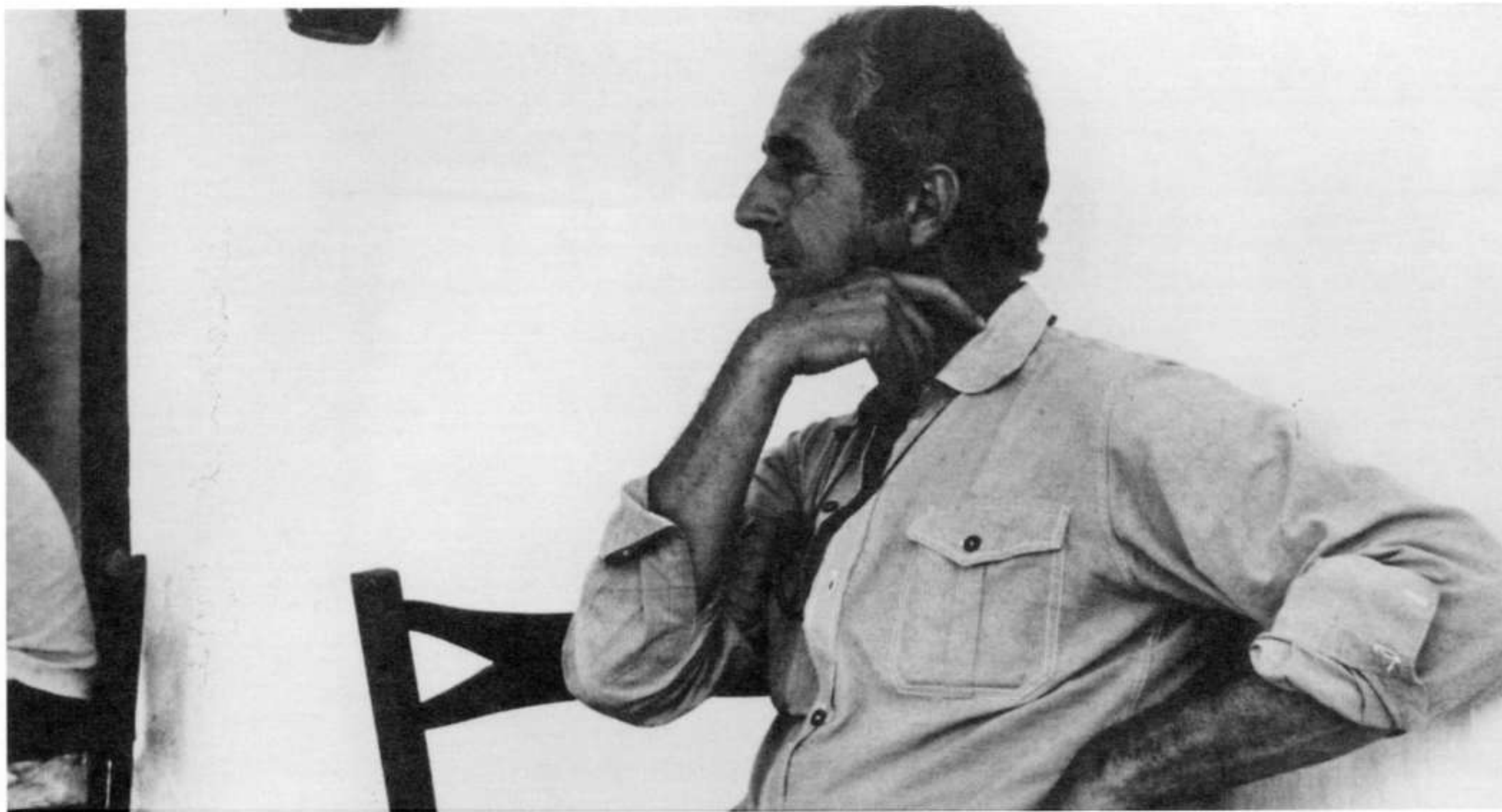


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Michelangelo Antonioni

Par-delà les nuages

Beyond the Clouds

Michelangelo Antonioni

FRANCE/ITALY/GERMANY, 1995

114 minutes ■ Colour/35mm

Production Company: **Sunshine/Cine B/France 3 Cinéma/Cecchi Gori Group Tiger Cinematografica/Road Movies Zweite Produktionen**
Executive Producer: **Danielle Gegauff-Rosencranz, Brigitte Faure, Pierre Roitfeld**

