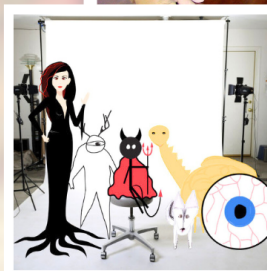


MY SECRET COUNTRY

NETA CHECK LOCAL LISTINGS



MY SECRET COUNTRY | MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT KIT

Is your station carrying *My Secret Country*? Use these resources to promote the show and engage your viewers with this unique program.

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DESCRIPTIONS

Slug: A journey into the heart of childhood imagination.

Short Description: *My Secret Country* is a heartwarming documentary that celebrates the enchanting power of childhood creativity. The story unfolds with three children embarking on a thrilling adventure into the depths of their imaginations. When desserts from around the world mysteriously disappear, their imaginary friends, brought to life through 2D animation, rally to save the day. Suspecting the mischievous inner voice of doubt, embodied as the character Kritik, the group sets out on a quest to find three magical ingredients that can rescue the world's treats from vanishing forever. Co-written with the young protagonists, this allegorical film offers a delightful blend of fantasy and reality that is sure to spark wonder in audiences of all ages.

Long Description: In the enchanting documentary film *My Secret Country*, three children welcome us into their captivating worlds of imaginary friends. Seamlessly blending reality and fantasy, the film introduces the children's pretend companions through 2D animation, revealing a parallel reality where desserts across the globe have mysteriously vanished.

As their imaginary friends embark on a quest to rescue sweet treats, they face obstacles in the form of their own inner doubts, embodied by the mischievous Kritik, who seeks to thwart their efforts. Undeterred, the group finds strength in the supportive character of the inner muse, Myoose. Co-written with the young protagonists, this fantastical journey is a testament to the limitless creativity of children, who often see possibilities where adults see only problems.

The children candidly reveal that their concern for desserts mirrors their broader worries about the future of the Earth's animals and plants. By rescuing desserts in the vivid landscapes of their minds, they empower themselves in a world where their ability to make tangible contributions toward averting environmental catastrophe feels limited.

Experts and parents in the film contextualize the importance of imaginative play, highlighting its role in childhood development and problem-solving skills.

At its core, *My Secret Country* is a journey into the heart of childhood, where dreams are born and anything is possible. Through charming storytelling, the film reminds us of the importance of holding on to our sense of wonder and embracing the adventures that await us, both in the real world and in the depths of our imaginations.

FILMMAKER BIO

Marlo McKenzie (Director, Producer, Animator, Editor, Director of Photography) is the co-director of *Carol Doda Topless at the Condor*, a documentary about the nation's first topless dancer. The film premiered at Telluride and opened in theaters nationwide in 2024. She also co-produced *Butterfly Town, USA* and served as an associate producer for the four-part documentary series *Standing on Sacred Ground*.

McKenzie lived several lives before finding a home as a producer and director in San Francisco. The Detroit native spent time in Europe, working in theater in Germany and studying in France. In Australia, McKenzie co-founded a video production company that trained underserved youth in media. She believes in the transformative power of storytelling and that to create a better world we must first be able to imagine it.

**FILMMAKER STATEMENT***Discovering the Role of Imagination*

When working with formerly unhoused youth at Oasis Youth Support Network in Australia, I was struck by their difficulty to hold a positive vision for their lives. Their experiences of severe abuse and neglect had profoundly impacted their ability to imagine a life beyond their immediate circumstances. As I guided them through a media program, I began to recognize the profound role imagination plays — not just as a tool for creativity, but as a vital mechanism for resilience. At its core, imagination allows us to see beyond what is, into what could be — a life filled with abundance, support, health and love.

The Return of Imaginary Friends – a Spark of Inspiration

Years later, after moving to San Francisco, I was working on a separate film project when someone casually mentioned that she and her brother had shared an imaginary world since childhood. This revelation came at a pivotal time. I had recently worked on *Standing on Sacred Ground*, a four-part documentary series about Indigenous leaders fighting to preserve their cultural wisdom and ancestral lands. Many of the Indigenous people we interviewed, including shamans, spoke of spiritual connections that paralleled the unseen worlds of childhood imagination. Intrigued, I began exploring shamanic practices, and to my surprise, my childhood imaginary friends resurfaced.

