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digital **RETOUCHING**

for FASHION BEAUTY & PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY

photoshop CS4

GRY GARNESS

Eureka Imaging Publications

extract: GRAFTING – THE ART OF BORROWING

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**DIGITAL RETOUCHING FOR FASHION, BEAUTY AND PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHY
in Photoshop CS4**

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Publications

GRAFTING – the art of borrowing

Grafting is simply borrowing a piece of the image, and placing it over an area where you use it as a 'patch'. This method has more control and flexibility than cloning or patching. It can be used to repair backgrounds and virtually anything else. We can combine it with masking and blending modes, but let's start with a quick no-frills hair graft.

The gaps in the hair were really distracting to this image. This can easily happen when hair is scraped back after being styled and re-styled all day, full of product and completely uncooperative. With grafting it's fairly easy to fix.

1. MAKE THE SELECTION

Make a generous **Freehand Lasso** selection around the area you want to borrow from. Don't even bother feathering. Here I wanted to borrow a chunk of hair from slightly above the thin patch.

2. COPY IT ONTO A LAYER

Hit **Edit>Copy Merged** followed by **Edit>Paste**. In this way you will avoid layer conflicts if you have several layers. Press the **V** key to select the **Move tool**. Get used to this little sequence because you'll be doing it often. Move the patch to the area you need to cover. You might have to **transform** the patch in its new location. Quite often a small rotate is needed to make it fit. **Command+T** gives you **Free Transform**, where you can **rotate** or **scale** the layer directly.

3. WARP IF NECESSARY

If you need to match the direction of the hair, you can access the **Warp** button before you commit the transform. See p.152. for more on Warp. It's a wonderful feature for this kind of thing, as it lets you shape the hair in the right direction, matching the surrounding hair. Here it worked beautifully.

4. MASK AND REVEAL THE PATCH

Go to **Layer>Add Layer Mask>Hide All.** This creates a black mask, hiding the patch. Grab the **Brush tool** and a **soft brush**. Set the opacity to 100%, **white**, and reveal the hair patch with the brush – only where you need it. Nudge position if necessary. If you go too far in revealing, press **X** on the keyboard to reverse the foreground color to **black**, and hide more of the patch again.

5. REPEAT FOR THE NEXT PATCH

You can sometimes use a graft twice, but do transform it slightly to avoid repetition, and later clone away any obvious repeating patterns. The best thing however, is to make a completely new graft.
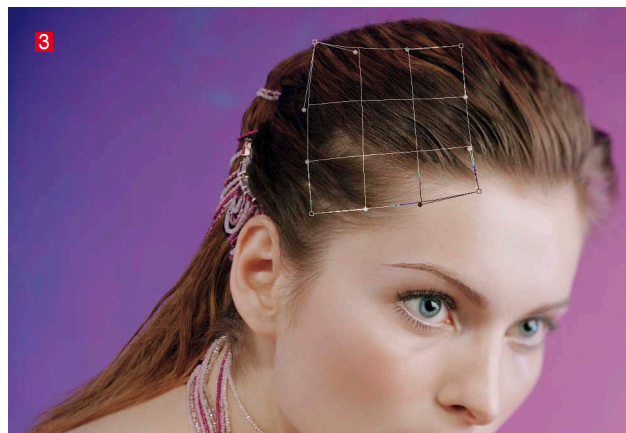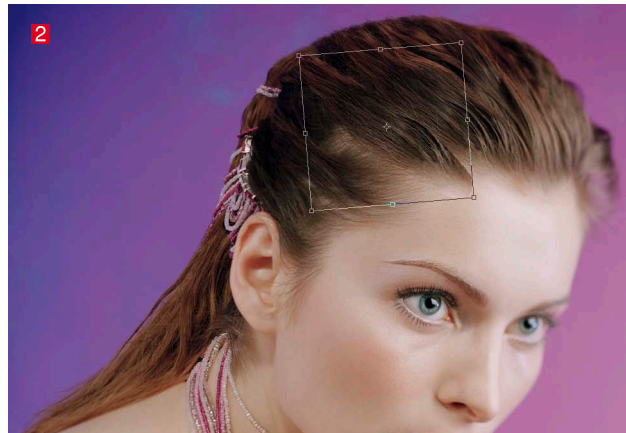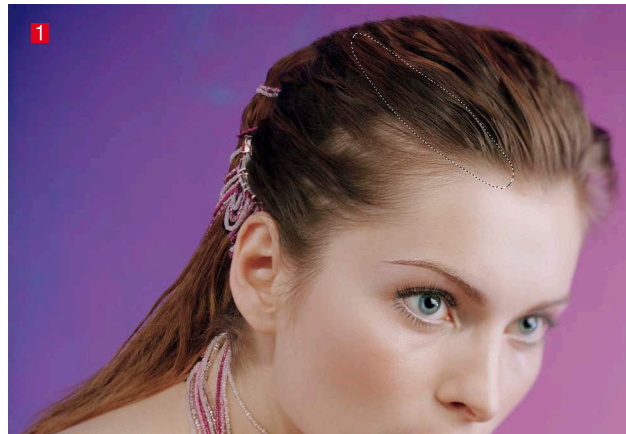
In many cases you might find it more practical to choose a layer-mask that reveals the whole patch, and then brush away the parts of the layer that you don't need. It's your choice, and it also depends on the size of the grafted patch. Try to be logical and flexible in the way you work with layer-masking – not getting stuck in a rut.

Grafting can also be used to repair backgrounds, edges of clothing where the edge has a particular texture you need to preserve, and also within fabrics/clothing. I use grafting all the time. Sometimes I merge it down to the Retouch layer. Other times I leave it on a separate layer.
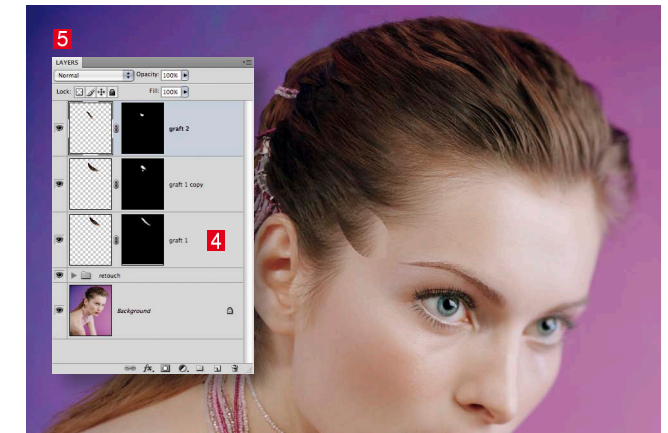
OPTIONAL COLOR CORRECTION:
If color adjustments are needed in order to match the surrounding areas, do the following:
Make a **Curves** adjustment layer and before you make any changes, press **Alt+Command+G**. This creates a **Clipping Group**, allowing the Curves adjustment to only affect the layer-graft you just made. Now you can **edit the Curve** so that the color of the edge blends with the surroundings as much as possible. In some cases you may need to draw a **Gradient** on the Curves layer-mask, to make it blend better all around. This is quite a workaround, so the graft better be worth it!