

A woman with her hair in a bun is sitting in the driver's seat of a car at night. The interior is dimly lit, and the background shows blurred city lights through the windshield. The overall mood is somber and contemplative.

Written and Directed by Kai Tillman

# HEY MAN

**CONTACT**

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## **LOGLINE**

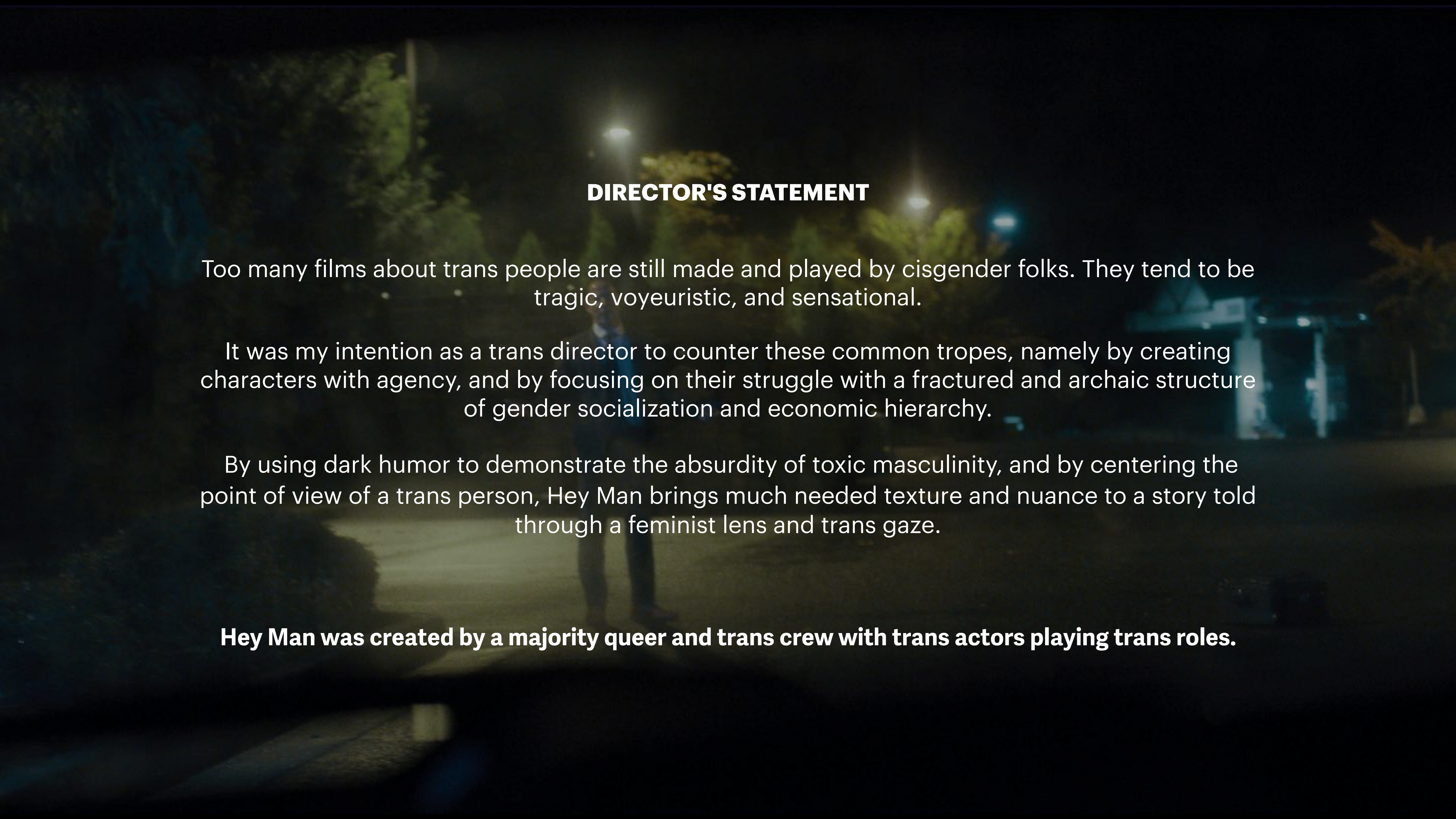
While navigating between steamy Grindr hookups and their rideshare passengers, Eli reluctantly alters their queer transmasculine identity to pass in a straight cisgender world for their physical and emotional safety.





## SYNOPSIS

Eli is a queer transmasculine person who starts driving for a rideshare company to pay for top surgery. He quickly learns that he has to pass as a cisgender male for emotional and physical safety. The problem is that he wasn't socialized as a male and lacks the nuance of being a 'man'. His nightly route starts by driving his best friend Niki, a professional dancer, to the strip club where she works. With each new passenger, Eli's performance of gender shifts and unfolds. The film explores the ways in which queer and trans people survive in the gig economy and navigate gender socialization.



## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Too many films about trans people are still made and played by cisgender folks. They tend to be tragic, voyeuristic, and sensational.

It was my intention as a trans director to counter these common tropes, namely by creating characters with agency, and by focusing on their struggle with a fractured and archaic structure of gender socialization and economic hierarchy.

By using dark humor to demonstrate the absurdity of toxic masculinity, and by centering the point of view of a trans person, *Hey Man* brings much needed texture and nuance to a story told through a feminist lens and trans gaze.

**Hey Man was created by a majority queer and trans crew with trans actors playing trans roles.**



## **DIRECTOR'S BIO**

Kai Tillman is a trans non-binary filmmaker and activist whose working class background and years of living on the fringe, has inspired their passion and dedication to grassroots filmmaking. This knowledge and experience has led them additionally into mentoring and training houseless and marginalized youth. They were selected for two workshops in Cuba hosted by Abbas Kiarostami in 2016 and Werner Herzog in 2017. Their short films have been screened in over 30 film festivals internationally including, Locarno Film Festival, Outfest LA, Fringe Film Festival and Musée D'art Moderne de Montréal.



**Sarah Whelden (She/Her)**  
Director of Photography

Sarah Whelden's award-winning approach to cinematography always puts the story first. It starts with asking "why" before ever considering "how."

As a queer trans woman, Sarah has a special place in her heart for those in the shadows. She is drawn to narratives that highlight the often chaotic reality between humans and their surroundings, and to characters who may be eager to find themselves but may not know where to start.



**Karina Lomelin Ripper (She/Her)**  
Producer

Karina Lomelin Ripper is a first generation Mexican-American director and producer based in Portland, Oregon. She works in commercial, documentary and independent film.

Karina has a background in associate producing on shows for National Geographic WILD and The Discovery Channel, as well as, feature documentaries for HBO and A&E Films. She was a producer on the narrative feature Clementine (Tribeca 2019), attending the Venice Biennale Cinema College Workshop (2016-17) and an honorary attendee at the Sundance Creative Producer's Lab (2017).



**Chelsea Unsbee (She/Her)**  
Producer

Chelsea is an experienced writer and creator working currently as a producer and script supervisor. She studied under Pilar Alessandra while in LA, honing her craft in script supervising and writing which led her to work as a writer for Dreamworks Studio Awesomenesstv.

Chelsea's dedication to diversity and representation has led her to actively support up and coming woman and non-binary filmmakers and hiring majority BIPOC and woman/non-binary lead crews

## CAST



### **Kai Choyce (He/Him)**

Kai Choyce is a Los Angeles-based writer, actor, podcaster, and standup comic. Kai's Curb Your Enthusiasm spec recently won second place in the sitcom category of the 2021 Scriptapalooza Tv Writing Competition. His short Pinged was a Semifinalist in the Filmmatic Horror Screenplay Awards and the Big Apple Film Festival Screenplay Competition.

As a comedian Kai has opened for River Butcher and Baron Vaughn and been featured in publications such as Playboy (not THAT way), Paste, Vulture. His comedy writing has been published in Reductress, McSweeney's, and Autostraddle. Women Who Kill, the true crime comedy podcast that Kai hosts and produces has listeners in 25 countries.



### **Kyler O'Neal (She/Her)**

Kyler O'Neal is an actress, model, dancer, singer and writer. Born and raised in the Midwest, Kyler graduated from Xavier University with a Bachelor's of Arts in Communications. After a five-year residency in New York City she relocated to Los Angeles where she released her self-published poetry book "Pity Party" and made her musical debut with her first single "Satan's Tears," which has been featured in such film festivals as Outfest and the San Francisco Trans Film Festival.

Through her work Kyler advocates for equity, social justice & awareness. Her newly released EP "VOX" is available for streaming or download everywhere

**Title** Hey Man  
**Year Completed** 2022  
**Length** 23 min  
**Country Production** USA  
**Genre** Dramey  
**Shooting Format** RED Gemini  
**Finish Format** 4k DCP & 2k DCP  
**Aspect Ratio** 2:4:1  
**Sound Format** 5.1 Surround & Stereo  
**Language** English

**Written**  
Kai Tillman & N. Eleanor Campbell  
**Directed by**  
Kai Tillman  
**Starring**  
Kai Choyce  
**Produced by**  
Briana Bard, Chelsea Unsbee, Eli Haan,  
Karina Ripper, N. Eleanor Campbell,  
Rachel Mossey, & Kelly Wilcox  
**Director of Photography**  
Sarah Whelden  
**Editor & Recording Mixer**  
Kai Tillman



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need real framework logo



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