

J-ZINE

FTVMAGAZINE

Moe Corner

Anime Previews

Durarara!!

Hanamaru Kindergarten

Ladies vs. Butlers!

Dance in the Vampire Bund

Ookamikakushi

Nodame Cantabile Finale

Anime Reviews

ef - A Tale of Memories & A Tale of Melodies

Mahoromatic ~Tadaima Okaeri

Abingdon Boys School

Concert Review

FTV: Behind the Scenes IV

Okawari

Chawan Mushi

DVD Releases

ef

Special Edition

Season 1&2 Anime Review

Yuuko Amamiya Bio



Upcoming DVD Releases (US)

Please note that release dates can frequently change, and we are not responsible for any inaccuracies in the dates provided.

Jan-10		02/09/2010	Soul Eater: Complete Collection, Part 1
01/05/2010	D.Gray-man: Season 1 Collection, Part 1	02/09/2010	Dante's Inferno (DVD)
	(Blu-ray)	02/09/2010	Dante's Inferno (Blu-ray)
01/05/2010	D.Gray-man: Season 2 Collection, Part 2	02/09/2010	Gao-Gai-Gar: Season 1 Collection (LiteBox)
01/05/2010	Nighthead Genesis: Complete Collection	02/09/2010	Girl's High: Complete Collection (LiteBox)
	(LiteBox)	02/09/2010	Naruto Shippuden, Vol.6
01/05/2010	Petite Princess Yucie: Complete Collection	02/16/2010	Case Closed the Movie 6: The Phantom of Baker Street
	(2010 Re-release)		
01/05/2010	You're Under Arrest: Season 2 Collection, Part 2	02/16/2010	Claymore: Complete Collection (Blu-ray)
		02/16/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Dragon Box 2
01/12/2010	Ghost in the Shell 2.0 (DVD)	02/16/2010	Heroic Age: Complete Collection (Blu-ray)
01/12/2010	Huntik - Secrets & Seekers, Vol.3 [Italian Animation]	02/16/2010	To Love Ru: Complete Collection 2
		02/16/2010	Bleach Season 4 Boxset, Part 2
01/12/2010	Hidamari Sketch: Season 1 Collection	02/16/2010	Naruto: Uncut Season 2 Boxset, Vol.1
01/12/2010	Naruto Shippuden, Vol.5	02/16/2010	Halo Legends
		02/16/2010	Halo Legends (SE)
01/15/2010	Genshiken 2, Vol.3	02/16/2010	Halo Legends (SE SteelBook) (Best Buy Exclusive)
			Halo Legends (Blu-ray)
01/19/2010	Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion R2, Part 3	02/16/2010	Halo Legends (Blu-ray SteelBook) (Best Buy Exclusive)
		02/16/2010	
01/19/2010	Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion R2, Part 3 (LE)	02/23/2010	The Tower of Druaga, Part 2: The Sword of URUK
01/19/2010	Bamboo Blade: Complete Collection, Part 2		
01/19/2010	Case Closed the Movie 5: Countdown to Heaven	02/23/2010	Dairugger, Armored Fleet: Collection 1
		02/23/2010	Maria-Holic: Complete Collection
01/19/2010	Linebarrels of Iron: Complete Collection, Part I	02/23/2010	Bleach, Vol.25
		Mar-10	
01/19/2010	One Piece: Season 2 Collection, Part 5	03/02/2010	Eureka Seven -good night, sleep tight, young lovers- (DVD)
01/19/2010	Rin - Daughter of Mnemosyne: Complete Collection	03/02/2010	Eureka Seven -good night, sleep tight, young lovers- (Blu-ray)
01/19/2010	Tsubasa, RESERVoIR CHRoNiCLE: Seasons 1 & 2 + Movie Collection	03/02/2010	Hayate the Combat Butler, Part 4
		03/02/2010	Kurokami: The Animation, Vol.1 (DVD)
01/19/2010	Moribito - Guardian of the Spirit: Complete Collection [Wal-Mart Exclusive]	03/02/2010	Kurokami: The Animation, Vol.1 (Blu-ray)
		03/02/2010	Castle in the Sky (2010 Re-release)
01/19/2010	Glass Mask: Complete Collection 1	03/02/2010	Kiki's Delivery Service (2010 Re-release)
01/19/2010	Special A (S.A): Complete Collection 2	03/02/2010	My Neighbor Totoro (2010 Re-release)
01/19/2010	Bleach, Vol.24	03/02/2010	Ponyo (DVD)
01/19/2010	Bakugan Battle Brawlers, Vol.6	03/02/2010	Ponyo (SE w/Plush)
		03/02/2010	Ponyo (Blu-ray)
01/26/2010	Sands of Destruction: Complete Collection	03/02/2010	Karin: Complete Collection (2010 Re-release)
01/26/2010	Sgt. Frog: Season 2 Collection, Part 1	03/02/2010	Phoneix: Complete Collection (LiteBox)
01/26/2010	Blade of the Immortal, Vol.3	03/02/2010	Yozakura Quartet: Complete Collection
01/26/2010	Neo Angelique Abyss: Season 1 Collection	03/02/2010	Rave Master: Complete Collection [createspace.com Exclusive]
01/26/2010	Tears to Tiara: Complete Collection 2	03/02/2010	Evangelion, Neon Genesis: 1.11 You Are (Not) Alone
01/26/2010	Naruto Shippuden Boxset 1		
01/26/2010	Naruto Shippuden Boxset 1 (SE)	03/09/2010	Evangelion, Neon Genesis: 1.11 You Are (Not) Alone (Blu-ray)
01/26/2010	Poke'mon Elements, Vol.7		
01/26/2010	Poke'mon Elements, Vol.8	03/09/2010	KenIchi - The Mightiest Disciple: Season 2 Collection, Part 1
Feb-10			
02/02/2010	Dragon Ball: Season 3 Boxset	03/09/2010	The Familiar of Zero: Complete Collection (2010 Re-release)
02/02/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Season 1 & 2 Boxset [Wal-Mart Exclusive]	03/09/2010	You're Under Arrest - Full Throttle: Complete Collection 1
		03/09/2010	Naruto Shippuden, Vol.7
02/02/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Season 3 & 4 Boxset [Wal-Mart Exclusive]	03/09/2010	Mobile Suit Gundam Unicorn, Vol.1 (Blu-ray) (Amazon.com Exclusive)
		03/09/2010	
02/02/2010	Ramen Fighter Miki: Complete Collection (LiteBox)	03/09/2010	Gunslinger Girl: Season 1 Collection (Bluray)
		03/09/2010	Gunslinger Girl - II Teatrino (TV & OVA): Complete Collection (Blu-ray)
02/02/2010	Skull Man: Complete Collection	03/12/2010	
02/02/2010	Piano - The Melody of a Young Girl's Heart: Bundle Collection	03/16/2010	
		03/16/2010	
02/02/2010	NANA: Complete Collection, Part 3	03/16/2010	

Special thanks to the original author for allowing us to reproduce this in J-Zine.

Continues on inside back cover...

<http://www.fansub.tv>
<http://blog.fansub.tv/Jzine1>
#FTV-JZine on irc.rizon.net

CREDITS

Management

Project leaders:

Noshi, Maiku_Ando

Editorial

Staff Writers:

Kit-Tsukasa, Maiku_Ando,
labk1ta, Noshi, nomae.

Design Editor

Maiku_Ando

Editor:

Nomae

Front & Back Covers:

Maiku_Ando

QC:

daft27, Noshi.

J-Zine Blog:

Maiku_Ando, Noshi

IRC Channel:

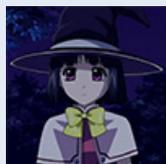
JinK

J-Zine is a fan made non-profit quarterly publication created by the members of the online anime community Fansub.Tv.

The J-Zine project is not involved in fansubbing or the distribution of copyrighted material.

All articles submitted are assumed for publication. We reserve the right to edit any article for clarity or brevity.

Images are copyrighted to their respective owners and used under the fair use clause of Copyright Law for purposes of product identification and editorial comment. Use of copyrighted material is kept to a minimum and any infringement of rights is unintentional.



Maiku_Ando

Welcome to Issue 6 of J-Zine!

Finally, a little later than planned, we bring you Issue 6!

This issue was originally written as a January/February release and was not released at the time due to production difficulties. Some parts of this issue are now a little out of date, and have not been updated since the intended release date to preserve the original work and feel of the issue. The DVD releases, this page and 'Desu Desu' have all been updated to June 2010.

For more news about J-Zine, please turn to "Desu Desu" on the back page.

This issue is an ef special. We'll be looking in-depth at the anime adaptations from Minori's game ef~ A fairy tale of the two. We have a joint review of ef~ A tale of Memories and ef~ A tale of Melodies, as well as not one but several character profiles this issue!

We still have our usual favourites, including the Moe Corner, Anime Previews, reviews and more recipes from labk1ta. Our behind the scenes feature returns this issue with part 2 of our interview with FTV's creator Daft27. See issue 1 for the first part, on the blog. We have also extended our DVD release date listings to give you as much forewarning as possible between issues.

