

Copying and Placing Objects and Assets in Affinity Photo

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Introduction

This document explains two capabilities of Affinity Photo:-

- Select, Copy and Paste an object from one image into another image
- Adding an Asset from the library of Affinity Photo assets

By selecting and copying an object from one image and pasting it in another image it is possible to create a composite image to create an artistic vision or intent. Care is needed to ensure the moved object matches the new image in terms of direction of light, colour tonality, etc so the viewer does not know it has been manually placed there.

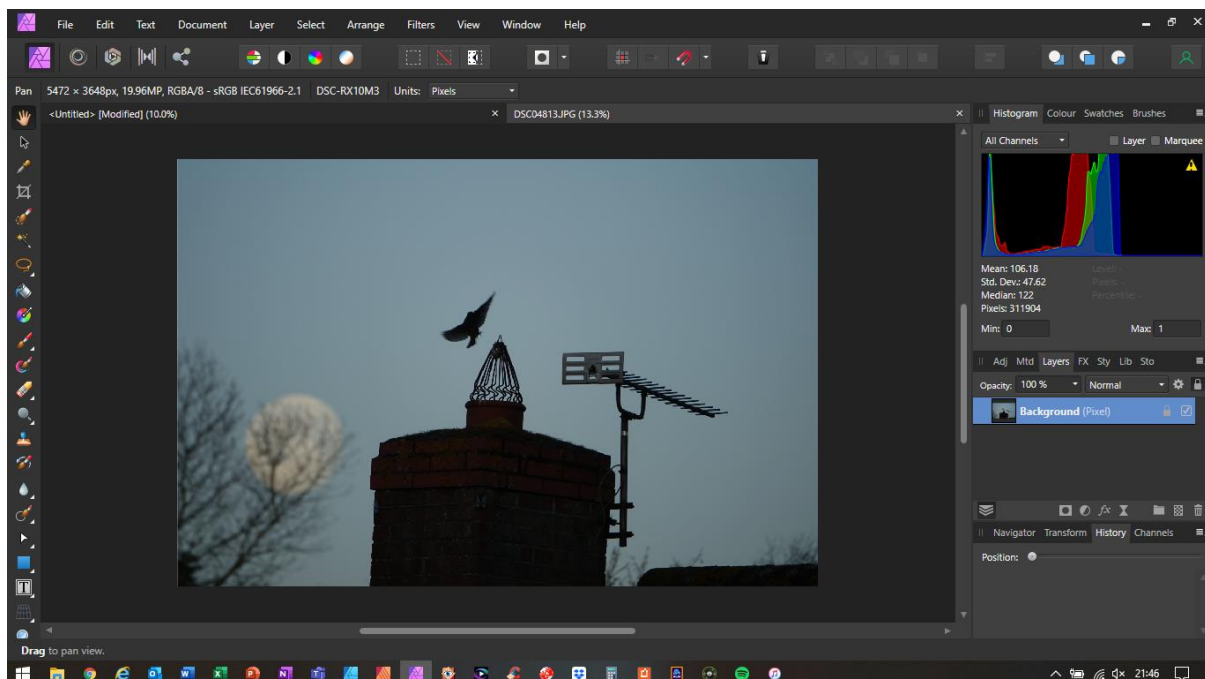
Assets in Affinity Photo are objects that can be placed into an image in a similar way. Assets and Overlays can be purchased and loaded into Affinity Photo for future use.

Warning: Using purchased content such as Assets and Overlays in images for submission to photographic competitions is not permitted under club competition rules. All content has to be created by the author of the images submitted to competitions.

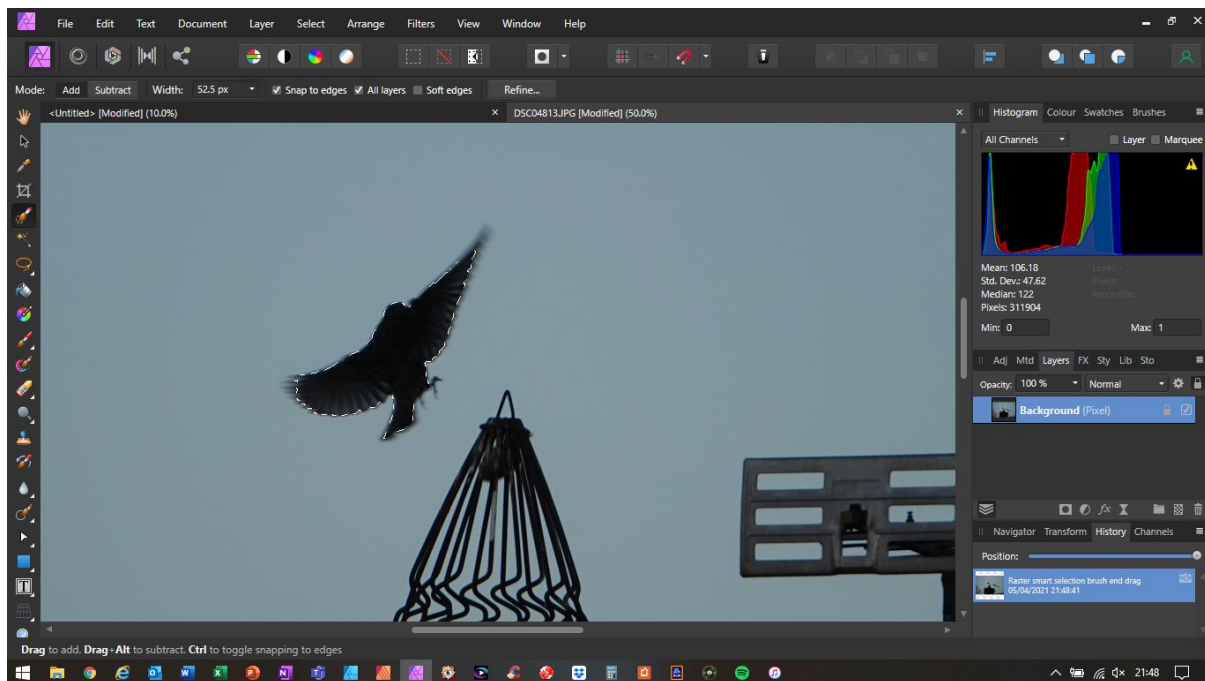
Copying and Pasting an Object

Using an image of a rooftop we will superimpose an object onto the image. In this example a bird will be added.

