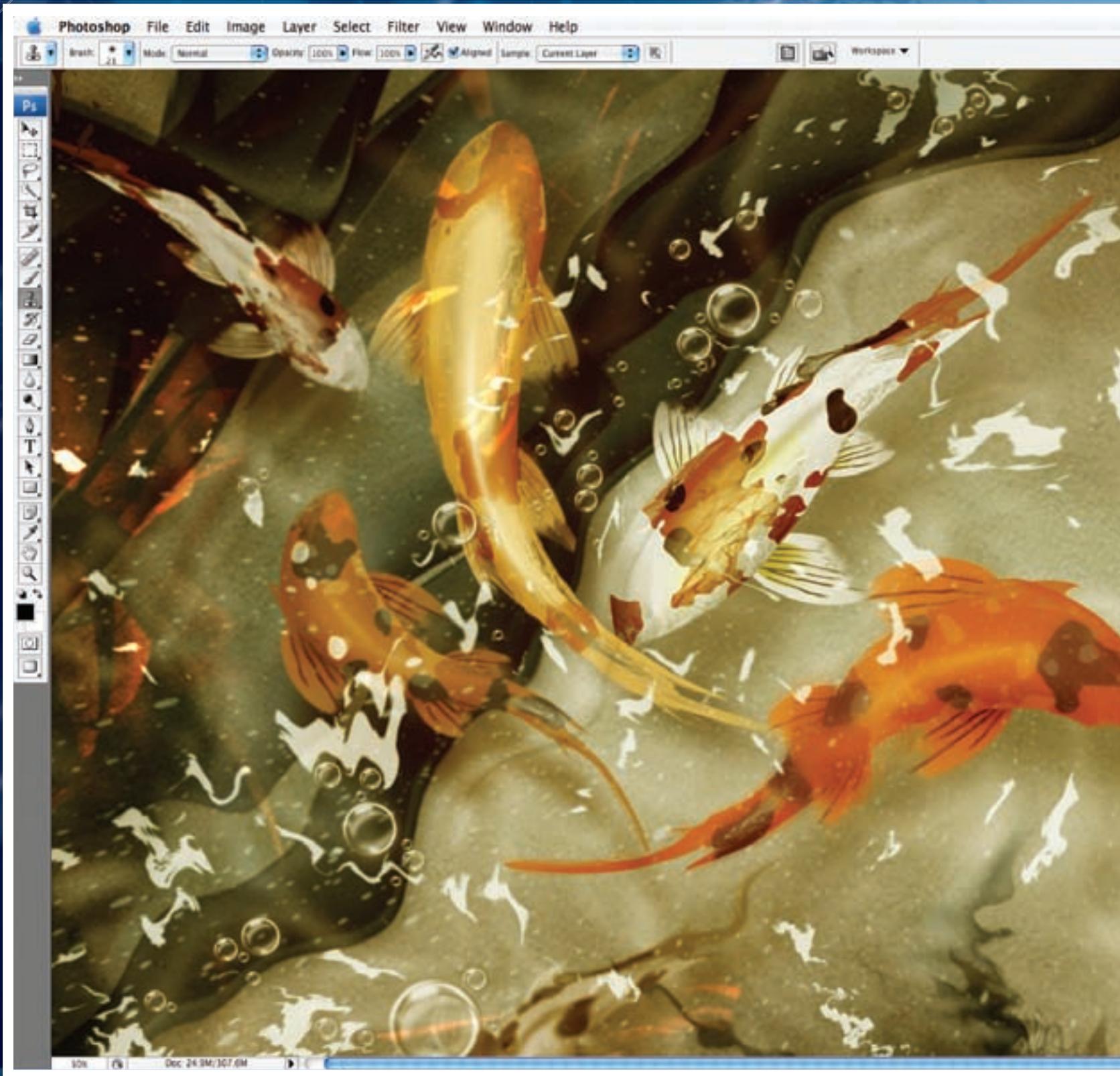
