

Spencer (film)

Spencer is a 2021 historical^{[8][9]} psychological drama film directed by Pablo Larraín from a screenplay by Steven Knight. The film is about Princess Diana's existential crisis during the Christmas of 1991, as she considers divorcing Prince Charles and leaving the British royal family. Kristen Stewart and Jack Farthing star as Diana and Charles respectively, Freddie Spry and Jack Neilen as Prince Harry and Prince William, respectively. Also starring Timothy Spall, Sean Harris, and Sally Hawkins.

Spencer premiered at the 78th Venice International Film Festival on 3 September 2021, and was theatrically released in the United Kingdom and the United States on 5 November 2021. The film grossed \$25.2 million worldwide on an \$18 million budget. It received generally positive reviews from critics, with Stewart's performance garnering widespread praise. For her performance as Diana, Stewart was nominated for the Academy Award, Golden Globe Award, and Critics' Choice Movie Award for Best Actress.

Plot

On Christmas Eve 1991, the British royal family prepares to spend the Christmas holidays at the Queen's Sandringham estate in Norfolk. Among the attendees is Diana, Princess of Wales, whose marriage to Prince Charles has become strained due to his relationship with Camilla Parker Bowles. The staff of Sandringham prepare for the royals' arrival and Diana is driving a small sportscar. Instead of driving with her security detail, she has decided to drive herself and has become lost, until running into Royal Head Chef Darren McGrady. She notes that the long-abandoned neighbouring estate, Park House, was her childhood home. Then she notices a scarecrow in the distance and eagerly runs towards it with a nostalgic expression. Diana takes off its jacket, which once belonged to her father John Spencer, 8th Earl Spencer, and goes back to her car.

When Diana arrives at Sandringham, her sons William and Harry are excited to see her, but she does not attempt to socialise with the rest of the royal family, who mostly ignore her. Diana's only friend at Sandringham is royal dresser Maggie, who encourages her to both combat the royal family and fulfil the

Spencer



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Pablo Larraín
Written by	Steven Knight
Produced by	Juan de Dios Larraín <div></div> Jonas Dornbach <div></div> Paul Webster <div></div> Pablo Larraín <div></div> Janine Jackowski <div></div> Maren Ade
Starring	Kristen Stewart <div></div> Timothy Spall <div></div> Jack Farthing <div></div> Sean Harris <div></div> Sally Hawkins <div></div> Freddie Spry
Cinematography	Claire Mathon
Edited by	Sebastián Sepúlveda ^[1]
Music by	Jonny Greenwood

obligations expected of her. Diana finds a book on Anne Boleyn in her bedroom. She begins to have dreams about Boleyn (including a hallucination of her at a Christmas Eve dinner where she imagines herself destroying a pearl necklace given to her by Charles and eating the pearls in her soup), eventually coming to believe that Boleyn's ghost is haunting her in her capacity as a fellow abandoned royal wife. Diana tries to visit her childhood home, but she is stopped by royal guards, who initially mistake her for an intruder.

On Christmas Day, Diana attends the service at St Mary Magdalene Church, Sandringham, where she notices Camilla among the gathered crowd and is photographed by numerous intrusive journalists. She holds a difficult conversation with Charles, who rebuffs her concern over William and Harry's participation in a pheasant shoot the next day and advises her to develop a stronger sense of separation between her public and private lives. Charles privately arranges for Maggie to be sent to London and spreads rumours that she had planted the Boleyn book in Diana's room and made critical comments about her mental health; McGrady denies that she had done so when Diana questions him.

Major Gregory attempts to encourage Diana to conform to the pressures of royal life by reminding her that the soldiers of the British Army die attempting to protect the interests of the Crown (and by extension her interests). Diana responds by stating that she never asked anyone to die for her and accuses him of planting the Boleyn book in her room as a warning, which he denies.

