Easily Replace Backgrounds in Photos with ON1 by Dan Harlacher

Hello, fellow photographers. I’m Dan Harlacher from ON1, the creators of some amazing photography apps and plugins! I’m excited to show you the new Quick Mask AI tool in ON1 Photo RAW 2024.5. This tool is incredibly powerful and makes background replacements super simple. To illustrate its capabilities, I’ll walk you through three examples, from simple to complex. I also created this short video outlining each of these steps!

Example 1:
Simple Background Replacement

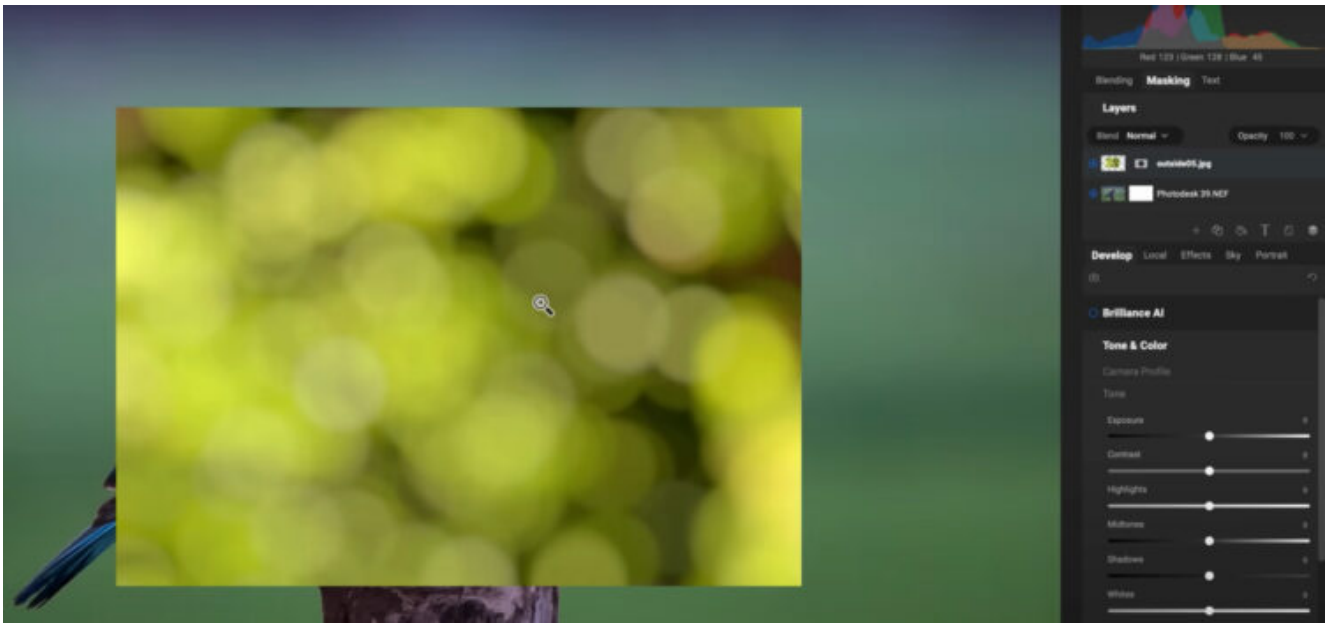
Let’s start with a straightforward example—a bird photo. The original background is dull and shot in low light, resulting in a noisy image. Here’s the step-by-step process to enhance and replace the background:



1. **Noise Reduction and Sharpening**: First, the photo includes a lot of noise and is a little out of focus. So, I used NoNoise AI and Tack Sharp AI to remove the noise and restore the details.



2. **Brightness Adjustment**: Next, I brightened the image using the “Tone and Color” adjustments, increasing the exposure by about a stop and adjusting the blacks to enhance contrast.
3. **Adding a New Background**: I selected a new background from the ON1 Extras, specifically a bokeh image, and used the “Transform” tool to fit it perfectly behind the bird.



4. Masking the Old Background: Using the Quick Mask AI tool, I clicked on the bird to keep it and removed the old background. The result was a clean separation, allowing the new background to shine.
5. **Final Adjustments**: Finally, I adjusted the background’s tone and color to complement the bird’s colors, creating a harmonious and vibrant image.



Example 2: Intermediate Background Replacement with Blending

I worked with a studio shot against a neutral backdrop for a more complex scenario.



