

A photograph of several lavender flower stalks with small, purple, tubular blossoms. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some appearing as tight buds and others as more open clusters. The background is a light, textured surface, possibly a wall or a backdrop, which makes the purple of the flowers stand out. The overall composition is vertical, with the flowers occupying the right and bottom portions of the frame.

PLUG IN with **onOne** SOFTWARE

A Photographer's
Guide to Vision and
Creative Expression

Nicole S. Young

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Peachpit Press
www.peachpit.com

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Peachpit Press is a division of Pearson Education.

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ISBN-13: 978-0-321-86278-5

ISBN-10: 0-321-86278-3

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed and bound in the United States of America

To Brian: Without you this book would have never been written. Thank you for your encouragement, for your inspiration, and for getting me out the door with my camera when I needed a break. I feel honored to have you in my life now and forever. I love you!

Acknowledgments

When I write a book it absorbs the majority of my time and energy, and this book, more so than any I've written thus far, was an exceptional challenge to complete. Even though I am and have been thoroughly familiar with the topic, writing a book on software before it's released is not an easy task and cannot be accomplished without the help of many individuals behind the scenes.

To my editors and production team over at Peachpit: Valerie Witte, Linda Laflamme, David Van Ness, Liz Welch, WolfsonDesign, Aren Straiger, Mimi Heft, and Valerie Haynes Perry. Thank you for your patience and dedication in putting this book together. The road was much bumpier than expected, but we pushed through and ended up with something I'm very proud of and excited to share with the world.

To the entire team at onOne Software: You have created an excellent product with Perfect Photo Suite 7 and should be *very* proud of it.

To Craig Keudell, onOne Software's President and Founder, for having the vision to put out a product for photographers and artists to help them create something beautiful.

A huge thanks Dan Harlacher, onOne's Senior Product Manager, for putting up with my prodding questions about the tiny bits and pieces of the software I needed verification on. It has been a busy time for all of us and I appreciate you taking the time out of your day to help me add so much value to the pages in this book.

To Amy Chan (Marketing), Rick LePage (Content), Brian Kraft (Sales), Kevin Bier (Engineering), Jonny Davenport (Prerelease Coordinator), and Patrick Smith (Customer Support) for not only being awesome, but also for helping out whenever I had any questions about the software. You guys are also pretty good for a laugh from time to time.

To the readers of this book, many of whom have been asking for a book about the Perfect Photo Suite for some time now. I hope that this book helps you in seeking the inspiration you desire, and also gives you the knowledge you need to speed up your "staring at pixels" time to give you more time creating beauty with your cameras.

And last, but definitely not least, to my husband, Brian Matiash. Thank you for being supportive during my rants and frustrations during the process, and also for your scrutinous tech editing of this book. You're the "preset of my life"... don't ever forget that. ;)

Contents

Foreword	x
Introduction	xii
CHAPTER 1 Getting Started	1
Installation and Setup	2
Installing the Software	2
Installing Plug-ins	4
Setting the Preferences	4
Color Settings and Calibration	7
Preparing Your Files	9
Tools, Groups, and Panes	10
Arranging the Workspace	10
Working with Tools	13
Navigator, Loupe, and Histogram	15
Opening an Image in the Perfect Photo Suite	18
Working from Perfect Layers	18
Working from Lightroom	19
Working from Aperture	21
Working from Photoshop	22
Saving Images	24
Working with Presets	25
Saving, Organizing, and Deleting	25
Importing and Exporting	26
Batch Processing	27
Lightroom	27
Aperture	28
Photoshop	30

CHAPTER 2 Perfect Layers	35
The Perfect Layers Interface	36
When to Use Perfect Layers	36
Layers, Blending, and Masking	37
What Are Layers?	37
Layer Blending and Opacity	40
Basic Masking	49
Using Perfect Layers	51
Getting Started	52
The Layers Pane	54
Masking Tools	59
Transforming Your Document	68
The Retouch Brush	73
Doing a Head-Swap	74
Exposure Blending with a Landscape Photograph	76
Creative Compositing	78
CHAPTER 3 Perfect Mask	83
The Perfect Mask Interface	84
When to Use Perfect Mask	84
Using Perfect Mask	85
Getting Started	85
Working with Brushes	86
Masking with Color	92
Additional Cleanup Tools	98
Previewing Your Mask	104
Adjusting and Applying Your Mask	106
Replacing a Sky	109
Removing a White Background	113
Working with Transparent Objects	117

