

PhotographyBB

YOUR GUIDE TO THE WORLD OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY **online**

This Month, We Visit

AMSTERDAM!

Journey to The Netherlands with Kenneth Fagan

Photography 101

Kenneth Fagan shows us:
THE BULB MODE!

How to Buy a Digital Camera

Jon Ayres gives us a look
at buying your next camera!

HDR Wizardry!

Emmanuel Panagiotakis is in
THE MEMBER SPOTLIGHT!



Plus: Loads of Killer Photoshop® Tutorials and Techniques this Month!



From The Editor's Desk

Dave Seeram is the Editor in Chief for PhotographyBB Online Magazine. As the administrator of the PhotographyBB Website and Forums, Dave is also an experienced author of several Photoshop® Actions and Tutorials which can be found on <http://www.photographyBB.com>.

Into our third edition, we're photographin', photoshopin', and rockin' away!

Welcome to issue three of the PhotographyBB Online Magazine. We had a very busy month, and I am pleased to say that the magazine is continuing to grow in content and contributors. It was a pleasure working with all of you this month, and I hope to see some of these new faces as part of our regular contributing author base. In fact, this month was so busy, that I am taking the month off from writing tutorials. We've got such a great selection this month, that I'll hold off until next month for my tutorial contributions. So for those of you who are missing the Actions in Action and Curves 101 sections, fear not, they will be back!

On that note, there's some new content taking the place of the aforementioned columns. This month, we have a terrific tutorial written by Fred McWilson, on creating Out Of Bounds (OOB) images. If you've never seen this before, prepare to have your socks knocked off, it's that cool! For those of you who have seen them, Fred is going to teach you how to create them. Additionally, something I am particularly pleased about, is that not only is Fred's tutorial for Photoshop, but Elements users will be able to follow along and use this technique too.

Jon Ayres has come up with two really fantastic and thought provoking articles yet again for this month's issue. The first being, Digital Photography as Fine Art. Jon gives us a good look at just what it takes to become a fine art digital photographer, and some things to consider along the way. Also, Jon gives us a look at his journey in purchasing his latest digital camera, and shares some great tips on things to look for when you buy your next digital toy!

Ken Fagan did a lot of work for me yet again on this issue, and takes us on a fascinating photo tour of his recent bike/barge trip to the Netherlands. Ken's also got our Photography 101 and accessory lessons down this month, and a great article about large format photography.

Victoria Sargsyan also helped out a lot this issue, contributing two rather unique Photoshop tutorials, using some rather useful but often overlooked features and tools in Photoshop.

I'd also like to thank Emmanuel Panagiotakis for joining us this month in our Member's Spotlight. Emmanuel is quite the experienced photographer, and is quickly becoming well known in the area of High Dynamic Range photography for his unique style and skill.

As for myself, I've been secretly working to bring some new features to the PhotographyBB Online community. The first I am pleased to say, is our Photoshop H.O.D. (Help On Demand) section of the site. Also, I'll be rolling out some surprises this month, so stay tuned to the site, and grab our RSS feed to stay updated with all the new and exciting events coming! Without further delay, I present to you Issue three of the PhotographyBB Online Magazine.

Dave Seeram
Editor and Publisher

PhotographyBB

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Contributing Authors

DAVE SEERAM is the creator of the PhotographyBB Online Website, and the Administrator of the PhotographyBB Forums. Dave is a 32-year old digital photography enthusiast, and loves shooting landscapes and architecture in his spare time. Additionally, he has several years of formal training in both Adobe Photoshop® and Quark Xpress®.

KENNETH FAGAN is a 24 year old photographer extraordinaire based in Meath, in the Republic of Ireland. Ken has traveled through Australia, Europe and lastly Canada where he graduated with a professional Diploma in Photography from the Focal Point School for Visual Arts in Vancouver, British Columbia. His specialties are product and food photography, but he is also skilled in fashion, sports and landscapes. Ken works with many camera formats including, 35mm pro digital and film SLRS, Medium format and 4x5 large format. Outside of photography, he enjoys cycling, fishing & hiking and never goes without his camera.

JON AYRES is a digital photographer from the United States, now living in Moscow since August 2003. He enjoys photography, writing, history, and taking beautiful scenes of Moscow on his walking photo-tours. His informative posts and photo-tours on the forums are always a treat. Jon has been involved in writing, digital art and photography for over thirty years and is a published author having several articles and photos published.

VICTORIA SARGSYAN is a professional graphic designer from Armenia, now living in the United States. She brings over 15 years of professional experience in graphic design, and her favorite software tool is Adobe Photoshop. Additionally, she is experienced in Illustrator, CorelDraw, Freehand, Lightroom, Adobe ImageReady, Flash, HTML, Dreamweaver, Motion Artist, Anime Studio, Poser. Victoria enjoys authoring tutorials and is a wizard at creating Photoshop brushes.

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Beyond the Digital World...

Have you ever stopped to think about the other camera formats out there? Last month I introduced the world of medium format. This month I am going to give all of you avid readers a chance to learn a little bit more about what is out there, and who uses these so called "other" formats. This month, we have a look at: Large Format.

LARGE FORMAT: MEDIUM FORMAT'S BIGGER BROTHER - By Kenneth Fagan



are two different types of large format cameras: The view camera and the press or field camera. The differences between the two are easily recognized. The view camera consists of a front and rear standard mounted on a rail which allows the two standards to be moved forwards or backwards for focus. A press or field camera is a smaller design which is hand-holdable and can fold away for storage, having just one standard mounted on a rail on the front of the camera for focusing. The front standard on both cameras houses the lens and lens board, unlike a conventional SLR lens, a LF lens is fitted to a lens board and secured onto the front standard.

On a monorail view camera, the front and rear standards are connected by either a compendium or a bag bellows. In the image below you see how it joins up to create a box type construction. In the first issue of the PhotographyBB Online Magazine, you read about camera obscura where the light

As you may have been able to guess from its title, large format is given its name because of the considerably larger film sizes compared to that of medium format. The immediately visible difference is how the film is presented; instead of on a roll like 35mm and medium format, large format film is manufactured in sheets. Beginning at 4"x5" this is the smallest of the large format but

today it is the most common along with 8"x10" which is less common but is still popular. There are other less common film sizes including 5"x7" and a massive 11"x14."

You may think that because of the large scale of the film you would need a high tech piece of kit to use it; well the opposite of this is true. Large format Cameras are made of quite a basic construction. There





entering a small hole creates an upside down and backwards image on the opposing wall. Well the fact of the matter is that there is no better example of this than when you are focusing on a large format camera. There are no reflex mirrors in a LF camera to convert the image so it takes a little getting used to. There are reflex mirror viewfinders available which mount onto the film back, and this reflects the image for easier focus, working in a similar fashion to the SLRs. Although helpful for framing the subject, they are of no benefit for fine focusing; instead a loupe (or magnifying glass) is used. Framing and focusing is impossible unless you have either a dark blanket (a cloth about the size of a bathing towel made especially for large format cameras) or a shade to block the light from outside reflecting on the ground glass. The ground glass is a square piece of glass about the same dimensions as the film; it is translucent instead of transparent. When you focus on a subject the image is reflected onto the ground glass upside down and backwards as I mentioned earlier.

The Versatility of View Cameras:

There are many differences between an SLR and a view camera, first off is the design. SLRs are made up of two units, the lens and the body, or you can include a third if you use a mounted flash. View cameras are a much bigger construction as I explained in the second paragraph. View cameras give you much

more control over the framing and the structure of an image, this is all down to the independent movements of the front and rear standards. Each standard is capable of many different movements which are as follows: Shift (left or right), tilt (angle up or angle down), swing (rotate left or right), raising and lowering, backwards and forwards. Each movement has its own function in focusing and are used accordingly depending on what the photographer is aiming for. Here is a basic explanation of each of the movements and their purposes:

Shift: To move the front and/or rear standard either left or right to change the position of the main subject in the frame. Useful if there is a subject at the edge of the frame in the way.

Tilt: To angle the lens board and the film back up or down to affect the focus depth of subject. Or to help straighten lines in buildings in other words it aids perspective control.

Swing: Similar to tilt except the front standard is swung either left or right it also affects the depth of focus and can be used to even out perspective and increase or decrease depth of field.

Raise/lower: To move the front



Tilt, shift, and swing shown

standard to adjust the framing of a subject.

Forwards/backwards: The initial movements needed to frame up



Raise/Lower shown.

the subject and focus. It all allows you to adjust the size of the subject in the frame.

Who uses view cameras?

With the introduction of medium format digital photography the need for large format photography has declined over the past few years. Large format cameras are primarily used by commercial product, advertising and architecture and some landscape photographers prefer to use large format.

Why use a view camera?

Large format view cameras make excellent commercial cameras, due to their large exposure area. The larger the area an image can be exposed on a piece of film, the higher the resolution. There is an outstanding ability for large prints without loss of detail, in comparison to 35mm, a sheet of 4x5" film has about fifteen times more area. To figure out the immediate advantage of large format photography is easy. Also with the view cameras ability to work with various movements, depending on the lens, line distortion will be at its minimum. LF lenses have three different categories: Wide (below 90mm), Normal (above 90 to 250mm) and Long lenses (250mm plus). The longer the lens, the less distortion will occur. Although, it is possible to counteract the distortion by using the tilt or swing movements.

Architectural photographers in particular know the benefits of LF photography. Where nuisance



Straight perspective shot of a building, taken with a view camera.

distortion is impossible to be avoided on an SLR, with a few movements on a view camera the lines are straightened and the perspective is leveled out to the desired effect.

The drawback of the view camera is of course the size. View cameras tend to be bulky and heavy instruments. Not being able to be hand-held they must be supported by a strong tripod. Enough to hold about ten kilos gives you a safe camera to tripod weight ratio. Along with the tripod you need a selection of other equipment to go with it for the camera to function properly, a selection of loaded film holders, a dark bag (for loading/unloading film), cable release, loupe, dark blanket, lenses and various other optional extras.

Working the Bellows: When you use your SLR, usually working out the light metering is straightforward enough with a bit of practice, while exposure metering on a view camera depends on the length of the bellows. The LF camera doesn't have a built in light meter so a hand held meter is necessary if you want good pictures (mistakes are expensive). If you have a 150mm lens in



A shot of a landscape taken on 4x5 film.

your LF camera and the length of the bellows measures 150mm, and the light meter reads f8 at 1 second, well this is the correct speed to use. Should the bellows be longer or shorter than 150mm, you'll need to reduce or increase the film speed accordingly. It is all down to how much light is able to enter the lens before it hits the film, the further the light has to travel the more exposure the film needs. This is known as bellows compensation. See the chart below to find out how it works.

Lens	L. of Bellows	Light reading	Time needed	Bellows comp.
150mm	150mm	F8@1sec	1sec	X1
150mm	250mm	F8@1sec	3sec	X3 (2.77)
150mm	400mm	F8@1sec	7sec	X7 (7.1)

Working out the bellows compensation can be worked out using this simple equation:

$$\frac{(\text{Focal Length})^2}{(\text{Lens Focal Length})^2} = \text{Bellows Compensation}$$

Example:

$$\frac{250^2}{150^2} = \frac{250\text{mm} \times 250\text{mm}}{150\text{mm} \times 150\text{mm}} = \frac{62500}{22500} = 2.77 \text{ (round to 3)}$$

In the example above with a 150mm lens, a bellows extended to 250mm, the compensation needed is 2.77 times the light or to make it simple 3 times.

Learning how to use a large format camera takes a lot of time. One must be patient, it can take a long time to compose and shoot a subject from start to finish. Dedication and a passion for the format is vital, otherwise you will make mistakes and rapidly become discontented and frustrated. Mistakes are rather costly and reshooting on a 4x5 is awkward; you might just end up losing a few valuable clients along the way. So don't throw away your SLRs for a large format just yet!

This was just a basic introduction to the world of large format - It is something I have a great passion for as it brings the magic back into photography in a world where the megapixel is king.

See the next page of this article, for some fine examples of large format photography, and just what can be achieved with a little patience and inspiration.



Large format shot of a rose



Large format shot and tight crop on the rose



Photo of a model, using a double exposure tehcnique



Large format shot showing selective focus

The Digital Fine Art Photographer

Creating Digital Fine Art Photographic Masterpieces



Digital Fine Art Photography, just what in heck is that you may ask? Good question, my definition of Digital Fine Art Photography is photos that have been taken and post processed with an artist's eye. Even though photography is an art in itself, few photographs can really truly be considered fine art; I mean museum gallery quality that collectors pay big bucks for. Photos of this type are far and few between. True Digital Fine Art Photographs are photos that are unique, photos that stand up and shout out a story, photos that are rare, one-of-a-kind types of photos. Not you're run of a mill everyday sunset, landscape, grandkiddies or pet photos. Do not get me wrong, I never said that photos of those types are not good, nice and special. They are very special to those who took them, but the problem is photos like that are your average run of a mill everyday snap shots seem a million times every day all over the world.

There is little difference between a Renior and Rembrandt painting and an extremely well thought out and processed Digital Fine Art Photo, and you can believe that art galleries are crying for such works along with fine art collectors today. You take a digital photo and sometimes combine it digitally with paint effects, maybe other effects to create a new exciting piece of art work. Or you take a digital photo and keep the photo's style, but make certain parts of it stronger, and the photo almost speaks out its story - this is digital Fine Art. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines art as "the use of skill and imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others." Digitally printed art meets that criteria, but can digital art actually be called fine art? Well, at the 2007 PMA convention, they announced that a professionally printed

26 x 90-inch Epson print sold for \$1.2 million. I think that can easily be classified as Fine Art with no trouble. So all the naysayers who say that post processed photos are not real photos or art, well what I can say, "I hope somebody will pay me one tenth of that for my so-called fake photos and art one day."

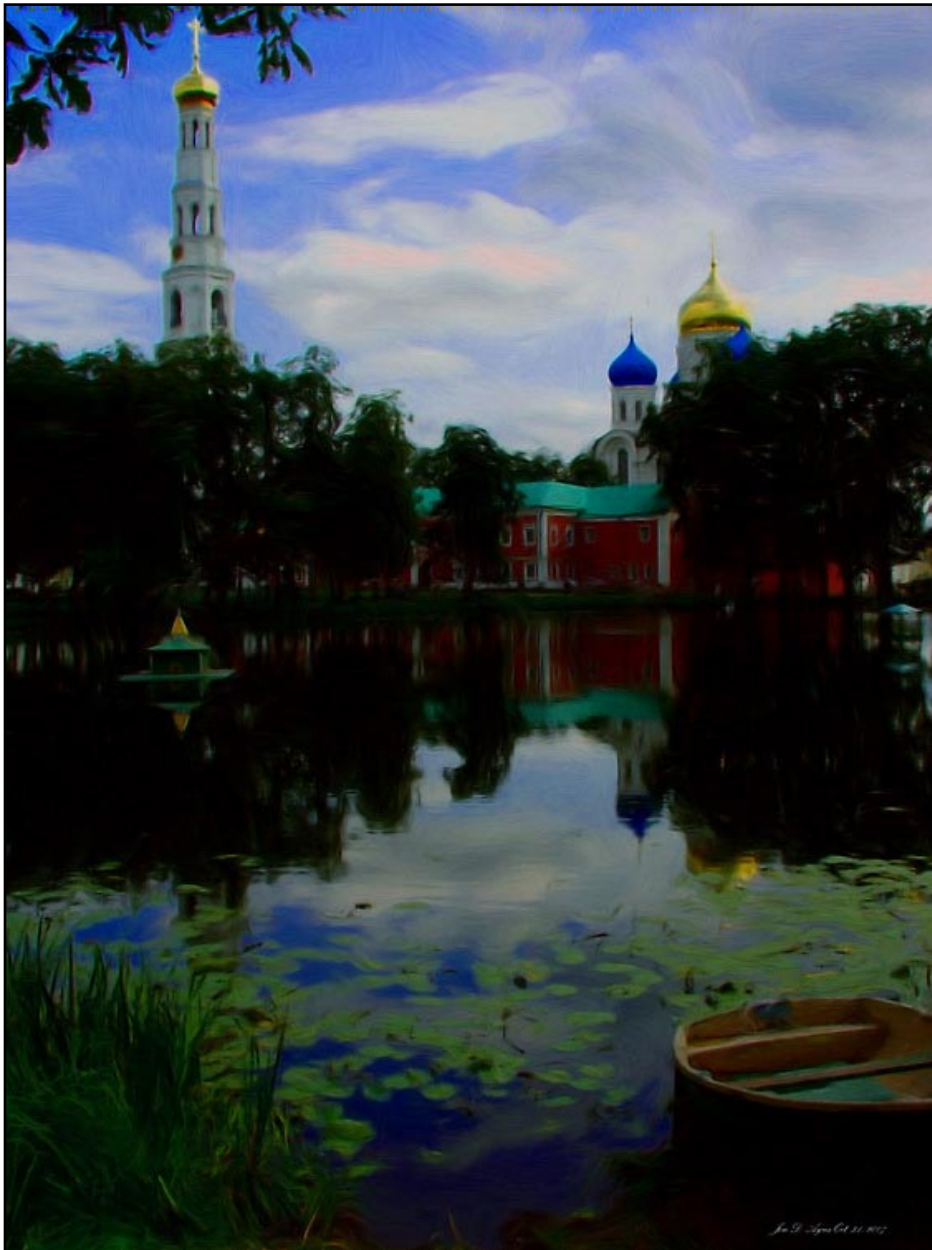
But seriously, human nature being what it is, what true art is, are some of the things which will be disputed as long as humans are on the earth. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder and what is art to one may be trash to another. Lately some professional photographers have been using "Fine Art," in naming their photography businesses and that is fine, but not necessarily a true statement. Some traditional photographers and painters, sketchers and other artists look down somewhat on Digital Fine Art. I'll be the first to agree that painting, sketching and drawing from a blank piece of paper takes great skill and I truly hope that this type of art never dies. But let's be honest, Digital Fine Art takes great skill also, you just have to try it out once to see it is not all that easy to produce good quality Digital Fine Art. You first have to take a professional high quality photo to work with. Then you have to decide just what you want to do with it: Do you want to repaint the photo one stroke at a time, just like an artist? Do you want to add some type of clone effects or do you want to produce a high quality photo art piece? Some digital art pieces take days, weeks, and months to complete. Digital Fine Art is no different from other types of art.

Yet, you rarely see Digital Fine Art Photography discussed on many photography forums, even on many retouching forums. You see software discussed from time to time, but as far as the art, the art of photography itself is hardly ever

discussed. What makes a good photo, what makes a good painting, just what good photography and art is; hardly ever do you see this discussed. Sure you can find plenty about post processing and photography tips on many forums, but very little about Digital Fine Art Photography per say or digital art. Even if you do a search on Google, most of what comes up is mainly just photographers trying to sell themselves as digital

Photography to be generally a two step process, at least for me. First, the taking the photo, and second the post processing work. I remember reading a few years ago on one of the digital photography forums one posting that especially caught my attention. The poster was so depressed because he could not find anything to photograph in his apartment and was considering giving up photography. This person also

had an illness that made him afraid to leave his apartment. I told him there are a million and one things to photograph in your apartment, but you're not looking at things with the right frame of mind. It really surprises me to see posts made on various photography forums when somebody says, "There's nothing to photograph where I live. Boohoo, boohoo" Really, all you have to do is open your eyes and you will see more than you will ever be able to photograph in your lifetime. The trouble is too many photographers do not know how to see with an artist's eye and this is even more important for the Digital Fine Arts Photographer. I told that poster to shut his eyes and turn slowly around a few times, stop and open his eyes. Focus on the first thing you see, but think as if you are an artist, think of how you will paint your subject, how will you express it, what lighting will you use. Then move around the object you're focusing on and find the best angle, will the light be in front or in back, act just like an artist, view you subject from every angle. You will see the item in a completely different point of view; photographers have to learn to see creatively as an artist and when you do, it opens up a whole and completely new world for you. Imagine the view



artists and little else. Digital Fine Art Photography is a distinct and different area and type of photography. If the work forces you to wonder whether it is a photograph, a painting or a print and the answer is "Yes" to all three - then it can be called Digital Fine Art.

on your LCD or even your canvas. Is the view that you want your painting to be? Compose your painting as your move around looking at your subject at different angles and lighting conditions.

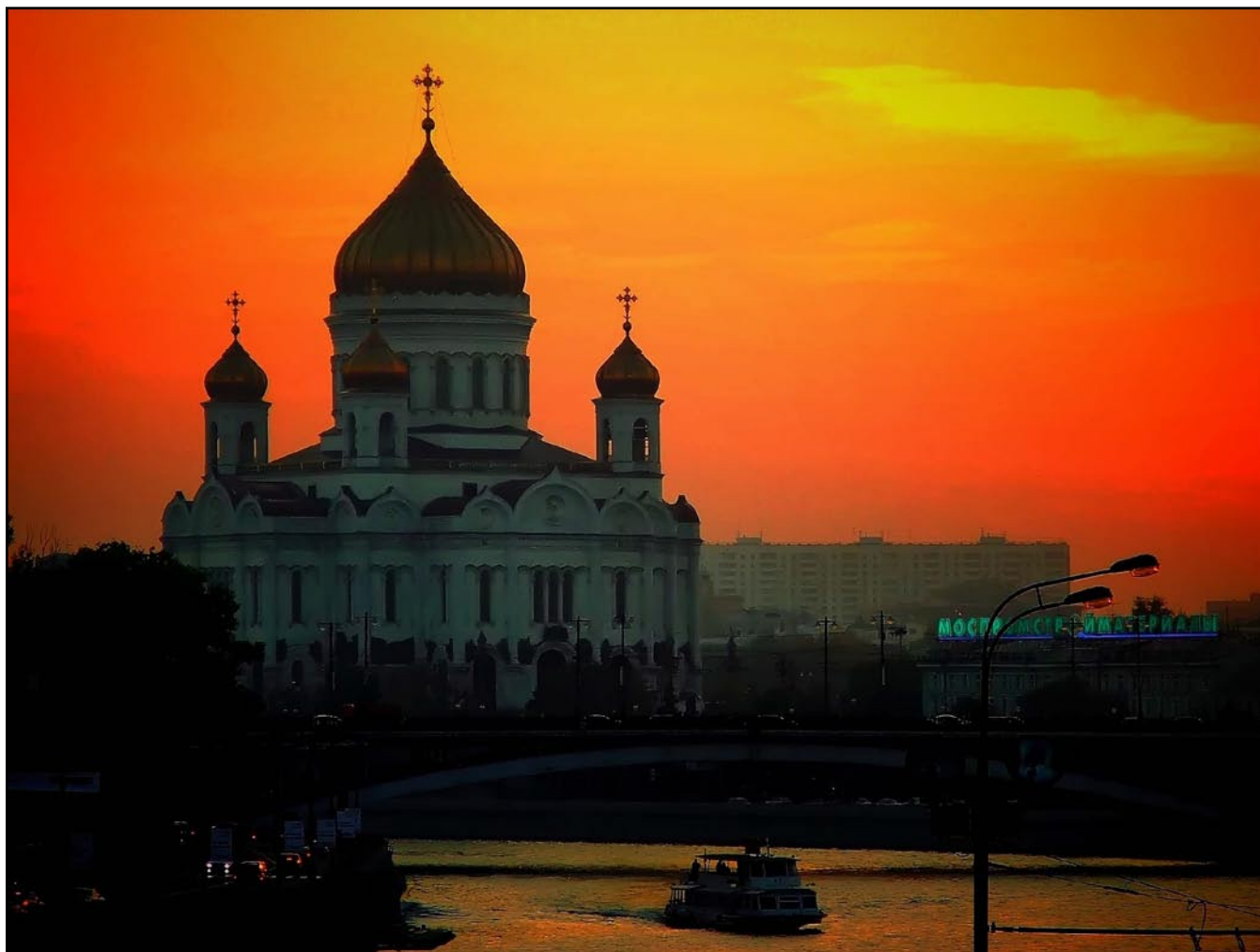
But how do I go about making digital fine art photos masterpieces you may ask? I consider Digital Fine Art

As I mentioned before, Digital Fine Art Photography for me is divided into two actions, taking the photo and post processing the photo. I consider myself a digital

artist and I like to believe that others also consider me a digital artist since I can say that I have sold some of my digital art work. I enjoy trying to compose my shots in different ways and views (even breaking some photography rules like the rule of thirds from time to time) and then post processing my digital negatives in various ways. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. I'm my own worst critic; I may take 100 photos and only find 20 at most worth using, if that many. I'm kind of like one of the famous classical artists, Vincent van Gogh who himself tore up the majority of his work

because you nothing but failure in the Digital Fine Art Photography world, because if you can not admit not all your work will be good, there are plenty of other pixel-peepers who will be more than happy to do it for you.

