

## PRESS

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## INTERVIEW

DETLEV BUCK

*TOUGH ENOUGH is quite a change from your other movies. It has a very different tone to it. What drew you to the story?*

The way that daily violence ends up in a situation where all you can say is "oh, shit". That's why we put in the scene with the happy slapping, which isn't even in the original book. And the way we filmed it, with stuntmen, is a joke compared to how extreme it really gets. It was also important to us to give more background on gang member Erol, who's a pure antagonist in the book. We made him a more complex character. In the film, you see him pushing a baby carriage and carrying groceries. But as part of a gang, he has to puff out his chest. We thought of calling the movie "Testosterone". On the one hand, Erol is a teenage father; he loves his wife and buys diapers, and he's just a regular little man. On the other hand, he has to act like a big tough guy and that leads to him getting beat.

*The film appears very authentic. What kind of research did you do?*

I went into classrooms. And I walked around Berlin's Neukölln neighborhood a lot. I just walked around, ate somewhere, watched everything and took it in. The incredible mix of nationalities. The way they fight in the kitchen, and then you see a young girl sitting at one of the tables doing homework. Everybody's carrying rugs around. So I just took the time to look and see, without taking a lot of notes or photographs. That way you get a feel for the atmosphere and that later becomes part of the story.

A lot of the seriousness and detail came from actor David Kross. After he read the book, he completely realized what was going on with the character right up to the moment he's forced with the decision whether or not to kill someone. I saw a lot of boys in casting sessions who just picked up the piece and pulled the trigger. When I asked them what they were doing, they said "it's in the script". David understood immediately the meaning of the scene... David has several powerful scenes. Where he really snaps with his mother, or with drug dealer Hotte, where he's helpless and doesn't know what to do. What's so great about him is you can read his thoughts on his face. He's completely transparent, you're breathing along with him and you always know where he's at. That's what makes good movie acting. Everything else is just gesticulation. Even without experience he had a very sensitive feel for things. He's a very serious young man, all 15 years of him.

*Were you inspired by any other movies?*

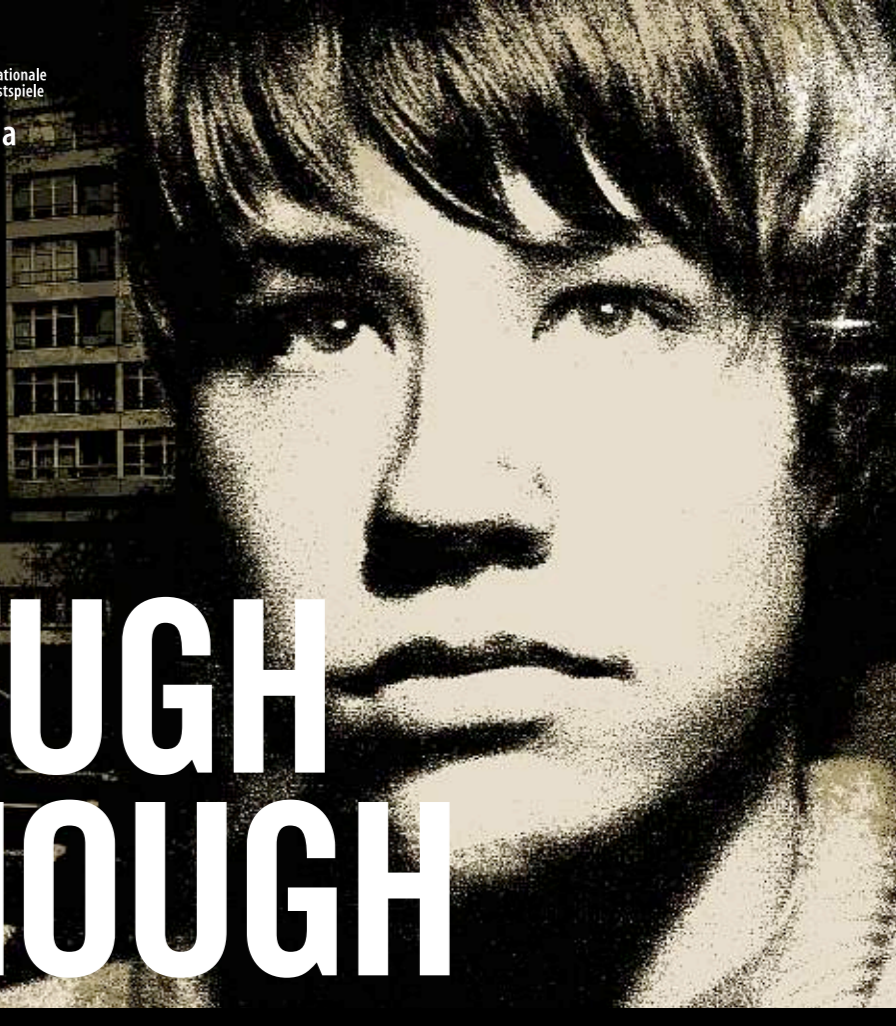
Somebody recently said to me it's a mixture of CHRISTIANE F. and Scorsese. Somebody else found links to Melville's LE SAMOURAI. I myself love Truffaut's THE 400 BLOWS. Those are all films I like, films about lonely people.

