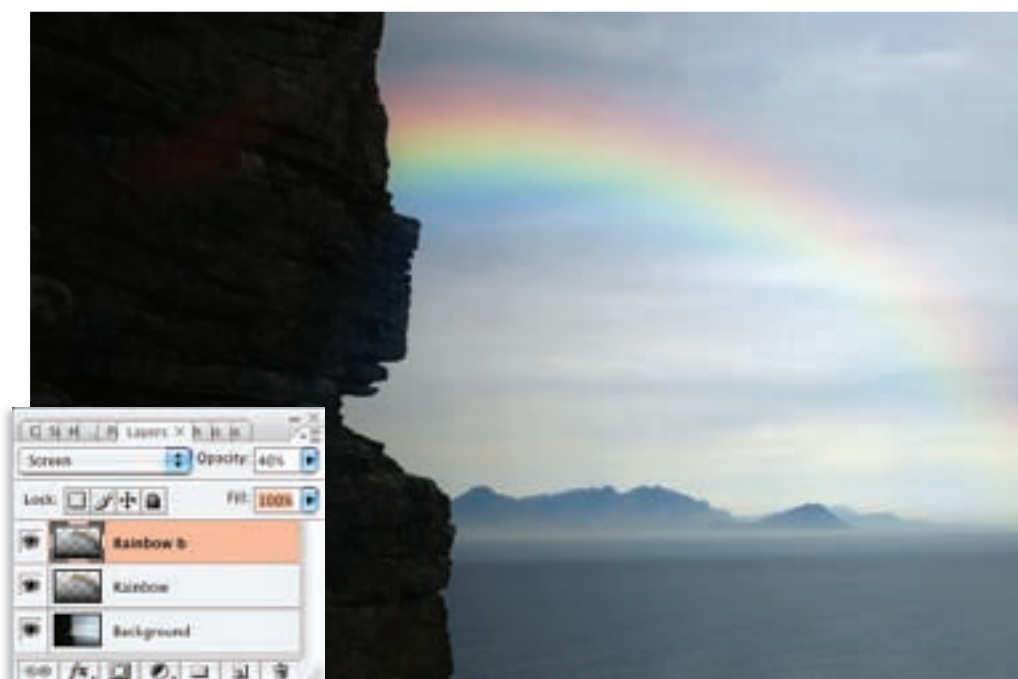


Helpdesk

This month, Helpdesk focuses on fixing your Photoshop effects problems **BY ADAM SMITH**



BRIGHTEN YOUR DAY: Duplicating your rainbow layer and dropping the layer's Opacity to around 40% intensifies the colours of the spectrum with subtlety

NEW HORIZONS

I have taken quite a few gloomy pictures of late and thought what a great idea it would be to liven them up with some cool rainbow effects. Could you point me in the right direction so I can do this? I think it would really add that extra something to my photographs. Many thanks,

Cheryl, North Carolina

This effect works best with contrasting skylines, Cheryl, so keep that in mind. Start by opening your image and then selecting Create New Layer from the foot of the Layers palette. Next, select your Gradient Tool from the toolbar and click to edit the Gradient bar in the above options. Click the right arrow, choosing Special Effects from the drop-down menu, and then select Russell's Rainbow Gradient. Set your Gradient Tool to Radial Gradient and drag the cursor to create a rainbow circle, which you can rescale with your Transform Tools.

Once it has been matched with your horizon, apply Screen Blend Mode to this new layer and then select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur, set to a percentage of around 60 pixels. Now take your Eraser Tool and erase the unwanted visual value from your landscape. Resetting

your gradients from the same drop-down menu, set the Foreground to Transparent Gradient. With Linear Gradient selected, press D to reset your colours to the default and drag from the bottom of the image to the top. Once complete, you should have a convincing rainbow effect. You can duplicate this layer again, dropping the new layer's Opacity to create intensity.

SKY AT NIGHT

Hello *Advanced Photoshop*. I've recently completed sixth form and am on my way to university, so am in the process of brushing up on my Photoshop skills. I'm working on a small photography project to show my peers on arrival, and all's going quite well.

However, I'm having trouble with a certain image. I want to create a skyline cluttered with stars and have tried a few effects (like scanning spray paint and applying Blend Modes, which didn't work), but nothing seems to have the desired effect. Are there any sure-fire ways to get good results?

Tabitha, Hamilton



TWINKLE, TWINKLE: To add finer detail, activate the Brush Picker, clicking the right arrow, and select Assorted Brushes. The Starburst Small brush offers interesting effects

Well, Tabitha, with a bit of help from *Advanced Photoshop* you can get some comprehensive effects for what you're looking for, and it's simpler than you might think. Start by opening your photo and then creating a new layer, selecting Edit>Fill>Use: Black. Next, with the layer active, select Filter>Noise>Add Noise, dragging the slider up to around 155%, depending on the image size. Set Distribution to Gaussian and check the Monochrome box. Now choose Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and apply a small amount, around 8 pixels.

