



Portfolio
Julia Krupa

Artist Statement

As an artist and researcher, I firmly believe that artistic research is a powerful tool to co-create with non-humans, especially plants. Art provides a space for shape-shifting and close interaction with the Other. Artistic research disrupts the traditional subject-object perspective in science, decentralizing and democratizing the research process by sharing causality in knowledge production. They also disrupt the traditional position of the artist as the sole creator of his works, demonstrating how art is always produced within a collective, including with the involvement of non-human beings.

Herbalism is my art practice, in which the relationship between humans and plants reveals new ways of understanding ecosystem interdependence and the possibility of alliances in the face of crises. Being with the plants and allowing their causality to be revealed in the process ensures that the work itself is never a finished object, but rather an evolving archive of an art practice based on field research deeply rooted in local environments.

My work includes video art, installations and dyeing. During field trips, I document interviews with women herbalists, capturing their stories, knowledge and connecting with their practices. These interviews will create a publicly accessible Herbalist Herstory Archive, which will create a space for previously unheard women's stories and the sharing of often overlooked knowledge of local healing traditions with the help of plants. The archive is not a static collection, but a living, growing resource that evolves with each new encounter and shared practice.

In my installations and staining, I use herbs that I collect myself during gathering walks, integrating their presence into the work tangibly, in line with the need to reclaim the materiality and causality of matter. This process is a direct, tangible engagement with the environment, and reflects my belief that art is an active, ongoing exchange, rather than the production of objects. The resulting objects serve as artifacts of the process, documenting the relationships I cultivate with herbs and plants. It is a record of research, gathering walks, cooking and preparing concoctions together, and multifaceted ways of healing, both for people and for local environments.

I believe that herbalism is a practice from a collective tradition that thrives on the exchange of knowledge and the sharing of experiences. This led me to found Weedworks in 2020, an open art and herbal studio where art and knowledge production come together. As an atelier and a collective, the Weed House invites people and plants to explore and create together, deepening their relationship. Through this space, I aim to nurture a community that values both human and non-human participation, seeking sustainable ways to coexist and resist an age of crises.

For me, art is about making connections and documenting the ongoing dialogue between human and non-human. Working with plants and herbalists, I see my work as part of a larger effort to build a future where art-based research, nature and community are intertwined.





Documentation of the exhibition "Making the Invisible a Community" at the Promotional Gallery in Warsaw.
(2024)

The exhibition is an archive in process created from temporal traces from field research around the relationship between people and plants in herbal practice. It is part of the doctoral project "Feminist Road to Bio-egalitarianism. Phytotherapeutic practices in Poland in the face of the climate crisis".

Excerpts from interviews with female herbalists, aiming to become part of the future Herbal Herstory Archive, can be heard at the link:
https://www.juliakrupa.com.pl/?page_id=584



Fragmenty dwukanałowej instalacji wideo składają się ze zbioru zapisów z badań terenowych oraz własnych spacerów zbierackich. Obrazom towarzyszą przetworzone dźwięki środowiska oraz nagrania mojego oddechu, tego jak się zmienia podczas spaceru zbierackiego i gazowej wymiany z roślinami.

Link: <https://youtu.be/YaGmW14Z9Bk>



Documentation of the diploma installation "Gatherer, Herbalist, Witch" at Lokal_30 Gallery (2021).

Excerpt from the exhibition description: "The main element of the project was the process itself - the day of going out to harvest, interacting with the plants, the identity of the Gatherer. Then the application of the practice of the Herbalist, when the herbs boil and give up the dye in the vat. And the final transformation into the Witch when interacting with the canvas, in the process of the creative ritual."



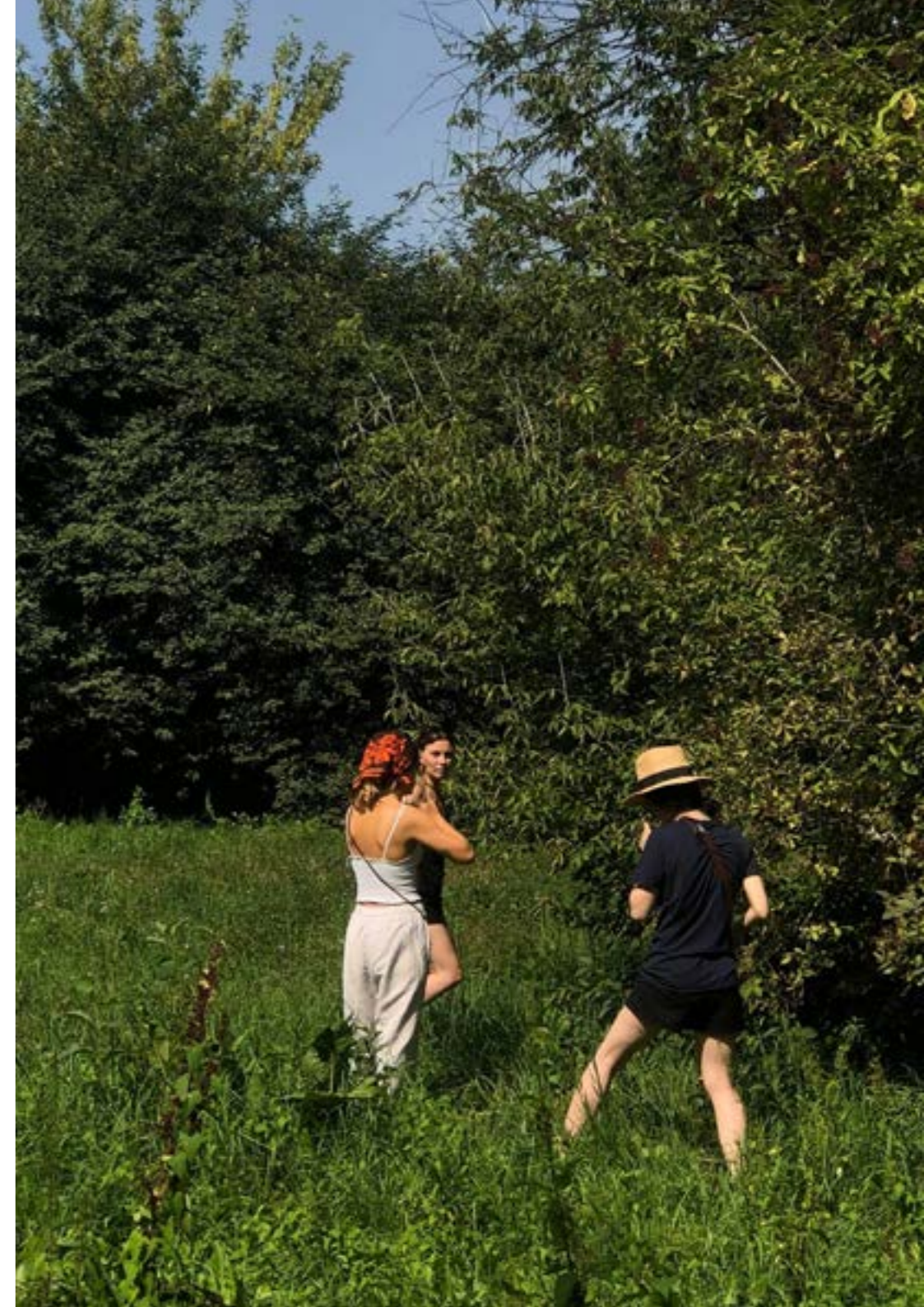
The performance consisted of several scenes of harvesting medicinal plants from the green spaces between Warsaw's busy roadways when they stopped mowing in 2020 due to the threat of drought.

Link:

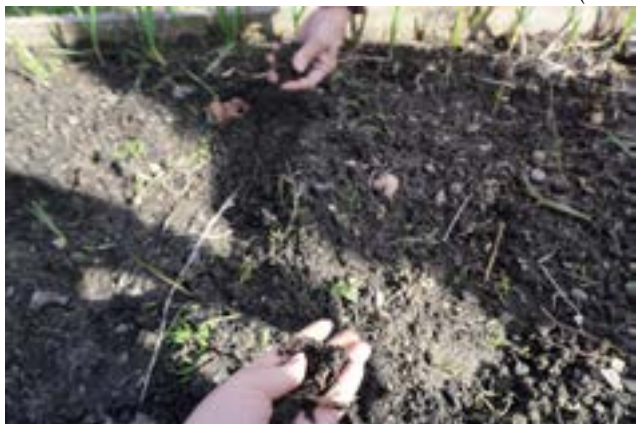
<https://player.vimeo.com/video/523400407?h=2e31626c40>

Chwaściarnia

A studio for building relationships with plants through artistic herbal practices. It was originally founded in 2020 as an educational program on the initiative of Julia Krupa, with support from the Autonomous Educational Space in Yazdov. It currently functions as a collective of researchers and artists working with plants: Anna Nowakowska, Mariana Łupina, Anna Maria Ziarkowska, Joanna Klikowicz, Julia Krupa, Martyna Chmielnicka, Tusia Kociubinska and Zuzanna Szymłowska. The group practices guerrilla gardening, urban gathering, creates herbal recipes, conducts workshops and walks in the area of ethnobotany and art. It acts as an activist in the area of ecology and respect for greenery. In 2023, the magazine *Czas Kultury* published an article by J. Soćko, J. Krupa describing the author's attentiveness method of Weedhouse directed at conscious and herbal-inspired ethics of care cohabitation of the world with plants.



Photos are from field research in Podhale (2024)



Julia Krupa (ur. 1997)

Artist and researcher combining herbal practices with art. A student at the Doctoral School of Humanities at the University of Warsaw; she is leading a project titled "Herbal Road to Feminist Bioegalitarianism. Phytotherapeutic traditions in Poland in the face of the climate crisis" including field research. Graduate of the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw, Faculty of Painting, diploma "Gatherer, Herbalist, Witch. Femininity in the face of Nature" defended with a perfect score (2021). Winner of the grand prize in the art competition of the Entry Initiative (2022). Creator of the author's studio called "Weedery" (originally within the Autonomous Educational Space in Yazdov, since 2020), practicing methods of cross-species understanding with plants through collective artistic herbal practice.

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