

Introduction

To make this image look more interesting I added some snow falling down and some dropping down from the letters. The first thing to do before opening Photoshop is to install a few Brush sets. If you don't know how to, follow [this very good guide](#) which tells you how to install extra presets in your Adobe Photoshop.

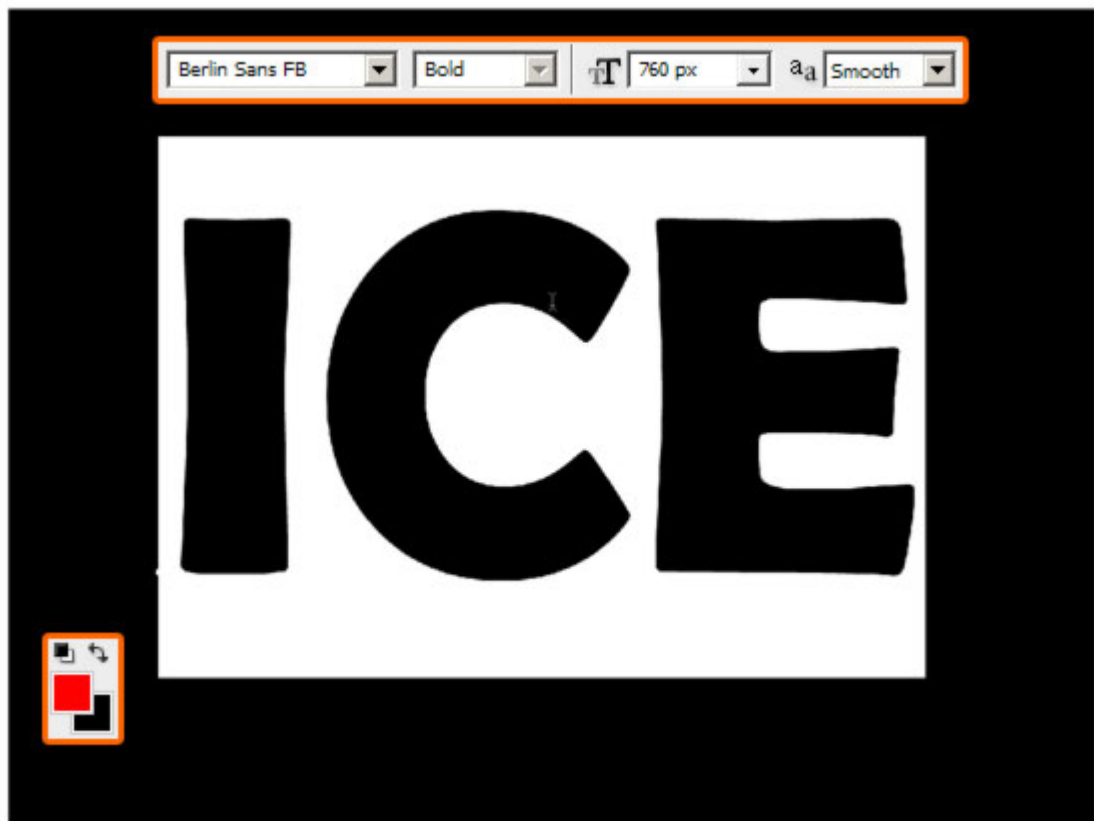
As mentioned, this effect is made from scratch, but I used two useful sets of tree Brushes: [this one](#) and this one (the set n°17 from the top) [from this list](#). Thank you very much to [pixelgratis](#) and [Velavan](#). For the text we'll use a special font called [Berlin Sans FB](#) in Bold version.

This tutorial is easy, made with basic techniques, can be done with Adobe Photoshop CS2 or superior and you don't need a pen tablet, a mouse is good enough. OK, now let's get working!

Step 1

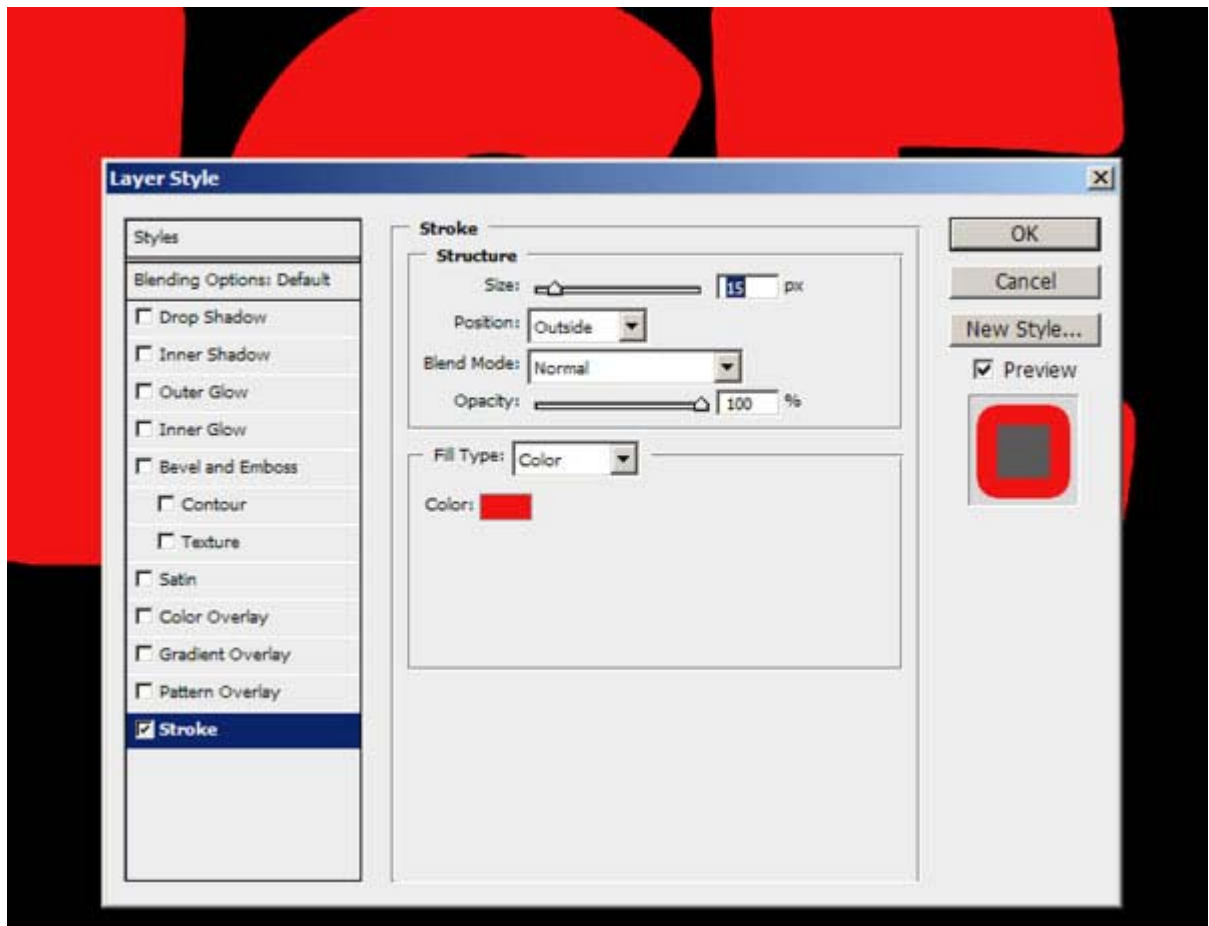
Create a document of the size you want, staying near to 1600 pixels by 1200 pixels, 300 dpi resolution (if you are going to print it) or 72 dpi if you're going to publish it on the Web. We can use 72 dpi to keep our document tidy and work faster. Set the Foreground color to black #000000 and then press Alt + Delete to fill the "Background" layer with a black color. Our "Background" layer become black with a touch!

Now choose #ff0000 as our Foreground color and type some text with the Horizontal Type Tool (T) using the settings shown below and the font we previously downloaded. We're using a red color just to create some contrast with the black background and the white effects that will come next.



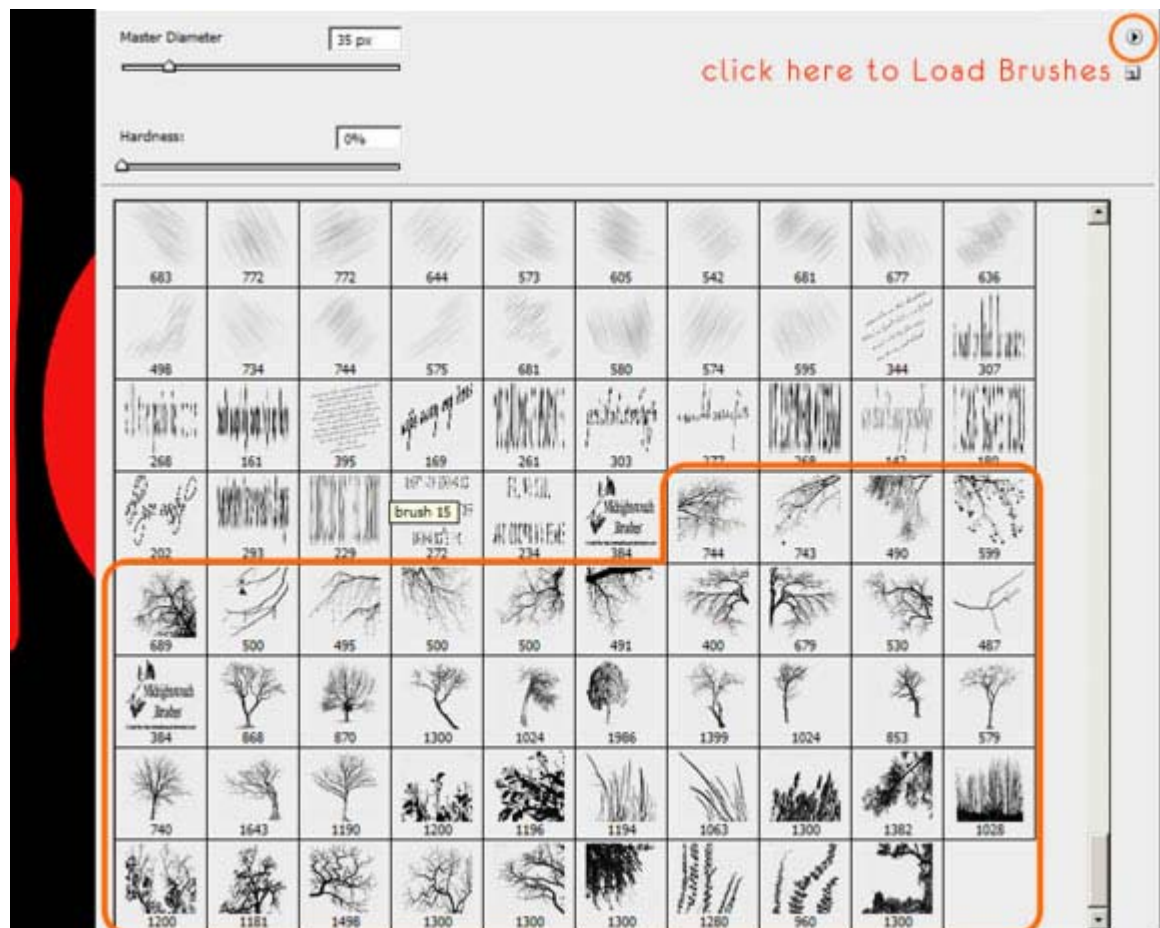
Step 2

Now double-click on the Layer thumbnail (or go to Layer > Layer Style > Stroke...) and choose #ff0000 for the color and set the Stroke at 15 pixels. This way we're making the text more rounded and fatty to avoid rough edges.



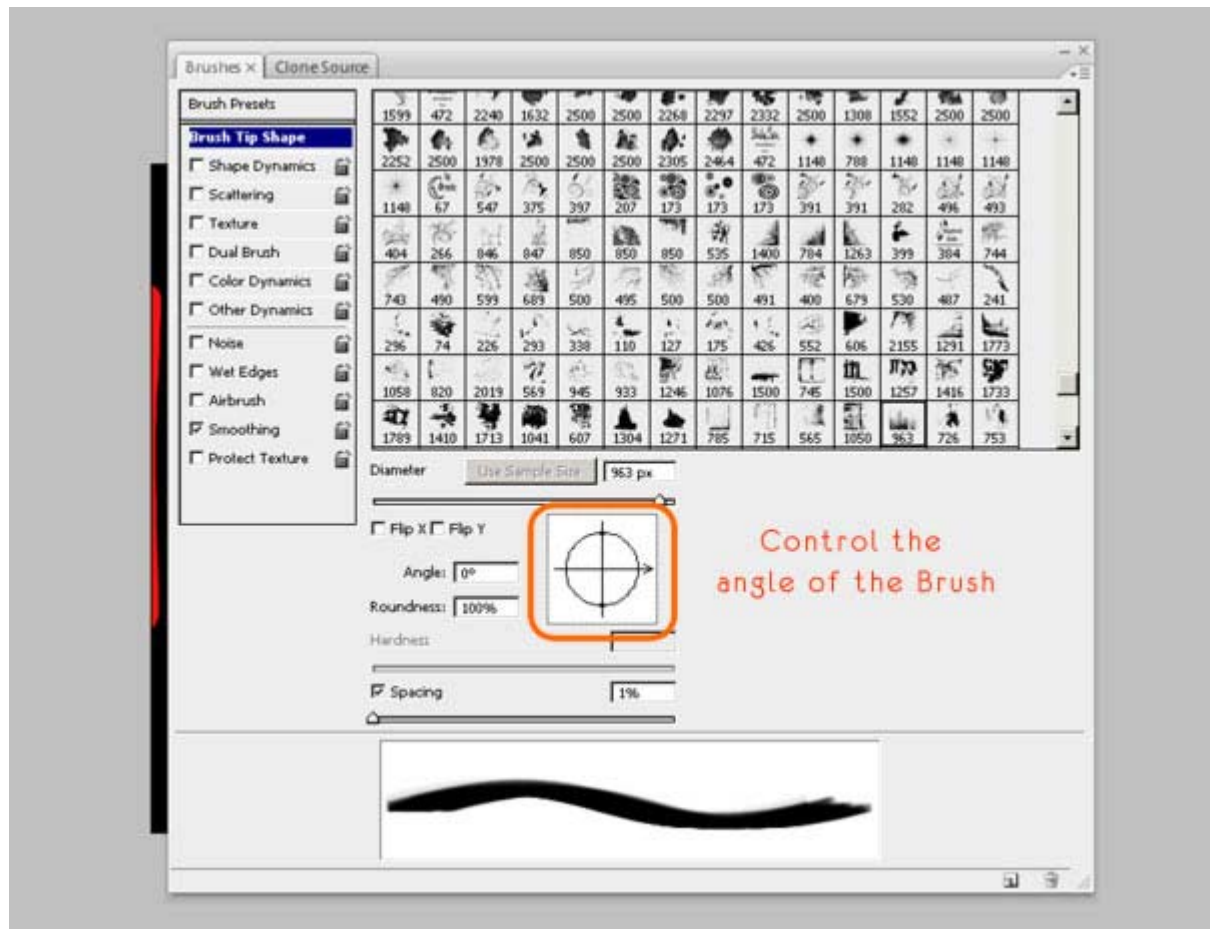
Step 3

Create a New Layer by clicking Command + Shift + N, then pick the Brush Tool (B), right-click with your mouse and finally load the new sets of Brushes by clicking on the little black arrow (look below). After choosing Load Brushes... browse to your Presets folder and then to the Brushes folder to load the Brushes. Load all the three sets we previously downloaded, as we're going to need some variety to create the ice effect.



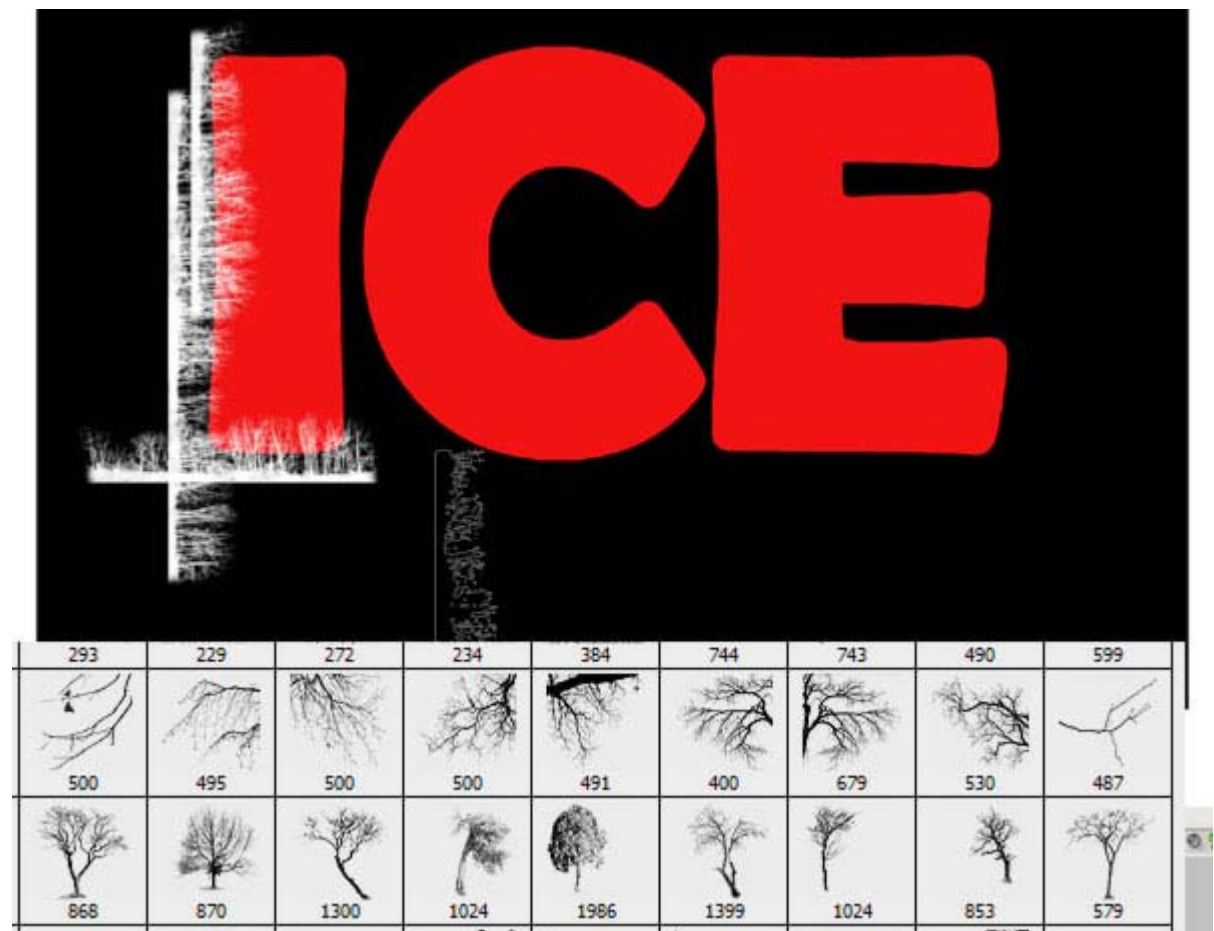
Step 4

Before beginning the work with Brushes, let's see how to modify the Angle of the Brush selected because it's essential for the next steps. Press F5 to open the Brushes Window: using the Angle option you can rotate the Brush you're using. Allow the Smoothing option for a softer Brush.



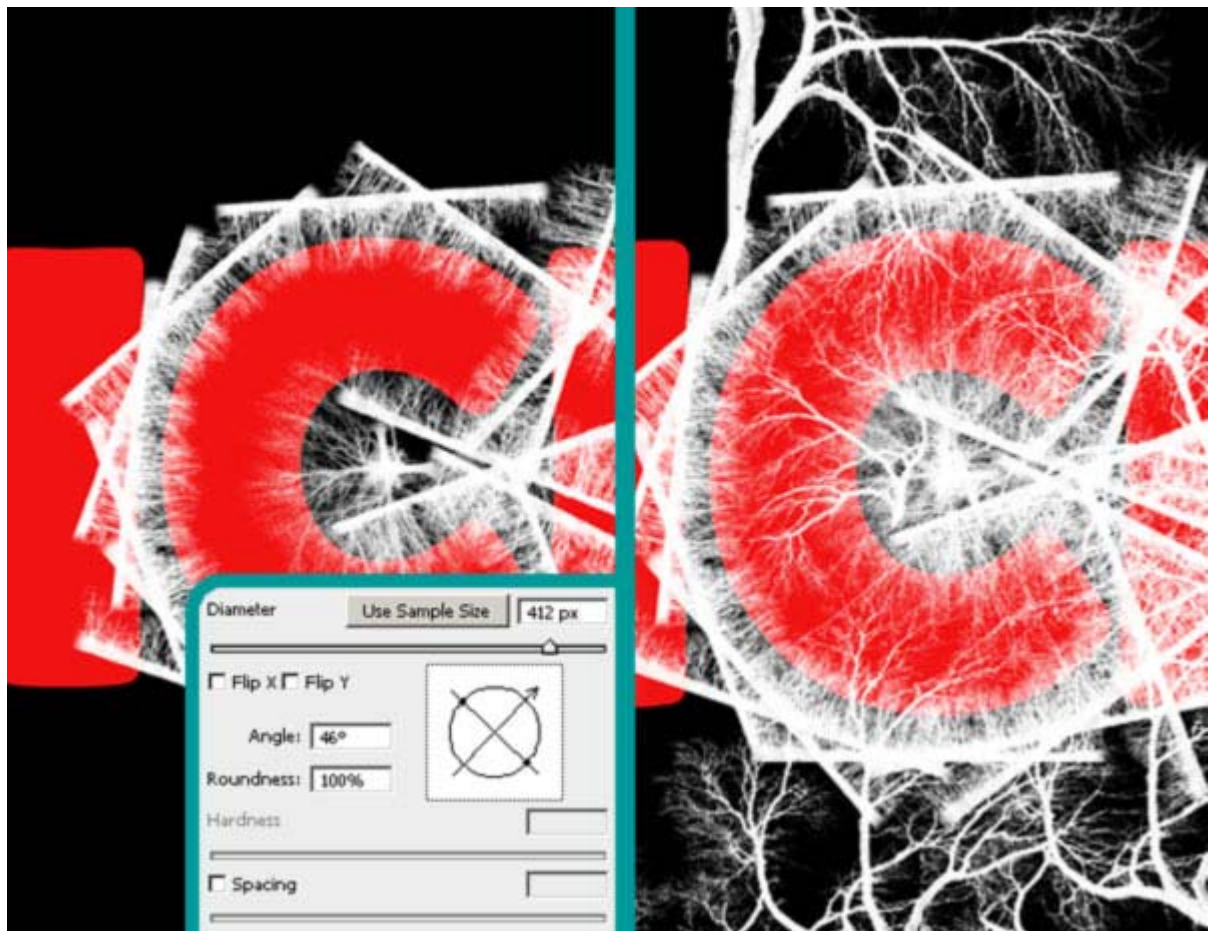
Step 5

Now click near the red area of the letters, everything which happens outside of that area is not important, and we can erase it later. Use your creativity to make something which should look like *cracks* in the ice - you have a lot of Brushes available to work with.



Step 6

The Angle and Size settings allow you to set and rotate the Brushes; uncheck the Spacing box to have more control when you're painting the ice cracks. For every letter create a new Layer hiding the one you've already made, so it's easier to look at what's happening in the red area.



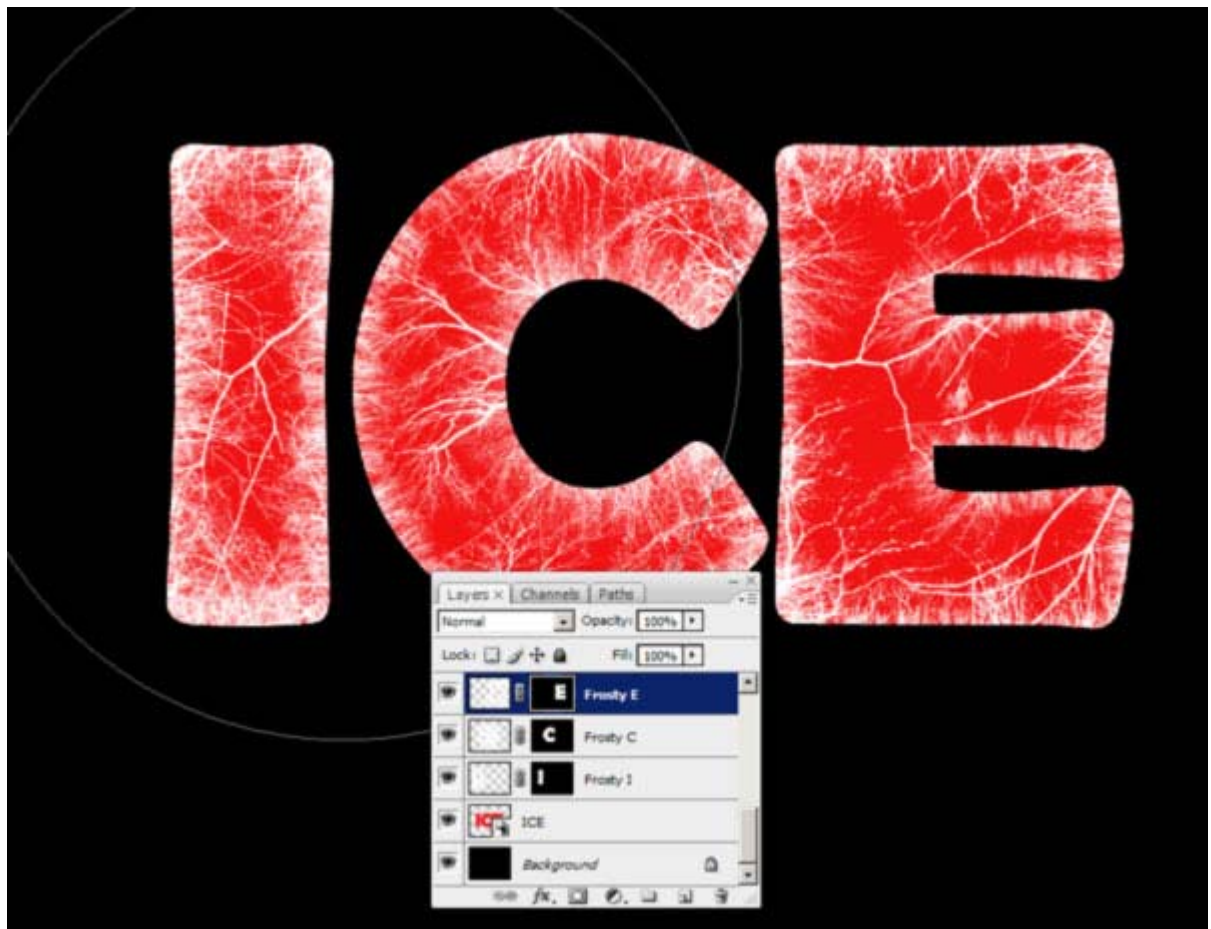
Step 7

Always give a name to layers, as it's easier to keep them organized. During the making of the ice effect it's important to use more *linear* Brushes to create the main shape of the letters and some bigger ones for the deeper cracks.



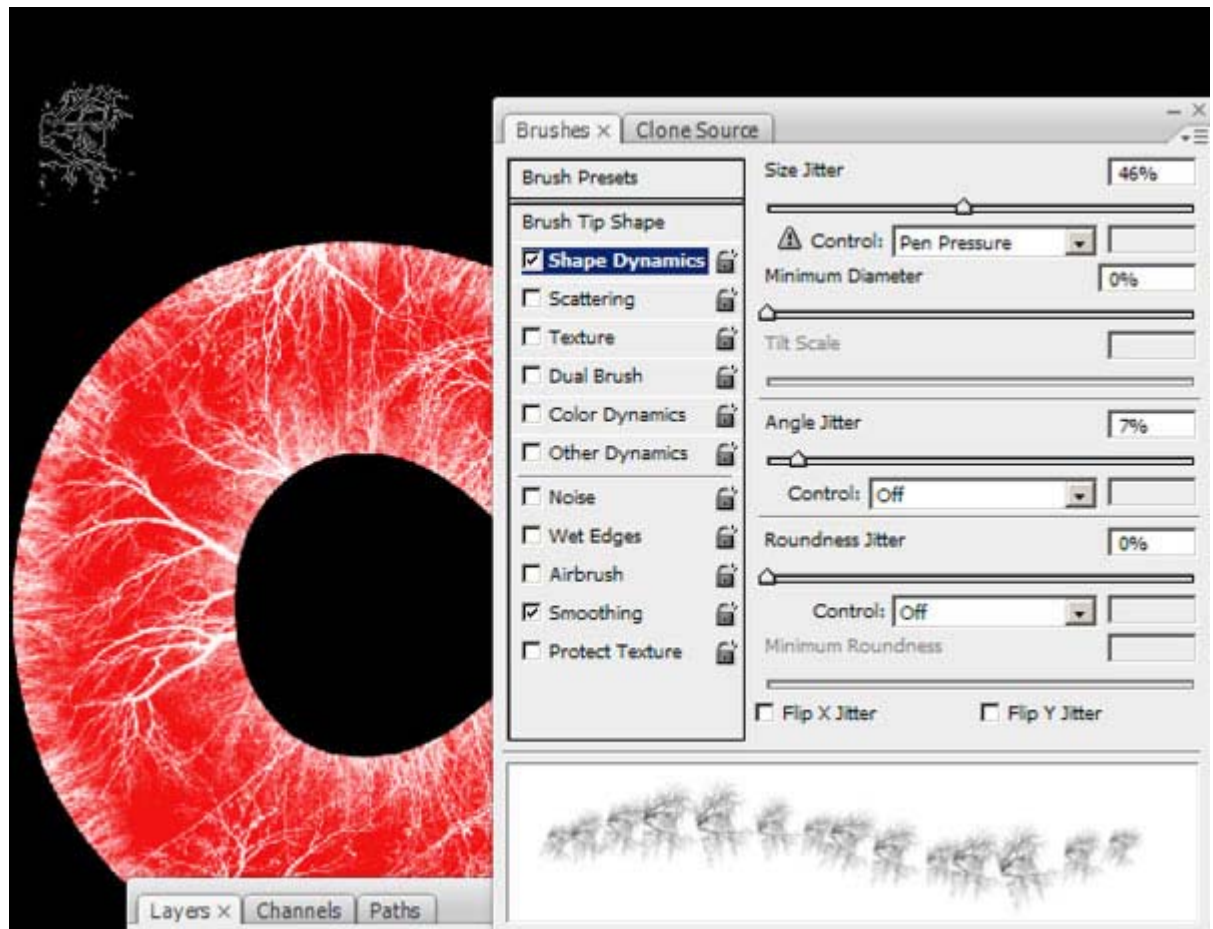
Step 8

Convert the "ICE" Layer (the red one) into a Smart Object (Right-click > Convert to Smart Object). Then Command-click on this Layer's thumbnail to select it completely and apply a Layer Mask to the other Layers.



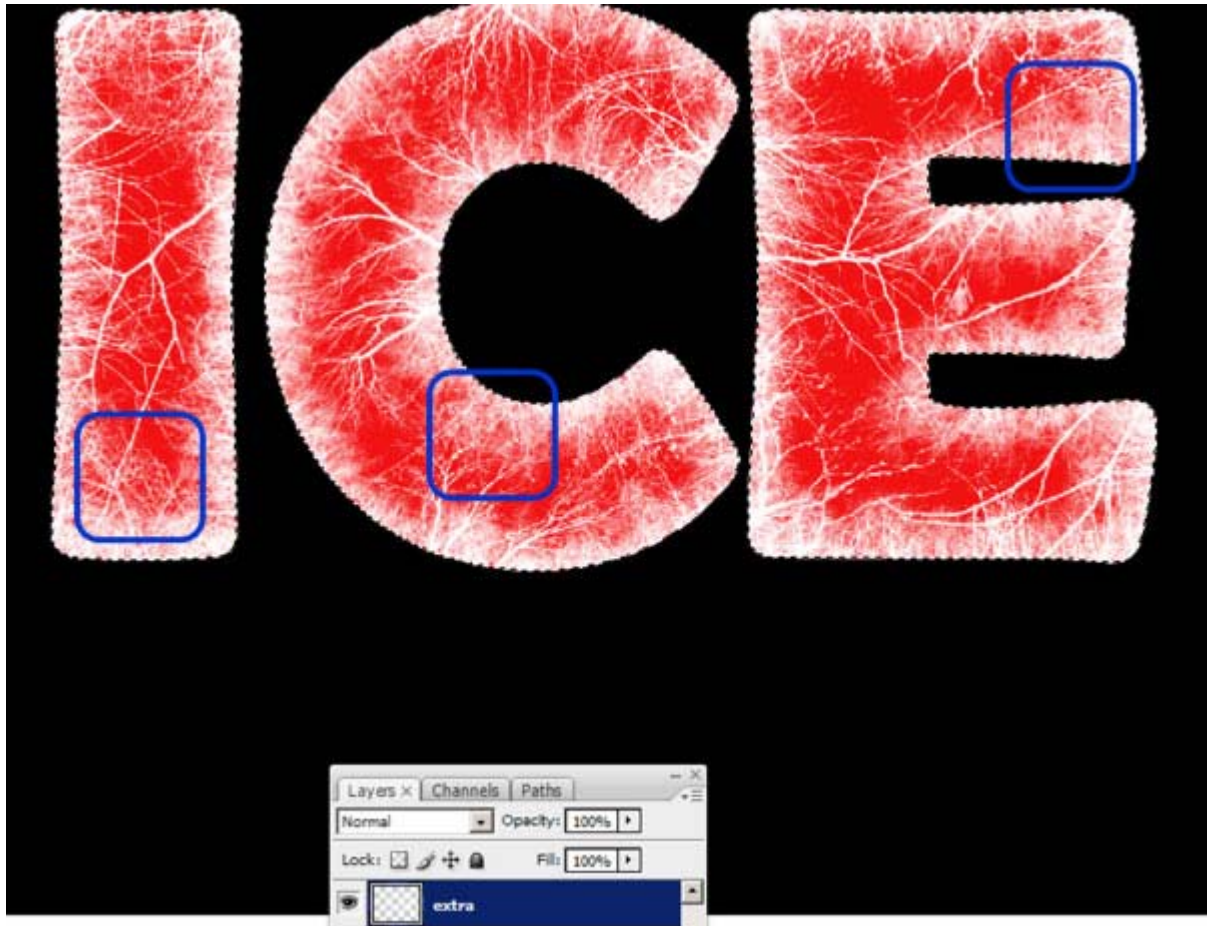
Step 9

Create a New Layer, call it "extra" and with a tree brush draw some extra ice into the red letters using the settings below (F5).



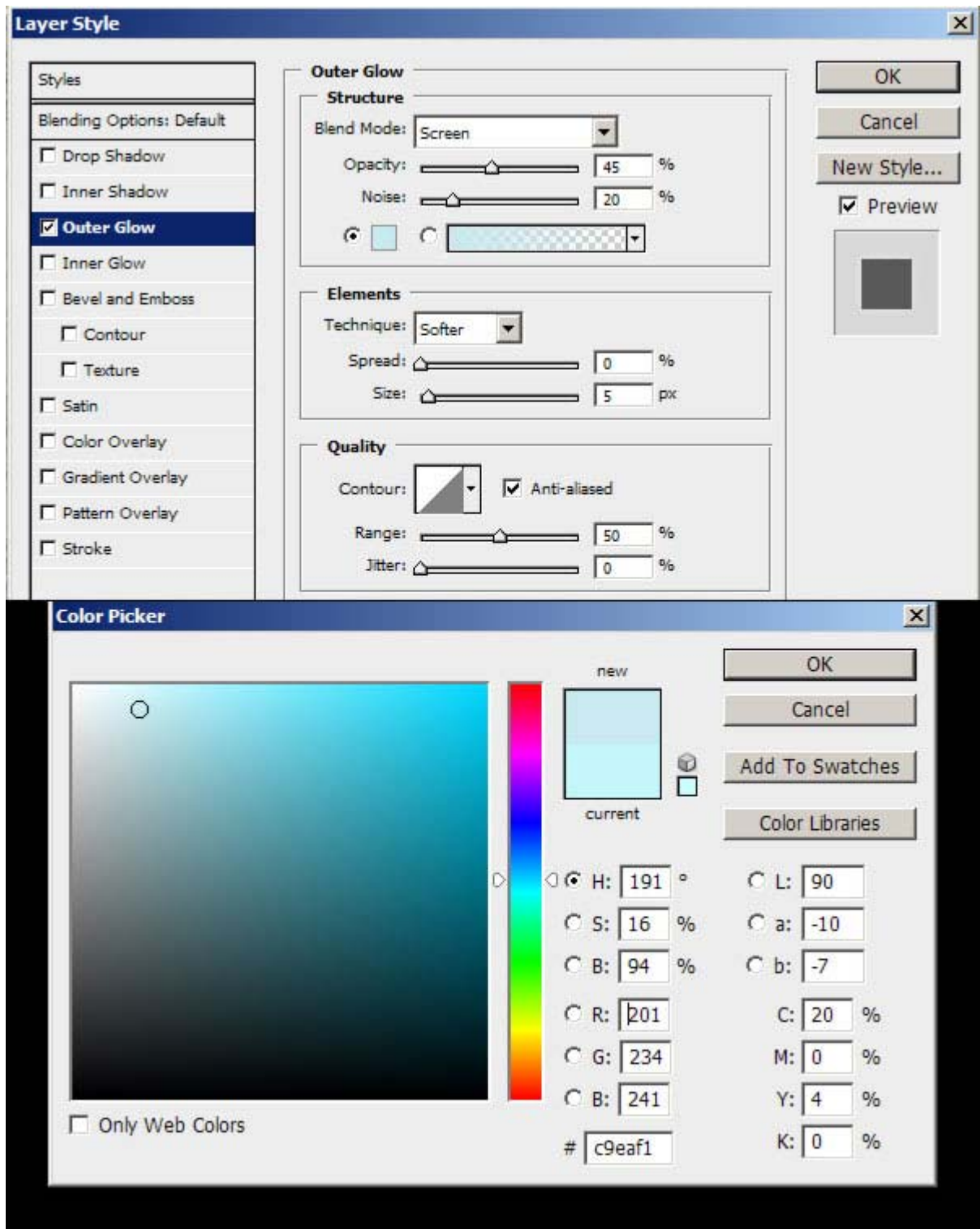
Step 10

Use the Brushes near the borders to make it look more three-dimensional. Help yourself by selecting the three letters so you can paint directly where you need to.



