

KONSHUU

Unique Art Styles

vol. 53 #4



Giorno Giovanna and Dio Brando

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure
Art By Colette Moskowitz

THIS MONTH'S FEATURED SERIES!

ANIME RECOMMENDATION

PING PONG THE ANIMATION

If you look past the show's "rough and sloppy" animation, which I argue is part of what makes the anime distinct, you get a beautifully-crafted story of growth among the small but memorable cast who undergo great development both as athletes and people. Come for the table tennis, stay for the narrative.



Spring 2014, Tatsunoko Production
Directed by Masaaki Yuasa
1 season, 11 episodes



Fall 2012, A-1 Pictures
Directed by Masashi Ishihama
1 season, 25 episodes

ANIME RECOMMENDATION

SHIN SEKAI YORI

Shin Sekai Yori is a dystopia, coming of age anime that focuses on Saki and her childhood friends as they navigate the strict and mysterious society controlled by adults. The art is distinct as the colors are more muted, character designs are unique, and the backgrounds/scenery are gorgeous. Shin Sekai Yori has dark, sinister, and adult themes, however ultimately is a beautiful series.

AN ARTIST'S PALETTE AT THE SERVICE OF MEANING AND STORYTELLING



FELIX L.

1st Year, Environmental Engineering

I wish I could study on a campus designed by Yuasa

Writer

Tatami Galaxy, one of the notorious director Masaaki Yuasa's defining works, is a prominent series in the world of unique art styles and bears witness to the tremendous amount of creativity permitted by anime as a form of media. I would describe the style of *Tatami Galaxy* as one that stems from simplicity and allows itself to be transformed and flow freely, creating an atmosphere and presentation that reeks of personality and forms an almost psychedelic yet inviting visual tone for the viewer. Initially, one might be thrown off by such an exuberant display of colors and figures, but once the viewer is thrown into the rapid flow of the narration upheld by the accompanying visuals, the creativity pays off.

One of the main usages of *Tatami Galaxy*'s art style lies in its characterization. The designs of several characters are exaggerated to a comical extent, reinforcing to no end their personalities and character traits, playing with cliches while giving them a great amount of charm. Whether it be Ozu's malicious face, with a smirk that shows his few but sharp teeth, the god's humongous chin and eccentric classical Japanese clothing that portray his peculiarity and laid-back attitude, or more generally the extremely wide range of expressions that each character, especially the protagonist, possess and display throughout the show. The faces and bodies of the characters, thanks to the show's unique art style, can completely change their shape, twist in absurd ways, and amplify their emotions and body language rather than being confined to a rigid and less expressive shape.



Tatami Galaxy's art style doesn't need to feel realistic, because it can describe and display certain aspects and emotions that we are perfectly acquainted with even better than perfect realism. The colorful sequences that accompany the protagonist's narration of his life in college give a vivid and striking dimension to his words, in perhaps the best way there is to display his vision of the perfect campus life. The depiction of the places that he goes through, or the people in the background, entirely depends on his perspective of them and his narration, often shown with resplendent colors and undetailed faces, limited to their existence as members of the protagonist's campus life and the emotional atmosphere that reigns there. These visual simplifications are key to the themes of the show and outline our tendency to imagine our environment in one-dimensional ways by ignoring the complexity of everything that composes it. Such simplifications, after all, are the great barrier between the protagonist and the pink-colored campus life that he seeks, a vision that by definition is simplified, and throughout the show, he gets to see the astounding variety of colors that it is actually comprised of.



Other scenes, such as the ones with the Fortune Teller that are tainted with a gloomy red hue, make splendid use of color to contribute to tone and atmosphere, and the association of both animation and other forms of art in several sections, namely the ones in the protagonist's room, creates a unique and striking blend, that on one hand seems quite disturbing, but on the other serves as a constant reminder of the show's themes and motifs of college life, and each decor used upholds the scenes that it hosts thanks to Yuasa's directing, and act as a constant refresher to the viewer's eye.

SUGAR RAY ROBINSON AND WHY THERE IS NO "BEST" BOXING MANGA



TONY T.

