

Arlington Camera Club ... 01-06-2010

Notes ...

Enhancing your images through Photoshop Elements ...

Note ... The best images are made in the camera and then adjusted in PS for an optimized result. You cannot take a bad image and make it good in PS but you sure can improve a good image and make it even better!!!

Monitor Calibration ... this is critical to Color Management and Work Flow

Setting up Photoshop Elements ...

Recommend version 6 or 7 or 8

Open program ... Edit> Color Settings.

Check "Always Optimize for Printing" Adobe RGB

s-RGB ... best for e-mailing photos and for the web.

Edit> Preferences:

Customize for individual needs

Suggestions: Color Picker ... Adobe .

Performance ...P E use 70%.

Editing Images:

Full Edit Mode in the Edit Section of P E ...

Other Edit modes ... Full Edit v Quick Edit v Guided Edit

Set up Full Edit:

Click on Window menu and select functions for the work space.

Basic set up: Tools, Layers, Undo History, Palette Bin and Project Bin. Histogram may be added but do not clutter the work space.

Majority of editing or adjustments will be done using Enhance and/or Layers. In many images a combination of the two.

Download images into the computer. How to do it: Check web site of the Arlington Camera Club.

Open the image in P E.

Raw... if a RAW capture P E opens in Camera Raw. If a JPEG then P E opens as JPEG but can be opened in RAW

Camera Raw: Adjustments

Note the symbols across the top left of C R. These are helpful but all of these adjustments can be done in P E.

Opening screen: Basic.

Note Histogram. Two triangles: one on white end and one on black end. If either or both triangles are lit, Black end will be blue and White end will be red, it means that the tonal values are out of range

White Balance: Presets available: Auto, Daylight, Cloudy, etc. Custom W B can be created by sliding the Temperature Adjustment bar

Set the White Balance

Auto Adjustment: Under the White Balance section. Any of these sliders can be adjusted such as Exposure, Recovery, Fill Light, Blacks, etc to improve the image

Lit triangles in the Histogram? Try to correct them. Try Exposure ... for either White or Black. Also move the Blacks Slider to try to improve the triangle on the Black side of the Histogram and use the Recovery Slider to improve the triangle on the White side of the Histogram

Shadows in the image can be helped with Fill Light

Clarity and Vibrance Adjustment: Clarity will enhance the mid tone contrast. Vibrance will improve the least saturated colors the most. Do not use Saturation

Open image in 8 bit depth ...

JPEG capture:

If the capture is made in JPEG, P E will open the image as a JPEG

To Open in Camera Raw ... File> Open as> find the JPEG ... Click on it > File name> drop down menu> select Camera Raw

Same adjustments as in a Raw image except fewer choices in White Balance

Open Image ... 8 bit depth is the default

Once image is open

Save the image with an appropriate name and save frequently.

Note: File> Open Recently Edited File ... a very valuable short cut to get to recent files

Work Flow:

Note ... The best approach to optimizing an image (from the perspective of flexibility and ultimate image quality) is to utilize a layer-based workflow.

Note ... Do not adjust the Background image. It is the baseline.

Create a Duplicate of the Background image

Background Copy> right click on Background Layer> Duplicate Layer> left click OK
Note new layer

Lens Distortion ... Correct on Background Copy ... Filters> Correct Camera Distortion

Shadow/Highlights Dark images can be helped with this adjustment. Must be on a Background Copy Enhance menu> Adjust Lighting> Shadow/Highlights

Crop and/or Straighten ... Recommend using Crop Tool for both

Remove blemishes ... e.g dust spots from the sky Clone Stamp Tool and/or Spot Healing Brush Best done on new layer In Layers Palette click on Box with arrow in it Next to Layers Circle with diagonal line

Layers Palette:

Levels ... New Layer ... adjust black and white points with the Histogram

Hue/Saturation: New Layer ... Permits an interface to enhance by saturation of 6 different colors and a Master. General rule ... keep H/S at 20 and under. Too much Saturation makes an image look phony and gaudy.

Hue slider should be used sparingly. Lightness slider ... not at all.

Photo Filter ... new layer ... can mimic a photo filter used on the lens ... e.g warm up a coolish image or it can correct a color cast or imbalance

Brightness/Contrast ... new layer ...

