Playing With 'Chisel or Carve'

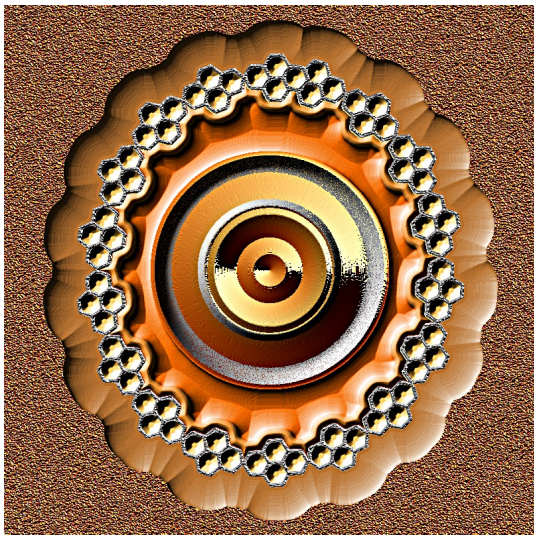
A multi part tutorial on various ways to use the 'Chisel or Carve' filter in GIMP

Part 5 – Chiselling and Carving Spiral & Radial Gradients









By OldManGrumpy



TUTORIAL PART FIVE

Step by Step Tutorial 5 – Chiselling and Carving Gradients

Welcome to tutorial five – exemplifying yet another approach for which I use the Chisel or Carve filter, and not using any line art this time. There are two separate sections 5a and 5b, representing the top two images on the front cover, each with its own outcome.

The bottom two front cover images have a more involved approach, including stroking paths and using GMIC. I will make some relevant comments about those aspects, using text and other selection options with Chisel or Carve in concluding the tutorial. You should then be able to try out such approaches yourself.

As usual some items used in the tutorial are included as ZIP files with the tutorial ZIP.

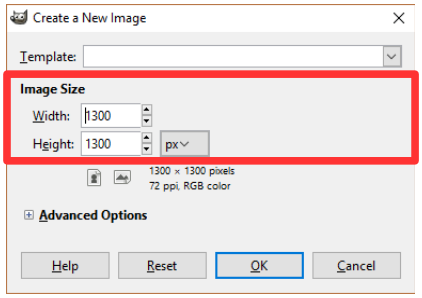
- The 'jarrah' timber background as a PNG file which can be unzipped to your preferred folder, then 'opened as layers' into your XCF file.
- A 'tassie oak' timber background also as a PNG file which can be unzipped to your preferred folder, then 'opened as layers' into your XCF file.

Our objective in this tutorial will be to create the outcomes, using a simple approach with just a couple of selections on a gradient canvas. Then we will apply Chisel or Carve in a more grandiose manner than the previous tutorials.

At each chisel or carve stage I will specify the required settings to use. Remember though, to save your XCF file regularly and if you do make a mistake or have problems, the Undo dialogue is your friend.

Section 5a – the Golden Gradient in Spiral Clockwise Shape

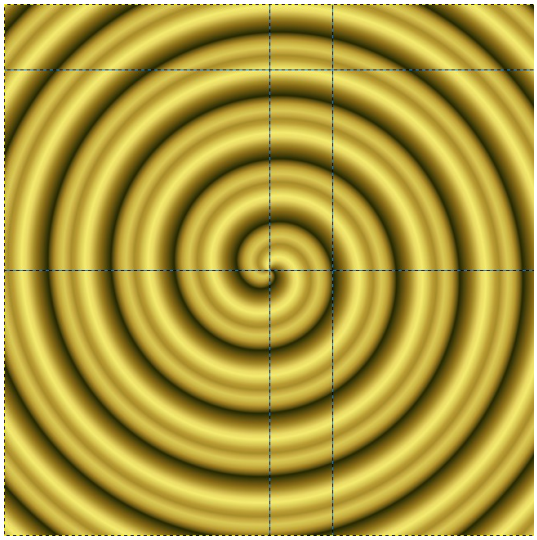
1. Choose File>New to open the Create a New Image dialogue box, enter the size as below, then click OK.