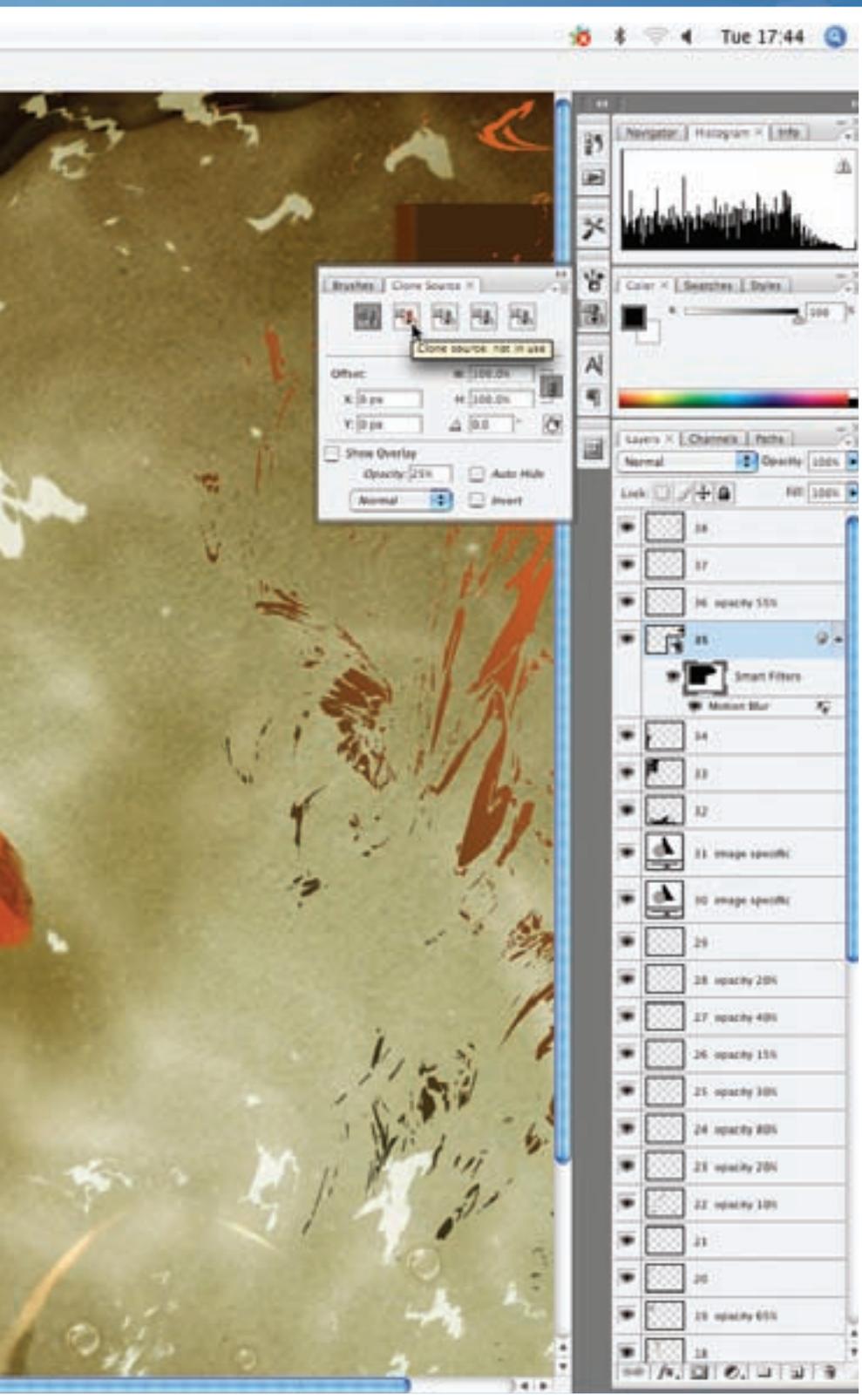


