

# KONSHUU

vol. 53 #2  
Historical

**Joseph Desaulniers**

*Identity V*

Art By Kate Bushmareva



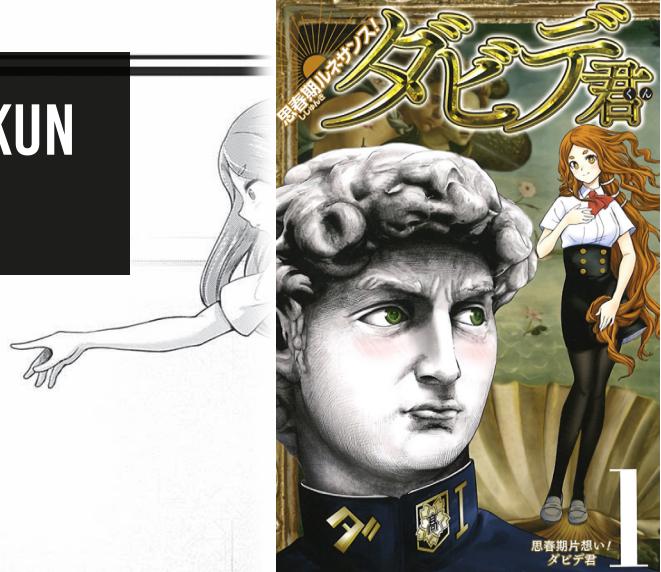
# THIS MONTH'S FEATURED SERIES!

## MANGA RECOMMENDATION

### SHISHUNKI RENAISSANCE! DAVID-KUN (TEENAGE RENAISSANCE! DAVID)



A hilarious romantic comedy following everyone's favorite Renaissance art sculpture, Michelangelo's David, and his pursuit of affection from high school sweetheart Venus. This manga can get really clever with its callbacks to several Renaissance pieces hidden in each chapter and I find myself rereading to spot the more obscure ones I had missed. It's short but the fun gags and panels will make you wish there were more manga like this one.



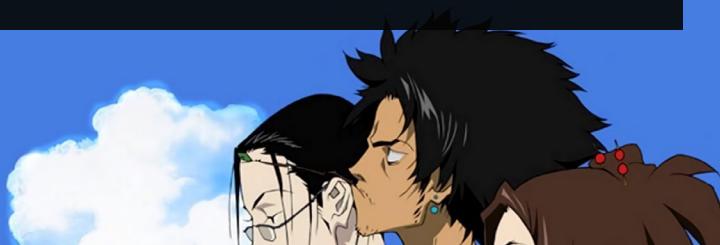
2018-2019  
By Yuushin Kuroki  
4 volumes, 37 chapters



Summer 2004, Manglobe  
Directed by Shinichirou Watanabe  
26 episodes

## ANIME RECOMMENDATION

### SAMURAI CHAMPLOO



It's often compared to *Cowboy Bebop*, but *Samurai Champloo* is its own masterpiece with its multicultural tunes, a small trio of fun protagonists, and fluid animation, all in an Edo-period setting. If you've ever listened to the banger of an opening that is Shiki no Uta before, then you'll most likely love *Samurai Champloo* for everything else it has to offer.

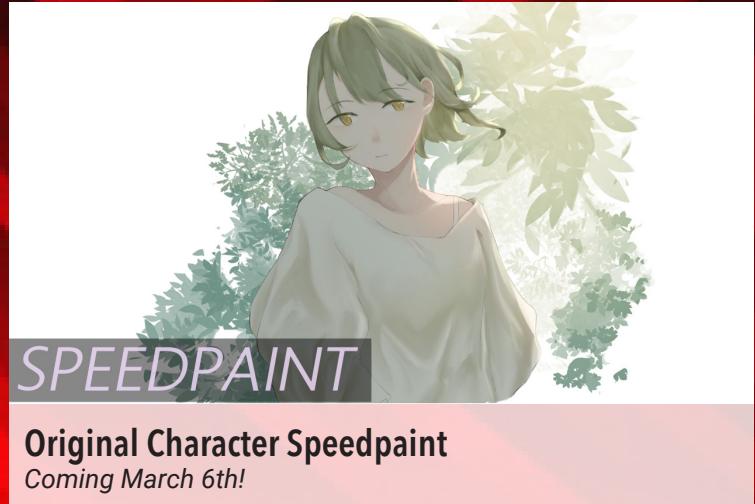
# CHECK OUT OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL!

