

Photoshop Using a Mac

Exercise 5 – Basic Channel Stunts

Part 1

Selecting Objects with Channels

1. Open and duplicate the Balloons.jpg file. We are going to remove the background.
 - a. Check that it is in RGB
2. Find the channel where the object you want to select (the balloons) look darkest
 - a. You can cycle through the layers by holding down the Command button and tapping 2, 3, 4, and 5.
3. Duplicate the layer (the Blue layer) so you don't destroy it.
 - a. Control-click (right-click) the layer and choose Duplicate Channel
 - i. Or drag the channel over the Create New Channel button
 - b. The default name, "Blue Copy" works nicely.
 - c. Turn on the visibility for the "Blue Copy" channel. Turn off visibility for the "Blue" channel.
4. Adjust the Blue Copy layer so the balloons are black and the background is white
 - a. Choose Image – Adjustments – Levels to get the Levels dialog box
 - b. Slide the little black triangle (just under the Input Levels graph) to the right until the balloons are as black as possible while still seeing their outlines
5. Using the white eyedropper, click the gray background to make it white.
 - a. Keep clicking until the background is as white as you can get it.
 - b. This is resetting the white in the image
6. Touch up the balloons with black and the background to white
 - a. Use the Brush tool
 - b. Tap the D key to switch your chip colors to black and white.
 - i. Tapping the X key will switch the background and foreground chips
 - c. Remember that [and] will change your brush size
7. Control-click the thumbnail of the Blue Copy channel to load it as a selection
 - a. This selects all of the white, the opposite of what we really want
8. Reverse the selection
 - a. Choose Select – Inverse (or press Command + Shift + I).
9. Turn on the composite channel (labeled "RGB") and turn off the Blue Copy channel

10. Open the Layers panel and make the background editable (Layer – New – Layer from Background).
11. Add a mask to the newly editable layer.
12. Now you have the balloons isolated. You can add your own sky (or underwater scene!).
 - a. You may want to use the Minimum filter to remove the halo effect
 - i. Filter – Other - Minimum
 - ii. Page 655 of Photoshop CS5 The Missing Manual

Part 2

Creating a Silhouette Effect

Open an image with a contrasted background (such as Indian.jpg). Follow Steps 1 – 9 above to get a silhouette of the image. When you see marching ants around your subject you are ready to proceed.

1. Add a new layer at the top of your stack
 - a. Click the Create New Layer button at the bottom of the Layers panel
 - b. Drag the new layer to the top of the stack if necessary
2. Fill your selection with black
 - a. Choose Edit – Fill and choose black from the “Contents” section
3. Add a Solid Color adjustment layer
 - a. Click on the half-black, half-white circle at the bottom of the Layers panel
 - b. Choose a bright color
4. Move the solid color layer between the silhouette layer and the original image layer
5. That’s it!
 - a. Or you can add another layer to create a cool, if retro, iPod ad