

**ANTONIONI: CONFRONTING THE MODERN WORLD WITH STYLE**



**BFI SOUTHBANK, 1 JANUARY – 27 FEBRUARY 2019**

**Wednesday 12 December 2018, London.**

Arriving in London after a world tour, produced by Luce Cinecittà, **ANTONIONI: CONFRONTING THE MODERN WORLD WITH STYLE** will be a major season dedicated to the groundbreaking director **Michelangelo Antonioni**, running at **BFI Southbank** from **Tuesday 1 January – Sunday 24 February**. A former critic, Antonioni quickly established himself with a striking series of features notable for their visual elegance, narrative subtlety and fascination with people striving to find satisfaction in the modern world. This season offers audiences an opportunity to discover the work of this titan of European art-house cinema.

There will be screenings of acclaimed films such as *L'avventura* (1960), *L'eclisse* (1962), *Blow up* (1966), *Zabriskie Point* (1970) and *The Passenger* (1975), the latter of which will be re-released in selected cinemas by the BFI on **Friday 4 January**. A highlight of the extensive events programme will be a number of onstage appearances from actor and assistant director **Enrica Fico Antonioni**, the director's widow, who will introduce screenings of *Red Desert* (1964) and *Identification of a Woman* (1982) and take part in a Q&A following a screening of *Beyond the Clouds* (1995). She will also introduce a shorts programme of films from 1983-2004 many of which she collaborated on with Antonioni. During the season the BFI Shop will exclusively stock *My Antonioni*, a new publication featuring texts by Michelangelo Antonioni and edited by **Carlo Di Carlo**, who was a key collaborator and friend of the director.

The season will boast a rich and varied events programme that will allow audiences to explore Antonioni's work in a myriad of ways. *Michelangelo Antonioni: Chronicle of a Modernist's Career* will be an introductory talk from season curator Geoff Andrew, in which he discusses both Antonioni's steady development of what became a highly distinctive style of cinematic storytelling, and the themes which preoccupied him over the years. There will also be a screening of *Dear Antonioni* (Gianni Massironi, 1997) a documentary portrait of the director featuring a star-studded array of interviewees including David Hemmings, Jack Nicholson and Vanessa Redgrave, while film philosophers Lucy Bolton, William Brown and John Ó Maoilearca will explore *The Passenger* through a philosophical lens in our regular **PHILOSOPHICAL SCREENS** series. There will be a discussion event **Antonioni: The Plurality of Artistic Vision** in which guest speakers will examine how Antonioni's distinctive style was influenced by his interest in paintings, photography and visual culture more generally. A study day **Landscape and Architecture in the Cinema of Michelangelo Antonioni** will address how landscape and urban architecture became inseparable parts of Antonioni's cinema and how he engaged with them to represent the challenges of modern life. Those wishing to delve even deeper into the director's oeuvre will also be able to attend a six-session evening course *Remaking the Image: An Introduction to the Work of Michelangelo Antonioni*.

As well as screening all of Antonioni's features, the season will also offer audiences a rare chance to see his short films on the big screen. In January the shorts programme **Antonioni's Short Films 1947-65** will feature early documentaries such as *People of the Po Valley* (1947), *Seven Reeds, One Suit* (1948) and *The Funicular of Mount Faloria* (1950), which are the closest the director came to neo-realism. In February the **Shorts Programme 1983-2004** will feature landscapes, architecture and artworks in wordless documentaries *Return to Lisca Bianca* (1983), *Sicilia* (1997) and *Roma* (1989, from *12 Registi per 12 Città*, made for the 1990 World Cup).

