

cereal:geek[®]

animation of the eighties



OSCAR
(GABRIEL)

issue ten
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editorial

And in the blink of an eye issue ten of **cereal:geek** is already here! Yes, although the last few years have been a little slow with regards to the output of **cereal:geek**, none can deny that 2013 is shaping up to be a good year for the best (and only) magazine dedicated to the many awesome cartoons of the eighties!

With this batch of eight (backdated) new issues (nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen, and sixteen) it was always my intention to release two issues back to back, in order to make up for the lack of **cereal:geek** activity over the last few years, and hopefully, eventually, ensure that the year on the cover actually matches up with the year the magazine is released! And given that the theme of this issue is the same as the one in the previous issue, it makes even more sense to have them come out back-to-back...

This issue continues with the subject of how Japanese animation influenced western animation during the eighties with the **East Meets West** theme! The second part of a mighty forty-eight page article examines how the relationship between east and west flourished, with many visual examples of what constitutes "anime influences". As I mentioned before this article was a true labor of love formulated by Jon Talpur and myself, with David Monid also contributing his knowledge. And, as before, the visual guide which you will see accompany the article, was the result of me capturing tens of thousands of images from a variety of animated cartoons of the eighties, and choosing the best images to highlight each and every point made.

The **East Meets West** theme of this issue became somewhat of a monster (in a good way)! We always knew it was going to be a rather large article, but we had no idea that it would be forty-eight pages across two issues! As a result there were numerous other theme-related articles that I was unable to squeeze into this issue. Fortunately, you will see these articles appear in issue fifteen, which will be the third **East Meets West**-themed issue of **cereal:geek**!

Although pre-orders are still coming in, I truly believe that issues eleven and twelve will be published post-September, with thirteen and fourteen following soon after! There's a chance that fifteen and sixteen will be out before the end of the year. If they fail to appear, they will be published early next year!

Now stop reading this editorial and enjoy all the delights that issue ten has to offer!

James "Busta Toons" Eatock



The cover of **cereal:geek** issue ten was illustrated by Oscar Celestini.

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If you have any **comments**, or if you would like to **contribute** the next issue please send an email to:
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NEWS

FROM THE EIGHTIES

ISSUE TEN - SECOND QUARTER 1983 - 30p - www.cerealgeek.com

TEENAGE THING

Fantastic Four member Benjamin Grimm (more commonly known as The Thing) has recently spoken out over the rumors of an animated series which depicts him as the alter-ego of a normal everyday teenager. "Yeah, I've heard about this cartoon", stated

Grimm. He continued, "Don't get me wrong, I'm glad that someone as strange-looking as me can be the sole lead on a cartoon. However, I find it insulting that this kid can change back to a human. I sure wish I could do that."

Continued on Page Six

THE "REAL" EMBARRASSEMENT

There were embarrassing scenes for all parties involved last night outside New York's most desired hotspot The Ritz. The ghostly appearance of a recently deceased popstar had prompted management to call in the Ghostbusters. However, during the confusion two calls were made, as two groups of Ghostbusters arrived on the scene to remove the ghost. Arriving mere seconds before, the "original" Ghostbusters consisting of Jake Kong, Eddie Spenser, and gorilla Tracy, began preparing their ghostbusting equipment. The group were alerted to the appearance of the "real" Ghostbusters seconds later when the siren's of their transport could be heard approaching. As the "real" Ghostbusters (consisting of only Peter Venkman and Egon Spengler on this occasion) emerged from their vehicle the "original" Ghostbusters barred their way. Things took a turn for the worse when Peter Venkman could be heard to question, "You still bring that stinking gorilla with you? I'm surprised you even let him off the leash!" To which Jake Kong was heard to reply, "I was going to ask the same about your secretary!", at which point Egon Spengler leapt towards Jake Kong in a rare moment of anger displayed by the respected scientist. Moments later Tracy the gorilla made his

presence felt by protecting his colleagues and barring the path of the "real" Ghostbusters. As Venkman and Spengler attempted to pass the large gorilla, Tracy savagely roared in their general direction. Seconds after that a physical confrontation occurred with fists thrown, hair pulled, and paranormal busting beams scattering the gathered crowds. Peter Venkman, speaking from his hospital bed last night had this to say, "Like it or not, that ridiculous gorilla is still a large, oversized, muscle-bound, savage animal, with sharp teeth, and the strength of ten men! Egon and I should've considered those facts before confronting the so-called Ghostbusters!" Egon Spengler, in the bed next to Dr. Venkman was unavailable for comment, as his jaw was broken in the fracas, and currently remains bandaged. Jake Kong later stated that this was to be considered a victory for justice. "Ever since those guys illegally took our company name people have considered them the "real" Ghostbusters, when we in fact have been around far longer." In spite of Jake's words they were unable to locate the ghost they had been asked to remove.

Continued on Page Three

MEGA-BYTE

If an effort to gain public support for his Decepticon cause on the planet Cybertron, leader Megatron has opened his own fast food restaurant just outside of Iacon, a former Autobot base of operations. Megatron was quoted as saying, "With the Decepticons ever-increasing dominance over the planet I think I can encourage more Cybertronians to join us." Many think that Megatron may be onto a winner with many of the Autobots having departed for the two newly constructed moonbases. Megatron continued, "We have a wealth of choice on the menu, and we hope to keep this restaurant open for a millennia. Only someone with a planet-sized appetite could put me out of business!"

by James Eatock

THE CAPEMAN VANISH-ETH

Metro City is in a state of confusion as to the disappearance of Inspector Gadget's ally Corporal Capeman. Having foiled Dr. Claw's most recent scheme Capeman was last seen heading to his house just over a week ago. Inspector Gadget recalled, "I remember dropping him off outside his house around about midday. Later that same day, Penny and Brain went to visit him and were gone for hours. When Penny and Brain returned they were covered in red paint, and said that Capeman had been redecorating.

Which is strange as he never struck me as the creative type" He continued, "Ever since Corporal Capeman's disappearance everyone has been affected in different ways. Penny refuses to talk about it, and the other day I saw our dog Brain burying something large in the back garden. Penny assured me it was just a large collection of bones that Brain had recently discovered." "Have no fear though, I'm an Inspector, and I, along with my various working wondrous gadgets, are always on duty," concluded the Inspector.

Photographer Adam Moore caught the moment when the "real" Ghostbusters were confronted by Tracy of the "original" Ghostbusters.



Pamela Hickey & Dennys McCoy

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS

(Premises)

1. A door-to-door cosmetics magnate is actually a scheming witch, whose salespeople (who now include Janine) are turned into mindless slaves. Her reasons become apparent at the national convention for the sales force.

2. A cute, sweet little ghost (a la "Casper") has everyone conned -- allowing only the skeptical Venkman and a jealous Slimer to see his true nature; that of a vicious, prank-playing poltergeist.

3. A door-to-door vacuum cleaner salesman is actually a SUCUBUS who is collecting the souls of unfortunate clients in his ELECTRA 2000 DELUXE DUST SUCKER vacuum cleaner. Once he gets the required 200 souls he will be promoted to the status of minor demon.

4. A misceivous WATER SPRITE reigns havoc on New York causing water spouts in Central Park Lake, and sea serpents at an Olympic swimming trials.

5. A night of extreme "pigging out" with Ray and Slimer causes the perfect psychic situation for the entrance of the SIN OF GLUTTONY back into the physical world.

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OLD VERSION

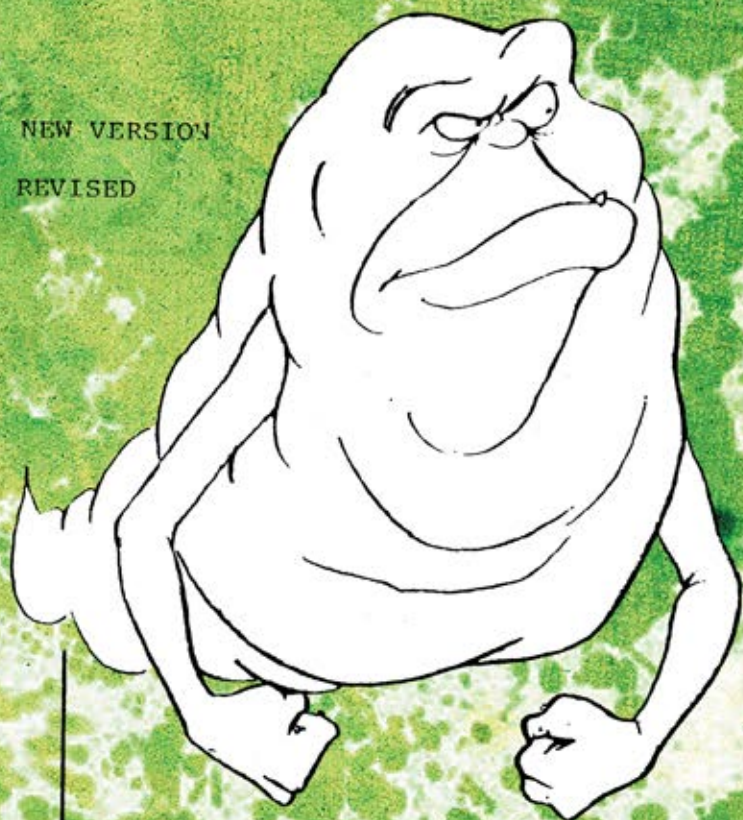


1987 SEASON

NEW VERSION

REVISED

FINAL REVISED
DATE: MAY 22, 1987



1988 SEASON - GHOSTBUSTERS II

THE NEW SLIMER HAS A TAIL
WHICH TRAILS OFF BEHIND HIM.
HE IS ALSO MORE FLEXIBLE AND
HE CAN STRETCH AND BEND IN A
VERY "CARTOONEY" STYLE.

THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS II

SHOW # 140000 MODEL # STOCK

TITLE THE REAL GHOSTBUSTERS II

ARTIST SLIMER - BEFORE AND AFTER

Venkman, Peter

Real Name: Peter Venkman

Nicknames: Dr. V., Slim Venkman

Other Current Aliases: None

Occupation: Former university student, now Ghostbuster

Identity: No dual identity

Legal Status: Citizen of the United States with no criminal record

Former Aliases: Venk-Man

Place of Birth: Brooklyn, New York

Marital Status: Single

Known Relatives: Unidentified Mother (deceased), Charlie Venkman (father), Uncle Alfred

Group Affiliation: Ghostbusters

Base of Operations: Ghostbusters HQ

First Appearance: *Ghostbusters* (1984)

History: Dr. Peter Venkman's father was, and remains, a schemer and confidence man who would frequently go off to seek his fortune. Sometimes Mr. Venkman took his wife and son along in tow, but frequently was just as likely to go away on his own for extended periods. Due to his father's numerous absences Peter became jaded at a young age, particularly towards holidays such as Christmas. Before he was eighteen Peter had lived in numerous places all across the United States of America, but finally found stability living in the New York borough of Brooklyn, his place of birth. Peter's mother passed away during this time.

During his college years Peter was member of the Tri Kappa Bru fraternity, and achieved a great level of notoriety for memorably running his underwear up a flagpole whilst still wearing them.

Years later he would attend Columbia University where he obtained doctorates in parapsychology and psychology. It was during this time that he met Raymond Stantz and Egon Spengler, students with a high degree of intelligence. Introducing them to one another the pair's enthusiasm in fringe sciences propelled their studies and careers forward, much to Peter's joy, finding that associated with the pair he could do minimal work.

The three would go on to become instructors and researchers at the university in Weaver Hall, but were fired in 1984. At Peter's prompting, the three went into private business as Ghostbusters. With the addition of fourth member Winston Zeddemore the team saved New York from Gozer the Gozerian and a disaster of biblical proportions.

As the years passed Peter and his fellow Ghostbusters found themselves regularly called upon to rid the country, and at times the world, of the threat of paranormal activity. To this day the team have removed hundreds of ghostly infestations and saved the world from numerous apocalyptic threats.

For a brief time Peter was imbued with super powers after accidentally stumbling into one of Egon's experiments. Calling himself Venk-Man, Peter used his powers to aid his friends during their assignments.

Though he is constantly telling jokes at his co-workers' expense, Peter is close friends with his fellow Ghostbusters and enjoys their company outside of work. He is much less amicable towards their resident ghost Slimer, who prevents him at every turn from having clean bed sheets and a stocked fridge. It is because of Slimer that Peter periodically rents apartments rather than continue to live in the firehouse.

Peter continues to bust ghosts, promote himself and the business, and trade on his fame for dates with pretty women and discount dry-cleaning.

Height: 6' 1"

Weight: 190 lbs

Eyes: Blue

Hair: None

Strength Level: Peter possesses the normal human strength of a man of his age, height, and build who engages in moderate regular exercise.

Abilities: Peter has a great deal of scientific expertise, and at a push can fix certain pieces of equipment used to capture ghosts. He is also a competent juggler, and smooth talker.



THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE
NEIGHTIES
UNIVERSE

by Ross May - illustration by Nathan Baertsch - colors by Andrew Cramer



TOP TEN WITCHES

Cartoons of the eighties were rife with superheroes, cute animals, and giant robots. But in the darkness of night there also lurked disciples of the forbidden arts. Through the use of arcane incantations and magical rites, they caused all manner of mystical mayhem.

10. UNNAMED WITCH

The New Adventures of Mighty Mouse

Mighty's Mouse's pal Scrappy runs into the Tooth Fairy who explains that she isn't feeling well but needs to visit one last house. Scrappy agrees to go in her stead, but the tooth he must obtain resides in the mouth of a sleeping, green-faced witch. Scrappy pulls the tooth prompting the witch to unleash her vengeance upon the poor rodent. Among other things, she makes a dollar bill come to life and attack him, sends him to a confusing M.C. Escher-esque world, and makes his hat talk like Paul Lynde.

9. CIRCE

Thundarr the Barbarian

Circe is a withered old crone with one eye. Five centuries ago, she was placed under a curse which would turn her to stone if she ever left her island prison. Circe realizes that since the curse solely affects her body, she can use her powers to transfer her mind into the body of another in order to escape the island. Seeing the youthful and beautiful Ariel, Circe targets her as the victim of this insidious magical transfer.

8. HOGATHA

The Smurfs

The villainous Hogatha caused problems for the Smurfs on several occasions. She has a habit of snorting when she speaks and is completely bald, though she wears a red wig. Hogatha has a big, warty nose and is quite repulsive, though she believes that she is gorgeous. Her main goal is to find a strapping beau by using her magical powers to attract a man. She has two pet vultures named Harold and Edgar, and these sinister birds serve as her main mode of transportation.

7. QUEEN AZURA

The New Adventures of Flash Gordon

Azura is the witch-queen of the forbidden city of Syk. With many powers at her command, she is justifiably feared by the populace of Mongo. Her servants include the cruel Tahl and the group of warriors known as the Magic Men. Azura is under the delusional conviction that Flash Gordon is actually her long-lost lover Gor Daahn, who once sat upon the throne of Syk.

6. LADY BANE

Gummi Bears

Lady Bane is an evil witch with a refined accent, and she is one of the Gummi Bears' main antagonists. She is extremely vain, and once became furious when she broke a fingernail. We learn that she is very old and must use magic to retain her youthful appearance. Lady Bane is served by the feral Troggles who are often at the receiving end of her outbursts. Duke Igthorn is infatuated with the witch but his love is unrequited. Lady Bane craves power above all else and plans to use her Gummi Medallion to help her attain this goal. However, she cannot use the Medallion until she learns the secrets of Gummi magic.

5. KESTREL

The Real Ghostbusters

This particular crone was imprisoned in a crystal ball by Eli Spengler, Egon's ancestor, with help from a group of pilgrims in the 1600s. When Kestrel is freed in the present day, she seeks revenge against the descendants of those who imprisoned her. Inspired by the cackling crones of fairy tales and by the Wicked Witch of the West, Kestrel's crazed laughter fills the air as she rides about on her broom. Kestrel has no true form and must take possession of a human host in order to achieve her evil ends.

4. SHOKOTI

He-Man and the Masters of the Universe

While Shokoti does not appear in "House of Shokoti" Part 1, her presence is felt throughout. When the alluring, blue-skinned witch finally emerges in the second part, she is revealed to have very evil intentions. She plans to perform a sacrifice in order to awaken a powerful, demonic beast which will plunge Eternia into eternal darkness. The dark witch also terrorizes the young boy Stanlan for good measure. Shokoti is very much drawn from the pantheon of classic horror, and the episode stands as one of the most frightening shows of the series.

3. MADAME RAZZ

She-Ra, Princess of Power

Not all animated witches are evil and, in fact, some of them are very good indeed. A stalwart member of the Great Rebellion, the zany Madame Razz is a good witch who helps She-Ra and her friends fight against the tyranny of the Evil Horde. While Madame Razz is very old and quite senile, her scatter-brained demeanor belies great wisdom and compassion. She is one of the few who know that Adora is really She-Ra, and is always ready to help out with a spell (though she often forgets the words to said spell).

2. SHADOW WEAVER

She-Ra, Princess of Power

The very powerful and very evil Horde witch known as Shadow Weaver is quite possibly the most frightening sorceress of this decade. With her raspy, wheezing voice, glowing yellow eyes, and hidden disfigured countenance, Shadow Weaver is the stuff of children's nightmares. Once a student of the good wizard Norwyn, Weaver betrayed her friends in exchange for the immense power offered to her by Hordak. Shadow Weaver possesses a vast amount of dark, mystical knowledge and is a master manipulator. It was Shadow Weaver who used magic to cloud Adora's mind in order to keep her under Horde control.



1. EVIL-LYN

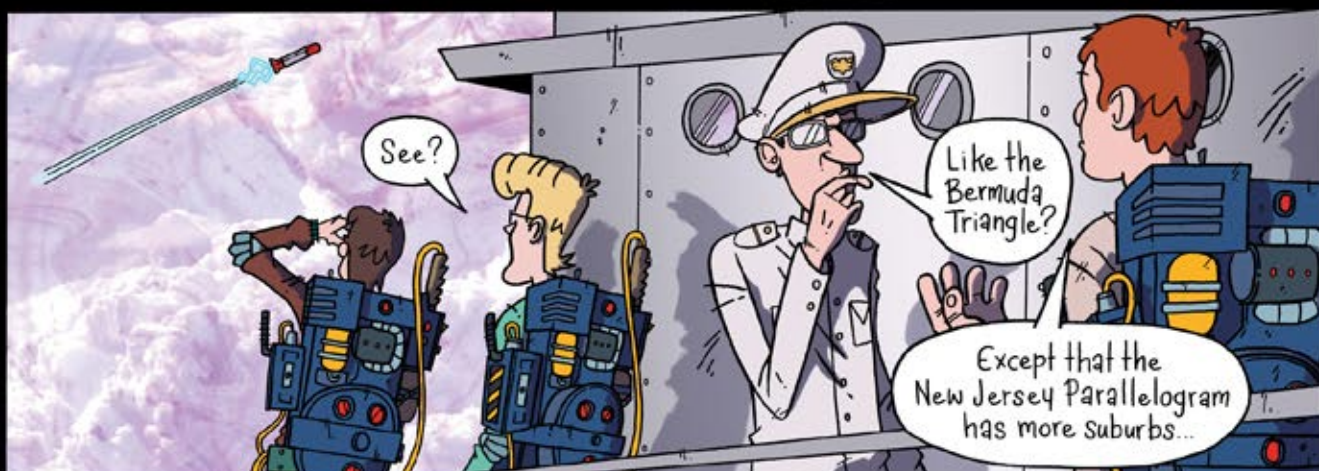
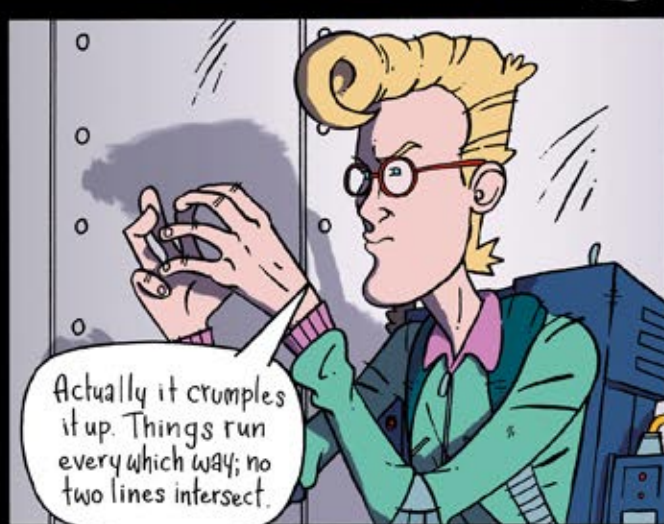
He-Man and the Masters of the Universe

