CARTOONS AND POP ART

Actions for Adobe® Photoshop® Elements 11 or newer

User Guide
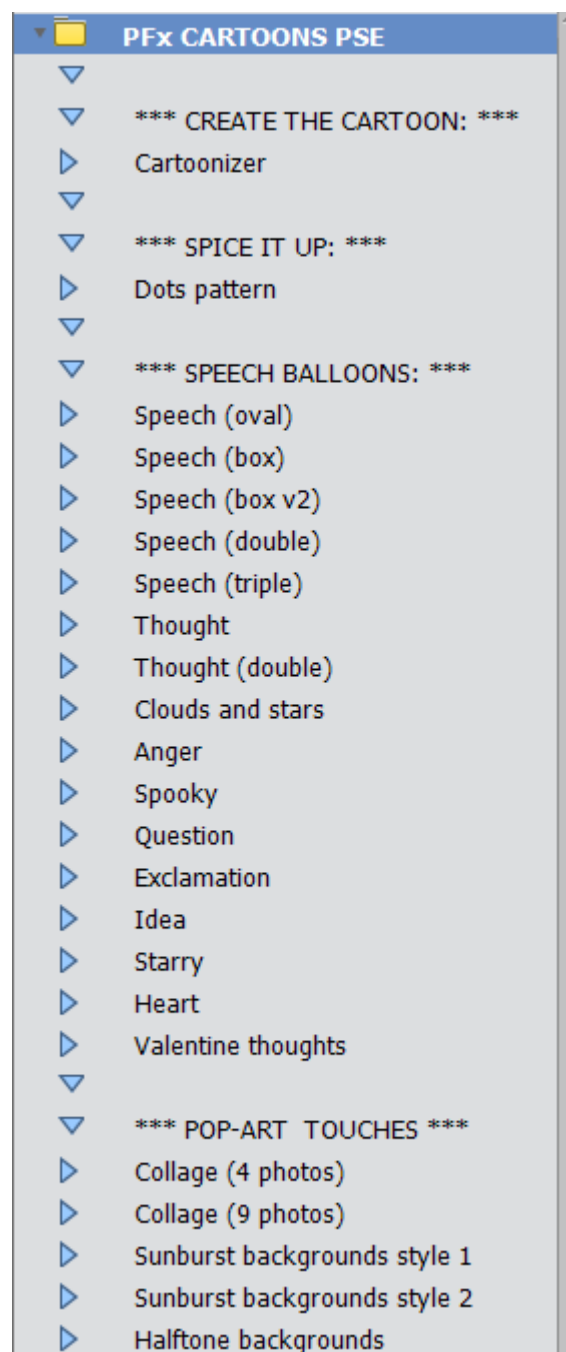
CONTENTS

1. THE BASICS

1.1. About the effects

The "Cartoons and Pop Art" is a set of Photoshop actions, which you can use to turn your photos into beautiful cartoons. The effects also include various elegant speech balloons, as well as pop art backgrounds and collages.

1.2. How the actions are organized

The actions are grouped in 4 groups, within the "PFx CARTOONS and POP ART pse" set:

- The **first group** contains the core action, called the "Cartoonizer".

- The **second group** is called "SPICE IT UP". It contains 2 actions that let you add a halftone pattern and create a grayscale copy of the cartoon.

- The **third group** contains 16 actions, which let you add 16 speech balloons to the cartoon.

- The actions in the **fourth group** let you spice up the cartoons with beautiful pop art effects. To use these actions, you will need to cartoonize a photo with a transparent background (e.g. a person or an animal extracted from the background).

