



“Unflinching and honest”  
**CHART**attack

“Compelling!”  
**WASHINGTONIAN**

“Truely unique!”  
**WASHINGTON CITY PAPER**

“Incredible... A must-watch”  
**BANGOR DAILY NEWS**



“An inspirational film!”  
**THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER**

“Bob Forrester is his own success story”  
**SPIN**

“Insightful!”  
**Criticize This!**

“Captivating!”  
**NASHVILLE SCENE**

“A brilliant documentary and touching addiction recovery story that should not be missed!”



“Forrester is a rare character with a rich, complicated history”  
**Los Angeles Times**

“Bahruth captures Forrester's wild streak”



# BOB AND THE MONSTER

## REVIEWS

**"Inspirational!** I sat riveted for 85 minutes as the story of Bob, punk-rock, drug addiction, and recovery unfolded on the screen. What could have been a cliched story was instead both a **brilliant rock documentary and a touching addiction recovery story that should not be missed!**" **TORONTO FILM SCENE**

"Taking the Behind the Music rise/fall/comeback format to deeper, more soulful places, Keirda Bahruth's "Bob and The Monster" begins with a sad tale of blown showbiz opportunity but, for once, uses drug addiction not as human-freakshow fodder but as **the starting point for a provocative argument about treatment strategies**" **HOLLYWOOD REPORTER**

"What director Keirda Bahruth captures in "Bob and the Monster" is the wild streak that fueled Forrest's early days as singer/songwriter who found eloquence in the mundane to his crusade against the accepted treatment of addiction, which trades out injections and inhalations for prescription pills in favor of a more human, compassionate approach. As the film demonstrates, none of this came easy to Forrest, who had to endure some unusual discoveries in his family tree, a post-rock life flipping burgers in the L.A. coffee shop Millie's, and a particularly ill-conceived cover of Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes of the Broken Hearted" on his way to becoming a confidant to the likes of Courtney Love and opening his own shop, Hollywood Recovery Services, to practice the treatment that helped him recover from his own demons. A day after the film's premiere at SXSW, Forrest and Bahruth sat down to discuss this **remarkable story**, as well as some of what wasn't in the film, the ways the music industry and the drug industry are quite similar, and why there really are second acts." **IFC.com**

"Forrest is his own success story" **SPIN**

"Straightforward and truthful as biographical pieces get and in the later stages of the film it **makes some salient and cogent points about the pharmaceutical industry and the nature of rehab today**. It is a great look at the late 80s and early 90s LA punk scene, but it is also **one of the best insights into the nature of addiction in quite some time.**" **CRITICIZE THIS (Toronto)**

"**unflinching and honest** film as complex, nuanced and interesting as its subject" **CHARTattack**

"The film blends archival footage, current interviews with musical heavyweights like Anthony Keidis and Courtney Love, and some really great stop motion animation to create **one of the best stories of redemption in years.**" **DORK SHELF, Toronto**

"'Bob and the Monster' delivers a **truly unique perspective** of a music scene often overlooked and forgotten about, as well as the heart-rending failure and ultimate success of a man who could have had it all." **SIDELINES (Nashville)**

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

## REVIEWS

“Many rock fans don’t know the name Bob Forrest, but it wasn’t meant to be that way. As singer for L.A. freak-punk luminaries Thelonious Monster - contemporaries of Red Hot Chili Peppers, Jane’s Addiction, Circle Jerks, X and Fishbone - Forrest carved out a name for himself as a volatile, poetic and captivating frontman destined for greatness... and as a junkie. This ultimately **touching documentary** — through personal interviews, celebrity commentary, archival footage and a variety of animations — chronicles the rise and total fall to rock bottom that led Forrest to reanimate himself as an influential and respected substance-abuse counselor. His unconventional and empathetic approach to treatment — and outspoken opposition to many more conventional forms of it — have made him a controversial figure to some and a guru to others” **NASHVILLE SCENE**

