

RETOUCH X PRESS

THE ULTIMATE PREPRESS TOOL FOR PHOTOSHOP







V-1.0

User's Guide

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RetouchXPress is a plug-in for Photoshop that is specifically designed for Packaging-Prepress Image Retouching

6 Benefits of RetouchXPress:

-  Reduce Leadtime up to 85%
-  Consistent Quality cross Operators & Locations
-  Increase Productivity and Efficiency
-  Reduce Rework and Correction-Loops
-  Make Rookies Work like Skilled Retouchers
-  Reduce New Employees' Training Time

The only flexographic image retouching tool in the market that automates, standardises and is easy-to-use!

RXP follows the regular manual retouching workflow:

- Cleans incoming file structure
- Visualizes and detects critical parts of the image
- Automates most popular separation modes in the industry
- Offers effective toolset to fix hard edges and minimum dot issues
- + Make work-files non-destructive & easily monitorable

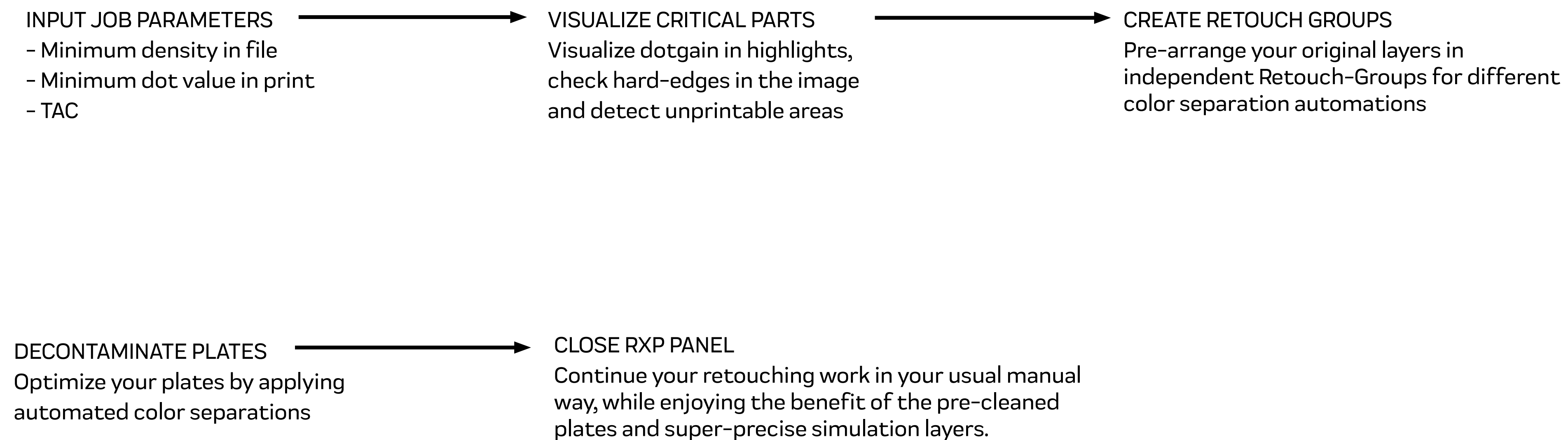
Minimum system requirements for 1.0 version:

- MacOS 10.13.6
- Processor: 3,4 GHz Intel Core i5
- Memory: 8 GB 2400 MHz DDR4
- Photoshop CC 20.0.4

AUTOMATED WORKFLOW

Leadtime: 1 to 5 mins

If you are an experienced retoucher insisting to your own working methods, you may want to use only the fully-automated features of the plugin to save valuable time!



END-TO-END CMYK WORKFLOW

Leadtime: 5 to 35 mins

All functions for retouching in a single plugin!
Even unexperienced retouchers can work safely
and quickly with this all-in-one toolset.

INPUT JOB PARAMETERS

- Minimum density in file
- Minimum dot value in print
- TAC

VISUALIZE CRITICAL PARTS

Visualize dotgain in highlights,
check hard-edges in the image
and detect unprintable areas

CREATE RETOUCH GROUPS

Arrange your original layers in independent
Retouch-Groups for easy navigation among
your retouch-actions in a non-destructive way

DECONTAMINATE PLATES

Optimize your plates by applying
automated color separations

RETOUCH CHANNEL-BY-CHANNEL

Fix hard-edges and minimum dot issues,
eliminate standalone pixel-groups

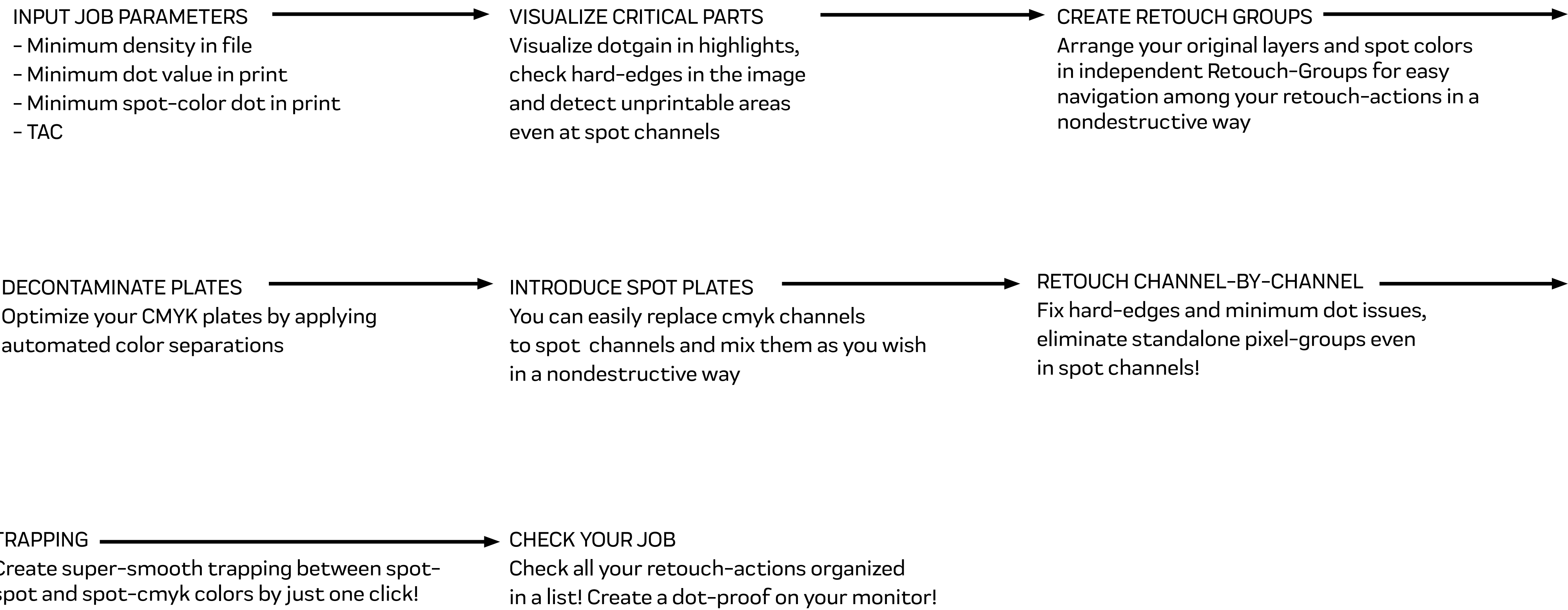
CHECK YOUR JOB

Check all your retouch-actions organized
in a list! Create a dot-proof on your monitor!

