



Would you like to introduce yourself?

Hi, I'm Camelia Phạm, a Vietnamese illustrator based in Hanoi. I graduated in Graphic Design but found my calling for illustration, through my love for drawing characters alongside bold, saturated colors and decorative frames that all together tell a story.

How would you describe your style in three words?

Colorful, graphic, maximalist

What subject areas do you specialise in with your illustrations?

I loved mythology stories as a kid and lots of them have inspired my drawings since. My current theme is mostly modernizing mythical characters, especially women. I used to distort the human body in different ways to deliver the story of the image, but now that I've discovered that what you wear says a lot about who you are. So, now that I only have a split second to impress the viewer, I've found it better to embellish my characters through clothing and accessories, so that their characteristics can shine through it.

How did you approach the astrological themes visually?

I don't normally know until I put pen to paper and just go with it. I'd sketch the character's pose first, then their clothes and the patterns for the frames, and then colors just come to me when I render it. I'm very glad and thankful that the publisher has let me freely create and show my interpretation of the myth.

Which colors, shapes, or moods were particularly important to you?

Currently I'm obsessed with the high saturated navy blue, as I feel it adds a layer of mysticism with a pop of vibrance.



Was there a motif or zodiac sign that particularly challenged you?

For me it's challenging to draw backgrounds, architecture, or anything that requires a level of realism or perspective. I'm trying to practice more to get better at that.

Normally, in my personal illustrations, I'd try to avoid backgrounds entirely by converting everything into a flat graphic pattern with frames, but when illustrating something that is grounded in history and culture, it needs to be as accurate as possible. These backgrounds are super important for signalling the era and location in which the story took place.

I've had to step out of my comfort zone a little to pay such close attention to the backgrounds, but I've learned so much from doing it. The brief helps a lot with this as it usually comes with photo references for each spread.

Do you have a favorite picture in the book, and why?

Probably page 99, the Chinese zodiac, because for the representation of the Year of the Dog, I took quite a lot of inspiration from my own dog, Mango.

Other than that, my second favorite has to be page 42, Mercury, because I've mastered drawing cows just from that page alone. Plus, I really love the color palette.