



The Main Feature

Season 45 – Issue 10 – Screening 12th February 2026

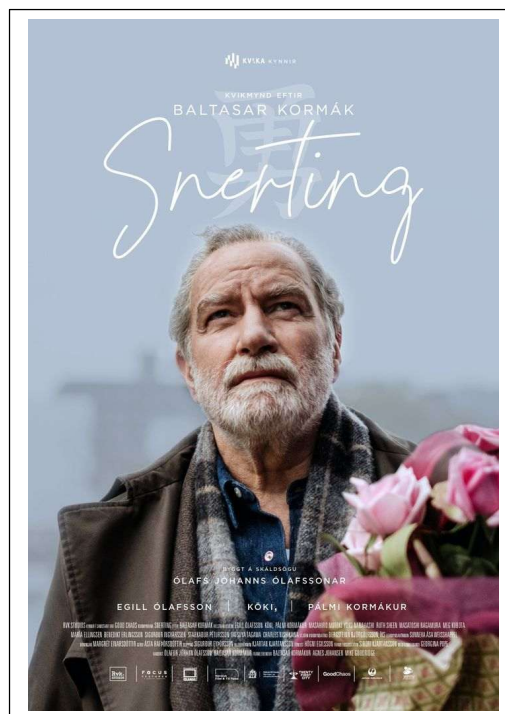
Touch (Snerting)

Iceland/Japan/UK/US 2024

121 mins

Certificate 15

Director	Baltasar Kormákur
Written By	Olaf Olafsso and Baltasar Kormákur
Photography	Bergsteinn Björgúlfsson
Art Director	Gunnar Pálsson
Music	Högni Egilsson
Egill Ólafsson	Kristófer
Yôko Narahashi	Miko
Palmi Kormákur	Young Kristófer (1969)
Kôki	Young Miko (1969)
Masahiro Motoki	Takahashi-san (Miko's Father)
Meg Kubota	Hitomi (Waitress)
Eiji Mihara	Dr. Kobayashi
Harpa Elísa Þórsdóttir	Sonja (Kristofer's daughter)
Ruth Sheen	Mrs. Ellis (London landlady)
Eugene Nomura	Akira



Our presentation this evening is a cross-cultural romantic drama, that flits between Iceland, London and Japan, and moves between the modern day and 1969.

The film opens early in 2020 in Iceland. Kristófer is an ageing widower, who still sings in a local choir and runs a neighbourhood restaurant. He is concerned by signs of physical and cognitive decline. His doctor arranges for a brain scan, gently advising him to “take care of unfinished business” whilst he still can. Kristófer is still haunted by a doomed affair over 50 years earlier and resolves to find his past love. Despite the rumblings of the Covid pandemic (and side-stepping his daughter’s increasingly frantic objections) he arranges to fly to London. The film flashbacks to his time there in 1969, when in his radical younger incarnation, he decides to drop out of his University course and impulsively becomes a dishwasher at a local Japanese restaurant. He works for the stern and conservative Takahashi-san, but is smitten by his daughter Miko, and begins an intense (but clandestine) affair. He starts to learn Japanese and shows considerable culinary aptitude (ingratiating himself with the restaurant staff and Takahashi in particular). The affair ends suddenly as - without warning - Takahashi moves back to Japan with Miko in tow. Kristófer never found out why. In the modern day, his London trip eventually unearths an address for Miko in Hiroshima and - skirting

the pandemic's restrictions – he flies to Japan to find her. He does find closure (no spoilers!).

The film is adapted from a novel by Olaf Olafsson (sadly not available in English) with the screenplay co-written by the director Baltasar Kormákur (previously best known for several small-scale Icelandic features as well as the hit 2015 Hollywood film “Everest”).

Critical and audience reaction was remarkably complimentary, with the Rotten Tomatoes aggregator website recording a 93% positive rating from film critics and a similar score from audiences. The film was a substantial hit in Iceland and France, and was much lauded in the US.

The New York Times noted that “its tender performances and gut-punch reveals are classic tear-jerker ingredients” with Variety concluding “this is a uniquely powerful, humane film about people rebounding from the rubble of devastating losses, choosing courage and love to overcome grief. And there’s nothing more touching than seeing that in action.” Though the film had a *very* truncated release in the UK, the Guardian praised “a love story, pure and simple and unashamedly emotional... delivering all the vicarious pleasure and pain that we’re looking for when we tuck into a good romance” awarding 4 stars out of 5.

The film was nominated for 13 Edda Awards (Iceland’s ‘Oscars’) and won 10, losing out to “When the Light Breaks” only for Best Film, Director and Supporting Actress but sweeping the board for all the other acting and technical categories.

