cool 'edgy' text

Make your text look as if it's carved
in stone. Funky text treatments, just
as you'd expect from us.

a TUTORIAL for
Edge Anarchy from
the Texture Anarchy suite.

infinite and scalable textures.

[from Digital Anarchy]

digital
anarchy

The best way to use Edge Anarchy with text is to make sure the text is thick. This is because Edge Anarchy cuts into the image to create a border. It is even better to use an oversized font, create the effect, then use Photoshop to scale down. Text effects don't work at smaller point sizes, because the characters get too thin and eaten away.

[figure 1]

In this tutorial, we are going to take a close look at Edge Anarchy and some of its key parameters. We used Futura Bold, which is a nice, thick san serif font. [figure 1]
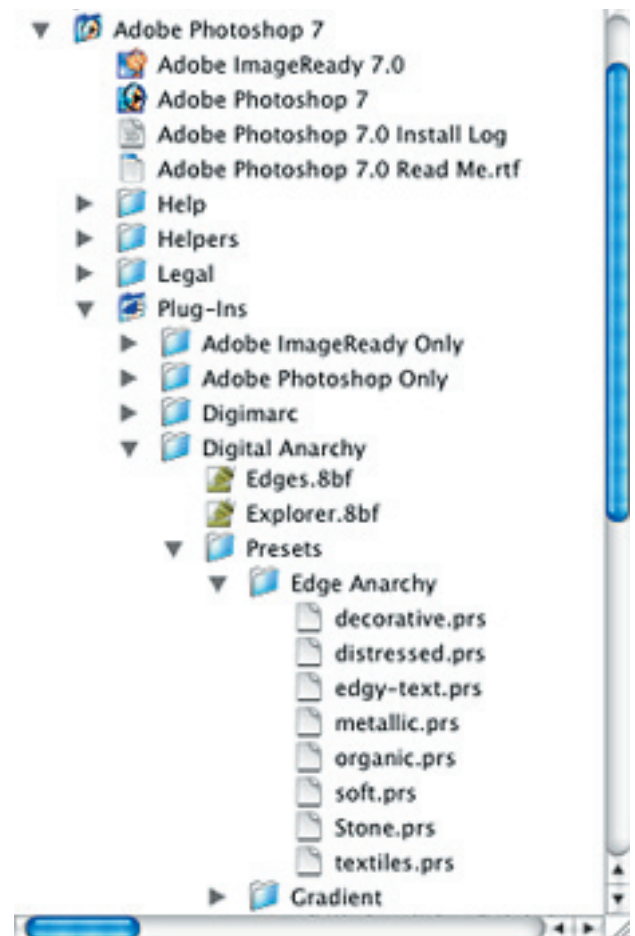
[figure 2]

01- load the preset

To work with this tutorial, you will need our texture preset and a starting image. A 'preset' is a pattern that we have already created for you to work with.

The preset and image are on the Digital Anarchy website, at the following location. Please copy or type this location into your browser (Internet Explorer, Safari) to download the file: http://www.digitalanarchy.com/tutorials/texture_edge-text.zip

Unzip to get two files. The image file 'anarchy.psd' is the Photoshop file that you will add edges to.

The other file, called 'edge-text.prs', is the preset file. Copy the preset (.prs) file into the Edge Anarchy folder in your Photoshop application folder. That location is: Photoshop\ Plug-Ins\ Digital Anarchy\ Presets\ Edge Anarchy. [figure 2]

* We have pictured Macintosh folders here, but the path is the same for Windows.
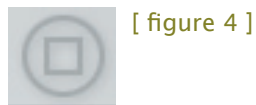
02- apply the filter

Open up the 'anarchy.psd' file in Photoshop. This image will be our starting point, and is made of rasterized text over a solid black layer. [figure 3]

Apply Edge Anarchy through the menu Filters> Digital Anarchy> Edge Anarchy). This will bring up the Edge Anarchy interface, with all its bells and whistles.

Let's explain what some of the bells do, and we'll get to the whistles later. In the upper right corner, click on the Preset Manager. This is the icon that has a square within a circle. [figure 4]
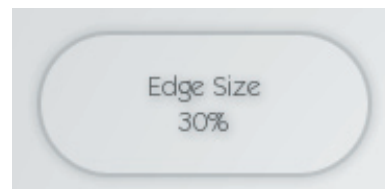
Scroll to the 'edgy text' category. There are three textures: Text Start, Cut Marble, and Marble Finish. Select the 'Text Start' preset, then click the OK button. [figure 5]

03- set edge size

First, let's adjust 'Edge Size' by scrubbing on that value until you reach 30%. [figure 6]

This controls how much the texture eats into the original image. Edge Size works in conjunction with the settings Falloff Gradient and Cutout Texture, but it is the main component for determining how much of an edge you'll create.

