



# Exploring the Invisible: Art, Science, and the Spiritual

*Lynn Gamwell*

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This sumptuous and stunningly illustrated book shows through words and images how directly, profoundly, and indisputably modern science has transformed modern art.

Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, a strange and exciting new world came into focus--a world of microorganisms in myriad shapes and colors, prehistoric fossils, bizarre undersea creatures, spectrums of light and sound, molecules of water, and atomic particles. Exploring the Invisible reveals that the world beyond the naked eye--made visible by advances in science--has been a major inspiration for artists ever since, influencing the subjects they choose as well as their techniques and modes of representation.

Lynn Gamwell traces the evolution of abstract art through several waves, beginning with Romanticism. She shows how new windows into telescopic and microscopic realms--combined with the growing explanatory importance of mathematics and new definitions of beauty derived from science--broadly and profoundly influenced Western art. Art increasingly reflected our more complex understanding of reality through increasing abstraction. For example, a German physiologist's famous demonstration that color is not in the world but in the mind influenced Monet's revolutionary painting with light. As the first wave of enthusiasm for science crested, abstract art emerged in Brussels and Munich. By 1914, it could be found from Moscow to Paris.

Throughout the book are beautiful images from both science and art--some well known, others rare--that reveal the scientific sources mined by Impressionist and Symbolist painters, Art Nouveau sculptors and architects, Cubists, and other nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists.

With a foreword by astronomer Neil deGrasse Tyson, *Exploring the Invisible* appears in an age when both artists and scientists are exploring the deepest meanings of life, consciousness, and the universe.

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