

# Ava DuVernay

When it comes to career changes, the Oscar-nominated director says embrace the small steps.

Ava's next film, *A Wrinkle in Time*, is based off Madeleine L'Engle's beloved novel.

Before I directed my first short film at 32, I worked in publicity and was on a lot of movie sets. That was a privilege a lot of directors don't have—the opportunity to watch other directors direct—and I learned about different kinds of film and styles of directing. When I started to play with directing, I kept my day job until I could figure out if it was something I could support myself doing. The week after I won best director at Sundance with my fourth film, *Middle of Nowhere*, I quit publicity. Most people feel like you have to make a career change in one fell swoop, but my advice is to embrace the progression. If it's something you're creating or producing, there's room for overlap.

## OUTTAKES

### SHAPESHIFTER

I don't have a preferred genre or form. I like to move between narrative films and documentary films, commercial projects and independent projects. That's part of the creative process for me. It's more about the story than the genre.

### CREATIVE MUSINGS

The work of other artists—museum exhibits or films—inspires me. I love to watch foreign films and see what people are thinking around the world.

### MUST-SEE

The new Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture is a perspective changer and a mecca of so much I hold dear. Every American should visit—it really brings you into the heart of a people who have been marginalized.