

## Article

# Silent Reshaping: The Adaptation Strategies of Mythological Female Figures in *Irish Folklore Trilogy*

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**Abstract:** Contemporary Chinese animated movies often feature subversive rewritings of traditional myths. However, they inevitably suffer from a significant disconnect between the contemporary works and the traditional values inherent in the original myths. This paper uses *Irish Folklore Trilogy* by Cartoon Saloon as a reference to explore the possibility of alternative expressions of mythological narrative in contemporary animated movies. *Irish Folklore Trilogy* draws heavily on the Celtic mythological tradition while employing a unique strategy of "preserving the original while nondisruptively innovating", allowing female characters to serve multiple functions and possess modern consciousness without deviating from the mythological archetype. It uses traditional mythological features such as metamorphosis to address issues of identity and cultural anxiety. This paper argues that the trilogy offers a flexible adaptation paradigm that integrates tradition and reality while avoiding structural rupture, thereby offering significant referential value for the creation of contemporary Chinese mythological movies.

**Keywords:** Adaptations of Mythology; Female figures; Irish Folklore Trilogy; Cartoon Saloon

## 1. Introduction

In recent years, Chinese animated movies have become internationally recognized for their enthusiasm in adapting mythology (Song, 2024). This trend began when *Monkey King: Hero is Back* launched the "Rise of Chinese Animation" through a new interpretation of *Journey to the West*. Following this, a series of myth-based animated movies such as *Ne Zha* series, *Jiang Ziya*, and *New Gods* series appeared. These movies commonly rewrite and subvert traditional stories, using character reconstruction, plot reversals, and added settings to break away from old narrative prototypes. Despite these commercial successes, recurring plot issues have emerged, including unclear character functions, inconsistent emotional logic, and loose story structure. Crucially, the underrepresentation of female characters has drawn frequent criticism. Although traditional mythology includes many female protagonists, most animated adaptations have overlooked them. Aside from *White Snake* series, female characters usually appear only in supporting roles.

Even in few works, many female characters experience cultural incompatibility during adaptation. Their values and behaviors are forcibly infused with modern consciousness, without adequate cultural and psychological grounding. As a result, these characters become conceptualized, spectacularized, and instrumentalized symbols, losing their link to original versions. The severance prevents the realization of their psychological depth and the renewal of original cultural meanings. These issues prompt a central question: must the modernization of traditional mythology rely solely on overturning established traditions?

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To address this question, *Irish Folklore Trilogy—The Secret of Kells, Song of the Sea, and Wolfwalkers*—created by the Irish independent animation studio Cartoon Saloon, offers a valuable lesson.

*Irish Folklore Trilogy* intertwines Celtic art and Irish indigenous culture, creating a rich, layered aesthetic. Celtic culture emerged as an ancient European tradition, spreading mainly across the British Isles and northwestern Europe. It features unique myths, art forms, languages, and customs. Irish culture, as an important branch, inherits Gaelic—the oldest branch of the Celtic languages—preserves the ancient and complete oral traditions of Celtic mythology, and develops a distinctive literary ecosystem on this basis (Koch, 2006). These traits allow it to influence the European world widely.

In the meantime, *Irish Folklore Trilogy* draws heavily on its national mythological traditions in its visual style, plot, and character archetypes, while naturally integrating contemporary topics such as gender, identity and cultural belonging through female characters. The trilogy maintains the original texts without drastic reconstruction, and the female characters do not adopt a radical "new woman" image. Instead, by gently revitalizing old mythological motifs, the series engages in deep dialogue with its audiences.

Therefore, this paper conducts a comprehensive analysis of all major female characters across *Irish Folklore Trilogy*—including protagonists such as Aisling, Saoirse, Robyn, and Mebh, as well as significant figures like Moll, Macha, and the grandmother. By examining their roots in Celtic mythology and Irish literature, this study demonstrates how these characters collectively serve as a vibrant reflection of the Irish literary and artistic tradition. It will analyze how they achieve modernity without departing from their archetypes and finally summarize Cartoon Saloon's unique methodology, aiming to provide more perspectives and cases for reference in the emerging trend of mythological adaptation in the Chinese animation industry.

