

Notes on the Session Delivered to the CCC Digital Group by Keith Sawyer on January 20th 2016

These notes cover the Difficult Selections part of the session (the Steam Punk Portrait image) but also apply generally to the Custom Car example, dealt with in the first half.

The settings employed here are specific to the images used in the demonstration. For your own images you may need to experiment with different settings to get the best results.

Procedure

Open your foreground image in Photoshop

Sharpen the image:

- Filter Menu
- Smart Sharpen
- Amount 155
- Radius 0.9

Warm up the image (or otherwise adjust it to suit)

- Image Menu
- Adjustments
- Photo Filter
- Warming Filter (LBA)
- Set to 30

Select the area of the image that you want to retain:

Use the Zoom tool to enlarge the image on the screen, if necessary

- Select the Polygonal Lasso tool
- Click accurately around any area of the image that has a solid outline
- When approaching the more complicated areas - ignore wisps of hair, fur, feathers (e.g.) and click inside them, selecting the more solid area of the image

Complete the selection until it is linked up all the way round and you see the "marching ants"

To improve the selection go to:

- Select Menu (top of screen)
- Refine Edge
- Radius 20
- Contrast 10

Try ticking the Smart Radius box; If it improves the selection, leave it ticked, if not, untick it

- Use the Refine Radius tool (which will already be selected as the default)
- Set Size to 25 (top left of screen)

Paint around the complicated areas of the image, taking in all of the so far unselected bits (You can do this in sections if you wish) by dragging the tool around the image.

When complete, you can remove any smudges or sections of background that have crept in by right clicking on the Refine Radius tool and selecting the other option - the Erase Refinements tool.

You will need to reduce the Size (top left of screen) to, say, 10 and then click around the image erasing the bits you don't want.

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When you have finished, click on OK.

If working in Photoshop CS5

Click on the Add Pixel Mask symbol in the Masks panel on the right of the screen.

If the Masks panel is not visible, click on Window (top of screen) and tick Mask

If working in Photoshop CC

Click on the Add layer Mask symbol at the bottom of the layers panel on the right of the screen.

The full selection will now appear, as a Mask eliminating the unwanted areas of the image.

Save the Mask to the desktop.

Close the image

Open your chosen background image

Click on the Photoshop Restore button (top right of screen - two overlapping squares) to reduce the size of the window.

Find the saved Mask on the desktop, click on it, hold down the mouse button and drag it onto the background image in the Photoshop window

Click on the Photoshop Restore button (a single square)

Position and resize the Mask image as necessary.

Click on the right hand mouse button and select Place (the Mask image will be pasted onto the background)

Go to the Layer menu (top of screen) and click on Flatten Image (The combined image will be reduced to a single layer)

Save the final image.