

Pet Sematary: Bloodlines

Pet Sematary: Bloodlines is a 2023 American supernatural horror film directed by Lindsey Anderson Beer (in her directorial debut), and co-written by Beer and Jeff Buhler. Serving as a prequel to *Pet Sematary* (2019), which in turn was based on the 1983 novel of the same name by Stephen King. It is the fourth installment of the *Pet Sematary* film series and stars Jackson White, Forrest Goodluck, Jack Mulhern, Henry Thomas, Natalie Alyn Lind, Isabella Star LaBlanc, Samantha Mathis, Pam Grier and David Duchovny. Set in 1969, 50 years before the events of the previous film, the plot follows a young Jud Crandall as he discovers a local Native American cemetery where the dead can live again, without realizing the horror that will affect his life.

After the commercial success of *Pet Sematary* in 2019, producer Lorenzo di Bonaventura had plans for a prequel explaining the mythology and universe of the film. In February 2021, the film was green-lit, with Buhler and di Bonaventura returning in their roles as screenwriter and producer, respectively. Beer signed on as director in May 2021 and principal photography began in August of the same year.

Pet Sematary: Bloodlines premiered at Fantastic Fest on September 23, 2023, which was followed by its streaming launch on Paramount+ on October 6.

Premise

In 1969, a young Jud Crandall dreams of escaping his hometown, until he discovers the malevolent secrets of what is buried in a cemetery. He confronts a haunting family legacy

Pet Sematary: Bloodlines



Release poster

Directed by	<u>Lindsey Anderson Beer</u>
Written by	<u>Lindsey Anderson Beer</u> <u>Jeff Buhler</u>
Based on	<i><u>Pet Sematary</u></i> by <u>Stephen King</u>
Produced by	<u>Lorenzo di Bonaventura</u> <u>Mark Vahradian</u>
Starring	<u>Jackson White</u> <u>Forrest Goodluck</u> <u>Jack Mulhern</u> <u>Henry Thomas</u> <u>Natalie Alyn Lind</u> <u>Isabella Star LaBlanc</u> <u>Samantha Mathis</u> <u>Pam Grier</u> <u>David Duchovny</u>

that forever connects him to the place and unites with his childhood friends as they face an ancient evil that has plagued Ludlow from its inception.^[2]

Cast

Cinematography	Benjamin Kirk Nielsen
Edited by	Ken Blackwell Jan Kovác
Music by	Brandon Roberts
Production companies	Paramount Players Di Bonaventura Pictures
Distributed by	Paramount+
Release dates	September 23, 2023 (Fantastic Fest) October 6, 2023 (United States)
Running time	84 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English

- [Jackson White](#) as Jud Crandall
- [Natalie Alyn Lind](#) as Norma
- [Forrest Goodluck](#) as Manny
- [Isabella Star LaBlanc](#) as Donna
- [Henry Thomas](#) as Dan Crandall
- [Jack Mulhern](#) as Timmy Baterman
- [David Duchovny](#) as Bill Baterman
- [Samantha Mathis](#) as Kathy Crandall
- [Pam Grier](#) as Majorie Washburn

Additionally, [Vincent Leclerc](#) plays a priest and [Ted Whittall](#) plays a hospital visitor.

Production

In March 2019, producer [Lorenzo di Bonaventura](#) stated that a prequel to *[Pet Sematary](#)* (2019) was possible if the film was a success financially.^[3] The following month, directors Kevin Kölsch and Denis Widmyer ruled themselves out of returning, saying, "If you were going to do more, you'd probably do backstory stuff. [...] I'd be really interested to see how somebody would do a sequel to this movie. It probably won't be us".^[4]

In May, screenwriter Jeff Buhler stated that there had been preliminary discussions on a continuation, saying, "So a lot of the ideas that we've been batting around currently, recently, have all been about, more about digging into the mythology of the town, these rituals that children present, the mythology of the [Micmac](#), the [Wendigo](#), the cemetery, the origins, Jud's life. So it looks like, I don't want to promise anything, because we don't know, we're not even down the road on an idea yet."^[5]

The film was officially announced in February 2021, with Buhler and di Bonaventura returning as screenwriter and producer, respectively.^{[6][7]} Lindsey Beer was hired to direct in May.^[8] In June, Jackson White was cast as a young Jud Crandall.^[9] The following month, Pam Grier joined the cast.^[10] Principal photography took place in Montreal in August, with some scenes being shot at John Abbott College.^{[9][11]}

Release

Pet Sematary: Bloodlines premiered at Fantastic Fest on September 23, 2023.^{[12][13]} It was released by Paramount+ on October 6, 2023, in the United States, Canada, and Latin America, and the following day in other territories.^[2]

Reception

Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 22% of 58 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 4.4/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Pet Sematary: Bloodlines* takes half-hearted stabs at expanding the world of Stephen King's original story, but they're largely lost in a substandard story that mistakes bland gore for effective horror."^[14] Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 31 out of 100, based on 10 critics, indicating "generally unfavorable" reviews.^[15]

Michael Nordine writing for *Variety* said, "Among the film's many flaws — its flat aesthetics, the forgettable characters who inhabit it (including David Duchovny and Pam Grier, both underused) — perhaps the most egregious is its utter lack of atmosphere. There's no sense of foreboding despite its attempts to unsettle, no feeling that the early warning signs are leading to anything especially frightening. Audiences already know what the eponymous burial ground does to anyone (or anything) unlucky enough to be interred there, and *Bloodlines* does little to live up to or expand the mythos".^[16] Bob Strauss of the *San Francisco Chronicle* wrote, "It's a better horror movie than the 2019 remake, but like Mary Lambert's 1989 production, it still feels unnecessary. Cool as the concept of a magic graveyard that brings beloved pets and, later, not so lovely people back from the dead may be, this remains second-rate King movie material".^[17]

Potential future

In September 2023, Beer stated that she would like to develop additional *Pet Sematary* installments to expand the franchise, which could further explore the origins of the evil in the franchise,^[18] while the filmmaker expressed interest in being involved in the potential future.^[19] By October of the same year, producer di Bonaventura stated that all creatives involved are considering developing a sequel, while producer Vahradian stated that future installments may further explore the demonic entity which causes the horrific events of the franchise.^[20] Later that same month, Beer confirmed that there are ongoing discussions to create additional *Pet Sematary* films, which may further detail the history of the ancient evil in Ludlow Town.^[21]

References

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External links

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