

9
Issue

13.05.2015

The Zine

Science Fiction - Fantasy - Anime





Editorial

Greetings and welcome to issue 9 of The Zine! For those not in the know, this is the University of Nottingham Science Fiction, Fantasy and Anime Society's platform to share our creative projects with fellow members.

While I may have published issue 9 already, this version is way better (honest), with improved formatting, working links and a significantly smaller file size! As of the time of writing this I may not actually be on the committee anymore, but let's not split hairs!

Collecting enough content to publish an issue may have been a little challenging, but taking cues from my predecessors I have bribed, bugged and beaten submissions out of enough of you lovely members in order to put this edition together.



Ian Ince
Zine Editor and
Communications Officer
2014-15

A massive thank you very much to all the nice people who kindly submitted content, without which we wouldn't be able to have a Zine published this year at all, and I hope you enjoy reading through what everyone has to offer.

Please consider submitting content to the next Zine, or maybe I should say to the society tumblr instead! This is potentially the last ever magazine format Zine, if the new committee decide to fully switch to tumblr format. Even if you don't have massive faith in how good your content is, we'll appreciate the effort anyway!

"Our new tumblr page is now host to our society's creative projects and opinions. With short stories, art, reviews and listings of coming events, it's the perfect thing to help waste away the time you should be spending on coursework."

Tumblr: uon-sffasoc.tumblr.com

So, what's in store for you this time? Meet the committee (2014-15), various reviews covering games, anime, figures, books and movies, a beginners guide to conventions, artwork, some society history, and more!

Also, don't forget to follow us on social media! More information about events and any society notifications can be found on our facebook page.

Email: committee@sffasoc.co.uk

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/groups/sffasoc>

Website: <http://sffasoc.co.uk>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/sffasoc>

4

Meet The Committee

7

Dragon Age 2 Review

by Ian Ince

11

Seconds Review

by Catriona Law

12

Avengers: Age of Ultron
Review

by Stuart McCunn

13

Miki Sayaka Figure Review

by Amy Woodhouse

15

Lucy Heartfilia Figure
Review

by Amy Woodhouse

17

DO's and DONT's of
Attending Conventions

by Catriona Law

19

Naming The Zine

by Ian Ince

20

Fan Art

featuring Saoirse Freeney

21

Ask the Anime Rep

featuring Matthew Thomas

22

Record of Anime Watched
at Anime Nights 2014-15

25

SFFAS: A Look Back Over
2014-15

28

Featured Anime Reviews!

Ben Brown and Mike Begg

President - Ben Brown

Hello, my name is Ben, Benedict, Ben-chan or occasionally Lyla. I am the president of the SFFA society, and I rule with an iron fist. Of course an iron fist isn't very practical on account of the fingers not being too flexible and the whole rust problem, so I'm working on replacing it with a carbon-fibre fist that will be lighter and more durable in outdoor applications.

Of course, I'm never outdoors! I'm always inside, watching anime and sci-fi and fantasy films and shows. Probably. Sometimes I might be studying Civil Engineering, which is my degree, but that's unlikely because sleeping is much more fun than 9am lectures. I'm now starting my third year, which is surprising given my amazing knack for not passing exams.



Well anyway, other things about me. I'm a fairly big fan of anime and other Japanese things - I even went to Japan once by train, which if you meet me I am liable to mention at least three times because it was a really cool experience. I also love a lot of Japanese music and am an audiophile of sorts, with a large collection of headphones, amplifiers and even CDs (yes, the round shiny things from the early 2000s, they do still exist and I like them so there). In terms of anime I like original shows (not based on anything) and especially mecha and well-executed romance. Some of my favourite shows are Star Driver, Fractale and Cardcaptor Sakura.

For sci-fi and fantasy I'm honestly a bit crap compared to some members. I like sci-fi and fantasy shows, and I remember being fascinated by watching our Star Wars VHS boxset endlessly when I was a child, but I'm missing some mainstays like Firefly and Battlestar Galactica and most other big names. I mean I've seen the popular big names but I'm thoroughly missing out on the sci-fi hipster stuff. What a failure.

Anyway, I hope to govern the society successfully. If you're reading this because something went wrong and you want someone to complain to, blame Nick Hyde (see below). Failing that, blame Matt Thomas for not letting me show the Star Driver movie.

Treasurer - Rebecca McClelland

Having escaped my home county of Essex in 2013, but never the awkward conversations about a certain TV show whenever I meet someone new, I then proceeded to get myself elected as treasurer of SFFASoc I guess.

I'm currently in my 2nd year studying Physics but I also turn up on a Wednesday night occasionally, when I'm not reading or rewatching Futurama for the 5th time.



Anime Rep. - Matthew Thomas

Getting in touch with Matt was trivial. Always ready to speak, breathe and consume anime. When I first asked about him writing for the Zine, a fountain pen was drawn and pages of his various opinions on new and old anime alike were on the verge of creation. However on further clarification that what was required was not about anime per-se, it was difficult to get a reply. As the Zine publishing date approached I quested through the cold ice and fluttering snow to reach where he resided; the following was all that could be obtained:



- * Likes Physics,
- * Studying Physics with Theo 3rd Year Msci
- * Likes anime more :)
- * Is a fussy eater - LOVES PASTA!
- * Has spent FAR TOO LONG in organising anime specific events
- * Has hosted two early anime film screenings, Giovanni's Island and Patema Inverted.
- * Still looking for a new pair of shoes
- * Favorite anime:Steins;Gate?
- * Currently listening to Ayano's Theory of Happiness, Chorus version

Science Fiction and Fantasy Rep. - Stuart McCunn



Stuart was born in America but has since moved to rectify the situation. Already overeducated, he is currently narrowing his job prospects even further by undertaking a PhD in Classics.

This is all under the directive of his hat, which has taken over his brain and commands his actions for nefarious(?) reasons of its own.

All hail our glorious headgear overlords!

Communications Officer - Ian Ince

I'm Ian and I don't know whether to write this in first person or third. Ian then decided that he would just do both, and infuriate people with strong feelings on inconsistency.

Jokes aside, I'm in my third year studying Geography. No, I don't spend all my time colouring in. Yes, everyone asks that. No, it isn't funny. :P



About me? I enjoy infamously long showers, and just like many people reading this, I have an unhealthy interest in anime. Some of my favourite shows are Star Driver, Sekaiichi Hatsukoi and Kill La Kill, though I have seen slightly more than just those ones!

BL is awesome :D

Ian also enjoys gaming, currently still playing League of Legends a fair amount and having not yet given up Pokemon Alpha Sapphire. He kind of went off the Pokemon series after Diamond and Pearl, but has never quite been able to resist buying each new iteration of games despite the bizarre new additions to the Pokedex each time.

My favourite games? Pokemon Colosseum holds a special place in my heart. It just oozes so much character, coupled with a catchy soundtrack, and it's refreshing that FINALLY FOR ONCE the main character is not some kid fresh out of his hometown, but a total badass who, in the opening sequence, splits with his criminal organisation, stealing their super important Pokemon snagging gear and blowing up their base while riding off into the desert with his Espeon and Umbreon in tow, on his hover motorcycle. Need I say more. Also Miror B. This game, man. (Maybe I should write a Pokemon Colosseum review). Also Paper Mario TTYD, Final Fantasy 12 and (more recently) Dragon Age 2.