As a child, I had three imaginary friends, including a winged unicorn named Penelope. Each night, we would journey to a tiny planet that I saw as a living being, a sentient presence that offered me comfort. Over time, a tiger became a part of this world as well. This reawakening of my childhood imagination, combined with the realization that others maintained similar inner worlds well into adulthood, planted the seed for *My Secret Country*.

Reconnecting With the Inner Child

A few central questions emerged: How can adults reclaim the wonder and playfulness of childhood? How does reconnecting with our inner child unlock creativity? As I followed the children in my documentary, I found myself learning from them. My inner child, once given space, became an active collaborator. She encouraged me to embrace my shamanic practice, to lean into the joy of storytelling, and even to call upon an imaginary friend to support me through the long hours of animation. This friend, ever present, is even credited in the film!

Children Are Experts at Imagination

Children navigate the world of imagination with a mastery that many adults have lost. I wanted *My Secret Country* to reflect that expertise, to be a film where children's voices shaped the narrative as much as possible. What unfolded was a deeply collaborative process. Each child was fascinated by the others' imaginary worlds and wanted their pretend friends to meet within the film.

Through collective storytelling, a shared adventure took shape: a world where dessert was on the brink of extinction, and only a magical cupcake, crafted from frosting, chocolate batter and rainbow sprinkles, could save it. I introduced the idea of an inner critic, embodied as Kritik, and they countered with Myoose, an inner muse. To bring their vision to life, we chose 2D animation, with the children actively contributing to character designs, reviewing scenes and guiding creative choices.

Saving Dessert, Saving the World: a Child's Imagination as an Environmental Allegory

After five years, I revisited Max, Maxine and Dori to document how their inner landscapes had evolved. Their reflections offered profound insight into why they had imagined dessert disappearing in the first place — revealing deeper layers of personal and symbolic meaning. As we spoke, it became clear that their story was more than just a playful adventure; it was an unconscious allegory for environmental loss.

Dessert, in their minds, represented joy, indulgence and the sweetness of life — things that, much like the natural world, could vanish if not cared for. Just as forests are cleared, species are lost and ecosystems collapse due to human neglect, the children instinctively imagined a world where something precious — something that brings people together in celebration — was on the brink of extinction. The three magical ingredients needed to save dessert mirrored the fundamental elements required to restore balance: care, creativity and collective action.



Their story reflected an intuitive understanding that environmental destruction is not just about losing landscapes or species — it is about losing the richness and wonder of life itself. By reclaiming dessert in their imagined world, they were, in a way, expressing a deep longing to protect and preserve what is beautiful and irreplaceable.

Empowerment and Joy Through Creativity

Creating *My Secret Country* was a 10-year journey filled with moments of joy, curiosity and discovery. Throughout, I continued to check in with the children, asking questions that mattered to them: How should Milou's bark sound? What does the Goblin King's castle look like? Does Scwigee have one head or two? Their answers shaped the film at every stage.

At its heart, this film is an invitation to rekindle our connection with imagination, to embrace creativity as a force for empowerment and to rediscover the joy of play.

