



Reflective Liquid Type

There are plenty of tutorials on creating type that looks like it's made of metal or liquid. This project combines the two techniques for an effect that really shines.

Step 1

Create a new image with the following attributes (Figure 1):

- * Width: 11 inches
- * Height: 11 inches
- * Resolution: 300 ppi, 8 or 16 bit
- * Background Color: White

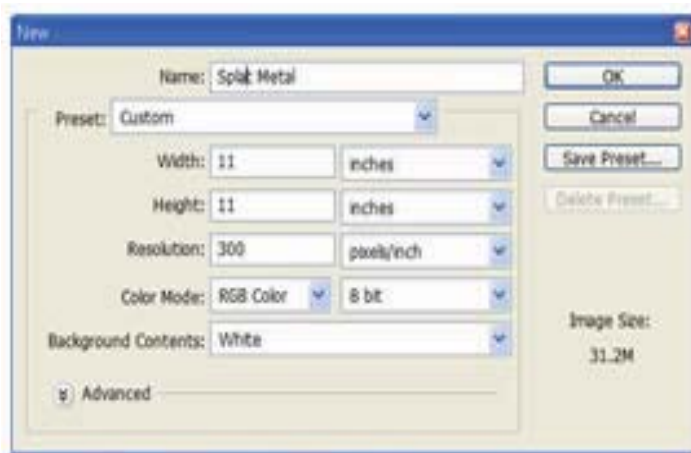


Figure 1.

Step 2

Since the desired effect is to appear liquefied, a font that appears to have been made with a crayon or round brush will work perfectly. Select the Type tool and open the Character palette from the Options bar. The font used here is called 'WallowHmkBold'...but you can use a similar font of your choice. The attributes for the characters are seen in Figure 2.

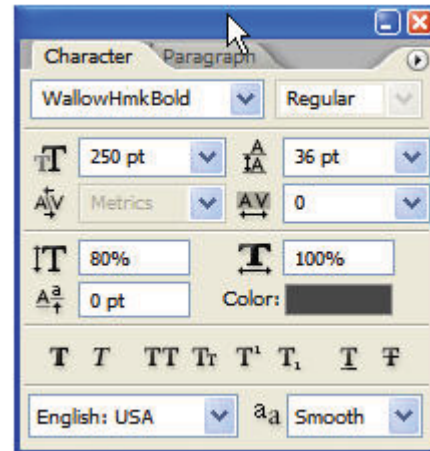


Figure 2.

Step 3

Note that the color is gray in the #666666 range and NOT stark black.

Type a word of your choice ("Splat" was used here) across the face of the image (Figure 3).



Figure 3.

Step 4

Rasterize the type layer, then paint a few additional gray dots around the type (Figure 4).



Figure 4.

Step 5

Open the Channels palette and duplicate a channel; the Blue channel will work fine (Figure 5). Go to Image > Adjustments > Invert.

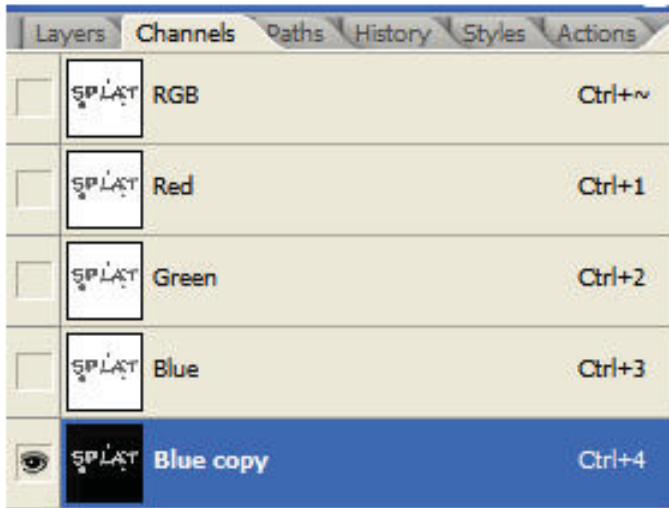


Figure 5.

Step 6

Open the Filter menu and select Blur > Gaussian Blur. Blur the channel at a 25 pixel radius (Figure 6). Then blur the channel again at a radius of 15 pixels.

