

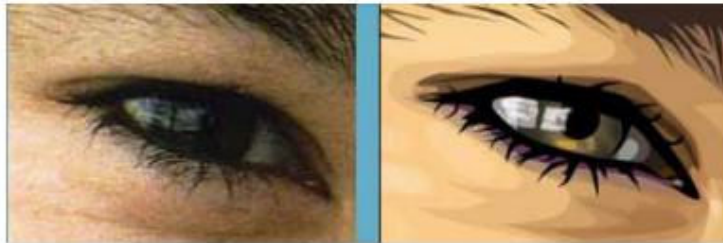
Melissa Evans- Vector Portrait Tutorial:

<http://www.melissaevans.com/tutorials/vector-art-with-photoshop>



THE EYES (well actually, eye in this case)

As you see, by comparing the original photo eye to my vector eye, I definitely didn't create exactly what was in the original photo. It's very important however to pay attention to the reflective quality of the eye. I've used several layers here to make it look semi-life-like and I work super zoomed in. Also you'll notice I used a pretty vivid violet colour under the eye...this really just adds interest to the vector.



Never use pure white for the eyeball. It will just look weird! If there is white anywhere on the eye it will be in the reflective highlight.

1. Put in the basic shapes of the eye. Note I used Layer Style Inner Glow on the iris layer. Make sure the pupil is round by using the eclipse tool.
2. Add in eyelashes (mine look a bit like cockroach legs ha ha). You can create multiple paths on a single path layer. I find a faster technique for shapes like this is to just create one and then duplicate it, altering it with transform and using the convert point tool.
3. Add in the highlights etc. You can see that the highlight has its opacity lowered so that the layers below show through. By adjusting the opacity of your layers, your vector will have a greater complexity...it will appear like there are more layers.



Skin Shading

When building up the light and dark areas make sure your shape layers have a low opacity (around 15%). By layering up the shape layers, you are going to create a more complex looking vector.

Look at the face and start picking out patches of colour/tone and create shape layers. Pointy, funky shapes are great..you don't need to follow the image exactly. A little abstraction from the photo is what is going to create an outstanding vector.

Look at the layers in the image below, you can see that many of them have a low opacity and interact together.



Don't get put off if your picture looks a bit terrible to begin with...just keep adding layers!



Just because you are colouring skin don't think that your colour palette has to be all the same either. Infact, the use of various colours/tones is going to make your picture go from average to great. The above image shows some of the colours I used to form the skin, with varying opacity (not including lips etc). As you can see there's a bit of variety and my final vector is quite tame.

The Mouth

Below is the finished mouth. Just like the eyes, a void using absolute white for the teeth. You can see how the lips are made up of overlapping layers, with their opacity altered. In some layers I have adjusted the Mode also, just for some variety.

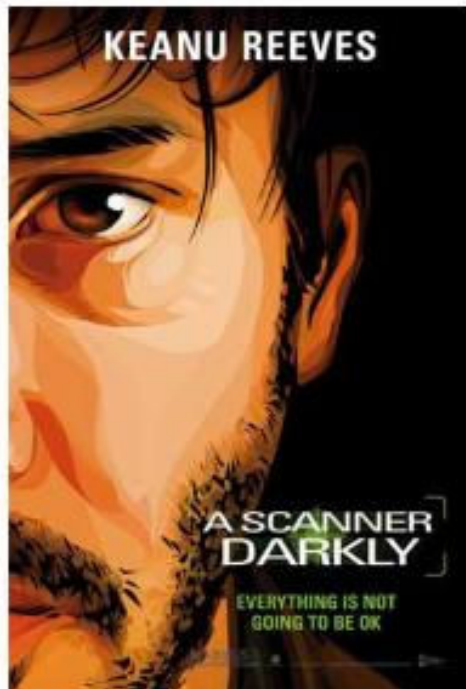


That's about it. You just need to do this same procedure for the entire image. Zoom in to the photo and look for patterns/shapes and recreate them!

Don't merge or rasterize your shape layers. As long as all your layers are shape layers then you have a vector piece of art...That means you can scale the original psd up and down in Photoshop and it will remain perfect and unpixelated!! The final output will NOT BE a vector file (it will be a rasterized jpg etc), to output a vector file you need to use Adobe Illustrator.

Learn by Example

There is so much rubbish vector work on the net but rather than point out all the flaws of others work (and possibly receive hate mail) I'm going to show you what I THINK makes great art. Hopefully by doing this, you will pick up a few tips for your next vector.



The Scanner Darkly poster, shown left, of Keanu Reeves is a prime example of great vector work. What makes it great?

1. Funky Shapes

I can't stand the boring result of just using Posterize and making shape layers exactly like that. It really doesn't hold any artistic merit. Definitely create a posterized layer but only use it as a ROUGH guide for when you're a little stuck. The funky shape layers of the face, on the poster shown left, are really great. Particularly around the eye area. You can see that the artist has abstracted the form of the shape layers but kept it so you can definitely see that it is Keanu Reeves. The shape layers also follow the form nicely of the underlying facial muscles.

2. Colour

If you use the colour picker to select your vector colour palette, from the original photo, then the result will be bland and boring. Never ever ever just use the original photo colours. Strong colours work well for vectors, as you can see in The Scanner Darkly poster. It's great to try to

get some really random colours or shades worked into your vector too. That way when you look at the zoomed in region of the vector it really does seem to be a bit of a mess BUT when you look at the whole image it looks great.

LOVE Your Work

From time to time people send me pictures of their work that they have achieved through following my tutorials. I decided to put some of the best here. Click on the thumbnails below...

