

# THE EPOCH TIMES

# ARTS & CULTURE

BOB EASTON



The reredos (a large decorative piece behind the altar) showing limewood carvings of flowers, shells, and strings of pearls, by Grinling Gibbons, pictured from below at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London.

## FINE ARTS

# The Michelangelo of Wood: Grinling Gibbons

The Grinling Gibbons Society exhibition:  
'Grinling Gibbons:  
Centuries in the Making'

## LORRAINE FERRIER

"Stupendous and beyond all description ... the incomparable carving of our Gibbons, who is without controversy the greatest master both for innovation and rareness of work that the world ever had in any age," wrote 17th-century diarist John Evelyn about Grinling Gibbons, the greatest decorative carver in British history.

This year marks 300 years since Gibbons's death, and the Grinling Gibbons Society has put together a yearlong festival to mark the tercentenary: Grinling Gibbons 300. One of the events is the exhibition "Grinling Gibbons: Centuries in the Making."

*Continued on Page 4*

“  
**Gibbons's carvings are almost the equivalent of still-life paintings, but in wood.**

*Hannah Phillip, curator*



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LITERATURE

# The Fabulous Fable: A Gift for All Ages

JEFF MINICK

In “Literature: An Introduction to Fiction, Poetry, and Drama,” the hefty volume once used by my Advanced Placement English Literature classes, X.J. Kennedy opens with a discussion of the fable. Naturally, he mentions that most famous practitioner of this genre, Aesop (circa 620–560 B.C.)

Little is known of the life of Aesop other than he was Greek—some debate his very existence—but many of the 584 fables attributed to him remain familiar to us to this day. Children still read or hear “The Tortoise and the Hare,” “The Boy Who Cried Wolf,” “The Fox and the Grapes,” and “The Dog and the Wolf.”

As Kennedy writes, a fable is “a brief story that sets forth a pointed statement of truth.” The characters in fables “may be talking animals (as in many of Aesop’s fables), inanimate objects, or people and supernatural beings (as in “The Appointment in Samarra.”)

Fables Are Universal

These qualities make the fable readily transferable cultural commodities. Aesop’s stories, for example, have long belonged to the world. The 10th century, for example, produced a collection of the Greek’s fables in Central Asia in the Uyghur language. In the 16th century, Portuguese missionaries introduced Aesop to the Japanese.

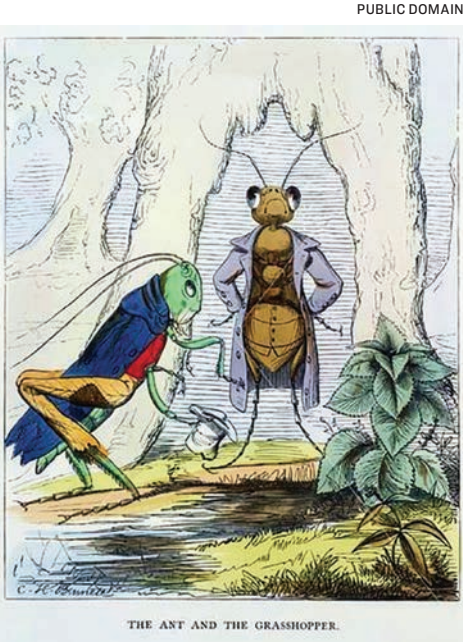
Other fabulists have also found popularity outside their own countries. Perhaps foremost among these was Jean de La Fontaine, whose late 17th-century collections became literary classics and remain familiar not only to French children but also to others around the world.

The timeless wisdom of fables can act as ballast and moorings for our children.

Like their characters, the moral truths of these short tales also appeal to a broad spectrum of cultures. Whether you are from the shores of the Ganges River or from the mountains of Colorado, you understand the message in a fable like “The Ant and the Grasshopper.” The ant works hard throughout the summer preparing his larder for the cruel months of winter, while the grasshopper merrily plays his fiddle and laughs in derision at the toiling ant. When storms and snow come, as they always do, it is the grasshopper that finds himself hungry and shivering in the cold. The moral of this story is twofold: Be responsible for yourself; there’s a time to work and a time to play. Most human beings acknowledge such ideas as true.

A Fable for Grownups

Let’s look now at a much more modern fable, Somerset Maugham’s version of an old Arabic legend, “The Appointment in Samarra,” which Kennedy includes in “Literature.” Here it is in its entirety: Death speaks: There was a merchant



An 1857 illustration of Aesop’s fable “The Ant and the Grasshopper.”

in Bagdad who sent his servant to market to buy provisions and in a little while the servant came back, white and trembling, and said, Master, just now when I was in the marketplace I was jostled by a woman in the crowd and when I turned I saw it was Death that jostled me. She looked at me and made a threatening gesture; now, lend me your horse, and I will ride away from this city and avoid my fate. I will go to Samarra and there Death will not find me. The merchant lent him his horse, and the servant mounted it, and he dug his spurs into its flanks and as fast as the horse could gallop he went. Then the merchant went down to the marketplace and he saw me standing in the crowd and he came to me and said, Why did you make a threatening gesture to my servant when you saw him this morning? That was not a threatening gesture, I said, it was only a start of surprise. I was astonished to see him in Bagdad, for I had an appointment with him tonight in Samarra.

Clearly, “The Appointment in Samarra” is not intended for children. The fables mentioned earlier may appeal even to the preschool crowd, but Maugham’s tiny gem of writing is too confusing and frightening for the little ones.

A Deeper Look

Yet I chose “The Appointment in Samarra” for analysis here for three reasons.

First, Maugham’s little story contains all the classic elements of a fable. It’s short, the language is succinct and without decoration, and Death appears in human form, in this case as a woman. Though the moral is not directly referenced, as it is in so many fables—Kennedy asks his student readers, “How would you state it in your own words?”—most of us would conclude that the message is that we cannot escape our fate, particularly in regard to death.

And unlike some fables, “The Appointment in Samarra” raises some important questions: What is fate? Do we believe in destiny or in free will? “I am the master of my fate,” wrote poet William Ernest Henley, “I am the captain of my soul.” Maugham’s fable challenges us to consider the truth of that bold proclamation.

Finally, I decided to elaborate on “The Appointment in Samarra” because of its power. I’ve read Maugham’s words with numerous classes, have mentioned it in some of my writing, and have told



An illustration of “The Hare and the Tortoise” from the 1855 edition of La Fontaine’s “Fables.”