Here’s the approach:

1. **Initial Adjustments**: I cropped out unwanted elements, like a soft box in the corner.

2. **Layering a New Background**: I added a new studio backdrop, flipped it to match the lighting, and scaled it to fit.
3. **Blending Backgrounds**: Using Quick Mask AI, I masked out the original background but retained the shadows and the floor’s shape by reducing the mask’s opacity. This blended the new backdrop seamlessly with the original, maintaining a realistic look.



4. **Color Adjustments**: I tinted the new background using a photo filter to match the subject’s shorts, ensuring a cohesive color scheme.
5. **Edge Refinement**: I used the Chisel tool and Refine brush

to clean up any remaining halos or edges, particularly around hair, for a polished finish.



Example 3:
Advanced Background Replacement with Color Corrections

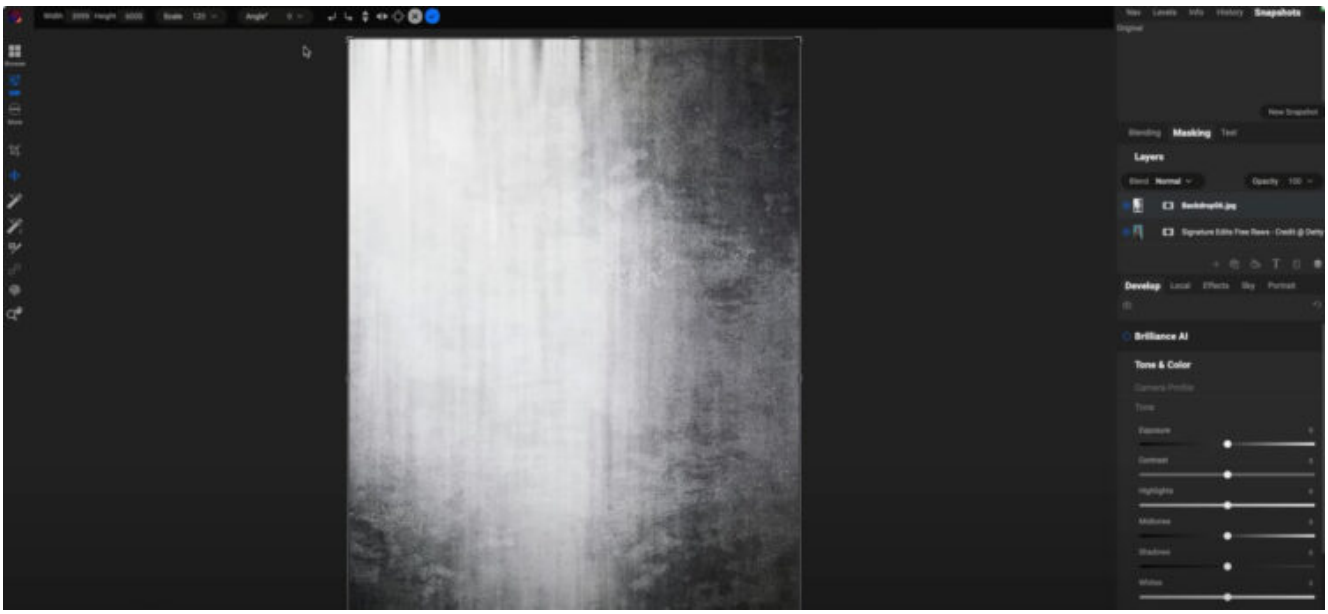
The third example involves a challenging shot with a bright blue background that reflects onto the subject’s metallic necklace and skin.



Here’s how I tackled it:

1. **Exposure Adjustment**: I lowered the exposure to correct the image’s brightness.
2. **New Background Addition**: I selected a new background and

used the Transform tool to scale and position it.



3. **Masking and Cleaning Up**: Quick Mask AI helped remove the old background. However, blue reflections remained on the subject, requiring further refinements.



4. **Local Color Adjustments**: I used local adjustments to desaturate the necklace’s blue reflections and repainted the skin edges with a flesh color using the paint with color option. This corrected the color cast without

altering the luminosity.

5. **Final Touches**: The result was a natural-looking edge with the correct colors, eliminating unnatural blue hues.



Conclusion

These examples highlight the incredible versatility and power of the Quick Mask AI tool in ON1 Photo RAW 2024.5. Whether dealing with simple or complex scenarios, this tool makes background replacements and composites much easier.

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