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Nach Mitternacht

(After Midnight)
(WEST GERMAN-COLOR)

Cannes, May 20.

A Regina Ziegler Film Production, Berlin, in coproduction with Paramount Film Production, Munich, and CCC-Filmkunst, Berlin. Executive producer, Horst Burkhard. Features cast. Directed by Wolf Gremm. Screenplay, Annette Reginer, Gremm, based on Irmgard Keun's novel; camera (color), Michael Steinke; sets, Jan Schubach; editing, Clarissa Ambach; sound, Wolf Dietrich Peters; music, Charles Kalman. Reviewed at Cannes Film Fest (Film Mart), May 19, '82. Running time: 110 MINS.

Cast: Desiree Nosbusch (Sanne Moder), Wolfgang Joerg, Nicole Heesters, Hermann Lause, Krista Stadler, Marion Kracht, Kurt Weinzierl.

Wolf Gremm's "After Midnight" is based on an important but neglected novel by Irmgard Keun penned in 1937 when the writer was on the lam from the Nazis. She was one of those German writers who refused to join the Party and thus fell on the "verboten" list upon her emigration (which took her to Belgium, Holland, France, and briefly to the USA).

"After Midnight" is an ironic satire on the behavior of the upper middle class during the formative years of the Third Reich, as viewed through the eyes of an 18-year-old girl. For the record, Irmgard Keun won the praise of satirist Kurt Tucholsky, and she pulled off the remarkable trick of living unnoticed in Germany from 1940 until the end of the war.

Gremm's direction is in the "Twilight of the Gods" vein: a decadent Deutschland stuffed with swastikas and lunkhead stormtroopers, cabaret scenes and voluptuous excess. Sets are gaudy enough to catch the eye, but the rest just ain't there. One plus: Keun herself makes a cameo bow. —Holl.