



Resene Lure 
Resene Spotlight 



into the light

Fantasy and reality, dark and light all weave through the lustrous artworks of this Palmerston North artist.

Top Artist Philip Liggins has mastered an old art form.

Above The combination of paint and glass produces an intensity of colour and luminous quality to the art.

Left The artwork that won the local Resene competition.

It's an art form used centuries ago on icons and sacral paintings, but artist Philip Liggins uses the technique of reverse painting on glass to great effect today.

"Everything is the opposite to traditional painting on canvas. The signature, details and foreground work, such as trees or birds flying, are painted first. And when they're dry, I paint the next layer, like the sky, over the dry foreground work. The art is done in layers, from the signature and foreground first, to the background last."

Philip's finished work is viewed from the front, unpainted side. The glass "serves as a support and a protective surface – almost like a varnish." The result is a bright, clear colour since the paint is not absorbed as it would be if applied to canvas, wood or paper. The combination of paint and glass produces an intensity of colour and luminous quality that you don't see in other mediums. Choosing the colours used is therefore very important, says Philip.

Philip chose the art form not long after completing a Certificate in Foundation Visual Arts in 1991, at UCOL (formerly Manawatu Polytechnic). It was winning a local Resene Art Contest run in Palmerston North in 2008, however, that inspired him to continue painting. His winning painting of an adult penguin with its young offspring has a strong ecology theme and is painted in various shades of blue – Philip's favourite colour!

Philip has used Resene paint, usually the small testpots, "ever since I

started painting" because of its durability, low odour and 'stickability'." He also likes the huge range of colours. He currently has 300 pots of colour "on the go".

An affinity for wildlife and a quirky use of unusual materials are strong components of Philip's work – for example, the heavily textured painting of an armadillo, which curves around the spiked teeth of a circular saw blade. It took around two weeks to complete.

His paintings of exotic jungle animals, dogs and horses have a naïve, refreshing simplicity, with a strong use of pattern, much like the work of French Post-Impressionist painter, Henri Rousseau, (1844-1910). These contrast strongly with the theatrical, fantasy figures of his other work. "I particularly like the work of UK-based fantasy artist, Chris Achilleos, who creates artwork for the *Fighting Fantasy* game-book series."

Philip is currently working on a commissioned painting, but his next artworks will "feature different forms of marine life, such as octopus and shark, with the circular saw blade as a base material."

Philip's artwork can be found at markets in the Manawatu and Horowhenua regions, at Mama Maternity, an arts and crafts retail outlet to be opened shortly in Feilding, Manawatu, or he can be contacted on 021 154 9606. [H](#)

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 Resene White Thunder