



DREAMY ARMIE



THE HOTTEST GAY ROMANCE THIS SUMMER, UNFORTUNATELY, WON'T BE YOURS! AND YOU'LL PROBABLY AGREE ONCE YOU'VE SEEN ARMIE HAMMER IN *CALL ME BY YOUR NAME*. MATTHEW MYERS EXPLAINS HOW THIS RISING STAR HAS REACHED A-LIST STATUS VIA A COMPELLING GAY ROLE.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, with a short stint in the Cayman Islands, Armie Hammer dropped out of high school to study acting, much to his parents' disapproval. After seeing *Home Alone* back in 1990, young Hammer decided to enter the acting profession because "making movies looked fun".

He landed his first appearances on television shows *Arrested Development* and *Desperate Housewives*. But it was when he played Christian evangelist Billy Graham in the 2008 movie *Billy: The Early Years* that his reputation began to grow. A Christian media group was so impressed with Hammer's portrayal they nominated him for a Faith And Values Award.

Hammer's career looked set to lift off when

director George Miller chose him to star as Bruce Wayne/Batman in *Justice League: Mortal*. Sadly, that film never went into production. Hammer's next big opportunity came playing identical twins Cameron and Tyler Winklevoss (with the help of CGI) in the 2010 Mark Zuckerberg biopic *The Social Network*. That film's success raised his profile worldwide.

Along with acting talent, Hammer is, at 195cm tall, also blessed with great looks. He's been described as "cartoonishly handsome" and "so good looking it is almost laughable - blond, sportily built, with perfect American teeth."

In 2011, Clint Eastwood cast him in *J Edgar* with Leonardo DiCaprio and the following year he played Prince Alcott alongside Julia Roberts in the comedy drama *Mirror Mirror*. He then donned the black mask as the lead in *The Lone Ranger* partnering Johnny Depp, and in 2015 joined Superman himself, Henry Cavill, in Guy Ritchie's *The Man From U.N.C.L.E.*

His growing presence in pop-culture consciousness brought him a guest spot on *The Simpsons*, where he reprised his role as the Winklevoss twins.

But it's *Call Me By Your Name* that has attracted Hammer's best reviews to date and there's even Oscar buzz. A gay summer love story, critics are raving. The film was released in the UK in October and is set for release in Australia and the USA on Boxing Day 2017. Surprisingly, in a post-Kevin Spacey world, the film has attracted very little criticism around the fact that Hammer's character, Oliver is 24 while his romantic interest Elio (played by Timothée Chalamet) is only 17.

Actor James Woods posted a snarky tweet: "As they quietly chip away the last barriers of decency. #NAMBLA." The hashtag refers to the paedophile advocacy group the North American Man/Boy Love Association. But Hammer shot back with: "Didn't you date a 19-year-old when you were 60...?" exposing Wood's hypocrisy and the common Hollywood trope of older men with younger women.

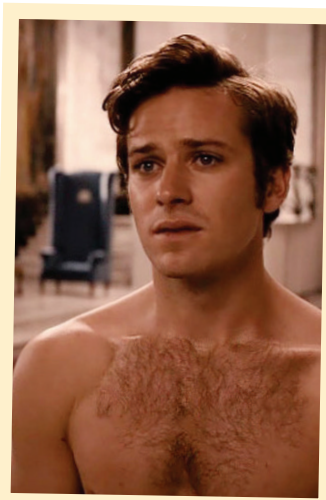
Woods' snipe is emblematic of an older generation of Hollywood star, hung up on outdated ideas of masculinity. A younger generation of movie devotees, however, have embraced the film and rewarded it with a typically quirky millennial tribute: bloggers took to re-dubbing a clip of Hammer's goofy dance (originally to the Psychedelic Furs' *Love My Way* in the film) with various music grabs from Rihanna and Taylor Swift. It became an internet sensation.

While previous criticisms of Hammer's acting have branded him "preppy", and *The Lone Ranger* was both a critical and commercial flop, his willingness to take on challenging, even controversial roles, is impressing Hollywood directors and producers. But *Call Me By Your Name* is not Hammer's first gay role. His character, Clyde Tolson in *J Edgar*, and James Lord in the recently released *Final Portrait* are also both gay.

His risk-taking and the acclaim for *Call Me By Your Name* has propelled Hammer to the top of the



ARMIE PLAYS GAY...
CALL ME BY YOUR NAME, J EDGAR
WITH LEONARDO DICAPRIO, AND
THE FINAL PORTRAIT.



LEADING MAN
(ABOVE) THE LONE RANGER AND
MIRROR MIRROR. (LEFT) THE MAN FROM
U.N.C.L.E. WITH HENRY CAVILL.

leading man heap, beating out rivals Chris Pratt and Channing Tatum in recent industry polls.

In his personal life, Hammer is married to actress Elizabeth Chambers (*2 Broke Girls*), and the couple have a three-year-old daughter and newborn son. In a *Playboy* interview he spoke candidly about his sex life, even admitting he'd kept one of *The Lone Ranger* masks, but he drew the line at playing Christian Grey in *Fifty Shades Of Grey*, citing it as "mommy porn".

"I'm not going to sit on top of the laundry machine in spin cycle reading about putting a ball gag in someone's mouth. That doesn't do it for me," he said.

What does it for him is taking on roles that are challenging and that bring integrity and creativity to what he's described as the "uncomfortable art" of acting.

Releasing in 2018, Hammer stars in *Hotel Mumbai* alongside Jason Isaacs. The film depicts the terrifying real-life drama of the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008. Shot in Australia last year, Hammer celebrated his 30th birthday with family in Adelaide's vineyard district, The Barossa Valley.

When Barry Jenkins' *Moonlight* (eventually) won the Best Picture Oscar at the 2017 Academy Awards, it was assumed it'd be a long time before another gay themed film was rewarded with a serious trophy. *Call Me By Your Name* may be the film to prove the pundits wrong. It joins a strong selection of gay films from the last 12 months including Francis Lee's *God's Own Country* and John Trengove's *The Wound*. Both Arnie Hammer and Timothée Chalamet could find themselves nominated in the Acting categories. Sadly, that probably means Mr Hammer won't be up for any Faith And Values Award next year!

MORE: Read our review of *Call My By Your Name* over the page.