The season, which will run chronologically, will open with Antonioni's first feature ***Chronicle of a Love Affair (aka Story of a Love Affair)*** (1950) in which a rich industrialist, provoked by groundless jealousy, hires a detective to investigate the past of the young woman he impulsively married several years earlier. Antonioni's interest in fragile relationships between restless, intelligent women and insecure men is evident by his second feature, ***The Lady Without Camelias*** (1953). Lucia Bosé excels as a shopgirl-turned-movie star whose idolising but possessive producer husband has plans for her career. His next film – ***The Vanquished*** (1953) – comprises three episodes set respectively in Paris, Rome and London and is inspired by real-life apparently motiveless murders perpetrated by young 'delinquents'. In ***Le amiche*** (1955), a young woman, back in Turin to open a fashion house, finds an unsuccessful suicide in an adjoining hotel room; the discovery leads to her taking up with a group of friends, and to one of Antonioni's most astute and darkly ironic explorations of different attitudes towards love, life and work. Focused on a working-class protagonist, ***Il grido*** (1957) follows a factory worker through an impoverished, wintry Po Valley after his lover suddenly ends their affair.

Antonioni's first collaboration with poet Tonino Guerra ***L'avventura*** (1960) extended his experiments with narrative: the sudden disappearance of a diplomat's daughter while holidaying with friends in the Aeolian Islands is less the start of a mystery than of a cool dissection of the relationship that develops between her lover and her best friend as they search for her. *L'avventura* was the first in a loose trilogy and was followed by ***La notte*** (1961), which follows the lives of a married couple over the course of an afternoon and a night and ***L'eclisse*** (1962) which follows Vittoria, who has just ended her relationship with an older man, and Piero a go-getting stockbroker who soon signals his interest in her. Antonioni's fourth consecutive film with Vitti ***Red Desert*** (1964) cast her as a woman so distraught at an increasingly industrialised world that she turns for sympathy to a business associate of her husband. Perhaps the most daringly stylised of all the director's films, it deploys a modernist score, expressionist colour and sound design, and striking shallow-focus compositions to suggest the protagonist's emotional and psychological turmoil.

Persuaded by producer Carlo Ponti to make English-language films abroad, Antonioni turned his focus to social change, moral uncertainty and personal disillusionment. His first film made outside Italy, ***Blow up*** (1966), chronicles 24 hours in the life of a London fashion photographer played by David Hemmings, seemingly interested only in the perks of his career until an encounter with a woman in a park introduces mystery – and perhaps meaning – into his life. It was followed by ***Zabriskie Point*** (1970), which looks at contemporary campus unrest and social division in America; a student suspected of shooting a cop takes flight by stealing a plane, and in the desert encounters a young woman travelling to an appointment with her wealthy boss. Antonioni appears less interested in politics than in the look of America – the signage, landscapes and rampant consumerism. Antonioni's final American film, ***The Passenger*** (1975) will be re-released by the BFI in selected cinemas on **Friday 4 January**; Jack Nicholson is excellent as a burnt-out political correspondent who impulsively exchanges identities with a businessman he finds dead in a North African hotel room. Suspense, intrigue, wit, ideas and visual beauty: this classic film has them all in spades.

Invited to film in China, Antonioni made ***China Chung Kuo – Cina*** (1972), a documentary triptych depicting daily life in Beijing, rural Henan and Suzhou, and Shanghai – only to incur the wrath of Mao. It is a fascinating work, happier to observe than comment, revelling in faces, places, architecture and movement. An intriguing experiment with new video technology of the time, ***The Oberwald Mystery*** (1980) is an adaptation of Cocteau's play *The Eagle Has Two Heads*; it features Monica Vitti as a widowed queen whose solitary mourning is interrupted when an anarchist poet takes refuge in her castle. In ***Identification of a Woman*** (1982) a recently divorced filmmaker is searching not only for a new lover but for the female protagonist of his next movie; Antonioni revisits themes and motifs from earlier films, but with fresh touches of irony. Completing the season will be ***Beyond the Clouds*** (1995), about a filmmaker (John Malkovich) who is considering material for his next film. *Beyond the Clouds*, which was Antonioni's last feature and was completed with the assistance of Wim Wenders, undoubtedly has moments of mysterious magic.

