



Photo Credit : Brad Valdez

The Bicycle Thief

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARTEMIS TO RELEASE ALBUM FROM BOB FORREST'S
THE BICYCLE THIEF



Artemis Records is set to release the debut album from **The Bicycle Thief**, featuring Bob Forrest from L.A.'s infamous Thelonious Monster. *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song* hits stores on May 8.

Originally released on California indie Golden Voice in 1999, the album features two new tracks "Song For A Kevin Spacey Movie" and "Trustfund Girl." The first single is a new version of "Aspirations" re-titled "Stoned." Guest appearances include longtime friend John Frusciante (Red Hot Chili Peppers) playing the guitar solo in the left speaker on "Cereal Song."

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PRESS RELEASE



THE BICYCLE THIEF

Talking to Bob Forrest of *The Bicycle Thief* can be both fascinating and confusing, but never boring. With his southern Californian suburban drawl and penchant for sudden philosophical observations, Forrest comes across as part Jeff Spicoli and part Sophoclean prophet—a five dimensional jigsaw puzzle that speaks in truthful and poignant riddles. Equally capable of quoting lines by T.S. Elliot and T.S.O.L. in the same sentence, Forrest is like a tour guide that disappears a mile in front of you, only to tap you on the shoulder an hour later.

Born in Los Angeles and raised in Palm Springs and Huntington Beach, Bob Forrest is southern California's native son. He knows the freeways by heart, can get from Sunset Boulevard to Crenshaw Boulevard in four seconds, and counts both high profile movie stars and homeless bums that slipped through the cracks of life as his closest friends. With his scraggly charm and infectious charisma, Forrest, like some kind of rock and roll version of Woody Allen's "Zelig," has a knack for showing up in the most unlikely places. His resume' is enough to make even the most musically motivated aspirant blush. From gambling with The Clash's Joe Strummer in Las Vegas, to being the one to introduce New Order's Bernard Sumner to David Lee Roth at a nightclub, to living in a house with The Red Hot Chili Peppers' John Frusciante, that Frusciante later burned down, Forrest's exploits, that have come from almost twenty years of touring the country, make him perhaps one of the most ubiquitous presence's in music today.

Orphaned by the time he was nineteen, Forrest turned down an opportunity to go to USC to study journalism. He worked both as a D.J. and in a bookstore and eventually hooked up with some local musicians he met while attending classes at L.A. City College. In 1983 the newfound friends formed Thelonious Monster, and from there Forrest's life kicked into a hedonistic and dangerous overdrive. While together on a full-time basis, Thelonious Monster was considered one of the best live bands around, and they released a dizzying, hook-laden, and raucous triptych of albums (*Next Saturday Afternoon*, *Stormy Weather*, and *Beautiful Mess*), that in the lexicon of the genre are long-considered to be post-punk classics.

After Thelonious Monster disbanded, Forrest took a hiatus from making music for the last eight years, and the release of *The Bicycle Thief*'s debut, *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song*, marks a return to the ring for the singer/songwriter and after one listen it becomes immediately clear that his right hook is as lethal and as potent as ever. Forrest, who has been singing all of his life about friends who won and lost their battles with drug addiction, spent the better part of the last eight years battling his own substance abuse problems and working on getting his life back together.

You Come And Go Like A Pop Song is a sizzling testament to both the rigors and benefits of living clean—the observations are more acute, the humor is sharper, and the hooks are more irresistible than anything he's ever done. Set against the backdrop of Los Angeles, the album explores the darkness of the city, the emptiness of addiction and the messes we make when we love someone so much we screw it all up. From the fevered and blistering look at sobriety, to the breezy insomniac's lullaby "Rainin' (4am)," *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song* comes across a collection of memorable and revelatory fight songs for a distracted world.

Although it contains elements of blues, punk, and country, *The Bicycle Thief*'s debut isn't a departure for Forrest in his lyrical focus—it's still populated by the same lovable

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BIOGRAPHY

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losers, glamorous disasters, and trashy charmers, but it asks deeper questions than his previous work. On "Stoned," the narrator, faced with his sons' indifference to school and the life of a teenager, looks within himself and finds that he shares the same feelings: "I've got a twelve-year-old-boy, and he is always bored and so are all his friends, and so am I..." Elsewhere, on "Tennis Shoes," when the speaker takes an unabashedly honest look at his seemingly normal existence, and declares: "I don't beg nothing from no one, mow my lawns on the weekends..." he seems oddly comfortable and comfortably at odds living in the suburbs as a normal guy. The beauty of *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song* is how it carefully examines how strange it is to be normal, and how quiet the world can be when it's self-destructing.

"What interests me," Forrest says of his song's lyrical contents, "is that people are okay when they are striving to get what they want. It's then that they seem to have meaning and purpose. It's getting it when all hell breaks loose. That's what a lot of my songs are about—that disaster period, when people get what they want and aren't satisfied because getting what you want is never how you think it's going to be."

You Come And Go Like A Pop Song is an album that surveys the moral decay of a society that has succumbed to the material world and lost all feeling for the physical and spiritual world. Although on the surface the album's title directly refers to the wonder and transformative nature of a three-minute pop song, the bigger question it seems to be asking is: Once your life has been changed how do you start to live? Forrest's own life was changed when he was thirteen-years-old and saw the movie version of "The Lenny Bruce Story." It set off a lifelong love affair with the media and the way we communicate with each other through the media. "I didn't have parents, so I was completely brought up and formed all my ideas from the media and its romantic notions," Forrest says. "I'm still so completely obsessed with it. This idea that the tube and the newspaper and the Internet and the radio connect you to the world around you with you not really having to participate in it. I know every episode of "I Love Lucy," and I know every movie that Sean Young has been in, I know that she left a dead cat on James Woods' porch, and I know what Paul Bowles and William Burroughs talked about fifty years ago in Tangiers. What baffles me is that all that is stored in my memory and I wonder what used to be stored in there before all this. I think that this information overload is what creates these drastic neuroses that we have in our society—there's so much information inside people that didn't used to be there. It overwhelms us. Before the twentieth century what were we thinking about? I think we were thinking about each other and now its been replaced by all this information. I'm a byproduct of that."

Older and wiser than his days in Thelonious Monster, in his music Forrest has become more introspective and contemplative. Whether singing about his father, or about being a father himself, Forrest brings to every Bicycle Thief number an internal reasoning with the self, and arrives at the conclusion that although we're not going to live forever, we have to be good to people in order to survive. Forrest, who lived the first part of his rock and roll life filled with the kind of hedonism that would make Perry Farrell look like an altar boy, uses his sobriety as a way of looking at the world through a whole new lens. If anything, Forrest, who studies people with the intensity of an anthropologist, now has the best seat in the house, and his observations of the human race are more pointed and astute than ever. Whether it's the bluesy burn of "L.A. Country Hometown Blues," or the haunting "Boy At A Bus Stop," Forrest's compositions have a broken grace and a cracked beauty that can only be arrived at by living and watching the gorgeous and sad orbits of the people around him. "I find the world around me very interesting," he says. "I don't necessarily like it, but I'm just astonished at how people behave, what they do, and what happens."

One of the main themes of The Bicycle Thief's debut is the decadence of consumerism and the superfluity of conspicuous consumption. In a world where many don't have food, clothes, or shelter, there are those that can't resist buying an Armani suit, a bigger house, or another Mercedes. Although Forrest feels the temptations of the material world provide nothing but

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emptiness, he admits that he too is seduced by the notion of having things. "I make myself sick," he says. "I have five televisions in a four bedroom house. I have two cars, I have three dogs, I have two VCR's and I have thousands CD's and movies. I think that I have more than any human being should ever want and I still don't have enough and I know that there are people in this neighborhood, in this city, in this country, in this world that don't have enough to eat today."

