

konshuu



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THIS WEEK'S SERIES

► ANIME SHOWING KONO SUBARASHII SEKAI NI SHUKUFUKU WO!

(KonoSuba: God's Blessing on this Wonderful World!)

Kazuma Satou, a gamer shut-in, one day decides to go outside to buy a new limited edition game. On his way back, he encounters a girl who was about to be hit with a truck. Without giving it a second thought, Kazuma dives in to save the girl, only to die and wake up in the afterlife. Here, he meets Aqua, a goddess. She gives him two options, one choice is to go to Heaven and the other choice is to be reborn in an alternate world to fight the Demon King. If Kazuma chooses to be reborn, he is allowed to take one thing with him to begin his new life. Kazuma, angry at Aqua for calling him an otaku, chooses her to accompany him out of spite. The two begin their new life in the town of Axel. Kazuma tries to recruit party members, only to find that partying with these new girls is just as bad as dealing with Aqua. Will Kazuma be able to defeat the Demon King or will his new allies destroy him instead?



Studio: Studio Deen

Original Creator: Natsume Akatsuki

STAFF PLAYLIST: "NOSTALGIA DRIVE (MEMORABLE INSERT SONGS)"

	Title	▼ Artist	Series	Added by
	A Cruel Angel's Thesis	Hinagiku Katsura	Hayate no Gotoku S2	Aaron
	Glassy Sky	Donna Burke	Tokyo Ghoul √A	Edward
	Kami to Hairpin to Watashi	Chiwa Saitou	Aria the Natural	Austin
	Libera Me From Hell	Taku Iwasaki	Gurren Lagann	Andy
	Little Busters	The Pillows	Fooly Cooly	Josh
	Natsukage	Jun Maeda	Air the Animation	Rika
	Obokuri Eeumi	Ikue Asazaki	Samurai Champloo	Tina
	Rap is a Man's Soul!	Taku Iwasaki	Gurren Lagann	Andrew
	Zero	Anna Tsuchiya	Nana	Nimsi



You might be thinking: “What kind of hero plays ping pong?” But the hero’s identity in *Ping Pong the Animation* has a clear, thematic, and symbolic meaning. You might start watching this anime with the expectation that it’s a standard shounen sports anime, but *Ping Pong the Animation* is so much more than that. It’s a tale of character growth with an entertaining coming-of-age plot and a profound message.



Enter Smile and Peco, a quiet and apathetic boy paired up with an expressive bubble-gum chewing ping pong prodigy. Peco, naturally talented at ping pong, sets his sights on becoming the ping pong world champion, while Smile quietly tags along as a relatively decent ping pong player with a lot of dexterity. Opponents have always fallen before Peco and Smile, but Smile always loses on purpose against his friend, as if he’s holding back on Peco. The reasons for his actions become clear later on throughout the show, but I won’t spoil that for you!

Unfortunately, Peco wakes up to reality once he starts playing against a wider range of opponents. As Peco

and Smile spy on their rival high school, we are quickly introduced to Kong Wenge, a Chinese ping pong prodigy that wipes the floor with Peco. Kong Wenge is a Chinese transfer student who was shamefully kicked off the national Ping Pong team and looks down upon the inferior Japanese ping pong players around him. He expresses his rage at his inability to honorably return to his home country by ruthlessly defeating Peco and shattering Peco’s pride. After getting defeated by Kong Wenge and also losing miserably in the interschool ping pong tournament shortly after, Peco begins to lose sight of his dream: becoming a ping pong master.



The next time we see Peco, he has become an emotional wreck. As a good-for-nothing smoker, he has lost all of his stamina and innate ability for ping pong. Luckily, with some encouragement from his childhood friend, Manabu Sakuma, and training from the mentor of his old table tennis dojo, he steels his resolve and begins training for the next interschool tournament. Meanwhile, Smile has suddenly begun intensive training for seemingly no reason. Smile appears to have no motivation for ping

pong, claiming that “he has no interest in the sport,” and that he could never see himself in professional play. But, in order to push Peco towards success, Smile hones his rallying skills not for himself, but rather for Peco. Later on, it’s revealed that Smile’s teacher also holds a personal regret regarding ping pong, which drove him to make Smile the “best of the best.”

As the second interschool tournament rolls around, we’re introduced to a fearsome ping pong player named Ryuichi “Dragon” Kazuma, a man who eats, sleeps, and breathes ping pong. As captain of the best ping pong team in the country and the heir to a giant sports gear corporation, Ryuichi has immense pressure on his shoulders to remain undefeated in ping pong.



