



# The Book of Kells

*Bernard Meehan*

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**The Book of Kells** Bernard Meehan

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One of the most remarkable manuscripts to survive from the early Middle Ages in Europe, the Book of Kells was probably painted around 800 in a monastery at Iona in Scotland or Kells in Ireland, or perhaps in both places. Extraordinarily inventive and intricate imagery accompanies the texts of the four Gospels: full-page depictions of Evangelists and their symbols, lavish honorific openings to the Gospels, extraordinary initials, and decoration that combines complex interlace, animals, and human figures. This newly photographed book explores the Book of Kells through its historical background; a display of the elements of the book at their actual size; the spectacular openings of the texts that precede the Gospels; a study of earlier and comparable manuscripts; detailed examination of symbols and themes, with special enlarged details; a look at the scribes and artists who worked on the manuscript; and a consideration of technical aspects, illuminated by recent scientific research. The rich illustrations feature more than fifty full-size reproductions of complete pages of the manuscript plus enlarged details that allow one to relish the intricacy of elements barely visible to the naked eye. Supplementary images place the manuscript in its setting and provide comparisons for its iconography and style. 250 illustrations, 230 in color

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