1st Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

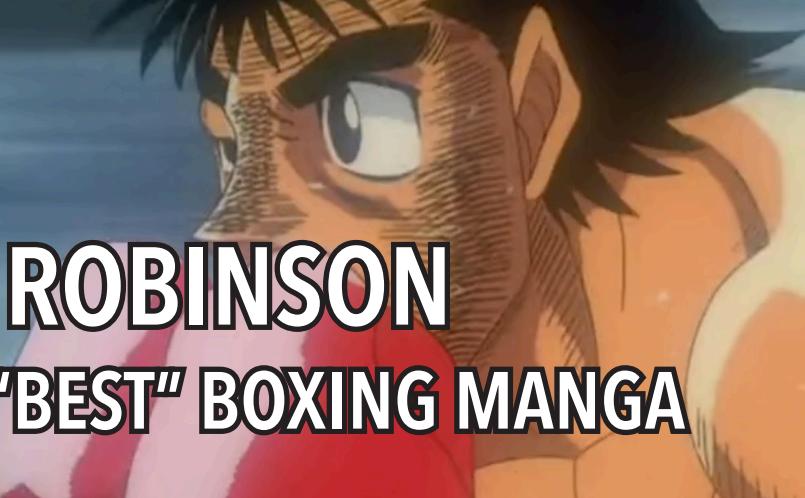
I promise this article is about manga, past the first paragraph.

Writer



If you ask any fan of boxing who the greatest fighter in the last 150 years of professional gloved pugilism, irrespective of weight class, is, you'll get various different answers. Historians will point to trailblazers like Sam Langford, Harry Greb, or Henry Armstrong for their remarkable accomplishments that almost certainly cannot be replicated again. Muhammad Ali often gets mentioned for his huge cultural impact coinciding with his legendary boxing career. In modern times, fighters like Roy Jones Jr, Floyd Mayweather, and Manny Pacquiao have made their marks in boxing history as well. But above all others, Sugar Ray Robinson is almost unanimously pointed to as the top contender for "greatest of all time, pound for pound". In an old HBO boxing documentary whose name escapes me at the time of writing, I distinctly recall the one-time welterweight and five-time middleweight champion referred to as an artistic genius—a master of his craft with all the eccentricities that the label might imply. It's not hard to see why this fits. Footage of the man in his prime condition and in his best weight of 147 pounds does not exist, but even footage of Sugar Ray in his later years as a middleweight demonstrates utter fluidity in footwork, multi-faceted punching, and complete ability to utilize any boxing style. His narrative is similarly great—a classic American rags-to-riches story with a young Walker Smith Jr. rising up the ranks, gaining the moniker of "Sugar Ray Robinson" along the way to boxing immortality. Add on his legendary bouts with fellow all time greats like Jake LaMotta and Carmen Basillo, and Robinson's place atop boxing history seems obvious.

Whenever I see discussion online regarding boxing anime/manga series, two always seem to come up in particular: *Ashita no Joe* and *Hajime no Ippo*. Often, I see the latter series being more



widely celebrated than the former for its stronger attention to the ins and outs of pugilism, an aspect Joe is more lacking in. This misses the point of both series. With Sugar Ray Robinson, I believe his status as the gold standard boxer rests upon his personal life narrative along with his expertise in the physical artistry of boxing. Both Joe and Ippo each capture these separate, distinct, aspects of what cemented Robinson as the all time greatest, and as such, wildly differ in intent and execution.

In execution and effect, *Ashita no Joe* is not a boxing narrative. Joe is a human narrative that simply features aspects of pugilism as a framing device. Though the titular Yabuki Joe himself could have had his mannerisms based on "The Louisville Lip" Cassius Clay, as this comparison is made within the series itself (published prior to Clay being widely addressed as Muhammad Ali), none of the boxing really captures the artistry of real-life boxing movement. Joe's actual fighting would never work at the elite level of the sport, given his extreme aggression and wild swings that comparatively make *Rocky* seem like a real boxing match. Instead, the series explores the actual emotions and narrative behind the sport in gritty detail. This can be seen in how concepts like punch-drunkness and questions regarding why fighters continue to fight are explored in the context of human emotions, as opposed to boxing ability. The realism and emotional impact of *Ashita no Joe* comes not from boxing, but rather what each punch, each blow, means to those involved. By learning to box, Yabuki Joe attains physical discipline which directly leads to a sense of newfound maturity; in this way, *Ashita no Joe* is really not thematically dissimilar to quintessential classic coming of age battle shounen series like *Dragon Ball* or *Yu Yu Hakusho*. What makes *Ashita no Joe* special is how his underdog status comes at least partially as the result of his socioeconomic origins and his late start in boxing. The series' roots in a more realistic setting and stark direct storytelling methods makes the central narrative of Joe's maturity more poignant as a commentary on the human condition.



