

# ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS

ADVANCED EDITING  
TECHNIQUES AND TRICKS

TED PADOVA

New  
Riders

VOICES THAT MATTER™

# **ADOBE PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS**

## **ADVANCED EDITING TECHNIQUES AND TRICKS**

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3. Name the Layer Smart Blur.
4. On the Smart Blur layer, choose Filter > Blur > Smart Blur. In the Smart Blur dialog box, first choose one of the quality options (Low, Medium, or High). The choice you make depends on the image you use. Look for outlines defined in white with the majority of the image in black.

Choose Edge Only and then adjust the Radius and Threshold sliders. In Figure 7.3, you can see the adjustments I made in the Smart Blur filter dialog box.

5. Click OK in the Smart Blur filter dialog box.
6. Press Ctrl/⌘ + I to invert the image.
7. Duplicate the layer and keep the name as Smart Blur copy. In Figure 7.4, you can see the Layers panel displaying the edits thus far.
8. Select the Smart layer (above the Background) layer and change the blend mode to Dissolve.
9. Add a layer mask to the Smart layer. Create a layer mask by clicking the Add Layer Mask button in the Layers panel.
10. Select the Brush tool and open the Tool Options panel (see Figure 7.5). Select a soft-edge brush and move the size slider to somewhere between 200 and 400.

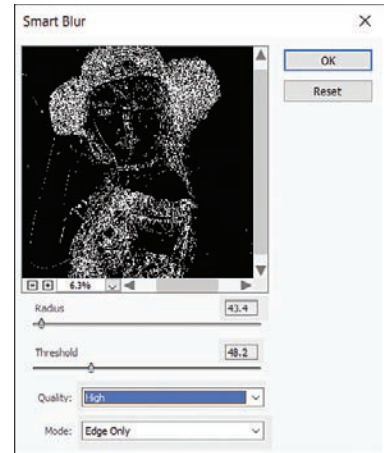


FIGURE 7.3 Adjustments in the Smart Blur filter dialog box.



FIGURE 7.4 The layers panel with the Smart Blur and Smart Blur copy layers.

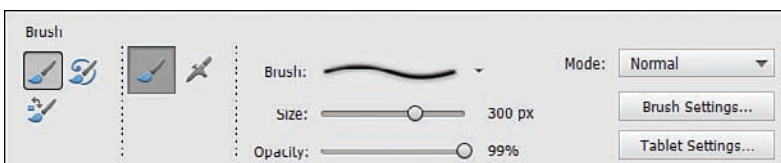
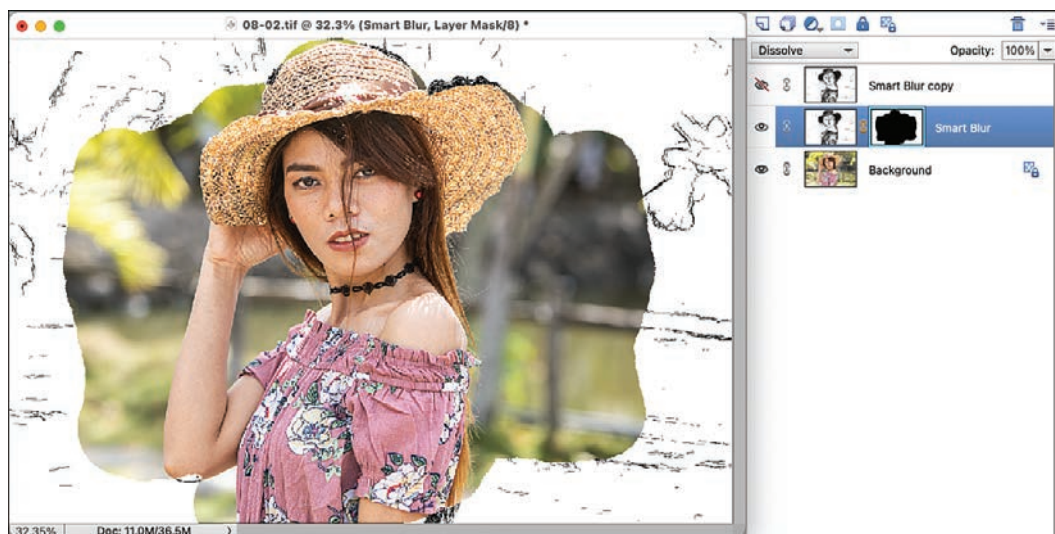


FIGURE 7.5 Brush settings in the Tools panel.