Notice that as the Edge Size is increased, it eats away at more of the image and will eventually erode the entire image. [figure 7]

[figure 3]

[figure 4]

[figure 5]

[figure 6]

[figure 7]

05- set edge type

There are two types of Edges that can be set by the 'Edge Type' parameter. Gaussian produces a rounded edge and is more suitable for images. Voronoi produces a square edge and is FAR more suitable for text. To change between types, just click on the Edge Type box. [figure 7]
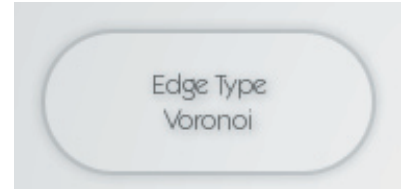
[figure 7]

Since we are using text, change Edge Type to Voronoi. You'll notice that the text takes on a harder edge immediately and is considerably less eroded than with Gaussian. Our Gaussian example has much rounder sides and doesn't hold the text together anywhere near as well as the Voronoi example. [figure 8]

Why 'Gaussian' and 'Voronoi' instead of Round and Square? Because we're always trying to teach people new words... we're looking out for you! Then again, perhaps it's just because we're programmer geeks and don't have enough sense to name things Round and Square.

[figure 8]

06- resize cutout texture

A few notes on how textures affect the text image. There are two texture wells, 'Cutout Texture' and 'Tint Texture'. [figure 9]

The 'Cutout Texture' is the more important one. It creates the bump map that determines how the text/image will be eroded away. A 'bump map' is an image that erodes and shifts another image. The higher the contrast in the bump texture, the more erosion you'll see in the image it is affecting or displacing.
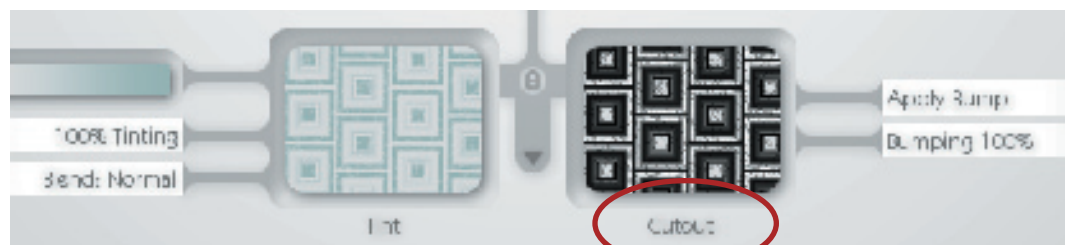
[figure 9]

In a bump map, black and white act as extreme values. The more blacks and whites, the more erosion and displacement. If there are more neutral grays, the overall effect will be less severe.

Scale the 'Cutout Texture' up and down. To do this, hover your cursor over the texture well until transform controls appear. Select the right-most icon, which is Scale. [figure 10]

[figure 10]

As you scrub to the left, the texture will get smaller, and you'll get more detail on the text. [figure 11a] Scrub to the right to decrease the texture size and detail. [figure 11b]

You can also use the Pan and Rotate transform tools to reposition the texture. Since the textures you are applying are procedural – based on mathematical algorithms – there is no pixelation or 'stair-steps'.

[figure 11a]

07– change falloff gradient

The other texture well is 'Tint Texture'. This determines how the texture's color blends with the color of the original image. The prominance of the Tint depends mostly on the Falloff Gradient.

[figure 11b]

'Falloff Gradient' sets the blend of the tint and bump map with the colors of the original text/image. It also sets the transparency of the edge. [figure 12a]

Click on Falloff to see the gradient. The preset is at halfway point, leaving an even mix of Tint and original color. [figure 12b] Let's move the points further to the left, so the text color will be more influenced by the Tint texture. This causes the coloring of the text to take on the texture color. [figure 12c]
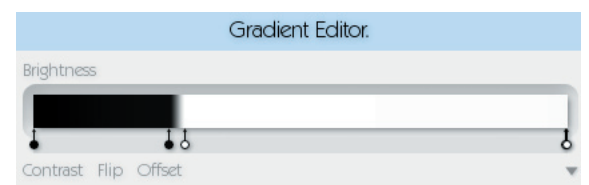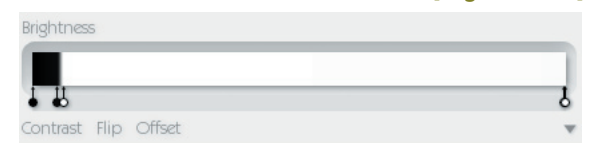

[figure 12a]

[figure 12b]

[figure 12c]

Keep the two middle black/white points close together to produce a solid edge. [figure 13] If they are far apart, leaving mid-gray tones, the edge will slowly fade out to transparency, which is not what we want.

If we move the gradient points further left and increase the Edge Size to 80, you will end up with an even more eaten-away image. [figure 14]

Alternately, you can load in our 'Cut Marble' preset to get this image.

[figure 13]

[figure 14]

08- change gradient again

As an experiment, move the Falloff Gradient points to the right end. [figure 12] Everything disappears!

Not quite... If you set Edge Size back to 20%, the image reappears. By setting the Falloff Gradient so far right, we were only using the Cutout Texture itself to create a displacement. We had reduced the influence of the Tint to basically nothing.

This results in a silhouette of sorts with the Cutout distorting the text, but not giving it any sort of depth or coloring. [figure 13] It is very useful when dealing with images for which you want to create a distressed but non-textured edge.

[figure 12]

[figure 13]

In summary, by moving the Gradient points left, we increased the influence of the Tint Texture. By increasing the Edge Size, we allowed more of the original image to be affected by both the Tint and the Cutout Texture.

The combination leads to a sharp, stylized, 3D-ish effect. You can apply the 'Marble Finish' preset to see this final effect.