END-TO-END ALL-INK WORKFLOW

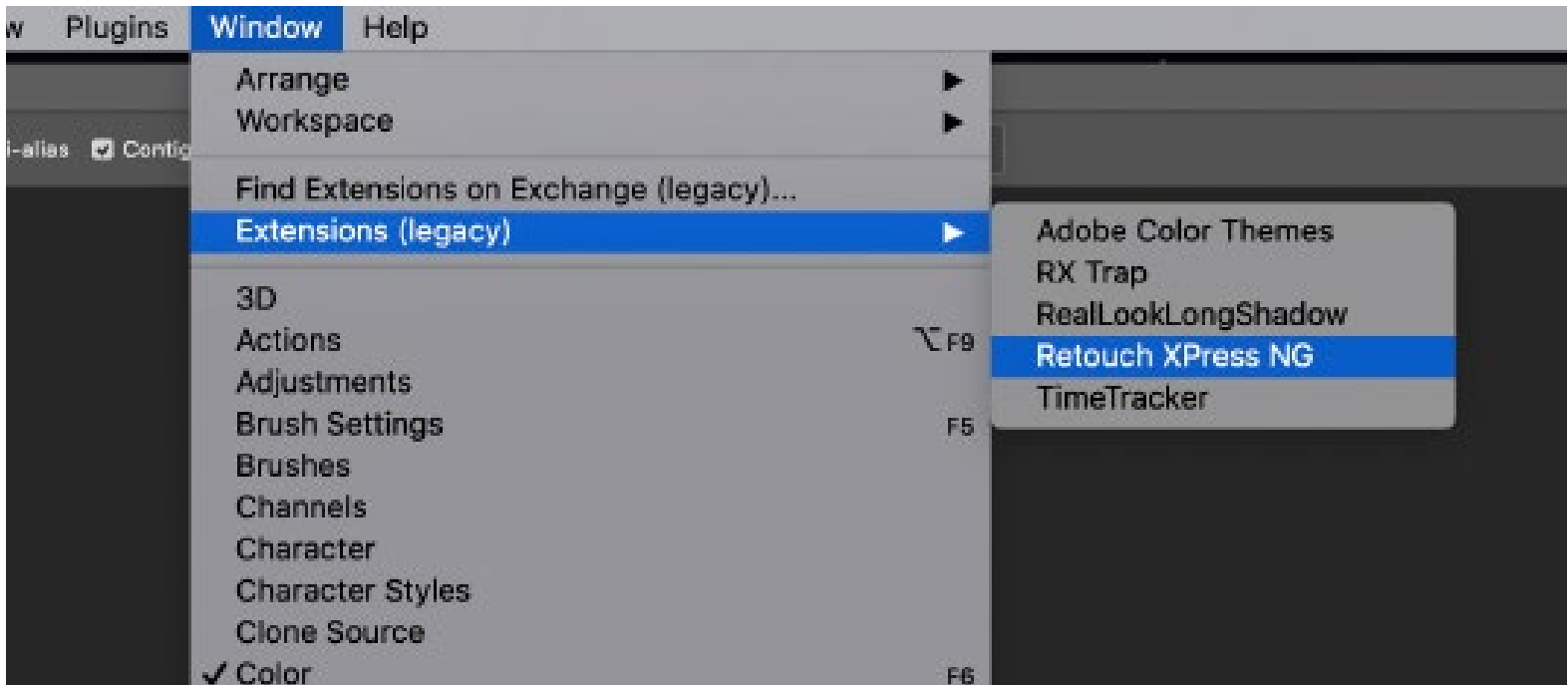
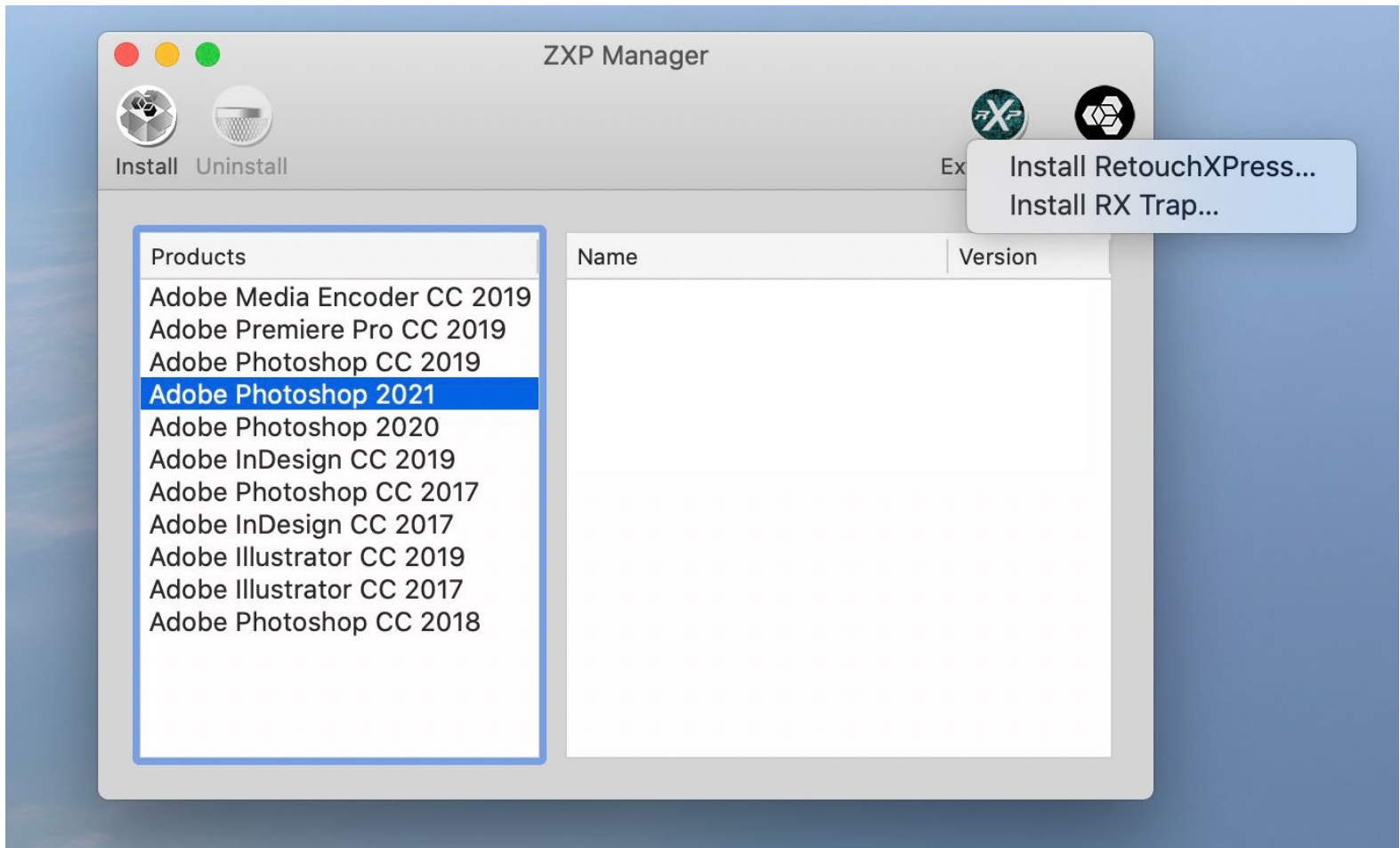
Leadtime: 15 to 45 mins

Even spot color plates can be retouched the same way as cmyk channels in RXP! Introduce, modify, retouch Pantone channels just as if they were regular layers!



Installation

Installation on Windows 10

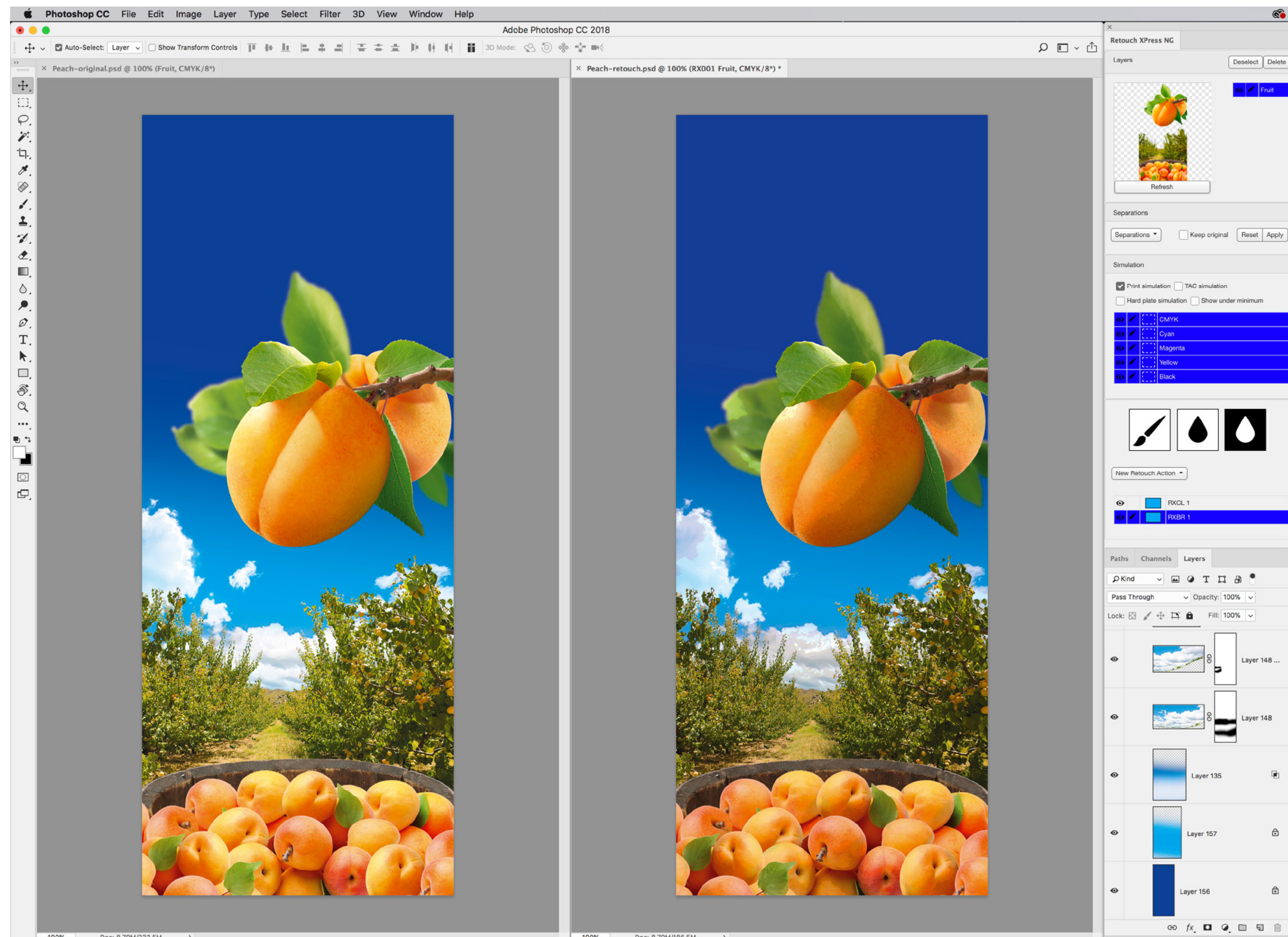


1. Make sure you have Adobe Photoshop CC 2019 or later installed on your computer
2. Quit Photoshop
3. In the Trial-Pack folder find and open ZXPManager folder
4. Open (double-click) [ZXPManager.exe](#)
5. If you have any previous (old) RetouchXPress products please uninstall (see last paragraph)
6. Select Photoshop 2019, 2020 or 2021 from the list in the left window
7. Click on the **green RXP icon** in the upper-right corner of ZXP Manager panel.
8. Click on 'Install RetouchXPress' and 'Install RX Trap' in the drop-down menu.
9. Open Photoshop CC 2019, 2020 or 2021
10. In the Preferences menu go to Plug-Ins
11. 'Enable Generator' checkbox should be turned off
12. Go to Window / Extensions (legacy) menu and click on Retouch XPress NG and/or RX Trap
13. Open a CMYK image and start retouching! Demo mode is limited to 599x599 pixels.

Uninstall

1. Open ZXP Manager
2. Select Photoshop 2019, 2020 or 2021 from the list in the left window
3. Select RetouchXPressNG or RX Trap in the list on the right
3. Click on Uninstall in the upper-left corner

Interface Setting



Optimal interface setting in Photoshop

For optimal work in RetouchXPress we suggest using the following interface settings in Photoshop:

Workspace should be set to 'Essentials' since you need only your Layer palette to be open. **All the other functions for retouching are available within the RetouchXPress panel!**

You may also use Paths if you would like to load selections from premade paths. Some of the Retouch-Actions will automatically activate the Properties panel of Photoshop where you can make adjustments.

It is very useful to keep the original image as a reference on the left side and your workfile on the right side.

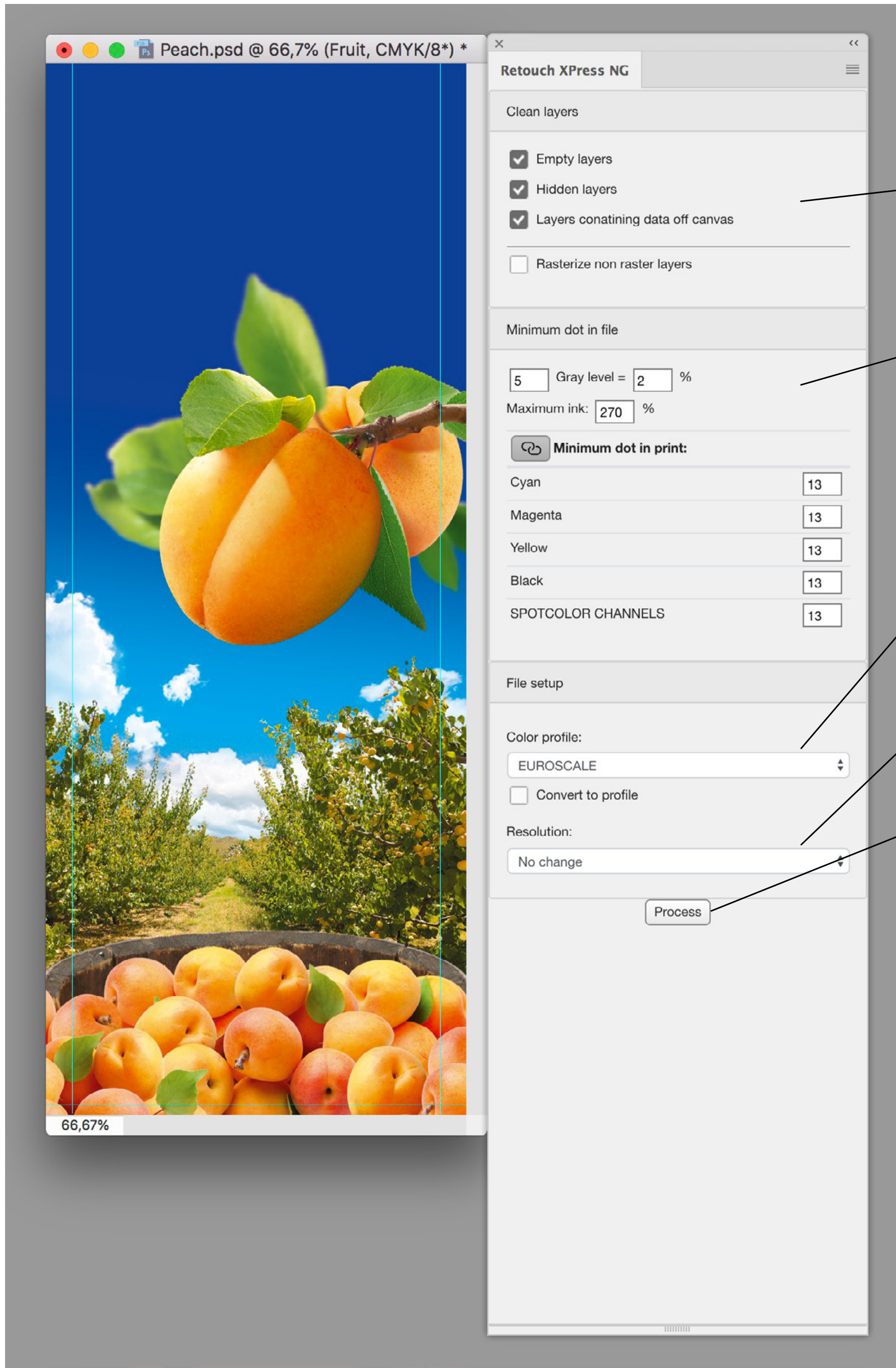
In the 'Arrange' menu our suggestion is choosing '2-up Horizontal' or '2-up Vertical' so you will have a view of both images in a synchronized way. This way you can compare the overall look of the 2 artworks after each actions you make in your workfile. The intent is to make your workfile identical or look very similar to the original. Do not jump between the 2 documents though, stay within your workfile.

While you are working in RetouchXPress do not use History and Channel functions since these can mix up and freeze the plugin.

If - for some reason - you wish to continue retouching manually, you can close RetouchXPress panel any time.

All layers created by the plugin will remain in the file however if you manually modify these layers and its structure RetouchXPress may not be able to reload them in its system when you open the panel again.

1. Input Specifications



Starting your job - Input panel

Fill out the panel!

1. Clean layers

You can select 4 options for optimizing layers in your psd file.

2. Minimum dot/density settings

Define:

- Minimum density in file
- Minimum dot value in print (measured on the final packaging materials)

3. Color management settings

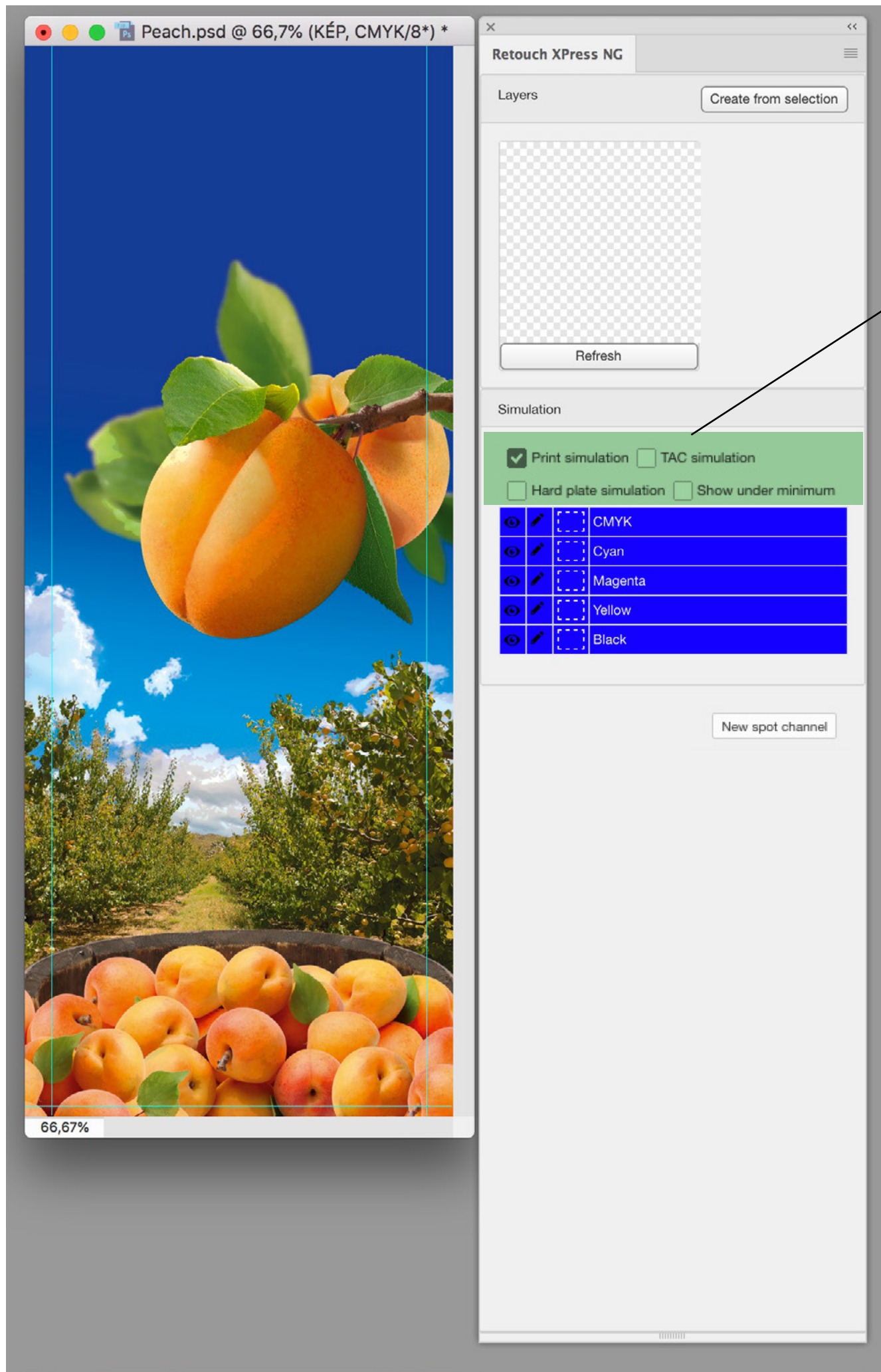
- Maximum in (TAC)
- Color profile (only Euroscale is available in 1.0)

4. Resolution change

- 2 kind of presets

Click on 'Process' to go to the next panel

2. View Simulations



Working panel - Simulation modes

RetouchXPress generates preview layers based on the input data on the previous panel. You can turn on and off simulation modes anytime during your workflow.

Check the boxes to turn on view-modes!

- **Print simulation** features the significant dot gain in the highlight areas and also the breakouts as they will look like on the final printing material according to the input value in the previous panel.

It is recommended to keep this view mode turned on through the whole workflow otherwise your minimum dot and breakout areas will not be visible!

- **Hard plate simulation** displays the printing and non-printing areas in a simple black-and-white mode.

- **Show under minimum** displays the highlights that are not printable. Turn off the other simulation modes to get a proper view!

- **TAC** displays where you exceed total-ink-coverage limit according to your setting on the Input panel. Turn off the other simulation modes to get a proper view!

3. Create Retouch-Groups

Retouch-groups

You can create as many retouch-groups as you wish.

1. Select one or more of the original layers in Photoshop's layer panel then click on ,Create from selection' in the plugin panel.

2. If you want to create more Retouch-Groups click on ,Deselect' and repeat step 1

If your original image is flattened (1 layer only) than you will obviously have only 1 retouch-group. You have to create at least 1 retouch group to start introducing retouch-actions.

RX will also create a live composite thumbnail of the multiple layers in the group. If you make significant changes in the artwork, click ,Refresh' for updating the thumbnail.

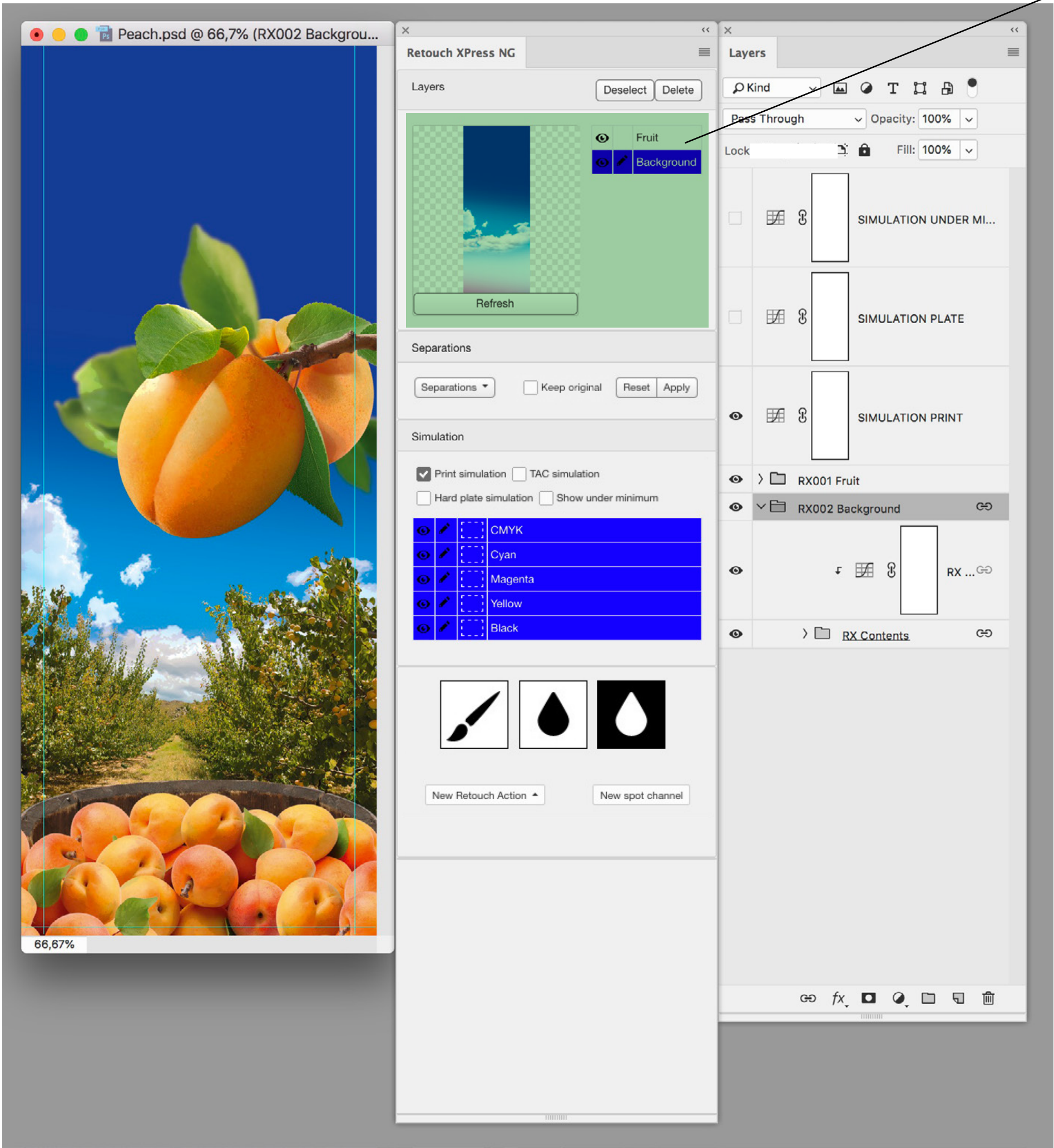
Please note that a retouch-group can contain multiple layers so you can keep all the original layers in your document. They can be useful for loading selections, creating masks.

In this sample-artwork you want to prepress the foreground (peach) and the background (sky) independently. Background and foreground are made of multiple layers so you put them into separate retouch-groups accordingly.

Later you can also move and rescale these groups including retouch-layers. (E. g. easily alter a 1L fruit juice to a 200 ml one without further retouching)

Tip:

If you want to apply different plate separations for certain elements in your design (eg. Triplex for peach / NoBlack for background) you should put these elements in different Retouch-Groups at the beginning of the retouch work.



4. Reseparate CMYK Plates



Automatic separations

You can reseparate all layers in a retouch-group by just one click. No masking is needed since RX automatically loads and adds together the selections of all layers in the group.

Choose one of the separation modes from the menu! Click on apply!

- **Triplex** automatically removes one of the gray-components so you will have only 3 inks at one location. Cyan will be removed from reds, oranges, browns, while magenta will be removed from greenish tones.

You do not have to make pre-masking and you can forget channel-mixer in PS.

- **NoBlack** completely removes black plate while preserving the overall look of the image.

- **OnlyBlack** can be useful at neutral color objects, like milk, coconut, etc.

- **SkeletonBlack** – a common separation mode in flexo printing (not available in beta version.)

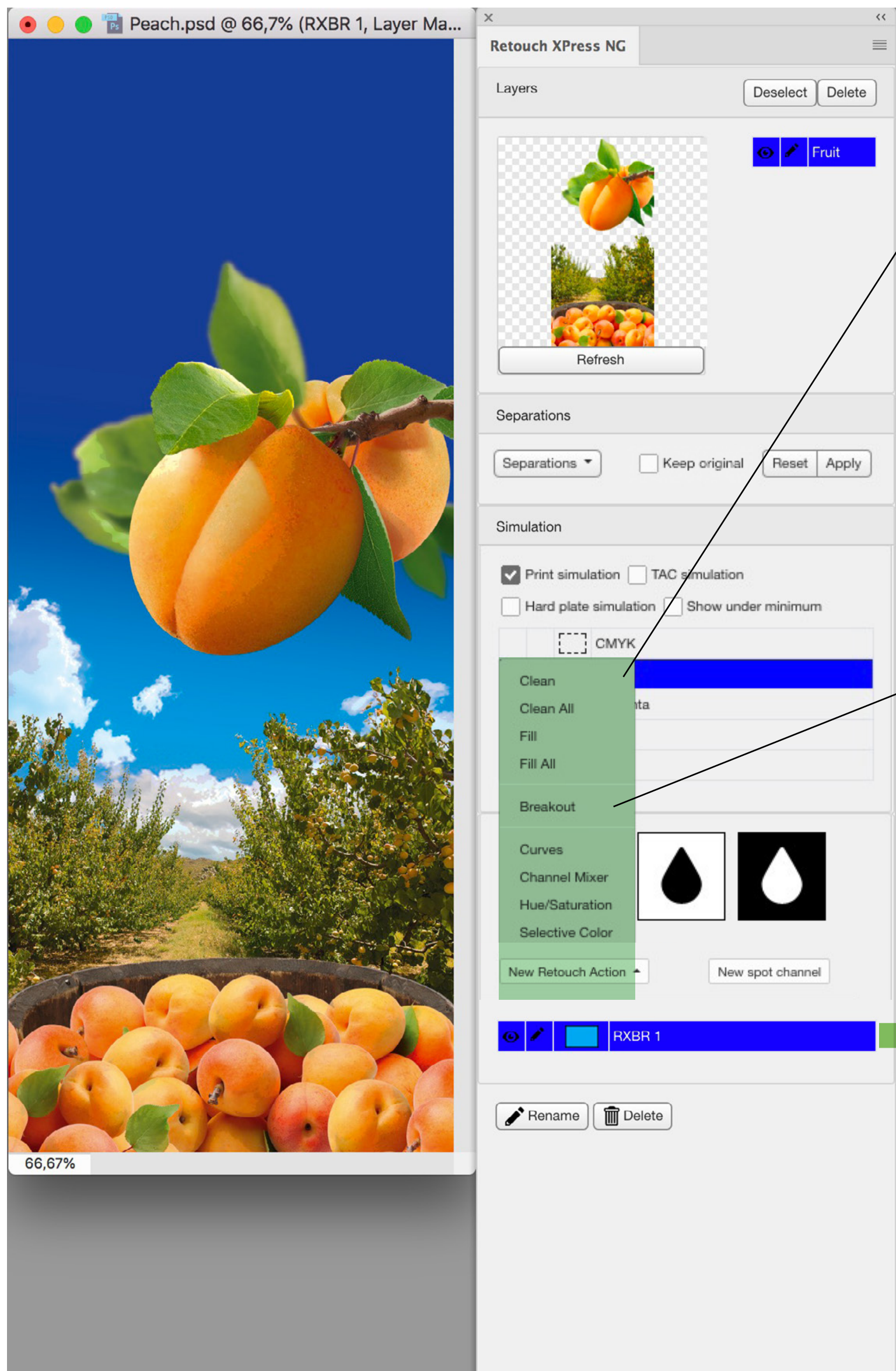
You can apply different separation modes for different retouch-groups.

One retouch group can include only one kind of separation mode!

,Keep original' checkbox

You can decide to keep the original separation in the psd file so you can restore it any time later. This feature may significantly increase the file-size that might slow down RXP and Photoshop.

5. Apply Retouch-Actions

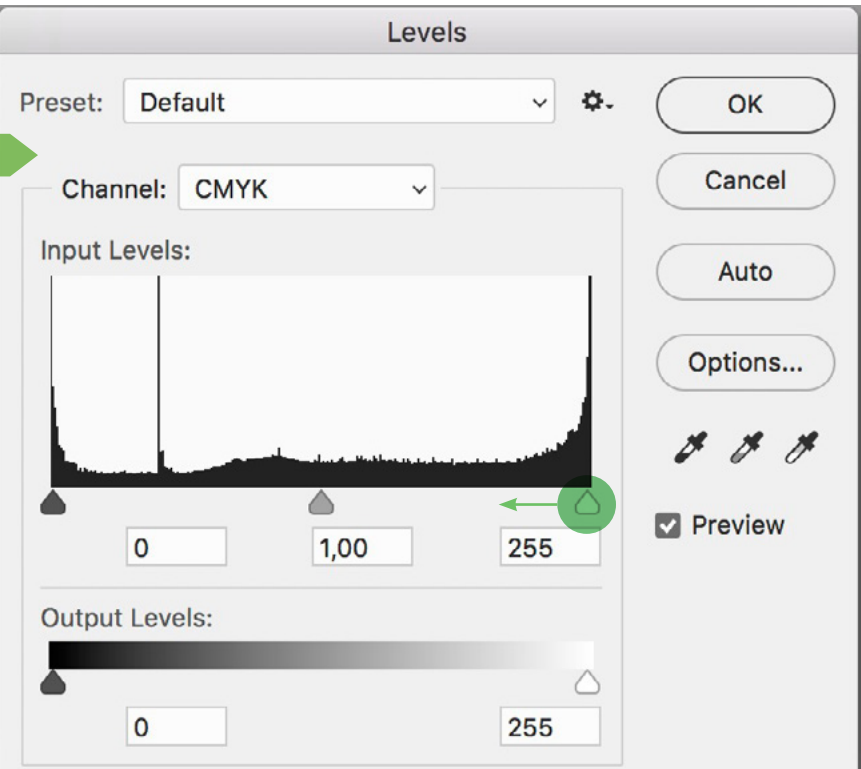


Retouch Actions

Once you start working in on one of your retouch groups and already reduced 4 inks to 3 (by Triplex or NoBlack) you can go on with channel-by-channel retouching.

- 1. Select one of your Retouch-Groups at the top of the panel
- 2. Select a plate (C, M, Y, K or CMYK)
- 3. Click on „New Retouch Action” and choose an action from the menu.

- **Breakout** pulls back (shortens) the breakout boundaries and also eliminates some of the noises and patches from the highlight areas. Open Photoshop Level palette by double clicking the newly created RXBR layer in the list. Pull the upper right slider to the left and view changes real-time.



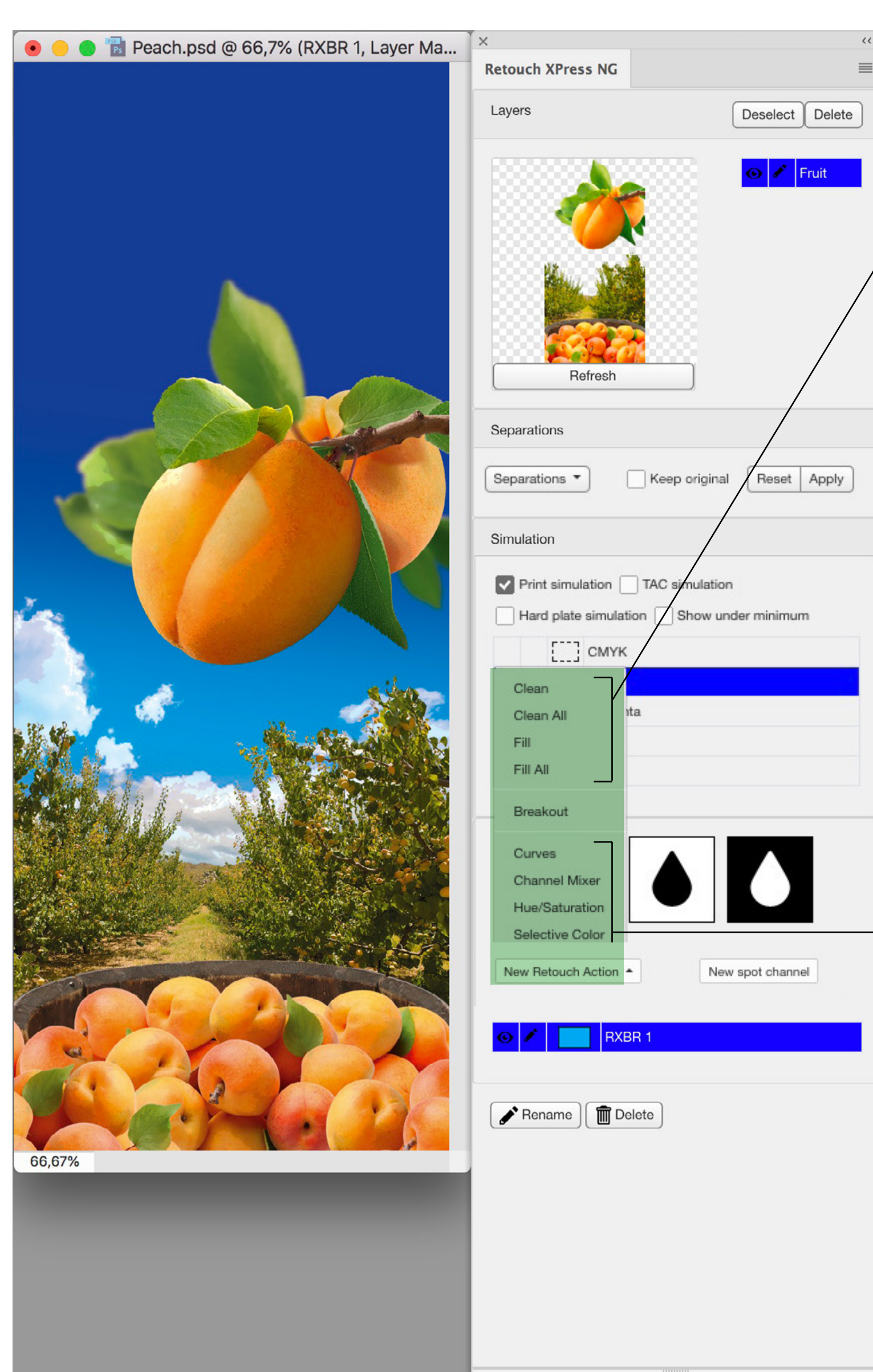
6. Apply Retouch-Actions

Modifying existing Retouch-Actions:

1. Select one of your Retouch-Groups at the top of the panel
2. Select a plate (C, M, Y, K or CMYK)
3. Click on one of the existing Retouch-Actions in the List
4. Paint/unpaint with the brush or make adjustments on the Properties panel of Photoshop

TAC-Fix with Selective-Color:

1. Select one of your Retouch-Groups at the top of the panel
2. Turn on TAC simulation, critical areas are displayed with black. If you cannot see anything displayed with black then your artwork is correct according to the TAC value you set up on the Input Panel at the beginning of the retouch session
3. Create a Selective-Color Retouch-Action.
4. Selective Color will appear in your action list and the Properties panel will load Selective Color settings
5. Select Blacks from the color menu of Properties and pull back the sliders till the black areas disappear from the artwork
6. Turn off TAC simulation



- / - **Fill and Fill-All** automatically set minimum dot within the retouch group. No need for masking, just move your cursor above the document and paint with the brush. Minimum dot value has to be set at the starting panel (See page 2 / 2)

Fill actions are visible only when Print simulation or Hard-plate simulation is turned on.

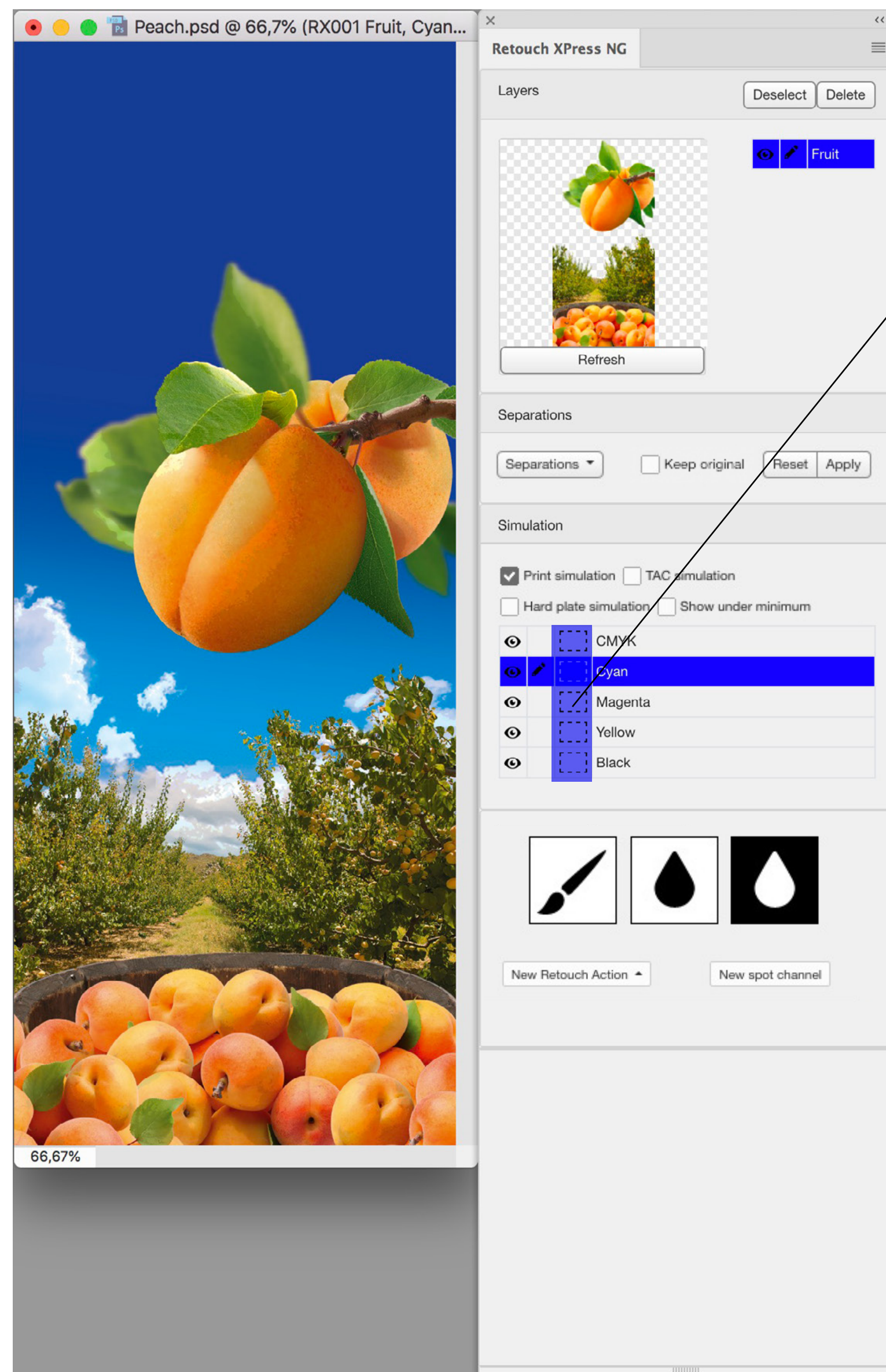
- **Clean** eliminates unwanted pixels. Just move your cursor above the document and erase with the brush. **Clean-All** removes all information from the selected plate.

- **Tip:** Changing foreground/background color by clicking on the brush-icon or typing „x’ you can make corrections, unfill and unclean the unwanted areas.

- You can create as many Fill and Clean actions as you wish, this way better structuring your job. Later you may rename, delete or make them invisible by just one click.

- You can also activate any of the **regular adjustment layers** (Curves, Selective Color, etc) from the plugin panel, RetouchXPRESS is going to put it in the right order in the layer structure, applying these changes only on the selected retouch group.

Using Masks and Selections



Live Selections

RXP AutoSelections: Dashed rectangle icons store the hard-plate selections of each channel. Loading these selections proves very useful when cleaning or filling up certain graphical elements.

