

# JFFS

## JAPANESE FANTASY FILM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Vol. 2, No. 9

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM--Member Kevin Grays has supplied us with the following plot synopsis for the wildly popular animated SF series GUNDAM:

Certain factions of Earth's populace have taken to living in immense outer space stations in the space year 0079. Earth falls under siege by an alien raced armed with gigantic Mobile Suit Zak robots, and Earth moves to defend itself by creating its own giant robot force. Young Amuro Ray dreams that someday he can fight for Earth and control the mightiest of Earth's robot force, Mobile Suit Gundam.

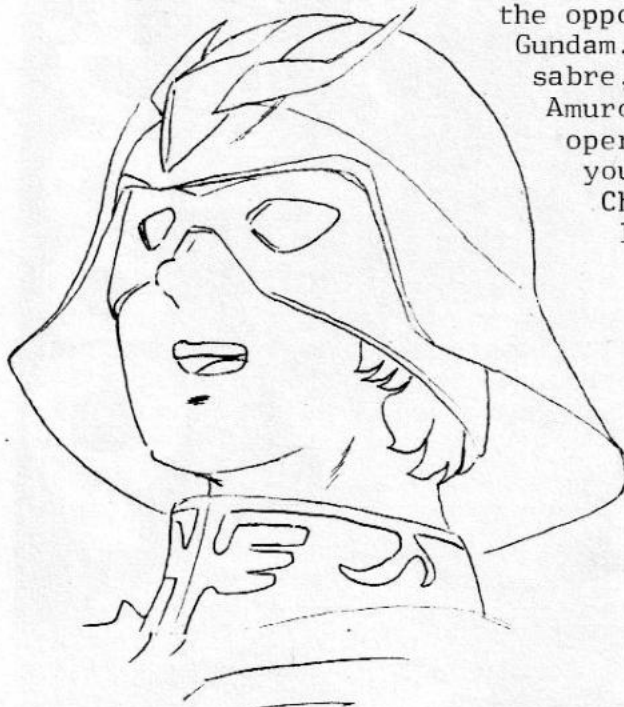
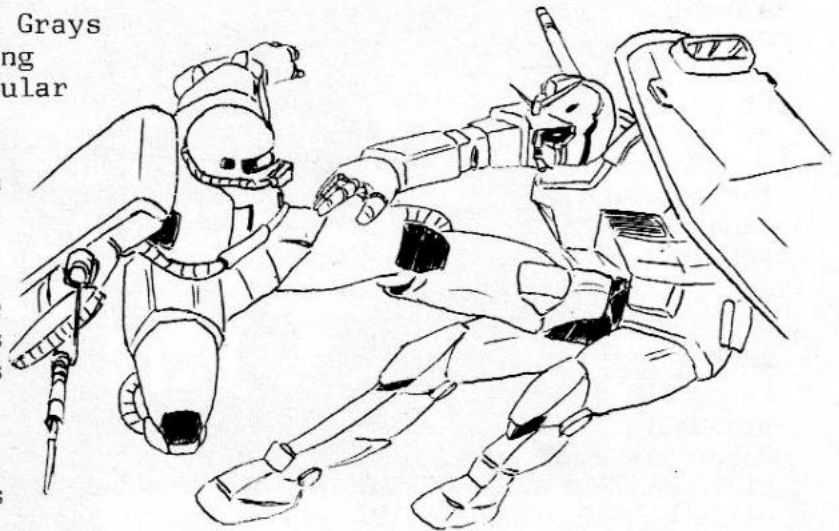
Amuro constantly studies the robot's

functions, hoping that his dream may someday come true. Sure enough, during a surprise raid by Zak forces, Amuro and his female companion Frau Baw seize

the opportunity to climb aboard and take control of Gundam. Using the immense mechanical hero's beam sabre, Amuro dispatches the enemy. Impressed by Amuro's skill and bravery, Bright Noah (chief of operations for Galactic White Base) befriends the young man and acts as his mentor. Meanwhile,

Char Aznable, the ruthless enemy leader, unleashes another Zak robot to threaten the inhabitants of Lunar 2. Amuro and Gundam spring into action and intercept the invader high above Earth. Gundam is near defeat when the two battling robots begin tumbling into the atmosphere and burning up. Amuro quickly searches through Gundam's operating manual and manages to find a device which activates a heat shield on Gundam, protecting Earth's avenger from sharing the same fiery fate as its opponent.

