



NICK SPENCE

www.nick-spence.com



Nick is a genius when it comes to hunting down the best stories, sites and individuals for improving your Photoshop existence. See who's made it this issue by turning to page 10.



ROBERT ANSELM

www.chainstyle.com



Robert has a very impressive website full of Photoshop goodies. Turn to page 36 where he shares some of his knowledge and reveals how to mimic the look of graduated camera lenses in Photoshop.



GILES ANGEL

www.angelphoto.co.uk



Giles is a professional image wrangler and can create pretty much anything with Photoshop. We tasked him with using the Liquify tool to create caricatures – see the results on page 28.



GEORGE CAIRNS

www.georgecairns.com



George has a double whammy for you this issue. In addition to his usual stint as Advice expert, he also walks you through the Shadow/Highlight tool and shows how it can improve photos.



CERI JONES

www.ceridjones.com/thames



You may remember Ceri from issue nine's Reader's Profile. He shared how he uses plug-ins with Photoshop to create painterly effects without breaking a sweat. We were so

impressed with his creations that we roped him into writing us a tutorial on using the buZZ.Simplifier plug-in with Photoshop. See how he got on by turning to page 50 and then install the plug-in to try it for yourself.

Photoshop creative

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PPA

Simulate graduated colour photo filters

Create an adjustable graduated colour lens and apply it to a landscape photo without the cost and hassle of the real thing



When first getting hooked on photography you think it's the coolest thing to toy with lenses.

Then you're introduced to filters and find you can play with colour effects that can change at a whim. But filters cost money, and good ones aren't cheap. Plus, you have to take them with you when you shoot, and fiddle with them in the viewfinder.

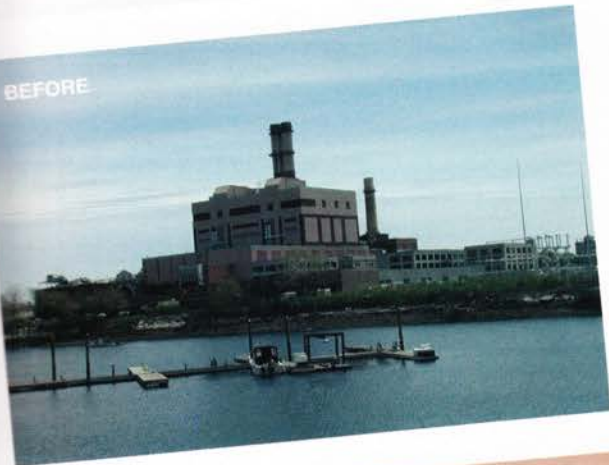
Then Photoshop comes along and suddenly you have a fully stocked darkroom at your

fingertips. You lose the will to sleep and caffeine becomes your best friend. You've hit the jackpot!

But here's the best thing about it. That digital darkroom gives you the ability to re-create most of those filters you once bought. In addition, you can custom create any colour gradient filter, tailoring it to suit your image. Your photographic tools have expanded and there's no limit. What's more, you can apply the filters to the image in any way you see fit. All with a few clicks of the mouse!

So let's get started and cut some filter glass...

BEFORE



KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

GRADIENT FILLS
ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
GRADIENT TOOLS
LAYER MASKS

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

Approximately
20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Robert
Anselmi

