



Best Visual Illusion Of The Year (Yes, That's A Real Contest) May 14, 2009

Posted by raxdakkar in [cool](#), [science](#).
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1. Look directly at the spinning disk. It will appear to fall vertically.

2. Look at the blue fixation point. The disk will appear to fall at about a 20-degree angle.

3. Shift your gaze during the disk's descent. The flight of the oval will abruptly shift direction. The abrupt shift is analogous to the "break" of the curveball.

The controls allow you to adjust the parameters of the effect.

Orientation: 0 Spatial Frequency: 50 Speed: -12 © Arthur Shapiro

Curveball Reversal PDF file

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No, it doesn't look like much (you only see the illusion in motion here), but that is 2009's best visual illusion, as chosen by visual illusion judges (yes, those are real) at illusioncontest.com. Staring at the blue dot while the spinning black and wall ball creates an illusion that the ball is falling at an angle. Check out 2nd and 3rd place for some more illusion based on magically colored doves and the contrast of androgyny.

UPDATE: Looks like those judges were just a tad more serious than I expected. In fact, they were really "a gathering... of neuroscientists and psychologists at the Naples Philharmonic Center for the Arts in Florida."

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[About...](#)
Clayton is a Journalism Major at the University of Kansas.

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