~~What is claimed is:~~CLAIMS

1. A topical oil-in-water emulsion composition comprising:

(a) a discontinuous oil phase;

(b) a continuous aqueous phase comprising water;

(c) a thickening agent;

(d) at least one lamellar membrane structure comprising (i) an alkyl amphiphilic component, (ii) an ester of a branched fatty acid and a branched fatty alcohol which is isostearyl isostearate, (iii) a fatty acid which is behenic acid, ~~and~~ (iv) a mixture of fatty alcohols comprising at least ~~one~~ two selected from the group consisting of cetyl alcohol, cetearyl alcohol and behenyl alcohol, and ~~fatty alcohol; and optionally~~ (v) a phospholipid which is hydrogenated phosphatidylcholine;

wherein the ester and alkyl amphiphilic component are in a weight ratio of about 10:1 to about 1:10; the fatty acid and alkyl amphiphilic component are in a weight ratio of about 10:1 to about 1:10; the fatty alcohol and alkyl amphiphilic component are in a weight ratio of about 20:1 to about 2:1; and the alkyl amphiphilic component and phospholipid are in a molar ratio of about 35:1 to about 6:1; and

wherein in use the composition has a water vapor transmission rate of less than 65 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ measured *in vitro* using *mod*WVTR test methodology.

~~2. The composition according to claim 1, wherein the composition comprises two or more fatty alcohols selected from the group consisting of C12 to C30 fatty alcohols.~~

~~3. The composition according to claim 2, wherein one of the two or more fatty alcohols is selected from the group consisting of a C18 to C30 fatty alcohol.~~

~~4. The composition according to claims 1 to 3, wherein the at least one fatty alcohol is a mixture of cetyl alcohol and behenyl alcohol.~~

~~5.The composition according to claiml to 3, wherein the at least one fatty alcohol is a mixture of cetyl alcohol and cetearyl alcohol.~~

~~6. The composition according to claims 1 to 3, wherein the at least one fatty alcohol is a mixture of cetearyl alcohol and behenyl alcohol.~~

~~7. The composition according to claim 3 wherein the molar % of the alcohol or the mixture of alcohols in the composition is from about 50 mol% to about 85 mol%.~~

~~8~~2.The composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 4, 6 or 7~~, wherein the mixture of fatty alcohols comprises cetyl alcohol and behenyl alcohol, and a~~the~~ molar ratio of ~~the second fatty alcohol to the amount of cetyl alcohol~~behenyl alcohol to cetyl alcohol is from about 4: 1 to about 0.35: 1.

~~9.The composition according to claim 1 wherein the lamellar structure comprise about 5 to about 75 % by weight of the pharmaceutical composition.~~

~~10~~3. The composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 9~~, wherein the alkyl amphiphilic component is a dialkyl amphiphilic component, or ~~and optionally a mixture of a dialkyl and a~~ monoalkyl amphiphilic component.

~~11~~4. The composition according to claim ~~10~~3, wherein the alkyl amphiphilic component is a dialkyl amphiphilic component and each alkyl group is independently selected from the group consisting of C14 to C22 alkyl groups.

~~12~~5. The composition according to claim ~~4~~8, wherein ~~the alkyl amphiphilic component is a dialkyl amphiphilic component and~~ the alkyl groups are each C16 alkyl groups.

~~13~~6. The composition according to claim ~~10~~3, wherein the alkyl amphiphilic component is a monoalkyl amphiphilic component and the alkyl group is selected from the group consisting of C14 to C22 alkyl groups.

~~14~~7. The composition according to claim ~~13~~6, wherein ~~the alkyl amphiphilic component is a monoalkyl amphiphilic component and~~ the alkyl group is a C16 alkyl group.

~~15~~8. The composition according to ~~any one of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 14~~, wherein the alkyl amphiphilic component is potassium dicetyl phosphate ~~and optionally~~or a potassium monocetyl phosphate.

~~16. The composition according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein the ester is an ester of a C12 to C30 branched fatty acid and a C12 to C30 branched fatty alcohol.~~

~~17. The composition according to claim 13, wherein the ester is an ester of a C16 to C22 branched fatty acid and a C16 to C22 branched fatty alcohol.~~

~~18. The composition according to claim 13 or 14, wherein the ester is an ester of a C18 branched fatty acid and a C18 branched fatty alcohol.~~

~~19. The composition according to any one of claims 1 to 15, wherein the ester is isostearyl isostearate.~~

~~20~~9. The composition according to ~~any of~~ claim~~s~~ 1 ~~to 19~~ wherein the composition has a mole % of the ester of about 5.0% to about 18%.

