



INTRODUCTION TO GRAPHIC COMMUNICATIONS POP ART FROM YOUR PHOTOS

Information
Sheet No.

PS876



If you are a fan of pop art then you're probably already well acquainted with the work Roy Lichtenstein. He became one of the leading pop artists of the sixties with his comic-strip paintings. *Drowning Girl* 1963, shown above, is one of his better known works and is a good example of the design features in his most famous pieces. Notice the thick lines, bold colors, and thought bubble. His work also often included boxed captions and words such as "WHAAM!" commonly found in comic books.

Benday dots were Lichtenstein's trademark. Benday dots are a printing process which combines two (or more) different small, colored dots to create a third color. Back in the day, pulp comic books used Benday dots in primary colors to inexpensively create the secondary colors such as flesh tone.


You can create the Benday dot effect by using the **Color Halftone** filter found in Photoshop, however this tutorial will show you a way to create a fantastic looking black and white **Halftone Pattern**. "Why?", because it often looks better.

Due to the vivid colors, the pop art that you will create will look fantastic if you get it printed at your local print shop. If you are going to get it printed, in the beginning change the resolution to 300dpi (Image >> Image Size) and at the end of the tutorial change the mode to CMYK (adjust colors if necessary).

There are 2 steps to this tutorial... but be sure to read through the entire tutorial first before beginning...

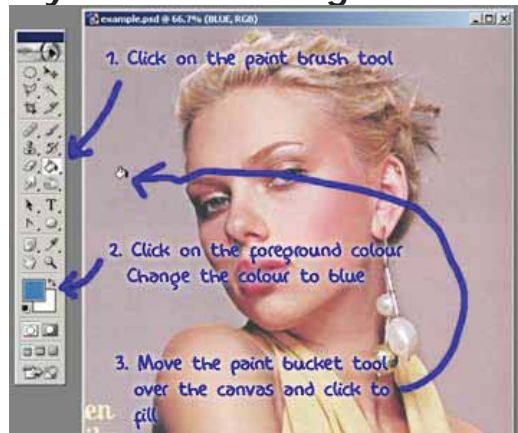
STEP 1. Creating the Half Tone Shading

a) Preparing the Canvas

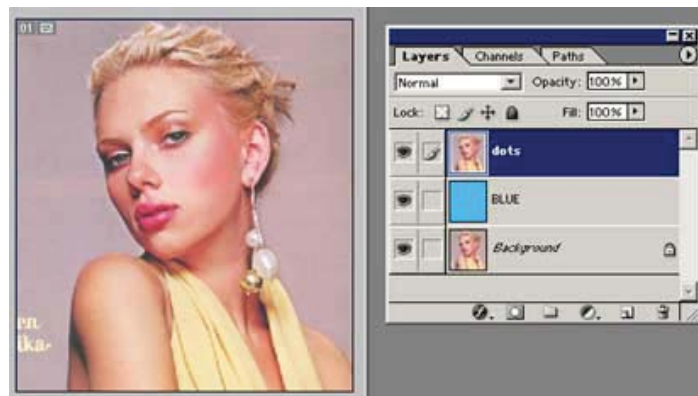
Open your picture in Photoshop that is going to become pop art and **duplicate the layer** called "*Background*". (Just click the layer called "*Background*" and drag it to this icon  at the bottom of the layer window to duplicate the layer.)

Rename this new layer "dots". (To rename a layer right-click on the name in the Layer Palette and select Layer Properties).

Create another new layer and fill it bright blue using the Paint Bucket tool .

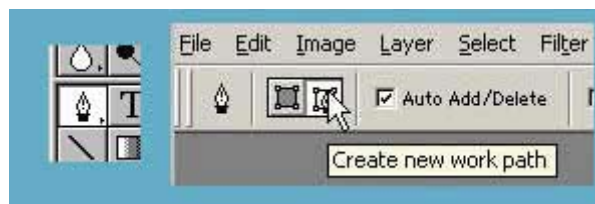


Drag this layer between the two existing layers and rename it something meaningful i.e "blue". The image below shows what your Layer Palette should look like. This is the basic set up to begin.



