

= Mobile Suit Gundam SEED =

Mobile Suit Gundam SEED (Japanese : ????????SEED (???) , Hepburn : Kid? Senshi Gandamu Sh?do) is an anime series developed by Sunrise and directed by Mitsuo Fukuda . The ninth installment in the Gundam franchise , Gundam SEED takes place in a future calendar era , in this case the Cosmic Era , the first to do so . In this era , mankind has developed into two subspecies : Naturals , who reside on Earth , and Coordinators , genetically enhanced humans capable of amazing feats of intellect who emigrate to man @-@ made orbital colonies to escape persecution by natural humans . The story revolves around a young Coordinator Kira Yamato who becomes involved in the war between the two races after a third , neutral faction 's space colony is invaded by the Coordinators .

The television series was broadcast in Japan between 2002 and 2003 , on the Tokyo Broadcasting System and Mainichi Broadcasting System networks , beginning a broadcast partnership with the Gundam franchise . The series spawned three compilations films and was adapted into a manga as well as light novels . A sequel series , Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Destiny followed in 2004 . Merchandise has been released , including models , CD soundtracks and video games . Gundam SEED was licensed by Bandai Entertainment for broadcast in North America , and began airing in the United States and Canada in 2004 and 2005 respectively . The films and the sequel were also licensed by Bandai . The manga and light novels as well as the spin @-@ off series , Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray , were licensed . Video games were released in North America .

Mobile Suit Gundam SEED was widely popular with the public in Japan , winning numerous awards , with high sales of the series DVD and music . The character development and animation has gained praise , but similarities with previous Gundam series have drawn both comparisons and criticism from Gundam fans .

= = Plot = =

The series is the first of the Gundam franchise set in the " Cosmic Era " in which mankind is divided between normal Earth dwelling humans , known as " Naturals " , and the genetically altered super @-@ humans known as " Coordinators " . The primary conflict of the story plot derives from jealous hatred by Naturals of the abilities of Coordinators , leading to hate crimes , and eventually the emigration of almost all Coordinators who flee into space to live idyllic lives on giant orbital space colonies called PLANTS of their own design . War eventually breaks out between Earth and the Plants . The Earth is divided between two major factions , the Earth Forces formed from most of the natural born human nations , primarily the Eurasians and the Atlantic Federation , and a natural human supremacist group known as Blue Cosmos with its slogan , " For the preservation of our blue and pure world " . The Earth Forces are not a unified alliance , and infighting and mistrust exist between their various nation states . The second major Earth nation is the Orb Union , a staunchly politically neutral and isolationist nation located on small Pacific Ocean islands ruled by a hereditary monarchy and still contains Coordinator citizens .

Two major events precede the story , known as the Bloody Valentine tragedy that initiated war between the PLANTS and the Earth Forces when one of the PLANT space stations , Junius @-@ 7 , is destroyed by a nuclear bomb . The second event is the counterattack by the PLANTS that buries Neutron Jammers deep into Earth 's crust that halts all nuclear reactions and long range radar and radio , causing most areas of earth to go without electricity or communication , and requiring mobile suits to rely on rechargeable batteries .

The PLANTS are a technological power house , developing many new technologies that give them equal power to Earth despite their very small population . It is the invention of the Mobile Suits that give their military the edge in the beginning of the war .

The story begins in the neutral Orb Union owned space colony Heliopolis , where secret development of 5 advanced mobile suits for the Earth Forces war effort in exchange for their technical data to be shared with the neutral Orb Union military . Additionally Heliopolis constructs a unique carrier battleship , the Archangel to base the five mobile suits from for the Earth Forces . The

colony is attacked by ZAFT forces , the military of the Coordinators , with the objective of stealing the new units . During the incursion an Orb union student and Coordinator named Kira Yamato , upon seeing his friends in danger , pilots the GAT @-@ X105 Strike mobile suit to fend off the invaders but the colony is critically damaged in the ensuing fight . As Heliopolis disintegrates , the survivors board the Archangel , and begin their journey to the Alliance base in Alaska . During the journey to Earth , Kira pilots the Strike to counter a series of attacks by ZAFT but is seemingly killed by his childhood friend , ZAFT soldier Athrun Zala , during one of their battles in which he also is nearly killed . Kira survives the attack and is taken by a blind priest to one of the PLANT space colonies , home to the Coordinators to recover . The Archangel arrives in Alaska but ZAFT launches a full @-@ scale attack on the base overpowering their enemies .

