

vol.49 #6  
Movies

# KOTOBUKI



Yukari Yukin  
*Garden of Words*  
art by Deborah Lim

# THIS WEEK'S FEATURED SERIES

MOVIE RECOMMENDATION

## MIND GAME

Nishi has two goals in life: become a manga artist and marry his childhood crush Myon. There's just one problem: Myon is already been proposed to. Just when Nishi meets her fiancé and accepts him, yakuza barge in and mess everything up. Thus begins Nishi's journey with Myon and her sister Yan as they escape to an otherworldly location and meet an old man. Made by the director of hits such as *Ping Pong The Animation* and *The Tatami Galaxy*.



Summer 2004, Studio 4°C  
Directed by Masaaki Yuasa

キミとなら、強くなれる。



Summer 2015, Studio Chizu  
Directed by Mamoru Hosoda

MOVIE RECOMMENDATION

## BAKEMONO NO KO (THE BOY AND THE BEAST)

After nine-year-old Ren's mother dies, he becomes orphaned and runs away to Shibuya to survive on his own. He gets lost in a maze and ends up in the land of Shibuten, where he meets Kumatetsu, a stubborn warrior who is in contention to become the new leader. Needing a disciple to be seriously considered, however, Kumatetsu takes in Ren, who is renamed Kyuuta. But as Ren grows up, he finds himself torn between his two worlds, wondering where his future lies.

# MAQUIA HAS A REALLY LONG NAME BUT IT'S A GREAT MOVIE



**ABEER HOSSIAN**

STAFF WRITER

2ND YEAR, MECHANICAL ENGINEERING AND ASTROPHYSICS

I have a physics midterm this week  
and I'm going to fail it. YEET.

## Spoilers for *Maquia: When the Promised Flower Blooms*

I was heavily considering writing about my personal favorite anime movie, *Koe no Katachi* (AKA *A Silent Voice*). I had followed the manga since its first release as a one-shot and was elated to see such a delicate and (ultimately) endearing story get its chance to shine on the big screen and finally get the widespread recognition it deserves. It now sits at #10 on MAL's Top Anime list and while I wish it was higher, I'm content with the respect it currently gets. I want to focus on *Maquia: When the Promised Flower Blooms* aka *Sayonara no Asa ni Yakusoku no Hana wo Kazarou*, but I'll just be referring to it as *Maquia* (italicized to differentiate it from the titular character, Maquia).



There is quite a lot to take away from the movie and it has the general strengths and weaknesses we expect from a near-top tier anime movie. While it doesn't achieve the impact of *Koe no Katachi* or *Kimi no Na wa*, *Maquia* manages to achieve just as much in its given timeframe. The other two movies are set in Japan (with *Your Name* having a small mystical element added of course), and thus they don't need to do any world building outside of creating great characters and pretty locations. There is no history to create, no magical rules or fictional governments and figures to fabricate. They exist in a world we all know to some degree and take off from there. *Maquia* on the other hand exists in a completely different world with different people, rules, and settings. While

much of the story takes place in a typical feudal European setting, the magic aspect has to be accounted for at every step. The land where Maquia and her people live is completely different from those normal humans reside in. *Maquia* has the additional task of making us believe in this world where dragons and magical, slow-aging mystical human-like beings exist alongside a quite convoluted royal-aristocratic social structure among the humans. The movie doesn't have the luxury of being able to simply take off with its story as it has to lay the groundwork as it gallops along.



*The beginning of Maquia's long journey of being a mother*

Thus, even with such a grandiose scope despite the limited time, *Maquia* succeeds exceptionally where most others fail: managing to create a compelling, moving story in a new world within such a short timespan. I cared for Maquia and her comrades, (SPOILERS) her son and his family. While I saw Ariel's outbursts and distrust of his "mother" as childish and petty, I understood where those emotions came from and how a person at that age would feel given the circumstances he found himself under. This is where *Maquia* really shines. The focus on the story isn't really on the magic race, the dragons, or the war the kingdoms wage, but the mother and son relationship between Maqua and Ariel. A child who has her entire people massacred decides to take on the Herculean task of raising a son of a race that is not her own, a child who will one day outgrow her and die before she does. None of these facts are readily apparent to her at the start. A child can't possibly have the foresight to plan how to raise a child and live the next 100 years of her life. Hell, even an adult can't do that – and that's what makes Maquia's journey so amazing and so relatable. Sure, she's in a completely different world, but all she's doing is raising a child. And while that itself is magical, it's something we can all relate to, either being the parents doing the raising or the children who still have much to see and learn.



