

COMMEMORATIVE

MAGAZINE

# HIGHLANDER



2018

€3~

LIGHTNING  
STRIKE



A COMIC CON IRELAND EVENT

YOUR KINDNESS  
SAVE LIVES



Temple  Street

CHILDREN'S UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL  
FOUNDATION

# CREDITS

Cover... Cormac Hughes

Graphic Design... Grisel San Martin

Publisher... Eoin McAuley

Kurgan... Kyle Fraser

The Story of Highlander... Christopher Fagan

Battle Scene... Austin McDonald

Highlander Montage... Niall Farrell

A Kind of Magic: Queen and Michael Kamen... Lorraine Walsh

Connor MacLeod Fight Scene... Robert Carey

The Mythology of Highlander... Sean Hill

Pure Magic... By Marc Diamond

Final Fight... Kyle Fraser

Afterword... David Williams

Special Thanks to Massimo Moretti of StudioCanal

Special Thanks to Aidan Alcock of Pulse College

*This magazine was produced Courtesy of STUDIOCANAL Films Ltd, Lightning Strike retain no rights to the characters nor their likeness herein published. All proceeds from the sale of this publication will be donated to Temple Street Children's Hospital.*



## PULSE COLLEGE

LEADERS IN CREATIVE MEDIA EDUCATION







# THE MYTHOLOGY OF HIGHLANDER

*By Sean Hill*

**T**he mythology of Highlander is a succinct one. A secret race of Immortals who have existed throughout time battle each other to experience the Quickening, a surge of power from a defeated Immortal, and eventually come together in the Gathering, where the last two Immortals will battle for the last time and obtain the power of the Prize. Immortals are incapable of having children and they may not, under any circumstances, battle on holy ground. The Prize grants not only mortality and the ability to conceive, but also a god-like omniscience where the winner can sense and feel every thought across the world.

The concept of the Quickening shares a great similarity with the archaic usage of the word 'quick', meaning 'alive'. The Quickening, in this sense, finds much in common with the 18th century Gothic Romantic concept of 'sublimity', an experience - artistic, aesthetic, spiritual or intellectual - of beauty, awe and terror beyond all possible of calculation. This is experienced, for instance, by Connor as he ran with the stag, proclaiming he could feel its heartbeat, or Connor's training across breathtaking vistas with Ramirez. It is the feeling of a surge of life or oneness with nature, an echo of the power of the Prize. Curiously, however, the quickening is also the first signs of movement from a fetus in the womb, historically argued to be the first true signs of life. This is reflected in the 'birth' of an Immortal, who often suffers a grave injury, but recovers and enters into the life of an Immortal.

# A KIND OF MAGIC

## QUEEN AND MICHAEL KAMEN

*By Lorraine Walsh*

**H**ighlander's cult status is due in part to Queen who wrote and performed almost half of the soundtrack that accompanies the film. Less infamous but significant nonetheless, is Michael Kamen's original score performed by the National Philharmonic Orchestra. There is a certain poignancy in listening to the soundtrack now, given that both Kamen and Mercury are no longer with us. Kamen died, aged 55, in 2003 and Freddie Mercury, died of Aids in 1991, just five years after the release of the Highlander film.

The script and a twenty minute montage of already filmed scenes provided enough inspiration for the four band members of Queen to write five original songs for Highlander, with only A Hammer to Fall originating from a previous album. Speaking about the process of writing for Highlander drummer Roger Taylor said they found "plenty of things in the plot to jump off". Typical of Queen each member wrote a completely different style of track for the film. Brian May, lead guitarist, inspired by the love story between the immortal Connor and his first love, the sadly mortal Heather, wrote the now classic Who Wants to Live Forever. In 1986, on the release of their A Kind of Magic album, May explains his take on the love story, "it was a strange kind of tragedy", that he could relate to his own life in that "love always comes to an end". Similarly, Brian Deacon, bass guitarist, was more inspired by the New York love scenes than the action in his wonderful, bluesy "slow ballad in a 6/8" rhythm, Just One Year of Love. Action inspired tracks include the guitar heavy, Gimme the Prize, the theme song for the villain of the film, The Kurgan and the heavy rock, opening track, Princes of the Universe. Although a planned release of a Highlander soundtrack album was canceled, probably due to the poor reception of the film, the Highlander inspired songs were developed and rearranged to become the fully fledged songs on the Queen nine track album A Kind of Magic, the title of the song and the album originating from a line in the film.

