

22B / NONDESTRUCTIVE EDITING - QUICK MASKS¹

The following sections will deal with photoshop more as an artists studio and not just as an extension of photography. You will work more with layers and using photoshop as a flexible design tool to generate digital and print work.

See also: “22A Non Destructive Editing - Layer Masks” for a different flavor of layer masks. While Quick Masks are good for creating selections, Layer Masks are easier for for making composites.



Dali Atomicus, Philippe Halsman, 1948.

This version of the photograph shows an element missing in the final print: the hands holding the chair. Also, the final print contains one of Dali's paintings (“Leda Atomica”) in the frame on the easel.

NONDESTRUCTIVE EDITING

Editing which does not alter the information contained in original image. When you work nondestructively you can always go back to the original image.

A SAFETY NET

Digital tools such as Photoshop are used for small and large image manipulations, such as the slightest adjustment to the tonal range or the creation of an alternative reality.

In the photo *Dali Atomicus*, photographer Philippe Halsmann suspends the laws of physics using only a 4 by 5 camera. Halsmann reports that the image was captured after “six hours and twenty-eight throws,” we don't know how many unhappy cats it took.

In this section we will use the same subject (Salvador Dali) but only a single cat to create our own image. We will focus on working in a nondestructive method so our edits and modifications to the original file are placed on separate layers or in alpha channels.

Learning to use Quick Mask will help you to understand masking. Masks define which areas are visible and which image areas are invisible. Masks do not delete image areas (this is why we have classified this as “non-destructive”), they

¹ Adapted from Digital Foundations Chapter 11

are simply used to hide or show parts of images. Since masks are either hiding or showing image areas (or partially showing), they operate in black and white and create transparency with shades of gray.



QUICK MASKS / ALPHA CHANNELS

In this exercise we will select parts of an image using the lasso tool, quick masks and alpha channels.

LASSO TOOL

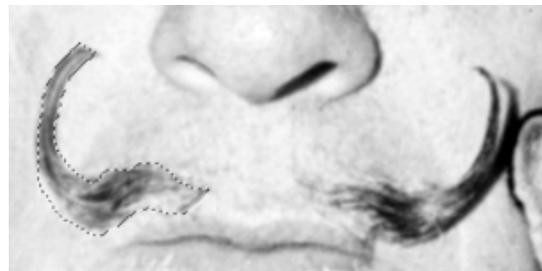
A selection tool used to make freehand selections.

YOU WILL NEED:

- A computer running Photoshop CS6
- The image of Dalí provided with this section.

STEPS:

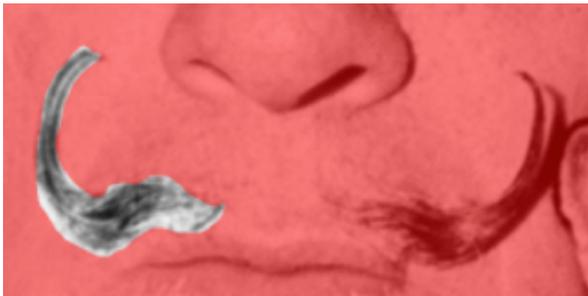
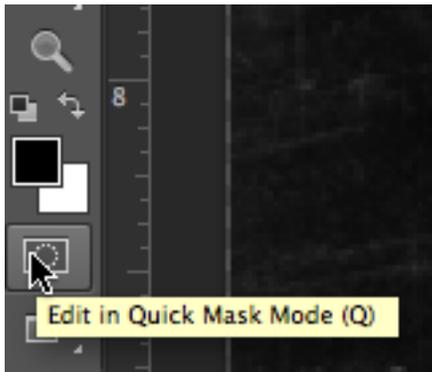
1. In photoshop Use File > Open to open the file Dali for this exercise.
2. Use the Lasso tool from the Toolbox to make a selection around the left part of Dalí's mustache. Click and drag with the Lasso tool from the beginning of the mustache all the way around its contour. The selection is made when you bring the mouse back to the point where you first pressed the mouse button. The Lasso tool serves the purpose of making a fast draft of a selection which can be used as a starting point for masks. Your selection will not be a perfect but we will modify it in the next step.



QUICK MASK

Turns all areas of an image that are NOT selected bright red. Making it easy to refine a selection.