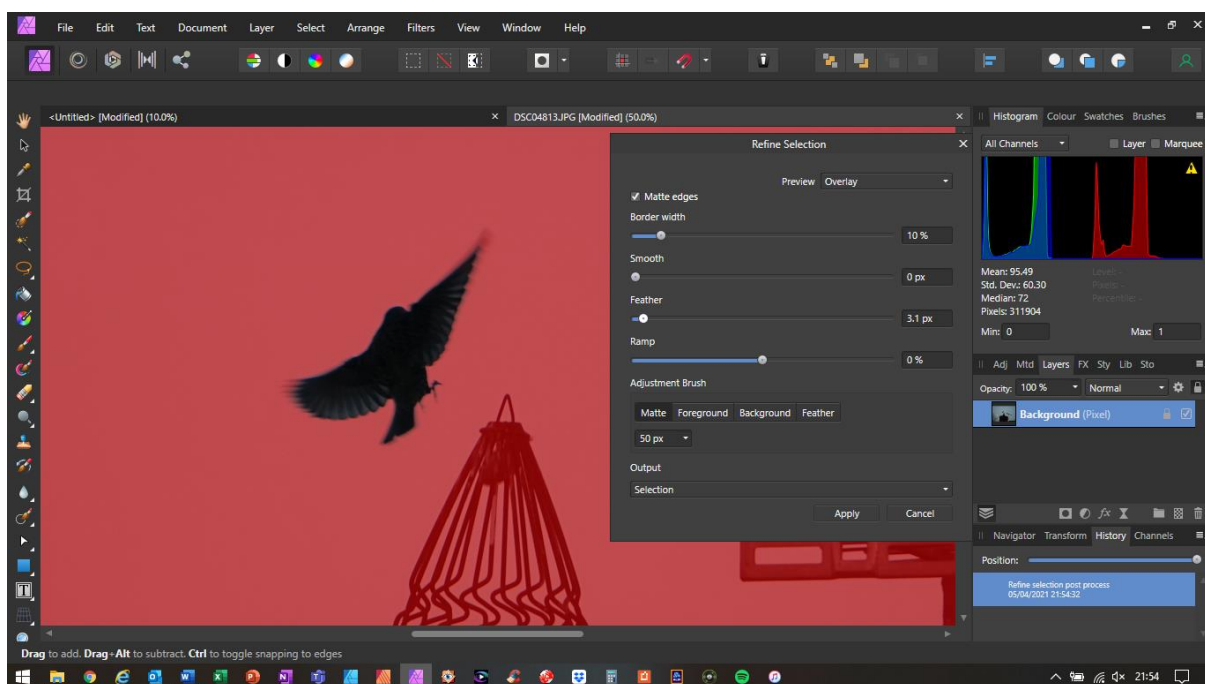
With the background image open in Affinity Photo, open the image from which you want to copy the object. There will then be two images open, signified by the two tabs at the top of the screen:



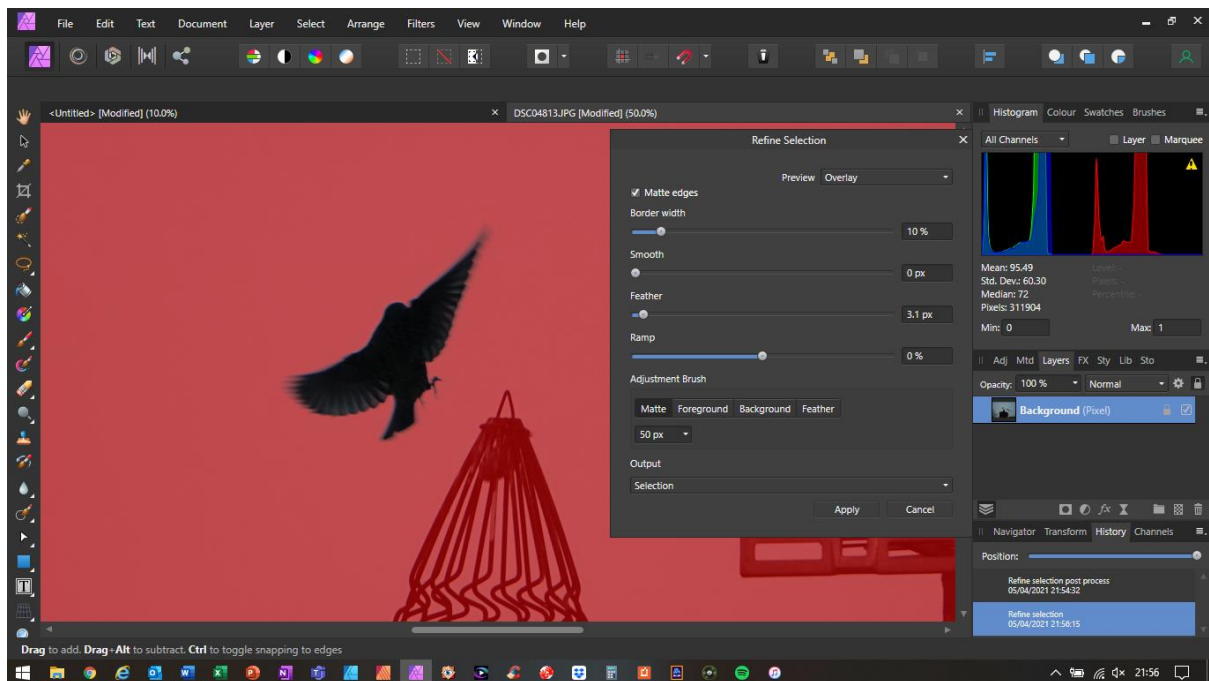
Using the Selection Brush from the left-hand tool bar, ensure Add is selected in the Command Bar at the top of the screen, set an appropriately sized selection brush then select the bird in the source image:



Because the bird has soft edges (motion blur) press the Refine button on the Command Bar at the top of the screen. A Refinement panel opens and Affinity Photo attempts to refine the selection. When the refinement has completed the screen has a red mask on the areas that are not selected and the red mask is not covering the selected area. You will see that the mask overlaps the bird's wing tips so it needs more refinement. Move the Feather slider to the right slightly (by a couple of pixels) then click on the Matte Adjustment Brush size (defaults to 50px):

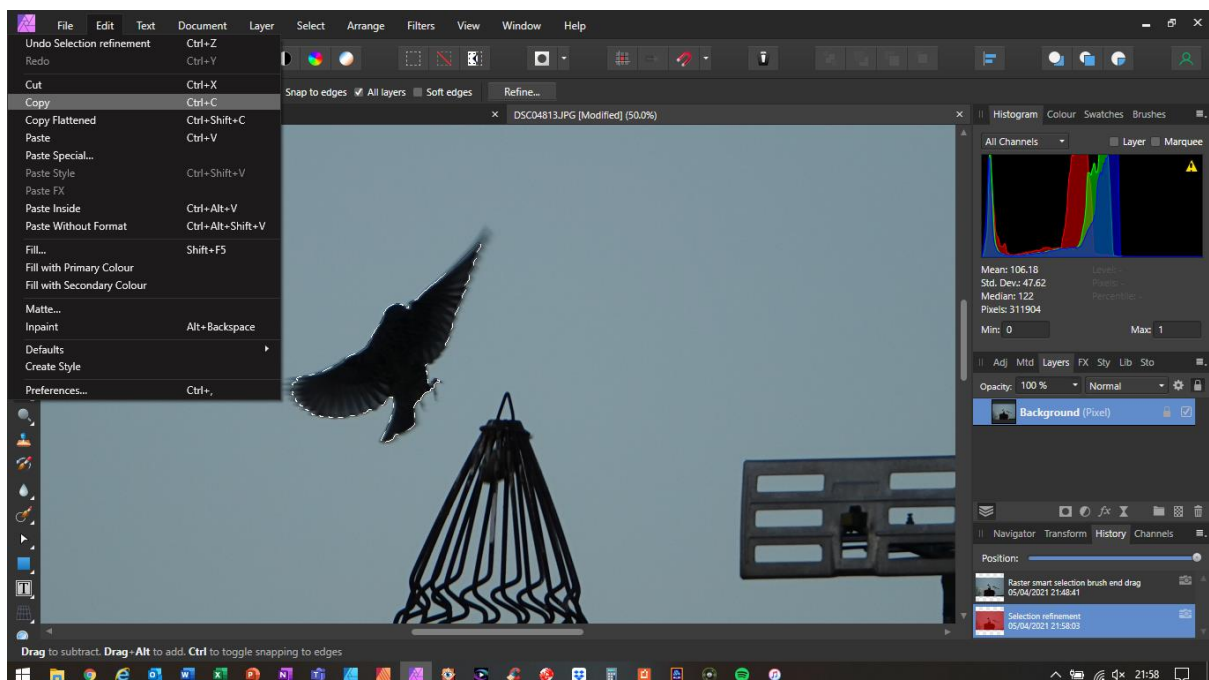


Brush around the outside of the bird. This makes Affinity Photo have a closer look at the edges of the bird to refine the selection:

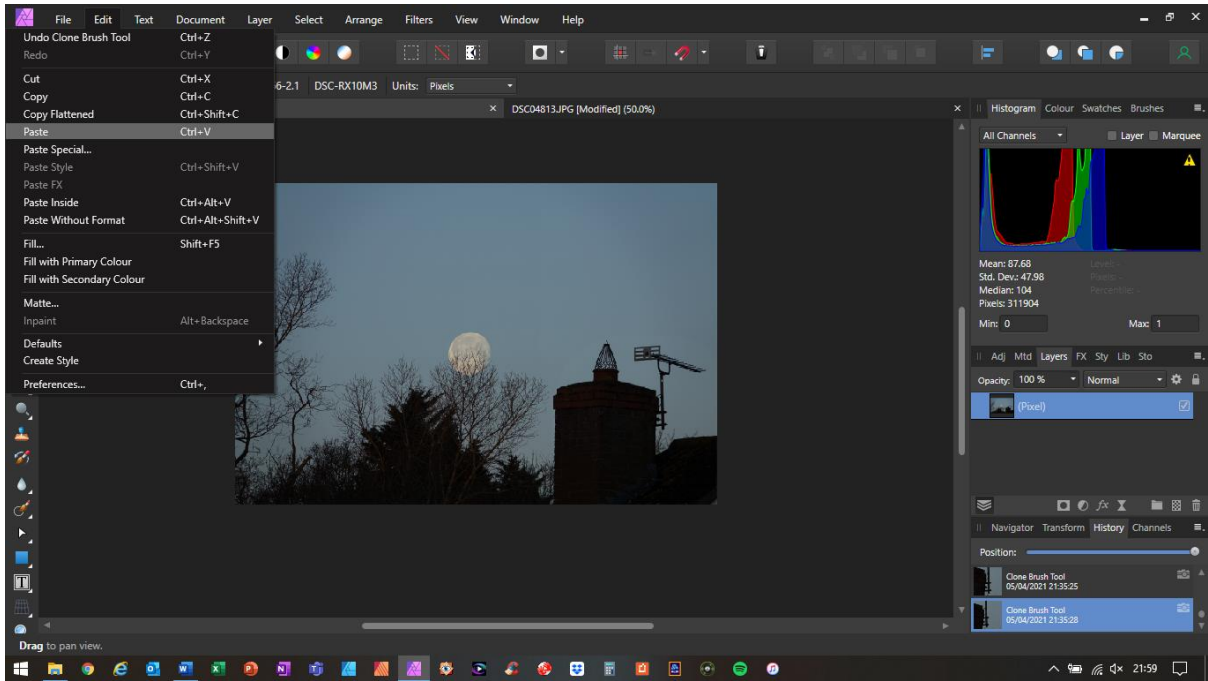


The two screenshots above look very similar but the lower image has a better refinement around the tips of the bird's wings. Click on the Apply button at the bottom of the Refine Selection panel:

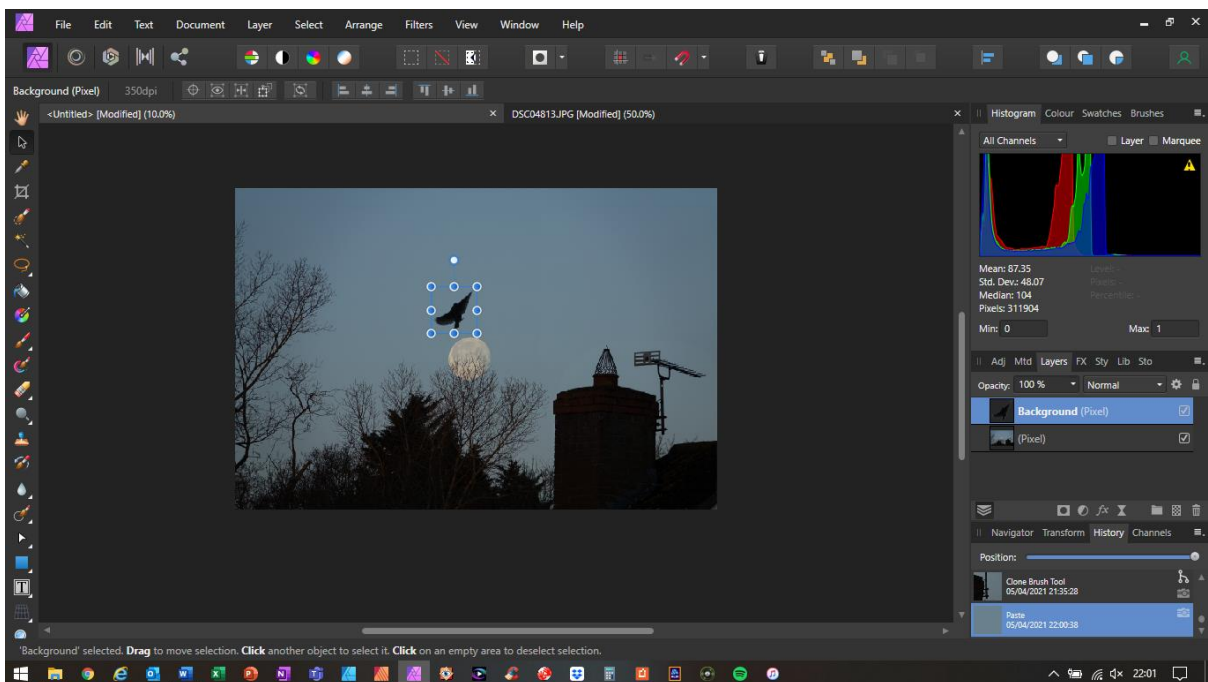
Go to Edit -> Copy



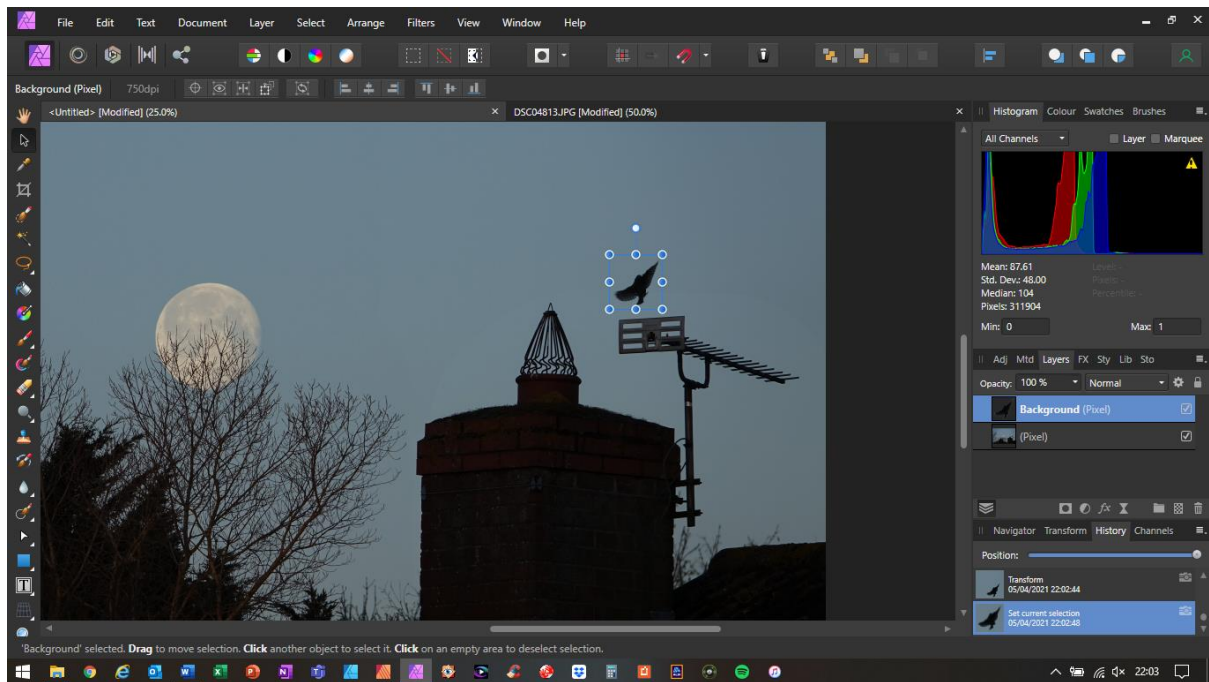
Click on the tab at the top to go to the other image then click on Edit -> Paste



The bird is pasted onto the image. Click on the Move Tool (near the top of the Tools Bar on the left of the screen):



Move the bird to the required position, such as near the TV aerial, and make it smaller so it is in proportion for the new position:



If you click on the Pan Tool (looks like a hand icon near the top-left of the screen) this deselects the bird in its new position. You will see that there are now two layers in the Layers Panel on the right, one for the background and one for the bird.

Note: We will use this composite image in the next example. The other image we copied the bird from isn't needed so it can be closed.

Using Assets

In Affinity Photo an Asset is an image you have bought and installed which can be overlaid onto an image of your own.

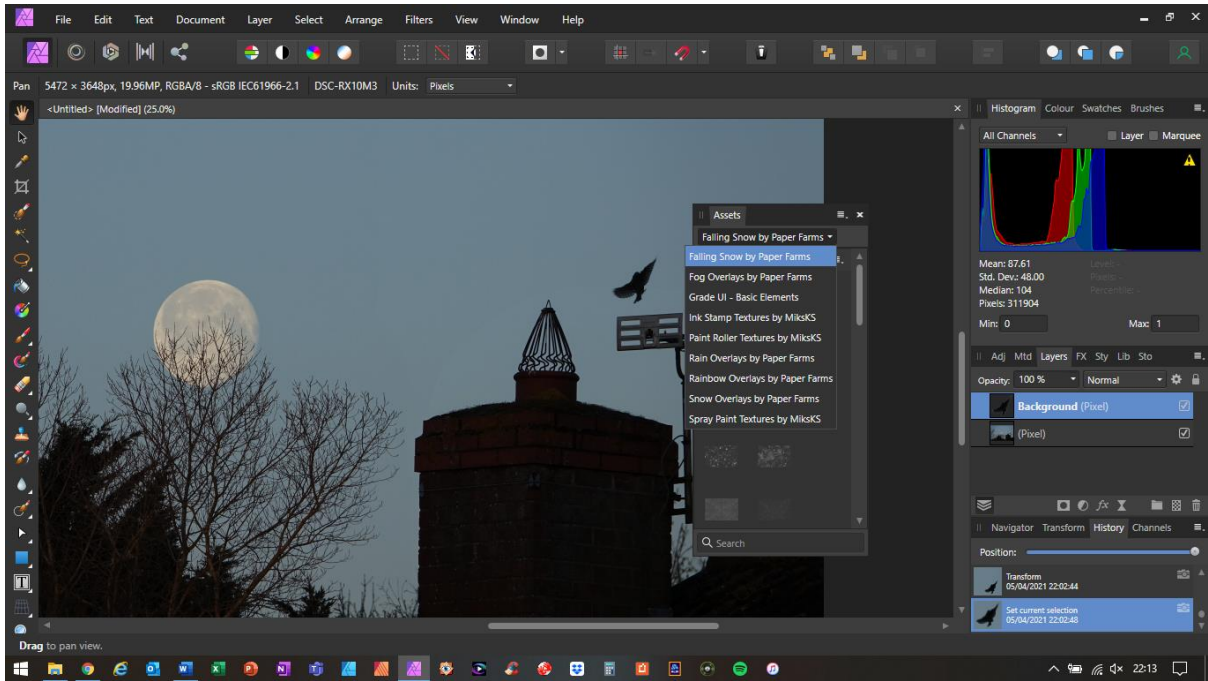
There are many Assets available to buy from the Affinity Store:

<https://affinity.serif.com/en-gb/store/>

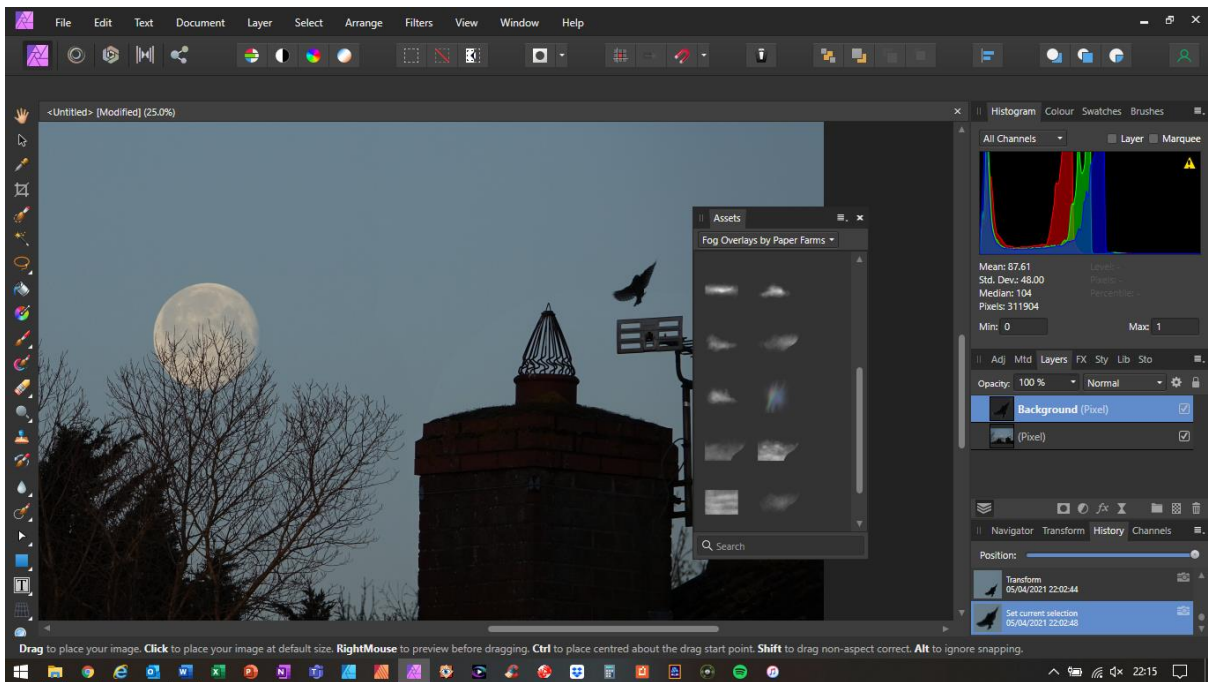
Warning: Photographic competitions do not permit purchased content to be used in images. All content must be the work of the author of the image.

