

TUTORIAL 7

Painting Special Effects on Photographs

In this tutorial you will learn how to transform a photo into a striking color composition with paintbrushes, masks, blending modes, color, and paper texture. In the following two methods the image is first rendered in a highly contrasted black and white, so that it is later suitable as a Color Range selection. A paper is then created and color is painted onto a new layer. The image is selected with the Color Range option by sampling a tonal range. Color Range will then select all the pixels of that particular tonal range. A mask is created to reveal the paint on the selection, and a filter can also be applied to create texture or increased light effect. In the first method Photoshop brushes are used with Color Range to create a special effect. In the second method, the color washes are made with real paint, and the texture is created with spotted paint in the studio.

USING DIGITAL PAINT FOR SPECIAL EFFECTS

In this first method I use brushes and color from Photoshop to paint special effects with Color Range for selection.

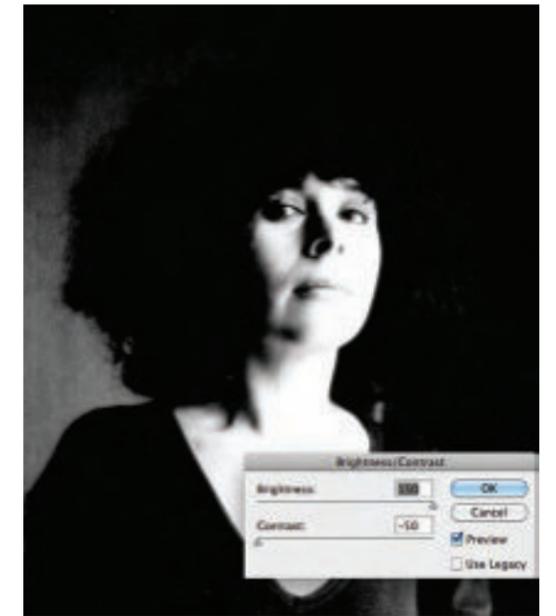
1 Prepare Your Image. In Photoshop open a photo portrait with a clean backdrop. I chose a portrait by Paris-based French photographer Marc Picot.

Note: To remove unwanted elements in a background, make a rough selection with the Lasso Tool. Then go to **Select > Refine Edge** and in the Feather slider apply a heavy feathering such as 20 pixels or more. From the Filter menu go to **Blur > Gaussian Blur** and set the Radius to 20. Repeat on other areas to phase them out.



START IMAGE Marc Picot, *Danielle*, tinted photograph

Duplicate the "Background" layer [Layer > Duplicate Layer]. Go to **Image > Adjustments > Black & White** and click OK in the Black & White window. Then from the Image menu go to **Image > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast**. Adjust the Brightness and Contrast sliders to lessen the gray tones as much as you can.



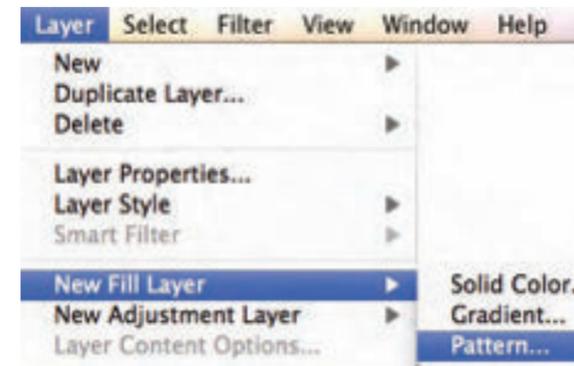
2 Clean Up the Background. If the backdrop is dark or busy, use the Quick Selection Tool to select it. You can also use the method described in step 1 to phase out a busy background. When using the Quick Selection Tool, be sure to use the Add to Selection or Subtract from Selection options in the Tool Options Bar on the upper-left side of the screen.



With the background selection active, use a paintbrush with white as the foreground color to paint out all the gray areas in the background. The subject should stand out alone on a white background.