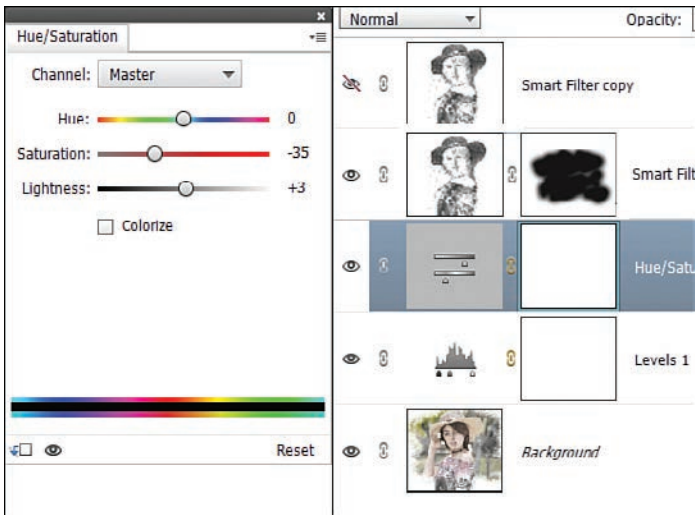
11. Set the default colors to black foreground/white background by pressing the D key on your keyboard.
12. Select the Smart Blur copy layer (at the top of the layer stack) and click the eye icon to hide the layer. We hide the top layer so we can see painting in the Layer Mask and where it will hide part of the image.
13. Click the Layer Mask to select it and then use the Brush tool to paint black on the Layer Mask. Paint random strokes and leave some white areas. In Figure 7.6, you can see the brush strokes I applied to the Layer Mask and the vibe area in the image in the Document window.





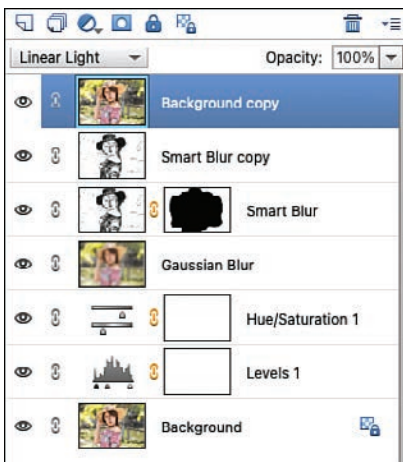
**FIGURE 7.6** Paint the Layer Mask with random brush strokes.

14. Unhide the top layer by clicking the eye icon on the Smart Blur copy layer.
15. Add a Levels adjustment layer by selecting the Background and clicking Levels from the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer drop-down list in the Layers panel. Make some levels adjustments for brightness values. Bring up the highlights and take down the shadows. The exact settings you use depends on your image. Make the adjustments that add a little more punch to the image.
16. Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer by choosing Hue/Saturation from the Create New Fill or Adjustment Layer drop-down list in the Layers panel. Again, exact settings depend on your image. In my example, I bumped up the Saturation a little by moving the Saturation slider to the left, and I increased the lightness slightly. At this point, your Layers panel should look like Figure 7.7. The Hue/Saturation dialog box is also shown in Figure 7.7.
17. Duplicate the background by selecting it and pressing **Ctrl/⌘ + J**.
18. Move the Background copy above the Hue/Saturation layer by clicking the new background copy and drag it up in the Layers panel so that it's above the Hue/Saturation layer.
19. Name the layer Gaussian Blur. This helps identify the adjustments made to the layers.



