

The background is a solid blue color. In the upper right, there is a large, stylized spiral graphic. In the lower half, there is a stylized, abstract figure that resembles a dancer or a person in motion, rendered in a darker shade of blue. The figure has a long, thin leg and a more complex, multi-armed upper body.

Tips and Tricks

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Airbrushing with Photoshop

TEXT AND IMAGES BY HELENE DELILLO

Digital airbrushing with Adobe Photoshop is an indispensable tool for creative directors, digital artists and photographers. Here is one of Dr. Helene's quick fixes for softening skin pores while using the History Brush in Photoshop.



Before



After

I love the History Brush for airbrushing in effects in different areas of an image. You should try this step-by-step technique and then experiment with the History Brush by using different filters and creating cool effects.

1. Open your image.
2. Duplicate background layer, Name it "working retouch."
3. Select the skin you want to soften in the image.
4. Go to the filter menu and select Blur -> Gaussian Blur. Choose an amount that softens to your liking (3 pixels radius) and click OK. The blur should have been applied to your working retouched layer.
5. Now go to the History palette (if not open, got to Window menu and select Show History).
6. From the History sub menu choose New Snapshot. Name this new snapshot Smooth Skin, then click OK.
7. Notice that the History has your original file name as a default history layer, and the new snapshot you created named Smooth Skin as a history layer.

8. Go to the Edit menu and select Undo (Command Z on Mac, or Control Z in Windows) and the blur is gone from the skin. Then deselect your selection (Command or Control D)

9. Now you can use the new Smooth Skin snapshot to paint with. Select the History brush in the tool palette (not the Art History brush).

10. Click to the left of the snapshot you created — the little brush icon is to the left of the Smooth Skin history layer.

11. Now select an opacity of 50 percent by hitting five (5) on your keypad and brush in Smooth Skin. Be careful not to over do it, and make sure not to blur edges in the image that should be sharp (Notice that in this image I need to make sure I don't blur the fur or it would look retouched).

12. Compare the before and after skin textures.

Experiment with this technique on others images. I'm sure you'll find it a fun and easy way to make improvements and airbrush out mistakes on your images.

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