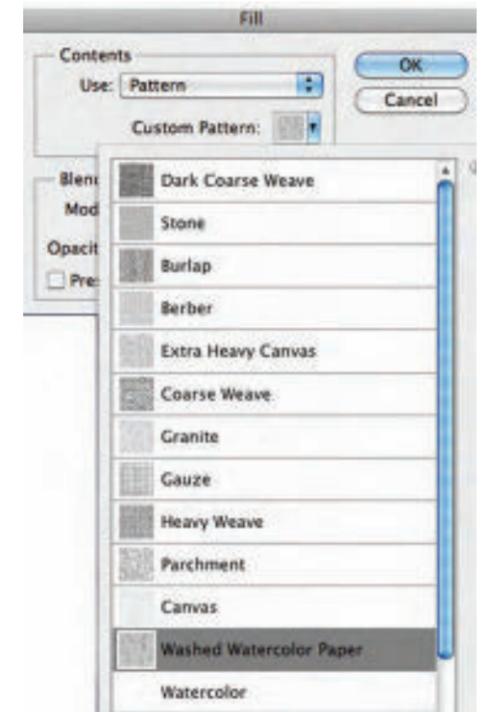
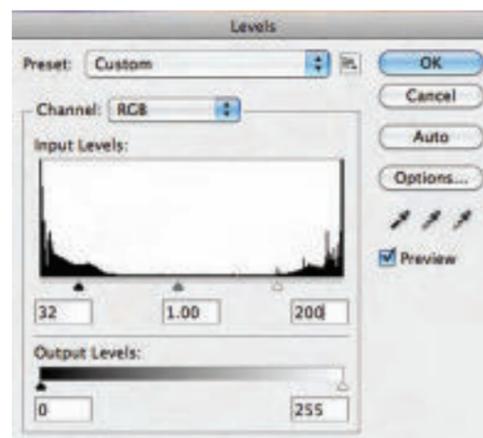
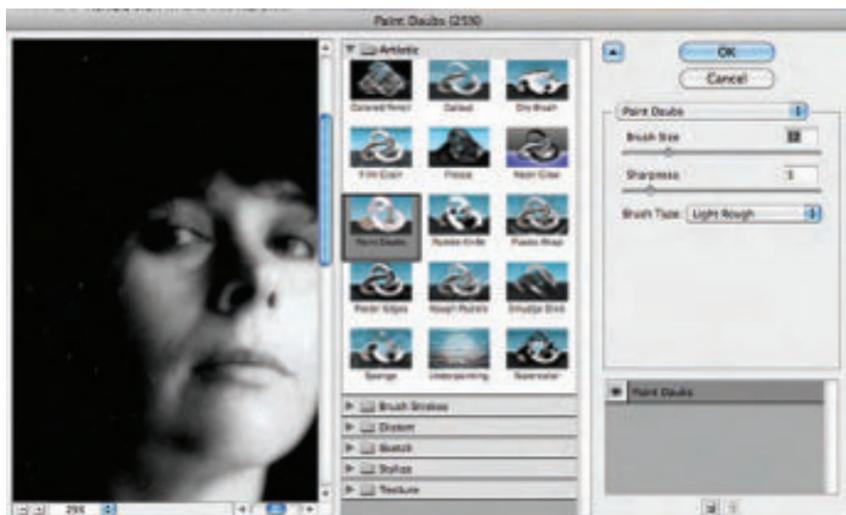