**FIGURE 7.7** Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer.

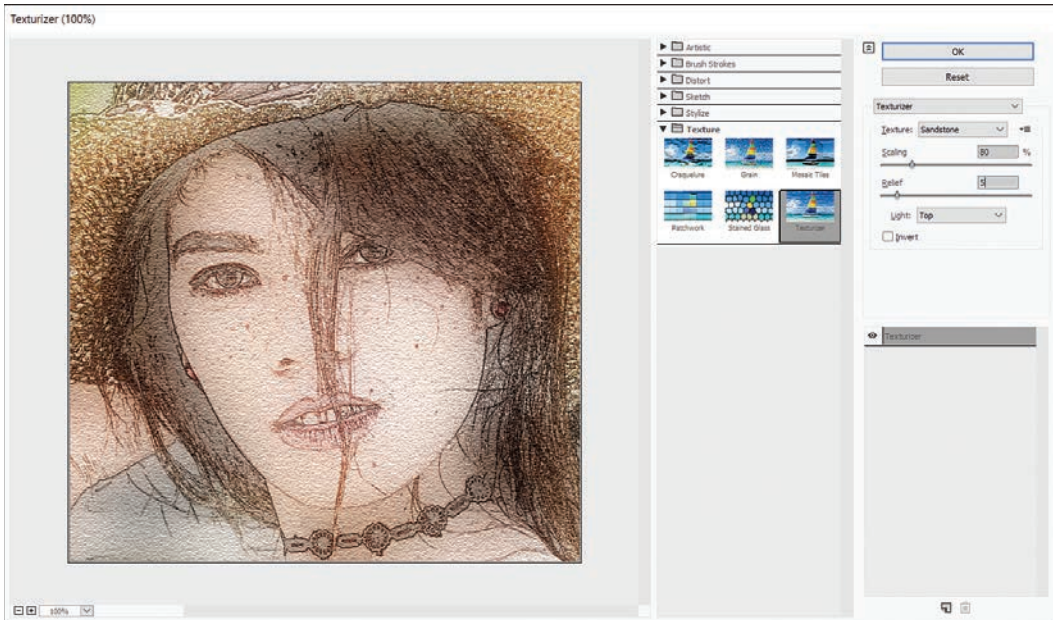
20. Choose Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur. Set the radius to a high value to add quite a bit of blur. In my example, I set the Radius adjustment to 36.0. The Gaussian Blur dialog box is shown in Figure 7.8.
21. Select the Gaussian Blur layer and select Soft Light in the Blend Mode drop-down list.
22. Select the Background and press  $\text{Ctrl}/\text{⌘} + \text{J}$  to duplicate it.
23. Move the Background copy to the top of the layer stack.
24. Choose Linear Light from the Blend Modes drop-down list in the Layers panel. At this point, your layers pane should look like Figure 7.8.



**FIGURE 7.8** Layers panel showing all layers up to this point.

25. Select all layers and press **Ctrl/⌘ + Alt/Option + Shift + E** to create a composite layer. Leave the blending mode to Normal. The composite layer should be at the top of the layer stack.
26. As a final edit, add a little bit of texture to the image with a Texturizer filter. Click the composite layer and choose **Filter > Texture > Texturizer**. In the Texturizer dialog box, press **Ctrl/⌘ + 1**. This zooms the view to 100%. From the Texture drop-down list, you have several choices. You can use artistic freedom here and choose Brick, Burlap, Canvas, or Sandstone for the texture. In this example, I use Sandstone to add a subtle texture, as shown in Figure 7.9. Move the Scaling and Relief sliders to create the look you desire.

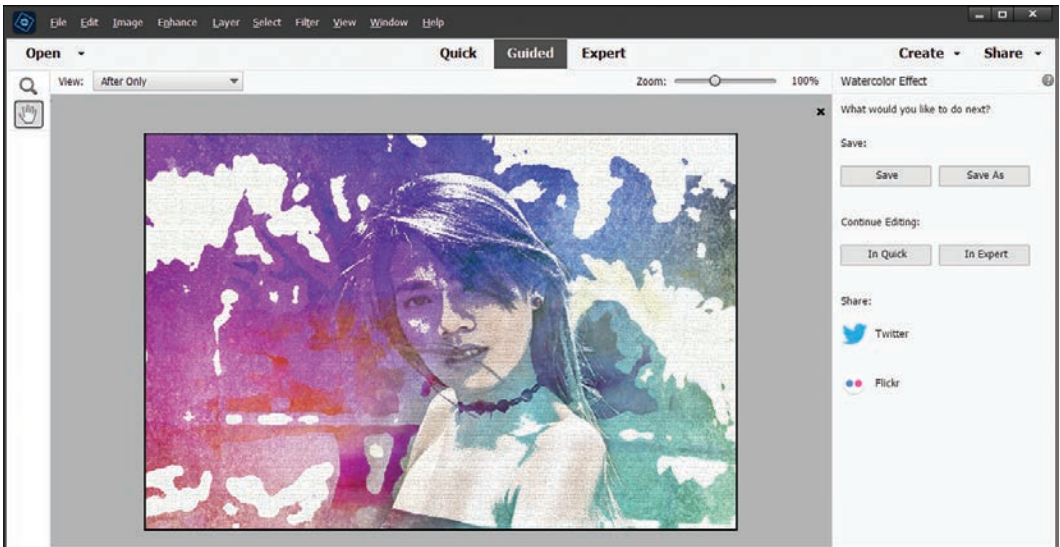
Turn back to Figure 7.2 and look at the original (on the left) and compare it to the final image (on the right) with the painterly effect added to it.



