

And So It Begins!

FanimeCon Opening Ceremony

*By: Ian Stait-Gardener
Writer and Photographer*

I wasn't quite sure what to expect from FanimeCon 2006, as this was going to be my first con in over 12 years, but that didn't slow me down on the drive to San Jose. When I arrived on Friday I was immediately inundated with costumed figures I could not identify and a collection of new terms which I would only start to understand and use by the end of the event. But the attitudes of fans were great as they helped me stumble through the native language of Anime. Equally amazing were the costumes, many of which I'm sure took quite some time to both make and don every-day.



Guy with anime armor

But just getting to the convention center was truly only the beginning of my adventure that would allow me little sleep over a period of four days. First item on my schedule was to check out the opening ceremony, luckily for me the great staff made accommodations for those of us that couldn't get there at 10am and scheduled the ceremony in the evening. The fan attendance at the opening was less than amazing to be honest, but the information the staff passed onto those of us in attendance was most useful.

At the opening they introduced such names as Hiroyuka Yamaga, Kazuhiro Takamura, Takahiro Mizushima, Asami Sanada, Ryoichi Koga, Ric Meyers and Gilles Poitras. That's just to name a few of the great guests they had scheduled to speak at the con. Along with these introductions, the San Jose Kung Fu Club gave us a sample of the performance they had planned for us later in the con.

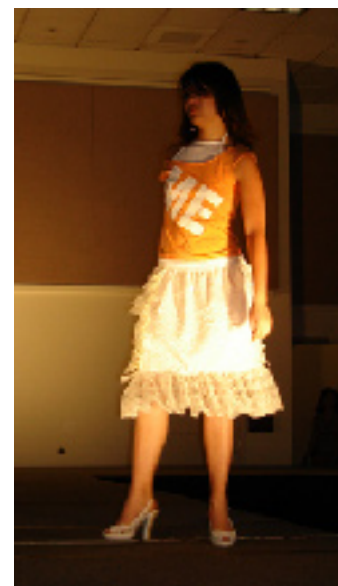
After the opening ceremony, I spent some time checking out the vendor hall, e-gaming hall and the Exhibit Hall. But despite the flurry of activity that was already occurring around me, I'd have to say that the show didn't really kick off until Saturday, when the poor folks with the 9 to 5s could finally dress and show us their devotion and enthusiasm.

Antagonite: Fashion at Fanime

*By: Andrea Campbell
Writer and Photographer*

The lights dim, the mic is tested "1, 2, 3" and one by one models parade down the runway towards the anxious fans. The first fashion show at Fanime took a look at young women and mens apparel for evening and day time wear.

First ladies wearing trendy screen printed tees and club inspired knee lengths skirts donned the stage along with mens casual attire shown in tees and fitted jeans. The designers Christina Huang, Rebecca Chan, and Emily Robbins drew inspiration from the fashions of their hometowns in Vancouver Canada as well as the latest runway shows in Milan and Paris. The result was awesome vintage inspired tees, mesh overlaid skirts, and the perfect bootcut jeans for men. Destruction was the main focus of the



*Mesh Accented Skirts
and Vintage Tee's*

mens denim in a light blue tint these pants can match back to any tee or button up top. Women were shown great light weight skirts to help beat the summer heat as well as tanks in various silhouettes.



*Illustration Destroyed
Denim with Vintage
Button-Up Shirts*

Next Teri Nguyen shows us the beauty of the plus size woman with her line Malchanceux. Focusing on the best parts of her customer we see low cut tops with fitted bottoms accenting the femininity of the junior plus size woman. Cute button up shirts with menswear inspired ties paired with denim capris. Nguyen also has developed a mens line with a 40's gangster influence. Pinstripe bottoms and beater style tank tops set the tone for the mens pieces in her latest collection.

Last we were treated to models showcasing traditional Kimono dress. The brilliant colors of the different brocade fabrics accented with solid belts and over coats was beautiful. Thank you to the Japan Society of Northern California for showcasing these kimonos at Fanime.

Late Night

Coffee Anyone?

By: Ian Stait-Gardener
Writer and Photographer

Just like any good event, the folks at the con weren't going to let something as trivial as 24 hours in a day stop them. Nope! They made sure to use every last moment they had presenting opportunities for us to enjoy ourselves. Some of the activities were the all hours video rooms playing non-stop Asian film titles like "All for Love", "Moonlight in Tokyo", "Sympathy for Lady Vengeance" and that's just naming three of the many great titles that kept the nights alive in their own way.

But all hours video programming wasn't the only thing keeping heart rates up. Every night the dance floors filled as DJs from around the area started to spin J Pop, house and trance. Giving the fans just one more reason to get down and move. Now, I know what you're thinking. That's Amazing! And you're right, I mean, who wouldn't like scantily clad men and women moving with the rhythmic beats of the music, well as the saying goes, soap is you friend!



*Late Night
Techno Dance Room*

After the doors on the dance floor close, you're left with a few options still, you can go back to watching Asian cinema, go to sleep (WTF?) OR, maybe you can take yourself over to see some Anime Anarchy, and when I say this, I'm not talking about flashing screens that'll send even the blind into a seizure, I'm talking about the good stuff. Blood, guts and violence! This is the stuff Saturday morning cartoons should be made of if you ask me.

