

# There She Goes

FEMINIST FILMMAKING AND BEYOND

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Chapter 5

## "Each Film Was Built as a Chamber and Became a Corridor"

Maya Deren's Film Aesthetics as Feminist Praxis

With the issuance of her experimental films on DVD, the publication of Bill Nichols's anthology *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde*, and the release of Martina Kudláček's documentary *In the Mirror of Maya Deren* (2002), Maya Deren has reemerged as a key auteur of the twentieth century. Deren's innovations in the name of film art stand as an historical counterpoint to the Hollywood product but also pose an implicit critique of contemporary American independent cinema. With decreasing difference between the two, Deren's idea of making a film "for what Hollywood spends on lipstick," as she once famously phrased it, or using her New York apartment for exhibition purposes seems nearly unthinkable.<sup>1</sup> It is this very exceptionality that makes Deren and the various activities she undertook in the name of independent and experimental cinema all the more significant today. Much of the historical work on Maya Deren, feminist and otherwise, has been "inquiries into the individual subject and her textual products," but, as Lauren Rabinovitz goes on to suggest, "the direction of radical political analysis must reach beyond" this limited scope if it is to articulate effectively the ever-expanding influence of Deren on filmmaking today.<sup>2</sup> Yet, even a feminist film historian like Rabinovitz, who presents a thorough discussion of Deren's work beyond her film texts, equivocates as to Deren's authorial agency. Claiming her to be "unconscious" of the ideologies against which she worked, Rabinovitz postulates that Deren "remained prisoner of an ideology that even constructed [her] position of resistance within traditional roles."<sup>3</sup> Rabinovitz suggests, accordingly, that in mapping the "discursive struggles" that shaped Deren's praxis, film historiography is better served by reassessing "the politics of power relations" than the examination of "intentions as politics."<sup>4</sup>

In vitiating Deren's agency, Rabinovitz repeats the gesture made by Laura Mulvey years earlier in her history of feminism and the avant-garde. Mulvey argues that "there is a difference between an interest in women's traditions—the individual or group achievements which women have to their credit, despite a hostile environment—and a belief in a feminine sensibility, tied to the domestic and then freed only into a similar orientation in art."<sup>5</sup> For Mulvey, Deren falls into the latter category, reduced to a parenthetical aside in her history of women's cinema.<sup>6</sup> Consequently Deren herself is frequently delinked from the discursive resistances apparent in her films.

Yet a feminine sensibility—originating in the domestic and redirected to the art world—found expression not only in her films but also in her activism, particularly her establishment of the Creative Film Foundation (CFF), a fact that renders disavowals of Deren's agency moot. Thus my goal here is to radicalize the analysis of Deren's function as film auteur by rethinking her various roles in the history of independent cinema in terms set out by feminist film theory. Deren's historical significance is much more complex than simply a name attached to a body of texts. In her film theories, her promotion of film art, her lobbying for alternative modes of distribution and exhibition, and the themes of her experimental films, Deren contested the extant film system and patriarchal society as a whole. By theorizing these interventions as a concatenated practice, I propose a feminist epistemological inquiry into the discourses that shape current understandings of the history of independent film and Deren's place in it.

Cutting across Deren's innovations as a filmmaker and activist, I contend, is a coherent "chamber" aesthetic formed as a critical response to the sexual division of public and private space that shaped her existence, both as a woman and an artist. Deren's biographers have noted, "architectural imagery serves throughout Deren's early films as a dominant visual metaphor."<sup>7</sup> However, I aver that the physical geographies represented in her films are in fact metonymic of Deren's broader spatial aesthetics, an aesthetics aimed at remapping social geographies circumscribing women's psychic, artistic, and physical mobility. In this way, what manifests in her films as a visual metaphor is actually a synecdoche for a broader conceptual metaphor informing Deren's various activities throughout her career as a filmmaker.

