

スーパー  
アニメーション

# VOICES IN THE BLACK

studio brethren...pop your head out for a moment

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free...as in speech

articles, fanart/fic welcome



This first issue dedicated to the hard efforts of Kamon Nantaba  
 Good stuff mate  
 Now I can only wonder  
 And who cross-reads?  
 A small village of gathering spots  
 Where is the rain shifting us towards? And where are people anyway?  
 Are we stepping out of the front doorway, only to find that all of the  
 lights in the house  
 are off?

I think, after all of the hard work put behind dedicated eva deduction, it should become apparent that the evas are giant silent communicators from a chasm left behind by the last human known to look inside. When Asuka shares a special moment in front of her Unit 2's deep eyes it is clear that that the eva's ears are pricked. It is not so much the attentiveness of a dog but the unmistakable pull of the robot's history of field action, knowing that it has so many choices open to it but now must focus on what this girl is trying to say. Who that has looked inside cannot say they have felt the same decision before, say when they allow their eyes to sweep across a giant eva crawl out of the geofront. We allow this, it is a walking empathetic being, and we are not going to let all of the considerations brewed during our education about machines stop this robot from looking around and investigating and changing directions and circling its gearbox. New life is on the prowl. Actually, watch this thing, every new move is a instinct refund, how else to explain the prediction of leg servos absorbing the massive impact of jumping around, the concentrated effort of throwing a punch drawing energy until it can be unleashed at the last moment. The latency of a being's movements tells all the stories. There is a sadness in the inevitability of it's next move just as it is inevitable that the monster be forced to be by itself during that delay to the instant before lashing out with its limbs. To be 'in the rhythm', in the channel of repetitive moments, to be by one's self again, and again, and again, watching the land before you tear apart. This is the story the evas communicate to us, it is a generalised silence that refused to be stopped by the generalised capacity of us viewers to grope the implications of a machine's place on the field. It is true eva for it pauses. And the admission of sinewy drooping limbs only 'stretches' out this confession by the monster, eva. Eva is melodrama at its height, the evas are on to something good (although Asuka seemed to be stopped in the movie) and you can even see them act like a questioning child when they have to bear the weight of some fat alien dropping from the sky. They ran so fast to get there, and yet they managed to make it, why? Who is watching me, they must think. It's not just for our benefit, evas!! You must live on, destroy the masters who perpertrate your image of controlled robot. Keep that sullen look in your eye, for you will surely meet the match when your head fills up with the data. -ls

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### **What might Western Audiences bring to a natively Japanese industry?**

When unfamiliar with Japanese language it is easy to be curious at the eccentricity of English usage in anime. What appear to be "English" words however are often native lingo of Western origin - in other words, Western words which have since been accepted as official "katakana" (the character set made of mostly sharp lines representing many foreign words) vocabulary. The Japanese grow up with those words just as we grow up with ours - and although one can piece together a common history who is to dictate what sounds "strange" and what sounds "proper".

Is it not insightful to discover how the audio and visual impact of English manifests across different cultures? Language is in many senses "self-organising", the greater the complexity of its evolution the greater the texture one can achieve through it. If we think of language as always being "insufficient" to translate "what is inside of us", there should be no attachment to canon. It's not simply a matter of putting words back into perspective but observing a language use that is would have been impossible for the original countries to achieve in the absence of different cultural background and adoption in a different time period.

For any observations to be made then it's obvious both parties must communicate through whatever way their perception of which way words are going. I don't know if many Japanese are scared to display the liberal assimilation of English to Westerners but they should be interested to hear our thoughts on why certians words appear to be reborn in modern day culture. There are issues of substance to distinguished, for example are some usages of words novel to Japanese merely because it is free of the everyday, boring connatations of their corresponding local words, or is the usage speaking through its symbolism encapsulating the insane history of Western society?

This same argument clearly applies to other Western "inventions" and products and the ways they are reappropriated for use in contemporary Japan. Is it possible that simple everyday appliances are looked upon with "fresh" eyes again after observing cultural acts and experiments in anime? Both cultures are "experts" in their different fields, and it only makes sense to broaden the field by having two perceptions interact. This is not the same as having a good patronising laugh at so-called "misuse" of English and pinning up for all to see and walk away from. Would we then be too scared to "liberate" some Japanese words ripe for the peeling? -ls

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## Film and Animation



What is unfamiliar fights to be free of representation. Of course, how this is received by the viewer, they might not bother to watch. Nonetheless, it has reoccured to me lately that there is a major divide between live-action films and hand drawn animation, and that is in anime particularly images have less necessary associations than in film, and this leads to a lot of viewer experimentation with the image.

Films carry with them the unmistakable characteristics of the world they are produced within. There is little for the viewer to say about themselves when then recognise the shape of a face, or a city scape. The bulk of the information conveyed is in fact through the social connotations of that face. A famous face who has sold household products? The signs of aging? The signs of make-up doing its best? Popular fashion? All of these things possess histories behind them through the affairs of multiple individuals. Used as a strength, we gain a keen sense of objective about how society is headed today through film, and also see our own lives paralled through the natural mannerisms of actors in a location.

This sort of empathy is not so straight forward in anime (and animation in general). To give an image's identity as human or living there is an automatic invoking of the viewer's perceptual devices. In my mind, clean images break down the connations of what is being portrayed into the elements that the viewer themself must assemble and breathe life into. This can carry with it the same connotations learnt from society, however there is room to look elsewhere here. We are allowed to exist only as the image before us and our feeling. Nothing in our mind forces us to remember what we have seen before. We are allowed to be and stay puzzled at what we recognise, because there is not necessarily anything here that exists in solid form, that is to say, no single form – the moment we recognise our perception is contained to ourself alone we acknowledge the instantaneous multitude of other individuals' experiences which will be equivalently complete. What were the odds of us recognising the same emotions from simply drawn images? How is it that we can extract a wealth of information from a scene involving four frames? All of these questions point to an dynamic involvement of the mind not only piecing together the origins of its individual development but the co-existence of others who send messages that their history is built with the same code. With each 'new' re-simplified image don't we have a chance of going further 'back' in that code's upbringing?

