Texture Overlays Tutorial

1. Choose an overlay that will complement (both in texture and color) the desired image. This takes some experience. Then change the orientation of the overlay (portrait or landscape mode) to match the image's orientation.

2. Open your photo in Photoshop or Adobe Elements. In the Layers Palette, drag your background layer onto the 'new layer' icon at the bottom of the palette to make a duplicate layer. (Or type the shortcut 'Cntl' + J).

3. Choose File:Place Linked. Navigate to the folder containing your texture overlays and locate the layer you wish to use. Click on 'Place'. Now expand two sides, if needed, to fit your texture layer to your photo image. Hit 'Enter'.

4. In the Layers Palette, change the opacity to 60% so you can partially see the underlying image.

5. Choose a 'Blending Mode' in the Layers Palette. The default blending mode is 'Normal'. Type 'v' to select the Move Tool, or just click on it. This is a very important step—or the following will not work. Holding down the 'Shift' key, type the '+' sign. Continuing to press the '+' sign will show you how each blending mode will alter your image. Cycle through all of them until you locate a blending mode which best fits your image. Hitting the '-' key will reverse the cycle. Concentrate on how the blending mode affects the 'background' and not the part of the image that will be masked out. For this image I will choose the 'Lighten' mode.

6. Mask out the central figure in the photo. Being sure the texture layer is selected in the Layers Palette, choose the 'Add Layer Mask' icon at the bottom of the Layers Palette (looks like a Japanese flag). Type 'B' to select the Brush Tool (or click on it). Change the Brush Flow Rate at the top of the window to 30% to start. Change the size of the brush using the Bracket keys on your key board. Set the Foreground Color to 'black'. You can type the 'x' key to reverse the fore ground color from black to white or white to black. Using the Brush Tool, paint with black to mask out the central figure. With the Mask icon selected (on the texture layer), hold down the 'Alt' key and click on the icon to closely examine the mask you are creating. You can paint directly on the enlarged mask if you desire. Hold down the 'Alt' key again and click on the mask icon to bring back your image to the screen. Zoom in on your image and clean up the edges as needed. 6a. Using optional Gradient Mask techniques: Type 'G' to select the Gradient Tool (or click on it). In the 'options box' at the top of the window click on the 'radial gradient' icon. Set the foreground color to 'black' (use the 'x' key). In the pull down menu at the top of the window, select the 'black to transparent' gradient. Do not choose the 'black to white' gradient, or you will not be able to use it more than once on this layer. Increase the opacity in the layers Palette to 100% to see the full effect. Now click on the center of the woman and drag to a corner and release. You can repeat this masking on other parts of the image as well.

7. Adjust the Layer Opacity to its optimum setting.

8. Additional texture layers can be used on top of this one if desired.

Sources of Overlays:
FREE: http://shadowhousecreations.blogspot.com
NotFree:
www.JoelOlives.comhttp://flypapertextures.com
www.graphicauthority.com
www.photobacks.com