E.g. a red apple image surely has magenta in its full area. This way you can load the outline of the apple as a selection and easily fill it up with Black or Cyan minimum dots.

1. Select the ink you would like to work on by clicking on the eye and pen icons

2. Select one of the Retouch Actions (create new or click on one in the list).

3. click on the dashed rectangle of the necessary channel and use brush tool or the adjustment panels according to the type of the Retouch Action.

Selections from original layer transparencies: RetouchXPress blocks working on original layers in your document while you have a retouch-action selected in the plugin panel. However **you can load layer transparency selections by CMD + left click on the layer in Photoshop's layer panel.**

Manual selections: Users can also load selections from paths, alpha channels and create live selections manually by lasso, rectangular/elliptical tools.

Masking methods that requires selecting original layers (e. g. magic-wand) cannot be used unless closing the panel, saving the selection then reopening the plugin.

Loading selections for Clean and Fill actions:

1. Select one of the Retouch Actions (create new or click on one in the list).

2. Load or create selection

3. Move your cursor above the image and start painting within the live selection

Loading selections for all the other actions:

1. Load or create selection

2. Ask a new Retouch-Action.

3. The changes will apply only within the selection

7. Check&Monitor your job



Action List

Any change (retouch action) you make in your document is recorded therefore non-desctrutive.

The changes appear in order under the selected retouch-group and the selected channel. In the list you will see only the items that affects that particular channel within the selected retouch group. This system creates a very easily understandable, clean structure in your PS file.

With RetouchXpress you can easily monitor and quality-control your job since **all changes can be turned on and off by the eye-icons**. You can always clearly follow all steps you have made in the file, and cannot get lost among tons of unstructured, mixed-up layers.

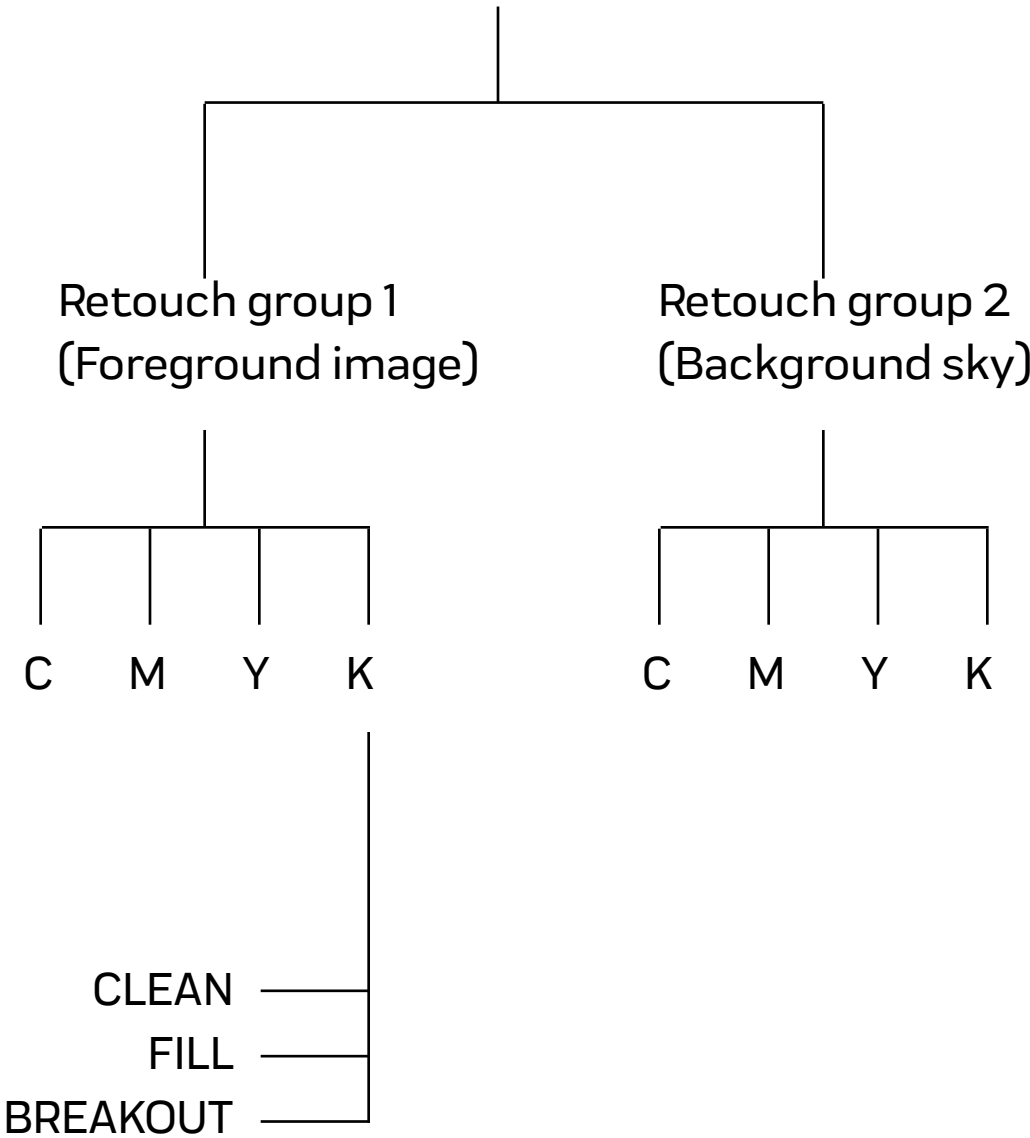
You can also change the default names of the retouch-actions for a better overview and easier navigation in your workflow:

1. Click on a Retouch-Action

2. Click on ,Rename'

3. Type a specific name, e.g: ,Client comment 1'

Actions list structure in this example



Mask Retouch-Actions



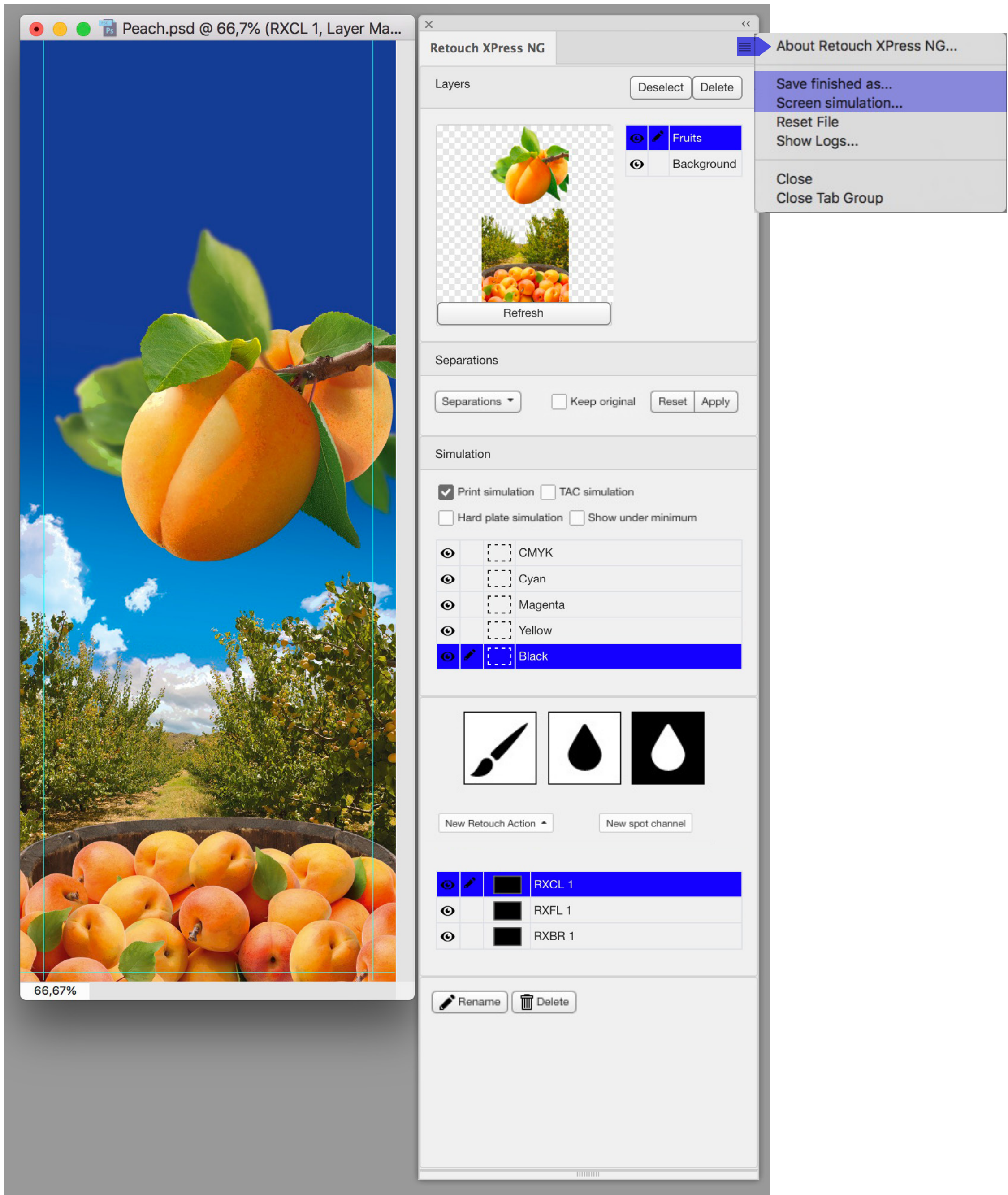
Masking Retouch Actions

Retouch-Actions generally affect the entire plate(s) of a retouch-group

If you want to apply these actions only for a part of a graphical element you may hide or reveal the layer-mask of the Retouch-Action then use the brush-tool (black or white) to hide/reveal certain areas.

1. Select one of your Retouch-Groups at the top of the panel
2. Select a plate (C, M, Y, K or CMYK)
3. Click on one of the existing Retouch-Actions in the List
4. Click on one of the drop-icons to hide/reveal the layer-mask of the Retouch-Action.
5. Click on the positive/negative brush tool and paint in the image to hide/reveal certain areas.

Save Output / Dot-Proof



Drop-down menu

Open the menu from the upper-right corner of RetouchXPress panel:

- With **Save finished as...** feature you can output your file in flattened format that does not contain unprintable highlights (i.e. cuts down everything between zero and min. dot)

Besides that you can also use Photoshop's own built in functions to save your artwork as a psd source-file. This will also contain the work-layers that has been created by RetouchXpress. Once reopening this job-file, RetouchXpress will recognise all RX work-layers and refills them into its own interface.

