

Film Talk

Discussions with writers, producers, directors and actors about glbt films and filmmaking.

By
Casper
Andreas



Lesbian filmmaker Andrea Meyerson tackles the men of comedy in new film

I am currently traveling to Gay and Lesbian Film Festivals around the country with my latest feature, and over the last few weeks I have run into



Filmmaker Andrea Meyerson

filmmaker Andrea Meyerson in Honolulu, New York, and San Francisco.

Meyerson is not just traveling around the country with one film but two. The prolific filmmaker has previously directed *Laughing Matters*, a documentary about pioneering lesbian comics, and *Laughing Matters... More*, about a new generation of lesbian comics. Her two new films are *Kate Clinton 25th Anniversary Tour*, about the legendary lesbian stand-up comedienne, as well as a film for the boys – *Laughing Matters... The Men*, featuring gay comics.

Laughing Matters... The Men was shot in five days over Pride Weekend in Palm Springs last November. The film uses the same winning formula as her previous films – interweaving stand-up material with candid interviews, which give the viewers the opportunity

to at once laugh and simultaneously understand the voyage that has led these performers to the stage.

Meyerson tells me that the shooting of the film was a wonderful experience; she loved working with the cast that includes Bruce Vilanch, Andre Kelley, Scott Kennedy, Alec Mapa and Bob Smith. “The guys were great and everyone really bonded,” she says.

It is no coincidence that Meyerson’s filmmaking career so far has been focused on documenting comedians. For twelve years she has been producing live comedy shows and concerts with lesbian artists in her native Los Angeles. She acknowledges that it was extraordinary when Ellen and Rosie came out, and how great it was that the community honored them, however:

“I felt a need to honor and pay tribute to the artists who were out from the beginning of their careers. So I made my first film *Laughing Matters* to showcase the talent and stories of whom I considered were the “pioneers” of lesbian comedy. It wasn’t so much that I wanted to make films, it was that I wanted to make this film.”

Though directing wasn’t always on her mind, she is now quite passionate about that process.

“I love creating something where there was nothing,” she exclaims. “I was used to producing one-night shows and when you wake up the next morning, there’s really nothing left but a memory, so I love that films have such a long shelf life. I also love the tremendous outreach films have. My films have been shown all over the world and I get e-mails from people that have seen them in Tel Aviv, Australia and Texas. Their letters are so moving and I really get a sense that my work is making a difference.”

All of Meyerson’s films are or will be available on Logo (*Laughing Matters... The Men* will premiere on the

cable channel in the fall of 2007). Her first two films are out on DVD and she is currently working on DVD distribution for her two new ones. All the films have also been quite successful on the film festival circuit.

“My documentaries have played at festivals all over the world,” Meyerson notes. “World premieres are so exciting and I love being in the audience and listening to the audience reaction. Last



Comic Kate Clinton

year *Laughing Matters... More* won eight festival awards so of course that added to the excitement!”

Meyerson concurs that the financing is always the most stressful thing about making a movie. For her first two films she was really creative in her fund-raising. In addition to finding a few backers, she also did bingo

Continued on next page

Meyerson: The world is heterosexual enough

Continued from previous page

events and fundraiser dinners. Luckily she has a built-in audience for events thanks to 'Women On A Roll' (www.womenonaroll.com), a very large lesbian social organization that she started in Los Angeles many years ago.

Though now a leader in the Los Angeles lesbian community, Meyerson actually came out late in life. After a pretty volatile childhood, she went through a period of being a self-described juvenile delinquent. And despite having quite a few same-sex experiences in her twenties, it wasn't until many years (and one failed marriage) later that she came out as a lesbian to herself and to the world. At this time in her life she is happy with her life and the career path she has chosen. In addition to making films she continues to produce a multitude of live comedy shows and concerts throughout the year.

In terms of the filmmaking she says that making films has been her film school and with each film she has learned "what the hell I was doing and got better!" Meyerson intends to keep making documentaries but at some point she will also do a narrative film, having recently optioned a script that she plans to direct. She also has a desire to write and direct her own screenplay. She has no desire however to cross over into making films for a mainstream audience.

"My passion is creating films for and about the LGBT community," Meyerson concludes. "The world is heterosexual enough – I don't feel compelled or even interested in straight content."

For more information, visit: www.alloutfilms.com

Casper Andreas is a writer, director, and actor living in New York. His second feature, the gay romantic comedy "A Four Letter Word" is currently playing festivals. www.embrem.com



The cast of *Laughing Matters... The Men* (right to left): Scott Kennedy, Andre Kelley, Eddie Sarfaty, Alec Mapa, Bob Smith, Bruce Vilanch

"Your place for fine, organic, live vegan cuisine."

Veggie Cafe

& JUICE BAR

Go Raw Cafe

www.gorawcafe.com
Dine in • Take Out • Delivery

**Fresh Juices • Smoothies
Salads • Raw Desserts
Supplements • Oils
Books • Skin Care**

**Two Convenient Locations
East & West**

Smith's Shopping Center
2381 E. Windmill Lane
450-9007

The Lakes Center
2910 Lake East Drive
254-5382

Want To Know Where The Locals Eat?

Josette's Bistro is your cozy casual bistro.

Authentic french food. Hosted by Josette.

www.JosettesBistro.com

Josette's

BISTRO

4983 W Flamingo Rd
(702) 227-4575

Visiting in town?
Show your Room Key
and RECEIVE 10% OFF.
Your Meal.

"We are located
5 minutes from
Strip"

CABARET EVERY SATURDAY with **Kiki Kalor**

WEAREFAMILYLV.COM

Contact: info@WeAreFamilyLV.com

**A Social Group for GLBT parents with children,
and GLBT parents that want children.**