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA

Website: www.mysecretcountry.org

Facebook: facebook.com/mysecretcountry/

Instagram: instagram.com/mysecretcountry

Hashtag: #MySecretCountry

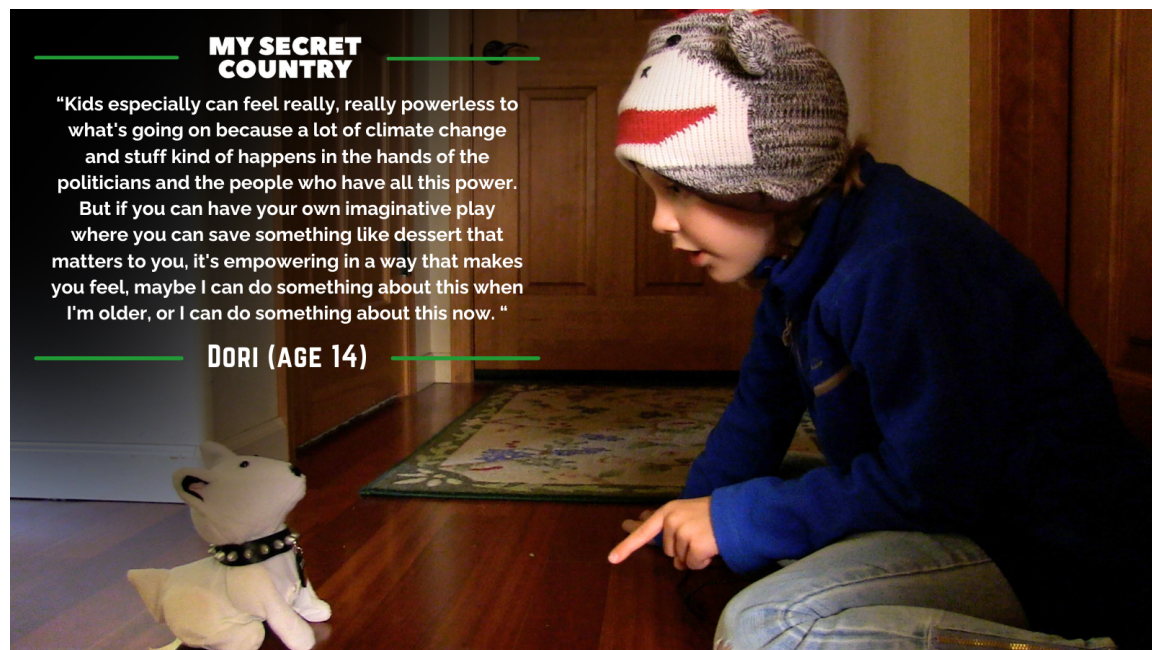
SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Social Ideas

- Use the co-brandable promo/trailer available on The Source on your social channels to pique interest.
- Create your own graphics using the provided [production stills](#), [poster](#), description, etc. Or use the [social media graphics](#) described below.
- In conjunction with tune-in promotion for the documentary, invite followers to share the imaginary worlds and friends they created as children.
- Partner with your local library to create and share a recommended reading list relating to imagination and childhood.

Sample Social Copy:

Co-written with Maxine (7), Dori (9) and Maxwell (5), *My Secret Country* is a heartwarming documentary that celebrates the enchanting power of childhood creativity. Blending fantasy and reality, it follows the three children embarking on a thrilling adventure into the depths of their imaginations. Watch *My Secret Country* [Day/Date/station].

Social Graphics

1920x1080 image shown here.



1080x1360 image shown here.

ENGAGEMENT AND MARKETING IDEAS

- Interview filmmaker Marlo McKenzie. Email her at m1m2creative@gmail.com to arrange an interview.
- Reach out to individuals and organizations in your community that may be interested in partnering with your station to promote or participate in a screening, including libraries, children’s museums, education and psychology departments at universities, and organizations dedicated to the arts and storytelling.
- Schedule broadcast or community screenings around these dates:
 - March 14: National Imagination Day
 - April: Earth Month
 - April 22: Earth Day
 - May 30: National Creativity Day
 - June 8, 2025: Children's Day (Día Mundial del Niño)
 - July 3: National Imaginary Friend Day
 - July 19: National Play Day
 - September: National Child Awareness Month



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

<Station Press Contact Name>

<Station Name>

<Email>

<Phone>

Marlo McKenzie

m1m2creative@gmail.com

<Station Name> to Air Documentary Co-Created With Children Exploring the Power of Imagination and Creativity

[<Station City, State>] – Co-written with Maxine (7), Dori (9) and Maxwell (5), *My Secret Country* is a heartwarming documentary that celebrates the enchanting power of childhood creativity. The film, which airs on <DATE> at <TIME> on <Station>, blends fantasy and reality as it follows the three children embarking on a thrilling adventure into the depths of their imaginations.

“It’s so fun, in your mind-adventure. You’re making the best story,” Maxine Prudhomme says in the film. “There can be anything you ever want, and you can do anything. And it’s all up to you. It’s like you’re in paradise.”

Alongside the young storytellers, experts and parents in the film contextualize the importance of imaginative play, highlighting its role in childhood development and problem-solving skills.

While working with formerly unhoused youth in Australia, filmmaker Marlo McKenzie began to recognize the profound role imagination plays — not just as a tool for creativity but also as a vital mechanism for resilience.

“Children navigate the world of imagination with a mastery that many adults have lost,” McKenzie said. “I wanted *My Secret Country* to reflect that expertise, to be a film where children’s voices shaped the narrative as much as possible. What unfolded was a deeply collaborative process. Each child was fascinated by the others’ imaginary worlds and wanted their pretend friends to meet within the film.”

For more information about the film, visit www.mysecretcountry.org.

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About <Station>

<Station Boilerplate Information>