

Working with the Filters

So, now that we have our 384 filters organized into their respective categories, let's see what they do.

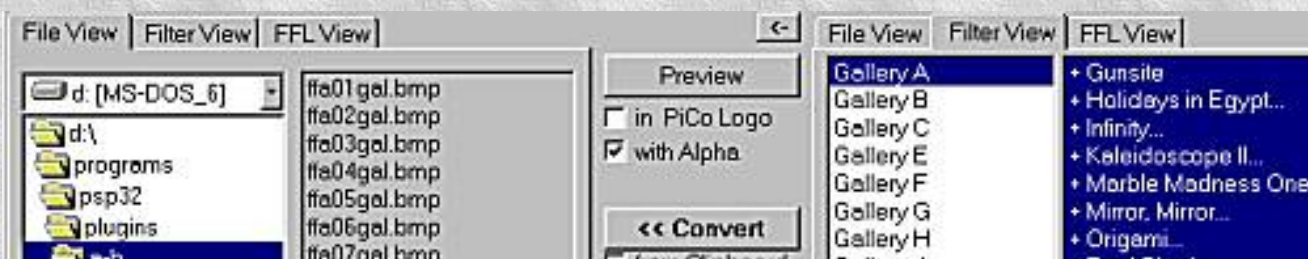
Two Quick Glances

1) Using the PiCo logo to preview filter effects

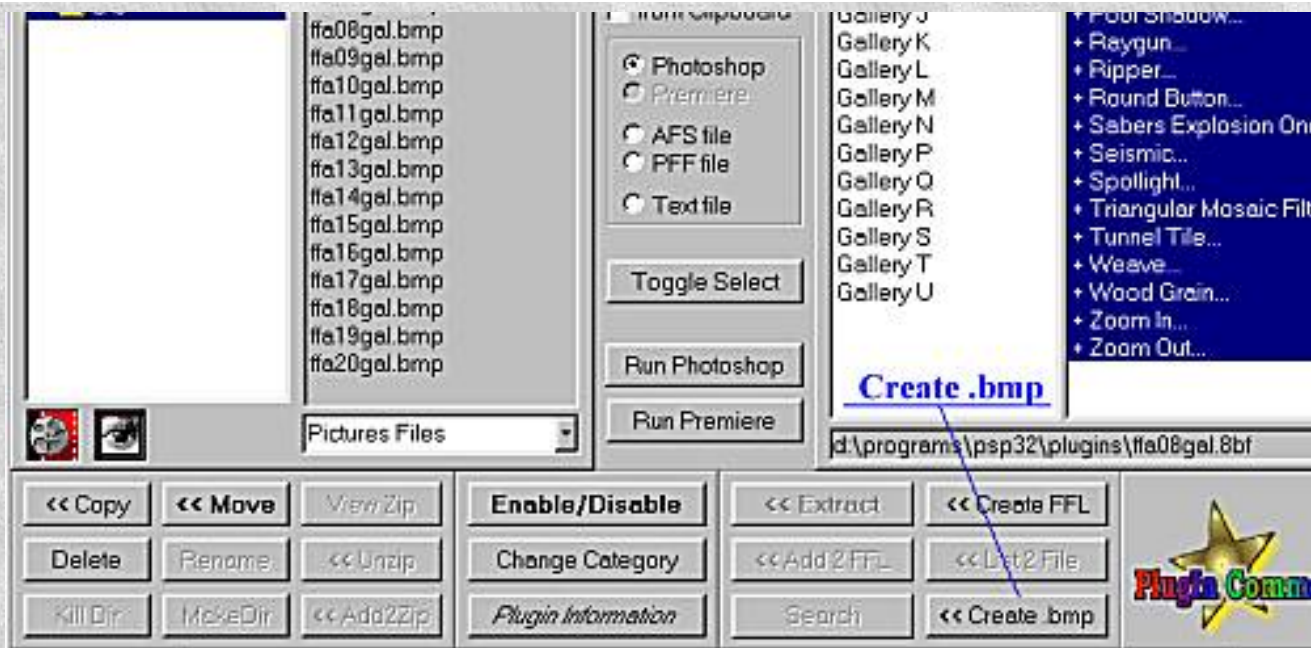


We'll begin by activating the right Tab Screen in Filter View. Now, highlight the first filter in the A Gallery (**Gunsight**) and then click the *in Pico logo* checkbox. You'll see that the PiCo logo in the lower right corner now shows the effect of the **Gunsight** filter on an image called *test.bmp* (you'll find this .bmp in the Pico directory). You can now use the down arrow to move through successive filters (**Holidays in Egypt...**, **Infinity...**, etc.) and see the effects of each filter in the PiCo logo.

2) Creating a file of thumbnails



Create some sub-directories in your plugins directory. I've



used a-b, c-d, etc., but you can group them however you like. Open the first of these subdirectories in the left Tab Screen. Now in the right Tab Screen select all the filters. Finally, hit the **Create .bmp** button.

PiCo will create a thumbnail .bmp image for each of the 20 filters in Gallery A. Do the same for Gallery B. Now you can use the "browser" function in PSP (or any other thumbnail viewer) and see the effects of all these 40 filters together.

Below is an example of part of the a-b subdirectory opened with PSP's browser.

HINT: You can control the size of each of these thumbnails in PSP by hitting File/Preferences/General Program Preferences/Browser and choosing a size.