Feature





Photoshop CS3 beta

We take an in-depth tour of the new features and showcase what you can expect to see in the latest version of our favourite app

For the first time in history, Adobe has launched a public beta preview of its most successful software package in the CS Suite and our trusty favourite, Photoshop. Last year Adobe released a beta of Lightroom and the result was a complete success.

Not only were the public able to test out a demo of the new software, but they were also able to give valuable feedback to the Adobe team and suggest improvements. This way of launching a new program has become extremely popular with many companies following suit, so it was received well when Adobe announced it was to do the same with the forthcoming release of Adobe CS3.

Although there are still plenty more features and enhancements to come in the final version, we couldn't help but pick out our favourite bits in the new beta so far. As we pride ourselves on giving a well-rounded opinion, we've also pointed out the bits we don't like, so you can prepare yourself for the new release and decide if you want to splash the cash on the latest version.

New features in CS3

Open up CS3 and you'll be presented with a brand new interface. While it doesn't look drastically different to the familiar interface of CS2, there are a few obvious changes. The workspace looks a lot sleeker due to the use of customisable interface >>>

“ YOU CAN PREPARE YOURSELF FOR THE NEW RELEASE AND DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO SPLASH THE CASH ”

Feature

»»» options. With these, palettes can be easily moved out of the way or altered to only show the tools you need to carry out your projects – giving you plenty of room to display the work on your canvas. The current beta is available as a Universal Binary for Mac platforms as well as Windows XP and Vista.

The toolbar

One of the first things that strikes you is a new single-column toolbar. At first glance it isn't particularly obvious what has changed, but it's clear that 'something's not quite right'. Fitting with the theme of making the most of valuable space, the single-column toolbar allows you to stretch your image further to the left. It looks a little odd to begin with, but like any change to familiarity, with a little bit of practice, any awkwardness is soon forgotten. However, if you're completely uncomfortable using this layout, you can click on the arrows in the upper left section of the box to take it back to the older style, double-column toolbar.

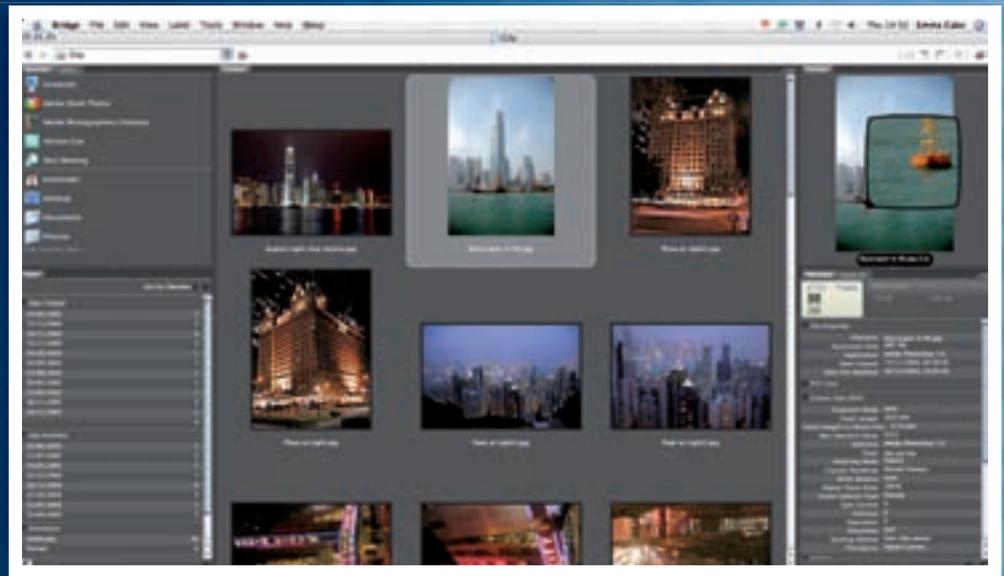
Intelligent palettes

Palettes have altered somewhat and now give you more opportunity to adjust your window space to give you more room. You can quickly undock palettes and hide them on the side of the screen or collapse them to get rid of them. It takes a bit of getting used to, as complete control in organisation of your palettes is a little bit alien at first, but we soon got the hang of it. You'll also find that when you select a tool in the toolbar the intelligent palettes on the right-hand screen allow you easier access to tool preferences, such as Brush Dynamics, without having to trudge through laborious menus in the upper toolbar.

If your palettes are still getting in the way of your artwork you can now set your View mode to Maximized Screen Mode to adjust your window size automatically, depending on the number of palettes you have open.



