

Kaiju Review

SPRING '94

VOLUME ONE NUMBER FIVE



Akihiko Hirata as Dr. Serizawa
in GOJIRA (1954)

The Journal of Japanese Monster Culture



Godzilla Lives I

I started this zine about a year ago to provide an English language source for information about collectible products that originated from the kaiju eiga phenomenon.

So far the response to my efforts has been very good. There were a few who complained that the Review was too focused on garage kits, too focused on expensive toys and lasers, and too focused on Toho. Too bad.

If you're into kaiju culture and you're reading this consider yourself fortunate. No boast just fact. A lot of talented work went into the production of this issue and yes, I even had help. (see credits)

As far as covering other areas of kaiju culture (like TV) please give me one more issue to get that together. I promise it'll be halfway worth the wait. In the meantime try to handle this issue carefully as it's sure to become a collectors item of some importance soon.

By the way this issue is a special DX edition of Kaiju Review. That stands for Don't expect every issue to be this fat.

Welcome to 1994 true believers, Godzilla turns forty this year and I say lets party.

WRITERS & ARTISTS CONTRIBUTING

TO THIS ISSUE :

Keith Aiken

Cover Artist, Mr. Aiken is currently working on the new Godzilla Mini-series for Dark Horse comics that will appear later this year. Keith's work has also been seen in the Dark Horse Predator comic and Marvel Comics Silver Surfer book.

Max Della Mora is a widely published writer whose work has appeared in several film genre magazines including *Asian Trash Cinema*, for KJR he has provided a look at European related kaiju eiga name changes.

Norman England

The coolest Caucasian I know in Japan (since Russ Tamblin left anyway). Our Man in Osaka's talent and dedication to KJR is only equaled by the degree to which I miss hanging out with him here in New York. He makes it seem a lot easier than it actually is to be a strange guy in a strange land.

Frank Young has been collecting and building Kaiju kits for several years now. His article in this issue offers a glimpse into just how familiar he is with this subject.

Ron Wilber contributes more kaiju cult artwork. Check out Ron's work on the cover of the next ATC.

David Milner

Since meeting David last Fall (thanks to Stuart Galbraith), he has become a good friend and an invaluable source of information on this exotic film genre. David is the Japanese Film Consultant for *Cult Movies* magazine.

Stuart Galbraith IV provided an excerpt from his recently published book that details the American versions of Japanese fantasy, horror and science fiction films.

I am Medero is responsible for the artwork that graces this issue's center spread (suitable for framing). Hopefully we can look forward to seeing more of I am's work in KJR soon.

Bill Stanton contributed a detailed look at

Nintendo's new Godzilla Game for the Super Famicom, and also wrote a checklist of the Bandai soft vinyl Godzilla Collection of figures.

Danny Coffin created the "Fire, Fire, Fire!" cartoon.

John Roberto reviewed The Godzilla Toy Museum Book.

Tom Miller reviewed the laser disc release of GODZILLA VS. MOSURA (CAV) and the English version of GODZILLA VS. BOLLANTIE from HBO Video (later)

Dinac Reed reviewed The new Godzilla Gameboy cart.

Robert Biondi who spent the holidays in Japan, reviewed the new film's soundtrack recordings.

Pete Tordin told us everything we wanted to know (and more) about the soundtrack to Godzilla '89.

Michael Keller reviews two examples of comic kaiju.

Bob Marshall just returned from an exciting trip to Japan, with the scoop on new toys and kits.

Bill Littman: Talks about the Kaiju O.C.D. set.

To Our Japanese Friends: Domo arigato gozaimasu senpai! Thanks for sharing your love of this genre with us.

Kaiju Review thanks the following Magazines for their support in the last year: *Starlog*, *Action Figure News*, *Model and Toy Collector*, *Kitbuilders*, *Cult Movies*, *Fanzine Five*, *Asian Trash Cinema*, *Cine Raider*, and *ModelGraphic*.

Submissions and letters are always welcome. All material will be considered available for publication unless otherwise indicated. Materials cannot be returned with out a.s.a.c. and at your request, KJR reserves the right to edit material for length or clarification of subject. Submissions should be typewritten.

Currently I am seeking review and feature material on Japanese television shows that relate to the science fiction and superhero genres. In addition I continue to need review material on any new kaiju products you have personal knowledge of. Please remember that on some items I am likely to receive several reviews. In these situations I will try to combine the coverage when possible.

Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to KAIJU REVIEW 301 East 64th Street, Suite Five F, New York, NY 10021. You may also address material through the Internet computer service via my friend David Milner at dave@blackbox.cc.columbia.edu

Subscriptions for KJR are available at ten dollars for four issues. Checks, cash or money orders are accepted. Make checks out to Dan Reed. Extra copies of this issue are available at cost of three dollars (P & H included)

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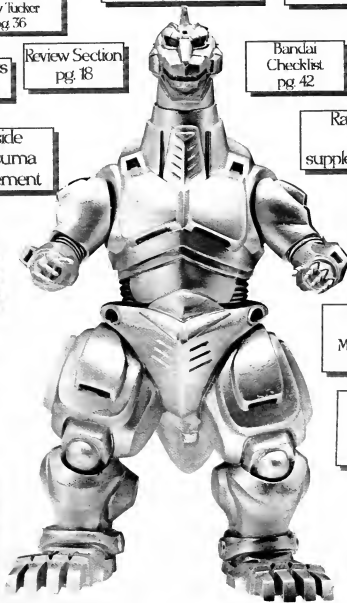
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Kaiju Komments

301 East 64th Street, Suite Five F.N.Y. NY 10021



What's the score?

HR My name is Andre Dubois and if you're old enough you might have seen my name as a contributor to "Japanese Giants". Actually, we have a new issue written down but who knows when we'll actually put the money to print it. Recently I've written a few articles in "Protoclature Addict".

I'm still as crazy about Japanese science fiction films and TV series as I was thirty years ago. Since the day I was terrified by '94 Godzilla (at the age of 8) I've been hooked by monsters. I'm also a big fan of superheroes -- my Ultraman episodes are getting close to 400 episodes.

I also collect posters, toys, models, CD soundtracks and interdiscs. I have the three disc set on Godzilla vs. Biollante, Godzilla vs. Ghidorah, and I'm currently waiting for the brand new Godzilla vs. Mothra on laserdisc.

I recently heard the soundtrack of Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla by Akira Ishikawa and I can give you a short review on that. Surprisingly enough, the new score has the most original music of his recent soundtrack. The original Godzilla theme is used again. Rodan brings with him the return of his brilliant powerful theme used in Ghidorah, Monster Zero, and Destroy All Monsters, a slower but more powerful version.

The fantastic "Godzilla vs. the Army March" from Godzilla vs. The Thing is at last brought back to life. Mechagodzilla, Baby Godzilla and the Garuda all have completely original new themes. (I have the complete Ishikawa double disc CD collection and it's nowhere to be heard.)

The Mechagodzilla theme is much more military than the theme of G '75 back in 1975. Actually it sounds much more like his classical stuff than his science fiction soundtrack.

Baby Godzilla (fortunately) bares a theme which is the complete opposite of the comical (awful) theme of Mothra. The piece here is a slow sad music much more in tune with the kind of music you get in films like the Majin series.

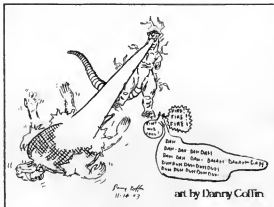
The Garuda and the G-Force team fly about with a powerful march in the best Destroy All Monsters theme tradition. One very funny piece of music is the Garuda simulation. A track used

as the members of the Garuda train inside a cockpit simulator. The G-Force theme is played with electronic sound much like a Nintendo game. Amazing but effective.

There are several incidental tracks which are quite interesting. The opening track called "King Ghidorah" is a slow variation of the King Ghidorah theme.

The overall feel of the score is rather strange because most of the tracks are flukish at his most serious, especially all the baby themes are unlike what you'd expect by looking at pictures of him. I'm wondering how well it'll play with the visuals.

The network of Son of Godzilla on your last cover was really great! You said you'd have some update on the Tri-Star Godzilla? This I've got to hear! I'm still skeptical on that



project, though I don't care about seeing Godzilla looking like the Jurassic Park dinosaur... Godzilla's gotta be Godzilla!

Sincerely yours,
Andrew Dubois
Montreal, CANADA

Thanks for your take on the new soundtrack Andre. I hope you'll consider contributing more information in the future.

Kaiju Italian Style

Dear Dan,

Thank you very much for your letter and the new issue of Kaiju Review. Without a doubt, the illustrations help a lot!

A Japanese friend gave me a synopsis of Godzilla vs. Mechagodzilla. It sounds really interesting. At MII-ED I've been able to see the first thirty minutes of the movie. It starts with a military operation where King Ghidorah's mechanical body is recuperated and used to build MG. Then there's a fight between Godzilla and Rodan on an island.

Unfortunately, when I was really enjoying the movie, a buyer entered the Toho office asking to see some cartoons and some exotic movies (what a bizarre wide interest) and the Toho guy unceremoniously pressed the stop button on the VCR. I was willing to kill everybody, needless

to say... Anyway, Godzilla is not going to die at all and there will be more movies "especially after the success of Jurassic Park" the Toho man told me. The new baby Gojira "looks dangerous" yes, but I don't think the old style (Minya) would work today.

About Godzilla Super Diorama Theatre, the movie mentioned by Roscoe Roberto, it is titled, DENSETSU NO KYOJU - OKAMOTOKO TAI GOJIRA (LEGEND OF THE SUPERBEAST - WOLF MAN VS. GODZILLA) shot on Super 8. I think that an article about Godzilla books would be quite interesting, giving comments or ratings. I now have 53 books on Mr. G but there are many I'm still looking for!

About Spiga and Giamis, their original names are exactly Kumonga (Kumo means "spider" in Japanese) and Kamakiru (Kamakiri means, yes, Mantis). The Kaiju art is something I would have made without, and not because Ron Wäber can't draw because on the contrary he's quite good, but since KR has so few pages, I would have preferred to see those pages filled with interesting text than sketches.

The article on Godzilla preschools made me drool over such items as the Godzilla vs. Megalon buttons or the Ghidrah mask! I'm interested in preschools too.

Reading about the Godzi museum instead made me even more willing to rush out, buy a ticket for Osaka, and spend the rest of my life there. Norman is a lucky guy indeed!

That's all for the moment. Hoping to hear from you soon.

Ciao!!
Max Della Mora
Milano, Italy

Thanks for the comments Max, for more on the European perspective check out Max's article in this issue.

Our friends in Kobe

Dear Mr. Dan Reed:

We feel very honored to have been introduced in your famous The Kaiju Review.

We are very interested in your fanzine. We are very much interested in any kind of information concerning Godzilla, especially information found only in the United States. We believe your fanzine will not only be enjoyable but also a valuable source for us and we look forward to reading upcoming issues.

Seiji Yamada and Kenji Ohtsura were very pleased and flattered to have been mentioned in your fanzine. Our Senrei, whose valuable collection helped make the Godzilla Museum possible, was deeply impressed with your devotion and dedication to the Kaiju. He is very interested in adding to his collection items such as Godzilla comic books, posters, toys, models, etc. made in the United States. We will be very grateful if you could provide us information on such items.

As for our fanzine we will enclose one with this letter. We are hoping to create a global network

of Godzilla fans. Hopefully with your assistance we will be able to make this possible. By working together we believe we can find a more efficient way to satisfy our readers not to mention ourselves.

Once again thank you very much for mentioning our store and museum in your fanzine. We hope this will be a beginning of a wonderful, not to forget, an international relationship. We anxiously look forward to hearing from you again.

Sincerely,
Naoko Ohsara
G-Kaikaku, Kobe

Thanks Naoko, it is a great honor for me to have had K.R. so well received by such devoted fans in Japan.

The Lost Film

Dear Dan,

The Kaiju Review is fantastic! I spent all day reading and re-reading it. The only thing that could be better would be if it was a monthly color magazine.

My only one complaint is that there's too much on modeling; for my personal taste. I still read and enjoyed the articles (in fact, I'm renovating my Aurora Glow-in-the-Dark Godzilla model and I'll use a lot of the info from the Review) but since I'm more into the movies than modeling, I'd like to see more articles about Honda and the Toho classics.

Your collectibles and laserdisc reviews are very informative, even though I'd never be able to afford a \$1,000 R/C Godzilla and I don't have a laserdisc player, but I'll read anything about the Big G.

Norman England's column is great. The articles are very well written. I guess if you're a Godzilla fan, you must be a bit of a Japan fan as well.

I do have a question for your readers. Back in 1959 and 1964, Democracy Pictures, out of Chicago, made a few stop-motion shorts entitled "The Fire Monsters" and "Son of Tor" with Godzilla, Anguirus and others. Don Galt, who wrote for Marvel Comics in the 70s, worked on these films. I tried calling Marvel but they said they didn't have any information about where to

reach Galt. If anyone knows about these films, or better yet has a copy of them, I'm very interested.

Keep up the great work. You've got a new life-long reader!

Mark Schultz
Warren, MI

I recall reading about those movies in one of Galt's books but never actually saw them. Try writing Don Galt c/o The Dimension Society, 280 Carleton Avenue, East Islip, N.Y. 11730

You Should Be So Lucky!

Dear Dan,

I received the first three issues of Kaiju Review and couldn't believe my luck. Finally, a truly great, up-to-date source of all kinds of Japanese monster information. In fact, Kaiju Review makes one hell of a good read. Then came KR #4...

Did I say "one hell of a good read"? Boy was that an understatement!! What can I say? KR#4 more than lived up to the hype! In my estimation, KR makes a truly great addition to the increasing ranks of Japanese sci-fi related magazines and fanzines. I truly enjoy reading the laserdisc reviews as well as all the toy and book reviews. Much of the info included therein would most likely not be found in the likes of Starlog, Fungoria, Goro Zone, blah, blah, blah.

I particularly found the news about the new version of Gamera interesting. Even though I myself have never been much of a Gamera fan.

Who knows, somewhere down the road we may see something that many kaiju fans have long wanted to see... Godzilla vs. Gamera! Such a film might actually be pretty amazing, though we all know who would win (hch-hch, that was cool)

On the toy front, I'm glad that Gorozone has finally had a true-to-film figure made of him. In my estimation, Gorozone has to be Toho's second finest kyoryu (after Godzilla, of course!). It's a shame that Goro was only featured in two films (and a bizarre six-part

storyline on the 1972 Toho TV series Godman).

I doubt Tri-Star would be thinking along these lines, but I'd like to see a movie featuring a "who's who" of the Big G's foes: King Ghidorah, Gigan, Megalon, Mechagodzilla, Chitranosaurs, Gavalla, Biollante (to name but a few). Maybe they could all attack L.A. or Seattle at once, and it would be up to Godzilla (and the 32nd Airborne, the Navy Seals, Green Berets and Delta Force) to save the day. Then, when the buddies are done in, Godzilla would take on those Special Forces! Ouch!

I also love seeing all the contributions of fan art, and would like to make some myself (I'm no Orui, but the critics in my drawings should be recognizable). I'll be sending some with this letter and more in future.

Well that's all for now. Keep on keeping with this lens, mean, mutha of a fanzine!

Danny Coffin
Parsippany, NJ

I'm glad you liked the last few issues Danny, thanks for the cool (hch hch) drawings.

Kaiju Power

Dear Dan,

Have you ever wondered who the toughest kaiju are? How about the weakest? For those who like statistics, the following lists are for you. The rankings are based on physical might, destructive power, and range of abilities demonstrated. (Monsters from the new movie aren't included. Neither is Minira, which is not an adult.) Here they are, according to Japanese sources:

Top Ten:

- 1) Godzilla (current version, 1992)
- 2) Mecha King Ghidorah
- 3) Dagueron
- 4) Daigora
- 5) Mothra (adult, new version)
- 6) Hattora (adult)
- 7) King Ghidorah (new version)
- 8) Mecha Godzilla (original)
- 9) Gamera
- 10) Jigra (aka Ziger)

Bottom Five:

- 1) King Caesar
- 2) Kamakura
- 3) Mogera
- 4) Manda
- 5) Anguirus

I did not include any kaiju more than once. (The original King Ghidorah and Godzilla would have been ranked #9 and #10 respectively.)

Robert Dwyer
Fendale, MI

Yeah, but Superman beats them all!



Saji Yamada, Kenji Ohmura, and Norman England

Kaiju News

TOHO REPORT

Now that *Godzilla vs Mecha Godzilla* has entered into screen history (see page 27) the question most fans have is: "what's next?"

The early rumors had Toho considering a remake (or more properly a 'revision') of the third film in the series *KING KONG VS. GODZILLA*. It's not going to happen this year. Owing to the lack of a concrete storyline (what sort of 'King Kong' could ever hope to battle *Godzilla*?), Kawakita's obvious preference for mechanized battles (as opposed to the more physical confrontations typical of the pre-'84 films), and most importantly a deficit of funding, required to secure the simian's screen rights from Ted Turner, it's just not likely to happen anytime soon.

Remember Toho had intended to take a break from the *Godzilla* series after the latest film. They had arranged with TriStar to release the American *Godzilla* in Japan at the same time as in the States (Dec. '94).

Toho expected to have the chance to see what direction the Americans would take with the series. Their arrangement with TriStar providing a chance to share in some of the prestige (and bottom line) of the new production.

However due to delays in getting the TriStar film out of development and actually into production a window of opportunity was created for Toho to

get one more film onto the market.

The Tokusatsu department, already up and running on the *YAMATA TAKERU* movie, will begin production on the next *Godzilla* film in late Spring.

Here's the scoop on the next Toho *Godzilla* film:

Currently referred to as *Godzilla 6*, the storyline of the new film involves a continuation of elements begun in



GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE.

Last seen as a giant rose floating above the Earth (during the end credits of the '89 film), Biollante is coming back, but not without a radical new design.

Because the original Biollante film was far from successful some significant changes will be made. In fact Biollante may play about as big a role in the new film as *Mecha King Ghidra* does in *G vs MG*. That is to say not much.

Before the credits even begin in the new film *Mecha Ghidra* has been scrapped and re-engineered into *Mecha Godzilla*, likewise in the next film Biollante will encounter an alien life form early on and be transformed into a brand new Toho kaiju.

The new monster will be known as *Uchu Gojira* or *Space Godzilla*.

Uchu Gojira is still being designed as this issue of *K.R.* goes to press so I don't have too much information. The current storyline will feature *Godzilla* and the 'baby' *Gojira*. As I understand it there will be some type of relationship (telepathic?) between the baby and *Uchu Gojira*.

Miki Saegusa and her friends at the United Nations *Godzilla* Countermeasures Center (*G-Force*) will also be back in the new film.

This time their main weapon will be an updated version of Mogera (the giant robot seen in *CHIKYU HOEIGUN*).

GOJIRA VS. UCHU GOJIRA is scheduled to begin filming in late May or early June for release in December. The Director is scheduled to be Kesho Yamashita with Koichi Kawakita continuing, as *SPEX* Director.

After having helmed the last two *Godzilla* films Director Takao Okawara will be taking a break in order to concentrate his efforts on directing the new Toho fantasy film *YAMATA TAKERU*. Scheduled to commence shooting February '94, Mr. Okawara will still be editing the film by the time *GODZILLA 6* goes into production in late May or early June.

The new director, Mr. Yamashita, has extensive credits from his work in television. His previous genre experience includes the 1987 film *19* (Nineteen), which concerns events in 1997 'New Tokyo', when three time travelers arrive from the future, bringing with them some type of Vampire mutant.

The film featured lots of optical effects. Guess who the Special Effects Director was? If you guessed

Koichi Kawakita give yourself a gold star.

As reported last issue Toho has committed to plans that would expand the range of Tokusatsu films being produced there. With the upcoming production of YAMATA TAKERU, and the possibility of a new Space Godzilla series branching off from the current one in the near future, you can be sure that whatever impact the American Godzilla film may have on the legendary studio, they will still be around long after the dust settles.



GAMERA UPDATE

For those of you who have been losing sleep wondering what happened to the proposed remake of Gamera here's some advice; become more involved in the real world.

Seriously, the on again off again production of the new Gamera film is once again in the active planning stage, with shooting scheduled to begin in the Spring.

As for the facts about the new Gamera film they (at least as of this writing) are that the Daiei production will be directed by Shiyusuke Kaneko (he also directed ULTRA Q THE MOVIE), from a script by Kazunori Ito (he wrote the first PATLABOR feature).

The SPFX Director will be Shinji Iiguchi (MEKADOROIDO), who will be assisted by Makoto Kamiya.

Under Koichi Kawakita's direction Mr. Kamiya edited the Special Supplemental disc (documentary) that was included with the CAV Brillante box set.

The storyline reportedly involves the return of the giant turtle in a story set in the near future. He will battle arevamped version of former foe



Gaos, the most popular daikaiju foe of Gamera (at least in Japan). The current film title is DAIKAIJU KUCHU KESSEN GAMERA (Gamera Giant Monster: Decisive Air Battle).

The film was originally planned as a short feature for co release with an animated children's movie. It has since been expanded to feature length with production set to commence sometime in the Spring of this year with a release date approximately ten to twelve months later. From what I've been able to gather the film is still very much targeted for a younger audience. It will be a Daiei production and will be distributed by Toho.

AMERIGOJI

After months of development the TriStar film is finally moving toward the production stage.

Industrial Light and Magic is expected to be handling most of the SPFX, with the Silicone Graphics company already contracted for the film. These are the talented folks who created the famous Indigo Computer responsible for some of the most significant advances in cinematic effects work seen in films like THE ABYSS, T2, and JURASSIC PARK.

In Japan the screening of GODZILLA VS MECHA GODZILLA included a trailer for the TriStar film which named Terry Rossio and Ted Elliott as the screenwriters for the film. They also wrote ALADDIN.

Currently a Fried / Woods Production for TriStar, the film has traveled a long and twisted path on its way through development.

Fried / Woods Productions' most recent films were SO I MARRIED AN AXE MURDERER, RUDY, and the soon to be released JUST IN TIME (Directed by Sidney Pollack) with Marisa Tomei.

The latest name to come out of the grapevine as slated to direct the TriStar film is Alex Cox, director of REPO MAN, SID AND NANCY, and the caffeine powered spaghetti punk western STRAIGHT TO HELL.

