



## **XARAXONE.COM TUTORIAL TRANSCRIPT**

August 2012 Tutorial transcript

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*This transcript is not verbatim, but it's what Gary used during the filming of the tutorial.*

Hi I'm Gary Bouton and welcome to another Xara TV tutorial at Xaraxone.com. Last moth, you did some pretty fancy image editing and the results were...touching. This month, we're going back...yep, *re-touching*.

Your first stop is XaraXone dot com foreword slash tutorials, click the august entry and then click the tutorial files button. Unzip the file and have them ready to load.

The key thing I want you to take home this month is that when you retouch two or more photos together, a diffuse background works better than a structured one, a patterned one. Leaves, sand, coarse fabric, and solid colors are easy to blend together at the edge of your selection. Patterned backgrounds have to be lined up. Make your work easy for yourself when you take the pictures.

Open Birhaus.xar now. Your mission is to fill the image on the page with birdhouses and to do this, you'll begin with the Mask mode. Click the button on the toolbox and the red overlay shows protected

areas. With the current tool, the Brush tool, draw a fairly tight outline around the birdhouse, like this. The birdhouse is available for editing, the rest of the image is protected. You can press Q as a shortcut now now, or choose Arrange, Apply ClipView. You've hidden the image background. Now, let's feather the shape. Drag the Feather slider up to about 12 pixels. Great. Now with the Selector tool, move the birdhouse onto the page. See? The diffuse detail—the leaves around the edges—let you almost perfectly blend the birdhouse into the scene.

Okay, I'm going to rotate the house a little. It's time for neighborhood development: drag the house to a different location, and before releasing the left mouse button, tap the right button, then release both to drop a copy of what you have selected. Scale and rotate the house a little so it doesn't look like an identical copy, and then drop another copy on the page.

Take your time composing the scene. Make more copies, scale them to different sizes, rotate them a little. Now, to me, the scene looks a little too symmetrical and it would be nice to have a house partially overlapping another to make the scene also suggest some depth. Because the houses are feathered, you can't have a clean edge overlapping a different house...unless... you have a house selected...you press Ctrl+Shift+C to create a copy of the house. In the Create a Bitmap Copy dialog box, make sure the Color Depth is TrueColor plus alpha, and then click Create. You don't need the original now so you can blow it up...or select it and press Backspace.

You now want to remove all the leaves up to the wooden edge of the house. The copy has a hard shape edge, which can be modified with the Shape tool, the Eraser in version 8, or by making a shape and subtracting from the copy of the house, which is what I'm doing. Once the shape is created, select the house and the shape, and

then choose Arrange, Combine Shapes, Subtract Shapes. Press Ctrl+F to put the house shape in front if needed and make it overlap a different house. Use the Shadow tool if you like to cast a shadow down and left on the underlying house.

Those are the moves. Continue making accommodations until someone comes by and asks to see your building permit.

Surprise! The Second part of XaraXone's image retouching itself has a second part! Load the Birdbath.xar document now.

It seems like every nature scene has an element that ruins the composition.

This lovely nature scene has an ugly birdbath in it, with an ugly bird in the ugly birdbath. I'll show you now, how to remove a significant piece of a photo, a little at a time, because the background is a diffuse texture. With the Clone tool, zoom and pan into the base of the birdbath and drag a selection around it. Once you've closed the shape, drag in a four o'clock direction like this. When the tone of the interior looks right, crank the Feathering slider on the Infobar up to about 14 pixels.

Let's move up and hide the left of the bath and the corresponding side of the toucan. When you've closed the shape, drag to the right and a little up, and then feather the selection by about ten pixels.

Next, draw an almost rectangular shape like this one around the toucan, leaving its beak and a little of the birdbath. Drag right to replace the selection, and then a 4 or 5 pixel feather is good.

Finally, drag a rectangular-ish shape around the rest of the unwanted area. Close the shape, drag inside as you see here, and 12 pixel feather will do the trick.

Now, you might think you're done, but by cloning this much of the photo, you might have a visible repetition here or there. No worries: drag around the repetitious area and move in a different area.

What's going on here is Xara is making copy areas and locking them to the image as soon as the Clone tool's unselected. Open the Page and Layer gallery to actually see what's going on backstage.

If you click to expand the selected photo, you'll see the clone entries on the list. You can select one and then move the element on the page, and even delete it if you like from this layer view.

Here's the wireframe view.

Okay, you're not done yet. There's a second part to the other half of part II of retouching.

Suppose you want to keep the birdbath but remove the bird. With the Clone tool, begin slowly and with accuracy tracing the edge of the birdbath; loop around part of the toucan here, close the shape and then the area directly to the left seems good, so drag it to the right. Now, as long as the Clone tool is active, you can switch to the Shape tool and refine the selection, like I'm doing here. I have a special technique Now Cloning applies a default of 3 pixels feathering, however, you want no feathering with this selection because you want the edge of the birdbath to be sharp; set the feathering amount to None and now we have an untidy top edge to deal with. Draw an oval around the most visible edge at top, drag down and right, and then feather the daylights out of the shape. 15 pixels will make that top edge soft and undetectable.

Do the beak area next. I suggest a replacement area from just above the shape, feather it, and then carefully trace the right edge of the birdbath, loop around, set the feather amount to None, and then use another clone piece to hide the edges of this selection.

Okay, break time. Wait! I have a Really Great Trick to use with the Clone tool.

The Clone tool by default gives you the Brush tool with which you drag a closed shape. But...

You can choose the Shape tool directly after the Clone tool, and the control points made by the Brush tool are visible and available for editing. Sadly, they're usually hard to see, so do this:

Set an outline color for the shape: by default you Shift-click a color swatch. Then go up to the outline width and make it something comfortable like 4 pixels. Do your shape editing, and when you're done, kill the outline width, and go back to the Clone tool to finish your mischief.

To continue...

Let's hide the interior lip of the birdbath at left. With the Clone tool, drag a small area, and then replace it by dragging on its inside. There isn't a lot of birdbath edge to sample from, so the shapes you draw need to be on the modest side and you repeat this several times.

You eventually need to work on the right side of the birdbath edge, so once you have the clone shape defined, you drag in the opposite direction to change the fill of the shape.

Okay, finally, in the bath itself you have unwanted Toucan feet. You don't need to clone anything here. Choose a drawing tool, I'm using the Pen tool because I *like* the Pen tool, and create a shape to cover the bird feet. Then with the Fill tool, choose Fractal Plasma. Scale the pattern down a little. Call up the Color Editor and select the inner fractal color. With the eye dropper, sample one of the dark green colors in the area of the Toucan feet. Then select the other color point and eyedropper a lighter gree...take your time, and you'll know when the color match is good because the Toucan feet will disappear.

Feather this shape a little, and move it up a little because feathering contracts a selection edge. Create a new shape over the original. Choose Flat Fill, make the fill Black and then choose the Transparency tool. Make the Transparency type Stained Glass and

then drag the cursor from top left to bottom right, lie you see here, imitating the lighting and shadow directions in the original photo.

Nice scene, wondrous editing, and not once did I make a pun about birds and the Feathering feature. Ooops.

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