

Canneseries: 'The Typist's' Nina Grosse on German Drama Series' New Edge

Writer-director Nina Grosse talks to Variety about sea-change in German drama series

By [John Hopewell](#)



CREDIT: ALEXANDER FISCHERKOESEN

CANNES — Crime thrillers, missing girl mysteries: Both are staples of German TV. But, backed by Germany's TV industry drivers – producer Oliver Berben, at Constantin's Moovie, broadcaster ZDF, sales company Beta Film – [Nina Grosse's "The Typist"](#) underscores the new edge of scripted drama on European free-to-air TV, one of the big trends in [Canneseries](#). That was already seen, when it comes to Germany, in "Shades of Guilt," another Moovie, ZDF, Beta collaboration involving Grosse and also starring Iris Berben ("Eddie the Eagle") and Moritz Bleibtreu ("Run. Lola, Run"). But that played second primetime.

"The Typist is a show which usually would have been aimed at a second primetime window, but the high quality and the star-character of the protagonists made it eligible for primetime TV," said Jan Motjo, Beta Film CEO.

He added: "What's interesting is the combination of the ambition to do something different, but still have elements which make it possible for the program to be successful in primetime. It's a big step forward that ZDF is consciously taking."

In "The Typist," Berben plays Freya, a dowdy Berlin police criminal interrogation officer who, spurred by flowering love with her flamboyant new boss (Babylon Berlin's Peter Kurth), determines to get to the bottom of her own daughter's disappearance 11 years prior. Paralyzed by grief, traumatized by her own family's violent past and the confessions she types, living a reclusive life in a flat which has hardly changed since her daughter went missing, Freya is a hugely sympathetic character. But she hides her own dark secrets as indeed may any number of characters. Variety chatted with writer Nina Grosse, who co-directed with

"Deutschland '83's" Samira Radsil, as [Canneseries](#) began.