

Inside Adobe Photoshop 5 - by Karl-Peter Gottschalk

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When I was working with one of the three star web and graphic designers in the UK, the biggest surprise I had was how limited the practical training opportunities had been for his employees in art school and after. I found myself giving free Photoshop tutorials to his staff so they would be up to speed for specific projects, and I do not consider myself a Photoshop expert by any means.

THE SEARCH FOR THE BEST

I had limited time available for this and outside courses were out of the question, so I went in search for the best set of books for them to learn from, something that would walk them through the creative and production processes Photoshop excels at, without insulting their intelligence. After a while I discovered the Inside series of bible-sized books from New Riders, who also publish the estimable web design teachers Lynda Weinman and David Siegel, and luckily for us they have just released a new edition of Inside Adobe Photoshop that covers the biggest upgrade of the program in a long while.

With Inside Adobe Photoshop 5 anyone who uses the program would gain something from

taking a day or two off from their usual workload and working through the tutorials with grim determination. Fortunately the Boutons have a sense of humor and lighten the load with a fair dose of whimsy and silliness even in some of the tutorial examples. I kinda like the one in Chapter 12: Creating A Photographic Fantasy where they merge a 3D alien modelled in Extreme 3D with a photograph of a dude in a suit and sunglasses clutching a miniature water pistol that the Boutons then turn into a pretty convincing (!) space laser. Aliens In Plaid indeed!

TUTORIALS IN DAMNED NEAR EVERYTHING!

That kind of levity is threaded through the whole book. There is also the Re-elect Senator Dave election poster finger removal sample that adds suitable type top and boot, the disgruntled flamingo-protecting Mountie, and A Big Hand for the Little Girl image resizing trickery.

But don't let the humour affect your judgement here. Inside Adobe Photoshop 5 is the best Photoshop 5 tutorial / reference book money can buy. Even better is that its useful life will outlast the currency of the 5th version update of the most commonly used image editing program in existence.

HERE'S A LIST, OR TWO

In the event that my own recommendations are not enough, here is list of benefits found on the back of the book. I could not put it better.

- Get a computer graphics overview of terms and concepts.
- Gain an in-depth understanding of how to customise Photoshop.
- Discover how to retouch and restore photographs.
- Learn how to use Photoshop in combination with Adobe Illustrator, Extensis

VectorTools and CorelXARA.

- Learn how to create animation, from creating the stills to batch editing the imagery

to compiling the frames.

- Start working with Photoshop for Web output.
- Develop expert techniques for image compositing.

The accompanying CD includes the obligatory mix of stock shots, example files, fonts, demo version software, texture files and bump maps for Photoshop, as well as a few exclusives:

- Three-D Graphics' Texture Creator in Mac and Windows versions, a natural

texture creation program.

- The VALIS Group's Flo – a Windows image manipulator.
- MooVer – a Mac animation compiler.

- MainActor, similar software for Windows.

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