ONTHECD

Starter file

AFTER

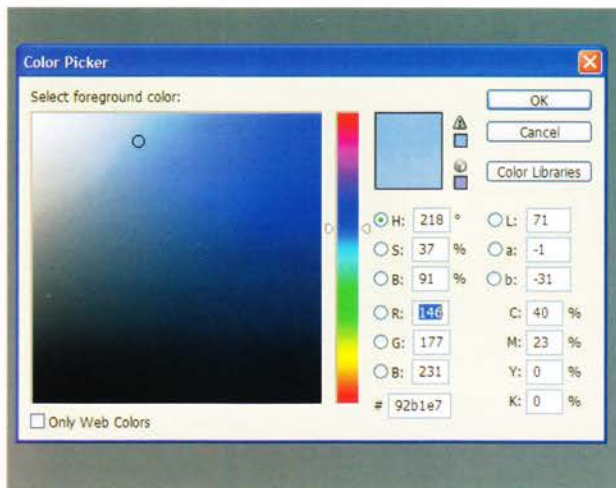


WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7 AND ABOVE

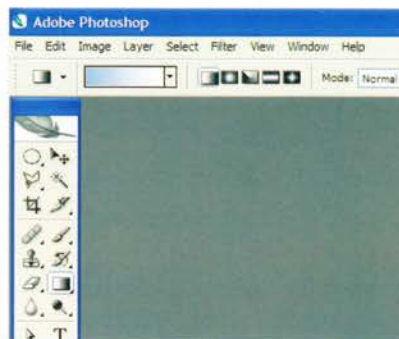


MAKE USE OF GRADIENTS

The basis for your filter

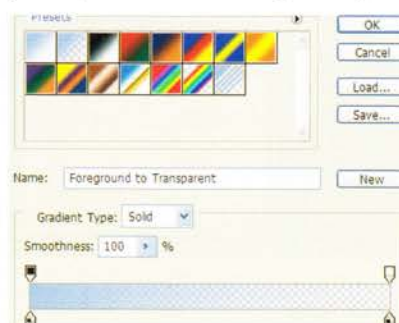
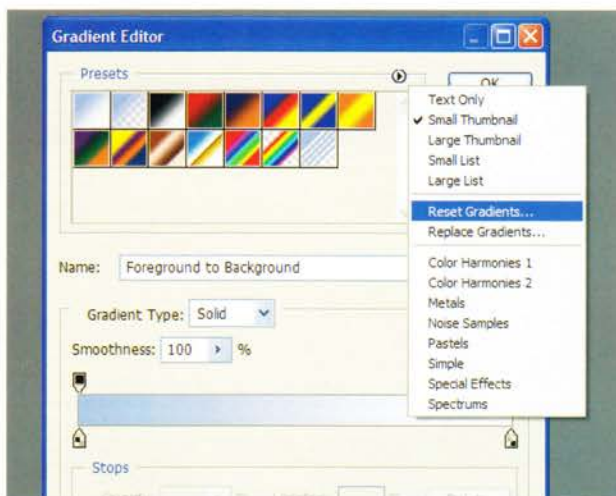


01 Select the right filter colour While any colour can be used for your gradient, matching the right colour to the right scene makes your image more realistic. Orange will enhance a sunset. Mauve, violet and pink enhance a sunrise. Brown, yellow and green create wonderfully stormy skies. And blue is great for midday sky or seas. Start by selecting a sky-blue colour.



02 Access the Gradient tool Click the Gradient tool (G) in the Photoshop Toolbox. The Options bar changes to reveal a gradient preview along the left side. Make sure the Linear Gradient is selected to the right of the gradient preview. This is the default gradient type.

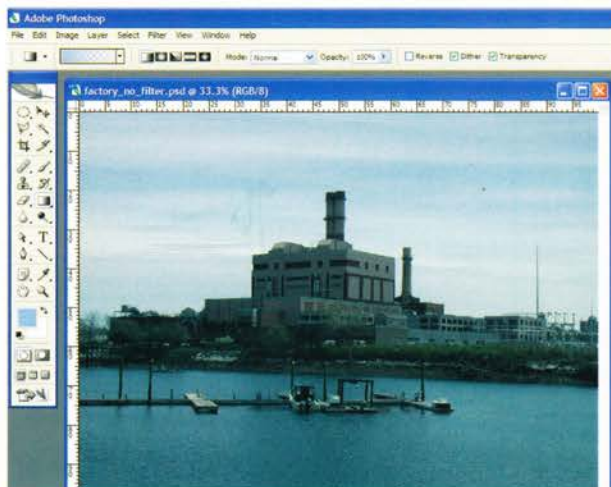
03 Access the Gradient Editor dialog Click the gradient preview to access the Gradient Editor dialog. Make sure the default gradient list is displayed. If you have added or deleted any gradients in the Gradient Editor, you can reset them by clicking on the menu arrow at the top right corner of the dialog and selecting Reset Gradients.



04 Select the Foreground to Transparent gradient Select the Foreground to Transparent gradient from the list. This is the second one in the default gradient list. This gradient picks up the foreground colour you previously selected and automatically adds transparency into the mix.



05 Name the gradient and save Enter a name for your gradient – for example, Blue Sky Gradient. Now click the New button to the right of the Name field. Your gradient is added to the end of the gradient list. Next, click the Save button to save the entire gradient list. It's always good practice to save your presets in case disaster strikes.



06 Find a suitable image Click the OK button to close the Gradient Editor. Since graduated filters work best on landscape or seascape images, try getting out and shooting a few images of distant vistas. Then open one of these photos in Photoshop.

Expert Tip



Clear your mind of transparency!

There's nothing stopping you from kicking the transparency out in favour of an additional colour. One of our favourite combinations has always been a dark-blue/gold-yellow gradient. The blue accentuates the sky, leaving the golden tones to work magic on the landscape below. To re-create this filter, select blue for your foreground colour and yellow for the background colour. Then select the Foreground to Background gradient from the Gradient Editor dialog (the first in the list). Apply the gradient to your image from top to bottom.

