Poster Photoshop Workshop Manual

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This manual is courtesy of DIAFRAGMA©, and will cover all the steps explained during DIAFRAGMA's Poster Photoshop Workshop on the 18th of March 2019. Before we start with the step-by-step walkthrough, be sure you are seated at a computer with Photoshop installed on, and one with a usable mouse. Start up your computer in Windows 10 and have fun with the workshop!
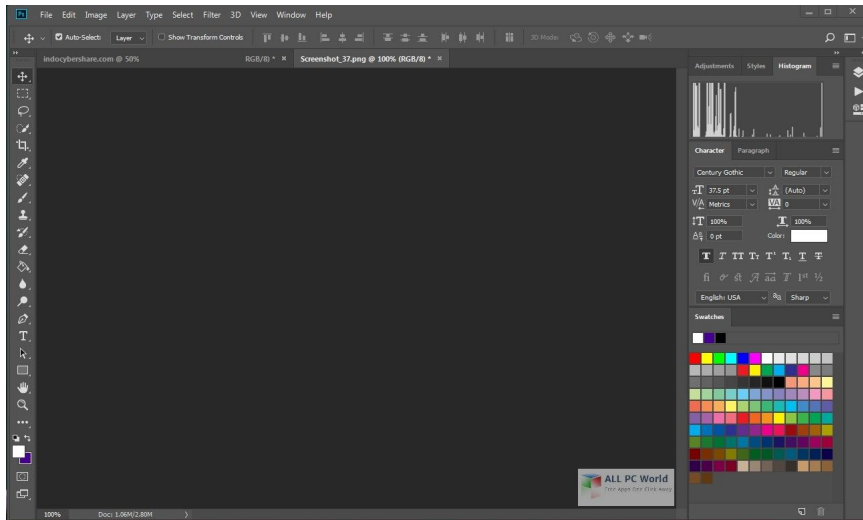
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Opening Photoshop

Photoshop can be found with the search function in Windows 10.
- In the search bar, simply type Photoshop, and open Photoshop CS6©

Photoshop Mainframe

Opening Photoshop will get you into the mainframe, which will look something like beneath.

In the mainframe, there are a few things to be noted:

1. Main program
   ○ In the top of the program are the program tabs "File", "Edit", and so on. We will later on use these tabs throughout the manual for e.g. loading in pictures and creating new layers.
2. Toolbar
   ○ On the left in the program, the toolbar can be found. Here you can find all the main photoshopping tools, such as the selection tool and the painting tool.
3. Option bar
   ○ When using a tool, the options bar appears on top (beneath the main program bar), with all options for the selected tool (e.g. changing shapes, sizes and opacity).
4. Manager
   ○ In the right you can find the manager panels. In these panels you can manage your objects and corrections and such. The most important manager panel will be the "Layers" panel, in which we will later on manage all the added layers.

Importing a picture file

What is the first thing to do when you start Photoshopping? Of course, loading in a picture to be Photoshopped. **NO**. Let me stop you there. The very first thing to do when starting to Photoshop, and the most important thing to do while Photoshopping is to **think**. Think about what you want to accomplish. What is your creative idea, and how are you going to implement your idea into a beautiful poster.

Let us start by thinking about whether we want to start creating our poster from a blank canvas, or do we want to use the original poster as a canvas. Sometimes it is easy to recreate the background of the poster, and thus recreate the poster from scratch. But too often this will not be possible, thus you will have to use the original poster as your starting point and start adding your pictures shot, and own texts, to this original poster.
When you have had a good think about how to proceed, we can start by opening the canvas.

Opening a file

- Select the file to open by either
  - Files → Open..
  - Ctrl+O.
  - Dragging the file in the empty Photoshop program

When you want to work with a blank canvas, also open the original poster the same way. Anyhow, you also want to create a new blank file. This can be done in multiple ways.

