

# KONSHUU

vol. 53 #1  
Cute



**Happy Days**

D.Gray-Man

Art By Sharrel Narsico

# THIS MONTH'S FEATURED SERIES!

## ANIME RECOMMENDATION

### AZUMANGA DAOH

Watch sub but dub isn't too bad

Nostalgic, silly, and cute, what more could you ask for? *Azumanga Daioh* has a small cast of funny characters with different quirks that bring the show to life from Sakaki's secret love for cute animals to Ayumu "Osaka" Kasuga's tendency to space out. There isn't much of an overarching plot but the various character interactions make up for it with their eccentricity and charm.



Spring 2002, J.C. Staff  
Directed by Hiroshi Nishikiori  
26 episodes, 2 shorts



Spring 2003, A.C.G.T.  
Directed by Ryuutarou Nakamura

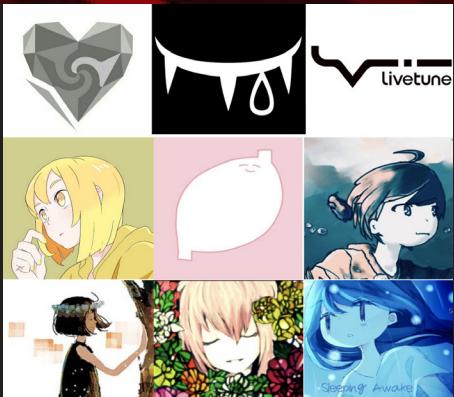
## ANIME RECOMMENDATION

### KINO'S JOURNEY

*Kino's Journey* (2003), based on a light novel series of the same name, follows the traveller Kino and her talking motorcycle, Hermes, on various travels. Each short story featured, spanning at most two episodes, explores a fictional country and its people and culture through the eyes of Kino with a light philosophical aesthetic.

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## Featured Videos:



**My Top 9 Vocaloid Producers**  
Released February 3rd

## Upcoming Videos:



**D-Gray Man | Speedpaint**  
Coming February 6th!

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**THE Mecha Episode | CAP #3**  
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**An Analysis on Tsunderes**  
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**SPEEDPAINT**

[Clip Studio Paint] Speedpaint- Gojou Satoru  
Released January 9th

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Coming March 3rd!

Watch these and more at [cal.moe/youtube!](https://cal.moe/youtube)



**Sona**

*League of Legends*

Art By Grace Li

# PASSION, VISUALIZED.



**NICHOLAS WONOSAPUTRA**

2nd Year, MCB Neurobiology

Doga Kobo's great

**Writer**

"It's spring!" - Aoba Suzukaze

These words may seem matter of fact and random. Afterall, the statement simply states the obvious: it's the spring season. However, these words are so much more than a random observation, as they are actually the declaration of the arrival of a fresh new start.

At first glance, *New Game!* looks like it's set in a candy-colored wonderland, and to some extent, it is. Its oversaturated color palette is carefully utilized to construct an ideal world: one where the city skyline is backed by a canvas of beautiful violet galaxies, where the sakura trees are always in full bloom, and where eyes filled with joy burst with sparkles. This extends into the show's representation of the standard game industry workplace. Cubicles are bright green with an assortment of decorations to each character, but are often way too excessive and neat than what most professionals would find relatable.



This leads me to my personal view of *New Game!*'s world as one that is lived, not real. We see the world through the eyes of a new employee, someone excited to have responsibilities of their own. This is compounded by the show's repetitive need to emphasize Aoba's youth to point out something more important than her actual age: she is unprepared for the workplace and the intensive work needs to be done to bring her dream to fruition. This inexperience and naiveté creates a world of endless possibility; one that isn't limited by the bounds of reality.

Despite the lack of realism, the world still feels real as it is perfectly functioning within its own internal logic. In a world where light pollution doesn't stop the milky way and where a new hire has no pressure to work their ass off, of course the office would be filled with random otaku trinkets and still remains clean, of course there's only cute girls doing cute things and gender discrimination is nonexistent, and of course Aoba would be hired to the company who made her favorite game.

Season 1 lacks a strong narrative throughline and relies on its strong character writing and animation. However, this causes the first season to be far more forgettable compared to the second season, which introduces a new set of characters, new conflicts and stakes, and thoroughly explores the mentor-student relationship Aoba has with her hero Ko, as well as the toxic, relationship-jeopardizing problems that arise during accreditation of key art and character design.

Cuteness forms the basis for the audience to empathize with Aoba, to the point where they become Aoba. Aoba is cute because she is relatable, she is relatable because her fundamental struggles transcend the cotton candy world she inhabits into the real world, albeit without the nuances of real-life workplace struggles.

