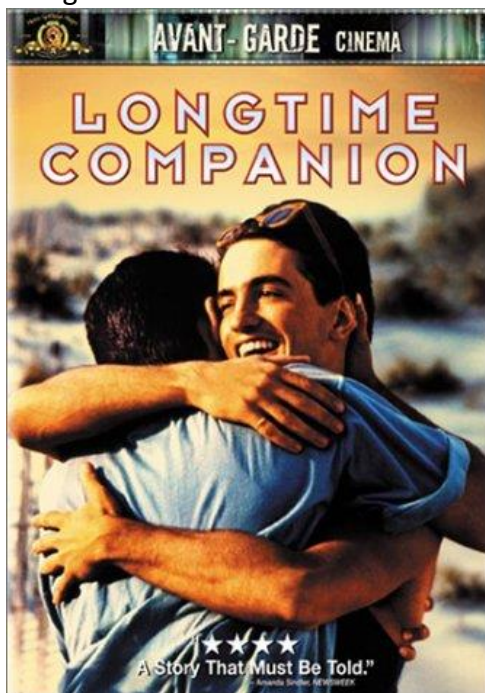


“Longtime Companion” was my first AIDS movie (I missed “An Early Frost”). I saw it together with Jit not long after it came out in 1989 in Pittsburgh. Obviously, a high-impact movie. I was completely blown away by the final scene in which those who have survived go to the beach and then meet all those who had died (which is why 3 of the 4 stills below are from that scene). The other reason I will remember this movie is how I learned that people deal very differently with grief. After seeing the final scene, there was no doubt in my mind that I *really* wanted to go to Pegasus and be in the middle of a dance floor filled with gay men and be under the influence of a bit alcohol. Jit on the other hand wanted to go home and cuddle and *really* did *not* want to go to Pegasus. The compromise was that we would do both. I am ashamed to say that I wouldn’t be surprised if I may have threatened to withhold the cuddling (I could be a real selfish prick at times). Anyway, Pegasus was a disaster; Jit didn’t want to dance and was just sulking in the dark. Cuddling happened, but consisted of two young men being physically touching and mentally not connecting at all.



Longtime Companion refers to the euphemism to describe a surviving same-sex lover when somebody had died of AIDS. It was used by the *New York Times* (at the time also known as “The New York Crimes” for its minimal coverage of the epidemic even though thousands were dying).