Evil-Lyn is Skeletor's second-in-command for good reason. She possesses the black magic, the cunning, and the style to cause serious problems for the Heroic Warriors of Eternia. Evil-Lyn is far more intelligent than Skeletor's other Evil Warriors and wields formidable powers of darkness which she uses to deceive and confound the denizens of Eternia. However, Evil-Lyn is as duplicitous as she is powerful and secretly plots behind Skeletor's back. In the classic episode "The Witch and The Warrior", she is forced to form an alliance with Teela and reveals that she seeks to take Skeletor's power for herself. As one of the most memorable and important characters in the *Masters of the Universe* mythos, Evil-Lyn takes top honors in our list of top ten witches in 1980s animation.

STAYTE OF THE EIGHTIES

For your entertainment **James Stayte** picks a specific scene from a cartoon of the eighties and transforms it into a comic book! Featured here is a scene from **The Real Ghostbusters** episode "Venkman's Ghost Repellers".







EAST meets WEST

THE INDUSTRY OF OUTSOURCING: PART 2

by Jon Talpur - with additional content by James Eatock and David Monid

ANIME 101 visual guide by James Eatock

Continuing on from the last issue Jon Talpur explores the influence of Japanese animation on the western world.

Transformers comes to an end

1987 not only saw the debut of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, but also witnessed the final episodes of *The Transformers* produced for its truncated three-episode-long fourth season. As the culmination of the trend begun in season three of the series, these three episodes were all animated by AKOM in Korea. Unusually however, this was not the end of the *Transformers* animated series, as the franchise's popularity in Japan ensured that upon the conclusion of the U.S.-produced third season of the series, all-new episodes were produced by Toei exclusively for Japan. This was by far the most striking example of U.S.-originated concepts as fodder for Japanese television animation. In the event, new Japanese-exclusive episodes of *The Transformers* were produced through to the end of 1989 and ended with an OVA in 1990.

Foreign episode exclusives were not limited to the *Transformers* this year however, as at this time, World Events Productions imported the animé series *Star Musketeer Bismarck* as *Saber Rider and the Star Sheriffs*. As the original animé series had typically featured more than its fair share of death and destruction, *Saber Rider* was subject to a lot of scripting and editing changes in order to make the series more palatable for U.S. television.

Aiding these changes were the production of no less than six completely original episodes that emphasized the changes made in the U.S. version of the series. These new episodes, while still animated by the same production company back in Japan, still nevertheless featured slightly different character designs than in the original Japanese episodes, depicting the characters looking a little older.

Cost Effective Korea

By 1988, with the winding down of bulk-ordered series produced for syndication, the number of series animated in Japan was noticeably less than had been seen in previous years. The 1988 *Superman* series from Ruby-Spears proved to be Toei's final outsourced production of the decade, the

studio deciding to concentrate more on home-grown efforts. DIC continued to outsource animation to Japan through 1989, most conspicuously with early episodes of their revival of *G.I. Joe*, but by then they were beginning to become the exception rather than the rule, with U.S. producers finally turning away from Japanese studios towards more cost effective South Korean studios. One of the decade's final noteworthy series to have its animation produced in Japan was Jetlag's *The New Adventures of He-Man*, from former DIC producer Jean Chalopin. Yet even in this series there are obvious signs of some episodes being outsourced to Korea, much to their visual detriment.

Japanese Animation: The Pros

When analyzing the outsourced animation that was so prevalent during the cartoons of the eighties, it is clear that it was with the action/adventure shows that Japanese animation really proved its worth. This is not to say that the Disney-esque or more cartoony shows did not benefit from outsourcing. If anything the Japanese directors and animators were so willing to stick to the more rounded designs seen in those particular shows that their style never really emerged, although technically it was there for all to see.

But with the action/adventure shows the Japanese directors and animators were able to showcase their style on a westernized production. Series that were in danger of featuring stilted movements and bland action sequences looked supremely dynamic and flourished in the hands of multiple talented artists and studios.

In Japan, during the seventies and particular eighties, many science-fiction themed animé series debuted, complete with the pre-requisite detailed artwork for spaceships and other futuristic technology. It was with such similar U.S. series that Japanese artistry could truly be appreciated. Environments which would have been rendered with simple detail by other studios were resplendent with copious amounts of detail seen in Japanese animation of the era. Japan's bubble economy during the eighties made it possible for such attention detail due to the amount of money available for such productions, both inside and outside of the country.

Japanese Animation: The Cons

There were however some drawbacks, due

ANIME 101: BLACK AREAS

Rendering areas of black on characters in an animation sequence in order to determine shadows or a metallic surface was an incredibly time consuming technique. Thankfully certain high quality episodes took the time and effort to create a sense of realism; although on many occasions the appearances of black areas on characters in an episode were simply quite random, and more than likely a stylistic choice by the animator.

The Transformers "Day of the Machines"



The Transformers "Microbots"



SilverHawks "Switch"



Galaxy Rangers "Rusty and the Boys"



Visionaries "Feryl Steps Out"



largely in part to the tight schedule to which cartoons produced in the U.S. often had to adhere to.

Japanese television series were almost exclusively weekly productions, which allowed animators to take their time, ensuring any given animé series would remain as visually consistent as possible. Suddenly, with the syndication boom in the U.S., episodes had to be animated at a far greater pace so that shows could effectively air five days a week for continuous broadcast. This increased schedule put a lot of pressure on all Japanese animation companies, who could not handle the entire workload themselves. This led to a variety of solutions, none of which were particularly attractive to either the U.S. studios or the viewing public.

The most common solution would be that certain U.S. series were subsequently outsourced to a variety of studios, both in Japan and Korea. This resulted in episodes differing greatly from one another in both visual style and the quality of animation. One episode of *MASK* could look dramatically different to another episode of the same series. Worth noting is that the episodes "Assault on Liberty", "Vanishing Point", "The Lost Riches of Rio" and "The Lippizaner Mystery" were of a much higher quality than the rest of the series.

Another common solution, which also had its own problems, is that a U.S.-based studio, such as Marvel Productions, would outsource an entire season of a show to one company, but find that the outsourced company, due to their own workload, would hand out one episode to a variety of animation teams, resulting in a production of varying quality.

Overseas animation studios operated on a tier system, with the A-team representing the company's top talent, the B-team representing good but not necessarily great artists, and the C-team featuring only passable artistry, with many artists learning the craft of animation. The end result would be that the style of an episode, or even a scene, would fluctuate wildly, resulting in some questionable visuals. Notable examples of this can be seen in the first season of *The Transformers*, entirely animated by Toei (though at times you wouldn't know it), and *The Adventures of the Galaxy Rangers*, animated by Tokyo Movie Shinsha.

In some ways, it was a crapshoot as to which internal team animated each episode, but the results are apparent when watching both series. Some episodes would feature fluid, on-model animation, and others would feature some very awkward animation, yet still ultimately animated within the same animation studio. Together with some series utilizing alternating animation studios, this often made for inconsistent artistry with outsourced shows.

In this respect, Filmation's admittedly rigid house standard at least ensured that all their productions would remain visually consistent from the first episode to the last. With an episode of *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe* you knew the style of animation you were going to get from episode to episode. And when the director allowed the animators to venture outside of the stock system you knew you would be treated to some fantastic visuals.

In stark contrast, *The Real Ghostbusters* series could treat you to an episode that was visually breathtaking, or one that would make you want to change the channel! For example, when seeing an episode such as the much-championed "When Halloween Was Forever", one finds themselves

watching it with their hands over their eyes because the animation, when compared to an episode such as the exquisitely-animated "The Cabinet of Calamari", is truly awful. Thankfully, for *The Real Ghostbusters*, the storytelling was the strongest aspect of the series. But not all cartoons of the eighties were so fortunate.

Another, perhaps unavoidable problem with outsourcing any animation abroad, was the language barrier, especially back in the eighties. Instant communication between production teams in the U.S. and Japan was difficult to say the least. This often led to animation coming back from Japan rife with errors, some of which would leave the U.S. producers scratching their heads. Producers would have to leave money aside in order to have the Japanese studios re-animate such error-laden scenes for use in the final broadcast episode, obviously at an accrued extra cost. This is why syndicated series such as *The Transformers* are filled with errors, while any given Filmation series is comparatively error-free, thanks to all the work being carried out in-house.