“We’ve seen the rock ‘n’ roll, drugs, and recovery movie before, but director Keirda **Bahruth injects (literally) new life into the genre** in Bob and The Monster, the tale of musician Bob Forrest’s addiction, recovery, and reinvention as a “punk-rock recovery” counselor. Combining interviews and animated sequences with an apparent treasure trove of archival footage, Bahruth manages to make a compelling case for sobriety while holding no punches on exactly how high the highs, and how low the lows, can so often be. Bahruth intersperses the film with interviews with Forrest’s fellow musicians (and addicts): Anthony Kiedis, Courtney Love, Flea, Steven Adler, a cleaned-up Frusciante, all of whom pay testament to how awful he used to be, and how magnificent he is now. “He’s given up his life for the 12th step,” says Love in a surprisingly lucid interview. Sobriety, Forrest says, “is a very simple life,” and you get the sense he’s found his true calling after a long period of ups and downs, not to mention having finally beaten the monster.” **WASHINGTONIAN MAGAZINE**

“It doesn’t matter if you don’t know who Bob Forrest is, or recognize his alt-rock band Thelonious Monster. His is the story of ‘80s and ‘90s rock in America. Silverdocs selection Bob & The Monster is a throwback to that time, including both the sublime and the ugly, and it’s all due to a huge body of well-curated footage. Rock stars just love to document themselves. But this film is only “rock doc” in part, and purposely so, says director Keirda Bahruth. It’s also **a redemptive story about the road to sobriety and an advocacy piece about drug and alcohol recovery.**” **WASHINGTON CITY PAPER**

“Sex, drugs, and rock and roll: a tired cliché. But not in the hands of Keirda Bahruth who weaves these elements together in her new **Oscar-worthy documentary BOB AND THE MONSTER**. The net is a film that tells of private heartbreak and musical genius, grotesque demise and irrepressible hope—and an actionable new direction for drug and alcohol recovery for our addicted to addiction times.” **Heroinlife.com**

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

## REVIEWS

“Keirda Bahruth’s documentary examines the Jekyll and Hyde life of Bob Forrest, the lead vocalist for the promising post-punk band Thelonious Monster. There’s the sober Bob, the one who Bahruth briefly introduces us to in the film’s opening, aged and with a worn face. Then there’s Bob the addict, the junkie poet-turned-musician whose ego and temper pushes away his bandmates and best friends, self-destructive, selfish and knocking on death’s door. You want to cover your eyes as he lets his life spiral out of control. Animated scenes recounting his first and most dangerous experiences with heroin are particularly hard to watch, but equally powerful. And then, there’s the light at the end of the tunnel. As painful as it is to watch Forrest recount his descent into addiction, his road to recovery is ultimately uplifting. As he comes clean and aspires to help others in a position that he was once in, Bob finds redemption and discovers a purpose that he so desperately needs. “Bob and The Monster” isn’t an easy movie to watch, but it’s **rewarding and a must-watch** for fans of that post-punk era - I couldn’t think of a more appropriate documentary to kick off KahBang’s film festival.” **BANGOR DAILY NEWS**

“‘Bob and the Monster’ is about a guy everybody wanted to be around until he became the guy everybody assumed had died. In the 1980s, Bob Forrest’s band, Thelonious Monster, was at the center of a music scene that included the Red Hot Chili Peppers and Jane’s Addiction. The band’s raw sound, wild shows and deeply personal lyrics appealed directly to the young Los Angeles punk crowd. So did the drugs. First, booze. Later, heroin. Monsters, both of them. Every time the band was about to make it big, Forrest’s drug-addled mind and ego got in the way. The band broke up, then got back together. It got clean, until it wasn’t. Forrest went to rehab, then left. He disappeared from his son’s life. For years, it seemed like he disappeared entirely.

But the film shows Forrest’s slow return, one helped by forgiving people, and Forrest’s realization that the charisma that worked to make music could help people struggling with addictions, especially other musicians. Forrest has been a regular on “Celebrity Rehab.” The documentary, which had its world premiere at SXSW, is filled with famous faces: John Frusciante, Courtney Love, Flea, Anthony Kiedis. Dr. Drew Pinsky and Forrest work together on addiction recovery programs. It reveals a different Bob Forrest, one who had a lot of time to think about what makes recovery work. He thinks 12 steps are great, but that organizations sell those methods for too high a price. He believes drugs aren’t a good way to treat drug addiction. He says recovery should be more about love than guilt.

Filmmaker Keirda Bahruth approached Forrest years after he’d sobered up and he didn’t hesitate to OK a movie. There are animated sequences, celebrity interviews and up close looks at how Forrest lives. Over six years, she reached out to old fans on MySpace and collected the kind of footage you’d think only the Facebook generation would have – young people mugging for cameras while they pluck guitars and drink a beer or too-young-to-be-real rock stars running around stages while the audience cheers. It’s grainy, sometimes shot by VHS recorders hoisted over shoulders, but it’s Forrest and Thelonious Monster.

