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Hyper realism

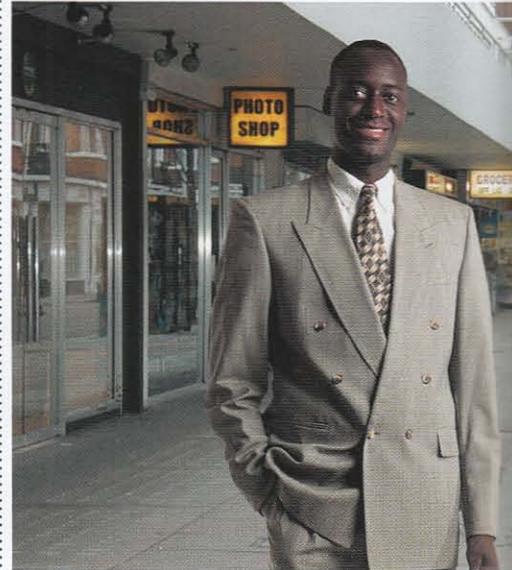
Blurring for speed



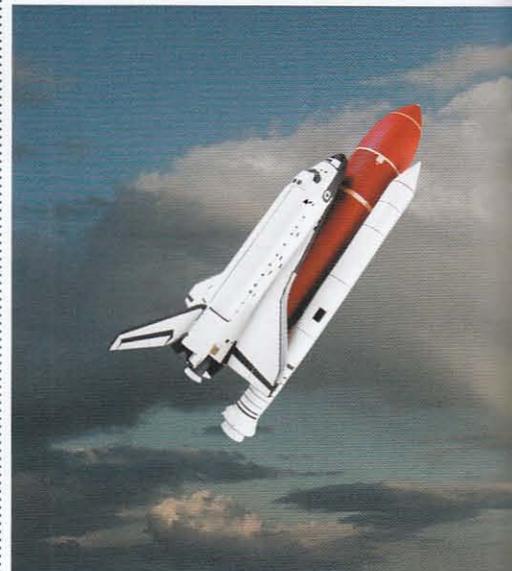
IMAGES: BODYSHOTS (PEOPLE), HEMERA PHOTO OBJECTS (SPACE SHUTTLE), COREL (SKY)

THE ILLUSTRATION ABOVE was to illustrate a Sunday Telegraph article on the proposed merger of American Airlines and British Airways. It was a simple enough job: fitting the heads of the two airline bosses to the bodies, and placing the logos on the backs of seats. But I felt that as it stood, the image was too static: so I added a Radial Blur to give the impression of speed.

In this section we'll look at how to use blur techniques to give the impression of movement, and how to get the best results from the filters.

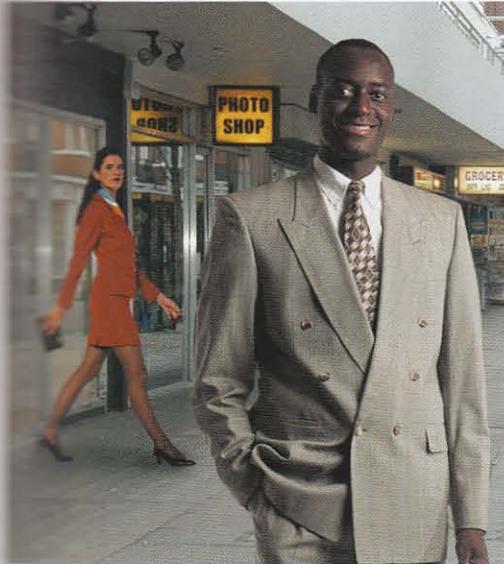


1 Here's the proud owner of a new photomontage shop, photographed outside his premises. He's been positioned so we can see the sign behind him, but it's all rather lacking in dynamism; the empty space to the left of him badly needs filling.

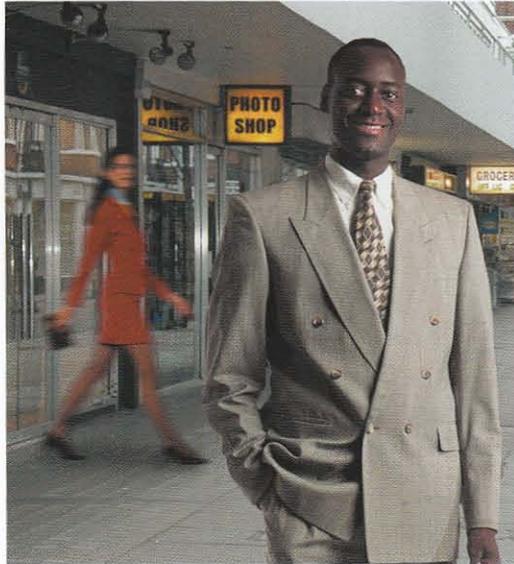


4 Here's a model of a space shuttle taking off into the skies. It's clearly not the real thing, and looks little better than a child's toy suspended against an unconvincing sky. Motion Blur, once again, can help bring this static image to life.

How to Cheat in Photoshop



2 Placing a passer-by in the scene helps with the composition of the montage, and her bright red suit adds a much-needed splash of color. The trouble here is that she's too strong an element: she draws the eye away from the main focus of the picture.



3 Applying a small degree of Motion Blur to the figure makes it appear as if she happened to be walking past while the photograph was being taken, and knocks her more firmly into the background. Of course, in reality a person wouldn't be blurred as evenly as this; but the effect works.



HOT TIP

The Motion Blur filter offers no preview within its dialog – instead, the blur is displayed on the whole image every time you make an adjustment. Getting the angle of the blur right can be tricky: but rather than dragging the direction wheel, highlight the Angle field and use the Up and Down cursor keys to change the angle of blur in small increments.



5 The shuttle layer is duplicated – we don't want to lose its sharp outline, only to add a blur on top. This layer is then blurred using Motion Blur. But the filter works in both directions: to make the shuttle look as if it's speeding forwards, we need to move either it or the blur.



6 By moving the shuttle to the top end of the blurred layer, the whole of the blur takes place behind it. The flames shooting out of the rocket boosters help: these are simply fireworks, merged in using the techniques described in Chapter 3, Hiding and showing.

SHORTCUTS

MAC WIN BOTH