Opening a new project

- You can create a blank canvas either by
  - Files → New.. →
  - Here you can create a new canvas by manually providing the dimensions, or selecting one of the pre-produced dimensions (such as A4, A3 and so one).
- Perhaps an easier way to create a blank canvas the same size as your original poster is by doing the following:
  - Select your opened original poster entirely by:
    - Ctrl+A
    - Using the selection tool and select the entire poster
    - Main program: Select → All
  - Copy the selected poster by using:
    - Ctrl+C
    - Edit → Copy
  - And then create a new file by:
    - Ctrl+N
    - File → New

You can now see that the dimensions of your original poster file are used in creating a new file with the same dimensions. Create the new file. You can then paste your file in the newly created file if you want to use the file as an example. A new layer is created in the Layers panel, and you can unshow this layer by either pressing the Eye pictogram, or by setting the opacity to 0.
Saving the project can be also be done in the Files bar, or by using Ctrl+S. Be sure to save your progress often.

Opening your own pictures and Ctrl+z

The thing to do next, is opening your recently shot pictures that you will use in recreating the original poster.
- Open the pictures the same way as you opened the original picture. Your pictures will then be opened in again a new tab/window in the program.
  - Is every of your pictures opened in the program? Then let us begin the fun!
Ow WAIT. Before we start with the fun parts, take in mind that whenever you do something stupid or horrible you can always go back to where you were using the command **Ctrl+Z** and going multiple steps back can be done with **Alt+Ctrl+Z.**

Selecting

There are multiple tools that have the ability to select parts of your photo, we will go through them step-by-step. We will cover the main tools and their **brother functions** which can be called upon by selecting and then dragging your mouse over the little tab-expansion triangle in the lower right corner of each tool tab. In this walkthrough, behind each tool will be the shortcode to use this tool. Simply pressing this button will grant you access to that particular tool. **Deselecting** can be done by using Ctrl+D or clicking anywhere with the Rectangular Marquee. **Inverting** your selection can be done by using Shift+Ctrl+I (or in the Select tab).

The Move tool (V)

- The Move tool is your cursor, with this tool you can drag elements in your creation. We won't use the brother function to the Move tool, so I am simply not going to explain that.

The Rectangular Marquee (M)

- The Rectangular selection tool can be used when you want to select or delete certain parts of your image with a straight border or when you want to select a certain new part of your picture/poster to create a picture with altered dimensions (for example a smaller sub-part of your photo/picture).
- Using Shift while using this function will grant you the power of selecting exact squares, i.e. Shift locks the dimensions of the selection tools to be equal. The brother functions to the Rectangular Marquee are:
    - The Elliptical Marquee (M) (used to select circular or elliptical parts of your picture). Using Shift to this function will give you the option to select perfect circles.
    - Single Column and Row Marquees can be used in selecting rows, but we won't use them.

That's enough Marquees for today

<u>The Lasso (L)</u>

- The Lasso tool can be used if you want to select things freely, i.e. out of the loose wrist. This function on its own is very hard to use if you only have a mouse, and not a touch screen drawing board to your computer.
- Anyhow, you can use this tool to make free selections of parts of pictures. The brother functions to the Lasso are the Polygonal Lasso (used in selecting polygons) and the very interesting Magnetic Lasso.
  - The Magnetic Lasso can be a very useful tool if you want to select for example a person out of a picture. The Magnetic Lasso can be used the same as a Lasso, freely, but it sticks to the lines of color change, in that way the Magnetic Lasso enables you to easily select hardlined/outlined figures from a picture.

<u>The Quick Selection tool (W)</u>

- The Quick Selection tool can also be very useful when you want to select certain objects from a picture. The Quick Selection tool, as well as the brother function Magic Wand (not to be confused with the Hitachi Magic Wand, which has another purpose and function) can detect (color)structures in the picture and select all adjacent parts of the picture with similar structure.
- When using the Quick Selection tool, hold the mouse and simply drag around to select particular structures. The same can be done by using the wand, and using Shift after selecting one structure to select another structure. This way you can select multiple defined structures from your picture at one.

You will now face the hard test of carefully selecting the persons in need of selecting, either using the Magnetic Lasso tool or one of the Quick Selection tool. Note that you can change the settings on **tolerance** off the selection in the **Option bars** of these tools.
By changing the tolerance, you enable yourself to select even more precise. When you have selected the desired part of the picture, you can simply copy paste it on the poster or on the blank canvas and a new layer will be created with the new object in it.

