

# Really Love (film)

**Really Love** is a 2020 American <u>romantic drama</u> film directed by Angel Kristi Williams and co-written with <u>Felicia Pride</u>. The film is set in Washington, D.C., and centers the romance between a struggling artist (<u>Kofi Siriboe</u>) and an ambitious law student (Yootha Wong-Loi-Sing). *Really Love* debuted in October 2020 at <u>AFI Film Festival</u>. It received mainly positive critical reception and leads Wong-Loi-Sing and Siriboe received a Special Jury Recognition for Acting at South by Southwest.

#### **Plot**

"Set in a gentrifying <u>Washington</u>, <u>D.C.</u>, a rising Black painter tries to break into a competitive art world, while balancing a whirlwind romance he never expected." [1]

#### Cast

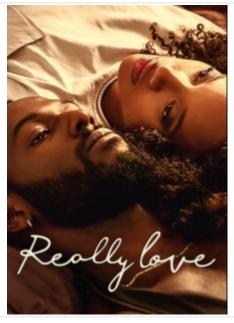
- Kofi Siriboe as Isaiah Maxwell, a struggling artist
- Yootha Wong-Loi-Sing as Stevie Richmond, an ambitious law student
- Blair Underwood as Jerome Richmond, Stevie's Father
- Uzo Aduba as Chenai Hungwe
- Mack Wilds as Nick Wright, Isaiah's friend since childhood
- Naturi Naughton as Sicily Richmond, Stevie's cousin
- Suzzanne Douglas as Anne Richmond, Stevie's mother
- Michael Ealy as Yusef Davis, Isaiah's colleague
- Jade Eshete as Mecca Gerima
- GoldLink as himself

## **Production**

*Really Love* is director Angel Kristi Williams' feature film debut and <u>Felicia Pride</u>'s debut screenplay. The two met through a mutual friend, after which Pride showed Williams the *Really Love* screenplay and invited her to direct the project. [3]

Williams stated that she was inspired by films including <u>In the Mood For Love</u>, <u>Blue Valentine</u>, and <u>Love Jones</u>. [4] The production designer was Nathan Parker and the cinematographer was Shawn Peters. [4][5] It was produced and financed by

#### Really Love



1961	
Directed by	Angel Kristi Williams
Written by	Felicia Pride Angel Kristi Williams
Screenplay by	Felicia Pride
Produced by	Mel Jones Charles D. King Kim Roth Aaliyah Williams Angel Kristi Williams
Starring	Kofi Siriboe Yootha Wong- Loi-Sing Uzo Aduba Mack Wilds Naturi Naughton Suzzanne Douglas Jade Eshete Blair Underwood
	Michael Ealy

Homegrown Pictures and Charles D. King's production company MACRO. [4] The artwork done by Isaiah in the film was created by artists Gerald Lovell, Chanel Compton, and Ronald Jackson. [5][3]

On July 8, 2018 it was announced that <u>Kofi Siriboe</u> was cast in a lead role in the film. <u>[6]</u> <u>Uzo Aduba, Naturi Naughton, Tristan Wilds, Yootha Wong-Loi-Sing, and <u>Jade Eshete</u> were announced as cast members on July 26, 2018. <u>[7]</u> <u>Michael Ealy</u> was announced on July 31, 2018. <u>[8]</u> The film is one of the last projects completed by Suzzanne Douglas prior to her death in 2021. <u>[3]</u></u>

The film was shot beginning in July 2018 on-location in Washington, D.C., as well as in Baltimore, Williams' hometown. [6] Shooting locations included the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Baltimore School for the Arts, the Parkway Theatre, Dovecote Cafe, and Williams' grandmother's home in Park Heights. [5]

Edited by	Steven Pristin Brian Ufberg
Music by	Khari Mateen
Production companies	MACRO Homegrown Productions
Distributed by	Netflix
Release dates	October 15, 2020 ( <u>AFI</u> Film Festival)
	August 25, 2021 (Netflix)
Running time	95 minutes
Country	American
Language	English

### Release

The film was originally set to premiere at <u>South by Southwest</u> in March 2020. However, after the festival was cancelled due to the <u>COVID-19 pandemic</u>, it debuted at <u>AFI</u>'s virtual film festival in October 2020. [4] *Really Love* began streaming on Netflix on August 25, 2021. [9][10]

## Soundtrack

The official soundtrack with an original jazz score composed by Khari Mateen was released on September 17, 2021. Screenwriter Felicia Pride said the soundtrack's ambiance was influenced by tracks like "Sumthin Sumthin (Mellosmoothe)" by Maxwell from the film Love Jones. 11 Ari Lennox, Kamasi Washington, Christian Scott aTunde Adjuah, and others appear in Really Love.

# Reception

*Really Love* received positive reception. On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 86% of 7 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.8/10.

In a review for  $\underline{Film\ Threat}$ , Alex Saveliev compared the film to  $\underline{If\ Beale\ Street\ Could\ Talk}$  and praised it as a "gentle, poignant examination of two young people at the dawn of self-discovery". In a similarly positive review, Robert Daniels wrote for  $\underline{The\ Playlist}$ , ""Really Love" is a timeless black romance. Kristi Williams is an assured new voice already nestling herself inside audiences' hearts." In a similarly large transfer of the playlist, "Really Love" is a timeless black romance. Kristi Williams is an assured new voice already nestling herself inside audiences' hearts.

## Awards and nominations

#### **2020 SXSW**

- Nominee, Grand Jury Award for Narrative Feature Angel Kristi Williams<sup>[14]</sup>
- Winners, Special Jury Recognition for Acting Yootha Wong-Loi-Sing and Kofi Siriboe<sup>[15]</sup>

## References

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# **External links**

- Really Love (https://www.netflix.com/title/81397545) on Netflix
- Really Love (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt8722624/) at IMDb

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