When you click OK, set the Layer Blend Mode for this layer to Screen. Next, select Image>Adjustments>Threshold, setting it to a value of 128. Your stars should look quite comprehensive now, but will probably be interfering with the rest of the visual value in your image. To rectify this, either use the Marquee Tool or Select>Color Range option to pick out your sky colour value, then click the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Applying Filter>Render>Clouds and adding Blend Modes at different opacities also adds dimension to your effect, so experiment with these.

LITTLE EXTRAS: You can even tell the Image Processor to convert JPEG output files to sRGB, making it easy to create images for web or email use



HANDY SECRETS

I have a multitude of photographs on my computer, but I want to convert them from their automatic JPEG to TIFF files, so that they are of a higher visual quality. Is there a quicker way of doing this than opening each one and individually resaving or creating actions (which seems quite tedious)?

Michael, Baltimore

Well Michael, you're in luck because with CS3 there is an option that does all the hard work for you. It's called the Image Processor option. To activate it, select File>Script>Image Processor and you'll be presented with the simply defined Image Processor dialog box.

Each numbered section serves a purpose; Section 1 targets the images that you wish to convert, either already open or selected from a folder. Section 2 allows you to set a location, either in the same folder or a newly created one. Section 3 offers you the choice to select whether you'd like to save as JPEG, PSD, TIFF or all three. You can also determine whether to resize your newly saved images here. Section 4 includes your Preferences, which allow you to attach copyright info, embed colour profiles (including ICC

BLURRED VISION

Dear *Advanced Photoshop* team, I've been toying with the idea of getting involved in digital photography and must say I am enjoying it. At times, however, I encounter a slight problem with blurred images. I thought that the Sharpening Tool could solve this issue, but it often leaves my images grainy and bitty. Am I using the tool wrong? Is there a better way? I'm confused.

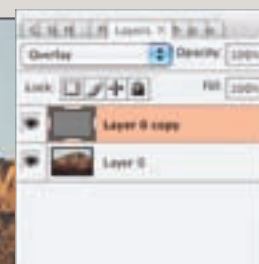
Charlotte, Devon

I don't think it's the use of the Sharpening Tool, Charlotte, perhaps just the focus of your images. With a little more experience in handling your camera, problems like this will soon



become less apparent. However, to help you right now, there is something we can suggest. It's true that the Sharpening options can enhance noise, grain and small artefacts within an image, so why not try using the High Pass filter? This will enhance the edge contrast and sharpen smoother edges.

Simply start by duplicating your blurred image layer, then set the Layer Blending Mode to Overlay for this newly created layer. With this layer still active, select Filter>Other>High Pass. You'll now be able to manipulate the effects to your taste, using the slide bar in the dialog box. You'll be editing the amount of grey pixels and brighter/darker values along contrasted areas, acting like an emboss effect of sorts. The Overlay Blend Mode is essential for this effect to succeed, as it acts in a similar way to dodging and burning along the contrast edge, thus sharpening the image without interference.



IT'S TIME WELL SPENT: Functions like the Sharpening Tool and the High Pass filter can only do so much, so it is always best to familiarise yourself with the zoom and focus functions on your camera first

profile) and even run a saved Photoshop action. It must, however, be loaded in the Action palette before it appears here.

TRY APPLY IMAGE

Hi guys! I have taken quite a few photos in my spare time as it's the school holidays and I enjoy it, but am looking to spice up a few of my black-and-white photos using Photoshop's creative options. If I'm honest, I'm not sure exactly where to start, but I'm certain there must be a way. Any tips you can give me, *Advanced Photoshop* team?

Danny, Cardiff

You're not wrong, Danny, there are a few good ways. Here's a simple, fun one to get you started, using the Apply Image command for cool effects. Start by opening your black-and-white photograph and then duplicate the layer, making a copy of it and naming it accordingly. Alternatively, you can just select the Create New Layer option at the foot of the Layers palette. Now select Image>Mode, and make sure your document is set to RGB/CMYK mode, so you know you'll be able to access your colour

palettes. Now select your preferred brush and apply broad strokes, using the colours of your choice. You should now have a black-and-white photo layer and a painted layer on top.

With your painted layer activated, select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set an amount dependent on your image resolution. Next, choose Image>Apply Image. Adjust the settings as follows: Layer: Background layer, Channel: RGB, Blending: Overlay or Soft Light, and Opacity: 100%. Depending on opacities and blending, your effects may vary, but you'll still have a cool painting-style image.



HAVE A BLAST: Try using alternative opacities, Blend Modes and even outrageous colour schemes to create some truly unique photo productions



HELPPDESK

CALL FOR QUESTIONS

Want help with Photoshop?

Send your emails to us at:

advancedpshop@imagine-publishing.co.uk

or post a message on our forum board at

www.advancedphotoshop.co.uk/forum.

Remember to specify whether you're using a PC or Mac and the version number of your edition of Photoshop.