

# KONSHUU

vol. 51 #8  
Retro Anime



**Ahiru & Princess Kraehe**

*Princess Tutu*

*Art By Sharrel Narsico*



# CONAN AND KINDAICHI



**RACHEL MIN**

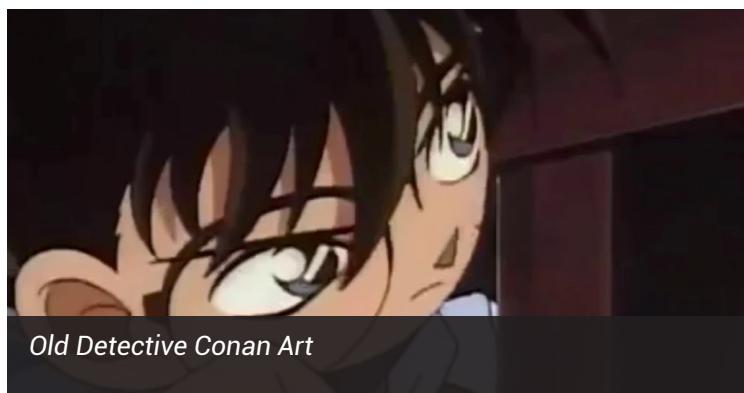
1st Year, Intended Computer Science  
Mystery shows scared me as a kid

Guest

From Sherlock Holmes to Hercule Poirot, detectives and whodunnit mysteries have always held a big place in literature and media. Unsurprisingly, it's a big genre in anime as well.

The most popular of these is no doubt *Detective Conan*, which is, in fact, one of the most popular anime in general. Currently, *Detective Conan* doesn't have any major competitors unlike the ever-growing action shounen genre, but when it first aired in the 90s, it was a different story.

*Detective Conan* hasn't changed much from the 90s; it's maintained a relatively light-hearted, action-oriented take on whodunnit mysteries. Since it's been running for such a long time, the art style was revamped several times to match the changing software and industry style, and some VAs were changed out. Even so, Conan has always charmed its audience with a cute mystery anime with nice characters and a slight suspension of disbelief. However, the popularity it sees in modern times wasn't always there. Whether it was because people in the 90s didn't like suspending their disbelief or because it came out slightly later than another popular mystery anime at the time, it didn't dominate the mystery genre like it does now.



Old Detective Conan Art

Enter the *Kindaichi Case Files*: a whodunnit mystery series following the deductions of a high school boy who happens to have a famous older relative and a crush on his childhood friend. If that doesn't sound familiar, it's basically the synopsis

of *Detective Conan*. However, the *Kindaichi Case Files* found more popularity in the 90s than *Detective Conan*. Of course, despite having similar premises, the *Kindaichi Case Files* and *Detective Conan* have differences that set them apart. For one, the *Kindaichi Case Files* is more grounded in reality with more believable motives and murders. Whereas *Detective Conan* motives often come off as shallow, the *Kindaichi Case Files* have more complex ones, and solving the murder is often also finding out what motivated the murder. In addition, the main character of *Detective Conan*, Conan, is perfect at almost everything he does; the one flaw Conan seems to have, being bad at singing, is immediately invalidated by the fact that he has perfect pitch. On the other hand, Kindaichi is an unathletic teen who's five seconds from flunking out of high school.

So where is the *Kindaichi Case Files* now, and why isn't it competing against *Detective Conan*? In short, the latest version of the show ended in 2011 though the manga did continue for a couple of years after that. Even though the *Kindaichi Case Files* is a more realistic, and in my opinion better, whodunnit show, there are clear reasons as to why it couldn't maintain its popularity. The *Kindaichi Case Files* is purely a whodunnit show. It doesn't have an overarching story involving multiple different organizations like Conan does, and it sticks to focusing purely on the mysteries. The bigger reason is that *Detective Conan* mainly appeals to a larger, younger audience while the *Kindaichi Case Files* appeals to a smaller, older audience. Thus, Conan probably managed to get backed more consistently over time.

The *Kindaichi Case Files* might not be as popular as it once was, but if you are a mystery aficionado or a fan of *Detective Conan*, the *Kindaichi Case Files* is a must-watch.



Kindaichi Suffering

# WEATHERING SHINKAI'S NAME



RICHARD HO

3rd Year, Economics

I do like *Tenki no Ko*, it's simply overrated in my opinion, and feels almost like it should've come from a different director, in the same vein as *I Want to Eat Your Pancreas*.

Guest

## OILERS! SPOILERS! SPOILERS! SPOILE

Makoto Shinkai has become the next big name in the anime industry, big enough that you don't have to be an otaku in Japan to know his name. However, his career didn't begin with his breakout success of *Kimi no Na wa* in 2016; in fact, he has been crafting well-regarded short films for decades. Shinkai's earlier works, written and sometimes even animated by himself, often have a surreal, melancholic, or tragic feel to them, and often prominently feature communication as a theme. For example, *Voice of a Distant Star* explored the effects of time on communication and differential experiences of a young couple in a mecha-styled future, almost serving as a deconstruction of the genre at the same time. *5 Centimeters per Second* showed the evolution of communication as technology changes, from a time where telephones and email weren't common to our modern age, and how it affects how close we are to others. *Garden of Words* ironically did not have much dialogue in it, instead choosing to portray emotions through body language, atmosphere, and silence, making the few conversations all the more weighted. Even in *Kimi no Na wa*, we see two teens communicating across time, space, and even mortality, taking a peek into each other's lives and leaving messages behind, and eventually deciding what was important enough to leave as a final message.

However, in *Tenki no Ko* we see a shift towards a broader audience and more of a deviation from Shinkai's previous works. The Ghibli style is in full effect, the scenes are often focused on action and sakuga moments, and the setting grounded in our reality brings with it echoes of company promotions. The trait this movie lacked the most was subtlety; foreshadowing was rather obvious, symbolism was overemphasized instead of letting the viewer notice them for themselves, and you can't forget about how a McDonald's burger is the best meal you've ever had in your entire life. There was little struggle over communication; secrets and thoughts flowed relatively freely, there was not much dramatic irony to play at the audience's heartstrings, and even Hina's role as a weather miko does not see her ever communicating with the life living in the skies above. And rather than continue with Shinkai's common endings of bittersweet-

ness and acceptance, he gives us a world where actions don't have consequences and the protagonists have a strictly happy ending. Hodoka makes a brash decision to pull Hina from the skies, regardless of the consequences—which ended up becoming the flooding of Tokyo. As the end scene begins to roll, you hear his voiceover and you think you know what's coming: his actions have caused devastation and the near collapse of Japanese society, and people are desperately trying to survive and rebuild in the new world they find themselves in. Instead, we see a world where firing a pistol at a police officer and resisting arrest gets a light slap on the wrist, where everyone has adapted to their new life perfectly, where our side protagonists succeed and our main protagonist reunites with the girl. No consequence is given to breaking laws, dooming the world; instead, we are taught that true love conquers all, and those who help will be rewarded, and that is distinctively not Shinkai.



I ask the reader to consider an alternative ending, and see which gives a little more depth. Our "hero" is sent back home, and continues with his voiceover as usual. Japan is still flooded, and the economy and infrastructure of the country is devastated. Wherever Hodoka goes, his reputation as the one who caused the eternal rain follows him in the background, alone as he started the movie as. When he meets with Keisuke, he is welcomed, though Keisuke obviously seems to have something he wants to say but can't quite bring himself to do it. As Hodoka leaves, Keisuke looks at a picture of his daughter, and the viewer knows he'll never be able to visit her again due to her asthma. Finally, he finds Hina, and we see the same reputation has followed her as well, as she dons her hood to prevent others from recognizing her. He calls out, and she turns to him. A tear rolls down her face to join the rain, and she gives a small sad smile before the screen cuts to black. Is she happy to see him? Or does she regret what they did?

# LOVETHAT TRANSCENDS SPACE & TIME



**NICHOLAS WONOSAPUTRA**

1st Year, Intended MCB Neurobiology

Y'all should listen to some Daft Punk

**Writer**

*Interstella 5555* is an animated film produced through a collaboration between Daft Punk and Toei Animation in 2003, which tells the story of a band of kidnapped alien musicians as they attempt to escape their captors while simultaneously recovering the stolen memories of their homeland.

Despite releasing in the 2000s, its artstyle is noticeably inspired by anime of the 1990s, which happens to coincide with Daft Punk's rise in popularity as part of the French house movement.

Simply put, this film is mesmerizing, due in part by its colorful setting and characters, but perhaps most elevated by the fact that there is no dialogue or exposition, just Daft Punk's music from their Discovery album accompanying vibrant, candy-colored visuals that tell a cohesive, and comprehensive, story.



This is a film that also thrives on its absurdity, as it freely mixes a plethora of sci-fi and magical elements that have rather illogical implications if one thinks about them for too long, which is all in service of matching Daft Punk's artistic style and vision in order to make a truly unique experience you won't find anywhere else. Hell, even Daft Punk themselves make an appearance in their own movie, playing the role of a band that lost their award to the main cast.

Despite its colorful presentation and absurdly fantastical science fiction elements, the film has some surprisingly strong emotional story beats, as the characters put their lives on the line to discover the truth behind their brainwashing. Ironically, one of the more popular, and beloved, songs on the album, "Harder Better Faster Stronger," accompanies the heart-wrenching display of aliens, who were once the popstars of a planet of blue humanoids, having their memories of their home planet altered to be about Earth and humans, with the original copies of the memories saved on floppy disks. Their blue skin is colored to be a human skin tone, and their native clothing is stripped and destroyed, replaced by stylish outfits and an algorithmically determined perfect pair of mind-control shades.

Even when they break their shades and make a break for it, their lives are at risk, and *Interstella* makes it very clear that it is a film that isn't afraid of killing characters and making necessary sacrifices.

This contrast between the colorful presentation and its unnerving content elevates *Interstella*'s underlying commentary on the predatory nature of the entertainment industry, with the main antagonist embodying the worst aspects of the industry: a manager hellbent on making their artists the best in the business, working them like brainwashed slaves, all in service of getting more and more records. This kind of manager is villainized to a ludicrous degree, even beyond the aforementioned brainwashing, and the true extent of his cultural thievery is exposed by the end of the group's journey to take their lives back.

At the end of the day, *Interstella 5555* is an experience that has a strikingly powerful story to tell about the consequences of cultural appropriation, the treatment of artists in the modern entertainment landscape, and the everlasting power of love.



# TIMELESS



**NICHOLAS WONOSAPUTRA**

1st Year, Intended MCB Neurobiology

**Writer**

*"The admiral's breath, we feel it on our skin, but it probably will become even stronger as time passes, and it will blow through history."*

-*Katerose von Kreuzer, Ep.88*

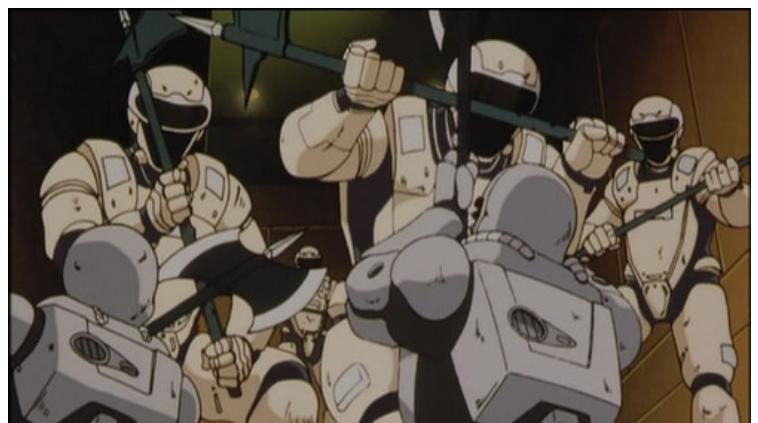
The start to a long marathon of the *Legend of the Galactic Heroes* simply wouldn't be the same without the iconic blaring of brass instruments, marching of drums, and crashing of cymbals characteristic to Mahler's Symphony No. 3 as the narrator contemplates the nature of war and humankind's everlasting struggle for power.

*Legend of the Galactic Heroes*'s soundtrack, which predominantly consists of classical music from the likes of Mozart, Mahler, Dvořák, Bruckner, Chopin, Beethoven, Wagner, and more, doesn't just stand around in the background making things sound pretty; it's powerful, and establishes the tone of the scene when characters yell out their battle cries as they enact immense and irreversible acts of violence, or when they quietly speak to one another in lavish ballrooms, keeping their political enemies in check.

Who could possibly forget the use of Dvořák's "From the New World," during the Battle of Amritsar? Just hearing this piece brings back vivid memories of the Alliance fleets stranded in enemy territory, their supply chain cut off, and they've become an enemy of the people they were supposed to emancipate. And

just over the horizon of their respective planets, they spot the Imperial fleets, and Vice Admiral Ullanhu shouts to his communications officer: "Send a message to the 13th fleet! 'We have encountered the enemy.'"

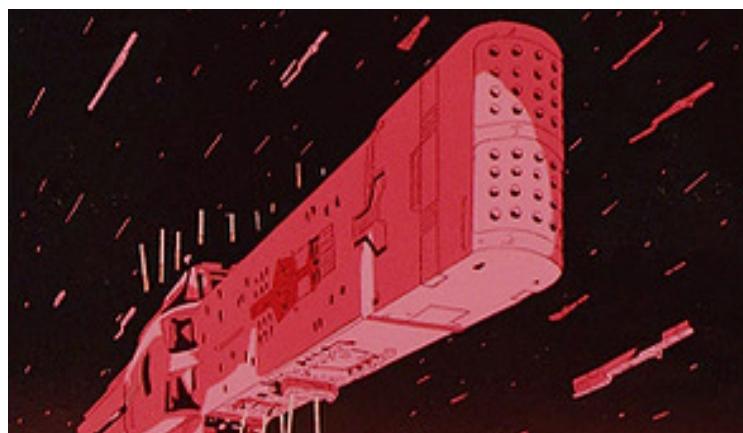
Then there's Anton Bruckner's Symphony No.1, which has such a distinct intensity to it that I can't help but picture the Rosen Ritter, and elite ground force from the Free Planet's Alliance, rushing up a hotel, axes in hand and blood covering the walls, as they attempt to rescue their commander, who is about to be executed for being a political enemy of the state.



This powerful score is indicative of the Legend's masterfully seamless integration of classical music to truly elevate the political drama, but the use of classical music also has a second, perhaps more profound, use in that it gives the show a sense of timelessness unlike any other.

Even the handful of original pieces are the logical evolution of the Legend's tone and presentation. The Galactic Empire and Free Planets Alliance's respective national anthems, "Valkyrie Ha" and "Revolution of the Heart," are iconic, memorable, and realistic, as they invoke the same sense of grandeur and patriotism that's purposefully, and perhaps necessarily, present in real-world national anthems.

Due to the Legend's presentation as a historical record, the type of orchestration present in its score only helps to drive home its place in the annals of history, as if it belonged in the past all this time. It's this sentiment that allows us to look at the Legend as a classic in every sense of the word. It isn't a classic just because it's old, it's a classic because it feels like it should be included in our history books, to be remembered forevermore.



# KIMENGUMI, OUR HEROES!



**SHAMIN CHOWDHURY**

4th Year, Physics and Mathematics

Stay strong!

**Writer**

Before 2000, shows from the Gundam franchise were really big, arguably bigger than even the big eye moe shows from around 2006-2008 (because, you know, gundams are really big). Other well-known shows from before 2000 like *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and *Macross* were also mecha, and this influence continued past 2000 appearing in shows like *Eureka Seven* and *Code Geass* (and *Bokurano*, a deconstruction of the genre).

But not all shows from before 2000 were gundam or mecha shows, and among these, I'd like to point out a school anime, *High School! Kimengumi*. In this fictional school, the students' lives are pretty normal (at least for the 80s in Japan). However, one club, the Kimengumi, livens things up. The name Kimengumi roughly means "weird faces club," and that's exactly who they are. All of them are said to have the weirdest, funniest looking faces in the school, but they use that to their advantage by pulling off hilarious antics that only they could. The first time we see them, they walk into the last ten minutes of class and give this self introduction with funny voices and poses, kinda like the Ginyu force from *Dragon Ball Z* (which came out after this show!). Then their leader Ichido Rei steals the other members' snacks, so they tie him to a rolling chair, literally rip through the school walls like they're paper, and then roll him around frantically until crashing him into a tree. They even have a special technique to defeat their opponents: the Kimen Flash!

Who are their opponents? Well, there are other clubs in the school, such as the Iro-otokogumi (hot guys club), Udegumi (sports club), Honegumi (studying club), and Bangumi (rebel

club). All of them represent relatively commonplace traits in high school, so the Kimengumi contrasts and stands out more in the show. But even more importantly, it helps cement how even though they don't have any notable or positive traits like these clubs, they still have their victories and hold their heads high (and low, and left, and right, whatever they feel like!). They have their first clash with their complete opposite, the Iro-otokogumi, when in the first episode, the Iro-otokogumi tries to get the main girl Kawa Yui (yes, her name is a pun on kawaii) to fall for them, but she refuses, saying she's not interested in such boring men as them. The Kimengumi then comes in and pulls off their special technique, the Kimen Flash, getting in a formation that looks like a demonic face and causing lightning to come down on the Iro-otokogumi!



Now, everyone has a good time with the Kimengumi, but people still make fun of them. In fact, members of the club admit that before they joined, they were just insulted and made fun of for their faces. But they still keep going. Let me quote a line from the leader: "Ima koko de warawarepanashi de wa, ware ware no make nano desu yo! Warawaretara sono bun warai kaeshite aru. Sore igai ni, ware ware no pride o tamotsu michi wa nai no de e arimasu." ("If they don't keep laughing at us, we'll lose! If they laugh at us, we laugh back at them. It's the only way we can salvage our pride.").

As somebody with multiple niche interests, I've had multiple times where people didn't get what I was into or made fun of me for it (particularly anime, as I'm sure a bunch of you have faced as well), but I think the Kimengumi's "laughing back at those who laugh at you" attitude is positive and empowering, and for that, the Kimengumi are our heroes!



# Staff Picks:

# BEST RETRO ANIME

## GREAT TEACHER ONIZUKA



ABEER HOSSAIN

*One of the funniest anime I have ever seen. It combines slapstick humor with mature themes and real life situations to create a truly transcendental anime.*

## GUNBUSTER

1988

ELIJAH BARTOLOME

*An awesome mecha OVA and the first anime that Hideaki Anno of Evangelion fame directed.*

## YU YU HAKUSHO

1992

RACHEL MIN

*"I don't know why I like it. I just do." - my brother*

## PRINCESS SARAH

1985

MARC CASTILLO

*This old anime is a meme in the Philippines. Don't believe me, well, check out @TweetsNiSarah on Twitter.*

## CARDCAPTOR SAKURA

1998

NERISSA HSIEH

*Sakura's brother text me back*

## BLACK JACK

1993

NICHOLAS WONOSAPUTRA

*The tale of an unlicensed expert surgeon that forces his patients to come to terms with the pricelessness of human life.*

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**Maron Kusakabe**  
*Kamikaze Kaitou Jeanne*  
Art By Tammy Lee

