

The Banshees of Inisherin



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This one really made me mad. I just turned it off about five minutes ago, so I am writing mad, as should be. I mentioned this new film a few months ago, saying I could tell from the previews it was about the only thing of 2022 worth even giving a shot. I was mostly right. The acting and cinematography is amazing all round, the setting is smashing, and the script is fabulous. . . up to a point. The first half is clever and touching and funny and even deep, as well as tightly written and staged, but writer/director Martin McDonagh can't leave it at that. He has to go all Modern on us halfway through, to save himself from being accused of making a sweet movie, I suppose. He doesn't want to be compared to John Sayles or the *Secret of Roan Inish*, since that would be death to a cool guy like him. So he has to start lopping fingers and killing cute donkeys, for no apparent reason except to feck with our heads. A lovely movie quickly turns into yet another Phoenician nightmare.

I saw it coming. I was watching for free online, of course. I won't pay to see a movie anymore, since I know how it goes. I have walked out of way too many movies, and I don't need to waste any more money on tickets or gas driving to a fucking theater. I know I am just there to be messed with. They want to break me, but I won't be broken.

I saw it coming after the first finger came off. I thought this can't turn out well, so I paused the movie and went to Wikipedia to read the plot of the second half. Sure enough, he kills the donkey, just as I expected. I knew he would since he spent so much time in the first half of the film making us love that donkey. So it was only there to be slaughtered. I know how these people work.

So I didn't see it. I only had to read about it, which didn't do the job it intended of further traumatizing me. In my head the cute donkey is still alive, and I think I will get a little furry donkey to live in my own house. Seems like a good idea.

I write this only to warn you: watch the first half and then turn it off. The first half is truly amazing. Some of the best cinematography I have ever seen. I am highly nostalgic, and part Irish, being a Malloy from that area, and I have even visited those islands. I spent five weeks in Galway and toured

the coasts and islands, drinking it in. Even thought of moving there, but unfortunately you can't move back to 1925. All that is gone now, worse every year, thanks to the Phoenicians and their "progress". You may have me pegged as a city boy, with my head full of learning, but I could easily be satisfied living on a island like that, living with animals, and delivering milk or making shoes by hand or something. I have done so in many previous lives and I miss it. I do not look back on the past with contempt, I look forward on the future with dread. I can't imagine being part of it.

But let's back up and tighten our focus a bit. As more proof this is about McDonagh inducing trauma, notice how he purposely wrote a script where everyone on this island except one *woman* is retarded or mental, and she ends up moving to the mainland to escape the chaos. So the past and rural living is blackwashed. Even worse is the present, where you sitting in the theater or at home are presented with with a lovely idyllic setting, a gorgeous coastline, smashing sunsets, furry miniature donkeys and pretty old carts, multi-color clothes flapping in the breeze on a clothes line, and then it is all yanked out from under you and butchered and burned to the ground, in the name of "comedy". I don't know about you, but that is the last thing I wanted from this movie. What I wanted was what we got in the first half: nostalgia, scenery, some laughs, and a bit of philosophy. What no one wanted or needed was this movie to morph halfway through into *John Wick*.

I ask again why movies always have to be like this. The Phoenicians can't seem to make a movie where Bambi's mother doesn't get killed, or Mufasa doesn't get thrown under a stampede, or Old Yeller doesn't get his brain's blown out, or Joe's mother doesn't get killed by an Owen Meany line drive. Even Pollyanna has to fall from a tall tree and break both legs. Why? I will be told it is because life is tragic, and children have to be taught that. But I don't buy it. Cinema is far more violent and traumatic than real life, so it isn't a preparation for anything. And you don't "prepare" someone for trauma by tripling their trauma. To me, it looks like cinema is actually seeding trauma, by creating traumatized people who are then lightning rods for trauma. To be blunt, Hollywood is fecking us up on purpose. We are far better consumers that way.

So this isn't about teaching kids about life, softening the blow of trauma, or anything like that. It isn't about the healing or annealing power of tragedy in theater, or about catharsis. It is about sadism, pure and simple. As usual, it is about the ruling families crushing the rest of us under their fake art, science, philosophy, religion, news and politics. It is about manufacturing fear, chaos, division, confusion, and disease for profit and control.

I was so mad at the donkey thing, I almost put my fist through the computer screen. If I had seen it I might have, like I did years ago when I stomped my television into tiny pieces. But I think this is it for me and new movies. I'm done. I was already pretty much done twenty five years ago, but let this be a final lesson to me. These people have nothing to say I am interested in hearing.