### *Ideological Premises and Social Geographies*

Although much attention has been given to Deren's life, especially in the expansive biographical project *The Legend of Maya Deren*, and a great deal of critical work has been written on her films, the aesthetic relationship be-

tween the two remains largely unaddressed. That is, critics tend to approach Deren studies with an implicit split between "life" and "art," which produces *either* biographical discussions *or* formalist critiques.

Over twenty years ago, Teresa de Lauretis urged feminist film critics to reconsider their object of study toward a redefinition of aesthetics that, among other things, foregrounds the production of gender difference: "The emphasis must be shifted away from the artist behind the camera, the gaze, or the text as origin and determination of meaning, toward the wider public sphere of cinema as a social technology."<sup>8</sup> This shift in emphasis has yet to take place fully in Deren historiography. When attention is directed away from Deren's film texts and toward her activities in transforming film culture, they appear as self-evident and transparent, stated as simple historical fact: "Since the war there had been several attempts to organize the independent film community in New York, most of them fueled by the energy and initiative of Maya Deren. In response to her vision of an extensive artists' support system, the Film Artists Society was founded in 1953 . . . while her Creative Film Foundation attempted to secure grants for independent filmmakers from 1955 to 1961."<sup>9</sup> Clearly, such practices speak directly to Deren's influential role in the wider sphere of cinema as a social technology. Nonetheless, Deren's activism and her productions as a filmmaker have yet to be theorized as a unified body of work. Regina Cornwell, for example, points out that Deren "is acclaimed as important; yet, seldom is the real significance of her role as an activist in the avant-garde explained."<sup>10</sup>

In the brief discussion of Deren that follows, Cornwell posits that "if Deren was influential through her filmmaking it was only so because she began the process of establishing, almost single-handedly, a milieu for the avant-garde film in this country—ways and means by which her works could be seen, ways and means taken up in turn by other artists."<sup>11</sup> Cornwell's thesis proposes a cause-and-effect scenario linking Deren's influence as a filmmaker and her (supplementary) role as a film activist. However, while she did take steps to create alternative forms of exhibition and distribution early in her career, much of Deren's efforts to invent these "ways and means" actually took place several years *after* her films had been widely screened. To this extent, reconsideration of the relationship of Deren's filmmaking to her activism requires a more nuanced historical analysis that resists certain teleological assumptions that imply Deren was inconsistent in her praxis. Deren's committed activities in the 1950s in terms of exhibition, distribution, and organization are rarely seen as a continuation of the immense productivity that marked her filmmaking in the 1940s. On the contrary, the waning of

film production after *Meditation on Violence* (1948) is frequently perceived as a cessation in Deren's creative process.

Deren's strides to create a public forum for film art need to be placed in sociohistorical context. If her film activism figured centrally in the period 1955 to 1961, it did so in relation to the apex of patriarchal ideology, which, as feminist historians have persuasively argued, attempted "to redefine women's roles in accordance with the new industrial order," effecting "the consolidation of the suburban nuclear family and the separation of the predominantly female sphere of consumption from the predominantly male sphere of production in the period after World War II."<sup>12</sup> This social context endows Deren's praxis with specific (counter-)cultural meaning. After World War II, institutional machineries were set in motion to shepherd women into emergent roles as suburban housewives whose redomestication was imperative to the shifting socioeconomic situation in the United States. Deren's interventions in terms of artistic practice and aesthetic commitment are redirected by this profound ideological shift. Yet discussions of Deren's historical significance rarely reflect the effects the war's changing circumstances had on her textual production and activist work, much less the social technologies bridging these concomitant discursive activities. What is needed to redress this oversight is an analytical framework that resists seeing life, history, and art as separate categories.

A feminist epistemology of aesthetics provides such a framework insofar as it links together pro-filmic tropes, gendered subjectivity, and the socio-historical discourses from which they emanate. By informing film analysis with the larger questions of sexual difference, feminist reconfigurations of aesthetics pointedly depart from strictly formalist definitions. As Mary Ann Doane has summarized, "there is at least one basic question that subtends the entire project of feminist film criticism . . . the question of the relations between aesthetics and politics."<sup>13</sup> Initially confronted with this question in the 1980s, Doane, along with other scholars who were actively involved in establishing said project, formulated a response that pointed beyond purely textual concerns by conceiving of feminist aesthetics as a social practice and thereby broadening its scope "to the axis of vision itself—to the modes of organizing vision and hearing which result in the production of that 'image.'"<sup>14</sup> In other words, the significant intervention of feminist film theory was to redefine aesthetics in such a way that it took account of the larger fields of artistic and political practice that together constituted women's cinema. Doing so led de Lauretis to characterize women's cinema "as a form of political critique or critical politics . . . that women have developed to analyze the

subject's relation to socio-historical reality," and to identify its central project as constructing "other objects and subjects of vision, and [formulating] the conditions of representability of another social subject."<sup>15</sup> It is this definition of feminist aesthetics that I want to return to and renew in the analysis of Deren that follows, for it invites feminist film historians to rethink Deren's various discursive activities as part of a constellated interventionist project, one that bespeaks a unified aesthetic in response to the historical discourses central to the production of sexual difference.

### *The Effective Creation of an Idea*

Deren's fluidity between artistic undertakings, political praxis, and community organizing fundamentally reconceptualizes the very notion of aesthetics in that these activities emanate less from "an aesthetic centered on the text and its effects" than from "an aesthetic of reception, where the spectator is the film's primary concern."<sup>16</sup> This concern with reception is overtly stated in Deren's concept of the "chamber film" as articulated in her "Statement of Principles": "Just as one is prepared to listen, in chamber music, for different values than one expects of symphonic orchestrations, so the use of the program title CHAMBER FILMS is intended to alert the eye of the audience towards the perceptions of values quite different from those of feature films."<sup>17</sup> What makes up these "different values" goes beyond the obvious formal challenges to the Hollywood system. The "chamber" in music indicates either a small, intimate performance space or music to be performed in the private sphere. The evocation of the chamber in Deren's own definition of her work raises the question of the ways in which her art transgresses the demarcated spaces of private and public. In this way, the concept of the chamber takes on a wider signification as a structuring principle in Deren's praxis, a principle directly concerned with the production and reception of "different values" made possible by the reconfiguration of subjectivity and space.

Deren's chamber aesthetic is most explicit in her early films wherein the male protagonist is "the mover of narrative while the female's association with space or matter deprives her of subjectivity."<sup>18</sup> As a site of domesticity, the chamber carries with it the cultural meaning that inscribes gender in its "proper" place. Manifest in Deren's cultural practices is the inseparability of spatiality and sexuality, which historically cohere in the figure of the domesticated woman. Deren's thematic engagement with femininity and domesticity appears early on in her poetry and experimental portraiture but

clearly culminates in her film work, most famously in *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943), as I have discussed in detail elsewhere.<sup>19</sup> Beginning with *Meshes*, her early “narrative” films reflect on how “the apparent mobility of the man is produced by the confinement of the woman, who is at once necessary to the maintenance of the house and the greatest threat to it.”<sup>20</sup> During what her biographers call her “chambers years” (1942–47), her best-known films often juxtaposed images of interiors with nature, constructing these spaces as oppositional.<sup>21</sup> In *Meshes* and *At Land* (1944), Deren herself is predominantly filmed either by the sea or enclosed in the home, with distinct meanings accruing to these contrasted spaces. Domestic space in both films is infused with danger for the female protagonist, but while *Meshes* conveys this threat through editing to make objects appear ominous, *At Land* embodies the threat in the male characters that populate interior spaces. Maria Pramaggiore interprets Deren’s pro-filmic “concern with bodies and movement” as a deconstructive response to heteronormativity, but I would suggest that the “hostile and threatening” men in these films—particularly in their “attempt[s] to limit her mobility”—also stand as an immediate creative response to the historical situation of women in the United States at the time.<sup>22</sup>

If, as Patricia Erens asserts, aesthetics “deals with the relationship between art and life and becomes the perspective from which an artist creates,” then the guiding aesthetic principle that emerges from Deren’s films and that continued in her film activism is the interrogation of, and resistance to, the gender arrangements that shaped her life as a woman and an artist.<sup>23</sup> Emphasizing ideological import, Deren argued that her “concern with space and time is not purely technical” but rather articulates “the curious dislocation of the individual in a suddenly and actually relativistic world, and her inability to cope with its fluidity or to achieve a stable, adjusted relationship to its elements.”<sup>24</sup> Deren articulates only too clearly the (political) meanings that subtend her aesthetic devices, such as slow motion and staccato editing, that ground her “new film realities” in the actualities of the world.

