

From Raw thru Develop to Fine Art Image Lightroom 3

the Artistic Image Classroom

An Image Processing Class - Future, 2011

What workflow will start with a raw file and take you to an award winning image which juried competitions like? We will present a workshop series showing how to walk that walk!

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Let's take a very brief look at Lightroom's tone mapping process in the Develop module. When Lightroom 2 came out, I was reading numbers like 75-85 % use of Develop mode from raw to fine art image. With Lightroom 3, those numbers are now 85 to 90%. And that's for a professional photographer - someone who needs to get through a lot of images, be they wedding, sports, or whatever.

Bear in mind, everyone will choose a different workflow path depending upon need and skill. Nevertheless, there are certain common steps. Lightroom engineers have tried to sequentially organize a series of Develop module workflow panels to really help the user.

Naturally, any such workflow can go from simple to complex. Scott Kelby has published a 7-Point System for development. We'll briefly discuss that system. Then we'll take you farther, into more advanced details for fine art image preparation for juried competitions using Lightroom.

7 Point System - Simple Way to See Changes You Make to Lightroom Images

Scott Kelby is editor in chief, NAPP (National Association of Professional Photographers). At the back of *the Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3 book for Digital Photographers*, Scott discusses the 7-Point System. It's a blow-by-blow Q&D description of subtle improvements and tweaks you make to images in Lightroom.

Choose a Camera Profile.

Since you're shooting raw, I usually embed Adobe 1998 profile in all subsequent images.



dealing with a raw file, this step is automatic.

Adjust White Balance.

Get the White Balance tool (in Basic panel, or press **W**) and click directly on a light gray area in the image. This action warms the image quite a bit. It removes color casts.

Adjust Overall Exposure.

If image is dark, you may want to increase Exposure to +0.35. When you do, clipping warnings may appear. If highlights clip, increase recovery slider and amount until white triangle up in the upper right Histogram turns black. You may want to bring up Blacks to make colors in shadow areas richer.

Adding Contrast.

Go to Tone Curve panel and change Point Curve pop up menu from Linear to Strong Contrast. If you're

Local Adjustments.

To greatly accentuate detail and contrast, get Local Adjustment Brush (K), choose Clarity from Effect pop up menu, then set Clarity to 100. Paint over the clock's glass. Avoid any hotspots. When you're done, click Close at bottom right.

Creating Impact.

Let's add a little punch using Clarity slider in Basic panel. Click-and-drag it over to right (roughly to +30). To make colors more vibrant, increase Vibrance to a value which is visually pleasing.

Finishing the Fine Art Image.

For finishing affect, add a Vignette to focus the image. Move Amount slider to -70.

The next few examples are only the tip of the iceberg!

Lightroom is a powerful friend which helps quick, yet in-depth processing from raw to fine art image... *Let's take a look at some of these tantalizing options!*

Quick White Balance - White Balance Selector Tool and the Navigator

There's a feature that's a really big help when you use the White Balance Selector tool. That's the Navigator panel on the top of the left side Panels area.

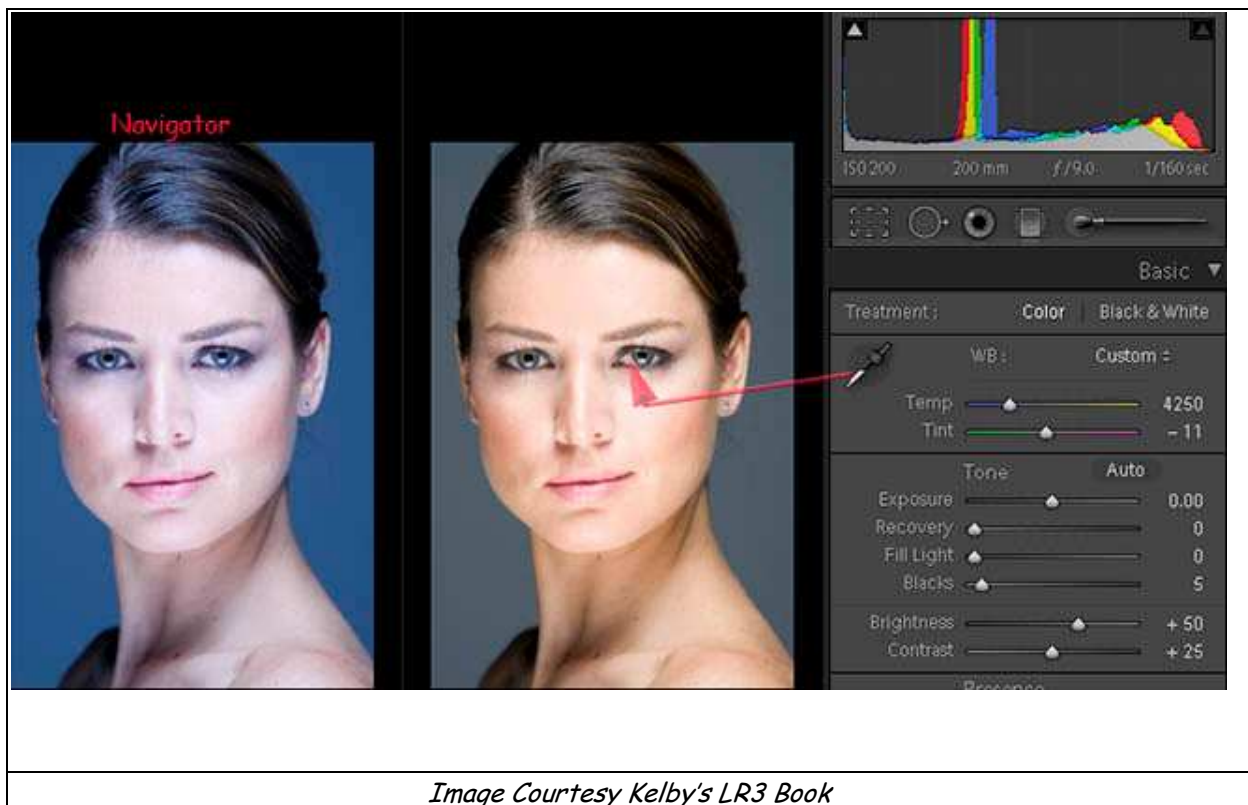
What's so cool about that?

Open the Basic Panel. Click Custom and choose Auto. As you hover the White Balance Selector tool over different parts of your photo, the Navigator gives you a 'live' image preview of what the White Balance would look like if you clicked there.

This quick balance is absolutely huge!

It saves you lots of clicks and lots of time, when finding a White Balance that looks good to you.

Pretty sweet, eh...



Comparing Sequential Development Steps in Lightroom

Our normal development sequence in Lightroom consists of 7 to 10 steps. This sequence depends on pre-visualization analysis of what the image requires - both for composition and impact. Since each image is different, you may choose a different order to workflow steps.

Lightroom engineers created the Develop panel with following tools: we use Basic, Tone Curve, HSL, and Detail. Split Toning, Lens Correction, Effects, and Camera Calibration may also come into play.

Unheralded, *Before and After* compare in Develop module is a very key tool.



In this example, we're near completion of our work up on *Primordial Bisti*. We've created a mask of the lower layer using the Local Adjustment brush. In the workshop, we will discuss detailed tips and tricks for quickly masking the bottom layer. In short English, we have to play back and forth between Auto Mask, brush A, and brush B to quickly yet thoroughly complete the mask.

After we've created a mask, we must select the Color Picker (little rectangle called Color) on the Lightroom Adjustment Brush panel. We choose a sympathetic color from our image by holding down the shift key on the Color Picker inset and moving the cursor to the exact color we want. With mask in place, we lower brightness to add impact.

For large masks, Lightroom's Local Adjustment brush imposes a 'tax' on slower computers with limited RAM. The more you mask, the more RAM you need! Will talk about workarounds so your mask is properly completed.

Finalize Fine Art Image in Photoshop

As we all know, Photoshop's tools have deeper abilities to refine images.



While Lightroom is quite powerful, Photoshop is truly quintessential! In other words, there are some things you can only do in Photoshop.

In particular, we use **Ctrl-Alt-I**. If we've cropped an image in Lightroom, to add impact, we usually resize the image to original sensor size.

Moreover, we like to provide a 3-D sharpening effect to various components in each image. We use Pixel Genius' *Photokit Sharpener* 2.0. PKS2 turns the brush tool into a significant ability to 'paint' 3-D sharpness using the pen from a Wacom tablet.

Our *Primordial Bisti* image was produced in Lightroom 3.4. Application of a Local Adjustment mask for the

lower layer taxed our Windows XP dual CPU 4 GB laptop.

Let us show you how to start with an rather blog initial image, crop the image, add contrast, then mask the lower segment. We will provide all this and more in our

"Comparing Sequential Development Steps in Lightroom Workshop!"

Future Lightroom Workshops at the Artistic Image

After reviewing several information sheets from participants of Lightroom 3 workshops, Bob has asked me to prepare future Lightroom Development workshop. The aim is to take a raw file and document individual steps in the Develop module to give you an idea of either simple or complex workflow.

A raw file contains all of the information for each capture. But, a raw file is flat and needs sharpening. We've gone back in our catalog and selected 2 raw files from our early shooting history.

Each requires a different approach. We show you how to work with Before and After files as one workshop. Then, we show you how to provide the finishing fine art image touches in Photoshop to prepare for presentation to juried competitions.

*Registration is Open for Future Classes... Don't Miss Your Chance!
Give Us a Call to Talk about YOUR Needs*

Contact

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