

Peter Paterson – Notes from his visit to CD group in Feb 2019

Peter says he just does what he did in the darkroom. A bit of dodging and burning, amending the colours (perhaps to remove a colour cast) and a bit of contrast.

General Thoughts

- Always shoots in Raw
- Exposes for the sky and aims to underexpose so you have details everywhere
- Less is more for editing
- Process using 16 bits if you can – especially for the sky
- Look at the edges when you are taking the image and try to avoid distracting things eg highlighted sky or bright blobs on the sides.
- Wait a bit of time before you look at the image
- Use your feet when composing

What to do...

Open the Raw file in the raw processor

1. Hit 'auto' to see what the system can do as sometimes it's enough.
2. If there is a colour cast you could move the temperature or white balance sliders, but, he has a better way than doing that.
3. Wiggle the sliders until you are happy – make sure that there isn't any blocking of blacks or whites. Set clarity and vibrance to 20. If you make the clarity negative you will soften the image. NB: If you have loaded a jpg into Raw then don't touch the clarity, vibrance and saturation sliders as they have already been altered in camera.
4. Tick to remove chromatic aberration and enable the profile correction for the lens.
5. Maybe add a neutral density filter (PS) if he forgot to use one.
6. Straighten the image (here or in PS)
7. Then open in PS.

To remove a colour cast (for example on a long exposure which has blue)

1. Create a new empty layer
2. Use the eye dropper to select the colour where the colour cast is deepest and click to sample
3. Fill the new layer with the colour (alt delete), then invert the colour to it's opposite (Control I)
4. Make the layer blend mode colour and the opacity 38%

Adjusting different areas

He doesn't use clever masks – just uses the following techniques. He's blown images up to A1 and you still couldn't see the edits so works fine. Create new layers for the edits as then you can delete/amend them as you go.

1. Magic wand/quick selection to select the area you want to alter. Use minus and plus to add or remove areas. To avoid getting a hard line heavily feather (about 80% of slider or 300 pixels (depending on image)).
2. When the selection is still on then use adjustment layers to alter just the selected area. Uses levels, hue and saturation or curves (a very slight S curve adds contrast and gives a bit of luminosity). Hue/saturation – you look at each of the colours in turn.
3. Invert the selection to adjust the other areas of the image, or select a new area. Then use levels, hue/saturation or curves again.
4. Go back into camera Raw to bring back any blacks which are blocked out to black. You use the magic wand to select the clipped bits, zoom in and then go into camera Raw to increase the black slider.
5. Use Pixelgenius Photokit 2 to do a number of simple tasks eg burning in the corners or top and bottom.
6. Then sharpen using the unsharp mask on a separate layer (uses 100 as value). Brush out the sharpening on the sky as that shouldn't be sharp. Alternatively use filter>other>high pass with 3'ish pixels (edges only) with soft light blending mode. You lose a bit of sharpening on printing so over do it if the image is to be printed out. NB: A phone image doesn't need sharpening.

Oversharpening - You can see white lines on an edge eg chimneys

Use the stamp tool, selecting very close to the correction and go along the white line. The blend mode should be darken.

Burning and dodging – uses a separate layer as thinks the actual tools are very course and doing it on a separate layer gives a much more refined result. Using a layer means it affects all tones at once

1. Create a new layer, soft light blend mode with 50% grey in it and opacity to 12%. The layer should be above the background layer, but, below everything else.
2. Set the foreground/background to black/white
3. Use a soft brush (number 50 is a soft brush), opacity at 14%, no hardness and 78% visible. Brush with black to darken an area and brush with white to lighten.

HDR – useful for images with big contrasts eg cathedrals

Takes 5 images (not the normal 3) with one stop between each one.

To select hair

Select the overall shape and use smart radius to help select the missing bits.

Also uses

Content aware band aid to replace anything unhelpful and if it doesn't work use the clone tool.

Gaussian blur and desaturation

Cropping and vignetting (either by system or by adding a black layer and using a soft brush)

Black and white – it's all about colour!

1. Get the colour image to a stage that you are happy with and would make a good quality colour print
 2. Oversaturate the colour of the image using the saturation slider in Hue and Saturation just enough to give a bit of leeway with the adjustments in the next step
 3. Using the Black and White Adjustment Layer in photoshop and adjusting the various colour sliders within get it as good as you can making sure that you do not burn out the highlights and do not lose the detail in the shadows
 4. Make a new Hue and Saturation adjustment layer and place it underneath the Black and White layer now adjust the colour sliders to see if this helps with the contrast in certain areas of the image.
 5. Once you have studied areas within the image that could do with either lightning or darkening or even more contrast using separate Adjustment layers for example curves for contrast, levels midpoint for lightning and darkening areas. He used the lasso to pick up a general area. Then feather up to 80% on the slider and, while the selection is still active, use curves and levels to amend that area.
 6. Once you are happy with the local contrast and levels then if still needed to burn in or hold back areas of the image then selecting a new layer making it a 50% grey with soft light as the blending mode layer you can then use a soft brush set at around 14% to lighten and darken local areas if needed remembering to have the foreground and background boxes set to pure white and black
- NB: Don't go back to seeing the colour after you've done this as it'll be weird.
7. Then to finish off before printing apply a Gradient map layer using the black to white gradient. Looks too much on the screen but is fine on the print. He has an Epsom printer and prints as 'light' on very bright base paper to bring out the whites.

Printing

Create 2 images – one for projection and one for printing.

Check the colour setting – srgb is fine for projection, but, change it to AdobeRGB when printing as it's a better colour space.

Make sure you are using an appropriate colour profile

Then select the ink and paper, he uses 1440 dpi for his printer, doesn't use high speed as you want the ink to sink in before it goes over it again, uses perceptual rendering intent as it's the best one and relative colormetic. Use soft proof to see what it might look like.