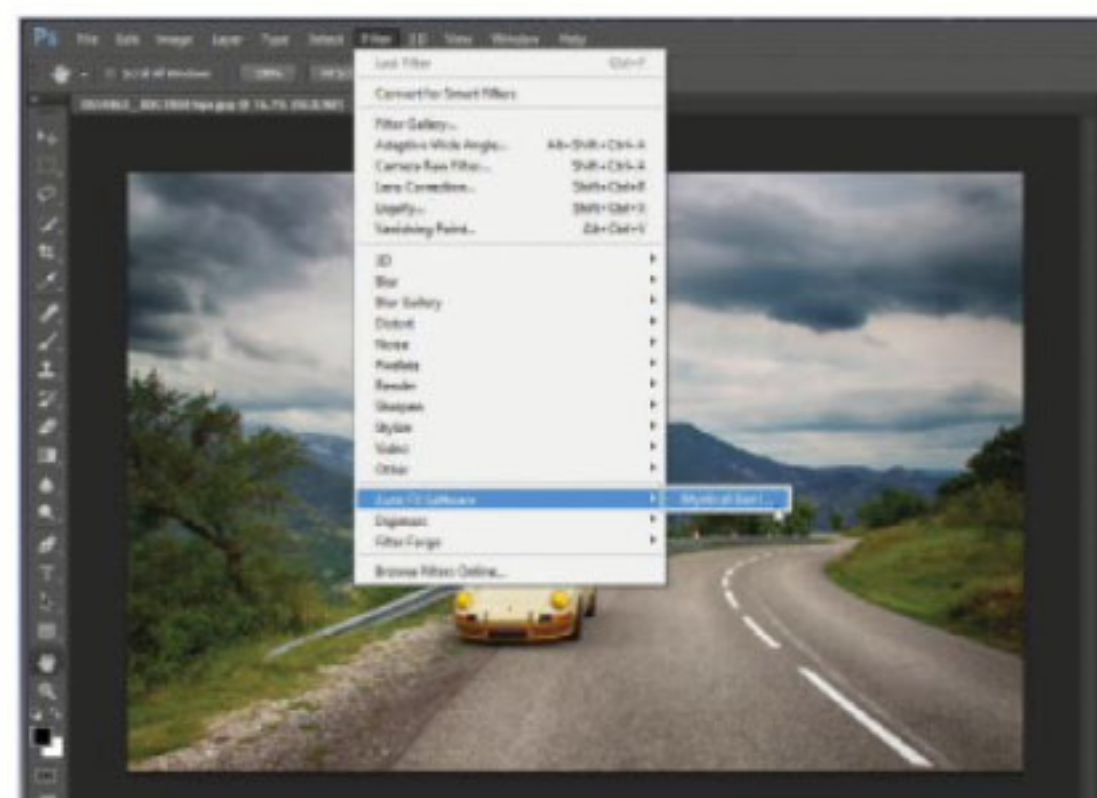
The verdict

8

This is a good selection of effects that's easy to use and capable of producing impressive results. It's not, however, inexpensive and the interface could be improved.

Create a dramatic scene

Use Mystical Suite's range of effects in order to produce an atmospheric advertising-style image easily



Access the suite

01 Mystical Suite installs both as a plug-in and as a standalone application. To locate it from within the Photoshop interface, head first to the Filter menu and then scroll to the bottom, where you'll find it under the Auto FX Software menu.



Make it night

02 Press Select Effect at the left of the interface. Look in the Mystical Tint Tone & Color menu and head to Moon Glow. The effect gives the impression of night, and can be adjusted by changing the Dark Mood, Softness and layer Opacity sliders.



Standout feature

Memory Dots

Gradually working on an effect only to make a mistake and lose your track is annoying, but in Mystical Suite you can make use of the 'memory dots', which enables you to record up to eight non-consecutive 'undo' markers while you are editing your image. Simply click one of the eight dots and Mystical Suite will save a version of your image as it currently is, which you can then return to.



Add some light

03 This is a strong point of Mystical Suite. Head to Mystical Light & Ambiance and then select Misty Light. This creates a beam of light that can be repositioned to suit your image and can be fine-tuned via the options on the left of the screen.