Note ... As each layer is created ... an "Eye" appears next to the layer This "Eye" turns the layer on and off

Note ... as each layer is created it also is created with a white box in the same rectangle ... this is a Layer Mask

Enhance

More adjustments Need to be done on a Background Copy and unlike Layers these are not adjustable once set Cannot be revisited but can be used again by doing the adjustment again

Note ... Avoid the Automatic Adjustments

Some of the Adjustments under Enhance:

Lighting, Color, and Convert to Black/White

Under Lighting is an important adjustment ... Shadows/Highlights.

Under Color are several important adjustments:

Remove Color Cast

Adjust Skin Tone ... Note not an easy one to use

Color Curves ... presets are available

Color Variations ... use Highlights ... add or subtract a little at a time

Also under Enhance:

Sharpening Tools: Unsharp mask and Adjust Sharpness

Convert to Black/White

Note the presets ... do not be afraid to play with them

Sepia tone ...convert to B/W ... then add warming Photo Filter or Adjust Skin Tone

Targeted adjustments ...

Dodge and Burn ... Two ways to approach this ...

Dodge and Burns Tools from the Tool bar ... or

New Layer> Overlay Blend Mode> Color Picker> Brush Tool

Note ... Color Picker ... when using the Eyedropper Tool be sure it is set at 3x3

Use brush at a 2% to 10%

Default Color Picker is Black/White ... Paint with White to lighten a specific area and vice versa or

Click on the Foreground Color and use the Eyedropper to select a color and paint with a specific color

Targeted selections of a specific part of the image ... use Tools:

Lasso, Magic Wand, Quick Selection and Magic Extractor

Note Marching Ants when a selection is made

After Selection: soften the edge of the selection ... This softens transition between image and selection. Amount depends on situation

Selection> Feathering or Modify or Refine Edge

Adjust selection same way as image is adjusted. Recommend a layer approach whenever possible

Note: When a Selection is made in Layers, the “marching ants” disappear as the adjustment is applied. In Enhance ... “marching ants” do not disappear until the adjustment is done

When done: save the image. Close image ... Wait 20-30 minutes and look at it again.

Note: To arrive at desired result may take going back and forth from Layers to Enhance

Finish Image:

Save as Master File! And Back up!!!

Flatten Layers Layers> Flatten

Size Image:

Image> Resize> Image Size ... Set Image H and W and Resolution... 300 for printing.

Sharpening:

Recommend ... Flatten and Size image before sharpening

Enhance> Adjust Sharpness ... Adjust Amount and Radius. Evaluate Lens Blur or Motion Blur Evaluate Sharpness at 100% in preview window Do not over sharpen ... Halos

Selective Sharpening: Create a Selection of area to be sharpened ... Feather ... to blend with Image ... Definitive demarcation ... 2-4 pixels ... Gradual demarcation ... 40-60 pixels

Edge Burn or Vignette:

Filter> Correct Camera Distortion> Vignette

Adjust darken/lighten ... then Adjust Midpoint

Printing:

File> Print> Printer Dialog Box

Select correct printer

Orient Image

Position Image

Color Management ... P E manages colors

Source space ... Adobe RGB(1998)

Printer profile ... Working RGB-Adobe RGB(1998)

Rendering Intent ... Relative Colorimetric

Printer Preferences:

Depends on the Printer ...

Note ... match paper profiles in printer with paper

Note: An image that is looked at on a monitor is being looked at with transmitted light. When that same image is looked at it as a print, it is being looked at with reflected light.

Competition

Image should have 1/8 inch white border to stand out against black mounting board

Printing can be done on larger paper ... then trimmed to size with 1/8 inch white border

OR

Create a white border in P E

Image> Resize> Canvas Size> New Size

Width and Height ... enter value in inches ... e g .125 for 1/8 inch

Click on Relative

Canvas extension color: White

Click OK

Note: If printing at a commercial outlet e g Costco ... Instruct Costco to print it frameless

Suggested Equipment and Suggested Reading

Monitor Calibration:

Spyder 3 by Data Color

X-Rite Eye-One Display

Pantone Huey Pro

Reading and Web Sites:

Real World Digital Photography 2nd Ed.; Katrin Eismann, Sean Duggan, and Tim Grey; Peachpit Press; 2004

Color Confidence; 2nd Ed.; Tim Grey; Sybex; 2006

Adobe Photoshop Elements: Classroom in a Book; Adobe Press (depends on the version)

The Photoshop Elements Book: Scott Kelby and Matt Kloskowski; New Riders (depends on the version)

Adobe.com
Tutorials; Updates; Books

ElementsVillage.com

TimGrey.com
DVD's; Digital Darkroom Quarterly; You Tube; Books
"Ask Tim Grey"; e-mail service answering questions about Photoshop. (Free)

NAPP ... National Association of Photoshop Professionals; NAPP.com
Tutorials; DVD's; Books

Appendix:

Color Management:

Calibrate the Display. Calibrating your monitor is primary step in setting up a digital darkroom and working on images in Photoshop.

Monitor Calibration tools:
Spyder 3 by Data Color
X-Rite Eye-One Display
Pantone Huey Pro

Color Management is critical to ensure that a print can be produced from the digital darkroom that has a reasonable similarity to the image created in P E. Keep in mind that when an image is looked at on a monitor it is being looked at with transmitted light and when it is looked at it in a print, it is being looked at with reflected light. BUT the only hope of coming even close to what is wanted as an end product is to start with a calibration of the display.

Color Spaces:

There are several working color spaces used in the preparation of images. Adobe RGB (1998) ... s RGB ... CMYK ... ProPhoto RGB ... Working spaces are defined as the range of colors available to produce an image. There are a lot of variations and combinations here, for example, a monitor has to be capable of seeing all of these variations and a printer has to be able to print them.

The space which will be used most is Adobe RGB (1998). This is for images which will be printed as the final output. And it is best suited for photo ink jet printers.

s-RGB is best for e-mailing photos and for the web.

Layer:

A layer is a digital imaging editing tool to separate different elements of an image. A layer enables an illustration to be built with individual graphic elements that can be moved and adjusted over and over to obtain a desired result.

It can be compared to a transparency on which imaging effects are applied. Please take note that the image will need to be "Flattened" or the Layers will need to be "Merged" after all of the adjustments are done to apply the total effect of all the layers.

Levels Histogram:

This layer will help create a white point and a black point for the image and will add contrast and depth.

One way to establish these points is to hold down the Alt Key and then move the sliders starting with the right or white point first. The image will turn black and the first white

seen on the screen will be the white point. The same can be done with the black point and the opposite will occur, the image will turn white and the first point seen will be black. These are not hard and fast points and they can be adjusted to suit the needs of the image. The Middle Slider is for Mid Tones.

Tonal values:

This is also known as Dynamic Range and it is the range of values to express the lightness or darkness of an image. The range is expressed as a number from 1 to 255. These are a series of vertical lines which are read as a Histogram. If this range is exceeded in an image, the vertical line that expresses this range will be up against the end of the Histogram. If the subject of the image were to be that of totally neutral values, for example weathered wood, all of the vertical lines would appear in middle area of the Histogram with very little spread. If the subject were a sunrise or sunset and the sun was in the picture than the range would be all across the Histogram and most likely there would some of the values against either end or both ends of the Histogram.

A few Key Board Short Cuts

Ctrl 0 ... will fit the image into the workspace.

Ctrl + ... enlarges the image

Ctrl - ... shrinks the image

Bracket Keys will enlarge and decrease the size of any brush. e g Clone Stamp Tool, Healing Tool, Paint Brush. Right key will enlarge.

B ... activates Brush Tool

Ctrl D ... deselect

Space Bar ... activates the Hand Tool to permit navigating around the image

File Formats:

JPEG ... JPG is the file extension, but it is properly referred to as JPEG, short for Joint Photographics Experts Group, named for the committee that created the JPEG standard

TIFF ... (Tagged Image File Format) ... A widely used graphics file format. TIFF allows for some compression and customization. TIFF files are compressed to save space and there are several compression methods. When saving your image as a TIFF ...
Compression> None (this means no additional compression)

PSD ... This is the native layered file format extension of Photoshop. Layers enable an illustration to be built with individual graphic elements that can be moved and adjusted over and over to obtain a desired result.