How to Create A Post-it Note Mural

by ian Sands

The one project by far that I receive the most requests asking, "How'd you do that?" is the Post It Note Mural. We first started creating Post-it Note murals back in 2009 but hit our height in 2011 when we created ten Post-it Note Murals, displaying them all around Apex High School.

Later we used the same process for turning Bricks into Pixels and also to complete portraits using Skittles. We even created a huge mosaic of the Mona Lisa using over 2,000 balloons!

No matter what the media, the basic concept is the same. Start by creating an image map that uses the same colors as the object (Post-it Notes, balloons, Skittles, etc) that you will use to complete your mural.

Below, are images and a description of the process we used to complete these projects. There is also a link to a video that demonstrates the process below that. Finally, check out a few of the Post-it Note mural images at the bottom of this post. They're pretty cool!

How to create this Johnny Depp Post_it Note Mural
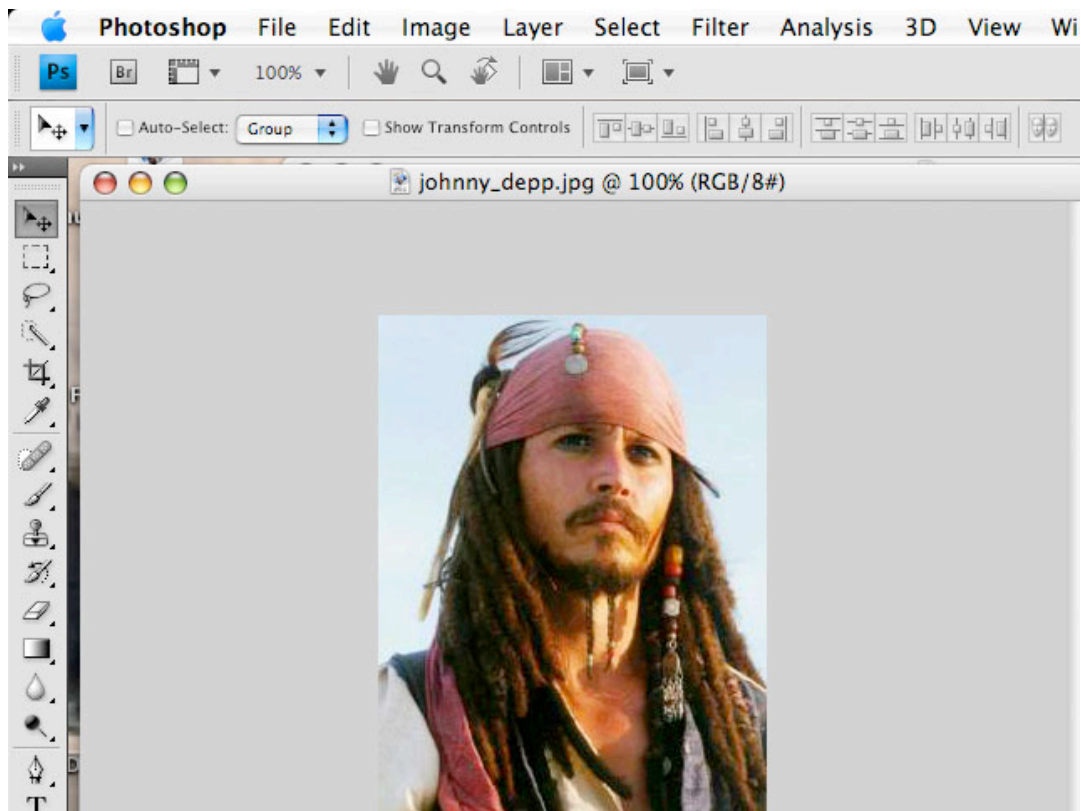
Before you begin:
Consider the wall space where you will complete your mosaic and consider how many Post-it Notes you will need to complete this project. The murals you see in this lesson plan are approximately 40 Post-it notes high by about the same number wide. That's 1,600 Post-it's per mural.

Also, consider the color of the Posit-it Notes you will use. Post-its come in a variety of color packs from pastels to very vivid hues. Look at the difference in color between the Johnny Depp mural and the John Lennon mural in this lesson.