Char sends one of his evil agents, Garm, to penetrate Earth's defenses and attack White Base. Amuro's friend Kai Shiden controls the gun cannon tank robot in an attempt to repel Garm's attack, but he is outmatched by superior alien forces. Over Bright Noah's



Char Aznable

vehement protests, Amuro brings Gundam to Kai's rescue. Brandishing his giant shield and deadly beam rifle, Gundam devastates the enemy, smashing their ships with his powerful legs. Suddenly, Gundam is confronted by a Zak robot, and Gundam is severely damaged while defeating the Zak.

Garma launches an all-out offensive against Earth using an entire army of Mobile Suit Zaks. Gundam is repaired and leads the Earth robot force against the Zaks who are destroying all in their path. The robot armies wage a fierce battle amidst Earth's largest cities. When his forces face inevitable defeat, Garma heads his command ship for a collision with White Base, but instead he falls short and crashes into the rubble of the decimated city. Another of Char Aznable's attempts at conquest has failed.

But Char is not yet finished with Earth. After the enemy empire conducts a memorial service for its fallen warrior Garma, a new Mobile Suit Zak is devised--a formidable destructive device equipped with an electrical cable whip. In a spectacular climactic battle, Gundam defeats the Zak and White Base is able to continue its journey through space, ever watchful of another attack by the notorious Char Aznable.

Though MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: THE MOVIE was quite well received in Japan, the second film adapting episodes 14-30 of the tv series was not accorded equal praises by Japanese fans, thus dimming fan enthusiasm for the next GUNDAM feature which is planned for release sometime in the near future. However, Gundam fans have not been disillusioned enough to warrant discontinuation of Gundam's enormous merchandising campaign!

