Helpdesk

If you've got a pesky Photoshop dilemma, the helpdesk is the perfect place to come for an answer BY **ADAM SMITH**

SKIN DEEP: *By using your Color Picker and a splay brush, Opacity set to 20-25% and blending mode set to Luminosity, you can make specific area modifications to skin complexion*

GLAMOROUS

I've been recently attending evening classes in photography. It's something I have been keen on doing for some time and I love it. I am seriously considering putting my skills to the test on a freelance basis, perhaps producing family and glamour photos. I've found Photoshop goes and in hand with creating great photography. However, I am no pro and am only coming to grips with the software. I have heard of so many cool effects on how to touch up your photos, amending skin blemishes and such. I am using the Clone tool to do this but it can be time-consuming. Is there perhaps a shorter way?
Jill, Devon

You're right Jill, Photoshop is the greatest tool for photo editing. There is a technique that may help you with your problem, especially when considering producing glamour photography. This is known as the Surface Blur, which can be found by selecting Filter>Blur> Surface Blur. The preferred way of applying to specific areas of your model's profile is to double-click the Quick Mask Mode icon, found in the toolbar. Now in the Quick Mask Options set your Color Indicates to Selected Areas, clicking OK. Next paint out the areas you wish to smooth and, once complete, re-select

Standard Mode (Q) to view your selected area. Then go ahead and select your Smart Blur, applying sparingly for best effects that really smooth the complexion.

INFRARED

I've been using Photoshop for a few years now and God knows it's helped me create some great fantasy effects in my artwork. I am now in my second year at university taking an illustration course, and am doing a project on fairytale-like model photography. I'm looking for some cool filter effects to really spice up my visual appeal, so was wondering if you had any ideas on how to get the best effect?
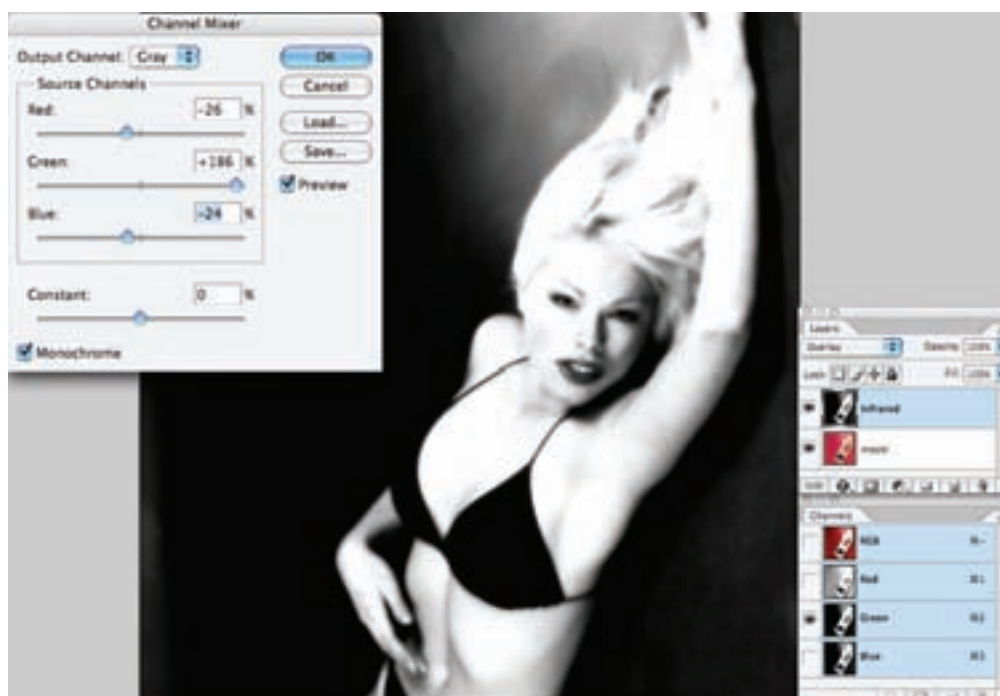**Kim, Wolverhampton**

There's a cool way to achieve an infrared effect with your photography in Photoshop that provides some fantastical lighting in your images. This is a technique that is common in wedding photography, so should give you a real fairytale feel. Start by duplicating your layer, and with this new layer active select your

Channels palette. Now isolate your Green channel and select Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Choose a pixel radius between 5 and 15 pixels depending on the desired effect and then click OK. Select Image>Adjustments> Channel Mixer.

