

konshuu



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THIS WEEK'S SERIES

► ANIME RECOMMENDATION **KAIBA**

From the insane mind that brought you *Mind Game*, *Tatami Galaxy*, and *Ping Pong*, Masaaki Yuasa creates a galactic dystopia in his usual pop art style. In this future, memories and personality are stored in data chips and can be plugged into an available body, capable of transferring a life indefinitely; the rich live above the clouds and the poor are harvested for their bodies, either by selling their own bodies or through forceful methods. *Kaiba* begins with a child (later named Warp) who wakes up on a planet with no memories, and is hunted by machines upon awakening. He is saved by a group of rebels who fight these machines, and learns that his body is particularly valuable; to reclaim his memories, he stows away on a train that stops on many planets to hopefully find answers. Every episode takes Warp to a different planet, each with its own complicated social issues and humanist stories of tragedy, love, loss and general intrigue.



Studio: WOWOW

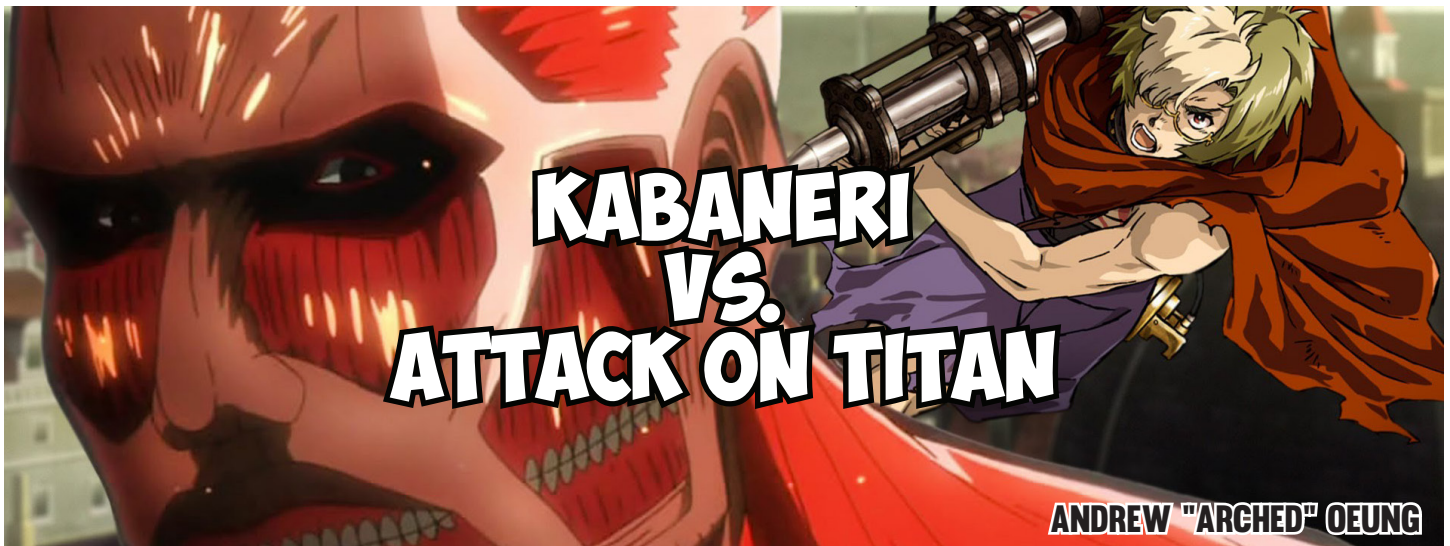
Director: Masaaki Yuasa



Author/Artist: Nean

MANGA RECOMMENDATION ◀ **LOVEROID**

Han Narum is a second year high schooler who begins to notice an unusual amount of couples, and naturally feels a little jealous for his own less-than-stellar romance life. Han Narum has gymnophobia: he has a fear of women that makes his interactions with them awkward and clumsy. There is, however, an exception. He can communicate normally to little girls, and he finds them more cute than their high school counterparts, causing his friends to joke that he is a bit of a lolicon. A girl approaches him one day and calls him “boyfriend,” and Han later finds out that she is a loveroid; androids that appear younger but become full adults from the power of a wholehearted confession and love. When these loveroids grow to their full size, their creator has issued a challenge, wherein they will fight and the loveroid’s partner will receive 10 billion yen!



