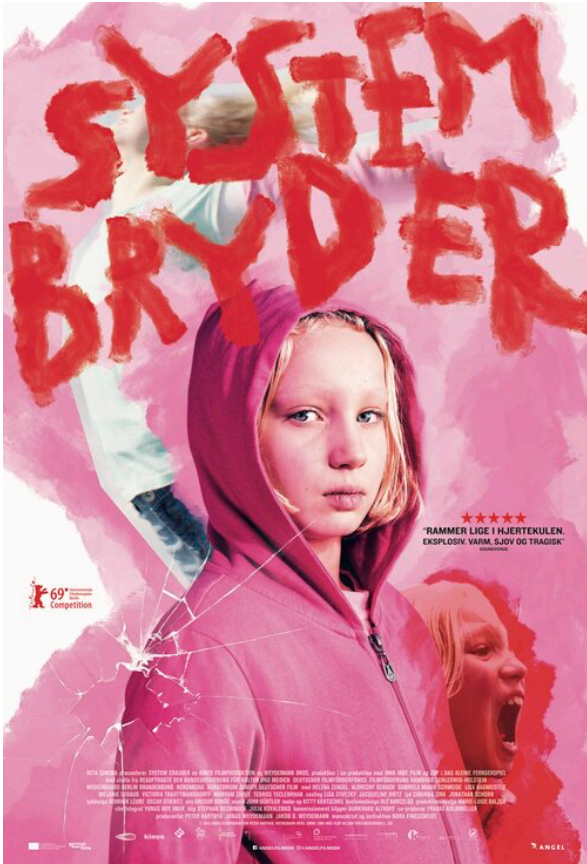


**Angel Films præsenterer**

**SYSTEMBRYDER**



**Premiere:** 3. september 2020

**Længde:** 125 minutter

**Censur:** 15 år

**Instruktør:** Nora Fingscheidt

**Premierebiografer:**

Grand Teatret, Empire Bio, Gloria,

Vester Vov Vov, Valby Kino, Café

Biografen Odense, Øst for

Paradis, Kolding, Sønderborg m.fl.

Benni er en ni-årig tornado i pink dunjakke. Hun er en systembryder. En kastekugle mellem forskellige institutioner, der ikke kan håndtere hendes udbrud af raseri og barske ydre. Det eneste Benni ønsker, er at bo med sin mor igen, men moderen er ikke i stand til at håndtere sin datters uberegnelige opførsel. Systemet er ved at give op, men da Micha ansættes som hjælper på hjemmet, begynder Benni for første gang at åbne op. Benni knytter sig til ham alt imens Micha forsøger at balancere sin professionalisme med sit personlige engagement i Benni. De bevæger sig begge på usikker grund og de mindste ting truer med at få deres venskab til at bryde sammen.

SYSTEMBRYDER er den tyske instruktør Nora Fingscheidts debutfilm. Den unge Helena Zengel brager igennem som Benni. Filmen blev vist i hovedkonkurrence på Berlin Film Festival i 2019, hvor den modtog Sølvbjørnen (Alfred Bauer Prize) for bedste film. Den har siden turneret på et hav af festivaler verden over. Filmen var Tysklands kandidat til Oscar for bedste fremmedsprogede film i 2020.

## INSTRUKTØR NORA FINGSCHIEDT OM FILMEN:

*"Jeg har lavet denne film for at vække forståelse for et barn som Benni. Børn som oplever at blive kastet rundt fra sted til sted, med skiftende omsorgspersoner. Hvordan skal et barn finde ro, når forandring er det eneste stabile i tilværelsen? Samtidig tager Benni os ind den vilde og fantasifulde verden hos et barn, der kæmper for at få sin mors kærlighed. Til trods for alle problemerne, afspejler filmen Bennis livsenergi, hendes humor og længsel. Jeg ønsker at skabe en film som man oplever med alle sine sanser. Bennis opførsel kan måske chokere, men som tilskuer ønsker jeg, at man føler glæde og omsorg for hende.*

*Voldelig adfærd fra et barn er et råb om hjælp. Altid"*

Trailer, undervisningsmateriale mv. <https://www.angelfilms.dk/systembryder>

## CAST

Benni  
Michael Heller  
Frau Bafané  
Bianca Klaaß  
Dr. Schönemann  
Pflegetmutter Silvia  
Elli Heller  
Erzieher Robert

