Photoshop Overlays

Or

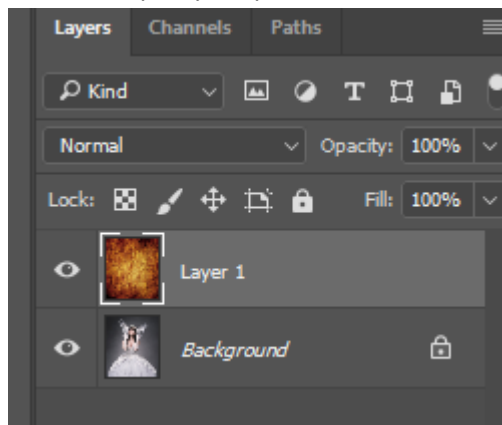Putting Backgrounds on top to get from here

To here

In 31 clicks or less

These instructions should enable all of you Photoshop users (and Affinity – I tested it today) to replace a plain grey background with a texture layer to make things a little more interesting without having to splash out on a hand painted background.

All you need is your original image and a textured background (just do a google image search for "Textured background") and you're good to go.

To get you going I've supplied two images.

1. Open Photoshop
2. File open and select both files (hold ctrl and click on each) then Open
3. This should give you two tabs with one image on each.
4. Select the move tool (Cross with arrows pointing North, south, east and west)
5. Click on the background layer and drag it to the portrait tab at the top of the screen. When done correctly the image displayed should change to the portrait. With the mouse button still held down move the cursor onto the portrait and let go. This should place the texture over the top of your portrait and create a new layer in your layer panel
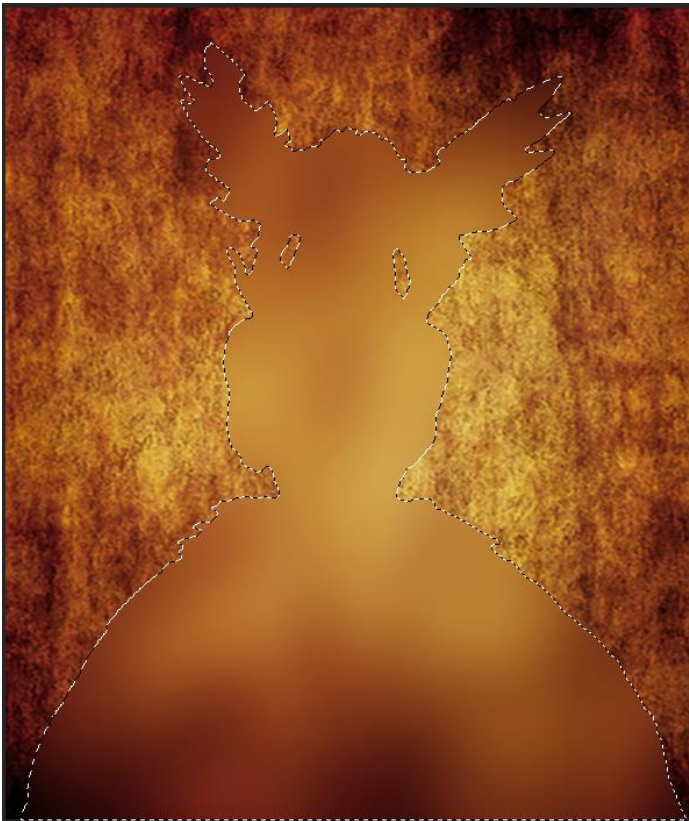

6.
7. Resize the texture if required to completely cover the portrait.
8. Turn off the texture layer (click on the eye icon)
9. Make sure the background layer is active (click where it says Background)
10. Using your preferred method make a selection of the entire figure. This doesn't have to be perfect but this is the stage where a little more time spent will be worthwhile.

11. Reactivate the texture layer and turn it back on. It should now look like this.

12.