Once in the Channel Mixer dialog box, activate Monochrome and move your Green slider to the far right, nearing the highest value. Drop your Red and Blue sliders to create the desired effect. Once this is complete, you can drop the Opacity of this newly treated layer to soften the effect before merging all layers. One thing to keep in mind is that this effect can be saved as an action and thus applied to other photographs or artworks, which is a godsend if your project includes multiple images (if it's going to be a storybook, for example).

TAXING SITUATION

Hi, *Advanced Photoshop* team. I am writing to you today not with a technical problem but a problem nevertheless, and hope from your many resources you can lend me a hand. I

AFTER EFFECTS: *This effect is great for its intended purposes, but can also be used subtly to create a film-noir effect*

GAMMA GLAMOUR: *Those who wish for a more technical solution to monitor brightness levels may want to address the Gamma amounts, found under File Menu>Monitor Setup. Visit www.cgsd.com for specific details*

wondered if anyone would know of a good European-based site where you can sell prints, such as ImageKind or deviantART, so that buyers in Europe don't have to pay high taxes of overseas trade? I'll be very happy to hear from you.
Ida Andersen Lang, Denmark

Thanks for your enquiry, Ida – we're sure this is a concern shared by many international artists looking to market their artwork. Even with the inclusive taxes you may well be best off dealing through sites such as deviantART. This is purely due to the opportunities they provide for promotion, being an international artistic community in a constant state of growth from both viewers, roughly 1.5 million individuals per day, as well as submitters.

While that's one option to definitely consider, we have also sourced some other viable options where artists can sell work. A prime example seems to be RedBubble.com. Here artists from Europe as well as Great Britain and America can upload, share and sell design without the penalty of commissions. RedBubble simply sets a base price and you set your own retail price. A seemingly professional retail option.

TAXES: *The people who sell their work on RedBubble are responsible for complying with their local tax law(s). There are no taxes that the artist needs to pay for overseas trade apart from the local taxes – eg income tax*

There may be slight taxation involved when selling to foreign consumers, but you're sure to also get a good amount of sales from native region consumers. The reality is that you won't often find a site such as RedBubble or deviantART that specifies solely to regional clients. It's not a viable option if they wish to become profitable, as it limits growth on a global scale.

PLATFORM PROBLEMS

I've been designing web graphics for a short time, since graduating last year. I've been working consistently on a PC over this time and have recently realised the virtues of transferring to Mac usage. I must say it has certainly increased the productivity of my workflow. But I've hit a snag. I've noticed that there is a distinct colour difference on-screen in my design and I am worried that this has disrupted the effect of my work for all to see. Is there a way to remedy this?
Brendan, Shropshire

This is a design problem that arises because the monitors for Macs and PCs display different levels of brightness. Usually web graphics designed on a Mac platform will be around 10-15 per cent darker on a PC using Windows. Of course, Photoshop is always there to provide a simple remedy. In this case it will allow you to proximate how these graphics will look when viewed on a PC, or visa versa.

Simply create your image and then in the File options choose the standard Save for Web. Now activate the '2-up' tab so you can compare images, select the Preview menu, top right, and choose Standard Windows Color. This will show you how your opened graphic will look when viewed on a standard Windows monitor. Selecting Standard Macintosh Color will do the reverse, and you can find a happy medium.

STOCK TAKE

Hi *Advanced Photoshop* team. I've been reading your magazine for quite some time now, and have learnt so much. I love the tutorials and it's comforting to know that you provide as much as you can to help us hungry creatives. Now, however, I feel it's time to stand on my own two feet, so could you maybe give me a heads-up on some cool royalty-free image sites, or where I can purchase some on the cheap?
Michael, Fallowfield, Manchester

We hear you, Michael. Buying materials, and that of course includes stock imagery, can be an expense for most artists. Luckily we know of a few choice options for you. Why not check out **www.dreamstime. com** to start with, a microstock library site that is all user-contributed. Here you can purchase royalty-free images for as low as $0.38 (that's 19p), as well as download free stock. Then there's **MorgueFile. com**. The purpose of this site is to provide free image reference material for use in all creative pursuits. You can contact the creator of the photo for specific permission, and the quality and breadth of photography available is very good.

THERE'S MORE: *Why not try a few more photo sites and compare stock? There's www.mayang.com, www.imageafter.com or www.nix.nasa.gov*

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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.