

# Kaiju Review

VOLUME ONE NUMBER SIX

SUMMER '94

Ultra  
Special  
Issue



The Journal of Japanese Monster Culture



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**Art Credits:** Front Cover by Luis Medero, Keith Aiken, Chris Bradley, Dan Lenehan, Ron Wilber, Back cover by Paul Roche,

Additional writing: Marshall Crist

**Welcome back after a long delay to the latest issue of Kaiju Review.**

**As promised last time this issue is devoted to more than just Godzilla movies as fans from around the world contribute articles on their favorite Japanese superhero characters. I hope you enjoy it!**

**There is currently a wide selection of excellent publications available relating to or specifically dealing with Japanese monster culture. Here's a list for fellow fans to check out of titles I have seen and highly recommend to K.R.'s readership.**

**SENTAI, The Journal of Asian SF and Fantasy;** Published by Ben Dunn of Antarctic Press, this is an excellent guide to both the monster and superhero scene in Japan. \$3.95 an

issue, write to A.P., 7272 Wurzbach, Suite 204, San Antonio, TX 78240 Available at comic book stores.

**Oriental Cinema and Video;** published by Draculina Publishing and edited by Damon Foster, a long time fan favorite, Damon has transformed O.C. into a regularly published nationally distributed compendium on the Asian film scene. A personal favorite of mine, \$3.25 write to O.C. c/o Box 576, Fremont, CA 94537-0576, available at better bookstore chains.

**Asian Trash Cinema:** Published and co-edited by Craig Ledbetter and Tom Weisser, this Asian companion to European Trash Cinema mainly focuses on Hong Kong cinema, but also covers a wide variety of Japanese genre films including kaiju eiga, very professionally laid out, in a digest size, this magazine is most recommended to fans of Asian genre films in general. \$6. an issue, write to Craig Ledbetter, box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325, also available at some national book and magazine chains.

**G-Fan;** Published and edited by J.D. Lees, this publication puts the fan back into fanzine with its original fan art, fan created Godzilla stories, and intense fan speculation about the fictional world of Godzilla films, also featuring news, reviews, and lots of reproductions of Toho ad art. Intended for Godzilla Otaku everywhere, \$3.95 an issue, write to Daikaiju Enterprises, Box 3468, Steinbach, Manitoba, Canada R0A 2A0 Also available at many comic book stores.

**Monster Attack Team;** published by Ed Holland, M.A.T.'s been around for awhile now bringing fans in depth coverage of the superhero scene in Japan as well as Godzilla and related films, very nice layout \$4.50 an issue, write to M.A.T. c/o 311 Jagoe #10, Denton, TX 76201-3841

**Japanese Giants;** Edited by Ed Godziszewski, probably one of the two greatest Godzilla related zines ever created, after a long absence, Ed's back with super detailed coverage of the making of Godzilla vs. Biollante, as well as lots of new coverage on the Japanese monster scene in general, an absolute must have for any serious kaiju fan! \$6.00 for the latest issue, write to Box 357, Wilmette, IL., 60091

**Xenorama;** Published and edited by David McRobie, this is a true fanzine style publication that covers a wide variety of topics including Japanese heroes and monsters, each issue has a special theme (like Submarines in the next one) and is highly enjoyable. \$9. for six issues, write to David at 4540 Maple Ave. #141, La Mesa, CA 91941-6355.

**Japanese Science Fiction and Fantasy and Horror Films;** by Stuart Galbraith IV, Published by McFarland Press, gathering information from a wide variety of sources this book is the only English language compendium of Japanese genre films available today in hard cover. Stuart lists the films both chronologically in the main text and then studio by studio in the Filmography listings at the end. Despite a complete lack of photo references, the book is an essential tool for fans and fan writers everywhere. \$45., write to McFarland & Co. Box 611, Jefferson, N.C. 28640

When writing to these publications for more information it is helpful to include a stamped and self addressed envelope (for J.D.'s Canadian mag. you should include international postal credits). Kaiju Review assumes no responsibility for any of these publications and they are presented here in the interest of furthering communication amongst kaiju fans everywhere.



**K.R. co-editor Dan Reed meets Godzilla himself: Kenpachiro Satsuma**

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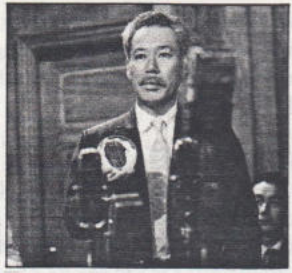




# Kaiju

## Buzz

## Notes



### JAN DE BONT SIGNS TO DIRECT TRISTAR GODZILLA

Ending months of speculation, rumor, and false reports TriStar Pictures topper **Marc Platt** has officially announced that **Jan De Bont** the director of the highly successful action film **Speed**, has been signed to direct the first American Godzilla film, with production slated to begin this Fall.

De Bont who made his directorial debut with the city bus on the loose thriller starring **Keanu Reeves**, was previously best known for his work as a cinematographer; lensing such films as **Die Hard**, **The Hunt For Red October**, **Lethal Weapon III**, and **Basic Instinct**.

De Bont is said to be making \$4 million plus to direct the Godzilla film. Currently under a two year contract to 20th Century Fox, De Bont's next project was thought to be an action film called **Overkill** in development at **Ridley Scott's** production company.

Thanks to the high boxoffice returns of **Speed**, the first time director's cache in Hollywood has increased a thousand fold which resulted in his being offered a wide selection of projects to choose from.

Some of the names that have circulated as possibilities to direct the American Godzilla film included **Tim Burton**, **Joe Dante**, **Sam Rami** and **Alex Cox**. The last having been named by several fanzines as the director thanks to a pervasive rumor that originated with some sources in fandom on the west coast. Most fans

are happy to learn that Burton would not be helming the project due to fears he would camp the Big G. up to the point where it resembled a high tech revision of the Godzilla remembered from the 1970's.

Joe Dante was reportedly offered the film several months ago but passed owing to a lack of confidence in his ability to bring anything new to the character.

The film is scheduled to begin production this Fall with a release date sometime in '95.

### GODZILLA TO BATTLE ALIEN MONSTER IN TRISTAR FILM

As reported two issues ago in Kaiju Review, the plot of the TriStar Godzilla film has many coincidental similarities to a Godzilla mini series in development at **Dark Horse Comics**.

One element of the movie and the comic that has been reported already in K.R. has been confirmed in a recent issue of **Entertainment Weekly**; the film will feature a strong female lead (a **Sigourney Weaver** type). The other significant coincidental factor is that Godzilla will battle an all new alien menace in the upcoming film, something that had also been planned for the comic.

The film's action will take place in both Los Angeles and San Francisco, with sources at TriStar promising the most spectacular giant monster battles ever seen on film.

As previously reported in K.R., **Industrial Light & Magic** has already been contracted to handle the special effects for the film with **Silicone Graphics** (and the Indigo computer that was used to create the digital effects sequences of films like **Jurassic Park**, **The Abyss**, and **T2**) already in developmental pre-production.

Strongly rumored to be the designer of the TriStar Godzilla is effects veteran **Phil Tippett**, whose most

recent giant monster work was on screen in **Jurassic Park**. Now that TriStar has made the official announcement as to its choice of director you can expect to see plenty of mainstream coverage of the production, so if you're planning on doing a scrapbook you better start now.

Production of special effects will be shot at Industrial Light & Magic's northern California Studio, with the bulk of the actual film being shot at Pinewood Studios in England this Fall and Winter.

TriStar Pictures presents : Godzilla

Executive Producers: Barry Osborn and Ian Bryce

Producers : Cary Woods and Rob Fried

Screenwriters : Terry Rossio and Ted Elliot

Director : Jan De Bont

### STEPHEN BISSETTE LAUNCHES NEW DINOSAUR EPIC

Steve Bissette who several years ago penciled the first definitive American Godzilla comic for **Dark Horse** comics, has a new project in the works called **TYRANT**. Described as a "serialized comic book novel" the book deals with the "birth, life, and death of a Tyrannosaurus Rex".

A long time supporter of dinosaurs and giant monsters in general, Steve will be including a regular back up feature in the book called the **Tyrant Media Guide**, that will include regular coverage of the Japanese monster film scene including new book and video releases.

The ashcan edition runs 36 (8"x 11") pages and features some of the most exciting dino graphics I've seen. More fun than a trip to **Jurassic Park**, this series is sure to be a huge hit with Dino fans and giant monster lovers everywhere. The ashcan edition is available still for \$10. ppd from **Spiderbaby Graphics, Box 442, Wilmington VT 05363**.



## NEW KIT MAGAZINE IN THE WORKS

Two of America's leading kit hobby experts have gone forward with plans to create what they hope will be "the definitive source of information for figure kit enthusiasts". Terry Webb and David Fisher will be heading up the publication.

Debuting this September the new magazine is called **Amazing Figure Modeler** and will feature coverage and analysis of the figure kit scene around the globe.

Terry Webb whose long association with the kit scene led to the publication of his ground breaking **Garage Kit that Ate My Wallet** trilogy and David Fisher, probably one of the finest build up artists around today are totally up to the task of bringing collectors the information they need to stay ahead of the ever expanding kit scene. Their combined expertise in this field is second to none making this magazine something resin heads everywhere will not be able to live without. Occasional K.R. writer and my best friend in Las Vegas, Dave Barker will also be on board, providing his expertise in kaiju eiga related kits. Subscriptions to this quarterly publication are \$20. for more info write: A.F.M., Box 30885, Columbus, OH 43230. K.R. also highly recommends Terry's new book **Revenge of the Garage Kit that Ate My Wallet**. (\$20.)

## GODZILLA FESTIVAL SLATED FOR TOKYO

The Sunshine Building in the Ikebukuro section of Tokyo will be the site of a special exhibit of **Godzilla** related props and materials, called the **GOJIRA FESUTIBARU** (Godzilla Festival). Many of the props in the show will be on loan from the collection of Yuji Nishimura (M-1), the author of **Godzilla Toy Museum** (see K.R. #5 for a review). Also assisting with the festival is noted media critic **Osamu Kishikawa**, the author of several books on Godzilla published in Japan as well a regular columnist in several Japanese film and television publications.

The exhibit will be divided into nine sections, five of which will consist of large scale dioramas that will detail the entire history of the Godzilla series:

(1) The first section will focus on the first Godzilla film, as well as the subsequent films of the 60s and 70s. **Hedorah, Ghidrah, Minya, and Rodan** will also be on display.

(2) The second section representing the 80s Godzilla, will feature an impressive centerpiece of **Godzilla** battling **Biollante**.

(3) The third section will cover the current Godzilla films and include **Batta, Mothra, and Mecha King Ghidra**.

(4) Section four will consist of a special exhibit on the special effects techniques pioneered by **Eiji Tsuburaya** and continued by **Koichi Kawakita** for the Godzilla films.

(5) Section five will feature a really large scale (reportedly 20 feet tall) exhibit of the current Godzilla fighting **Rodan** in an urban diorama.

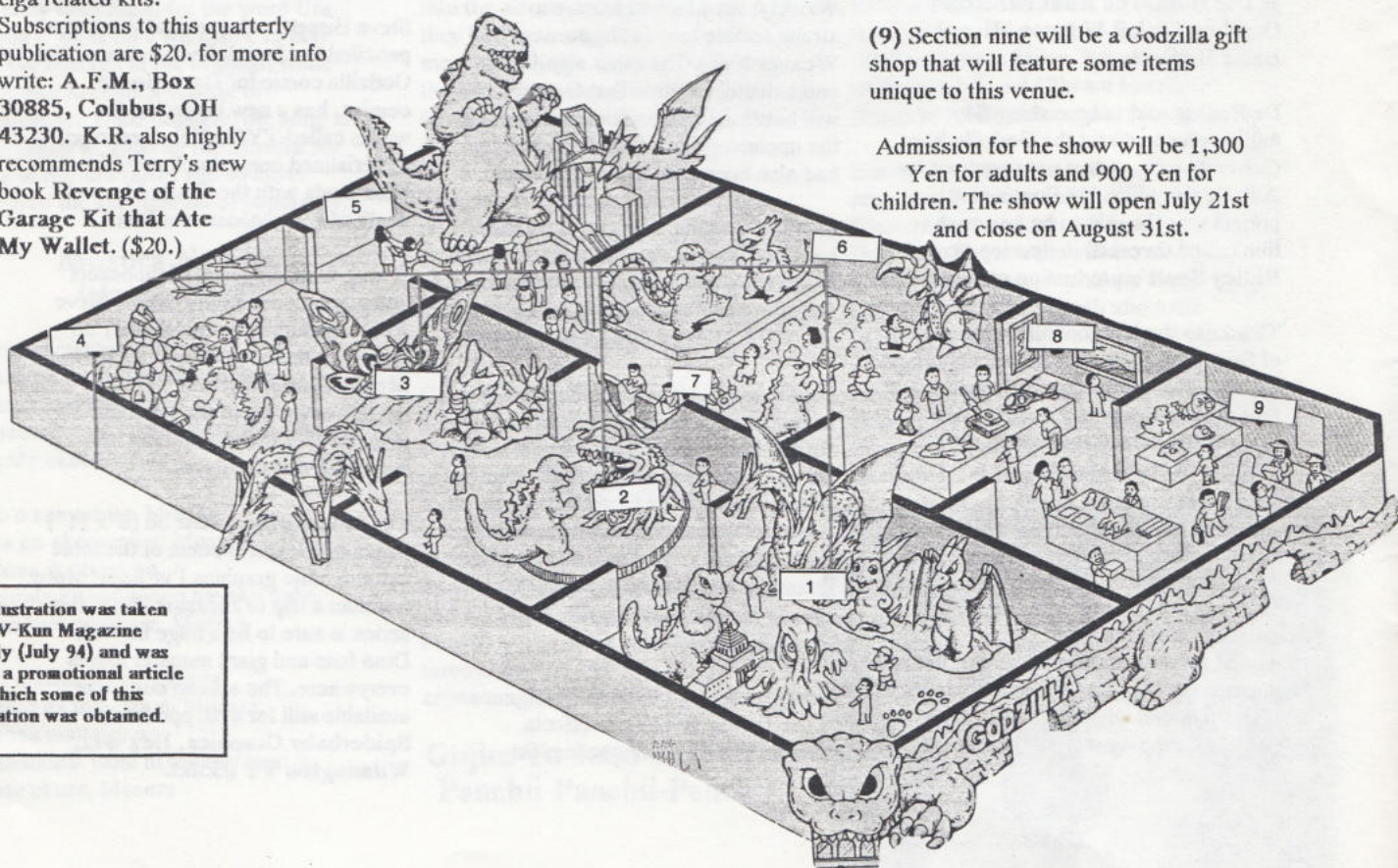
(6) Section six will be a theatre where portions of all twenty Godzilla films will be screened, and live stage shows will be presented.

(7) Section seven is a combination video game parlor and food court.

(8) Section eight will be a true **Gojira Museum** featuring such materials as original props from the films; matte paintings; scripts, movie poster and lobby card promotions, and related goods.

(9) Section nine will be a Godzilla gift shop that will feature some items unique to this venue.

Admission for the show will be 1,300 Yen for adults and 900 Yen for children. The show will open July 21st and close on August 31st.



This illustration was taken from TV-Kun Magazine Monthly (July 94) and was part of a promotional article from which some of this information was obtained.



## STEVE WANG TO DIRECT MORPHIN RANGER FEATURE FILM

Steve Wang the noted effects design specialist who brought the live action *Guyver* to the screen in both *The Guyver*, and *The Guyver: Dark Hero*, has been selected by 20th Century Fox to helm the production of a *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* feature film which will begin shooting this September.

Fox executives were reportedly very impressed with Steve's talents as displayed in the more recent *Guyver* production. With the tremendous Stateside success of the *Power Rangers*, the making of a feature length production seemed inevitable.

Sources indicate that primary production will take place in British Columbia, with most of the post production special effects being handled in California. This represents a departure from the already televised method of re-editing effects sequences shot in Japan with footage of the new American cast. In this case everything will be handled here in the U.S.

The cast will feature the same actors currently seen in the Fox television version. Although details of storyline are unavailable at this time fans can expect the film to cater to the same audience that watches the TV show, in other words a younger one. The film is slated for release in the U.S. sometime next Spring.

## DIRECTOR'S CUT : GODZILLA VS. MECHAGODZILLA CANCELED

Toho Video's plans for a laser disc release of the Director's cut of the last *Godzilla* feature have been cancelled in favor of a special CAV subscription laser release of the film that will include the usual special supplementary disc featuring the usual array of materials : behind the scenes footage; theatrical, and television trailers; cast and crew

interviews; and TV commercial parodies. In addition some of the previously unseen footage cut for the theatrical prints of the film will be available on the special disc, albeit separated from the actual film.

A source in Japan recently informed K.R. of a very interesting subplot that had been included in the original film but was later removed since it was considered too confusing to the core audience of these movies (Japanese children). Remember that *Mecha Godzilla* was constructed out of left over technology from *Mecha King Ghidra*? Well reportedly the MG wasn't the only thing they built out of that salvaged future technology.

If you recall the '91 film (*G. v. K.G.*) there was an amusing *Terminator* style character in the film called the *M11*. Who can forget the amusing special effects involved in that character?

In the original storyline of the last film the Katherine Burger character (part of the M.G. crew, and played by actress *Sherry Sweeney*) was



actually a 'replicant' created by Dr. Asimov with the same left over technology. In the original script this fact was unknown to the rest of the M.G. crew including Capt. Sasaki (*Daijiro Harada*) the the M.G. commander, who in the unseen subplot falls in love with Burger!

Perhaps this goes a long way in explaining why this character was so stiff through much of the film. It is unknown at this time if details of this subplot will be revealed in the special disc. Much of the unused footage that was to be seen consisted of variations on some of the effects sequences, and further character development of Kazuma Aoki (*Masahiro Takashima*) and Azusa Ryoko (*Ryoko Sano*).

This laser disc collection is set for

release in November, followed by a CLV version sometime in December. Expect prices to be about the same as the last three CAV box sets (around \$180. in the U.S.) The video rental version of the film will be available July 8th (catalog number TG 4533R).

## UPDATE : GOJIRA VS. SPACE GOJIRA

Sources indicate that *Koichi Kawakita* the Special Effects director of the last four *Godzilla* films has had some problems with the script *Hiroshi Kashiwabara* turned in for the next film.

Kawakita has reportedly made some major alterations in the screenplay (as related to the effects sequences). Initial plans for *Mothra* to play a larger role in the film have been scrapped by Kawakita in favor of a brief sequence in which the character will be seen in a 'telepathic vision'.

Kawakita has also altered several planned elements of the *Mogera* presentation as originally scripted by Kashiwabara, due to some major design changes in the character.

*Mogera* will now be created by the docking of a special ground based Maser tank with a flying vehicle (currently nick named the *Garuda II* by the effects staff). *Mogera* is actually an English language acronym for : M (obile) O (peration) G (-Force) E (xpert) R (obot) A (ero Type).

While several design elements of the *Space Godzilla* are still subject to change, fans can expect to see what amounts to a *Godzilla* suit with a special crystal like build-up.

Similar to the *Godzilla* suit the *S.G.* will be very dark in color with blue crystal formations replacing the usual dorsals. In addition the creature will sport crystal shoulder blades extensions, and a horn. The crystal nature of the alterations was likened to the type seen in *The Monolith Monsters*, according to one inside source. Various lighting effects (glowing eyes and crystals) will also be included.



The baby Gojira seen in the last film is said to still be 'really cute' but in this film will be half as tall as Godzilla (around 50 meters), and is now called 'Little Gojira'.

Expect to see Little Gojira play at least as big a role in this film as Godzilla, since Toho Executives including Tomoyuki Tanaka have expressed fears that the current Godzilla is just too awesome to support much suspense in its confrontations.

Kenpachiro Satsuma will return as Godzilla, with Ryu Hariken continuing to play the young Gojirasaurus. Wataru Fukuda who played MechaGodzilla (and more recently the Utsu No Ikusagami / Battle God of Space Robot in Yamato Takeru) will play Mogera. It's not known at press time who will double as Space Godzilla.

## LAST MINUTE DESIGN CHANGES MADE IN GAMERA SUIT

Production on the new Gamera film finally started on June 18th. Original plans to start shooting in May suffered a major set back when the chief financial producer of the film Bandai rejected the original design due to complications arising from the casting process of a soft vinyl toy version of the new design.

Originally Gamera possessed a spike like extension (picture the Guyver's elbow blades) on his forearms. Bandai was unsuccessful in its attempts to perfect a mold process capable of including this detail, so they went back to the film makers and requested (ordered) design changes. This reportedly led to some major disagreements with the creative team behind the film's effects designs. However since Bandai is the major investor, they won the argument in the end.

Contrary to reports published elsewhere, this is not a Toho production. The film is being produced under the Daiei name and will be distributed by Toho in the Asian market. Koichi Kawakita has absolutely nothing to do with the

special effects design of this film which (as reported last issue) will be handled by Shinji Higuchi (MEKADROID).

Daiei is making use of some of Toho's Television production facilities (Toho's Bilt Studio where Gridman was filmed).

## TOHO ANNOUNCES LASER DISC RELEASE SCHEDULE FOR 1994

Although these will be the original widescreen Japanese versions this list will feature the more familiar American titles:

August : **Godzilla Vs. the Cosmic Monster, and Terror of MechaGodzilla.** Both of these laser discs will include liner notes by Kaiju Review Editor Dan Reed.

September: **Ghidrah, The Three Headed Monster, Godzilla Versus the Sea Monster, and Destroy All Monsters.** Archivists at Toho have reportedly unearthed some new 16mm documentary footage of the

making of Ghidrah that may end up as part of a supplemental section on that disc, look for D.A.M. to be one of the year's hottest titles.

October : **Monster Zero, Son of Godzilla.**

November : **Godzilla Vs. MechaGodzilla ('93) Special CAV, Latitude Zero, 40th Anniversary Edition Gojira ('54) lots of cool extras!**

December : **Godzilla Vs. MechaGodzilla ('93) CLV version, Atragon.**

Coming soon to video tape : **Submersion of Japan, Espy, Bye Bye Jupiter, and War in Space.**

These titles should be available through American outlets such as **Sight & Sound** [617] 894-8633, or **Ken Crane's Laserdisc Superstore** 1-800-624-3078, as they become available. Japanese domestic prices for standard laser discs are set at 6,000 Y and videos are 5,050 Y. Expect to pay more with import and shipping costs.