Add lens flare

04 Return to the Mystical Light & Ambiance section and select Lens Flare. This can be repositioned and angled via an ellipse. If you click on Select Lens Flare, a window will appear that enables you to specify the exact type of lens flare that you want.



Create soft focus

05 Now go to Mystical Focus and select the Soft Focus option. This enables you to create a diffuse effect that can be masked off from the main subject via an ellipse tool and a set of brushes. Go to Mystical Tint Tone & Color and select Multiply Darks as a final step.

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Q+A PHOTOSHOP & ELEMENTS

We put forward some burning questions to our panel of experts

HOW CAN I USE STOCK IMAGES TO CREATE A BEAUTIFUL MERMAID?

To create a mermaid, first you need to find good stock images. There are plenty of online resources available for doing this. Browse stock sites, such as DeviantArt and Pixabay, to find fish scales, hair and brushes. Start by using the Pen tool to precisely create a selection around each image and then create a layer mask. Use the layer mask to hide the legs and place the fish scales. Open the Free Transform and switch to Warp mode to start shaping the fish scales and the hair. You can also use the Puppet Warp to create a curved shape and distort the image even more. Add adjustment layers, such as Hue/Saturation and Levels, to change the colours and improve the contrast respectively.

It is very important to apply the adjustments in each image to make the tonal corrections, and add a blueish or greenish colour over the composition. Use and abuse the layer masks; apply them whenever you need to hide specific areas or even on the adjustment layers to determine the area the adjustment will affect. Load the bubble brushes, create light rays, add fishes, reflections and coral reef to complete the underwater scene.



Meet your experts...



Daniel Sinoca

"I always love working with adjustment layers; they are so versatile and make my job infinitely easier."



Jenni Sanders

"It's so easy to create beautiful graphics in Photoshop, starting from scratch or starting with a photograph."



Hayley Paterek

"As a photographer I regularly use adjustment tools in Photoshop and Elements to enhance my images."



Mark White

"Making things from scratch is a creative solution, but it also puts you in control of your compositions."

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PAPER TEXTURE

Place your finished stamp onto a paper background or texture in order to help make it look believable.

MAIN PICTURE

Ensure you place a striking image at the centre of your stamp, perhaps a symbol of the country your stamp comes from.

OVERLAYS

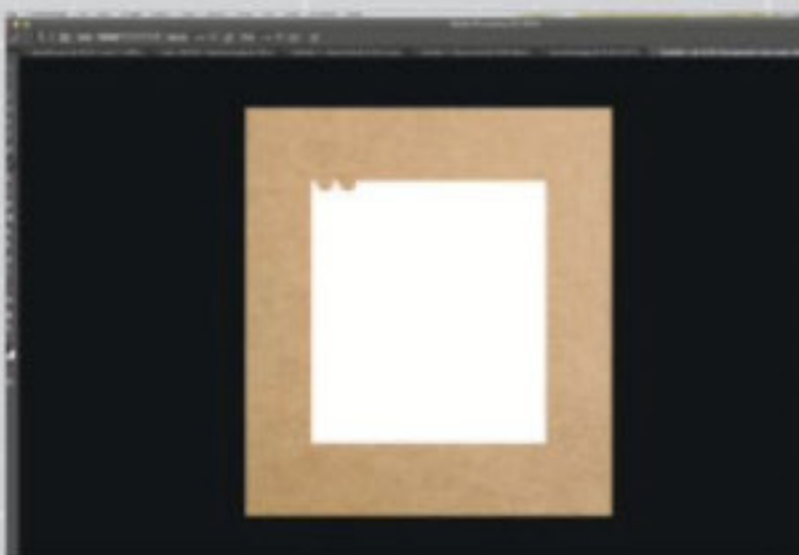
Overlay a colour or gradient on your picture to blend it in with the rest of the stamp.

EDGES

The edges of your stamp can vary in size and spacing; just keep a consistent brush for each stamp you create.



Mark's expert edit How can I create a postage stamp?



01 Open your paper texture and fill a white square on a new layer. Add a mask and use a hard black brush to erase semi-circles around the edges of your stamp.