BLACK AND WHITE: Now you can easily convert separate layers to black and white, or even add a subtle tone, sepia hue or tint to images



BRIDGE: Although the layout of Bridge is very similar to version 1.0, we found it has a few new additions and it has lost its sluggishness, making handling generally a lot smoother

Quick Selection Tool

Within the Tools palette is a new addition known as the Quick Selection Tool. At the moment this is the only new tool revealed in the Beta, but it's a goodie. In summary, the Quick Selection Tool works in a similar way to the Magic Wand Tool but with a bit more intelligence. Although it's pretty rough when you first apply it to your canvas, you can improve your selection options by pressing the Refine Edge button at the top of your toolbar. Pressing this gives you a number of options to change the effect of your Quick Selection Tool. The first option previews the selection with a standard option, while the second option shows you a quick mask preview. With the third and fourth option you can place your selection over a black or a white background and the fifth option allows you to preview the mask that defines the selection.

For all of these options you can adjust the Radius to improve the edge of the areas you've selected with soft transition effects or fine details. Within the same dialog box you can choose to adjust 'Contrast' – to make soft edges crisp and remove fuzzy artefacts or 'Smooth' to remove the jagged edges along a selection of edges. 'Feather' softens the selection edges with a uniform blur while 'Contract/Expand' expands or contracts the selection edge. We found this to be the best new addition to the beta release and as well as being a convenient way to create a quick selection or cutout, it's also perfect for experimenting with some more creative effects.

Curves

Adobe has kept away from it for a version, but now a few additions have been made to Curves, although they're nothing to really shout about. New display options that have been added allow you to choose how you display your curve. By extending the



PHOTOSHOP CS3 BETA

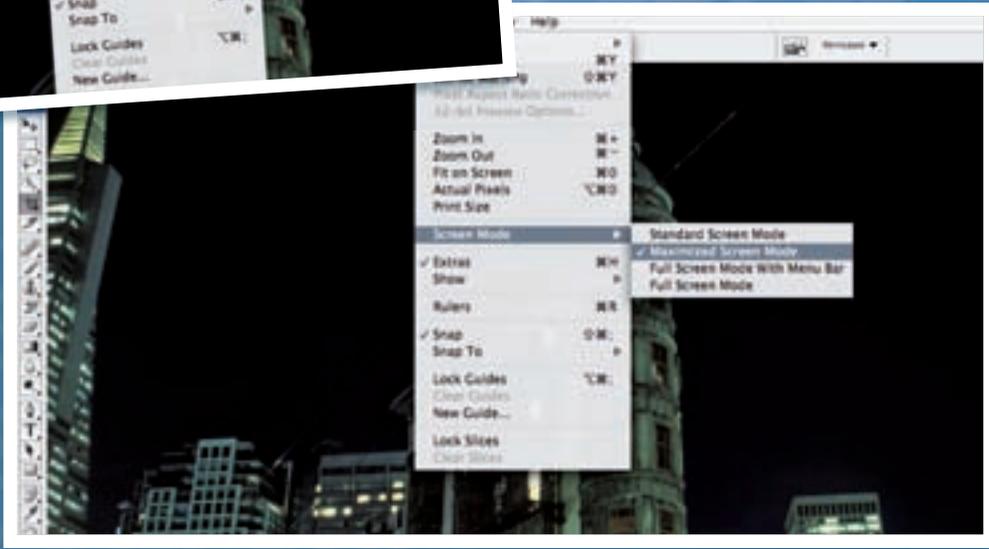
SCREEN MODE: With the new *Maximized Screen Mode* setting, you can make full use of moveable palettes and give yourself an impressive working space that fills up your entire screen display



CAMERA RAW

The Camera Raw dialog can now be used to edit JPG and RAW files too. It's a pretty odd addition to the features, as the whole point of RAW is that it works like a digital negative and traditionally gives more control over image quality than a JPG or a TIFF, for example. However, don't get us wrong – we're not complaining. The new development now gives us the opportunity to adjust 'temperature' and 'tint' on all valuable file types among the other options.

There's now a Fill Light Slider, which responds in a similar manner to the shadow slider in the Shadows/Highlights command and Recovery allows you to adjust the highlights without having to lower the exposure of your image. Vibrance is a new addition that can be used in a similar way to the Hue/Saturation command but there's less chance of over-saturating your image as well as less chance of a blown-out shot.



SINGLE-COLUMN TOOLBAR: The first change that will catch your attention is the new single-column toolbar. Although it's a pretty simple adjustment, it is one of many features that help you make full use of your screen space. It's not a change that you're forced to work with if you don't want to though. A simple click of the arrows at the top of the bar will transform it back to the traditional double bar.