This disequilibrium is descriptive not only of *At Land* but also of the social situation of women during the war years more broadly. Deren’s most productive deconstructions of the narratives of gendered domesticity flourished during the years when women were encouraged, in the guise of patriotism, to enter public life to benefit the war economy. The necessities of the war produced the dislocation of women by reversing the specific ideology of feminine domestication, bringing out into the open the actually relativistic spatial distribution of power along gendered lines. In fact, the U.S. government used the medium of film to disseminate these inversions of gender

expectations: *Rosie the Riveter* (1944) is the most famous example. If Deren’s pro-filmic women were made to negotiate a “stereotypically feminine space,” “in the sexualized, emotionalized, personalized, privatized, errant sphere of the home and bedchamber rather than in the structured, impersonal public realm,” Deren herself, at least during the war years, was not.<sup>25</sup> In 1946, Deren rented out the Provincetown Playhouse to show her 16mm films—something never attempted before—and was immensely successful with the event. Deren, who had often challenged social codes publicly, legitimated herself as an artist by bringing her work boldly into the field of public art. She screened her films at universities and theaters, wrote for magazines and journals, and won a Guggenheim grant and honors at Cannes, breaking new ground in both institutions as a woman and an independent filmmaker.

While the 1940s afforded a window of opportunity for women to seize the mechanisms of cultural representation, the 1950s announced the closing of this window, with the intensification of the discourses of domesticity and the family. “In the postwar period,” simultaneous to Deren’s establishing a presence in the public realm, “an intense ideological campaign was waged . . . calling for women to abandon the workplace and return to ‘traditional’ family values.”<sup>26</sup> Deren’s public life and art were greatly altered by the reclamation of public space by men returning from the war, as her biographers explain: “Deren may have made a breakthrough, in 1946, in legitimizing cinema as an art form, but her triumph was short-lived. In this year she received more support from the public and from private foundations than any other time of her life. She never received another grant. . . . Her subsequent screenings at the Provincetown were never as successful. The last seven years of her life were largely devoted to running the Creative Film Foundation,” a foundation, significantly, run from her home.<sup>27</sup> The conflation of “home” with acceptable forms of femininity policed women’s access to public space, which only a few short years previously women had been chastised as unpatriotic for *not* entering. For Deren, the spatial limitations imposed on women meant the public delegitimation of her work and position as an artist.<sup>28</sup> Deren was displaced from the public realm and found herself “projecting [the film] for people here at home almost every night.”<sup>29</sup> This shift back into the home, however, provided the grounds for Deren’s resistance to such a dislocation.

### *An Act of Inestimable Public Importance*

Although Deren was prolific in making “chamber” films during and right after the war years, the discursive contingencies following the war channeled