## GO BROKE ! (New Kaiju Toys & Kits)

In conjunction with the release of **Ultraman Powered** in Japan, Bandai Japan has released a collection of Ultraman figures called **Sound Battlers**. The set consists of the new **Ultraman Powered** figure, the original **Ultraman**, **Ultra Seven**, and the following kaiju: The new **Red King**, the **Elking** (from **Ultra Seven**), the original **Baltan** and the new **Baltan**. Each figure is about 12" high and features a sophisticated sound chip that's activated via the interplay between figures. This collection also includes something close to a 1 to 1 scale replica of the hand weapon used by the **Ultra Garrison** in **Ultra Seven**, that can also be used to activate the figure's sound chips. These toys are priced around \$30. each (US).

**Tsukuda Hobby** has started a new collection of classic Toho kaiju figures in the 1/160th scale. This makes them perfectly compatible with the N (railroad) scale type buildings and accessories found at most hobby outlets. The first kit in the series is the original **Rodan**. Standing about 30cm with wings extended.

The kit was sculpted by **Takuji Yamada**, and retails for around 5,000Y. Coming up next is a **MothGodzi** kit, 1st version **King Ghidrah**, and 70s favorite: **Gigan**. More will follow.

**Kaiyodo** will soon be releasing two Toho submarine kits in resin cast: The **Alpha Zero** (From **Latitude Zero**), and The **Explorer** (from **King Kong Escapes**). The latter kit will include the hovercraft seen transporting **Capt. Nelson**, **Jiro**, and **Linda** to and from **Mondo Island** for their first encounter with **King Kong**. This kit was sculpted by **Junicai Kanaya** and is scheduled to retail for around 3,000Y. Each kit is in 1/35th scale (about 12" long). The **Alpha Zero** sub will be released in conjunction with **Toho Video's** laser disc release of **Latitude Zero** later this year.

**M-1** has produced a totally cool **Ann Yuri** (from **Ultra Seven**) figure in resin cast. Featuring museum quality detail the kit comes with an actual signature of authenticity from actress **Yuriko Hishimi**.

The kit sells for about \$200. (U.S.)

**M1** has also produced a set of studio quality replicas of the **Ultra Garrison** hand gun, uniform crest pin and wrist worn communication device. This **Tsuburaya** approved collectible will be very limited and sells for around \$550. (U.S.)

Bandai has released a five piece collection of soft vinyl figures based on the film **Yamato Takeru**. The figures include **Utsu No Ikusagami**, the Battle God of Space Robot, **Kumaso-Gami** the lava monster, **Kai Shin** the sea monster, **Amamo Shiratori** the war bird, and the gigantic centerpiece to the collection: **Yamato No Orochi** the hydra of Yamato. The set is up to the same standards seen on recent **Godzilla Collection** releases.

Speaking of which : the latest Bandai classic Toho figure to come on sale in Japan is the mecha kaiju **Mogera** from the film **The Mysterians**, based on the original design ; this soft vinyl figure is a must have for anyone serious about collecting these types of toys. It sells in Japan for just under \$20. (U.S.).



# Kaiju Reviews

## JINZONINGEN KIKAIDA: Perfect Box

Toci Video LSTD01105  
Yen 68,000

Reviewed  
by Greg Chang

To the best of my knowledge, **Kikaida** is the only Japanese superhero from the seventies to garner an article in *TIME* magazine. Of course, this was a reaction to its overwhelming response in Hawaii and the prospects for success in Los Angeles (I guess it didn't catch on.)

**Kikaida** premiered in Hawaii twenty years ago. Today it's an icon from a different era—a defining symbol from the annals of local popular culture. Recent telecasts in Hawaii on pay-per-view cable TV attests to its viability, at least for those of us who grew up watching the show.

In the midst of all this nostalgia it's easy to forget the impact of **Kikaida** in Japan. In 1972, **Shotaro Ishimori** (now **Ishinomori**) was the creator of a number of manga titles. One of his live action shows, **Kamen Rider**, had been on the air for over a year already, and was on its way to becoming a mini-industry.

**Jinzoningen Kikaida** became another major cultural contribution to seventies superhero TV in Japan.

The significance of the show can best be appreciated with this collection of the entire series on laser disc. Released in December 1993, the box set covers all 43 episodes on eleven double sided platters. Each episode has been digitally remastered from negative prints, save for the first one (apparently the original negative source is unavailable), and a monaural digital sound source along with a nearly indistinguishable analog channel.

Twenty episodes of the series were

previously available on VHS and can probably still be found for rent in some Japanese video outlets. Fans with laser disc players, however, would be best advised to invest in this lavish set. Nearly every scene looks fresh and clear, with but a few sprinklings of film scratches to a minor degree. Some parts look decidedly more rough and grainy, particularly scenes with titles (credits, commercial breaks) and SFX overlays (the "change" sequence, fading scene transpositions).

Even with these imperfections, the transfer looks glorious. The color hues are rich and striking and the resolution in most scenes is sparkling, considering that the 16mm film stock wasn't produced for such video projects or even long-term preservation in mind. The digital sound also sounds very good, with nary a scratch or rough spot, and even some bass kick in the background musical numbers.

With an episode running roughly 24 minutes, two episodes are presented on each side in CLV mode. Each episode is presented completely, including the opening title screen, main and end credits, and trailer for the following week's episode. Chapter markers are offered for these items, along with all sequences where Jiro plays his guitar or changes into Kikaida. Each episode includes roughly six to eight chapters.

If anything in life is certain, it is this fact: Japan knows packaging! It's one thing that the items are of excellent quality; that they are housed and presented so opulently makes the entree that much more delectable. All eleven discs have a picture label on each side, and is contained in its own jacket sleeve with identifying photos on each side (some pictures are photo shots taken from trading cards, others appear rare and previously unpublished). All of this is contained in a sturdy, red and blue

glossy box with **KIKAIDA** written in English on the sides with only the stylized kanji/kana spelling out "**Jinzoningen Kikaida**" on the box and the disc sleeves.

Of course it wouldn't be a full-fledged Japanese video release without some extra goodies included in the box. For starters it includes the movie **Tobidasu Jinzoningen Kikaida** ("**Kikaida Flies Out**"), the 33-minute featurette which has four segments in 3-D. Two exact replicas of the 3-D glasses distributed for the film are included, a neat touch.

The film played in Hawaii several times since 1975, the last time in the late 1980's. However, I was never able to access the 3-D effect in the theater; watching it on home video is, unfortunately, just a futile. The bland plot also contributes to what is, by general consensus, the most disappointing **Kikaida** episode ever.

Of course the video transfer of the film, undoubtedly shot on superior film stock, looks richer, cleaner and more confident than the TV episodes (the non-3-D segments, anyway). An original trailer, looking more worn and washed out, precedes the film, replete with marquee-like titles blazing across the screen ("**Jiro! The Young Man with the Red Guitar!**"). And it goes without saying that all of this is letterboxed, approaching the 2.35:1 Cinemascope aspect ratio; the trailer and opening title sequence





aren't as tightly matted, however.

Contained on the first four sides are background musical tracks. The musical numbers are audibly identified by a producer ("M-1", "M-2", etc.), ostensibly during the actual recording sessions. The tracks include the familiar action pieces, themes for the Dark and Hanpei, various versions of Jiro's guitar and Gill's flute, and karaoke-like takes of the opening and closing theme songs. Also offered are an assortment of instrumental numbers (possibly from a completely different show) ranging from generic jazz-pop to a plucky, guitar-driven tune which seems more suited to a 1960's beach party movie rather than a Japanese superhero show.

The success of Kikaida in Hawaii led to stage shows and various appearances long after the series concluded in Japan. One such show, from January 1975, is documented via 8mm film footage probably taken by someone on the production crew. The quality looks like your average home movie from your childhood but is still watchable, although the sound is muffled in places. Highlights include: Daisuke Ban (as Jiro) speaking in English, Daisuke Ban singing, several kids going on stage to demonstrate the "change" routine.

Furthermore, two versions of a commercial (probably aired during the beginning of the series) are offered, selling picture cards (only Y30 apiece!) along with a plastic belt holder. The footage is in surprisingly good shape and the action/product placement well drawn out.

A requisite 12-page, album-sized booklet fills out the package. Although not filled with as many "rare" photos as seen in previously published Kikaida reference books, it does have some interesting material, including: an opening essay by series creator Shotaro Ishinomori; a round table discussion with actors Daisuke Ban and Masahiro Kamiya (Masaru), Executive Producer Susumu Yoshikawa and other crew members; and a narrative by screenwriter Shuukei Nagasaka focusing on Hakaidai.

Excepting more secret treasure hidden in the Toci vaults, this must be regarded as the definitive Kikaida box set. Of course, anything is possible. This collection could have been made even more lavish (not to mention expensive) with a CAV supplemental disc with still frames of behind-the-scenes footage, preproduction design sketches, episode stills... And you could have added maybe Y15,000 to the price tag. And, dang, no subtitles!

## ULTRAMAN VS. MASKED RIDER

Reviewed by Max Della Mora

Produced by Bandai and released in late 1993, **Ultraman vs. Masked Rider** is a 90 minute tribute to the two most popular Japanese TV characters. Oddly enough, while **Ultraman** is quite famous everywhere, (especially after the questionable **Ultraman Great / Ultraman Towards the Future** show which was telecast in the U.S. and even spawned a series of American comics and a new show actually produced in the States: **Ultraman Powered / Ultraman, Ultimate Hero**); **Masked Rider**, better known as **Kamen Rider**, remains a character well-known only in Asian countries (some bizarre Taiwan movies included large portions of the original Japanese TV shows, for example) and constitutes only a "psychotronic" interest in Western countries to a limited number of fans.

A wide and legitimate distribution in the American video market would be necessary in order to acquaint more fans to this interesting series.

Fans would probably most appreciate the more recent **Kamen Rider** films like **Shin Kamen Rider Joshoo / The Real Kamen Rider - Prologue**, **Kamen Rider ZO**

or the new **Kamen Rider J**. These more mature and consistently well made films would no doubt receive a very positive reaction in the U.S.

In any case, **Ultraman** and **Masked Rider** boast the biggest number of sequels: **Ultraman** saw eight follow-ups between 1966 and 1994 (**Ultra 7**, **Return of Ultraman**, **Ultraman Ace**, **Ultraman Taro**, **Ultraman Leo**, **Ultraman 80**, **Ultraman Great** and **Ultraman Powered**), while **Kamen Rider**, since 1971, has produced a long series of adventures based on the human grasshoppers (all created by **Shotaro Ishinomori**): **Masked Rider V3**, **M.R. X**, **M.R. Amazon**, **M.R. Stronger**, **Sky Rider**, **M.R. Super One**, **M.R. Black**, and **Black RX** (plus the previously mentioned three movies).

This special tape demonstrates the substantial differences between the two characters. **Ultraman** is a giant alien being with super powers who fights a variety of gigantic monsters





(mutants, space creatures, dinosaurs, robots). The tone of the series is purely science fiction with lots of space ships, advanced weaponry and super military bases. Masked Rider on the other hand is a mutant human being without special powers, except for his astounding ability in martial arts (incredible jumps and powerful kicks and punches).

In the newer shows, Masked Rider does adapt himself to current trends, for example in **Kamen Rider Black RX** the character is able to transform himself into two other riders: **Bio Rider** and **Robo Rider**.

In addition the tone of the Masked Rider series is quite removed from that of the **Tsuburaya** creation; the episodes are more horror and suspense than science fiction related; with the opposing forces made up of horrible human-monsters created by the mixing of human beings with animals, vegetables, and even inanimate objects.

The video is divided into various chapters. It starts by explaining the genesis of Masked Rider who was initially conceived as **Juji Kamen** (Cross Mask), then **Skull Mask** and **Hopper King** (with the design of the Kamen Rider we all know).

Strangely, the evolution of Ultraman, from **Bemular** to **Redman** on to **Ultraman** isn't explained.

Next, there are several comparisons made between the two characters using stock footage from the respective shows: various weapons (the **Spaceum** beam of **Ultraman** and the **Rider Kick** of **Masked Rider** their most powerful weapons); their transformation sequence styles; the mecha they employ (the spaceships and rockets vs. the motorcycles); the kaiju of **Ultraman** and the **Kaijin** of **Masked Rider**.

Here the tape singles out the most dangerous creatures (the space beings **Baltan**, **Nakkul** and **Hipporito** and compares them to the evil **Rider Bros.** replicas **Shocker Raider**, **Shadow Moon** and **Doras**).

There's also a confrontation between

the "messages" (I would call it moralism) of the two shows.

Humor is sometimes created by a brief editing of scenes from both series including a collection of the most bizarre sounds emitted by the **Rider's kaijin**, stuff like, "Boroboroborooo!"

The special also contains several interviews with **Ultraman's** creative personnel including: **Koji Moritsugu** (aka **Dan Moroboshi** - **Ultra 7**), director **Kazuho Mitsuta** (director of some episodes of **Ultra Q**, **Ultraman** and **Ultra 7**) and **Noboru Tsuburaya** (who seems to enjoy wearing shockingly colored jackets!).

Interviewed for the **Kamen Rider** section are **Hiroshi Miyauchi** (**Kamen Rider V3**) and **Shotaro Ishinomori** (whose name was initially **Ishimori** but, as he felt it would bring him bad luck, he decided to add a "no") and a **Kamen Rider** director I haven't identified.

**Ultra Seven** and **Kamen Rider V3** are indicated to be the most loved characters by Japanese fans.

At the ending, we finally see the direct confrontation between **Ultraman** and **Masked Rider: Super Battle - Urutoruman Vs. Kamen Raidaa**.

Two monsters attack Tokyo, the gigantic **Kodai Kaiju Gadorasu** (Ancient Times Monster **Gadras**) who raises from the ground and the **Kaijin Doku Sariri Otoko** (Poisonous Mutant Man **Crawfish**) a member of the Middle East branch of **Shocker**, the number 1 enemy of **Masked Rider**.

It looks like **Ultraman** and **Masked Raider** are about to win, when suddenly the monsters fuse their bodies, forming one super monster: **Sanrigadorasu / Sanrigadras**.

**Kamen Rider**, in order to help **Ultraman**, becomes a giant (a property which no **Rider Bros.** ever demonstrated until now!). Together, they destroy the monster with a combination of the **Spaceum Beam**

and the **Rider Kick**.

The "Super Battle" is just what the title says, a long 15 minutes of fighting. Well directed, edited, and with good special effects. It is a pity that there isn't a real plot; the short remains a taste of something fans would probably like to see more of in the future.

In addition to **Ultraman Vs. Masked Rider**, two other tapes have been released which contain commemorative specials on the respective characters, with a running time of forty minutes each.

## MAGIC SERPENT

(Something Weird Video)

Reviewed by Marshall Crist

**Something Weird Video** is best known for its hundreds of softcore porn titles from the 1960s, so I was surprised to learn that they also offer my childhood TV favorite, **Magic Serpent** (1966). I have yet to locate a copy of the Japanese version, so for now this will have to do. This is the AIP TV edition, supervised by those Camera perennials, **Emil** and **Eli Haviv**.

In case you've never seen this Toei epic, the plot is sort of similar to the first **Majin** movie. It's a period piece that opens with the overthrow of a feudal lord, **Ogata**, at the hands of **Yukidaijo** and his henchman, **Orakimaru**. The murdered ruler's son, **Ikezukimaru**, then spends the rest of the film trying to reclaim his birthright and avenge his father.

The prologue is great fun, as the young son escapes his burning home, only to be attacked by **Yukidaijo**, who has taken the form of a huge dragon (with roars courtesy of **Godzilla**). He is saved by a giant bird, which tears open the dragon's face.

The credits then play over bloody freeze-frames of the dragon's spurring head! (Incidentally, AIP or Titan Productions made a mistake and listed the credit "Produced by **Shigeru Okada**" twice, consecutively, for your double enjoyment.)



Years later, Ikezukimaru is grown and is being instructed in combat and magic by an Obi Wan-like sage who makes cryptic reference to his previous, fallen student (guess who).

The middle of the film is basically a martial arts adventure, with all the usual posturing and melodrama. The highlight is the scene where the hero's head is cut off by a ninja's boomerang, but his body still defeats the opponent. Then, when blood drips out of the captured ninja's mouth, the severed head observes, "He chewed up his tongue."

Along the way Ikezukimaru meets a young woman, Sonata. (He doesn't realize it's a woman until he accidentally grabs a handful of cleavage.) Sonata is searching for her father, whom she never knew (guess who he is...). She's visited by the image of her grandmother, who gives her a magical spider-shaped hairpin that you just know she'll need in the last reel.

Finally, all the simmering plot lines come to a boil and it's kaiju time. Ikezukimaru turns himself into a giant, horned frog and attacks the castle. Yukidaijo becomes the dragon again and the two battle among some nifty miniatures. Sonata calls on her hairpin and a huge spider appears and webs up the dragon. Both men return to normal and Ikezukimaru defeats Yukidaijo in a sword fight. The happy couple then fly off on the giant bird,

which inexplicably appears again.

The film runs 84 minutes and is followed by 39 minutes of clips from Japanese and Korean pop music performances. The movie is in color and, sadly, not letterboxed.

The score sounds canned, reaching neither emotional highs nor lows, and is reminiscent of that used in several of Daiei's *Gamera* opuses. (I like it though.)

It stars Kiroki Maisukata, Tomoko Ogawa, and Nobuo Kaneko. It was directed by Tetsuya Yamauchi.

Actually, I consider this one of the best non-Toho Japanese monster offerings, far surpassing *Gappa*, *The X From Outer Space* and the like for sheer enjoyability. The twist of having the characters turn into monsters makes them (the monsters) easier to identify with, heightening the drama. Like the *Majin* films, though, most of the screen time is concerned with the struggle of the protagonists against the evil usurpers of feudal power.

Fortunately, much of the potentially tedious material involves magic and some colorful, if unconvincing, effects to keep the viewer interested.

The characters can be difficult to keep track of, so having the film on tape and being able to refer back to portions is an asset.

## GOJIRA GAHOU: THE GODZILLA CHRONICLES

Takeshobo books B-Media Books  
(ISBN 4-88475-267-8 1800 yen)

Book Review by Norman England

Books on Godzilla, how many are out there? Hundreds it seems - but does anyone really know? Loaded with a seemingly endless supply of photos and information, publishers keep churning them out.

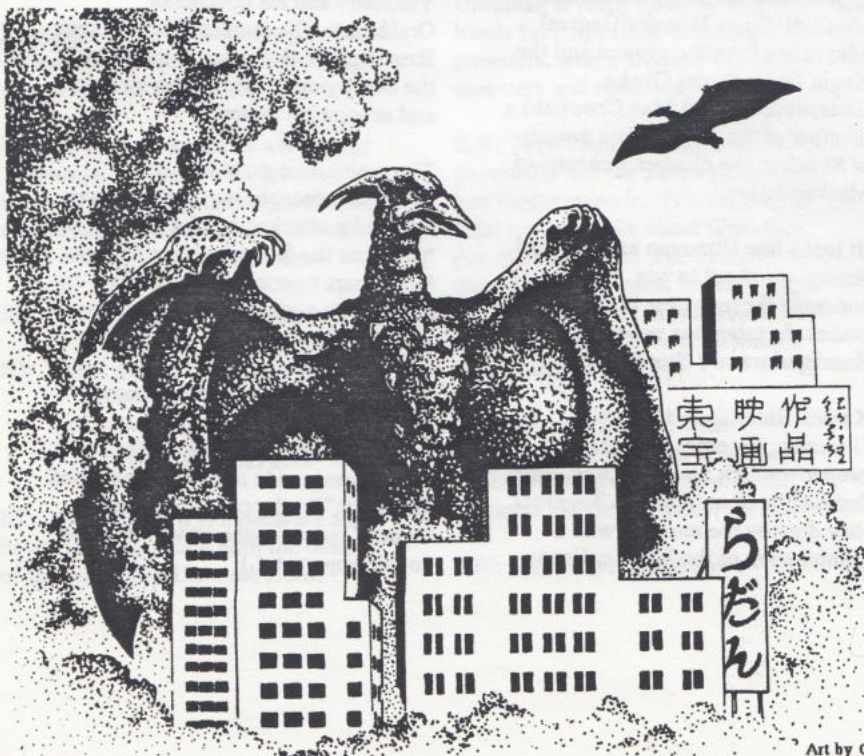
Most are aimed at children with few facts given other than monster names, size, and weight, and lots of pretty color pictures. When an actor is included, their character's name is usually all that is given, thus making them of only limited value as a true reference book.

Released on 12/21/93, the book, "*Gojira Gahou, The Godzilla Chronicles: The History of Toho Fantastic Movies, 1935-1993*" is strictly adult reading, and one of the best, most concise books to date on the history of Toho fantasy films. This is one of those rare Godzilla books that looks at Godzilla (and company) movies by focusing on the human actors. A void that has been crying to be filled for a long time. I came away from this book with a much better sense of the kinds of actors and actresses that have appeared in Godzilla films.

*Gojira Gahou* is like most books of this kind: crammed full of photos and written in Japanese. The first 48 pages of this soft cover book are in color, with b&w pages rounding it off to 224 in total.

It starts with the typical homage to the latest release, in this case *Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla*, and then gives a small profile of every Toho monster. Pretty basic stuff. The book then starts to cover the history of the subject by giving a good selection of posters, magazine ads, record and CD covers that have appeared throughout the 40 years of Godzilla.

After this the reader is treated to a chapter called, "*Gojira Korekushon*



Art by Chris Bradley



SHI" (History of Godzilla Collection) which contains dozens of photos of toys, books, and models. Though not nearly as complete as the book **Godzilla Toy Museum**, it nevertheless gives an accurate feel of the many directions the Godzilla merchandise market took over the years.

Interestingly, the final two color pages have recent photos of the dilapidating original masks of several Godzilla's and King Kong from the collection of **Shin Watanabe**.

After this somewhat hurried history lesson, the book follows in chronological order of release most Toho fantasy genre films starting with the original **Gojira**.

Information such as running time, major credits, original English title and story synopsis are given for each film. Films of lesser notoriety can be found in the index, which lists all Toho fantasy films starting with the 1935 film **Kaguya Hime** and ending with **Gojira vs. MekaGojira**.

Along with this information, many photos from each film appear in a well laid out collage style. And most photos have tidbits of little known, interesting facts under them.

I was surprised to read that **King Kong** had been originally slated to play **Ebirah's** rival in **Godzilla vs. The Sea Monster**.

Also reported is that **Frankenstein Conquers the World** had gone through several intensive rewrites. The film started off as **Frankenstein vs. the Human Vapor**, which then went on to **Frankenstein vs. Godzilla**, until Toho finally settled on **Baragon** as his nemesis.

The book is broken up into chapters of several year "blocks", which follow very accurately the style changes that Toho has gone through.

The human aspect that I spoke of is presented in "bonus columns" which feature profiles of many actors and actresses. It seems that like myself, the authors (this book is a collaboration of many people) are fans

of **Kumi Mizuno** and feature her in three profiles and numerous photos.

