The Laser Engraver™

...laser university's monthly newsletter

Don't forget to take advantage of our *Add-On Promotion* offered in the March issue. The offer expires April 15. **You must call in to** 1-800-733-7705 to receive an 8 month add-on to your current subscription for the 6 month price of $239. Ask for the Order Department and for the "Existing Subscriber Add-on Promo."

Updates - LaserU Survey Results

Thank you to everyone that took the time to fill out the survey for LaserUniversity. A link was sent out on March 11, 2008 for you to go to an online survey to answer questions to help us improve. If you would still like to partake in this 5-minute endeavor, please send me an email!

Some of the great feedback included subscribers wanting information on scroll saw patterns, stamping, and PhotoGrav.

I have updated our PhotoGrav information to reflect the newly released version 3.0. You will find it in the Project Center and a shapshot below.

free for you!

Since I saw scrollsaw patterns a couple of times on the request list from the survey I have found some free patterns for you for this month's free files.

I am also working on a Project Center addition that will help with the scanning & cleaning process of the pattern. It should be loaded within one week complete with text version and video version.

You will find the links to download the images on the

Laser Spotlight

Each month we showcase an item, product or skill from LaserU. We give a summary of the item and provide links for more information. This month we will look at **PhotoGrav 3.0 - Why you need it & How it works.** This comes from our Project Center.

If you currently have the prior version (2.1.1) you will definitely want to upgrade!

Compare to version 2.11
All I can say is, "what a difference a version can make!" If you are familiar with PhotoGrav software you will quickly notice the differences in the newest version. In 2.11 there was a process set in cement that one had to follow to prep a photo before PG (PhotoGrav) would even accept the image for processing. Now, with PG 3.0 the program has so much more flexibility.

Some of the features over the previous version include:
        -the ability to use either color or B&W photos
        -the ability to use standard image formats such as tif, jpg, png and bmp
        -built in resize original image tool
        -expanded and updated laser system list
        -expanded and updated materials list

A great product made even better, PhotoGrav 3.0 is designed for novice and expert engravers to product first run, professional results.

How it works
If you are totally new to PG, let me explain further. The basic of idea of PhotoGrav is to remove all the variables in the process of laser engraving photos. Over the years, PG has established itself as the standard for laser engraved photo quality. Born from necessity over 10 years ago, the need for quality laser photos continues to expand.

The solution for success in any process is to remove the variables. The fewer the variables, the less human interface required to make questionable judgments.

Three major variables are present in the laser engraving process:

1. *the laser system* – PG can be set up to your specific laser manufacturer and other settings
2. *the material* – through an extensive list, the needed material is selected in PG. This applies filters to the image for optimum engraving results. These filters compensate for the absorption factor of each material.
3. *the photo* – each photo has a range of highlight, midtone and shadow values. PG creates a histogram based on algorithms to accommodate these values.

PG 3.0 reduces the variables in the production process using these three main areas. The user will find much more consistent results over a wide range of materials and customer supplied photos. Each of these three is further addressed in the remainder of this tutorial.

See the example below for a series of photos that were processed with and without PhotoGrav.

<div align="center">Processed Without PhotoGrav</div>

June 2007 - Caught in the Paint

<div align="center">Processed WITH PhotoGrav</div>

June 2007 - Caught in the Paint

The second example has much more clarity and detail to the finer points of the images. Compare the first image in the series. In the PhotoGrav'ed example, my son's facial features are much clearer. Now look at the third image in the series. In the PhotoGrav'ed example, his mouth can be seen amidst the paint on his face. Hands down – the second example is the one a client would pay great sums to have of their loved one.

Interested? See our lesson in the Project Center for a step-by-step on how PG 3.0 works! And it is easy!

For more information on PhotoGrav 3.0 see the **Project Center**.

Please send questions and comments to laseru@laserbits.com

See you next month with our next **The Laser Engraver** Newsletter.

Kathryn

April 02, 2008

Files Free For You!

Be Mine   Dinosaur Puzzle   Friends   Luck

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Kathryn