The 2008 Masters of Illusion!

The results of the 2008 Best Visual Illusion of the Year have been announced. You can see the winners now, but it’s hard to tell in the thumbnails why each one is an illusion—click on the picture for more detail. (As opposed to staring at the thumbnails for five minutes and thinking “I don’t get it.” I placed fifth on whether or not that actually happened to me.)

To celebrate this contest, Scientific American published the article "The Neuroscience of Illusion" by Susana Martinez-Conde and Stephen L. Macknik in which they explain "the scientific value of visual illusions." (apparently the first of a series of such articles.) The article has a slideshow with more illusions, like a motion illusion. There’s by Ayano Kitaura and is even cooler than the one below:

Although the site page for the illusion above also contains a vector field for the Rubiny resistor, and that’s pretty cool itself. Thanks Paul Nasca! (Who created it and put it in the public domain.) [Act -- I can’t seem to upload it! Well, you can find the vector field here.]

Another neat illusion is the Cafe Vital illusion, in which the lines look tilted even though they are all parallel:

What’s really cool is that the first 1913 building (in the Docklands region of Melbourne, Australia) decorated their building in this design. (Or that just going to cause ships to crash because they get so confused? Maybe this is a bad idea)

And one final treat — if you haven’t seen it yet, go check out the spinning woman on Wild about Mary (and elsewhere). Counterclockwise or clockwise: you be the judge.

Tags: optical illusion, visual illusion

One Response to "The 2008 Masters of Illusion!"

bennu mik says:
May 28, 2008 at 9:23 pm

awesome. the green & blue one is awesome cool.

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