Transformation

Now you might encounter that the picture is much smaller or larger than you desire. We can change the position, dimensions and scale of an object by either
- Pressing Ctrl+T
- Edit → Either one of the transformation tabs (free for free transformation, the other ones for predefined transformations)
You can now scale the object to the desired size. Holding Shift will again grant you the power of keeping the ratios of the dimensions, so that your object doesn't become too skinny or fat.

You can now either repeat these steps for the possible other objects in your poster, or you will want to adjust this first new object in a way to make everything look way better.
Whatever you do, always work in **different layers**, and be sure to -before changing anything to your picture- **duplicate your layer (by right clicking on the layer and choosing "Duplicate Layer").** This way you will always have the original layer to fall back to in case everything went horribly wrong.

<u>Tonal Adjustments</u>

So there are a couple types of adjustments you can do to your image, all these can be found under the main tab "Image". In this tab you can find corrections on colors, brightness, contrast and so on. I won't explain them all to you but you also won't need them all. Just start puzzling with them until you are content with the result. Another thing to do is to open the adjustment tab by going to **"Window" → "Adjustments"**, with the adjustments panel you can change the settings over all the layers in the project, which might come in handy in the end. There are a few adjustments I will further specify:

<u>Brightness/Contrast</u>

- Brightness and Contrast make adjustments to the tonal range of your image, adjusting highlights and shadows respectively.

<u>Levels, Curves (and Exposure)</u>

- Levels modify the tonal values by combining adjustments in shadows, midtones and highlights. By slightly changing the separate levels, your image can become much more vivid. That is also why this adjustment layer is one of the most used ones in Photoshop.
- With curves the same can be done but much more precisely, creating perfect balances in tones of your picture.
- With the exposure tab, the same can be done but separately so, with Exposure adjusting the highlights, Offset adjusting the midtones and Gamma adjusting the dark tones only

<u>Vibrance and Hue/Saturation</u>

- With the Vibrance tab you can adjust the image in two ways. The saturation slider increases saturation of the colors in the image. The Vibrance slider modifies the level of saturation of all colors selectively, focussing on the least saturated colors and avoiding over-saturation of skin tones, adding liveliness to your picture.
- Hue/Saturation lets you adjust the hue, saturation and lightness of your entire image or in a specific range of colors in your image. Just play a bit with these siders and look whether you can create a more fitting picture.

<u>Color Balance</u>

- The color balance tab lets you change the mixture of colors in an image. By changing the color mixture composition, you can bring out certain colors real beautifully.

<u>Black & White</u>

- And last but not least (we strive for equality), Black & White. In this panel you can change the picture into a Black & White picture, whereafter you can adjust what colors you want to bring out extra in your conversion to Black & White.

So these were a few of the many adjustments you can do on your picture, to increase the reality of the fit with the background and the fit in the poster. Tonal adjustments can really make the difference between a realistic remake, and a really ugly one.

Retouching

Maybe one of the most interesting things to learn, and one of the things I most often use is the art of retouching, or spiriting away things (gotta love Ghibli). There are a few tools in the retouching kit that can be very helpful when you struggle with the discovery that the picture you took does not fully cover the object in the poster. We will again not explain all the tools, but only the ones most often used and most valuable to our adventure. Before explaining the tools be very secure in the way you work. **Duplicate the layer you want to retouch first, by right clicking on the layer and choosing "Duplicate Layer", and know when to use Ctrl+z.** Take note that the a part of the Option bar functions (Shape, Size, Hardness, and so on) can also be quick-summoned by using a tool and the left clicking anywhere in your project.

The Eraser (E)

- This may seem unnecessary to explain, but the eraser tool can be very valuable in retouching the final parts of a picture with which you are not very content. Changing the opacity of the eraser (in the Option Bar) can give the option to create a smooth blurry transition between the poster's background and a pasted in picture.
- There is one particular interesting brother function to the eraser, which is called the Background Eraser:
  - The Background Eraser, as it states, enables you to remove an entire background with about the same color set as the pixel you erase. This tool can be very useful in deleting for example the white background behind cartoon images, or the even-colored background wall to a close up facial picture. Nice tricks Mr Aizawa.