PFx CARTOONS PSE

*** CREATE THE CARTOON: ***
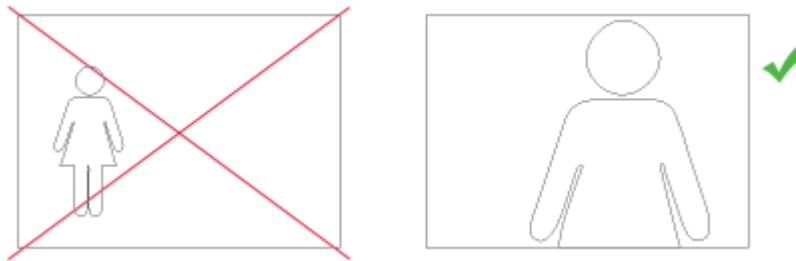Cartoonizer

*** SPICE IT UP: ***
Dots pattern

*** SPEECH BALLOONS: ***
Speech (oval)
Speech (box)
Speech (box v2)
Speech (double)
Speech (triple)
Thought
Thought (double)
Clouds and stars
Anger
Spooky
Question
Exclamation
Idea
Starry
Heart
Valentine thoughts

*** POP-ART TOUCHES ***
Collage (4 photos)
Collage (9 photos)
Sunburst backgrounds style 1
Sunburst backgrounds style 2
Halftone backgrounds

1.3. Installing the actions in Photoshop

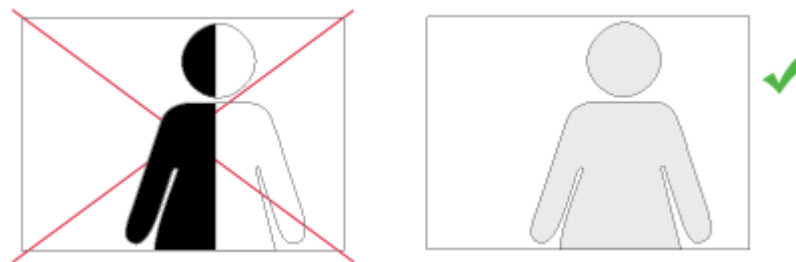If you don't know how to install and use Photoshop actions, please refer to this article on PanosFX.com:

https://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/installing-pse-actions

2. BEFORE RUNNING THE ACTIONS

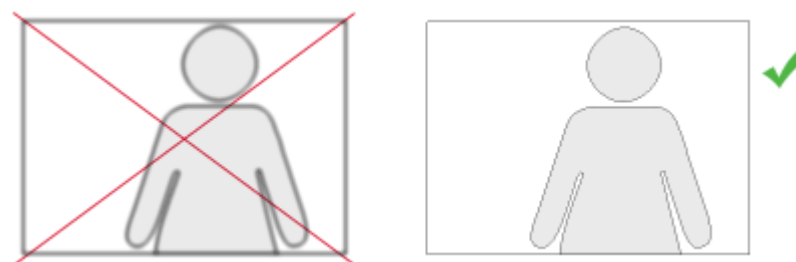## 2.1. Selecting the right photos

Not all photos are appropriate for these effects. To create a beautiful cartoon, prefer photos that meet these standards:

Prefer photos of people (or animals, objects) taken from a short distance. Face portraits make great cartoons!

Avoid photos taken under poor lighting conditions or photos taken under 'hard' light.

Avoid blurred photos!

2.2. Photos with transparency

One of the advantages of the "Cartoonizer" actions is that you can use them on photos with transparency (such as a **layered PSD** photo with transparency, or a **PNG-24** photo with transparency). The actions will preserve any transparent pixels.

So, what's the big deal about using a photo with transparent background?

If your photo has a transparent background, you can use the actions in the "POP ART TOUCHES" group to create various pop art inspired effects. For example, you can insert a sunburst type of background behind the cartoon.

You can extract a person / animal / object from its background using the "Quick Selection Tool":

We will refer to the pop art effects later in this manual.

3. THE ACTIONS

3.1. Optimal image size

The action produces best results with photos whose size is in the range from 3 to 8 Megapixels.

When the action begins, it lets you change the size of the photo. If your photo is very big (or very small) try to set its longest side (width or height) to ~2500 pixels. As a general rule, enter a value **from 1500 to 3500 pixels** for the **longest** image side.

3.2. Three different cartoons

The "Cartoonizer" action creates three different cartoons on your work area, so that you to choose the one you prefer mostly. The first cartoon is richer in details; the second has a flatter look, while the third one looks glossier with fewer sketch lines.

3.3. The layers:

The "Cartoonizer" action creates 3 layers that are combined to create the overall effect.

