



小鳥遊 ひかり
TAKANASHI HIKARI
(INTERVIEWS WITH MONSTER GIRLS)

FEB
09
2017

THIS WEEK'S SERIES

ANIME RECOMMENDATION: **LITTLE WITCH ACADEMIA**

In this new anime, Studio Trigger tackles the slice of life genre while still being able to maintain the grandiose sense of adventure that their other works are known for. Atsuko Kagari, an ordinary girl of non-witch lineage, gets to attend the renowned witch academy Luna Nova, in hopes of becoming a great witch just like her childhood hero Shiny Chariot. Being a non-witch, she sometimes struggles with her incantations and other magical studies, but is able to get by with the support of her roommates; Sucy Manbavaran, a somber and blunt, yet caring alchemist who is fascinated with poisons and venoms, and Lotte Yansson, a cheerful and friendly witch who can speak with fairies. *Little Witch Academia* is a bright and colorful anime with lots of personality. It uses familiar settings and concepts of witchcraft to create a world full of magic that is fun to explore. While the series has its serious moments, it does not forget to have fun with itself.



Studio: Studio Trigger

Directed by: Yoh Yoshinari

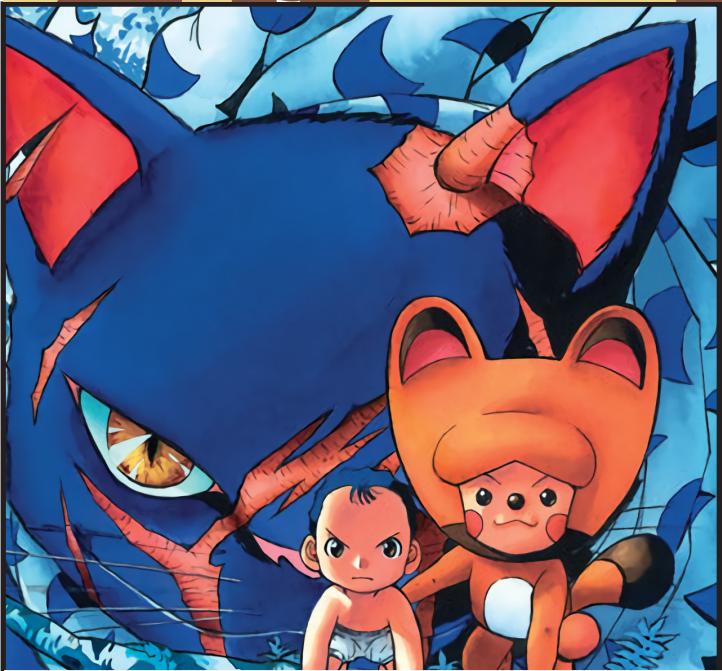


Illustrated and written by: Tomoki Matsumoto

MANGA SOCIAL: **PRUNUS GIRL**

In this manga serialized in *Gangan Joker*, Maki Makito meets a beautiful girl while checking the results of his high school entrance exams. As it turns out the girl he meets, Aikawa Kizuna, not only goes to the same school as him, but is also in his class. However, on the first day of school Aikawa reveals to the class that despite appearances she is actually a he! Maki's dreams of being together with his dream girl quickly shatter, however he is never quite able to act normally around Aikawa. Despite his reluctance to the idea, Aikawa quickly befriends Maki and the two share an uncomfortable friendship, one in which Aikiwa constantly teases Maki with his girlish charm and taunts him to decide whether Aikawa is a girl or a boy ... and whether or not that ultimately matters.

THIS WEEK'S SERIES



Illustrated and written by: Makoto Raiku

ANIME RECOMMENDATION: **YOZAKURA QUARTET**

Sakurashin is the home of the Seven Pillars, which connects this world to another dimension. The Seven Pillars are the only objects that exist in both worlds, and can bring beings from one side to another. Sakurashin acts as the hub where humans from one world and demons from the other can coexist, and even have children together. However, demons are only immortal in their world. If they choose to stay in the human world, they must also accept death. Hime Yarizakura comes from a long line of protectors of Sakurashin who have defended it despite pressure from those that want to expel all of the demons. When demons are close to death, they are sent back to their own world by being "tuned" by the Hiizumi clan, so that they can remain immortal. In return, they can never cross over again into the human world. This generation's Hiizumi, Akina, has been refusing to use his powers. Hime and Akina have many half-demon friends, and together they seek a third solution after generations of loss and painful tradition.

MANGA SOCIAL. **ANIMAL LAND**

A human mother abandons her unwanted baby by sending it down the river at night to die from exposure. Instead of perishing, it finds its way into Animal Land, a world where the strong eat and the weak are eaten. A world untouched by humans, that is until now. A tanuki named Monoko finds the child and decides that she will be its mother. Since both her parents were eaten by lynx she feels that the child will allow her to have a family once again. The tanuki village she belongs to is initially hesitant to take in the child, but eventually warms up to the idea after seeing how important it is to her. How will this human child fit into and affect the world of Animal Land where no human has tread before?



Studio: Nomad

Written by: Suzuhito Yasuda



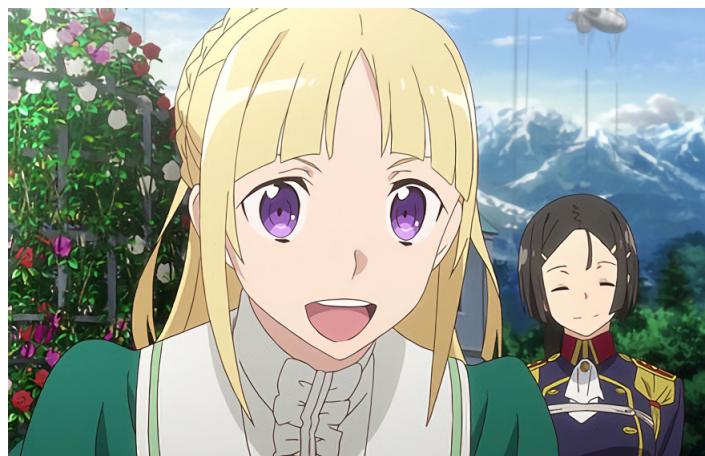
IN DEFENSE OF IZETTA: THE LAST WITCH

CASSIE SONNE

WARNING—

SPOILERS FOR *Izetta: The Last Witch* AHEAD!

I finished *Izetta: The Last Witch* over this past winter break. Still ruminating over the ending, I went to score the show on MyAnimeList (MAL) and discovered that *Izetta: The Last Witch* had a paltry average score of 6.95. Full-length anime that cannot break a seven tends to be regarded poorly by the wider anime community, and *Izetta: The Last Witch* appears to be no exception. Of the four highest rated reviews on MAL, the scores are 4, 3, and 5. The anime community tends to throw vitriol at the series' every direction, save for the soundtrack—no one in their right mind could criticize that. *Izetta: The Last Witch* deserves better. Let us examine the show, appreciate its good points while acknowledging its flaws and shortcomings in the categories of art and animation, story/plot, music, characters, and enjoyment.



ANIMATION – 8/10

In its art and animation, *Izetta: The Last Witch* does not disappoint. The backgrounds are vibrant with polished color, and the character designs are both memorable and pleasing to the eye. There is a notable attention to detail in clothing, which the Archduchess Fine can wear

quite beautifully. Unfortunately, the clothes sometimes come off in ways that are unappreciated—for a show with such a serious theme, fanservice can be both unwelcome and jarring. *Izetta: The Last Witch* feels the need to pay much attention to characters' (mostly Izetta's) breasts; apart from this caveat, the art and animation come together to captivate, especially during the anime's fight scenes. If you have ever had a fantasy about magic sending WW2-era tanks flying through the air, *Izetta: The Last Witch* displays that aptly. Despite the fanservice and occasional dips in quality during less important scenes, I would rate the art/animation overall an 8/10.

PLOT – 7/10

The visuals of *Izetta: The Last Witch* give the show a strong start, but unfortunately, the plot cannot quite back that up. With a fantastic beginning, meandering middle, and solid ending, *Izetta: The Last Witch* occasionally loses its way in the storytelling department. The premise entices on its own: in an alternate WW2 scenario, a tiny European country's only hope of resisting the German offensive is a magical witch who rides an enchanted gun into battle, giving the country hope because of a fairy tale about the White Witch who saved the nation once before.

The first three episodes deliver on the exciting premise, culminating in an epic battle in which Izetta simply destroys everything in her path—truly a sight to behold. It is after this epic moment that the show begins to falter with its storytelling pace. Obviously, the show would be over too quickly if Izetta ran in and destroyed the Germanians. Adding politics and world matters into the mix was not a bad decision in the middle of the show, despite slowing the story's progression—it was still

interesting to see how other countries would respond to a tiny nation suddenly having the most powerful weapon on earth, in the form of a 15 year old girl.



In terms of pacing, *Izetta: The Last Witch* makes a bad decision with the slice-of-life episode that spends entirely too long focusing on pie-related antics, and dress-fitting fanservice without really building character for the main cast. The anime also tacks time to show more of the German's side as they attempt to confirm and counteract Izetta's weaknesses. However, this is not nearly as interesting or compelling as the first handful of episodes. The Germans are the antagonists; we know they are bad, and making their goals compelling and multi-dimensional is arguably not a wise idea in this case. Spending so much time and focus on the Germans was not in the best interest.

Luckily, by the eighth episode, the show begins to recover. It starts to intertwine the old fairy tale of the White Witch with present-day happenings. While not the most subtle writing on the planet, it is serviceable, and makes for a satisfying conclusion when both the fairy tale and the anime itself come to focus. *Izetta: The Last Witch* even had the guts to go for a mixed ending (not entirely happy, but without it being pointlessly dark), a feat which I find admirable. Overall, the show receives an 8/10 for concept for story, but a 6/10 in execution.

MUSIC - 9/10

While the story may not always be the strongest part of *Izetta: The Last Witch*, the music will never fail to hype the viewer up and sell the current moment. The opening of the show, cross the line, has a hard rock/metal influence that makes it both catchy and badass. The OST throughout the show has European inspiration to fit the World War 2 setting. Listening to it reminds

me of Yuki Kajiura—high praise, considering she is one of the preeminent composers for anime. This anime was actually composer Michiru's first project, and she has definitely given herself quite an introduction. The ethereal chanting can be haunting or captivating, depending on the scene, and combined with the animation, makes each battle fun to watch. The music receives a strong 9/10 from me—a score I think few would disagree with, since even the reviews on MAL acknowledge that it is one of the best soundtracks of 2016.

CHARACTERS - 4/10

Compared to the height that is the musical component of this anime, *Izetta: The Last Witch*'s characters cannot compete. With Hitler as the bad guy, there does not seem to be much room for character depth: the antagonists are bad because they want to rule the world, and they are willing to use any means to achieve that goal. The witch that the Germans revive to fight on their side is equally rotten to the core, although at least she motives that tie into the main themes of the fairy tale story. That being said, this witch is still portrayed as being so completely evil that she delights in torturing Izetta; few viewers will find sympathy for her, and thus she remains a lackluster antagonist.



The protagonists fare better, although that is saying little. The Archduchess is a good person, who treats her servants kindly, adores her people, and wants to protect them. She is talented at diplomacy despite her young age, and she still adores sweets; yet we learn little else about her. Izetta also loves the Archduchess' country, and more importantly, she loves the Archduchess herself. This is almost definitely in a romantic way, although of course the show never confirms or denies that, leaving the *yuri* as undertones between characters.



Just like the Archduchess, Izetta is a good person willing to do what it takes to save her country. Neither receive any major flaws nor do they receive further character development. Two side characters, Sieg and Bianca, are both more multi-dimensional, although their story arcs follow similar “willing to kill someone we care about to protect the country” trajectories. By far the weakest part of the story is the characters that guide it, and receives a 4/10.

ENJOYMENT - 8/10

I saved enjoyment for last because, with any show, it is really the most important part. Anime is an entertainment medium, and you may not enjoy a given show no matter how good the art/animation, music, story, or characters are. In some cases, you might enjoy a show despite a lackluster showing in one of these categories, and that is where I find myself with *Izetta: The Last Witch*.

Days after finishing it, with the soundtrack and opening still playing in my head, I am left thinking about *Izetta: The Last Witch* as a fun show; sit back, relax, grab some popcorn, and watch the fight scenes play out. If you are searching for a perfectly executed plot with compelling characters, you should look elsewhere.

However, if you want an exciting and hype-filled show with fight scenes and political intrigue, backed up by beautiful art, worthy animation, and an excellent soundtrack, *Izetta: The Last Witch* deserves a watch. Anime originals are always a risk, and in the end I am glad that Studio Ajia-Do decided to produce *Izetta: The Last Witch*.

THIS WEEK'S POLL

Which 2016 anime season was your favorite?

a) Winter 2016 (*Erased*, *Konosuba*, *Dimension W*, *Shouwa Genroku*, etc.)

b) Spring 2016 (*Re:Zero*, *Boku no Hero Academia*, *Bungou Stray Dogs*, etc.)

c) Summer 2016 (*Mob Psycho 100*, *Shokugeki S2*, *New Game*, etc.)

d) Fall 2016 (*Yuri!!! On ICE*, *Keijo*, *Natsume Yuujinchou Go*, etc.)

Vote now at: BIT.LY/2KZSDJX



THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITY

LIGHTNING ROUND! Name the series/generation that this character is from. You have 30 seconds for each series. Try to get at least 3 out of 5 correct!

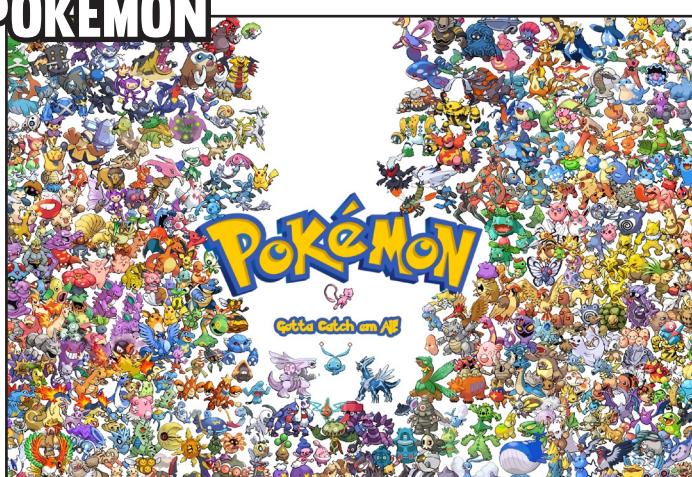
GUNDAM



1. Lightning Gundam
2. Strike Gundam
3. Gundam Kyrios
4. Gundam Heavyarms
5. Burning Gundam



POKEMON



1. Happiny
2. Tropius
3. Vanilluxe
4. Magneton
5. Sneasel



YU-GI-OH



1. Syrus Truesdale
2. Kite Tenjo
3. Mokuba
4. Crow Hogan
5. Zuzu Boyle



Answers: 1. Gundam 00, 2. Gundam SEED, 3. Gundam Wing, 4. Generation 1, 5. Generation 2, 6. Yu-Gi-Oh!, 7. Yu-Gi-Oh! GX, 8. Yu-Gi-Oh! Zexal, 9. Yu-Gi-Oh! Duels Masters, 10. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5Ds, 11. Yu-Gi-Oh! Arc-V, 12. Yu-Gi-Oh! Generations, 13. Yu-Gi-Oh! GX 2, 14. Yu-Gi-Oh! GX 3, 15. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 3, 16. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 4, 17. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 5, 18. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 6, 19. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 7, 20. Yu-Gi-Oh! 5D's 8.

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SOCIAL MEDIA

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

calanimagealpha.com
facebook.com/groups/calanimagealpha
twitter.com/calanimagealpha
calanimagealpha.tumblr.com

BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
Konshuu Staff
Cal Animage Alpha

WEEKLY EVENTS

Manga Social: Thurs 5:30 - 6:30pm
Game Night: Thurs 8-10pm

Artwork by: Jamie You
Tenko Chabashira - Danganronpa V3: Killing Harmony