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**– ENDS –**

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### SEASON LISTINGS:

#### **Michelangelo Antonioni: Chronicle of a Modernist's Career**

*TRT 100min*

*Tickets £6.50*

**WED 9 JAN 18:10 NFT1**

#### **Chronicle of a Love Affair (aka Story of a Love Affair) Cronaca di un amore**

*Italy 1950. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Lucia Bosé, Massimo Girotti, Ferdinando Sarmi. 101min. Digital. EST. PG*

**WED 2 JAN 18:20 NFT1 / SUN 6 JAN 20:15 NFT3 / SAT 19 JAN 20:40 NFT2**

#### **The Lady Without Camelias La signora senza camellie**

*Italy 1953. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Lucia Bosé, Andrea Checchi, Gino Cervi, Alain Cuny. 102min. Digital. EST. PG*

**THU 3 JAN 18:30 NFT1 / SAT 12 JAN 20:30 NFT3**

#### **Antonioni's Short Films 1947-65**

*TRT c.111min. EST*

**SAT 5 JAN 20:30 NFT3 / FRI 18 JAN 18:10 NFT2**

#### **The Vanquished I vinti**

*Italy-France 1953. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Jean-Pierre Mocky, Franco Interlenghi, Anna Maria Ferrero, Patrick Barr. 110min. Digital. EST. Advised 18*

**SAT 5 JAN 17:45 NFT3 / SUN 20 JAN 20:15 NFT3**

#### **Le amiche The Girlfriends**

*Italy 1955. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Eleonora Rossi Drago, Valentina Cortese, Gabriele Ferzetti, Yvonne Furneaux. 103min. Digital. EST. PG*

**WED 9 JAN 20:40 NFT2 / WED 16 JAN 18:30 NFT2 / WED 23 JAN 18:20 NFT2 / SUN 27 JAN 20:20 NFT1**

#### **Il grido The Cry**

*Italy-USA 1957. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Steve Cochran, Alida Valli, Betsy Blair, Dorian Gray. 116min. Digital. EST. 12A*

**SUN 13 JAN 20:00 NFT2 / WED 16 JAN 20:45 NFT2 / SUN 20 JAN 17:50 NFT1**

#### **L'avventura The Adventure**

*Italy-France 1960. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Monica Vitti, Gabriele Ferzetti, Lea Massari. 138min. Digital. EST. PG*

**TUE 1 JAN 20:10 NFT3 / SAT 12 JAN 17:30 NFT1 / TUE 22 JAN 18:30 NFT1 / SUN 27 JAN 17:30 NFT1**

#### **La notte The Night**

*Italy-France 1961. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Jeanne Moreau, Marcello Mastroianni, Monica Vitti. 121min. Digital. EST. 12A*

**TUE 1 JAN 18:10 NFT1 / MON 7 JAN 18:15 NFT2 / FRI 25 JAN 20:45 NFT1 / MON 28 JAN 20:40 NFT1**

#### **L'eclisse The Eclipse**

*Italy-France 1962. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Monica Vitti, Alain Delon, Francisco Rabal. 126min. Digital. EST. PG*

**FRI 4 JAN 20:30 NFT2 / FRI 11 JAN 18:00 NFT1 / SAT 26 JAN 20:30 NFT2 / TUE 29 JAN 20:45 NFT1**

#### **The Passenger Professione: reporter**

*Italy-France-Spain 1975. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Jack Nicholson, Maria Schneider, Jenny Runacre, Ian Hendry. 126min. Digital. 12A. A BFI release*

**FROM FRI 4 JAN**

### **Philosophical Screens: The Passenger**

TRT 75min

Free to ticket-holders of *The Passenger* on Thu 17 Jan 17:50 NFT3, otherwise £6.50 (must be booked in advance due to capacity)

**THU 17 JAN 20:20 BLUE ROOM**

### **Free Seniors' Talk: Dear Antonioni + intro by BFI programmer David Somerset**

BBC 1997. Dir Gianni Massironi. 93min

Free for over-60s (booking by phone or in person only), otherwise normal matinee price

**MON 14 JAN, 11:00**

### **Remaking the Image: An Introduction to the Work of Michelangelo Antonioni**

Course fee £72, concs £60

**EVERY WED FROM 9 JAN-13 FEB 18:30-20:30**

### **Red Desert Il deserto rosso**

Italy-France 1964. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Monica Vitti, Richard Harris, Carlo Chionetti. 117min. Digital 4K. EST. 12A

**WED 6 FEB 20:40 NFT1 / SAT 9 FEB 20:40 NFT2 / SAT 16 FEB 18:00 NFT3\* / SAT 23 FEB 20:45 NFT1**

**\*Screening introduced by actor Enrica Fico Antonioni**

### **Blow up**

UK-Italy-USA 1966. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With David Hemmings, Vanessa Redgrave, Peter Bowles, Sarah Miles. 111min.

Format tbc. 15

**SUN 3 FEB 17:40 NFT1 / THU 7 FEB 20:45 NFT1 / SUN 10 FEB 20:05 NFT2**

### **Zabriskie Point**

USA 1970. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Mark Frechette, Daria Halprin, Rod Taylor. 114min. Digital. 15

**SAT 2 FEB 15:00 NFT2 / MON 4 FEB 20:40 NFT2 / WED 13 FEB 20:40 NFT3 / TUE 19 FEB 18:10 NFT1**

### **China Chung Kuo - Cina**

Italy-France 1972. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. 217min. Digital. EST. 12A

**SUN 3 FEB 13:10 NFT2 / SAT 9 FEB 13:40 NFT3**

### **The Passenger Professione: reporter**

Italy-France-Spain 1975. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Jack Nicholson, Maria Schneider, Jenny Runacre, Ian Hendry. 126min.

Digital. 12A

**FRI 8 FEB 20:30 NFT2 / FRI 15 FEB 20:30 NFT1 / SUN 24 FEB 17:15 NFT1**

### **The Oberwald Mystery Il mistero di Oberwald**

Italy-West Germany 1980. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Monica Vitti, Franco Branciaroli, Luigi Diberti. 128min. Format tbc.

EST

**SUN 17 FEB 19:50 NFT2 / FRI 22 FEB 18:10 NFT2**

### **Identification of a Woman Identificazione di una donna**

Italy-France 1982. Dir Michelangelo Antonioni. With Tomas Milian, Daniela Silverio, Christine Boisson, Marcel Bozzuffi. 130min.

Format tbc. EST. 18

**MON 18 FEB 18:00 NFT1\* / WED 20 FEB 20:30 NFT3**

**\*Screening introduced by actor Enrica Fico Antonioni**

### **Shorts Programme 2 (1983-2004)**

TRT c.106min

**SAT 9 FEB 18:10 NFT2 / SUN 17 FEB 17:30 NFT3\***

**\*Screening introduced by actor Enrica Fico Antonioni**

### **Beyond the Clouds Al di là delle nuvole**

France-Italy-Germany 1995. Dirs Michelangelo Antonioni, Wim Wenders. With John Malkovich, Sophie Marceau, Irène Jacob,

Peter Weller. 112min. Format tbc. EST. 18

**SUN 17 FEB 14:20 NFT3\* / THU 21 FEB 20:40 NFT2**

**\*Screening followed by Q&A with actor Enrica Fico Antonioni**

### **Antonioni: The Plurality of Artistic Vision**

RT 100mins

**MON 4 FEB 18:30 NFT2**

**Study Day: Landscape and Architecture in the Cinema of Michelangelo Antonioni**  
**SAT 16 FEB 12:00-17:00 NFT3**

**About the BFI**

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**BFI Reuben Library**

BFI Southbank is home to the BFI Reuben Library which holds the world's largest collection of books, journals and digitised material about film, television and the moving image. The library is free to access and hosts a year-round programme of talks and events.

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The BFI Reuben Library is open 10:30-19:00, Tuesday-Saturday.

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**\*\*\* PICTURE DESK \*\*\***

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