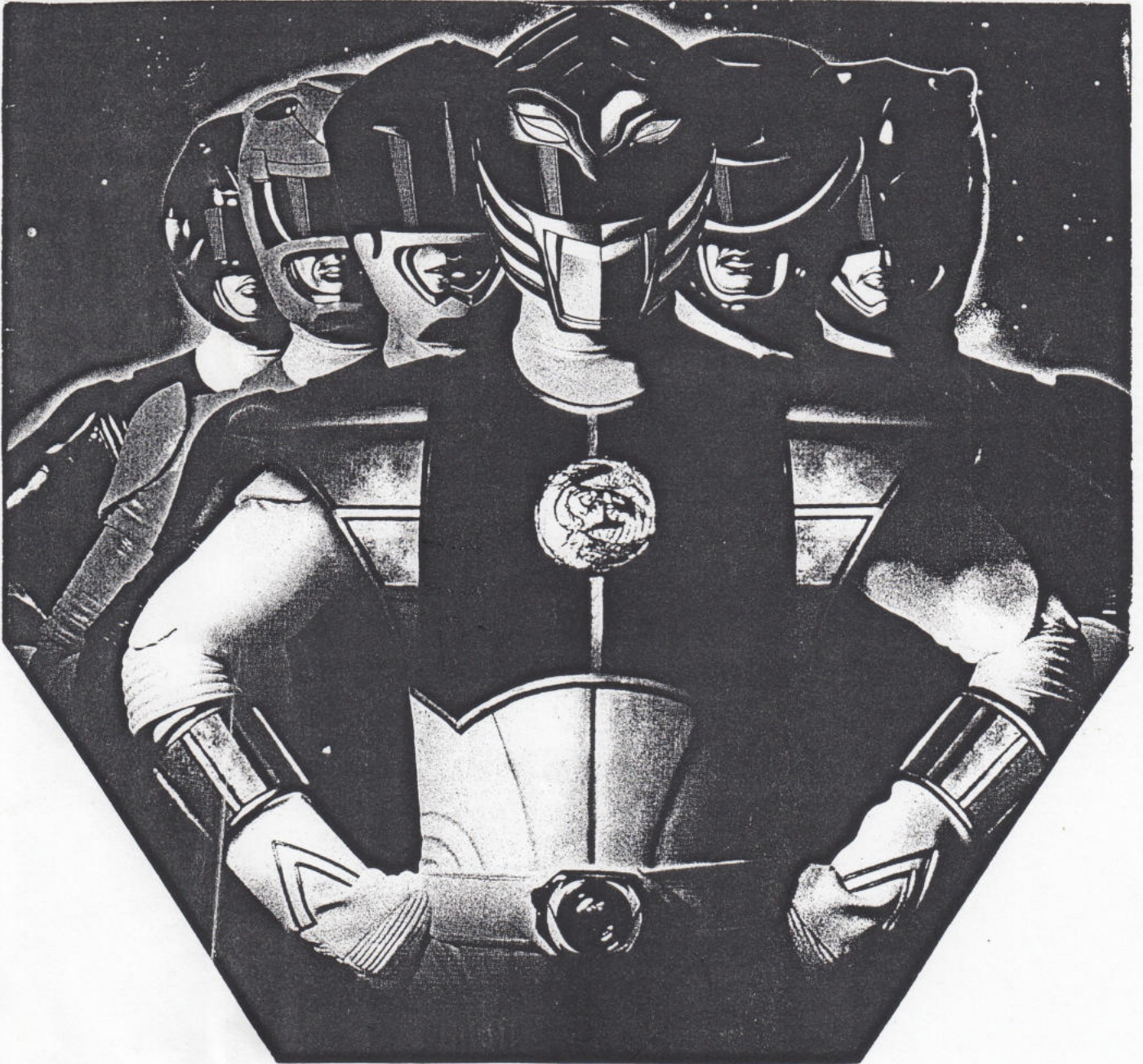


OWARI

おわり

#2



MIGHTY MORPHIN
POWER RANGERS
THE MOVIE

THE BEGINNING OF "THE END"

Here we are again. I'll bet a lot of you didn't think I was serious about doing #2. Well, I was. Duh, right? I must even be psychic because I'd told people it would be ready in May. I felt Owari #1 was a modest success as it exceeded my expectations in terms of orders. Of course, I'd still be doing this even if no one was reading, but knowing I have some sort of audience helps.

I did a rotten job defining the purpose of Owari last time, so I'll try again. Owari is a personal fanzine that covers many things that interest me. My second favorite thing in the whole world (after sleeping) is watching Japanese sci-fi movies, so that will be the main focus here. However, I have lots of other interests, so Owari will likely include things not pertaining to that genre. I will probably not write about anime or Hong Kong "new wave" films very much as those topics don't do much for me and are overexposed anyway. That's not to say that they'll never appear here. Basically, Owari is about whatever I want it to be about.

I consider Owari #1 to be an experiment of sorts. I didn't know what I was doing and it showed. Even the writing style wasn't quite my usual stuff. Well, I've learned a lot and I think those lessons have resulted in a much improved zine for issue #2. One thing that hasn't changed, alas, is that the pages are still one-sided. Yes, it's ridiculous, but it's much more convenient. My layouts are not very sturdy and would likely get totally screwed up if I gave them to someone else to print. I'll continue to publish in this format until I get (a) a computer, (b) a copier, (c) a great deal of money, or (d) all of the above. None of these are on the horizon, I assure you.

In this issue, we have a study of Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie and the first chapter in a multi-part fan fiction epic. Just to prove that I can jump on a bandwagon, I've also included a gratuitous review of the latest Godzilla film. There are also some random things that I found interesting or amusing. By the way, for the record, I want to thank you for choosing to read Owari. It looks as if starting your own Japanese sci-fi fanzine is all the rage these days, so I'm glad I got a head start. I appreciate you giving me the chance to share with you my mad dream. See ya later!

Sincerely,

Christopher Elam
Christopher Elam

LOGO DESIGN: Cool, huh? It was created by Rob Perchaluk of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Rob works for the comic book coloring outfit Digital Chameleon and is a fine artist in his own right. His "Pulsar-The Star Warrior" appeared in Monnga #2 & #3. Thanks, Rob!

OWARI (The Fanzine For People Entirely Too Interested In Japanese Sci-Fi) is published by Captain Satellite Productions. That's a silly way of saying: Christopher Elam, P.O. Box 129, Reeves, LA 70658. Single issue price: \$2.00 (Check or MO payable to Christopher Elam). All characters are copyrighted by their respective owners and are used solely for informational and promotional purposes. All text and art is the property of its creator. PUBLISHED MAY 1996.

MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS THE MOVIE



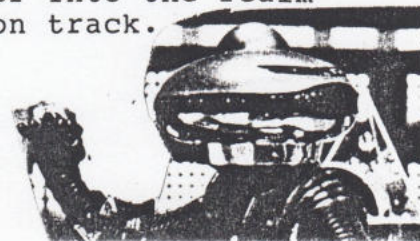
The Power Rangers in their Ninjetti garb (l-r: Steve Cardenas, Karan Ashley, Amy Jo Johnson, Jason David Frank, David Yost, Johnny Yong Bosch).

A FINAL LOOK AT MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS: THE MOVIE or THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIS

by Christopher Elam

Wow, has it really been almost a year since this movie was released? I guess time flies when you're not having fun, too. That statement has nothing to do with the Power Rangers, though some of you probably thought it did. It merely refers to the fact that I consider 1995 the single worst year of my short time on Earth. Hmmmm, this review is starting to veer into the realm of "true confessions". I'd better get it back on track.

Ai-yi-yi-yi-yi! It's Alpha 5 →



As I alluded to in the previous paragraph, Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie arrived in theatres in June 1995. Its release was preceded by a great deal of hype, speculation, and merchandising. There was even some controversy thrown into the mix. The film itself came and went relatively quickly. Commercials for its fast food tie-in actually outlasted its theatrical run. Now, the movie is available on home video for even the laziest of couch potatoes to view at his/her convenience. I've taken it upon myself to provide an in-depth analysis of this entity called Mighty Morphin Power Rangers: The Movie. It's a dirty job, but somebody has to do it.

A plot synopsis would seem to be the first order of business. The movie opens with a Star Warsish prologue that serves to summarize "the story so far" for you poor souls who weren't around 10,000 years ago to catch everything as it happened. After the title, we're treated to a skydiving sequence that is arguably the most exciting part of the movie. Meanwhile, there's trouble afoot in Angel Grove (again) when construction workers unearth a mysterious object that resembles Doctor Doom's hand clutching a purple Easter egg. The Rangers' long-suffering baddies Lord Zedd and Rita Repulsa, not to mention perennial henchmonster Goldar and newcomer Mordant, later show up and crack that puppy open. Out pops Ivan Ooze, yet another in the seemingly endless lineup of Zordon's old foes.

The Zedd man asks his new friend to help him conquer the Earth and ol' Ivan does a pretty good job. He wrecks the Command Center, strips the Rangers of their powers and even pulls Zordon out of his time warp. This means the old dude is rapidly aging and that is certainly not good. Zordon's right-hand robot, the reliably annoying Alpha 5, transports our heroes to the distant planet Phaedos to obtain new powers. On Phaedos, the Rangers get chummy with a most excellent alien warrior woman named Dulcea. It seems Dulcea is one of Zordon's old "friends" (know what I mean, wink, wink, nudge, nudge?) and she agrees to help the Earthlings. While all of this is going on, Ivan is busy betraying Zedd and Rita by trapping them in a snow globe. No kidding, that's really what he does! Our lesson for today, kids: never trust a millenia-old meglomaniac whom you've just freed from a giant holiday candy. Anyway, Mr. Ooze then lays his plans to create terror in the world by rebuilding his giant war robots which just so happen to be lying in pieces under Angel Grove. How convenient!



(left)
Gabrielle
Fitzpatrick
as Dulcea
(top right)
Paul
Freeman as
Ivan Ooze
(bottom right)
Red Ranger
action pose!



Do the Rangers get new powers and new Zords? Do they halt Ivan Ooze's fiendish plans? Do they help Zordon do the time warp again? Do you need a frigging clue? Of course they do! This isn't Ivan Ooze: The Movie. You can always rest assured that good will triumph over evil in the land of superheroes. The real challenge is getting to the inevitable ending in an interesting way.

Let's look at the script first. Anyone seeking originality should go elsewhere. If you've watched even a handful of TV episodes, you'll experience that most curious feeling of *déjà vu*. A number of standard plot devices (i.e. clichés) have been incorporated into this feature. Let's see, you've got your Angel Grove citizens under an evil spell, the depowering of the Rangers and the journey to a distant planet. Did I miss any? In fairness, the screenplay manages to tell the story in a reasonably straightforward manner with few of the huge continuity gaps that have plagued the regular series. I know I'm praising this movie with faint damns, but that's the best I can do. One of the most humorous flaws which crept into the movie was a disregard for time. The march of the Angel Grove parents to their supposed demise is interminably long. Then, the town of Angel Grove goes from broad daylight to pitch blackness in about two minutes! I guess the filmmakers were guided by the spirit of Ed Wood in this respect.



Boo, hiss! It's the Rangers' Rogues Gallery! From left to right, we have Mordant, Rita Repulsa, Lord Zedd, and Goldar.

There was one element of the script that I felt was an attempt to be a little different and that was pulling Zordon out of his time warp. It turns out that he's not just a big head after all. Zordon's just this guy, y'know. What a shame that even this stab at originality wound up being derivative. I felt like I was watching an instant replay of the Luke/Vader heart to heart talk at the climax of Return of the Jedi in his scenes with the Rangers. There's that Star Wars influence again! Any similarities in the two sequences were only emphasized by Zordon's makeup, very similar to that of the unmasked Darth (with the added bonus of Zordon lying in a dead-ringer for Kal-el's spaceship in Superman: The Movie). It would be a safe bet that the people involved in MMPR: The Movie have watched a lot of other movies.

The direction by the heretofore anonymous Bryan Spicer is all right but nothing terribly special. There are a couple of inspired moments, but also a few cringe-worthy moments. It's difficult to view the film without pondering what might have been. Those of you with long memories might remember that director/costume designer Steve Wang (Guyver films, Kung-Fu Rascals) was supposed to be in charge of both the film's visual effects and the overall direction. Wang discussed his plans for the movie in Sentai #3 and he was involved with the project long enough that the video box for Guyver 2: Dark Hero actually credits him with the direction of the (then unreleased) MMPR: The Movie. What happened? One can only assume that those persistent "creative differences" got in the way.



Jason Frank
as Tommy, AKA
White Ranger



A.J. Johnson
as Kimberly,
AKA Pink Ranger



The acting in the film is surprisingly competent. While Spicer is no auteur, his handling of the actors is light years better than the TV show. Who would've dreamed that some of the Rangers were actually capable of facial expressions? Let's also not forget the straight-faced delivery of that deathless line: "I'm a frog." Seriously, the best performances on the hero side are by Jason Frank and Amy Jo Johnson. That's not much of a shock when you consider that they are/were the standouts in the series, too. Frank displays lots of charisma and fighting skill, while Johnson continues to prove that she's much more than just another pretty face. Yes, I'm a big fanboy for both of them and I think they deserve to succeed beyond the Power Rangers franchise.

I must admit that I'm astonished to report that the supporting players are also good. The only problem (albeit a minor one) is the Australian accents that creep into the dialogue. Such an accent is fine for alien warrior woman Dulcea, but it seems incongruous for that Mr. All-American Dad guy. I guess I'm just nit-picking. My one true regret about the film is the short shrift given to Paul Schrier and Jason Narvy as Bulk and Skull. Their hilarious antics are often the only redeeming qualities in many later episodes. They're in their usual form at the outset, but then they virtually vanish. They do appear at the "ooze" party thrown by the town's teens, but they don't do anything especially memorable (as an aside, I think Angel Grove is the only place where the bad kids drink 7-Up at their keg party). Oh, speaking of ooze, Paul Freeman as the scenery chewing Ivan Ooze steals the show. Everyone who is surprised should stand on their heads now.



←
Two intellectual
guys: Bulk (on
right) & Skull
(left)



"Pay no attention to the man behind the curtain!": The Rangers discover the incapacitated Zordon.

The stuntwork is at least the equal of that in the regular series. However, better photography and a less constrictive schedule makes the whole thing look a lot flashier. It's a pity that Saban felt the need to soften things by adding comedic sound effects which really didn't help at all. At least they weren't stingy in the fight department, unlike many third season episodes which feature no action (an apparent response to those self-appointed critics). My only other complaint is the use of such blatantly fake wire tricks. This practice is quite commonplace in Hong Kong martial arts fantasy epics, but that doesn't mean I have to like it.

The main selling point of this theatrical effort were the much-ballyhooed CGI effects to realize the Zords on screen. Frankly, I think such effects are overrated and no more realistic than older methods like stop-motion, suitmation, and model work. To make matters worse, the American producers took it upon themselves to insult the work of the Toei staff. Hey, you conceited idiots, it was those "plastic toy" effects that got you where you are now! Happily, I felt some measure of vindication when I saw the results of U.S. ingenuity. The Zords are slick and move well, but they're completely artificial and bereft of personality. They also bear only a passing resemblance to the Bandai toys on which they are actually based, much less the Toei originals. Give me fake-looking models and guys in suits any day!

I was much more satisfied with the movie's other special effects. The sets, especially the Command Center and Zedd's palace, are magnificent. I also like the spiffy new costumes and weapons that are displayed. The movie Ranger costumes took a lot of abuse in the fan press, but they looked nice when I saw them in motion. The other costumes are also well-designed. My personal favorite is Lord Zedd with his cool pulsing brain. All of the assorted gadgets looked sophisticated in a pseudo-scientific way. A decent budget can do wonders for quality.

As for the music score, it's not bad but nothing exciting. It's filled with all the typical sweeping grand sci-fi epic motifs we've come to expect in American films of this type. Less pleasing are all of those pop songs included solely to create a more marketable soundtrack album. Here's a tip, guys: it didn't work. The familiar tunes don't have much recognition value and the new ones are awful beyond description. The last thing the world needed was a musical ode to Alpha 5.

From a technical point of view, the film is recorded in Dolby Stereo and the sound is impressive. The color by Deluxe is also really great if you can see a good print. The letterboxed laserdisc copy has vibrant color while the videotape is muted and not as eye-catching.



Black Ranger



Yellow Ranger



Blue Ranger

As I mentioned at the top of the proceedings, the actual movie bombed big time at the box office. The reason why is no mystery: it's not a great film. I personally enjoyed it, but I didn't feel an urge to spend more money to see it again. I was more entertained by the two guys who kept accidentally spilling popcorn on each other in the theatre. The lack of hordes of repeat viewers (crucial to family film success) spelled doom. There was also no reason for parents to take their li'l rugrats to see it when the kids would've been just as satisfied watching it for free on the tube. A similar fate befell Batman:Mask of the Phantasm. I wonder when these people will learn not to release movies based on children's shows which are still airing in first run.

In terms of the regular TV show, the movie had very little effect. The film apparently involved the Earth 2 Power Rangers as it was completely divorced from the series' tenuous continuity. Some elements and story concepts, like the Tengu Warriors, did find their way into the series. In fact, the movie may've been based on the episodes since I've been told it was either filmed during a third season break or after the third season had wrapped. Speaking of the third season, despite the incorporation of the prodigious number of Ninja Sentai KakuRanger mecha, interest in the show seemed to flag. You can point to wimped down action, truly inane stories, and new actors who are even more terrible (who dreamed it was possible?), but American kiddies appear to have reached the saturation level with the Rangers. Saban is making a stab at reviving things with the completely revamped Power Rangers Zeo, which will feature "new Rangers, new villains, new Zords". This incarnation will be heavily based on Choriki Sentai OhRanger if the promos are accurate. I also recently heard that another film is possible. Don't look at me, I'm baffled too.

I chose the alternate title for this article because I felt that the movie was the last time I would enjoy the U.S. reworking of the sentai concept. I don't despise it like many folks; it just doesn't do anything for me anymore. This is coming from a person who used to consider himself a big fan. However, with these new attempts still impending at this writing, it remains to be seen if the Power Rangers will endure or if they will soon be history.

THE END

(This article would not have been possible without the help of Amy Elam, Lewis Smith, Dan Reed, and David McRobie.)

O-FACTOID: We all know that Dave Stevens based the Rocketeer on movie serial heroes like Rocket Man and Commando Cody, but has anyone noticed how much he also looks like Spectreman? Spectreman and The Rocketeer - separated at birth?

O-FACTOID: Douglas Fein played the captain of the ill-fated submarine Seahawk in King Kong vs. Godzilla. His voice is dubbed in the American version by Les Tremayne.

O-FACTOID: Ultra series veteran Hiroko Sakurai (Fuji in Ultraman) appears in the 1968 film Curse of the Blood (Japanese title: Kaidan Zankoku Monogatari).



The Power Rangers

MIGHTY MORPHIN POWER RANGERS: THE MOVIE



A Twentieth-Century Fox presentation. A Saban Entertainment/Toei Company Production. Producers: Haim Saban, Shuki Levy, Suzanne Todd. Director: Bryan Spicer. Story: John Kamps & Arne Olsen. Screenplay: Arne Olsen. Co-Producer/Unit Production Manager: David Coatsworth. Director of Photography: Paul Murphy, A.C.S. Production Designer: Craig Stearns. Edited by Wayne Wahrman, A.C.E. Costume Designer: Joseph Porro. Music Supervisor: Happy Walters. Music: Graeme Revell.

CAST: Karan Ashley (Aisha/Yellow Ranger), Johnny Yong Bosch (Adam/Black Ranger), Steve Cardenas (Rocky/Red Ranger), Jason David Frank (Tommy/White Ranger), Amy Jo Johnson (Kimberly/Pink Ranger), David Yost (Billy/Blue Ranger), Jason Narvy (Skull), Paul Schrier (Bulk), Paul Freeman (Ivan Ooze), Gabrielle Fitzpatrick (Dulcea), Nicholas Bell (Zordon), Peta-Maree Rixon (Alpha 5), Jean Paul Bell (Mordant), Kerry Casey (Goldar), Mark Ginther (Lord Zedd), Julia Cortez (Rita Repulsa), Jamie Croft (Fred Kelman), Paul Pantano, Mitchell McMahon, Tim Valka (Kids), Peter Mochrie (Mr. Kelman), Scott McGregor (Security Guard), Paula Morrell (Reporter), Paul Goddard, Robert Simper (Construction Workers), Robyn Gol (Zombie Parent Dancer).

