# Using Masks in Corel PHOTO-PAINT™

Masks in PHOTO-PAINT work similarly to placing a stencil over a piece of paper. Masks enable you to isolate areas for editing, while protecting the remaining areas from any changes. There are several mask-creating options, including the **Smart Selection Mask** tool which is new to PHOTO-PAINT 2020.

For our first example, we'll start with a photo of some doughnuts. The photo is the selected object.
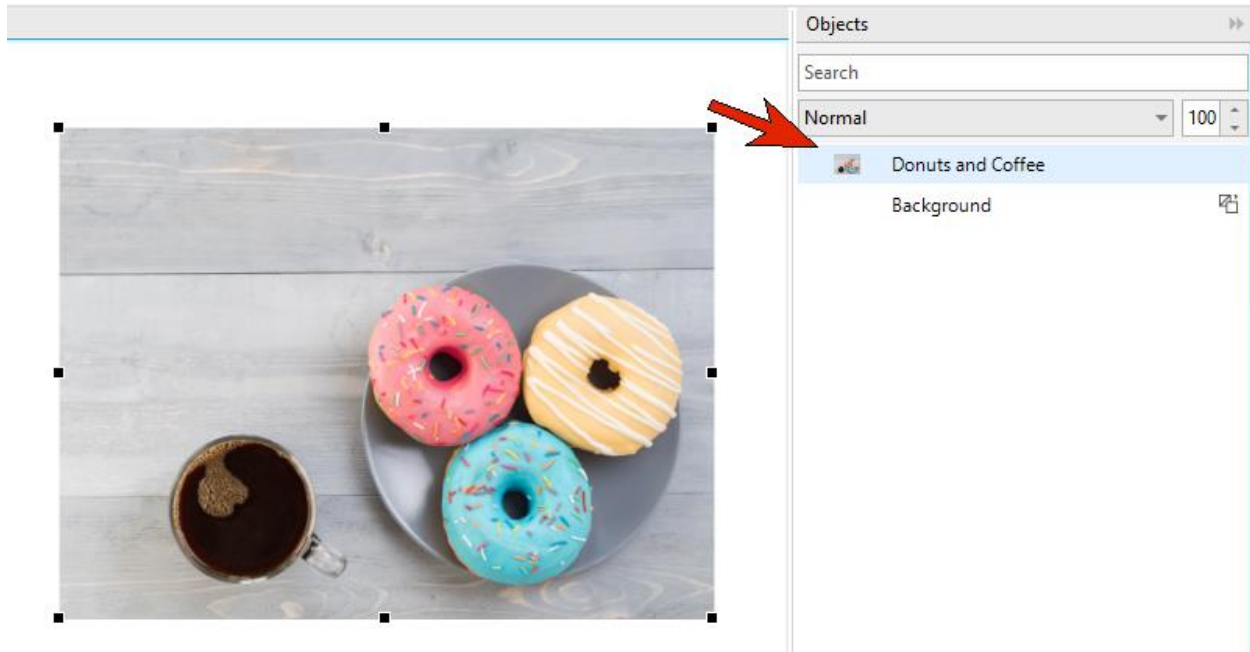

On the left toolbar, open the **Mask** tool group flyout and choose the **Ellipse Mask** tool.
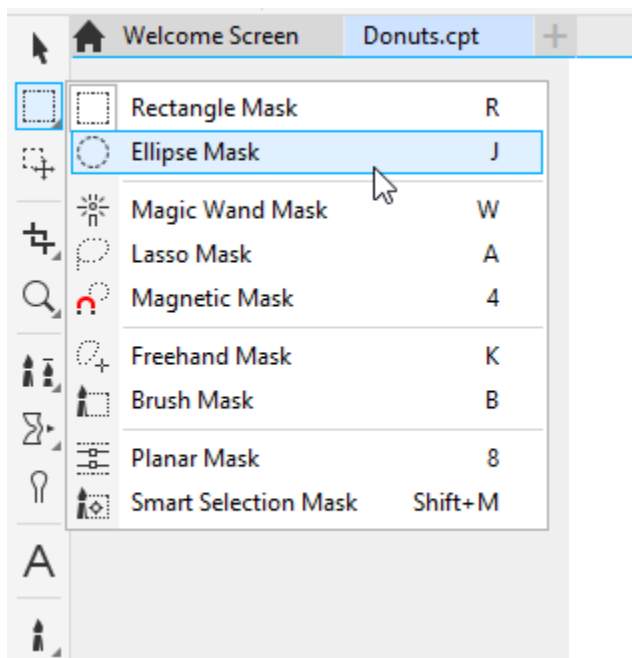
Drag to place the mask shape approximately along the outline of one of the doughnuts. The moving dashed border is the mask marquee.

The mask isn't perfectly located, so we will use the **Mask Transform** tool to make adjustments. The controls in the property bar for this tool include **Position and Size**, **Rotate**, **Scale**, and more.
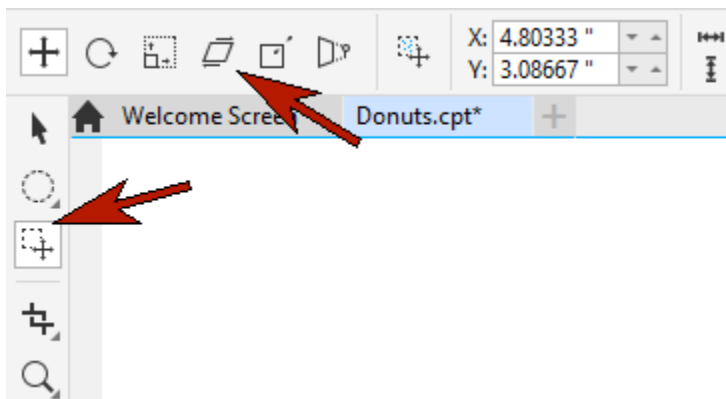
We'll use the **Position and Size** control to resize and reposition as needed to fit the mask to the doughnut.

By default, what's inside the mask is what you can now keep or edit. When you choose **Mask > Mask Overlay**, the red overlay marks what you can't access while the mask is active.

Choose **Mask** > **Invert Mask** to reverse what's inside the mask, and now it's the doughnut that can't be edited.

If we press **Ctrl** + **X**, everything inside the mask is cut and only the doughnut remains.

Another mask is needed along the doughnut hole, which isn't perfectly round. We will use the **Lasso Mask** tool, carefully tracing around the hole's edges, and double-clicking when finished.
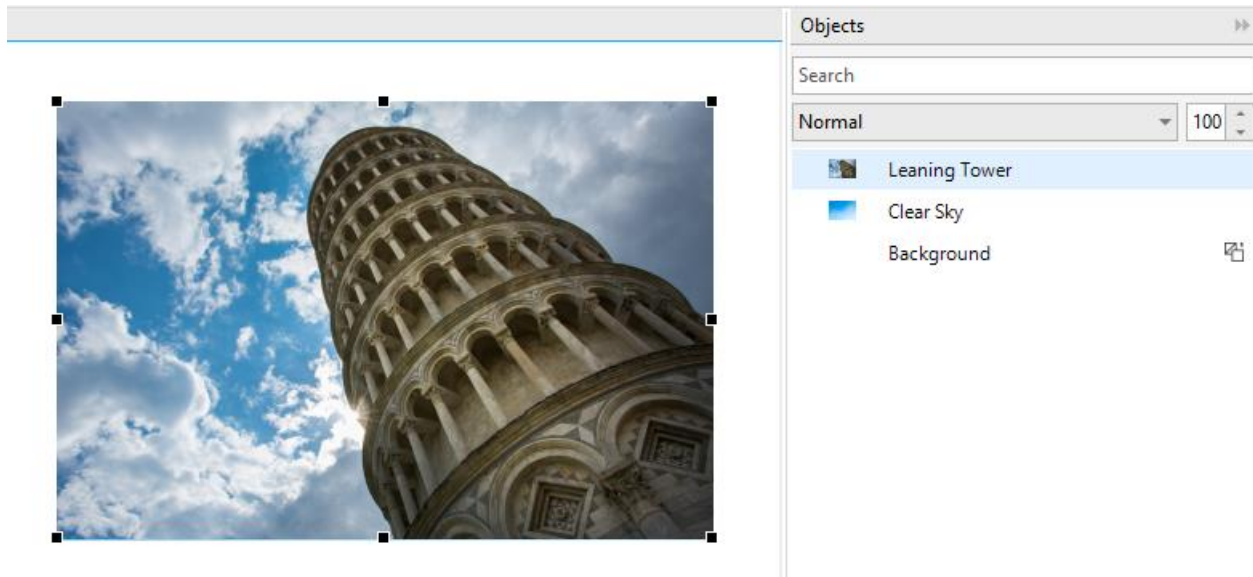
Press **Ctrl** + **X** to cut out this part of the photo.

