

ghettokids

# ghettokids

*Script: Gabriela Sperl  
Director: Christian Wagner  
Director of photography: Jürgen Jürges*

*A production by TV60Film for the  
Bayerischer Rundfunk in co-production with arte, Paris ©2002*

*Premiere at the Munich Film Festival 2002:  
Thursday, 4 July 2002 at 8:00 PM in the  
Arri Kino, Munich*

***International Premiere:  
MONTREAL WORLD FILMFESTIVAL 2002***

*International Festivals:  
German filmweek Paris 2002  
26<sup>th</sup> Göteborg Film Festival 2003*

ghettokids

## **synopsis**

**Ghetto Kids** is the story of two foreign children in a socially explosive neighborhood in Munich. Thirteen-year-old Christos lives with his mother and two brothers in extremely crowded quarters, and idolizes his older brother, Maikis. But his real home is the central station, where occasional trick and petty theft puts a little cash in his pocket

**Ghetto Kids**, is as hard biting a social drama as they come. And it tells also the story of teacher Hanna Solinger (Barbara Rudnik/ CAMPUS; SANDMANN) who returns to her mother, near Munich.

She's assigned to a school in an area of high social deprivation (with children from just such an area playing themselves in the film). After her first day she's ready to call it quits, telling the principal she's unwilling to teach that particular class ever again. What she doesn't let on is that one of the pupils, Christos, robbed her at the station the day before. The station is his second home and he earns his living turning tricks and stealing.

When Maikis is framed by a rival gang and arrested in the school-yard, Christos implores Hanna to stay and do what she can for Maikis, but she's unwilling. Until streetworker Xaver (Günther Maria Halmer/ GANDHI; DIE INNERE SICHERHEIT), persuades her to try a new teaching method. The attempt works and she's accepted by the students. She and Xaver also manage to win Maikis' freedom.

It looks like a happy end, with both brothers on a solid path. But then...

**Ghetto Kids** is directed by award-winning **Christian Wagner** (Waller's last Walk; Transatlantis, Zita-a short film about sloth) whose trophies include the *German Film Award* in Silver, *German Film Critics Prize* (Berlinale), the *Bavarian Film Award* and the *Jury's Special Award* in Turin. He has also been nominated for a *European Film Award, Paris*.

Festivals include participation such as:

BERLIN FILMFESTIVAL COMPETITION

SEMAINE DE LA CRITIQUE, CANNES  
(Special mentioning of the jury)

ghettokids

## **An Extraordinary Film Project**

At first glance, this isn't the sort of film one would associate with Munich---a place supposedly without poverty. But *ghettokids* shows us a whole new side of the city. Young, amateur actors from a problem area known as "Hasenberg" appear alongside such well-known German performers as Barbara Rudnik and Günther Maria Halmer. And it is precisely this combination that gives the film its gripping authenticity.

*ghettokids* tells the story of two brothers: Maikis (**Toni Osmani**) and Christos (**Ioannis Tsialas**). They live together with their older brother and their mother in a one-room flat in Hasenberg. The family had emigrated from Greece years ago in the hope that in Germany everything would be better. But their living conditions are crowded, money is scarce and their homeland is far, far away. Both boys deal in drugs and Christos sells his body as well. What's more, they're both Turkish-speaking Greeks and this makes them outsiders even among the Turkish youths in the special school for foreigners they attend. Next to the Hasenberg, their "homes away from home" are the Main Railway Station, the subway and a youth centre which is run by the social worker Xaver (**Günther Maria Halmer**). It's at the railway station that they have their first encounter with Hanna Solinger (**Barbara Rudnik**). She is a teacher and is moving from Hamburg to Munich with her children. While she is unloading her luggage from the train, Christos steals her wallet, little knowing that the next morning she will be standing in front of him as his new teacher. Hanna Solinger's new job won't be an easy one, because the whole class is determined to shock any new teacher so thoroughly and so quickly that she'll never come back again.

The story comes to a head when Maikis becomes involved in the attack of a Turkish gang on some subway passengers and gets arrested for a theft that (for once) he hadn't committed.

*ghettokids* was produced by TV60Film (Bernd Burgemeister) for the Bayerischer Rundfunk in co-production with Arte for broadcast on Germany's Channel 1. The script is by Gabriela Sperl.. It is based on extensive research and was inspired by Susanne Korbmacher-Schulz and her experiences with a youth group she founded, "ghettokids---Soziale Projekte e. V".

*ghettokids* was directed by award winning Christian Wagner and the cameraman was the well known Jürgen Jürges.