In industry, a common practice is “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” And here, Attack on Titan’s producers, Wit Studio and Production I.G. is doing exactly that: rehashing the same plot formula in order to achieve potential success once more. But is their formula even perfect to begin with? By copying their once-successful formula, Attack on Titan’s producers, Wit Studio and Production I.G. has given birth to a strange anime, dubbed by some as “Attack on Trains” or “Attack on Titan with Zombies.” But is it better than Attack on Titan, worse than Attack on Titan, or filled with the exact same problems?

Avoiding the question is not exactly the best idea for a deep plot, but it is arguably better than teasing the answer and never explaining it, which is essentially what Attack on Titan does. However, unlike Attack on Titan, Kabaneri starts off without a meaningful plot direction in the beginning. The main protagonist, Ikoma, gains zombie-like powers by becoming a half-zombie, half-human entity known as a Kabaneri (just like Eren Jaeger’s half-titan, half-human existence), then rides on a train to go to Japan’s new capital, Kongoyaku. Once again, the show hardly gives a reason for this, but instead uses this opportunity to fight zombies...for half the length of the show. Granted, the interaction between humans and their reluctance to accept protection from a half-zombie, half-human monster is explored throughout these episodes, but it is quickly dropped as soon as the main antagonist of the show, Biba, appears.



First off, let us take a look at the confusing, underdeveloped plot of Kabaneri. As the story opens up, we learn that Japan has been infested with Kabane, braindead zombies that prey on humans. As a result, humanity was forced to retreat into iron fortresses, with railway trains as their only transportation to and from other cities. But why did the Kabane appear? What is their motive? These questions are never answered in the story. Heck, they are not even touched upon.



Things are finally looking up. Biba, leader of the Hunters, catches the protagonists and his friends off guard by imprisoning them under a false pretense

of kindness and hospitality. He believes that the “strong will survive, while the weak will perish” in this world. Yet, what drove him to become this twisted and dogmatic warrior with no regard for others? Ikoma struggles doggedly to find the truth behind this villainous criminal, only to find out the shocking truth: Biba has father problems.

Yes, after his father betrays him without any explanation, Biba sets out on a 10-year journey to return to Japan’s capital to murder his father in cold blood. On the way, he razes two cities to the ground, before Ikoma finally stops him and saves his damsel in distress. Then, they all live happily ever after, because the damsel in distress was rescued, and the plot refuses to pay attention to the countless lives lost due to Biba’s bizarre, almost nonsensical actions.



Based off the weak plot, you can probably already tell that Kabaneri’s characters are weak and underdeveloped. Most of the characters are forgettable and/or serve little to no purpose, with the exception of Ikoma, Biba, and Mumei, the main heroine of the show. I do not even think I could name more than a handful of characters without looking them up on Google. However, even Ikoma feels unimportant at times, because his singular motivation is his desire to give Mumei a new life. If you take that away, he does not have a real purpose in the show. Meanwhile, Biba is essentially a walking contradiction in the show, touting that “the strong survive over the weak” despite the fact that he saves Ikoma from dying at the end of the show, an act of mercy that completely defies his ideology.

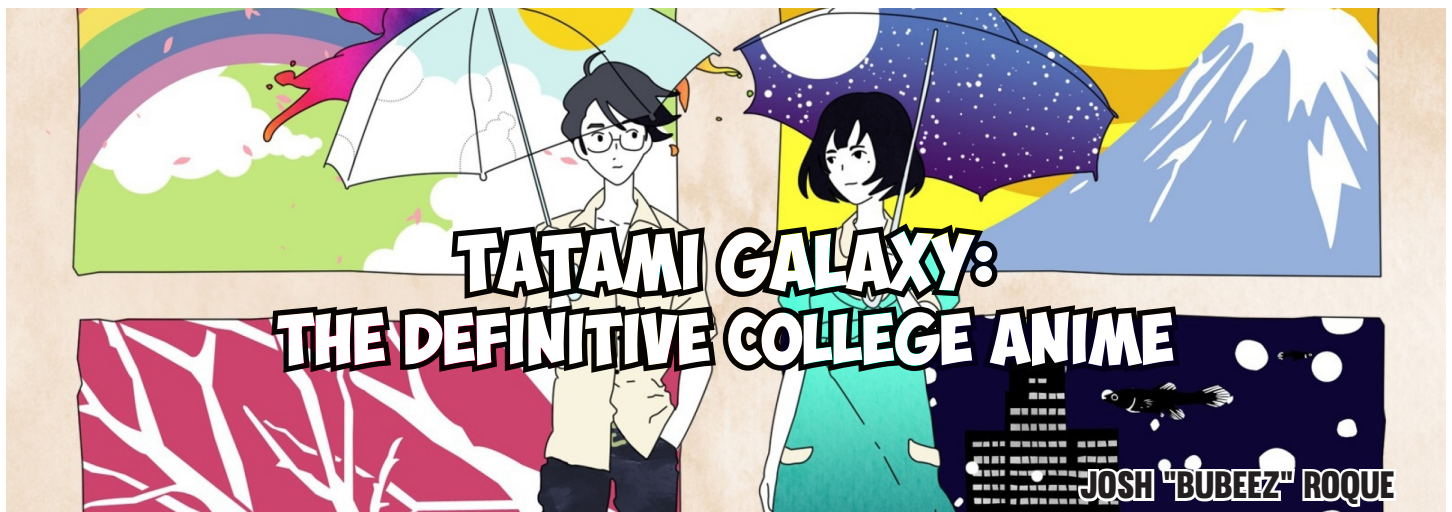
Despite all of my criticism regarding the plot and characterization, I do concede that Kabaneri certainly

