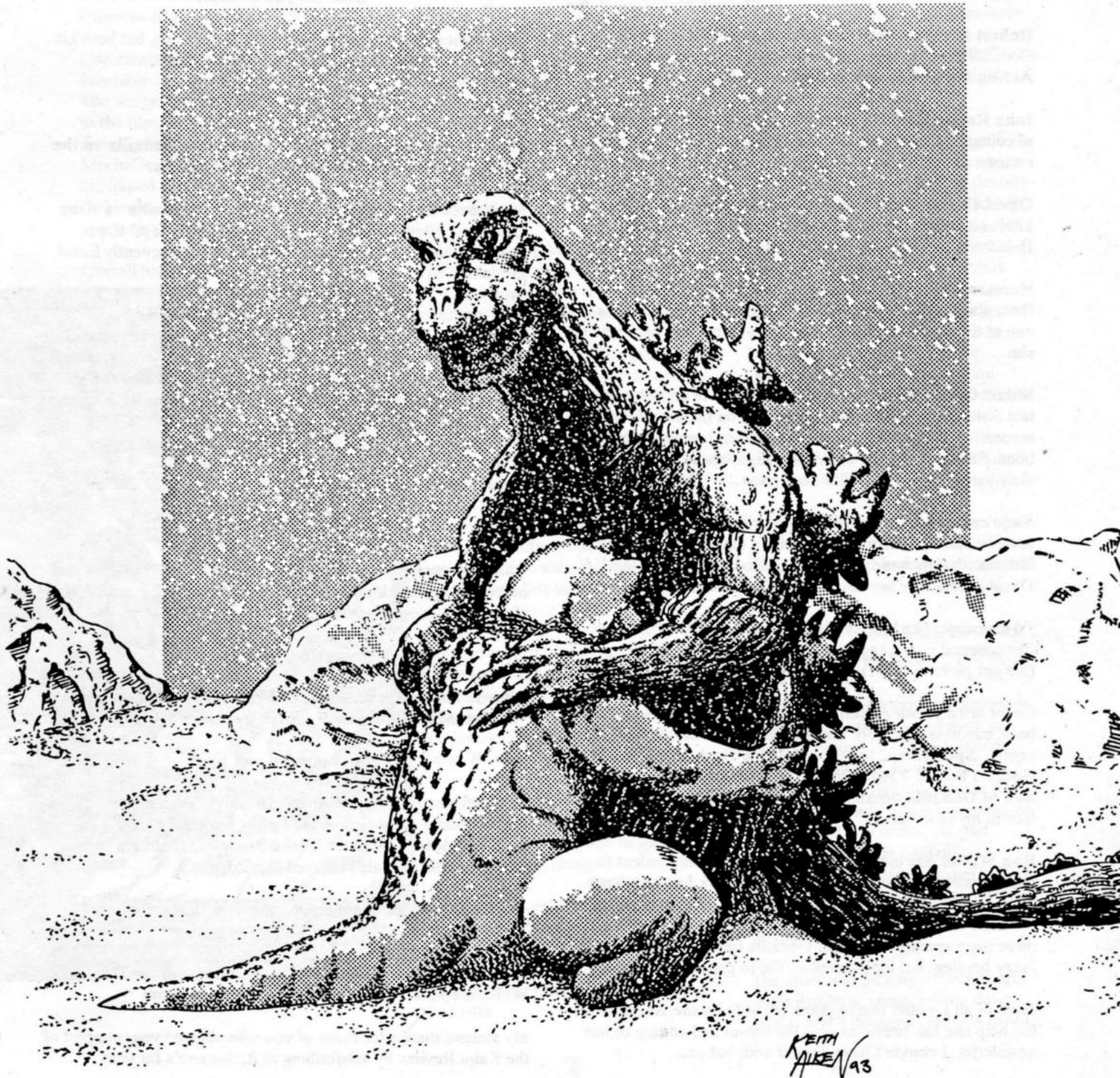


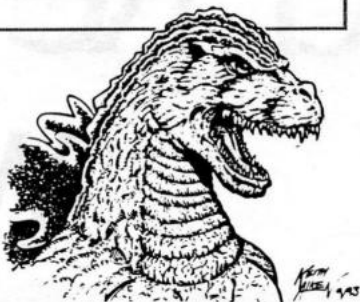
The Kaiju Review

Winter '93



Wanted More Readers Like

Once again I owe a large debt of thanks to the fellow fans and collectors of Kaiju culture, who have been generous enough to contribute of their time and talents toward making this issue of the Review an interesting one.



Robert Biondi returns to these pages with a report on Godzilla's true stature in film history. Robert also writes for **Action Figure News** and the 'zine **G-Force**.

John Rocco Roberto takes a pragmatic look at the hobby of collecting Japanese monster toys and kits, and also reviews the book **Godzilla : Super Diorama Theater**.

David Barker clues us in on the new **Spiga** and **Gimantis** kits, and tells us why **Volks** is a company to look out for. Heh, heh.

Norman England, "Our Man in Osaka", talks about Godzilla's unusual television activities in Japan and visits one of the coolest spots to shop Goji in the land of the rising sun.

Stuart Galbraith IV who was the subject of an interview last issue has graced us with an article on the use of wide screen lensing and stereophonic sound in Japanese genre films. Stuart's book on the history of Japanese genre films distributed in the U.S. will be out soon.

Kaiju enthusiast **David Milner** contributes two laser reviews and an article on some of the crazy ideas American film distributors had for promoting Godzilla films in the U.S. David is currently on the staff at **Cult Movies** magazine.

I'd especially like to thank two talented Artists who were instrumental in taking Kaiju Review to the next level (it's got pictures now!):

Cover artist **Keith Aiken** works as an inker in the comic book business; his work includes **Marvel's Silver Surfer** comic, **Spiderman**, and the upcoming **Dark Horse** Godzilla books. I asked him to recreate this scene from **Son of Godzilla** because I thought it would lend a seasonal flair to my first "cover". The insert above is also by Keith.

Ron Wilber has been a very supportive correspondent to this newsletter for some time now. His work has been seen on the cover of **Asian Trash Cinema**, and in the pages of **Domino Lady** and other titles from **Eros Comics**. His three page spread on the last Godzilla film was based on a fuzzy bootleg, but looks terrific. Go to page 10 and enjoy!

Most of all I would like to thank my wife **Diane Reed** for all the help she has provided with the layout and editing of this newsletter. I couldn't have done it without you.

Results of the Official K.R. Reader Survey

I'd like to thank all the readers who were nice enough to take the time to respond to my somewhat odd list of questions regarding their interest in Kaiju pop culture. Here are the results:

Age of interest?

Most readers indicated they first remember discovering Godzilla between the ages of five and seven.

What do you collect?

Most indicated a preference for collecting videos, but both kit builders and obsessives were well represented.

Favorite Kaiju Film?

The number one favorite Kaiju film cited was **Godzilla vs the Thing**. Number two was **Destroy All Monsters**.

Most popular of the new series was by far **Godzilla vs King Ghidora**. Films such as: **The Mysterians**, **War of the Gargantuas**, and the original **Godzilla** were frequently listed as well.

Show 'n Tell

The coolest item in your collection question never got the same answer twice and really illustrated the diverse interests, tastes, and experiences of the respondents. It also indicated the general absence of available Japanese collectibles for many fans around the country.

Anime?

Most readers could care less for Anime.

Just kidding almost.

Question number six was mainly a joke on **Star Trek** fans and other F.B. types, although most of you went for the most viable choice (#1) concerning dealers.

Favorite Magazines?

Favorite magazines included; **Hobby Japan**, **Cinefantastique**, **Filmfax**, **Markalite**, and of course **Business Week**.

Other movies you like?

Included Hong Kong and American action films, more mainstream science fiction and horror movies, and the collective output of the the **Three Stooges**. (I always figured most Godzilla fans also enjoyed the Stooges.)

What do you want to see more of in the Review?

One word: pictures.

Welcome new subscribers; this one's for you!

My sincere thanks for those of you who showed your support of the Kaiju Review by subscribing to it, this one's for you!

From the Tokyo Film

Festival, comes the word that Godzilla manages to defeat the new Mechanical version of himself in the 20th entry of the Toho series.

But it's a hard won fight, and provides a spectacular finale to a film that is at other times over burdened with cuteness and sentiment.

Comments have been generally favorable regarding Rodan's new look. The winged favorite plays a crucial role in the film, revitalizing Godzilla at his lowest point in the fight against Super MechaGodzilla. His return signals the likelihood that many more of the previously established daikaiju will be appearing in future films.

Overall tech credits are excellent, with

the new designs remaining, mostly a matter of taste among aficionados of this genre.

Of course many fans did express dismay at the Baby Gojira design, which frankly in my opinion makes **Minya** look dangerous. Of course you can picture this thing growing up into something that would resemble Godzilla. I wonder what Minya looks like these days.

More Toho EFX

Toho is planning on doing three effects oriented films in '94. An unusually heavy schedule that would seem to indicate a great renewal of self confidence in the Tokusatsu Department, following the success of the Godzilla series.

First up is a remake of **The Three Treasures**, the story of Japan's myth shrouded origins first released in 1959 featuring **Toshiro Mifune**.

Next is a World War II film the details of which are under wraps at this time, and finally, the next Godzilla film.

As usual the plot of the new film has been a tightly guarded secret. Last year during the Christmas release of **Godzilla vs Mothra**, Toho publicly announced its plans for **Godzilla vs MechaGodzilla**. Hopefully we can look forward to some announcement of their plans this year as well.

However in order to throw out the first ball of looney speculation, the **Kaiju Review** is pleased to report Toho's continuing interest in securing the rights to use the **King Kong** character in a future film (first reported in **Kaiju Review**, vol. I no. II).

Sources in Hollywood indicate that the necessary negotiations are underway to enable Toho to go forward with the project.

Obviously it would be the ideal way for them to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Godzilla by recreating the financial success of the series most profitable film to date, **King Kong vs Godzilla**.

Amerigoji Revisited

On the subject of TriStar's upcoming Godzilla project here are some of the latest rumors (unconfirmed as this issue goes to press):

The Godzilla effect will be achieved through a combination of models and computer animation, like the dinosaurs of **Jurassic Park**.

