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tre volti (Three faces of a woman), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1965

Le amiche (The girl friends), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1955

Il mistero di Oberwald (The Oberwald mystery), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1981

I vinti (The vanquished), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1953

La notte (The night), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1961

Professione: reporter (The passenger), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1975

Chung kuo - Cina (China), Antonioni, Michelangelo, 1972

MODERNIST MASTER: MICHELANGELO

ANTONIONI

"Antonioni is one of the greatest artists of the twentieth century" - **Martin Scorsese**

"The cinema is not, in essence, moral. It is emotional." - **Michelangelo Antonioni**

Few directors have so radically transformed our perception of the possibilities of film as has Michelangelo Antonioni. Just as there is painting before and after "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon," there is cinema before and after L'AVVENTURA. Indeed, Antonioni's films constitute a monument of modernism. Their evocation of postwar alienation and anomie, their formal innovation and figurative beauty, created one of the most influential and inexhaustible canons in the history of cinema. Ironically, though his early films in many ways prepare for post-modernism, and his late ones (especially THE MYSTERY OF OBERWALD) contribute to it, Antonioni's reputation was one of the casualties of post-modernist culture. As knowingness displaced knowledge, and high culture (as it was known) succumbed to incessant irony, the rigour, gravity and introspection of Antonioni's art were devalued and derided. And little wonder—post-modernism celebrates (and embodies) one of the sources of Antonioni's deepest disquiet: the clamour, flux and artificiality of modern life.

Pier Paolo Pasolini (himself a pioneering post-modernist), commented: "I don't like Antonioni, abstract art, or electronic music." Pasolini's impatience with his compatriot should not be surprising; unlike Visconti, with whom Pasolini shared many qualities, Antonioni represented a bourgeois, intellectual tradition that Pasolini reviled. "The experience which has been most important in making me the director I have become," Antonioni confessed, "is that of the middle class background from which I come and in which I was brought up. It was that world which contributed most to my predilection for certain themes, certain problems, certain emotional and psychological conflicts."

Antonioni's break with Italian neorealism also came earlier and was more decisive than Pasolini's. Though Antonioni collaborated with Pasolini's mentor (and master of neorealism) Roberto Rossellini, he distanced himself from the movement: "I'm not really a good son of neorealism," he said, "I'm rather like the black sheep of its family." Just how black a sheep became apparent with his first feature, the chic STORY OF A LOVE AFFAIR (1950), based on a James M. Cain novel and set amongst the Milanese nobility. Though some tortuous attempts were made to claim the film for the neorealist fold, as there were a few years later with IL GRIDO (1957), which French

critics dubbed "interior neorealism," Antonioni had decidedly breached most of the tenets of that postwar movement. His intellectual objectivity, his emphasis on psychology, on dissolution and uncertainty, on the abstract, stylized treatment of objects and space as expressions of interior states, on the existential malaise of the bourgeoisie, were in every way contrary to the optimism and sentimentality of classic neorealism. (Antonioni's early period remains comparatively unexamined, though it includes some of his best films. As David Thomson has written: "The period from CRONACA DI UN AMORE to IL GRIDO is triumphant.")

The narrative and formal experimentation of Antonioni's celebrated trilogy, which includes L'AVVENTURA (1960), LA NOTTE (1961) and L'ECLISSE (1962), established Antonioni's reputation as a pre-eminent modernist, and created an indelible image of postwar Europe, unmoored and adrift in what Alberto Moravia called "a nameless, formless anguish." More architectural than painterly in composition, their separation of figure and ground oscillating or disappearing altogether, the three films featured narratives marked by absence and irresolution and characters conspicuously unmotivated in their actions. The subsequent films extended Antonioni's experimentation, from the manipulation of colour in RED DESERT (1964) and extended shot duration in THE PASSENGER (1975), through the use of video in THE MYSTERY OF OBERWALD (1980) and of volumetric composition in IDENTIFICATION OF A WOMAN (1982). Throughout, despite being called reactionary by factions of the Italian left, Antonioni remained strikingly prescient in his treatment of contemporary social problems.

