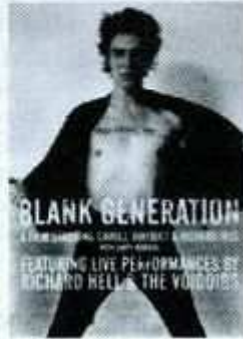


BLANK GENERATION (MVD)

If you like Richard Hell's music, you'll like *Blank Generation*. Because, frankly, there's little for a non-fan to like about this film.

A plot never unfolds. The characters—mainly punk rocker Billy (played by Hell) and journalist Nada (played by Carole Bouquet)—are undeveloped. Not only do Hell and Bouquet have no onscreen chemistry, but their volatile romantic relationship is filled with inane dialog, constant breaking up and making up, and arguments that arise out of nowhere over nothing. That pretty much sums up the entire film: Scenes just happen, subplots (none of which are worth retracing) start and never finish, Andy Warhol



drops in for God knows what reason (though it's actually a good cameo), and by the time the 80 minutes is up, you're not sure what you've just seen. In short, *Blank Generation* makes no sense. (Not surprisingly, director Ulli Lommel has made mostly straight-to-video exploitation schlock since this 1980 release.)

But if you're a Richard Hell & the Voidoids fan, there are a few killer clips of the band live at CBGB in 1978 (when the movie was shot) with great sound. Like the rest of the film, which is shot beautifully in spite of its vacuity, the music bits are in glorious full color, with shots panning out through the legendary club in the late '70s—neon beer signs, scenesters and all. Likewise, the clips of Hell cruising through gritty New York in his beat-up silver Cadillac are very cool viewing—from rundown buildings to dive bars to the shots of parked gas-guzzlers lining the streets.

The DVD also features an extensive interview with Hell himself, who tactfully dismisses the film and outlines its many flaws with incredulous chuckles. Reservations aside, even Hell acknowledges the value of *Blank Generation* as a good period piece for late '70s New York—which isn't a bad thing. **(Doug Sheppard)**