

PATRON PICK

WITCH HAT ATELIER

MANGA BY KAMOME SHIRAHAMA

In the manga *Witch Hat Atelier*, author Shirahama offers a classic fantasy narrative. In a world where magicians are believed to be born, not made, a girl named Coco dreams for the impossible: she wants nothing more than to be a witch. One fateful day, a travelling magician named Qifrey stops by her village. After secretly seeing Qifrey cast a spell, Coco discovers the truth: witches are normal people who learn to use magic after practice and study. Forced to leave her home, she is taken up by Qifrey as his apprentice. At the same time, hints of an overarching plot suggest this starry-eyed girl will eventually find herself in something much greater that threatens the very foundation of the magic world. Shirahama's *Witch Hat Atelier* stands

out from other fantasy titles with its gorgeous illustrations and character designs. The art, reminiscent of classic fairy tales in late 19th century illustrated books, is absolutely stunning and full of detailed and ornate panels that heighten the sense of otherworldliness. Each page design and panelling is masterfully paced and thoughtful, making its scenes of magic and still pages come alive with sense of great motion. The characters are adorable and full of expression and whimsy that reminds me of characters found in Ghibli Studios films. It was really regrettable that Shirahama Kamome was not able to attend Toronto Comic Arts Festival 2020. I hope that there will be another opportunity to invite the author to Toronto in the near future.

— Brooke S.
June, 2020

ABOUT AUTHOR

Kamome Shirahama (白浜 鷗) is the author of the smash hit manga series *Witch Hat Atelier*, serialized beginning in 2016 and published in English and Japanese by Kodansha. A graduate of the design department of the Tokyo University of the Arts, Shirahama lives in Tokyo, Japan. As a freelance illustrator, Shirahama has created numerous cover illustrations for DC Comics and Marvel Comics, including *Star Wars: Doctor Aphra*, *Star Wars: The last Jedi*, *Batgirl and the Birds of Prey*, and *Wonder Woman*, among many others. Before beginning *Witch Hat Atelier*, Shirahama created the manga series *Divines: Eniale & Dewiela*, which has been published in French by Pika Édition.

— from torontocomics.com



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