VOICES: Kerrigan Mahan (Goldar), Robert L. Manahan (Zordon), Robert Axelrod (Lord Zedd), Barbara Goodson (Rita Repulsa), Richard Wood (Alpha 5), Martin G. Metcalf (Mordant).

STUNT PLAYERS: Sophia Crawford, Hien Nguyen, Stuart Quan, Bridgett Riley, Danny Wayne Stallcup, David Wald, Tetsuji Hashimoto, Tadahiro Nakamura, Ed Neil, Tomoo Oe, Keiya Tabuchi, Jim Stephan, Andrew Cavanagh, Scott Crawford, Paul Doyle, Nash Edgerton, Terry Flanagan, Dean Gould, Lou Horvath, Tony Lynch, Kathy McMorro, Cesa Mora, Callan Mulvey, Cinnamon Pollard, Priscilla Schwartzman, Sotiri Sotiropoulos, Gillian Statham, Avril Wynne.

ADDITIONAL CREDITS: First Assistant Director: Steve Love. Art Director: Colin Gibson. Second Unit Director: Gary Hymes. Orchestra: West Australian Symphony Orchestra - conducted by Tim Simonec. ADR Supervisor: R.J. Kizer. Visual Effects: VIFX, Optical Illusions, Inc., Digital Magic, Sessums Engineering, Wolf Drum Imaging, VCE. Creature Effects: Studio Kite - Sydney, Australia (Ivan Ooze, Bone Creature, Gatekeepers), Global Effects, Inc. - U.S.A. (Alpha 5, Saba), Optic Nerve Studios - U.S.A. (Tengu Warriors, Lord Zedd), Sticks & Stones - U.S.A. (Power Rangers Suits, Power Ranger Helmets), Criswell Productions - U.S.A. (Goldar, Mordant). 2nd Unit Directors: Jeff Imada, Jeff Pruitt. Production Supervisor: Michael Levine (Ooze Fight), Jeff Imada. Stunt & Fight Coordinator: Jeff Pruitt. Original Designs: Yuda Ako, Toei Co., Ltd. staff. Original TV Musical Themes: Shuki Levy, Kussa Mahchi, Ron Wasserman. Based on the "Super Sentai" TV series of Toei Co., Ltd. (created by Shotaro Ishinomori & Tohru Hirayama). Digital Dolby Stereo/Color by Deluxe. Quality Assurance by THX Theatre Alignment Program. Running Time: 96 minutes. MPAA Rating: PG. General Theatrical Release: June 30, 1995.

MORPHINOMENAL TRIVIA!!!!!!

*ADR supervisor R.J. Kizer is mainly known as the director of the American scenes in New World's release of Godzilla 1985. He also served as co-director (with Donald G. Jackson) on the oddball epic Hell Comes to Frogtown.

*Actor Robert Simper shared the role of Ultraman with Steve Apps in the series Ultraman Towards the Future (AKA Ultraman Great), which was also filmed in Australia. He also appeared in the Hong Kong action/comedy Aces Go Places II (AKA Mad Mission 2).



THE
RETURN
OF

JETMAN

Story & Art by Lewis Smith

□ 11 1/2 7/8

THE RETURN OF JETMAN
Part 1: Throwing the Gauntlet
by Lewis Smith
Edited by C. Elam

PROLOGUE: In the year 199X, the Earth was infiltrated by the forces of Hyper Dimensional Invaders Byram. Led by the ruthless Count Radeige, they were gods made flesh. Journeying from an extra dimensional place, the Hyper World, they used his super-science on a campaign of conquest.

Five young men and women were given great power due to the machinations of Byram, and they used it to battle this evil force. They called themselves Chojin Sentai Jetman. They repelled Byram's attacks and finally engaged the warlord himself.

Their victory resulted in the destruction of all their technologies, but the Jetmen themselves were unhurt. One later died due to an act of senseless violence, but the rest resumed normal lives. All that remained as a legacy of their titanic struggle was a monument, a black obelisk emblazoned with their symbol and this inscription:

"Here, the heroes of Earth sacrificed all to stop a great evil. We will honor that sacrifice always."

* * *

201X A.D.

22,300 miles above Earth floats the second manned satellite launched by Earth, Skyforce Earthship 2. The first was destroyed by Byram. This station stands as the first line of defense against invaders like Byram.

Captain Aya Odagiri sat at her desk and reminded herself once again that it was over. That it had been over for awhile. Strange, she thought, how history repeats itself. Twenty years ago, she had been aboard Earthship 1. She had borne the brunt of Radeige's first attack. She had watched one of her best friends die. Or so it had seemed.

In those days, she was Commander Odagiri, Commander in Chief of the J Project to be precise. The J Project had been studying the effects of Birdonic Waves, a newly discovered type of cosmic radiation. They intended to use the Birdonic Waves to empower a select group of soldiers.

But the best laid plans of mice and men (and commanders) went awry when Radeige attacked. The containment unit ruptured and the Birdonic Waves which had been harnessed were dispersed. They bombarded the Earth and Commander Odagiri discovered, to her chagrin, that her squadron consisted of a reprobate, a farmer, an heiress, a schoolgirl and only one of her original volunteers.

But they had become her friends. She had even served as matron of honor for two of them. She looked at the picture of Ryu and Kaori on her desk. They still looked so young. She, on the other hand, felt old.

Never mind the fact that someone was talking to her now, and she wasn't even listening.

"Excuse me," she said. "What were you saying?"

"Dr. Masaru Komoyoji is here," her receptionist replied calmly. The doctor in question stood behind the young woman. He had been the first physicist to study Birdonic Waves. He had been with the J Project at first, but had left after his concerns about direct exposure to the radiation fell on deaf ears.

"Greetings, Captain," Komoyoji said. "Have I caught you in the middle of something?"

"Oh no," she said hurriedly. "I'm glad you came. I was simply woolgathering."

Komoyoji looked at the familiar wristband on her desk. It was a Cross-Changer, the device which the Jetmen had used to activate their Birdonic powers.

"Revisiting the past, I see," Komoyoji observed. "I just heard. I'm sorry."

"It's not your fault," Odagiri said. "You only did what you thought was right. It was the government's decision not to restart J Project. Maybe they're right. After all, there hasn't been a threat to world security in twenty years."

"That wasn't the reason I spoke against it," Komoyoji responded. "We haven't even determined the long-term effects on humans. The others seem fine now, but you remember what happened to Gai. This energy is so unpredictable. I've had experience with enhanced power beings before, but nothing prepared me for that."

"I haven't forgotten," Odagiri replied flatly.

