

27 March 2019



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

To whom it may concern,

I'm writing you today with my highest recommendation for the research, work and art of Thomas Keyes.

Keyes' work first caught my eye for its brilliant and creative entwining of ancient manuscript illumination and contemporary graffiti writing. His art entices, delights, and provokes rich reflection on the entanglement of those ancient and contemporary forms. As a researcher in religion whose office sits just around the corner from one of Ireland's great illuminated manuscripts—the Book of Kells—I am consistently amazed at the ways Keyes' work both cites and expands upon that tradition of illumination into the living present. I often bring his work into my classrooms.

Quite often research into ancient manuscripts, theological tracts, and illuminated texts rests solely on an intellectual, historical, and disembodied level. Scholars of the humanities do remarkable work theorizing the making of ancient and medieval insular art. But often missing from these scholarly conversations is an experiential perspective that knows intimately the everyday practices that go into *making* and *creating* such writing.

Thomas Keyes' work steps boldly into that cultural need, uncovering rich insights in the process. He is a leader in a growing field of research and art as we begin to reinvest in uncovering the processes behind insular art. He's an expert in producing and using authentic materials—from pigments to parchment, birch to charcoal. And his research and practice of ancient ways of making both creates unforgettable pieces while also uncovering important insights into the actual practice of composing insular art. He has my highest admiration and recommendation for that work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jacob Erickson'.

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