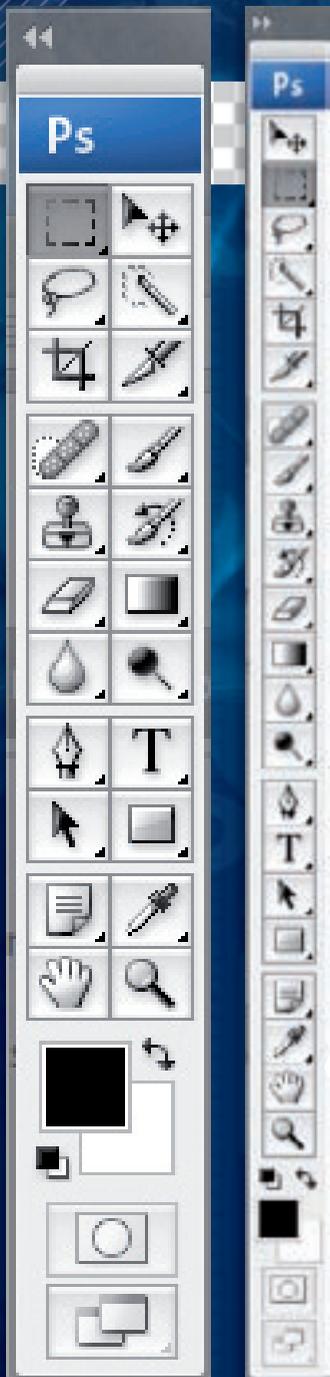
QUICK SELECTION TOOL: This is the only new tool revealed in the Beta version and works like an intelligent Magic Wand Tool. With it you can make a selection from which you can apply Contrast, Smooth, Feather and Contract/Expand effects.

MAXIMIZED SCREEN MODE: There's now a new option within the View menu called Maximized Screen Mode. With this you can make full use of your monitor display, as Photoshop will automatically fill your screen with the image.

SMART FILTERS: The biggest achievement previewed in the CS3 Beta are the new Smart Filters. Just like adjustment layers, you can now add a filter effect within a layer, so it's fully editable.



“THERE ARE PLENTY MORE OPTIONS FOR THOSE WHO PRIDE THEMSELVES ON ORGANISATION”



“THERE'S NOW A NON-DESTRUCTIVE WAY TO APPLY MULTIPLE FILTERS TO AN IMAGE - USING SMART FILTERS”

»» bottom half of the curve dialog using the Curve Display Options extension, you can choose to display information for your Channel Overlay, Baseline, Histogram and Intersection Line.

Print options

There are now new print options found within the Print menu. These changes enable you to adjust both the Color Management settings of your image and tweak the output settings for print, including Bleed and Transfer options.

Black and White Conversion Tool

There's no longer a need to use the Channel Mixer to convert your colour images into black and white. Now Photoshop CS3 includes a Black and White command that can be accessed in both the upper toolbar and as an adjustment layer. With this, not only can you tweak the separate channels, but you can also add a subtle colour tint to your images (great for giving your photos a sepia effect, or adding any hue you like).

The new Bridge

We weren't really fans of the sluggish Bridge, so a revamp is very welcome. Although it looks pretty familiar, there are some handy additions to the new

version including a Loupe Tool. This allows you to look at specific areas in detail without zooming in on the entire image. We absolutely loved the inclusion of a geeky little fake LCD that's displayed within a palette once an image is option showing off the metadata in the shot.

The best news is that Bridge now runs a bit faster, as the thumbnails can be displayed in low quality but with a simple right-click you can adjust a chosen thumbnail to high-res.

