



# Very villainous

## Jamie Bartlett is pretty good at being bad

**NATALIE BOSMAN**

HE might play a “baddie” who grows a conscience in the upcoming feature film *White Lion*, but Jamie Bartlett (left) is delighted to come back home to his regular gig – playing the part of the dubious *Rhythm City* character David Genaro.

“Mike O’Reilly was a status six character,” he says of the former *Isidingo* villain that he has played.

“He wears grey shoes and white socks. He’s a lovable thug, but dangerous.

“David, on the other hand, is a status ten character,” Bartlett says.

“He’s very powerful, psychologically powerful, and his emotional landscape is absolutely unbelievable.”

Having played the part of David for over three years now, you’d think that Bartlett might be in

**snip** Watch *Rhythm City* weekdays on e.tv at 6.30pm.

danger of becoming bored.

But the beauty of his character, he is quick to explain, lies in the fact he’s allowed much of his own interpretation of the character.

“I’m allowed quite a lot of freedom with the dialogue – I don’t know if you get a sense of that? He’s given quite a lot of leeway, and that keeps it fresh; it keeps me on my toes,” Bartlett says.

“But I’m always really pushing it. *Rhythm City* is a lot more risque than some of the other shows, and it’s very nice to have that kind of freedom because I can be a bit sassy and a bit naughty.”

Naughtiness has a way of catching up with you, however, and in the not too distant future, Bartlett’s character is going to surprise many a *Rhythm City* viewer.

“He’s doing things that are not really safe,”

Bartlett confides.

“It’s the kind of thing that you expect to see in *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels*.

“It’s very psychological stuff, and the kind of extremes where he is going emotionally are exhaustive and expansive.

“And although I think that it’s very good for ARs [audience ratings], I think he needs to be reigned in. So there’s a big event coming soon where the audience is going to get their pound of flesh from him.”

For Bartlett, this change in direction presents an acting challenge that he thrives on.

“I want to show the audience David’s weakness, his bruises (emotionally), his issues with his father, his sexual issues, his vulnerability, his wanting to be loved and mothered,” he says.

“I’m always trying to show the audience the man behind the mind behind the gun.”

While some might say that Bartlett has typecast himself to forever play the “bad guy”, Bartlett retaliates with his characteristically self-deprecating dark humour.

“It comes easier to me, in terms of my size and how ugly I am,” he jokes.

“I mean, look at this face!”