## Featured Videos:



**Kunikida Hanamaru Speedpaint**  
Released March 3rd

## Upcoming Videos:



**Original Character Speedpaint**  
Coming March 6th!



**An Analysis on Tsunderes**  
Released February 13th



**Short Animation Draft - Anime Witch Girl**  
Coming March 10th!



**DGM Mana & Neah Speedpaint + DGM Animatic Rough Draft Preview \*SPOILER WARNING\***  
Released February 6th



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



## Shichika Yasuri and Togame

Katanagatari

Art By Tammy Lee



# Yūrakutei Yakumo

Shouwa Genroku Rakugo Shinjuu

Art By Miranda Zhang



# THE NEXUS POINT OF ALL HISTORY



**TONY T.**

1st Year, Intended Economics and Data Science

This article is about *∀Gundam* but never uses the word "mustache"...

**Writer**

*∀Gundam* is an interesting series to discuss in the context of "historical anime". It isn't listed as such on database websites like MyAnimeList, and I very rarely hear it mentioned in those types of discussions. Yet, I personally believe it represents that label to an absolute T. How does *∀Gundam* do this?

To answer that, we need to talk about parallel universes. Or rather, how *∀Gundam* does away with them.

With the release of 1994's *Mobile Fighter G Gundam*, the franchise accomplished two milestones. First, *G Gundam* is incredibly light hearted and fun, due to the change in director from Tomino Yoshiyuki, the series' creator and director of the prior four installments, to Imagawa Yasuhiro, an understudy of Tomino's. The second notable thing accomplished was in how *G Gundam* broke away from the prior four installments in continuity; instead of taking place in the same "Universal Century" timeline as *Gundam*, *Zeta Gundam*, *Gundam ZZ*, and *Victory Gundam*, *G Gundam* created its own continuity, the "Future Century" timeline. Following the release of *Mobile Fighter G Gundam* were 1995's *Mobile Suit Gundam Wing* and 1996's *After War Gundam X*, both of which followed *G Gundam* in those aspects: different directors, tones, and continuities. To this day, *Gundam* maintains a healthy mix of new continuities in addition to expanding on the Universal Century.

Why does any of this matter? Well, 1999's *∀Gundam* was Tomino Yoshiyuki's return to the franchise, years since his last installment. In the director's chair once more, he made perhaps the most interesting move in the franchise in erasing the other series as parallel universes. Instead, the existing *Gundam* continuities were explained as part of the same world, separated by innumerable time. While this creates plenty of headscratchers, it effectively hints to what *∀Gundam* is. An embrace of *Gundam* in its entirety, even series not directed by Tomino, *∀Gundam* is a celebration of *Gundam* history. Notably, many characters in *∀Gundam* use Mobile Suit units derived from past series, excavated from regressed Earth resembling steam-era America. The varying designs from many series are incorporated into a strange hodgepodge of ideas, creating *∀Gundam*'s unique and unrivaled sense of style.

Converging the histories of all the *Gundam* series, *∀Gundam* also serves as a nexus point for two unique histories of its own. The series features two very different societies - the aforementioned steam-era America inspired society on Earth, and a race of scientifically advanced humans on the Moon. It explores how these periods, one past and one a possible future, would interact. In addition, characters from different eras of *Gundam* history are awoken from cryo-sleep, providing yet more characters with their own unique ideologies. Thus, *∀Gundam* is an incredibly interesting convergence of history - both *Gundam* lore, and its own contained histories.

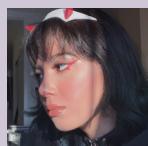
To slightly tangent, Tomino's style in his earlier works, even outside *Gundam*, with series like *Zanbot 3* and *Space Runaway Ideon*, is a tad bit overbearing. Earlier Tomino series like *Zeta Gundam* and *Victory Gundam* are examples of the bleak, depressing war dramas Tomino was known for. One might call them dense, another could call it pretentious. I call it an acquired taste - I love both *Zeta* and *Victory*. Regardless, "Kill em All" Tomino was a tad overdone. *∀Gundam* is thus also a directorial shift in how Tomino calmly presents events while always maintaining a sense of peacefulness even in the presence of large-scale conflict.