A perfect example of what an error-laden episode could look like on its first animation pass can be seen on the Rhino DVD release of *The Transformers* episode "Heavy Metal War", which showcases a multitude of first take animation errors. We see everything from characters rendered and painted incorrectly, to errors in both camera positioning and movement, and even cels placed on top of one another. On a few occasions we even see the shots confusingly animated backwards! A good portion of that particular episode (and many others of that initial first season) had to be reanimated for final broadcast, and even then they were still not completely error-free.

The Studios

Some good comparative examples can be seen with Toei's work on the weekly network series *Dungeons & Dragons* contrasted with their work on syndicated series *G.I. Joe* and *The Transformers*. Despite all three series being animated for the same production company back in the U.S., in this case Marvel Productions, *Dungeons & Dragons*, with its luxurious weekly pace, afforded the animators at Toei more time to craft the animation for each episode, with the consequent result of the episodes looking in general much nicer than their contemporary work on *G.I. Joe* and *The Transformers*.

With regards to the animation itself, only a couple of studios came close to complete visual consistency when working on U.S.-produced shows, and only one of those was a mainstream animé studio; Tokyo Movie Shinsha and their A-team of animators. It is easy to spot when TMS had their best team handle an episode of any series. Not only is the animation of high quality, but the characters are hardly ever drawn off-model in any given scene. And when an episode isn't of typically high-quality animation when compared to the rest of the series, it is often still far greater-looking than any piece of animation produced by a Korean studio of the time.

It is little wonder then that Tokyo Movie Shinsha were quickly contracted by Disney only a few years after subcontracting their services for foreign studios. Only TMS and their top team could hope to approach the required standards set by Disney for their television animation, and the Japanese studio

ANIME 101: BLACK AND WHITE CARD

The black and white card was employed for one frame and would often be utilized as part of a special effects sequence. Although it would occasionally showcase a point of impact, it would be used to highlight the previous frame, usually in relation to a blast of energy. The technique was incredibly effective as the human eye would see the one frame, but not long enough to question its appearance, resulting in a truly unique special effect.

ThunderCats "The Garden of Delights"



The Real Ghostbusters "Lost and Foundry"



SilverHawks "Fantascreen"



SilverHawks "One on One"



Galaxy Rangers "Showtime"



ANIME 101: BLACK, WHITE, AND RED CARD

This stylish technique, much like the black and white card, was employed for one frame and would dictate the point of impact during an animation sequence. The point of impact would be illustrated by the circle, with random lines connecting to it. Most commonly the background would be black with the red and white colors detailing the focal point. This technique was only utilized on episodes that had a much higher quality of animation.

The Transformers "Heavy Metal War"



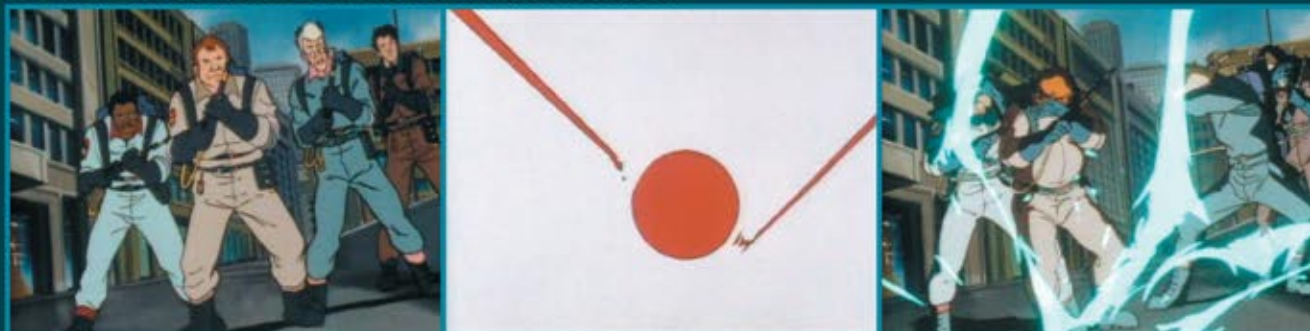
The Transformers "Call of the Primitives"



ThunderCats "Day of the Eclipse"



The Real Ghostbusters "Janine Melnitz, Ghostbuster"



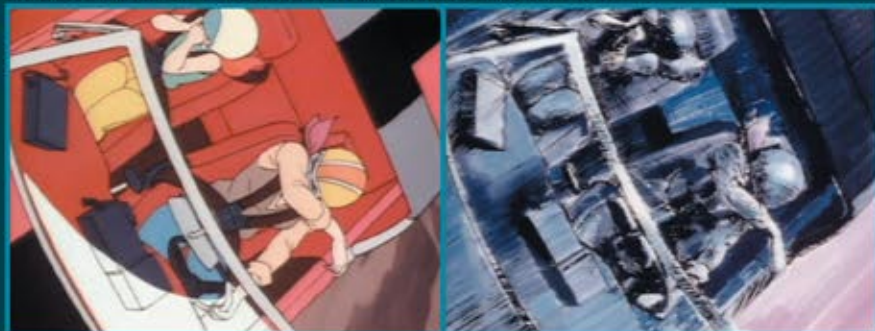
The New Adventures of He-Man "The Games"



ANIME 101: PASTEL POSTCARD MEMORIES

This technique created by the legendary Osamu Dezaki (which he called "postcard memories") is by far one of the most memorable aspects of Japanese animation. During a moment of heightened action or drama the animation sequence freezes and dissolves to an incredibly detailed stylized pastel painting. Dezaki himself worked on some of the Tokyo Movie Shinsha animated shows, such as *Mighty Orbs*, *Bionic Six*, and *Visionaries*.

Pole Position "The Chicken Who Knew Too Much"



In this dramatic scene Tess Darrett and her sister Daisy are racing along a mountainous road when their car (Wheels) hits a patch of oil. Tess is unable to maintain control of Wheels and the vehicle slides over the edge of the cliff. The animation sequence stops on this frame and dissolves to the illustration of the pair in distress, with the screen fading to black, thus ending act one.

ThunderCats "Excalibur"



Disguised as King Arthur, Mumm-Ra is allowed into the Cat's Lair, and challenges Lion-O to a duel. As he walks away having dominated the conversation King Arthur declares that he and Lion-O will meet at dawn. The animation freezes on this frame and transitions to the illustrated version incredibly fast. Notice how the illustration beautifully depicts a spotlight on Lion-O.

ThunderCats "ThunderCats-Ho!" Part Two



In this sequence Lion-O is fleeing for his life from the Mutants' latest vehicle the Fist Pounder. As he turns to confront the vehicle he sees one of the mighty fists bearing down on him. He raises his sword to shield himself, and the sequence then freezes transitioning to the illustration. The level of detail on this piece really showcases how this technique can emphasize a character's raw emotion.

Visionaries "Trail of the Three Wizards"



Having been sent to retrieve the treacherous Falkama, Leoric the Leader of the Spectral Knights locates the wizard during a stormy night. Upon announcing himself dramatically to Falkama, Leoric is illuminated in the darkness by a bolt of lightning. The use of the illustration on this occasion demonstrates the way in which one of these detailed pieces could be used as a special effect.

C.O.P.S. "The Case of the Blitz Attack"



In this episode, revolving around the friendship between police officer Bowser and his robotic dog Blitz, we see Bowser about to be gunned down at close range. Just at the shot is fired Blitz leaps in-between Bowser and the shooter, leading to this explosively striking illustration. Again, this piece shows how one of these beautifully detailed illustrations could be used as a special effect.



The Real Ghostbusters was a show that had a varying degree of animation styles.

naturally acquitted themselves quite well.

The other studio that maintained a surprising level of visual consistency with their U.S.-produced work was Pacific Animation Studio on behalf of Rankin/Bass. The studio itself was founded primarily in order to produce animation specifically for the U.S. market, in this case the shows *ThunderCats* and *SilverHawks*, as opposed to having their time divided by also providing animation for genuine home-grown animé shows.

Therefore on the face of it, starting your own satellite studio using Japanese artists in Japan would seem to have been a foolproof solution. But DIC's Jean Chalopin met with only limited success when he operated the same strategy with KK C&D, whose output didn't reach the visual heights of Pacific Animation or TMS at their very best.

There's no doubt that the big animation companies produced the most consistently top quality work. That said, studios like Sunrise and Ashi Productions (now Production Reed) produced animation that was equally as good. Ashi was not affiliated with a larger company and was one of the smaller studios of the time, but the work they produced was just as good as that produced by the bigger animation houses.

In some instances, smaller studios were given the opportunity to showcase their abilities and establish themselves not just overseas, but at home as well. World, Studio Juno, Swan Production, Shaft,

Studio Look, and Studio Giants were just some of the companies whose work on western productions elevated their status at the time, and enabled them to receive regular animated productions in their own respective countries.

Turning Japanese

Having a series animated by Japanese studios would result in unintended occurrences within the animation itself. U.S. producers were keen to ensure that the Japanese animators rendered any given series' characters as closely to their U.S.-drawn model sheets as possible. In the odd instance however, certain flourishes by the Japanese animators manifested themselves in depicting some series' characters in a distinct animé style. And this particular subject is how the premise of this very article began!

Turning Japanese - Design

Even though much of the animation production was outsourced to Japan by American studios during the eighties, the process of designing the characters was often kept in-house. However, with Japanese animation being utilized on American productions, and the influence it was having on the western artists at the time, it was only natural the animé character design influences crept into the cartoons of the eighties.

ANIME 101: EXPLOSIONS

Japanese studios have always been famed for their ability to render explosions like no other! Although American studios such as Filmation could create realistic-looking explosions, they could not match the sheer energy created by the Japanese animators. The incredibly detailed explosions were often animated by Toei, whereas the smooth, energetic, and sometimes colorful explosions could often be attributed to Tokyo Movie Shinsha.

