

Madims & Mams

WHAT'S NEW?

This past year, 2008, I've been working very hard at creating some fun and practical Actions for digital imaging in Photoshop®. During this process I've discovered and implemented 2 unique things. One is *Mama's Airbrush Diameter to Iris Measurement System* or MADIMS—for short—or maybe not! And the other is what I'm calling *Mama's Auto Masking* or MAM for short. OK this is getting silly! Let me expound further on both of these Mad Mama innovations.

MADIMS

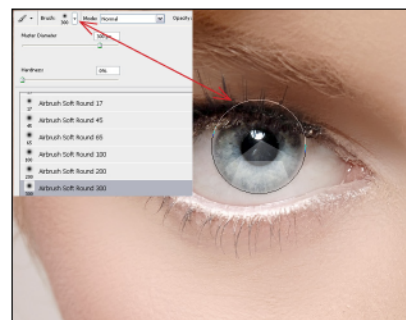
It is not logical to expect every Photoshop® Action that involves behind the scenes, out of your control, setting of pixel amounts or percentages of various and particular filters to yield the same results for various and particular subjects, and their various sizes, and/or resolutions. I've been retouching portraits and creating actions for 10 years and I can't believe it took me this long to figure out that there was a geometric common measurement denominator between a Photoshop tool & the human eye—the circle! I measure the diameter of the iris (the colored part) with the diameter of the Airbrush Soft Round Brush to determine the appropriate size Action. I've developed certain Actions with different formulas adjusted to yield the optimum result for that size!

So, yes—now some of my Actions have “sizes,” a bit off-the-wall but trust me, it works! This facilitates the correct use of some of Mama's Actions according to the size of the subject's iris. This system of measurement is far easier to explain and demonstrate compared to my earlier explanations of face ratio to the total canvas size, which was needed to choose which formulas of the original Mama's Powders worked best for a particular image. And that didn't take into account file resolution, whereas the brush size does—automatically!

The brush diameter measuring of the iris size works and remains consistent no matter what the file resolution is, as the eyes are already inherently relative to the subject's face size and

therefore automatically establishes the ratio to the file resolution and canvas size. The brush size is effectively resolution independent in this system. It works across the board!

To measure choose the Airbrush Soft Round style of brush and move the cursor over the eye. Don't click or you'll put down paint. Click the left and right bracket keys [_] to shrink or enlarge the brush diameter to fit around the iris. Once it matches look at the dynamic update of the brush size listed in the top Options bar for the Brush tool. If it reads 30, then you'd choose an Action whose number is closest to 30—if it reads 300 then you'd choose an Action whose number is closest to 300!



The Airbrush Soft Round is the Style brush I've based all my measurements upon. A measurement taken with a hard edge brush would yield different numbers. I chose the Airbrush Soft Round style because it is my favorite style tool for retouching! I'm always yappin' about the Airbrush Soft Round in my video tutorials! Not all of Mama's Actions offer or require this notation for measurement but I've include size markers inside of parentheses (_), on Action names that do utilize this method.

So what happens if everyone's backs are turned in the photo, or there are no faces? And the Action name you want to try has (25-50) or (300) in the name? Well, just experiment—play the Action and assess the results. The Actions only take a second or two. It's not like a mad green genie is going to explode out of the monitor if you use the wrong size Action. Besides, I already fixed that problem before releasing these Actions!