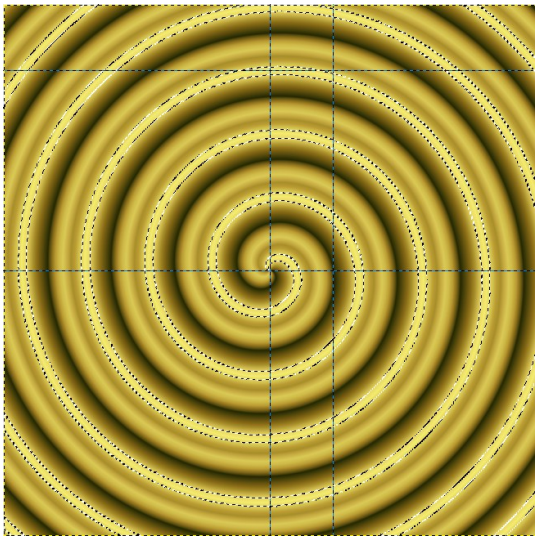
2. Select File>Open as layers to display the Open Image dialogue and choose the jarrah timber PNG file then click OK.
3. We will now just set up some guides to help us out. We need centred guides at 650 pixels both horizontally and vertically. If you have the script New Guides by Percent, use that or use the standard GIMP New Guide facility.
4. We will also need other guides, a vertical one at 805 pixels from the canvas left edge (to

assist in making the spiral gradient fit the canvas to match that of the tutorial) and a horizontal one at 160 pixels from the canvas top to pinpoint colour selection – so create those too.

5. Now create a new transparent layer. From the Tool Box choose the Blend Tool and from Tool Options select the gradient Golden. From the Shape drop down select Spiral (cw).
6. Place the cursor directly over the intersection of the central guides at 650 pixels, left click and, holding down the button, drag the cursor directly right until it is on the intersection of the guides at 650 pixels horizontally and 805 pixels vertically, then release the button. You should now have a canvas looking like this example :

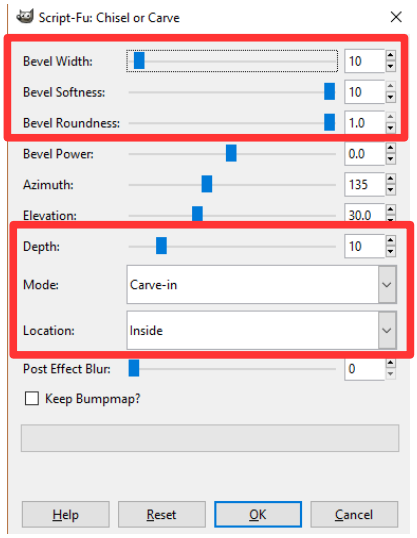


7. Rename this layer as golden background then from the Tool Box choose the Select by Color Tool and position the cursor on the intersection of the guides at 650 pixels vertical and 160 pixels horizontal so that we can select a specific colour in the spiral, then click to create a selection, that should look like this :



8. Now right click on the canvas and Select>To Path as we will need it again shortly. Rename the path Selection from 650 x 160. You can also select Image>Guides>Remove all Guides now as we are finished with them.