## 2. Mythological Foundations: The "Woman-Nature-Sovereignty" Trinity in Celtic Lore

Although Ireland is located on an island, it shares a tradition of goddess worship with mainland Europe, and even surpasses it in certain aspects—blending nature, politics, national identity, and female deities. This provides fertile ground for the symbolic depth of female roles in *Irish Folklore Trilogy*. Like the well-known Greek mythology, Celtic mythology often associates many things, from mountains and rivers to plants and even abstract concepts, with female deities. For example, *Brigid*, the goddess whose sacred tree is the birch tree, governs fire, healing, agriculture, prophecy, and poetry; *Aine*, the goddess revered as the ancestor of many Irish families, governs midsummer and sunlight; and *Cailleach*, whose name in Irish means "old woman" and "witch", governs storms and winter (MacCulloch, 1918). However, what is less common is that Celtic mythology also highly binds political elements, such as the nation and sovereignty, to goddesses. The word *Eire*, meaning "Ireland" in Old Irish, derives from the name of the goddess *Eriu*, one of the three sovereign goddesses of Ireland (Monaghan, 2003). Furthermore, women in Celtic mythology often possess fluid identities, capable of transforming into specific animals. For example, the goddess of war *Morrigan* appears as a raven, symbolizing impending death and calamity; the midsummer goddess *Aine* can transform into a red mare.

*Irish Folklore Trilogy* closely follows the tropes of Celtic mythology. The key argument is that its female characters not only drive the plot but also metaphorically embody nature, history, nation, and identity. This reflects the mythic tradition of the "woman-nature-sovereignty" trinity in Irish culture, which the trilogy adopts as a core structure.

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In *The Secret of Kells*, the narrator's name, *Aisling*, has cultural roots. Originally meaning "dream" or "vision" in Gaelic (Monaghan, 2003), the word later came to refer to a unique literary genre created by 18th-century Irish exiled poets. In the Gaelic poetry of the 17th to 19th centuries, known as *Aisling*, poets would encounter a beautiful woman who symbolizes the land of Ireland in their dreams. She would tell them about the nation's suffering and prophesy future liberation. Yeats' one-act play *Cathleen ni Houlihan*, was influenced by this, telling the story of a young man who is persuaded by an old woman and dedicates himself to the cause of Irish independence. When he heroically sacrifices himself for independence, the old woman transforms into a young queen (Chen, 2012). Therefore, the film's protagonist's name, *Aisling*, is connected to the archetype of the mother of the nation, making it natural for the story of Ireland's Viking invasion to be narrated from her perspective.

*Robyn Goodfellowe*, the protagonist of *Wolfwalkers*, comes from England. She bears the name of a mischievous elf from local folklore, which highlights her lively, unrestrained nature. The elf's nickname, *Puck*, relates to the Irish elf *Puca* (Keightley, 1828/2022). Thus, the film connects the English girl Robyn with Irish culture by cleverly using her name. The film also pays close homage to the Irish historical group, the *Fianna*, through its core characters, the wolfwalkers. *Fianna* formed hunter-warrior groups who lived in the wild during the Iron Age and early Middle Ages. They were mainly consisted of young men and women outside the elite. They did not belong to any noble or political power but served the kingdom as mercenaries to defend against foreign invasions (MacKillop, 2000). In the film, the wolfwalker mother Moll and daughter Mebh live in the forest, show bravery and skill in battle, and fight as irreconcilable enemies of Lord Protector Cromwell, who invades Ireland and destroys the forest. Their identity and behavior strongly mirror that of the *Fianna*, faithfully representing Irish culture.

Cartoon Saloon does not make its portrayal of female characters entirely original or deliberately innovative. Instead, the studio carefully selects and reorganizes symbolic relationships while highly respecting Celtic mythological traditions, which imbues the characters with a rich cultural foundation. This "tradition-first" approach lays a solid foundation for the characters' modern translation and cultural responses in subsequent narratives.

### 3. Functional Reconstruction: Re-layering the Mother and Crone Archetypes

While the female characters in *Irish Folklore Trilogy* possess mythological archetypes and symbolic meanings, they are not limited by the motifs. Instead, through the resetting of "functional positioning" and "thematic symbolism," they become key participants in the story, bearers of identity transformation, and metaphorical focal points of cultural issues. This is not a superficial reversal of character or moral subversion, but a profound rewriting that incorporates the characters into the structure of contemporary issues.

