

= Last Exile =

Last Exile ( ????????? , Rasuto Eguzairu ) is a Japanese animated television series created by Gonzo . It featured a production team led by director Koichi Chigira , character designer Range Murata , and production designer Mahiro Maeda . The three had previously worked together in Blue Submarine No. 6 , one of the first CG anime series . Last Exile aired on TV Tokyo between April 7 , 2003 and September 29 , 2003 . A sequel series , Last Exile -Fam , The Silver Wing- ( ????????? ? ?????? ? , Rasuto Eguzairu Gin 'yoku no Famu ) , aired between October 15 , 2011 and March 23 , 2012 . A film adaptation of the series , Last Exile -Fam , The Silver Wing- : Over the Wishes , will be released on February 6 , 2016 .

The story is set on the fictional world of Prester , where its inhabitants use aerial vehicles known as vanships as a means of transportation . On this world which is divided in eternal conflict between the nations of Anatoray and Disith , sky couriers Claus Valca and Lavie Head must deliver a girl who holds the key to uniting the two factions . Although Prester itself is not a representation of Earth , it features technology reminiscent of nineteenth @-@ century Europe at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution . Many of its designs were also inspired by Germany 's technological advances during the interwar period .

Last Exile was well received in North America , and the series was licensed for the English language by Geneon Entertainment ( then Pioneer Entertainment ) in June 2003 , two months after the first episode aired in Japan . Funimation Entertainment began licensing the series after Geneon ceased production of its titles , later licensing the sequel series . It was also licensed for English releases in the United Kingdom by originally ADV Films until its closure in 2009 and is now licensed by Manga Entertainment , and in Australia by Madman Entertainment . Other published media included two soundtracks , two manga adaptations and artbooks .

= = Setting = =

Last Exile is set on the fictional world of Prester . Prester 's two nations of Anatoray and Disith are separated by a turbulent region of the sky known as the Grand Stream and are engaged in eternal conflict according to the code of chivalric warfare . A superior faction known as the Guild enforces these rules . It also provides the two nations with technology but , unknown to them , has dishonorable intentions , to preserve the status quo and enforce its dominance of both sides . Although the story is set in the future , the technology employed differs from that in a typical space opera . Instead , the show 's retro @-@ futuristic dieselpunk setting resembles nineteenth @-@ century Europe at the height of the Industrial Revolution . Inhabitants of Prester operate aerial vehicles known as vanships in the world 's Golden Age of Aviation ; it should be noted that although the technology is primitive , the aerial vehicles use a form of antigravity ( developed by the Guild ) and lighter @-@ than @-@ air methods of flight rather than the use of wings .

Various scenes in the series also show existing tension between the upper and lower classes . Anatoray 's nobility and military officers generally believe that commoners do not understand their codes of chivalry . On the other hand , the lower class also despise the aristocracy for their monopoly on resources . This tension extends to the accessibility of clean water , which varies in price according to purity grades . In the larger story , the advanced Guild society is portrayed as degenerate and lazy , while the people of Anatoray and Disith are creative and industrious .

The series introduces viewers to a wide range of naval and military vocabulary . More primitive navigational methods such as dead reckoning and instruments such as the sextant are also used in the series .

= = Plot = =

= = = Last Exile = = =

The story revolves around fifteen @-@ year @-@ old pilot Claus Valca and navigator Lavie Head , who fly their vanship as sky couriers in the nation of Anatoray . Although they usually take up missions of relatively low difficulty , they are one day asked to complete the mission of a dying courier . The mission , rated seven stars out of ten , is to deliver a young girl named Alvis Hamilton to the mysterious battleship Silvana . Despite their fears , Claus and Lavie deliver Alvis to the battleship but decide to remain aboard to keep her safe .

Claus and Lavie are initially treated as intruders but eventually befriend the crew of the Silvana . They learn that the Guild intends to capture Alvis for reasons unknown to them . In the first battle between the Silvana and Guild forces , Guild member Dio Eraclea takes an interest in Claus 's flying skills and his signature move , the Immelmann turn . Wanting to learn more about Claus , Dio willingly allows himself to be captured . He reveals to the Silvana 's captain , Alex Row , the existence of one of four Mysteria which act as a key to something known as Exile .

