

Power Retouche Pro, v. 7.0

Power Retouche Pro is a set of twenty-four high-quality image correction plug-ins. All of them support both 8 and 16 bits per channel colour depth in RGB as well as CMYK mode (excluding *Transparency*). Also, some of those plug-ins are also capable of working in the Lab, Duotone, Grayscale, HSB, HSL and Multichannel modes. One of their common features is the ability to save and load custom settings, which gives the user the opportunity to easily duplicate the effect should such need arise. Those plug-ins can also apply changes only to selected zones of the image – colour and brightness range or the area defined by a gradient map. Due to the possibility to display a live preview in *divided variants* (*Pict. 1*) comparison of the before and after versions is much easier than ever before. As for the *Power Retouche Pro* drawbacks, sometimes the image in the filter's dialogue is displayed in an inadequate size (*Pict. 2*). The quick-fix for this is to maximize and restore (or *vice versa*) the plug-in's window. There is also a problem with the accuracy of moving the magnified image. For instance, you can never see it's lower right corner at 200% zoom. I hope the issues above, I have experienced in Windows environment, will be corrected in future versions.

Single plug-in focus

The *Power Retouche Pro* bundle contains an award-winning *B&W Studio* filter which is the best solution I have encountered so far for converting a colour image into a black and white one. Not only can it emulate the response curve of the best-known professional films (such as Kodak TMAX or Ilford Delta), but also allows the user to define a custom spectral sensitivity. Similarly, adding digital colour filters is not a problem. Moreover, the *B&W Studio* offers you the possibility to adjust such parameters as *blackpoint*, *multigrade*, *contrast* and *brightness* measured in the *exposure stops*. The quality of the output image is really outstanding and when combined with *Film Grain* and *Black Definition* filters it can produce a very realistic B&W picture.

The other plug-ins worth mentioning are: *Contrast* – the ultimate way to enhance your bland photos; *Sharpness* – a sophisticated tool designed to regain as much details as possible from a blurred areas, without intensifying the noise; *Lens corrector* – comes in handy when the correction of lens problems such as pincushion or barrel distortion is needed; *Noise Corrector* – Your last resort in fighting with the frustrating hot pixels and noise.

In the package You will also find a less complicated but also useful filters like: *Soft-filter* – for a good software emulation of traditional lens soft filter; *Edge line* – nicely done edge-tracker; *Histogram repair* – a must-run filter after the 8 bits to 16 bits per channel image conversion; *Saturation* – increases saturation while preserving colour relationship; *Toned photos* – adds a hue (i.e. sepia, cyanotype) to a black and white photography; *White balance* – a fast method of correcting badly chosen white balance, for example photo taken in tungsten light with WB set to *cloudy day*.

To sum up, the *Power Retouche Pro* is a powerful and well-designed retoucher's suite. In my opinion, the superb quality of the output images and the variety of filters fully compensate for the awkward zoomed preview moving and long refresh times, especially in high, over 6 mpx, resolutions. I think that this software is well worth its price and should be placed on the must-buy list of every photographer.

Pros:

- » very good quality of final effects
- » ability to save and load settings
- » wide variety of colour modes supported in both 8 and 16 bit per channel depth
- » a fair price: 7,29\$ (5,92 EUR, 4,17£) per plug-in when bought in set

Cons:

- » problems with moving zoomed preview
- » too long refresh time, esp. for large images
- » freezes for a moment while *estimating processing time*
- » misleading bit depths (48, 64) in documentation

reviewed by Damian Sepczuk ◀

