

Title: The Phenomenology of Kruchenykh's Futurist Books  
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Various scholars have suggested many interpretations of the Futurists' conception of "the word as such," but none is definitive. This paper suggests an alternative interpretation of "the word as such," and relates it to the ideas of the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Merleau-Ponty's ideas presuppose the inseparability of the intellectual and physiological aspects of perception. From this perspective, Futurist books can be seen as a coherent corpus of works that exemplify the sensory-oriented – rather than rationalized and purely intellectual – search for selfhood, in which the physiological body becomes the seat of subjectivity. This process of re-achieving direct unmediated contact with the physical world was systematically articulated in works by Alexei Kruchenykh, who preached "unmediated comprehension through the word." This paper analyzes select works by Kruchenykh and his collaborators – namely the books *Мирсконца* (*Mirskontsa*), *Утиное Гнездышко Дурных Слов* (*Duck's Nest of Foul Words*), and *Помада* (*Lipstick*) – from 1912-1914, focusing on the physical, material aspects, or phenomenological exigency as expressed in these works. Focused on visual art and literature, Merleau-Ponty's arguments, open up new possibilities for looking at Futurist poetics and, as this paper shows, provide an alternative philosophical basis for Futurist aesthetic tenets.