

Graffiti film banned

By Ian Royall

A FILM glorifying graffiti has been axed from the Melbourne Underground Film Festival after censors banned it nationwide.

The film, 70K, features a notorious Melbourne gang vandalising buildings and trains across the city.

Censors also ruled out six pornographic films, including Sex Wish and Whore, from the festival schedule.

The Office of Film and Literature Classification refused to give 70K a rating, making the screening of it illegal.

The Classification Board said the movie glamourised, and attempted to legitimise, criminal acts.

But festival director Richard Wolstencroft said he was surprised by the decision.

``If someone makes a film about some other criminal act, or even about say Martin Bryant, do we ban it?" he said. He said graffiti was not a serious crime. Anti-graffiti campaigner and Casey city councillor Steve Beardon welcomed the board's decision.

``It sends a message to these vandals that the wider community does not accept their so-called rantings that this is artwork," he said.

``These vandals often brag that Melbourne is not only the sports capital, but that it's also a graffiti capital. But this decision sends a message that it's not."

Commenting on the ban of the erotic movies, Mr Wolstencroft said he did not support censorship. ``The OFLC should simply rate films," he said.

Mr Wolstencroft said the festival's entire audience was over 18 years and the banned films were no worse than that available in X-rated shops in the city.