



# Preaching the word of the bored

Inspired by sloth, Johnny Knoxville returns for *Jackass: Number Two*, surprisingly still in one piece

## **Jackass: Number Two**

Directed by Jeff Tremaine  
Starring Johnny Knoxville, Bam Margera, Steve-O and Christ Pontius  
Opens 22 September  
Empire Theatres

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After its first broadcast on MTV in 2000, *Jackass* quickly became a cult classic. Indeed, it was the first time in the history of humankind where getting mercilessly smashed in the testicles was your one-way ticket to social acceptance and fame. The men who performed the daring, idiotic stunts became instant celebrities, and to cap it all off, the team released *Jackass: The Movie* in 2002. No longer slowed down by network censors, the movie was considerably more graphic and crude than the TV show.

Eventually, MTV axed the show, and the Jackasses went their separate ways. However, the leader of the Jackass men, Tennessee-born Johnny Knoxville, moved into some serious acting roles, starring in the *Dukes of Hazzard* remake and *The Ringer*, while playing smaller parts in *Lords of Dogtown* and *Walking Tall*, among others.

But, after a four-year hiatus, Knoxville and his crew have returned with *Jackass: Number Two*. Raunchier and more deplorable than the first, it's storming into theatres, threatening to corrupt a new generation of junior high males. However, during the

layoff, the real question is whether or not Knoxville, America's purveyor of pain and stunting, has gone soft or lost his sense of humour.

"Just a second, I'm in this hotel and they're playing the fuckin' worst music," Knoxville exclaims over the phone. "Holy hell, what music is this? Bryan Adams singing Oasis? Okay, close that door. Goddamn!"

Knoxville is definitely enthusiastic about discussing his return to *Jackass*.

"The second film blows the first film away," he says with his trademark Southern accent. "We were so excited to do anything on this movie. If something was too hardcore, one of the boys would step up and do it. There was a competitiveness this time that wasn't there with the first film."

The lifestyle takes its toll, though, and Johnny alluded to the battle wounds he'd received during filming. "I've got anaconda scars, alligator scars, boat scars and riot prevention test scars. There were a couple times I was just going to bypass the ambulance and end up in the mortuary. I almost bought it. It was just a damn good time, all-in-all."

Really, his strict mental preparation methods are the key to getting through his self-imposed gauntlet. Four years is a long time to come up with clever new ways to injure yourself, and Johnny revealed the secret of how the *Jackass* crew continues to push the creative limits of masochism.

"Whiskey and ignorance," Knoxville says. "Don't want to take a regular job.

Laziness will really inspire you sometimes. I watched a lot of *Tom and Jerry* cartoons for this film, so, you know, I'm just trying to turn cartoons into reality.

"I really just try not to think about the stunt," Knoxville continues. "For physical preparation, maybe chugging a beer. And I do count that as physical preparation!"

Knoxville also mentions how simple it is to go from being on an improvised show to reading from a script. "You just have to stay a little bit more sober," he says. Although the critics haven't agreed that sobriety has improved his acting abilities, he doesn't take it personally. "I don't really pay attention to that, or anything much at all, really."

Besides melting into the real world of acting over the past few years, though, Johnny has spent more time recently with his wife Melanie, and daughter Madison. For the most part, it wasn't a matter of how they felt about him going back into a life of danger; it was more a case of telling a few little white lies.

"I never told [Melanie] what I was going to do because she'd worry, and then I'd come home all battered," Knoxville says. "When the show was on, Madison was five so we'd only let her see parts like where Weeman was an Oompa-Loompa. She never saw Daddy get hurt. Now she's ten and there are obviously parts where I'm like, 'You're not seeing that until you're 40,' but I've shown her parts where Daddy got blasted and she



thought it was the funniest thing. She never knew I did stunts. I was a big sissy to her, and I still am."

Knoxville has been berated by parental groups over the years for causing teenagers—who've ultimately ended up in hospital—to copycat his stunts. However, he has a few serious words of advice for those planning to follow in his footsteps, and Knoxville believes any mother will agree

with him this time around. "Stay in school and actually get an education instead," he says. "Do something with your life."

With those delicate words in mind, we might wonder what the biggest stunt is that we can expect from him in the new film.

"Look for the rocket and the steel wall," Knoxville says. "I think you guys might kind of giggle."