PROCESSING BRACKETED IMAGES IN PHOTOMATIX (Px)

I am currently using Photomatix Pro Version 3.2.7 – 32 bit. This tutorial assumes you have produced and saved a set of bracketed images in 16 bit TIFF format. For more information see 'Producing Bracketed Image Sets'.

1. Open Px
2. View>Show Workflow Shortcuts – The 'Workflow Shortcuts' panel will open.
3. Click 'Generate HDR Image' - The 'Generate HDR – Selecting source images.' panel will open.
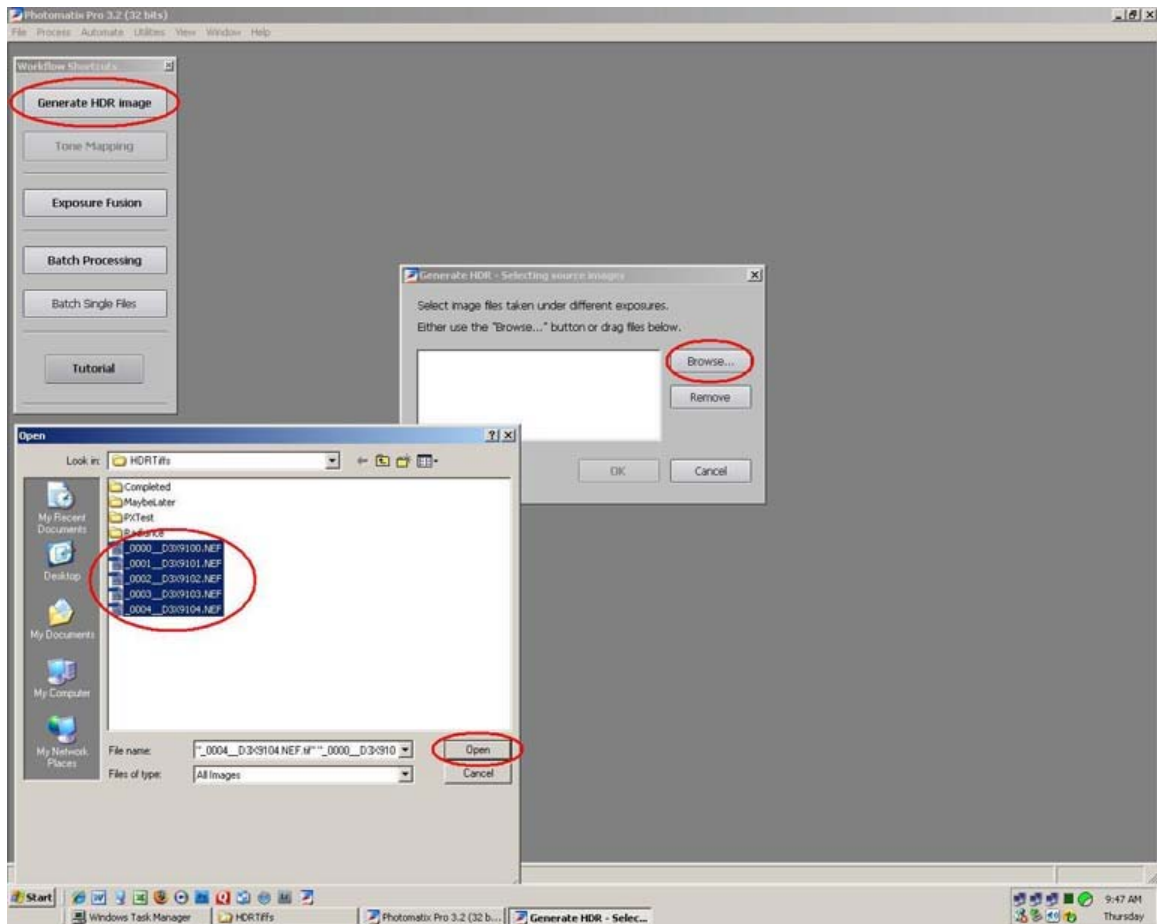
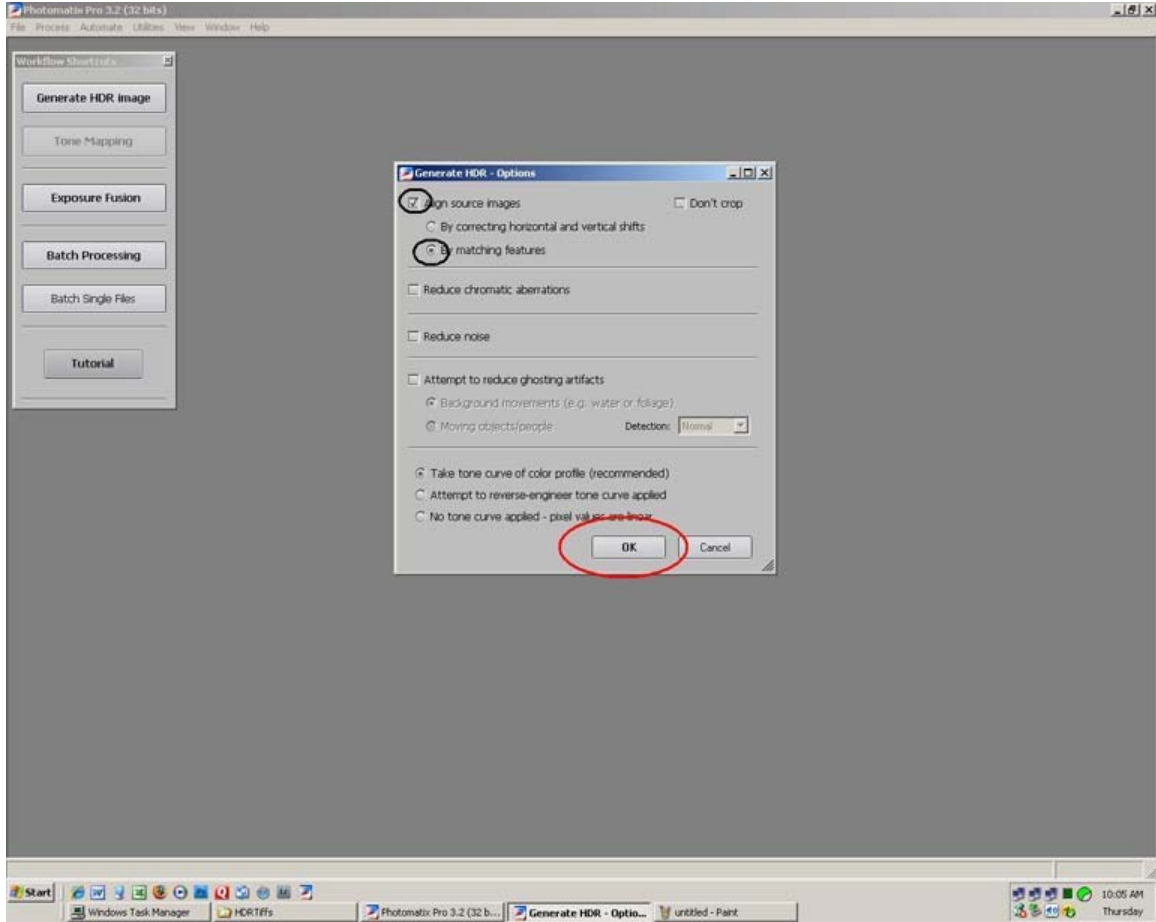
HDR Processing in Px Image 01