Forrest may be aware of his own shortcomings—on "Hurt" he even admits "I've made mistakes that are irreversible..." but it's the residents of L.A. proper that really frustrate him. "You can measure the greed and selfishness in the atmosphere of Los Angeles," Forrest says. "People always talk about God and spirituality and then they get all excited because someone bought a new Porsche. That's L.A.—spirituality and Porsche's. I've been all over the world and there is no other city that is so consumed by who you are and what you do, than Los Angeles. There's no way that New York or London can even compare. In L.A. you are defined by how much money you make and you're treated accordingly."

Although *The Bicycle Thief* is set to take the world by storm—in the meantime Forrest is not one to sit still. He is already working on a follow-up, and *Thelonious Monster* is now alive and well, and rumored to even be planning a new album themselves. In spite of his association with *Thelonious Monster*, Forrest is emphatically clear that *The Bicycle Thief*, which has had a series of personnel changes, is anything but a side project or a busman's holiday. "The Bicycle Thief is me," Forrest insists, "just like *Badly Drawn Boy* is him, and *Everlast* is that guy—other people play on their records, but it's just them." In addition to his musical duties with *The Bicycle Thief* and *Thelonious Monster*, Forrest is a busy man. Away from his own music, he is active in local Los Angeles politics, and is on the Board of Directors of *The Musician's Assistance Program*, an organization founded by '40s jazz player *Buddy Arnold*. "We do what the union is supposed to be doing for musicians but doesn't," Forrest says of the M.A.P. which helps musicians battle substance abuse problems. Although he has done a great deal for the M.A.P. Forrest is decidedly modest about his role: "I do day to day stuff," he says, "but I like it—plus I'm good at it."

In the meantime Forrest remains Los Angeles' prodigal son and its greatest spectator. From its ghettos, its boulevards, and its battered promenades, Forrest maintains his romance and his bitterness with southern California. His compositions are catchy blasts of irony, truth, and sadness, that traverse not only the roads of his native soil, but the roads of the human heart. Armed with a unique philosophical perspective, a sense of humor, and the ability to write some of the most infectious songs around, on *You Come And Go Like A Pop Song*, Bob Forrest emerges as the post-punk poet laureate of the City of Quartz. "The world that everybody sees as black and white," he says, "I see as purple and red, and everyone sees it right side up and I see it upside down. That's the way I've always been and the bottom line is I find it all terribly amusing. I would consider myself to be a philosopher more than a musician and the songs are an extension of what I think and what I believe. I'm not saying that things are terrible, I'm saying let's look at ourselves. I don't believe that there's any true saints—I'm just as full of shit as the next guy, it's just that I know it-- and I just want to point it out a little bit."

Los Angeles Times

Friday, October 15, 1999

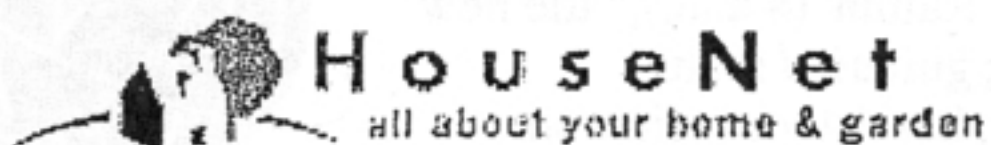
Home Edition Section: Calendar Page: F-22

By: RICHARD CROMELIN *** Three Stars

The Bicycle Thief, "You Come and Go Like a Pop Song," Goldenvoice. If people remember Bob Forrest at all, six years after his last record with Thelonious Monster, it's probably as the L.A. rock scene's quintessential loser--an eccentric, ingratiating talent who caught all the breaks and quickly squandered them. Forrest knows it too, and his first album with his new group is a scrappy, sprawling jumble of regret, defiance, despair, anger and hope. "So many things used to mean so much to me, but now I just can't remember what they are," he sings in his weary twang, as the Bicycle Thief's acoustic-grounded garage-rock gathers around his rolling narrative. With his disarming candor, Forrest doesn't always make himself likable, but his refusal to contrive a storybook redemption gives weight to the small triumphs he does allow. The greatest of them is unspoken but unmistakable in every one of these brave and touching performances: his rediscovery of music's purity and power.