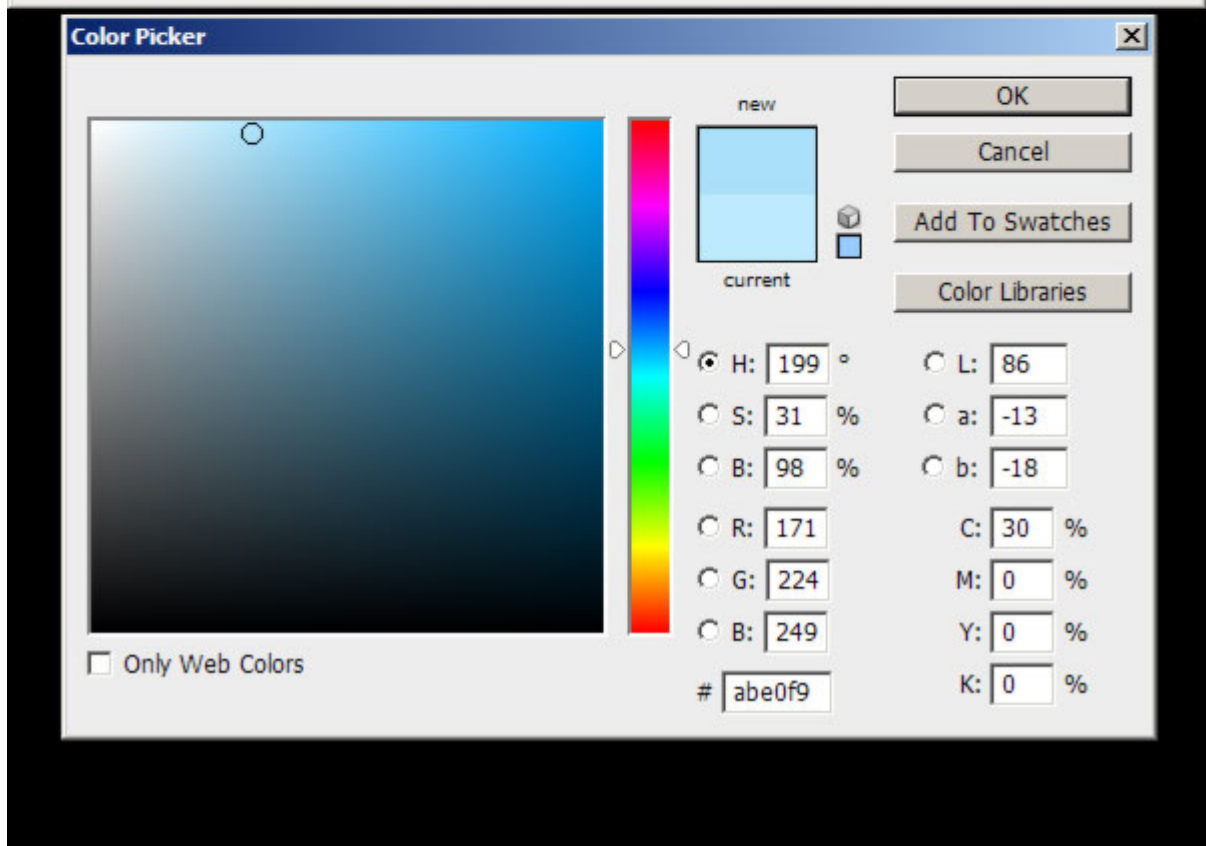
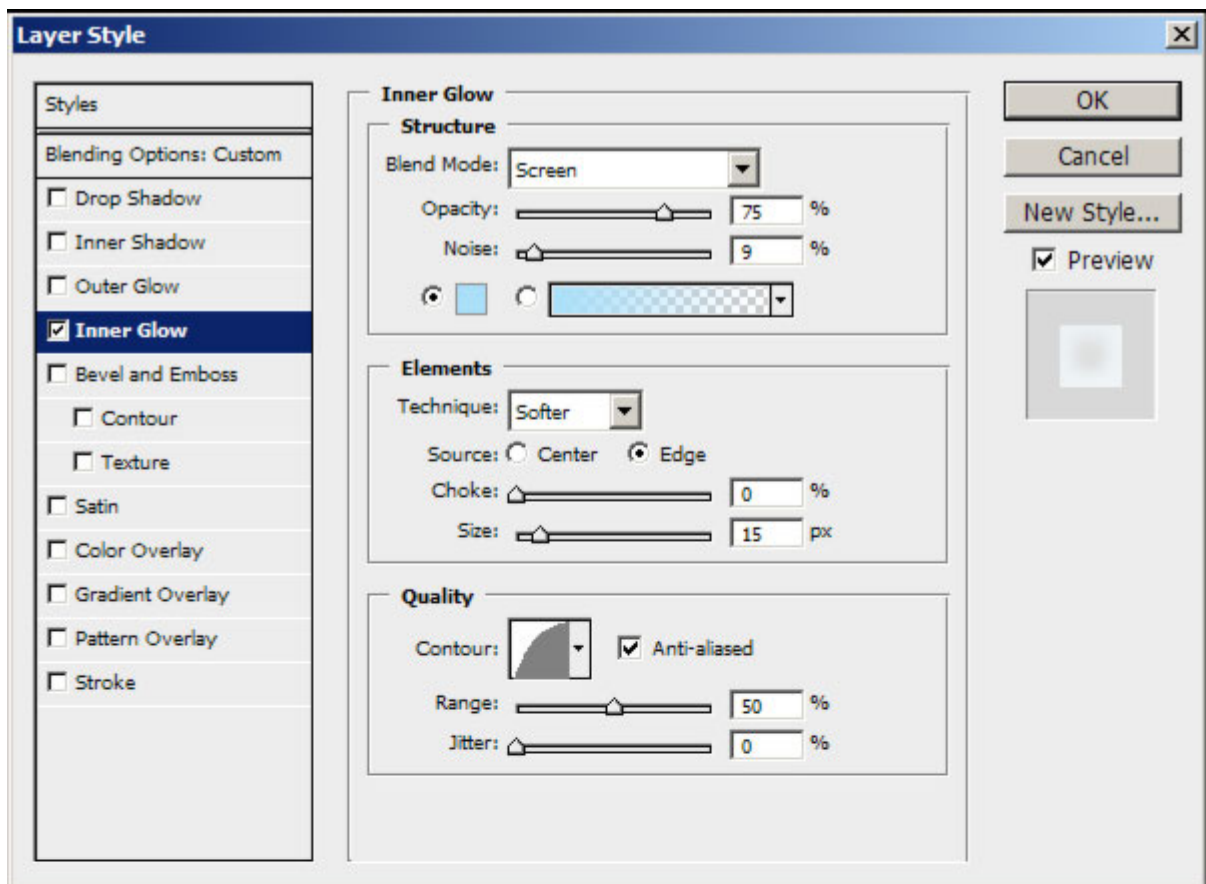
Step 11

Now go to the Blending Options of every ice layer (the white ones) and apply the settings shown below. These features are very useful also to colorize layers. We'll use a very light blue color (#c9eaf1) in the Outer Glow options to create some halo around the letters and inside to make it look frozen.



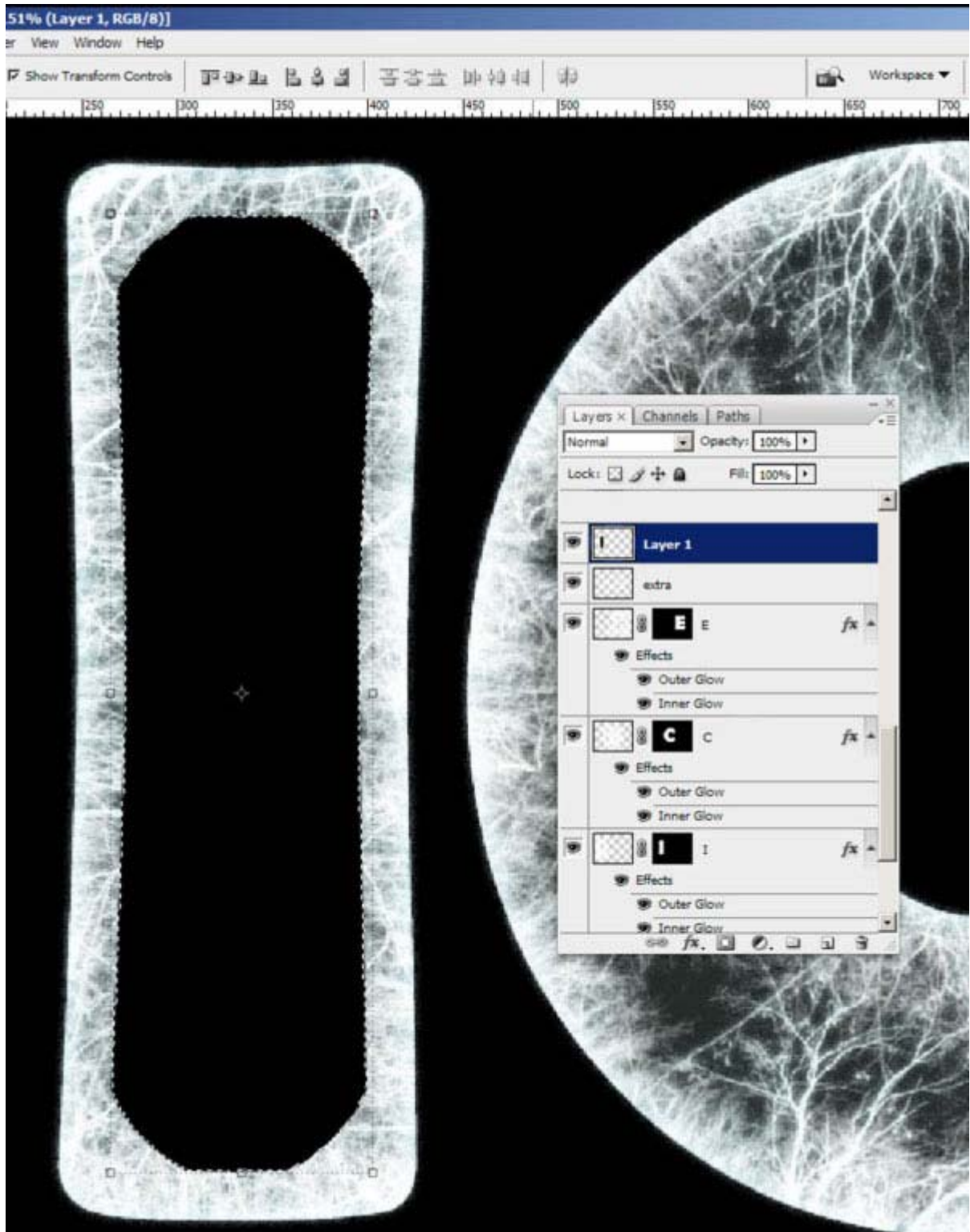
Step 12

Using the Inner Glow option we'll create a glow effect. Apply a value around 10% of noise to make it look more crispy.



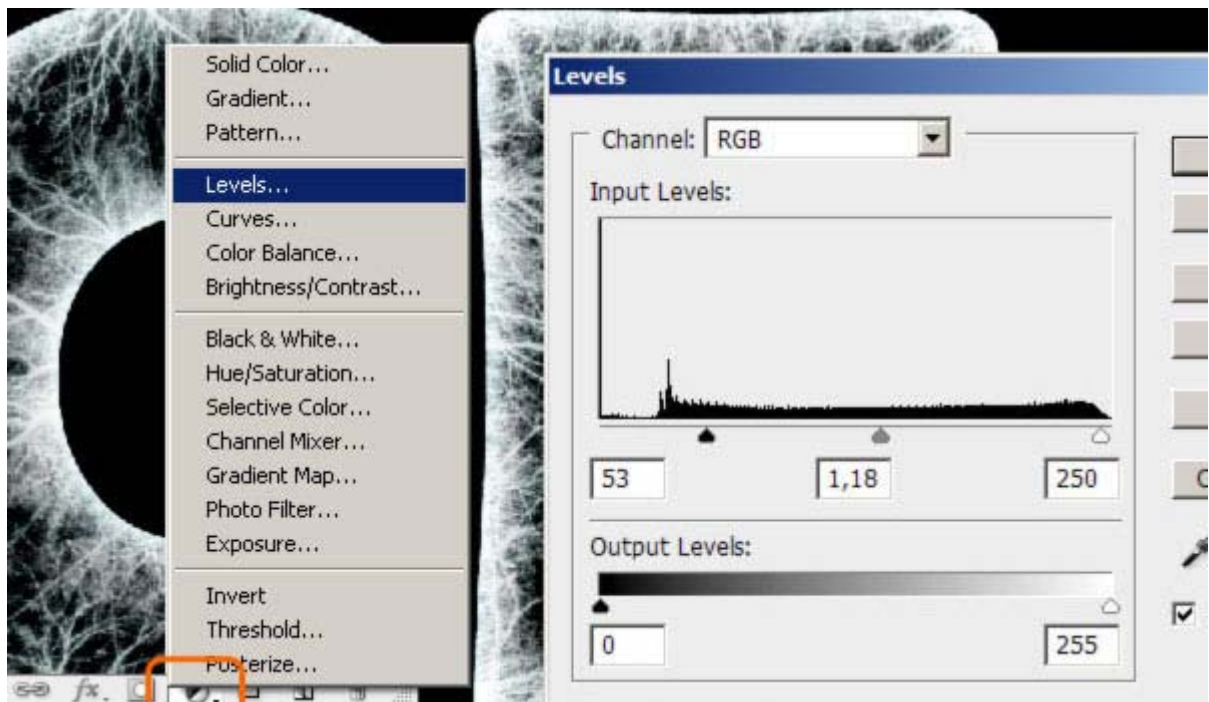
Step 13

Select the "I" letter of the "ICE" layer, then go to Select > Modify > Contract... > 25 pixels. Then click OK. Create a new layer ("Layer 1") and press Alt + Delete to fill the selected area; use full black (#000000). Then Deselect and go to Filter > Blur >> Gaussian Blur... 15 pixels. Do the same for the other letters applying always the same Blur.



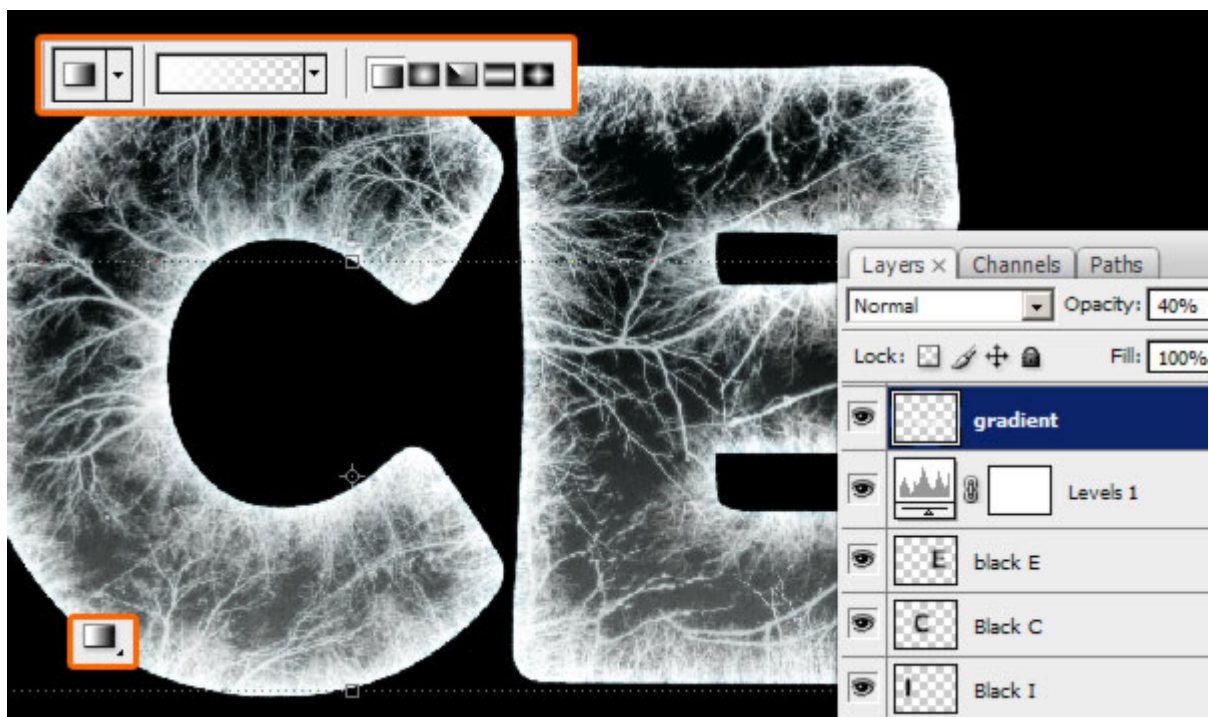
Step 14

Name these black Layers with "black E, C, I" and set their Opacity to 40%. Then create a New Adjustments Layer and go to Levels. Applying the settings shown below, from here they will influence the whole image.



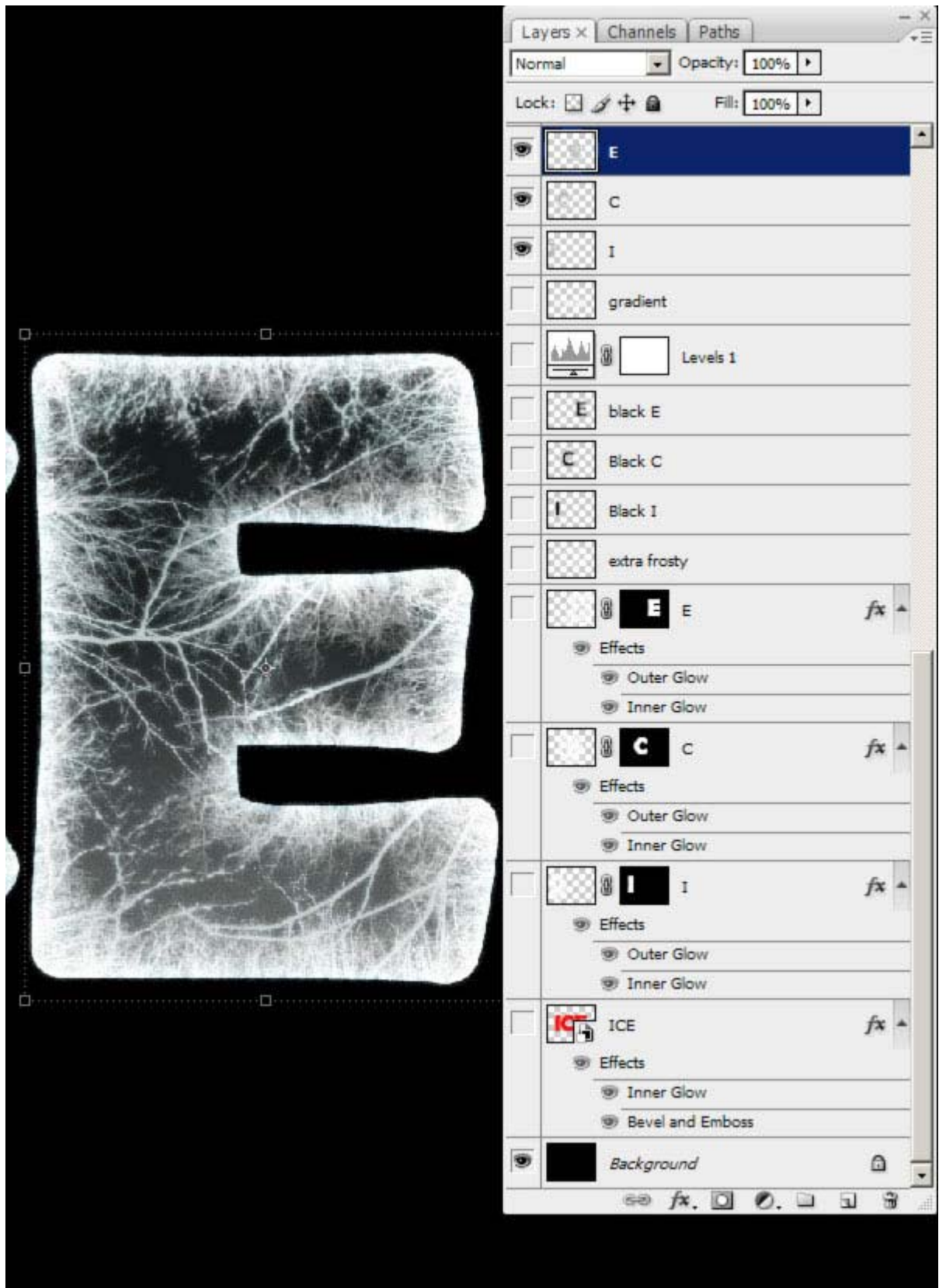
Step 15

Command-click on the "ICE" layer to select it and then create a new layer and call it "gradient." With a white to transparent gradient draw the bottom to the top. We're drawing some light from the bottom. Set the Opacity to 40%.