3. Enter Quick Mask Mode by pressing the “Q” key on the keypad or clicking on the Quick Mask icon at the bottom of the Toolbox, just beneath the foreground/background color chip icons. The selected areas are easily visible.

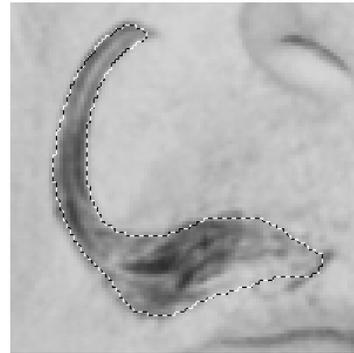
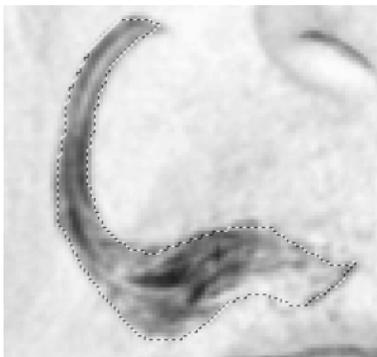
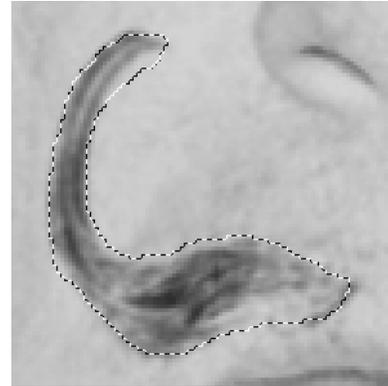


LOAD DEFAULT CHIPS

The letter “D” on the keypad will load black into the foreground color and white

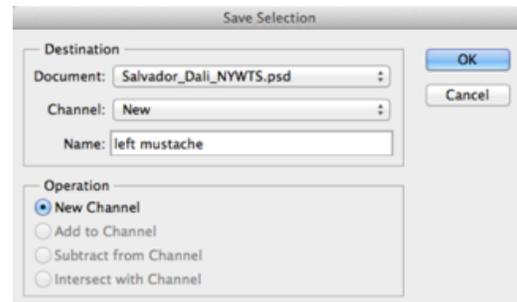
into the background color chip. These are the default color positions.

4. Click on the Paintbrush tool and make sure that the default colors are loaded into the foreground/background color chips (black on top, white as the background color) by clicking on the small black/white color chip icon to the top left area of the actual color chips in the Toolbox. On any mask, the color black will hide part of the image and the color white will reveal part of the image. The red overlay in Quickmask is used as a guide, so you can easily see where you have painted with black or white to add or remove the mask.
5. Painting with white paint on the Quick Mask will add parts of the image to the selection area. Painting with black paint on the Quick Mask will hide parts of the image. In other words, it will add to the mask and subtract from the selection area. Practice painting with black and white paint.
6. Paint with different size brushes and notice what happens with a soft or hard brush, or with the brush set at different opacities. As you are painting, press the letter “Q” to exit Quick Mask Mode. You will see the resulting selection.
7. Press “Q” again to re-enter Quick Mask Mode and continue painting to modify the mask. The final brushwork in Quickmask and the resulting selection in standard editing mode.



8. Exit Quick Mask and return to standard editing mode when you are finished modifying the selection in Quick Mask mode. Your selection should more closely fit the contour of the mustache.

Here is an image of our Lasso tool selection before Quick Mask and the final selection after making modifications with the Paintbrush in Quick Mask.

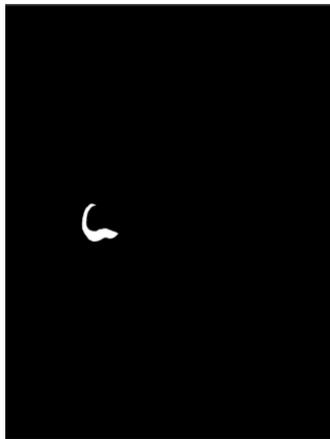


9. Choose Select > Save Selection and name the new selection left mustache. Click OK. When a selection is saved it becomes an alpha channel.

ALPHA CHANNEL

A grayscale channel that defines which parts of an image are visible and which are transparent.

10. All channels can be viewed by clicking on their names in the Channels panel. Click on the Channels tab in the Layers panel, then click on the name, left mustache. The file now shows the left mustache alpha channel. Everything that is not included in the mask is black, and the once selected shape of the left side of the mustache is white.



