

VISTA POINT PICTURES  
in association with  
JOWHARAH FILMS  
presents

# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

**EVERY JOURNEY BEGINS WITHIN**

**FILMETS**  
Badalona Film Festival

Official Selection  
New Filmmakers  
Los Angeles

WINNER  
BEST EXPERIMENTAL FILM  
BEST LEAD ACTING SHORT

4 NOMINATIONS  
BEST SHORT FILM  
BEST DIRECTOR OF A SHORT FILM  
BEST MUSIC IN FILM  
BEST COSTUME

COLUMBIA  
GORGE  
2015

MIAMI  
INTERNATIONAL  
FILM FESTIVAL  
2015

WINNER  
COURT MÉTRAGE  
short film corner  
FESTIVAL DE CANNES 2014

DANCES FILMS  
OFFICIAL SELECTION

WINNER  
IndieFEST  
Film Awards

AWARD OF MERIT  
WOMEN FILMMAKERS

DIAMOND AWARD  
INTERNATIONAL FILM  
& PHOTOGRAPHY  
FESTIVAL  
2014

WINNER  
DIAMOND AWARD

NEW HOPE  
FILM FESTIVAL  
OFFICIAL SELECTION  
2014

NOMINATION  
BEST EXPERIMENTAL SHORT

THREE RIVERS  
INTERNATIONAL FILM  
FESTIVAL  
2014

VISTA POINT PICTURES IN ASSOCIATION WITH JOWHARAH FILMS PRESENTS  
**The BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM**

"THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM" ZANE BYRDY GABRIEL VOSS GLADYS NYOTH  
EVA ZEVA CRISTINA BALMORES COSTUME DESIGNER EVELYN HANNA AND EVA ZEVA  
PRODUCTION DESIGNER WEST INDIAN GIRL MUSIC BY VIVEK MADDALA EDITOR BILLY PEAKE PRODUCTION DESIGNER BRIAN PARADA  
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY NATHAN LEVINE-HEANEY WRITTEN BY ARLENE BOGNA AND ANTHONY FERRANTI DIRECTED BY ARLENE BOGNA  
PRODUCED BY ROMELL FOSTER-OWENS AND ANTHONY FERRANTI

Facebook: [WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/THEBALLADOF SNAKEOILSAM](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/THEBALLADOF SNAKEOILSAM)

A film by Arlene Bogna

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

## LOGLINE

An alchemist and snake oil salesman driven by ambition embarks on a mystical journey in pursuit of redemption.

## SYNOPSIS

An alchemist and desert traveler pushes himself beyond exhaustion to invent a magical elixir. After a visit from ethereal spirits, he concocts what he hopes to be a powerful mixture. With his long sought after potion in hand, he faces his nagging doubts and presents his creation to an eclectic group of desert dwellers.

## DESCRIPTION

A desert steampunk fantasy featuring music by West Indian Girl.

Directed by Arlene Bogna; Produced by Romell Foster-Owens and Anthony Ferranti, **The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam** stars Zane Byrdy, Gladys Nyoth, Gabriel Voss, Cristina Balmores, and Eva Zeva.

## TAGLINE

Every journey begins within.



Zane Byrdy in **The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam** directed by Arlene Bogna.

**THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM**

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

**RUN TIME/FORMAT** 13 minutes, 2K (digital), 1.85 aspect ratio

## RELEASE DATES (OFFICIAL SELECTION)

2014 Cannes Short Film Corner (World Premiere)	2014 FILMETS Badalona Film Festival
2014 Dances With Films (US Premiere)	2015 Columbia Gorge International Film Festival
2014 Madrid International Film Festival *	2015 CinéWomen *
2014 Downtown Film Festival - Los Angeles	2015 Miami Independent Film Festival
2014 New Hope Film Festival *	2015 IndieFEST *
2014 Lady Filmmakers Festival *	2015 Jerome Indie Film and Music Festival
2014 International Film and Photography Festival *	2015 I Filmmaker Film Festival
2014 Three Rivers Western Film Festival	2016 NewFilmmakers Los Angeles

## AWARDS

(WINNER) IndieFEST Award of Merit: Women Filmmakers  
(WINNER) CinéWomen Cahiers: Arlene Bogna interview  
(WINNER) *Diamond Award*, International Film & Photography Festival  
(WINNER) *Best Experimental Film, Best Actor in a Short Film, (Nom) Best Supporting Actress*, Lady Filmmakers  
(Nom) *Best Short Film, Best Director of a Short Film, Best Music in Film, Best Costume*, MadridIFF  
(Nom) *Best Experimental Short*, New Hope Film Festival

