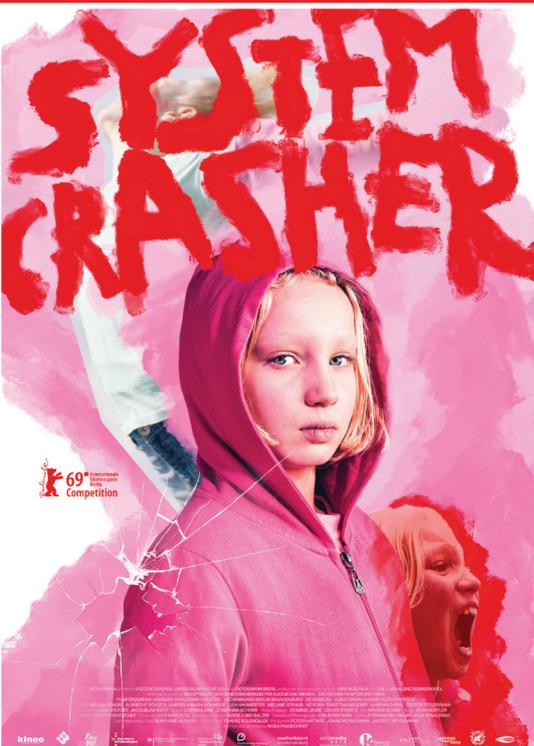# SYSTEM CRASHER
1h 58min // Germany // German

SYNOPSIS

System Crasher introduces us to Benni (Helena Zengel), a fragile-looking nine-year-old. Despite her appearance, Benni has an unbridled ferocity and an aversion to authority, regularly throwing objects, foul language, and even herself at those in proximity. She is what is known in Germany as a 'system crasher' – so disruptive and unpredictable that she requires nothing less than full attention; so antisocial and hostile that she cannot fit among schoolmates or in the foster care system. Benni's mother (Lisa Hagmeister) is forced to give her up to social services as a way of protecting two younger siblings. However, as Benni bounces from determined caseworker Maria Bafané (Gabriela Maria Schmeide) to tough-but-nice support worker Micha (Albert Schuch), it is hard to believe her problems can be easily solved.

MORE ABOUT THE FILM...

Film notes from FilmBath Festival 2019 by Edward Hassall

In her first feature-length non-documentary film, German writer/director Nora Fingscheidt asks her audience to walk a line between compassion, control, chaos, and love.

'There's no miracle cure for Benni; no magical solution that they haven't tried,' writes Chloe Walker for Culturefly. '*System Crasher asks us, like the adults in Benni's life, to cling on and hope for the best.'* This film is awash with strong performances, but it is relative newcomer Zengel who *'not only commands the attention of the viewer but, once she has it, refuses to relinquish her control'* – Mary-Catherine Harvey, The Upcoming.

It is an 'exceptional, no-holds-barred performance', writes Jay Weissberg in Variety, saying Zengel *'throws herself into the anarchic role with impressive abandon. Effortlessly flipping from angelic dissimulation to all-out psychosis, the young actress has a haunting presence that even at her calmest, never completely hides the turmoil within'*.

To convey Benni's mental state, the film is 'run through some neat style filters that are more than superficial', says Lee Marshall. 'Fingscheidt alternately channels Benni's chaotic energy before suddenly moving to sequences that take a distance from the blonde time-bomb'.

System Crasher premiered earlier this year at the 69th Berlinale where it won the Alfred Bauer Prize, awarded to a film that 'opens new perspectives on cinematic art', as well as the Berliner Morgenpost Readers' Jury Award, voted for by 12 readers of the German daily newspaper.

CAST

CHARACTER	ACTOR
Bernadette 'Benni' Klaaß	Helena Zengel
Michael 'Micha' Heller	Albrecht Schuch
Frau Bafané	Gabriela Maria Schmeide
Bianca Klaaß	Lisa Hagmeister

CREW

Director/Writer	Nora Fingscheidt
Cinematography	Yunus Roy Imer
Music	John Gürtler
Producer	Peter Hartwig

BOOKING

Distributor:
606 Distribution

Non-theatrical bookings:
Pat Kelman
pat.kelman@606distribution.co.uk

Available: Now