First look at your subjects as an artist looks toward his/her subjects, after all are thou not an artist? When your taking photos, think like an artist, you will be surprised at what you will see. Something as simple as your wrist watch lying on your dresser top will look



because it did not satisfy him. Many times I will take a photo, spend a night post processing it and finish only to say, "this stinks" and delete it. I did not say I never over look some things, I often do, but, I like to believe that I do not miss much when looking over my work. The Digital Fine Art Photographer has to honest and critical with themselves, you'll never succeed if your not. You have to get rid of the attitude, "I have this DSLR camera, I have all of these lenses, I have Photoshop, I am a professional and all my work is great. Attitudes like that are as much of a joke as those who think they have to carry a camera every where they go, and will

like a magnificent sculpture when you look at it with an artist attitude. A bee hovering on top of a flower will look like an old world flyer; two ants fighting will look like two dueling dinosaurs. Look as an artist looks and you will find yourself in a completely new world; let your imagination run wild. This leads us to the first rule for taking digital art photos: study your subject hard and as long as needed.

Photography is an art form, so why not act just like an artist? Artists, before there were such things as cameras, took a long time to study their subjects and

the painting sometimes took years to complete. Ansel Adams, one of America's foremost photographers sometimes spent weeks looking over one of his photography subjects before taking any photos, and when he started taking the photos, he would spend days taking the photos at different angles, different times of day, sun rise, sun set, facing the sun, facing away from the sun, moving around to different angles

photography. I did not say "BREAK THE RULES ALWAYS! Too often photographers try and follow photography rules like the rule of thirds, composition, use this or use that setting - hogwash I say! Successful digital artists are never afraid to experiment and try out new things both in photography and post processing; there is a time and place for rules and a time and place for no rules. So get that I must always follow photography

rules without exception out of your mind. In art, there are no rules.



Just like other artists, the true digital artist should specialize in a certain type of digital photo art; that is not to say they only take photos of certain things or only post process in certain ways, of course not. But every photographer has certain subjects that are their favorite items to photograph and that are what they photograph the most, which are the artist's specialty. Most photographers are always looking for something interesting, I do the same thing myself, but there are certain things I consider my specialty: street night photography, landscapes and old architecture are my specialty and what I photograph the most. Your specialty will be part of your style; every artist has their own style and you will also. Your style will be as special as Repin's, Monet's, Renior's or Rembrandt's and it will be your own and nobody else's. The same with post processing, I think we all tend to post process certain types of photos in certain ways, but Digital Fine Art photographers experiment with post processing as they do with photography.

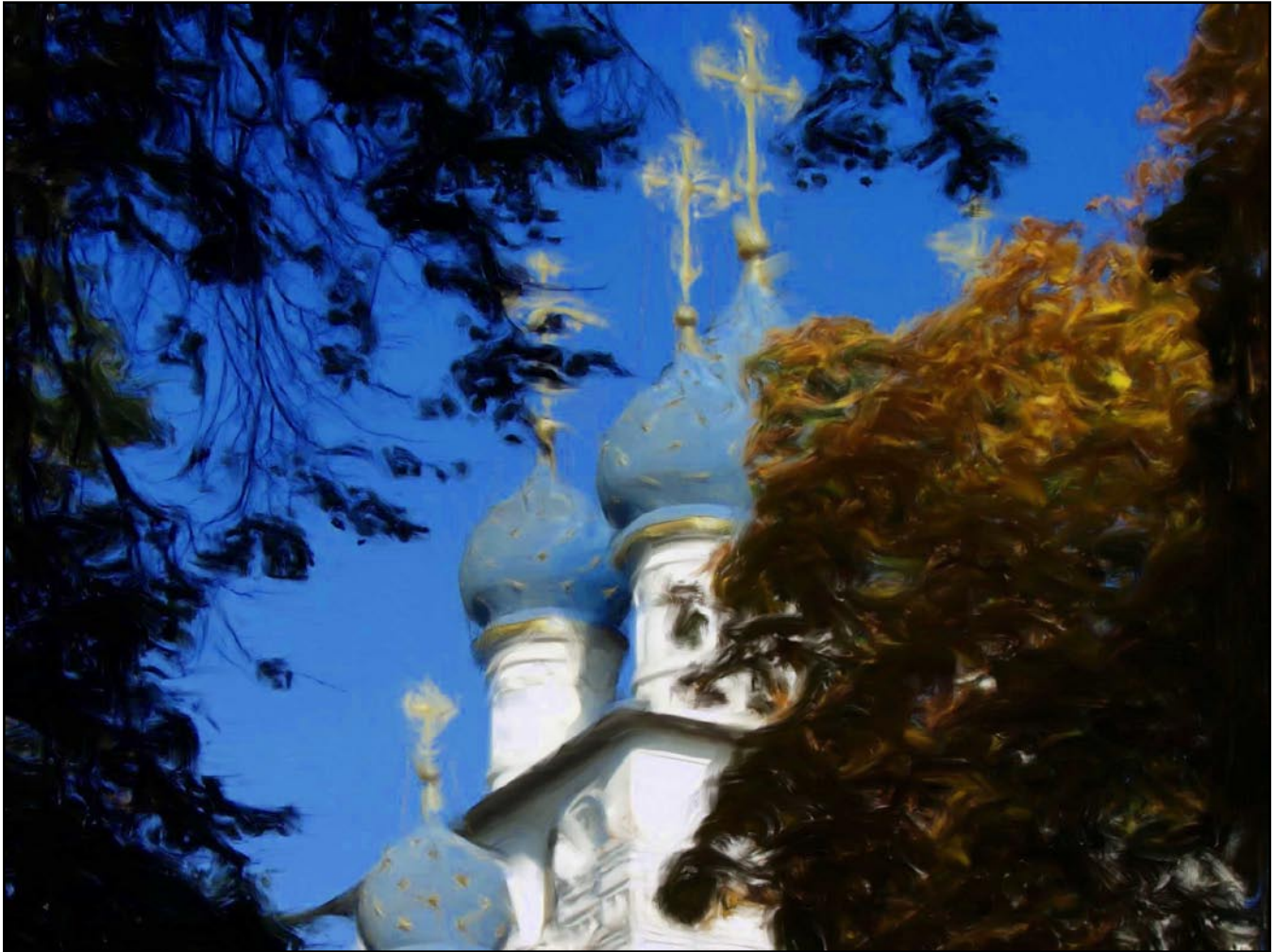
and spent weeks post processing his film in an old chemical film darkrooms before he could get the shots he wanted and were happy with. I am not a big fan of Ansel Adams personally, but that does not change the fact that he was a talented and great photographer who contributed a lot to photography. I'm a firm believer that in photography fine art, there are no rules. Never be afraid to break the so-called rules of

The digital artist photographer needs inspiration just like all artists and there is much inspiration all around you, sometimes you may find inspiration is a lovely scene you come across. I find a lot of my inspiration from old paintings. I go to museums quiet often and have many books on the cities of Russia with old paintings in these books and from looking at these old paintings I find ideas on how I want to photograph a certain subject. Inspiration can

be found all around you, just like I told that man on a forum who was afraid to leave his apartment and who said there was nothing to photograph in his apartment, "All you have to do is open your eyes and look." Like I mentioned before, sometimes I break the rules of photography and take the photo the way I want to take it, sometimes it works and sometimes it does not, but you never know unless you try. As Frank Sinatra liked to say, "I did it my way" as for me, "I do it my way!"

Part of your inspiration may come from just who your

lend themselves to certain post processing techniques better than other photographs, some are best to remain photos, others are better as oil, watercolor, pastel paintings or sketches. Each photo has qualities which lend it to certain post processing better than others. Photoshop is the top dog here in the kingdom of post processing, especially if you're looking to keep your digital art photos looking like photos or with the right plugins adding special effects. If you're looking to change your photos into paintings or I should say give your photos a painted look then Corel Painter,



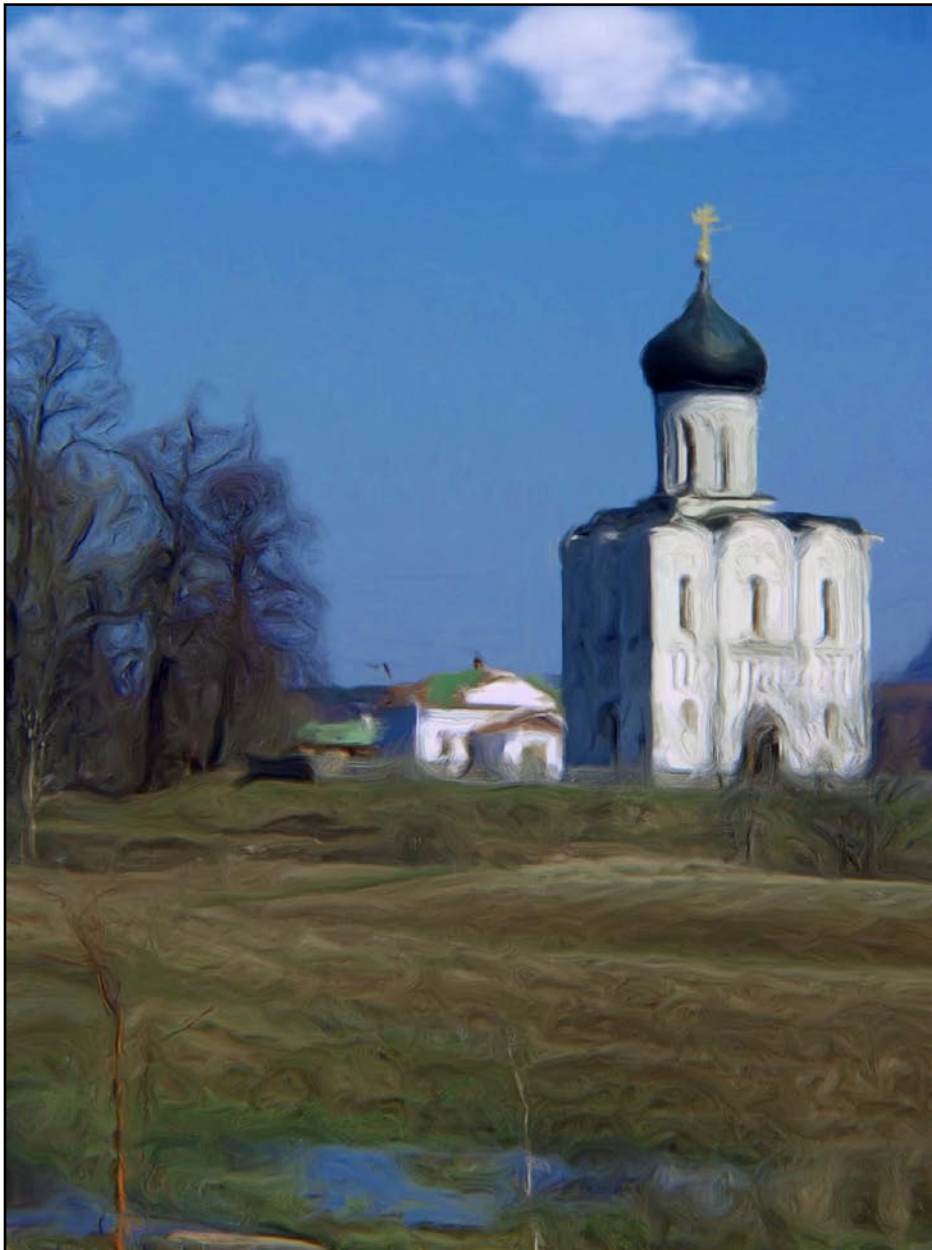
target audience will be. This is especially important if you're looking to sell your artwork, but it is just as important if you're only looking to have your work shown in a local gallery or museum. Know thyself and you'll know thou audience.

Post processing is an important part of Digital Fine Art Photography, whether you want to keep your photos as digital art photos or alter your photos with special effects into various types of art. It really depends on what you want to do as to what the best post processing program you need. Some photos tend to

Painter Essentials, TwistedBrush or Gertrudis Pro are excellent programs for this. I always keep the original photos saved and copied onto cds, something like a digital negative, and then I can experiment with as many different post processing techniques as I want. Post processing is a big part of digital art photography and there are many excellent and free post processing programs that are very good to help you post process your photos into digital art masterpieces worthy of hanging in a gallery. Though Photoshop is the top photo post processing program and can do some artistic looking photos with various types of effects, I

do not consider it the best program for painting, this honor goes to Corel's Painter. Also Corel's Painter Essentials is also a good easy to use paint program. Another great paint program is TwistedBrush, almost as good as Painter. TwistedBrush only lacks the auto cloning function which I like to use with painter Essentials sometimes, but if you can live without auto cloning, then TwistedBrush is excellent and there's even

subdued, fantasy (where you add elements to your photos that were not in the original photography,) portraiture, people, architecture, night/day, stormy, the list goes on and on. Just like in digital photography, the Digital Fine Arts Photographer will also develop their own types of post processing style or styles. Again, experimentation is the name of the game with post processing just like with digital photography.



My main Digital Fine Art Photography post processing styles are various types of paint, sketch, sometimes black and white antique styles and maybe just straight photo with strong editing or another style if the photo mood requires it. But my main Digital Fine Art post processing style is mainly different painting types, oil, pastel and watercolor, because I like these styles the best. I try to choose the best style that fits with the photo best.

Probably the top resource for Digital Fine Art post processing would be RetouchPro forum <http://www.retouchpro.com/> and their forum is excellent for all types of retouching including Photo Based Art. <http://www.retouchpro.com/forums/photo-based-art/>

Software Links:

<http://www.retouchpro.com/forums/software/>

Digital Fine Art Photography is becoming very popular today, though the number of people involved in this new type of art is still small as compared to those involved in the art of photography, many museums, art exhibitions and fine art collectors now consider Digital Fine Art Photography as a valid, legitimate and true art form.

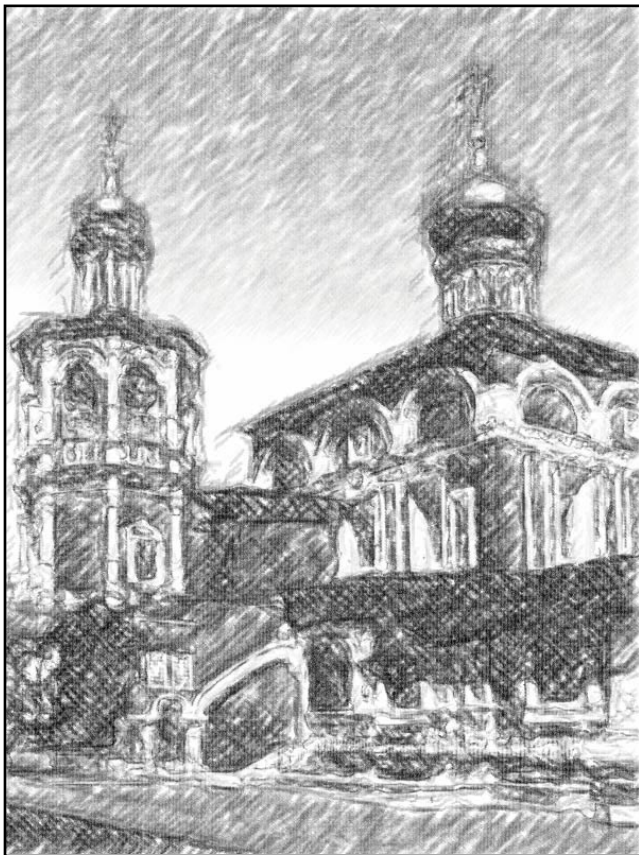
a free version of TwistedBrush; its an older version with less features, but still one of the best photo painting programs there is.

There are many different types of Digital Fine Art Photography post processing techniques, more than I could ever hope to name in this article. B&W, gothic, aged, impressionist, oil, water color, pastels, vivid,

The people involved in Digital Fine Art Photography are now somewhat even smaller and the number of true Digital Fine Art Artists even smaller, compared to those involved in photography, but you can find examples of many good Digital Fine Art Artists on a few web pages for ideas and inspiration. Several facts make the market for Digital Fine Art worth becoming involved in it, 1. The number of true Digital Fine Art Artists is

now small and collectors are buying these early pieces at excellent prices to good artists. Gambling really if these artists will become the new Warhol's, Monet's or Rembrandt's and I'm sure that some of the new Digital Fine Art Artists will become famous in time with this new medium in their own right. 2. it's a new style of art, appropriately Digital Fine Art is an art within an art. Though only a few people are involved in Digital Fine Art Photography, as Digital Fine Art becomes more and more popular and it already is becoming very popular with certain art galleries and collectors, more will become involved in this art. 3. The market for Digital Fine Art is growing; more than it is for stock photography along with higher prices now for art photography pieces. As it grows, the demand also grows. As Digital Fine Art Photography becomes more popular, the demand by magazines and other media will also grow stronger. There already is a demand for Digital Fine Art by calendar, post card and greeting card companies and lets not forget fine art collectors who are more than willing to pay big bucks for work they like. 4. Lastly, its fun! I may not know how to sketch or paint, but I do know how to create decent Digital Fine Art. No, I do not fancy myself a professional artist by any means, but I'm still learning and having a lot more fun, not only taking photos, but also post processing them

If you're interested in becoming involved with Digital Fine Art, I would recommend reading a few books



about photography. First you have to know how to use your camera and there are millions of books on digital photography all over the world. Specialty books are extremely helpful, such as Black and White photography, Macro or Nature photography and any other books for the type of photography you do which you can build into Digital Fine Art Photos. Next there are books directly about Digital Art that are very useful.

One of my favorite free ebooks is called, **“Digital Matte Painting Techniques, Tutorials & Walk-Throughs Collected and Compiled from a wide range of Online-Resources.”** Being in love with the art of Matte Painting, I collected these tutorials over one year from numerous online resources and eventually compiled them into this document. Originally intended for personal use only, I thought that maybe some people out there might be interested too, so I decided to release them to the public.

I do not remember where on the internet I found this book, as far as I remember it was free by the person who collected these tutorials, you may be able to find it by doing an internet search. But this ebook is very good with excellent resources and tips. Do a search on the internet for this book, as far as I remember it is a free book.

Photoshop Fine Arts Effects Cookbook

By John Beardsworth

Is another good book if you're a Photoshop user. Heres a little from the overview of the book: "How would you like to create your own impressionist landscape, a van Gogh still life, or a surrealist Salvador Dali dream world? Or perhaps a classic Ansel Adams photograph of Yosemite or an authentic-looking 19th century Daguerrotype? You can do all of that and more with Photoshop Fine Art Effects Cookbook. The book tells you all you need to know to turn your original digital photographs into images that mimic the styles of great photographers and painters. From advice on how to develop an eye for appropriate subject matter to 62 detailed recipes that demonstrate exactly how to create an "original" van Gogh, Vermeer, Edward Weston, or Andy Warhol (among others), this book is an authentic guide to understanding and simulating the work of great artists-and a whole lot of fun. Analyzing the styles of great artists: format, composition, angles of view, color palettes, and image textures, Shooting for digital manipulation, working non-destructively, making your own brushes and patterns. Creating Daguerrotypes, cyanotypes, stop-motion photographs, cross-processed images, Polaroid transfers, and infrared effects mimicking photographic styles from the pre-Raphaelites and the Naturalists to Jerry Uelsmann and David Hockney Exploring painting and printmaking

techniques from Rembrandt to Warhol: Dutch portraits, 18th century landscape painting, Japanese woodblocks, Impressionism, Pointillism, Fauvism, Art Nouveau, Cubism, Futurism, Surrealism, and Pop Art." This is one of my favorite Photoshop books.

Digital Art Photography for Dummies

By Matthew Bamberg MA

This is my favorite book on Digital Art Photography, this book tells it all. First chapters tell a little about digital art photography, what it truly is, what you need and do not need, defining both yourself as a photographer and your photos, defining who will your art appeal to and who will buy them, then moves to taking digital art photos, all kinds of digital art photos, composing indoor and outdoor shots, photographing people, animals, shooting color and black and white photos for art, night art photography, getting creative art results, using Photoshop for art, printing and framing, digital art photography tips and rules, and ends with a little about selling your art. Some may think this is just a digital photography book and to a large degree it really is, but geared towards digital art photography

PhotoForum.ru is probably my favorite site to get inspiration from, especially the My Russia section of photographs, some very good photos and digital art can be found here taken by Russians and people from all over the world.

<http://www.photoforum.ru/>

60 Sources of Inspiration for Photography: A great link for photographic ideas, some very good ideas I never thought of before, a must read for those who say that there is nothing to photograph where they live.

<http://blogs.photopreneur.com/60-sources-of-inspiration-for-photography>

16 Inspirational Portrait Photography Techniques: Some more great inspiration ideas for shooting Portrait Digital Art.

<http://blog.epicedits.com/2007/12/10/16-inspirational-portrait-photography-techniques/>

My Top 5 Sources of Inspiration in Photography: Another interesting site.

<http://blog.epicedits.com/2007/05/08/my-top-5-sources-of-inspiration-in-photography/>

11 Surefire Tips for Improving Your Landscape Photography: Some great landscape ideas here, I mean some unique one of a kind landscapes.

<http://www.bspcn.com/2007/05/18/11-surefire-tips-for-improving-your-landscape-photography/>

20 Beautiful HDR Pictures Will Blow Your Mind: HDR photos can also be Digital Fine Art Photography if you

know how, so here's how.

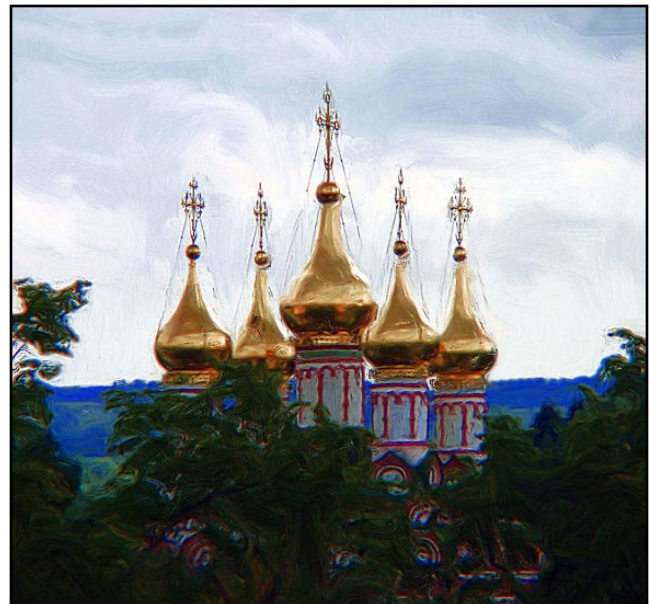
<http://www.bspcn.com/2008/03/01/20-beautiful-hdr-pictures-will-blow-your-mind/>

25 Photographs Taken at the Exact Right Time: Now tell me these photos are not inspirational photos.

<http://www.bspcn.com/2007/11/02/25-photographs-taken-at-the-exact-right-time/>

20 More Photographs Taken at the Exact Right Angle: More inspiration for photography, if this doesn't help you, then you need a new hobby.