Now working on the "dots" layer we need to clear out all the unwanted parts of the photograph. In this case the model is isolated; delete the rest remaining background.

Cut out your subject using the **Pen Tool**. Remember to make sure the pen tool is set to **create a Work Path**. See below.



***NOTE:** You could use the eraser tool but the results won't be as professional.

Using the pen tool **create a path** around the person (or thing) and then **make it into selection**. **Invert the selection** (CTRL + Shift + i) and hit **delete**. **Deselect** (Ctrl + D)

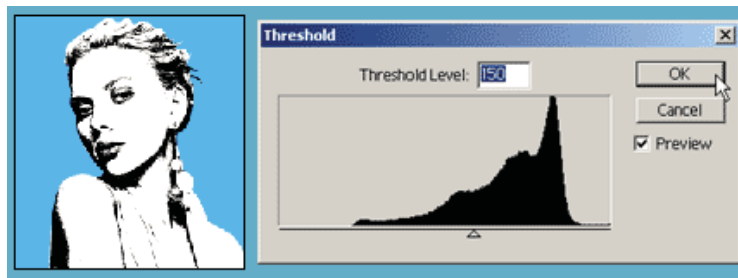


b) Making the Dots

Desaturate the "dots" layer (Ctrl + Shft + U).



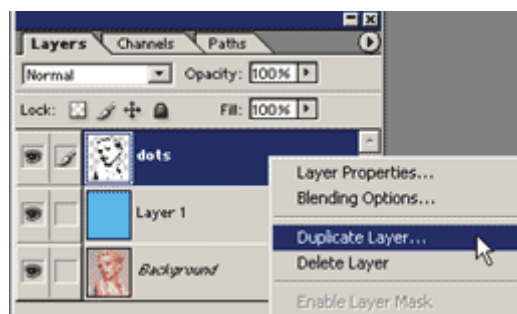
While still on the "dots" layer adjust **Threshold** to something dramatic. **Image >> Adjustments >> Threshold . . .** The settings used here are shown in the image below, but you will need to experiment to see what threshold settings works for YOUR image.



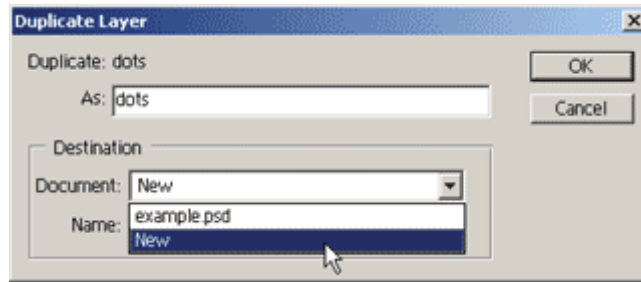
Using Threshold will leave the image looking very pixelated (jagged). So apply **Gaussian Blur** (approximately a 2-3 pixels should do it). **Filter >> Blur >> Gaussian Blur...**



In your Layers Palette **right-click on the "dots" layer** and select **Duplicate Layer....** See image below.



Select **New** for the Destination Document. Now you will have 2 documents open in Photoshop.

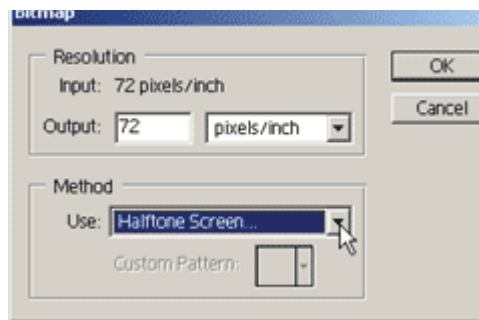


Working on your **new** document change the **Mode to Grayscale**. **Image >> Mode >> Grayscale**. A dialogue box appears... "Discard color information?"... Click OK.

