

A Monster High Creator Declares Children's Drawings Can Change the World in New Picture Book for Ages 3–7

Bear Affair Inc. announces the release of [The Secret Life of Tools](#) — a new back-to-school picture book for preschool and kindergarten classrooms.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, August 18, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Every parent and teacher has them: drawings taped to the refrigerator, pinned to classroom walls, tucked into drawers and saved without quite knowing why. Crayon castles. Lopsided houses for pets. Bear cubs with blue fur. The world may call them adorable. [Barry Waldo](#) believes they are something much more.



New Children's Book [The Secret Life of Tools: The Magic Begins When No One is Watching](#)

The former Disney executive and a creator of the global Monster High franchise brings that belief to life in [The Secret Life of Tools](#), a magical new children's picture book for ages 3–7, illustrated by Román Díaz and published August 18, by Bear Affair Inc.

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Get ready for a fun, action-packed read as you turn every page of [The Secret Life of Tools](#)! Barry Waldo's playful story is packed with rhythm that engages imagination, mind, creativity, and body.”

Dr. Suzi Tortora, Child Development Specialist, Founder Dancing Dialogue

The story begins with Pip, a young dreamer whose drawing flies out of the classroom window and lands beside a magical toolbox. Suddenly, the tools spring to life. Led by the Big Red Toolbox, they BUILD. They BANG. They BUZZ. They BOLT.

But there is a problem: Tick Tock the Clock is racing toward the school bell, and the magical tools must bring Pip's drawing to life before time runs out — and before anyone discovers their secret.

At the heart of The Secret Life of Tools is a simple message for every child who has ever picked up a crayon: What you draw today could change the world tomorrow.

“Get ready for a fun, action-packed read as you turn every page of The Secret Life of Tools!” said Dr. Suzi Tortora, Early Childhood Developmental Specialist and Founder/Director of Dancing Dialogue: A Creative Arts Center for Healing & Wellness in New York. “Barry Waldo's playful story is packed with rhythm and rhyme that stimulates every young listener's imagination, and engages their minds, creativity, and bodies.”

A STORY ABOUT DRAWINGS THAT COME TO LIFE — CREATED BY SOMEONE WHO HAS SEEN IT HAPPEN
Barry Waldo knows firsthand what can happen when a drawing becomes an idea — and an idea becomes something the world can see.

He began his career at Disney, where he oversaw global preschool brands including Winnie the Pooh. He later joined Mattel, where he led the creation of Monster High, a franchise that grew from an original creative drawing into a global phenomenon spanning publishing, toys, animation, fashion and entertainment.

That real-world transformation mirrors the central idea of The Secret Life of Tools: imagination is not merely something children do. It is where the things that shape the world begin.

At home, Barry has witnessed that creative process from another perspective. His spouse is one of Hollywood's celebrated production designers, whose credits include the Emmy-nominated Outlander, Burlesque starring Cher and Christina Aguilera, Cruel Intentions, and Neil Gaiman's The Sandman for Netflix.

Every building, costume, character and story begins somewhere — often with a pencil, a blank page and an idea.

A BACK-TO_SCHOOL BOOK ABOUT DREAMS, TELLING TIME AND STEM



Look Inside: The Secret Life of Tools by Barry Waldo, Illustrated by Román Díaz



Author Barry Waldo and his Beloved Book Characters

Written as a funny, fast-moving rhyming adventure, *The Secret Life of Tools* is designed for read-alouds at home and in preschool, kindergarten and first-grade classrooms. The result is a growth-mindset read-aloud and STEM storytime book that gives educators and parents a playful way to talk with young children about ideas, invention and the creative process. "This book is filled with joy, surprise, heartfelt messages, and creative genius. It's so relatable to children and packed with teachable moments. And the Toy Story feel? That's the bonus," says Educator Kim Ahart Thompson, Talented and Gifted Teacher, Ward Central Elementary, Cabot, Arkansas Public School District.

AVAILABILITY & LAUNCH EVENT

The Secret Life of Tools is available beginning today, August 18, 2026, in hardcover (\$19.99), paperback (\$13.99) and eBook (\$6.99) wherever children's books are sold.

On Saturday, August 22, at 10 a.m., Waldo will appear at the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival venue in Garrison, New York, for a global launch event at the Cold Spring Farmers Market. The event will feature a book signing, Q&A moderated by childhood expert Dr. Suzi Tortora, and tips to get started on that "picture book you've been thinking about forever," says Waldo.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Román Díaz was born in Mexico. Since he was a child, he always wanted to draw like adults. Now that he is an adult, he likes to draw like children — an approach that serves him extraordinarily well. Represented by Astound Agency, Díaz has created illustrations for books, video games, and a wide range of creative projects. His work on *The Secret Life of Tools* brings warmth, humor, and extraordinary detail to Barry Waldo's magical world, giving every tool a personality, every page a heartbeat, and every young reader a reason to look twice.

ABOUT BARRY WALDO

Barry Waldo is a #1 Amazon bestselling author of seven children's picture books and a former Disney executive who oversaw global preschool brands including Winnie the Pooh. At Mattel, he led the creation of the Monster High franchise. His books include the Bear in a Bow Tie series — *The Bear Who Dared*, *UnFROGettable Friends* (Puerto Rico) with Grammy-winning co-author Luis Fonsi, *The Bear and Pierre le Flair* (France), and *Blue Hears a Moo!* (Scotland) — as well as the Dirt Diggers Club series about gardening, including *Messy McFarlen's Tomato Garden* and *Big Bloom Ka-BOOM!*

A graduate of the University of Arkansas and the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, Waldo is a member of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI).

ABOUT BEAR AFFAIR INC

Bear Affair Inc. is an independent picture book imprint dedicated to human-written stories that spark imagination, celebrate difference and remind children, and the adults who love them, that big dreams get built one drawing at a time.

BOOK DETAILS

Title: The Secret Life of Tools

Author and Creator: Barry Waldo

Illustrator: Román Díaz

Publisher: Bear Affair Inc.

Publication Date: August 18, 2026

Age Range: 3-7

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