



**MUSIC
BOX
FILMS**

Presents

GENERATION WAR

A FILM BY PHILIPP KADELBACH

GERMANY, 2012

279 min. (Part 1: 131 min., Part 2: 148 min.)

In German with English subtitles

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<http://www.musicboxfilms.com/generation-war-movies-80.php>

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SYNOPSIS

Valor, courage, and betrayal come to the fore in *GENERATION WAR*, a remarkable epic film which shows the everyday realities of wartime life from a deeply personal perspective. Billed as a German *BAND OF BROTHERS*, *GENERATION WAR* vividly depicts the lives of five young German friends forced to navigate the unconscionable moral compromises of life under Hitler.

In Berlin in 1941, on the eve of Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union, level-headed officer Wilhelm (Volker Bruch) is full of patriotic fervor as he prepares to head off to the eastern front with his sensitive younger brother Friedhelm (Tom Schilling). Charlotte (Miriam Stein) is a young nurse in love with Wilhelm who is serving in the Red Cross. Greta (Katherina Schüttler) is an ambitious singer who longs to become another Marlene Dietrich, while her boyfriend Viktor (Ludwig Trepte) faces a daily struggle for survival as a Jew in an increasingly oppressive regime.

Each of these five exceptional young German actors infuse their characters with the certainty of youth, and then allow it to drain away with each successive month of war as the true horrors of the Third Reich are slowly revealed. At nearly every moment, they are faced with choices between complicity and rebellion, self-preservation and self-sacrifice, blood on their hands and love in their hearts—only to discover the deceptive nature of such seemingly black-and-white propositions.

Eight years in the making, and filmed on over 150 sets across Germany, Lithuania and Latvia, *GENERATION WAR* insightfully reveals a country still grappling with how previous generations could have let themselves become so tragically misdirected. In Germany, the film has sparked a passionate discussion over personal responsibility and the burden of guilt of everyday people for Nazi atrocities.

German critics have been nearly universal in their praise, with *Der Spiegel* calling *GENERATION WAR* a "turning point in German television" and a review in national newspaper *Suddeutsche Zeitung* describing the film as "the first and last chance... to ask our grandparents about their true biographies, their immoral compromises...the missed chances to act."

AUTHOR'S NOTE – Stefan Kolditz

My inspiration for GENERATION WAR stemmed from a desire to begin a conversation with the generation that lived during WW2 in Germany – our mothers and fathers, our grandmothers and grandfathers. For years, out of shame, denial, and/or unrepentance, we rarely heard their voices. But I felt the right moment has arrived.

I wanted to tell the story of five young people. Every generation was young once, even if the next generation has a hard time imagining that their parents and grandparents were once as young as they are. Wilhelm. Friedhelm. Viktor. Greta. Charlotte. Five young people, full of dreams and hopes, none of whom who can be neatly categorized as perpetrator or victim, guilty or innocent. Five everyday Germans – neither heroic resistance fighters, nor fanatical Nazis – who lived through one of the most brutal wars fought by humankind, and one that has yet to let go of us even 70 years later.

Are we ourselves really so different, so incorruptible? Is it possible to have a conversation with this generation, one that is much closer to us than we may possibly suspect? Can the differences between our generations' experiences be thoughtfully discussed? Can a film about five very different young people bring this about? Without shameful judgments. Without false self-righteousness. Without moral superiority. I hope so. This was the reason why I worked on GENERATION WAR for nearly eight years.

I wanted to learn this generation's stories. Even if so many had already passed away, like my father, born in 1922, who was forced into battle fresh from school like millions of others. It was a war that had never been his, one he had to fight to the very end.

PRODUCER'S NOTE – Nico Hofmann

GENERATION WAR is a sensitive, critical homage to the generation of my parents, who were profoundly marked by the war. The idea for the film came about in 2006 during the production of a previous film I produced called DRESDEN. Author Stefan Kolditz, Heike Hempel and I wanted to make another film together, one that would foster a dialogue with our parents, who still had their entire lives before them at the outbreak of World War II.

We had already examined the Third Reich from many perspectives in DRESDEN and other films. But never before had a German television production transposed into fiction the lives of young people in WWII in such a multi-faceted and pitch-perfect manner as Stefan Kolditz in his three-part script for GENERATION WAR. After six years of collaboration with German broadcaster ZDF, director Philipp Kadelbach and cameraman David Slama succeeded in transferring the script into an uncompromising and drastic visual idiom, thus creating an unsparing, generation-crossing antiwar film.

