PanosFX
creative photo effects

VECTOR PAINTINGS

For Adobe® Photoshop® CC, CS6, CS5, CS4
Adobe® Photoshop® Elements 15 or newer

User Guide

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1. THE BASICS
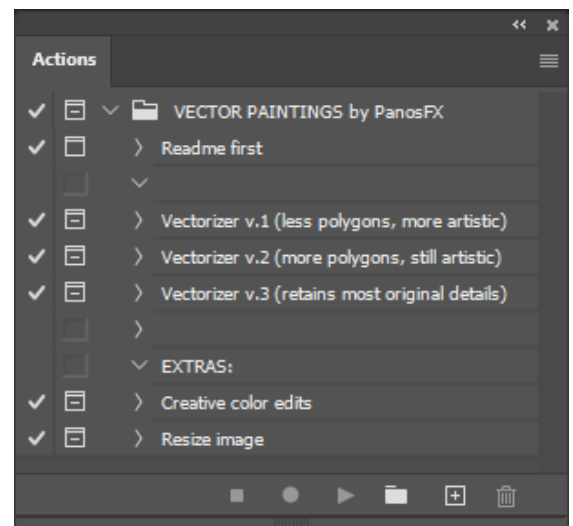
1.1. About the effects

The PanosFX "VECTOR PAINTINGS" is a set of Photoshop actions that combine raster and vector graphics with painting effects.

- You can apply a unique look to your images.
- You can turn photos of your friends and family into cartoons.
- You can upscale an image considerably and create a large poster without blurring its details.

1.2. How the actions are organized

The actions are contained in a set called "VECTOR PAINTINGS by PanosFX".

- The three "**Vectorizer**" actions are the set's core actions. You must run one of them.

- The "**EXTRAS**" group contains 2 actions:
    - The "**Creative color edits**" action lets you adjust / change the image colors. This action is only available in the product version for Adobe Photoshop.
    - The "**Resize image**" lets you go back and resize the final vector image to your preference.

1.3. Downloading and installing the actions in Photoshop

Click on the download link that was emailed to you when you purchased the product, to download the zip file. Alternatively, login and click the "Customer Control Panel" link (at the header and footer of www.panosfx.com). Click on "My Downloads" and finally click on the file link to download the latest version.

Decompress the product zip file, and load the action file "**PFx VECTOR PAINTINGS.atn**" in Photoshop.

If you don't know how to install and use Photoshop actions, refer to these instructions.

Installing actions in Photoshop:

http://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/installing-photoshop-actions

Installing actions in Photoshop Elements:

https://www.panosfx.com/installation-troubleshooting/installing-pse-actions
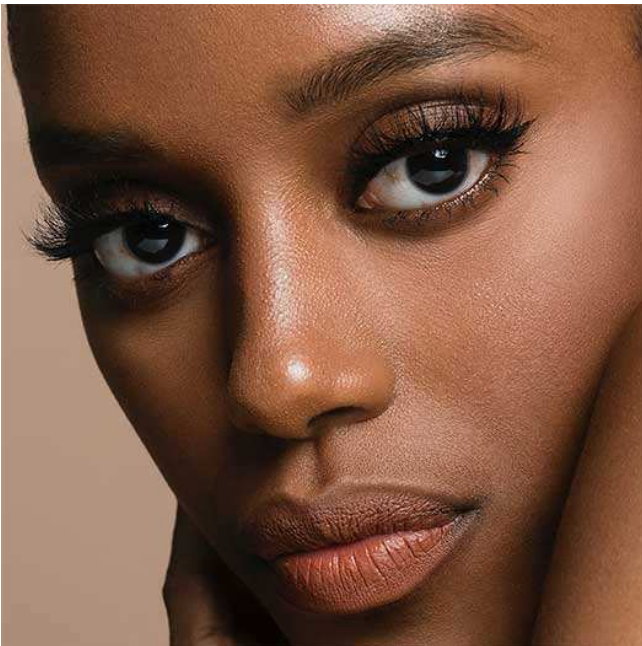
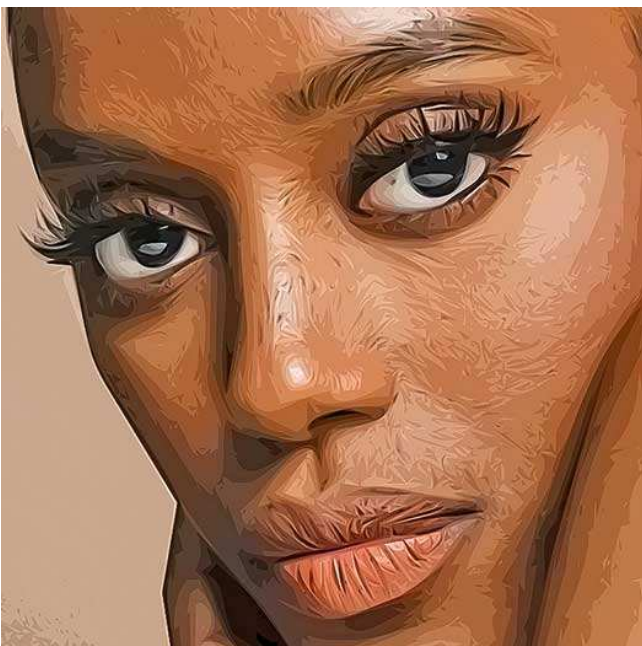# 2. THE ACTIONS IN DETAIL