# ghettokids

## crew

Director	Christian Wagner
First assistant director	Doris Wedemeier
Second assistant director	Erek Kühn
Script supervisor	My-Chi Phu Tho
Screenplay	Dr. Gabriela Sperl
Camera	Jürgen Jürges
First assistant camera	Oliver Lechner
Gaffer	Boogie Bockmeier
Lighting technician	Moritz Buchberger
Lighting technician	Ralph von Zündt
Grip	Klaus Wieland
Dolly grip	Christian Troschke
Driver	Gregor Stitzl
Still photographer	Heike Ulrich
Executive Producer	Dieter Graber
Production manager	Harald Wigankow
Unit manager	Heike Käbisch
Cutter	Patricia Rommel
Art Department	Su Proebster
Props	Kurt Herzog
Lead man	Roland Eckert
Property driver	Richard Damian Grady
Property master	Birgit Pernutz
Costumes	Nicole Schlier
Assistant costume designer	Christine Splett
Makeup artist	Sonali Chatterjee
Casting	Heike Ulrich
Boom operator	Kathrin Hertzberg
Dialog editor	Wolfgang Hess
Sound	Marc Parisotto
Sound designer	Rudi Preusser
Dialog supervisor	Nina Roll
Sound recordist	Toni Vetter
Music	Fabian Römer
Breakdance Instructor	Aloun Phetnoi
Producer	TV60Film (Bernd Burgemeister)
Editor	Stephanie Heckner BR Patricia Seutin-Bardou arte

# ghettokids

## cast

<b>Christos</b>	Ioannis Tsialas
<b>Maikis</b>	Urjeton (Toni) Osmani
<b>Hanna Solinger</b>	Barbara Rudnik
<b>Xaver Friedmann</b>	Günther Maria Halmer
<b>Erna Solinger</b>	Renate Becker
<b>Kathi Solinger</b>	Julia Dietze
<b>Benny Solinger</b>	Marian Lösch
<b>Alena</b>	Neza Selbuz
<b>Alex</b>	Mehdi Moinzadeh
<b>Ringo</b>	Fatih Sahanoglu
<b>Orcun</b>	Onur Balta
<b>Sweety</b>	Xhafer Berisha
<b>Zombo</b>	Besnik Osmani
<b>Marvan</b>	Rassim Sefer Oglou
<b>Nina</b>	Lenci Berger
<b>IQ</b>	Alexander Adler
<b>Director Huber</b>	Michael Tregor
<b>Erwin</b>	Hans Fleischmann

ghettokids

## **Susanne Korbmacher-Schulz and her “ghettokids Club”**

The “ghettokids Club” was founded by Susanne Korbmacher-Schulz, a teacher for special education, and Achim Seipt, a social worker. Their goal was to provide self-help projects for children and young people in Munich.

The “Lichttaler Project” was developed in 1998 by Susanne Korbmacher-Schulz and was intended primarily to benefit young people from socially disadvantaged environments.

The basic idea of the project centered around a system of exchange, of giving and receiving, in which the “Lichttaler” was used as an imaginary currency. A child could for example tutor another child in one of his school subjects and be paid for it with a certain number of “Lichttaler”. This “payment” could then be exchanged for lessons in breakdancing, aerobics, painting, cooking or any number of other things. In this way the children learned to develop responsibility and personal initiative while at the same time discovering their own talents and skills. And in addition, they learned the lesson that in order to *take* someone else first has to *give*---and vice versa.

Other projects:

“Thealimuta” (theatre, song, music and dance) since 1996

“ghetto drum company” since 2000

“Rap yourself---the ghetto dance company” since 2000

## Ioannis Tsialas (Christos)

### **Biography**

For the first six years of school this 13 years old Greek boy attended a special, bilingual school in Hasenberg. While there he regularly took part in the intensive pedagogic development project “Thealimuta” (theatre, song, music and dance). “Yannis” (as he is known) has an unusually strong creative potential which find its expression in theatrical improvisations, singing, dancing and drawing. It is also in these areas that he enthusiastically made his contribution to the film project. He’s had contact with the film world once already---as an extra in Dominik Graf’s and Michael Althen’s *“Munich – secrets of a city”* (2000).

---

## Urjeton (Toni) Osmani (Maikis)

### **Biography**

The 17 years old Albanian gave himself the nickname “Toni”. During his attendance at the special school in Hasenberg, he also took part not only in the “Thealimuta” project, but in the “Lichttaler” self-help project as well. Both of these projects helped him during difficult phases of his life. He was able to develop his creative talents in the chorus as well as in the theatre and breakdance groups. The improvisational talent he has demonstrated at public appearances has been particularly impressive. He has already appeared in a small role in Roland Suso Richter’s film *“Eine Hand voll Gras”* (2000). Right now, he’s finishing his secondary education.

---

ghettokids

Barbara Rudnik (Hanna Solinger)

### **Biography**

Barbara Rudnik's film debut was in Beate Klöckner's first film "Kopfschuss". It was produced in 1981 and dealt with the idea of life as a movie. The film critic Hans-Christoph Blumenberg saw it and then when he made *his* first film in 1984 he asked Barbara Rudnik to play the lead in "*Tausend Augen*". This film turned out to be a breakthrough for this highly gifted actress. In 1996 she was awarded the Adolf Grimme Audience Prize for her portrayal of a television presenter in the prize-winning thriller "*Der Sandmann*" (director: Nico Hofmann). Then, in 1997, she played the mother of little Annemarie in a remake of the murder mystery "Es geschah am hellichten Tag" (director: Nico Hofmann). As Ms. Rudnik said in an interview with Swiss television, this was the role which helped her make the shift from playing a cool, beautiful blond to playing "serious roles that can be taken seriously."



ghettokids

## Barbara Rudnik (Hanna Solinger)

### *A Selection of 'Barbara Rudnik's Films:*

- 2000 *Komm, süßer Tod* (director: Wolfgang Murnberger)  
1999 *Schnee in der Neujahrsnacht* (director: Thorsten Schmidt)  
1998 *Solo für Klarinette* (director: Nico Hofmann)  
*Der Campus* (director: Sönke Wortmann)  
1986 *Müllers Büro* (director: Niki List)  
*Douce France, Frankreich* (director: François Chardeux)  
1984 *Tausend Augen* (director: Hans-Christoph Blumenberg)  
1981 *Kopfschuss* (director: Beate Klöckner)

### **A Selection of Barbara Rudnik's Television Appearances:**

- 2002 *Die Falle* (director: Johannes Grieser)  
2001 *Verdammte Gefühle* (director: Peter Lichtefeld)  
*HR-POLIZEIRUF 110: Grauzone* (director: Marc Hertel)  
2000 *BR-TATORT: Und dahinter liegt New York* (Regie:  
*Friedemann Fromm*)  
*Das Geheimnis* (director: Jorgo Papavassiliou)  
*Küß mich, Tiger!* (director: Jan Ruzicka)  
*Mein Leben gehört mir* (director: Christiane Balthasar)  
1999 *Sturmzeit* (director: Bernd Böhlich)  
*Doppeltes Dreieck* (director: Torsten C. Fischer)  
*Es geschah am hellichten Tag* (director: Nico Hofmann)  
1997 *BR-TATORT: Liebe, Sex, Tod* (director: Peter Fratzscher)  
1996 *Der Parkhausmörder* (director: Michael Keusch)  
1995 *Der Sandmann* (director Nico Hofmann)  
1992 *Rotlicht* (director: Michael Lähn)  
1990 *Für immer jung* (director: Vivian Naefe)  
984 *Treffer* (director: Dominik Graf)

### **Prizes:**

- 1996 Adolf Grimme Viewers Prize for "*Der Sandmann*"

ghettokids

## Günther Maria Halmer (Xaver Friedmann)

### **Biography**

Günther Maria Halmer is one of Germany's best known film and television actors. He achieved enormous popularity playing the attorney Jean Abel in the ZDF crime series "*Ein Fall für Abel*". He first became famous as "Tscharli" in Bavarian Television's legendary series "*Münchner Geschichten*". In addition to his frequent appearances on German television, he has also participated in numerous international productions such as "*Peter der Große*", (director Marvin Chomsky/1986); the Mexican adventure film "*Rebellion der Gehenkten*" (director: Luis Buñuel/1987); "*Der Zug*" (director: Damiano Damiani/1990); and "*Das Geheimnis des schwarzen Dschungels*" (director: Kevin Connor). He has also made two films together with Jürgen Prochnow: the political thriller "*Der Fall Lucona*" (director: Jack Gold) and "*Tödliche Wahl*" (director: Peter Deutsch).

ghettokids

Günther Maria Halmer (Xaver Friedmann)

**A Selection of Günther Maria Halmer's Feature Films:**

2000            *Innere Sicherheit* (director: Christian Petzold)  
1990            *Abrahams Gold* (director: Jörg Graser)  
1989            *Anna* (director: Frank Strecker)  
1988            *Nachsaison* (director Wolfram Paulus)  
1987            *Operation Dead End* (director: Nikolai Müllerschön)  
1983            *Sophies Entscheidung* (Alan J. Pakula)  
1982            *Gandhi* (director: Sir Richard Attenborough)  
1971            *Die Angst ist ein zweiter Schatten* (director: Norbert  
                    Kückelmann)

**A Selection of Günther Maria Halmer's Television Appearances:**

2002            *Mörderherz* (director: Christian Görlitz)  
2001            *Bis dass Dein Tod uns scheidet* (director: Manfred Stelzer)  
                    *Andreas Hofer – Die Freiheit des Adlers* (director:  
                    Xaver Schwarzenberger)  
2000            *Tanz mit dem Teufel – Die Entführung des Richard*  
                    *Oetker* (director: Peter Keglevic)  
                    *SWR-TATORT: "Bienzle und das Doppelspiel* (director:  
                    Hartmut Griesmayr)  
1999            *Nana* (director: Alberto Negrin)  
1998            *Der Weibsteufel* (director: Jo Baier)  
1996            *Silent Night* (director: Maximilian Schell)  
1995            *Gnadenlos* (director: Gaby Kubach)  
1993            *Der Fall Lucona* (director: Jack Gold)  
1988-  
2001            21 episodes of "Ein Fall für Abel" (among the directors:  
                    Frank Guthke, Marc Rothemund, Christian Görlitz)  
1988            *Bangkok-Story* (director: Rolf von Sydow)  
1987            *BR-TATORT: Riedmüller, Vorname Sigi* (director: Michael  
                    Kehlmann)  
1986            *Lenin – Der Zug* (director: Damiano Damiani)  
1983            *WDR-TATORT: Grenzgänger* (director: Ilse Hofmann)  
1982            *Ausgetrickst* (director: Sigi Rothemund)  
1972            *Münchener Geschichten* (director: Helmut Dietl)

## Fatih Sahanoglu (Ringo)

### **Biography**

Fatih is a German of Turkish descents. He's 16 years old and after successfully completing school he is now an apprentice with the Munich Municipal Services. He earned his "Lichttaler" with breakdance performances and then invested them in advanced breakdance training with a professional.

---

## Onur Balta (Orcun)

### **Biography**

Onur is 16 years old and is in the 9th grade. Like most of the other young people in the film, he lives with his family in Hasenberg and attends a special multi-lingual school for foreigners. His active participation in the chorus and the theatre group has helped him overcome a number of personal crises. He earned his "Lichttaler" by teaching younger pupils breakdance or helping them with their German. This imaginary currency enabled him to take courses in English and computer science.

---

## Xhafer Berisha (Sweety)

### **Biography**

Xhafer comes from a very large family and is an Albanian from Kosovo. For two years now he has been participating in a program at his school to train him as a mediator in conflict situations. These skills have enabled him to earn a lot of valuable "Lichttaler" which he has exchanged for breakdance training with a professional. His athletic abilities are impressive and he was able to put them to good use in *ghettokids*.

## Alexander Adler (IQ)

### **Biography**

The 17 years old Sinti has successfully completed primary school and is about to finish secondary school as well. He has also been an active participant in the theatre group. His style as a dancer has been strongly influenced by the martial arts and he's been a big success wherever the ghettokids appear. He used his "Lichttaler" for a long-term PC course at BMW and for the production of a CD. Right now, he's learning to drive.

---

## Lenci Berger (Nina)

### **Biography**

Lenci is a 16 years old Sinti. She has an impressive singing voice and uses it with great success in a Sinti Chorus (of which she is the director). For two years now she has been participating in the ghettokids projects "Thealimuta" and "Lichttaler" and her solo appearances were very convincing. The "Lichttaler" she's earned have been spent on vocal training with a Munich soprano and an English course.

ghettokids

## Gabriela Sperl (**Scriptwriter**)

### **Biography**

After earning a PHD in history, Gabriela Sperl spent many years as a freelance script analyst and producer for Bavarian Television. In 1998 she took over the leadership of the Music and Television Drama division at the Bayerischer Rundfunk. Her department has produced debut films such as “*Kleine Kreise*” (2000, director: Jakob Hilpert) as well as television dramas such as “Ganz unten, ganz oben” (director: Matti Geschonneck) and “Ende der Saison” (2001, director: Stefan Krohmer), which won four Grimme Prizes in gold. Gabriela Sperl has also been responsible for numerous feature film co-productions. A recent example is “*Taking Sides – Der Fall Furtwängler*” (2001, director: István Szabó)

At writing workshops in both Berlin and Munich, Gabriela Sperl has for many years now been working to support a new generation of scriptwriters. She is also a trustee of Munich’s film and television academy. In addition to her successful collaboration with writers and producers, she has also made a reputation for herself as a scriptwriter. Among other works, she has written the concept and three episodes of the ARD series “*Dr. Schwarz und Dr. Martin*”; a script for the film “*Wer Kollegen hat, braucht keine Feinde*” (director: Martin Enlen) which was nominated for the Grimme Prize; and the scripts for the four-part series “*Liebe und weitere Katastrophen*”. The latter film starred Bobby Brederlow, Senta Berger and Friedrich von Thun and was nominated for both the Grimme Prize and the Television Prize.