The only drawback to this method of looking at filter effects is that the filternames are filenames, not the

names of the filters themselves; **ffa19gal** isn't as helpful or easy to remember as **Triangular Mosaic Filter**. Of course, you can switch to *File View* and double-click on the filename --thus opening the [FF Editor](#)-- and then read the filter name from the credits window, or you can download this [text file with the filters arranged by filename](#) and consult it whenever you need to know which filter corresponds to which filename.

Finally, you might consider converting all these bmp's into jpg's; 40 bmp's take up 2 Mb, whereas 40 jpg's, compressed at 30, take up only 220 Kb. PSP has a Batch Conversion utility (File/Batch Conversion...) that works like a charm.

The Filter Factory Editor

Introduction

Each of the filter-enhanced images we saw in the last section was created using the filter author's default slider settings. Now we'll take a closer look at each of these filters using PiCo, and discover the limitless possibilities of Filter Factory Filters.

When you double-click on any of the filters (it doesn't matter whether you're in *File View* or *Filter View*) the **Filter Factory Editor** will automatically open. For this demonstration we've chosen to open Mario Klingemann's **Raygun** filter (Gallery A, ffa02gal.8bf).



Note: If you don't see the "**Gearwheel Hubbub**" interface, go into PiCo's preferences (PiCo/Preferences or hit F+12) and choose it in the *Interface Design* dropdown window. Or choose any of the others if you like them better.

Randomizing

A good way to get a general idea of all that a filter is capable of is by hitting the ***Randomize*** button (circled in aqua). This changes all the sliders in a random fashion. Keep clicking on ***Randomize*** and if you get an effect that you particularly like, hit one of the ten red save buttons in the upper right corner. When you're done browsing, you can click on each of these buttons to bring back up the effect you liked. Now start experimenting with the sliders.

Creating a Default Image for ***Big View***

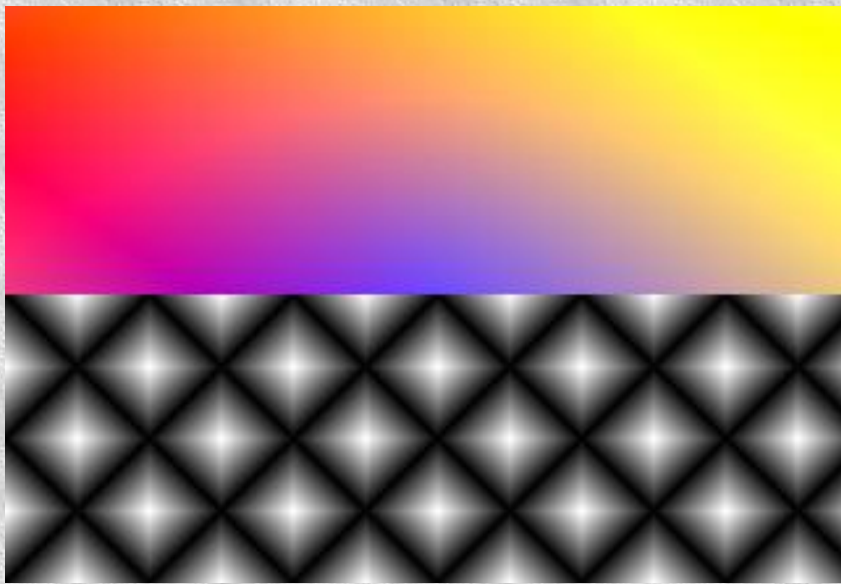
The test.bmp image that comes with PiCo is fine as far as it goes, but there are obvious advantages to creating your own default image. For one thing, you can make it larger so it can show better detail. Naturally there is a size/time trade-off here: the bigger you make your test image the longer it will take to load when you hit ***Big View***, the button just up from ***Randomize***, that will show you a full size view of the filter effect. You'll just have to experiment and see how long you have to wait for various sized images. Remember too that different filters take different lengths of time to effect an image.

Another reason to make your own default image is that the Filter Factory Filters are an incredibly varied lot: you may find, for example, that although a certain filter doesn't have a particularly interesting effect on a conventional photo, it might have a very dramatic effect on text or an abstract image. What follows is a suggestion for a default image, one that will show us four possible effects for each view.

Go into PSP or whatever you're using and create a 16 million color 320 x 220 pixel image; the background color is unimportant, but the proportions should be 16/11. Select the top half of this image, that is, an area 320 by 110. Go into Gallery R, choose Harry Raver's ***Mystic Mountain***, and adjust the controls until you get a nice rainbow effect. Hit OK and the result should be something like this:



Now select the lower half of the image with the Magic Wand tool, go to Gallery G and choose Mario Klingemann's ***Pyramids with Depth*** filter. Take the divisions down to around 45 and hit OK. Now your image looks like this:



Grab part of a photo and paste it into the right hand side of the image; then use the text editor to write something in the left. This is the finished product:



Save this as a bmp image and stick it wherever you like; hit *Open* in the FF Editor; go find your default bmp image and load it. Now whenever you click on a filter, you'll have an idea of what it does to 4 kinds of images. Just to give you an idea, we applied various settings of *Raygun* to our default image; after checking them out using *Big View*, we hit *Save Pic* to save the ones we liked and then turned them into jpg's. Below are four of the results:





That's all for now. If you have any questions or comments, please pass by the [Pico Board](#).

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[Visca el Filter Factory!](#)

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