Wide Angle Correction

Don't you hate it when you change to your wide angle lens to take the shot and even this just isn't wide enough! Don't fret, Photoshop is here to save the day.
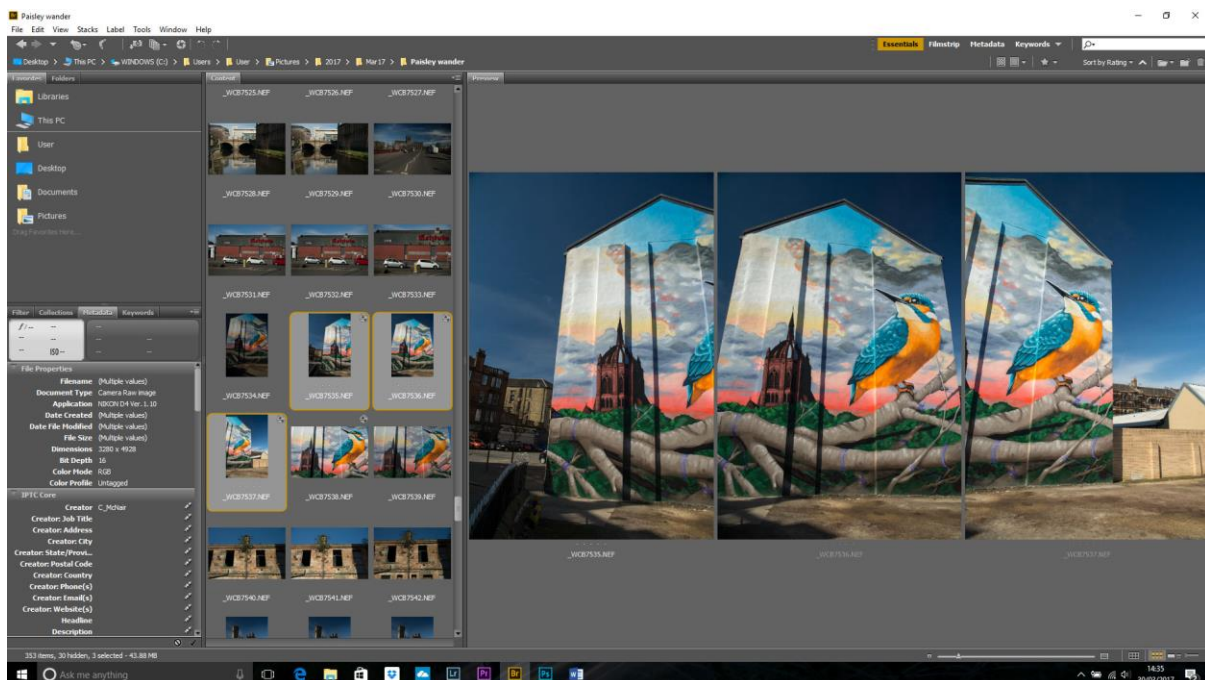
I shot three images in my hometown of Paisley of a mural painted on a gable end of a building. I couldn't get further back due to a busy road and had to climb a short wall and wrap my legs around the railings to steady myself as I took the pics. I just couldn't fit the whole building into one pic so I took a series of three to stitch together in Photoshop at a later date – that later date being the Digi Group last night!

Wide angle lenses often make things look weird, especially around the edges and they never recommend using wide lenses to Photomerge due to the distortions. Never mind, here goes…

First I want to do a quick RAW conversion on the 3 images to I selected them inside Bridge and right-clicked and chose Open. This takes them into Adobe Camera RAW (ACR).

With the first image selected I moved the sliders until I was happy, then from the little dropdown on the left hand beside the thumbnails I chose Select All (Cntl+A) then from the same dropdown Sync Settings (Alt+S). Click OK when the next dialogue box comes up and then Done (not Open).

Back in Bridge the thumbnails will have updated and look a lot better.

