Workflow with Lightroom Plug-Ins

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This is an introduction only to some of the available Lightroom plug-ins; the ones I am most familiar with; and how to incorporate them into a usable workflow. My apologies for those I have missed or not used.

Notes:

- *Prices are rounded (up) to the nearest dollar USD*
- *Discounts: NAPP, etc*
- *Virtually all plug-ins can be downloaded for a free trial period (most commonly a month)*
- *Once installed (to C:\Users\Colin\AppData\Roaming\ Adobe\Lightroom\Modules\ on my computer), a plug-in must be configured in Lightroom. Go to File > Plug-in Manager and select the plug-in you want to configure.*
- *Publishing Services are installed to C:\Program Files\Adobe\Adobe Photoshop Lightroom 3.5\ and must also be configured in the LR Plug-in Manager.*

Workflow Overview

Developing

- DNG ProfileManager (*see last page*)
- Topaz plug-in suite
- Nik plug-in suite
- onOne plug-in suite
- HDRsoft's Photomatix
- Photoshop
- Softproofing

Publishing

- Gallery 3
- The Turning Gate
- Wordpress
- Flickr
- Facebook
- SlideShowPro
- Pro Show
- Blurb

Topaz Labs' Photoshop Bundle

$300

Includes:

- **Adjust**
- **B&W Effects**
- **Lens Effects**
- **Detail**
- **DeNoise**
- **Simplify**
- **Clean**
- **ReMask**
- **InFocus**
- **DeJPEG**

To make Topaz Bundle work in Lightroom, Aperture & iPhoto:

- **Fusion Express (FREE)**

In Lightroom, go to Photo > Topaz Suite > choose copy or original > select plug-in from Fusion Express list. In Photoshop, these are at the bottom of the Filters list.

Nik Software's Complete Collection
Lightroom & Aperture

Full: $300
Ultimate (adds Photoshop): $500

Includes:

- **Dfine**
- **Viveza**
- **HDR Efex Pro**
- **Color Efex Pro**
- **Silver Efex Pro**
- **Sharpener Pro**

Local adjustments with U-point technology.

For HDR Efex Pro in Lightroom, select the images you want combined, then go to File > Export with Preset > HDR Efex Pro.

For the rest of the Nik Collection, go to Photo > Edit In > choose your plug-in. In Photoshop, these are at the bottom of the Filters list.

Other Apps:
Snapseed for iPhone/iPad $5 / for MacOS/Windows $20

onOne's Perfect Photo Suite 6

Full: $300
Upgrade: $150

Works in Photoshop, Lightroom, Aperture, or as a standalone application.

Includes:

- **Perfect Layers**
- **Perfect Effects**
- **Perfect Portrait**
- **Perfect Resize (previously Genuine Fractals)**
- **Perfect Mask**
- **Perfect FocalPoint**
- **Perfect Frame**

Local adjustments with Perfect Mask.

In Photoshop, go to File > Automate and select which plug-in you want to use.

In Lightroom, go to File > Plug-in Extras > Perfect Photo Suite. This opens Perfect Layers, where you can work with all the apps below (here, FocalPoint is called Blur).

Other onOne plugins include:

- **PhotoTools $100**
- **PhotoTune $100**
- **Photo Essentials (plug-in for PS Elements) $70**

Free Presets for LR at
ononesoftware.com/products/perfect-presets-lightroom

Comparisons:

HDR:	**Photomatix vs HDR Efex Pro**
Noise-reduction:	**Noiseware vs DeNoise vs Dfine**
Black & White:	**Silver Efex Pro vs B&W Effects**
Effects:	**Viveza vs Topaz Adjust**
Borders:	**Silver/Color Efex vs Perfect Frame**

I have my personal favourites flowing from my experience with these plug-ins. Test drive them to determine which one's work best for you within your budget.

After processing an image in the LR Develop module, I will usually open the image in Photoshop (*Photo > Edit In > choose one of several PS options. Shortcut is Ctrl-E*). I will access plug-ins available there, working on individual layers, and blending the layered effects in accordance with my artistic vision. My choice of plugin will depend on which one I think I can get the best result in for that particular image.

In PS, I will reduce opacity or paint on a mask to control the amount and location of the effects I created with the plugins. As these processes generally increase noise, I will run the results through a noise reduction plugin, again using opacity and/or masking to avoid overdoing it. I then hit Save (not Save As) to save the file back to the LR catelog.