The sheer elusiveness of Antonioni's films frustrates and sometimes confounds scrutiny of his work. The tenuousness of perception and the instability of the world are key themes in Antonioni's cinema, warning us of the impossibility of reaching a fixed or comprehensive understanding of his work. Antonioni would no doubt reject Godard's cynical dictum, "to see is to deceive," in favour of his own eloquent assertion about the fragility and incompleteness of sight: "The world, the reality we live in . . . is invisible, hence we have to be satisfied with what we see." - **James Quandt**



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ANTONIONI

MODERNIST MASTER

STORY OF A LOVE AFFAIR

(CRONACA DI UN AMORE)

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni
Italy 1950 96 minutes
Cast: Lucia Bosé, Massimo Girotti

"One of the most perfectly and completely structured films in the entire history of cinema" (Nöel Burch), Antonioni's first feature is as great as it is little known. (Some claim it is the best film he ever made; we would concur were it not for his half dozen other masterpieces.) Like Visconti before him (in *OSSESSIONE*, soon to be screened at the Cinematheque), Antonioni transposed James M. Cain's *The Postman Always Rings Twice* to an entirely different setting: here, the post-war world of the Milanese aristocracy. An industrialist hires a detective to investigate his wife's past, and in doing so unwittingly reunites her with her high school sweetheart. The two lovers conspire to kill the suspicious husband. Semiotically sleek and impossibly chic with its glistening succession of cars, boudoirs and boîtes, *AFFAIR* is a work of astonishing plastic beauty, and prefigures the thematic and stylistic preoccupations of Antonioni's later work. Not to be missed.

Friday, January 23 6:30 p.m.

L'AVVENTURA

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni Italy 1960 145 minutes Cast: Monica Vitti, Lea Massari

Antonioni's epochal masterpiece provoked derision and outrage at the 1960 Cannes festival, but quickly established its claim as "the most important film since *CITIZEN KANE*" (Robert Benayoun). During a yachting party, a woman argues with her architect lover and then disappears from the Sicilian island they'd been exploring. Her lover and her best friend set out to find her, but the urgency of their search dissipates as they fall into an uneasy sexual relationship. "Of all the memorable works in film history, only a relative few have pioneered . . . and shining amongst these few is *L'AVVENTURA*" (Stanley Kauffman).

preceded by:

RETURN TO LISCA BIANCA (RITORNO A LISCA BIANCA)

Italy 1983 9 minutes

An eerie return visit more than two decades later to the island setting of *L'AVVENTURA*.

Friday, January 23 8:45 p.m.

Thursday, February 5 6:30 p.m.

LA NOTTE

(THE NIGHT)

Director: Michelangelo Antonioni
Italy 1961 122 minutes
Cast: Marcello Mastroianni, Jeanne Moreau

A key work of modernist cinema, *LA NOTTE* still maintains its power to shock audiences into a new kind of seeing. (Its compositions are among the most striking in all of Antonioni's films.) Mastroianni plays an exhausted novelist coasting on his reputation, Moreau his disenchanted wife. As the title suggests, the film follows the couple to the end of the night, from an afternoon visit to a dying friend in hospital, through a party for a book launch at the home of an industrialist, to separate morning forays: he into his study, she into the deserted streets of Milan. "Antonioni's most rigorous film . . . an ambiguous and desolate masterpiece" (Peter Cowie).

Saturday, January 24 6:30 p.m.

L'AVVENTURA



LA NOTTE



This comprehensive retrospective is a presentation of Cinedittà International (Rome) with the support of the Ministero del Turismo e dello Spettacolo (Rome), in collaboration with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Toronto.

The retrospective includes much rare material and several Toronto premieres, and in almost all cases, films are presented in 35mm prints, newly struck for this event. Little of Antonioni's work is currently available in Canada, so this is not only your best, but quite possibly your last, opportunity to see it.

ALL NEW PRINTS!

STORY OF A LOVE AFFAIR
(CRONACA DI UN AMORE)
Italy 1950 ■ 96 minutes
Cast: Lucia Bose, Massimo Girotti

"One of the most perfectly and completely structured films in the entire history of cinema" (Noel Burch), Antonioni's first feature is as great as it

is little known. (Some claim it is the best film he ever made.) Like Visconti before him (in *OSSESSIONE*), Antonioni transposed James M. Cain's hard-boiled novel *The Postman Always Rings Twice* to an entirely different setting: here, the post-war world of the Milanese nobility. An industrialist hires a detective to investigate his wife's past, and unwittingly brings her high school sweetheart back into her life. The two lovers plot to kill the suspicious husband. Semiotically opulent with its glistering succession of cars, boudoirs and nightclubs, sheathed in the city's incessant rain, *AFFAIR* prefigures the thematic and stylistic preoccupations of Antonioni's later work.

preceded by:

GENTE DEL PO
(PEOPLE OF THE PO)
Italy 1943-47 ■ 9 minutes

A seemingly jinxed project—part of its footage lost in processing, another part of its negative destroyed by humidity during the war—this film is about a barge trip down the river Po.

and

SUPERSTITION
(SUPERSTIZIONE)
Italy 1949 ■ 9 minutes

A film about superstition (charms, spells, exorcisms) in the village of Camerino in the Marche.

