Light Painting Effect Photoshop Actions

This action pack will allow you to create a light painting effect from rasterized shapes or text layers. Once you use one of the actions in the pack you will be able to adjust the color of the resulting light contour by the use of a Hue/Saturation adjustment layer that the action creates.

Package contents

This package contains several files: 3 ATN (Photoshop action) files, 1 ABR (Photoshop brush) file and 1 ASL (Photoshop layer style) file.

The main files are the ATN files, as they contain the actual Photoshop action. The rest are support file but are required in order for the action to work.

Installation notes

Step 1

Install the action prerequisites: file background.asl and file round-brush.abr that can be found in the package.
There are several options to install these files and one of them is going to Photoshop File>Open and select the 2 files to load them.

Step 2

Install the action files: file 1-COLOR-LIGHT-PAINTING.atn, 2-COLORS-LIGHT-PAINTING.atn and N-COLORS-LIGHT-PAINTING.atn also found in the package.
The installation is made in a similar manner as described in step 1 (File>Open and load the 3 files).

Step 3

Open the actions panel (by going in Photoshop to Window>Actions) and in this panel you will find 3 sets named:

1 COLOR LIGHT PAINTING
2 COLORS LIGHT PAINTING
N COLORS LIGHT PAINTING

If you expand any of these sets you will find inside several variations for this light painting action.

How to use this action

Open a new canvas, the size is not important, but for a better looking effect you should use at least a 500x500 pixels canvas. If your canvas is much larger or much smaller than 500x500px you will need to make some adjustments to the layer styles as described in the *Customization* section (please see below the "light 2" layer customization).

Now, add a text and go to the actions panel (Window>Actions), expand one of the 3 sets, for example lets take the "N COLORS LIGHT PAINTING" set and select the action inside the set, named "light-text-ncolors".

Make sure that the Brush Tool opacity is set to 100%.

To run the action press the play button.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Even if this action is made mainly for text layers, it works just as well on any shape as long as it is rasterized. Make sure that you only have one layer when running this action so merge the layers if you have more than one. (tip: To rasterize a layer press right click on the layer and choose "Rasterize Layer").

Light Painting Effect Photoshop Actions – Help File

Customization

        The action pack contains one-click actions, meaning that you just have to run it on a text / shape (rasterized) and you get a result. The result is a sum of layers that you can then adjust to get the desired look.

        The resulting layers after playing the actions are:

background
        - you can customize the background by changing the background Pattern Overlay in the layer styles
        - you can also change the layer styles as you wish (NOTE: the result looks good only on dark backgrounds)

text layer
        - this is the original layer with some added layer styles which you can also adjust for changing the contour properties (opacity of the Stroke, add Inner Glow, Outer Glow)

light 1
        - is the main part of the effect
        - in the layer styles you can adjust the Drop Shadow distance property so that the effect looks properly sized according to the canvas size
        - in the layer styles you can adjust the Outer Glow for a brighter or more subtle glow
        - TIP: you can add light accents by using the Brush Tool (sparkle brushes or even hard round brushes) with different opacity levels; I have used this technique to create the accents in the preview image.

light 2
        - this layer is not customizable

color
        - this layer is not customizable

hue saturation
        - for actions from 1 COLOR LIGHT PAINTING and 2 COLORS LIGHT PAINTING this layer can adjust the resulting color(s) of the text / shape by changing the Hue value

gradient
        - for the action from N COLORS LIGHT PAINTING this layer can adjust the color gradient by changing the Gradient Overlay in the layer styles window