# WOLF CHILDREN IS AMAZING

**JONATHAN QIAN**

2ND YEAR, CHEMICAL ENGINEERING

STAFF WRITER

This movie will make you want to call your mom after you finish it

**Spoilers for *Wolf Children***

*Wolf Children*, or *Ookami Kodomo no Ame to Yuki*, is one of my all time favorite movies. Many of the aspects of the film appeal to me on a personal level, and the technical aspects of the film are fantastic as well. Let's dive in.

First, let's talk about the story. The story is pretty simple; it follows Hana, a college student, who meets a werewolf and falls in love. Hana and the werewolf begin to live together and have two children. One day, the werewolf goes hunting for food for his kids, and ends up getting killed, to the horror of Hana. Hana decides to take on the challenge of raising her two half-wolf children, and the rest of the movie is spent showing the struggles that both Hana and her children face as a result of their unique situation. Hana moves out of the city and into the countryside so that her children can be free to live as both human and wolf children.



The werewolf in his wolf form

While the plot is relatively simple, it works very well, since the characters are the most important aspect of the movie. Hana's is a hard-working mother, affection who will stop at nothing to protect her children and ensure their happiness. Her resolve and strength are put on display again and again; no matter what happens to her or her children, she finds a reason to continue and persevere. The way she continually finds a way forward for herself and her children is heartwarming, and it makes it very easy to empathize with Hana, even if you might not have experienced anything similar. As someone who was raised by a single mother, seeing Hana take on the world for the sake of her children, sacrificing blood, sweat, and tears struck a chord in me, to the point where I had to give my mom a call and tell her how much I love and appreciate her after watching this movie for the first time. While Hana is a huge part of the movie, Ame and Yuki also contribute an immense deal to the film. Yuki, the older sister, who narrates the film, changes from a fearless energetic girl who embraced her wolf side, to someone who wants to fit in with society and hides her wolf side in fear that it would isolate her from society. Yuki on the other hand, starts off a weak boy, who fears his wolf side and finds solace with Hana, and turns into an independent, determined boy who tries his best to ease the burden



Hana and the werewolf enjoying a meal together

he places on his mother. Ame and Yuki serve as foils to each other; they are opposites throughout the entire movie and highlight the difficulty of raising of two very different children. The side characters in the movie are also fantastic, and they all feel very alive and add a lot of flavor to the world, despite being plot devices sometimes.

Common criticism is directed towards Ame's actions near the end of the movie, but his actions make sense, considering his perspective. Throughout most of Ame's childhood, he was a timid, weak child who clung to Hana and avoided his wolf side as much as possible. As he gets older, he begins to see things from other people's perspectives, especially his mom's. Ame starts to feel like a burden on Hana due to the worry he caused her when he was younger. At the same time, he begins to feel like he does not fit in with the human world and begins to reconnect with his wolf side. He starts to feel like his time is wasted in school, and starts going out into the wild to learn more about it as a wolf so that he can go out and be independent. Ame's growth culminates with him leaving Hana to live as a wolf in the forest, since it is where Ame feels the most comfortable. Every child has to leave their parents when they grow up, and Ame's maturation into a wolf parallels the way human kids leave their parents once they begin their careers.