<http://www.bspcn.com/2007/12/25/20-more-photographs-taken-at-the-exact-right-angle/>



There you have it in a nutshell pretty much how I do my Digital Fine Art Photography, or maybe I should say a lot of what I take into consideration when I make a digital art photograph and then post process it. I personally think that digital art will be the next art rage and a few of the extremely talented digital artists today will become the famous and rich digital artists of tomorrow. I'm able to sell a work every now and then, and that's nice, but my main reason for creating my digital art is because I enjoy it and find it fun. I find post processing relaxing and I enjoy trying out different things just to see what the outcome will be. Sometimes it works; sometimes it doesn't, but its fun trying. Try creating some Digital Fine Art sometime; I think you'll like it. In this article you will find a few examples of my digital art, a few with an paint style, a couple that mainly retain their photo quality, but have a touch of paint effects, an antique black and white photo and a couple of sketches. Nothing really fancy per say, but they will give you an idea of a little of what you can accomplish with Digital Fine Art. The new art forum of today, so try it, you might like it!



Photography 101

Each issue of PhotographyBB Online Magazine will bring you helpful tips and tutorials on how to get the most of your digital camera and equipment. We'll cover camera techniques, principals of photography, digital photography issues, and how to get the most from the dreaded manual-mode!

BULB MODE: YOUR DOOR TO NEW PHOTOGRAPHIC CREATIVITY - By Kenneth Fagan

In Issue #2, I introduced you to the world of manual photography, using exposure times and depth of field to your advantage, allowing you full control over the image you wanted to create. This month I am going to introduce you to another level of manual mode, the bulb mode. The bulb mode is not necessarily any more complicated or confusing than standard 'M' mode, it is just another step on the road leading you to more creative photography than you could ever dream of by using full auto.

To begin, you will be able to find the bulb mode setting on your camera in either of these two ways: The more obvious one being a 'B' symbol on the mode dial of your SLR or, more than likely you will need to have your camera set to the 'M' or manual mode; turn the dial you use to change the exposure times in the direction of the increasing exposure times, normally it will go as far back as 30 seconds and then 'bulb' appears on the LCD screen. To be able to successfully use the bulb mode, a tripod is an essential piece of equipment. Without one, you are guaranteed extremely shaky images (I gave some good tips on purchasing a tripod in Issue #2 should you be wishing to purchase one).

Shooting in Bulb mode is slightly different than shooting in manual. In manual mode when you compress the shutter release button, the exposure is timed internally, so the shutter is electronically controlled once you have compressed the shutter release button. However, with bulb mode, the 'shutter open-shutter closed' time is controlled externally. By externally, I mean by either the photographer using a stop watch, a timed cable or remote shutter release. The shutter basically stays open until you release it.

Cable releases are small sometimes quite simple devices where it is connected to a camera through a small connection. The simplest forms of cable releases consist of a button and a locking switch. The button acts as the shutter release button on your camera, and the locking switch keeps the shutter release button compressed. Hence, by keeping the shutter open,

the shutter of your camera will remain open until you choose to release the locking switch, so it is quite possible to have an exposure time of many hours at a time, provided that the batteries don't fail in the mean time.

There are more advanced cable releases on the market such as timer models and remote wireless models. These are more expensive than a standard cable release, but I do find that with long exposures a good watch should do the trick. If you don't have a cable release, and you don't want to go buying one, there is the option of compressing the shutter release button on your camera and keeping it compressed until the exposure time is up. Should you be shooting with exposure time of many minutes or perhaps hours, this may prove to be quite frustrating and tiring, in this case you have two options; grin and bear it, or go out and buy the cheapest cable release you can buy to fit your camera.



A simple cable release with locking switch (left) and a more advanced release switch from Canon (right).

There are no real hard and fast rules about exposure times in bulb mode it is really all about experimentation, if you use a digital SLR choosing a low ISO speed between 50 and 200 I find is a good range, anything faster will cause digital noise and may have an adverse effect on the final result. The same rules apply if you are shooting on a film SLR. Choose a slow film for best results, or for even better results on film, use colour transparency (slide) film. The reproduction quality of slide film is much better than that of colour negative.

Bear in mind that the exposure time also depends on the ISO speed you choose. See the table below to compare different exposure times with varying ISO speeds, shutter times and aperture values. Here's a table (below) comparing an example beginning at an ISO of 50 at f8 for a 20 minute exposure:

This was taken at f11 for about one hour at an ISO rating of 100. If I was to change the ISO to 200 and left the aperture at f11, it would have cut the exposure time by half but the final result would not be what I required. So to keep the shutter time at the desired length when you increase the ISO rating to 200 you will need to set your aperture to f16 (this halves the amount of light entering the lens and increases the exposure time by two).

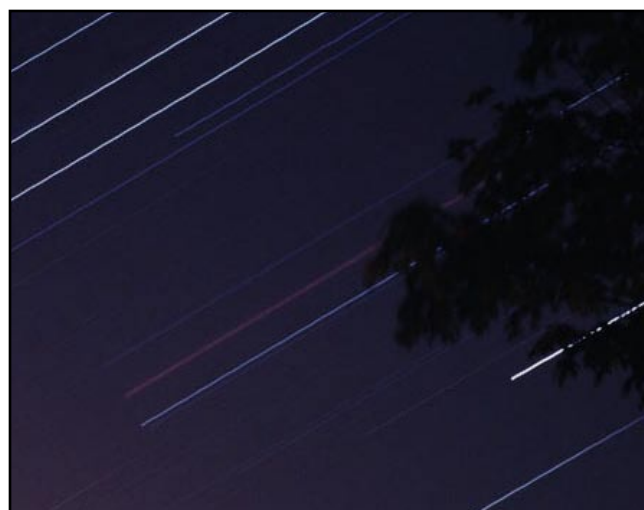
In the example of the traffic trails, which I shot using a twin lens reflex medium format camera for a photographic art gallery, (See Issue #2 for more information on medium format). I used the bulb mode on the camera to achieve the results; exposure time was thirty seconds at f11. If time allows, try to take as many images you can of the subject at various shutter speeds and apertures (bracketing) and make a

Table Showing Exposure Times in Bulb Mode and Effects of Varying ISO and Aperture

ISO	f-8	f-11	f-16	f-22
50	20min	40min	80min	160min
100	10min	20min	40min	80min
200	5min	10min	20min	40min

The chart above will give you a good understanding of varying your exposure times when using the bulb mode. It is also very important to put into consideration the fact that for some instances changing your ISO speed from 50 to 200 for a faster exposure time may not be long enough to achieve the desired effect. Instead you will have to adjust you aperture and your exposure time accordingly so that you achieve the effect you want. (Remember: See Issue's #1 and #2 for aperture and exposure time primers!).

A good example of this is the star trails image below.



Star Trails in bulb mode, exposure time: 1 hour

note of each. That way, when it comes to viewing the results you will know what shutter speed and aperture combination worked best for the task. You will then be able to better judge the shutter speed and aperture settings you need to achieve the desired result, and future results.

As with manual mode, bulb mode is all about experimentation, so don't be afraid to push the boat out a little. If it doesn't turn out the way you wanted it the first time, use the experience to your advantage when you try it next time. Bulb mode is a lot of fun and getting a good result can a very satisfying feeling. Try out these new techniques, and share your bulb mode photos with us in the PhotographyBB Forums!



Traffic Trails in bulb mode, exposure time: 30 seconds.



Photography Around the World

In this third issue of the PhotographyBB Online Magazine, Kenneth Fagan takes us across the globe for a fascinating look at his photographic bicycle adventure in Amsterdam, and other parts of the Netherlands.

THE NETHERLANDS: RED LIGHTS, BIKES, AND BARGES - By Kenneth Fagan



It was the late summer in 2007, it was the wettest summer in decades, day after day the rain pounded every street, and the warmth of the summer sun was burdened by a heavy unrelenting mass of cloud. The whole country was blindfolded by a neutral grey shroud.

It was time to take a vacation. So my brother, cousin and I boarded a plane on a wet Saturday morning at the Dublin airport bound for the Netherlands. It was my first trip there so to be honest I was quite sceptical about the visit. The plan of action was to stay in Amsterdam for about three nights, and then work around part of the Netherlands, sleeping on a barge and working our way around by bicycle... the Dutch way.

With all the talk I heard about Amsterdam being seedy and drug ridden, before the trip, I wasn't sure what to expect. I have to admit I was nervous, curious and excited all at once, but it didn't take long for me to change my mind. The hotel we stayed in Amsterdam was a peculiar little spot, many stories high; it earned its

meagre two stars gracefully. Its spiral stair case nervously wound its way up five or six levels occasionally decorated by a loose rail or post. We trundled our way up and up, to the very top floor we went, where we fell upon our room on the sixth floor. Ideally positioned above our heads as we entered our room was a trapdoor, an attic trapdoor to be totally exact. Along with a few more heart thumping steps one late night or one wayward move would land you back downstairs in a matter of moments.

I was a little disappointed in the room at first I must admit, but like a lost puppy its charming character quickly grew on me. We got used to the daily hike up and down the stairs. The room was well equipped, it had a fridge for beer, three beds and three beams running across the "V" of the ceiling at intervals for the occasional accidental coming together of skull and timber.

Three nights was all we spent in that hotel, and I missed it when we had to leave for the next part of the trip. Re-enacting our arrival in our departure, we tiptoed down the stairs with rucksacks and cases on our backs. The loose railings again teased us with their secure looking guise.

While we were in Amsterdam, we spent the days wandering around and checking out the sights, and never once did we get bored; there is so much to see in this city. Its old style character with its slanted buildings, narrow streets, endless canals and adult shops, not to mention the red light district where scantily clad individuals show off their wares to anyone willing to pay enough to avail of their services. Hidden behind a rich velvety red curtain surrounded by neon they go on about their business doing their work and paying their taxes like the rest of us. I chose not to bring my camera down these areas. It would be like invading somebody's workplace.



The main attraction for me in Amsterdam was Dam Square. Dotted with street entertainers, the place was a Mecca for tourists and of course let's not forget the pigeons. Also, there's the beautiful palace that stood elegantly looking down onto dam square a masterpiece of architectural glory.



A photo-montage of Dam Square

The Netherlands is almost entirely flat, much of it being reclaimed from the sea for agriculture. Don't be surprised to see bicycle parking lots full of hundreds and hundreds of old battered but still in use bicycles, lining the edges of the canals. Around Amsterdam, cycling is the main mode of transport along with cars.



Each street was scattered with quaint little restaurants, hemp stores and souvenir shops, not to mention the worldwide invasion of the big "M" and various other pizzerias and take out joints. A cultured city, Amsterdam had something for everyone, young and old. Once our days in Amsterdam were complete, we headed towards the awaiting barge in port D. Port D was positioned on a canal right beside a science museum, we could see it from the street outside our hotel. Of course we didn't realize this until about four miles later, we almost circumnavigated the whole of Amsterdam! Well I know now we didn't, but with the mix of blazing sun, mild hangovers and concrete, it sure felt like it. Eventually, after a lot of searching we found our barge, there it was, we could almost see our hotel from its position.



Our barge at dusk

So then came phase two of our Netherlands trip, the bike tour. The three of us (my brother, cousin and I) are avid fair-weather cyclists, so the beautiful sunshine that blessed our trip was a welcome sight. Along with the other tourists on the barge, we set out that evening on two wheels; the guide brought us out to get a feel for our new bikes for the week. It didn't take long for the first faller, a coming together of bicycle and bollard; a bruised ego and a cut leg was the result. At that point,



I started to worry when it would be my turn. Along the cycle lane, well actually one could nearly say that the lanes are more cycle motorways, meeting traffic was daunting, like the first time you learn how to drive.

The next morning we headed north on our bikes (each morning we would leave the barge by bicycle, and meet it again further on that evening), and we moved forth, wind in our faces towards Edam. The idea was to make a round trip of about two hundred and fifty kilometers by bike, where each town we passed marked our progression on our map. Large or small, each town held itself in high regard, none any less charming than the other. After Edam we moved on to a pleasant little town called Hoorn, and then to the tip of the mainland Den Helder. A short barge trip across the water brought us to the island of Texel. Cycling along the man made dams that kept the sea off the land, the wind again pushed us back. We cycled around Texel for about two days, most memorably the fantastic twisting roads that made its way

through sand dunes and scrub. It was a lot of fun and breathtakingly beautiful. We visited a seal sanctuary on the island where it was a daily ritual for tourists to visit the seals at feeding time, signalled by the smell of fish and the easily identified squawk of the seagulls. It was

A hut in the sand dunes, in Texel.





an experience I will never forget, wary of the seagull's overhead; the seals provided great entertainment for everyone. I saw for myself the hard work which the dedicated staff go through every day for the welfare of these beautiful mammals. Visiting the Seal sanctuary was the final port of call while we were on the island of Texel.

That evening we headed back to the mainland on the barge. By then it was beyond midway of the tour. We passed through many open air museums, which consisted of small old time houses, windmills and old boats. An interesting place, but I couldn't help seeing the tacky side of it as many of the houses in all of the towns I saw were as they were many decades ago, so I failed to see the real reason for these open air museums apart from the obvious tourist income it would get.

Everyday, about two hours into the cycling, we would stop for a well earned snack; this was where I became acquainted with the delicious Dutch apple pie. Dutch apple pie is a masterpiece of Dutch culinary engineering, about two inches of sweet apples, a sprinkling of raisins (it could have been sultanas either) sandwiched between some thick flaky pastry



Ice cream vendor, full of tasty treats!

and a generous smothering of freshly whipped cream. It really was a contradiction of sorts, taking part in an active holiday and knocking back the healthy aspect of it with a heart attack portion of calories and cholesterol.

Being a photographer, the Netherlands gave me many photo opportunities. The hollow land threw up some challenging compositions, with its endlessly



flat horizon and lack of tulips. Yes, the Netherlands is world famous for its tulips! I don't know what I was expecting for August, we missed the tulip growing season by about five months. I am a photographer not a horticulturist or gardener so I think that is enough to get me out of trouble. I could only imagine the magnificent colours of the rows and rows of flowers, being a long term hay fever sufferer, in the back of my mind I was regrettably relieved.

The Netherlands is a country that is almost fully at sea level or below it, as I mentioned earlier, the coastline is protected from the North Sea by man made barriers. Should these dams ever breach, much of the Netherlands could end up under water. The Netherlands used be known as Holland, taken from the words Hollow and land - the hollow land could not describe it any more aptly.

The Dutch people are friendly and open minded, their grasp of the English language is impeccable, and they take a lot of pride in their country, maintaining it like a well oiled machine. It took millions of man hours to build it into what it is today. It is a constant battle for them against the raging north sea, day in day out it batters the coastline threatening the lands very existence.

The cycle trip had finally come to an end, one week of pedal pushing and eating apple pies took its toll on us all. Aching calf's, callused palms and sunburn didn't put a dampener on any of it - we were all proud of our tour. Two hundred and fifty kilometers later, not much to many, but a lot to us we breathed a sigh of total content as we docked for the final time in Port D, Pier 4 in Amsterdam. We made it, we survived, and we cycled around one of the most fascinating little countries I have ever seen, and it was an experience I will never forget. Some day, if you can, make your way over to Europe and stop in the Netherlands, you will not be disappointed.

Below: Our view from the barge





Choosing the Right Accessories

With all of the photography gear on the market today, it's difficult to determine which accessories are right for you, and what to look for once you decide on an accessory. In this ongoing segment, we'll examine the things you should look for when choosing photography accessories, and help you to make an informed decision based on your photographic needs.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: CHOOSING THE RIGHT LENS TO SUIT YOUR NEEDS

- By Kenneth Fagan

As all ye SLR users know, choosing a lens can be confusing. With a vast range of lenses to choose from, picking the right lens could seem like a daunting task. Each SLR manufacturer can have an array of lenses to choose from. This month I will be giving you some useful information on choosing the right lens to suit your needs.

Making too hasty of decisions can end up in disappointment and leave you out of pocket. Here are a few questions you need to ask yourself before you make your final decision on choosing a lens.

What will I be using the lens for? This may sound like a really silly question, and you may think the obvious answer is to take pictures; yes this is correct but only to a point. Different lenses have different uses. For example, you wouldn't want to purchase a macro lens if you intended on using it for sports photography.

How much money do I want to spend? Whether you are on a tight budget or are a big spender, there is something out there for everyone, from cheap and cheerful to professional standard.

What type of lens do I want? With so many lenses on the market choosing the most suitable one can be difficult. Below are definitions for the different variations of lenses, it will give you a better idea of what is out there and what might best work for you.

Here's a brief breakdown of different lens types, and their uses:

Macro:

Used for close to extreme close up photography, these lenses are most commonly used for shooting insects and flowers creating larger than life images.

Wide Angle:

A lens which covers a large area in the frame at a close range.

Fisheye:

A lens which operates at a very wide angle, causing barrel distortion (straight lines curving inwards. Not much use for portraiture due to the bulging effect of the barrel distortion, but can give great results for the more artistic side of photography.

Zoom:

A lens with variable focal lengths (the distance between the centre of the lens and the focal plane which is either the digital sensor or film), these are versatile lenses and can replace the need for having more than lens.



An example of a zoom lens is 70-200mm, meaning it is the equivalent of having a 70mm and a 200mm lens and all in between, although the quality of the images produced using a zoom lens is not as good as that of a prime lens (see below).

Prime Lens:

Unlike zoom lenses, prime lenses have fixed focal lengths, where the lens has only one focal length. As mentioned earlier, the images produced with a prime lens are of a higher standard than a zoom lens.

Telephoto:

Most commonly used for sports and wildlife photography, the telephoto lens works very much like a telescope where it enlarges the images in the frame. Telephoto lenses are not the same as zoom lenses due to the fact that tele-lenses have a fixed focal length where as zoom lenses have varied focal lengths.

Mirror:

These are the lesser known of the lens family. The mirror lens consists of both mirror and glass elements, they have a fixed focal length and a single aperture (usually f8 or f5.6). The combination of the mirror and the glass elements decreases the size of the lens rather considerably, creating a light stubby construction with a capacity of 500mm or 1000mm with a tele-converter (see below). The images produced from these lenses can be quite poor, un-sharp images, vignetting and distortion is commonplace.

Tele-converter:

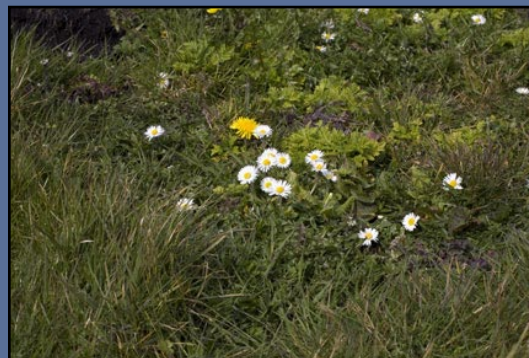
An adaptor to fit a lens to increase the focal length.

How zoom lenses work: The most common choice for a photographer when purchasing lenses for the first time are zoom lenses. This is mainly due to the fact that it is much easier to carry around one lens rather than two or three prime lenses, and it is more convenient than having to move from one lens to another. Not having to buy a multitude of lenses saves quite a bit of money too. The images to the right show an example of how zoom lenses operate over a broad range. This example demonstrates four photos taken on a 70-200mm zoom lens on a full frame DSLR.

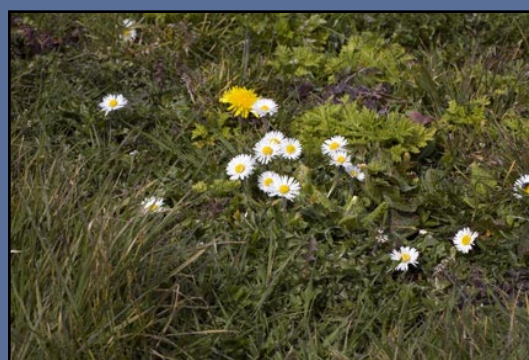
When you purchase your DSLR there are a range of lenses suited to that particular camera. It is not necessary to buy the most expensive lens on the market as these are primarily manufactured for the higher end professional DSLR bodies in the product range. Lens imperfections won't be picked up as quickly with an amateur DSLR as it would a pro-level DSLR.

Depending on the cost, the actual quality of the images produced by the lens is mainly down to the

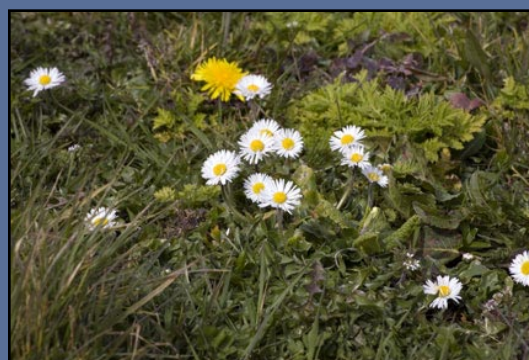
Zoom Lens Examples: 70-200mm Zooms



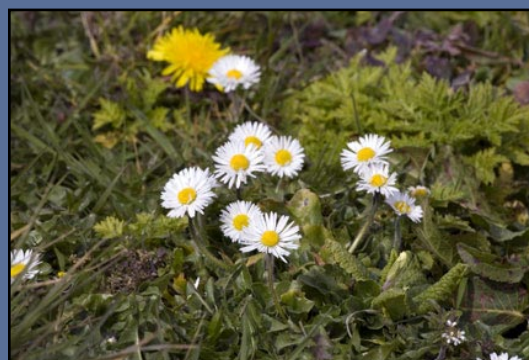
Taken at 70mm on a 70-200mm Zoom Lens



Taken at 100mm on a 70-200mm Zoom Lens



Taken at 135mm on a 70-200mm Zoom Lens



Taken at 200mm on a 70-200mm Zoom Lens

quality of the glass with which it was manufactured. The cheapest of the cheap lenses contain many plastic elements, greatly reducing the sharpness as the light enters the lens, whereas the higher-end market lenses are built using all glass elements, something which is vital in producing crisp and clear images. For best results, when choosing a lens, it is a good idea to buy the same brand as your actual camera. This way you are sure to be buying a product which is of a good to high quality standard; of course quality also depends on the manufacturer too. Manufacturers who produce poor quality SLRs will most definitely produce poor quality lenses.

Another option is to buy a “compatible type” lens, that is, a lens compatible to your camera’s brand. The most common compatible lens manufactures are Sigma and Tamron, and for less purchasing cost they produce a relatively good quality alternative to the higher end manufacturers such as Canon, Nikon and Pentax. The higher end manufacturers produce professional standard lenses with high quality precision cut and polished glass for crisp and clear professional quality images.

At the upper echelons of the lens business are Leica and Carl Zeiss. These lenses are made using the best possible technology, precision engineering and highest glass quality, and are the envy of the lens world. However, they do come at a higher cost, so they may not be suitable for everyone. Below is a re-cap on what you need to know before you purchase a lens. Keep these questions in mind when selecting your new lens:

- What type of lens do you want?
- What will you primarily use it for?
- Do you want a zoom lens or a prime lens?
- How much do you want to spend?
- Do you want a compatible lens, a low budget lens from the maker of your DSLR or a higher end model?
- What make of SLR do you have?

Be sure to choose a lens which will fit your camera, different brands have different mounts.

