

Looking At What's Not There- A Circle In Midair

What is necessary for spying a circle traced out in mid air?

1. I have to see in space, i.e., I must look "beyond" the finger tip and at the "plane" being drawn on.
2. I have to see in time, i.e., I must ignore the finger as it goes to the beginning of the forthcoming circle and also as it leaves the circle upon the finish of the drawing (usually the "Noon" position, [using a clock as an analogy]).
3. I have to keep in mind the "line" being traced out as the finger progresses from the Noon position to the 1 and the 2, etc., and on back around to the Noon position again.
4. I have to recognize the correspondence of the "circle" and the verbal description of what I am doing, i.e., a plane line with no endpoints and with all points being equal distance from a single point (the center), or more briefly: a uniform plane loop. This necessitates all that preceded as necessary for drawing or pointing out the circle.

All this must be done a priori (for the only empirical object here is the finger and that is not the object of our looking, for if we focus on the finger we miss the circle).

See also *Circles In The Air* ([original reprint](#) or [expanded version](#)) from *Kant-Studien*.

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