



Digital Montage Photo Project

For this unit all photos will be taken as a homework assignment

- each student will work individually / independently
- each student will take the required photos either during class time or after school or on week-ends.
- each student must plan so that he / she will be able to complete and submit his or her work on time

Each individual student must complete and submit all parts of the project.

1. Look at / study photo montages by Oscar Rejlander, Henry Peach Robinson, Jerry Uelsmann, Scott Mutter, Thomas Barbey (& any others of the student's choice).
2. Copy and paste your favorite montage image into a MS Word document.
BE SURE TO CITE THE REFERENCE SOURCE!!!
3. Write what you think the photographer is trying to communicate through this image.
4. Explain what clues the photographer has placed in the picture or in the elements / principles of design used to create the picture that the photographer has used to convey that message.

One Story-telling Montage

- A. Students begin this project by deciding what "story" they want their picture to tell or what emotion they want to communicate.
- B. Students take a set of photographs that will be visual clues that they will synthesize (collage together) into a photo montage that will illustrate the feelings or tell the story. (Choose any appropriate subject matter that, when combined with a background scene and other objects, will establish the mood or feelings or tell the story.)
If necessary take photos of your subject(s) posed in several key positions. Choose a background scene that will be an imaginative and creative new environment for your subject.
- C. Transfer your digital images to your photo class USB.
- D. Open all the images in Adobe PhotoShop.
 1. Use one of the Lasso or other selection tools to draw an outline around the first object you want to use.
 2. Use the Quick mask tool  to refine your selection.
 3. Go to "edit" then to "copy" (or press "Ctrl" + C)
 4. Click your left mouse button down on the other (background scene) photo and go to "edit" then to "paste" (or press "Ctrl" + V)
 5. If you have more than one subject or pose to add to the scene, repeat steps 1-3 for each of your subjects or poses.
 6. If necessary, go to "edit" then to "transform" then to "scale" and adjust the size of the image you have just inserted into the scene. (Remember to hold down the shift key while you drag the square "handles" in the corners of the transform scale box inward or outward to make the image larger or smaller.)
 7. Adjust the opacity of the layer until it looks natural.
 8. Your teacher will review ways that you can add realistic looking shadows and other ways to make your illusion look more convincing.
 9. Move the new subjects around in the scene until the composition looks natural and yet has strong impact.

One "Message" Montage (original photo montage created using Adobe Photoshop)

For each montage:

1. Decide what message you want to convey.
2. Pre-plan your idea (the "clues" you will use) in your mind &/or sketch it on paper.
3. Decide whether your montage will have more impact if it is in black & white or if color is essential to your message.
4. Take at least ten photos as an image "database" from which you will select elements for your montage.
5. Use the technique you used for the poem montage to combine elements from your pictures into one image.

Prop-Based Montage technique - (This is often used in an advertising.)

