Christmas Greetings 2
Snow Globe Holiday Trees (Photoshop Elements)
by Syndee Rogers

Nothing says you care like a hand-made card! We'll create a whimsical snow globe card In this three part video series. In this first lesson we'll create fun holiday trees using the Shape and Brush Tools. Here in Expert Mode of Photoshop Elements, I've already created a new 7 by 7 inch document at 300 pixels per inch with a transparent background. Now let's get the Move tool, and in the Tool Options, check Auto Select Layer and Show Bounding Box. Click on the Foreground Color Chip, and in the Color Picker choose a color. I'm using Hex # ffa6ad, and then go ahead and click OK. Now get the Custom Shape tool, it's located with the other shape tools. And in the Tool Options, open the Shape picker and choose the Triangle shape. If you don't see it, open the Shape menu and choose Shapes. Now let's set the Style to None, then open the Geometry Options and choose Fixed Size. And I'm going to set both the width and height 2.6 inches. And then click on the Create New Shape layer icon. Now on the left side of your document, click and drag slightly to create the shape.

Next, press Ctrl J or Cmd J on a Mac to duplicate the triangle. And let's get the Move tool. And on your document, hold down the Shift key and then click and drag the triangle straight up, so that your triangle shapes create a two-tiered tree. Now let's go up in the Menu Bar, and choose Image > Transform Shape > Skew. And then on the document, click on the bottom left corner handle of the Bounding box, and drag straight up. This gives our tree a more whimsical look. And then click the checkmark to commit. In the Layers panel, hold down the Shift key and click on both the triangles to activate them. Next in the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Merge Shapes. This keeps our tree a Shape layer. Which allows us to quickly recolor it by double clicking on it's thumbnail in the Layers panel.

Now our tree just isn't a tree until it has a trunk. So click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker, and choose a brown for the tree trunk. I'm using Hex #9d8d6f. Then Click OK.
In the Layers panel, click on the Create a New Layer icon and click and drag the new layer down below the tree layer. Now, Get the Rectangle tool. And In the Tool Options, set the Style to None. Open the Geometry Options and choose Fixed Size. Set the Width to .26 inches and the Height to 1.12 inches. Click on the Create New Shape Layer icon.
Now on your document, at the bottom of the tree, click and drag to create the shape and move it into position under your tree. As long as you don't let go of your mouse or pen, you can move the truck into position.

Now in the Layers panel, activate the tree shape. Then press Ctrl J or Cmd J on a Mac to duplicate the tree. And then in theTool Options, click Simplify. Now get the Lasso tool, and in the Tool Options, click on the New Selection icon, set the feather to 0 pixels and check Anti-Aliasing. And on the document, right on top of your tree shape, click and drag out a selection around the top of the tree that mimics fallen snow. And now in the Menu Bar, choose Select > Inverse. Press the Backspace key or the Delete key on a Mac, so only the selected portion of the tree remains. And in the Menu Bar, choose Select > Deselect. Back up In the Menu Bar, choose Enhance > Adjust Color > Adjust Hue/Saturation and move the Lightness Slider all the way to the right side until the tree top turns white. And Click OK. Now in the Layers panel, with your top layer activated, hold down the Shift key and click on the tree trunk layer. Now all of your tree there should be activated. Click on one of the link icons to link two layers together. This ensures that our three layers will stay together when we move it around.

Now let's create a Christmas Tree. Activate the top layer in your Layers panel. Now click on the Foreground Color Chip and in the Color Picker choose a color. 'm using Hex #b0d387. And then click OK. Okay, let's get the Custom Shape tool, and in the Tool Options, open the Shape Picker and choose the Triangle shape. The style should be set to None.Then open the Geometry Options and choose Fixed Size, set the Width to 2.6 inches and Height to 3.8 inches and click on the Create New Shape Layer icon. Now on the document, on the right side of the pink tree click and drag slightly to create the shape, but before letting go of your mouse or pen, move it into position so that is overlapping your pink tree a bit. Now you can let go of your mouse. Now get the Move tool.
And in the Layers panel, activate the tree trunk layer, then press Ctrl J or Cmd J on a Mac to duplicate the layer. Now on the document click and move the duplicate tree trunk centered under our new green tree.

So naturally our Christmas tree need some lights. Let's go ahead and activate the green tree shape in the Layers panel and then click on the Create a New Layer icon. And then in the Menu Bar, choose Layer > Create Clipping Mask to clip the blank layer to the green tree. Now Get the Brush tool. And In the Tool Options, open the Brush Picker and choose a Hard Round brush from the Basic Brushes. Let's set the Size to 32 pixels, the Mode to Normal, and the Opacity to 100%. Then open the Brush Settings and set the Spacing 201%. Now click on the Foreground Color Chip and choose White. Then click OK. Now making sure you're on your new blank layer, on the document, click and draw with your brush right on top of the tree to mimic a string of lights. If you would like to save your modified brush to use in the future, please refer to the manual for detailed instructions.

Next we'll create a planter for our tree. So click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and choose a color for the planter base. I'm using Hex #c6e4cf. Then click OK.
Now get the Rounded Rectangle tool. And In the Tool Options, set the Radius to 10 px, the Style to None, open the Geometry Options, and choose Fixed Size, set the Width to .96 inches and Height to .88 inches and click on the Create New Shape Layer icon. Now, on your document, click and drag slightly at the bottom of the tree trunk to create the shape.

Now in the Menu Bar, choose Image > Transform > Perspective. And on your document, click and drag to the right from the bottom left corner handle of the bounding box and drag inward. Then click the check mark to commit. Now let's click on the Foreground Color Chip to open the Color Picker and we want to choose a slightly lighter color for the planter top. I'm using Hex #c9ecd6. Then click OK. And we're going to use the Rounded Rectangle tool again. So In the Tool Options, we'll leave all the settings the same except let's change the Width to 1.08 inches and the Height to .19 inches. Now, on your document, click and drag slightly at the top of the planter to create the shape. Now we have a set of whimsical holiday trees.

To finish up, make sure to save (File > Save As) your document as a PSD. I would suggest including the class name and holiday trees at the end so that it's easy to find for our next lesson. This has been Syndee Rogers with Christmas Greetings 2.