Kira goes to Alaska with the ZGMF @-@ X10A Freedom , a highly advanced , nuclear powered , and Neutron Jammer proof ZAFT mobile suit stolen by the PLANT pop star Coordinator Lacus Clyne daughter of Siegel Clyne , President of the Supreme Council of PLANT . Using Freedom , Kira ends the battle between the two armies , but the Alaska base is subsequently destroyed . The Archangel flees to the neutral country of the Orb Union . The Archangel and a new ship , the Orb Union ship Kusanagi leave Earth for space where they then join Lacus Clyne 's rebel faction and their stolen ZAFT battleship , the Eternal (meant to carry the Freedom and Justice mobile suites) to form the Three Ships Alliance with the common goal of ending the war between the Naturals and Coordinators . In the midst of the conflict , Athrun learns that Kira survived and searches for him under orders to recover Gundam Freedom , and is given an equally powerful prototype Gundam Justice . However , after learning of Patrick Zala 's , Athrun 's father and the radical militant faction leader of the PLANT Supreme Council , plan to commit genocide Athrun deserts him and joins the Three Ships Alliance . In a final battle , the Earth Forces deploys nuclear weapons equipped Neutron Jammer Canceler technology copied from stolen data on the Freedom and Justice Gundams power systems . The Earth Forces intend to destroy the PLANT space colonies but are stopped by ZAFT 's GENESIS , a super weapon microwave laser designed to commit genocide on the Naturals . The Three Ship Alliance intervenes to defeat the GENESIS ending the battle . The war ultimately ends as a peace treaty is signed .

= = Development = =

Mobile Suit Gundam SEED was directed by Mitsuo Fukuda (Future GPX Cyber Formula and Gear Fighter Dendoh) with music by Toshihiko Sahashi . The series was first announced in June 2002 , while a trailer was available in September on the series ' official website . A total of eight writers were in charge of the series . The characters were designed by Hisashi Hirai , while the mechanical designs were made by Kunio Okawara and Kimitoshi Yamane . Mobile Suit Gundam planning manager Koichi Inoue stated that the staff making Gundam SEED was a new and young team that would continue working with following Gundam series . Inoue , however , would work with anime based on the original Gundam series . Fukuda stated that Gundam SEED was initially told from Kira 's point of view , but deeper into the series the point of view would shift to other characters . His main focus with the series was to entertain the audience , pointing out that the drama would develop through the series in a similar vein to previous Gundam series . The first part worked on was the plot followed by action sequences , stating that the human characters were more important than the combat sequences . In retrospect , Fukuda said that Kira 's wish to fight was forced upon him stemming from his desire to protect his friends . Moreover , he considered these actions as being based on Japanese thoughts .

= = Media = =

= = = Anime = = =

The series premiered in Japan on the terrestrial Tokyo Broadcasting System and Mainichi

Broadcasting System networks , where it occupied the Saturday 6 pm timeslot , replacing Ultraman Cosmos . Mobile Suit Gundam SEED aired between October 5 , 2002 , and September 27 , 2003 . Each episode was streamed on the Internet the day after broadcast , for users subscribing to Nippon Telegraph and Telephone services , in Windows Media or Real format . The series was sold in Japan as thirteen DVD volumes released from March 28 , 2003 to March 26 , 2004 . On March 26 , 2004 , a five @-@ minute epilogue called After Phase : In the Valley of Stars was released on the thirteenth and final DVD of the Japanese release . A DVD box set of the series was released on February 23 , 2010 . A fifty @-@ episode sequel titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Destiny aired in Japan from October 9 , 2004 to October 1 , 2005 , airing on the same stations as Gundam SEED . Gundam SEED Destiny takes place two years after the original series and follows Shinn Asuka , focusing mainly on his involvement in the new war .

A HD remaster edition of the series was confirmed in August 2011 although Mitsuo Fukuda stated it was leaked information and that the official information would come in few following days . In November 2011 , Bandai announced the release of the series in four Blu @-@ ray compilations between March and the December of 2012 . The HD version was first streamed on the Bandai Channel website in December 2011 and aired in Japan between January and November 2012 .