Go to View -> Studio -> Assets

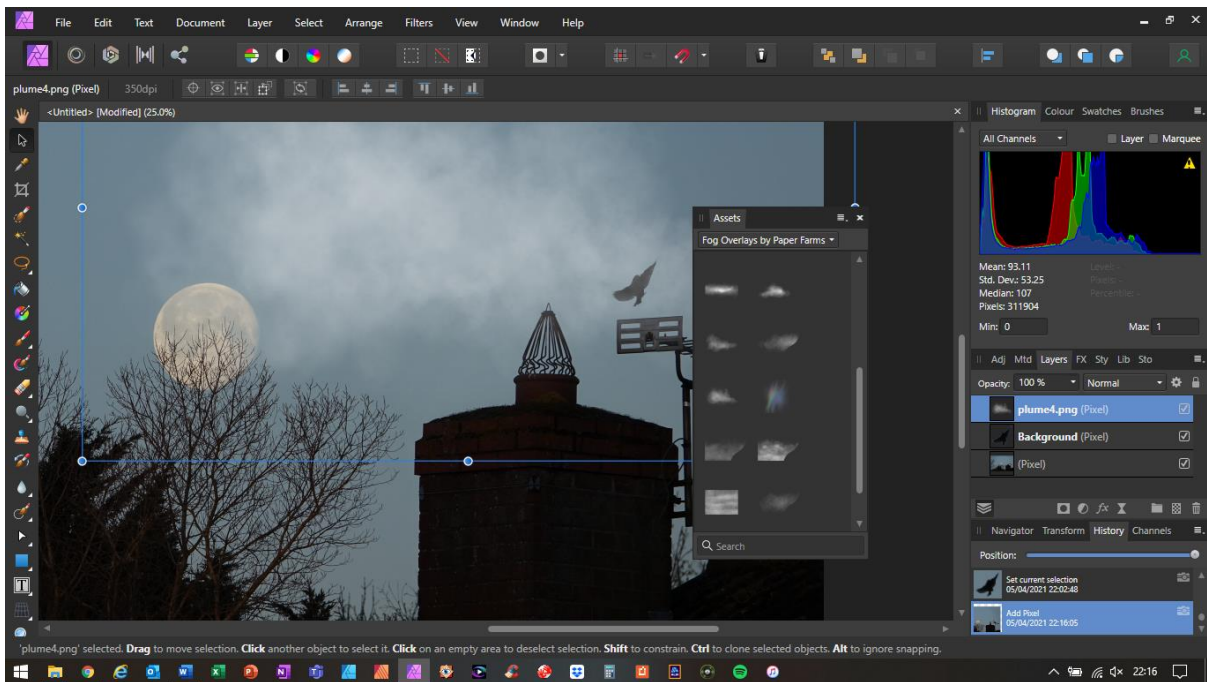
An Assets panel opens. Any Assets you have loaded into Affinity will be visible in a dropdown list:



In this example we will use a Fog Overlay asset to simulate smoke coming out of the chimney:

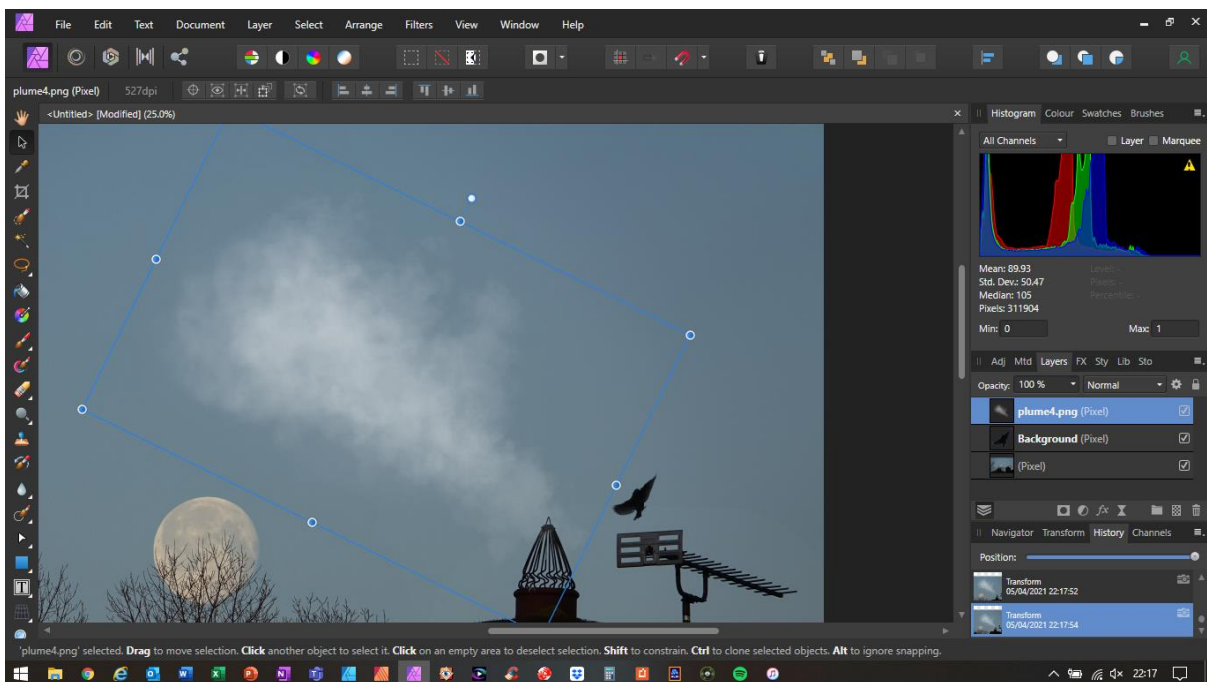


When the asset is selected, the cursor changes shape to signify there is an object to place on the image. Clicking on the main screen will place the image as a new layer:



The asset is now a layer, as can be seen in the Layers Panel on the right. The Assets Panel can be closed.