Join The Team !

We are still very short staffed here at J-Zine. We really need more reviewers, writers, and a news researcher. We'd also love to have some help in producing a mini manga comic in a future issue, so if your interested in writing a witty story, or want to try your hand at drawing a manga, here's your chance. Please note that these positions are voluntary; we can't pay for commissions. We don't have advertisements, and we don't sell J-Zine; everything is done in people's spare time.

If you love anime or manga, are into roleplaying, or if you just like writing, even if you have never thought of being part of a magazine, do drop by and let us know; we are always looking for new ideas and new articles. We'll help you every step of the way, so give it a try. You can drop by the forum, send a PM, or contact me by email.

Maiku Ando

Design Editor

Maiku_ando@fansub.tv

ef

Kit-Tsukasa reviews both seasons of the Anime adaption of ef , A tale of memories and A tale of Melodies.

18-27



ef © Minori / Shaft.

Character Bios

Our ef Special begins with 3 character bios from the cast of ef!

18

Anime Review

Kit-Tsukasa reviews both seasons of the Anime adaption of ef , A tale of memories and A tale of Melodies.

24



Moe Corner

Another season ends, another battle rages, who is the most moe of them all? We count down the 10 most moe characters of the season.

10



FTV ~ Behind the Scenes

We continue our behind the scenes coverage of your favourite anime community Fansub.tv, and bring you part 2 of our exclusive interview with Daft27.

16

Anime Previews

Durarara!!
Hanamaru Kindergarten
Ladies vs. Butlers!
Dance in the Vampire Bund
Ookamikakushi
Nodame Cantabile Finale



6

Anime & Drama Reviews

ef ~ A tale of Memories &
ef ~ A Tale of Melodies Joint Review
Mahromatic ~Tadaima Okaeri Anime Review

18

Culture

Abingdon Boys School in Concert
at Zeche, Bochum in Germany, 10-11-2009.
Okawari

34

Desu Desu ~ The Back Page

This time its all about us... no really it *is*.
J-Zine News & Messages :-
This Issue, Delays & Production Problems
Issue 7 & Beyond...

40



Anime Previews

Written by Kit-Tsukasa



Anime previews



Previews by
Kit-Tsukasa



Durarara!! (Premier: January 7, 2010)

From the creators of Spice and Wolf II and Baccano!, the story of Durarara!! takes place in Ikebukuro, Tokyo, where high school students are involved in gangs and fight against each other. However, despite having the guts to constantly pulverize each other, they're all afraid of one thing: an urban legend by the name of Dullahan. Dullahan is apparently a headless "Irish fairy" who rides a silent motorcycle without headlights. Mikado Ryuugamine is a relatively normal high school boy, except he is interested in "peculiar" things. Mikado recently moved into Ikebukuro right when the hunt for Dullahan's head had just begun. The character art is done by Suzuhito Yasuda, who did Yozakura Quartet's design. Many famous seiyuus will also be voicing characters in this series including Yuuchi Nakamura (Alto Saotome from Macross Frontier), Kana Hanazawa (Nadoko Sengoku from Bakemonogatari), Jun Fukuyama (Lelouch Lamperouge from Code Geass), Toshiyuki Toyonaga (Capeta Taira from Capeta), Daisuke Ono (Itsuki Koizumi from The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya), and Mamoru Miyano (Setsuna Seiei from Gundam 00), just to name a few.

Hanamaru Kindergarten (Premier: January 10, 2010)

At first glance, one may think Gainax must be out of their minds doing this kind of show, given the shows they've animated in the past, including Neon Genesis Evangelion, Shikabane Hime, and Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann. If anything is surprising, Seiji Mizushima, the director of the original Fullmetal Alchemist (2003) and both Gundam 00 seasons, is directing this show. Hanamaru Kindergarten follows Anzu, who goes to a preschool with Koume and Hிரagi. Like all little kids, they try to attract attention from their caretaker Tsuchida. Unfortunately, Tsuchida is less interested in toddlers and more interested in people closer to his age, like Yamamoto, who supervises children next door. Does the story sound familiar? Sounds a lot like Kodomo no Jikan for those who have seen it or read the manga. Whether or not Gainax will choose to take it to the borderline loli pornography level is another issue, but it is highly unlikely, as the manga itself has not gained recognition for that kind of content. Mai Otsuka, character designer of Shakugan no Shana, will be involved in the designs for this series. MAKO (Akiha Shishidou from Sora wo Kakeru Shoujo), Kei Shindou (Kuro Kagami from Kodomo no Jikan), and Ayahi Takagaki (Otome Asakura from Da Capo II) will be voicing the three toddlers mentioned above.





Ladies vs. Butlers! (Premier: January 5, 2010)

Ladies vs. Butlers! is an ecchi comedy series based off a light novel and manga of the same name. Akiharu Hino was taken in by his uncle after losing his parents. However, he immediately attempts to distant himself from his uncle when he enters high school, since his uncle was clearly only after his parent's inheritance. Akiharu ends up attending Hakureiryu High School, a boarding school that was once a place for upper-class ladies. Akiharu is placed in the school's new servant training department, where students are trained to become maids or butlers.

Due to his delinquent-like appearance, however, many of the students are frightened, especially the girls who make up the majority of the student body. Initially, all hope seems lost to make any friends due to this appearance, but he happens to run into his childhood friend Tomomi Saikyo. Opinions about Akiharu then begin to change as students realize that he is not a true delinquent. The series will be animated by XEBEC (Pandora Hearts and To Love-Ru) with seiyuus including Ayako Kawasumi (Saber from Fate/Stay Night), Mai Goto (Mizuki Hayama from ef ~a Tale of Melodies~), Mai Nakahara (Nagisa Furukawa from Clannad), Rie Kugumiya (Shana from Shakugan no Shana), and Ami Koshimizu (Holo from Spice and Wolf).



Dance in the Vampire Bund (Premier: January 7, 2010)

Dance in the Vampire Bund is SHAFT's (ef ~A Tale of Melodies~ and Bakemonogatari) newest work, based off the manga of the same name. Akiyuki Shinbou, Bakemonogatari's director, will be directing this series in addition to the new Hidamari Sketch Hoshimittsu premiering on the same day.

Dance in the Vampire Bund follows vampire princess Mina Tepes who uses her accumulated wealth to pay off Japan's national debt in return for freedom for her kind in an off-coast district. On the eve prior to when Tepes was to declare the existence of vampires in her "Newfoundland," an opposition party arises and plots to assassinate Tepes.

Yuuchi Nakamura (Tomoya Okazaki from Clannad and Alto Saotome from Macross Frontier) and Aoi Yuuki (Murasaki Kuhouin from Kure-nai and Akira Tooka from Shikabane Hime) will be casting as the protagonists in this show.



Ookamikakushi (Premier: January 7, 2010)

Ookamikakushi is based off a visual novel by 07th Expansion, the creators of Higurashi no Naku Koro ni and the recent Umineko no Naku Koro ni. While Higurashi was a relatively solid series, Umineko was far from good and thus raises eyebrows as to whether or not Ookamikakushi will be successful. Although Umineko did not exactly adapt its visual novel faithfully, the fact that AIC will be animating Ookamikakushi instead of Studio DEEN also raises the question as to whether or not the series will be adapted well. AIC has been improving more recently and it may be a nice time to change companies for 07th Expansion projects.

Ookamikakushi follows 16-year-old Hiroshi Kuzumi, who moved to Jogamachi where a river divides the old and new village. Hiroshi soon discovers that Jogamachi has many traditions and customs that have been kept alive for generations to the present day. He befriends many people at his new school, including Nemuru Kushinada, who warns Hiroshi to stay away from the old village where terrifying mysteries await and have remained unsolved. Yuki Kajiura (.hack//Sign, Pandora Hearts) and the FictionJunction team will be providing the musical score for this series. Saki Fujita (Hatsune Miku from Vocaloid), Yuu Kobayashi (Setsuna Sakurazaki from Negima!), Mariya Ise (Ayumi Aihara from Hatsukoi Limited), and Emiri Kato (Mayoi Hachikuji from Bakemonogatari) will be voicing the protagonists.

Nodame Cantabile Finale (Premier: January 14, 2010)

Probably the favorite series of the season, J.C. Staff is back yet again with a third season of Nodame Cantabile, and this time it looks like it will be the finale as described by the title of the series.

The story follows Shinichi Chiaki, who dreams of becoming an accomplished conductor, and Megumi Noda (aka Nodame), who is a slob but actually a very talented pianist, as they go from a top music academy in Japan to Paris.

The series is said to continue immediately after the end of the Paris Chapter, which aired in 2008. Although not confirmed, it is highly probable that the same voice cast and staff will reprise their respective roles to animate the finale.



Will Shinichi finally achieve his long aspired dream, or will the series result in a tragic ending?