## PUBLICIST / SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER

Nicolette Fontaine, Discovery Media & Marketing / [nicolettefontaine@comcast.net](mailto:nicolettefontaine@comcast.net) / (561) 302-7782

## OFFICIAL WEBSITE/SOCIAL MEDIA

<http://www.TheBalladOfSnakeOilSam.com> , <http://www.facebook.com/TheBalladOfSnakeOilSam>

**PRESS LIST:** <http://www.arlenebogna.com/#!press/cegh>

**TRAILER:** <http://www.arlenebogna.com/>

## CAST & CREW LIST

Directed by	Arlene Bogna	Director of Photography	Nathan Levine-Heaney
Writer(s)	Anthony Ferranti	Production Designer	Brian Parada
	Arlene Bogna	Editor	Billy Peake
Producer(s)	Romell Foster-Owens	Costume Designer(s)	Evelyn Hanna & Eva Zeva
	Anthony Ferranti	Composer, Original Score	Vivek Maddala
Lead Cast:	Zane Byrdy	Music Composer(s)	Robert James & Eva Zeva (West Indian Girl)
	Gladys Nyoth		
	Gabriel Voss		
	Cristina Balmores		
	Eva Zeva		

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

## ~ QUOTES ~

Marked by audacious narrative twists and gorgeous camera work, The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam is an adventurous work of cinema. Arlene Bogna's desert steampunk fantasy features moments of surreal humour and memorable images, pushing the road trip genre to personal depths and virtuosic aesthetic heights.

~ CINEWOMEN CAHIERS

[It's] like Mad Max meets Breaking Bad with some steampunk thrown into the mix. When I spoke to Arlene, the director/creator, I was completely taken back by her passion and her inner nerd-dom (in a very good way). She's the type of director that will blow the roof off the industry and completely reshape the way independent filmmakers see the craft. Arlene tells the story like she wants to see it and, by God, that's the Indie Spirit.

~ Justin Kincaid, FILM FERVOR

Just let it wash over you like a warm desert wind, and experience it as it is. You'll be glad you did, and you'll probably want to watch it again.

~ Steven W. Alloway, FANBOY COMICS

The excellent '70s-film cinematography and use of the California desert, makes for a superb short film. It is bold, ambitious and has all the passion to become a feature film.

~ Paul Booth, INFLUX MAGAZINE

Arlene Bogna has surely made her mark with this brilliant and surreal film that tells a wonderful story completely and solely visually...The impressionistic performance by everyone is totally captivating... The film allowed for amazing artistic freedom, musical colors and a visual tone that is truly unique.

~ Geoffrey Maingart, THE HOLLYWOOD TIMES

Dances With Films is thrilled to present the exciting, exotic, hallucinogenic trip of the Wild Wild West from the highly creative mind of director/writer, Arlene Bogna and Producers, Romell Foster-Owens & Anthony Ferranti Jr., to the Hollywood Industry. An exciting envisioning of a story untold, this production promises a story that yearns to uncoil.

~ DANCES WITH FILMS Fest Co-Founder, Leslee Scallon

With its cool score, far-out set design, hip style and striking cinematography, The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam struck our judges as an upbeat and offbeat wallop of fun. We're honored to screen it in our lineup. Best of luck for you continued success!

~ NEW HOPE FILM FESTIVAL Chairman, Doug Whipple

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ PRESS LIST ~

## MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS



CinéWomen Cahiers, "Arlene Bogna", 2015.

Film Fervor, "Arlene Bogna", by Justin Kincaid, May 21, 2015.

**COVER STORY:** Applaud Women Magazine, "Inspirational Women – Arlene Bogna", by Cristina Staltare, Spring Issue, 2015.

Markee 2.0 Magazine, "Snake Oil Sam: Diversity In Action", by Tom Inglesby, Fall Issue, 2014.

The Hollywood Times - "The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam", by Geoffrey Maingart, August 23, 2014.

Success Stalkers, Ioana Garrett interviews writer/director Arlene Bogna, Ep. 60, September 30, 2014.

Max It Magazine - "The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam", August 11, 2014.