Step 16

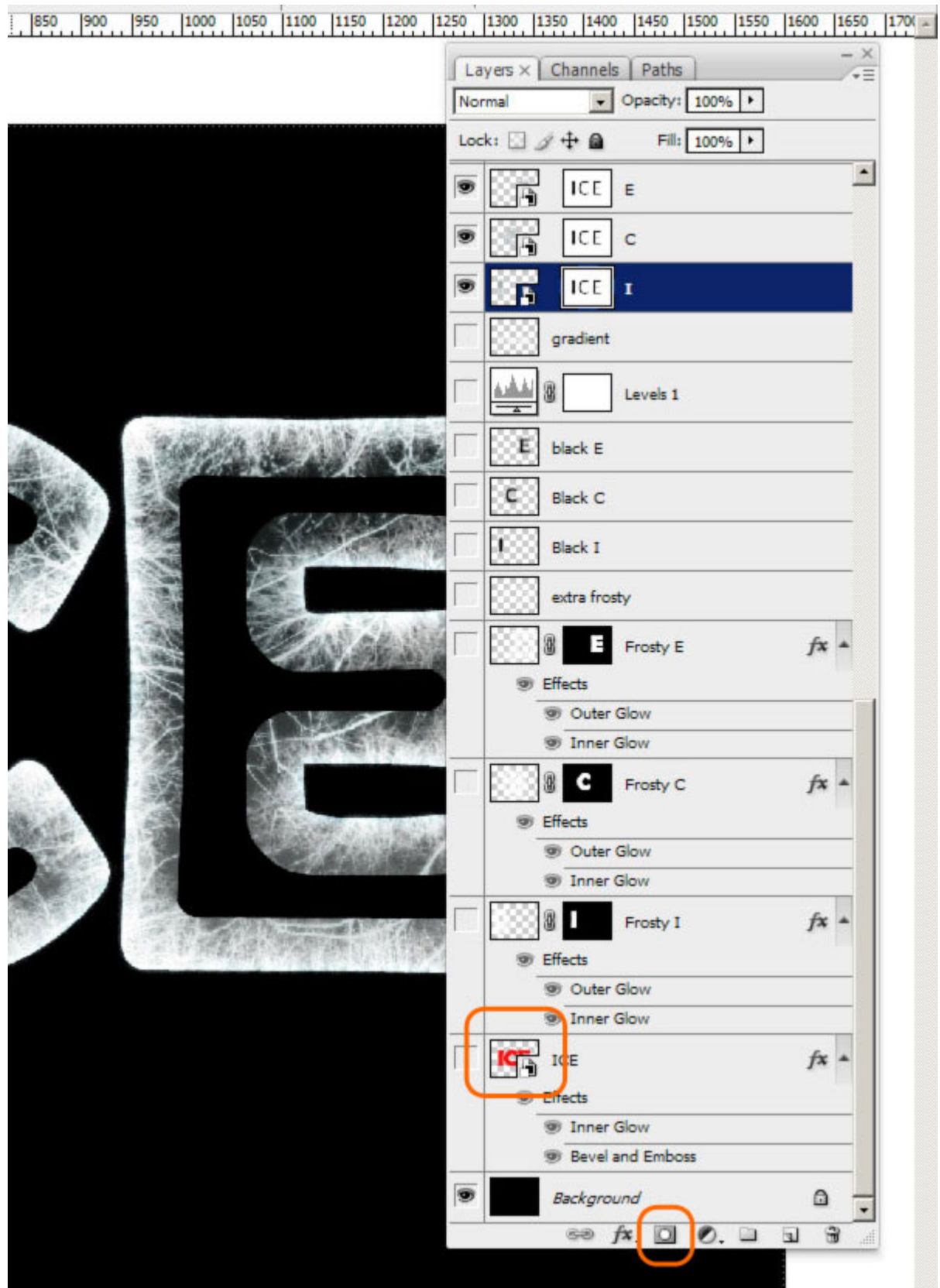
Hide the "Background" layer (which is black) and select one letter with the Rectangular Marquee Tool. Go to Edit > Copy Merged then Press Command + V. Do the same also for the other two letters and name the layers with the corresponding letter. Then you can hide all the other layers because from now on we'll work on these new ones, but keep the old ones because they can always be useful.



Step 17

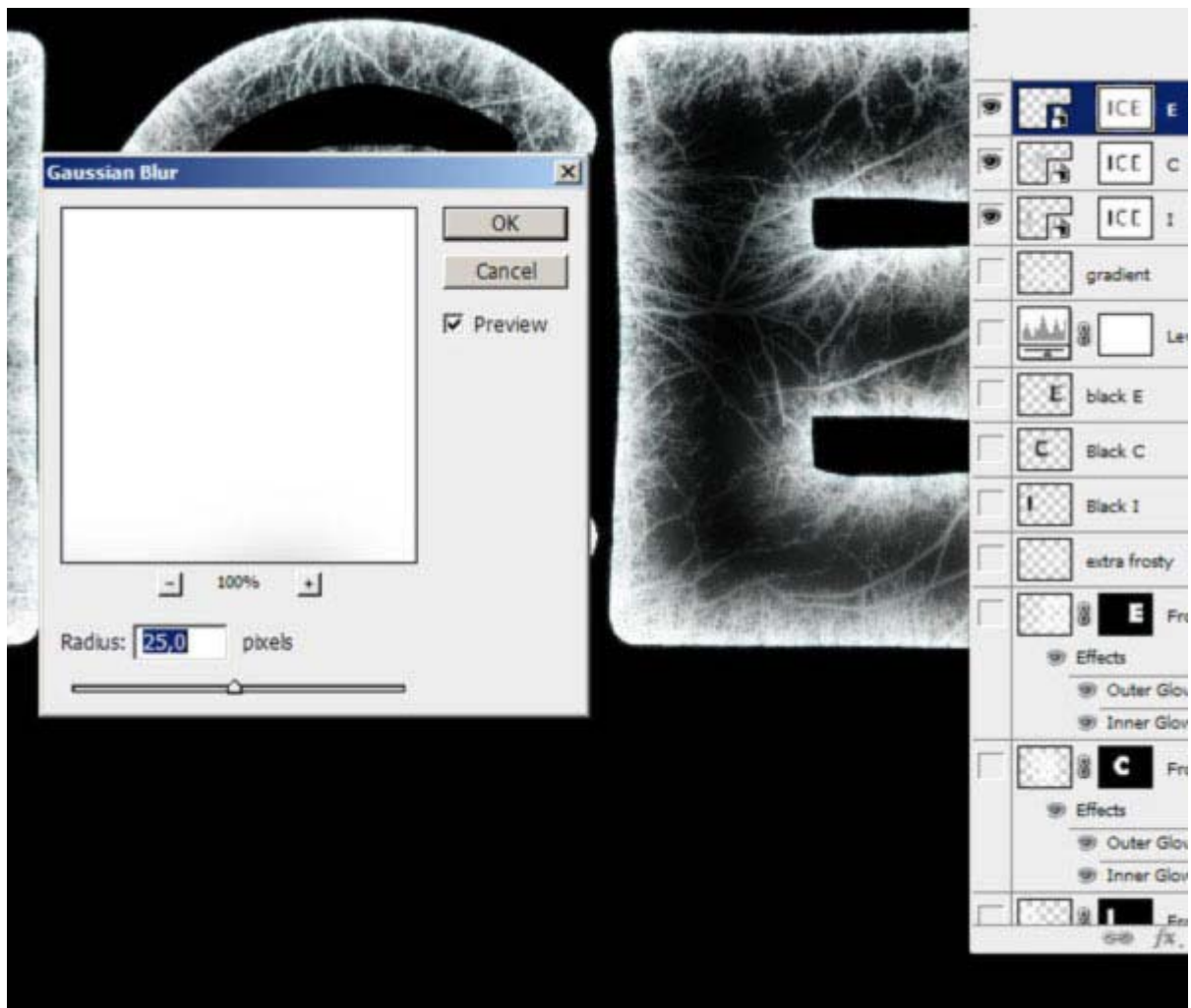
Right-click on the thumbnail layers and Convert them to Smart Objects. Now Command-click on the "ICE" layer and go to Select > Modify > Contract... by 35

pixels. Apply this Selection as a Layer Mask to every letter. Don't worry if the masking is covering all three letters.



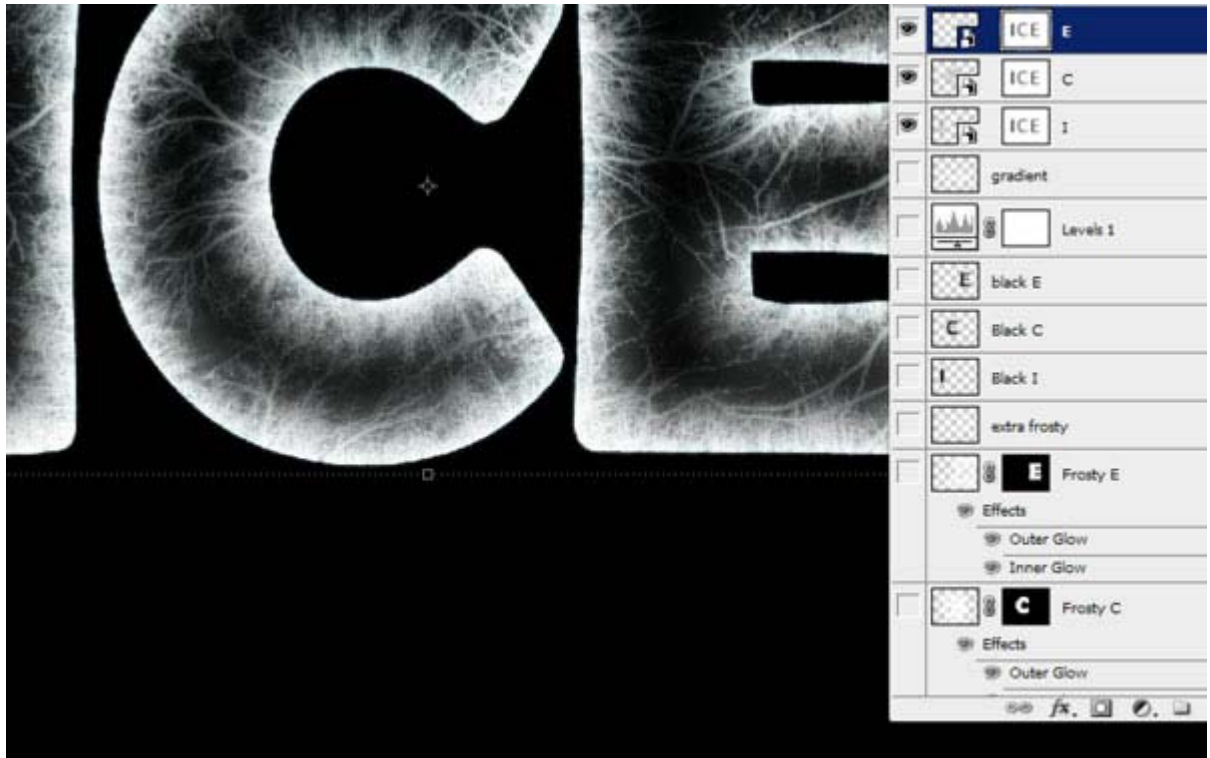
Step 18

Select the Layer Mask thumbnail and go to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur... 25 pixels. Do this to all the "I," "C," and "E: layers. This process is useful to create some darker areas inside.



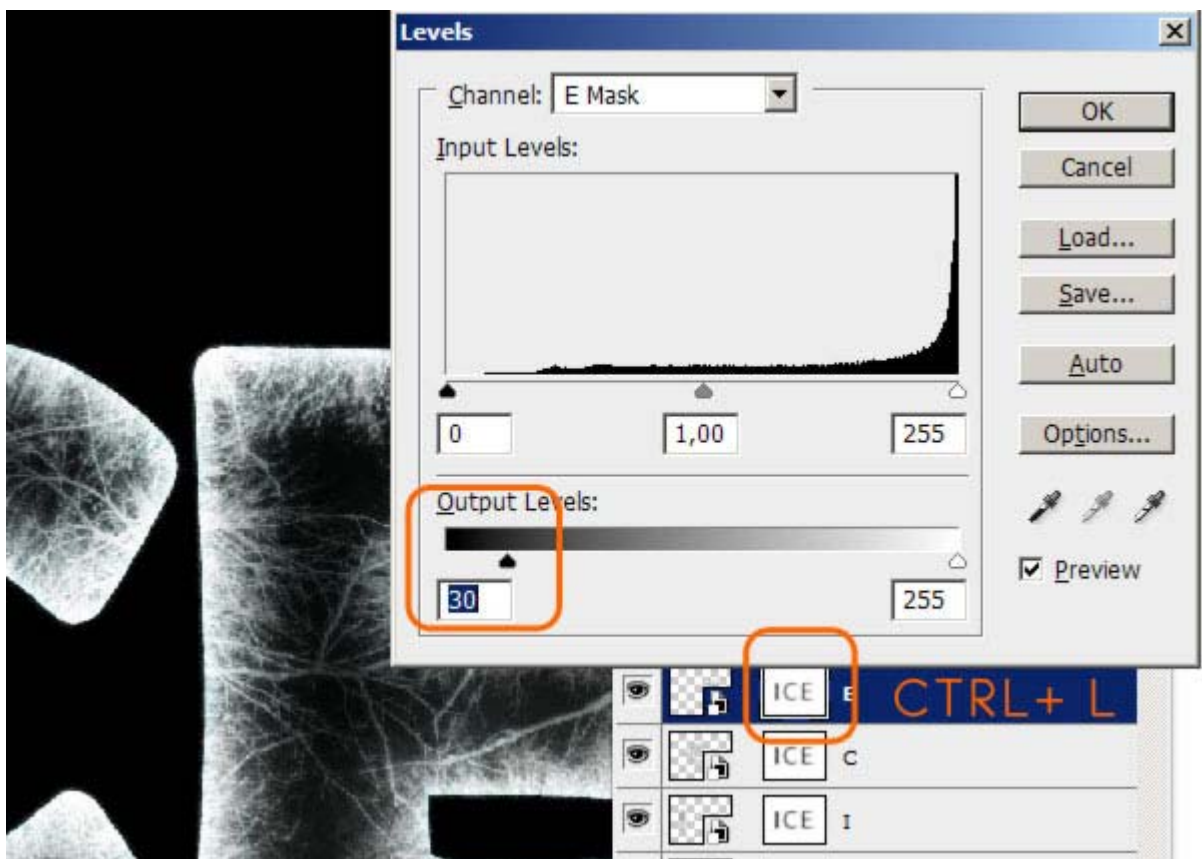
Step 19

Below is how it should look like.



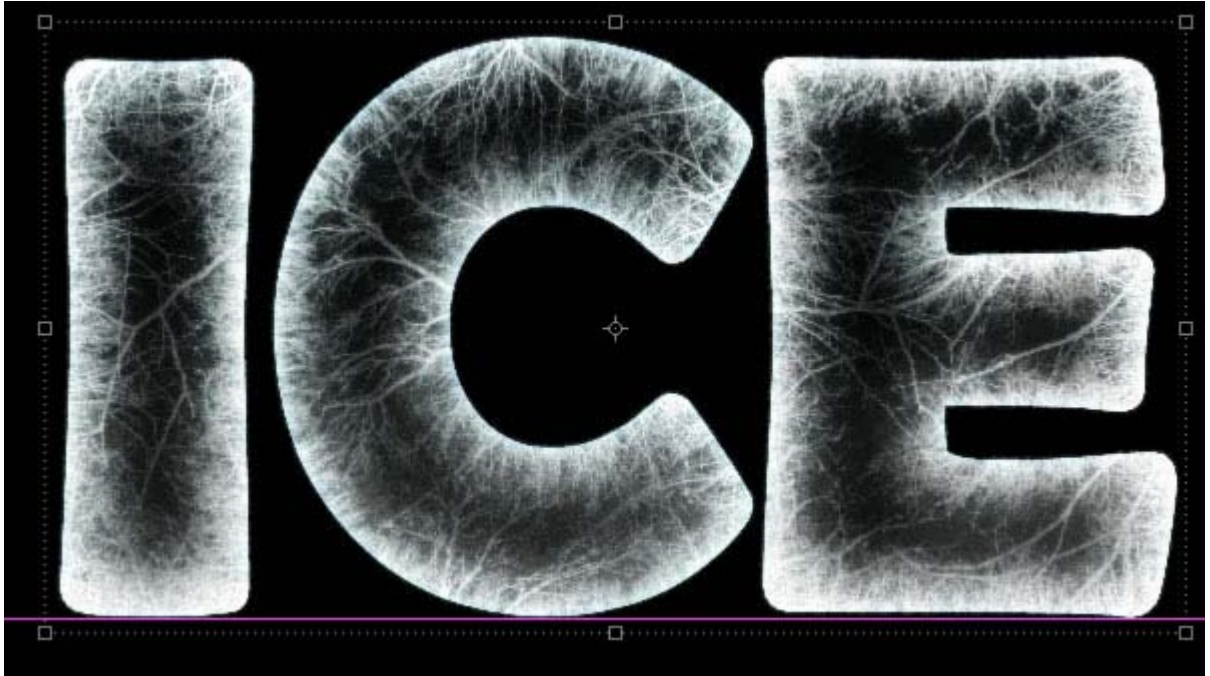
Step 20

Press Command + L on the Layer Mask to Open the Levels and reduce the darkness (value 30). This way the Layer Mask become lighter showing more of the ice inside.



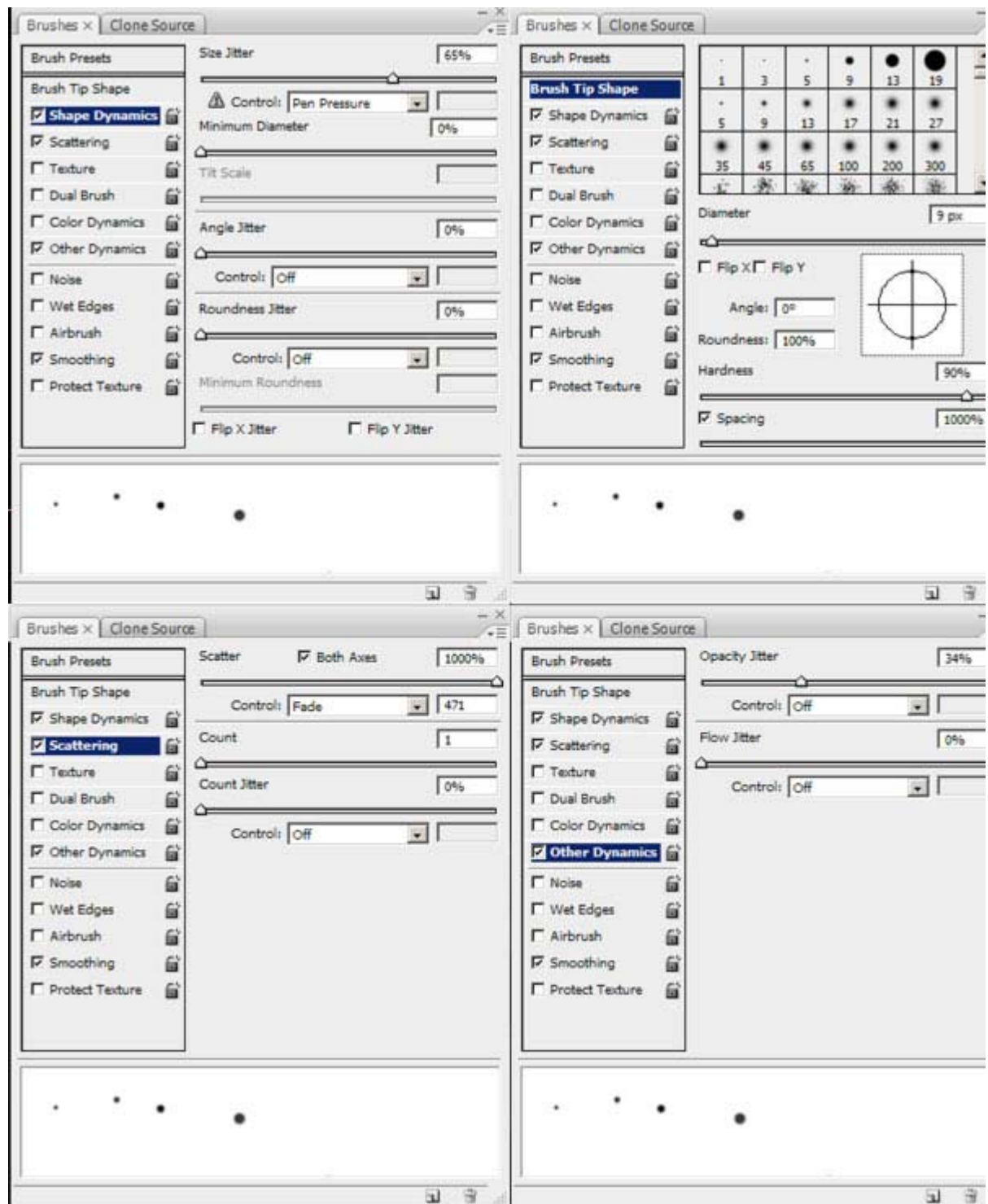
Step 21

Duplicate the "I," "C," and "E" Layers, Right-click on the Layer Mask > Apply Layer Mask. Finally Merge them. Hide all the rest and create a new layer. Let's start making the snow now.