Protecting your camera and your lenses:

To keep your lens in top condition, it is essential to look after it in a proper manner. It isn’t too difficult to keep your lens safe, particularly the glass. To prevent any direct contact with the glass of the lens, it is recommended that you purchase a UV (Ultra-Violet) filter to fit to the front of your lens; they are quite inexpensive and it saves any damage from happening to the coating on the lens from cleaning, dust and fingerprints. A plastic lens hood is another relatively inexpensive investment, and will provide some

protection for your lens. Should your lens accidentally fall to the ground, the lens hood would take the most of the impact and protect it sufficiently. That being said, it is obviously important that you be careful enough not to drop it in the first place.

Try not to remove your lens unnecessarily, this allows dust particles into your camera and possibly onto your sensor. When removing your lens make sure that your DSLR is switched off as static electricity will draw more dust particles onto your sensor.

At the end of it all, it is entirely up to you as to what you would like out of your lens. While many of your local camera store sales people should offer you good advice, unfortunately there are also some sales associates will try to sell you anything just for the sale. It is a good idea to do plenty of research before you open your wallet. A little knowledge on the subject goes a long way, and be happy with your choice. Remember, a lens is the type of long-term investment that will outlast even your camera body.

If you are interested in finding compatible lens for your DSLR I recommend the following links:

Sigma Lenses:
<http://www.sigmaphotos.com/lenses>

Tamron Lenses:
<http://www.tamrom.com>



how to buy your next digital camera!

MY JOURNEY THROUGH SEARCHING FOR MY LATEST DIGITAL CAMERA - By Jon Ayres



It used to always amaze me when I would see a post of one of the photography forums asking, "Which camera should I buy?" That is until I started shopping for a new camera, and found myself somewhat overwhelmed by everything that is being offered today.

However, after much research, I was able to limit my choices and finally decided to buy a new Panasonic FZ-50 because it looked to be the best choice for the type of photography I do. I remember in the old days when if you wanted a camera, you went to the store, picked out the camera you wanted, paid for it and took it home, but now it is a little more complicated process. I was able to narrow my choices down to the Panasonic FZ-18, FZ-50 and Fuji 9100, and in the end, my final decision was to get the Panasonic FZ-50.

The first thing you should take into consideration is what type of photographer you are, and the type of photos you take? If you're a photographer who only takes photos when the grand-kiddies visit, when you go on vacation, or just in the mood to take photos, then you will want an easy to use camera. But, if you're a serious photographer who has been involved in the hobby for a few years and knowledgeable (or willing to learn) about photography and the settings to use, then you will want a more advanced prosumer bridge camera, maybe even a DSLR camera. You have to be honest with yourself and get a camera that's best suited for you; do not make the mistake of thinking that by getting an advanced DSLR camera, you'll automatically

be taking pro photos; that's just playing photographer. Plain and simply, for my type of photography, a DSLR camera just really isn't needed, so that was not really even considered by me, though I did look at a couple of DSLR cameras, but in the end I decided that I just did not need one. Not only should you be aware of your own strengths and weaknesses, you should know the same about the camera you are looking to buy. There is no such thing as the perfect camera that can take every type of photo perfectly, not even the ever lustful DSLR cameras are perfect goof proof cameras. For example I know of no point and shoot or bridge camera that really handles high ISO settings well, except perhaps the Fujifilm cameras, but that's debatable since Fuji joined in the pixel race. I have an old S5500 Fuji that I have been using for five years, it's one of the best available light cameras Fuji made, but daylight photos sometimes can leave a little to be desired, especially on overcast days. Each camera has its trade offs, even the DSLR cameras. Get a camera that is strongest in the area of photography you do the most, daylight, night, outside, interiors, sports, children, parties, and concerts, what ever types you photograph you should match your camera's strengths to what you shoot and generally it will work for every photo opportunity you encounter. Every camera has its strengths, it shoots some things better than other things and it's only wise to choose a camera whose strengths match what you shoot the most. This is where research comes in. Digital cameras come in three flavors, point and shoot, prosumer bridge and DSLR cameras. It just depends on you and your type of photography.

I consider myself mainly a digital fine art photography artist or so I like to believe. My

main photography subjects are city/street scenes, architecture, interior of old buildings and night photography. Of course I sometimes do other types of photography, but I wanted a camera to match my main interests of photography first, anything else was an added bonus. So I started seriously looking for a good prosumer bridge camera. Only two really seemed to be what I needed: The Fuji S9100 or the Panasonic FZ-50. Of those two I finally settled on the FZ-50 because even though it did not rate as well as the Fuji for night / available light photos in most reviews, I had seen enough night and available light photos taken with the FZ50 camera on several sites to know that this camera actually can take excellent night and low light photos, plus other types of photography I like to specialize in, plus the ever so often "out of the ordinary" shots I sometimes stumble onto. I liked the Panasonic FZ50 better and to a large degree it came down to personal preference on my part. By the way, I also own a Fuji S5500, an excellent low light camera, but some what dated. So I know how well the older Fuji cameras are, but I also have experience with Panasonic cameras and just liked the Panasonic FZ-50 better, as far as manual focus goes on a digital camera, there is none better than the FZ50. I read everything I could find about this and other cameras on the Internet.

One important resource every camera buyer should read are the various reviews (both on and offline) and I read every one I could find. Professional reviewers of this camera almost all said the same thing; some so close that they looked to have been written by the same person. I read photography magazine reviews, newspaper reviews and camera web page reviews. Professionally written reviews have to be taken with a grain of salt. Since professional reviewers have many things to review (sometimes over 100 cameras per month), with that amount, no reviewer can really look over a camera in full detail at any length of time, there are only so many hours in a day. That is why user reviews are just as important, the owners who use the camera in detail and a lot longer than any pro reviewer will often can give you more truth than any pro review can. A good example, almost every pro reviewer said that the FZ50 was not good for indoor, low light or night photography, yet on a couple of Panasonic forums and photo hosting sites pretty well proved the so-called professional reviewers wrong - the FZ50 is capable of taking excellent available light photos. So make sure to read both the professional and user reviews in order to get the complete picture or should I say, "get the complete photo of the camera your interested in."

There are 1000's of camera reviews posted on the internet every week, and its very easy to do an internet search of the camera name and model that interests you. Of course, if it's a camera that is new or hasn't

been released yet, you will not find as much as you will for older cameras. Most reviewers only consider the photos as it comes directly from the camera with no post processing, which seems a little silly to me. But then considering if the reviewer is a professional working for a magazine, they must have a couple of hundred cameras to review each month, so they really do not have time to spend with each camera. Next find forums on the camera you are interested in, and see what the owners of this camera say? What do their photos look like? Will this camera deliver in what you need it to do? Take for example the FZ-50 that I decided to buy; all the reviews said it was a well made, strong camera, as close to a DSLR camera as it can get without owning a DSLR. But the camera was not good for low light photography and that bothered me since I do a lot of low light photography. They said the higher ISOs on this camera were not very good and noisy, but then most high ISOs on cameras that are not DSLR are not very good, that's a fact of life. But I read a few of the owner's opinions and looked at their photos taken with this camera and wow, kind of blew what the reviewers said out of the water somewhat. It was then that I realized that reviewers are not worried with post processed photos, only photos directly out of the camera. The low light and night photos taken with this camera are excellent when post processed. So you have to look a deeper than only with official camera reviews, also look at camera forums and those who own and use the camera.

Next I checked out photos taken with this camera, both on various Panasonic forums, on Flickr.com, and anywhere else I could find. I like Flickr.com to check out different photos taken with cameras I'm interested in. For example, I did a search for the FZ-50 and found a few thousand photos, and then I did a search within a search for particular types of photos, night, street, churches, building interiors, low light and cityscapes and viewed the EXIF (Exchangeable Image File Format) data. I viewed the EXIF data just to see if it was a straight photo from the camera or if post processing was done, and if it was post processed, what program was used. That is more or less what sold me on the FZ-50. I also paid close attention to what owners of this camera had to say, "yes the camera has its faults like most cameras do, but most of the FZ-50's faults can be overcome with skill, paying attention to what your doing and with post processing." I liked the camera, good features, good image quality if you do it right, in other words know just what in heck you are doing and it's a strong well made camera.

Checking out other owner's photos is very important, after all, its photos that tell the story. Look at the photos posted on various sites like Flickr.com,

photobucket and a few other photography forums or photo posting sites. Do the photos match your expectations or what you want?

Another helpful thing you can do is to download the manual of the camera you're interested in and take a look at it. Just about every camera on the market has manuals that can be downloaded from the respective manufacturers' websites. Take time and look over the manual of the camera your interested in, does it do what you want it to do, does it have the features you want, can you use the camera or learn how to use it? You can find all this out and more if you download the manual and look it over. One of the things that ticks me off, is when somebody makes a post on some forum, "I bought this camera and it is no good, does not take good photos, does not do this or that, I've been using the camera for two days and it's a bad camera, boohoo, boohoo!" Nine times out of ten, they have not even bothered opening the manual and finding out how to use the camera. Of course any camera will not be good if you do not take the time to read the manual. I've ordered me the FZ50, in the meantime I will be reading the manual I downloaded so I will know how to use this camera to its fullest.

The last part after making my decision was checking and finding the best price for the FZ-50. Since I'm a teacher and teachers do not make a lot of extra spending cash, I had to shop for the best price. Sometimes you have to do your shopping online and that is fine, but make absolutely sure that you check the store's rating at <http://www.resellerratings.com/> and make sure that the online store your buying from has a good rating. Not all, but many online camera stores, are famous for bait and switch. They offer an incredible low price (the bait) and once you're hooked, they try force you to buy overpriced extras like memory cards at three times the price that the card can be bought elsewhere or batteries for at least double the normal price. Some bait and switch stores even have the nerve to try and sell you a warranty that actually should come with the camera for free for around \$100 plus extra dollars. Then, if you refuse to buy, the camera is now "on backorder." Sometimes if you cancel your order the store then tries to charge you a restocking fee for something that is not in stock. Just how these thieves can get away with this is beyond me. If the price is too good to be true, then most likely it is not (true), so remember the first law of consumers, "buyer beware." That being said, there are plenty of reputable camera dealers online, just do the research before spending that hard earned cash.

Yes, choosing a digital camera has gotten harder today with so many choices and decisions to make, every camera claiming to be the best, with more

features, can do everything. But you can make the decision easily if you research and review. Remember what kind of photographer you are, your skill level, and types of photos you tend to take. Then find a camera that best suits your style and skills (a camera you can use and grow with). Read everything you can find about the cameras that you're interested in. Once you find a camera you like and are interested in getting, read the reviews, both the professional reviews and owner reviews to get a good idea of what the camera can do and can not do; the camera's strengths and weaknesses. Download the camera manuals and take a look at them, you can learn a lot from the various camera manuals if you bother to read them. Then lastly, look at photos taken with the camera, especially photos that match the type of photos you take. That is how I ended up ordering a Panasonic DMC-FZ50K camera and hopefully I will get it before long, in the meantime I will read the FZ50 manual I downloaded to get familiar with the camera.

A Word From the Author:

My name is Jon D. Ayres and I'm originally from Albany, GA in the US. I first came to Moscow, Russia in August 2003 and fell in love with the city and I have been here ever since. I consider Moscow as much my hometown as I do Albany. Photography, writing and history are my hobbies along with shooting, hiking, camping, fishing, hunting and walking. I enjoy taking walks around Moscow and live next to a nature preserve in the southern part of Moscow where I enjoy taking walks and photos. In Moscow, I have taught English, business, history, literature among other things.

I have been involved in writing, digital art and photography for over thirty years and I am a published author having several articles and photos published. I have owned and used many cameras, including a Canon SLR, Polaroid and more digital cameras than I can remember. I'm a firm believer in post processing and have been using Photoshop since the first version came out. You can find examples of my digital art and photography at the following sites:

<http://www.redbubble.com/people/bossman>

<http://www.featurepics.com/Authors/Images6269.aspx>

<http://www.eyeftheheart.com/JonAyres>

<http://www.fotothing.com/JohnnyReb/>



Photoshop Tutorial

This month, we've got a guest contributor who's going to take us through an amazing Photoshop tutorial for creating a unique and memorable effect. This tutorial will also work in Photoshop Elements, so Elements users, go wild! Let's have a look, at the wonderful world of "Out Of Bounds!"

HOW TO CREATE "OUT OF BOUNDS" IMAGE MASTERPIECES - By Fred McWilson



Hello fellow image editors! PhotographyBB Online Magazine was kind enough to let me share with you a image editing technique that has in some form another been around since the roots of artistic freedom! It can be subtle or it can be bold and there are no ends to its application. So what is the name of this "technique?" Some call it "out of bounds"; others call it "out of frame" and a few call it "cool, weird and huh??" The slang, abbreviated or as the company I work for likes to do, they create acronyms... so the image editing technique shall be from here on out

known as "OOB". I first saw this term used on the web several years ago and found the images created with this effect to be fascinating.

Once I realized that "OOB" was a technique employed in print ads and such, I was amazed at just how many images today utilize this effect. So what is this effect or technique? Basically it is an effect or technique to create the illusion of 3D within your image. This commonly is accomplished by creating a border or frame around your image and then moving

the frame and isolating the image such that parts of your image protrude or come out over the frame/ border. See the image of my daughter, rock and water:



Notice the white frame representing a film print border of years ago and how the rock, water and my daughter all extend beyond the bounds of the frame. This is the essence of this type of effect. It is a very simple effect and can be easily learned. Here's another example of this effect:



A brief introduction before jumping into, or should I say "jumping out of" the OOB tutorial, I wanted to discuss a few tips regarding the selection, execution and presentation of OOB's.

Selection:

First comes what I think can be the most difficult task in creating a great OOB...that is "image selection." The image you choose can impact your OOB work in several ways. So if you choose an image that does not have any or easily "protrudable" parts, one that is flat, it will make the OOB effect more difficult to achieve. Secondly, if you choose an image that has great potential with regards to protrusions but the protrusions are difficult to extract, such as anything

with fur or other complex edges, then your work again will be more difficult for you. I suggest for starting OOBers to choose a simple, hard edged image for your first attempts, now if you are skilled in the ways of good extractions then disregard my suggestion and choose your pain!

Execution and Presentation:

Once you begin the editing journey into OOB's, one key to a successful OOB like most other editing works is your "execution", such as your attention to details like shading, masking and perspective. All these parts that go into creating an OOB are fundamental to realizing a great final image. No big secret here, but when doing OOB's you may get into things that you might not normally deal with in your normal type editing. A lot of editing that goes on typically deals with cleaning up dust spots, sharpening or other basic stuff we all do. OOB's will introduce you to a few new editing skills hopefully that can help you not only in image editing but making you think even more about your photography as well. The "presentation" of your OOB creation is another part of the whole to what makes or breaks the effect. The arrangement and balance to your image is key to a wonderful OOB or a ho-hum work. As you will see in the tutorial with respect to the background choice, whether it is a gradient or some other, all will impact your image.

Now a few words around the tutorial, I wrote this tutorial using Photoshop CS2 but folks with Elements should be able to follow along well, they will just need to download a free masking tool add-on located here:

<http://graphicssoft.about.com/od/pselements/p/layermasks.htm>

Another thing about the tutorial, it is a graphically illustrated, step-by-step process, so even if you know nothing about editing you should still be able to create an OOB. Some of the editing tools you will be using and hopefully come to understand if you don't already, are Layers, Layer Masks and Selections. These are some of the most fundamental tools that image editing folks work with...so if you haven't used these before, then I think you will find this tutorial a good and fun way to learn about them to further your editing skill set.

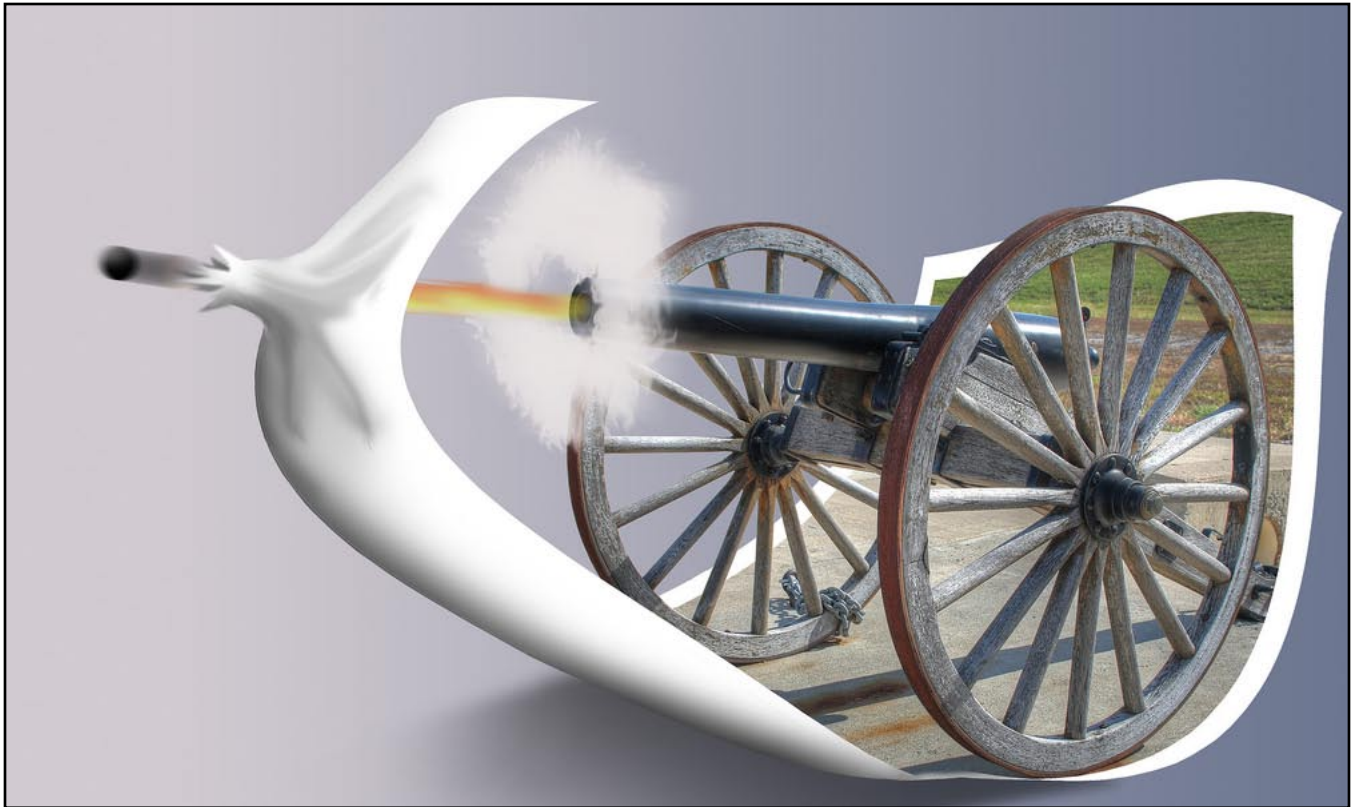
For further OOB examples please checkout my Flickr OOB gallery here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/serrator/sets/72057594091393842/>

...and our OOB group on Flickr here:

<http://www.flickr.com/groups/oob/pool/>

As a follow up to this article/tutorial we will explore some more advanced OOB creations such as these with curved frames and frame interactions:



I hope you enjoy the tutorial and be sure to share your OOB creations in the forum. Now, on with the tutorial!

A Note From the Editor of PhotographyBB Online Magazine...

Hello! I just wanted to make a note regarding the format of this tutorial. The author, Fred McWilson, has put together a fabulous ebook style tutorial, and rather than re-writing it and formatting it to our layout, we are going to present his original format in reduced size here. If the images appear too small, zoom to 125% and you will be able to view them nicely. We'll also provide a link to download his PDF.

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF OOB'S

LET'S GO!

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OUT OF BOUNDS STYLE OF PHOTO MANIPULATION TUTORIAL

WHAT ARE OOB'S?

OUT OF BOUNDS...OR AS IT IS MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS "OOB" IS A TECHNIQUE TO MANIPULATE PHOTO'S TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF 3D SEE THE EXAMPLE BELOW FOR DETAILS...

YOUR PHOTO HERE

THE FRAME

THE BACKGROUND

HAVING PART OF THE PIC EXTEND BEYOND THE FRAME IS HOW THE 3D ILLUSION IS CREATED

THE OOB TECHNIQUE HAS BEEN AROUND A LONG TIME. IF YOU BEGIN TO DISCERN THIS MODE YOU WILL FIND IT'S USE IN MANY PLACES FROM MAGAZINE COVERS TO NEWSPAPER FLYERS.

I THINK IT CAN BE ARGUED THAT M.C. ESCHER IS ONE OF THE PIONEERS WHO DEMONSTRATED THIS TECHNIQUE IN HIS WORKS ELOQUENTLY.

TAKE A LOOK AT A FEW SUBTLE AND NOT SO SUBTLE EXAMPLES BELOW...

FOR THIS TUTORIAL I WILL BE USING ADOBE'S PHOTOSHOP CS2 EDITING SOFTWARE. MOST OF THE EXAMPLES SHOULD ALSO WORK IN OTHER PHOTO EDITING SOFTWARE PACKAGES.

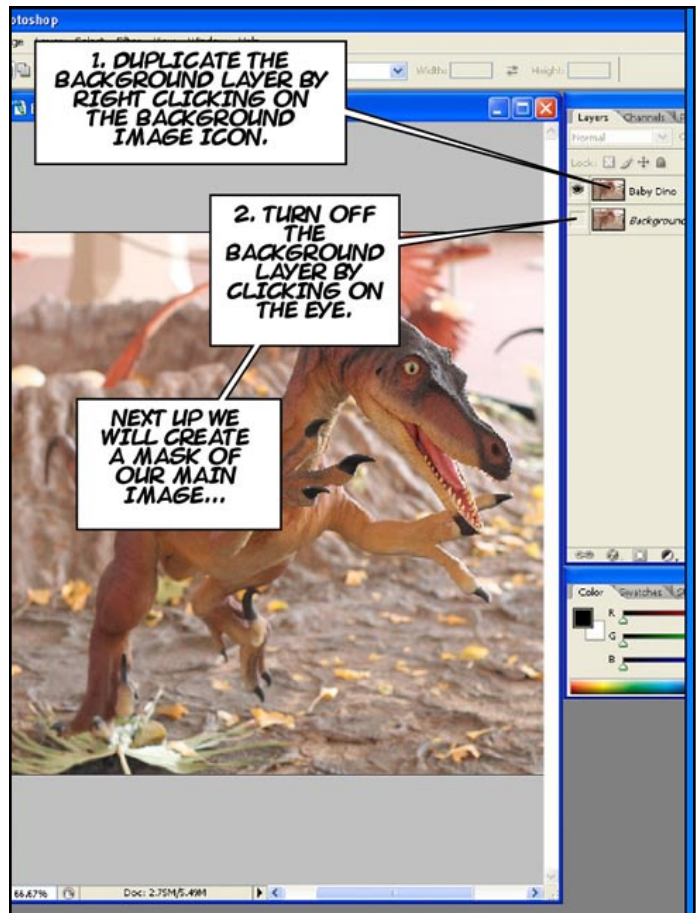
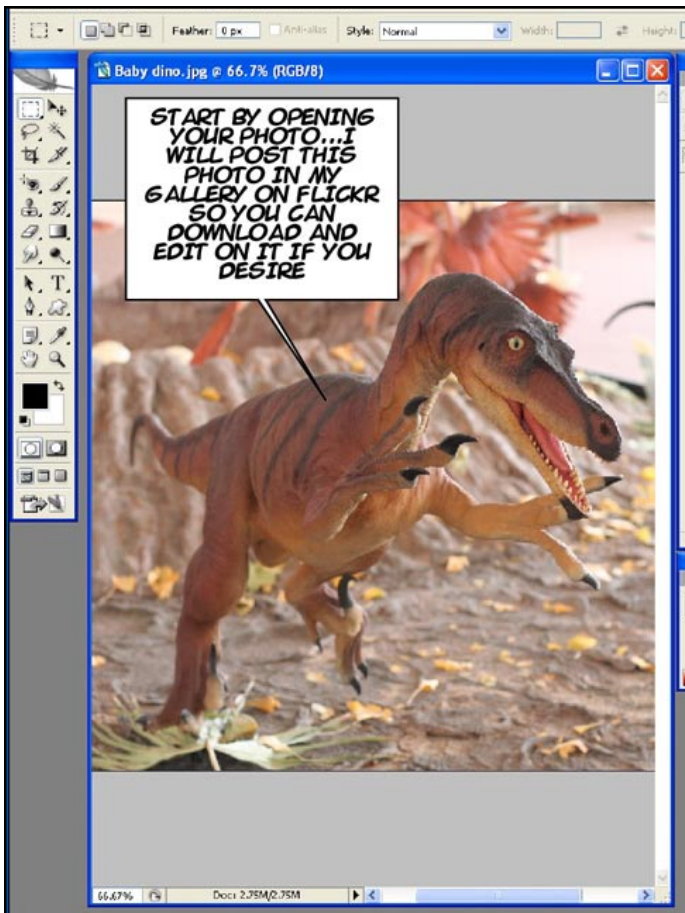
SO LET'S JUMP IN AND GET STARTED...

