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## Critic's Choice: **ALLONSANFAN**



In 1816, during the wave of reaction that swept Europe after the fall of Napoleon, veteran revolutionary Fulvio (Marcello Mastroianni), born of a wealthy family, wishes only to join his loved ones and abandon the Brothers, the dwindling band of political activists who look to him for guidance and inspiration. Far from a sober historical study, this 1974 film by Paolo and Vittorio Taviani (*Padre Padrone*, *The Night of the Shooting Stars*) is dizzyingly subjective and elliptical, reaching for the magical child's-eye perspective that no other directors would unleash on such subject matter. The

Taviani's enthusiastic audacity can spill over into unintentional humor (especially when they bring in a full orchestra on the sound track at the least likely moments), a tendency abetted by their refusal to fill in psychological context even when it would cost them almost no effort. But their wild juxtapositions of sex, politics, and family life are managed with admirable clarity, and one can forgive almost any misstep in artists with such a confident grasp of the poetic capabilities of cinema. Opening this week at the Cineplex, *Allonsanfan* costars Laura Betti, Lea Massari, and the wonderful Mimsy Farmer.

—Dan Sallitt