Railway Montage Using Affinity Photo


Here is the procedure I used to achieve this image. The same procedure can be adapted for our June subject "Montage - A view from my Window"

Generally speaking, montages tell a story, so images that have some connection should be used; The images I selected were these.

Firstly a texture image is needed. This is the agent that ties the various images together. Open one of the many from the **texture folder**, (or use one of your own), make a **copy** and apply a **recolour adjustment to that layer.** Go to: **Layer ➤ New Adjustment Layer ➤ Recolour,** and select the **Overlay** blend mode. I fiddled with the various sliders here, and settled on the following values: **hue: - 32**, **saturation: 15%** and a **lightness of -5%**, giving the Background layer below.
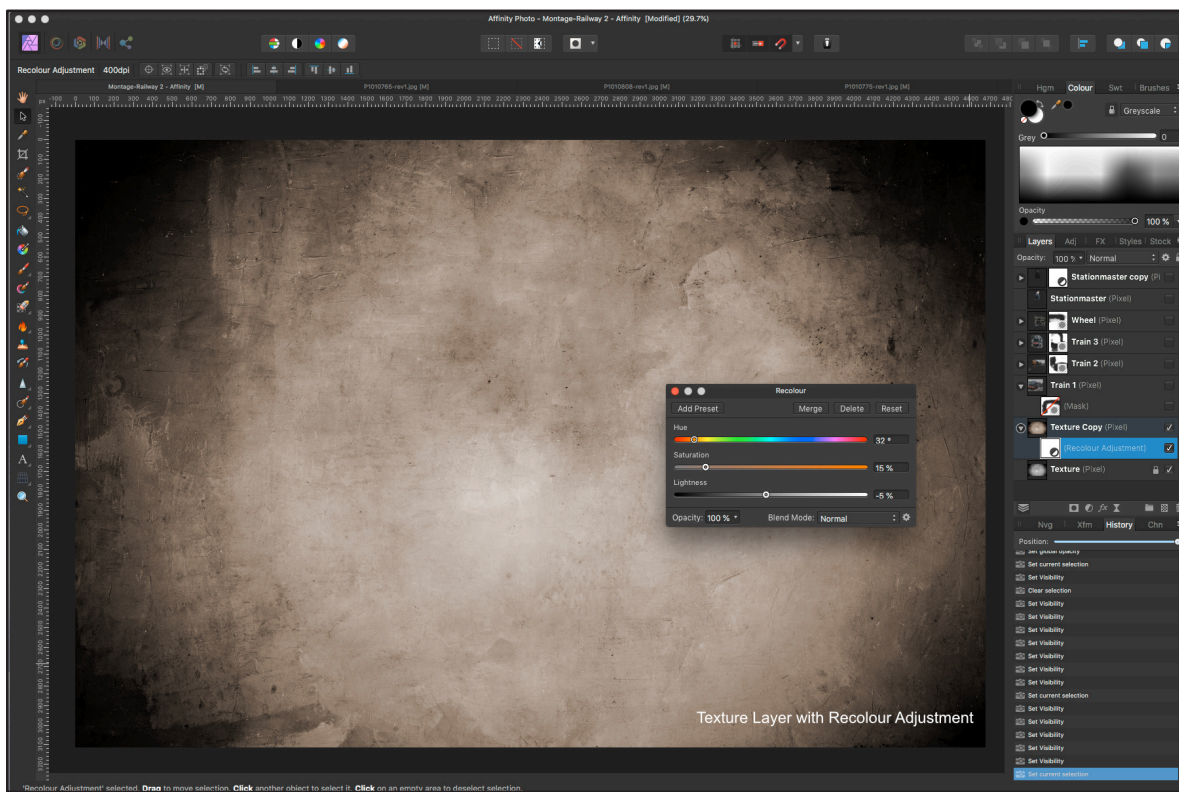
The next task was to make a selection of the stationmaster; I opened the file in Affinity and made a selection - I used the Polygonal Lasso tool for this.   Then, either make a copy **(ctrl J)** or click on the **Refine** option button at the top, and in the box that opens up go to the **Output** option at the bottom, and select **New Layer ➤ click apply.** In each case you end up with a background layer and a layer above, which has the selection on a **transparent background.** Toggle off or delete the "background" layer and export the remaining layer as a **.png or .psd file.** (Both the **.png or .psd file** retain the **transparent background** which is needed for copying and pasting; However, saving as a .jpg will create an image with a white background)

Blending the first photo.   Go to **File** ➤ **Open**, and select the first of the photos.
Go to: **Select** ➤ **Select all**, then **: Edit** ➤ **Copy**, **File** ➤ **Close** then, **Edit** ➤ **Paste** onto the background. Use the **move tool** to position & size the image.
I changed the Blend mode from "**Normal**" to "**Hard Light**" and adjusted the **Opacity** to suit - here at **60%**
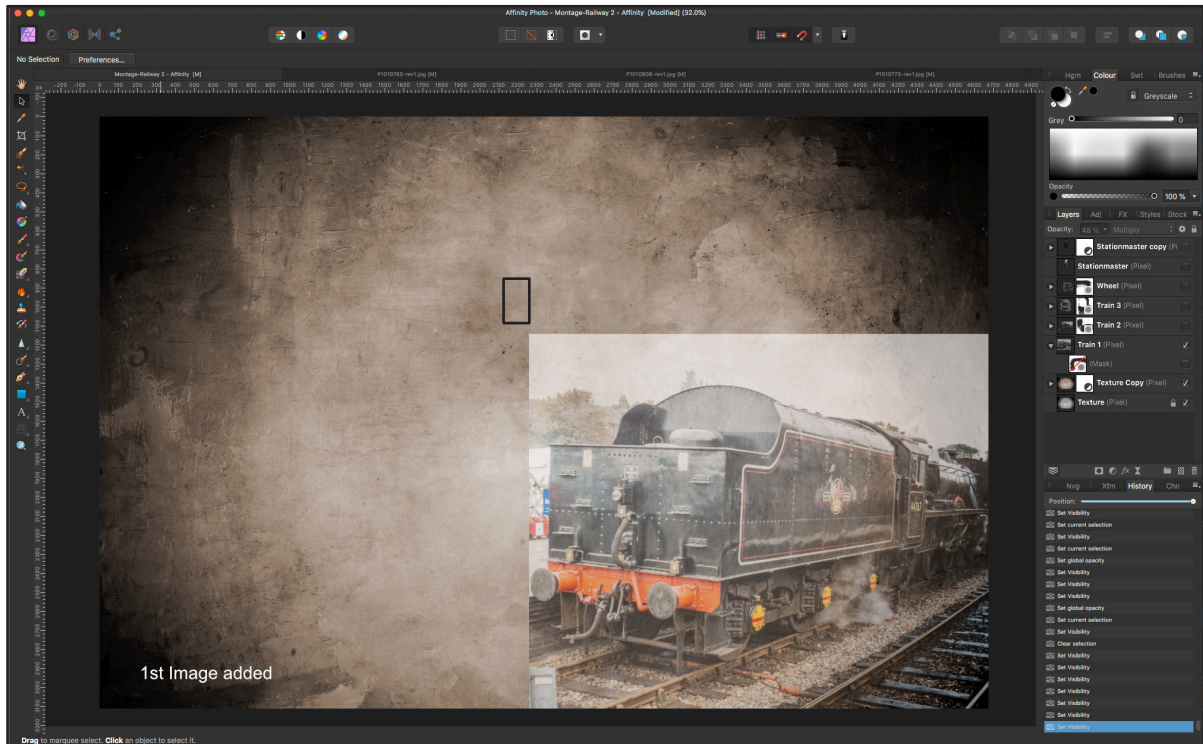
Now create a mask layer by going to: L**ayer** ➤ New **Mask Layer.**   With this new mask highlighted, select the **Paint Brush Tool (B**) and adjust the brush settings. Here I settled on **200px wide; 50% Opacity**; **100% Flow** and **0% Hardness.**   With the **foreground colour of Black** (if it isn't black already, **press D then X**) begin painting around the edges of the image. Decreasing the opacity of the brush as you move into the image can assist in creating a smoother blend.   If a mistake is made just go over it with a **white brush (press X)**.   We arrive at this:

Now add the remaining pictures into the montage using the same procedures. I ended up with the same settings on all 4 images ie **"Hard Light @ 60% opacity**. The exception was the stationmaster layer which was **"Hard Light" @ 90%**   Finally a copy of this layer was created (ctrl J) with a Blend mode of **Multiply @ 50%** and a **Brightness/Contrast adjustment** was added with the **brightness slider @ -100%** to give more prominance to the main subject.

Experiment with the various sliders. The blending modes that seem to work best are **Overlay; Soft Light**; & **Hard Light** and the **opacity slider** should be used to further enhance the blending.

Experiment by introducing a different texture file. Go to **File ➤ Open**, and select a new texture. Go to **Select ➤ Select all**, then **: Edit ➤ Copy** , **File ➤ Close** Now go to the Layers column and highlight the **Texture copy layer** then **Edit ➤ Paste.** This will place the new texture in the layer directly above the old texture and in **normal** blend mode will override the original.   Use different adjustment layers on the texture layer as required.

These images are all on different layers and each layer can be moved and resized at any time. When completely happy, go to **Document ➤ Flatten,** and export. Save the file as an Affinity file if further work is required.

Good luck with the "View from my window" montage.

Final screen before exporting