Firstly, the female characters in *Irish Folklore Trilogy* break through the traditional limitations of the "Mother" archetype in both appearance and narrative function, no longer portraying them as an "omnipotent mother goddess," but as more humane figures with weaknesses and the potential for empathy. As mentioned above, in Celtic mythology, there is a type of goddess who often possesses strong maternal instincts and represents nature and the nation, guiding and caring for the people. In *The Secret of Kells*, *Aisling*, as a functional mother, undertakes the tasks of nurturing and guiding. She helps Brendan obtain ink and rescuing him from his predicament. But she does not appear as an adult woman, but as a lonely, naughty, and emotional young girl: she frightens and teases Brendan, lost her mother at a young age, and harbors a strong fear and psychological trauma of the Crom. Conversely, Moll in *Wolfwalkers* is a nominal mother but, functionally, rarely demonstrates a protective

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and nurturing role. Aside from the powerful healing abilities she displays at the beginning when rescuing the shepherds, she mostly serves as someone needs to be rescued. She was caught and imprisoned by Cromwell while searching for a new home for the wolves. So, she did not play an important guiding role in the growth of Robyn and Mebh. Instead, the rescue she got marked a great victory for Robyn and Mebh in their adventure.

In conclusion, *Irish Folklore Trilogy* does not intend to continue to portray a glorious and omnipotent mother goddess, but rather pays attention to female characters' weakness, thus allowing mothers or caregivers to interact with the protagonists in a more equal manner, demonstrating a determination to break the "myth of women".

Secondly, *Irish Folklore Trilogy* also innovates on the archetype of the "Crone"—the trilogy attempt to destigmatize elderly women and incorporates more characteristics of the "Mother" archetype, using the ambiguity of moral boundaries to create more vivid figures.

Celtic mythology is replete with goddesses representing calamity and death, closely associated with the end of life, and thus equated with the image of the old woman. With the introduction of Christianity to Ireland, the Christian hatred of witches further negatively impacted the image of the old woman. Yeats (1888/1991) mentioned that in the late 1880s, legends of witches stealing cheese and butter were common in Irish villages. The basic premise of Macha, the owl goddess, and her mirror image, the grandmother, in *Song of the Sea* reflects the traditional Crone's association with the end of life, yet reinterprets it through the lens of psychology. Macha's act of petrifying spirits is a psychological manifestation of emotional numbing; by freezing the emotions of others, she attempts to halt the fluidity of suffering. This reveals a defensive rational order that seeks to survive trauma by annihilating the capacity to feel, effectively turning the self and others into stone to escape the burden of loss. The grandmother ignores Saoirse's longing for the sea, taking the two siblings to a lifeless city. Her actions represent the ego's attempt to suppress the primal, wild instincts of the Selkie identity in favor of social conformity. By cutting off the children's connection to the sea, she attempts to tame the divine feminine nature, reducing a creature of myth to an ordinary child bound by the rigid, disenchanted structures of urban modernity.

However, *Cartoon Saloon* did not portray them as purely villainous characters, but rather explored their maternal side. In Macha's confession, the audience can tell that her initial intention in petrifying people was to prevent her son's grief, while the grandmother's stubbornness stemmed from concern for her granddaughter's safety—Macha and the grandmother ultimately embody the Jungian archetype of the Devouring Mother (Jung & Hull, 2023). Their maternal instinct has become destructive through its overprotectiveness: they offer a suffocating love that devours the independence and emotional vitality of their children to spare them from pain. This profound psychological tension demonstrates that the Crone is reconstructed not as a villain, but as a tragic figure whose love has become a form of incarceration, illustrating how motherhood can be distorted by the fear of suffering. The strategy of character design breaks down the binary distinction between "justice and evil," making "suppressing vitality" an understandable situational choice.

#### **4. The Modernity of Metamorphosis: Identity and Cultural Anxiety**

The modernity of these characters is best exemplified by the way *Irish Folklore Trilogy* borrows the "metamorphosis" tradition from Celtic mythology. This device endows female figures with dual identities, serving as a vehicle for exploring contemporary themes such as identity and cultural anxiety.

Metamorphosis is a common fantasy element in Celtic mythology. In Celtic culture, it is not merely a simple supernatural trick, but a profound cultural expression that connects deities, heroes, and the natural world, symbolizing the essence of life, identity, and existence.