Also to its credit is the relaxed atmosphere the book gives off, making it very reader friendly, though on occasion it borders on tongue-in-cheek. For example, I found myself laughing out loud over a caption beneath a photo of Kumi from **War of the Gargantuas** as she's climbing up Mt. Tanigawadake that reads, "Rea byuu no utsukushisa!" (Beautiful rear view shot!).

This book has now become my bible for information on the fantastic film catalog which Toho has given us. Its chronological presentation makes it easy to jump around, and with so much given in such a small book I find it hard to put down after I've picked it up - I always seem to find something new.

I only wish an English translation was available for the many non-Japanese speaking Godzilla enthusiasts out there, though one shouldn't worry too much about that since the book is so well laid out much pertinent information is easily derived. As you can see, I highly recommend this book which hopefully won't vanish soon like most Godzilla books seem to do all too quickly.

Editors Note : As this issue goes to press I have been informed by Norman England that this book has just been withdrawn from circulation in Japan owing to some controversy arising from a photo (on page 167) from the film **Prophecies of Nostradamus** (1974), that shows two post apocalyptic humanoids seen near the end of the film.

This photo (as well as the film itself), was the subject of complaints from a group representing actual victims of real life mercury and radiation poisoning in Japan who deemed the depiction to be in the worst possible taste when considered in the light of actual human tragedy.

Bowing to pressure from this lobby, Toho has requested that the book be withdrawn from sale, and has similarly deleted the actual film from its video catalog. Keep in mind that in

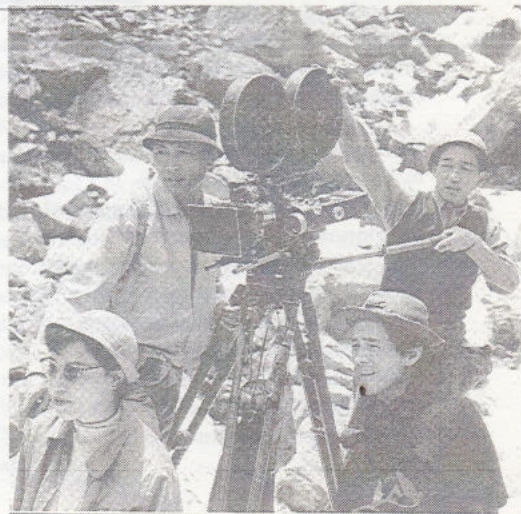
the book's case, this is one small picture among literally thousands found in the book.

A dubbed version of the film, now titled **Catastrophe 1999** is sometimes shown on Turner Network Television, really late at night.

In a related case the 12th episode of the television series **Ultra Seven** was banned forever by **Tsuburaya Productions** after it's first airing because of the same type of objections from a group affiliated with survivors of the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

In Toho's case this is not the first time the company has taken a film out of circulation because of objections from groups within the Japanese community. The original version of **Half Human**, the classic **Jujin Yukiotako / Monster Snowman** (1955) is no longer available in any format from Toho Video because of complaints from representatives of Japan's native culture the Ainu about their portrayal in the film.

A source in Japan advises us that much of the 'profile' type material found in the book is a rehashing studio promotional 'gossip' and should be regarded with that in mind. Never the less for the most bang for your buck in terms of 'look at all them pictures' value, **Godzilla Chronicles** is one of the best books I've seen. Copies may still be available from American based Japanese book stores like **Kinokuniya Books** {212} 765-1461 in New York or **Books Nippon** {310} 604-9701 in California.





## GRIDMAN THE FLOPPY DISK WARRIOR

by Max Della Mora

Fourteen years passed since the last original Tsuburaya creation was introduced into the world of Live Action TV Super Heros, not since 1977 when the Japanese TV screens shined with the images of the show **Kyoryu Dai Senso Aizenbogu** -- Big Dinosaur War Izenborg ( Editor's note: called **Planet of the Dinosaurs** on an American video release) quite an ingenious production, despite some limitations, it mixed cartoon animation with live scenes (the Izenbor hero, the evil monster-dinosaurs) and the usual models.

**Kyoryu Sentai Koscidon** -- Dinosaur Team Koscidon released the the following year, isn't appropriately a super hero's serial while **Ultraman 80** and **Ultraman Great/Ultraman Toward the Stars** aren't new ideas since they do nothing more than add new brothers to the pantheon of the benevolent aliens from Nebula M78.

Personally, I also think that these last two are the worst Tsuburaya productions ever made. Pale copies of the glorious shows of the '60s/'70s era that were marked by excellent special effects; mature, interesting screenplays; and unusual direction that often lead to the most pure delirium (just take a look at some of the **Ultraman Taro** or **Ultraman Leo** episodes).

In April '93 Tsuburaya Production, now under the guidance of **Noboru Tsuburaya**, returns to TV with a fresh approach to an old idea, the new show is **Denko Chojin Guriddoman** -- **Lightning Superman Gridman**. (First broadcast from 4/3/93 - 1/8/94)

(note: 1993 was a good year for



Japanese superheroes since it saw the premier of two other notable shows: the excellent **Tokuso Robot Janpason** -- **Special Search Robot Janperson** which brought new life to the dying genre of the robot policemen after 3 years of disappointments with **Winspector**, **Solbrain** and **Exceedraft**, and the **Gosei Sentai Dairinja** -- **Five Stars Team Dairanger**)

While featuring the standard soap opera like plots common to Japanese hero sagas, **Gridman** introduced

some exciting new monsters, and some interesting new Robots that were patterned after mythical creatures like the Gryphon and Phoenix.

The exciting conflicts play cleverly on the omnipresent computer mania that seems an integral part of Japanese culture, where it seems like there is a computer or video game console set in every home.

The story of **Gridman** is rather like a videogame since the action takes place inside a computer. Sure, a similar concept was already utilized in **Tron** (1984) but the **Lisberger** movie was nothing like this!

Three teenage computer experts, Naoto Sho; Itsuhei Baba; and a girl named Yuka Inoc, have built in the Baba's home basement a super computer which Itsuhei utilized to create advanced computer graphics including a super hero called Gridman.

Meanwhile a rival character, Takeshi Toto, an introverted nerdish computer head, spends his time creating computer viruses that are

introduced in data banks as part of his personal revenge against the world.

But things take a turn for the worse when into the mainframe of Takeshi's computer appears the evil Maoh (King Evil), a black caped figure who gives life to Takeshi's monster shaped viruses in order to conquer the world and leave it entirely under the control of machines. The monsters attack data banks, either destroying them entirely or introducing dangerous modifications that lead to havoc in the



real world.

From the Hyper World comes a hero dedicated to the battle against Maoh. Upon entering Itsuhei's computer the Hyper Agent merges with the boy's cyber creation, bringing Gridman to life.

In order to do this the Hyper Agent needs to tap into a human life force and so donates to Naoto a special bracelet called Acceptor, which permits the boy to dematerialize his body and enter in the Computer World.

Gridman and Naoto, fusing their bodies, become invincible. But Gridman's energy isn't unlimited, after few minutes the Energy Lamp on his head starts to blink perilously (just like Ultraman's Color Timer), which means he has to destroy the monster fast or he will cease to exist.

Since the monsters get harder to fight with every episode, Itsuhei, the real computer genius of the trio, creates new weapons for Gridman to use in order to defeat his enemies. These include: God Zenon, a super robot who was born from the union of Thunder Jed (piloted by Yuka via a joystick in the computer) Twin Driller and God Tank (!); Dynadragon, a robotic dinosaur able to transform into a super bazooka, that when joined to Gridman's body, transforms him into King Gridman.

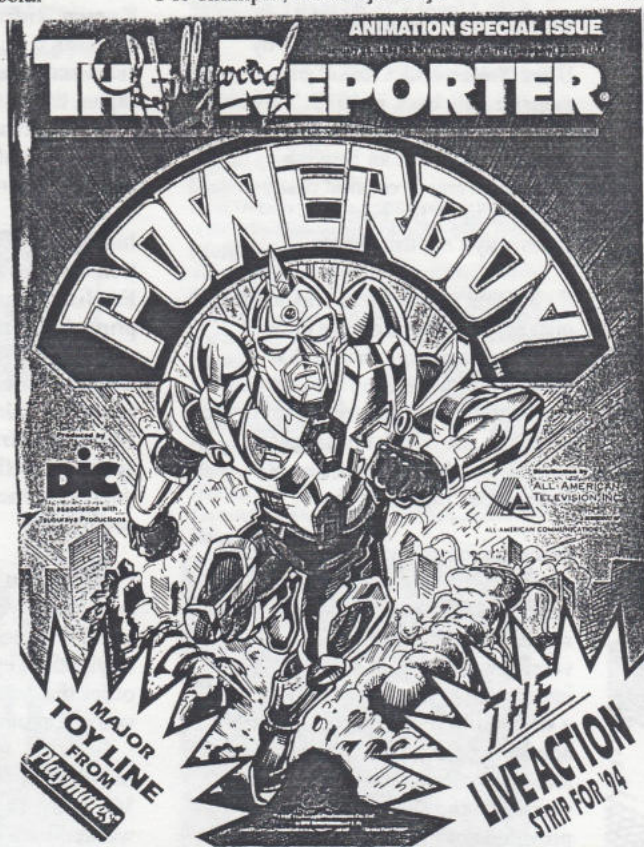
After each battle, having destroyed the kaiju virus with the powerful Grid-Beam, Gridman rebuilds the damaged Computer World, which could as easily be the hard drive inside a microwave oven as the giant data banks of an industrial operation.

Maoh's desire to destroy humanity never ends, each episode features a new challenge to the abilities of the trio in conjunction with Gridman to

maintain order in the computer world.

**Denko Chojin Guriddoman** features an excellently designed super hero, a high-tech computer age version of **Ultraman**. His foes are equally imaginative yet also reminiscent of earlier Tsuburaya productions.

For example, the **Ninja Kaiju**



Tsunobirah, armed with nunchaku is Gridman's version of the Ultra series arch nemesis **Uchu Ninja Seijin Baltan**. Another is the "illusion monster" **Dazuruba**, a really sensational creature.

The sets of the Computer World (built at Toho Studio's television facility, as with the original **Ultraman**) are interesting, with enormous towers of pulsating lights and giant data banks instead of the standard miniature replicas of Tokyo or Osaka.

On a negative side, the show is shot on video (but is aired with a smashing stereo sound) and not on film as TV serials usually are (the

only other serial done on video that I know about is **Denno Kcisatsu Saibaakoppu**, Electric Brain Police Force Cybercop, produced by Toho Planning in 1988).

Also, the screenplays tend to be limited in scope, but, after all, all the action takes place in the limited Computer World. Some episodes are really quite funny, as with the one where a sexy police girl tries to hide

her appearance in a magazine wearing a bathing suit (nothing kinky!) but all the males of the city, including Naoto, Itsuhei and Takeshi, get really horny!

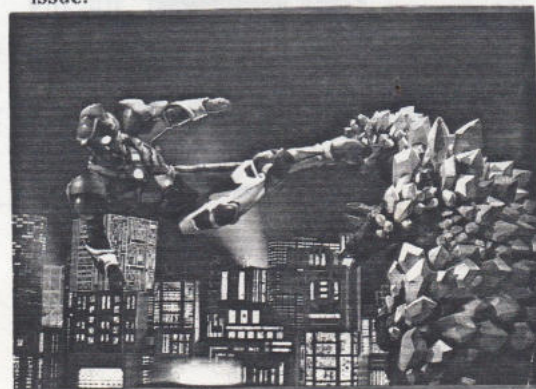
After the big success of **Mighty Morphin Power Rangers**, it's Gridman's turn to be Americanized, and I have my doubts thinking about what American producers may do to the show. Substituting Naoto & co. with obnoxious Yankee kids with fancy dresses.

Let's hope the Maoh kaiju-virus shows up in the editing machine's computer in the U.S.

Editor's Note : The American version will be a D.I.C. co-production with Tsuburaya and will be distributed this Fall by All American Television

Inc. Originally re-titled **Powerboy** for American release, the show is now known as **Superhuman Samurai Syber Squad**. The character of Gridman is now called **Servo**. Toy collectors may have already seen a number of toys based on the show from the company **Playmates** (**Mutant Ninja Turtles**, **Star Trek** etc.) at their local Toys R Us.

More on the American version next issue.





# ULTRA SEVEN IN HAWAII

A LOOK BACK AT THE JAPANESE SUPERHERO BOOM OF THE 1970'S

Editor's note : This text comes from a souvenir program that was sent to me by **Greg Chan** of Honolulu, Hawaii. It was originally distributed during a series of personal appearances in Hawaii made by **Ultra Seven** and a few of his monster pals back in 1975. This tour was part of an effort to promote the local broadcast of an English language version of what many consider to be the best of **Tsuburaya's** Ultra shows.

If you didn't grow up in Hawaii you may not have been aware of the Japanese superhero boom that occurred through the 70's and now seems to be re-emerging again in the 90's with the current broadcast revival of subtitled episodes of **Kikaida** on cable TV there.

Since some readers have expressed displeasure in regard to TNT's editing of the show, as well as the sarcastic nature of the TPS version's dubbing, it's very interesting to consider that years ago a whole different group of English speaking fans were treated to another, perhaps more authentic version of the show, that even provided young fans with the opportunity to meet their hero in person ! That this was confined to such a small (albeit American) locale is all the more fascinating. **Kaiju Review** thanks **Greg Chan** for bringing this to the attention of our readers.

Ultra Seven Souvenir Program  
Hawaiian Tour Edition circa 1975

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the **Ultra Seven** Show!

**Ultra Seven**, as many of you might already know, was created many years ago by **Noboru Tsuburaya**. **Ultra Seven** is scheduled to run in

Hawaii for approximately 49 weeks (two times per week).

The **Ultraman** series was the first to run in Japan, followed by other **superheroes** such as **Kikaida**, **Kamen Rider**, **Diamond Eye**, **Kikaida 0-1**, etc. In merchandise sales and household audience in Japan, the **Ultraman** series is number one! In Hawaii, **Ultra Seven** is rated **tops** over and above any other **superhero** program.

Indeed **Ultra Seven** has set a new trend in Hawaii. An example is by **all-English** magazines that have been printed. **Ultra Seven** magazine has surpassed **Kikaida**, **Kikaida 0-1**, **Kamen Rider**, and **Diamond Eye** magazines almost 100 per cent! Because **Ultra Seven's** specific, space type effect, it has drawn the interest of thousands and thousands of people.

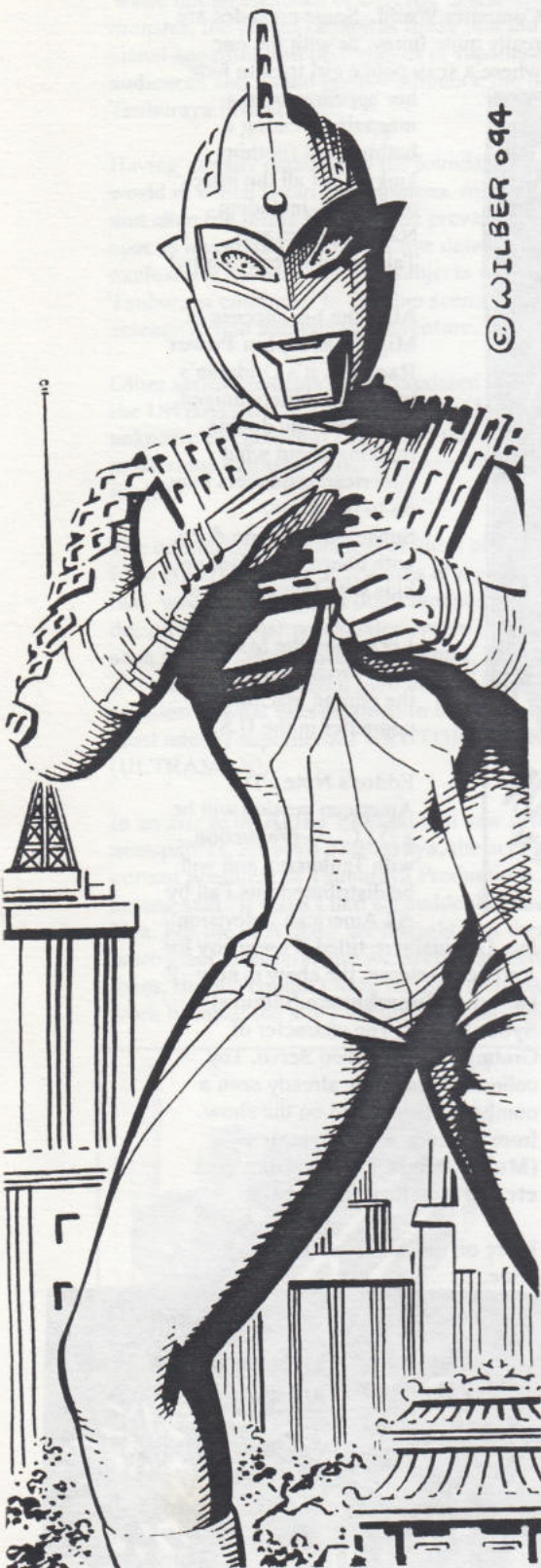
Those of you who are here tonight will enjoy what you are about to see. This production took many, many months of planning by **Noboru Tsuburaya** in order that you will never forget what you are about to see.

In behalf of Mr. **Noboru Tsuburaya**, Mr. **Mike Ikeda**, and those who have worked hard in putting this major production together, we are proud to present to you tonight - the **Mighty Ultra Seven** - in person!

**Noboru Tsuburaya**,  
Creator of the **Ultra Seven**  
series

In the first of the **Ultra Man** series about seven years ago, there were no **superheroes** - only **monsters**! However, the **Tsuburaya** staff got together under the direction of **Noboru Tsuburaya** and felt that a hero was needed to fight off the **monsters** that were in the first series which at that time was called, "**Ultra Q**."

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So a **superhero** was created and that hero was called **Ultraman**. Thus the second series got underway - **Ultra Man!**

Before the series ended (normally a series lasts one year), **Noboru Tsuburaya** created **Ultra Seven** - the mighty **Ultra Seven!** How in the world did they name the **superhero** **Ultra Seven**? Well, at this time this was the third series. **Tsuburaya** thought calling the hero **Ultra Three** didn't sound too good, so he started "**Ultra One**," "**Ultra Two**," "**Ultra Three**," etc. Then it occurred that "**Seven**" - **Ultra Seven** - sounded best. Therefore, the third series was called "**Ultra Seven!**"

### Gumpachi Ono, Top man in Ultra Seven merchandising

Everyone has someone they can depend on. In this case, **Noboru Tsuburaya** works very closely with **Gumpachi Ono**, the right-hand man who has helped **Tsuburaya** empire to grow!

Mr. **Ono** runs the merchandising end in Japan while Mr. **Tsuburaya** works on the production end. **Gumpachi Ono** keeps the **Tsuburaya** empire working like clockwork seeing that everything runs on schedule.

It is due to Mr. **Ono** that success has come to **Tsuburaya Enterprises**.

### Mike Ikeda, Hawaii's local Ultra Seven Coordinator

**Mike Ikeda** presently works for **Tsuburaya Hawaii**. Locally, he is in charge of all promotions on the **Ultra Seven** television program.

Mr. **Ikeda** has been working on prolonging the **Ultra Seven** program in Hawaii and has succeeded! **Ultra Seven** toys and dolls are currently on the market and are experiencing tremendous sales.

Mr. **Ikeda** has organized an **Ultra Seven Fan Club** opened to people of all ages - even adults - and the membership is free. Membership

cards can be obtained free at many merchants throughout Hawaii! Members receive discounts on certain items and are eligible for contests and the like. Only 10,000 membership cards have been printed so to guarantee yourself a membership card make sure you visit one of your favorite retail outlets today!

### Dun, Publisher - Promoter, Superheroes

**Dun** has obtained exclusive rights in Hawaii for publications.

Publications that have covered such **superheroes** as **Kikaida**, **Kamen Rider**, **Kikaida 0-1**, **Ultra Seven**, **Shooting Star**, **Diamond Eye**, and the **Kikaida 0-1 Coloring Book**. The new book features tons of full-colored photos and is entitled "**Kikaida Brothers**." It is a big book released as a **souvenir collector's edition**. It contains letters from the readers, colored photos, coloring section, games, puzzles, powers of the **Kikaida Brothers**, the birth of the **Kikaida Brothers**, a giant **Hakaida** section, photos and write-ups on **Jiro** and **Ichiro**, and many, many more goodies! The **Kikaida Brothers Book** contains 100 gigantic pages, full of action and excitement!

In Hawaii, **Dun Productions** also has the rights on the late superstar, **Bruce Lee**. The objective was to print publications designed and made for Hawaii's audience due to the fact that Hawaii is a special type of audience.

### Profile: Ultra Dubbers

**Priscilla Piano** is 23 and majors in Speech at the University of Hawaii (UH). She voices **Ann's** part in the **Ultra 7** episodes. She is also interested in music.

**Dana Ikeda**, born and raised in Hawaii, graduated from the UH with a Bachelors of Education degree specializing in Speech Communications. She finds the **Ultra 7** dubbing extremely challenging.

**Francis Catalano** has been into theatrics since 1969. Presently he attends the UH and hopes to obtain a M.F.A. degree in Playwrighting.

**Sarah Hunter** is 29 years old. She came from Indiana and now attends the UH. She plays the part of the **Giant 7' Granny Goose**. She has been in theatrics for many years.

### Ultra 7 Hawaii Tour 1975

**Ultra Seven** will be going on a series of personal appearances. The personal appearance starts on July 18th with **Ultra Seven** and four of the popular monsters appearing at Pearl City Shopping Center.

On Friday July 25th **Seven** and the monsters will be at **Gems** in Waipahu; July 26th **Seven** and the monsters will be at **Gems** in Ala Moana and in **Gems** at Kapalama.

On the morning of August 2nd (Saturday) **Seven** will be at the Grand Opening of the new Waimalu Shopping Center and at 1:00PM that same day, **Seven** will be at the Kahala Mall State! **Seven** will also be going to Maui, Hilo, and Kauai for a series of personal appearances. During these times he will be passing out free membership cards to his fans, both young and old.

The **Ultra Seven** personal souvenir coloring book will be on sale only at locations where **Ultra Seven** appears.

### Ultra Seven's Personal Appearances

Presently, **Dun** is handling **Ultra Seven's** personal appearances throughout Hawaii. Unlike the other personal appearances that you might have seen, plans are being made for a unique type of personal appearance by **Ultra Seven** and four of the popular monsters.

Also, during **Ultra Seven's** personal appearances, **Ultra Seven** will be giving away free membership cards to all those who are interested in being an **Ultra Seven** member.



**Ultra Seven** will also be bringing his personal coloring books called "**Ultra Seven - Personal Appearance - Hawaii.**" The coloring book will be available only at **Ultra Seven's** personal appearances.

