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While comparative literature is a well-recognized field of study, the notion of comparative arts remains unfamiliar to many. In this fascinating book, Daniel Albright addresses the fundamental question of comparative arts: Are there many different arts, or is there one art which takes different forms? He considers various artistic media, especially literature, music, and painting, to discover which aspects of each medium are unique and which can be "translated" from one to another. Can a poem turn into a symphony, or a symphony into a painting?

Albright explores how different media interact, as in a drama, when speech, stage decor, and music are co-present, or in a musical composition that employs the collage method of the visual arts. Tracing arguments and questions about the relations among the arts from Aristotle's Poetics to the present day, he illuminates the understudied discipline of comparative arts and urges new attention to its riches.

Daniel Albright is the Ernest Bernbaum Professor of Literature at Harvard University, and he teaches in the Comparative Literature, English, and Music departments. He is the author of sixteen previous books. He lives in Cambridge, MA.