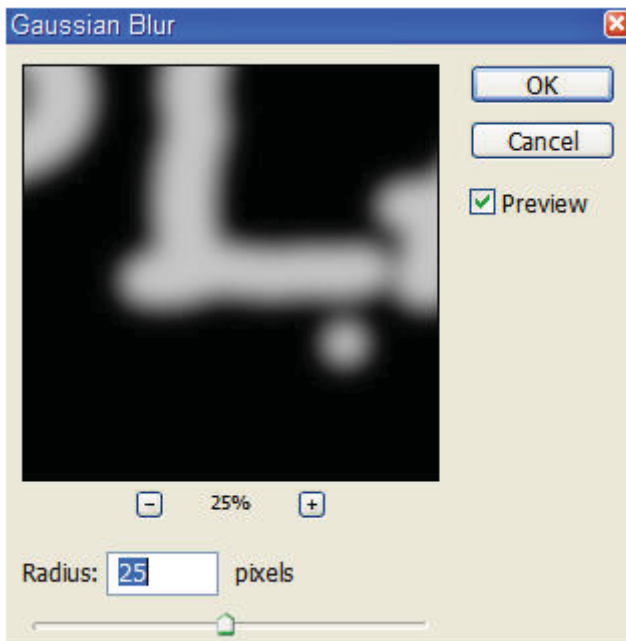


Figure 6.

Step 7

Turn off the Blue copy channel (Figure 7), but don't delete it -- you'll need it in a moment or two.



Figure 7.

Step 8

Go to Filter > Render > Lighting Effects. Set it up as shown in Figure 8. Be sure to select the Blue copy channel as the Texture Channel.

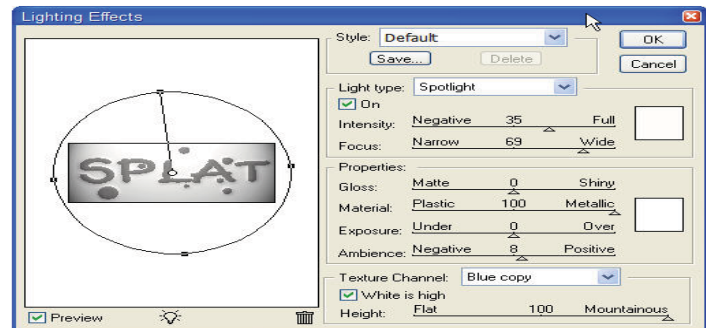


Figure 8.

Step 9

The result of all that is a fairly basic bevel (Figure 9), and yes, you could do pretty much the same thing with a layer style. Some habits die hard, however, the end result is better when channels come into play.



Figure 9.

Step 10

Duplicate the text layer and go to Filter > Sketch > Chrome. Set up the reflections as shown in Figure 10.

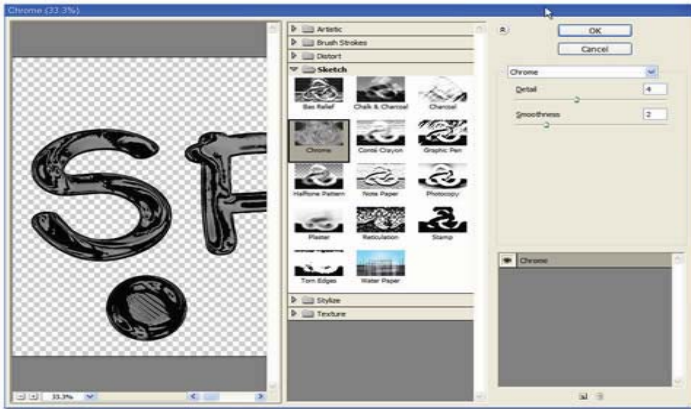


Figure 10.

Step 11

Now you can play with Layer Styles a bit. Open the Layer Styles dialog box and select Bevel/Emboss. Enter the settings you see in Figure 11.

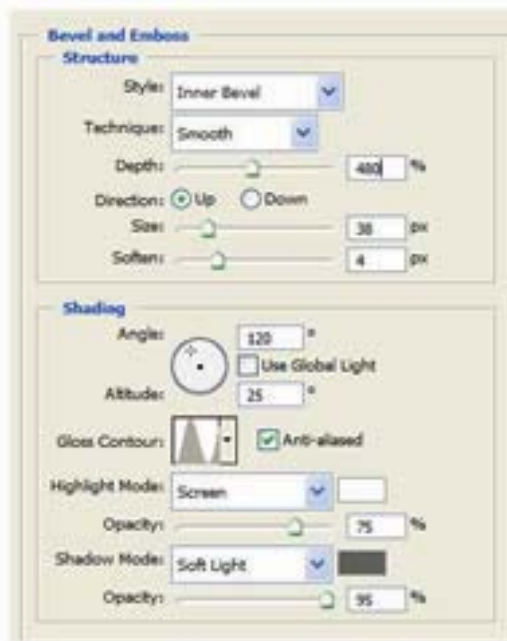


Figure 11.