The New Adventures of Zorro "Fort Ramon"



Centurions "Battle Beneath the Sea"



ThunderCats "Queen of 8 Legs"



The Real Ghostbusters "Egon's Ghost"



Galaxy Rangers "Psychocrypt"



The look of these characters was often a clear indication that Japanese animation studios were working on these American-produced shows. Not all characters were so obviously animé in appearance, but there were certain aspects to many of the westernized designs that the Japanese animators would play to, allowing them to make the characters appear as if they had just stepped out of a Japanese cartoon!

Marvel's *Dungeons & Dragons* featured quality animation by Toei throughout. As such it is no surprise to find a few animé-influenced character designs. Both Lorne from the episode "Odyssey of the Twelfth Talisman" and Karena from the episode "Citadel of Shadow" were clearly influenced by Japanese animation.

DIC shows more than most tended to feature many character and vehicles designs that would not look out of place in traditional animé productions, such as Penny from *Inspector Gadget*. Penny was one of the earliest designed characters in the world of western animation to display clear animé influences. This was largely in part due to DIC's close association with the Japanese animation studios they hired to work on the show.

Both Gloria Baker and Vanessa Warfield from the *MASK* series had rather obvious animé design elements, even if their male cast members did not. These design traits, most notably with their respective hairstyles, would become apparent when the animation for an episode was executed by one of the stronger animation teams, allowing the Japanese animators to express the characters in such a way that you would think you were watching an animé production!

By far the show with the most animé-looking characters was *Jayce and the Wheeled Warriors*. With this series more than any other DIC were quite happy to let the animé influences shine. Although the main cast were more westernized in design, many of the notable guest characters were clearly and unapologetically influenced by the Japanese character designers with little involvement from the west.

There are some noteworthy instances of the traditional animé look creeping into episodes of other series, such as *The Transformers*.

In his initial appearances the human ally of the Autobots, Spike, was more westernized in design. However, as the series progressed his appearance became more animé influenced as Toei firmly took hold of the look of the series. Chip Chase's first appearance in the season one episode "Roll For It" had him illustrated in many different styles, most memorably a couple of particular shots in which he looked like an extra from *Robotech*! The episode "Fire on the Mountain" was notable for the appearance of Luisa, a one-shot guest female character. Her appearance was startling in that, up until that point, no female character had been illustrated in such an overtly animé fashion. In addition the villagers that appear in the very same episode would not have looked out of place as extras in an episode of *Battle of the Planets*. The villainous Dr. Arkeville's appearances in the show were varying, but most memorably his typically animé haggard appearance with uneven teeth and large ape-like mouth reminded us who was animating this series. In the second season episode "Auto Bop" we see two young girls appear with big eyes and pointed chins. Even their hairstyles were commonplace of Japanese animation at the time.

And with regards to the robots in disguise themselves, the first season of the series had a few episodes animated by teams that tended to render the Autobots and Decepticons with a more traditionally animé stylizing, making them look both heroic and almost human at times. Their "human traits" would become evident through their movements, which often lacked the weight of an oversized robot. The second season would see Toei adhering more closely to the model sheets provided by Marvel Productions, as the emphasis to keep everything on model was strengthened; a strategy seen in most other outsourced series by that point.

That said, with regards to the human character designs, Spike, his father Sparkplug, Chip Chase, and most notably Carly were continuously illustrated with very angular animé design features, at least in the episodes with higher production values.

Of course one of the biggest benefits of Japanese animation on a western production is that they could take the most complicated design and animate it beautifully. Often western studios would greatly simplify designs in order to make them less of a chore to animate. However, it does appear numerous times throughout the eighties that the Japanese thrived on animating thoroughly detailed robots, vehicles, and ships. From the intricate designs of the Autobots and Decepticons in *The Transformers*, to the complicated vehicle transformations in the *MASK* series, no design was ever too hard for the animators to sink their teeth into.

By far one of the most striking pieces of detailed machinery animated was witnessed in the *ThunderCats* episode "Turmagar the Tuska". In this episode we see an oversized eight-legged mechanical war machine known as the Technopede. The level of detail on the machine is intricate, greatly showcased as Lion-O leaps about the machine in an effort to stop it. As the machine moves none of the detail is sacrificed, making it one of the most intricately animé looking scenes of the eighties.

Turning Japanese - Mannerisms

With Japanese animation studios working on western productions at the same time as their own shows it was only natural that numerous animé facial expressions would appear every once in a while. As with so many other Japanese stylizations these expressions would only be prevalent in the visually high quality episodes. Tokyo Movie Shinsha and Toei, working on shows as early as 1981, were already beginning to include animé expressions.

Japanese animation studios were provided with model sheets, many of which would include expression sheets. These sheets would show the animators what kinds of expressions the characters could have, often with a side note that they should not deviate from them. Even though the animators would make sure to keep the facial structure the same, the eyes and the mouths of the characters would be experimented with a great deal.

In the *Dungeons & Dragons* cartoon, being the more comedic members of the cast, both Presto and Eric were the characters most prone to animé-based expressions.

The cast of *MASK* were rarely ever illustrated with animé expressions. However, T-Bob, the robot sidekick, was illustrated with numerous animé-like expressions during the series. However, in the episodes

ANIME 101: TWO BACKGROUNDS FOR ONE SHOT

This wonderfully artistic touch would see the background of a specific shot painted twice, resulting in two backgrounds with very different palettes. A source of light in the animation sequence itself would initiate the director to switch between the two backgrounds, resulting in a dramatic shifting of contrast, effectively adding to the believability of the lighting. This technique is often overlooked due to its effectiveness.

ThunderCats "Out of Sight"



In this scene Lion-O commands the power of the Sword of Omens resulting in an impressively fast-timed and beautifully animated light show. In this instance the two backgrounds are painted slightly off register from one another, so the dramatic shift from the day background to the one of stark contrast is more striking, as the background itself appears to be changing position.

The Real Ghostbusters "Janine Melnitz, Ghostbuster"



When Janine arrives to confront the primal god Proteus, she decides to make a rather dramatic entrance by unleashing the fury of the proton beams! The second background is painted in such a way that the brush strokes themselves highlight the dramatic focal point of the proton beam as it strikes the door. Also the shift in the color palette compliments the iridescent hot white glow of the beam.

SilverHawks "Sky-Shadow"



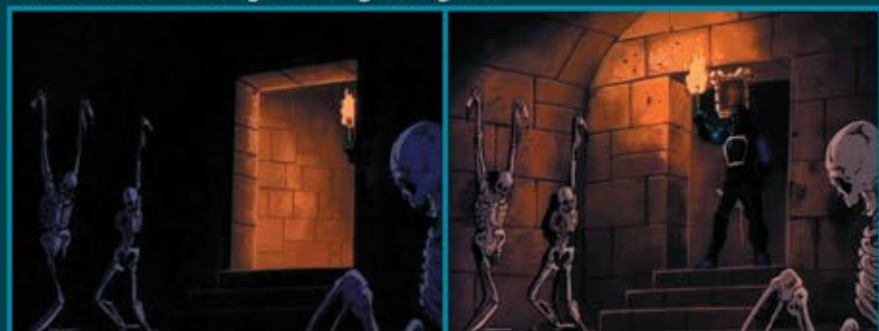
At first glance these two backgrounds appear to have very little difference between them other than the changes in contrast to the door and the floor. However, the back wall has incredibly subtle, but effective changes, with the shadows on the second background rendered far broader than in the first, beautifully showcasing the way in which the beam has altered the light source.

Galaxy Rangers "Rainmaker"



As Walter "Doc" Hartford stands heroically at the end of a rain-drenched alley, we see a flash of lightning illuminate the scene. On the left wall you can see the shadows from the above stairwell dramatically shift in length. The key to the success of this second background is the way in which the brush strokes and details are rendered vertically, emphasizing the torrential downpour.

Visionaries "The Age of Magic Begins"



A wonderfully effective use of two backgrounds occurs in this scene in which Darkstorm enters a room bearing a torch. Initially the room is painted with just a few minor highlights. However, as soon as Darkstorm enters the torch illuminates the room showcasing the second background quite beautifully. Also worth noting is that the outside corridor's light source also changes.



ThunderCats often showcased the Japanese animators ability to render great detail ("Turmagar the Tuska").

in which the animation excelled we would see T-Bob's expressions utilize numerous animé traits, most notably the way in which his eyes were animated, breaking out of their on-model surroundings.

Another DIC sidekick, Slimer, was afforded some truly breathtaking pieces of animé-influenced goodness in certain episodes of *The Real Ghostbusters*, at least when the quality of the Japanese animation was willing to let him do so!

Out of all the shows animated overseas during the eighties *The Real Ghostbusters* appears to be the one cartoon in which the Japanese animators were clearly given a great deal more freedom when it came to animating character expressions and movement. This could be explained by the fact that, on the whole, the quality of animation throughout was generally of a high standard, and the fact that the animation directors and producers at DIC were a big fan of the animé touches given to their show. These animé inspired expressions were almost definitely not something the American-based artists had requested in their storyboards. These touches would've been determined by the Japanese layout artists.

Rarely were the heroic characters of *The New Adventures of He-Man* given overtly comedic animé takes. However, in the episode "Four Ways To Sundown" Flipshot displays some ridiculously over-the-top animé expressions, all of which utilize the fact that his nose is hidden to increase the comedy value.

Often the influence of traditional Japanese animé character takes would slip into certain scenes. The end result would be a character moving from one facial expression to another, or changing their posture, whilst clearly illustrated with an animé-styled look upon their face. This style of animation was most commonly used to indicate that a character was surprised or confused about something that had happened.

Having a character wink on screen was something that occurred in numerous American animated cartoons such as *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*. However, in Japanese animation the art of winking was quite regularly used, and almost always the context did not warrant it. Numerous times it was as if the Japanese animators included the wink to emphasize a character movement or accentuate a piece of dialogue in order to make a talking head sequence more striking.

The wink and two-fingered salute had a character bring two fingers close to their forehead, and then bring their hand across sharply, either with both fingers together, or as a peace sign, whilst winking in the process. It was used as both a greeting and a sign off, and much like the wink, on occasion, was used to emphasize a statement. This is a piece of character animation that the Japanese animators often snuck into productions as random as *MASK*, *ThunderCats*, and *Galaxy High School*.

Simple conversations between characters

ANIME 101: PULLING FOCUS

Pulling focus is nothing new in the world of film, but western-based animation (outside of Disney's theatrical work) rarely employed the technique. Japanese animation would not only use it on occasion to shift focus from one subject to another within the frame, but also use it effectively to transition from one area of the story to the next. It was also a way of showing that animation could be as effective as live action.

Dungeons & Dragons "Beauty and the Bogbeast"



Traversing through a thick forest Dungeon Master's pupils are confronted by an oversized and ill-tempered Golem. A typically defiant Bobby and his unicorn Uni are picked up by the Golem, resulting in this visual. Initially the focus is on the face of the giant as he speaks, examining the pair in the palm of his hand. The focus then shifts to Bobby, as he speaks in the following scene.

MASK "The Lippizaner Mystery"



In this scene Matt Trakker notices that a trip wire has been set up in a secret passageway. As he and Dusty Hayes crouch down we can just make out a blurred object across the foreground. The focus then dramatically shifts to the foreground, timed to the moment Matt and Dusty raise their heads, and we see the trip wire that they are staring at. This is an incredibly accurate piece of focus pulling.

ThunderCats "Exodus"



Seconds after taking hold of the Sword of Omens as an adult, Lion-O briefly examines it prior to calling upon its power. We initially see the sword in the foreground, as the focus shifts to Lion-O whose eyes widen, slowly beginning to remember the power of the sword. Oddly when it focuses on Lion-O, due to the sword now blurred in the foreground he appears to be looking off into space!

The Real Ghostbusters "Janine's Genie"



In a rather comical change of focus we see Peter Venkman, whose watermelon has gone missing, pick up a seed from the ground. We see the seed in focus between Peter's fingers as he muses that he is holding a watermelon seed. Suddenly the focus shifts to Peter's face in the background, his expression changing to one of horror, as he realizes that Slimer has eaten his watermelon!

Galaxy Rangers "Natural Balance"



An impressively long piece of focus pulling occurs in this scene in which we see a battle taking place. The camera then dramatically pulls focus to the foreground in which we see Buzzwang, Zachary Foxx Jr., and Jessica Foxx climbing up a large hill with the battle now taking place far below. The depth of this shot created by the focus change is impressive, revealing that they are now a great distance away.



Skyfire's transformation shows a beautifully dynamic use of held frames ("The Ultimate Doom" Part 3).

would often benefit from a nice attention to detail. Characters that would often be seen static with only their mouth moving were given head tilts to the side. This not only looked visually pleasing, but in the case of the male leads would highlight their strong jaw line, and make them look heroic. This technique was also often achieved with use of a slightly lower camera angle than what western audiences were used to.

One of the most notable aspects of Japanese animation of the highest standard was the use of hands and the way in which they were illustrated. The previously mentioned episodes of *MASK* that benefited from incredibly high-quality animation showcased the animation team's ability to accentuate dialogue through use of hands. Sometimes the dialogue didn't necessarily require hand movements, but it was always a nice visual treat.

Over the top animation from such legends as Chuck Jones and Tex Avery meant that exaggerated movement was nothing new in western animation. However, while the west would use it for comedy, the east would use it in a truly unique way by making simple character movements incredibly eye-catching. Transitioning between two points a character would sometimes strike an unnecessary pose in order to make the movement more dynamic. This would often be the case in the *MASK* series when a character would activate their respective mask by striking a dynamic pose.

In the vein of exaggerated movement,

another technique (used mainly in *The Transformers*) showcased the director's ability to hold frames of action, enabling the following frames to look more dynamic. For example in the season one episode "The Ultimate Doom" Part 3 we see Skyfire escape the Decepticons by transforming into his jet mode and exiting the shot quickly. The transformation is a mere five frames in length, which for Japanese animation at its finest sounds like a ludicrously small amount. However, the way in which the transformation is animated, utilizing held cels, is what makes the scene stand out so convincingly. Skyfire turns to exit transforming into only half of his jet mode with his exhausts showing. We then see the plumes of smoke explode from his rockets in a beautifully timed and dramatic-looking sequence, prompting the next cel of Skyfire to show him in full jet mode, prior to him zooming off into the distance.

Turning Japanese - Direction

Japanese direction would almost always manifest itself style-wise in a cartoon. While the animators and directors may not have always been able to include animé expressions, visual stylizations were encouraged, as more times than often it was both dynamic and effective. Numerous techniques were almost exclusively used by the Japanese artists.

For example lines of movement would often manifest themselves in outsourced animation in unique

continued on page 67

ANIME 101: SPECIAL EFFECTS I

While American animation studios crafted special effects that influenced the entire industry worldwide, the Japanese studios relied on the techniques they had utilized for decades. The Japanese animators ability to render beams of energy with such dynamic movement highlighted the fact that they took their special effects as seriously as their character animation. The beauty of the special effects was at times truly breathtaking.

Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends "A Fire-Star Is Born"



Dungeons & Dragons "Servant of Evil"



Dungeons & Dragons "Citadel of Shadow"



The Transformers "S.O.S. Dinobots"



The Transformers "Day of the Machines"



ANIME 101: SPECIAL EFFECTS II

The way in which a beam of energy would be fired was something the Japanese animators honed to perfection. The effects sequence would often have the first few frames of laser fire unfocused, leading to a beautiful arrangement of light. Following these frames the beam of energy would be focused and direct, creating a sense of concussive power. Although the explosive bursts of energy seemed loosely connected, there was often logic behind them.

The Transformers "Microbots"



MASK "Blackout"



ThunderCats "Day of the Eclipse"



ThunderCats "Day of the Eclipse"



Galaxy Rangers "Showtime"



ANIME 101: LENS FLARE

One of the most visually pleasing effects used by the Japanese animation directors was the forced lens flare. The effect would often be represented with a simple cel overlay, on which was painted a beautifully realistic lens flare. Occasionally the flare would shift between two overlays, as if the camera itself were adjusting to the sun's rays.

The effect itself would more commonly be animated by catching the light of a moving object on screen.

The New Adventures of Zorro "Turnabout"



Dungeons & Dragons "The Box"



The Transformers "Megatron's Master Plan" Part 1



MASK "The Creeping Desert"



MASK "Demolition Duel to the Death"



ways. Rather than the lines being used predictably around an object they were used to imply a great deal more movement than was actually visible on screen. Whilst the end result was always pleasing to the eye, a degree of awkwardness could be perceived, due to the random placement of many of the lines. The first season of *The Transformers* tended to utilize this stylistic choice quite regularly.

A more traditional trail of movement, similar to the American technique, would be employed to reduce the amount of animation frames required. However, in Japanese animation this technique was used to emphasize the movement between frames. The frame with the additional areas of action would be timed much faster than the frames either side of it. This would make the movement on screen a great deal more energetic, even if it is someone merely clicking their fingers as could be seen in the *MASK* episode "Assault on Liberty"! A similar technique would see the trails painted on top of the cel to create a much more striking sense of movement, though the areas of movement would often be a great deal looser than the aforementioned ones. Examples of this could be seen numerous times in the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* episode "Turtles on Trial". All of this may sound like a cheap, cost-cutting technique, but it was executed with such craftsmanship that it added a little extra excitement to a simple movement.

Another effective technique involving lines, though not overused, was often employed in the episodes with a high quality of animation. An object, most commonly a character, would exit the shot at such a fast pace that the last frame would be animated as straight lines, evoking a wonderful sense of speed that the camera itself could not pick up. Although rarely used it could also be seen when a character raced into shot.

Turning Japanese - Static imagery

Black and white cards were employed for one frame and would often be utilized as part of a special effects sequence. Although it would occasionally showcase a point of impact, it would be used to highlight the previous frame, usually in relation to a blast of energy. The technique was incredibly effective as the human eye would see the one frame, but not long enough to question its appearance, resulting in a truly unique special effect. A similar card utilizing black, white, and red as a color scheme was also used, although it would only appear on episodes that had a much higher quality of animation.

One technique that appeared in a few outsourced cartoons of the eighties would have the image onscreen suddenly freeze and dissolve to an incredibly detailed stylized pastel painting, often during a moment of heightened action or drama. This technique created by the legendary Osamu Dezaki (which he called "postcard memories") is by far one of the most memorable aspects of Japanese animation and appeared on numerous shows, such as *Pole Position*, *ThunderCats* (numerous times), and *Visionaries*. Dezaki had previously used this technique in his direction of the *Space Adventure Cobra* series.

Turning Japanese - Explosions and Effects

Japanese studios had always been famed for their ability to render explosions like no other! Although American studios such as Filmation at

the time were creating realistic-looking explosions, they could not match the sheer energy created by the Japanese animators. The incredibly detailed explosions were often animated by Toei, whereas the smooth, energetic, and sometimes colorful explosions could often be attributed to Tokyo Movie Shinsha.

Special effects were also something that the Japanese could execute with wonderful proficiency. While American animation studios crafted special effects that influenced the entire industry worldwide, the Japanese studios relied on the techniques they had utilized for decades. The Japanese animators' ability to render beams of energy with such dynamic movement highlighted the fact that they took their special effects as seriously as their character animation. The beauty of the special effects was at times truly breathtaking. The way in which a beam of energy would be fired was something the Japanese animators honed to perfection. The effects sequence would often have the first few frames of laser fire unfocused, leading to a beautiful arrangement of light. Following these frames the beam of energy would be focused and direct, creating a sense of concussive power. Although the explosive bursts of energy seemed loosely connected, there was often logic behind them.