At the bottom of the layers stack you can find two more layers: the "Original Photo" and the "Background". Both layers are turned off.
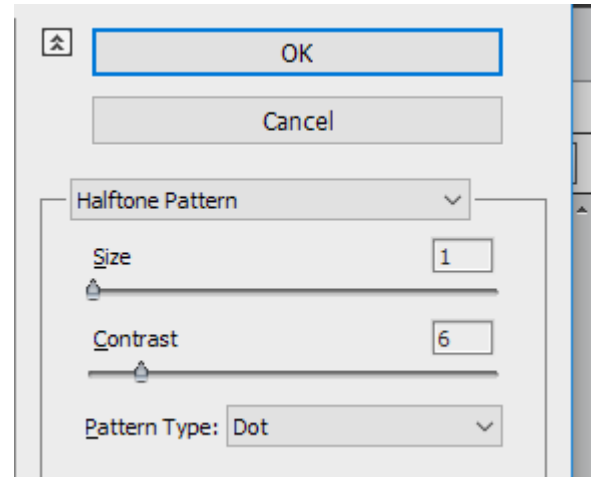
You can compare the original image vs. its cartoon version, by holding down the **Alt** key (Mac: **option**) and clicking on the small eyeball icon to the left of the "Original Photo" layer.
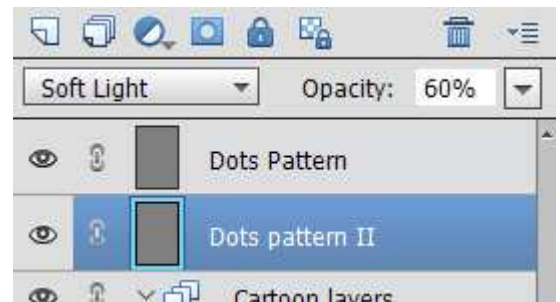
3.4. The "Dots pattern" action

Having created the cartoon using the "Cartoonizer" action, you can now add a halftone pattern using the "Dots pattern" action.

The action will open the Halftone Pattern filter settings. Move the **Size** slider to your liking and hit OK to apply your changes:
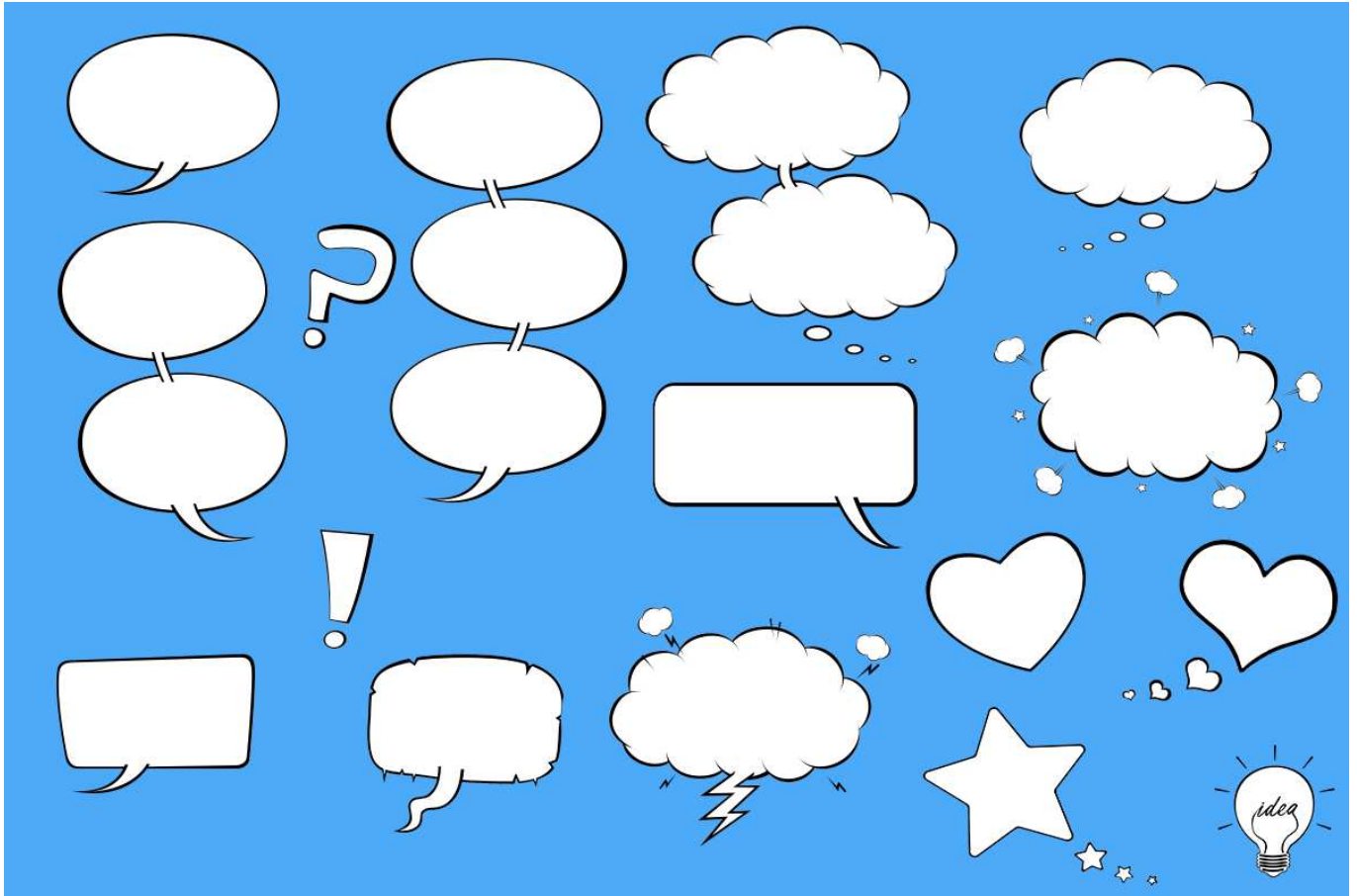
A new layer called "Dots Pattern" has been created on the layers panel. You can change its opacity and / or its blending mode, or even delete it.
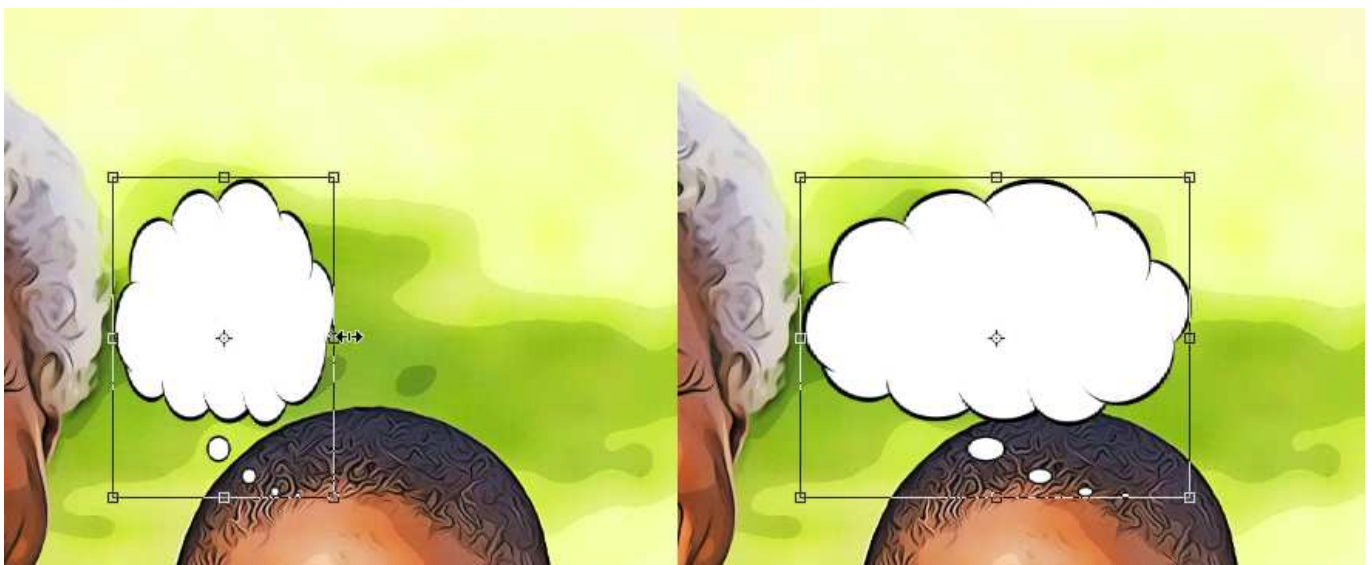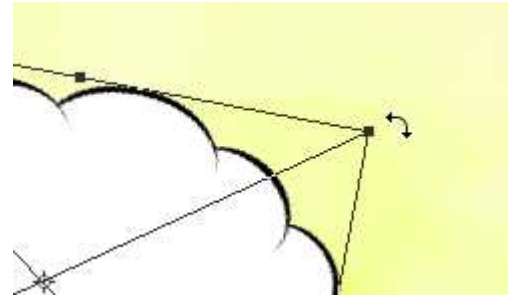
3.5. The "Speech Balloons"

The actions in the "SPEECH BALLONS" group let you add 16 different vector speech balloons, to the cartoon. You can run the same action as many times as you wish, to add multiple balloons of the same type.
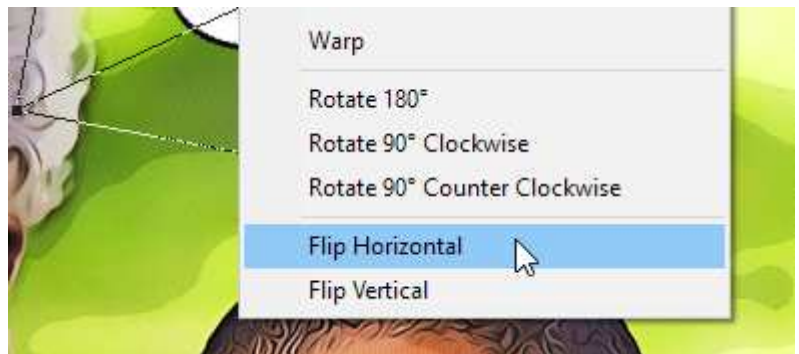

To resize the balloon, hold down the SHIFT key and drag a handle:

Use the corner handles to rotate the balloon. When you hover the mouse over a corner handle it will be transformed into a double-headed curved arrow. Click and drag to rotate, double click to confirm, press Esc to cancel.
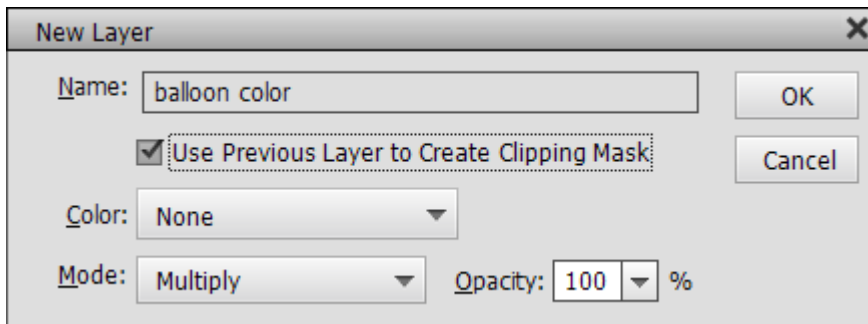

You can also **right click** on the balloon, and select the two "Flip" commands to flip the balloon horizontally and/or vertically:

How to change the balloon color:

With the balloon layer selected, select the menu command "**Layer > New Fill Layer > Solid Color**".

Change the layer name to "**Balloon color**"; check the "**Use Previous Layer to Create Clipping Mask**" box; set the Mode to "**Multiply**" and hit **OK**:
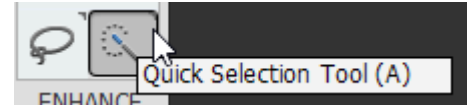

Pick a color of your preference and hit OK.