When the Silvana 's executive officer , Sophia Forrester , is revealed to be the Emperor 's daughter and heir , she returns to Anatoray at the request of the prime minister . Sophia assumes the throne after the Emperor is killed during a surprise attack at the capital by the Disith nation and pleads for an alliance with Disith in order to capture Exile and end the Guild 's control . Sophia reveals to Claus that Alvis is linked to the Mysteria , but as preparations for the assault are made , Alvis is captured by the Guild .

Delphine Eraclea , the Maestro of the Guild , reveals that Exile is a colony ship used by those who first settled their world , and she intends to use Alvis and the Mysteria to take control of it . However , Claus and Alvis escape the Guild stronghold and are reunited with Lavie when the alliance fleet attacks . As the fleet follows Exile past the Grand Stream and enters Disith , it is able to destroy Delphine 's forces . After Claus and Alvis recite the four Mysteria , Exile reveals itself as a starship that will carry people back to their old home world .

= = = Last Exile : Travelers from the Hourglass = = =

A manga set right after the events of Last Exile and before Fam , The Silver Wing , Travelers from the Hourglass continues the story of Claus , Lavie , Alvis , and the others who left Prester and settled on Earth , their ancestors ' home world . As they get used to their new home , Al is pursued by the Earth Guild .

= = = Last Exile : Fam , The Silver Wing = = =

Taking place 4 years after the events of Last Exile , Last Exile : Fam , The Silver Wing is set on Earth , the original home world of the colonists of Prester . The new story focuses on Fam Fan Fan and Giselle Collette , two vespa vanship pilots who work as Sky Pirates , capturing and selling battleships for a living .

Fam and Giselle get into an adventure when they and the Sky Pirates rescue Liliana il Grazioso Merlo Turan and her younger sister , Millia Il Velch Cutrettola Turan , Princesses of the Turan Kingdom , from the clutches of the mighty Ades Federation . The Federation , led by Empress S?r? Augusta and Premier Luscinia H?fez , is on an all out war against nations who descended from immigrants who came back to Earth by Exile ships . As Ades was the only nation to stay on Earth when it was in a state of chaos and ruin , Luscinia believes that the Exile immigrants have no right to return to Earth since their ancestors abandoned Earth when it was in chaos only to return when Earth was viable to live on again and force the original inhabitants of Earth off their lands to form their own nations . To return these lands to their original inhabitants , Luscinia leads the Ades Federation to conquer the immigrant nations and destroy their armies , with Turan being one of them .

After Luscinia kidnaps Liliana , who has the ability to control an Exile , Luscinia summons an Exile to destroy Iglasia , the capital of Turan , killing its soldiers and the King of Turan , leading to the surrender of Turan to Ades . With everything she cared for lost , Millia is given refuge by the Sky Pirates , where Fam promises to help Millia regain her kingdom .

## == Production ==

Last Exile was created by Gonzo in celebration of the company's 10th anniversary . It featured a production team led by director Koichi Chigira , character designer Range Murata , and production designer Mahiro Maeda . The three had previously worked together to create Blue Submarine No. 6 , one of the first CG anime series .

## === Art design ===

Conceptual designs were created by Range Murata , who was given complete freedom to create the setting . He began drawing detailed sketches of machines and everyday objects from a daily newspaper . His research was given no constraints with the exception of production deadlines . Gonzo initially intended for Last Exile to be shown in a space setting , but producers did not want the characters to wear sterile space suits . Instead , the final product was described by Jonathan Mays as an " ugly " world of " rusting bolts , lots of blues and grays . " Murata believed the design took " the course the story had laid out " . His character conceptualization included a great amount of time spent on costume design . Wanting to portray each character's personality more fully , he " tried to draw in the kind of material that would have been used in creating their clothes and try to represent the stitches connecting the fabric . " In contrast to crewmembers of the battleship Silvana who wear modern and utilitarian uniforms , other characters wear traditionally aristocratic attire . High amount of attention was given to character animation . Animators especially experienced difficulties with Alex Row's hair and flowing cape .