Keep in mind that depending on the mural design, you may need more of one color than another. Just because your design calls for 1,600 Post-its doesn't mean the colors will be equally split. i.e. you may need far more purples to complete the mural than yellow. This may cause you to need to purchase more packs then your original intent.
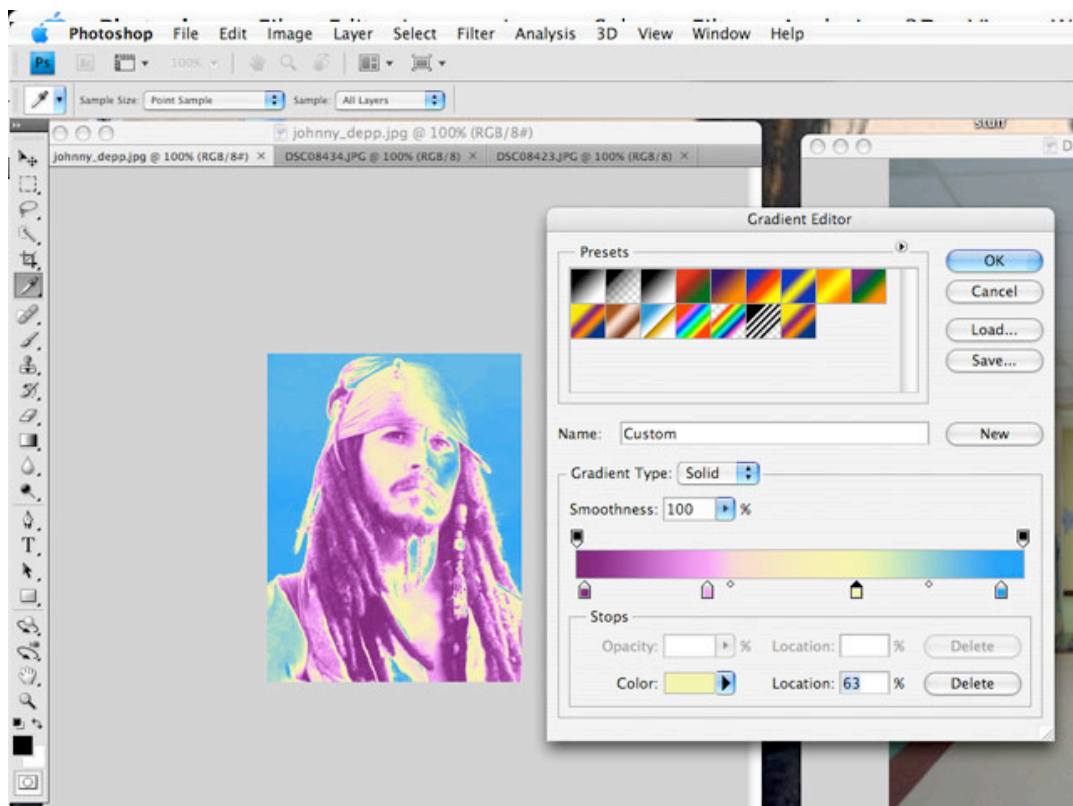
Step one:

Here we are starting with a photo of J Depp and have imported it into PhotoShop. Next, we will make two important changes.
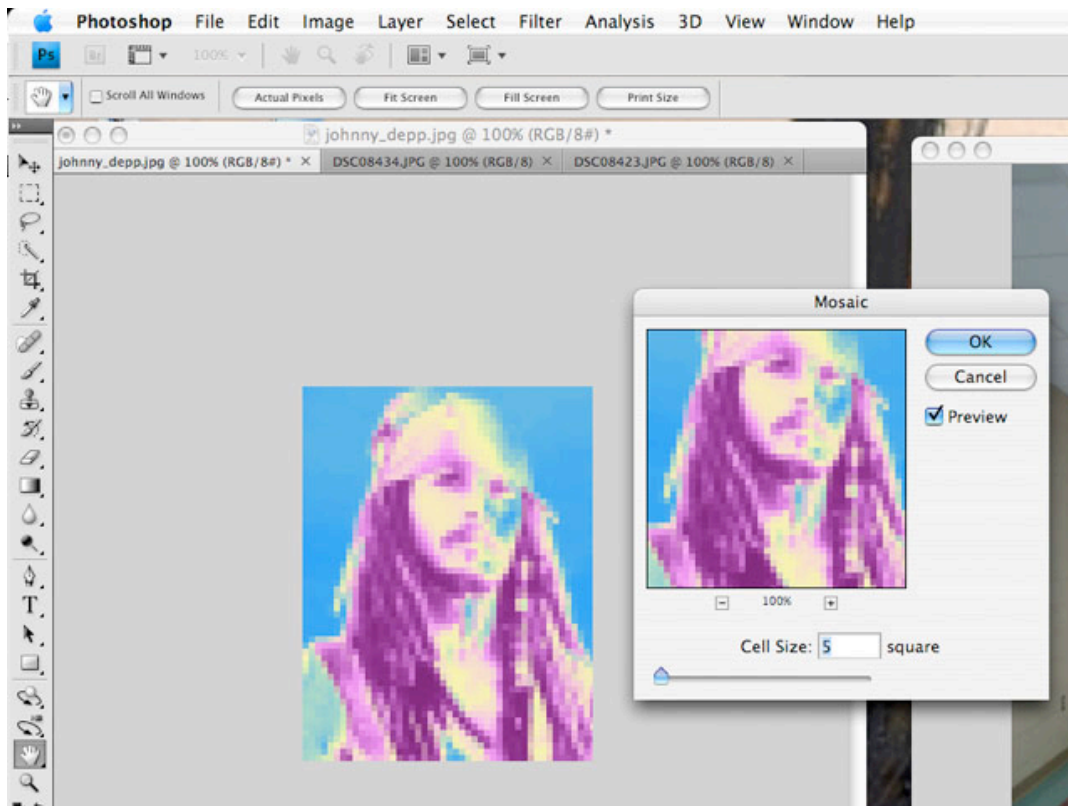
Step Two:

First, we will apply a gradient map. You will find it under image/adjustments. The point of the gradient map is to turn the photo into the same colors as your Post-its. This takes some playing around with.

