

JAMES IVORY

b. June 7, 1928

OSCAR-WINNING FILMMAKER

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Academy Award
for Best Adapted
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Me by Your Name.”**

James Ivory is an award-winning film director, producer and screenwriter. Along with film producer Ismail Merchant, his life partner, he founded the highly successful movie-making enterprise Merchant Ivory Productions. Ivory won the Academy Award for “Call Me by Your Name” (2017), a gay coming-of-age romantic drama set in 1980s Italy.

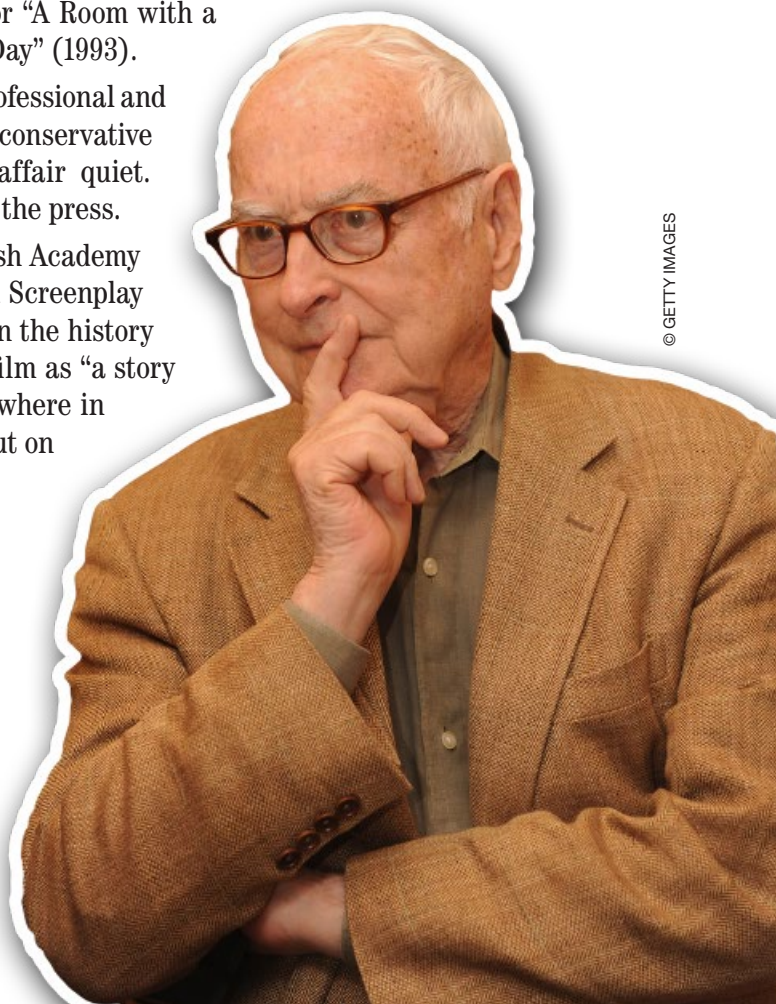
Ivory was born in Berkeley, California. He studied fine arts at the University of Oregon before attending the USC School for Cinematic Arts. The documentary he created for his master’s thesis, “Venice: Theme and Variations,” was selected by The New York Times as one of the 10 best nontheatrical films of the year.

In 1959 Ivory met Ismail Merchant at a film screening in New York. The two fell in love, and in 1961 they founded Merchant Ivory Productions. Though they initially intended to make English language films in India for the international market, they made many films set in England and the United States. For the most part, Ivory directed and Merchant produced the company’s 44 movies.

Best known for their intelligent themes and superb casting, Merchant Ivory films have garnered countless nominations and awards in the United States and Europe. The company’s most iconic pictures are based on literary works dealing with social issues. “Maurice” (1987), directed by Ivory, was one of the first movies to affirmatively depict gay relationships and became a life-changing film for many young gay men in the ’80s and ’90s. Ivory received the Academy Award nomination for Best Director for “A Room with a View” (1985), “Howards End” (1992) and “The Remains of the Day” (1993).

Until Merchant’s death in 2015, Ivory and Merchant shared a professional and romantic relationship. Because Merchant came from a deeply conservative Indian Muslim family, the couple kept their 44-year love affair quiet. References to their personal life were made only discreetly by the press.

In 2018 at age 89, Ivory won the Academy Award and the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Award for Best Adapted Screenplay for “Call Me by Your Name,” making him the oldest recipient in the history of either award. In his acceptance speech, he described the film as “a story familiar to most of us; whether we’re straight or gay, or somewhere in between, we’ve all gone through first love, I hope, and come out on the other side mostly intact.”



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