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FILMAKADEMIE WIEN

PRESSKIT

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT

A FILM BY MATTHIAS KREPP

AUSTRIA / 59MIN



TECHNICAL DATA

RUNNING TIME	59min
FORMAT	digital
SCREEN RATIO	1:1,39
LANGUAGE	German, English, Arabic, Russian
YEAR OF PRODUCTION	2024

CAST AND CREW

LOLA	Maya Unger
PAUL	Laurin Saied
KARIN	Petra Morzé
FUAD	Johnny Mhanna
MARIE	Anna Rot
SIMON	Martin Vischer
KLAUS	Felix Römer
LYDIA	Wiktorija Malektorowytsh

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY	Matthias Krepp
PRODUCED BY	Dominic Kubisch
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Angelika Spangel, Sophia Wiegele
EDITOR	Dominic Kubisch
SOUNDDESIGN	Victoria Grohs
SOUND	Victoria Grohs, Jón H. Geirfinnsson, Chuqi Lu, Benedikt Palier
PRODUCTION DESIGN	Laura Malmberg, Paul Sturminger, Nicola Oberholzer, Vasilisa Grebenshikova
COSTUME DESIGN	Veronika Harb
MAKEUP DESIGN	Birgit Brezina, Franziska Fröhlich, Emese Torma

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Vienna Film Academy
Institut für Film und Fernsehen
Anton von Webern Platz 1
A-1030 Vienna



LOGLINE

One night, one city, three stories. It's New Year's Eve 2019/20. A year that will bring an unforeseeable historical turning point is looming ahead. *STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT* follows six characters as they struggle to find solace and meaning in a world of change.

SYNOPSIS

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT tells three stories against the backdrop of New Year's Eve 2019/20. Lola and her friend Paul navigate the city's nocturnal landscape provoking strangers. Karin, a German teacher, ventures into a complex relationship with her Syrian student Fuad. Simon and Marie find themselves entangled in a surreal night with Simon's former professor and his wife. As these lives converge, the film explores the complexities of human connection amidst the uncertainty of a world on the brink of change.



BIOGRAPHY / FILMOGRAPHY

Matthias Krepp is an Austrian director. He studied Comparative Literature and History, and was later accepted into the directing-class of Michael Haneke at Vienna Film Academy. During his studies he directed several short films in collaboration with Angelika Spangel and Dominic Kubisch. His documentary debut *Sand and Blood* premiered in Locarno Film Festival 2017.

- 2024 *Strangers in the Night* / 59min / Fiction
- 2017 *Sand and Blood* / 90min / Documentary
- 2015 *Ende September* / 30min / Fiction
- 2014 *Cüneyt, kleiner Krieger* / 17min / Fiction
- 2014 *Obdach* / 6min / Documentary
- 2012 *Sasha* / 6min / Fiction

AWARDS

- Silver Eye Award (Ji.Hlava 2017)
- Nominated for Franz Grabner Award (Diagonale, Austria 2018)
- Winner Docu/Life (Docu Days UA, Kyiv 2018)
- Megahertz Student Award (DOK.fest Munich 2018)
- Golden Lynx Award, Best Documentary (FEST, Espinho 2018)
- Special Mention (ASTRA, Bucharest 2018)



DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

STRANGERS IN THE NIGHT consists of three stories - a society panorama in miniature, set on New Year's Eve 2019. A few hours earlier, the first news agency report about a mysterious lung disease in the Hubei province had emerged. It appeared as a footnote in European newspapers, while headlines were dominated by reports of celebrations around the globe.

I wrote the initial draft of the screenplay before the pandemic, in which a certain apocalyptic atmosphere was already present, even without knowledge of subsequent events. It originated from a feeling that some members of my generation (and not only them) are familiar with: the feeling of living in a society without history, one that is utterly overwhelmed and vulnerable when history crashes upon it with full force - whether through crises, wars, or the global outbreak of a disease. I have tried to depict various aspects of this within the different characters of the film: Some retreat into cynicism, while others become lethargic and struggle to reach maturity (even beyond their thirties). Yet, others strive to find their happiness in love and sexual fulfillment.

When I wrote the final version of the script, the war in Ukraine still had not erupted - and the term 'turning point' wasn't on everyone's lips (despite the pandemic), but it was evident that an era was coming to an end. I don't want to romanticize it - that era was never entirely stable or secure, and its imminent (and inevitable) end had been discussed already twenty years ago. Nonetheless, that end always just appeared as a storm brewing on the horizon. The mechanisms of a new era were (and likely still are to some extent) elusive.



Hence, it would have been challenging for me to write a dystopian film set in the near future. I would have had to invent the coordinates of this new world and sacrifice the film's realistic tone, likely turning it into satire. But I aimed to create a serious and simple film, in which a political and historical dimension plays only an indirect role - much like it does in my character's daily life. When I speak of simplicity, I don't refer to the film's subject or structure, nor do I mean its organizational effort. The latter was challenging for us (given our limited budget and resources) - and without an exceptional team (particularly Angelika Spangel and Dominic Kubisch, whose contribution to the film is just as significant as mine), the film would not have been possible. What I mean by simplicity is a certain minimalism in the film's visual language, realism in acting, and a clear rhythm in editing. This combination of precise planning and vital, realistic performance is challenging to achieve and demands patience and trust of the actors - and I am happy to have been able to cast such dedicated and outstanding actors and actresses, who have given so much to the film. In this regard, I can also speak of luck - despite all the struggle and hard work that go into such a film project, a great deal of luck is needed. I'm thankful for that.



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