1. Use a digital camera and a copy stand light set up to take 3-4 sharp, well lighted, and finely detailed photos of a prop or small product.
2. Use the same digital camera to take 3-4 pictures of a person. The person should be posing in a position that you can later combine with your product to create a convincing montage photo. If you photograph the person against a plain white or a plain black background you will have an easier time “copying” and “pasting” later.
3. Bring your digital media card to the teacher to have the files transferred to your USB drive.
4. Bring your USB drive to your computer and open all of the images in Adobe PhotoShop.
5. Select your best product photo and your best person photo(s) and close the other ones.
6. Begin with the person photo.
 - If you photographed the person against a solid color background - use the “magic wand” selection tool to select the background area of the photo. (The “marching ants” should surround the background area.)
 - Click the quick mask circle to check the selection area.
(Use the paintbrush tool and the eraser tool to make sure that the entire background area is selected.)
 - Click on the quick mask circle again to exit quick mask and change the selection indicator from a color back to the “marching ants.”
 - Go to the “Select” column and choose “Inverse”
(because you don’t really want the background – you really want to select the area that contains the person.)
 - Go to “Edit” > “Copy” (or Ctrl key plus C key)
 - Go to “Layer” > “New” > “Layer” (this will produce a blank transparent layer.)
 - Go to “edit” > “Paste” (or Ctrl key plus V key) – This will paste your person onto the new blank transparent layer.
 - Save your file using “File” > “Save As” – and give your file an appropriate new name. Make sure you save it as a .psd (PhotoShop) type file so that your layers will be saved and available for future use.
7. Now you are ready to work with your product photo.
 - Click on the person layer from the person photo, hold the mouse button down and drag that layer onto the product photo.
(This should paste a new layer onto your product photo and the person image should appear near the product.)
 - Check to make sure that you have enough room for the person to fit according to your design idea.
 - If you do not have enough room, make sure the person layer is highlighted in the layers box of your product photo and go to “edit” > “transform” > “scale” to change the size of your person. Hold down the shift key to keep your person image in proportion. Click the left mouse button down on one corner of the scaling box and hold both buttons down while you drag the corner inward or outward to re-size your person image. Release the mouse button first and then the shift button. Double click anywhere inside the scale box to make the scale box disappear.
 - Go to “image” > “adjust” > “levels” to adjust the levels of the person layer to make it match the product photo layer.
 - Use the arrow tool to move your person into the correct position.
8. Next, add realism by adding a shadow for your person that mimics the shadow cast by your product.
 - Go to “layer” > “duplicate layer” (call your new layer “shadow”)
 - Go to “edit” > “transform” > rotate and rotate the new shadow layer until it falls at the same angle as the other shadows in the picture. Double click anywhere inside the rotate box to make the box disappear.
 - Go to “edit” > “transform” > “distort” and move the little pull/push boxes around the edges of the distort box until the shadow seems to look “normal.” Double click anywhere inside the distort box to make the box disappear.
10. Save your file using “File” > “Save As” – and give your file an appropriate new name. Make sure you save it as a .psd (PhotoShop) type file so that your layers will be saved and available for future use.
11. Crop your image to the frame shape you want to use for your montage.
12. Re-size your image for a good print out.
 - Go to “Image” > “Image Size”
 - Change the resolution from 72 pixels per inch to 300 pixels per inch.
 - Change the longest side of the image to 7 inches.
13. Go to “Layer” > “Flatten Image”
14. Save your file again.
 - Give it a new file name such as “product montage – final.”
 - This time in the Save as box make sure that .jpg is selected.
(This will save your image in a format that can be used in other programs such as Microsoft Word.)

IF you need to create extra space on one side of your product photo image ...

- a. Go to "Image" > "Image Size" to check the size of your original product photo.
- b. Go to "File" > "New" and create a new image box that is about two inches wider and two inches taller than your original image. You can make these dimensions even larger if necessary.
 - o Make sure that the "contents" selection is "transparent"
 - o Make sure that the "mode" selection is RGB
- c. After your new blank image opens up,
 - o click on your product photo,
 - o Go to "edit" > "copy" (or use Ctrl + the C key)
 - o Click on your blank image to make it the active one
 - o Go to "edit" > "paste" (or use Ctrl + the V key)
 - o This will paste the product photo into the new file space. Use the arrow key to drag it into position.
 - o Click the rectangular marquee tool to make it active. Click on the side of the product photo that you need to add extra space to & "drag" a rectangle to select it for copying. Try to select an area that has background color but none of the actual product in it.
 - o Go to "edit" > "copy" (or use Ctrl + the C key)
 - o Go to "edit" > "paste" (or use Ctrl + the V key)
 - o Use the arrow tool to move the copied section into position.
 - o Go to "edit" > "transform" > "flip horizontal" to make the section blend in better. (If you are adding a section to the top or bottom instead of to one side use "flip vertical" instead of "flip horizontal.")
 - o Repeat the last few steps as many times as necessary until you have enough space to add your person image.
- d. Go to "Layer" > "Flatten Image" to combine all of your new background pieces with your product image.