Clone Stamp (S)

- Probably the most useful trick there is to know in Photoshopping a poster, is the Clone Stamp tool. This tool lends you the power of imitating surrounding patterns and with that recreate that pattern elsewhere in the picture. This is my favourite "Sjoemel" tool. Spiriting away every part of the poster still visible after pasting your pictures on it by simply recreating the pattern of the surrounding background.
- To use this tool simply use the Alt-key to select the pattern you want to imitate, and then click wherever you want to recreate this pattern. Be creative in using this tool. Play with the opacity and the size of the stamp to create a more natural result. Often you also want to mimic a part of the poster onto another layer, you can them simple use the Alt+Left Click on the poster layer and then switch to the layer you want to mimic the parts of the poster on.

An additional Retouching tip from me:

Using the Clone Stamp too much can create smudges in the stamped background. You can resolve this problem by first selecting (this can just be done freely with the Lasso) a small part of the neighbouring pattern you want to simulate, and copy this entire selected part onto the part you want to cover. Using the Clone Stamp to blur the edges can create a more realistic looking result.

Okay, these were the Retouching tools I wanted to cover, there are a lot more -try them out yourself- but these were the ones I myself use the most.

Drawing and type tools

The drawing and typing tools can be used, amongst others, to add text and shapes to your project.

Horizontal Typing tool (T)

- The Horizontal Typing tool can be used to create texts for your poster. In creating texts there are a few panels that need explanation and are good to know.
  - When you have created a text, you can change the font and size and such in the option bar that appeared on the top of the program when you selected the text tool.
  - You can do all sorts of text editing in the text-editing panel. If this panel is not yet opened in your manager bar, you can open it by going to "Window" → "Character"
  - You can do all sort of text transformations by double clicking on the text layer. This will grant you access to the layer styles in which you can add colors, gradients, outer lines and so on, to the text. *P.s. this can also be used in for other kinds of layers such as shape layers.*

In poster text editing it is also of great importance to recreate the font of the poster. The font is the layout of the style of the letters that is used. You can try and look for a font in the basic fonts, or you can search the InterWebs for any type of font that is used in your poster.
For example: Search Google for "Font Christopher Robin" and you will see that there are multiple sites on which you can download fonts (for example www.dafontfree.io). Here you can download fonts, after which you will have to install them on your PC. *I'm not certain this can be done on the uni-computers, but we will see.*
Installing can be done by opening the downloaded file and clicking the admin-function "Install" on top of the opened font page. The font is then added to all your programs, so also to PhotoShop. You might have to restart PhotoShop, so be sure to **save** your progress.

Rectangle tool (U)

- The Rectangle tool can be used in creating rectangle shaped shapes, in the brother functions multiple other shapes can be selected such as rounded rectangles, ellipses, polygons, lines and custom shapes. You can select even more shapes by choosing a shape in the option bar of this latter brother function.
- As with the text tool, you can change the effects on the shape by adding them in the layer styles (under Layer, or by double clicking on the specific layer).

So this actually were all the Drawing and type tools I wanted to show you and with that we are almost at the end of this manual.

Navigation tools

In editing you sometimes want to zoom in on certain parts of the poster in order to also cover the small details.
- You can do this by using the Zoom tool (Z)   and then click on the part you want to zoom in on. You can unzoom by using the Zoom tool with Alt and then click.

- Furthermore, the Hand tool (H). When you are zoomed in, you can stroll through your poster by using the Hand tool. With this tool you can grab your poster by clicking and stroll through it by dragging.

That were all the tools I wanted to show you. Now I hope that you have enough knowledge to create a beautiful poster. The only thing that last you know is to save the project and export your poster.

Saving and exporting

You can save and export your project and poster in the Files tab.
- Saving the project can be done by "Files" → "Save", and save your project as a PhotoShop file.
- Exporting the project can be done by "Files" → "Export" → "Export as…". Here you can select the format you want to export to (either choose .png or .jpeg) and where you want to export it to. You can also change some additional options, but these are not really important for now.

Then we are done. I hope that you have learned a lot and thought this all was useful. I hope you are content with the result, and have become to understand and like photoshopping. I want to thank you for your attending and attention. DIAFRAGMA wishes you well.