

minority filmmakers, enabling producers to comply with equal-opportunity laws by hiring men of color. Only in the appendix does Wexman mention that the investigations were continued in 2015 by the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). It is possible that she completed her manuscript before the announcement of the 2019 statistics showing that the film industry saw a 600 percent increase in female studio director hires and episodic TV a 130 percent increase. Many attribute these increases to the federal inquiry.

Where the early chapters of the book are about the director's right to control the creative process, in the book's fifth chapter, "Law: The DGA and Artists as Owners," Wexman explores whether directors have jurisdiction over their films after release. This question first arose in the 1960s when wide-screen movies were "panned-and-scanned" for broadcast on television and once again in the 1980s when the controversial "colorization" of black-and-white movies began. Wexman illustrates how the "Anglo-American doctrine of copyright" clashes with the European presumption of artist's rights (109), and she provides examples of more-enlightened practices overseas. "France, for example, grants moral rights to directors and screenwriters, other countries give them to composers and cinematographers. . . . Only Japan grants such rights to anyone involved in producing a work" (115).

Though I had hoped that Wexman would take up the mantle of a Supreme Court justice and argue in favor of directors over screenwriters (or vice versa) or of artist's rights over copyright (or vice versa), she avoids such positioning as she clearly explains the arguments on all sides. I closed the book feeling like Justice Potter Stewart, when he made his famous ruling on pornography in 1964: I know authorship when I see it. Certainly I'd rule to extend auteur status to Ava DuVernay, David Fincher, Spike Lee, and Steven Spielberg. But to Michael Bay, Joel Schumacher, or McG? Not a chance.

She concludes her evenhanded book duly impressed by how much the guild has accomplished in its eighty-five years. And indeed, it is impressive. For the most part, the DGA has declawed the moguls and defanged the producers who demeaned directors or behaved as though they were fungible. As to the guild's future, Wexman wonders whether in a labor-unfriendly nation where union membership has dropped to 11 percent of the work force, a guild comprising some fifteen thousand directors of movies, TV, radio, and commercials can evolve at the lightning pace of their converging technologies. I wonder whether commercials directors have the same investment in creative rights

as film directors. And whether, in this era of media disruption, filmmakers care more about protecting their employment than their status as artists.

BOOK DATA Virginia Wright Wexman. *Hollywood's Artists: The Directors Guild of America and the Construction of Authorship*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2020. \$90 cloth; \$30 paper; \$29.99 e-book. 312 pages.

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## PATRICIA WHITE

### *Afterimages: Women, Cinema and Changing Times* by Laura Mulvey

A new book by Laura Mulvey is a publishing occasion to mark. This is the case not only because the present moment of public scrutiny of issues of women and cinema—with #MeToo, 5050by2020, and the now-frequent invocation of "the female gaze"—calls out for her perspective, but also because of the sheer pleasure of her company. Whether co-curating one of the first women's film events, at the Edinburgh Film Festival in 1972; diagnosing the Hollywood pleasure machine's construction of "woman as image/man as bearer of the look" in her famous 1975 essay; or making the new kind of cinema she prescribed there in works like *Riddles of the Sphinx* (codirected with Peter Wollen, 1977), Mulvey has combined practice and theory and occupied public and scholarly spaces from the outset.

She maintained this perspective through her long career as an educator only recently retired from Birkbeck College, University of London. In her new book, *Afterimages: Women, Cinema and Changing Times*, Mulvey's voice welcomes the reader into an intimacy of unfolding thought that feels like the best kind of teaching. Although I speak here of her writing voice, anyone who has watched *Riddles of the Sphinx*, or heard Mulvey's audio commentaries, lectures, or interviews, will have a memorable aural image to accompany her prose.

Mulvey positions herself more as an essayist than a writer of tomes. As its reflective title indicates, *Afterimages: On Cinema, Women, and Changing Times* does not undertake any definitive statement on present debates, even as it invokes the keywords that define Mulvey's prodigious influence on an entire field. The text that introduces and connects the book's thirteen essays—on women and spectacle, global women filmmakers, and the

relationship between the moving image and contemporary art—carefully braids together several distinct strands of thought. In essays on Marilyn Monroe and *Vertigo*, for instance, Mulvey returns explicitly to ideas broached in her “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” and even adds an appendix about that 1975 polemical essay, modestly styled as an FAQ: “[I]t is now possible for . . . any curious young woman . . . to analyse exactly how the male gaze was and is constructed, to speculate about a feminist alternative and develop a knowledge of the language of film that is essential for any alternative way of seeing to come into being” (252). But questions of temporality—time as change—familiar from her previous book (the haunting *Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image*, 2006) layer these reflections. For example, in the book’s first section (“A Last Chapter”) she provides a fascinating commentary on the “late style” of the waning Hollywood studio era, which inflects both Monroe’s persona and *Vertigo*, the greatest film of all time (at least until 2022) according to *Sight and Sound*’s critics’ decennial poll. In *Vertigo*, “Hitchcock films Madeline as disembodied, ghostly, and filmic” (45), Mulvey writes. Contrast this with the earlier essay’s emphasis on the woman as embodied, “castrated.”

Indeed “late style”—the period when an artist’s preoccupations become stylized and allegorical—characterizes Mulvey’s own book. She writes poignantly of and from the perspective of a woman who grew up loving Hollywood in the 1950s; participated in London’s cinephile culture of the 1960s; and used the lens of the emerging women’s movement to make sense of contradictory ideas in her intellectual, political, and artistic contributions of the 1970s. She has since been associated with a concept—“the male gaze”—that she was always careful to nuance.

*Afterimages* frequently invokes the figure of the palimpsest: “evoking the way that quotation and reference create layers of time, bringing something from the past into the present, which then inscribes the present onto the past in a similar but different manner, ghostly rather than textual” (77). Spatializing time and temporalizing space, the palimpsest also describes her book’s structure. For example, the concluding essay revisits the work of artist Mary Kelly, whose *Post-Partum Document* (1973–79) kept company with Mulvey’s exploration of psychoanalysis and the maternal in the 1970s, connecting affect and history. In fact, each of the book’s thirteen essays includes a proper name, and the effect is less of canonizing auteurs than staging conversations with figures who reciprocate her

concerns, from Jean-Luc Godard to Isaac Julien. In her thoughtful close readings, Mulvey returns to themes of performance, voice, and technology that de-essentialize gendered structures of looking and put them in social and spatiotemporal contexts.

The dialectical call of “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” for a radical feminist filmmaking—the first blow against the monolithic accumulation of traditional filmic conventions—is too often overlooked in the force field of the essay’s account of classical Hollywood cinema. *Afterimage*’s middle section confirms the significance of Mulvey’s writing on work by contemporary women directors in the intervening years. Reaching beyond the avant-garde to encompass melodrama, archival documentary, and art-house cinema, the films and filmmakers profiled share an interest in the representability of the maternal. For example, Rakhshan Bani-Etemad’s extraordinary family drama *Zir-e poost-e shahr* (*Under the Skin of the City*, 2001) focalizes a Teheran mother’s perspective on injustice, precarity, and silence. Mulvey locates the film’s critique in marks of formal estrangement that link its use of melodrama to her own work on the Hollywood woman’s picture. The reader will be rewarded by Mulvey’s take on filmmakers whose work is de rigueur for any conversation about feminist film: a lovely reading of *Jeanne Dielman, 23, quai du Commerce, 1080 Bruxelles* solicited for this journal’s landmark memorial issue on Chantal Akerman, and an essay on the kaleidoscopic generational layerings of Julie Dash’s *Daughters of the Dust* (1991).

At the same time, the brilliant, multistranded films of Alina Marazzi and Clio Barnard deserve the wider recognition that Mulvey’s attention will bring them. In the documentary *Un’ora sola ti vorrei* (*For One More Hour with You*, 2002), Marazzi reads from letters and diaries left by her mother, Luisa—lost to suicide when the filmmaker was a child. The voice-over accompanies a cache of home movies that position Luisa as a dutiful daughter, wife, and mother; the bourgeois grandfather was unable to see what was captured in the images he filmed as an obsessive hobby. The juxtaposition exposes the painful price of the proprietary male gaze as Marazzi, in collaboration with her female editor, enters into dialogue with her mother.

Ethical issues are also engaged in Clio Barnard’s experimental documentary about late playwright Andrea Dunbar, *The Arbor* (2010). The film explores mother–daughter betrayal and repetition through the striking device of actors repeating verbatim interviews, filmed at the locations Dunbar wrote about. Barnard looks back to modernist

strategies of quotation common in the experimental 16 mm film culture that shaped Mulvey's work in the 1970s to achieve something deeply moving. These women filmmakers find formal means to allow the past to speak through the present—a distanciation *affect*.

Writing on the essay film, Timothy Corrigan remarked that “essays describe and provoke an activity of public thought . . . in a dialogue of ideas.” In *Afterimages*, each essay, as well as the book's rich connective, contextualizing prose, holds its reader in mind as an interlocutor, exploring a set of ideas—about spectacle, the “apparatus,” and what I might call the life of the image (which encompasses questions of death). This is also true of Mulvey's media work: the essayistic structure of *Riddles of the Sphinx* looks ahead to her recent experiments in videographic criticism.

Ultimately, I believe, it isn't only what Mulvey says in her essays that galvanizes new sets of undergraduates every year but how she says it, in her inimitable figural language. Just as her film work is heavily linguistic, so is her writing full of concrete imagery: “the half-light of the imaginary” where the mother bonds with the child in “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,” the heroine “torn between the deep blue sea of passive femininity and the devil of regressive masculinity” in “Afterthoughts on Visual Pleasure Inspired by *Duel in the Sun* (King Vidor, 1946),” and the precise pronouncement that “the strength of the melodramatic form lies in the amount of dust the story raises along the road, a cloud of overdetermined irreconcilables which refuse to be dispersed in the last five minutes” in “Douglas Sirk and Melodrama.”

*Jeanne Dielman* was released the same year in which “Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema” was published—a watershed year (1975) for cine-feminism. Mulvey emphasizes the importance of the film: “It felt as though there was a before and after *Jeanne Dielman*, just as there had once been a before and after *Citizen Kane*” (100). But Mulvey rolls back the definitive claim to remind the reader about that moment's “nerve of urgency” and its reach toward the future. Thus “the product is more exemplary than personal, more transcendent than individual.” She could be talking about her own essay, with characteristic modesty. Poignantly, *Afterimages* was published right around the time Mulvey's former partner Peter Wollen passed away. As contributors to the film journal *Screen* in the 1970s, their generation staked out a future for film studies. Mulvey is loath to have the last word, and the vibrancy

of feminist film culture today is enriched by that generosity.

BOOK DATA. Laura Mulvey, *Afterimages: On Cinema, Women and Changing Times*. Reaktion Books/University of Chicago Press, 2020. \$25 cloth. 240 pages.

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## FAN YANG

### *Underglobalization: Beijing's Media Urbanism and the Chimera of Legitimacy* by Joshua Neves

The experience of reading Joshua Neves's *Underglobalization* is a bit like watching an experimental film. Beijing, the Chinese capital, which serves as the backdrop for much of this ambitious book, zooms in and out of kaleidoscopic lenses in breathtaking ways. The view of the city—and the fast-changing mediascapes that its (non)residents inhabit—is often mesmerizing. This has to do in part with the visual archive and embodied experiences that Neves draws on; their presence has the effect of defying the representational and epistemological limits intrinsic to the book's textual medium. Bringing an innovative approach to media that focuses on forms, technologies, practices, and infrastructures, Neves has produced a captivating account that challenges the methodological complacencies of much scholarship at the intersection of China, media, and globalization.

Neves situates his study in what he calls “the Olympic era,” beginning with Beijing's winning of the Olympics bid in 2011 and extending to the Beijing Winter Games in 2022. The concept of “underglobalization” in the title takes a cue from Ackbar Abbas's term “faking globalization,” which describes the historically specific rise of counterfeit practices as China became integrated into the global economy. Instead of treating “fakes” as a stage in a linear trajectory that progressively leads toward a legitimate design culture, as Abbas has done, Neves shifts critical attention to what lies between hegemonic norms and their illegitimate “others” in order to destabilize the sanctity of the former through the prism of the latter.

Underglobalization is reminiscent of the “globalization from below” concept used by scholars of diaspora to emphasize the role of transnational migrants in