FUN WITH PHOTO MASK FRAMES
TUTORIAL
FOR SERIF CRAFT ARTIST PROFESSIONAL

By Karen Lewis
http://karenscreatinynook.blogspot.com
FUN WITH PHOTO MASK FRAMES

TUTORIAL FOR CRAFT ARTIST PROFESSIONAL

This is a transcript of the videos which can be found on You Tube – Part 1 and Part 2 – watching the videos and reading this together might make it easier to follow.

Welcome to this, my second video tutorial, using Serif’s "Craft Artist Professional" software.

This tutorial was born out of a recent thread posted on DaisyTrail by White Rabbit, Photomasks, which referred to a video on You Tube, CA Convert Photo Mask to Frame by another DaisyTrail member, mcleansue, although she no longer seems active on the forum.

As the thread progressed, splodges and splats as bases for your frames were mentioned, and there was a link to another DT Forum Thread, within which there was a link to Quick Shape Splats, previously found in Serif’s DrawPlus7 software, so these could be downloaded to add to the Stencils Tab in Craft Artist.

Before I start, I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the following on the Daisytrail Forum, for their input:

White Rabbit – for starting the thread in the first place and thus getting me interested in the use of photomasks;

mcleansue – for her video tutorial which explained the basics of how to get started.

Alfred (Corniest on DT) - for the links to the Quick Shapes, and his “recipe” to produce an 'artistic edge' which is softer than the original way of doing things. And also for allowing me to show it here.

JanineS – for her version of how she does this, and her agreement to letting me show it here.
wendyp – for her idea of using dingbats to add character to a plain frame, and her tutorial.

I can't take credit for any of the following; I am merely building on the information the afore-mentioned have given out.

Personally I find that making up the little tutorials, and writing them down, helps to fix the details in my brain. I hope that sharing them with others might be helpful.

So, having added the DP7 shapes to my Stencils Tab, it was time to play.

1. I started with a straight-forward splat stencil brought onto the work-space.
2. Click on “Shapes” on toolbar and draw a Quick Rectangle over the stencil.

3. Go up to the Colour Tab, and colour it black.

4. Select, then click on “Lift Stencil”. This leaves you with your basic black shape.

5. Select, then copy (Ctrl C).

6. Go to Toolbar > Edit > Paste Special > Serif Transparent Bitmap > OK.
7. You now get a grey box attached to the cursor. Click on page and pull out to reveal the new bitmap.

8. Delete your original.

9. Move up to the Context Toolbar > “Convert to Frame”.

The 3 icons appearing at the base show it is now a frame.
10. If you bring in a photo you should now have a working mask frame. If you want to, you can select the frame, right click on it and access the Filter Effects to play with the frame. This might result in a nice embellishment – if you get something you like, drag it over to the Embellishments Tab on the left for keeps.

11. Drag your frame into the Frames Tab.

12. Don't forget to Save Digikit before you close down your project!!!

Then, remembering a page tutorial by wendyp, I added a couple of dingbats around the edge. You could also use Photoshop brushes if you have abr.viewer to change them into pngs that can be brought in via the Photo Tab.

I used Manfred Klein's Floralia dingbats in this tutorial, which I got from FontSquirrel.com. There are so many dingbats available, so you can have a lot of fun with this.

As before, I started with a straight-forward splat stencil brought onto the work-space.

1. Click on “Shapes” on toolbar and draw a Quick Rectangle over the stencil.

2. Go up to the Colour Tab, and colour it black.

3. Select, then click on “Lift Stencil”. This leaves you with your basic black shape.

4. Now to bring in your dingbats, click on “Text” on the toolbar and place your cursor on the page. It might be a good idea to increase the font size.

5. Move over to the Font Box and scroll through to the dingbat of your choice. Select and then type the relevant letter/number on your page to produce the dingbat.

(In my example, the first dingbat came on to the page as a smudgy blur. If this happens, don’t panic. Move over to the Line Tab on the right of the workspace and check the line setting.

As was the case here, it was still set to a high setting; moving it back down to zero brings your text back to the way you expect it to look. It took me quite a while to
suss this out when I first started using DSA2. It is now always my first point of call when this happens.)

6. Resize your dingbat(s) accordingly and drag and drop and arrange them around your frame until you are happy with your design. I use “Ctrl” and the equivalent of left click on my graphics pen if I want duplicates.

7. Draw a selection box around all the items on the page and Group.

8. Tools > “Convert to Bitmap”.

9. Go to Toolbar > Edit > Paste Special > Serif Transparent Bitmap > OK. You now get a grey box attached to the cursor.

10. Click on page and pull out to reveal new bitmap.

11. Delete your original.

12. Move up to the Context Toolbar > “Convert to Frame”.

© Karen Lewis 2012
13. Check with photo that it is a working frame. Drag into Frames Tab.

14. Don't forget to Save Digikit before you close down your project!!!

This gives a nice result. It is also one that you can add effects to.

The only problem, if you can really call it that, is that this approach gives a very hard, sharp edge to the frame. That can look good, but I was wondering if I could get a softer edge to the frame.

Alfred then came up with a “recipe” to get a softer edge to the frame.

I hadn't realised it, but one of the more recent updates to Craft Artist enabled the use of 'artistic edges'. Unlike the standard frames, the frame bitmap with these artistic edges has a different Blend Mode setting. It uses “Erase” instead of “Normal”. This means that the edges (and / or the middle) of the frame can be softened.

