



Sylvia, the Wood Nymph

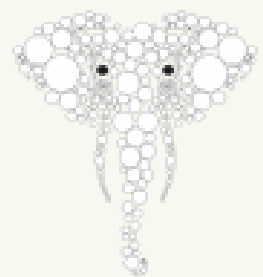
Team

Timothy D. Brewerton, MD
Executive Producer

Production Company
White Elephant Enterprises, Inc.
Robyn Hussa Farrell
Tim Farrell
Co-Directors

Fiscal Sponsor

The Film Collaborative



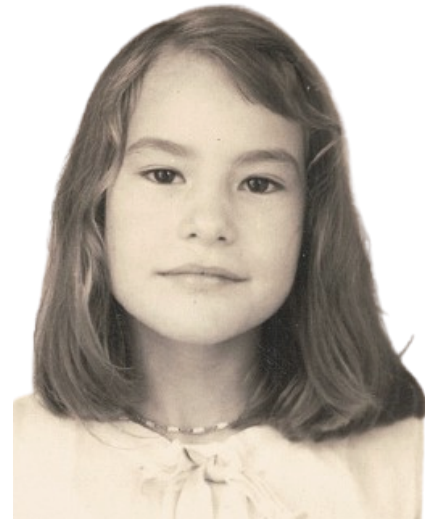
whiteelephant

The Documentary: Sylvia, the Wood Nymph

Sylvia The Wood Nymph is the true story of a woman who struggled with Multiple Personality Disorder which she experienced as a result of considerable early childhood maltreatment. This film takes an intimate and personal look at her journey toward healing through the eyes of a compassionate psychiatrist, her close friends, and her husband. Notably, the film contains rarely seen footage of altered personalities in Sylvia's therapy sessions, video testimony and writings, used with her permission.

Sylvia's Story

From the time she was an infant Sylvia suffered severe sexual abuse and neglect. She was not allowed inside the family home, left to fend for herself in the woods, naked and living off scraps of food left in a dog bowl on the family's front porch.



This long pattern of assault and neglect left Sylvia with a fractured sense of self and incompletely formed identity. Over time, she developed seven distinct personalities to help her cope with her past and dissociate from her painful memories and experiences. Despite the many obstacles she faced, Sylvia was able to function in the world, unaware of the many layers that formed her complex myriad of alter identities, each with its own function.

Enter Dr. Brewerton

Then in 1988, when Sylvia was 47 years old, a profound meeting took place in the offices of psychiatrist Timothy Brewerton of the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC), where the complex web of Sylvia's mental state was revealed. At first meeting, Sylvia was merely looking for some respite from a long struggle with depression, binge eating, and medical issues, but soon, both she and Dr. Brewerton would learn much more about the battle her unconscious mind had been fighting to keep the painful memories in check.

Through several years of therapy, Dr. Brewerton was able to help Sylvia discover all of the collective parts of her identity and integrate them together as one, resulting in a full recovery. Finally, Sylvia was able to fall in love, find friendship, connectivity, new purpose and meaning, and lead a full life.



In Sylvia's Words

"I have been thinking a lot about my own reasons for publishing our experience. Over these years, I have remembered things I had long forgotten, had really never knew that had happened to me. Today, with all your help-- I am a real person. I am not living as a fractured entity that I invented my own self-- out of struggling to stay alive through the shame of being me. I see myself as being my own hero. And it was a really brave, long, hard struggle! I want to give back."

Sylvia Crew

ROBYN HUSSA FARRELL	Co-Director & Executive Producer
TIM FARRELL	Co-Director & Executive Producer
DR. TIM BREWERTON	Executive Producer
LOUISE FAGAN	Associate Producer
SUE LEE	Editor



Sylvia Cast



Robyn Hussa Farrell, Co-Director,
in conversation with
Dr. Tim Brewerton, Sylvia's psychiatrist.

DR. BETHANY BRAND
DR. TIMOTHY BREWERTON
DR. ROBERT POST
DR. FRANK PUTNAM
DR. RICHARD LOWENSTEIN
"LAURA" - INDIVIDUAL IN
RECOVERY
SYLVIA
SYLVIA'S HUSBAND, DON
SYLVIA'S CLOSEST FRIENDS

Giving Voice to Sylvia, the Wood Nymph



Sylvia's story is told through three intersecting layers: a heroine who has terrible obstacles she must overcome, medical professionals struggling to find support in their community, and patients navigating DID.

Sylvia offered the world an amazing gift: she allowed Dr. Brewerton to film and audio record their sessions. These remarkable interviews, captured between July 1988 and April 1991, are the foundation for this project. The tapes, along with Sylvia's original letters and emails, are the bedrock of Sylvia's voice and serve as a legacy to those who continue to struggle in silence.

With Sylvia's consent, our documentary explores the horrible details of Sylvia's early life, as told by her husband, doctor and Sylvia herself. We will learn about the joyful and generous person that Sylvia became through the eyes of her friends and the man who finally offered the love she had long sought, but had always lived without. Through Sylvia, her friends and others who suffer from DID, we learn that healing (and a full recovery) is possible.

Timeline

Pre-production work on the entire project began in 2019. The core team is assembled, primary interviews have been filmed and Sylvia's archival footage has been transcribed. In 2022, we completed a rough cut and have begun to strategize animation and other editing requirements.

The anticipated completion date for Sylvia, the Wood Nymph is Summer of 2023.



You Can Be a Part of Sylvia's Story

Though the project has progressed to this exciting stage, it is at a crucial phase in its development with funding needed for animation and finish editing.

Your involvement at this stage will ensure Sylvia's story is told. Donations can be made online are tax-deductible through The Film Collaborative who is serving as Fiscal Sponsor of this project.

[Click here to make a donation:](#)



Thank you for supporting this important effort that is dedicated to bringing hope and healing to those who have endured severe childhood trauma through Sylvia, the Wood Nymph's inspiring story.



DR. BREWERTON;
THANK YOU — FOR BELIEVING IN ALL
OF US, WHEN I WAS SO SURE I WAS
ONLY ONE.
— FOR BELIEVING IN ME, WHEN I COULD
NOT BELIEVE THAT ALL OF US WERE ME.
A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO MS. B. FOR
ALL THOSE THURSDAY NIGHTS WE WORKED SO
LATE TO RESCUE THE WOOD NYMPH.
THANK YOU MOST OF ALL FOR YOUR
YEARS. THEY HAVE HEALED MY
HEART.

Sylvia; et al
12.31.88
HAPPY NEW YEAR!



The Sylvia team is grateful to the following collaborators
for lending their time and talent to consult with us:

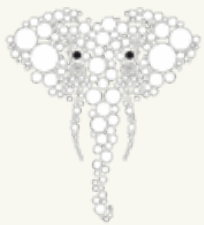
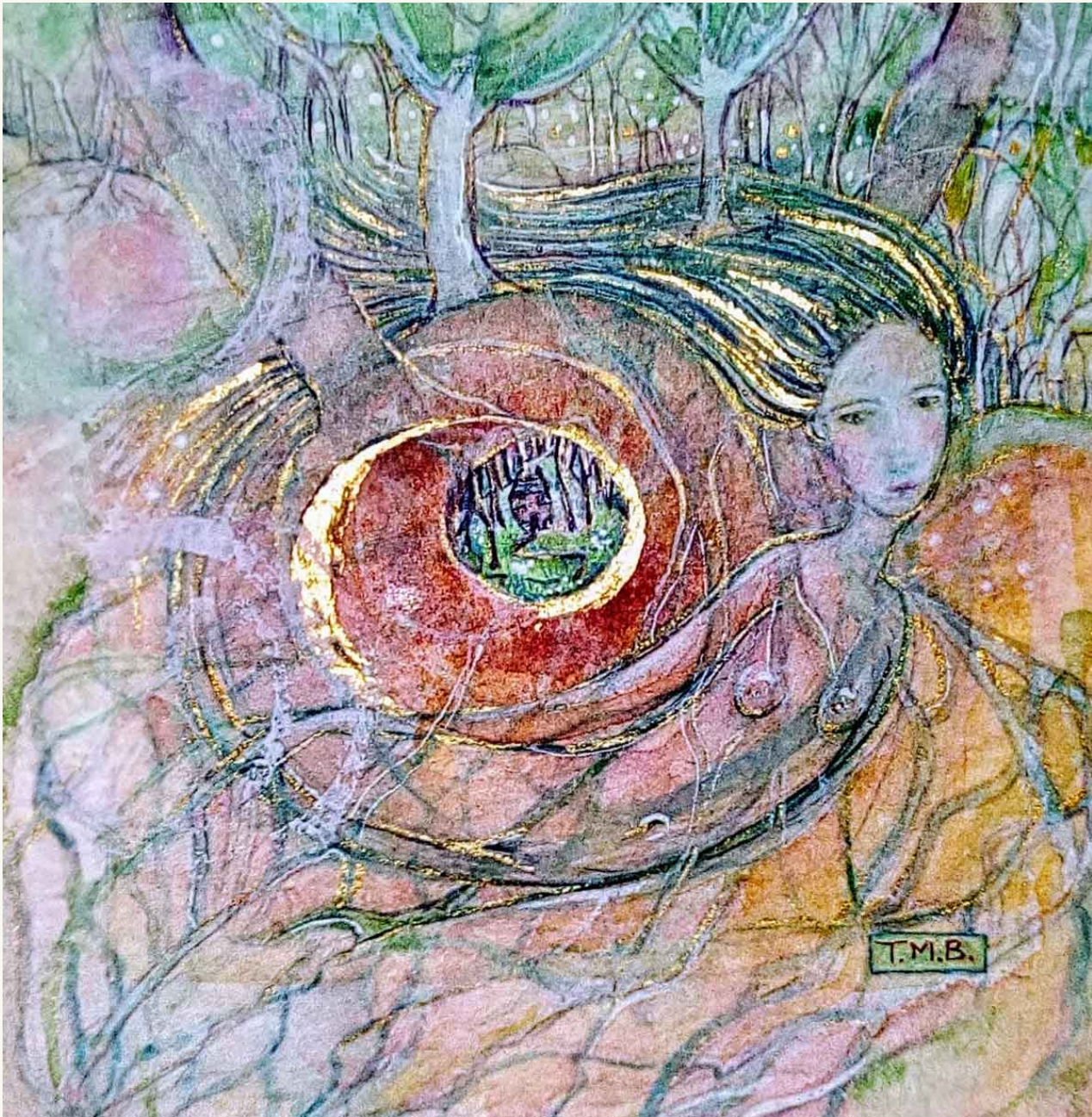
Daniel J. Clark Kate Farrell Caitlin Foose Heather Hower Lisa Sabey
and

Lynette Gryseels, Director of Fiscal Sponsorship at The Film Collaborative



whiteelephant

"I know there are many others in this same, familiar condition. I'd like to show these people what you taught me to do for myself. With the right professional help, we can become the person we know we are, strong, smart, brave and whole." - Sylvia



Original Artwork by Tamsin Bridge, titled
The Roots and Reflections of a Wood Nymph

whiteelephant

Executive Producer

Timothy D. Brewerton, MD, DLFAPA, FAED, DFAACAP, CEDS-S is an experienced clinician, researcher, teacher, mentor, writer, editor, advocate and consultant in the eating disorder and trauma fields. He is currently Affiliate Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, where he is in private practice. He has board certifications in general, child-adolescent, and forensic psychiatry, and addiction medicine. He is: Distinguished Life Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association; Distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; Founding Fellow and former Board Member of the Academy of Eating Disorders (AED); Founding Fellow and former president of the Eating Disorders Research Society; former president of the SC Psychiatric Association; author of >170 articles/book chapters; editor of 2 texts. He has given >400 presentations nationally and internationally and has reviewed for >60 scientific journals. He has known Sylvia since 1988, her husband Don since 1990 and is developing an educational series for medical professionals, a narrative film, and a book about their shared journey and Sylvia's legacy.

co-Directors, Executive Producers

Robyn Husa Farrell and **Tim Farrell** are a husband and wife team who have won awards as NYC theatre and film producers, television news producer, and community journalists. Tim and Robyn each share >25 years of work in entertainment and run White Elephant Enterprises, a full-service production company. They co-Directed the critically-acclaimed "Highland Video Village" public art installation, funded through a \$1M grant from Bloomberg Philanthropies. Developed over the course of 1.5 years working directly with residents of a challenged community to teach documentary storytelling and community journalism techniques, the results of "Video Village" directly led to residents taking political action in South Carolina.

As Senior Political Producer for NY1 News, Tim Farrell oversaw production of NYC Inside City Hall -- a live, nightly show covering city, state, and national politics. He served as Field Producer for large-scale events, including Democratic and GOP conventions, Nelson Mandela funeral, and as a member of Hillary Clinton's press corps in 2008. For his expertise in political storytelling, Tim was recognized with 2015 and 2010 Press Club Awards.

As producer and director of the documentary, *The Walking Hospital*, Tim had the opportunity to travel to remote regions of Tibet to tell the story of Chinese medicine specialists serving the people of Nepal. *The Walking Hospital: Road to Lomanthang* and *The Walking Hospital: Kathmandu* were exhibited at the Rubin Museum of Art in NYC in 2009 and as part of the Nursing Nepal installation in 2011. *The Walking Hospital: Lomanthang* was featured at the 2012 Napa Valley Film Festival.

Tim's political background marries well with Robyn Husa Farrell's public health work and expertise as an award-winning producer. Husa co-founded the award-winning Transport Group Theatre Company in NYC, now in its 20th year, and received the 2007 Drama Desk award for *breadth of vision and challenging productions*. Husa founded Mental Fitness a groundbreaking nonprofit that works to educate about mental health literacy in K16 schools across the country. She worked with hundreds of researchers to direct award-winning theatre and film programs that have been featured nationally and used as ongoing training tools in academic and health institutions. Husa's research led her and Farrell to create Sharpen, a digital mental health service that delivers comprehensive psycho educational modular content to organizations. For Sharpen, the pair has created over 450 documentary film-style educational modules and have won awards for improving resilience through trauma-informed technology.

Fiscal Sponsor, The Film Collaborative. Learn more here.