If there's anything else to criticize *Ashita no Joe* for, despite it being one of my all time favorite anime/manga series, I would say that the series is not realistic to the sport of boxing. The boxing landscape presented in *Joe* is quite barren—while Joe's weight class of Bantamweight (118 pounds) gets some world building with contenders and titlists, very little of the rest of the world is elaborated upon. Part of what made legendary reigns like Sugar Ray Robinson's so revered was the high level of competition in many weight classes in the same era. Robinson's reigns came in eras with other high level fighters like Kid Gavilán, Joey Maxim, Gene Fullmer, and others, presenting different stylistic variety which made Robinson's large repertoire of punches, speed, and instinctive understanding of what was necessary to win a fight all the more impressive.



To find a true "boxing" narrative, one needs look no further than *Hajime no Ippo*, which perfectly encapsulates the other thing that makes great boxing matches artistic showcases—the fighting itself. Most characters within *Ippo* have real-life pugilistic inspirations and/or use boxing styles reminiscent of real boxers. This is made apparent in the very construction of the titular Makunouchi Ippo, whose style is most reminiscent of that of Mike Tyson whilst also incorporating various other fighters like Jack Dempsey and Floyd Patterson with their heavy-hitting, swarming styles rooted in sheer physical pressure and unorthodox sizes for their weight class. In my view, this could be a primary reason as to why the series has been popular not only amongst anime fans, but fight fans as well: *Hajime no Ippo* is boxing. At the risk of being slightly less relatable to a general audience as a narrative, *Ippo* develops its characters as boxers first and foremost. This is in stark contrast to *Joe*, wherein its characters were generally developed as human beings. This isn't to say that *Ippo* lacks human characters, though there is perhaps less focus due to the sheer amount of characters. By sacrificing a bit in terms of having a truly focused, human story like *Joe*, *Ippo* instead presents a very developed boxing world with pieces constantly moving. Coupled with the author's seemingly fundamental understanding of how core boxing tactics work, *Ippo* fulfills the other half of what is crucial to boxing as an artform—the fighting itself.

With how much detail the sport of boxing, with its corrupt politics and various fighting styles, is presented in *Hajime no Ippo*, it would not be an exaggeration to call the action of reading the series a simulation of following the real sport itself. Though the narrative of *Hajime no Ippo* is a bit messier than *Joe*'s, it picks up that series' slack in terms of showcasing the beauty of actual pugilism itself. For instance, a character like Mashiba Ryou clearly has his real life counterpart in "The Hitman" Thomas Hearns and his fighting presence within the series—with his long reach, skinny frame, and effective straight punches which carry massive power—reflect that inspiration. Similarly, the "end-game boss" of sorts in *Hajime no Ippo*, Ricardo Martinez, clearly references real-life never-beaten champion Ricardo "El Finito" Lopez in his hybrid boxer-puncher style, bobbing and weaving blows with the intent to counter. The imitation of real boxing in the series goes as far as to replicate somewhat narratively arbitrary concepts like championship splits between various sanctioning bodies, greedy promoters, and boxing publications. All of this goes a long way to emphasize the main point of the story—replicating boxing itself. However, what truly ties *Hajime no Ippo*, in the 1334 chapters released as of the first edit of this article, is its devotion to depicting the various styles of boxing as the art form that it deserves to be seen as.

Thus, there really is no best representation of boxing in anime/manga in the sense that the two most accomplished series set out to capture completely different aspects of boxing. *Ashita no Joe*, with its story of human perseverance, reflects the narratives that make the sport such a unique beast, allowing individuals to raise themselves through social rungs. Alternatively, *Hajime no Ippo* meticulously creates a believable imitation of a 1990s boxing landscape, delivering a unique interpretation of the various (art)styles that master boxers employ. Though I personally enjoyed *Ashita no Joe* more, I cannot deny that various aspects of real boxing were captured far better in *Hajime no Ippo*. In real life, Sugar Ray Robinson is almost certainly the greatest boxing of all time in terms of his masterful, artistic, command of the ring, but in fiction, I cannot definitively say either *Ashita no Joe* or *Hajime no Ippo* capture pugilism better than the other.