Michael Kamen, a young composer at the time of writing the score for Highlander went on to become a well respected conductor and composer with an eclectic style and work history. Included among his best known work are soundtracks for Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves (1991), X-men (2000) and Band of Brothers (2001). He also conducted Pink Floyd's, The Wall, performance in Berlin (1990), and worked with Metallica, David Bowie and Bob Dylan. His style varies on the Highlander tracks, the theme song is sci-fi inspired, in the vein of Star Wars, with electronic sections along with strings, brasses and the Scottish mandolin. Hauntingly beautiful is the instrumental accompaniment to the Connor/Heather love scenes on which Kamen collaborated with Brian May. Writing in 2016, Jonathan Broxton, Editor of Movie Music UK, said, "Highlander is the genesis of the action style Kamen perfected later" and "the intelligent thematic writing and the florid orchestral arrangements illustrate perfectly why so many hold him in such high regard".

Revisiting the Highlander soundtrack, it is notable that each of its five contributors saw something different to inspire them, in an at the time unfinished film, but that is the nature of creativity. In the final editing of Highlander the potential of much of the soundtrack and score, perhaps was lost, in the rush to make an commercially, viable blockbuster. The music that Queen and to a certain extent Michael Kamen wrote, belong to another Highlander one that was more spectacular, more emotional, less sword-wielding action. Apologies in advance to die-hard fans, but imagine a version of Highlander, storyboarded solely on the music and lyrics that the four members of Queen wrote and Freddie Mercury sang. That surely, could be the one that lives forever.





# THE STORY OF HIGHLANDER

*By Christopher Fagan*

**I**n this violent tale of immortals fighting to the death, the mystical Connor MacLeod (known as Russell Nash in present day) kills a man in a sword fight set in a New York City parking lot, leaving a sliver of an ancient weapon lodged in a car park pillar in the process.

After the brilliant forensics specialist Brenda Wyatt recovers evidence of the mysterious weapon, she and her partner, Lt. Frank Moran embark on an investigation of Nash that will land them in the middle of a dangerous, centuries-old feud between powerful immortals.



The 450 year old Connor MacLeod, a swordsman from the Scottish Highlands, known as the highlander, has wandered the world as one of a secret race of immortals who cannot die, unless beheaded.

We follow Connor's four and a half centuries lifetime, through flashbacks and modern day as we see Connor's timeless love story and near endless battles.

Tutored by Ramirez, an older more experienced immortal in the rules of the game, where Immortals can only die by decapitation and can only avoid battle on holy ground. Until the remaining immortals come together to participate in 'The Gathering', as there can only be one.

The last two surviving are Connor and his greatest enemy, The Kurgan an immortal of immense power and ferocity. Facing The Kurgan who wishes to obtain the Prize a special ability which is could give the last living immortal warrior, vast knowledge and the ability to enslave the entire human race.

*'THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE'*



# PURE MAGIK!

REMEMBERING HIGHLANDER - A SCOTTISH PERSPECTIVE

BY MARC DIAMOND



1986, GLASGOW.  
THE EIGHTIES WERE A  
WEE BIT GRIM, BUT THE  
HIGHLANDS WEREN'T FAR.

MY WEE BROTHER AND I WOULD TROMP  
THROUGH THE CAMPSIE GLEN\* AS OFTEN AS  
WE COULD, SWINGING STICK LIGHTSABERS.

2000AD COMIC WRITERS  
PROVIDED US WITH SCI-FI  
SCOTTISH FLAVOUR, BUT  
THERE WASN'T MUCH ABOUT  
SCOTLAND IN HOLLYWOOD.  
SCOTTY FROM STAR TREK?!

THE PILITHIUM  
CRYSTALS  
CANNAE HANDLE IT,  
CAP'N!!!

BOOM! HIGHLANDER ARRIVED  
WITH A LIGHTNING FLASH! BUT  
HE'S FRENCH? DISNAE MATTER.  
SEE THAT KILT? HE'S SCOTTISH!



