



Langston Faizon Santisima was born in Santiago, Cuba on June 14, 1968, but was raised in Newark, NJ and San Diego, CA. Changing his name to Faizon Love, he started out in showbiz as a stand-up comedian at 15, before finding steady work as a colorful character actor both on TV and in film.

Among the many movies on his resume' are Elf, Blue Crush, Friday, 3 Strikes, Money Talks, The Replacements, The Players Club, Idlewild, Torque, The Perfect Holiday and Who's Your Caddy? On television, the burly teddy bear has appeared on such sitcoms as "That's So Raven," "The Wayans Bros," and "The Parent 'Hood." Here, Faizon talks about his new film, Couples Retreat, a battle-of-the-sexes ensemble comedy co-starring includes Vince Vaughn, Jason Bateman, Kali Hawk, Kristin Davis and Jon Favreau.

Kam Williams: Hey, Faizon.

Faizon Love: What's up, man?

KW: First, let me tell you how much I've enjoyed your work. You seem to pop up doing a hilarious cameo in every other movie I see.

FL: [Laughs] That's funny, because this is one of the last two movies I'm doing in order to focus on writing and directing. There's an Eddie Murphy project I may do, but I've already directed my first piece. [Tao of the Golden Mask]

KW: Wow!

FL: Yeah. That's where it's at.

KW: So, what type of pictures do you want to direct?

FL: The first one is sort of an homage to Bruce Lee, but the good guys wear black. It's a fun popcorn movie. And I'm going to make some more Seventies-style karate movies with budgets around \$5 million. Hopefully, they'll turn over a profit.

KW: Speaking of directing, Couples Retreat was made by a first-time director, Peter Billingsley. Was that risky?

FL: Not really. Peter's a part of the family. He's been around the business. He had Jon

[Favreau] there, and Vinnie [Vaughn] was hands-on, too. And most good directors are good actors, and Peter's been an actor for years.

KW: Yeah, as a child, he played Ralphie in *A Christmas Story*.

FL: Oh man, he goes back. He was also *The Dirt Bike Kid*. So, he's developed a very sensitive ear and a great eye, and he surrounded himself here with a great team.

KW: There are so many big names in this cast: Vince Vaughn... Kristin Davis... Jason Bateman...

FL: [Cuts me off] Wait, you've got to say, "Jason [expletive]-ing Bateman!" That's how we say his name. Working with such a great bunch of guys made it easy to go on autopilot.

KW: But with such a talented cast, was it hard to find the space to do your thing?

FL: No, it went very naturally. It's not about the space, it's about the piece.

KW: *Couples Retreat* sounds a lot like Neil Simon's *California Suite*, the way it revolves around four couples. Did you ever see that film?

FL: Yes! Exactly! A lot of people don't know that movie.

KW: You've done some outrageous things on camera? Is there a line you wouldn't cross?

FL: Yeah. It's got to be fun and it's got to make sense for the character. But this is just entertainment. Either you're going to be the dancing bear or you're going to be the girl with the big [expletives].

KW: What would you say was your big break?

FL: [Laughs] I'm still looking for it. A career is like bricks and mortar. Each movie you make adds to the foundation of a body of work. When you retire, you may get to look back and reflect on what might have been your big break, but you don't have that luxury in the middle of your career. You have to keep plugging away, working hard and reinventing yourself

KW: *Couples Retreat* might be a bit of a breakout role, since your character Shane is more complex than most of the ones you've generally played.

FL: Yes, this film is a little different for me, because I play more of a leading man.

Fav [Jon Favreau] has always been telling me, "Dude, you can do a lead role." But Hollywood tends to see you in a limited way that creates a ceiling. I was lucky that Stuber [producer Scott Stuber] and everybody else saw my acting range and felt I could do this.

KW: You're paired opposite Kali Hawk in this picture. How was it working with her?

FL: Kali's brand new, but I think people are going to like her.

KW: Tell me a little about your background.

FL: My father was in the Navy. So, I was raised in San Diego, and we did move to Newark, but I was born in Cuba.

KW: Is there any question no one ever asks you, that you wish someone would?

FL: Yeah. Why are they asking Obama for his birth certificate?

KW: Why do you think they're doing it?

FL: Because the guy is good.

KW: The Tasha Smith question: Are you ever afraid?

FL: No.

KW: The Columbus Short question: Are you happy?

FL: Yeah, sure.

KW: The Flex Alexander question: How do you get through the tough times?

FL: [Chuckles] Everybody prepares for victory, nobody prepares for defeat. There are no tough times. Those defeats make the victories sweeter. So, they both work hand-in-hand.

KW: The Teri Emerson question: When was the last time you had a good laugh?

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Written by Kam Williams

FL: While hanging out with Eddie Murphy a couple of weeks ago.

KW: The bookworm Troy Johnson question: What was the last book you read?

FL: The autobiography of Fidel Castro.

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1416562338?ie=UTF8&tag=thslfofire-20&linkCode=as2&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=1416562338>

KW: The music maven Heather Covington question: What music are you listening to?

FL: Right now, I'm listening to Whitney Houston.

KW: What has been the biggest obstacle you have had to overcome?

FL: Losing weight. [LOL] Losing weight, bro.

KW: The Rudy Lewis question: Who's at the top of your hero list?

FL: Definitely Dr. Martin Luther King. And then Barack Obama, but we have to wait and see, because he might [expletive] up.

KW: The Laz Alonso question: How can your fans help you?

FL: By just being supportive. They shouldn't even be called fans. I don't like any of that celebrity on a pedestal B.S. We're just all just on this planet together, you know, bro.

KW: What is your favorite food to cook?

FL: Mexican. Love it! Love it! Love it!

KW: What advice do you have for anyone who wants to follow in your footsteps?

FL: Don't! Follow your own footsteps. If you can be inspired by someone, fine. But don't follow any man.

KW: When you look in the mirror, what do you see?

FL: The light! The reflection of the light.

KW: The "Realtor to the Stars" Jimmy Bayan question: Where in L.A. do you live?

FL: Glendale.

KW: Thanks for the time, Faizon, and best of luck with both acting and directing.

FL: I appreciate it too, bro. Thanks a lot, Kam.

To see a trailer for Couples Retreat, visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbfhb-43UNQ>