PHOTOSHOP FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Part 1 BASIC WORKFLOW

According to Wikipedia, the concept of workflow goes back to Adam Smith, but the term Work Flow is very much a 21st century application. Back in "film days" I dropped 10 or more rolls of film through the film slot at Baboo Labs in NYC's photo district. The next morning one of my photo assistants would have the transparencies laid out on my light box ready to select and ship to the client. Life was simple then.

Now I come home from a shoot and process my own images. At 3AM my nose hits the keyboard and I wake up to a screen full of ggggggggggggggggggs. Seriously, with all of the advantages of digital photography comes the additional burden to the photographer of doing his or her own processing to get the best possible images. This new advantage and additional work creates the need for maximum efficiency and organization.

The photographers workflow as I see it, has 3 major parts. 1. Preparing the camera equipment for maximum creativity. 2. Processing and storing the images for output. 3. Output. In the exercises that follow we will be mostly concerned with the processing and storage stages, but not ignoring the camera equipment preparation.

Camera Equipment: Media cards, uploading, storage systems, and other good habits

- Lots of Media Cards. If you consider the money you have spent for camera equipment, then think about how you would feel if you ran out of space on a trip because you didn't want to spend the extra money for large capacity media cards. Remember, you can no longer borrow a roll of film from a friend. But that's a good thing. One of the great advantages of digital photography is its freedom of continuous shooting. I fill a 8GB media card in a typical day's shoot. I occasionally fill three 8GB cards.

- Set your camera's color profile to Adobe RGB 1998. Some cameras are factory set at sRGB IEC61966, which is a narrower standard that works well on monitor screens and projectors. It is OK to downgrade to it for your slide shows, but upgrading from it to Adobe RGB 1998 will not improve your images to the RGB 1998 standard.

- Set your camera's sharpen perameter to "0." Do all of your sharpening in Photoshop after all of the image refining has been completed. This way your refining is done on the purest data possible.

- Another almost essential piece of travel equipment is a DVD burner. I use 4GB media cards and a Delkin DVD BurnAway. When traveling, my SOP is to begin burning the day's take before supper, and clean and repack equipment after supper. I am then ready for another sunrise session. On a long trip, the DVDs get mailed home.

Computer hardware:

At home, a large capacity computer is a must. An important factor in improving your skills is to take many images—often. You will eventually need extra HDs (hard disks). I now use 2 internal and 6 external drives, and I'm running out of space. Why so many? In my case (which could possibly become your case), though I have many finished images backed up "in the bank," I constantly need quick access to just about any image I ever made for stock sales. Your needs may not be as imminent, but if you plan to sell stock photography, large capacity HDs are handy storage devices.

- One 1.0-TB Main HD containing programs and first Scratch Disk*.
- Two 2.0-TB (two terabyte) external HDs. One for downloading all RAW files and new film scans, and one for backup.
- One additional 2.0TB internal HD for storing stock and working "My Pictures," and "intermediate**" .psd files and current work storage. This disk also serves as a second Scratch Disk*.
- Two additional 2.0-TB external HDs for redudant backup and stored in a bank Safety Deposit box. Thes are swapped monthly.

A Scratch Disk is the HD space that stores the work in progress. Each time you perform an operation or add a layer, Photoshop treats it as another step and saves the previous step in the "History" of your work. These "History" steps act as buffers that you can retrieve if you have gone overboard in your corrections
*** Intermediate files are files that are worked to a point where they may have a future use that is not currently determined. They contain all Layers and History that may be changed at a future date.*

Of course you won't have to run out and buy these hard disks all at once. But you will find that HDs fill up fast when you are shooting 18 megapixels per image. Buy as needed. Don't worry, they're getting cheaper.

Software

Photoshop is not just for photographers. Graphic designers, illustrators art directors, artists, counterfeiters and many other people use Photoshop. There is something for everybody in Photoshop. But, because we are photographers we should set up Photoshop especially for us. The following adjustments to the default settings should be made before beginning to work in Photoshop.

Fig. 1-1

- Go to **Edit/Color Profile** and change the default color profile to **Adobe RGB-1998**.

- Go to **Edit/Preferences/General** and set: **Units** to "inches," and **History States** to "40."

- Open any image and go to **Image/Adjustments/ Levels.** Double-click on the black eyedropper in the lower right corer of the panel that pops up. A color pallet will pop up. In the three boxes labeled R, G, & B, replace the "0" with 10 (See Fig. 1-1). Click **OK**. Back in Levels, double click the white eyedropper and replace the "255" in each box with 245. Click **OK**. Back in Levels again click **OK**. A pop-up box will ask: Save new the new target colors as defaults? Click **Yes**.

- Also see Part 2, Page 2, **Workflow Defaults line 6,** for Camera Raw settings.

ALSO BECOME FAMILIAR WITH:

- A list of shortcuts and the ability to customized your own shortcuts can be found at **Edit/Shortcuts** in the main menu, or by keyboarding **<Alt+Shift+Ctrl+K>** (So, there's your first shortcut).

- There is a list of Keyboard Shortcuts for use as a desk reference, and a formula for how to write and **Action** (algorythm or Macro) and use **Batch** automations in Part 8 Appendix of these workshop notes.

Photoshop Course Topics:

- Bridge: Organizing, rating, and selecting images, slide shows (Class review).
- Camera Raw: First refinments. tools (when and when not to use them).
- Layers: When and how to use adjustment layers.
- Channels: Panoramas the hard way, Using Channels to enhance detail . . .
- Creativity: Blending images, Montage, Gradients . . .
- Special Effects: Composites, Typography, and lots of fun stuff . . .

The complete course with note sheets and videos, including images, can be found at **www.miltonheiberg.com** *and it is free.*

Feel free to use the images that are in the Images folder on the accompanying CD, or from the Website list of images to practice your skills throughout the course exercises. Keep in mind, however, that they are copyrighted and not to be sold or used commercially.

If you have any problems working with these lessons, please call me at 407-658-4869.
Best times are Wednesday through Friday between 7:00 and 9:00 PM,
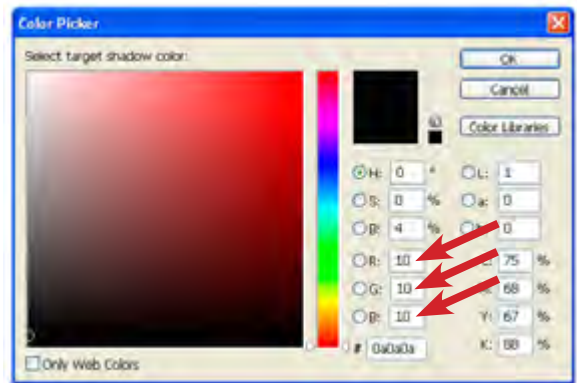
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