2.1. The three "Vectorizer" actions

The "Vectorizer v1"and the "Vectorizer v2" actions create a more artistic rendition of the original image. The rendition is more intense in the first version. You can use these actions to create more fluid, cartoonish results.

The "Vectorizer v3" action retains many of the details of the original image. This action is very useful in certain projects, e.g. if you wish to upscale the image by a large factor, without blurring its details.
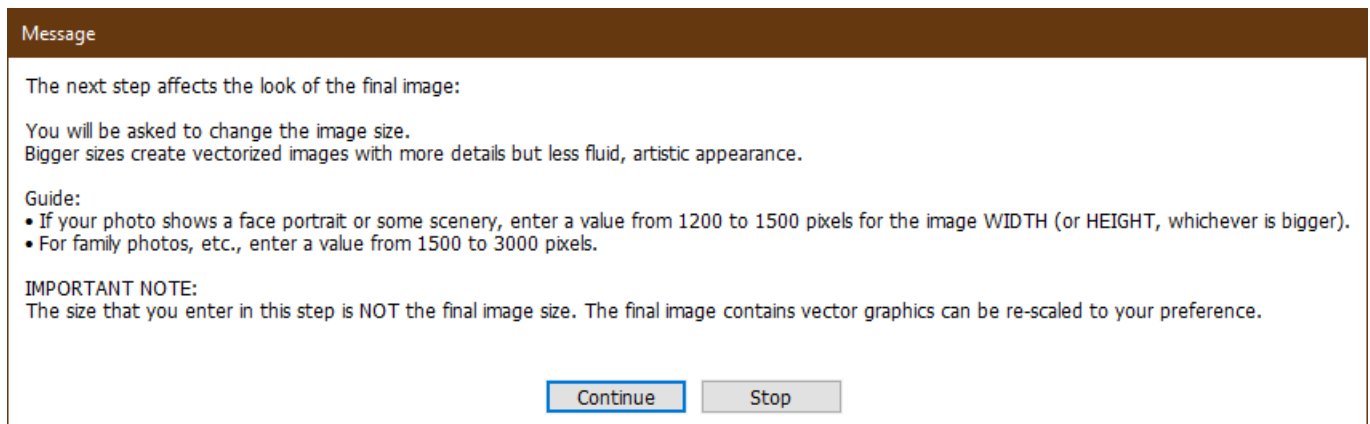
Original:

"Vectorizer v1":

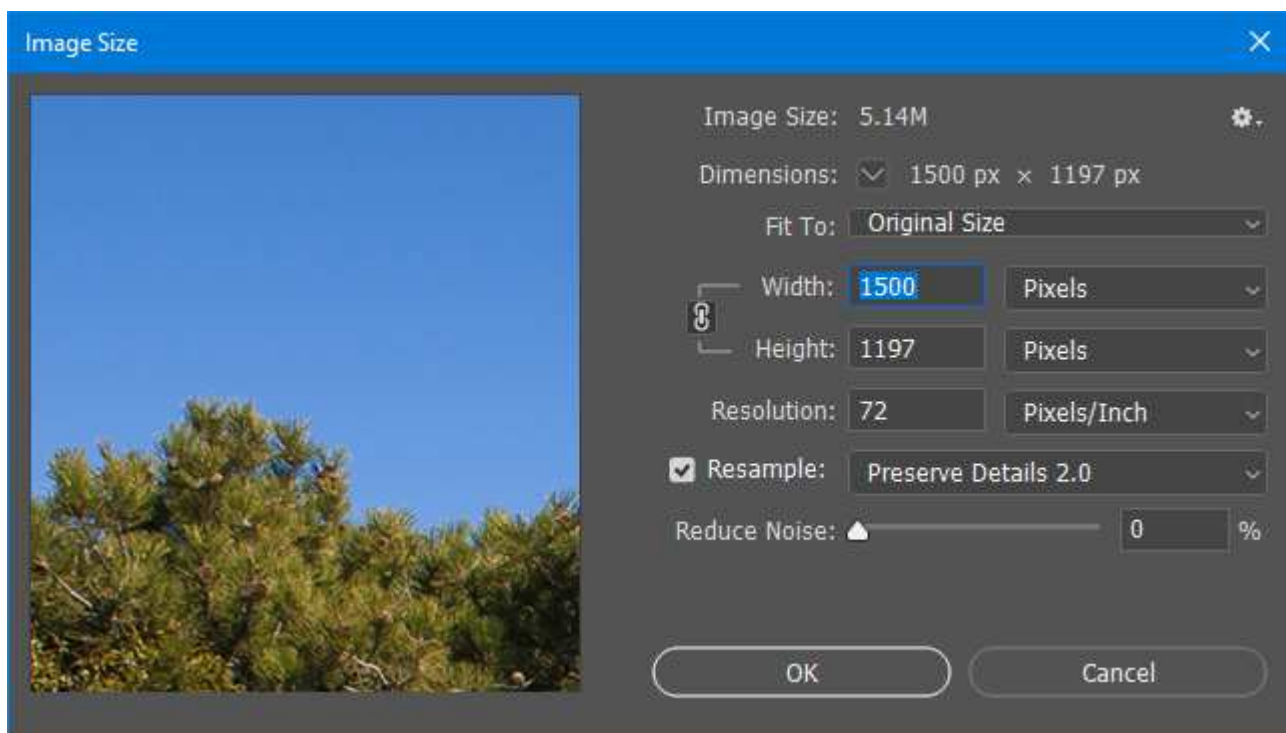**"Vectorizer v2":**

"Vectorizer v3":

Load a photo, click one of the three "Vectorizer" actions and hit the Action Panel's Play button. The action will display the following message:

Please read these instructions carefully and hit **Continue**.

You will be presented with the **Image Size** window:

The value that you enter at this step for the image **width** (or **height**, whichever is bigger), will *affect the appearance* of the final vector image:

- Smaller sizes produce graphics with more fluid graphical details.
- Larger sizes produce vectors that retain more details from the original photo.

At this point, it is important to understand that the image size you define here is **not** the final size of the vectorized image. Vector graphics can be re-scaled freely. You will define the size of the vector image in the next action step.

Below you can see an example. On the left you see a part of the original photo.
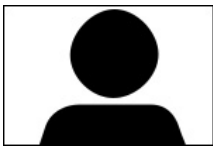
The vectorized image at the center was created by changing the image width to 1000 pixels. The one on the right was created by setting the image width to 1500 pixels. Notice the difference in the details:
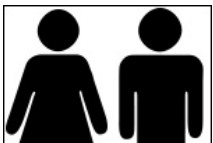

You are now wondering: how much should you resize the image width (or height), at this step?

