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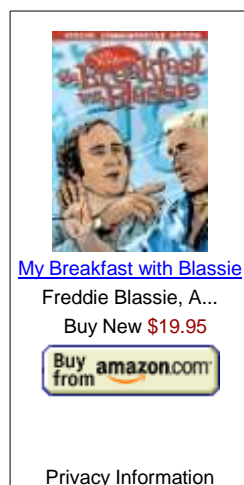
## [I'm from Hollywood! My Breakfast With Blassie.](#)

Jun 6th, 2009 by [Bryan White](#)



Andy Kaufman wasn't exactly a comedian. It's tough to put a label on what he did, exactly, because it borders on performance art. He gained momentum in the mid-70's after appearing on a few episodes of Saturday Night Live doing the Foreign Guy routine. You may have seen this. He plays a record, lip syncs a line from the Mighty Mouse theme and then stands around looking uncomfortable. He also did "impressions" of public figures that were hardly impressions at all until he capped the routine off with a killer Elvis Presley number. This was Andy's act. But a comedian, he was not. Andy actually referred to himself as a "song and dance man" whatever the hell that means. He didn't do a whole lot of singing or dancing. For the most part, he staged elaborate stunts that seemed morbid or at the very least, in poor taste. Ultimately, Andy's gags seemed like they were only for his own amusement and his enabler/sidekick, Bob Zmuda. Somewhere along the line he managed to con TV studios into pointing cameras at his weird-ass antics and broadcast them to the nation.

In retrospect, a lot of people recognize Andy for the genius that he was but back then it seemed like very few people really got it. Andy was tolerated because he was a hit on *Taxi* and only the people closest to him at the time seemed to understand what he was doing and it's unclear to this very day if they have become in on the joke. Most everyone at the time thought that he was crazy and disruptive. Thanks to one of David Letterman's classically weird appearances, up there with meltdowns by Crispin Glover and Harvey Pekar, the world came to know about Kaufman's love of professional wrestling. This artifact, *My Breakfast With Blassie*, is evidence of just how weird Andy was and how much he loved "sports entertainment".



*My Breakfast With Blassie* is pretty simple to describe. Andy Kaufman meets up with then manager and legendary pro-wrestler, "Classy" Freddie Blassie, King of Men, at a Sambo's restaurant in Los Angeles. They have breakfast and talk about how difficult it is to be a celebrity as well as the foolishness of taking on Jerry Lawler in the ring. Kaufman wears the neckbrace he received as a result of an alleged broken neck after Lawler delivered a pile driver. Eventually, some fans at a nearby table try to get autographs and another patron comes over to deliver boogers to Kaufman and finally vomits on his food.

That's it, folks. That's *My Breakfast With Blassie*. Two men get together, antagonize some fans and eat some food. What this really is is a riff on the art flick, *My Dinner With Andre*, which follows a similar format. Two dudes get together for dinner and talk about experimental filmmaking. It's a sort of in-joke as the results of their discussion becomes an experimental film. An interesting if not terminally pretentious idea. But the point here isn't to make fun of or even so much as parody *My Dinner With Andre*. It's

almost as though Kaufman and Blassie are just copying the central idea and remixing it. Like most of Andy's stunts, the point is never clear and even with a running time of an hour, it gets old quickly but this is two artists at work. Say what you want about professional wrestling, but a lot of what you see there in the ring and on camera is improvisation. Blassie was the master. Jokers like Rick Flair studied Blassie to see what makes a charismatic professional villain on the mic and Blassie's formula for getting the crowd riled up still works to this very day. Andy is Andy, in this case and the two bounce some of the most absurd conversations back and forth for an hour. Some of it real, like Blassie's claims about bloodying up his opponents in Japan, some of it made up like his Japanese wife. By the end of the movie, it has gone completely off the rails as Andy explains that vomit on his food makes him laugh.

Blassie, the classic wrestling heel, doesn't drop his act for a second and most of the time he's going out of his way to be racist, sexist and generally offensive. Andy plays as though he's following Freddie's lead and eventually proclaims to the female fans who have offended him by asking for his autograph during his meal, "You should be at home in the kitchen washing pots and pans and raising babies!" However, like most of Andy's bad-guy stuff, he seemed to like playing the heel in these wrestling situations, it goes on too long. This was usually a deliberate move on Andy's part, but this is longer than most of his gags and eventually becomes tiresome.

The DVD can't possibly be sourced from the original three quarter videotape. It suffers from drop outs and color bleed indicative of a second or third generation dupe. The audio track suffers as well. In a supplement, director Johnny Legend explains that the first seventeen minutes of the chat was supposed to be a test to get the audio levels but was so good that they couldn't stop them. Unfortunately, most of the audio is buried in the low end. Fans of Andy are going to want to check this out, though. Even though the quality isn't much better than the bootlegs that circulated for years, it was released toward the end of Andy's life and also has an interesting background as this is where he met the woman that he would spend the rest of his albeit short life with.

The quality of the DVD sucks but the content is what it is important. The DVD comes packed with a healthy dose of extras relating to both Andy and Freddie as well as footage from the premier and photos. Most

important to this release is a little context and directors Linda Lautrec and Johnny Legend do a talking head segment that explains the making of this movie. It is easily one of the best parts of the disc short of the feature. Agents tried to cage him and as mainstream success did its best to keep up with Andy, he couldn't be stopped. My Breakfast With Blassie is Andy's last will and testament. Evidence that the man went out on top.

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