Helena Zengel  
Albrecht Schuch  
Gabriela Maria Schmeide  
Lisa Hagmeister  
Melanie Straub  
Victoria Trauttmansdorff  
Maryam Zaree  
Tedros Teclebrhan

## CREW

Written & directed by  
Director of photography  
Producers

Co-producer  
Commissioning Editor  
Production design  
Costume design  
Make Up artist  
Sound  
Music  
Sound design  
Editors  
Casting by  
Production

Co-production

With backing from

Nora Fingscheidt  
Yunus Roy Imer  
Peter Hartwig  
Jonas Weydemann  
Jakob D. Weydemann  
Frauke Kolbmüller  
Burkhard Althoff  
Marie-Luise Balzer  
Ulé Barcelos  
Kitty Kratschke  
Corinna Zink, Jonathan Schorr  
John Gürtler  
Dominik Leube, Oscar Stiebitz  
Stephan Bechinger, Julia Kovalenko  
Lisa Stutzky, Jacqueline Rietz  
kineo Filmproduktion  
Weydemann Bros.  
Oma Inge Film  
ZDF / Das kleine Fernsehspiel  
Die Beauftragte der Bundesregierung für Kultur  
und Medien, Deutscher Filmförderfonds,  
Filmförderung Hamburg Schleswig-Holstein,  
Medienboard Berlin Brandenburg, nordmedia,  
Kuratorium junger deutscher Film

## TECHNICAL DETAILS

Shooting Locations  
Shooting time  
Running time  
Format  
Screen Ratio  
First public screening

Awards

Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Berlin, Brandenburg  
07.11.2017 - 27.03.2018  
119 min  
DCP/ 2D  
1:1.85  
Berlinale Wettbewerb 2019 (IFB Competition  
2019)  
Emder Drehbuchpreis 2016, Thomas Strittmatter  
Drehbuchpreis 2017, Kompagnon-Förderpreis  
Berlinale Talents 2017, Les Arcs Film Festival  
Work-in-Progress – TitraFilm Award 2018

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## **LOGLINE**

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On her wild quest for love, 9-year-old Benni's untamed energy drives everyone around her to despair.

## **SYNOPSIS**

She is small, but dangerous. Wherever Benni ends up, she is immediately expelled. The wild 9-year-old girl has already become what child protection services call a "system crusher". And she is certainly not looking to change her ways. Because Benni has one single goal: to be back at home with her mommy! But Bianca is scared of her own daughter. Mrs. Bafané from child protection services is trying her best to find a permanent placement for Benni. She hires the anger management trainer Micha as Benni's school escort and suddenly there is a seed of hope. Will Micha be able to succeed where all others despaired?

While being acutely authentic, first-time director Nora Fingscheidt transcends a psychological study and crafts vibrant, visceral and emotional cinema, which evokes unforgettable performances.

## **STORYLINE**

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She is rebellious, she is aggressive and unpredictable. Benni's real name is Bernadette. But just see what happens when anyone calls her that! Foster families, living groups, a special needs school: Benni has already been through it all and is kicked out wherever she goes. The outwardly delicate nine-year-old is already what the youth welfare office refers to as a "system crusher." But this doesn't matter to Benni, since she has only one goal: to live with her mom again! But Bianca is completely overwhelmed with her daughter.

The warm-hearted Mrs. Bafané from the youth welfare office is on the verge of despair. No one wants to take on Benni anymore. She is permanently suspended from school. Even everyday life is impossible to manage with her: due to traumatic experiences in her early childhood, no one can touch her face. Mrs. Bafané ventures a final experiment and hires Micha, an anti-violence trainer for juvenile delinquents. After initial resistance, Benni agrees to engage with Micha, and instead of yet another referral to the child psychiatrist, he arranges for them to spend some time together in nature. Three weeks of outdoor education without electricity and running water.

The time in the forest is a severe test not just for Benni, but also for Micha. The otherwise self-confident man is brought to his limits. But he finally succeeds in creating an experience for Benni that she can be proud of, and in finding a real way of reaching her.