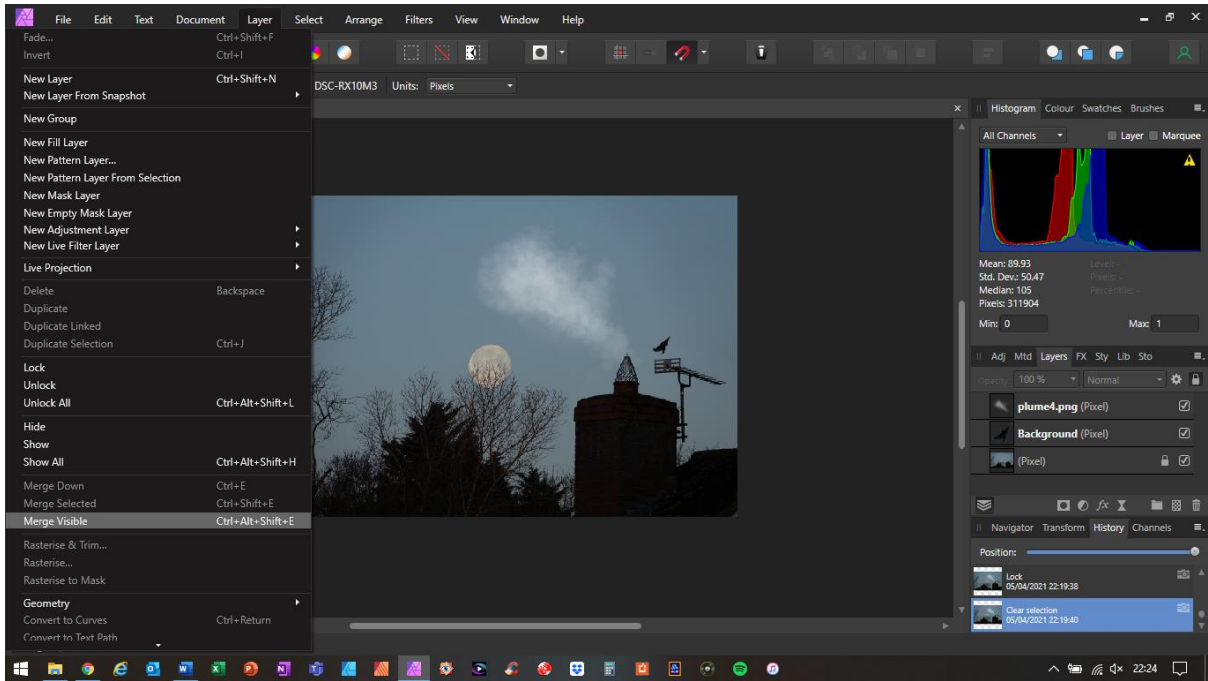
Resize and rotate the asset image and move it into the required position:



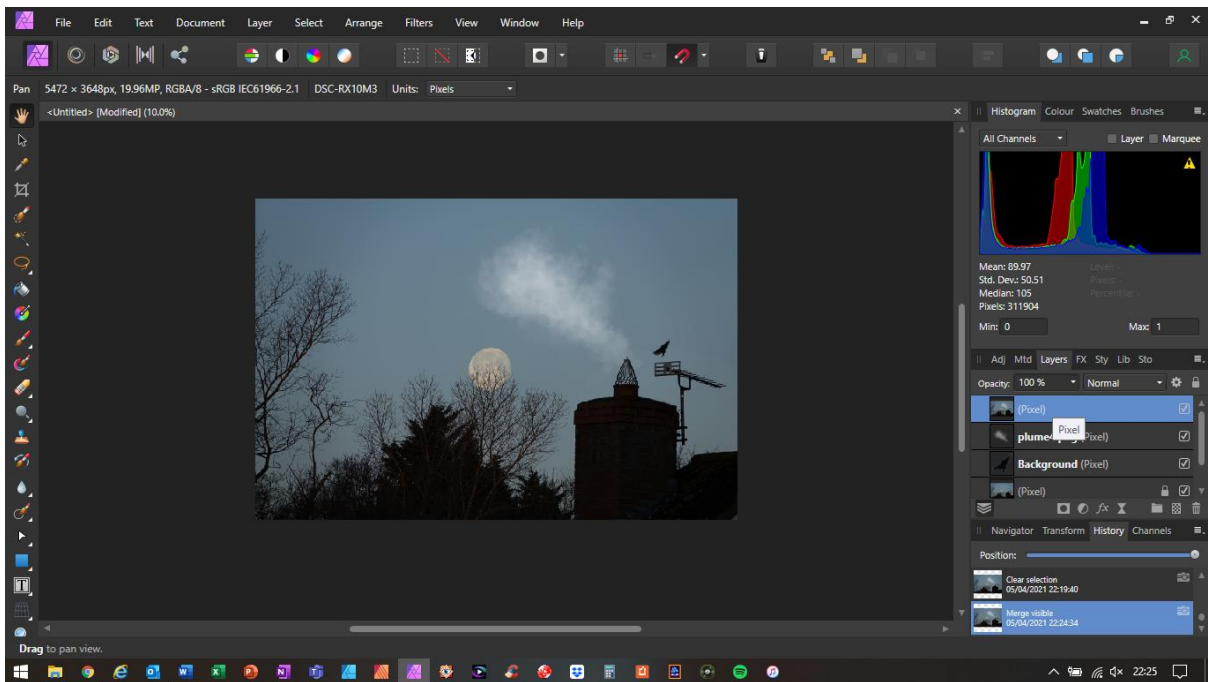
The Fog asset looks like smoke coming from the chimney in this example. The composite image has now been created. All that remains is some adjustments, as follows:

Before making adjustments to the final composite image, merge the visible layers.

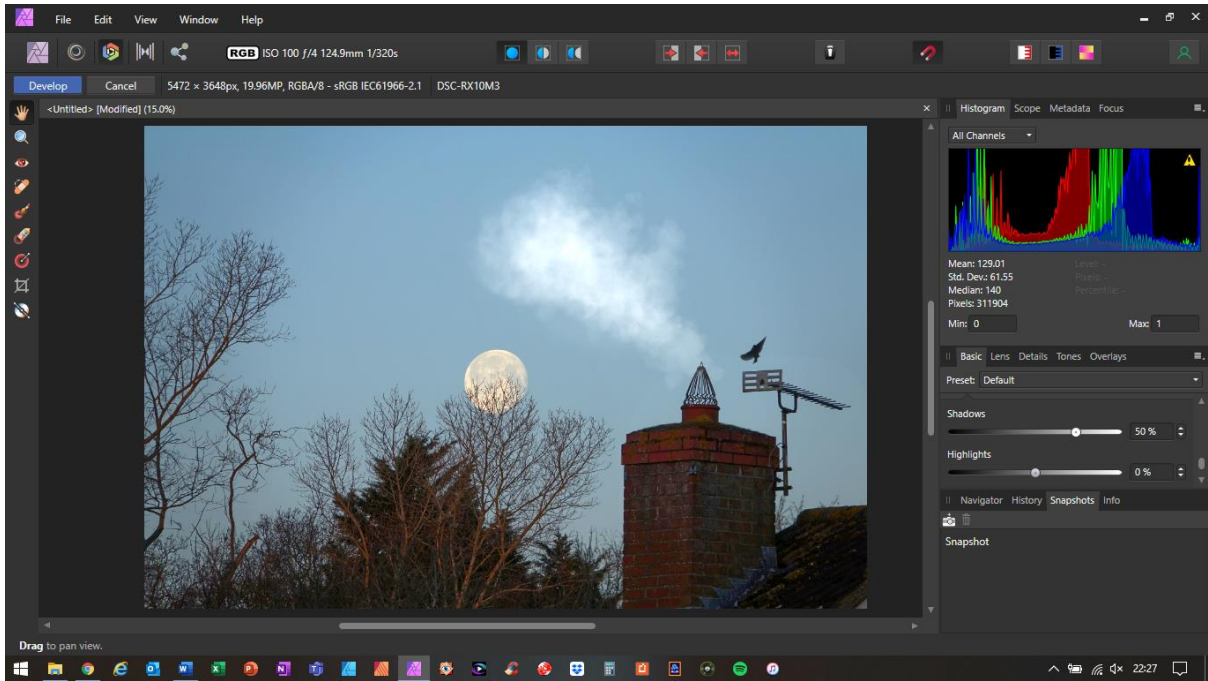
Go to Layer -> Merge Visible



The Merge Visible command creates a new combined (flattened) Pixel Layer which appears in the layers panel on the right:

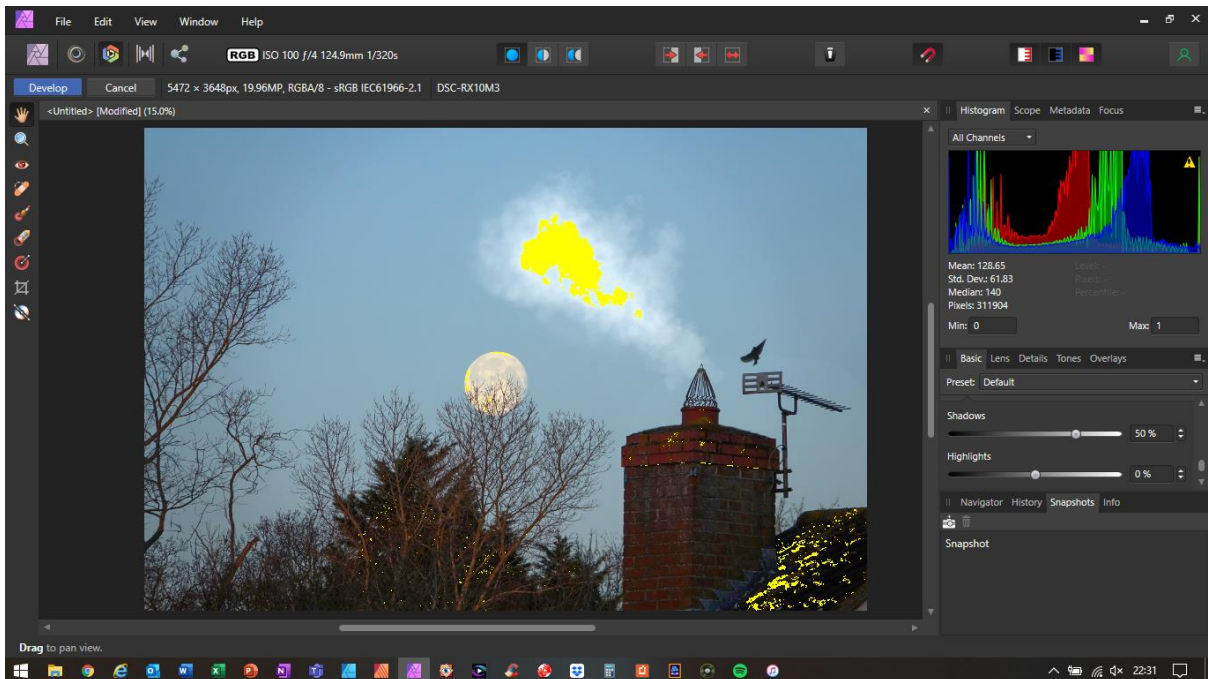


With that new Pixel Layer selected go to the Develop Persona before making adjustment. That way you have more scope for adjustment of shadows and exposure compared to the Photo Persona:

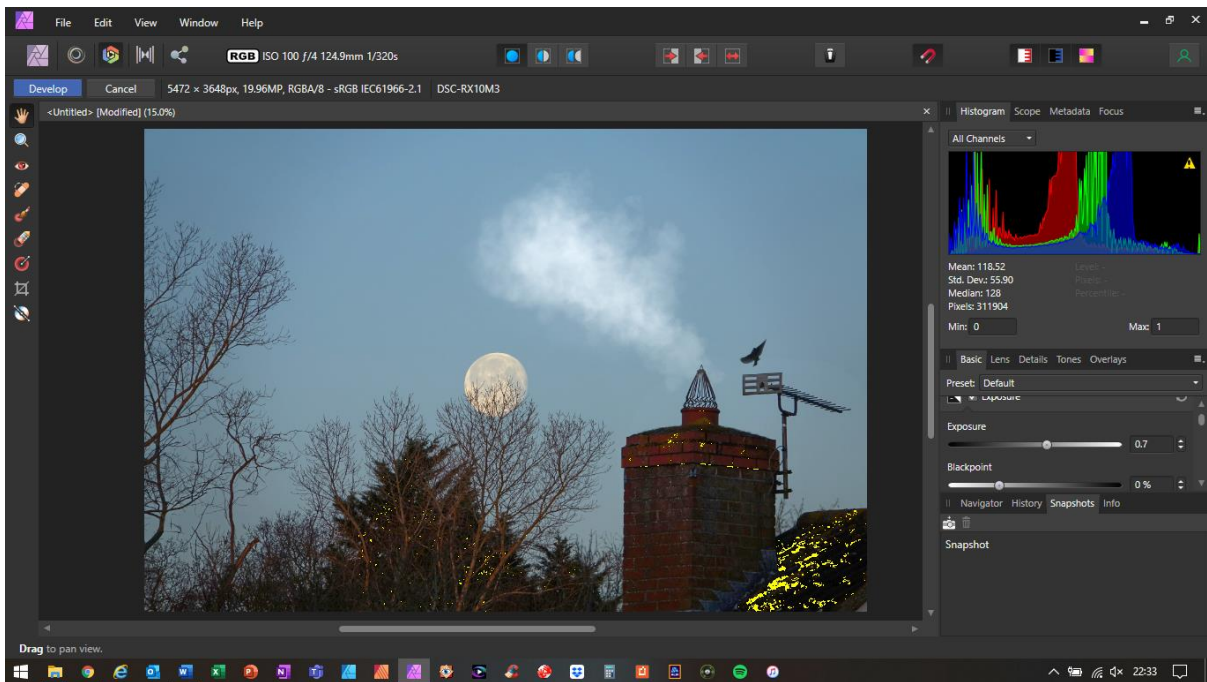


In the above screenshot the Exposure was increased by one stop, the Saturation was increased by 20% and the Shadows were increased by 50% to lighten the foreground.

When making adjustments in the Develop Persona you can turn on the warnings (buttons in the top-right of the screen) to show any under or over exposure, tonal clipping, etc.