SEAN CONNERY IS AN  
EGYPTIAN? DISNAE MATTER.  
HE'S ALWAYS SCOTTISH!

WE HAD TO SEE IT! WE MANAGED TO  
GET A HOLD OF THE VHS. EVENTUALLY.



"I'M FIFTEEN, HONEST!!!"

"I AM CONNOR MACLEOD OF THE CLAN MACLEOD. I WAS BORN IN 1518 IN THE  
VILLAGE OF GLENFINNAN ON THE SHORES OF LOCH SHIEL, AND I AM IMMORTAL."

WE CHANTED THOSE WORDS LIKE A  
MANTRA FOR MONTHS.



"BUT IF HE LOSES HIS  
HEAD, HE DIES. SO  
HE'S NOT IMMORTAL  
THEN? I DON'T GET  
IT?"  
"DISNAE MATTER!!!"

WE DIDN'T CARE THAT IT DIDN'T MAKE A LICK OF SENSE. IT WAS MAGIC AND  
FIGHTING AND **SCOTTISH!** WE COULD FEEL THE QUICKENING, AND EVEN THOUGH  
WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THAT WAS EXACTLY, WE DID KNOW THAT IT WAS...

# PURE DEAD BRILLIANT!



AND HEATHER.



MY BROTHER SAID, "SOMEDAY, I'M GONNA FIND **MY** HEATHER AND MARRY HER IN THE HIGHLANDS." WE LOVED HEATHER.



AND WHEN HEATHER IS OLD AND ASKS CONOR, "WHERE ARE WE?" "WE'RE IN THE HIGHLANDS, WHERE ELSE?"  
**\*CUE WHO WANTS TO LIVE FOREVER\***



"ARE YOU CRYIN'?"  
"NO. ARE YOU?"  
"NO. \*SNIFF\*"



**\*CUE GOOSEBUMPS\***

THE BEST BITS FOR ME THOUGH WERE THE SCOTTISH BITS. AND THE JUMPS THROUGH HISTORY. THEY WERE THE MOST INTERESTING AND I COULD HAVE WATCHED A WHOLE MOVIE ABOUT THAT.

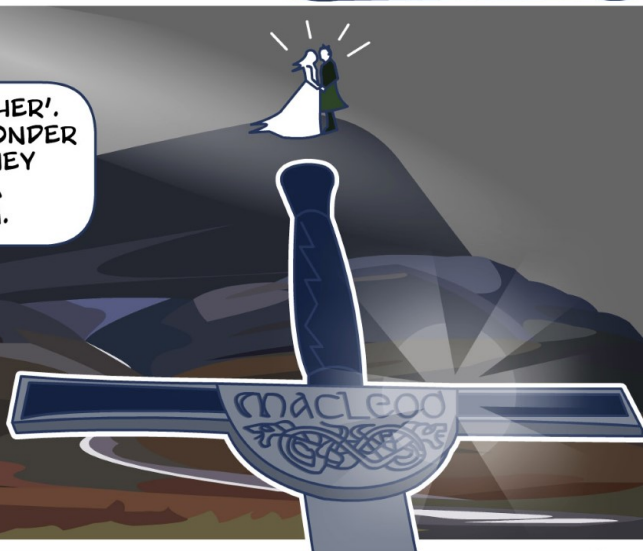
1536  
1783  
1943  
1985

THE 'MODERN DAY' SEGMENTS, HOWEVER, SEEM CHEESY IN RETROSPECT AND THE KURGAN WAS A WEE BIT SILLY, IF I'M HONEST. HOW ON EARTH DID HE MANAGE TO LIVE SO LONG THE WAY HE CARRIED ON?

"I'M CANDY."  
"OF COURSE YOU ARE."  
OH. MY. GOD.



MY BROTHER NEVER DID FIND A 'HEATHER'. INSTEAD, HE FOUND A JENNIFER. I WONDER IF HE'S TOLD HER THAT SOME DAY, THEY **WILL** GET MARRIED ON THE TOP OF A MOUNTAIN IN SCOTLAND. IN THE RAIN.