After returning to "civilization," Benni clings to Micha and wants to stay with him. But Micha has his own family and realizes that he is losing his professional distance. When Benni's mother suddenly reappears, things take their own course.

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## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE | NORA FINGSCHIEDT**

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While shooting a documentary about a home for dispossessed women, I heard the unofficial term “system crasher” for the first time, because the youngest resident was just 14 years old. There were no children’s homes left willing to take the girl in. I couldn’t get that term out of my head, so I started an intense research. During this period I met an 11-year-old boy who had been in 52 different institutions. “System crashers” are children with incredible strength and endurance, but still tragic figures. At a very early age they put all their opportunities of becoming integrated into our society at risk. How much energy does it take to drive so many trained child care workers to despair? What if it were possible to re-channel this energy and use it for positive purposes?

My motivation for making this film was to sensitize people to children like Benni. That’s why the film is being told primarily from Benni’s point of view. As spectators we develop a feeling for the confusing number of “homes”, the changing guardians and the constant and dizzying disruption of relationships. At the same time, Benni draws us into the wild, uncertain, fantasy-filled world of a child fighting for her own sense of being. I wanted the film to bubble with energy and, despite the tragic nature of the topic, to be humorous and lighthearted. Just like Benni is. Although we may be upset – even shocked – by Benni’s violent behavior, we should learn to love her and to fear for her during the course of the film. Ever since I met my first “system crasher”, I’ve known that I had to tell a story about one. Children’s violence is a cry for help. Always.

## **PRODUCERS' NOTE | PETER HARTWIG, JONAS WEYDEMANN, FRAUKE KOLBMÜLLER**

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Every good movie needs a good script. Naturally! Through her years of research and great empathy, Nora Fingscheidt has written a book that convinced all of us immediately. Completely! While reading the script, we were already plunged into emotional depths, were engaged boldly, cheerfully, and with positivity and then confronted with the harsh reality. The story of Benni and her desperate struggle for her mother’s love coincides in many ways with our view of the way a narrative should be. Taking the child’s perspective, not judging anyone as guilty, but questioning all sides, shedding light on their despair and often helplessness – this is something that greatly appeals to us.

During filming this was a great challenge for everyone involved – to take the child’s perspective, to always remain at eye level, to allow space for the child’s spontaneous reactions and to follow them. The sets were set up at 360°, which, for a debut film with a limited budget, means finding creative solutions really everywhere at all levels. For example, the production office was converted into one of the sets, and so we worked on the staircase with laptops on our knees. Everyone in the team took on several tasks. And so did we as producers, each with a stronger focus in the different project phases and always in constant and very close collaboration with Nora. Her vision formed the center of our actions.

Nora succeeded in translating Benni’s adventurous journey into a highly emotional drama. The film’s many contrasts and nuances, what we were aspiring to cinematographically, combined with an emotional roller coaster – the audience is sure to laugh and cry. We want to stimulate a discussion about the place of children in our society – for such a discussion to occur in the first place, and much more. And also a discussion about the responsibility that many people take on in this area.

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## CREW BIOGRAPHY | FILMOGRAPHY

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### **NORA FINGSCHIEDT | DIRECTOR**

Nora Fingscheidt was born in Braunschweig in 1983 and spent her childhood in Germany and Argentina. From 2003 onwards she supported the development of the self-organized film school filmArche in Berlin. At the same time, she completed her training as an acting coach by Sigrid Andersson. 2008 – 2017 Nora studied fiction directing at the Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. Her graduation film, the full-length documentary WITHOUT THIS WORLD about a conservative Mennonite colony in Argentina, won the Max Ophüls Prize and First Steps Award in 2017. Her fiction debut SYSTEM CRASHER has already won several awards at script level. It also won the “Works in Progress” section at Les Arcs Film Festival.

### **PETER HARTWIG | KINEO FILMPRODUKTION**

Peter Hartwig was born in 1964 in Babelsberg. Since completing his studies at the Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, he has been involved in over 59 films in various capacities.

He has participated in all of Andreas Dresen’s major films since 1993 – in addition to works by Oskar Roehler, Esther Gronenborn, Dani Levy, Philipp Stölzl, Andreas Kleinert, Urs Egger, Volker Schlöndorff, and other directors. With his kineo label, he has produced films that have received the Grimme Award, among other prizes, and has twice been awarded the title of Fairest Producer at the Berlinale.