Social Sec. - Nick Hyde

Name: The name's Hyde... Nick Hyde

Preferred name: Agent 00... oh wait that's not me, it's Nick :D

Year of study: 2

Agency branch: Physics

Areas of expertise:

- >Gaming, very fond of the Batman series, Skyrim and Devil May Cry.
- >Anime, 366 episodes and a lot of free time later, Bleach is my favourite XD
- >Sci-fi, I love Buffy the Vamp slayer and Arrow. No, I don't know which is better between DC and Marvel.
- >Board games, nothing like a war caused on a board.
- >Occasionally saving small worlds that no one knows about or knows are important yet.

Agent Hyde is currently undercover as a second year MSci Physics student and has infiltrated the committee of SFFAS, so shhh don't tell.



MASCOT - James Titmuss



James is old. Like, really old. And we can't seem to get rid of him. So we just let him sit around and blabber about whatever he likes.

As MASCOT he is responsible for remembering what happened before, so his advanced (mid-twenties) age helps him there.

He fancies himself as the one behind the scenes pulling the strings. We don't contradict his delusions for fear of what might happen to his already limited sanity.



So with exams looming and my duties as Comms Officer requiring me to release a Zine issue soon, the best course of action was clearly to buy Dragon Age 2 and spend many days over the last 2 weeks playing through it. However, I am at least an opportunistic escapist so I figured why not use this as material to write a review?

This will be more of a 'I've played this game and this is what I think' rather than a 'this will give you a good idea of what the game is like and whether it is for me'. People more popular and better at that task than me have done that already!

Dragon Age 2 is, as you might expect, the second main game

in the Dragon Age series, coming after Origins and before the recently released Inquisition. It's a few years old now but it was part of the Humble Origin Bundle 2 and I had played and enjoyed Origins a few years ago, so I decided to give it a shot.

Some general info about the game:

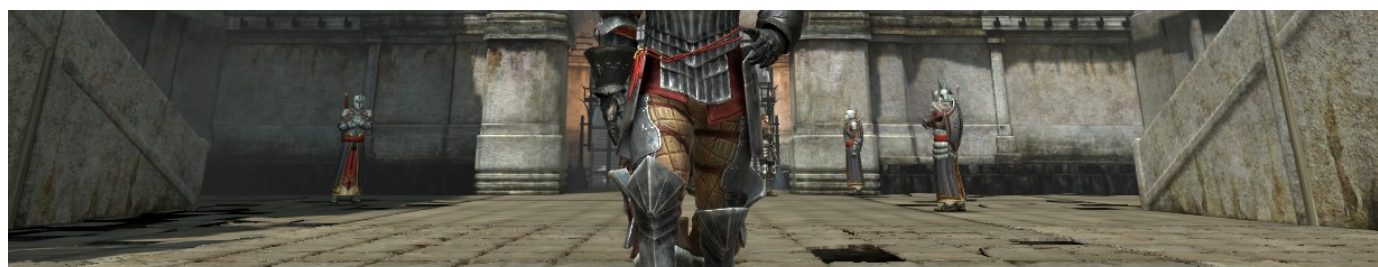
Genre: Action RPG

Developer: BioWare

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Platforms: PS3, PC, Xbox 360

Released: March 2011





My rogue class character performing an aerial attack mid-battle. Also dragons. It is Dragon Age after all.

The Plot

You can get full details in all their spoiler-y glory from many websites of your choosing, but I'll try to provide a concise summary here.

The protagonist of the game, Hawke, has his home village of Lothering razed to the ground as a result of a Blight, a major event in the plot of the previous game. Fleeing from the disaster, Hawke and family travel across the ocean to seek refuge with estranged relations in the city-state of Kirkwall.

Upon arrival, they discover that said relative has lost the family estate, money, and social standing. The events of Dragon Age 2 chronicle Hawke's actions to reclaim his family's former wealth and status, involving shady connections with some of the city's more dubious characters as well as a dangerous venture into the deep roads in search of riches, and then inevitably becoming involved with Kirkwall city politics along the way.

There are more intricacies than just that of course, but I don't want to be that guy who spoils everything!

This was actually much shorter and easier to describe than I thought.

The Good

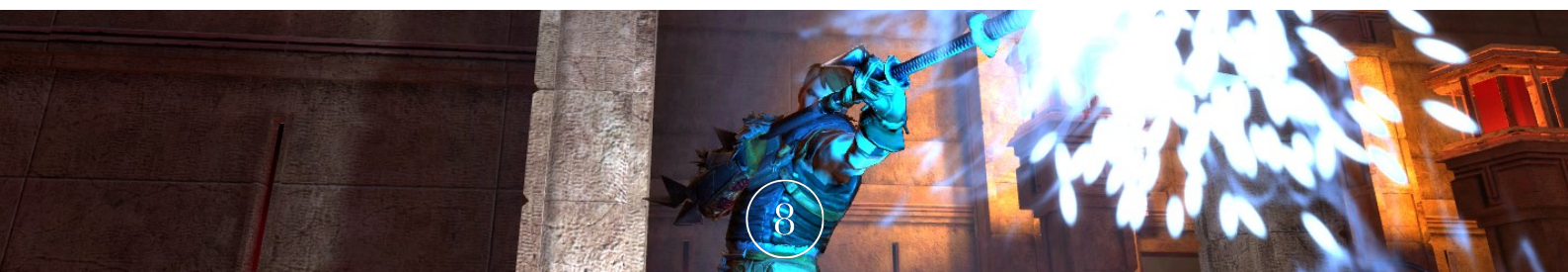
+ You can see which armour your character is wearing! I love games where you can see armour, and not just a default appearance regardless of whatever they have equipped.

+ The battle system with an emphasis on pausing time in order to tactically decide on a suitable course of action for your characters to take. While the combat system itself is your fairly standard button pressing hotbar affair, this extra strategic element helps to set it apart from many other games, and works great to boot.

+ FINALLY A COUPLE OF HALF DECENT HAIRSTYLES. Origins was awful for this, they all looked bad, with no exceptions.

+ Cool attack animations. Staves have different attacks for far away and up close, rogue characters are very acrobatic, with leaps and tumbles. I've yet to focus on playing a warrior style build myself but I'm sure they have some nice moves too!

+ No cumbersome encounters while travelling from place to place on the map, unlike Origins, where you would often be intercepted en route and have to face a boring instance with enemies or some other activity.





My archer firing a realistic amount of arrows from his bow in the form of beams of light. Also Fenris wtf are you doing.

+ No tedious plot arcs. In Origins, one of the main story arcs was incredibly dull and time consuming which honestly put me off the whole game because I lost the will to live.

+ One of my companions got pissed off at me later on in the game because I sold her default sword and shield which were mementos of her husband. It made me smile, not because I was a scumbag, but because actions like that are usually ignored.

+ The banter your companions will occasionally have with each other while running around is interesting and funny, based on plot events and their history. It's a nice touch.

+ Dragon Age really doesn't pull its punches, with (unexpected) morbid story elements. I won't give spoilers on this one!

