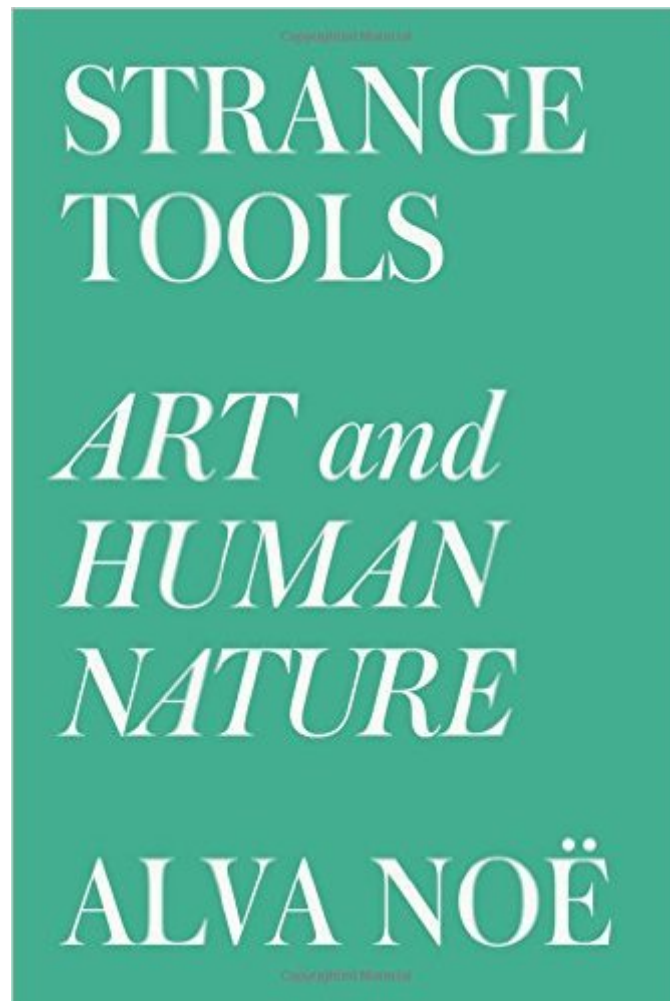


The book was found

Strange Tools: Art And Human Nature



Synopsis

A philosopher makes the case for thinking of works of art as tools for investigating ourselves. What is art? Why does it matter to us? What does it tell us about ourselves? Normally, we look to works of art in order to answer these fundamental questions. But what if the objects themselves are not what matter? In *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature*, the philosopher and cognitive scientist Alva Noë argues that our obsession with works of art has gotten in the way of understanding how art works on us. For Noë, art isn't a phenomenon in need of an explanation but a mode of research, a method of investigating what makes us human—a strange tool. Art isn't just something to look at or listen to—it is a challenge, a dare to try to make sense of what it is all about. Art aims not for satisfaction but for confrontation, intervention, and subversion. Through diverse and provocative examples from the history of art-making, Noë reveals the transformative power of artistic production. By staging a dance, choreographers cast light on the way bodily movement organizes us. Painting goes beyond depiction and representation to call into question the role of pictures in our lives. Accordingly, we cannot reduce art to some natural aesthetic sense or trigger; recent efforts to frame questions of art in terms of neurobiology and evolutionary theory alone are doomed to fail. By engaging with art, we are able to study ourselves in profoundly novel ways. In fact, art and philosophy have much more in common than you might think. Reframing the conversation around artists and their craft, *Strange Tools* is a daring and stimulating intervention in contemporary thought.

Book Information

Hardcover: 304 pages

Publisher: Hill and Wang (September 22, 2015)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0809089173

ISBN-13: 978-0809089178

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 1 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (7 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #43,611 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #17 in [Books > Politics & Social](#)

[Sciences > Philosophy > Aesthetics](#) #107 in [Books > Medical Books > Psychology >](#)

[Neuropsychology](#) #150 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Psychology & Counseling >](#)

[Neuropsychology](#)

Customer Reviews

Some years ago, I was talking with an artist. He asked me about the science of visual perception. I explained that the vision scientists seek to understand how it is we see so much – “the colorful and detailed world of objects spread out around us in space” – when what we are given are tiny distorted upside-down images in the eyes. How do we see so much on the basis of so little? I was startled by the artist’s reply. Nonsense! he scoffed. That’s not the question we should ask. The important question is this: Why are we so blind, why do we see so little, when there is so much around us to see? – Alva Noë’s quote above is from the Preface of Alva Noë’s latest book *Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature*. Noë is a philosopher at UC-Berkeley who focuses his research on mind and cognition. I have been a fan of his work for the last year or so, so I was excited when he came out with this latest book which deals with a subject that I concern myself with in my own work. His work initially caught my attention because he already does very well what I seek to do to some degree: blurring boundaries between disciplines and shattering harmful ideologies. After all, is this not necessary if we are to advance thought? It turns out that there is a lot that Noë and I agree on concerning art, and there was even more for me to learn concerning the relationship between art and philosophy more generally. He argues that both art and philosophy are transformative in that they force us to look at the world in different ways. As he explains in Chapter 8, a good work of art carries the message – “See me if you can!” – One cannot understand it with one simple glance.

Noë builds a situationally based theory of art (his enactive approach) because, in his view, art is not in our heads. Yet, and a real problem with this book is that his view of art (and philosophy) fails to explain how our brains and society come together. Surely, even if he wants to define art “outside of our heads,” he needs to explicitly explain how the brains of artists and art enthusiasts are involved in art practices and commentary? He does not and this is only one of many ways in which his arguments seem to lack well thought out substance. The gist of Noë’s argument, as I understand it, is that artists and philosophers are doing the same thing because in both cases those who engage are looking for understanding, not breakthroughs and inventions. Communication allows us to understand more. What this amounts to, as I understand it, is that our ideas are like a musical score. We all play or interpret the score differently and through communication with other we refine our understanding of what is in the score. He invokes Kant to explain that his isn’t a relativistic position because, surely, there is some kind of universality that exists outside of our sensory (situational) space. The book’s most noteworthy feature is that it has no images. Yet art is

often discussed in terms of visual perception, seeing, and an array of artwork. Actually this book is really two books, with extensive notes at the back. The notes are not endnotes because the main text does not link to them in any way. The notes read as if they had served as an (abandoned) book proposal. It is in the notes where we find more of the critical studies type of information, while the primary text is quite breezy. There is a lack of integration between the two parts.

[Download to continue reading...](#)

Strange Tools: Art and Human Nature Nursing: Human Science And Human Care (Watson, Nursing: Human Science and Human Care) The Process of Creating Life: Nature of Order, Book 2: An Essay on the Art of Building and the Nature of the Universe (The Nature of Order)(Flexible) Human Caring Science: A Theory of Nursing (Watson, Nursing: Human Science and Human Care) The Nature of Order: An Essay on the Art of Building and the Nature of the Universe, Book 3 - A Vision of a Living World (Center for Environmental Structure, Vol. 11) The Nature of Order: An Essay on the Art of Building and the Nature of the Universe, Book 4 - The Luminous Ground (Center for Environmental Structure, Vol. 12) The Nature of Order: An Essay on the Art of Building and the Nature of the Universe, Book 1 - The Phenomenon of Life (Center for Environmental Structure, Vol. 9) Drawing Nature for the Absolute Beginner: A Clear & Easy Guide to Drawing Landscapes & Nature (Art for the Absolute Beginner) Tools & Techniques of Employee Benefit and Retirement Planning, 11th ed. (Tools and Techniques of Employee Benefit and Retirement Planning) Practical Management Science, Revised (with CD-ROM, Decision Making Tools and Stat Tools Suite, and Microsoft Project) The Tools: 5 Tools to Help You Find Courage, Creativity, and Willpower--and Inspire You to Live Life in Forward Motion Crucial Accountability: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, Broken Commitments, and Bad Behavior, Second Edition: Tools for Resolving Violated Expectations, ... and Bad Behavior, Second Edition AUDIO Cancer Survivorship Coping Tools - We'll Get you Through This: Tools for Cancer's Emotional Pain From a Melanoma and Breast Cancer Survivor 99+ Best Free Internet Marketing Tools And Resources To Boost Your Online Marketing Efforts (SEO Tools, Social Media Marketing, Email Marketing, Content ... (Smart Entrepreneur Guides! Book 2) Sales: A Beginners Guide to Master Simple Sales Techniques and Increase Sales (sales, best tips, sales tools, sales strategy, close the deal, business ... sales techniques, sales tools Book 1) Whose Tools Are These?: A Look at Tools Workers Use - Big, Sharp, and Smooth (Whose Is It?: Community Workers) Unix Shell Programming Tools with CDROM (Unix Tools) The Consultant's Big Book of Organization Development Tools : 50 Reproducible Intervention Tools to Help Solve Your Clients' Problems Pro Tools 101 -- An Introduction to Pro Tools 10 (Book & DVD) (Avid Learning) Art: Painting For Artists - Styles: Acrylic

And Oil Painting (art history, art books, art theory, art techniques Book 2)

[Dmca](#)