



presents

KEDİ



Directed by **CEYDA TORUN**

Produced by **CEYDA TORUN** and **CHARLIE WUPPERMANN**

Starring Cats: **SARI, BENGÜ, ASLAN PARÇASI, PSIKOPAT, DENİZ, GAMSIZ,** and **DUMAN**

World Premiere: 2016 If Istanbul Independent Film Festival

Run Time: 79 minutes

Language: Turkish

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SYNOPSIS

Hundreds of thousands of cats roam the metropolis of Istanbul freely. For thousands of years they've wandered in and out of people's lives, becoming an essential part of the communities that make the city so rich. Claiming no owners, these animals live between two worlds, neither wild nor tame – and they bring joy and purpose to those people they choose to adopt. In Istanbul, cats are the mirrors to the people, allowing them to reflect on their lives in ways nothing else could.

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I grew up in Istanbul until I was eleven years old and I believe my childhood was infinitely less lonesome than it would have been if it weren't for cats. And I wouldn't be the person I am today. Every year that I returned to the city, I saw it change in ways that made it less and less recognizable, except for the cats; they were the one constant element, becoming synonymous with the city itself and ultimately, embodying its soul. This film is, in many ways, a love letter to those cats and the city, both of which are changing in ways that are unpredictable.

When we set out to make this film, I had many ideas about what it should be. I hoped to show Istanbul in ways that went beyond tour guides and news headlines. I wanted to explore philosophical themes that would make you, the audience, ponder about our relationship to cats, to nature, to each other.

In the end, I hope this film makes you feel like you just had a cat snuggle up on your lap unexpectedly, and purr fervently for a good long time, while allowing you to stroke it gently along its back; forcing you, simply because you can't move without letting go of that softness and warmth, to think about things that you may not have given yourself time to think about in the busy life you lead, to discuss them with a group of new friends, friends from Istanbul who tell you what the city is really like.

Hopefully this film will be that experience for you, and that you'll leave with a yearning in your hands to pet a cat, and visit Istanbul.

ABOUT THE FILM

"In Istanbul, the cat is more than just a cat. The cat embodies the indescribable chaos, the culture, and the uniqueness that is the essence of Istanbul."

- Y. Barlas

Director Ceyda Torun grew up in Istanbul in the early 80s when the city was the epicenter of a country on the brink of globalization. At the time, the population of the city was merely 4 million; today Istanbul has grown to a population of almost 20 million, its city limits constantly expanding.

Besides this enormous mass of people, there has been another creature native to the city for thousands of years: street cats. With backgrounds as varied as their human counterparts, street cats experience the city in ways totally unknown to people. For them, the city might as well be called, Catstanbul.

When first conceiving the idea, what enticed the filmmakers most was the uniqueness of how street cats are treated in Istanbul, not too dissimilar to cows in India. For the largely Muslim population, cats have a somewhat holy reputation, being referenced multiple times in stories surrounding the prophet Mohammed. Compared with the more sanitary approach of Europe and the US where cats who are not claimed by humans are captured and put through a system, and the seemingly indifferent approach of the Asian and Arabic nations, the communal approach of the residents of Istanbul to caring for street cats while allowing them to retain their

independence offered a new way to understand the culture of this city. Turns out, it offered a new way of understanding how we approach life.

Director Ceyda Torun and cinematographer Charlie Wuppermann traveled to Istanbul to gather footage of the cats themselves, not knowing if it was possible to capture the essence of what it means to be a cat in Istanbul. Along with local researchers, they gathered stories and searched for people who seemed to have extensive knowledge of the street cats of their neighborhood; who's the alpha, who's fathered by whom, which cat steals from the fishmonger, which has a habit of breaking into the neighbors house. The stories they heard got them even more excited to make this film and to document these one-of-a-kind animals in action.

In an effort to get as close to the cats as possible, the filmmakers designed and experimented with various 'cat-cameras,' followed the cats into dark alleys and deserted basements, flew drones over the rooftops, and pretty much stalked them in order to capture cinematic visuals like over-the-shoulder shots as the cats navigated the city streets. It was dedicated work, returning to shoot the same cats day in and day out which resulted in capturing their unique characters and interaction with their communities.

After two months of shooting, Torun and editor Mo Stoebe began to craft each cat's story, striving to capture their uniqueness by allowing the cats to narrate their own stories. Through a select number of cat stories, the ultimate aim was to create a contemplative piece that navigates the themes of love, loss, joy, loneliness, and belonging. Torun states, "I came to

realize that my own stories of the street cats of Istanbul were not exclusive to me, that everyone who had allowed themselves to form a meaningful relationship with these creatures had come to experience life and their part in it differently. The degree of this profound change in perspective varied from person to person, but one thing remained constant, it was brought on by having the opportunity to co-exist with an animal with charm, intellect, and self-sufficiency."

"They say cats know that we're not God... They know we're just the middlemen."

- H. Karaci

MEET THE CATS

Sarı - The Hustler



Appearance: Yellow-and-white tabby - yellow eyes, slight figure and on the short side

Gender: Female

Profession: Hustler, Mother

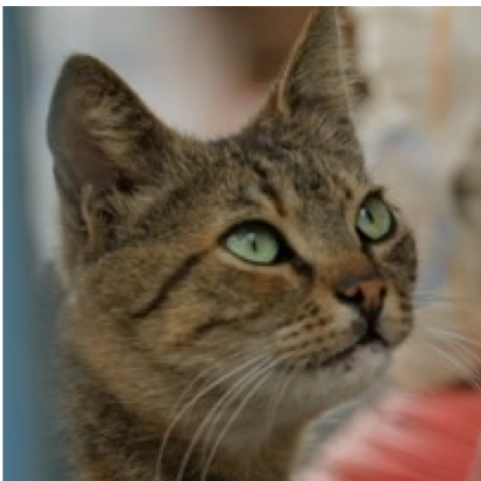
Location: Galata Tower

Traits: Doesn't give a sh*t, begs, steals, forages, persistent

Nicknames: Yellow, YellowSh*t, The Hustler

Sarı is a yellow tabby who lives at the base of Galata Tower, one of the oldest and best known landmarks in the city. She's a hustler. She moves with a clear mission: gotta eat, gotta drink, gotta get food. She begs, steals, forages, and gets what she needs. Even though she gets chased away from the square's cafes and restaurants, she has her allies. One shopkeeper has become her main supporter, giving her chunks of food to take to her kittens. YellowSh*t, as she lovingly calls her because of her persistent character, used to lounge in her shop for hours on end, watching the customers try on clothes. Now that she has kittens, she hustles to feed them and herself.

Bengü - The Lover



Appearance: Grey/brown tabby - emerald eyes, curls her paws whenever she stands still

Gender: Female

Profession: Lover, Mother, Family Member

Location: Karaköy

Traits: Super soft, loves to be petted, purrs a lot, mother who defends her young viciously

Nickname: The Lover

Bengü, a grey tabby, has made herself the center of many men's love. She resides in an industrial manufacturing neighborhood, surrounded by metals, chains, and rope. She is every bit as soft and cuddly as her surroundings are hard and cold. She has won the hearts of all the workingmen in the neighborhood, purring audibly wherever she goes and inspiring those around her. As one of the men who knows her well has put it, she's become such a part of their lives, that she's family.

Aslan Parçası - The Hunter



Appearance: Long-haired, black-and-white - lime green eyes, sometimes grimy when out of the sewer

Gender: Male

Profession: Hunter, Fish Connoisseur

Location: Kandilli

Traits: Hunts rats, eats fish, loves a good scenic view, sleeps all day, hunts at night

Nicknames: Little Lion, The Hunter, Guardian

Along the Asian shore of the Bosphorus, a famous fish restaurant has a guardian. Little Lion is a long-haired, black-and-white cat who has made it his mission to fend off mice and rats, earning the gratitude of those who witness his efforts. He may not always catch his prey, but his presence keeps the rats away...

