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Sac. 4.01.4 Berlin Affair

'Berlin Affair' a Premiere Offering

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"Berlin Affair," a Universal World Premiere presentation aired last evening on NBC's Monday Night at the Movies, is a conventional spy drama made diverting by well-photographed authentic locales, an exceptionally strong performance by Darren McGavin and, above all, by some very adroit direction by David Lowell Rich.

When a courier for West German dope smuggling ring is found dead on a lonely beach somewhere, the works of his watch mysteriously missing, the head of a Geneva-based killer-for-hire bureau (Fritz Weaver) sends for McGavin, a professional assassin, to hunt down the murderer (Brian Kelly), a longtime friend. It's a distasteful assignment, but McGavin is obligated to Weaver for some past favors.

Plot Thickens

McGavin's mission takes him to West Berlin, where the plot quickly thickens. Besides Kelly he encounters the smugglers, Claude Dauphin (whom Kelly is blackmailing) and Christian Roberts, whose front an art gallery, and their partner (Derren Nesbitt), who poses as a representative for a plastics firm and is an art gallery, and their is Weaver's client.

McGavin also meets—and eventually falls in love with—one of Dauphin's employes, Pascale Petit, who happens to be Kelly's girl and is indebted to him for getting her

'BERLIN AFFAIR'

An NBC presentation of a Universal World Premiere production. Producers E. Jack Neuman, Paul Donnelly. Director David Lowell Rich. Teleplay Peter Pendvik, E. Jack Neuman; from a story by Elliott West. Camera Michael Marszalek. Art director Hans Jurgen Kiesbach. Music Francis Lai. Film editor Edward M. Abrams. Featuring Darren McGavin, Fritz Weaver, Brian Kelly, Claude Dauphin, Pascale Petit, Christian Roberts, Derren Nesbitt, Kathie Brown, Marjan Collier, Reinhard Koldoboff, Heidi Hankammer, Gida Schubert, Manfred Maurer, Isabell Erwins. Color. Aired Monday night at 9 p.m. on NBC.

parents out of East Germany.

On the one hand "Berlin Affair's" script seems derivative of the John Le Carre and Len Deighton stories with their emphasis on the loneliness and the obsessiveness of the professional spy. On the other, it has echoes of Hitchcock in its aura of glamor and in its romantic entanglements.

Its main strength lies in the depth of feeling Rich has been able to bring to McGavin's decidedly familiar dilemma of being torn between love and duty. In this he has been aided by Francis Lai's romantic score and by the conviction McGavin has brought to his role, that of a proud, hard man taken by surprise by his own emotions.

Miss Petit, unfortunately, is a rather nondescript European starlet type who speaks very stilted English. (Karen Dor, so memorable in Hitchcock's "Topaz," would have been perfect.) However, Kelly, Weaver and the rest of the cast are fine.

Once again the very able David Lowell Rich demonstrates the virtue of taking genre material seriously and wresting from it style and meaning.