With the 3 pics still selected Tools>Photoshop>Photomerge. Normally I choose Auto, but Cylindrical and Spherical gave the building a better shape to start with. Here I will go with Spherical.
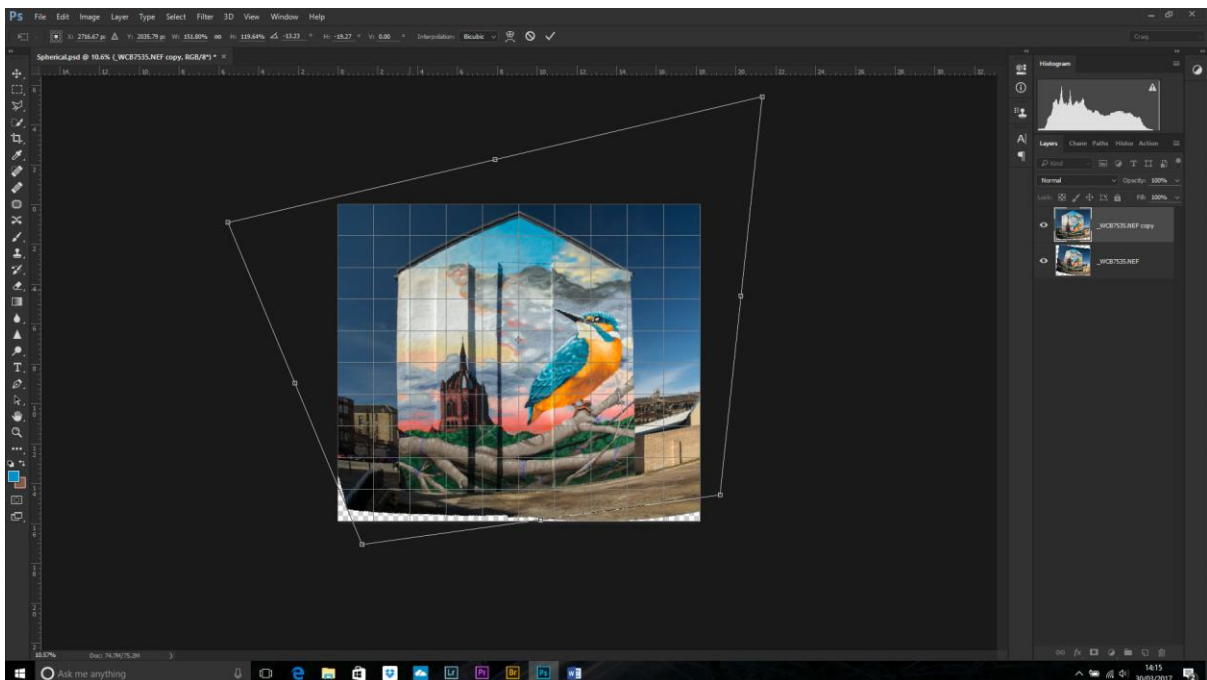
Zoom in to make sure the merging process has worked ok, then flatten the layers or merge visible to make the file size more manageable.

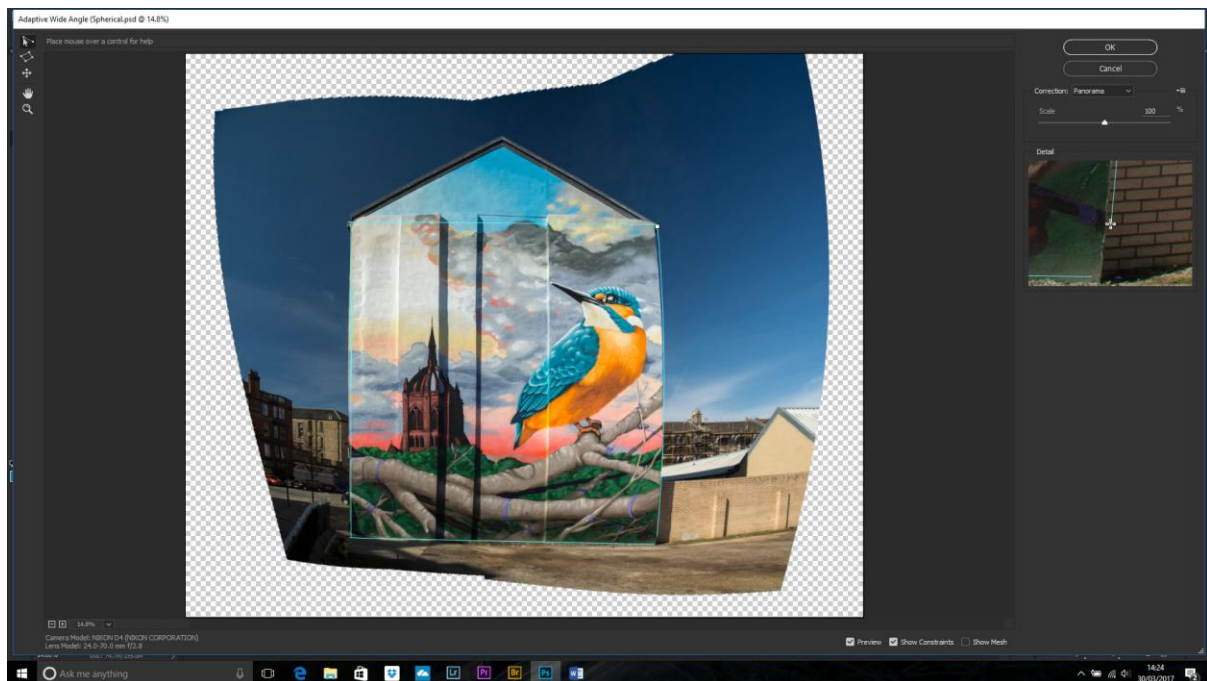Make a copy of this layer (Cntl+J).

Then choose Edit>Free transform (Cntl+T).

While holding down the Cntl key, drag the handles out until the building is roughly square (not leaning back – keystoning). Using View>Show>Grid will help (Cntl+'). You may have to zoom out a bit so you can see the handles.

The building is still bulging outwards (barrel distortion) and we can fix this using Filter>Lens Correction, but this will only give good results if the bulging is even all the way round.

The better choice is Filter>Adaptive Wide Angle. Make sure the Constraint tool is selected then draw along a line which should be straight – Photoshop will straighten it up! Do this with the other sides.

When you are happy click ok.

Back in Photoshop, I finished off with a crop and a little bit of Content Aware Fill in one corner.

Done!