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藍よりの青し



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.Hack//SIGN: What Is Reality? A Strange Gaming World In Anime. This time, we are covering a rather unusual show, *.Hack//SIGN* (the "dot" at the beginning is pronounced), which became a big phenomenon in Japan in 2002. Why is it so unique? Because the story presents us a main character, Tsukasa, who loses his self in reality and cannot get out of the game. In the 1980's, a science-fiction movie, *Tron*, presented a main character who entered the world of an artificial intelligence and got lost. Here, *.Hack//SIGN* presents characters who play the game and willingly enter the NET world, via a head-mounted display, when they play in "The World". Of course, the whole thing is a fiction and we cannot enter the game world physically in reality (yet?). But, wait, are there not many gamers today who literally play as if their souls were sucked by the game? Here, director Koichi Mashimo (the rising star director of *Noir*) is showing you a boy who cannot get out of "The World", as if he were a ghost! What is his psychological state? When gamers in reality get really involved with playing a game, they literally forget the time, to eat, to sleep, etc., because their minds are too busy or simply gone somewhere else! Haven't you experienced that state when you are enjoying playing a game or doing a hobby? Then, when you see Tsukasa here, who does not like to face the reality of his life, calling the real world "s—t", we do not feel too unfamiliar. So what happens when Tsukasa cannot get back to reality when he wishes? What happens when his reality disappears? Inside "The World", he becomes like a ghost, a Zombie (a living-dead?!) and finally, when he started connecting with other characters emotionally, he began to suffer psychologically. Although this anime's story is a fantasy, we see a lot of gamers like Tsukasa and we all know that reality is sometimes very ugly and hard to deal with. Therefore, it may only be natural for humans to create a place where they can escape it (it's called escapism), like games, movies, plays, books, etc. In *.Hack//SIGN*, Tsukasa is inside a dungeon that literally looks like a human body's internal organs and bones, probably created by Tsukasa's imagination, and symbolizing that he is in the process of going through his deepest inner emotions. Director Mashimo presents many images for "The World", such as the desert, European cities (Italy, maybe Venice? Or Florence?), the forest, a cathedral, etc., but they are all illusion, reflections of the human mind and state, using light and shadow to symbolize positive and negative human feelings.

As I watched the show here, I began thinking about human anxiety and the defense mechanisms of our psychology. Why did Tsukasa become like that? Because human anxiety is an exceptionally uncomfortable experience that is hard to cope with. When the pressure of anxiety is excessive (like Tsukasa's case) and cannot be relieved by practical problem-solving methods, the human ego uses maneuvers such as a defense mechanism to deny, falsify or even distort reality. But, as he meets others, he begins to gradually change. Many of his conflicts and frustrations are part of growing up as adults in reality, right? Despite the fancy gaming, costumes and settings inside "The World", this show does not offer much action. Instead, it proposes a trip inside the consciousness and soul of an emotionally bruised, but slowly healing person. So, enter the world of modern fiction, as well as a psychological labyrinth! Let's see... Can you really get out of "The World"?

Miyako Matsuda

• • •

This issue is quietly (without fanfare) celebrating our 15th anniversary and the fact that we have become this great, independent, anime magazine that offers you more useful information than any other anime magazine! Being fifteen years-old also make us the oldest anime magazine in publication (so we KNOW anime). The anniversary itself was in fact last November (and we've been too busy to really celebrate), but issue 75 seemed perfect to highlight the occasion. Of course, this issue doesn't look much different (a little more color maybe) than usual, probably because, for us, every new issue is special and better than the previous ones. We hope that you feel the same way (in any case, let us know what you think about the magazine and what you would like us to talk about: comments@protoculture.qc.ca). Now, we are ready for at least another fifteen years!

In the following pages you will find the first part of a feature article on Osamu Tezuka and his work, a 8-page Spotlight (all in color!) on *.Hack//SIGN*, as well as a great harvest of "Anime Stories": *Ai Yori Aoshi*, *Captain Tsubasa*, *Chobits*, *Galaxy Angel*, *Gatekeepers 21*, *Hikaru no Go*, *Mahoromatic*, and *Najica*. Of course, this issue also offers many "Anime World" articles (anecdotes from Yoshiyuki Tomino and the *Cowboy Bebop* crew, convention reports on Otakon and Anime Expo NY, the Modern Japanese Music Database Part 19, interviews with Hilary Haag, Monica Rial and Kristine Sa), tons of reviews (6 live-action movies, 11 manga, 2 model kits, 1 video game, and 42 anime videos!) and the latest news! Enjoy!

Next Issue: spotlights on *Rahxephon* and *Dragonar* as well as many "Anime Stories", introducing anime like *Abeno Bridge Magic Shopping Mall* (the latest comedy from Gainax), *Hakujaden* (the very first Japanese animated movie), *Kikaider*, *Patlabor WXIII*, *Read Or Die*, the *Turn A Gundam* Movies, and more!! Don't miss it! Check our web page for details: www.protoculture-mag.com!