Step 22

Pick the Brush Tool (B) and choose a normal circle brush. Then apply the settings shown below in the Brush Windows (F5).



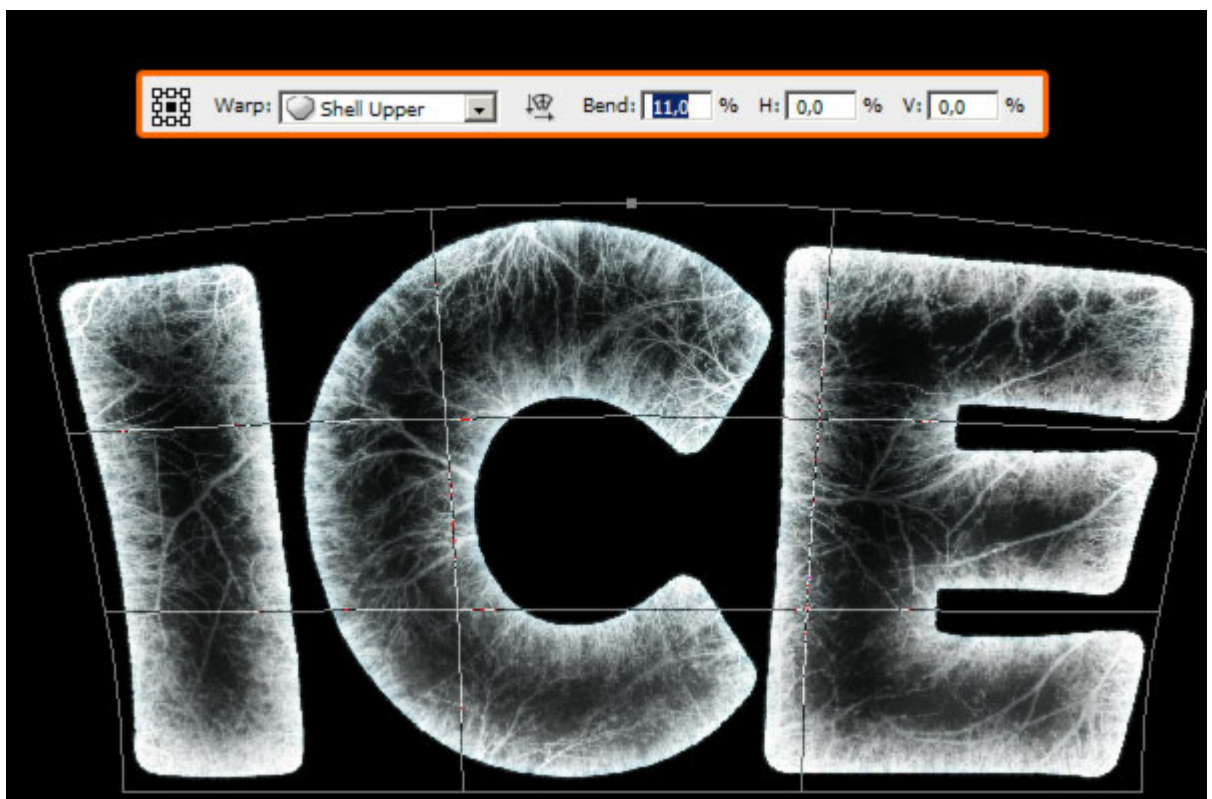
Step 23

Create a new layer and paint the snow increasing and decreasing the brush size.



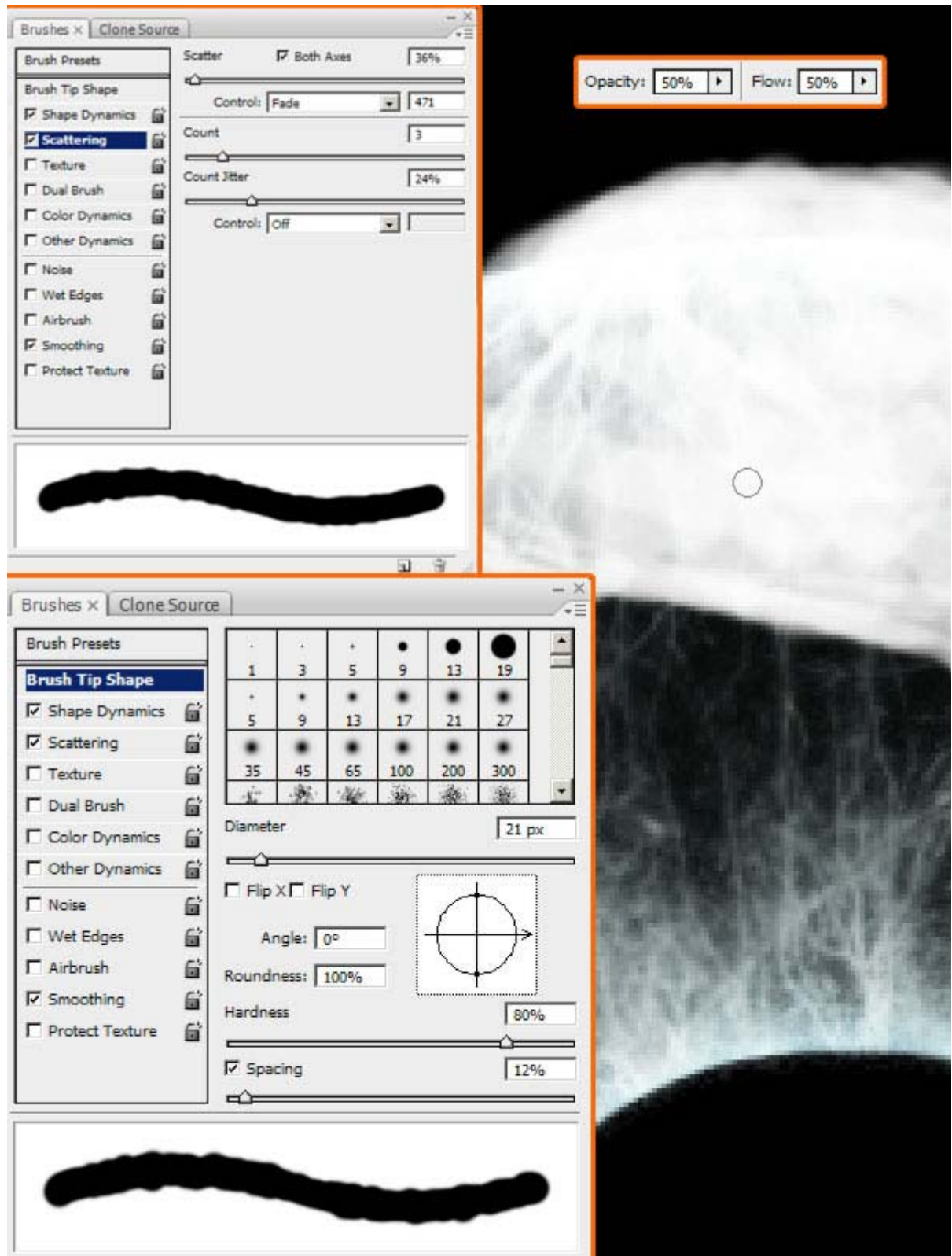
Step 24

Select the "Ice" layer and press Command + T. Then click on the Warp icon and choose the Shell Upper with Bend set to 11%.



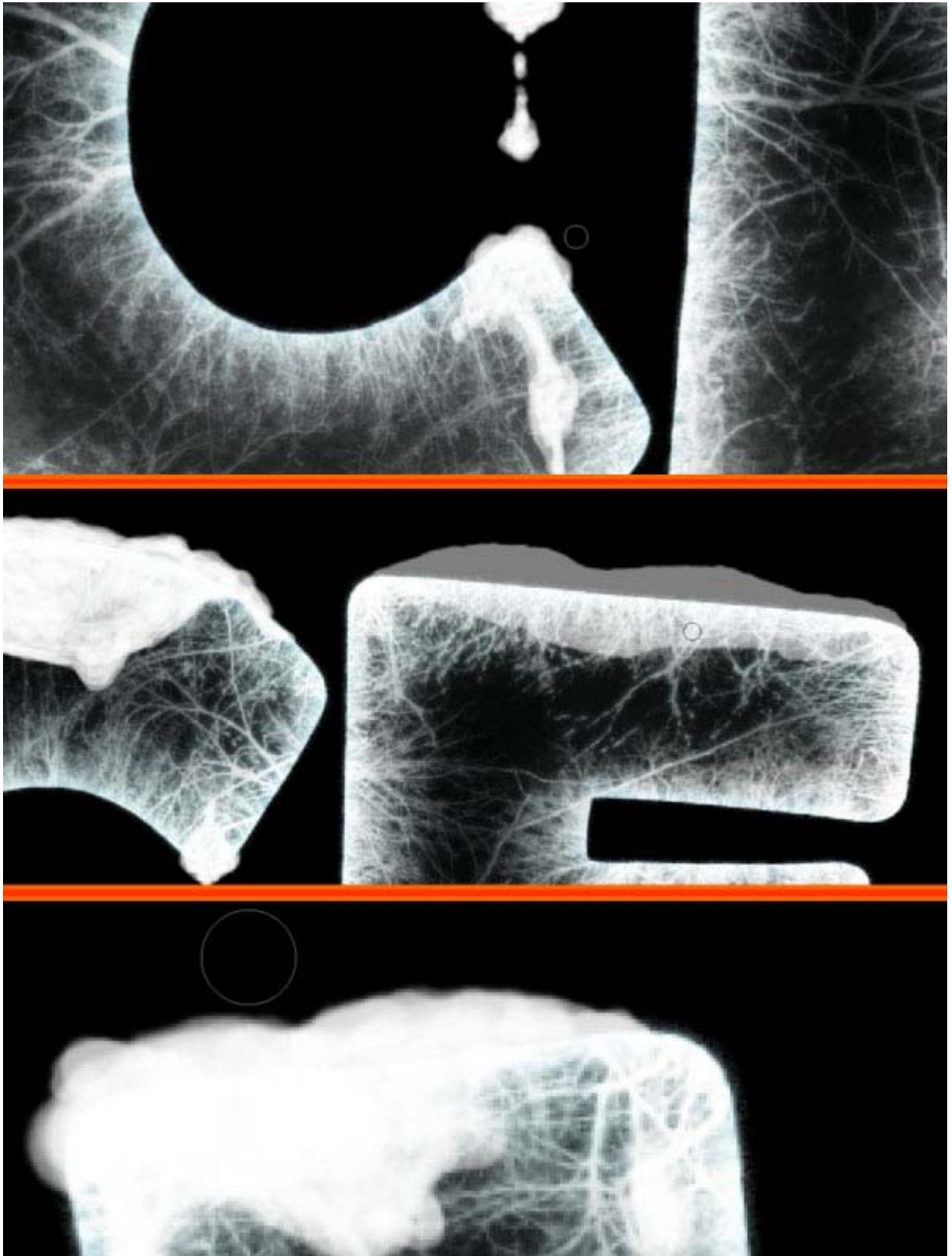
Step 25

Change the settings of the brush with these new ones. Start to paint the snow leaving some slightly darker areas.



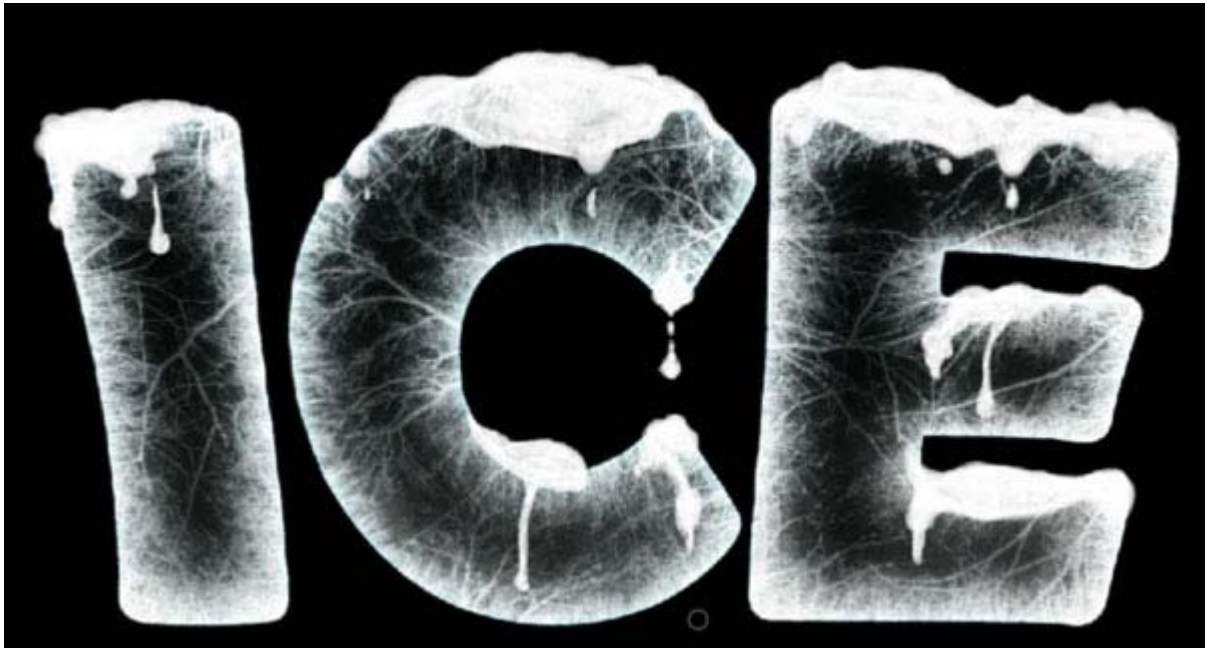
Step 26

Paint the snow on top of the letters. We can work on one single layer now.



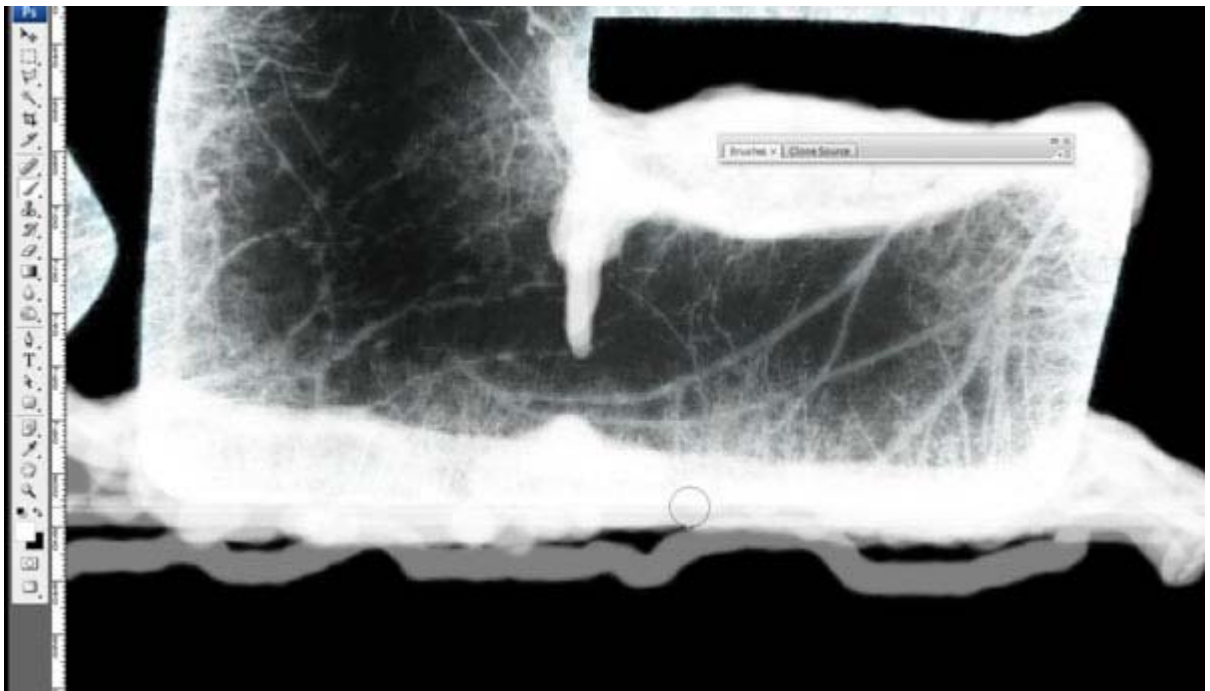
Step 27

After you've done this, retouch the corners and edges with the Eraser Tool (E) using a soft brush.



Step 28

Create a new layer on top and begin to paint some snow near the base of the letters using the same brush, with the same settings as before.