**FIGURE 7.9** Make adjustments in the Texturizer dialog box.

## Creating a Watercolor Effect

Like the painterly effect, the watercolor effect is another task you have with a Guided Edit. The Guided Edit walks you through steps to produce an effect similar to what you see in Figure 7.10.



**FIGURE 7.10** Watercolor effect made in the Guided Edits panel.

You can also create a watercolor effect using your own adjustments to create something a little different than what you see in Figure 7.10.

In Figure 7.11, you see an original image on the left and a watercolor effect created manually in the Photo Editor on the right.



**FIGURE 7.11** Original photo (left) and after producing a watercolor effect (right).

To produce a similar watercolor effect on one of your photos, follow these steps:

1. Open a photo in the Photo Editor. Use a photo that is corrected for brightness and contrast.
2. Create two copies of the Background layer by pressing **Ctrl/⌘ + J** twice.
3. Change the name of the top layer to Smart Blur Edge.



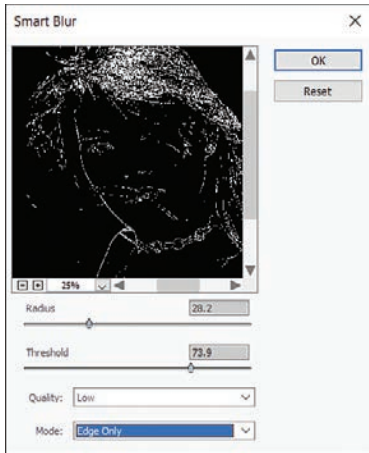


FIGURE 7.12 Settings in the Smart Blur dialog box.



FIGURE 7.13 Settings for the second Smart Blur filter.

4. Select the top layer and choose Filter > Blur > Smart Blur. In the Smart Blur dialog box, produce an effect similar to what you did earlier to achieve the effect shown in Figure 7.3. Set the Quality to Low and choose Edge Only for the mode. Depending on your image resolution, you might need to move the Radius and Threshold sliders to produce an outline in white. Be careful to not move the sliders to produce too much white. In my example, I used the values you can see in Figure 7.12.
5. Select the layer and press Ctrl/⌘ + I to invert it.
6. Set the blending mode to one of the Darken modes. In my example, I used Linear Burn. Try different modes to see which one works best for you.
7. Name the first layer (the one above the Background copy) **Smart Blur Normal**. At this point, you should have a Background, a layer named Smart Blur Normal, and the top layer named Smart Blur Edge.
8. Select the Smart Blur Normal layer and choose Filter > Blur > Smart Blur. Choose High for Quality and set the Mode to Normal. Leave the Radius and Threshold settings alone. These settings are the same as when you set up the first Smart Blur. See Figure 7.13.
9. Duplicate the Smart Blur Normal layer. At this point, you should have three layers above the background. Name this new layer Smart Blur Paint.
10. Invert the Smart Blur Normal layer by pressing Ctrl/⌘ + I.
11. Open the Blend Mode drop-down list in the Layers panel and choose Color Dodge.
12. Paint random strokes on the layer. Keep the layer selected and use the Brush tool to paint over the layer, making random strokes like you did when creating the painterly image. Use the default foreground color and any brush tip that you like.
13. You may want to add one Levels Adjustment layer above the Smart Blur Paint layer and another above the Smart Blur Normal layer and adjust the Brightness/Contrast to your liking. At this point, the Layers panel should look like Figure 7.14.
14. Select all layers above the background and press Ctrl/⌘ + Alt/Option + Shift + E to create a composite layer and name it Composite Texture.