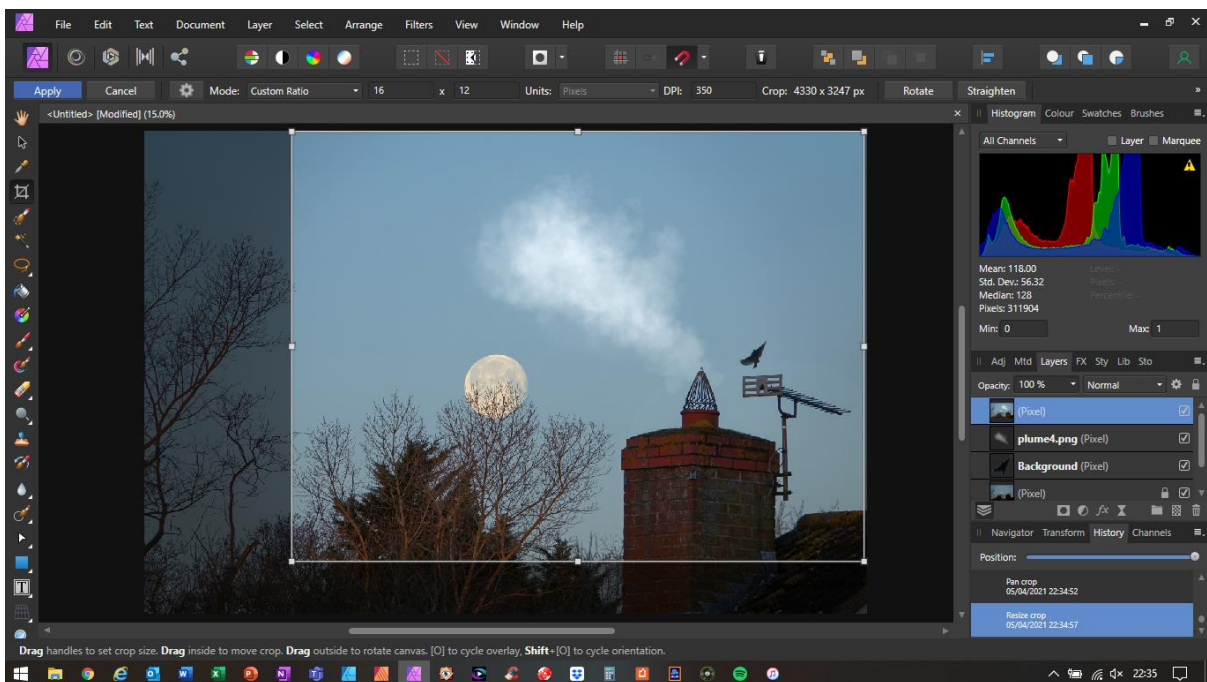


In the above screenshot the smoke we added is now over-exposed and the roof is tonally a bit too dark, so make any minor adjustments needed to remedy that.

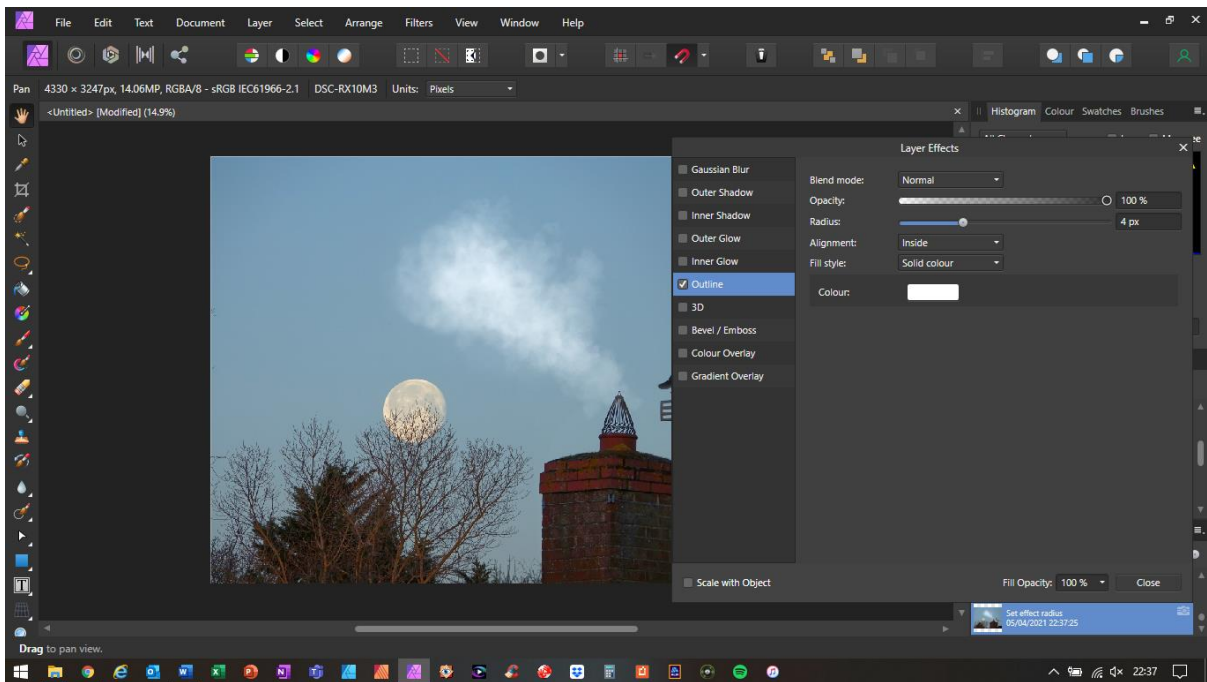


Refine as needed then Develop. Clicking on the Develop button in the top-left does the image development procedure and changes the screen back to the Photo Persona.

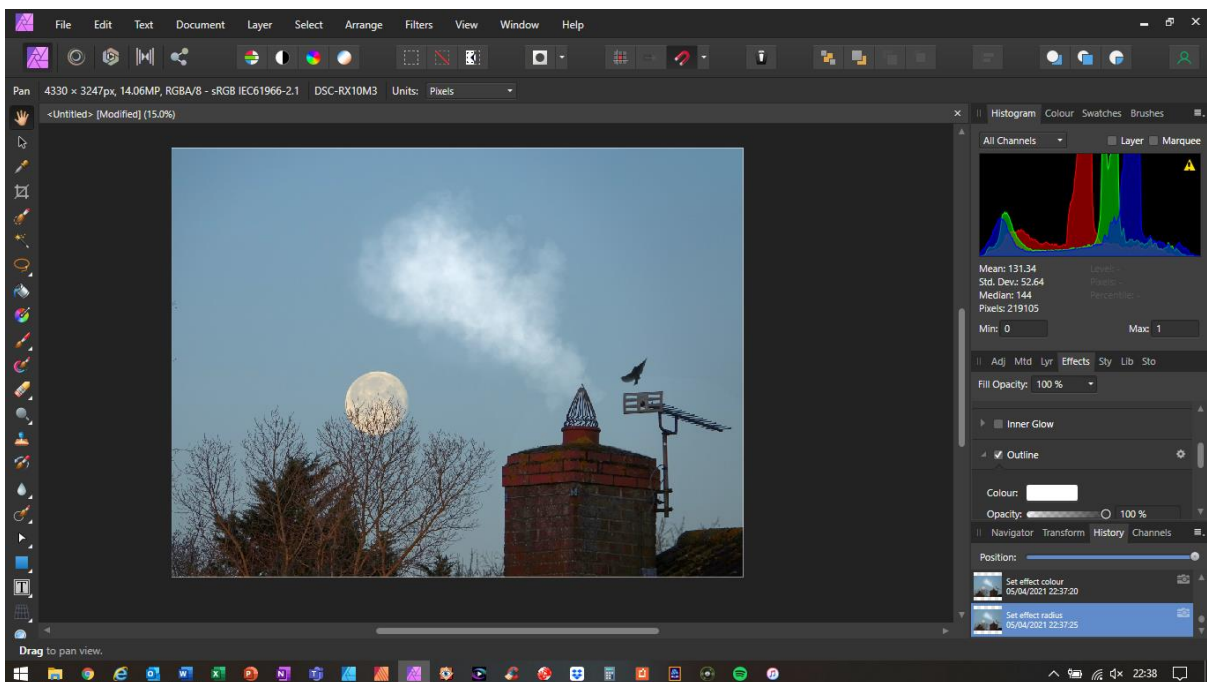
Do any cropping, resizing and final adjustments in the Photo Persona:



Add an Outline border to the image if desired e.g. if it is to be a digitally projected image:



Check your final image then export it, as required:



Conclusion:

The ability to enhance images with objects, animals, figures, etc (Assets) allow the artist to create composite images that fulfil the artist's vision.

Don't pass-off bought content as your own work!

Andy Mills LRPS