

A Tête-à-Tête with the talented actress Gugu Mbatha-Raw

Written by Kam Williams

Wednesday, 30 December 2015 00:00



Born in Oxford in the United Kingdom, [Gugu Mbatha-Raw](#) trained at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. Her first professional role was in an Open Air production of Shakespeare's "As You Like It" as Celia. Following this, she landed roles at Manchester's Royal Exchange Theatre, where she performed in "Antony and Cleopatra" and the title role of Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet," opposite Andrew Garfield, for which she was nominated for the *Manchester Evening News Award* for Best Actress in 2005.

Gugu Mbatha-Raw's other stage credits include the critically-acclaimed "Big White Fog" at the Almeida Theatre and David Hare's "Gethsemane," a production at the National Theatre that later toured the UK. She made her West End debut as Ophelia in "Hamlet" opposite Jude Law.

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Her British television credits include “M15/Spooks,” “Dr. Who,” “Marple – Ordeal by Innocence,” “Bonekickers,” and “Fallout.” She subsequently starred as Samantha Bloom in the JJ Abrams NBC series “Undercovers,” for which she was nominated for an *NAACP award* for best actress in a television series.

In 2011, she landed her breakout big screen role in *Larry Crowne*, directed by Tom Hanks and co-starring Julia Roberts. More recently, she played the title character in Fox Searchlight’s highly-acclaimed period drama

Belle

, alongside Tom Wilkinson, Emily Watson, Miranda Richardson, Sam Reid and Matthew Goode.

Gugu Mbatha-Raw next starred alongside Minnie Driver, Nate Parker and Danny Glover in *Beyond the Lights*

, a love story set in the music world. In February of 2015, she was seen in Andy and Lana Wachowski’s

Jupiter Ascending

, starring Channing Tatum, Mila Kunis and Eddie Redmayne. And she is set to co-star opposite Matthew McConaughey in

The Free State of Jones

, a Civil War action-drama written and directed by Gary Ross which be released next May.

Here, Gugu Mbatha-Raw talks about her latest role playing [Will Smith](#) 's wife in [Concussion](#) , a drama about the National Football League's attempt to discredit

[Dr. Omalu](#)

,
[the pathologist](#)

whose research uncovered the link between hits to the head and the early onset of a host of neurological disorders in football players.

[Our website is the first Canadian online magazine that posted this interview]

Kam Williams: Hi, Gugu [Mbatha-Raw]. I'm delighted to have another opportunity to speak with you.

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Gugu Mbatha-Raw: Sure! How have you been, Kam [Williams]?

KW: I really enjoyed *Concussion*, including your performance. How did you enjoy making the film?

GMR: Oh, it was a really great experience. [Writer/director] Peter Landesman was so passionate about the movie and about Bennet's [Dr. Bennet Omalu] story. And having an opportunity to work with Will Smith was huge, obviously. I was also excited about transforming in this role. And it was fun working in Pittsburgh, the home of the Steelers, since I'd never been there before. And I found the city and its history quite fascinating.

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