~ Albums are rated on a scale of one star (poor), two stars (fair), three stars (good) and four stars (excellent). The albums are already released unless otherwise noted.

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MUSIC * FEATURE

Nov 26 - Dec 2, 1999.

Bob Forrest Tells All

"Johnny Depp made me do it!"

by Brendan Mullen

AFTER BURNING NEARLY AS MANY BRIDGES AS THE Roman army, Bob Forrest kicks off his first postThelonious Monster album by announcing remorse. He's not gonna do it again, he's not going through it all again, Bob yowls on *You Come and Go Like a Pop Song*, his latest round of episodic dope-fiend confessional-repentance sagas, wherein self-image bludgeoned by excess finally begets illumination, transcendence and rebirth, recurrent Bob themes that can only be delivered in that gritty, profoundly Catholic adenoidal squawk which is so deeply Bob.



Bobsville: Go with it
Photo by Debra DiPaolo

The reformed suburban-stoner Sammy Hagar fan from Huntington Beach, who once said he dreamt of being a spiritual link between Darby Crash and Top Jimmy, is back for the first time since the undervalued *Beautiful Mess* (Capitol, 1992). Bob is heard on this new live-in-the-studio set of semi-acoustic folkish pop rock with good old-fashioned five-stringed guitars strumming away and at least three or four great tunes mastered loud and hot in a first-rate Pro-Tools-in-the-bedroom production by Marc Hunter and Josh Blum. Lyrically, as always, everything's utterly personal in Bobsville: It's his bloodied bed of regret, he says, but at the end of the day, the dear chap wants you to know he's still trying, trying.

And so Bob's back to work courtesy of Goldenvoice Recordings, with a revised post-corporate indie philosophy: If you carve out a small brand-name niche and sell a few thousand CDs here and there, plus a few tours thrown in, well, you'll never be as rich as former roommates Flea and Swan, but it sure beats washing dishes at Millie's or being a 38-year-old delivery boy, a light-bulb-flash revelation alluded to in "Cereal Song."

Bob's strength on this fine new outing, as in the *Monster*, is as a collaborative lyricist-singer-songwriter whose talent and charisma help to attract the right combination of co-writers, engineers and

Antibalas' liberation Afrobeat. By Jay Babcock

Glam 'n' eggs: Memphis belle Lorette Velvette. By Chris Morris

Sade in love, growth and catharsis. By Ernest Hardy

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A Lot of Night Music
Eduard Tubin's elephantine 11th; Thomas Zehetmair's luscious, vibrant Ludwig Van.

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help to attract the right combination of co-writers, arrangers and musicians to make it happen. Apart from one co-write with former Monster guitarist Dix Denney, the lovely "Rainin' (4 a.m.)," the new crew boasts the immensely creative young guitarist/ multi-instrumentalist/co-writer Josh Klinghoffer, bassist/ co-writer/co-producer Josh Blum and drummer/co-writer Kevin Fitzgerald.



HOLLYWOOD FORUM



REGISTER NOW!

I recently enjoyed an afternoon with clean and funny Bob (Bob at his best), whom I've known on and off since mid-'83 from lurking around the Cathay de Grande, Club Lingerie, the Zero, Power Tools, Raji's and the many other drink-'n'-dope dives of the day. Bob talked about his new band called the Bicycle Thief, the new album, being a dad, education and the shortcomings of the L.A. Unified School District, corporate pop culture, the Musicians Assistance Program and many other things unprintable, and there isn't space anyway.

