Rolling Mesh (Green Hills) —converting gradients to mesh and editing, plus extras

TASKS

1. Produce an illustration of rolling hills similar to *Examples* but feel free to choose your own contours and colors! Match the contour of mesh object to the tonal transitions. Work from a limited palette of **only three colors for the land and three colors for the sky**. (i.e. shades of greens for hills and shades of blue for sky) Once again, this has much to do with understanding the cast of light. (white is okay too)

2. After completing hills and sky, apply background rays to skyline as demonstrated in class! [See *Lighting Effects and Opacity Masks* tutorial], **Use any single color you wish for rays! White or light colors work best.**

3. Finally, create bubbles **(Zero% Opacity Blend)** to float in the foreground. **Use any colors you want for the bubbles.**

Hills

1. Draw 4 closed shapes to represent the hills with any tool, and make them overlap.
2. Fill them all with the same custom linear gradient, then customize each with the Gradient Tool. No Stroke!(Save and name your custom gradient swatch!)
3. Make a rectangle for the background sky, apply gradient. (You can start with the green gradient you just made and change stops to blue and rename)
4. Object>Expand all the things you wish to convert from gradient-filled objects into Gradient Mesh. (In dialog box: make sure "fill" box is checked & "expand gradient to gradient mesh" radio button is selected) [**Illustrator converts each linear gradient into a rectangle rotated to the angle matching the linear gradient's angle; each mesh rectangle is masked by the original object**]
5. Use tools and techniques below to manipulate gradient objects you just made.
   - *Object>Lock/Unlock All* toggle to isolate objects as you work, or place each object on a separate layer
   - *Mesh Tool*—click on any mesh anchor point to select or move that point, or its direction handles
   - *Mesh Tool*—click anywhere within a mesh (except on an anchor point) to add new mesh point and grid line (Be careful how you select, sometimes adds unexpected color)
   - *Mesh Tool*—option/click to delete mesh point
   - *Pen Tool*—use + to add anchor point to add a point *without* a gridline (for very subtle touches)
   - *Lasso Tool*—to select groups of points to move or re-color
   - *Direct Select Tool*—to select individual points to change color and to pull handles to change shape
   - *Warp Tool*—to move grid around
   - *Smooth Tool*—to clean up bad contours; adjust handles of curves; add/delete points

6. Try applying Blending Modes from Transparency Palette on overlapping objects and bubbles. (I applied a Soft Light blending mode to my rays which faded them gently into the blue sky)

- Note: Any object can be made into a "mesh object" by simply selecting it and Object>Create Gradient Mesh. This brings up a dialog box allowing you to choose the number of rows and columns.

Bubbles (Zero% Opacity Blend)

- Modify an oval to look like a blunt " C " to form highlight, white fill/white stroke and make it 0% opacity
- Draw a circle with a color fill and no stroke and place it *behind* the highlight.
- Select both objects, then with the Blend Tool, click on one anchor point of the larger object, then option/click on the corresponding anchor point of the smaller object and specify 22-44 Specified Steps in the dialog box.
- Reverse the color sequence for a different look. Make the highlight a color at 100% opacity and the circle behind it white with 0% opacity and repeat blending steps.
- Reduce the size of just the highlight to make bubble transition lines smoother. This is also the effect of adding steps to the blend, but too much and you'll crash! Also, the look begins to deteriorate.
- Move just the highlight to different locations inside and outside of bubble—the blending steps follow and redraw!
- This can work with any two objects!

Rays
- See "Lighting Effects and Opacity Masks" tutorial at www.voiceonapage.com in tutorials> illustrator.
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