1a: I used a gaussian filter to blur the images, I used a (5x5) window and a sigma of 1

My results images were similar for the most part, however there were some portions of the displacement image for ShiftR5U5 that were somewhat less pronounced in comparison the ShiftR2 displacement result

1b: the shift for R10 looked as expected, however for R20 and R40 it began to no longer work