

Photoshop Masking & Compositing

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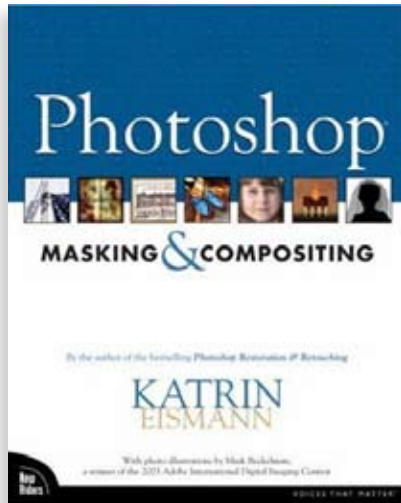
If you look at the publication date of this book, 2005, you may well wonder why I was interested in doing a review of it. Katrin Eismann's *Photoshop Masking & Compositing* is considered the authoritative source on the titled subjects by many of the leading *Photoshop* authors and teachers. Whenever further reading is suggested on the topic of masking or composites, one name and one title is consistently listed – *Photoshop Masking & Compositing* by Katrin Eismann.

The 519 pages of this book are organized into four parts:

- Selection Tools and Techniques
- Layers and Masks Exposed
- Selecting and Preserving Fine Detail
- Subjective and Objective Compositing

The example images used in the book are still available for download from the companion site at www.Photoshopmasking.com.

This is one of the most in-depth and thorough books, focusing on a rather narrow digital imaging subject matter, I've come across to date. And, the author turns all this *Photoshop* techie stuff into a rather enjoyable read. The attention to detail, step by step instructions and alerts to possible pitfalls, make this volume an outstanding guide to some of digital imaging's most challenging and rewarding tools and techniques.



Section I, the first 126 pages, is devoted to the wide variety of tools and methods for making selections. The selection tools are what you use to separate out the

image elements. The section on modifying, transforming, saving and loading selections is excellent and will definitely come in handy as I often need a lot of help with my real world selections. A complete chapter is devoted to the Pen, a paths-based *Photoshop* drawing tool. The author considers the Pen the best choice when selecting shape-based image elements. Section II begins with an introduction to masks. They are used to hide or protect parts of an image, leaving the revealed remainder of the image to be manipulated.

All this preparatory learning brings us to layer masks. The author feels they are the soul of *Photoshop*. They allow you to manipulate and combine images “in a non-destructive manner. They enable you to move, hide, blend, conceal and experiment with image combinations to your heart’s content — all without ever losing a single pixel.” Once the basic techniques have been presented in depth, the rest of the book is all the frosting of how to create effective and powerful images, and mighty tasty at that! The chapters continue with advanced and quite powerful selection techniques using some of *Photoshop*'s less commonly known tools such as calculations. The remainder of the book focuses on building composite images for realistic effects and artistic creations. Following the step-by-steps with the downloaded images gives you a framework for building the skills as well as ideas for creating artful and photo-real composites from your own work.

In Summary

Katrin Eismann's *Photoshop Masking & Compositing* gets the 5-star recommendation from me. It doesn't matter what version of *Photoshop* you are using, this book is the manual on the subject of masking and compositing in a manner to achieve striking and slick results.

About: *Photoshop Masking & Compositing*

- Author:** Katrin Eismann
- Publisher:** Peachpit Press (Voices that Matter, New Riders) www.peachpit.com
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