*Shirobako* dives into realism to present the anime industry as an imperfect field, where suffering and regrets mix with elation and amazement. In *Shirobako*, animators can become jaded and forget the reason they tried to become an animator in the first place. Some are even sacrificing their artistic merit just to survive. *New Game!* presents us with what a healthier, almost idealistic workplace could be, but even in that bubblegum world, there will always be problems, unnecessary rivalries, and the path towards one's dreams will never be an easy one.



# MAHOROMATIC'S CONTROVERSIAL ENDING



TONY T.

1st Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

Guest

## SPOILERS FOR MAHOROMATIC

While *Mahromatic* is an occasionally enjoyable generic school slice of life romantic comedy, it would be forgettable and ultimately pointless if not for its controversial ending. The first 25 episodes of *Mahromatic* are fairly stock and not something very unique - the main character, Suguru, gets into shenanigans with the kooky strange characters around him with growing romantic tension between him and his maid, Mahoro. Said maid is secretly a superpowered android previously employed by a secret agency to save the world, but often, the only interesting thing done with this premise is how she strives to keep it a secret from Suguru and the rest of the cookie cutter, generic cast. Her limited lifespan is a focal point of the series, displayed at the end of every episode to an interesting effect. By presenting this dramatic element following numerous scenes of lighthearted jokes, it creates a unique dynamic wherein the audience is aware of underlying tension that most of the characters are oblivious to. Still, even in the instances when military conflicts or dramatic bits do appear within the series, there isn't a lot done with them and they often fall flat.

And that's why the bleak, dark, ending works so well for me. In a fairly unexpected turn, Mahoro is forced to self-destruct herself to save the Earth, long before her lifespan actually runs out. In doing this, the audience's expectations are betrayed as the series' final episode makes a downright bizarre leap into the far flung future. In this final episode, Suguru, previously a fairly generic nerdy romcom lead, abandons everyone around him to work as a bounty hunter on Mars. In doing this, he completely leaves the rest of the cast in hopes of forgetting the pain he suffers from Mahoro's death. Sporting a cigarette and a cynical demeanor, his outlook radically

differs from everything the character was established to be in the previous 25 episodes. After being backstabbed by a colleague, Suguru lays dying, before seeing Mahoro again. The question of whether or not she is actually there or is just welcoming him to a form of the afterlife is deliberately left ambiguous.

While it is intensely controversial and adds to Gainax's list of strange endings, I thought the ending showed a great deal of insight into the concepts of nostalgia and past memories. By abandoning his past, Suguru is left numb without any real purpose. Yet, it is only because of his past memories of pain that Suguru leaves the cutesy generic romcom shenanigans of his youth behind in such a startling way. I think the finale paints the rest of the series in a darker light, attempting to comment on how those past, rose tinted memories of a more innocent time should be remembered, but should not consume you. It's downright heartbreakingly how, after building up the fluffy cutesy side cast for so long, the series remarkably has an adult Suguru state that he hasn't seen them in years. But it's powerful. Suguru, in this case, is an omen that while it's nice to live in the past once in a while, it's incredibly unhealthy to be consumed by it. Thus, upon rewatches, one could view most of the first 25 episodes of *Mahromatic* as having narrator bias. Was everything so purely fun? Were all the characters that idealized? All of that is thus left up for question by the finale, as the generic rom-com shenanigans become recontextualized as nostalgia.

Slice of life is, in its nature, somewhat escapist: viewers are supposed to project onto the characters and their struggles. What's really separating older viewers of cutesy school shows like *Mahromatic* from the jaded adult Suguru? By viewing such shows, aren't such audience members escaping into the past just as Suguru lets the past completely define him? Therefore, while *Mahromatic* is a very flawed series, I personally found the hugely controversial ending to be a breath of fresh air for these types of series. Your mileage may vary - I've seen a lot of people completely hate this finale for betraying the cute and fun dynamics that the show primarily consists of - but I found it to be a breath of fresh air.

# DON'T BE SUCH A TEASE~



**KHALEA RIDAD**

4th Year, English

To tease or not to tease, that is the question.

**Writer**



## SPOILERS FOR DON'T TOY WITH ME

Spring is coming! What better way to celebrate the change from winter to spring than watching heartwarming romance, comedy, a slice of life animes, or all of them in one? Many know the main dere types, like tsunderes, with their seemingly indifferent attitudes yet endearing or yanderes with their obsessive demeanor. However, other dere types extend from the main dere types such as hiyakasuderes. Stemming from tsunderes with characteristics similar to sadoderes that share characteristics with yanderes. Nagatoro from "*Ijiranaide, Nagatoro-san*" or "Don't Toy with me Miss Nagatoro" is one of these mixtures.