1500 pixels: this is your starting point. Enter a smaller value (between 1000-1500 pixels) if the main photo subject covers a large part of the photo area, or if you want to create a vector image with more fluid, artistic details. Enter a higher value to retain more details of the original photo.

Here are some recommendations:

If your photo shows a face portrait, a building, some kind of landscape, etc., you may enter a value from 1000 to 1500 pixels for the image width (or height, *whichever is bigger*).

If your photo shows people photographed from a close distance, try entering a value from 1200 to 1700 pixels for the image width (or height, *whichever is bigger*).
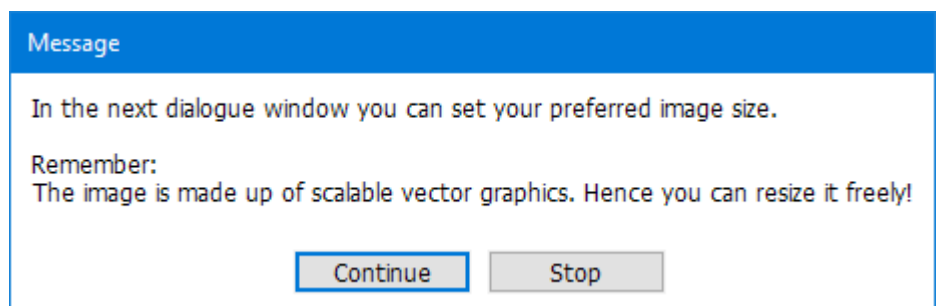
If your photo shows many people, then try entering a value from 1500 to 3000 pixels for the image width (or height, *whichever is bigger*).

Change the image size and hit **OK**. The action will start scanning your photo, converting the bitmap graphics to vectors. This process may take a while, depending on the size and the details of the particular photo.

When the conversion is completed, the action will ask you to define the size of the vector image:
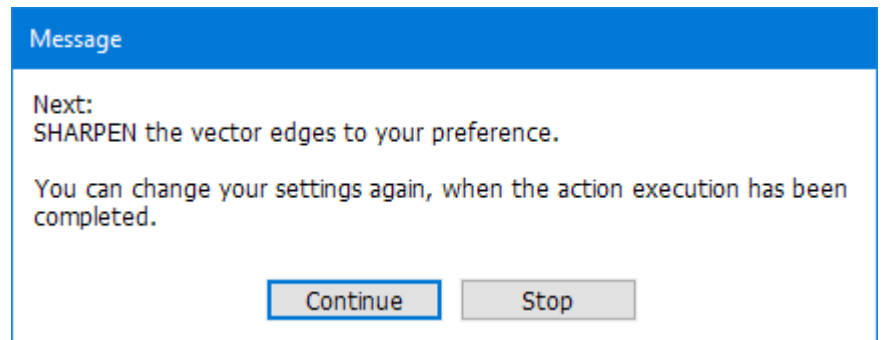

Hit **Continue** and enter the preferred size. Since the image is made up of vector graphics, you can resize it freely, to create a very large poster or a work of art that you can show off in your social media accounts and other on-line galli.

Enter the preferred size and hit **OK** to continue.

NOTE: The last action of the set ("**Resize image**") will let you change the image size again.

