



# The Rhythm of Thought: Art, Literature, and Music after Merleau-Ponty

*Jessica Wiskus*

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Between present and past, visible and invisible, and sensation and idea, there is resonance—so philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty argued and so Jessica Wiskus explores in *The Rhythm of Thought*. Holding the poetry of Stéphane Mallarmé, the paintings of Paul Cézanne, the prose of Marcel Proust, and the music of Claude Debussy under Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenological light, she offers innovative interpretations of some of these artists’ masterworks, in turn articulating a new perspective on Merleau-Ponty’s philosophy.

More than merely recovering Merleau-Ponty’s thought, Wiskus thinks according to it. First examining these artists in relation to noncoincidence—as silence in poetry, depth in painting, memory in literature, and rhythm in music—she moves through an array of their artworks toward some of Merleau-Ponty’s most exciting themes: our bodily relationship to the world and the dynamic process of expression. She closes with an examination of synesthesia as an intertwining of internal and external realms and a call, finally, for philosophical inquiry as a mode of artistic expression. Structured like a piece of music itself, *The Rhythm of Thought* offers new contexts in which to approach art, philosophy, and the resonance between them.



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