her energies into creating a "chamber" form of collectivity and distribution. It was during the 1950s, at the height of the newly restructured cult of domesticity, that Deren founded the CFF, "a non-profit foundation that awarded filmmaking grants to independent filmmakers. Naming herself the executive secretary, Deren ran a one-woman operation, seeking funds to underwrite the grants, organizing film screenings and symposia, and publicizing film as a creative art form . . . she ran the entire organization out of the Greenwich Village apartment."<sup>30</sup> Deren may have run her organization from home, but in so doing she negotiated the hegemonic concepts that defined this space for women. In line with the themes and imagery of her early films, Deren used the CFF to transform the very space constitutive of the "feminine," the private "chamber" of the home, into a viable site of contestation. One particular instance of how Deren accrued funds for the CFF exemplifies the ways in which her praxis resignified the domestic, private roles ascribed to women: "Deren convinced Shirley Clarke that if Clarke's wealthy father contributed \$1,000 he was going to give to Clarke anyway, Deren would see that Clarke got a fellowship for \$800. Deren netted a \$200 cash contribution and the publicity attached to a substantial anonymous donation, while Clarke benefited from the attendant publicity as well as the status of receiving an artistic honor."<sup>31</sup> Shirley Clarke, one of the only other female filmmakers in the Greenwich Village art world, would go on to make two significant independent films, *The Cool World* (1964) and *Portrait of Jason* (1967). Deren's shifting of funds appears innocuous but in fact effects a significant reworking of the flow of cultural capital upon which gendered power relations rely, a reworking that Clarke herself continued as the co-founder of the Film-Makers' Distribution Center.

Key to men's regaining the public realm was the desire for sole control of economic resources that require the dependency of women upon men. This patriarchal control makes women turn to private forms of economic support, provided to them in familial roles such as wives and daughters. Deren rechanneled the flow of capital from the confines and secrecy of the home through a public foundation, which appears to esteem the work of women like Clarke and Deren, thereby challenging the very enclosures of the family and its economic substructure that keeps women tied to the domestic situation. In one gesture, Deren enacts a complex transvaluation of the economies of the domestic sphere, transforming Clarke's reception of her father's money from private, paternalistic "gift" to a respectable, public "honor" for artistic practice. This intervention on the part of the CFF exemplifies what was demanded of Deren as a woman working in the 1950s, not only to establish alternative routes for funding independent cinema, but also to make

a place for women outside of the normative patriarchal familial structures. Deren's resistance enabled her to link together the kind of behind the scenes organizational work commonly done by women in the home with the social order and, in this way, allowed such unofficial practices to accrue cultural capital and public validation. The CFF's cultural legitimacy nevertheless needed to be officially sanctioned by male authority; the names of public figures (almost all male) on its board of directors were used as metaphorical chaperones to grant the foundation tacit legitimacy. Deren turned to the established names in the arts, such as Jean Cocteau, Martha Graham, Joseph Campbell, and Clement Greenberg, whose "personal endorsements of the CFF authorized independent cinema's rightful place among the postwar vanguard arts."<sup>32</sup> These public figures, whose relationship to the foundation was often just a name on a letterhead, lent credence to Deren's work as an authoritative public arts discourse despite the fact that it was generated in the private sphere.

In a rare critical analysis of Deren's activism in the history of independent film, Rabinovitz posits that "the CFF may have been in practice a nominal apparatus of the independent cinema but its discursive value obscured its limited economic function."<sup>33</sup> This discursive value does indeed transcend the history of independent cinema. Deren's interventions signify a transgression of the implicit gender boundaries between the public and the private. Using Clarke's father's money or turning to the men of the public art world, Deren appropriated the authoritative privilege granted to men by a phallocratic political economy to make space for women artists like Clarke and herself in the public imagination. The role of artist not only granted women like Deren a certain (limited) access to public discourse but also provided versions of community in opposition to the patriarchal family structure. Deren's "role in the apparatus extended beyond that of the producer" in that her artistic and activist practices attempted to redefine both private and public space for women, standing as a viable and necessary response to the patriarchal discourses of her own time.<sup>34</sup>

The discourses enforcing sexual asymmetry in the 1950s and 1960s effectively silenced Deren as an artist and activist. Deren built her career and public fame on "ideas of the filmmaker's mutual support, exhibition, and distribution"; yet these ideas quickly fell out of favor.<sup>35</sup> The spatial ideologies of the 1950s and 1960s depended on the consolidation of discourses that yoked femininity to sexual reproduction within the confines of the patriarchal, suburban family home. The rigid sexual stratification reconfigured the art world as a male-only territory, foreclosing the cultural position of authorial subject to women. Significantly, it was feminist filmmakers of the