After imagining wounding herself with a pair of wire cutters given to her by McGrady, Diana avoids the formal Christmas Day dinner, instead running to her childhood home and gaining access to it with the wire cutters. Memories of her happier girlhood overtake her, and she dances from room to room while imagining her younger self. She considers committing suicide by throwing herself down a flight of stairs, but the hallucination of Boleyn stops her. Instead, she rips apart her pearl necklace.

On Boxing Day, Diana wakes up in her room to find that Maggie has been called back from London. The two travel to a nearby beach, where Diana talks about her mental and marital problems. Maggie responds by confessing that she is in love with Diana. After bidding Maggie farewell, Diana goes to the pheasant shoot, walks out in front of the crowd of hunters, and announces that she is taking William and Harry to London, to which Charles reluctantly agrees. Diana bids farewell to McGrady and Major Gregory returns the Boleyn book to the library. As they drive away, Diana and her children sing along to the song "All I

Production companies	Komplizen Film ^[2] Fabula ^[2] Shoebox Films ^[2] <u>FilmNation</u> <u>Entertainment</u>
Distributed by	<u>Neon</u> <u>Topic Studios</u> ^[3] (United States) <u>STXinternational</u> (United Kingdom) DCM Film Distribution (Germany) ^[4] Sun Distribution (Chile)
Release dates	3 September 2021 (<u>Venice</u>) 5 November 2021 (United Kingdom and United States)
Running time	117 minutes
Countries	United Kingdom United States Germany Chile
Language	English
Budget	\$18 million ^[5] ^[6]
Box office	\$25.2 million ^[7]

Need Is a Miracle" by Mike and the Mechanics, passing the scarecrow again, now dressed in one of Diana's outfits. They drive to London, where they order KFC and eat by the River Thames. Diana looks across the river, uncertain of her future but no longer feeling burdened by royal responsibility.

Cast

- Kristen Stewart as Diana, Princess of Wales (née Spencer)^[2]
 - Greta Bücken as late-teens Diana
 - Kimia Schmidt as nine-year-old Diana
- Timothy Spall as Equerry Major Alistair Gregory
- Jack Nielen as Prince William of Wales
- Freddie Spry as Prince Henry "Harry" of Wales
- Jack Farthing as Charles, Prince of Wales
- Sean Harris as Royal Head Chef Darren McGrady
- Sally Hawkins as Royal Dresser Maggie
- Stella Gonet as Queen Elizabeth II
- Richard Sammel as Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh
- Elizabeth Berrington as Anne, Princess Royal
- Amy Manson as Anne Boleyn
- James Harkness as Footman Paul
- John Keogh as Michael
- Ben Plunkett-Reynolds as Footman Brian
- Ryan Wichert as Staff Sergeant Wood
- Thomas Douglas as John Spencer, 8th Earl Spencer
- Emma Darwall-Smith as Camilla Parker Bowles
- Niklas Kohrt as Prince Andrew, Duke of York
- Olga Hellsing as Sarah, Duchess of York
- Mathias Wolkowski as Prince Edward
- Oriana Gordon as Lady Sarah Armstrong-Jones

Production

On 17 June 2020, it was announced that Pablo Larraín would direct *Spencer*, a film starring Kristen Stewart as Princess Diana.^[10] On 26 June 2020, it was reported that Neon and Topic Studios had acquired the rights to distribute the film in the United States for \$4 million in a bidding war that reportedly also included Searchlight Pictures, Universal Pictures and A24.^[3] In July 2020, STX Entertainment and DCM Film Distribution were set to distribute the film in the United Kingdom and Germany.^[4]

Filming

Filming began at the Schlosshotel Kronberg, Germany, in January 2021 with Timothy Spall, Sally Hawkins, and Sean Harris joining the cast.^{[11][12]} Other filming locations were the Schloss Marquardt in Marquardt, north of the city of Potsdam, and Nordkirchen Castle,^[13] the moated castle. During the fall of 2020, Larraín and Production Designer Guy Hendrix Dyas embarked on an intense scout in search of the perfect location. Sandringham Castle is a British institution set within the picturesque landscape of Norfolk. The fore mentioned Nordkirchen Castle was exactly what the script called for, grand and impressive, yet

isolated. "An Elegant prison" was the exact expression coined by Larraín and Dyas to convey the overall sentiment to the rest of the crew. Somewhere where you wouldn't necessarily enjoy spending Christmas, where you get the subtle feeling that underneath the festivities there's a real anguish and misery at play. On March 25, production moved to the UK for the final stretch of filming, with Jack Farthing joining the cast as Prince Charles, and the film wrapped on 27 April 2021.^[14]

The film was shot on both Kodak Super 16mm and 35mm film stock by cinematographer Claire Mathon using the Arricam LT, and Arriflex 416 Plus.^[15] To achieve the film's specific look, she used a combination of Leitz Summilux and Zeiss Ultra 16 lenses.

In an interview with Kodak, Mathon said that shooting on film was their obvious choice, calling it a "necessity" and that "there was never a question about shooting digital or film". According to her, the only question was whether they would shoot the film in 16mm or 35mm film stock. She also revealed that she and Larraín reviewed sequences from various Stanley Kubrick films such as *Barry Lyndon* (1975) and *A Clockwork Orange* (1971) to learn about the style of camera movement, rhythm of the shots, and the use of short focal lenses.

Most of the film was shot on Super 16mm film format due to the lightness, and ergonomics of the equipment used while also revealing that economic advantages is also part of the reason. In some scenes where they want to minimize the grain, they opted for the 35mm film stock as it retains both softness and details on the darker part of the image.^[16]

Film processing and 4K 16-bit scans were done at Hiventy in Paris, while the cameras was supported by Arri Rental in Berlin, Germany.

Music

Jonny Greenwood composed the score.^[17] The score was released by Mercury KX on 12 November 2021.^[18] Writing for the You Discover Music website, Sharon Kelly described the soundtrack, stating: "Jonny Greenwood's genre bending music for the *Spencer* soundtrack combines free jazz and classical baroque."^[19]

Release

Spencer had its world premiere in competition at the Venice International Film Festival.^[20] It then screened at film festivals in Telluride,^[21] Toronto,^[22] London,^[23] Philadelphia,^{[24][25]} San Diego^[26] and Zurich.^[27]



First AD Gregor Stitzl, Production Designer Guy Hendrix Dyas, Director Pablo Larraín and Cinematographer Claire Mathon on location at Hunstanton beach, Norfolk, U.K.

The film was theatrically released in the United Kingdom and the United States on 5 November 2021.^[28] It was the last film to be distributed by STX Entertainment in the United Kingdom before the distributor's UK division was shut down on July 28, 2022.^[29]

Reception

Box office

Spencer grossed more than \$7 million in the United States and Canada, and \$18.1 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$25.2 million.^[7]

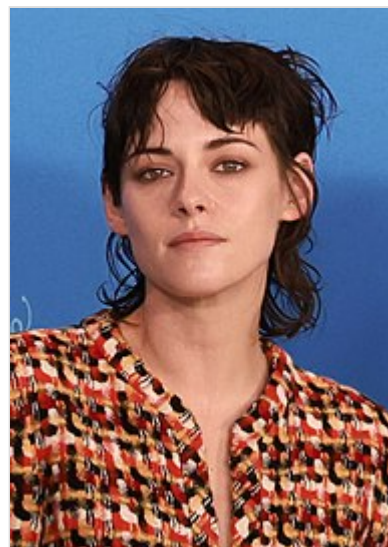
In the United States and Canada, *Spencer* made \$2.1 million from 996 theatres in its opening weekend.^[30] In its second weekend, the film played in 1,265 theatres and made \$1.53 million.^[31]

Critical response

Upon the teaser trailer's release, *Forbes* reported that the role "thrusts" Stewart "into the Oscar race" for the Academy Award for Best Actress.^[32] After the film's world premiere, *Variety* also stated, "There's already been plenty of talk in Venice that the role will likely land Stewart her first Oscar nomination." The film received a three-minute standing ovation at its world premiere,^[33] with critics lauding Stewart's performance as Diana.^[34]