Bandai Entertainment licensed the animation of Gundam SEED on February 15 , 2004 , and it began airing in the United States and Canada in 2004 and 2005 respectively . The English adaptation was produced in association with The Ocean Group and the English @-@ language dub was recorded at Ocean Studios in Vancouver , Canada . The series was released on ten DVDs in bilingual format between August 10 , 2004 , and May 10 , 2005 . The epilogue was not released on the North American DVD release because it was not licensed to Bandai Entertainment by Sunrise ; however , it was released on the final European DVD release . Beez Entertainment also published the series in ten DVDs from June 13 , 2005 to March 6 , 2006 . A two part box set called the " Anime Legends Edition " was released on January 8 , 2008 , and March 4 , 2008 , with each set containing five DVDs .

On October 11 , 2014 at their 2014 New York Comic @-@ Con panel , Sunrise announced they will be re @-@ releasing all of the Gundam franchise , including Gundam SEED in North America though distribution from Right Stuf Inc . , beginning in Spring 2015 .

== = Films = = =

A three @-@ part film compilation of the television series has been released as Mobile Suit Gundam SEED : Special Edition . Each compilation film is 90 minutes long and retells the story of Gundam SEED , with additional and altered scenes from the TV series . Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Destiny followed the same formula in four compilation movies as Gundam SEED Destiny : Special Edition . They were released from August 27 to October 22 during 2004 in DVD format . The three films were released alongside the four films from Gundam SEED Destiny on February 25 , 2010 . Gundam SEED : Special Edition has been licensed for North America by Bandai Entertainment and was released on DVDs in English , between July 11 , 2005 , and November 22 , 2005 . A DVD box of the three films was released by Bandai on November 26 , 2008 under the title of " Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Complete Feature Collection " .

== = Soundtracks = = =

The music from the series is composed by Toshihiko Sahashi with CDs published by Victor Entertainment . Notable artists who sang opening and ending themes for the series include Nami Tamaki , who was fourteen years old when the third opening theme was used , and T.M. Revolution , who also provided the voice for the character , Miguel Aiman . Four original soundtracks were released between December 4 , 2002 and December 16 , 2004 . They include background music , insert themes as well as some opening and ending themes . Symphony SEED -Symphonic Suit Mobile Suit Gundam SEED- is a collaboration album between Mobile Suit Gundam SEED music and the London Symphony Orchestra released on May 8 , 2004 containing a total of ten tracks . A

compilation DVD , featuring four music videos from Mobile Suit Gundam SEED and Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Destiny , was released on May 24 , 2006 under the title Mobile Suit Gundam SEED & SEED DESTINY Clipping 4 Songs . Five character CDs with themes performed by the Japanese voice actors were released between March 21 , 2003 and July 23 , 2003 . Two compilation albums have also been released : Mobile Suit Gundam SEED COMPLETE BEST was released on November 22 , 2006 , featuring thirteen tracks . Mobile Suit Gundam SEED ~ SEED DESTINY BEST " THE BRIDGE " Across the Songs from GUNDAM SEED & SEED DESTINY is a two @-@ CD compilation of ending themes , insert and character songs from Gundam SEED and Gundam SEED Destiny . All the songs from Gundam SEED and Gundam SEED Destiny by T.M.Revolution were collected in a CD titled X42S @-@ REVOLUTION , released on March 24 , 2010 . The limited edition version includes a DVD with music videos from the anime series . Two other CD singles were released during 2012 featuring the new theme songs from the HD rerelease of Gundam SEED .

= = = Manga = = =

A manga series was written by Masatsugu Iwase based on the events from the anime series . It was published in five tank?bon volumes from March 20 , 2003 to January 21 , 2005 by Kodansha . The English version was published in North America by Del Rey Manga who licensed it in January 2004 as one of their first titles , and released between April 27 , 2004 and August 30 , 2005 . Another spin @-@ off series is Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray , written by Tomohiro Chiba and illustrated by K?ichi Tokita , which focused on the three MBF @-@ P0x mobile suit prototypes and their respective pilots and organizations . It was published in three tank?bon volumes from April 28 , 2003 to February 26 , 2004 by Kadokawa Shoten . The English release was announced by Tokyopop in December 2003 . The volumes were released between May 11 , 2004 and November 9 , 2004 . A one @-@ volume manga titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED featuring SUIT CD (?????????SEED featuring SUIT CD) was written by Yasushi Yamaguchi and released on January 22 , 2005 by Kadokawa . In 2012 , Kadokawa released a new manga series titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED : Re by Juu Ishiguchi . The manga retells the events from the television series . It is currently collected into 3 Tankobon Volumes by Kadokawa Shoten .

