

konshuu

PRESENTED BY CAL ANIMAGE ALPHA

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Hello and thank you for being a part of Cal Animage Alpha!

For the new members, I hope you will have the opportunity to meet new people and make new friends through the club. CAA brings together a truly unique group of people from across Berkeley, so my best advice is to get to know your peers. More often than not, CAA members stay friends for the full duration of their college lives. For returning members, I'd like to thank you for your continued support of our organization. You keep us going and allow us to put on our events. For those of you that haven't met me yet, let me introduce myself. I'm a 2nd year EECS major and former club Technology officer. This is my first semester as CAA's President and I look forward to making the most of it.


I'd also like to take the time to remind everyone that our annual anime convention, Anime Destiny, will be held on Sunday, February 21st. The event will feature artists, dealers, panelists, cosplay, and more. Anime Destiny, in addition to being a lot of fun, helps keep CAA running year to year, and it would mean a lot to see you there!

— **CONNOR "NICH" WORLEY**, *President of CAA*



THIS WEEK'S SERIES

ANIME SHOWING ◀ **OSOMATSU-SAN** (Mr. Osomatsu)



Osomatsu-kun was a comedy series that aired in the late 1960s. It followed the (mis-)adventures of six troublemaking brothers, each with a distinct personality in spite of their identical appearances. Osomatsu-san, now airing many decades later, is a reboot that proves to be both refreshing and faithful to its source content. The Matsuno brothers—Juushimatsu, Todomatsu, Ichimatsu, Choromatsu, Karamatsu, and Osomatsu—make their return to the screen in style, first “adapting” to the future by parodying just about every contemporary anime cliché in the book. The series continues in a similar manner, with plenty of ridiculous mishaps, gags, and pop culture references. What Osomatsu-san lacks in plot, it makes up for in unadulterated fun.

Studio: Studio Pierrot

Original Creator: Fujio Akatsuka

WEEKLY SHOWINGS

► HIMOUTO! UMARU-CHAN

Umaru Doma lives in two different worlds: She's both a well-behaved high school student fit for regular society and a lazy stay-at-home who does nothing but have fun. When she falls into her "indoor" state, she puts on an animal hoodie and is drawn as a chibi as she plays video games, reads manga, and watches anime. Her brother Taihei often becomes a victim to Umaru's laziness, as she often relies on him to maintain her secret. Umaru is a genius in both athletics and schoolwork, as well as a video game legend at her local arcade; eventually, her second life is discovered. Her two lives intersect as she makes friends and the two sides of Umaru connect through those bonds of friendship over time. Light-hearted, hilarious, and adorably chibi, Himouto is a slice-of-life about supreme otaku lifestyle.



Studio: Doga Kobo

Original Creator: Sankaku Head

DIMENSION W ◀

In 2036, a new form of energy called W (put into units called coils) has accelerated technology in the world; a grid formed around the world keeps this energy flowing throughout the new metropolises riddled with skyscrapers. Not everything has been solved for everyone, though; energy is a monopolized business through New Tesla Energy, and illegal coils are being made to serve the needs of the poorer. Kyoma Mabuchi, a Collector, hates new technology and drives around in an old, gasoline-fueled car, searching for illegal coils. On a particular bust, Kyoma meets a humanoid robot, Mira, who is being powered by illegal coils. She claims to be the "daughter" of the scientist who created the coils, who has since gone into hiding. When New Tesla finds him, he commits suicide by shorting out the world's power grid. Without a home or a purpose, Mira joins the Collectors in hopes of learning more about New Tesla, the company that murdered her family.



Studios: Studio 3Hz, Orange

Original Creator: Yuji Iwahara



“Are you enjoying the Time of Eve?” A message flashes on the torso of a woman with circuitry instead of organs. A high school student has his phone connected to an inner mechanism within the woman’s confounding anatomy; he reads the message, a confused look in his face. He orders a coffee, and the woman responds by quickly shuffling towards the coffee maker. He prefaces his questions and statements with commands, and the digital halo above the woman’s head changes color with each question.