9. Select Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve and apply the settings as shown below then click OK :



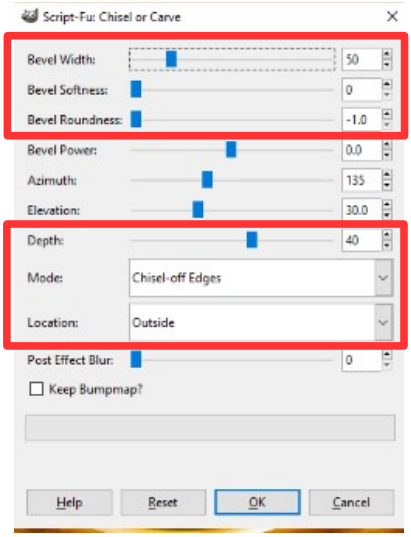
10. That action has created a new layer with a narrow carving right through to the spiral centre. Now duplicate that layer twice to accentuate the carving and your canvas should now resemble my example below :



11. Before we go further, let's prepare the background so that it will really highlight that next chiselled feature. So duplicate the golden background layer, set the blend mode of the original to Grain Merge and that of the duplicate to Multiply. You should now see this more woody textured image on your canvas :



12. From the paths dialogue right click on the path Selection from 650 x 160 and choose Path to Selection. Now select Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve and apply the settings as shown below then click OK :

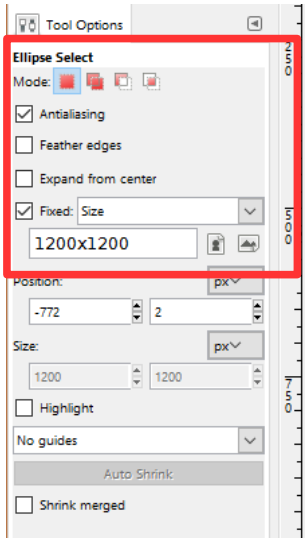


13. A new broadly chiselled layer will have been created , so duplicate it once for effect and you should see a canvas resembling this example below :

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14. Let's just take a sideways step for a moment to check out another decorative option. Duplicate the last duplicated chiselled layer again and then change the Blend Mode of this new duplicate to Dissolve. Have a look at its impact, then reduce the Opacity to 40% and look again, then up to 100% - interesting effects and something else to play with latter. OK make that layer invisible now and lets finish of this image.
15. The effect of the chiselling on the spiral pattern crates 'lumps' where the spiral goes off canvas, so lets make a circular frame to cover them up. From the Tool Box choose the Ellipse Select Tool and in the Tool Options apply the settings shown below to give a Fixed Size ellipse, then press Enter on your keyboard to register them :

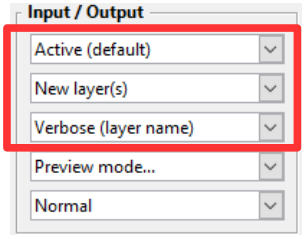


16. Now left click on the canvas, hold the button down and drag the 1200 x 1200 ellipse so that the cross hairs are exactly over the central point where the spiral carve disappears. Then release the button to create the selection. Right click on the canvas and choose Select to Path. Rename the path as 1200 x1200.
17. Now make the jarrah timber layer active, right click then choose Select>Invert and then right click and select Edit>Copy, then Edit>Paste and click on the Create New Layer icon

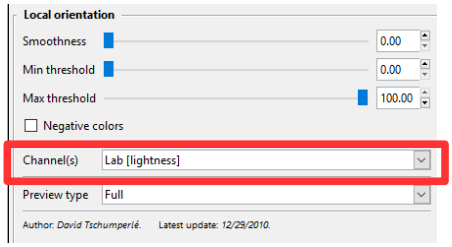
ion the Layer Dialogue to anchor the selection. You should now have a wooden framed canvas like this :



18. Now with this new pasted layer active select Filters>GMIC to display the GMIC dialogue window. As always ensure that your Input/Output settings reflect those below :



19. Now from the GMIC menu choose Contours>Local Orientation and in the Settings dialogue, from the Channel(s) drop down, select Lab (lightness) as shown below, then press Apply to create that new layer.



