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Issue 8, Summer June 20, 2012 - September 21, 2012

Genki Life is published seasonal, quarterly, by *The Genshiken of the Inland Empire* anime club, a subsidiary of *Studio ArtMix: Intelligent Graphic Design*. Subscription of this magazine is free of charge. Please **email glm@studioartmix.com** your request to subscribe to this digital publication as well as any other inquiries about this publication.

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Note

ummer comes upon us once again and the summer convention season is in full swing. Now that most students art out of school, there should be no reason for the otaku to attend any of the fabulous summer conventions thoughout the country and the rest of the world.

Ever since the Spring deadline of Genki Life Magazine, there's been some staff changes. I realized from the last deadline that it was very, very difficult to get things organized and have things done on time and in an orderly fashion. We're still undergoing changes and hopefully for the best.

This spring gave us the opportunity to attend three conventions: WonderCon in March at Anaheim, FanimeCon in May at San Jose and AM2 also in Anaheim this June. We all had serious fun at all these conventions and took quite a few pictures, all posted on our website. While the Wonder-Con pictures are already up, hopefully, if time permits, I will have FanimeCon and AM2 pictures up within a month after this issue goes live. We do still have Anime Expo in Los Angeles to attend.

Graphic Designer

Publisher-Genki Life Magazine, President-GIE

- Ed Joney



anime.studioartmix.com • glm@studioartmix.com



Genki Life Magazine

Staff

Publisher & Editor

Ed Gomez

Public Relations

Tim Brillo

Contributors & Writers

Yukimura82 Hinata Aoi Lageon The Goon

Staff Photographers

Tim Brillo Andy Van Lageon

Graphic Design & Layout

Ed Gomez NiteCore

We're always looking for contributors to this magazine in the fields of writing, reporting, reviewing, photography and graphic design. If you would like to contribute to this magazine, please e-mail me at: glm@studioartmix.com or Facebook:

gie.glm@groups.facebook.com

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An Idol 'Graduating' Should Not Be Frontpage News

25 announcement that she was leaving the all-girl idol collective AKB48, a rumor circulated on Twitter that a male University of Tokyo student had committed suicide in response. The rumor was quickly exposed as a hoax, but the point had been made. People were taking the news way too seriously. No one was really surprised when the sports tabloids made it their front-page story, but did the national dailies have to report it in such detail?



Maeda (center) with some of the members of AKB48.

When Maeda said she was "graduating" from a group she joined as an original member at 14, she was already 20, the age of majority in Japan. As a commercial enterprise, AKB48 is fixated on adolescence, but there are members even older than Maeda who remain with the ship, so some commentators have been pondering the significance of her decision. She's nominally the group's most popular member and, more significantly, her endeavors as a solo entity have yet to meet with much success. In the past she said her main ambition was to be an actress, but the TV drama series she appeared in last summer, Hanazakari ni Kimitachi e, averaged a miserable 7 percent share per episode, and her big movie vehicle, Moshi Kōkō Yakyū no Joshi Maneger ga Drucker no 'Manegement'



Atsuko Maeda plays as Mizuki Ashiya (above), in the 2011 remake of "Hana Kimi," who poses as a boy at an all-boys school. In "Moshi Dora," she plays as Minami Kawashi (below), who manages the high school baseball team using a book by Peter Drucker.



wo Yondara, was a box office dud. Adding insult to injury, the tabloid Sports Hochi awarded her its Hebi Ichigo Award—Japan's equivalent of Hollywood's Razzies for the worst film performances of the year. Some in the show-business press hold that Maeda may be unselfishly making room for young AKB members to rise higher in the organization, but gossip columnist Yoshiko Matsumoto thinks it might be something else. She sympathizes with Maeda and believes the young star wasn't happy in the group. It's lonely at the top, and the pressure to stay there is more emotionally vexing than it's worth. People misread her slightly contrarian attitude as the outward manifestation of a grouchy constitution, but the politics that rules AKB forces her to do things that must be trying on a day-to-day basis, such as putting up with colleagues' "overly considerate" attentions.

The group's producer and songwriter, Yasushi Akimoto, once described Maeda as "stoical," adding she isn't comfortable with "wishy-washy relationships." When Akimoto talks about AKB, it's often difficult to tell if he's being naive or cynical. Like the comment

he made to CNN several months ago that his sexually suggestive lyrics are merely a means of "depicting reality" so that the girls and their fans will think about such sensitive topics, his analysis of Maeda's personality glosses over what's obvious, which is that she's forced by circumstance to be Akimoto's point-person in a project that endeavors to explain how young Japanese women think and feel.

By now nobody with half a gram of critical faculty believes AKB's appeal is purely musical. Any entertainment value derived from their records or performances is qualified by their mission to be both famous and accessible. Akimoto's boldest twist on the classic idol formula is to tie sales of AKB merchandise to involvement with the group, even if the involvement is heavily controlled: the meet-and-greet sessions after shows and, especially, the "elections" to decide which member is the most "popular."

These elections may have had more to do with Maeda's decision than anything else. Contests to determine popularity are the cruelest kind, and it's said that the first time Maeda won an election the audience was





clapping and calling her name just before the emcee announced the runner-up, meaning that, while everyone expected her to win, many vocalized their hope that she wouldn't. The next year, when her crown was taken

away by Yuko Oshima, Maeda said she was relieved, and the year after that, when she got it back, she made a strange but revealing comment: She knew there were people who hated her, but "please don't hate AKB48."

It was too late. The haters were out in force, and it appears most of them are women. It's no secret that, unlike past "people's idols" (kokumin-teki aidoru), such as Pink Lady or Morning Musume, AKB48 is designed to appeal specifically to a pre-adult male sensibility, regardless of actual age. Except for elementary school girls who aspire to be in the group, females seem to have a tough time empathizing with or appreciating AKB48.

Part of it has to do with sex. Pundit and sex-paraphernalia entrepreneur Minori Kitahara has said that AKB doesn't demonstrate the "sexual self-awareness" of female K-pop artists since that would be intimidating to male fans, who still prefer their objects of desire to be demure and unyielding.

Not to mix metaphors, but the cat fight in the goldfish bowl that AKB's public activities showcase—from backstage documentaries to variety-show appearances—is what keeps those male fans riveted and female nonfans repulsed. In a feature article in *Aera* that diverged from Matsumoto's tack, AKB was said to symbolize the "lack of freedom" that young women still have to struggle with in Japanese society, though the writer also wondered if expressing such a viewpoint wasn't "being too mean."

This cautious tone shows how tough it is to discuss the group with any sort of candor and not come across as being petty and nasty. Whatever one wants to make of Akimoto's questionable PR decisions—presenting his charges as, literally, fantasy bedmates, or having them smooth one another suggestively in TV commercials—the girls' main appeal is still their accessibility, which, in the context of Japanese show business, is a pretty good joke. The operating principle of idolhood is that fans don't feel the sort of distance from their heroes that they might feel toward performers with ambition and demonstrable talent. AKB48 just makes the relationship clearer. Consequently, Maeda's retirement seems contrived, so her fans shouldn't fret. Someone will find something for her to do. Philip Brasor



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THE NEW PRINCE OF TENNIS

s the temperatures are warming up, it's a great time to play some outdoor sports. One of the sports that's played right now in this good weather is tennis. By coincidence, as the tennis season starts, a new season of *The Prince of Tennis* have started as well, but with an added change to the title, *The NEW Prince of Tennis*. This is the continuation after the finals where Seigaku Academy are the middle school champions.

The new episode takes place when Ryōma Echizen, who is in New York, and the members of Seigaku Tennis Club, receive an invitation for the U-17 camp in Japan. The U-17 camp is a training facility for those who have talent in tennis, to train and to become professional players. The U-17 camp is meant for high school players, but this year after the middle school championship games, some schools



have been recognized with great talents; Seigaku, Fudomine, Rikkai, St. Rudolph, Hyotei, Shitenhoji, Yamabuki, Rokkaku, Higa and Nagoya.

As Kunimitsu Tezuka and the rest of Seigaku

enter the U-17 camp, they are approached by two high schoolers who give them a test to knock off three cans on the other side of the court with only five tennis balls. Of course, the whole team passes the test and continues to the main courts. As they reach the main courts, they are amazed that the facility has the state of the art equipment. While passing through, they are bad mouthed and looked down upon by the high schoolers. As tension rises between Seigaku and the high school players, the other middle schools show up to back them up.

Just when a fight was about to begin, a voice over the facility stopped them. One of the coaches explain why there are 50 additional middle schoolers into the facility. As the middle schoolers and high schoolers are given the reason, the coach says there's limited space and only those who catch a tennis ball can stay. As everyone is running around trying to catch a ball, the middle schoolers are grabbing multiple tennis balls. So which players are staying? What will they gain from this camp?

This anime series is only 13 episodes long and hopefully will continue at a later date. It feels like it is going to be another eventful anime with more surprises. If you like tennis, know the rules and terms, then it's going to be easy to understand. If you just started watching this anime at this point, it is better to start off from the very beginning with the *Prince of Tennis* to see what Seigaku Academy and the other schools had to endure to reach this point. All the same characters are back, but will the new characters put these middle schoolers in their place? Let's wait to find out.

Seiichi Yukimura





f /Knightrokon



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Akira Yamaoka



Mary Elizabeth McGlynn



Troy Baker



Richard Epcar



Phil LaMarr



Convention Schedule

Summer 2012

PortConMaine

June 21-24 DoubleTree by Hilton (formerly Wyndham Portland Airport Hotel), South Portland, ME www.portconmaine.com

Seishun-Con

June 22-24 Doubletree Hotel Atlanta NW/ Marietta, Atlanta, GA www.seishun-con.com

Supanova Pop Culture Expo

June 22-24 Claremont Showgrounds Claremont, WA Australia www.supanova.com.au

JAFAX

June 23-24 Grand Valley State University Allendale, MI www.jafax.org

NemaCon

June 23-24 Middlesbrough Town Hall Middlesbrough, UK www.nemacon.com

NipponCon

June 23-24 Das Bürgerhaus Oslebshausen Bremen, Germany www.nipponcon.de

Animaritime

June 29 - July 1 Delta Beauséjour Moncton, New Brunswick www.animaritime.org

Anime Festival Wichita

June 29 - July 1 Hyatt Regency Wichita Wichita, KS www.afwcon.org

AniMinneapolis

June 29 - July 1 Ramada Mall of America Bloomington, MN www.animinneapolis.com

FandomFest

June 29 - July 1 Galt House, Louisville, KY www.fandomfest.com

Hetalia Con!

June 29 - July 1 Indiana Convention Center Indianapolis, IN www.hetaliacon.weebly.com

Anime Expo

June 29 - July 2 Los Angeles Convention Center Los Angeles, CA www.anime-expo.org

Florida Supercon

June 29 - July 2 Miami Airport Convention Center, Miami, FL www.floridasupercon.com

Lucky Con Lincoln

June 30
The Priory Centre
Lincoln, UK
sites.google.com/site/luckyconlincoln2012/

Asahi Anime Festival

June 30 - July 1 The Hub, Bartholemew Square Brighton, UK www.brightonjapan.com

London Anime Con

June 30 - July 1 London Metropolitan University, The Rocket Complex London, UK

www.londonanimecon.com

CONvergence

July 5-8 DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Bloomington - Minneapolis South,Minneapolis, MN www.convergence-con.org

Japan Expo

July 5-8 Paris-Nord Villepinte Paris, France www.japan-expo.com

Omnicon

July 6-7 McAllen Convention Center McAllen, TX www.omnicononline.com

Anime Midwest

July 6-8 Wyndham Lisle-Chicago Hotel & Executive Meeting Center Lisle, IL www.animemidwest.com

Anime Overload

July 6-8 Holiday Inn Austin Midtown Austin, TX www.animeoverload.net

Anime Punch: Fieldcon

July 6-8 AEP ReCreation Lands Morgan County, OH www.animepunch.org/fieldcon/

AnimeWorld Indianapolis

July 6-8 Sheraton Indianapolis Hotel at Keystone Crossing Indianapolis, IN www.animeworldexpos.com/indy/

Chiisaicon

July 6-8 Paroquet Springs Conference Centre, Shepherdsville, KY www.chiisaicon.com

Convention Schedule

Summer 2012 continued

London Film and Comic Con

July 6-8 Olympia Grand Hall London, UK www.londonfilmandcomiccon.com

MiniComi

July 7 University of British Columbia, Student Union Building Vancouver, British Columbia www.minicomi.orangesanctuary.com

comCosDay

July 7-8 SAALBAU Titus-Forum Frankfurt am Main, Germany www.cosday.de

SummerCon

July 12 Camino Real Hotel El Paso, TX www.epsummercon.com

Comic-Con International: San Diego

July 12-15 San Diego Convention Center San Diego, CA www.comic-con.org

Anime SouthEast

July 13-15 Sevierville Events Center Sevierville, TN www.animesoutheast.com

ConnectiCon

July 13-15 Connecticut Convention Center Hartford, CT www.connecticon.org

Ikasucon

July 13-15 Grand Wayne Convention Center, Fort Wayne, IN www.ikasucon.org



Sukoshicon: Athens

July 14 Holiday Inn Hotel Athens Athens, GA www.sukoshicon.com/ athens/location.html

Ai-Kon

July 20-22 Winnipeg Convention Centre Winnipeg, Manitoba www.ai-kon.org

BroCon

July 20-22 University of Limerick Limerick, Ireland www.brocon.info

N.A.P.P.A. Con

July 20-22 Country Inn & Suites By Carlson Decatur Decatur, AL www.nappaconvention.com

Sogen Con

July 20-22 Sheraton Sioux Falls & Convention Center Sioux Falls, SD www.sogencon.org

Tokyo in Tulsa

July 20-22 Tulsa Convention Center Tulsa, OK www.tokyointulsa.com



Manchester MCM Expo

July 21 Manchester Central Manchester, UK www.manchestermcmexpo.com

Animelowa

July 27-29 Coralville Marriott Hotel & Conference Center Coralville, IA www.animeiowa.com

Animeland Tucon

July 27-29 Holiday Inn Hotel & Suites Tucson Airport-North Tucson, AZ www.animelandtucon.com

AVCon

July 27-29 Adelaide Convention Centre Adelaide, SA Australia www.avcon.org.au

ConBravo!

