

This Flash
movie
requires a



This
Flash
movie
requires
a newer
version of
the
Flash
plug-in.
Please
upgrade
your
Flash
plug-in
by
visiting
www.macromedia.com



• Movie Database
(Over 150,000 titles)

• Site



TOP SEARCHES: [Luxury Liner \(1948\)](#), [Two Sisters from Boston \(1946\)](#), [More>>](#)

TOP STORIES

[Kiki & Within the Law - A Silent Double Feature Spotlighting Norma Talmadge](#)

[Blank Generation - 1980 Drama Set in NYC's Punk Rock Scene](#)

[The Sadist With Red Teeth & Forbidden Paris - French Cult Film Double Feature](#)

[James Mason in Bigger Than Life on DVD](#)

[Emma Thompson & Helena Bonham Carter in Howards End on DVD](#)

[George Bernard Shaw on Film: Eclipse Series 20](#)

MOVIE NEWS

NEW BOOKS

[Mack Sennett's Fun Factory from MacFarland & Company](#)

[Fall Girl: My Life as a Western Stunt Double - Coming in April](#)

[Portable Grindhouse: The Lost Art of the VHS Box](#)

[A Touch of Grace: How To Be a Princess the Grace Kelly Way](#)

[Akira Kurosawa: Master of Cinema](#)

[Starstruck: Vintage Movie Posters from Classic Hollywood](#)

FEATURE

BLANK GENERATION - New York City's Punk Rock Scene is the Setting for This 1980 Feature from Director Ulli Lommel



It's a shame that the American collective consciousness of its own national cinema in the 1980s is limited to a tight clique of John Hughes movies, cop buddy films, slasher pics and sequels to *Star Wars* (1977) and *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981). The decade offered so much more variety than that. A prodigious amount of 60s and 70s-style cinematic experimentation bled into the 80s but never transitioned to the multiplex, where films were invariably assessed less on their own merits than by how they queued up alongside *E.T.* (1982), *Beverly Hills Cop* (1984) or *Pretty in Pink* (1985). The majority of the low budget, truly independent features that were made at this point originated in the Bohemian conclaves of downtown New York or Hollywood in Los Angeles and made inspired use of first-time actors culled from the ranks of local musicians and non-traditional performance artists, with the addition of an

PRESS RELEASES

[A Star is Born Restored Blu-Ray Edition - Coming in June](#)

[The Orphan Film Symposium - April 7-10,](#)

DVD REVIEWS

[Rembetiko - 1983 Greek Historical Epic on DVD](#)

[Leo McCarey's Make Way for Tomorrow on DVD](#)

[Max Ophuls' Lola](#)

[2010 in New York City](#)[Joseph Losey's The Prowler at NYC's Film Forum 3/19-25](#)[An Evening at the Barn with Marc Wanamaker - April 14th in Hollywood, Ca.](#)[TCM Joins Campaign to Save the Hollywood Sign](#)[Victor Fleming Tribute at NYC's Film Forum in March](#)

Blank Generation
A rare cinematic look at the final days of New York's '70s punk rock scene, this music-laced drama from director Ulli Lommel ("Cocaine Cowboys") stars Richard Hell as a struggling musician torn between his career and his...
Was \$14.99
now: \$13.49

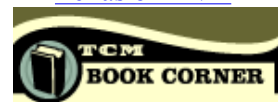


Make Way For Tomorrow
Serving as an inspiration for Yasujiro Ozu's classic character study "Tokyo Story," this classic melodrama from director Leo McCarey tells the heart-tugging story of an elderly couple (Victor Moore,

occasional Hollywood actor for marquee value. Among the best of this lot is Richard Elfman's *Forbidden Zone* (1980), Mark Rappaport's *Imposters* (1980), Amos Poe's *Subway Riders* (1981), Beth B and Scott B's *Vortex* (1982), Susan Seidelman's *Smithereens* (1982), Slava Tsukerman's *Liquid Sky* (1982), Rene Daadler's *Population: 1* (1986) and, beating the lot of them out of the gate, Ulli Lommel's **Blank Generation** (1979).

After ten years of steady work in West Germany alongside *German-Neuer Deutscher Film wunderkind* Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Ulli Lommel paddled out ahead of the second wave of Eastern Bloc filmmakers flocking to American shores. Lommel's arrival in the States fell between the crossovers of Milos Foreman, Ivan Passer and Roman Polanski before him and Wolfgang Peterson and Renny Harlin in the years afterward. While those immigrant filmmakers would go on to enjoy far more lucrative Hollywood careers, Lommel's sum total of finished films just might outdo their combined efforts. With such early features to his credit as the Fassbinder-produced *Die Zärtlichkeit der Wölfe* (*The Tenderness of the Wolves*, 1973), a fictionalized account of the crimes of German serial killer Fritz Haarman, and *Ausgerechnet Bananen* (*Monkey Business*, 1977), in which he starred opposite his then-girlfriend Anna Karina, Lommel pointed himself toward Canada. At the Montreal Film Festival, American programmer Roger Deutsch, a protégé of film distributor Joseph Green (director of the one-off schlock classic *The Brain That Wouldn't Die*), invited Lommel to come to New York, promising an introduction to artist/entrepreneur/film producer Andy Warhol. Warhol ultimately agreed to back Lommel's first two English language films and made rare, iconic appearances in both.

