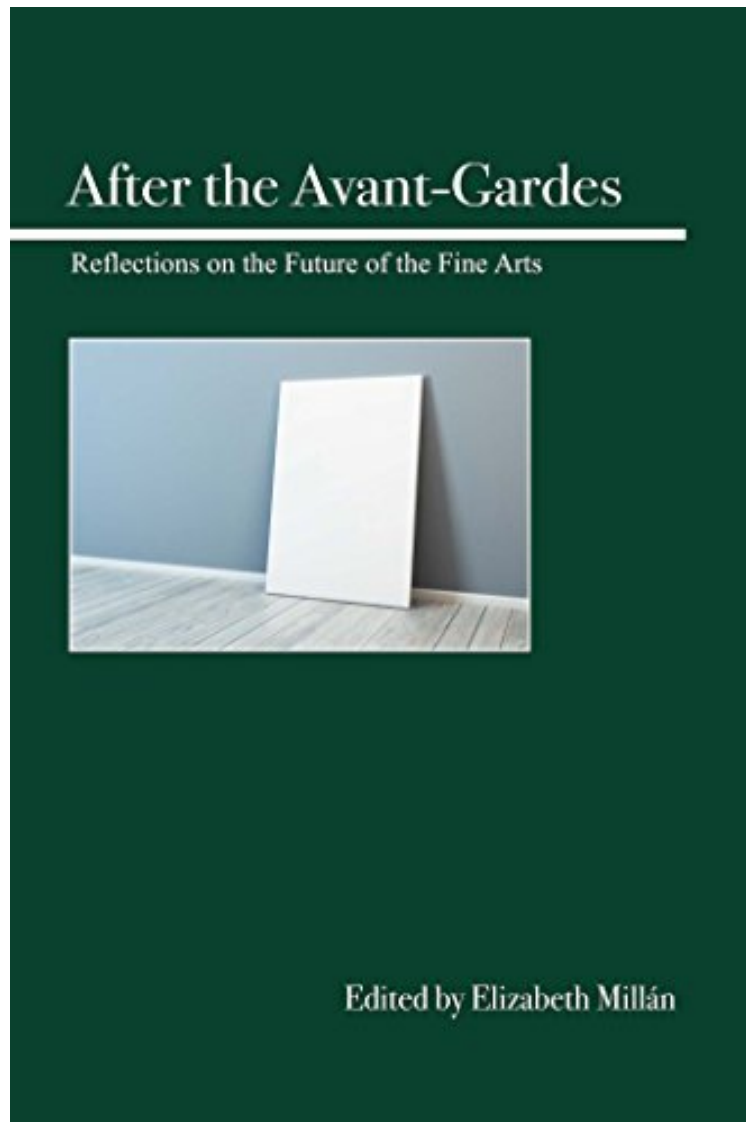


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From Open Court : After the Avant-Gardes before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised After the Avant-Gardes:

A rallying call for all those who have been disquieted or disgusted by the excesses of artistic modernism. This is a collection of ten provocative essays on the arts, by writers of varied orientations who share a skepticism about the exaggerated role of modernism and the successive avant-gardes in shaping what is accepted as valid contemporary art. The essays cover painting and other visual arts, literature, music, and general observations about all the arts. It is not

an exercise in hand-wringing about the current state of the arts, but looks for different directions in which the arts may now fruitfully evolve. Despite the diverse philosophies of the contributors, these essays together constitute a formidable case against the unhealthy impact of avant-gardism on our lives and aesthetic culture. The essays include the following, among others: a study of anti-modernist painter Odd Nerdrum, who sees modernist art as totalitarian; a critique of the avant-gardist neglect of mimesis as a key to art; an evaluation of “the end of art”; a critique of modern art in light of “the aesthetic harm principle”; an examination of Popper's objections to progressivism in music; the presentation of a new paradigm for literature.

Is there a future for figurative painting? Will rhyme and meter make a substantial comeback in poetry? What comes after postmodernism? Are we living through the end of art? These are the questions asked in *After the Avant-Gardes*, a collection of ten critical essays on the current state of painting, music, literature, and other fine arts, and where they are headed in the future. The main thrust of the essays gathered by DePaul University's Elizabeth Milla (including one of her own) is that, starting in the early Twentieth Century, the scourge of Modernism hijacked the art world, enshrined itself as the almighty overlord of culture, and rained fiery death on anything that would previously have been deemed High Art, replacing the tyrannical hegemony it sought to upend with its own brand of strict rules and regulations for what is deemed art. Abstraction and theory are shown to outweigh figurative mastery and emotion as metrics of artiness. The collection paints a brutal and dismal picture, one where the mean-eyed elites of the art world dismiss true works of art in favor of laughable garbage paid for with public money. - ed by Sean West, San Francisco Book

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About the Author Elizabeth Milla is professor of philosophy at DePaul University. She is the author of *Friedrich Schlegel and the Emergence of Romantic Philosophy* (2007) and co-editor of several books including *The New Light of German Romanticism* (2009). She lives in Chicago.