



# *HEAVY PETTING*

*An eerie bifurcated character drama about a queer encounter between two lonely  
cat enthusiasts, and a macabre test of one's social obscurity.*

WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY

*BRENDAN PROOF*

## SYNOPSIS

*A lonely young woman (Marina) scrambling to fill the void left by a missing household pet forges a strange and tenuous bond with an unexpected visitor role-playing in a cat costume (Jordan). When Marina's pet returns, Jordan is discarded and returns to life of profound solitude and invisibility, which inspires a macabre test of their social obscurity.*



*NARRATIVE SHORT DRAMA  
QUEER / MYSTERY / HORROR  
2021 • CANADA • ENGLISH • 17MINS  
COLOUR • 1.66 • 5.1 SURROUND • DCP AND DIGITAL FILE*

A person is standing in a field at dusk, looking towards a large tree. The scene is dimly lit, with a warm, golden glow from the setting sun. The person is in the foreground, slightly to the left, and the tree is in the middle ground, to the right. The background shows a fence and some foliage.

## DIRECTOR STATEMENT

*Heavy Petting* explores the distinction and degeneration between loneliness and isolation through a bifurcated character study. It tells the story of two women that seem initially to be sharing a symbiotic longing for companionship, but who upon closer examination are experiencing something separate and gravely dissimilar.

Although longing is a natural feature of the human spirit, as someone who has descended into the aberrant solitude of mental illness, I know that it's vital to develop an understanding of the difference between these two experiences, and how easily it is to slip from one to the other without support.

Using a gradual tonal shift, the film aims to lull an audience into the expectation of an off-beat erotic journey, before pivoting at the midpoint and thrusting them into a bleaker world, with subtle callbacks that reconfigure their understanding of what came earlier to create a stark compare and contrast experience.

*Heavy Petting* is a film for people who feel invisible or disposable, and have been driven to despair because of it. It is primarily for young adults, whose experiences of alienation are especially acute, and especially for queer folks who know the sting of fetishization better than most. It is particularly for bisexual identifying people, whose suffering often goes unnoticed or is dismissed entirely.

The morbidity and creeping horror of *Heavy Petting* is a way to express that the stakes are higher than people think. Although mental health issues may initially present as modest, and be disregarded as frivolous, they are an insidious force that needed to be confronted. I hope that the revulsion of the film's conclusion will shock people out of complacency, and inspire empathy and intervention in the lives of folks yearning to have their pain acknowledged.

## CAST

*Haley Midgette – Marina*

*Samantha Calleja – Jordan*

*Mitchell Court – The Smoker*

*Andy Assaf & Laura Del Papa – The Couple*

*Bernadette Medhurst – The Homeowner*

## FILMMAKERS

*Brendan Prost – Director, Producer, Writer, Editor*

*Brendan Whelton – Producer*

*Gayle Ye – Director of Photography*

*P.H. Bergeron – Production Designer*

*Chris Reineck - Composer*



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## DIRECTOR BIOGRAPHY

*Brendan Prost is a dogged and unabashedly personal filmmaker from Calgary, currently based in Toronto. He is best known as the creator of four DIY feature films that have screened theatrically across Canada, and are now available everyone on-demand. His credits also include an eclectic mix of short films, and music videos for artists like jordan mason and German Error Message. His queer character drama Loretta's Flowers (2018) was selected for Telefilm Canada's "Not Short on Talent" showcase at Cannes before premiering at the Edinburgh and Vancouver International Film Festivals, as well as Inside Out in Toronto. Most recently, his lyrical Pacific Northwest drama Bellingham (2019) premiered at the Rhode Island International Film Festival, and his queer holiday comedy Main Squeeze (2019) premiered at Ashland and VIFF. Brendan graduated with distinction from Simon Fraser University's School for the Contemporary Arts, and is an alumnus of the Directors' Lab at the Canadian Film Centre. Brendan's background as an actor drives his interest in character-driven cinema that radiates with an uncanny sense of sincerity and emotional specificity, grounded by powerful performances and a thematic interest in alienation and longing.*



## CONTACT

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## LINKS

IMDB - <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13241652>  
ONLINE SCREENER - <https://vimeo.com/478171427> (password: petting)  
FILM FREEWAY - <https://filmfreeway.com/projects/2070978>  
DOWNLOADABLE PHOTOS & VIDEO – <https://bit.ly/3l2B5e9>