- Screen simulation:

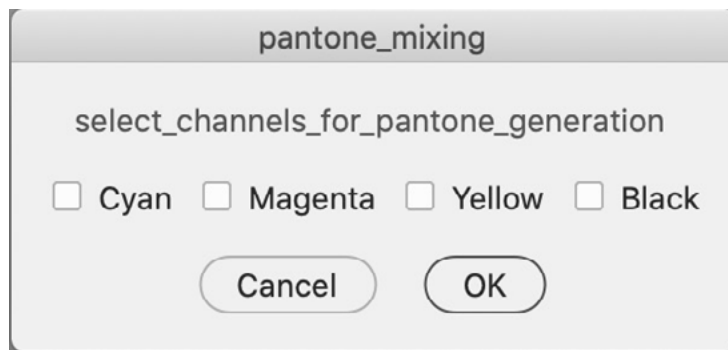
1. First select an area by the rectangular selection tool in your working file.
2. Then click on *Screen simulation* and specify screen values.
3. Click on OK and view your dot proof in a separate Photoshop window.
4. Close the document to return to your working file.

Spot-Color Print Preview

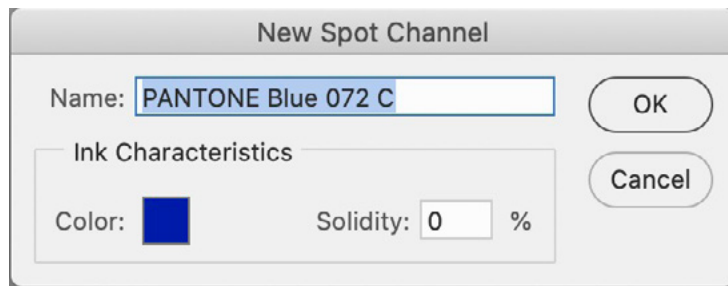
You can visualize minimum dot and highlight-dotgain on spot plates too by turning on “Print simulation” checkbox. The real printed value of your minimum dot can be set on the starting panel of the plugin.

Creating Spot Colors

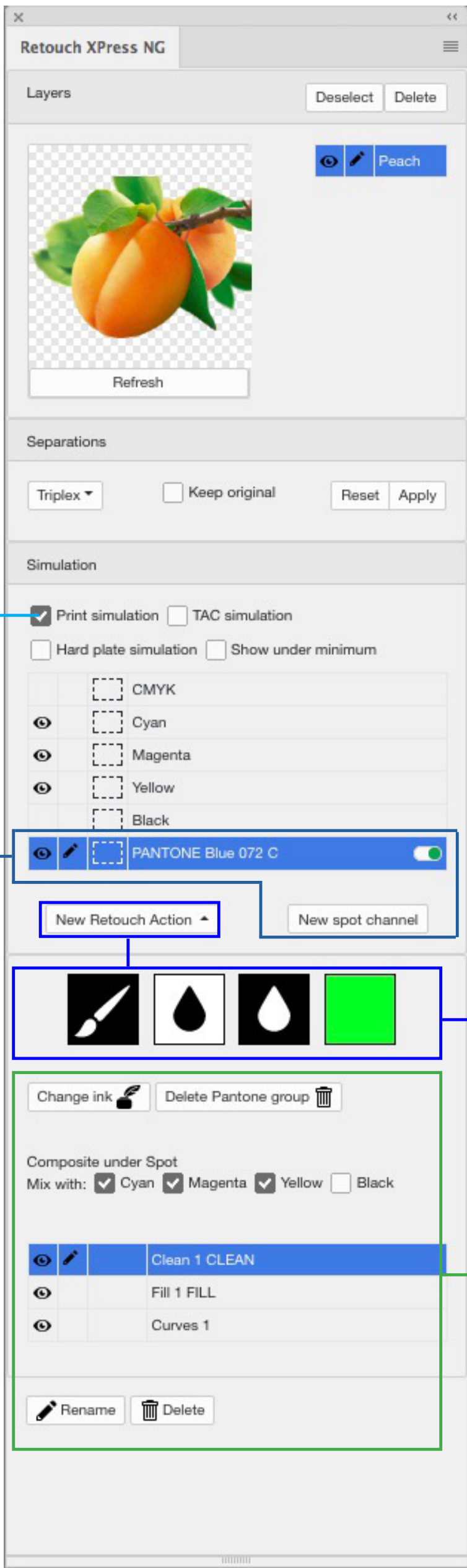
- 1. Open a CMYK image (flat or layered) and click on “process” to get to the working panel
- 2. Create a live selection! Only the selected area will be converted to spot-color.
- 3. Click on “New spot channel”
- 4. Select the source channels in the pop-up window:



- 5. Select ink from the next popup menu:



- 6. The new ink appears in the ink list



Spot-Color retouching functions:

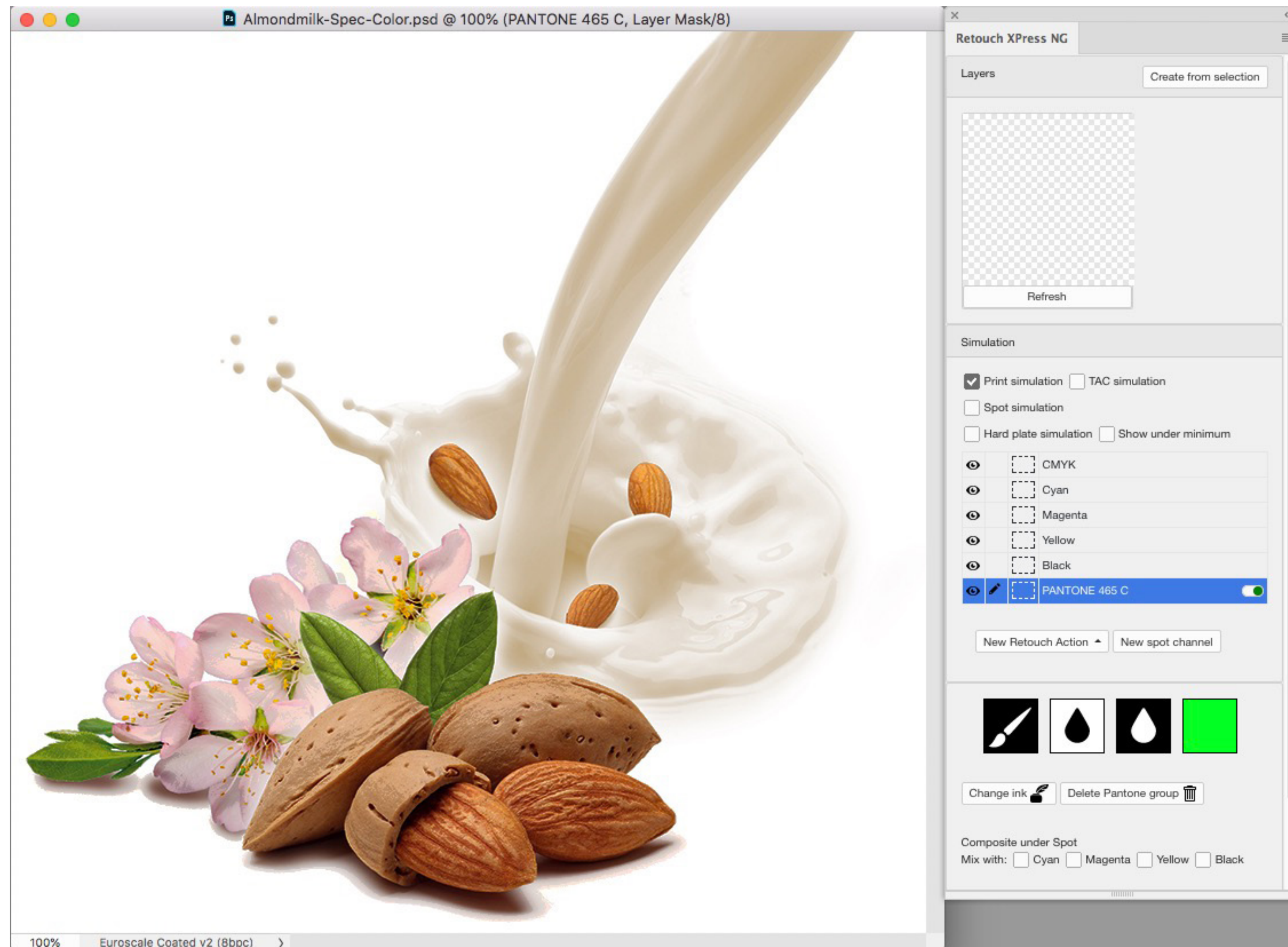
The “New Retouch-Action” drop-down menu and the retouching tools beneath change to the available spot-color features as soon as you select a spot channel in the list.

Spot-Color modification

When you click on a spot channel in your ink list the plugin loads the tools and menus for spot-color modifications:

- You can change the ink
- Mix CMYK channels under the selected spot-color
- You can completely delete a spot-channel including all the changes and functions that belongs to it.
- With the little green switches in the channel list you can hide the spec inks including all the changes and functions that belongs to it and check the original CMYK information under the spot ink .
- Retouch Actions are listed at the bottom of the panel just like in case of CMYK channels. You can turn them on and off with the eye icon, rename or delete them.

CREATING SPOT PLATES



WORKFLOW EXAMPLE – 1

1. Open *Almondmilk.psd* from sample files and click on “Process” on RetouchXPress panel

Please note that spot-colors and its functions are NOT tied to Retouch-Groups neither Photoshop Layers. Spot-color introduction is only based on live selections that you can also load from the original layers of the psd file.

2. In Photoshop’s Paths palette click on the pre-made path “PANTONE 465” and load its selection

3. Go back to RetouchXpress interface and click on “New spot channel”

4. Select all inks in the pop-up window, these all will be combined as the source information for the spot plate.

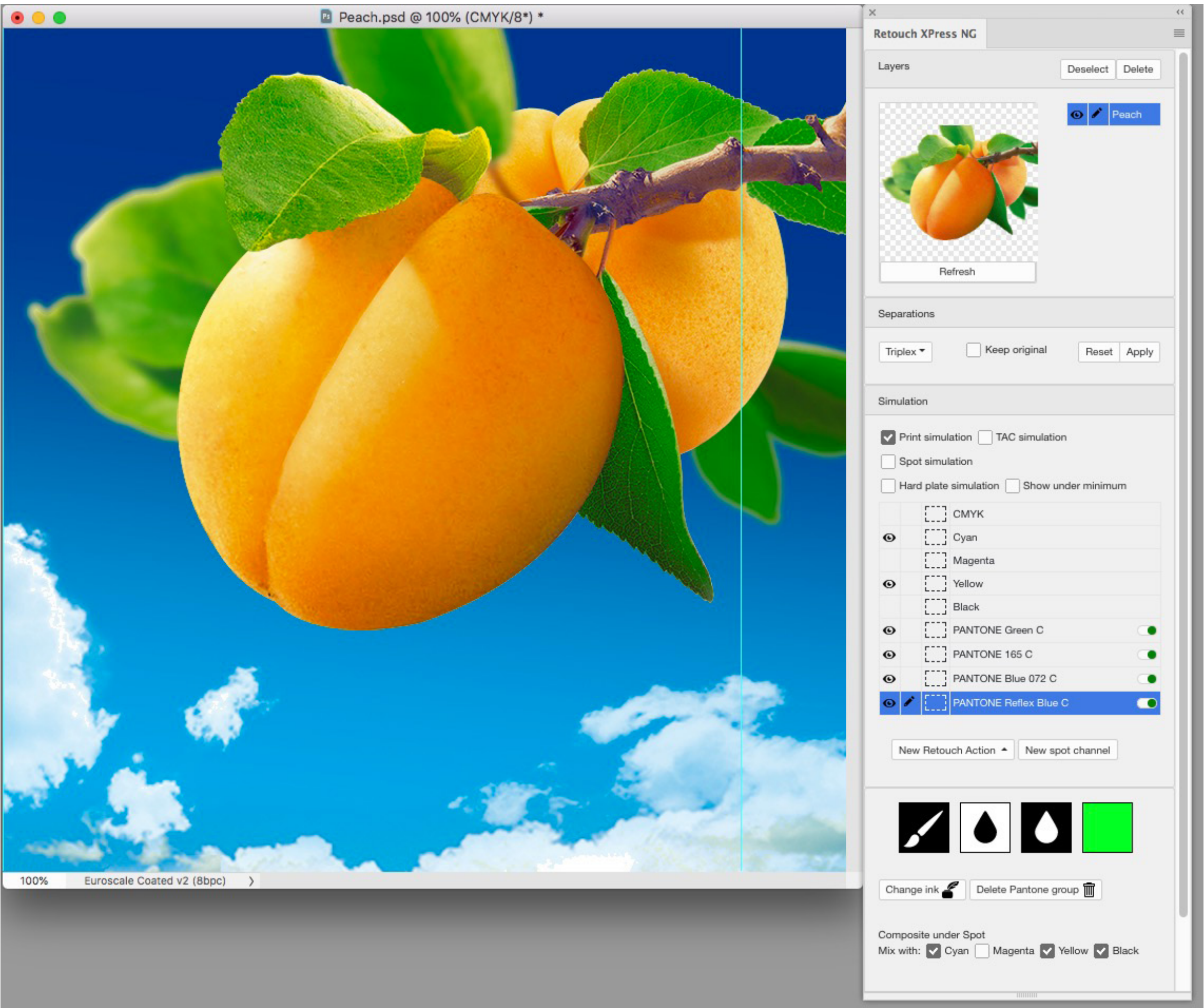
5. Select PANTONE 465 C from the next pop-up window

6. You will notice that RetouchXPress has changed all CMYK inks to P 465 only within the selected (milk-splash) area.

7. Click on “Spot simulation” above the channel list and check minimum dot issues on your new spec-color plate.

8. Click on the eye icon and turn off the green slider next to the PANTONE channel in the list so you can check the difference between the original CMYK solution and the spot version you have just created.

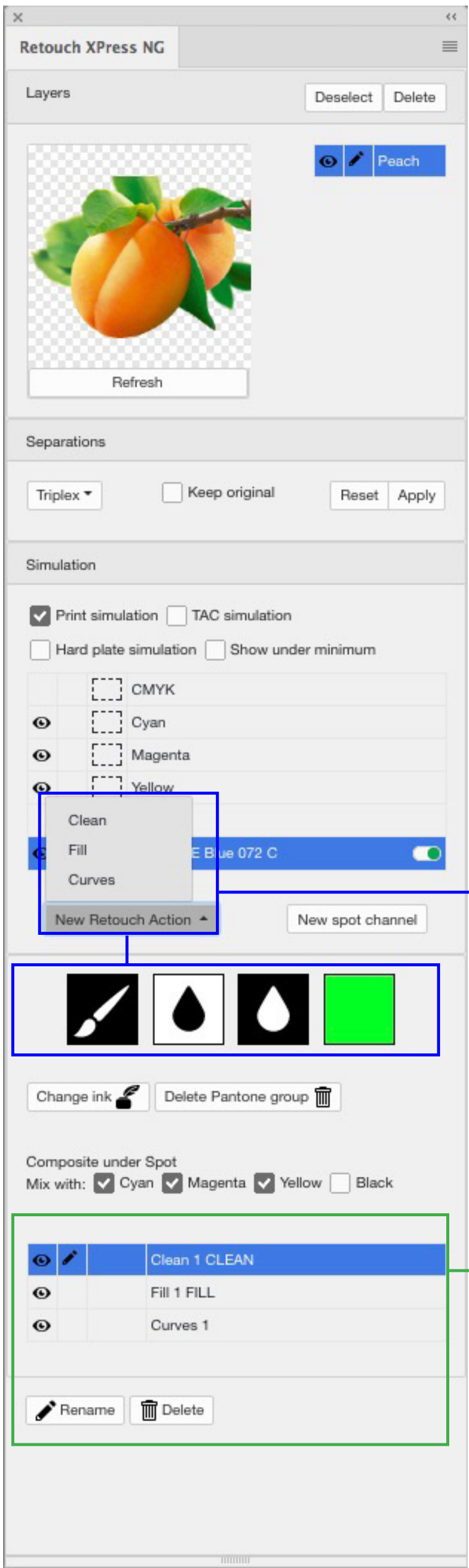
CREATING SPOT PLATES



WORKFLOW EXAMPLE - 2

1. Open *Peach.psd* from sample files and click on “Process” on RetouchXPress panel
2. Create a Retouch-Group of the foreground fruit image
3. Convert it to Triplex to get cleaner CMYK plates. You will utilize them more efficiently when creating spot channels.
Please note that Spec-Colors and its functions are NOT tied to Retouch-Groups neither Photoshop Layers. Spec Color introduction is only based on live selections that you can also load from the original layers of the psd file.
4. In Photoshop Layers palette open RX Contents folder and CMD+Click on the fruit layer to load its selection
5. Go back to RetouchXpress interface and click on “New spot channel”
6. Select only Cyan in the pop-up window, this will be the source channel for the green leaves
7. Select PANTONE Green C from the next pop-up window
8. You will notice that RetouchXPress has changed Cyan to P Green only within the selected area
9. Repeat point 4 and 5 then select only Magenta in the pop-up window, this will be the source channel for the peach.
10. Select PANTONE 165 C from the next pop-up window
11. You will notice that RetouchXPress has changed Magenta to P165 only within the selected area, i.e the peach is now made of Y, K and P165
12. Now we want to change K to P072 in the fruit image so you will repeat point 4, 5 then select Black in the pop-up window and select P072 from the ink list
13. If you also want to change the blue sky background to spot colors, repeat point 4, “select inverse” then repeat point 5, 6, 7 using your own choice in terms of source channels and target inks.
14. You can also try the following functions:
 - Spot simulation
 - Turning little green sliders on/off
 - Deleting Pantone channels
 - Changing “Composite under Spot”
 - “Change ink” feature

RETOUCHING SPOT PLATES



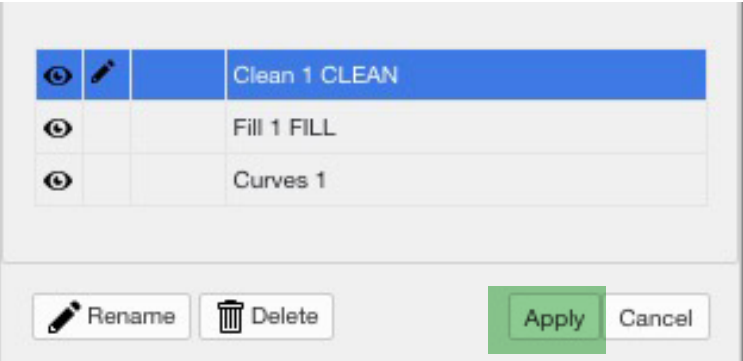
If you select a spot-channel in the channel list you can only choose from 3 Retouch-Actions in the drop-down menu: Clean, Fill and Curves. New actions will appear in the action list at the bottom of the panel. You can later turn them on and off or modify them any time by double-clicking on an item in the list.

Curves

You can adjust the lightness, contrast and breakout limits of your spot-plates by one single functions. Curves work in a NONDESTRUCTIVE way on spot channels, just like on CMYK channels. You can never loose details.

Fill and Clean

Fill and clean functions are for the same purpose as they are at the CMYK plates however they work a bit different way: You will start using these functions in **quick-mask mode** which will be automatically loaded by the plugin. With the brush icon you can paint in the images and then by clicking on the “Apply” button the software will apply the changes on the selected spot channel.



All changes are NONDESTRUCTIVE” so you will never use any details despite you are working on spot channels.

WARNING - UI Protocol

Once you start working in RetouchXPress stay within the panel and avoid using Photoshop's own interface because that may cause disfunctions in the layer structure created by the plugin.

- Use Photoshop layer palette only for creating Retouch-Groups and for loading selections!

- Instead of Photoshop channels palette use RXP's channel selector!

- Introduce your usual adjustment layers (curves, selective-color, etc) from within RXP's 'New retouch action' menu!

Close RXP panel If you want to switch to your usual manual workflow. In this case however - when reopening RXP panel - it may not recognize and reload its own layer-structure (retouch-groups and retouch-actions) any more.

Document windows

Jumping in and out of your working file (to another ps document) might distract the interface. Closing and reopening RetouchXPress panel (and sometimes also the working file) usually helps.

Retouch-Actions

When a required retouch-action does not work make sure that you have the retouch-group and the ink-channel selected on the panel. If that does not help then you just create a new action and hide or delete the other one that did not function properly.

File size

In general, avoid big files (more than 80-100 MB) in 1.0 version as it may slow down Photoshop significantly.

Version 1.1 will support large files after program-code optimalization.



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