11. Click back on the Gray channel to return to standard editing mode. Deselect the left side of the mustache by choosing Select Menu > Deselect or use the key command, Cmd+D. Then reselect the left side of the mustache by loading it from the Channel panel by Cmd+clicking on the icon of the alpha channel, left mustache. Practice deselecting and then loading the alpha channel, or reselecting by using

Cmd+D then Cmd+click on the alpha channel.

12. Use File > Save as to save the Photoshop file. We named ours daliwithcat.psd.

SAVING A SELECTION

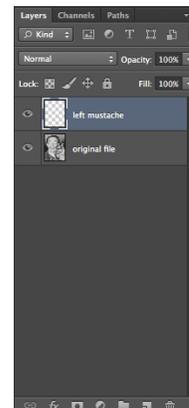
In this exercise we will build off our previous work to continue modifying the image.

YOU WILL NEED:

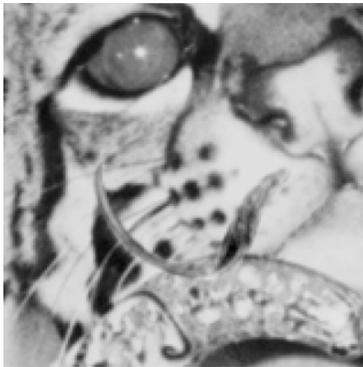
- Your project file from the last exercise.

STEPS:

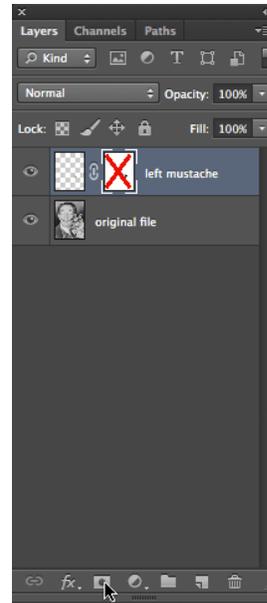
1. Start with the selection of the left side of the mustache loaded.
2. Copy and paste the half-mustache to a new layer by either using the Edit Menu or Cmd+J.
3. Rename your layers. We named the Background layer original file and the copied layer left mustache.EDIT: Can't change background label



4. Use the Move tool to position the mustache on the left side of the cat's face.
5. Then use Edit > Free Transform to rotate the mustache to the left. Watch Out: If the left mustache layer was not active (highlighted) you may have moved the layer containing the original file. Make sure the layer that you want to edit is active before editing. We will add a final adjustment for contrast at the end of this exercise, but you can add an adjustment with Levels now to make the mustache darker.



6. Now we will add a mask to the left mustache layer in order to further control how the layer blends with the original image. Add a layer mask by clicking on the Add Layer Mask button in the bottom of the Layers panel.



7. Zoom in to at least 100% before editing the mask. Notice that the icon for the mask is white in the Layers panel. Since everything on the layer is revealed, the entire mask is white. The mask is currently active in the Layers panel. You can tell which part of the layer is active – the content or the mask, because there is a frame around the icon for the active layer component.

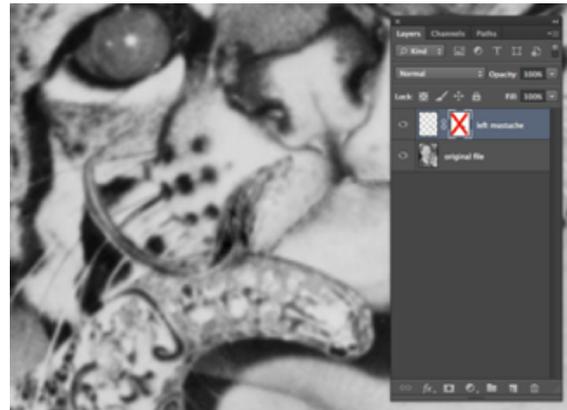
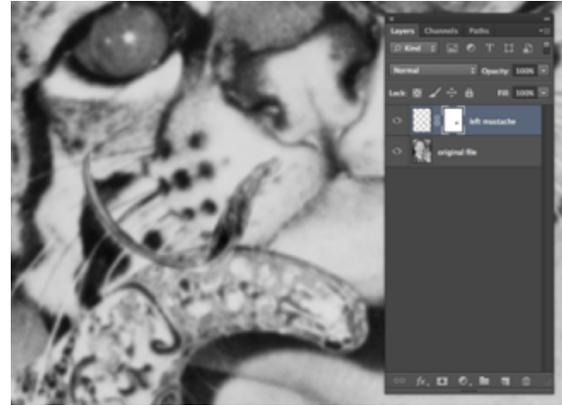
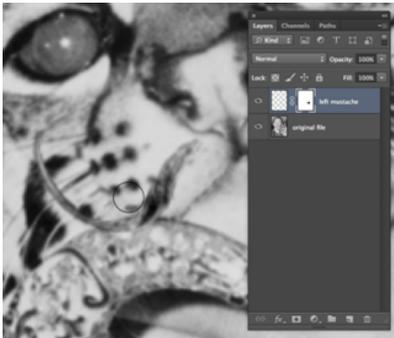
ACTIVATE LAYER COMPONENT

Click on the icon of the layer content or the layer mask to make active either layer component.

8. Now we will blend the edges of the mustache using the Paintbrush tool on the layer mask. This will make the mustache appear more realistic on the cat's face. Click on the Paintbrush tool. Load black into the foreground

color. Black will be used on the mask to hide parts of the layer content.

9. Use the Options panel to set the opacity to 70%. Use a big, soft brush. We set our brush at 30 pixels and 0% hardness. Trace just around the edges of the mustache with the edge of the Paintbrush tool brushing against the edge of the mustache and then view the image with and without the layer mask.



ZOOM TO FIT

Zoom out to Fit on Screen viewing mode by using **Cmd+0**

10. Shft+click on the mask icon to disable it. Then Shft+click again on the mask icon to enable it.

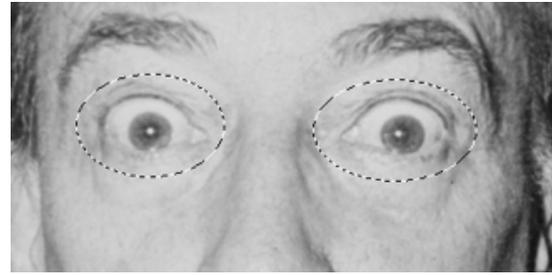
11. and or View the mask in the document window by Opt+clicking on the mask icon. It is possible to edit the mask with black or white paint in this mode, too, although without seeing the affects of editing the mask on both layers you may be less likely to do so. Click on the icon of the layer content to return to standard editing mode.



12. Now for the true test: repeat all of the steps in both exercises with the other half of the mustache!



13. Once again, repeat these steps for the eyes. Use the Ellipse Selection tool to select one of Dalí's eyes. Then hold Shift while selecting the other eye with the same tool. Make the original file layer active by clicking on it. Press Cmd+J to float the selected eyes to a new layer. Rename the layer eyes.



14. Use the Move tool to position the eyes onto the cat's face. You will have to select each eye individually to move it into place. EDIT: how do you move each one individually when using Shift+Ellipse tool. Ends up moving both eyes as one shape. and use Edit > Free Transform to rotate it. Add a layer mask and use black paint to hide the edges of the eyes. EDIT: I got lost on using the mask to add black to the edges. I was able to add a red mask outline around the eyes but when you add the adjustment layer it affects the area outside the eyes as well



15. Add a Levels adjustment layer on top of the eyes layer. We used the button in the bottom of the Layers panel.



16. Push the sliders beneath the shadow and highlight areas towards each other in the Adjustments panel to create more contrast in the image.



17. Now we will organize all of our manipulations into one folder. Click once on the left mustache layer then Shft+click on the layer Levels 1 to select all layers above original file. Use the Layers panel pulldown menu to choose New Group from Layers and name the group manipulations. Now the nondestructive layers are grouped into one folder. The folder can be collapsed or expanded using the small sideways triangle on the left side of the folder icon in the Layers panel.

ETHICS AND IMAGE MANIPULATION

In certain situations, the digital artist must be ethically aware of the manipulation that occurs in such applications. The National Press Photographers Association maintains a code of ethics that journalism students and professionals should abide.

Journalists and news photographers strive for accuracy in their image-based reporting. There are historical cases of digital manipulation which are often used to illustrate a violation of the NPPA code of ethics (see the National Geographic 1982 cover image of the pyramids). Note: NPAA code of ethics can be found here: [\[Link\]](#).