On review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes, 83% of 351 critics have given the film a positive review, with an average rating of 7.6/10. The website's critics consensus reads: "*Spencer* can frustrate with its idiosyncratic depiction of its subject's life, but Kristen Stewart's finely modulated performance anchors the film's flights of fancy."^[35] On Metacritic, the film has a weighted average score of 76 out of 100, based on 53 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".^[36]

David Rooney of *The Hollywood Reporter* stated that the film "rests on Stewart's shoulders and she commits to the film's slightly bonkers excesses as much as to its moments of delicate illumination" and wrote that "[not] everything lands in *Spencer*, and I often wondered if the film was so set on bucking convention that it would alienate its audience. But it tells a sorrowful story we all think we know in a new and genuinely disturbing light."^[37] Reviewing the film for *The Daily Telegraph*, Robbie Collin wrote: "The 31-year-old Stewart – who will be instantly and justifiably awards-tipped for this – navigates this perilous terrain with total mastery, getting the voice and mannerisms just right but vamping everything up just a notch, in order to better lean into the film's melodramatic, paranoiac and absurdist swerves."^[38] Drawing comparisons between the film and the Jacqueline Kennedy biopic *Jackie* (2016), also directed by Larraín, Pete Hammond of *Deadline Hollywood* stated that "*Spencer* is something else indeed, almost playing out in a conventional dramatic fashion, a more accessible approach in some ways, but also more ambitious as it is squarely from the point of view of its title character, purposely called *Spencer* to assure us that the person who once was, is well on the way to finding that very lost spirit again before it is too late."^[39]



Stewart's performance as Princess Diana gained widespread praise, earning her a nomination for the Academy Award for Best Actress.

Spencer was listed on many critics' top ten lists for 2021.^[40]

Response of the Princess' staff

Stewart's portrayal of Diana was hailed as one of the most accurate portrayals of the late Princess. Ken Wharfe, Diana's former bodyguard, commented, "Out of all the people who have played Diana over the past 10 years, she's the closest to her. She managed to perfect her mannerisms." Former Royal Chef Darren McGrady, who was portrayed by actor Sean Harris in the film, said, "Kristen Stewart is amazing as the princess, with her mannerisms and her voice ... the happy scenes of her with the boys, it was like her

coming alive again. For real, Kristen Stewart played an amazing part."^[41]^[42] However, McGrady also pointed out that the film took considerable liberties, especially with its use of metaphors, but acknowledged that the film was a fictionalised take on what possibly could have happened.^[42]

Accolades

Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Recipient(s)	Result	Ref(s)
<u>AACTA International Awards</u>	<u>26 January 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[43]
		<u>Best Supporting Actress</u>	<u>Sally Hawkins</u>	Nominated	
<u>Academy Awards</u>	<u>27 March 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	<u>Kristen Stewart</u>	Nominated	^[44]
<u>Alliance of Women Film Journalists Awards</u>	<u>25 January 2022</u>	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[45]
<u>Austin Film Critics Association</u>	<u>11 January 2022</u>	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[46]
		Best Original Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Boston Society of Film Critics Awards</u>	<u>12 December 2021</u>	Best Original Score	Jonny Greenwood	Won	^[47]
<u>Chicago Film Critics Association Awards</u>	<u>15 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	^[48]
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
		Best Costume Design	<u>Jacqueline Durran</u>	Won	
<u>Critics' Choice Movie Awards</u>	<u>13 March 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[49]
		<u>Best Score</u>	<u>Jonny Greenwood</u>	Nominated	
<u>Dallas–Fort Worth Film Critics Association</u>	<u>20 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	^[50]
<u>Denver Film Critics Society</u>	<u>17 January 2022</u>	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Won	^[51]
		Best Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Detroit Film Critics Society</u>	<u>6 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[52]
<u>Dorian Awards</u>	<u>17 March 2022</u>	Best Lead Film Performance	Kristen Stewart	Won	^[53]
		Best Film Music	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Dublin Film Critics' Circle</u>	<u>21 December 2021</u>	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Runner-up	^[54]
		Best Cinematography	Claire Mathon	4th place	
<u>Florida Film Critics Circle</u>	<u>22 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[55]
		<u>Best Cinematography</u>	Claire Mathon	Runner-up	
<u>Georgia Film Critics Association</u>	<u>14 January 2022</u>	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	^[56]
		Best Original Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	