Production of Last Exile relied heavily on 3D computer animation . Of the 350 shots used in the first episode , more than 200 included computer @-@ generated animation . In comparison , Gonzo's previous work Vandread used an average of 40 to 50 computer @-@ generated shots per episode . Animation was also supplemented with Victorian era flourishes . In order to combine hand @-@ drawn animation with computer @-@ generated ones , the production team used a technique for non @-@ photorealistic rendering , which could not be used for Blue Submarine No. 6 because of a stylistic conflict . At the 2003 Anime Expo , Maeda , who also worked with Studio Ghibli's production of Castle in the Sky , commented that " [ Last Exile ] is very advanced in how it will incorporate the two mediums " .

## === Historical references ===

Real @-@ world historical designs were also adapted for the fictional world . Flying battleships of the Anatoray and Disith nations included components of Japanese dreadnoughts in commission at the turn of the twentieth century . Uniform designs for Anatoray's musketeers were based on Napoleon Bonaparte's army and American Civil War soldiers . On the other hand , Soviet Red Army fur coats provided the basis for Disith uniforms . Another inspiration for creators came from a silent film of the airship Hindenburg , which depicted the aircraft's UFO @-@ like silver @-@ plated design in contrast to the traditional buildings below . This imagery was reproduced in the series .

Producers selected a specific historical time frame to serve as a point of reference .

We had this image of Germany at the beginning of the twentieth century . We thought that Germany of the interwar period had very interesting characteristics . People think of something of dark and negative because of the rise of the Nazism . But so much of things appeared at that time , like a rapid growth of the cities and richness . Industrial technology , chemistry , scientific discoveries , much of inventions also in the design . Bauhaus appears there , for example . [ ... ] I think that all that Germany produced at that time was extreme and unique .

Several characters were also named after historical figures . The name of Claus Valca's father was derived from Hamilcar Barca , the leading commander of Carthaginian forces during the First Punic War and father of the talented tactician Hannibal . An Anatoray general was named after Vitellius , who led the Roman Empire for several months during the Year of the Four Emperors .

= = Media = =

= = = Anime = = =

Last Exile premiered in Japan on April 7 , 2003 , and aired on TV Tokyo until the airing of its final episode on September 29 . A total of 13 DVD compilations were released by Victor Entertainment between July 23 , 2003 , and July 21 , 2004 . A complete seven @-@ disc boxed set was released on November 21 , 2004 . The deluxe edition of this set included a model of Tatiana 's and Alister 's red vanship , a short story on the fictional Battle of Otranto , unpublished articles on the series , and illustrations by character designer Range Murata .

After receiving a respectable amount of attention in the United States , Pioneer Entertainment ( later Geneon Entertainment ) licensed the series in June 2003 , two months after the first episode aired in Japan , and the first compilation DVD was released on November 18 . TechTV premiered the series in English language during its Anime Unleashed programming block on March 8 , 2004 . The first thirteen episodes aired nightly until March 14 , and remaining episodes premiered on December 6 after channel was merged into G4techTV , with new episodes airing each weeknight until the series concluded on December 22 . All 26 episodes were also aired in a marathon broadcast on Christmas Day . AZN Television and G4techTV Canada also broadcast the series in 2007 . After Geneon ceased distribution of its licensed titles in North America , rights to the series were transferred to Funimation Entertainment , and a four @-@ disc boxed set was released on May 5 , 2009 , and again on June 14 , 2011 , under the " Anime Classics " line .

ADV Films originally owned the license for the series ' English release in the United Kingdom until its parent company 's shutdown in 2009 and has now been re @-@ licensed by Manga Entertainment , while distribution rights in Australia and New Zealand are owned by Madman Entertainment . Last Exile is also licensed for regional language release in France , Germany , Sweden , Russia , and Taiwan . It has been hosted at the streaming media website Crunchyroll .

On February 1 , 2011 , Gonzo revealed that a new Last Exile anime was planned titled Last Exile -Fam , The Silver Wing- , described as " a new series of Last Exile [ with ] new story , [ main ] characters , and mechanical designs . " Koichi Chigira and Hitomi Kuroishi returned to direct and score the anime , respectively . The series aired in Japan between October 15 , 2011 and March 23 , 2012 and was also simulcasted on the same day in Asia by Animax Asia , making it the fifth anime to be simulcasted the same time as its Japanese premiere on the channel , after Tears to Tiara , Fullmetal Alchemist : Brotherhood , Inuyasha : The Final Act , and Maid Sama ! . Funimation Entertainment licensed the series for streaming and home video release and simulcast the series as it aired . A film adaptation of the series , titled Last Exile -Fam , The Silver Wing- : Over the Wishes , will be released in theaters on February 6 , 2016 . The film will recompile the events of the television series with newly animated shots of footage .

