



ARTS & SCIENCE COUNCIL
Charlotte-Mecklenburg

GRANT RECIPIENT



GROUP PHOTO BY BOBBY BLUE;
STILLS PROVIDED BY THERESE BARTHOLOMEW

Artist Type

Documentary Filmmakers

Web Site

<http://theresewrites.com>

At a Glance

A team of professional filmmakers volunteered to make a film exploring the issues of forgiveness, punishment, social responsibility and rehabilitation following the murder of the writer/director's brother in 2003.

Collaborative Film Team

Therese Bartholomew: Director/Writer

Erik Murphy: Director Photography

Ruth Duncan: Producer

Will Davis: Creative Director

Tamara Titus: Development Director

Dr. Bruce Arrigo: Consultant on
Criminal Justice

Craig Renfroe: Creative Consultant

Chris Renfroe: Creative Consultant,
Camera Assistant

Amorette Mayr: Development
Coordinator

Christian Domarus: Editor

ASC Regional Artist Grant Project

To shoot 20 hours of footage for "The Final Gift," (working title) for a documentary film detailing a woman's search for greater meaning in her brother's murder.

Personal Quest

Movie Chronicles Woman's Search for Meaning In Her Brother's Murder

EDITOR'S NOTE: Realtor® Reflections *regularly features an artist or agency affiliated with the Arts & Science Council as a way for Realtors® to help educate their clients about our cultural community.*

BY LOUISE BARDEN

In February 2003, Therese Bartholomew was an English teacher and writer working on an M.F.A. when her younger brother was murdered at age 33. The tragedy would ultimately change the lives of a group of filmmakers in ways they could not have imagined.

Although she had been raised to believe in Christian forgiveness, the first time Bartholomew saw the 22-year-old man who had killed Steve, she was surprised by feelings of compassion mingled with her grief and anger.

Confronting Confusion Head-On

Bartholomew found herself imagining what might have caused this young man to ruin his own life while ending another. She could see the grief on the faces of his family members in the courtroom. She began wondering whether the killer would be able to redeem his life.

Trying to understand what had happened, Bartholomew changed her graduate studies' focus to criminal justice. She wanted other

people to consider society's responsibility toward people who commit crimes, and toward criminals who will be released back into society.

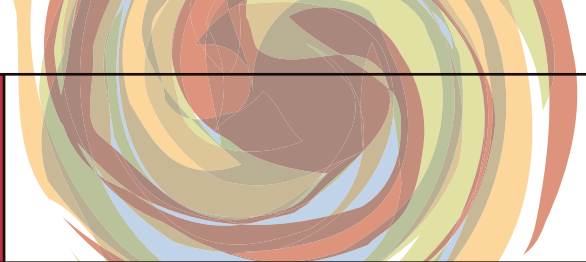
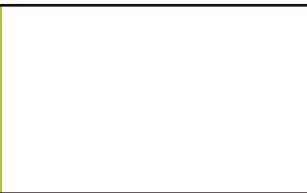
One night, she realized a film would reach more people than she ever could in writing. The problem was that Bartholomew knew nothing about moviemaking.

Chance Meeting Builds a Team

Then came a chance meeting with professional filmmaker Erik Murphy in a coffee shop. What followed was one introduction after another, until an entire team of film professionals offered to donate time and their own money to make a documentary.

Their goal was to show the feelings and lives of the people around the killer and his victim. If they did it right, they believed, they could make moviegoers question their beliefs about crime, punishment, retribution and rehabilitation.

For more than two years, the team planned and filmed without outside support. But in 2007, Murphy's application for an ASC Regional Artist Project Grant gave them funds to cover the costs of some of their out-of-town filming and for storing high-definition video and audio digital files.



Murphy and Creative Director Will Davis emphasize that it is not a simple process. They must take the time and effort to earn the trust of the people they want to film. They must demonstrate that this is not about commercial benefit; it's about trying to honestly convey the results of such a criminal act and its effect on an entire group of people.

They anticipate filming more than 100 hours of footage. It's a goal they hope will produce results by summer 2008. With the help of the ASC grant, they are still working on it. **RR**

From left: Will Davis, Therese Bartholomew (front), Ruth Duncan (back), Erik Murphy. Jessica cleaning her uncle's grave. Bartholomew and her daughter, Jessica, at Steve's grave. Bartholomew overlooking the cemetery where her brother, Steve, is buried.