

Photoshop Conference

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Grayscale Retouching

By Katrin Eismann

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Portrait Retouching

The three most important factors in achieving good image reproduction are calibration, image resolution, and tonal balance of the original. The following exercise will address tonal balance and image retouching.

For more information on calibration, resolution and tonal reproduction see;

Real World Scanning & Halftones
by David Blatner & Steve Roth
Professional Photoshop & Make Ready
by Dan Margulis
Making a Digital Book by Stephen Johnson

Tonal Balance

Before beginning with the image restoration process, the first step is to always correct the tonal balance of the image. If you are going out to press, talk with your printer as to what highlight and shadow dot the press can hold. If you are unsure, a safe setting is to use a 5% highlight dot and a 95% shadow dot.

Using the Curves dialogue versus the Levels dialogue has the advantage that Curves allows you to adjust any point along the grayscale curve while keeping up to 15 other values constant.

1) Add an Image Adjustment Layer—Curves.



2) Using the Info Window, set the lightest skintones to 15% K and check the shadows so they don't dip below 95% K.



Retouching

In this example, the client requested that her skin be cleaned-up and that the portrait have a slightly more glamorous look. Using layers allows for great precision and the ability to accentuate and downplay certain parts of the image.

1) Duplicate the original image into a new layer.



2) Go **Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur...**



3) Apply a Gaussian Blur to the top layer between 1.0 and 2.0.



4) Use the Eraser Tool set to Airbrush at a low pressure to erase away the blurred eyes. This will allow the sharp image to show through the blurred layer.



5) Add a blank layer. This is where the areas around the eyes and the shadows under the mouth will be dodged or lightened. I use the Airbrush set to Overlay at a very low opacity with the foreground color set to white. Working on a separate layer allows me to paint and erase at will, slowly building up to the desired effect.



Before dodge



After dodge





6) Duplicate the the original layer and burn in eye definition and mascara.

7) I will do a bit of clean-up if required with the Rubber Stamp tool set to lighten, sample merged, and **not** 100% opacity to slowly sneak-up on the skin blemishes.



Final Image



Before and After Comparison

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