



The Letterpress Project

Author and Illustrator E-Interviews

An Interview With Sophie Cameron

Q1. What are your earliest memories of books and reading? For example, did you have a favourite or inspirational book?

The first book I remember thinking of as my favourite was *Peter Pan*, when I was four or five. It was quite a multi-arts obsession – I saw a stage show of it, then the Disney film, then came to the book. I reread it recently for the first time in over twenty years and loved it – my second novel, which I’m working on at the moment, is partly inspired by it.

Q2. What inspired you to become an author / illustrator?

There are lots of books that inspired me, but I decided I wanted to become an author after reading Phillip Pullman’s *Northern Lights* when I was nine. The story was unlike anything I’d read before, and the settings are just so rich – I loved the thought of creating a whole other world like that.

Q3. For you, what makes a successful book or illustration?

For me, characters and worldbuilding are the most important aspects, regardless of genre. It’s hard to enjoy a book if you don’t care about the characters (though they don’t necessarily have to be likeable), and rich settings and a vivid atmosphere often make a book much more memorable. Looking through GoodReads, there are quite a few books that I can barely remember having read, and for me that’s often because they lacked that sense of place.

Q4. Do you have a specific audience in mind when you write your books / plan your illustrations?

Writing for young adults, there are certain things you have to take into consideration: voice,

use of language, graphic or violent imagery, how much description you use... you can't get away with waxing lyrical about a sunset for two whole pages, for example. Otherwise, I don't really think about who's going to be reading it at all! It makes it kind of terrifying when the time comes to give it to people to read.

Q5. What future do you think the physical book has? For example, do you think the electronic book will replace the physical book?

No, I don't think so. I'm a bit fan of ebooks – I live in Spain and it's much easier and cheaper for me to download English books than to have them delivered here – but I still usually prefer a physical book. Most people like to own objects in general, and lots like having books to display, so while we might read more often on ereaders, I don't think printed books will die out.

Q6. Are you a book collector? Is there a special book you'd love to own?

I'm hoping to get a Ravenclaw 20th anniversary editions of *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* for my birthday! I also have all of *His Dark Materials* signed and in hardback, which I'm quite proud of.