

The Conservative Avantgarde

The current state of the American avantgarde and perhaps of the avantgarde globally is one of circulating stasis, a neo-medieval arrangement, a nicheguard that is conservative aesthetically. Today's avantgarde participates in and enacts changed social, cultural, and political circumstances far different from the "historical avantgarde" of former years. I do not say this change is a bad thing. As a category, the avantgarde began as a European phenomenon. But before long it took root in the Americas and in many non-Western places where it developed in a variety of culture-specific ways. After discussing my thesis as it applies to the USA, I will say a few words about the avantgarde globally.

About the Author

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(See biography sketch on website under "Schechner")