

## Landscape Painting In Digital Technology: Rudimentary Procedural Lessons in Adobe Photoshop

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## Abstract

The lack of technological knowhow for Computer Graphic Application Software is indeed affecting the exploration of the art of Digital painting technologies among fine art painters in Ghana despite its popularity within the global fraternity of fine artists. Unlike the traditional painting profession that requires mainly creative rendering skills to practice, digital painting requires both computer technological knowhow and creative artefactual rendering skill to practice. It has therefore been the aim of the author of this paper to explore the digital technologies in Adobe Photoshop for painting various stylistic areas in fine art painting with the same dexterity as practiced in easel painting to foster popularisation of this art in Ghana. In this practice-led research paper, the focus is on Digital Landscape Painting in Adobe Photoshop. The descriptive method for documentation of practice-led activities in design-based research has therefore been adopted to present the outcome of his research in a detail illustrative procedural format to help inculcate the skills for colour formulation and compositional rendering skills in digital landscape painting.

## **Keywords**

Computer Graphic Application Software, Digital Painting Technologies, Digital Landscape Painting, Colour Formulation, Compositional Rendering Skills

## **1. Introduction**

Since the official introduction of digital painting in 2006 as a course of study in the Department of Painting and Sculpture at Kwame Nkrumah University of Science Technology (KNUST), to equip art students with artifactual skills for computer artistry, its popularity is yet to gain prominence in Ghana and rub shoulders with the traditional painting schemes. Efforts at instilling the discipline for digital painting have been relentless. Even though the course is only taught in first and second year at KNUST, no particular year group of students have been able to holistically acquire all the relevant skills required for developing expertise for handling digital painting with dexterity. The theoretical aspect of the course has been essentially expansive, because the students have to understand the nature of the computer as a system before applying the theory in the actual artefactual work.

Two years of theory and practical studies is obviously not sufficient to address all that it takes to be proficient. New media art students therefore complete their studies, with insufficient expertise for excelling in the field of digital painting and the purpose of popularising digital painting in Ghana through this study unfortunately ends up in illusion. It's on these bases that the author has been dealing with publications on technological procedures for executing digital paintings in Adobe Photoshop, focusing on subject matter and stylistic effect to serve as a manual for both amateur and professional fine art painters to enhance their digital painting skills, outside the academic environment.

Admittedly, the author's previous papers on portrait Image Colouration (Annum & Poku, 2021) as well as Simulation of Impasto Effect in Digital Painting (Annum, 2022) have been profitable in facilitating New-media artists' practical activities in and outside the academic environment. This paper focuses on rudimentary skills for Digital Landscape Painting in Adobe Photoshop version 22 offering procedural description of technological procedures for creating fascinating landscape compositions.

## 2. Historical Overview of Landscape Painting

Landscape painting is a fine art discipline in which practitioners are mostly inspired by the world around them to artistically create natural sceneries that portray compositional elements like mountains, valleys, trees, rivers and forests. It is not a 21<sup>st</sup> century art phenomenon. The genesis of this art dates as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup> century in China, where Chinese ancient painters sought to capture their impression of the landscape (Konst, 2018).

This art as extensively discussed by Getty (n.d.), was very prominent among the ancient Greeks and Romans who created wall paintings of landscapes and gardenscapes until the fall of the Roman Empire when the tradition of depicting pure landscapes declined, giving way to what was seen only as a setting for religious and figural scenes. This also continued until the 16<sup>th</sup> century when artists began to view the landscape as a subject in its own right. According to Getty, the artistic shift seems to have corresponded to a growing interest in the natural world sparked by the Renaissance.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the classical landscape was born, in which the positioning of objects was contrived; every tree, rock, or animal was carefully placed to pre-

sent a harmonious, balanced, and timeless mood. The classical landscape was perfected by French artists Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, both of whom spent most of their careers in Rome drawing inspiration from the Roman countryside. Italy, at this time, was the preferred location for many artists, who often travelled there with patrons on the Grand Tour.

In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes changed the tide of landscape painting in France. Valencienne's groundbreaking book on landscape painting, "*Eléments de Perspective Practique*", published in 1800, which emphasized the aesthetic ideal of the "historic landscape," pushed art Academies in France to create a prize for this concept in 1817. The next generation of French landscape painters benefitted greatly from Valenciennes' efforts. Among them was Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, who was heavily influenced by the historic landscapes of Valenciennes and by his own travels in Italy.

Getty further hints that the 19<sup>th</sup> century held many milestones in the history of landscape art. As the Industrial Revolution altered the traditions of rural life, the old hierarchy of subjects crumbled. Throughout Europe and North America, landscape painting gained a new supremacy. Barbizon painters such as Théodore Rousseau and Charles Daubigny became less concerned with idealized, classical landscapes and focused more on painting out-of-doors directly from nature. The 19<sup>th</sup> century also saw the birth of landscape photography, which would greatly influence the landscape painters' compositional choices. Revolutionary artists emerged, such as Gustave Courbet, who pushed the boundaries of landscape painting even further by making it both a tactile and visual experience. Courbet's radical painting techniques and independent spirit paved the way for the next generation of painters to break from the Academy of the Impressionists.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, painters continued to embrace the landscape. As photography gained acceptance as an art form, artists used the medium to create interpretations of the land through pictorialist effects and, later, through formal compositions of close-up, cropped views of the landscape. In America, photographer Ansel Adams captured the country's attention with his breathtaking views of the wild beauty of the American West. Even though the major artistic movements of the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century were no longer dominated by the landscape as a subject, the genre's importance continued as artists responded to fears of increased industrialization, the threat of global destruction, and ecological disasters.

According to Getty, in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the definition of landscape was challenged and pressed to include concepts like urban landscapes, cultural landscapes, industrial landscapes, and landscape architecture. Landscape photography continued to evolve and rise in popularity. American photographers like Robert Adams and William A. Garnett used the medium to raise awareness of conservation concerns. Today, landscape continues to be a subject artists turn to when contemplating the ways we relate to the places where we live and the impact of human activities on the environment. This objective, the author of this paper believes still play dominant role in modern landscape painting including those done in Digital Technology with software like Adobe Photoshop.

## 3. Methodology of the Study

The author's previous publications (Annum & Poku, 2021; Annum, 2022) have dealt extensively on the theoretical foundations for employing the Descriptive Research Method (Alhassan, 2007) to bring clarity to his practice-related research papers. His papers are technological in character, giving procedural account of steps to follow in executing painting projects using Adobe Photoshop drawing and painting tools. The appropriateness of this method as a design-based research tool for imparting practical related knowledge to help in addressing artistic designing problems in Computerized or Digital art has also been expatiated upon by (Kennedy-Clark, 2013) and (Anderson & Shattuck, 2012).

Technological skill-based procedures intended to impart artifactual skills for digital painting should provide instructions, descriptively outlined in a simplified layout which will be very easy to grasp by all levels of digital art students. It should indeed offer illustrative demonstration (Teachmint, 2022) of the procedural framework of the designing schemes.

# 4. Essential Adobe Photoshop Utilities (Adobe Systems, 2013)

The developers of Adobe Photoshop have enhanced the functionality of the software to enable digital painters to tackle centuries old art subject like land-scape painting with ease and dexterity.

In earlier versions of Adobe Photoshop, the author had to employ the brush and the smudge tools to draw and paint various elements in his digital landscape composition. Although cloud effects were easily rendered from the render submenu under the filter menu, it was very challenging to achieve fascinating trees and foliage effects using the limited brush tip shapes that offered some vegetative effects to help in capturing the unique character of foliage in a composition. However, in most recent versions, specifically 2022 version, schemes for rendering variety of trees and foliage have been included to help simplify the task of generating vegetation for landscape sceneries. This is to complement the essential utilities of the earlier versions and enhance the artifactual skills of painters for creative digital landscape painting.

The author's simplified techniques as expounded in this paper require the use of the <u>smudge tool</u>, the <u>clone tool</u>, <u>colour adjustment commands</u>, the <u>move tool</u>, the <u>selection tools</u>, the <u>eraser tool</u>, the <u>gradient tool</u>, <u>filter gallery</u> and the <u>cloud</u> and <u>foliage rendering tools</u>. The <u>layer palette</u>, <u>colour palette</u> and the <u>brush settings palette</u> are the essentials for the compositional structure and colourization of the picture elements of trees and foliage.

#### The Smudge Tool 😡

The smudge tool is the virtual applicator in Photoshop that the author uses to apply, spread blend and colours as the various elements in the composition are being manipulated. The tool simulates the action of dragging a finger or a brush through wet paint. It picks up colour from where the stroke begins and pushes it in the direction it is dragged. It is effective for retouching colours or blending tones of colours in an image. It is customised by using the *brush preset picker, mode, strength* and *finger painting* options.

The brush settings panel defines the character of the tip of the smudge tool. The harder the brush picker the more distinct the edges of the strokes appear. The normal smudging mode also creates the best result. The 'strength' in this scheme specifies the volume of paint it drags per stroke of application. The higher the strength, the more distinct the stroke appears with its colour scheme and vice versa.

The finger painting option  $\checkmark$  in the options bar enables the smudge tool to apply new colour shades from the colour palette by using the colour shade in the foreground colour box at the beginning of each stroke. If this is deselected, the Smudge tool uses the colour under the pointer at the beginning of each stroke. Holding down the ALT key whilst the smudge is still selected will perform the function of applying the current colour displayed in the foreground colour box. When the ALT key is released, it reverts to the smudging mode. As the main virtual applicator for blending colours, the smudge tool has to be customised to possess the appropriate texture that can smudge to create the desired effect. The brush tip shape in the brush settings palette provides variety of textures for this customisation.

The selection of the "sample all layers option" in the options bar is varied in the customisation schemes, relative to what effect is to be achieved with other layers. When this option is selected, the tool uses colour data from all visible layers to smudge. If this is deselected, the Smudge tool uses colours from only the active layer.

The Clone Stamp Tool

The clone stamp tool is used to replicate effects from an image over another image or part of the same image. To do this, hold down the ALT key whilst you click a spot on the image. On the clone tool options bar, you can specify a brush and customize its application effect. You can specify a blending mode, opacity, and flow. You can also determine how you want to align the sampled pixels with the "Use same offset for each stroke option" f. If this option is selected, you can release the mouse button without losing the current sampling point. As a result, the sampled pixels are applied continuously, no matter how many times you stop and resume painting. If you deselect it, the sampled pixels are applied from the initial sampling point each time you stop and resume painting. You can also specify which specific layers to sample data from, *i.e.* either all visible layers or only from the active layer.

#### Colour Adjustment Commands (Annum, 2022)

The colour adjustment commands in the adjustment submenu under the image menu (Figure 1), provides commands for adjusting tonal levels of pixels in images as well as commands for editing colour values in an image. These commands include Exposure, Vibrance, Colour Balance, Photo Filter, Channel Mixer, Posterize adjuster, Colour Brightness/Contrast and Hue/Saturation.

Three commands were of significant importance in this practical research. These were Colour Balance, Hue/Saturation and Colour Brightness/Contrast.

- Colour Balance command changes the overall mixture of colours in an image.
- Hue/Saturation command adjusts the hue, saturation, and lightness values of the entire image or individual colour components.
- The Brightness/Contrast adjustment makes simple adjustments to the tonal range of an image, with the adjustment affecting every pixel in the image. It does not work with individual channels. The contrast expands or shrinks the overall range of tonal values in the image.

Image Layer Type Select Filter Mode	3D View Plugins Window Help
Adjustments	Brightness/Contrast
J Auto Tone Shift+Ctrl+L Auto Contrast Alt+Shift+Ctrl+L Auto Color Shift+Ctrl+B	Levels Ctrl+L Curves Ctrl+M Exposure
Image Size Alt+Ctrl+I Canvas Size Alt+Ctrl+C Image Rotation Crop Trim Reveal All	Vibrance Hue/Saturation Ctrl+U Color Balance Ctrl+B Black & White Alt+Shift+Ctrl+B Photo Filter Channel Mixer Color Lookup
Duplicate Apply Image Calculations	Invert Ctrl+I Posterize
Variables Apply Data Set	Gradient Map Selective Color
Trap Analysis	Shadows/Highlights HDR Toning
	Desaturate Shift+Ctrl+U Match Color Replace Color Equalize

Figure 1. Adjustment submenu.

- The Move Tool  $\leftrightarrow$
- The author's compositional techniques require the use of the move tool for dragging a selected composition element, especially inserted tree or a layer to a new location in a composition. On the options bar (Figure 2), make sure "A" (*automatically select a group or layer by clicking on a visible pixel options*) and "B" (*show transform control on the selected layer*) are selected for effective use of the move tool.





#### The Selection Tools

Since this practical research is in the category of bitmap imaging which displays picture elements in pixels, it became necessary to use bitmap selection tools to isolate one or more parts of an image in order to edit and apply effects and filters to the selected pixels of the image while leaving the unselected areas unedited. The lasso tool and the magic wand tool (**Figure 3**) made it possible to select picture elements based on the range of colours in a bitmap image. There are additional commands in the 'Select menu' to *select, deselect, or reselect* all pixels.



Figure 3. Selection tools.

The Eraser Tool 🛃

The eraser tool clears colour pixels in an image as you drag the eraser through the pixels to reveal elements on an underlying layer or the colour of a background with a transparency lock. If the eraser is dragged in a background layer with its transparency unlocked, the eraser clears the pixels to expose the background transparency. The strength of the eraser to clear pixels is subject to the increase or decrease of the *opacity* and *flow* values on the option bar.

### The Gradient Tool

The gradient tool is used to create a gradation of tones, shades or gradual blend between multiple colours. Photoshop provides set of preset gradient fills for creating these gradations. It however comes with a gradient editor dialog box (**Figure 6**) which can be used to define new personalized gradient effects by modifying any of the preset gradients.

#### The Filter Gallery

An important functionality in Photoshop that matters most in the simulation of stylistic effects is the Filter Gallery under the Filter Menu (**Figure 4**). The Filter Gallery (Annum, 2022) provides artistic filters that offer the digital artist with tools for modifying the visual effects of the various elements in a landscape painting. The artistic category in particular helps in achieving fascinating painterly effects that are not easily realizable with the brush tool. The presence of the preview window enables the artist to adjust the sliders to desired levels.

#### Foliage and Cloud Renderer

Adobe Photoshop has simplified a scheme for rendering clouds and foliage in personalized colour schemes with fascinating effects. These tools can be accessed from; the *Filter* menu > *Render* sub menu. The tree dialogue box for creating variety of foliage has user friendly utilities for personalizing the characteristics of the foliage and trunk structures. It has two tabs (Basic and Advanced) that dis-

play utilities for customising the variety of trees it displays. It also has a preview window for appreciating the visual effects. You can edit the *light direction*, *amount* and *size of leaves*, the *trunk height* and *thickness*. The *colours of the trunk and leaves* can also be edited as well as their texture. The *shape* and *character of the leaves* can also be varied. The sliders and the check boxes are the handlers for customisation. This is what makes Adobe Photoshop the author's most preferred software, recommended for amateur digital landscape painting lessons.

Filter 3D View Plugins	Window Help
Last Filter	Alt+Ctrl+F
Convert for Smart Filters	•
Neural Filters	
Filter Gallery	
Adaptive Wide Angle	Alt+Shift+Ctrl+A
Camera Raw Filter	Shift+Ctrl+A
Lens Correction	Shift+Ctrl+R
Liquify	Shift+Ctrl+X
Vanishing Point	Alt+Ctrl+V
3D	•
Blur	•
Blur Gallery	•
Distort	•
Noise	•
Pixelate	•
Render	•
Sharpen	•
Stylize	•
Video	•
Other	•

Figure 4. Filter gallery.

## 5. Results and Discussion

The 2022 version of Adobe Photoshop is equipped with digital imaging schemes to make it possible for any zealous fine artist to create two-dimensional arts including Digital Landscape paintings with dexterity. The flexibility of its application tools and the millions of colour shades it generates makes it possible for artists to easily create or modify colour schemes and render with fascinating stylistic effects that is not easy to achieve in studio easel painting. The digital procedures discussed below is the result of the author's familiarity with Adobe Photoshop drawing and painting capabilities as a computer software, as well as his personal mastery over fundamental artefactual schemes for digital painting with Photoshop. The procedures are to serve as a fundamental guide to inspire most especially amateur digital painters in advancing their own techniques for achieving good results in landscape painting.

Landscape Painting Procedures

The digital procedures discussed in this paper does not constitute the standardised blueprint for digital landscape painting, but a basic scheme to offer guidelines for amateur digital painters in advancing their own techniques for achieving success in their projects. The flexibility of Adobe Photoshop application tools makes it possible to create variety of results even when the procedures are rigidly replicated.

## Step 1: Setting the digital canvas for background and foreground colouration.

For this exercise, a new canvas of size 600 pixels wide by 550 pixels high was created by using the new document command. The resolution was set to the lowest of 72 pixels per inch, in RGB colour mode at 8 bit of data per colour channel. These settings are the author's scheme for maintaining a freeze-free working system especially when colour application begins. The purpose for setting any side of the canvas dimension to not more than 600 pixels is to ensure that any clock speed of computer processor will be able to render colour works effectively. **Figure 5** is the photograph of the landscape scenery for this exercise.



Figure 5. Photographic landscape scenery.

#### Step 2: Defining the sky and ground areas.

The author's principal technique is to create a layer for each major element in his landscape composition so they can be treated independently. In Adobe Photoshop, every new canvas created, is assigned with the name "background" in the layer palette. The author converts this background into a layer, from which the sky and ground layers are created.

## To do this,

1) Click the padlock on the background and rename layer 0 as "sky".

2) Right-click on this "sky" layer to display a shortcut menu, and click duplicate layer to create a copy of "sky" layer. 3) Rename "sky copy" as "ground". This layer should be on top of the "sky" layer.

4) Open the Gradient Editor to edit a ground effect with two colour stops (**Figure 6**). Double click on each colour stop and select an appropriate colour from the colour picker. Click OK when done and select the linear gradient option on the options bar.

5) Select the "ground" layer in the layer palette and apply the gradient on the canvas by clicking and holding down on the mouse button and dragging it vertically across the face of the canvas (**Figure 7**).

6) Select the lasso tool, and do a freehand drawing of the perimeter of the sky area on the gradient surface of the ground layer (Figure 8(a)).

7) Select the move tool to display the transform controls (**Figure 8(b)**), ensuring that the ground layer is selected in the layer palette.

8) Tap the delete key on the keyboard to delete the selected area. This will reveal the blank space of the sky layer under the gradient surface which is the ground layer (Figure 8(c)).

Gradient Editor		
Presets	¢.	OK
> 🛅 Basics	~	
> 🛅 Blues		Cancel
> Purples		Import
> 🖿 Pinks		Export
> 🛅 Reds		
Name: Custom		New
Gradient Type: Solid ~ Smoothness: 100 ~ %		Ţ
Gradient Type: Solid ~ Smoothness: 100 ~ %	\$	•
Gradient Type: Solid ~ Smoothness: 100 ~ %	¢	
Gradient Type: Solid Smoothness: 100 Stops Opacity: 96	Cocation: %	Delete

Figure 6. The gradient editor.







Figure 8. (a) Drawing with lasso tool; (b) Selection of move tool; (c) Revealing sky area through the ground layer.

Step 3: Rendering of the sky effects.

1) Go to the colour palette and edit the foreground colour box using the colour picker to obtain a light blue colour of your choice, living the background colour box as white (Figure 9).

2) Select the sky layer in the layer palette.

3) Go to *filter menu* > *render* > *cloud* or *different cloud* to automatically apply Photoshop cloud effect to the sky layer (**Figure 10**). By repeatedly tapping the shortcut, Ctrl + Alt + F on the keyboard, Photoshop varies the cloud effect for better option.



Figure 9. Editing of Foreground & Background colour boxes with colour picker



Figure 10. Sky rendering.

Step 4: Rendering of trees and foliage

The trees and foliage were based on the photographic landscape scenery in **Figure 5** which only served as a guide for the selection of colour schemes. The author's digital landscape painting technique starts with the rendering of trees from the horizon with dark toned colours. *It is important to render the trees movable on the canvas so they can be manipulated independently. This therefore necessitates the use of separate layers for each major picture element that is to be introduced in the composition.* Ones a picture element is inserted on a separate layer, it enables you to use the move tool to move it to the appropriate location in the composition without affecting other picture elements. With the move tool, picture elements can be scaled to any size, distorted, skewed, rotated or warped to achieve any desirable effect of interest.

To insert trees and foliage;

1) Select the ground layer and insert a layer above it using the "create a new layer" command button (Figure 11). This new layer will display a transparent background.



Figure 11. Creating a layer for tree rendering.

2) After the layer has been created, go to *filter menu* > *render* > *tree*, to open the tree dialogue box and customise a tree for the horizon. It is only a matter of choice to select a tree that fits a composition. The variation is achieved by the manipulation of the check boxes and the sliders under the *Basic* and *Advanced* tabs. Select the options that can create the best character of foliage. The shrub tree was the author's choice in this exercise (**Figure 12(a)**). After inserting the tree:

a. Use the hard round eraser with 100% opacity and flow to trim the base of the tree of the foliage (Figure 12(b)).

b. Use a combination of the *smudge* and *clone* tools, customized with a suitable textured brush tip setting which is close to the texture of the foliage, to paint the under groove to harmonise the ground colours. The strength of the smudge tool, as well as the opacity of the clone tool must be adjusted to achieve desired effect (Figure 12(c)).

3) When this is well done, copies of the shrub can be made by duplicating the

layer on which the shrub is inserted and relocating with the move tool to fill the length of the horizon. This will create the thicket (**Figure 12(d)**). To duplicate a layer, select the specific layer in the layer palette > layer menu > duplicate layer. Any additional tree of interest on the ground can also be added from the tree dialogue box on separate layers. Any other picture element can also be painted to enhance the creative outlook of the composition (**Figure 12(c)**). The hue saturation brightness or the colour balance tool can be used to adjust colour elements based on their position in the perspective view.



(a)







(d)





**Figure 12.** (a) Rendered tree; (b) Trimming of shrub base; (c) Texturing the under groove; (d) Duplication of shrub to create thicket; (e) Adding other picture elements.

4) One of the challenges in digital landscape painting of trees is about the painting of specific trees that are not in the collection of what Photoshop provides. Example is the plantain or banana trees. No sample was found to be close to this tree. So the ingenuity of the author as a new media artist made the difference. This handicap necessitated the use of the clone tool to replicate them from the photographic landscape scenery (**Figure 13(a)**). It was only to serve as the preliminary sketch from which painterly effect was to be achieved. The author's light cloning technique was employed (**Figure 13(b)**). The cloning was executed on a separate layer. This technique requires the opacity of the clone tool to be adjusted to 35% whilst the Flow remains at 100%. The clone aligned tool is not lost when the mouse button is released in the process of cloning.



Figure 13. (a) Photographic landscape scenery; (b) Light cloning of plantain trees.

5) Ones the light cloning was completed, heightening of the dull colours of the plantain trees (Figures 14(a)-(c)) was done with the smudge tool figure painting option  $\swarrow$ , by which, appropriate colour shades edited in the foreground colour box were instantly applied. In any manual tree and foliage painting exercise, it is important to set the smudge tool with an appropriate textured tip from the brush settings panel to help achieve the desire painterly effect. Zooming In and Out of the image by holding down the ALT key on the keyboard whilst scrolling the mouse makes it possible to smudge minute areas. It is also important to regulate the size of the smudge tip in order to fit the structure of the tree and the foliage for desirable results.