Although the popularity of dinosaurs will influence the new design parameters, it'll still be Godzilla. Toho has retained final approval over the character's appearance.

The film will not be a new origin film, but will feature a story line involving the efforts of a female lead to destroy the monster who years before killed her father. The similarity of this plot to **Randy Stradley's Dark Horse** story line may not be coincidental.

Speculation continues regarding who will direct the film. Although Tim Burton's name continues to be associated with the movie, some insiders indicate this may be out of a desire on TriStar's behalf to add marquee value to the project, thus enabling them to attract some A list talent to the film.

I spoke with Tim Burton at the New York Film Festival, and he would not confirm his involvement beyond what he himself had read in the trades.

Dark Horse's upcoming Godzilla Comic projects

Those of you who enjoyed the return of **Randy Stradley's G-Force** in issues #10 and 11 of **Dark Horse Comics**, can look forward to a continuation of this storyline in a mini series scheduled for the beginning of next year. If you recall, the plot involved a sleeping Godzilla awakened by a dose of toxins blasted into the monster by the daughter of a man who was killed, sometime before by Godzilla

The story will pick up with the earth imperiled by a menace from outer space, and a drugged Godzilla unable



to defend it.

Before you see that one however Dark Horse plans to release a one shot comic adaptation of the **Godzilla vs Charles Barkley** commercial. Silly story perhaps, but Toho reportedly loves it, so I'll reserve judgement.

Contributing his superb talents to both of these projects is the cover artist of this issue of the Review, **Keith Aiken**, who will be inking the books.

Tokyo Marui's Follow-up to the RC Godzilla

Obsessive collectors with more money than brains take note: following the great success of **Tokyo Marui's RC Godzilla** (reviewed last issue), the company has announced plans for two immediate follow-ups to the animatronic monster.

The first reportedly on sale soon in

Japan will be an **RC Mothra** (larvae form obviously), based on the design seen in the original film. In addition to replicating the creature's locomotive action, it also spits a webbing like substance as in the films. Can you imagine the weird stuff you could do with this thing? Expect a price in line with the Goji RC (around \$500 in Japan).

Next on the drawing board is an **RC Mecha King Ghidora**. I'm sure this will have to be seen to be believed. Few design details are currently available, but you can look forward to paying more for this one than you may have shelled out for the RC Godzilla.

It certainly makes one yearn for the days when Amerigoji toys clutter the shelves of your local **Toys R Us** following the release of the TriStar film.



Speaking of Toys

Bandai has just released a **King Kong** figure as part of its Toho kaiju collection. I just heard about this and at press time I was still waiting for one to arrive in the mail from Japan, it's the '62 Kong, not the '68 version seen in **King Kong Escapes**. Chances are it's the former, which bodes well for the speculation regarding Toho's plans for next year's Godzilla film.

Bandai has also released a **Gavalla** (Gabarah) figure, [mentioned last issue as a new kit release from both **Volks** and **Wave**]. Scheduled next is a **Titanosaurus** figure (seen in **Terror of MechaGodzilla**), and of course several figures from the new film, **MechaGodzilla**, **Baby Gojira**, **Godzilla**, and both versions of the new **Rodan**.

Collectors familiar with Bandai's release of the **Space Gaos** figure [part of the **Gamera** collection], will be amused to note that they've pulled the same trick with **Rodan**; used the same mold with a different paint job, to create the alternative figure..

The buzz I've heard from Japan indicates there may be a large scale **MechaGodzilla** toy figure in the works from Bandai, in the same scale as their G'91 figure (see page 18).

New CD Set Announced

King Records is advertising a December release for **Kaiju O**, a ten CD collection featuring selections from the soundtrack scores of Japanese monster, science fiction and fantasy films. The CDs will be packaged in a laser disc sized box set, which will include a special music video disc of scenes and sounds from **Godzilla vs King Ghidora**, and a special edition kaiju poster [suitable for framing]. The price is listed at 28,000 yen. The catalog number is KICA 2201 thru 2210.

The Big Picture on Japanese Genre Films

by
Stuart Galbraith IV

Since the late '50s, Japanese fantastic films have ranked among the most pictorially interesting in the history of the fantasy genre. Of course, it's hard to appreciate this when they're shown on American television. Most Japanese fantasy films -- **GODZILLA VERSUS THE SEA MONSTER**, **THE X FROM OUTER SPACE**, **WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS** and many others -- are available to TV stations only as blurry, faded, pan-and-scanned images, usually culled from 16mm prints made decades ago. They don't look or sound impressive at all. To most Americans they simply look cheap, incompetent, or both.

But one look at a Japanese laserdisc or even a VHS video cassette changes all that. The budgets may have been (comparatively) low, the shooting schedules short, but Japan's filmmakers never seems to run out of imagination in their use of wide screen.

The wide screen era in Japan began with the April 1957 release of Daiei's **OOTORI-JO NO HANAYOME** (**THE LORD TAKES A BRIDE**). Virtually overnight, the industry embraced the format, and far more completely than their counterparts in the United States ever would.

Each studio had its own name for the process -- Daiescope, Shochiku Grand Scope, Toho Scope (the company flirted with "Toho Pan Scope" for at least one feature before



settling on the former) -- but whatever the name, they all used the same technology: anamorphic wide screen.

The system had its roots in 20th Century Fox's CinemaScope, itself adapted from Henri Chretien's Hypergonar lens, developed (but not widely used) in the late 1920s. Fox acquired the system in late 1952, in response to a two month old, widely popular wide screen format then creating a sensation on Broadway... AND which proved successful in prying former moviegoers away from their new TV sets: Cinerama.

CinemaScope, a much-watered down variation of Cinerama, used an anamorphic lens during production and exhibition: the lens optically squeezed a wide image onto standard-size 35mm frames, then unsqueezed the image during projection. The resultant picture, 2.35 times as wide as it was tall (though Fox flirted with even wider aspect ratios in the beginning), was impressive on big movie screens.

By 1957, however, CinemaScope was already beginning to fall out of favor with the majors, and never became the standard of the industry that Fox had hoped.

But not in Japan. EVERYONE utilized the format. Virtually all Japanese theatrical features through the mid-1980s were filmed anamorphic. Interestingly, the few that were not -- soft-core porno films, some art house pictures, short subjects culled from Japanese TV -- were released in the old Academy ratio, rather than the cropped widescreen format adapted in the United States in the early 1950s, and which still dominates the Western market today.

Lesser known is the fact that these same Japanese-made wide screen movies were commonly released in stereophonic sound as well. Following the lead of M-G-M, Paramount and others in the U.S., Toho and several other "majors" used Perspecta stereophonic sound on many of their releases through early 1965. Though incapable of reproducing true stereophonic music, Perspecta did feature fully directional dialog and

sound effects. Though Toho and others proudly credited the system (in English) at the bottom of title cards in their opening credits, not one Japanese fantasy film has, as yet, been released to video using the Perspecta cues. (This has been a problem in the United States as well; the majority of Perspecta releases have been issued to tape and disc as mono.)

What's really strange about all this is the fact that while a great many American widescreen films are visually as dull as dishwater, even Japanese shlock tends to look impressive. This may be due, in part, to the fact that Hollywood's directors and cinematographers were, as a whole, somewhat older (John Ford, George Stevens, Byron Haskins and others had careers going back to the silent days) and were thus less inclined to change their ways. Yet one can zip through just about anywhere in films like *THE HUMAN VAPOR* or *THE X FROM OUTER SPACE* and find beautifully composed, exquisitely-balanced set-ups while their American counterparts, even in A-budget pictures, appear stodgy and lifeless by comparison.

Just compare the letterboxed editions of *20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA* or *JOURNEY TO THE CENTER OF THE EARTH* to *GORATH* or *MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET* -- the difference is startling. From expensive art house films like *KWAIDAN* to the cheapest of the cheap, Japanese fantasy films are almost always attractively shot.

A few examples: In *BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE*, there's a wonderfully evocative nighttime effects shot of two rocketships being readied for a mission to the moon. In *DESTROY ALL MONSTERS*, there's a scene where actors Jun Tazaki and Akira Kubo interrogate an alien-possessed Yoshio Tsuchiya. The latter's back is to the camera, which Tazaki and Kubo's heads are framed by circular grids in a nearby wall. In *MONSTER ZERO*, there's a terrific low-angle view of Godzilla and Rodan being whisked through space by X-ite flying saucers.

By the mid-80s, as more and more Western films flooded the Japanese market, the industry lost interest in scope and adopted the much less impressive cropped format favored in other parts of the world. What was lost pictorially, however, was compensated somewhat by Japan's swift changeover to full stereophonic sound, usually under the Dolby label.

Once again, American distributors cared not in the slightest about such things, issuing both *GODZILLA 1985* and *GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE* mono. The Japanese versions of these films, as well as *GODZILLA VS. KING GHIDORAH*, *GUNHED*, *AKIRA* and many others, make dazzling use of surround.

A good example of this can be found in *GODZILLA 1985*; during a low-angle shot looking up at Godzilla, laser beams shoot from the left and right side of the screen, and the directional mixing is startlingly effective.

While video companies, along with major cable networks such as Disney, Comedy Central and others continue to market hideous, unwatchable prints of Japanese effects spectacles, die-hard KAIJU fans are rediscovering these same films on Japanese home video. And "rediscovery" is the right word, because watching the best of these films -- especially on laserdisc -- IS a revelation, and very much like seeing them for the first time.

(Stuart Galbraith IV is the author of JAPANESE SCIENCE FICTION, FANTASY AND HORROR FILMS: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF 103 FEATURES RELEASES IN THE UNITED STATES, 1950-1992, available through McFarland and Company, Inc., 919-246-4460.)



Daikaiju Video, Book, and Kit Reviews

MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET

Laserdisc Review by David Milner

DAIKYOJU GAPPA (GIGANTIC BEAST GAPPA), known in the United States as both MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET and GAPPA, THE TRIPPHIBIAN MONSTER, was recently reissued on laserdisc in Japan by the Pioneer LDC Corporation as part of its TOKUSATSU EIGA HIZO SHIRIZU (SPECIALLY PHOTOGRAPHED MOVIE TREASURE SERIES). The laserdisc includes a number of trailers, one of which is in English, and a booklet containing staff and cast lists, a synopsis and a number of black and white photographs. Chapter stops are provided.

