

SCUM Book Review

“Adobe Photoshop Elements 3.0, Classroom in a Book” (Windows Version)

By Adobe Press

Review by Fred Offenbach, SCUM

Forward by the SCUM Librarian: *“In an effort to get a hold of a good reference work for the newly released Photoshop Elements 3.0, I requested a copy of this book. In my zeal, I regrettably ignored the small type at the bottom of the cover where it said ‘Windows Version.’ Because I believed the two versions are quite similar in some ways, I cast about for a Photoshop Elements 3.0 pro to do a review. My first choice was Fred Offenbach who has taught Photoshop Elements classes in the past and will in the future. He has labored under difficulties that were not of his own making, nor those of the publisher. My apologies and congratulations to Fred on the following effort.”*

In reviewing this book it is necessary to state that the Windows version of the program Photoshop Elements 3.0 differs significantly from the Macintosh version 3.0. Even in Photoshop Elements, Version 2, Adobe marketed a package of PSE 2.0 plus Photo Album for Windows while Mac users were unable to use the 2.0 program. The program at that time was cross-platform with a common 250-page book that was included with the program disk. With version 3.0 the disk is unique to one OS, and there is no significant book that is included.

When Adobe published version 3.0 they incorporated the Album program into the PSE 3.0 with the Windows version, and they called it Organizer; however, they did not include the Organizer into the Mac version. The first 50 pages of this 290 page book are dedicated to the Organizer. Beyond this fact, the book includes a disk containing all of the photos to be used with the exercises, and the disk cannot be opened with the Mac OS. It is certainly possible to convert the files, via a Windows computer, into JPEG files and then open them on a Mac so that you could do the exercises. Instead, a Mac user can substitute photos that are similar.

With all of the aforementioned handicaps, the book is still usable, if you want to read between the lines. There are exercises that are good in that they use different tools to accomplish the same task, and to compare the results. For these instances the book is good.

I expected to find more insider tricks and advance techniques, since the book is written for Adobe Press. It did cover some intermediate tasks, but most of it is for the beginner to intermediate level. And with the lack of photos, a beginner might find it exhausting.

In summary, the book is probably an average book for a Windows beginner because it does lead you step by step. For a Mac beginner who wants a book, there are better teaching books available for version 2 and there should shortly be

many for version 3. Those fans who have a version 2 book with a version 3 disk will find little to justify a version 3 book because of the relative few changes in the program.