

# About Film-Diary

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Anne-Charlotte Robertson

I had no way of explaining why I had breakdowns. It was another inexplicable thing in my life. When I was a kid growing up, I never thought I'd be having delusions, and be hospitalized. In 1981 I started the diary, and in 1981 I didn't have a breakdown. I think it might be because I was going to film school: I had somewhere to go, I had a camera to borrow. I made several other short films the fall of 1981 and then began the diary.

One short film was called *Locomotion* [1981]. It shows me against a blue wall, screaming and exhibiting the side effects of medication I had observed in the hospitals. The first real breakdown that I got on film was in 1982. I showed my delusions. I showed that I was afraid that root vegetables suffered, so I was going to take them back to the garden and replant them. You can see me getting on my big rain slicker and getting out the beets and carrots and onions and preparing to take them back, making sign language in front of the camera.

In fact, that first breakdown occurred shortly after a person at school threatened he'd call the cops and take the camera away from me. Losing that camera, I lost my mind. Every time there's a breakdown, I try to take pictures of it. My problem with a film diary (and with a written diary) is that sometimes I become so paranoid and obnoxious. Voices in my head become so frightening, and I cannot bring myself to document them. It's just too terrifying.

I believe in film being necessary every day. Monet did his haystacks and I have done the gazebo in the backyard. This winter I was so depressed, after getting out of the hospital and being put under a whole lot of restrictions, I was taking pictures every day of the gazebo in all kinds of weather. •

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*Excerpts from the conversation of Scott MacDonald with Anne-Charlotte Robertson in: Scott MacDonald (1992). A Critical Cinema 2. Interviews with Independent Filmmaker. University of California Press. Berkeley.*