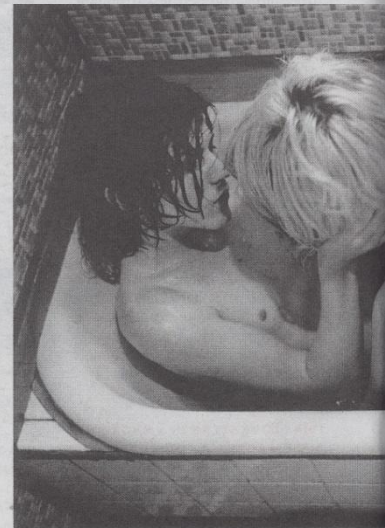
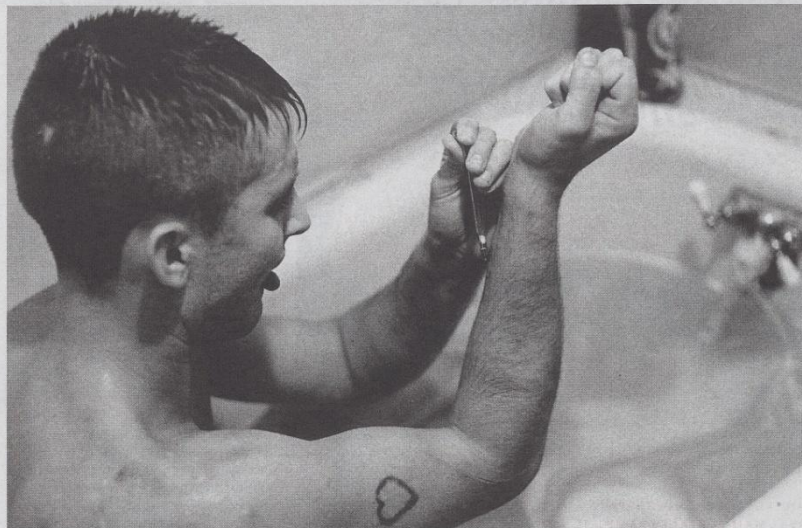
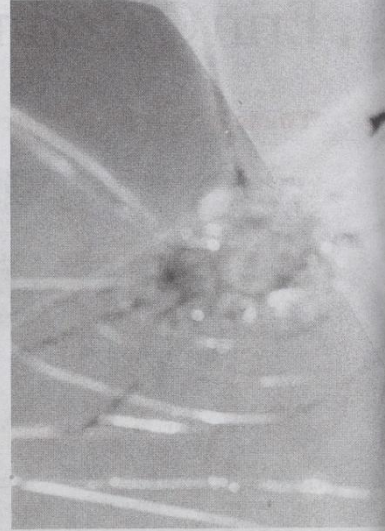




REVUE
Portfolio



Larry Clark
**Dark side of the
American dream**

WORDS BY ADAM JACQUES

A YOUNG MAN plunges a hypodermic needle into his arm to deliver the next hit. Two more casually shoot up in front of a window; and a teenage couple are captured in an intimate moment in a half-filled bathtub. Larry Clark's disturbing images have shone a light on the dark underbelly of teenage subculture – from drugs to sexuality and violence – for the past 40 years. But these pictures, insists the 68-year-old, are not intended to

shock: "I've always tried to reflect what's really going on – what I see and hear."

Best known for his uncompromising 1995 film *Kids*, which chronicled a day in the life of a group of sexually active teenagers in New York City, Clark's latest exhibition blends the recent – a group of 14-year-old skateboarders in South Central LA – with the vintage, above.

"It all started with me documenting my experiences as a teenager," reveals Clark. "I began shooting up amphetamines with my friends in Oklahoma when we were



just 16." His ensuing autobiographical photo book revealed to a shocked public a Middle America they had no idea about. "People will always say that these images were just depicting some fantasy of mine," he says, "but teenagers' lives are always darker than their parents think; all people have to do is read the papers to know that this is all going on." •

Clark's exhibition, What Do You Do for Fun?, is at the Simon Lee Gallery, London W1 (simonleegallery.com), until 2 April

TEENAGE KICKS
Clark's work (here, from 1961 to 1971) captures his experiences of teenage life in the US – no matter what Middle America might think; bottom right, self-portrait, 1962

