



About the Cover

Reflecting the Prism of His Life

Gary Singh

Were Sipo Liimatainen an inanimate object, he'd be a prism. Or so he says. From the darkness of his persona, an entire spectrum of light emerges. That is, the colors of his personality rest on a lap of darkness. Filtered through his brain and the software, the colors explode into vibrant, searching works. An apparent philosophy of color theory, vibration, and frequency is latent in his work.

Based in Akaa, Finland, about 25 miles south of Tampere and not too far from Lake Vanajavesi, Sipo says he has powerfully subtle sensors. He dives deep into his work, whether it's fractal art for living rooms, greeting cards, or corporate clients. Entirely self-taught, he began his career as an airbrush artist in the advertising industry, in the early 1980s. He did custom work on automobiles, portraits, walls, and other objects.

"At the end of the 1990s I began to search new ways of expressing myself," he recalls. "As I felt growing interest in digital art, leaving traditional painting for computer art was quite natural. Through a fascination with digital and fractal worlds, I found my very own method of working."

With his wife's encouragement, he made the jump to a full-time artist's career, knowing that his airbrush background would help him in the long run. He knew he could eventually make a go of it.

"It was a big step, and it was challenging to leave old routines," he says. "But year by year my business has been growing, and I feel confident with my art in the future."

Liimatainen's website, www.sipo-liimatainen.artistwebsites.com, contains an overwhelming number of images, assiduously classified and divided into numerous categories—for example, Green Abstract Fractal Art, White Abstract Fractal Art, Mythological Art, and Decorative Art—replete with statistics for each piece. For each image, viewers can inspect the color schemes and the number of visitors. Any artwork might contain numerous searchable tags such as "painterly," "inspirational," and "creative," and viewers can even search by color. A variety of temperaments emerges from his multidimensional images. Each one presents deep levels of interaction; some viewers might even go as far to speculate that the images exhibit hidden energies.

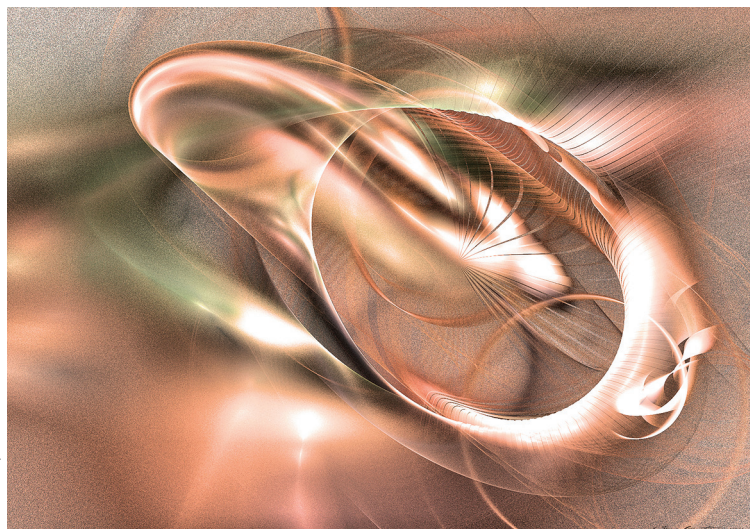
Everything Is Vibration

With *Delightful Mood of Abstracted Mind* (see this issue's cover), Liimatainen says his ideas were clear from the beginning. It wasn't an arbitrary process of tweaking coefficients or parameters.

"I wanted to create a freely flowing geometric abstraction," he says. "The patterns look like they're painted."

Using mainly the flame editor in Apophysis 2.09, Liimatainen created seven triangle layers, each with its own scaling and transform values: linear, spherical, and sinusoidal. The colors are also divided into different levels and have similar brightness, gamma, and vibrancy values. Liimatainen says the rendering settings he conjured up were quality 4,000, filter radius 0.7, and oversample 2. After rendering, he made the final tweaks in Photoshop.

"Gradient pattern colors that glow and flow—yellow, orange, blue, gray, green, black, and so on—



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Figure 1. *Harmony of Thebes* is part of a series that Sipo Liimatainen designs for home and office interiors.

were in my mind in the very beginning,” he says. “During the process, I improvised with colors to reach their own shapes and harmonies.”

Continuing on that front, *Harmony of Thebes*, (see Figure 1) is part of Liimatainen’s Listen with Your Eyes series, which he designs for home and office interiors. On the website, searchable word tags for the image include “fine art,” “office art,” “mystical,” “spirals,” and “translucent.” Another degree of classification shows the number of dominant colors by which users can search for this image.

Despite over-the-top degrees of classification for each image, the Listen With Your Eyes images suggest a state of “betweenness,” a blending of the senses and perhaps, yet again, the vibratory characteristics of certain color frequencies. You get a sense that a deeper, more elaborate internal scheme is at work here.

