

## Film Review: Breathless Beauty Within Animated Wonder ‘Song of the Sea’

Submitted by [NickHC](#) [1] on February 20, 2015 - 9:21pm

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CHICAGO – Just in time for its potential win of the “Best Animated Feature” Oscar this Sunday, the Irish animated film “Song of the Sea” opens this weekend at Chicago’s Music Box Theater. A grab-bag myth come to storytelling life, this film is vitalized by its gorgeous animation as much as the heart within its narrative. An accomplishment that would make the likes of Hayao Miyazaki proud, “Song of the Sea” is a gift to fans of animation.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

This animated treasure from the “Secret of Kells” director Tomm Moore is an original story, but based on the Irish folklore of Selkies, creatures that live as seals in the sea, but humans on land. Moore angles his Selkie tale to focus on themes of humans dealing with burrowed grief. In “Song of the Sea,” a father (Conor, voiced by Brendan Gleeson) cares for his children, his pre-teen Ben (David Rawle) and six-year-old mute daughter Saoirse (Lucy O’Connell). The three of them live alone on an island, at the top of a very big hill, in a lighthouse. The family unit has felt incomplete since the passing of the mother, who Ben remembers vividly as a baby, before she left the family after giving birth to Saoirse.

Conor’s mother (known as Granny, voiced by Fionnula Flanagan) tries to fix the unit’s sadness by removing the children from their isolated home, and making them live with her. When Ben isn’t allowed to take his delightful dog Cú along with, he and Saoirse escape Granny’s house, and travel back to their father’s island. Though Ben has angst towards his young sister during this journey, he learns about her special Selkie background, and helps her save fairies who have let themselves become stones for the price of losing their difficult emotions. Their feelings are stored by an owl-looking woman named Macha (also voiced by Flanagan).

*“Song of the Sea” opens at Chicago’s Music Box Theater on February 20. Featuring the voices of Brendan Gleeson, Fionnula Flanagan, David Rawle, Lisa Hannigan, Lucy O’Connell, and Jon Kenny. Written by Will Collins & Tomm Moore, directed by Moore. Rated “PG”*



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‘Song of the Sea’

Photo credit: GKIDS



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