OPTICS

User Guide

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Copyright

OPTICS 2025 - 1/27/25

Features

Mask ML

Mask ML is an easy to use point and click mask generator utilizing machine learning object segmentation. A single click selects a defined segment of the image while successive clicks add adjacent areas to the object.

Particle Illusion

Particle Brushes

Paint with particles while drawing using either Particle Creation or Animation modes. See the Brushes-Animate Particles and Brushes-Emit Particles preset categories for a set of ready to draw presets.

Particle Creation (Click+drag)

Emits particles from the brushstroke.

Animation (Click+drag)

Particles animate along the brushstroke.

Particle Brushes Preset Category

The Particle Brushes preset category contains ready to draw presets.

Update To 2025

Particle Illusion has been updated to v2025 and adds even more creative features including:

- **New option to copy/paste color gradients, alpha gradients, and particle images (sprites) between particle type nodes.**

- **New Repeat animation option is available for any animated parameter, which is especially useful on position and over life parameters for continuous/cycling animation patterns.**

- **New Add button provides a visible and convenient way to add a selected emitter from the library to the PI Stage.**

- **Improved emitter library window UI, e.g. with rollover indication for buttons, updated color scheme and general look and feel, improved thumbnail sizes, tooltip improvements, etc.**

- **New 2025 Emitter Library.**

For a complete list of features, fixed bugs and changes, see: **Release Notes**

Featured Preset Category

A Featured category includes a set of curated presets.

Looks

A Look is similar to a Setup which saves the filters and masks in the Layers window. However, once created with File > Create Look, the look will appear in the Looks tab of the Filters window allowing quick access to a set of multi-layer filter/mask presets. Using File > Import/Export, the entire set of Looks can be loaded from and saved to a file.

Library Updates

EXIF Library

The EXIF library was updated to include most current digital cameras.

RAW Camera Library

The RAW camera file support has been updated to include most current digital cameras. For a complete list of supported cameras, see: **Optics RAW File Support**

Luminosity Blend Mode

Combines the luminance (brightness) of the blend color with the hue and saturation of the base color. This mode is useful for adjusting the brightness of an image without affecting its colors.

Spot Mask - Rotate

Added Rotate to Spot Mask.

User Interface

Advanced Workspace

The Advanced workspace optimizes the Viewer area by removing the Filters window and requiring filter selection using either the Filters menu or pressing **Ctr/Cmd+F** to open a Search window. Presets are on the left, Viewer in the center, Parameters and Layers are on the right.

Customizable Filter Group Order

Customize the order of the filter groups by dragging them to a new position. Reset the tab order using the Filters Options hamburger menu.

Export/Import Favorites/Custom Presets

Custom presets and favorites can be imported and exported using the File > Import and Export options.

Extended Tool Tips

Added more descriptive tool tips to include the name of the name of the tool, a keyboard shortcut, a short description, and animated content and/or a link to a video on select tools.

File > Save As - Populate Field With Source File's Name

When using File > Save As, the name field is now populated with the source file name.

Filters Menu

The Filters menu displays a comprehensive hierarchical list view of the filter groups and filters with the ability to search.

Hide/Show Filters

Allows filters to be hidden and displayed again. A new context menu (right-click over a filter) includes: Hide, Show and Show All.

Overlay Mask (Shift-M)

Cycles between the mask superimposed as a 50% red overlay and the image.

Parameter Text Dimmed When Disabled

The text for disabled parameters is now dimmed.

Presets List View

The Presets window can now be switched between Thumbnail and List views using the Presets Options hamburger menu.

Search (Ctrl/Cmd+F)

A Search window appears at the top left of the Viewer where filters can be searched for and then previewed with the **Up/Down Arrow** keys. Press **Enter** to select a filter and close the Search window.

Sliders

Added sliders to the parameters view and changed the reset icon.

Viewer

Compare Shortcuts

Added the following Viewer > Compare mode shortcuts:

- **Side by Side: Alt-S**
- **Horizontal Split: Alt-H**
- **Vertical Split: Alt-V**
- **A/B: Alt-A**

Enter Full Screen (F11 - Windows, Ctrl+Cmd+F - Mac)

Select Workspace > Enter Full Screen to display the image in full screen mode. Press **Esc** to exit.

Zoom Shortcuts

Added additional Zoom shortcuts:

- **+ : Zooms the image in**
- **- : Zooms the image out**
- **Shift-left-mouse drag up and down: Zooms the image in and out**

Preferences

Disabled Layer Behavior

Controls what happens when Enable Layer is disabled.

Mask Overlay Color

Sets the color of the mask overlay.

Mask Overlay Opacity

Sets the color of the mask opacity.

Tabbed Preference Pane

Preferences are now organized in groups in a tabbed window.

Viewer Background Color

Added a Viewer Background Color preference that sets the color of the Viewer background.

Changes

User Interface

Add Mask Menu Alphabetized

The Add Mask menu was alphabetized.

Enable Filter

The Enable Filter icon in the Layers window was changed from a lightning bolt to an eyeball and renamed to Enable Layer. When disabled, the filter, masks, Blend Mode and Opacity are all disabled.

Particle Illusion

Combined Release Emitter Groups

Combined the various release version preset groups into one group called "Release Emitters" with each version as a sub-group.

Remove PI Sampler Group

Removed the PI Sampler preset group as these presets were also in other categories.

Search

Filters in Search results can only be applied by pressing **Enter** or clicking on one of the filters in the Search window.

Wrap Filters Icon Replaced

Replaced the Wrap Filters icon in Filters window with a hamburger menu.

Bug Fixes

Large Images Crashed Optics In Photoshop

Really large images would crash Optics in Photoshop.

Licensing

Use Optics Floating License Before BFX Suite Floating License

With both Optics and Boris FX Suite floating licenses installed, Optics used the suite license before the Optics license. Now, Optics only uses the suite license after all Optics licenses are used.

macOS 15 Rotate WiFi Address Licensing Issue

When enabled, macOS 15's new Rotate WiFi Address opt-in feature randomly changes your device's MAC address. If you activated a nodelocked license, it would eventually cease to work. The Mac licensing was upgraded to handle this new feature.

Particle Illusion

Slow Performance When A Mask Was Present

When a mask was present with Particle Illusion applied, performance was slow.

Saved Setup Ignored Particle Illusion Interface Modifications

A saved setup ignored modifications made within the Particle Illusion user interface.

World And Emitter Y Offsets Were Incorrect With Vertical Images

With vertical images, the World and Emitter Y offsets were incorrect.

Pen/Tablet Right-Click-Drag Did Not Paint The Mask With Zero Opacity

Using a pen and tablet, right-click dragging did not paint the mask with zero opacity.

ProPhoto Color Profile Not Embedding In Saved File

The ProPhoto color profile was not embedding in saved files.

User Interface

Light > Color Setting Not Remembered

The Light > Color setting was not remembered when loading a setup or when reopening Optics from a smart object in Photoshop.

Looks > Color Gradient > Color Pot Did Not Change When A Preset Was Selected

The Looks > Color Gradient > Color pot did not change when a preset was selected.

Ozone Desaturated Presets Were Misspelled

The Ozone desaturated presets were misspelled.

Known Issues

Particle Illusion - Single Particle Types & Multiple Strokes

When using multiple brush strokes, some brush presets, for instance "Hot Flare Warped Trail Thin Smoke", the glows and rings only show on the last pat.h

Photoshop Smart Objects and Alpha

When alpha is exported from Optics to a Smart Object containing an embedded layer mask, it is exported as transparency. You can access the Smart Object's alpha after applying Optics by dragging the Smart Object's layer thumbnail and releasing on top of the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the layers window.