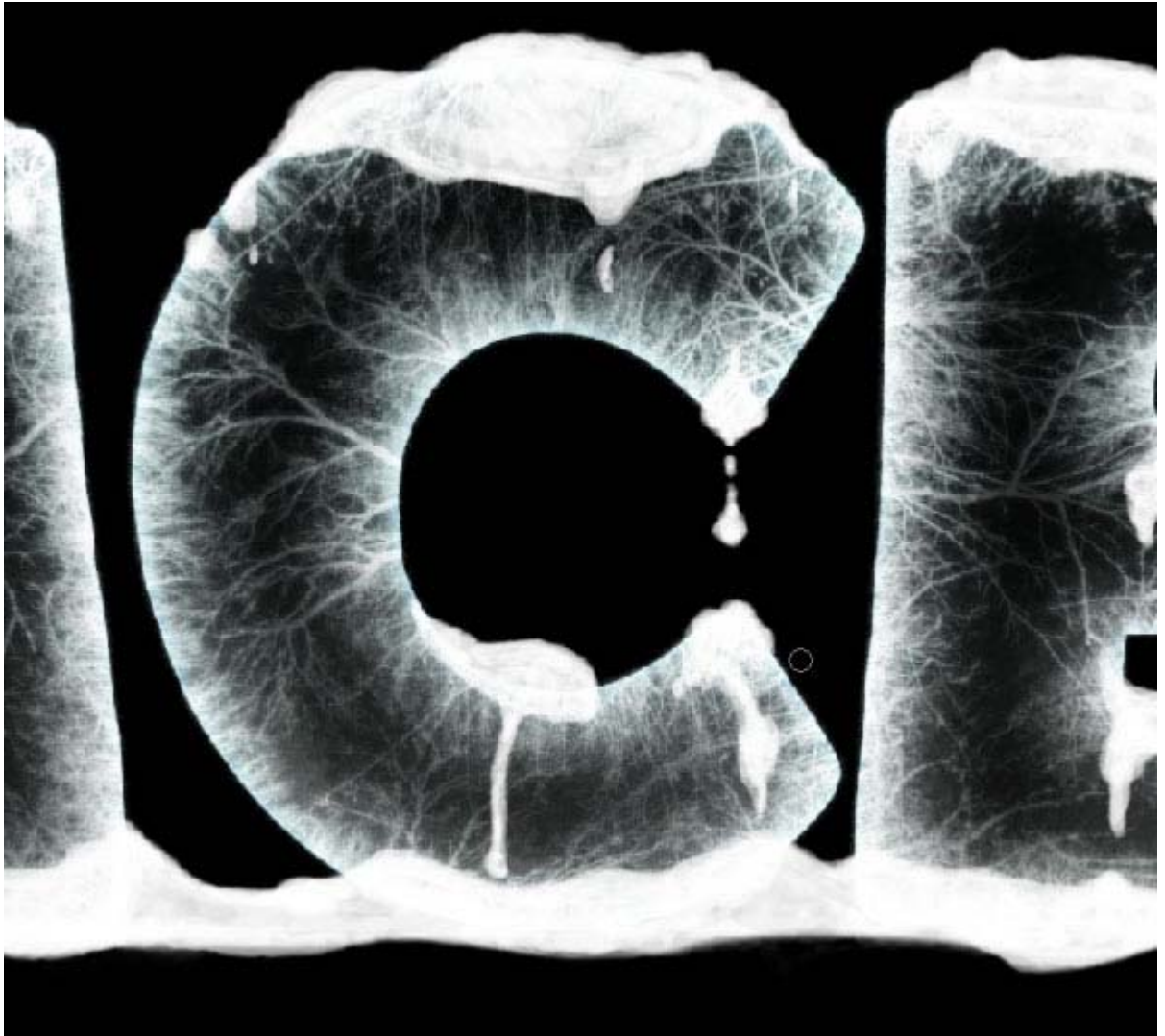
Step 29

Leave some little darker areas.



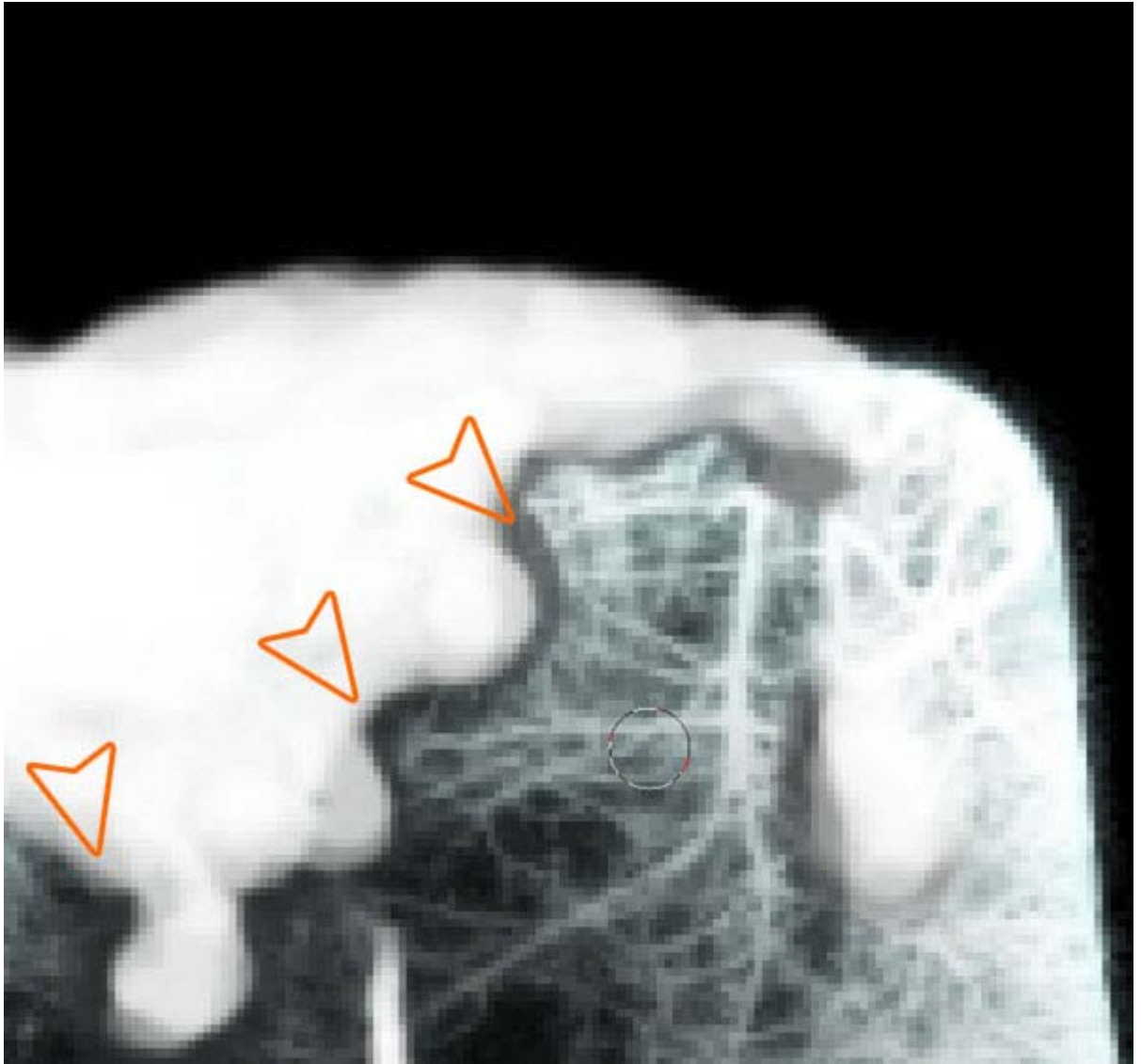
Step 30

Clean the edges using the Eraser Tool (E) with a soft brush.



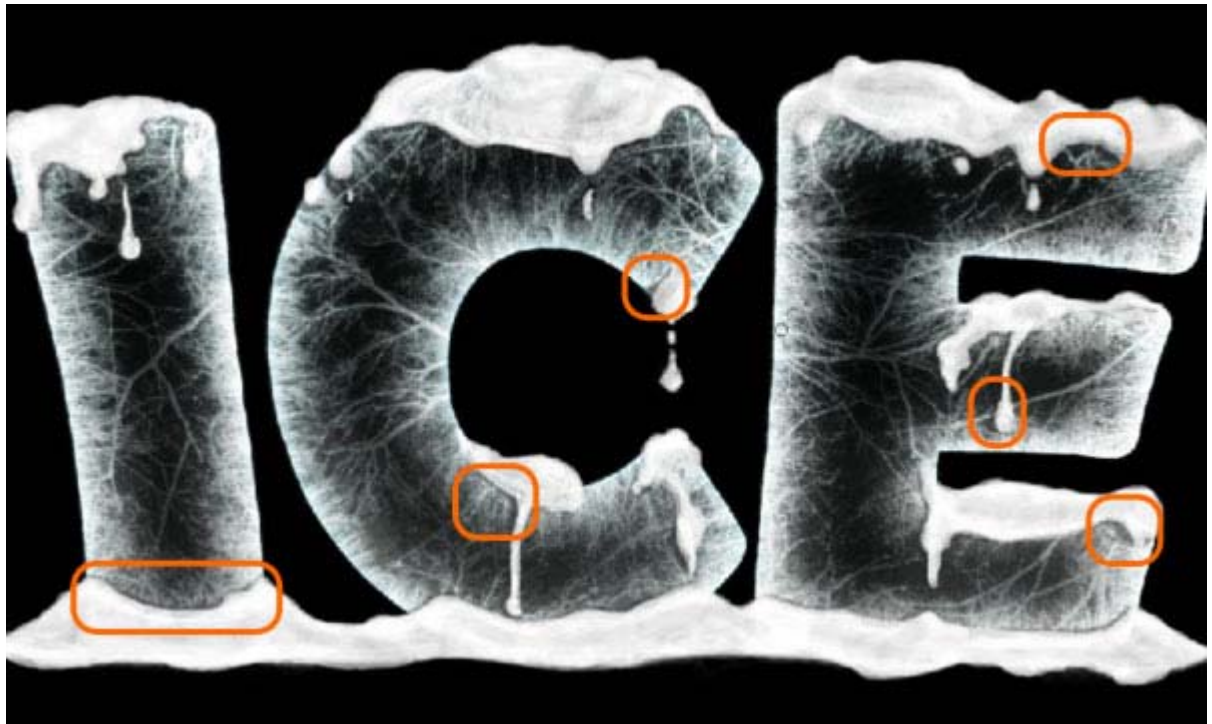
Step 31

Create a New Layer above the snow on the letters and start painting with a black (#000000) Brush to create shadows. Let's suppose the light comes from the top.



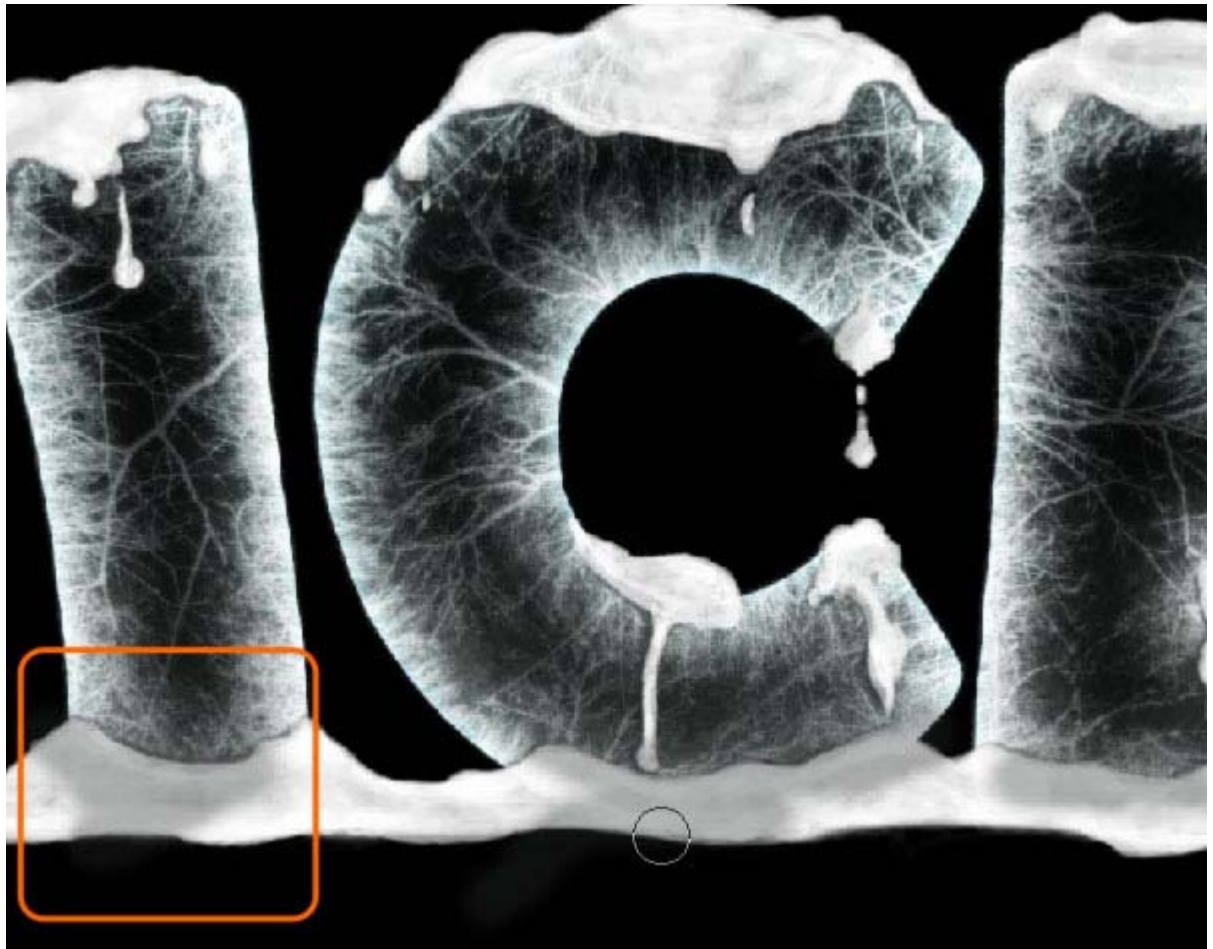
Step 32

Make some bigger shadows where there are *humps*.



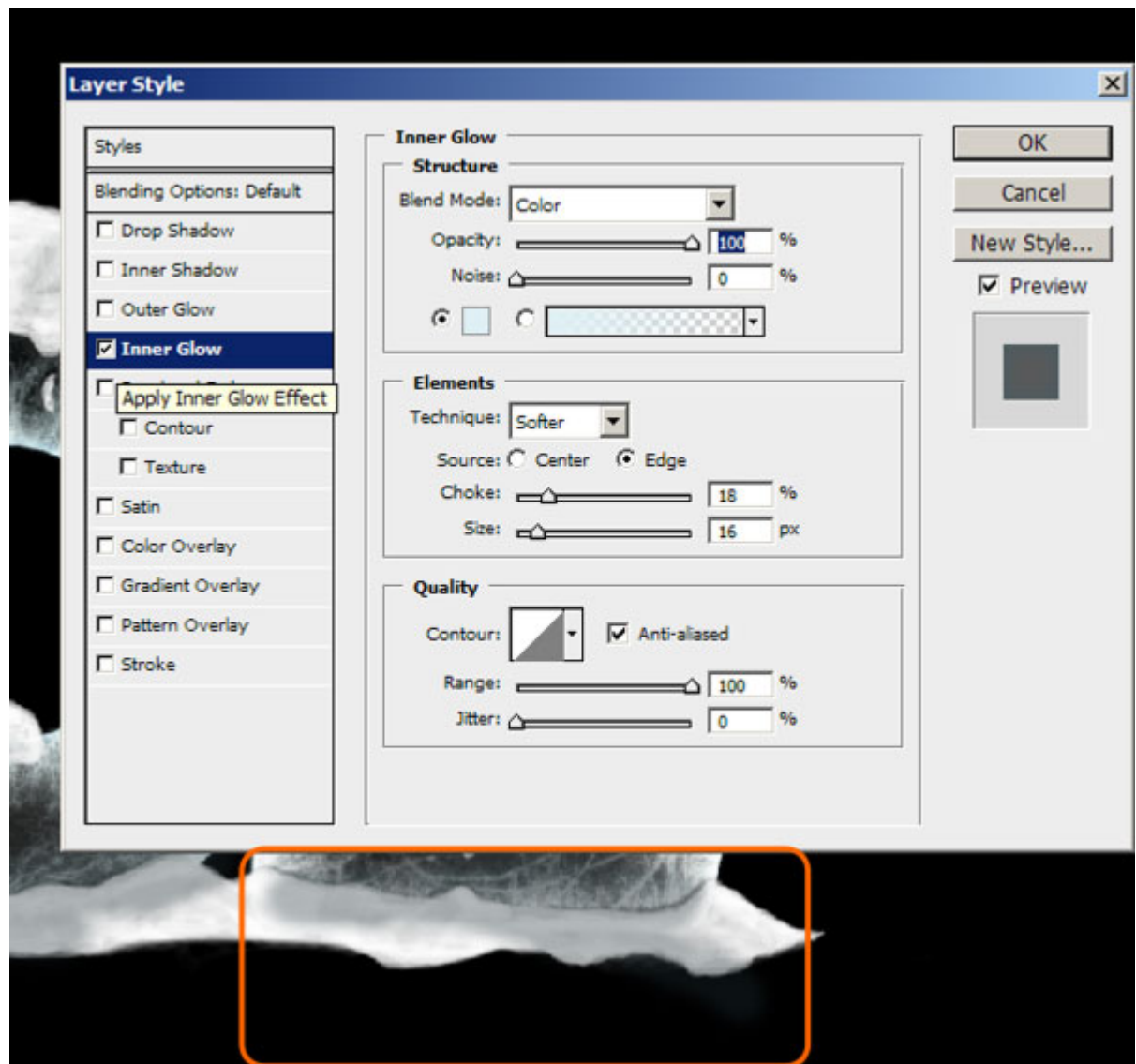
Step 33

Create a new layer on top and paint some shadows using the same brush. These are the shadows of the letters.



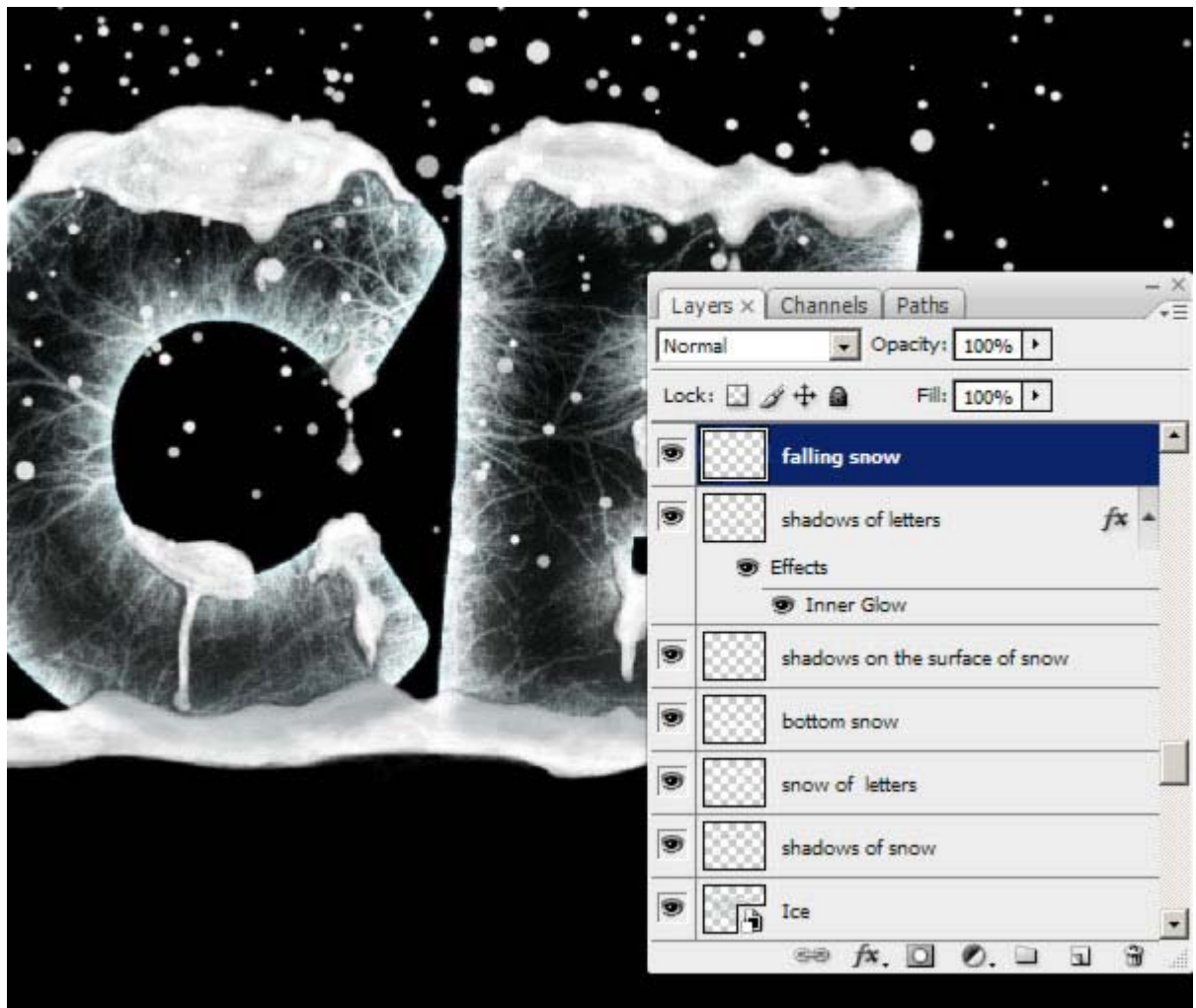
Step 34

Apply this Inner Glow to the shadows just made.



