

NEWSLETTER



March 2007

Here is the first newsletter of 2007. If you have any tips, interesting pictures, websites that can help the cause or anything pertaining to Elements let me know, (elements@bkbrown.net) and I'll publish it here and on the website.

I have also posted two new tutorials on my web site. These replace the old "Printing Better Photos" which I thought was not really informative enough.

The two new ones:

UNDERSTANDING IMAGES, Part 1. Guide to File Formats

UNDERSTANDING IMAGES, Part 2. Guide to Resolution, Size and Printing.

I think these will be helpful in explaining the nature of images and producing not only better prints but also uploading pictures to the web.

TIPS

Elliptical Marquee & Rectangular Marquee Tools

When you are using the elliptical or rectangular marquee tools for selection it can sometimes be very frustrating to get the shape to conform to the size you want and to position it where you need it.

There is an easy way around these frustrations. When making a selection with either tool remember the following:

Normal Selection - Elliptical or rectangular selection is formed as you drag away with one of the edges placed where you clicked.

With ALT Key pressed – Elliptical or rectangular selection is formed as you drag with the center or corner placed where you clicked.

With SHIFT Key pressed - Selection is forced to be circular or square.

With SPACE BAR pressed - Selection can be moved while it is still being defined, to position it exactly where you want it, and ensure the correct selection dimensions are achieved.

It's that simple, try it out on a plain white background and you will find it very easy and then you can use it on your images with confidence.

Straight Lines Using the Brush or Pencil Tool

People often have a problem trying to keep a straight line (vertically or horizontally) when using the brush or pencil tool. If you are, say, trying to paint a straight line across the top or down the side of an image to create a frame effect it is easy to achieve a dead straight line by holding down the shift key while moving the tool either horizontally or vertically.

Should you want to draw several straight lines not necessarily just horizontal or vertical then there is a method called the point to point method. Click on the image where you wish to start and hold down the shift key and click on the places around the image you desire and the software will draw lines between the click points and at the angle that a straight line takes.

Virtual Photographer

I stumbled upon this little gem one day on the web; Virtual Photographer is a **free** set of filters that can easily be added to Elements. The web site is www.optikvervelabs.com and as mentioned the download is no charge. Below is an example using one of the filters. I will cover this more at one of our meetings but in the meantime please download it and try it out. If anyone is interested in doing this send me an e-mail and I will give you the full download and installing instructions (which are very easy, even I could do it!)



ORIGINAL



COLOR FILTER

The filters are not just for pictures of flowers etc. as there are many effects for portraits, landscapes or any other picture you want to change. There are a lot of preset filters or you can cook up your own. I think this could be very interesting for special effects and after all the price is right!

Backgrounds

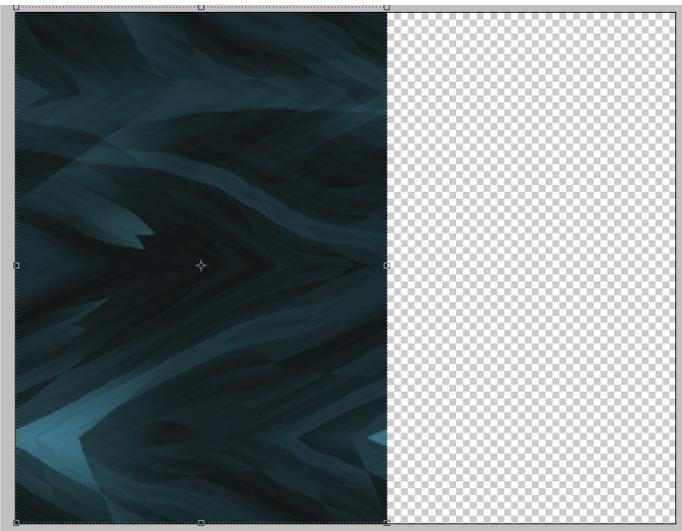
I think we all have had the occasion where we wanted to take a particular shot and mount it onto a nice background but weren't sure how to do this or what to use for the background.

As many of you know I "collect" pictures of many types and keep them together in a folder I call "Stock Pictures." In this folder I have many other folders to categorize pictures such as a folder for "Animals" with sub-folders for dogs, cats, exotic etc. I also keep abstract files and one I have is called Textures. In this folder I have many textures or backgrounds which are ideal for creating a canvas onto which you can mount a picture.

To illustrate this I took a picture of waves (shown below) and then decided to mount it onto a suitable background.



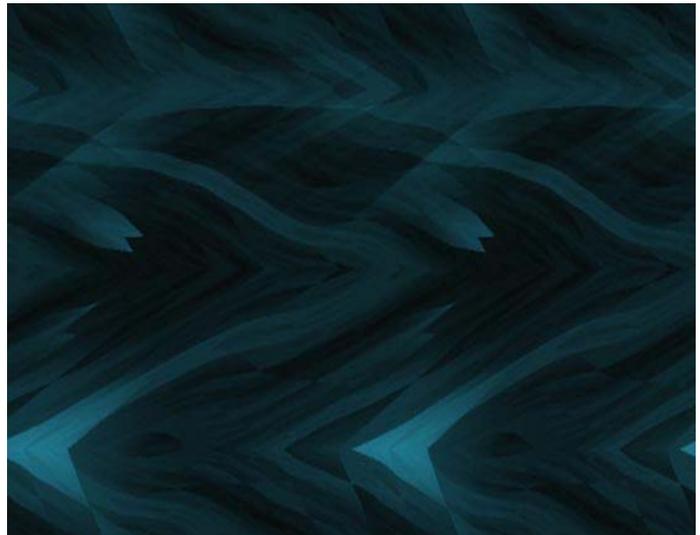
I wanted a finished size of 8" x 10" (suitable for framing) so I created a new canvas with a transparent background and opened and copied one of the textures I have, called "waves" and pasted it onto the blank canvas.



This was the first image pasted covering half the transparent canvas.

Note these sizes are not to scale for this article but just to show the idea.

I then pasted the same image again onto the canvas which completely covered it and gave me a very attractive background which I thought suitable for the picture.



Opening the original picture and SELECT>ALL, then EDIT>COPY and returning to the background EDIT>PASTE I have my picture with a very attractive surround/background. Of course this is my taste and as I am frequently reminded all my taste is in my mouth it might not suit you.

However I am sure you get the idea behind the exercise. I will try to find a way of putting some of these textures up on the web site but until then I will show some samples at the next SIG meeting.

Finally here are a couple of pictures sent to me by Lyn Oakleaf of an albino peacock. It is a most unusual picture and I am going to add it to our gallery.



Don't forget if you find any pictures like this one, create anything you would like to share or stumble across a notable web site let me know and I will include it either in the newsletter or on the web.