July 27-29 Holiday Inn Burlington Burlington, Ontario www.conbravo.com

Otakon

July 27-29 Baltimore Convention Center Baltimore, MD www.otakon.com

WausaubiCon

July 27-29 The Plaza Hotel & Suites of Wausau, Wausau, WI www.wausaubicon.com

Anime Festival Orlando

August 3-5 Wyndham Orlando Resort Orlando, FL www.animefestivalorlando.com

AnimeWorld Chicago

August 3-5 Hyatt Regency O'Hare Rosemont, IL www.animeworldchicago.com

Auto Assembly

August 3-5 Hilton Birmingham Metropole Hotel, Birmingham, UK www.autoassembly.org.uk

Go! Daiko-con

August 3-5 Auburn Hills Marriott Pontiac at Centerpoint Pontiac, MI www.godaikocon.com

Otakuthon

August 3-5 Palais des congrès de Montréal Montreal, Quebec www.otakuthon.com

Tokonatsu

August 3-6 Ampthill & Woburn District Scout Ground Milton Bryan, UK www.tokonatsu.org.uk

Tosho-con

August 4 Rockville Centre Public Library Rockville Centre, NY www.toshocon.com

KuroNeko Con

August 4-5 Spokane Falls Community College Spokane, WA www.kuronekocon.com

AmeCon

August 10-12 Keele University Keele, UK www.amecon.org.uk

Animethon

August 10-12 MacEwan University Edmonton, Alberta www.animethon.org

Comic Market

August 10-12 Tokyo Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan www.comiket.co.jp



Nagu Con

August 10-12 Holiday Inn Helena, Helena, MT www.hstrial-nagucon.homestead.com

San Japan

August 10-12 Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center / San Antonio Grand Hyatt Hotel San Antonio, TX www.san-japan.org

Sukoshicon: Louisville

August 11-12 Hilton Garden Inn Louisville Northeast, Louisville, KY www.sukoshicon.com/ky/ location.html

Anime Revolution

August 17-19 Vancouver Convention Centre Vancouver, British Columbia www.animerevolution.ca

Genki

August 17-19 Roskilde Kongres- og Idrætscenter Roskilde, Denmark www.genki.dk/en/

Manifest

August 17-19 Melbourne Showgrounds Melbourne, VIC Australia www.manifest.org.au

Mizu Con

August 17-19
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Miami Airport & Convention
Center, Miami, FL
www.mizucon.com

Motaku

August 17-19 Holiday Inn Kansas City SE / CoCo Key Water Resort Kansas City, MO www.motaku.org

Power Morphicon 3

August 17-19 Pasadena Convention Center Pasadena, CA www.officicialpowermorphicon.com

FanExpo Canada

August 23-26 Metro Toronto Convention Centre, Toronto, Ontario www.fanexpocanada.com

Abunai

August 24-26 NH Koningshof Veldhoven, Netherlands www.abunaicon.nl

MatsuriCon

August 24-26 Hyatt Regency Columbus Columbus, OH www.matsuricon.org

Convention Schedule

Summer 2012 continued

Nom-Con

August 24-26
Burlington Hotel Dublin
Dublin, Ireland
www.nom-con.net

Animeland Makiba

August 31 - September 2 Palace Station Hotel & Casino Las Vegas, NV www.animelandmakiba.com

Meta Con

August 31 - September 2 DoubleTree By Hilton Bloomington - Minneapolis South, Minneapolis, MN www.metaconvention.com

Sac-Anime

August 31 - September 2 Woodlake Hotel Sacramento Sacramento, CA www.sacanime.com

Animaine

August 31 - September 3 Best Western Merry Manor Inn South Portland, ME www.animaine.com

AnimeFest

August 31 - September 3 Sheraton Dallas Downtown Hotel Dallas, TX www.animefest.org

Dragon*Con

August 31 - September 3 Atlanta Marriott Marquis, Hyatt Regency Atlanta, Atlanta Hilton, Sheraton Atlanta, Westin Peachtree Plaza Atlanta, GA www.dragoncon.org

Kumoricon

September 1-3 Hilton Vancouver Washington / Red Lion Vancouver at the Quay Vancouver, WA www.kumoricon.org

Saboten-Con

September 1-3 Renaissance Glendale Glendale, AZ www.sabotencon.com

CampAnime

September 7-9 Camp Woodstock Woodstock Valley, CT www.campanime.com

Connichi

September 7-9 Kongress Palais Kassel Kassel, Germany www.connichi.de

Geek.Kon

September 7-9 Madison Marriott West Madison, WI www.geekkon.net

Kita-Kon

September 7-9 Valhalla Inn Hotel & Convention Center, Thunder Bay, Ontario www.kita-kon.org

MechaCon

September 7-9 Hilton New Orleans Riverside New Orleans, LA www.mechacon.com

UmiCon

September 7-9 The Plaza Resort & Spa Daytona Beach, FL www.umicondaytona.com

J-Con

September 14-15 The Riverside Centre Derby, UK www.j-con.co.uk

Aoi Uma Con

September 14-16 Fern Valley Hotel & Conference Center Louisville, KY www.aoiumacon.com

Nan Desu Kan

September 14-16 Marriott Denver Tech Center Denver, CO www.ndkdenver.org

Comikaze Expo

September 15-16 Los Angeles Convention Center Los Angeles, CA www.comikazeexpo.com

Ramencon

September 21-23 Radisson Hotel at Star Plaza Merrillville, IN www.ramencon.com

Rochester Sci-Fi and Anime Convention

September 21-23 Main Street Armory Rochester, NY www.rochesterscifianimecon.com



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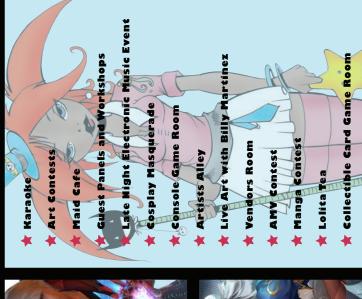














This 2011—2012 season of basketball in the U.S. was late due to negotiations. The games have been almost back-to-back with no rest for some teams who are

on the road. Since basketball games have been getting more physical towards the end of the season, winning the championship is what each team is aiming for.

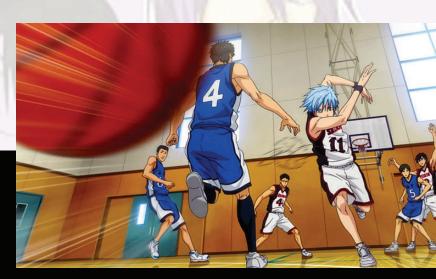
o when basketball season ends with a team winning this years' championship, this new sports anime will continue the excitement for those who like basketball and anime. The new exciting sport anime that came out this year is *Kuroko no Baske* (*Kuroko's Basketball*) and it grabs your attention.

The story begins with: "The Teiko Middle School basketball club, an incredibly strong team with over a hundred members and three consecutive championship wins. Amongst their brilliant record, the generation of five prodigies was known as the "Generation Of Miracles."

Despite being relatively unknown and lacking a game







record, there was one more member recognized by the five prodigies: A phantom sixth man."

After the six Teiko basketball players graduated from middle school, they each went to different high schools and joined the basketball team. The phantom sixth player, Tetsuya Kuroko, went to a new school with a barely known strong basketball team, Seirin High. Another talented basketball player who enters Seirin High, Kagami Taiga, came from America with potential that is still growing. Kagami joins the team aiming to be the best player in Japan but did not know about the "Generation of Miracles" and learned that they are the best players. With him knowing about the prodigies and his plan to be the best in Japan, he

sets his goal to beat each member of the "Generation of Miracles." After Kuroko hears Kagami's goal, he decides to lend his abilities to beat the prodigies by saying, "I will be the shadow to your light." Thus the story starts here.

The anime is still new but it has been a manga for quite some time. So if you are willing to wait to watch this anime, then just be patient. If you want to get ahead and find out how everything turns out, the manga will just do that. From what I have seen in the anime, it seems like it is going to be long like any other sports anime. But like any sports anime, if you know the terms, rules or trying the sport, then it will be easy understand. Seiichi Yukimura



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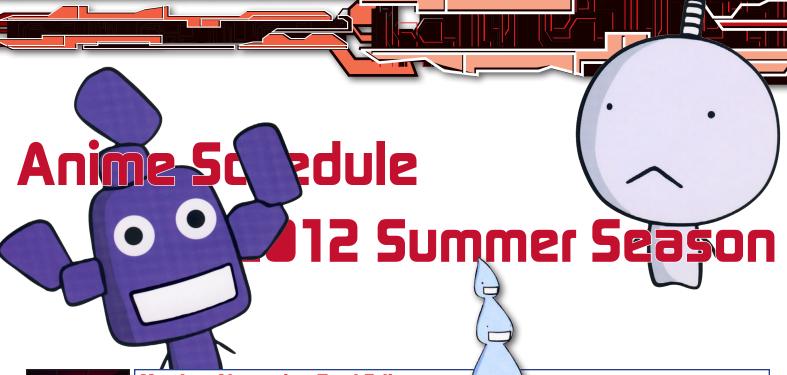


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Muv-Luv Alternative: Total Eclipse

マブラヴオルタネイティヴ トータル・イクリプス

Satelight + July, 1 + TV Tokyo + www.muv-luv-te-anime.com

The UN has proposed a joint development program between the Imperial Japan and the United States, development project of TSF, the Prominence Project. Yui Takamura, a surface pilot of the Imperial Royal Guards of Japan, is given responsibility for the project and sets off to Alaska. Meanwhile, Yuya Bridges, also a surface pilot of the US Army, was heading to the same destination. This story with exciting human dramas and robot actions takes place in the development of a new Tactical Surface Fighters, the most important and effective weapons against BETA, at a crisis of human extinction.



Tari Tari

タリ タリ

P.A. Works + July, 1 + TV Kanagawa + www.taritari.jp

The story centers around five Japanese high school students who are too young to be called adults, but who no longer think of themselves as children: Wakana Saka, Konatsu Miyamoto, Sawa Okita, Daichi Tanaka and "Wiin" just transfered into Wakana's class after 12 years abroad in Australia. Music brings Wakana, Konatsu, Sawa and the others together into an ensemble during their last summer in high school.



Jinrui wa Suitai Shimashita (Athropy of Mankind)

人類は衰退しました

AIC ASTA + July, 1 + TV Kanagawa + www.maql.co.jp/special/jintai

The story is set several centuries into the slow decline of mankind. Earth has now become the realm of "fairies" — 10-centimeter-tall (about 4-inch-tall) creatures with remarkable intelligence. The human protagonist of the story serves an important duty as the international arbitrator between the fairies and humans, and she returns to her former hometown of Kusunoki. She chose this job because she thought it was an easy job she can do, even when she is as old as her grandfather. However, she learns that her job is anything but simple when she meets the fairies.



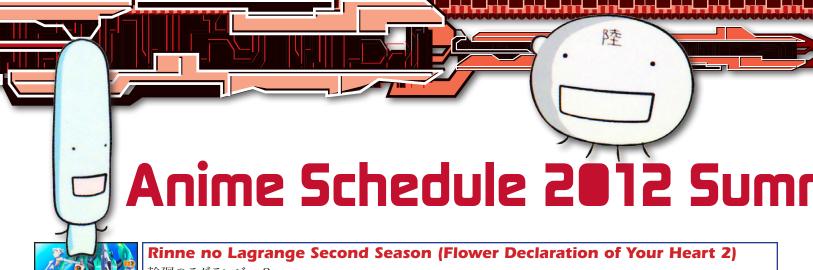
Arcana Famiglia: La Storia Della Arcana Famiglia

アルカナ・ファミリア ~La storia della Arcana Famiglia~

J.C. Staff + July, 1 + TV Kanagawa + www.arcanafamiglia.com

The story takes place on the small island of Regalo in the Mediterranean Sea. The island has been protected by a vigilante committee called "Arcana Famiglia." The members of the family have psychic powers gained by a secret ritual. Felicita is a 16-year-old girl who was raised by her strict mother. She visits Regalo to see her father who is the head of Arcana Famiglia. He tells her to become the leader of "Serie of Sword," the arbitrator section of the family. As one of the members of Arcana Famiglia, Felicita interacts with other handsome but eccentric members.

The information presented here is as accurate as much as humanly possible and is subject to change without not



輪廻のラグランジェ2

XEBEC • July, 1 • Tokyo MX • www.lag-rin.com

Madoka Kyōno is an energetic girl who is full of passion. As the proud, and only, member of the Kamogawa Girls' High School Jersey Club, she goes around helping people in need. Madoka's life is turned upside down when she is suddenly asked by a mysterious girl named Lan to pilot a robot. Motivated by her desire to protect the people and city of Kamogawa, Madoka agrees to pilot the resurrected Vox robot to fight against extraterrestrials that have come to attack Earth. Second part of Rinne no Lagrange.

