

Photoshop 6.0.1 plug-ins available for Pentium 4 chips

Those of you who unwrapped a new Pentium 4 for Christmas might want to head over to Adobe's Web site if you want to truly kick Photoshop up a notch and get the speed you need. Adobe is advising Pentium 4 users to download a new collection of revised plug-ins to get enhanced performance on Intel Pentium 4 processor-based systems.

This update includes four separate files: MMXCore.8bx, LightingEffects.8bf, Shear.8bf, and Plugin.dll.

MMXCore.8bx is the meat of the updated plug-ins because it contains new performance enhancements for Pentium 4 systems and all existing enhancements for other Pentium-class systems that use MMX technology.

LightingEffects.8bf includes all of the functionality of the existing Lighting Effects plug-in, as well as additional enhancements for Pentium 4 systems.

The Shear.8bf plug-in resolves an out-of-memory condition, while the Plugin.dll resolves problems with plug-ins that don't use multiple processors.

Adobe recommends that all of these plug-ins replace the existing plug-ins of the same names that were installed with Photoshop 6.0.1. It also advises that Photoshop 6.0 users update to Photoshop 6.0.1 before installing these plug-in updates as bad things could happen to good artists. The update is available at <ftp://ftp.adobe.com/pub/adobe/photoshop/win/6.x/ps601up.exe>.

PowerRetouche updates new collection with Sharpness Editor 2

Developed by the Danish artist Jan Esmann, the Retouche family of filters has been described as plug-ins "that combine digital photo editing with optical science." Esmann, whose filters hit the market in 2001, has created plug-ins with professional punch but in keeping with the spirit of the plug-in pioneers, has made them shareware.

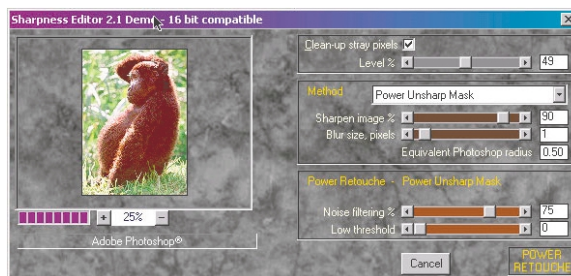
In the recently released collection are four Correctors: Lens, Noise, Exposure, and Colourstich. The Lens Corrector is designed to correct distortions created by camera lenses while the Noise Corrector can remove various kinds of noise in digital images. Exposure Corrector gives designers full control over image exposure as a whole or targeted to lights, midtones, or shadows, while the Colourstich Corrector corrects any discoloration due to unwanted color of light.

The other part of the collection—the Editors—includes Color, Saturation, Contrast, Transparency, Brightness, and Sharpness. Color allows you to target a very specific color to change without fiddling with selection tools. Saturation preserves color relations by preserving hues and values while raising chroma. Contrast allows for total independent control of the range, midtones, and the brilliance of an image, while the Transparency Editor lets users work with transparency in layers, and targets the transparency to light areas or shadows. Brightness gives users full control over color preservation allowing them to preserve or reduce color freely while altering brightness.

The centerpiece of the Editors collection is the Sharpness Editor (SHED). According to PowerRetouche, the built-in Unsharp Mask doesn't sharpen enough and if it does, creates negative contour lines and alters contrast. SHED, on the other hand, removes blur without creating irrelevant contrast enhancements or spectacular edge lines. The recently unveiled Version 2 includes a borderless Unsharp Mask, an improved version of the Sharpness Editor method and features an optical-based improvement of traditional Unsharp Mask.

All plug-ins can be bought as stand-alone filters running from \$32 to \$54 or you can buy the whole kit and caboodle for \$188, which includes updates, manuals, and the chance, as Esmann notes in his Web site, "to help feed a starving artist."

The set is currently only for Photoshop running on Windows. If, however, any of you Mac coding warriors out there want to bring these plug-ins to Mac users, Esmann asks that you contact him through their Web site at www.powerretouche.com where you can also buy the filters and download demos.



QuickRepeat and ColorVision updated for Photoshop 6.0

Age Technologies, a Quebec-based corporation specializing in software for the fashion and textile industries, has updated their plug-ins for Photoshop 6.0 users, including the Windows versions of QuickRepeat and ColorVision.

QuickRepeat is for designers to create their own printed textile fabrics and create repetitions with any image or part of image from Photoshop. With ColorVision, designers can re-color a scanned fabric image instantly in an almost infinite range of hues and it's no longer necessary to reduce the number of colors when re-coloring fabrics.

The updates resolve a problem involved in loading the Clidesign file format into Photoshop 6.0. Users with earlier versions of Photoshop don't need to download the update.

Age Technologies is also working on a fix for ColorVision with Photoshop 6.0 on Mac OS, which should be available by the time you read this.

According to the company, their other product—PlaidMaker Plus—is still running fine with Photoshop 6.0 under Windows and QuickRepeat and PlaidMaker are still working fine with Photoshop 6.0 under Mac OS.

As a performance note, Age Technologies is advising users to remove the Digimark "Detect Watermark" plug-in because Clidesign modules will run faster without it.

For more info on these plug-ins as well as to download the update, visit the company's Web site at www.agetechnologies.com. ■