has some praiseworthy music and stellar animation. Most songs are composed by the talented Hiroyuki Sawano, known for his soundtracks of Gundam Unicorn and Aldnoah.Zero, among others. Sawano’s songs fit perfectly with the chaotic action and tense cliffhangers of the show. The opening song, made by Egoist, is decent, but the animation behind the opening is the real eye-catcher. As the opening begins, we see Mumei slowly walking down a staircase, with her armsleeves trailing behind her.



Overall, Kabaneri can be summed up to be action for the sake of action. The plot and characterization ultimately seem secondary in nature to the well-animated fight scenes, which makes the action seem less meaningful as a result. It is only natural that people would compare this show to Attack on Titan, because both shows are honestly plagued with much of the same problems. I personally feel that this show gets more flak than it should over Attack on Titan, because it does do a few things better than Attack on Titan, even if zombies are a much less novel concept than titans. So, if you happen to be looking for more Attack on Titan episodes, or if you can ignore plot for some awesome fight scenes, I encourage you to give Kabaneri a chance, because this show will probably be right up your alley.





I have never written about Tatami Galaxy (Youjouhan Shinwa Taikei in Japanese) because I believed that I could never do it justice; as my favorite anime of all time, Tatami Galaxy is somewhat of a sacred subject for me. I will say this: It is the definitive college anime.

A college anime should, by its definition, represent college life. The definitive college anime, then, should be able to speak about college life in a way that its theme encompasses as much about college as possible; managing diets, going to a party or two, managing romance, schoolwork, extracurriculars and everything in between. As a college student, the product of these common and daily thoughts and occurrences usually sums up to one or two statements: life is hard, and people sometimes get what they want, and sometimes they do not.



Tatami Galaxy recreates these themes through an adventure in the eyes of a college freshman; put more accurately, the story is about a student halfway through college reminiscing about his past two years, thinking about the clubs and failed expectations of his “rose-colored campus life.” Our protagonist has no name and other people refer to him as generics such as senpai; in general, people name him Watashi, which refers to the pronoun I in Japanese. The first few minutes of the anime

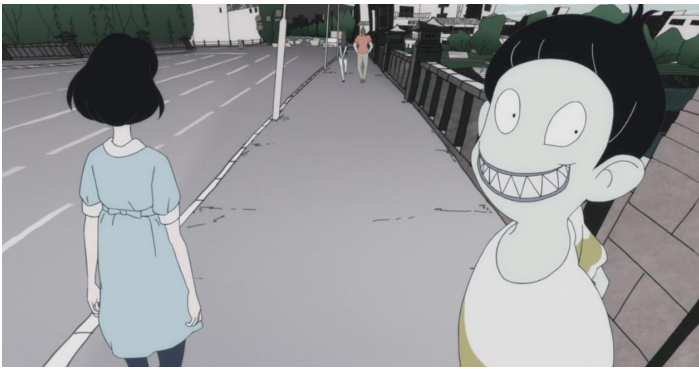
are confusing and the dialogue moves so quickly that I understand why people stop at the first episode; in his head, the protagonist narrates his own story and thoughts so quickly that it becomes difficult to understand what he is really thinking.



A lot of the importance of the show comes from the protagonist’s inability to escape this self-narration of his own life; he talks about how life should be, how he imagined that his college career would be the start to his ideal life. Not only does he narrate this, he represents this desire for the “rose-colored campus life” by joining the tennis club in the first episode, which he imagines would allow him to meet girls, be sociable, and enjoy life.