As the story goes, Mr. Cox petitioned Toho directly for the job. If this is true it makes me wonder how much control they might actually have over the entire project. Mr. Cox is already scheduled to direct RICHARD III in London starting in April for First Look Pictures.

The American Godzilla is not likely to have any direct relationship with the current Toho series. In other words don't look for Miki Saegusa or the Baby Gajira in this one.

Unconfirmed at press time, I have heard that much of GODZILLA will be shot in England at Pinewood Studios. With or without Mr. Cox the film should be arriving in theaters sometime in 1995.

ULTRAMAN: ULTIMATE HERO



The new Tsuburaya production of ULTRAMAN: ULTIMATE HERO has wrapped in Los Angeles.

The tenth television series to feature the heroes from Nebula M78, the shows should arrive via syndication sometime later this year.



YOG: MONSTER FROM SPACE

The new Ultraman suit was designed by Kevin Hudson (PREDATOR 2, BATMAN RETURNS) who along with Bruce Spalding, Fuller recreated some of the original series' most famous kaiju. New versions of Baltan, Red King, and others will be featured.

The two kaiju creators are long time fans of the Japanese genre, who have gone to great lengths to create as dynamic a version of the storyline as we've seen so far.

In other Ultraman news by the time you read this TNT should have started broadcasting the old ULTRAMAN 7 show (six a.m. weekdays). Out of circulation for some time its release coincides with the growing popularity of Japanese superheros. I have recently heard that a revamped version of the popular Japanese TV show GRIDMAN may be one of the next shows to arrive on our shores. I guess the coming boom in kaiju culture is starting to pick up momentum.

NEW LASERS ON THE WAY

Collectors with a yen for Toho films have a lot to look forward to in 1994.

Scheduled for release on March 21st are GEZORA GANIME KAMEHA KESSEN NANKAI NO DAIKAIJU (YOG: MONSTER FROM SPACE), YOSEI GORASU (GORATH), and the one we've been waiting for

mastered from a significantly improved new print, CHIKYU BOEIGUN (THE MYSTERIANS).

Both GORATH and THE MYSTERIANS will be released along with their original theatrical trailers, while YOG goes one step further with second side CAV that includes a large still file that documents the original production of the film. This was last done for GOJIRA NO GYAKUSHU (GODZILLA RAIDS AGAIN).

The GORATH disc is mastered in stereo. The cover will feature the original poster art.

Finally some laser news that might be exasperating for those of you who have not even seen the regular version yet, but come November or early December Toho is likely to release a CAV version of the Director's cut of GOJIRA vs. MEKAGOJIRA. This edition will reportedly be available only in the CAV format. The CLV disc and VHS tapes will feature the post festival theatrical cut. This box set may be limited.

AT THE BOOKSHOPS

As is usually the case whenever a new Godzilla film comes out, a library of new books are released that detail the production of the current film and in some cases

explore the history of the genre.

There is such a wide variety of titles to choose from that it's hard to settle on any single item. Keeping in mind that most of us have a hard time reading Japanese, here's a few recommendations that are based mainly on the pictorial value of the books.

THE GODZILLA CHRONICLES: A HISTORY OF TOHO FANTASTIC MOVIES, 1935-1993 (B Media Books ISBN 4-88475-267-8) This book is packed with photos of Toho kaiju and fantasy films spanning the entire history of the company's tokusatsu films up to the current film.

This book also features poster art, toys and other kaiju products. Selling for less than twenty dollars in Japan this compact volume compares favorably with hard cover books covering some of the same areas that sold for more than five times the price.

On the market for awhile now but getting harder to find in U.S. based Japanese book stores is **SUPER WEAPONRY IN THE TOHO SF&X FILMS** written by Mr. Osamu Kishikawa under the supervision of Effects Director Kawakita. Mr. Kishikawa's work has previously been seen as the Chief Editor of some of the pictorial information (construction) included with many of Toho Video's Laser disc titles.

This is a must have book for anyone fascinated by the great war machines used in the battles fought against monsters and/or aliens through the course of the Toho tokusatsu films.

You'll find detailed photos of every piece of hardware they ever thought up; from Atargon to the saucers from Monster Zero.

Each section of the book (listed as Acts) covers a specific area such as Beam type weapons (like the Maser Tanks), Meka Kaiju like Meka Kong and Mogura, and so on.

Selling for under thirty dollars in Japan the book is an essential addition to any serious collector's bookshelf. (ISBN 4 499 20598 0).

A Visit to Japan

by David Milner

You should also be on the look out for Television Land Magazine's GODZILLA GRAPHIC COLOR SPECIAL book which sells for under ten dollars in Japan (950Y).

The book opens up with a collection of color stills from the current film that take you through the plot step by step. Virtually any moment of dramatic or physical impact has been included here.

This is followed by a section on the Toho Meka that has been deployed against the King of the monsters in the current series. Starting with the Garuda and working back to the flying Battle Tanks of the first two films.

The penultimate section features an overview of Gojira eiga related garage kits and toys that includes even the small plastic bubble toys (sold in coin operated vending machines in Japan) right up to the latest 'Real Action' and DX figures that Bandai has made available.

The yen price for each item (along with the company name) has also been provided enabling collectors to be more informed when dealing with American importer/distributors.

One special item of interest here is included in the section detailing Bandai's soft vinyl collection of Kaiju figures. Pictured is the King Kong '62 figure alongside what appears to be a King Kong '68 (from the film KING KONG ESCAPES). This is actually a scratch build up of the '62 figure. Last issue I mistakenly announced that Bandai would be releasing both versions of Rodan from the new film, the only difference being the paint job. I compared this with the previous release of two versions of Gao from the Gamera collection. Sorry folks I was wrong on both counts. As with the two Kong figures, what I had actually seen were simply variations that had been added by fans.

The book ends with a six page calendar section featuring stills from all the current films. It's really nice.

The entire book is in color and would be a worthwhile item at twice the price.

Speaking of twice the price (albeit most worthwhile) the publishers of Hobby Japan have just released a compendium of all the Godzilla garage kits (and a few of the more recent toys) ever made. This is a special volume not an edition of the Hobby Japan EX series.

The first 114 color pages feature a re organization of much of the incredible kit and diorama work that has graced the pages of Hobby Japan over the years. Starting with fresh material covering the new kits created for the latest film , then going chronologically from the first Godzilla ('54) up to last year's GODZILLA TAI MOSURA . The pictorial layout is nothing short of stunning.

This is followed by a feature on master kaiju sculptors Yuji Sakai , and Norizumi Morooka's work.

The black and white section at the back of the book is divided into three sections.

The first of these is the 'required' coverage of Toho Meka (illustrated via art rather than photos). This is the least interesting portion of the book for someone who can't read the text.

Next is a two part explanation of kitbuilding techniques (specific to kaiju figures) that covers both resin and soft vinyl models. Although the text is fully in Japanese, the step by step photos should provide some assistance to novice kitbuilders.

The last section is called 'Garage Kit Perfect Catalogue'. This is a photo listing (by individual company) of all the models currently available. The yen price is also included.

You should be able to order the majority of these books through your local Japanese book store. You might try Kinokuniya Books at 10 West 49th Street, N.Y., NY 10020 [212] 765 1461, or Books Nippon at (310) 604 9701, for mail ordering. These titles tend to sell out quickly. If you have a problem write to me in care of the Review for help.

I could hardly believe it. I had flown to Japan before, but this had never happened. I had a whole row of seats to myself! I could stretch out. I could lie down. I could almost be comfortable! This really made the fourteen hours pass much more quickly.

My plane landed at about 4:00PM, and I knew that by the time I claimed my bags, got through customs and made it into Tokyo, it would be too late for me to get anything done. So, I just checked into my hotel, had some dinner and tried to get caught up on all the sleep I'd just missed.

The first thing I did the next day was head straight for the Yurakucho Mulsion building near the Ginza. I knew that GOJIRA VS MEKAGOJIRA (GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA) was playing in one of the five theaters in the building, but I did not know that it was being presented in six-track digital dolby sound!

Along with popcorn, potato sticks, candy and soda, there were programs, posters, VHS tapes, T-shirts, jackets, models, and toys being sold at the concession stand inside the theater. Among the more interesting, and expensive, of these items were the "real action" Godzilla remote control toy and the highly detailed Super MechaGodzilla DX action figure.

The advertisements and trailers started right on time. Along with some automobile, beer and long distance telephone commercials, there were ads for the new CHIO GOJIRA (SUPER GODZILLA) game for the Super Nintendo Entertainment System and the GOJIRA BAKU TO RETSU DEN (GODZILLA EXPLOSIVE FIGHT VIOLENT LEGEND) game for the Turbo Duo. Among the trailers was a preview of YAMATA TAKIERU (YAMATA BECOMES FURIOUS), a film loosely based on the 1959 epic NIPON TANJI (JAPAN BIRTH) that is scheduled to be released in Japan in July. There were only a few shots of the Yamata





ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE

by Stuart Galbraith IV (book excerpt)

Despite a silly — and much maligned — title, this Toho production, known in Japan as *MATANGO*, is one of the studio's most atypical and interesting films. Chiefly, it's a psychological horror film — allegory, although it contains science fiction elements as well. While frequently shown on American television during the sixties and seventies, the picture has all but disappeared today, an undeserving fate for this unique and quietly disturbing little film.

In a darkened room overlooking the nighttime Tokyo skyline, a man who we can't quite see recounts his story of survival. He was one of five holiday makers — Kessei (Yoshio Tsuchiya), a wealthy businessman; his girlfriend, singer and television star Meimi Sekoguchi (Kumi Mizuno); an assistant professor in psychology, Kenji Morrei (Akira Kubo); his girlfriend, student Akiko Soma (Miki Yashiro); and a mystery writer, Etsuro Yoshida (Iiroshi Tachikawa) — all vacationing off the coast of Japan aboard a yacht, which was suddenly caught in a terrific storm. Despite the experience of the yacht's skipper, Sakeda (Iiroshi Koizumi), and sailor Koyama (Kenji Sahara), the ship loses its way (along with its mast) and drifts for many days. The food and water are nearly gone when the survivors spot an island somewhere near the equator. They head ashore, find fresh water and discover another ship — a rotting, beached research vessel. They find no bodies aboard, but much

of the vessel is covered with a damp, moldy fungus. The ship's mirrors are missing, and an cycless turtle, along with several other mutated animals, is discovered in the ship's laboratory. They find a couple of weeks' worth of food, and decide to clean the large ship and use it as their temporary home while awaiting rescue. The equipment on board and the captain's log suggest the ship was on a top secret scientific expedition (its country of origin obscure) to study the island's radioactivity. Men sent ashore to gather food, we learn, never returned. When Kessei tries to steal some of the canned food, he is interrupted by a hideous figure dressed in rags with barnacle-like growths all over his face. Although everyone sees the creature, they dismiss the incident as some kind of hallucination. The food slowly begins to run out, and the relationships between the castaways become strained. The log, shrouded island becomes wet and miserable, and the seven begin searching the island for other sources of nourishment, but they are only able to find a few turtle eggs and some edible roots. There are mushrooms on the island, but in his log, book the captain of the research vessel warned that the mushrooms must not be consumed. Meimi, the more attractive of the two women, uses her femininity to get the men fighting amongst themselves. She eventually has an affair with Yoshida, who is slowly going crazy and by now is eating the mushrooms in spite of the warnings.

Many more sunken vessels are found underwater near the beach where Sakeda tries to repair the yacht. He is approached by Kessei, who wants Sakeda to help him steal all the food and sail off without the others, believing that two would have the best chance of making it back to civilization. Sakeda is outraged at the very suggestion. Yoshida, now completely mad, grabs a rifle and prepares to shoot all the men and take the women. There's a scuffle, and Koyama is shot dead. Yoshida is tackled and disarmed and then banished from the ship along with Meimi, who assisted the mad writer. Sakeda disappears, along with

the repaired yacht, and a despondent Kessei asks Morrei to help him commit suicide. While Morrei and Akiko go off to look for food, Meimi returns to the vessel, and to Kessei's arms. Meimi takes Kessei to the mushrooms. Overcome with hunger, Kessei succumbs and begins eating them. Meimi then tells him the mushrooms are relentlessly addictive: once you start consuming them, you can never stop. She also tells the terrified Kessei that those who eat the mushrooms eventually become mushrooms themselves. Several human-size mushroom people, mutated human beings from previous shipwrecks, begin to appear. Kessei sees Yoshida, his face now moldy and mutated, happily eating mushrooms. Kessei screams. The yacht drifts back to the island, and Morrei climbs aboard. On one of the cabin walls, Sakeda has written a message explaining that he tried to get back to civilization but was unable. He died at sea. The unhappy Morrei returns to Akiko and the scientific vessel. By now the canned food has run out and roots on the island are getting harder and harder to find. Akiko suggests that they give up and eat the mushrooms — at least they still would survive — but Morrei refuses. The mushroom people attack the ship and carry off Akiko. Morrei goes after her, but it is too late: she has already succumbed and is eating the mushrooms. "It's delicious," she says, "Really!" Somehow, Morrei makes it to the yacht and sails away. After several days, the ship is found, and Morrei is brought back to Tokyo to tell his fantastic story. Locked up in a psychiatric ward, no one believes him. The doctors ask him how he was able to survive the journey back. Turning around, we see Morrei's face covered with fungus. "I ate them!" he screams.

I hadn't seen *ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE* in many years before watching it again for this book, but I remembered much of the film quite vividly, especially the twist ending, which had scared the daylight out of me (and it's still unnerving, even today). Similar to W. H. Hodgson's story "The Voice of the Night" (1907), *Attack of the Mushroom People* is brimming with dream like images and ideas.

The picture is also similar to William Golding's story *Lord of the Flies*, itself adapted for the screen that same year (by Peter Brook). Both stories revolve around shipwrecked castaways who eventually turn on one another. In *Lord of the Flies*, young schoolboys became animal-like savages, while here, adult men and women turn into big mushrooms. While not quite up to the level of Golding's story, and while the mushroom people themselves (in their final form) are ruffery and unconvincing, for atmosphere alone, few films are as interesting as *Attack of the Mushroom People*. It's simply one of the most atmospheric horror films ever to come out of Japan. At first, the island appears to be a tropical paradise, but it quickly becomes wet, moldy and dreary. By the final third of the film, it is almost constantly raining -- day and night -- and fog covers the entire island. The idea of it continually drawing ship after ship to its shores, tempting its crews out of existence, is a fascinating concept. There is a feeling of dread which hangs over the story from the very beginning, and the end, when several characters seem downright happy to surrender to their own desires by eating the mushrooms, seems perfectly logical. The rotting research vessel is an inspired creation. When we first see it, most of the ship's interior is covered with several inches of colorful mold. Parts of the ship are moldier than others (the captain's room is caked with the stuff), but even after it has been cleaned up, it's a wonder that any of the castaways would still want to stay there.

The familiar cast, under the direction of Ishiro Honda, does a fine job with the material, and Yoshio Tsuchiya's tortured Kessai is particularly impressive. At the beginning of the story, Tsuchiya's wealthy Kessai is so pompous he wears a captain's outfit even though Sakeda actually drives the boat. Kessai's wealth and power do him little good on the island, and he quickly becomes a pathetic figure, paying tens of thousands of yen for a single turtle egg.

"Illogical on any level except that of fantasy, where it is glaringly consistent," said Science Fiction.

"This is a picture that...allows us to glimpse something of the nature of the dream logic that structures the monster movie scenarios." *The Motion Picture Guide* gave the film a one-star rating, saying it was "too much for an intelligent mind to accept," but *Psychotronic* called the picture "a real find for bored late night TV viewers."

Attack of the Mushroom People / Matango. Producer, Tomoyuki Tanaka; Director, Ishiro Honda; Screenplay, Takeshi Kimura, loosely based on the 1907 short story "The Voice of the Night," by W. H. Hodgson; Director of Photography, Hajime Koizumi; Sound, Toho Recording Centre; Sound Effects, Toho Sound Effects Group; Special Effects Unit: Director, Eiji Tsuburaya; Photography, Teisho Arikawa.

Cast: Akira Kubo (Professor Kenji Morici), Kenji Sahara (Koyama), Yoshio Tsuchiya (Fumio Kessai), Hiroshi Koizumi (Sakeda), Miki Yashiro (Akiko Soma), Kumi Mizuno (Meimi Sekiguchi), Hiroshi Tachikawa (Etsuro Yoshida). A Toho Co., Ltd., Production. Color (processed by Tokyo Laboratory Ltd.). Toho Scope. 89 minutes. Released August 11, 1963.

U.S. Version: Never released theatrically in the United States. Released directly to television by American International Television (AIP-TV) in 1965. A James H. Nicholson and Samuel Z. Arkoff Presentation; Re-recording, Tita Sound Studios; prints by Pathe. Copyright 1965 by American International Productions. International Title: *Matango*, Fungus of Terror. 88 minutes. No MPAA rating.

[From *Japanese Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films: A Critical Analysis of 103 Features Released in the United States, 1950-1992* (c) 1994 Stuart Galbraith IV, McFarland & Co., Inc., Publishers, Jefferson, NC 28640.]

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Collecting



Toho Meka

by Frank Young

With the growing popularity of garage kit models of Toho Kaiju characters, it seems natural that the science-fiction weaponry featured in their movies would also inspire kits. This article will focus mainly on the earlier and more obscure garage kits.

One of the participants at the Wonderfestival of January 1992, made available a 1/1 scale model of the Oxygen Destroyer as used in the original 1954 *Godzilla* movie. Pictures of this model were shown in contemporary Hobby Japan and Model Graphix articles about that particular Wonderfestival.

Around late 1986 Kaiyodo produced a resin model of the flying World Air Force Alpha ship and a Mysterian flying saucer from the 1957 *MYSTERIANS* movie. The ship was about 11 inches in length and made of soft white resin with very little surface detail while the flying saucer was 1 1/2 inches long. Original price was Y2500.

The 1963 movie *ATRAKON* featured a battleship sized flying submersible called the Go-Ten-Go. Various models were made in the 1960s including the often reissued and terrible injection plastic model by Aoshima. The later garage kits are often superior in detail and accuracy. In fact, one of Kaiyodo's first model kits was a Go-Ten-Go kit with vacuum main hulls and resin parts produced around 1982. Kaiyodo eventually released an all resin Go-Ten-Go around 1986 which was later reissued in vinyl in 1989. The original

vinyl version was Y2500. The vinyl version had a scribed deck to represent the wood deck while the original resin issue had a smooth deck without scribing. In late 1992 Kaiyodo produced a smaller 1/950 Go-Ten Go and a 1/950 Mt Empire submarine in resin for Y2800 each. In addition to the 1/950 Atragon submarines, Kaiyodo also made similar sized resin models of the Alpha submarine and evil Black Shark submarine from LATITUDE ZERO.

General Products produced a metal 1/700 Go-Ten-Go in the mid 1980s. Inoue Arts produced probably the largest Go-Ten Go in a diorama set with a to scale Manda encircling the submarine. It was listed as 1/200 scale and measures 75cm and cost Y35000 in the early 1980s. This was a limited edition although it is possible Inoue Arts may have produced and marketed a very limited reissue. It still remains a very rare model.

Paradise employed the talents of Inoue for their vinyl 50cm Go-Ten Go in 1991 (selling for Y24800), which is still available. Paradise also produced a limited edition resin Planet X UFO saucer from Godzilla vs. Monster X (aka Invasion of the Astro Monsters) for the 1991 summer Wonderfestival that sold for Y1000.



Time Tunnel 2 also produced a small Planet X saucer which came with a sleeping Godzilla for the summer Wonderfestival the year before.

Wonderfestivals are a good source for special edition parage kits which are frequently no longer available after the show is over.

The 1991 Wonderfestival saw a resin JX 2 spaceship from the GORATHI, the BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE earth spaceship (Speed Ship) and the alien Natal saucer, and the DESTROY

ALL MONSTERS SY-3 spaceships. Incidentally Kaiyodo made a larger vinyl SY-3 in 1990 which may still be available. It sold for Y8000 when originally released.

WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS introduced a Maser cannon and tractor. There is a 1/350 resin Maser cannon in their 1/350 Volks Gargantuas set. WAVE also made a small metal special edition Maser cannon and tractor available with two of their injection molded 1/87 Maser Cannon kits during an introductory promotion in 1992. WAVE also produced a larger 1/35 Maser cannon for Y68000 in 1991. Kaiyodo produced their 1/35 Maser cannon which sold for Y28000 in 1992.

GODZILLA 1984 featured the Super X. Kaiyodo made a resin 1/350 Godzilla vs. Super X set priced at Y2800 in 1984; however Kaiyodo 1/350 series is much smaller than Volks current 1/350 series. Kaiyodo made a larger resin three inch Super X. This was originally advertised as 1/350 also! It is actually more in scale with the larger twelve inch Godzilla 1984 models. This was also reissued in vinyl with a similar sized Super X 2 from the next film. Nitto made a larger resin 1994 Super X with moving parts before the demise of this mass produced company although the Super X that I saw was of a limited production resin issue.

GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE introduced the new Super X 2 which was made into a large 1/150 vinyl model with options for open and closed nose section by Falchion. The Super X came as a bonus in a smaller vinyl form in the Max Factory Biollante Gijira vinyl model. In fact, Falchion also included a small vinyl model of the prototype Super X-2 not seen in the movie. Falchion made Super X 2 in 1/250 scale. Interestingly, Max Factory reissued the Biollante Gijira as a Ghidrah Gijira with a bonus vinyl small Gijirasaurus and "KIDS" time travel ship from the 1991 GOJIRA Vs KINGU GIDORA.

Although I intended to discuss Toho weaponry, I would like to mention

the Astro-Boat from the 1967 THE X FROM OUTER SPACE movie made by Shochiku. Umikobo Takarajima (Dream Company Treasure Island) made a resin model of the Astro-Boat for Y4500 in the summer of 1993 to go with the earlier Paradise model of the X MONSTER (aka Chelad).



by Norman England

Something that doesn't get as much attention amongst some fans of genre films is the audio portion. A Toho film, or any film for that matter, would have little or no impact without a good musical accompaniment. Luckily for us, most Godzilla films are supported by rich, powerful musical themes that enable us to be drawn into the action and story further and with greater ease.

Most of this credit goes to the strong compositions of Akira Ifukube, but others have made significant contributions too. Most notably Masaru Sato (Gigantis, Sea Monster, Son Of Godzilla. He also did Gijira Tai MekaGijira.) But most of us, when we think of Godzilla music, think Ifukube.

