

# Red without Blue

A FILM BY BROOKE SEBOLD, BENITA SILLS, & TODD SILLS

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## SYNOPSIS

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Red Without Blue is an artistic and groundbreaking portrayal of gender, identity, and the unbreakable bond of twinship despite transformation.

In 1983, Mark and Alexander Farley were born minutes apart in Big Sky country with an identical genetic make-up. The twins' early lives were quintessentially all-American: picture perfect holidays, a second home by the lake, supportive parents who cheered them on every step of the way. By the time they were 14, their parents had divorced, they had come out as gay, and a joint suicide attempt precipitated a forced separation of Mark and Alex for more than two years.

Today, Mark is attending art school in San Francisco, and Alex is living as a woman named Clair in New York. RED WITHOUT BLUE explodes our notions of self-hood and sexual identity through its deeply personal look at the unique and unconventional relationship between Mark and Clair as they mature into adulthood.

Through candid and extensive interviews, each twin recounts the difficulties of growing up gay in Montana, the deleterious effects of their parents' separation, and the boundaries crossed as drugs and sexual experimentation spiraled out of control. Illustrative vignettes punctuate these darker periods of the twins' adolescence through hauntingly beautiful, manipulated home-movies, family photographs, and experimental sequences shot on super-8 film. From the twins' retelling, we hear about the singular bond they shared as children, the hardships they endured, and Mark's evolving perspective now that his identical twin has ceased to be identical. Through Mark's voice particularly comes the story of his family's redemption from a dark past.

## AWARDS

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- Slamdance Film Festival, Audience Award—Best Documentary Feature (2007)
- Frameline: The San Francisco Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Best Documentary Feature—The \$10,000 Michael J. Burg Documentary Jury Award (2007)

- Inside Out, Toronto Gay & Lesbian Film & Video Festival, Best Documentary Feature—Audience Award (2007)
- Miami Gay & Lesbian Film Festival, Best Documentary Feature—Jury Award (2007)
- Silverlake Film Festival, Festival Directors Award (2007)
- Athens International Film And Video Festival, Best Documentary Feature—1st Place (2007)

## **OFFICIAL SELECTION**

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- The Barcelona Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
- Hamburg International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival
- ImageOUT, Rochester, NY
- Kalamazoo, Coming Out Proud Film Festival
- Lisboa Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
- Pikes Peak Lavender Film Festival
- QueerDOC Film Festival
- Vancouver Queer Film Festival
- Pride Pictures, Waterloo, Ontario
- Rhode Island International Film Festival
- Dublin Lesbian and Gay Film Festival
- Outfest: The Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
- Perth Revelation International Film Festival
- Jerusalem International Film Festival
- Queer Takes, Walker Art Center
- Frameline, San Francisco International LGBT Film Festival
- Provincetown International Film Festival
- Seattle International Film Festival
- NewFest: The New York Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
- Portland Queer Documentary Film Festival
- Inside Out, Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival
- Out Takes Festival, New Zealand
- Silver Lake Film Festival
- Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festival
- Birmingham SHOUT
- Athens International Film and Video Festival
- Atlanta Film Festival
- Wingspan, Reel Pride Series, Tucson, Arizona
- Crossroads Film Festival
- Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival
- Melbourne Queer Film Festival
- Slamdance Film Festival

## **DIRECTOR BIOS**

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BROOKE SEBOLD

Co-Director/ Co-Editor / Co-Cinematographer

Sebold has been writing, editing and producing films in the Bay Area for the last four years. As an associate editor for Citizen Film, Sebold worked on a number of award-winning documentaries currently screening in festivals and museums around the world. Presently, she works as an editor for the Vanguard Group at Al Gore's new cable television station, Current TV. Sebold studied film at Brown University, and holds a degree in Visual Arts with a focus in Film Production.

BENITA SILLS

Co-Director/ Co-Editor

Benita has been working in the documentary film industry for six years. After producing educational documentaries at CBS News Productions in New York, she moved to San Francisco and worked for two established documentary film production companies: The Working Group and Citizen Film.

TODD SILLS

Co-Director/ Co-Cinematographer

Todd studied film at New York University and holds degrees in religion and poetry from Northwestern University. After working at Merchant Ivory Films in New York, he moved to San Francisco where he split his time managing Access Video and working on the post-production team at KQED's Spark\*.

## **DIRECTORS' STATEMENT**

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When Mark initially moved into our house, we bonded instantly over art, film, and decorating tips. Over the next few months, we became intimate friends, sharing embarrassing stories, sexual escapades, and the mundane minutia of our daily lives. Mark did not disclose the details of his painful adolescence or the transformation of his identical twin immediately. He had to be certain that we would not judge the twins unfairly for mistakes made in adolescence.

When Mark did finally tell us the story of his past – a story wrought with drug and sexual abuse, attempted suicide, homophobia and ultimately transformation – we were perplexed. Our housemate, with whom we identified on so many levels, had experienced a past entirely different from our own trajectories. Judgment was the furthest thing from our minds, as we listened to the hardships that Mark and Clair successfully overcame.

We knew that we were in a unique position to tell Mark and Clair's story with a degree of intimacy rarely found in documentary film. We also knew that by telling this story, we could perhaps help others to look past their personal judgments – whether it be of homosexuality or the transgender community – and get to know the singular and indestructible bond that defines Mark and Clair.

RED WITHOUT BLUE rejects the concept of detached filmmaker observing a subject through a lens. Our intention is to make the film Mark would have made for himself had

he been a filmmaker. Thus, Red Without Blue is a complex and highly intimate journey portraying the evolution of the relationship between Mark and Alex and eventually Mark and Clair, and how this tight-knit relationship has ultimately decimated their picture-perfect family.

As both filmmakers and friends to the Farley family, we have a great responsibility to create an accurate tapestry of the past and present, the joyous moments and the agonizing defeats that define the individuals Mark and Clair have become.

## **CREW**

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### **Directed and Produced by**

Brooke Sebold  
Benita Sills  
Todd Sills

### **Cinematography**

Brooke Sebold  
Todd Sills

### **Editing**

Brooke Sebold  
Benita Sills

### **Music by**

Peter Surla  
Bexar Bexar

### **Color Correction**

Mathias Hilger

### **Sound Mix**

Paul Zahnley