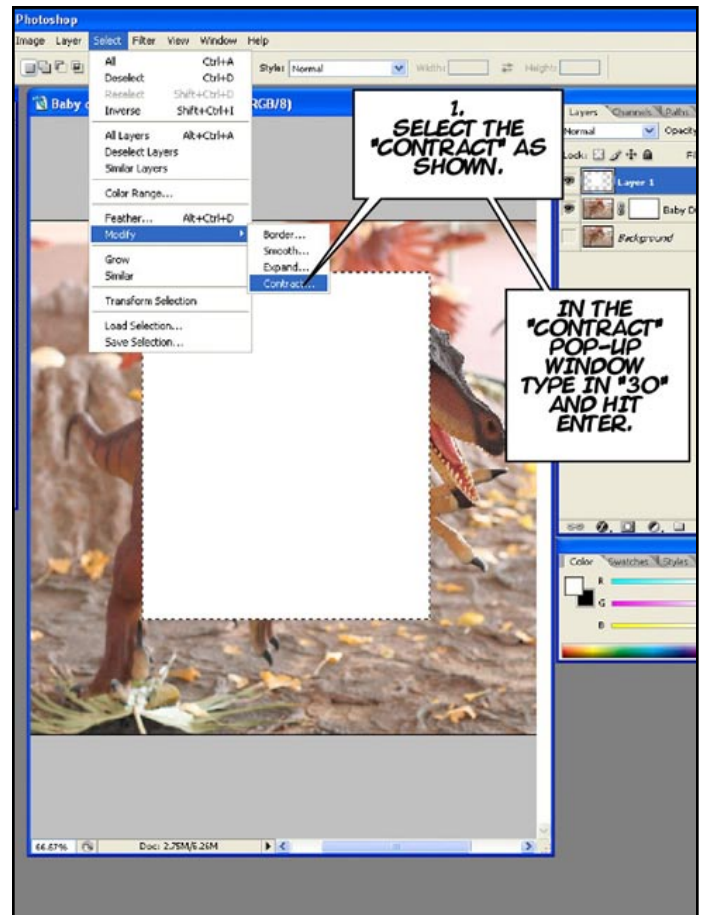
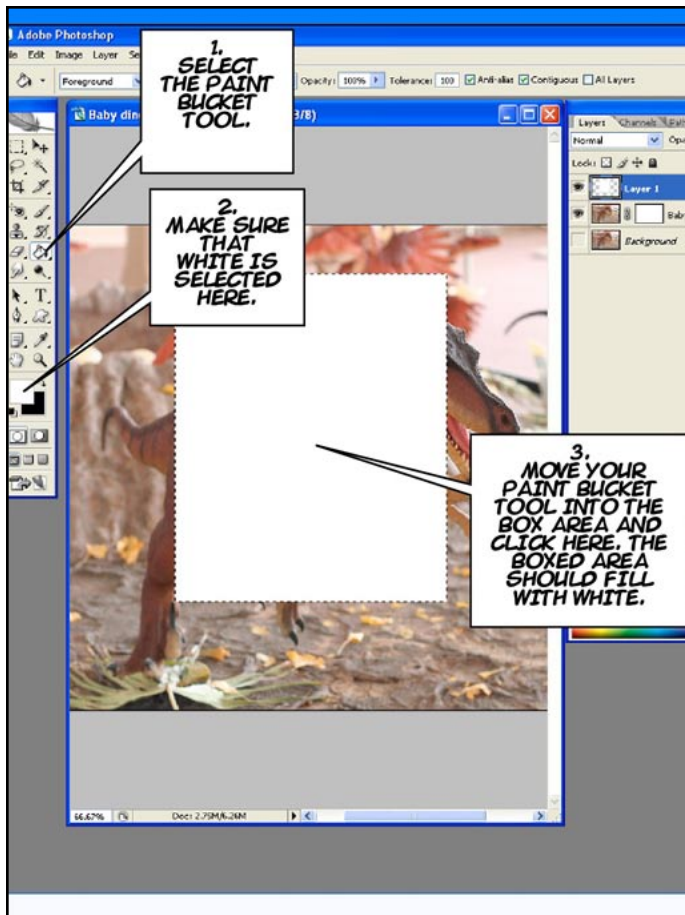
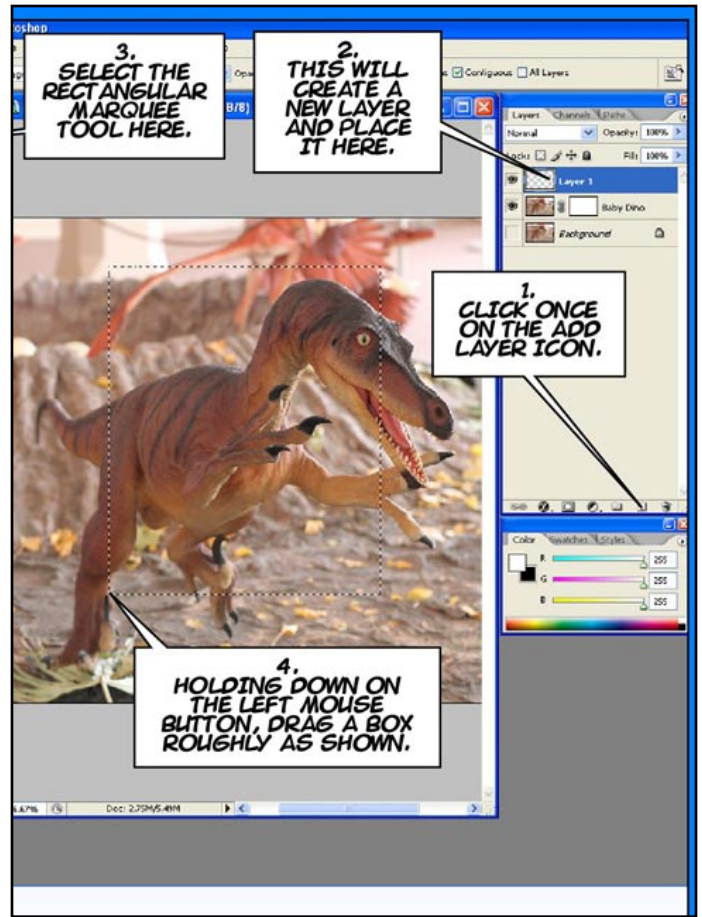
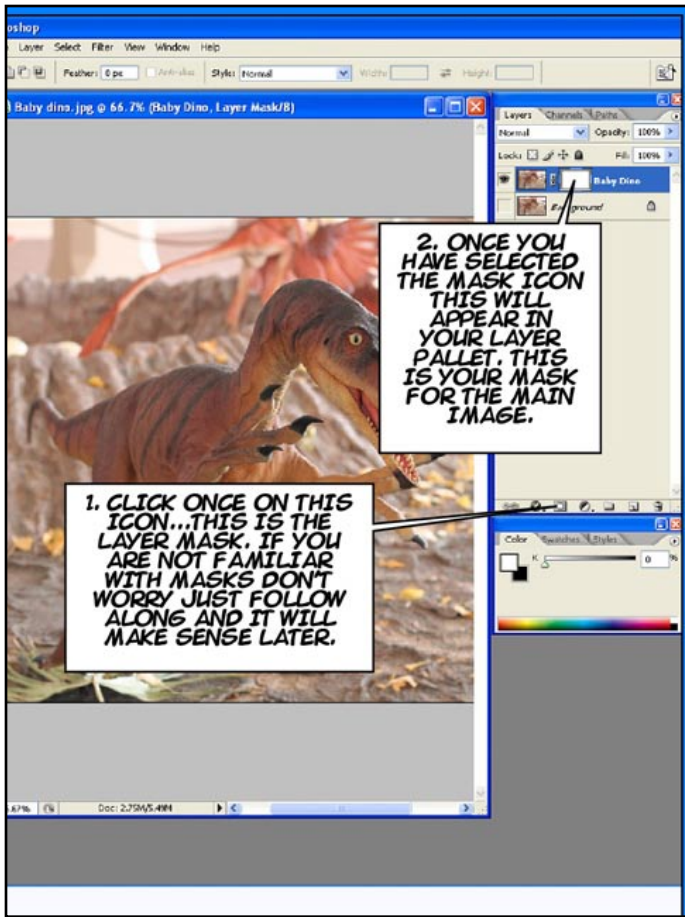
FIRST THOUGH, WHICH OF THE PHOTO'S BELOW DO YOU THINK WOULD MAKE FOR A SUITABLE OOB?

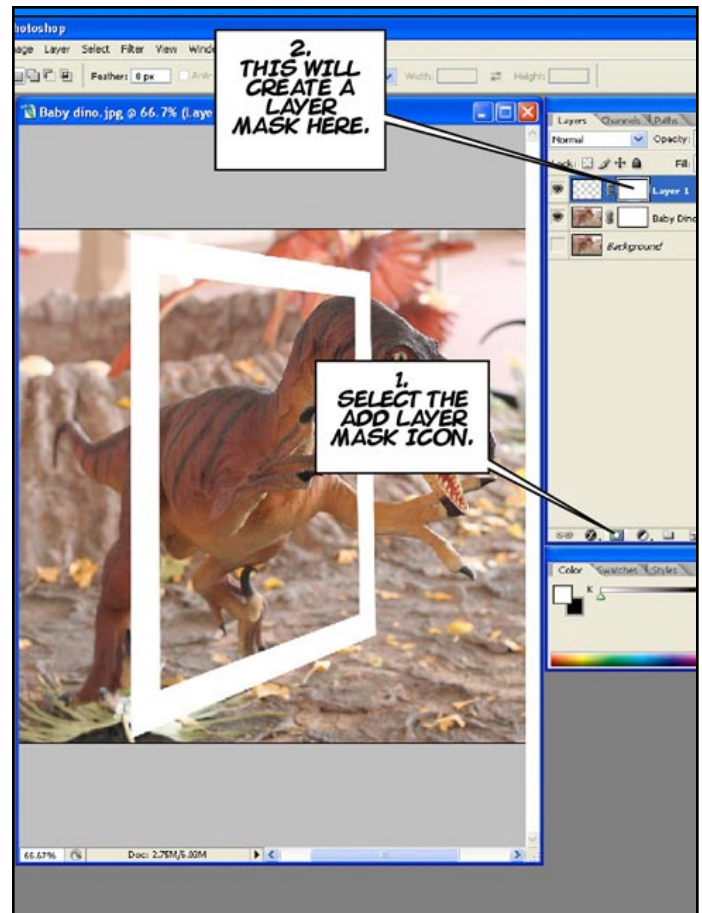
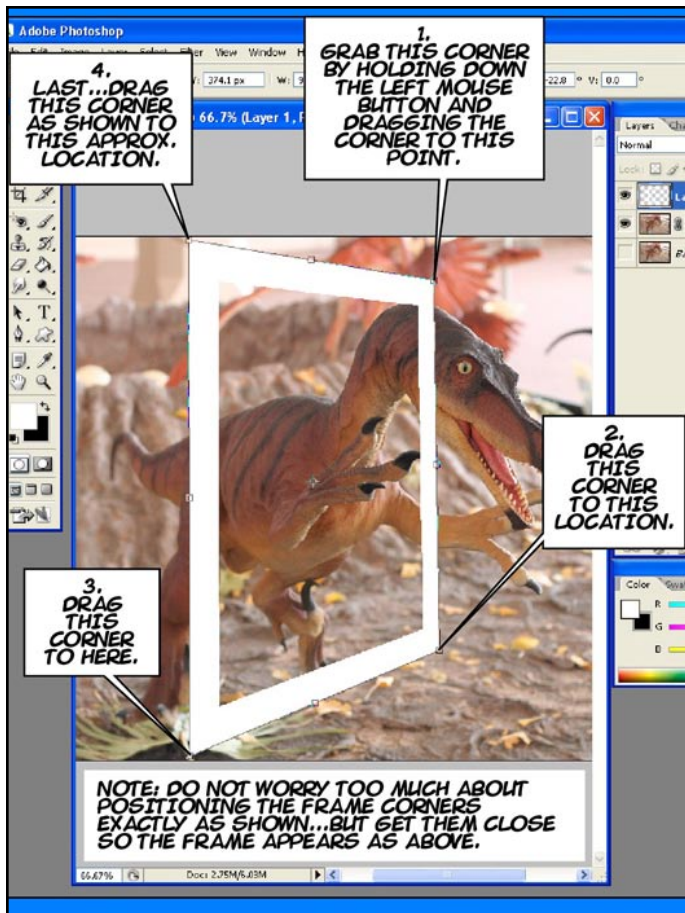
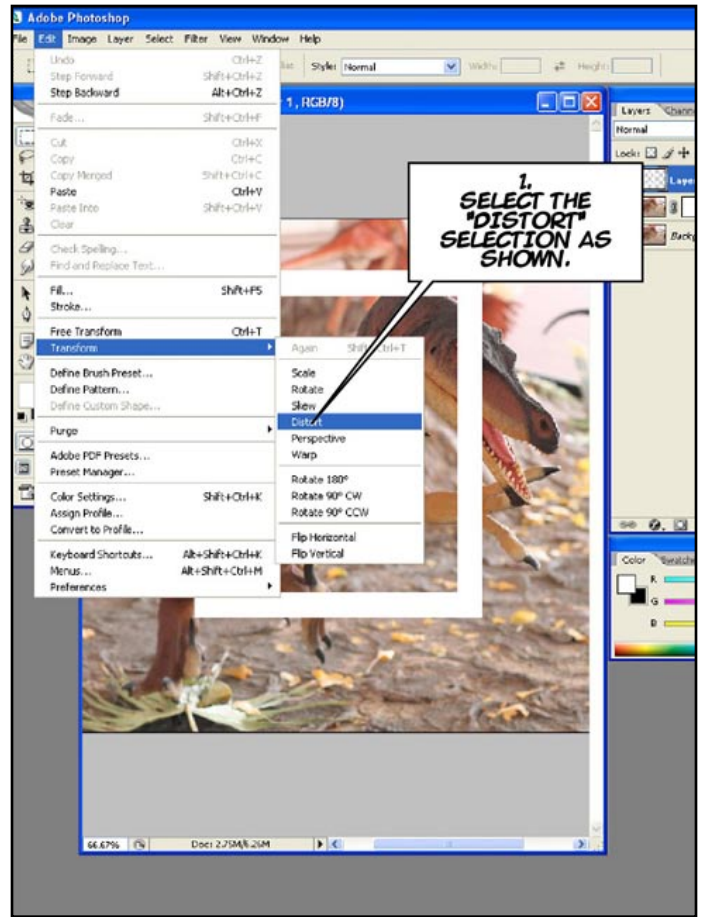
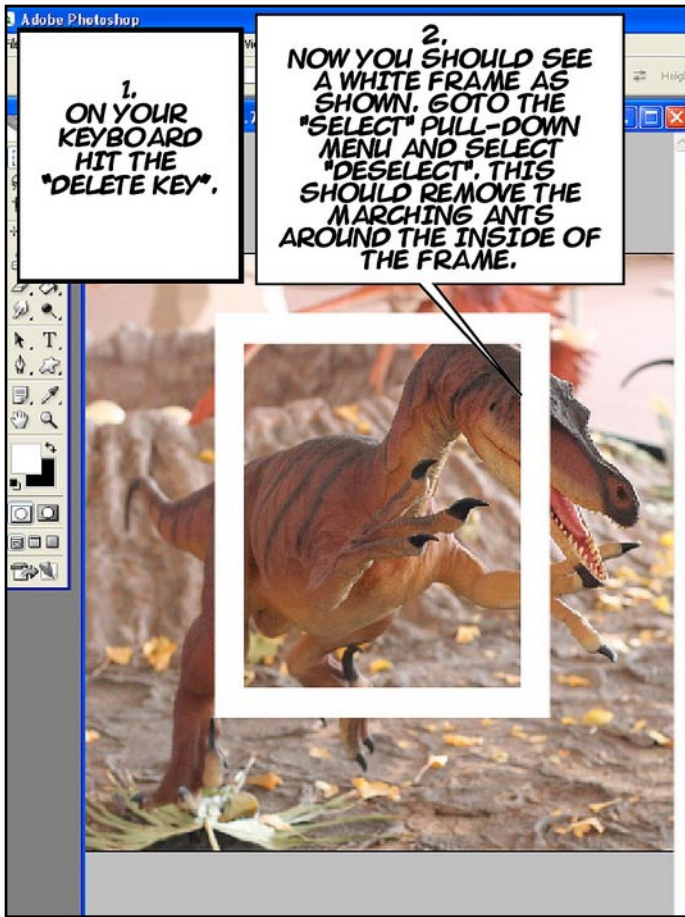


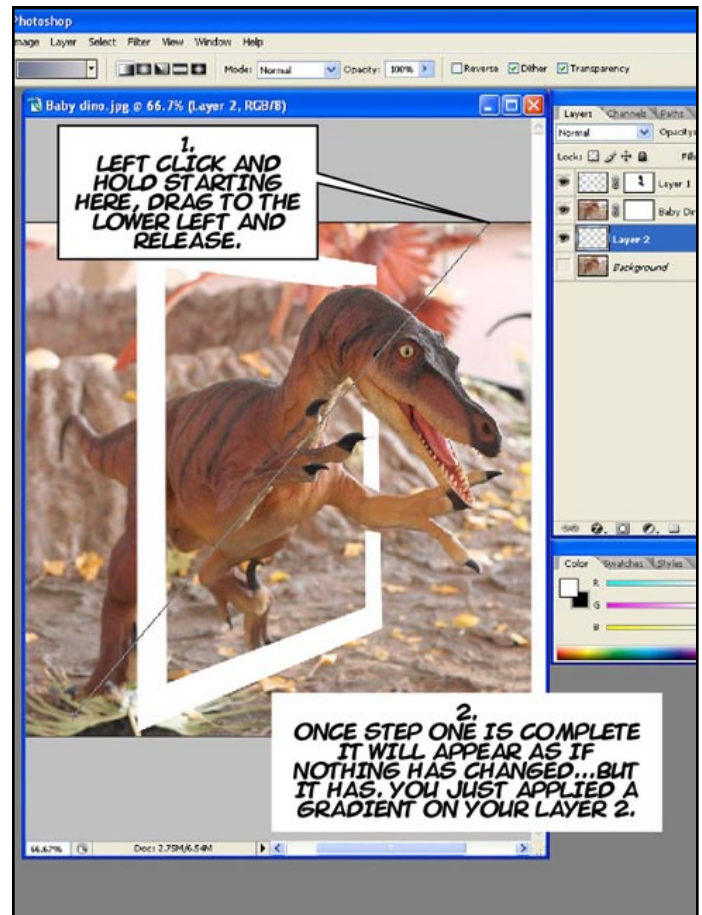
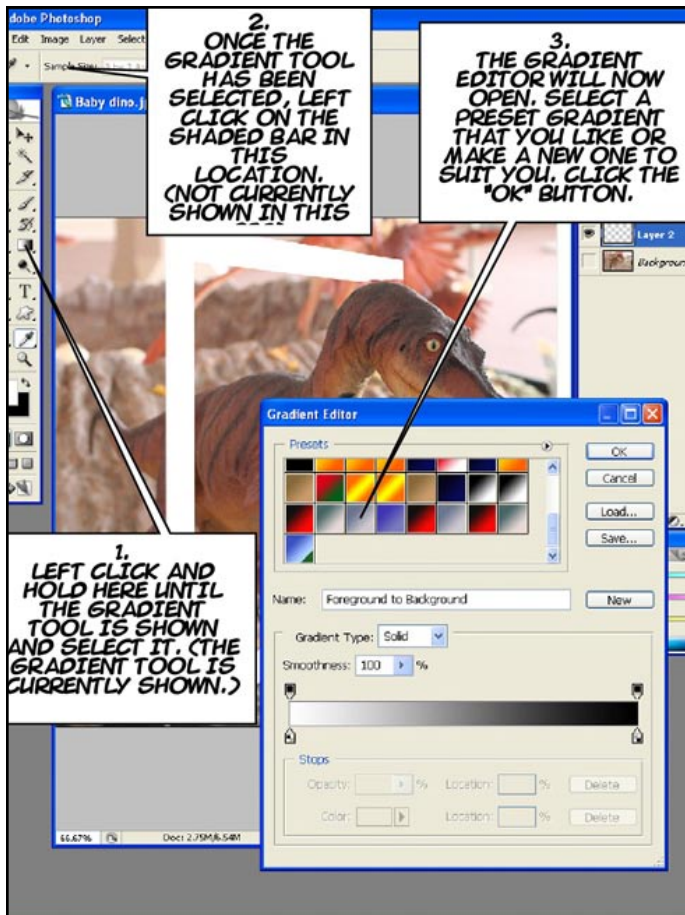
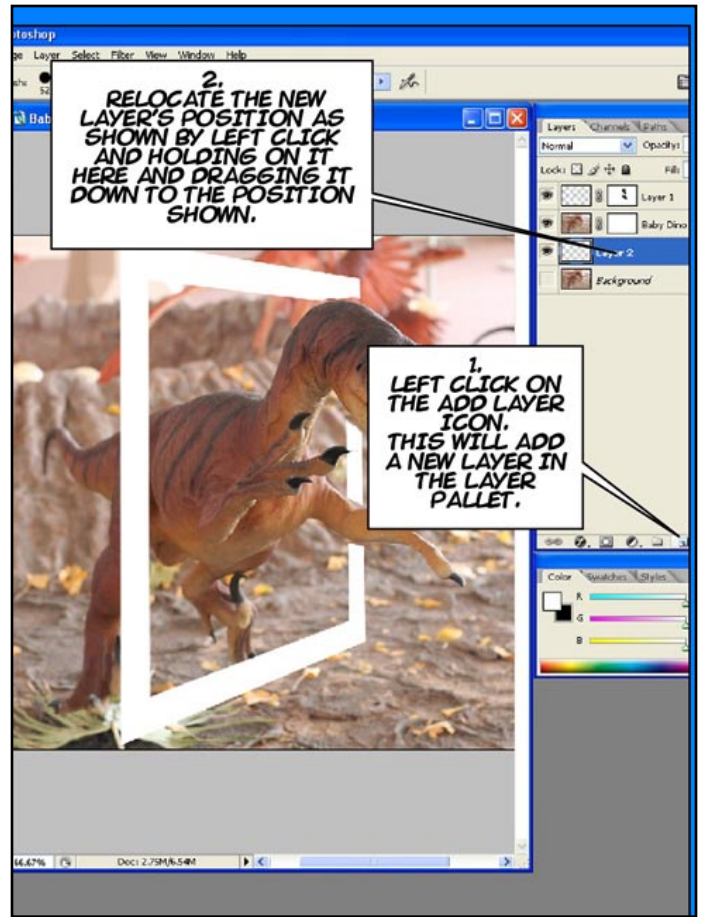
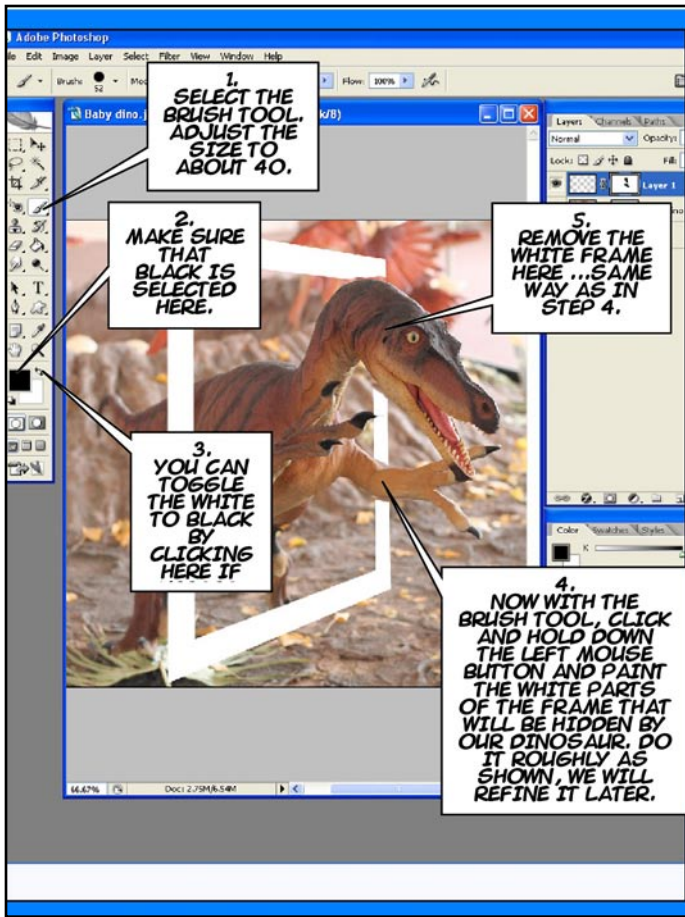
WELL TO BE HONEST JUST ABOUT ANY PHOTO CAN BE MADE INTO SOME TYPE OF OOB. THERE ARE PHOTO'S THAT WILL NATURALLY BE MUCH EASIER TO CREATE THE EFFECT, OTHERS WILL TAKE MUCH MORE THOUGHT AND MANIPULATION. THE KEY HERE IS TO PICK A PHOTO THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO THE OOB REALM WHEN BEGINNING WITH OOB'S.

