



Julia Pełka

WOOD EATERS

A FILM BY
JULIA PEŁKA

KRAKOW
FILM FESTIVAL

WORLD PREMIERE

RHODE ISLAND
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE

OFF ODENSE
INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

OFFICIAL SELECTION

PARALLAX FILM



LOGLINE

The main fumigator exterminates wood-eaters from the old wooden church. He must fight ruthlessly to protect the beauty of the wooden monument. He will use his own method to kill every last one of wood-eater.

SYNOPSIS

In a historic Lemko church in the region of Podkarpacie in Poland, a quiet, relentless battle is being fought against wood-boring beetles that are destroying the church structure. A fumigator, in an attempt to save the church, resorts to radical measures bearing a historical burden. This is a story of the tension between culture and nature, and of the struggle whose outcome steers the viewer towards questions with no simple answers.

COUNTRY

Poland

YEAR

2026

RUNNING TIME

14 min.

LANGUAGE

Polish

FORMAT

DCP

ASPECT RATIO

2:39:1

GENRE

Documentary

My first encounter with wood eaters goes back to childhood. My grandmother lived in a wooden house and fought insects in its walls, injecting poison into the holes they left behind. During the war, she had used similar glass syringes as a nurse to treat people. Years later, she used them to inject poison into the wood and kill insects to save her house.

That contradiction stayed with me.

When I discovered a Lemko wooden church being consumed from within, that childhood memory returned to me. In an attempt to save it, specialists chose a radical method: sealing the entire building and fumigating it with Zyklon B, a pesticide with a deeply disturbing history. What interested me was the tension between the desire to preserve and how far that desire can take us.

I began making the film at the same time my mother was seriously ill with cancer. Faced with the possibility of losing her, I too reached for radical measures, driven by the need to do everything I could.

Her illness made what was happening invisibly inside the church suddenly feel very close to me. I became interested in our need to control what ultimately cannot be controlled: illness, decay, nature, death.

The thermal camera gave this tension a visual form. Through it, insect and human are translated into the same visual language of temperature, briefly dissolving the hierarchy between protector and pest.

How far are we willing to go to save what we love? Where does care end and radical action begin? Can we recognize that boundary when we are the ones afraid of loss?



JULIA PEŁKA

DIRECTOR

WOODEATERS.COM



Director, cinematographer, and producer, graduate of the Lodz Film School. The premiere of her film *FAT KATHY* (2019) at Hot Docs established her position as a documentary filmmaker, earning critical acclaim and audience recognition. She creates auteur documentary cinema with a formal, minimalist approach, searching for visual metaphors that transcend literalness. Her films explore the relationship between humans and nature, moving away from hierarchical perspectives. Her style is marked by visual sensitivity, subtlety, and attentive observation of both subjects and protagonists. Her cinema consistently raises questions about humanity's place in the world rather than offering straightforward answers.



SELECTED FESTIVALS

Hot Docs - Official Selections

Krakow Film Festival - International Competition

Warsaw Film Festival - Official Selections

AmDocs Film Festival - Official Selections

GoShort Film Festival - Official Selections

SELECTED WORKS

2026
WOODEATERS (dir.)

2024
LONIA & BRONIA (dir./prod.)

2019
FAT KATHY (dir.)

PAULINA SKIBIŃSKA

PRODUCER

WOODEATERS.COM



Sundance award-winning director, producer and screenwriter. Her short documentary OBJECT(2016) received the Sundance Short Film Special Jury Award and was nominated for an IDA Documentary Award. Paulina produces bold, author-driven films with a distinctive cinematic language and strong international potential. Her recent producing credits include the documentary Lonia & Bronia, which she also co-directed and produced for Netflix US. She graduated from the Lodz Film School and is an alumna of the MIDPOINT programme. She received an international Eastman Kodak Scholarship and is a member of the Polish Filmmakers Association.



CURRENT PROJECTS

Feature Documentary - In Development

Television Documentary - In Production

Short Documentary - In Post-Production

SELECTED WORKS

2026
WOODEATERS (prod.)

2024
LONIA & BRONIA (dir./prod.)

2016
OBJECT (dir./writer)

SZYMON KLUZ

CINEMATOGRAPHER

WOODEATERS.COM



CAMERIMAGE

Cinematographer, graduate of the Cinematography Department at the Łódź Film School (PWSFTviT). Known for feature short "WAZ-KI/Dragonflies" (dir. Justyna Nowak) that took part in the competition of the 64th Venice Film Festival, where it was nominated for the Prix UIP of the European Film Academy. His cinematography credits include the feature films Clearing dir. Magdalena Pięta, Nothing About You Scares Me dir. Justyna Nowak; the documentaries FAT KATHY, WOODEATERS dir. Julia Pełka) and the television films On Taking Care of a Dracae-na dir. Dominika Montean-Pańków, The Killing of Joanna , dir. Agata Baumgart).



AWARDS & FESTIVALS

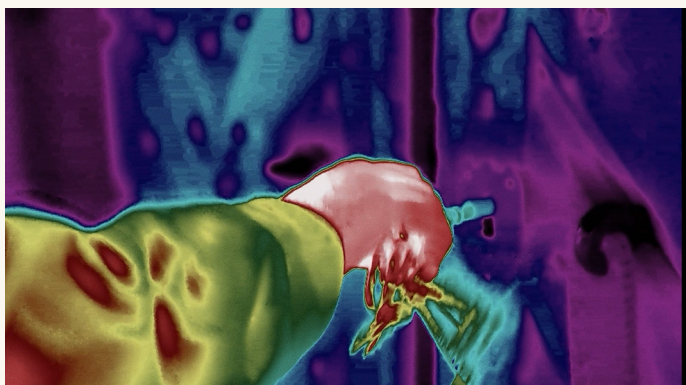
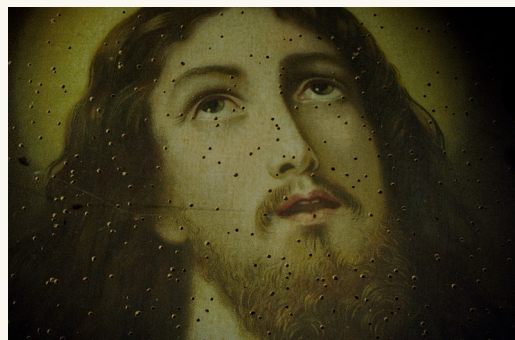
64th Venice Film Festival - Official Selections

CAMERIMAGE - Official Selections

Canon Cinematography Award at the Raindance Film Festival

Best Cinematography Award at the Prague Film Festival

Award for Lighting Design for the theatre production at the Divine Comedy International Theatre Festival in Kraków.



Rooted in the tradition of the Polish School of Documentary, Pełka brings a distinctive authorial style to the film's precise visual language. She combines the beauty of nature with the starkness of scientific observation: thermal imagery reveals what remains hidden, while immersive sound design evokes the unseen world of insects within the church's wooden structure.

A SPECIAL COLLABORATION ANDRZEJ PAŃGOWSKI

The original poster for *Woodeaters*, featured on the cover of this press kit, was designed by legendary Polish poster artist Andrzej Pańkowski.

“What remains most compelling is the suspension between care and destruction - choosing one order at the expense of another.”

- Maks Reiter

FESTIVAL HISTORY



KRAKOW FILM FESTIVAL
POLAND
WORLD PREMIERE
INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION
OSCAR QUALIFYING FESTIVAL
2026



RHODE ISLAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
USA
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE
OFFICIAL COMPETITION
2026



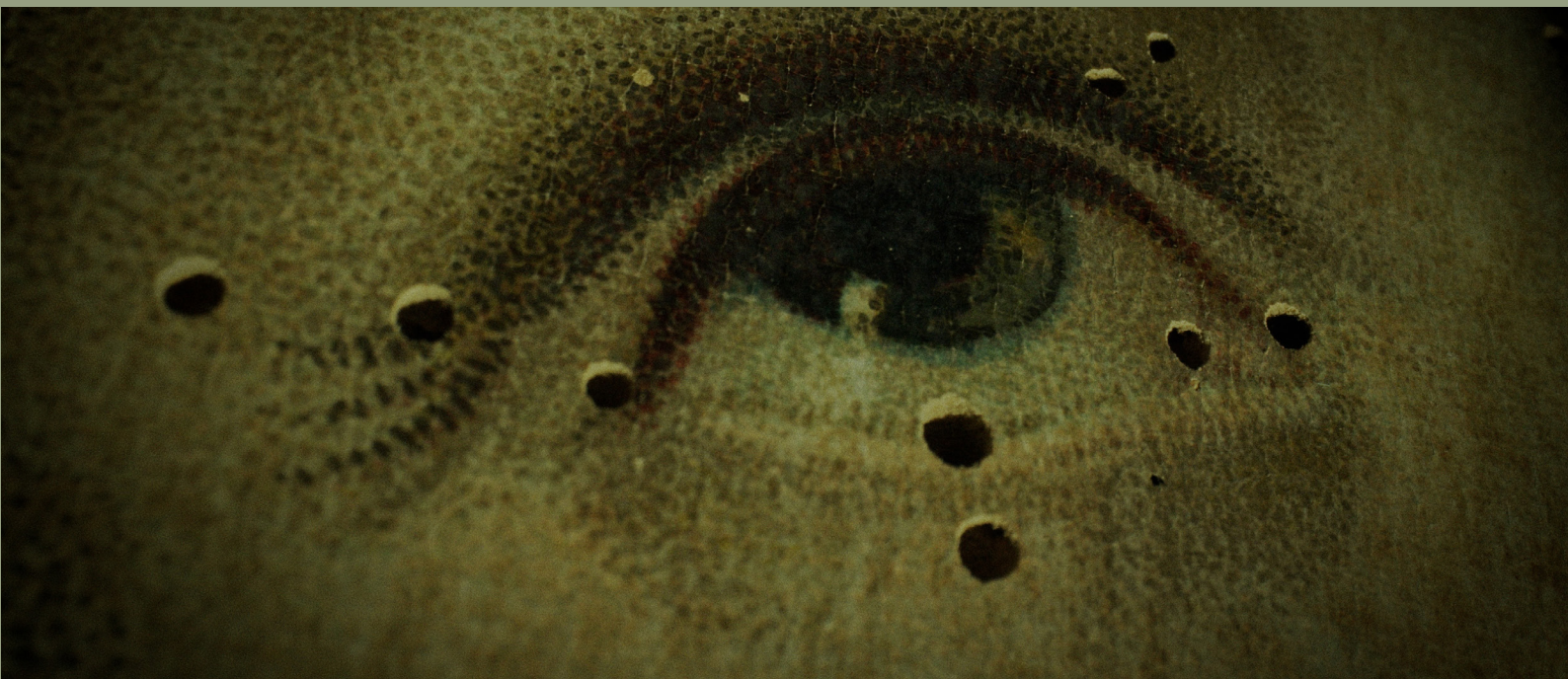
OFF-ODENSE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
DENMARK
OFFICIAL SELECTION
OSCAR QUALIFYING FESTIVAL
EUROPEAN FILM AWARDS QUALIFYING FESTIVAL
2026

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