

POP ART: Lichtenstein



Welcome to this project from

THE IMAGINATION VAULT CLASSROOM

A monthly membership for secondary and tertiary teachers, home educators and students wanting to teach and learn Digital Art and Design.

Photoshop Skills Focus:

Filters

Blending Layers

Basic Image Adjustments

Welcome to this sample project from [THE IMAGINATION VAULT CLASSROOM](#), a monthly membership (launching September 2017) for secondary and tertiary teachers, home educators and students wanting to teach and learn digital art and design.

All projects are developed for teaching and learning through Photoshop. Each monthly project will cater for various skill levels of Photoshop. The bundles are designed in such a way that teachers and students can learn directly from them, and teachers can use the materials and video tutorials to teach the projects in their classroom.

THE IMAGINATION VAULT CLASSROOM subscribers receive access to all monthly project PDF instructions, resource details and downloads, bonus materials, video tutorials, audio downloads, transcripts, a closed (paid members only) Facebook group and live monthly Q&A calls with Matt Jolliffe.

We hope you enjoy this project & happy learning!



POP ART: Lichtenstein TUTORIAL

Convert an original photo to a Lichtenstein style artwork

The Pop art movement is defined by themes and techniques drawn from the popular mass culture. Areas like advertising, every-day cultural objects and comic books. This art movement is considered a reaction to the ideas of abstract expressionism. Pop Art employed images of popular culture in art, emphasizing common elements of any culture, usually through the use of irony.

In the early 1960s, Roy Fox Lichtenstein gained renown as a leading Pop artist for paintings sourced from comic books, specifically DC Comics. Although other artists had previously integrated popular imagery into their works, no one hitherto had focused on cartoon imagery as exclusively as Lichtenstein. His work, along with that of Andy Warhol, heralded the beginning of the Pop art movement. Lichtenstein did not simply copy comic pages directly; he employed a complex technique that involved cropping images to create entirely new, dramatic compositions, as in *Drowning Girl*, whose source image included the woman's boyfriend standing on a boat above her. Lichtenstein also condensed the text of the comic book panels, setting language as another, crucial visual element. (<http://www.theartstory.org>)



Roy Lichtenstein's *Drowning Girl* (1963)

The main characteristics of Lichtenstein's style were bold colours (mainly primary colours), black outlines, and tones rendered by Ben-Day dots. His work also often included boxed captions or thought bubbles and words such as "WHAAM!" commonly found in comic books.



Benday dots used in Roy Lichtenstein's *Viki* (1964)

Ben-Day dots were Lichtenstein's trademark. Ben-Day dots are a printing process which combines two (or more) different small, coloured dots to create a third colour. In the 1950s & 60s, comic books used Ben-Day dots in the four process to inexpensively create the secondary colours, shading and flesh tones. Lichtenstein's work often over emphasised these dots for artistic effect.



LICHTENSTEIN PORTRAIT

Skill level: Intermediate

Skills Focus: Filters | Layer Blending | Basic Image Adjustments

Time to complete project: 1 – 2 hours

Resources

To complete this tutorial, you will need the following images:

A portrait photograph with a simple background such as the image below, **or**

You could also use your own original photographs.

Lichtenstein tended to fill the frame with his portraits; using extreme close ups and border mergers as a key aspect of his work. Portraits that can be cropped without losing too much space are ideal.



The first stage of creating a Lichtenstein is to convert a photo to a sketch. It is a relatively easy process to turn a photo into a line drawing with Photoshop. This effect will work on almost any image



(although it can sometimes be less effective for people). The final quality will depend on how sharp your original image is. If there are lots of strong lines in the original image, then this process is ideal.

Step 1 - Open a Photo

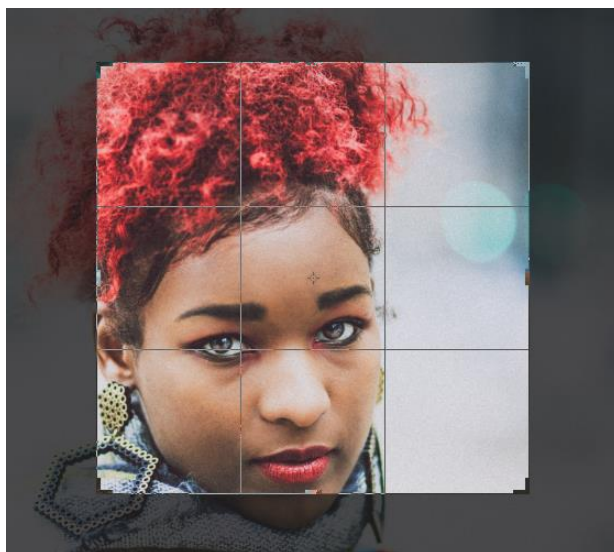
Open your base image in Photoshop (**Ctrl + O**).