4 Create a Paper. From the Layer menu go to New Fill Layer > Pattern.

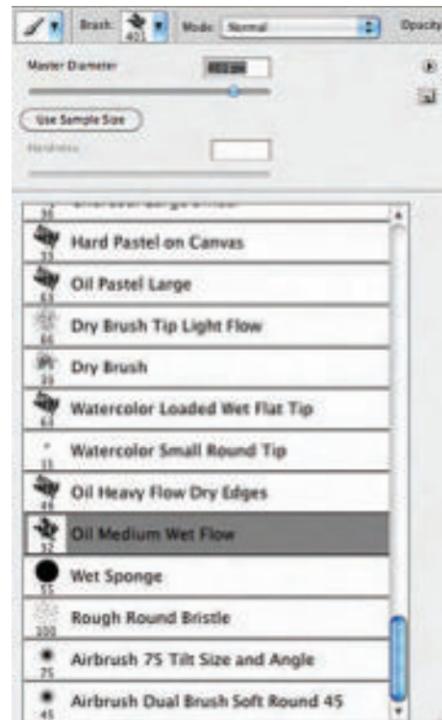
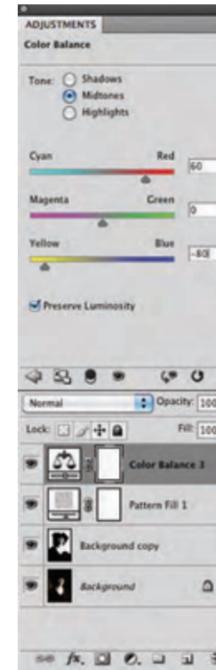


3 Add a Filter. From the Select menu choose Deselect, and then from the Filter menu choose Artistic > Paint Daubs. Set the Brush Size to 12, the Brush Detail to 9 (some versions of Photoshop will not have this setting), the Sharpness to 5, and choose Light Rough for the Brush Type. Click OK. From Image > Adjustments > Levels, set the levels to about 32, 1.00, and 200. For more details on Levels, see Making Basic Photo Corrections on pages 136–147.

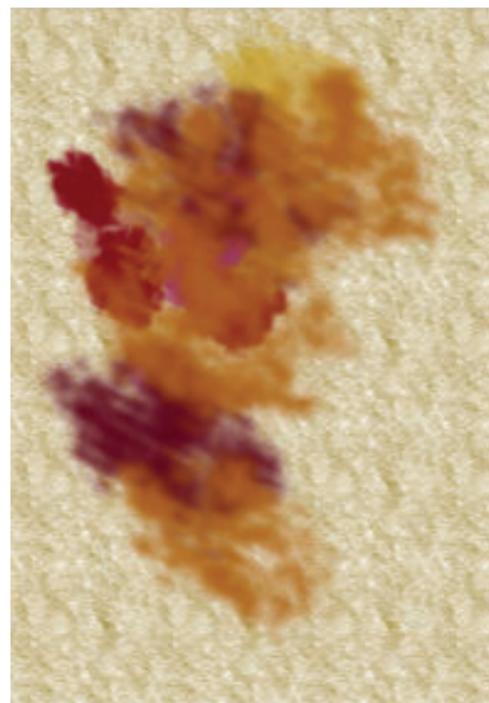
Click inside the Pattern swatch to open the list, and from the Artist Surfaces list choose a texture. I chose Washed Watercolor Paper for my image. Adjust the Scale to around 600% or more and click OK. Change the Blend Mode of this layer to Multiply.



5 Tint Your Paper. To add a color tint to the paper, go to the Layer menu and choose **New Adjustment Layer > Color Balance**. For this image I set the Color Balance for the Midtones as Cyan +60, Magenta 0, and Yellow -80. Feel free to tint your paper as you wish.

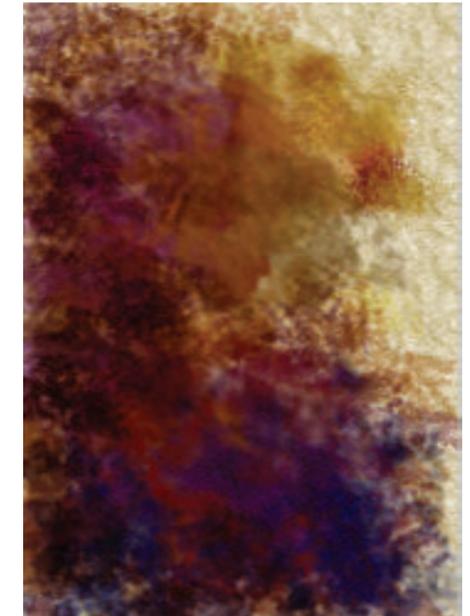


6 Create a Painting Layer. Add a new layer [Layer > New > Layer]. I named mine “Warm Tones.” Choose the Brush Tool, and from the brush list select a brush. For this image I selected the Oil Medium Wet Flow brush and set it at around 800 pixels. Chose any brush that will give you texture and transparency. Open the Swatches palette from the Window menu and pick a color.