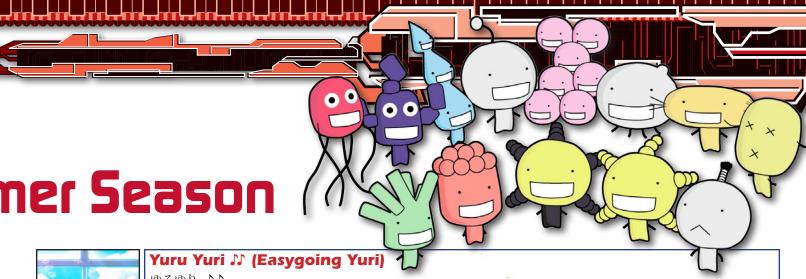
Chôyaku Hyakunin Isshu: Uta Koi.

超訳百人一首 うた恋い。

TYO Animations + July, 2 + TV Tokyo + www.anime-utakoi.jp

This tells the "super-liberal interpretation" of the Hyakunin Isshu anthology of poems that were written between the 7th and 13th centuries in Japan. The anthology features 100 romantic poems from 100 different poets such as The Tale of Genji's "Murasaki Shikibu." The poems are also used as the basis for the karuta card game.







ゆるゆり ♪♪

Dogakobo + July, 2 + TV Tokyo + www.yuruyuri.com

Right after starting middle school, Akari Akaza joins the Amusement Club which is composed solely by her two child-hood friends, Kyōko Toshinō and Yui Funami. Chinatsu Yoshikawa, Akaza's classmate, becomes a member after finding out about the dissolution of the Tea Club. The Amusement Club, situated at the tea room facility since the Tea Club disbanded, has no clear purpose, being free for the girls to do whatever they want. The second season of *Yuru Yuri*.



Moyashimon Returns: Tales of Agriculture

もやしもん リターンズ

Shirogumi Inc. + July, 5 + Fuji TV + www.kamosuzo2.tv

Enter Tadayasu, a freshmen college student who can see and talk to cute, chibi bacteria and other microscopic organisms. It's not all fun and games like it sounds though, because it gets him into all sorts of trouble. Join Tadayasu as he enters his first year at the Agriculture University, what crazy events await him? Second season.



Natsuyuki Rendezvous

夏雪ランデブー

Dogakobo + July, 5 + Fuji TV + www.natsuyuki.tv

Ryōsuke works part-time as a florist. He has bad eyesight, a pure heart, and a secret crush on the store manager, Rokka. Unfortunately for him, Rokka swore off love 8 years ago. But when Ryōsuke goes up to her apartment on the second floor, he runs into a good-looking half-naked man. At first upset, he learns that this isn't Rokka's live-in boyfriend; he's the ghost of her late husband, Atsushi. She can't see him, and Ryosuke decides not to give up on her, even with a dead husband standing in the way.



Joshiraku

じょしらく

J.C. Staff • July, 5 • MBS • www.starchild.co.jp/special/joshiraku

This is about cute girls and what they do to entertain themselves. It doesn't focus on frustrating topics or similar things. 5 girls asking each other about something completely random, but when they have reached a conclusion, it is always far from the original question.



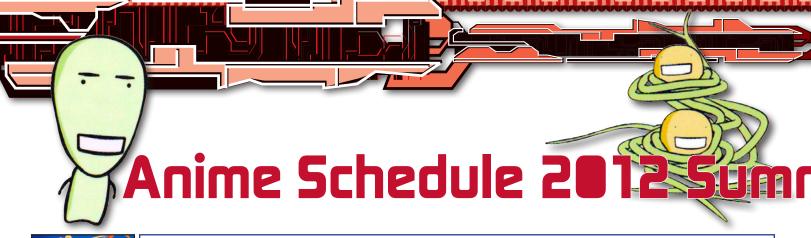
Kono Naka ni Hitori, Imouto ga Iru! (One of Them Is My Younger Sister!)

この中に1人、妹がいる!

Studio Gokumi + July, 5 + TBS/BS-TBS + www.tbs.co.jp/anime/nakaimo

The story centers around Shōgo Mikadono, the son of an industrial magnate named Mikadono Kumagorō who passed away. As a final wish, Kumagorō gave Shōgo a condition before Shōgo can inherit the family legacy—find a female mate at school. At his new school, it appears his younger sister (separated from him at birth) also attends this academy, and is trying to get closer to him without letting know him who she actually is. Problem is, Shōgo seems to be popular with the other girls as well! Can Shōgo "properly" reunite with his little sister and while making a girlfriend at the same time?!

The information presented here is as accurate as much as humanly possible and is subject to change without notice





Koi to Senkyo to Chocolate (Love, Election and Chocolate)

恋と選挙とチョコレート

AIC Build + July, 5 + TBS/BS-TBS + www.koichoco.com

The story follows the protagonist Yūki Ōjima, who attends Takafuji Private Academy, a large school with over 6,000 students. Yūki is a member of the Food Research Club along with seven others, including his childhood friend Chisato Sumiyoshi. The members leisurely spend their time in the club not doing much activities. When the election of the next student council president comes up, the front runner Satsuki Shinonome proposes that clubs that have no merit should be sorted out and abolished. Yūki learns about the issues facing the school and decides to run in the election.



Campione!

カンピオーネ!

Diomedea + July, 6 + AT-X + www.campi-anime.com

A harem love comedy plus magic battles. Godo Kusanagi is a 16-year-old high school boy, who once killed the god "Verethragna" and acquired the title of "Campione (god killer)" when he was 15. Erica Brandelli is a 16-year-old Italian girl, who is a "Great Knight" of the magic society "Bronze Black Cross" and had fought together with Godo to defeat Verethragna. Godo doesn't like fighting but his title of "Campione" makes him get involved in battles against other Campiones and uncontrollable gods.



Hagure Yûsha no Kichiku Bigaku (Aesthetics of a Rogue Hero)

はぐれ勇者の鬼畜美学 (エステティカ)

ARMS + July, 6 + AT-X + www.kichiku.tv

In normal RPGs, a hero defeats the Satan king and the story ends. But what does the hero do after that? Ōsawa Akatsuki defeats the Satan king in the fantasy world of Alleyzard and returns to the real world. He is sheltered by the international organization BABEL, which protects and controls people transferred from the outer worlds. BABEL is astonished to know Akatsuki has really defeated Satan and brings Satan's daughter Miu from Alleyzard. In the academy of BABEL, Akatsuki confronts other "returners," who have psychic powers.



Dakara Boku wa, H ga Dekinai. (So, I Cannot Get Erotic.)

だから僕は、Hができない。

Feel + July, 6 + AT-X + www.boku-h.com

Ryōsuke Kaga, a helplessly romantic teenager, was walking in the rain when he sees a beautiful girl with red eyes drenched in the rain. Everyone was avoiding her, but Ryōsuke was taught to treasure women so he offered his help by letting her dry off at his home. Ryōsuke can't imagine that this mysterious girl would stab him in the chest and leave him to die... Or did she? Who is this pretty girl and what does she want with him?

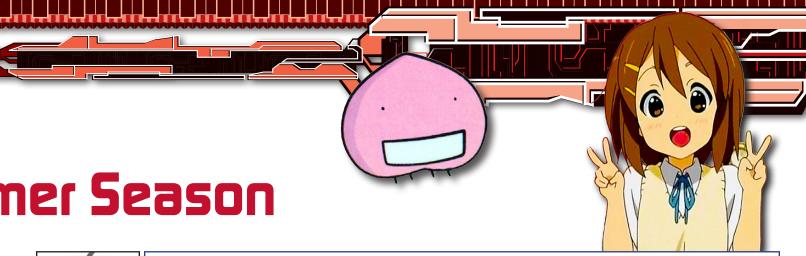


Dog Days'

ドッグデイズ'

Seven Arcs + July, 7 + Tokyo MX + www.dogdays.tv

Republic of Biscotti faces a predicament by the invasion of Galette Leo Knights. In order to save the country, Princess Milchore summons a "hero" from the outer world. Shinku, a junior high school boy living in the Earth, is chosen as the hero. The second season of *Dog Days*.





Sword Art Online

ソードアート・オンライン

A-1 Pictures + July, 7 + Tokyo MX + www.swordart-online.net

Kirito, a solo player who had the luck-of-the-draw to play the beta version, and the many other players of Sword Art Online (SAO) are trapped inside of a game, unable to logout; the only way to live is to win. Death in-game means death in the real world, tampering or prolonged power outage with the Nerve Gear, the gear that simulates in-game character control by redirecting brain signals, also means death. To win means to defeat the final boss on the top floor, out of the original 10,000 players at the start, two years later 6000 remain and 26 floors left to clear.



Kyôkai Sen-jô no Horizon II (Horizon in the Middle of Nowhere II)

境界線上のホライゾン II

Sunrise + July, 7 + MBS + www.genesis-horizon.net

In a distant future, Japan is divided into feudal territories, which have been conquered and are ruled by outside countries. The flying city-ship Musashi, which holds the remnants of the Japanese, is being targeted and has no choice but to keep its people safe by going to war. With the fate of the world resting on its hands, the students of Musashi may hold the key to victory. Second season of *Horizon in the Middle of Nowhere*.



Oda Nobuna no Yabô (Ambition of Oda)

織田信奈の野望

Studio Gokumi/Madhouse + July, 8 + TV Tokyo + www.odanobuna.com

Sagara Yoshiharu, a 17 year old high school student, travels back in time to the Sengoku period (Warring States Era), where the main Samurai lords are women. He meets Oda Nobuna, the female equivalent of Oda Nobunaga, who subsequently gives him the nickname "monkey" and takes him below her wing.



Hakuôki: Reimei-roku

薄桜鬼 黎明録

Studio DEEN + July, 9 + Tokyo MX + www.geneonuniversal.jp/rondorobe/anime/hakuoki

Prequel of *Hakuōki*. The story of the dawning of the Shinsengumi. The protagonist, Yukimura Chizuru, is the daughter of a doctor who works in Edo. The father leaves Edo to work as a volunteer doctor and moves to Kyōto without his daughter. As time passes by, Chizuru starts worrying about losing contact with her father, so she decides to go to Kyōto in search of him. On the way, Chizuru is attacked by few criminals and witnesses a fight between an oni and the Shinsengumi. The story is overall romantic with a historical and political background.



Ebiten: Kôritsu Ebisugawa Kôkô Tenmon-Bu (Ebisugawa Public High School Astronomical Club)

えびてん 公立海老栖川高校天悶部

AIC Classic + July, 14 + Nico Nico Douga + www.ebiten.jp

Itsuki Noya just started his school year at the Ebisugawa High School and since he has always had a fascination with space, he decides to join the astronomy club. However, he mistakenly walks into the all girls Otaku Club. He notices that the members are really weird, but Itsuki has yet to realize that he isn't in the astronomy club. His life is about to get complicated by being surrounded by so many girls.

The information presented here is as accurate as much as humanly possible and is subject to change without noti



SABOTEN CON 2012

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Akira Yamaoka

Mary Elizabeth McGlynn

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Glendale Arizona | Labor Day Weekend (9/1-9/3) www.sabotencon.com

B'z Live-Gym 2012 -Into Free-Concert Tour





ut in the deep depths of the interstellar void, a spacecraft casually speeds though hyperspace towards Earth. In an instant, the lone pilot is jolted by collision alarms throughout the craft. As the pilot tries to regain control, things go awry as the craft enters the Earth's atmosphere. The breaking thrusters go off in time before the craft goes through a controlled crash landing. "Lifeform detected in the landing path!"

One late spring night, a boy takes a stroll though the countryside where he lives. There's a nice, cool, refreshing breeze blowing around him. With his trusted 8 mm movie camera, he goes around looking for locations for a future movie project he planning for. One location he found is a view, from a bridge, overlooking lake and countryside. It looks promising. While testing his camera, he looks up and notices a point of light getting bigger. A loud, rumbling sound soon ensues him. He's thrown over the bridge. "A hand!"

"Was this just a dream?" Kaito Kirishima wakes up like any other day before going to school. At school, later that morning, Kaito meets up with his frends Tetsurō, Kanna and Mio. As they begin discussing the movie project for this summer, Tetsurō tells them that there's a new third-year transfer student that started attending their school. Tetsurō goes over and proposes to Ichika (the new student) and her classmate, Remon, to join them in their movie production during their lunch break. They accept.

On the way home from school. Kaito

notices Ichika fishing at a nearby stream and goes to talk to her. He asks what she's doing there, finds out that she's "from far away" and was going to camp out. They continue talking on the way to Kaito's home. With nowhere to go, Kaito unintentionally invites her to stay with him and his sister.

While Ichika refreshens herself, Kaito suddenly feels pain around his neck, has flashbacks and falls unconscious. Ichika is revealed the be the alien who crash landed on Earth and saved Kaito's life. She quickly summons Rinon, her organic computer interface, and immediately scans Kaito. Ichika injected Kaito before with nano-machines to heal him by means of a kiss. She injects him again with more nano-machines with a kiss. Near the end of the infusion, Ichika is caught off guard by Kaito's sister, Nanami, and his classmate, Kanna, while holding the unconscious Kaito in her arms. Both are surprised by the sight bestowed upon them, knowing that Kaito isn't the kind of person to do something like that.

When Kaito regains consciousness, he is met by some hostility from Kanna who's





L-R: Tetsuro, Kaito, Mio and Kanna in thier class.

surprised to see Ichika at his house, as wells a Nanami. Kaito introduces Ichika to Nanami and explains her situation. It's perfect timing! Nanami has to leave for a couple months for a business trip and is worried about leaving Kaito alone for the summer. Nanami accepts Ichika into their home to help watch over Kaito and to keep him company. Kanna swelled in anger about this arrangement, but also accepts it.