4. Click 'Browse' – an 'Open' panel will open. Browse to the folder containing the bracketed image set. Select the images (Click the first one and Shift-click the last one, or Ctrl-click each in turn).
5. Click 'Open' - The files will appear in the 'Generate HDR' panel.

6. Click 'OK' – the Exposure Values panel may open. If so, use the tools available to set the spacing between the exposures. If you used my suggestions in the 'Producing Bracketed Image Sets' tutorial, spacing will be either 1 or 2 stops.
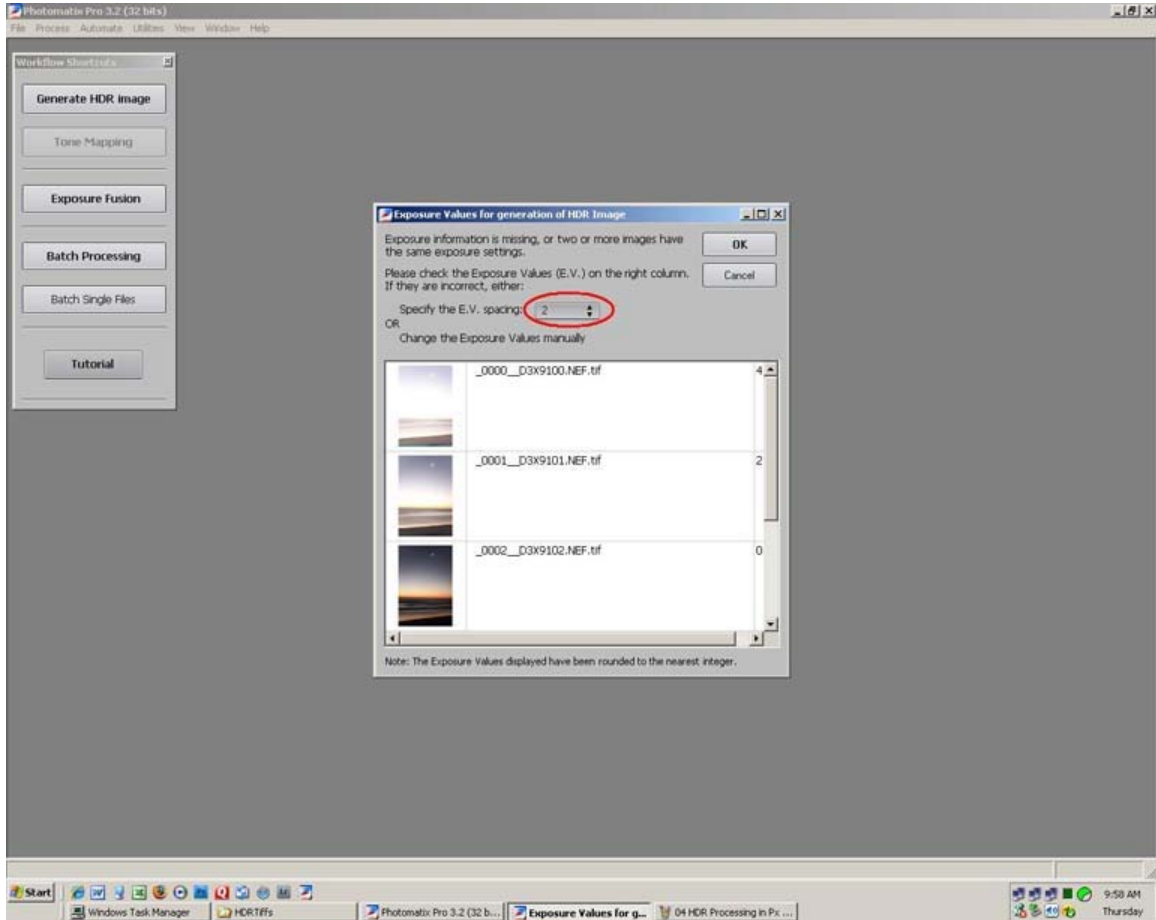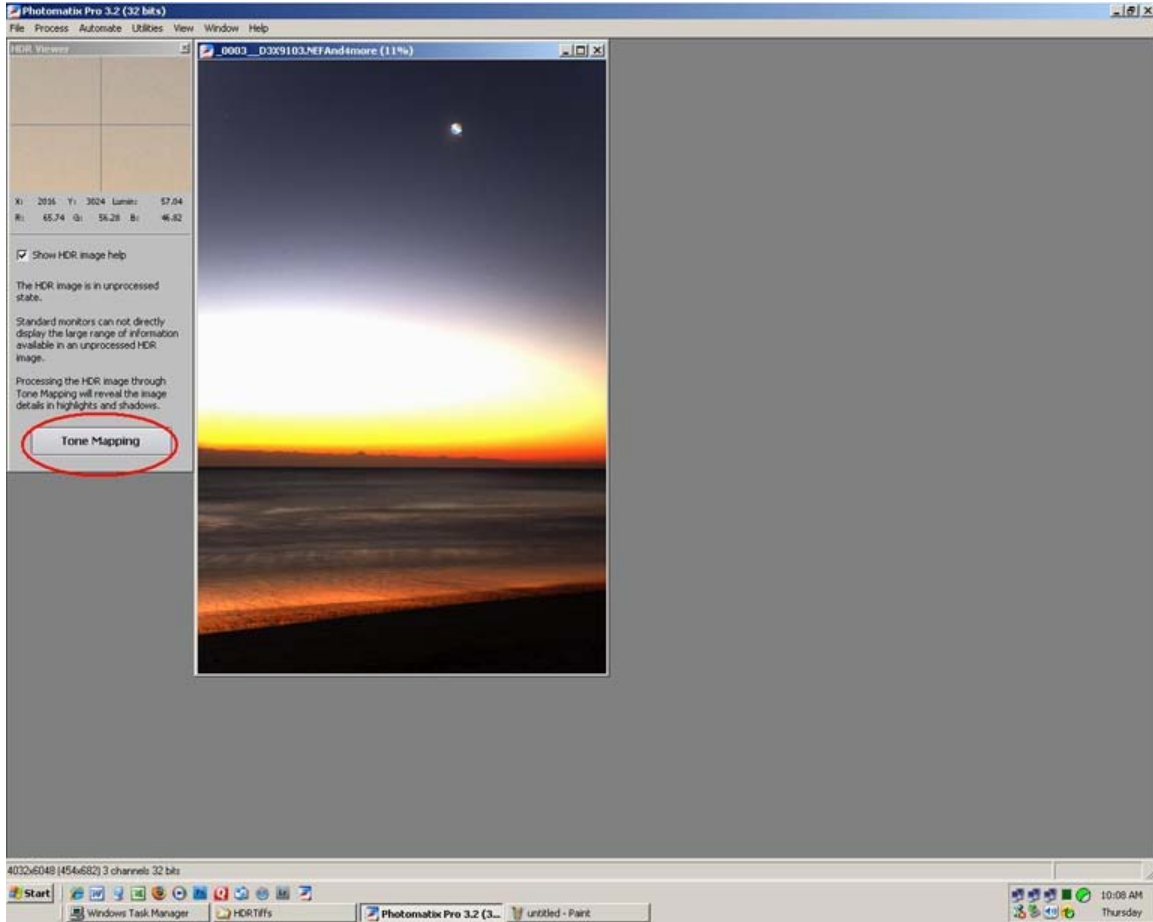