One of the most visually pleasing effects used by the Japanese animation directors was the forced lens flare. The effect would often be represented with a simple cel overlay, on which was painted a beautifully realistic lens flare. Occasionally the flare would shift between two overlays, as if the camera itself were adjusting to the sun's rays. The effect itself would more commonly be animated by catching the light of a moving object on screen.

More commonly the movement of light was revealed by animating a reflective gleam across the surface of a character in a moving vehicle or ship. However, it was more strikingly used to give weight and punch to dialogue on a simple static shot. The gleam would often travel from one side of the object to the other, often twisting in order to highlight the shape of the object it was travelling across. It was a simple yet incredibly effective technique.

Seen throughout many of the Japanese animated cartoons of the eighties the camera shade technique would darken the edges (top and bottom) of an image to highlight the central staging. This method was employed to create a sense of mood, often one of sadness or depression. It was also utilized in a more obvious way by complimenting a light source. Though rarely used, it would effectively highlight a character's eyes. The camera shade was used to incredibly great effect in the *MASK* episode "The Lipizzaner Mystery". In the episode Matt Trakker and Dusty Hayes of *MASK* are desperately trying to figure out who the mysterious recipient of the Lipizzaner stallions (that *VENOM* has stolen) will be. The moment Matt realizes that the recipient is a wealthy Arabian he had previously been the guest of, earlier in the episode, we are treated to four still images as his memory puts the pieces of the puzzle together, accompanied by some haunting music. The camera slowly trucks into each of these images showing previous encounters with the Arabian from Matt's point of view, culminating in a fifth still image showing the Arabian looking less than trustworthy and more threatening, as if Matt has suddenly realized the true personality of his former host. It is a beautifully-directed way of showing a character's sudden realization, and one of the most

ANIME 101: REFLECTIVE GLEAM

The reflective gleam was often used to show movement should the camera be showing a character in a moving vehicle or ship. However, it was more strikingly used to give weight and punch to dialogue on a simple static shot. The gleam would often travel from one side of the object to the other, often twisting in order to highlight the shape of the object it was travelling across. It was a simple yet incredibly effective technique.

The Transformers "Day of the Machines"



MASK "The Lippizaner Mystery"



The Real Ghostbusters "Venkman's Ghost Repellers"



SilverHawks "Save The Sun"



Galaxy Rangers "Space Moby"



hauntingly dramatic scenes of the series.

One of the most beautiful aspects of outsourcing animation to Japan is that the direction and attention to detail at times was delightful to say the least. In the aforementioned episodes of *MASK* that excelled visually, there are numerous examples in which reflections and shadows are used to perfection. The beauty is that these techniques are not necessary to the story, but the staff involved added them for authenticity. In the *MASK* episode "Assault on Liberty" we see Matt Trakker in Thunderhawk flying through New York. In one particular shot we see both Matt and Thunderhawk beautifully reflected in a few of the skyscrapers that he passes.

A comical technique that rarely showed up in outsourced shows would have the villains being launched into the air by an explosion, and subsequently forced to fly through the sky. This happened in the *MASK* episode "The Manakara Giant" in which we see both Miles Mayhem and Vanessa Warfield comically posed as they fly through the air and off into the distance. In this shot Vanessa's facial expressions and body mannerisms exude those seen in animé productions. This technique of the characters flying through the air would become a memorable fixture in the first season of *Pokémon*, which would always end with the cast of Team Rocket being launched into the air after losing a battle.

Turning Japanese - Of In-Jokes and Panties

Another, less seen aspect of outsourced Japanese animation was the "in-joke". Animé has had a long tradition of in-jokes between other animé series and movie genres, but up to the eighties this was very much minimized in U.S.-produced shows, their producers doubtlessly wishing to avoid any potential legal trouble. At the time only Filmation had in-jokes which the artists inserted into their latest productions; although these gags referenced other Filmation shows or fellow staff members, so there was little chance of legal action being taken. It is therefore amusing to see certain in-jokes manifesting themselves in some of the outsourced animation of the eighties.

Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends had numerous in-jokes scattered throughout the series. In the episode "The Origin of the Iceman" we see an arcade machine with the text "I Love Lum" written on the side. Lum was the troublemaking green-haired alien star of the popular Japanese animated series *Urusei Yatsura*, a show that was particularly popular with Japanese animators from all studios of the day.

Another tribute from Toei occurred in the episode "Along Came Spidey" in which we see none other than Jason from *Battle of the Planets/Gatchaman* sporting Mark's color scheme. Interestingly, in the same shot we see a certain individual wearing shades and a white top with the Gatchaman team logo on it. The same man can also be seen during the introduction sequence of *Dungeons & Dragons* as one of the members of the line waiting to board the rollercoaster, and even an episode of *G.I. Joe*! As all these references were animated by Toei there's a strong chance it was a staff member included for their own amusement.

In the *Dungeons & Dragons* episode "Servant of Evil" we see Toei reference another of their Marvel Productions shows, as Eric fans himself with a *Spider-Man* comic. However, it wasn't simply Toei that included in-jokes in their productions.

Although the animation was carried out overseas DIC enjoyed having characters crossover. In the *Pole Position* episode "To Clutch a Thief" we see Montgomery Moose from *The Get-Along Gang* make a cameo appearance as a parade balloon.

In *The Real Ghostbusters* episode "Mrs. Roger's Neighborhood" we see Ecto-1 drive past what clearly appears to be a Camaro, the very same vehicle that Matt Trakker was in command of throughout the *MASK* cartoon. Most memorably of all, during *Inspector Gadget's* second season, the cast of *Heathcliff and The Catillac Cats* made numerous blatant cameos in the series, and vice versa.

Another *MASK* cameo, which proved to be a strange one, was the appearance of T-Bob in a large crowd in the *Galaxy Rangers* episode "Battle of the Bandits". This was odd as *Galaxy Rangers* had nothing to do with DIC in the slightest.

A more obscure example would be the brief appearance of *Mobile Suit Gundam* parts in *Transformers: The Movie*, a joke that would be appreciated by the Japanese animators who sneaked them into the film, but one that would have gone quietly unnoticed by an intended audience with likely no knowledge of *Gundam* whatsoever.

Although not Japanese in origin the word "XAM" would often appear in certain productions, usually scrawled randomly as graffiti on a background. XAM referred to ex-employees of a Utah-based studio called Ahern-Marshall, subsequently collectively calling themselves Ex-Ahern-Marshall (XAM). XAM showed up in *Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends*, *The Incredible Hulk*, *Thundarr*, *The Transformers*, and even the *RoboCop* animated series.

Occasionally, these jokes would venture into more risqué territory, such as the appearance of what first appears to be random text on a computer screen in the early *Transformers* episode "Roll for It". The text is actually phonetically written Japanese that when translated has one staff member saying that they "want a women", and asking another staff member if they have "lost their virginity", suggesting they go see a prostitute at a "Turkish bath"!

Television animé in the eighties back in Japan was actually rather liberal, with the "shower scene" an almost constant staple in most genres of animé at the time, which were still intended for mainstream audiences rather than a particular niche of fan. Naturally, any such scenes included in animé that was adapted for U.S. television were understandably the first to be excised.

A recurring staple of animé production, especially during the eighties, was the shot of a female character's panties. Whether the U.S. producers were quick to spot these errors or not, these moments of "fan service" were not prevalent in the numerous outsourced animated productions of this decade. Such overtly "fan service" moments remained rare in outsourced animation, but there were a couple of notable exceptions.

Numerous shots in the *Gatchaman* series had Princess' panties shown quite blatantly. These shots were surprisingly not edited out of the westernized *Battle of the Planets* show. It was a scene to be replicated years later in *Dungeons & Dragons*, where Sheila's panties also occasionally made appearances on-screen.

In *The Real Ghostbusters* episode "Banshee Bake a Cherry Pie?" a female music star Shanna O'Callahan is shown on a poster that resides outside

ANIME 101: CAMERA SHADE

Seen throughout many of the Japanese animated cartoons of the eighties the camera shade technique would darken the edges (top and bottom) of an image to highlight the central staging. This method was employed to create a sense of mood, often one of sadness or depression. It was also utilized in a more obvious way by complimenting a light source. Though rarely used, it would effectively highlight a characters eyes.

Examples from *The Transformers*



Examples from *MASK*



Examples from *Jayce and the Wheeled Warriors*, *Centurions*, and *The Real Ghostbusters*



Examples from *Galaxy Rangers*



Examples from *Visionaries*, *C.O.P.S.*, and *The New Adventures of He-Man*



of the Ghostbusters' firehouse headquarters. The poster is noticeable for showing Shanna's side profile in which her nipples are clearly illustrated poking prominently through her top! Oddly, the poster is illustrated numerous times throughout the episode, and on each occasion her nipples are still prominent. Another, more brazenly rendered shot could be seen with Crita in *The New Adventures of He-Man's* "Balance of Power", where she is shown communicating via a view screen, illustrated with her nipples clearly poking through her top.

If You Can't Beat Them, Join Them

With so many U.S. series having successfully outsourced animation from Japan, with the obvious technical proficiency that went with it, this finally inspired one company in particular to make great inroads at acquiring the rights to, and dubbing into English, not just one or two, but multiple animé series. Dubbed animé shows in the U.S. had proven that they could be successful, but with U.S. animation already being a flourishing industry in itself, the notion that importing and dubbing animé shows into English for television had only manifested itself with a few isolated examples. Harmony Gold, with its broadcasts of *Robotech* and *Captain Harlock and the Queen of a Thousand Years* arguably came the closest to establishing English-dubbed animé as a viable standard. However, aside from further producing a number of feature-length dubbed animé television specials, a repeat in success proved to be beyond the company's reach. Instead, the baton passed to another company, Saban Productions.

