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So Weit Das Auge Reicht

(As Far As The Eye Sees)

(WEST GERMAN-COLOR)

Variety 8-20-80
Locarno, Aug. 19.

Cactus Film release of Prokino, Films Du Losange-Cactus Film-Swiss TV-DRS production. Features entire cast. Written and directed by Erwin Keusch. Camera (color), Dietrich Lohmann; editor, Bettina Lewertoff. Reviewed at Locarno Film Fest, Aug. 8, '80. Running time: 137 MINS.

Robert Bernd Tauber
Anna Aurore Clement
Alex Jurgen Prochnow
Iris Antonia Reininghaus
Kuhl Hans-Michael Rehberg

Film is a carefully worked-out attempt to bring off a sort of melodrama about love over money, full of rife coincidences, cupidity, and murder as the protagonists go in and out of outlandish, highly coincidental situations and meetings. But all this is too contrived and hollow to get the needed inventiveness, light hearted romantics and final winning out of innocence it strives desperately to achieve.

The hero, a simple masseur and parttime singer, is afflicted with bad hearing. It might be a dramatic, tragic flaw but is also used for some misunderstandings. He inherits a fortune in stocks from his father who left his now-dead mother.

But some conniving stock market types are after him to get the money. The young man charged with finding the inheritor even sets up an elaborate idea to get his own girl to seduce and marry the man to get the money and then divorce him. But the latter ends up with another girl, is charged with murder the other commits but is finally rid of all of them as he leaves the girl he perhaps loved who insists she really loved him despite being in on the elaborate affair.

Home grounds might take to this. Its excessive plotting and careful but stolid direction might give it some payoff, though it's otherwise limited and does not enhance the cries of the West German renaissance that still spill plenty of critical ink in many countries. Acceptable thespians cannot overcome the elephantine handline of what should have been a sprightly adventure tale of innocence overcoming cupidity. —Mosk.