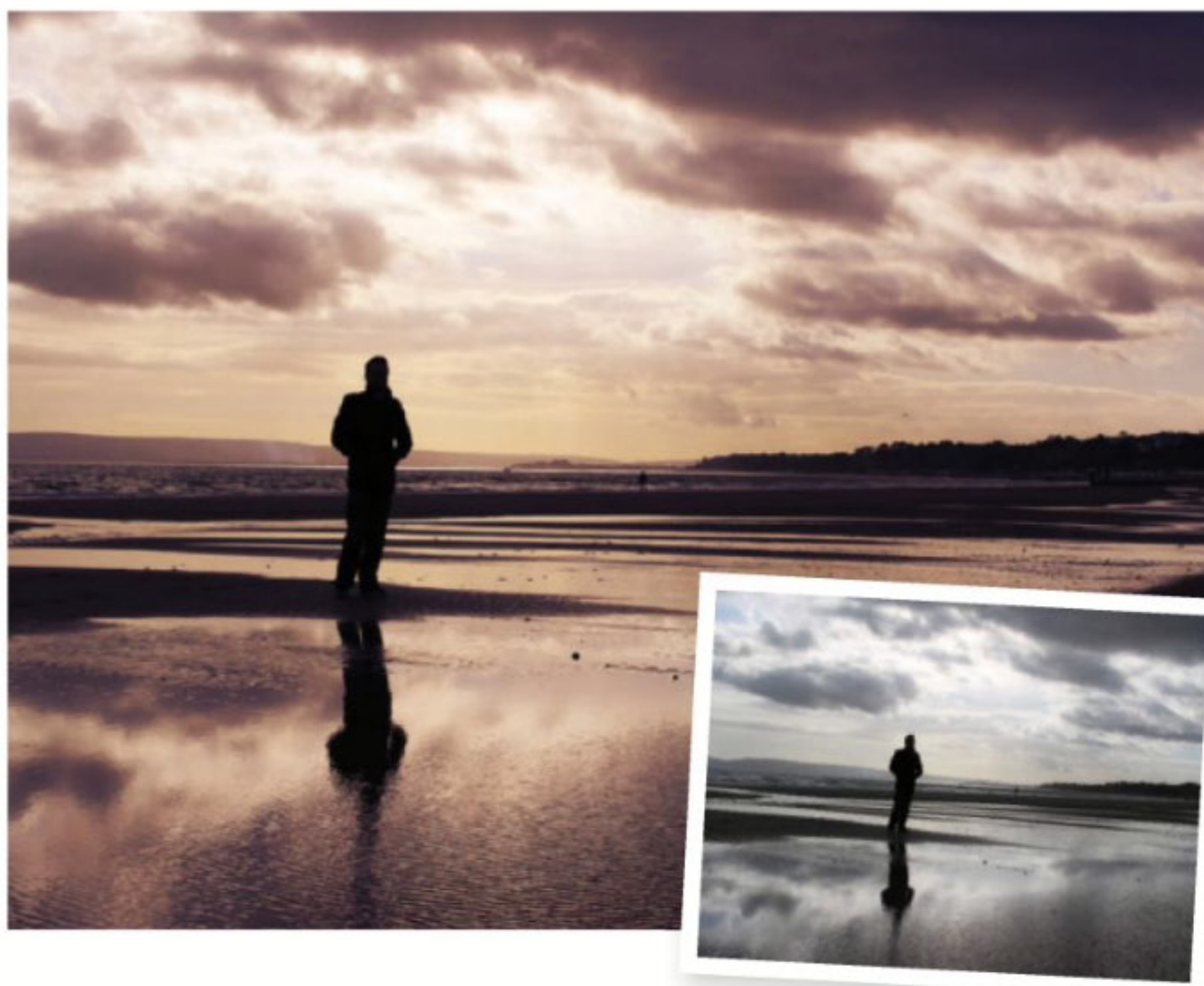
02 Ctrl/right-click your layer and choose Blending Options. Add a Drop Shadow. Now add the main image of your stamp by pasting it into place.



03 Add adjustment layers, gradients or other creative effects to your picture, and set clipping masks to set them to the stamp, and not the background.



04 Group your stamp layers, add your other paper texture, and set the blend mode to Multiply, Opacity to 50%. As a final touch, add a postal mark.