**Ultra Seven's** appearances will be made on Maui, Kauai, Hilo and in Honolulu.

Watch the newspaper ads for time and store locations.

### Step by Step

(Live show cues)

- 1 - Sound effects - theme music and introductory music.
- 2 - Narrator's introduction to the show.
- 3 - Theme song of **Ultra Seven**.
- 4 - Introduces **Shimon Masato**, singer of the **Ultra Seven** theme song and also **Kikaida**, **Kamen Rider**, **Kikaida 0-1**, and other Superheroes songs.
- 5 - MC asks **Shimon** a few questions.
- 6 - MC introduces **Pochi Pochi**.
- 7 - **Pochi Pochi** calls **Booska** on stage.
- 8 - **Monsters** roar!
- 9 - MC introduces monsters - so many of them!
- 10 - MC introduces the superhero of all superheroes - **Ultra Seven**!
- 11 - **Pochi Pochi** appears once again on stage.
- 12 - Surprise game with the children!
- 13 - Monster attack!
- 14 - **Ultra Seven** appears.
- 15 - **Shimon Masato** comes on stage to sing **Ultra Seven** song.
- 16 - **Pochi Pochi** and **Booska** come back on stage
- 17 - Monsters appear again.
- 18 - Let's promise to meet again!

### Powers of Ultra Seven

1. **Ultra Eye** - by putting on the **Ultra Eye**, **Dan Moroboshi** undergoes the dramatic transfiguration into **Ultra Seven**.
2. **Ultra Beam** - The beam, actually **Emelium ray**, is shot from **Ultra Seven's** forehead, changing itself into head beam or anti-magnetic beam as the occasion demands.
3. **Ability to Fly** - **Ultra Seven** can

boost himself into space like a rocket. In the air, he can fly at an amazing speed of Mach 7, seven times as fast as sound travels through the air.

4. **Ultra Chop** - **Ultra Seven** has smashing power in his arms. A punch with his fist can easily reduce a space ship into scrap.

5. **Ultra Senses** - **Ultra Seven's** senses are unbelievably sharp. He can hear, for instance, a needle drop miles away. His ears also catch sound waves beyond human perceptibility.

6. **Multi-Lingual Ability** - Even when he works as **Ultra Seven**, a space man, he can freely converse with people on the earth in their languages.

7. **Ability To Change His Size** - **Ultra Seven** can adjust his size into any size he wants.

### THE ULTRA SEVEN STORY

He came to make a survey of the earth. When **Seven** first came to earth, he saw a boy, **Rama Jiro**, saving a friend while mountain climbing. He was so moved by the kind-hearted courageous boy, that when he disguised himself into a human being, he took on the soul and image of this boy.

In normal life, he disguises himself as **Dan**, a member of the **Ultra Squad**, which defends the earth. When **Dan** puts on the **Ultra Eye**, he can change into **Ultra Seven**.

**Ultra Seven** has the **Emelume Beam** that's so dangerous that it can smash anything to pieces. When he lowers the voltage of the **Ultra Beam**, he can make his enemy faint.

**Seven** has the **Universe Boomerang** that can cut any enemy into two. It is his most useful weapon and it is controlled by his brain waves.

**Seven** has also the **Wide-Shot**, the most destructive ray beam in the **Universe**. The ray beam can only be used when there's lots of energy.

**Seven** can eject from his whole body 1,000,000 volts of electricity. He can melt the enemy!

From his fingertips he can eject 200,000 degrees of heat.

When **Seven** cannot change himself into **Ultra Seven**, because of reasons concerning his relations with other human beings, or depending on the situation between his enemies - **Capsule Monster** can take his place.

### Vital Statistics

Height: 120 feet  
Weight: 30,000 tons  
Place of Birth: M 78 Nebular

### IN CLOSING

People have often wondered how long the Superheroes trend will continue to last. Many have speculated that the trend is currently declining by the amount of sales that has dropped to some extent.

**Ultra Seven's** audience has grown tremendously since the start of the program a couple of months ago. **Ultra Seven's** household according to the television ratings is the largest of all the superheroes programs including **Kikaida 0-1** and **Kamen Rider**.

In Japan, **Ultra Seven** (or the **Ultraman** series) is considered to be the superhero of all superheroes!

Tonight, you will experience and see the superhero that started the trend in Japan, the superhero that is recognized through sales and television households - **Number One!**





# OUR VISIT TO TOHO

by Diane Reed

I've been to a lot of movie studios during my career, and am pleased to report that the visit to Toho was a refreshing change. There are no theme rides or overpriced souvenir shops on this lot (much to the disappointment of many Godzilla fans, I'm sure!); just as there are no Mercedes, no Armani, no double latte cappuccinos, no cell phones, no golf carts, and no swarm of self-important Hollywood types on the backlot streets or in the commissary. Toho studios isn't about image, it isn't about Hollywood, AHHHHhno! doesn't work here. This is a working movie studio and the people who are here are here to WORK.

Bicycles are the preferred method of transportation, and the only people we saw around the studio were people who looked like they were actually working on a project for the currently filming movie, YAMATO TAKERU.

Our kind and generous host helped make our trip to Tokyo possible, and one of the highlights was definitely the trip to Toho Studios (in fact, we enjoyed it so much, we eagerly accepted the offer to return the next day).

After breakfast in our hotel, we walked through the crowded sidewalks of Ginza, through the hordes of well-dressed shoppers and commuters and into the subway. With military precision, our train arrived on time, the doors lined up to the walkways on the platform, and, as we took our seats on the velvet cushioned benches, the colorful train whisked us through the underground tunnels of Tokyo then emerged with the towers of Shinjuku in the background. The landscape became more residential, with tightly packed homes and village centers rushing past our window. We arrived in Setagaya where we disembarked and began our descent into Toho.

We walked through the small town, past Japanese shops playing American music from the '70s, a Colonel Sanders (complete with lifelike statue), and curving streets lined with bright pink plastic cherry blossoms. The commerce area soon thinned out and disappeared behind us and we were walking through a wealthy residential district with beautiful houses with private driveways, and beautiful flowering trees. The quiet was peaceful; the only sounds were the birds (the ever-present crow) and

our own breathing as we walked along.

Finally we rounded the bend past a fork in the road and arrived at the back gate of Toho (all signage is in Japanese). We stopped at the guard station where we signed in and received our visitors passes. Dan and I instantly looked from the badges to each other with only one thought: *souvenirs!* (We were not allowed to keep them!)

With our passes clipped to our shirts, we went down the street and, finally, we were at Toho!

Here are just a few of the highlights from our two-day studio visit:

One of the first places into which we were invited was the soundstage in which they were filming a scene from YAMATO TAKERU. We followed our host out of the sunshine and found ourselves on the cool, misty surface of the moon (thanks to a little movie magic). The first thing we noticed is that Koichi Kawakita is sitting about five feet away from us, discussing some notes on his clipboard with a crew member. I expect we'll stand quietly by the door and leave as soon as Kawakita discovers us and throws us out! But instead, we are ushered inside to take a center-stage seat

directly behind the camera, which is mounted up high on a crane. Director of Photography Kenichi Eguchi mans the camera.

Situated in the center of the moonscape in front of us is the Yamata No Orchi (the Hydra of Yamata), a giant red and gold hydra. We are watching them film a battle sequence where the camera shoots the point of view of the Utsu No Ikusagami (the Battle God of Space Robot). There are cables and wires all around our feet, and I just hope we won't get swept into the shot when the camera starts to move!

Finally, everyone gets in their places, fresh smoke and mist is fanned onto the hydra, voices call out commands, and suddenly the camera swishes down and swings towards the flailing monster. Loud, bright explosions go off just as the camera is about to crash. Looks like a pretty exciting scene.

As the smell of sulphur from the explosions wafts through the air, a lunch break is called. We go back outside.

Next we're asked if we would like to meet Kawakita. Yeah, we thought about it for a minute but then decided to just have lunch instead. No, I'm kidding. We were brought to what would be the director's bungalow if this was Hollywood, but here in Toho it was a modest low building. Kawakita invited us to join him for some coffee as we sat at his

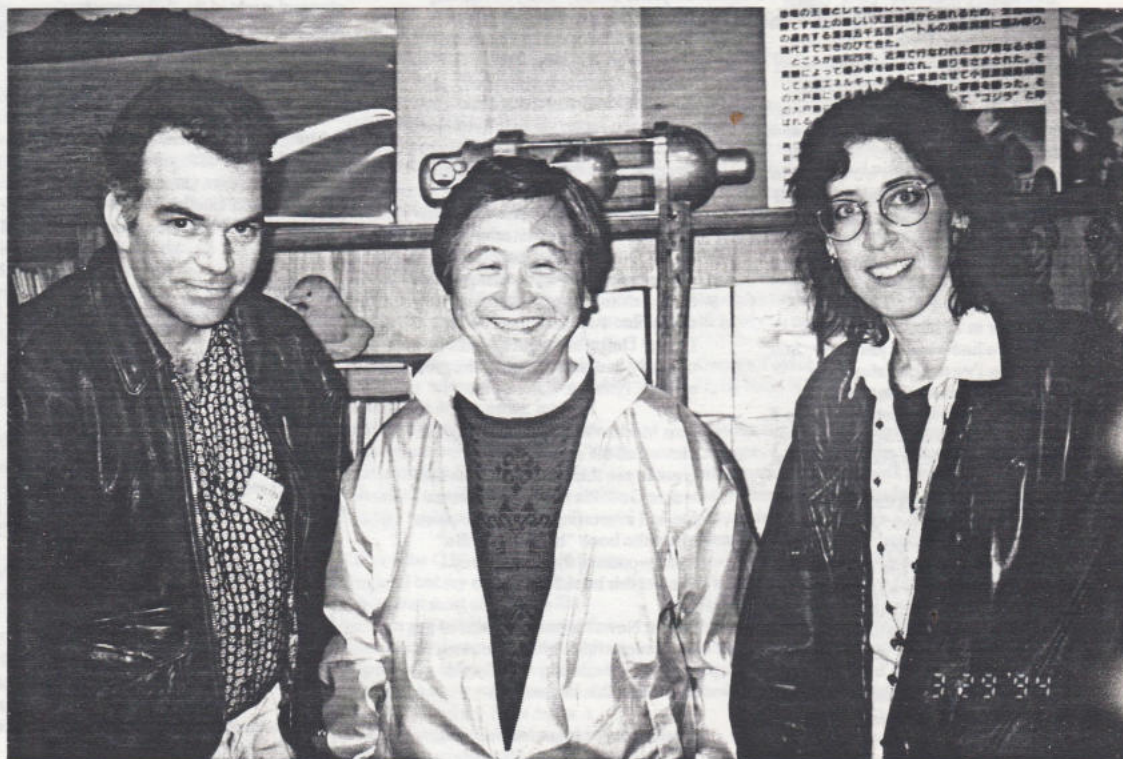
table for a brief chat. We eyed the room, trying to take in and remember which toys, models, books and tapes he had. At a nearby table in the same small room, members of the crew sat around and eyed us curiously.

Dan had made up a special edition of Kaiju Review artwork (containing much of the art you've seen in past issues) and showed it to Mr. Kawakita. He particularly liked Keith Aiken's portrait of Hirata and Ron Wilber's Raymond Burr spread. He seemed to get a kick out of Paul Roche's rendition of a possible poster for the next Godzilla movie (which hadn't even started filming yet!).

Next, Kawakita indicated for us to follow him through a plain, unmarked door and up a narrow flight of wooden steps. Was this where they tortured and killed gaijin fans? There were so many customs and practices to be aware of in Japan, but one of them, I guessed, was that it would be rude to not follow our host. So up the stairs we went until we found ourselves in a small, dark wooden room.

There were boxes stacked up and a shelf full of tapes and books and old programs. A prototype sculpture of Mogera -- a robot which will appear in the next movie -- stood on one shelf next to ones of last year's MechaGodzilla and Baby Gajira. Kawakita showed us around, then offered Dan a polished wooden plaque bearing a

Continued on page 39



Dan Reed, Toho Special Effects Director Koichi Kawakita, and Diane Reed



# Kaiju Komments

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

Dear Dan,

Sorry it has taken me so long to get back to you -- I actually began this letter a month ago.

I thought the Spring issue of KR was great -- though I have to disagree with Mark Schultz: I love the articles on toys, models, and modeling -- and I want to know when this stuff is available so I can go out and get it. I see no reason why stories and reviews of the films shouldn't co-exist peacefully with articles about other aspects of kaiju hobbying.

Regarding Toho's crackdown on unauthorized publications, KR shouldn't have too much to worry about as long as it's a subscription-only fanzine. Twentieth Century Fox went through a similar crackdown on unauthorized Aliens materials several years ago. My impression of their actions seemed to indicate that they didn't care too much -- until the material started to be openly distributed, widely available, and making money for someone. Then Fox wanted their cut. Toho may have a different tact, though.

We license Godzilla through Hank Saperstein's company, UPA, which holds the copyright for Godzilla in the U.S. However, UPA handles only Godzilla, so all of the other monsters and characters have to be licensed from Toho. We discovered years ago that Toho is not very reasonable about the amount they want to license the other monsters -- when we wanted to license Rodan and Mothra, they told us they wanted the same for each of those monsters as what UPA was getting for Godzilla. It didn't seem to matter to them that Godzilla (at that time) had appeared as the title character in 15 films, whereas the other two had been in just a few. Still, one thing I've noticed about film companies is that regimes seem to come and go with great rapidity, so if there are new people in charge now, one might be able to get a better deal.

Finally, a bit of news that will be of interest to KR readers: I still haven't seen a script for the new TriStar Godzilla film, but while doing a trademark search for a Dave Stevens project (Mimi Rodan), our lawyer discovered that Columbia Pictures has filed an "intent to use" trademark registration for Rodan -- which may, or may not, indicate that they have plans for a Rodan movie after the Godzilla film.

Best,

Randy Stradley, Creative Director  
Dark Horse Comics, Inc.

Thanks for the feedback Randy. Kaiju Review is intended mainly for collectors, so I can't expect to please everyone with each issue. I'm glad Mark enjoyed Kaiju Review enough to make use of the name Ameri-Goji to refer to the TriStar Godzilla in a recent article he did for another fanzine. My wife coined this term way back in issue one of K.R. and she's thrilled to see it entering into common usage among fans. The possibility of an American Rodan film is something to think about. I have to wonder however if Columbia (Sony) might already be thinking about the follow up to the first TriStar Godzilla film. I understand that actor Jim Carrey is under consideration to play the part of Rodan.

Dear Dan:

I received Kaiju Review with great surprise. I really enjoyed reading the exciting articles, and in fact I have read the magazine more than 5 times over. My favorites are the ones by you, Norman England, and David Milner. For those of us who can't go to Japan, these articles are most treasured, because it helps us imagine what it must be like to go.

It's great that Kaiju Review knows someone from here that now lives in Japan. Norman England's experience was very exciting in its focus on the Japanese anticipation of the film. And the report on the Digital Dolby surround sound... I can only imagine. Keep up the great articles, Norman. Thank you.

Luis Medero's centerfold was great. I loved all the descriptions. It's great to see this sort of research as it makes Godzilla fandom even more fun and interesting. I'm very curious about the book "Inside Godzilla" and I wonder if there's any way I can get this book?

"Kaiju News" is probably one of the most interesting parts of the zine. I really appreciated your effort in collecting this information.

Thank you for your detailed review of Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla.

One thing I'd like to mention is that, although the latest Godzilla looks good, it is my least favorite suit of the new series. The problem I have with it is mostly in the legs and the torso. The torso looks shorter and has more of a belly on it, and where the legs attach looks odd. The legs don't have the detail that the Mothra one had (which I consider the best suit of the new series). The Biollante suit is my next favorite.

I look forward to the next Kaiju Review. Thank you Dan, so very much.

Sincerely, your friend,

Paul Roche  
San Antonio, TX

It's great to hear from you Paul and I know everyone you mentioned appreciates your feedback. I thought the new Godzilla looked a bit bulky in the butt as well, however I thought Satsuma's acting in this film was the best ever (since '85) and that added to Kawakita's outstanding effects photography makes the last suit my favorite, with former personal champ BioGodzi taking second on my list as well.

Dear Dan:

I really loved my first issue of the Review. Quite a quality rag. My favorite part was in the letters section where you responded to Robert Dwyer's list, ranking physical might of the Toho monsters. After his exhaustive list, you wrote, "Yeah, but Superman beats them all", the famous line from Godzilla vs. the Smog Monster. That line has to be the single greatest piece of dubbing I've ever seen. I've been curious for ages as to what the Japanese line was, since it simply has to be phonetically close to the English. Also, what is the translation of that line?

Yours truly,

Tom Franck  
Hollywood, CA

In the Japanese version after being asked if he really likes Godzilla, the boy (Hiroyuki Kawase) says: "Yes, but I'm not otaku about it or anything."

Dear Dan,

The Spring '94 issue of Kaiju Review was fantastic! So much info was crammed inside, it was impossible to digest in one sitting.

To give some constructive criticism, I found the Bandai Checklist article

to be somewhat unprofessional and characteristic of the types of articles found in "Fan-Boy" publications. The points raised by Mr. Stanton are moot, considering that many kaiju collectors will disagree on the particular merits and flaws of the Bandai line; everyone has his or her favorite figure, regardless of sculpting quality and/or the garish color scheme often selected. (Fans of the older Bandai-produced vinyls will attest to this.) Mr. Stanton is also oblivious to the fact that Godzilla vinyl figures are produced as toys and design considerations are only given to marketing and financial factors -- not whether adult collectors feel a figure is out of scale or not. For example, current retail marketing trends dictate that metallic colors are apt to sell more products to the consumer market. Ever wonder why your Gorosaurus figure is a metallic blue, King Seasar is highlighted in garish gold, or even Kamakiras is an uncharacteristic metallic reddish-brown? Because trend forecasting companies hired by Bandai tell them that this will call attention to their product. Basically, a more informative article would have been to have a more accurate and complete (why were Gorosaurus and Mechani-King not mentioned? These are two of the better figures in the series!) listing of the vinyl series Bandai has produced, as well as details of the many improvements in quality they have made in the last couple of years. I am personally grateful just to be able to collect all these great toys that I was "deprived" of in my childhood -- no matter what anyone says, the U.S. has yet to produce a quality Godzilla product that stands up to the Japanese-produced merchandise. That includes the Shogun Warrior Godzilla, which in my opinion, is a joke. (Hey, thanks for listening!)

Anyway, we are much looking forward to the next issue of Kaiju Review.

Sincerely,

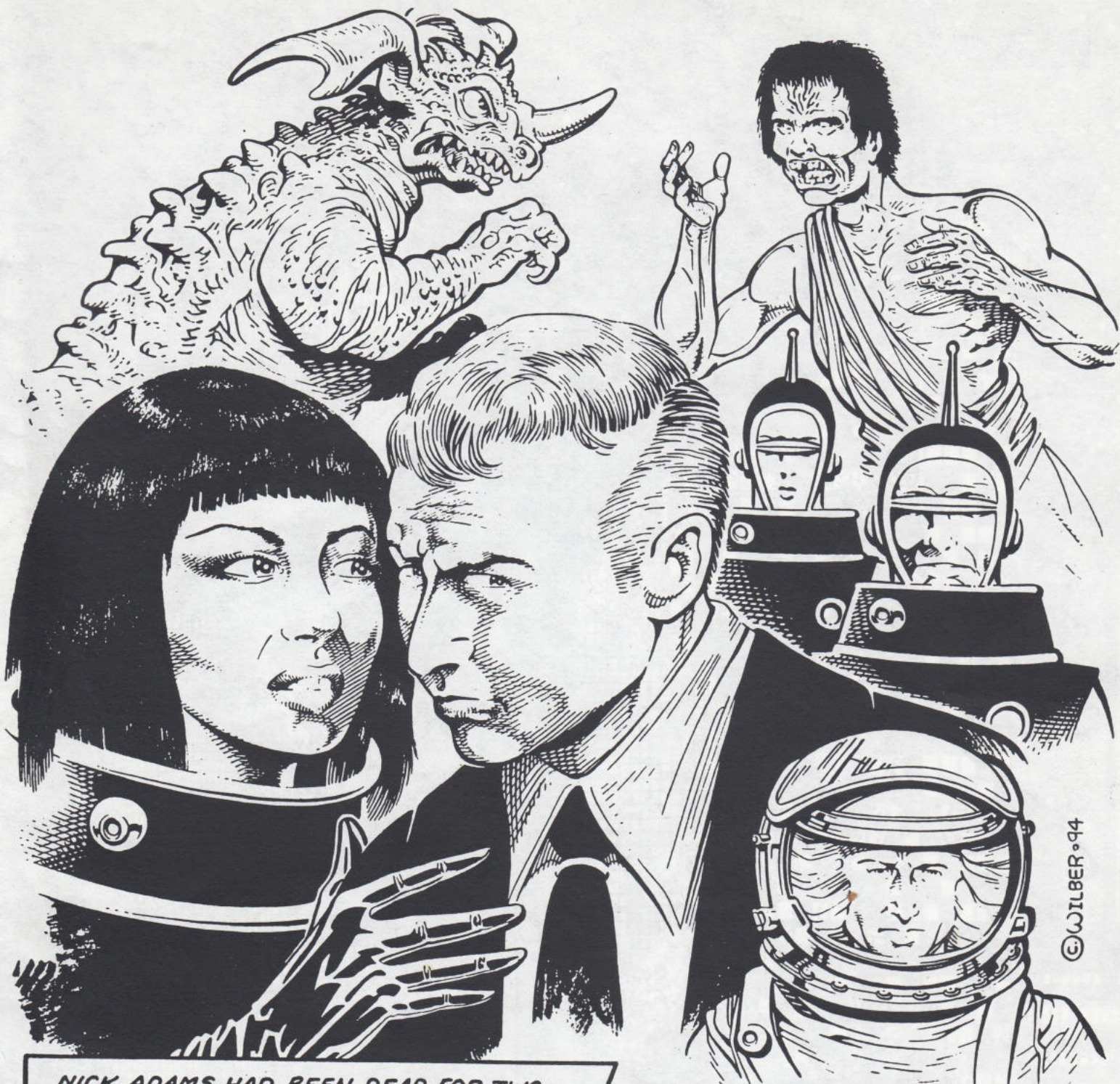
Jim Cironella  
Fort Lee, NJ

Thanks for your thoughts Jim. I think your appellation of 'fan-boy' to describe Mr. Stanton's piece is a bit unfair when you consider that his article was listed as a review (therefore his opinion), and in fact he himself described his Bandai Checklist as 'simplicité' in its preface. I appreciate that this is a subject somewhat closer to your own heart, and would love to see you write a more definitive article on soft vinyl toys for a future issue.