The picture quality of the disc, which is in letterbox format, is superb. Those who have seen only the Orion Home Video edition of MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET will be very surprised by just how good some of the shots in the film really look. The sound quality also is very good, but the film's monaural soundtrack does leave something to be desired.

The Japanese and American versions of MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET are pretty much the same. However, the GAPPA NO UTA (SONG OF GAPPA) heard during the opening credits in the Japanese version was replaced with some standard orchestral music in the American one, and a brief shot at the end of the film of the mother Gappa crying while she is holding the baby was edited out of the American version.

The monster suits stretch credibility quite a bit, but generally the special effects aren't all that bad. They're not quite up to Toho's standards, but

they're better than those seen in Daiei's Gamera films.

MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET has been called a parody in the past, and there is some

justification for this view. At one point in the original Japanese version of the film, for example, a person who is witnessing the monsters wreak havoc says that it's not so bad because they are destroying only the poor section of town. However, for the most part, MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET is purely a children's film. Saki (Masanori Machida), the native boy from Obelisk Island, plays a prominent role in the film, and many of the film's key elements, such as the baby Gappa being taken from and then reunited with its parents and the young daughter of President Funasu (Keisuke Yukioka), the publishing magnate, being the one who finally coaxes him into standing aside and allowing the baby Gappa to be returned to its parents, are obviously intended to appeal to children.

The item number of the laserdisc is PILD-1087, and it is priced at Y4,700. Most laserdisc importers in the United States are charging about \$60 for it.

DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER

Laserdisc review by David Milner

DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER (UCHU DAIKAIJU DOGORA) was released on laserdisc in Japan on October 1st by the Toho Company Ltd. The film previously had been made available only on VHS tape.

The laserdisc is in letterbox format, and it features a trailer and chapter stops. Included with it is an insert featuring staff and cast lists, some background information on the film and black and white photographs. The picture quality of the disc, like that of virtually all of Toho's other more recent home video releases, is excellent, as is the sound quality.

DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER, Toho's first entry in the kaiju eiga (monster genre) to feature a giant monster from outer space, also is the first of Toho's monster movies to have elements borrowed from the yakuza (gangster) genre incorporated into it. Uakuza films were very popular back in 1964 when DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER was released, and this explains why gangsters were also included in the cast of characters of Toho's next monster film, GHIDRAH, THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER (SAN DAIKAIJU CHIKYU SAIDAI NO KESSEN).

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER is that for it, special effects director Eiji Tsuburaya developed the technique of filming objects in water so that it would appear that they were floating in air. This is how the creatures in the film were made to seem like they really were descending from space.

Another of the film's more interesting aspects is the makeup of the cast. It includes not only Mie Hama, who is best known for her roles as Madam X in KING KONG ESCAPES (KINGU KONGU NO GYAKUSHU) and Japanese secret service agent Kissy Suzuki in the genre fans may remember as Dr. Who in KING KONG ESCAPES and GABARA ORU KAIJU DAISHINGEKI). Robert Dunham, an American, is in the film as well. He also appears in MOTHRA (MOSURA) as the Rolisican who takes possession of the fairies after Nelson is killed and GODZILLA VS. MEGALON (GOJIRA TAI MEGARO) as the leader of the Seatopians.

DAGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER is not a favorite of most genre fans, explaining why Toho did not release it on laserdisc before now. However, those who are interested in seeing some of the most innovative special effects Eiji Tsuburaya ever created or who just enjoy Akira Ifukube's music will not be disappointed by the film.

The laserdisc costs Y6,000, and its

catalogue number is T.L.L. 2427. It can be purchased from most laserdisc importers in the United States for around \$75.

GODZILLA: SUPER DIORAMA THEATER (Shogakukan, 1992) 1,400. yen Editors: Masami Yamada, Shigeo Tanabe, Masatoshi Kariya; Research: Mr. Motoyama; Publisher: Kazuki Tanaka

Book Review by John Rocco Roberto

A fine example of model/diorama building techniques, Super Diorama Theater should be enjoyable to both modelers and non-modelers alike.

Containing over 54 full color diorama photos, the bulk of the book (Chapter 1) presents the story of the Earth being invaded by space monsters, and the attempts of the inhabitants of Monster Island to stop them (thus the "diorama theater").

Diorama scenes include:

Tokyo being attacked by monsters like Ghidrah, Gigan, Hedorah, Mogella, and even Godzilla (who turns out to be MechaGodzilla); and

The space monsters ganging up and entrapping the real Godzilla; the Earth Defense Force, with the help of Rodan and Mothra, racing to the rescue.

Each diorama, referred to as scenes in the book, helps to unfold the story. Although the text is in Japanese, the story can be followed easily.

Chapter 2 is a two page spread consisting of eight full color paintings of Godzilla and the other Toho monsters in various battle scenes.

Chapter 3 highlights various Godzilla related collectibles and props, including postcards, model kits, toys, post production photos from "Terror of MechaGodzilla" and, most interesting of all, production stills of the KongGodzi Godzilla battling a large white furry creature. I cannot make out the name of the production, but an announcement poster is one of the stills. If anyone knows more about this

story, please write to the Review.

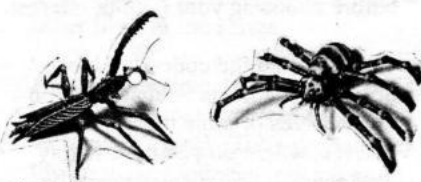
Chapter 4 shows production photos from various Toho films.

Chapter 5 consists of film stills from all of Toho's science fiction films in year order from 1954 through the present, including the 1957 Godzilla and Angilas suits shipped to America for the aborted "story frame" for Gigantis.

Chapter 6 covers preproduction drawings of most of the Toho monsters, including early sketches of Rodan with feathers! There are also production photos showing the construction of the MothGodzi suit.

Chapter 7 includes the layouts and story boards used by the author in creating the dioramas, and techniques in construction and photographing dioramas.

Despite the Japanese text, **Godzilla: Super Diorama Theater** has more than enough graphic content to make it worth seeking out. It presents a fine example of what can be accomplished via kit building, and tells a story via dioramas which I found to be very enjoyable. I highly recommend it to fans.



CINEMA SFX SERIES

Kit Review by David Barker

Attention Gajira collectors: just when you thought it was safe to visit Monster Island, Volks has introduced a new model kit to inspire your creative powers.

Owning more Godzilla kits than common sense allows, it's quite refreshing to find something different of one of the G's foes.

This new kit takes its design from the film **Son of Godzilla**, and contains both the Gimantis and Spiga (referred to as *Kamakillas* and *Kumonga* in some Japanese texts - *Edito*), the oversized deadly mantis, and the big spider, [who would also be seen in **Destroy All Monsters**]. The kit is a part of the **Volks Oriental Heroes Junior SFX Series**.

I have a great fondness for the line of kits Volks has produced. While everyone in Japan has produced a Godzilla kit of some type, Volks has broken the mold by continuing to create figures of such classic Toho monsters as **Ghidrah, Rodan, Minya, and Mothra**.

Cast in resin the two creatures are scaled at 1/350th. Both figures are broken down into 7 pieces, and include extra materials for insectoid details. This is a pretty simple kit to build. The painting will be the most complicated part, if you take your time and do it right.

I already have a Minya kit in the same scale, and plan to build up a diorama from the film. It's just too bad the Mantis wasn't designed with its wings extended. Then I could have rigged Minya with a flame thrower and toasted some bugs. Heh. Heh. That would be cool. Bugs suck.

At the Louisville show, I asked the representatives from **Kaiyodo** if they planned on adding other older Toho monsters to their 20cm Godzilla line. They laughed and said no, it wouldn't sell. Maybe American collectors have a fondness for older Daikaiju, that our Japanese counterparts no longer share.

You can contact Volks directly at 075-955-2087 (fax 075-955-0272).

So You want to start a Kaiju Collection?

A Beginner's Guide

by John Rocco Roberto

Kaiju collecting can quickly become a very expensive as well as addicting hobby. It is also a very satisfying one, thanks mostly to the popularity of the current series of films, as well as the mass production of "Garage" kits and figures, the kaiju enthusiast has more choices to choose from than just a few years ago. The problem, as far as the beginner is concerned, is trying to decide which aspect of the hobby to concentrate on. We all wish we could acquire every piece that is out there, but it is beyond most collector's financial means. The question then becomes, should one concentrate on collecting the various vinyl figures, as released by **Bandai**, **Yamakatus**, **Yotaka** and others, or the various model kits, as released by **Billiken**, **Kaiyodo**, **Paradise** and **Max factory**, to name a few. Or, should one try to collect a sample from each (not to mention other collectibles, like toys,



Volks 1/500th scale Resin kit "Godzilla vs Mothra"

playing cards, ice cube trays, etc.). Each area offers advantages as well as disadvantages to the collector, but the most important aspect of any collector to consider, and one that is easily overlooked, is space. Display space.

There is no point in starting a kaiju collection if you cannot display your collection or show it off to others. Part of the joy in any collection is the ability to show your prized possessions to others, and there is no way of doing that if your figures and models are sitting in a box at the back of your closet.

So first, make display considerations before choosing your field of interest.

Where would the collection look best, will the items be displayed on wall shelves or table tops; if on wall shelves, where do you have empty wall space? Will display cases be used, or book cases; will you place the figures individually standing, or clustered together (like a family photo)?

We all wish we had unlimited space to display our pieces, and there is nothing worse than acquiring a sought-after piece only to discover you have no room to display it. There are also many factors to consider when making display arrangements:

— displaying items on shelves frees up furniture tops;

— using display cases limits the need to dust items;
— displaying items standing individually allows you to concentrate on the single piece
— displaying items in the cluttered fashion allows you to fit more pieces into one space.

Whichever style you choose, the important thing is that you are comfortable with it: remember, others will look at your collection; you have to live with it.

Once display considerations have been made, then the items to add to your collection can be made. You may wish to pick up items as they interest you, not concentrating on any one aspect of the hobby, having selections representing toys, models, and figures, or you may wish to limit your choices solely on one aspect, such as modeling. Whichever you choose, the choice should be a personal one. There are, however, a few things to consider when choosing a field:

— Model collecting allows an individual to concentrate on well detailed figures, allowing a wide variety of choices. Current kits being produced offer a range from single standing figures to detailed dioramas, as well as giving the modeler the choice of materials to work with, like vinyl, resin, or metal. **Hobby Japan** is probably the best source of information on current and new items available on the market.



