

# CHELMSFORD FILM CLUB

An Independent film society based in Chelmsford

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## **A War** (2015)

**Denmark**     **1 hr 55 mins**

**Director:**     **Tobias Lindholm**

**Writer:**       **Tobias Lindholm**

**Cast:**         **Pilou Asbaek, Alex Høgh Andersen, Tuva Novotny**



## **Reviews:**

**Mark Kermode, The Observer (from January 2016)**

“The issue is not what you have done, but what you do now...” Denmark’s entry for this year’s best foreign language film Oscar is a gripping and thought-provoking affair from writer-director [Tobias Lindholm](#) that counterposes battlefronts at home and abroad. We open with an arresting, *Kajaki*-style sequence in which a Danish patrol in Afghanistan suffers traumatising loss.

From here we cut to Denmark, where the family of [Pilou Asbæk](#)’s company commander Claus Michael Pedersen are awaiting his call. As the drama unfolds, moving inexorably from conflict zone to courtroom, we shift back and forth between the commander and his wife, Maria (Tuva Novotny), both of whom face potentially life-threatening situations involving the protection/endangerment of children and judgment calls made in haste.

With its handheld camerawork (by Magnus Nordenhof Jønck), sparse music cues and affectingly naturalistic performances, *A War* employs quasi-documentary “realism” to powerful effect. The combination of nail-biting tension and suffocating stillness that characterised [A Hijacking \(Kapringen\)](#) (from which key cast members return) inflects the life-and-death mundanity of the war-zone sequences, while later stages echo the communal paranoia of *The Hunt (Jagten)*, which Lindholm co-wrote with Thomas Vinterberg.

Ultimately, this is a film about guilt, grief and accountability, the chaos of war clashing with the sterility of an after-the-fact trial as the boundaries between blame and bravery are blurred beyond resolution. Novotny is terrific as the wife and mother struggling to hold her family together as her husband is hauled over the coals, and Lindholm’s juxtaposition of images of prone children, worlds apart, is both acute and alarming.”

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## **Club notices:**

### **Our last presentation: ‘Tale of Tales’**

There were 24 response slips returned after the showing of this film, the breakdown from these slips were as follows:

- ‘Excellent’: 4 votes
- ‘Very Good’: 13 votes
- ‘Good’: 3 votes
- ‘Satisfactory’: 2 votes
- ‘Poor’: 1 vote

Please visit the current season page at <http://www.chelmsford-filmclub.co.uk> to read all the feedback comments.

### **Our next presentation:**

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> June at 8pm – The Assassin**