Claude J. Pelletier
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• J A P A N • J A P A N • J A P A N •

A Computer Mouse designed by manga artists! Everyone who has a computer uses a mouse. Now, manga artist Masamune Shirou (*Appleseed*, *Ghost In The Shell*) has designed an optical mouse, of which famous mecha designer Hajime Katoki (*Gundam*) designed the compact version. Those have hit the market in Japan on November 22nd, 2002 and are available for USB computers, as well as the Sony PS2. For more information: Elecom Information Center, (tel) 03-5337-3042 or <http://www.elecom.co.jp>. (Source: *Animage* #295, January 2003).

Ghost In The Shell: Innocence to be released in Spring 2004! Hayao Miyazaki and Toshio Suzuki, from Studio Ghibli, have always admired Mamoru Oshii's work and talent. That's why they decided to support financially the new *Ghost In The Shell* movie and promote it through their distribution contacts. With Ghibli as co-producer, Production I.G. is doing the animation work. Director Mamoru Oshii started working on the film two years ago and about 20% of the actual anime drawings have been completed, so Production I.G. is planning that the movie will be completed by the end of the year. The concept behind Section 9 is still the same, but this time Director Oshii has come up with a totally different story. In 2032 Tokyo, there are robots looking exactly like humans. But when a human loses his/her physical body, can he/she still love someone? It is the story of two characters: a cyborg with only the brain left as human part and a woman who wanders in the cyberworld without any physical body (Motoko Kusanagi?). It looks like it is the sequel of the first movie... Fans are certainly eagerly awaiting the release of this brand new movie! (Source: *Animage* #296, February 2003).

Howl's Moving Castle by Director Hayao Miyazaki. As we have reported in PA#69, *Howl's Moving Castle* was going to be adapted by Studio Ghibli. It is now official that Director Hayao Miyazaki, after the enormous success such as *Princess Mononoke* and *Spirited Away*, just started working on the anime adaptation of the story created by British children books' writer Diana Wynne Jones. Recently, Miyazaki wrote all the stories for his animation, but this time he chose to adapt the story from an existing novel. He is trying to create a "Melodrama of War," based on two characters - Sophie, who becomes a 90 year-old due to a spell, and the wizard Howl - and a fantasy world inspired by 19th Century European science fiction artists - a world mixing magic and science, a bit like in *Laputa*. For this animation, Director Miyazaki will use 3D computer graphics. He is also writing the script and working on the storyboards. The production officially started in February and the Japanese theatrical release date is set for Summer 2004. (Source: *Animage* #296, February 2003).

Macross: The Tokyo District Court has decided that the copyright belongs to the production studio. The long controversy concerning the rights to the *Macross* TV series is over (for now!). Some time ago, Tatsunoko Production (located in Kokubunji City, Tokyo Prefecture) was sued by Studio Nue (located in the Nerima District of Tokyo City) for the copyright. On January 20th, 2003, the District Court of Tokyo, headed by Judge Toshiaki Inamura, decided that the copyright of *Macross*, the show itself, belongs to Tatsunoko Production. In October 2002, Studio Nue had won the rights pertaining to the *Macross* characters and mecha through a lawsuit at the Tokyo High Court, but Judge Inamura allowed Tatsunoko Production to obtain the copyright of the show because the production was under the care of Tatsunoko. The Japanese copyright law, as a general rule, give the rights to the production company, not to the planners or directors of the shows. Judge Inamura ruling says that "Tatsunoko Production was the one who controlled and managed the contract and did the actual work. Studio Nue had planned the show and did all the creation [including the revolutionary Valkyrie transformable fighter], therefore the rights to the show's characters and mecha belong to them". Tatsunoko Production is well known for producing *Science Ninja Team Gatchaman* and Studio Nue is famous for the designs of *Space Cruiser Yamato* and *Space Pirate Captain Harlock*. (Source: Yahoo Japan, Mainichi Shinbun, ANN).

Ninja Scroll TV Series! Despite its ultra violence, the high quality anime movie was highly admired by many fans, for its action and its artistic images, not only in Japan, but also in North America and all around the world. Created by Director Yoshiaki Kawajiri, *Ninja Scroll* was released in theatres in 1993. Now, for the new TV series to be released soon (no date have been officially announced yet), Kawajiri is still writing the story and working as supervisor, but Tatsuya Sato (Nadesico) is directing. The Japanese title is the same as the movie: *Jubei Ninpucho* (The Chapter Of Jubei's Art Of Ninjitsu). The character designs are by Takahiro Yoshimatsu (*Jubei-chan The Ninja Girl*). This time, Jubei would be a much more cheerful character, a free-spirited ninja-for-hire. He is doing it for the money and has sworn allegiance to any warlords. The stage is set in the mountains during the Japanese civil war era. Fans can enjoy again Jubei's Ninjitsu & tactics! Stay tuned. (Source: *Animage* #296, February 2003).

