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Thursday, September 14

Stranger in a Strange Land

ALI: FEAR EATS THE SOUL

(ALI: ANGST ESSEN SEELE AUF)

1974, Rainer Werner Fassbinder,

West Germany, 94 min.

6:00

Winner of the International Critic's Prize at the Cannes Film Festival ALI borrows from the formula for Hollywood tearjerkers (especially ALL THAT HEAVEN ALLOWS) to tell the story of the rocky relationship of Emmi (Brigitte Mira), a sixtyish German cleaning lady and Ali (El Hedi Ben Salem), an inarticulate Moroccan guest worker nearly half her age. A widow whom nobody needs and an outsider whom nobody wants, the two have nothing but loneliness in common. Their marriage draws criticism and abuse from Emmi's children, Ali's friends and their neighbors. Gradually, and out of selfish necessity, the Germans come to terms with the match and with the

return of her old social circle Emmi reverts to the dominant cultural chauvinism. Fassbinder uses the conventions of the emotionally charged melodrama and his highly stylized compositions to comment on the hypocrisy of German society. (AS)
