

Night of a 1000 Hours: A fantastical take on the dark secrets of a family and a country
by Tina Poglajen

17/10/2016 - The supernatural whodunit by Austrian director Virgil Widrich has no patience for the conventions of realism



Laurence Rupp and Amira Casar in *Night Of A 1000 Hours*

In Vienna, the members of the Ullich dynasty gather to discuss the inheritance of the family business. Discovering her son Jochen is a neo-Nazi, the wealthy Erika decides to leave her fortune to her nephew Philip, but suddenly dies before she can finish signing her will. Her death soon proves to be less tragic than it would seem at first glance: in a grand gesture that only serves as a prelude to

Virgil Widrich's *Night of a 1000 Hours*

general contempt for subtlety, not only does she momentarily come back to life, but so do all of their other deceased family members – Erika's mother, who died a tragic death shortly after Erika was born and now appears younger than her, Philip's confused grandmother, his eccentric great-grandfather and their countless other relatives.

(The article continues below - Commercial information)

The Luxemburgish-Austrian-Dutch co-production that premiered at the Busan Film Festival last week (where it won the Audience Award) and screened in competition at the 32nd Warsaw Film Festival has no patience for the conventions of realism. The plot is outrageously fantastical, and its form is just as dramatic: the acting, the costumes, the colours, the camera work and the setting – the timelessly opulent Viennese palace. A more than suitable location when it turns out that it is not only the family's ancestors who are being brought back to life, so is the past itself.

The film, starring **Laurence Rupp** and **Amira Casar**, does not bother with being overly politically correct: The obstacle to its romantic couple's happiness lies, as the neo-Nazi of the family astutely observes, somewhere between incest and necrophilia – and that obstacle proves to be far from insurmountable. Ultimately, *Night of a 1000 Hours* is a kind of a supernatural comedy whodunit, but the kind that is shrewd enough to realise that the dark secrets of a family can never be isolated from the rottenness of society itself.

Produced by AMOUR FOU Luxembourg (Luxembourg) and AMOUR FOU Vienna (Austria) and co-produced by KeyFilm (Netherlands) and Golden Girls Filmproduktion (Austria), *Night of a 1000 Hours* is sold internationally by Picture Tree International.