Now the doughnut can be used as an object in another document. Use **Ctrl** + **C** to copy it, **Ctrl** + **V** to paste, then use the **Pick** tool to resize and move as needed.

Our second example is a photo of the Leaning Tower of Pisa, placed above a photo of a clear sky. The tower photo is selected.

There are a few ways to mask just the tower. You can try the **Magic Wand Mask** tool in **Normal** mode, with a medium **Tolerance** of around 50, and drag the mouse to include the pixels you want in the mask. This leaves some areas that need to be removed from the mask, as well as added.

You can lower the **Tolerance** and switch to **Subtractive** mode, then click in the background to exclude those pixels from the mask.
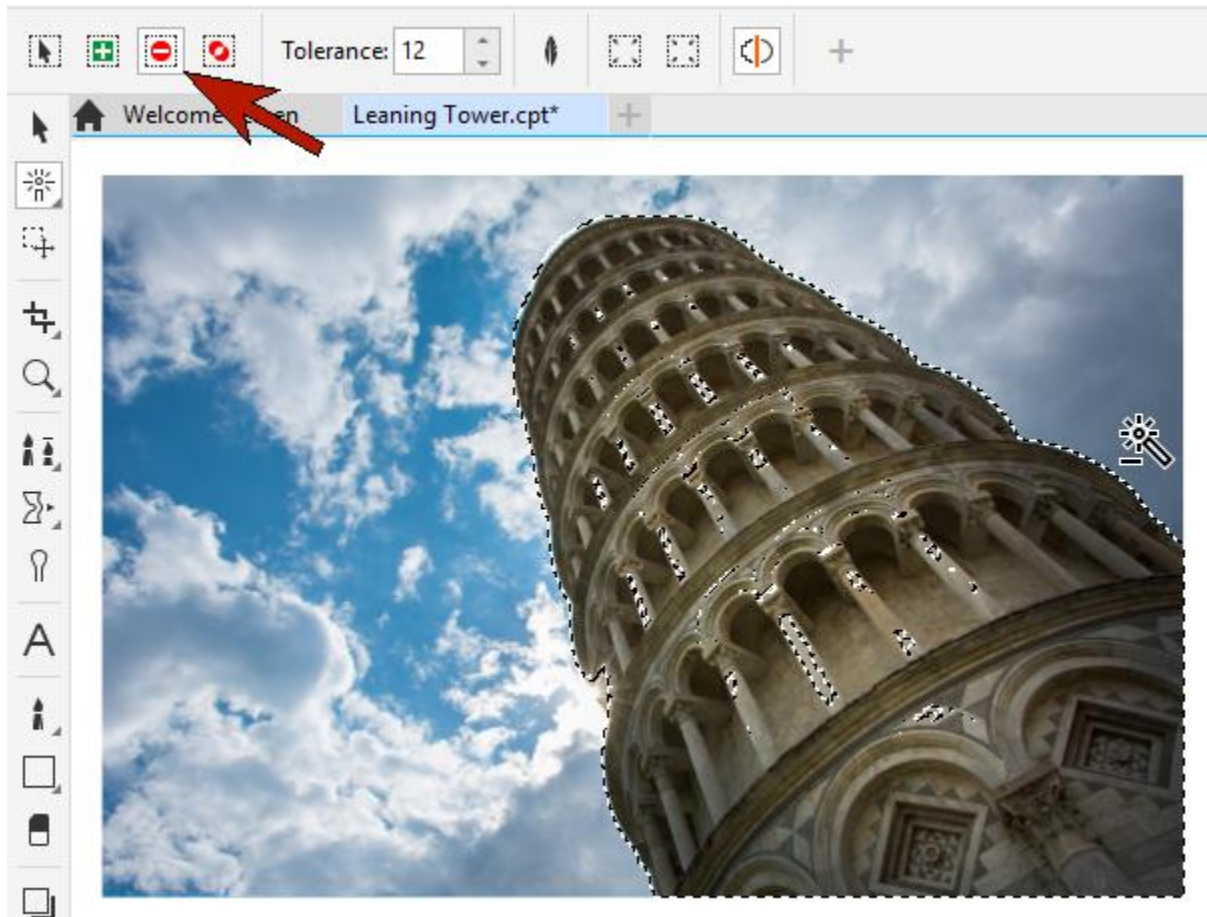
Then switch to **Additive** mode and click the bits along the tower that had been excluded before.