(Left) A facsimile of the 1489 Spanish edition of “Aesop’s Fables” (“*Fabulas de Esopo*”) published in Madrid in 1929. The frontispiece woodcut depicts Aesop surrounded by images and events from the “Life of Aesop” by Planudes. (Right) W. Somerset Maugham’s fable “The Appointment in Samarra” is not for children. “The Gentleman and Death,” 17th century, by Pedro de Camprobin. Hospital de la Caridad.



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were acquainted with this story. We can easily equip our children with this wisdom. Our libraries and bookshops are loaded with these collections—my library has more than 20 books of Aesop’s fables alone—and many of these books are handsomely illustrated, adding to their appeal to the young. If the children enjoy videos, you can find dozens of sites promoting fables through cartoons and dramatic readings online. Give this gift to our children, and it will last them a lifetime.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. He is the author of two novels, “Amanda Bell” and “Dust On Their Wings,” and two works of nonfiction, “Learning As I Go” and “Movies Make The Man.” Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.



INSPIRED  
ORIGINAL





The Quire (the choir stalls) of St Paul's Cathedral in London was one of Grinling Gibbons's most illustrious commissions and a defining symbol of professional triumph.

FINE ARTS

# The Michelangelo of Wood: Grinling Gibbons

## The Grinling Gibbons Society exhibition: ‘Grinling Gibbons: Centuries in the Making’



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“They are almost forms of sculpture pinned to the wall.”

Hannah Phillip, curator

Continued from **Page 1**

Hannah Phillip, Grinling 300 director and the exhibition curator, explained in a telephone interview, that the exhibition aims to highlight Gibbons's life and legacy and to shine a light on where to enjoy Gibbons's work in situ.

To that end, the Grinling Gibbons Society has created an online catalog called “Grinling Gibbons Online” to record the artist's work worldwide. Any works attributed to Gibbons and his followers, or works that are questionably his are included in the online catalog in the hope of opening up debate about his work.

**Discovering a Diligent Carver**  
In his diary, Evelyn described how he

(Left) Grinling Gibbons, 1690, by John Smith, after Sir Godfrey Kneller. Mezzotint; 13 3/8 inches by 10 5/16 inches. Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1925, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

(Below) The Barrow coat of arms, at Wren Library, Trinity College, Cambridge and details of the squirrel at top, and of nuts.

first met the 19-year-old Gibbons. While walking across fields near his home in Deptford, South London, he happened upon a solitary thatched cottage. Inside, he could see Gibbons carving a copy of an Italian Renaissance painting from an engraving. The painting was Tintoretto's “The Crucifixion.” Evelyn recognized the work because he also had an engraving, having purchased it in Venice during his Grand Tour. (The painting is regarded as one of the best examples of the Venetian style of painting.)

Evelyn was astounded by Gibbons's work. “The curiosity of handling, drawing and studious exactnesse, I never had before scene before in all my travells,” he wrote.

Puzzled, Evelyn asked Gibbons why he worked in “such an obscure & lonesome place.” Gibbons replied that it was so he could apply himself to his profession without interruption.

Evelyn was well-connected. Seeing such skill, he suggested that he could introduce the young Gibbons to great men who could employ him. Gibbons insisted that he was just a beginner, but that “The Cruxification” carving he was working on could be sold.

Evelyn described the carving. “There being nothing even in nature so tender, & delicate as the flowers & festoones about it, & yet the work was very strong.”

That chance encounter was fortuitous for the young artist. He made a deep impression on Evelyn, who found him very civil, sober, and discrete in his discourse. Evelyn, in his diary, recounted what he had told King Charles I about Gibbons's work: “I would adventure my reputation with his Majestie that he had never seene any thing approach it, & that he would be exceedingly pleased, & employ him.”

Gibbons's meeting with the king result-



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ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

ed in his receiving the first of many royal commissions. His first was the remodeling of Windsor Palace for Charles I. He then worked as the official royal carver and sculptor for monarchs from Charles II to George I.

As part of the royal court, he worked alongside the court architects, one of whom was the preeminent architect Sir Christopher Wren, who was helping to rebuild London after the Great Fire in 1666. Gibbons's most illustrious commissions were for Wren: the Quire (the choir stalls) at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, and the ornamentation of Wren Library at Trinity College in Cambridge, to name a couple.

**Grinling Gibbons**  
Gibbons's family were English merchants. His mother (whose maiden name is his first name, as per tradition at the time) came from a family of tobacco merchants. And his father was one of the Merchant Adventurers, a company of English merchants who traded mainly with the Netherlands.

The family lived in Rotterdam, in the Southern Netherlands, where Gibbons was surrounded by a myriad of artistic influences. It was the Dutch Golden Age, after all, when the Netherlands became world-renowned for its trade, military, science, art, and culture.

Dutch architecture, carving, sculpture, and the interest in still-life, flower, and genre (daily life) paintings flourished. “It was an amazing array of influences that he would have been able to imbibe. And we can ... see how he channeled that through his work,” Phillip said.

“Gibbons's carvings are almost the equivalent of still-life paintings, but in wood,” she said. She described a panel in the exhibition from St. James Church in Piccadilly, where an array of fruits, flowers, and animals appear real. “Not only does he draw on the natural world, but he does very successfully imitate it as well,” she said.

**Early Influences**  
It's unclear exactly who trained Gibbons, but there are a couple of theories. Documents detail that he once worked in Artus Quellinus the Elder's workshop in Amsterdam. Quellinus was the foremost sculptor at that time, specializing in stone, and so some scholars surmise that Gibbons may have developed his amazing skills under Quellinus's tutelage.

But Phillip explained that recent research by Ada de Wit has put forward another theory. De Wit is the curator of works of art and sculpture at the Wallace Collection in London, and has written her doctoral thesis on Dutch carvers operating in England. De Wit believes that Gibbons took an apprenticeship locally in Rotterdam with the van Douwe family of sculptors whose workshop was very close to where the Gibbons family lived.

Carving was part of Rotterdam's thriving shipbuilding industry. “It would have been a profession on his doorstep,” Phillip said. She explained that the designs and carvings that were being created for the vessels were more than just little embellishments. “This was not a bit of extra detail being put on. They're very lavish and ornate forms of ornamentation.” Gibbons would have been surrounded by this carving industry.

In the 1660s, Gibbons traveled to England where he first worked as a journeyman for the preeminent architect and craftsman John Etty, in York, in the north of England. Eventually he traveled south, and settled in Deptford, South London, the center of British naval shipbuilding where his fortunes changed when he met Evelyn.

