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MY BREAKFAST WITH BLASSIE (1983)



When it comes to my childhood one of the things that always sticks out is my love for professional wrestling. To this day I dabble a bit and still watch it when it's on TV, but as a kid it was a way of life so to speak. One of the biggest pop culture icons of all time has to be comedian Andy Kaufman, who in the early 80s was dabbling a bit in the sport of kings himself. Well, that is when it came to wrestling women in Memphis and basically pissing off crowds of rednecks. I remembered him as the guy from Taxi and was pretty surprised one day when switching around on cable to see him having breakfast with pro wrestler "Classie" Freddie Blassie. At the time I had no idea that Blassie was a wrestler, as I mainly knew him as the guy who managed the majority of the guys I hated as a kid (you know, the bad guy or "Heel" as they are known in wrestling terms). I had no idea what I was watching was a fabrication and I was fixed on how ignorant Kaufman was to a group of ladies sitting at a table next to him. It also didn't help that Kaufman would mention how famous he would throughout. I just thought the guy was a jerk, but little did I know as a kid that I was being fooled very much like how I was fooled when watching wrestling. Those guys weren't the characters they portrayed and this was not how Andy Kaufman seriously acted.

"Mr Breakfast with Blassie" is a performance piece by Blassie and Kaufman that's pulled off with flying colors. It's them talking about their lives and careers all the while eating in a restaurant. They manage to cover some ground in their conversations, that is until they get involved with a table of women in the restaurant. Then we get to witness the hilarity that ensues as their meal goes on. This is basically a parody of an art film that was popular at the time called "My Dinner with Andre".

On paper this one doesn't sound like much, but believe me it's actually pretty damn funny. Not only that but Kaufman and Blassie come off like the two biggest jerks in the world. It's intentionally done this way, but if you have ever seen it and didn't know what it was, I'd guarantee you that you would basically be fooled....that is if you're unaware of the stylings of one Andy Kaufman. Considering that he never really wrestled full time and was used as a comedic act in wrestling, you'd think it would be something

long forgotten. But that's not the case as Kaufman is known in professional wrestling as a man who really understood what the wrestling business was all about, working the fans. He managed to become enemy number one in Memphis while messing with Jerry "The King" Lawler and it's still talked about to this day. It all came to a head during an episode of David Letterman's "The Late Show" in which Lawler slapped Kaufman right in the face, completely unplanned and shocked the world. Little did they know that this was all a part of their plan.

"My Breakfast with Blassie" is a great introduction into the work of Kaufman and how he really enjoyed fooling the world around him. So much so that in fact when he contracted a type of lung cancer, many people didn't think he was serious. Even after he was pronounced dead many thought it was simply another hoax.

*Overall "My Breakfast with Blassie" is a wonderful performance piece that's one of the most interesting and entertaining ways you could spend 68 minutes. The new DVD release also has special features like "Lost Footage: Andy in the Raw", "Blassie Graffiti bonus footage", "Legendary Graffiti home movies", "The Making of My Breakfast with Blassie", a photo gallery and footage from the movie's premiere. This comes **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** from me as it's something I've seen over twenty years ago for the first time and has stuck with me ever since. It's extremely entertaining and it's something that hasn't been done this way since. It's incredibly original.*

*Rating - ****

-Ed Demko

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