Dear Dan:

I just got my first ever copy of Kaiju Review (#5) a few days ago and I can't believe the amount of information in this thing.





© WILBER 94

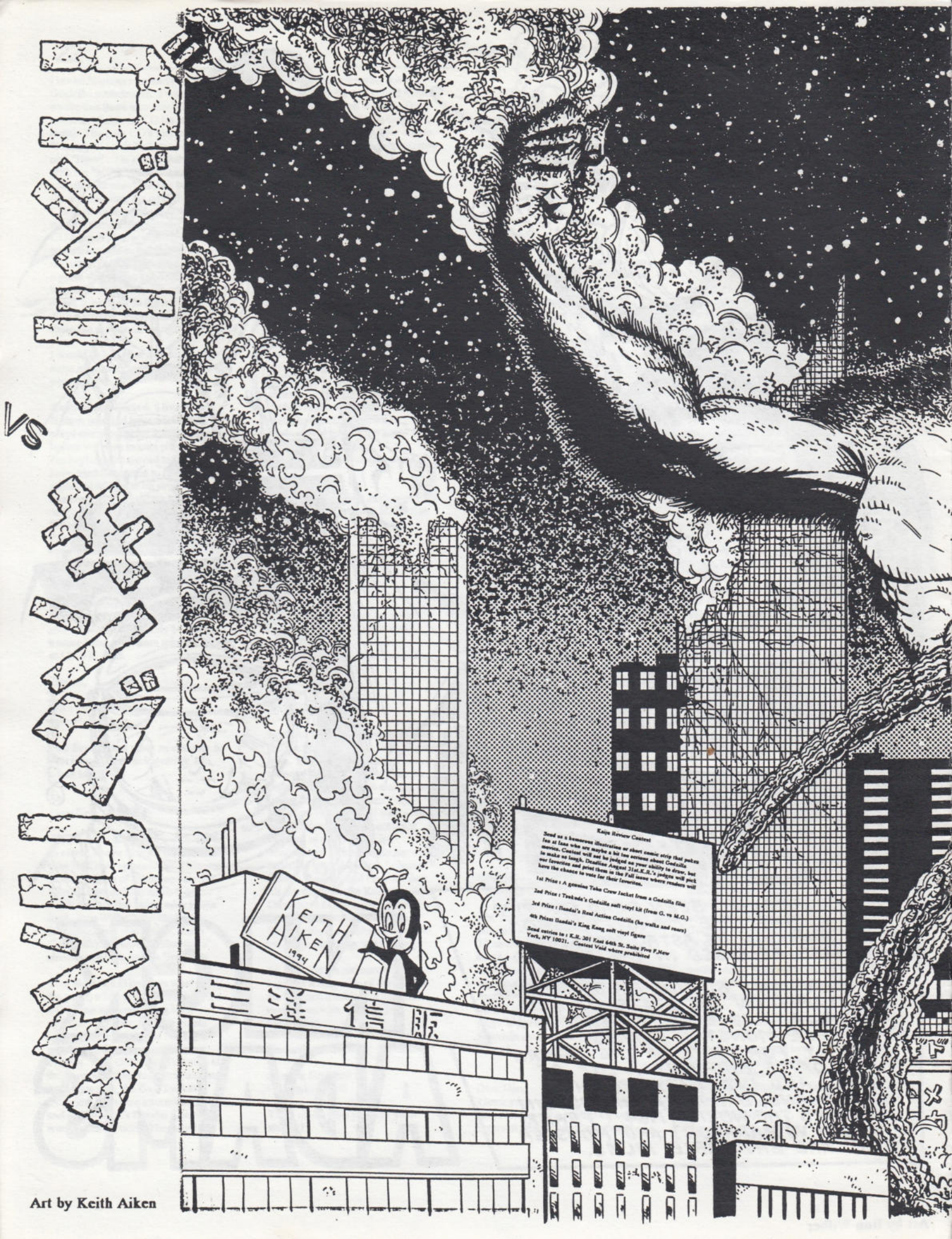
NICK ADAMS HAD BEEN DEAD FOR TWO YEARS BY THE TIME "MONSTER ZERO", 1970, (INVASION OF ASTRO MONSTER, 1966) WAS RELEASED IN THE UNITED STATES.

AN APPARANT SUICIDE HIS DEPRESSION WAS BLAMED ON THE STATE OF HIS CAREER, A "HAS BEEN" APPEARING IN JAPANESE MONSTER MOVIES.

HAPPILY FOR FANS OF THE GENRE NICK ADAMS BROUGHT A LOT OF ENERGY AND INTENSITY TO HIS PERFORMANCES AND "FRANKENSTEIN CONQUERS THE WORLD", 1964 (FRANKENSTEIN VS BARAGON) AND "MONSTER ZERO" ARE ENJOYABLE FILMS.

# NICK ADAMS











I loved Norman England's article on Godzilla soundtracks. I was not aware that there is so much Toho music available on CD (in Japan, at least). The only CD's I have now are "History of Godzilla" two volume set and "Howl". I'm not all that happy with the "HOG" CD's because trailer soundtracks comprise one third of the discs' selections. As a result, these CD's are terribly incomplete from a musical standpoint. Instead of buying CD's I didn't know existed, I've been renting laserdiscs and taping the soundtracks through my stereo. This is a great way to get Toho music because on the Toho laserdiscs the music is isolated on the left channel, with a mixture of music and all dialogue and sfx on the right.

I would like to issue a message (or more accurately, a desperate plea) to your readers:

**Keyboardist Wanted:** I live in the Boston area and have a band that only plays music by Akira Ifukube. Shortly before we were to start playing out, our keyboardist moved to Oregon. I have tried for months to find a replacement, but to no avail. We need someone who can do the low/mid-range orchestral noise present in Ifukube's music, as well as sample thunderous percussion and monster sounds. I would also like to hear from any trumpet players in the Boston area. Other info of dubious relevance: we are in our early/mid-20s, we would operate mainly within the Bos/Prov/NY/DC indie-rock scene, and we would most likely be billed as a noise band. For more info call Mike at 617-646-1728.

Thanks,

Mike Stretton  
Arlington, MA

**I've forwarded your comments to Norman, good luck getting the band together**

Dear Dan,

After reading Kaiju Review #5 cover to cover, I have to say that I like the way K.R. now appears like a fanzine in the tradition of Japanese Fantasy Film Journal and Japanese Giants. Keith Aiken's fine cover adds to this look. Ron Wilber's tribute to Raymond Burr was classy, Stuart Galbraith's excerpt of "Mantango" sheds much light on this "lost" film.

Tom Miller's LD reviews went right to the point, while Norman England's CD listing was something long overdue. With the Akihiko Hirata tribute, the expansion of K.R. into areas other than merchandise is evident. Max Della Mora's listing of the European titles for Godzilla films was enjoyable, the Guy Tucker interview had some interesting points, and Bill Stanton's Bandai Checklist was very analytical. The detailed

inside Godzilla drawing made a good centerfold, and David Milner's travel log was well written. The info on "Gojira vs. Uchu Gojira" is interesting but let's see how it ends up; it certainly sounds more exciting than "Gojira vs. King Kongu"! Your opinions on "Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla" were on the mark while your toy review, the thing that K.R. is best known for, was very informative. I especially liked "Real Action Godzilla Tai DX Godzilla", both the review AND the title.

On the constructive criticism side, the layout was fine but the issue looked a little overcrowded. A third of the material could have been printed in the next issue without diminishing the look of K.R. #5, nor lessening the importance of the later articles. Also, some of your comments on the opening and closing pages came across as questionable and negative, and went against the otherwise professional look of the issue. Of course, this could be a misunderstanding of your sense of humor.

Anyway, happy first anniversary for Kaiju Review, we look forward to your next issue.

Yours truly,

Robert Okama  
Brooklyn, NY

**Well thank you Robert your sense of orokasa in all things kaiju makes you the no waraimono ni naru of fandom.**

Dear Dan,

I collect Toho laserdiscs and found the the Spring '94 issue to be of great help. Because of your magazine, I recently purchased The Mysterians, ordered Gorath and am making calls to find someone who has Yog, Monster From Space. I also made two purchases of compact discs because of the Gojira Eiga Soundtracks article. I also have on order the book Japanese Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Films. All this thanks to the Kaiju Review. On second thought, your magazine is putting me in the poorhouse. Please cancel my subscription! No, no, no, just kidding, just kidding.

I'm sure that it's not easy to put together a magazine of this quality and on such a subject as Japanese monster movies. Thanks for everything.

Sincerely,

Spencer Godshall  
Cinnaminson, NJ

**They make you pay for your stuff !!!!!**

**Last issue I asked if any readers knew about the Hawaiian English language version of Ultra Seven that predated the one seen on TNT recently by nearly 20 years! As someone who grew up on the 50th state, reader Greg Chan remembers :**

Dear Dan :

I find it interesting that you've come across so much information clear across the continent. I wish I had that kind of network. Anyway responding to your inquiries :

Ultra -Seven was, indeed broadcast here in the mid- 1970's. It was shown on the local NBC affiliate here in a kind of syndication deal or something. It's weird how its playing here has only recently popped up as "rumors". The Ultra series never really hooked on with the kids here, not with the kind of voracity that Kikaïda garnered, and such as faded into obscurity despite the local production work that went into the dubbing and so forth.

Even more strange is how people don't remember Ultra Seven despite extensive publicity and documentation. The only surviving evidence in my possession is a souvenir program from a local appearance in 1975. It's faded a bit and I scratched it up in places like a ten year old is apt to do. But in it are some interesting things about the series and, in a specific context about the whole local Japanese superhero craze [in Hawaii].

There are pictures of people that ; A) I never heard of as a kid; B) never cared about as a kid; and C) never heard from again. One individual identified which may pique your interest (it did for me) is this Dun guy. I have no idea who he is how he obtained exclusive rights in Hawaii for all things Japanese, and where he is now--not to mention that the trademark of his name may have expired by now.

Greg Chang  
Honolulu, Hawaii

**For nostalgia so thick you could cut it with a knife turn to page 14 and imagine what it must have been like to be a kaiju crazy ten year old a long time ago in a place not so far away. And for more from Greg Chan on the superhero scene turn to page 9 for his review of Kikaïda on laser disc. Thanks Greg !**

Dear Dan,  
Thank you very much for the last Kaiju Review, the perfect balance between articles, reviews of toys,

videos, CDs and everything that must be in a Godzilla fanzine or that a Godzilla fan must know. Really enjoyed the article about Godzilla soundtracks and the interview with Guy Tucker.

Reading the Guy Tucker interview, I noticed that you seemed unfamiliar with the ESPY movie. I thought it had gotten an American release, but it seems that it didn't. Well it was released in Italy as ESPY MINACCIA EXTRASENSORIAL (Espy Extrasensory Threat), and in Spain as LA GUERRA DE LOS PODERES OCULTOS (War of the Occult Powers). I saw it on TV when I was a kid but I remember very little of it. A friend of mine has a bad TV copy and sooner or later I'll borrow that tape and give it another look.

The info about a sequel of SMOG MONSTER was absolutely interesting especially because HEDORAH is one of my favorite Godzi-movies. Like you I prefer the pre-G-'84 material, I strongly believe that the real Godzilla is the one that appeared in the movies from DESTROY ALL MONSTERS to TERROR OF MECHAGODZILLA. A camp hero, a giant clown in a lizard skin, but that is the Godzilla I love the most!

Max Della Mora  
Milan, Italy

**Personally my favorite Godzilla (of all) is the one in GODZILLA VS. THE THING, but from what I have heard Tim Burton shares your love of the more camp Godzilla seen in the later films. For more from Max, see his reviews of Ultraman vs. Masked Rider and Gridman elsewhere in this issue.**

Kaiju Review,

I thought I was the only one who loved Godzilla. I was wrong, I see there are others out there that are bigger fans than I am. This fanzine is great, I hope it never stops. One thing that disturbed me in an earlier issue Paul Banks wrote in saying "One cannot say 'well I, uh, sorta, um, kinda like, you know, like Godzilla movies' without getting a strange stare." What?! Why can't you? Are you too embarrassed? You are no true Godzilla fan, if you were you would proclaim your dedication to Gojira even if it meant your death would result. I enjoy the strange looks I get from humans; it makes me stronger and more dedicated to Gojira.

Anyway I would like to know 1) What is the best color to use to get Godzilla's claws and toes? 2) Did Akira Ifukube retire or will he host the musical score for Godzilla 6? 3) Is there anyway I can obtain back issue of Kaiju Review? 4) Is Godzilla really 60,000 tons?



What's the best book to learn how to read Japanese symbols? I hope this fanzine lasts forever.

Jim Figurski  
Dearborn Heights, MI

1: I'm not sure Jim, but I'll go along with whatever you decide;  
2: I'm unsure at presstime about Ifukube. 3: Only the 5th issue.; 4: No not really. I recommend the publication MANGAJIN as a great source for fans who want to learn more about reading Japanese, and Japanese pop culture in general, \$30. for 10 issues. Also a good connection for Japanese pen-pals, write to them at Box 7119, Marietta, GA 30065 and tell them K.R. sent you

Dear Dan,

Thanks for Kaiju Review #5. I read it at least 5 times when I first got it and I must say it's one fantastic zine! The articles! The pictures! plus my favorite, the details of Mr. Satsuma inside Godzilla, now I know how Godzilla gets his lifelike movements and how Mr. Satsuma operates the suit!

I've been a fan of Ultraman, Godzilla and others in the Japanese sci-fi genre for over 20 years and still into my crazy hobby as a collector of videos, toys, posters, etc. Ultraman is my favorite subject! I have just about all the Ultra-series!

I've seen clips of the new Godzilla vs. Mecha-Godzilla and must say it's one hell of a movie! I've heard it's going to be out July 1st in Japan on video. I can't wait to see Godzilla kick butt in the film! Why can't these U.S. companies here get off their butts and bring these films to the States?! I know Ultraman is trying to return to the States in a new series. Let's hope something can be done!

You asked me for information about Ultra Seven on TNT so here's an episode guide to the shows which have aired so far on TNT, along with the name of the monster or alien who appeared in that episode. Since many episodes were shown out of order during the brief run of Ultra-Seven, this guide is in order of their numbers. There is no word yet if TNT will finish the rest of the series. There are at least 15 episodes of Ultra-Seven they haven't broadcast yet.

- #1 Enter Dan Moroboshi / Alien: Cool Windon
- #2 Shrubs From Space / Alien: Waiell
- #8 Smokers on the Rampage / Alien: Metron
- #9 Toys in Crisis / Alien: Chibull, Android Maiden
- #10 The Man Next Door / Alien: Icarus
- #13 Space Ace Reunion / Alien: Ayros
- #14 Planets in Conflict, Part 1 / Alien: Pedan and Robot King Joe
- #15 Planets in Conflict, Part 2 / Alien: Pedan and Robot King Joe
- #16 The Eyes Have Had It / Monster:

- Annon
- #17 Cave In / Robot: U-Tom
- #18 The Bells Are Ringing / Alien: Bell, Gumonga, Sultan Plant
- #19 Wayne, Lord of the Universe / Alien: Bado
- #20 The Quake Maker / Alien: Shaplay, Monster Giradoras
- #21 The Nissans Return Engagement / Ironrocks
- #22 The Chromosome Eaters / Alien: Buraco
- #23 The Fugitive Fortune Teller / Alien: Shadow, Gubila
- #24 Mother Knows Best / Alien: Cannon
- #25 Ultra-7 Exposed / Alien: Poll, Gander, Miclas
- #26 The 8,000 Megaton Mistake / Star-Bem Gyeron
- #27 Temporary Traitor / Alien: Vogue
- #28 Death on Wheels / Dino-Tank
- #29 The Apprentice Alien / Alien: Prote
- #30 Trial by Ware / Alien: Platic
- #32 Sharp Shooter Showdown / Alien: Pega
- #33 Island in the Sky / Monster: Rigger
- #34 The Dead Invaders / Shadow Man
- #35 Urban Removal / Monster: Dancan
- #36 Moonstruck / Alien: Zemppa, Petero
- #37 The Devil's Angel / Maya
- #38 The Brave One / Robot: CrazyGon
- #39 Ultra-7 Tastes Defeat, Part 1 / Alien: Guts, Monster Aron
- #40 Ultra-7 Tastes Defeat, Part 2 / Alien: Guts
- #41 Killer Lake / Alien: Tepeto, Monster: Tepeto
- #42 The Boy on the Beach / Nonmalt, Monster: Guyro
- #43 Tyranny by Design / Robot: Commander

If you want TNT to air the rest, let them know! Tell them you want to see the missing episodes with Elking, Nurse, Imitation-Ultra-Seven, and Gorfion among others. Send your letters to:  
**Turner Network Television  
Viewer Mail Department  
1050 Techwood Drive  
Atlanta, GA 30318.**  
Let them know: We want Ultra-Seven back!

Well, have to fly. Keep those issues coming. You've got my support!

SHOOOWAT! (as Ultraman would say)

Lenell Bridges  
Chicago, IL

P.S. If Godzilla likes you, he'll kill you last!

**Thanks Lenell, your help with the Ultraman coverage in this issue is deeply appreciated. I urge fans to follow Lenell's advice and write those letters!**



Art by Ron Wilber

Dan:

I have received my first issue of Kaiju Review and wanted to write to you to let you know my opinion of it. The best word to describe it is INFORMATIVE. I found more information in this one issue of the Review than I have ever seen in all my years as a Godzilla fan (15 to be exact). Fans unfortunate enough not to have a subscription to your Review may not hear about most of this information for one or two years. I called TriStar Pictures to ask about any information they could give me on the progress of their Godzilla movie and they said there wasn't really any information to give out except that it was going into the production stage and it would be coming out but not for a while. Your zine provides fans with specific information and tells them the inside scoop.

I loved the C.D. review by Norman England but my only question is where can most of us Godzilla fanatics get our claws on any of these musical wonders? My only opportunity to buy these is if I find a dealer at a show who has them. I recently asked my Mom to fax a letter to Bandai of America asking them about any possible way to

order Godzilla merchandise directly from Bandai of Japan, since I am sure you are aware of how much dealers charge for them at a show. I am still waiting to hear from them.

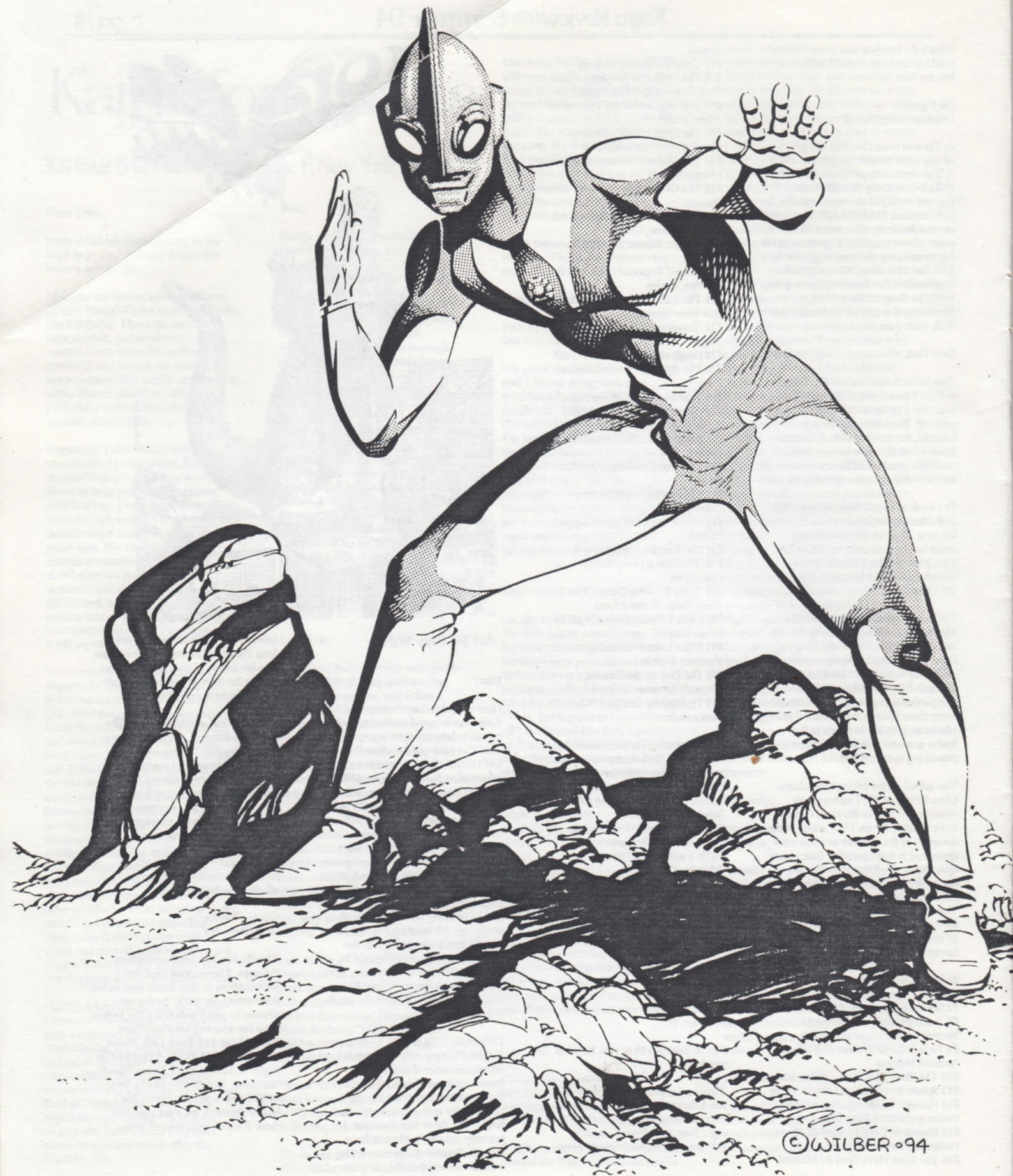
I couldn't find anything I didn't like about the Review. The video game reviews by Bill Stanton and Diane Reed were good, and seeing the Gameboy review made me wish I could fly to Japan and pick up a copy. Overall I would say everyone did a great job, and I hope to see more great information in the Summer edition.

Thank you for putting together a Japanese monster magazine that fans all over can be proud of.

George Taylor  
Hyde Park, NY

**Thanks for the kind comments George, I hope you find the information in this issue somewhat interesting as well. As far as places to get Godzilla CDs (other than fan shows) try Footlight Records at 113 East 12th Street, NY, NY 10003 [212] 533-1572 or Sight & Sound at 27 Jones Road, Waltham, MA 02154 [617] 894-8633 (also a great source for import lasers), be sure and tell them Kaiju Review sent you.**







# An Overview of Tsuburaya Productions

## Part One: The Legend Begins!

by Kevin Grays

Eiji Tsuburaya, the early special photographic effects genius who gave the world *Godzilla*, was also responsible for the creation of one of Japan's most enduring television legacies.

By 1963 he had established the foundation of a special photographic effects facility, geared primarily toward television production that would ultimately become Tsuburaya Productions Co., Ltd.

It was during the period between 1964 and 1965, as audiences were crowding into theatres in order to be awed by Tsuburaya's creations for Toho (in such films as *Uchu Dai Kaiju Dogora / Dogora*, the *Space Monster*, *Furankenshutain Tai Chitei Kaiju Baragon / Frankenstein Conquers the World*, and the fourth, fifth and sixth entries of the *Godzilla* series), that Tsuburaya was putting together a team of the industry's top special effects technicians and science fiction writers, to work under his supervision on an original science fiction television series for Japan's TBS



center : Kenji Sahara, left : Hiroko Sakurai, right : Yasuhiko Saijo

(Tokyo Broadcasting System).

Twenty eight black and white episodes were broadcast on TBS under the title *URUTORA Q / ULTRA Q* from January 2nd to July 3rd, 1966, with a special final episode telecast on December 14th, 1967. The shows featured scenarios that explored territories not always

focused on by Toho or the other film studios of the day. Typically described as a Japanese combination of *Outer Limits* and *The Twilight Zone*, *ULTRA Q* showcased a variety of monsters and bizarre life forms that were often uncovered through the investigation of unusual phenomena.

The cast included **Kenji Sahara**, who had previously been introduced to kaiju fans in his role as Shigeru in Toho's 1956 classic *Sora No Dai Kaiju, Radon / Rodan*. In *ULTRA Q* Sahara played the role of Jun Manjome a pilot for Hoshikawa Aviation, and avowed science fiction enthusiast.

Also featured in the cast of *ULTRA Q* was **Hiroko Sakurai** as Daily News photographer Yuriko Edogawa. Sakurai would go on to become a favorite among Japanese television audiences for her many roles in Tsuburaya productions.

Comic relief was provided by actor **Yasuhiko Saijo** as co-pilot Ippei Togawa.

Many actors familiar to fans of Toho's kaiju eiga would guest star in select

### THE TEAMS OF THE ULTRA-SERIES



Eiji Tsuburaya and the original Ultra Team

Crew logs and notes by Lenell Bridges  
Actor Listings by Hisayuki Isogai

*Ultraman* has been a part of my life for a long time. I've grown up with him since the early '70s when I was a kid. There is something special about the giant superhero of Nebula-M78.

Many fans know that the *Science Patrol* was in the original series and *UMA* was in *Ultraman Towards the Future*, and now *W.I.N.R.* in the upcoming *Ultraman the Ultimate Hero* series. This outline should help many fans finally have an English language reference for the groups that were in each series.

All these groups helped the Ultra-Beings of Nebula M78 protect the earth from giant monsters, alien invaders, and grand scale emergencies! This list covers only the live-action Ultra-shows and does not include the animated versions of *Ultraman*, and *Ultraman the Adventure Begins*.





Ureo Egawa, Hiroko Sakurai, and Kenji Sahara in the Ultra Q episode *Manmosu Furawa*

episodes of the series. These included **Akihiko Hirata** (probably best known from his role as Dr. Serizawa from the original *GOJIRA*) and **Jun Tazaki** (Capt. Shinguji in *Kaitei Gunkan / Atragon*, the Eastern Defense Forces General in *Kingu Kongu Tai Gojira*, and the Morning News Editor in *Mosura Tai Gojira*, to name only a few of his many Toho film roles).

Recurring characters included Yuriko's Editor (**Yoshifumi Tajima**), and the scientific authority Dr. Ichinotani (**Ureo Egawa**).

A number of episodes were directed by Eiji Tsuburaya's eldest son **Hajime Tsuburaya** (including the first three to air), who would go on to become a major talent in Tsuburaya Productions future endeavors.

Classic scenarios for the series were developed by such writers as **Tetsuo Kinjo** (who wrote the second and third entries among others) and **Masahiro Yamada** who listed the popular kaiju Peguila among his many story ideas for the series.

Music for the series was a diverse mixture of eerie arrangements that suggested horror or suspense, to

children's songs instrumentals and march music. The composer was **Kunio Miyauchi** who would later handle the soundtrack for *Godzilla's Revenge*.

While Toho's influence on the series was quite apparent (especially when one became aware of the fact that many of the kaiju who appeared in the series were simply refurbished variations on existing Toho monsters), *ULTRA Q* went beyond the merely derivative to greatly impact and inspire future films and their creations.

In episode four **Manmosu Furawa / Mammoth Flower**, (written by **Kinjo** with **Koji Kajita**, who also directed) the destructive plant mutation Juran is an obvious precursor to the monster featured alongside *Godzilla* in 1989's *Godzilla Vs. Biollante*. This is especially apparent when one compares the sight of Juran's emergence from Tokyo bay by an amazed and frightened crowd on the Tokyo shore in the *ULTRA Q* episode to *Biollante's* discovery in Ashino Lake in the film made more than twenty years later.

Toho's cinematic giant spider Kumonga (known as Spiga by American audiences) introduced in the 1967 film *Kaijuto No Kessen, Gojira No Musuko / Son of Godzilla* was preceded by *ULTRA Q's* 9th episode **Kumo Danshaku / Baron Kumo** written by **Kinjo** and directed by Hajime Tsuburaya, which featured a giant Tarantula, though of a much smaller scale than the Toho Arachnid.

The original designs of various monsters from the *ULTRA Q* television series created by artist/painter **Tohl (Toru) Narita** would become popular trademarks of Tsuburaya's Productions to Japanese television audiences. These included Peguila (the refrigeration monster from episode 5 and 14), the meteorite monster Garamon (from episodes 13 and 16), and Kemur the Alien Abductor (from episode 19).

Some of these characters (or at least their costumes) would reappear in future Tsuburaya television productions.

Many of the story ideas and concepts developed and explored in *ULTRA Q* were new, exciting and even shocking to the early era of Japanese television in which

text continues on page 28

Series: **ULTRA Q** (January 2, 1966-July 3, 1967) 27 episodes

Note: There is no giant hero in this series or a team group. However, there were 3 people who constantly teamed up to destroy the giant monsters and weird aliens using all sorts of man's technology.

Jun Manjome  
(Kenji Sahara)

Ippei Togawa  
(Yasuhiko Nishijo)

Yuriko Ebogawa  
(Hiroko Sakurai)

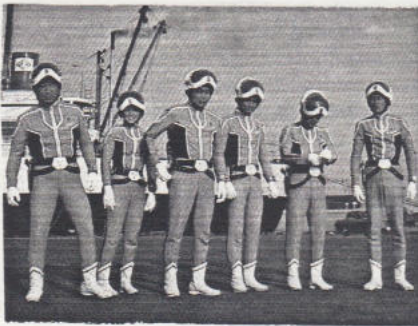


Series: **ULTRAMAN** (July 17, 1966-April 9, 1967) 39 episodes  
Group Name: **The Science Patrol / Science Special Search Party (SSS)**

Group Members:  
Captain (Mura) Muramatsu  
(Shoji Kobahashi)  
Hayata / Ultraman  
(Susumu Kurobe)  
Arashi  
(Ikichi Ishii)  
Akiko Fuji  
(Hiroko Sakurai)  
Hoshino (Fuji's younger brother, honorary member)  
(Akibide Tsuzawa)  
Professor Iwamaoto  
(Akihiko Hirata)







Series: **ULTRA-SEVEN** (October 1, 1967-September 8, 1968) 49 episodes  
Group Name: **The Terrestrial Defense Force (TDF); Ultra Garrison, Ultra Guard, Ultra Squad**

Group Members:  
Captain Kiriya  
(**Shoji Kobahashi**)  
Dan Moroboshi (Ultra-Seven)  
(**Koji Moritsugu**)  
Ann Yuri  
(**Yuriko Hishimi**)  
Furuhashi  
(**Ikichi Ishii**)  
Soga  
(**Nobusuke Achiwa**)  
Amagi  
(**Toshi Furuya**)



Series: **RETURN OF ULTRAMAN** (April 2, 1971-March 31, 1972)  
51 episodes

Group Name: **Monster Attack Team (MAT)**

Group Members:

Captain Katsuchihiro Kato (until episode #22)  
(**Nobuo Tsukamoto**)  
Captain Ryu Ibuki (after episode #22) (**Jun Negami**)  
Hideki Go (Ultraman - Shin/Jack) (**Jiro Dan**)  
Tekeshi Minami  
(**Shunsuke Ikeda**)  
Fumeco Kishida  
(**Ken Nishida**)  
Ipppei Ueno  
(**Mitsui**)  
Yuriko Oka  
(**Mika Katsuragi**)



Series: **ULTRAMAN ACE** (April 7, 1972-March 30, 1973) 52 episodes

Group Name: **Terrible Monster Attacking Crew (TAC)**

Group Members:  
Captain Goro Ryu  
(**Tetsuro**)  
Seiji Hokuto (Ultraman Ace, who is summoned with Yoko Minami by their Ultra-Ring touch) (**Keiji Takamine**)  
Yoko Minami (she is part of Ace's summoning through the Ultra Ring touch, then in episode #28 she gives her ring to Seiji and returns to her real identity as a sister of the moon) (**Mitsuko Hoshi**)  
Ichiro Yamanaga  
(**Shun-ichi Okita**)  
Kozo Yoshimura  
(**Mitsuhiro Sano**)  
Noriko Mikawa  
(**Keiko Nishi**)  
Tsutomu Korno  
(**Masaaki Yamamoto**)



Series: **ULTRAMAN TARO** (April 6, 1973-April 5, 1974) 53 episodes

Group Name: **Zariba of all Territory (ZAT)**

Group Members:

Commander Ryutaro Oshahina  
(**Akira Nagoya**)  
Captain Shuhei Ito Oragaki  
(**Takahiko Higashino**)  
Kotaro Higashi (Ultraman Tarō)  
(**Saburo Shinoda**)  
Tetsuy Kitajima  
(**Hidehiro Tsuyama**)  
Tadeo Nanbaka  
(**Toyoyuki Kimura**)  
Jiro Nishida  
(**Kiyotaka Mitsugi**)  
Izumi Moriyama  
(**Kiyoko Matsutani**)



Series: **ULTRAMAN LEO** (April 12, 1974-March 28, 1975) 51 episodes

Group Name: **Monster Attack Crew (MAC)**

Group Members:  
Captain Dan Moroboshi (Ultra-Seven)  
(**Hirotugu Moritsugu**)  
Gen Otori (Ultraman Leo)  
(**Ryu Manatsu**)  
Ichiro Aoshima  
(**Yuichi Yanagisawa**)  
Akio Kuroda  
(**So Kuroda**)  
Kyohiko Akaishi  
(**Kenji Oshima**)  
Haroko Momoi  
(**Kyoko Shintama**)  
Junko Shirakawa  
(**Micko Mita**)



Note: All five members of the MAC team were killed in episode #40 of Ultraman Leo by the hands of the evil alien Commander Black and his monster Silver Bloome. Only Dan and Gen (Seven and Leo) survived the massacre. Dan finally regained his Ultra-Seven form and returned to M-78 but an enraged Ultraman Leo stayed on Earth vowing to find and destroy the alien to avenge the deaths of the MAC team. He succeeded.



Series: **ULTRAMAN 80** (April 2, 1980-March 25, 1981) 50 episodes

Group Name: **Utility Government Members (U.G.M.)**

Group Members:  
Captain Kasuki Oyama  
(**Hitoshi Nakayama**)  
Chief Junkichi Ito  
(**Masaaki Daimon**)  
Takeshi Yamato (Ultraman 80)  
(**Yatsunori Hasegawa**)  
Tokiko Harada  
(**Daisuke Munon**)  
Hiroshi Tajima  
(**Shuhei Nida**)  
Emi Jono (until episode #43)  
(**Eri Ishida**)  
Yuriko Kosaka (Ultrawoman Yullian, after episode #43)  
(**Noriko Shirasaka**)





they were introduced. They presented ideas about the existence of other worlds and dimensions beyond our own, places where the delicate balance of nature could be upset by man's environmental abuses with disastrous consequences, the possibilities of as yet undiscovered forms of life, and the ever present danger of alien invaders made aware of us by our own attempts at space exploration.

While not all episodes of ULTRA Q featured a giant monster, the higher ratings of those that did indicated the visual appetites and preferences of Japanese television audiences and would greatly influence the future direction of Tsuburaya Productions.

Having already established the foundation of a fictional world in which bizarre phenomena, mysterious mutations, and alien life forms had become prevalent enough to justify special investigation and reactive defense force operations exclusively devoted to these subjects with ULTRA Q, Tsuburaya continued to develop scenarios in this realm of science fiction and fantasy adventure.

Other series concepts which predated ULTRA Q included the UNBALANCE (Tales of unusual occurrences with unknown phenomena) and WOO (stories about a mysterious extraterrestrial phantom life form that comes to Earth).

The continued development of ideas after ULTRA Q went from BEMLAR, the adventures of a giant winged monster that would fight against other monsters on Earth (the design for Bemlar would later evolve into that of the kaiju seen in Nikkatsu's *Daikyoju Gappa*, 1967) to REDMAN, a more anthropomorphized hero design, before the final creation of what was destined to become one of Japan's most adored superheroes URUTORAMAN (ULTRAMAN).

In an article by Akiko Fukami that saw print in U.S. newspapers, Noboru Tsuburaya, the second son of Eiji and current president of Tsuburaya Productions, was quoted as having said "It wasn't like we suddenly came up with the idea. For the next show we thought that there should be more giant monsters, and we needed something to defeat them. But we couldn't have the Self Defense Forces do the work because the story would not fit into the 30 minute time

frame of the show. So we decided to bring someone from outer space and say he can only stay on Earth for three minutes to fight the monsters. In other words if we didn't have the thirty minute time frame, we may have never come up with Ultraman".

The original ULTRAMAN was a revolutionary creation that would spawn a legacy of immeasurable proportions. The concept alone would become the forerunner of an entire genre of superhero programming that would populate Japanese television for decades, creating a cultural sensation that would leave its mark in history.

The ULTRAMAN series premiered in a 7:00-7:30 time slot on the TBS network on July 17th, 1966 and ran with 39 full color episodes until April 9th, 1967.

The now legendary storyline of ULTRAMAN introduced the Ultra visitor as an interstellar law enforcement agent from the galactic system of Nebula M78.

In pursuit of the 'escaped' criminal space monster Bemlar, the chase has led them to Earth, where the M78 officer accidentally collides with the Delta VTOL craft piloted by Officer Hayata of the Science Special Search (SSS) Party (known in the U.S. version as the "Science Patrol").

This first episode was called *Urutora Sakusen Dai Ichi Go / Ultra Strategy No. 1* (or *Hero From the Stars*, as it is known in the U.S.), and was directed by Hajime Tsuburaya and written by Tetsuo Kinjo and Shinichi Sekizawa.

To make amends for the tragic accident, Ultraman, a citizen of the 'Land of Light', uses his power to extend his own life to Hayata, resurrecting the Earthman.

Hayata is given the ability to summon the extraterrestrial hero with the Beta capsule given to him. Sharing the same life, the two become one. In situations of extreme crises Hayata uses the Beta Capsule to initiate the transformation to Ultraman.

However Ultraman can only remain on Earth for a short time before his energy begins to diminish; signaled by the blinking of the Color Timer alarm on his chest.



Series: **ULTRAMAN, TOWARDS THE FUTURE / ULTRAMAN GREAT**  
(January 1992-April 1992) 13 episodes  
Group Name: **Universal Multipurpose Agency (U.M.A.)**

Group Members:

Colonel Arthur Grant  
Ralph Cotterill  
Jack Shindo / Ultraman Great  
Dore Krause / Robert Simper  
Jean Echo  
Gia Carides  
Lloyd Wilder  
Rick Adams  
Kim Shomin.  
Grace Barr  
Charles Morgan.  
Lloyd Morris

Series: **ULTRAMAN, THE ULTIMATE HERO / ULTRAMAN POWERED**  
(1994; dates not known at this time) New series  
Group Name: **Worldwide Investigation Network Response Team (W.I.N.R.)**

Group Members:

Captain Russell Edlund  
Harrison Page  
Kenichi Kai / Ultraman Powered  
Kane Kosugi / Scott Rogers  
Teresa Beck.  
Sandra Guibord  
Julie Young.  
Robyn Bailey  
Rick Saunders  
Rob Roy Fitzgerald



In physical form on Earth, Ultraman is like an astronaut on a distant planet with limited reserves of energy. Extended periods on Earth with its 'alien' environment and distance from the solar energy source of the sun, could result in his death if he exhausts his energy supply in battle.

The classic role of Officer Hayata was brought to life by actor **Susumu Kurobe**, who Toho fans might remember from his comparatively smaller roles as antagonistic henchmen in such films as *Ghidrah*, *the Three Headed Monster*, *King Kong Escapes*, and *Latitude Zero*.

More recently Kurobe has been seen as the elder Aviation Forces Staff Commander in *Godzilla vs. King Ghidra* ('91) and *Godzilla vs. Mothra* ('92).

**Hiroko Sakurai** returned in what may be her most popular character, SSS Communications Specialist Officer **Akiko Fuji**.



**Susumu Kurobe as Hayata**

Fans of the current *Godzilla* series will also recognize actor **Akiji** (aka **Shoji**) **Kobayashi** as SSS Party Captain, Muramatsu, long before his role as the Prime Minister's Cabinet Chambers Security Director in *Godzilla vs. King Ghidra*, and *Godzilla vs. Mothra*.

**Akihiko Hirata** frequently appeared in the series as scientific consultant Dr. Iwamoto and **Susumu Fujita** (whose roles at Toho included General Iwasa in *Dogora*, Gen. Morita in *The Mysterians*, and the Countermeasures Defense Forces Commander in *Godzilla vs. the Thing* ('64) among others), guest starred as the Defense Forces Chief of Staff.

**Shinichi Sekizawa**, who wrote the screenplays for many of Toho's classic kaiju and S.F. eiga epics *Battle in Outer Space*, *Mothra*, *King Kong vs. Godzilla*, *Godzilla vs. the Thing*, etc. contributed to the first episode that would set the premise for the series.

A notable director to have his talents emerge in the show was **Akio Jissoji**. Jissoji's particular use of dark, dramatic lighting and his ability to establish bizarre, compelling moods through his surreal compositions of visual images, have led some to place those episodes of *ULTRAMAN* he directed in a category of their own. These included episodes 14, 15, 22, 23, and 34, and featured (respectively) the kaiju Gamakujira, Gavaddon, Terresdon, Jamila, and Skydon. All of these episodes were written by Mamoru Sasaki.

Jissoji's sequence in episode 34, *Sora No Okurimono / A*

*Gift From the Sky*, where Hayata is in such a rush that he accidentally holds up a spoon before realizing that he has grabbed a dining utensil instead of the Beta Capsule, actually caused a controversy at Tsuburaya Productions about the implications of such a portrayal of the character, and if the scene should be used or not. It was, and the decision to use it remains a topic of interest in retrospect of the classic moments from the series to this day.

For two episodes (12 featuring the Mummy Beastman and the dragon-like Dodongo, and episode 13 featuring Pester the Oil Consumption creature) **Hajime Tsuburaya** would serve as both director and special effects director, simultaneously.

Generally though the special visual effects for most *ULTRAMAN* episodes were handled by **Koichi Takano**, who would have a long career of effects direction at Tsuburaya Productions.

**Kunio Miyauchi** would return to develop the music for this new *ULTRA* series, composing memorable themes (like the classic Science Special Search Party March) that would remain popular with fans long after the initial run of the series. Various re-orchestrations of the music would be heard over the years recorded by everyone from the Tokyo Symphony Orchestra to popular disco and rock versions of the *ULTRAMAN* song.

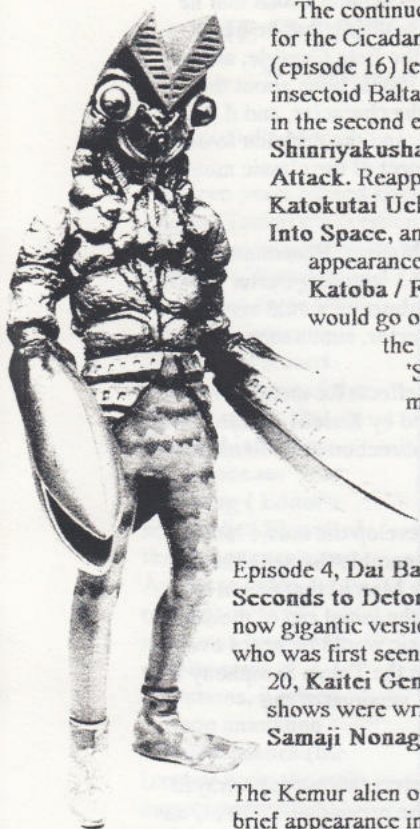
*ULTRAMAN* featured several monsters that were portrayed with basic costume elements from the previous *ULTRA Q* as well as variations on several Toho kaiju creations.

In episode 3, *Katokutai Shutsugeki Seyo / The Special Party's Sortie* the transparent monster, Nelonga is the product of a recombination of the costumes of Toho's Baragon and the monster Pagos from episode 18 of *ULTRA Q*.

This popular body design would see continued alterations and variations to create the uranium eating kaiju; Gobora of episode 9, *Denko-Sekka Sakusen / Operation: Instant Flash* and the briefly seen subterranean monster Maglla of episode 8, *Kaiju Muho Chitai / The Violent Monster Region*.

American fans are probably most familiar with the use of the *Mosura Tai Gojira* G-suit combined with the G-head from the suit used in *Nankai No Daiketto / Godzilla vs. the Sea Monster*, (with the addition of a frill around the neck) to create the monster Jirass (known in the U.S. version as Keyra) for episode 10 *Nazo No Kyoryu Kichi / Enigma of the Dinosaur Base*. Ultraman tears off the frill in the course of their duel setting up what looks like a fight between Japan's two greatest heroes, that climaxes with a rather sad death for the Big G. The Peguila suit from *ULTRA Q* episodes 5 and 14, was also resurrected into Chandler, the monster whose winged arm was torn off by the vicious Red King in episode 8. This episode of Ultraman also featured the basic Garamon costume (from *ULTRA Q* episodes 13 & 16) which is used to portray the friendly little creature Pigmon, who risks its life to help the Special Science Search Party. Pigmon would return in episode 37; *Chisana Eiyu / The Littlest Hero*, and would become a beloved character in Japan.





The continued evolution of the design used for the Cicadaman invader, seen in **ULTRA Q** (episode 16) led to the creation of the similarly insectoid Baltan aliens which were introduced in the second episode of *Ultraman*, **Shinriyakusha O Ute / The Invaders Attack**. Reappearing in episode 16, **Katokutai Uchu He / The Special Party Into Space**, and also making a cameo appearance in episode 33, **Kinjira Reta Katoba / Forbidden Words**, the Baltan would go on to become the arch villains of the *Ultra* series. Also known as the 'Space Ninja', their devious mastery of illusions in their invasion attempts would threaten the Universe throughout the various *Ultra* shows.

Episode 4, **Dai Bakuhatu Go Byomae / Five Seconds to Detonation**, featured the return of a now gigantic version of the sea creature Ragon, who was first seen in *ULTRA Q* episode number 20, **Kaitai Genjin Ragon**. Both of these shows were written (and the UQ directed) by **Samaji Nonagase**.

The Kemur alien of *ULTRA Q* episode 19 made a brief appearance in *Ultraman* episode 33. This suit was later revised for use as the alien Z-Ton agent seen in the final episode (39) **Saraba Urutoraman / Farewell Ultraman**. This was also the episode that introduced the Zoffy character (*Ultraman's* Captain), who would continue to play an important role in the *Ultra* mythos.

Many of the other more original *Ultra* monster designs would fascinate Japanese audiences to the point where they were popular enough to compete with Toho's kaiju characters. Their images would be reproduced in toys, model kits, candy packaging, manga, etc. Such *Ultraman* monsters as Red King (the savage 'Skull Monster') seen in episode 8 and episode 25, **Kai Suisei Tsuifun / The Strange Comet, Typhon** and the ancient monster Gomora (episodes 26 and 27, the two part **Kaiju Denka / King Creature**) remain popular with *Ultra* fans to this day.

Although the motivations of the *Ultraman* monsters would be as varied as their designs, a theme of the series would frequently be that the monsters had no evil intentions and were a threat mainly due to its size or adverse effect on a frightened populace.

Most often the human forces had no alternative but to try and destroy these creatures. It is in the climax of these situations when events become so unmanageable, that the extraterrestrial 'salvation' of *Ultraman* was required.

But *Ultraman* also understands that evil intent is not behind every threat. It has been speculated by **Noboru Tsuburaya** himself that one of the factors contributing to *Ultraman's* lasting popularity is the character's understanding of this lack

of evil intent as demonstrated by the respect shown to his slain foes through his ceremonial escort of them into outer space and the region of the Monster Graveyard.

In its initial run on the Tokyo Broadcasting Service, *Ultraman* reportedly scored a 42.8 % ratings in its peaks and maintained an average 30% rating throughout. Other stations were quick to secure their bids for the show in re-runs.

In Japan *Ultraman* achieved a fandom and acclaim on the level of *Star Trek* here in the U.S. The character is considered Japan's if not Asia's equivalent of **Superman**. As *Superman* has a history of 'fighting for the American way', *Ultraman* could be considered to represent Japanese values and principles. It's interesting to note that both characters while sharing an extraterrestrial origin (the ultimate foreigners) have had a profound effect on their respective pop cultures, to the point of being considered national heroes.

However *Ultraman* (in his respective TV incarnation) was represented with an even greater emphasis as a defender of the entire earth, for all people. Although some story lines may have hinted at politics or reflect issues of national security, it is clear that *Ultraman* never takes sides and only appears when human life is in danger from over powering non-human forces. It is as if he follows a directive of non-interference in situations of human to human or nation to nation conflict.

A best selling book in Japan was published not too long ago by the Chuokei Shuppan Publishing company. Called **An Introduction to Research on Ultraman**, it was written by a group of 25 researchers that included such individuals as university professors specializing in fields like physics, engineering, law and ethics.

The book examined in academic detail such subjects as who or what government agencies would be responsible for financial compensation if your property is accidentally destroyed by *Ultraman* in his attempts to stop a life threatening creature; who would be responsible for disposal of possibly radioactive monster carcasses; the question of ethics behind *Ultraman's* killing of the monsters, and the use of force even if the purpose is to save human life; the DNA composition of *Ultraman's* body; the tracing and outline of responsibilities for world monster control, from Paris Interpol to the Japanese Self Defense forces; and a multitude of other issues that relate the fictional universe of the *Ultraman* series with our own. {Editor's Note : Similar scholarly books have been written in Japan about the *Godzilla* films}

The English dubbed American version was released in limited markets here in the U.S. in the late sixties by United Artists . This resulted in the creation of a small fandom for the character here in the U.S. that continues to grow to this day.

{Next Issue Kevin Gray's continues this article with more on the history of Tsuburaya Productions featuring more *Ultra* heroes, as well as other productions}

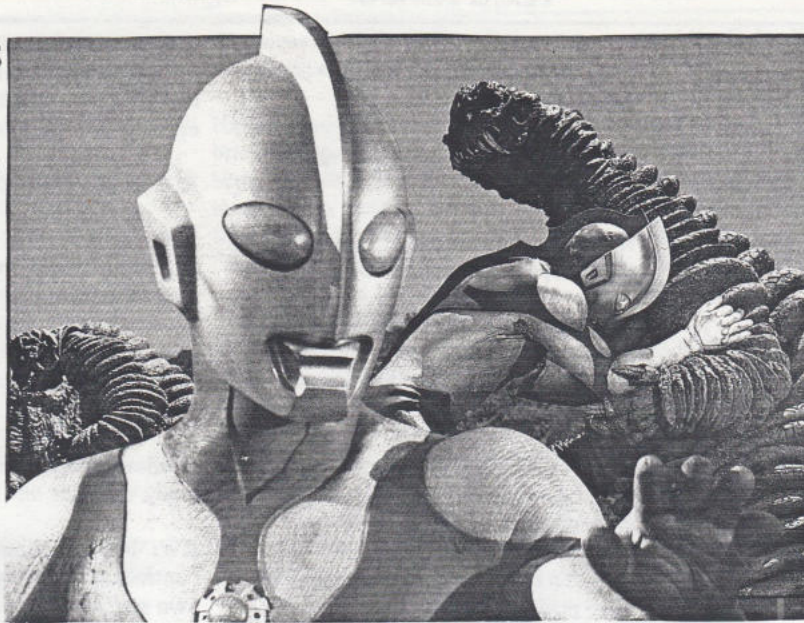


## ULTRA INTERVIEWS

WITH  
JOHN DOUGLAS,  
KING WILDER,  
and  
JULIE AVOLA

OF THE  
**ULTRAMAN,  
ULTIMATE  
HERO**  
TELEVISION  
SERIES

with Robert Dagg



Ever since **Ultraman** left the airwaves of American television in the early eighties, thousands of fans have been adrift without their giant red and silver hero from Nebula M-78.

Well, fellow fans, it's now 1994 and we have a new Ultraman show to watch and enjoy. Having been blessed with knowing some people in the industry, I was able to speak with **King Wilder** (series director), **Julie Avola** (series executive producer) and **John Douglas** (series producer/writer). What follows is an interview with the people who made the new show happen along with **Tsuburaya Productions**.

### JOHN DOUGLAS

**R.D.:** First I would like to thank you for your time in answering these questions for me John. I grew up with the original Ultraman show along with thousands of other people and it's nice to see him making a comeback to American television.

**John Douglas:** Thank you also! It's refreshing to know that there are fans out there that can appreciate the work that you do. I hope that when you finally get to see the show that it lives up to your expectations.

**RD:** First off, John, have you heard if there might be a second season of the **Ultraman, The Ultimate Hero** using

more of the original monsters from the first series?

**JD:** It is still pretty early to know whether or not the public response will warrant a continuation of the **Ultraman the Ultimate Hero** storyline. Even if we do not continue the adventures of Kenichi Kai and the W.I.N.R. Team, Tsuburaya Productions will continue to make new (and different) Ultraman series. If there will be a second season to **Ultraman Ultimate Hero**, we will let you know when we know.

**RD:** Are the new episodes direct remakes of the original show's episodes?

**JD:** Our new episodes will be using similar story lines with the original monsters, but certain situations will have been changed to reflect the fact that these stories are taking place 25 years later and in a different part of the world. But the situations should be recognizable to most fans. I should add, though, that we wanted to have a few surprises, so don't expect an exact translation.

**RD:** In terms of filming the new series, were the episodes filmed one at a time or some in different order and how long did it take to complete the entire 13 episode series?

**JD:** We filmed the current series in a concurrent fashion, the way most movies are show. For budgetary and time constraint purposes, we broke the scripts down, scene by scene, and shot all the W.I.N.R. Headquarters scenes at the same time, all the monsters and miniatures at the same time, all the "on location" shots at the same time, and so on. So on any given day, we could be shooting some Baltan scenes, some Gomora scenes, and some Pestar

scenes, if all three episodes had points similar in them to film on a particular set. Although we did not shoot things in a very linear fashion, we managed to shoot all thirteen episodes (monsters, miniatures, live action, and locations) over a fourteen week period. So you do the math!

**RD:** For all of you that hate math like I do, that's about three and a half months... I think. One of the favorite things about the original show that people liked was the catchy theme song and music. Who handled the new show's music?

**JD:** Our score is by **Toshiko Sahashi**. I am rather new to all this Japanese stuff, so I don't know if he's famous or not. Have you heard of him?

**RD:** No.

**JD:** Well, you can probably tell that he is not an American composer, and thus, his score has a definite Japanese tone to it. At first I didn't know what to think of it, but the themes have become stuck in my head and I have grown to like it. But then again I also liked the original series' music.

**RD:** When can we expect to see the new show on television?

**JD:** Tentatively we are set to be finished with post production at the



beginning of March. [Actually post production was just finished because of the earthquake that hit the L.A. area a couple of months back - Rob.] We understand that the shows will first be shown on Japanese television in the Spring (Springtime here, anyway) and some form of distribution will follow here in September. I still don't know if we will have a television distribution or go straight to video over here. Once again, I'll let you know when I know.

RD: Does Major Havoc plan on bringing other Japanese television shows over the U.S. like *Space Sheriff Gavan* or *Kamen Rider*?

JD: Major Havoc was put together specifically for the purpose of creating thirteen remake episodes of previously existing materials. Beyond that, Major Havoc will probably cease to be.

If a second set of episodes are ordered and it is decided that we will make them, Major Havoc Entertainment, Inc. might be resuscitated for that purpose. As I understand *Gridman*, which is another Tsuburaya Productions series, will be coming over to the U.S. this year from D.I.C. Entertainment and will be called *The Super Human Samurai Cyber Squad*. All I know about this series is that it bears a bit of resemblance to the Ultraman character and typical situations, as to the others you mention, I am totally in the dark.

RD: And finally, John, have you heard if Tsuburaya Productions is working on anything else right now?

JD: When I last spoke to a liaison at Tsuburaya Productions, I heard mention of possibly filming in Canada and Germany. As to what will be shot there is not known at this time.

RD: Thanks again for your time John.

JD: Thank you for your support.

## KING WILDER

RD: Mr. Wilder, it is a pleasure and honor to be speaking with the director of *Ultraman The Ultimate Hero*.

King Wilder: Thanks I really enjoyed working on the show.

RD: What's the status of the show at this point?

KW: The show or entire series is in the can, post production and all.

RD: That's funny; I've heard rumors that the show wouldn't be finished until 1995 and post production was being delayed.

KW: Yeah, I heard those rumors too. I don't know how they got started. The show is finished.

RD: It's been rumored that changes were made to episode 13, the final show of the series. Does this have anything to do with a possible second season.

[SPOILER WARNING! Don't read Mr. Wilder's response to this question if you don't want episode 13's surprise ending given away.]

KW: Yes, there were some changes made to that episode. Tsuburaya Productions told us that it wanted to feature the Baltan along with the creature Zeton in the last episode. So we went back and edited in more Baltan footage.

RD: That sounds pretty neat. The Baltan and Zeton were a couple of my favorite Ultra monsters. Ultraman is really going to have his hands full. Speaking of favorite monsters, which are your favorite monsters and episodes?

KW: Well I like them all really but I personally like the Zambora episode and Pestar episode. It's hard to say what exactly I like about them they just stick with me. The Pestar episode is really good because there are a lot of neat explosions and the creature is really relentless when it attacks the oil refinery.

RD: Who determined what monsters were going to be in this series and who wrote the original episodes for the new show?

KW: Tsuburaya Productions

evidently took a poll of Japanese fans favorite original monsters and then had their own writers pen the new episodes for the show.

RD: That's pretty interesting.

KW: Yes. A lot of the Japanese companies really stay in contact with their fandom and usually ask their fans for direct input into their particular show. I think they did that with a *Godzilla* movie recently.

RD: Yes, that was *Godzilla vs. Biollante*. So American writers didn't really write the new show's episodes?

KW: Right. Tsuburaya Productions controls all the story ideas and has its own staff of writers work on scripts. Our writers went back over those scripts and polished them up for the American audience.

RD: Has the show been picked up yet for any type of distribution here in the States?

KW: At this time it hasn't been picked up yet. That's pretty disappointing. The show evidently had a chance to be picked up but wasn't. It's kind of strange.

Ultraman has been around for years and is very well known. With the success of the *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*, it doesn't make sense that the show has been overlooked so far. I remain confident though, that it will eventually get some type of television distribution. We'll just have to wait and see.

RD: Thank you for your time. I've seen the new show's first three episodes on import video and I think it will do great when it's released in the United States.

KW: Thanks you, I had a great time directing the show and I hope all the Ultraman fans will enjoy it.

## JULIE AVOLA

RD: What exactly were your duties in respect to the show?

Julie Avola: I'm the executive producer of the show and I also did all



the post production work on the show.

RD: I understand the rumors of the show having post production problems are false?

JA: Yes. I did all the post production on the show. It's finished.

RD: I've seen the show's first three episodes. I like how you used the original shows sound effects in the new show.

JA: Yeah, a lot of us are familiar with the original show and we like the sound effects, so I decided along with Tsuburaya Productions that we would use those sound effects.

RD: A lot of the Ultraman fans out there will like hearing the Baltan's sinister laughing again.

JA: Yes, along with the other monsters distinct sound effects.

RD: How did actual filming of the series go? It's been reported that you had problems with the heat and bees.

JA: Filming actually went pretty well. Yes we had troubles with bees and bee stings on the crew. A lot of the crew and cast started off the series with drinking pop in between takes. That quickly changed when the bees started coming around! Everyone switched to water. The heat was also a problem. **Scott Rogers** (Ultraman) actually had an air conditioned Ultraman suit to wear. But everyone else suffered.

RD: Do you have a favorite monster or episode?

JA: I like the Baltan. The Gomora monster is also neat looking. It's also a sad story. The Gomora episode is kind of tragic, almost, a tear jerker. You'll see.

RD: Are you surprised the show hasn't been picked up yet for American television?

JA: Yes. It's kind of early yet but I definitely think the show could have and should have been picked up. The Japanese giant monster invasion is heating up and Ultraman is one of the most popular of them all! Go figure.

RD: Do you know if we can expect to see any toys or figures released in conjunction with the show?

JA: Well, Bandai of Japan has released a set of toy figures based on the show in Japan. They're pretty neat looking.

RD: I have the new Baltan figure. They did a good job with that.

JA: I'm sure that down the line a company will probably release a line of figures but it's still a little early to tell. The show has to be picked up first.

RD: Thanks Julie, it's been nice of you to answer these questions for me and our readers. I'll let you get back to your monster fighting!

JA: Thank you, it's been fun!



## ULTRAMAN: THE ULTIMATE HERO

by Lenell Bridges



He's back! He's big! He's bad! He's beautiful! After a long time in Japan he's flying across the Pacific! It's his first U.S. production! Yes, it's Ultraman! That hero from Nebula M78!

The new show is called **Ultraman The Ultimate Hero** and known as **Ultraman Powered** in Japan. This is the tenth Ultra teleseries by **Tsuburaya Productions** and was produced in association with **Major Havoc Productions** of California.

Filmed here in the States, the new series runs only 13 episodes. Major Havoc Productions has spared no expense in making the series top-notch. Many of the famous Ultra-monsters are returning, like **Red King**, **Gomora**, **Telesdon**, **Chanler**, and many famous aliens like the **Baltan**, **Dada**, and the infamous **Z-Ton** (who defeated Ultraman in the original series). The series will be based on episodes from the original shows. The main storyline is simple: giant monsters and evil invading aliens are about to attack our helpless planet. Only Ultraman and the W.I.N.R. Team can save us!

The cast for the new series:

The W.I.N.R. (Worldwide Investigation Network Response Team):

**Harrison Page** as Captain Russell Edlund; **Sandra Guibord** as Teresa Beck; **Robyn Bailey** as Julie Young; **Rob Roy Fitzgerald** as Rick Saunders; and **Kane Kosugi** (that's right, the son of famous martial arts star **Sho Kosugi**) as Kenichi Kai (who is really Ultraman thanks to the new Beta Capsule that Ultraman gives him). Many of Kane's credits in films go back to ones like **Revenge of the Ninja**, and **Pray for Death**.

Based on the first 3 episodes, the show seems far superior to **Ultraman Towards the Future**, which many people thought was disappointing. That version deserves some credit, however, since it inspired the producers of Major Havoc Productions to make this new version of Ultraman which brings back the classic type of excitement the Ultra-series should have, with Ultraman fighting his classic monster/alien foes in the '90s!

In Japan the series has been released on home video. After that, the series will be shown on Japanese TV and eventually American TV may show the series or at least it will hopefully be released on home video.



# OUR MAN IN OSAKA

By Norman England

Now that *Gojira vs. MekaGojira* has left the theaters and Godzilla mania has slowed a bit, life in Japan returns to normal. Though for serious Godzilla watchers in Japan, thanks to Godzilla's long history, every day is an adventure in Godzilla lore. But before I get into Godzilla for this issue's column I'd like to set the stage with some thoughts from my ever evolving opinion of this one of a kind country.

Japan is a country of seemingly endless contradictions. On one hand it has a long history filled with great art and literature, insightful philosophers and poets. Even today, every community, no matter how small, has a wealth of temples that offer retreat and allow one to ponder these achievements from over the past fifteen hundred years.

On the other hand, it is a country which changed completely after the second world war into a loud tasteless "carnival" style nation. Wherever you go, neon signs flash hypnotically in your face, the din of pachinko parlors deafens your ears, and TV, one of the low points in human expression here, comes up with the most ludicrous of shows to numb your brain.

I find living in Japan has been a good way to curb my TV watching habit, for it is near impossible to sit through shows due to the fact that they are so loud. By "loud" I mean, take a typical variety show: lights flash wildly about the stage, ceiling and walls, the audience screams, yells and laughs at everything in sight. The simple act of an MC just taking the stage sends them into a frenzy. Me, I break into a cold sweat and change the channel fast.

Then there are the game shows. These are 99% of the time not made up of ordinary people trying to win a few prizes to make life a bit sweeter, but

popular celebrities vying to become even more popular. And the premises of these game shows run from camera crews invading an average person's home with the celebrities trying to guess what the contents of their refrigerator is, to how long it will take a man holding on to a greasy pole to fall into a waiting vat of jello below.

Also very popular in Japan are TV dramas. If one station hits upon a story that proves to be a hit, all others will follow suit. The trend now are stories of high school girls having sordid affairs with their teachers. As a result, the job of high school teachers has become much sought-after.

By now, you're probably wondering how Godzilla fits into all this. Well, a lot of the actors and actresses we are familiar with from Godzilla movies, appear in many of these programs.

My latest hobby has become spotting what people from the Big G's history are up to. In some cases I've been shocked by what I've seen, but I just remind myself, these are people doing their job: acting.

Before coming to Japan, certain faces were to me synonymous only with Godzilla. People such as **Akira Takarada** (*Gojira*, *Godzilla vs. The Thing*) for example. You can imagine my surprise upon seeing him on a TV commercial for bath salts, dancing around naked except for a small towel covering his privates. This shocked my wife Yuko as well, but for a different reason - she'd always considered Takarada a "serious" performer before.

Almost daily I see people from throughout Godzilla history on TV doing something or other. I caught a show which featured Sumo's top wrestlers singing Karaoke and dancing in an hour-long show hosted by **Tadao Takashima** (*King Kong*

*vs. Godzilla*) and his wife. I sat dumbfounded as Tadao, in a laser light display, introduced such sumo greats as **Akebono** and **Musashimaru**, who got up, sang, and shook their flab in a way that made me thankful I'd digested my supper a few hours earlier.

Tadao's son, **Masanobu Takashima** (*Gojira vs. Biollante*) is the spokesman for Lawson convenience store. I find that when I watch Biollante now I keep expecting him to suddenly turn up with the Lawson blue and white striped shirt on. He also appears as the star of his own drama, though, to his credit, it fortunately has nothing to do with high school girls. The story line features him as the manager of a hotel in Tokyo. His character is now in the process of learning English, and the tribulations that go with it - something which half the country seems to be doing, and agonizing over now.

I was flipping through the channels the other day and found **Chuck Wilson** (*Gojira vs. Kingu Gidora*) explaining the importance of smiling for actors, then turned the channel only to find **Satomi Kobayashi** (*Gojira vs. Mosura*) demonstrating eye drops. She also appears in another commercial surrounded by Americans trying desperately to speak English.

The most pleased I've been finding old timers was the time I watched the goddess **Kumi Mizuno** (hey, we all have our favorites) in an excellent NHK (a cross between the BBC and PBS) TV stage production set in feudal Japan. She has aged a bit since her Toho days, but still looks fantastic and has really matured as an actress. I also caught her on an NHK quiz show which was not the usual fare, but more along the lines of Jeopardy, with the host asking questions on history and politics. She came across as well spoken and



classy.

On another NHK show of this type I saw **Hideo (Eisei) Amamoto** (Dr. Who from **King Kong Escapes**). He looks about 135 now, but is sharp, and has an incredibly quick wit. Amamoto san is currently appearing in the show "17 Sai - at Seventeen" which features the most popular young stars in Japan today.

**Ryoko Sana**, baby Goji's surrogate mom from **Gojira vs. MekaGojira**, just made the news because of her engagement to popular jockey **Utaka Take**. The public was stunned by their engagement because Take is a well known bachelor who lives a well-documented life of beautiful women, late night parties, and a taste for fine whiskey. Though I guess, any woman who can tame a wild baby **Gojirasaurus** can handle just about anything. At one of their many press junkets she said that she plans to continue acting. This was evident by a show in which she was teamed up with **Akira Takarada** and they compared the talents of American dog trainers against those of Japanese.

As I had mentioned before, my wife always had this image of **Akira Takarada** as a stern, well-thought-out talent. Recently he too has succumbed to the depths of the Japanese TV wasteland. I was surprised when playing channel hopping one night to come across him on a late night talk show kissing another male actor on the lips on a dare. Then I was left speechless by his appearance as an MC for a contest show that was trying to find the best

dressed transvestite in Japan. After the winner - who was not my choice - was chosen, everyone got up and sang a song entitled, "We are the Okama" to the tune of "We are the World". "Okama" is Japanese for gay male. This show was a take-off on the "Miss Japan Beauty Show" which **Takarada** has been hosting for the past 20 years.

**Maichan**, the leader of the telepathic children in **Gojira vs. MekaGojira**, has been setting the small tube ablaze with her own cooking show for children. Toho used her as an added attraction for the kiddies who have taken to **Maichan** like a **Moth(r)** to flame. She also has appeared in at least a dozen commercials.

Even **Godzilla** makes it into a few commercials, though not enough for my taste. During the run of **Gojira vs. MekaGojira** he appeared in a commercial for cable channel **MBS**. A brilliant commercial which had the **Big G** rising out of the sea, while a long haired boy (odd, because most boys here have extremely close cropped hair) looked on dumbstruck. It ended with a half dozen **Godzillas** on screen all doing something representative of **Godzilla**, with the **MBS** building sitting in the background. **Godzilla** also appeared in a local commercial which featured clips of him battling **MekaGojira** over which products from a local store were superimposed. His latest commercial features **Peter Falk** as a bartender who pulls out a large glass and places it on the bar while speaking to an off-screen **Godzilla**.

**Falk** is dubbed into Japanese, with **Godzilla's** footsteps heard growing near. **Falk's Columbo** character is very popular in Japan, and the same actor who dubs his voice for the series is used here. The commercial is for **Suntory** whiskey. Bet you didn't know that **Godzilla** was a lush.

Unlike Americans, the Japanese see TV as a good medium to appear in, where careers instead of being hampered actually flourish. The bottom line is that a Japanese actor must appear in a commercial to maintain popularity and be considered current. A much different attitude wouldn't you say? Even American actors realize that popularity here is dependent on TV, and many appear, with actors such as **Michael J. Fox**, **Charlie Sheen**, **Jodie Foster**, and **Harrison Ford** on TV commercials here daily.

While Japanese TV does have a ways to go until it can compete with American TV, I still find it fascinating, if only for the blatantly innocent air about it. But in the end, I find I long for American shows, populated by Americans doing wholesome American things like blowing up cars and verbally abusing each other. Luckily though, many American shows (in addition to **Columbo**) have found their way across the Pacific and are shown both in Japanese and English. So I am able to retain some relationship with the popular culture of my birthland. I can now proudly say I've seen almost every episode of **Get Christy Love** that has ever been produced. Look, I didn't say they were current shows, did I?

## Profiles in Film Sound Editing

by Dan Lenehan





# SONGS OF GODZILLA



by Norman England

Music and the Japanese people have always enjoyed a good relationship. Children, starting at surprisingly young ages, perform around the dinner table for family members and neighbors. This continues into adulthood with businessmen entertaining clients and friends trying to impress each other at Karaoke bars.

It's only natural, then, to see this love of the song to find its way into their film industry, and thus songs have been appearing in Godzilla films practically since their inception. This use of music adds an element that is usually sadly neglected in Western fantasy films. But for the Japanese, music, notably the song structure, is an essential means of self-expression.

Probably the most popular song to appear in kaiju eiga did not appear in a Godzilla film at all, but in the film **Mothra** (1961). The song, **Mosura No Uta** (Mothra's Song), recorded by the vocal group **The Peanuts** has left an indelible mark on movie viewers since its release.

It is said that in Japan even those who know little of Godzilla (yes, there are a few) know the song. A testament to the talents of the writers and to **The Peanuts**, **Emi** and **Yumi Ito**.

Many myths abound as to the origin of the song, the words, the meaning itself. From several published sources I've pieced together what I think is an accurate account of the formation of the song.

After **Mothra** was been given the go-ahead, those involved, **Ishiro Honda**, **Tanaka Tomoyuki**, and **Seikizawa Shinichi** decided that a means to accentuate the spiritual element of the film was needed. They figured that a musical element would suit the task well and sat up one night writing out lyrics that expressed what they wanted said.

Unanimously they agreed that a language other than Japanese should be used, although none of them spoke anything else. **Honda**, desperate to have an authentic island feel for the lyrics, was introduced to an Indonesian student studying at Tokyo University who spoke Japanese as well as his native Indonesian and Malaysian. They settled on Malaysian and the student (whose name I can't find anywhere) translated the words. The lyrics were then handed over to **Yuuji Koseki**, and from him sprang the melody and music we've come to know and love.

Unfortunately, no one can seem to

find a copy of the original lyrics, but to extend the song on its latest version, the **Cosmos** version from **Godzilla vs. Mothra**, the Malaysian lyrics have been translated back into Japanese.

What follows are the original lyrics and a translation taken from the Japanese. Of the first column, those are the Malaysian lyrics phonetically altered for Japanese. The second verse is Japanese and only appears in the **Cosmos** version.

## Mosura No Uta (Mothra's Song)

Mosura ya Mosura  
Dongan kasakuyan indoo muu  
Rusuto uiraadoa, hanba hanbamuyan  
Randa banunradan Tounjukanraa  
Kasaku yaanmu

Mosura ya Mosura  
Yasashisasac wasure  
Arehateta  
Hito no kokoro inorinagara  
Utai, ai no uta

(English:)  
Mothra, oh Mothra  
Hear our call for you to save us  
Over time, over sea  
Like a wave you come  
Our guardian angel

Mothra oh Mothra  
The people have forgotten kindness  
Their spirit falls to ruin  
We shall pray for the people as we sing,  
This song on love.

Also appearing in **Mothra** and performed by **The Peanuts** is the song **Infanto No Musume** (Infant Island Maidens). Though not as catchy as **Mosura No Uta**, it still is a lyrically moving song that the **Shobijin** (which means "small beautiful girl") sang while under **Nelson's** evil control. This time the lyrics are strictly Japanese, and the song was written by **Susumu Ike**.

## Infanto No Musume (Infant Island Maidens)

Akarui uta o utatte itemo Kokoro wa  
shizumu umi no soko  
Watashi no hoho wa waratte itemo



Kokoro o tsutsumu kuroi kumo

Hitosashiyubi o hitai ni atete  
Mahiru no tsuki ni  
Oinorishiyoo  
Inazuma hikaru namima kara  
Kumamo kara kotaete shiawase  
Yatteckuru

(English:)

We sing a joyous song  
Though our hearts sink to the ocean  
depth  
Even though ours is a way of laughter  
Our spirit is wrapped in a black cloud

Place an index finger to our forehead  
And when the moon is in the noon  
sky,  
We shall pray  
Though now lightning bolts from the  
open seas and the open sky,  
A reply will come  
Happiness will come to us.

The next film to feature a song, of  
sorts, was the 1962 release of **King  
Kong vs. Godzilla**. In this case, a  
less memorable song than that of  
Mothra, but still one that fit into the  
theme of the film.

The song, **Kyodai Naru Majin** (The  
Huge Malevolent Deity), written by  
**Akira Ifukube** and **Keiichi Ota**, was  
used extensively throughout the film,  
mostly to help subdue Kong while he  
was buzzed on Farou berries. This  
translation is taken from a Japanese  
translation of the original lyrics.

### Kyodai Naru Majin

(The Huge Malevolent Deity)

A si anaroi aseke samoai  
A si anaroi aseke samoai  
Ke keletena ke keletena  
I na mang fandoro saguita  
I na mang fandoro saguita  
Ke keletena ke keletena  
Sikuna funadono onasau nunafa  
A si anaroi aseke samoai  
A si anaori aseke samoai  
Ma gu nu nitu Ma gu nu nitu  
Sikuna marikan sikuna marikan  
Ma gu nu nitu Ma gu nu nitu  
Rau rau rauuuu

(English:)

At the end of the dense jungle  
The towering greatness lives  
Soothe the rage you rush about in

Accept this poor girl's sacrifice  
Lift up her cursed blood  
Deliver us from darkness  
The legs of our God shake the island  
The arms of our God destroys the  
mountains  
Awaken to the sound of the drums  
that echo far and wide  
The heartbeat of our God will protect  
us  
As we beg from the ground with  
respect  
Rau rau rauuuu

Reprising their roles from Mothra,  
Emi and Yumi Ito's appearance in  
**Godzilla vs The Thing** (4/29/64)  
added two new songs to the body of  
the now rapidly growing Toho music  
catalogue. Written by **Akira  
Ifukube**, the song, **Sei Naru Izumi**  
(Sacred Spring) is written in the  
indigenous language of the  
Philippines, Tagalog.

This song is to me the most  
emotionally charged of all songs to  
have appeared in Godzilla films. The  
Peanuts were in top shape and  
demonstrated why they were one of  
the most popular vocal groups in  
Japan at the time. Unfortunately, a  
complete translation of the lyrics is  
unavailable, but I did manage to find  
a few lines in a book which had been  
translated into Japanese. Here are  
the lyrics as they appeared in the  
film, with a partial translation.

### Sei Naru Izumi

(Sacred Spring)

Na intindihan mo ba  
Na intindihan mo ba  
Mayroun douan maganda balon  
Punta ka lang dito  
Ka lang dito  
Halika at marupo  
Halika at marupo

(English:)

Is it that you too do not remember  
Is it that you too do not remember  
The beautiful spring

**Mahara Mosura**, the egg hatching  
song by **Akira Ifukube** and **Shoichi  
Oota** also appeared in **Godzilla vs.  
The Thing**. This too is in ancient  
Tagalog with no translation  
available.

### Mahara Mosura

Mahara mahara Mosura  
Tama tama Mosura

Laban guera labanan  
Laban guera labanan

Mahara mahara Mosura

Back in their continuing role as the  
twins from Infant Island, The Peanuts  
appearance in **Ghidrah, The Three  
Headed Monster** (12/20/64) was  
marked by their performance of the  
song, **Shiawase O Yobou** (A Call For  
Happiness), in which they summoned  
Mothra to Japan in the hopes that she  
could talk Godzilla and Rodan into  
defending the country from the  
ravagings of Ghidrah. The song was  
written by **Tokiko Iwatani** and  
**Yasushi Miyagawa**.

### Shiawase O Yobou

(A Call For Happiness)

Mosura... Mosura...

Shiawase o yobi ni yukoo  
Natsukashi shima e  
Harukana ano sora to  
Toke au umi de  
Shiawase yo naze naku no  
Hohoemi o wasurezu ni Shiawase o  
yoboo

Shiawase o yobi ni yukoo  
Natsukashi shima e  
Harukana ano sora to  
Toke au umi de  
Shiawase yo naze nayamu  
Soyokaze to kumo ni noru  
Shiawase o yobou

Mosura... Mosura....

(English:)

Mothra... Mothra...

Let's put out a call for happiness  
To our longed for island land  
Where the far off sky  
Melts into the sea  
There is the happiness, but why do we  
cry  
We must not forget our smile  
As we call for happiness

Let's put out a call for happiness  
To our longed for island land



Where the far off sky  
Melts into the sea  
There is the happiness, but why do we  
worry  
As we ride the breeze and clouds,  
Let us call for happiness

Mothra... Mothra...

For **Godzilla vs. The Sea Monster** (1966), The Peanuts opted not to reprise their part in the Godzilla series. They instead turned the singing chores over to another, lesser known vocal group called **Pair Bambi**. The song, **Mosura No Uta** (Mothra's Ballad), was used to wake a napping Mothra into doing yet another good deed for mankind. This time she was used as a means of public transportation for a bunch of island people and some Japanese trouble-makers.

Astute readers may have noticed that this song bases the same title as the main song in Mothra. While the pronunciation of the Japanese characters makes it sound the same, the Kanji (Japanese word character derived from Chinese) is different.

The writers of the song, **Tokiko Iwatani** and **Masaru Sato**, employed a rarely used Kanji for the word Uta (song). Thus they were able to play off the success of the original, while still able to claim a vestige of originality. Unfortunately, the song is not nearly as good as the Mosura No Uta of Mothra fame, and so never enjoyed the slightest bit of popularity.

### Mosura No Uta (Mothra's Ballad)

Me o samashite, Mosura  
Hana ga hirakuyou ni Mosura  
Minna matteiru no  
Aozameta sora e hikaru tsubasa de  
Tonde okure Mosura

Me o samashite, Mosura  
Asa ga akeruyou ni Mosura  
Minna matteiru no  
Namida no yotsuyu o hayaku hoho  
kara keshite okure, Mosura

Me o samashite, Mosura  
Kumo ga utayou ni Mosura  
Minna matteiru no  
Hatemonai yami ni sakebu inori o  
Kiite okure, Mosura

(English:)  
Open your eyes, Mothra  
Like a flower you open, Mothra  
We all await you  
With your wings to the bluest sky  
Fly for us Mothra

Open your eyes, Mothra  
Like the morning you rise, Mothra  
We all await you  
The morning dew drops quickly fall  
from your cheeks, Mothra  
Open your eyes, Mothra  
The clouds they sing, Mothra  
We all await you  
Listen to our prayers as we scream  
from the never ending darkness

Except for tie-in songs released on records and used on TV commercials, a song was not to appear in a Godzilla film again until the 1971 release of **Godzilla vs. The Smog Monster**.

The song, **Save The Earth**, an appeal to stop the pollution of the earth, appears in the opening title sequence of both the Japanese and English versions. For the English version the song was successfully translated, saving me the trouble, but in trying to make English words fit into the already established melody they had to change the song a bit, most notably the chorus. The title of the Japanese song is **Kacse! Taiyo O**, which translates literally to Give It Back! The Sun.

The chorus of the Japanese version is, "Give it back" and then lists what is wanted to be returned: blue skies; blue oceans; and the Sun. The song was written by **Yoshimitsu Itano** and **Koichi Sugiyama**.

**Godzilla vs. Megalon** (1973) saw Godzilla sink to a new low. Nowhere was this more evident than in the song that appeared at the end of the film. Written by **Shinichi Sekizawa** and **Riichi Manabe**, the song, **Gojira To Jetto Jagaa De Panchii-Panchii-Panchii** (Godzilla and Jet Jaguar They Punch Punch Punch) is originally comprised of three choruses, but only the last appears in the film.

### Gojira To Jetto Gagaa De Panchii-Panchii-Panchii

(Godzilla and Jet Jaguar They Punch  
Punch Punch)

Hito ga tsukutta, Robatto dake do  
Jetto Jagaa, Jetto Jagaa  
Yatta ze, Jagaa  
Yuke yuke Heiwa o mamoru tame  
Minna mo doroku,  
yuuki o miseru  
Gojira to Jagaa de  
panchii panchii panchii  
Naku na, poukra mo  
Ganbaroo

(English:)  
Though he's only a robot built by man  
Jet Jaguar, Jet Jaguar  
He's the coolest, Jaguar  
Only he goes to protect the peace  
Everyone's amazed,  
by the courage he displays  
Godzilla and Jaguar they  
punch punch punch  
Don't cry, for neither will we  
Keep standing tall

Since Godzilla's reemergence, songs seem to have been left out of the picture. Possibly because the filmmakers of today view this past habit as being a bit unsophisticated. If this is the case, I would have to disagree. To me, the songs of the past movies help to strengthen the unique style of the Godzilla film. Perhaps it is impossible to step back to those simpler times in Japan, but at least through video and CDs we have a means to revisit them again and again.

It is my hope that the translations presented here can help further the Western fans understanding of Godzilla. These translations, as any, are open to debate, especially since they are poetry laced with idiomatic expressions that for the most part have no equivalent in the English language. I'd like to thank my wife Yuko for helping me to understand some of the more esoteric aspects of the at times frustrating Japanese language.





# TOHO VISIT

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sculpted likeness of Godzilla on it that he took from a small stack on a nearby shelf. Dan seemed pretty excited to get one of these. Our host smiled and said "just like Universal Studios, you don't want to leave without a souvenir."

There was some kind of metal and glass cylinder high on a shelf across the room that Dan seemed pretty interested in; it was the Oxygen Destroyer, a prop from the original Godzilla film. Kawakita saw our interest and waved us over to take a picture there with him. While we didn't speak Japanese, and he didn't speak English to us, we found him very friendly and he seemed to take a real pleasure in sharing his work with us.

Our encounters with other members of the cast and crew were equally friendly. In fact, I was very impressed by the openness and curiosity with which we were inevitably greeted. It wasn't the phony Hollywood "schmooze" thing; here, at Toho, the people we met seemed genuinely flattered that we wanted to meet them. It seemed especially culturally rewarding since we almost never spoke any words in the same language, yet so clearly we shared a common bond in our enthusiasm for their work.

We were eyeing some discarded hydra heads and necks laying in a dumpster outside the soundstage (would these fit in our suitcase, we wondered??) when we met **Ryu Hariken**, a friendly athletic actor, who plays **Kumaso-Gami** (God of Kumaso) a/k/a the lava monster (see his costume and you'll know why). He came over and happily posed with us for our camera, then invited us to watch him get some publicity photos (in costume) taken.

We followed him over to another small, low structure which houses a small studio for Toho's publicity photographer since 1977, **Mr. Naoko**. Again, we were warmly welcomed, and, after leaving our shoes at the door and donning the requisite slippers (none of which ever seemed to fit Dan's feet), we were invited to sit on a bench next to the photographer's camera to watch the action. **Mr. Naoko** brought out a scrap book of his past work for us to look at.

By this time, **Mr. Hariken** had climbed into his heavy kaiju costume and stood before the camera on an off-white backdrop than went from (and included) the floor to the ceiling. He posed for

still shots while the photographer clicked and whirled away using two cameras (probably one was color and one b&w). It was obvious that the suit was very, very heavy and hot to work in. Several times during the shoot oxygen was sprayed into the costume and water offered through a straw. A stool was never more than a few feet away in case the weight of the costume required the actor to sit for a rest, and photographer's assistants would help the monster raise his weapon and would help support his upraised arm while the photographer readied the cameras. It looked like hard work, and when **Mr. Hariken** finally removed the costume's head, he was red and sweating profusely. Nonetheless, he gamely posed with us after **Mr. Naoko** ushered us onto the backdrop to stand beside him. (**Mr. Naoko** used our camera, so I don't think you'll see those shots in the press materials!)

Well, I thought we had a pretty good day, and we were ready to have a quick bite to eat then leave. When I lived in Los Angeles years ago, I used to crash into movie studios with my friends and have lunch at the studio commissary; it's as good a place as any to run into actors and directors. So I thought the Toho Studios commissary would be a fun place for lunch.

The Toho commissary is a small, decidedly functional and unglamorous cafeteria. The omnipresent big screen TV was tuned in to Japanese high school baseball. The lunch menu had a few dishes, and we ordered curried rice, and cokes. The commissary was practically deserted.

But then, in walked someone who created quite a stir. The actors at Toho all looked quite athletic, with stocky yet compact builds, due to the heavy costumes they were required to wear. Such was the figure who was coming over to meet us now: **Kenpachiro Satsuma** (that's **Mr. Godzilla**, since 1985).

He sat with us, and Dan showed him the Kaiju Review. Needless to say, he got a kick out of the "On The Inside With **Mr. Satsuma**" centerfold (from last issue) that **Luis Medero** drew. He gave us a copy of his book, **Godzilla Visits Korea**, which was due to hit bookstores that week (it's a new edition of an old book, reprinted thanks to the renewed interest in North Korea these days). The book is about **Satsuma** working on a monster film in Korea.

Like everyone else we had so far encountered, **Satsuma** happily mugged for our cameras. I don't think I've ever seen Dan happier than he looks in one photograph as he sits side by side with **Satsuma**, with **Mr. Satsuma** giving him the "thumbs up"!

We also met actor **Wataru Fukuda** outside the commissary. The youngest of the three suitation actors we met, he played **MechaGodzilla** as well as the **Gojirasaurus** in **Godzilla vs. King Ghidra**. He plays the **Space Robot** in **YAMATO TAKERU**, and will play **Mogera** in the next **Godzilla** film.

Our second day at Toho was mostly spent visiting a storage shed. This is located at the far end of the Toho backlot, so we got to walk through the area we didn't cover yesterday.

We got our visitors passes from the guard at the back gate again, and we headed down the now familiar backlot street towards yesterday's soundstage and the commissary. Then, a delightful, typically Japanese and somehow quaint sight: special effects director **Kawakita** rides by on his bicycle, smiling and waving to us as he passed. No entourage, no chauffeur.

As we walked across the backlot, we passed the giant wave pool, where all those **Godzilla** in the water scenes have been shot since the early days. It's a fairly large body of water, quiet for the moment, with wave machines on one side and a painted sky backdrop on the other.

We walked along the waterfront, then hit a beehive of activity: our big red and gold friend the hydra of **Yamato** sits high upon a built up outdoor set, with crews scurrying all around it, building the risers, attaching the wires to the hydra heads, and other various activities. **Kawakita** is carefully observing the action. He sees us watching from afar and waves again. He points to the jacket he is wearing (one I had given him yesterday -- a gift from my place of business to his -- especially since I had heard he

has a fondness for crew jackets!).

We also pass and say hi again to **Kenichi Eguchi**, who is sitting at his camera, perched atop a small hill facing the huge structure holding the hydra. To make our photo album complete, we ask if we can take his picture. He invites Dan up to sit in his chair at the camera, while he poses alongside.

The scene we have been watching them set up is not scheduled to be filmed until tonight, under cover of darkness, so we move on.

As we have throughout, we always ask permission before taking *any* photographs; we are told that we may take as many as we like of the monster suits in storage.

The storage shed is at the end of a road. Outside the shed we meet **Mr. Yamato** of **Bon Craft**, who is busy putting some finishing touches on the **Utso No Ikusagami** silver and gold robot suit, in preparation for tonight's filming. Matching silver gloves lay on the ground beside the armored suit. Keeping **Mr. Yamato** company are **Shuichi Murakami**, who built the **Godzilla** suit seen in the last year's film, **Godzilla vs. MechaGodzilla**, and **Komei Kondo**, one of **Mr. Kawakita's** many assistants.

Inside the storage building are a bevy of costumes and mechanical props, and we were allowed to wander among them all by ourselves. We saw colorful, carpet-covered **Mothra**; golden **Ghidrah**, **Rodan**, **Baby Gojira**, and several **Godzilla** suits, hanging eerily on racks. One **Godzilla** has its thick rubber suit open and the fin-closure sitting beside it. I try, unsuccessfully, to persuade Dan to climb in and be **Godzilla** for a few glorious moments. Not wanting to get thrown out, Dan wisely declines.

Our last stop on the Toho backlot is a small Shinto shrine where the film crews gather at the beginning of each movie for a ceremony they hope will insure a successful shoot. There is nothing like this in Hollywood.



Director of Special Effects photography **Kenichi Eguchi**





Art by Paul Roche