Producer: **Philippe Carcassonne, Stephane Tchal Gadjeff**

Screenplay: **Tonino Guerra, Michelangelo Antonioni, Wim Wenders**

Cinematographer: **Alfio Contini, Robby Muller**

Editor: **Claudio di Mauro, Michelangelo Antonioni, Peter Przygodda, Lucien Segura**

Production Designer: **Thierry Flamand**

Sound: **Jean-Pierre Ruh**

Music: **Lucio Dalla, Laurent Petitgand, Van Morrison, U2**

Principal Cast: **Fanny Ardant, Chiara Caselli, Irène Jacob, John Malkovich, Sophie Marceau, Vincent Perez, Jean Reno, Kim Rossi-Stuart, Inès Sastre, Peter Weller, Marcello Mastroianni, Jeanne Moreau**

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This is indeed a wonderful gift, a new film by Italian master Michelangelo Antonioni. Antonioni changed the face of contemporary cinema in countless ways, not the least of which was in letting character motivation remain ambiguous as he played with the nuances of emotion. He recognized that existence is never clear-cut, and that human beings have desires they cannot explain, passions they cannot articulate and opposing emotions that exist at the same exact moment.

It is now hard to remember what the cinema was before *L'avventura* changed its face and the way stories could be told. Through the past three decades every new film by Antonioni has been an event, but coming as it does after a long period of silence, his new *Par-delà les nuages* is more than that. The film is very personal, indeed autobiographical. Based on short stories that Antonioni wrote, *Par-delà les nuages* consists of four glimpses of human love in Italy and France, which together form a complete portrait of heterosexual desire, illusion, passion and carnal madness in the 20th century.

The stories are strange, complex, disturbing and told with the master's eye for detail and situating his characters in space. Sophie Marceau and John Malkovich appear in a story where madness beckons; Fanny Ardant and Peter Weller in an episode built around

the agony of a young woman dealing with the breakup of her marriage; Irène Jacob and Vincent Perez in a sequence that mixes carnal desire and platonic love; and another section probes into the notion of the sex act being a desecration of desire.

As always, Antonioni approaches his characters, and his actors, with extreme tenderness and lucidity, and the mark of his hand and heart is clear in every frame. He has drawn on the talents of the world's most accomplished film actors as his collaborators, including Marcello Mastroianni and Jeanne Moreau, both of whom worked with him in his earlier masterpieces. Aiding him in many ways, including writing the screenplay with Antonioni and Tonino Guerra and directing the film's prologue, epilogue and interludes, is Wim Wenders – a fond tribute from one cinematic master to another.

■ Piers Handling



Michelangelo Antonioni was born in Ferrara, Italy, in 1912. In the early forties, he collaborated on scripts and assisted directors such as Roberto Rossellini and Giuseppe de Santis, and directed his first feature, *Story of a Love Affair*, in 1950. He scored his first interna-

tional triumph with *L'avventura* (60). Filmography: *Story of a Love Affair* (50), *The Vanquished* (53), *Camille Without Camillas* (53), *Love in the City* (co-director) (53), *The Girl Friends* (55), *The Outcry* (57), *L'avventura* (60), *La notte* (61), *L'eclisse* (62), *Red Desert* (65), *I tre volti* (co-director) (64), *Blow-Up* (66), *Zabriskie Point* (70), *Chung Kuo* (72), *The Passenger* (75), *The Mystery of Oberwald* (80), *Identification of a Woman* (82), *Par-delà les nuages* (95).