In a single scene, the plot of Time of Eve presents itself to the audience, naturally and without assumption; the characters are not acting out of the ordinary, the boy in glasses does not question the circuit composition of the woman sitting next to him, and the woman herself remains neutral to the wire connecting her abdomen to the boy’s phone. We learn about this world through direct experience, and the first few minutes spare no time to activate our suspension of disbelief. This scene echoes the style of the rest of the movie, so a deeper look into the first few minutes provides a good backdrop for reviewing the rest.



What do we take from this scene? Questions. Lots and lots of fantastic questions about the world we’ve been dropped into, without so much as a whisper of explanation. How could a simple phone connect to a robotic woman through a single cable? What is the relationship between the woman and the boy? Even the slightest details of this scene complicate the simple

ideas it represents; when the interaction between the woman and the boy’s phone has finished, the woman fixes her clothes in a hurry. As she walks away, he forces a question, and the digital halo floating above the woman’s head changes. It forces us to ask: What is she in control of, and what is she forced to do as a command from the boy?

The boy’s actions are far from normal, despite the uninterested look on his face. His eyes dwindle on the woman for slightly too long, eyes fixed on the halo floating above the woman’s head—the interaction draws our attention to the largest difference between the two characters we have met; one has a digital halo, and the other cannot help but notice it as well. Another small detail drawn from a single scene is the hesitation of the boy; his voice stumbles through commands, almost like he struggles to order around the woman.

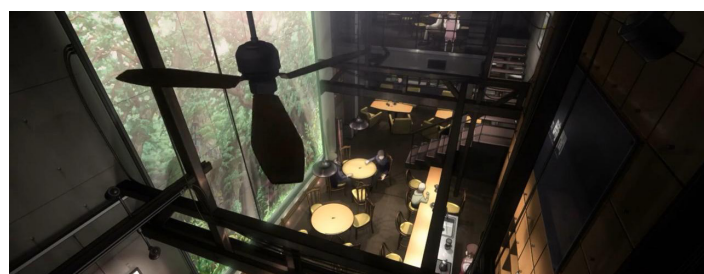
At one point, he begins a new question without a command. He stops and realizes his mistake, beginning again with “Status: Family.” What this slight hiccup represents is a confusion inside the boy, especially in how he talks to the woman. Also important to note is the transition to first-person perspective of the boy: The camera shakes softly as the boy looks around the room. This is disorienting, but it is meant to be disorienting; up until now, we have had still shots of the room from an omniscient viewpoint. The change is jarring and brief; it is a taste of the real-time confusion of the boy, and the shaky camera brings us closer to how the character is perceiving the world. Confusing, constantly shaking, dynamic, and somewhat spontaneous; we suspend our disbelief here when we enter his eyes and see that he is moving in time and space just like we do.

Afterwards, the woman is able to recall the whereabouts of everyone in the household; this tells us that the woman has some connection to a single family. When we are introduced to another character, the boy’s sister,

her hangover and immediate flop onto the couch tells us that she is a more realistic character to follow than the boy. She calls the woman “a thing” and throws out commands with no sense of finesse that the boy had; she creates a tension of “human versus subhuman” for this particular robot/woman, as well as another question for the audience to hold onto. If it’s normal to throw out commands and barely acknowledge the strange woman, why does the boy struggle with the idea of commanding?

If you’ve made it this far into this review, this is a fantastic movie. Bottom line, this movie is created to involve you. The story is being written with you in mind. Within a few minutes, the audience has become an active participant of the world. We’ve seen interactions, we know the boy’s hazy viewpoint of the world, and there are robots that would appear human without the digital halo above their heads. Time of Eve, in most of its two hour runtime, takes place in a single room; a sleek, modern café with the same regular customers. It is funny, isolated, delicate with its humor and classy all throughout; let it be known that this review tackles the least obvious of the great qualities of this movie, rather than the most. You need to watch it for the obviously great pieces.

After the first scene, we learn that the boy’s name is Rikuo, the android’s name is Sammy, and the world is deep in conversation about the line between android and human. We get the advantage of seeing the world mostly through Rikuo, who is in the most precarious of views: he accepts that androids deserve rights, but he also contends that there is a difference between them and humans. So, we get to see the wishy-washy, uncertain yet receptive viewpoint of someone on the fence. The conversation becomes reality when Rikuo finds that Sammy has been visiting a café without the explicit command or permission of anyone in his family. He suddenly grows suspicious of his “housedroid,” and wonders why an android could conceivably go anywhere of its own decision. So, we see how the questions pop up at the beginning of the film.



Rikuo, upon visiting the café by tracking Sammy’s movements, finds a space where androids turn off the digital halos and are indistinguishable from humans. The rule of the café, posted proudly in front, bans any discrimination from androids and humans within the café. Rikuo first goes with his friend from school, Masaki, and they look around the café for any digital rings. However, the bartender and guests of the café treat them warmly no matter how desperately they stare.

Rikuo, probably like the audience would act, treats the guests kindly but finds an issue with being unable to tell who is human and who is not. The bulk of the film has Rikuo and Masaki exploring the lives of the regulars of the café, to find out the true difference between an android and a human.

How does the film help us understand the ‘rules’ of Time of Eve?

We start to see what’s normal and what’s not through three main channels: his sister, the interactions of humans and their subservient androids at school, and the media we are exposed to in the movie. These tell us exactly what kind of society has come about, and instead of questions we get a ‘state of the world’ as opposed to Rikuo’s (or our own) viewpoint. His sister gets an advantage by interacting with the same android, Sammy, so that we can see how Sammy is used to being treated. Sometimes a maid, sometimes a substitute parent. Never a person.

The idea continues at school: we see androids come to pick up their human masters, carry their belongings, and be generally treated as slaves. Rikuo seems to be the only one that talks to his android on a humanistic level, although he struggles to remain in the status quo. Masaki, whose dad is heavily involved in android politics, explains the rules of androids after talking about their apparent fear of them: They cannot harm humans, they cannot disobey an order (unless it harms humans) and they must do their best to preserve themselves.

The media also tells us what widespread messages about androids are being circulated. Throughout the film, we see newspaper clippings and television commercials about the growing likeness of androids to humans; particularly, an anti-android commercial about a robotic tomato versus a real, human-grown tomato. The movie cultivates a hint of reliance on these androids for the daily lives of humans; a passing conversation

states that androids have been in households for at least a decade. Sammy being able to connect to a mobile phone drives this point of ‘regularity’ home.



We also learn through Rikuo and Masaki that the café is irregular; they attempt to break the rules of the café, laugh when some androids are unable to resemble humans, and even get angry at androids attempting to act human. The stigma is extreme; android sympathizers are seen as creepy and overly attached to the idea that androids are equal to humans.

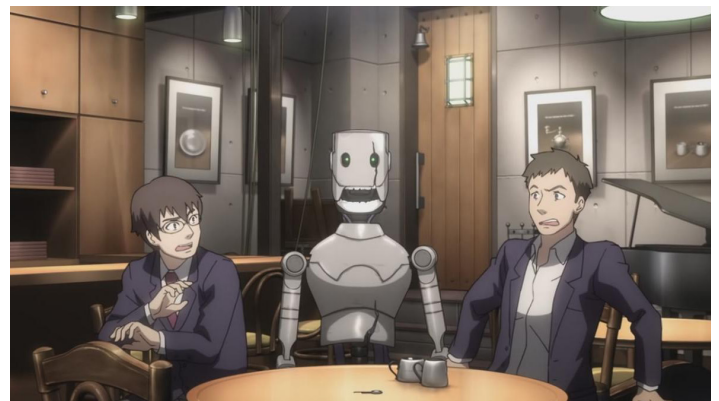
Yet, like a convention of a Shakespearean play, the café acts as a place for all of these ‘rules’ to be flipped upside-down. The androids and humans never question who is who within the café—except for our confused Rikuo, however, who strives to find the real limit between the two. We find that he has a personal stake in the answer; in the corner of the café sits a piano, which Masako pressures Rikuo to play. Rikuo remembers that an android had taken the headlines for playing the piano so well, even though it was Rikuo who had won. He also has a personal attachment to Sammy, who he has a hard time believing is nothing but an android.