As with almost everything, the Japanese have taken the music from Godzilla, analyzed it, organized it and presented it to collectors in staggering amounts of CDs. Recently I've attempted to try and figure just what is out there for other Godzilla music buffs trying to piece together a decent soundtrack collection.

For collectors with a bottomless wallet the news is good, there are well over 70 CDs. For the rest of us on a budget it's obvious we'll never get all of them. And unless the Japanese

suddenly change their habit of unrelenting production, we can expect many more in the coming years.

I'd really love to get into each and every one but space doesn't permit, nor do I pretend to have all of them. But most are made up of duplicate tracks, and thus owning every CD is a bit redundant. So I'll skim a bit and tackle my personal favorites.

For those strictly into Ifukube's work I recommend the 13 double disc sets of his on FMI records. While most discs only feature excerpts from several films, this set is a complete offering of Ifukube's works from Godzilla and other Toho masterpieces. They're pricey at Y3,900 apiece. I don't really find the stark cover with his name written in chicken scratch like Japanese very appealing. There are more than a dozen sets, but only ten have a series number.

For those wanting to get the most for the least, I recommend the King Records "Gojira, Original Soundtrack" (KI 230A7021, Y2369). Of all the discs that take snippets from movies and lump them together this is by far the best selection. Originally released on three records ten years ago, the CD, while not having all the material presented on the records, is the longest CD in my collection at 78 minutes. Every Godzilla movie from the old days is represented here.

Also from King Records is a ten disc (each sold separately) set called "SF tokusatsu eiga ongaku zenshuu" (the complete musical works of SciFi special effects movies, KICA 2031 - 2040). These discs cover not only a wide range of titles, they're reasonably priced at Y2000 apiece. The drawback here is that the music, though stated in the title as complete, is not. Just a few select cuts from each film are included. Plus the films lumped together have no musical relationship with each other. For example on Disc 8 in between the serious Ifukube scores from "Frankenstein Conquers the World" and "War of the Gargantuas" is the campy music from "Godzilla vs. Megalon".

My personal favorite, and recently rereleased, is the King Records three

CD box set, "Gojira Densetsu" (Godzilla legend, KICA072, Y5800). This differs from all other records in that it is synthesizer versions of kaiju themes. Originally released on record almost ten years back, it's been remixed and has a few new songs added. I find I never tire of these discs, probably due to their combined length of 150 minutes.

The synthesizer really lends itself surprisingly well to the Toho body of music, and the production and musicianship is top notch. Makoto Inoue produced the set. He wrote the definitive book on Ifukube's music, IN MR. IFUKUBE'S ROOM. I find this disc to be the perfect music to build models by or late night BGM for when I contemplate the socio-ecological symbolism presented in "Godzilla vs. Hedora". I think it also has the best version of the Mothra song to date. As an example of how hard the Japanese make it to be completist, the first two discs of this set were released separately for Y3008 each a few years back.

Speaking of the Mothra song, the new Gojira vs. Mothra's version was released last year on a CD single (for those not familiar with the Japanese CD single it is a three inch disc). This disc has a beautiful cover and also has a karaoke version of the song so you can sing along. Unfortunately, it is now out of print. (TODT 2940, Y1000)

From Sony records comes a disc called "Howl, The Grunts and Growls of All Toho Monsters" (SRCL 2531, Y1800). Though not as complete as the two record set "Sound Effects of Godzilla" released many years ago, this is a fun collection of monster "Howls". It has four different roars of Godzilla and everyone up through Gojira vs. Mosura. Even though the names are listed in Japanese the CD comes with a 24 page booklet with a photo of each monster and a number next to them which corresponds to their track on the CD. Plus it starts out with a goofy "rap" song called "Godzilla's Coming To Town" (featuring "M.C. Godzilla") which utilizes various yells found on the CD.

One of the goofiest CDs, and a personal favorite, is "Gojira Vocal Collection" from Victor (VICL 5083, Y2500). This disc is a collection of tie-in songs, mostly aimed at children, that were released between 1955 and 1984. The original records themselves are now extremely rare and this is the first time they have been collected. Probably for the nostalgic value to fans in Japan who were children during the "old days".

This practice is still in effect today, in fact the latest film has a tie-in song called "Kanosimi no Gojira" (Godzilla's sorrow, SRCL 3750 Y1000).

Many songs will be easily recognized because they incorporate themes found in various Godzilla films. They range from the lovely original Peanuts versions of the songs from Mothra to, for lack of a better word, the bizarre. The song "Gojira san" released in May of 1955 has to be heard to be believed. It is done in Japanese "minyo" (folk) style and sports traditional instruments. The December 1970 release of "Kaiju no Kurisumasu" (The Monsters' Christmas) is a venture in bad taste. My personal favorite is the cut "Yukel Yukel Gojira" (Go! Go! Gojira). This was released as a single but only officially used as background music for a TV commercial. It features lyrics sung from Godzilla's point of view: "Please excuse me, I'm so very sorry, my body is so large, please excuse me".

Quite possibly most of these discs may have just become outdated with the Toshiba FMI release of every Godzilla soundtrack on a separate disc. Released on 12/22/93 (TYCY 5345 - 5364) for a mere Y1500 apiece each disc has the entire soundtrack of the film featured on the disc. A simple black cover with the films poster adorns each cover. This is the set I've been waiting for. All I can say is: it's about time.

Unfortunately not available for inspection for this article is the 1/8/94 release of Kaiju O (Monster King, King Records, KICA 2201 - 10). This is a ten CD set of Toho SciFi, horror, and fantasy film music. It comes in a

Gojira Eiga CD Titles

COMP	CAT #	TITLE	RELEASE DATE	NO. OF DISCS	MONO/STEREO	PRICE (YEN)
K1	230A7021	GOJIRA ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	12/21/89	1	S/M	2,369
K1	230A7022	GOJIRA 1984 ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	12/21/89	1	S	2,369
K1	K32X7032	GOJ DENSITU (LEGEND) CHRONOLOGY 1	9/5/86	1	S	3,008
K1	K32X7033	GOJIRA DENSITU (LEGEND) CHRONOLOGY 2	9/5/86	1	S	3,008
K1	KICA 72	GOJIRA DENSITU (LEGEND) RELEASE (IN BOOK) SF TOKUSATSU EIGA ONGAKU ZENRUI (THE COMPLETE MUSICAL WORKS OF SF SPECIAL EFFECT MOVIES - 10 VOLUME SET)	11/5/91 12/1/93 10/5/91	3 1 1	S M	5,800 2,300
K1	KICA 2031	GOJIRA, GI-GANTS				
K1	KICA 2032	KING KONG VS. GODZILLA, MOSURA				
K1	KICA 2033	MOSURA VS. GODZILLA, DOGORA THE SPACE MONSTER				
K1	KICA 2034	OHORA THE THREE HEADED MONSTER, MATANGO				
K1	KICA 2035	MONSTER ZERO, VARAN				
K1	KICA 2036	SON OF GODZILLA, KING KONG ESCAPES				
K1	KICA 2037	DESTROY ALL MONSTERS				
K1	KICA 2038	FRANKENSTEIN VS. BARAGON, GODZILLA VS. MEGALON, WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS				
K1	KICA 2039	GODZILLA VS. MECHA-GODZILLA, TERROR OF GODZILLA				
K1	KICA 2040	THE MYSTERIANS				
K1	KICA 2201-2210	KAIRU: O	1/8/94	10		28,000
K1	KICA 2211	GOJIRA	12/1/93	1	S	2,300
K1	KICA 2212	KUSOU KAGAKU ONGAKU DAISSHOKEI - OSTINATO - (NEW RECORDINGS OF OLD THEMES)	12/1/93	1	S	2,300
VI	VICL 5078	GOJIRA & KAIRU EIGA ONGAKU DAIYAKKA 1 (ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GOJIRA & KAIRU MOVIE MUSIC)	7/21/91	1		2,500
VI	VICL 5079	GOJIRA & KAIRU EIGA ONGAKU DAIYAKKA 2	7/21/91	1	S/M	2,500
VI	VICL 5083	GOJIRA VOCAL COLLECTION	7/21/91	1	S/M	2,500
VI	VICL 8030	A TRIBUTE TO GOJIRA	11/21/91	1		2,800
S	SRCL 2531	HOWL: THE GRUNTS AND GROWLS OF ALL TOHO MONSTERS	11/21/92	1	S	1,800
S	SRCL 3750	KANASHIMI NO GOJIRA (GOJIRA'S SORROW) (CD SINGLE)	11/1/93	1	S	1,000
TY	TODT 2940	MOSURA NO UTA (MOSURA'S SONG) (CD SINGLE)	11/4/92	1	S	1,000
BC	BCCE 9001	GOJIRA VS. KING GHIDRA ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	12/5/91	2	S	4,500
TY	TYCY 5122	GOJIRA VS. BILLYANTE ORIGINAL SOUNDTRACK	12/5/91	1	S	3,000
TY	TYCY 5195-6	GOJIRA, RADON, MYSTERIANS	11/4/92	2 EACH	M	3,900
TY	TYCY 5197-8	KING KONG VS. GOJIRA, VARAN				
TY	TYCY 5199-200	MOSURA VS. GOJIRA, TERROR OF MECHA-GODZILLA				
TY	TYCY 5201-2	KING KONG ESCAPES, ATRAGON				
TY	TYCY 5203-4	GHIDRA THE THREE HEADED MONSTER, MONSTER ZERO				
TY	TYCY 5205-6	FRANKENSTEIN CONQUERS THE WORLD, WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS				
TY	TYCY 5207-8	BATTLE IN OUTER SPACE, GODZILLA VS. THE SEA MONSTER				
TY	TYCY 5215-6	KING KONG VS. GOJIRA		2	S	3,900
TY	TYCY 5267-8	GOJIRA VS. MOSURA (#9 IN IPUJUBE SERIES)	11/4/92	2	S	5,000
TY	TYCY 5269	GOJIRA VS. MOSURA (PICTURE DISC)	11/4/92	1	S	5,000
TY	TYCY 5342-43	GOJIRA VS. MEKA-GODZILLA (#10 IN IPUJUBE SERIES)	12/8/93	2	S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5345	GOJIRA	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5346	GI-GANTS, FIRE MONSTER	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5347	KING KONG VS. GOJIRA	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5348	MOSURA VS. GOJIRA	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5349	GHIDRA THE THREE HEADED MONSTER	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5350	MONSTER ZERO	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5351	GODZILLA VS. THE SEA MONSTER	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5352	SON OF GODZILLA	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5353	DESTROY ALL MONSTERS	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5354	GODZILLA'S REVENGE	12/22/93	1	M/S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5355	GODZILLA VS. THE SMOG MONSTER	12/22/93	1	M/S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5356	GODZILLA ON MONSTER ISLAND	12/22/93	1	M/S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5357	GODZILLA VS. MIBELON	12/22/93	1	M/S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5358	GODZILLA VS. MECHA-GODZILLA	12/22/93	1	M	1,500
TY	TYCY 5359	TERROR OF MECHA-GODZILLA	12/22/93	1	S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5360	GOJIRA II	12/22/93	1	S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5361	GOJIRA VS. BILLYANTE	12/22/93	1	S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5364	GOJIRA VS. KING GHIDRA	12/22/93	1	S	1,500
TY	TYCY 5363	GOJIRA VS. MOSURA	12/22/93	1	S	3,000
TY	TYCY 5364	GOJIRA VS. MEKA-GODZILLA	12/8/93	1	S	1,000
TY	TYDY 2042	GOJIRA GYMNASIUM (CD SINGLE)	11/4/92	1	S	3,800
VP	VAPB1036-7	GOJIRA KOUYUKU FANTASY (GOJIRA SYMPHONY FANTASY) (INTERVIEW WITH IPUJUBE)	12/1/93	2	S	2,000
AP	APCF 5096	GOJIRA NO SUMETSU - THE HISTORY OF GODZILLA VOL. 1	12/5/91	1	M	2,000
AP	APCF 5097	GOJIRA NO SUMETSU - THE HISTORY OF GODZILLA VOL. 2	12/5/91	1	M	2,000
SL	SLCS 5004	CONVITATO CON L'ORIENTE (LIVE IPUJUBE CONCERT IN ITALY)		1	S	2,300
SL	SLCS 7104	THE FILM MUSIC BY MASARU SATOH VOL. 4				2,500

LISTING COMPILED BY NORMAN ENGLAND, FORMATED BY DIANE REED

laser disc size box, with a feature on Ifukube conducting the score for Gajira vs. Gidora on laserdisc and a poster. But it's rather expensive at ¥28000, plus it's not the complete music from each film. Rather a mishmash of music arranged on each disc under a certain heading. There's the "horror" disc, the "SciFi" disc, the "epic fantasy" disc, etc. I think I'd prefer to buy the individual discs knowing that they contain all the music from that particular film.

Well that about covers what I feel are the most important ones out there. If I've left discs out, give me a break. Every time I turn around it seems that some record company is jumping on the Godzilla bandwagon, so to speak, and releasing a CD. Still it's nice to see that one of the elements of Godzilla I've always been attracted to get such overwhelming attention, even though it's burning a hole in my wallet.

Our Man In Osaka

by Norman England

For most of us, Godzilla is a creature who inhabits our TV. All his larger than life exploits reduced to a small box in our living room. The last film shown in American theaters, except for those in revival houses, was GODZILLA '85. But luckily, as a child, I'd been able to convince my parents that seeing a Godzilla film was a productive way to spend a Saturday afternoon and was able to catch several in my local movie house in upstate New York. The theater is where Godzilla reigns. There he really is the 100 meter, 60,000 ton unstoppable giant.

Since moving to Japan last year, the date "December 11, 1993" has been my most anticipated day. That's the opening day of GOJIRA VS MEKAGOJIRA. Circled on my calendar, I agonizingly watched the days creep slowly towards it.

I bought my tickets in Osaka a month beforehand. You're able to do that in Japan, plus pre-bought tickets always have a beautiful print of the poster on them. Ticket outlets had a coinciding giveaway, a small black plastic bag, with one of the three figures: Godzilla, MechaGodzilla, or Rodan.

Godzilla mania has been slowly building for the past few months here. There have been a few TV specials, old film reruns, and commercial tie-ins. And the toys. For those who feel they must have everything that pertains to Godzilla, get ready to see a major dent in your bank account. Toho has really outdone themselves this time. I find new Godzilla things here daily. It makes me wonder if even Toho knows just what is out there.

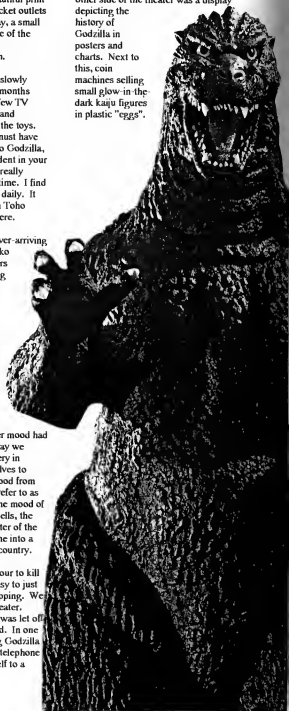
Finally, the seemingly never-arriving day arrived. My wife Yuko and I called all the theaters in the Osaka area showing the film to decide just which would be the best one. We settled on a theater in Umeda with digital Dolby surround.

Since I'm a big fan, this has always been a dream: seeing a Godzilla movie on opening day in Japan. I had to do this right; the proper mood had to be obtained. On the way we stopped off at a local eatery in Umeda and treated ourselves to okonomiyaki, a popular food from Osaka that some people refer to as "Japanese pizza". I let the mood of the old restaurant, the smells, the traditional music, the banter of the young waitresses, carry me into a trance. This IS Godzilla country.

Even though we had an hour to kill after eating, I was too antsy to just walk around window shopping. We headed straight for the theater. Took the elevator up and was let off into a Godzilla playground. In one corner was a stand selling Godzilla toys, shirts, books, pens, telephone cards, etc. I treated myself to a

baseball cap, handkerchief and Gojira credit card holder.

On a wall behind a glass case on the other side of the theater was a display depicting the history of Godzilla in posters and charts. Next to this, coin machines selling small glow-in-the-dark kaiju figures in plastic "eggs".



And in front of this was the 40th anniversary commemorative stamp.

The Japanese love stamp pads, they have them everywhere. At practically every train station and tourist spot you can find a rubber stamp pad bearing that place's name, which you're supposed to stamp into a book to then later show your friends that yes, you actually did go to, say, the Saitama station in Tokyo. For those who pick up the program to the new film, you will notice that in front of the second page is a stiff piece of white paper. This is where you are to use the stamp. Toho has produced several for each theater, with that theater's name appearing on the bottom.

Yuko and I got on line for the 7:30 show. I asked the girl to tear my ticket carefully. It's a cool souvenir, after all. I was then handed a small blue plastic bag which held a small kaiju figure. Cool, a giveaway. We walked in under a giant banner with cardboard figures of Gojira and MekaGojira flanking us. Above us a huge cut out of Rodan floated silently. We got into the theater and quickly found the perfect seat, 10th row, center.

I sat in my seat and decided to check out just who in Japan goes to see Gojira on opening night. Kids with their parents, a few longer die-hard fans, couples on dates. The man next to us was with his son, they poured over the program book. His knowledge of Gojilla was impressive and he was obviously trying to gain his son's enthusiasm. Behind us, two children played with small figures from the film while their ancient looking grandfather watched on with a stone face. A typical crowd. The theater filled up, and then it started.

I don't want to give it away, nor is this intended to be a review, but I have a few comments I'd like to share. For one thing, the surround sound blew me away. Every time MekaGojira would land, the whole theater shook. Gojilla's footsteps are imaginatively panned from right to left. Detail lost on TV came to life on the big screen. Traditional Ifukube themes, as well as a few new ones, thundered. I was mesmerized.

There are some amazing effects here.

Particularly in the last battle in Chiba. About half way through the film Gojilla breaks a Toho taboo and treks through Kyoto (once the Imperial Capital of Japan and home of the Emperor's Palace). As he made his way to Kyoto tower the audience broke out in a sweat. After he leveled it they gasped in astonishment. But the big guy was nice enough not to touch any temples. From Kyoto he made a brief appearance here in Osaka and in a blatant plug for one of the sponsors, MHS Broadcasting, walked through Umeda (surprisingly the very neighborhood I was in) with the MHS building in the foreground.

Unlike the last film, Gojilla vs. Mothra, which came the closest to the old feel, the new film establishes the New Gojilla style: Gojilla vs. Japanese high technology. My one big complaint is the appearance of many non-Japanese and the abundance of English. This may help us English speakers in understanding the story better but isn't one of the reasons we watch these films to view a world removed from our own? But Japanese thinking is that foreigners lend an international feel, so they use them whenever possible. Also, I'm not a big fan of Ryoko Sano nor Maichan, the head girl of the "Baby Gojira choir". She's a popular child actress who always has a smile plastered on her face.

Following the film are two trailers, one for Gojira 6 the next Toho Gojilla film and a trailer for the upcoming, TriStar production. Neither of which give any clue as to what they might be about.

Walking out of the theater in stunned silence, my mind replayed its new-found images over and over. Another film is added to the body of Gojilla lore and a personal dream realized. I urge fellow fans to try and not buy the first copy that appears at conventions. The crew at Toho really hit the mark this time, try and give their work some meaning, wait for the official video or laser to come out, you won't be sorry you did.



KAIJU PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

by Norman Fingale

How many times have you seen a monster's name spelled in English and not been able to figure out how to say it correctly? Today it seems that most hard core fans prefer to use the Japanese pronunciation but not every one has taken the time to make sure that they are pronouncing the names correctly.

Homesteaded Japanese was established after World War II and it called the Hepburn (Honnin) system. If one spends some time studying these simple rules you'll find yourself able to correctly pronounce any Japanese word written in Roman letters.

First off, Japanese is much easier for Americans to pronounce than vice versa. Japanese has only about 1/5 the amount of actual produced sounds. The problem for us then becomes all the words sound alike after a while. But as I said, study these rules, you'll be glad you did.

A = as in Father; B = as in But; CH = as in Chat; D = as in Dental; E = as in me; G = as in Go; H = as in Home; I = as in Jane; J = as in Jolly; K = as in Kangaroo; M = as in Mat; N = as in Net; O = as in Open; P = as in Pitch; S = as in Say; SH = as in She; T = as in Top; U = as in Food; W = as in Wash; Y = as in Yard; Z = as in Zone.

The two sounds English speaking people have trouble with are the F and R sounds. F sounds more like HU (as in Who). And the R should be more like a cross between S and an L.

I let's try this out on Rodan, which is actually spelled Rodan if you translate it correctly. Give the initial R an L feel and follow the list above. You should come up with something along these lines: The RA comes across as "La" like when you hum a song: "La-la-la", but with a D edge to it. The DO sounds like doe, as in a female deer. And the N like in Norman. It'll fall in place with a little practice. For help refer to any video you might have. This will also help you to correctly pronounce the names of actors, directors, and new Japanese friends. There's nothing worse than seeing a famous Godzilla personality and butcher his or her name. Especially when you're trying to come across as a know-it-all.

For further instruction on Japanese language skills, check out your local library or bookstore. It really helps to enhance your enjoyment of this genre.

REVIEWS

GODZILLA TOY MUSEUM

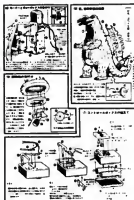
Book review by John Rocco Roberto

For the kaiju enthusiast, especially ones who concentrate on the toy and vinyl figure aspect of the hobby, "Godzilla Toy Museum" should be looked upon as one's bible. Ninety-six pages of full color photos illustrating almost every kaiju related toy produced from 1957 to the present. Each item is displayed with its various color schemes and variations, release dates and original yen prices, making this an invaluable guide for either the collector who has most of these pieces, or the ones looking to acquire them.

Chapter (1) One, entitled, "Soft Vinyl Kaiju" concentrates on the various marusan releases of the 1960s (this line was later picked up by Bullmark in the 1970s), right up to Bandai's current series, which at the time of publication ended with the new Mothra figures.

Chapter (2) Two, entitled, "Tin Toys" illustrates the various die cast wire controlled figures released in the 1970s including a ray gun from "The Mysterians", originally released in 1957.