This method works well to mask the tower, but in PHOTO-PAINT 2020 we have a faster and easier way to get the same result.

We'll use **Mask** > **Remove Mask** to start over, this time using the new **Smart Selection Mask** tool.

In **Normal** mode, drag the mouse within the tower.

When you release the mouse, the mask expands to include the entire tower but none of the background. This is because the new **Smart Selection Mask** tool includes an edge-detection algorithm, as well as machine learning models to identify and include colors in a selection.
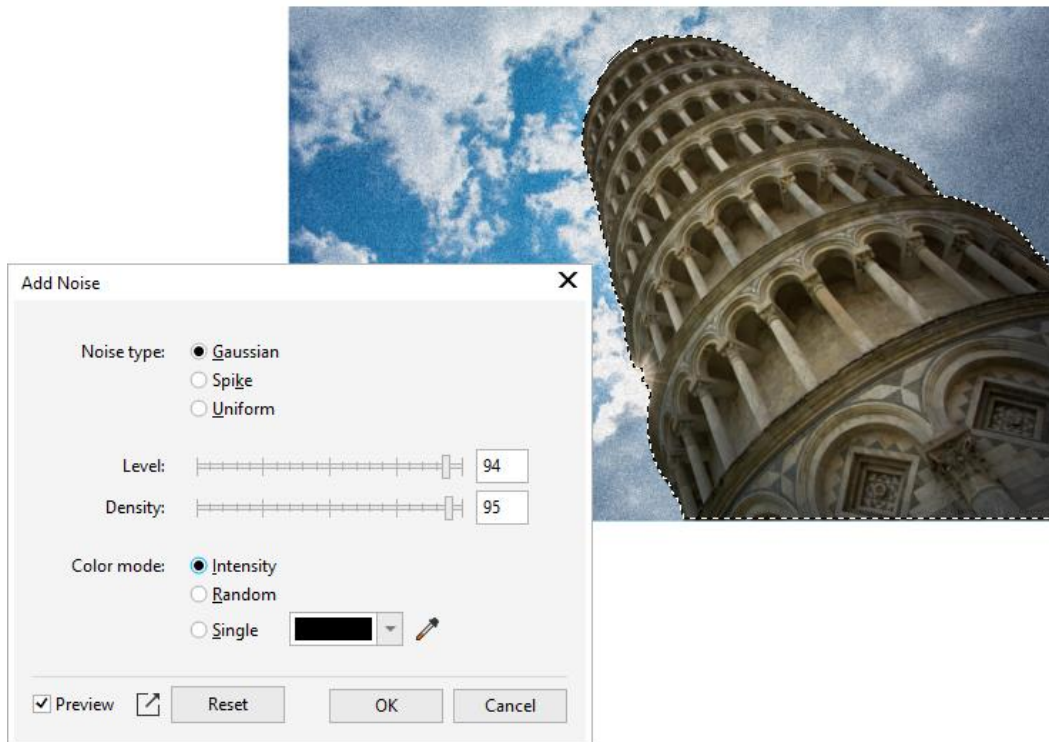
The mask includes only the tower, so if you apply an effect, such as **Effects** > **Color Transform** > **Psychedelic**, the effect is applied only within the mask.
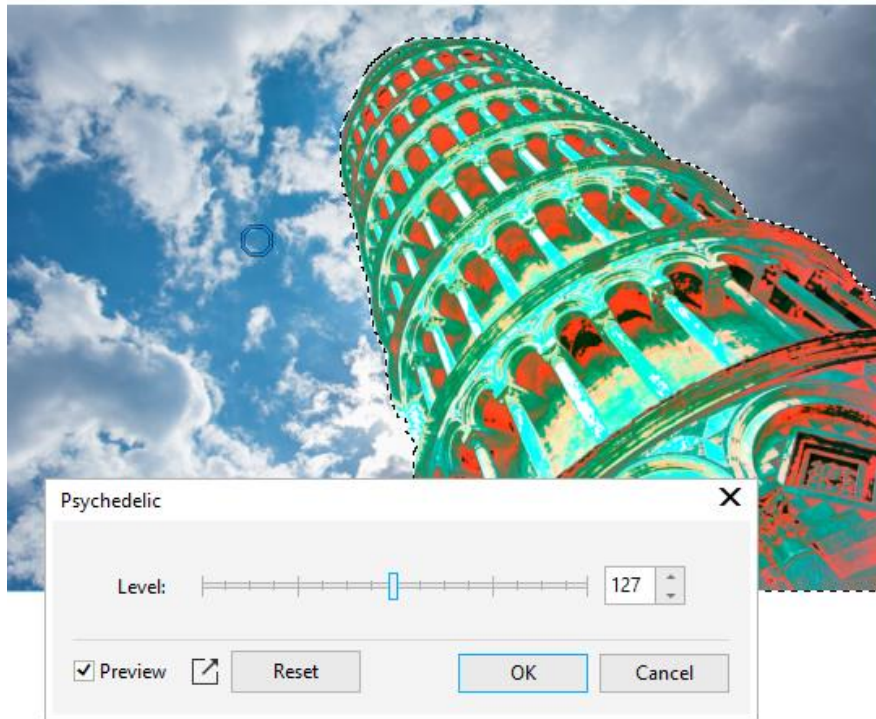

Or you can invert the mask (go to **Mask** > **Invert Mask**). This places the sky inside the mask, to which you can add a different effect such as **Noise**.

Or, with the inverted mask of the sky still active, press **Delete** to remove all pixels inside the mask. This allows the photo below, with the clear sky, to show through.

