

SCRAPPER'S GUIDE

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Digital Stained Glass (Photoshop)

Tip of the Week by Sara Horton on December 14, 2009

As a child, I loved sitting in church watching the streams of light cast colors through the stained glass windows. As an adult, I am still intrigued by their artistic appeal.

With the holiday season upon us, we are attending cantatas, Christmas Eve services and children's Christmas programs at our church. What better way to scrapbook these events than with digital stained glass?



You can use the same effect to document your child's baptism, dedication, confirmation, first communion or music recital. Photos from a special wedding, mission trip, or a vacation stop at a famous cathedral can also be framed by this technique.

Step 1: Create the background

Begin by creating a new black document at 300 pixels per inch in RGB color mode. For the sample, I created a 12x12-inch document. Open a photo and use the Move tool to drag it onto the black background document.

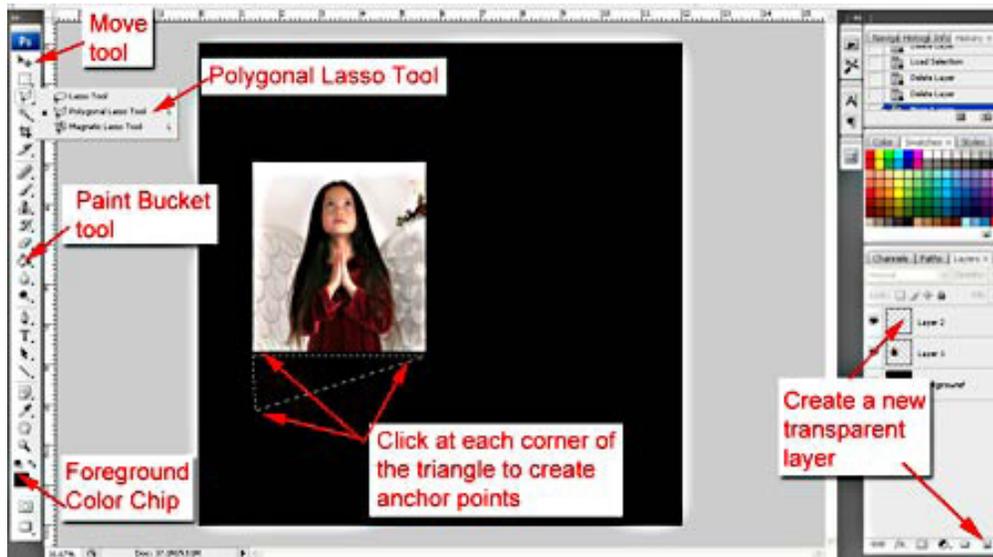
Step 2: Create the glass

Click on the Create a new layer icon on the Layers panel to create a new transparent layer.

Get the Polygonal Lasso Tool which shares a spot in the Tool Panel with the Lasso tool. Click and hold the Lasso tool to activate the flyout menu and scroll down to select the Polygonal Lasso.

Click once on your layout under the bottom left corner of the photo. (Don't click and hold, just click once.) Press the Shift key and move the cursor to the right bottom corner of your photo. Click to anchor the selection. Let go of the Shift key and drag the cursor downward, to the left, and click once more to create a third anchor point directly below the original left anchor point. Finish the selection by moving the cursor upward and placing it over the first anchor point to complete the triangle. As you click on the original anchor point, the selection changes from straight lines to marching ants.

(See next page for picture)



Step 3: Fill the glass chip with color

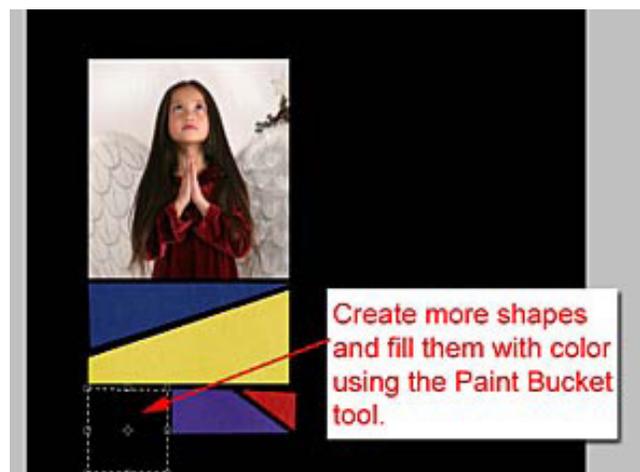
Choose a new foreground color by clicking on the Foreground Color Chip at the bottom of the Tool Bar. Choose a jewel tone color from the Color Picker window and click OK to select it.



Get the Paint Bucket tool and click once inside the triangle selection to fill it with the color. Press Ctrl D (Mac: Cmd D) to remove the selection (marching ants).

Step 4: Create more glass shards

Click the Create a New Layer icon in the Layers Panel and repeat the process of creating a glass shard, leaving space between the first triangle and the next shape.



Don't worry about making perfect selections - creating loosely aligned polygons and triangles gives your project a stained glass effect. Fill each shape with a different jewel tone shade as you continue to add more digital glass to your project.

Variation: Use the finished shapes as clipping masks. To do this, use the Move Tool to drag a piece of digital paper directly over the shape layer. Press Alt (Mac: Opt) and click between the digital paper and glass shape layers in the Layers panel to digitally "glue" the paper to the glass shape. If you know ahead of time that this is what you plan to do, you can use the same Foreground color for all the shapes. Clipping different papers to the shapes will give each shape a unique pattern or color.

Credits:

Scrapbook page by Sara Horton
Rainbow Solids Paperie by Anna Aspnes at Designer Digitals
Font: GE Basalt Script



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