

Mental As Anything (L-R): Martin Plaza, Peter O'Doherty, Reg Mombassa, Greedy Smith, Wayne Delisle.



Method In Their Mentalness

An Interview with Mental As Anything's Peter O'Doherty

"I know we've helped propagate the image of being a bit silly, but that's on the surface," explained the Mentals' Peter O'Doherty from Sydney at the end of last month. "At the same time when you write songs on your own you often write them when you're going through stress or emotional problems and those things are pretty serious. Life is serious enough

without stamping it down as being very straight-faced. We'll always have that humour there, it's a problem, I know," he laughed."

Videomental

The Mentals have been reaping the profits from

idiocy for over seven years, ever since the release of their classic drinking anthem 'The Nips Are Getting Bigger'. But now, in the video parlours, is *Monumental*, an 85 minute visual orgy of Pythonesque animation, Monkees' lunacy, Mentals morality and 19 songs that add up to a greatest hits and near misses:

"It was a collaboration between us and the B-Sharp team who did the animation. We've always had that style of bizarre humour and if it's similar to the Monty Python stuff then that's good. We tried to steer away from a stiff chronological history of the band — that's why we used the humour and we did a couple of new clips like the

'Berserk Warriors' one with Reg doing his Scottish trick."

And his chopping liver trick?

"Yeah, very sensitive isn't it? Our mum really likes it." And whose mum wouldn't like the romance behind the scene of a berserk expatriate Kiwi in viking garb hacking into a great slice of liver? A touch of

class.

And then there's the motor mower and clothesline worshipping scene, a dig at Aussie society:

"I suppose it is, with me and Reg being brothers and New Zealanders, we never let the Aussies forget about our cultural superiority. Our collective intelligence is probably 10 times higher than the stupid Australians in the band."

The video cover advertises *Monumental* as "arguably the second greatest story ever told," so what happened to the first?

"The Bible would have to be the first. We're all very pious and we all go to church on Sunday in our finest."

Word has filtered back that the band had to undergo tremendous hardship and face unspeakable dangers to complete some of the clips:

"Yeah, I had to run along the beach towards the water and although it looks to be a hundred yards away it's actually a mile. Just having to get up and leave the beer is pretty hard work, a huge sacrifice. Greedy had to wallow around in the mud and how stupid and pathetic is that? He couldn't come up with the real cultural idea of using sausages to make you look more glamorous, like Reg."

"We did some terrible things as we don't seem to have a great deal of shame, so we'll do anything at the time if it means being an idiot, which we're quite good at, unfortunately."

Any thoughts about releasing a Greatest Hits album to tie in with the video's guaranteed success?

"We could, but
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