However, the tennis club does not go well for Watashi; he quickly finds that he is not as sociable as he thinks, and his rose-colored expectations get replaced when he finds a single friend, named Ozu. The first things we learn about Ozu are that he is mischievous, has many connections in other clubs, and that Watashi feels tormented by Ozu. As others in the tennis club start relationships and seem happier, Ozu offers Watashi an option to become an evil prankster, specifically targeting couples in the tennis club. In a desire for revenge and contempt for his lost rose-colored campus life, Watashi joins Ozu in attacking the club, until they get kicked out.



This sets up the basic premise for each episode: Watashi does not get what he wants in a club, so he regrets his decisions, and finds a way to blame Ozu for taking away his college life that he believes he deserves. While each episode usually begins with Watashi's freshman year as he joins a different club, there is a distinct continuity throughout the show. For example, Watashi meets many omens such as a mysterious old woman in every episode who tells him that an opportunity is always dangling in front of him, and he need only take it. One of Watashi's friends who lives in the same apartment complex as him also consistently warns him that "the rose-colored campus life" does not exist. However, Watashi always finds a way to dismiss these warnings each episode, while the viewer does not. We begin to see that despite Watashi's good intentions and nature (he is, after all, a very hard worker and polite to others) that his obsession with the ideal is getting in the way of the truth about his college life. Halfway through college, steeped in regret about his decisions, Watashi is constantly reimagining his college life in different ways in an attempt to justify why his ideal life has gone so wrong; each club he joins is a simulation of another kind of college life he could have lived. He may have been a bicyclist, an evil prankster, a hikikomori, or a man leading on three different women.

A fair warning about this show: it is questionable whether some events happen, or not, because the entire story is a

representation of Watashi's mind, who is reimagining the past. Each moment asks the viewer to decide whether it is actually happening, is an abstract made up in Watashi's mind, or a combination of both; however, its result is an astounding adventure based in a college setting with imaginative scenes but realistic emotions. This scene at the ramen cart may have actually happened in Watashi's first year, or it may just be Watashi stuck in a reimagination of how certain events occurred. What is important to distinguish is what Watashi changes in his mind, versus what always stays the same: he changes what club he joins, his decisions and other parts of himself. What never changes is his expectation of college life, and his disappointment with his two years of college life by the end of each episode. The Tatami Galaxy is a rollercoaster through different college clubs as the protagonist tries to figure out how to get to the life he wants--- sound familiar? College is hard! Sometimes, you get what you want, and sometimes you do not. Watashi works hard to afford an expensive bicycle but it gets stolen; he works hard on making movies but gets discouraged and instead makes a movie exposing the secrets of the film club's president. Does that mean that the Tatami Galaxy is optimistic, pessimistic? No. And that's exactly its point.

At its core, Tatami Galaxy is a fun adventure full of ups and downs, and Watashi's life in these imagined clubs becomes a mix of joy and suffering; and as viewers, we come to understand that his dissatisfaction and desire to choose another path is the center of the problem. By the end of the anime, we come to understand that the heart of Watashi's problem is not in his actual college life which is actually highly enjoyable. His constant desire for an ideal life is what makes his life appear so miserable. These opportunities that come up in every episode are difficult for Watashi to make because they would make him realize his constant denial; the rose-colored campus life is not an ideal life to shape, but a mindset on one's own life. Watashi's journey in his mind is one that I am sure we have all made, will make, and will have to make. Tatami Galaxy is, for me, the definitive college anime.









THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITY

POKÉMON NAME CHAIN:

Given all of these Pokémon, make the longest combination where the last letter of a Pokémon's name corresponds with the first of another Pokémon's name. The longest chain uses ALL of these Pokémon.

 <p>Dratini</p>	 <p>Yanmega</p>	 <p>Aron</p>	 <p>Nidoking</p>
 <p>Pinsir</p>	 <p>Nidoran</p>	 <p>Garchomp</p>	 <p>Ariados</p>
 <p>Ghastly</p>	 <p>Yanma</p>	 <p>Octillery</p>	 <p>Girfarig</p>
 <p>Lucario</p>	 <p>Remoraid</p>	 <p>Yveltal</p>	 <p>Seaking</p>

Answer:Girfarig,Ghastly,Yveltal,Lucario,Octillery,Yanmega,Aron,Nidoran,Nidoran,Yanma,Ariados,Seaking,Garchomp,Pinsir,Remoraid,Dratini

LAST WEEK'S POLL

The strategy and complexity behind creating decks...Which of these is your favorite card game?

RESULTS



- Yu-Gi-Oh!
- Pokemon
- Magic: The Gathering
- Hearthstone
- World of Warcraft
- Other

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Let's go on a high quality feels trip! Which is your favorite Makoto Shinkai movie?