Step 5: Treatment of ground effects

After the smudging of the plantain trees achieved the desired brilliance and colour saturation, painting of the ground effect (Figure 15) began with the use of the smudge tool. The swiping motion of the smudge tool was in varied direction to create accidental strokes. The painting was restricted to the 'ground' layer by selecting it in the layer palette. In this exercise;

a. The choice of the appropriate textured brush tip from the brush preset

picker as well as the adjustment of the smudge strength to appropriate percentage level was very vital for achieving the desired accidental effects. The use of the figure painting option enabled the application of varied colours from the foreground colour box in the colour palette.



(a)

(b)



(c)

**Figure 14.** (a) Smudging of the cloned colours; (b) Heightening of plantain tree colours (stage 1); (c) Heightening of plantain trees colours (final stage).



Figure 15. Painting of ground effect.

b. The selection of the Sample All Layers option 👔 helped in harmonizing the ground colours with the under grooves of the shrubs and the plantain trees.

#### **Achieving Creative Painterly Effects**

The uniqueness of Adobe Photoshop to create variety of fascinating colouristic effect from the same composition makes it the author's best choice of graphic application software for digital art. In Photoshop, the colour adjustment commands in the adjustment submenu under the image menu, provides commands for adjusting tonal levels and chromatic values and saturation strength of pixels in an image. Two (2) procedures can be adopted to achieve such results. Either the entire composition of layers is flattened into one (1) layer, from the layer menu (layer menu > flatten image) before the adjustment commands are used, or all the separate layers in the layer palette are retained whilst they are edited individually in the composition.

Figure 16(a) shows the effect of using two (2) filters to alter the textural effect of the ground. These were the ocean ripple under the Distort categories and paint daubs under the Artistic categories in the filter dialogue box. By randomly adjusting their sliders in the filter dialogue box, interesting accidental effects resulted to enhance the textural outlook of the ground. This treatment was restricted to the ground layer, as it was selected in the layer palette before applying the filters.



(a)



(c)

Figure 16. (a) Finished painting; (b) Altering colour schemes; (c) Altering stylistic effects.

**Figure 16(b)** is the result of using Brightness/Contrast, Hue/Saturation and Colour Balance adjustment commands to work on the composition in **Figure 16(a)**. In this exercise all the layers were retained. The author's painting technique that has been discussed in this paper produced five (5) layers of picture elements; (*layer for sky, layer for ground, layer for shrubs, layer for additional trees and layer for plantain trees*). They were individually selected whilst the colour adjustment commands were adjusted to obtain the altered result in **Figure 16(b)**.

**Figure 16(c)** is the result of modifying the visual effects of the various elements in the composition with selected filters from the filter gallery. At this stage, all the layers were flattened into a single layer, before the special effects were applied from filter gallery to modify the creative outlook. The pointillism finish in **Figure 16(c)** is the result of random adjustment of the sliders of the ocean ripple option under the distort category of filter tools.

#### 6. Conclusion

The author's motivation for conducting this research stems from the difficulties his New-Media Art students encounter in executing their digital landscape painting assignments. After introducing them to Adobe Photoshop software and inspiring them with some collections of professional works, the zealousness and enthusiasm to excel in performance became evident by their commitment in class. Unfortunately, the unavailability of manuals to aid them in carrying out their academic projects in the various aspects of the digital painting discipline dampened their enthusiasm. This is the principal reason for this documentation to serve as a manual to foster creative practice among digital artists in art institutions.

This research work is therefore timely and most appropriate to provide the necessary rudimentary schemes for equipping both amateur and professional fine artists with the necessary painting skills for digital landscape painting exploration. The digital procedures discussed should not be regarded as standard-ised blueprint for any digital landscape painting project to be executed. It should be the bases for capacity building that can enhance the creativity of both amateurs and professional fine artists. It is also hoped that this paper will be beneficial to Digital Art Instructors in various art institutions as they offer their students with the needed guidelines for creative diversification of approaches in digital landscape painting in order to overcome prototypical finishes in both digital and easel painting practice.

#### **Conflicts of Interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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