Chapter (3) Three, entitled, "Plastic Models" lists all the various Godzilla models and kaiju related kits from



Marsuan's 1964 Godzilla (molded from their vinyl toys) right up to the current Bandai releases. This chapter does not include "parage" type kits but does include some interesting photographs of different wind-up and wire-controlled models. Other models featured in this section are a photo spread of San's SY 3 kit produced in 1968, and various versions of the ATRAGON model produced from 1964 to 1977 by numerous companies.

Chapter (4) Four, entitled, "Godzilla Toys" covers the various toy related items including the Bullmark die cast figures, the early radio controlled Godzilla and Mecha-Godzilla toys from 1983, and the Japanese version of the Shogun Warrior Godzilla which was released in the U.S. (the major difference from the U.S. version being Godzilla has his complete set of fins on his back [a voice box is also included]).

Chapter (5) Five, entitled, "Low Price Small Toys" is a two page spread consisting mostly of SD (super deformed) type kaiju figures, playsets, water pistols and what appears to be a dart gun set. Its only relationship to Godzilla appears to be the drawing of Godzilla and Anguirus fighting on the box.

Chapter (6) Six, entitled, "World Toys" completely concentrates on the Godzilla related items produced outside of Japan, mainly in the U.S. Included are the 1964 Aurora Godzilla model molded and cast in bright pink (why?), Godzilla's Go-Cart model released in 1966 and also pictured the Rodan and Ghidrah models produced under Aurora's "Monsters of the Movies" line. Also covered are some Godzilla games and playsets released by the H.G. Toy Company, the Imperial 12" Godzilla figure, a Halloween costume and other related items.

The book ends with a special report by Yuji Nishimura entitled, "A Visit to a Kaiju Factory", which illustrates the step by step procedures in manufacturing vinyl figures. Unfortunately, the text is entirely in Japanese so one can only enjoy the illustrations. The chapter does include some interesting publicity

material and reprints of various instruction manuals for the earlier model releases.

On the whole, "Godzilla Toy Collection" is an excellent source of information on the different types of Godzilla toys released through the years, and although the \$64.80 price tag is a bit steep, it is well worth the investment for the serious kaiju toy collector.

(Bandai, 1992), 5,000 yen. Editors: Takashi Kuraji, Yuji Nishimura, Research: Kim Ito, Paul Copeland, Dave Tanenley, Michi Komatsu; Hardcover, \$64.80, available at Books Kinokuniya.

PHOTOGRAPHI COLLECTION SPECIAL SKILL DIRECTOR EIJI TSUBURAYA



Book review by David Milner

Shashin Shu Tokugji Kantoku Tsuburaya Eiji (Photograph Collection Special Skill Director Eiji Tsuburaya), a three hundred and forty page hardcover book featuring fifteen hundred black and white and one hundred color behind-the-scenes photographs from the tokusatsu ciga (specially photographed films) that Eiji Tsuburaya worked on, was recently published in Japan by Asahi Sonorama. It is priced at ¥9,600, and it can be specially ordered through a number of different Japanese bookstores for about \$125.

The book also included chapters on the Godzilla films, other monster films, war films, fantasy films and so on. There also is a chapter devoted exclusively to the various television series that Tsuburaya created such as URUTORAMAN (ULTRAMAN),

KAIJU BUSUKA (PLEASANT BEAST BUSUKA)* and MAITEI JAKU (MIGHTY JACK).

There is virtually no text. What little there is merely provides information on the photographs.

One of the book's more interesting aspects is that it features a number of photographs of Tsuburaya's family. Among these are pictures not only of his wife and children, but also of his mother and his grandchildren. There are a number of photographs from Tsuburaya's funeral as well.

Not too surprisingly, there are no photographs from GOJIRA MINIRA GABARA ORU KAIJU DAISHINGEKI (GODZILLA MINYA GABARA A.I. MONSTERS GIANT ATTACK)*, which was originally going to be called MINYA, SON OF GODZILLA in the United States instead of GODZILLA'S REVENGE. Eiji Tsuburaya is listed as the tokupji kantoku in the film's credits, but as Ishiro Honda once said, "by that time, (Tsuburaya's) two chief assistants, Teisho Arikawa and Teruyoshi Nakano, were sufficiently experienced to be able to handle the special effects on their own."

Although many of the photographs contained in Shashin Shu Tokupji Kantoku Tsuburaya Eiji have been published before, there are more than enough new ones to make the book worth purchasing even for those who already own Toho Tokusatsu Eiga Zenshu (Toho Specially Photographed Movie All History) and Toho Tokusatsu Kaiju Eiga Kaikan (Toho Specially Photographed Monster Movie Giant Book), the two previously published hardcover books containing behind the scenes photographs from Toho's tokusatsu eiga.

*The Japanese characters for "strange" and "pleasant" are both pronounced "kai". "Strange beast" is commonly translated as "monster".

WHALE GOD

Laserdisc review by David Milner

KUIJRA GAMI (WHALE GOD), a

film released by the Daiei Motion Picture Company Limited in 1962, was recently made available on laserdisc in Japan by the Pioneer LDC Corporation. The disc is in letterbox format, and it features chapter stops, a trailer and an insert with cast and staff lists, a synopsis, some background information on KUIJRA GAMI and a number of black and white photographs.

The picture quality of the disc is excellent. Often there are spots or streaks on the prints from which the home video editions of films produced before the mid 1960s are duplicated, but in this case there are none. The sound quality also is very good, but as with so many other Japanese films produced before the early 1980s, the monaural soundtrack does leave something to be desired.

The most notable member of the cast of KUIJRA GAMI is Takashi Shimura. He is best known for his roles as Kamei, the leader of the SHICHININ NO SAMURAI (SEVEN SAMURAI), and Dr. Kyohei Yamane, the paleontologist in GOJIRA. Shimura plays the nanushi (village leader) in the film, and as always, he gives a superb performance.

Kojiro Hongo, whom fans of the kaiju eiga (monster genre) may remember as chief engineer Shiro Tsutsumi in DAIKAIJU KUCHUSEN GAMERA TAI GYAOSU (GIANT MONSTER AIR BATTLE GAMERA AGAINST GYAOSU) and scoutmaster Nobuhiko Shimada in GAMERA TAI UCHIU KAIJU BAIRASU (GAMERA AGAINST SPACE MONSTER BAIRASU) also is in the film. He plays Shaki, the person who finally manages to kill the kujira.

The special effects could have been better, but they are adequate. Rarely does the viewer believe that he or she is looking at a real whale, but this does not detract from the drama of the film.

Akira Ifukube's score is very good, but it is not one of his best. The themes are affecting enough, but

they just are not as memorable as many of the ones he wrote for the Toho Company Limited's entries in the kaiju eiga.

It is possible that KUIJRA GAMI was initially inspired by MOBY DICK, but there really are few similarities between the two. While Herman Melville's work focuses on the character of Captain Ahab, KUIJRA GAMI is more of an "all for one and one for all" morality play that espouses the virtues of self-sacrifice.

The item number of the laserdisc is PILD 7089, and it costs ¥4,700. Most laserdisc importers in the United States are charging about \$60 for it.



GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA
Review of Toho Video CAV Laser Box Set (TLL 2434)

by Tom Miller

In what one hopes will be a continuing tradition, Toho has released their third three-disc CAV box set, GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA. The cover differs from the BOLLANT and KING GHIDORA sets; instead of a photo from the film, there is a title and credits card (in English) against an op art Mothra wing background. Upon opening the box, one finds an advertising flyer for such items as a laserdisc documentary on the making of the new GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA, Godzilla computer games, Godzilla books, etc. It's heartbreaking to see all the Godzilla merchandise that will never make it to American shores. Next there is an eleven page color booklet in Japanese (with some English) about the film. Finally, there is the film itself.

Short of going to Japan and seeing GODZILLA VS. MOTHIRA in a movie theatre, I can't imagine a better presentation of the film than this disc set. The audio is CX encoded digital stereo, reproducing all the roars and explosions with crystal clarity at frighten the neighbors volume. The picture is bright and clear, with all colors faithfully reproduced, and the image is sharp and detailed.

The quality of the disc may be almost too good, with the occasional wire or other stage device clearly visible; but as the film is well paced, with no dead spots, you either won't notice or won't care.

The film is letterboxed, of course, however the newer Godzilla films are not as extremely widescreen as the older ones so the disc should look fine even on smaller TV sets. Some of the highlights include: Godzilla's undersea struggle with Batta (a nice change of pace setting), the temple stairs collapsing under Fujita, Mothra's single-minded drive through Tokyo to the Cosmos, and Mothra and Batta's aerial battle, with the colorful combatants being reminiscent of a World War I dogfight between the Royal Flying Corps and Von Richtofen's Flying Circus.

GODZILLA VS. MOTHIRA repeats some of the themes from earlier films, for example, the ecology message of the '70s and the anti-businessman theme of the original 1964 *Mosura*. (Even in Japanese films it seems that all businessmen are rapacious and evil.) These themes are never allowed to dominate the film or make it preachy, they simply provide the background for the action.

The film itself is spread out over 4 sides, each less than the full half hour allowed by the CAV format, so that no scenes are abruptly split between two sides. Each disc is chapter encoded, a generous 52 chapters for the film itself, allowing easy access to favorite moments.

The third disc contains supplementary material. There are interviews with the cast and crew (mostly the female cast members), behind the scenes "making of" bits, etc. There are also some scenes of unused footage,

although far less than on the BIOLLANTIE supplemental disc. Apparently there was little wasted film this time. Akira Ifukube is interviewed, and several pages of handwritten scores are shown. A number of storyboards and preproduction drawings are also shown, the most interesting being from the abandoned *MOSURA VS HAGAN* project.

Several of the crew reminisce about Ishiro Honda at the end of the disc, a nice touch. Also presented are posters, stills, newspaper clippings, TV appearances by the Cosmos and similar promotional materials. The weirdest is a commercial for the Wow Wow television service featuring a whole herd of Godzillas. There are several trailers for GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA and finally, a mouth watering and all too brief trailer for the new GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA. Let's hope that that will be the next box set.

This set is not cheap; you can expect to pay \$200+ for it. It's worth every penny; you won't find a better version, and there's no telling when, if ever, it will be released in English. To be cynical, I suppose that now there will be better bootlegs of GODZILLA VS. MOTHIRA available. Do yourself a favor, get the real item instead.

GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE

Review of HBO Video Laserdisc (I.D. 90838) by Tom Miller



HBO's release of GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE joins the small group of English dubbed Godzilla films released on laserdisc. Only four others have been released: GODZILLA VS. THE SMOG MONSTER, GODZILLA VS. GIGAN, GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA, and GODZILLA '85 (which is out of print). Unlike the others, BIOLLANTE is letterboxed, although this is nowhere noted on the laserdisc jacket. Even the catalog that I ordered it from described it as "non-letterbox".

The source is the same as for the earlier videotape version, with the same annoying, dubbed Australian voices. The dialogue itself isn't bad, but the voices are sometimes distracting. The voice chosen for Major Kuroki seems particularly inappropriate, more suited to a teenager than a military leader. My pet peeve is the pronunciation of Biollante: "HYE ollant" -- I much prefer the Japanese "BEE ollant". There is both a digital and an analog soundtrack, CX encoded, in mono. Despite this, there is noticeable distortion during some of the dialogue and re-recorded music. Otherwise the sound is fine.

The picture is very good, with the color and detail that one expects from a laserdisc, although not up to the standards of Toho's CAV version. Unfortunately, the disc is not chapter encoded. The jacket sleeve uses the same artwork as the videotape, but it is much more impressive at laserdisc size. Also impressive is the price: \$34.95, half the price of the tape.

Other than the audio distortion mentioned, this is an excellent disc, easily the best English language Godzilla movie available, thanks to letterboxing.

The release of BIOLLANTE is quite encouraging. After all, this is a movie that had no theatrical release in the U.S. and only limited cable release. Unlike the video, which is priced for rental, the laserdisc is priced to sell. Considering that it has been available both as a bootleg and as a Japanese import for some time, HBO is taking,

the gamble that there are still enough Godzilla fans willing to purchase a quality English version to justify its release. I let's hope that IIHO is correct and we can look forward to English, letterboxed laserdiscs of GODZILLA VS. KING GHIDORAH and GODZILLA VS. MOTHRA.



Godzilla visits Kyoto in the new film

GODZILLA VS. MECHA GODZILLA Soundtrack

Double CD Soundtrack review by
Robert Bondi

In addition to countless models, toys, books, videotapes and laserdiscs, Godzilla's 40th birthday was marked by an unprecedented release of new compact discs. This review will cover the CDs available for "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla".

Toshiba EMI Ltd. has released a special double CD set for "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla" (Catalog no. TYCY 5364.43) and is the most recent addition in a 12-part set that chronicles Maestro Akira Ifukube's work in science fiction movies.

These sets are:

- (1) Godzilla, Rodan, The Mysterians;
- (2) King Kong vs. Godzilla, Varan; (3) Mothra vs. Godzilla, Dagora the Space Monster, Terror of MechaGodzilla; (4) Atragon, Latitude Zero, King Kong Escapes; (5) Ghidrah the Three-Headed Monster, Godzilla vs. Monster Zero, Destroy All Monsters; (6) Frankenstein Conquers the World, War of the Gargantuas; (7) Battle in Outer Space, Yog- Monster from Space; (8) The Three Treasures; (9) Godzilla vs. Mothra; (10) Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla; * Music for the three

DaiMaijin films (set not numbered); * Music for war films (set not numbered). (There is also a King Kong vs. Godzilla / White God double disc set in stereo)

As with the "Godzilla vs. Mothra" set, Disc 1 of the "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla" set is Ifukube's complete score, while Disc 2 is the final music soundtrack. Disc 1 contains the full recordings of each musical track, along with alternate music cues, and cues that were not used in the final film. The tracks on this disc are not in the order played on the final soundtrack, but instead are in the order as recorded in the studio. Disc 2 is the musical score taken directly from the film's soundtrack, which unfortunately means that the tracks are volume adjusted, and some of the tracks end abruptly rather than conclude gracefully.

Toshiba EMI Ltd. has also released the complete music soundtracks for all 20 Godzilla movies on single CDs. The single disc for "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla" (Catalog no. TYCY 5364) contains the final music soundtrack, like Disc 2 in the double set, but fortunately the tracks are not volume adjusted and are all complete with no cut-offs. Completeists will want to obtain both the double set and the single CD, since the three discs are significantly different. All three discs are in magnificent stereo, and sound awesome on even a modest home stereo system!

Enthusiasts of Akira Ifukube's work will be delighted with his score for "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla". Rather than re-orchestrating his MechaGodzilla theme from "The Terror of MechaGodzilla" (1975), Ifukube has composed an entirely new theme for MechaGodzilla, one befitting the mechanical monster's new role as the ultimate weapon against Godzilla. The new MechaGodzilla theme is powerful, awesome, relentless, yet never evil or menacing. Rodan's rousing theme from the 1960s is used, and is just as effective today. For Godzilla, Ifukube employs the King of the Monsters' theme from "Mothra vs. Godzilla", and reserves the stirring "Godzilla March" (from "Godzilla

vs. King Ghidorah" and "Godzilla vs. Mothra") for Godzilla's final victory against MechaGodzilla. The super flying, fortress Garuda and the military forces are represented by an exciting, new theme (G Force March), in which one can hear notes from the military march in "Frankenstein Conquers the World" and the jet theme from the original "Rodan". These powerful scores are balanced by serene incidental pieces, representing the films' love interests. Rounding out the entire soundtrack are beautiful choral pieces which are associated with the Baby Godzilla.

Overall, Akira Ifukube's work for "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla", which is also his tenth score for a Godzilla film, must rank as one of his finest works.

GODZILLA VS. BIOILLANTE SOUNDTRACK

Compact Disc review by Peter Turdin

The GODZILLA VS. BIOILLANTE soundtrack, available through Toshiba/EMI (CD TYCY 5122, Cassette TTY 5122) contains most of the film score from the seventeenth entry in the Godzilla series. Missing is the traditional music by Akira Ifukube, used during much of the film, and the cute little tune, used just prior to Godzilla's attack on Osaka. What is on this CD is the music written by sixty-one year old composer, Koichi Sugiyama.

The cover of the CD displays the same artwork as the VHS and Laserdisc versions of the film itself: Biollante wrapped around Godzilla and about to bite his face off. Inside is a single black and white folded insert with several stills from the film and even more Japanese text, and I can't read a word of it.

The first track, "Godzilla 1989" begins with a sudden, deep horn blast (which can be quite startling if one is not prepared for it). Much of this piece seems very much influenced by John Williams' theme to JAWS, as a cello plays a slightly familiar "da dum da dum" through most of this six minute track. The horn section, the strings, and a kettle drum play for most of the time, although a few flutes are sprinkled in and a clarinet (at least I

think it's a clarinet) has a brief solo. This is a very dramatic piece, most of which is used during the scenes in which Godzilla faces Biollante. This and the final selection on the CD are my two personal favorites.

"Saradian Republic" is the next track, and it gives the illusion that it is much longer than three minutes and thirty six seconds because, frankly, it drones on. The pseudo Middle Eastern flute riffs and low string selections are repeated several times during this piece. This theme does, however, paint a perfect picture of the desert: a vast, barren wasteland and no civilization for miles. This music is used only during the scene setting shots of Saradia, the fictional Middle Eastern country used in BIOLLANTE.

Track three, the Japanese military's theme or "Scramble March" begins very softly with only a few varied instruments playing the basic rhythm of the piece, followed by a brief flute solo and exploding into a full trumpet march, transforming into a very powerful string fanfare. Even though there is a constant beat throughout the entire piece, much of the theme doesn't seem overly militaristic. There is, however, a short snare drum march midway through. A fairly decent track.

Yoshiko Tanaka plays Asuka Okouchi in GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE. "Asuka" is also the name of a piano composition on the soundtrack. Her theme begins as a very beautiful piano piece with strings playing faintly in the background. Unfortunately, the set of simple, one fingered notes is repeated several times, but there is a nice flute solo near the end. The fact that only less than a minute of this music is actually used in the film may explain this.

An American ear listening to "Countdown" may feel that it is a rather silly track, considering the dramatic sequences in the film where it is used: while Colonel Gondo and Kazuto Kirishima are racing to deactivate Bio Major's detonator, and during Godzilla's attack on Osaka. And having an American ear, I would have guessed that this theme was actually written by Danny Elfman for

PIE WEEF'S BIG ADVENTURE. Perhaps Japanese film viewers feel that this piece is very dramatic, I really don't know, but if that is the case, I severely doubt that Americans will take this theme or the above sequences very seriously.

Translated literally, the title of track six is "Theme of Love". A very moving piece, it begins with a clarinet solo and eventually becomes primarily strings, all the while being accompanied by a harp. "Theme of Love" continues the simple notes and repetition that is evident in all the other tracks on this soundtrack. However, in this case it doesn't detract from the music in any way. In fact, it really would be rather nice to hear a bit more of it. Unfortunately, that can't be said of the next track...

During the beginning sequence of GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE which takes place just after the events in GOJIRA (GODZILLA: 1985), the Japanese military and agents from the genetics company Bio Major, clash. The music during their fire fight is what is on the next track, "Bio Wars". The string section and the trumpets are accompanied by an electric guitar in an attempt, perhaps, to appeal to Western listeners. Regrettably, Western listeners probably will not enjoy this piece. "Bio Wars" does have a few good moments. One of Akira Ifukube's classic marches has been incorporated into the main part of the music. If it wasn't buried so deep by the electric guitar and it lasted longer, the Ifukube march may have been able to save this track.

"Biollante" almost tells the story of its namesake in the film. The music starts off as a beautiful string and flute score that possibly symbolizes Erika, the young woman whose genetic information helps to create the monster Biollante. The music then grows very sad and grim, suggesting a death, in this case, Erika's. As the theme continues, a trumpet establishes the beat while the strings accompany for about a minute. The section suggests the creating and growth of Biollante. Suddenly, the music hints that

something very large has appeared, again, Biollante. For the next minute, the same trumpet/strings selection is repeated. The music then becomes very joyful, perhaps symbolizing that Erika's soul is now free from Biollante and that she can finally rest. Now, whether or not Supjyama had written this piece with such a thought-provoking message in mind I can't say, but nonetheless this is an excellent theme.

As the title suggests, "Requiem" is a dark and sad piece. Most of this track is played while Biollante is in flames, having lost the battle with Godzilla on Lake Ashino. Although this is a rather decent track, not much can be noted about it, other than the fact that this theme is played entirely by the string section.

The final track is titled after the new anti Godzilla super weapon, the Super X2. This track also doubles as the finale to the film. Most of the theme is a powerful fanfare, using every instrument to its full potential and sounding, strangely enough, like the main theme from SUPERMAN. The strings take over for two short sections, which have a softer feel than the rest of the theme, but everything flows together wonderfully. The music for this track can be heard while the Super X2 speeds to intercept Godzilla, who has just emerged from Mt. Mihara, during the subsequent battle, and of course, as the finale.

THE GODZILLA VS. BIOLLANTE soundtrack, like the film itself, is great in some places and downright awful in others. It's not up to par with the soundtracks written by Akira Ifukube for other Godzilla films, but it's not too bad. Fans of the Big G can still get quite a bit of enjoyment out of it.

SUPER GODZILLA
Super Famicom game review
by Bill Stanton

I recently got a chance to play at length the new Super Nintendo version of Toho Games' SUPER GODZILLA video game. The version was complete and is currently available for sale in Japan for the SNES 16-bit system. The cartridge is 12 megabyte format or 1.5 megabytes.

RAYMOND BURR APPEARED IN TWO GODZILLA FILMS WITHOUT ACTUALLY BEING IN EITHER ONE. AS MOST FANS KNOW HIS SCENES WERE ADDED LATER.

GODZILLA,
KING OF THE
MONSTERS

IN "GODZILLA, KING OF THE MONSTERS" BURR IS WELL INTEGRATED WITH THE EXISTING FOOTAGE AND APPEARS TO INTERACT WITH THE CHARACTERS.

IN "GODZILLA 1985" BURR HAD LITTLE TO DO BUT STAND AROUND AND LOOK CONCERNED.

RAYMOND BURR

RAYMOND BURR GAVE A SERIOUS PERFORMANCE AS THE INTREPID REPORTER, STEVE MARTIN, THAT LENDS DIGNITY AND SINCERITY TO THE CHARACTER AND THE FILMS, AND ADDS AN EXTRA LEVEL OF BELIEVABILITY TO GODZILLA.

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On The Inside With Mr. Satsuma

Original Artwork by Luis Medero, for K.R.