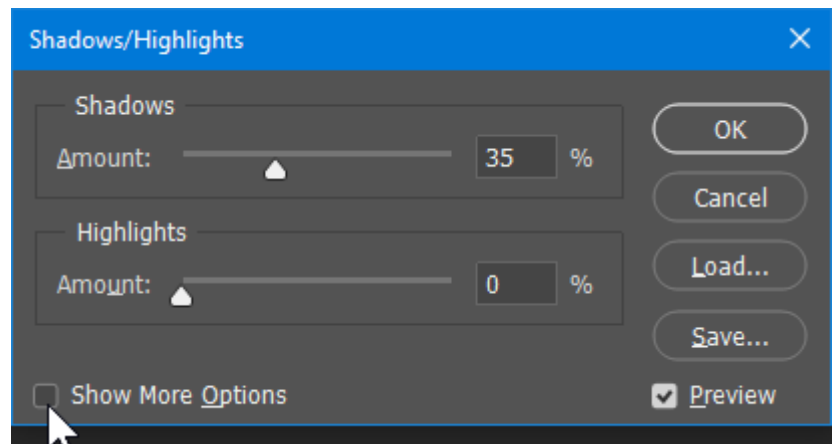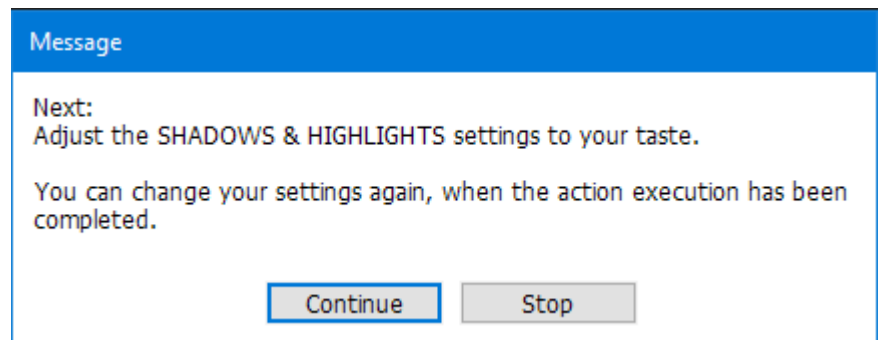The next step sharpens the image, emphasizing the details of the vector edges.

Hit Continue and adjust the settings of the **Smart Sharpen** filter. You will be able to re-edit these settings again, when the action finishes.
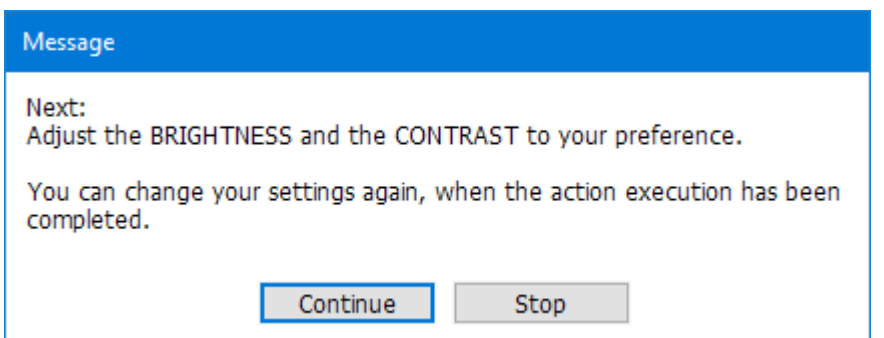
> **Message**
>
> Next:
> SHARPEN the vector edges to your preference.
>
> You can change your settings again, when the action execution has been completed.
>
> Continue   Stop

The next step allows you to tweak the image shadows and highlights:

> **Message**
>
> Next:
> Adjust the SHADOWS & HIGHLIGHTS settings to your taste.
>
> You can change your settings again, when the action execution has been completed.
>
> Continue   Stop
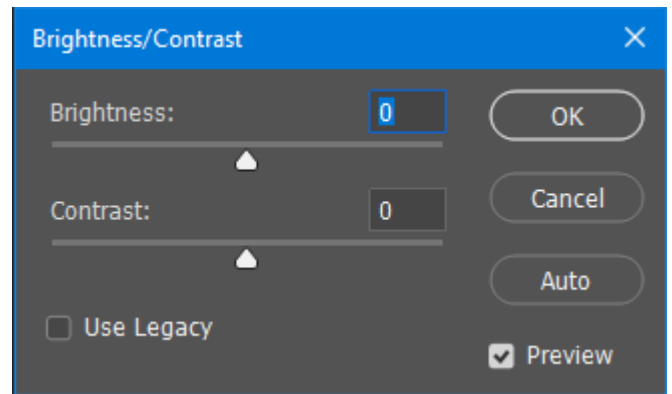
Hit Continue. The **Shadows/Highlights** window shows up.