Haim Saban, alongside close associate Shuki Levy, already had plenty of experience with the adaptation of animé into other languages by the time the company entered the U.S. market. They had started their association with animation back in the late seventies, where they provided new musical soundtracks to various animé series dubbed in France, perhaps most notably the extraordinarily popular *Goldorak* (*Force Five's Grendizer* series).

Saban and Levy were actually tapped by Harmony Gold at one point to provide a new score for the English dub of a Korean animated movie entitled *Goldwing* in 1980. Their experience on the production was put to good use three years later, as some of their music for *Goldwing* was reused in the first few episodes of *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*, and indeed, both composers provided background music for the rest of the series.

Saban and Levy subsequently provided scores for many other popular U.S. series in quick succession, including *Inspector Gadget*, *Pole Position*, *Heathcliff* and *The Catillac Cats*, and *MASK* to name but a few they are credited for.

By 1986, Saban Productions had been formed, and Saban acquired the rights to two animé series and created the *Macron I* dub. Taking inspiration, and most of the same voiceover artists and scriptwriters, from Harmony Gold's *Robotech* and *Captain Harlock* television dubs, *Macron I* was a re-edit of those two acquired animé series into one. The series was not a notable success, but it was enough to get Saban established as a producer in his own right in the U.S.

Macron I was eventually followed in quick succession by a range of further animé series imported and dubbed by Saban into English through to the end of the eighties. These included *Dragon Warrior*, *Maple*

Town, *Noozles*, *Ox Tales*, *Tales of Little Women*, *The Adventures of Peter Pan*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, and *Wowser*. In isolation, few of these shows were mega-hits, but they produced a steady stream of revenue for Saban Entertainment, and the comparatively low cost of importing and dubbing an animé series as opposed to creating a U.S. production from scratch added even more of an incentive, especially when coupled with the obvious high quality of the Japanese-produced animation itself.

With an established reasonably low-cost formula for creating multiple "new" series for U.S. television, Saban, more than any other company, appreciated animé for what it was and would become one of the industry leaders in adapting Japanese material into English for television over the following decade. The nineties actually began with one of their must successful cult series in the form of *Samurai Pizza Cats*, which featured a radically rewritten script in contrast to the original Japanese show *Kyatto Ninden Teyandee* (by Tatsunoko Productions) that nevertheless ensured the series was a surprising hit, at the time when the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* dominated the airwaves.

The notion of rewriting material to such an extreme extent was fully honed into an art form in 1993, when Saban acquired the rights to one of Toei's live-action Super Sentai series and adapted it into the *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. This series alone turned Saban into a multi-billionaire, and the benefits of adapting Japanese material into English were finally thrust into the limelight for all to see.

Ironically, the Super Sentai series were originally co-licensed by Marvel Comics due to their earlier alliance with Toei, and Marvel Productions at one point attempted to sell their own dub of a Super Sentai series in the eighties to no avail. We can only wonder how different Marvel Productions fortunes would have been if they had managed to successfully sell that concept into English before Saban.

Animation By Filimation

With the television animation market, particularly in syndication, growing significantly during the eighties, outsourcing the animation production was the only truly viable solution in order to produce all of these shows cost-effectively.

The alternative was home-grown animation, and U.S. animators simply cost too much for this to be a viable economic solution, as Filimation encountered with their shows. This in itself raises an interesting question: Would Filimation still be around today had they outsourced many of their shows during the eighties?

One of Filimation's legacies is that by keeping production of their shows in the U.S., they kept the animation industry alive when the majority of outsourcing occurred. And for this they are rightfully celebrated. For all their critics, none can deny that Filimation ensured that many people not only had careers in animation during the eighties, but also got their start in the animation industry. Had Filimation outsourced there's a strong chance the animation industry in the U.S. would be non-existent, along with much of the artistic talent. However, had they outsourced there's also a chance that Filimation would still be around to some extent today.

He-Man and the Masters of the Universe, *She-Ra: Princess of Power*, *Ghostbusters*, and *BraveStarr's*

ANIME 101: COMPARING ARTISTIC STYLES

One of the persistent issues that American studios faced by outsourcing work to numerous animation houses in both Japan and Korea was the varying quality of animation delivered. This problem would also manifest itself due to the way in which the Japanese studios themselves worked with a tier system of animation teams! The contrast between the different animation teams was often apparent, especially on the shows with sixty-five episodes.

Examples from *Inspector Gadget*



Examples from *The Transformers*



Examples from *ThunderCats*



Examples from *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*



Examples from *The New Adventures of He-Man*



combined episode count (not including specials and movies) totals three-hundred and fifty-three episodes. The cost of producing all those episodes would've set Filmation back millions upon millions of dollars, even with their stock animation system in place. For the same price, by outsourcing they could've probably produced six-hundred episodes via Japanese-based studios, and possibly a thousand or more episodes via the studios in Korea!

Yes, there's every chance that Filmation would still be around today, but the reality is, their reputation as an animation house in the U.S., despite the limited nature of their animation compared to the vast majority of their contemporaries, will always be fondly remembered and celebrated.

The Beneficiaries

In a strange way, outsourcing not only benefited the countries involved in those productions, thanks largely in part to the millions of dollars the toy companies pumped into advertising, but also bridged the gap between America and Japan. Four decades earlier America and Japan had been at war, but by the eighties, at least in the animation world, the two realized that they needed to work with one another for mutual benefit.

Whilst in office President of the United States Ronald Reagan may not have broken down the walls that had been created by political tensions of the time, but his decision to allow the production of toy-based cartoons inadvertently helped America and Japan form a long-lasting relationship; something he probably never foresaw!

In truth the relationship had already made some progress during the sixties and seventies, but it was the eighties that really showed that the two countries could co-operate. This in turn opened the doors for other Asian countries like South Korea, Taiwan, and the Philippines to form animation studios of their own and continue to aid Japan with outsourced work for America throughout the nineties, and to the present day. It is impossible to ignore the fact that the animation industry did help in bridging the gap between two different cultures, and regardless of past or present differences these countries are still eager to provide the west with wonderful animation to be enjoyed for a long time to come.

With the money the toy industry pumped into the animation industry, the outsourcing studios (and the countries they were associated with) made a great deal of money. With that money they were able to keep talented artists in work, develop new talents, and improve their own quality of output. This is certainly the case with a studio like AKOM who during the eighties produced shoddy animation for western productions, and were actually fired from *Batman: The Animated Series* in the nineties due to the quality of their animation not meeting the standards of the other studios (such as Tokyo Movie Shinsha) on the series. These days AKOM are one of the top foreign studios for outsourced production in America, animating such projects as *The Simpsons Movie*. A long way from their questionable animation on the third season of *The Transformers*.

Was Outsourcing a Success?

When shows initially began to be outsourced, the three main countries cartoons were sent to be

animated were South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan. It is interesting to see that it didn't take long for Japan to resolutely win out with most of the U.S. production houses, with Marvel quickly abandoning Mihan upon the conclusion of *Spider-Man and his Amazing Friends*, and only Hanna-Barbera continuing to offer significant work to Taiwan by way of Cuckoo's Nest/Wang Film with *GoBots* and the later *Super Friends* series for instance. With so much money floating around on both sides of the Atlantic during the early-to-mid eighties, producers were at last spending money where they saw the quality, even if that quality was sometimes uneven.

This age of common sense was not to last though, and by 1986, cracks in this strategy began to appear, as Korean companies such as AKOM and Hanho Heung-Up began to offer their services at even more competitive rates, with a corresponding lack of animation quality compared to the Japanese studios. It was an offer U.S. production companies couldn't refuse, and by the end of the eighties, the trend away from Japanese to Korean studios was well underway, and with few exceptions during the next decade, one that was never truly to be reversed.

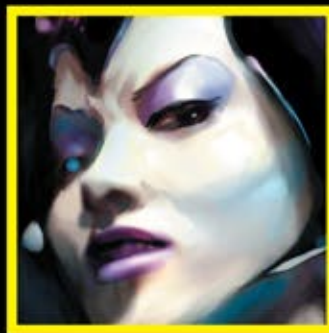
It is therefore ironic that due to the higher quality of animation on offer throughout the Japanese-outsourced cartoons of the eighties, the Korean-outsourced shows of the nineties pale into comparison! Korean studios' artistry did improve during the next decade, but few studios matched the heights of the most competently animated Japanese outsourced animation of the eighties.

Together, this perception of older Japanese-animated U.S. series, along with the rise of a new and more lasting wave of animé fandom in the western world in the nineties, painted Japanese animation in a very favorable light, and made fans appreciate the few remaining series featuring Japanese outsourced animation while they were still on the air, such as *Tiny Toons*, and the *Batman* and *Superman* animated series. This appreciation was due to the fact that the trend that began in the eighties finally reached its natural climax by the end of the nineties, as virtually no future U.S. shows would feature Japanese outsourced animation on a regular basis. Those productions that would be very welcome rare exceptions.

However, during this time, the skills of Korean animation studios also began to increase geometrically, and ironically increasing numbers of animé series back in Japan at this time started themselves subcontracting work out to Korean studios as well, such had their skills improved over the decade.

Still, fans of these shows we analyze can still point to the quality present in many of the Japanese outsourced shows made during the eighties, as at their best, the cartoons of the eighties represented the amazing skills of Japanese animators during animé's arguably most fortuitous and daring decade. A decade that ultimately culminated in the impressive technical achievement of *Akira* in 1988. Those many cartoons of the eighties with Japanese outsourced animation therefore represent an impressive legacy, especially when they are still remembered and celebrated for their impressively-animated scenes almost thirty years later!

So, the next time we say a cartoon, episode or scene features "Japanese animation" or has an "animé influence" in the pages of *cereal:geek* you'll know exactly what we mean.



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