Touch is gently paced, with well-drawn characters, though to be snippy it’s slightly improbable that flights and hotels would be so available as the pandemic raged. The young Miko (played by Kôki, mainly known in Japan as a model and songwriter) is caught between paternal conservatism and the “swinging sixties” culture in London, and is soft-spoken yet disarmingly frank. Young Kristófer (played by Palmi, the director’s son) is naïve but charmingly generous-hearted. His older version (Egill Ólafsson) is a driven but world-weary romantic.

I’ll end with a particularly appreciative lament from an IMDb reviewer

“Touch is an utterly superb, beautifully made film, which stands out on another level to anything else my wife and I have seen for years. Yet it has simply disappeared without trace from London cinemas. What on earth is going on? All I can say is that this is a truly remarkable film.”

We look forward to your own reactions!

Eugene Smith



We thank Red Eye for subsidising the cost of printing these notes. Red Eye Print, Unit 2D, Lansbury Estate, 102 Lower, GU21 2EP Tel: 01483 772111

Club website: www.wncc.org.uk. Prefer to leave your comments on the film and your score online rather than on paper? Email to reactions@wncc.org.uk by Wednesday 18th February
Discs of most of our previous shows are available to hire for a modest fee.

The Best Romantic Films of All Time

With Valentine's Day around the corner, what are the "best" romantic films? Here's Time Out's take. Films shown by the Club in previous years are **in bold**.

Falling in love is easy, but choosing the greatest films about love is a puzzle. That's why, to help us curate this list, we chatted to more than 100 filmmakers, actors and writers, including those from Time Out. Believe us when we say these are folks familiar with the language of amour. Who knows more about making hearts swell than Nicholas Sparks, author of *The Notebook*? Or Notting Hill screenwriter Richard Curtis? Shoot, we even asked the ultimate romantic, Miss Piggy. We're sure you'll find the following list of the [20] greatest romantic movies ever speaks to your own heart as well.



1	Brief Encounter	1945
2	Casablanca	1942
3	In the Mood for Love	2000
4	A Matter of Life and Death	1946
5	Annie Hall	1977
6	Harold and Maude	1971
7	Brokeback Mountain	2005
8	The Apartment	1960
9	Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind	2004
10	Punch Drunk Love	2002
11	Wall-e	2008
12	Gone with the Wind	1939
13	I Know Where I'm Going	1945
14	Letter from an Unknown Woman	1948
15	Call Me By Your Name	2017
16	Wild at Heart	1990
17	La Belle et la Bete	1946
18	True Romance	1993
19	Manhattan	1979
20	L'Atalante	1934

Full list (100 films!) is at

<https://www.timeout.com/film/the-100-best-romantic-movies>

Comments and reactions to: **Chevalier** (shown 22nd January 2026)
 No of reaction slips received = 25 Average score = 6.80

Score 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
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Position	Film	Score	Reactions
1	Mr. Burton	8.41	29
2	Conclave	8.15	34
3	Frantz	7.91	32
4	The Dressmaker	7.73	26
5	Perfect Days	7.34	29
6	Chevalier	6.80	25
7	Maria	6.16	25
8	Jimi - All is By My Side	4.77	26
9	A Christmas Tale/Conte de Noel	3.72	25

So sad that Chevalier's story has almost been wiped from history

We enjoyed the film and the music

Really enjoyed this film

An excellent choice for the club. Fascinating. Great music. A part of history worth exploring
 Interesting why it has English dialogue – should have been in French. A good story even so

An unusual film with its historical background – enjoyable

Thoroughly enjoyable

A little like the curate's egg. Perhaps would enjoy more on second viewing

Dramatic costume drama. Interesting story. Beautiful costumes, music and setting.

Thought provoking

Second half much better than the first. Interesting story. Music was moving. Worth watching to learn the history

Obviously a “grande” budget but the magic wasn't there. A heroic failure

The highpoint was the initial “violin off” with Mozart. Fascinating story

Why must modern swear words be used in period pieces? Immediately alarm bells ring

A sad, sad reflection that society has not changed in 125 years

A real rollercoaster of a film, luckily with an upbeat ending...

Our Next Film - 26th February – Thelma



On paper, Thelma may sound unbearably twee, the kind of film that relies heavily on old people saying the darnedest things to win laughs. But the film is buoyed by a consistently funny script, real pathos and stellar comic performances – Empire

The tone from the debut feature writer and director Josh Margolin is exquisitely well-judged, offsetting deeply felt melancholy with wry humour – The Times

Thelma is warm, accomplished and extremely witty - poking affectionate fun at the ageing process and proving you're never too old to get stuck into an adventure – The Radio Times