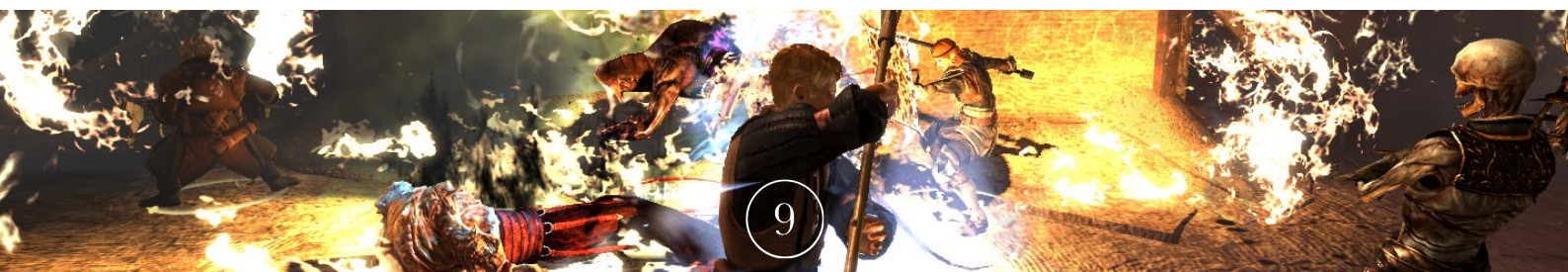
+ The day/ night cycle. It's nice to see the city throughout different parts of the day, even if the only things that change are the lighting, some quests, and the shops being shut.

+ In general the game does a great job with creating atmospheres for each location. In particular I really liked the feel of the tavern at night. Everything seems to work well.

+ Quite pretty, considering its age.

The Bad

- For some of the merchants and a few other objects in game, the click box doesn't properly align with the visuals.
- You could only play as a human, and not a dwarf, elf or qunari.
- Sister Petrice. That bitch.
- You can't change the armour your companions wear.
- Players are locked into a class specific weapon type.
- Bizarrely, some staves are held upside down. Like, with the staff head facing down and held with the top part as the handle.
- No steamy romance scenes unlike the previous and next game! There are romance scenes of course but they're just not... quite the same. Everyone is always fully clothed
- No gear previews in the shops.
- Disappointing cinematic cutscenes (but there aren't that many so it's fine). Weirdly grainy/ blurry compared to the relatively good quality of the game normally.





My mage mid-battle after casting a large aoe ice spell. Enemies are impaled by shards of ice and are bleeding excessively.

Things that were neither positive nor negative but are worth mentioning:

± Soundtrack. It's not 'bad' by any means, but it's just not as good as Origins. That being said, it has some nice lighter numbers such as in the Hanged Man.

± DA2 isn't open world, it is a bunch of reasonably sized instances accessible via map. Origins is the same and Inquisition to an extent is the same but each area is so freaking huge there may as well be several entire maps. There is also no fast travel within an instance in DA2, you have to reach an exit in order to travel elsewhere.

± Voice acting was passable I suppose? It wasn't cringe inducing, but equally I didn't think 'wow, they did a really good job'. That being said I thought a few of the voices were perfect, for example I think the templar knight-commander Meredith was really well done.

± More or less without exception, all headgear items look incredibly ugly. Impressively ugly, in fact. But there is the option to hide the appearance of said headgear, so it's not really a problem.

± Sometimes locations such as caves are reused for multiple quests, which some people didn't like. However I didn't really notice it being particularly monotonous myself, as quests often used different areas and it really didn't seem like a major problem to me.

To sum up...

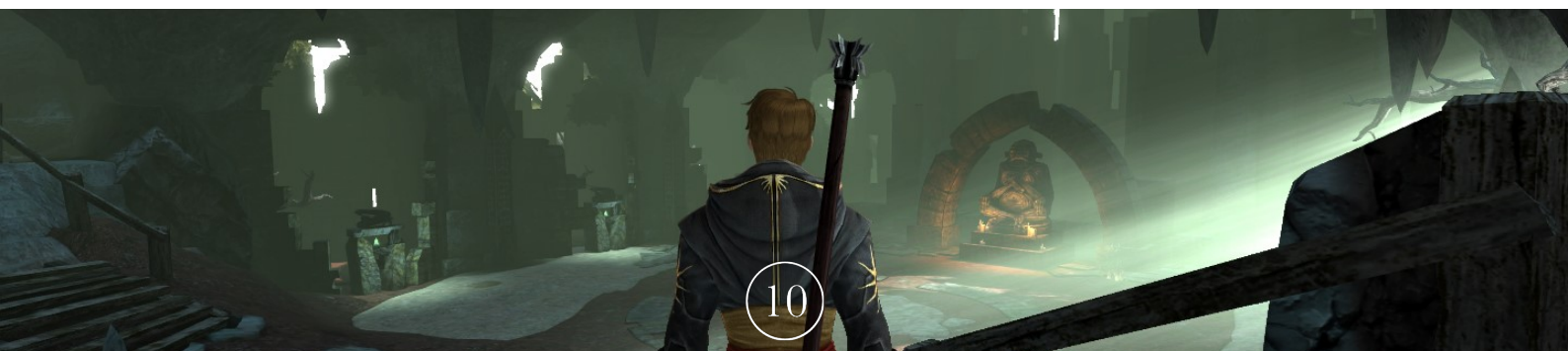
Dragon Age 2 seems to have a bit of a reputation for being a letdown after Origins, citing that it was rushed in order to ride on the success of the first game, and reusing dungeon levels etc., causing some of it to feel repetitive.

But personally I thought DA2 overall was great. It was enjoyable to play and wasn't ruined by the flaws it does have. The story was interesting and while not perfect it didn't really frustrate me in any way, so I'd say that's a plus. I didn't think any elements felt too forced, and there was a nice diverse cast of characters as well.

If you have played Origins and liked it then you might enjoy DA2 too, as the game itself isn't very different, with similar mechanics and battle system, a reworked skills tree thing, and a different plot of course.

I don't think that playing Origins is necessary to play and enjoy DA2, but there are a few references which you will only get if you have played it, and Origins was great itself so you might as well play that too.

While I didn't include all that many screenshots, I spent ages taking loads while playing through, so I may upload the best ones to imgur or something and link them.





Seconds by Bryan Lee O'Malley Review by Catriona Law

The brilliance of this graphic novel's title is a reason to buy it without even considering the content. Not only is *Seconds* the name of the pivotal restaurant where the action is centred or a description of how the story is about second chances, it is a cheeky reference to how this is the first book produced by Bryan Lee O'Malley after his *Scott Pilgrim* comic book series. Publishing an entirely new story after your last was a hugely popular multimedia success must be a hugely daunting experience, and the title suggests O'Malley is asking the legions of *Scott Pilgrim* fans with high expectations (myself included!) to give him another chance to win them over again. But has he succeeded?

The main character of *Seconds*, Katie, at first appears to be the antithesis of Scott Pilgrim himself: on the surface, she's a talented, ambitious young chef who has been running a successful restaurant called Seconds with her friends for the last four years and is now planning a new one in her dream location. But cracks soon start to appear in her life, and after a terrible evening ends with one of her waitresses going to hospital due to an accident Katie caused, she's ready to give up. Luckily, a second chance arrives for her in the shape of a magic mushroom and a little red notebook which allows her to go back and fix her mistake. And when Katie discovers a whole grove of mushrooms growing in the walk-in, she plans to fix her life to make it perfect. Too bad if the strange white-haired owner of the magic fungi says it's against the rules to use more than one- Katie has no time for rules when she's rewriting the universe. But rewriting the universe can have dangerous consequences as Katie's about to find out...

For *Seconds*, O'Malley stated that he was aiming for 'bigger hair and cuter figures', and '70/80s manga style'. He succeeded: Katie has bright red hair that wouldn't look out of place in Dragon Ball and the characters frequently slip into super deformed style during humorous moments. These simplistic character designs contrast the beautifully detailed backgrounds and building designs, and one of the artistic highlights is a fantastic floor plan of the restaurant at work. The use of colour in this book really helps to bring the supernatural aspects of the story to life, especially at the scariest

moments, although the cuddly style takes away some of the horror.