Peter Hartwig also works as a photographer and is frequently involved in special projects in this context – most recently 3 DAYS IN QUIBERON and GUNDERMANN. SYSTEM CRASHER is already his second collaboration with Nora Fingscheidt.

### **JONAS WEYDEMANN | WEYDEMANN BROS.**

Jonas Weydemann was born in Hamburg. He earned a degree in production at the German Film and Television Academy Berlin (dffb) and is an alumnus of the IDFAcademy, ep2c, Rotterdam Lab, Cannes Producers Network, Berlinale Talents, and EAVE Producer’s Workshop.

Jonas is the winner of the Robert Bosch Co-Production Prize and was Program Director of the short film festival Wendland Shorts (2007–2017).

He is Germany Coordinator of EAVE, teaches at the European-Asian producer workshop Ties That Bind (TTB), and is a member of the German Film Academy and European Film Academy.

### **JAKOB D. WEYDEMANN | WEYDEMANN BROS.**

Jakob D. Weydemann was born in Hamburg. He studied political science and earned a degree in directing at the CECC in Barcelona. He is an alumnus of Ateliers du Cinéma Européen (ACE), the Sarajevo Young Producers Program, Documentary Campus Masterschool, Entertainment Masterclass, and the International Producing Class of the international film school cologne (ifs).

Jakob is a winner of the Gerd Ruge Scholarship and a member of the ACE Producers Network, the German Film Academy and the European Film Academy.

Together Jakob and Jonas Weydemann founded the film production company Weydemann Bros., of which they are currently managing directors.

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### **FRAUKE KOLBMÜLLER | OMA INGE FILM**

Born and raised in Leipzig, Frauke Kolbmüller has been active in the field of media, film, and theater since 2000. After studying digital media at the University of Bremen, she specialized in film production in the master's program at the Hamburg Media School from 2010 to 2012. Until 2016 she worked freelance as production manager for Gruner + Jahr's stern.de DigitalTV, where she developed parallel feature film projects. She has also worked as a freelance producer for Hamster Film (BOY 7, directed by Özgür Yildirim), Wüste Film (STRAWBERRY BUBBLEGUMS, directed by Benjamin Teske), and other film companies. Since 2016 she has been a freelance lecturer in production and project management at the DMA Media Academy. Nora Fingscheidt's SYSTEM CRASHER is the third production of her production company Oma Inge Film, founded in Hamburg in mid-2015.

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## CAST BIOGRAPHY | FILMOGRAPHY

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### HELENA ZENGEL IS BENNI

Helena Zengel was born in 2008 in Berlin. Despite her young age, she has already appeared in several films, including the lead role in Mascha Schilinski's drama *DARK BLUE GIRL*, which was screened at the Berlinale in 2018, in Simon Ostermann's award-winning short film *ROUTE B96*, in Leonie Krippendorf's *LOOPING*, and in Anna Maria Roznovska's *BABY BICHKA*. In addition, the horse fan was also seen in the ZDF productions *DIE SPEZIALISTEN – DIESER WEG* by Gero Weinreuter, *ES WIRD TOTE GEBEN* by Lars Becker, and *SPREEWALDKRIMI – MÖRDERISCHE HITZE* by Kai Wessel. In *SYSTEM CRASHER*, Helena Zengel plays the main role – the rebellious Benni. Nora Fingscheidt's debut film will celebrate its world premiere in the official competition of the 69<sup>th</sup> Berlinale and is scheduled for release in autumn 2019.

### Filmography

2019	SYSTEM CRASHER	Director: Nora Fingscheidt
2016	DARK BLUE GIRL	Director: Mascha Schilinski
2015	ROUTE B96	Director: Simon Ostermann
2015	LOOPING	Director: Leonie Krippendorf