Monday, January 25 8:45 p.m.



Michelangelo Antonioni's **BLOW UP**

I VINTI

(THE DEFEATED)

Italy 1952 ■ 110 minutes
Cast: Jean-Pierre Mocky, Fay Compton

Antonioni's most rarely screened fiction film, this three-part work was made for a Catholic production company as a dire commentary on the amoral state of European youth (the original English release was called *YOUTH AND PERVERSION*). Part One focuses on a group of Parisian teenagers on a country outing, one of whom pretends he is a rich racketeer and is murdered for his money. The Italian episode centres on the son of a rich Roman family who becomes involved in a contraband ring. The third episode, which foreshadows Antonioni's fascination with London in *BLOW UP*, is a Hitchcockian portrait of a would-be poet who decides to become famous by murdering a woman. Antonioni often expressed frustration that *I VINTI* was treated more as a social document than as a stylistic experiment. "The film remains a major experiment in narration, for Antonioni, and for the cinema" (Sam Rohdie).

preceded by:

NETTEZZA URBANA
(N.U.)
Italy 1948 ■ 9 minutes

Antonioni's second film, which chronicles a day in the life of Roman street sweepers. "N.U. offers a camera movement so strikingly arbitrary to prefigure *RED DESERT* and *THE PASSENGER*" (Seymour Chatman).

and

THE VILLA OF MONSTERS
(LA VILLA DEI MOSTRI)
Italy 1950 ■ 10 minutes

A study of the grotesque sculptures that fill the park of the ancient villa of Bomarzo.

Tuesday, January 26 8:45 p.m.

THE LADY WITHOUT CAMELIAS

(LA SIGNORA SENZA CAMELIE)

Italy 1953 ■ 105 minutes
Cast: Lucia Bose, Andrea Cechi

A devastating melodrama about a Milanese shopgirl who is discovered by a sleazy movie producer. He becomes insanely jealous of her consorting with actors, marries her, and attempts to change her image by casting her as Joan of Arc in his first art film. When the film turns out to be a disaster, the actress "retires" and takes up with a

shallow playboy diplomat. *CAMELIAS* was originally conceived for Gina Lollobrigida, who turned it down because of its stinging portrait of the Italian film industry and of actresses very much like she. "Invariably stunning to behold" (*Time Out*). "Far more than a footnote to Antonioni's career, it is a preface to . . . the work that later was to include *L'AVVENTURA*, *LA NOTTE*, *ECLIPSE*, *RED DESERT*, *BLOW UP* and *ZABRISKIE POINT*. . . Fascinating" (Vincent Canby).

preceded by:

LIES OF LOVE
(L'AMOROSA MENZOGNA)
Italy 1949 ■ 10 minutes

A satire about "the making of a *fumetto*, or photoromance, in a shabby little studio in Rome. . . Amusing in a lightly satirical way, it reflects an aspect of Antonioni that the broad public does not know well" (Seymour Chatman).

Thursday, January 28 8:45 p.m.

THE GIRLFRIENDS

(LE AMICHE)

Italy 1955 ■ 105 minutes
Cast: Eleanora Rossi Drago, Valentina Cortese

"Quintessential Antonioni" (Penelope Houston), *THE GIRLFRIENDS* was based on a famous Pavese novella. A young woman returns to her native Turin to open a fashion salon. She falls in with a "smart set," including the suicidal daughter of an eminent family, a painter who is jealous of his wife's success, and a viperous woman who vents her despair by attacking her closest friends. In its emphasis on the spiritual and moral malaise of the wealthy, and in its stunningly abstract style, this important early work foreshadows the director's ground-breaking trilogy of the early sixties. "Though seldom seen now, Antonioni's fourth feature is one of his greatest films" (*Time Out*). "In the long and justly celebrated beach sequence, Antonioni's style . . . is at its finest" (Houston). "The film merits all possible superlatives" (Philip Strick). "A masterpiece of understatement, restraint, economy of style and characterization" (Jonas Mekas).

preceded by:

ANTONIONI VISTO DA ANTONIONI
Italy 1989 ■ 28 minutes

A very rare interview with Antonioni, conducted by eminent film critic Lino Micciché.

Saturday, January 30 8:45 p.m.

IL GRIDO

(THE CRY)

Italy 1957 ■ 116 minutes
Cast: Steve Cochran, Alida Voli

made just before L'AVVENTURA, IL GRIDO is one of Antonioni's greatest films, one which has gained in stature and importance with the years. A weakly beautiful portrait of a worker who wanders the Po Valley with his little daughter after his wife leaves him, IL GRIDO is one of the director's personal favorites. "When I saw IL GRIDO after some time," Antonioni said, "I was stunned to find myself faced with such nakedness, with such great solitude. It was like what happens on some mornings when we look in the mirror and are startled by the reflection of our own face." "IL GRIDO attains the perfection of a masterpiece. . . . Indeed, it is a classic cinematography, and certainly one of the most significant films of recent years" (Pierre Leprohon).

preceded by:

SUICIDE ATTEMPT

(TENTATO SUICIDIO)

Italy 1953 ■ 20 minutes

In the omnibus film LOVE IN THE CITY, six Italian directors, including Fellini, Lattuada and Antonioni, recreated real-life stories of life and love in Rome. In his section, which is in many ways a key to understanding his cinema, Antonioni brought together a group of young women in a film studio and, instead of having them explain their desire to kill themselves, asked them to act out the actual attempt. "I sought to rouse the public's revulsion against suicide by showing the spiritual desolation of the characters" (Antonioni).

Monday, February 1 8:45 p.m.

L'AVVENTURA

(THE ADVENTURE)

Italy 1960 ■ 145 minutes
Cast: Monica Vitti, Lea Massari

L'AVVENTURA provoked derision and outrage when it premiered at the 1960 Cannes festival, but quickly established its claim as "the most important film since CITIZEN KANE" (Robert Benayoun). (It has been included in every subsequent Sight and Sound survey of the ten best films of all time.) During a yachting party, a woman argues with her architect lover and then disappears from the Sicilian island they've been exploring. Her lover and her best friend set out to find her, but the urgency of their search dissipates as they fall into an uneasy sexual relationship. "Of all the memorable works in film history, only a relative few have pioneered . . . and shining amongst these few is L'AVVENTURA" (Stanley Lauffman).

preceded by:



RETURN TO LISCA BIANCA

(RITORNO A LISCA BIANCA)

Italy 1983 ■ 9 minutes

An eerie return visit more than two decades later to the island setting of L'AVVENTURA.

Tuesday, February 2 8:45 p.m.

LA NOTTE

(THE NIGHT)

Italy 1961 ■ 122 minutes
Cast: Jeanne Moreau, Marcello Mastroianni

The middle film of Antonioni's celebrated trilogy is a key work of modernist cinema. Mastroianni is an exhausted novelist coasting on his reputation, Moreau is his disenchanted wife. As the title suggests, the film follows the couple to the end of the night, from an afternoon visit to a dying friend in hospital, through a book launching party at the home of an industrialist, to their separate nocturnal forays: he into his study, she into the deserted streets of Milan. "Antonioni's most rigorous film . . . an ambiguous and desolate masterpiece" (Peter Cowie).

Thursday, February 4 8:45 p.m.

L'ECLISSE

(THE ECLIPSE)

Italy 1961 ■ 125 minutes
Cast: Monica Vitti, Alain Delon

The final work in the trilogy begun with L'AVVENTURA and continued with LA NOTTE. "Of all my old films L'ECLISSE is the one I like best," Antonioni wrote in 1967. "From the point of view of style it is the most rigorous, and therefore the most successful. Also it is the most modern." A tail-spin in Rome's stock market serves as the backdrop for a love affair between a translator (Monica Vitti) and her mother's stockbroker. Antonioni's evocation of urban lassitude and alienation has never seemed so overwhelming. The final sequence, in which suspense is built out of an increasingly unbearable absence, is justly famous. "Antonioni's last great film before THE PASSENGER" (Penelope Houston).

preceded by:

KUMBHA MELA

India 1977-89 ■ 18 minutes

Antonioni's 1977 footage of the most important Indian religious festival, which takes place at the confluence of the Ganges, Jamuna and Saraswati rivers.

Saturday, February 6 8:45 p.m.

Michelangelo Antonioni's L'ECLISSE

TORONTO PREMIERE! CHUNG KUO CHINA

(CHUNG KUO CINA)

Italy 1972 ■ 240 minutes

One of Antonioni's most important works, largely unseen (because undistributed) but nevertheless famous for the circumstances of its filming, for the Chinese government's virulent attack on Antonioni after its release, and for Umberto Eco's article which offered a semiotic explanation of why the Chinese found it so insulting. Invited by the Chinese government to make a documentary about their country (which was in the throes of Mao's Cultural Revolution) Antonioni spent eight weeks shooting with the full cooperation of officials. The result was less a documentary or travelogue than a classic Antonionian meditation, focusing on the "faces, gestures, habits" of the people and the textures, spaces, and contours of the urban and rural landscapes. As Sam Rohdie has observed, "CHUNG KUO CINA is a film about a China seen but not known, observed, but not explained and that is its wonderful power and its secret happiness." A year after the film's release, Antonioni was violently attacked by the Chinese government as "a worm who spoke for the Russians," who demonstrated "extreme hatred" for China, and who spoke from "the pack of imperialists and social imperialists." Seven years later, they apologized to him. CHUNG KUO CINA has been the single most difficult Antonioni film to see; we are very pleased to present the Toronto premiere as part of this retrospective.

Sunday, February 7 1:30 p.m.

"Dear Antonioni"...

PHOTO EXHIBIT

Do not miss the free exhibit of sixty large-scale still photographs from Antonioni's films, an essential adjunct to this retrospective. The exhibit will be on view at the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, 496 Huron Street throughout the retrospective. For information on viewing times, please call 921-3802.

ANTONIONI SYMPOSIUM

Watch for details on a one-day symposium, organized by Cinematheque Ontario and the Department of Italian Studies and Cinema Studies of the University of Toronto, which will bring together a number of leading Antonioni scholars and film directors for discussion of various facets of Antonioni's films. Date, venue and participants will be announced in January.



RED DESERT

(IL DESERTO ROSSO)

Italy 1964 ■ 116 minutes

Cast: Monica Vitti, Richard Harris

Antonioni's first film in color all but subjugates its characters to its landscape. Antonioni transformed Ravenna, the city of Dante's tomb, Byzantine murals, and marble churches, into a terrifyingly beautiful industrial desert of slagheaps, factories, and sulphurous skies. (Grass, sand, buildings, even hair and fruit were painted and dyed to accomplish this disturbing effect.) Monica Vitti is the traumatized heroine who, in a desperate search for love, has a brief affair with the owner of a factory which her husband manages. Prescient in its connection of existential panic and pollution, emotional dissociation and technological sovereignty, RED DESERT is counted by most critics as one of the greatest works of European cinema. "It remains a milestone in the history of cinema" (Ned Riffkin).

Monday, February 8 6:30 p.m.

BLOW UP

Britain/Italy 1966 ■ 111 minutes

Cast: David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave

BLOW UP is set in the "swinging London" of the mid-sixties, and concerns a disaffected young fashion photographer who inadvertently photographs a murder while taking pictures in a secluded park. Or has he? Antonioni's narrative ambiguities and irresolutions turned the question of whether the murder had really taken place into the trendiest subject of debate since LAST YEAR AT MARIENBAD. "BLOW UP is the movie of the year. It is to Antonioni what LOLA MONTES was to Ophüls, UGETSU to Mizoguchi, CONTEMPT to Godard, FRENCH CAN-CAN to Renoir, LIME-LIGHT to Chaplin, REAR WINDOW to Hitchcock, 8 1/2 to Fellini—a statement of the artist, not on life but on art itself as the consuming passion of an artist's life" (Andrew Sarris).

preceded by:

PREFACE

(PREFAZIONE;
IL PROVINO)

Italy 1965 ■ 25 minutes

Cast: Soraya, Dino De Laurentiis

This rare short work served as the "preface" to a now lost anthology film, THE THREE FACES, which was designed by Dino De Laurentiis to turn Soraya, who was once the empress of Iran, into a movie star. "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 Palma)" (J. Hoberman, Village Voice).

Tuesday, February 9 8:45 p.m.