Moe Corner

Written by Kit-Tsukasa

とある科学の超電磁砲

©鎌池和馬/冬川基/アスキー・メディアワークス/
PROJECT-RAILGUN

原画：田中雄一 仕上げ：J.C.STAFF





Moe Corner



By Kit-Tsukasa

Compared to the rest of 2009, the moe trend has decreased dramatically in the Fall 2009 season. Companies seem to have slowly moved away from the dying trend and so the playing field has become more level for many, making the competition fiercer and the definition of moe vaguer. With that, we present to you the Fall 2009 moe characters.





#10 Bakemonogatari Cast

Although Bakemonogatari is indefinitely delayed, this doesn't stop fans from producing fan art, doujins, and the like about the characters. If anything, the spirit of Bakemonogatari is being kept alive through all these, despite the indefinite delay of the remaining two episodes from SHAFT.

Last issue, we had Hitagi Senjougahara at #3 and so it is not surprising that the ranking has dropped to #10 since series come and go and new favorites from the new season are picked up by the audience from the new season. All in all, Bakemonogatari is currently kept in the back of every true otaku's head, and we will endlessly wait for the remaining two episodes.

#9 Ushio Kazama from Sasameki Koto

If you were watching this show for yuri, at least you won't be bored like most people were with Aoi Hana. Sasameki Koto mixes the yuri with a bit of cuteness that makes the characters a little more interesting without going too far like Saki.



Since it's a yuri show, it's not surprising that Ushio is interested in girls. However, she's not just interested in one girl, she basically goes on a rampage for every cute girl she sees. Not to the extent of Rena Ryuuguu from Higurashi no Naku Koro ni, who ends up taking everything cute she sees home, but close enough that it becomes creepy for the people Ushio meets while amusing for the audience watching. That alone is enough to land Ushio in the top 10.



#8 Chiho Mihara & Chise Mihara from Kobato

A CLAMP work almost always includes at least one moe character, minus furies. Chii is routinely a staple cameo from CLAMP's popular 2002 work. Although not voiced by Rie Tanaka, Megumi Nakajima does just as good of a job in Kobato. Though they are not main characters, very few episodes go by without at least one appearance from the twins. Given some of Nakajima's roles thus far, it's difficult to deny that she can truly give off a moe appeal for the characters she plays, and the Chii twins are no exception. Had the two played a greater role, they may have even been higher up on this list.



#7 Lisa from Seiken no Blacksmith

Although Seiken no Blacksmith was a terrible show, what's not to like about a loli, elf-like girl who has the polite personality of a maid?

The answer is absolutely nothing, especially since she's voiced by Aki Toyosaki (Yui from K-ON!). Though some people may dislike the voice, that doesn't change the effect of Lisa's behavior and how she acts. It's her cute little self that appeals to the fans and keeps attracting people to the horrid show.



#6 Ruiko Saten from To Aru Kagaku no Railgun

And here we begin the series with the greatest moe. Ruiko Saten is unsurprisingly one of the favorites in this series, being the only one of the four protagonists to have no esper abilities, making her your “ordinary girl.” As a result, she is easier for people in general to relate to, being the “powerless” or “useless” one in a society. Nevertheless, Ruiko is often the playful one of the group, and her carefree attitude ends up as comedy relief for the most part, making her an appealing character. Apparently her outfits are also more attractive than all the other characters’...

#5 Eve Neuschwanstein from Needless

Needless was a show that no one really expected to be good from the beginning, but ended up all right. Eve’s terrible memory for names and her wild-like behavior makes her an interesting character that differs from the typical moe trend. Most of her moe appeal comes from providing comedy relief, significantly more than Ruiko Saten from To Aru Kagaku no Railgun. Eve basically does things on a whim without thinking; from her speech to her actions, everything is all based on what’s going on at the time. Given the randomness of Needless, Eve certainly enhances that quality to the extent that she deserves the #5 spot for this season.



#4 Alistia Rein

from Nogizaka Haruka no Himitsu Purezza



Nogizaka Haruka returns with a second season, but surprisingly, the title character and returning characters are not in the top 10. In fact, Alisita Rein is entirely new. She is a loli maid who is not very fluent with Japanese, and thus doesn’t speak often, not to mention that she is voiced by Rie Kugimiya. Alistia seemingly has bipolar behavior rather than a bipolar personality. When not actually working, she’s just a sweet little loli who likes stuffed dolls and responds to people with nods. When working, she essentially becomes a devil that will violently and brutally destroy anything that threatens to get in the way of those whom she is required to protect. Some people are reminded of Dokuro-chan from Bokusatsu Tenshi Dokuro-chan since Alisita’s primary weapon is a metal club. As usual, it’s rare for a Kugimiya voiced character to ever go wrong. The characters usually are a mix between angelic and devilish; there is almost never a gray area.



#3 Akari Kirishima & Kotone Kirishima from Nyan Koi!

Another set of twins, except this time the two are completely different in personality: one is a tsundere while the other is a denpakei. It's not uncommon to see twins who have different characteristics in anime, however, what makes these two stand out to earn the #3 spot is really up in the air. A combination of voo-doo tricks, magical girl stuff, and a lot of over the top stuff in Nyan Koi! is what really makes them special. Describing them seems to be difficult, but they seem to give off the air that makes them some of the more likeable characters this season over others.

#2 Mikoto Misaka & Kuroko Shirai from To Aru Kagaku no Railgun

Another set of characters together, but these two aren't related by blood. Ever since To Aru Majutsu no Index last year, Mikoto and Kuroko were the more popular characters in the show over the title character Index and hence they got their own manga and now series.

To this end, the series is definitely better executed than Index such that it focuses on these characters specifically rather than diverging to another character no one really cares about. Railgun is one of the better shows this season, and Mikoto and Kuroko at #2 definitely prove it. There is simply a big gap between #2 and the rest of the competition behind it. However, there is one thing that keeps them out of the top spot for this season.



#1

Mafuyu Shiina from Seitokai no Ichizon

It's incredibly difficult to deny Mafuyu's spot after the later episodes of Seitokai no Ichizon. Mafuyu is a little different from your typical "ordinary girl." In fact, she's a little more like Haruka Nogizaka from Nogizaka Haruka no Himitsu. Mafuyu loves video games probably more than her own life, as well as BL (aka Boy's Love or yaoi) material. Mafuyu bases all her arguments and actions on video games, making her an amusing character. Although she may be a character that is harder for otakus to relate with, when she's not hooked on games or BL content, her shy personality, especially towards males, catches the eyes of many. She may not be as strong of a contender as some of the previous moe corner candidates or potential candidates, in this time where the moe trend is dying, Mafuyu is essentially the last light of hope.



Fansub.TV

NETWORK

Anime downloads, info, updates and discussions



Interview by
Nahrallah

Synopsis:

Not surprisingly, Stan loves anime. Fansub.TV allowed him to combine this passion with his coding skills. I caught up with Stan just as he was about to indulge his addiction by watching an episode of "To Heart," and managed to discover a bit about the man who created Fansub.TV.

Profile:



Name: Daft

Age: 22

Sex: M

Location: Washington D.C.

Blood Type: AB

Favorite Anime / Game:

The one I'm working on

Favorite Sweets:

French vanilla ice cream, crème brûlée

Wages in ice cream: One a month

Nahrallah: Could you please tell us a little about yourself?

Stan: *Let's see. I'm 22 and from New Jersey. I'm a lazy bum who likes art and creative stuff. I got interested in programming since it was a cheap and easy way to 'make' and distribute things... as well as the fact that it offers many opportunities for leverage, meaning I write something once and it works for me... forever! :)*

Nahrallah: How long have you been involved in web design and development and how did you first become interested in it?

Stan: *Um, I guess I started about 10 years ago. Started with one of those AOL Homepages.*

I thought it was the best thing ever. I had some javascript code on my page that cycled through 200 random quotes that I found. I thought it was so cool. My favorite one from those was... 'Yesterday, I dreamt I ate a 10 pound marshmallow. When I awoke, my pillow was gone.'

Nahrallah: Do you use Fansub.TV recreationally?

Stan: *lol. I suppose I use it like everyone else uses it. :P I use fansub.tv to see what's new and start the downloads, check my PMs, check server status info for any irregularities, read interesting posts... and then watch the anime that I've downloaded. Except I have the responsibility to keep it online and running, that's about it.*

Nahrallah: Do you still take an active interest in anime, staying up to date with current releases and frequently watching it?

Stan: *Yep, if I have time I'll try to watch anything that looks interesting. I'm generally not interested in action though so no Bleach or Naruto for me usually.*

Nahrallah: What does anime mean to you? Is it a form of creative inspiration?

Stan: *I like it as a medium for story telling. Of creative inspiration? Hm, well there're only a couple of animes out there that really do it for me. Once in a while, I'll see something that I like and I'll want to reproduce it but in comparison to the other types of mediums for entertainment, I think anime fits in a good area.*

Unfortunately, it's still a niche market and doesn't have the history of regular ol' motion pictures or books and I'm not really into visual novels / comics / mangas.

Nahrallah: What do you do to relax and unwind?

Stan: *Eat, drink, sleep. lol*

Nahrallah: Do you have any other hobbies?

Stan: *Read. Hm, any other hobbies... I dunno, nothing that I really do regularly. Hm, let's see... oh, I do enjoy music as a hobby.*

Nahrallah: What do you enjoy most, playing or listening to music?

Stan: *I enjoy listening to music the most. I'm not really that good at playing. Plus, when you're working only for yourself... it's not really that fun.*

Nahrallah: What's your favourite cuisine?

Stan: *I generally like chicken and I'd go for a good ahi salad ... or are you talking about the type of cuisine? Like Italian, etc?*

Nahrallah: The type of cuisine...

Stan: *Probably French.*

Nahrallah: Choosing from anime that has been released or will be released for 2008, what would your top pick be?

Stan: *I'm looking forward to the second season of Minami-ke. Different animation studio, but with the same voice actors and such, hopefully it will have much of the same charm.*

Nahrallah: If you had the ability to preserve 5 anime for future generations, what would they be?

Stan: *Preserve? Hm, I'd probably go with some Studio Ghibli flicks. Disney's dubbing for Studio Ghibli stuff is the best I've seen so far which I think is important for future generations.*



Reviews

ef, Mahoro ~ Tadaima Okaeri.





ef ~ A tale of Memories/Melodies



Review by
Kit-Tsukasa

Synopsis:

ef is composed of two seasons: ~A Tale of Memories~ and ~A Tale of Melodies~, that aired in Japan in Fall 2007 and Fall 2008 respectively. Given how much overlap there is between the two, a joint review will be done. ef is based on the visual novel ef ~A Fairy Tale of the Two~, which is also divided into two halves: The First Tale and The Latter Tale, both of which were produced by minori, the same company that produced the Wind ~A Breath of Heart~, Haru no Ashito, and the recent Eden* ~They were Only Two on the Planet~ visual novels.

Produced by SHAFT, which is a company known for its high quality animation, directed by Shin Oonuma, and supervised by Akiyuki Shinbo, who directed Bakemonogatari and Hidamari Sketch, ef gave off a unique feeling compared to all other anime around at the time, especially when compared to some of the other series between 2006 and 2008 such as Clannad, Macross Frontier, Code Geass, Spice and Wolf, and Gundam 00. Unfortunately, since ef was not a mainstream title, it did not make a very big mark in the anime industry and was constantly overshadowed by the aforementioned titles. The two seasons of ef more or less covered the contents of the game with some changes due to ef being classified an eroge visual novel.



Story:

ef diverges from the typical visual novel type game. Instead of the player choosing the route, the game is essentially played by ear and protagonists are preset for each arc.

Like the game, the anime is divided into five main stories in two different settings. The stories take place in two settings 1998 (the past) and 2008 (the present).

The story involves five pairs of characters: Miyako Miyamura and Hiro Hirono, Kei Shindou and Kyousuke Tsutsumi, Chihiro Shindou and Renji Asou, Mizuki Hayama and Shuuichi Kuze, and Yuuko Amamiya and Yuu Himura.

In addition, unlike most series, ef attempts to connect all five stories together by developing all five simultaneously, and it does this successfully, which many series fail to do. In A Tale of Memories, the

focus is on the first three pairs listed above. Everything takes place in the present, as each pair of characters struggle through personal dreams and love interests. Resolution of each struggle is done with the advice and support of the other pairs and through interpersonal support for each other. In A Tale of Melodies, the story focuses on the latter two pairs and goes back and forth between the past and present, where events in the present are supported based on past experiences.



In addition, pieces of dialogue from the prequel are explained and become clearer as the series dives into the past.

Although the story can get very convoluted at times, it is not detrimental to the overall story, as everything is often exposed and explained crystal clear by the end of the series.

The story leaves little to no plot-holes unturned and makes it a very solid and tear-jerking series. *ef* does a fantastic job at slowly building up to a climax and then executing the drama at a level very few series have ever done before.

However, *ef* doesn't just do it once; in fact, it does it at least two or three times throughout both series. In both series, almost everything feels so realistic, making it a wonderful way for audience members to be able to relate to each character.

The only detrimental factor to the story was that the end of melodies felt a little rushed and out of place due to what seems to be a removal of content.

As stated before, because the show is based off of an eroge visual novel, some additional content in addition to the eroge scenes had to be removed and replaced in order for the story to continue to make sense. The most important factor, however, was that the general structure of the show did not change even though bits and pieces of the scenarios changed.

Visual novel fans were clearly disappointed by this, as was I, but that still doesn't deny *ef*'s story from being unique and amazing as a whole, since from the standpoint of someone who hasn't played the game, it would probably be a marvelous story if that someone was interested in the romance or drama genre. **Score: 9/10**

Art and Animation:

The original character designs were done by 2C Galore and Naru Nanao (character designer of the original *Da Capo*) while the original animation was by Makoto Shinkai (creator of *5 Centimeters per Second* and *Beyond the Clouds: The Place Promised in Our Early Days*).

These were used as inspiration by Nobuhiro Sugiyama for both the anime's character designs and animation.

All in all, no one can deny that *ef* was a beautiful piece of art. Although the TV quality was very poor, when using the Blu-Ray or DVD to compare to other series, one can tell that this is beyond SHAFT's normal animation quality, even considering the inspiration of Makoto Shinkai's fantastic animation techniques.

The colors were always very vivid and every bit of motion was smooth with nothing out of the ordinary.

Characters did not have facial expressions that a normal human couldn't, and there were essentially no flaws in detail.

Everything was consistent from beginning to end in the series. Even very few of SHAFT's other works can really rival this type of quality work, and the only ones that currently spring to mind are Summer 2009 Bakemonogatari or maybe Satelight's Spring 2009 Basquash.

ef's art and animation in general go several steps further than your average series. Although A Tale of Memories may look a little obsolete now, during its time it was something that stood out above everything else, and now everything is trying to copy the style to keep up.

Luckily, when A Tale of Melodies came around in 2008, it took the animation to yet another level, from the subtle variations in the opening and ending sequences, to metaphoric portrayals of certain scenes, to what essentially is eye candy in all the other scenes.

If anything, if a series like Code Geass from 2007 or Macross Frontier or Clannad ~After Story~ from 2008 got a 10/10, ef certainly deserves an 11, but sadly we can't give higher than a 10 here. **Score: 11 10/10**

Music:

Someone who has always worked with Makoto Shinkai since 2002 on his projects, as well as lately the minori visual novels, is Tenmon. Tenmon usually likes to make altered variations of a track for a particular project, and ef is no exception.

In addition, he seems to be a fan of the piano and violin, which for a dramatic series like ef, fits all too well.



To some extent, one can even argue that he's on a level similar to that of Yuki Kajiura or Yoko Kanno.

The soundtrack for ef itself can even be rather moving and tear-jerking at times if listening to the right songs.

The unique mix of sadness and peacefulness is a feeling that is incredibly difficult to describe, and only by listening to these pieces can one begin to feel the cross between these polar opposite feelings.

Putting Tenmon's work aside, the seiyuus don't exactly have great

singing voices, so most of the ending themes are only mediocre at best.

The openings on the other hand are done by ELISA, who is a real singer and can actually sing.

Prior to ef, ELISA did not participate in any anime-related projects except Initial D in 1998, which she performed at the age of 9.

As a result, it was unexpected and nice to see essentially a new singer, not to mention succeed with a full debut in the anime industry. **Score: 9/10**

Character:

If ef didn't have character development, this series would have failed massively. Unlike most recent visual novel adaptations, in which the protagonist, usually male, ends up being involved in a harem, usually female, to some degree and is "forced" to choose one at the end, ef's couples are all preset by default.

As such, one would think that it would be even more difficult to develop character relationships and background with essentially double the number of characters. Nevertheless, ef puts all those other adaptations to shame by successfully doing so.

Each and every major character from each pair is developed thoroughly in the span of twenty-four episodes with almost no corners cut. By the end of the series the viewer is given complete insight on specifically who both the male and female protagonist are in each pair, what are each of



their dreams and aspirations, how they develop a deep relationship with each other, and the resulting outcome. Everything comes to a solid conclusive end for each pair, be it happy or sad, dramatic or tear-jerking, etc...

To develop over ten characters solidly over twenty four episodes is an amazing feat that almost no other visual novel has accomplished to date, and ef is certainly quite the shocker.

Score: 10/10

Enjoyment:

Having not played the visual novel until right before the premier of A Tale of Melodies, like most people, it was difficult to grasp the point of the series until midway through A Tale of Memories.

The thing that kept most people coming back, myself included, was the eye candy from animation that differed from other series at the time.



After a few sudden developments midway through A Tale of Memories, the series just kept drawing me back in episode after episode.

Each episode ended with some cliffhanger-like ending or some plot purposely left undeveloped, which almost always is a great technique to use.

Even the end of A Tale of Memories was a cliffhanger leading into A Tale of Melodies, which aired one year later.

In A Tale of Melodies, the attractive force keeping viewers intensified, as scenarios got more serious and somewhat devastating in the show, making it more interesting to watch, as viewers kept coming back to find out what happens next in the plot.

Regardless of lack of pacing towards the end of the series, the final moments of the series were not rushed and ended on a rather solid note.

Everything came to a close and that is what a lot of series these days lack: a fitting and conclusive closure to a series.

Score: 10/10

Overall:

If one word could describe ef, it would be masterpiece. ef is something that differs from traditional and present-day anime styles and in my opinion, it was more dramatic and tear-jerking than *Clannad ~After Story~*, which essentially was a Deus Ex Machina end.

Sure, the first few episodes of ef weren't great, but of course, everything in those episodes was simply building up to the multiple climaxes this series was to throw out later on.

In other words, too many people judged the series by its cover and did not give it enough time to fully develop. It's been a while since I've had a romance drama that I truly enjoyed and considered exceptional among other titles.

In fact, the last series I considered in this category was probably *Kimi ga Nozomu Eien* back in 2003. If anything, ef definitely earns a spot in the classics hall of fame.

It's a really big shame that this series is severely underrated and overshadowed by series that only turned out to be barely satisfying.

ef essentially had it all, from a solid music score, to exceptional animation techniques and artwork, to a suspenseful, dramatic, and tear-jerking plot, to solid character development. These are the foundations for a true series.

Although music and art and animation quality is debatable based on taste, no one can really deny plot or character development, as those are general facts about the series itself.

The storytelling method may not have been the best, but it was unique, so most viewers were probably not used to it, which results in the series being rejected off the bat.

I for one enjoy uniqueness, as it gives diversity to anime, which is what the anime industry needs right now.

ef is definitely a step in the right direction for bringing back series that have what make classics stand out above the rest. If anything, I recommend ef to anyone. It truly is a piece of work and requires one to watch all the episodes to truly understand the series.

It's simply not a series one can just pick-up, drop halfway, and expect to know exactly what will happen and that's the only way any series can be truly judged: after all episodes have been watched and understood. ef is truly a work to behold and definitely deserves more recognition.

Score: 10/10





Yuuko Amamiya

Written by Kit-Tsukasa

Name: Yuuko (Yuko) Amamiya (雨宮優子)
Age: 16
Birth Date: June 21, 1982 – December 25, 1998
Gender: Female
Hair Length/Color: Long/Blue with a hint of gray
Eye Color: Pink
Anime Appearances: ef ~A Tale of Memories~, ef ~A Tale of Melodies~
Voice Actor/Actress (Seiyuu): Yumiko Nakajima
Japan Saimoe Best Run: Round 1 (2009)
Korean Best Moe Best Run: Round 2 (2009)*, 90th overall (2008)
ISML Best Run: Prelims (2009)
*final statistics for 2009 are not available yet.

Yuuko Amamiya

Spoiler alert: Be warned that there may be massive spoilers in this article. Please read the article at your own discretion. I am not responsible for any shocks or “damage” that may occur from reading this article.

Character description:

Yuuko is first seen in ef ~A Tale of Memories~ and spends most of her time dressed like a nun. She often appears and disappears quickly throughout the show and gives other characters advice on how to live their life. She is considered to be one of two key characters that develop the ef story as a whole. In ef ~A Tale of Melodies~, Yuuko’s past was completely revealed.

In her early life, she lived in an orphanage where she met Yuu Himura where she tried to be his “sister.” Despite constantly drawing portraits of Yuuko, Yuu ends up rejecting her as a “replacement” and thus her friendship with him is immediately broken and she begins committing acts of self-harm.

Not long after, she is adopted by Akira Amamiya, who, like Yuu, lost his sister in the same earthquake. Unfortunately, because Yuuko is only similar in appearance, Akira is physically, verbally, and sexually abusive towards her. Yuuko, however, remains silent about all of this and attempts to live a normal life, as she has no home or anyone to return to.

In the late 90s, Yuu and Yuuko meet each other once more at the high school where Akira is an art teacher. There, while acting like a kind-hearted person and putting on a brave face, Yuuko attempts to haunt, upset, and hurt Yuu for the rejection she received from him at the orphanage, as well as all the pain she received in the years she spent with Akira.

In spite of this, her grudge towards Yuu doesn’t last very long. Instead, they subside immediately as she comes to realize that what she meant to say back at the orphanage was that she didn’t want to become Yuu’s replacement sister, but rather that she loved him. As Yuu begins to realize the same thing, Yuuko cuts her ties with Akira and begins to live a life with just her and Yuu.

Unfortunately, this happiness is cut short when she is involved in a hit and run accident on Christmas Day in 1998. Ten years later, while everyone keeps talking about Yuuko’s spirit providing advice, Yuu remains in the dark about her spiritual existence until the end of ef ~A Tale of Melodies~.

Yuu eventually finds her lingering spirit in the Japanese Otowa Church on Christmas Day where Yuuko spends one final day with him. During this day, Yuuko corrects Yuu by saying that he “loved her” instead of “loves her,” and explains that her work in Otowa is finally finished and that it is time for Yuu to move on.



In the anime, she was hit by a car when she attempted to pick up a small ball, which reminded her of the same one at the orphanage. In the visual novel, she saves the younger Mizuki (Miki) from being hit by a car and dies shortly after going to a church to pray for the safety and happiness of herself, Yuu, and their child (she was pregnant, which was not revealed in the anime).

Attractiveness: 9/10

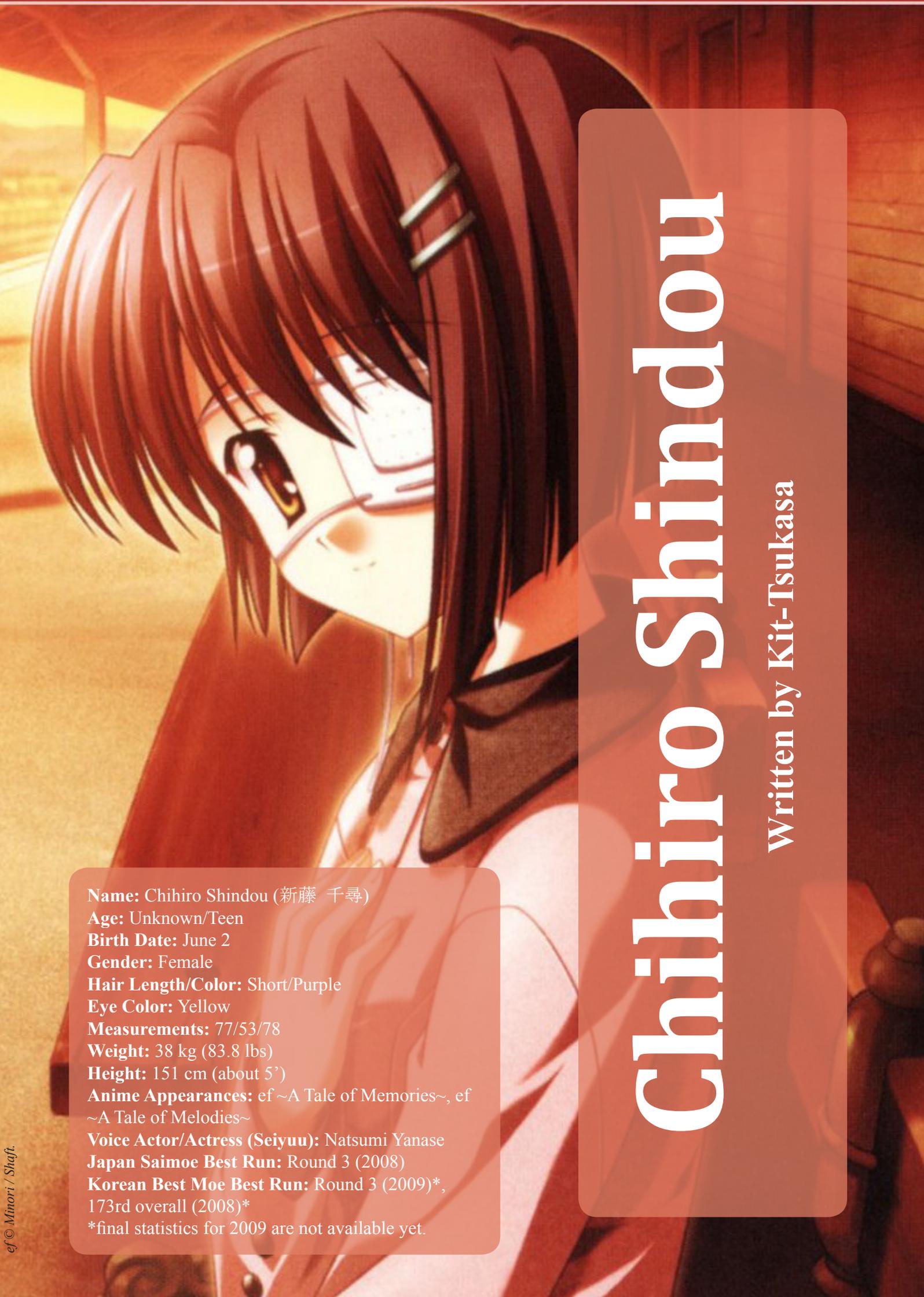
Moe Rating: 3/10

Likeable: Yes

Underrated: Yes

Final Verdict: 10/10

Opinion: Yuuko can be seen as a tragic heroine figure. She was someone who struggled throughout her entire life as well as in the afterlife simply to obtain happiness for herself and the one she holds dearest obtain happiness. She may not necessarily be the most popular character in the ef franchise due to the moe trend, but in my opinion, Yuuko is a character that differs from the current moe trend and has a back story that is tear-jerking and depressing at the same time, making her truly one of the best “real” characters in both the anime and visual novel industry.