The film ranks among the most elaborate and powerful productions made during our company's 14-year history. Even though many of the films I made, whether as director or producer, have dealt with German themes and my own family history, GENERATION WAR is my most personal production and is the product of a long-cherished wish to relate the wartime experiences of my parents as precisely as possible and sketch the portrait of a generation. The narrative arc of the fictitious stories of five friends who lose themselves in the turmoil of the war ranges from 1941 to 1945. One of the characters, depicted by Volker Bruch, faithfully retraces my father's story and grapples with his moral transformation during the war.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER'S NOTE – Thomas Stammer

It was important for us to make a film that gives the trauma of German history an emotional form that is credible down into the last details, yet powerful and emotional at the same time. In GENERATION WAR there seems to be a direct connection between a difficult and often unmanageable set and the palpably dense and intense atmosphere of the film.

This is very comforting to all who cursed us, yet also always supported us, when vehicles got stuck in snow and mud, when we shot in buildings on the verge of collapsing, when we ran up and down endlessly high staircases, worked in ice-cold basements, endured the narrow and dingy studio motifs and harrowing access to the locations. The memories of the efforts we undertook on 86 days of shooting in 141 sets in three countries have fortunately paled by now, even though we can still sense the intensity in the film's images.

There are many special features concerning the design of the motifs. The Ukrainian villages, for example. The entire external surfaces of the museum's village, on whose property we shot in Lithuania, were covered with a ten-centimeter thick coat of mud. Then we drove through the mud for hours with our track vehicles and trucks in order to recreate the original historical conditions there. After the shooting, one of my colleagues edited still photographs with a black-white filter. We were hardly able to tell the genuine historical photos apart from the set photos. Perhaps one of the reasons why the scenes in the trenches made such a strong and truthful impact is that in Lithuania we, too, had to suffer under similar cold as the soldiers back then. We can still feel the icy wind on the plains of Lithuania, when we dug the trenches for our film at minus 30 degrees.

In the case of GENERATION WAR, the journey through five German states was a blessing after shooting in Lithuania and Latvia. Our heroes' paths led them through various nations, seasons, landscapes and very special places. We were able to search for our motifs from among the most ideal and contrasting characteristics of the seven states and countries. Upon taking a closer look, we must admit that this was a logistical and nerve-wracking nightmare; yet our lives as travelers also bound us, in a way, into the spirit of our story.

I am proud of each individual set that we produced for GENERATION WAR. No matter how demanding each individual motif was, what counts is solely the quality of the overall set design for all three film sections. The difficulties encountered in digging a swamp by hand in the middle of a forest, in taking up fighting positions and standing in water in below-freezing temperatures, in shoveling an excess of genuine snow or producing artificial snow for another scene, in accepting the hindrances posed by frog wanderings or snowed-in airports – all this fades away behind the satisfying results. The quality of the sets reveals itself in the unflagging credibility and emotional sincerity of the world of our heroes.

In GENERATION WAR our heroes experience the war not as a singular dramatic event or from the knowledge of hindsight, but as a steadily increasing and traumatic tightening of the net. This was also a central theme for the spatial design of the film. In the midst of a world thrown upside down, thrown into perplexing situations determined by others, which keep pushing us constantly towards bodily and atmospheric conditions. Oddly, this occurs in alternation with the vast landscapes of the East which, like the dimensions of this war, are unfathomable and ungraspable.

The development of these young people does not lead out into a free and open world, as would be possible today in a unified Europe. Instead, they are increasingly exploited and destroyed by

the events to the same extent as their war material and the rooms through which they move. Ultimately, every place, including their homes, becomes a battlefield on which they lose themselves and perish. I have tried to transpose this development through the topography and materialness of the film: narrowness and fear, grime and violence which dig themselves into the dynamic of the story, framed by an endless horizon of landscapes in which it abates. The waste and abuse of objects, places and human beings reflect the desperate inner condition of our heroes.

CAST

Volker Bruch	Wilhelm
Tom Schilling	Friedhelm
Katharina Schüttler	Greta
Ludwig Trepte	Viktor
Miriam Stein	Charlotte
Christiane Paul	Lilja
Sylvester Groth	Hiemer
Götz Schuber	Dr. Jahn
Mark Waschke	Dorn
Maxim Mehmet	Hauptmann Feigl

CREW

Director	Philipp Kadelbach
Script	Stefan Kolditz
Photography	David Slama
Producer	Nico Hofmann
Editor	Bernd Schlegel
Music	Fabian Römer
Make-up Artist	Gerd Zeiss
Costume	Wiebke Kratz
Production Designer	Thomas Stammer
Line Producer	Tim Greve

FILMOGRAPHIES

CAST

Volker Bruch
as Wilhelm

2004	BAAL	Uwe Janson
2005	ROSE	Alain Gsponer
2006	LIFE ACTUALLY	Alain Gsponer
		Marcus H.
2007	BEST TIMES	Rosenmüller
2008	THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX	Uli Edel
	THE READER	Stephen Daldry
2009	THE MURDER FARM	Bettina Oberli
2010	YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE	Philipp Stölzl
2011	WESTWIND	Robert Thalheim
	CONFESSION OF A CHILD OF THE	
2012	CENTURY	Sylvie Verheyde
2013	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach

Tom Schilling*as Friedhelm*

1999	PARADISE MALL	Friedemann Fromm
2000	CRAZY	Hans-Christian Schmid
2002	HEART OVER HEAD	Michael Gutmann
2003	PLAY IT LOUD!	Benjamin Quabeck
2004	BEFORE THE FALL	Dennis Gansel
2006	JOY DIVISON	Reg Traviss
2007	PORNORAMA	Marc Rothemund
	TOUR EXCESS	Detlef Bothe
2008	THE BAADER MEINHOF COMPLEX	Uli Edel
2010	KEN FOLLETS EISFIEBER	Peter Keglevic
	LIFE IS TOO LONG	Dani Levy
	DAWN OF THE EVIL: RISE OF THE	
2011	REICH	Urs Odermatt
2012	OH BOY	Jan Ole Gerster
2013	HOTEL ADLON – A FAMILY SAGA	Uli Edel
	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach
	LUDWIG II	Peter Sehr
	WOYZECK	David Nuran Calis

Katharina Schüttler*as Greta*

1993	DIE LOK	Gerd Haag
1995	SVENS GEHEIMNIS	Roland Suso Richter
1996	AUSGERASTET	Hanno Brühl
1997	DER SCHREI DER LIEBE	Matti Geschonneck
1998	OUTRAGE	Claudia Prietzel
1999	THE WHITE SOUND	Hans Weingartner
2000	THE STATE I AM IN	Christian Petzold
		Marc-Andreas
2002	WEIHNACHTEN	Bochert
2003	SOPHIIIIIIE!	Michael Hofmann
		Hermine
2004	DER BOXER UND DIE FRISEUSE	Huntgeburth
2005	TRUTH OR DARE	Arne Nolting
2006	DREI GRAD KÄLTER	Florian Hoffmeister
2009	GANZ NAH BEI DIR	Almut Getto
	MY WORDS, MY LIES – MY LOVE	Alain Gsponer
2010	THE TWO LIVES OF DANIEL SHORE	Michael Dreher
2011	WHAT A MAN	Matthias

2012	OH BOY	Schweighöfer
	THE GUARDIANS	Jan Ole Gerster
2013	GENERATION WAR	Til Schweiger
		Philipp Kadelbach

Ludwig Trepte

as Viktor

2005	KOMBAT 16	Mirko Borscht
2006	TEENAGE WASTELAND	Eva Urthaler
2007	GOOD MORNING MR. GROTHE	Lars Kraume
2008	OUTTA CONTROL	Nicole Weegmann
2009	A PIECE OF ME	Christoph Röhl
2010	KREUTZER KOMMT	Richard Huber
2012	MY BIG FAT BALKAN WEDDING	Michael Rowitz
2013	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach

Miriam Stein

as Charlotte

1999	THE GIRL FROM FAR AWAY	Peter Reichenbach
2001	TOD DURCH ENTLASSUNG	Christian Kohlund
2004	ALLES WEGEN HULK	Peter Reichenbach
2007	LIEBE UND WAHN	Michael C. Huber
2008	JIMMIE	Tobias Ineichen
2010	YOUNG GOETHE IN LOVE	Philipp Stölzl
	NEUE VAHR SÜD	Hermine Huntgeburth
2012	THE FORSTER BOY	Markus Imboden
	OMAMAMAMIA	Tomy Wigand
2013	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach

CREW

Philipp Kadelbach

Director

1999	PLATONIC LOVE
2010	THE SECRET OF THE WHALES
2011	HINDENBURG

Stefan Kolditz*Author*

1988	DIE ENTFERNUNG ZWISCHEN DIR, MIR UND IHR	Michael Kann
1994	BURNING LIFE	Peter Welz
1995	MOBBING – DIE LIEBEN KOLLEGEN	Bernd Böhlich
1998	SCENT OF SEDUCTION	Bodo Fürneisen
1999	SNOW ON NEW YEAR'S EVE	Thorsten Schmidt
2001	12 PAST MIDNIGHT	Bernd Michael Lade
2002	AFTER THE ACCIDENT	Johannes Fabrick
2003	ZODIAC SIGN	Peter Patzak
2004	STRIPPED	Sigi Rothemund
2006	DRESDEN: THE INFERNO	Roland Suso Richter
2009	SCHATTEN DER GERECHTIGKEIT	Hans-Günther Bücking
2013	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach

Nico Hofmann*Producer*

1993	DURST	Martin Weinhart
2000	EINE HAND VOLL GLÜCK	Christiane Balthasar
2001	NO REGRETS	Benjamin Quabeck
	DANCE WITH THE DEVIL	Peter Keglevic
	THE TUNNEL	Roland Suso Richter
2002	EINE LIEBE IN AFRIKA	Xaver Schwarzenberger
2003	FAMILIENKREISE	Stefan Krohmer
2005	DRESDEN: THE INFERNO	Roland Suso Richter
	THE AIRLIFT	Dror Zahavi
2006	NOT ALL WERE MURDERERS	Jo Baier
2007	MARCH OF MILLIONS	Kai Wessel
2008	THE MIRACLE OF BERLIN	Roland Suso Richter
2009	DUTSCHKE	Stefan Krohmer
2010	UNTIL NOTHING REMAINS	Nikolas Stein von Kamienski
2011	HINDENBURG	Philipp Kadelbach
	SHE DESERVED IT	Thomas Stiller
2012	ROMMEL	Nikolas Stein von Kamienski
2013	GENERATION WAR	Philipp Kadelbach

TEAMWORX

With more than 240 productions to its credit, teamWorx Television & Film GmbH numbers among the most important television producers in Germany and is a market leader throughout Europe in the field of event productions. The firm was founded in 1998 by Nico Hofmann, producer and chairman of the management, producer Ariane Krampe and Wolf Bauer, chairman of the management of UFA; Further managing directors and producers next to Nico Hofmann are Joachim Kosack and Markus Brunnemann. The production team also includes Sascha Schwingel, Benjamin Benedict, Jochen Laube and Steffi Ackermann.

Since its foundation, teamWorx has continuously expanded its product portfolio. It now comprises series and TV cycles next to high-quality TV movies and scripted programs with event character. Exemplary for the variety of teamWorx productions are TV movies such as "Enno," "Operation Valkyrie," "Bobby," "Something to Remind Me," "Familienkreise," "The Miracle of Berlin," "Mogadischu," "Der Mann aus der Pfalz," "Der Fall Jakob von Metzler" and "Rommel;" event miniseries such as "Dresden: The Inferno," "March of Millions," "Storm Tide," "The Airlift" the adaptation of Uwe Tellkamp's bestseller of the same name "The Tower;" the big-screen productions "Wolfsburg," "Berlin: A Symphony of a Big City;" the multiple award-winning drama "The Day I Was Not Born" and "Cracks in the Shell " by Christian Schwochow, as well as filmed stage works including "Lulu," "Baal" and "Werther." The successful TV cycles "Donna Leon," "Spring " and others supplement the portfolio.

About Music Box Films

Music Box Films is a leading theatrical and home entertainment distributor of international, American independent and documentary films in North America.

Past releases include Guillaume Canet's hit thriller TELL NO ONE; the film adaptations of Stieg Larsson's trilogy of international mega-selling novels - the first in the series- THE GIRL WITH THE DRAGON TATTOO, with over \$10 million in US box office, was one of the most popular international releases of the decade; Terence Davies' THE DEEP BLUE SEA starring Rachel Weisz, New York Film Critics Circle Best Actress winner; and Philippe Falardeau's Academy Award-nominated MONSIEUR LAZHAR.

Upcoming titles include Roger Michell's LE WEEK-END, written by Hanif Kureishi and starring Jim Broadbent; the hit French mini-series THE RETURNED, currently seen on Sundance Channel; five-time Academy Award® nominee Jan Troell's THE LAST SENTENCE; and Jan Ole Gerster's German smash hit OH BOY, which swept the German Oscars earlier this year.

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