Peco is unluckily matched up against Kong Wenge and Ryuichi Kazuma. However, we begin to see the fruits of his labor and growth of his ping pong style as he effortlessly defeats Kong Wenge and slowly but surely defeats the juggernaut known as Ryuichi. Finally, he comes face to face with his long-awaited, final opponent: Smile. The climax between Smile and Peco is honestly beautiful to watch, and has a lot of symbolic meaning to it. Spoiling it would leave a sour taste in my mouth, so I’ll just leave it at that! You’ll have to find out the winner on your own.

You might notice that I’m just brushing over the ping pong matches, but the show quickly speeds through them, because it’s less about the actual match and more about each player’s mental state. Players without conviction crumble like a chocolate chip cookie, while others with passion can overcome any odds against them. Interestingly enough, Ping Pong the Animation goes against the convention that “hard work surpasses talent.” There are multiple instances in which Peco defeats opponents with countless more years of experience in an almost deus-ex-machina fashion. However, I think the

overall intended message is that passion can truly yield success.



Honestly, there aren’t many flaws for Ping Pong the Animation. The “rough” animation can take a few episodes to get used to, but it hopefully won’t ruin your viewing experience. In fact, I found it to be a nice change of pace, myself.

Ping Pong the Animation’s music is extremely catchy and enjoyable. You’ll find yourself chanting “The hero appears! The hero appears! The hero appears!” more than once as the hero theme begins playing in each episode. Similarly, Kong Wenge’s theme song, “Like a Dance,” also gives off that fiery passion that Kong Wenge himself demonstrates as he rallies in ping pong matches.



In Ping Pong the Animation, no character is truly “minor.” Almost every opponent Smile or Peco face has a particular motivation, whether it be returning to China, becoming the best of the best, or settling an old score. In this way, I really feel like Ping Pong the Animation succeeded in giving each character in the plot importance. As I’ve said before, Ping Pong the Animation really isn’t about ping pong; it’s about how the sport of ping pong irreversibly shapes each character’s lives and influences their future.

KYOTO ANIMATION

CASSANDRA SONNE

Freshman, Media Studies

Few have trouble rattling off their favorite anime when the question is posed. Favorite animation studio, however, tends to be a harder question. Ask someone, “How do you feel about Studio X?” and you’re likely to get a blank stare until you add “makers of...” So, just who are the companies who bring us the anime we all know and love? Today, I’ll be discussing my favorite anime studio, Kyoto Animation, how it sets standards for the rest of the industry, and how it edges out a few other studios for my number one spot.

Before I go any further, I of course need to answer the question “What has Kyoto Animation produced?” They’ve been around since 1981, but their first anime didn’t come out until 2003: *Full Metal Panic? Fumoffu*. From there, they went on to produce a number of hits: *The Melancholy of Haruhi Suzumiya* (whose movie sequel is often considered one of the best series-related anime movies of all time), *Lucky Star*, *Clannad*/*Clannad After Story*, *K-On!*, and *Nichijou*. That takes us to 2011. It’s harder to judge whether more recent series will stand the test of time. *Hyouka*, *Love, Chunibyo & Other Delusions*, *Tamako Market*, *Free!*, *Beyond the Boundary*, *Amagi Brilliant Park*, and *Sound! Euphonium* are the main series they’ve worked on since then, and *Myriad Colors Phantom World* just finished airing. With that out of the way, we can move on to the studio itself.

What makes Kyoto Animation so special? Depending on the genres of anime you prefer, you may not know or like many of their anime. After all, they specialize in slice-of-life, moe, comedy, drama, and romance, leaving action fans high and dry (for the most part). Yet for those who do enjoy those genres, Kyoto Animation’s anime tend to stand out. First, Kyoto Animation has produced consistently stunning animation, even for shows that typically wouldn’t typically require it. They’re a master of the little details. Look no further than the musical performances in *K-On!*. If you pay attention, you’ll notice that not only do they play their instruments accurately, but the audience’s lips match up to the words as they sing along. Or, take the animation in *Beyond the Boundary*, which was done by Kyoto Animation’s B-team—first time animators who had just graduated from animation school. Despite this, the animation is consistently stunning and fluid, leading to some beautiful fight scenes. Anime is a visual medium; a studio that is able to put out shows pleasing to the eye in genres I enjoy warrants high praise for me.