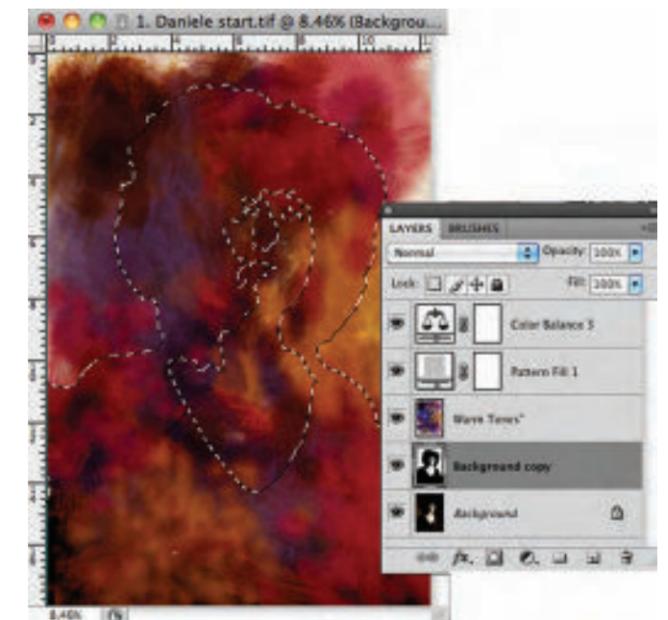


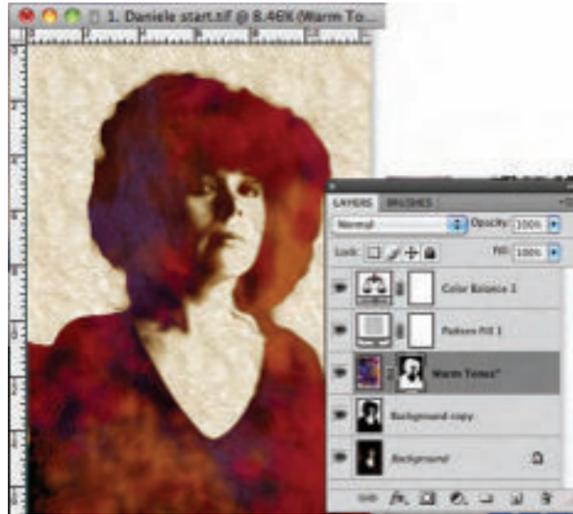
Start painting on the “Warm Tones” layer using intense colors. Here, I started with yellow and red tones.

Alternate your brushes, and also try the Splatter brushes. In the Tool Options Bar, switch the Blend Mode to **Multiply**. Use single clicks on the paintbrush rather than holding the mouse down and dragging. Start with lighter colors and gradually work toward darker tones.

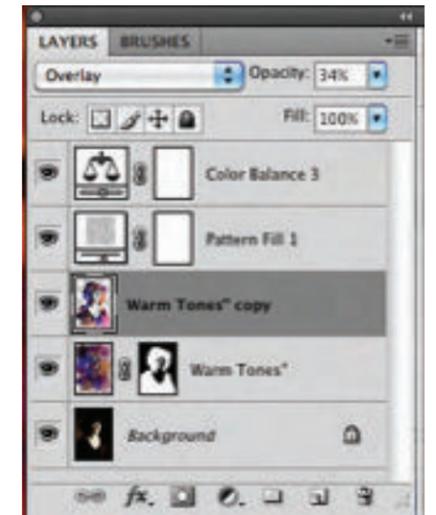


7 Select with Color Range. Activate the “Background Copy.” From the Select menu choose **Color Range**. In the preview window check **Selection**. Notice the three eyedropper sampler icons in the Color Range window. The first one is automatically selected. Click on a black area of the image to select the black areas and then click **OK**. If you wish to add to this selection, choose the **Add to Sample Eyedropper Tool** and click on a middle tone in your image. (The plus or minus eyedroppers, respectively, add or delete the number of pixels selected. The more pixels that are selected, the more color is displayed.)