If you are not familiar with how to use the gradient map in Photoshop, visit this Tutorial Video I created for my students.

Step Three:

After we have the color of the photo matching the colors of the Post-it Notes, we used the mosaic filter. That's under filter/pixilate. Using mosaic breaks the photo down into little squares. You can adjust the amount of squares. The idea is to get the squares as big as possible without losing the image. Again, you need to play around.

Step Four:

It is very important to keep in mind the amount of Post-its needed times the size of the wall. If you use 3" post it notes and your mosaic is 40 squares high, you will need a 10 foot high wall.

Step Five:

Once you have the image the way you want it, the rest is pretty simple. Just print out the image and use it as a guide when placing the Post-it Notes on the wall.

The only other thing I would recommend is using tape to adhere the Post-it Notes. Even though they are sticky, Post-it Notes don't stick to walls very well.

The Video:

To help my students prepare their image maps, I created a [Tutorial Video](#) so they could follow along step by step. [Check it out here on Vimeo!](#)

Below:

It took us 16,000 Post-it Notes to complete the ten murals created at Apex High School. Here are five of the murals...
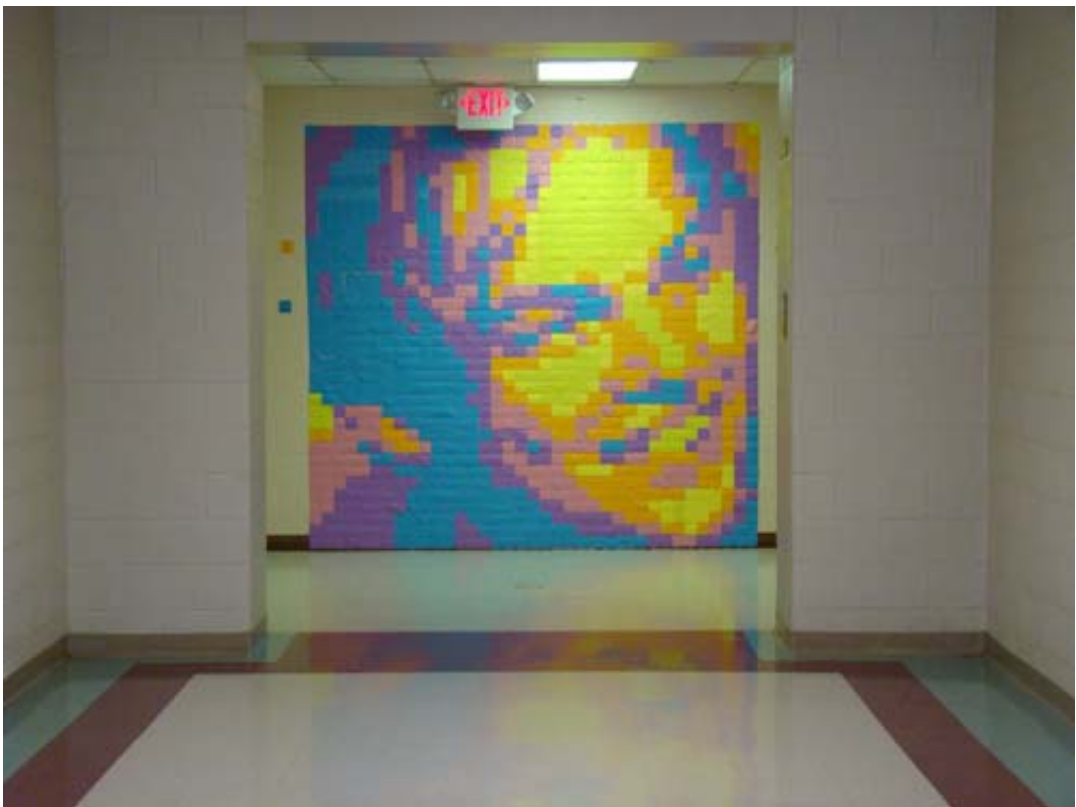

Steve Carell

Marilyn Monroe

John Lennon

Audrey Hepburn

Leo Dicaprio

Artist Inspiration:

There are some great mosaic artworks being created today. If you're looking to include modern artists as an inspiration for your project, check out the work of Christian Faur. Christian Faur created incredible mosaics using crayons.

http://www.christianfaur.com/

You should also search the Internet for mosaics made out of the following materials: rubiks cubes, coffee cups, polo shirts and jelly bellies.