Otomo Katsuhiro is back, bringing his Steamboy in Autumn 2003! Studio Sunrise (*Gundam*) is teaming up with Director Katsuhiro Otomo (*Akira*) to finally complete (after eight years!) and release his new anime movie. Toho will handle the Theatrical Distribution. The story is staged in the 19th Century England, a little before the first World Expo's opening. The invention of "Steam-Ball" creates many disputes and a boy gets involved against his will. Director Otomo is trying to bring the latest technology of anime to produce very artistic images in contrast with a classical story. He is also working as a scriptwriter, along with Sadayuki Murai. Fans can look forward to another high-quality anime! (Source: *Animage* #296, February 2003).

Haro from Gundam Seed. In *Gundam Seed* there is this cute little mecha creature, Haro, created by one of the main characters, Athrun Zara, for his fiancee Lax. This Haro (which is, in fact, a kind of personal robot) has been in huge demand by enthusiastic *Gundam* fans and Bandai has released Haro toys in several models and colors, including a Mini-Haro. For more information, go see at: <http://www.bandai-plamo.net> or phone at: Bandai Hobby Office, tel. 03-3847-5116. (Source: *Animedia*, January 2003).

Hunter X Hunter new OVA. Enthusiastic fans wanted to keep watching this series after the end of the TV series and the OVA. Now a second OVA, titled *Greed Island*, has been released on February 19th, 2003. The original manga, created by Yoshihiro Togashi, is still going strong through *Shonen Jump* weekly magazine. This second OVA series will have a total of four episodes and is based on the "Greedy Island" chapter of Togashi's manga. The great hunter JIN created the Greed Island game for hunters. Gon and Kirua ended up playing the game and decided to visit the auction. © Yoshihiro Togashi/Shueisha/Nippon Animation. (Source: *Animage* #295, January 2003).

Studio BONES new anime TV series Scrapped Princess is in production. Studio BONES, which brought us *Rahxephon* (directed by Yutaka Izubuchi), is working on the anime version of the popular manga *Scrapped Princess* (a hit title from monthly *Dragon* magazine). Fans in Japan call it "*Sute-Puri*" (short for "scrapped or abandoned princess"). This time, the director is Soichi Masui, a newcomer who was working as an assistant director for director Izubuchi while he was working on *Rahxephon*. The story is about a 16 year-old Princess, Pacifica Kasur. She has been abandoned due to an ominous prophecy announcing that Pacifica would bring chaos and disaster to the whole world. She was supposed to have been abandoned (or even scrapped, like an object) to die, but, in fact, she is alive and well, protected by her elder sister Shanon and her brother-in-law Racwell. Outwardly, Pacifica looks extremely selfish, but her attitude is just the reflection of her suffering. It is the story of her adventures and what would really happen if the prophecy would come true. This production is organized by Reiko Yoshida (*Cat Returns*). (Source: *Animage* #295, January 2003).

The Galaxy Express 999 train in Hokkaido! The famous 999 has become a reality! It has been faithfully reproduced, up to the interior and Tetsuro and Maetel sitting in there! If you would like to ride this train, go to Kitami City and Ikeda Town in Hokkaido and take a tour of the Hokkaido Chihoku Highlands on a legend! For more information: Hokkaido Chihoku Highland Railway, tel. 0157-31-7111. (Source: *Animedia*, January 2003).