Psikopat - The Psycho



Appearance: Short-haired, black-and-white - green eyes, walks with an attitude; she's got a piercing stare and a defiant gait

Gender: Female

Profession: Jealous Housewife, Neighborhood Psychopath

Location: Samatya

Traits: Fierce, doesn't shy from confrontation, assertive, no bullshit, demands respect

Nicknames: Psycho, Neighborhood Psychopath

She is one tough cookie. A short-haired, black-and-white cat, Psycho lives in one of the oldest parts of town, Samatya, frequently showing up at a tea house that's tucked behind an old Church. She has earned the respect of the neighborhood vendors, fishermen, and even stray dogs. She fears no one, bullies her spouse, keeps rivals out of her territory and makes even tough guys respect her. She is... the neighborhood psycho.

Deniz - The Social Butterfly



Appearance: Grey-and-white tabby - green eyes, youthful and energetic

Gender: Male

Profession: Mascot, Young Trouble Maker

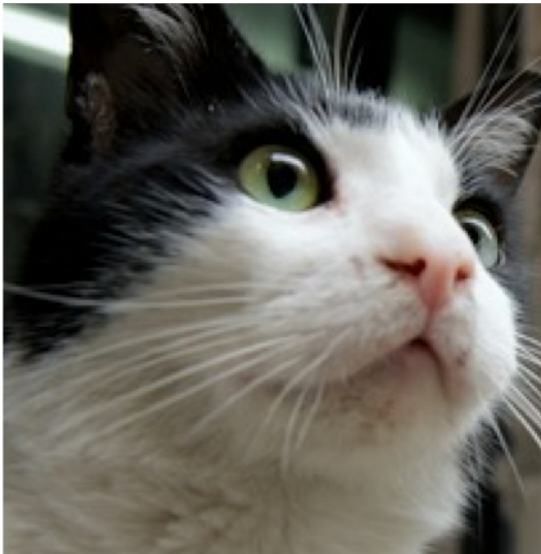
Location: Ferikoy Organic Market

Traits: Young and youthful, sleeps on market stalls, hassles cats and customers alike

Nicknames: The Social Butterfly

Noticed as a kitten, Deniz took his time getting comfortable with people but now makes up for it with plenty of cuddle time with the vendors and customers of the local organic market. He climbs the awnings, hassles the other cats, plays behind the stalls, falls asleep among boxes of tea... He is the mascot of the market, but the other cats around him are just as delightful to watch.

Gamsız - The Player



Appearance: Short-haired, black-and-white - green eyes, hefty figure and sweet eyes

Gender: Male

Profession: Neighborhood Man, Lover, Baker

Location: Cihangir

Traits: Vicious claws, sideways stance, boss of his street

Nicknames: Happy-Go-Lucky, Carefree, Player

Don't be fooled by Gamsız's innocent little face.

He's a formidable cat who knows all his human neighbors and what foods he can sneak from whom. His short-haired, black-and-white form is mighty and he's got mad climbing and fighting skills. There's no tree he can't climb, no balcony he can't get to, no human he can't charm and no cat he can't take down. It helps that he lives in Cihangir, the original artists' neighborhood, which is now a cat haven. His 'humans' are many but he gets special treatment by a baker and an actress who love him equally but for different reasons.