### ALBRECHT SCHUCH IS MICHAEL HELLER

Albrecht Schuch, born in 1985 in Jena, attended the University of Music and Theater "Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy" Leipzig from 2006 to 2010. Since 2001 he has appeared at various theaters, including in Jena, Leipzig, Vienna, and Berlin. Starting in 2002, film and television productions followed, including episodes of *POLIZEIRUF 110* and *TATORT*. In 2010 Albrecht Schuch played Harry Klein in Hermine Huntgeburth's novel adaptation *NEUE VAHR SÜD*. For this role he was honored as an ensemble member with the 2010 German Comedy Award for Best TV Comedy. The following year he appeared as Alexander von Humboldt in Detlev Buck's bestseller adaptation *MEASURING THE WORLD*. He also played roles in Robert Thalheim's *WESTWIND*, in the Ken Follett adaptation *A DANGEROUS FORTUNE*, and in one part of the award-winning trilogy *MITTEN IN DEUTSCHLAND: NSU*, winning a Grimme Award for his portrayal of a right-wing terrorist. In 2016 Albrecht Schuch played the landscape painter Otto Modersohn in Christian Schwochow's *PAULA*. Film and TV productions in which Albrecht Schuch has appeared include Simon Ostermann's award-winning short film *ROUTE B96* and the novel adaptation *KRUSO*. In 2018 Albrecht Schuch received the German Acting Award for Best Supporting Actor in Kilian Riedhoff's ARD hostage drama *GLADBECK* as well as the German Television Academy Award for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for the ZDF financial thriller series *BAD BANKS*. In 2019 Albrecht Schuch can be seen in *SYSTEM CRASHER*. Nora Fingscheidt's debut film will celebrate its world premiere in the official competition of the 69<sup>th</sup> Berlinale and is scheduled for release this autumn.

### Filmography

2019	SYSTEM CRASHER	Director: Nora Fingscheidt
2019	BERLIN ALEXANDERPLATZ	Director: Burhan Qurbani
2018	BAD BANKS	Director: Christian Schwochow
2018	54 HOURS	Director: Kilian Riedhoff
2018	KRUSO	Director: Thomas Stuber
2016	PAULA	Director: Christian Schwochow

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**GABRIELA MARIA SCHMEIDE IS MRS. BAFANÉ**

Gabriela Maria Schmeide was born in 1965 in Bautzen. After training as a singer and violinist, she studied at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin from 1987 to 1991. Shortly thereafter she received the sponsorship award of the Academy of Arts. After graduating she was first engaged at the Berliner Ensemble. In 1992 she was voted Young Actress of the Year by "Theater heute" magazine. In 1994 Gabriela Maria Schmeide moved to Bremen, where she performed in the ensemble of the Theater Bremen until 2009, first as a full-time member and then on a freelance basis. Since the 2009/2010 season she has been an ensemble member of the Thalia Theater Hamburg. Ever since her title role in Andreas Dresen's film POLICEWOMAN, for which she won the Adolf Grimme Award, she has also established herself in both film and television. In addition, she has appeared in Dresen's GRILL POINT, Hans-Christoph Blumenberg's DER AUFSTAND, Michael Haneke's THE WHITE RIBBON, Doris Dörrie's THE HAIRDRESSER, Sönke Wortmann's FRAU MÜLLER MUSS WEG!, Matti Geschonneck's IN TIMES OF FADING LIGHT, and many other film and television productions. In 2019 Gabriela Maria Schmeide can be seen in SYSTEM CRASHER. Nora Fingscheidt's debut film will celebrate its world premiere in the official competition of the 69th Berlinale and is scheduled for release this autumn.

**Filmography**

2019	SYSTEM CRASHER	Director: Nora Fingscheidt
2017	IN TIMES OF FADING LIGHT	Director: Matti Geschonneck
2015	FRAU MÜLLER MUSS WEG!	Director: Sönke Wortmann
2010	THE HAIRDRESSER	Director: Doris Dörrie
2010	THE WHITE RIBBON	Director: Michael Haneke
2008	PATCHWORK	Director: Franziska Buch
2005	DRESDEN	Director: Roland Suso Richter
2002	GRILL POINT	Director: Andreas Dresen
2000	POLICE WOMAN	Director: Andreas Dresen

**LISA HAGMEISTER IS BIANCA KLAASS**

Lisa Hagmeister, born in 1979 in Berlin, studied at the Ernst Busch Academy of Dramatic Arts in Berlin. Her first theater engagement took her to the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus, after which she moved to the Thalia Theater Hamburg, where she continues to perform today. She has been involved in many film productions since 2007, including in several TATORT episodes as well as in Nina Grosse's terrorism drama DER VERLORENE SOHN. In 2007 the actress won a German Television Award for her portrayal of a young mother in Lars Kraume's TATORT – DER FRÜHE ABSCHIED, and in 2008 she received the Boy Gobert Prize of the Körber Foundation. In 2015 the film MÄNNERTREU by Hermine Huntgeburth, in which Lisa Hagmeister plays the daughter of Matthias Brandt, won the Grimme Award. For her outstanding performance of Selma in Bastian Kraft's play DANCER IN THE DARK, Lisa Hagmeister was honored in 2018 with the Rolf Mares Hamburg Theater Prize. Most recently, she starred in Eva Trobisch's award-winning feature film ALL IS GOOD. In 2019 Lisa Hagmeister can be seen in SYSTEM CRASHER. Nora Fingscheidt's debut film will celebrate its world premiere in the official competition of the 69th Berlinale and is scheduled for release this autumn.

**Filmography**

2019	SYSTEM CRASHER	Director: Nora Fingscheidt
2018	ALL IS GOOD	Director: Eva Trobisch
2014	MÄNNERTREU	Director: Hermine Huntgeburth
2010	THE COMING DAYS	Director: Lars Kraume

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**Benni, the heroine of SYSTEM CRASHER, is nine years old. What was your experience like as a nine-year-old?**

Quite good, actually. I was also a rebellious child, but lucky enough to grow up in a family environment that was able to accept and channel my energy.

**Benni doesn't benefit from this good fortune. As a so-called "problem child," she has to constantly change caregivers and deal with the decisions that others make for her. Did this subject come to you, or did you search for it?**

It came to me, yes, you can say that. For a long time I wanted to make a story about a volatile and extremely energetic girl. The idea wouldn't let go of me, but I simply didn't have the right occasion yet to implement it. When I was making a documentary about a homeless women's shelter in Stuttgart six years ago, that moment had come.

**Please describe this moment.**

One day a fourteen-year-old girl moved into the shelter. This was a shock for me. I asked about her and heard the term "system crusher" for the first time. This is what children like Benni, who are kicked out everywhere they go, are unofficially called.

**SYSTEM CRASHER is a fascinating expression...**

Yes, incredibly powerful and radical. But I'm aware that it will be polarizing as a film title. Because it's not about hackers or anti-G20 protesters. Even among experts it is very controversial, because it doesn't capture the heart of the matter. These children and adolescents aren't destroying any kind of functioning system; rather, it is failed system processes that lead to the fact that they aren't accepted anywhere and are repeatedly thrown off track. So one tries to avoid "system crusher" as a term. Nevertheless, there are few really good alternatives.

**Why is Benni only nine?**

It was a deliberate decision, just like the decision to cast a girl and not a boy, who are in the majority as "system crushers." At the age of nine, children can act consciously to a certain extent, and also manipulate. Nonetheless, we should be afraid for Benni. We wanted to keep her away from clichés and rash categorizations, like suggesting adolescent rebellion simply because she may be fourteen years old. Also, Benni shouldn't live in a rough big city, in order to avoid putting her into the next pigeonhole and thereby simplifying the subject matter.

**This is a character that stands or falls with her actress. How did you find the fascinating Helena Zengel?**

For years while I was writing the script, I thought I would never find a girl who could play Benni. And if I did, the parents would never agree to let her play this girl. Nevertheless, I kept writing because I had to do it. Of course I made a point of starting the search early enough – in agencies, on the streets, in schools and sports clubs. Helena was the seventh in the first selection of ten girls. It was immediately clear that she had something extremely special. But I thought it was impossible that we had already found the right one in number seven. The Dardenne brothers cast 700 boys for The Kid with a Bike! So we moved on, auditioned around 150 girls and still kept coming back to Helena again and again.

**What was special about her?**

She was the only one who could play aggression and hardship at the same time. There was never anything spoiled or impudent, it was always linked with fragility and vulnerability.

**How did you work with Helena?**

At first Helena's mother read the script with her alone. She has a great understanding of our narrative concerns, but asked immediately how we would deal with the extremes in terms of content. I am the mother of an eight-year-old son myself, which is why it was particularly important to me to go about our preparations very carefully. The goal was to slip into the character of Benni and enter into her world little by little. We started to get to know each other and work together six months before shooting. This also meant that Helena was involved in the process of selecting the actors, down to the smallest supporting role. So everyone had to meet and interact with her during auditions. And she really has an enormous presence, so you have to hold your own as a partner on the set.