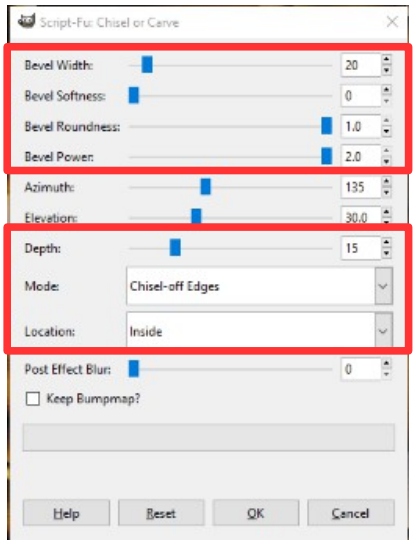
20. The GMIC window should reappear, so this time change the Channel(s) selection to All then press Apply again to create the new layer, then close GMIC. Your canvas should now resemble this with a metallic looking frame :



21. Set the Blend mode of this silvery layer to Overlay, then relocate the jarrah timber frame layer with the centre hole, above it and also set its blend mode to Overlay and now duplicate it. Hopefully now your canvas will resemble this shiny cupric look :



22. Nearly finished now, so in the Paths Dialogue, on the 1200 x1200 path right click and choose Path to Selection, then on the canvas right click and choose Select Grow. In that dialogue box enter 20 pixels for the growth Size, then click OK.
23. Now lets just properly decorate this frame; select Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve and apply the settings as shown below then click OK :



24. Right click on the canvas and Select>None. The chiselling has created a ridge around the frame hole so duplicate this layer twice to increase the effect. You may like then to right click on the layers dialogue, choose New from Visible, run Filters>Enhance>Unsharp mask against it then change the blend mode to Overlay. And that is it – your canvas should now look like that below :

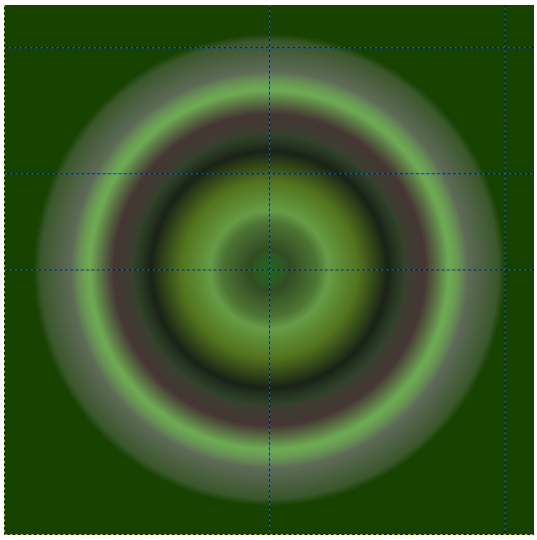


Congratulations that is another Chisel or Carve tutorial completed; you may like to play with the layers and their blend modes to customise your outcome.

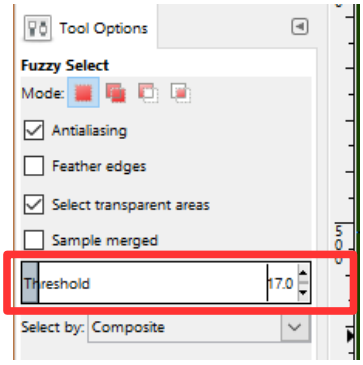
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Section 5b – the Greens Gradient in Radial Shape