#### RECENT RELEASES ON JAPANESE TV.....

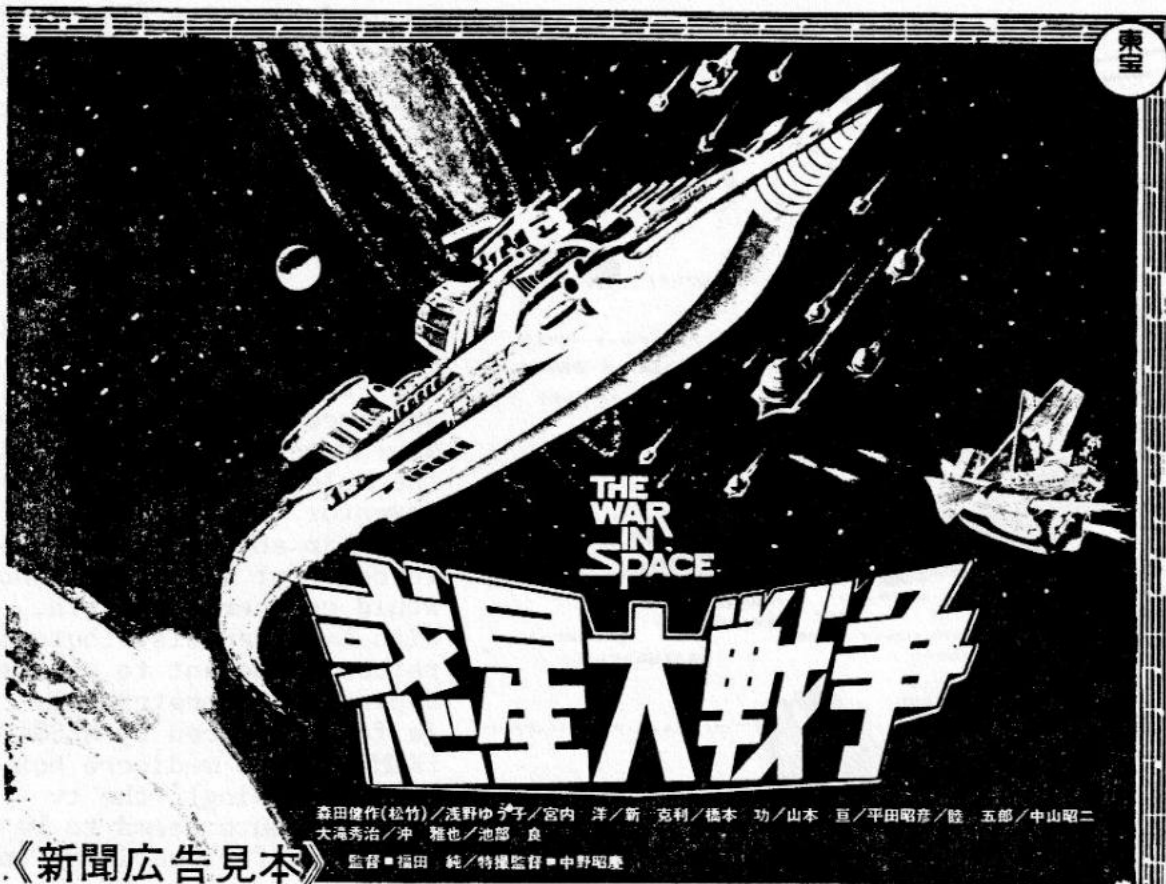
Among the series under current re-broadcasting on various stations across Japan are Tsuburaya Production's ULTRA SEVEN, ULTRAMAN TARO, and MIRROR MAN.....YAMATO BE FOREVER was shown on August 19, though slightly edited for television. This was just part of a mini Yamato festival, as SPACE CRUISER YAMATO (the original movie condensation) and YAMATO THE NEW VOYAGE were also shown during August... Making its Japanese tv premiere on August 9 was GODZILLA VS. MEGALON..... New animated tv series include GO SHOGUN and Tatsunoko's SADAMEBIUS, the former being the usual giant combination robot fare and the later being a space opera.....CYBORG 009 also has returned for the fall season reruns....

#### AND LOOK WHAT HAS BEEN RELEASED TO AMERICAN TELEVISION.....

Two of Toho's science fiction films produced in the 70's but heretofore unseen in this country have finally been picked up by U.S. distributors for television release. CATASTROPHE: 1999 (NOSTRADAMUS NO DAYOGEN--1974) has begun to crop up on local stations around the country under the title THE LAST DAYS OF PLANET EARTH. Not to be confused with







東宝

東宝プレスシート

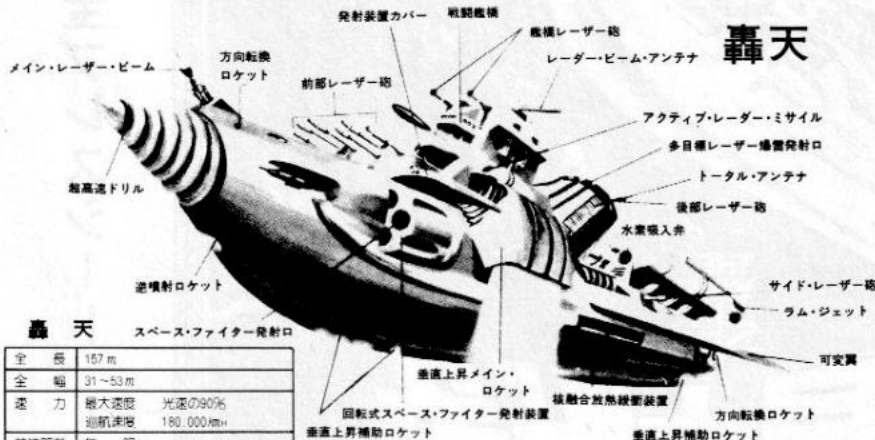
Press sheet for THE WAR IN SPACE

the recent Sun Pictures exploitation filmed titled THE LATE GREAT PLANET EARTH, this Toho film had gotten theatrical release in most of the major world markets except the United States during the 70's. CATASTROPHE: 1999 deals with the calamities which threaten the Earth in the face of rampant pollution and over-population. The respected actor Tetsuro Tanba (recently seen in Toei's MESSAGE FROM SPACE in the role of Commander Ernest Naguchi) plays the role of an environmental scientist who investigates the many weird events occurring around the world and warns of man's ultimate demise. LAST DAYS OF PLANET EARTH is actually the same version of CATASTROPHE: 1999 which was released in Great Britain a few years ago. It was dubbed by the same British voice actors who also dubbed the versions of GODZILLA ON MONSTER ISLAND, GODZILLA VS. THE COSMIC MONSTER, and TERROR OF MECHAGODZILLA that were released theatrically in this country. Among the few scenes edited from the American release of this film is the images of World War III--after nuclear missiles have destroyed most of the populace and killed even the military personnel who launch the missiles, nuclear warheads continue to be launched by computers, dramatizing the senseless overkill of nuclear war.

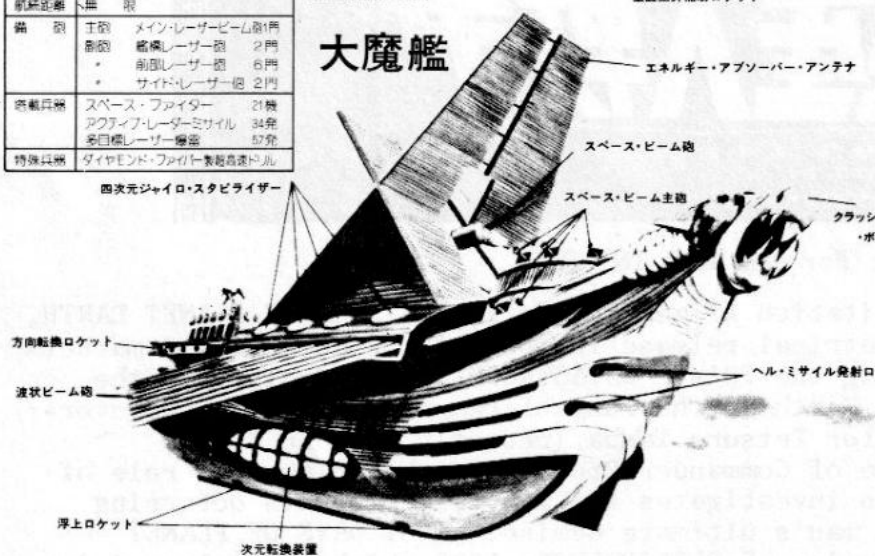
The other Toho science fiction film of the 70's to be picked up by American television is THE WAR IN SPACE (WAKSEI DAISENSO---1977). Again, the United States has been the last of the major world markets to receive this film. Rather poorly received in Japan during its domestic release in 1977, WAR IN SPACE was rushed into production rather hastily in order to capitalize on the anticipation growing in Japan for the upcoming release of STAR WARS. Unfortunately, a rather sloppy, weak film was the result. Toei's decision to take its time

# 惑星大戦争

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全長	157m
全幅	31~53m
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航続距離	無限
機銃	主砲 メイン・レーザー・ビーム 1門 副砲 艦橋レーザー砲 2門 * 前部レーザー砲 6門 * サイド・レーザー砲 2門
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特殊兵器	ダイヤモンド・ファイター 超高速ドリル



in producing its STAR WARS take-off seemed to pay off in comparison. THE WAR IN SPACE concerns the exploits of space battleship UNSF Gohten (looking much like a souped up Alpha/Atragon hybrid) against evil invaders from the planet Hell. Though this film is not intended as a sequel to Toho's 1959 film BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE, it does star Ryo Ikebe who also appeared in the 1959 space adventure. Here, Ikebe plays the role of the scientist/inventor of Gohten who takes his ship and crew to Venus to confront the aliens who would conquer the Earth. With American distributors rather reluctant to release Japanese SF theatrically (a fear enhanced by MESSAGE FROM SPACE's mediocre box-office showing), the tv release route seems to be the only hope for Americans to see Japan's newer SF crop. Certainly, WAR IN SPACE did not do anything to convince U.S. distributors to think otherwise. Hopefully, this will not reflect negatively on the chance for theatrical bookings for VIRUS, ULTRAMAN HERO FROM THE STARS, or any possible future Godzilla adventures.

Nothing new has developed recently on ULTRAMAN HERO FROM THE STARS as all parties involved have been rather quiet on the subject as of late. Of even greater concern, however, has been the prolonged silence on the prospects for a new Godzilla film which less than a half a year ago had been strongly rumored for Toho's 50th Anniversary early in 1982.....However, Toho has not been totally inactive in the field of sfx films as RENGU KANTAI (THE GRAND FLEET) was released on August 8. Starring a number of familiar Toho actors such as Tetsuro Tanba, the special effects in this World War II sea epic were said to be rather inconsistent. Though the scenes showing off the huge miniature battleships in action were enthusiastically received, scenes involving fighter planes were said to be sadly lacking in their execution. Additionally, stock footage from other war films and actual combat footage was intermixed with the new scenes, making for an unsettling effect..... The music for RENGU KANTAI was composed by Masaru Sato.....

LATE BREAKING NEWS.....August Ragone informs us that MGM has just announced

plans to release Osamu Tezuka's animated feature PHOENIX 2772 (1980) to theaters in this country. This masterfully animated space adventure will be titled SPACE FIREBIRD, and it has reportedly already been dubbed and edited with post-production work having just been finished.

THE QUEST  
FOR  
THE  
LEGENDARY  
FIREBIRD!



TOHO

PRESENTS

# SPACE FIREBIRD

AN OSAMU TEZUKA FILM

Produced by Tezuka Production/Producers Kiichi Ichikawa • Susumu Asotagawa  
Story by Osamu Tezuka/Screenplay by Osamu Tezuka • Toku Sugiyama/Directed by  
Taku Sugiyama/Art by Kazuko Nakamura • Noboru Ishiguro/Music by Yasuo Higuchi

As this issue of the JFFS Newsletter comes to a close, we would like to apologize for its lateness due in part to a lack of information being made available from Japanese sources. Also, a number of inquiries as to the status of the first JFFS Yearbook have been made. Unforeseen circumstances have caused considerable delay in its production, but all members can be assured that they will receive their copy upon its completion. On a more positive note, the JFFS has made arrangements with the Izumiya Co. in Japan to offer members Toei animation materials, including posters, stills, and unpainted animation cels! Sayonara till next time.....

**ANNOUNCING:** The STARBLAZERS Fan Club--devoted to STARBLAZERS and nothing else. Members receive a clubzine which is published four times per year, a membership card, and club services. Membership is \$2.00 and supporting membership is \$5.00. We have 150 members, but need you to grow. Send membership fee in cash, money order, or check payable to: STARBLAZERS Fan Club, c/o Michael Pinto, 1622 Stevens Ave., Merrick, New York 11566.

Have a club / fanzine needing publicity? Let us know!



# JFFS Supplement 3

## TWIN TAIL

#2 EYES--radar eyes which emit supersonic waves with a green light.

NARROW BEAM INPUT--radar wave receiving antenna.

HEART--resistant to heat and cold. Pumps the equivalent of 3 gas tankers of blood.

#2 BRAIN--governs fighting with enemies.

STOMACH--all which is digested is distributed throughout the entire body.

#1 BRAIN--common use brain.

#1 EYES--common use eyes.

TAILS--stronger than steel, yet flexible. Tipped with poison.

TWIN TAIL ("Return of Ultraman")

45 meters tall 15,000 tons

Before mammals appeared on the Earth, insects and spiders lived. This monster, like a scorpion combined with a centipede, lived within the ground for unknown millions of years. Twin Tail obtained nourishment by eating rocks and mud. Its soft flesh makes it a desirable prey for the underground monster Gudon.