3.6. The "Pop Art" effects

To use the actions in the fourth group ("POP ART TOUCHES") you need to have a photo where the photographic object has been extracted from its background:

To extract an object from the background, pick the Quick Selection Tool:

Carefully select the background. To subtract pixels from the selection, hold down the **Alt** key (Mac: **option**) while clicking. Press the bracket keys [ ] to change the size of the selection brush tip.

Having selected the background, hold down the **Alt** key (Mac: **option**) and click the **Add a mask** icon, at the top of the layers panel:

This will mask out the background:

> **TIP:** To fine-tune the selection, hold down **Shift** and select the menu command **Select > Refine Mask**. This will open the "Refine Mask" window.

Now run the "Cartoonizer" action.

The action completes and the photo is turned into a cartoon:

The action preserved the transparent background pixels. It's time to use the 4 pop art actions.

The "Collage (4 photos)" action.

The "Collage (4 photos)" action will turn the cartoon into a pop art collage, which shows 4 different versions of the photo, placed over colored tiles:

You can easily change the colors of each one of the 4 tiles, by double clicking the respective color fill layer in the layers panel.

The "Collage (9 photos)" action.

The "Collage (9 photos)" action will turn the cartoon into a pop art collage, with 9 different versions of the photo:

You can easily change the colors of each one of the 9 tiles, by double clicking the respective color fill layer in the layers panel.

The "Sunburst background" actions

This action places a sunburst graphic behind the cartoon:

There are two "Sunburst" actions. Each action produces 3 different backgrounds, with customizable colors (2 x 3 = 6 different backgrounds).

The 6 "Sunburst" backgrounds

The "Halftone background" action.

This action places a halftone pattern graphic behind the cartoon:

The action lets you select the two pattern colors (default: red & yellow) and define the maximum dot radius.

When the action completes, a layer group called "Halftone background" is created in PSE 2018 or PSE 15. It contains 2 layers: "Color 1" and "Color 2". Click on the layer thumbnails, to change the colors to your preference:

In PSE 14 (and in the older PSE versions) the action creates 2 layers, called "Halftone – Color 1" and "Halftone – Color 2". Double click their thumbnails, to change the default colors to your preference.
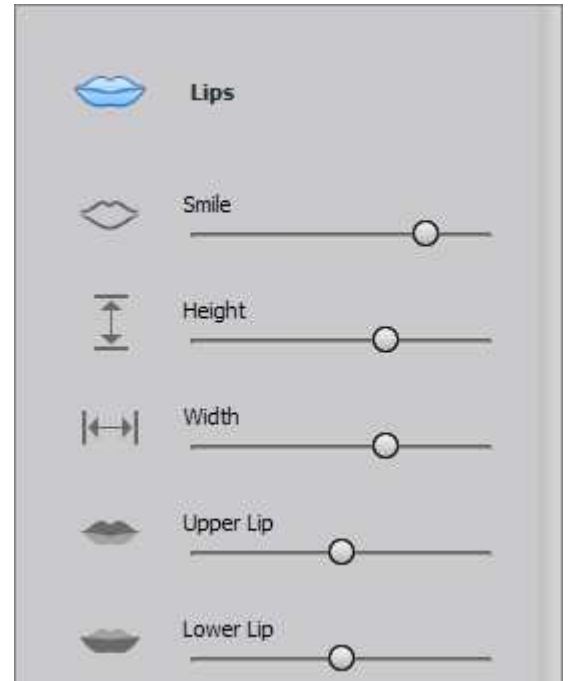
The 2 "Halftone" backgrounds

1. CARICATURES

1.1. Turning a face into a caricature

Adobe introduced the facial feature adjustments in Photoshop Elements 15. You can use this amazing technology to turn one or more faces into caricatures, prior to using the Cartoons actions.

You need to have a photo showing at least one human face, which is facing forwards. Select **Enhance > Adjust Facial Features** from the menu. Use the settings on the right, to modify the facial features.

Adjust the settings and press OK to apply. Repeat as many times as you wish, to create a funny face. Finally run the Cartoon action.

If you have any questions, please use the contact form at panosfx.com

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The photos used in this guide were kindly provided by Shutterstock. The Shutterstock IDs are as follows:

140378221.jpg

169057235.jpg

136789808.jpg