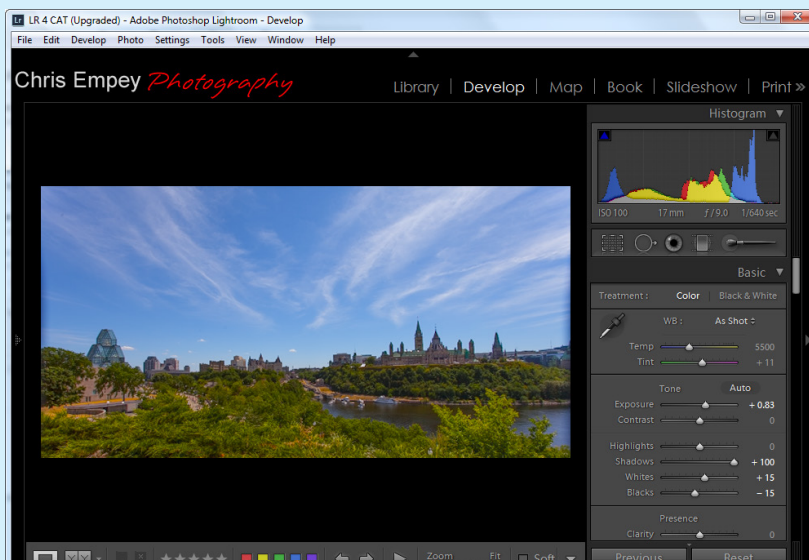# In Focus

Niagara Falls Camera Club

Creating a Vignette
by Chris Empey

At the recent "Everything You Wanted To Know about Digital Photography" intro course that we held, I was asked how to burn in, or darken, the corners on a photo. This is called a vignette. The purpose of the vignette is to draw the viewer's eye to the photographic subject. Darkening the edges of the image helps with this as people have a tendency to look at the brightest area of an image first. There are several ways to do that and here I will show you two ways, once in Lightroom 4 and once in Photoshop that is useful for various functions, not just creating a vignette.

Lightroom 4

I have a tendency to add a vignette to my image at the end of my processing. This is also the suggestion from Adobe which is why they put the Effects panel at the end of the panels, just before the rarely used Camera Calibration panel. Below you will see a photo of the Ottawa skyline taken from Nepean Point beside the National Gallery. I have already made all of my other adjustments that I want for this shot, including white balance, exposure, white and black levels, contrast and sharpening.

First, open the Effects Panel and review the sliders for the Post-Crop Vignetting
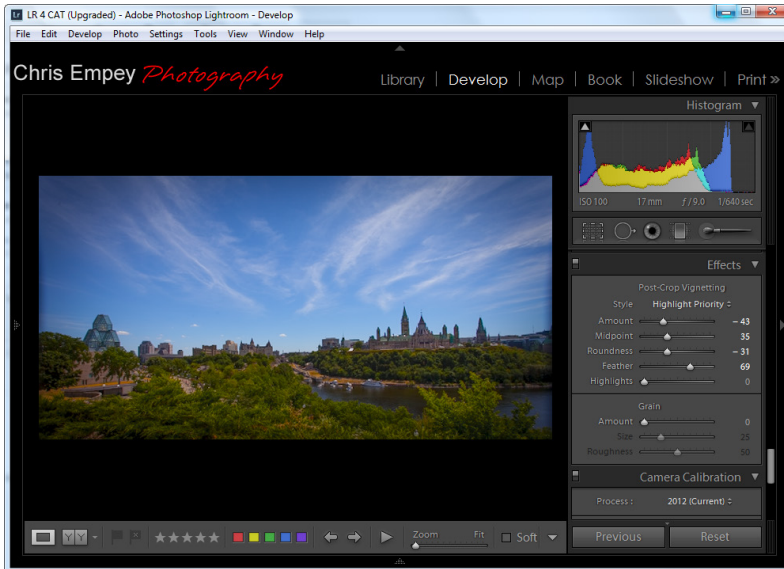
- *Style* – There are three options here though I almost exclusively use highlight priority and never use paint overlay. You can play around and decide what you like best.

- *Amount* - Controls how light or dark the vignette will be. Left darks, right whitens.

- *Midpoint* – Controls how large the vignette will be.

November Program

Next Month, Niagara Falls Camera Club will welcome Doug Hansgate of Twin Cities Camera Club to present his program 'Classic One Light Portraiture' This is sure to be a great evening of instruction on taking your portraits to a new level very easily with minimal equipment.

Newsletter Submission

If you are interested in writing a small piece for In Focus, please contact Chris Empey, cempey@ NiagaraFallsCameraClub.org. We are always looking for good content that will help our members and provide some informative reading for them.

- *Roundness* - Controls the shape of the vignette. +100 is round and moving the slider to the left flattens that out until -100 which is almost a square.

- *Feather* - Controls the how hard the edge of the vignette will be. I tend to prefer vignettes that you can't actually see. They are there but you don't notice them.

- *Highlights* – Used to help maintain the highlights when creating a dark vignette. Has no effect when creating a white vignette.
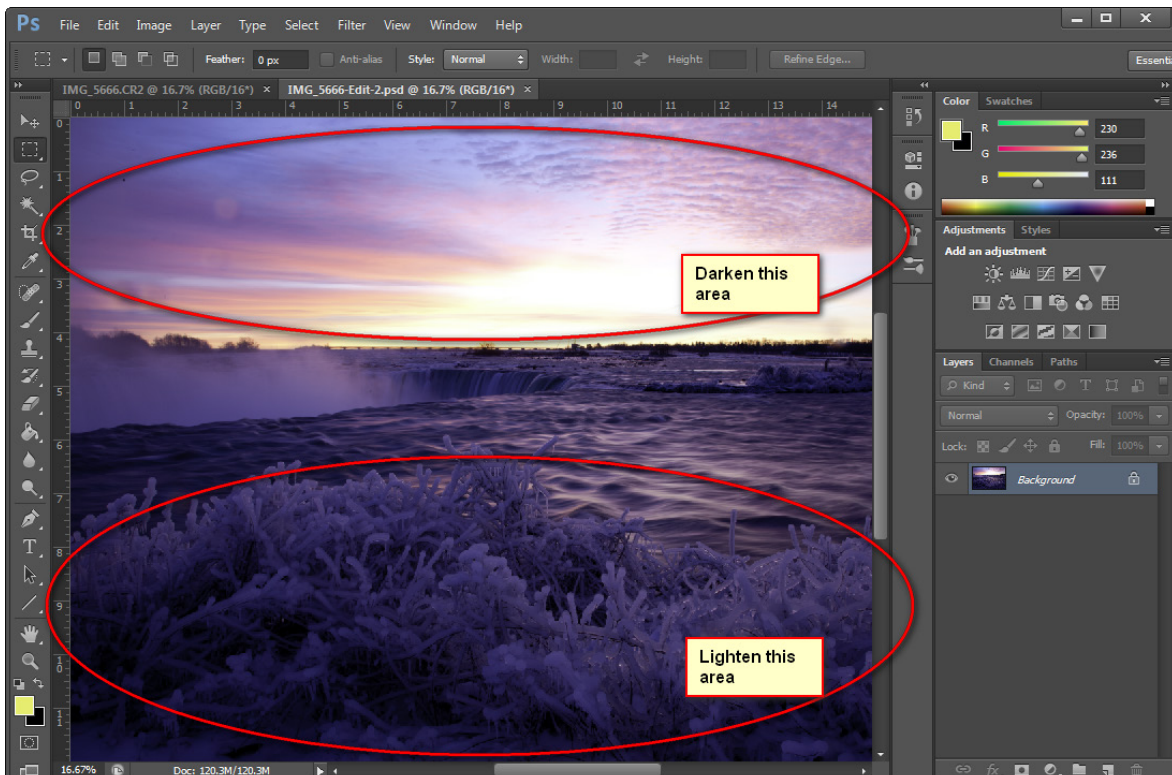
The photo on the left shows the same image with the Post-Crop Vignette settings I have applied to the image. The effect is subtle but still effective.

