

Retro Sci-Fi text

- a tutorial to make this effect:



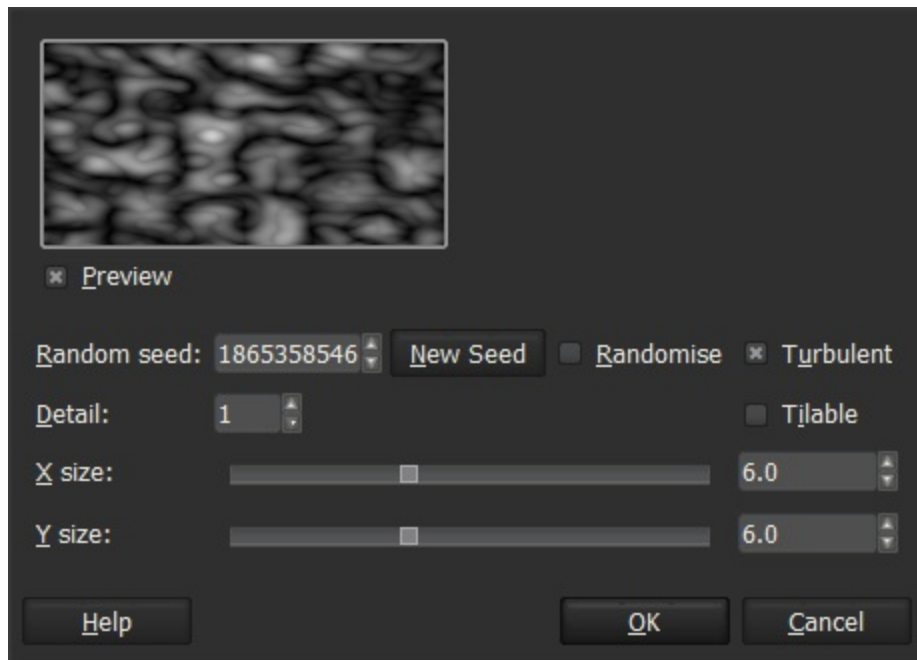
Requires G'mic!

The effect I show in this tutorial was first inspired by this thread on Gimp Chat :

<http://www.gimpchat.com/viewtopic.php?f=23&t=3515&hilit=accidental+rodilius> and I want everyone who contributed to the fun

in that thread to get their share of credit, especially Draconian and Lylejk.

1. It's important to start from a large enough image, mine is 1200 X 1200 px.
2. Choose a chunky and rather straight lined font (I use SF Laundromatic Bold) for this and make some extra space between the letters - how much extra space you need depends on the fonts, I needed 10 px.
3. make a new layer and name it "Pixel blur". Go to Filters -> Clouds -> Difference clouds. Run the filter at these settings:



Random seed is not important here, but Turbulent is, and so are the X and Y sizes. Much smaller or bigger sizes may spoil the pixelised effect - but of course it's always fun to experiment! When you have your difference cloud, alpha select the text in the text layer, invert the selection and delete.

4. Make sure the pixel blur layer is selected and go to Filters -> Blur -> Pixelise. Run the filter at these settings:



Again, experimenting is fun, but bigger pixel sizes may distort the text to unreadable shapes and smaller sizes may reduce the effect of the filters you will use next.

5. Now go to G'mic -> Artistic - graphic novel, make sure "Output" is set to "New layer(s)", and either experiment with settings, or just run the filter at default settings. Here is a good opportunity to experiment without ruining the whole effect. When you are done, set the graphic novel layer to Grain merge.

6. Now the text should get some colour (unless you prefer it in greyscale, of course). Select the pixel blur layer. You could colourise this layer in many ways, for example by Colours -> Colourise, but I chose to use a gradient map instead, gradient maps (or for that matter palette maps) work very well on the results of a pixel blur, where the colours are nicely sorted. So, pick out a gradient that goes

well with your background and go to Colours -> Map -> Map to Gradient.

7. In the layers menu, click "New from visible" and then go to G'mic -> Contours -> Gradient Norm. Here is another opportunity to experiment without ruining the whole effect - in this case I just ran it at default settings. When the filter is ready, make sure you have the new layer with the gradient norm selected and go to Colours -> Colour to alpha. choose black (000000), so that you only get the white framework left. Name the layer "Framework".
8. Up til now, I haven't made a background for mine and if you're following this exactly you haven't either. I thought the text turned out like something from a Sci-Fi movie from the eighties or nineties, so I simply used a space texture for mine.
9. Now that you have a background you can tune your framework layer a little - try changing layer modes and/or turn the opacity down. For my example text I set the layer to grain merge but didn't turn the opacity down.
10. Now for the final touch: rays. Select your framework layer. Go to G'mic -> Lights & shadows -> Light rays. Check the box for Transparency, then you can play with the settings or just run the filter at default. When you're ready you can colourize or i colour invert the rays if you like, I didn't on this one. Since I wanted light rays, I set the layer mode to screen and left the ray layer above the framework layer. I turned down the opacity on the rays a bit and then my retro sci-fi was finished. I have made some of these images with light backgrounds and black framework instead, though, and on those I either colourised the rays or colour inverted them. Then I moved the ray layer down to beneath the pixel blur layer - I think black or coloured rays tend to take over too much if I keep them on top of the layers list.

Hope you got through this without problems! To finish up with, here's an

example of what the effect will look like with light background, dark colours on the text and dark rays (it's basically the same picture as the first one but with some of the layers colour inverted):