Finally, our last example shows a beautiful way of using masks to create a composite image. To start, we have used the **Visibility** icon in the **Objects** docker to hide all objects except for the background photo of a snow fox.
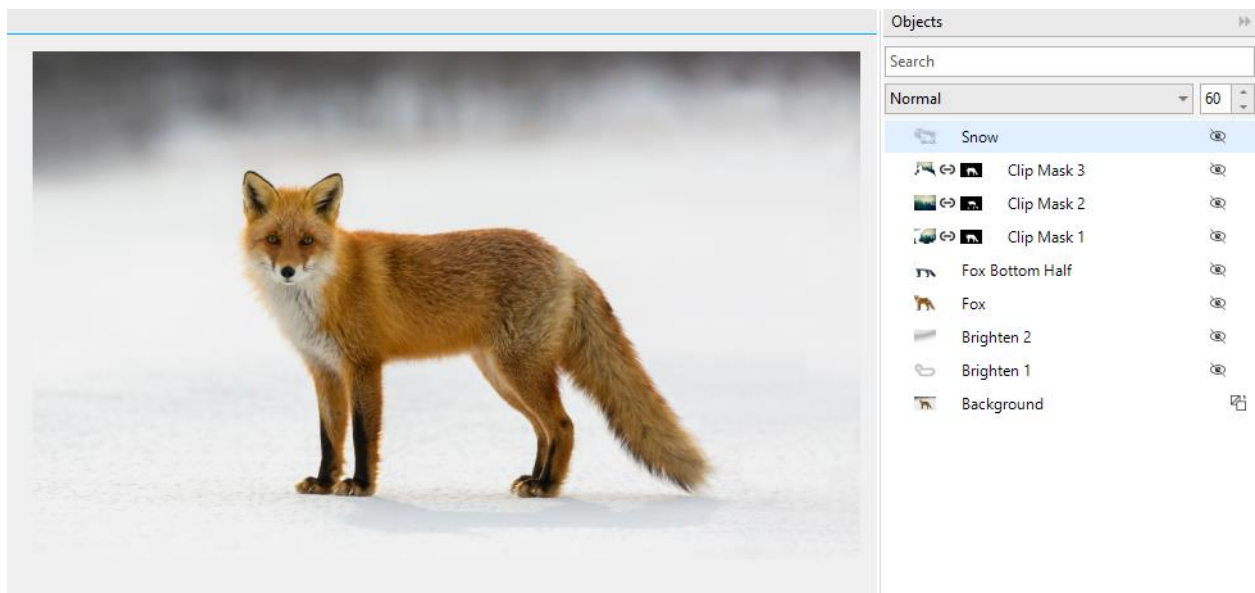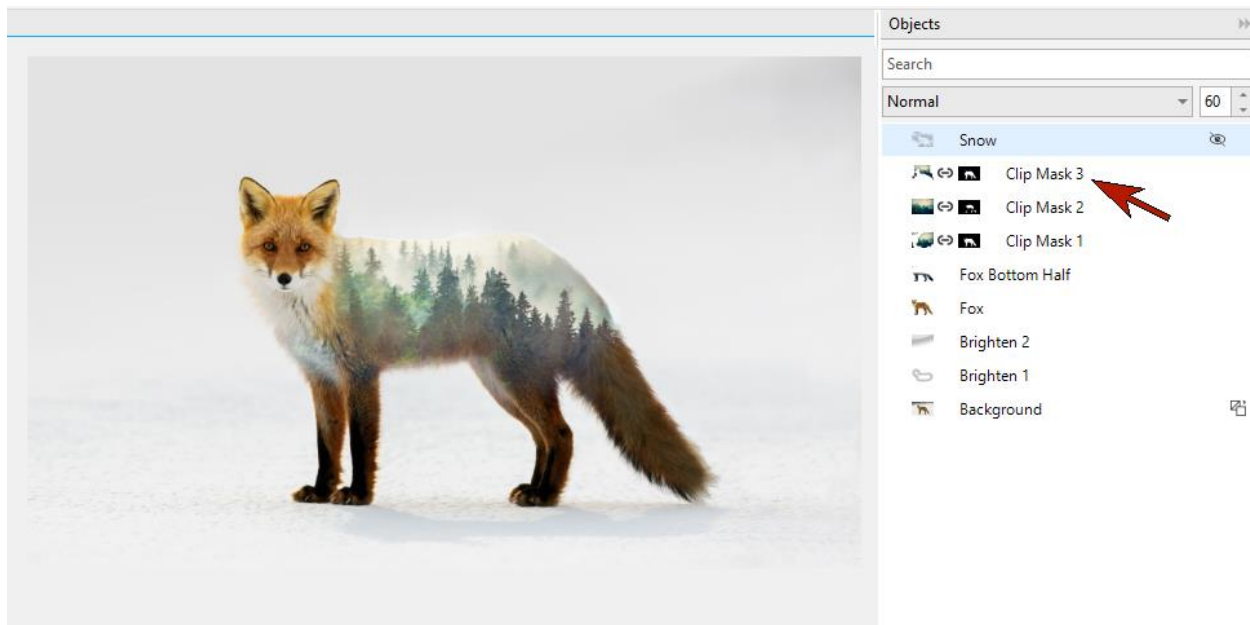
The two **Brighten** objects lighten the background. The **Fox** object is a copy of the fox itself, which was created with the **Smart Selection Mask** tool.