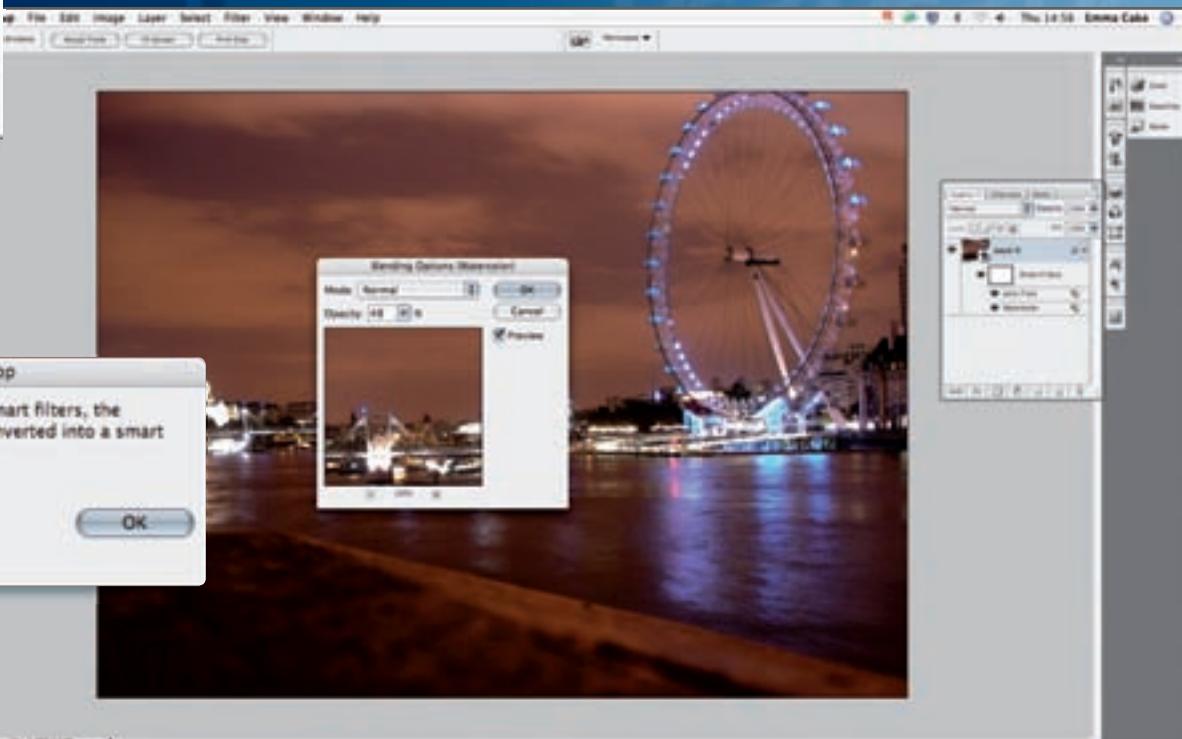
Smart Filters

There's now a non-destructive way to apply multiple filters to an image - using Smart Filters. To begin using Smart Filters you first need to convert the image you're working on into a Smart Object. Filters will then appear as an adjustment layer in the Layers palette. As with all adjustment layers, Smart Filters will enable you to go back at any time and adjust the application of your filter just as you would be able to with a Curves or a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer. You can access a PSB file of your original image at any time by clicking on the thumbnails. Our favourite feature is that you can lower the opacity levels and change the blending mode of your filter by clicking on the slider icon within the Smart Filter layer. Giving you perfect control if you're an avid user of filters.

«« **THE TOOLBAR:**
The new single-column toolbar gives you the opportunity to make more room for your images

SMART FILTERS: Not titled 'smart' for now! These clever little things give users expert control over image edits

GET SMART: In order to make use of Smart Filters, first you must convert images into a Smart Object



