

MY IMAGINARY COUNTRY

(Mi País Imaginario)

A film by Patricio Guzmán



83min/ Chile/France /Spanish with English subtitles/1.85/DCP/Colour/2022
Official Selection Cannes Film Festival 2022- Special Screening

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SYNOPSIS

“October 2019, an unexpected revolution, a social explosion. One and a half million people demonstrated in the streets of Santiago for more democracy, a more dignified life, a better education, a better health system and a new Constitution. Chile had recovered its memory. The event I had been waiting for since my student struggles in 1973 finally materialized.”

Patricio Guzmán



Further information and downloads [here](#)

Photo sets to download [here](#)

Director/Writer	Patricio Guzmán
Director of Photography	Samuel Lahu
Editor	Laurence Manheimer
Music	Miranda y Tobar
Sound	Juan Carlos Maldonado Dubo, Aymeric Duras
Producer	Renate Sachse (Atacama Productions)
Co-Producers	Olivier Père - ARTE France Cinéma (France) Alexandra Galvis - Market Chile
Executive Producer	Benjamin Lanlard
Financial Partners	CNC, ARTE Cinéma, ARTE TV, Creative Media Europe, Region Île de France, Consejo Nacional de las Culturas, las Artes y el Patrimonio (Chile)



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PATRICIO GUZMÁN

Patricio Guzmán was born in 1941 in Santiago de Chile. He studied at the Official School of Cinematographic Art in Madrid. He dedicated his career to documentary film. His films, presented in numerous festivals, are internationally recognized.

Between 1972 and 1979, he directed *The Battle of Chile*, a five-hour trilogy on the government of Salvador Allende and its fall. This film laid the foundations of his cinema. The North American magazine CINEASTE named it among “the ten best political films in the world”.

After Pinochet's coup, he was arrested and locked up for two weeks in the National Stadium, where he was repeatedly threatened with mock executions.

In 1973, he left Chile and settled in Cuba, then in Spain and France, but remained very attached to his country and its history. He chairs the International Documentary Festival in Santiago de Chile (FIDOCs) which he created in 1997.

The Cordillera of Dreams presented in the official selection at the 2019 Cannes Film Festival, closes a trilogy that began with *Nostalgia of the Light* (Cannes 2010) and *The Pearl Button* (Berlin 2015). His new film, *My Imaginary Country*, was selected for the 2022 Cannes Film Festival.



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

My previous film, *The Cordillera of Dreams*, ended with a sequence in which I mentioned how my mother had taught me that when I saw a shooting star up in the sky, I could make a wish in my heart of hearts and that this wish could come true. In this final sequence, I said out loud that my wish was for Chile to recuperate its childhood and joy.

In October 2019, when my film came out in France, something completely unexpected happened in Chile a revolution, a social uprising. A million and a half people marched for more democracy, for a more dignified life, better education, and a better health system for all. Chile had gotten its memory back.



Since Allende, I had never seen such a thing. As in the days of Popular Unity, I heard old songs written by Victor Jara, *Los Prisioneros*, and many others. They were now sung by today's Chileans. I realized that memory had been perfectly passed down and was very much alive.

Thousands of citizens marched, shouted, and tagged the walls. Ordinary people. Many of them were the parents of students who were marching, retired people, former civil servants, or employees, anonymous people. There was no leader then, there is no such thing now. We did not see any famous people.

The people marched the streets, faced the police and their water cannons. Many people lost an eye. Thousands of them were injured and thirty-two died. But how could it be that a whole people had woken up forty-seven years after Pinochet's coup in a so-called social outburst, a major rebellion or even a revolution?

To me, it was a mystery.

So, I looked into that mystery. I filmed its effect on the atmosphere, the air the emotions and the feelings of my fellow countrymen and women.

Fifty years after I directed the *Battle of Chile*, I was in the streets again, filming what was happening. I was there when the Chilean people voted for a new constitution and obtained an 80% majority in favour of a constituent assembly. I was there when a thirty-five-year-old left-wing new president, Gabriel Boric, was elected with 56% of the votes. An unprecedented event in the history of the country, my imaginary country...