When Gibbons came to England, wood carvings were executed in oak, but he pioneered the use of limewood. Phillip explained that woodcarving in England at that time was quite flat, and oak was traditionally used to ornament houses.

Limewood is different from oak. “It allows [for] much finer cutting and detailing, which is what Gibbons's work is all about—that realism, that lightness, and fluidity. ... He also exploited the color of limewood, which is very pale, and so set against oak, which is usually somewhat darker, it really brings forward the carving in its own right,” she said.

The flair with which Gibbons created his carvings to ornament houses made his carvings “art works in their own right; they are almost forms of sculpture pinned to the wall,” Phillip said.

“He's innovating in terms of materials, style, and influences,” she said. But he's also elevated woodcarving to an art form, she added. “Gibbons had great skill in undercutting and understanding the dimensions of things.”

“He was an amazing draftsman, as well as a carver. Some people can be technically very good at what they do, but they don't necessarily have that understanding of design and he had both,” Phillip said.

One iconic Gibbons carving in the exhibition demonstrates his virtuosity: A cravat carved in limewood that imitates Venetian point lace so delicately that it's astounding. The 18th-century art connoisseur Horace Walpole, who once owned the piece, decided to wear the fashionable cravat to a dinner party of distinguished French, Spanish, and Portuguese visitors at his neo-Gothic Strawberry Hill House in Twickenham, London.

**Exhibition Challenges**  
Most of Gibbons's work is part of the fabric of buildings, which meant that arranging an exhibition of his works was a “phenomenal undertaking,” Philip said. “You obviously don't want to arrange an exhibition at the risk of the objects.”

One of the works on show is part of the Quire in St. Paul's Cathedral, where the choir still sings. It's a stupendous piece and



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remarkable that it's on display. “The Quire is his tour de force carving,” Phillip said. In the 19th century, the cathedral Quire was shortened and the organ was moved. The part of the Quire that was removed is in the exhibition.

Phillip explained that one of the private loans came from a reordered carving, and because it had been reordered, it meant that the Gibbons Society didn't have to do any invasive removal of the work to borrow the piece for the show.

Another example of a rearranged carving in the exhibition is a surround for a mirror. Instead of a coherent design, the design loops in on itself. (I will clarify with Hannah what she means here. I thought it was an architectural surround on the wall (which we call a surround), not the frame. In the UK we would call a mirror frame exactly that so Connie has me thinking!)

Phillip hopes that the exhibition not only highlights Gibbons's life and legacy, but that visitors understand that carvers today continue to emulate and be inspired by him. Grinling Gibbons endures as the Michelangelo of wood.

*The Grinling Gibbons Society exhibition: “Grinling Gibbons: Centuries in the Making” is at Bonhams, New Bond Street, London, until Aug. 27. Compton Verney Art Gallery & Park, in Warwickshire will host the exhibition Sept. 25-Jan. 30, 2022. To find out more, visit Grinling-Gibbons.org*



BOB EASTON

The reredos (a large decorative piece behind the altar) crest by Grinling Gibbons, pictured from below, at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London. In the center, a pelican can be seen feeding its own blood to its young, symbolic of how Christ sacrificed himself for mankind.



V&A MUSEUM

Cravat, circa 1690, by Grinling Gibbons. Limewood with raised and openwork carving. Gift of the Hon. Mrs. Walter Levy; Victoria and Albert Museum, London.



LITERATURE

# Calls to Cancel Chaucer Ignore His Defense of Women and the Innocent, and Assume All His Characters’ Opinions Are His

JESSICA WOLLOCK

Spying is a risky profession. For the 14th-century English undercover agent-turned-poet Geoffrey Chaucer, the dangers—at least to his reputation—continue to surface centuries after his death.

In his July 2021 essay for the Times Literary Supplement, A.S.G. Edwards, professor of medieval manuscripts at the University of Kent in Canterbury, England, laments the removal of Geoffrey Chaucer from university curricula. Edwards says he believes this disappearance may be propelled by a vocal cohort of scholars who see the “father of English poetry” as a rapist, racist, and antisemite.

The predicament would have amused Chaucer himself. Jewish and feminist scholars, among others, are shooting down one of their earliest and wisest allies. This is happening when new research reveals a Chaucer altogether different from what many current readers have come to accept. My decades of research show that he was no raunchy proponent of bro culture but a daring and ingenious defender of women and the innocent.

As a medievalist who teaches Chaucer, I believe the movement to cancel Chaucer has been bamboozled by his trademark—his consummate skill as a master of disguise.

### Outfoxing the Professors

It’s true that Chaucer’s work contains toxic material. His “Wife of Bath’s Prologue” in “The Canterbury Tales,” his celebrated collection of stories, quotes at length from the long tradition of classical and medieval works on the evils of women, as mansplained by the Wife’s elderly husbands: “You say, just as worms destroy a tree, so a wife destroys her husband.”

Later, “The Prioress’s Tale” repeats the antisemitic blood libel story, the false accusation that Jews murdered Christians, at a time when Jews across Europe were under attack.

These poems in particular generate accusations that Chaucer propagated sexist and antisemitic material because he agreed with or enjoyed it.

Several prominent scholars seem convinced that Chaucer’s personal views are the same as those of his characters and that Chaucer is promoting these opinions. And they believe he abducted or raped a young



Detail from the “Canterbury Tales” mural, 1939, by Ezra Winter. Library of Congress John Adams Building, Washington, D.C.

woman named Cecily Chaumpaigne, although the legal records are enigmatic. It looks as though Cecily accused Chaucer of some such crime and he paid her to clear his name. It’s unclear what actually happened between them.

Critics cherry-pick quotations to support their claims about Chaucer. But if you examine his writings in detail, as I have, you’ll see that themes of concern for women and human rights, the oppressed, and the persecuted, reappear time and time again.

## Chaucer was actually an advocate for human rights.

### Chaucer the Spy

Readers often assume that Chaucer’s characters were a reflection of the writer’s own attitude because he is such a convincing role player. Chaucer’s career in the English secret service trained him as an observer, analyst, diplomat, and master at concealing his own views.

In his teens, Chaucer became a confidential envoy for England. From 1359 to 1378, he graced English diplomatic delegations and carried out missions described in expense records only as “the king’s secret business.”