Check your image size and make sure it is 300 PPI, Image ⇒ Image Size (**Control + Alt + I**) and set Resolution to 300 Pixels/Inch.

Step 2 - Crop

Crop **(C)** your image to an extreme close up. Decide your format (I'm going square) and keep the rule of thirds in mind.



Step 3 - Desaturated Layer

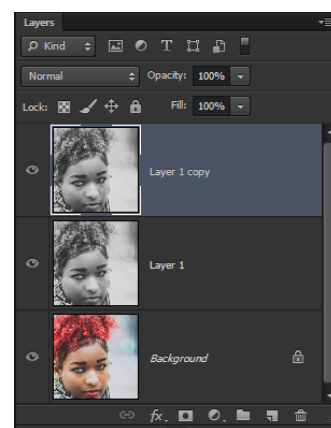


Duplicate the image in the layers palette **(Ctrl + J)**.

With the new layer selected you need to desaturate the image. To do this go to Image ⇒ adjustments ⇒ desaturate. **(Ctrl + Shift + U)**

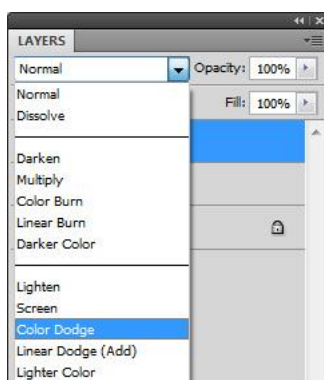
Step 4 - Inverted Layer

Duplicate this modified layer **(Ctrl + J)**. You should now have a colour background layer and 2 desaturated layers above.

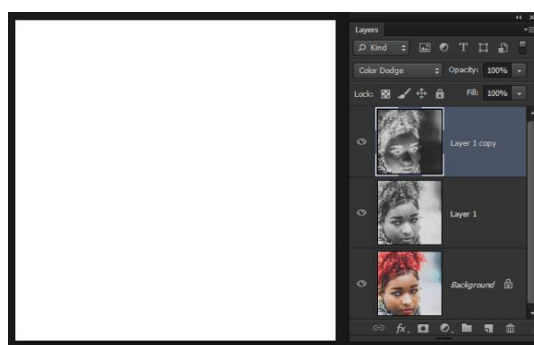


Invert the colours on the top layer of your image. To do this go to Image ⇒ Adjustments ⇒ Invert **(Ctrl + I)**.

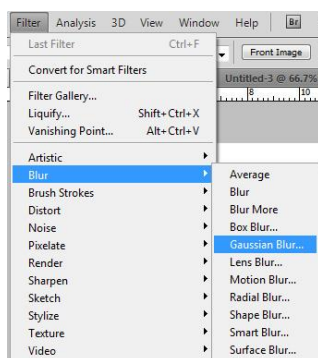
Step 5 - Blending



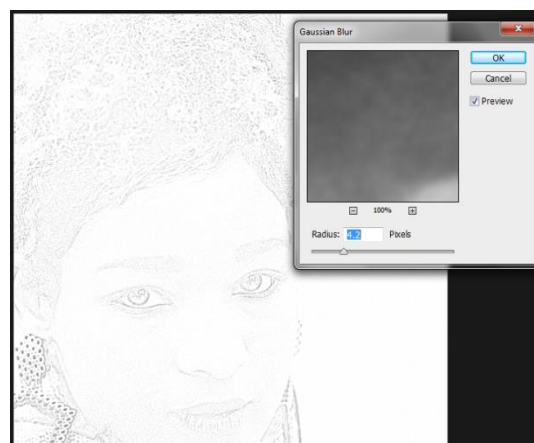
With the top layer still selected (the inverted layer) choose 'Colour Dodge' from the layers palette drop down menu (**Shift + Alt + D**). (This will make most of the image turn white)



Step 6 - Blur



We now need to apply a gaussian blur to the newly white layer to allow parts of the layer underneath to show through. Select the top layer and choose Filter ⇒ Blur ⇒ Gaussian Blur.