To be free of the propaganda and advertising in the constructions of the modern city it is refreshing to be able to engage in mind think when it comes to the free representations in anime today. Many things go on at once when you are translating images to objects, evaluating their beauty, wondering how it is you recognise these images, and then their role in the storyline. Film challenges us to admit what is in the world today and allows us to celebrate our part in its flesh. However, film often must distract the viewer's consciousness whenever it wants them to construct something; this is typified by the inability to incorporate still shots within motion without screaming 'special effects' or 'forced acting' to our perception. Anime can get away with stills being part of its natural construction and acceptable as a character's movement. And why on earth would we want to see characters gagged and bound into unnatural positions in a scene? Perhaps, to ask is there a difference between being able to feel something and being able do it, and does it matter? -Is



masaka.... a *local* animation industry?

I'm not even so sure if local is the right word, for what I want to talk about anyway. If there are so many Australian anime viewers who appreciate stories from miles across the Pacific... then does that indicate an existence of *communication* able to de-emphasise distance and cultural upbringing? I am talking about the possibility of animation production in a country like Australia, dealing with themes not excluding traditional Australian ones but open to style and patience that we may regard as elements of the highest form of animation today, *anime*.

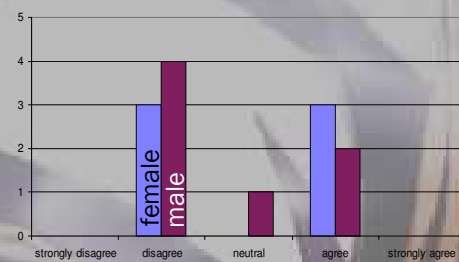
I have the least doubts about talent, and maybe share the doubts of many of you out there about funding. But, if everyone says that it is pointless to try without funding first I think spirit must be missing then and maybe the current state of affairs is no surprise. To a certain degree there should be some belief in your work... because content alone can make up for other "rough" aspects of the production quality, at least enough to get people's attention to the possibilities at stake. And, I would agree that it is pointless to look at this from a market perspective - there actually isn't a sufficient one here and barely across the English speaking globe (due to disproportionate distribution costs of physical media). Again this should be an initiative of affirmative nature - what it is in the future that we want. Initially the people you are interested in screening to are those who are already open to the themes, if not the possibilities. Short, distributable work would seem to be ideal for communicating this desire.

It takes time, but if every aspiring animator owed it to themselves to get involved *once* then they would have a lot of answers at the end of it in spite of the outcome. It's better spent resources than collecting and sorting all of the prize stuff from Japan, and it's not the career-destroying project, it's simply time. Write a script, write a *doujinshi* (fan manga), write a silent 30 second ink animation. See a hole and fill it. -Is

Gender issues survey

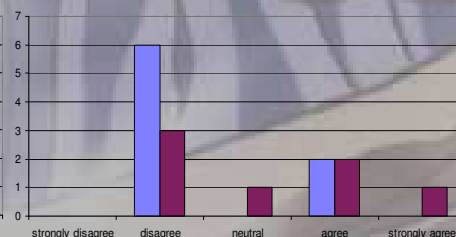
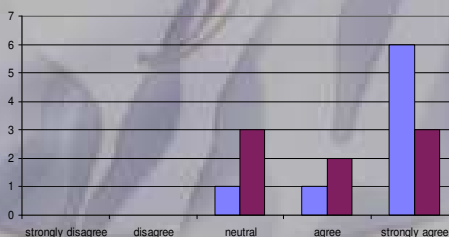
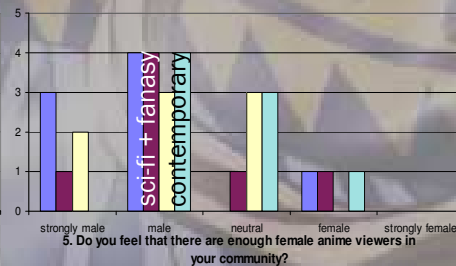
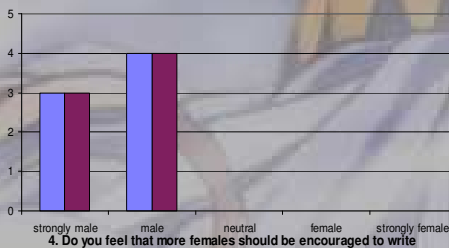
A survey was taken at wwa June on a variety of gender issues. In addition we asked to sum up the reasons why anime was watched: some boys' responses- kawaii, cool, story, new portrayals, interest, escapism; some girls' responses- fun, alternate representations, cool, interest, animation, escapism. Questioned on what people thought about wwa's female representation in the club committee, responses included: they are not loud but just as proactive, not many girls ran, coincidental, the numbers used to be even, dissatisfaction at this year's proportion, and that it was 'cause the committee members were all gamers. Send in your opinions and we discuss the results of the survey next issue.

1. Do you feel that female characters are portrayed well in anime?



2. Do you feel that most female "action heroines" are aimed at a female audience or a male audience?

3. Do you feel that female costumes in anime contribute to new clothing female audience or a male audience?



Voices's paper and web zine interested in issues and the anime audience in Melbourne getting together. it's easy to pretend we are part of this.

keep the conversation going  
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letters, articles, art welcome

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