Staff Picks: UNIQUE ART STYLES

PUNPUN ONODERA

OYASUMI PUNPUN

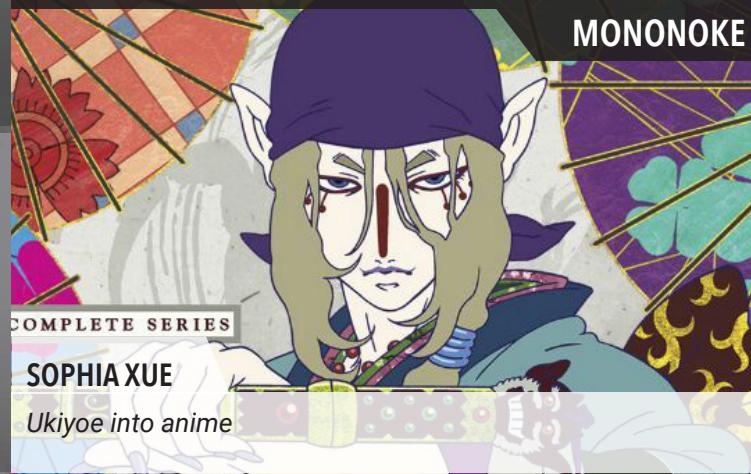


MITCH MADAYAG

Who would have thought that a simple cute-looking bird boy surrounded by realistic people would be the most despairing of them all.

MEDICINE SELLER

MONONOKE



COMPLETE SERIES

SOPHIA XUE

Ukiyo-e into anime

LELOUCH VI BRITANNIA

CODE GEASS



TIFFANY TRAN

Sharp chins, huge double eyelids, and flat(?) hair

FUURA KAFUKA

SAYONARA ZETSUBOU SENSEI



TONY.

Overwhelming sense of optimism... with a twist. Kafuka lives on within us all.

LITERALLY EVERYONE

GAKUEN HANDSOME



SOPHIA XUE

Best yaoi game, ever... Their chin can actually kill themselves (and others)

ITOUE KAIJI

KAIJI: ULTIMATE SURVIVOR



MIRANDA ZHANG

On the note of sharp chins, Kaiji's (and that huge nose) is quite pointy as well, but somehow the style portrays the series' raw zawa zawa energy so well. 0,000 yen.

DEAR KONSHUU-SENSEI...



"Several friends of mine are really into JRPGs, and I want to discuss those games with them, but I don't know where to start, having not played many. Recommendations?"

Hello, anonymous reader! I just want to say that's really sweet of you! Your friends are lucky to have you and I hope my answer may help even just a little.

Since your main goal is to have more talking points with them, try asking your friends for recommendations first. I've found this works well to get conversation going. Watch the shine enter their eyes as they start rambling on about their favorite JRPGs, although you may end up with niche games. They might even lend you their old games.

As for recommendations, it probably depends on what console you already have! (Hint, this may be another good talking point with your friends!) Ib is a personal favorite of mine since you can play it with a Mac/Windows, though I'm not sure it technically fills out the Japanese part of JRPG. But it's free and plays into psychological horror as you explore the dark hallways of an art gallery gone wrong. I can't recommend more since I don't play JRPGs a lot. But I've heard great things from Persona 5 (PS4, PS3), and NieR: Automata (PS4, Xbox 1, Windows), but again, it comes down to personal preferences! Definitely something to explore on your own too!

I'm proud that you're willing to expand your interests to include your friends' hobbies, but I hope you also share more of yourself with your friends too! Although they may not start picking up on your favorite pastimes, they will at least recognize what topics to talk with you in response! If nothing else, they'll remember you when that topic pops up in their life. Friendship is a two-way bridge, so don't be afraid to let them know you as a person of your own tastes too!

Good luck! I wish you best in your journey to the JRPG world!

Konshuu-sensei

Ask a question at tinyurl.com/konshuusensei and it might be answered by Konshuu-sensei in the next issue!

VOLUME 53, ISSUE 4

APRIL 8, 2021

-  facebook.com/calanimagealpha
-  instagram.com/calanimagealpha
-  cal.moe/discord
-  cal.moe/youtube

CLUB EVENTS

Follow us on social media or visit cal.moe for updates!

Weekly Virtual Game Nights:

Thursdays 8-9pm

CAA Discord - cal.moe/discord

STAFF

	Mitchell Madayag Editor-in-Chief
	Tiffany Tran Layout Editor
	Sophia Xue Artist/Layout Editor
	Miranda Zhang Artist/Layout Editor
	Sharrel Narsico Artist
	Tammy Lee Artist
	Kate Bushmareva Artist
	Grace Li Artist
	Athena Chen Artist

	Crystal Li Artist
	Colette Moskowitz Artist
	Heaven Jones Artist
	Erik Nelson Writer
	Khalea Ridad Writer
	Nicole Oliva Writer
	Tony T. Writer
	Felix Levy Writer

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

j.mp/konsub

Popuko x Noriaki & Pipimi x Jotaro

Pop Team Epic x JoJo's Bizarre Adventure

Art By [Heaven Jones](#)

