

GILBERT GOTTFRIED

DICK JOKES AND DUCKS

Gilbert Gottfried has become a household name thanks to an odd mix of comedic talents. Some people know him for his voice-over work in animated movies and TV commercials, most notably as Aflac's insurance-selling duck. Others know that he is one of the filthiest stand-ups working today. Gottfried's recent flurry of non-PC tweets about Japan's devastating earthquake and tsunami cost him his Aflac gig. We caught up with the self-proclaimed "short, annoying Jew" backstage at the Hilton hotel in Las Vegas (where he was performing) to discuss birds, Howard Stern, getting a handjob from Miley Cyrus and his first book, the hilarious *Rubber Balls and Liquor*.

HUSTLER: Las Vegas and you seem like an odd combination.

GILBERT GOTTFRIED: What happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. With me all that stays in Vegas is dirty sheets from jerking off.

What do you like best about Vegas?

My favorite thing is the buffets. It looks just like food. It's kind of like the show *Beatlemania*. If you close your eyes and smell, you think it's real.

What's your favorite way to have fun in Vegas?

Jerking off, but I'm usually calling the front desk to complain: "You gave me *Babysitters 3*. I ordered *Babysitters 2*." That's not good because if you watch part three without having seen part two, you miss the whole storyline.

What kind of people have been coming to see you at the Hilton?

Usually it's people who couldn't get tickets to see anything else.

Are you intimidated by performing in the

same showroom that Fat Elvis did?

Yes. They still have Fat Elvis here. They keep him in a freezer. Every now and then you can open it up, chip off a piece and suck it.

Is there any truth to the rumor that Elvis's ghost haunts the bathroom backstage?

Something is haunting the bathroom, because it has a very bad odor.

Your old pal Wayne Newton has performed here too. Has he come to see you?

Yes, my old pal Wayne Newton. At this point I don't know if Wayne Newton can afford the cab fare to come over.

You mention in *Rubber Balls and Liquor* that Newton once introduced you from the stage while you were in the audience. Will you be doing that yourself?

As soon as a real celebrity stops in, I will mention him.

Have any quasicelebrities stopped by?

Yes, somebody who met Wayne Newton came in.

In your book you admit being uncomfortable around other celebrities. Why?

It's just like when people stop me in the street and start to talk. Then eventually they'll repeat themselves. And then the next thing they do is say something that makes no

sense at all, and then they insult me. I do the same thing when I meet celebrities. I met Harrison Ford one time. He said, "Hey, Gilbert, I love your work." I said, "Thanks. And you are?" Joking. He then said, "Harrison Ford." Now I can't watch his movies.

Do you have any famous friends?

No, I really don't. A few years back I did *Jack and the Beanstalk* with Christopher Lloyd and Katey Sagal. I was the goose, because I have to play a bird in everything. Christopher Lloyd and I had done the voices on this cartoon show *Cyberchase* for years, and I had done an episode of *Married...With Children* where I was squeezed into a life raft with Katey Sagal. Neither one of them remembered who I was.

Do you have any friends?

No. I pretend people are my friends if they offer to buy me lunch.

How much money does someone have to spend?

Pretty much you could buy me a meal at McDonald's.

When was the last time you picked up the check at a restaurant?

Actually, just today at lunch. I picked up the check and handed it to someone at the table.

Do you consider Howard Stern a friend after being on his show for years?

Yes, it's just like you would imagine. Me and Howard Stern play tennis together. Sometimes we just lie in his office on a cot

and cuddle. Actually, with me and Howard Stern, when we're not on the air, it becomes very uncomfortable.

But didn't Howard come to see you when you were in the hospital awhile back?

He came to the hospital, and he made the stupid mistake of asking if I needed anything. Of course, my eyes welled up with tears—the kind of tears that you get when you're going to get free shit. So I started doing this unending list of stuff I needed. He finally just got me a cheap pair of bedroom slippers and never asked if I needed anything ever again.

What is your preshow ritual?

Like every performer, I get in a big circle and ask Jesus Christ to help me do the dick jokes the right way.

It's said that comedy comes from tragedy. What's yours?

My tragedy is my career. My other tragedy is when I stand in front of a full-length mirror naked.

Does your throat hurt after you do a show?

Yes, it hurts during the show and after the show. And people's ears hurt during the show. They sometimes bleed.

Why did you write *Rubber Balls and Liquor*?

I actually decided to write it because I had a book deal. They said they'd pay me for it. Then I said, "Let me think of something to write down on paper."

Is it true you'll do anything for money?

I will do absolutely anything for money. I'll appear on anything. I would blow up a school bus for the right amount of money.

Why did you title your book *Rubber Balls and Liquor*?

It's from an old children's joke. One of the first dirty jokes you learn. You say "Rubber balls and liquor" to everything I ask. So, what did you have for lunch today?

Rubber balls and liquor.

What did you have for dinner?

Rubber balls and liquor.

What are you gonna do with your girlfriend tonight?

Rubber balls and liquor.

And that's the joke. What makes no sense about it is that we are referring to a girl's breasts as balls.

So the book doesn't include any stories about your having sex with a transvestite?

If this one sells, that will be in the second book.

The model on the front cover has great legs. Did you fuck her?

Yes. I did have sex with her, but the publisher decided not to use that picture for the cover.

The cover also features two balls and

a bottle of booze to symbolize a penis. Why are the balls crooked?

This is not a mistake. I wanted the liquor bottle straight up with the two balls underneath so it was as obvious as possible that it's a cock and balls. The publisher, St. Martin's, looked at that and said, "Can we put the balls a little off to the side and make it a little less obvious and disgusting?"

Your publisher thought that by moving the balls half an inch, the sexual connotation would be less obvious?

Yes. Sometimes I move my balls a half an inch, and it's less obvious. My balls are very subtle.

Have you cleared space on your mantel for all the literary awards you may win?

I hope I'll be like Saul Bellow and win a Nobel Prize.

***Rubbers Balls and Liquor* mentions that you're not good with women.**

Yes, but you don't need to read the book to figure that one out.

What about comedy groupies or "road ass"?

I have women throwing themselves at me all the time, but they have terrible aim and end up, like, 50 miles away.

Tell us the colostomy bag story.

There was a comedian, and this girl stayed around after the show because she liked him. After the audience left, he took her onstage, they laid down, and during a wild moment of sex his colostomy bag burst open and covered the girl in shit.

How can a guy with a sack of shit hanging off his side get a girl at a comedy club but you can't?

I've asked myself that every second of my life.

If you're not good with the ladies, how did you end up not only getting a woman to sleep with you but also marry you and give birth to your children?

I had to pay for it.

What kind of a father are you?

I don't know. I'm not allowed to see the children without supervision. To make up for the fact that I don't get to see my own children that much, I hang around school playgrounds and watch the children there.

Do you have any advice for your kids?

Oh, advice. I thought you said device. I do have that. It's the chain I use to lock them in their room. Advice? I say, "Look at everything in my life and do it differently."

Do you plan on pushing them into show business?

I want to get them into showbiz early and then into rehab right afterwards.

Do your kids know you're the voice of several animated birds and, once upon a time, the Aflac duck? (continued on page 132)

PHOTOS BY GEORGE SEMMARA



AN UNCENSORED Q&A WITH ONE OF THE MOST CONTROVERSIAL COMICS OF ALL TIME.