Note that the Shadow color is again gray in the #666666 range, and not black. Once done, click OK (Figure 12).



Figure 12.

Step 12

Let's shine this up a bit. Control+Click the text layer to generate a selection, then use the screenshots below as your guide to making a Curves adjustment layer (Figure 13) and Levels adjustment layer (Figure 14).

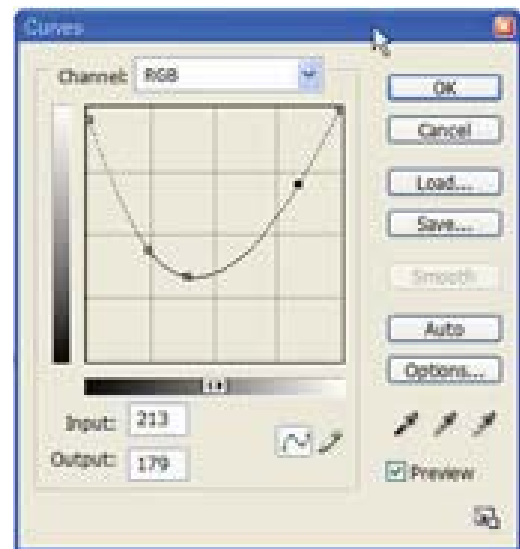


Figure 13.

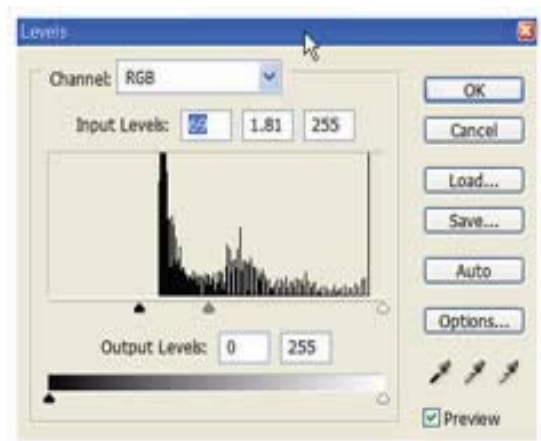


Figure 14.

Step 13

Add a new layer with a black background so the shine really comes out (Figure 15).



Figure 15.

Step 14

Turn off the background layers and merge all the others together (Figure 16).

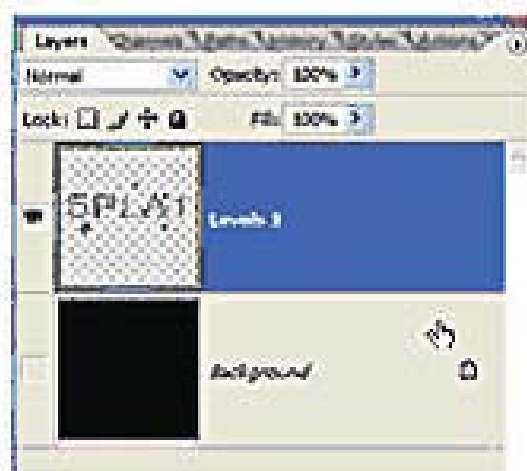


Figure 16.

Step 15

To give the type an enhanced liquid quality, go to Filter > Liquefy. Use the Bloat tool to expand or otherwise warp areas of the text (Figure 17). Once you are happy with the distortions, click OK.

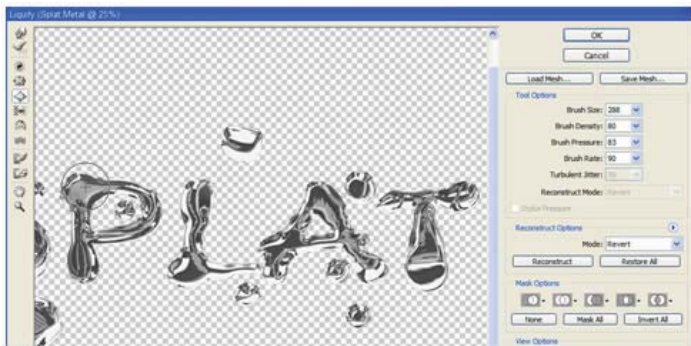


Figure 17.

Step 16

You can now throw the text into any image you so choose. In Figure 18, here a blurred a tech-style background was added, placed the type in that document, then placing a duplicate of the blurred layer above the text. The Blend mode of the top layer is changed to Soft Light to serve as reflections off the type, or making the type appear transparent, allowing you to see the background through it.



Figure 18.