“Living on the borderline of two different worlds, visible and invisible, is an inevitable part of an artist’s common life,” says Liimatainen. “Only very seldom can you compare powerful images to weak words. Personally, I prefer perception by eyes and ears to speaking. Furthermore, I’m keen on philosophizing, so the name, the Listen With Your Eyes series, was a self-evident fact.”

All in all, Liimatainen says the way in which the colors vibrate is important to him. Color frequencies play a role in every creation.

Dominated by violet, *Aquarius 49* (see Figure 2) also comes from the Listen series. An Aquarian, Liimatainen created the piece as a 49th birthday present to himself last January. Violet has the highest frequency in the visible spectrum; in theory, it can relate to intuition and spiritual energy. If you spend enough time with color theorists, esotericists, and astrologers, an Aquarian connection to the “violet flame” will eventually emerge.

“I think it’s a strong abstract artwork,” Liimatainen says. “Especially in terms of colors, and it works very well in large art prints.”

Do Not Touch (see Figure 3) provides more examples of the vivid, vibratory color schemes that emerge when Liimatainen turns his brain into a prism. Even though these images emerged from fractal equations, he claims the final result doesn’t come across as such to many viewers. Things are not as they seem.

“I’ve received plenty of positive comments,” he said. “Including ones such as, ‘It looks familiar, but doesn’t remind me of anything I know.’”

Restrained, yet Flaming

Regarding the creative process, Liimatainen believes that fractal artworks can be created with a

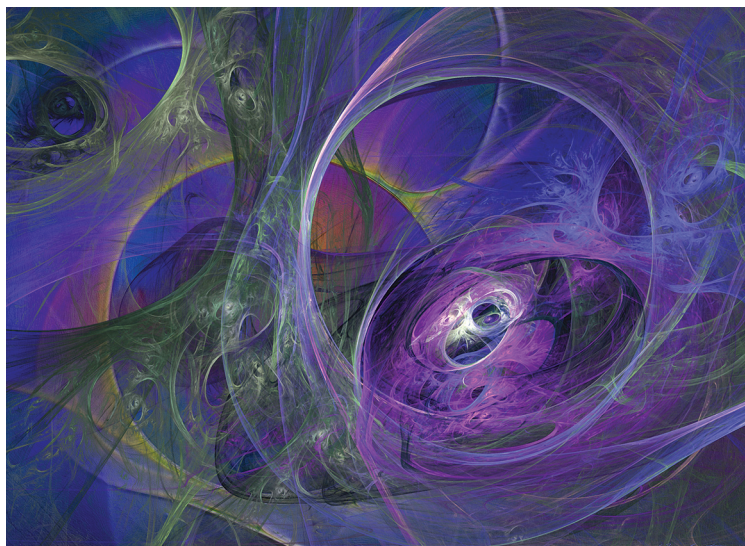


Figure 2. Liimatainen created *Aquarius 49* as a 49th-birthday present to himself, an Aquarian.

sense of discipline, but they do involve free improvisation and what he calls “a flaming mind.”

“I have the skill to dive into my artworks and create them by rolling layers and feeling details of them,” he explains. “This process happens in my head. I don’t use sketchbooks. To be honest, sometimes in the middle of process the artwork starts its own life and forces me to choose another way of expression.”

In the future, he plans to network more, search for new forms, and collaborate more. He also plans to publish a series of greeting cards—a staggering 150 different artworks. ■■

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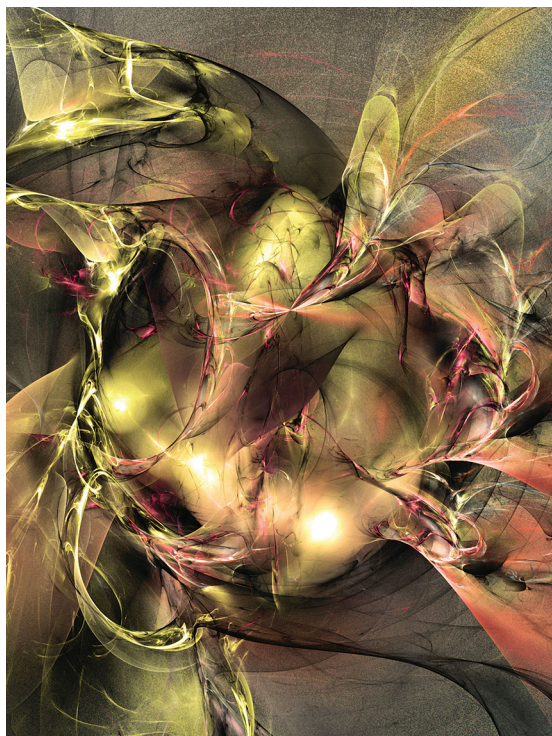


Figure 3. *Do Not Touch* shows the vivid, vibratory color schemes that emerge when Liimatainen turns his brain into a prism.