

# A United Kingdom



USA | 2016 | 100 mins | Cert PG

Director: Amma Asante      Screenplay: Guy Hibbert

Cast: David Oyelowo, Rosamund Pike, Tom Felton, Jack Davenport,  
Laura Carmichael, Terry Pheto

## SYNOPSIS

A United Kingdom tells the inspiring true story of Seretse Khama, the King of Bechuanaland (modern Botswana), and Ruth Williams, the London office worker he married in 1948 in the face of fierce opposition from their families and the British and South African governments. Seretse and Ruth defied family, Apartheid and empire - their love triumphed over every obstacle flung in their path and in so doing they transformed their nation and inspired the world.

## REVIEW

As a female British film-maker of Ghanaian heritage, the director Amma Asante broke several glass ceilings when her third feature, A United Kingdom, opened the London film festival in October 2016.

With terrific warmth and idealism – and irresistible storytelling relish – director Amma Asante gives us a romantic true story from our dowdy postwar past. And with some style and wit, she even revives the spirit and showmanship of Richard Attenborough, who I think would have really enjoyed this gutsy movie. It's a tale of star-crossed lovers with the bigoted British government playing a particularly shabby and nasty House of Capulet: a story of imperialism, bully-ism, and Westminster functionaries passing off their taboo horror of interracial marrying as a matter of realism and political expediency.

With screenwriter Guy Hibbert, Asante has recovered a long-forgotten chapter of Britain's history which deserves an airing. And Rosamund Pike and David Oyelowo give beguiling performances as a white woman and black African man who fall in love. There's an openness and ingenuous quality to the two leads which is never slushy. And given that we are elsewhere entitled to suspect de facto apartheid in Hollywood, when it comes to the issue of casting romantic leads, Asante, Pike and Oyelowo make it look easy and necessary.

*Guardian September 2016*

Based on book "Colour Bar" by Susan Williams

## Awards and Nominations

- British Independent Film Awards 2016. Terry Pheto nominated for Best Supporting Actress
- London Critics Circle Film Awards 2017. Nominations: David Oyelowo for British/Irish Actor of the Year and Guy Hibbert for Breakthrough British/Irish Filmmaker of the Year



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Famous left-wing politician Tony Benn appears as a character in this film. In real life he fought very hard for Seretse's liberation and became a very close friend of his, but they had to limit his screen time to focus more on Seretse and Ruth's relationship.
- The house used as Ruth & Seretse's home in the film was the home of the real Ruth & Seretse.
- A book on this event entitled "A Marriage of Inconvenience" was written by Michael Duffield and subtitled "The Persecution of Seretse and Ruth Khama". The book was made into a TV film of the same title in 1990.

## COMING UP NEXT...

Friday 27th October @ 7:45pm

## HIDDEN FIGURES

The story of a team of female African-American mathematicians who played a vital role in NASA during the early years of the U.S. space program.

*Cert PG, 127 mins*

[www.highworthfilms.org.uk](http://www.highworthfilms.org.uk)