

My Breakfast with Blassie ★★★

MVD, 68 min., not rated,
DVD: \$19.95



Some 25 years after his death, comic/actor/performance artist Andy Kaufman remains one of the most fascinating figures in modern show business. He delighted in confounding his audiences, who could never be sure what to expect when he took the stage or stepped before a camera. Filmed in 1983, the year before Kaufman's untimely death at age 35 from cancer, *My Breakfast with Blassie* (inspired by *My Dinner with André*, reviewed below) is a low-key but occasionally hilarious reflection of Kaufman's obsession with professional wrestling. This modest hour-plus documentary records Andy's morning meal with wrestling great Fred Blassie, a master showman who made the squared circle his stage long before Vince McMahon turned the World Wrestling Federation into a troupe of traveling clowns. Kaufman and Blassie have a wide-ranging discussion in which it's nearly impossible to sort the sincere from the phony. At various points absurd, banal, and side-splitting, *My Breakfast with Blassie* shows Kaufman at his best: willing to stretch the accepted boundaries of comedy by—odd as this sounds—daring his audiences not to laugh. Those who appreciated Kaufman's unique brand of humor will enjoy this vintage program, which may admittedly be dated, but is still often funny. DVD extras include "Lost Footage: Andy in the Raw," a "making-of" featurette, a photo gallery, and footage from the film's premiere. Recommended. (E. Hulse)