

AWARENESS

All artists are obviously aware of whatever they are reproducing on canvas. It may be something they are looking at or it may be something in their imagination. It could be a work in progress that they look at and add to, or change to eventually end up with some awareness they like. But looking at something is only one type of awareness. For example, consider a blind musician's awareness of sounds, or a blind sculptor's feel of touch.

We are aware that our dog is aware of us. A wolf is aware of a rabbit. But what about a cat being aware of a mouse in total darkness? What kind of awareness does a bee have when it is aware of a flower by seeing it in ultra-violet light? What about a bat who zeroes in on a moth at night by using Sonar. Thinking about the different types of awareness makes us aware of our very limited range of vision that extends only in the 'humanly' visible part of a very broad electromagnetic spectrum.

Even then, our awareness of what constitutes awareness is not complete. For example, we may paint a landscape with trees, but we may also be aware that the Earth's biomass has more single-cell organisms than multicell. We are simply not directly aware of all the microbes, but we can look for them with a microscope and 'know' that they really are there. Speaking of trees, they inhabit a different time frame, and to us appear stationary, whereas actually they are in constant change. A sunflower, with a total lifespan of 3 months, rapidly grows, and even moves its flower-head to face the sun. In order to live, it must also be aware of gravity to grow roots downward, and of soil chemistry to suck nutrients into the roots. Yet at any instant it appears to us as immobile. So, what kind of awareness is knowing something without seeing it? Perhaps we must consider, any and all ways, that information about some thing is available to something else!

So far, we have concentrated on mammalian awareness. Consider a frog, (reptilian), eating a fly. It surely was aware of the fly in order to catch it. Next consider an amoeba that touches a food particle and swallows it. Now imagine yourself at a smoker volcanic vent at the bottom of an ocean. It is surrounded by single-cell organisms that extract energy from the smoke particles. Thus, they are chemically aware of their environment.

If you have enjoyed this line of thought so far, consider what it might mean to envision atoms that are chemically 'aware' of other atoms and thus allow the formation of complex organic compounds and ultimately living organisms. This step may seem like a step too far, but one can transfer more information inside your brain by studying some organic and inorganic chemistry. Then again why stop at this point? Consider the nucleus of a proton, consisting of so-called quarks that exchange 'awareness' by means of leptons. After all, for us humans to be aware of an object, we need to exchange photons of light with it.

Then again, if we really want to stretch incredulity, consider quantum field theory where we have a universe tied together with fields that seem to be aware of 'everything'. So, is information and awareness, so necessary to artistry, also a universal fundamental?