

PROGRAM LET'S DOC. DOCUMENTARY IDEAS LAB

DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS
FOR YOUNG AUDIENCE
FORUM 2024

CENTRUM
KULTURY
FILMOWEJ

im. Andrzeja Wajdy

[ckf.waw.pl]

PROGRAM LET'S DOC.
DOCUMENTARY
IDEAS LAB

LET'S DOC program is an educational experiment aimed at creative people who intend to create documentaries and have an idea for a story about the children's or young people's world. The program emerges from the need to create media that will help us communicate with children and young people, especially during crises.

In countries such as the Netherlands, Belgium, Denmark and the Nordic countries, documentaries for young audiences are in demand at festivals, in education and on television. We want it to look similar in Poland, which is why since 2020 we have been running LET'S DOC development program and annual meetings in the form of the Documentary Film for Young Audiences Forum.

Each edition of the program lasts about a year. During this time, filmmakers, children and tutors are working on the development of ideas for documentaries that we present to the Polish and international film industry in order to jointly create conditions for the production, financing and distribution of documentaries for children in Poland.

*Dear Friends,
we are happy and proud to present the latest documentary film projects for young audiences developed during the fourth edition of LET'S DOC. DOCUMENTARY IDEAS LAB, organized by the Andrzej Wajda Centre for Film Culture.*

We invite you to the Documentary Film for Young Audiences Forum on May 9th, within the framework of Millennium Docs Against Gravity, where projects will be presented to representatives of the international and Polish film industry and the festival audience.

Our goal is, on the one hand, to enable the creators of the presented projects to find potential partners, especially producers, and on the other hand, to inspire the Polish film industry to create and support documentaries for young audiences. We believe that, just as in the field of feature films for young audiences, the Polish film industry will notice the great potential here that has not yet been tapped.

In our experience, non-fiction content is a very useful tool in the education and emotional development of children and young people, that is why we also popularize documentaries among parents and teachers. After the last forum in May 2023, we created a festival at the Centre dedicated solely to documentary films for young people - LET'S DOC. Its first edition was held in October and the second edition in April 2024. It is a meeting place for all those who are thinking about our collective future and supporting the young in shaping it. Let's build together an informed audience of tomorrow and inspire each other to live a life based on empathy, respect for others and faith in our ability to overcome crises.

Katarzyna Ślesicka
Deputy director of the Andrzej Wajda Centre for Film Culture,
director of the LET'S DOC Documentary Film Festival
for Young Audiences, film producer.

WHAT HAVE WE DONE AND WHAT ARE WE STRIVING FOR?

So far we have held four editions of the LET'S DOC development program. Some of the ideas we worked on during our workshops are already in production (e.g. "King Matt the First" by Jaśmina Wójcik, "Jest G." by Marek Głuszczyk), and others have already had their premieres: "Girls' Stories" by Aga Borzym, „Pinki” by Ewa Martynkien and Wojciech Szczupak. We are in constant contact with initiatives working on documentary cinema for young audiences in Europe, in particular the IDFA festival, KinderDocs in Athens, Ket & Doc in Belgium, m:brane in Sweden. Representatives of these initiatives are hosted at the 5th Documentary Film for Young Audiences Forum.

The Forum is the final of the fourth edition of the LET'S DOC program. It is held with the support of partners, including the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands. All this to successively create a support network and ecosystem working for the creation of Polish documentary films for young audiences.

We have a dream that Polish cinemas, television, and educational programs will feature Polish documentaries for children telling the stories of young people that viewers may meet at school, in the backyard, while developing their interests. For this to happen, we need to produce documentaries for the young in Poland, and institutions and organizations that can support this process should see the potential as well as the mission.

Karolina Śmigiel

Author and coordinator of the LET'S DOC program and the Documentary Film for Young Audiences Forum, artistic director of the Documentary Film Festival for Young Audiences LET'S DOC.

4th EDITION OF LET'S DOC PROGRAM IS:

- **7 documentary projects for young audiences in the development phase**
- **11 workshop meetings with tutors:**
directors Katarzyna Lesisz, Jaśmina Wójcik and Maciej Cuske
- **Consultations with Polish and international experts:**
Marije Veenstra (IDFA Education), Astrid Bussink (director of "Listen"), Ulla Hastrup (Danish expert on documentaries for young audiences), Lidia Duda, Anna Bławut, Paweł Łoziński, Patrycja Rzepecka, Małgorzata Świdorska, Katarzyna Ślesicka, Anna Wydra, Karolina Śmigiel, Jarosław Wszędybył
- **5 joint workshops for filmmakers and young experts, pitching in front of young audience (March 2024)**
- **5th Documentary Film for Young Audiences Forum**



DOCUMENTARY FILM PROJECTS LET'S DOC

4th EDITION



ENGLISH TITLE: INVISIBLE PLACES

ORIGINAL TITLE: NIEWIDZIALNE MIEJSCA

Directed by Karolina Wajman
Director's e-mail:
karolina.wajman@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 667 855 121

Production stage: development

Total budget: 28 000 EURO
Requirements: 28 000 EURO

Estimated production
end date: February 2026

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, tv broadcaster

KAROLINA WAJMAN

Script consultant, writer and kid's animator. Graduate of the Atelier Scenariuszowe as a script consultant (2023) and the School of Social Dramaturgy (2021). Works on fiction, documentaries and series development independently and in production house Haka Films. Writes about media and visual culture for Dwutygodnik and Szum Magazine.

30-YEAR-OLD KAROLINA EMBARKS ON A JOURNEY ACROSS POLAND IN SEARCH OF PLACES THAT BRING CHILDREN HAPPINESS. KIDS GUIDE HER TO THEIR FAVOURITE NOOKS AND CRANNIES - MAGICAL WORLDS THAT ARE PROTECTED AT ALL COSTS - AND SHARE WHY THEY ARE IMPORTANT TO THEM.

"Invisible Places" is an emotional journey into the worlds created by children. A group of twelve young „guides" from different regions of Poland lead the director – 30-year-old Karolina – to places where they feel happy.

During the journey, they visit a hole in the ground where one can rest, the biggest tree with a breathtaking view of the entire city, a stone wall hidden in the middle of the forest serving as a fortress in make-believe games, and an abandoned bunker known only to their closest friend. Kids build them all by themselves or discover and adapt random works of nature to their specific needs. You can only find these places if someone shows them to you and you can only enjoy them if you are invited into the world of their imagination.

Sharing one's favorite place is a pretext to discover what is most important to us. Sincerely and uncompromisingly, children talk to Karolina about their desires, dreams, relationships, hopes, and doubts, as well as their ways of finding what brings them joy.

"Invisible Places" is a short movie that will allow young viewers to relate and discover the importance of places and relationships that they build and create. It is also for adults who wish to find their inner child.



ENGLISH TITLE: JULIA'S RACE

ORIGINAL TITLE: WYŚCIG JULII

Directed by Paulina Sobczak
Director's e-mail:
sobczakpaulina@outlook.com
Director's phone number:
+48 514 330 858

Production stage: development

Total budget: 45 000 EURO
Requirements: 45 000 EURO

PAULINA SOBCZAK

Filmmaker, video editor, and graphic designer. In the United States, she studied documentary film and worked as a television producer at Arkansas PBS, directing educational series for children. Her sports documentary was nominated at the Mid-America Emmy® Awards in 2023.

DREAMING OF BECOMING THE FIRST FEMALE MOTOGP RACER, 12-YEAR-OLD POLISH GIRL JULIA TRIES TO BALANCE HER PASSION FOR MOTORCYCLE RACING WITH TYPICAL TEENAGE LIFE, SACRIFICING TIME WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

„Julia's Race” is a coming-of-age story set in the world of motorcycle racing, seen from the perspective of 12-year-old Julia, who loves speed and adrenaline. Her passion for motorcycles began at age 6 when she discovered her older brother's abandoned motorcycle. In addition to her aspirations, Julia is a positive, happy, and picky-eating teenager who enjoys board games and meeting friends.

Over the years, Julia became an accomplished athlete at the national level. Her ultimate goal is to become the first female rider in MotoGP, the highest class of motorcycle road racing. However, in Poland, this sport is not popular, and there are very limited opportunities for advancement.

To support their daughter's ambitions, Julia's parents decided to relocate from Poland to Italy in 2023. In Italy, where motorcycles are considered a national sport and the weather permits year-round training, Julia can truly thrive. However, she also needs to learn English and Italian to communicate with her peers and coach. Guided by an Italian coach, Julia prepares for eliminations that could secure her ticket to the prestigious 2025 FIM MiniGP World Series, where she'll compete against the best riders in the world.

The motorcycle world is a vast unknown, requiring a significant financial investment and carrying the risk of serious injury. Julia learns that being a young athlete requires significant sacrifices. Her once-simple passion now demands a rigorous routine of hard work and discipline. Amidst training and competitions, she misses her family in Poland and struggles to find time for friends. As she dedicates herself to athletic pursuits, the carefree days of adolescence begin to slip away.

„Julia's Race” depicts a journey from childhood dreams to professional struggles and the inner conflict of a teenager torn between the drive to excel in the sport and the desire to embrace an ordinary teenage life.



ENGLISH TITLE: SITTING AT HOME

ORIGINAL TITLE: HEMMASITTARE

POLISH TITLE: SIEDZĄCY W DOMU

Directed by Katarzyna Piórek

Director's e-mail:

hemmasittarefilm@gmail.com

Director's phone number:

+46 700 599 126

Swedish producer: Sergio C Ayala

Producer's e-mail:

sergio@monserratefilms.com

Producer's phone number:

+46 761 647 316

Production stage: development

Total budget: 40 000 EURO

Requirements: 40 000 EURO

KATARZYNA PIÓREK

Graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Poznań, majored in Film and Television Image Production and Photography, specialising in animated film. She also studied animation and post-production at Stockholm University of the Arts. She is an artist working in the field of visual arts with a focus on video art and installations. She cooperates with Gallery Studio 44 in Stockholm. In 2022, she graduated from the Wajda School on the DOC PRO course. For several years now, she has been living in Stockholm.

A 13 YEAR OLD BOY FROM STOCKHOLM REFUSES TO GO TO SCHOOL. FALLING BEHIND WITH SCHOOLWORK INCREASES HIS ANXIETY AND ISOLATION. FACED WITH AN OPPRESSIVE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, HE HAS TO FIND THE STRENGTH TO RECOVER HIS JOY AND MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING.

Shortly after starting 7th grade, Alvin, a cheerful 13-year-old from Stockholm who dreams of a career in engineering, gradually loses his motivation for learning and his sense of security at school. He refuses to attend classes as a form of protest – an act of courage which leads to him being labelled a “hemmasittare” / “hometrapped”.

In Sweden, there is no easy access to home schooling or alternative forms of education, and Alvin is now spending his seventh month without any educational support.

As a result, feelings of guilt, sadness and isolation from his friends, as well as massive amounts of schoolwork to catch up on, reduce the hope that these problems can be overcome. Leaving the house, which has become his asylum and safe zone, leads to feelings of great stress and fear.

His worried parents are forced to seek help from various institutions. At home, they motivate their son in every way possible to return to school after all. Psychiatrists claim they cannot force a child to return to a place which is a source of stress. School has nothing new to offer. All the efforts made by his family simply lead to feelings of failure. The virtual world of video games becomes a refuge for the boy– where heroes tend to win, and if they lose he can start again with a tap of the ENTER key.

And yet, the reality is different from the virtual realm – the mood at home worsens, and the school authorities report the family to social services for failing to abide by school attendance rules. Time flies past. Alvin turns into a young man, and his parents worry about his future. Will he manage to overcome problems and make up for lost time before he is forced to choose which high school he will go to in the future?

SITTING AT HOME

dir. Katarzyna Piórek



ENGLISH TITLE: PLAYING WAR
ORIGINAL TITLE: ZABAWA W WOJNĘ

Directed by
Piotr Pluta & Anna Wolszczak
Director's e-mail: plutapk@gmail.com,
anna.wolszczak93@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 792 297 717,
+48 513 570 919

Production stage: development

Total budget: 32 000 EURO
Requirements: 32 000 EURO

PIOTR PLUTA

Film director, screenwriter, author of theater adaptations. Graduate of biotechnology and the Gdynia Film School. Participant of the WFDiF script study. Creator of short features, music videos, commercials and making-of's.

ANNA WOLSZCZAK

Director, theater instructor, theater expert. In her work, she focuses on building her own language of theater of movement and living matter. She creates art for children and teenagers. Graduate of the Academy of Theater Arts in Wrocław and a scholarship holder of Rose Bruford College in London.

THREE CHILDREN AT A MILITARY CAMP TRY TO FACE NEW CHALLENGES. THE IRON RULES OF THE MILITARY WORLD CAUSE EMOTIONAL CRACKS IN THEM, FORCING THEM TO GROW UP FASTER. WHAT ARE THEIR MOTIVATIONS AND WHY ARE THEY WILLING TO SACRIFICE SO MUCH TO PLAY THE ROLE OF LITTLE SOLDIERS?

The military camp lasts 10 days. The participants are children from 8 to 16 years of age. The program is complex, but mainly based on discipline and tactical activities that are intended to recreate real warfare using replica weapons. Here, children's play meets adult life, where you need to skillfully use camouflage, landing and drill in order not to „die” on the battlefield.

The film will feature three main characters who try to overcome all the challenges in their own way. Each of them has their own motivation. Become more resilient, develop their passion, please their parents. They often do it despite themselves. Gritting their teeth, under the guise of brave faces, children cut themselves off from emotions, wanting to become tougher and invincible. However, they don't always succeed. Over time, they experience increasing difficulties in fulfilling physical tasks, longing for their parents, discomfort with camp conditions and fear of military rigor.

Is the experience of a military camp necessary in the process of growing up? In a world affected by war, should we learn about war from an early age?



ENGLISH TITLE: SIMON
ORIGINAL TITLE: SZYMON

Directed by Stefan Łazarski
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lovebudgetfilms@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 693 833 706
Produced by Agnieszka Skalska
Producer's e-mail:
agnieszkaannaskalska@gmail.com
Producer's phone number:
+48 509 236 089

Production stage: Development

Total budget: 250 000 EURO
Requirements: 250 000 EURO

STEFAN ŁAZARSKI

Director and screenwriter, would-be sociologist and Spanish philologist. He started his adventure with film in high school by shooting and editing skate videos. Before starting his studies at the Lodz Film School, he worked as a copywriter in advertising agencies. He has made over a dozen short and medium-length films shown at festivals in Poland and abroad. During the pandemic, he taught documentary film classes for neuroatypical youth. He has collaborated with public benefit organizations, like the Proxima theater, Autyzm Up foundation or La Strada.

SZYMON HAS BEEN SINGING ALONGSIDE FAMOUS VOCALISTS SINCE HE WAS A CHILD. NOW, AS HE BECOMES A TEENAGER, HIS COURAGE AND CHARM ARE NO LONGER SUFFICIENT TO BE ALLOWED ON STAGE. WHAT WILL HE DO TO NOT LOSE THE ONLY PLACE WHERE HE FEELS ACCEPTED?

Simon is on the autism spectrum and dreams of becoming a famous singer. Over the past few years, he has appeared alongside many stars of the Polish music scene, from Ryszard Rynkowski to Kaliber 44 to Daria Zawiałow. He has participated in numerous competitions and, thanks to his innate talent and charisma, has won over the hearts of the audience.

Now he is 15 years old and no longer just a charming child who dazzled everyone with his talent and lack of stage fright. He is becoming a teenager and encounters a world that shows him no special treatment. Simon is finishing elementary school this year. His parents, Tomek and Marcelina, want him to attend a high school for people with disabilities, but Simon feels that his place is on stage, among musicians and singers. It's easier for him to find himself in the artist-audience relationship than in relationships with peers who often don't understand him and reject him. Simon is direct and painfully honest, which is both his gift and his curse.

Simon's parents, seeking a way for him to function independently as an adult in the future, support him in pursuing his dream of becoming a singer. Marcelina takes a realistic approach to this process, taking him to singing lessons, song reviews, and social skills training. Tomek accompanies him to concerts, helping him find his way as a young man. They don't give up, although there are moments when their efforts seem to be doomed to fail. In the meantime, Simon learns how the world functions, and sometimes the world learns something from Simon.



ENGLISH TITLE: BECOMING THAT MAN
ORIGINAL TITLE: STAJĄC SIĘ TYM MĘŻCZYZNĄ

Directed by:
Martyna Nitkowska & Weronika Perłowska
Director's e-mail:
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w.perłowska@gmail.com
Director's phone number:
+48 508 179 150, +48 502 856 606

Estimated production
end date: September 2025

Estimated duration: 30 minutes

We are looking for: producer,
co-producer, funding, tv broadcaster

Production stage: development

Total budget: 33 000 EURO
Requirements: 33 000 EURO

WERONIKA PERŁOWSKA

An artist working at the intersection of visual arts and participatory activities. graduate of University of the Arts Poznan. Her works have been exhibited both nationally and internationally. She organizes and facilitates workshops and socially engaged projects.