"*Don't Toy with me Miss Nagatoro*", a new anime coming out in April this year, is a romantic, slice of life comedy depicting amusing interactions between the teasing kouhai, Hayase Nagatoro, and her demure senpai, Naoto Hachioji. The story focuses on Nagatoro, who is different from regular tsunderes, in the fact that she teases her love interest to the point of tears. However, she isn't so sadistic to gain pleasure from physically or emotionally hurting her Senpai outside teasing, classifying her as a Hiyakasudere. Hiyakasuderes extend from tsunderes and love to tease their love interests to get a reaction, such as making them flustered or annoyed. However, they do not manipulate or hurt their love interest like sadoderes, known to enjoy hurting their loved ones and their love interests.

When we meet Nagatoro and Naoto, we are led to believe that Nagatoro is different from her friends, who laughed at the pitiful senpai's manga before leaving. Nagatoro decides to stay behind to tease her Senpai about how the protagonist's looks don't match his actions. To prove her statement, Nagatoro acts out the scene where the protagonist coolly accepts the swordswoman and calls her beautiful. However, Naoto is too flustered to act as the protagonist, proving how unrealistic the scene was to Nagatoro. She explains that the protagonist and Naoto have, "the face of a virgin" and continues to call Naoto disgusting, embarrassing him to the point of tears. Before Nagatoro leaves, she comforts Naoto, wiping his tears away with her handkerchief. While smiling mischievously, she apologizes for her teasing.

Although Nagatoro's teasing borders on bullying, Naoto doesn't seem to mind. In a later chapter, Nagatoro pushes Naoto harder than she intended, shoving him to the ground. Nagatoro's shock is displayed on her face as she shyly apologizes and asks, "aren't you going to get mad?" However, Naoto's reflection reveals that he feels different about Nagatoro's teasing. He admits that he does get annoyed and angry, yet he doesn't dislike talking to her, making Nagatoro blush, before finally asking for her name. This endearing confession sets the story between the sadistic kouhai and her feeble senpai.

The manga makes you want to dislike Nagatoro for her harsh teasing, but her Senpai's comical, flustered reactions leave you wanting to see when and if Naoto will stand up for himself, which he gradually does over time, yet he submits to Nagatoro. I also look forward to their amusing interactions that lead to lucky accidents or Nagatoro flustered with no retort as they get to know each other. I'm excited and can't wait to see this manga come to life with Nagatoro's sadistic, sometimes suggestive teasing that leaves her senpai a blushing mess, and enjoy his reactions.



# ARIA THE NATURAL THE CUTEST GIRL IS THE ARCHITECTURE



TONY T.

1st Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

Guest

## SPOILERS FOR ARIA THE NATURAL

While *Aria* definitely belongs under the ever-popular sub-genre of "Cute Girls Doing Cute Things" with series like *Hidamari Sketch*, *K-On!*, and *Yuru Camp*, I feel that statement gives a fairly poor impression of what the series' main draw is. As in, I don't think the "Cute Girls" implicated under CGDCT is really the best thing the series has to offer. Don't get me wrong - I found all the characters to be great in *Aria The Animation* (first season) and their arcs all culminated beautifully in *Aria The Origination* (third and final season). But for my money's worth, I found the second season, *Aria The Natural*, to be by far the most fascinating by focusing on a different protagonist outside the main characters. I think that the main character of *Aria the Natural* is the setting of Neo Venezia itself.



For people who haven't seen *Aria*, the world of Neo-Venezia is a bizarre, strange mix of sci-fi and fantasy. By all accounts, a futuristic recreation of Venice on a Mars which humanity has entirely flooded would not at all be out of place in a science fiction story. Yet, the layered and historied architecture on display, along with the numerous supernatural occurrences, makes the world feel fantastical and almost dreamlike. Adding to this effect is how the central characters all hold jobs as Undine - gondola-paddling tourist guides. By nature of being technology within our past, this evokes an antiquated feeling that permeates the entire setting of *Aria*.

Moreover, the settings often lack human beings outside of the character exploring them. They are liminal spaces full of mystery. Neo-Venezia is almost like a maze, with the characters accidentally stumbling into previously unseen small alleys that construct the world to be grand, storied, and mystifying.