“I’ve always been cool to people. It really works with drug and alcohol addicts,” Forrest told the crowd after the premiere. “You’ve got to change this damn world, or die trying.”

**CNN.com**

# Bob AND THE MONSTER



## Bob Forrest and Keirda Bahruth Capture the "Monster"

Posted 03/17/2011 10:00 AM by Stephen Saito

The subject and the director reflect on their striking SXSW rock doc "Bob and the Monster" about an almost famous rocker who became a deservedly famous drug counselor.



Director Keirda Bahruth and Bob Forrest of "Bob and the Monster," Shaker Films, 2011

In the midst of one of the biggest music festivals in the world, Bob Forrest wanted the music to be shut off. "Look at this fucking thing that's going on," he asks me, gazing back in the direction of Austin's infamous 6th Street. He laughs, "Do you want to be over there in that fucking thing?"

Though Forrest is still an active musician, there was a time when he was right in the middle of the fray. As the frontman of Thelonious Monster, he came up with a group of Los Angeles bands including the likes of Red Hot Chili Peppers and Fishbone (also the subject of an excellent documentary at SXSW called "Everyday Sunshine") that ruled the L.A. scene in the early '80s with a sound that found the rhythm in chaos described as "drunk rock" by one critic. And Forrest was drunk, and high for most of it, alienating bandmates, missing in action for his immediate family and failing upward as Thelonious Monster became coveted by major labels, even though the band would never hold together long enough with a temperamental lead singer to ever see mainstream success.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

However, where "Bob and the Monster" differs from most documentaries about burnt out musicians is that Forrest ultimately traded one art for another, becoming a drug counselor with an unusually compassionate touch. Some may know this already from "Celebrity Rehab," the VH1 show where he's often been a shoulder to cry on and without a doubt the calmest person in the house. (Outside is another matter since as he told the audience at the film's premiere, "If you're a fan of that show, I appreciate it, but I'm not.")

Still, what director Keirda Bahruth captures in "Bob and the Monster" is the wild streak that fueled Forrest's early days as singer/songwriter who found eloquence in the mundane to his crusade against the accepted treatment of addiction, which trades out injections and inhalations for prescription pills in favor of a more human, compassionate approach. As the film demonstrates, none of this came easy to Forrest, who had to endure some unusual discoveries in his family tree, a post-rock life flipping burgers in the L.A. coffee shop Millie's, and a particularly ill-conceived cover of Jimmy Ruffin's "What Becomes of the Broken Hearted" on his way to becoming a confidant to the likes of Courtney Love and opening his own shop, Hollywood Recovery Services, to practice the treatment that helped him recover from his own demons. A day after the film's premiere at SXSW, Forrest and Bahruth sat down to discuss his remarkable story, as well as some of what wasn't in the film, the ways the music industry and the drug industry are quite similar, and why there really are second acts.

## How did this documentary come together?

**Keirda Bahruth:** I have been aware of Bob since I was a teenager through his band Thelonious Monster. I was a fan of his band and through that, I came across a record that he put out called "The Bicycle Thief" in 2000. When I heard that record, I was really moved. I knew Bob had a drug problem back in those days and "The Bicycle Thief" is a very autobiographical record, so you could hear a lot of his story. And I became very intrigued with wanting to make a film about him. I knew that there was a really compelling, interesting story, and Bob is very likeable, so I approached him.

**Bob Forrest:** The Bicycle Thief record really is a document of what happened after the crash - it has a song about the first time I picked up a guitar sober, like really sober after years of trying. And I always feared getting back into music because I thought it would lead back into drugs. A lot of that is on there - that hesitancy. It's a pretty honest document of what it's like to survive drug addiction and what it's like to try to create a second happier life. Then [Keirda] came and asked about the story and the story hadn't been written yet. That's why the film kind of ends like what is he doing? [laughs] I like that feeling because I don't know what I'm doing. I've got a company. I know that. I'm barely breaking even, I know that. I've got a philosophy that's not very popular, I know that. [laughs]

**KB:** But you know what, Bob? One of the things that he said to me when I said I want to make a documentary about you, and he said, "that's great. There's been a few people that have tried already." So what had happened there?

**BF:** There was more of a kind of biopic version of it and then people were compiling things, but why I think the film is so compelling is that there is a developing second act of my life. F. Scott Fitzgerald said, "There's no second acts in American life" - that's because he's an alcoholic who died of alcoholism and never had a second chance at life. So my getting sober then is in the process of becoming. And I think that's documented well in the movie.