**How did you rehearse with Helena?**

On the day before the actual shooting day we rehearsed the material, explored texts and situations, also in order to see what might not be right. Then we slept on it. So we always knew what to expect.

**The focus of SYSTEM CRASHER is clearly on Benni. Nevertheless, the successful balance is up to the adults who interact or try to interact with her.**

Because the whole system consists of people who are caught up in structures that for the most part they did not create themselves.

**Do you also want to provoke a discussion in society?**

Yes, a discussion about violence and aggression, which often arise out of fear, especially among children, and how we deal with it. About what lies behind the understandable impulse to want to lock away these children, because others have to be protected. Who among us is aware that there are still children's homes and child psychiatry offices that are overflowing everywhere and have long waiting lists? In Germany this is more of a marginal social issue. But also thinking about all the caregivers who are often extremely overburdened in their strenuous and under-appreciated jobs.

**On the subject of research, it must have been prolonged and intense.**

It certainly was! It went on for several years. I lived in a residential group and worked in a school for educational assistance, a child welfare placement center, and a child psychiatry office. In addition, I held countless discussions with employees of institutions and agencies and also with child and youth psychologists. It was a kaleidoscope of people and places that moved me very much.

**Did you ever have the feeling that there was still a missing piece of the puzzle, so there was a danger of the research never ending?**

I had to stop the research for other reasons, because at a certain point, what I saw and heard was affecting me too much. My world view had grown too much darker. All the severe cases of child abuse and neglect accumulated. I couldn't have endured any more research.

**Are children like Benni lost?**

I think it is very difficult for them, but they are often so impressive and yet invisible at the same time. This only changes when they are maybe sixteen or eighteen and situations start to escalate. The really terrible stories these teenagers went through as children, when they were really in need, remain in the shadows. But there are also occasional cases where children pull themselves together.

**You also work as a documentary filmmaker. Why did SYSTEM CRASHER become a feature film?**

A documentary was something I never considered as an option. I wanted to create an intense, energetic audiovisual cinematic experience that lays no claim to reality. Because the reality is much worse. WITHOUT THIS WORLD, however, my last project, could never have become a feature film. I would never have wanted to stage a fundamentalist Christian sect with German roots in Argentina. I wanted to really go there, to feel and experience, to observe. For SYSTEM CRASHER, though, I couldn't intrude into the lives of real people who already have it hard enough. Absolutely not!

**It would be too harsh for audiences, too.**

Barely endurable even. Who would want to watch that? I wanted to make an intense fictional film with a raw energy that rivets the audience and shakes them up in a positive sense. It's also about the beauty of people who simply don't fit into the system.

**The scenes that Benni's mother gets are few, but intense and painful. Were they especially tricky to pull off?**

They were like treading a borderline. Because we're presenting a mother who loves her child yet harms her at the same time, who is helpless and overwhelmed, gentle, weak, and at the same time tough and severe. I often experienced something like this during my research: mothers with five children who have been taken from them, and yet they go on to have a sixth, seventh, eighth. You have to look very closely at these women to understand what is behind their decisions. It's about not betraying them, but letting them keep their dignity. As a child you are at the mercy of your parents, regardless of which family you are born into. Nearly all children like Benni want to go back to mom and dad, even if they experienced abuse and egregious violence there. This often renders us adults speechless, but it's a fact.

**Though a few devices are used, SYSTEM CRASHER is carried by its own authentic atmosphere.**

The film contains many generalized scenes that reflect reality. Scenes that were told to me or that I experienced and then developed further. They were to some extent polished, shortened, or amplified, simply due to the needs of the film dramaturgy and the fact that it must remain watchable. And yet I was primarily concerned with conveying Benni's emotional world, her traumas, and her body feeling. SYSTEM CRASHER stands for what I want in cinema. I like anti-heroes who do terrible things out of desperation and hurt the people they love the most.

**For further information:**

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Pictures and clips available under [ftp.betafilm.com](http://ftp.betafilm.com), user: ftpress01, password: 8synopsis