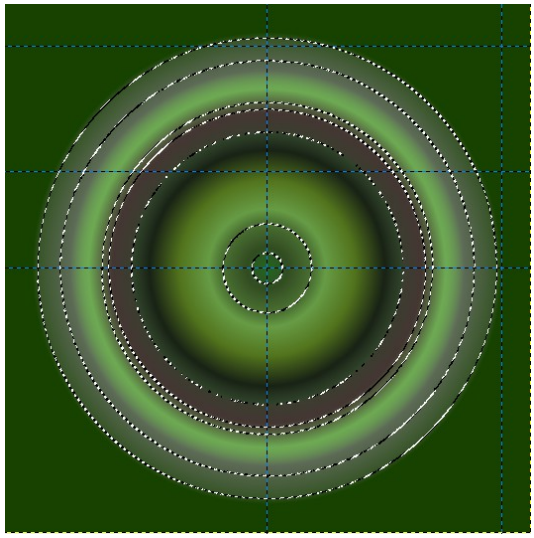
1. Select File>New to open the Create a New Image dialogue box, and this time enter the size as 1600 x 1600 pixels, then click OK.
2. Select File>Open as layers to display the Open Image dialogue and choose the tassie oak timber PNG file then click OK.
3. We will again set up some guides to help us out. We need centred guides at 800 pixels both horizontally and vertically. If you have the script New Guides by Percent, use that or use the standard GIMP New Guide facility.
4. We will also need two horizontal guides one at 130 pixels and the other at 510 pixels both from the canvas top, to pinpoint our colour selections – so create those too.
5. Also to help get the radial size of the gradient to match the tutorial, set up another vertical guide at 1510 pixels (from the canvas left).
6. Now create a new transparent layer. From the Tool Box choose the Blend Tool and from Tool Options select the gradient Geens. From the Shape drop down select Radial.
7. Place the cursor directly over the intersection of the central guides at 800 pixels, left click and, holding down the button, drag the cursor directly right until it is on the intersection of the guides at 800 pixels horizontally and 1510 pixels vertically, then release the button. You should now have a canvas looking like this example :



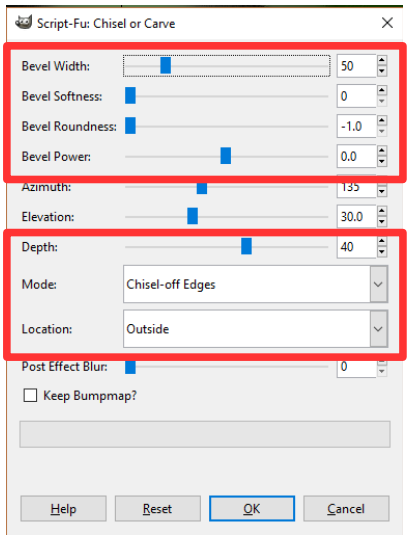
8. Later we will again modify this background. From the Tool Box choose the Select by Color Tool. In the Tool Options change the Threshold setting to 17 as shown below :



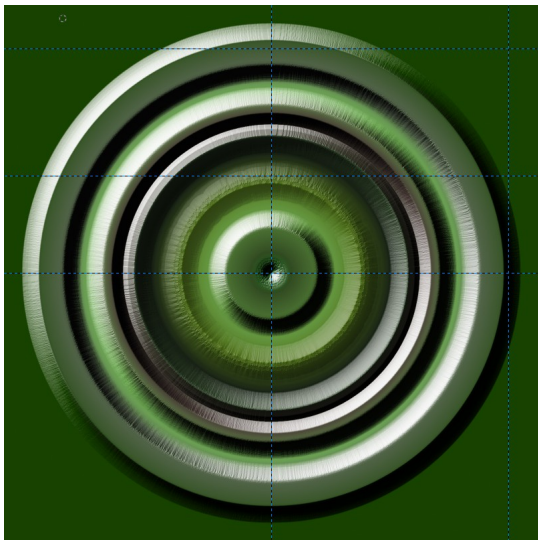
9. Now place the cursor directly over the intersection of the central vertical guide at 800 pixels and the horizontal guide at 130 pixels, then click to make a selection based on the colouring at this point. This is how your selection should look :