The majority of the characters in *Seconds* have memorable designs and personalities, from the fiery chef Andrew to Yana the bubbly waitress. Katie in particular is a well-written heroine- she's an energetic, often hilarious yet realistically flawed human being who you keep rooting for despite her dodgy decisions. The other lead females are well defined too, with Hazel the socially awkward waitress turned supernatural expert and Lis, the otherworldly keeper of the mushrooms who is trying to stop Katie at every turn. It's great to see strong, creative female characters, but on the other hand Katie's ex Max feels a little underdeveloped and like a generic 'male love interest' in comparison. However, this may be O'Malley's intentions as part of the plot: does Katie know Max as well as she thought she did?

Seconds is a deft mix of genres: it's a supernatural drama with large helpings of comedy and splashes of slice-of-life. The witty narrator is a clever addition, switching between revealing how Katie views the events unfolding and sparring with her as she refuses to acknowledge her true feelings. The story draws you in and as Katie starts to change more and more things, you can feel how her life is spiralling out of control on the pages in front of you. Though the book starts out colourful and light-hearted, as it progresses both the plot and Katie's world become darker and there are a couple of great shocks that will make jump out of your seat. At the end, the moral lesson Katie learns is very predictable and I imagine the overly neat wrapping-up at the conclusion will disappoint some readers, but as a whole the story is immensely enjoyable.

TL;DR: Don't worry *Scott Pilgrim* fans, *Seconds* is definitely a worthy successor (even a better one in my opinion!) with lovable characters, manga-esque art and O'Malley's quirky sense of humour. Despite a predictable ending and moral lesson, the twists and turns of the plot make this book a hugely entertaining read from beginning to end. Recommended to anyone and everyone!

Rating: 8.5/10



Avengers: Age of Ultron Review by Stuart McCunn

This film is a worthy follow up to the original Avengers film, and it's no great criticism to say that it doesn't quite reach the same exalted heights. Where that film was very precise and rationally laid out with no scene included that didn't add to the plot, this one is a bit more bloated and features moments where the plot developments feel thrown in to advance the story rather than because they make sense. The film just has too many ideas all struggling to get out, and sometimes the seams start showing. The rest of the time we're seeing the same group of badasses at work fighting killer robots or confronting their personal demons. What's not to like?

One of the nice things about this film is the sense of progression. There's a camaraderie this time round that was completely absent in the previous film. There are still causes of conflict between them, but most of the time they're just buds casually hanging out with each other. A running joke about Captain America reinforces this sense of comfort. We also see a few more players from the standalone films as War Machine and Falcon both appear for somewhat extended cameos.

None of the action scenes are as impressive as the ones in the Avengers, but they are still effective nonetheless. They are a lot more varied than the ones in the first film, taking place all over the world from Eastern Europe to Africa to South Korea. The final battle in particular is rather unique in its setting and very well managed. But much more than the last film this one explores the inner failings of each character. These were the scenes that didn't

feel as well integrated to me, although some of them reveal a lot about why the characters are the way they are.

Marvel has typically had a hard time creating memorable villains. While their heroes receive good coverage and conflict the villains are underdeveloped apart from their wonderful costumes, with the obvious exceptions of Loki and, to a lesser extent, the Winter Soldier. They've nailed it here as Ultron truly is a magnificent creation. A surprisingly normal guy for an eight foot tall armored robot with a god complex and daddy issues, he just never seems able to understand that what he's doing is completely insane. His efforts to be rational even in the face of obviously irrational behavior is what makes him so interesting. And entertaining. I think my favorite line of his was actually the mundane "Hey guys, don't be like that." It's so aggressively reasonable at a point where most villains would be cackling maniacally and killing civilians at random. He's not like anyone you've seen before and he's even a step up from Loki, despite having a single film to explain everything about himself.

In all, a good film and one that leaves us in an interesting place for Phase 3 of Marvel's cinematic universe. It'll be quite interesting to see what the future holds. I mean, the next villain could be anyone, and they've set up... oh who am I kidding. It's going to be Thanos. It can be no one else. They've certainly been dropping enough hints. He should be a tough opponent, but good luck making him half as interesting as Ultron is.



Miki Sayaka

Mahou Shoujo Madoka Magica

Good Smile Company

Figure Review by Amy Woodhouse

Miki Sayaka originates from the popular magical girl anime, *Mahou Shoujo Madoka Magica*, and is first seen alongside main character Kaname Madoka, Sayaka's best friend. She's incredibly compassionate and energetic with a hint of tomboy in her personality; a lively character who won't stop at anything to help others. Sayaka's magical abilities are centred much more around physical skills hence her having one of the only melee weapons, a sword, in the group of girls. Sayaka even has the ability to rapidly heal, much faster than the others, perhaps influenced by her strong sense of justice and due to her contract made with the mysterious Kyuubey.

This figure of Sayaka is the original version created by *Good Smile Company* and is of 1/8 scale, part of a set of five girls in total from the anime. She's wonderfully sculpted in her transformation outfit with such precise detailing and colouring accurate to the series.

Sayaka's pose, though not quite as dynamic as some figures, is elegant and very attractive. The sculpting of her clothes has been brilliantly executed to make her look alive and accentuate the

stance. She wears a shoulder-less top allowing for movement during combat and the blue section around her chest has been given a glossy finish reflecting a form of armour. The little ruffles around the edges of her top are very well detailed and painted superbly with a hint of blue to define the creasing. The gold works well with the shades of blue, though there's a little bit of messy paintwork noticeable only up close.

The pleats in Sayaka's skirt have been cut diagonally matching the ascent of the shape of the skirt itself just covering the tops of her thighs. The occasional flutter that's been incorporated into the sculpt provides plenty of movement and has been shaded nicely. Her belt, however, seems rather flat in comparison as it loses dimension across her front and merges with the skirt itself, however for such a small feature it's fairly well painted with just a little untidy paintwork around the buckle. Sayaka's soul gem is attached to her belly button and has been magnificently well detailed; small hints of metallic colour have been added into the blue of the gem making it look almost like a vapour or liquid as seen in the anime.



The sculpt of the socks and gloves have been effectively manufactured as they wrap around Sayaka's limbs nicely showing off the shape of her body whilst maintaining their dimension and not sinking into her skin. Her hands are beautifully sculpted and have been manufactured to come apart at the wrist allowing a change of pose without showing seam lines. Sayaka's default pose without the swords makes her look quite playful as if she's flying through Mitakihara which is suggestive of a soaring bird; seemingly appropriate given her signature colour matching the sky.

The magical swords summoned by Sayaka are fantastically sculpted and painted with the inclusion of a hamon, or wave frost across the blade completing the look to give a magnificent, metallic finish. Additionally, she has been given a cape which fastens around her neck finalising her 'knight' ensemble which looks to be fluttering in the wind enhancing the elegance of the figure.

Sayaka's bright blue hair is shaded brilliantly, darkening towards the ends to give it a shiny appearance. Each strand of her hair comes to a fine point with a few layers in the back giving it a nice amount of volume and dimension as well as a couple of small cute flicks creating movement.

Our mahou shoujo has a lovely round face with full, blushing cheeks brightening up the figure. She also wears a welcoming expression, fully calm and collected with big round blue eyes softly shaded complimenting her gentle features which is well suited to both of the optional graceful poses.

The base, like the other girls in this particular line of figures, corresponds with Sayaka's signature colour, and though modest in shape, the base possesses a gradient of colour from the edges fading into the centre; a very aesthetically pleasing base when put alongside the other matching figures and in no way withdraws attention from the figure itself. Her beautifully sculpted shoes attach with two pegs into the base including a small arc at the back providing support.

Overall, Miki Sayaka is an extraordinarily well manufactured figure and poses only the fewest of mistakes in paintwork with a truly well-executed sculpt. She's a wonderful addition to any collection and is a great representation of the magical girl from *Mahou Shoujo Madoka Magica* for those well-acquainted with the series.

Lucy Heartfilia - Fairy Tail - Good Smile Company

Figure Review by Amy Woodhouse

Lucy Heartfilia is from the popular shounen anime, *Fairy Tail*, a Wizard's Guild in the town of Magnolia. This heroine is desperate to join the guild and with help from fellow protagonist Natsu Dragneel, her wish is finally granted. Lucy simply exudes sex appeal and often uses this to her advantage during tasks taken from the guild, though she's not all about vanity and comes across as an intelligent, caring girl who's passionate about literature and will do almost anything to help her friends and fellow guild members. Lucy is a Celestial Wizard who uses keys to open the path that connects our world to the Celestial universe in which spirits she has contracted with, aid her in numerous battles.

This particular figure of Lucy is of 1/7 scale and is the first of the series *Fairy Tail* to be released by *Good Smile Company* and Masa, the sculptor of this figure, has done well to show off her curvaceous body with this collectible.

Lucy doesn't have the most dynamic pose in the figure industry, but it works well to show off her curvaceous body that she's always so proud of. Her top has been well moulded to her body with no unsightly gaps disguising her cast-off ability whilst exposing a great amount of her voluptuous chest.

The paintwork is absolutely stunning, every stroke has been perfectly executed and only a little bit of paint from the silver of her zip has been misplaced onto the top, but it's hardly noticeable. When cast off, however, there are huge gaps between her clothing and arms showing a poor sculpt.

The shape of Lucy's skirt really accentuates her curvaceous hips and has so much movement that it really brings the figure to life. Like the top, her skirt is immaculately painted and the sculpting of each pleat is fantastic; it really brings dimension to the figure. The belt is quite well painted with a metallic finish and a splash of pink matching her guild mark, however the overall sculpt is quite flat in contrast to the rest of the figure.

The thigh-high socks are flawless and the slight shading that's been included is very attractive. Lucy's been manufactured with slight indents where the socks hug her body making for a much more realistic sculpt. The boots are incredibly eye-catching and possess a glossy finish allowing them to really stand out; the brown colour also helps to tone down the intense black of the socks that would otherwise look unseemly with her white outfit.

The brown satchel is magnificently sculpted with bronze buckles and hangs nicely from Lucy tucking slightly beneath her top to hold it in place. The gradient colour across the satchel gives a nice vintage effect bringing character to the figure. An optional

The term 'cast off' refers to the clothes being removable.



pouch is provided which may be removed; the paintwork is slightly messy but it is well sculpted and sits in Lucy's waist nicely.

The Fairy Tail guild mark can be found on Lucy's right hand in a pale pink matching the tint of her finely painted nails. In her other hand, Lucy clutches a Celestial key, ready to open the path between our worlds; the key, unfortunately, is not designed like those found in the anime, nevertheless it has been given a metallic gold finish imitating the rare Zodiac keys.

Lucy's hair is styled in her most commonly seen way with a little blue ribbon holding her hair in a neat side ponytail. The dynamic sculpt is well done with a fair few mistakes, none of which are particularly visible, and the paint is wonderfully shaded atop her head but becomes more uniform in colour further towards the tips.

Lucy's big brown eyes are reasonably accurate to what's seen in the series, but they seem rather far apart to be wholly true for her character. The detailing of her many eyelashes and the shape of her eyes themselves, however are wonderful and really bring about Lucy's determination as expressed through her features. A soft blush has been brushed across her cheeks adding colour and liveliness to her face and her small grin really completes her overall appearance.

The base for this figure is a simple round, translucent disk which holds Lucy completely stable with four pegs. The Fairy Tail guild mark, in Lucy's chosen colour of pink, has been added to the top of the plain blue base making it a little more exciting, but still not much to look at.

Fortunately due to the modesty in this base, attention is not detracted from the figure itself, but this particular shade of blue does not enhance the figure in any way.

All in all, Lucy Heartfilia has been well translated into figure form by Good Smile Company and holds plenty of high-quality sculpt and paintwork with only a few minor defects including the fact that when cast-off, the pose seems a little awkward, but regardless she's a gorgeous figure and a fantastic addition to any collection!





DOs and DON'Ts of Attending Conventions by Catriona Law

Booking, planning and attending your first convention, especially if it's a big one, can make you nervous. When (and how) should you get the tickets? What do you need to bring on the day? Do you *have* to come in cosplay?

I've been in this position before, as has anyone else attending a convention, whether it is sci-fi, fantasy, anime, gaming or cosplay-themed (or all of those combined!). So, after attending a few conventions, here's some tips for planning, going to and enjoying your first con!

DO plan ahead. Always research the convention you're thinking of going to at least a couple of weeks beforehand. Where is it, and how will you get to it? If it's a multi-day event, how many days do you want to attend, and if the answer is 'more than one', will you need to sort out accommodation? Sorting these things out in advance will make the day/weekend a lot easier, and could make train and coach tickets cheaper.

DO book your tickets in advance whenever possible. All the conventions I've attended provided the opportunity to book tickets online. I highly recommend doing this because if you book in advance, you can often get early entry and skip the huge queues for buying tickets on the day for smaller queues instead (especially at larger cons).

DO consider bringing a packed lunch. You'll save time by not having to wait in the queues at food outlets, and probably money as well.

DON'T forget to bring bottled water. You can probably guess the main basics you'll need to bring: purse/wallet, phone, tickets etc. However, I highly recommend bringing your own drink supply; conventions are usually hot, stuffy places and you'll need to keep hydrated, especially if you're wearing heavy clothing or a wig.

DO bring enough cash for the merchandise stalls. Although a few dealers at conventions provide card readers, there are many that will only take cash, and not all conventions have cash machines available on site! Work out an amount for the most you want to spend, add on a bit extra as a 'safety net' in case you see something you really want or for an emergency, and keep it safe on the day.

DON'T ignore the artists' alley. Conventions usually have sections and stands run by free-lance artists who will be selling a range of items including prints, posters, stickers, bookmarks, jewellery and more. These stalls are a great way to find unique and one-off prints/posters and other trinkets of series you like (many artists produce work based on popular series, as well as introducing their own ideas and stories).

DON'T feel obliged to come in cosplay. I went to a convention dedicated to cosplay recently and there were many non-cosplayers there, so don't feel that you have to cosplay or that you will stand out for not doing so. Wear whatever you feel comfortable in. I do recommend, however, wearing your geekiest clothing- it's the perfect time to get out that t-shirt with the super-obscure reference to your favourite niche series!

If you DO cosplay, DO plan it beforehand. If you want to make your own cosplay, it will take time, effort and money. Plan out how long it will take to assemble, and make sure you give yourself enough time to buy all the material, order any wigs or other accessories and make the costume. If you plan to buy a cosplay costume, make sure that when ordering online you leave enough time for it to arrive before the convention. Trying to finish a costume at the last minute is extremely stressful, and conventions aren't as fun when you're tired.

DON'T be frightened to photograph cosplayers, but DO ask first! Cosplayers often spend a lot of time and money on their costumes, and are usually happy to accept photo requests. If you want to photograph a cosplayer, always ask if you can do so in a polite manner and at an appropriate moment (i.e. not when they are eating, moving quickly, in the toilet or otherwise busy). I've never had a photo request turned down following these rules. When photographing a cosplayer, make sure to wait until they are ready (many will get into a specific pose) and give them a heads-up ("Smile! ... oh wait your character never does") before taking the picture. If you ask politely and nicely, they may be happy to pose in a particular way for you ("Would you be able to strangle the Kyubey plushie, that would look great! Thanks, that's brilliant!"), but don't ask for any inappropriate shots or positions.

DON'T touch cosplayers' props or costumes. At a recent convention, my sister left her large cosplay staff on a seat in a small room to collect a quiz prize, only a few feet away from where she was standing. She was really stressed out when another boy in the room picked up the staff and started handling it. Cosplayers' props and costumes can take a lot of time to make or a lot of money to buy, and are often very fragile even if they don't look it. NEVER ever touch, take or handle them without explicit permission from the cosplayer.

DO participate in and watch events. Conventions often have a variety of events going on throughout the day, including cosplay competitions and masquerades, talent competitions, quizzes and workshops. If you want to take part, go for it! Don't be scared of entering the quiz because you feel you don't watch enough anime, or going to that workshop because you've never heard of Lolita fashion. And regardless of whether you participate, I would recommend watching the cosplay masquerades or competitions to enjoy the skill and variety of costumes.

And most importantly: DO have fun!





Naming The Zine by Ian Ince

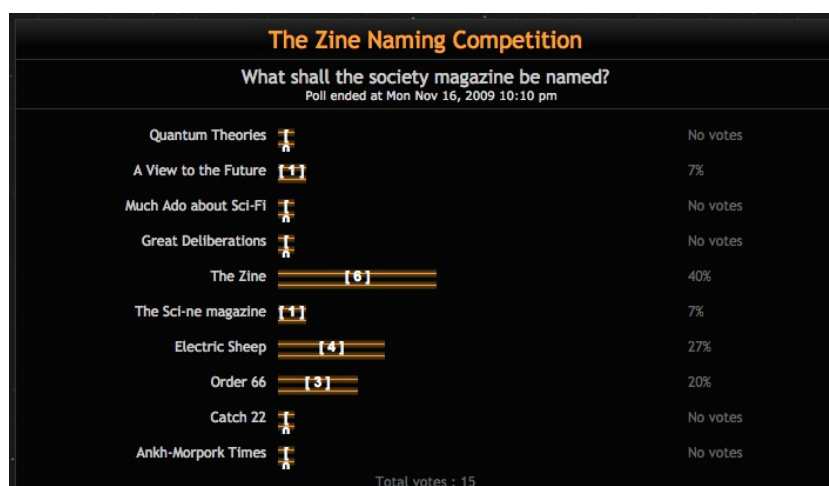
If you have ever wondered about the namesake of this fine publication, then you aren't alone! Zine (pronounced "zeen") is the informal short form for magazine, especially a fanzine. It's a perfectly logical name but I did wonder why it had never been 'properly' named, maybe something witty relating to science fiction, fantasy or perhaps anime.

Fortunately the (now defunct) forums still exist, and the answer is found in a section dedicated to The Zine specifically, where there was a poll back from 2009 titled 'The Zine Naming Competition'. Society members were asked for their suggestions and then the winning name voted on. Fighting off competition from the likes of 'Electric Sheep', 'Order 66' and 'A View to the Future' to name a few, the winning candidate was simply 'The Zine', and won with a grand total of 6 votes out of 15.

Despite the fact that 'Zine (with apostrophe) might perhaps make more grammatical sense, the winning submission was specifically The Zine (sans apostrophe), as pointed out in discussion later on by forum user 'Splend42', and since that's what people voted for, that's what it should be. It was noted though that Zine might be mistakenly pronounced to rhyme with line, and the apostrophe would make it clear how to correctly pronounce it. It was also mentioned that the transition to a proper noun could justify leaving it as is.

The issue was never really resolved, but I (along with the previous few editors) have decided to keep The Zine as it is. Here's a link to the forums so you can have a nosey around yourselves if you are curious:

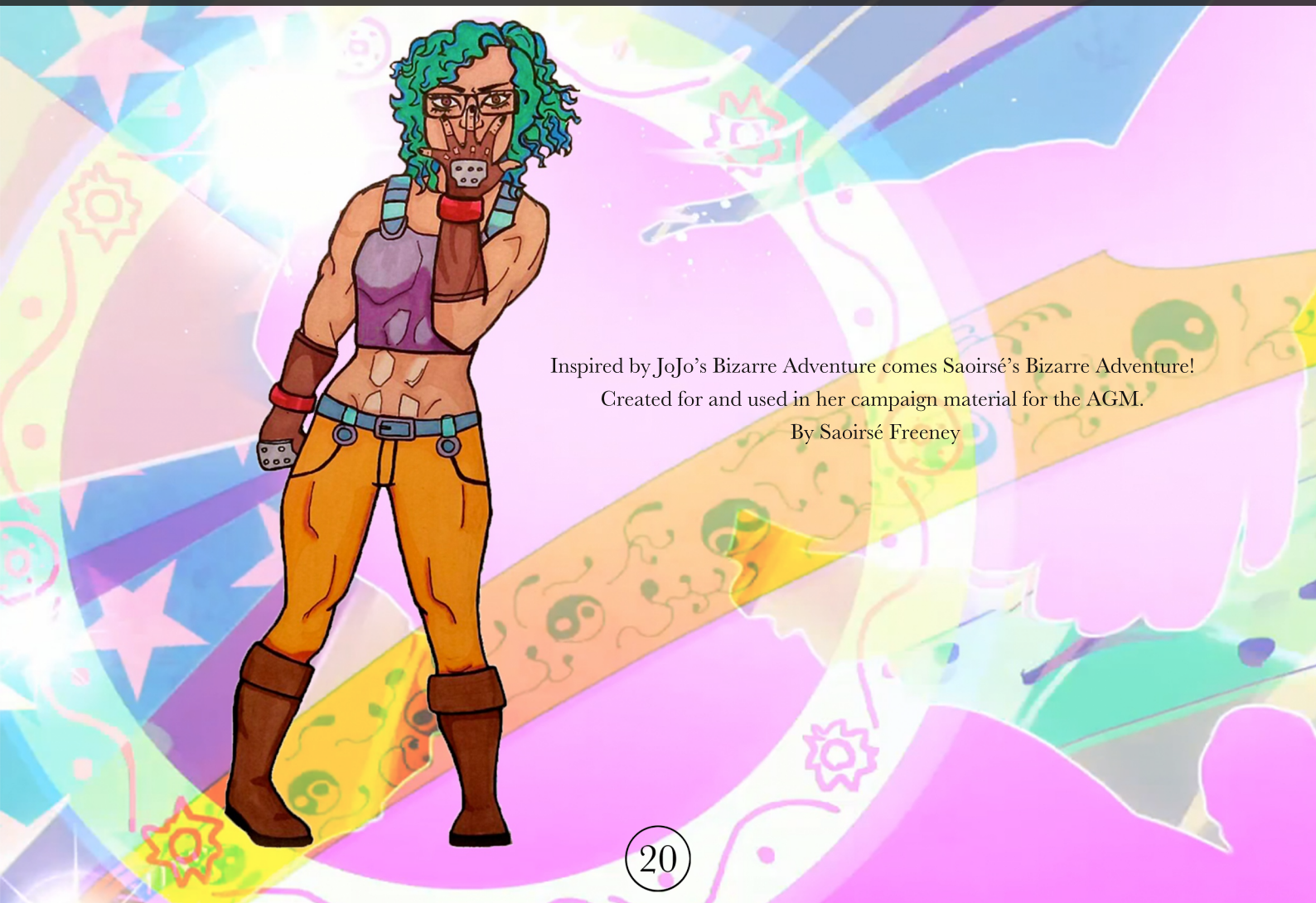
<http://su-web2.nottingham.ac.uk/~scifi/phpbb/index.php>





Everyone's favourite scissor blade wielding badass,
Ryuko Matoi from Kill la Kill! Don't lose your way!
(by Ian Ince)

Fan Art



Inspired by JoJo's Bizarre Adventure comes Saoirse's Bizarre Adventure!
Created for and used in her campaign material for the AGM.
By Saoirse Freency



[Friend of Friend] I like scifi and I'm relatively new to anime, what shows should I watch?

