

## **Digital Presentation Tuesday March 3rd 2009**

### ***High Dynamic Range (HDR)***

Preparation: Basically it is the process of taking multiple images at differing exposure and blending in Photoshop to produce a single image.

A tripod though not essential would obviously be beneficial, I personally take 5 exposures using one stop increments, which Adobe recommends, as any less they say could introduce banding. On most modern Dig. SLRs this can be set automatically, if not take an exposure reading of the scene and adjust each setting manually.

Using in exposure stops +2 +1. 0. -1 -2 should give excellent results, though whatever method is chosen make sure it is the exposure time and not the aperture which is changed, otherwise depth of field problems etc will occur.

### **Photoshop CS2 Onwards**

File>Automate>Merge to HDR. Choose either File or Folder. These are best done as Raw Images and in order to merge these files it can take a considerable time, depending on your computer to download. I normally tick the aligned image at the bottom of the box, though whilst essential for hand held images should strictly speaking be redundant for a tripod, you will then get a combined image together with various thumbnails on the L/H side of the screen. The only control this gives on the resulting 32 bit image is the setting of white point – not usually satisfactory. Change bit depth, by clicking on button and change to either 8 bit or 16 bit. This opens another control box. This opens Exposure and Gamma default setting- Exposure control is obvious, reducing Gamma increases contrast. If this is not satisfactory tick the other options. Next comes Compress Highlights and equalise Histogram, both these functions are purely automatic and rarely successful. However the last item Local Adaptation I find the best because it allows you to use the Toning curve and Histogram facility.

Once you have played around with this to your satisfaction click OK.

Don't forget to utilise the various tools in Photoshop to make the image look real, there is a danger in certain circumstances of producing images

That are slightly weird or false. I generally tend to use the Burn and Dodge method I used to demonstrate. I.e Create new layer, change blending mode to Overlay and tick box marked use 50% grey. Use soft black brush for burning in and white for dodging- don't forget to reduce opacity to around 10% and increase or decrease accordingly.

There is also a Plug in Programme called Photomatix, especially for HDR which is excellent, prices can be obtained on the web, though bear in mind present dollar/sterling position.

### ***Improvements in Portraiture.***

#### **Reduce "Hot Spots".**

Duplicate image, change layer mode to Darken, reduce opacity to 40%. Use Clone tool make sure the align box at top is unticked. Take sample of colour nearby which is OK. , then gently stamp on area that requires attention. When finished either flatten or merge visible.

### **Whitening Teeth:**

Select area then image>adjust> hue saturation. Instead of Master in Edit box choose yellow and reduce saturation by a small amount-don't overdo it!

### **Softening complexion:**

Only of use really on female portraits. Firstly duplicate image, apply Gaussian Blur app. 25 pixels reduce opacity of this layer, Normally by app. same amount . ie 25% if skin condition etc requires use a good 10% more-35/40%. Then press and hold alt key and click on layer mask ikon at bottom of layers panel. this results in a Black mask. This hides the blurry layer. Avoid detail areas such as eyes , eyebrows , mouth etc and paint over face with white. When finished if you Alt/click on Mask you can see if any areas missed. Load it as a selection by pressing control and layer mask. Click on image then Ctrl /J to create new layer. This looks pretty horrible, but persevere- Image>adjust>Desaturate this layer, the Filter>other>High Pass and drag radius slider to zero, then gradually slide across till some detail appears in this mask. With all three layers visible now change Layer mode to Soft Light. You will the see a much improved image and if necessary you can amend the opacity of top layer to suit.

### ***Quick Sky insert:***

Firstly import sky and image. Position sky so that it covers the foreground, reduce opacity of sky temporarily if necessary to assist in positioning.

Use Gradient tool Black to Transparent and holding Shift key draw from near top of image to just below where sky finishes together with Quick Mask. Make selection, then Edit> Clear .

Go to Layers palette and click fx icon at bottom palette - Choose Blending Options and pick Underlying layer at base of box , drag slider across from left to right-you will see the sky gradually recede from base, together with several artefacts appearing. Don't worry, change Blending mode to Darken, they will disappear! There is no definitive amount of radius but as an example in demo I found on image shown around 160 seemed OK.

If any problems with the above methods please contact me at club or e mail me-shall be pleased to help if possible

**Geoff Robinson**