Ano Natsu de Matteru is a science fiction, romantic comedy, drama that revolves around

the developing relationship between Kaito Kirishima (CV: Shimazaki, Nobunaga*) and Ichika Takatsuki (CV: Tomatsu, Haruka). Early in the story, which is clearly obvious, Kanna Tanigawa (CV: Ishihara, Kaori) is madly in love with Kaito and has a difficult time trying to convey her feelings. When things are complicated enough, Tetsurō Ishigaki (CV: Ogihara, Hideki), a childhood friend of Kanna and school playboy, has been in love with her forever but doesn't want to ruin their friendship. Then there's the softspoken Mio Kitahara (CV: Asumi, Kana), has liked Tetsurō since they first met at the beginning of the school year.

The intricate love relationship between the characters is awkward at the beginning. As the story develops further, they come to terms with their feeling. Kaito and Ichika get together at the expense of Kanna's feelings. Tetsurō confesses to Kanna and gets turned down and feels relieved to get it off his chest. Mio confesses to Tetsurō, but at first, he turns her down and then their relationship develops further. Even though



Ramon Yamano (CV: Tamura, Yukari) isn't involved romantically with anyone, she does play in important role in the storyline, has a secret that's revealed at the end of the series. In the middle of the series, we're introduced to Kaori Kinoshita, a childhood friend and elementary school classmate of Kaito. Kaori had feelings for Kaito back then, but when they meet again, she tries to confess to him. There's also Chiharu Arisawa, Kaori's classmate, meets Teturo and falls madly in love with him. This infuriates Mio.

"Anonatsu," though, the typical older alien meets younger Earthling, Earthing loves alien, something happens to alien and comes back storyline, ecchi moments, there's more to it. The voice actors did a great job giving life and feelings to the characters they portray. Throughout the story, the character's feeling seem so real that you could easily develop an emotional attachment to them. This is especially true with Kanna. In the episode where she confesses to Kaito and is turned down. She realized that she doesn't have a chance with him, she goes though an emotional breakdown. You can't help but feel deeply for her.

At the beginning of the series, the reason for Ichika's visit to Earth, is because of a genetic memory of a certain place. Between the movie filming, Kaito helps her find this particular place. Closer to the end of the series, Ichika's sister, Emika, show's up to take her back. We learn that Ichika left her home world without telling anyone where she went. How Emika learned of Ichika's whereabouts is because Rinon accidentally set off the emergency rescue beacon in an earlier episode. Emika wants to take Ichika back before the rescue drones arrive on Earth. When they do, all hell breaks out...literally. A lot of things; vehicles, roads and tress are destroyed as everyone helps Ichika escape from their clutches. In the end, Ichika, with the help of Kaito, found "that place in her memory" and is taken away.

Originally aired in Japan from January to March, 2012 and was animated by J.C. Staff. The series is produced by Genco, Inc., in



Kaito Kirishima and Ichika Tatsuki







Air Gear, Vol. 24 Oh!Great Kodansha International June 26



Alice in the Country of Hearts, Vol. 1 Quinrose Yen Press June 26



Alice in the Country of Hearts, Vol. 2 Quinrose Yen Press June 26



Alice in the Country of Hearts, Vol. 3 Quinrose Yen Press June 26



Kobato, Vol. 6 Clamp Yen Press June 26



Spice and Wolf, Vol. 6 Isuna Hasekura Yen Press June 26



Bakuman., Vol. 12 Tsugumi Ōba, Takeshi Obata VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Bleach, Vol. 42 Tite Kubo VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Bleach, Vol. 43 Tite Kubo VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Claymore, Vol. 20 Norihiro Yagi VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Dengeki Daisy, Vol. 10 Kyōsuke Motomi VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



D.Gray-man, Vol. 22 Katsura Hoshino VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Naruto, Vol. 57 Masashi Kishimoto VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Hana-Kimi (3-in-1 Edition), Vol. 3 Hisaya Nakajo VIZ Media, LLC. July 3

Manga Releases

Summer 2012 continued



Natsume's Book of Friends, Vol. 12 Yuki Midorikawa VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



One Piece, Vol. 63
Eiichirō Oda
VIZ Media, LLC.
July 3



Pokémon Black and White, Vol. 8 Hidenori Kusaka, Satoshi Yamamoto VIZ Media, LLC. July 3 Not Actual Cover



Rosario+Vampire: Season II, Vol. 9 Akihisa Ikeda VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Skip Beat! (3-in-1 Edition), Vol. 3 Yoshiki Nakamura VIZ Media, LLC. July 3



Skip Beat!, Vol. 28 Yoshiki Nakamura VIZ Media, LLC. July 3

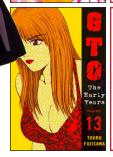


Vol. 6Yoshinobu Yamada
Kodansha International
July 10

Cage of Eden,



Fairy Tail, Vol. 20 Hiro Mashima Kodansha International July 10



GTO: The Early Years, Vol. 13 Tōru Fujisawa Vertical, Incorporated July 10



Gurren Lagann, Vol. 7 Kotaro Mori Bandai Entertainment July 10 Not Actual Cover



Negima!, Vol. 35 *Ken Akamatsu*Kodansha International
July 10



Shugo Chara
Chan, Vol. 4
PEACH-PIT
Kodansha International
July 10
Not Actual Cover



Fairy Tail, Vol. 10
Hiro Mashima
Kodansha International
July 17
Reprint



Arisa, Vol. 8Natsumi Andō
Kodansha International
July 17



Fairy Tail, Vol. 4
Hiro Mashima
Kodansha International
July 17
Reprint

20th Century Boys,

Vol. 21

July 17

Naoki Urasawa

VIZ Media, LLC.



Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney, Vol. 5 Kenji Kuroda Kodansha International July 17 Not Actual Cover

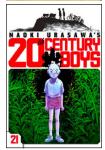


Fairy Tail, Vol. 11
Hiro Mashima
Kodansha International
July 17
Reprint

Black Butler,

Vol. 10 Yana Toboso

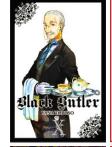
Yen Press July 24



Durarara!!, Vol. 3Ryōgo Narita, Akiyo Satorigi
Orbit
July 24



GTO: 14 Days in Shonan, Vol. 4 Tōru Fujisawa Vertical, Incorporated July 24



Highschool of the Dead, Vol. 7Daisuke Satō, Shōji Satō
Yen Press
July 24



Pandora Hearts, Vol. 11 Jun Mochizuki Yen Press July 24



Soul Eater NOT!, Vol. 1 Atsushi Ōkubo Yen Press July 24

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Manga Releases

Summer 2012 continued



13th Boy, Vol. 12SangEun Lee
Orbit
July 24
Not Actual Cover



X, Vol. 3 Clamp VIZ Media, LLC. July 24



Negima!, Omnibus 5 Ken Akamatsu Kodansha International July 31



A Devil and Her Love Song, Vol. 4 Miyoshi Tomori VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Ai Ore!, Vol. 6 Mayu Shinjo VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Bakuman, Vol. 13 Tsugumi Ōba, Takeshi Obata VIZ Media, LLC. August 7

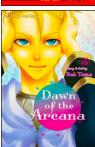


WHI FACHS

Bleach, Vol. 44 Tite Kubo VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Bleach, Vol. 45 Tite Kubo VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Dawn of the Arcana, Vol. 5 Rei Toma VIZ Media, LLC. August 7





Fairy Tail, Vol. 9 Hiro Mashima Kodansha International August 7 Reprint



Haruka: Beyond the Stream of Time, Vol. 17 Tōko Mizuno VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Kamisama Kiss, Vol. 10 Julietta Suzuki VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Nura: Rise of the Yokai Clan, Vol. Hiroshi Shiibashi VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Slam Dunk, Vol. 23 Takehiko Inoue VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Tegami Bachi, Vol. 10 Hiroyuki Asada VIZ Media, LLC. August 7



Toriko, Vol. 11 Mitsutoshi Shimabukuro VIZ Media, LLC. August 7

Cage of Eden,

Yoshinobu Yamada

Kodansha International

Vol. 7

August 14

Vol. 7 Ryō Ryumon Kodansha International August 14

Bloody Monday,



Inuyasha, Vol. 12 (VIZBIG Edition) Rumiko Takahashi VIZ Media, LLC.



August 14



Kekkaishi, Vol. 33 Yellow Tanabe VIZ Media, LLC. August 14





Manga Releases

Summer 2012 continued



Bamboo Blade, Vol. 14Masahiro Totsuka
Orbit
August 21



Bunny Drop, Vol. 6 Yumi Unita Orbit August 21



Dorohedoro, Vol. 7 Q Hayashida VIZ Media, LLC. August 21



Gon 7 Masashi Tanaka Kodansha International August 21

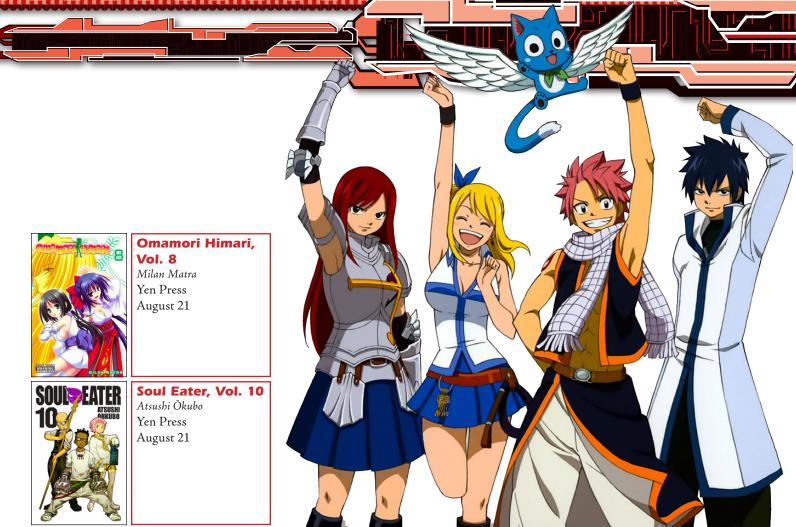


GTO: The Early Years, Vol. 14 Tōru Fujisawa Vertical, Incorporated August 21



Nabari No Ou, Vol. 11 Yūki Kamatani Orbit August 21







Tenjo Tenge, Vol. 8: Full Contact Edition 2-in-1 Oh!Great VIZ Media, LLC. August 21



Haruhi Suzumiya, Vol. 13 Nagaru Tanigawa, Gaku Tsugano, Noizi Ito Yen Press August 21

The Melancholy of



Chi's Sweet Home, Vol. 9 Konami Kanata Vertical, Incorporated August 28



Bakuman., Vol. 14Tsugumi Ōba, Takeshi Obata
VIZ Media, LLC.
September 4



Bleach, Vol. 46Tite Kubo
VIZ Media, LLC.
September 4



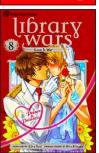
Bleach, Vol. 47 *Tite Kubo*VIZ Media, LLC.
September 4



Fushigi Yûgi: Genbu Kaiden, Vol. 10 Yū Watase VIZ Media, LLC. September 4



Gunslinger Girl, Omnibus 5 Yū Aida Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC. September 4



Library Wars: Love & War, Vol. 8 Kiiro Yumi VIZ Media, LLC. September 4

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Summer 2012 continued



Naruto, Vol. 58 Masashi Kishimoto VIZ Media, LLC. September 4



One Piece, Vol. 64Eiichirō Oda
VIZ Media, LLC.
September 4



Otomen, Vol. 13
Aya Kanno
VIZ Media, LLC.
September 4



Haruhi Suzumiya
(1)
Nagaru Tanigawa
Little, Brown Books for
Young Readers
September 4
Light Novel

The Melancholy of



The Sigh of Haruhi Suzumiya (2)

Nagaru Tanigawa Little, Brown Books for Young Readers September 4 Light Novel



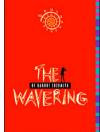
The Boredom of Haruhi Suzumiya (3)

Nagaru Tanigawa Little, Brown Books for Young Readers September 4 Light Novel



The Rampage of Haruhi Suzumiya (5)

Nagaru Tanigawa Little, Brown Books for Young Readers September 4 Light Novel



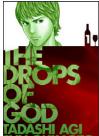
The Wavering of Haruhi Suzumiya (6)

Nagaru Tanigawa Little, Brown Books for Young Readers September 4 Light Novel



Toradora! Vol. 5

Yuyuko Takemiya, Zekkyo Seven Seas Entertainment, LLC. September 4



Drops of God: Wines of the New World

Tadashi Agi, Shū Okimoto Vertical, Incorporated September 11



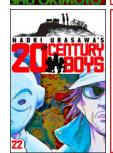
Hayate the Combat Butler, Vol. 20

Kenjiro Hata VIZ Media, LLC. September 11



House of Five Leaves, Vol. 8

Natsume Ono VIZ Media, LLC. September 11



20th Century Boys, Vol. 22

Naoki Urasawa VIZ Media, LLC. September 18



UNITED STATES STATIONS STATIONS COSTLAND C

S TV AICHI GEARS UP FOR THE 10th Anniversary of its annual World Cosplay Summit, a movement is underway in the United States to bring the opportunity to compete in this international pageant to more cosplayers than ever before.

Previous Page: 2010 Group photo from the Centrair Airport promotional event. Photo taken from Laura Butler's collections

US Preliminary Round at Katsucon. Photo Julinto.





Organizer Laura Butler (center) with Team US 2010 Rynn and Sumikins. Photo taken from Laura Butler's collection.

Under the leadership of Organizer Laura Butler and Assistant Organizer Lynleigh Sato, the WCS United States Preliminaries is shaping up to be much more than the behind-thescenes review and judging entity it had been in years past. Following a successful turn as a headlining cosplay event at the 2012 Katsucon convention in Maryland, WCS US is working to bring regional qualifier events to conventions across the country.

With many years of combined cosplay experience under their belts, Butler and Sato have come to appreciate the sense of community and camaraderie as one of the strongest forces that can sustain and grow the cosplay hobby into higher echelons of creativity and achievement. Through high-spirited nationwide competitions, WCS US is working to foster a sense of pride and positivity befitting a team to represent the United States internationally. By bringing the competition in front of convention audiences, it affords teams the opportunity to display their handiwork in public even if they aren't ultimately chosen

to travel to Japan, and offers the winning team a chance to receive feedback on their performance so they can be sure they're bringing their best to the international exhibition.

Diana Owen and Katie George were chosen to represent the United States this year with their elaborate and elegant Princess Tutu costumes, and many conventions have seen the potential of hosting a championship-level cosplay competition as a centerpiece event. It also widens the talent pool of potential com-

Sonnya and Renee having a Sailor Moon photoshoot at WCS 2008. Photo by LJinto.







Above: Liz and Dia at the opening of the WCS 2009 Finals. Photo by LJinto.

Left: Ali and Ashe sporting their Puella Magi Madoka Magica cosplays for the Nishiki Boulevard Red Carpet Parade. Photo by LJinto.





petitors to regions which have historically been isolated from the major convention circuits, and gives these cosplayers a chance to receive some well-deserved recognition from the national community of cosplayers and cos-fans.

Several conventions have already officially announced their participation in qualifying rounds for 2013, and more are in discussion with WCS US leadership. With Katsucon retaining the national finals event this year as well as hosting the Eastern Qualifier, HEXXP will open its doors to teams hoping to secure the Hawaiian Qualifier spot. Nan Desu Kan in Colorado will host the Mountain Qualifier, and WCS US hopes to have a dozen or more qualifiers established with conventions across the country by the time the 2014 qualifying rounds begin.

With preparations underway for 2013 and 2014, as well as the upcoming 2012 Finals in Japan in July, WCS US is involved with a wide range of cosplayers and event organizers. They are excited to be bringing a new era in top-tier cosplay competition and performance to the United States, and bringing United States cosplay to the world. Greg Hansen (WCS US Staff Writer) with Laura Butler (WCS US Organizer)





Top Left: Group photo from the 2011 Sweet Castle Photoshoot event.

Top Right: Diana and Katie's award winning Princess Tutu performance at Katsucon 2012. Photo by Chris Landingin.

Left: The WCS 2005 Team Laura, Lisa, and Lynleigh with the Individual Entry Deandra. In press costumes. Photo taken from Laura Butler's collection.

Bottom Left: WCS 2004 group photo. Photo taken from Aimee Harris' collection.

UNITED STATES TEAMS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT:

2004

Stephanie Piper, Aimee Harris

2005

Laura Butler (nee Chase) [Tokyo Kitty], Lynleigh Sato (nee Benton) [Love Meeko], Lisa Truong (nee Munden) [Cherrie Pie], Deandra Ervin [Honey Bunny]

2008

Renee Gloger [Umister], Sonnya Marcela Paz [s0nified]

2009

Elizabeth Licata [Fatwetdog], India Davis [Dia]

2010

Kathryn Griffin [Rynn], Krystal Stoner [Sumikins]

2011

Alexandra Weber [Ali], Ashley Rice [Ashe]

2012

Diana Owen [Diana], Katie George [Katie]

For more information visit: http://www.facebook.com/WCSPrelimsUS. A national website will be coming soon. Please email questions to wcsprelimsus@gmail.com

































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For movie lovers, if they want to watch a flick, they simply get a DVD machine or a Blu-ray player—it doesn't matter if Sony, Samsung or Panasonic made it. And, let's say, you don't own physical, disc-based media: Then, you can stream whatever movies you want through your TV or PC.

But video games are different. Video games may outsell their cinematic colleagues, but they still chain gamers to specific consoles. Want to play a Nintendo game? You need a Nintendo console. Sony exclusive games must be played on PS3s, and Microsoft-exclusive games are for the Xbox 360 (though some end up on Windows boxes, too). As much as you may want to take your copy of Nintendo's *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword*, pop it into your PlayStation 3 or Xbox 360, and play the game—You just can't. You need Nintendo hardware.

Video-game consoles are closed ecosystems that don't take kindly to alien flora and fauna. Each console holder (Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo) approves every single game that appears on its machine, which is why consoles are called "closed platforms." Two big reasons for this are control and retail sales: large retail chains, especially in America, will not carry adults-only video games. And because they are closed platforms, console game-holders can ensure that explicit, pornographic video games are not released on their machines.

In the past, Nintendo has been very strict about the types of games that appear on its consoles in order not to tarnish its family-friendly image. Another reason is profit. Game companies must buy development software from the console-makers and then give a percentage of the sales to them.

PCs, on the other hand, are completely open. Anyone can release pretty much anything on a PC—which is both a good and a bad thing. It's good because it means that large corporations don't dictate content. This freedom is a double-edged sword, because games with questionable content can also be released. A few years back, makers of erotic PC-games in Japan came under fire in the West for their

pornographic—even misogynistic—titles.

The freedom PCs have is close to the freedom DVD and Blu-ray players have: being able to run both family-friendly and adults-only content. Ultimately, that means that the hardware itself moves to the background, and the content becomes the central focus. Often for gamers, it seems like the console itself is the main focus due to the power and influence consoles and console-holders have in the game industry.

But it's not only content regulation that consoles offer. They are a standard. PCs are continually evolving with faster processors being released all the time. When a game is released on PC, one of the first things PC gamers do is check the game's technical specifications to see if their computer is powerful enough to run the game. Some games can be played on pretty much any PC. Other games require top-shelf hardware. Video game consoles, however, ensure that both players and game-makers are on the same page. If you buy, say, a PS3 game, then your PlayStation 3 will definitely be able to run it. If you buy a PC game, you'll need to check your specs first.

Last month, one rumor seemed to offer hope that PC-gaming could get a standard—one that could actually be the nail in consolegaming's coffin. Video-game-maker Valve was rumored to be working on a "box" that would allow gamers who don't own PCs to connect to Steam, which is Valve's computer-based digital distribution service. That would have meant gamers would no longer have to worry about PC specs or be boxed in by closed console platforms. The rumors were shot down, but not before exciting legions of gamers about the possibility of a console-free future.

Sony, Nintendo or Microsoft are not likely to give up their console dominance anytime soon, however. Nintendo has repeatedly said its games will only appear on Nintendo hardware. For Nintendo, the games and the physical hardware are inseparable. Microsoft, however, is first and foremost a software maker, and Sony is continuing to outsource its manufacturing to China—a move that could reveal Sony's desire to concentrate more on its software and networking businesses. Nintendo's consoles are always very different from Microsoft's and

Sony's, which, increasingly, are starting to converge. The horsepower for the Xbox 360 and PS3 are different, sure, but the graphics are not dramatically so. The layout of the controllers is similar, too, so that game-developers can easily release games on both the PS3 and the Xbox 360. But does that mean Sony and Microsoft are going to release a PlayStation 360? Don't hold your breath.

The next Xbox, which is apparently codenamed *Durango*, is also likely to be very different from the current system and offer a unique experience. Microsoft has not revealed any info about its new system, but there's no doubt consoles need to differentiate themselves to entice players. The next PlayStation, which is rumored to have the codename Orbis, should be more powerful than the current hardware; it might be able to use Sony smartphones as a controller. Nintendo, meanwhile, has provided a look as to what to expect with its new console, the Wii U. It will sport high-definition graphics as well as a new, tablet-style controller.

Sure, making consoles is expensive: putting them on trucks and getting them in stores alone is expensive. But the machines, along with their online services and paid digital content, are lucrative moneymakers. If consoles do disappear—and one day they will—expect current console-makers to shift their emphasis from hardware to their online services, which Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo all currently have. Gaming will move from the consoles to the cloud.

Gone will be the day of buying an actual box console. One day, PlayStation or Xbox games may be accessible through your TV or playable using your Sony or Windows smartphone as a controller. Gaming hardware as we now know it could disappear forever. But Nintendo's console? You'll still probably have to go to the shop to buy that. Sprian Ashcraft





Kana, Asumi 阿澄 佳奈 DOB: August 12, 1984 Fukuoka Prefecture Blood Type: A



Toyosaki, Aki 豊崎 愛生 DOB: October 28, 1986 Tokushima Prefecture Blood Type: AB

Current Roles...



Hirata, Hiroaki 平田 広明 DOB: August 7, 1963 Tōkyō Blood Type: A



Nyarlathotep Haiyore! Nyaruko-san



Kitahara, Mio Ano Natsu de Matteru



Kurokami, Medaka Medaka Box



Tamaki, Rinko Kiseki, Natsuiro



Nanba, Mutta Uchū Kyōdai



Kotetsu T. Kaburagi Tiger & Bunny



Tachibana, Miya Amagami SS+ Plus



Yukikaze Panetone Dog Days'



Kurashima, Chiyuri Accel World



Zenna, Rie Hvōka



Chibiki, Tatsuji

Another



Orlando Haddick Catherine



Miyano, Mamoru 宮野真守 DOB: June 8, 1983 Saitama Prefecture Blood Type: B



Namikawa, Daisuke 浪川 大輔 DOB: April 2, 1976 Tōkyō Blood Type: B



Kobayashi, Yū 小林 ゆう DOB: February 5, 1982 Tōkyō Blood Type: O

Current Roles..







Kanzaki, Jin



Yanagin Ginga e Kickoff!! Danshi Kökösei no Nichijō



Amagi, Kôga

Zetman

Phi Brain: Kami no Puzzle



Chihayafuru

Natsume, Zange

Akune, Kôki

Medaka Box

Zetman



Cathy Yu-Gi-Oh! Zexal



of Spring 2012



Nakamura, Yuichi 中村 悠一

DOB: February 20, 1980 Fukuyama-shi, Hiroshima-ken

Blood Type: **B**

Current Roles...



Satō, Satomi

佐藤 聡美

DOB: May 8, 1986 Miyagi Prefecture Blood Type: O

Current Roles...



Nomizu, Iori 野水 伊織

DOB: October 18, 1985 Sapporo, Hokkaidō Blood Type: A

Current Roles...



Oreki, Hôtarô

Hyōka



Miketsukami, Sôshi Inu × Boku SS



Lyla Queen's Blade Rebellion



Chitanda, Eru Hyōka



Upotte!



Haruna
Zombie Of The Dead



Gray Fullbuster
Fairy Tail



Mykage Aquarion EVOL



Tainaka, Ritsu

K-On! Movie



Nobidome, Manaka Ro-Kyu-Bu!



Ogura, Yumi Another



Kushiya, Inaho Maken-ki!



Yoshitani, Ayako 吉谷彩子

DOB: September 26, 1991 Chiba Prefecture

Blood Type: AB

Premiere Role...



Kimura, Ryōhei 木村 良平

DOB: July 30, 1984 Tōkyō

Blood Type: AB

Current Roles...



Ono, Kenshō 小野 賢章

DOB: October 5, 1989 Fukuoka Prefecture

Blood Type: A

Current Roles...



Urabe, Mikoto Nazo no Kanojo X



Nishimi, Kaoru Sakamichi no Apollon

Chihiro, Furuya

Sankarea



Kise, Ryôta Kuroko no Basuke



Shôma, Takakura Mawaru Penguin Drum



Kuroko, Tetsuya Kuroko no Basuke



Lenine
Michiko to Hatchin



Vaan Dissidia 012 Final Fantasy





JULY BIRTHDAYS



Chara Soon Kidō Senshi Gundam ZZ

Asakura, Yōmei Shaman King Kotobuki, Tsumugi K-On!

Nami One Piece Hyūga, Neji

Naruto
4
Jackie Tonor

Jackie Tonomura Kidō Senshi Gundam SEED

Yukihiro, Ayaka Mahō Sensei Negima!

> Fujisaki, Suguru Gravitation

Sakurajosui, Suzume Akihabara Dennō Gumi



Inuzuka, Kiba *Naruto* Kurosaki, Ichigo

Bleach Yuki, Sara Chōjū Kishin Dancougar Hiiragi, Tsukasa

> Lucky★Star Hiiragi, Kagami Lucky★Star

Kururugi, Suzaku Code Geass



11Ibuki, Maya
Shin Seiki Evangelion



Black Pegasus
Saint Seiya
Shaolan Li

Shaolan, Li Card Captor Sakura

16Tokiwa, Kyōko
Full Metal Panic!



Selfie Tilmitt Final Fantasy VIII



17 Arisawa, Tatsuki *Bleach*



18Terada, Yoshiyuki
Card Captor Sakura
Sasaki, Tsuyoshi

Kodomo no Omocha



19 Miura, Azusa The Idolm@ster

20



Ssigh Argyle Kidō Senshi Gundam SEED Ibuki, Fūko



Clannad

21

Vash the Stampede

Trigun

Ryu

Street Fighter



Kidō Butōden G Gundam

Fukuda, Shinta

Bakuman.

22

Tokiha, Mai

Mai HiME

23

Tachikawa, Ikumi

Comic Party

Uchiha, Sasuke

Naruto

Momoshiro, Takeshi

Tennis no Ōjisama

Domon Kasshu



28Shinguji, Sakura
Sakura Taisen



Seiya, Kō Bishōjo Senshi Sailor Moon Lisianthus

Lisianthus Shuffle!

ne information presented here is as accurate as much as humanly possible and is subject to change without notic



Katsumi Liqueur Silent Möbius



2 Kurono, Kurumu Rosario + Vampire



Chiba, Mamoru Bishōjo Senshi Sailor Moon Koizumi, Risa

Lovely Complex



Dilandau Albatou Tenkū no Escaflowne Yazakura, Hazuki



Happy Lesson Shidō, Hikaru Magic Knights Rayearth Yzak Jule Cidō Senshi Gundam SEED



Ascoeur Kiddy Girl-and Shibiku, Masato Chōjū Kishin Dancougar



12

Asami, Shōko Angelic Layer Waya, Yoshitaka Hikaru no Go



14

Faye Valentine Cowboy Bebop

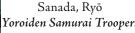


15 Tachibana, Kippei Tennis no Ōjisama

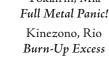
> Phoenix Ikki Saint Seiya



Miyafuji, Yoshika Strike Witches Momochi, Zabuza Naruto









17 Pal Pu Ran Idol Project



Cloud Strife Final Fantasy VII

19



Tomosaka, Suzuka Lamune



23

Ryōko Tenchi Muyō! Squall Leonhart Final Fantasy VIII Temari



28 Tokiha, Takumi Mai HiME



29 Kikuchi, Makoto The Idolm@ster



31 Hatsune, Miku Vocaloid

Nene Romanova Bubblegum Crisis

Abarai, Renji Bleach

EPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS



Dita Liebely Vandread



Chiba, Nagisa Code Geass



Mineva Lao Zabi Kidō Senshi Zeta Gundam Bakura, Ryō Yu-Gi-Ob



Inoue, Orihime Bleach Daidōji, Tomoyo

3



Card Captor Sakura Motosuwa, Hideki Chobits

4



Kobayashi, Kōtarō Angelic Layer



10

Mizuno, Ami Bishōjo Senshi Sailor Moon



Saiko, Yuki Silent Möbius



<u>11</u> C-ko Kotobuki Project A-ko



12



Aida, Kensuke Shin Seiki Evangelion Sayla Mass Kidō Senshi Gundam



Nagisa, Kaworu Shin Seiki Evangelion Argo Gulskii Kidō Butōden G Gundam



Hatake, Kakashi Naruto



Nishino. Tsukasa Ichigo 100%



17 Roux Ruka Kidō Senshi Gundam ZZ



19 Alberto Heinrich/004



Cyborg 009 20



Shindō, Hikaru Hikaru no Go

21



Masaki, Ayeka Jurai Tenchi Muyō! Gascogne Rheingau Vandread







Morishima, Haruka Amagami SS





Yamanaka, Ino Naruto

Minase, Akiko



Kanon 23



Karen Sister Princess 24



Mikage, Aya Ayashi no Ceres Chitose, Hibiya

Chobits



27 Char Aznable

Kidō Senshi Gundam

TOP MALE RANKING



Raider ライダー Fate/Zero



Lelouch Lamperouge ルルーシュ・ランペ ルージ Code Geass: Hangyaku no Lelouch



Sira Yamato キラ・ヤマト Kidō Senshi Gundam SEED



Bmiya, Kiritsugu 衛宮 切嗣 Fate/Zero



S Fukai Ao フカイ・アオ Eureka Seven AO



Araragi, Koyomi 阿良々木 暦 Nisemonogatari



Yuutsu

Yuutsu



4 Oreki, Hōtarō 折木 奉太郎 Hyōka



Archer アーチャー Fate/Zero



10 Arita, Haruyuk 有田 春雪 Accel World

TOP FEMALE RANKING



Saber Arturia
Pendragon
セイバー・アルトリア・ペンドラゴン
Fate/zero



Chitanda, Eru 千反田 える Hyōka



5 Sheryl Nome シェリル・ノーム Gekijōban Macross F



Eureka エウレカ Eureka Seven AO



Kuroyukihime 黒雪姫 Accel World



Hirasawa, Yui 平沢 唯 K-On!



Nakano, Azusa 中野 梓 K-On!



Nyaruko ニヤル子 Haiyore! Nyaruko-san



Yuzuriha, Inori 楪いのり Guilty Crown



10 Arata Naru アラタ・ナル Eureka Seven AO

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morning of May 27, the second day of the convention. For quite some years now, we haven't arrived at FanimeCon on the second day, so we weren't sure what to expect...registering.

We left the motel, we stayed at that night, very early. We caught the 5:36 am light rail to arrive at the Fairmont Hotel a little after six. It was too early to check in, but it was worth a try amyway. When the front desk clerk checked for any available rooms, there were none, which was expected. He was supposed to call me when rooms are available, like he said he would do, but we never got a call. We check in our luggage at the bell desk so we wouldn't have to lug them around.

Day Two

It was around 6:30 am when we walked up to McEnery Convention Center to get our badges. Tim didn't pre-register, so he had to go to that line. I went to the pre-register line. It was a couple hours before registration was open. Still, I met some good people to talk to during that time. Since we got there early, both lines went fairly fast for Tim and I. We got our badges at the same time. Time for breakfast at Peggy Sue's.

Back at the convention center, a little past ten, we were about to go to the Exhibit Hall. There was a line...a long line at that, so we decided to go later when the line dies down. Instead, we were about to walk into Artist Alley to look around and to look for prospective artists for our magazine. We didn't know there was line for that also, which mixed into the Exhibit Hall line. We stopped in time before going in and before people in line started yelling at us. Funny, we got that far—probably because Tim and I were a little too dressed up for Fanime—in our sports jackets. I wanted to change into cosplay, but we didn't have our room yet. We decided to join the growing crowd of cosplayers outside the center and take pictures...material for the magazine. They

way we were dressed, it seemed we were there for business rather than pleasure, but it was for both.

Before we went to the Exhibit Hall, we took a quick sideline trip through the Gaming Hall. It was same as last year. There was a great selection of games for everyone. We finally made it to the Exhibit Hall. I'd also say it was the same as last year, but every year, as with most conventions,



there will be vendors

who always show up, not show up and new ones. One such vendor I noticed from last year was the one who sold vintage anime merchandise near the Exhibit Hall exit. Being the way I am, that's what I look for, vintage and rare items. Most of the other vendors sell much the same things. I picked up a few vintage art boards and books that I thought I would never find there, but that was the next day.

Right after lunch was the Kia Asamiya panel which was at the Marriott. His most famous works are Silent Möbius, Kidō Senkan Nadesico, Compiler and Assembler 0X to name a few. He's also did a mange adaptation of Star Wars: Episode I: The Phantom Menace. We got in line for that and was one of the first few at the beginning. Soon after, the line became very long. This was person I wanted to see the most and was very excited to see him. Once the panel started, this was the first time I've seen him in person. The panel was all questions and answers...mostly stupid questions. Mr. Asamia is a fan of western culture and comics, primarily Batman and other DC Comic titles. This influence shows in his works. He's also a big vintage car otaku, in which many his characters appear in his car drawing as race queens. One thing—he's

never owned any of the cars in his drawings. After the panel, he had an autograph session at the Fairmont Hotel. I was supposed to bring an original, Japanese version, first print, first volume of his *Silent Möbius* manga, but I forgot to bring it with me.

Back at the hotel, we finally got our room. We had our bags sent to our room while we rested and refreshed for a bit. To keep us going, we downed a couple of energy drinks. Hopefully, they'll work because we were already too tired. Our luggage arrived soon after, unpacked, check our equipment, changed into my redone *Macross Frontier*, Ozma Lee cosplay and set out to the convention center. I realized that this debacle with the hotel, wasting our convention time, could have been avoided if I had more properly planned for it. But a two-month plan to a convention is short-notice. Hopefully Tim's camera batter will last us for the rest of the convention.

I felt totally great being in cosplay and to be in full convention mode. I did feel like I had more energy now. With no plans to do anything for the time being, we enjoyed walking around the convention center, taking pictures, buying stuff at the Exhibit Hall, taking more pictures, talking to people and so on. All this time, I was keeping in mind to look for some people I know and meet up with them. We also had plans to check out the Square Enix panel at even. I didn't know there was a problem with

seven. I didn't know there was a problem with them. Instead, we met up with Tim's cousin, who showed up and showed him around the Fanime convention, since he was in the area

from Salinas.
This was all new to him despite being a fan and had gone to other conventions in the past.

Dinner was up next and we all decided to eat at Original Joe's a couple blocks down the street. I had to go back to the hotel to change out of cosplay. One thing I learned about Original Joe's from experience—they frown on cosplayers and regularly dressed people because the restaurant

is a classy place, despite being a major source of revenue during Fanime. I got back into my sports jacket and met up with Tim and Eugene at the lobby. Around the time we finished dinner, Tim and I were totally spent, so we turned in for the night. It's hard to think that our day started 4:30 am that morning, with no sleep the night before and do all the things we did the entire day—amazing

Day Three

We were well rested the next day. After changing into my Space Battleship Yamato, Susumu Kodai cosplay and getting ready, Tima and I went to have breakfast at the usual place. Back at the convention center, we took it easy, walking around then finally, got in line for the UC Gundam vs. Other Gundams panel, at the Marriott, moderated by Gilles Poitras. While the line, Tim noticed some One Piece cosplayers walking into the convention center who could have been friends I have been looking for. It's like searching for a needle in a small haystack.

The Gundam panel was very interesting. There were many more things I learned from comparing the "official" Universal Calendar (U.C.) from all the other "calendar" Gundam shows. For one thing, the other Gundam show, may appear, but don't have such an intricate





Top: Kia Asamiya Bottom: Silent Möbius manga.



storyline and background story to the official one. In the U.C. universe, even though many people worked on the different series, their story lines could be tied to main events in the U.C. and not disjointed.

After the panel, we made it to the other side of the convention center to the Fanimaid Café to have a little snack. We were too busy

to out, walk a couple blocks and eat real food. The best thing about the Café, other than the pretty and cute maids. Okay, the second best thing is that you're seated with totally random people and having awkward moments. One of two things could hap-



Our Fanimaid maid, Chika-can.

pen, you could open up, meet and converse with your table mates or totally ignore them and stay within your group. Good thing I like to initiate meeting and talking to new people. It depends on the other people at the table if they want to converse also. The first group we met were pretty cool. We were then introduced to our cute maid, Chika-chan. At one point, we were going to play some table games, but more than half of us opted out. But instead we talked over having snacks.



When Chika-chan started talking to them, because a couple of them had those expensive, robotic cat ears that "moved according to your thoughts." I had to admit, they were very interesting, though pricey. Chika-chan tried them on and it looked cute on her. Good thing because the whole table became involved in the conversation. When we

finished having our snacks, we had out picture taken with some maids and set off the Stage Zero for the Fanimaid Live show. The Fanimaid show was fun and cute. The huge crowd around Stage Zero was proof of that.

We had time to kill before our next scheduled event, the screening of Space Battleship Yamato 2199 in one of the video rooms. There's were many great talented people at Artist Alley as we walked the aisles. Though many of the works were from many popular anime

titles, the artists applied their owen particular style to it. I do admit that some of the artwork looked better than the original character designer's work. Many were also selling arts and crafts, homemade jewelry, accessories and so on to suit any taste people could have. We also went outside to take more pictures. By coincidence, there were a group of female, Afro-American, cosplayers that I had a feeling that I recognized. After taking their picture, I asked them if they were from the East Coast and had attended KatsuCon. They told me that they're from Los Angeles and that they had attended KatsuCon. My hunch was right, they were Chocolate Covered Cosplay (C3). We had an article last issue about World Cosplay Summit Preliminaries at KatsuCon. C3 was in the article and made the top ten in the WCS Prelims.

It was almost time for Yamato 2199 to start so we made out way to the video room. Yamato 2199 is a retelling of the original Space Battleship Yamato (Uchū Senkan Yamato) from the 1970s with new character designs and new animation, mixed in with CG (computer graphics) scenes. Even to this day, every time I hear "Uchu Senkan Yamato," the opening theme by Isao Sasaki, I'm overwhelmed with emotions. There's no describing it, but it gives me goosebumps all over. During the screening, I realized the guy sitting next we was the same guy I met at the pre-reg line the first day. After the screening, we talked for a while in the hallway. Come to find that we had much the same interests, other than vintage anime.

After we freshened up at the hotel, we went to the Cosplay Spectacular even at the San Jose Civic Auditorium. We had waited

until the line was gone before we went in. In the meantime, we took pictures at the convention center until the lines were done. Good thing though or I wouldn't have met some interesting people at the convention center. Over the years, we learned that it was kind of useless waiting in line for events at the auditorium. No matter where you sat, the view of the stage was always good, except for the main floor, unless you were in the front. The further back you sat, increasingly, more heads get in the way of the view of stage. While most of the skits were good, there were some that stood out. One of them was the IdolMaster skit where the cosplayers performed one of their songs. The Black Butler entry was also cool and memorable to me. There was also the Ranma 1/2 skit that was interesting. I liked their mirror idea. The Pokémon Anonymous skit was also hilarious. Another good one was the guy with the dancing lights. He reminded me of Hawaiian fire dancers, but to techno music. Honestly, I can't remember whether the performer was guy or gal. Sorry. The one that was the most legit and topped my list was the Princess Tutu performance. The ballerina's performance was spectacular, beautiful, emotional and delicate. There was no way that performance could be faked by a regular coslayer. She had mad skill. We called it the day after Cosplay Spectacular. But that not all. There were many other panels going on late at night, most over 18 panels and other such things.

Despite being tired most of the time, attending FanimeCon was well worth the trouble of getting there. Actually, the one thing that surprised me was a pocket schedule was included in the swag bag. I missed it for most of the our first day here. This year, we had a better idea of what was going on. We didn't waste time going to the information booth every other hour and remembering what panels and events we wanted to see, like we did last year. The one thing I do regret is not being able to come two days before and be at the convention for all four days. The first day, the night we arrived in town, there was a Leiji Matsumoto (Yamato, Captain Harlock, Cosmo Zero, Galaxy Express 999) cosplay gathering which I wanted to be part of because of my cosplay. All in all, we most certainly had a great time, attending events, meeting people and sharing a common hobby with like people. The slogan for FanimeCon, "by fans, for fans" is true to it's word. Even over the years since my first FanimeCon in 2002. FanimeCon has still remained the most fun convention I've attended. * Ed Gomez



Upcoming Anime BVB/Blu-R

Summer 2012

June 26

Lupin the Third: The Complete First TV Series

Discotek/Eastern Star DVD • MSRP \$5995 Sub

Ouran High School Host Club: Complete Collection (Classic Line)

FUNimation

NCD MCDD \$4

DVD • MSRP \$4998

Ouran High School Host Club: Complete Collection (Classic Line)

FUNimation

Blu-ray • MSRP \$4998

Tales of Vesperia ~The First Strike~

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$3498

Bakuman: Season 1, Part 1

Media Blasters

Blu-ray • MSRP \$5999

Strawberry Panic: Complete Collection (AnimeWorks Classic)

Media Blasters

DVD • MSRP \$1999 Sub

Maria Holic Alive: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$4998 Sub

TOWANOQUON: The Complete

Film Series

Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$5998

TOWANOQUON: The Complete Film Series

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray • MSRP \$6998





July 3

anohana - The Flower We Saw That Day: Complete Series Premium Edition

NIS America

BD/DVD Combo • MSRP \$6999 Sub

kimi ni todoke -From Me to You-: Volume 3 Premium Edition

NIS America

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$6999 Sub

Hetalia World Series: Season 4 Collection

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$3498

Hetalia World Series: Season 4 Collection (LE)

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$3998

Hidamari Sketch x SP (special)

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$1498 Sub

Needless: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$7998

Needless: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray • MSRP \$8998

4 Kids Favorites: Cartoon Network - The Action Collection (w/Bakugan)

Warner Brothers

DVD + MSRP \$1499 Dub

July 10

El Cazador de la Bruja: Complete Collection (S.A.V.E. Edition)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$2998

Panty & Stocking with Garterbelt: Complete Collection (LE)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$6498



Mahoromatic - Automatic Maiden: I'm Home!

Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$2998

Mahoromatic - Automatic Maiden: **Ultimate Collection**

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$5998

Dirty Pair Flash: Complete Collection

TRSI / Nozomi Entertainment

DVD • MSRP \$3999

Naruto Shippuden Boxset 11

Viz Media

DVD • MSRP \$4995

July 17

Fractale: Complete Collection (LE)

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$6998

Fullmetal Alchemist - Brotherhood: Collection 2

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$6998

Fullmetal Alchemist - Brotherhood: Collection 2

FUNimation

Blu-ray • MSRP \$6998

Girls Bravo: Complete Collection (S.A.V.E. Edition)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$2998

Psychic Squad (Zettai Karen Children): Collection 2

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$4998 Sub

The Book of Bantorra: Complete Collection 2

Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$5998

July 24

Golgo 13: The Professional

Discotek/Eastern Star

DVD • MSRP \$1995



Ai Yori Aoshi: Complete Collection (Classic Line)

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$4998

Armitage III: The Complete Saga

(Classic Line)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$2998

Otoboku - Maidens Are Falling For Me: Complete Collection (AnimeWorks Classics)

Media Blasters

DVD • MSRP \$1499 Sub

Clannad After Story: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray • MSRP \$8998

July 31

Strike Witches: Season 1 Collection

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$5498

The Sacred Blacksmith: Complete Collection (Re-release)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$4998

Hatsukoi Limited: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$4998 Sub

Blade: Complete Collection (Marvel Anime)

Sony Picture

DVD • MSRP \$1999

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Upcoming Anime BVB/Blu-Ra

Summer 2012 Continued

Wolverine: Complete Collection (Marvel Anime)

Sony Picture DVD • MSRP \$1999

August 7

Parasite Dolls: The Motion Picture

AEsir Holdings DVD • MSRP \$1998

Disgaea: Complete Collection

(S.A.V.E. Edition)

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$1998

Is This A Zombie?: Complete Collection (LE)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$6498 First Press

bunny drop: Complete Series **Premium Edition**

NIS America

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$6999 Sub

The World God Only Knows:

Season 2 Collection Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$5998

The World God Only Knows: Season 2 Collection

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray + MSRP \$6998

Rental Magica: Collection 1 (Litebox)

TRSI / Nozomi Entertainment DVD + MSRP \$3999 Sub

August 14

Oblivion Island: Haruka and the

Magic Mirror

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$1998

Oblivion Island: Haruka and the

Magic Mirror

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$2498

One Piece: Collection 7

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$3498

Trinity Blood: Complete Collection DVD (Classic Line)

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$3998

Ah! My Buddha: Nirvana Collection (AnimeWorks Classics)

Media Blasters

DVD + MSRP \$1999

Dojin Work: Complete Collection

(AnimeWorks Classics)

Media Blasters

DVD + MSRP \$1999 Sub

Nighthead Genesis: Complete Collection (AnimeWorks Clas-

sics)

Media Blasters

DVD + MSRP \$1999 Sub

This Boy Can Fight Aliens

Sentai Filmworks

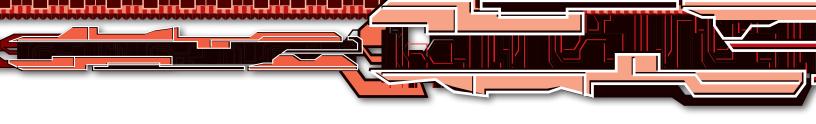
DVD • MSRP \$1498

This Boy Can Fight Aliens

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray + MSRP \$2498





ay Releases

August 21

Space Adventure Cobra: The Movie

Discotek/Eastern Star DVD • MSRP \$1995

Shakugan no Shana: Season 1 Collection

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$5998

Shangri-La, Part 1 (LE)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$6498 First Press

Shangri-La, Part 2

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$5998

No. 6: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$5998

No. 6: Complete Collection

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray • MSRP \$6998

August 28

Ergo Proxy: Complete Collection

(Classic Line)

FUNimation

DVD + MSRP \$3998

Freezing: Complete Collection (LE)

FUNimation

Blu-ray / DVD Combo + MSRP \$6998 First Press

Kaleido Star: Season 1 Collection (S.A.V.E. Edition)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$2998

Texhnolyze: Complete Collection

(Classic Line)

FUNimation

DVD • MSRP \$4998

K-ON! Season 2: Complete Collection 2

Sentai Filmworks

DVD + MSRP \$5998

K-ON! Season 2: Complete Collection 2

Sentai Filmworks

Blu-ray + MSRP \$6998

Koihime † Musō: The Ultimate Collection

Sentai Filmworks

DVD • MSRP \$8998

Transformers - Victory: The Japanese Collection

Shout! Factory

DVD + MSRP \$2993 Sub

September 4

Maria Watches Over Us:

Season 1 Collection

(Litebox)

TRSI / Nozomi Entertainment

DVD + MSRP \$3999 Sub

Martian Sucessor

Nadesico: Complete

Collection (LE) TV/OVA/Movie

TRSI / Nozomi Entertainment

DVD • MSRP \$5999

Pokémon: Diamond and Pearl - Sinnoh

League Victors: Boxset 3

Viz Media

DVD + MSRP \$1997 Dub

September 11

Kanokon - The Girl Who Cried Fox:

TV & OVA Collection

Media Blasters

DVD • MSRP \$3999

Kite

Media Blasters

Blu-ray + MSRP \$2499 Edited

Bleach: Uncut Boxset 14

Viz Media

DVD • MSRP \$4995

September 18

Venus Wars

Discotek/Eastern Star

DVD • MSRP \$1995

September 19

Fate/Zero: Blu-ray Box 2

[Import]

Aniplex of America

DVD • MSRP \$45498 Sub /

TRSI

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Gundam at night with spectaular lighting effects.
Photo by virgodragoon



he facility, called *DiverCity Tokyo Plaza*, is situated in the Odaiba neighborhood in Koto Ward, where it is guarded by an 18-meter Gundam statue. "Diver" is a play on the name of the neighborhood. The facility will have a number of retail outlets, including H&M, Armani Jeans, Uniqlo and Zara.

The main attraction is *Gundam Front Tokyo*, an entertainment spot run by Bandai Co. and other companies. The facility features "realscale" attractions of the popular animation series, including *Dome-G* for dynamic images of famous scenes in the animation, and computer images of new works projected inside a 16-meter-diameter dome.

In the Experience Field area, visitors can view models, including a fullscale Core Fighter Ver.GFT "mecha" from the first series and a lifesized bust of Strike Freedom Gundam Ver.GFT from the "Seed Destiny" series, with a 1/3000th scale model of the A Baoa Qu space fortress to boot.

Customers can also have photos taken with their favorite characters

at the *Character Photo Spot* of the Experience Field. The Museum Space area includes the *Archive Counter*, where people can use a touch panel to select images and information to be projected on a wide screen for other visitors at the venue.

Also on display are newly created original drawings by robot designer Kunio Okawara and animator Yoshikazu Yasuhiko, as well as early designs. A wall panel features a guideline on all of the Gundam series, including wars, organized in chronological order.

More than 1,000 "Gunpla" plastic models of Gundam robots and battleships are exhibited in another section. The guide map for the complex and notices for viewing the projections at Dome-G are provided in Japanese, English, Chinese and Korean. The Gundam Front Tokyo website is also rendered in these four languages. The complex charges an admission fee for all but a few sections. * Kyudo



SUNSET LIVE PRESENETS KEY CLUB HOUYWOOD Mayn World Rock Your Geats June 21

9039 Sunset Boulevard West Hollywood, CA 90059 Used without permission. GIE is not affliated with the Key Club and May'n. Actual concent/allbum photo not used.

Console & Desktop Gaming

Summer 2012

June 21

Quantum Conundrum

Square Enix Puzzle - PC

June 25

Dungeons & Dragons Online: Menace of the Underdark

Warner Bros. Interactive RPG - PC

June 26

London 2012: The Official Video Game of the Olympic

SEGA

Sports - PC, PS3, X360

Record of Agarest War 2

Aksys Games Strategy, RPG - PS3

Record of Agarest War 2 (Limited Edition)

Aksys Games Strategy - RPG - PS3

Resident Evil: Chronicles **HD Collection**

Capcom Shooter - PS3

> Spec Ops: The Line

2K Games Action - PC, PS3, X360

The Amazing Spider-Man

Action - 3DS, NDS, PS3, Wii, X360

June 27

Mini Ninjas Adventures

Square Enix Action - X360

Leon & Claire - Resident Evil

June 29

Adidas MiCoach

505 Games Sports - PS3, X360

Pro Cycling Manager 2012: Le

Tour de France

Focus Home Interactive

Racing - PC



June 30

Battlefield 3: Close Quarters

Electronic Arts Shooter - PC, PS3, X360

Frogger: Hyper Arcade Edition

Konami Action - PS3, Wii, X360

King's Bounty: Warriors of the North

1C Company RPG - PC

Legends of Pegasus

Kalypso Media Simulation - PC

Magna Mundi

Paradox Interactive Strategy - PC

Marvel Pinball: **Avengers Chronicles**

Zen Studios Pinball - PS3, Vita, X360

Move D.N.A.

Interworks Action - PS3

Of Orcs and Men

Focus Home Interactive RPG - PC, PS3, X360

Toki Tori 2

Two Tribes

Puzzle, Adventure - Mac, PC, Wii-U

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater HD

Activision

Sports - PS3, X360

July 1

American Mensa Academy

Square Enix

Trivia - PC, PS3, X360

Double Dragon: Neon

Majesco

Fighting - PS3, X360

The information presented he

Console & Desktop Gaming

Summer 2012



Test Drive:

Racing - X360

Championship

Black Bean Games

Racing - PS3, X360

Anarchy Reigns

Action - PS3, X360

Atari

SEGA

Ferrari Racing Legends

WRC 2 FIA World Rally

July 3

Theatrhythm Final **Fantasy**

Square Enix Music, Action - 3DS

July 10

Ice Age: Continental

Drift — Arctic Games

Activision

Adventure - 3DS, X360

NCAA Football 13

Electronic Arts Sports - PS3, X360

Rhythm Thief & the Emperor's Treasure

SEGA

Music, Action - 3DS

The Last Story

Xseed Games RPG - Wii

July 17

Heroes of Ruin

Square Enix Adventure - 3DS

Resident Evil:

The Darkside Chronicles Capcom

Shooter - PS3

Resident Evil: The Umbrella Chronicles

Capcom Shooter - PS3

Princess Alicia & Tricia - Growlanser IV

July 24

Growlanser IV: Wayfarer of Time

Atlus RPG - PSP

Prototype 2

Activision Action - PC

July 31

Kingdom Hearts 3D: **Dream Drop Distance**

Square Enix

Action, Adventure - 3DS

Kingdom Hearts 3D:

Dream Drop Distance (The Mark of Mastery Edition)

Square Enix

Action, Adventure - 3DS

Risen 2: Dark Waters

Deep Silver

RPG - PS3, X360

Ayane & **Christine** — Dead

August 1

Darksiders II (Collector's Edition)

THQ

Action - PC, PS3, X360

Hitman: Sniper Challenge

Square Enix Action - PC

Legasista

NIS America Action, RPG - PS3

Mama's 2-Pack

Majesco

Compilation - Wii

Mama's Combo Pack Volume 1

Majesco

Compilation - NDS

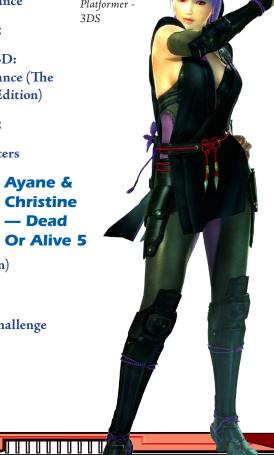
Mama's Combo Pack Volume 2

Majesco

Compilation - NDS

New Super Mario Bros. 2

Nintendo Platformer : 3DS





August 7

Everyone Sing

O-Games Music - PS3, Wii, X360

Persona 4 Arena

Atlus Fighting - PS3, X360



August 14

Darksiders II

THQ Action - PC, PS3, X360

Sleeping Dogs

Square Enix Action - PC, PS3, X360

August 21

Sniper: Ghost Warrior 2

City Interactive Shooter - PC, PS3, X360

August 24

Dark Souls (Prepare to Die Edition)

Namco Bandai Action, RPG - PC

August 28

Madden NFL 13

Electronic Arts Sports - PS3, Vita, Wii, X360

Transformers: Fall of Cybertron

Activision Shooter - PS3, X360

September 1

Class of Heroes II

MonkeyPaw Games RPG - PSP

Dead or Alive 5

Tecmo Fighting - PS3, X360

NHL 13

Electronic Arts Sports - PS3, X360

Tiger Woods PGA Tour 13 (The Masters Collector's Edition)

Electronic Arts Sports - PS3, X360

September 4

Far Cry 3

Ubisoft Shooter - PC, PS3, X360

September 7

Sports Champions 2

Sony Computer Entertainment Sports, Action - PS3

September 11

Tekken Tag Tournament 2

Namco Bandai Fighting - PS3, X360

September 18

Borderlands 2

2K Games Action, RPG - PC PS3, X360

Street Fighter: 25th

Anniversary Collector's Set

Capcom

Compilation - PS3, X360

September 27

Carrier Command: Gaea Mission

Mastertronic Plus Action - PC, X360



Agarest War 2 Limited Edition Set

The information presented here is as accurate as much as humanly possible and is subject to change without notice





Jason · Los Angeles, CA

A budding aritst? Casual artist? A professional?
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to the larger fan community?
Contact us at
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glm@studioartmix.com for submission requirements.

Gallery



"Surrounded By Darkness"
Amanda · 23 · Murrieta, CA
Deviant Art: ajanime12@deviantart.com
sleepyskeleton.com

"Checkers"
Kaito and Len from Vocaloid
Francis · 21 · South Gate, CA
furanQ.com







ince its 2009 debut in South Korea, CNBLUE (씨엔블루)has been a bastion of rock in a music scene dominated by danceable electro-pop. The band's lasting success has comforted some about the continuing mainstream appeal of rock, while detractors accuse it of peddling innocuous poppy sounds, even calling the group a fake band.

In a recent interview with the four members, front man Jung Yong Hwa (정용화), 22, bassist Lee Jung Shin (이정신),20, guitarist Lee Jong Hyun (이 종현), 21, and drummer Kang Min Hyuk (강민혁), 20, seemed to weigh in little on the controversy.

Rather than theorizing or rationalizing about their career, the quartet revel in it with ample humility, as sometimes even they are at a loss to describe the reason behind their success.

"Compared to when we were touring (East) Asia with the single 'Love,' (from their second EP Bluelove) nowadays K-pop is riding on a much bigger wave," Jung says, adding that their audience and fan base have expanded thanks to the collective

expansion of Korean pop music in the last year. "The stages are bigger for us. Most of our fans used to be in their 30s or 40s; now we have more in their 20s or younger."

Much like their K-pop colleagues, CN Blue has gone from a group of nobodies to superstars almost overnight, starting with the debut Korean EP Bluetory and its catchy lead single "I'm a Loner (외 돌이야)." Most recently, the band released its third mini-album titled Ear Fun, with the single off it, "Hey You," topping domestic charts.

The band's continuing run of hits in South Korea and even its rise to Japanese stardom was a surprise to many, simply because it stood nowhere near the usual dancing troupe model of K-pop, now gaining popularity overseas. There were many critics, however, including popular Korean rocker Shin Hae Chul, who publicly accused CN Blue of plagiarism.

But since its debut, seeing guitars and a drum set on the stage of weekly pop music shows has become less alien, and Big Bang, the biggest K-pop boy band that relies heavily on dance, recruited a live band on stage. Even indie band Busker Busker, the runner-up on the third season of Korea's *American Idol* equivalent *Superstar K*, is now gaining mass-market attention, with its recent major-label debut topping charts.

The group is also looking further afield when it comes to giving back. In March, a school named after it was opened in a small village in southwestern Burkina Faso in West Africa, partially funded by the proceeds of the band's earnings.

"A lot of times we want to help but don't know how," Jung says. "We recently got to watch a video clip of the school, now all finished and in operation. We are very proud of this."

The band's management agency, FNC Entertainment, stated that the contribution to the Burkina project, organized by the Korea Food for Hungry International, will continue on a consistent basis.

Now in their third year as a part of CN Blue, the members seem to reflect much longer when asked about their future plans and ambitions.

"The lyrics of foreign bands are so much more varied. Some of the subjects are simply unimaginable to me," Jung says, adding that the group are also stepping away from the syrupy lovesick words the fans have come to associate with them. "I want to be alone, maybe travel—alone."

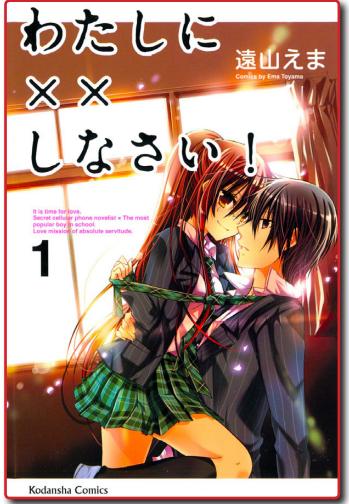
"I want life to be a bit more spectacular," Lee Jung Shin says. "Our career has progressed endlessly. We need a break."

"I want to space out for a little while," adds Lee Jong Hyun, laughing.

The quartet were off to an amusement park outside Seoul for their next appointment. Hardly the break they might want, but Lee Jong Hyun glows with hope: "We're going to be together for 20 to 30 years, at least," he says. ***** Kwaak Je Yup









Himuro, Yukina "Yupina"

High schooler and secret mobile phone novelist who goes by the pen name Yupina. Blackmails Shigure into a romace role player.



Kitami, Shigure
The student council president, well-known and well likes guy, on the

known and well likes guy...on the exterior. He hold a secret of being a total womanizer. To hide this, he plays into Yukina's plan.

Watashi ni XX Shinasai! わたしにxxしさない!

by Tôyama, Ema (遠山 えま)

Yukina Himuro isn't your typical high schooler. She's given the nickname as the "Snow Woman," as a result of her sharp, glearing eyes and skin, cool to the touch. Unbeknownst to her fellow classmates, Yukina is also a mobile phone novelist who goes by the pen name "Yupina." One day, she finds a notebook belonging to the student council president, Shigure Kitami. To everyone, Shigure is a role model and an ideal student, but holds a dark secret. The notebook Yukina found lists in detail the girls Shigure "conquered," then dropped and so on.

Yukina, herself, has never been in or felt what it's like to be in love. This incident with Shigure's notebook is an opportunity. She blackmails Shigure in playing romantic roles in the novels she writes. Could this role playing lead into something else?

Here's a preview of the first chapter. Be sure to support the author.

It's so much fun to observe people YUKINA-CHAAAN! WERE YOU ABLE TO DO LOTS OF OBSERVING TODAY? YEP. THEY MANA ALWAYS RUN AWAY COURT RIGHT AWAY LET'S GO HOME TOGETHER. BECAUSE OF MY EYES.

Watashi Ni×× Shinasai







Watashi ui XX Shinasai!

HEY, YOU! HERE ARE YOU LOOKING-







Watashi ni XX Shinasai!

Watashi Ni 🗙 Shinasai

y-Y0U!

HOW DARE YOU LOOK AT

A TEACHER

LIKE THAT?!









Watashi ni 14 Shinasai!

Stop Reading Here









Watashi ni XX Shinasai

DON'T YOU

TODAY?

Uematsu

kun is

pretty

Komiya- good...
san isn't
bad,

either.

WE

SHH DON"

HER

EYES!

Student notebo SAS MANUEL OF On DO YOU KNOW ME? I'M IN YOUR CLASS! Watashi ni XX Shinasai! I'M HAPPY TO SEE THAT YOU KNOW MY NAME. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO TALK TO YOU.







Start— Reading-Here

Start with top right and end with bottom left. Reading is done the same direction.



RIGHT?

I want ... to make these

readers even happier...

I'm going to write





Watashi ni XX Shinasai!

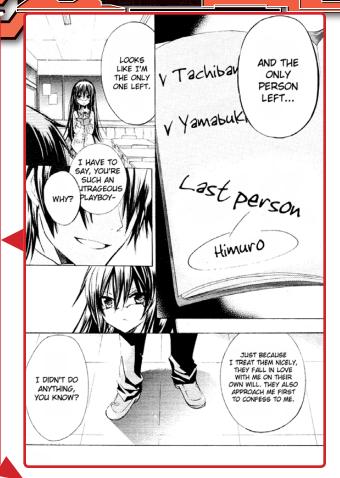
If so ... I'll try doing everything I can.

A love

novel in

'upina's stype!

WELL, IT'S INTERESTING, SO IT BECAME A NICE SORT OF TIME-KILLING THING FOR ME. WHY ARE YOU FEIGNING BUT Watashi ni 11 Shinasai! YOU WERE THE LAST PERSON FOR ME TO COMPLETE MY QUEST... NOT REALLY?







Start Reading Here

Start with top right and end with bottom left. Reading is done the same direction.









Watashi ni XX Shinasai!

WHY DO TO DO THOSE THINGS? YOU DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER CHOICES. CONFESS YOUR LOVE TO ME! HOLD MY HAND I GUESS WE'LL START WITH EMBRACE ME KISS ME

Watashi ni 11 Shinasai!





FALL IN LOVE WITH ME



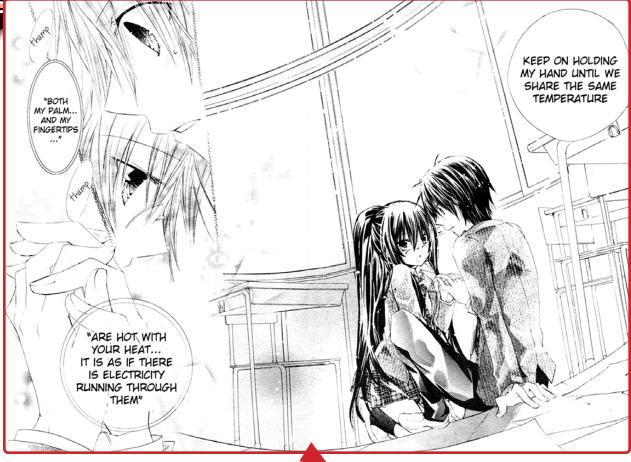




Watashi ni XX Shinasai!

Watashi ni XX Shinasail

Stop Reading Here



End of Volume One, Chapter 1

This concludes our preview of **Watashi ni XXX Shinsai!**







YOUR PERSONALITY IS COLD, BUT HAND IS BY HAND. SUMMY CETS TRANSFERRED TO MINE... NO INSTITUTE THE WARMTH... FINE HAND... INSTITUTE THE WARMTH... FOR HIS HAND... INSTITUTE THE HA

ALL THE WAY...

Watashi ni XX Shinasai!

TO THE

PALM OF MY

HAND.



The most intriguing one would have to be the fight between Madara Uchiha and the First Hokage. The exact details of the fight or how it was portrayed might not be canon to the story but it was awesome to see nonetheless.

As for the gameplay mechanics, a substitution jutsu bar has now been added in battle. This prevents you from spamming the substitution jutsu every time you get attacked by the opposing player. Once you use a portion of the bar, it will slowly replenish over time. Some people will hate it. Some people will love it. Me? I like it. It adds a challenge factor and encourages you to have a strategy instead of just rushing into the fight.

I'm not much of an online player so I really don't have a say about the online portion of this game. The ninja info cards do return but now, each card has a bonus that will potentially help you in an online battle. You can also save your own replays and even download replays from other players, which is pretty cool because you can learn different tactics from them.

Playing this game with a high definition TV is a given because playing it with a standard TV deprives you the visual impact of the game. Graphics are awesome as always just like with Ultimate Ninja Storm 2. Character models are fantastic, the music is great, and the combat system is fluid. Overall, it's not really a hardcore competitive game and not a balanced game by any means but a really enjoyable one at that. Playing this game is definitely a blast. * Sunset Spider