= = = Soundtracks = = =

Two pieces of theme music were used for the series . " Cloud Age Symphony " , performed by Shuntaro Okino , was used as the opening theme for all 26 episodes . It was released by Victor Entertainment as a maxi single on May 21 , 2003 , and remained on the Oricon music charts for six weeks , where it peaked at 52nd position . Hitomi Kuroishi 's " Over The Sky " was used as the ending theme .

Music trio Dolce Triade , which includes Kuroishi , produced two CD soundtracks for the series . Last Exile O.S.T. was released by Victor Entertainment on June 21 , 2003 , and remained on the Oricon music charts for seven weeks , where it peaked at 52nd position . It includes both theme songs and 17 additional instrumental tracks . The second soundtrack , Last Exile O.S.T. 2 was released on September 3 , 2003 , and remained on the Oricon music charts for five weeks , where it peaked at 55th position . It includes an alternate version of the ending theme song and 19 additional

instrumental tracks . Geneon Entertainment licensed both soundtracks for release in North America . The first soundtrack was released on February 17 , 2004 , and the second was released on April 13 . However , both soundtracks are out of print in North America after Geneon ceased production of its licensed titles in 2007 .

== = Art book == =

A 136 @-@ page art book titled Last Exile Aerial Log was published in February 2005 but has since been discontinued . It was published in Japanese and was never translated for English @-@ language release . The book contains detailed character sketches and descriptions as well as technical manuals for aircraft that appeared in the series . It also includes exclusive interviews with members of the production staff .

== = Manga == =

Currently there are two manga . The first is a manga adaptation of Last Exile : Fam , The Silver Wing written by Gonzo and illustrated by Robo Miyamoto and is serialized in Young Ace magazine and published by Kadokawa Shoten . The second , titled Last Exile ? Travelers from the Hourglass ( ????????? ? ?????? , Rasuto Eguzairu ? Sunadokei no Ryojin ) , tells what happened to the Claus and his friends after the events of Last Exile and before the events of Last Exile : Fam , The Silver Wing . The manga is written by Gonzo and illustrated by Minoru Murao , one of the original animators of the Last Exile anime . Last Exile ? Travelers from the Hourglass is serialized in Newtype Ace and published by Kadokawa .

== = Live @-@ action film == =

On February 11 , 2005 , a report on Anime News Network mentioned a possible live @-@ action Last Exile film . It was based on a blog post by Patrick Macias , writer for Animerica and author of several books on Japanese pop culture and anime , which noted that while he was attending the Tokyo International Anime Fair , a Gonzo employee suggested that an unnamed New Line Cinema producer was interested in adapting the series for a live @-@ action production . On July 8 , 2009 , a concept art image was leaked on the Internet but was removed at the request of filmmakers . However , as of 2013 , there has been no new news about the Live @-@ action film , suggesting it has been canceled .

== = Reception == =

After receiving a respectable amount of attention in the United States , the series was licensed to Pioneer Entertainment ( later Geneon Entertainment ) in June 2003 , only two months after the first episode aired in Japan . When Geneon 's compilation DVDs were released , reviewers such as IGN praised them despite the use of Dolby Digital 2 @.@ 0 audio mix over a 5 @.@ 1 mix . " The separation is masterfully taken care of with voices , music , and sound effects leveled off very cleanly for both the Japanese and English audio tracks . " In an interview with director Koichi Chigira given in July 2004 , he was surprised to find that the series had reached a great level of popularity among fans in the United States .

Last Exile has been likened to Hayao Miyazaki 's classic work Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind and the early steampunk novel trilogy A Nomad of the Time Streams . It received numerous praises for its artwork and production , placing it as one of Gonzo 's best work . By integrating music and sounds of a European theme , the soundtrack contributed to the series ' unique flavor . Anime News Network rated the series as " a must @-@ have for all anime fans . " However , the complex storyline tested viewers ' patience because " mysteries pile upon one another before the answers start spilling forth in the second half [ of the series ] . " