

= Zaion : I Wish You Were Here =

Zaion : I Wish You Were Here (Japanese : ????????????? , Hepburn : Anata ga koko ni Ite hoshii) is a four @-@ episode Japanese science fiction original video animation (OVA) released by Gonzo in 2001 . The story is set in the near future , when a spaceborne virus threatens Earth by turning humans into violent creatures . Enhanced soldiers fight a losing war against these creatures to ensure the survival of the human race . The series was directed by Seiji Mizushima and written by Natsuko Takahashi . Music for the series was composed by Kenji Kawai . Zaion has been licensed for English @-@ language release in North America , the United Kingdom , and Australia .

= = Plot = =

The story of Zaion is set in 2004 , four years after the American CDC discovers a meteorite @-@ introduced virus that irreversibly alters the molecular structure of the human body and turns its victims into violent creatures . In an effort to eradicate the infestation that has claimed 3 percent of the human population , the World Health Organization of the United Nations establish a secret internal organization , the Committee of the Universal Resolution of Ecocatastrophe (CURE) in 2002 with several international branches , and creates a unit of soldiers whose bodies have been introduced with nanomachines . These soldiers , wearing Nano Osmolar Armor (NOA) , engage the victims in direct combat . They also establish units of unmanned , remote mech units known as Multi @-@ purpose Operative Beings (MOB) to assist the NOA . As the missions begin to take a toll on the NOA 's ranks , NOA soldier Yuuji Tamiya (?? ??? , Tamiya Y?ji) (voiced by Joe Odagiri in Japanese and Joey Hood in English) becomes angry at learning that CURE has been working on a secret weapon project , known as UNIT , and not employing it . The Japanese Branch 's weapon , UNIT @-@ i , is a girl named Ai (??) (voiced by Yukari Tamura in Japanese and Christa Kimlicko Jones in English) who is able to create a projected being that can destroy the creatures . During the next outbreak , victims of the virus fuse together into a larger creature and overwhelm the soldiers . CURE decides to put Ai 's ability to the test , and the projected being destroys the creature .

Yuuji is quarantined after coming in contact with one of the creatures but is released when he recovers from his injuries . However , his blood tests later indicate that the virus has evolved and is attacking the nanomachines in his body . CURE orders for Yuuji 's arrest , but he escapes and takes Ai hostage . When his condition worsens during the journey , Ai heals him with her powers . The other NOA soldiers catch up to the two and help them escape , but they are soon found by CURE units . Unwilling to see Yuuji and the others hurt , Ai decides to leave with the CURE soldiers . At the NOA facility , the infected soldiers become victims of the virus as the nanomachines are destroyed . Yuuji is forced to fight them and the CURE units sent to kill them at the same time . Ai finds out that Yuuji is in danger and asks that she be taken to the facility . She realizes her feelings for Yuuji and projects them with her powers to eliminate the virus . A larger outbreak occurs elsewhere in the city , and the virus further evolves to mimic the nanomachines ' abilities . Yuuji delays the creatures ' advance as Ai creates the projected being once again . She uses all her power to purge the infected area of the virus , but this causes her to collapse in exhaustion . Yuuji runs to her , fearing that she is dead , but she is still alive . Unfortunately , the seemingly defeated virus resists , and Yuuji desperately rushes towards the creatures to fight them . In the end it is revealed that Ai had lost her ability and she and Yuuji had left the organization . In the epilogue it shows Ai and Yuuji spending time together , happy to be free from their duties at last .

= = Media = =

The first episode of Zaion was published on the Internet on October 4 , 2001 . It was one of the few instances of a new series being introduced on the Internet before it was broadcast on television . The first two episodes aired later that day on the Kids Station television network . The network also aired the final episodes of the series on November 3 , 2001 . The ending theme song for the series is " Lunatic Trance : Shizuka naru Zekky? " (Lunatic Trance ? ?????? ?) , which was released as a

maxi single on November 21 , 2001 . The song was later included in Gonzo 's compilation release of music from its anime works in 2006 . The series did not have an opening theme .

Each episode of Zaion was released monthly on DVD by Japanese distributor Media Factory . The first episode was released on February 22 , 2002 , and the final episode was released on May 31 , 2002 . ADV Films licensed the series for the English language and released the episodes in pairs in 2003 . It then repackaged the series into one set , released on February 3 , 2009 . Madman Entertainment licensed Zaion for distribution in Australia and New Zealand and released its boxed set on July 26 , 2006 .

= = Reception = =

Critical reception of Zaion : I Wish You Were Here was mixed . " On the surface , it may appear to be merely another sci @-@ fi mecha action show " , Patrick King of Anime Fringe wrote . However , Zaion introduced apocalyptic themes similar those found in Michael Crichton 's novel *Andromeda Strain* and the film *28 Days Later* . According to King , the real story of Zaion occurs when Yuuji and Ai develop their relationship , and " we begin to think less of the nanomachine technology and viral invasion of the planet and focus more upon the potential love between these two lonely people , trapped in a labyrinth devoid of an exit " . The series was produced with high audio and visual qualities and was designed with " plausible technical details " . King also praised the fitting soundtrack , which was composed by Kenji Kawai and incorporated the sounds of progressive rock . On the contrary , Jason Bustard of THEM Anime rated the series one out of five stars and accused Gonzo of attempting to " rip off Power Rangers as a last resort " . He also pointed out the seemingly oblivious general population of the world in Zaion that are not at all concerned about the invasion . " If they were trying for some sort of grand social statement here , they succeeded instead in making the vast majority of Japan simply look stupid " , Bustard charged .

Zac Bertschy of Anime News Network also rated Zaion below average . Although he criticized the series as a " woefully undercooked and dull bit of science fiction claptrap " , he also admitted that it " wouldn 't be quite so miserable if the design wasn 't as poorly handled as it is " . Gonzo , which was known for incorporating experimental animation into its productions , mismanaged the show 's 3D computer animation and produced a result that " could have been rendered many years ago in some ancient MS @-@ DOS modeling program " . Despite his criticisms , Bertschy called the soundtrack " a truck stop of pleasure on the highway of pain " and praised the professional English @-@ language dub released by ADV Films . Mania.com 's Chris Beveridge noted that character development between Yuuji and Ai was not consistent . " Yuuji comes across as little more than a blank sheet for the most part with just the scribble of ' angst ' on him " , Beveridge observed . Overall , Gonzo 's experimentation with computer animation " look highly fake and out of place " .