"NOW I'M IN A BAND WITH A 19-YEAR-OLD AND A 24-year-old," says Bob. "I learn from them, and they pick up a few tips from the old dog, too, so it's cool. Josh, the guitarist, recently turned down a tour with Nine Inch Nails, and when I asked him why, he said, 'It just doesn't excite me -- anybody could play the guitar parts in Trent Reznor's music. I love you and playing *your* music.' That spun my head around. Maybe there really is hope. This was from a kid whose first live gig was seeing Pearl Jam, whose dad was into Led Zep, the Stones and Springsteen a little later, so it's likely our guitar player was conceived with *In Through the Out Door* in the background, or maybe it was *The River!*"

Bob also pointed out that for some of us older fuckers disinclined to roll over, there's the very real dilemma of what to do about the very unfunny nightmare issue of the formal education of our progeny. Dad Bob addresses this over the funky, irresistible groove "Aspirations," about his 12-year-old son, the angel Elijah, who is fed up with school.

"The L.A. Unified School District sure makes my life hell. My son is bored to tears by a whole bunch of cold numbers, dates and facts, which is the way all the LAUSD curricula are designed. The how and the why are always left out, and there's nothing on how all this information relates to kids' lives, or anybody's life, so your kid rebels and fights with you, and all you're trying to do is encourage him to get a basic education.

"But the big upside of being Dad is learning about the world through his perceptions. Although we share the same belief system -- that everything basically sucks -- I'm forced into positive reasoning rather than just whining along with him, and it helps me so much to dwell on the positive.

"One day I noticed hair under his arms, and I'd see him talking to girls, so I said, 'Son, the time has come for us to have a little biology talk,' and the script went something like this:

"You mean, like, we're gonna do the man-to-man sex talk?"

"I said, 'Uh, yes . . . I guess so,' and he went all grave and serious.

"Dad, are you, uh, under the assumption that I'm a virgin?"

"Dude, you're 12 years old!"

BOB HAS A LOT OF FRIENDS WHO CARE, even though he whines on "Boy at a Bus Stop" that he doesn't have a single one, a temporary state of affairs no doubt owing to Bad Bob's lurid addict side and his penchant for extreme outlandishness, such as getting booted from Johnny Depp's exclusive Viper Room bad-boy inner circle for totaling the boss's pickup. This incident earned Bob Hall of Fame status in the Hillbilly Prince's personally named "Waste-O Club," whose elite membership also included such superheavyweight badasses as Gibby "Satan" Haynes, Evan Dando, Shane "I'm Not a Fuckup Like Bob" MacGowan, Al Jourgensen and John "Go With It" Frusciante, with occasional quickie visits by Perry "Gotta Dash" Farrell.

Could you support someone as an artist who once beat RCA out of more cash than McLaren ever squeezed from A&M for the Pistols (somebody over at RCA thought Bob might've been the Dylan of the '80s) if you thought he was a good songwriter? 'Course you would.

Could you get with a guy who emotes about living with John Frusciante during the darkest hours of the latter's hellacious "Your Pussy's Glued to a Building on Fire" period, some of which is captured in Johnny Depp's movie short *Stuff*, just before the young Chili Pepper burned down his Hollywood Hills digs? Rather than calling 911, the composer of "Under the Bridge" once stood over Bob, who was writhing on the floor while plummeting into a major OD, and said in a soothing, reassuring voice, "Just go with it, man . . . it's okay."

The same Bob who survived that little kick in the head was soon able to howl at the moon with laughter following his humiliating brush with the ultimate in Big Top Geek shame: getting booed out at a Clippers game while singing the national anthem wasted on smack and booze.

THE HELLION MYTHS AND LEGENDS ON Bob's way-after-midnight exploits abound ad infinitum, and on his new record Bob once again writes about what he knows best: the agony and the ecstasy, the many near-death experiences, and the dark side of fame. When Bob transcends his pain, sometimes you, the listener, get to go with it.

"I accept that my music doesn't necessarily have mass appeal. I used to blame drugs and alcohol for not getting over, but I've learned to live with the awareness that my music may not be for everybody. And you know what? So what! My music is for the type of people

who want to know if life is worth living, and I'm here to report that, sadly, it is very much so. Life without drugs and alcohol is all about battling with your kid over schoolwork, playing with your dog and telling your mom you love her."

