MAYA DEREN INFLUENCE ON CYBERFEMINISM

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Cyber Feminism is defined as the promotion of sexual and gender equality of human beings on media, internet, and other information technology means. It makes use of new technology to urge people to act in favor of gender equality and improve the position of women positively. Many revolutionary people have always tried to give the world of cinema a different look. Through their work, such people have made cinema an art itself. When Hollywood was producing different films with clear storylines, Maya Deren persisted with his ideas and often left many people restless. Maya Deren, through her work, gave rise to a completely new genre in the film industry known as Avant-Garde.

Maya's mode of expression in her films was mostly strange and weird, but her films essentially can be divided into two groups; those which revolve around a social issue and some were tribute of purely art. Maya Deren’s work made women believe that there is room for them in cinema. She developed a concept called vertical filmmaking, which meant that many emotions will come out of people's minds when they see her work. She compelled people to think about how to put their feelings in film analyzing and making. Her film "meshes of the afternoon" had specifically left a huge impact on different filmmakers, through a fragmented narrative and visual symbolism of women in a dream state. The film leaves a haunting impression on viewers but influenced contemporary culture and even pop music. Janelle Monae’s music video for “tight rope” is a clear representation of Deren’s influence. Deren helped cinema in terms of promoting it as a form of art. She continued to promote different hypothetical concepts of avant-garde cinema and was also a vigorous and hardworking supporter of experimental film making in her lifetime. She provided a clear rationale and logical context to film making. Her dance and body movement in the film ‘Meshes of the afternoon’ has influenced many filmmakers. Her dance and movement of the body in the film have deeply influenced cultural values and artistic qualities of dance during the early 40s (Satin, 1993).

Maya Deren inspired many women to raise their voices on feminist issues. One of the people she influenced the most, was Barbara Jean Hammer. She was an American feminist filmmaker whose career revolved around gender roles and lesbian relationships (Youmans, 2012). Hammer, like her role model Maya, was an avant-garde filmmaker and received prominent recognition in her field. Birgit Hein, Nelly Kaplan, and Catherine Breillat were some other renowned film writers and directors that focused their objective on highlighting female issues and rights on the stage of cinema.

Women are now involved in film making in almost all the roles as actresses, directors, producers and critics, and other film-related professions. Though there is still a lack of involvement of women in creative positions like cinematography etc. Women centered films are also a separate genre that focuses on the problems with women such as domestic life, motherhood, romance, and public life. Shirley Clarke and Joyce Wieland are some of the popular female filmmakers that came out on top in the male-dominant industry back in the mid-19th century. Second-wave feminism was a huge influence on film making back then. The issues of gender inequality like many other places are still there in Film making as well. The issue of sexism, low pay, and racism were there in the early 50s and are still present and are encouraged in society. Women are often considered not fit enough for many roles in the movies or behind the scenes. For example in most action movies, the stunt performers are male and women aren’t entrusted with such responsibilities because the role is considered manly.

**References**

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