Komoyoji felt his eyes turn inward. He knew what she felt. "The right choice is not always easy. I know that from my own experience. Desperate times call for desperate measures, do they not?"

Odagiri's interest was piqued. She recognized those words and she knew what they meant. "Thank you, doctor. You've been a great help. We'll talk later."

She pushed a button on her desk. "Ensign Shiomi," she said. "I want to be on the next shuttle back to Earth."

* * *

Outside of normal dimensions there exists a Hyper World, where conventional laws of time and space do not apply. It was from this world that Radeige launched his campaign to conquer Earth.

The Emperor of the Hyper World, Thanatos, knew this because Radeige had been his brother. His death had made it possible for Thanatos to come to power.

Now, it seemed, he was destined to follow in his brother's footsteps. Only he would not fail. He could not fail, for the Hyper World was dying and the only place suitable for his people was Earth.

He contemplated all this as he sat in the control room of his ship. It cleaved dimensions on its way to Earth. Inside was the entire population of the Hyper World, or at least all of those who could be saved. They numbered in the billions, all good subjects.

Thanatos was not unaware of the potential threat of Jetman. But he had already taken precautions against that. His knights would take care of the Jetmen. After all, they had been created to be the Jetmen's peers in fighting skill.

His reverie was interrupted by his vizier Hades. The black clad being spoke in a deep, raspy voice, even though he had no mouth.

"We are approaching Earth," he said. "The knights have been sent ahead and have captured the Jetmen. They will hold them until we arrive."

"I am glad we created them to be the equals of Jetman," Thanatos said. "For inferior lifeforms, those humans are quite dangerous."

"But not dangerous enough to withstand us," Hades said as he gestured to his master with the Chaos Staff. The Chaos Staff, a gift from Thanatos, allowed him to alter the size and mass of anything.

"You are correct," Thanatos replied. "The Jetmen have no machines. Their unique technologies were destroyed in the battle with Radeige. Without their champions, the Earthlings have no chance."

* * *

That night, Aya walked through the doors of Skycamp. Once, this had been Jetman's base of operations. Komoyoji's use of the phrase

"desperate times" was a code. While Skycamp was quite abandoned now, part of the monument the people of Japan had given their heroes, it was not altogether deserted.

"I see you got the message," a calm, measured voice said. A light was activated and Odagiri saw that the black-helmeted figure had been standing in front of her the whole time. He was large, the black cape draped about his shoulder hiding his physique not at all. The fiery bird insignia on his chest described him more than mere words. To Aya, he was Jet Phoenix.

"Yes," Aya said, her voice thick with emotion. "They're gone. Ryu, Raita, Ako, Kaori. Whoever he is, he isn't like Radeige. He made sure to eliminate any obstacles."

"He didn't get you, I see," Jet Phoenix said.

"Or you."

"I have an excellent alibi," Jet Phoenix said. "In any case, we've got one chance according to Komoyoji. The Birdonic Radiation didn't fade when we destroyed Radeige. The good doctor says that the children inherited the Birdonic Powers. Unfortunately, they're dormant. But one pulse of Birdonic energy should activate them."

"You're taking an awful risk," Aya said. "Using children to fight wars."

"Who better?" Jet Phoenix asked. "It's their world, their future."

His tone carried reproof. Hadn't she done the same thing twenty years ago?

"You'd best get back to the satellite," Jet Phoenix said. "He's made his first move. The war is on."

* * *

Thanatos appeared with Hades in tow at the monument. The knights were behind them. They had been created from Thanatos' fiercest warriors. Nova was a ferocious amazon, Gamenon was a strong (if not necessarily smart) warrior, and the cyclopean Destron was a diminutive but deadly warrior, one of Thanatos' trusted advisors. Starblade was also there. He was reckless and duplicitous, a loose cannon held in check only by the knowledge that Thanatos could unmake him as easily as he had made him.

Destron transmitted Thanatos' image all over the world. Thanatos stood alongside the obelisk. It was time to send these puny humans a message.

"People of Earth, your attention please," Thanatos began. "I am Thanatos. I am your new ruler. Starting now, you will make way for my people on your world. You have no chance against us, as we have taken your defenders. Jetman is in our power. You have 24 hours to surrender."

* * *

Jet Phoenix pressed the button. Almost instantly, three young men and two women appeared in the control room with him. Although he had never seen them before, he found their features quite recognizable.

Gai and Kenshiro Tendoh were twins, the sons of Red Hawk and White Swan. Gohan Ohishi was the strapping son of Yellow Owl, while the tall Etsuko Ohishi was Raita's daughter. The slight Reiko Hayasaka was the daughter of Blue Swallow.

"Welcome to Skywatch," Jet Phoenix announced. "I apologize for the abruptness of this summons, but there is little time."

"What are you talking about?" Ken asked. "Gai and I just got up and Mom and Dad were gone! Where have you taken them?"

"Ease up," Gai said, putting a hand on his brother's shoulder. "Hear him out. I don't think he's the one who kidnapped them. Look at his uniform."

"Yeah," Gohan said. "I recognize the suit, sort of. You knew my father, didn't you? You're a Jetman."

"In a way," was Jet Phoenix's response. The five youths were struck by the serene tone in which he spoke. Something about that manner made them at ease. "Your parents were taken by a being named Thanatos."

He pointed to one of the scenes playing on a control room video screen. "There he is," he said. "Right outside. He kidnapped your parents because he believes they are still Jetman. He's wrong, of course. They lost their powers shortly after the battle with Radeige."

"Why not tell us something we don't already know?" piped Reiko. "I don't think talk's going to save our folks."

"You want the truth?" asked Jet Phoenix. "The truth is that your parents never really lost their powers. The energy remained dormant within them, as energy cannot be destroyed."

"So what does that have to do with us?" queried Etsuko. "You said yourself that the energy is still within them. Them, not us. They have the power and this Thanatos has them."

"I never said that your parents were our only hope," replied Jet Phoenix. "As you said, Thanatos has them in his clutches. The real hope for the Earth is...you five."

"WHAT?" exclaimed Gohan.

"You're crazy, man!" shouted Ken. "I can't believe you're playing some sort of game with us now!"

"Look at them," said Etsuko. "We wouldn't stand a chance against them; it's obvious,"

"That's where you're wrong," countered Jet Phoenix. "You can match them because you also possess the powers. They were passed on by your parents at birth. In fact, the potential power of you five is even greater than your parents. The powers have become magnified; they need only to be brought to the surface."

"I hate to rain on your parade," Reiko asked, "but how do you know this stuff? What happens if we get out there and we don't have these powers?"

"You will," Jet Phoenix answered. "I can understand any misgivings which the five of you may have. I will activate your powers so that you may free your parents. After that, you will be free to do as you choose."

They stood in silence. All of them felt overwhelmed by the events in the last few minutes. Yet they all knew what they had to do. Their parents needed them.

