

## PRESS RELEASE:

# Crisis in Afghanistan Inspires Local Filmmakers to Release Film to the World for Free

Feb.21, 2022

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On **Feb.21, 2022** local filmmakers, **Kate McKenzie & Martin Parnell** will release their documentary film, [The Secret Marathon](#) to **stream publicly for the first time on Vimeo**. The award winning documentary film tells the story of the first women in Afghanistan to run a marathon.

“We were heartbroken to hear the news that the Taliban had taken over Afghanistan. Months later, many of our friends and contacts are still not safe and are facing threats due to promoting gender equality,” states Kate McKenzie, Film Co-Director.

“Seeing the influx of new Afghan refugees to Canada, we felt now was the time to share with the world a **different perspective about Afghanistan** through our film. Oftentimes, the only things we hear about Afghanistan are stories of war, poverty and terrorism yet it is a beautiful country with resilient and hospitable people.” states McKenzie.

“Our hope is that by sharing our story, Canadians and those around the world will be more willing to **greet Afghan refugees with open arms** and see them as wonderful additions to our communities.” states Martin Parnell, Executive Producer.

McKenzie shares, “While filming this documentary in Afghanistan, I was inspired by such brave women and girls who **fought for equality and at times, risked their lives** for the freedom to run outdoors.” McKenzie hopes that the film will inspire others to stand in solidarity with Afghans and continue to speak up about the need for gender equality.

The Secret Marathon film was created in collaboration with Afghan cultural advisors and all Afghans featured in the film have communicated their support for sharing the film more widely.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- The Secret Marathon film has **raised over \$100,000 for charities** including Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, the Afghan Sports Trust and 261 Fearless all of whom create opportunities for women in education and sport.
- The film **inspired the [Secret 3K](#) a run/walk event** hosted during the week of International Women’s Day now in it’s 5th year with **thousands of participants joining from 24 countries** around the world.
- **Award winning film** including:
  - Winner of People’s Choice Award, Best Documentary Feature at Edmonton International Film Festival, People’s Choice Award at Zonta Film Festival, Audience Choice Best Documentary Runner-Up at Cinefest Film Festival
  - Record breaking attendance at Calgary Underground Film Festival
  - Sold-out theaters at Cinefest, EIFF, Zonta, CUFF Docs, Red Deer Justice Film Festival, Kingston Canadian Film Festival

## QUICK FACTS

- Website: <https://thesecretmarathon.com/>
- Social Channels: [@TheSecretMarathon](#) (FB, IG, LinkedIN) [@ASecretMarathon](#) (Twitter)
- Photos: [Link](#)
- Film Trailer Link Youtube: <https://youtu.be/sNPxyL49-h0>
- Short Film Trailer: [Link for social media](#)
- Media Kit: [Link](#)
- Feature Length Film Link: <https://vimeo.com/thesecretmarathon/>

Primary Media Contact:

Kate McKenzie, Co-Director & Executive Producer

Email: [info@thesecretmarathon.com](mailto:info@thesecretmarathon.com)

Martin Parnell, Executive Producer

Email: [info@martinparnell.com](mailto:info@martinparnell.com)

**Social Media Information**

#TheSecret3K

Instagram: [@thesecretmarathon](https://www.instagram.com/thesecretmarathon)

Facebook: [@thesecretmarathon](https://www.facebook.com/thesecretmarathon)

Youtube: [The Secret Marathon](https://www.youtube.com/TheSecretMarathon)

Twitter: [@asecretmarathon](https://www.twitter.com/asecretmarathon)