Click on "**Show More Options**" to display all available settings. You will be able to re-edit your settings again, when the action finishes.
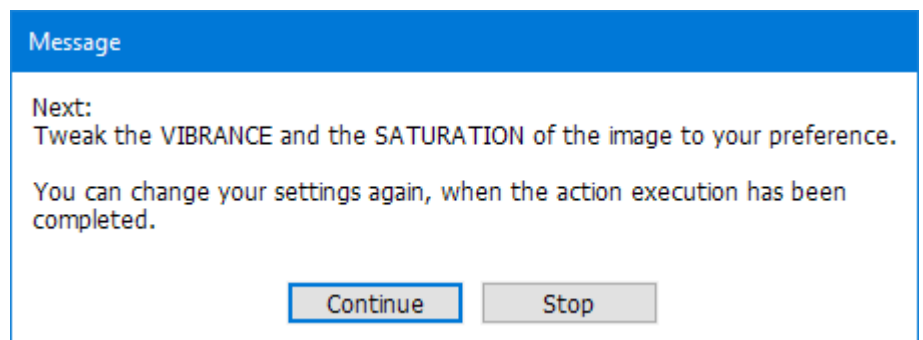
> **Shadows/Highlights**
>
> Shadows
> Amount: 35   %   OK
>
> Highlights   Cancel
> Amount: 0   %   Load...
>
>   Save...
> ☐ Show More Options   ☑ Preview

The next dialogue window lets you tweak the image brightness and contrast.

> **Message**
>
> Next:
> Adjust the BRIGHTNESS and the CONTRAST to your preference.
>
> You can change your settings again, when the action execution has been completed.
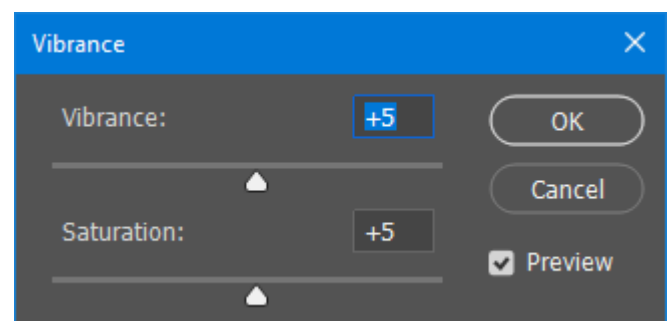>
> Continue   Stop

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Hit **Continue**. Adjust the default settings and hit **OK** to move on. You will be able to re-edit your settings again, when the action execution has been completed.

The last step lets you tweak the vibrance and the saturation of the image (the saturation, in the Photoshop CS3 version of the action).

Hit **Continue**, adjust the default settings and hit **OK** to move on. Once again, your settings can be changed when the action completes.
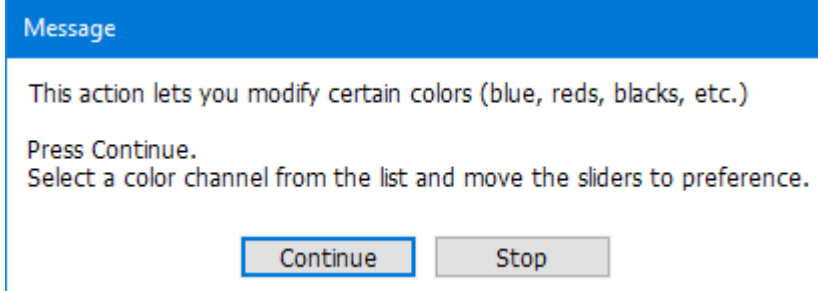
When you are done, press OK to complete the action.
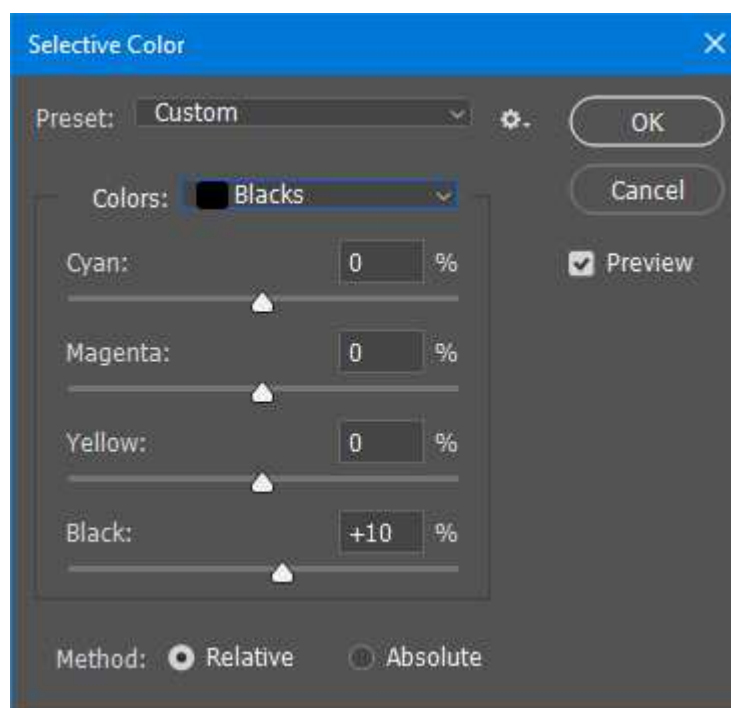
2.2. The "Creative color edits" action

This action lets you make creative color edits, using the powerful "**Selective Color" a**djustment tool.

For example you can change the color of a flower from red to yellow; or, when the skin colors look very saturated, you can make them look more neutral, etc.

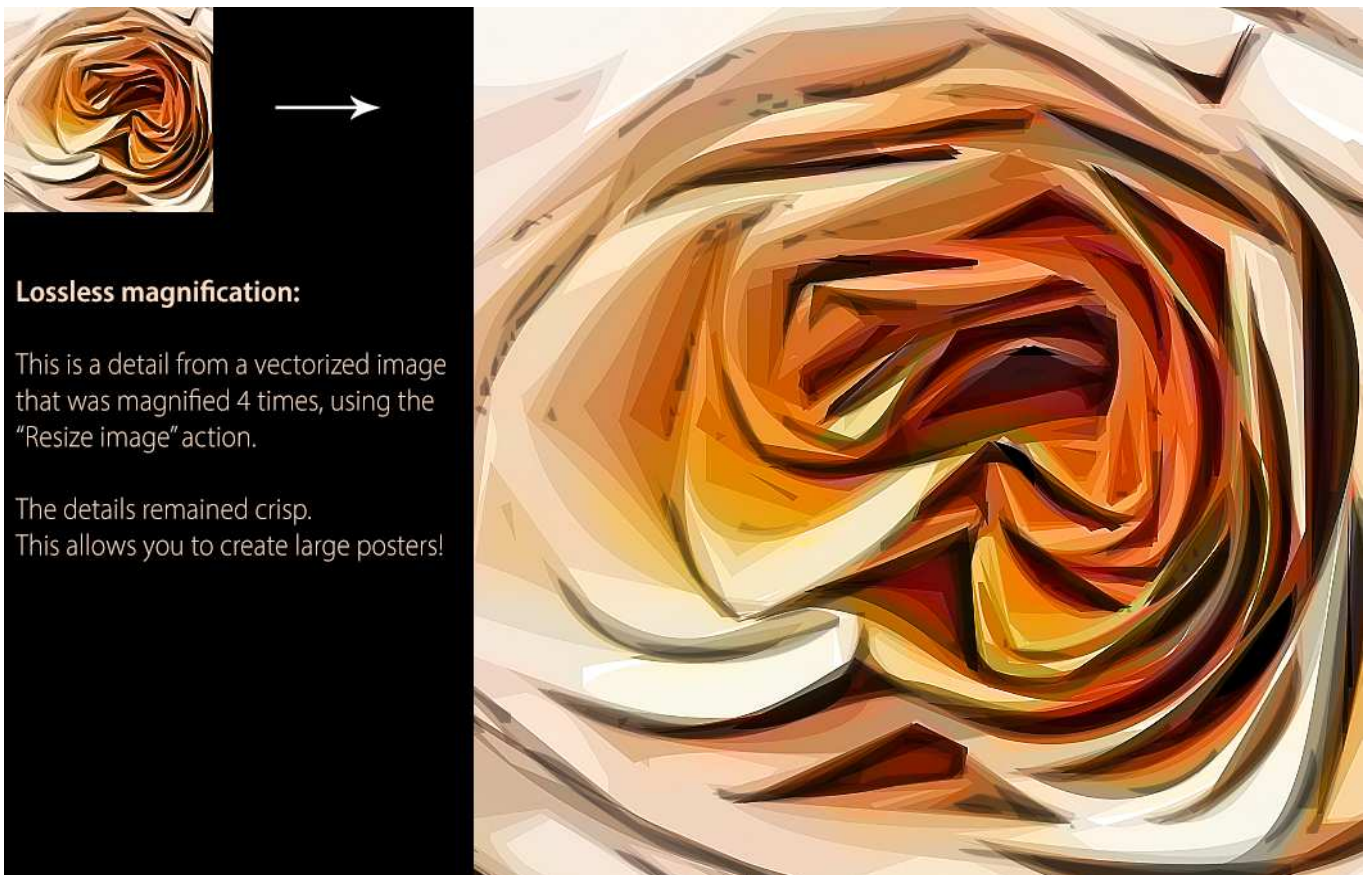Hit Continue. Select a color channel from the "**Colors**" list and then move the 4 sliders to your preference.