[Comms Officer] You should totally watch [Boku no P-](#)

[Anime Rep] *cough*

[Comms Officer] [Psycho Pass](#)? It was our set series this year. It got a little dark in places, was enjoyable and avoided some anime tropes which might be off-putting, eg there weren't boobs everywhere.

[Anime Rep] Psycho Pass (series on Netflix) and [Time of Eve](#) (series on Crunchyroll) are good choices, but it really depends what type of sci-fi you like. The dubs for Psycho Pass are good, Time of Eve so-so. Japanese for both are great. There are lots of shows out there but not actually too many good "intro to anime" style shows that are also sci-fi.

As more of a comedy set in space, you might enjoy [Space Dandy](#) (Netflix). [Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood](#) (Netflix) is a kind of fantasy that most people enjoy, probably the first thing I'd recomend to someone if I didn't know what they like.

[Knights of Sidonia](#) (Netflix) has a CGI style, but is a very strong and enjoyable anime series. Comes with a few of the typical anime tropes but has fantastic hard sci-fi world building.

[Steins;Gate](#) (Netflix) has the whole time travel sci-fi thing going on, though it can be a little slow, more subdued as a show than the others.

([Ghost in the Shell](#) is something lots of people might recommend, but I don't think it is a good intro series.)

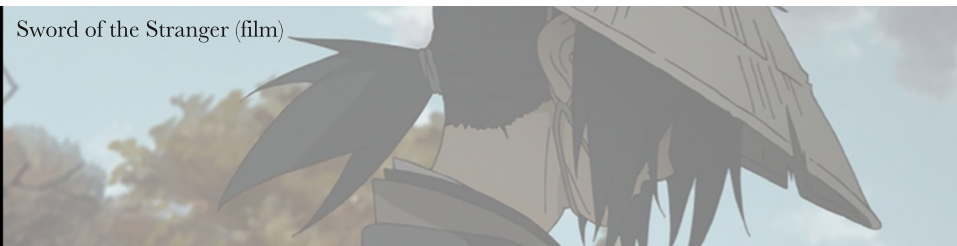
Finally, I'll add [Shin Sekai Yori](#) (Crunchyroll) as a great supernatural sci-fi series; a fascinating story of society far in the future built up from the emergence of psychic ability in the modern day. With a plot filled with intrigue, mystery, tension and great world building; this is a very well written series. It has almost none of the typical negative anime tropes.

Record of anime watched at anime nights 2014-15

If you have been along to the anime nights this year it's likely you'll remember some of the shows we have watched. However, in case you have forgotten, or didn't know and are curious, or just for posterity, I kept a record of which episodes of which anime were voted in every week. There's a couple of anime films we screened on the list too.

29.09.14

Sword of the Stranger (film)



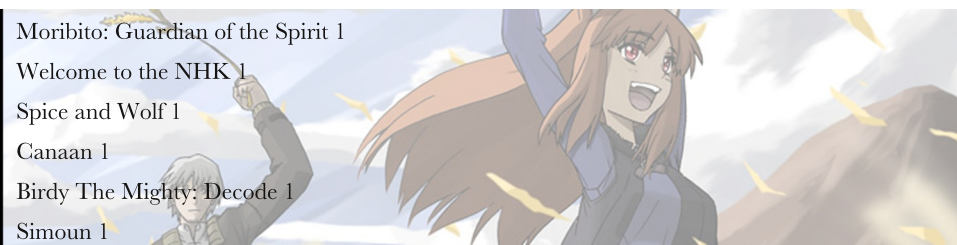
06.10.14

Psycho Pass 1
Steins;Gate 1
Cowboy Bebop 1
D.Gray-Man 1
Gankutsuou: The Count of Monte Cristo 1



13.10.14

Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit 1
Welcome to the NHK 1
Spice and Wolf 1
Canaan 1
Birdy The Mighty: Decode 1
Simoun 1



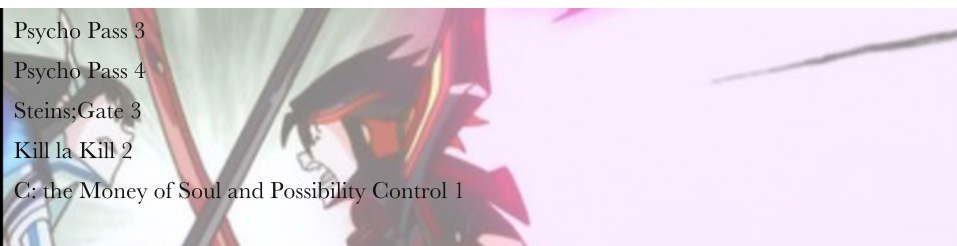
20.10.14

Psycho Pass 2
Steins;Gate 2
Welcome to the NHK 2
Welcome to the NHK 3
Kill la Kill 1



27.10.14

Psycho Pass 3
Psycho Pass 4
Steins;Gate 3
Kill la Kill 2
C: the Money of Soul and Possibility Control 1



03.11.14

Psycho Pass 5
Psycho Pass 6
Kill la Kill 3
Kill la Kill 4
Steins;Gate 4
Steins;Gate 5



10.11.14

Psycho Pass 7
Psycho Pass 8
Kill la Kill 5
Kill la Kill 6
Steins;Gate 6
Steins;Gate 7





Giovanni's Island (film)

14.11.14



Psycho Pass 9

Psycho Pass 10

Steins;Gate 8

Steins;Gate 9

Fractale 1

Kill la Kill 7

17.11.14



Psycho Pass 11

Psycho Pass 12

Steins;Gate 10

Steins;Gate 11

Tower of Druaga 1

Tower of Druaga 2

24.11.14



Psycho Pass 13

Psycho Pass 14

Kill la Kill 8

Kill la Kill 9

Steins;Gate 12

Steins;Gate 13

01.12.14



Psycho Pass 15

Psycho Pass 16

Gurren Lagann 1

Gurren Lagann 2

Steins;Gate 14

Steins;Gate 15

08.12.14



Psycho Pass 17

Psycho Pass 18

Steins;Gate 16

Another 1

Another 2

26.01.15



Psycho Pass 19

Psycho Pass 20

Steins;Gate 17

Steins;Gate 18

Another 3

Another 4

02.02.15



Psycho Pass 21

Psycho Pass 22 [final episode]

Steins;Gate 19

Steins;Gate 20

Another 5

Another 6

09.02.15

16.02.15

Steins;Gate 21
Steins;Gate 22
Another 7
Another 8
Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit 2
Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit 3