I'm not an expert about anything. Anybody who says they're an expert about addiction - how can you be an expert about something so vague? You can generally educate and say this is generally what happens, but I've just seen too much [to standardize] what is the thread that goes through this process that people - drug addicts and alcoholics - transform themselves -- it's indefinable. So how can you be an expert about something that's indefinable? You can be an expert about describing it and describing generally what happens, but there is no cookie cut formula and that's my problem with the industry itself that says there is a cookie cut formula.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

**This film also isn't a cookie cutter documentary, using claymation to depict some of Bob's drug use and since it was filmed over many years, the film's interviews look to be conducted on several different types of cameras, which give it an interesting texture. Was that something you embraced or was it frustrating over time?**

**KB:** I started to embrace that. I think as time went on, I really had a desire for the film to want to look better, but I really embraced the formats of the '80s too. I really love the way VHS cam looks. I really love the way Super 16 looks. And it really was just a collective of all these different formats, so the Panasonic camera, the SD camera that we used to shoot Anthony [Kiedis] and a couple of those interviews on, that was the popular camera in 2006. Cut to 2010 when we interview Courtney Love and we're shooting on an HD cam, then you up-res it all to HD, which is the format now, it's the great sum of the SD cam that used to look really good. So it was a process that could've been disheartening, but I learned to embrace it. And so you know what? This is a story that was told over 30 years and at the end, it gets super clean because we're in present day and in the '80s, it was really gritty.

**BF:** Just as a viewer, I think it's like the memories of things. Some are cloudy, some are distinct - that's how I see it. I don't mind that it shifts all around. It seems to bother film people more than just fans of film. [Pointing to Keirda] She saw some blurriness and I'm like the whole thing is memories and ideas and trying to recapture and trying to show [what happened]. [laughs]



Bob Forrest in "Bob and the Monster," Shaker Films, 2011

**Was it a challenge to balance Bob's music career with his new career as a drug counselor?**

**KB:** I went on feeling for me because I could've gone on for three hours about Bob's history and then gone on for a lot longer. When I felt like I had told enough of his history and felt like the audience would be able to see how bad Bob's addiction had been, it was time to get rid of the rest of the footage I had hung onto because all of it was so great and just cut to the chase and get to 1996 where Bob started working in Millie's [Coffee Shop] and finally got clean.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

**One of the things that is brought up, but feels curiously absent as the film goes on is about Bob's relationship to his immediate family and his son in particular. Is there a reason why that is?**

**BF:** Some people had comments about that. My family...the idea that...how you can tell what my relationship with my son is comes off in just...I was a bad parent, right? Obviously. So what I tried to do is heal it in the only way it seemed it could organically happen, which is more of a brotherhood and a camaraderie with him and it comes across, but she [pointing at Keirda] did something that I didn't like, which is when I laugh with him in the record store [a scene at Amoeba Records in Los Angeles], it's more focused on me and it doesn't show our body language and how relaxed we are with each other. [Looks at Keirda] You zeroed in on my face too much where the old shot used to be of us.

**KB:** Oh, I've got you. And let me say as the filmmaker, I had a concern that Bob is a very open soul and a very complicated soul at the same time. So whenever I felt like I would not be able to do justice to a relationship of his because of its complicated nature, I felt like if it was going to be portrayed with too much question and too much broadness or have the ability to be misinterpreted, I tried to stay away from it.

**Keirda, you had full editorial control, but when you make this kind of biographical documentary, how much do you see it as a partnership?**

**KB:** I tried to bring Bob in way more than I've heard people have. I trust Bob and I care about Bob and I wanted Bob to be comfortable. So when Bob asked to see cuts, I let him see what he wanted to see and when he was uncomfortable with something or something was untrue, we discussed it and we changed it.

**BF:** Let's talk about human relationships in general. [My son] Elijah, typical of what we all believe happens when a father is a drug addict and absent from a child's life then becomes sober to save the day, there's two narratives that people believe that are both lies. One is that the child hates the father, then rebels against the father. He never did that. One is we live happily ever after. That hasn't happened either, and rarely does. But everybody wants you to believe these lies and the truth is he's unresolved about it, I'm unresolved about it and we love one another.