Vote now at: [BIT.LY/KONPOLL4404](https://bit.ly/konpoll4404)

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

J.MP/KONSUB

PUBLICATION STAFF

Editor-in-Chief: Austin Tai

Managing Editor: Josh Roque

Layout Editors: Edward Hong, Nimsi Garcia

Writers: Andrew Oeung, Andy Chen

Illustrator: Rika Sato

REGULAR WEEKLY EVENTS

Manga Socials

GBC Patio

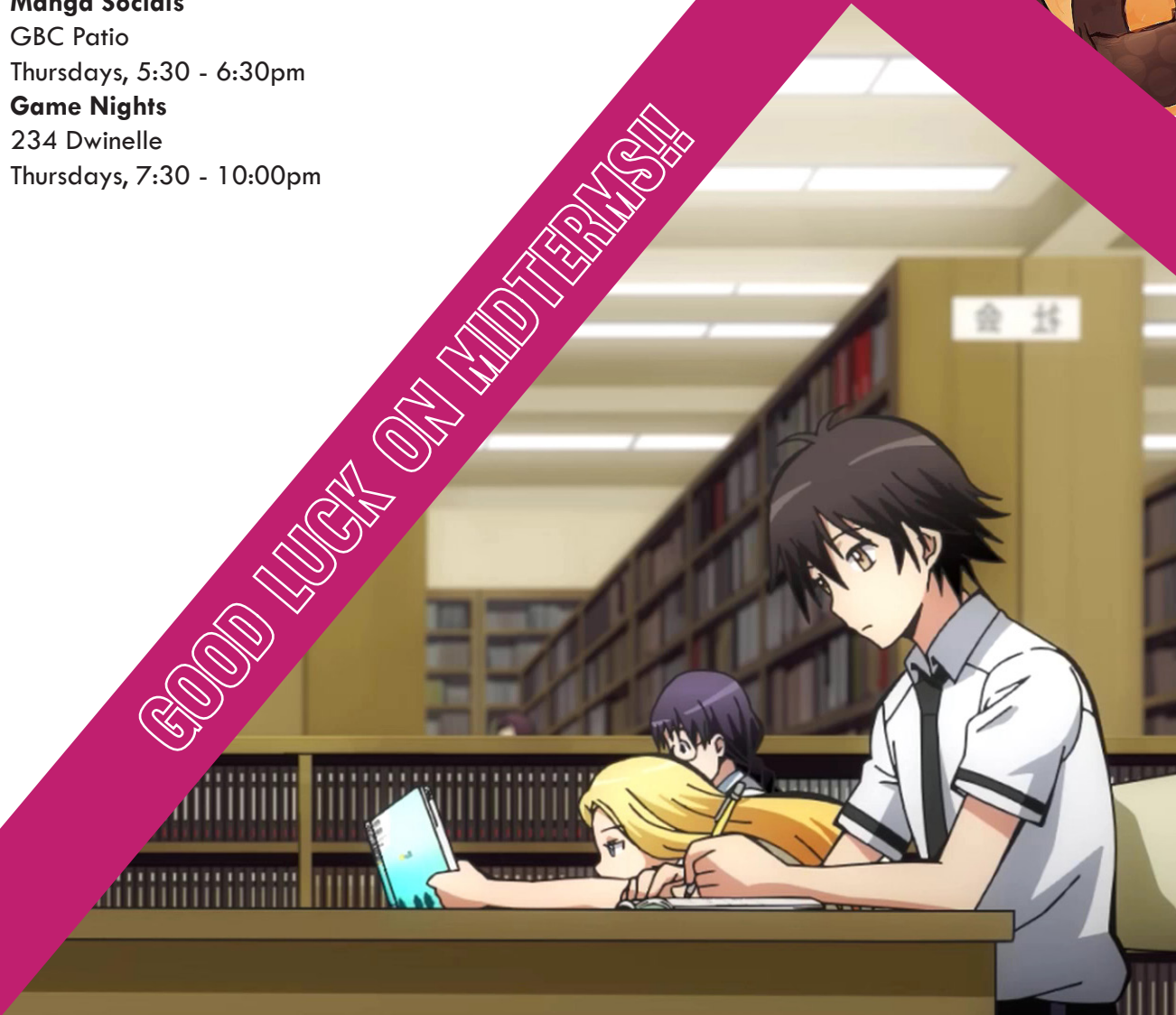
Thursdays, 5:30 - 6:30pm

Game Nights

234 Dwinelle

Thursdays, 7:30 - 10:00pm

GOOD LUCK ON MIDTERMS!!



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