CHAPTER 4 Perfect Portrait	121
The Perfect Portrait Interface	122
When to Use Perfect Portrait	122
Portrait Retouching	123
Facial Recognition	123
Refining the Face	126
Skin Retouching	132
Color Correction	139
Enhancing the Eyes and Mouth	142
Effects and Presets	146
Cleaning Up Skin	148
CHAPTER 5 Perfect Effects	153
The Perfect Effects Interface	154
When to Use Perfect Effects	154
Applying Effects	155
The Browser Pane	155
Effects Stack	158
Effect Options	161
Blending Options	167
Working with Presets	172
Saving Presets	172
Importing Presets	173
Masking Tools	174
The Masking Brush	175
The Masking Bug	178
The Masking Menu	182
Brush Effects	184
Enhancing the Color and Tone of an Image	185
Stylizing a Landscape Image	187
Enhancing a Portrait	190

CHAPTER 6 Perfect B&W	195
The Perfect B&W Interface	196
When to Use Perfect B&W	196
Converting to Black and White	197
The Browser Pane	197
Adjustment Panes	199
Brushes and Tools	212
Saving Presets	218
Creating a Black and White Film Look	219
Creating a Black and White Landscape Image	222
Converting a Portrait to Black and White	225
CHAPTER 7 FocalPoint	229
The FocalPoint Interface	230
What Is Depth of Field?	230
Deep versus Shallow	231
When to Use FocalPoint	232
Using FocalPoint	233
The Focus Bug	234
The Blur Pane	242
The Options Pane	248
The Focus Brush	249
Adding a Vignette	253
Presets	256
Portrait Blur with a Round Focus Bug	258
The Tilt-Shift Look	261
Advanced: Working with Selections from Photoshop	264

CHAPTER 8 Perfect Resize	269
The Perfect Resize Interface	270
When to Use Perfect Resize	270
Understanding Resolution	271
Pixel Dimension and Document Size	273
Pixel Dimensions	273
Document Size	274
Presets and Cropping	276
Settings	277
Sharpening and Film Grain	279
Gallery Wrap and Tiling	281
Tiling	282
Gallery Wrap	285
CHAPTER 9 Perfect Integration	291
Creating Blurry Backgrounds for Composites	292
Replacing a Sky and Converting to Black and White	303
Adding Texture and Grunge	313
Batch Processing for Time-Lapse Photography	323
CONCLUSION	330
INDEX	333
Bonus material mentioned in this eBook is available after the index:	
APPENDIX: Keyboard Shortcuts	A-1

Foreword

Seeing *Plug In with onOne Software* come to fruition means a great deal to me, and being asked to write its foreword is icing on the cake. You see, the software that this book encapsulates, the company that created it, and the author who penned this book all mean a great deal to me. I've been a devoted user of the Perfect Photo Suite for many years, and I attribute much of my success as a photographer squarely to its tools.

As onOne Software's curriculum and education manager, I'll occasionally roam around the engineering, development, and QA sections at the office to peek at the engineers' displays. Usually, I am greeted to windows of code—lots of code. To see the magical and creative ways that you, the photographer, use the tools built on these thousands upon thousands of lines of code is nothing short of astounding. This book will help you get the most out of Perfect Photo Suite 7 so you can amaze me even more.

At its core, we built Perfect Photo Suite 7 to serve as an extension of your creativity. We wanted to provide you with a finely tuned instrument that can provide beautiful results in a scalable way, from the casual user who simply wants to apply a one-click effect to the power user who loves spending hours digging deep into the fiber of what makes this suite of tools so powerful. We all have our own sensibilities around style when it comes to post-processing and the Perfect Photo Suite was built to help each of you find, refine, and evolve what that means.

When you first launch Perfect Photo Suite 7, you're going to see the product of so many months of labor. In its truest form, this was a labor of love for us at onOne. Every aspect of every module, from the fonts used to the order that the tools were laid out, was carefully discussed, debated, and even argued over. Nothing was deemed as trivial. But every decision was made with one overriding purpose in mind: to build the most powerful and inspiring collection of photo editing products for you, providing everything you need to realize your photographic vision.