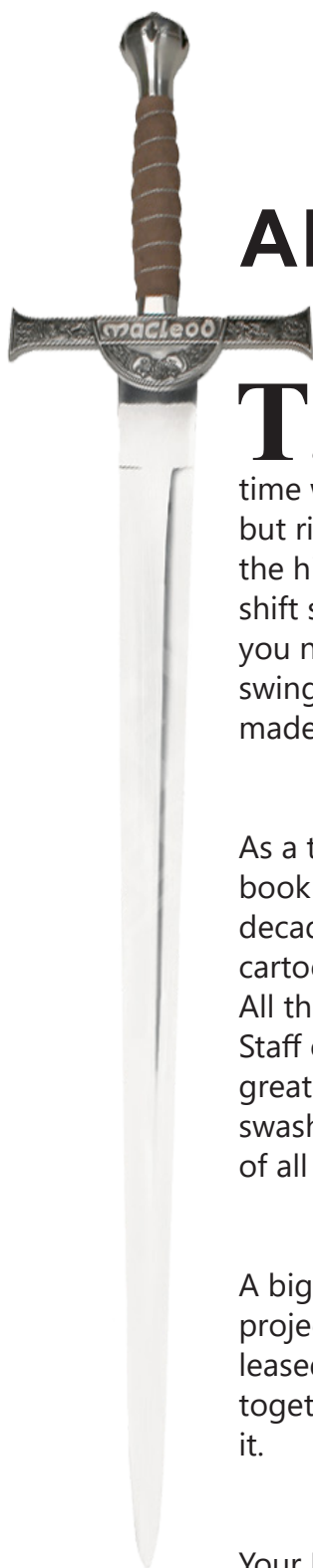


THOSE EIGHTIES SEQUENCES MAY HAVE DATED THE MOVIE. AND MY IRISH KIDS DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT A HIGHLANDER IS, UNFORTUNATELY (!?) "IS IT ABOUT CONOR MCGREGOR?" BUT THAT DOESN'T MATTER. **WE** REMEMBER IT IMPERFECTLY AS PERFECT...AND PROUDLY SCOTTISH! (AND WE'RE TRULY THANKFUL THEY **NEVER** MADE ANY SEQUELS.)

**THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE!**







# AFTERWORD

**T**he Eighties were a feast of over the top action movies, a decade of big screen heroes and villains. Mostly this time was filled with ludicrous plots and ridiculous firearms, but right in the middle of it all, a wonderful fantasy set in the highlands of Scotland. Who of us didn't wield a make-shift sword at some point in our childhood, and how could you not love the idea of shouting "there can be only one" swinging your weaponised cardboard tube. Highlander made immortals of us all.

As a team we are very excited that we got to work on this book celebrating one of the greatest action movies of the decade. Highlander spawned countless films, T.V series, cartoons, books, comics and video games.

All the work in this book is done by Students, Alumni and Staff of Pulse College, in Dublin Ireland. This has been a great opportunity for us to bond over a common interest in swashbuckling and kilts. But all joking aside I'm very proud of all the student contributions and work.

A big thank you to StudioCanal for their support in this project, to Dublin Comic Con where this book will be released, and to all the team members for bringing this book together. We hope you enjoy it as much as we did making it.

Your Fellow Adventurer,

***David Williams***

Head of Games and Animation at Pulse College







# WRITERS GAME

17 - 18 NOVEMBER 2018

ODEON POINT VILLAGE  
DUBLIN, IRELAND

---

SMASH THROUGH INTO WRITING FOR COMICS,  
GAMES, FILM AND VR WITH OUR GROUND-BREAKING  
MASTERCLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

COMIC CON EVENTBRITE SPECIAL OFFER  
Use code "COMICCON" for 10% OFF YOUR TICKET

BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW  
[www.WRITERSGAME.media](http://www.WRITERSGAME.media)



# SPRINGBOARD YOUR CAREER.

## Springboard+ Certificate in ANIMATION

Pulse College has 25 **FREE** places on offer  
**Enrolling Now for Sept '18**

Applications are now open to  
**Jobseekers, the Employed & Returners**

Animation by Pulse College Student Graham Isherwood

**Email:** [springboard@pulsecollege.com](mailto:springboard@pulsecollege.com)

**Tel:** (0)1 478 4045

**Location:** Halston Street, Dublin 7

**Website:** [www.pulsecollege.com/springboard](http://www.pulsecollege.com/springboard)