Each image, each sound in a film is put there. All you have to do is look and listen. My favorite audience is people who allow themselves to get drawn in to what they see and hear. At the beginning of TOUGH ENOUGH, when you hear Stravinsky's music and see this young man walking the streets, disoriented, you know right away that whatever's going to happen, it's not going to be all laughs. It's a movie about a problem and that takes priority. We were determined to tell that story. It's the story of a young man who was taken out because he's the weakest link. That always happens to people who have no backbone.



56<sup>th</sup> Internationale  
Filmfestspiele  
Berlin  
Panorama

# TOUGH ENOUGH



BY  
DETLEV  
BUCK

THE MATCH FACTORY

# TOUGH ENOUGH



# CAST

Polischka  
**DAVID KROSS**  
 Miriam Polischka  
**JENNY ELVERS-ELBERTZHAGEN**  
 Hamal  
**ERHAN EMRE**  
 Erol  
**OKTAY ÖZDEMİR**  
 Barut  
**KIDA KHODR RAMADAN**  
 Crille  
**ARNEL TACI**  
 Matze  
**KAI MICHAEL MÜLLER**  
 Gerber  
**HANS LÖW**  
 Dr. Klaus Peters  
**JAN HENRIK STAHLBERG**

## DAVID KROSS AS MICHAEL POLISCHKA

David Kross was born in 1990 in a smallish town by the name of Bargteheide near Hamburg. He appeared in a number of school plays and had a small film role before director Detlev Buck's daughter Bernadette discovered him for TOUGH ENOUGH. Michael Polischka is his first starring role.

**FILMOGRAPHY** /// 2006 KNALLHART (Tough Enough) Dir: Detlev Buck /// 2002 HILFE, ICH BIN EIN JUNGE (Help, I'm a Boy!) Dir: Oliver Dommenges

## ERHAN EMRE AS HAMAL

Erhan Emre was born in Berlin's famed Turkish quarter, Kreuzberg. He first stepped in front of the camera at the age of 10 in Thomas Draeger's KANAKE (Dago). A series of films and televisions appearances followed. Mr. Emre considers his first "real" film part to be his role in Martin Eigler's ICARUS, a movie about the Kreuzberg scene. Mr. Emre is still at home in Kreuzberg and is familiar with the 1990's gang scene. Three years ago, he and Neco Çelik founded their own film production company.

**SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY** /// Theatrical Films /// 2006 KNALLHART (Tough Enough) Dir: Detlev Buck /// 2004 ALLTAG (Everyday) Dir: Neco Çelik /// 2002 FREUNDE (Friends) Dir: Martin Eigler /// 2001 ELEFANTENHERZ (Elephant Heart) Dir: Züli Aladag /// **TELEVISION** /// 2004 Zeit der Wünsche /// (The Wishing Hour) Dir: Rolf Schübel /// 2001 Tatort: Schützlinge (Scene of the Crime) Dir: Martin Eigler

## JENNY ELVERS-ELBERTZHAGEN AS MIRIAM POLISCHKA

Jenny Elvers-Elbertzhagen was born in Lüneburg in northern Germany and studied acting in Berlin, Hamburg and Los Angeles. After appearing in the films JAILBIRDS and KNOCKIN' ON HEAVEN'S DOOR, she worked in episodic television, as well as hosting TV specials and working as a model. Since 2002, Ms. Elvers-Elbertzhagen can also be frequently seen on stage in Düsseldorf, Hamburg and Berlin. TOUGH ENOUGH is her first lead role in a theatrical feature.

**SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY** /// 2006 KNALLHART (Tough Enough) Dir: Detlev Buck /// 1997 KNOCKIN' ON HEAVENS DOOR Dir: Thomas Jahn /// 1995 MÄNNERPENSION (Jailbirds) Dir: Detlev Buck /// **TELEVISION** /// 2000 Der Bulle von Tölz (Tölz Cop) Dir: Hans Werner /// 1999 Freunde fürs Leben (Friends for Life) Dir: various /// 1998 Nikola Dir: various

*Fifteen-year-old Michael must prove he's tough enough when he's thrown into the gritty urban world of a rough ethnic neighborhood, far from the posh suburbs he's used to.*

# DETLEV BUCK DIRECTOR



Detlev Buck made his fame as an actor, director and screenwriter at the tender age of 22. Following high school and alternate military service, he made the short film ERST DIE ARBEIT UND DANN...? (Time to Knock Off), which quickly became a cult classic. His first feature as a director was KARNIGGELS (Rabbit Fever), which won the Bavarian Film Prize. He followed up with 1993's NO MORE MR. NICE GUY, which garnered an honorable mention at the Berlin Film Festival and two German Film Prizes. Mr. Buck's next film, JAILBIRDS, which he directed and starred in, made stars of the two female leads, Heike Makatsch and Marie Bäumer.

In 2004 he was awarded The German Film Award in Gold as best supporting actor for his role in BERLIN BLUES, directed by Leander Haußmann. That same year, he played the role of Colonel Kalt in Haußmann's NVA. In the spring of 2005, Mr. Buck completed another role for Mr. Haußmann in the film adaptation of Schiller's LOVE & INTRIGUE. TOUGH ENOUGH is the first feature film Mr. Buck has directed for which he did not also write the script.

**SELECTED FILMOGRAPHY** /// AS DIRECTOR /// 2006 KNALLHART (Tough Enough) /// 2000 LIEBESLUDER (Bundle of Joy) /// 1998 LIEBE DEINE NÄCHSTE (Love Your Female Neighbor) /// 1996 MÄNNERPENSION (Jailbirds) /// 1993 WIR KÖNNEN AUCH ANDERS (No More Mr. Nice Guy) /// AS ACTOR /// 2005 KABALE & LIEBE (Love & Intrigue) Dir: Leander Haußmann /// 2004 NVA Dir: Leander Haußmann /// 2002 HERR LEHMANN (Berlin Blues) Dir: Leander Haußmann /// 2001 BLUE MOON Dir: Andrea Dusel /// 1999 SONNENALLEE (Sun Alley) Dir: Leander Haußmann /// 1999 DER GROSSE BAGAROZY (The Devil and Ms. D.) Dir: Bernd Eichinger /// 1998 AIMÉE & JAGUAR Dir: Max Färberböck



# CREW

**DIRECTOR**  
 Detlev Buck  
**SCREENPLAY**  
 Zoran Drvenkar,  
 Gregor Tessnow  
**EXECUTIVE PRODUCER**  
 Claus Boje  
**PRODUCER FOR WDR**  
 Michael André  
**PRODUCER FOR ARTE**  
 Andreas Schreitmüller  
**LINE PRODUCERS**  
 Sonja Schmitt,  
 Jan Brandt  
**CASTING**  
 Astrid Rosenfeld  
**DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY**  
 Kolja Brandt  
**EDITOR**  
 Dirk Grau  
**SOUND RECORDIST**  
 Florian Niederleithinger  
**PRODUCTION DESIGN**  
 Udo Kramer  
**COSTUME DESIGN**  
 Jale Kustaloglu  
**ORIGINAL MUSIC**  
 Bert Wrede  
**SOUND DESIGN**  
 Dirk Jacob

A Boje Buck Produktion  
 with Westdeutscher  
 Rundfunk und arte  
 Subsidies provided by  
 Medienboard Berlin-  
 Brandenburg, Filmförde-  
 rungsanstalt, BKM

**ORIGINAL TITLE**  
 Knallhart  
**FORMAT**  
 35 mm  
 1:1,85,  
 Color,  
 Dolby SRD  
**LENGTH**  
 98 mins



# SYNOPSIS TOUGH ENOUGH BY DETLEV BUCK

Fifteen-year-old Michael Polischka is thrown into a gritty urban world when his mother breaks up with her rich doctor boyfriend. With little money of her own, Miriam is forced to move them into a dumpy apartment in a rough ethnic neighborhood, far from the posh suburbs they had grown accustomed to. Beatings and extortion by a gang of violent bullies makes public high school miserable for Michael. Life at home isn't much better since he has to put up with the guys his pretty young mom entertains in her desperate search for a new man. Michael learns the ropes about the neighborhood from his likeable new buddies Crille and his younger half-brother Matze, a couple of neglected and undisciplined delinquents. Not only do they give Michael some street smarts, they also introduce him to petty crime, cutting class and drinking. A chance meeting with urbane crime lord Hamal and his henchman Barut turns Michael's life around. The thugs take him under their wing, protecting him from the high school gang. Michael's honest face makes him the perfect guy for drug deliveries to local dealers. The teenager handles the tension of these dangerous missions like a pro. Michael proves he's tough enough, but eventually finds out he's actually in way over his head.

