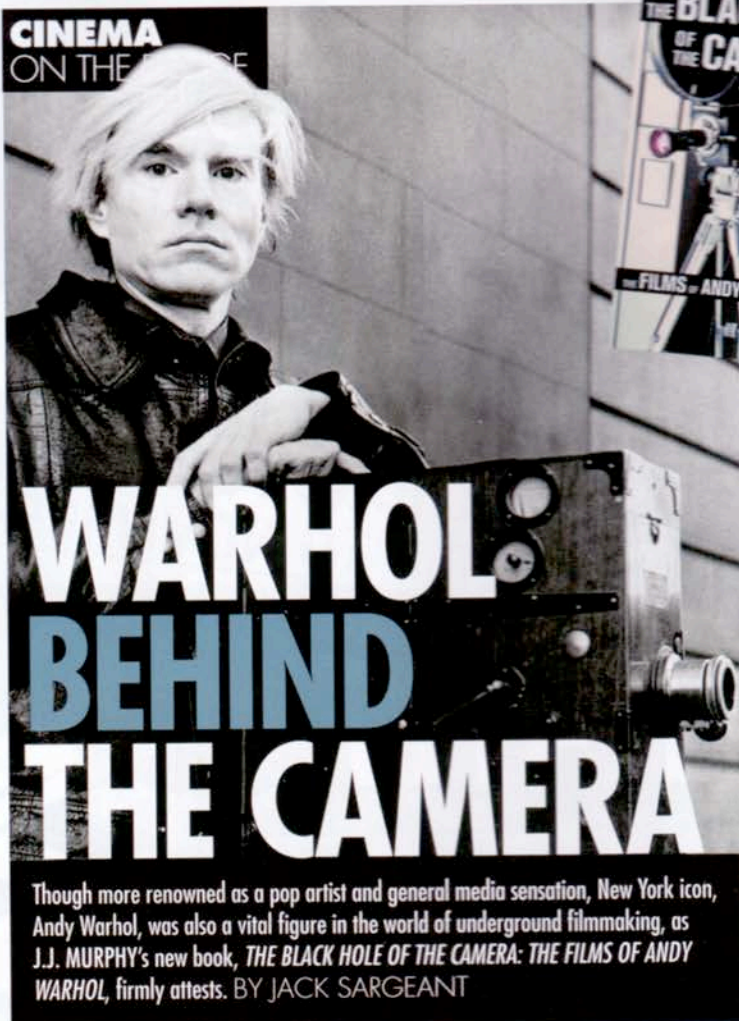




KEN PARK

Film festivals are usually free from the prying, grabbing hands of the censor, with curators more often than not allowed to play whichever works they deem of interest to an adult audience of keen cineastes often well attuned to the more disturbing corners of the filmic experience. But when Sydney Film Festival director, Gayle Lake, picked *Ken Park* – the latest effort from the notorious Larry Clark (*Kids*) – to screen at the event in 2003, she unknowingly opened up a big, squirming can of worms. In something of a first for a film festival, The Office Of Film And Literature Classification (OFLC) actively stepped in and refused to classify the movie, which features non-simulated sex acts in its grim, ugly depiction of adolescence and the predatory adults who often squeeze the life out of it. Though The Sydney Film Festival appealed what was effectively a ban, NSW Attorney General Bob Debus claimed that he could not lift it, and Australia's artistic community started to raise its voice, with many suggesting that the festival should screen the film regardless. "Not only would such a screening be illegal, but it could also affect the future status of the festival," Gayle Lake said. Matters reached boiling point when a group of industry supporters calling itself Free Cinema (led by *The Movie Show's* Margaret Pomeranz) illegally screened the unclassified film at Sydney's Balmain Town Hall to a 500-strong audience. Police intervened during the opening credits, however, and stopped the screening. The Office Of Film And Literature Classification has not classified the film since. "It is an explicit film, and it is a confronting film, but it's a film that certainly deserves to be seen by an adult audience," eminent critic, David Stratton, told ABC Radio. "It's sad that we in this country today have got to a stage where adults can't choose whether or not to see a film like this."



Though more renowned as a pop artist and general media sensation, New York icon, Andy Warhol, was also a vital figure in the world of underground filmmaking, as J.J. MURPHY's new book, *THE BLACK HOLE OF THE CAMERA: THE FILMS OF ANDY WARHOL*, firmly attests. BY JACK SARGEANT

Andy Warhol has already been the subject of a couple of columns here. Simply put, his works (or those boasting his name as producer) straddle the experimental, the underground, and the cult forms better than those of anybody else from the sixties. Warhol surrounded himself with equally talented – if sadly often less well known – individuals who all contributed in their own way to the wider Factory aesthetic.

As a filmmaker, Warhol supervised his own cinematic universe, with its own style, its own rules, and its own

unique perspective. This world had its own stars, drawn from the bohemian community that grew around the artist. They included Edie Sedgwick, Taylor Mead, Viva, Eric Emerson, Brigid Berlin, Gerard Malanga, Ondine, Mary Woronov, Paul America, Joe Dallesandro, and many others, who posed for screen tests, enacted vignettes, and finally acted in more "traditional" narrative feature films. Alongside these stars were other artists who would either hang out or stop by The Factory and occasionally appear in films that danced between quasi-documentaries of

outré personalities performing staged versions of themselves, and directly fictional works. J.J. Murphy's book, *The Black Hole Of The Camera: The Films Of Andy Warhol*, examines Warhol's work at length. Taking a broadly historical trajectory, the book examines the films and the various

artistic collaborations that produced these works, from writers such as playwright, Ronald Tavel, who created scenarios in which the cast often enacted psychodramas; Chuck Wein, who similarly worked as an instigator of narratives; and director, Paul Morrissey. Tracing the development of film through Warhol's career, Murphy's book re-addresses and, perhaps more importantly, re-energizes the idea of Warhol as one of the central filmmakers of the American avant-garde and underground, while simultaneously being the era's most visionary pop artist.

Tracing the development of Warhol's work through these collaborations, as well as through his use of expanded cinema and sound portraits, Murphy offers an exhaustive analysis of Warhol's filmmaking practice; the techniques employed to get the performances for his films; and the ways in which the films were shot and edited. A product of thoroughly engaged research and heavy on details, *The Black Hole Of The Camera: The Films Of Andy Warhol* describes the methods used to create the works and the films themselves, meaning that even those who may have only seen the better known movies or snippets of projects online can still enjoy this fascinating and essential book.

For more information on J.J. Murphy, head to www.jjmurphyfilm.com/. ■

CASTING COUCH



NANCY AND DANNY

Carey Mulligan will star as a small-town woman who pulls another man into a get-rich-quick scheme gone awry in this black comedy from director, James Marsh (*Project Nim*).

THE LONG RED ROAD

Tom Hardy will topline this adaptation of Brett C. Leonard's play about a tortured alcoholic who has to pull himself together for the sake of his desperate young daughter.

WHISKEY BAY

Willem Dafoe will star in this thriller as a cop who has to work alongside a white supremacist (Matt Dillon) that he arrested to bring down a hate group from the inside.

HIDDEN

In this thriller, Alexander Skarsgard, Andrea Riseborough and Emily Alyn Lind are a family who have lived for nearly a year in a bomb shelter after a nuclear catastrophe.