HOW DO I ADD A COHESIVE COLOUR TONE TO MY IMAGES?

It's easy to add a consistent colour tone to an image in both Photoshop and Elements, provided you're working in Expert mode. Simply open your photo and select Gradient Map from the 'Create new fill or adjustment layer' tab in the Layers palette. Now double-click on the gradient effect to open the Gradient Editor dialog box. Here you can select a gradient type from the Preset menu and then customise the colours to suit your shot. Select a gradient that features one or two different hues. You'll notice that the colour appearing on the right affects the shadows while the colour on the left alters the highlights. To change colour tones, simply click on the colour tabs at the bottom of the gradient and select a new hue from the Select Stop Color menu. Click OK and then change the layer's blending mode at the top of the Layers palette to Overlay. Adjust the Opacity of the layer if you want a subtle effect. In Photoshop you can tweak the tones further using the Selective Color adjustment tool. Simply adjust the sliders in the white, neutrals and blacks.

CAN I MAKE A LOW POLY PORTRAIT WITHOUT DRAWING EVERY SHAPE?

There is a quick way of creating low poly art found in the Filters Gallery, under Artistic Filters called Cutout. In here you'll find three controls: Number of Levels, Edge Simplicity and Edge Fidelity. The Number of Levels dictates how many different tones and colours are in the cutout; Edge Simplicity dictates the complexity of the shapes; and Edge Fidelity increases or decreases edge smoothness. Play about with all three sliders!