Two more side stories titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray R and Mobile Suit Gundam SEED X Astray were created . Toda Yasunari replaced Tokita as the illustrator in the former , while Tokita reprised his role in the latter . Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray R follows the adventures of the Red Frame 's pilot Lowe and his Junk Guild associates and interlocks with the events of the original Astray @-@ series . It spanned four volumes published from March 20 , 2003 to August 26 , 2004 . The English volumes published by TokyoPop were released from February 8 , 2005 to November 8 , 2005 . Gundam SEED X Astray is about Canard Pars , who is a failed experiment from the Ultimate Coordinator program . Canard is searching for Kira Yamato , the successful Ultimate Coordinator , so that he can defeat him and prove he was not a " failure " . Two volumes were published for the series in May and October , 2005 . TokyoPop published its two volumes on October 31 , 2006 and February 27 , 2007 . There was a " photo novel " side story titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray B which was illustrated by Toda Yasunari . A single volume from the series was published on August 31 , 2005 and follows Gai Murakumo and his fellow Serpent Tail mercenaries .

There is yonkoma series titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Club Yonkoma that parodies the events from both Gundam SEED and Gundam SEED Destiny . The comics were a joint venture between Sunrise 's official Gundam SEED fan club and Newtype Japanese magazine . Kadokawa Shoten released the first publications of the yonkoma on August 8 , 2005 .

= = = Light novels = = =

A light novel adaptation of the TV series was authored by Riu Goto . It was originally a supplement of Kadokawa Sneaker Bunko with illustrations by Ogasawara Tomofumi . The stories were eventually published in five volumes by Kadokawa Shoten with the first one in March 2003 and the

fifth in January 2004 . Tokyopop released the first three light novels in North America from October 11 , 2005 to May 9 , 2006 . Two light novels volumes from Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Astray spin @-@ off series were also authored by Tomohiro Chiba and published by Kadokawa on September 1 , 2003 and July 1 , 2004 .

= = = Video games = = =

Video games have been released based on the anime series : Gundam Seed : Federation vs. Z.A.F.T. II for arcades , Mobile Suit Gundam Seed : Tomo to Kimi to Senjou de (?????????SEED : ??????? , lit . " Friends and Foes on the Battelfield ") and Gundam Seed : Battle Assault for the Game Boy Advance , Gundam Seed : Federation vs. Z.A.F.T. , Mobile Suit Gundam Seed , Mobile Suit Gundam Seed : Never Ending Tomorrow , Mobile Suit Gundam Seed Destiny : Generation of CE , and Gundam Seed : Federation vs. Z.A.F.T. 2 Plus for PlayStation 2 , A PlayStation Portable game was also released under the title of Gundam Seed : Federation vs. Z.A.F.T. Portable as well as a mobile phone game , Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Phase @-@ Act Delivery . Artdink developed the first PlayStation Vita Gundam game , Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Battle Destiny (?????????SEED BATTLE DESTINY) . Released on June 7 , 2012 , the game covers events from both Gundam SEED and Gundam SEED Destiny .

Characters from Gundam SEED have been featured in Gundam crossover games . These include Mobile Suit Gundam : Gundam vs. Gundam Next , the SD Gundam G series and a few games from the Gundam Battle Assault series , Dynasty Warriors : Gundam 2 , and Dynasty Warriors : Gundam 3 . Other crossover games featuring them are games from the Super Robot Wars series as well as Another Century 's Episode 3 and Another Century 's Episode : R.

= = = Other merchandise = = =

Guidebooks have been released for Gundam SEED such as Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Ultimate Super Encyclopedia (??? ?????????SEED???) on July 10 , 2003 . Two official guidebooks were released in Japan on July 18 , 2003 by Kadokawa Shoten : Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Photos Freedom Kira (?????????SEED??? FREEDOM??) and Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Photos Justice Athrun (?????????SEED??? JUSTICE????) focus on Kira Yamato and Athrun Zala respectively . In the same year , a series of guidebooks with the label of " Official File " were released in Japan . A guidebook titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED ? All Characters Analysis (?????????????SEED ?????????????) was published on April 19 , 2004 , featuring an extensive analysis on the storyline and characters . A more detailed guidebook , Mobile Suit Gundam SEED Perfect Archive Series (?????????????SEED PERFECT ARCHIVE SERIES) , featuring articles on the characters , technology and universe was published in March 2006 . An artbook titled Mobile Suit Gundam SEED RGB Illustrations (?????????SEED RGB ILLUSTRATIONS) was released on July 26 , 2004 .