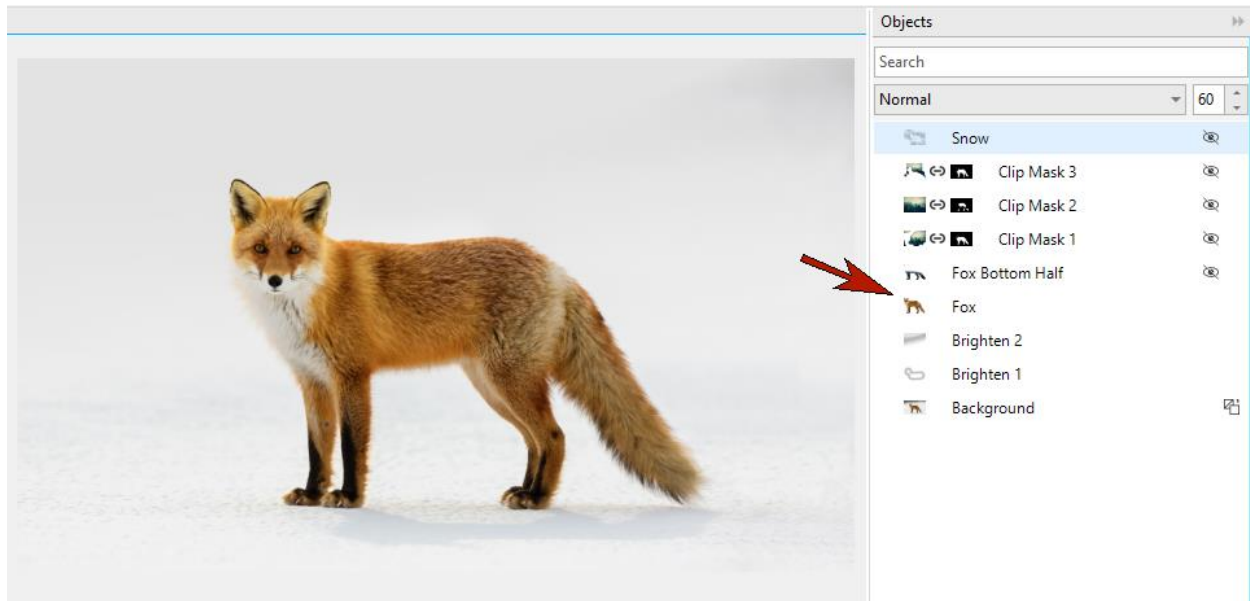
The **Fox Bottom Half** is another clipped object, blended with the background image of pine trees.

Then come three clip masks, each using a different part of the fox, and blended in different ways with the pine tree image.

Learning how to use masks will open up a new world of creative options for your PHOTO-PAINT projects.