It is as if Tomino borrowed not just the universes, but also the tones of other *Gundam* series, and created a beautiful tapestry featuring everything the franchise has to offer. It is the maturation of Tomino's writing style, mixed with other ideas and history, that makes *∀Gundam* so special. The representation of the universal quantifier, the Turned A in *∀Gundam* fits the series very well, representing the convergence of *Gundam* ideas and histories, along with the convergence of writing styles. Paradoxically, this was quite innovative for the franchise. It is thus quite fitting for such a bold, different series, changing accepted ideas of *Gundam*, to be released as the millennium itself was changing - turning, if you will.

But, really, none of that truly does the series justice. The above 691 words you just read were but the history and background of *∀Gundam* and the wider *Gundam* franchise - the only way I can properly convey the weight of the series. *Gundam* as a whole is filled with amazing stories that often go overlooked nowadays, perhaps because of a strange cultural backlash against the concept of giant robots. But, in my view, *∀Gundam* is the most unique and could only be done with this unique franchise and its history.

# LARGER THAN LIFE:

## A BRIEF VENTURE INTO THE PAST WITH BUNGO STRAY DOGS



NICOLE OLIVA

1st Year, Undeclared

Have spent nearly \$500 on Gojo Satoru. Send help on IG @n1kowo. That has nothing to do with this though.

Writer

As an ongoing series winning multiple awards and ranking in best-selling lists, *Bungo Stray Dogs* (2012-present) has garnered positive critical reception, especially in Japan. While not explicitly of the historical genre, its cast consists of characters heavily based off of real figures from the past. Specifically, it revives significant writers, with the main cast being Japanese literary giants, and seasonal antagonists hailing from other parts of the world like the United States and Russia. Allusions that break the fourth wall are not necessarily new in the anime and manga realm. Notably, Hirohiko Araki's *JoJo's Bizarre Adventure* infamously names character abilities ("stands") after songs, somewhat unsurprising considering that the fame of musicians knows no bounds, especially with the steep rise of social media. However, I wondered what it was that made a show about texts dating back to the 1800s (which mainly thrive in an academic setting today) click with a young adult audience in the 2010s. To learn more about why this might be, I sat down with Professor Jonathan Zwicker from Cal's East Asian Languages and Culture Department.

Japanese culture and literature follows a cyclical pattern. We started off our conversation with a brief analysis of Natsume Sōseki's *Kokoro*\* and Osamu Dazai's *No Longer Human*. Both of their fictional counterparts act as unifying figures in the ongoing Port Mafia and Armed Detective Agency conflict that occurs in the series. Their personalities somewhat coincide too, shrouding mysterious backstories and terrifying intellect beneath lighthearted, almost harmless facades. Similarly, both the real Sōseki and Dazai incorporate themes such as academia, love and loss, community, and suicide. The most surprising thing, though, is that Sōseki lived during the Meiji Period, whereas



Dazai began his career in the postwar era. Perhaps time does not know any bounds when it comes to these two.

As noted by Professor Zwicker, an important correlation to make when understanding Kafka Asagiri and Sango Harukawa's creative choice is the perception of high culture in Japan. I asked, "How closely tied is literature to Japanese identity?" First, we have to return to the foundational concept of high culture. High culture is "cultural aspects considered superior and typically associated with and consumed by the elites of society," such as the fine arts, poetry, classical music, and ballet. On the other hand, popular culture is a set of practices, beliefs, and objects (including media) that embody the most broadly shared meanings of a social system, utilizing capitalism to appeal to the masses. While the easiest conclusion to jump to is that there are no greater opposites than these two, Japan is unique in the way that it disregards this top-down hierarchy. "There's a sort of symbiosis between high culture and popular culture that is different from any other place," Zwicker notes. Just like anime and manga are powerhouses as cultural institutions, granting fame to things that may not otherwise be popular (see *Haikyuu* with volleyball and a video game about young women wielding swords giving rise to Japanese sword making), "Japanese writers and intellectuals play a more public role than in America. While important writers in America are not too popular, winners of literary prizes in Japan are celebrities." Set up a convergence of the two most influential forces in the country, and you just might have the formula for a radical form of intellectual success.



\*Sōseki's in-show ability is named after a different work, *I Am a Cat*, but in no way is each character in BSD reduced to a single title. For example, remnants of Tanizaki's fictional personality and ability are found in the short story "The Secret" despite the main focus being on Light Snow (The Makioka Sisters). Story for another day though!