Move the slider up and down to find what level suits your picture. The setting for this is often somewhere between 1 and 5 but will depend on how complex your original image is. Mine was 4.3.

Step 7 - Tidy the Image



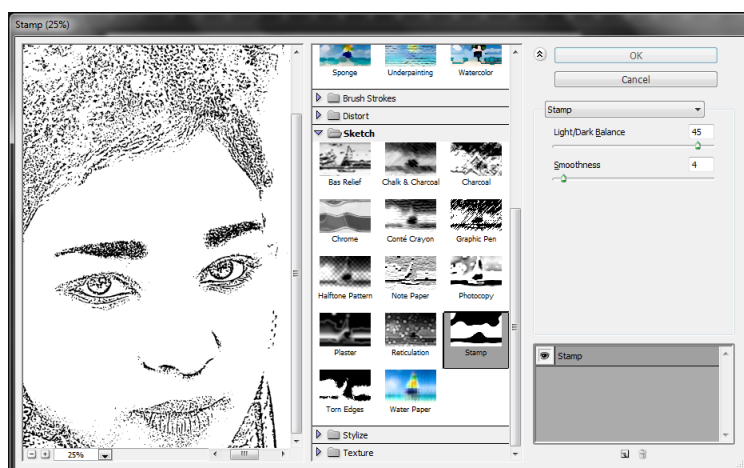
To tidy up the image use the Dodge and Burn tools to clean up the image. The Dodge tool will lighten the pencil marks, the burn tool darken them. You may have a lot of speckles like I did so this will help reduce this. Spend some time on this step as it will impact on your dark lines at the end.

In this example I used the dodge tool to tidy up the face and background and the burn tool to define the eyebrows and nose.



Step 8 - Stamp Layer

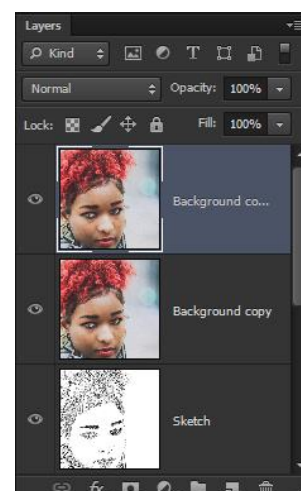
Make sure you are on the top layer then combine all layers into a new layer (**Ctrl + Alt + Shift + E**). This will keep your original layers underneath to come back to if you make a serious error. Name your new layer Sketch.



You might want to apply the Stamp filter to make the lines darker if you are using this for a Lichtenstein style artwork. Make sure your colours are set to black and white. Go to Filter ⇒ Filter Gallery ⇒ choose the Sketch section ⇒ Stamp.

Step 9 - Double Duplicate

Click on your original image at the bottom of your layer stack. Duplicate your background layer (**Ctrl + J**). Move this new layer to the top of your layer stack. Duplicate this layer again (**Ctrl + J**). You should now have 2 full colour images above your sketch.

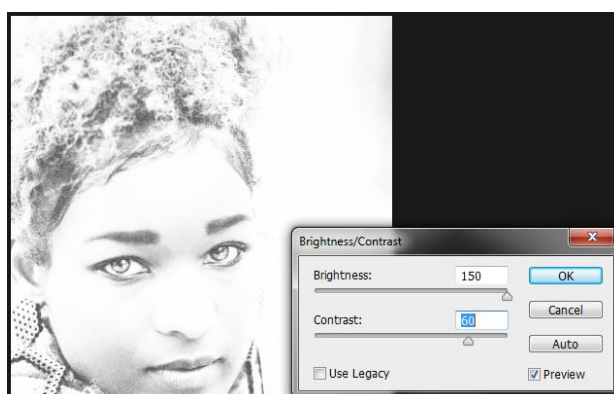


Step 10 - Ben-Day Dots

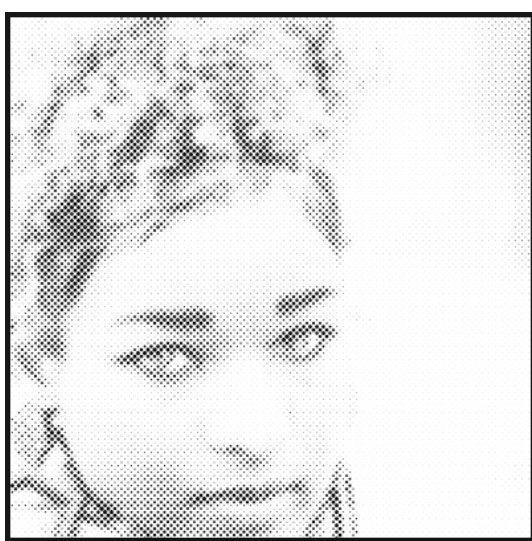


Make sure your top layer is selected and rename it Dots. Discard your colour information; Image ⇒ Adjustment ⇒ Desaturate (**Ctrl + Shift + U**).

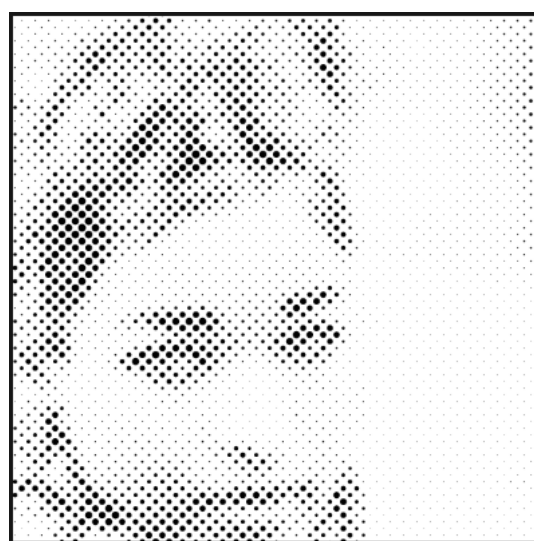
Adjust your Brightness and Contrast by going to Image ⇒ Adjust ⇒ Brightness/Contrast. Take things right up to flare out your highlights.



Filter your image; Filter ⇒ Pixelate ⇒ Color Halftone. Set Max Radius to 30 (Pixels) and Channels 1-4 all to 45 degrees.



Radius 15 pixels



Radius 30 pixels

You may wish to undo (**Ctrl + Z**) and repeat the filter modifying the radius until you are happy with your look.

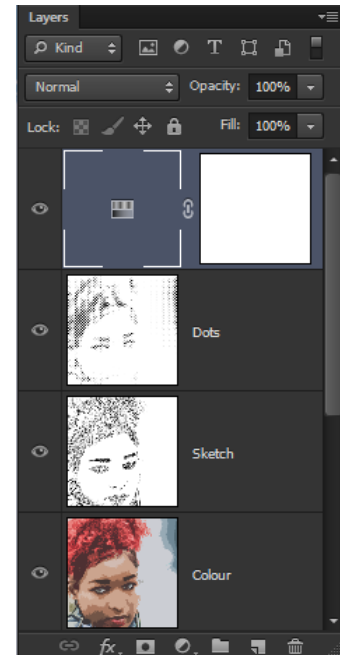
Step 11 - Combine Images

Set the blending mode of your dots layer to Multiply (**Alt + Shift + M**).


Select your other duplicate of the background (the one with its colour) and rename it colour. Apply the cutout filter. Go to Filter ⇒ Filter Gallery ⇒ choose the Artistic section ⇒ Cutout.

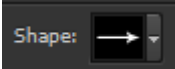
Move your sketch layer up between your dots and colour layer and set the blending mode to Multiply (**Alt + Shift + M**).

Add a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer if you wish to tweak your colours.




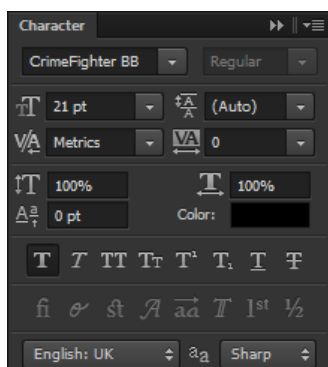
Step 12 - Speech Bubble

Choose the custom Shape tool (**U** ⇒ **Shift + U**) hit Shift + U until you see the right icon. 

On the tool options choose the custom shape dropdown. 

Photoshop comes with more shapes than is shown in this initial list. Click the cog icon and choose 'talk bubbles' from the list. If you click replace you will hide all other shapes from this list and load the talk bubbles, append will add them to the bottom of the current list of custom shapes.