Duman - The Gentleman



Appearance: Grey-and-white - green eyes, a little chunky around the waist but stands with the posture of an aristocrat

Gender: Male

Profession: Foodie, Gentleman

Location: Nisantasi

Traits: Paws at the window when hungry, never begs or goes inside, demands proper delicatessen, dives in dumpsters

Nicknames: Smokey, Gent, Foodie

Duman lives in one of the poshest neighborhoods in Istanbul and has somehow made his alliance with the people who run a very fancy delicatessen. He knows better than to march right into the shop, so he waits patiently outside, staring down the waiters until they prepare him meals - frequently of smoked meats and specialty cheeses. His signature pawing of the window to get their attention is a sight the patrons have come to expect even if they're on serious business lunches. Though with the efforts of the restaurant's management his previously plump grey and white figure has now leaned, he still forages the dumpsters, proving no matter how fancy a cat may get, he's still a street cat.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Ceyda Torun (Director / Producer)

Born in Istanbul, Ceyda spent her formidable early years among the street cats while her mother worried she'd get rabies and her sister worried she'd bring home fleas. After her family left the country when she was eleven, Ceyda lived in Amman, Jordan, and ended up in New York for her high school years, never encountering a street cat. Ceyda studied Anthropology at Boston University, returned to Istanbul to assist director Reha Erdem and then off to London to work alongside producer Chris Auty. She returned to the US and co-founded Termite Films with cinematographer Charlie Wuppermann and has since directed her first feature documentary. She still misses her feline companions, gets excited whenever she sees a cat on the streets of Los Angeles, but they rarely feel the same way about her.

Charlie Wuppermann (Cinematographer / Producer)

Charlie never imagined that he would one day be lying on the streets of Istanbul getting on eye level with cats, human shoes, and car tires in order to shoot a documentary. But after founding Termite Films with his producing partner Ceyda Torun, it became clear that a film had to be made about the Cats of Istanbul. Before this adventure, Charlie graduated from the London Film School with an MA in cinematography, after which he began shooting music videos, commercials, and documentaries in his native Germany and all over Europe. In 2009, he moved to Los Angeles permanently and has since shot the narrative feature films BHOPAL:

A PRAYER FOR RAIN, BLOOD MOON, and A COUNTRY CALLED HOME. He loved every minute of shooting KEDi and can't wait to go back to Istanbul.

Mo Stoebe (Editor)

Austrian-born M(e)o(w) Stoebe is an editor, animator, and filmmaker based in Los Angeles. He started his career in motion graphics and editing in commercial postproduction where he contributed to title sequences for films such as Ridley Scott's BLACK HAWK DOWN as well as edited over 100 photofilms with six-time World Press Award-winning photojournalist Gideon Mendel for UNICEF, UNAIDS, and Actionaid. Mo's feature documentary editing credits include the award winning OUT IN INDIA, STATE OF CONTROL, ONE MINUTE TO BURN, and KEDi; he holds an MA in Communication Design from the Royal College of Art in London.

Kira Fontana (Composer/Music Editor)

Always a great admirer of the independent spirit of felines, Kira fell in love with the idea behind KEDi. Intrigued to learn of the millions of street cats in Istanbul and the special bonds they create with humans, Kira was delighted when director Ceyda Torun approached her to write the music that would help bring these magical stories to life. Kira strove to create an ethereal sound world that reflects the role cats play as both mirrors to the main human characters, and as observers of the city's ever changing nature. Kira earned her BM in Composition from the Eastman School of Music, and her MM from the Yale School of Music. Her main composition mentors were Steve Reich, John Adams and David Lang. She now lives in Los Angeles, where she is an active composer and songwriter.

MAIN CREDITS

Director	Ceyda Torun
Producer	Ceyda Torun Charlie Wuppermann
Executive Producer	Thomas Podstawski Gregor Kewel
Co-Producer	Ilan Arboleda John Keith Wasson
Production Cos	Termite Films PK Film Investment
Editor	Mo Stoebe
Original Music	Kira Fontana
Cinematographer	Charlie Wuppermann
Additional Cinematographer	Alp Korfalı
Sound Recordist	Burcin Aktan Ilkin Kitapçı
Cast	Bulent Ustun Mine Sogut Elif Nursad Atalay