<u>Gold Derby Film Awards</u>	16 March 2022	Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Won	[57]
		Best Cinematography	Claire Mathon	Nominated	
		Best Costume Design	Jacqueline Durran	Nominated	
		Best Make Up and hair	Wakana Yoshihara, Sian Wilson, Stacey Panepinto, Nicola Isles	Nominated	
		Best Original Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Golden Globe Awards</u>	9 January 2022	Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama	<u>Kristen Stewart</u>	Nominated	[58]
<u>Hamilton Behind the Camera Awards</u>	13 November 2021	Director Award	Pablo Larrain	Won	[59]
<u>Hollywood Critics Association</u>	28 February 2022	Best Picture	<i>Spencer</i>	Nominated	[60]
		Best Director	Pablo Larraín	Nominated	
		Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Won	
		Best Costume Design	Jacqueline Durran	Nominated	
		Best Original Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
		Best Cinematography	Claire Mathon	Nominated	
		Best Production Design	Guy Hendrix Dyas and Yesim Zolan	Nominated	
		Best Indie Film	<i>Spencer</i>	Nominated	
<u>Houston Film Critics Society Awards</u>	19 January 2022	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	[61]
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>International Cinephile Society</u>	6 February 2022	Best Picture	<i>Spencer</i>	18th place	[62]
		Best Actress	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	
		Best Cinematography	Claire Mathon	Nominated	
		Best Score	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>London Film Critics Circle</u>	6 February 2022	<u>Actress of the Year</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	[63]
<u>Los Angeles Film Critics Association Awards</u>	18 December 2021	<u>Best Music</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Runner-up	[64]
<u>National Film Awards UK</u>	4 July 2022	Best Newcomer (for Spencer)	Freddie Spry	Nominated	[65]
<u>Online Film Critics Society Awards</u>	24 January 2022	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	[66]
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
		Best Costume Design	<i>Spencer</i>	Nominated	
<u>Palm Springs International Film Festival</u>	6 January 2022	Spotlight Award - Actress	Kristen Stewart	Won	[67]
<u>San Diego Film Critics Society</u>	10 January 2021	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	[68]

<u>San Francisco Bay Area Film Critics Circle</u>	<u>10 January 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Nominated	[69]
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Satellite Awards</u>	<u>2 April 2022</u>	<u>Best Motion Picture – Drama</u>	<i>Spencer</i>	Nominated	[70]
		<u>Best Actress in a Motion Picture – Drama</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	
		<u>Best Art Direction and Production Design</u>	Guy Hendrix Dyas and Yesim Zolan	Nominated	
		<u>Best Costume Design</u>	Jacqueline Durran	Nominated	
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Seattle Film Critics Society</u>	<u>17 January 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress in a Leading Role</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	[71]
		<u>Best Costume Design</u>	Jacqueline Durran	Nominated	
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Southeastern Film Critics Association</u>	<u>13 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	[72]
<u>St. Louis Gateway Film Critics Association Awards</u>	<u>19 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	[73]
		<u>Best Music Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
		<u>Best Costume Design</u>	Jacqueline Durran	Runner-up	
<u>Toronto Film Critics Association</u>	<u>16 January 2022</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Runner-up	[74]
<u>Venice International Film Festival</u>	<u>11 September 2021</u>	<u>Golden Lion</u>	<u>Pablo Larraín</u>	Nominated	[20]
<u>Washington D.C. Area Film Critics Association</u>	<u>6 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	[75]
		<u>Best Score</u>	Jonny Greenwood	Nominated	
<u>Women Film Critics Circle</u>	<u>13 December 2021</u>	<u>Best Actress</u>	Kristen Stewart	Won	[76]

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