Choose a thought or speech bubble and drag it into place. Give it a white fill and a black stroke (about 3pt) in the tool options. 



Select your type tool (**T**) and in your character panel choose an appropriate font at a size around 18pt. I've used a comic book style font I downloaded called **CrimeFighter BB** designed by Nate Piekos, at blambot.com.

Click in your speech bubble. You will notice handles appear around your speech bubble along with your flashing cursor to type.

Type a sentence or two. You could be humorous, political or whatever. I've chosen to go with a comment on social media adapted from a quote I found online;

"I don't want to live my life seeking validation from people on social media ... but I can't help it".

Adjust your font size to fit. If you need to you can adjust the edges of your type by moving the handles on the type layer.

And we're done.

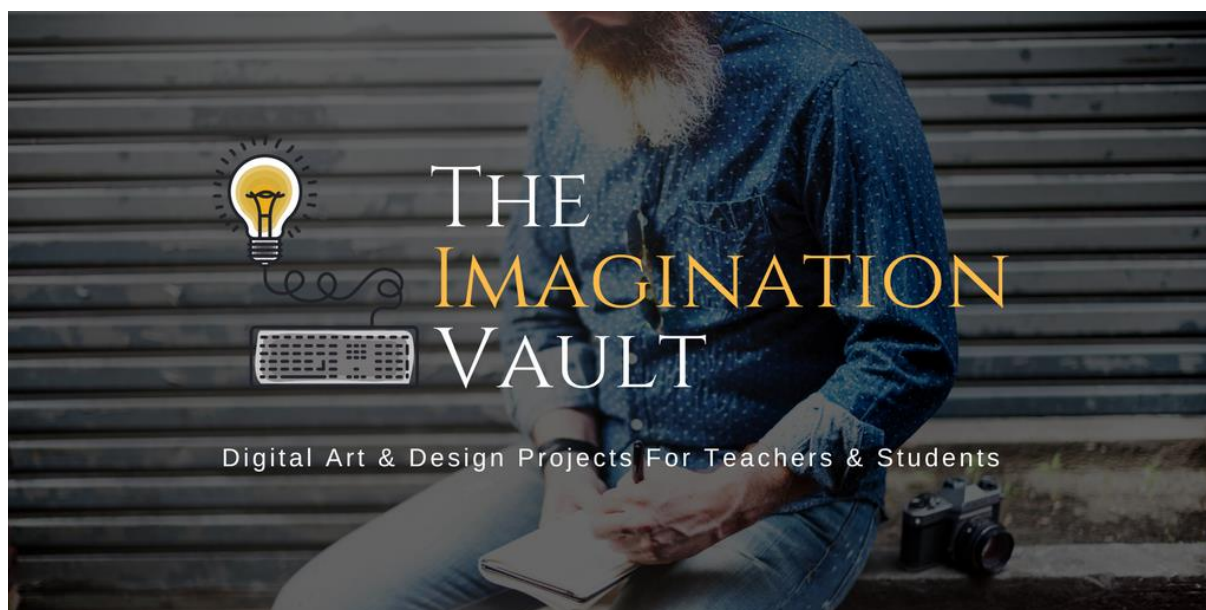


Final Image

A portrait photograph has been transformed into a Roy Lichtenstein style image complete with Ben-Day dots and speech bubble.



Final work including Ben-Day Dots and Speech Bubble



Co-founded in 2017 by Linda Jolliffe and Digital Media Lecturer, Matt Jolliffe of Perth, Western Australia, **THE IMAGINATION VAULT** aims to provide inspiring digital art and design projects and helpful resources for secondary and tertiary digital art and design teachers, home educators and students.

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Monthly projects will cater for various skill levels of Photoshop, enabling the teacher and student to learn or upskill, and some projects will be geared at being applied to real world design applications such as Social Media artwork, magazine covers etc.

We hope you enjoy this free project. Look out for more opportunities to download free digital art resources and projects as the launch of **THE IMAGINATION VAULT CLASSROOM** draws closer.

Stay subscribed to learn when YOU can join **THE IMAGINATION VAULT CLASSROOM**, and don't forget to 'Like' **THE IMAGINATION VAULT** Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/theimaginationvault

Happy creating!

Matt & Linda Jolliffe | The Imagination Vault Team