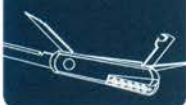
Web Resources



The real thing

Graduated filters come in all shapes and sizes. Cokin filters (www.cokin.com) offers a very flexible and interchangeable system; a great place to start. Tiffen (www.tiffen.com) also produces very good filters at affordable prices, though they tend to be a bit less flexible. Singh-Ray filters (www.singh-ray.com) are for the serious photographer – some of the best filters on the market.

Tool School



The Editor

At the bottom of the Gradient

Editor is a visual representation of your gradient. The swatches ('stops') below affect colours; those above affect transparency. Click above or below to add stops. Click a stop to select/edit it; drag it from the bar to remove it. Hold Alt/Option and drag a stop across the bar to copy it. To delete a gradient from the Editor, hold Alt/Option and hover over it in the list. Click the gradient. Beware! There's no undo for this action.

Web Resources



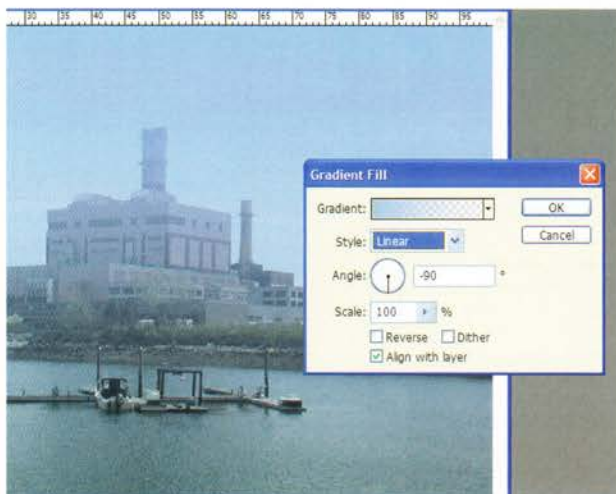
If you have a hunger for gradients...

If you're looking for more places to obtain gradients, you'll find a series of PS Grad Filter gradients on the CD, which you can try out on your own images. Another great resource is the Adobe Studio Exchange (<http://share.studio.adobe.com/axBrowseProduct.asp?p=2>) where you can find an abundance of presets to whet your appetite. Last but not least, you can visit this author's site at www.chainstyle.com where you'll find some additional gradients and other goodies.



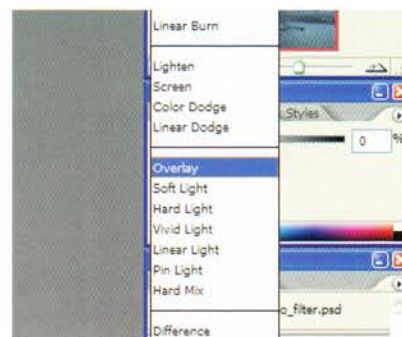
ADDING THE GRADIENT TO THE IMAGE

Merge for filter harmony



07 Create a Gradient adjustment layer

Click the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette and select Gradient. Be careful not to confuse this adjustment layer with the Gradient Map adjustment layer. Change the angle to -90 and click OK.

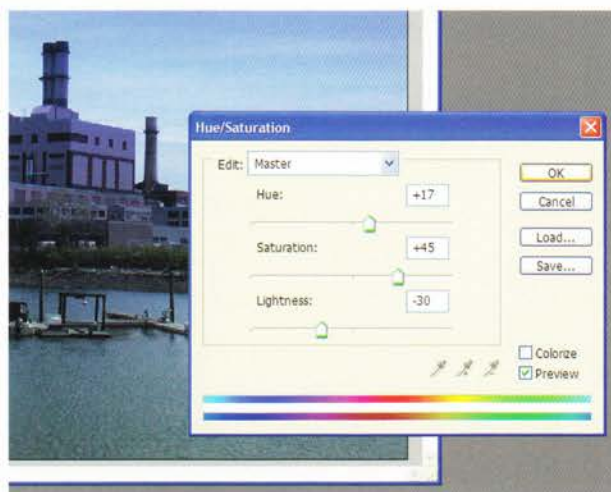


08 Change the blending mode of the adjustment layer Change the blending mode of the Gradient adjustment layer to Overlay. This blends the filter with the underlying image, and also slightly underexposes the image in the non-transparent filter areas – the sky in this case.



09 Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer.

Click the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer icon at the bottom of the Layers palette again, and select Hue/Saturation. Click OK without making any adjustments. Hover your mouse between the Hue/Saturation and Gradient adjustment layers and Alt/Option-click when the mouse cursor changes to the Group symbol. This groups the Hue/Saturation layer with the Gradient adjustment layer below.