I wrote a song about how one day he's going to hate me - he doesn't hate me, but he has every reason to and all the lies of our society tell you he's going to. It's very peculiar. He was proud to become a musician. I was like what are you trying to do, kill me? I remember saying that. Like that's the last thing I want for my child is to go through this fucking hell that me and most of my friends have gone through, whether you succeed or fail. It's a horrible way of life being a musician in this country.

**KB:** In terms of Bob's family, I thought one of the things Bob probably would've avoided with me, and he was gracious enough to allow me to film was him and Nancy [his mother, who he was told from an early age was his sister] together. So I felt like that was very uncomfortable and I pushed to make that happen, but I think when he signed on, he signed on for what his life really was.

**BF:** Yeah, I don't mind it.

**KB:** It was just...it was tense.

**BF:** [laughs] I think that comes across in the film.



# BOB AND THE MONSTER

**At the premiere, Bob said he hadn't seen the last 45 minutes of it and for both of you, was that a nerveracking experience?**

**BF:** That last part because it's almost impossible to document recovery. Nobody does it well. We have a TV show about it, it's kind of like all fluff and happy endings. If you go back and you're a fan of the show, you go back and look at Mike Starr's narrative at the end of that season. [He appeared as if he kicked his habit.] He died last week on drugs. There's no happy endings. Just a constant evolution and self-actualization that happens when you recover and it doesn't fit to the formatted belief system of the American psyche that we all live happily ever after. If we're all living happily ever after, God help us.

**KB:** But there's also a lot of things that are wrong with the recovery industry. According to Bob and according to the research that I've done, it's a movie in itself.

**BF:** That's what she discovered and that's the cut I saw and it was like 45 minutes of trying to explain Suboxone [the drug that's prescribed to curb addiction instead of therapy]. [laughs] But now she did a great job with this. It's the story of me through the journey of the record business and the recovery business and I'll tell you an interesting thing. When the Chili Peppers were taking off way ahead of us, right around "Mother's Milk" - nobody sold many records - but the Chili Peppers were always ahead of us and when they went from the Palladium to the Greek Theater, that's a big jump and we were still playing the Palace and the Roxy and playing the same things, most of the music business bases your success or failure on a thing called "butts in the seats." Well, the recovery industry has another saying, it's called "heads on beds." Isn't that frightening?

**KB:** That should be the name of the next movie.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

## LOG LINE

A portrait of outspoken indie-rock hero Bob Forrest, from his life-threatening struggle with addiction to his transformation into one of the most influential and controversial drug counselors in the US today.

## SYNOPSIS

A documentary chronicling the life of charismatic singer/songwriter Bob Forrest, from his days as front man of the indie rock band Thelonious Monster, through his life-threatening struggle with addiction, to his triumph and transformation into one of the most influential addiction counselors in the US today.

BOB AND THE MONSTER crafts contemporary footage, animation and compelling interviews with rare archival performances and exclusive personal videos from Bob's past to reveal the complex layers of this troubled, but optimistic soul. Testimony from his peers, including Courtney Love, Anthony Kiedis, Flea, John Frusciante, members of Jane's Addiction, Fishbone and Guns n' Roses add texture, but it's the depth of Bob's music, interwoven throughout the film, that illuminates this unforgettable and truly inspirational story.

Director Keirda Bahruth has spent six years filming Bob Forrest and depicts a fascinating portrait of an intrepid soul whose passion for living and self-discovery is evident in both his failures and successes. The film traces his extraordinary life, from a traumatic childhood event through decades of poverty and drug addiction; numerous menial jobs and an unlikely rise to stardom with his band Thelonious Monster; then back again through homelessness, 22 drug rehabs and jail; to his unexpected transformation into an acclaimed drug and alcohol counselor who now dedicates his life to helping fellow musicians recover from addiction.

BOB AND THE MONSTER transcends the stereotype of heroin addicted rock star and reveals a more personal message. Bob's story is a living testament to the heights of human courage and the ability to shape your own destiny.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

## KEIRDA BAHRUTH DIRECTOR / PRODUCER

Keirda Bahruth is a freelance director / producer based in Los Angeles. She began her career working on various music videos before transitioning into the commercial world on ads for Toyota, Apple and many others.

A move to New York City via Coppos Films teamed her up with legendary Saturday Night Live director Jim Signorelli, famous for his popular commercial parody sketches. Signorelli mentored Keirda and instructed her to shoot behind-the-scenes footage of life at SNL for the show's 25th anniversary special, which gave her complete access to the inner workings of the show. SNL was an unlikely place to develop a taste for documentary filmmaking, and yet this was the breeding ground for Keirda's love of filming extraordinary people in their day-to-day lives.

After three full seasons at SNL, Keirda returned to Los Angeles and joined the nascent world of reality television, which had just begun to sweep the nation. She has directed and produced shows for CBS, NBC / Universal, Discovery Channel, E!, Fox, The WB and MTV.

In 2004, Keirda founded Shaker Films with partner Rick Ballard and began shooting her first documentary film titled BOB AND THE MONSTER. In 2008, while filming BOB AND THE MONSTER, Keirda was recruited by Interloper Films to produce the documentary feature WE LIVE IN PUBLIC. The film led to many successes, including a Grand Jury Prize win at Sundance 2009, an acquisition by MoMA, massive amounts of incredible press and a theatrical release.

BOB AND THE MONSTER premiered at the 2011 SXSW Film Festival and has since played such prestigious festivals as Hot Docs, Sheffield, Silverdocs and many more. The upcoming fall schedule will include screenings in Seattle, Sound Unseen, Citizen Jane, Bergen International and will play in competition at IDFA in Holland.

## KEIRDA BAHRUTH FILMOGRAPHY:

BOB AND THE MONSTER (2011): Director / Producer

WE LIVE IN PUBLIC (2009): Producer



# BOB AND THE MONSTER

Q&A with director Keirda Bahruth

**When did you first learn about Bob Forrest's story?**

I was a fan of his band Thelonious Monster back in the late 80's, early 90's so I already had an awareness of him, but it wasn't until twenty years later when I heard a record by The Bicycle Thief, which was Bob Forrest's new band, that I became intrigued by him as a person. It's such a highly personal, beautiful record and his story just spilled out of the speakers. I became kind of obsessed with that record for a year or so and kept coming back to this idea of making a film about him. It seemed like such an unusually inspirational story and an uncommon one in the world of rock and roll.

**Was Bob reluctant in sharing any of his story? What about any of the interviewees?**

Bob was an open book most of the time, incredibly gracious and inviting, but there were in fact times where I felt he didn't trust my motives. His story has the potential to be treated in a very exploitive, "Behind The Music" manner. Even though I knew that he felt my artistic intentions were admirable, he shut down at times and I would have to figure out how to work my way back in. As far as the people interviewed in the film, everyone was very open to talk about Bob, what was challenging was finding patients to talk about their experience with him. Anonymity is important to addicts and alcoholics and I respect that so when the answer was no, I didn't push. I just came up with other ways to tell the story.

**What was the process for getting the film together – how long did it take from concept to completion?**

It took a total of 6 and half years to complete. Most of that was out of economic necessity, which in the end benefited the film greatly because this would have been an entirely different film if I had found financing in 2004.

**His story is familiar to the history of rock and roll. What makes Bob's story different?**

Bob is like the horse whisperer of addiction. He has a precise talent of knowing how to lead someone out of his or her own darkness. Everyone is different; the same thing doesn't work for every case. And when your dealing with addiction you have a very short window to act and he is able to figure that out quickly and respond. There are plenty of rock stars that find their way out of addiction and that's fantastic, but that's not what makes him unique. He's a skilled counselor whose message of love and tolerance and compassion runs contrary to the industrial complex of the modern day recovery industry.

**How familiar were you with addiction/recovery before the film? What did you learn from it?**

I had some knowledge of addiction and recovery before I started this film through friends and personal experiences so I felt comfortable discussing these ideas with Bob and the people in the film. I knew that I wanted to stay respectful to the subject and stray away from the opportunity to exploit. I also wanted to respect the anonymity element and was able to do so by always keeping it about Bob and his experience. What I've taken away from this experience and from Bob is the concept of tolerance and that's not to say that I didn't have that before I walked in, but the extent of that tolerance was limited. Bob's message of tolerance is limitless when it comes to helping people with addiction.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

Q&A continued...

**You paint a great picture of the Los Angeles scene circa mid 1980's. How familiar with the culture/music scene before you started shooting?**

I was around for it. It was a really exciting time in Los Angeles and I have never felt like it was properly portrayed. The focus has always been on the glam / heavy metal scene because that's what was on MTV, but there was this much cooler, more creative scene happening that no one talks about. Bands like Jane's Addiction, Fishbone, Red Hot Chili Peppers and, of course, Thelonious Monster were the bands that mattered in my opinion, and also had a lasting impact on my generation.