Based on a similar graphic design created for the book *INSIDE GODZILLA* (ISBN 4 480 04176), the story of Kenpachiro Satsuma's career and a chronicle of his recent work on *GODZILLA VS MEGAGODZILLA*. This book is most highly recommended to the fans of this dynamic actor, whose contribution to the success of the current series has been immeasurable.

Godzilla's eyes are operated via radio remote control.

Framework assembly for supporting Godzilla's head above Mr. Satsuma's. This is in turn attached via supports to a molded helmet that the actor wears.

The helmet is attached via four padded cables to the specially designed harness below. This padding is essential to Mr. Satsuma's safety during some of Godzilla's rougher moments on camera.

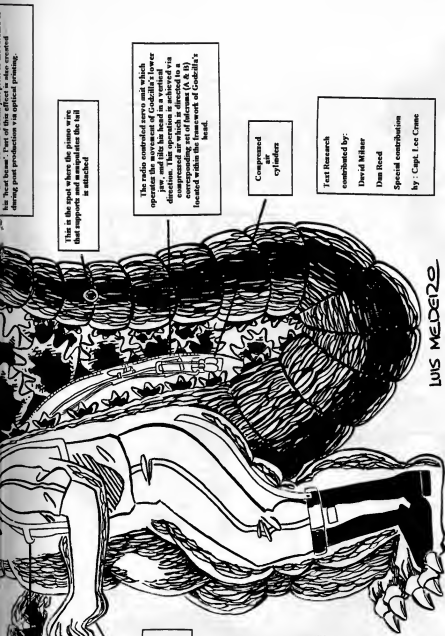
Mr. Satsuma wears safety goggles to protect his vision in the midst of all the miniature explosions he must endure in the course of a day's work inside the suit.

There are several holes concealed in the folds and texture of the suit's "neck" area which allow Mr. Satsuma to see and breathe while on the inside.

The dorsal fin section is attached (using velcro) after Mr. Satsuma has entered the suit through the opening located in the back. The actor rests his support arms on the sides of the suit, who brace him as he slides up until into the costume.

Two different sets of fins were designed to be used with the suit. One was constructed of the same foam latex material used for the rest of the body, while the other was made of PVC. The latter was used for the scenes equipped with internal lights used to create the irradiating effect that occurs just prior to the release of





LUIS MEDERZO

Kaiju Review

GOZILLA (c) 1994 TORCO CO. LTD

The harness that supports the majority of the weight required to keep the head in position

Since Godzilla only has four fingers on each hand, the actor's ring and pinky fingers are pinned to operate the costume digits.

Compressed air cylinders

The radio controlled servo unit which operates the movement of Godzilla's lower jaw, and fits his head in a special device that is operated via compressed air which is directed to a corresponding set of solenoids (A & B) located within the framework of Godzilla's head.

Text Research contributed by:

David Milner

Dan Reed

Special contribution

by: Capt. Lee Crane

The actor wears specially designed boots which enable his feet to remain in position despite the sweat that tends to pool up at the base of the costume following long periods of filming under hot lights.



A note: I have been doing artwork (graphics) for video games, especially (lately) SNES video games, for the past five years. I've seen plenty of games for all the cartridge based home video game units, past and present. What follows is a critical look at SUPER GODZILLA, seen from what could be deemed a jaded viewpoint. With that in mind...

After Toho produced GODZILLA, MONSTER OF MONSTERS and GODZILLA 2 for the old 8 bit NES and GODZILLA for the Game Boy, the waters were calm for a while on the Godzilla gaming front. Then, as the Super Nintendo became a smash hit in Japan (and here), plans were formed to produce a modified, up-to-date version for the new system. SUPER GODZILLA was born.

Let me now backtrack a bit and say that I enjoyed the first GODZILLA on the NES. The graphics were exceptional given that system's limitations and all the monsters (almost all the old guard was on hand, including some Kaiju that never actually appeared alongside Godzilla onscreen) were painstakingly rendered faithfully with all their familiar abilities. The game moved slowly and was excruciatingly monotonous, but it was worth it to play the plodding thing to see the monsters in action. GODZILLA 2 served a different purpose: to provide a very simple war game style simulation with a handful of monsters in a few scenarios. A quick play and not nearly as visually satisfying as its predecessor, GODZILLA 2 was a disappointment to most. Much different was the first Game Boy title, which brought a "super deformed" look and puzzle-based format of play. Again, not interesting, visually (you couldn't even tell which monsters were which from the small assortment), and not much fun to play for those who wanted monsters fighting (like me). The new Game Boy titles look to be leagues ahead with head to head fighting action a la STREET FIGHTER II.

So, having seen something of this new

SUPER GODZILLA at Winter CES in Las Vegas last year, I expected a big scale nice looking game with loads of big, colorful monsters and more going on. I was let down on all points. SUPER GODZILLA has adequate artwork throughout, but nothing exceptional and in some



cases rather simplistic and poor. Godzilla is forced to navigate narrow city streets in a simple icon map. Above this map, a half screen animation of Godzilla moving up and down (conveniently seen from a looking up perspective so nothing, but the tops of buildings and Godzilla's upper torso are shown) conveys a boring, repetitive scene. Godzilla can knock down buildings and mountains (of a certain type), but the animation is the same every time and takes so long you wind up avoiding it to speed up the pace.

Throughout the game, Godzilla must go from city to city, walk around and be shot at from tanks that are unceremoniously stepped on and finally fight another monster to move on to the next level. There are power-ups and nuclear plants to heal damage, but the latter is another case of the same old animation taking 15 or 20 seconds, again and again and again.

Battle is even worse. When you position Godzilla's blue map dot on a pink dot, the upper screen becomes a side-view with characters much smaller than I saw at various electronics shows. Even then, they're often obscured by an

annoying, cityscape so you barely see Godzilla or the enemy at all.

During a fight, Godzilla must be coaxed over to the other monster and make a successful punch. You can only punch, nothing else. Once you punch the enemy, you must retreat

and hit a button again to bring up a special attack window that scrolls leisurely through different forms of attack like tail swipe or breath ray.

Meanwhile, the other monster usually strikes back and erases the special attack menu, ruining your chances and forcing you to go through the whole process again. If

you do make it, the special attack changes the screen to a new animation (called a "cinematic"). Here, silly music plays while a cheesy tail slap or badly aligned ray fires at a monster. These

animations take anywhere from 10 to 25 seconds, are exactly the same for all five special attacks, and you will grow to hate them as they make the battle last three times longer than it should. The enemy special attacks come instantly, since the computer (SNES) doesn't have to punch you to execute them. Indeed, the enemy can launch across the screen at you at a moment's notice while Godzilla must slowly amble to attack. So, the enemy winds up doing 90% of the attacking, and "escape" becomes a much used option. After fleeing, Godzilla must seek out more health bonuses and power-ups to return for more abuse. Some monsters are so tough it takes four or five attempts, each such bout taking 10 to 30 minutes due to lengthy cinematics. Needless to say, this game eclipses the monotony and boredom of the first NES game by a huge margin. I have to give Nintendo credit for making a joystick that can stand up to being thrown against the wall repeatedly.

To add insult to injury, SUPER GODZILLA doesn't have a save game or password feature. If you make it to the last level and die, you have to spend another two or three hours playing to get back there (if you're lucky). Some games don't really need password; this one really does. Even worse, the selection of monsters this

time is feeble. Godzilla, MechaGodzilla (1992 version), Ghidrah, MechaGhidrah, Battra, Biollante, and Ilapan (from the aborted MOTILLA VS. BAKAN project). Compared to the first NES game, this is about half the number and that's with three all new characters. Gone are old stand bys Rodan, Angilas, Gigan, Hedora, and Mothra.

Good points? A couple. Akira Ifukube's scores are sloppily translated here, yet still give a bit of atmosphere because the basic tunes are so characteristic. Also, some of the graphics are OK and are better than anything before seen in a Godzilla video game. That's not saying much, but there it is.

Good news? For those of you who have PC Engine CD ROMs (also known as the DUO or TURBOGRAFX 16 CD here), yes, Hudson Soft is producing what looks like the absolutely best Godzilla game ever. A straight on fight simulator with no nonsense, just great big characters onscreen with fighting on their minds. You can select one of any of the kaju, a list totalling over sixteen from what I've seen. Got a friend? Have him play as Gigan and you play Rodan. Or maybe you want to be Ghidrah and he'll be MechaGodzilla. Ever wonder if Hedora could kill Biollante? This game can tell you. For one or two players, with CD quality renderings of Ifukube's music, no less. The Duo can't really hold a candle to the SNES in terms of graphics or non CD sound, but here the developers of each game took different approaches and Hudson's looks to be the best. I went out and paid \$300 for a Duo just for GODZILLA. It is slated for release in February.

Until then, you still can't buy the U.S. version of SUPER GODZILLA for the SNES and probably won't be able to for a while. The game uses lots of Kanji and Kana in lengthy text messages throughout the game (yet another irritating distraction that occurs all the time, even in battles), and these take time to translate and convert. Maybe that's for the best. I wouldn't even bother waiting for a U.S. release of GODZILLA on the

Duo. Call up any of the Japanese game importers listed in any major video game magazine and order it (when available).



NEW GODZILLA GAME BOY

Game review by Diane Reed

The newest Godzilla Game Boy (just released in Japan) is a great game. The monsters are faithfully reproduced here and best of all, Godzilla is more than half the height of the playing screen. The graphics are good and clear (at least by Game Boy standards) and it's fun to watch the damage Godzilla can do.

The game is an action scroll-style, with "life line" energy bars at the bottom for Godzilla (you) and the enemy he is fighting (keeps changing). As I said, the graphics are great and the music is reminiscent of the movies. There is no time limit on the game, so it's simply a matter of getting through the "scenes" of the movies, defeating the enemy before he annihilates you!

The game begins with Godzilla walking out of the water. Whether on land or in the sea, his movements are very lifelike, with the ground actually shaking under his feet at times.

Weaponry includes his thermonuclear death breath, punching and kicking, and tail swipes where the Godzilla actually swings 360 degrees around. In addition to the various monsters he encounters (including Ebirah, Battra, Mothra, Biollante, Hedora, and Mecha King Ghidrah) he is also under attack from various planes, helicopters, and tanks. His energy is renewed by striking an opponent, and, interestingly enough, also by

just standing still, as if every expenditure of energy slowly depletes him. (However, if you leave Godzilla standing there too long, he'll "bark" at you!)

In addition to the nice size of the main characters, the passing scenery is vivid and interesting, as it changes from the opening scene of barren mountains to the flower-covered landscapes of Biollante; from cityscapes by day to the fairgrounds of Mothra at nightfall. I'm sure you'll recognize more than a few familiar scenes from the movies.

The game excels even in the details; for instance, one of my favorite things is the way the planes fall from the sky when you strike but not destroy them. Sometimes I enjoy simply walking through the city, ignoring the enemies, simply to get a kick out of destroying all the buildings and watching them crumble to the ground!

Unfortunately, unless you complete a level, you have to keep going all the way back to the beginning if you are defeated, and, as far as I know, there is no password or save feature, so each time you turn off the Game Boy you will have to start again at the beginning. So of course you are stuck fighting the same battles over and over again, when what you really want to do is see what the monsters are like at the next level! But that, along with a somewhat difficult screen to read, is par for the course with Game Boy. This is still a great game. You'll find a lot of reasons to love it!

GODZILLA VS BARKLEY (Dark Horse Comics)

reviewed by Michael Keller

The infamous "Godzilla vs. Charles Barkley" Nike ad campaign culminated with the MTV Video Music Awards of 1992, so the timing of this Dark Horse adaptation is a bit off, to say the least. But it seems that DH decided "better late than never" and put this comic out anyway. The reasoning? Perhaps the recent dinosaur craze brought on by JURASSIC PARK, perhaps the new interest in Japanese live action brought on by MIGHTY MORPHIN

POWER RANGERS, maybe it was Sir Charles' SNL duel with Barney, who knows? Whatever the case Godzilla vs. Barkley (I guess Charles was one word too many for the space provided on the cover) appears to be a one issue special for \$2.95.

The story, which one might fear to be nothing but a Nike infomercial, is actually quite amusing; and the word "Nike" isn't mentioned once (there is a reference to "shoes" in the later part of the story). We finally find out Wily Barkley was 300 feet tall in that commercial (even though it IS far-fetched, but hey, what did you expect?) and we get a much more exciting game of one on one than ILM was able to provide us with. Is the story silly? Yes. But damn it, it **SHOULD** be silly! This isn't meant to be an attempt at re-doing. DH's excellent **GODZILLA COLOR SPECIAL #1**, this is just a fun little fable meant to amuse Godzilla fans and basketball fans alike. Anyone who criticizes the comic for being whimsical and unrealistic has missed the point entirely. That's like saying, the ocean is too wet.

One thing, which certainly is comparable with the GODZILLA COLOR SPECIAL is the art work, provided this time by Jeff Butler. Butler does a good job of following in Art Adams' footsteps; giving us a better looking Godzilla than the '70s Marvel comic, the DH manga translation and the black and white

DH Godzilla special, and almost as good as Adam's eastern behemoth. The comic is also in color, and Godzilla's ray is faithfully portrayed as a bluish beam of light rather than

reporter in the story. This sort of thing has always bugged me, whether it be the Marvel comic or the U.S. release of KING KONG VS. GODZILLA or GODZILLA 1985. If

a giant monster levels one of the biggest cities in the world, it would instantly become common knowledge all over the globe. The original Japanese films never did this. (2) While Godzilla is attacking the city, Barkley (still his normal size) and a child fan who's riding in a car with him stop at a neighborhood basketball court to shoot a few hoops. Like I said before, the whole concept of this comic is fanciful, but fanciful scenarios are not necessarily excuses for human characters to act unrealistically. The whole scene just struck me as odd and tested my willing suspension of disbelief.

In any case, this reviewer says the GODZILLA VS. BARKLEY comic is worth doing without the hero sub you were going to buy with that \$2.95. Dark Horse has certainly treated our favorite radioactive dinosaur better than other comic companies, including some Japanese publications, even when only doing a



the flaming stream we've seen in comics before. Keith Aiken, doing the inking and James Sinclair, providing the color, both do their jobs very well. (To say the very least)

My only real gripes are: (1) Why do we Americans always have to act like we've never heard of Godzilla simply because he hasn't attacked our country? "We've just been informed by the Japanese ministry of defense that the monster's name is Godzilla" is a quote by a news

silly, fun little story like this. So unless the thought of seeing Godzilla wearing sneakers in one scene (!) really makes you want to toss your cookies, even as a joke, be sure to look for it at your local comic dealer.



ULTRAMAN CLASSIC: BATTLE OF THE ULTRA BROTHERS

Viz Manga Heroes
comic review by Michael Keller

This is the Ultra series that I know and love! It's the series the makers of this comic know and love as well. These people grew up watching ULTRA Q, ULTRAMAN, ULTRA SEVEN, ULTRAMAN ACE et al on Japanese television. From day one, they knew what the Ultra series was all about, and how it should be represented. Look, the series has a simple formula that works: giant silver and red guys beating the tar out of giant monsters. That's what Ultraman SHOULD be, and these guys know it!

This black and white graphic novel is part one of a six part adaptation of a Japanese manga based on the Ultra series. The original manga was written and drawn by Mamoru Uchiyama, with the English adaptation handled by Toshifumi Yoshida and Trish Ledoux, and some touch up art and lettering by Bill Spicer. The Ultra brothers are faithfully represented and act according to how their characters were portrayed on their respective shows. One obvious difference is that the faces of the giant cyborgs show more emotion and are capable of more expression than they were on live-action television, particularly in the mouth region. The Ultra beings are also given the ability to sweat and cry in some scenes. However, as anyone familiar with Ultra manga stories knows, the Japanese comics have always represented the Ultramen in this fashion.

There are no human characters. The story revolves solely around the Ultra-brothers and the monsters they fight, similar to films such as THE ULTRAMAN STORY, etc. Several of the classic monsters return: Zetton, Black King, Birdon, etc. The battles between these and the other monsters and the Ultra brothers are very well done. There is action galore, and all of it executed in top form. Interspersed throughout the story are some profiles of Ultra beings and monsters, and some charts explaining chains of command.

I'm hard pressed to come up with any criticisms of this comic; so much did I enjoy it that I regret not immediately having the second issue to pick up where this one leaves off. The only real shortcoming I can think of is that the art could be a little better, though it's not bad at all. Color would be nice, too. But these remarks are mere nitpicking comments. ULTRAMAN CLASSIC #1 is easily the best English-language Japanese fantasy comic currently available.

New Toy & Kit Reviews

by Dan Reed

With each new film comes a selection of new toys and kits for the collector to choose from. This is especially the case with the current film which has spawned at least eight different kits depicting the M.G., and ten new figures (kits & toys) of the latest version of Godzilla. Rather than comment on everything that's out there now, I'll focus on some of the items I've personally managed to see so far.

THE RADIO CONTROL GODZILLA

Inspired by the relative success of Tokyo Marui's large scale R.C. Godzilla (see K.R. Vol. 1 No. III for more info), the Bandai company has so far released no less than three variations of battery operated walking and roaring Godzilla figures adapted from the latest incarnation.

The largest (and probably least common) is a radio controlled version that sells for under two hundred dollars in Japan. It comes ready to go (just add batteries). The servo design is well executed allowing for

powerful mobility. It is very toy like in design however, and so suffers in comparison to the Inoue design of the Marui R.C. However if you were to race the two across the same surface the Bandai toy will always win.

Real Action Godzilla Tai DX Godzilla

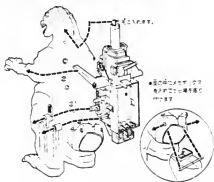
The 'Real Action' Godzilla comes in a kit design clearly packaged to resemble a scaled down version of the Tokyo Marui toy. For those who passed on the former owing to cost, this is an excellent opportunity to acquire a fairly impressive toy collectible.

The servo mechanism is made out of plastic (with a ready made gearbox drive). It is quite easy to assemble, requiring only the most basic of modeling skills. The instructions, although in Japanese, are clearly illustrated and easy to follow.

As with the Marui toy the Godzilla 'suit' is displayed apart from the servo device. Prepainted and cast of a soft pliable latex material, this figure is very true to the new film's design.

The most difficult stage of assembly is when you stretch the suit over the servo frame. Doing so without the proper caution could result in damage to the suit. The biggest flaw in the design (for me at least) is the way the fins (and tail portion) connect to the rest of the suit. It is an interlocking tab design that serves the purpose, but disrupts the smooth design of the toy

From the Bandai instructions for the R.A. Godzilla



Cont on pg 42

GOJIRA TAI MEKAGOJIRA

Film Review by Dan Reed

After the last two films' disappointing climaxes (Godzilla given a swim by the monster(s) he was fighting, roll final credits) I was hoping that maybe this time around things would be a little different. They were.

Godzilla vs Mecha Godzilla is very likely to become everyone's favorite Godzilla movie (at least of the current series). Thanks mainly to Godzilla's return to center stage in the new film.

Wataru Mimura's screenplay allows for some of Director Okawara's more serious intentions to come through while returning Godzilla to the center of the story where he belongs. For the first time since 1984 this is a Godzilla movie from start to finish. There are no futurians, or other daikaiju competing for screen time.

Sure there is the MG, but its purpose is expressly related to Godzilla rather than incidental to the big guy's activities.

The storyline is simple:

Utilizing the future tech debris of Mecha King Ghidora, the folks at the United Nations Godzilla Countermeasures Center have built themselves a big silver doppleganger created for no other purpose beyond ridding Japan of Godzilla once and for all.

Meanwhile on Adonoa Island a scientific team discovers evidence of daikaiju activity. (One Egg and the shell fragments of another). This leads to the arrival of Rodan (drawn apparently by the disturbance of the Egg), and finally Godzilla. Of course a titanic battle ensues.

The Egg is removed to Japan, where the team continues to study it, while at the same time it acts as a lodestone for Godzilla.

After lots of mass destruction has occurred Mecha Godzilla is mobilized to confront Godzilla.

Later Godzilla passes through Kyoto (a first) apparently searching for the Egg. By this time however it has hatched into a diminutive replica (with Bambi like eyes) of the big G. Some type of gojiric empathy is

exchanged between the two, and Godzilla leaves the mainland.

Next Mecha Godzilla is refitted to allow the latest version of the Toho flying battle tank (the Garuda) to combine with it in order to create Super MG.

Following some off camera research into the 'Baby's' physiology Godzilla's weak spot is determined to be a second brain located near the base of his spine. A new weapon is created to destroy the 2nd brain, it's called the G-Crusher.

The Military decide to use the Baby as bait to lure Godzilla into a second battle with MG. But an optically enhanced Fire Rodan arrives first for a terrific nighttime encounter with the M.G. Followed shortly after by Godzilla.

The firestorm that concludes the film takes the King of the Monsters to the abyss and back with a vengeance.

The final resolution transcends rational definition and opens a very wide door for Toho to go in just about any direction they want with the series.

Director Okawara reportedly wanted to kill Godzilla completely by the end of this movie in order to lend it the dramatic impact of the original film. Wisely Toho decided against this.

As usual the cast is made up of familiar faces, at the forefront of which is Masahiro Takashima as the Garuda's pilot Kazuma Aoki. Takashima isn't provided with as much character as in some of his previous roles in ZIPANG



and GUNHED.

Second lead belongs to Ryoko Sano as the Baby Gajira's chief love interest (as well as Aoki's) Azusa Gojo. She is given much screen time in order to establish about as much identification with the Baby as we can stand. A very successful television actress and it shows.

Of course the fan favorite will be Megumi Odaka reprising her role as 'Miki Saegusa' for the fourth time. This time the telepath is used for about the first 3/4's of the film mainly to establish some sense of continuity and to primarily act as a compass for Godzilla's physical (as well as elemental) presence.

You know, the hand goes to the forehead and this is followed by that studied faraway look she gets in her eyes, that usually means trouble is on its way.

It isn't until the end of the film that we see her character engaged in any real conflict. Her link to Godzilla is portrayed as a sympathetic one and that makes her an unlikely 'chief gunner' on the MG team. I have to admit I do get a kick out of those ears of hers though. She is the single most identifiable link between the last four films (Godzilla has changed more radically in appearance than she has).

Daijro Harada chews up the most scenery as the gruff G F Team leader and Chief Pilot of the MG, Takuya Sasaki. He plays off Takashima's character (the Garuda Pilot) for mostly comic effect.

