

# CREATION OF LILAC HUES TAKEN ON 12th JUNE 2019 CANON EOS 5D (IR CONVERTED) 24-105MM F4 L

Lilac Hues is the result of a rather bizarre process called false colour processing of an Infra Red Image. While normal photography is the art of capturing light, IR photography on the other hand is the art of capturing the invisible wavelenths of light we cant see — but the challenge comes with its benefits, IR photographs can be really attention grabbing and otherworldly.

Although photoshop processing can be used to create an pseudo InfraRed effect from a normally image, there are 2 methods to produce a true infrared image digitally. The first is to use a dense filter in-front of the lens like a Hoya R72. However there are 2 problems with this - as the filter is designed to block visible light you cannot see what's in frame to compose the shot when the filter is attached. Secondly the focus distance of IR light is different to that of visible light. Older lenses might have a special IR focus distance adjustment on them, but modern Auto Focus lenses generally don't offer this so focusing may be a bit hit and miss. A more convenient (but expensive) way of capturing IR digitally is to have a camera converted to permanently to record only IR wavelengths. The conversion involves replacing the normal antialiasing filter that's placed in front of the sensor with one that blocks wavelengths below 720nm (ie visible spectrum) and adjusting the focal point of the sensor. Because this filter allows some of the near red wavelengths to be recorded (full IR starts at 830nm and would only show black and white) some false colour can be captured which can be manipulated shamelessly in PS.



Un-corrected RAW file taken at 720nm  
1/60 F11 ISO 160



Unedited RAW image using a custom white balance correction (6350K) showing the false colours that are present

You have to remember that although you can see through the lens to compose a shot as normal, the image that will be recorded on a IR converted camera is not what you actually see and exposures and results may be very different from what you expect. Its an exciting branch of photography that actually works best in traditionally poor photographic conditions e.g. harsh sunny mid-summers day. A blue sky will appear black, or very dark, while foliage will get a distinct white color. This creates amazing contrast in the image that makes the photo 'pop'.

## Post Processing:

Using a process called channel switching we can independently control the RED, GREEN and BLUE channels. Initially we want to switch the Red and the Blue channel so that the sky becomes a more "normal" blue and the trees are coloured.

This is done using a Channel Mixer layer:

Select Red and drag the Red setting to 0% and drag the Blue setting to 100%

Select Blue and drag the Blue setting to 0% and drag the Red setting to 100%

The contrast and tonal range can then be adjusted using Levels and Curve settings,



The final image is a complex blend of a number of different colour adjustments:

A separate layer was created for each aspect of the image; the sky, the trees and topiary balls and the wall and the toning was adjusted to give the desired effect.

Each layer was blended using layer masks.

This is a very quick guide on how to manipulate the false color in Photoshop, but Im no expert and there isn't any magic number that works for all photographs — you just have to play and see what happens. But on the other hand there is no right result either - its what looks good to you!