**Where did you get a hold of the archive footage? It's incredible. Talk about weaving into the film.**

One thing that's beneficial about making a film that takes place largely in Hollywood in the 1980s is that so many people back then had video cameras. And luckily a lot of those videotapes survived. We've had more than a few people offer up their old VHS tapes in exchange for a DVD copy because they no longer have a VCR.

Also, with the advent of MTV, there were plenty of people in the music scene able to transition their filmmaking skills into careers making music videos. In fact that's how we lucked into the super 8 footage that's so prevalent throughout the film. Jane Simpson and Tina Silvey made the first Thelonious Monster music video with the theme of "a day in the life of Bob". I had seen the video online and I tracked down Jane and Tina and begged them for any footage they had. Then one day Tina showed up at the office with all the dailies and sound reels from the shoot. My jaw hit the floor. I have been so impressed by the graciousness and generosity of people who knew Bob, who've known Bob for years and who were so willing to participate in the telling of his story.

Former band members KK Barrett and Jon Huck combed through their personal archives and turned up absolute gold for us. Making this film for so many years, I really felt like I had to earn the trust of people who hold these materials, and to let them know that I had the utmost respect for them and for telling a story that they could be proud to be a part of. It wasn't until after 4 years of working on this film that drummer Pete Weiss was comfortable enough with me to share the 3 hours of footage he shot while on tour with the band in 1992.

We also put out massive Internet calls for footage and posted on boards. People really came out of the woodwork, but it took time. This film could not have been made on the quick.

# BOB AND THE MONSTER

Q&A continued...

**The choice to use stop-motion animation/animation is fascinating. It makes the drug taking more palatable. Can you describe your approach to the animation?**

I always knew that animation was going to be a part of the film. There's only so much archival footage to be had. A friend of mine sent a reel from "Les lapins de l'espace", a French animation company. I watched two stop-motion pieces they had done and was blown away by how raw it was and how much emotion their clay figures were capable of pulling out of me. Their use of dramatic lighting was so impressive I immediately knew they would be able to capture both the seduction and ultimate desperation associated with shooting drugs. Claymation was also very popular in the 80's so it had a nice organic feel of the time for me.

**The last part of the film deals with the diverse approaches of the recovery business. Bob advocates a non-drug approach. How much research did you do to verify Bob's story? Did talk to anyone with opposing philosophies?**

We researched medical journals and read articles and talked to other addicts and all of the information was consistent about the highly addictive nature of these pharmaceuticals, but I didn't want the film to have a concrete opinion on whether or not drugs should be used to help addicts get sober. I wanted the film to open up a conversation about it because we are in fact seeing an increase in prescription drug casualties. Bob isn't hard-core in one direction, he believes that certain people need the assistance of medication when it comes to withdrawal, but it's the abuse of that system that he is questioning.

Bob is pulling the curtain away to reveal facts about the recovery industry that everyone has a right to know about. I love that about him. He's carrying the same punk rock ethos he had 20 years ago into his new life.

**What do you hope audiences take away from the film? Do you hope this prompts a renaissance for the music of Thelonious Monster?**

I hope audiences will take away Bob's message of perseverance and hope. It's a simple message that can be repackaged a million ways because sometimes people need to be reminded of that. It still impresses me what this guy has been through and that he still perseveres with such conviction. I would also hope that it opens up some dialogue about the recovery industry, what we can do to make improvements on its' outdated practices and get people talking about the importance of aftercare. And on top of that, if people were able to discover the Monster through the film, I'd be thrilled.

**How would Bob view the rock adage/ classic Neil Young line... "it's better to burn out then fade way." It seems there's another way.**

I don't think Bob believes in burning out or fading away. He's saying there is another choice. Ultimately, that's one of the main themes of the film, that the people who are mad for living need to stay mad for living the whole time.

# Bob AND THE MONSTER

## CAST, in alphabetical order:

David Adelson  
Steven Adler  
Buddy Arnold  
Eric Avery  
Iris Berry  
Dallas Don Burnett  
Chris Carey  
Anne D'Agnillo  
Dix Denney  
Norwood Fisher  
Flea  
Bob Forrest  
Elijah Forrest  
Nancy Forrest  
Frenchie  
John Frusciante  
Gary Gersh

Brett Gurewitz  
Gibby Haynes  
Jon Huck  
Anthony Keidis  
Courtney Love  
Mike Martt  
Angelo Moore  
Keith Morris  
Brendan Mullen  
Patty Peck  
Stephen Perkins  
Dr. Drew Pinsky  
Zander Schloss  
Max Smith  
Shelly Sprague  
Scott Weiland  
Pete Weiss

## CREDITS:

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY

Keirda Bahruth

PRODUCED BY

Rick Ballard  
Keirda Bahruth  
Austin Wilkin

CO-PRODUCER

Scott Pourroy

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

John Battsek  
Andrew Ruhemann  
David Beitchman  
Ricky Beck Mahler  
Morgan Langley

CO-EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

Marc D. Bruder  
Alex Hill

EDITED BY

Joshua Altman

SENIOR ASSOCIATE PRODUCER

Sandra Valdivieso

CONSULTING PRODUCERS

Kenneth Shiffrin  
Aaron Morrison  
Jeff Frey



# Bob AND THE MONSTER

ORIGINAL SCORE	Josh Klinghoffer
ADDITIONAL EDITING	Rick Ballard Adam Lichenstien Bartley Powers
MAIN TITLE DESIGN	Dave Eagle
ANIMATION	Les lapins de l'espace
COLORIST	Bob Curreri Mohawk Color Studios
SOUND DESIGN	William Flynn
SOUND MIX	Jeff Fuller   Play Sound Rick Ballard
LEGAL SERVICES	David Beitchman Beitchman & Zekian, PC

## PRODUCER BIOS:

### **JOHN BATTSEK**

#### **EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**

John Battsek conceived and produced Passion Pictures' first feature, *One Day in September*, which went on to win an Academy Award for Best Feature Documentary and an Emmy in 2000. John has since accrued a slate of over twenty acclaimed documentary films including *Once in a Lifetime*, *Black Sun*, *In the Shadow of the Moon*, *My Kid Could Paint That* and *Sergio*. In 2010 *Stones in Exile* premiered at the 2010 Cannes Film Festival in Director's Fortnight and two films premiered at Sundance Film Festival: *Restrepo* opened the festival and went on to win the Grand Jury Prize, along with *The Tillman Story*, which was acquired by The Weinstein Company. Both films were released theatrically in the U.S. summer 2010. Battsek executive produced James Marsh's feature documentary, *Project Nim*, which premiered at January's 2011 Sundance to great acclaim and will be released in the US this spring. More recently, Battsek executive produced two new films *Bob & the Monster* and *Better This World*; both premiering at 2011 SXSW Film Festival.

### **RICK BALLARD**

#### **PRODUCER**

Rick owns and operates Acetate Records, a, L.A. based record label he founded in 1999. With an impressive roster of artists, he is one of the few truly independent labels surviving and thriving. Rick has filmed hundreds of live shows and lends his talent for capturing spontaneous moments from behind the lens. In 2001, he produced and filmed "Badsville," a documentary film distributed by Image Entertainment, focusing on the Hollywood music scene of the late 1990s.

# Bob <sup>AND</sup><sub>THE</sub> MONSTER

## **AUSTIN WILKIN PRODUCER**

Austin Wilkin is a producer and writer living in Los Angeles, CA. A graduate of Boston University's College of Communications with a B.S. in Film & Broadcasting, Austin has worked on numerous films and television productions including "Monument Ave," "Rock Star," "Scrubs", "Sex in the City" and the documentary feature films "We Live in Public" (2009 Sundance Grand Jury Prize winner) and "Bob and the Monster".

## **SCOTT POURROY CO-PRODUCER**

After numerous years as a producer of visual effects for features, commercials and music videos, Scott founded A Few Miles North Productions, a boutique music video production company in 1999. After producing over 100 music videos at AFMN for a variety of artists ranging from Merle Haggard to Snoop Dogg, the company was sold in 2004. In addition to his work in reality TV, music video and commercial production, he also served as Post Supervisor on the award winning documentary "We Live in Public".

## SEE THE TRAILER, SELECT CLIPS AND MORE AT:

Downloadable press kit available on website, high-resolution stills and video materials are available upon request.

WEBSITE: [www.bobandthemonster.com](http://www.bobandthemonster.com)

TWITTER: [@BobnTheMonster](https://twitter.com/BobnTheMonster)

FACEBOOK: <http://tinyurl.com/batmFacebook>

YOUTUBE: <http://tinyurl.com/batmtrailer>

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