



*Kensuke's Kingdom*

FEATURES TOP STORIES

## Blue Fox Debuts NorAm Trailer for Acclaimed 'Kensuke's Kingdom' Ahead of Oct. Release



By Mercedes Milligan August 1, 2024

Movie-goers and animation lovers this side of the pond can look forward to checking out a dedicatedly crafted new import from Europe this fall, when Blue Fox Entertainment releases Lupus Films' *Kensuke's Kingdom*. Adapted from the best-selling novel by Michael Morpurgo (*War Horse*), the 85-minute adventure will open in theaters across the U.S. and Canada on **October 18**.

Blue Fox has released a new U.S. trailer for the pic, which you can watch below.

**Synopsis:** *Kensuke's Kingdom* spotlights the epic adventure of Michael, a young boy shipwrecked on a remote island who must adapt to life alone. Over time, Michael feels another presence and learns that his new world is home to both unimaginable danger and beauty.

The voice cast features BAFTA and Academy Award winner **Cillian Murphy** (*Oppenheimer*, *Inception*) as Dad, BAFTA winner and Academy Award nominee **Sally Hawkins** (*The Shape of Water*, *Happy Go Lucky*) as Mum, **Raffey Cassidy** (*The Killing of a Sacred Deer*, *Vox Lux*) as Becky, **Aaron MacGregor** (*Puffin Rock and the New Friends*) as Michael and Academy Award nominee **Ken Watanabe** (*Letters from Iwo Jima*, *The Last Samurai*) as Kensuke.

Directed by Neil Boyle and Kirk Hendry, *Kensuke's Kingdom* is adapted for screen by BAFTA Award nominee Frank

Cottrell-Boyce (*Hilary and Jackie*). Producers are Emmy Award-winning producers and founders of animation studio Lupus Films, Camilla Deakin and Ruth Fielding, and Academy Award nominee Stéphan Roelants of Melusine Productions.

The early reviews in the U.K. have been glowing (the film has a 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes as of Aug. 3). Here is a sampler:

“The story is told almost entirely through the visuals of 2D hand-drawn animation, which is frequently beautiful in its no-thrills simplicity. There are moments of real splendor, especially in the evocations of the seascapes and the island ...A sequence when Kensuke imagines what happened to his family in Nagasaki takes the traditional Japanese painting style of Nihonga as a visual reference and is a standout moment, both aesthetically and emotionally.”

— **John Beasdale, *The Times***

“The film is thoughtful, tender and generally quite beguiling, even if Michael’s immaturity makes him an irritating protagonist in the first half.”

— **Tim Robey, *Daily Telegraph***

“It’s rather Spielbergian in its way (Spielberg filmed Morpurgo’s *War Horse*) but more low-cal.”

— **Peter Bradshaw, *The Guardian***

This film adaptation brought out that reaction of childlike wonder in a distinctly simple, heartfelt way that very few animated films — hell, very few films, period — manage to do.

— **Joseph Tomastik, *Loud and Clear Reviews***

You can read *Animation Magazine’s* interview with the filmmakers from April ’24 issue [here](#).

---