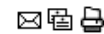


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Dissension Style Guide: Simic

Magic Arcana
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The Simic combine Blue's insatiable curiosity with Green's hunger for growth, forming an academic guild that is passionate about literally *embodying* its ideas. This is not the alchemical industriousness of the Izzet or the growth-for-community's-sake of the Selesnya, however; it's *life utilized* as the ultimate tool for scientific expansion. Today we take a look at *Dissension's* style guide to see how the style of the Simic expresses these principles visually.

A style guide is a document of text and reference illustrations used to guide artists who work on a *Magic* set. Anthony Waters, Dan Scott, Greg Staples, Jim Nelson, Kev Walker, Martina Pilcerova, Matt Cavotta, Matt Wilson, and Tomas Giorello all worked as concept illustrators for *Dissension*.



The Simic center of power is **Novijen**, a bizarre architectural womb that serves as the Simic Combine's scientific campus. As you can see above, the look of Simic architecture is, of course, organic. How does life solve problems? By adapting, fusing, metastasizing, distending, *evolving*. To create a living space, the Simic evolve a specialized set of organisms that can serve as bricks, mortar, supports, and other infrastructure.

...Which brings us to cytoplasts. As [Matt Cavotta discussed](#) during *Dissension* previews, cytoplasts are globs of tissue that provide a bio-magical conduit of genetic information to and from the host organism. Cytoplasts show up in the style guide only briefly but are everywhere in card art. Specifically they're a visual cue for the graft mechanic – see the aqua-blue blobs attached

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to the graft critters depicted on **Helium Squirter**, **Simic Basilisk**, **Sporeback Troll**, and **Vigean Hydropon**. If you see a cytoplast, you're seeing Simic ideals applied in the real world – at least, in Momir Vig's gooey, pulsating vision of the real world.



The other stylistic cues in Simic technology vary between the shaggy-with-moss and ropy-with-vines look of **Leafdrake Roost** or **Vigean Intuition**, to the bulbous and translucent look of **Protean Hulk** or **Plaxmanta**, to the severe and prosthetic-intensive look of **Simic Guildmage** or **Simic Initiate**. The recurring thread here is the well-intentioned augmentation of life for the sake of improvement – evolving inevitably into a runaway evolution for evolution's sake. Is that nature turned into something strictly unnatural? Momir Vig would call it progress!



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