ZABRISKIE POINT

USA 1969 ■ 110 minutes

Cast: Mark Frechette, Daria Holprin, Harrison Ford

One of the most controversial films in Antonioni's career, savaged by North American critics when it was originally released, ZABRISKIE POINT is now being reevaluated by scholars and commentators (e.g. Robert Philip Kolker, Sam Rohdie), some of whom claim it is one of his most profound works. (Witness the recent issue of *Film Comment*, which dedicated several pages to an account of the film's shoot.) ZABRISKIE deals with Sixties student unrest in southern California, specifically with the son of a rich L. A. family who "drops out" and steals a gun, intending to kill a policeman. When his plans backfire, he takes an airplane for a joyride and lands in Death Valley, where he encounters (and, in a famous sequence, makes love to) a young woman who works for a property developer. (The film's star, Mark Frechette, was later sentenced to prison after robbing a bank in Boston....) No longer distributed here, ZABRISKIE POINT is essential viewing. "The most entertaining of Antonioni's movies... the most intelligent, compassionate probing of the radical young in recent American film" (Richard Corliss).

Thursday, February 11 6:30 p.m.

UNCUT ORIGINAL VERSION!

THE PASSENGER

(PROFESSIONE: REPORTER)

Italy 1975 ■ 126 minutes

Cast: Jack Nicholson, Maria Schneider

Many Antonioni authorities, including Richard Roud and Penelope Houston, count THE PASSENGER as Antonioni's finest work since L'ECLISSE. (The film has long been out of distribution in North America; we are presenting for the first time in Toronto the uncut original version.) Jack Nicholson plays a television reporter who seizes the chance to assume a new identity when a man who looks like him dies suddenly in an isolated hotel in Chad. Switching passport photos, Nicholson assumes the dead man's career as a weapons dealer, and begins an affair with a mysterious young architecture student. Antonioni's exploration of the tenuousness of identity "leads to a final sequence, a single shot lasting seven minutes which is one of the most extraordinary in film history" (Richard Roud).

Friday, February 12 8:45 p.m.

THE MYSTERY OF OBERWALD

(IL MISTIRE DI OBERWALD)

Italy 1980 ■ 129 minutes

Cast: Monica Vitti, Franco Branciaroli

Though *Time* Magazine called it "one of the ten best films of the year..."

Antonioni's most impressive experiment yet... a bold new direction for the cinema, a work of dazzling ambition and achievement," OBERWALD never received distribution in North America. Working with Monica Vitti for the first time since RED DESERT (1964), Antonioni made the strangest work of his career. She plays the queen who falls in the love with the man sent to assassinate her in Cocteau's historical romance THE EAGLE HAS TWO HEADS. Antonioni shot OBERWALD on video and transferred it to 35mm film, manipulating color and texture to transform each image into a startling signifier of emotion. (Dawn arrives as a wave of cerulean light, a blizzard of vermillion swirls around the lovers as they struggle against their fated deaths, the sky blazes crimson as their passion ignites....)

preceded by

NOTO MANDORLI VULCANO STROMBOLI CARNEVALE

Italy 1992 ■ 8 minutes

Antonioni's latest film, made in June 1992 for the Italian pavilion at the Seville Expo, is structured around five themes, five different outlooks on Sicily: a return to Noto, one of the places of L'AVVENTURA; an in-depth look at the Stromboli and Vulcano volcanoes; images of an almond tree in bloom on the hills of Noto; and, finally, a look at the carnival of Acireale.

Sunday, February 14 1:30 p.m.

IDENTIFICATION OF A WOMAN

(IDENTIFICAZIONE
DI UNA DONNA)

Italy 1982 ■ 128 minutes

Cast: Tomas Milian, Christine Boisson

Chic, oblique and extraordinarily erotic, IDENTIFICATION is Antonioni in top form, and marks a return to the preoccupations and setting of his first film and of his trilogy: ennui and desolation amongst the haute bourgeoisie. (One of the most impressive films of the eighties, IDENTIFICATION was never released in North America.) A filmmaker searches for two women: one to inspire his new film, the other to replace the wife he has divorced. His encounters with a beautiful, androgynous aristocrat whose promiscuous love life includes both men and women, and then with a stage actress, drive the director only further into artistic and emotional paralysis. With several set-pieces as great as anything in Antonioni's canon, IDENTIFICATION is "a brilliant, glittering piece of filmmaking... a stunningly beautiful film" (Nick Roddick, *Sight and Sound*). "Visually this is perhaps Antonioni's most beautiful film to date" (*Time Out*).

Sunday, February 14 4:00 p.m.