I may choose to do further LR development and/or open them in a plugin not access through PS for further work.

HDRsoft's Photomatix Pro

Standalone plus Lightroom plug-in: **$99**
Standalone plus Lightroom & Photoshop plug-ins: **$119**

Select images to combine > File > Plugin Extras > Export to Photomatix

Imagenomics' Noiseware Pro

Standalone ($50) / PS Plug-in ($70) - No Lightroom plug-in

SoftProofing for Lightroom 3

http://www.lightroom-plugins.com/ProofIndex.php   £ 10.00
A free version only proof low resolution images.

In Lightroom 3, go to File > Plug-in Extras > SoftProof

In the Develop module of Lightroom 4 (Beta), check Soft Proofing in the Toolbar below the main content window. A Soft Proofing panel will appear on the top right (which includes a modified histogram).

TIP: If you end up with out-of-gamut colours, Perceptual Intent is usually best. If there are no out-of-gamut colours, Relative Intent is usually best.

Note: Softproofing only works well when your monitor is properly calibrated and you reference the ICC profile of your final output. For example, it is wise when publishing a book through Blurb to download their ICC profile from their website.

Book Publishing:

Blurb

LR4 will have a Book module for publishing to Blurb or PDF, so no plug-in is needed for that. But if you prefer working with Blurb's own bookmaking tool, BookSmart, or you are sticking with LR3, you can download a Blurb Publishing Plug-in at http://www.adobe.com/cfusion/exchange/index.cfm?event=productHome&exc=25&loc=en_us

Web Publishing:

TIP: Read documentation carefully.

The Turning Gate

TTG CE2 Highslide Gallery   **$25**

TTG CE2 Pages   **$25**

- **Home | Galleries | Services | Info | About | Contact**
- **Indexing of TTG Galleries**

TTG CE2 Horizon   **$25**

TTG CE2 Auto Index   **$15**

Other plug-ins for Wordpress, e-commerce (cart, Fotomoto), client response

Also, several free plug-ins, including TTG SimpleViewer (much better than the Simpleviewer that comes with LR3).

Once downloaded and installed, TTG plug-ins are available for use in the LR Web Module.

Gallery 3

Gallery 3 is a powerful open source content management system specifically for web galleries. Once set up, it is easy to manage and upload images to, especially using LR and the plug-in for it.

My whole website at colincampbellphotoart.ca is a Gallery 3 installation using the G3 plug-in for LR, with the exception of the home page, which was built in Lightroom using TTG plug-ins.

Download Gallery 3 from gallery.menalto.com and a Gallery 3 Publish Service plug-in for Lightroom that works for me at http://felix.nesciens.net/?p=123

WordPress

WordPress is a hugely popular blogging platform and powerful content management system. You can either download it from wordpress.org and upload it to a hosting service or set up a WordPress website at wordpress.com. Many hosting services offer WordPress as an option without any intallation hassles.

SlideShowPro

A popular photo gallery program, originally a Flash plug-in, now available as a Lightroom plug-in. $35

Accessed in Lightroom as a Layout Style in the Web Module.

Download:
http://slideshowpro.net/products/slideshowpro_player/#ssplr

Installation Guide (a little more involved than other plugins):
http://wiki.slideshowpro.net/SSPlr/IN-InstallPlugin

User Instructions:
http://wiki.slideshowpro.net/SSPlr/QuickStart

Flickr / Facebook / SmugMug

Plug-ins are available to publish images to various social media.

Pro Show

A plug-in is available at photodex.com to publish directly to ProShow Web & ProShow Producer, but I could not find one that works with ProShow Gold.

X-Rite ColorChecker Passport DNG ProfileManager

Another plug-in useful for many photographers is the one used in conjunction with X-Rite's ColorChecker Passport to aid colour management. It rightfully belongs at the beginning of the Lightroom workflow. For details on its use, go to: http://xritephoto.com/ph_product_overview.aspx?id=1257&catid=28&action=overview

Web Sources:

http://ononesoftware.com
http://niksoftware.com
http://topazlabs.com
http://hdrsoft.com
http://imagenomic.com
http://blurb.com
http://gallery.menalto.com & gallery.menalto.com/node/97832
http://theturninggate.net
http://slideshowpro.net
http://wordpress.org & http://wordpress.com