But why do I specifically point out *Aria the Natural*? The season has to be the least discussed out of the three, though not without reason: *The Animation* is the entrance point which introduces the world and characters. *The Origination* features the amazing dramatic climax for all the arcs. However, *The Natural*, as the middle season, has far more breathing room with episodes of the characters exploring completely abandoned areas often with small supernatural events. As a result, I feel that no other part of the series hits the core appeal of the *Aria* franchise better than this second season, as the world itself is just brimming with intrigue. As *Aria* falls under the subcategory of iyashikei, series that try to calm and soothe their audience, I find it is not the cute girls that really evoke that feeling, but rather the world itself. Neo Venezia, particularly in *The Natural*, feels like a breathing, lived in place; exploring the world with the characters elicited a sort of childlike wonder in me that no other media has even gotten close to matching. While I normally have a strong appreciation for narratives that move from point A to point B to point C, like *Legend of the Galactic Heroes*, *Dragon Ball*, or *Future Boy Conan*, I couldn't help but be captured by the sheer quality of *Aria*'s worldbuilding, most evident in *The Natural*. Many CGDCT shows are iyashikei by nature of their character dynamics being relaxing, but simply by existing and being explored, the cutest girl doing the cutest, most soothing, things in *Aria* was Neo-Venezia.



# Staff Picks:

# CUTEST CHARACTER

## **APOLLO JUSTICE**

ACE ATTORNEY



ATHENA CHEN

*We stan a short king. Also his hair antennae are ADORABLE.*

## **PAPI**

MONSTER MUSUME



NEIL FRYDENDAL

*The most lovable birdbrain.*

## **YOTSUBA KOIWAI**

YOTSUBA TO!



MIRANDA ZHANG

*She's just a happy-go-lucky kid that radiates happiness and has a really pattable head.*

## **YURIE HITOTSUBASHI**

KAMICHU!



## **FUKO IBUKI**

CLANNAD



MITCHELL MADAYAG

*Starfish lovers unite!*

## **ALLEN WALKER**

D.GRAY-MAN

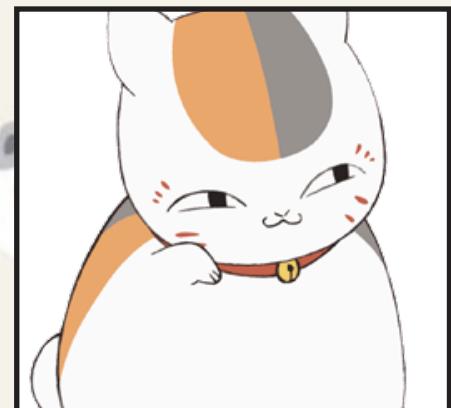
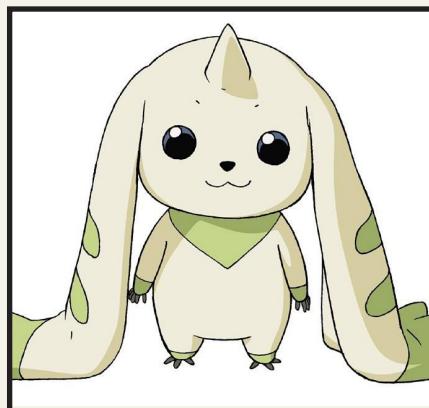
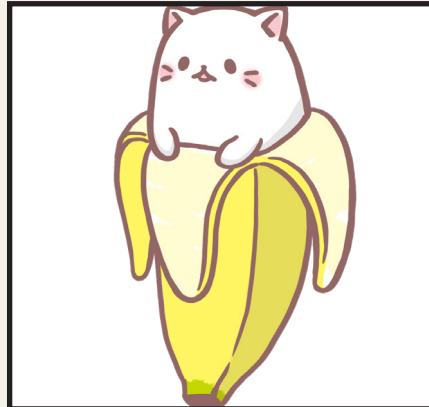


SHARREL NARSICO

*Every time I see him, I melt. I'm weak.*

This Month's Poll:

# CUTEST ANIMAL IN ANIME HISTORY



**AND MORE! VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE!**

To vote: go to [cal.moe/poll](https://cal.moe/poll)!

**Results will be featured in next month's issue!**

# DEAR KONSHUU-SENSEI...

"Hesō, everyone! Konshuu-sensei is back and kicking! I love chocolates, and am a big, big fan of comfy blankets. I also feel better knowing that the people I care for are safe and well, so I hope you're doing well today!"

Feel free to ask me anything—I'll get back to you on our next issue! I give life advice (don't trust it), solve love triangles (by turning them into love squares), and even help out with homework (the answer is 9 for sure).

\*\*You may also send in art requests for any characters to be featured in Konshuu-sensei, but if and when I do them are up to the fickle wheel of fortune! (Wink)"

Ask a question at [tinyurl.com/konshuusensei](http://tinyurl.com/konshuusensei) and it might be answered by Konshuu-sensei in the next issue!

# VOLUME 53, ISSUE 1

February 4, 2021

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### Weekly Virtual Game Nights:

Thursdays 8-9pm

CAA Discord - [cal.moe/discord](https://cal.moe/discord)

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[j.mp/konsub](https://j.mp/konsub)

**Angie Yonaga**  
*Danganronpa V3: Killing Harmony*  
Art By Kate Bushmareva

