

The guy who has nothing to loos

IN decades to come, Australian children may look up from their pillows with sleepy eyes and ask their parents: 'Is Kenny real?'

At least that's the scenario hoped for by the publicity team behind the new Australian comedy *Kenny* – a mockumentary about a lovable toilet engineer.

The film, which opens around the country today, follows its titular hero with a fly-on-the-wall authenticity that has had preview audiences wondering just how much of the film is fact and how much is fiction.

To further cloud the issue, Kenny (who bears a striking resemblance to Melbourne actor Shane Jacobson) has spent the past few months on the road, touting the film as part of a grassroots press campaign.

The unwitting movie star, who peppers his sentences with a stream of cracker Aussie similes, says he's confident he's now heard every possible pun that can be made of the film's subject matter.

"It's actually no different to the life I lead as a plumber," he says.

"It's a s*** film. It's a crap film. It's another s*** Australian film about s***.

"It's open to every possible pun under the sun, don't you worry."

Real or not, there's nothing crap about the film *Kenny*, which takes the observational mockumentary form refined in the BBC series *The Office* and pumps it full of larrikin humour and laconic Australian charm.

"Basically, the humour of the people you'd meet on any construction site or farm in the country – the average battlers," says Kenny.

So might the Australian film industry, which has endured all sorts of woes in the past few years, be fished out of the poo by a movie about, well, poo?

"I think we're looking in the wrong direction for stories right now," says Kenny.

"Look at the heroism of our wartime wives and what they had to do to keep their families together.

"Look, I'd love to think an Australian could pull on his Rip Curl shirt, drive in his Australian-made car, pull up at the cinemas and watch an Australian film that embraces this great country and what it can do.

"But I think the aim here is really just to make a film that celebrates what we are as working-class Australians and leaves people with a warm heart and a face full of smiles."

The film was shot on an extremely modest budget, but was given a big boost in the production values stakes by the participation of the real-life Melbourne portable toilet rental company, Splashdown.

"The blokes who made the film approached us and said they'd like to film us doing our jobs 'for a little while'," says Kenny.

"Well, apparently 'a little while' is about 2½ years. I didn't know that's how long 'a little while' was, did you?

"I know I wouldn't like to be dragged behind a ute in me underwear for 'a little while'."

– SAM CLEVELAND

□ *Kenny* opens today and is rated M.

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Kenny – star of an Aussie mockumentary about a porta-loo worker