Documents show him scouting paths through the Pyrenees for English forces poised to invade Spain. He lobbied Italy

for money and troops, while also perhaps investigating the suspicious death of Lionel of Antwerp, an English prince who was probably poisoned soon after his wedding.

Chaucer’s job brought him face-to-face with the darkest figures of his day—the treacherous Charles the Bad, king of Navarre, a notorious traitor and assassin; and Bernabò Visconti, lord of Milan, who helped devise a 40-day torture protocol.

Chaucer’s poetry reflects his experience as an English agent. He enjoyed role-playing and assuming many identities in his writing. And like the couriers he dispatched from Italy in 1378, he brings his readers covert messages split between multiple speakers. Each teller holds just a piece of the puzzle. The whole story can only be understood when all the messages arrive.

He also uses the skills of a secret agent to express dangerous truths not accepted in his own day, when misogyny and antisemitism were both entrenched, especially among the clergy.

Chaucer does not preach or explain. Instead, he lets the formidable Wife of Bath, the character he most enjoyed, tell us about the misogyny of her five husbands and fantasize about how ladies of King Arthur’s court might take revenge on a rapist. Or he makes his deserted Queen Dido cry: “Given their bad behavior, it’s a shame any woman ever took pity on any man.”

### Chaucer the Chivalrous Defender

While current critiques of Chaucer label him as an exponent of toxic masculinity, he was

actually an advocate for human rights.

My own research shows that in the course of his career, he supported women’s right to choose their own mates and the human desire for freedom from enslavement, coercion, verbal abuse, political tyranny, judicial corruption, and sexual trafficking. In “The Canterbury Tales” and “The Legend of Good Women,” he tells many stories on such themes. There he opposed assassination, infanticide and femicide, the mistreatment of prisoners, sexual harassment, and domestic abuse. He valued self-control in action and in speech. He spoke out for women, enslaved people, and Jews.

“Women want to be free and not coerced like slaves, and so do men,” the narrator of “The Franklin’s Prologue” says.

As for Jews, Chaucer salutes their ancient heroism in his early poem “The House of Fame.” He depicts them as a people who have done great good in the world, only to be rewarded with slander. In “The Prioress’s Tale” he shows them being libeled by a desperate character to cover up a crime of which they were manifestly innocent, a century after all Jews had been brutally expelled from England.

Chaucer’s own words demonstrate beyond the shadow of a doubt that when his much underestimated Prioress tells her antisemitic blood libel tale, Chaucer is not endorsing it. Through her own words and actions, and a cascade of reactions from those who hear her, he is exposing such guilty and dangerous actors as they deploy such lies.

And was he a rapist or an abductor? It’s unlikely. The case suggests that he might well have been targeted, perhaps even because of his work. Few authors have ever been more outspoken about man’s inhumanity to women.

It is bizarre that one of the strongest and earliest writers in English literature to speak out against rape and support women and the downtrodden should be pilloried and threatened with cancellation.

But Chaucer knew that the complexity of his art put him at risk. As his character the Squire dryly observed, people all too often “demen gladly to the badder ende”—“They are happy to assume the worst.”

Jennifer Wollock is a professor of English at Texas A&M University. This article was first published on *The Conversation*.

POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

# Even Geniuses Have Trouble Leaving the Nest



Mark Jackson grew up in Spring Valley, N.Y., where he attended a Waldorf school. At Williams College, his professors all suggested he write professionally. He acted professionally for 20 years instead. Now he writes professionally about acting. In the movies.

### MARK JACKSON

There’s nothing quite as fun in movies as when an apparently innocuous individual unexpectedly unpacks his or her superpowers. Like when that silent guy at the bar, who wants nothing more than a cold beer and a quiet place to drink it in (that’s a Clint Eastwood line), gets fed up with being harassed, and the opposition suddenly realizes it’s knocked over a hornet’s nest.

In “Good Will Hunting,” this occurs when 20-year-old MIT university janitor Will Hunting (Matt Damon) is hanging out with his blue-collar South Boston buddies in a Cambridge bar packed with world-class Harvard minds. He notices that his best friend, Chuckie (Ben Affleck), at the other end of the bar is on the losing end of a publicly embarrassing, predatory-competitive debate about history—with a Harvardian.

Now Will’s a tough kid; he put a gang member in the hospital during a street fight. He could easily reduce the disdainful, pony-tailed Harvard guy to a grease stain on the rug, but he doesn’t need to. Because he’s a photographic-memory-having, speed-reading math genius with an encyclopedic, memorized metric ton of trivia in his head, who is also able to intuit people’s thoughts and secrets. As mentioned: superpowers.

Will: “The sad thing about a guy like you is in 50 years you’re gonna start doing some thinking of your own, and you’re gonna come up with the fact that there are two certainties in life. One: Don’t do that (plagiarize). And two: You dropped a hundred and fifty grand on a[n] ... education you could’ve got for a dollar-fifty in late charges at the public library.”

Harvard guy: “Yeah, but I’ll have a degree. And you’ll be serving my kids fries at a drive-through on our way to a ski trip.”

Will: “Yeah, maybe. But at least I won’t be unoriginal. By the way, if you have a problem with that, we could just step outside and we could figure it out.”

Harvard guy: “Nah, it’s cool.”

Chuckie: “How ya like me now?!”

“Good Will Hunting” was famously co-authored by early-career Matt Damon and Ben Affleck, for which they won Oscars, thereby elevating their showbiz cache into the stratosphere. It’s equal parts romance, redemption story, coming-of-age story, and Hero’s Journey.

### Harbinger

Will Hunting spends his days mopping floors, his nights drinking with his bros who, in addition to Chuckie, include Chuckie’s obnoxious and hilariously clueless kid brother Morgan (Casey Affleck) and stoic mechanic Billy (Cole Hauser). Weekends are spent in batting cages, at the dog-racing track, attending Little League games, picking fights with local rival gangs, followed by more barhopping.

Will’s essentially a ghost at MIT. One day, decorated mathematician and MIT professor Gerald Lambeau (Stellan Skarsgard) posts a high-octane math formula on the hallway chalkboard outside his room, to challenge his students. Will, on his floor-mopping rounds, sees it and solves the formula overnight, scribbling on pieces of envelopes and creating an instant buzz as to who the mystery student-genius might be.

When no one steps forward, Lambeau puts another problem on the board that took him and his colleagues two years to figure out. Lickety-split, Will solves it, shocking Lambeau to his core and inspiring him to track down the mystery math superhero.