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The ancient Irish canon, *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*, even describes the mythical race of *Tuatha Dé Danann* as a people skilled in transformation, thus establishing the fundamental role of this ability in the narrative.

The female characters in *Irish Folklore Trilogy* retain the ability to transform, suggesting cultural marginality or identity drift.

In *The Secret of Kells*, Aisling symbolises the vast forest and possesses the personality of a naughty girl, often appearing as a white wolf ruling over a pack. In the film *Song of the Sea*, Macha embodies both the traits of a desperate mother and a cold-blooded witch, directly drawing inspiration from the image of a calamity goddess capable of transforming into an owl. In *Song of the Sea*, the figures of Bronagh and her daughter originate in Irish folklore about the *selkie*, a Gaelic word for “seal” (Monaghan, 2003). In the 16th century, during the Age of Discovery, European explorers and merchants realized the high commercial value of seal blubber and fur, leading to a widespread seal-hunting boom. This gave rise to various seal legends in Ireland, Scotland, and Scandinavia, primarily depicting seals killed at sea resurrected on land (Thomson, 2001). Thus, the image of the selkie gradually took shape. They could transform between seals and humans by putting on/off their fur/coat. Although many countries later banned seal hunting, legends about seals did not disappear. Instead, they continued to circulate among the people, giving rise to a widely influential tale: a fisherman fell in love with a selkie and married her. To keep her on land, the fisherman hid her coat. When the selkie regained the coat, she returned to her home in the sea. This legend was also incorporated into *Song of the Sea*, alluding to the dilemma Bronagh and Saoirse faced when confronted with family and self-identity. In *Wolfwalkers*, Robyn's name is linked to the Irish folktale spirit *Puca*, a creature capable of transforming into various animals and even humans, always symbolizing either good or bad fortune (Keightley, 1828/2022). This foreshadows Robyn becoming a wolfwalker and her extreme transformation from hostility towards wolves to protection of them.

As a manifestation of supernatural abilities, metamorphosis in *Irish Folklore Trilogy* also serves as a metaphor for identity, reflecting the transitions and contradictions individuals experience in social roles, family relationships, and cultural identity. In *Song of the Sea*, metamorphosis embodies identity anxiety. Unlike the other two films, *Song of the Sea* lacks a clearly defined “mother” character. Instead, the plot is driven by the “absence” and “dereliction” of the mother: Bronagh disappears into the sea after giving birth to Saoirse, and even in her brief appearance at the end of the story, she ultimately does not return to her family. In other words, she prefers to live as a seal in the sea rather than remain on land as a human mother. Here, we can see that the seal and human forms represent different roles for women in personal and social contexts.

In *Song of the Sea*, this metamorphosis is articulated through a sharp contrast in mise-en-scène and color palettes. The rigid, geometric lines and muted greys of the city symbolize the restrictive human social roles and the weight of modernization, while the organic, hand-drawn swirls and luminous blues of the ocean represent the mythic Selkie archetype. Saoirse’s physical transformation—anchored by the visually striking white selkie coat—serves as a cinematic manifestation of her identity anxiety. Her literal loss of voice in the grey, human world versus her vibrant power in the blue sea provides a visual metaphor for the struggle between domestic conformity and her ancestral, mythic essence.

When the film uses the contrast between the ocean and the city to call for a return to nature, Bronagh's choice to stay true to her heart and return to the ocean is implicitly affirmed. In contrast, Saoirse, wearing a seal coat, ultimately chooses to stay on the land—she completes the metamorphosis ritual but no longer seeks to escape; rather, she embraces her

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family. This design responds to the conflicting emotions children experience regarding parental divorce and cultural identity. It also reflects the contemporary values of "free choice" and "self-definition." Robyn from *Wolfwalkers* is another example. Initially, as the daughter of an English colonist, she attempts to become a hunter to maintain order in a human city. After discovering she has transformed into a wolfwalker, Robyn experiences anxiety and confusion, even forcing herself to stay up all night to avoid becoming a wolf. However, Robyn ultimately sides with the wolfwalkers against Lord Protector Cromwell and lives in the forest, signifying that amidst the conflict of dual cultures, she ultimately abandons colonial culture and embraces traditional Irish culture. The transformation process here symbolizes the fission, mixing, and repositioning of cultural identity. Visually, While the town of Kilkenny is depicted in a flat, restrictive woodcut style—utilizing a grey and brown palette to represent colonial order—the forest and the metamorphosis process utilize expressive, fluid charcoal lines and warm, autumnal tones. This visual shift during Robyn's transformation allows the audience to see her identity anxiety as a literal change in cinematic grammar; the rigid, two-dimensional world of her English heritage is replaced by the three-dimensional, wild perspective of the wolfwalkers (Wang, 2022). In other words, metamorphosis is not merely a supernatural event, but also a performative vehicle of reconstructing a character's self-identity, giving richer connotations to the common mythological concept of bodily transformation.

