The last of the vampires?

Heirs Of The Night is a 26 x 26 mins live-action vampire series brought to Cannes by ZDF Enterprises. The series gets its World Premiere TV Screening at this year's MIPJunior.

In Europe, the end of the 19th century, a prophecy warns the five remaining vampire clans in Europe that they need to unite or else they will become extinct. They have to learn to trust each other and work together if they are to resist the powers of Dracula, who has awoken after a long sleep. Over the last few decades the clans have been fighting each other in the long-running clan wars. But now the Elders have to set aside their differences so the young Heirs can attend the vampire school that exists on the ship The Elisabetha. There the Heirs will share knowledge of each other's powers to become stronger than ever.

The Heirs face challenges they have never met before — for example the threat of the feared Redmasks, vampires controlled by Dracula. Vampire Hunter Van Helsing is another force they have to contend with: they need to survive these and many other challenges, and it's up to 14-year-old Alisa von Valamia — who has the power to choose between eternal life as a vampire or for all vampires to live as humans — together with the Heirs, to save the world from eternal darkness.

Dutch director Dieserik van Rooijen, known for Penoza, Daylight, Tapped and American horror film Cadaver, directs the new live-action series, written by Swedish screenwriter Maria von Heland and based on the successful German book series Die
Erben der Nacht.

"This series is a wonderful fusion of genres," Van Rooijen said. "Fantasy, coming of age, action, adventure and even costume drama. In my youth I devoured all the vampire films that were there. With this passion I want to create a credible world in this series where vampires roam and are hunted — and where our heroes are children who learn to become masters of their powers."

The series is produced by Lemming Film (The Netherlands), in co-production with Maze Pictures (Germany), Hamster Film (Germany) and Maipo Film (Norway) for German broadcasters NDR and KiKA. It will be one of the biggest Dutch drama series ever produced for television. The working language is English and actors from eight different countries star, including Monica Hendrickx, Stijn Harmans and Benja Bruinjning of the Netherlands. The series won funding through the Netherlands Film Production Incentive Scheme. ZDFE handles distribution.

ZDFE junior vice-president Arne Lohmann said: "I am sure that children all over the world will fall for our vampire kids, just like we have right from the start." He added: "Heirs Of The Night combines coming of age, mystery and adventure in an addictive way."

• Heirs Of The Night is the Sunday World Premiere TV Screening at MIPJunior, on October 13 at 17:45 in the Grand Theatre of the JW Marriott