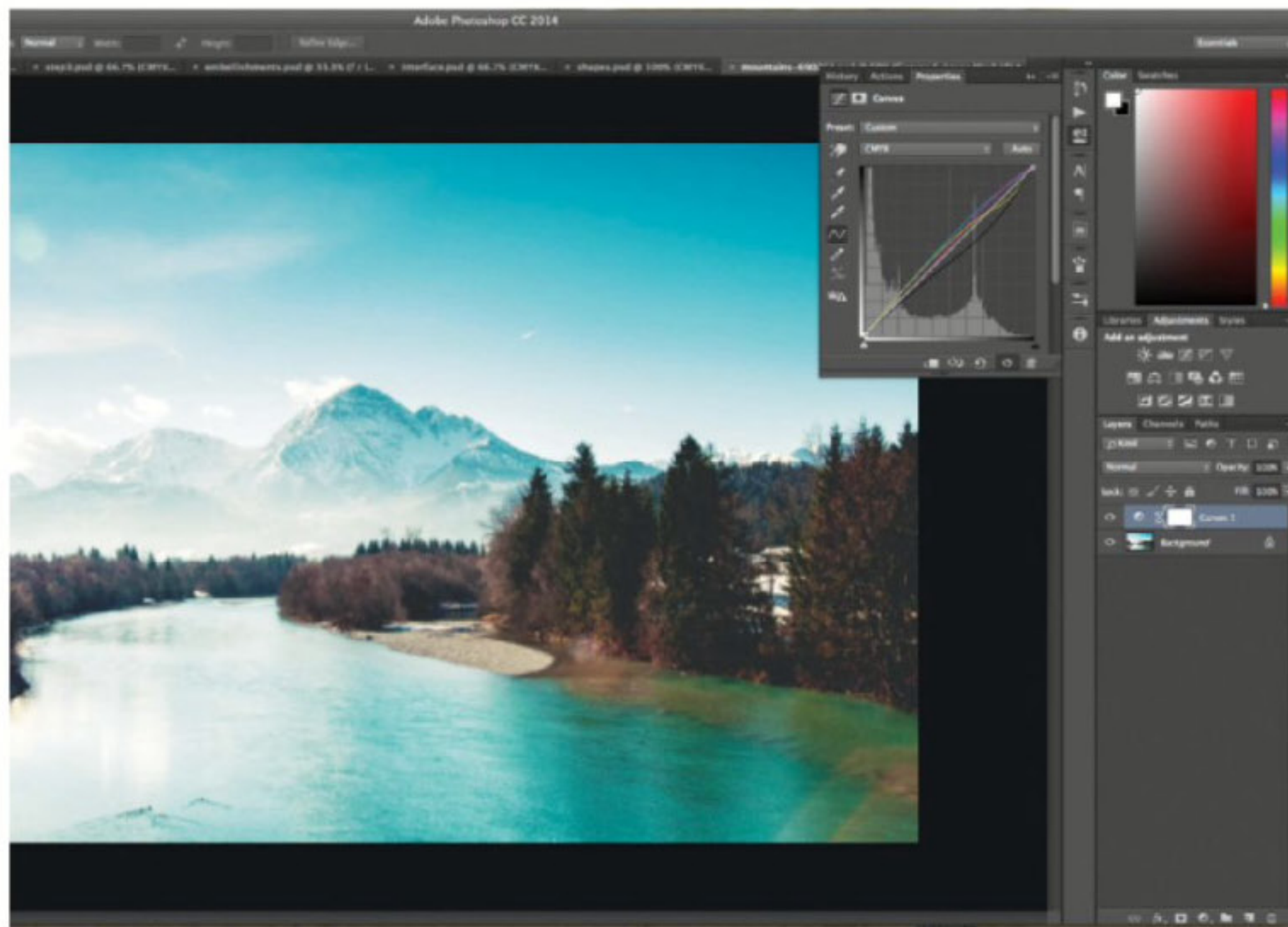
SOFTEN THE EFFECT

For realistic results you'll need to lower the Opacity of the shadow layer and apply a blur so that the edges appear soft.



DO YOU HAVE ANY TIPS ON CREATING REALISTIC SHADOWS?

Adding a shadow to a shot can help give it a three-dimensional feel, which may be necessary if you've taken a photograph in flat lighting. To add a shadow to a specific subject, make a selection of it in Photoshop or Elements first using the Quick Selection tool. Now create a separate layer of this via Layer>New>Layer Via Copy and go to Edit>Fill selection and ensure the selection appears black. You can then use the Move and Free Transform tool to place the shadow behind your subject. Lastly, to give your shadow a softer and more realistic look, lower the layer's Opacity and blur it via Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur.



IS IT BETTER TO COLOUR CORRECT IN CMYK OR RGB?

The difference between CMYK and RGB is that RGB pictures consist of red, green and blue pixels, and CMYKs consist of cyan, magenta, yellow and black. Computer monitors produce RGB images, whereas printers use CMYK ink cartridges.

This is important to bear in mind when creating images, if you're designing for a particular medium. Should you want to convert between the two modes, there can be a slight change in colour. This can be fixed by adding a Curves adjustment, and touching up individual colour strands of the picture.

Remember if you're creating an image in RGB that you later convert into CMYK, adjustment layers don't convert over. Photoshop will prompt you to flatten the image before proceeding, to preserve the adjustments' effects, and even the blend modes' effects on the picture. Do this, as it will minimise the need to correct the colour in your picture.



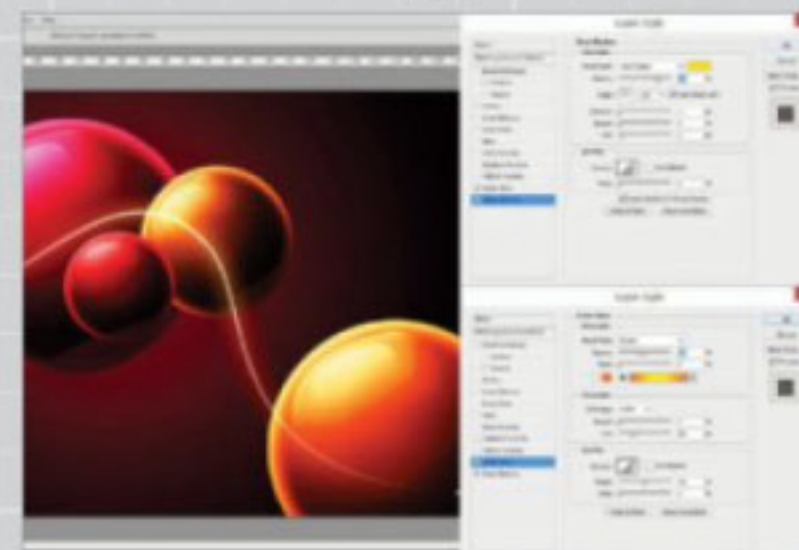
Jenni's expert edit Can I create light trails quickly?



