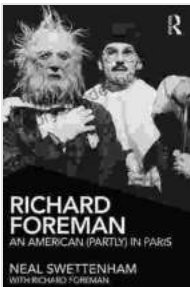


# Richard Foreman: An American Avant-Garde in Paris

Amidst the grand boulevards and iconic landmarks of Paris, a quiet revolution is taking place in the world of theatre. Richard Foreman, the highly acclaimed avant-garde American playwright, director, and visual artist, has found a new home in the City of Lights.

For over five decades, Foreman has pushed the boundaries of experimental theatre, creating works that are both intellectually challenging and visually stunning. His unique style, which he refers to as "ontological-hysteric theatre," explores the complexities of human consciousness, the nature of reality, and the limits of language.



## Richard Foreman: An American (Partly) in Paris

by Stephan Schiffman

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 773 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 230 pages



Born in New York City in 1937, Foreman began his artistic career as a painter. However, he soon became disillusioned with the limitations of traditional painting and turned to theatre as a more expressive medium. In

1968, he founded the Ontological-Hysteric Theater, which became a hub for avant-garde theatre in New York.

Foreman's work is characterized by its use of unconventional staging, fragmented narratives, and surreal imagery. He often incorporates elements of science fiction, philosophy, and pop culture into his plays, creating a unique blend of intellectualism and absurdity.

In recent years, Foreman's work has garnered international acclaim. He has been the recipient of numerous awards, including the prestigious Obie Award for Lifetime Achievement in Theatre. His plays have been performed in major cities around the world, including London, Berlin, and Tokyo.

Paris has emerged as a particularly important center for Foreman's work. In 2015, he was commissioned by the Theatre du Chatelet to create a new play, "Richard Foreman's Symphony of Rats," which premiered to critical acclaim. The play explored themes of urban decay, social inequality, and the fragility of human existence.

Foreman's relationship with Paris is a complex one. He is drawn to the city's rich cultural heritage and its vibrant artistic scene. However, he is also critical of the city's elitism and its tendency to favor traditional forms of theatre over more experimental work.

Despite these criticisms, Foreman remains committed to Paris and its potential as a hub for avant-garde theatre. He believes that the city's unique fusion of old and new, its blend of tradition and innovation, provides a fertile ground for his work to grow.

The future of avant-garde theatre in Paris is uncertain. The city faces many challenges, including rising costs of living, gentrification, and the increasing dominance of commercial theatre. However, Foreman remains optimistic. He believes that there is a growing audience for experimental theatre in Paris, and he is determined to continue pushing the boundaries of the art form.

As the sun sets over the Eiffel Tower, casting a warm glow over the rooftops of Paris, Richard Foreman sits in a small cafe, sipping coffee and reflecting on his life's work. He is a man of contradictions: a visionary artist who is also a pragmatist, a rebel who is also a traditionalist, an American who has found a home in Paris.

Foreman is a true pioneer of avant-garde theatre. His work has challenged audiences to think differently about the nature of reality, the limits of language, and the possibilities of human consciousness. As he continues to create new work in Paris, he is sure to leave a lasting legacy on the world of theatre.

Image credits:

- Richard Foreman by Alfredo Flores, courtesy of the artist
- Richard Foreman's Symphony of Rats at the Theatre du Chatelet by Jean-Louis Fernandez, courtesy of the Theatre du Chatelet

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