Meanwhile, juvie-genius Will finally ends up in jail. He’s got a rap sheet as long as his arm, but he’s previously been successful defending himself against various charges of assault (impersonating an officer, grand theft auto, resisting arrest, and so on). He knows the law back to the 1800s, but he’s not able to get the charges dismissed this time, finally running into a judge who will not tolerate, in this case, the striking of an officer.

### An 11th-Hour Save

Professor Lambeau figures out who solved his math problem, comes to Will’s rescue, and arranges for the directionless kid to be released into his care. He takes Will under his wing on the condition that they solve weekly math formulas together, and that Will attends weekly, court-mandated therapy sessions with a psychologist.

Will reluctantly accepts and goes through a series of therapists, all of whom he variously derides, messes with, or calls out for being secretly gay, until he meets the one who won’t throw in the towel: Sean Maguire (Robin Williams). It turns out that Sean is also originally from working-class Southie (a South Boston area). Sean teaches at a local community college, wears a Boston Red Sox jacket, and was Lambeau’s freshman-year roommate at MIT.

Sean offers an escape route from the confines of (in the parlance of the Hero’s Journey) the village compound. In Will’s case, this means from the meaningless, massively underachieving, drudge-filled existence he clings to out of a misguided romantic notion of a life doing nothing more than eventually attending his buddies’ kids’ baseball games.

Will gets inside Sean’s head and rearranges the furniture in a heartbeat. Which is good, because Sean nearly chokes Will unconscious for disrespecting Sean’s wife. Young, wayward men and boys need a powerful male authority figure to show them exactly where the boundaries are.

For Sean, the challenge is figuring out how to communicate through Will’s lightning-quick manipulative verbal dances, smoke-screens, use of knowledge as a weapon, and psychic brick walls. He nails it: Will’s real smart, but he’s a boy; his glaring lack of worldly experiences can’t be validated by his giant stack of book-learning, and his lack of courage to be emotionally vulnerable is the thing that’s keeping his possibilities for self-actualization (and greatness) beyond his reach. Sean’s the first person ever to call Will on any of this. Robin Williams captured the Oscar for Best Supporting Actor for this role.

### Self-Discovery

The most powerful scene, other than the famous “It’s not your fault” scene, is the one where Chuckie essentially kicks Will out of the nest—the village compound—and challenges him to be great:



(L–R) Minnie Driver, Casey Affleck, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, and Scott William Winters in a genius-versus-Harvard-student verbal showdown in “Good Will Hunting.”



ALL PHOTOS BY MIRAMAX

## ‘Good Will Hunting’ received nine Oscar nominations.



Twenty-year-old uneducated janitor Will Hunting (Matt Damon) solves a Ph.D.-level math problem in “Good Will Hunting.”

### ‘Good Will Hunting’

#### Director

Gus Van Sant

#### Starring

Robin Williams, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Casey Affleck, Cole Hauser, Stellan Skarsgard, Minnie Driver

#### Running Time

2 hours, 6 minutes

#### MPAA Rating

R

#### Release Date

Dec. 5, 1997 (U.S.)

★★★★★

Will: “Oh, come on! Why is it always this, I mean, I ... owe it to myself to do this? What if I don’t want to?”

Chuckie: “Alright. No. No no.... you. You don’t owe it to yourself. You owe it to me. ‘Cause tomorrow I’m gonna wake up and I’ll be fifty and I’ll still be doing this. ... And that’s all right, that’s fine. I mean, you’re sittin’ on a winning lottery ticket. ... And that’s ... ‘cause I’d do anything to ... have what you got. So would any of these ... guys. It’d be an insult to us if you’re still here in twenty years. Hanging around here is a ... waste of your time.”

Will: “You don’t know that.”

Chuckie: “I don’t?”

Will: “No. You don’t know that.”

Chuckie: “Oh, I don’t know that. Let me tell you what I do know. Every day I come by to pick you up. And we go out, we have a few drinks and a few laughs and it’s great. But you know what the best part of my day is? It’s for about ten seconds from when I pull up to the curb to when I get to your door. Because I think maybe I’ll get up there and I’ll knock on the door and you won’t be there. No goodbye, no see you later, no nothin’. Just left. I don’t know much, but I know that.”

### More Oscars

At the 70th Academy Awards (up against the 11 nominations for “Titanic”), “Good Will Hunting” received nine Oscar nominations, including Best Actor (Damon), Best Director (Van Sant), Best Supporting Actress (Minnie Driver), Best Original Score (Danny Elfman), Best Song (Elliott Smith), and Best Picture. Damon and Affleck won as authors for Best Original Screenplay. The film was hugely successful, making more than \$220 million.

“Good Will Hunting” isn’t autobiographical; childhood buddies Damon and Affleck both grew up relatively well-to-do and were both involved in the arts. Damon himself actually attended Harvard, which is why the theme of hidden genius is something he plays well, such as his poker-genius character in “Rounders.”

It is safe to say, though, that it’s the longstanding childhood friendship of two guys with the common goal to make it as actors that provided the magic that made “Good Will Hunting” work: their hilarious dude-chemistry and the hysterically realistic brotherly bickering between the two real-life Affleck brothers, not to mention Ben Affleck’s camaraderie with Cole Hauser—they’d both had their breakout roles in “Dazed and Confused” as high school football teammates.

It’s stood the test of time. It’s still highly inspirational for all those looking to challenge themselves and leave the nest.

(L–R) Casey Affleck, Cole Hauser, Ben Affleck, and Matt Damon play friends who grew up together in South Boston, in “Good Will Hunting.”

### WHAT GOOD IS POETRY

# The Fragmented Beauty of ‘Kubla Khan’

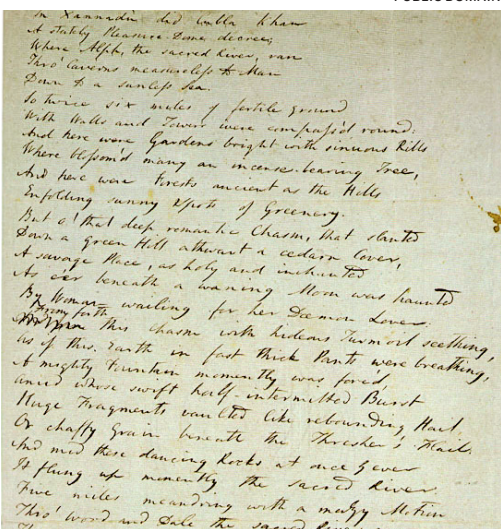
### SEAN FITZPATRICK

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge awoke with a start as these words thundered through his thoughts. Upsetting the volumes that littered his desk, he grasped at his pen, stabbed at his inkwell, snatched a scrap of paper, and shivered with wonder as his muse sang on:

So twice five miles of fertile ground  
With walls and towers were girdled round;  
And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills,  
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;  
And here were forests ancient as the hills,  
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

Such were the wild words, in 1797, that rushed like a roaring river from Coleridge’s pen like a cataclysm. Struggling with the effects of medication, he had fallen into a feverish slumber over an exotic travelogue that mentioned the capital city of the Mongol ruler, Kublai



A draft written between 1797 and 1818 of Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s poem “Kubla Khan,” written in the poet’s own hand.

Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted  
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!  
A savage place! as holy and enchanted  
As e’er beneath a waning moon was haunted  
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!  
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momently was forced:  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,

Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher’s flail:

And mid these dancing rocks at once and ever  
It flung up momently the sacred river.

The force of Coleridge’s poem, unlike any he had ever written before, lunged and loomed off the page in the lonely farmhouse room where it was suddenly and strangely born. Even as it sang of uncontrollable elements of primal power and fear, so did it itself, as a poem, possess that unbridled authority of artistic inspiration that every artist both longs for and fears. Coleridge wrote, and the poem took on a life that was wholly its own, as all great poems do.

Five miles meandering with a mazy motion  
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,  
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,  
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean;  
And ‘mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!  
The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.  
It was a miracle of rare device,  
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

The images that dropped before him were like the discovery of a strange kingdom that was like poetry itself. From the dome of the mind to the depths of nature’s mysteries, imagination and inspiration are twin creative forces that can be beautiful or terrible, like heaven and hell, with music and noise, peace and war, the sacred and the savage. On Coleridge dashed, his brow damp with both fervor and fever.

A damsel with a dulcimer  
In a vision once I saw:  
It was an Abyssinian maid  
And on her dulcimer she played,  
Singing of Mount Abora.  
Could I revive within me  
Her symphony and song,

To such a deep delight ’twould win me,  
That with music loud and long,  
I would build that dome in air,  
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!  
And all who heard should see them there,  
And all should cry, Beware! Beware!  
His flashing eyes, his floating hair!  
Weave a circle round him thrice,  
And close your eyes with holy dread  
For he on honey-dew hath fed,  
And drunk the milk of Paradise...

Then, a knock at the door. Coleridge’s pen paused over the word “Paradise.” He rose to find a person on some small business. The matter settled, he returned to his desk only to find—to his shock and dismay—the vision had fled. “Kubla Khan” was finished where it lay unfinished. And so, Coleridge called it evermore “a vision in a dream, a fragment.” There is a particular pleasure that only an unfinished work can offer; for though it comes with a degree of pain, it is deeply meaningful. This fragment provides a taste of the power of poetry, and a foretaste of the fulfillment for the truth that all seek. There is a poignancy in unfinished art that cries out for completion, for perfection. Those masterpieces whose creation is cut short—Aquinas’s “Summa,” Michelangelo’s “Rondanini Pietà,” Mozart’s “Requiem,” Dickens’s “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” and Coleridge’s “Kubla Khan”—all evoke that singular sense of needing to be finished that every human being must share until we find the end that awaits us, whether it be in a sunny dome of pleasure or savage caves of ice.

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REACHING WITHIN: WHAT TRADITIONAL ART OFFERS THE HEART

# The Moral Hero in ‘Knight, Death, and the Devil’

ERIC BESS

I sometimes wonder what it means to be the hero in one’s own life story. How might we lead a virtuous and dignified life despite hardships? This is not an unusual question in any sense. Cultures across time and in different places have wrestled with this moral question.

## Albrecht Dürer, the Printmaker

Born in Germany during the late 15th century, Albrecht Dürer was one of many artists interested in asking moral questions during the Renaissance period. He was an accomplished painter and draftsman, but many of his greatest works are in the medium of printmaking. He pushed printmaking to new heights and legitimized it as an independent art form.

One of his greatest print series is the “Meisterstiche” or master engravings, which are a group of three images: “Saint Jerome in His Study,” “Melancholia,” and “Knight, Death, and the Devil.”

According to the Metropolitan Museum of Art website, these three prints were “intended more for connoisseurs and collectors than for popular devotion,” suggesting that the prints’ symbolism was specific to a limited audience. The specific meanings behind these three prints still stump scholars today.

## The Knight’s unaffected and calm demeanor even diminishes the perceived power of Death and the Devil.

With that said, we will look only at “Knight, Death, and the Devil,” which corresponds to notions of morality in the philosophy of medieval scholasticism. Our intention isn’t to decipher what the connoisseurs and collectors in the 1500s thought about the symbolic imagery but to see if this image stimulates moral questions for us today.

### ‘Knight, Death, and the Devil’

In “Knight, Death, and the Devil,” Dürer depicts four prominent figures: the Knight riding a horse, Death also on a horse, the Devil, and a dog.

The Knight is in full armor as if he is ready for battle. He holds a spear and steadies it against his shoulder. With his other hand, he grasps his horse’s rein. He looks directly in front of him as his horse walks forward. A dog follows closely beside the Knight’s horse.

Compositionally, Death is to the left of the Knight. Death wears a crown with entangled snakes and holds an hourglass in his hand. He also sits on a horse that bows its head toward a skull on the tree stump ahead of the Knight. Death looks directly at the Knight.



“Knight, Death, and the Devil,” 1513, by Albrecht Dürer. Engraving, 9 13/16 inches by 7 11/16 inches. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

The Devil watches the Knight intensely from behind. Dürer depicts the Devil as a chimeric monster: He has goat-like ears, ram horns, a rhinoceros-like horn on the back of his head, a wolf-like snout with a pig nose, and long jowls hanging from both sides of his mouth. He holds a sharp weapon in his hand and reaches out for the back of the Knight with his other hand.

The jagged rocks and gnarly trees of the mountainous terrain suggest a difficult journey. Off in the distance, however,

we can see a castle against the sky at the mountain’s peak.

### The Moral Hero

I think it’s evident that the Knight is on a journey, but a journey to where? What is his relationship to the other figures on this journey, and how might this relationship inform us morally?