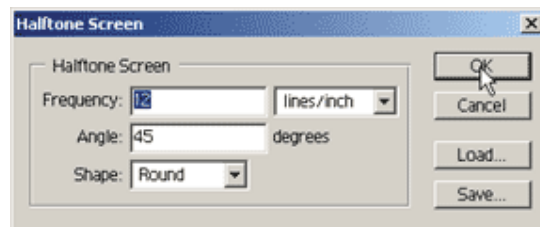
Now change the **Mode to Bitmap**.

Image >> Mode >> Bitmap A dialogue box appears... "Flatten layers?"... Click OK.

Choose **Halftone Screen** on the Bitmap options window. Click OK. See image below.



Next appears the Halftone Screen box. Apply the settings shown below. Note you may want to experiment with the **Frequency** as this decides the size of the dots. Click OK.



You are now almost there with the dots. All that's left is to transfer the dots back to the first document. (See part C).



Note if your dots aren't looking very good you may have forgotten to apply blur or need to apply more blur. The smoother gradient is, the better halftone pattern.

c) Organizing

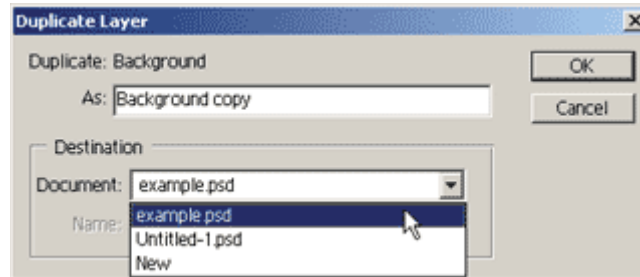
Change the **Mode back to Grayscale**.

A dialogue box will appear...Make sure the size ratio is 1 and click OK.

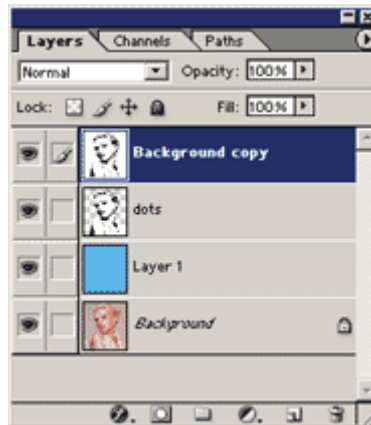
Now change the **Mode back to RGB**.

In your Layers Palette right-click on the layer and select **Duplicate Layer**.

There should be 3 three options as the Destination Document. Choose your original .psd (which should be the top one). See image below.

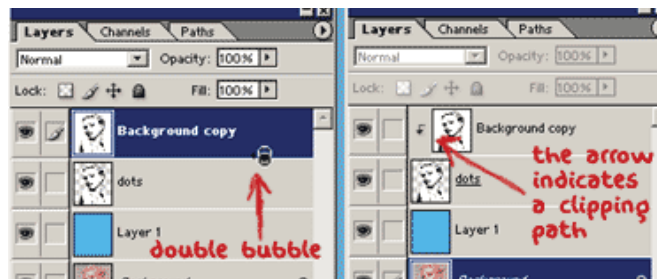


Your Layers Palette should look like the one shown below. You can close the second .psd that you created; there's no need for it now.

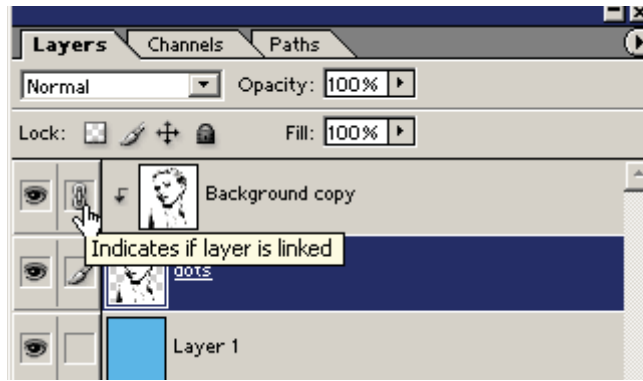


The final step for creating the dots is to **create a Clipping Path** between the new layer and the "dots" layer.