So now we try Alfred's “recipe”.

1. Place a stencil on the page from the Stencils Tab.

2. Press the 'Outer' button.

3. “Shapes” > Quick Rectangle to cover the stencil.
4. Colour Tab – change the rectangle to black.

5. Select. Click on the stencil. Then click on “Lift Stencil” to create a cropped item.

6. To soften the edges of the cropped item, use the Feather Edge. Go to the Effects Tab on the right of the workspace and Feather Edge is at the bottom right of the box. Use the slider to get the desired effect.
OR – you can go to the Brushes Tab > Edge Brushes > your choice.

7. Open the Frames Tab on the left and drag the item into it.

8. Delete the original on your workspace.

9. Drag your frame back on to your workspace.

10. Go to the Layers Tab and click on the + beside the Frame to expand the Frame item.
You now see the Frame bitmap and polycurve.

11. Click on the Frame bitmap to select.
12. If the Colour Box isn't already open, click there to access the “Blend Mode”.

13. Set the Blend Mode of the bitmap to 'Erase'. This turns the frame grey.

14. Drag a photo to the frame to try it.

15. Drag your frame into the Frames Tab. Delete the cropped item frame from there.
16. Don't forget to Save Digikit before you close down your project!!!

You can use effects on these frames as well.

JanineS then came along on the thread and she had produced a slightly different way to do this.

Instead of using stencils for this, I imported in an image from my files that I wanted to use.

1. Bring your image bitmap onto your work-page.

2. Copy (Ctrl C) and paste (Ctrl V) this image so you now have two identical bitmaps. The pasted image remains on top of the original.
3. In the Layers Tab, select the *lower* bitmap.

![Layers Tab](image)

4. In the Arrange Tab, click on “Convert to Curves”.

![Arrange Tab](image)
5. Colour fill this lower bitmap with red.

6. Go to Shapes, select Quick Rectangle and draw over both the bitmaps.

7. Colour the rectangle black.

8. In the Layers Tab, select the *upper* bitmap, NOT the red curve.
9. In the Arrange Tab, bring to the front.

10. Go to the Blend Mode and change to “Erase”.

11. Select both the bitmap and the rectangle, Group, and go to Tools > Convert to Bitmap.

12. Go back to Blend Mode, and set this new bitmap to “Erase”.

13. Going up to the Context Toolbar, click “Convert to Frame”.
14. Go back to the Layers Tab and find your new frame. Click on the + beside it and it expands to show the frame bitmap and two poly-curves.
15. Drag your red poly-curve up to directly below the frame bitmap.

16. Select both of the other curves. Right click and delete them. Your frame on your work-page should now show up grey.
17. You can test your new frame by bringing in a photo.

18. Move frame across into Frame Tab.

19. Don't forget to Save Digikit before you close down your project!!!

Making mask frames with Photoshop Brushes?
This is very similar to using the dingbats. I use the abr.viewer to change the PS brush files into png files so that they can be brought into Craft Artist via the Photo Tab. I used some dandelion brushes in my example – there are literally hundreds to choose from so plenty of scope for a truly individual and unique design.

As before, I started with a straight-forward splat stencil brought onto the work-space.

1. Click on “Shapes” on toolbar and draw a Quick Rectangle over the stencil.

2. Go up to the Colour Tab, and colour it black.

3. Select, then click on “Lift Stencil”. This leaves you with your basic black shape.

4. Now bring in your Photoshop Brush png image(s) dragging over from from the Photo Tab.

5. Resize the image(s) accordingly and drag and drop and arrange them around your frame until you are happy with your design. I use “Ctrl” and the equivalent of left click on my graphics pen if I want duplicates.

6. Draw a selection box around all the items on the page and Group.

7. Tools > “Convert to Bitmap”.

8. Go to Toolbar > Edit > Paste Special > Serif Transparent Bitmap > OK. You now get a grey box attached to the cursor.

9. Click on page and pull out to reveal new bitmap.
10. Delete your original.

11. Move up to the Context Toolbar > “Convert to Frame”.

12. Check with photo that it is a working frame. Drag into Frames Tab.

13. Don't forget to Save Digikit before you close down your project!!!

Remember also that you can make your own mask shapes with the Craft Artist brushes, as Sue showed in her video mentioned at the start of this tutorial.

You can also use these methods on photomask PS brushes to add to your collection.

After all this, you now have the start of your new frames kit, which you can add to as you wish.

As with all things, this is only limited by your imagination. I made some of the images in ArtRage Studio Pro and imported them in via the Photo Tab. Then I started to get a little silly, producing the dandelion page using Dandelions Photoshop Brushes from Graphics-Illustrations.com. The Photo Mask Grunge Squares PS brushes I used were also from Graphics-Illustrations.com. It is a lot of fun, and becomes more than a little addictive.

I hope this has all made sense and that you find this little tutorial useful. You can find a pdf copy of this video and examples of my pages on my crafting blog http://karenscraftingnook.blogspot.com. I hope you will pay a visit and perhaps leave a comment, or even subscribe via RSS or email. You can also ask any questions there as well, if needs be.

Thank you very much.

Karen Lewis

Karen's Crafting Nook