Let’s first start with what these figures might symbolize. I think the Knight is our moral hero. He is in full armor with a spear, not to fight

off mortal enemies, I believe, but to protect himself against Death and the Devil on his journey.

Death, with his mouth agape and the hourglass in his hand, seems to almost sneer at the Knight. It’s as if he warns the Knight, “Your time is almost up, and you’ll be subject to me, king of the dead.” Death’s horse also bows down toward the skull on the tree stump as if to bring the Knight’s attention to it.

The snakes on Death’s crown are an interesting addition by Dürer. Snakes were traditionally symbolic of both life and death. In the Christian tradition, however, snakes became associated with both Death and the Devil, and the Devil’s purpose was to undermine God and tempt humans. Thus, the snakes depicted here likely associate Death with the Devil and temptation.

Interestingly enough, the Knight doesn’t look at Death; that is, he is not “tempted” by the fear of Death. He is not concerned that his time is limited. His helmet appears to prevent him from looking at Death even if he wanted to. Instead, the Knight looks straight ahead and continues his journey.

The chimeric appearance of the Devil suggests the Devil’s ability to take on different forms to achieve his ends deceptively. The Devil reaches out to grab onto the Knight from behind. The Knight appears not to notice, which also suggests how crafty and deceptive the Devil can be.

The Knight appears to be stuck between a rock and a hard place—that is, between Death and the Devil—and this feeling is enhanced by the rocky and gnarly terrain.

Or does the Knight’s demeanor suggest something different? His calm and stoic appearance might mean that he is unfazed by Death and the Devil.

The dog beside the horse may be symbolic of loyalty, but loyalty to what? Loyalty to the Knight, most likely. Thus, the Knight represents the moral hero, that is, the one who remains unaffected by temptation (the Devil) and fear (Death) for the sake of completing a journey.

Perhaps, the fact that the Knight has passed the Devil suggests that he has already overcome the Devil’s temptations, and the fact that his helmet blocks the view of Death indicates that he is unconcerned with Death. The Knight’s unaffected and calm demeanor even diminishes the perceived power of Death and the Devil.

Is it then the case that being a moral hero on the journey of life consists in fearlessly ignoring temptation?

And what is the destination of this journey? The castle seems to be a place of peace relative to the rest of the image. It even appears to be a place of light and glory compared to the darker, gloomy environment below. Does this suggest that a peaceful mind and heart is the destination? If so, then true peace requires heroic effort.

*The traditional arts often contain spiritual representations and symbols the meanings of which can be lost to our modern minds. In our series “Reaching Within: What Traditional Art Offers the Heart,” we interpret visual arts in ways that may be morally insightful for us today. We do not assume to provide absolute answers to questions generations have wrestled with, but hope that our questions will inspire a reflective journey toward our becoming more authentic, compassionate, and courageous human beings.*

*Eric Bess is a practicing representational artist and is a doctoral candidate at the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts (IDSVA).*



A self-portrait of Albrecht Dürer at age 26. Prado, Madrid.

## MUSIC

# The Not-So-Dying Art of the Barbershop Quartet

MICHAEL KUREK

One of the great apple-pie traditions of American music, right up there with a marching band or Dixieland band, is the good old barbershop quartet. My mind goes right to those white gazebos in parks and town squares and those beribboned straw hats, big mustaches, and striped jackets that barbershop quartets typically sport.

While thinking about the famous Buffalo Bills, the quartet who sang “Lida Rose” in “The Music Man” movie (the subject of my last Epoch Times article), I began to wonder whether barbershop quartets still exist in America, or if it’s a dead or dying art form?

It would be well to note first that old-fashioned men’s barbershops themselves appear to be a dying breed, most having been usurped by large, mall-based, unisex hair salons. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were only 9,400 traditional men’s barbershops left in the United States in 2020, down from 33,000 in 1972, when they began keeping records on it.

It can be safely speculated, then, that many young men today have probably never been to, or perhaps even seen, an old-style barbershop. So, any musical ensemble named after one would seem to be archaic, by definition. What does the barbershop’s musical namesake have to do with getting one’s hair cut, anyway?

To put the answer into context, we must remember that recorded music and passive listening to music are relatively recent phenomena. People used to have to make their own music; and well into the 20th century, ordinary folks could be quite uninhibited about bursting into song as a regular part of everyday life.

They sang robustly at church and around the piano at home, or on the front porch in the evening. Street vendors hawked their wares with a bit of a tune as their jingle. At work or social gatherings, a good job or a promotion might be rewarded with a lusty refrain of “For He’s a Jolly Good Fellow.” Soldiers often marched to a sung cadence, as did miners trudging into the mines and home again. (“Hi ho, hi ho, it’s off to work we go.”)

### Barbershop Origins

In 17th-century England, barbershops, as a de facto gathering place for the common man, typically had a stringed instrument similar to a lute available for use by the men waiting for their haircuts. To pass the time, anyone could use it to accompany some impromptu recreational singing by the group.

By the early 19th century in America, with no radio or television to fill the silence of the shop, it became common for the barber himself to belt out a popular tune. Then the men waiting for their turn in the chair—often total strangers to each other—would freely chime in with him. It is something we can hardly imagine happening today, outside of a movie musical. What’s more, the men could improvise harmony!

The style of harmony and rhythm that became common for such singing owes a lot to the parallel tradition of male harmony singing in the African American community. There was often the same African American intersection of European harmony with African rhythms and scalar inflections that produced jazz. This increasingly lent a ragtime influence to the sound of the emerging white barbershop quartets.

As with any grassroots art form, certain norms gradually codified. The ensemble shaped up into a standard four-part group—from the top down, a high tenor on harmony, then a second tenor (called “lead”) just below it on the main melody, then baritone and bass voices below that.

The characteristic harmony of the style (for those who know the terms) features a chain of dominant seventh chords generally moving in descending fifths around the circle of fifths. Distinct from modern-day a cappella or pop vocal groups, the traditional barbershop quartet had no “beat boxes,” counter melodies, or accompaniment parts. Its members sang

A barbershop quartet performs in Universal City, Calif., on July 27, 2013.



unified as one voice, all with the same rhythm and words together, only on different pitches, creating a new chord for every word.

One thing that codified the barbershop quartet as a classic American ensemble was Vaudeville, where quartets were hired to entertain the crowds between the main acts. They would stand in front of the closed curtain while the next act was being set up behind the curtain. It was then that their typically stylish costume with the straw hats became standard.