Fanboy Comics - "Dances With Films 2014: 'The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam'", by Steven W. Alloway, June 2014.

YOUnique - Susan Stackpole's Internet Radio Interview with Director Arlene Bogna, June 9, 2014.

Broadway World, "THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM to Premiere at Dances With Films Festival", May 2014.

Influx Magazine - "Dances With Films 17" - by Paul Booth, June 18, 2014.

LA Arts Examiner, "17th annual Dance with Films Festival starts this weekend", May 28, 2014.

The Wrap, "Dances With Films Announces 2014 Lineup, Distribution for Award Winners", May 2014.

**FULL PRESS LIST:** <http://www.arlenebogna.com/#!/press/cegh>

For media inquiries and interview opportunities, Contact:

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# ARLENE BOGNA

Director, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT



In “The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam” I explore the idea of a Medicine Man, someone who’s maybe not quite there yet, but evolving. I also explore the notion of redemption as it unfolds in the emotional events between characters through their experiences of trust. Can we trust in our dreams and ambitions? Can we trust others? Can they trust us?

“The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam” comes from a place of pure inspiration. The story was inspired by the music of West Indian Girl and was originally pitched as a music video concept. I soon realized I had a bigger story and developed it into a short film. The concept challenged me to show Sam’s story without depending on words. By focusing on Sam’s emotions, the narrative and the mood depend purely on subtext and visuals to tell his story. And the symbolism of Snake Oil goes beyond the questionable promise of an elixir and into the realm of ‘Snake Medicine’ which promises transformation and rebirth.

My main influence is the work of Director Sergio Leone. I love the robust moments in between his characters in his spaghetti westerns as well as the operatic style of the 60’s genre he helped define. Some of the greatest moments happen without words. I was also inspired by the desert cinematography of the 70’s film “Vanishing Point,” and one of the exterior shots in “The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam” is dedicated to it. I am inspired by the work of Director Kim Jee-Woon in “The Good, The Bad, The Weird” and how his shots just flow and how style informs character. And, as an homage to Director Michelangelo Antonioni, my intention is to create “metonymy” – a word I ferociously studied in school – by placing characters in empty or fractured landscapes to provide insights into their emotional states of mind.

“The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam” is a tone piece celebrating the hypnotic and suspenseful elements of Sam’s world. The rugged, other-worldly terrain of the desert is more than a setting, it is a presence and a catalyst for Sam’s transformation - it provides a harsh yet delicate testing ground for strength and survival while giving the space and peace for introspection and reflection. To make the film feel both anachronistic and timeless, I experiment with dreamlike visuals, time, and costume. The style is influenced by Steampunk with just a hint of Burning Man, a love letter to the tribal dance community and its subculture, music and the self-expression it encourages, the sincere attempt to reconnect with earth and a sense of tribe. Ultimately, Sam’s redemption can only be gained through the trust and acceptance of his tribe.

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## **ARLENE BOGNA**

Director, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Arlene Bogna is an award-winning director with a passion for character-driven storytelling and compelling visuals. Arlene wrote and directed "The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam" which debuted at the prestigious Cannes Short Film Corner. Ms. Bogna has directed over 25 commercial spots and branded entertainment segments for television and new media and has been a shadow director for 2 network episodic dramas. Arlene has a strong visual background in Art Direction, Photography, and Visual Effects and majored in film and literature at UCLA, spending a year abroad to study cinema and mass media at the Universita di Bologna, Italy.

Reel: [arlenebogna.com](http://arlenebogna.com)



## **ANTHONY FERRANTI**

Writer / Producer, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Tony Ferranti is an award-winning writer/producer who has spent countless hours in small windowless rooms collaborating with a wide array of other creative individuals birthing a number of wild (sometimes disturbing) videos for some of the biggest video game titles to hit gaming consoles. Tony takes projects from concept through to completion creating Television commercials, trailers, EPKs, presentation pieces, webisodes and sometimes short films. Born and raised in San Jose, California, Tony now calls Los Angeles his home.



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## **ROMELL FOSTER-OWENS**

Producer, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Romell Foster-Owens is an award-winning Producer, Director and writer who has been in the business of writing, producing and directing award-winning commercials, television series, TV movies, documentaries, and independent feature films for over 20 years.

