

CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

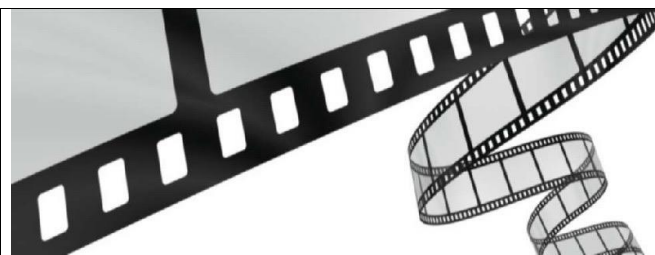
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MONSTER Tuesday 29 April 2025

Dir Hirokazu Kore-eda 2023 Japan 125 mins

Cast: Sakura Ando (Saori Mugino); Eito Nagayama (Michitoshi Hori); Soya Kurokawa (Minato); Hinata Hiigai (Yori); Mitsuki Takahata (Hirona); Akihiro Kakuta (Humiaki Shoda, vice-principle of school); Shido Nakamura (Kiyotaka, Yuri's father); Yuko Tanaka (Makiko Fushimi, school principal).

Monster had its world premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 2023, selected to compete for the Palme d'Or. It had a hugely positive critical response: "Gently devastating in its compassion [it is] a masterpiece of shifting perspectives that surprises to the end" was one appraisal. In a discussion with two critics Kore-eda said that he intended the ending to be one in which Minato and Yori choose life, directing it as a celebration of their being alive (after what happens in the tunnel). He said that he had anticipated that "about 20%" of the audience would interpret it as a depiction of an after-life, which he acknowledged was "undeniably" an underestimation and might have been "naive". What will our CFC audience make of it?

So this is a story about the developing relationship between two young boys, one which is misunderstood by the adults who care, and fail to care, for them. They are, in one sense, 'outsiders', a theme which Kore-eda has continuously explored in his films: the grief-stricken Yumiko in his 1995 breakthrough *Maborosi*, the down-on-his-luck private detective Ryota in 2016's *After the Storm* or the family of petty thieves in 2008's *Shoplifters*.

This is the last film in our 2024/25 season of 10. We hope you have enjoyed all that you have managed to watch. The programme was chosen by our Secretary (Booking) Daden Hunt, with suggestions from other members of the Committee. Daden has now stood down from the Committee after many years of supporting the club and we offer him our very great thanks and wish him well. Another programme is being planned for 2025/26, starting on Monday 29 September. At the beginning of *Monster* we will be holding another raffle. The last two have provided the licence fee for one of our films, a huge help for the club.