

LORBER
f i l m s

PRESENTS



THE WOODMANS

A film by C. Scott Willis

2010, US, 82 minutes

*Winner, Best New York Documentary – Tribeca Film Festival
Official Selection, Silverdocs Documentary Festival*

Publicity Contact: Susan Norget
susan@norget.com / (212) 431-0090

A Lorber Films Release from Kino Lorber, Inc.
333 West 39th Street, Suite 503, New York, NY, 10018
(212) 629-6880 / contact@kinolorber.com
Press materials: <http://www.kinolorber.com>

LORBER

f i l m s

SYNOPSIS

Francesca Woodman's haunting B&W images, many of them nude self-portraits, now reside in the pantheon of great photography from the late 20th century. The daughter of artists Betty and Charles Woodman (she a ceramicist and he a painter/photographer), Francesca was a precocious RISD graduate, who came to New York with the intention of setting the art world on fire. But in 1981, as a despondent 22-year-old, she committed suicide. *The Woodmans* beautifully interweaves the young artist's work (including experimental videos and diary passages) with interviews with the parents who have nurtured her professional reputation these past 30 years, while continuing to make art of their own in the face of tragedy. The film grapples with disturbing issues, among them: parent-child competition and the toxic level of ambition that fuels the New York art scene. Says Betty Woodman succinctly: "She's the famous artist and we're the famous artist's family." (*Karen Cooper, Film Forum*)

CAST AND CREW

DIRECTED BY C. Scott Willis

PRODUCED BY Neil Barrett, Jeff Werner & C. Scott Willis

CINEMATOGRAPHY BY Neil Barrett

EDITED BY Jeff Werner

ART DIRECTION BY Ekin Akalin

ORIGINAL SCORE David Lang

ORIGINAL SCORE PERFORMED BY So Percussion

In order of appearance:

Betty Woodman

George Woodman

Charlie Woodman

Patricia Sawin (Francesca's childhood friend)

Edwin Frank (Francesca's childhood friend)

Sloan Rankin (Francesca's classmate at RISD)

Catherine Chermayeff (Francesca's classmate at RISD)

Sabina Mirri (Francesca's model)

Glenn Palmer-Smith (former photographers' representative)

Robert Kushner (artist)

LORBER

f i l m s

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

C. SCOTT WILLIS (Director / Producer) is a 30 year veteran of the News, Current Affairs and Documentary world, including 27 years with ABC News as a Producer in the Middle East and London, a Senior Producer of Nightline, and then as Executive Producer of an ABC News primetime series. He is the winner of 11 Emmy and two DuPont Columbia awards for his documentary work, on subjects ranging from the fall of the Soviet Empire to the rise of the Clinton Years. In 2001, Willis started his own production company (C. Scott Films LLC) and has produced and directed nearly a dozen documentaries for television, including a series of investigative stories for PBS's NOVA. *The Woodmans* is his first feature documentary for theatrical release.

NEIL BARRETT (Producer / Cinematographer) is a British cinematographer who has worked on over 30 broadcast documentary films for National Geographic, the BBC, PBS, Discovery, The History Channel, NBC, ABC and CNN. He has filmed in over 40 countries worldwide, and his work has won several awards, including the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Award for excellence in broadcast journalism, the Edward R. Murrow, and three Cine Golden Eagle Awards. His feature credits include *The Other City* (a 2010 Tribeca premiere), a film about the growing AIDS crisis in Washington, D.C.; *Kicking It* (a 2008 Sundance premiere), a profile of homeless soccer players who compete in an international sports tournament; and *Mario's Story* (2006), a film about a Latino boy wrongly convicted of a crime he did not commit.

JEFF WERNER (Producer / Editor) is an award-winning editor and director of documentaries, feature films and motion picture advertising. His editing credits include *Peep World* (2010), with Michael C. Hall, Sarah Silverman and Taraji Henson, *The Other City* (2010), *The Year of the Yao* (2004), *The Smith Family* (2002), and Barbra Streisand's *The Mirror Has Two Faces* (1996). He also co-directed and edited both *Kicking It* (2008) and *Mario's Story* (2006), and is the winner of several Hollywood Key Art Awards for his work in motion picture advertising.

DAVID LANG (Composer) received the 2008 Pulitzer Prize in Music for *The Little Match Girl Passion*, commissioned by Carnegie Hall for the vocal ensemble Theatre of Voices. One of America's most performed and honored composers, his recent work includes *Writing on Water* for the London Sinfonietta, with libretto and visuals by English filmmaker Peter Greenaway; *The Difficulty of Crossing a Field*, a fully-staged opera for the Kronos Quartet; and the oratorio *Shelter*, with co-composers Michael Gordon and Julia Wolfe, at the Next Wave Festival of the Brooklyn Academy of Music. He is also co-founder and co-artistic director of New York's legendary music festival, Bang on a Can.

LORBER

f i l m s

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I confess to being much more comfortable working in the world of armed conflict than the world of emotional conflict. For most of my career I have produced and directed investigative films, "big stories" about global issues and institutions. By that measure, *The Woodmans* is a "small story" but it has an enormous impact on the people who see it. To me it is a story about a family, the bond of art that unites it and the tragedy it suffers and comes to terms with — because of that bond. It is a film that taught me to be patient, to appreciate the beauty of the world it inhabits and above all to listen carefully — so the story could reveal itself.

– C. Scott Willis



LORBER

f i l m s

ABOUT THE WOODMAN FAMILY

BETTY WOODMAN (b. 1930) is an artist and ceramic sculptor whose works have been exhibited around the world. In 2006, a retrospective of her work was shown at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and in 2009, she was awarded an honorary degree by the Rhode Island School of Design, Francesca's alma mater. Her work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum, among others. She is represented by the Max Protetch Gallery in New York.

GEORGE WOODMAN (b. 1932) is a painter and photographer. He attended Harvard University and earned a masters degree in painting from the University of New Mexico. His paintings were associated with the "Pattern and Decorations" movement of the 1970's. In the early 1980's he turned to photography. His work is represented in the collections of the Guggenheim and Whitney museums, among others.

CHARLES WOODMAN (b. 1955) is an assistant professor of Electronic Art at the University of Cincinnati. His recent works have "concentrated on the integration of video in live performances... in collaboration with musicians and dancers." He is a founding member of the video performance group viDEO sAVant.

FRANCESCA WOODMAN (1958 – 1981) attended the Phillips Academy in Massachusetts and graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) in 1979. Up until her untimely death in 1981, aged just 22, she produced an extraordinary body of work acclaimed for its singularity of style and range of innovative techniques. Woodman is often situated alongside her contemporaries of the late 1970's such as Ana Mendieta and Hannah Wilke, yet her work also foreshadows artists such as Cindy Sherman, Sarah Lucas, Nan Goldin and Karen Finley in their subsequent dialogues with the self and reinterpretations of the female body.

Since 1986 (when a retrospective show was organized at the Wellesley College Museum), Woodman's work has been exhibited widely and has been the subject of extensive critical study in the United States and Europe. Large solo presentations of her work include an exhibition curated by the Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain (Paris) in 1998, touring to venues including Kunsthall (Rotterdam), the Photographers Gallery (London), and Douglas Hyde Gallery (Ireland). Her work has been featured in many international group exhibitions and is represented in collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Detroit Institute of Arts, and Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain. Woodman will have a large retrospective at SF MoMA in 2011, travelling to the Guggenheim Museum in 2012. (*courtesy Victoria Miro Gallery*)