23.02.15

Steins;Gate 23
Steins;Gate 24 [final episode]
Fractale 2
Fractale 3
C: The Money and Soul of Possibility Control 2
C: The Money and Soul of Possibility Control 3



02.03.15

Steins;Gate 25 (ova)
Another 9
Another 10
C: The Money and Soul of Possibility Control 4
C: The Money and Soul of Possibility Control 5
Fractale 4



09.03.15

Another 11
Another 12 [final episode]
Fractale 5
Fractale 6
Bakemonogatari 1



13.03.15

Time of Eve (film)



16.03.15

Steins;Gate Movie
Fractale 7
Fractale 8



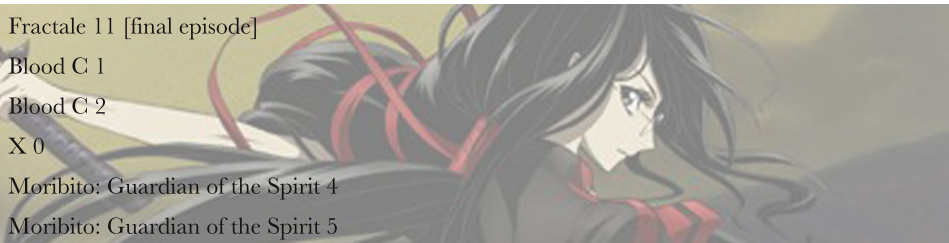
23.03.15

[AGM]
Bakemonogatari 2
Fractale 9
Fractale 10



27.04.15

Fractale 11 [final episode]
Blood C 1
Blood C 2
X 0
Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit 4
Moribito: Guardian of the Spirit 5





Monday 22nd September - Welcome Fair

I suppose our first 'event' if it could be called that was the Welcome Fair! It was great seeing so many people interested in our society.

Wednesday 24th September - Escape Week One

We kicked off the year with a film screening of the 1968 classic, Planet of the Apes.

Saturday 27th September - SFFASoc Meet and Greet

Our traditional meet and greet event, for members to get to know some of the old faces and also the new, held at our local haunt the Johnson Arms.

Monday 29th September - Introduction to Anime

The anime film shown this year was Sword of the Stranger, about a swordsman becoming caught up in a struggle between morality, righteousness and devotion after agreeing to escort a raggedy boy and his dog to a temple far away. Also featured an anime goodies raffle, with a selection of anime dvds as prizes.

Wednesday 1st October - Quiz Night

Another of our annual traditions, this year's quiz featured the following rounds devised by the committee:

- *General Knowledge
- *Anime Trivia (featuring the Guess The Gender bonus question)
- *Anime Music
- *SciFi Trivia

*SciFi Music

*Picture Round

*Cult and other things we supposedly cover in the constitution

*Committee Round

and even a super secret, super special

*SPORTS ROUND!

Friday 3rd October - Treasure Hunt

Working in small teams, members took to the campus following a series of clues to complete a quest line involving the mystical gem [insert name here] and an evil boss. Also included President Ben demanding groups tell him something funny, dance for him, or perform a variety of other menial tasks.

Saturday 4th October - Nottingham Comic Con

A trip to Nottingham Comic Con, started the year previous as Nerdfest Comic Con I believe. This time with extended opening times and an expanded number of exhibitions.

Saturday 11th October - Geeky Shopping Trip

A tour of Nottingham City Centre, featuring establishments such as Forbidden Planet, Page 45 and Cookie Shake.

Saturday 17th October - Cosplay Workshop

A trial event we hadn't held before, a panel of members with cosplay expertise available to advise and help people with their own costumes or projects. In preparation for our next event, which was...



The society trip to MCM London October 2014. Cameo appearance from Jesus.

Saturday 25th October - MCM London Comic Con!

One of our biggest and most anticipated events of the year, a day trip to the UK's largest comic con in London! There was cosplay, there was merchandise, there was all manner of other activities and exhibitions.

Friday 31st October - Pumpkin Carving

We had fun gouging out the insides of a select group of unfortunate pumpkins before mangling their butchered remains for our twisted pleasure.

Saturday 1st November - SFFASoc Halloween Party

Close enough! Our annual All Hallow's Eve party, featuring fun games such as apple bobbing and even a costume competition.

Friday 7th November - Cinema Trip: Interstellar

A trip to the Savoy Cinema to see Christopher Nolan's new film, Interstellar.

Friday 14th November - Film Screening: Giovanni's Island

An advance film screening of the animated film Giovanni's Island, courtesy of Anime Limited.

"Giovanni's island was a nice, happy film."

"might follow it up with crying in a corner for a few days"

Friday 28th November - Board Games Night with Boardsoc

A room, some people, and a selection of board games resulted in what I'm told was an enjoyable evening of fun for all!

Friday 12th December - Cinema Trip: The Hobbit: Battle of the Five Armies

A trip to see the most recently released Hobbit film! Which 5 armies those actually were was slightly unclear, as depending on what you classed as an 'army' the number varied a bit. Still an enjoyable evening, however.

Friday 30th January - Cinema Trip: Big Hero 6

A trip to the cinema to watch the newest Disney film. I have it on good authority that it was basically just like Frozen, only without the princesses, or snow, or singing, or trolls... But with 100% more cuddly robots.

Friday 6th February - Cinema Trip: Jupiter Ascending

(Another) Cinema trip... Hey, it's not our fault there were so many films to see!

Friday 27th February - Bowling Trip

An excursion to a bowling place not too far from Dunkirk! The evening involved bowling. It was fun. I got a few strikes, and one time somehow managed to miss every single pin spectacularly. This was with the rails up. Impressive, huh.



Society film screening of anime film Giovanni's Island

Friday 13th March - Time of Eve Anime Film Screening

We mix it up a bit this week, with an Anime film! And you didn't even need to leave campus.

Time of Eve (2010) examines a future where androids are commonplace working in all industries, and almost indistinguishable from humans except for a compulsory floating light ring. In a tucked away cafe "The Time of Eve", discrimination of androids is prohibited and the difference between Android and human blurs.

Monday 23rd March and Wednesday 25th March - AGM

A listen to what the committee-to-be candidates had to say, and then a vote (single transferable, for those interested) on who the society thought was best!

Friday 27th March - Challenge Run/ Treasure Hunt

A mad dash around campus to complete various activities to gain points within a time limit. The winning team being the one with most points- providing there was photographic evidence of it all!

Saturday 25th April - Cinema Trip: Avengers: Age of Ultron

You know the drill by now, we went to the cinema to see the latest Avengers film.

Editor's Note: Unfortunately I wasn't able to showcase all picture of all the events in the Zine, but if you check out the society facebook page, there are a lot more there: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/sfhsoc/>



Featured Anime Reviews!

I thought I knew a thing or two about anime until I came across these guys! (*see also: Mattman*)

Interested in what was airing way back when? Unsure of what to watch next? Maybe you just appreciate some well written content? Check out their rundown of some of 2014's best (and worst) shows. Go read them, go!

I decided to link their respective blogs instead of copy-pasting them word for word, which would probably have ended up looking worse than the originals, and also I'm lazy. Enjoy!

Link to Ben Brown's 2014 anime review:

<https://supernizzle.wordpress.com/2015/01/09/anime-2014-round-up/>

Link to Mike Begg's 2014 anime review:

<http://kongmingsays.blogspot.co.uk/2015/03/a-look-back-anime-of-2014.html>

9
Issue

13.05.2015



The Zine

Science Fiction - Fantasy - Anime