Model kits, however, are not without their drawbacks.

They are difficult to build, and generally require above average kit-building abilities. Excess parts have to be trimmed, joint seams need to be filled, detail has to be painted; these are not the old "snap, glue and display" kits we all grew up with, and your ability to work well with models should be considered before committing to this route.

Model kits are also expensive, running anywhere from \$30 to over \$300. All these factors should be taken into consideration when deciding if model collecting is for you. If so, then you're in for a wonderful hobby experience. (For examples of what can be done with models and dioramas, check out **Godzilla: Super Diorama Theater**, reviewed on page 7.)

Vinyl figures, especially those released by **Bandai**, have an advantage over model kits in that they are relatively inexpensive, and are ready to be displayed (the average cost runs from \$12 to \$85). The detail, however, is not as good as with the model kits, but that has been changing with the more recent releases.

The key disadvantage is that the figures are not to scale with each other, a major drawback if you're a perfectionist. If scale is not a factor, vinyl figures offer an inexpensive way to build a collection quickly.

Word to the wise: do not become obsessed with acquiring any one item; merchandise from Japan is slow in getting here, and although a piece may seem hard to find, you will, with patience, find it in plenty supply in a few months.

Shop around, don't let specialty stores or dealers convince you that the items are not available elsewhere, and do not over pay! Current yen to dollar ration is about **1 yen = 1 1/8 pennies**. You can find the yen prices in most issues of **Hobby Japan** as well as other related Japanese magazines. **Rule of thumb: anything marked up over 30-40% is a rip-off.**

With a little patience and forethought, kaiju collecting can be a very satisfying hobby. Enjoy!

So just how big is Godzilla?

by Robert Biondi

Contrary to what the English dub of the original **Godzilla, King of the Monsters** would have us believe, Godzilla was never "over 400 feet tall". What follows is a history of Godzilla's height, or correctly, increase in height.

In the 1954 Japanese original, Dr. **Yamane** estimates that Godzilla is 50 meters tall (167 feet). Godzilla destroys Tokyo, but is later killed by the Oxygen Destroyer.

A *second* Godzilla appears in the next movie, **Godzilla Raids Again** (1955). This creature is also 50 meters tall and would remain this size for the following Godzilla movies through to **Terror of MechaGodzilla** (1975).

In 1984, Toho presented **Godzilla** (**Godzilla 1985** in the U.S.) as a direct sequel to the 1954 original, thus ignoring the existence of the 14 other films in the series.

At the same time, the height of the new Godzilla was increased to 80 meters (267 feet). Toho probably did this to make Godzilla appears more imposing alongside Tokyo's modern skyscrapers. Godzilla is also 80 meters tall in **Godzilla vs. Biollante** (1989).

In **Godzilla vs. King Ghidra** (1991), futurians attempt to prevent Godzilla's creation. However, their complicated time-travel plan backfires, and Godzilla is reborn in 1992, now towering at 100 meters (334 feet).

Godzilla is this size in **Godzilla vs. Mothra** (1992) and the upcoming **Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla**.

These changes in Godzilla's height has meant a little confusion for collectors. First, let's go over what scale is. Scale is the fractional way of showing a model's size in comparison to the real thing. For example, if a Godzilla model is in 1/250 scale, the real Godzilla (if he truly existed) would be 250 times greater than the model.

With **Kaiyodo's** fine set of soft vinyl Godzilla models, which I call The Godzilla Gallery, a basic scale of 1/250 is used.

Therefore, Kaiyodo's 1954, 1955, 1962, 1964, and 1968 Godzilla kits are all 8" representations of a monster that is 50 meters tall.

However, the Kaiyodo 1984 and 1989 Godzilla kits are also 8" tall, but are shown to be in 1/500 scale. Further, the 1991 Godzilla kit is 9" tall and is in 1/400 scale.

Why this discrepancy in scale between the pre- and post- 1984 Godzilla models? Remember, the 1984 and 1989 Godzillas are 80 meters tall and the 1991 Godzilla is 100 meters tall. Since Kaiyodo apparently wanted to work in the same size rather than scale (and probably also stay in the same price range), the 1984, 1989 and 1991 Godzilla models had to be reduced in scale in order to match the rest of the series. Also, Kaiyodo broke the 8"-9" constant size of their "Godzilla Gallery" by releasing their 1992 Godzilla in 1/350 scale (11" tall).

Perhaps Kaiyodo did this to give the 1992 Godzilla better detailing, as it's a superb kit. But not only does this put the 1992 Godzilla out of size range of the other Godzilla models, it's also out of scale for Kaiyodo's two excellent **Battia** models which are in 1/400 scale! I suspect that Kaiyodo may eventually release a 1992 Godzilla model in 1/400 scale to match with these other kits.

Granted, all this may make little difference to some Godzilla collectors, like one poor dumb schmuck from Las Vegas whom we

Cont on page 18

ゴジラ VS モスラ

The Kaiju Review
presents
the Kaiju Art
of
Ron Wilber
Godzilla vs Mothra



MOTHRA'S EGG

THE COSMOS

YELLOW
ELECTRIC
FROM HORN

LOTS OF
SPIKES ON
IT'S BACK
↓

LIGHT
PURPLE
ELECTRIC
FROM
EYES

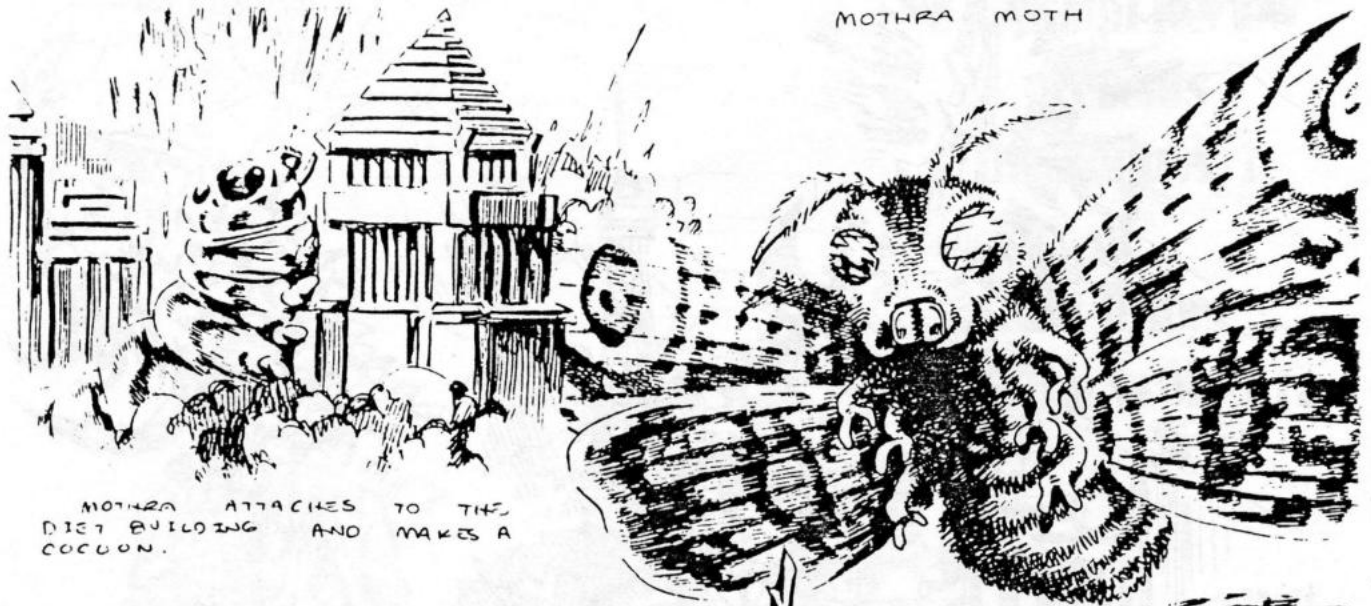
← BATTRA ↑ LARVA

GOJATILLA
ATTACKS
MOTHRA'S
EGG
AT SEA

MOTHRA
LARVA
↓

©OCTOBER 93

MOTHRA MOTH




MOTHRA ATTACKS TO THE
DIE BUILDING AND MAKES A
COOON.



BATTRA
MOTH



© 1993 S. G. S.

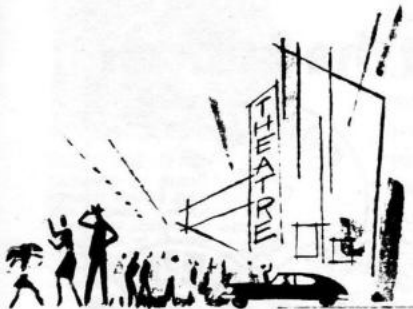


Selling Godzilla

by David Milner

Over the years, film distributors gradually have adopted a set of standard procedures that they use to publicize their films. These include running trailers in theaters, airing commercials on television and radio, placing advertisements in newspapers and inviting critics to special preview screenings. Many distributors have come up with much more elaborate methods of increasing box office receipts, but few have been more creative than those trying to promote Japanese monster movies in the United States.

American International, for example, suggested that in order to help promote "Godzilla vs. The Thing", theater managers should, "spot all places where buildings have been wrecked or razed in your area, or where pre-construction digging is going on, and post signs on surrounding fences reading, 'Godzilla fought The Thing here'." It also suggested that theater managers should have "wrecked or totally demolished cars placed around the city and in front of the theater with cards attached reading, 'A victim of 'Destroy All Monsters'.'"



NOTHING LIKE THIS EVER ON THE SCREEN!

SEE the war of the GIANTS!
SEE the BIRTH of the world's most terrifying monster!
SEE armies of the world destroyed by "THE THING"

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PRESENTS — COLORSCOPE

GODZILLA VS. THE THING

AN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURE • Produced by TOHO CO., Ltd.



SEAT SELLING SLANTS

Wherever possible stencil enormous footsteps — 5 to 6 feet or more in length and proportioned — on busy streets and have them leading to your theatre, or to "Godzilla versus The Thing" display. The stencils can be lettered "Godzilla was here," for an effective interest arouser in thriller film.

• • • • •

Spot all places where buildings have been wrecked or razed in your area, or where pre-construction digging is going on and post signs on surrounding fences, reading "Godzilla fought The Thing here!" — another effective attention-getter.

• • • • •

Get local ice cream parlors to cooperate on "Godzilla" monster sundae specials. They also can set up a "Mystery Thing Sundae" — a monster sundae of mystery ingredients and flavors. This can be used as the basis of a contest with prizes awarded to kids who correctly name the flavors and ingredients used in mystery concoction.

• • • • •

By all means use Godzilla and giant question mark as theme for theatre front and marquee display, with mystery monster battle themes from ads. These can be enhanced with red flashing eyes for Godzilla and other effects.

• • • • •

Contact local police and fire departments and Defense Department — armed services offices for weapons display promotion, with signs "These couldn't stop Godzilla or The Thing" ... This display can be used in lobby or at other central locations.

• • • • •

In cooperation with local TV kid show, or newspaper, or radio personality, sponsor "Mystery Monster 'Thing' Contest" — with prizes awarded to youngster who submits drawing of most frightening monster as his or her idea of what "The Thing" really looks like. This will set up tremendous advance interest in "Godzilla versus The Thing."

• • • • •

TOTAL WRECK

Have wrecked or totally demolished cars placed around the city and in front of the theatre with cards attached reading — "A Victim of DESTROY ALL MONSTERS" — theatre and play-date.



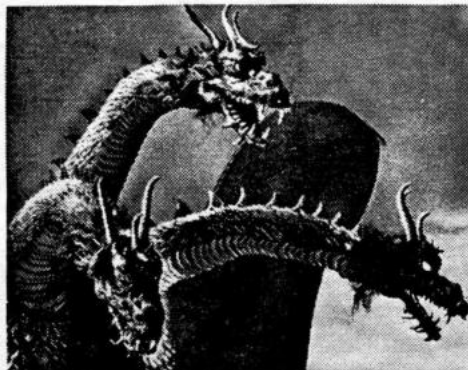
Cinema Shares, the American distributor of "Godzilla vs. Megalon", made available "upon special request to Cinema Shares representatives, giant full color cut-outs of the four monsters in the film". These were made to fit on Volkswagen Beetles, and arrangements could be made for cars to be provided by local Volkswagen dealers. "This can be a huge promotional plus for your theater, but it requires a lot of advance planning and work. You can have your local officials declare 'Monster Day' or 'Godzilla Day' and have a parade, or use the convoy to visit shopping centers, or at sports events, etc."



Often distributors trying to promote Japanese monster movies would attempt to plant articles about them in newspapers and magazines. For example, as part of its publicity campaign for "Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster", Continental offered a piece entitled, "New Monster Proves Three Heads Better Than One" in which Shinichi Sekizawa, the screenwriter, was referred to as being "an expert on the extra-curricular activities of delinquent monsters."

GHIDRAH THE THREE-HEADED MONSTER

Continental created a Ghidrah mask to help promote "Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster", and it suggested that local radio and television announcers should "request that listeners send in a wrapper or box top" from whatever products the announcers were trying to sell in exchange for a "free full-color mask of "Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster"! It also urged theater managers to contact "local supermarkets running large ads for a big sale coming up. This is an excellent way to reach the reader's eye with an illustration of the mask and copy that says "The Two Biggest Events in Town...Blank Market's Giant Sale and "Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster!"



GHIDRAH Scene Mat 2B

"Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster" prepares to challenge the combined might of Godzilla, Rodan and Mothra for control of the world in the new science-fiction spectacle. Filmed in color "Ghidrah, The Three-Headed Monster," a Continental release, opens at the Theatre on

NEW MONSTER PROVES THREE HEADS BETTER THAN ONE

It was bound to happen! Forget the axiom that two heads are better than one. The very latest in world destroyers is one head up on it as is proven in "Ghidrah - The Three Headed Monster,"

the new Tohoscope/Eastman-color thriller which opens at the Theatre on

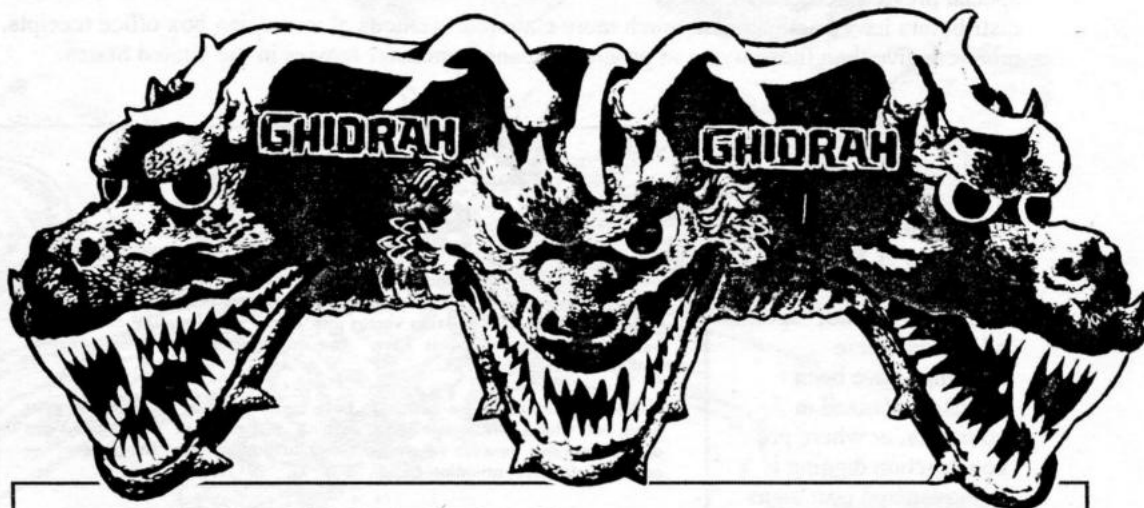
Those veteran one headed monsters, Godzilla, Rodan and Mothra are on hand to learn this new lesson the hard way. Purely an outer space product, Ghidrah comes equipped with four legs, a set of coliseum size wings and multiple mouths that spew out three times as much destruction at a crack as the earth born monsters can do singly in a month of Sundays. The obvious solution is for Godzilla, Rodan and Mothra to stop tearing at each other's throats long enough to put their combined heads together to drive the foreigner out of their territory, which means out of this world.

Shinichi Sekizawa, an expert on the extra-curricular activi-

ties of delinquent monsters, conjured a screenplay which affords Godzilla and Rodan with scenes to exhibit their individual specialties, than adding Mothra to combine their talents for the inevitable showdown with Ghidrah on the slopes of Mt. Fuji. The built-in violence of each contestant automatically brings about the smash climax when irresistible forces meet an immovable object and the earth literally trembles from the impact.

"Ghidrah - The Three Headed Monster" was produced by Tomoyuki Tanaka for the Toho Company. A Walter Reade-Sterling presentation, it is being released through its Continental Distributing Division which has to acknowledge that three heads are better than one.

GHIDRAH FULL COLOR MASK



SOME WAYS TO USE THIS MASK:

★ The TV kiddie show Host can use the mask with guests and as a gift to the children...OR...the radio and TV announcer can request the listeners send in a wrapper or box top of the product they are selling and RECEIVE A FREE FULL-COLOR MASK OF "GHIDRAH-THE THREE HEADED MONSTER."

★ Check your local Supermarket... they may be running large ads for a big sale coming up...this is an

excellent way to reach the reader's eye with an illustration of the mask and copy that says: "THE TWO BIGGEST EVENTS IN TOWN...BLANK MARKET'S GIANT SALE AND 'GHIDRAH-THE THREE HEADED MONSTER' AT.....THEATRE!"

★ Local retailers having a "special" may display in their windows a GIANT 3 for 1 SALE...purchase the product and receive a free

GHIDRAH-THE THREE HEADED MONSTER mask.

★ "THE FIGHT OF THE CENTURY! SEE 'GHIDRAH-THE THREE HEADED MONSTER' BATTLE GODZILLA, RODAN AND MOTHRA AT THE.....THEATRE!" This sign together with one sheet and other accessories AND the GHIDRAH masks make an ideal window display in sporting goods stores.

BUTTON, BUTTON, Who's got the button?

Boost your box-office grosses with these exciting Three Color Buttons. Order them early and arrange for give-aways:

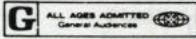
- (1) Give out buttons to every patron (as long as supply lasts) — make sure you plug this item in all of your pre-opening ads, on radio and TV.
- (2) Arrange with either Radio or TV stations to distribute these buttons, in exchange for free time. They can either run contests or merely have viewers or listeners call in.
- (3) Arrange with local merchants to distribute buttons (and have them run ads on your behalf) — tie in with MONSTER SALE, etc.
- (4) Have the buttons passed out on the streets. Make sure that they also have heralds to give out with theatre name, day and date. (Artwork for herald shown on this page.)



OUT OF POLLUTION'S DEPTHS IT SLITHERS!

Breathing Poison...
Leaving a wake
of deadly slime...
Destroying all
in its path!

GODZILLA vs. THE SMOG MONSTER



COLOR BY MOVIELAB
IN COLORSCOPE

A Toho Company Production
An AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL Release

©1972 American International Pictures, Inc.

The MONSTERS
are in REVOLT!
...and the world
is on the brink of
DESTRUCTION!



"DESTROY ALL MONSTERS"
COLOR
MOTHRA-GODZILLA-RODAN-MANDA
AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL
©1969 American International Pictures



SCENE MAT 1-A
MENACED BY MUCK
Hiroki Kawase (left) and Toshie Kimura flee before the menace of Hedorah, a gigantic living blob of corrosive sludge which rose from the polluted waters of a city to threaten the world in "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster," American International's ecology accented thriller

Many distributors encouraged theater managers to tie-in with local merchants. American International, for example, urged them to coax exterminators into using the line, "We Destroy All Monsters Too... but not the variety seen in American International's 'Destroy All Monsters,'" in their advertising. It also recommended that theater managers recruit bar owners to help promote "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster". "Have local bar owners create a new mixed drink labeled the 'Godzilla cocktail...it clears that five o'clock smog from your brain'."

Photographs with brief captions printed underneath them were also used to help promote the films. The caption to one of the photographs distributed to help publicize "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster", for example, read simply, "menaced by muck - young Hiroki Kawase and Toshie Kimura flee before the menace of Hedorah, a gigantic living blob of corrosive sludge which rose from the polluted waters of a city to threaten the world in "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster".

In order to help publicize "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster", American International pointed out to theater managers that "a very pertinent and eye-catching three-dimensional display can be created in your lobby by setting up cutouts of the monster figures from posters over a mound of rubbish with tin cans and bottles so that the smog monster rises from the head." Other distributors also recommended setting up special displays in theaters. Columbia, for example, suggested that radioactive material should be displayed in the lobbies of theaters showing "Mothra".

All of these methods of publicizing Japanese monster movies had their merits, but they weren't always successful. So some distributors suggested that advertisements should simply be placed in the classifieds. "Classify your monsters in the classified section! Wanted - Men, Women or Young Adults to Help 'Destroy All Monsters'!"

JAPANESE KIDDIES GROOVE ON MONSTER

One of the favorite heroes of Japanese youngsters today is Godzilla, the prehistoric monster creation which gained so much popularity in the world's cinema and stars in the new screen thriller, "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster" opening at the Theatre.

Every toy shop in Tokyo carries a line of Godzilla dolls, reproducing the menacing beast in plastic and battery-operated animated figures. The character is also reproduced for Japanese kids on tee-shirts, lunch boxes and a wide assortment of items on the toy shelves.

In line with this popularity, Godzilla is presented as a superhero in "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster." He takes up the cudgels for ecology, pitting his strength against a menacing blob of living sludge born in pollution and bent on decimating the population of the earth with its corrosive cloud.

Produced by the Toho Company, the American International release stars Japanese cinema headliners Akira Yamauchi, Hiroyuki Kawase, Toshie Kimura, Toshie Shibusaki and Keiko Mari. It was directed by Yoshimitsu Banno from a screenplay by Kaoru Mabuchi and Yoshimitsu Banno.



ALIEN KILAAKS TRAP SCIENTIFIC TEAM: Protected by an invisible electronic wall, a handsome group of alien Kilaaks bent on conquering earth from outer-space, temporarily trap a moon-based scientific team in this suspenseful scene from the American International release, "Destroy All Monsters," beginning at the Theatre.

PUBLICITY



SCENE MAT 2-A

TITANIC STRUGGLE - Godzilla (right), the prehistoric saurian takes up the cudgels for mankind in "Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster" against the threat of Hedorah, a monstrous menace spawned of big city pollution and threatening to spread a death-dealing odious cloud around the earth. The ecology-accented thriller is a Toho Company production released by American International which opens at the Theatre.

EXPLOITATION

Kaiju Komments

301 East 64th Street, Suite Five F, NY, NY 10021

Voice of Approval

Dan Reed Sensei:

Hajime mashita oh great kaiju wrangler. I must bestow felicitations on you and your greatness and the brilliant essays that you have conferred on us "goji boys". You have definitely amassed many great literary feats on the Toho subculture. Your illuminating banter with other collectors of the big guy is by far the most entertaining aspect of your publication. I really enjoy hearing what other treasurers of Gojira-san have to say about what's going on in the hobby. Especially when they take my flippant comments so seriously. Remember this oh wise SENSEI GOJIRA WA NEZUMI-IRO to MIDORI NO DESUKA? Once you solve this enigma, you will realize that he is only an overworked stunt man in a rubber suit smashing models on Stage 9 at Toho. Keep up the quality work.

Arigato gozimasu...

Ja'ne

Adam Kupka
Elk River, MN

Thanks Adam!

Voice of Discontent

Dear Dan,

Some thoughts in your newsletter while eating my Udon:

While I did enjoy your publication a great deal, I was somewhat disappointed to find its main focus to be Godzilla merchandise. Sure, the news on new Goji products is an important aspect of the kaiju phenomena to a lot of fans. I myself have spent hours gazing at the pages of B-Club or Hobby Japan wishing I had more information (i.e. English translations) of prices and specs. But I do have my limits, both monetary and just plain interest, too much product pitching, however cool the toys may be.

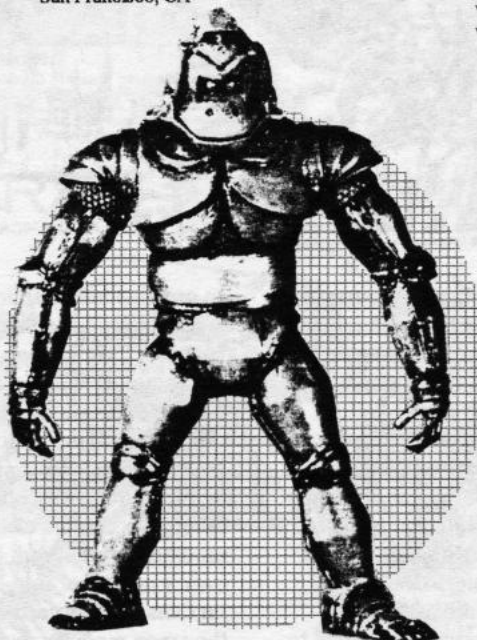
My love for the genre is ultimately focused on the films and the personalities behind them. If Kaiju Review is indeed "The Journal of Japanese Monster Culture" then I feel that it should somehow engage the history of the Japanese monster in ways other than just showing what new toys are for sale. The interview with Stuart Galbraith was a step in this direction, but even he's got something to sell.

One of the best things about the Fall '93 issue was the readers' survey. It made me feel like a fan rather than a consumer. It's stuff like this that the Kaiju Review doesn't have enough of. Maybe you could open the floor to readers more. Let them voice their opinions on the genre, let them place classified or pen pal listings. This could bring an element of fannish fun that I feel Kaiju Review needs in order to become truly vital to its readers and subject matter. The range of kaiju fans

crosses so many socio/economic barriers that it's a shame not to let them hear each other's voices.

But Kaiju Review is cool. There is plenty of stuff to work with, like 40 glorious years of non-stop Japanese MONSTERS! MONSTERS! MONSTERS! I would love to contribute in any way to future issues of the Review, but please correspond with me first so that we can generate some concrete ideas. Thanks a lot for listening,

Patrick Macias
San Francisco, CA



Gee I guess calling it the Journal of Japanese Monster Culture, is a bit presumptuous, but hey it sounds cool right?

The Voice of Reason

Dan,

I really enjoyed reading the third issue of KAIJU REVIEW. I especially liked Robert Biondi's home video reviews and your article on the remote control Godzilla toy available from Tokyos Marui.

I'm glad to see that there finally is a publication available in the United States that provides information on all of the latest Godzilla toys, models, videos and so on released in Japan. These items are not cheap, and by providing detailed information on them, your fanzine allows enthusiasts to make much more informed purchasing decisions.

About the only suggestion I would offer is that you include prices and catalogue numbers in your product reviews. These often are needed in order for collectors to order the items you cover in the fanzine.

David Milner
New York, NY

Good call, and thanks for your contributions to this issue Dave.

Hey it's only paint!

Mr. Reed:

I recently finished reading Issue #3 of KAIJU REVIEW. I like it! I like it! Although just about everything in it was pretty much old news to me, it is still nice to see a slick publication about the King of the Monsters. The RC Godzilla, the video game and movie reviews, the interview with Stuart Galbraith, and the kit building articles were all superb. However, I do have a comment for Mr. Howarth: GREEN!!!! You paint your Godzillas GREEN?! I'm sorry, but Godzilla is NOT green. Perhaps you should try dark grey or even black. Trust me, it looks a hell of a lot better.

Okay, okay. With that off my chest... I look forward to Issue #4 and to news of the upcoming Columbia/TriStar GODZILLA.

Keep up the great work!

Pete Turdin
Wallingford, CT

Thanks for the input Pete, but remember kaiju color, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder. It's true most purist prefer gray shades, but did you ever notice how Toho colors Godzillas in its print ads? It looks green to me.

Kanadian Kaiju

Dear Dan,

I was sent a copy of Kaiju Review by a fellow fan. I really enjoyed it and am continually amazed by the discovery of others who share my passion in such a serious way (i.e. I'm not the only weirdo in North America who studies Goji).

As you might have guessed by the enclosed fanzine, I also produce a publication devoted to Godzilla. It seems we both had the same great idea at the same time. Judging from your Issue #3, our two zines seem to complement each other by taking a slightly different angle on the same topic.

I'm sure you are pretty busy with your publishing duties, but if you are interested in opening lines of communication I await your letter. Otherwise, I'll look forward to Issue #4 of Kaiju Review. All the best,

J.D. Lees
Steinbach, Manitoba
CANADA

Thanks for sending along a copy of G-Force! it's a great zine. Write to J.D. at Box 3468 c/o the address above, zipcode R0A 2A0, for more information. Be sure and mention where you heard about it.

My Favorite letter

Dear Dan,

Issue #3 is another successful advance for Kaiju Review. It gets better each time! Congrats!

Good to see an article by my friend Robert Biondi. He not only does good articles, he's also a genuine nice guy and has helped me get many kaiju kits I'd never have come across otherwise.

I enjoyed **Charles Howarth's** article on "Goji Kit-building". There isn't any wrong way to do things as long as it turns out good. There are a few ideas I'd like to add:

The builder should check the kit for air-holes. Japanese kits are usually far crisper than U.S. kits in this regard, particularly with resin. Yet even the very best Japanese kit can have a few. These can be filled with the same putty you use to fill seams or if the hole is small enough a small dot of superglue gel can often fill it. For some reason the fins cast on Godzilla's tail where it connects to the body facing up to the head will usually be a place for holes. I've found this on kits from **Billiken**, **Kaiyodo**, **Maxfactory** and **Paradise**.

Another thing I do differently than Charles is to paint the eyes and mouth before attaching the head to the body. At this point you can easily hold the head in your hand so it's simple to turn it about for the best angle to paint. The mouth will never be easier to paint than before it's put together.

I agree with Charles on painting up to a point. I would add a dark wash of black and green before dry-brushing the highlights.

This will settle into the creases and deep textures. When you dry-brush the lighter color you'll then have 3 levels of color -- the basic coat, the dark wash, and the highlight. The more tones the better.

When I fill seams on Goji I do them all before I attach the fins. It's easier to hold the figure without all those fins on back. When I do put on the fins I do them slowly. Glue on three, fill seams, attach three more, fill, and so on until the last. It's easier this way than to try and fill around a forest of Godzilla fins. With one area open you can get the tool you use into the tight space around these parts.

The **Tokyo Marui** R.C. Godzilla sounds like a fantastic toy I'll probably never own.

I watched "Godzilla vs. Mothra" (the new one) and drew some sketches as I viewed it. It's that copy taped off the theater screen. Obviously the picture quality isn't the best. Battra is my impression of him as I couldn't catch a good clear look. Well, I enclosed copies of the sketches in case you're interested.

I ordered a catalog from **Monstrosities, Inc.** Haven't gotten it yet. Got a whole lot of addresses I fired off S.A.S.E.s and catalog orders to. Hopefully they'll all have a pile of kaiju goodies and I can see who offers the best deal. Thanks for publishing Kaiju Review and doing such a fantastic job. Stay well!

Ronald Wilber

Liberty, NY

Thank you Ron! I think you offer some excellent advice regarding some of the finer points of Goji Kit building. As far as your drawings are concerned I think they're really great, and appreciate your allowing me to share them with the rest of the Review's readership (see pages 9-11). Readers please write in and let us know what you think of Ron's work.

The West Coast of America, Destroyed!

Dan:

I happened upon your KAIJU REVIEW at the May "Monster, Chiller, Horror Theatre" Modelfest. I love it! I loved Godzilla as a kid, and recently, my long dormant interest was renewed at the sight of several **Bandai** figures on a shelf at a specialty toy store. I soon found out that Toho was still cranking out Godzilla movies. I was in heaven. But, alas, there was no one to talk to about my renewed passion. One cannot say, "Well, I, uh, sorta, um kinda, like, you know, like Godzilla movies," without getting a strange stare. Now I can say, "I like Godzilla, and I'm proud of it!" Thank you.

I have to admit that I bought one of the bootleg copies of "Godzilla vs. Mothra." Yeah, the quality of the tape wasn't that good, with the guy's arm getting tired a couple of times and that damn kid with a squeak toy, but the movie was great. The key in buying tapes is to find a dealer who will provide upgraded tapes as they become available.

With each movie since **Godzilla 1985** getting increasingly better, I'm eagerly awaiting **Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla**. I'm glad to see Toho Studios made radical design changes in both Rodan and MechaGodzilla. MechaGodzilla, in particular, is very well designed.

As far as the proposed American Godzilla, unless **Godzilla vs. King Ghidorah** gets a stateside theatrical release, I would assume the American movie would require a new beginning. A plotline could go as follows:

- * Nevada Desert, December 6, 1941: An ambitious grad student finds what appears to be a group of fossilized eggs on a dig. He hides the discovery, and the next day is called off the dig as America goes to war.

- * After the war, the student finds the dig site closed down as a nuclear test site. The student becomes a professor.

- * Thirty years later, the dying professor tells a protege of the eggs.

- * The protege finds the dig site. Several eggs have been destroyed, but five eggs survive. Two of the eggs are significantly larger.

- * The protege takes the eggs back to his seaside lab and incubates them. One night, the two larger eggs hatch, and they escape from the lab.

- * Twenty years later, several ships headed toward Los Angeles begin to disappear.

Seaside residents report seeing the head of a gigantic creature off the coast. A series of tremors rock California from San Francisco to Los Angeles.

- * A fleet is dispatched from San Diego to investigate. Godzilla appears and destroys the fleet. Godzilla then destroys a panic-stricken Los Angeles.

- * Godzilla heads north. An attack plan is set for Yosemite in order to evacuate Northern California. Godzilla survives the attack and proceeds to San Francisco, stopping to munch at a nuclear power plant along the way.

- * The tremors continue to worsen. Scientists predict that they are a prelude to a cataclysmic earthquake and predict an epicenter. Meanwhile, Godzilla is destroying a deserted San Francisco.

- * The new plan is to use nuclear fuel to lure Godzilla to the predicted epicenter and to initiate the earthquake with explosives.

- * The plan works as Godzilla is trapped in the fault from the massive cave-ins caused by the quake.

Such a movie would be difficult to cast since all the roles would be supporting ones as the major star will be the special effects. The director will be the key element and either of the two rumored choices, **Tim Burton** or **Terry Gilliam**, would do fine.

Thanks for listening and keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Paul Banks
Philadelphia, PA

Wow thank God(zilla), I live on the east coast. Very interesting letter Paul. Any other fans with storylines for a Godzilla film out there?

Art Lover

Dan:

Finally a picture! I really liked **Ken Hare's** portrait of Godzilla. You should have put it on the front page! Please print more of Ken's work!

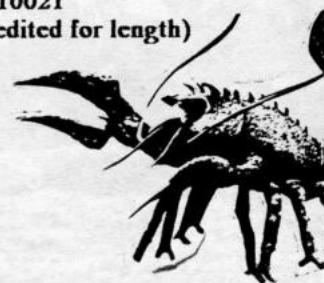
Oh and by the way **PLEASE TELL CHUCK HOWARTH THAT GODZILLA IS NOT GREEN!!!!!!**

Best,

Mattel Jones,
Brooklyn, NY

Wow, for a guy named after a toy company, you really take this stuff seriously don't you?

Address your comments on this issue, or whatever might be on your mind relating to Japanese Genre films and their related materials to **Kaiju Komments c/o 301 East 64th Street, Suite Five F, New York, NY 10021 (letters may be edited for length)**



How Big? cont.

will affectionately call "David B." But what if, like me, you're a perfectionist on correct scale? The solution would be to collect the Kaiyodo **Godzilla Gallery** set and substitute the 1984-1992 Godzilla models with the ones below.

Kaiyodo Kit

- (1) 1984 Godzilla (1/500 scale, 8" tall)
- (2) 1989 Godzilla (1/500 scale, 8" tall)
- (3) 1991 Godzilla (1/400 scale, 9" tall)
- (4) 1992 Godzilla (1/350 scale, 11" tall)

Substitute Kit

- (1) **Kaiyodo** vinyl 1984 Godzilla (1/250 scale, 12" tall). Availability: no longer produced, but still in circulation.
- (2) **Maxfactory** vinyl 1989/1991 Godzilla (no scale given 11" tall). This kit is not quite in the correct size for our purposes, but it's pretty close. Availability: currently produced.
- (3) **Volks** resin 1991 Godzilla (no scale given, 14" tall). Availability: short production run, hard to find. Alternate substitute: **Bandai** 14" tall

Godzilla vinyl toy.

(4) **Billiken** 1992 Godzilla (no scale given, 14" tall). Availability: currently produced.

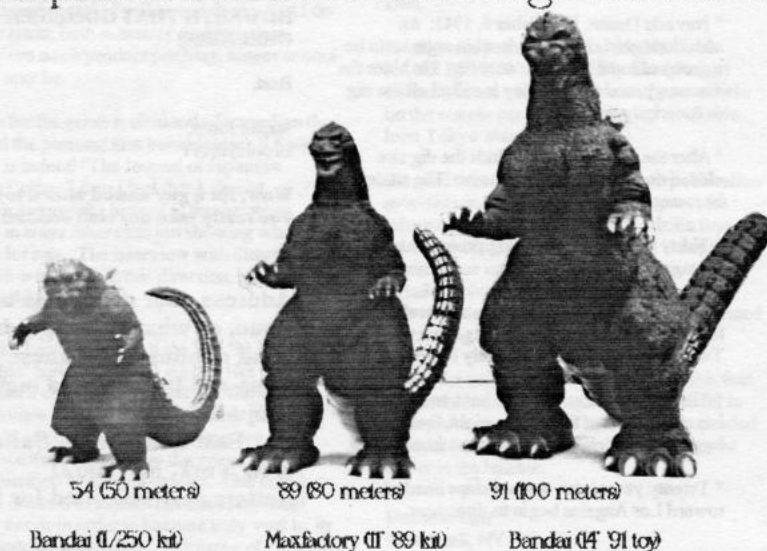
Finding some of these substitute kits may be a little tricky, but once obtained and displayed along with the Kaiyodo 1/250 pre-1984 Godzilla models, an interesting and accurate display of Godzilla's different appearances and heights will be created.

By the way, my suggestions are not meant in any way to criticize the Kaiyodo 1984-1992 Godzilla kits. On the contrary, place these four kits together as a "Godzilla New Age" display!

To close, **C.S. Lewis**, author of the **Chronicles of Narnia** fantasy series, believed that the things we consider important in life appear bigger as we grow older. Could Godzilla's progressive increase in height mean that Toho is hinting that we should be more appreciative of the King of the Monsters? Perhaps not, but then again...

(Sizes in meters have been gleaned from various Japanese "Godzilla Digest" books. Conversions have been calculated by the author and are approximate.)

Comparison of Godzilla's height increase



OUR MAN

"Hey everyone, it's time to **aerobisize with Godzilla!**" Huh...? Images of Godzilla abound now in Japan due to the upcoming release of the new film. But sometimes I wonder about his placement. The other day, after crawling out of bed in my Osaka apartment, I turned on the TV to see Godzilla aerobisizing with children. Scenes like this make it hard for me to justify to my friends here that Godzilla collecting is not a childish endeavor. We are mature, forward-thinkers with our feet firmly planted on the ground. OK, maybe our heads are in the clouds, but our hearts are in the right place.

"Yo Godzilla, what d'ya think of this show for the fall TV line-up?" What?? Caught a sneak preview show of upcoming shows where members of some Godzilla task force show Godzilla video clips of new programs in the hopes to calm him down and not destroy Tokyo. It seemed more like they were trying to bore him in to leaving Japan forever.

In America, product placement and endorsements abound, but usually there is some sort of connection between the actor or sports hero and the product. It's hard for me to imagine what connection could possibly exist between a man in a rubber suit who can barely walk and aerobics. And in a show which is trying to elicit a critical response from a creature whose only means of communication is a single roar. For those of you unfamiliar with the abundance of bad taste here: Welcome to Japan.

Sifting through this sea of Godzilla junk and bad taste is no small task. Luckily for me, our eagle-eyed editor Dan found an ad for a Godzilla shop and museum in Kobe and asked if I would go see what it's about. Firstly, I need about no provocation to go to Kobe. It's probably my favorite city in Japan. Located 30 minutes by train to the west of Osaka, Kobe is a tiny city nestled between Mount Rokko and the ocean. Kobe is also one of the few cities in Japan where the city council actually has been able to instill some sort of vision into the city's design, unlike my

IN OSAKA

by Norman England

city of Osaka, which is many things but beautiful is not one of them.

"Godzilla shop in Kobe" is a gold mine to say the least. It's by far the most exciting bit of Godzilla I've found to date. Only a three minute walk from Sannomiya station. I was able to see its banners blowing in the wind as the train pulled into the station. I was surprised to discover that the shop is not just a store but an entire building devoted to Godzilla. Not a terribly huge building, but four floors devoted to almost anything is enough to get the point across.

Walking to the entrance, I was greeted by strains of Akira Ifukube music which came from speakers mounted above the entrance. Poking my head through the store's noren (those pieces of cloth with printed images -- in this case Godzilla -- that are split in the middle and hang about two feet down from doorways). I found a restaurant with posters from various Godzilla movies hanging on the walls. Walking up the steps to the second floor I found a Japanese style bar and yet another restaurant.

Arriving on the third floor, I was wondering if I hadn't died in a train wreck on the way over and been granted entrance into Godzilla heaven. Here is the most comprehensive gathering of Godzilla "stuff" I have ever seen. Every model, book, CD, LD, video, and toy currently available is crammed on these shelves. Like their ad boasts, "If it's Godzilla, we got it."

And they're not kidding. Run out of Godzilla golf balls? Need a new pair of Godzilla pajamas? A Godzilla Baseball cap? A Godzilla apron for those outdoor barbecues? How about a Godzilla costume? Or one of Ghidra where the arms act as his first and third heads. You want it, it's here.

In a glass-encased room behind the register I could see a couple of guys busily working on model kits. A half built Manda, Jet Jaguar, several Godzillas. Even the girl at the register was busy carving a piece of plaster, making her own original Godzilla model. And above this on a wide screen TV, "King Kong vs. Godzilla" played.

I managed to pull myself away to the top floor where the museum is located. Here too I was completely in awe. Behind glass cases are over fifty of the most expertly built Godzilla models I have ever seen. In addition, there are many monsters and ships from various other Toho films. My favorite was a case filled with models and dioramas built by Inoue Tadao, who I was told is considered the master Godzilla kit designer and builder. Also here is Tadao's design prototype for the remote control Godzilla.

Almost a complete collection of original movie posters adorns the walls, as well as several props, including the head of M-11 (which was a present from the actor) with his protruding electronic ear piece and several pre-production models of Biollante. A case loaded with original movie programs, give aways, old toys and several books had me mesmerized for almost an hour.

Most of this is from the collection of the store's owner, Mr. Yamazaki, who unfortunately wasn't around this day. But I did spend quite a bit of time talking with

the store's manager Seiji Yamada. He stressed that this store is entirely a labor of love. All employees are Godzilla fans and take an active part in making the store what it is. Yamada is himself a big fan of sci-fi and horror, most notably English Hammer films, which he collects on laserdisc. Also an amateur cartoonist, he designed the store's bags and wrapping paper.

Yamada explained that Mr. Yamazaki, a long-time collector of Godzilla paraphernalia, found his collection getting out of hand and decided that a museum setting would be the best way to show it off. He found this building in Kobe but the rent was a bit steep, so to offset the costs he opened the shop and restaurant. His collection is augmented by those of several friends and gifts he has been presented with since the opening last August.

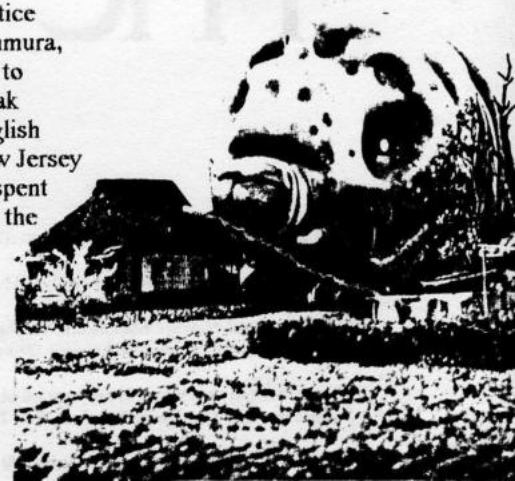
Yamada went on to say that the goal of the store was to honor Godzilla and the legend behind him, while keeping it fresh and fun. For example, the restaurant's menu is related to Godzilla in every way. Here you can order such fare and "Minya Yaki". I like to experiment, but I think I'll hold off on file of baby Godzilla for awhile!

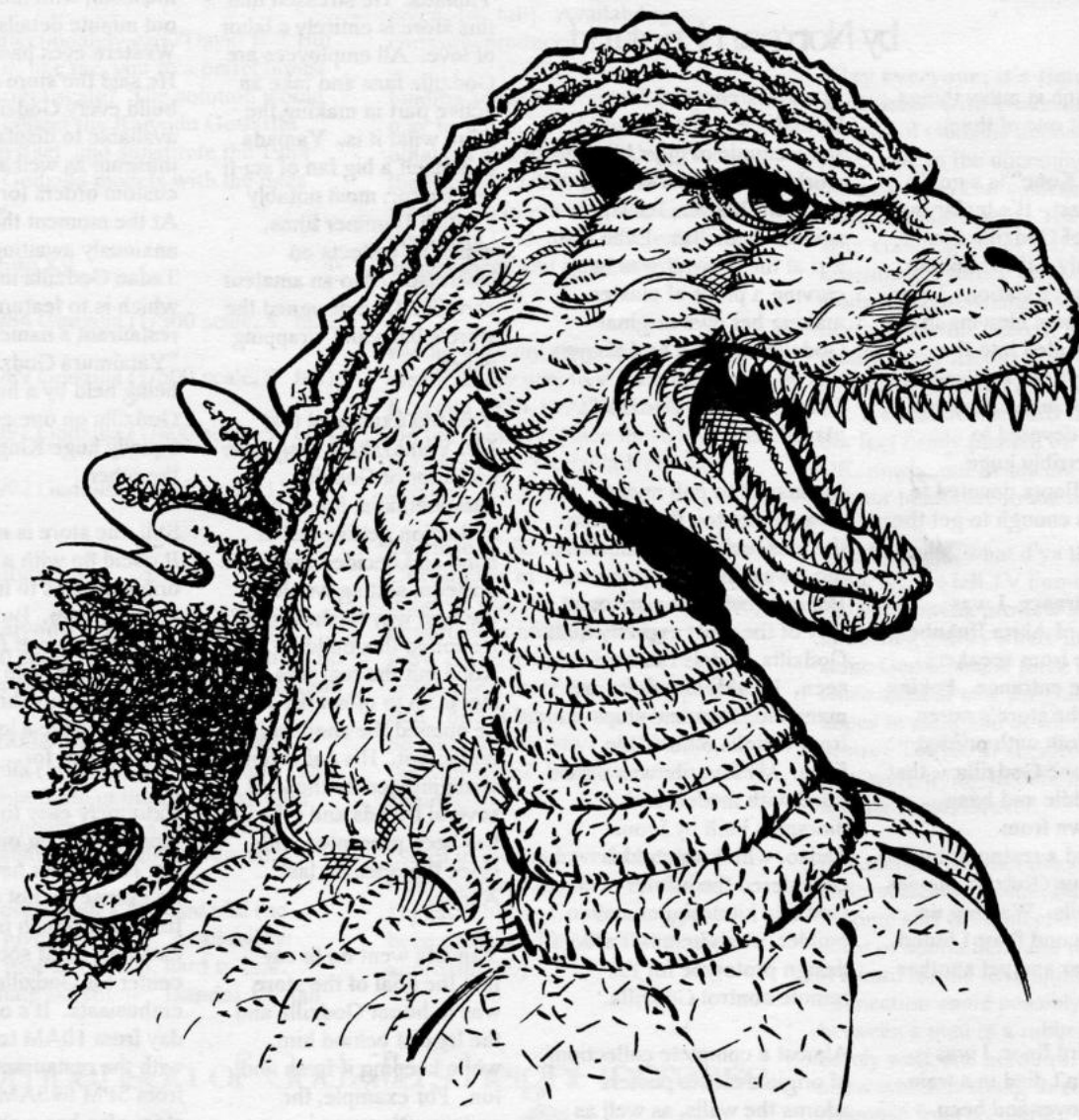
Yamada introduced me to one of their apprentice modelers, Kenji Ohmura, who I was relieved to discover could speak nearly flawless English due to living in New Jersey for ten years. We spent time going through the

rows of cases in the museum, with him pointing out minute details my Western eyes passed over. He said the store tries to build every Godzilla kit available to display in the museum as well as doing custom orders for clients. At the moment they are all anxiously awaiting a custom Tadao Godzilla model which is to feature the restaurant's name, "Yataimura Godzilla", being held by a huge Godzilla on one end and an equally huge King Kong on the other.

Still, the store is not perfect. It could do with a few more original items to make it a true museum. But as a private endeavor (they have no affiliation with Toho) and being only three months old, they have a lot to be commended for.

Extremely easy to get to, those travelling outside of the Tokyo area have almost no excuse for not catching this shop, which is sure to establish itself soon as a center for Godzilla enthusiasts. It's open every day from 10AM to 8PM, with the restaurant open from 5PM to 5AM. The store also has a club and publishes a fanzine (in Japanese). For further information write: Godzilla Shop in Kobe, 5-15-2 Asahi-dori Chuou-ku, Kobe City Hyogo, Japan 651. Tell them "Kaiju rebuu no osusume no mise desu ne" (Kaiju Review sent me).





The Kaiju Review

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Submissions and correspondence are welcomed. Materials cannot be returned without a s.a.s.e., and at your request, and will be considered available for publication. **Submission Deadline for next issue: 12/21/93**

Subscriptions to next year's issues may be obtained by sending a check, cash, or money order for ten dollars (cheap), for the next four issues to **Dan Reed c/o The Kaiju Review, 301 East 64th St., Suite 5F, New York, NY 10021.**

Next issue due sometime in mid-January. It'll be cool.