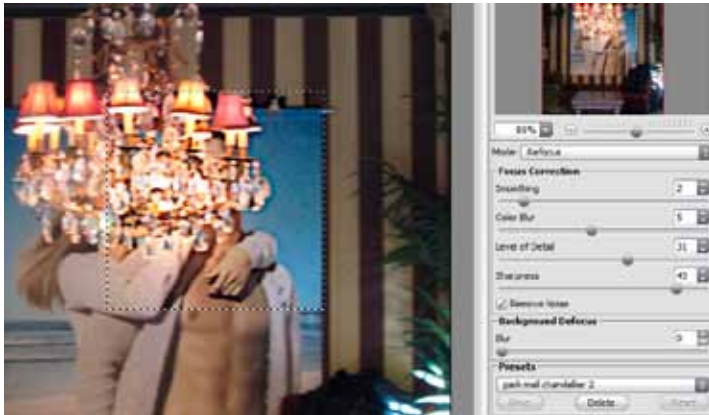# AKVIS *Retouch 5*.1

Iris Yoffa

Focus Improvement and Blur Effects

Do you suffer from point-and-shoot camera shake or the cell phone fuzzies? AKVIS's *Refocus* can help you add that missing sharpness or focus to your image. Of course, there are limits to the software's ability to rectify an out-of-focus situation but it does a pretty good job!

So what does this photo editor plug-in and/or stand-alone app do? It brings improved sharpness to all or partial areas of an image, or creates a blur effect, either tilt-shift or iris blur. To improve focus it looks at the underlying pixels in an image and increases the apparent edge between pixels that already have contrasting color information.

Refocus can also create a lack of sharpness resulting in a blur effect in a defined area. The interface provides tools for marking the focus area and the background area and an eraser for removing the defining lines.

A small preview window appears in the image to show you the effects of your slider manipulations. Start with one of the program's built-in presets. Then customize the focus correction by adjusting the sliders for smoothing, color blur to remove halos and fringing and for detail and sharpness.

I left the tic in the Remove Noise checkbox. Background Defocus provides a slider for adjusting the amount of blur applied if you define a background area. Once you tweak the sliders to your liking Save the settings as a preset for use on another image.

Press the right-facing arrow in the top menu bar to apply your settings to the whole image. Saving options in the plug-in are managed by the photo editor of choice. In the standalone your choices are jpg, png, bmp and tif.

I had a fun shot of an image of a couple embracing which had been hung in a mall sitting area. Their heads were obscured by a chandelier making an interesting composition. Sadly, the whole shot was rather fuzzy. I wanted the focus of the image to be an in-focus chandelier.

I started with the AKVIS Sharpen preset, tweaked it a bit for fringing and the level of detail and saved the changes as a preset. The program did a remarkable job of adding the crispness I needed. I added a bit of Iris Blur to the edges of the photo to nudge the viewer's eye to the chandelier and pictured figures.

Original   **Refocused**

Note: The one downside to these impressive tools in both plug-in and stand-alone format is that after installing onto my *Windows 8.1* laptop *Refocus* crashed on startup.

When I contacted tech support about the problem they provided me with an EXE file of the stand-alone app. It contained all the required files to run the program and ran without any issue.

Installing and running on *Windows 7* as a plug-in and stand-alone was problem-free.

About: AKVIS *Retouch 5.1*

Publisher: AKVIS
http://akvis.com/en/refocus/price-sharpen-photo.php

Price: $39 to $72:
Home plugin: $39*Home
Deluxe (with Plug-in *and* Stand-alone): $49*
Business: $72
Free 10 day trial
http://akvis.com/en/refocus/download-sharpen-photo.php
Upgrade pricing and more information is available at
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