Ms. Foster-Owens is a graduate of the prestigious American Film Institute (Directing) and San Diego State University (Theatre) and is an Alumnus of the Producers Guild of America's Diversity Workshop and an Alumnus of Robert De Niro's Tribeca All Access Program. Ms. Foster-Owens has the rare distinction of three films that she produced being Official Selections of the prestigious Cannes Film Festival in France. Romell has won numerous awards, including an Emmy Award, NAACP Image Award, Black Filmmaker's Hall of Fame Award for Best Independent Film, the National Council of Christians and Jews Humanitarian Award, 2009 Women in Film Spotlight Award, a Platinum Aurora Award, three Gold Aurora Awards, three Telly and Addy Awards.



Reel: [jowharahfilms.com](http://jowharahfilms.com)

## **NATHAN LEVINE-HEANEY**

Cinematographer, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

An energetic cinematographer with a strong story telling background, Nathan has shot for diverse clients and brands including: BBC, MTV, NBC, US Airways, Coca Cola, Fosters Beer, Bertolli and Red Brick Pizza. Originally from California, Nathan also spent much of his youth in Ireland, where he attended Trinity College in Dublin before returning to the US to attend the Florida State Film school. After finishing his Cinematography studies, his masters thesis project was awarded the prestigious American Society of Cinematographers (ASC) Heritage Award in 2009, honoring his as the top student work in the country for that year.

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## WEST INDIAN GIRL

### ROBERT JAMES, EVA ZEVA

Original Music by Robert James & Eva Zeva of *West Indian Girl*, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

#### ROBERT JAMES

Composer

##### BIOGRAPHY

Robert James is a music composer, producer, performer from Los Angeles. He's also the singer/co-founder of the music group West Indian Girl. He owns and operates Illuminus Studios in the heart of Los Angeles. An eclectic studio specializing in the sampling/programming of old analog synths. He keeps an organic garden and drives an electric car.



##### STATEMENT

“Arlene is a wonderful director. She's always confident and focused. She left me feeling inspired to be a part of such an epic/artistic endeavour.”

#### EVA ZEVA

Composer, “Muse”

##### BIOGRAPHY

Eva Zeva is a Los Angeles performer and song writer. She's a co-writer on the latest West Indian Girl release Shangri La as well as feature vocalist on a number of tracks. Eva was born in Beirut, Lebanon. She's also a professional belly dancer.



##### STATEMENT

“I love Arlene, she made me feel like a goddess and part of the family. I feel like I've known her forever. I would be honoured to work with her again sometime.”

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ CAST ~

## ZANE BYRDY

“Snake Oil Sam”

### BIOGRAPHY

Zane Byrdy is a Chicago born actor and musician. For years he has made films and music in complete DIY fashion with a handful of directors and producers in Chicago. He recently shot the feature film Sweet Leaf with director Julian Grant, that is premiering/headlining the Polygrind film festival in Las Vegas this year. Zane trained in Chicago as a method actor under Grant Stokes who in turn trained under Uta Hagen in New York. Zane moved to Los Angeles early in 2013 and auditioned for The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam shortly after arriving, landing the lead role.



### STATEMENT

“I was instantly drawn to the character and his intensity, his need for redemption. Also, the fact that there is no dialogue and had to be acted with thought and intent, seemed like a beautiful way to make a film.”

“I connected and bonded with director Arlene Bogna in the auditions and recognized that her style was very in tune with my own. She has a depth of emotion with which she inspires moments and scenarios, it made for a bit of magic on set.”

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ CAST ~

## GLADYS NYOTH

“Muse”

### BIOGRAPHY

Gladys Nyoth is the definition of an adventurer. At the young age of 15, she decides to leave France and her family to continue her career in film, as well as her education in the field of Physics. With a strong theater background gained in Paris, Nyoth gears her career towards the film industry through her training at the Ivanna Chubbuck Studio. Gladys breaks in her first TV pilot as Kelly in the new TV show SMH, produced by Kevin Boyd. On top of her acting career, Nyoth is currently working towards opening a West African restaurant in the heart of Beverly Hills in honor of her Cameroonian origins and to remind the world the basics of real communal dining.



### STATEMENT

“When I heard the concept of THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM, I was in. Every actor dreams to be part of a magical set that can physicalize a world of fantasy. Being part of this project woke the kid and the real artist in me. Plus, who wouldn't want to portray a beautiful muse diverging the reality of a man?”