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CHOBITS #1 W/ LE COLLECTORS BOX & STATIONARY KIT	P	B	100	39.98	16+	03/04
NIGHTMARE CAMPUS #1	A18	B	40	29.99	18+	03/11
STEPMOTHER'S SIN	A18	B	65	29.99	18+	03/11
CRYING FREEMAN #1: PORTRAIT OF A KILLER	ADV	B	100	29.98	17+	03/11
STEEL ANGEL KURUMI #5: ENCORE	ADV	B	60	19.98	17+	03/11
SUKEBAN DEKA	ADV	B	100	19.98	15+	03/11
Z.O.E.: DOLORES, I #3: A PRELUDE TO WAR	ADV	B	100	29.98	15+	03/11
DRAGONBALL Z TV #86: KID BUU: A NEW BEGINNING	FN		62	24.95		03/11
KIRBY #4: ESCARGOON SQUAD	FN	D	60	19.95		03/11
CARDCAPTOR SAKURA #14: POWER AWRY	P	S	100	29.98	13+	03/11
REVOLUT. GIRL UTENA #5: DARKNESS BECKONING	SS	B	75	29.99	13+	03/11
JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE #1	STA	B	90	29.99		03/11
JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE #1 W/ BOX	STA	B	90	44.99		03/11
GREAT TEACHER ONIZUKA (GTO) #7: SHOWBIZ (Eps 28-31)	TP	B	100	29.98	16+	03/11
DESCENDANTS OF DARKNESS #2: DEVIL'S SONG	USM	B	75	29.99	13+	03/11
GALL FORCE #1: ETERNAL STORY	USM	B	86	19.99	13+	03/11
GALL FORCE #2: DESTRUCTION	USM	B	50	19.99	13+	03/11
GALL FORCE #3: STARDUST WAR	USM	B	62	19.99	13+	03/11
RHEA GALL FORCE	USM	B	60	19.99	13+	03/11
GALL FORCE DVD COLLECTION	USM	B	260	74.99	13+	03/11
POKEMON JOHTO COLL. #1: ROAD TO JOHTO L. CHAMP.	VV	B	160	19.98	G	03/11
YOU'RE UNDER ARREST BOX SET #2 (Eps 13-24)	AE					03/15
COLORFUL!	ADV	B	110	29.98	17+	03/18
MEGAMAN #2: BATTLE FOR THE FUTURE	ADV	D	350	29.98	G	03/18
SUPER DUPER SUMOS #2: ABSOLUTELY FLABULOUS	ADV	E	115	14.98	G	03/18
WILD ARMS #2: WESTERN ROMANCE	ADV	B	100	29.98	12+	03/18
.HACK//SIGN #1: LOGIN (Eps 1-5)	B	B	125	29.98	13+	03/18
BANNER OF THE STARS #2: BASROIL UNLEASHED!	B	B	100	29.98	13+	03/18
LOVE HINA: SPRING MOVIE	BIG	B	60	29.98	13+	03/18
MELTY LANCER #2: OMEGA	B	B	75	29.98	13+	03/18
DRAGONBALL: KING PICCOLO SET #1	FN			39.95		03/18
YUGIHO #7: DOUBLE TROUBLE DUEL	FN	D	60	19.95		03/18
YUGIHO #8: FACE OFF	FN	D	60	19.95		03/18
TENCHI MUYO! OVA #1	P	B	120	24.98	13+	03/18
TENCHI MUYO! OVA #2	P	B	105	24.98	13+	03/18
TENCHI MUYO! OVA #3	P	B	90	24.98	13+	03/18
TENCHI MUYO! OVA #4	P	B	105	24.98	13+	03/18
VANDREAD 2nd STAGE #4: FINAL ASSAULT	P	B	75	29.98	13+	03/18
GENESIS CLIMBER MOSPEADA BOX SET	ADV	S	625	89.98	15+	03/25
HELLO KITTY'S PARADISE #4: LEARN WITH LOVE	ADV	D	90	14.98	G	03/25
RAHXEPHON #1: THRESHOLD	ADV	B	125	29.98	15+	03/25
RAHXEPHON #1: THRESHOLD W/ ARTBOX & T-SHIRT	ADV	B	125	44.98	15+	03/25
RUROUNI KENSHIN / SAMURAI X (OVA): REFLECTION	ADV	B	60	29.98	17+	03/25
BERSERK #5	AW		100	29.95		03/25
GENMA WARS #1: DIVINE TWINS	AW		100	29.95		03/25
MAGIC KNIGHTS RAYEARTH II #1-6	AW		100 ea	29.95 ea		03/25
MAGIC KNIGHTS RAYEARTH II #7	AW		125	29.95		03/25
SPACE PIRATE MITO #2	AW		75	24.95		03/25
Ys #2	AW		90	24.95		03/25
DRAGONBALL Z TV BOX SET #7: PERFECT CELL	FN			54.95		03/25
FRUITS BASKET #3: PUDDLES OF MEMORIES	FN	B	123	39.95	13+	03/25
SLAVE DOLL	KM		90	29.95	18+	03/25
FIST OF THE NORTH STAR #1-2	ME	B	120 ea	24.95 ea	13+	03/25
MAHROMATIC #2: HAUNTING PAST	P	B	100	29.98	16+	03/25
X TV #4: FOUR	P	B	75	29.98	16+	03/25
KIMBA THE WHITE LION #1-2	RH	D	175 ea	19.95 ea	G	03/25