FOR THIS TUTORIAL I AM GOING WITH THIS PHOTO. IT HAS SEVERAL ASPECTS THAT LEND TO IT TO OOB'ING.









2. SELECT A BRUSH HERE AND SIZE IT TO AROUND 50.

1. LEFT CLICK ONCE HERE ON THE LAYER MASK FOR THE MAIN IMAGE.

TOGGLE WHITE TO BLACK

3. AGAIN MAKE SURE THE BLACK COLOR IS SELECTED AS SHOWN AND BEGIN PAINTING AWAY THE MAIN IMAGE AS SHOWN. PAINT AWAY EVERYTHING OUTSIDE THE WHITE FRAME EXCEPT THE ARM AND HEAD OF OUR DINOSAUR. SEE NOTE.

NOTE: IF YOU PAINT AWAY SOMETHING YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE...NO PROBLEM JUST TOGGLE THE BLACK TO WHITE. WHITE WILL PAINT THE IMAGE BACK. (BLACK = REMOVE AND WHITE = BRING BACK.)

2. CLICK HERE TO TOGGLE FROM THE BLACK TO THE WHITE AND PAINT OVER THE REMOVED AREA TO REGAIN IT BACK!

1. OOPS...REMOVED SOMETHING YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE...EASY TO FIX...

3. TOGGLE BACK TO THE BLACK AND FINISH THE REMOVAL OF THE IMAGE OUTSIDE THE FRAME WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE DINO ARM AND HEAD. BE SURE TO ZOOM IN CLOSE TO REMOVE BACKGROUND AND NOT DINO PARTS OUTSIDE THE FRAME. USE SMALLER BRUSH SIZE AS WELL FOR TIGHT AREA'S.

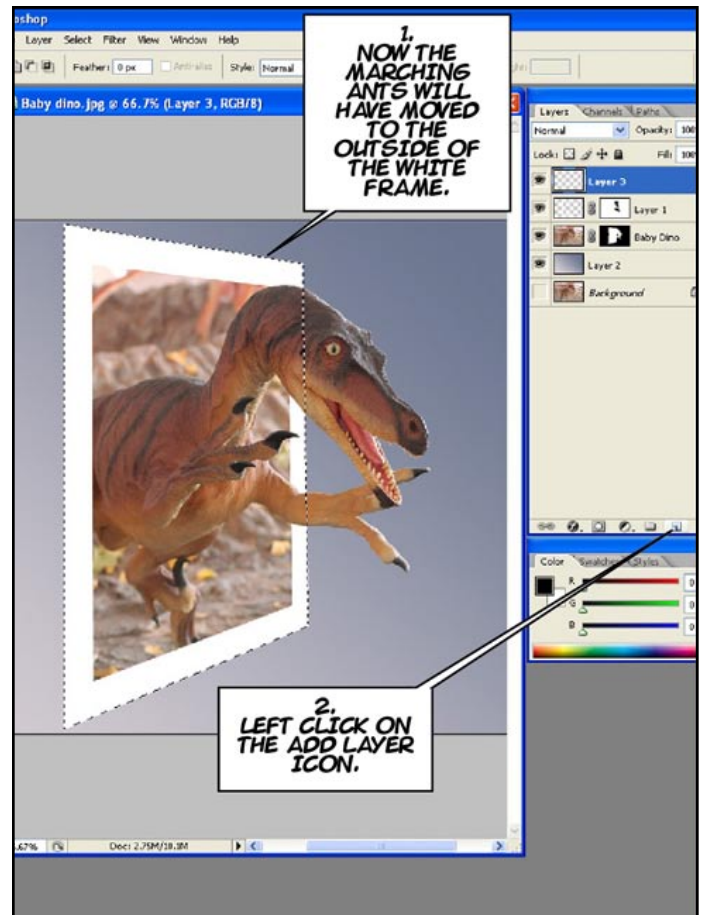
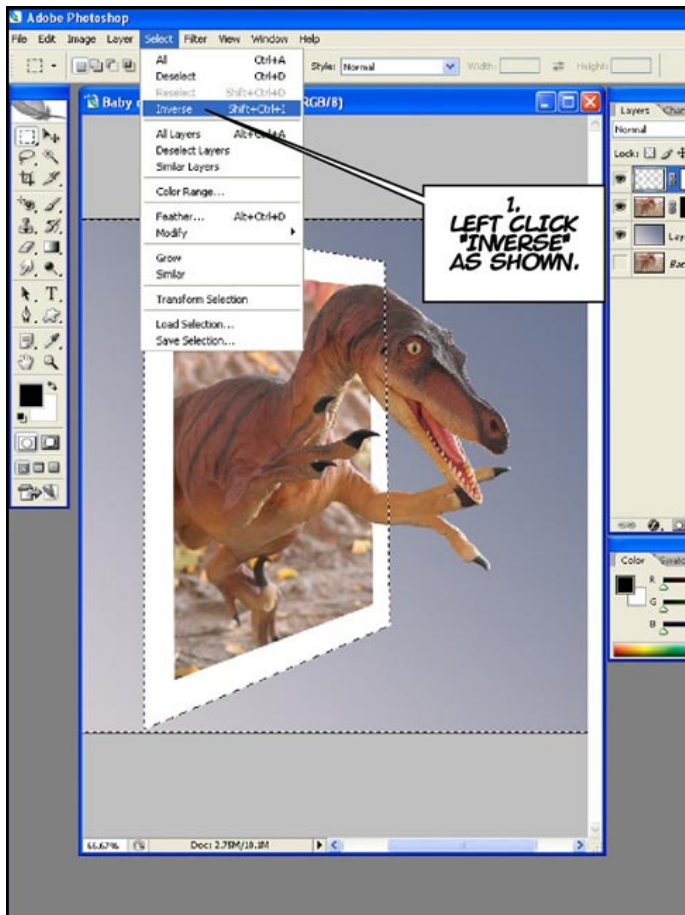
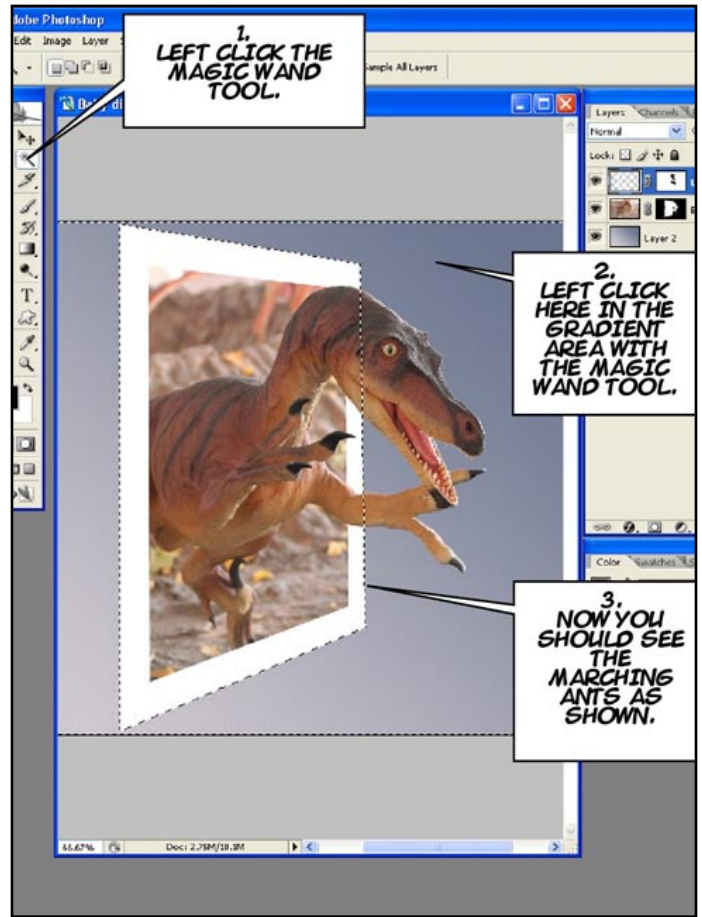
1. YOUR DINO SHOULD NOW LOOK SIMILAR TO THIS AT THIS POINT. NEXT WE WILL FINISH OUR FRAME THAT WE ROUGHED IN EARLIER.

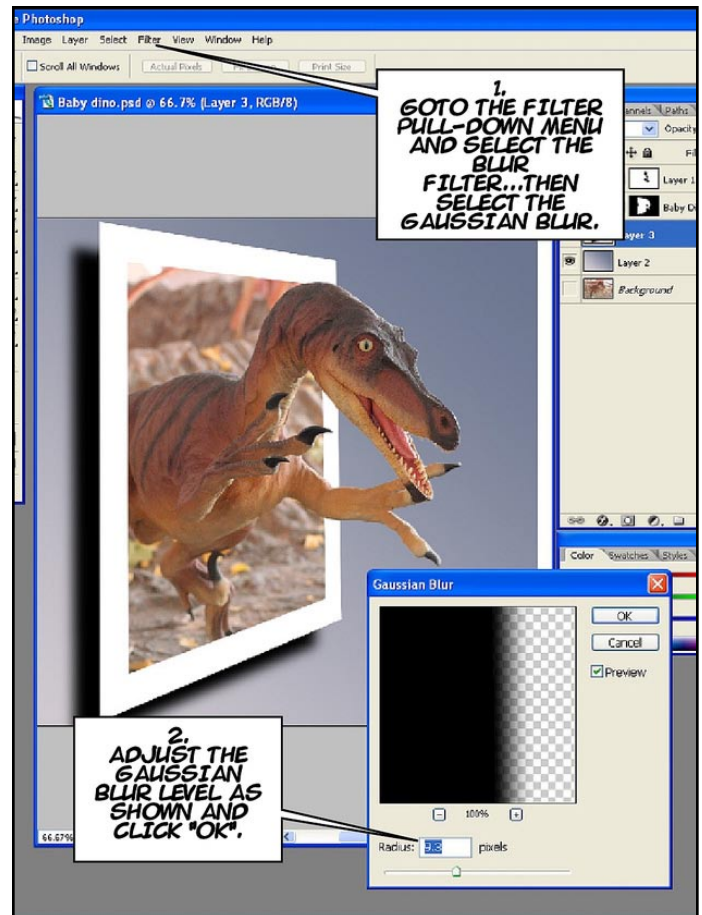
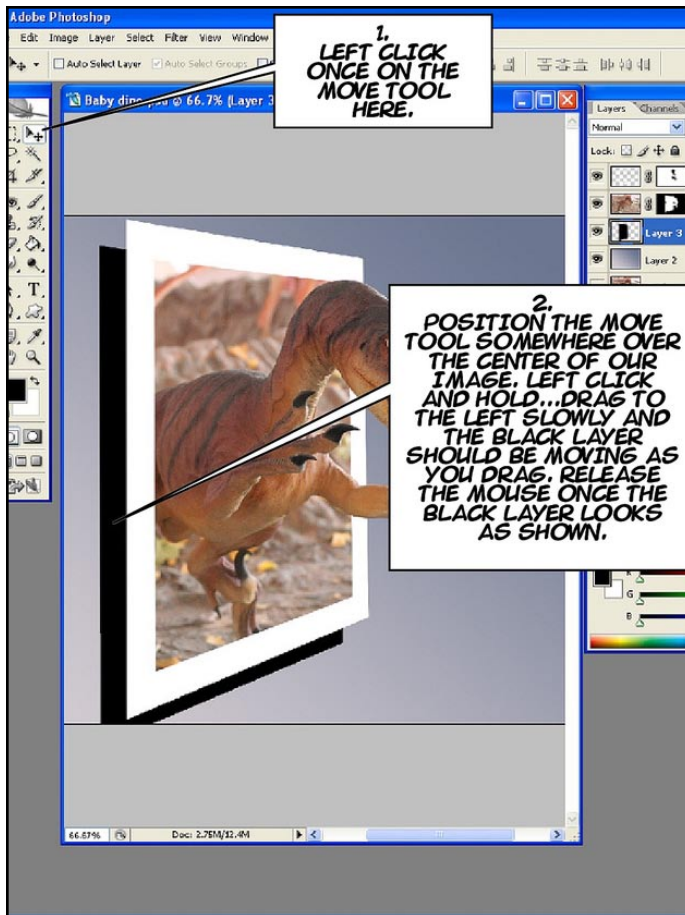
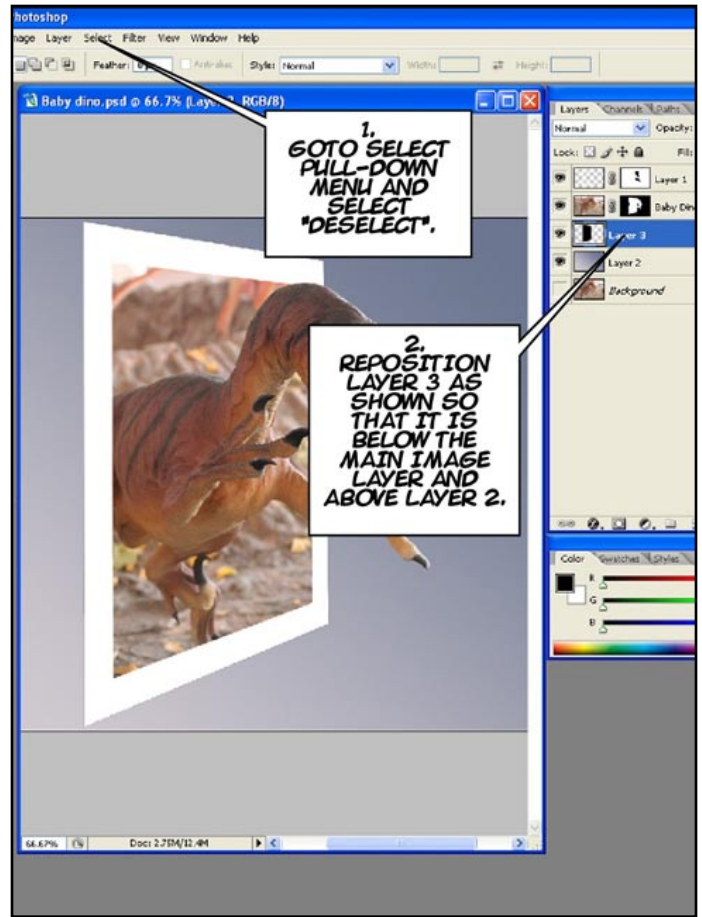
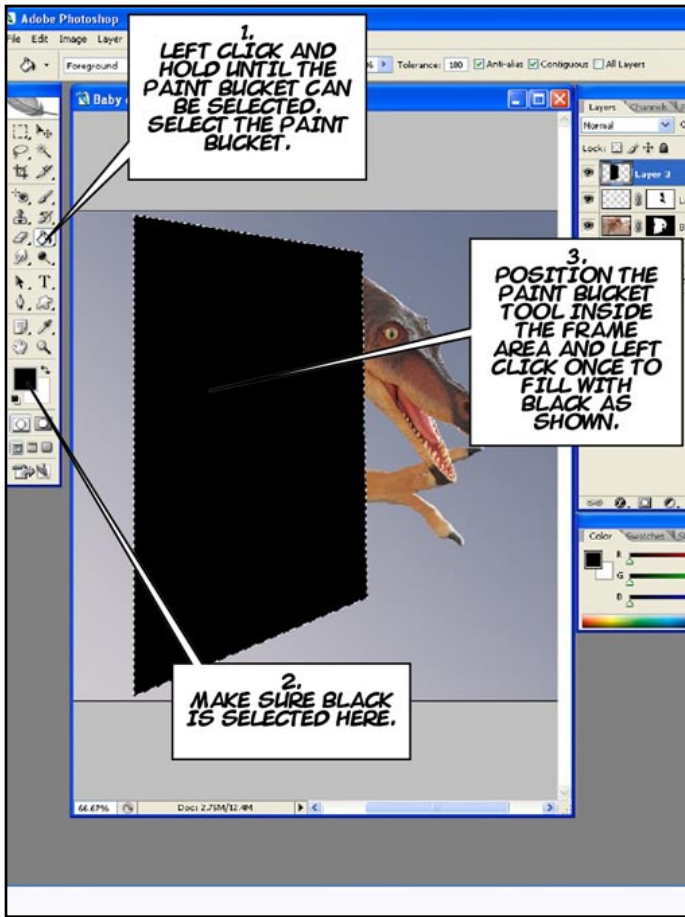
3. BRUSH TOOL SHOULD STILL BE SELECTED,

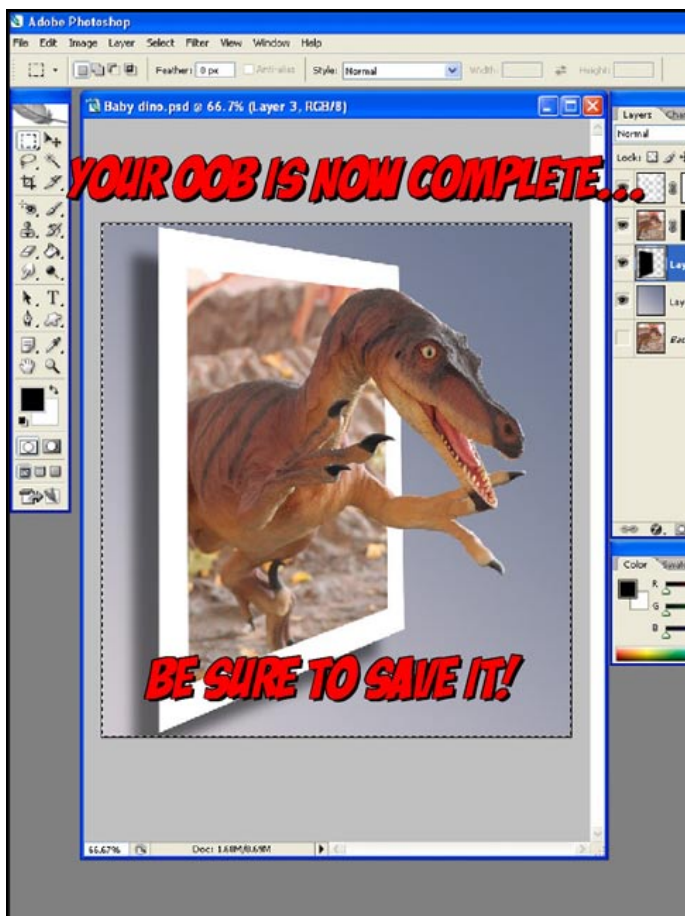
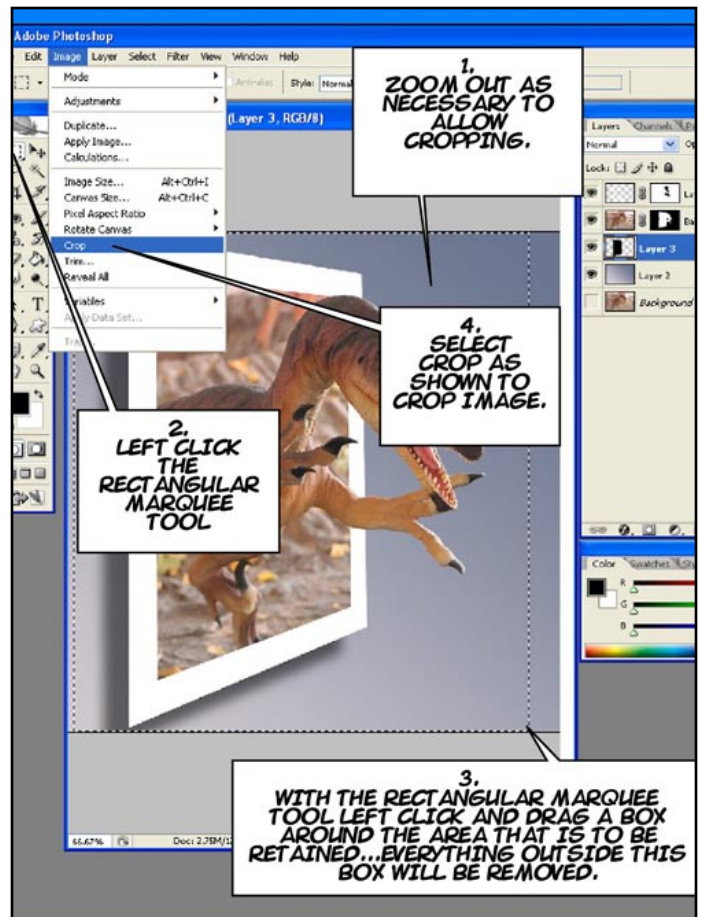
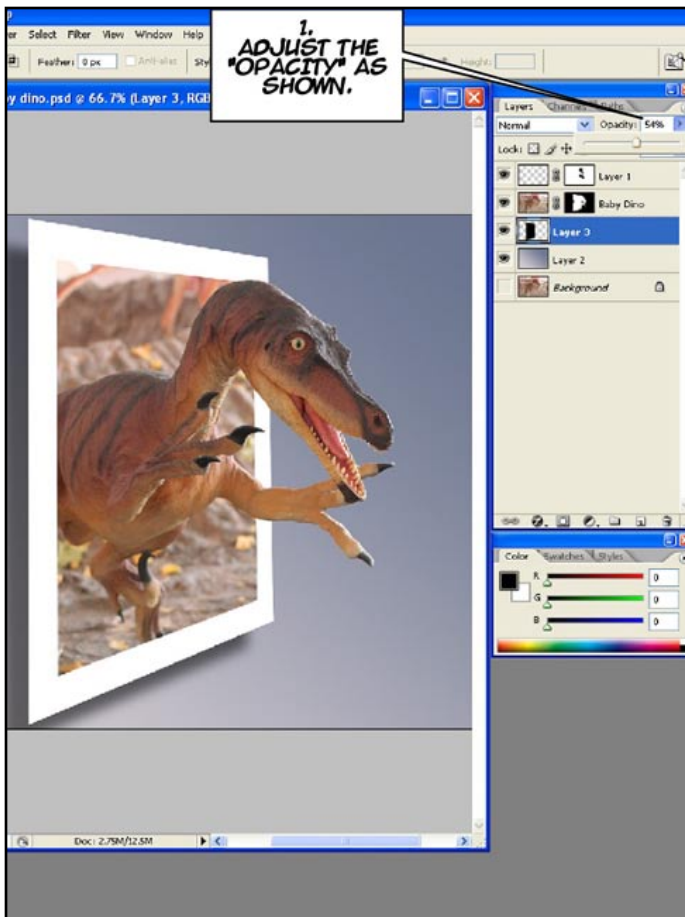
4. BEGIN TO PAINT BACK IN THE WHITE FRAME UP TO THE DINO'S HEAD AND ARM CAREFULLY.