1970s and 1980s who strategically co-opted Deren's "chamber" aesthetics as a critical gesture to open a space for women in the avant-garde film establishment. As film historian Michael O'Pray notes, "It was in the late 1970s that women film-makers broke away from the London Film Makers Co-op and set up their own organization Circles in East London. . . . Interestingly the dissenting women cited Maya Deren, Germaine Dulac, and Alice Guy, who represent by and large a poetic narrative cinema and not a formal one. Thus the political split was also an artistic one."<sup>36</sup> This discursive reclamation goes beyond acknowledgment of the content of Deren's films. Circles, along with the many other organizations that arose in the name of "women's cinema," were indebted to Deren for inventing new forms of cultural communities and social subjects as well as producing tools, from cinematic narratives to theoretical models and economic structures, for ideological refashioning.

Deren's film activism, especially through the CFF, emerged from the knowledge that artistic "experiments . . . are next to impossible for individuals unconnected with a sympathetic institution."<sup>37</sup> Her praxis countered this by attempting to establish the ways and means of distribution that would enable her and others to continue making films. Most likely, it was the example of this praxis—more than Deren's "poetic narrative cinema"—that helped the Circles filmmaking co-op to go on making films. Deren made a space for herself as a woman and for the women filmmakers who followed by forging a critical social vision of the spatial discourses constitutive of the gendered subject and pursuing this vision in all areas of filmmaking, from production to distribution and exhibition. Contemporary lesbian-feminist filmmaker Barbara Hammer attests to Deren's continuing influence when she asserts that the exhibition and distribution practices Deren created, along with her critical writings and formal film aesthetics, have benefited her career immeasurably.<sup>38</sup> Whereas Deren's protagonists appear to be trapped in, or perpetually escaping from, the domestic sphere that defines the limits of their world, her activism in the name of independent film unfettered women artists from the domestic by staking a claim to the public discourse of the art world.

Deren quite consciously dedicated herself to the transformation of the social technology of the cinema by establishing a chamber aesthetic that shaped her filmmaking and organizing activities. Indeed, her social vision for independent cinema was clear. In July 1960, a year before she died, Deren wrote, "The artist, beginning in reality—in that which already exists—starts moving toward a vision, an idea, and with the cumulative momentum of that dedicated concentration, crosses the threshold . . . propelled by the dynamic of the idea, the limitations which he does not recognize do not

exist, and so he transcends them and creates new worlds."<sup>39</sup> The idea, or "complex cluster" of ideas, that propelled Deren was a set of "ideological premises" in direct opposition to "to the corrupt artistic standards of . . . the Hollywood industry," premises gathered together and codified in "the concept of the *Chamber film*."<sup>40</sup> The chamber stands as a critical concept for redefining (feminist) aesthetics to rethink the divide between formalism and activism that has structured the figuration of Deren in the history of American independent cinema. Focusing on the discourses that engendered her as an historical subject provides a means of connecting these apparently disparate activities. In her effective creation of a chamber aesthetic, Deren transcended the historical limitations designed to immobilize women and, in doing so, performed "an act of inestimable public importance" in the histories of women's cinema and independent cinema alike.<sup>41</sup>