Of special note is the presence of two veteran players of kaiju cinema, Kenji Sahara and Tadao Takashima.

Sahara's appearance marks the eleventh time he has acted in a

Godzilla film, a new record. As Security Chief Segawa his role is a background one, but it's great to see Mr. Sahara looking so well.

As the director of the Psychie Institute, Mr. Takashima gets to act alongside his son in a few scenes. Mr. Takashima brings with him a lifetime's experience of taking movies such as this one in total



seriousness.

Remember when he was sent to Farou Island to capture King Kong back in KING KONG TAI GOJIRA ? Or when his weather control experiments resulted in the scene depicted at the conclusion of SON OF GODZILLA ?

As Commander Aso, Akira Nakao is my favorite character (other than Miki) in the film. Most of his best scenes take place in some shadowy situation room where he carries the film's greatest dramatic weight. This is a Military commander who's number one objective is to see Godzilla dead. His character shapes the viewer's whole sympathetic perception of who the good guys and bad guys are in this movie. (hint: it's the monsters we prefer) This guy is great ! He provides all the energy for our lack of empathy with the military position on Godzilla.

An incidental performance in the film is handled by comedian Rarasu Ishii, a life long fan of the series who lobbied Toho for the chance to appear in a Godzilla film, he provides a couple moments of comic relief early on in the story.

Yukihiro Kanetsuna's MG suit looks great. The design of the MG is along smoother more aerodynamic lines than that of the original versions.

Its weaponry is extensive, with the central plasma grenade device being the single most effective force found so far, capable of knocking Godzilla on his ass every time it fires.



I came away from the film wondering what the logic was to building such an impressive housing for what looked like a weapon better suited to Maser Tank style ground forces.

Anyway the new MG looks pretty cool for the most part, and it's inspired no small

amount of merchandising on its behalf. It seems designed almost for that purpose what with the variation aspect and all. Do you want MG or do you prefer SUPER MG ? The influence of Anime's robojock mentality is very evident here.

The Garuda looks far more sophisticated in design than its predecessors the two Super X's. In the end it's just about as effective.

It winds up being somewhat superfluous to the MG's main weapons it's chief function being to buy time for MG to get the Pulse Cannon charged up again and the G-Crusher locked and loaded.

With the help of Ryoko Sano's sentimental yet effective performance and Akira Ifukube's masterful choral theme, the Baby Gajira managed to win my sympathy by the end of the movie, adding to the pleasant outcome of the finale.

Obviously designed by Masakazu Amaki with the 'Kawaii' (cute) market in mind., it suffers greatly in comparison with Toho's other kaiju characters. I guess Minya was somewhat freakish, but this thing is





downright Disneyesque. It'll be very interesting to see how much it changes (grows) in the next film.

Shinichi Wakasa's new Rodan 'puppet' looks great. I especially liked the animatronics work that went into creating Rodan's expressive reaction shots.

The monster's reappearance as 'Fire Rodan' is accomplished via some interesting optical work. Someone recently commented to me about how much the F.R. resembled Mattel's 'World's Greatest Monsters' Rodan toy that came out back in 1979

Shuichi Murakami has altered the Godzilla suit somewhat since Mothra. Bulkier in design, the new Godzilla shows a great deal more expression than in his last few outings.

It should be noted that during the first battle sequence on Adonoa Island between Godzilla and Rodan the suit used is exactly the same one we saw in GODZILLA TAI MOSURA.

It isn't until after the monster has arrived in Japan that the new variations are added (mainly changing the head and legs of the monster).

The eyes are the key to Godzilla's new personality. Beginning in MOTHRA and even more so in this film they are very expressive. Big dark pupils surrounded by a golden iris. The pools of darkness are gone. Godzilla's greatest reaction shot comes early in the film, during his initial encounter with Rodan. A bug-eyed double take, reminiscent of his character as seen in movies like GHIDRAH and MONSTER ZERO.

Kawakita has brought Godzilla almost full circle since radically altering the look of the monster for BOLLANTE.

This saurian vision of Gojira has filled out significantly since '89, resulting in a far more anthropomorphized look.

I'm sure a large part of this trend is in tribute to the larger than life talents of master suitation Actor Kenchiro Satsuma. His enthusiasm for the role must inspire the technicians he works so closely with.

Overall the tokusatsu photography is very impressive. Kenchi Eguchi's camera work takes advantage of several low angle perspectives that help to put the audience right into the midst of the titanic action.

The optical effects that carry Godzilla through one scene of destruction to the next, are continually impressive. Easily the most outstanding work seen in the current series.

There are compositional shots scattered throughout the film that evoke memories of some of the earlier entries in the series.

Particularly the destruction of the Yokkaichi petro chemical complex shortly after Godzilla first arrives in Japan. This matte shot is well executed and brings to mind scenes from G '64.

There is also an establishing shot of the research Team on Adonoa Island that was lifted (copied) straight from WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS. The 'climbing up that hill' scene.

One of the film's most classic shots takes place when Godzilla nears the Kiyomizu Dera, one of the oldest temples in Japan. (see pg. 9)

One has to admire Mr. Kawakita and his crew for their efforts in this post JURASSIC PARK age of spfx. Overall tech. credits are very high for this genre. My only complaint was that there could have been a wider variety of weapons on board the MG.

The climatic G-Crusher device is a bit of a let down owing to the same basic effect being carried out earlier in the film. This 'harpoon' style weapon rockets out of MG's wrists imploding Godzilla, (with blood spurting) it's pretty graphic. Used first to simply electrocute Gozilla, it's brought back

again as G-Crusher near the end of the film. It's like they ran out of new ideas.

Ifukube's score was masterful, actually playing a major role in the plot of the film. His best work by far for the newer films. (for more see Robert Biondi's review of the soundtrack on pg.21)

I don't think anyone will be disappointed by this film. In my opinion it is easily the most entertaining film so far of the new series. It's really worth waiting for the official Toho Videos to show up as some off the best footage will be lost on bootleg prints. Better yet I urge fans to petition HBO video to pick up the domestic rights to this one for the U.S. video market.

GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA (1993)

Staff:

Executive Producer.....Tomoyuki Tanaka

Producer.....Shogo Tomiyama

Director.....Takao Okawara

Director of Special Effects.....Koichi Kawakita

Director of Photography.....Yoshimori Sekiguchi

Art Director.....Ken Sakai

Sound Recordist.....Kazuo Miyazaki

Lighting by.....Hideki Mochizuki

Music.....Akira Ishikawa

Script.....Wataru Mimura

Cast:

Kazuma Aoki.....Mitsukiyo Takashima

Azuma Gojo.....Byoko Sano

Takuya Sakai.....Daigoro Harada

Miki Saegusa.....Megumi Odaka

Jun Sonezaki.....Ichirota Miyagawa

Director Segawa.....Kenji Sahara

Chief Horono.....Taduo Takashima

Commander Aso.....Akira Nakao

Professor Onae.....Yuzuki Kawasu

Kunio Katsunagi.....Hazuuri Ishii

Katherine Burger.....Sherry Sweeney

Doctor Asimov.....Leo Mengotti

Godzilla.....Kenpachiro Satsuma

Mechagodzilla.....Wataru Fukuda

Baby Godzilla.....Hariken Iryu



Akihiko Hirata



An Appreciation by Dan Reed

One of my favorite aspects of Toho's kaiju cipa has always been the familiar company of actors who populate the films, providing the human element by which we appreciate these tales of monsters.

One of the well known faces in this troupe was Akihiko Hirata. Appearing in seven of the first fifteen Godzilla films, Hirata was most often cast in roles of authority in the majority of genre films he appeared in. Most often remembered as a scientist, he was equally believable as a police or government official.

A role as a Zero pilot in the war film SARABA RABAURO (Farewell Rabaul) earlier in 1954, led to the Director Ishiro Honda casting of Hirata in GOJIRA.

Frequently reported to have been initially slated to play Ogata in the film, director Honda had no recollection of this in an interview conducted in 1992, and suggested that this idea was just a rumor.

Whatever the case, as Dr. Daisuke Serizawa, Hirata created one of the most enduring performances of a scientist in conflict with his own creation since Colin Clive in FRANKENSTEIN. The horror contained in Serizawa's Oxygen Destroyer was enough to make the II-Homb dropped on Hiroshima (not to mention the threat of Godzilla) look minor in comparison.

We first see Dr. Serizawa standing on the dock, as Dr. Yamane's research team sails to Odo Island. He stands

out among the jubilant crowd of well wishers. Streamers flying, and happy faces surrounding him, Serizawa is a dark and somewhat ominous figure. The first indications of the storm to come, in the midst of the calm that precedes it.

The sacrifice that Serizawa ultimately makes in order to destroy both of the forces of destruction that inhabit the film lend the picture both its greatest tragedy and its most significant humanity.

Akihiko Hirata went on to provide a wide variety of kaiju cipa with his sincere and always compelling and credible performances. Much respected among his peers, the actor was considered a consummate professional.

Originally scheduled to appear in GODZILLA '84, Hirata passed away ten years ago this July.

In keeping with the fortieth anniversary of Godzilla that we celebrate this year, this issue of Kaiju Review is humbly dedicated to the memory of this great actor who provided the genre with some of its finest moments.

What follows is an overview of Akihiko Hirata's better known Toho film roles, his many appearances outside the genre as in SAMURAI II: DUEL AT ICHIJOUJI TEMPLE ('55) and Kurosawa's SANJURO ('62), as well as his numerous television appearances have not been included.

1954 GOJIRA as Dr. Daisuke Serizawa

1956 SORA NO DAIKAIJU RADON (RODAN) as paleontologist Dr. Kashiwagi

1957 CHIKYU BOEIGUN (THE MYSTERIANS) as astronomer Ryochi Shirashi

1958 IJHO TO EKATAI-NINGEN (THE H MAN) as Inspector Tominaga

1958 DAIKAIJU BARAN (VARAN THE UNBELIEVABLE) as Dr. Fujimura

1961 DENSO NINGEN (THE SECRET OF THE TELIGIAN) as Detective Kobayashi

1962 MOSURA (MOTHRA) as one of the doctors who treat the sailors exposed to radiation.

1962 KING KONG TAI GOJIRA as Premier Shigeru

1963 KATTEI GUNKAN (ATRAGON) as Mu Agent #23

1964 YOSEI GRASU (GORATH) as Capt. Endo of the Spaceship Otori (the IX Eagle)

1964 SAN DAIKAIJU CHIKYU SAIDAI NO KESSEN (GHIDRAH, THE THREE HEADED MONSTER) as Chief Detective Okita

1966 NANKAI NO DAI KETTO (GODZILLA VS THE SEA MONSTER) as the cyepatched Captain of the Red Bamboo squad

1967 KAIJU SHIMA NO KESSEN GOJIRA NO MUSUKO (SON OF GODZILLA) as Fujisaki the radio operator

1969 IDO ZERO DAI SAKUSEN (LATITUDE ZERO) as Dr. Ken Tashiro

1974 GOJIRA TAI MEKAGOJIRA as Prof. Hideto Miyajima the scientist who is forced to repair Mecha Godzilla in order to save his daughter

1975 MEKAGOJIRA NO GYAKUSHU (TERROR OF MECHAGODZILLA) as Dr. Shinji Mafune who discovered and controlled Titanosaurus

1977 WAKUSEI DAISENO (THE WAR IN SPACE) as Defense Countermeasures Supreme Commander Oshi

1983 SAYONARA JUPITER as Ryutaro Inoue



IN THE FABULOUS EMPIRE OF THE MONSTERS

by Max Della Morra (ITALY)

Japan's kaiju eiga was just as successful in its effect on the minds of young Europeans as it was on those of its American counterparts. I still remember vividly when, accompanied by my grandfather, I took in lots of Godzilla movies, often watching them twice (one time, I saw GODZILLA VS. MEGALON six times in three different theatres!)

There were however times when I would go to the cinema in the hope of receiving a fresh dose of radioactive critters, only to find that the film was something quite different than what I had expected. Why? Because here in Italy, as in the rest of Europe, titles are frequently highly misleading.

What follows is a chronological listing of many of the more interesting re-titlings, along with an attempt, where possible to explain the motivations for such changes. Please note that the date doesn't refer to European release date but to the original Japanese one. The first title listed is the Japanese one followed (where appropriate) by the more familiar North American one and the name of the Director.

Of course there were many more movies from Japan that saw European releases, but their titles were not so eccentric as those you'll read next.

1954 : GOHRA (Directed by Ishiro Honda)

This film was released in Spain as THE KING OF THE MONSTERS, or REY DE LOS MONSTRUOS also known as JAPON BAJO - EL TERROR DEL MONSTRES. This is quite strange since it appears that they translated the U.S. title without bothering to mention Godzilla. In Belgium the film is known as GODZILLA ROI DES MONSTRES, while both Germany and England simply called it GODZILLA.

1955: GOHRA NO GYAKUSHU (GODZILLA'S COUNTERATTACK) (Directed by Motoyoshi Oda)

Known in Italy as : IL REI DEI MOSTRI, it suffered under the American title GIGANTS, THE FIRE MONSTER, but was more clearly labeled in Europe as LE RETOUR DE GODZILLA and GODZILLA CONTRE ANZILLA in France and GODZILLA KFIIRT ZURUCK (GODZILLA RETURNS) in Germany. The title in Belgium was DE TERUGKEER VAN GODZILLA (THE RETURN OF GODZILLA). This film has also been variously referred to as THE VOLCANO MONSTER and COUNTERATTACK OF THE MONSTER.



1957: CHIKYU BOEIGUN (THE MYSTERIANS) (Dir. I. Honda)

Well known for their totally incoherent titles, Germany renamed this film PHANTOM 7000 or SPACE BEASTS (WELTRAUM BESTIEN)

1962 : KINGU KONGU TAI GOHRA (Dir. I. HONDA)

Called THE TRIUMPH OF KING KONG in Italy (IL TRIUNFO DE KING KONG) it got a late (re) release following the huge international success of the Dino De Laurentiis Kong. This was the first of many attempts to cash in on the Kong name in a wide variety of European titles often lacking the presence of the ape himself. In France the film was called KING KONG CONTRE GODZILLA,

mit Kazuhide Sasaki
Yutaka Hayashi Hideojuki Kawano
Regie: Jun Fukuda

Star: Masako Shimazaki
Kamata: Yumiko Asakawa
Senshi: K. Hondo Akimasa Nakano
Musik: Ritsuo Maruo
Produzent: Tetsuroyo Tanaka

Continued Next

Germany preferred to call the film RUCKKEHR DES KING KONG (THE RETURN OF KING KONG), while Belgium and Spain stuck with the actual title substituting TEGEN and CONTRA for VS. (or the Japanese TAI)

1963: KAITEI GUNKAN (ATORAGON) (Dir. I. Honda)

Spy movies, and especially 007, were very popular back then and so we have in Spain AGENT 04 OF THE SUBMERSED EMPIRE (AGENTE 04 DEL IMPERIO SUMERGIDO). Toho's general international title was FLYING SUPER SUB, ATORAGON.

MATANGO (ATTACK OF THE MUSHROOM PEOPLE) (Dir. I. Honda)

Overseas title : MATANGO, FUNGUS OF TERROR

1964: MOSURA TAI GOJIRA (GODZILLA VS. THE THING) (Dir. I. Honda)

Released in Italy under the cryptic title WATANG! NEL FAVALOSO IMPERO DEI MONSTRI (IN THE FABULOUS EMPIRE OF THE MONSTERS). Curiously the Italian poster art was identical to the one used in America (Godzilla clutching a question mark) perhaps this was Watang? Known in Germany as GODZILLA UND DIE URWELTRAUPEN (GODZILLA AND THE PREHISTORIC CATERpillars). It has also been called at other times and in other places: GODZILLA VS. THE GIANT MOTHI as well as GODZILLA FIGHTS THE GIANT MOTHI and of course the more common GODZILLA VS. MOTHIRA.

UCHIU DAIKAIJU DOGORA (DOGORA, THE SPACE MONSTER) (Dir. I. Honda)

In Germany the mysterious Phantom returns in X 3000 PHANTOM AGAINST GANGSTERS (X 3000 PHANTOME GEGEN GANGSTER). Unsuspecting audiences expecting shoot outs between the Phantom and the gangsters instead were treated to a space dai kaiju shaped like a medusae against the gangsters. But if the

German title for this film seems misleading, DOGORA, IL MOSTRO DELLA GRANDE PALUDE, (DOGORA, MONSTER FROM THE BIG SWAMP), the Italian title is very incorrect.

CHIKYU SAIDAI NO KESSEN (GHIDRAH THE THREE HEADED MONSTER) (Dir. I. Honda)

Known as ALIEN MONSTER in its British release, other titles are reported to include GHIDRAH, MONSTER OF MONSTERS, and THE GREATEST BATTLE ON EARTH.

1965 : KAIJU DAISENSO (MONSTER ZERO) (Dir. I. Honda)

Italy : L'INVASIONE DE GLI ASTRO MOSTRI (INVASION OF THE ASTRO MONSTER), France : INVASION PLANETE X, Germany: BEFEHL AUS DEM DUNKEL (ORDER FROM THE DARK), Spain: LOS MONSTRUOS INVADEN LA TIERRA, and Finland: INVASION OF ASTRO MONSTER. This film has come to be known by the video title (U.S.) as GODZILLA VS. MONSTER ZERO and in the U.K. as BATTLE OF THE ASTROS (along with variations on the preceding titles).

FURANKENSHUTAI 'TAI CHITTEI KAIJU BARAGON (FRANKENSTEIN CONQUERS THE WORLD) (Dir. I. Honda)

FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER WITH AN APE FACE is the quite racist German title (after all, the title character has, in the movie, a Japanese face!) Here the Frankenstein name is aptly used but moreover, as you'll see, the name was also frequently used without logic in many other titles creating unintentionally comic titles.

1966: FURANKENSHUTAI NO KAIJU - SANDA TAI GAIRA (WAR OF THE GARGANTUAS) (Dir. I. Honda)

Intended as a sequel to the previous title it was known as KONG URANGO SULLA METROPOLI (KONG, HURRICANE OVER THE METROPOLIS) in Italy, originally

released in Italy as KATANGO (?), it was released under the other title in order to cash in on the success of KING KONG.

Known as LA BATALLA DE LOS SIMIOS GIGANTES (WAR OF THE GIANT MONKEYS), in Spain, LES MONSTRES DES PLANETES SECRETES (MONSTERS OF THE SECRET PLANETS), in France, and FRANKENSTEIN ZWEIKAMPF DER GIGANTEN (FRANKENSTEIN DUEL OF THE GIANTS) in Germany.

NANKAI NO DAIKETTO (GODZILLA VS. THE SEA MONSTER) (Dir. Jun Fukuda)

Did you know that Godzilla was built in a laboratory, using parts of dead monsters? Based on Germany's title for Jun Fukuda's first Godzilla film this would seem to be the case; FRANKENSTEIN UND DIE UNGEHEUER AUS DEM MER (FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTER FROM THE SEA). Furthermore you might be surprised to learn that in Holland Mothra had a reputation as a blood sucking fiend and stalker of virgins as MOTTA IEL VLEGENDE DRACULA MONSTER (MOTHRA THE GIANT DRACULA MONSTER). Still more titles for this film include : France: EBIRAH CONTRE GODZILLA, and the U.K.'s title for the film was EBIRAH HORROR OF THE DEEP, which was also the original U.S. television title for the film. This film is also frequently referred to by some as BIG DUEL IN THE SOUTH SEAS, a reference to the Japanese title.

DAIKAIJU KETTO GAMERA TAI BARUGON (WAR OF THE MONSTERS) (Dir. Shigeo Tanaka)

Were you under the impression that GODZILLA was THE DRAGON FROM THE JUNGLE (GODZILLA - DER DRACHE AUS DEM DRSCHUNGEL)? Of course not, because that was the German title for this film from Daiei Studios (the second Camera film and the first one in color). Later released to U.S. video simply as GAMERA VS. BARUGON.

OGON BATTO (GOLDEN BAT) (Dir. Hajime Sato)

Ogon Batto/Golden Bat, the peculiar skeleton-faced super hero featured in this film, got re-christened as DIAVOLIK in Italy for THE RETURN OF DIAVOLIK (IL RITORNO DI DIAVOLIK). The Diavolik name is inspired by Diabolik, a very popular crime comic book character who also spawned a movie in 1967 titled DIAVOLIK (U.S.A. title, DANGER DIAVOLIK) directed by Mario Bava. Needless to say, the two characters have nothing in common since Diabolik is completely dressed in black while Ogon Batto is a little more colorful.

KAITAI DAISENSO (TERROR BENEATH THE SEA)
(Dir. Hajime Sato)

Back to Germany, where film distributors traded sea mutants for hounds in this Sonny Chiba film, since it was titled UX HOUNDS UNDERSEA VOYAGE OF TERROR! This Toei company release was also known as WATER CYBORG.

1967: DAIKYOJU
GAPPA (MONSTER FROM A PREHISTORIC PLANET)
(Dir. Haruyasu Noguchi)

Get ready for these two: KING KONG FRANKENSTEIN'S SOHN (KING KONG SON OF FRANKENSTEIN), aka KINGU KONGU NO GYAKUSHU, and GAPPA FRANKENSTEIN'S FLIEGENDE MONSTER (GAPPA THE FRANKENSTEIN'S FLYING MONSTER) There's no need to say where these two come from.

But France is really not kidding with wacky titles considering that Gappa got titled as

GAPPA LE DESCENDANT DE GODZILLA (GAPPA THE DESCENDANT OF GODZILLA), and GAPPA LA TERREUR DE KING KONG (GAPPA TERROR OF KING KONG). No kidding!

DAI KAIJU KUCHIUSEN GAMERA TAI GYAOSU (RETURN OF THE GIANT MONSTER) (Dir. Noriyuki Yuasa)

Frankenstein returns in GAMERA GEGEN GAOS - FRANKENSTEIN'S KAMPF DER UNGEHEUER (GAMERA VS. GAOS FRANKENSTEIN WAR OF THE MONSTERS), and GUILA FRANKENSTEIN'S TEUFELSEI (GUILA - FRANKENSTEIN'S DEVIL EGG !)

UUCHIU DAIKAIJU GUIRARA (THE X FROM OUTER SPACE)
(Dir. Kazui Nihonmatsu)

Better known by the U.S. title, this film was released in France as ITOKA LE MONSTRE DES GALAXIES (ITOKA MONSTER OF THE GALAXIES), Italy instead preferred the more bland ODISSEA SULLA TERRA (ODYSSEY ON THE EARTH) trying to disguise it as a totally different movie.

KAIJU SHIMA NO KESSEN: GOJIRA NO MUSUKO (SON OF GODZILLA)
(Dir. Jun Fukuda)

It would seem that our old friend Frankenstein shifted his operations to the South Seas in order to torment

Minya, at least that's the impression you get from the German title for this film: FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTER JAGEN GODZILLAS SOHN (FRANKENSTEIN'S MONSTERS HUNT GODZILLA'S SON). In fact the action in this film actually took place on FRANKENSTEIN IN SAARI (FRANKENSTEIN'S ISLAND). First titled IL FIGLIO DI GODZILLA in Italy the film was later re-released under the misnomer IL RITORNO DI GORGO (THE RETURN OF GORGO) in order to capitalize on the successful re-release of that earlier film. In the print of Il Ritorono De Gorgo each time the name Godzilla was pronounced the audio track skips! This print was also on video in Greece (with Italian sound and Greek subtitles) as GORGO MONSTER OF



FRANKENSTEIN'S HÖLLENBRUT

Hiroshi Ishikawa - Minoru Takashima - Tomoko Umeda - Kunio Murai u. a.
Regie: Jun Fukuda Ein Gappa-Fantastik der Toho International, Tokio

Continued Film

AMAZONIA. In Spain the film was known as EL HIJO DE GODZILLA, while French distributors called it LA PLANETE DES MONSTRES, similarly Belgium sold the film as DE PLANEET DER MONSTERS.

Now probably you're asking yourself why this recurrent use of the Frankenstein name. I have heard that the justification for Frankenstein being included in the title of so many of the German versions of the Godzilla films was that at least one of the characters was always renamed Mr. Frankenstein or Dr. Frankenstein or something of that nature. It turns out according to a German friend that this was only the case twice. In SON OF GODZILLA there is a scene in which Goro says: "Well, maybe they're Frankenstein's monsters." The only time however, that a characters name was actually changed to Frankenstein is in KING KONG ESCAPES in which case it was Dr. Who. Similarly Mecha Godzilla was called King Kong.

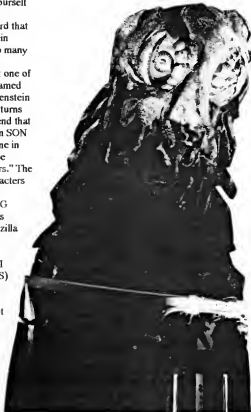
1968: KAIJU SHOSHINGEKI (DESTROY ALL MONSTERS) (Dir. I. Honda)

Just about the only monster not present in the film, but he still gets his name up in lights GLI EREDI DI KING KONG (THE INHERITORS OF KING KONG) was the Italian title for the film. Naturally an old hand is at work in the German title FRANKENSTEIN UND DIE MONSTER AUS DEM ALL, sounds like a classic Hammer film doesn't it? Translation: FRANKENSTEIN AND THE MONSTERS FROM SPACE. France had a good thought with the more truthful LES ENVAHISSEURS ATTAQUENT (THE INVADERS ATTACK), something I guess they are used to. Also known as OPERATION MONSTERLAND on U.K. video.

KYUKETSUKI GOKEMIDORO (GOKE BODYSNATCHER FROM HELL) (Dir. Hajime Sato)

The order was DISTRUGGETE DC 59 DA BASE SPAZIALE A HONG KONG (DESTROY DC 59 FROM SPACE BASE TO HONG KONG) At

least that's the Italian title for this film. Italian lobby cards came complete with AIRPORT-inspired drawings. This bizarre Shochiku production was also known as GOKE THE VAMPIRE.



1969: GAMERA TAI DAIKUUJI GIRON (ATTACK OF THE MONSTERS) (Dir. Noriaki Yuasa)

Godzilla and King Kong meet again in Italy for KING KONG CONTRO GODZILLA. Pity that Godzilla is actually Guiron while King Kong is really Gamera. The fifth film in the Gamera series now more commonly referred to as GAMERA VS GUIRON.

ORU KAIJU DAISHINGEKI (GODZILLA'S REVENGE) (Dir. I. Honda)

Called IL VENDETTA DI GODZILLA in Italy. (Hey Manya You

looking at me?)

IDO ZERO DAISAKUSEN (LATITUDE ZERO) (Dir. I. Honda)

1970: GAMERA TAI DAIMAJU JAIGA (GAMERA VS MONSTER X) (Dir. Noriaki Yuasa)

King Kong is back, but this time spelled Kin Kong, in KINKONG L'IMPERO DEI DRAGHI (KINKONG DRAGON'S EMPIRE) the Italian title for the sixth film in the series, released in Germany as FRANKENSTEIN'S DAMON BEDROHT DIE WELT (GAMERA VS. JIGER - FRANKENSTEIN'S DEMONS THREATEN THE WORLD), called MONSTERS INVADE EXPO 90 in the U.K.

1971: GOJIRA TAI HEDORA (GODZILLA VS THE SMOG MONSTER) (Dir. Yoshimitsu Banno)

Known in Germany, as FRANKENSTEIN'S KAMPF GEGEN DIE TEUFELMONSTER MONSTER (FRANKENSTEIN WAR AGAINST THE DEVIL), in Holland as SATANS CREATUUR, and in Italy as GODZILLA FURIA DI MOSTRI (GODZILLA FURY OF THE MONSTERS). This psychedelic masterpiece is a personal favorite of mine.

1972: CHIKYU MEIREI TOGEKI - GOJIRA TAI GAIGAN (GODZILLA VS. GIGANT) (Dir. Jun Fukuda)

I have you had enough of Frankenstein yet? Well, I have, but the German's hadn't at this point when they called this film FRANKENSTEIN'S HOLLENBRUT (FRANKENSTEIN'S HELL PROGENY), in the U.K. it was known as WAR OF THE MONSTERS, Belgium called it LA PLANETE DE GODZILLA, in Italy as GODZILLA CONTRO I GIGANTI (GODZILLA AGAINST THE GIANTS), and it was released in France under a plethora of titles (more are from video releases) as DESTINATION EARTH: MISSION APOCALYPSE aka EXTERMINATION 2025 aka AFTER HOLOCAUST aka SPACE OGRES (L'ESPACE) with

Interview with Guy Tucker

conducted 12/31/93 in NYC

I thought some of K.R.'s readership might be interested in reading about the experiences of one fan who took his interest in kaiju culture one step further than some of us might think to do.

KR: How did you first become interested - what was your earliest youthful memory of Godzilla or Japanese genre films?

GT: Well, it has to have been before first grade, but I don't remember exactly when. Probably around 1972. I was at a friend's house just a few doors down from where I lived in Brooklyn, and it was just on TV. It was either *Sea Monster* or *Destroy All Monsters* that was playing. I just didn't know what it was, so I asked, "What are you watching?" and he said, "Don't you know? That's *Godzilla*!"

KR: So you definitely saw them first on television.

GT: Only on television. I didn't get to see it in the theatres until '76 when *Megalon* came out.

KR: What do you remember about the films from then?

GT: As a kid, I did not like the original *Godzilla* picture remotely as much as I liked *Godzilla's Revenge*, because it was just too gloomy. But I also responded to some of the atmospherics - the footsteps, the music - I appreciated it on that level.

KR: Was there a time your interest waned, or have you maintained it?

GT: No, it exploded. When I got older, and I got a VCR and was able to tape them for the first time and I started noticing the differences in textures as the series went on. For instance, one of the first ones I was able to tape was

Smog Monster, which was always one of my least favorites, until I was got the VCR, and I recorded that one and I watched it more often and I found it a lot more interesting.

KR: When did you become aware of kaiju fandom?

GT: It's all in order: getting the tape player, having a slightly different perspective, and then right around here, at age 15, I'm discovering *Japanese Fantasy Film Journal*, but by accident. And that was Issue #15, with Part 3 of the Toho legacy, commemorating the late '60s pictures. And Greg Shoemaker had a real knack for writing as though he knew more than he did, because he really didn't know very much first hand; I guess he had been told a lot. One letter I got from him, he said he was very much embarrassed by those articles because

they had a pseudo-intellectual tone that he didn't care for now. But that was what I responded to - because it was the first time I had ever seen these movies taken really seriously. So, coupled with that, I was starting to look at them differently. I find correlation in print. In those days, and still do a degree, if I see something in print I pay more attention to it than if it's something I just hear or think.

That and then *Japanese Giants* - I got in touch with those people through back issue offers and that wasn't quite as revelatory because it was a far less of a think publication but there were more facts in it, about *RODAN* for instance. Really, there are only two issues that I have, and the first one I had was their film book of *Rodan* and what they knew about Americanizing it. I haven't seen it in years. Plus it was a bit more fannish than Shoemaker's publication.

KR: How did this contact impact on your interests?

GT: It just hit me that if it were at all possible, I had to do something. I was up for hours one night when I (A) got the idea, and (B) realized that any number of these people could be dead and how would I know it. Because the magazines just came out like once a year. So I just thought -- and it's a funny way of looking at things but that's how I look at things -- that time was running out.

KR: How did you try to get in contact with these people?

GT: I went to Japan for the first time when I was seventeen, in the summer.

KR: How did you get to go to Japan?

GT: My father had the money, I had wanted to go for years, and he finally could afford it so we went. While I was there, I thought about but didn't really have time to meet with the story executive at Toho, because earlier that year I had found out about the *Godzilla* sequel story contest - before I went there, I found that at Tower Records they were selling the actual Toho *Godzilla* '84 tapes, and they weren't even selling them for much, so I snapped one up. It was the first Japanese version I ever saw and I was blown away by it, simply because it was new, and I still think relatively highly of



it.

Anyway, I found out around that time, probably from *Japanese Fantasy Film Society Newsletter* that they were having a story contest.

KR: This was put out by the same people who did *Japanese Giants*.

GT: Yes. It mentioned the story contest but I had already missed the deadline. These are the stories that would become *Biollante*. I missed the deadline but I wrote a whole script anyway. The fastest I ever wrote a full script: ten days.

KR: When you say a whole script -

GT: A shooting script. I haven't read it in years, but it worked. This was in June 1985. My father found out from Toho in New York who to send it to, and we sent it to the editor there.

KR: Did he respond to it to you?

GT: In September he did. He sent the whole thing back. It was basically, thanks for your interest, but we don't want scripts that haven't been commissioned. I later found out that he was supposed to have passed it on to Fumio Tanaka (then in charge of the *Godzilla Story Department*) and never did. Of course, I was late. In my cover letter I just pretended that I didn't know there was a deadline. We weren't supposed to send full scripts; I didn't know that either.

KR: So what was it about?

GT: I was going in a whole different direction. I assumed that *Godzilla '84* was an anomaly; that they were just doing this one shot. And what I did was a direct sequel *Terror of Mecha Godzilla*.

KR: So you went back to the original series.

GT: It was very much of a homage to various pictures; like, I held over a character from *Terror*, inferred some characters like an aging helicopter pilot who was getting bored. My idea was that ten years had passed since *Terror* and I determined that since nothing had happened in the series, nothing had happened in their world. It was very complicated.

KR: How long were you in Japan?

GT: Only three weeks. I wasn't in Tokyo long enough to do much of anything.

KR: Did you meet anyone from Toho at that point?

GT: No.

KR: Did you find a lot of *Godzilla* related materials in the stores?

GT: Oh yeah. Not nearly as much as you find now, though. Also I bought something like 20 LPs.

KR: So how did you manage to get into the studio?

GT: I wasn't thinking so much in terms of the studio as I was in terms of the people. I already guessed that no one was under contract anymore, so it was more of a question of finding individuals. And I wanted to start at the top. Around the same time, when I got back from Japan, [a friend introduced me to several Japanese fans, one of which later] introduced me to Makoto Inoue. Inoue was part of a rock band then but he had done the *Godzilla Legend* CD's, so my introduction to him was that I was taken to this club in Shibuya where he used to play, and I sat through two hours of that, which included music from *Mysterians*. Inoue thought I was probably OK and so he and the other Japanese were my chaperones to meet Akira Ifukube which was late in that first voyage. Most of that summer I just spent walking around Tokyo getting acclimated.

KR: So you met Ifukube first?

GT: Actually my first week there I was invited to Toei Studios by another friend [of a friend], who was the founder of the first *Kamen Rider* Fan Club, and that was how I met one of the more important people that I met there, Toru Hirayama, the *Kamen* writer producer, who was then retired, although not to the degree he is now. Now he's studying to be a Shinto priest. I think he is one by now.

KR: Had you been a fan of *Kamen Rider*?

GT: No, not remotely. In fact that first meeting at Toei, Hirayama had actually assembled like ten Japanese fans to grill me on questions like what did I think of the ending of *Superman*; should he have turned back the world? One thing I noticed was the questions were by and large sort of intellectual type questions. I was very surprised that they had given any thought to that. Also, questions about *Captain America*; they were curious about the flag imagery in *Captain America*.

KR: The comic book character?

GT: Yes. They didn't really understand to what degree he was supposed to be a fanatic patriot or what, and the *Captain America* questions got really silly and I got a bit testy at one point and I said to them that I seemed to recall that in World War II all the children were forced to bow to the flag every morning, as though it were actually the Emperor, at which point my translator got a bit worried; she didn't really want to translate that! Hirayama though speaks perfect English and he understood that and he was very amused.

KR: How much later than this was it that you actually met Ifukube?

GT: Probably six weeks into the stay.

KR: What were the circumstances of that?

GT: Inoue took me to Ifukube's house. That in itself shocked me, that I would be admitted to his house.

KR: So it was unusual to meet someone under those circumstances?

GT: I didn't know much about it but I certainly didn't expect it would be at people's houses.

KR: What can you recall from that experience?

GT: He seemed to be almost as nervous as I was in some ways. Mainly, I remember - he still does this, last time I saw him, anyway - he chain smokes and still pretty much spends most of the time he's talking looking anywhere but in your direction.

KR: You see him in the documentary

interviews looking down a lot.

GT: Yes. Nowadays he always wears a suit and bow tie -- I showed you a picture in that interview, he's just wearing a big white summer shirt -- I don't think he had conducted as many interviews in those days.

KR: Did he seem aware of the extent of American fandom?

GT: No. Although, I forget if it was sold there, but there was a book in America that had a whole chapter on him -- I think he did have it in 1985 and it had been given to him by a student of his. So he was pleased by that but overall he didn't think that the American fandom counted for much; he didn't know how extensive it was or not. I believe I am the first American fan that interviewed him.

KR: At the time how prepared were you to interview him?

GT: I didn't know what I was doing. I just had some, not really so much procedural questions as just, how do you go about things. The only answer that I really got that was unusual was when he said that his favorite monster theme was the octopus scene from *King Kong Vs. Godzilla*, because that had been the hardest for him to do. But there was so much that he didn't remember. He didn't then and doesn't now remember about the *Majin* music.

KR: How long did the meeting last?

GT: About two hours. His wife was there and she served 100% orange juice, which in Japan is not nearly as good as 100%. I don't know why.

KR: What was his house like?

GT: It was sort of an eclectic mix of Asiatic materials all over the place, like he has this old Buddha stuff on the walls, various Chinese looking vases, some Japanese stuff; the drawers where he keeps score sheets are written out in Russian. I was really struck by the fact that he made us tea. Later on I found out that he's sort of a connoisseur of tea; he collects tea.

KR: Was this like a tea ceremony?

GT: I assumed it was, although there

was nothing I had to do that you would have to do in a ceremony. Years later when I went there with a whole bunch of other people -- he said, "I hope you don't think that all composers are bad hosts" because he wasn't doing the proper tea ceremony. But then he did it all. By then I was used to it. Ishiro Honda also did it. Those were the only two people whose houses I went to.

K.R.: What was it like to meet Honda?



G.T.: Not nearly as frightening, as meeting Ifukube.

K.R.: Did you get the sense that he enjoyed this attention?

G.T.: Much more so the third time. The third time was just really energetic. The second time went on maybe a bit too long, and everybody got tired. But the third one which I like, that's the one I have on video tape.

K.R.: Was he very forthcoming with information?

G.T.: He was much harder to draw out than Ifukube. There was something very good natured about him and very cooperative but if he didn't have an answer for you he didn't give it, that's partly because he was just so polite about other people and he was not shy about being evasive. I realized this most when I looked over the first two

interviews. I had transcribed these along with one with *Yoshia Tsuchiya*, now I got seven pages out of him in one interview and five pages out of Honda in two. That told me something.

KR: What types of questions did you ask him?

GT: The last time I met him -- this is one thing I'd ask all the time -- what were his favorites of his own pictures. Usually he'd say the first *Godzilla*, or "who can decide", things like that. This time it was very different. He really thought about it, there was this long silence; he actually got up and he started looking over the various tapes he had on the wall and finally he said, the first one was *Matango* (*Attack of the Mushroom People*), and then another pause, and he said *Rodan*, and then he decided for a third one *The Human Vapor*, and he stopped there. The one that surprised me was *Rodan*, which is a movie I never cared for very much. But *Matango* I myself thought it was his best movie.

KR: What was it that he liked about those films?

GT: In the case of *Rodan*, I don't know, but as for *Matango*, that was just something where everybody on the film pretty much for once felt that they have done exactly what they ought to have done, and also the writer, *Kimura*, said that Honda was very, very proud of this, and at the end of the screening Honda asked him, "well how did I do this time?" and *Kimura* said, "100%".

KR: I understand you also met *Jun Fukuda* in your travels, what was he like?

GT: *Fukuda* turns out to be very intelligent and had no illusions really about the quality of his own work. I get the feeling from him and he said this, his own best movies are outside the special effects genre. The movies where he's gotten the best reviews have been detective type movies and those are the ones he names as his favorites.

Fukuda was supposed to have turned out somewhat more important than he did. He was one of Toho's golden boys in the late '50s; he jumped from third assistant to first assistant director in just a few

films, which was unheard of. His career took an unlikely trajectory. He was chief assistant on *Rodan* and on the *Samurai* trilogy for Hiroshi Inagaki.

Anyway, he did so many of these huge productions in so little time that by 1959 Toho was ready to graduate him to director. The way this was done then was the director had to submit a full script whether original or an adaptation, it didn't matter, and on the basis of the script they would decide what he was cut out to do. I don't know what he wrote but his first film was not *Telegian* as is generally said, but instead it was Toho's one attempt at copying a formula that Nikkatsu was finding a lot of success with, which was sort of the reckless youth movie, the wild James Dean type things. It was called *PLAYING WITH FIRE*. He possibly did too good a job, especially for 1959, because when Toho saw it they thought it would ruin the company name if they put this out so it was released only in the suburbs. Then they felt bad about it so they decided to give him a big special effects movie and that's why he made *Telegian* (*Secret of the ...*). But then that wasn't as successful as they had hoped so they shuffled him off into just every genre there was. But he didn't really start focusing entirely on detective films until the '70s.

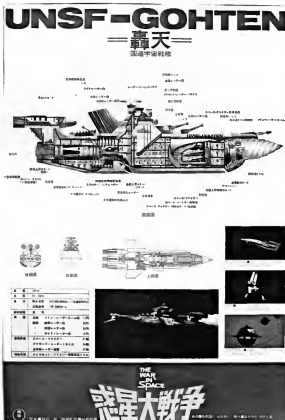
KR: What was the relationship between *Telegian* and *Human Vapor*?

GT: It's actually much closer to *If Man*, more in terms of atmosphere. It might have been similar anyway because the *If Man* was Honda's one foray into the nightclub world.

KR: *If Man* had elements of the yakuza genre? (Japanese gangster films)

GT: Only in a very general sense. Honda didn't have the sensibility to do

what Fukuda did to really portray the criminals as genuine criminal types. Honda's sensibility was a bit too refined to really go to town on it. Compare the nightclub in *If Man* to the one in *Telegian*. The one in *Telegian* is a lot more vulgar. He has close-ups of cleavage at one point shaking away into the frame, and Honda would never have done that to say the least.



KR: What about that scene in *Matango*?

GT: Mushroom People had to have a sexual sub-context and it's frankly remarkable that Honda went as far as he did because he never went that far before or again. But there was no other way to do it; the story was powered by lust.

KR: How long after you met Honda did you meet Fukuda?

GT: A couple years. The summer of 1990. That was definitely my best summer in terms of interviews. I did something like ten of them.

KR: How did you meet Fukuda?

GT: I had fallen with a different fan group at this time which turned out to be a much more prominent bunch of fans.

They introduced me originally to Fumio Tanaka and Teruyoshi Nakano. By that time I was at the second party where I met Nakano, one thing I noticed was that even though they were letting me in to the party, it was up to me to make an impression. Fortunately when I met Nakano I knew enough Japanese to impress him. So that came off very well. It was at this time that I met Fukuda who was being introduced to this group for the first time. He was actually more nervous than I was. This was one of the largest parties I went to; there were at least 60 people there, and because it was so large most of us didn't know each other so they have this custom of everybody standing up and identifying themselves and saying what they do and offer some comments about the official guests, which were Nakano, Tanaka and Fukuda. The other two already knew what I thought of them so I saved my remarks for Fukuda. Everybody was saying what their favorite of Fukuda's movies were. This club was originally founded as a *War In Space* club; they were all kids who adored *War In Space*, and in this they fastened on to Tanaka and Nakano because they worked on the *War In Space*. Fukuda was a very late addition, really. My

favorite Fukuda movies were *Son of Godzilla*, which I only heard one other person mention, and *ESPY*, which nobody mentioned. Fukuda seemed pleased by that, because he later said that his favorites of the special effects movies were those two. He seemed impressed that an American would even be familiar with *ESPY*. I had pointed out that it seemed to me to be the forerunner of the 1970's psychic movies, which it was. It was made before *Carrie* even, and it also pretty much forecasts *The*



Medusa Touch.

KR: When did Espy come out?

GT: 1974.

KR: A Toho production?

GT: Yes. Fukuda later told me that it was something he had been attached to for many years before production. It was published in the 1960's and Toho bought it then. If it had been made in the '60s it would have been a much larger production because in the original they go into outer space and whatnot and by 1974 they didn't have remotely the money they needed to film it as written, but what they did with the money I thought was impressive and I still think it was Fukuda's most interesting film visually. Thematically I think it's his most ambitious movie, of the special effects films.

K.R.: Based on the information you've gathered what message do you have for the fans of kaiju eiga?

G.T.: The legitimacy of the genre. You can't run it down strictly on the basis of how it's been represented here. The Toho pictures were a particularly vital and important part of the film industry and economy then.

K.R.: Is it considered legitimate over there?

G.T.: More so now than it was ten years ago.

K.R.: What was one of your most memorable experiences during the course of this research?

G.T.: This one really amazing interview where I had set up an interview with Koichi Kawakita and he could only give me an hour so I had

arranged to meet Kenji Sahara the same day. We wound up conducting more or less simultaneous interviews in Kawakita's office. After I'd talked to Sahara at length someone else came into the room who looked slightly familiar and started listening in at the end of the table. But we didn't pay much

attention to him, and then Kawakita came back in the room with these two scripts which he slammed onto the table, they were different drafts of *Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster*, (on the tape) it doesn't across, this sudden realization that Yoshimitsu Banno (the Toho screenwriter and Director who helmed *Smog Monster*) had been watching us talk for the last half hour. So I managed to get some comments out of him. It was just an uproarious afternoon, you never knew what was going to happen.

Another moment was a year later when I managed to meet Tomoyuki Tanaka, who was someone I was told I would never get the chance to meet because of his health condition. I was very lucky. I managed to get a signature from him at first he turned me down because he said his hand was too weak. I'm not sure why he changed his mind but perhaps it was that we were sitting next to an office (this was at the King Ghidora screening at the Tokyo Film Festival Sep.'91) and it was clear that everyone who came out of that room knew who I was, Kazuki Omori (Director/screenwriter Biollante & King Ghidora) had met and remembered me, Yoshio Tsuchiya was there, Kawakita was very friendly to me, as well as Ifukube. They all signed the CD I had with me and I think that motivated Tanaka to write his name down as well, which he did in little English letters; T. Tanaka. That particular moment was a good note to go out on and I haven't been back since then.

DAVID MILLNER ASKS
SEVERAL QUESTIONS AT THIS
POINT

D.M.: Was your impression of these

people that they wanted to be involved in these films? Did they enjoy working on them or would they have preferred to be doing something else?

G.T.: They were very equivocal about what they did, Ifonda and Fukuda were 'studio' Directors, Fukuda was the one who actually suggested the most degree of resistance, he said of the films he had made they they were not films he had expressly wanted to do. But he seemed happy enough with how they turned out. He never had a reputation of someone who was hard to work with or that he was angry about being in that situation, this was just the way things were done. He was the Director and did what 'they' told him to do. Honda was even more equivocal about it. People around Ifonda told me that in their opinion he had been shortchanged by Toho's behavior, some felt he didn't speak up enough for himself, that with all the money he was making for Toho, he should have been pushing for things that he wanted because they owed him, but he didn't have the temperament to do that. A lot of people agreed that he never got to express the kind of sentiment that he had, that it never came out as a whole film, just parts of his movies.

D.M.: What about Ifukube, did you get the impression he liked scoring these films or would he have preferred to have just been a composer?

G.T.: Ifukube's perspective on the films has changed every time I've ever met him. He's never the same. At the time of (production on) *King Ghidora*, that was the most energetic I ever saw him, at the scoring sessions for *King Ghidora*, and apparently he's been continuing at that pitch for the films since. When I first met him he wasn't that aware of how big a following he had. Ten years before, when the first L.P.s came, out his reaction was basically: why does anyone care about these movies I did, and now it's like either he is either editing his memory to conform with how he feels about it now or he really just enjoyed doing it, and I think he's certainly enjoying himself now. He's much more generous about the experience now than I think he was when I first met him, at that time I think he'd rather have spent all that time making money off his

symphonies but he couldn't. Now he seems to look at the whole experience as valuable.

D.M. : What brought about the change?

G.T. : Maybe the rising tide of acclaim he was receiving.

D.M. : Which genre films are your favorites?

G.T. : I tend to lean away from the monster films now compared to when I was younger, I'm very interested in the moral complexities of the mutant pictures. I tend to think *Matango* is Honda's best movie overall and after that is *Frankenstein vs. Baragon*, because I think that's the ultimate monster film. I think *Godzilla* ('54) is definitely the best of the *Godzilla* films, I wasn't really convinced of that until I saw the Horacio Higuchi subtitled version, because the translations I'd read of the script before that were very inept. Higuchi really breathed life into it.

D.M. : Which of the *Godzilla* films was your favorite before that?

G.T. : When I was younger *Destroy All Monsters*, than I went through a period of infatuation with *Smog Monster*.

D.M. : What did you like specifically about *Smog Monster*?

G.T. : That I couldn't understand it. I like being mystified. When I was a teenager there were all these symbols in it that I couldn't quite understand. The expressiveness of the film language was appealing to me, it still is. It's a very expressive film. There is an unusual quality to the visuals. It's not like any of the ones before. It broke a pattern that what was beginning to set in. One that of course they went right back to, because Tanaka was horrified of that film. Banno (the writer/Director) told me that they were only able to make it that radical because Tanaka was in the hospital during most of the shooting. Then when he'd gotten out and saw it he said 'what have you done!?', You just ruined the series! He did allow Banno to write a couple of drafts for the sequel, but then they went straight to Gigan.

and Hanno only co wrote one more movie for Toho, he became an executive after that.

D.M. : So there had been plans for another film featuring *Hedorah*?

G.T. : It was on the boards. It never went past the script stage. Banno had all these weird ideas for it. He wanted to film it in Africa, or set it in Africa. Hedorah comes to life there. Banno spent the 70s shooting a lot of documentaries about African famine. He also shot the documentary footage in *Catastrophe 1999*, where he also did one of the last drafts of the script. The nightclub scene in *Catastrophe 1999* is a direct crib from the nightclub scene in *Godzilla vs. Smog Monster*.

D.M. : You seem to like *Godzilla's Revenge* more than most people.

G.T. : The first writer I ever read, who seemed to think about the films at all was Donald Glut. One of the pictures he really liked was *Godzilla's Revenge*, and he made a really good case for it. So even though I'd already liked it from a child's standpoint, there was a degree of re-enforcement there. The landscape of *Godzilla's Revenge* is very simple. It's in halves as opposed to acts. At that point in his career Shinichi Sekizawa was able to spin a couple of ideas into 75 minutes, that was all he needed. Sekizawa said that the original shape of the film was dictated by Tanaka, who asked him "Well can you write this movie made up of bits and parts of other movies?", and Sekizawa said jokingly : "of course that's what I do best". So using the stock footage was part of the planning stage. It wasn't a last minute decision. They'd always intended to use it.

D.M. : And that was for budgetary reasons?

G.T. : Yes. Also Tsuburaya was sick and Honda had to step in and take over the effects, and naturally he wouldn't be able to devise anything, too elaborate.

D.M. : Why do you call *Frankenstein vs Baragon* the ultimate monster movie?

G.T. : Because when we meet Frankenstein he is essentially a boy, who just grows into a much larger boy, and this encourages us to identify with him as a human throughout. With *Baragon* quite clearly the monster. Therefore by the end of the film, it's the ultimate conflict between creatures because it's not monster vs monster, but man versus monster. Human intellect attempting to deal with this berserk antediluvian force. It's never been done that way before or since. It's the kind of thing that's most obviously missing from the way Toho is handling the Miki Saegusa character in the current films. There should be a lot more invested in the psychic connection she has with *Godzilla*, yet we are not remotely told what it is doing to her mind. Every film she is just so perky, she has no personality in this picture (C v MG). What if she felt his rage more intensely than she does? What if she started acting like him in certain ways? What if his mentality became stronger than hers? As it is she's no good for anything except as a sort of living radar device. It should be a lot more than that. There are no people in the most recent films. The only character so far in the new cycle was Shindo (Yoshio Tsuchiya) in *King Chidora*. The rest just seem to be there to develop potentials, such as they are.

Guy Tucker is presently at work on a book that will detail the history and background of the specially photographed Japanese fantasy films and their creators.



Dorsal Notes

continued from pg. 26

and makes it difficult to access the battery compartment. I am planning to modify mine with some build-up that will include velcro as a closure device (as with the real suit).

The action is strictly forward motion, with the hands moving up and down and the head tilting left and right. The traditional roar is also included, powered by odd sized photo batteries for some strange reason.

THE DX

The DX Godzilla looks exactly like MothiGodzi soft vinyl toy issued in '92 by Bandai. The legs have been redesigned to accommodate the built-in servo device. Most of the body is made of the same soft vinyl found in the normal toy line. Powered by two double AA batteries this monster is built for rougher play.

The only action is strong, forward movement as the mouth opens and closes pretty much in sync with the roar.

No assembly is required on this toy. It fits in perfectly with the rest of the Bandai Godzilla (soft vinyl) figure collection. I just wish they'd animate some of the other characters too.

Both toys are about eight inches in height and sell for under forty dollars in Japan. While it's hard to pick a favorite I'd say for display purposes the 'Real Action' Godzilla is the one to pick up. It is completely varied in design from any of the other figures in the Bandai collection, and stands to become the most collectible of the two. However if you want an animatronic Goji that will stand up to greater abuse and doesn't require any assembly than I'd say go for the DX.

Bandai's Super MechaGodzilla MechaGodzilla & Garuda Combination Model Kit

Number 16 in Bandai's Daikaiju plastic kit collection and yen priced below forty dollars this kit is probably the most complicated to assemble of the three MG kits reviewed in this issue. Cast in silver and white styrene plastic, this kit is designed to allow the modeler to choose from three variations of the character as seen in the new film, that is regular MG (standing), the Super MG (w/ Garuda attached) and the flying version of the MG as seen just prior to its encounter with Godzilla at Susaka. The kit is also highly articulated. In addition the Garuda can be built as a stand alone for use in a diorama type build-up.

I've always enjoyed collecting this line of kits and in their last few releases (including this one) they've shown far greater attention to detail than was apparent in the earlier kits. Of course the price has gone up in the meantime. This kit is very affordable for the collector who is wary of the higher prices commanded by soft vinyl and resin kits. The way of American distributors jacking the price up on this one however. The scale is listed at

1/600 and the figure would display nicely alongside number 15 in the series (the Godzilla kit which is adaptable between the '54 and '92 versions).

More Mecha-Kits

Of all the Mecha Godzilla models currently available the Kaiyodo is the most unique, mainly due to its sleek action pose that bears little similarity to anything seen in the film. Sculpted by Taku Sato in 1/400th scale, I gather the kit results in Japan for in the neighborhood of forty bucks. It may also be available in resin for about 3x that price.

It's easy to put together (in fact because of the 'artificial life' nature of this piloted dai robo most of these kits are simple to build. You don't have to worry about concealing seam lines as much). I like the way this kit looks (sort of) but I wouldn't recommend it for anyone desiring an accurate replica of the title character from the film.

Tsukuda Hobby has created both a Godzilla and Mecha Godzilla soft vinyl kit in the 1/300th scale (about 12" and 14" respectively). Both kits are very simple to assemble and come with some factory detailing already applied. For example the MG has already been painted silver, and the Godzilla has very realistic plastic eyes and a detailed mouth (which opens).

The Mecha Godzilla kit was sculpted by Tatsumi Chijima and looks very accurate to the film version. It is composed of eight snap together sections, glue is only required for the dorsal portion.

Tsukuda's Godzilla '93 kit was sculpted by Takaji Yamada. Simple to build with only minor putty work required. The stance is not especially different from the usual mode but does accurately convey the character as seen in the film. The plastic eyes add a lot to the character's dynamic.

Selling for around \$70 in Japan both kits are great stand alone figures.

Tsukuda Hobby will next release a Fire Rodan figure, to scale with the others, sometime later this Spring. In the near future they will also be coming out with (my favorite) the MothiGodzi '64. Thanks to Bob Marshall for info on Tsukuda's Godzilla and MG kits.

Bandai Checklist Review by Bill Stanton

I've been shopping for Bandai poseable figures since I was old enough to talk, and recently there has been an abundance of new issues that far outclasses the older plastic figures of the past. Needless to say, I've had my hands full trying to collect them all, and while many of the new series have been of great quality, there are still a few below average figures that people ordering sight unseen might want to watch out for. So, I thought a simplistic list and rating of many of the currently available figures would help out the obsessed kaiju toy collectors like myself to sort the poor from the amazing. Here goes, and many gomen nasai's for any omissions I've made...

BIO-GODZILLA (A) The Biollante style Godzilla, which was carried over for GJIRA VS. KING GIDORA. A great rendering of the Bio-G, possibly the best small-scale (9") version

yet made. The jet-black is a little excessive, and masks the great detail a little hard to see, but the minimalist use of paint only serves to make the figure look more realistic. Even the silver paint on the dorsal line can be forgiven.

BIO-GODZILLA (A) The big-scale version of the aforementioned style. A giant high-quality (20") figure with the same glossy black look, but much more detail. The mouth is a little off, but it really makes heads turn at the office! Comes in an awesome (duh!) huge box with giant Godzilla image.

KING GHIDRAH (B+) Pretty good, but could have been better. This mid-scale (approx. 9") version could have had better head positioning, or more articulation in the necks. The sculpt is good, though. Would have been impressive with gold paint or a brighter gold metallic vinyl. Still the best Ghidrah small figure yet, though. Not as nice as the recently re-issued Great King Ghidrah.

KING GHIDRAH (B+) Higger is usually better, and this larger version of the above figure benefits from increased detail but still suffers from the same color and articulation problems.

MECHA GHIDRAH (B-) Same again in mid-scale except the metallic parts should have been more metallic color, not unpainted gray vinyl. Still good.

MECHA GHIDRAH (A) OK, same as big Ghidrah but now the mecha stuff just makes this large figure very, very cool looking. (Cliche description, but it is. A definite "must" for Bandai collectors. Why don't I have one yet?

MOTHRA (B) I larva, mid-scale version of the 1963 style. Nice paint, great detail. A bit on the small side (about 6" long) and a little out of scale with the new Godzilla.

MOTHRA (B+) I larva, mid-scale but new 1992 style. Higger and more impressive than the 1963 version, with bright (non-metallic) paint that still looks good. Definitely different than the older style and more to scale with the Bio and Mecha Godzilla toys.

MOTHRA (A) Adult, large size (wingspan about one foot). The use of crushed velvet on the body to simulate hair is great, the yellow plastic legs are rather simple but effective and the clear plastic wings with graphics painted on one side are terrific! Super-impressive and comes with its own stand with Cosmos emblem on it. Worth the price of \$40-\$65.

MOTHRA (A) Adult, mid-sized. Smaller, but still crushed velvet and painted plastic wings. The claws are incorporated onto the body but it's still a great figure. Have to hang this one, though. [this is the 'original' Mothra variation]

BATTRA (A+) Adult, large. Spectacular sculpture, some painted clear wings (as adult Mothra, and very effective painting (not perfect but good) make this one of the finest Bandai kaiju figures to date. The stand tops it off.

BATTRA (A) Larva, mid-size. Again, very accurate rendering of the complex original suit. Painting is a little sloppy but accurate in hues (although metallic). An impressive figure.

MEGALON (B) Excellent sculpt, rotten paint. Plastic is green and shouldn't have been. The gold eyes and big silver drill-claws save the day and make it a good figure overall.

GIGAN (D-) Fair paint, but this doesn't look a whole lot like the Gigan I know. Too skinny, proportions are way off. Outstanding since the original is so impressive. Should have been much better.

HEDORAH (B-) This is really a C rating, but since I like the idea I'll hedge. Good paint (except the sporadic spraying of yellow and red) and a great sculpt. They tried to do the eyes with clear plastic lenses and red painted irises printed on paper inserts. That didn't quite work out, but it's a novelty. I'm a sucker for big shiny monsters, I suppose.

KING KONG (A+) Amazing. Bandai took the worst costume produced for a Godzilla film and made it one of the better figures of their line. Flat finish paint and hyper-detailed hair-fines simulate fur. The teeth are accurately painted and the eyes are gold, making the funny glittering look they had in **KING KONG VS. GODZILLA**. You'll buy it despite the suit.

RODAN (B-) Old style, but better than better and is again the best looking Rodan poseable figure (just the head, really) in the line. The head is a bit too big but the features are very accurate to the first Rodan film (thankfully).

ROOAN (A) New style, in Fire Rodan mode. This Rodan, unlike the above, is in flight with the head pointing up but the feet flat so it can stand. Somehow, Bandai managed to make the flat feet look totally unobtrusive so the illusion of flight is maintained when the figure is held or suspended horizontally. Vinyl color is a great scarlet purple and the paint is good.

MECHAGODZILLA (B) Old style. Great, bright and shiny replica of the original and with good painting. Doesn't jump out and grab you like some of the toys but it's a good one.

MECHAGODZILLA (C) New style, mid-size. The head is too small, and the overall sculpture seems a bit out of proportion. Paint seems good, but the image is lost by the poor feature detail. Impressively articulated, though.

GODZILLA SAURUS (A) A bit on the small size and totally out of proportion to any of the other figures, but an excellent sculpt and replica of the original. Paint is good (sparingly used) and the vinyl is the right color.

BABY GODZILLA (A) Paint on this one is a bit bright and the vinyl is an annoying blue color, but the sculpture is perfection if not an improvement over the original.

MINYA (B) Repulsive, but accurate and interestingly painted.

BIOLLANTE (B) Bad sculpt, fairly poor paint but the big and the floppy rubbery tendrils add a lot to the overall impression. Recommended but pricey.

GIMANTIS S (B+) Another great sculpt but mediocre paint and the vinyl color shouldn't have been so green. The possibility of this one is nil due to wacky leg joints and the front claws interfering.

ANGILAS (B) Newest (there was one in the mid-80's), a little on the rounded side but good posture and sculpt. Notten gold paint sprayed everywhere.

BARAGON (B) Paint almost ruined this one, too.

Too much gold can't mask the superb sculpt here. Easily the best Baragon likeness to date.

...I could go into the Gamera figures, but I think that can wait for later, besides which I haven't seen them all close-up yet. The new Ultraman series figures are beginning to appear as well, and they look pretty good.

KING SEESAR (D) Mediocre sculpture and atrocious paint (all gold) combine to make this a really lackluster and unbelievable figure.

MOSU GOOZILLA (C) Same black vinyl and paint as BIO-GODZILLA but the line sculpture is way off. The mouth is now open and the eyes are white with black pupils, unlike the original. The arms are a bit wide apart and the teeth should have been better. Definitely not as good as BIO.

MOTHRA (B) Big larval stage, came out after BIOLLANTE. There was a version that was limited edition where the vinyl was very soft and pliable, and was a bit bigger, I believe. This made out of the regular stuff. While it looks a bit weird (flattened), the use of flat finish paint and subtle shading enhances the figure.

GODZILLA (O) Released in the mid-80's, but still currently available. The rendition of the original MGSUTAI TAI GOJIRA is a fairly well sculpted but absolutely cries out to be repainted by a sane person. The flat green vinyl has been attacked with a silver spray can, resulting in a very crude-looking figure with bright silver chest, knees, fins, top of head and palms (I). Unless you intend to repaint it, leave it alone or bury it in a lead-lined coffin.

JET JAGUAR (B) Accurate paint and a pretty good sculpt of a ludicrous character. A bit on the small side and out of scale, but that's a flaw inherent of most of the Bandai line.

KAIJU O C D COLLECTION

Reviewed by Bill Littman

Just received the Kaiju O collection. If anything was ever worth the money, it's this assemblage of musical goodies. There are titles probably no one outside Nagoya has ever heard of but one of the fascinations of listening to these tracks is the well-rounded education it provides on just what types of entertainment the Japanese people had available to them over the past 40+ years. Each disc is divided into subject areas: sci-fi, horror, historical epic, and so forth.

There are lots of overview tracks from the GOJIRA and GAMERA films; material from the Toho and Columbia record series from the late 70s.

There are plenty of musical surprises available from TOMIKENSHI (INVISIBILITY), SWORDSMAN to newly conducted and magnificently recorded T-antennae style selections from G '54, G '91, and G '92.

My own favorite (non-dramatic) track from BUD TO EIKITAI NINGEN (HUMAN) is the wild nightclub jazz piece near the end of the film. On the raw track you can hear the guys shrugging their approval and applauding a wild drum solo.

In addition, there are many tracks from obscure kaidan films; historical spectacles, the vampire films; new tracks from the science/horror

novelty; even tracks from Sato's score for JUIN YUKI OTOKO (HALF HUMAN).

Also included is an eight-inch LO featuring Akira Ikuboku conducting the score for GOJIRA VS. KINGU GHIGORA. The LO, as usual with Japanese pressings, is pristine and what a treat it is to see maestro Ikuboku conducting with such vigor (he's framed just in front of the projection screen as the KINGU-GHIGORA titles are coming on).

Included is a 14-page glossy booklet on every track in the collection. I could go on and on like this for a week and when I finally do get through it all, I'll probably want to start all over again. I'm overwhelmed. The packaging alone makes this a showpiece.

(please see chart on page 15 for prices and stock #)

This just in!

The current Toho production of the fantasy film YAMATA TAKERU, has set a record at the studio's famed tokusatsu department. The Yamata no Orochi (hydra of Yamata) designed for the film is the biggest kaiju ever built at Toho. Measuring over 30 feet in length the original design was created by master Gojira kit sculptor Yaji Sakai. While Sakai's model was a table top version the full on camera design was put together by monster shop craftsman Shunichi Wakana. He designed the current Godzilla film's Fire Rodan, and the previous years Battra Imago.

Last Word

I hope you found something worthwhile in this issue of Kaiju Review. I'd appreciate it if you took time to write in and let me know what you liked (and didn't like) about this issue.

Feedback from readers (good or bad) is essential to the development of this zine. I know the people who the time to contribute would like to know what you thought about it.

The next issue is due sometime in late April. There is plenty of time to submit material for it, be it art work or written. When possible manuscripts are preferred typewritten. As for illustrations they should be produced on a white background. Keep in mind that the darker the lines the easier they are to reproduce.

With the increased interest in Japanese related films and television shows I imagine we'll soon be seeing several other kaiju related fancies on the market. I won't be too surprised to see much of the information found in this volume reprinted (with hyphens!) in other publications. Kaiju Review doesn't own this news, it just brings it to your attention first. Thanks for taking the time to check it out. Next time someone laughs when you say you love Godzilla movies just roll up this issue and hit them in the head with it. There's a lot of us around.



