

What you'll learn in this chapter

Creative Techniques and Working Methods

Analysis and adjustment

You'll learn to analyze images and adjust them in order to enhance the details. Your analysis will deviate from the analysis of photography in the classic sense. You are not concerned with the end product of each photographic image. The initial photography is merely seen as a means to an end. You will look for regions of detail that you can enhance via Adjustment tools and regardless of the color balance and tonal perfection of the final image, you'll concentrate on creating something that you can use for the specific task of tracing traditionally.



Stripping things down

In addition to preparing images for tracing purposes, you'll also learn to perform drastic adjustments to strip images down to the core, or essence, of the image. The result of this is a stark, black-and-white version of the photograph that clearly divides positive and negative space, removing anything in-between.



Photoshop Tools, Features, and Functions

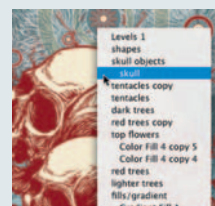


Solid color layer masks

Many people work with solid color layers, but rarely do I see people editing the masks to realize their vision. In this chapter, editing the masks of solid color layers is the key to creating the main components within the image shown here.

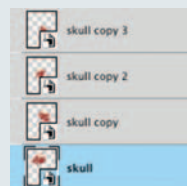
Smart objects

Groups of layers will be stored within smart objects further along in the chapter. Because numerous instances of these objects are scattered around, the timesaving benefit of editing all instances of an object at once becomes invaluable.



Quick targeting

It may seem like a small thing, but the method of targeting layers by Control-clicking with the Move tool will help you navigate the clutter of the Layers palette with ease.



1 When capturing the visual components of the illustration, there is no need for perfect lighting, focus, or exposure. The resulting images are for tracing purposes only, so your photography doesn't need to be technically perfect. This skull was quickly photographed outdoors on an overcast day, which provided nice, even lighting.



PART ONE: Start with photographs



Project files

All of the files needed to follow along with this chapter and create the featured image are available for download on the accompanying Web site in the project files section. Visit www.creativephotoshopthebook.com.



Skipping ahead

The first two parts of this chapter describe the process of preparing and creating art before entering Photoshop. If you aren't interested in this aspect and just want to get busy creating the featured image, go ahead and skip forward to Part Three of this chapter.

2 The octopus and flower were photographed outdoors on the same day. The background of the image isn't a concern at all because we'll be tracing the subject only. The tree and hydro tower images will be incorporated as manipulated photos, not hand-drawn reproductions. Shooting these against a clear sky makes it easier to isolate them later on.