

## Assignment 2: The Hero With a Thousand Faces

*“The latest incarnation of Oedipus, the continued romance of Beauty and the Beast, stand this afternoon on the corner of 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue, waiting for the traffic light to change.”*

*–Joseph Campbell, The Hero With a Thousand Faces*

### Description:

In the book *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell explores the theory that mythological narratives frequently share a fundamental structure. Called a “monomyth,” Campbell reveals the many ways a classic myth tells itself over and over through different stories and characters throughout time. The monomyth includes all of the stages of The Writer’s Journey by Vogler (who was working from Campbell’s 17-stage “Hero’s Journey”), which you are following in weekly discussions in this course. Those 12 stages of a monomyth can be broken down into three “acts” that pretty much all stories follow: 1) Departure 2) Initiation 3) Return. Your goal for this assignment is to use the story arc of a classic myth or story to make a full-page magazine feature illustration about a current musical artist or group.

- ✦ **Format:** Feature Editorial (full-page)
- ✦ **Dimensions:** 10 x 12 inches, with 0.125 inch bleed, vertical orientation
- ✦ **Final Delivery Specs:** 400 dpi, CMYK colour profile, PDF file with bleed settings on
- ✦ **Client:** a popular music trade magazine (Rolling Stone, Pitchfork, Kerrang!, The Kraze, The Source)
- ✦ **Timeline:** 2 weeks
- ✦ **Professional Fee:** \$1200

### Process:

One of the classic functions of an editorial illustrator is portraiture of famous people. Famous people are our modern-day heroes, and illustrators have a unique ability to translate the style, affect, mood, and story of a musician, artist, celebrity, or political figure into a compelling and memorable image of them. There are many ways to do this: by exaggerating their most prominent features, using colour and material to translate their overall vibe, use a facial expression to show the tragedy and triumph they have experienced, using abstraction and mark-making to speak to their personal style, all in service of creating an in-depth, personal, and accurate depiction of them beyond the abilities of a photographer. In some cases, the ability to connect a famous person’s life story or current situation to a classic story helps the viewer/reader better understand who the person is, on a more mythical scale. The outcome is the feeling that this person is larger than life, represents something bigger than just themselves, and that their life and creative practice have something important to teach us about the human condition. For this assignment, you will do just that: connect a musical artist or music group to a classic myth, and

create a full-page illustration of them for a trade magazine. The portrait you create of them can be a bust or full-body portrait, and must interweave elements of a classic myth into the composition, stylistic look, colour palette, and objects within the picture frame.

### **Part 1: Research and Sketch Development**

Begin with finding a musical artist or music group that you connect with on a personal level. You should know something about this artist and their music. Look further into that artist and research the answers to the following questions in a word/google doc:

- 1) Where did they grow up and what kind of childhood did they have?
- 2) Was there a major moment in their early life/career that set them on their trajectory?
- 3) What is the biggest influence on the kind of music they create?
- 4) What is the emotional/conceptual style of the music?
- 5) What are the most prominent characteristics of their music genre (besides instruments)?
- 6) What kind of lyrics do they write? Autobiographic? Love story? Depression or Anxiety? Fictional adventure? Abstract thought? Social or political issues?

Once you've researched the above questions and found out all you can, begin researching classic myths and stories from any appropriate culture. Find a story that relates to your musician, a story whose character(s) have experienced a similar life, tragedies, triumphs, or story arc. Think about what your musician(s) have in common with characters from classic stories, and begin to overlap the features of each into one concept. Does your favourite rapper have things in common with an ancient Egyptian pharaoh? Is your favourite K-Pop group like a group of outlaws? Does your favourite folk singer share the tragic past of a lovelorn Greek couple? Figure it out!

Through the thumbnail process, develop three strong sketches of possible feature illustrations, which combine visual elements and contextual clues related to both your musical artist and a classic myth or story. Using drawn details and annotation in each sketch, outline the connections, contextual clues, character(s), and environment that fill each composition. Make sure that the musical artist is the main focus of the work, and practice their likeness.

Bring the following to class in Week 4 to discuss with your classmates and instructor:

- 1) Your word/google doc with the 6 research questions, along with notes on the classic myth or story you've found to connect with the musician.
- 2) Three detailed and annotated sketches of possible compositions for the feature illustration.

**Part 2: Final Artwork**

After determining the best sketch direction and any adjustments that should be made to it, prepare a substrate that fits the format listed above, whether analog or digital. Analog finals must be scanned in and formatted to match the “Final Delivery Specs” listed above. Digital final artworks must be executed on a canvas matching the specs listed above.

Execute the final artwork and prepare a digital image to show for presentation in class on Week 5. A short review and discussion of the work will take place, followed by directions on how to upload a PDF of process documents and final work to the Assignment 2 interface for grading.