

Torpii  
in

# Kittens Never Sleep

a thriller short





# KITTENS NEVER SLEEP

*a 12 minute thriller with a soundtrack that's killer!*

SOMEWHERE BETWEEN courageous, hopeful and absurd lies *Kittens Never Sleep*, an upbeat noir thriller that explores themes of kittenhood identity formation and triumph over the odds through determination and hard work.

This fun, suspenseful dramadey, filmed in the high contrast black and white stylization of 1960's New Wave cinema, replete with a frenetic bebop jazz soundtrack that's true to the genre, focuses on the coming-of-age story of a hired killer kitten. Torbi, a five month old tortoise shell tabby, is driven to bring to justice all those who exploit the weak. As Torbi makes the archetypal hero's journey, she discovers what she's truly made of, and viewers do too, as we embrace one of nature's most astounding dichotomies: the cute and adorable appearance of a baby feline is profoundly contradicted by her natural instinct to mercilessly kill.

Kittens Never Sleep is a passion project born from the isolation and restlessness of Covid-era lockdown. With a lot of time on her hands, nightly Criterion Collection movie binges inspired director Gabrielle Drinard's interest in and study of Japanese 1960's noir and samurai movies. She found their aesthetic stylizations, visual experiments and creative risk taking ignited her imagination. The *Kittens* set spans the confines of her livingroom in scope, expanded by random found footage that doesn't even pretend to provide continuity of location. One minute the backdrop is San Francisco, the next minute New York or Tokyo, and obvious green screen errors increase the fantasy and absurdist elements of the film. Her idea for the *Kittens* film series came when she realized her newly adopted shelter kitten's propensity towards violence and thirst for the kill folded neatly into noir themes while at the same time fulfilled her need for a Covid-safe lead actor.

Drinard's hope was to create a fun escape for an anxious, Covid-weary audience as we watch Torbi, not animated with Disney-style anthropomorphism, but truly as herself, in all her charming real life awkward kittenness as we watch her grow into her hunting skills in real time.

Through Torbi and Gabrielle's partner-in-crime

Torbi's first assignment as a hired killer kitten pits her against a formidable foe in 18lb tuxedo cat Minerva as she gears up for the blockbuster fight of her five month old lifetime to rescue Boss Lady's unsuspecting elderly mother from Minerva's evil clawed grip.

relationship on (and off) screen, we as viewers enjoy and relate to the camaraderie of the human-animal bond and celebrate the resourcefulness and resilience of creativity under stifling limitations.

**DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT**  
Gabrielle Drinard, February 2021



### GABRIELLE DRINARD

Writer/director Gabrielle Drinard was raised by fine artists believing that artistic purpose is never limited to one format for any person. She comfortably crosses genres of fine art, writing, photography, video and design. Gabrielle has a background in commercial and fine art,

with BFA degrees in Illustration from the Pacific NW College of Art in Portland, OR and Graphic Design from California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA. Gabrielle has spent equal time living and working in both Portland and San Francisco, with a career spanning illustration, photography and graphic design and has shown contemporary art in galleries and alternative spaces in both cities. Currently, Gabrielle is employed as a Marketing Manager who's recent work in advertising motion graphics and video led to an interest in creative filmmaking. *Kittens Never Sleep* is her second short film. Gabrielle lives in Portland, OR and in her spare time enjoys raising her kitten Torbi and writing a novel.

Torbi found her passion for acting after being discovered while napping in a communal litterbox in the “Kitten Room” of the local animal shelter by Gabrielle Drinard who quickly adopted her for her unique markings and beguiling charm. Torbi first made an impression on audiences with her debut role in arthouse drama *Kill! Kitten Kill!* also directed by and co-starring Gabrielle Drinard. It was this video that exposed her passion and power as a youthful feline heroine. Torbi's success has continued to grow with lead and recurring roles as Drinard's “mews” in arthouse shorts inspired by international 1960's noir cinema. When not focused on video projects, Torbi enjoys zestfully chasing small moving objects and sharpening her knife-like claws. Torbi's advice to aspiring kitten actors includes these four tips based on her experience:

- 1.) Be honest 2.) Be real 3.) Do the homework. 4.) Kill things.

In spite of the film title, Torbi in fact sleeps up to eighteen hours a day.



### TORBI TIBODEAUX DRINARD

Up and coming actress Torbi Tibodeaux Drinard can next be seen in the highly anticipated film short *Kitten Jungle*, continuing her recurring role as an awkward but effective hired killer kitten.

Born in Portland, OR on August 29th, 2020,



### MINERVA NELSON

Minerva Nelson brings elegance and grace to her role and is a natural actress but is otherwise pure evil. Due to her independent nature, scenes with her and Torbi were filmed separately. Especially since Torbi could not be forgiven for eating Minerva's food. *Kittens Never Sleep* is Minerva's film debut. She does not plan to act in any others and considers them “stupid” and “boring”.

Run time 12 minutes

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Filmography  
Kitten Jungle  
release date  
in 2021  
Kittens Never Sleep  
2021  
Kill! Kitten Kill!  
2020

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