


A wide-angle landscape photograph of a loch at sunset. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white and orange-tinted clouds. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow over the scene. In the foreground, the calm water of the loch perfectly reflects the sky, clouds, and the surrounding mountains. The mountains are dark and rugged, with some snow or light-colored rock visible on their peaks. In the distance, a small village with white buildings is visible on the right side of the loch. The overall mood is serene and majestic.

MARA OF THE LOCH

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A wide-angle landscape shot of a Scottish loch. The water is calm and reflects the sky. In the background, a large, craggy rock formation stands prominently. The surrounding hills are covered in lush green grass. The sky is a pale, hazy blue.

A lonely teenage artist visiting her grandparents on a remote Scottish loch befriends a selkie girl whose stolen sealskin awakens an ancient kelpie, forcing her family to confront forgotten grief before one act of sacrifice turns memory into legend.

STORY

Mara of the Loch is a Scottish folklore fantasy about Isla, a city girl reluctantly staying with her grandparents on the Isle of Harris. Bored, restless, and feeling out of place, Isla is drawn to the loch, where she meets Mara, a strange, ageless girl who lives between land and water.

Their friendship opens the door to an older world of wisps, seals, standing stones, lost songs, and family secrets. When Mara's sealskin is stolen, she begins to fade, and Isla's family is pulled into a mystery stretching back to Granny's childhood, and her sister Eilidh, who once saw the same darkness beneath the water.

The trail leads from the village festival to the black standing stone, the Seal's Mouth cave, and finally a cliffside confrontation with the kelpie, an ancient creature that feeds on loneliness and speaks in the voices of the dead. When Isla is thrown into the loch, Mara destroys the kelpie and dives after her, saving her friend at a terrible cost. Years later, Isla has turned that sacrifice into a children's book, keeping Mara alive the only way she can: through story.

TONE

A scenic view of a coastal town with colorful houses and a loch, with a large white house on a hill in the background. The foreground is filled with out-of-focus red and green foliage.

Mara of the Loch blends the wonder of a coming-of-age fairytale with the atmosphere of Scottish folk-horror: intimate, lyrical, eerie, and emotionally bittersweet, with magic rooted in grief, memory, family, and the wild power of the loch.

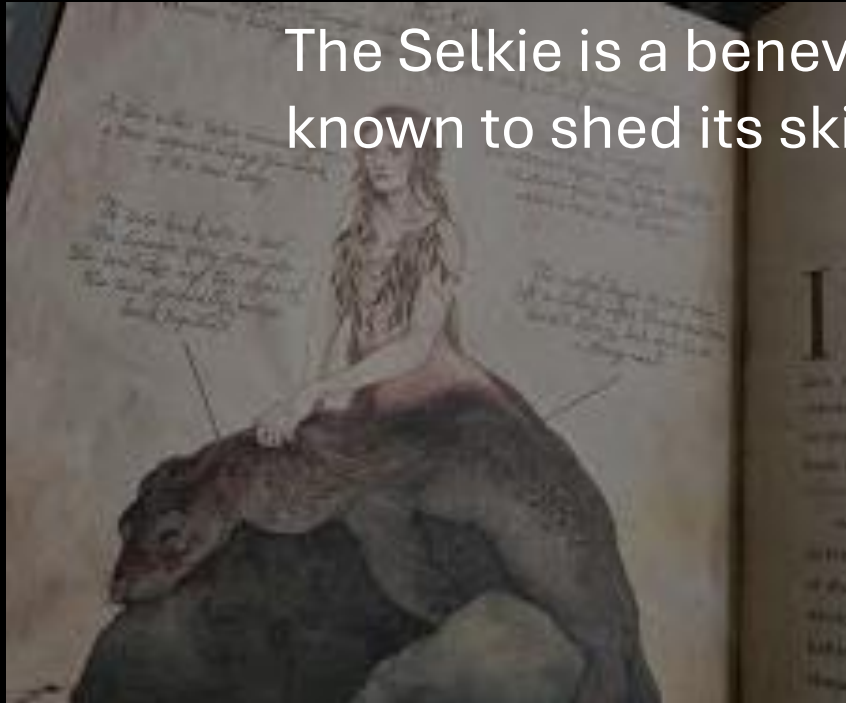
Bright lush greens blues and purples that turn grey and desaturated as the mystery unfolds.

THE WORLD OF MARA OF THE LOCH

Sitting between myth and the modern day lies the world of Mara of the Loch. Drawing on Gaelic legends of Kelpies, Selkies and other tales Mara of the Loch blends these two worlds.



The Selkie is a benevolent kind shapeshifting water spirit known to shed its skin and become human.





The kelpie is a malevolent shapeshifting water spirit often known to lure humans to their deaths near bodies of water



A cinematic photograph of three people sitting on large, dark rocks on a rocky shore. They are facing away from the camera, looking out over a calm body of water towards a sunset. The sky is filled with soft, orange and pink clouds. In the foreground, a small campfire is burning brightly on the ground. Various items like a red cup, a blue container, and a bottle are scattered around the fire. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

CHARACTERS

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Isla

A restless, artistic fourteen-year-old city girl who feels disconnected from the island until Mara awakens her courage, imagination, and belief in old stories.

Mara

A mysterious selkie girl of the loch: playful, ancient, lonely, and magical. Her stolen sealskin drives the story, and her sacrifice becomes Isla's legend.



Mum

Practical, protective, and skeptical at first, she is forced to believe when Isla's life is threatened. Her love grounds the supernatural danger.