~~21. The composition according to any of claims 1 to 20 wherein the composition has a molar ratio of the fatty alcohol to the ester from about 4.0: 1 to about 19: 1.0.~~

~~22. The composition according to any one of claims 1 to 16, wherein the fatty acid is a C12 to C32 fatty acid.~~

~~23. The composition according to claim 1 to 17, wherein the fatty acid is a C16 to C30 fatty acid.~~

~~24. The composition according to any one of claims 1 to 17, wherein the fatty acid is selected from the group consisting of stearic acid, arachidic acid, behenic acid, lignoceric acid and cerotinic acid.~~

~~25. The composition according to any one of claims 1 to 24, wherein the fatty acid is behenic acid.~~

~~26~~10. The composition according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claim~~s~~ 1 comprising ~~that has~~ a mole % of about 2.0 to about 11 mol% of the alkyl amphiphilic component; about 5.0% to about 18% mol% of the ester; about 6% to about 20 mol% of the fatty acid; and about 50 to about 85 mol% of the alcohol, and ~~optionally~~ about 2.0 to about 8.0 mol% of the phosphatidylcholine.

~~27. The composition according to any of the preceding claims wherein the phospholipid is hydrogenated lecithin.~~

~~28~~11. The composition according to ~~any of the preceding~~ claim 1~~s~~, wherein the composition has a water vapor transmission rate of less than 62 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ measured *in vitro*.

~~29. The composition according to any of claims 1 to 28, wherein the composition has a water vapor transmission rate from about 50 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ to about 62 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ measured in vitro.~~

~~30. A method for moisturizing, and protecting, repairing, or restoring the skin lipid barrier of a mammal, the method comprising applying to the skin of the mammal in need thereof an effective amount of a topical oil-in-water emulsion composition comprising:~~

(a) a discontinuous oil phase;

(b) a continuous aqueous phase comprising water;

(c) a thickening agent;

(d) at least one lamellar membrane structure comprising (i) an alkyl amphiphilic component, (ii) an ester of a branched fatty acid and a branched fatty alcohol, (iii) a fatty acid, (iv) a fatty alcohol, and optionally (v) a phospholipid; and

wherein in use the composition has a water vapor transmission rate of less than 65 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ measured *in vitro* using *mod*WVTR test methodology.

31. A topical oil-in-water emulsion composition comprising:

(a) a discontinuous oil phase;

(b) a continuous aqueous phase comprising water;

(c) a thickening agent;

(d) at least one lamellar membrane structure comprising (i) a monoalkyl amphiphilic component, (ii) an ester of a branched fatty acid and a branched fatty alcohol, (iii) a fatty acid, and (iv) at least one fatty alcohol; and optionally (v) a phospholipid.

32. The composition according to claim 31 wherein in use the composition has a water vapor transmission rate of less than 65 $g.m^{-2}.hr^{-1}$ measured in vitro using modWVTR test methodology.

33. The composition according to claim 31, wherein the alkyl group of the monoalkyl amphiphilic component is selected from the group consisting of C14 to C22 alkyl groups.

34. The composition according to claim 33, wherein the alkyl group is a C16 alkyl group.

35. The composition according to claim 31, wherein the monoalkyl amphiphilic component is potassium monocetyl phosphate.

36. The composition according to any of claims 31 to 35 wherein the mol % of the mono alkyl amphiphilic component is from about 4 % to about 12.5%.

37. The composition according to any of claims 31 to 36 wherein the mol % of the mono alkyl amphiphilic component is from about 4.5 to about 8%.

38. The composition according to any of claims 31 to 37 wherein the composition has a molar ratio of the fatty alcohol to the ester is from about 3.4: 1 to about 19 : 1.

~~39. The composition according to claim 38 wherein the molar ratio of the fatty alcohol to the ester is from about 3.4 to about 8.~~

~~40. The composition according to claims 31 to 39 wherein the mol % of the ester is from about 5.0 to about 18%.~~

~~41. The composition according to claim 40 wherein the mol % of the ester is from about 7.5 % to about 14%.~~

~~42. The composition according to claim 31 has a molar % of from about 4.5 to about 12 mol% of the monoalkyl amphiphilic component: from about 5 to about 18 mol% of the ester: about 6 to about 20mol% of the fatty acid: about 50 to about 85mol% of the fatty alcohol; and optionally about 6 to about 15 mol% of the phospholipid as phosphatidyl choline.~~

~~43. The composition according to claim 31 has a molar % of from about 4.5 to about 12 mol% of the monoalkyl amphiphilic component: from about 7.5 to about 14 mol% of the ester: about 15 to about 20mol% of the fatty acid: about 60 to about 70mol% of the fatty alcohol; and optionally about 6 to about 9 mol% of the phospholipid as phosphatidyl choline.~~