"Okay," Gai said. "Let's do it."

* * *

Thanatos clenched his fist, ready to smash the obelisk as a prelude to demolishing this monument to his brother's enemies. Suddenly, he was struck by a laser blast fired from atop one of the machines.

"Stop!" cried Jet Phoenix. "I command you to leave! Return your prisoners or we attack!"

"Who are you?" Hades said.

Gai and the rest stood behind Jet Phoenix. Each was now equipped with a Cross-Changer bracelet. Gai turned to Ken and said worriedly, "I sure hope this works."

Ken grinned and reassured his brother. "Take a chance," he said and each of the five youths activated their new powers. Instantly, they were clad in their uniforms and each marvelled at how natural it felt. They announced themselves to their foes.

Gai: "Red Hawk!"

Ken: "Black Condor!"

Gohan: "Yellow Owl!"

Etsuko: "White Swan!"

Reiko: "Blue Swallow!"

Jet Phoenix: "Jet Phoenix!"

"Chojin Sentai Jetman!" they declared in unison.

Thanatos struck Destron hard. "Damn you!" he exclaimed. "You swore that the Jetmen were in custody!"

"Look again," Hades observed. "They're not the Jetmen Radeige fought. These are new."

"I don't care!" Thanatos screamed. "Destroy them!"

Jetman leapt into action. They first had to contend with the Garo, the android guard which Thanatos used as foot soldiers. Though none of them had been fighters before, each of the new heroes slipped easily into their new roles. It was as if this was what they were meant to do.

Gai could hardly believe what he was doing. Both he and Ken had taken karate, but he was amazed at some of the maneuvers he was performing. It was beyond his wildest dreams.

Ken also noted his new level of skill, but he wasn't necessarily shocked. "Relieved" might've been a better way to describe it. He had never been as athletic as Gai, relying more on his cunning to outwit his opponents.

Gohan easily tossed a Garo aside. He had always been strong, but now he seemed even stronger. He was beginning to feel like a real superhero. He smashed one of the Garo into the dirt hard enough to smash it.

Etsuko was the first to display one of the new Jet Powers which Jet Phoenix had discussed in his hurried debriefing. Each of them had a unique ability which they could use to overwhelm their enemies. Etsuko concentrated and the white jewel on her buckle began to glow. A snowstorm appeared instantaneously and several Garo were frozen by the extreme cold. Etsuko used the Wing Gauntlet which each Jetman wore on his right arm to obliterate the petrified automatons with one fell blow.

Reiko busied herself by eluding the Garo. The petite daredevil was having fun in spite of herself. The Garo were so stupid, she mused, that they were blasting themselves to pieces trying to catch her. This was fine until she ran away from one of the machines and ran right into another. She was sent sprawling. Thinking quickly, she reached forward and pantsed the Garo in front of her. The Garo behind her shot the now trouserless Garo, who, in anger, responded in kind.

"I love it when a plan comes together," Reiko giggled as she blasted two more Garo with her Wing Gauntlet.

* * *

"This isn't going well at all," Hades said. "Knights, ATTACK!"

Destron led the charge by firing his eye beam. It struck Gai hard. Ken rushed to his side. He had learned early in the battle with the Garo that his instincts controlled his powers better than he did consciously.

Trusting his instincts, Ken activated his Jet Power. The Condor Stealth Cloak appeared around himself and Gai.

"Ken?" Gai said as he noticed the distortion around them. "What happened?"

"I made us invisible somehow," responded Ken. "I'm not sure how. I saw that tall girl freeze some of that big guy's flunkies. I guess we all have some kind of power. You'd better use yours soon. I don't know how long this lasts."

Gai took the hint. He concentrated and activated his Jet Power. He rose high into the air, then extended his fist. He used his Hawk Fist to smash Destron's armor and send the knight reeling.

"Not bad," Ken said.

Meanwhile, Gohan was wrestling with Gamenon. This is a real kick, Gohan thought, feeling a little guilty. This must be what it feels like to be Ultraman battling the monsters. It certainly had wrestling at school beat.

He threw Gamenon off and smacked the ground as hard as he could. Seismic waves knocked Gamenon off his feet. More good news, Gohan thought with a smile. I have Dragonball powers! Just call me Son Gohan!

Reiko, meanwhile, was busy fighting Starblade. His speed was amazing despite his size. If she could use some help, it was now.

As if in answer, she found herself standing beside an exact copy of herself. She probably would have addressed the higher questions that such a situation entailed had she not been otherwise occupied.

Not only did she press the attack, but her analog followed suit, doing exactly the follow-up she required. Starblade teleported away in frustration, not eager to be beat up on anymore.

Etsuko was ably dealing with Nova. She had already dealt with the feral female's weapons and had surprised her opponent with her speed and grace. Truth to tell, Etsuko was pretty surprised herself.

* * *

After a few minutes, Destron and Nova had both disappeared. Only Gamenon, stubborn to the last, remained. Thanatos and Hades surveyed the situation.

"He doesn't stand a chance," Hades observed.

"I agree," Thanatos said, "but he is expendable. Let us return to the ship. To borrow the human expression, it seems we should fight fire with fire."

They vanished, leaving a very confused Gamenon behind. Jet Phoenix seized the opportunity to test another facet of his team's powers.

"Jetman!" he cried. "Form on me!"

The five Jetmen stood alongside each other. Their Wing Gauntlets glowed and they all fired in unison. An energy sphere streaked toward Gamenon, enveloping and crushing him.

It was over. They had won their first victory against Thanatos. Yet their parents were still prisoners. They stood motionless for a moment, stunned.

"You all did well," Jet Phoenix said. "I'm only sorry we didn't get a chance to rescue your parents. We will, believe me, but I can't do it without all of you."

"Thanatos has to be stopped," Gai said. "I'd fight him even if Mom and Dad weren't in danger."

"Speak for yourself," Ken said. "I'm only in this long enough to get them back."

"Come on, buddy," Gohan said. "If we've got these powers, then we have a responsibility to use them to stop people like that."

"Both of you sound like Dad," Ken retorted. "Believe that comic book stuff if you want. I'm looking out for number one."

Jet Phoenix would have smiled had he been able. The words were different, but the sentiment sounded familiar.

"I don't know how the rest of you feel," offered Etsuko, "but I agree with Ken. We're no superheroes. The odds against us are just too long."

"The way I hear it, the odds weren't very good for the original Jetman team either," Reiko said. "Heck, they hated each other for awhile. They were willing to sacrifice everything for their cause. I think we should be ready to do the same."

* * *

Meanwhile, in the Hyper-Ship, Thanatos brooded in his chamber, Hades stood awaiting his command. The lord of the Hyper World was weighing his options. These new Jetmen were an unexpected development, but not an insurmountable obstacle. They were still inexperienced, vulnerable. Vulnerable? Perhaps to those more experienced? A wicked grin crossed Thanatos' lips.

"Hades," Thanatos said. "I think it's time we extended a proper greeting to our...guests."

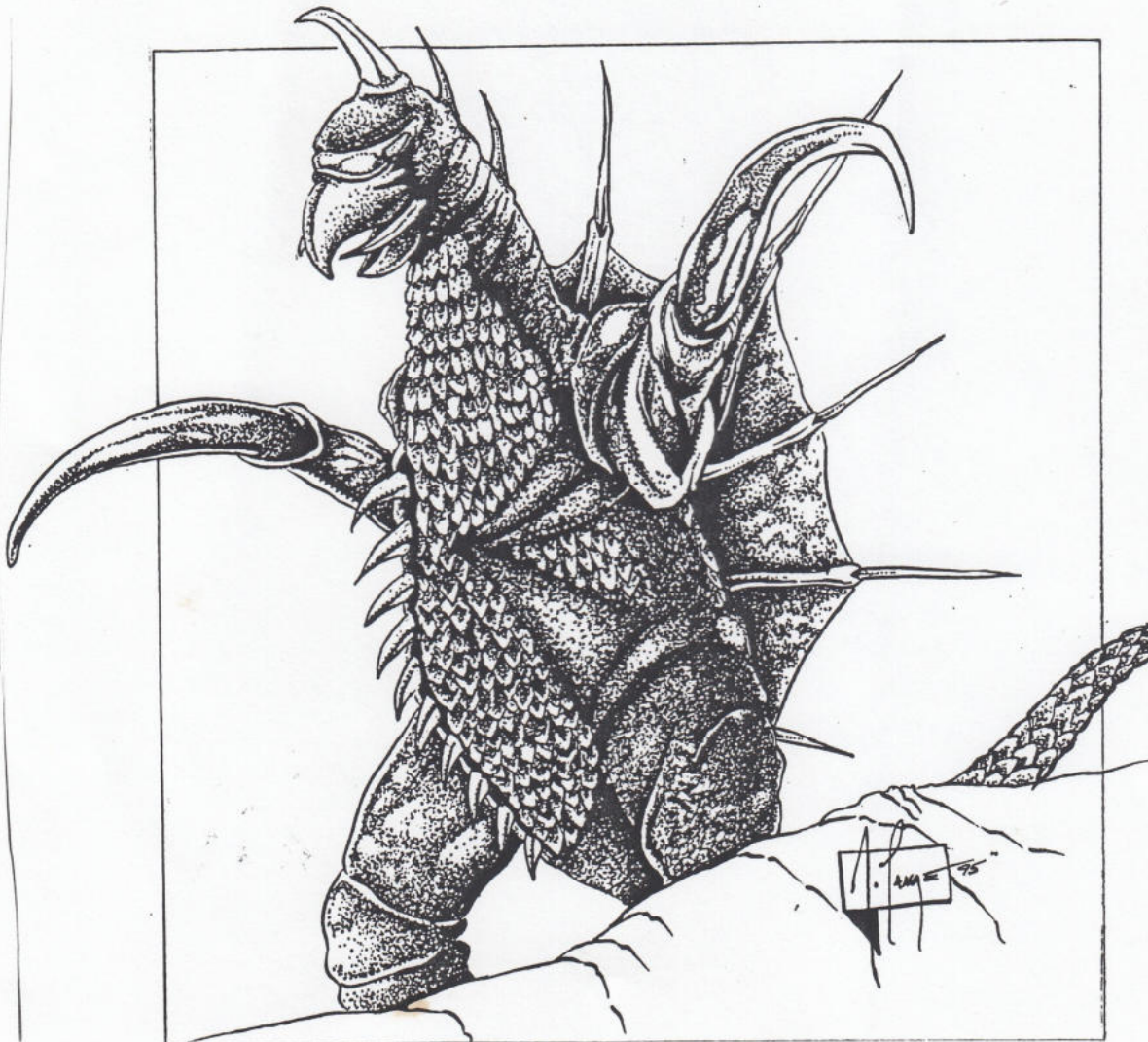
"What do you mean?" Hades queried.

"Remember when I said we should 'fight fire with fire'?" Thanatos inquired. "If we are to conquer this new Jetman, perhaps we need our own Jetman."

Thanatos arose from his throne. "They will not be able to kill their own kind so easily," he proclaimed. "That weakness will be their undoing! We will destroy them with those they hold most dear!"

TO BE CONTINUED

(Lewis Smith is still a college student in North Carolina, though he tells me he may be transferring to a college with a name I can actually pronounce. He was a bit disappointed with the lack of enthusiasm in bribing him. He hopes he will have more luck in finding a bodyguard to protect him from all of his female stalkers. Any potential bodyguards should apply c/o Owari.)



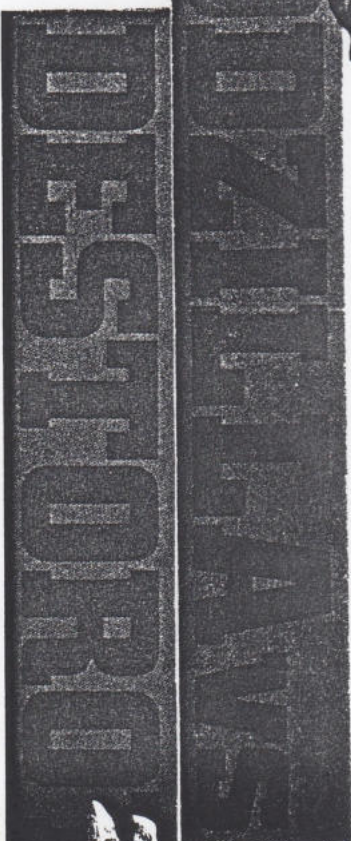
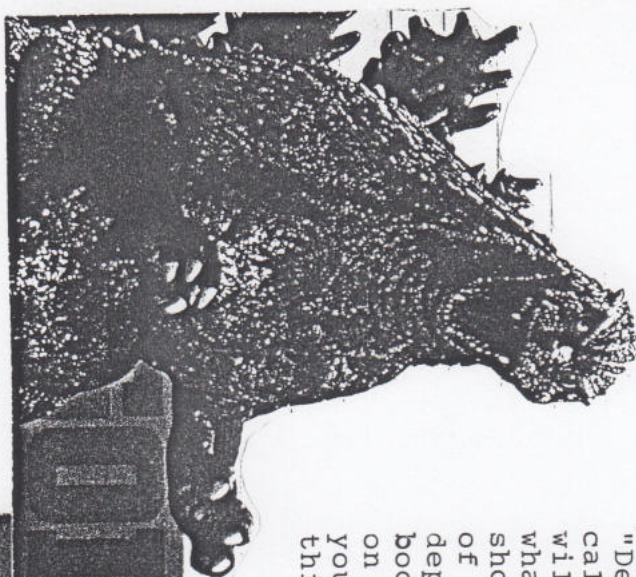
Look! Gigan's come! Just look! A kaiju portrait from New York illustrator Jerry Lange. Jerry is looking for a good home for his two creations, the monsters Rygan and Spydon. Can you help him?



THE LAST BATTLE OF GODZILLA

ONE FAN'S OPINION OF A CERTAIN MOVIE
by C. Elam

You know the one. It's that movie that everyone and his brother (not to mention sleazy third cousin "Lefty") has been talking about. Why, yes, it's Godzilla vs. What's His Name (you say "Destroyer", he says "Destroyah", let's call the whole thing off). Since people will nag me until I die to tell them what I thought of it, I figured I should write a review and make some of them pay me. This won't be an in-depth analysis. Why bother when everybody else will do that? We'll continue on the next page. I don't know about you, but I'm getting a headache reading this thing sideways!



Ah, that's better! So what'd I think of this much anticipated film? I liked it. It's not perfect, but not much in life is. It's very exciting, probably the most thrilling G-flick to me since Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah. The effects work is the usual Kawakita business. If you're a fan (like me), you'll be satisfied. If you're not a fan, you'll find even more reason to complain. Ifukube's score is also top-notch. I'm especially fond of the new apocalyptic variation on the traditional Godzilla theme. The direction by Takao Okawara is also very proficient. He handles all aspects of the movie well. The cast is competent, though none of their characters are especially memorable. It's tons of fun to see all of those familiar faces, either reprising previous roles or playing similar roles. One point of confusion that has emerged is that some have stated that Mashiro Takashima portrays Sho Kuroki. The character of Kuroki was played by Masanobu Takashima in Godzilla vs. Biollante, while brother Masahiro was Aoki in Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla. It seems unlikely Toho would've made a mistake like this. I assume Mashiro is either playing Aoki or a new character. As for the film's scenario, it's the most coherent Kazuki Omori script since... since...say, has Omori ever written a coherent script?

Before we conclude, we should discuss the climax, the worst kept secret in film history. The Big Guy does die and Junior Godzilla mutates into a new Godzilla to presumably continue the series. This ending has caused me to reflect on the fabled Godzilla/Elvis connection first brought to light by that renowned double bill of Harum Scarum and Ghidrah the Three-Headed Monster. Both "King"s are now dead, but have would-be replacements waiting in the wings. Will Junior be recognized as the true heir to the King of the Monsters or will he be just another Elvis impersonator playing in seedy dives? The answer depends on the quality of future Godzilla movies. I don't know about you, but I can't wait to find out.

GODZILLA VS. DESTROYAH. A Toho Production. Executive Producer: Tomoyuki Tanaka. Producer: Shogo Tomiyama. Director: Takao Okawara. Special Effects Director: Koichi Kawakita. Screenplay: Kazuki Omori. Music: Akira Ifukube. Photography: Yoshinori Sekiguchi. Special Effects Photography: Kenichi Eguchi. CAST: Tatsumi Takuro (Dr. Kensaku Ijuin), Yoko Ishino (Yukari Yamane), Yasufumi Hayashi (Kenkichi Yamane), Megumi Odaka (Miki Saegusa), Sayaka Osawa (Meru Ozawa), Momoko Kochi (Emiko Yamane), Saburo Shinoda (Mitsuru Kunitomo), Masahiro Takashima (Super X III Commander [Kazuma Aoki?]), Akira Nakao (Commander Takaai Aso), Kenpachiro Satsuma (Godzilla), Ryo Hariya (Destroyah), Ryu Harkien (Junior Godzilla). Color-101 minutes. Released December 9, 1995.



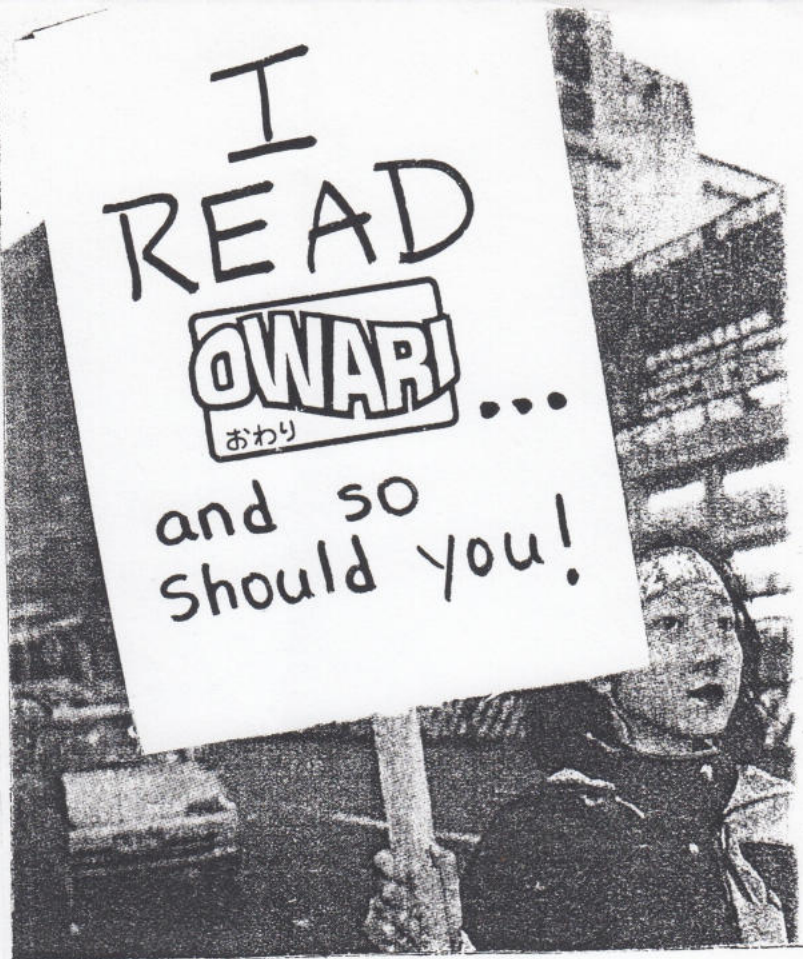
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CLOSING CREDITS & OTHER TRIVIA
 Thanks all around to my wacky contributors, my wacky family (especially sinister sister Amy), and all my wacky Owari readers. You all know who you are!

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...IT'S ALL ABOUT LIFE. LOVE...FUN

WOODY ALLEN STRIKES BACK!

woody allen's what's up tiger lily? IN COLOR

American International Picture

NEXT ISSUE:

"Oh, Phil! All you ever think about is sex!" That's right, it's time for that classic What's Up, Tiger Lily?. We'll talk about Woody Allen's hysterical redub of a Toho spy movie and I'll try to dig up as much info as possible on the original Japanese movies. There'll also be Part 2 of The Return of Jetman and whatever else I can fit in the 'zine's pages. Owari #3 will be ready (I think) sometime in the latter part of 1996. Hope to see you there.