

a photographic memory

a film by rachel elizabeth seed



Logline

A daughter attempts to piece together a portrait of her mother, a daring journalist and a woman she never knew. Uncovering the vast archive Sheila Turner-Seed produced, including lost interviews with iconic photographers, the film explores memory, legacy and stories left untold.

Synopsis

Thirty years after her mother's death, photographer Rachel Elizabeth Seed discovers her mother's work — more than 50 hours of interviews with the greatest photographers of the 20th Century, including Henri Cartier-Bresson, Lisette Model, Gordon Parks, W. Eugene Smith, Roman Vishniac, Cornell Capa and Bruce Davidson. When Rachel threads in the audio reels and presses play, she hears her mother's voice for the first time since she was a baby. Sheila Turner-Seed, a daring, world-traveling journalist ahead of her time, died suddenly of a brain aneurysm when Rachel was just 18 months old. Moved to uncover more of what she left behind, Rachel sets out to revisit her mom's subjects, family and friends, revisiting the photographers she interviewed decades before. As new truths emerge, Rachel builds an unlikely relationship with her mother through the audio recordings, photographs, and films her mother made during her brief life, crafting an imagined conversation through the cinematic medium. As she discovers the shocking secrets which may have led to her mother's untimely death, Rachel's ability to forge her own path hinges on how these revelations affect her own life. The film draws from footage of Rachel's visits to the photographers her mother interviewed, Sheila's award-winning audio-visual work, Super 8 family films, still photography, audio letters and journals, weaving together personal and photohistorical media to tell a universal story — about facing mortality and loss, the construction of memory and the restoration of a legacy. Along this path, Rachel explores the question of whether it is possible to get to know someone through the things they leave behind.

CONTACT

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Stage: Post-Production

Length: 90minutes (approx.)

Anticipated Release: 2022