It can be said that the female figures in *Irish Folklore Trilogy* are not new-era heroines or symbolic female will, but rather vivid figures who have undergone transformation within the framework of traditional roles. They are no longer simply summarized by labels such as omnipotent, sacrificial, or sensitive. Instead, they are able to gain the right to participate and choose in modern issues, thus forming an independent expression within the organic structure of family, community, and nation.

## 5. Methodological Implications: A Paradigm of "Gentle Adaptation" for Chinese Animation

In *Irish Folklore Trilogy*, Cartoon Saloon uses mythological archetypes as the basis for character construction and completes the modern translation of the characters through narrative skills. This reflects its unique adaptation strategy: to reflect the contemporary perspective in a gentle and inconspicuous way, allowing the traditional symbolic system to take effect in contemporary expression.

Specifically, this strategy differs from traditional "faithful adaptation" which strictly reproduce historical anecdotes. nondisruptive innovation does not overturn the basic features of archetypal elements, but updates their background context. All three works are based on traditional myths or folk tales, but their plots do not simply reproduce them in a static manner. Rather, they integrate clear mythological archetypes into entirely new environments and original narrative threads, allowing ancient figures to actively interact with modern issues and altered historical eras.

*The Secret of Kells* uses the creation of the Irish national treasure, *Book of Kells*, as its narrative thread. And the eve of the Viking invasion is its setting. However, specific characters such as Brendan, Aisling, and the monks, along with their anecdotes, are nowhere to be found in the real history. The selkies and wolfwalkers, with their clear archetypes, also serve a new environment in the film: the selkie can travel to modern Dublin with its bustling traffic, and the Fianna, who disappeared after the Middle Ages, can be reborn in the era of the Lord Protector.

The modern issues embodied by the female characters in Cartoon Saloon are never presented in the film as a manifesto or in a confrontational manner, but are deeply embedded in

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their living environments, character fates, and emotional changes. The transformation between human and animal forms is not merely for visual stimulation or to create fantasy, but is internalized as the characters' inner anxieties and confusion, thus deepening the expression of the themes. Saoirse and Robyn's self-identities are both introspected through transformation, slowly growing and gradually becoming clearer through connections with family, friendship, and nature, rather than bursting out in adventure by abruptly denying their initial identities. Themes such as ecological destruction, cultural oppression, and identity dilemmas, though hidden beneath the plot, are also powerful—compared to slogan-like sentimentality and sudden violent confrontations, the emotional expression, highly integrated with the story itself, seems to resonate more deeply with the audience. At the same time, the rewriting of "Crone" and "Mother" follows the same aesthetic logic: they do not represent absolute good or evil, wisdom or horror, but simply themselves with joy and sorrow. These approaches aim to emphasize the "complexity of the female image" rather than its "reversal," and the "diversity of life states" rather than the "redistribution of power and status," thus avoiding the problem of ineffective reshaping of mythological figures.

A comparison of recent Chinese mythological animated movies highlights the fundamental differences between these two creative paradigms. Works such as *Ne Zha* series, *White Snake* series, and *New Gods* series lean more towards commercial films in terms of genre and target audience, and their creative strategies generally exhibit strong confrontational traits such as de-sanctification, heroic subversion, and institutional skepticism.

While these strategies certainly respond to audiences' expectations for novelty and help release negative emotions from reality, some works also reveal obvious problems. Such as the fragmented use of traditional mythological systems in plot structures, inconsistent character portrayals after subversion, and a lack of mediating transition between cultural roots and modern issues, leading to audience confusion and weakened emotional resonance. For example, recent Chinese adaptations frequently transform traditionally benevolent immortals into villains to serve contemporary conspiracy theories regarding corrupt power. This 'heroic subversion' often lacks a solid cultural foundation, sacrificing the sacred logic of the original myths for a modern anti-establishment narrative. Conversely, in *Irish Folklore Trilogy*, the choice of villains aligns with deep-seated cultural cognition: Lord Protector Cromwell in *Wolfwalkers* continues his historical role as a loathed invader, and Macha's initially negative portrayal in *Song of the Sea* is rooted in her mythological identity as a harbinger of calamity and death.