= = Reception = =

The show has become one of the most popular of the Gundam series in Japan , enjoying high television ratings and DVD sales . In April 2004 , Bandai Visual announced that one million copies of the Gundam SEED DVD had been sold in Japan , with the first volume having sold over 100 @,@ 000 copies . CDs sales have also been high with the single CD from the series ' first ending theme becoming one of the top @-@ selling CDs in Japan during 2002 . By July 2004 , 10 million plastic Gundam SEED models had been sold worldwide . In the same month , Jerry Chu , marketing manager for Bandai Entertainment Inc . , stated the response to Gundam SEED has been highly positive , having broken rating records when it first aired in Japan . Chu added that reaction in the United States was the most enthusiastic Bandai received in the last six years . According to the analyst John Oppliger of AnimeNation Gundam SEED became the first Gundam series which was widely successful not only among " Gundam fans and hardcore otaku " but also among "

mainstream , casual Japanese viewers " . Gundam SEED was the eighth TV Feature Award winner at the Animation Kobe Awards in 2003 . It was the third winner at the Japanese Otaku Awards in 2003 . It won Animage 's twenty @-@ fifth Anime Grand Prix award winner in 2002 , with the characters of Kira Yamato and Lacus Clyne topping the male and female anime categories , respectively . It topped the charts in the Newtype magazine reader poll during 2004 . However , the show was not well received by older Japanese fans . In February 2004 , Sunrise 's president , Takayuki Yoshii , stated it was because Gundam SEED incorporated elements from popular live @-@ action television dramas . On the other hand , Bandai Visual reported in April 2004 that Gundam SEED had a wide audience , including both young and older viewers .

Gundam SEED has been praised for being a stand @-@ out in a long line of Gundam series with Anime News Network 's Paul Fargo calling it " the best of the alternative timelines , but stands as one of the best Gundam titles " . The story has been praised for its battle sequences as well as its character @-@ driven scenes , neither of which were reviewed to have detracted emphasis from the other . The series was noted to " downshift " in pace from its early episodes as the main characters development began to progress along political themes , which appealed to some audiences . Early in the series , speculations were made with regard to the progress the characters ' relationships . The relationship between Kira Yamato and Athrun Zala earned praise as it resulted in entertaining action scenes between their mobile suits , while in later reviews speculation arose as to whether the two would become allies .

The climax has been praised for bringing unexpected inclusions within the war , as well as revelations regarding the characters ' roles . A common comment among writers was that Gundam SEED blended elements from previous Gundam series and displayed it in fast @-@ paced way , making it enjoyable to younger fans but still engaging older fans familiar with previous series . DVD Verdict writer Mitchell Hattaway further noted that while it used elements from other anime series , it still " drew [him] in so quickly [he] soon found [himself] wrapped up in the proceedings " . Carl Kimlinger from Anime News Network stated that Gundam SEED adapted the original Mobile Suit Gundam series from 1979 for a modern audience in the same way Mobile Suit Gundam 00 would adapt Mobile Suit Gundam Wing . Bamboo Dong from the same site stated that while this caused the appearance of " hardcore anti @-@ Gundam Seed zealots " who criticized the series for these traits , it was nevertheless entertaining to watch and give anime fans a step into the " Gundam fandom " .

The quality of the animation led THEM Anime Reviews ' Derrick L. Tucker to call it " by @-@ and @-@ far the best of any Gundam Series to date " . Additionally , the soundtrack was popular for bringing popular J @-@ pop artists such as Nami Tamaki and T.M. Revolution to perform the theme songs . The casting of many talented voice actors , such as Rie Tanaka , Seki Tomokazu and Houko Kuwashima , provided the emotional depth in scenes that required it . The English dub was reviewed favorably for the most part but comparisons between the English and original Japanese dubbing revealed weaknesses in the portrayal of the characters .

= = = Controversy = = =

The sixteenth episode of Gundam SEED features a scene in which Kira Yamato is seen dressing after getting out of a bed where the teenage girl Flay Allster lies sleeping naked , suggesting a sexual relationship . The Japanese Commission for Better Broadcasting reported that viewers filed complaints regarding the scene as the show was aired at 6 pm when children would be watching . Mainichi replied by mentioning it should have given more careful consideration to the episode before airing it . The scene was extended in one of the compilation films with John Oppliger noting it expanded the off @-@ screen scene with three shots .