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Richard Hell & the Voidoids: Blank Generation

The most interesting part of this wildly eccentric punk-rock movie from 1980 arrives in the form of a retrospective interview with its star, **Richard Hell**. Typically, such interviews are devoid of insight and fresh recollections. Here, though, the former lead singer of **Television** and the **Voidoids** cuts through the baloney, revealing the pretentious behavior and misguided perceptions of the German director **Ulli Lommel** and his French co-star, **Carole Bouquet**. It's really quite entertaining. In *Blank Generation*, Bouquet plays a beautiful, if robotic journalist who's fallen in love with the subject of her report, a punk rocker about to break big. Hell's character is in the midst of an "existential crisis," however, and can't decide whether he should go left or right, let alone straight ahead.

The only discernible drama derives from the reporter's inability to decide if she should stay with the musician or go back to Europe with a German TV producer. *Blank Generation* is as stupid as it sounds, but not without several other redeeming factors. They include a short interview with a surprisingly lucid Andy Warhol, performances at CBGB's, scenes from a no-longer-gritty Lower East Side, **Ed Lachman's** cinematography and **Elliot Goldenthal's** soundtrack. (Both would go on to garner Oscar nominations.)

– Gary Dretzka