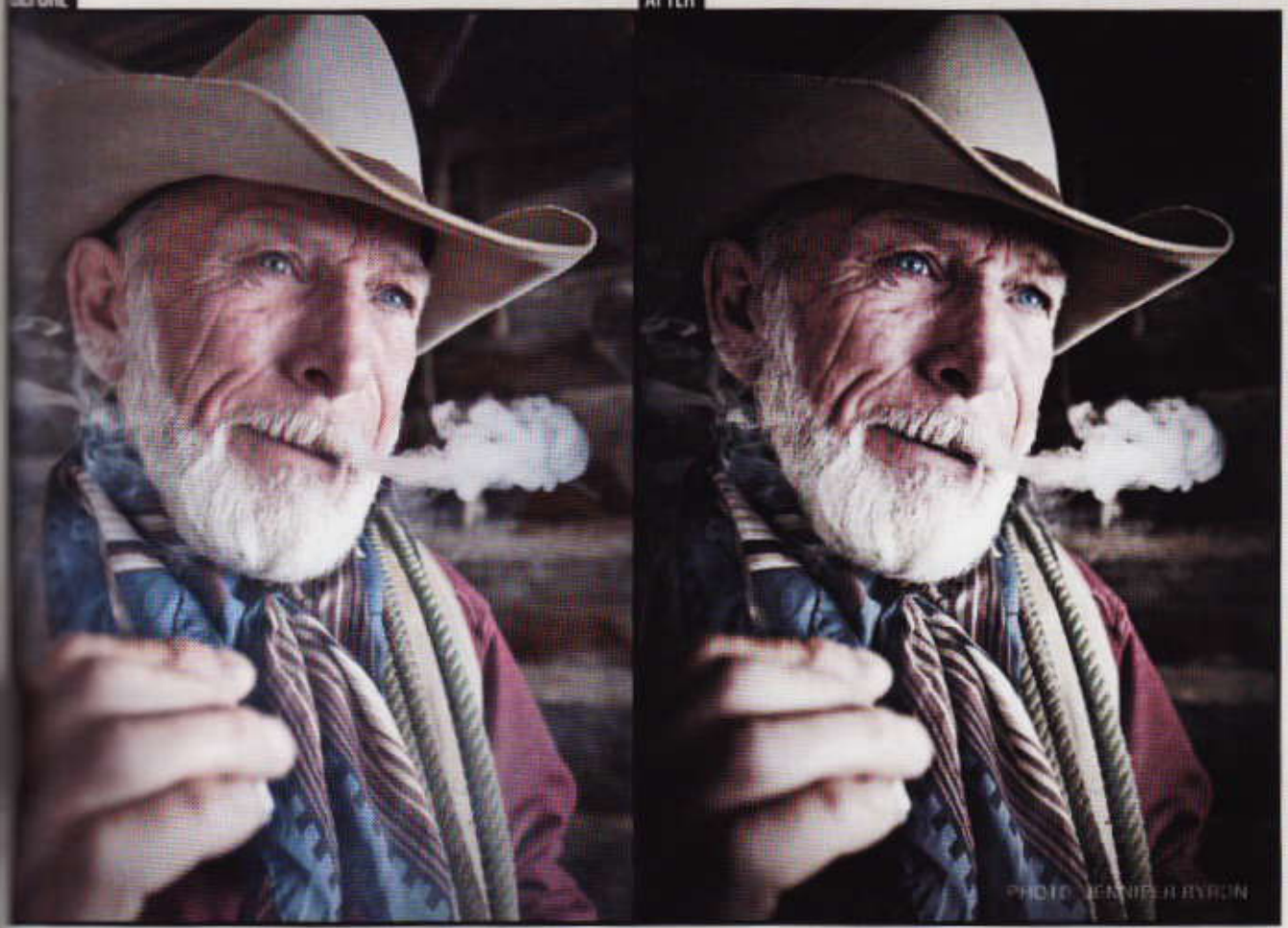

Applying A Dragon Effect

Controlling the look of specific blocks within an image is good, but sometimes a little dodge and burn is necessary to touch up the details within a scene. If you want to lend a grungier feeling to your image, try the 'dragon effect.'

1. Start by increasing the contrast of the image.
2. Pay special attention to the contrast of the eyes by creating masks and adjusting the different parts of the eye to increase the contrast.
3. An 'S' curve layer can be applied to the image to increase contrast control.
4. Duplicate the image, create a grayscale version and increase the contrast even further (ensure this layer is on top of the original layer).
5. Reduce the opacity of the grayscale image to create a starker and more desaturated look.
6. Restore the saturation of the eyes using a mask on the grayscale image.
7. Combine both layers and duplicate the newly combined layer.
8. Apply a High Pass filter on the top layer and set the Blending Mode to Soft Light. Sometimes it's best to selectively apply this effect with a layer mask on the subject's hair.
9. Shift the overall color tone of the image by creating a solid color layer with a low opacity (about 20-30%) and setting the Blend Mode to Softlight. Using the Color Picker, choose a color that gives the final image a tone that suits the mood you're after. This effect can be made as subtle or extreme as you'd like by increasing or decreasing the opacity. If there's an object in the scene that has a color you don't want to be changed by this new layer, a mask can be created on the solid color's layer.