With the black areas still selected, activate the “Warm Tones” layer. Click on the Add a Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. Your selection will automatically be added as the mask. Now delete the “Background Copy” layer by dragging it to the trashcan in the Layers palette.

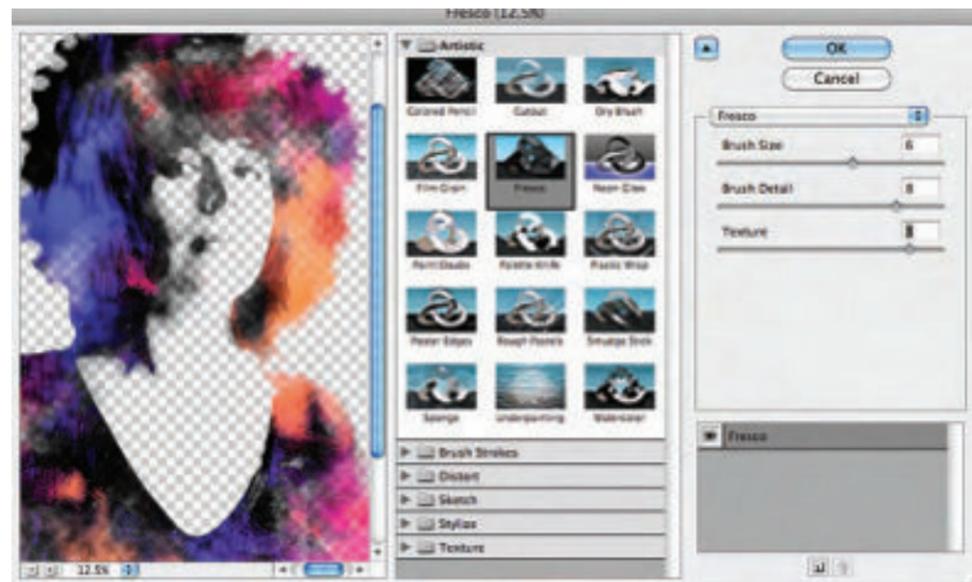


To blend this layer to the layer below, first lower the Opacity of the layer to around 35%. Try different blending modes in the Layers palette to allow the texture to show through. I chose Overlay.

8 Paint on the Mask. To make the selection look more natural, I decided to roughen up the edges around the hair. To fix the edges of your mask, activate the layer mask by clicking directly on the mask thumbnail. Select the Brush Tool and choose a brush from the brush list. I used the paintbrush Dry Brush on Towel with black as the foreground color to roughen the edges of my image.



9 Apply the Mask and a Subtle Texture. Duplicate the “Warm Tones” layer [Layer > Duplicate Layer]. Drag the mask to the trashcan in the Layers palette, and when the option comes up to apply or delete the mask, click Apply. From the Filter menu choose Filter > Artistic > Fresco. I set the Brush Size to 6, the Brush Detail to 8, and the Texture to 3.



10 Save Your File. Duplicate your image file, flatten it, and save it as a TIFF document.



✓ **the final**
Sylvie Covey, *Danielle in Colors*,
digital print, 22 x 16 inches

USING REAL PAINT WASHES FOR SPECIAL EFFECTS

In this second method color washes are first created with real watercolor paint and paper in the studio. I painted one with warm red and yellow colors, and another with cold greens and blues. I also made one with spotted texture. These color washes were then scanned and saved as TIFF files with a 300 dpi resolution. See pages 22–23 for more information on scanning an image. Remember that you can use your scanned color washes with many different images.