### A Still-Thriving American Tradition

In 1938, a society for barbershop quartet singing emerged out of an informal gathering on April 11, 1938, in Tulsa, Oklahoma. An enthusiast named Owen Clifton Cash invited 14 male friends to get together for a fun sing-along party, and 26 showed up! They sang gleefully through the night, both as a full group and divided into several quartets, on the rooftop garden of the now-historic Tulsa Club Building.

## Perhaps thanks to lack of media exposure, many of us have not been aware of how thriving this genre remains.

They decided to start meeting regularly as a singing society, and so they did, eventually becoming what is now known informally as the Barbershop Harmony Society (BHS), and officially as the Society for the Preservation and Encouragement of Barber Shop Quartet Singing in America (SPEBSQSA).

Today, that organization has 17 regional districts in the United States,

with 700 local chapters that meet weekly. The United States has 22,000 members, and international chapters have 80,000 members worldwide. In the United States, they participate jointly in local, regional, and national conventions and competitions.

Among several other such organizations are the Society for the Preservation and Propagation of Barbershop Quartet Singing in the United States (SPPBSQSUS); Friends in Harmony, based in San Antonio, Texas; and women’s barbershop organizations like the Sweet Adelines International, also formed in Tulsa and boasting 21,000 members worldwide, and Harmony Incorporated, founded in Rhode Island.

Perhaps thanks to lack of media exposure, many of us have not been aware of how thriving this genre remains. Discovering it has felt, for me, like coming across one of the best kept secrets of musical Americana, rich in cultural heritage, vibrantly still alive, and deserving of perpetuation.

My final question was “What has kept this tradition so active and enduring?” I sought out and asked a regular member of the Barbershop Harmony Society in my city whether his motivation for belonging was primarily preservational and historic, or what. His answer was simple: “What motivates me to show up at all the meetings and sing my heart out is that it is just really fun!”

*American composer Michael Kurek is the composer of the Billboard No. 1 classical album “The Sea Knows.” The winner of numerous composition awards, including the prestigious Academy Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, he has served on the Nominations Committee of the Recording Academy for the classical Grammy Awards. He is a professor emeritus of composition at Vanderbilt University. For more information and music, visit MichaelKurek.com*



There are few old-fashioned barbershops left. This photo of Old Towne Hair in Chisago City, Minn., was taken in August 2020.



Singing in the barber shop was once an actual pastime.





A scene from “Fisherman’s Friends” that captures the flavor of Cornwall, in England.

POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

# The Importance of Friends, Tradition, and Community

IAN KANE

Recently, some friends of mine traveled throughout the county of Cornwall, located in southwest England and home to the Cornish. Cornwall is known for its rich maritime heritage, which is celebrated by the many rich sea shanties (nautical work songs) that are sung by its seagoing folks. My friends raved about their lovely time and how unique Cornwall was in comparison to other parts of England.

Indeed, when I researched the place, I could see what they were talking about. From the majestic, sea-sculpted cliffs up and down Cornwall’s coastlines to its ancient standing stones, I was thoroughly impressed and added it to my “must visit” list.

So, when I discovered that director Chris Foggin’s 2019 film “Fisherman’s Friends” was about the real-life signing of sea shanty singers to a major record label, I just had to see if it was any good: It’s not good at all—it’s spectacular—in an earthy (or watery, in this

**‘Fisherman’s Friends’**

**Director**  
Chris Foggin

**Starring**  
James Purefoy, Meadow Nobrega, and David Hayman

**MPAA Rating**  
PG-13

**Running Time**  
1 hour, 52 minutes

**Release Date**  
March 15, 2019 (UK)

★★★★☆

case) and earnest way.

This biopic begins with four cynical record execs, who travel from London to a small Cornish fishing village for a stag weekend (otherwise known as a bachelor party). One of the men, Danny (Daniel Mays) seems to be even more jaded than his pessimistic comrades. For instance, he regards monogamy as being unnatural.

On the other side of the equation, we are introduced to the various denizens of the village, including rambunctious Alwyn (Tuppence Middleton); her father, fisherman Jim (James Purefoy); and his friends and co-workers Jago (David Hayman), Leadville (Dave Johns), and Rowan (Sam Swainsbury).

When Danny and his city slicker pals arrive at the village, there are quite a few jarring (although humorously delivered) culture clashes between the execs and the proudly traditional folks of the village, who hold camaraderie and truthfulness as sacrosanct.

Things take a turn for the unexpected when Danny and his friends show up at a sea shan-

ty being performed by the fishermen. During the performance, Danny’s friends form a deceptive plan: Since Danny’s one of the junior men of their organization, they want him to prove his worth by signing the fishermen to their music label. But when Danny falls for their hoax, they suddenly vanish. Their excuse is that something urgent came up—yet Danny is still tasked with signing singers.

Danny tries his best to ingratiate himself with the fishermen and offers them a contract on the spot while visiting them in a local pub, but to no avail. They don’t trust him based on their wariness of outsiders. In a last-ditch effort, Danny goes out on a fishing trip with the men to try to impress them.

After Danny finally convinces the group to give his offer a shot, his fellow execs admit that they’ve been pulling a fast one on him the whole time. But now Danny’s got a problem: He’s already given fisherman Jim his word that the offer is real, and a man’s word is something that Jim considers to be “as strong as a Cornish oak.”

As Danny begins to appreciate the old customs, traditions, and values of the villagers, he likewise tries to figure out how to convince his major record label that signing a large group of singing fishermen is good for business. A romantic subplot also develops, as Danny also has eyes for Alwyn but isn’t quite sure that she feels the same way about him.

**Where Honesty Is Sacred**

Although the film’s content doesn’t really tread any new water (couldn’t help the pun), the way the story unfolds is natural, heartfelt, and unforced. Daniel Mays is convincing as a somewhat bumbling Londoner who is out of his depth in the picturesque fishing village, where he realizes that big-city machinations don’t mean a thing in a land where people will give their lives for their words, and a hard day’s work is a ritual of tradition along with some drinking and calloused hands.

All of the actors’ performances are likewise great, such as James Purefoy as the perpetually suspicious fisherman Jim.

“Fisherman’s Friends” reminds us of the importance of friends and community, while not taking itself too seriously. Come for the beautiful singing, and stay for the uplifting story.

*Ian Kane is a filmmaker and author based out of Los Angeles. To learn more, visit [IanKanehealthnut.com](http://IanKanehealthnut.com)*

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