After spending some time watching the late night Anime, I wandered over to see why the event staff had organized an ID checkpoint? Booze? Nakedness? Naughty fun? I just had to investigate. So I walked over to see what all the fuss was about, and that's when I heard another one of those strange words I kept hearing at the opening ceremony, Yaoi and the ever present, hentai. And as any

good reporter, I had to get the scoop on this yaoi stuff. So there I am, an unsuspecting passerby, and out of nowhere a truck made of OMFGWTF? hits me! I think that just about explains it.

Later in the con, after I drank the visions away and I was recovering from my traumatic experience with the word we do not mention I wandered over to see what was going on with this whole Midnight Madness nonsense. And nonsense it was.

Pure and hilarious as it should be. I'm talking beautifully absurd fan parodies made just the way we want them. Now here is where I must admit that I actually left before seeing too many due to the amazing ability of wall-to-wall bodies generating a disgusting amount of heat. Combine this heat with one room, lots of sweat and some fans' apparent phobia of soap and you have a lovely experience. After being there for fifteen minutes I was having strange thoughts of running around without a chicken and spraying milk with a hose. It was then that I decided maybe a couple hours of sleep wouldn't be such a bad idea.



*Getting some fresh air,
outside the Techno Dance Room*

E-Gaming Room

OMG WTF?

By: Jon Campbell
Writer and Photographer

After you have had your fill of panels, video programming, and shopping in the merchandise room, you can go and



Locals displaying the advanced PC-Gaming machines

waste time in the 50,000 square foot E-Gaming room. The E-Gaming room has everything you need, from arcade gaming, to console gaming, and everything in between. With a complete arcade line up of fighting, classics, and exercise games

(like Dance Dance Revolution).

Feeling like a challenge, join one of the many PC gaming tournaments, or just sit and try the latest and greatest PC games, before you buy them. When it comes to console gaming, nothing was forgotten.

With every game console ever created, you can play games all the way from classic to just off the shelves new, games like, Megaman, Castlevania 1-3, Final Fantasy 1-12, Tekken 1-5, Capcom vs SNK 1 & 2, and many more.



PC-Gaming: Tournaments, New Releases, Free Play

Thanks to Richard Johnson (who brought 7 Japanese PS2's) you are even able to play games not available in the US like, Pop'n Music, Taiko no Tatsujin, Guitar Freaks, and Dance Dance Revolution (Japanese only versions). So if you had your fill of panels, video programming, and everything else Fanime-Con has to offer, stop by and check out the E-Gaming room, just make sure you remember to watch the time.

See You Next Year!?!

Go home and take a Bath!

By: Ian Stait-Gardener
Writer and Photographer

Now, after spending Friday to Sunday adapting to fanspeak, character recognition and searing the nostrils, it was time to call it quits for one more year and part ways.

A sad day for some, a new horizon for others, but however you felt about it, you were more than welcome



"The Wave" at Closing Ceremony

to come and

share in the collective vibe of the closing ceremony. Much larger than the opening, they presented a slide show consisting of photos taken at this years con. As well as hearing Rob Miles say a few words, we subjected the staff and guests of honor to one last demonstration of the fans devotion as we all got up and did the wave. What better way to go out? And with that, I hope to see you next year at FanimeCon 2007.

xxxHOLiC (TV Series)

*Currently Airing on Japanese Television.
No License information for an
American Release as of June, 2006*

Review By: Jon Campbell

Story:

Everyone has something that they would wish for, something they desire, or something they can't live without. What would you give up to have your dreams come true, what sacrifices would you make? Watanuki Kimihiro, knows exactly what he would wish for, but what would it cost to have his wish come true?

Watanuki Kimihiro has had a difficult time over the past few years, as his parents died in a horrible accident, and he has had to take care of himself. Watanuki has problems other than dealing with the everyday trials of normal life. He is plagued with the rare gift of being able to see evil spirits, not only does that make things more difficult than normal, but the evil spirits are also attracted to Watanuki.



Yuuko (left) and Watanuki (right)

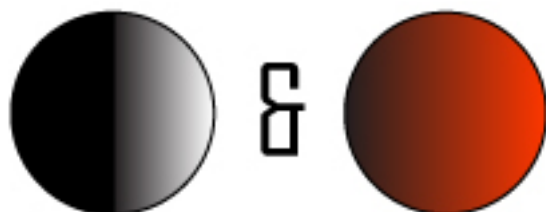


Watanuki and evil spirits

One day walking home from school, a large amount of evil spirits gather around Watanuki, and force him to the ground, the only thing that saves him, is by touching the fence of a large local house. After touching the fence, all the evil spirits magically disappear. Curious as to why the spirits disappeared when he touched the fence, Watanuki takes a quick look at the house, and is suddenly unable to control his legs.

When Watanuki arrives at the front door (unintentionally), he is greeted by 2 strange little girls, one with pink hair, and one with blue hair. These little girls take Watanuki to their master, a woman who calls herself Ichihara Yuuko, and is a local fortune teller, and expert in everything supernatural. After reading Watanuki's future, Yuuko claims that she can grant Watanuki's wish, she can make the evil spirits go away, but he will have to work part time as payment for her granting his wish.

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