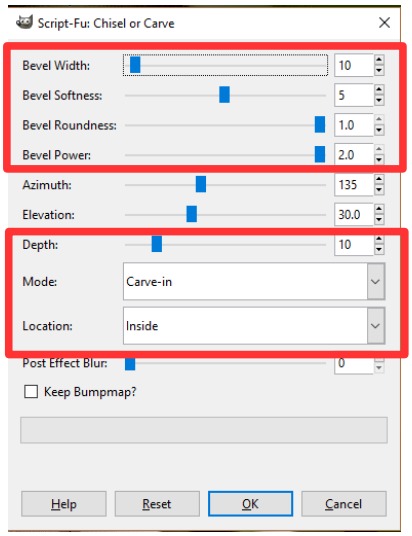
10. So right click on the canvas and choose Select>To Path then rename the path as Selection by color @ 800 x 130 threshold 17.
11. Now select Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve and change the settings to reflect those exemplified below, which will deliver a comprehensively sculptured outcome given the nature of the selection, then press OK :



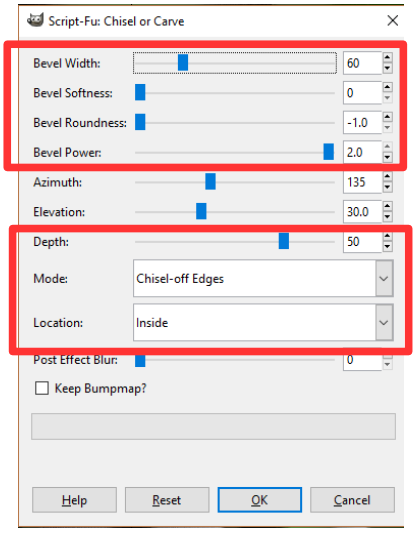
12. In this case let's duplicate the newly chiselled layer just once and you should now see something like this on your canvas



13. Next, pick the Fuzzy Selection Tool from the Tool box and place the cross hairs of the cursor directly over the intersection of the guides at horizontal 510 pixels and vertical 800 pixels. Then click to create our next selection. As always (well most times!) right click on the canvas and choose Select to Path. Rename the path as selection fuzzy @ 800 x 510.
14. Once again select Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve, then modify the parameters to those shown in the example below and then press OK:



15. This newly created chiselled layer accentuates the centre area of the gradient, so lets once more duplicate twice to reinforce that effect.
16. Of course we could leave it there, but let's add one more component to the image. So so choose the Ellipse Select Tool from the Tool Box, modify the Tool Options to deliver a Fixed Size ellipse at 200 x 200 pixels. Then click on the canvas, hold down the left button and drag the ellipse to the centre so the cross hairs are directly over the intersection of the guides at both 800 pixels horizontally and vertically. Next press Enter on the keyboard to register the selection.
17. Now for the last time choose Filters>Decor>Chisel or Carve and modify the settings to those shown below, then press OK :



18. You should now see a volcano like mound in the centre of your canvas, so duplicate this newly chiselled layer twice to complete the effect. Your canvas should now relect this example below :



19. Well we have nearly finished now, so select Image>Guides>Remove all guides to clear the screen.
20. For the final background changes, make the original Greens gradient layer active. Duplicate this layer and change the blend mode of the duplicate to Grain Merge. You may wish this to be your final background, but in my version I also changed the the blend mode of the original radial gradient to Grain Merge to include the texture of the underlying tassie oak timber layer.
21. Therefore my example below shows my finished product :



Well that is it once again. Thank you for trying my tutorials and I trust you got something out of them. The flexibility and capability of the Chisel or Carve filter is endless and much depends on your ability to try it out in obscure ways. Again just try playing with the techniques and settings you have used in these tutorials.

Now some comments on additional methods to create selections and use them with the Chisel or Carve script. In the other examples on the front cover of this document, to assist in creating selections and/or to create bevels I used :

- Text along a path
- Stroked paths with various brushes providing more complex shapes for selection/carving
- GMIC filters – particularly local orientation in its various modes when run against gradients

What I have also not demonstrated is :

- Drawing/painting to create selections
- Different shapes of gradient
- Creating and using 'fused shapes' from GIMP rectangle/ellipse tools

I am sure there are many other alternatives too. So experiment, explore and have fun playing with GIMP.