The first guest they meet is Akiko, a bubbly and talkative girl in a beanie. She helps them get used to the rules of the café; she simply stops talking when they ask about how androids and humans are different. They figure her for a human, because she acts so lively and animated compared to the automatic precision of everyday androids. When they see her picking up her master at school, with a digital ring above her head, they begin to question the conventions they had grown up with.

Thematically, *Time of Eve* is wide. To take a step closer, and see just how these questions and explanations matter to us as viewers, we must look at the techniques the movie uses to draw us in.

First and foremost, the camera perspectives. We already talked about the first scene, but the movie continually puts us in the first-person perspective of various characters: Rikuo, various androids and their visual interfaces, and even ourselves at times. For one scene, sitting at a table in the café, the camera is fixed next to Rikuo and swivels around as he talks to Masaki about their situation; the audience literally sits in the café as the conversation goes on, total immersed in the scene. What the camera sees is what we would see.



When an ancient robot stumbles into the café, barely passing as an android, we see the messages on his interface clouding his vision. He awkwardly clicks through screen popups and can identify the room with bare efficiency. He does not even remember his name. But, we see a drawing pop up in the visuals; a bad drawing, done by a child, that barely resembles the robot. After the scene, his vision is filled only with this image drawn by a child, and his last wish was for his name to be remembered by someone. Why would we be put into this perspective? On the outside, he is a primitive robot with a metal, broken exterior; on the inside, he is just like a human. Flooded with desire, a feeling of importance, a panic about being something more than they are now. It is a very humbling scene, and the perspective causes us to understand that.

Secondly, the use of sound and voices brings us further into the lore of the movie; androids outside of the café have a certain lifeless quality to their voices, synthesized and controlled. When the androids enter the café, they explode into liveliness and mirth; they have the same speech patterns as humans, interact without worry about

commands or questions, and can smile and laugh as they please.

Finally, the use of human stories for the androids bridges the gap between them for the viewer. Of the six or so regular visitors of the café, Koji and Rina bring the most common human story together. Rikuo assumes that either Koji or Rina must be an android, to only meet in the café and act as if it was forbidden love. One day, Rikuo opens Koji's camera and puts it on the display for everyone to see; Rina included. She sees another woman in several pictures, posing with Koji romantically. She runs to the bathroom, and that's when Rikuo sees the malfunctioning circuitry in her leg; however, Masaki talks to Koji at the table and finds out he is an android as well. Rikuo and Masaki pool their knowledge together, to find that both androids have no idea that the other is an android as well.



What the two represent is the ability to love, something Rikuo and Masaki never considered; the conclusion that Rikuo reaches is that love has its difficulties regardless of android or human status. The very human story of the forbidden love affair brings a humbling touch to androids and their equally complicated interactions.

We have questions presented to us in the beginning scene, and we have the observations of the café that count as 'our own experience.' So what? Well, the movie is entirely in media res; we are given a story that has already had its beginning and will never have its end. The film ends just as it began: with a café, a sense of the outside world, and just barely a mention of the android/human difference. And that's a beautiful way to wrap up all of Time of Eve; they are not the magnum opuses, they were not the beginnings, they will not be the ending—they are simply a fragment of time, in a little café, just charming tales of individuals who happen to be human or android. And that's quite telling, isn't it?

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THIS WEEK'S POLL

**It's time for you to pilot the robot!
Which is your favorite Mecha?**

A character with red hair and a black suit, likely a mecha pilot, standing in front of a large, fiery mecha. The character is looking forward with a determined expression. The mecha is a large, red and black robot with a long, flowing cape, and it is surrounded by flames and smoke.

Vote now at: **J.MP/KONPOLL4301**

Konshuu 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

Mondays, 7:00 - 10:00pm

Manga Socials

Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Game Nights

Thursdays, 7:30 - 10:00pm

WEEKLY SHOWINGS

Dimension W

Himouto! Umaru-chan

NEXT WEEK'S SHOWING: YOUNG BLACK JACK