HDR Processing in Px Image 02

7. Click 'OK' – The 'Generate HDR – Options' panel will open. I suggest using the defaults unless you needed to align the images and were unable to use the images when they were aligned in Photoshop. In that case, select 'Align source images>By matching features.
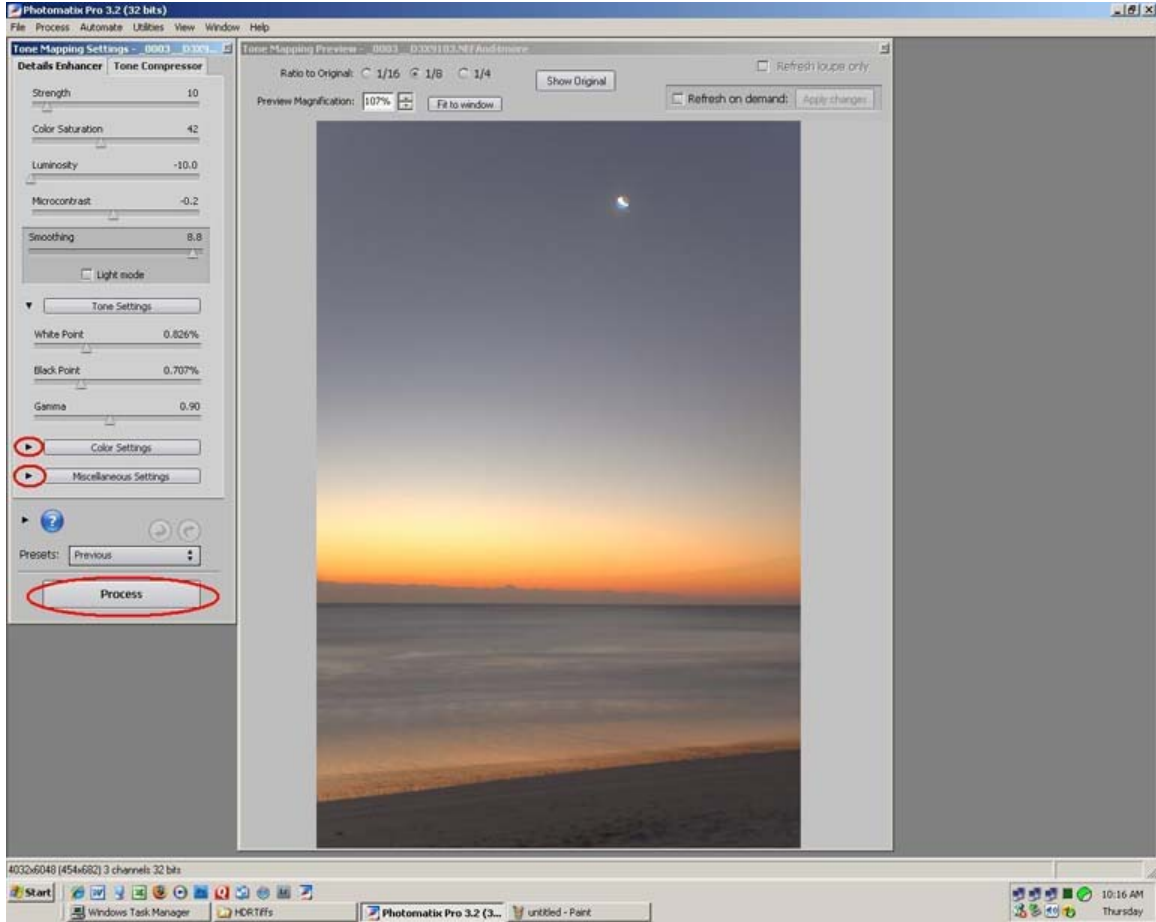
HDR Processing in Px Image 03

8. Click 'OK' – After a bit of processing delay, Px will produce and display a very ugly image. It is what you get if you attempt to display a 32 bit image in a 16 bit image space.

HDR Processing in Px Image 04

9. Click 'Tone Mapping' – a somewhat better looking image will open in the – 'Tone Mapping Preview' window, along with the 'Tone Mapping Settings' panel.

HDR Processing in Px Image 05

10. You may have to move or close the Histogram window.
11. Close/retract the 'Color Setting' and 'Miscellaneous Setting' sections of the panel. The controls in these sections are not needed unless one is doing HDR Grunge processing (www.hdrgrunge.com).
12. My defaults for normal processing are:
    a. Strength – 30
    b. Color Saturation – 60
    c. Luminosity - -7.8
    d. Microcontrast - -7.8
    e. Smoothing – Light Mode – Max
    f. White Point - .1%
    g. Black Point - .05%
    h. Gamma – 1

From the image above, you will notice that some changes have been made from the defaults. As a general rule, work toward a natural looking image making as few

adjustments as possible, particularly of settings that can be made in Photoshop. This is very subjective and you will find the adjustments particularly interactive. I find it works best to make extreme adjustments, view the result, and then back off to find the optimal setting. Don't worry if the image is made to look a bit flat in order to avoid hot spots. The Photoshop tools are the best way to make adjustments since they will be non-destructive – assuming one processes in layers. See the 'Using Adjustment Layers' tip.

13. Click 'Process' – When processing is completed.
14. File>Save As – a 'Save As' panel will open. Browse to where you want to save the processed image. I name the file using the camera type, the range of image numbers, and the location where the images were taken. Example: D3x_9569_72_MonroeAve.tif.

CLOSE PHOTOMATIX – Proceed to Using_NeatImage

If you found this tutorial of value, please consider visiting the SHUTTERFREAKS DONATION PAGE. Thank you.