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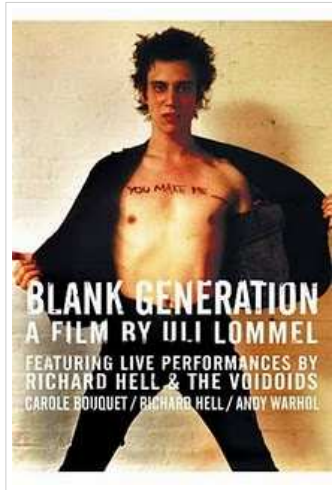
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FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 2010

## Blank Generation - DVD Review (Richard Hell, Carole Bouquet)



Uli Lommel's 1980 film *Blank Generation* was just rereleased on DVD (by MVD Entertainment) with a bonus 45-minute interview with Richard Hell.

This is an intriguing film for many reasons – one of which is that Richard Hell is always a fascinating speaker and he gives an insightful interview about the making of the film and the NYC music scene at that time. What is somewhat amusing is that Hell trashes the film during the interview. In a recent interview with the Wall Street Journal, Hell said *"I actually feel that the interview is better than the movie. It can even be said it's better as the movie, since it includes clips. The only thing it's lacking is some of the live performances."*

The bottom line is that, while *Blank Generation* isn't Academy Awards material, it isn't that bad. Fans of the NYC punk scene are going to want this disc in their collection – others may wonder

what all the fuss is about.

The movie was filmed in early 1978 against the gritty backdrop of near-bankrupt NYC and the plot centers around Billy (played by Richard Hell) who is a punk musician on the verge of major label success and his relationship with French journalist/documentarist Nada (played by future Bond girl Carole Bouquet). The film plays out against this central theme and it is an almost voyeuristic experience. The motivations of the starring and secondary characters are never fully explained so, watching the film, is almost like being a "fly on the wall". You see all of the dialogue and interplay but can never be sure what is driving it or who some of the secondary characters are that Billy and Nada come into contact with.

Some of non sequiturs around these secondary characters are completely amusing while other of the secondary characters come and go in the blink of an eye. One of the late-stage subplots is the introduction of Lommel himself into the movie and he plays the German journalist Hoffritz who is intent of landing an interview with Andy Warhol. While he waits intently in the television studio for Andy to show up, Walter Stedding show up as "Andy's assistant" and starts to play electric violin to the bafflement of Hoffritz and the TV studio crew. Warhol eventually makes an in-person appearance and gives a typically bizarre interview to Nada.

One of the highlights of the film is the live Voidoids footage from CBGB. Hell describes the live footage as "the best existing film footage of my band at a time when it was in top condition". He is right – it is exciting watching much-missed Robert Quine tossing off guitar licks while the pre-Ramones Marc Bell keeps the beat.

While *Blank Generation* has some flaws, there are more than enough redeeming moments to justify checking out this new re-release of the film.

### Links:

[Richard Hell](#)

POSTED BY MIKE AT 4:58 PM

LABELS: BLANK GENERATION, BOWERY BALLROOM, CAROLE BOUQUET, CBGBS, JAMES BOND, MVD VISUAL, PUNK, RICHARD HELL, ULI LOMMEL

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Showing events after 3/30.

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Friday, April 16

8:00pm [White Mice \(w/Liturgy, Sufi](#)

Thursday, May 6

7:00pm [Black Breath & Converge](#)

Showing events until 5/31. [Look for i](#)

Events shown in time zone: Eastern

Time



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