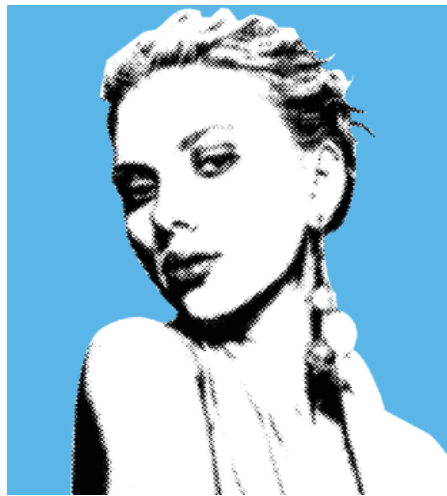
To create a Clipping Path...hold down the ALT key and move your cursor between the 2 layers in your Layers Palette. When the cursor turns into a "double bubble" (see image below) click to create the clipping path.



Now **link the "dots" and "Background copy" layer**. See image below.
Merge Linked layers (Ctrl + E)



Your picture should now look like the one shown below, only better because it's not so small and compressed!



Now is a good time to **Save** (Ctrl + S) your work.

STEP 2. Adding Color

Having achieved a great looking half tone effect, it's time to add the color.

You are going to use Fill Layers to color this picture. Fill Layers are great if you are indecisive about your color palette and fantastic for color experimentation for pop art.

a) Creating Fill Layers

Duplicate the "dots" layer. Rename this layer "white" and drag it below the "dots" layer in your layer palette.

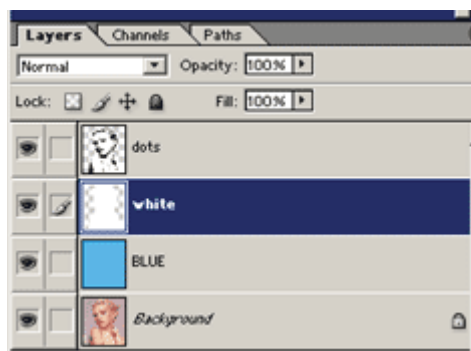
Adjust the Brightness/Contrast on the "white" layer.

Image >> Adjustments >> Brightness/Contrast...

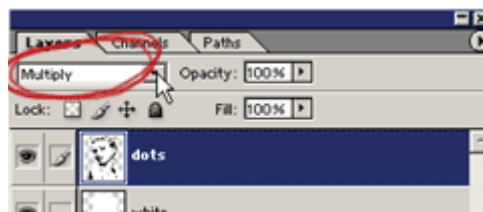
Set the Brightness to +100, and adjust Contrast until white.

Now the "white" layer is white! Your layers palette should look like the one shown below.

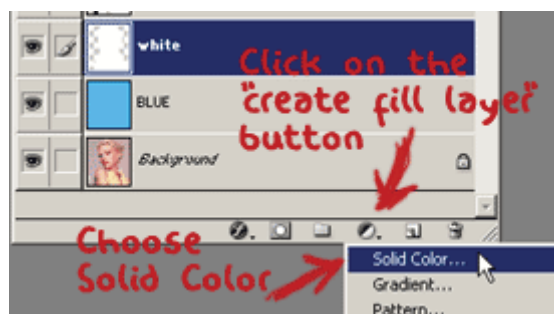
Note: Turn off the visibility of the "dots" layer (click the eye icon) first to see the adjustments on your canvas.