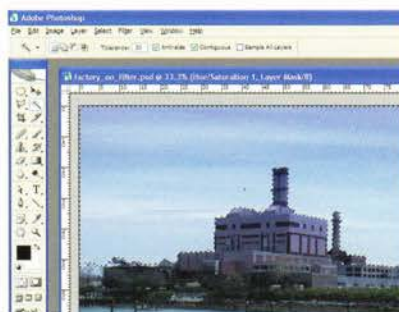


10 Fine-tune your colour adjustments

By first grouping the Hue/Saturation adjustment layer, you can fine-tune the colour and watch the changes affect the Gradient adjustment layer in isolation. Double-click the Hue/Saturation adjustment layer thumbnail to open the dialog, and edit the Hue, Saturation and Lightness sliders to taste. Be careful not to overdo the effect.



11 Correct for exposure If you moved the Lightness slider to the left, the image becomes darker. To compensate, select the Hue/Saturation Layer Mask thumbnail. Press the D and X keys sequentially. This resets and switches the foreground/background colours. Hold the Shift key down, and with the Gradient tool still selected, click and drag from the bottom to the top of the image.



12 Localise your gradient filter Select the Magic Wand tool (W) and set Tolerance to 30, with both the Anti-Alias and Contiguous options checked. Select the image layer and click in an area of the sky. Then, holding your Shift key down to add to the selection, click a few more times until the entire sky is selected.



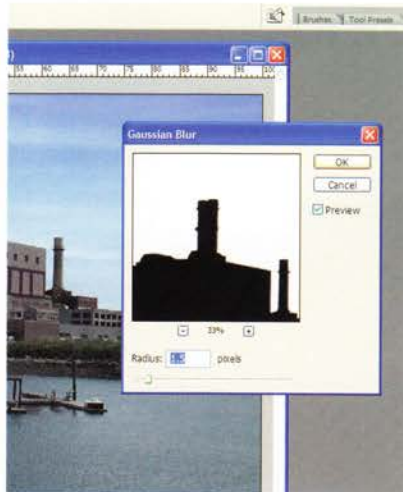
13 Mask everything except the sky Invert the selection (Ctrl/Apple+ Shift+I). Now click the Layer Mask thumbnail on the Gradient adjustment layer, and with black still selected as your foreground colour, fill the selection with it (Alt/Option+Backspace). Now the gradient adjustment only affects the sky. Try doing that with a traditional graduated filter!



OTHER EFFECTS

Different colours give different effects

14 Soften the edges of the mask Press Ctrl/Apple+D to deselect the landscape. With the Layer Mask thumbnail on the Gradient adjustment layer still selected, go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur. Depending on the resolution of your image, enter a small number between .5 and 5 for the Radius. We chose 1.5. Click OK to apply your changes.



15 Change the time of day The beauty of this technique is that you can change the mood of your scene by entering the Hue/Saturation adjustment layer at any point in time, and adjusting the Color palette. Here, the blue sky enhancement is turned into an afternoon sunset. All these adjustments are non-destructive to the original image.



16 Final touches to the sunset To quickly view the scene without any mask adjustments, Shift-click the Mask thumbnails. This toggles them off. Here, both masks are turned off. As a final step, the image layer is duplicated and the sky deleted. Finally, the blend mode is changed to Linear Burn at 25% opacity. This adds to the realism of the sunset.



Photoshop vs traditional filters

Photoshop is very handy when you want to create a filter effect, but how does it compare to the real thing?

Graduated colour filters are mainly used to enhance sunsets and landscape images, or for artistic effects. These filters are composed of a single sheet of glass, plastic or gel that's half colour, gradually shifting to clear transparency. The result in front of a camera is an image with a gradual shift between a colour overlay and the underlying image. The fact that the shift is gradual provides a more natural look to the image. You can buy these filters with varying degrees of transition depending on your needs, but most graduated filters have very soft and smooth transitions.

Graduated colour filters also affect the exposure of your image. Where the coloured part of the filter covers a scene, underexposure occurs (usually anywhere from half a stop to three stops). Where the area of the scene is covered by transparency, overexposure can occur. The amount of exposure difference between the two areas is dependent upon the light in the scene, the way the filter is used and the colour density of the filter.

Photographers also use special filters called 'Neutral Density Graduated filters', which are comprised of various

densities of grey – not colour. This type of filter can correct an exposure difference in a scene. Think of a landscape image which is shot on a bright sunny day. The sky is blown out but the area below the horizon is a perfect exposure. The filter tricks the camera into underexposing the sky, while maintaining the integrity of the land below the horizon. The end result is a correctly exposed image. There are ways of handling Neutral Density filters in Photoshop, however, but that subject is beyond the scope of this tutorial.

Without a filter



With Cokin Gradual B1 (122) filter



Filter created in Photoshop