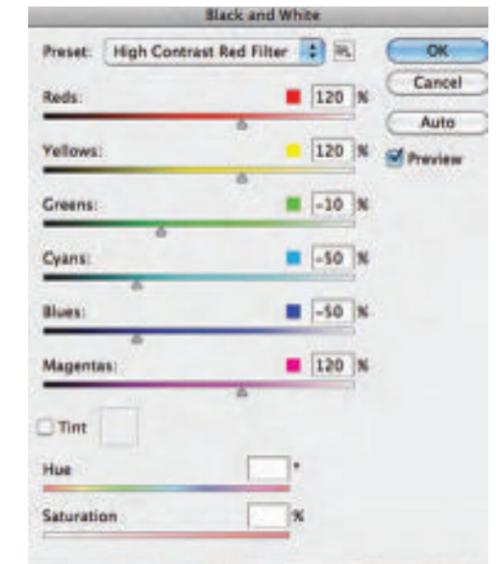


1 Choose Your Subject from Your Photo Files. Open an image in Photoshop and duplicate the “Background” layer [Layer > Duplicate Layer]. I chose a close-up of a forest scene shot in Northern California.

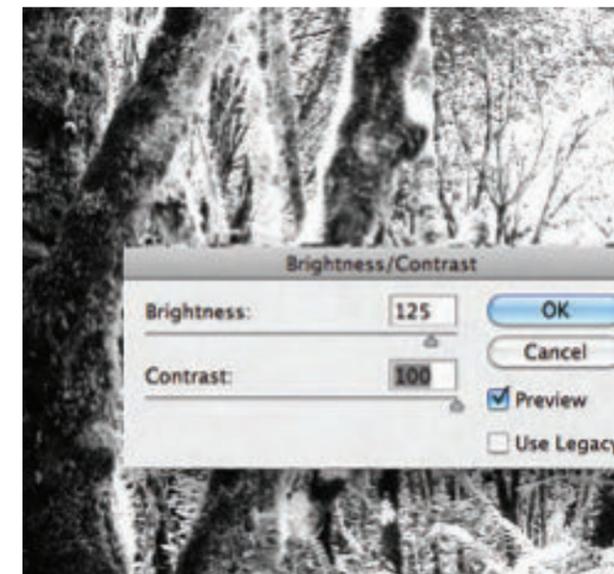


START IMAGE Sylvie Covey, *Forest*, digital print

2 Switch Your Image from Color to Black and White. From the Image menu choose Image > Adjustments > Black & White. In the Black and White dialog box, choose High Contrast Red Filter from the Preset options. This filter will give your image a highly contrasted effect.

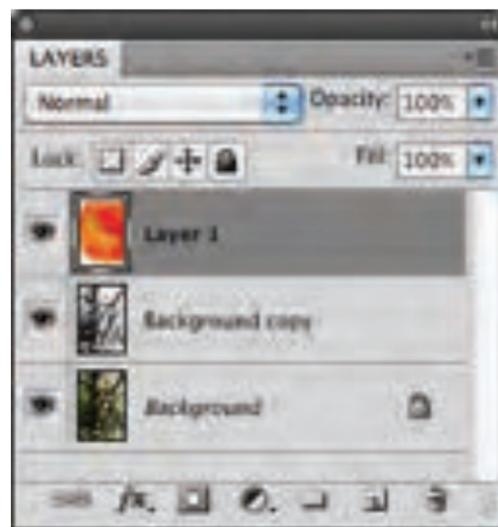


3 Adjust the Brightness and Contrast. In order to improve the contrast again, from the Image menu go to Image > Adjustments > Brightness/Contrast. Move the Brightness slider to around 125 and the Contrast slider to around 100. These settings can be adjusted according to your image.