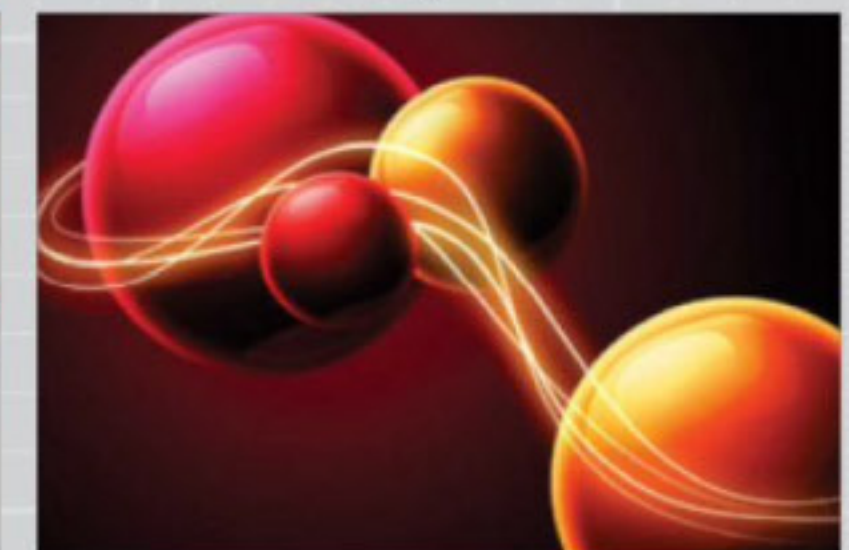
01 Select the Pen tool (P). Now click-drag to create the curved points where you would like your light trail to follow. Use Alt to adjust the curves.



02 Create a new layer. Set up your Brush to be small, white, 100% Hardness. Reselect the Pen, right-click your Path, select Stroke, tick Simulate Pressure.



03 Right-click layer thumbnail, pick Blending Options. Set Drop Shadow: Color Dodge, Yellow and Outer Glow: Screen, Orange/Yellow Gradient, 50-70px Size.



04 Create new paths on new layers with the Pen tool, varying the curve. You can vary the Stroke and Layer Styles – see what works best!

HOW CAN I REPAIR PHOTOS IN PHOTOSHOP?

There are countless ways to repair photo damage in Photoshop, but some techniques you can use as standard to restore any old or damaged photo.

Start off with the Clone tool, and Alt/Opt-click on good patches of your picture. Brush over the damaged area as you would any other brush, but keep the Opacity low and the brush strokes frequent to avoid directly copying areas, as this will look obviously edited in your final picture.

Filters can also give a smooth look to an old picture. Duplicate your layer and choose a Cutout with Levels: 7, Simplicity: 5, Fidelity: 2, and reduce the Opacity to 75%. This will sit over the original layer and get rid of some of the antique grain. Finally, use a Brush to gently paint 50% opaque strokes on a new layer. This will give more contrast, accentuate colours and smooth your whole picture.