Her script for “*Bobby*” (2002) was an enormous success with both the press and the public. The two principal players, Bobby Brederlow and Veronica Ferres, were awarded Golden Cameras. In her two most recent projects, “*Eine Liebe in Afrika*” (director: Xaver Schwarzenberger) and “*ghettokids*” (director: Christian Wagner) Gabriela Sperl has once again achieved her goal of combining first-class storytelling with social and political themes.

ghettokids

## Christian Wagner (director)

### **Biography**

Christian Wagner completed his first full-length 8 mm film ("*Der Prophetor*") while he was still in secondary school. Rejected three times at film schools he then went on to study German literature, Theater and Psychology in Munich. This was followed 1982-84 by "*Born to be free in captivity*" which received a number prizes. In 1985 he joined up with Nico Hofmann, Jan Schütte, Werner Penzel, Nico Humbert and others to found an alternative film distribution cooperative called "Der andere Blick".

His breakthrough came in 1988 with his first feature film "*Walters last walk*". Among other prizes, it was given the German Federal Film Prize in 1989 and the Bavarian Film Prize in 1988. His second major feature film "*Transatlantis*" was the official German entry for the International Film Festival in Berlin. In addition to being a producer, director and author, Christian Wagner has also conducted directing workshops all over the world under the auspices of the Goethe Institute. Since 1995 he has been a lecturer in film direction at Baden-Württemberg's film academy in Ludwigsburg.

ghettokids

Christian Wagner (director)

### Filmography

2001/2002	<i>ghettokids</i> (direction)
1999/2001	<i>Courage</i> (direction)
1997/1998	<i>Zita – a short film about sloth</i>
1993/1994	<i>Transatlantis</i> (direction, script, production)
1989/1990	<i>Train</i> (script, direction)
1985-1988	<i>Waller's last walk</i> (script, direction, production)
1982-1984	<i>Born to be free in captivity</i> (script, direction, production)
1980/1981	<i>Der Prophetor</i> (script, direction, production)

### Prizes and Awards

1998	Special Prize of the Jury at the Turin Film Festival for “ <i>Zita</i> ”
1989	German Federal Film Prize for “ <i>Waller's last walk</i> ”
1989	German Critics Prize at the Berlinale for “ <i>Waller's letzter Gang</i> ”
1989	Prize for the Best First Film, Valladolid, for “ <i>Waller's letzter Gang</i> ”
1989	Best Film, Cadiz, for “ <i>Waller's letzter Gang</i> ”
1989	Nomination for the European Film Prize, Paris, for “ <i>Waller's last walk</i> ”
1988	Bavarian Film Prize for “ <i>Waller's last walk</i> ”
1989	Camera d'Or/Special Mention, Cannes, for “ <i>Waller's last walk</i> ”



ghettokids

*Please check out for further information the homepages*

[www.g-h-e-t-t-o-k-i-d-s.de](http://www.g-h-e-t-t-o-k-i-d-s.de)

[www.wagnerfilm.de](http://www.wagnerfilm.de)

ghettokids

*"ghettokids"*

*Germany, 35mm (blow up from Super-16), color*

*1:1,78, 2688 meter, 88 min., Dolby stereo SR*

*(Available with English or French subtitles as well as French dubbed version)*

*A production by TV60Film for the*

*Bayerischer Rundfunk in co-production with arte, Paris ©2002*

*Worldsales: CINEPOOL*

*Dr. Cathy Rohnke, Wolfram Skowronnek*

*Sonnenstrasse 21 D-80331 Munich-Germany*

*Phone +49-89-55 87 60 Fax +49-89-55 87 62 29*

*Email: [cinepool@telepool.de](mailto:cinepool@telepool.de) [www.telepool.de](http://www.telepool.de)*

*Please contact the director of the film:*

*Christian Wagner*

*Steinstraße 28 D-81667 München*

*+49-89-488453 +49-171-931 78 78*

*email: [info@wagnerfilm.de](mailto:info@wagnerfilm.de)*