Filmed without a finished script in the harsh New York winter of January and February 1978, **Blank Generation** benefits immensely from the loose-knit star performance of Voidoids singer-songwriter Richard Hell, whose punk rock anthem "Blank Generation" provided Lommel's shapeless, aimless guerilla production with its title and point of view. Looking like the love child of Mick Jagger and Mischa Auer, Hell plays an up-and-coming rocker from Manhattan's Lower East Side who

[Montes on DVD](#)[Ray Charles in *Ballad in Blue*](#)[Werner Schroeter's *Palermo or Wolfsburg* on DVD](#)[Wim Wenders' *Paris, Texas* on DVD](#)

For a chance to try and win a free copy of **I Know Where I'm Going: Katherine Hepburn, a Personal Biography**, [click here.](#)



Search our extensive online Hollywood film news and classic DVD archive. Articles and classic movie releases are organized by their release date.

Beulah Bondi)
 who are forc...
 Was \$29.99
now: \$24.99

 [Sponsored Links](#) [What's This?](#)

Acai Berry ... EXPOSED

Health Reporter Discovers
 the Shocking Truth About
 Acai Berry.
[News7Daily.tv](#)

BEST Teeth-Whitener?

Before You Whiten Your
 Teeth, Be Sure to Read Our
 In-Depth Review First!
[www.Beauty-Weekly.com](#)

1547% Penny Stock Picks?

Our last pick exploded 1547%
 - Join our free newsletter
 today!
[www.PennyStockAdvice.com](#)

[BUY A LINK HERE](#)

feels himself squeezed between the predatory encouragement of music industry sharks (Howard Grant and Ben Weiner as an amusing Mutt & Jeff team) and amoral French photojournalist Nada Lumière (Carole Bouquet, between Buñuel's *That Obscure Object of Desire* and *For Your Eyes Only*), who obsessively records the intimate moments of her life to maintain an emotional distance. *Théâtre de l'Absurde*-isms abound and the film suggests more than it states frankly. While no one in his right mind would argue that **Blank Generation** is on par with Jean Luc Godard's *À bout de souffle* (*Breathless*, 1960), which seems a direct influence, or even Donald Cammell and Nicholas Roeg's *Performance* (1970), the film does achieve and maintain an unfiltered freshness entirely missing from the contemporary American independent film scene and points intriguingly, in its use of the video camera as a fetish item, to David Cronenberg's *Videodrome* (1984), which furthered the notion of a society evolving at the illusion of 24 frames per second.

MVDVisual's all-region DVD of **Blank Generation** looks surpassingly fine for a grungy, low budget production shot on the fly over a full generation ago. No complaints about picture and sound and the packaging is minimalist but attractive. MVD has sweetened the package of this now-rare film with live, vintage footage of Richard Hell and the Voidoids performing at the sadly defunct CBGB, as well as a 45 minute interview of the retired musician by Luc Sante, author of *Low Life: Lures and Snares of Old New York*. Fans of **Blank Generation** who expect to be thrilled at the prospect of catching up with Richard Hell (who went on to another big role in Susan Seidelman's *Smithereens* but was reduced to playing a dead body in Seidelman's subsequent *Desperately Seeking Susan*) will find themselves sorely disappointed by the often negative tone of this chat, during which Sante proves himself to be a surprisingly unprepared interviewer (he seems entirely unaware of the subsequent career of Academy Award winning film composer Elliot Goldenthal) who never challenges (even in a sporting Devil's advocate way) any of Hell's allegations while Hell himself dishes on Ulli Lommel's vanity and derides his value as a filmmaker. There are some good making-of tidbits buried within the fault-finding (Hell also points out some famous

faces in the crowd scenes shot at CBGB) but the sum total of negativity is desultory rather than celebratory. To his credit, Hell is an otherwise self-effacing and thoughtful interview subject who wonders ultimately if his take on **Blank Generation** is the best – if only Luc Sante had been up to the task of teasing out the value of this slight but nonetheless historically important film.

For more information about **Blank Generation**, visit [MVD Visual](#). To order **Blank Generation**, go to [TCM Shopping](#).

by Richard Harlan Smith

Our International Sites:  [TCM UK](#) |  [TCM Spain](#) |  [TCM France](#) | [TCM Latin America](#) | [TCM Asia](#) | [TCM Germany](#)

TURNER SPORTS & ENTERTAINMENT DIGITAL SITES: [cartoonnetwork.com](#) | [tbs.com](#) | [tnt.tv](#) | [trutv.com](#) | [adultswim.com](#)

[home](#) | [contact us](#) | [site map](#) | [recommended links](#) | [now playing guide](#) | [top movie picks](#)
[TCM Canada Schedule](#) | [RSS](#) | [archives](#) | [help](#) | [privacy policy](#) | [TV Parental Guidelines](#)
[terms of use](#) | [code of conduct](#) for this site | [Press Room](#)

TM & © 2010 Turner Classic Movies, A Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.
 [TCM.com is part of the Turner Sports and Entertainment Digital Network.](#)