1. LEFT CLICK HERE TO ACTIVATE THE FRAME MASK.

2. TOGGLE TO WHITE BY LEFT CLICKING HERE.







A Final Word From PhotographyBB

What a great effect; it's actually quite easy to achieve! We hope you've enjoyed this tutorial, and can now produce some fantastic and creative OOB images of your own. Feel free to show off some of your creations in the PhotographyBB Online Forums!

<http://www.photographybb.com/forum>

If you would like to learn more about this technique or see some more advanced examples from Fred McWilson, check out his Flickr OOB Page here:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/serrator/sets/72057594091393842/>

You can also download the full PDF for this tutorial, along with the second PDF for the more advanced "frame warping" tutorial at Fred's site here:

http://www.logicscape.com/oob_tutorials/

Have fun with your new technique!



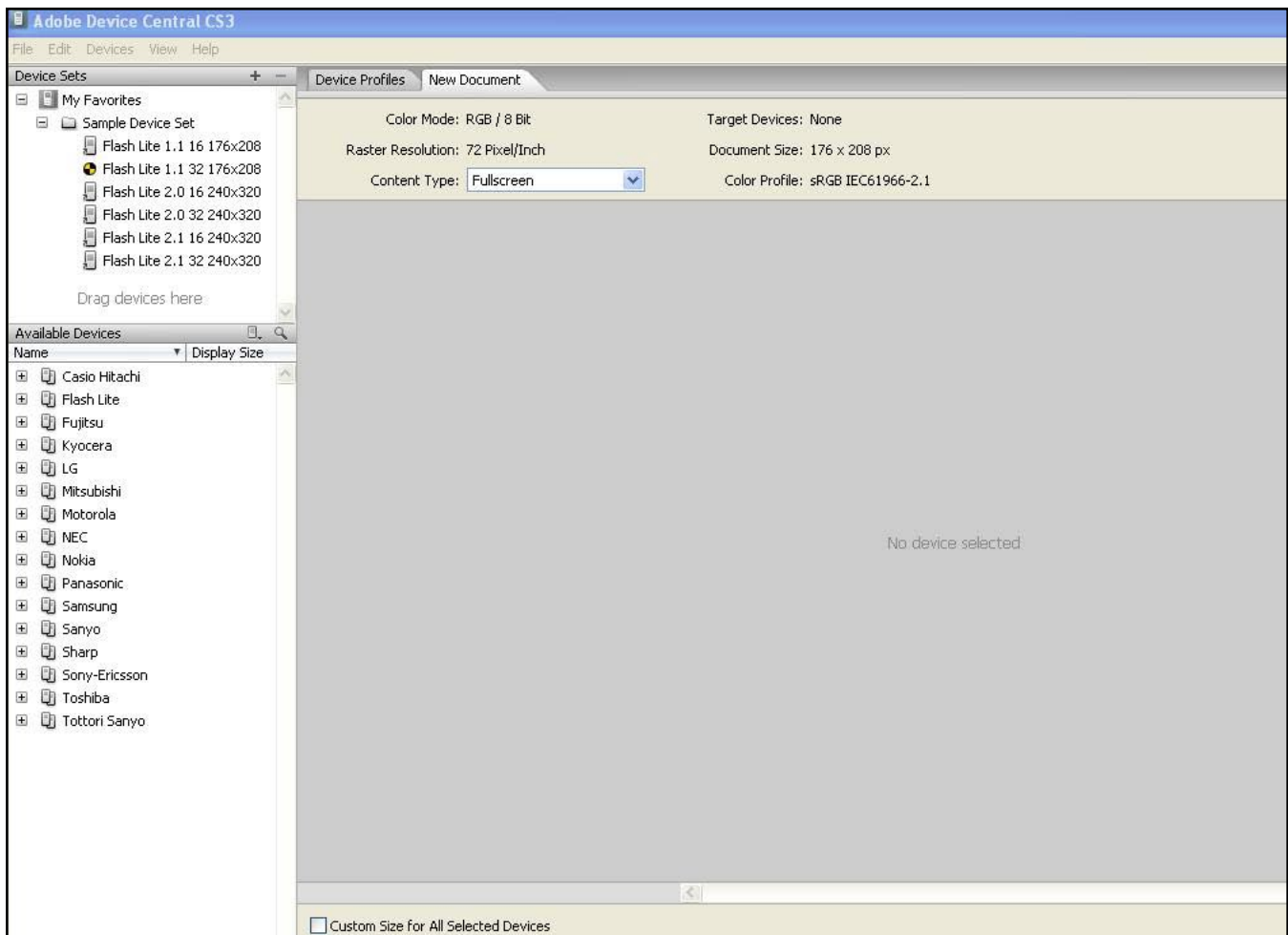
Adobe Device Central CS3

Perhaps one of the more overlooked packages in the CS3 software suite, Adobe Device Central CS3 enables you to create content for mobile devices such as wireless phones. This month, Victoria takes us through a tutorial on creating images optimized for wireless devices.

HOW TO OPTIMIZE AND CREATE IMAGES FOR YOUR MOBILE PHONE - By Victoria Sargsyan

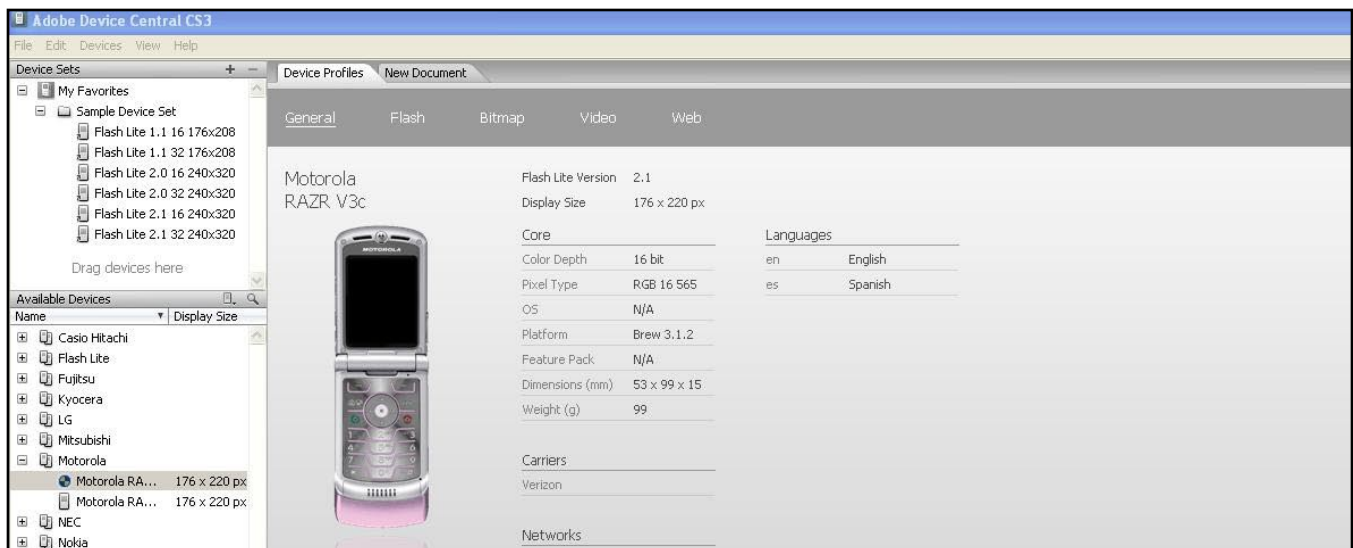
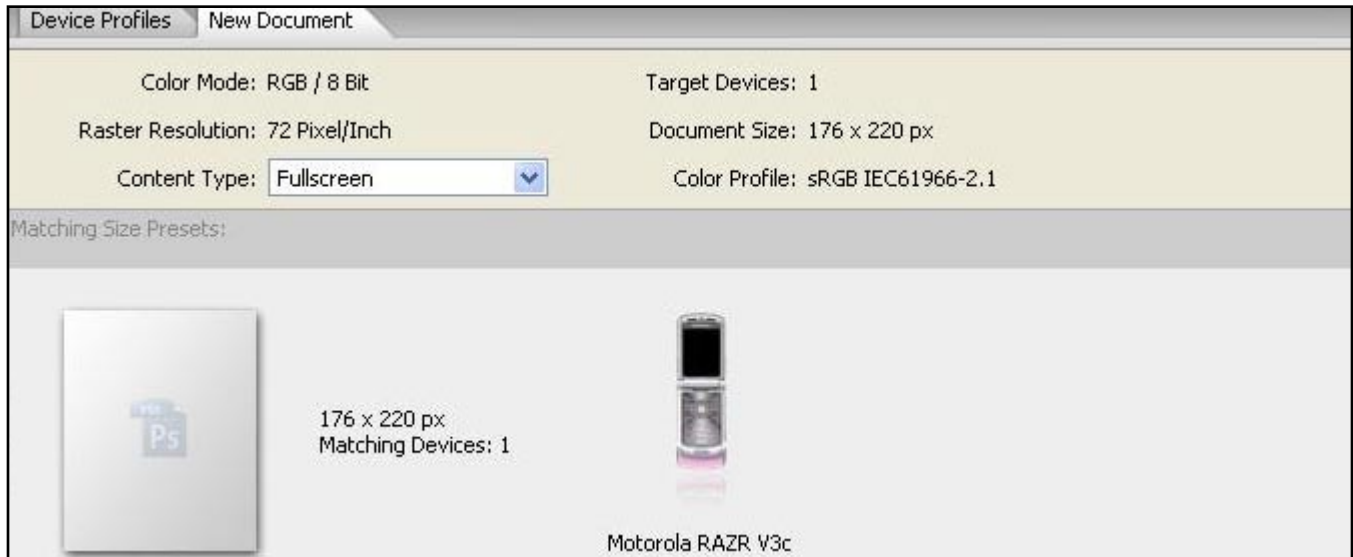
You may or may not have heard about Adobe Device Central CS3 before, and maybe you've never used it. Adobe Device Central CS3 helps professionals and mobile content developers to develop compelling and innovating content for mobile devices, including images, and Flash content. This month, I am going to show you how to optimize images for your mobile device, which can be used as background wallpapers, or even mobile screensaver images, all based on your specific mobile device.

Step 1: Open Adobe Device Central CS3 and select "Photoshop File" from the available choices. You'll see a list of compatible devices down the left side of the screen.

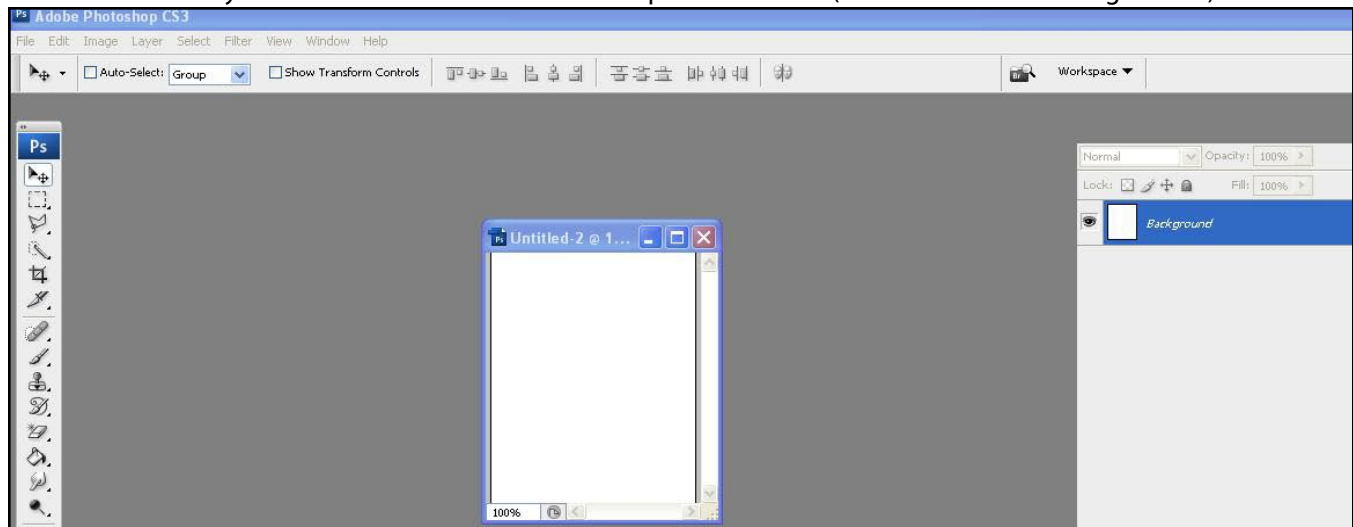


Step 2: Choose your device. For this example, I chose the Motorola V3 RAZR.

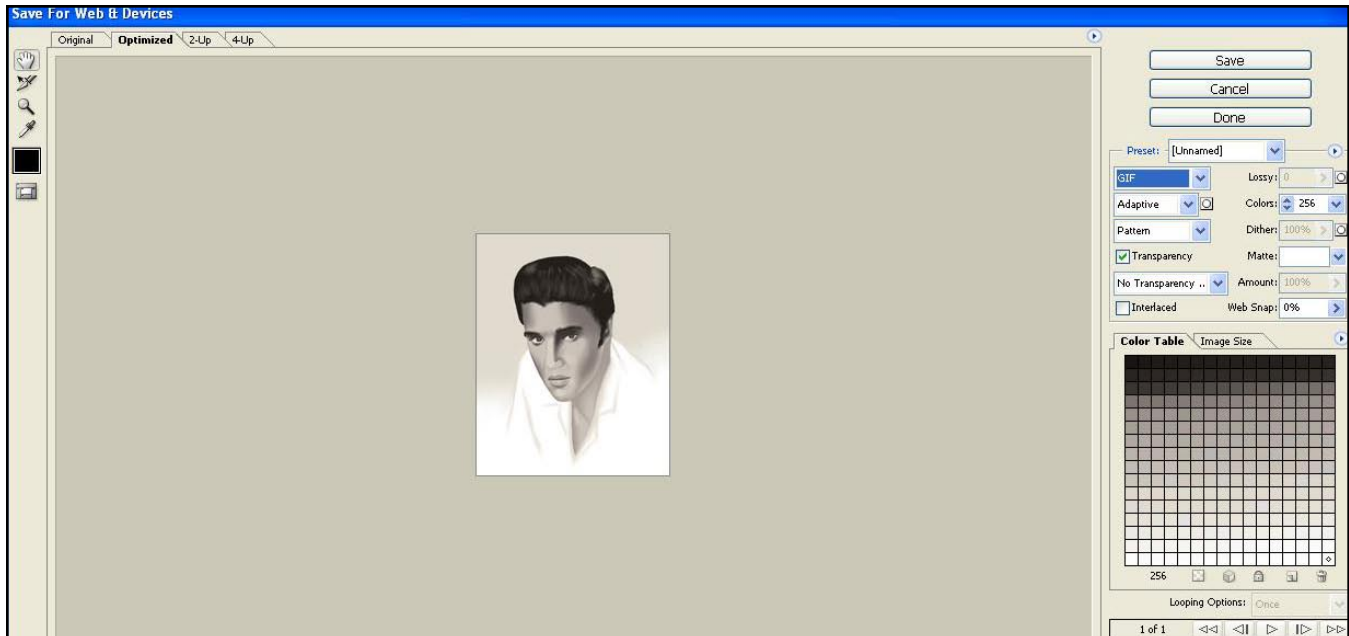
Note: If you click on the Device Profiles tab, you can view the details for your device, including screen size, etc...



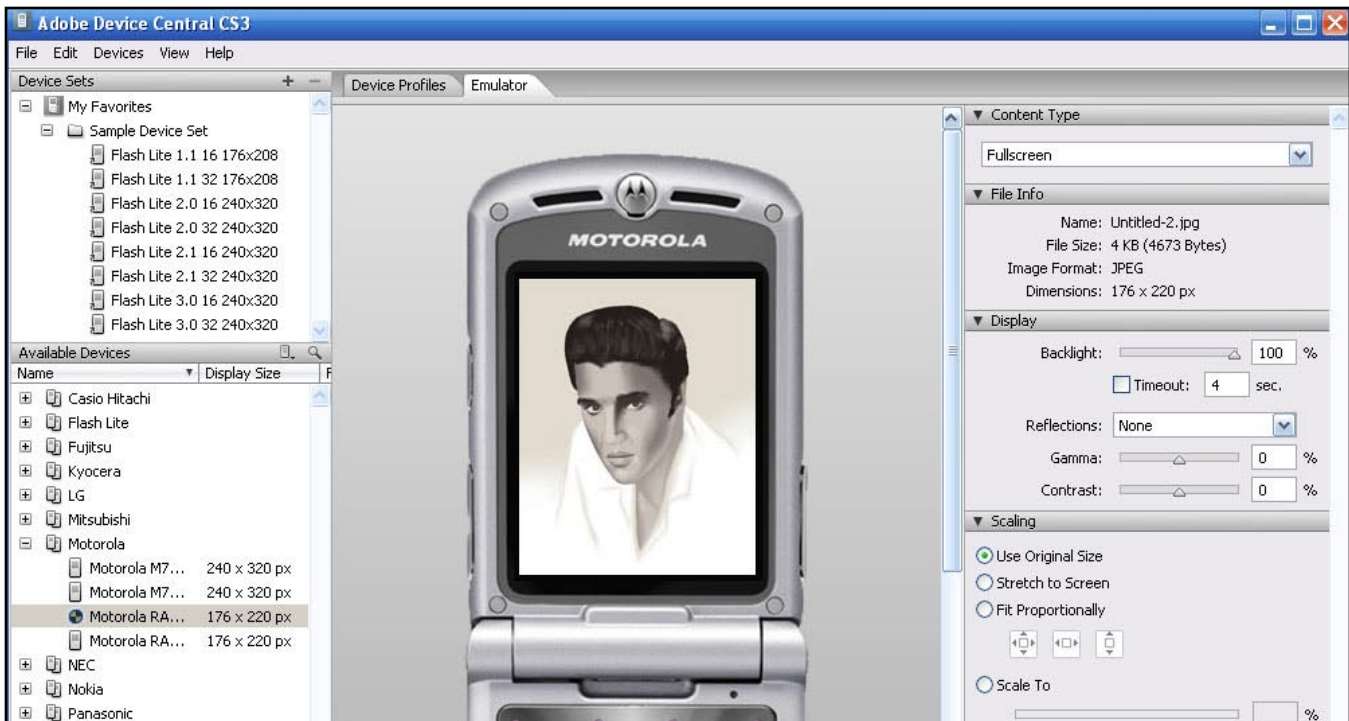
Step 3: Click the "Create" button at the bottom right, and a new document will open in Photoshop CS3, sized as per the dimensions of your device's screen size. I created a portrait of Elvis (I think he's the best singer ever!).



Step 4: Create your image in Photoshop (or open a picture which you would like to use). Once your image is complete, go to the menu: File>Save For Web & Devices... From this point, you can save your “optimized” image.



Side Note: In the previous step, if you click on the button “Device Central” in the bottom right corner of the “Save for Web & Devices dialog box, you will see a preview of your image on the mobile device, back in Adobe Device Central. Here, you can also set different parameters for your device, such as backlighting strength, gamma, contrast, etc...



From this point, you can now upload your saved file to your mobile device. It's that easy!

About the Author: Victoria Sargsyan is a member of NAPP (National Association of Photoshop Professionals) and is a talented graphic artist and web designer with over 15 years professional experience. To see more from Victoria, visit her website where you can check out her galleries and additional tutorials at:

<http://www.viktoriyaiimage.com>



Digital Scrapbooking

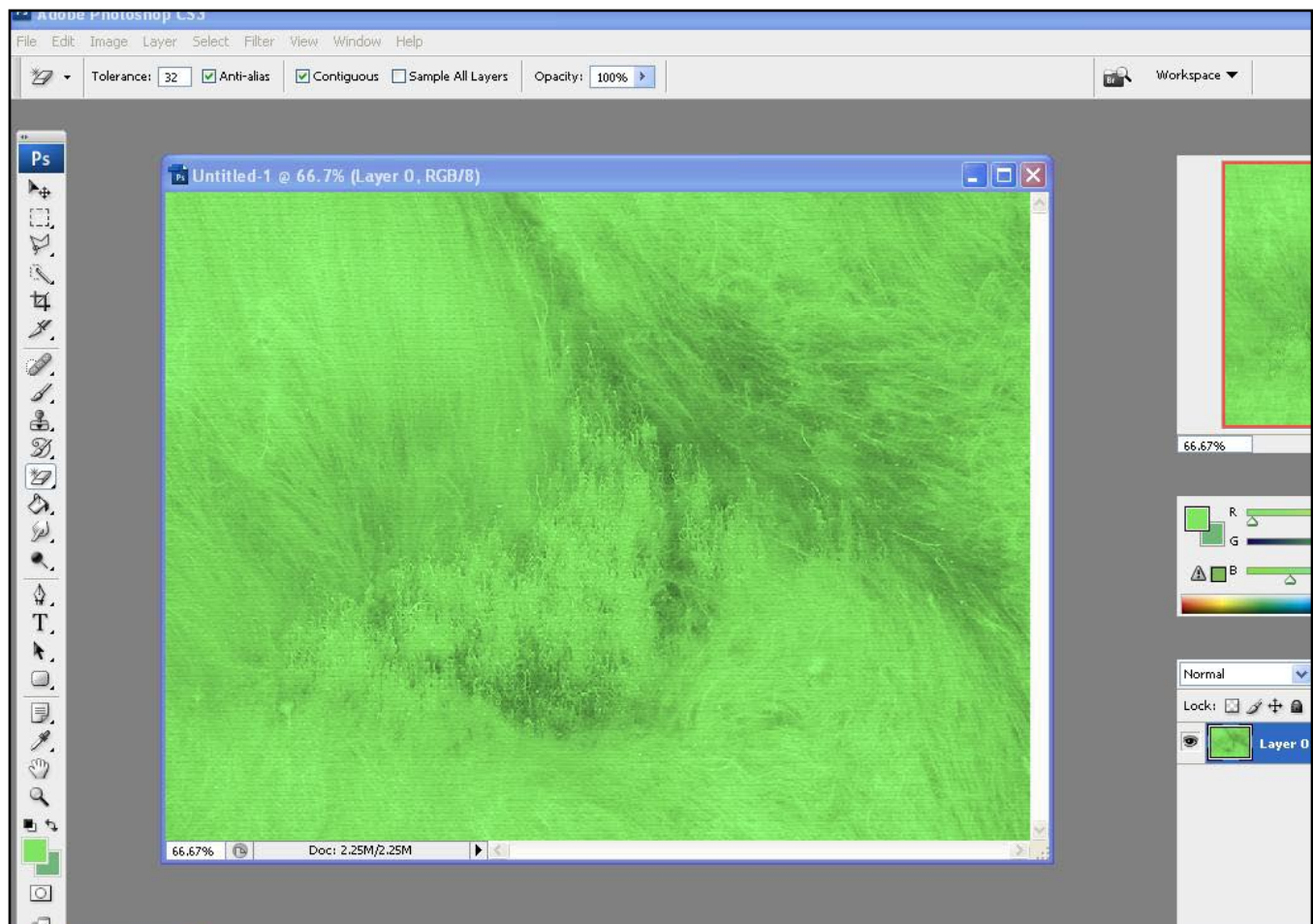
Through our first two issues, Victoria has given us some useful tips for creating scrapbook layouts for your photos. In this month's issue, Victoria brings it to a new level by showing us a digital scrapbooking technique: How to make a photo album... Digital Style!