Granny / Jean

Warm, sharp, and quietly wise. She carries childhood memories of Mara and the family guilt surrounding her sister's encounter with the loch's darkness.



Granddad / John

Gentle, steady, and brave. He becomes the family's practical problem-solver, tracking the stolen sealskin and protecting Isla.

Angus

A grief-stricken local carver manipulated by the creature using the voice of his lost Morven. Not evil but broken and used.



Eilidh

Granny's late sister, an artist who once believed in Mara and saw the darkness beneath the loch. Her old sketches become the map to the truth.

The Kelpie / Loch Ghost

The ancient antagonist beneath the water. It feeds on loneliness, stolen voices, and memory, using grief to lure people into serving it.



Morven

Angus's lost loved one, never truly present, but her voice is used by the kelpie to manipulate him.

Adult Isla

Isla years later, now the author of *Mara of the Loch*, keeping Mara alive through story even after the world has forgotten her.



CASTING

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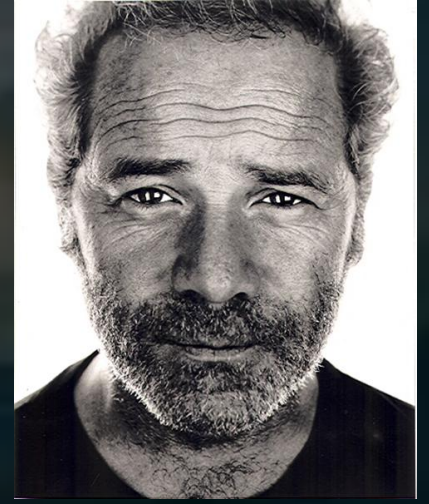
GRANDAD / JOHN



GREGOR FISHER



JAMES COSMO



PETER MULLAN

GRANNY / JEAN



EMMA THOMPSON



CELIA IMRIE

MUM



KELLY MACDONALD



KATE DICKIE

ANGUS



JAMES MCAVOY



ROBERT CARLYLE



DOUGRAY SCOTT

† ISLA & MARA †

† EILIDH †

† MORVEN †

† KELPIE / LOCH GHOST †

† OPEN CASTING †



ADULT ISLA

AUTHOR HANNA MACLENNAN

An aerial photograph of a coastal town, likely in Ireland, featuring a long row of white, two-story buildings with grey roofs along a rocky coastline. The water is a deep teal color, and the sky is filled with dramatic, grey clouds. The text 'MOOD BOARD' is overlaid in the center in a white, serif font, with two small white stars positioned below the 'O's.

MOOD BOARD

DIRECTOR – KIERAN P. KELLY

Kieran has over 20 years of experience across film and television
In front of the lens in projects *'Rebus'*, *'Stone of Destiny'*, *'Burke & Hare'*, *'Outlander'* as well as others.

In 2017 he led *'The Inescapable Arrival of Lazlo Petushki'* to a Best Short BAFTA win.

After moving away from acting, he has worked behind the camera on short form content with Greenroom Films as well as Producing *'Broken Glass'* a short film highlighting the mental health struggles our emergency service personal have to deal with, starring Stephen McCole (*The Magdalene Sisters, High Times & Rushmore*) and Graham Cole Obe (*The Bill*).



DIRECTORS STATEMENT

‘Mara of the Loch’ for me is about being young and in that odd space between childhood and adulthood, about meeting new friends and spending the summer adventuring going places you know you shouldn’t.

When I read ‘Mara of the Loch’ By Hannah MacLennan although short it transported me to my childhood summering in the north coast of Scotland around Durness and Smoo Cave. I remembered all the legends and myths of that part of Scotland about good skin changing Selkies, the malevolent horse spirit the Kelpie and I wanted to expand on it. I wanted to bring that unique landscape to life for people and children who might not ever get to see that part of our world.

Having gained the rights to make a screenplay from her short story I chiefly wanted to have a story that is folklore and legend but not so far from our world as to be utterly fantastical. I want the audience to believe that this could happen in their world, so I went down a more of a mystery ‘who done it’ route and used magic and folklore to complement the world, think ‘*Loch Ness, 1996*’ or ‘*The Water Horse, 2007*’ it becomes more believable for the audience as well as reducing the need for CG elements.

The story is firmly based on Scottish Gaelic folklore, my vision is that anything relating to that folklore should be authentic to the Scottish Gaelic communities and not a stereotype of their ways of life and heritage. For this reason, I would like to film exclusively on the islands or Inner Hebrides like the isle of Skye and not revert to covering everything with tartan and bagpipes although there may be a small place for those set pieces.

Our cast and crew will be predominantly Scottish or based full time in Scotland for me, Mara and Isla need to be from the Highlands and Islands for the authenticity and respect of the lore so open castings will be held in those areas to find our leads.

I would like this film to be a true representation of Scotland its culture, myths and legends. Creature design will come wholly from Pictish and ancient drawings, the sketches in both sketchbooks should reflect this as well as the amulet designs.

For the colours, Scotland in summer is full of bright greens, cool blues and purples I would like the character wardrobe to reflect this then beginning to get darker into greys and browns as the tone of the film changes into a darker theme think ‘*Harry potter and the Philosophers Stone then Prisoner of Azkaban*’. Having a visual tonal shift for the audience I believe will help overall immersion.

I love to tell a story; I always have done. Mara for me is a culmination of that love and my passion for Scottish folk history. – Kieran P. Kelly | Director.