Urban Playground Photo-Op Part 2: MelancholyGirl Image

You’ve been contacted by Urban Playground magazine, a magazine that specializes in helping parents keep their kids active and engaged in a positive way within the confines of a city setting. The editor-in-chief heard you could use some practise with your photo-editing skills, so she’s sent this week’s photos your way.

Using the images provided in the UrbanPlayground\_Tutorial file (Shared > Hammond > Hand Out > Digital Pictures > UrbanPlayground\_Tutorial), follow along with the mini-lessons below.

**Skill 1: Evaluate**

Open Photoshop CS6, then open the MelancholyGirl\_Before photo, and the MelancholyGirl\_After photo. If you’ve done this correctly, they will appear as separate tabs at the top of your document window. Save each photo into your Photoshop folder.

Evaluate the “MelancholyGirl\_Before” photograph. Notice that the image is dark, the subject is wearing very dark eyeliner, has bloodshot eyes, and a few freckles and blemishes on her skin. This dark, brooding teenager just does not fit with Urban Playground’s vision. Now take a look at the “MelancholyGirl\_After” photograph. Much better, isn’t it?

For the lessons that follow, edit the MelancholyGirl\_Before photo, and use the MelancholyGirl\_After photo as a reference for what your photo should look like when you’re done!

Before making any adjustments, rename the “Background” layer “MelancholyGirl.” It is always best practise to name your layers after their content.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Skill 2: Colour Correction Using Adjustment Layers**

Just like you did for the GirlWithCap image, apply a Brightness/Contrast Adjustment Layer to the entire photo to make it look less dark and brooding. Make sure that your image still looks natural.

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Apply and adjust a Brightness/Contrast Adjustment layer to the photo to make it look brighter

1. For further instruction on how to use Adjustment Layers, refer back to the GirlWithCap Instructions.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Skill 3: Use the Spot Healing Brush and Healing Brush to Remove Blemishes**

Just like you did for the GirlWithCap image, use the Spot Healing Brush, and Healing Brush tools to remove blemishes. This time, however, instead of removing blemishes from a brick wall, you will be carefully removing blemishes from a portrait.

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Use the Spot Healing Brush to remove the appearance of random hair, bloodshot eyes, and other blemishes from the portrait

1. For further instruction on how to use the Spot Healing Brush, refer back to the GirlWithCap Instructions.
2. Make sure that the Original Image (aka Background Layer) is selected.
3. Zoom in on the model’s face so that you can see it clearly.
4. Select the Spot Healing Brush tool.
5. In the Options Panel, select the following settings:
   1. Brush Size: 7-10
   2. Mode: Normal
   3. Type: Content-Aware
6. TIPS: Be careful not to overcorrect… Make sure that you leave enough detail in the face so that it retains is character. Brush using short strokes – the longer your stroke, the more it alters the surrounding pixels, which can create unnatural effects.
7. With the Spot Healing Brush tool:
   1. Brush out the hair across the face
   2. Brush over fine lines around the eyes and mouth
   3. Brush over the red veins in the eyes
   4. Brush out any other freckles or blemishes you see

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Use the Healing Brush to remove the appearance of makeup smudges from the portrait’s eyes

1. Select the Healing Brush Tool (likely hidden under the Spot Healing Brush tool).
2. Select a brush with a size of 19 pixels, and a hardness of 50%
3. Alt-click an area just below the dark areas beneath her eyes to create a sampling source.
4. Brush beneath her eyes to remove the dark makeup. Make sure that you brush using short strokes, and that you create a sampling source every few brush strokes.
   1. Note: Some wonky things can happen when using this tool – if this happens to you, undo, then re-create your sampling source (follow step c to do this)
5. Don’t worry if it doesn’t look perfect – right now you are just worried about changing the colour. You will smooth out the texture later on.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Skill 4: Use Dodge Tool to Brighten**

The Dodge tool is used to apply selective brightening/lightening within a photo.

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Lighten the dark circles under the subject’s eyes using the Dodge tool

1. In the Tools Panel, select the Dodge tool.
2. In the Options Panel, change the brush size to 65 px and the Exposure to 30%. Make sure that Midtones is selected in the Range menu.
3. Brush the Dodge tool over the shadows under the eyes to lighten them.
4. In the Options Panel, change from Midtones to Shadows in the Range menu.
5. Use the Dodge tool to lighten the shadowed areas above the eyes, and the white areas around the irises to bring out the colour.

Bonus: Use the Sponge tool (size: 35 px, hardness:0%, mode: saturate, flow: 50%) to increase the saturation of the subject’s irises (making them appear more green).

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Skill 5: Apply a Surface Blur Filter**

The Surface Blur filter is used to give photos a smooth appearance.

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Create a Surface Blur layer and effect to smooth out the subject’s skin

1. Right-click on the MelancholyGirl layer, then select “Duplicate Layer.” Rename this layer “Surface Blur.”
2. **Move the Surface Blur layer between the Brightness/Contrast Adjustment Layer and the MelancholyGirl layer, if it isn’t already.**
3. With the Surface Blur layer selected, choose Filter > Blur > Surface Blur.
4. In the Surface Blur dialog box, leave the Radius at 5 px, and move the Threshold to 10 levels. Then click OK.
5. The Surface Blur filter has left the subject looking a little glassy. To fix this, in the Layers Panel, reduce the Surface Blur layer’s opacity to 50%. The subject looks more realistic now, but it’s the skin we really want to look smooth – not the eyes, eyebrows, nose definition, and teeth.
6. Keep the Surface Blur layer selected. In the Tools Panel, select the Eraser tool.
7. In the Options Panel, select a midsized brush between 10-50 with 10% hardness. Set the Opacity to 90%.
8. Use the Eraser tool to brush over the eyes, eyebrows, defining lines of the nose, and mouth. By doing this, you’re erasing parts of the blurred layer to let the sharper layer below show through. This leaves the skin looking smooth, and the facial features looking realistic!
9. Increase the brush size to 400 px, then brush across the background, shirt, and hair to bring these features back to their original sharpness. Now only the model’s face has surface blur.

**Hint:** Turn the visibility of the MelancholyGirl layer off to fine-tune your erasing.

------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Skill 6: Change the Hue**

The “Hue” brush mode allows the colour of pixels within an image to be changed, while taking into consideration the various shades of each pixel so that the details that make the photo realistic remain.

***Step-By-Step***

Goal: Recolour the girl’s lips so that they are a brighter hue

1. Click on the “MelancholyGirl” layer.
2. Zoom in on the girl’s lips.
3. Select the Brush tool. Change the Size to ~45 and the Hardness to ~50. Change the Mode (in the Options bar) to “Hue.”
4. Select a pink-red colour from the colour picker, and carefully paint over the girl’s mouth to brighten up her lipstick!