KIMBA THE WHITE LION BOX SET	RH	D	350	59.95	G	03/25
CAN CAN BUNNY #1: LUCKY 7	SC		75	29.98	18+	03/25
URUSEI YATSURA BOX SET #4 (Eps 15-20)	AE	S				03/28
DAI-GUARD #5: IN THE RED	ADV	B	100	29.98	12+	04/01
DEVIL LADY #3: THE STRENGTHENING	ADV	B	100	29.98	17+	04/01
ARGENTO SOMA #2: GETTING EVEN	B	B	125	29.98	13+	04/01
BETTERMAN #6: FINALITY	B	B	100	29.98	13+	04/01
RONIN WARRIORS OVA #1	B	B	175	29.98	13+	04/01
G-TASTE #2: HEAT WAVE	SC		50	29.98		04/01
RUPAN: THE FUMA CONSPIRACY	AE					04/07
FOUR PLAY	A18	B	60	29.99	18+	04/08
MAMA MIA!	A18	B	45	29.99	18+	04/08
CHANGE POP SESSION: SESSION THREE	ADV	B	100	29.98	12+	04/08
CITY HUNTER: .357 MAGNUM	ADV	B	80	29.98	15+	04/08
COMPILER	ADV	B	100	19.98	15+	DEL
EXCEL SAGA #6: GOING WAY TOO FAR!	ADV	B	125	29.98	17+	04/08
NOIR #2: THE HIT LIST	ADV	B	100	29.98	15+	04/08
RUNE SOLDIER #1: ENTER THE KLUTZ	ADV	B	100	29.98	15+	04/08
BEYBLADE #2: THE BLADEBREAKERS	P	D	100	19.98	7+	04/08
HELLSING COMPLETE COLLECTION	P	B	320	124.98	16+	04/08
LUPIN III TV #2: LOVE HEIST	P	B	125	29.98	13+	04/08
PATLABOR MOVIE 3: WXIII	P	B	102	24.98	16+	04/08
PATLABOR MOVIE 3: WXIII (Special Edition w/ Mini-Pato!)	P	B	318	59.98	16+	04/08
A LITTLE SNOW FAIRY SUGAR #1: SWEET MISCHIEF	P	B	100	29.98	3+	04/08
A LITTLE SNOW FAIRY SUGAR #1 W/ COLLECTOR'S BOX	P	B	100	34.98	3+	04/08
BIG WARS	USM	B	70	19.99	13+	04/08
DNA2 (DNA SQUARED) #2: TURBULENCE	USM	B	75	29.99	13+	04/08
TOKYO BABYLON	USM	B	95	19.99	13+	04/08
DIRTY PAIR FLASH COLLECTION	ADV	B	400	39.98	15+	04/15

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• I V E - A C T I O N •

Angel Of Darkness #2	CM	S	70	29.95	18+	02/11
Farscape Season Two Vol. 2.5	ADV	E	260	39.98		02/25
Zaichichi Meets Yojimbo	AE					03/07
Tokyo: The Last Megalopolis	ADV	S	135	19.98	17+	DEL
Naughty Guide To Tokyo Nightlife	APC	B	80	29.99	R	03/11
Street Fury Chrome Edition	TP		60	19.99		03/11
Andromeda 1.5 (Ep. 119-122)	ADV	E	200+	39.98		03/18
Camera #1: Guardian Of The Universe	ADV	B	90	19.98	12+	03/18
Camera #1: Guardian Of The Universe w/ custom art box	ADV	B	90	24.98	12+	03/18
Angel Of Darkness #3	CM	S	72	29.95	18+	03/25
Black Angel Collection	TS	B	180	29.95		03/25
Lone Wolf & Cub #2 DVD	AE					Mar
Tomie	C1			19.99		Mar
Farscape Season Three Vol. 3.1	ADV	E	200+	39.98		04/08
Dragon Blue	ADV	S	75	19.98	15+	04/15
Andromeda 2.1	ADV	E	250+	39.98		04/22
Camera #2: Attack Of Legion	ADV	B	100	19.98	12+	04/29
Kunoichi: Lady Ninja	TS	B	120	29.95		04/29
LoneWolf & Cub#1 DVD	AE					04/30
Angel Of Darkness #4	CM	S	76	29.95	18+	05/06
LoneWolf & Cub#2 DVD	AE					05/07
Zero Woman: The Accused (R-Rated Version)	APC	B	77	29.99	R	05/13
Farscape Season Three Vol. 3.2	ADV	E	250+	39.98		05/20
Yokai Monsters: Spook Warfare	ADV	S	90	29.98	12+	05/20
Sex Medusa	TS					May
Angel Of Darkness #5	CM	S	72	29.95	18+	06/17
Angel Of Darkness Collection	CM	S	362	129.95	18+	06/17

• S O U N D T R A C K S •

Lupin III TV: Sideburn Club Mix Soundtrack	P	13	65	14.98		01/28
Lupin III TV: Original Soundtrack	P	15	53	14.98		04/08
Ah! My Goddess The Movie Soundtrack	P	26	66	14.98		04/08

LEGEND:

Anime / Live-Action: A18: Anime 18 (CPM); ADV: A.D. Vision; AE: AnimEigo; APC: Asia Pulp Cinema; AW: AnimeWorks (MB); B: Bandai; BV: Buena Vista (Disney); CM: Critical Mass (RS); CPM: Central Park Media; CTS: Columbia/TriStar; DF: Destination Film (CTS); FN: Funimation; IG: Production I.G. Video; IM: Image; KM: Kitty Media (MB); KP: Kaiju Productions (MB); MB: Media Blasters; ME: Manga Ent.; NIR: Nirvana; NT: NuTech; P: Pioneer; RH: Rhino Home Video; RS: The Right Stuf; SC: SoftCel; SP: Synch-Point; SS: Software Sulptors (CPM); TP: Tokyo Pop; TS: Tokyo Shock (MB); USM: U.S. Manga Corps (CPM); UV: Urban Vision; W: Viz Video; WB: Warner Brothers; S: Subtitled; D: Dubbed; B: Bilingual; M: Multilingual; E: English; DEL: Delayed. The last four columns are the duration (min.), price (\$US), rating and release date (street).

Soundtrack: ATX: AnimeTrax (RS); TP: TokyoPop. Chart lists releaser, duration (min.), number of tracks, price (\$US) and release date.

Manga: AP: Antarctic Press; C1: ComicsOne; CPM: Central Park Media Manga; DH: Dark Horse; DK: Daikajiu; DW: Dreamwave; GO: Guardian Of Order; GS: Gutsoon!; IC: Ironcat; IM: Image; M18: Manga 18 (CPM); MV: Marvel; RM: Redlight Manga; SF: Sexy Fruit (IC); T: Titan; TP: TokyoPop (Mlxx); VIZ: Viz Comics; W: Wizard; WS: WildStorm; GN: Graphic Novel; BK: Book. * Adult titles. Columns: Title, Issue, Publisher, Prices (in \$US), Release Month. Sources: *Previews* and publishers' press releases.



• MANGA SELECTION •

Alien Nine: Book 1. Yuri is totally bummed. She just started 6th grade and was elected to capture and eliminate aliens that are constantly invading the school... a difficult and dangerous job! Even worse, she has to wear a creepy symbiotic alien helmet to get the job done... Gross! Another Original Manga line release in the authentic Japanese style right to left format! CPM Manga, Story and Art by Hitoshi Tomizawa, CMX 64201G, b&w, 5.25" X 7.5", 224 pg, \$15.95, 16+, avail. on 5/14/03.

Battle Royale Vol. 1 (of 5). Japan's most disturbing and macabre manga, recognized as a modern day *Lord of the Flies*, introduces readers to a horrifying world in which reality games like today's Survivor get a homicidal maniac twist and are taken to the ultimate extreme. In this manga series' chilling future, random Jr. High School classes are chosen to compete in a game called "Battle Royale." The rules: one student must become the sole survivor after three days or ALL will perish. With an island as their backdrop, the students are armed and sent out into the fields alone and unprepared for the horror that awaits them. Classmates turn on each other in a battle for survival, where treaties are made and broken, and former friends become foes as the relentless countdown continues. Amid the betrayals and rising body count, two classmates confess their love for each other and swear to survive the deadly game together. Tokyopop, created by Koushun Takami and Masayuki Taguchi, adapted by Keith Giffen, SC, 5x7, b&w, \$9.99, available in April.

Cowboy Bebop: Shooting Star. One of Tokyopop's best sellers and regularly ranked in the BookScan top 10 graphic novel bestseller list, *Cowboy Bebop* is based on the smash hit anime series. This is the phenomenal comic misadventure of interplanetary bounty hunters, Spike, Jet, Faye and Ed, taking on the jobs even the most seasoned vets would run from. *Cowboy Bebop: Shooting Star* is an alternate telling of the famous TV show that contains all the same intrigue, adventure, action and gritty noir ambiance of its onscreen counterpart. A fantastic yarn in its own right, this two-volume series is a perfect addendum to any *Cowboy Bebop* collection. Tokyopop, by Hajime Yodate & Yutaka Nanten, SC, 192 pg, b&w, \$9.99, Vol. 1 (of 2) avail. in March.

Fake Vol. 1. Sanami Matcho's *Fake*, a shounen-ai favorite, is the unlikely love story of two NYC cops — who both happen to be guys. Meet Ryo and Dee, two New York City cops with an attraction for action and for each other! When Ryo, a soft-spoken officer, joins the NYPD's 27th precinct, he's soon partnered up with Dee, a cocky, confident cop with attitude to spare. Ryo & Dee are called in to investigate the activities of some two bit street punk. But when Dee is kidnapped, Ryo must put all of his skill and straining to the test to get his partner back in one piece. Their partnership is on the line as electrified emotions raise questions of attractions within them that are difficult to ignore. *Fake* began appearing in tankoubon (graphic novel) form in Japan from Biblos in 1994 and ended its 7-volume run in 2000. Tokyopop, by Sanami Matcho, SC, 5x7, 192 pg, b&w, \$9.99, avail. on 5/06/03.

Let's Stay Together Forever. Love and Rockers! High school cliques can get very exclusive and people will seldom cross the lines. Will Leo the metalhead and Ayami the shy girl realize that they were made for each other, or will social dogmas keep them apart? A tale of love, loss, hairspray! Japanese style right to left format book! CPM Manga, Story and Art by Tomoko Taniguchi, CMX 62701G, b&w, 5.5" X 8" (pocket size), 192 pg, \$15.95, 3+, avail. on 04-02-03.

Metropolis. From Osamu Tezuka, creator of *Astro Boy*, comes *Metropolis*, the legendary 1949 graphic novel that inspired the animated fame that floored audiences and critics alike. In a not-so-far-off future a beautiful, artificially created girl — unaware of her non-human background — searches for the non-existent parents she believes must exist, wandering alone in a world populated by humans and by the slave-driven robots who serve them. Tezuka's key theme of the nature of humanity in a technological society is framed in bold relief, as well as his wry allegorical observations of the Cold War that was escalating when he created *Metropolis*. A brilliant work of wit and wisdom (and guest-starring some friends you may recognize from *Astro Boy*!) *Metropolis* is one of graphic fiction's most enduring tales, available for the first time in an English-language edition. Dark Horse, story & art by Osamu Tezuka, b&w, 168pg, SC, 4 1/2" x 7", \$13.95, avail. on 4/09/03.

Phoenix: Dawn, Vol. 1. The previous volume, *Phoenix: A Tale of the Future*, was the second part of Osamu Tezuka's epic life's work, the twelve-volume *Phoenix* saga. Now, we begin with the beginning: *Dawn* is both the first part of the saga and the earliest part of *Phoenix*'s story, which jumps by resonance and reincarnation between the ancient past and distant future! *A Tale of the Future* took place from 3404 A.D. to beyond the end of time; *Dawn* takes the reader back to 240 A.D. for Tezuka's struggle to draw forth a vision of the human truth from Japan's ancient myths. With sweeping battle scenes reminiscent of an Akira Kurosawa epic, Phoenix: Dawn is brought to America at last through the involvement of Frederik Schodt, the leading Western authority on "God of Manga" Osamu Tezuka, creator of *Astro Boy*, *Adolf*, and *Black Jack*. Viz, CTPH002, story & art by Osamu Tezuka, b&w, 344 pg, \$15.95 US (\$26.50 Can), avail. on 3/5/03.

• MANGA NEWS •

Tokyopop announced an avalanche of new manga titles: *Baby Birth*, *Brain Powered*, *Brigadoon*, *Kindaichi Case Files*, *NieA Under 7*, *Saber Marionette J*, *Wild Act*, as well as the Yaoi series *Gravitation* and *Fake!* (Source: ANN).

Viz, LLC's Graphic Novel *Inu-Yasha* Volume 1 was identified by Nielsen BookScan as the number one graphic novel sold in the US during the holiday rush ending December 29, 2002. Viz plans to relaunch *Inu-Yasha* (along with several other "Second Edition") in April in a smaller format and at a lesser price of \$8.95.

AKIRA CINEMANGA VOL. 3 (/5)	GN	TP	14.99	Apr
ANGEL [Erika Sakurazawa]	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
ANIMERICA EXTRA VOL. 6 [manga anthology]	4-5	VIZ	4.95	Mar/Apr
ASTRO BOY VOL. 14-15	GN	DH	9.95	Apr 30/May28
BATTLE ROYALE #1 (/5)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
BIG O (THE) #2	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
BIG O (THE) Part 4	1-2	(/4) VIZ	3.50	Mar/Apr
BLACK CROW	GN	IC	13.95	Mar
BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL (#77-78): FALL FROST	5-6	(/6) DH	2.99	Mar 12/Apr 9
CARDCAPTOR SAKURA VOL. 4 (/6)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
CHICAGO #2: BOOK OF JUSTICE	GN	VIZ	15.95	Apr
CHOBITS VOL 5 (/8)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
COWBOY BEBOP: SHOOTING STAR #1 (/2)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
CRAYON SHIN-CHAN #4	GN	C1	9.95	Apr
CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON #3	GN	C1	13.95	Mar
DANCE TILL TOMORROW #6	GN	VIZ	12.95	Apr
DEMON DIARY #1 (/4)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
DIGIMON #2 (/12)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
DRAGON KNIGHTS VOL. 7 (/17)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
DRAGONBALL / DBZ 2nd EDITION #1-7	GN	VIZ	7.95	Apr
FAKE #1 (/7)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
FIREFIGHTER!: DAIGO OF FIRE COMPANY M SPECIAL ED.	GN	VIZ	9.95	Mar
FIST OF THE NORTH STAR: MASTER EDITION #3	GN	GS	14.95	Mar
FIVE STAR STORIES [SC, 9x12, 96pg, b&w]	10-11	TOY	9.98	Mar/Apr
FUSHIGI YUGI #8	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
FUSHIGI YUGI 2nd EDITION #1-2	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
GATEKEEPERS VOL. 2 (/7)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
GHOST IN THE SHELL 2: MAN-MACHINE INTERFACE	5	DH	3.50	Apr 2
GTO Vol. 11 (/25)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
GUNDAM THE ORIGIN VOL. 5	GN	VIZ	7.95	Apr
GUNDAM WING GROUND ZERO 2nd EDITION	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
HAPPY MANIA #1 (/5)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
HEAVEN SWORD & DRAGON SABRE #6	GN	C1	13.95	Apr
HYPER DOLLS #4	GN	IC	15.95	Apr
INITIAL D VOL. 6 (/23)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
INUYASHA 2nd EDITION #1-2	GN	VIZ	8.95	Apr
INUYASHA: A FEUDAL FAIRY TALE VOL. 13	GN	VIZ	8.95	Mar
INUYASHA VOL. 2 (/4)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
IRIN WOK JANI #4	GN	C1	9.95	Apr
JUNKO MIZUNO'S HANSEL AND GRETEL	GN	VIZ	15.95	Apr
KARE KANO VOL. 3 (/13)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
LEGENDARY COUPLE (THE) #4	GN	C1	13.95	Mar
LET'S STAY TOGETHER FOREVER	GN	CPM	15.95	Apr
LOVE HINA VOL. 10 (/14)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
LUPIN III VOL. 3 (/14)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
MAN OF MANY FACES #1 (/2)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
MARMALADE BOY VOL. 6 (/8)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
MARS VOL. 10 (/15)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
MEGA DRAGON & TIGER #4	GN	C1	13.95	Mar
MEGATOKYO #1	GN	IC	9.95	Mar
METROPOLIS	GN	DH	13.95	Apr 9
MIRACLE GIRLS VOL. 9 (/9)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
NEON GENESIS EVANGELION #7	GN	VIZ	15.95	Apr
OH MY GODDESS #96: THE PHANTOM RACER	1	(/4) DH	2.99	Mar 5
OH MY GODDESS: MYSTERY CHILD	GN	DH	18.95	May 7
ONEGAI TEACHER: PLEASE TEACHER #2	GN	C1	9.95	Apr
PHOENIX VOL. 2: DAWN	GN	VIZ	15.95	Mar
POWER RANGERS NINJA STORM CINEMANGA #1 (/3)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
PRIEST VOL. 6 (/9)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
RAGNAROK VOL. 7	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
RAIJIN COMICS [Weekly manga anthology! 214pg]	13-20	GS	4.95	Mar/Apr
RANMA 1/2 2nd EDITION #1-2	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
RAVE VOL. 2 (/18)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
RAYEARTH SPECIAL BOX SET COLL. #2 (/2)	GN	TP	29.99	Mar
REALITY CHECK #2 (/2)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
REBIRTH VOL. 2 (/11)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
REBOUND #1 (/10)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
RECORD OF LODOSS WAR: WELCOME TO LODOSS ISLAND #1	GN	CPM	15.95	Apr
RED PROWLING DEVIL #4	GN	C1	9.95	Apr
SAINT LEGEND #4	GN	C1	13.95	Mar
SAMURAI LEGEND	GN	CPM	15.95	Mar
SCRYED VOL. 2 (/5)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
SHADOW STAR: NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH	GN	DH	14.95	Apr 9
SHAOLIN SISTERS VOL. 2 (/5)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
SHONEN JUMP VOL. 1 ! [manga anthology, 256pg!]	5-6	VIZ	4.95	Mar/Apr
SILENT MOBIUS VOL. 10: BLOOD	GN	VIZ	12.95	Mar
SKULL MAN VOL. 6 (/7)	GN	TP	9.99	Apr
STORM RIDER #11	GN	C1	13.95	Mar
STORY OF THE TAO #4	GN	C1	13.95	Apr
SUPER MANGA BLAST! [manga anthology]	31	DH	5.99	Apr 30
TENCHI MUYO! THE ALL NEW VOL. 1	GN	VIZ	8.95	Mar
TOKYO MEW MEW #1 (/4)	GN	TP	9.99	Mar
VAGABOND VOL. 5	GN	VIZ	9.95	Mar
VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU #5: INTRUSION	GN	IC	15.95	Mar
VAMPIRE YUI VOL. 4	GN	IC	15.95	Apr
VAMPIRE YUI VOL. 5	7	IC	2.95	Mar
X/1999 #10: FUGUE	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
X/1999 2nd EDITION #1-2	GN	VIZ	9.95	Apr
YOU & ME VOL. 2-3	GN	IC	11.95	Mar/Apr
ZOIDS: CHAOTIC CENTURY VOL. 14	GN	VIZ	5.95	Mar