PHOTOSHOP CS3 BETA

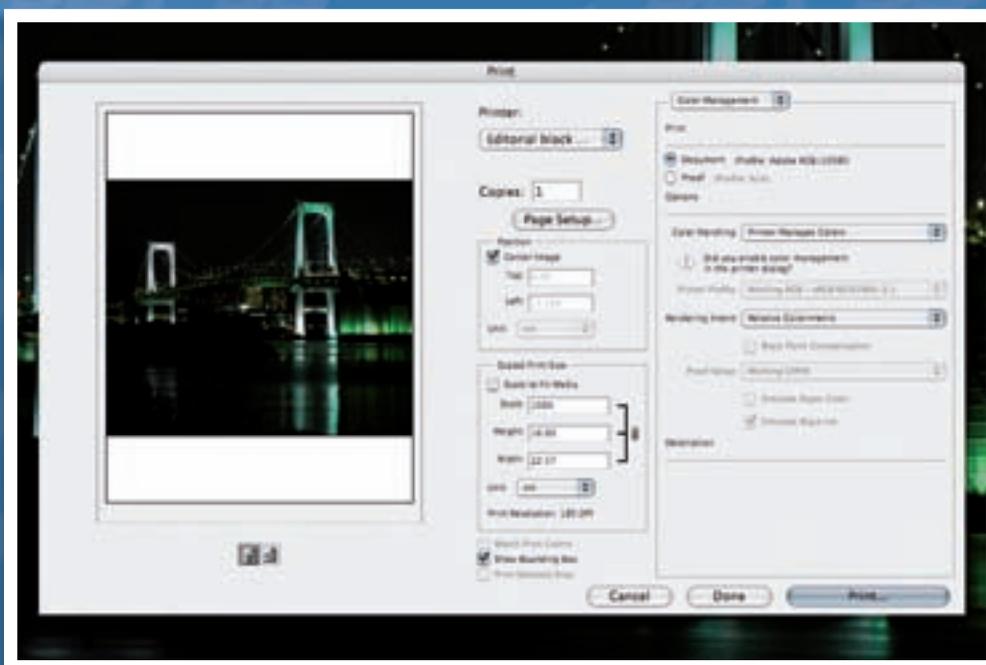
Improved cloning and healing

There's now a new Clone Source palette that shows off a live preview of the clone source and lays it over the area you're cloning. We struggled with this slightly confusing addition. The trick is remembering which one is your original image and which is your clone source. You can now also set Clone Brush presets using the five different buttons at the top of the Clone Source palette. If you're working on reflections in your image you can make use of Cloning Rotation options to clone a sample at a set angle.

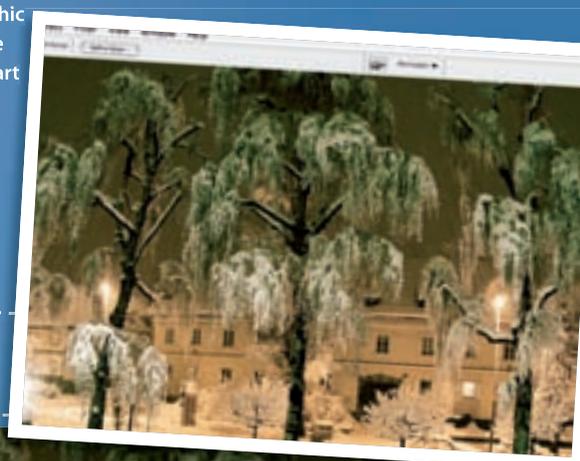
How it benefits you

The new features benefit artists in different ways depending on your requirements. For digital photographers who use Photoshop to enhance their imagery, the improved cloning and healing tools could seriously aid a complex retouching job (provided you master this rather tricky tool first). Similarly, converting images successfully to monochrome is now a doddle with the new Black and White Conversion Tool. The improved Bridge (which thankfully *doesn't* crash every five seconds) is great for those with accumulating photo libraries. The Quick Selection Tool is better suited to graphic designers who like to use their images as a base for their designs. Our favourite new feature, Smart Filters, will spare those dreadful times when you wish you could turn back the clock on a filter application and start all over again. Of course, there are a few new features that will benefit everyone too, such as the Maximized Screen Mode and new printing options. ■

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE: *The new Photoshop seems to have benefits for all, it just depends on how you use the app*



PRINTING: *The CS3 beta reveals some new print options to play around with. It gives you the ability to adjust the Color Management of images and alter the Bleed and Transfer*



SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Have you got what it takes?

Macintosh

- PowerPC G4 or G5 or Intel based Macintosh processor
- Mac OS X v.10.4.8
- 320MB of RAM (512MB recommended)
- 64MB of video RAM
- 1.5GB of available hard disk space
- 1024 x 768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card
- DVD-ROM drive
- Internet or phone connection required for product activation
- QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features

Windows

- Intel Pentium 4, Intel Centrino, Intel Xeon, or Dual-Core Intel Xeon processor
- Microsoft Windows XP with Service Pack 2 or Windows Vista
- 320MB of RAM (512MB recommended)
- 64MB of video RAM
- 650MB of available hard disk space
- 1024 x 768 monitor resolution with 16-bit video card
- DVD-ROM drive
- Internet or phone connection required for product activation
- QuickTime 7 software required for multimedia features

QUICK SELECTION TOOL: *So far, the only new tool to be revealed. It's basically a brainier version of the Magic Wand Tool*