“Working with Arlene was a treat! She is so amazing at combining both play and work together and getting amazing results in doing so. It is hard to come up with a scenario like The Ballad and be able to execute it in camera. Arlene nailed it and I am dying to work with her again!”

# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ CAST ~

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## **GABRIEL VOSS**

“Driver Dan”

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Gabriel is an actor and recovering lawyer residing in Los Angeles. He has been the lead in multiple independent feature films and dozens of short films, and has had co-star roles on television shows for Lifetime and Discovery Channel. Gabriel also writes and produces, and he produced and stars in the 70’s style comedic webseries, Shut Yo’ Mouth ([watchshutyomouth.com](http://watchshutyomouth.com)). You can find all things Gabriel Voss on his website at [www.gabrielvoss.com](http://www.gabrielvoss.com).



### **STATEMENT**

“I wanted to be part of THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM because I believed in the vision of the director and the capability of the team she assembled.”

“Working with the director was amazing! Arlene had a very clear vision of for the film and pushed the cast and crew to their limits to get what the film required, yet doing so with such kindness and generosity of spirit. Even in our most difficult moments on set, Arlene would be right in the middle of things smiling and telling us we could do it. And we did.”

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ CAST ~

## CRISTINA BALMORES

“Muse”

### BIOGRAPHY

As seen in commercials, print, television, and film, Cristina Balmores is pleased to appear in Arlene Bogna's "The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam". Most notable credits include "Dawn" in the Warner Bros. show "Veronica Mars" opposite Kristen Bell, "Heather" in ABC Family's "Greek", and "it" girl for the national, turned international McDonalds Chicken Selects Ad Campaign in 2005. You can catch her as Dr. Jenny Haung, in the upcoming pilot, "The Ploy."



### STATEMENT

“Never having worked on a project that involved creative costumes in a beautiful desert setting, I immediately had interest in playing one of Arlene Bogna's Muses in THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM.”

“Working with Arlene Bogna was a pleasure. She's a gem much like the types you hear about - Woody Allen or Clint Eastwood - she is certainly an actor's director. It was a memorable experience and I'd work with her over and over again.”

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## **BILLY PEAKE**

Editor, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Originally from Virginia, Billy Peake has wanted to make movies since he was eight years old. Billy is a graduate of Chapman University in Editing with an emphasis in Sound Design. He has a passion for narrative filmmaking and edits features, shorts, and music videos. When he grows up he wants to be a Jedi.

### **STATEMENT**

“The wide open landscapes and connection to the earth which is inherent in the footage spoke to me as someone who used to spend days at a time exploring the woods of my home state. Working with Arlene was a dream -- a true collaborative effort. She had a strong vision I picked up on immediately that jived with my own favored style of editing -- trusting the footage and the actors; letting shots play as long as there is emotion left in them to give.”

## **VIVEK MADDALA**

Composer, Original Score, THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

### **BIOGRAPHY**

Vivek Maddala is an international award-winning composer and multi-instrumental performer. He has scored over 30 feature films, theater & dance productions, and TV episodes over the past decade. His extraordinarily diverse musical palette, often combining melodic symphony writing with modern ethnic textures from around the globe, has been described as "an emotive frenzy of guitar, percussion, brass, woodwinds, and strings." Although best known for his film scores, Vivek also writes, produces, and performs with various rock/jazz/world recording artists. He is a Sundance Lab Fellow for film composition, and recently had work premiere at the Cannes, Toronto, Berlin, and Sundance film festivals. You can find Vivek on the web at [www.maddala.com](http://www.maddala.com)

### **STATEMENT**

“THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM contains sparse dialog and is deftly directed and edited to create impressionistic space for emotion and anticipation. It was a broad canvas on which to paint musical pictures with immense creative freedom, but at the same time the film is quite delicate -- requiring restraint and precision in the musical colors and textures. The opportunity to collaborate on this amazing film with director Arlene Bogna, to create a musical ‘voice’ to serve her dramatic vision, was irresistible.”

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# THE BALLAD OF SNAKE OIL SAM

~ STILLS ~



Zane Byrdy in *The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam* directed by Arlene Bogna.



Zane Byrdy in *The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam* directed by Arlene Bogna.



Gladys Nyoth, Eva Zeva, and Cristina Balmores in *The Ballad of Snake Oil Sam* directed by Arlene Bogna.

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