NEPG - CREATING A TRIPTYCH IN PHOTOSHOP

This tutorial explains how to create a triptych in Photoshop, as a digital file for projection. It could also be used to create a single print with three images or to create and print three separate small images to fit into a triptych frame.

Select the three images that you intend to display together in the triptych format. In selecting images consider how they relate to one another not only in regard to the theme or intended message but also in regard to their size, orientation, colour, contrast, sharpness and tonal compatibility.

Remember that the 'hero' in one image may draw the eye more than the 'hero' in each of the other images. In fact, the images may be such that the eye is drawn around the triptych in such a way that it eventually settles on the hero of, lets say, the centre image. Alternatively, each image may stand alone in a way that there are three compatible 'heroes' with each being of equal visual weight.

Prepare your three images as normal using your raw processor (for example, Lightroom, Capture One, Affinity, ON1) and send them separately to Photoshop for amalgamation into a triptych frame. Each file should be sent to Photoshop preferably in 16-bit PSD format and in the same colour space (sRGB for projection or Adobe RGB for printing).

These notes have been prepared with reference to MAC keystrokes. The only keystroke differences between Mac and PC are shown in the following table.

MAC	PC
COMMAND	CONTROL
OPTION (key also marked ALT)	ALT
CONTROL CLICK or a 2 key mouse	RIGHT MOUSE CLICK
RETURN key (also has ENTER on it)	ENTER KEY on keyboard

Note that in the following notes, where CAPITALS have been used this indicates that the top pull-down menu of the Photoshop workspace has been used.

Complete any further editing of your separate images in Photoshop before you arrange them on a single canvas (leave them in the original size). Create a new canvas (FILE-New) in a 6x4 landscape, panoramic landscape or 4x6 portrait format. Although a square format would be acceptable for any single image it would not be appropriate for the triptych.

The canvas size should be made sufficient to receive the three images forming the triptych with extra space for gaps between the images and edge of the frame. For example, with 2 portrait images of 6000 x 4000 pixels and one landscape image of 4000 x 6000 pixels you could create a landscape canvas of say 15000 x 10000 pixels, which would maintain a 6x3 landscape format for the triptych.

If the canvas created is too large for easy viewing then reduce its size using Cmd Minus. Separately copy each image (Cmd A/Cmd C) and paste (Cmd V) onto the

canvas (each image will be pasted into its own layer). Each time an image is placed drag it to approximately position it on the canvas.

In the Photoshop versions 2020 onwards Photoshop will indicate lines and dimensions to assist alignment of the images. In all versions rulers and a grid can be shown (VIEW-Rulers and VIEW-Show-Grid).

The appropriate layer is selected when you subsequently click on any image in the triptych. After selecting an image it may be adjusted as follows:

- Use Cmd T to create selection handles around the pasted image and drag any corner to resize the image. Also, any image may be rotated after moving the cursor slightly away from any corner. Double click the selection to apply the transformation.
- Use V for the move tool to enable final positioning on the canvas. Fine adjustments in image position may be done using the arrow keys.

Use the crop tool (double click to apply the crop) to crop the triptych to the desired shape. Next, to finalize the triptych:

- Use LAYER-Flatten Image
- Resize image (IMAGE-Image Size) to suit competition criteria (maximum height 1080 pixels and maximum width 1920 pixels).
- FILE-Save As and follow the prompts to save a copy of the triptych to, for example, your desktop before loading it through the NEPG portal (the Competition Uploader).