

Film Title and Release Date: *Cat Nation* (2017)

Length of Film in Minutes: 52 minutes

Film Genre: Documentary

Reviewer Name and Grade: Sarina P., 10th Grade

Date Reviewed: December 28, 2021

Cat Nation is a documentary from the perspective of Chris Broad, a British vlogger who has lived in Japan for five years. The documentary covers the Japanese culture surrounding cats. While most people around the world like cats, the Japanese people seem to have a particular fascination with all things cat related. Throughout the documentary, Chris Broad discusses many common examples of cat related Japanese attractions. One of the first attractions covered are cat cafes. This is a type of restaurant that has free roaming cats in it. The customers are free to pet and play with the cats. After that, Chris takes a tour of Aoshima, a “cat island.” Cats were brought to this island and quickly took over. Wild cats outnumber humans at least six to one. Next, Chris visits a cat themed train. The train is based around a cat who is the supposed conductor, and is widely loved by the passengers. This was the beginning of a section dedicated to “cat jobs,” where cats help their owners with their businesses. Another example listed was a cat said to give good luck to people who bought lottery tickets at his owner’s convenience store. The film also covered how cats have been represented through artistic depiction. This included the famous maneki neko, or waving cat statues, as well as famous Japanese cat characters.

3. *In a new paragraph, answer the following questions: How did you find the film on Kanopy (by title search, subject search, casual browsing, etc.)?*

I found this film through browsing. I picked it because I enjoy both cats and Japanese culture.

Did the plot (for fictional movie) or presentation of information (for documentary) keep you interested?

I found the information to be much more fun to watch than most other documentaries that I’ve seen. Most animal documentaries tend to lose my attention because they don’t have a lot of personality in my opinion, but this one was much more lively.

Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?

The pacing was good, and I liked how the documentary was broken up into organized sections.

What grade level(s) is this film appropriate for?

This film would be appropriate for all ages. There aren’t any themes that are too mature for children, but also nothing to make it too childish for teens and adults.

I would rate this film *5 stars*. I really enjoyed it, and it would be a great film for anyone who could use a lighthearted documentary to boost their mood. It doesn’t feel like the viewer has to take in too much information at once, but is still educational about an interesting part of Japanese culture. The only critique I can think of is that there were a few sections with un-translated Japanese. I might’ve been able to turn on subtitles for the whole movie on my TV, but it might’ve been nice to have the subtitles built in only for the parts that non-Japanese speaking people wouldn’t understand. Regardless, these sections didn’t make it too hard to understand, so I didn’t deduct any stars for it. I highly recommend it to any animal lover.