This is all meaningful for one important reason: Kyoto Animation does almost all of their work in-house. When I refer to setting industry standards, this is what I mean. Many studios outsource their animation to freelance artists, who are overworked and underpaid. They average 11 hours of work a day, every day, for only

\$27,689 a year. Kyoto Animation deviates from this by having a staff that works for a salary, rather than just freelance workers paid by the drawing. This leads to the studio having a cohesive style, making their works easily recognizable. As mentioned above, they also have their own animation studio—which, if Beyond the Boundary is anything to go on, produces well-trained students. Furthermore, they're beginning to own more and more of the works they produce. More rights means more of a say in exactly how the anime gets created.



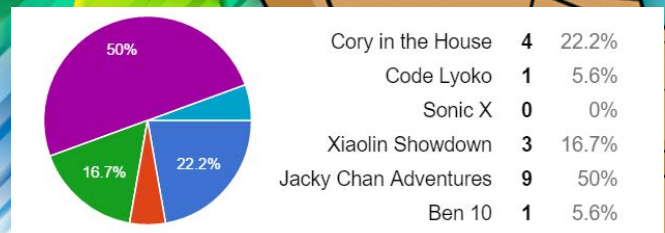
Many other excellent anime studios exist. Action fans often cite Madhouse as a favorite, as it's another studio with high animation quality that has produced recent anime such as One Punch Man, No Game No Life, and Ore Monogatari!!, and past works such as Death Note, Hunter x Hunter 2011, and Hellsing Ultimate. Shaft, J.C. Staff, Trigger, P.A. Works, and Bones are typically held in high regard as well. Animation studios are defined not just by their visual quality and style, but by the works they choose to adapt. They often get pegged for being best at certain genres, so it's not surprising that people's favorite anime studios may break down in part along genre lines. The reason Kyoto Animation is my favorite studio has a lot to do with the fact that I enjoy slice-of-life, moe, comedy, romance, and drama. But it also has to do with the fact that I like knowing the anime I watch has been made by a team who loves what they're doing and are being paid well for it. If the industry as whole moved more towards Kyoto Animation's model, I think everyone—animators and viewers alike—would be better for it.



LAST WEEK'S POLL

Which of these acclaimed and top-rated anime had the best English dub?

RESULTS



THIS WEEK'S POLL

Which of these recent anime has been your favorite Kyoto Animation work?

Vote now at: [J.MP/KONPOLL4309](https://j.mp/konpoll4309)

NAME THAT FOOD!

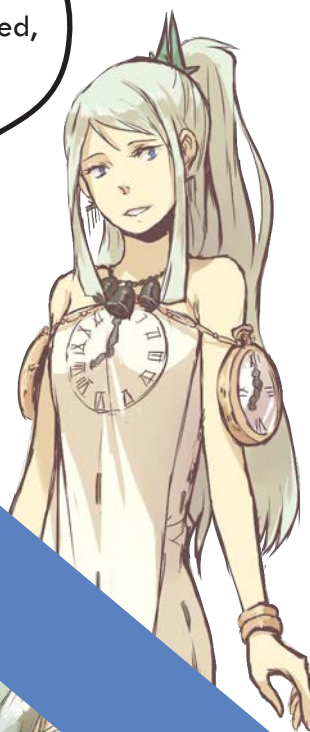
As followers of anime and manga, we have been exposed at numerous times to Japanese cuisine. Let's see just how well you remember what you've seen. Below are nine pictures of food depicted in anime. Your job is to name the type of food each depicts. A word bank has been provided to help you out; kudos to those who can name the foods without referencing the word bank.

WORD BANK
 GYUDON KARAAGE KATSUDON
 ONIGIRI SOMEN SUKIYAKI
 TONKATSU YAKINIKU YAKISOBA



Answers: 1. sukiyaki, 2. yakimiku, 3. yakisoba, 4. somen, 5. gyudon, 6. karaage, 7. tonkatsu, 8. katsudon, 9. onigiri

Konshuu proudly accepts
guest submissions from club members!
If you'd like to have content featured,
please submit to:
J.MP/KONSUB



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WEEKLY EVENTS

Anime Showings and Socials

9 Evans

Mondays, 7:00 - 10:00pm

Manga Socials

106 Dwinelle

Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Game Nights

2030 VLSB

Thursdays, 7:30 - 10:00pm

WEEKLY SHOWINGS

Dimension W

Himouto! Umaru-chan

NEXT WEEK'S SHOWING: HAY TO GENSO NO GRINGAR

