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Image Trends Fisheye-Hemi Photoshop Plug-ins

Remove Distortion, Retain Composition in Seconds

I am an optimist by nature, but when I was asked to test and write about Image Trends new Fisheye-Hemi Photoshop plug-ins to correct fisheye distortion, I was concerned. I had experimented with fisheyes before, but never used them for anything other than fun. In fact, I'd turned down assignments when fisheye lenses were required.

I photograph people, and no previous method of fisheye distortion correction satisfied me. The vertical lines looked wonderful, but my human subjects remained distorted and cartoon-like. I heard that Image Trends had come out with a set of Photoshop plug-in filters designed for images of people. Curiosity got the better of me, and I decided to take the challenge.

Filters in the Field

With a Nikkor 10.5mm lens on my Nikon D70s, I made my first test shots at a future hospital site in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Looking through the 10.5mm was a bit intimidating because the image looked grossly distorted (image 1). I had loaded my laptop with the three Fisheye-Hemi filters, which I installed under the Photoshop Filters Menu. The three filters address 8mm (filter 1), 10.5mm (filter 2), and 15/16mm (filter 3) fisheye on APS-size digital sensors, or the equivalent coverage on other cameras.

I loaded the image into Photoshop and processed it through the Fisheye-Hemi 2 full-frame filter. In seconds, the Fisheye-Hemi mathematically produced an aesthetically pleasing normal view of the people in my photograph (Image 2).

Not only were the faces and bodies corrected for distortion, the image resolution was improved, my original composition and framing were retained, and the vertical lines were straightened. Simply amazing!

Until now, all that could be expected from fisheye correction was to capture fisheye images

Image 1. Construction personnel (l to r) John Buschmann, Jerry Scheuer, and Jamie Brush discuss blueprints for a new hospital at a construction site in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Image captured with 10.5mm, no correction.

Allison Earnest

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using rectilinear mapping techniques. This method has many drawbacks, such as distortion of people near the perimeter and loss of resolution and data. It also discards about one-third of the pixels and crops to the center along the horizontal axis of an image.

As Image 3 reflects, the drawbacks of rectilinear mapping include shrinking the center of an image, which has most of the detail. Although the image is similar to what is seen by the human eye, when printed, it remains distorted.

Before the Fisheye-Hemi, I would have politely declined to photograph a large group in a relatively small space, such as the group in Image 4 (before correction). An 8mm fisheye was used to capture the Image Trends team at their headquarters in Austin, Texas.

The advantage of using the Fisheye-Hemi 1 filter is that it produces superior distortion correction of all the people in the photograph (image 5). Fisheye-Hemi filters use a mapping technology that utilizes almost all of the pixels, while retaining the original composition and shape of people in the image.

Additional Photo Opps

The Fisheye-Hemi is opening up a world of photographic possibilities. Among them: environmental portraits with a 180-degree view, distortion-free people no matter where they are in an image, retaining the crop as seen through the camera, large corporate or wedding portraits made from a relatively close distance when space is an issue. Case in point: Recently, my clients Kendra and Jason requested an engagement portrait that included the entire scene of their chosen reception hall. Without the Hemi correction filter, this assignment would have been impossible.

Image Trends Fisheye-Hemi filters are fast, easy, reliable, and consistent in their performance with all 8mm,10.5mm, and 15/16mm Fisheye Hemispheric lenses. Because the filters are Photoshop plug-ins, they offer all the usual benefits of Photoshop, such as batch processing and other workflow procedures.

The next time you need a fisheye lens to capture a scene with people, try the Fisheye-Hemi. It's a whole new way of seeing photograhically.

For more information on Image Trends filters, visit **www.ImageTrendsInc.com**.

Essential Tools

- Nikon D70s
- Nikkor 10.5mm fisheye
- Nikon SB-800 Speedlights
- California Sunbounce reflector
- Lexar memory cards
- Kubota Imaging Tools
- Adobe Photoshop CS2
- Dell PC

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Image 2. When the original construction site image was corrected with the Fisheye-Hemi 2 filter, it produced a very pleasing rendition of the people and lines throughout the image.

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Image 3. In comparison, when the original construction site image was corrected with the rectilinear method of fisheye correction, the people in the image remain distorted, the original crop is lost, and the resolution is lost.

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Image 4. This image of the Image Trends team in their in Austin, Texas, headquarters was shot with an 8mm fisheye. No fisheye correction has been made.

Courtesy Image Trends, Inc.

Image 5. When the original 8mm fisheye image was corrected using the Fisheye-Hemi 1 filter, all the people within the image and the outer edges of the photograph are beautifully corrected for distortion.
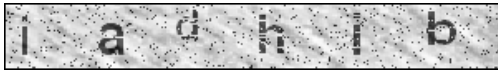
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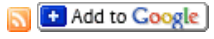**City, State:**

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