To that end, *Plug In with onOne Software* is a wonderful complement to the Perfect Photo Suite. You might say it's the *perfect* complement. With Nicole Young as the book's author, you will be treated to some of the best educational material out there. If there is one skill that Nicole excels at, it is sharing her knowledge in a way that is clear, approachable, and easy to understand. She thrives on turning obscure topics like layer masks, blending options, and resize algorithms into material that is truly easy to grasp and, more importantly, to use. In these pages, you'll tour every single product and its tools and follow along through step-by-step examples of those tools in action. Every discussion is supported by beautiful imagery—all processed using Perfect Photo Suite 7. This book is one of the most comprehensive resources for using Perfect Photo Suite 7 to its fullest potential.

Nicole took such great care to make sure every corner of the Perfect Photo Suite was represented and explained in a familiar tone. From her frequent visits to the onOne Software office in Portland to her whimsical, ad hoc video chats with Senior Product Manager Dan Harlacher, Nicole made it her number one priority to thoroughly learn every feature, every tool, and every menu item that makes up Perfect Photo Suite 7. I'll be the first to admit to learning a number of new things about software during the tech-editing phase of this book. In turn, for all of her effort, Nicole was able to synthesize this material in a way that will truly engage you and make you excited to run out the door, grab some new photos, and launch them in the Perfect Photo Suite as soon as you get home.

I hope you enjoy the inspiring words and imagery that Nicole shares in the coming pages. It is my sincerest wish that her efforts serve as inspiration for you as you learn all about the power of Perfect Photo Suite 7.

Never stop shooting. Never stop sharing.

Brian Matiash
Curriculum and Education Manager
onOne Software

Introduction

Post-processing can, at times, feel like a necessary evil. We photographers tend to enjoy the *photography* side of things and dread staring at pixels in front of a glowing computer monitor to create the final image. I definitely put myself into that category; I don't hate post-processing, I just prefer to spend my time doing something else.

In writing *Plug In with onOne Software*, however, I had to dig deep into every crevice of Perfect Photo Suite 7 to discover its potential, and during that process I learned so much more than I expected. And then a surprising thing happened: I began to *enjoy* editing my photos with my newfound knowledge. Now, I'm often *excited* to import images into my computer because I look forward to seeing what I can do with them in the Perfect Photo Suite 7. The editing process has become my playground. My hope is that the Perfect Photo Suite, along with this book, will encourage you to enjoy the process of experimenting with your photos, too.

Not only will you learn more about the software, you may discover new ways to edit your photos. While writing, I uncovered a few that had never occurred to me. When working on Chapter 3, "Perfect Mask," for example, I quickly realized how easy it was to mask a subject out of a scene and swap in a new backdrop, and it has inspired me to create more composite images. And, with the introduction of the brand-new product, Perfect B&W, I now have an easily accessible and simple-to-use tool to convert images into gorgeous black and white photographs. In-between the pages of writing each chapter I found ways to breathe new life into old photographs I had nearly forgotten about. I don't believe that we can use software and plug-ins as a quick fix to create a beautiful work of art from a crappy photograph, but we can use the software for a boost of inspiration and fuel the fire of our creative minds.

This book is not intended to be read from cover to conclusion; rather, it was made for you to jump around and learn about the specific areas you need help with the most. In Chapter 1, “Getting Started,” I spell out some of the best practices for using the software, such as setting up your computer and preparing your files, and from there I dive straight into each specific product in Perfect Photo Suite 7. The chapters are laid out in the same order you’ll find the products in the software, and to make things easy, you’ll always know which product you’re reading about just by looking at the top of the page. Chapters 2 through 7 each have a “step by step” section at the end to demonstrate how to process one or more images in that product; and you can learn how to enlarge, sharpen, and get your images ready for printing in Chapter 8, “Perfect Resize.” Chapter 9, “Perfect Integration,” brings the workflow together by showing how to process images in more than one product in the Perfect Photo Suite. You’ll learn not only what the features can do, but also how you can combine them for spectacular results.

So, whether you’re new to the onOne Software products or you’ve been using them for several years, you’re bound to learn a thing or two in *Plug In with onOne Software*. My goal was to create an intensive book covering as many features of the Perfect Photo Suite 7 that I could fit inside of each of these pages. I hope that in reading this book you get as excited and inspired about photography as I did while writing it.

NOTE

No book ever seems to have enough room to fit all the useful information about a product, so I was selective about what I included in each chapter. Because I just had to share a little more information that might come in handy, however, I’ve provided a bonus for you online. As an added value for you, I wrote an appendix, “Keyboard Shortcuts,” which covers the keyboard shortcuts you can use as you are working in the software. To access it, log in to or join Peachpit.com (it’s free), then enter the book’s ISBN. After you register the book, a link to the bonus content will be listed on your Account page under Registered Products.