By default, the action will tweak the "**Blacks**" channel in the "**Colors**" dropdown list, by setting the value of **Black** to +10 :
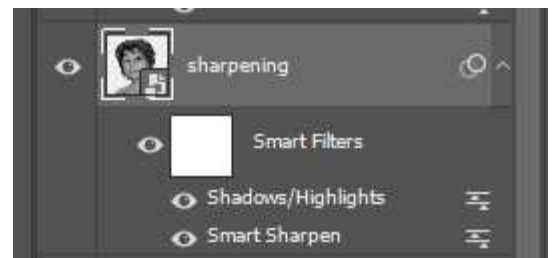
2.3. The "Resize Image" action

If you want to change the image size, do not use the **Image Size** command. Run the "Resize Image" action instead.

Lossless magnification:

This is a detail from a vectorized image that was magnified 4 times, using the "Resize image" action.

The details remained crisp.
This allows you to create large posters!

When the action finishes, you may double click the two smart filters of the "sharpening" layer, to re-adjust their settings:

- **Shadows/Highlights**
- **Smart Sharpen**

If you plan to resize the vectorized image later, save the image as a layered PSD file. If your client calls you the next day asking you to print the vectorized photo in large format, just open the PSD file, run the "Resize Image" action, adjust the smart filters, and keep the customer happy.

2.4. The layers panel

The image on the right shows all layers created by the actions. They are contained in a group called "LAYERS".

The actions create 4 adjustment layers:

- **Levels**
- **Vibrance / Saturation** (Hue/Saturation in the CS3 version)
- **Brightness / Contrast**
- **Color adjustments** (created by the "Creative color edits" action).

Double click the adjustment layer thumbnails to re-adjust the settings.

There are also 3 different "**sketch**" layers. You can tweak their opacity to your preference (you may press the numerical keyboard keys).

You may experiment with **changing the blending mode and opacity** of the "**Color**" layer. By default its blending mode is set to "Color" and its opacity is 100%.

The "**sharpening**" layer contains two smart filters:

- **Shadows/Highlights**, and
- **Smart Sharpen**

Double click on the smart filters to change their settings.

The "Vectors" group of layers contains the image vector graphics. Leave this group untouched, as it is used by the "Image resize" action.

If you have any questions or if you need any help, please use the contact form at panosfx.com, in order to get proper assistance.

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