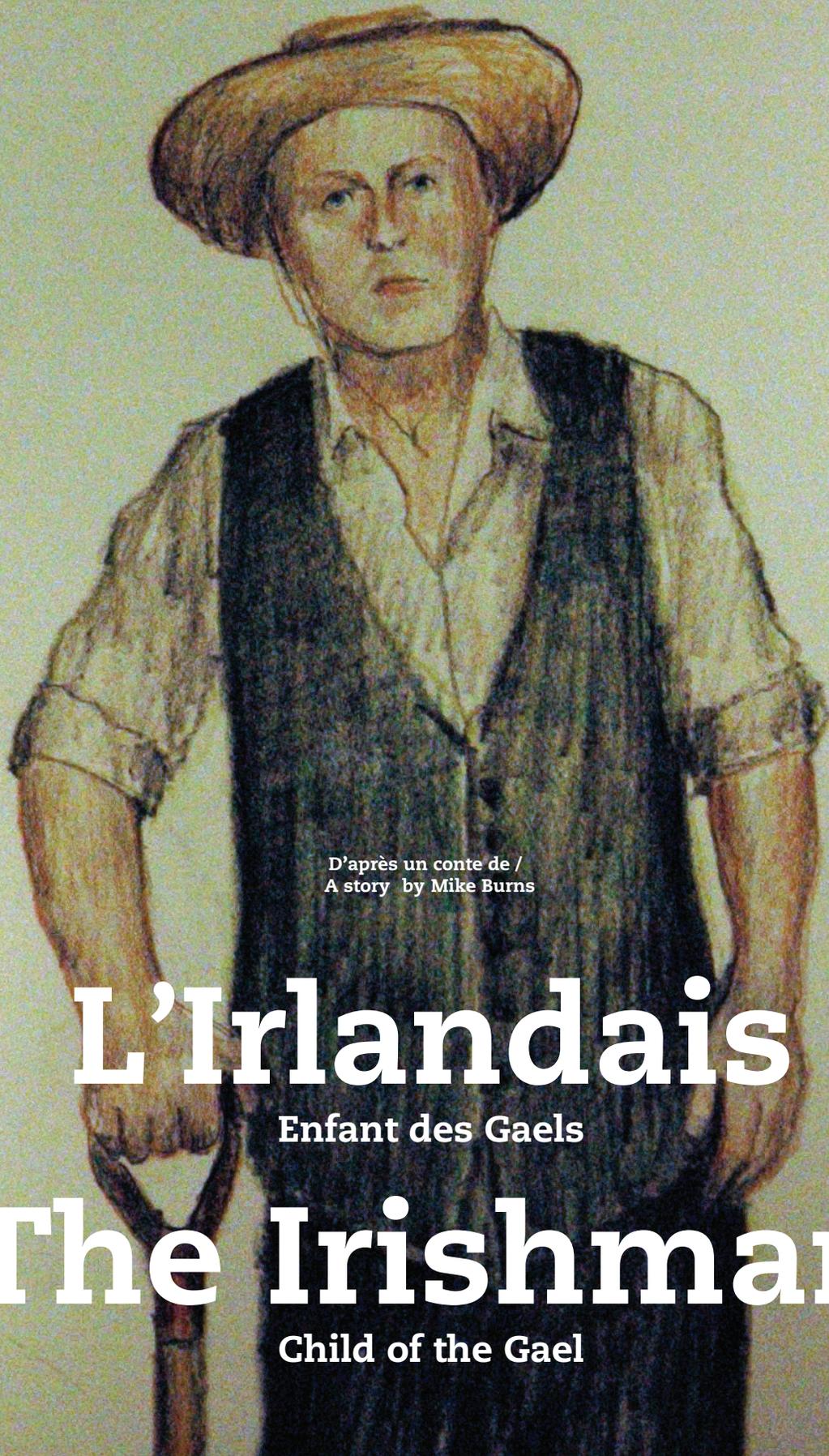


MacLeod Nine Productions Présente - Presents  
Un film de G. Scott MacLeod / A film by G. Scott MacLeod

LEARNING  
GUIDE



D'après un conte de /  
A story by Mike Burns

# L'Irlandais

Enfant des Gaels

# The Irishman

Child of the Gael

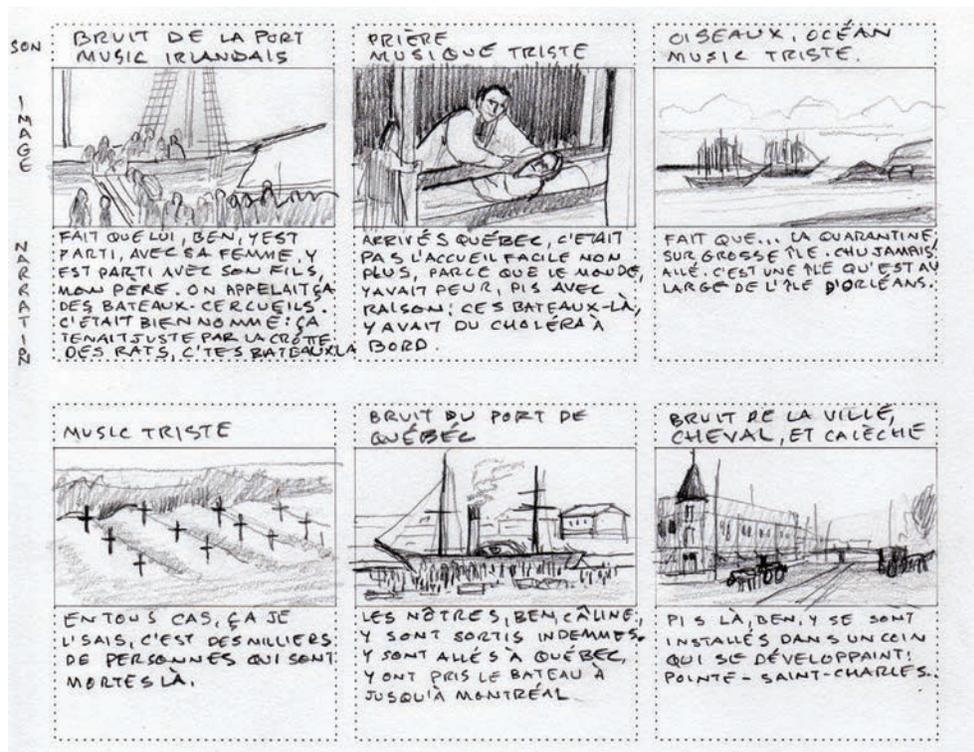
# L'Irlandais

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## Objectives

In *The Irishman – Child of the Gael*, our narrator Sean recounts his maternal and paternal ancestors' dramatic immigrant experiences in Canada after fleeing desperate conditions at home. This learning guide is designed to help educators raise awareness about the Irish immigrant experience in the 1800s, the conditions that drove so many to emigrate and the impact their arrival has had in Canada.



## Before Screening the Video



- 1 What do you know about your family's arrival in Canada? When did they come and why?
- 2 What types of things do you associate with Irish culture? Can you name any events or parts of Canadian culture that have been imported from Ireland?
- 3 Why do you think the Irish came to North America during the 1800s? Were they coming for something new or fleeing something at home?
- 4 How did people travel great distances around the world in the 1800s?
- 5 What types of jobs do you think Irish immigrants typically performed in Canada in the 1800s?
- 6 Imagine life in Canada in the 1840s and 1850s. What do you think would be the greatest challenges?



## After Screening the Video

- 1 What were the situations that forced Sean's maternal and paternal ancestors to leave Ireland?
- 2 Where was Grosse Ile? Why were immigrants forced to stop there when they came to Canada? What is the purpose of a quarantine station?
- 3 What kinds of work did Irish labourers do in Canada when they arrived? Why were these early infrastructure projects important for Canada?
- 4 What did many Irish immigrants call the ships used to transport them across the ocean? Why did they choose this name?
- 5 What unusual kind of shelter did some of the Irish labourers in the film use? Why do you think they would use this sort of housing? What would be the advantages of this type of housing? What about the disadvantages?
- 6 What sorts of recreational activities did the Irish immigrant workers engage in when work was over? Were these activities effective in helping them relax?





## Follow-up Projects

- 1 Research the cholera epidemic of the 1800s. What path did the epidemic follow to arrive in North America? How was the disease spread? How many people reportedly died of the epidemic in Canada? What is the significance of the Black Rock monument in Montreal?
- 2 Research the immigrant story of one branch of your family tree. Describe these ancestors' experiences coming to Canada.
- 3 The Irish Potato Famine (1845-1852), known in Ireland as the Great Famine, had a huge impact on Canadian immigration. Research this tragic event and report to the class on your findings.
- 4 The Irish were instrumental in the building of the Lachine Canal in Montreal. Research this canal and report to your class on its significance to Canadian industry.
- 5 Write a poem or a story or create a piece of music or an illustration inspired by the film.
- 6 Write a few journal entries as if you were one of the characters in the film.





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