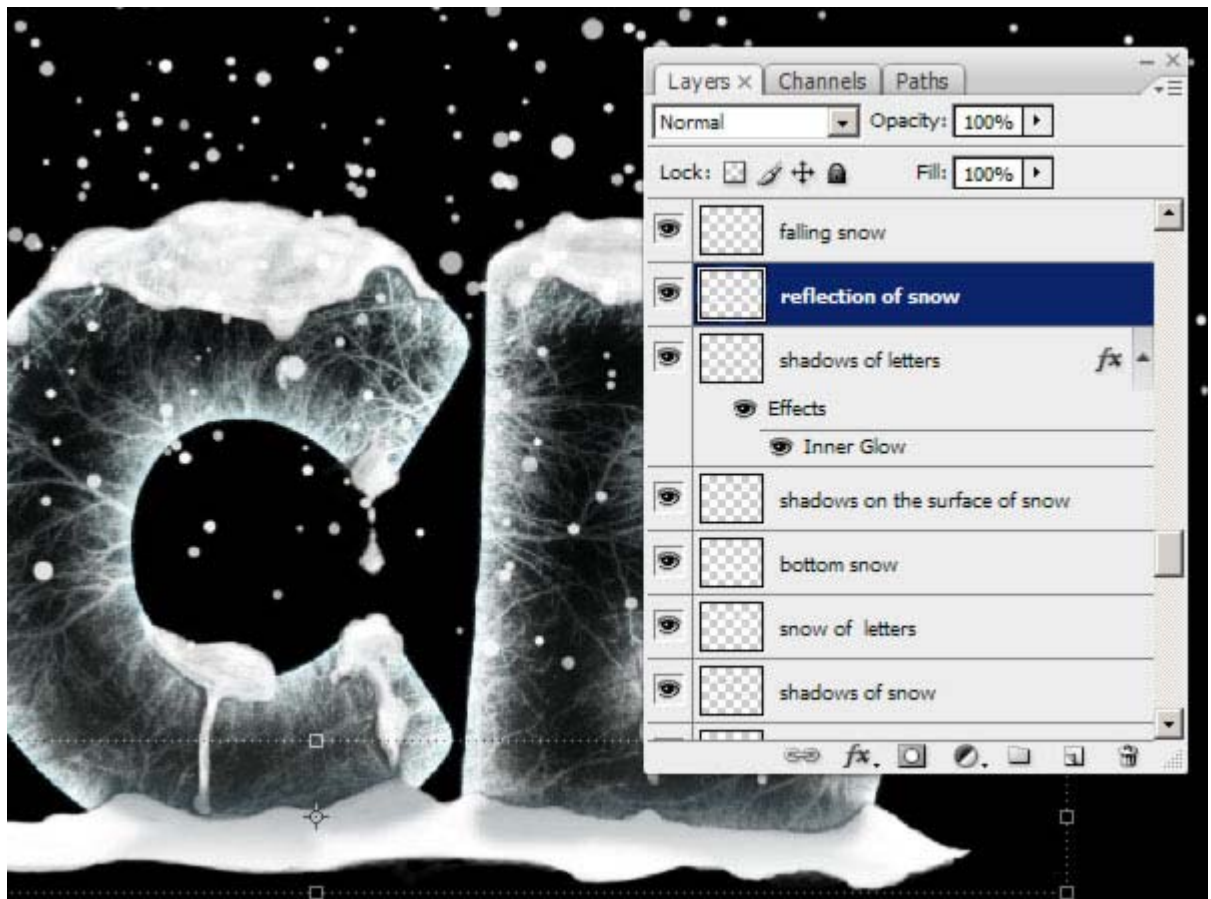
Step 35

Add some more falling snow on a new layer on top.



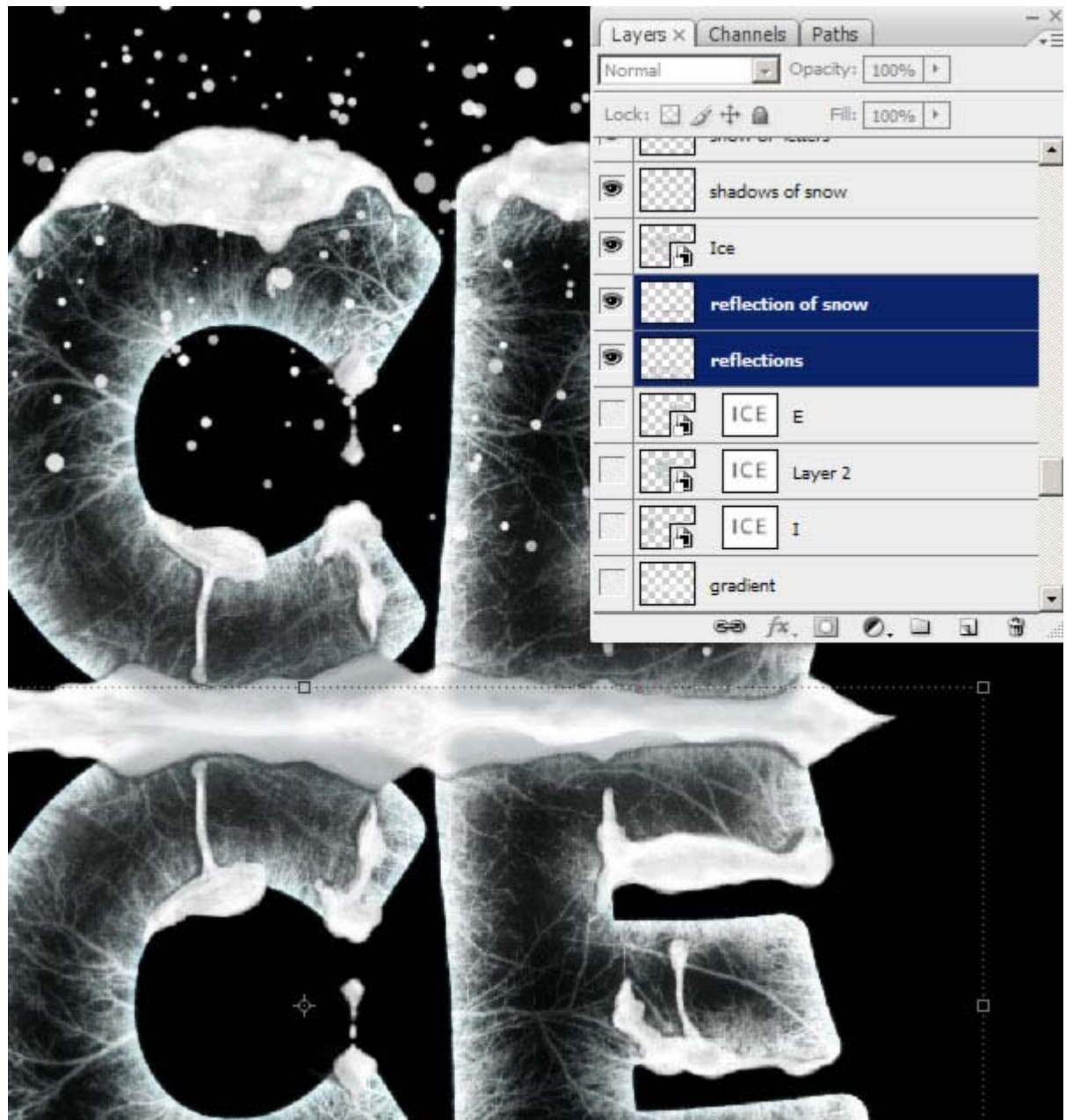
Step 36

Now select the snow on the top and Duplicate it by dragging the thumbnail to the New Layer Icon.



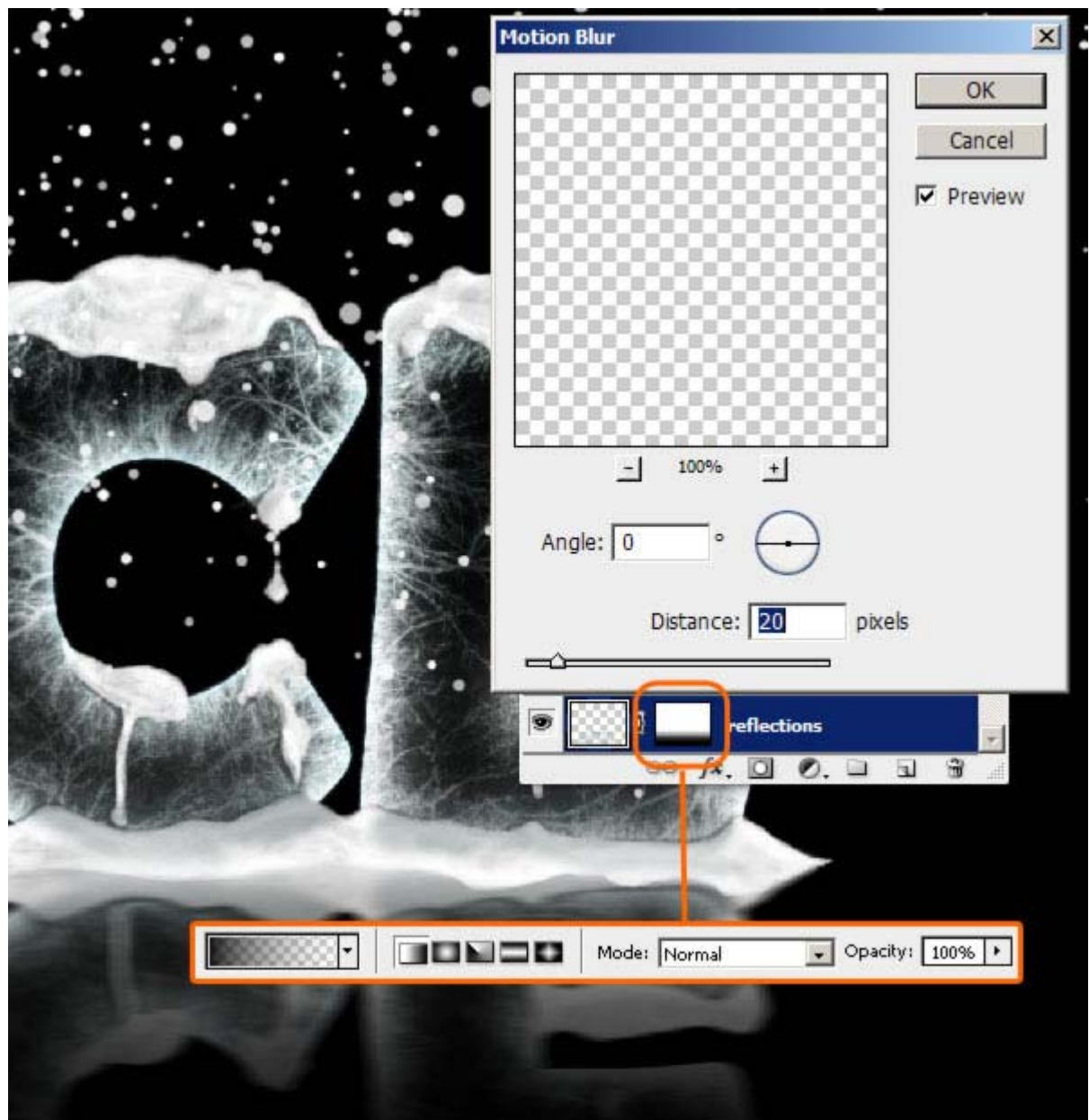
Step 37

Do the same with the letters and the snow on top of them. Merge these two layers to make the reflection. Press Command + T, then Right-click > Flip Vertical.



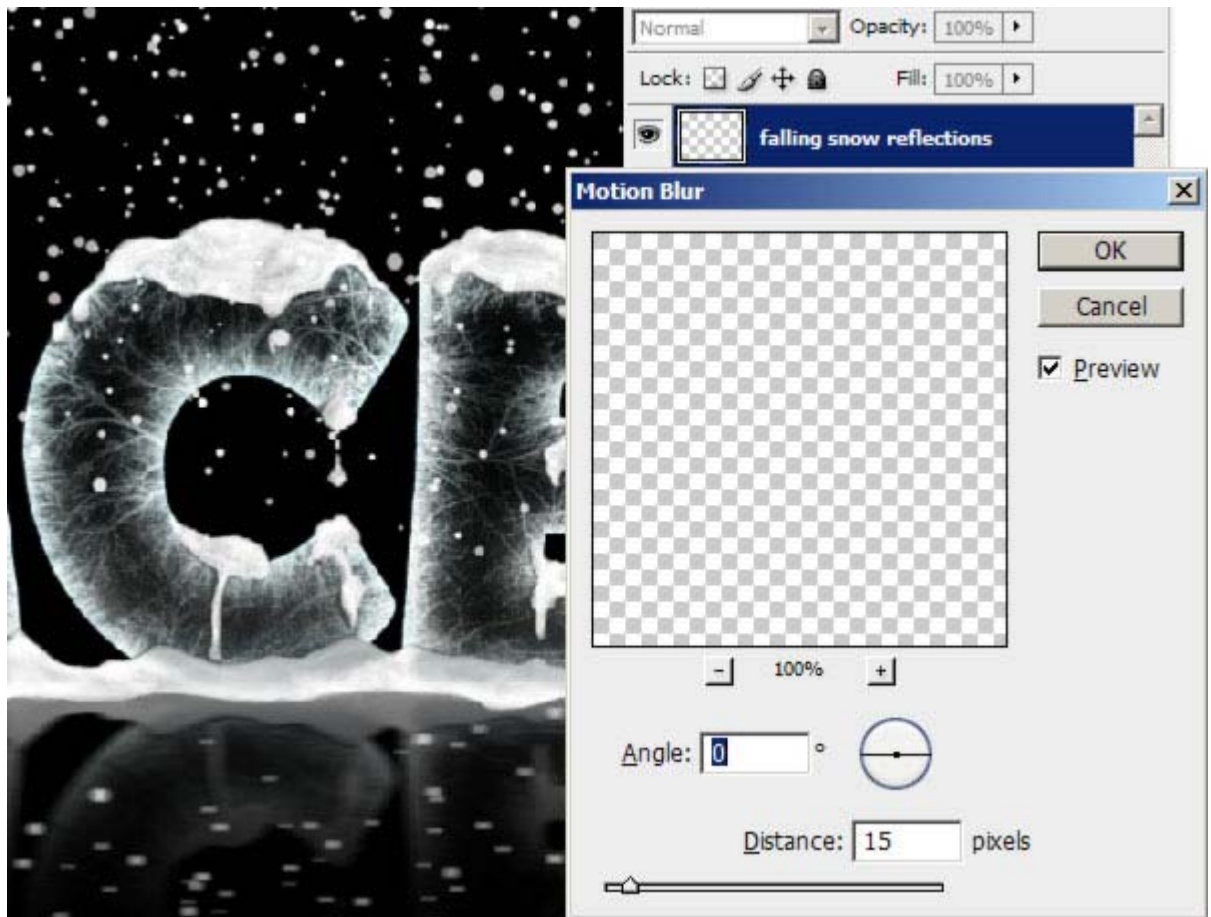
Step 38

With the Gradient Tool (G) draw on the Layer Mask a vertical black to transparent gradient. Hold the Shift key to keep it vertical. Then apply some Motion Blur: Angle 0° and Distance 20 pixels.



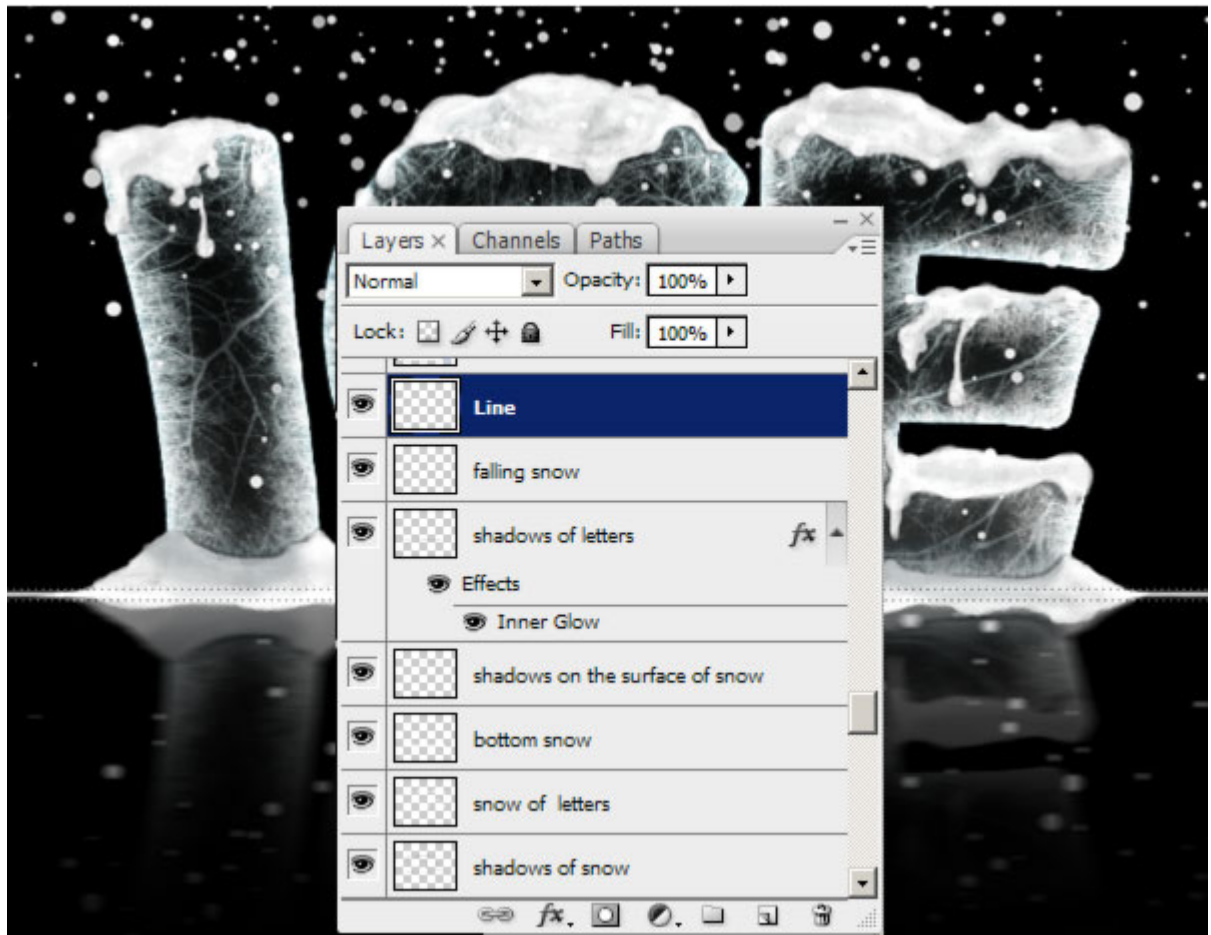
Step 39

Do the same as before for the falling snow layer: Duplicate, Flip Vertical, add a Gradient Mask, and apply a Motion Blur.