A close-up, anime-style illustration of Chihiro Shindou's face. She has short, dark purple hair with bangs and is looking slightly to the right with a gentle expression. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting an indoor setting with soft lighting.

Chihiro Shindou

Written by Kit-Tsukasa

Name: Chihiro Shindou (新藤 千尋)
Age: Unknown/Teen
Birth Date: June 2
Gender: Female
Hair Length/Color: Short/Purple
Eye Color: Yellow
Measurements: 77/53/78
Weight: 38 kg (83.8 lbs)
Height: 151 cm (about 5')
Anime Appearances: ef ~A Tale of Memories~, ef ~A Tale of Melodies~
Voice Actor/Actress (Seiyuu): Natsumi Yanase
Japan Saimoe Best Run: Round 3 (2008)
Korean Best Moe Best Run: Round 3 (2009)*, 173rd overall (2008)*
*final statistics for 2009 are not available yet.

Chihiro Shindou

Spoiler alert: Be warned that there may be massive spoilers in this article. Please read the article at your own discretion. I am not responsible for any shocks or “damage” that may occur from reading this article.

Character description:

Chihiro Shindou’s primary appearance is in *ef ~A Tale of Memories~*, as one of the three heroines. Her guardian is revealed to be Yuu Himura, a mysterious man who works in a church despite being an atheist. Chihiro is often seen at an abandoned train station and spends her days reading books.

Although she is the twin sister of Kei Shindou, who attends Otowa Gakuen, certain circumstances prevent Chihiro from attending school.

Chihiro is often shy until one day when Renji Asou finds her at the train station. Afterwards, Renji attempts to return every day after school to keep Chihiro company.

During early childhood, Chihiro was involved in an accident that resulted in her having severe anterograde amnesia, a case where she is unable to remember anything after thirteen hours aside from any events prior to the accident.

As a result, Chihiro carries a diary around to write down everything she does so that even though she forgets it all by the next day, she will be able to remind herself the next day.

In addition to reading, Chihiro has a dream of writing a novel. Due to her condition, however, she often makes little progress each day. When she meets Renji, he claims to enjoy reading novels and decides to help Chihiro accomplish her dream.

During this collaboration, the two become close and fall in love with each other. As the novel nears completion, Renji realizes that the novel is about Chihiro’s world, in which Chihiro attempts to explain her thirteen hour world.

Chihiro is arguably people’s favorite *ef* heroine, with the other competition coming from Miyako Miyamura and Yuuko Amamiya.

Chihiro’s timidity and her tragic past make her a character many feel sympathy for.



She attempts to show little weakness, to prevent those around her from constantly worrying about her and the pain she will continue to go through for the rest of her life.

Attractiveness: 8/10

Moe Rating: 7/10

Likeable: Yes

Underrated: Yes

Final Verdict: 8/10



Yuu Himura

Written by Kit-Tsukasa

Name: Yuu (Yu) Himura (火村 夕)
Age: 16 (past), 26 (present)
Birth Date: May 5, 1982(?)
Gender: Male
Hair Length/Color: Short/Gray-white
Eye Color: Yellow
Anime Appearances: ef ~A Tale of Memories~, ef ~A Tale of Melodies~
Voice Actor/Actress (Seiyuu): Kouichi Tsuchika
Korean Best Moe Best Run: 715th overall (2009)*
*2008 statistics are no longer available

Yuu Himura

Spoiler alert: Be warned that there may be massive spoilers in this article. Please read the article at your own discretion. I am not responsible for any shocks or “damage” that may occur from reading this article.

Character description:

Yuu made his first appearance in ef ~A Tale of Memories~, but his character was not explained until the sequel, ef ~A Tale of Melodies~. Although an atheist, he is often found in a church giving advice to many other main heroes and heroines of the ef story.

When asked about his past or personal life, he often responds with vague statements or says that he is “waiting for someone.” Yuu is considered to be one of the two key characters that develop the ef story as a whole. In most cases, Yuu is considered the narrator of the series.

In his early childhood, Yuu lost his entire family due to an earthquake, and was raised in an orphanage. Yuu endlessly blames himself for not being able to protect his sister from the earthquake and this ends up being a burden for him. In addition, he meets the cheery Yuuko Amamiya at the orphanage who wishes to be his sister. Yuu rejects her and attempts to distance himself. Despite this, Yuu is often seen happily drawing pictures of Yuuko, though he constantly denies his happiness.

Ten years later, Yuu meets up with Yuuko at the high school they attend. Despite telling Yuuko to distance herself from him, every time Yuuko seemingly runs into a problem, Yuu attempts to help her resolve the problem. In the anime it is later revealed that Yuuko was deliberately hurting herself or getting into trouble in order to have Yuu experience mental frustration and “protect” her.

After Yuu learns the truth behind Yuuko’s last ten years, Yuu dedicates himself to protecting Yuuko from future harm. Yuu initially decides to run away with Yuuko, which ends up failing when Akira Amamiya, Yuuko’s legal guardian and stepbrother, puts Yuu in a state of mental shock, preventing him from returning to Yuuko one night, which causes Yuuko to feel that Yuu had left her, so she decides to return with Akira.

Not long after, Akira ends up committing suicide when he remembers his sister’s true face and is able to draw it, which results in Yuu having the opportunity to once again live with Yuuko without further disturbance.



In the game, Yuu never ran away with Yuuko. Instead, Akari let them go after Yuu proved himself to Akari that he would be able to protect Yuuko by mentally overcoming Akari’s attacks and threats.

Unfortunately, the happy times did not last long when Yuu finds Yuuko’s dead body on Christmas Day in 1998. Since that day in 1998, Yuu moved away from Japan in an attempt to discard his past entirely, and created a new Otowa City in Australia, where he decided to pass on his experiences of happiness to others through advice. In the new Otowa City, he became Chihiro Shindou’s guardian for approximately ten years. Once Chihiro found someone she could truly put her trust into, Yuu decided to release his heavy protection over her.

Coincidentally, on Christmas Day in 2008, Yuu finds Yuuko in Japan’s Otowa church, where they spend one final day together before Yuuko leaves him for good and Yuu officially decides and promises with Yuuko to never look back at the past and to be happy while looking towards the future.

Mahromatic ~ Tadaima Okaeri ~

Mahromatic Automatic Maiden - Anime Special



Review by
Maiku_Ando

Synopsis:

Nearly seven years have passed since V1046-R Mahoro last graced our screens with her perfect, never faltering smile and constant bubbly personality.

Now she's back in this two part special which is set as a side story to the second season, "Mahromatic: Something More Beautiful."

For many, Mahromatic is one of the great animes and mangas, it's a classic and has a huge following, myself included. The ending is infamous—both of them—you either hated it or loved it, you either loved the anime end (which was made first) or the manga end, or hated both; some are still undecided years later.

I won't spoil it for you, and neither will Tadaima Okaeri, because it's a special, set alongside the second series. This means no third ending, it means two maids, and it's all happy and sweet times again, something many of the original Mahoro fans wanted. It's like escapism from escapism, or time travel, who knows; you're back in those happy times with Mahoro-san, and that's all that matters.

For first impressions, the opening has been cleverly reworked to remind you of the original theme, yet still remains original.



It gives off a wonderful nostalgic feeling, and it manages to suck you right back into Mahoro's world like it was yesterday. The music is nice, and though it's not bad, it's just not the original, unforgettable Kaerimichi.

The storyline is a nice little diversion from the plot of the series, and the main characters spend almost the entire 2 episodes preparing and running a maid cafe to mark the anniversary of the town. There are a couple reminders of the main plot with an appearance by Ryuga from Saint and some old foes from Management trying to disrupt things.

The tone is much lighter than the original series and more noticeably ecchi.

The original Mahoro was never noticeably ecchi. There was a long running joke where Mahoro devoted so much time (and a special episode) hunting down Suguru's dirty magazines, and a certain female teacher was always saying and trying to do ecchi things to Suguru, but you'd never see anything; you'd certainly never see what was under Mahoro-san's maid uniform.



She's still saying the same classic line "Ecchi na no wa ikenai to omoimasu" (I think that dirty thoughts are bad), except now you may have a face full of her panties at the same time.

Battle scenes now feature near-misses that magically only harm her maid uniform, some great low-level camera shots, and even one scene where her uniform seems to self-destruct, but fear not, there's more to this than just fanservice.

The second episode takes the opportunity to bring up the romantic side a little as the gang wanders around the festival together as the sun goes down and the girls finally admit they have feelings for Suguru. It's sweet, it's funny, it's a little ecchi, and there's clearly an ulterior motive to the whole thing.

This sweet little side story is clearly designed to do one thing—take you back to those happy times with Mahoro-san—and it does so perfectly.

In Japan, both episodes came to DVD in December, and there is also a new CD album out; everything about this looks like a test.

Only time will tell if this "memory of springtime" bears any fruit, but it certainly looks like Gainax is trying to test the waters to see if we are still pining for more from the maid with a pure heart. Nothing is impossible in anime, and both endings are certainly open-ended enough to make another season plausible. My fingers are still crossed.

Animation: 8

Bright, colourful, clear, and sharp. Excellent quality and keeps with the original two seasons.

Story: 7

Having only two episodes limits things a lot, but it's well done. Short and sweet, like a memory of spring time.

Characters: 9

It's Mahoro that makes it, she's the perfect maid. The triomatic make it funny, and Suguru is just right.

Action: 6

Limited and more of an excuse for fanservice, but the way the last robot was taken out was classic.

Sound: 7

You keep thinking you're going to hear the classic theme from the first season but it never quite appears, still very good and fits the scenes well.

Individual enjoyment: 10.

More Mahoro after seven years? How could it be anything less than a 10. It's like watching it all over again without the ending.

Overall: 8

If it wasn't Mahoro, or if it hadn't been so long since the original, then it would be an average fanservice special, but it IS Mahoro, and it is still true to the original. It's definitely worth watching, even if you haven't seen Mahoro before.

Culture

Abingdon Boys School Concert & Okawari





Abingdon Boys School ~ Concert~

JZeche, Bochum in Germany, 10-11-2009

Article by
Noshi

Synopsis:

Abingdon boys school, named after a real existing all-male English school, is a Japanese rock band recognisable by their school uniform themed outfits and front man Takanori Nishikawa, also known as T.M. Revolution.

Formed in early 2005, they have gained quite some fame with their music for opening and ending themes in various anime. For example: Innocent Sorrow; 1st OP in D.Gray-man, Howling; 1st OP in Darker than BLACK and Strength; 4th ED in Soul Eater. They had successfully finished their first ever European tour in November and not long after that they announced they will release their second album on the 27th of January named ABINGDON ROAD.

Noshi travelled all the way from the Netherlands to Germany with a friend to see this wonderful band in concert! The announcement for a signing session came only a few days before the concert, and since we already booked our train tickets weeks beforehand, we might have not made it in time if we didn't follow another train schedule in Germany and took a cab to the concert hall. The signing session was only from 3 till 4 pm.

We waited in line and saw people get inside in small groups of four or five whenever the previous group was done. In the end we were the last few allowed to go inside. They were selling posters and the EU release album Teaching Materials.

I brought their first album with me and got it signed by all the members. Guitarist Hiroshi was first, he was rather shy but very happy to see everyone. Next was Kishi, he is on keyboards and he spoke English very well and started a conversation with whoever he could speak English with.

Then was the next guitarist SUNAO, he was the funniest of them all and even though he didn't speak English well, he at least tried his best to converse in Japanese. It was a fun and intimate experience, they were all so nice and friendly and we took quite some pictures together.

Takanori would welcome you with a bright smile and insisted on addressing the owner of each of the goods he was signing. His English was very well and he was very enthusiastic while asking everyone how they were doing and got them pumped up for the show.

We went back outside and joined the line again which was still short.





The doors opened and everyone was allowed inside around 6 o'clock. As everyone rushed inside and had secured themselves of merchandise and/or a nice spot, the waiting began.

The concert finally started at 7. Everyone was waiting in excitement. They came on stage one by one with a support drummer named Hasegawa and support bassist named Ikuo. Later on I found out it was Ikuo from the band BULL ZEICHEN 88. There they were, in their awesome school outfits, and started with Strength.

The sound was very loud, it hurt everyone's ears and that didn't change throughout the whole concert. It was definitely not needed for the singer, as there already is a great, loud and clear voice coming out of the rather short vocalist even without having to turn up the volume so high. But his vibrant voice was still really amazing to hear live. The crowd was very lively; everyone moved and sang along with the music.

After 5 more songs, they took a small break for a bit of interaction with the crowd.

Takanori had studied German and it didn't even sound bad at all. He mentioned numerous times in German, English and Japanese that they were grateful to be here and grateful that so many people came. He said short sentences like 'wir lieben euch'-'we love you' and 'ihr seid geil!'-'you are awesome!' and finally 'prost!'-'cheers!' leading to the band saying 'kanpai!' and the crowd all shouted 'kanpai' to Takanori's amazement and amusement.

They continued with Fre@K \$HoW and everyone sang along again. Next was the much anticipated Innocent Sorrow, probably their most popular song.

The band was very enthusiastic while playing this song and gave it their all. Everyone went crazy and screamed along with this song and at some point all the voices definitely raised above the instrumentals. I think even Takanori was out of breath for a little while, but not long after that, they continued with Kimi no Uta before going off stage for a break.

The audience started screaming 'encore' repeatedly and the band reappeared again later on. Refreshed and wearing the Abingdon boys school tour t-shirts.

Takanori tried to tell us they visited Berlin the day before for the 20 years commemoration of the Berlin wall and that they had seen the Brandenburg Tor. He asked guitarist SUNAO to help him demonstrate what he meant and sort of forced him to bend over while he stood behind him and raised his arm to represent the statue on top of the Brandenburg gate.

It looked more like a failed attempt of sexual harassment and while SUNAO was not really amused and returned to his spot right away, the crowd definitely was! Even the rest of the band burst out in laughter.

Enough of the talking, the next song was up and it was their new, unreleased song From Dusk till Dawn, a nice slow paced song with a beautiful catchy melody.

The concert had come to an end. It seemed they enjoyed it a lot as well and they really took their time to say goodbye and enjoy the longest applause I've ever seen a Japanese rock band get.

Before leaving the stage for good they threw a few items into the crowd, 2 drumsticks and a guitar pick. 1 drumstick was caught by a girl, the other one was caught by 2 girls which resulted in pulling and pushing to get the other one off. Security had to break it in half after watching them struggle.

While everyone was still enjoying and processing the amazing concert, we got shooed away by security and forced to get our stuff and leave the concert hall.

All in all it was a great concert. Great interaction with the audience, awesome performance and got the crowd singing along with almost every song till their throats hurt. They got a lot of positive reactions from everyone and let's hope they'll do another tour soon. Keep an eye on them so you don't miss it!

They are definitely worth it!

Setlist

- 01 Strength
- 02 Freedom
- 03 Howling
- 04 Nephilim
- 05 Dress
- 06 Valkyrie
- 07 Fre@K \$HoW
- 08 JAP
- 09 Innocent Sorrow
- 10 Kimi no Uta

-encore-

- 11 New song: From Dusk till dawn
- 12 Stay away
- 13 Atena



Okawari!

Article by labk1ta



Konnichiwa! How is everyone doing? I hope everyone enjoyed their holidays. I spent my holidays with family and friends, and I really enjoyed it.

I went to my favorite Japanese restaurant the other week with my family where they have this seasonal egg custard dish. I really love it! Its called Chawan Mushi. It's a chicken and shrimp in egg custard served hot in a small cup. I've searched for the recipe so I could share it with you, so here you go...

INGREDIENTS

- 4 medium-sized raw shrimp (peeled, deveined, and cut in half lengthwise)
- ¼ teaspoon ajishio (equal parts of salt and MSG)
- ½ chicken breast (boneless and skinless) cut into ½-inch cubes
- ¼ teaspoon Japanese all-purpose soy sauce
- 12 pieces of canned ginkgo nuts
- 6 medium-sized mushrooms, washed and chopped. (shiitake is good if you have some)
- ½ teaspoon MSG

CUSTARD:

- 4 medium eggs
- 2⅔ cups ichiban dashi* or chicken stock
- ½ teaspoon usukuchi shoyu (light soy sauce)

GARNISH:

- 4 teaspoon grated scraped fresh ginger root or chopped green onions



METHOD

PREPARE AHEAD:

1. Sprinkle the shrimp with ajishio and the chicken with soy sauce and MSG. Place 1 shrimp, a few cubes of chicken, 2 or 3 ginkgo nuts, and some chopped mushrooms in each of four 8-ounce custard cups or bowls. You can use a souffle dishes if you want.
2. Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl, then stir in the dashi, salt, sprinkle the MSG, and the usukuchi shoyu. Divide it equally among the cups. Skim off any bubbles on top of the custard mixture and cover each cup securely with aluminum foil.

TO COOK:

Place the custard in a steamer. Bring the water to a boil, then partially cover the pot and steam over moderate heat for 10 minutes, until the custard is firm. Remember not to put too much water in the steamer.

Its good to serve it while its hot. Serve it with grated ginger root or green onions.

*ichiban dashi - is also called basic soup stock. Its the Japanese equivalent of chicken and beef stocks. It is used as the stock for many meat, poultry, and fish dishes and becomes the soup itself. It is easily and quickly made from the package. I will post the recipe in our blog, in case any one wants to make it.

I hope you will enjoy cooking and eating this very yummy custard. This is labk1ta at your service. I'll see you again in our next issue.. Genki!



Compiled by
Maiku_Ando

Desu:

A Japanese copula (です), or word used to grammatically link a subject and predicate. It is often translated into English using the verb "it is." In addition, desu can only appear at the end of a sentence. (Source Wikipedia).

About this issue...

This is issue 6 of J-Zine which by our original release schedule would be expected around January. As we were running late from issue 5, around 2 months behind intended schedule, we expected this issue to be delayed to around February. Unfortunately due to a lack of staff, and a lack of free time for many of us, the project began to stall.

Our intention at that time was to finish this issue and announce a hiatus to the project to allow us to re-group and come back sometime later, maybe with a project re-start and/or a new name. We even got as far as writing it all, but then the project stalled and we couldn't finish it. We then effectively went on hiatus.

Compared to what we advertised back in issue 5 we are missing some articles which didn't make it to draft stage, these have been postponed but they may yet appear in a future issue, so do keep looking out for them.



The maids from the Princess Lover Visual Novel for PC. Because you can never have too many maids.

The Future for J-Zine...

We are still planning the future of Project Webzine, but we do have some details on the future plans.

The biggest change will be our release schedule, we will be reducing our releases to 2 issues per year, there will be a Summer and Winter release. The main reason for this is to reduce the work load and to give us more time.

We are still very short of staff, and we feel we cannot keep to a quarterly deadline. We are also not professionals, we all have demanding real lives and we want to do this project because we enjoy it, not because its the next quarter and its time to release something.

The project stalled because we tried to do too much, and we put too much pressure on everyone to get things finished by a certain date, we started rushing things, the quality was suffering and everyone started to get tired.

By cutting out our most difficult periods - Autumn and Spring, we can avoid the times when most of our staff are very busy with real life. With 2 issues a year we can take more time over each issue, and hopefully not burn out our staff quite so quickly.

Our next release will be our Summer 2010 Issue. At present we cannot confirm in detail what will be in the issue as we are still planning the content, and we do not have an exact release date yet.

Coming Next Issue...

Anime Previews, Anime Reviews, Okawari, DVD Release Info And more!

And finally, some images to brighten your day...



Yukiho Hagiwara from THE iDOLM@STER games for Xbox 360, PSP and DS. There is also an OVA and an alternate universe mecha Anime.

Upcoming DVD Releases (US) - Continued from inside front cover.

Please note that release dates can frequently change, and we are not responsible for any inaccuracies in the dates provided.

03/16/2010	One Piece: Season 2 Collection, Part 6	04/13/2010	NANA: Complete Collection, Part 4
03/16/2010	Slayers Revolution [Season 4]: Complete Collection	04/13/2010	Bakugan Battle Brawlers, Chapter 1
		04/20/2010	Doujin Work: Complete Collection
03/16/2010	Genshiken 2: Complete Collection (Premium with T-Shirt)	04/20/2010	Otogi Zoshi: Collection of Ages
		04/20/2010	Le Portrait de Petite Cossette
03/16/2010	Genshiken 2: Designer Artbox with T-Shirt	04/20/2010	Bleach, Vol.27
03/16/2010	Tayutama - Kiss on My Diety: Complete Collection	04/20/2010	Naruto Shippuden Boxset 2
		04/20/2010	Naruto Shippuden Boxset 2 (SE)
03/16/2010	Astro Boy (2009 Movie)	04/27/2010	Magic Knight Rayearth: Season 1 Collection (Remastered)
03/16/2010	Astro Boy (2009 Movie) (Blu-ray)		
03/16/2010	Honey & Clover: Complete Collection, Part 3	04/27/2010	Rurouni Kenshin: Complete Collection
03/16/2010	Aria the Origination: Complete Collectio (w/ OVA ~Arietta~)	04/27/2010	Gintama: Collection 1
		04/27/2010	Rental Magica: Complete Collection, Part 2
03/23/2010	Case Closed: Season 3 Collection (Viridian)	04/27/2010	Naruto Uncut Season 2 Boxset, Vol.2
03/23/2010	Case Closed: Season 4 Collection (Viridian)	May-10	
03/23/2010	Case Closed: Season 5 Collection (Viridian)	05/04/2010	Hayate the Combat Butler, Part 5
03/23/2010	Trinity Blood: Complete Collection (Blu-ray)	05/04/2010	CLAMP Double Feature: Tsubasa Chronicles & xxxHOLic (Blu-ray)
03/23/2010	Huntik - Secrets & Seekers, Vol.4 [Italian Animation]	05/04/2010	Darker than BLACK: Complete Collection
03/23/2010	Ikki-Tousen Dragon Destiny, Vol.2	05/04/2010	Dragon Ball: Season 4 Boxset
03/23/2010	Bleach, Vol.26	05/04/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Dragon Box 3
03/23/2010	Poke'mon Elements, Vol.9	05/04/2010	Tsubasa, RESERVoIR CHRoNiCLE: Season 2 Collection (Blu-ray)
03/23/2010	Poke'mon Elements, Vol.10		
03/30/2010	Lupin the 3rd: Episode 0 - The First Contact	05/04/2010	Tsubasa, RESERVoIR CHRoNiCLE: Collected Memories Collection (Blu-ray)
03/30/2010	Aquarion: Complete Collection (2010 Re-release)	05/04/2010	Vandread: Ultimate Collection (Seasons 1 & 2 + OVAs)
03/30/2010	Kanon: Complete Collection (S.A.V.E. Edition)	05/04/2010	Rozen Maiden + Rozen Maiden Tra"umend: Complete Collection
03/30/2010	Negima!?: Complete Collection	05/04/2010	Tekkaman Blade: Complete Collection
03/30/2010	Ouran High School Host Club: Complete Collection	05/04/2010	Voltron - Defender of the Universe: Lion Force, Part 1
03/30/2010	Ouran High School Host Club: Complete Collection (Blu-ray)	05/04/2010	Voltron - Defender of the Universe: Lion Force, Part 2
03/30/2010	Sgt. Frog: Season 2 Collection, Part 2	05/04/2010	You're Under Arrest - Full Throttle: Complete Collection 2
03/30/2010	Soul Eater, Part 2	05/04/2010	Junjo Romantica: Season 1 Collection
03/30/2010	Strike Witches: Complete Collection	05/04/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Season 5 & 6 Boxset [Walmart Exclusive]
03/30/2010	Neo Angelique Abyss: Season 2 Collection	05/11/2010	Dragon Ball Z: Season 7 & 8 Boxset [Walmart Exclusive]
Apr-10			Initial D: Stage 3 (Movie)
04/06/2010	Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion R2, Part 4	05/11/2010	Initial D: Stage 4, Part 1
04/06/2010	Code Geass: Lelouch of the Rebellion R2, Part 4 (LE)	05/11/2010	One Piece: Season 2 Collection, Part 7
04/06/2010	Kannagi - Crazy Shrine Maiden: Complete Collection	05/11/2010	Shin-Chan: Season 1 Collection
04/06/2010	Lucky Star: Complete Collection (Anime Legends)	05/11/2010	Shin-Chan: Season 2 Collection
04/06/2010	Mobile Suit Gundam 00: Season 2 Collection, Part 1	05/11/2010	Xenosaga: Complete Collection (Viridian)
04/06/2010	Mobile Suit Gundam 00: Season 2 Collection, Part 1 (LE)	05/11/2010	Huntik - Secretes & Seekers: Season 1 Collection [Italian Animation]
04/06/2010	Sukisho: Complete Collection (LiteBox)	05/11/2010	Samurai Harem (Asu no Yoichi): Complete Collection
04/06/2010	Hidamari Sketch x 365: Complete Collection	05/18/2010	Air (TV): Complete Collection (S.A.V.E. Edition)
04/06/2010	Naruto Shippuden, Vol.8		
04/13/2010	When They Cry: Complete Collection (2010 Re-release)	05/18/2010	Dragon Ball Z Kai: Season 1 Collection, Part 1 (DVD)
04/13/2010	Beast King GoLion: Complete Collection	05/18/2010	Dragon Ball Z Kai: Season 1 Collection, Part 1 (Blu-ray)
04/13/2010	Genshiken 2: Complete Collection (Premium without T-Shirt)	05/18/2010	xxxHOLic: Complete Collection (2010 Re-release)
04/13/2010	Living for the Day After Tomorrow (Asatte no Houkou): Complete Collection	05/18/2010	Ah! My Buddha: Nirvana Collection
		05/18/2010	Bludgeoning Angel Dokuro-Chan (SE)
		05/18/2010	Queen's Blade: The Exiled Virgin, Vol.1
		05/18/2010	Appleseed (Blu-ray)

Special thanks to the original author for allowing us to reproduce this in J-Zine.