One thing to note, on any of the Lightroom panels you can turn off the effects of that panel by clicking the rectangular white and black button to the left of the panel title.
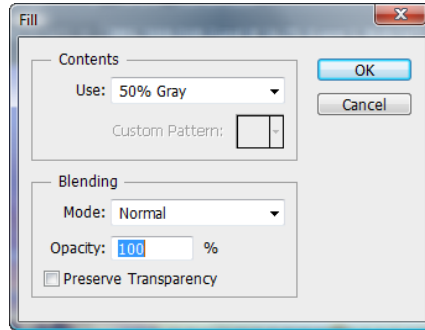
Photoshop

The technique I am illustrating here is one of many ways to add a vignette to a photo in Photoshop (or Photoshop Elements). I am actually going to show you how to dodge (lighten) and burn (darken), but from there, the vignette is simply a burn around the edge of the photo.

1. Open you file in Photoshop or Photoshop Elements and perform any global colour adjustments, cropping, spotting and so forth. This is the image I am working with. I have circled the area I want to make adjustments on.

2. On the Layer Menu, Choose Layer, New, then Layer or Shift-CTRL-N together to create a new layer.

3. On the Edit Menu, Choose fill. Change the Contents drop down to read 50% Gray.

4. Once you have created the new, 50% gray layer, change its blending mode to Overlay. This can be found in the Layers Palette.

5. At this point you can use the dodge tool () to lighten the image or the burn tool () to darken the image. Simply choose an appropriate brush size for the what you want to do and paint over the layer. I like to work gradually so I set my exposure on the tools to 50% or less and make repeated passes as necessary.

6. These 50% gray adjustment layers may be stacked to add even more lightening or darkening. To add your vignette, add another 50% gray adjustment layer and burn the edges with a very large, soft brush.

Here is my final image with a curves adjustment layer applied to reduce the contrast a little.

These are just two of the ways to create a vignette. With Photoshop, and Photoshop Elements, there are often many ways to arrive at the same end.

Monthly Competition Scores
September 2012

Colour Prints

Group	Name	Entries	Awards	Score
Bronze				
	Sue Petri	2	2	30
Silver				
	Bill Feder	2	1	26
	Jim Coniar	2	1	24
	Charles Martyk	1	1	14
Gold				
	Anne Shannon	2	0	23
	Lorraine Pichette	2	0	23
	Derek Bottomley	2	0	21
	Henry Wojnarowski	1	1	16
Diamond				
	Syliva Greco	2	2	36
	George Beehler	2	1	26
	Terry Babij	2	0	25

Monochrome Prints

Group	Name	Entries	Awards	Score
Bronze				
	Bill Feder	2	1	28
	Sue Petri	2	1	26
	Jan Maklak	2	1	26
	Jim Koniar	1	0	9
Silver				
	Charles Martyk	1	1	14
Gold				
	Lorraine Pichette	2	1	26
	Henry Wojnarowski	1	0	11
Diamond				
	Terry Babij	2	2	35
	Silvia Greco	2	1	29
	George Beehler	2	0	24

Slides

Group	Name	Entries	Awards	Score
Bronze				
	Christine Hess	2	2	33
Silver				
	Charles Martyk	2	1	26
	Cindy Phillips	2	1	24
	Jim Koniar	2	0	20
Gold				
	Terry Babij	2	2	32
	Derek ottomley	2	2	32
	Henry Wojnarowski	2	2	32
	Jan Maklak	2	1	28
	Cliff Empey	2	1	25
	Laurie Rees	2	0	19
Diamond				
	Scott Simons	2	2	37
	Chris Empey	2	2	33
	Laura Cardwell	2	2	32
	Karen Fulham	2	1	26