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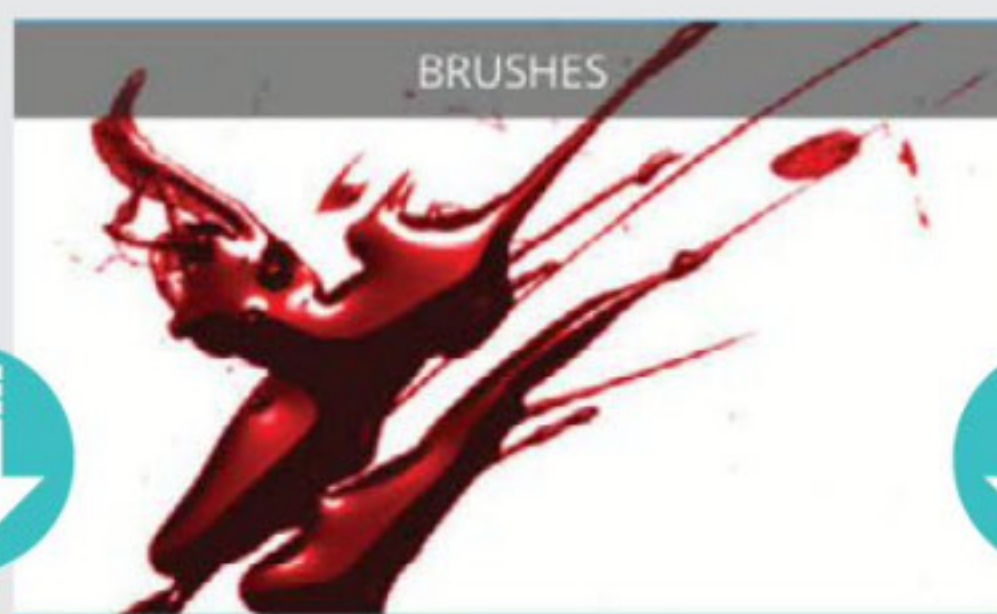
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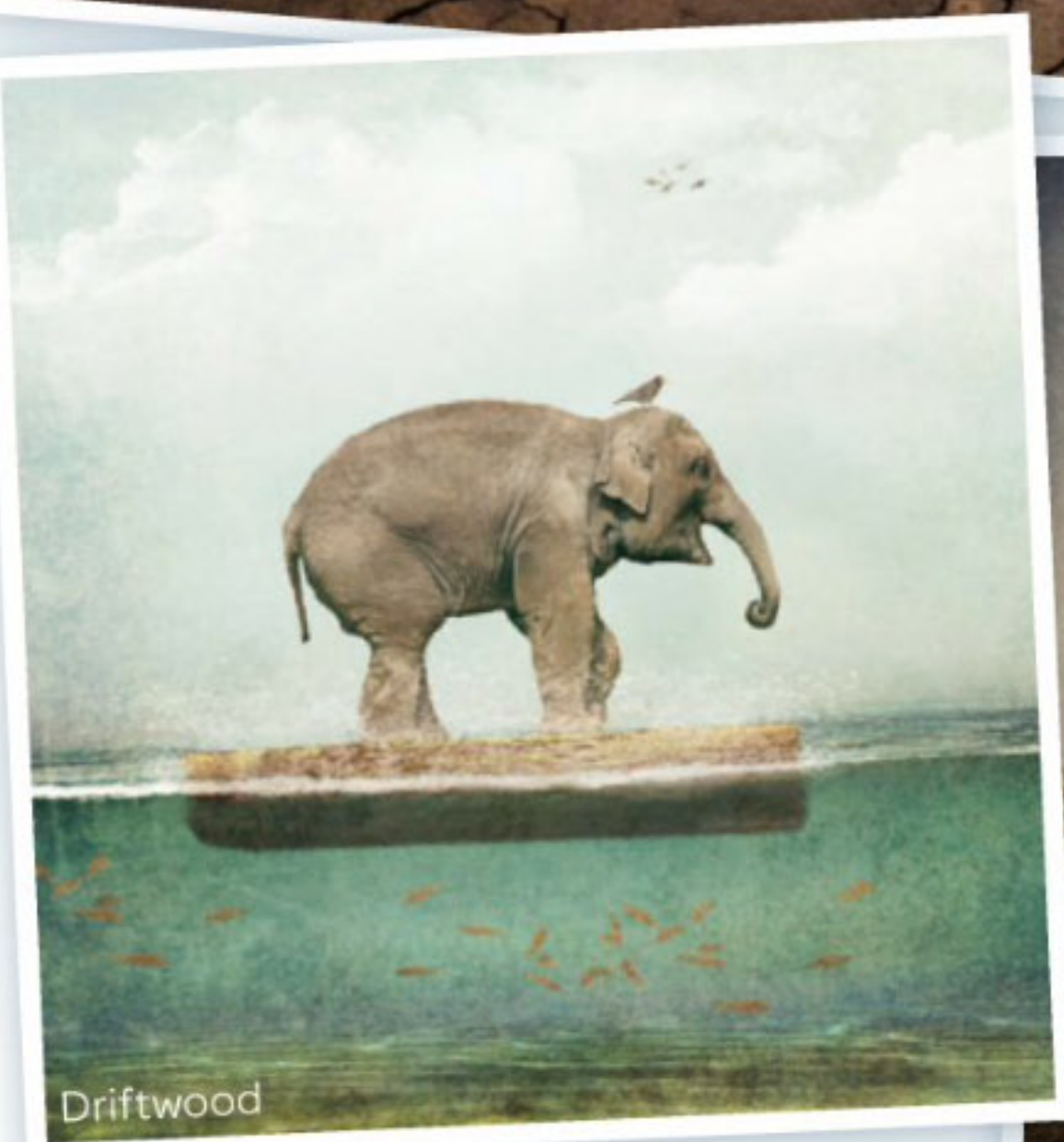
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Paul Cresswell

How does Paul create his animal magic? We talk inspiration, evolution and elephants with the Cotswolds-based artist

Originally a photographer who accidentally stumbled into the possibilities of Photoshop, Paul Cresswell told us: "I wanted to enhance photos, but through learning how to do this, a new world was opened up to me."

Since then, he's created countless distinctive elephant compositions, and developed his skills with the program. We chatted to Paul to find out the secrets of his work.

Do you sketch your pictures first? What's your creative process?

So far I haven't planned a picture. Often the original idea I had in my head is very different from the finished article. For example, Evolution started out as just the tree and rain on one side, but a program about woolly mammoths was on TV in the background and gave me the idea for the final picture.

You use a lot of elephants in your work. What is it in particular that you love about them?

I have always loved taking pictures of animals. I find elephants to be so expressive and happy. I

found it amusing that an animal of that size could be put into the situations I created.

Can you tell us if you have any finishing touches that you like adding to pictures?

Generally I use a High Pass filter to sharpen, and I have a couple of go-to textures to finish off the look. I also like to use the Clarity slider on the Camera Raw filter and use a fair bit of Dodge and Burn.

What piece of essential advice would you give to someone starting in Photoshop?

Don't give up. Read tutorials, try to find different ways to achieve the same effect, and don't be afraid to experiment. If it doesn't look right, do it again. Create things that you like to look at, not what you think people will like. Also, learn the keyboard shortcuts, they're a great time-saver.

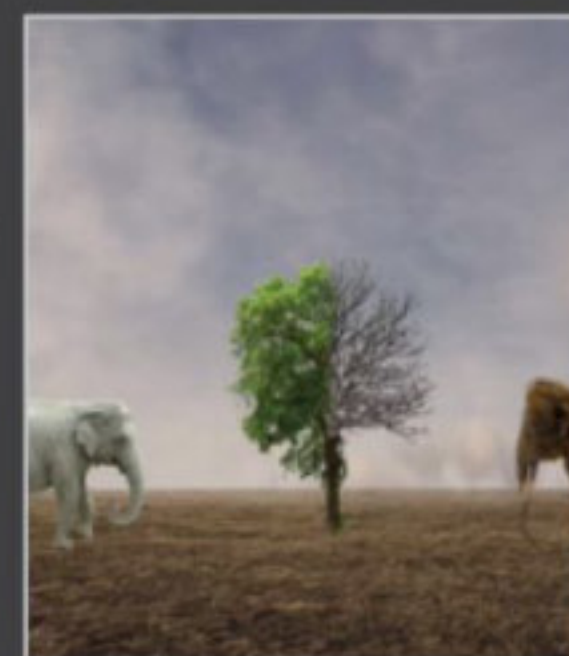
For more work by Paul visit www.photoshopcreative.co.uk/user/Elviscole

The Making Of Evolution

Create a time-spanning composite in just four easy steps

Preliminary arranging

Finding suitable pictures to use, the main components were arranged on the background, carefully cutting out the subjects and masking excess areas.



Snow and brushes

Falling snow and clouds were added with brushes. The snow covering the ground and mammoth was with a Channel Mixer layer. Masks were used on areas.



Fine-tuning

A texture and a gradient both set to Soft Light were added, as well as a Color Balance layer and a shadow on the elephant. A touch of dodging and burning was also applied.



Camera Raw

A copy of the image was made and opened in the Camera Raw filter to add more clarity. Finally a Blue filter was added and the areas not needed were masked out.



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— Mal. Walker, Australian
photographer and wanderer

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