### Notes

1. Maya Deren, qtd. in *Esquire*, December 1946; reprinted in Catrina Neiman, VèVè A. Clark, and Millicent Hodson, eds., *The Legend of Maya Deren: A Documentary Biography and Collected Works*, vol. I, part 2 (New York: Anthology Film Archives/Film Culture, 1988), 331 and 418.
2. Lauren Rabinowitz, "Wearing the Critic's Hat: History, Critical Discourses, and the American Avant-Garde Cinema," in *To Free the Cinema: Jonas Mekas and the New York Underground*, ed. David E. James (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 270.
3. Lauren Rabinovitz, *Points of Resistance: Women, Power, and Politics in the New York Avant-Garde Cinema, 1943–71* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 5.
4. Rabinovitz, "Wearing the Critic's Hat," 277.
5. Laura Mulvey, "Film, Feminism, and the Avant-Garde," in *The British Avant-Garde Film, 1926–1995: An Anthology of Writings*, ed. Michael O'Pray (Bedfordshire, UK: University of Luton Press, 1996), 201.
6. *Ibid.*, 214. For further discussion of Deren's place in Mulvey's article, see Theresa L. Geller, "The Personal Cinema of Maya Deren: *Meshes of the Afternoon* and Its Critical Reception in the History of the Avant-Garde," *Biography* 29, no. 1 (2006): 153–56.
7. Neiman, Clark, and Hodson, introduction to "Chambers" in *Legend of Maya Deren*, 2.
8. Teresa de Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1987), 134.
9. David E. James, introduction to James, *To Free the Cinema*, 9.
10. Regina Cornwell, "Maya Deren and Germaine Dulac: Activists of the Avant-Garde," in *Sexual Stratagems: The World of Women in Film*, ed. Patricia Erens (New York: Horizon, 1979), 185.

11. Ibid., 186.
12. D. A. Leslie, "Femininity, Post-Fordism, and the 'New Traditionalism,'" in *Space, Gender, Knowledge: Feminist Readings*, ed. Linda McDowell and Joanne P. Sharp (London: Arnold, 1997), 301.
13. Mary Ann Doane, "Aesthetics and Politics," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 30, no. 1 (2004): 1231.
14. Mary Ann Doane, Patricia Mellencamp, and Linda Williams, eds., *Re-Vision: Essays in Feminist Film Criticism* (Frederick, MD: University Publications of America and the American Film Institute, 1984), 6.
15. De Lauretis, *Technologies of Gender*, 134–35.
16. Ibid., 141.
17. Maya Deren, "Statement of Principles," *Film Culture* 22–23 (1961): 161–63.
18. Mary Ann Doane, *The Desire to Desire: The Woman's Film of the 1940s* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 6.
19. See Geller, "Personal Cinema," 140–58.
20. Mark Wigley, "Untitled: The Housing of Gender," in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 337.
21. See Neiman, Clark, and Hodson, introduction to "Chambers," in *Legend of Maya Deren*, 1–2.
22. Maria Pramaggiore, "Seeing Double(s): Reading Deren Bisexually," in *Maya Deren and the American Avant-Garde*, ed. Bill Nichols (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 249.
23. Patricia Erens, "Towards a Feminist Aesthetic: Reflection-Revolution-Ritual," in Erens, *Sexual Stratagems*, 157.
24. Maya Deren, "Program Notes," *Film Culture* 39 (Winter 1961): 2.
25. Richard Feldstein and Judith Roof, eds., *Feminism and Psychoanalysis* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), 2.
26. Leslie, "Femininity, Post-Fordism," 301.
27. Neiman, Clark, and Hodson, "Thresholds," in *Legend of Maya Deren*, 236.
28. For further discussion see Geller, "Personal Cinema."
29. Deren, "Letter to Sawyer Falk" in Neiman, Clark, and Hodson, *Legend of Maya Deren*, 250.
30. Rabinovitz, *Points of Resistance*, 82.
31. Rabinovitz citing Shirley Clarke, *ibid.*, 82.
32. Ibid., 83.
33. Ibid.
34. Rabinovitz, "Wearing the Critic's Hat," 277.
35. Sheldon Renan, *An Introduction to the American Underground Film* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1967), 214.
36. Michael O'Pray, introduction to O'Pray, *British Avant-Garde Film*, 16.
37. Deren, "Letter to Sawyer Falk," 251.
38. Barbara Hammer, "Maya Deren and Me," in Nichols, *Maya Deren*, 264.
39. Deren, "Movie Journal," July 21, 1960; reprinted in *Film Culture* 39 (Winter 1965): 53.

40. Ibid., 53–54.

41. Maya Deren, "The Hero's Life," in "Stairways (1942–3)," in Neiman, Clark, and Hodson, *Legend of Maya Deren*, 67. In Deren's poem, "He performs an act of inestimable public importance" while she returns to "the too familiar street of houses leading home."