In the treatment of female figures, there is a risk of "over-instrumentation" or "deliberate image reconstruction," turning them into mere showcases of innovation and canvases for moral projection, failing to evoke genuine audience empathy. For instance, in *White Snake: Green Snake*, the protagonist Xiao Qing is redesigned with a high-ponytail and tight-fitting modern suit—a visual choice that has no trace in the original folklore. Such forced innovation serves as a spectacularized symbol aimed at providing visual stimulation, but it severs the character's link to her cultural roots.

In contrast, Cartoon Saloon's "nondisruptive innovation" strategy establishes a clear theoretical framework that differs fundamentally from traditional "faithful adaptation". While faithful adaptations often rely on a "worshipful retro style" that strictly reproduces ancient plots, and recent subversions rely on a "deconstructive modern style," nondisruptive innovation acts as a dynamic dialogue with tradition. It finds expressive space within the old system and achieves "structural meaning transformation through minor adjustments". Its core methodology is rooted in traditional structures while implicitly integrating contemporary issues, avoiding both the structural rupture of modern subversion and the static replication of traditional faithful adaptation.

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If the characters and story archetypes are significantly subverted, the emotional connection with the audience may be lost, leaving the story completely unfamiliar. Therefore, ensuring that the characters, story structure, and archetypes are consistent is more likely to guarantee the film's style consistency and avoid a sense of cultural disconnect for the audience. In *Irish Folklore Trilogy*, the relationships and meanings of the characters naturally evolve into the innovative stage. Aisling is still a goddess. But she has transformed from a saintly guardian of the forest into an equal partner of the protagonist's age and similar circumstances. Saoirse still possesses the selkie's abilities, but she does not return to the sea in the end; instead, she establishes an emotional connection with her father and brother. Robyn becomes a wolfwalker, which no longer signifies abandoning her human identity, but rather actively reconstructing her self-identity amidst cultural crossover. The creative process of Cartoon Saloon seems to convey the message that reviving mythology may be more suitable for connecting with tradition and expressing the present than reconstructing mythology.

## 6. Conclusion

Starting with a focus on the mythological foundations of female, Cartoon Saloon's *Irish Folklore Trilogy* presents a clear theoretical framework for "nondisruptive innovation". Rather than breaking the old narrative through subversive labels or relying on a "worshipful retro" reproduction of traditions, it achieves the regeneration and modern translation of mythological narratives through three core pillars: gentle structural adjustments (updating contextual backgrounds rather than merely repeating literal events), restrained character reorganization (resetting functional positioning without destroying archetypes), and deep emotional embedding (internalizing mythic elements to address modern anxieties).

In fact, the meaning of mythology has never been static. It is constantly being awakened, interpreted, and reconstructed in different eras. The effectiveness of adaptation does not depend on the degree of similarity between the old and the new, but rather on whether tradition can regain its expressive power in a new social context. Through *Irish Folklore Trilogy*, we can see that strongly negating tradition is not the only path to innovation; sometimes, fully respecting its internal organic structure allows mythology to be heard, understood, and trusted again. Perhaps Chinese animated movies can incorporate this question into their creative thinking: is the process of creating based on mythology a confrontation with tradition, or a dialogue with it?

Faced with the inexhaustible treasure trove of traditional culture, the Chinese animation industry could revitalize its heritage by transitioning from technical saturation to aesthetic rooting. Rather than over-relying on high-spec 3D rendering to achieve commercial visual stimulation, creators should seek inspiration directly from traditional Chinese painting and decorative arts. Just as *Irish Folklore Trilogy* incorporates local motifs and geometric patterns from *the Book of Kells* into its cinematic language, Chinese mythological IP could utilize traditional aesthetics—such as the fluid lines of Dunhuang murals or the negative space of ink-wash painting—to create a visual-narrative mediating transition that feels culturally organic rather than technologically imposed.

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