Patricio Guzmán

AN INTERVIEW WITH PATRICIO GUZMÁN BY KALEEM AFTAB IN CINEUROPA

In October 2019, one and a half million Chileans took to the streets of Santiago demanding changes to the constitution in order to make Chile more democratic, improve the education and health systems, and enable the building of a new country. It was the event that director Patricio Guzmán (Nostalgia for the Light) had been waiting for ever since ever since he took part in demonstrations in 1973.

Cineuropa: Were you surprised by what happened on 17 October 2019, or did you always think the spirit that had propelled Allende to power in Chile would return?

Patricio Guzmán: It was a shock – no one was expecting this to happen. From one day to the next, a change happened, and this was a movement without a leader. It came about because of what people were writing on the internet, and then suddenly, everyone was on the streets.

Do you think it makes it trickier to succeed when there are movements without leaders?

It was not a problem. At the start, it was the students conducting a protest about the Metro. The objective was clear: to meet in the square and demonstrate. What was surprising was that one million people turned up on the streets.

Were you there to witness it, and did you know that you would make a documentary right away?

No, I was in Paris when this happened, so I saw all this unfold on television. I only decided to make this film afterwards, and then I went to Chile twice to record and film what was happening. We went in October and November 2020 for the first time. We had difficulties with the lockdown both times we went.

In the film, you contrast your own experiences in the 1970s and being imprisoned in the stadium with what is happening today. Do you think the movements are similar?

No. What is happening today is very different to what happened before. What is similar is that they are both protest moments; however, the times are very different.

What is the significance of the title? Because this is Chile; it's not an imaginary country...

That's true, it's not an imaginary country. However, it's a difficult and complicated country. What we mean by an imaginary country is that the future is not written, and these protestors are working towards a society that they would like and hope to see. It's the future country that's imaginary until it comes to pass.

The film is less philosophical than some of your other documentaries, and more direct, too –why did you decide to do that?

It's reportage. I did this because it's the most direct way of telling this story. It was a spontaneous decision to make this film, and I wanted to show what was happening. There was no need to make a fable out of it.

How did you choose the talking heads who appear in the documentary?

We had a list of 40 or 50 women. We wanted to concentrate on the voices of women because that is the big difference between the 1970s and today: the role of women in public life. Today, women are a central part of public life, their voice is important, and it was particularly essential in this movement.



PROTEST SONG IN THE FILM

“EL VIOLADOR ERES TÚ”

CANCIÓN DE “TESIS”

*El patriarcado es un juez
Que nos juzga por nacer
Y nuestro castigo
Es la violencia que no ves*

*El patriarcado es un juez
Que nos juzga por nacer
Y nuestro castigo
Es la violencia que ya ves*

*Es feminicidio
Impunidad para el asesino
Es la desaparición
Es la violación*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni
cómo vestía*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni
cómo vestía*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni
cómo vestía*

*Y la culpa no era mía, ni dónde estaba, ni
cómo vestía*

*El violador eres tú
El violador eres tú*

*Son los pacos
Los jueces
El estado
El presidente*

*El estado opresor es un macho violador
El estado opresor es un macho violador*

“THE RAPIST IS YOU’ (SONG BY THE TESIS COLLECTIVE)

*Patriarchy is a judge
Who judges us for being born
And our punishment
Is the violence you don't see*

*Patriarchy is a judge
Who judges us for being born
And our punishment
Is the violence that you already see*

*It's femicide
Impunity for the murderer
It's the disappearance
It's rape*

*And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor
how I was dressed*

*And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor
how I was dressed*

*And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor
how I was dressed*

*And it's not my fault, nor where I was, nor
how I was dressed*

*The rapist is you
The rapist is you*

*They are the cops
The Judges
The state
The President*

*The oppressive state is a macho rapist
The oppressive state is a macho rapist*

Duerme tranquila

Niña inocente,

Sin preocuparte del bandolero

Que por tus sueños

Dulce y sonriente

Vela tu amante carabinero

El violador eres tú

El violador eres tú

El violador eres tú

Sleep peacefully

Innocent girl,

Without worrying about the bandit

That for your dreams

Sweet and smiling

Watch your policeman lover

The rapist is you

The rapist is you

The rapist is you