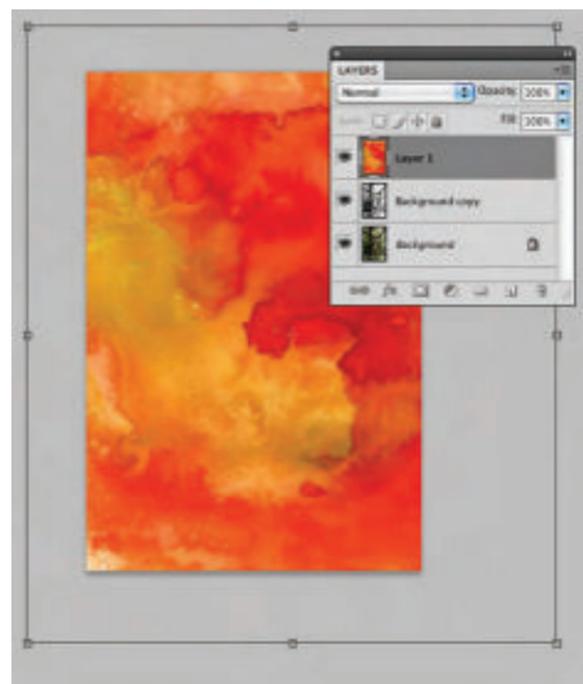
4 Merge Your Color Wash onto the Photograph.

Open your first color-wash painting in Photoshop. From the Select menu go to **Select > All**, and from the Edit menu go to **Edit > Copy**. Activate your image file, and from the Edit menu choose **Paste**. Your color wash now sits above your image in the Layers palette.



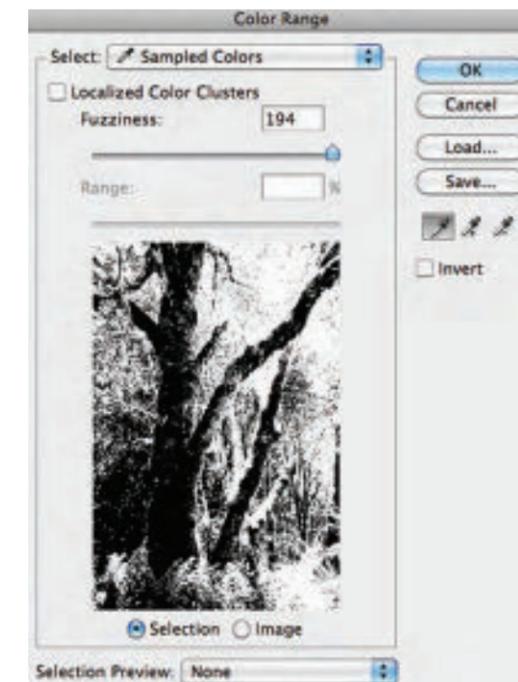
5 Adjust the Size of Both Files.

From the View menu select **Zoom** and zoom out a couple of times to give yourself enough space to use the **Scale** command; then from the Edit menu choose **Edit > Transform > Scale**. Pull the scale handles out on each side to fill the layer with your color wash and hide any margins.



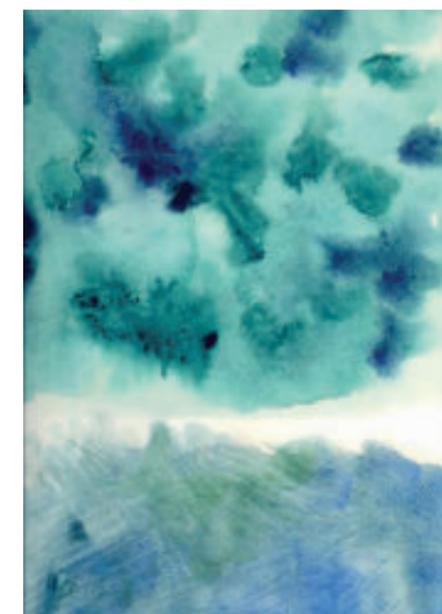
6 Select the White Areas to Receive the First Color Wash.

From the Select menu choose **Select > Color Range**. In the Color Range window, look for three eyedroppers icons placed under the OK/Cancel/Load/Save list. With **Selection** checked, notice which eyedropper is selected. The eyedropper on the left selects whichever pixels are of the same value as that of the selection. When you click on an area of your image with that eyedropper, all of the pixels of that particular tonal range become selected. The eyedropper in the center adds to the sample selection, and the eyedropper on the right subtracts from the sample selection. For this first selection, choose the white and light areas. Play with the **Add to Sample Eyedropper Tool** or **Subtract from Sample Eyedropper Tool** until you like your selection. Remember that *only the selected area* will show color. In this step I chose to select and color the white areas.



7 Bring Your First Color Selection into a Layer Mask.

With the selection active, hide the “Background Copy” layer’s visibility by checking off the Eye icon in the Layers palette; then activate “Layer 1.” In the Layers palette find and click on the **Add a Layer Mask** icon. The first color wash now appears in the selected white areas.



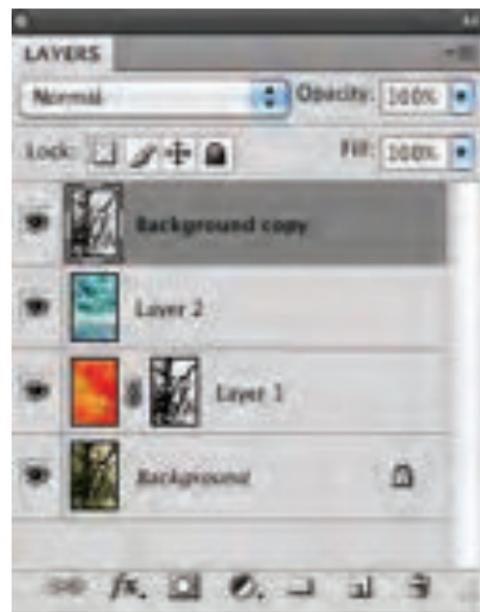
8 Add a Second Color Wash.

Open your second color wash painting in Photoshop. From the Select menu go to **Select > All**, and from the Edit menu go to **Edit > Copy**. Activate your image file, and from the Edit menu choose **Paste**. Your second color wash now appears under the “Background Copy” layer.



9 Select the Black Areas of Your Image for the Second Color Wash.

Reopen the visibility of the “Background Copy” layer by clicking on its Eye icon and activating that layer. From the Select menu go to Color Range, and this time use the Eyedropper Tool to sample the black areas of your image. The selection should look like the opposite of the image in step 6.



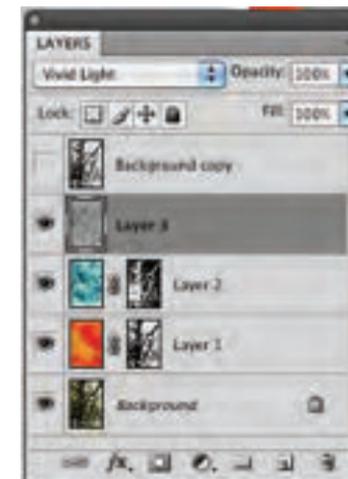
10 Reveal the Second Color Wash in the Black Areas.

With that selection active, hide the “Background Copy” layer’s visibility by checking off its Eye icon in the Layers palette; then activate “Layer 2.” In the Layers palette find and click on the Add a Layer Mask icon. The second color wash now appears in the selected black areas.



11 Add a Texture with a Third Color Wash.

To add a little texture go to Edit > Fill > Pattern and choose a texture. I opened my third “Color Spotted” file and selected it [Select > All]. Then I copied it [Edit > Copy] and pasted it [Edit > Paste] onto my image and then I changed the Blend Mode of the layer to Vivid Light.



12 Adjust the Curves and Save Your File.

Finally, you can add some contrast with an S-shape curve adjustment [Image > Adjustments > Curves] and save your file as a PSD file. Then flatten it and save it as a TIFF file to print.



the final

Sylvie Covey, *Fiery Trees*,
digital print