## Staff Picks:

# FAVORITE HISTORICAL ANIME

### DAI GYAKUTEN SAIBAN



ATHENA CHEN

*It's Ace Attorney in the Meiji era, featuring renowned detective and best boi Herlock Sholmes Sherlock Holmes. If the leaks are true, we may be getting an official translation soon...*

### PRINCESS MONONOKE



MICHELL MADAYAG

*An incredible Studio Ghibli movie that somehow scared helpless childhood me less than Spirited Away.*

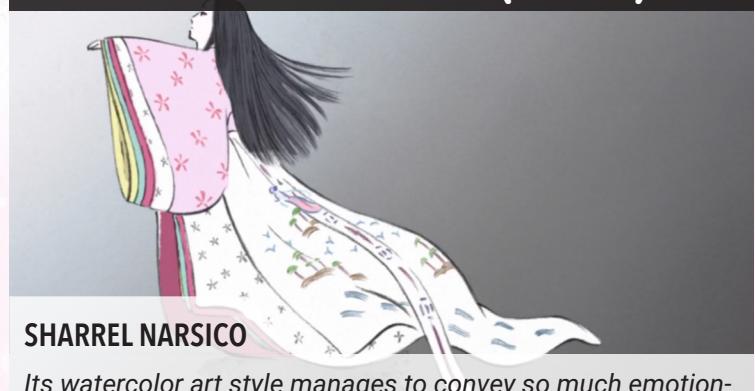
### ROSE OF VERSAILLES



NICHOLAS WONO SAPUTRA

*A shoujo military anime set before, during, and after the French Revolution. What more do you need?*

### PRINCESS KAGUYA (2013)



SHARREL NARSICO

*Its watercolor art style manages to convey so much emotional depth of the bittersweet Japanese folklore. Not to mention the captivating music. 10/10 would watch again.*

### OKAMI



MIRANDA ZHANG

*The ukiyo-e and sumi-e styles of the environment and character designs are so beautiful... Also, Ammy is the cutest wolf sun goddess, and I love her.*

### THE WIND RISES



TONY T.

*A classic Miyazaki film, even down to the anti-war message. Presents a wonderfully contemplative narrative of chasing dreams with morally questionable implications.*

# Last Month's Poll: CUTEST ANIMAL IN ANIME HISTORY RESULTS!



Timcanpy (D. Gray-Man)  
122 votes

**1st  
Place**



Leon (Katekyo  
Hitman Reborn)  
15 votes

**2nd  
Place**



Pikachu  
(Pokémon)  
13 votes

**3rd  
Place**

4th Place (11 votes):  
Bananya (Bananya)  
Luna (Sailor Moon)

5th Place (8 votes):  
Nyanko Sensei (*Book of  
Friends*)

6th Place (7 votes):  
Gamabunta (*Naruto*)  
Kyubey (*Madoka Magica*)

7th Place (6 votes):  
Jigglypuff (*Pokémon*)

8th Place (5 votes):  
Chopper (*One Piece*)  
Demon Dogs (*Jujutsu Kaisen*)  
Morgana (*Persona 5*)  
Otori-Sama (*Spirited Away*)  
Rimuru (*That Time I Got  
Reincarnated Into a Slime*)

**Thank you to everyone who voted!**

## This Month's Poll:

# GREATEST HISTORICAL FIGURE IN ANIME



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

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

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

# DEAR KONSHUU-SENSEI...

My spouse of 30 years left me following an argument wherein I stated SAO was "not totally cringe". What should I do?

Dear Anonymous Reader,

Konshuu-sensei says that the first thing to do is take care of your own mental health! Going through an argument, especially one as challenging as proving that SAO is "not totally cringe", can definitely drain the soul of a SAO fan. I suggest taking calming strolls, doing some self-care, singing karaoke with friends online, or starting a new hobby. Allow yourself the space to relax, and rewatch SAO. Because SAO will always stay by your side, cringe and all.

PS Developing your very own NerveGear console can be a new hobby.

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

# VOLUME 53, ISSUE 2

March 4, 2021

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-  [cal.moe/youtube](https://cal.moe/youtube)

## CLUB EVENTS

Follow us on social media or visit [cal.moe](https://cal.moe) for updates!

### Weekly Virtual Game Nights:

Thursdays 8-9pm

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

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	<b>Athena Chen</b> Editor-in-Chief
	<b>Lea Nakatsukasa</b> Layout Editor
	<b>Tiffany Tran</b> Layout Editor
	<b>Sophia Xue</b> Artist/Layout Editor
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Konshuu accepts guest submissions from club members! If you'd like to have content featured, please visit:

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

**Mikazuki Munechika**  
*Touken Ranbu*  
Art By Sophia Xue