Moving onto the technical aspects of the film, The soundtrack is one of the best things about the movie. Every track enhances important scenes and emphasizes emotional moments. Masakatsu Takagi did a fantastic job utilizing the classical style to convey emotion and make scenes memorable. One of the marks of a truly great soundtrack is being able to picture scenes and dialogue when you hear the song, and *Wolf Children*'s soundtrack does that amazingly well. Every time I hear Kito Kito, I can picture Hana and her children playing in the fresh snow, exploring the mountains and enjoying their new life in the countryside



Hana, Ame and Yuki looking at...hana

after facing so many challenges. Every time I hear Maternity Sky, I can picture Hana and the werewolf falling deeper and deeper into love while taking on new challenges together. The sound design is amazingly well done; nothing felt out of place, and the various sound effects added so much more weight to scenes. The voice acting was solid as well; the narration that Yuki provides throughout the movie really gives the feeling that Hana was an amazing mother who Yuki respects and loves a lot.

The art and animation in the movie are solid for the most part. The backgrounds are gorgeous, and the animation is pretty clean for the most part. Hana's home in the countryside is very reminiscent of *My Neighbor Totoro* and the area is just as beautiful. There are a few instances where the movie looks odd due to out of place CGI, but it does not detract heavily from the movie or ruin immersion. The direction is fantastic throughout the movie. A personal highlight is the five minute no dialogue sequence at the beginning of the movie, showing Hana and the werewolf's growing relationship in a way that gives you a glimpse into how much they care about each other and the enormous positive impact that they have on each other. It reminded a lot of the beginning of *Up*, where you see Carl and Ellie's relationship throughout their lifetime without a single word of dialogue.

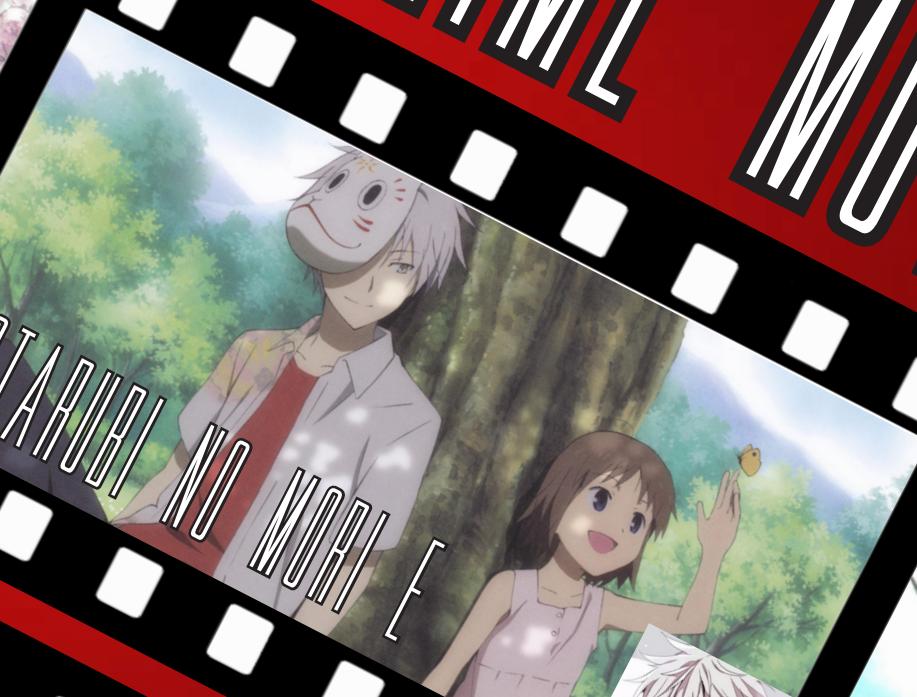


*The beautiful scenery*

Overall, *Wolf Children* is a fantastic movie and is a must watch for anyone that enjoys movies about growing up and family. It falls slightly short of being a masterpiece due to small inconsistencies in animation quality, but *Wolf Children* more than makes up for it with its amazing soundtrack and great characters and is more than worth your time.



# STAFF PICKS: GIRL'S ANIME MOVIES



# VOLUME XLIX, ISSUE 6 — MARCH 14, 2019



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**BOOETTE**

Super Mario  
Art by Borah Lim