AS A LATE TEEN, BOB FORREST CAME TO punk rock after listening to Rodney's Sunday-night KROQ show: "I bought an import single by the Pistols and went to see the Go-Go's and the Plugz at the Fleetwood in 1980, and was shocked to see older jocks from my high school there with shaven heads smashing each other up. But I knew instinctively punk rock was about so much more than that.

"I started reading *Slash* and saw there was an intelligent, literary side to it, too, which appealed to me as a compulsive reader. I was going to Golden West College in H.B., and, later on, LACC, with the idea of majoring in journalism. I knew something was happening, but didn't know what it was . . . like Mr. Jones in the Dylan song."

While attending LACC circa 1983, Bob hung out at the Cathay de Grande, a where he befriended local blues legend Top Jimmy and got to know Michael Brennan, the club's owner. Bob talked Brennan into hiring him as a between-band DJ: "For \$15 a night and all the booze I could drink, I lamely ditched school. I also drifted into a bit of booking and did some Sunday-afternoon shows at the Cathay and other places, with the Minutemen and Black Flag and others . . ."

Another inspiration was seeing the Replacements in '83.

"Paul Westerberg seemed a geeky-outsider kind of guy like me, who was really into punk rock but who could also write songs that had some meaning and passion -- like Dylan and John Lennon, Neil Young, Elvis Costello, or some of my other favorites. Westerberg was a sensitive, introspective lyricist, which I thought was so cool because you weren't allowed to be sensitive or reflective in punk, and there he was pulling it off without being a sap. Wow, now I was really stoked to try and do something."

Thelonus Monster lasted 11 years, on and off, and made four albums and an EP, and will probably convene for sporadic reunions forever.

"While at LACC I met Pete Weiss, Chris Handsone and Jon Huck, who wanted to start a band but had no singer, and we found we jammed well together. The intent wasn't to get rich and famous. It was just for love of music, but soon it got like 'If we're going to perform drunk, why not rehearse drunk to know what it feels like?' 'Just play music and it'll all fall into place' was our naiveté."

A Fan on Today's Music:

"Freddie Durst [Limp Bizkit] and his ilk amaze the shit out of me. They have literally been able to get dollar signs down on tape, and now Freddie's record even at Interscope, too. Hell, my rock icon for

HOW FRED'S A RECORD EXEC AT INTERSCOPE, TOO. HE'S MY ROCK ICON FOR the millennium, the ultimate combination of rock boorishness, dollars and pop culture turned to shit . . ."

"Call me precious if you want, because music is my religion, and I think of it as life-affirming and soul-supportive and the best thing ever on a Saturday night, but what do I know about it ever since jocks, ignoramuses and other idiots became part of the market share of punk rock and its splintered aftermath?"

"I was talking to Johnny Depp about my beef with Fred and his band, and he said I should go public with it in interviews. I said, 'I can't do that, I can't diss somebody that big -- some even say that Fred's supposed to be a nice guy.' Johnny said, 'Sure you can. You owe it to yourself, to music fans and to pop culture in general.' So here we go: Fred Durst is as much the enemy as the Backstreet Boys and all the fucked-up record execs that sit around agreeing on how evil the machine is, yet none of them will cop to it that they're contributing. It's never them personally. It's always somebody else who's the evil sonofabitch. Even Jon Sidel, a bud for, like, 15 years who now does A&R at Interscope, told me that he was shamelessly just looking for another 'N Sync, while agreeing that the big bad machinations of corporate commerce sucks so hard. So it's not all Fred's fault, I guess, but he's a huge chunk of it. Freddie D. will, of course, respond that I'm just sour grapes and that I should go fuck myself because he's sold nearly 10 million records, whatever, and who am I and what have I done?" [*bursts out laughing uncontrollably*].

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