CREATING AN ANIMATED DIGITAL PHOTO ALBUM - By Victoria Sargsyan

We've seen some cool scrapbooking techniques that are useful not only for online galleries, but also for print. This month, I am going to show you a technique using Photoshop CS3's Animation Palette, to create an animated digital photo album which you can use in your online gallery or email to your family and friends. The end result produces a cool looking album page, where the images automatically load, one after the other!

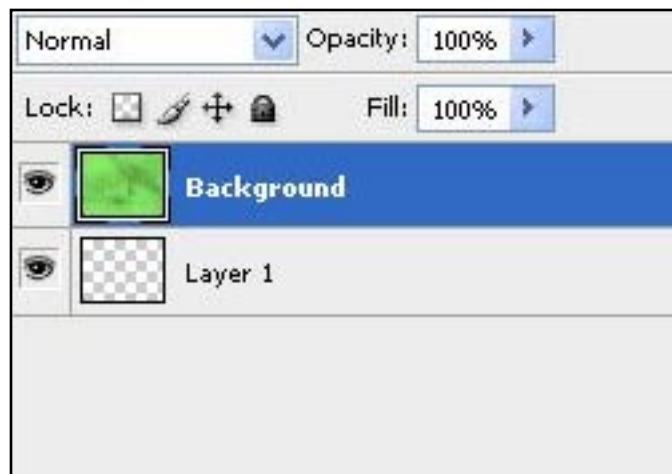
Step 1: Create a new document in Photoshop CS3. In this example, I made a new document at: 1024x768 px 72dpi

Step 2: Create any background you would like, or open a background texture to use as your background. Here I used a nice green background with bright colors for spring.



Step 3: Double click on the background layer in the layers palette, and rename it to something else, because we are going to add a new layer underneath this layer in a moment. If you double click the background layer in the layers palette, the default renaming will be "Layer 0" which you can use for now.

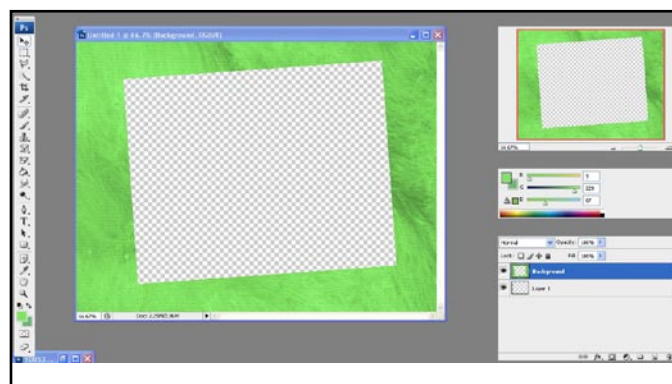
After you have done this, create a new layer, and move it under your background image layer. You can also do this by using a shortcut: While holding Control (PC) or Command (Mac) click on the new layer icon in the layers palette, and your new layer will appear under your active layer. Once this new layer appears, I renamed my original background layer to "Background" again. Your layers palette should now look like this:



Step 4:

Click on the Background layer to make sure it is active, as shown above in the layers palette. With this layer active, use the rectangular marquee tool to make a selection area. This is where your photos are going to show through, so make your selection a decent size for a photo.

Go to the menu: Select>Transform Selection and rotate your selection area slightly. Now press Delete to delete the area of your background texture/image. Now press Control-D (PC) or Command-D (Mac) to deselect.

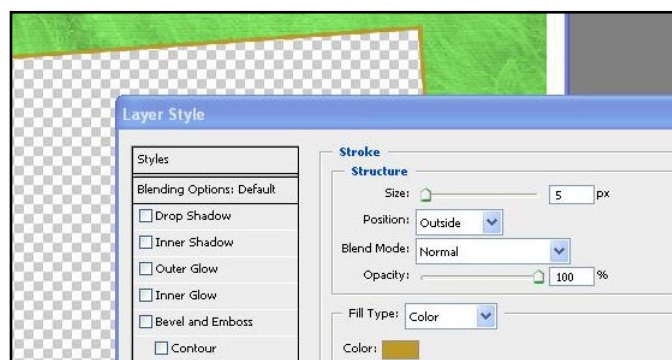


Step 5:

To add a little touch of style, go to the menu: Layer>Layer Style>Stroke... to add a border around the area you just deleted.

I used a setting of 5px for the border stroke thickness, and I chose an orange-ish color for the stroke color.

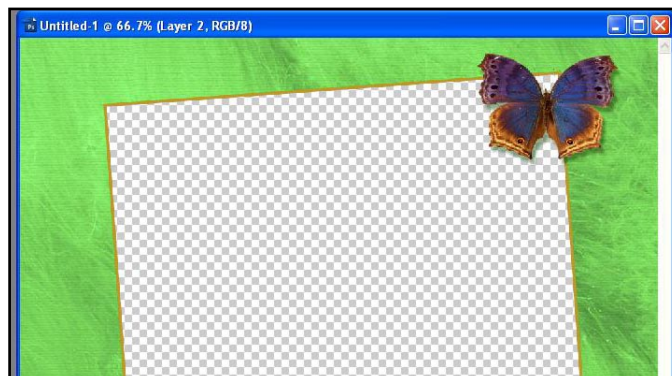
Choose any color or stroke thickness you would like, just make sure the Position is set to Outside, and Blend Mode is set to Normal.



Step 6:

I also added an little extra by adding an image of a butterfly on a new layer, on top of my other layers, to add to my spring theme.

Try adding your own style of image, such as a flower, butterfly, or anything suitable to the theme of your photo album!

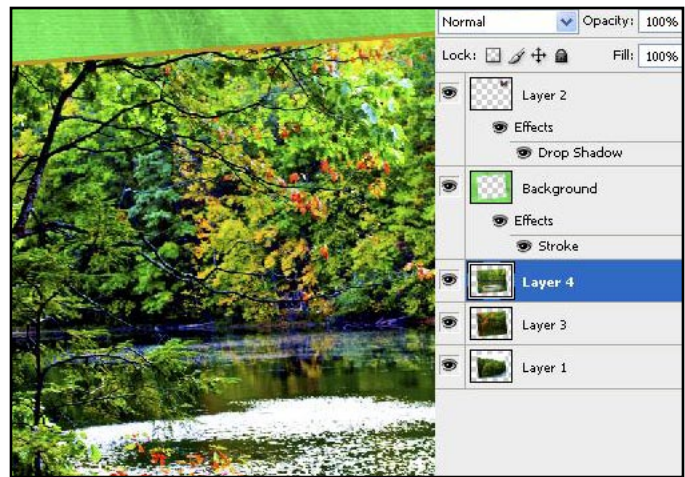


Step 7:

Click on the bottom layer "Layer 1" in your layers palette to make it the active layer. Now simply start dragging in the photos that you would like to use for your album.

For each image that you drag into this file, you can use the Transform Tool by pressing Control-T (PC) or Command-T (Mac) to resize and rotate your images to fit the frame as you like.

Make sure each image that you add to this file, is on a separate layer, and that they are all under the background layer. See my example: Layers 1, 3, and 4



Step 8:

Hide all of your "picture" layers, except for the bottom one. You can hide them by clicking on the Layer visibility icon (the little eyeball icon next to each layer in the layers palette).

See my example here, of how my frame layer, and only my first image (the bottom layer) are visible.

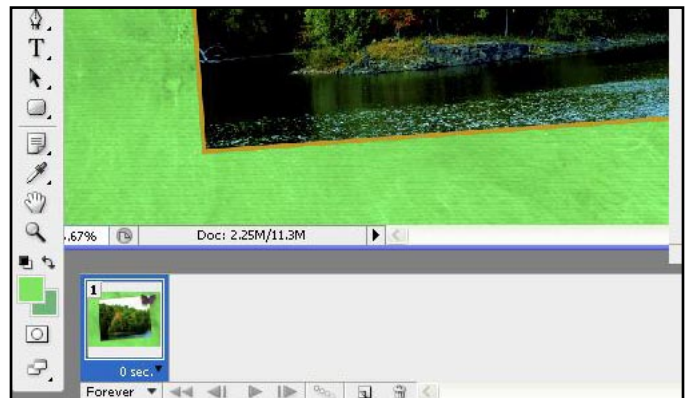


Step 9:

Now it's time to bring up the Animation Palette.

Go to the menu: Window>Animation

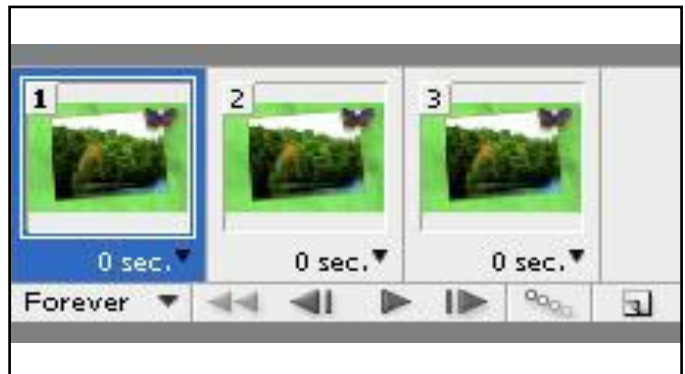
You'll see a new window pop up, at the bottom of your image. This indicates the "frames" that your animation will be composed of.



Step 10:

Now, for each image that you have inserted into this file (on its own layer for each image), you'll want to make that many copies of "frames" in the animation palette.

To do this, click on the "Duplicate Selected Frames" icon at the bottom of the animation palette (the icon to the left of the trash can icon). Create a frame for each image that you have imported. For now, don't worry that they all look like your background image.

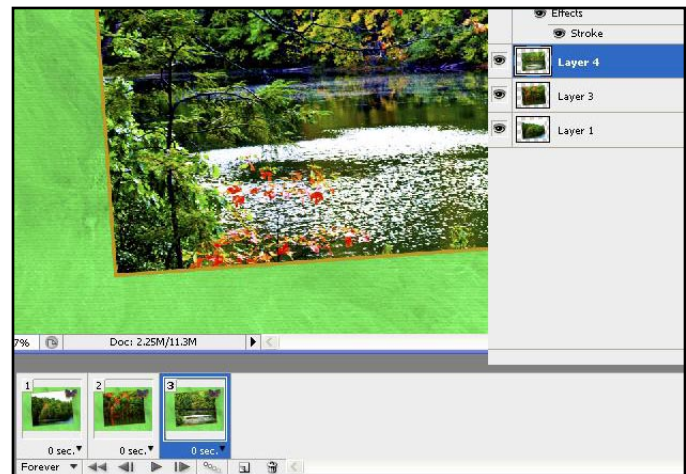


Step 11:

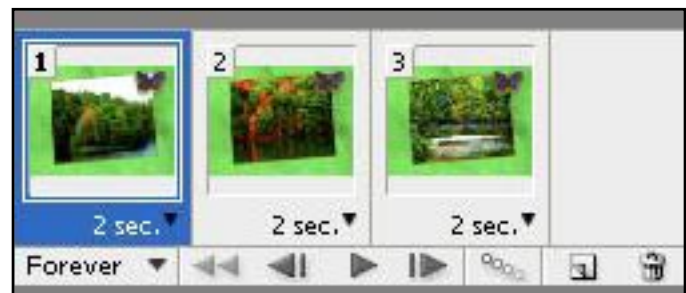
Click on the second frame in the animation palette, and now make your second image layer (Layer 3 in my example here) visible. Do this by clicking the eyeball icon in the layers palette for Layer 3, turning the visibility ON.

Now you'll see in your animation palette, your second frame contains a thumbnail of your second image in your stack of image layers.

Repeat this process for each frame and layer, until you have made visible all of your image layers, one per frame.

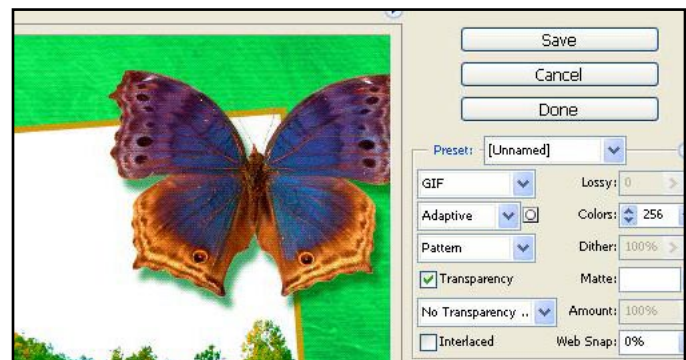
**Step 12:**

Select each frame by Shift-Clicking on them until each frame is highlighted, then on any of the frames, click on the little arrow where it says "0 sec" and choose a delay time in between frames of your digital album. This will set the delay time between pictures in your display. You can also select individual frames to make different delay lengths if you desire.

**Step 13:**

The last step is to save this digital album animation by going to File>Save For Web & Devices...

When the dialog box appears, make sure to save the file as a GIF image, otherwise the animation will not play, and you will only see the first frame. Once you have saved this image as a GIF, you're finished!

**Complete!**

You now have a very unique way to display or email photos to family and friends, in one file! Now they can sit back and see your whole album, automatically!

Animated GIF images will not display inside this magazine in PDF format, so if you would like to see a sample of the final image and animation, please click here:

[Digital Album Sample Image](#)

Have fun with this technique, post your albums on the forum for us to see, and enjoy!



Member in the Spotlight

Each month, we'll feature a "Spotlight" on one of our site's forum members and tell you a little bit about who they are, how they got started, what their photographic interests are, and display some of their work.

FEATURE ON MEMBER: Emmanuel Panagiotakis



2007

Emmanuel Panagiotakis

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PBB MAG: Emmanuel, thank you for joining us, it's great to have you here! Why don't we start by giving our readers a little introduction to yourself?

Hello PhotographyBB and readers! I am Emmanuel Panagiotakis. I was born in Greece, but I have been living in the United States for the last 20 years. I am pleased to say that besides working at my regular full-time job, I also work with our local tourism department and recreation center here, as a photographer professionally.

PBB MAG: What type of photographic equipment and software do you use? Do you have any favourite gear that you always bring with you on a shoot?

I currently use Canon camera equipment; I have a Canon Mark III, Canon 40D, and a variety of Canon lenses.

For my post processing, I like to use Adobe Photoshop CS3, HDRsoft's Photomatix for my HDR (High Dynamic Range) photography processing, Color Efex Pro plugins, and PT GUI as my panoramic photography stitching software.

As for the gear I like to bring to a shoot: I always bring my Mark III, 40D, Canon 24-70mm f/2.8, Canon 70-200mm f/2.8, Canon 15mm fisheye, Canon 500mm f/4.0, and Canon TS-E 24mm f/3.5 lenses. I also make sure to bring a set of Lee graduated filters, gray card,



2008

Emmanuel Panagiotakis

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emergency sensor cleaning kit, blower, and of course, a tripod.

PBB MAG: Emmanuel, your photos would indicate that you are quite experienced in photography! Do you remember what first got you interested in photography?

I have been interested in photography and image processing for most of my life. However, I can say that I didn't seriously pursue this interest until digital photography became more affordable. It was macro photography that first got me interested in digital. I had seen macro photos of flowers and insects in various books. I liked the look, and that made me interested in learning how to create these images. One thing led to another, and I began expanding to other forms of photography.

PBB MAG: Photographically, what's your favourite discipline? (I.e. landscapes, portraits, nature, etc...)

My favorite subjects are landscapes and wildlife. For landscapes, I enjoy any type of landscape photography, such as waterfalls, countrysapes, and cityscapes. I also like to capture the seasons, my favorite being autumn. Also, trying to capture the various moods of weather inspires me.

For my wildlife photography, I enjoy large animal photography, for example tigers and lions but I also enjoy other wildlife such as waterfowl. I usually go to zoos, animal sanctuaries, and local parks. Sometimes I even drive along country roads in search of wildlife.

PBB MAG: I spent some time looking at your online gallery, and it's obvious to see that not only are you a talented digital photographer, but you are also a wizard at HDR (High Dynamic Range) photography. What is it about HDR that got you interested, and how long have you been working with this style of photography?

I have always been amazed when I've seen high dynamic range images, and I wondered how they were photographed and processed. So one day, about three



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Emmanuel Panagiotakis

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This is the photo for which I won First Place in the Popular Photography Magazine's "Your Best Shot" Contest

months ago, I decided to give it a try. I enjoyed the process and the results so much that I wanted to perfect the technique and create my own style.

PBB MAG: Emmanuel, can you tell us what photographic achievement you are most proud of? Also, what are your plans for the future of your photography?

The photographic achievement that I am most proud of, is that in May of 2007, I won first place on Popular Photography Magazine's "Your Best Shot" contest! The photo that won the contest is this picture of Lions, as shown here.

For the future, as a photographer and image processor, I would like to continue to improve on the colors captured in my photography. As well, it's my goal to continue in trying to create and achieve a unique style of photography.

PBB MAG: It's been just great talking with you Emmanuel. Before you go, do you have any advice that you would like to share with anyone who's

wanting to take "the next step" in photography?

Sure! The advice that I would offer for those photographers who like to shoot landscapes: Don't get too disappointed if you can't get the "perfect shot" the first time. You must be persistent, and shoot the same subject on multiple occasions during different times of the day, under different lighting conditions. Overcast days tend to have a lot of definition in the clouds, and would be ideal to capture a "moody" feel. Rainy days? No problem! Just go out and shoot, and try to stay dry. I can also say that a perfectly sunny day is not necessarily the ideal condition for landscape photography. Try to shoot during the early morning or late afternoon because of the angle of the sun and better colors.

For people interested in HDR photography: You can definitely shoot throughout the day. Also, the shadows around you will give you a 3-D feeling in your pictures. As for tips for image processing, If you would like to improve yourself, I highly recommend taking some classes online at the Kelby training website. I took some of them and these classes helped me a lot.

Here's another example of an HDR (High Dynamic Range) countryscape image from Emmanuel. Notice the rich colors and contrast Emmanuel brings out with his special processing techniques. PhotographyBB would like to thank Emmanuel Panagiotakis for joining us this month! If you would like to be featured in an issue of the PhotographyBB Online Magazine, send us an email, and maybe you'll be our next - Member in the Spotlight!



2007

Emmanuel Panagiotakis

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2008

Emmanuel Panagiotakis

Emmanuel Panagiotakis:

Emmanuel is an accomplished photographer and image processor, originally from Greece, but now living in the United States. If you would like to learn more about Emmanuel and view some of his photography, please visit Emmanuel's online gallery at:

<http://www.EPphoto.net>

You can also read our feature article on the PhotographyBB website under the HDR category, or chat with Emmanuel in the PhotographyBB Forums.

welcome to Photoshop H.O.D.!

WELCOME TO THE NEXT GENERATION, IN A NEW ERA OF DIGITAL IMAGING ASSISTANCE

What is Photoshop H.O.D.?

Photoshop H.O.D. (Help On Demand!) is a new meeting place at PhotographyBB.com, where anyone in need of digital image editing or graphic design assistance can visit our site and find the help they need FOR FREE! If you are in need of assistance with either a Photoshop effect that you are trying to achieve, a tutorial that you need help with (or want created), a graphic you are trying to design, or even help editing a photo, then visit the Photoshop H.O.D. section of our site for help. Is your Photoshop acting strange? Not doing what it's supposed to? Visit PhotographyBB's Photoshop H.O.D. to get the assistance you require!

We have a dedicated team of members with years of photography, graphic design, and Photoshop experience who are willing and able to help with your questions. Get the answers you need, and get them FAST! Think of us like a custom tailored help guide, just for you. We all need a little help sometimes, and when you need help, think of Photoshop H.O.D. only at PhotographyBB.com. Who knows, after finding the help you need, maybe you'll be able to offer assistance to the next member in need!

How Do I Get Help?

Simple! All you need to do is register on the PhotographyBB.com Forums to be able to make a post, requesting the assistance you require. After that, an experienced H.O.D. member will reply with the solution to your questions!

Can I Offer to Help and be on the H.O.D. Team?

Absolutely! Our H.O.D. team is made up of our membership, so whoever has the answer to the question that another member is asking, feel free to chime in and give the help response. We are building a photography and digital imaging community together, and the only way to do that, is by helping each other to learn and grow together.

Visit the PhotographyBB Forums' Photoshop H.O.D. Section and participate today!
<http://www.photographybb.com/forum/viewforum.php?f=81>

Step into the Spotlight!

Would you like to be featured in the PhotographyBB Online Spotlight on Member section? If so, please let us know at: magazine@photographybb.com

We'll feature your photos, a small biography and write-up about you, as well as links to your web gallery or photography related business. We all love photography and image editing, so let's get to know each other!

Next Month's Issue:

First and foremost, we're going to be announcing the first place winner, for the March "Exposure" photography contest, as well as announcing a new contest!

We'll continue our popular series of "Photography Around the World" as we take you on a photographer's view of far away and exotic places which just might make you feel like you are actually there!

We'll be continuing an expanded tutorial series for both Photoshop and Photoshop Elements Users, with a new tutorial next month on working with RAW files. Additionally, our Photoshop Actions in Action section will return with a new Action effect!

Discounts for Readers:

If you are a regular visitor to the PhotographyBB Online Website, you may have noticed down the sidebar, a section called "Coupons of The Month." This section contains various photography related coupons and deals such as free photo prints, and discounts on books and software. If you are planning to buy these things anyways, visit us and use a coupon!

Thank you for reading the PhotographyBB Online Magazine. We hope you enjoyed it, and we'd love to see you again next month. If you have any questions or comments for us regarding this magazine, please feel free to email us at:

magazine@photographybb.com

We would love to hear from you!

Have a Great Idea for a Photography Article?

We are looking for talented individuals who would like to expand their portfolios by volunteering to contribute articles to this e-magazine! If you are interested, we'd love to hear from you.

Topics of Interest are:

- Photography Techniques
- Photography on Location
- Photoshop Tutorials
- Hardware / Software Reviews
- Camera Equipment
- Member Spotlight
- Plus we're open to new ideas!

To become either a regular contributing author, or even just for a one-time article, please email us at:

magazine@photographybb.com

Introduce yourself, share your idea, and maybe we'll see you in next month's issue!