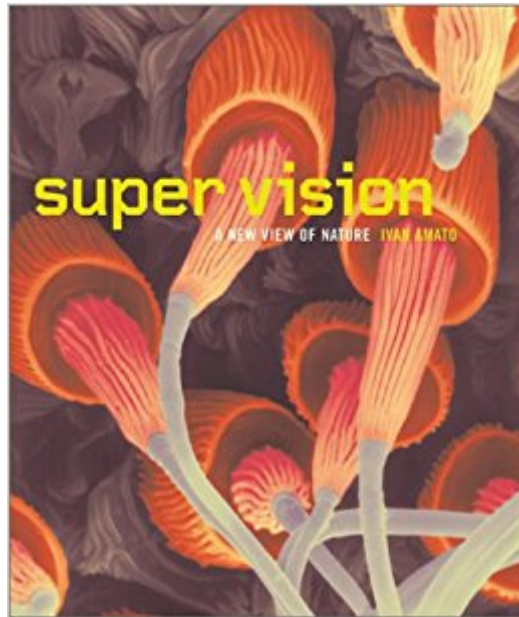




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# Super Vision: A New View Of Nature



## Synopsis

What does nature really look like? Scientific instruments enable us to see far more of the physical world than ever before. These devices can register millions of invisible colours, look back in cosmic time some 12 billion years, peer behind and within seemingly opaque barriers such as skin and bone, and capture events that last a mere trillionth of a second. In this volume, images of scientific interest and of beauty are accompanied by Ivan Amato's descriptions, which shed light on the images themselves as well as the technologies that created them.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

From the incomprehensibly minute movements of subatomic particles to the equally incomprehensible curve of the universe, Science News associate editor Amato has gathered a selection of images of processes, objects and beings that give the external world's inhuman scales their close-up. From a human immunodeficiency virus rising "like a sun over turbulent waters" over a lymph tissue cell to an Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar image of Washington, D.C., and back down to "the smallest guitar in the world"-a silicon guitar 10-millionths of a meter long, with guitar strings only about 100 atoms wide-Amato tours the limits of representation, and the many techniques scientists and other specialists have developed for rendering the invisible and the monumental. Fractals, microchips, biotechnology and global warming all make appearances. In many cases, the images have been garishly colored in order to highlight the details, sometimes too much so, and the author is obviously interested in comparing art to nature, directly so in a

comparison of cancerous dog skin to Vincent van Gogh's *Starry Night* (plausible) and a cross-section of a dog's skin mole to a Picasso (less so). A series of black-and-white photographs of snowflakes (each one of which is indeed unique) have all the somber documentary power of a Walker Evans. The "Visible Human Project," uses X-rays and magnetic resonance techniques to completely represent the human body, in meaty tissue tones that make the neck look like a piece of chuck. The accompanying text is non-patronizing, introducing technical terms and processes carefully and making this set of visions super indeed. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Many scientists are inspired by the beauty of the natural world and have a strong desire to bring all of life into crisp focus, hence the creation of such devices and technologies as the telescope, microscope, spectroscopy, X rays, radar, and particle accelerators, all of which greatly extend our visual range, and grant us what prolific science writer Amato calls supervision. Thanks to this capacity, science has become increasingly image driven, a fact celebrated to splendid effect in this gorgeously produced volume. The startling images--the bizarrely pretty budding of a deadly virus, the elegance of a polymer helix, the astonishing complexity of a single heart cell, the surprisingly rough texture of a rose petal, the intricacies of a microchip--are arresting in their richness and grace, resembling in their patterns everything from mandalas to a Van Gogh sky, abstractions by Jackson Pollock, and fantastic landscapes. As nanotechnologies evolve and more images of the universe are beamed back to earth, we'll continue to acquire new perspectives, and, hopefully, new insights. Donna Seaman Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

The concept of this book is an excellent one, trying to encompass views of our universe from the the most minuscule to the colossal. Although many of the images or similar ones could be found in other publications, to have them in a single volume, as *Super Vision* does, is a wonderful project. Some of the illustrations appear to be unnecessarily large. What is offered in extra-size, with poor resolution and some blurring, could have been presented as smaller and crisper images occupying less than one page instead of one-and-a-half pages, and it would have reduced the book's size without detracting from its considerable virtues. Furthermore, the expansion of an over-sized image to the adjacent page destroys its integrity without adding any value. The only advantage I can see in this would be for the visually impaired. In the book's Introduction (page 18) there is an error in the wavelength scale illustration. The visible spectrum is displayed with the violet color towards the longer wavelengths (infrared) and the the red color towards the shorter ones. This,

of course, should be the reverse. I have enjoyed the book greatly, and plan to make it part of my permanent library. The three-star rating would be much higher if it were not for some of the over-sized images which I found unnecessary and, at times, annoying.

I purchased this book because I work in a scanning electron microscopy lab and the images in this book are stellar! I use the book to show friends and family examples of really small stuff in great detail. It also serves as an inspirational tool for when I have down time and want to look at random stuff under the scope. The book is awesome, you most likely will not regret the purchase!

Everybody needs this book. I gave a copy to my grandson, who has just started college, and he disappeared into it at once. The idea of this prize-winning book is to show the natural world in new ways, starting with the minutest little things that can only be seen through an electron microscope and going all the way to the incomprehensibly large universe that we live in. The pictures are amazing, and beautifully colorful. Each one is accompanied by a description of what is shown, how the picture was taken, and the information it provides, all written in clear and easy to understand language, nothing too technical. You can study this book from beginning to end, or you can just dip in and see what marvels you find each time! I can't recommend this book too highly.

This is an absolutely beautiful book showing images from the tiniest entities to the largest in the world. It should be on everyone's coffee table or in everyone's library. The book gives a perspective made possible by the use of various means of taking pictures in such a way as to make the viewer see in a different way. The images are both informative and artistic. Ivan Amato accompanies the images with clear and succinct explanations.

From protons to parsecs, Ivan Amato's "Super Vision" reveals what many scientists know: the universe is a visually stunning place. This remarkable collection of images, coupled with Amato's compelling captions, shows the art that can be found in science. Thanks to advances in instruments ranging from atom smashers to telescopes, combined with unprecedented computer power, the phenomena of the cosmos can be painted in vivid color. Scientists use these images in their daily effort to understand the universe; we can enjoy them for pure aesthetic pleasure. Covering 42 orders of magnitude (powers of ten), "Super Vision" shows us the abstract swirls of a decaying particle, the eerie machinery of a spider's spinnerets, how zebrafish scales can look like a Balinese hillside, and the tortured faces of distant planets. For a guide to the art in our natural world, this is

the book. It's as beautiful as the universe it describes.

So many fascinating pictures with many vibrant colors. The pictures are large with very little description text which makes it a wonderful picture book for all ages, including infants.

The colors and clarity are stunning. I was looking for images to springboard designs for quilts and found a treasure house. Since I wasn't interested in the text I can't evaluate that; the illustrations are exceptional.

I bought this book hoping to share it with my grandchildren age 4-12. It's a bit deep for them, although the 7 year old enjoyed browsing through it with me. On the other hand, my husband and I adored it. Everything the other reviewers said is true.

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