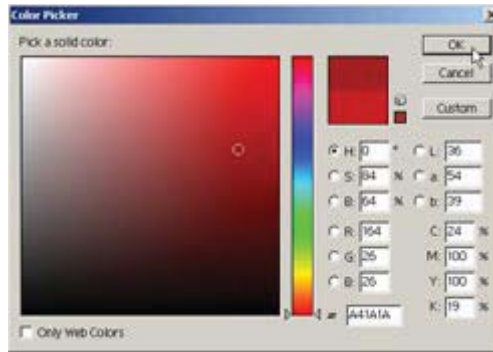
Change the blend mode on the "dots" layer to Multiply.



Click on this icon  at the bottom of your Layer Palette and select **Solid Color...**

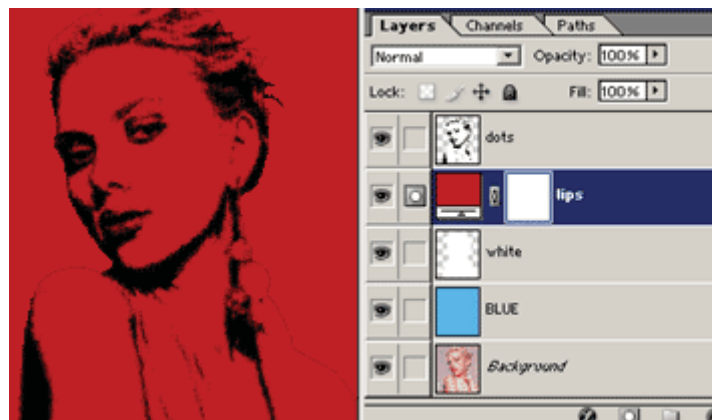


Select a color in the Color Picker dialogue box. Click OK. Here a red shade was used to color her lips. You don't need to be too picky here because we can change the color easily later on.




The new fill layer created will appear in your layer window. Right-click and **rename the layer** e.g “lips” to color the lips.


Drag the new fill layer below the “dots” layer in your layer palette. See below. Your image is now totally filled with the color of the fill layer...but don't worry you are about to fix that.



Create a Clipping Path between the “lip” and “white” layer. This will ensure that you don't color over the lines ^_^



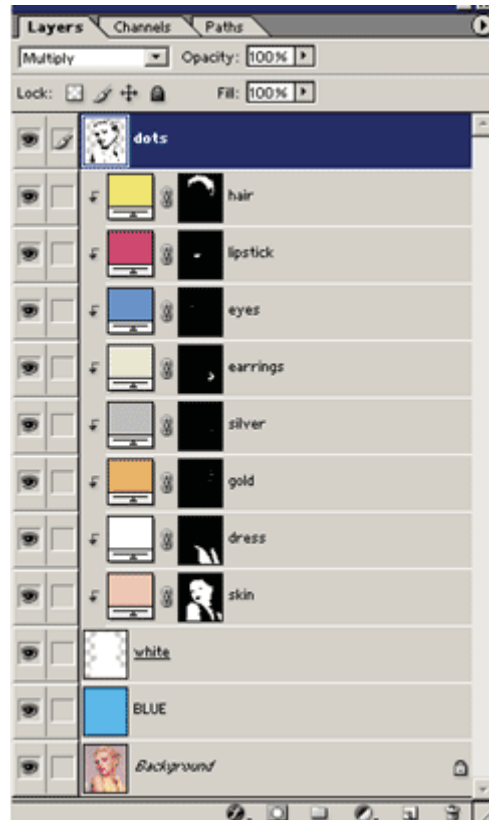
Change the foreground color to black. Working on this new layer, take your Paint Bucket Tool () and **fill the “lips” layer black**. The color disappears; this is because the color will only show up where there is white on this fill layer.