MARTYNA NITKOWSKA

She graduated from the Department of Film Art Organization at the Lodz Film School and completed the Sputnik Photos Mentoring Program. She primarily works with film and photography in her artistic practice. While currently working in advertising production, she is also experienced in working on series and feature films.

UNCERTAIN AND LOST TEENS QUESTION WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A MAN TODAY. DUE TO THE LACK OF ANSWERS AND AUTHORITY FIGURES, THEY DECIDE TO CREATE A FICTIONAL INFLUENCER - A MAN THEY WOULD LIKE TO BECOME.

Sixteen-year-olds - Janek, Dominik, Wojtek, and Bartek are lost and uncertain about their role in the world. How to form genuine friendships? What to do to ignite a desire to act, and sometimes even a desire to live? How to explore sexuality, fearing both rejection and crossing someone else's boundaries? How to be sensitive without risking being ridiculous? And finally, what should a true man be like today?

Finding answers to these questions is not easy in a world where boys are constantly bombarded with extreme messages about masculinity. On one hand, encourages the rejection of everything traditionally considered masculine, and on the other, promotes toxic „alpha males.” The matter is made even more difficult as they lack role models. Well-known YouTubers and streamers, whom they once admired, preach controversial content and use violence against women.

In the film „Becoming That Man,” we follow a group of high school friends who, as part of a school project, undertake to create a fictional character of a „new man” - an influencer who could be a role model for them and other boys. It quickly turns out that there are even more questions that need to be answered. Who is this Man, what does he look like, what does he like, and what must he be able to do? Can he be sensitive and emotional, or should he be strong and decisive? Or maybe both? Working on this character shows how diverse the ideas about masculinity can be.



ENGLISH TITLE: LAST SUMMER

ORIGINAL TITLE: OSTATNIE LATO

Directed by
Eleanora Iadkouskaya & Jan Jurczak
Director's e-mail: eleonor.idk@gmail.com,
mail@janjurczak.com
Director's phone number: +48 790 290 017,
+48 666 033 820

Production stage: development

Total budget: 70 000 EURO
Requirements: 70 000 EURO

ELEANORA IADKOUSKAYA [instagram.com/eleanora_iadkouskaya/](https://www.instagram.com/eleanora_iadkouskaya/)

Directress & DoP, activist, studied in German Film and Television Academy Berlin GmbH (2022-ongoing), Academy of Arts in Lodz - Bachelor's degree in Animation, École nationale supérieure d'art de Dijon. She is involved in projects discovering childhood, coming of age, nature and relationships, both in fiction and documentary filmmaking. Eleanora works with socially engaged documentary projects at CBS and NBC.

JAN JURCZAK [janjurczak.com](https://www.janjurczak.com) [instagram.com/jan_jurczak/](https://www.instagram.com/jan_jurczak/)

Cinematographer, activist, studied in German Film and Television Academy Berlin GmbH (2022-ongoing), Institute of Creative Photography in Opava, Czech Republic (2019-2024). Jan has been visiting, documenting and supporting communities affected by Ukrainian war since 2017. He is involved in projects based on building relationships, trust and working with trauma, both in fiction and documentary filmmaking. Jan worked for clients such as: LOBS, Liberation France, Arte, Discovery Chanel.

**SERGEI'S ADOLESCENCE DURING THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION ON UKRAINE,
THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND PEERS.**

"Last Summer" shows the everyday life of a teenager distorted by the state of war. Sergei Sorokopud is a sensitive sixteen-year-old boy injured during the Russian invasion of Ukraine who lives with his family near the Ukrainian-Belarusian border. The end of his seemingly carefree adolescence comes with possible military duty and a ban on leaving the country. Sergei is forced with having to make a decision about his future, which he is unable to make alone. In his life, war is intertwined with close relationships inside his family and teenage friends. Sergei's mother Svieta is seeking relief in alcohol, which frustrates him and leaves him helpless and abandoned. Intensity of their relation mixes tenderness with violence. The film follows the boy as he takes care of his siblings, parties with his friends, explores the limits of the body in dangerous games, and opens up to his girlfriend. As the years come to an end, the documentary leaves us with an open-ended, emotional exploration of family ties in the face of an uncertain future.

LAST SUMMER

dir. Eleanora Iadkouskaya & Jan Jurczak

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