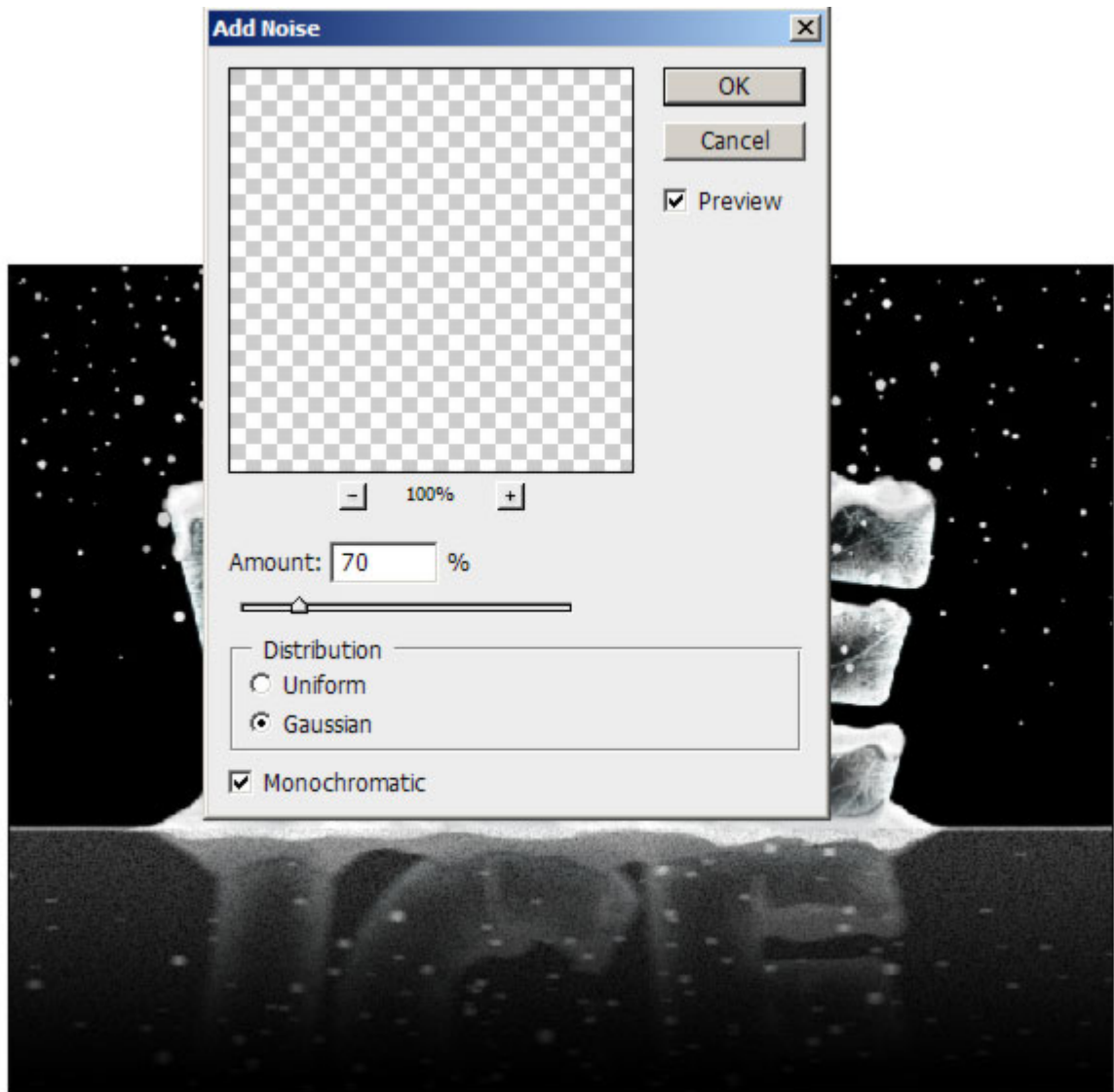
Step 40

Create a new layer behind the letters and draw a horizontal white line with a brush (always holding the Shift key). Set the Size to 15 pixels and the Hardness to 80%. Set the Opacity of the layer to 90%.



Step 41

Create a new layer behind the reflections and draw a white to transparent Gradient starting from the line drawn in the previous step. Also add 70% Gaussian Noise by going to Filter > Noise > Add Noise.



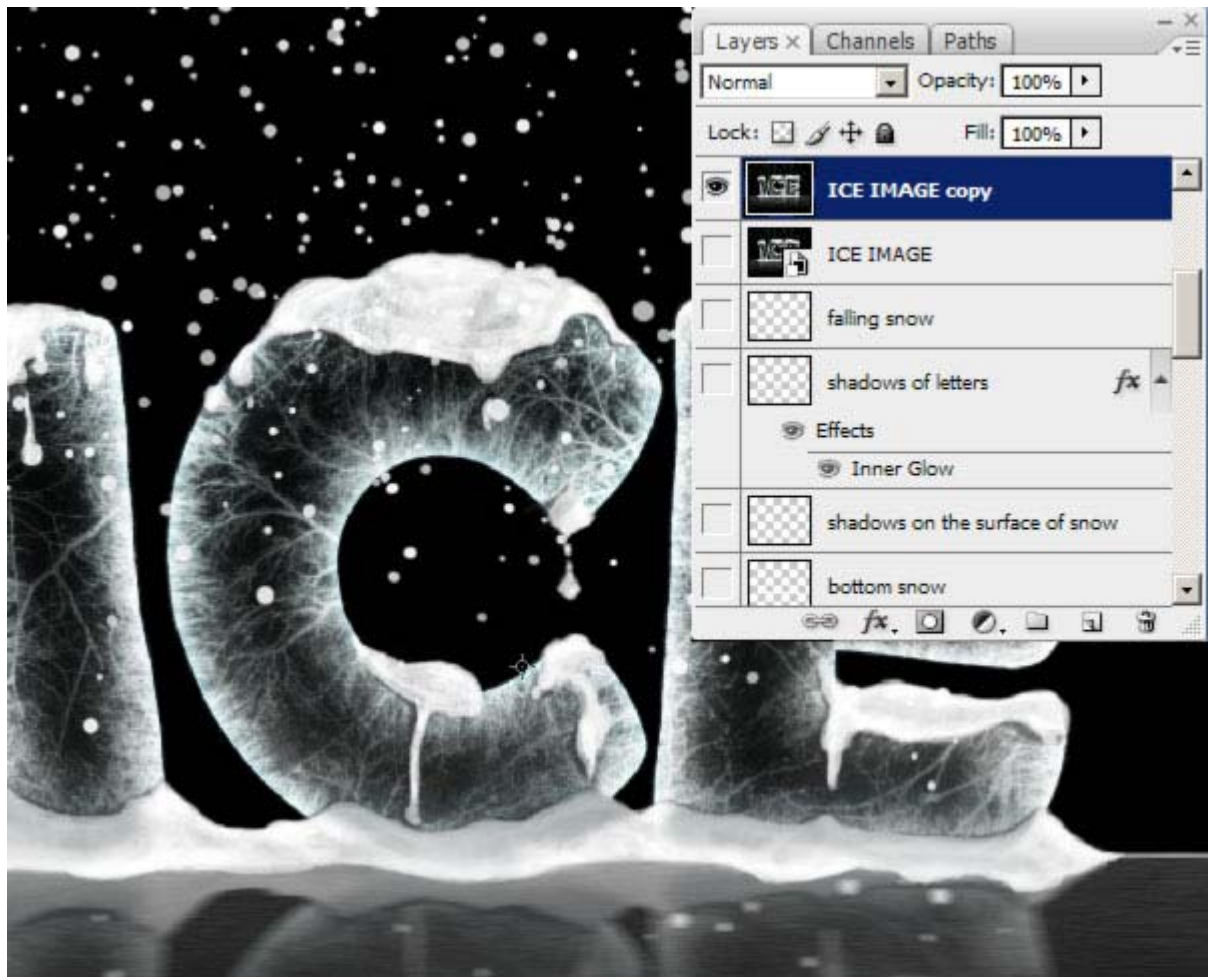
Step 42

This is the actual situation: every effect on his own layer. Now Create a new layer, then go to Image > Apply Image... and click OK.



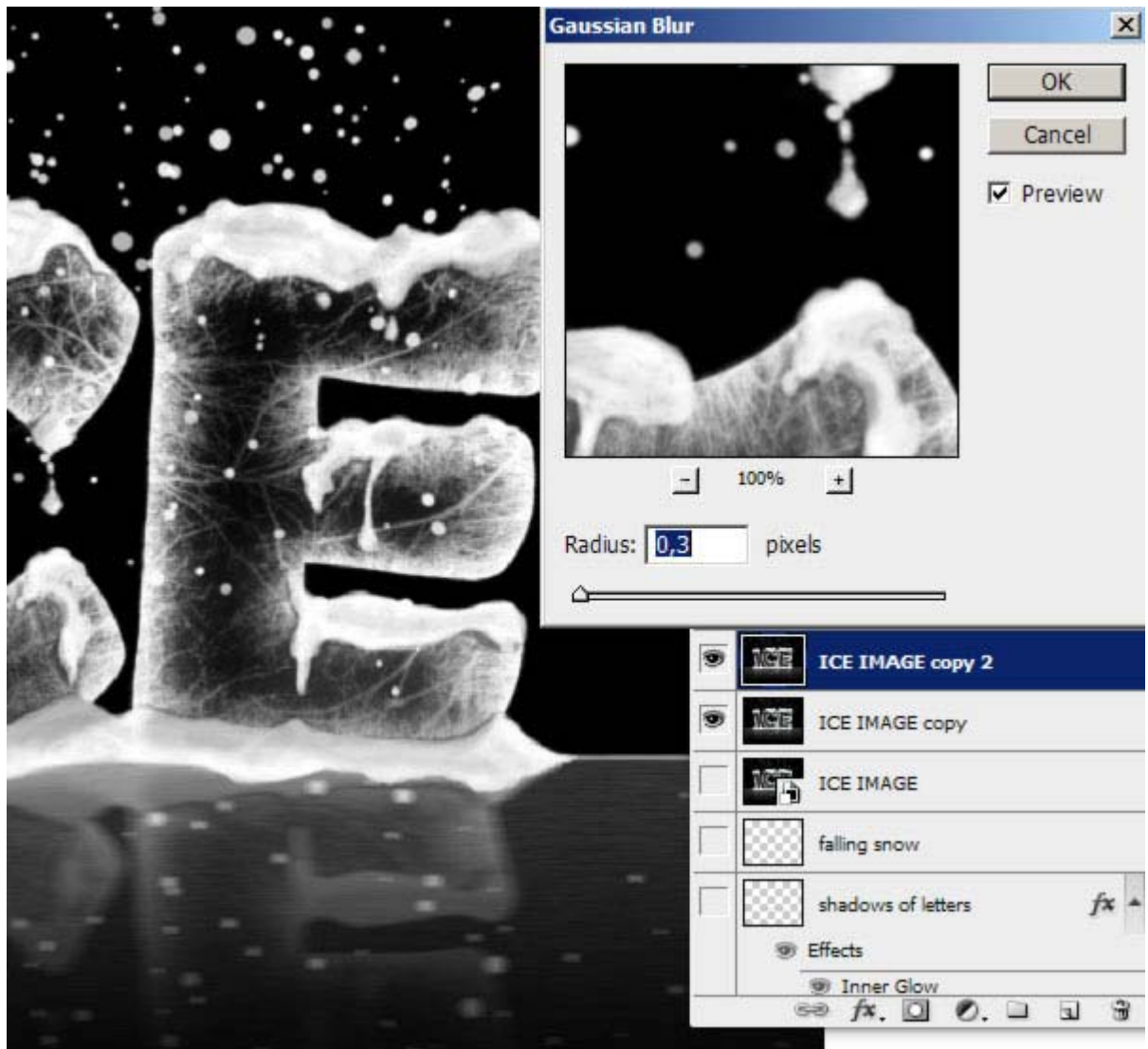
Step 43

Call this new layer "ICE IMAGE" and Duplicate it. Now we can hide all the rest, we'll be working a bit on sharpening and increasing the definition.



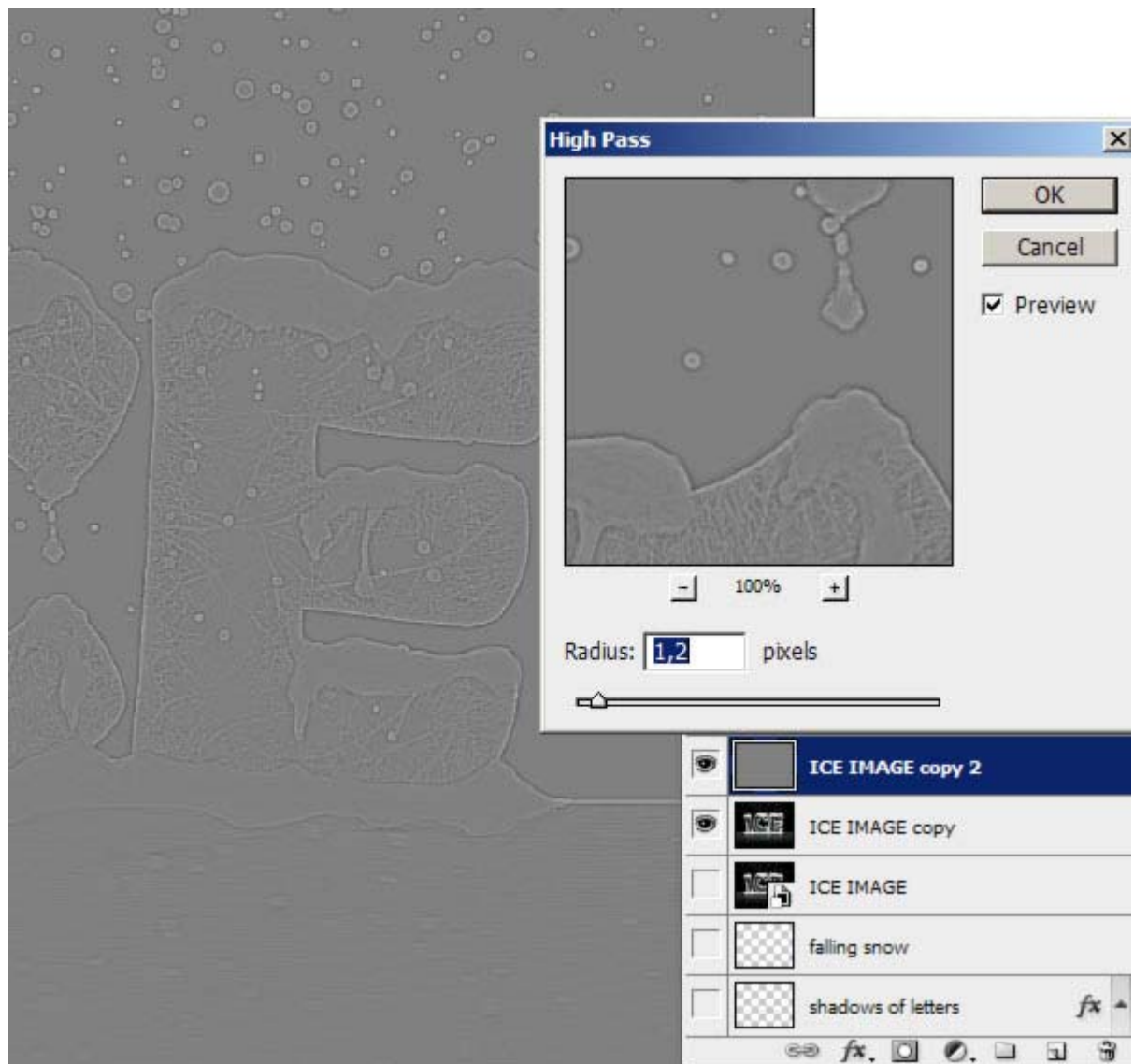
Step 44

Duplicate this layer again and apply a Gaussian Blur of 0,3 pixels just to smooth everything.



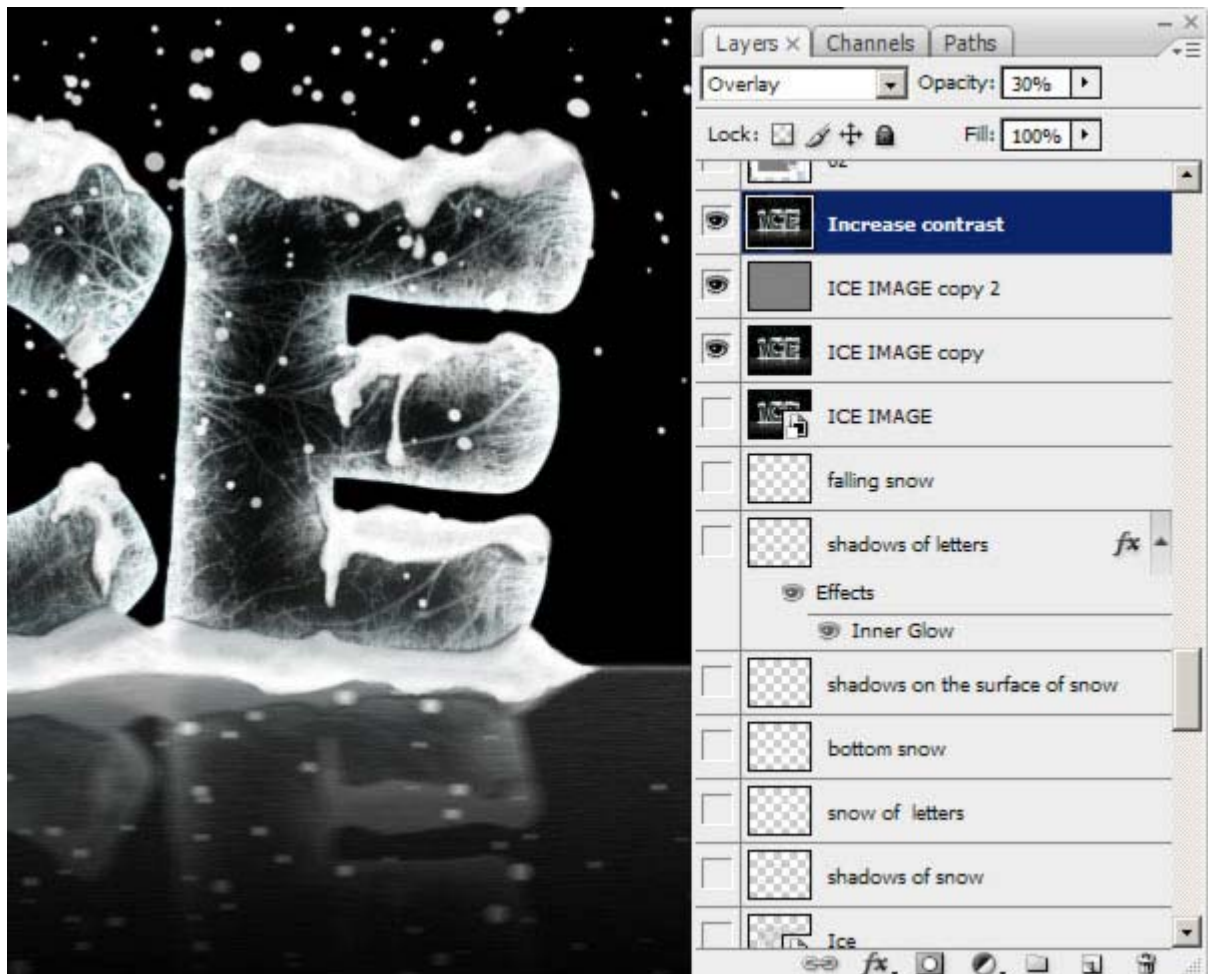
Step 45

Then go to Filter > Other > High Pass and apply the following settings.



Step 46

Again, create a new layer by going to Image > Apply Image... and click OK. Set it to Overlay and 30% for Opacity.



Step 47

Draw a circle on a new layer with the Elliptical Marquee Tool. Fill it with black, then Deselect with Command + D. Now go to Filter > Blur > Gaussian Blur, and set it to 25 pixels. This gives some sort of vignetting effect.



Final Result

And here's the final outcome! It could be very nice to add some Christmas decorations! Well it's not that time yet!



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