13. From your filter menu select Gaussian blur and move the slider across until all of the texture INSIDE the selection disappears. We want the colour to remain. Something like this.
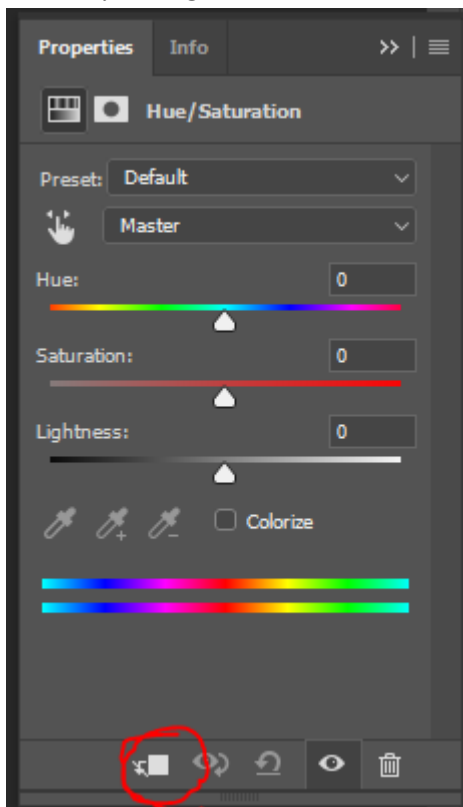

14.

15. OPTION 1 – if you feel that you may wish to add a second (or third, fourth etc) layer later on, save the selection now. From the toolbar click Select and then Save selection.

16. Turn your selection off. Select then Deselect.
17. Almost there. In your layers panel change the Blend mode of the texture layer to Overlay or Soft light. (Try both and see which gives the desire effect.

18.

19. This could be the end. If it is for you then just flatten your image, save it and your done.
20. Option 2 – Change the colour scheme.
21. Apply a Hue and Saturation layer but make sure to click on the icon circled below. You'll know if you forget to as the models face will change colour unexpectedly.
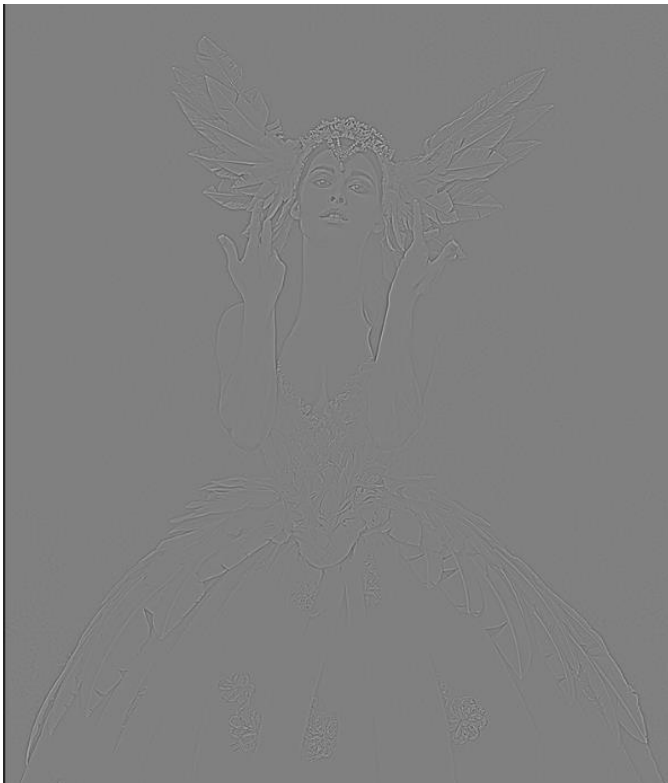
22.

23. Move the Hue slider left and right until you see a colour combo you like. I'm going for a cool blue.

24.

25. This too could be the end. Flatten, save and you're done.

26. Option 3 – Sharpening

27. Flatten the image and make a duplicate layer – Ctrl J

28. From the filter mention select Other and then High Pass. Move the slider until the image is just visible. Using the files provided a radius of 2 pixels should give you this.

29.

30. Change this layer blend mode to overlay and it will sharpen the entire image.
31. Apply a layer mask and the invert it (Ctrl I) to obscure the entire layer.
32. Using a soft brush with White selected paint over the eyes and the lace on the dress.
33. Flatten the image and you're done.

34.
35. If you find one texture isn't doing it for you, repeat stages 2 to 17, remembering to use your saved selection rather than repeating stage 10. Add extra textures before using Option 3.
36. This method works on grey backgrounds or any other solid colour (Pink, Green, Blue etc) but avoid Black and White.