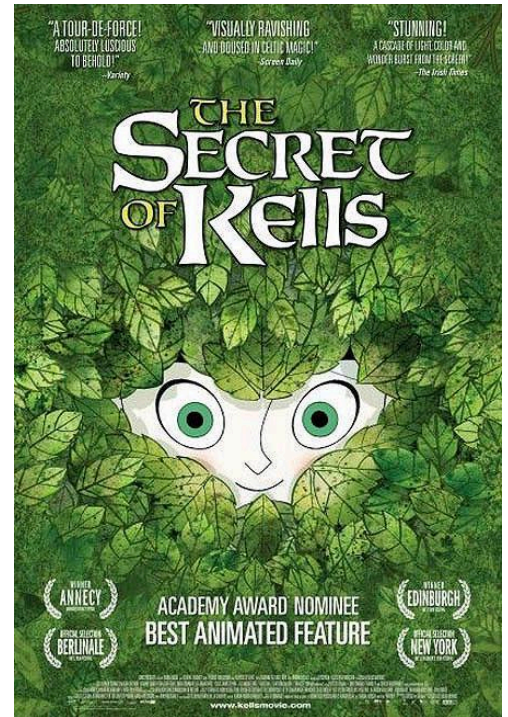


The Secret of the Kells an Extra Credit Assignment

Here is a short review of the movie by Charles Solomon:

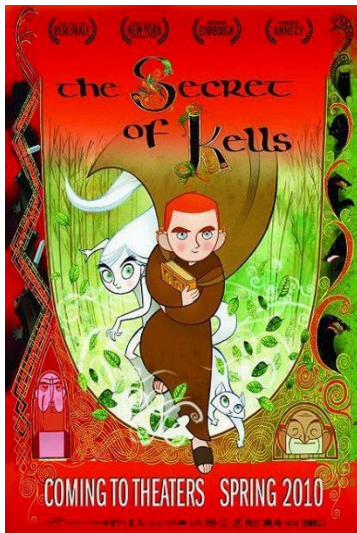
In contrast to big-budget Hollywood CG features, *The Secret of the Kells* is a welcome reminder of how warm, personal, and compelling traditional drawn animation can be. The story takes place in the eighth century, a perilous time when Viking raiders threatened to destroy Irish civilization. Since his parents were killed by Vikings, 12-year-old Brendan (voice by Evan McGuire) has lived within the walled monastery of Kells under the stern eye of his uncle, Abbot Cellach (Brendan Gleeson). But his life changes when Brother Aidan (Mick Lally) arrives at Kells with a wondrously beautiful but unfinished illuminated manuscript, created to be "a beacon in these dark times." Brendan realizes he wants to become an illuminator and complete the book, despite his uncle's opposition. His decision helps him win the friendship of Aisling (Christen Mooney), a silver-haired wood fairy--and requires him to battle the monstrous pagan god Crom Cruach. The visuals in *The Secret of the Kells* were inspired by the eighth-century manuscript the Book of Kells, which has been preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Fans of *Samurai Jack* will recognize another influence on the flat, angular figures and their stylized movements. Brendan's adventures are exciting enough to keep children entertained, while its graphic beauties will delight adult viewers. *The Secret of the Kells* surprised many observers when it earned an Oscar nomination for Best Animated Feature, and it's a film no one interested in animation should miss. (Unrated: suitable for ages 8 and older: some scary imagery and violence.) --Charles Solomon



Important: The film is available from Netflix Streaming.

While you watch this movie – take notes (just jot a few words down) on these two central points:

- Connections between this movie and what you read about the Monastic (look it up) life (including creating and preserving texts) and the Celtic Culture from your text book (look up the Book of Kells).
- Connections with what you learned about the Shaper from the novel, *Grendel*. Think about it – while Brendan is concerned with completing and preserving the art of Brother Aidan, his uncle is more concerned with the worldly preservation of the monastery – what does Brendan see about the connection between these two ideas.



When you are done – post one response in each of these two forums: The Secret of the Kells – Historical Connections, and The Secret of the Kells – Art and the Shaper. Make sure you observe correct grammatical and other writing conventions in your postings – be specific and insightful (and try to be original). Also, respond (thoughtfully and specifically) to one posting that someone else has written in each of these forums.

Have fun and enjoy the movie. Cut and paste your postings and responses, print them, and turn them in – you will then take a short quiz to assess your watching

of the film.