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"M. Aki Kaurismäki's story" (1/3)

All dialogu

By J. Hoberman

Jean-Luc Godard:  
"Son + image"

At the Museum of Modern Art  
October 30 through  
November 30

**Prefazione**

Written and directed by  
Michelangelo Antonioni  
Produced by Dino De Laurentiis  
At the Walter Reade Theater  
October 31 through November 3

Jean-Luc Godard is scarcely the only filmmaker being feted in New York. The Film Society of Lincoln Center is in the midst of a lavishly complete Antonioni retrospective. Among the rarities this week is an item with a remarkably Godardian premise: "Prefazione" is Antonioni's preface to *I Tre Volti* (*The Three Faces*), the posh—and now lost—1965 anthology film with which producer Dino De Laurentiis vainly attempted to launch Soraya, ex-empress of Iran, as an international movie star.

Showing on a bill with *Blow-Up*, this 25-minute curiosity—which was made in the midst of Antonioni's ultrafashionable Pop Art phase—can be seen as a bridge between the gorgeous industrial wasteland of *Red Desert* and the hypnotically vacuous scene-mongering of *Blow-Up* (both of which were also shot by Carlo Di Pampa). "Prefazione" is a stylized nocturne set in a series of improbably empty, antiseptic glass-and-steel fluorescent pavilions, connected by a network of shiny sports cars and neon-limned streets. Soraya appears as herself (with a cameo by De Laurentiis as himself), petulantly enduring a screen test in a secluded movie

**Film**

studio staked out by a pair of determined paparazzi.

Although treated as a precious object, the inexpressively pouting empress is repeatedly made over—with lights, makeup, wigs. The ambience is imploded jet-set: