

POWER TOOLS FOR PROS.

GET IT DONE

amazonPrime

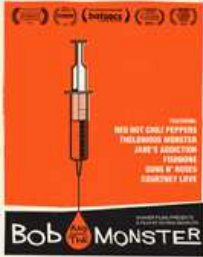
amazonPrime

DVD Reviews Quick Index

- [DVD Releases](#)
- [Recent DVD Reviews](#)
- [Search for a DVD review...](#)

Search

Case Number 26458: Small Claims Court



Bob and the Monster (Blu-ray)

Passion Pictures // 2011 // 98 Minutes // Rated R
 Reviewed by Judge Bill Gibron // October 24th, 2013

- [View Judge Gibron's Dossier](#)
- [E-mail Judge Gibron](#)
- [Printer Friendly Review](#)

Every purchase you make through these Amazon links supports DVD Verdict's reviewing efforts. Thank you!

Buy Now >> amazon

Buy Now >> amazon

Buy Now >> amazon

Scales of Justice

Judgment: 90

Perp Profile

Studio: [Passion Pictures](#)

Video Formats:

- 1.78:1 Non-Anamorphic (1080i)

Audio Formats:

- PCM 2.0 Stereo (English)

Subtitles:

- None

Running Time: 98 Minutes

Release Year: 2011

MPAA Rating: Rated R

Genres:

- [Blu-ray](#)
- [Concerts and Musicals](#)
- [Documentary](#)

All Rise...

Judge Bill Gibron thinks a good alternative title would be Bob and Some Kind of Monster.

Distinguishing Marks

- Commentaries
- Featurette
- Trailer

The Charge

The needle and the damage undone.

Accomplices

- [IMDb](#)
- [Official Site](#)

The Case

If the phoenix can rise from the ashes of destruction to be a new, better bird, then Bob Forrest can go from ace post-punk musician to drug addict to drug counselor extraordinaire over the course of his cruelly self-destructive life. With a back story only Jack Nicholson could appreciate and a collective of friends including members of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Fishbone, and Black Flag, this future pain in Dr. Drew's side went from screaming on the sidelines to fronting the almost famous outfit Thelonious Monster. Taking a page out of Anton Newcombe's Brian Jonestown Massacre handbook, he then spent the next few years making records, touring the world, and alienating himself from everyone who was ever close to him. Eventually, he turned to a drug he was "destined" to abuse—heroin—and the result was a depressing downward spiral into irrelevancy, homelessness, and interpersonal dead ends. Eventually, Forrest got clean and found sanctuary in the Musicians Assistance Program, a cause which catapulted him into the ranks of internationally known recovery experts. Rallying against a "medication" based approach to treatment, he remains a controversial and complex figure.

As the subject of the insightful documentary **Bob and the Monster**, Forrest remains a fringe familiar face. Anyone who watched the various incarnation of Dr. Drew's Celebrity Rehab will remember the man, long scraggly dreadlocked hair under an ill-fitting hat, voice sounding like a dozen burn-outs while his approach spoke to compassion and personal responsibility. There may be those who recall his work with Thelonious Monster, though the various snippets of songs presented here do little to ramp up a revisit to his past catalog. In a sense, **Bob and the Monster** outlines a life determined to die at the end of a needle, a prescient understanding of one's own inner weaknesses and how an artistic scene in sunny California lead to as many smack casualties as classic albums. We get testimonials from Flea and Anthony Kiedis. Ex-girlfriends and Monster band members add to the color and detail. Perhaps the most compelling comments come from former Pepper John Frusciante, who acknowledges that, without Forrest's help, he'd be dead today. There is some startling before and after footage to confirm such sentiments.

But it's the main man's story that attracts the most attention. Forrest is a psychological whirling dervish, at least at first, and his mind runs at hypersonic levels. During the rock phase of the narrative, he is literally bouncing off the squatter's walls, crashing with pals and pretending to be part of the growing post-punk movement. Then he becomes the lead singer of Thelonious Monster and the movie turns into one of those terrific Behind the Music like overviews of talent trumped by the ever-changing popular culture. While many still love the combo, they didn't become superstars and Forrest spent all his money on drugs. Before long, we are into the clichéd "down and out" phase, though in Forrest's case, the desire to do something positive outweighs the need to shoot up. In between, we see the fun and the fear, the concert triumphs and the onstage meltdowns that would become Forrest's legacy. Eventually, he discovers MAP, becomes a volunteer, then outspoken advocate, then in demand counselor, then a bit of a firebrand free spirit.

By the end, Monster is back together and gigging, Forrest is himself a much sought after therapist, and there's a real

sense of completeness and closure. **Bob and the Monster** might be a bit too pat, cruising over every cornerstone in Forrest's life with little outside perspective, but the results are just as engaging. Keirda Bahruth's direction incorporates stop motion scenes of junkie antics, a lot of talking head space, and a great deal of introspection on Forrest's part. But the message kind of gets mangled here, suggesting that you can more or less mainline yourself to (near) death and then come out of it a better person and a bigger success. Sure, you have to stop using, but the only real victimizing we see is on Frusciante and ex-Guns N' Roses drummer Steven Adler's part. Forrest found a way to cope without copping, and this might be the main theme of **Bob and the Monster**. If drugs are an escape, this film argues that the journey through junk ends up tragic or telling. Luckily for our subject, he found the necessary detour before death.

Offered up in a nice Blu-ray package, obsessives will probably fault Shaker Films for not producing something of reference quality. On the other hand, when you consider that the vast majority of the movie is made up of archival footage and home movies, as well as currently shot interviews and added material, the 1080i, 1.78:1 image is pretty good. There are some softness issues and a bit of ghosting, but overall, the transfer is presentable. So is the sonic situation here. Granted, we are only given a LPCM 2.0 stereo mix, but the music never drowns out the dialogue and the overall feeling is polished and professional. This is a documentary, after all, not some immersive action film. Finally, on the added content side of things, we are offered two commentary tracks, one with Forrest alone and another with director Bahruth and producer Rick Ballard. Both are excellent, with the former dealing more with the movie itself and the latter highlighting the road to getting Forrest's story told. We also get some behind the scenes footage on the making of the stop motion animation, and a trailer.

With its "happy" ending and PC-appropriate message, **Bob and the Monster** would seem like your standard rags to riches to rags to redemption story. Thanks to the man at the middle of this narrative, the film transcends such trappings to be about more. So much more.

The Verdict

Not guilty. An excellent documentary on a fascinating subject.

Give us your feedback!

Did we give **Bob and the Monster (Blu-ray)** a fair trial? [yes](#) / [no](#)



unlimited streaming
of thousands of movies & TV shows
+ 2-Day Free Shipping

Share This Review

Recommend { 0

Tweet { 0

• [Stm](#)

Follow DVD Verdict

Other Reviews You Might Enjoy

- [Stagedoor \(2006\)](#)
- [The End Of America](#)
- [The History Channel Presents: The Race To The Moon](#)
- [Young And Restless In China](#)

Discover gifts
GUARANTEED
to please



L.L.Bean
FREE SHIPPING
▶ **SHOP NOW**