

Artful Photos

Lesson 3: Brushed Watercolor Mask (Photoshop Elements)

In this lesson, we'll use the collaged photo document from the last lesson and transform it into a beautiful brushed watercolor mask.

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Set Up the Workspace

- Begin in Advanced/Expert Mode of Photoshop Elements.
- Open the 12x12 inch collaged photo document (File > Open) you left off with in Lesson 2: Collaged Photo.
- Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips to the default of black and white.



Duplicate and Merge the Group

- In the Layers panel, activate the Master group.
- Press Ctrl J (Mac: Cmd J) to duplicate the group.
- With the duplicate group active, right-click (Mac: Ctrl-click) and choose Ungroup Layers. All eight layers from the duplicate group should be active.
- Press Ctrl E (Mac: Cmd E) to merge the layers.
- Double-click directly on the name of the layer and rename it Merged. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Click on the Visibility icon of the Master group to hide it.
- With the Merged layer active, hold down the Ctrl key (Mac: Cmd key) and click on the Create a New Layer icon to place a new layer below the merged layer.

Create a Brushed Mask

NOTE: You should have loaded the class brushes in Lesson 2: Collaged Photo.

- Get the Brush Tool.
- In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker. Choose the WC Masks 6-Light-SyndeeR brush from the ART-Class-Brushes. Leave the settings as is.

NOTE: The class brushes have built-in settings, so any adjustments made to the brush will revert back to the original settings once you choose a different brush.

- Activate the Merged layer in the Layers panel.
- In the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask to clip the Merged layer to the blank layer below.
- Activate the blank layer.

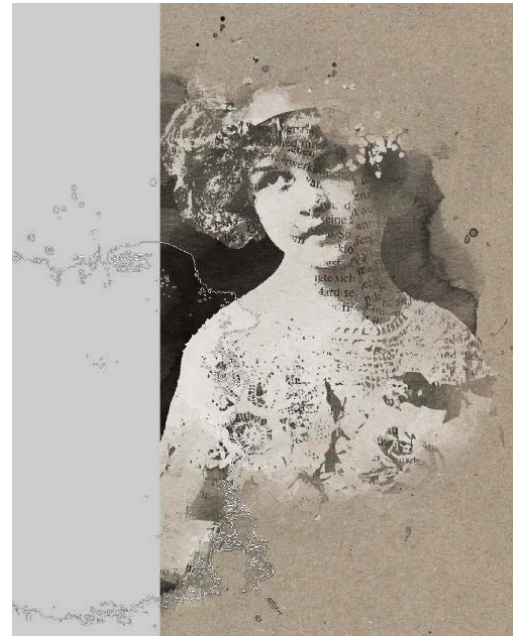
- On the document, click to stamp the brush once on the middle-left side.



- Move the brush to the left and up a bit so that it's extending off the left edge, and click once to stamp the brush.



- Move the brush down a bit below, overlapping the previous stamped areas, and click to stamp just a bit on the left edge.



- In the Layers panel, change the Blend Mode of the stamped layer to Hard Light. This takes on more of the background color.
- Double-click on the brushed layer and rename it Mask. Press Enter/Return to commit the change.
- Activate the Merged layer.



Add Elements to the Page

- Get the Move tool.
- Open the Voices-WA-SyndeeR.png (File > Open) from the class download.
- Holding down the Shift key, click on the Voices wordart and drag it over to your document. Then, click on the Voices wordart and move it so that it overlaps the right side of the masked photo.



- Open the Butterfly-SyndeeR.png (File > Open) from the class download.
- Holding down the Shift key, click on the Butterfly and drag it over to your document. Then, click on the Butterfly and move it so that it sits above the Voices wordart.



Add a Drop Shadow

NOTE: You should have loaded the class styles in Lesson 2: Collaged Photo.

- In the Menu Bar, choose Window > Styles.
- In the Styles panel, if you don't see your class drop shadow styles, open the dropdown menu and locate the Drop-Shadow-SyndeeR. Click on one of the drop shadow icons to apply the shadow. I used Shad-1. Close the Styles panel.



Your page is ready to add additional elements, photos, and journaling or you can leave it as is.



In this example, I've used brushes from the class brushes to add to the corners of the page.

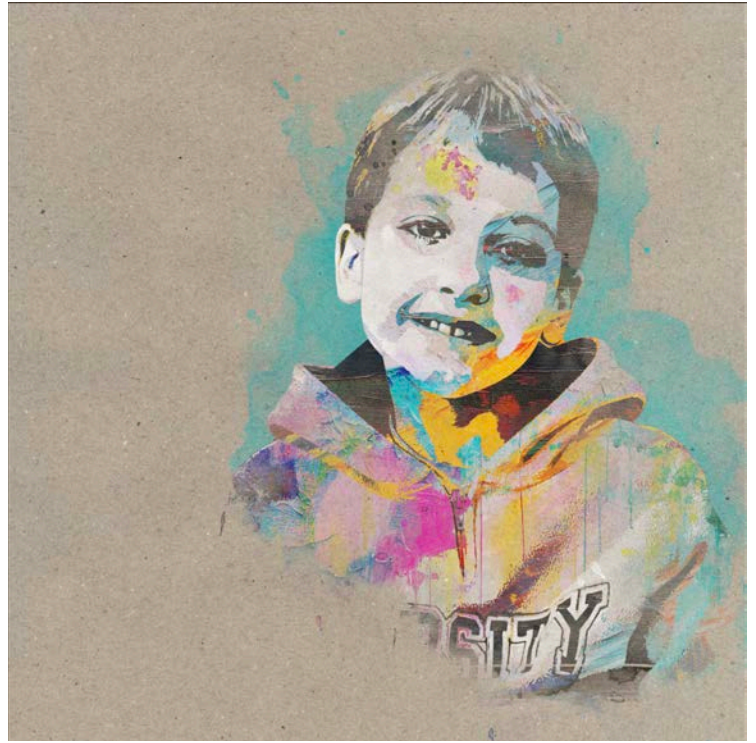
- On a new layer, I used the WC Masks 4-SyndeeR brush on the top-left edge and the bottom-right corner of the page.
- Then, I clipped the Torn-Pages-2-SyndeeR.jpg paper to the brushed layer.
- I set the Blend Mode of the brushed layer to Hard Light.
- On a new layer, I stamped the Messy Ink-Corner-SyndeeR on top of the previous stamped and brushed corners.



This page was created using the techniques from Lessons 2 and 3 using the same selfie I used for my examples at the end of Lesson 2: Collaged Photo.



TIP: When using an colored image or element, try use a complimentary color instead of black to stamp your mask with.



Save the Document

- Save the document (File > Save) as a layered PSD file.
- Save the document in the class folder for this lesson. Click Save.