Now for the coloring; change the foreground color to white. Get your Paint Brush Tool () and **start painting** where you want to the color to appear. Use a hard brush with the opacity set to 100%. Make sure that you **zoom in when coloring**, so that it is nice and tidy!



b) More Fill Layers

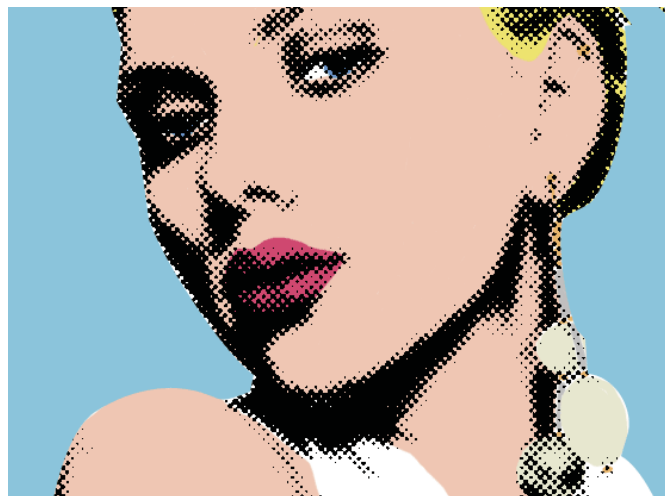
Repeat the above step creating a new fill layer for each color/item in your picture. Below is my layers palette.



Note how you have used clipping paths on all the new fill layers.



At any time if you are unhappy with a color that you have chosen, simply **double click on the Layer Thumbnail** (as shown above) and re-select a color. Now you have the ability to change the color of the hair for example, to a whole new color in a second flat!!



You're pretty much finished; you will need to add a caption, or a speech or thought bubble to make this a Lichtenstein inspired piece.

Custom shapes have a few speech and thought bubbles to choose from.

The font used in this finished picture is **ANIME ACE** but you May choose another; Comic San might work but the choice is yours.

Try experimenting with the colors too for something really bold.

COMBINING WITH LINE ART TUTORIAL



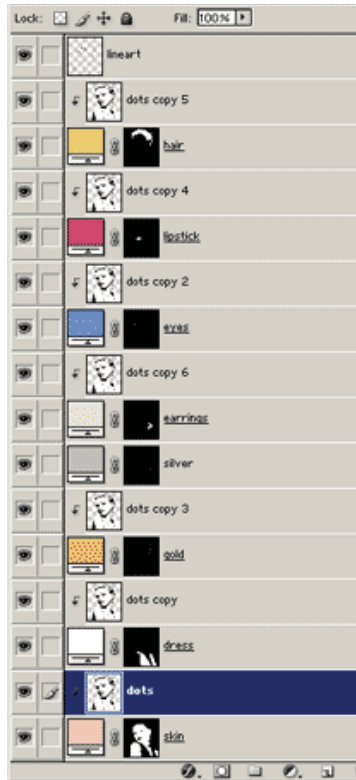
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The picture of the layer palette below pretty much explains it all. Obviously the line art is the top layer.

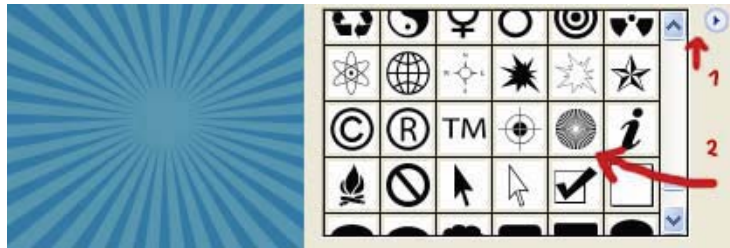
Duplicate the half tone layer and place it over each color layer with a clipping path.

Set the mode of the half tone layer to Soft Light (or something similar).

Adjust the opacity of the half tone layer until it looks good.



If you are interested in creating the pattern used for the background of THE final picture, the pattern is made with a custom shape.



If you are using Photoshop 7, CS or CS2 then you will have it already in your custom shapes (the arrow, marked 2, is pointing to it in the above image). You will need to select Show All to see it (see the image above, click on the area, marked with the 1 arrow to reveal custom shape options -Show All). If you are using an earlier version of Photoshop then you need to make it.

Some examples of what can be done using this technique:



