

# Animation PLANET

Covering The World Of Animation

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HERK! Premiere Issue

• The making of the new Disney feature Hercules

• All about those crazy MAD T.V. animations

• Voice actor mania!

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About the Cover...

Hercules brings the team of John Musker and Ron Clements (*The Little Mermaid* and *Hercules*) to the screen. (© Disney)

watch.

There is one last thing I would like to talk about concerning this title. I was rather offended by the very casual attitude I saw with VOTOMS in regard to war. Cherico fought so he could find this woman who wanted to kill him, and perhaps someone might find this romantic. However, there is nothing romantic or glamorous about warfare. War is brutal and soul-eroding. This more than anything else (and there is so much not to like about VOTOMS) made me reject this title. Get it at your own risk.

(Recommended alternative titles: *Gall Force*, *Bubblegum Crisis*, and *The Venus Wars*) **John Beam**

**Neon Genesis Evangelion: Genesis 0:1**  
AD Vision Films Release, VHSEV/001S  
Subtitled, Color, VHS Hi-Fi Stereo, 60 minutes

**Contains violence and mature situations**

Approximately twelve years before *Neon Genesis Evangelion* first aired on Japanese television in 1995, the group which created it: animation fans, science fiction writers, and artists, formed Gainax, and changed the face of Japanese animation. Their first project, the animated feature *Wings of Honneamise* (1987), launched these animation rebels into worldwide prominence, and with such outstanding series as *Aim for the Top!*: *Gunbuster*, *Nadia of the Mysterious Seas*, and *Otaku No Video*, their prominence has never wavered. With *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, the group at Gainax have totally outdone themselves.

As with many Japanese animated tales, it is set in the near-future, and involves alien invaders threatening the existence of mankind. In the year 2000, just fifteen years prior to the events covered in the first two episodes, a strange being lands in Antarctica, and without warning it self-destructs, melting the ice cap, throwing the Earth off its axis, and wiping out half of humanity. Ironically, certain children are born nine months after this event who are endowed with the talents necessary to save the human race from extinction.

Now, it is the year 2015, and these strange beings (referred to as "Angels") have returned. Angels are enormous, hideously ugly creatures, who protect themselves with "Absolute Terror" (or AT) fields, which deflect any conventional or thermonuclear attacks against them. Besides this, they are also capable of summoning energy weapons that wield incredible destructive power. To combat this threat, a special UN agency called NERV was formed, and using knowledge that was gathered from the earlier Angel appearance, they have created "Evas", enormous bio-mechanical humanoid weapons. It just so happens that the children mentioned earlier,

now exactly fifteen years-old, can link telepathically with the Evas, and are chosen to pilot these weapons and fight for the salvation of all mankind.

If I were simply going to comment on the story alone (as much as I have been able to gather), I would say I am fascinated with it. However, there is SO much more to this Japanese television presentation. The characters are well developed, the character and mechanical designs are handsome, and the animation is incredible. Two original Gainax staff members, Hideaki Anno (Screenplay/Storyboards, Mecha Designs, and Series Director), and Yoshiyuki Sadamoto (Character Designs) have contributed to nearly every Gainax project, and their assistance to Project Eva/Neon Genesis Evangelion was certainly essential to its success. Despite the fact I have only seen the earliest episodes, *Evangelion* is the best animated television series I have ever seen. It is definitely a series I will follow to the very end. **John Beam**

**Urusei Yatsura TV Series 12**

(Episodes 43-46)

AnimEigo/AT092-110

Subtitled, Color, Mono HI-FI, 100 Minutes  
**Contains brief nudity & adult situations**

For those of you unaware of what *Urusei Yatsura* (*Those Obnoxious Aliens*) is about, I shall be brief in describing the odd goings-on. Ataru Moroboshi, the unluckiest lech in the universe, manages to win a game of tag with Lum, a demon princess, whose minions would have repossessed the Earth if Ataru had lost.



© AnimEigo

However, Lum misunderstands Ataru's cry "Now I can get married!" (his semi-girlfriend, Shinobu, promised to marry him if he actually won), and takes it as a proposal to her. Now, poor Ataru must endure having a beautiful girl (in a tiger-stripped bikini, green hair, and horns) living in his bedroom closet. Oh yeah,

Lum also electrocutes Ataru whenever his eyes stray toward another girl!

Episode 43 (*The Terror of Meow*) chronicles the account of a poor girl named Mizuzu, whose cat Yuki takes over her body, and she is cursed to wander the Earth part-girl, part-cat. However, the demented Buddhist monk Cherry finds a way to exorcise the cat's spirit, and change Mizuzu back to her true form. This involves Ataru making a complete idiot of himself, which is something Ataru is very capable of doing. In episode 44 (*After You've Gone*), Ataru tells Lum that he doesn't want her around anymore, and he soon finds himself alone, with only a cute stuffed doll resembling Lum left on his dresser. Now Ataru is in complete turmoil, because he discovers he is just as hung up on Lum as she is on him! This episode was polled by fans in Japan as being the most popular in the whole series.

There may not be another episode in UY as totally strange as #45 (*Lum's Class Reunion*). Nearly every character involved in this series is bizarre, and ALL of them descend upon Tomobiki High School for an alien's class reunion. Interesting, but VERY strange! The final episode on this tape literally ends things with a bang. With "Lunchtime Eat-Out'ers, Gather Around!", all the students of Tomobiki High wage war on the faculty, to fight the rule against students eating lunches off school grounds. Lots of weirdness, anime cameos (watch for "The Mach 5's" appearance), and fun in this one.

Mamoru Oshii is best known for directing more serious titles, such as the *Patlabor* series and *Ghost in the Shell*, but he shows with *Urusei Yatsura* that he can handle wacky comedy rather deftly. The stories are based upon Rumiko Takahashi's world-famous manga (comic book), and many believe UY is her best work. I will admit that this anime is not for everyone (people who do not handle odd behavior well, STAY WAY!), but even the lamest episodes are at least interesting, and

the best ones are outstanding. **John Beam**

**Blue Seed, Volume 1**  
AD Visions Films Release/VHSBS/001S

*Continued on Page 55*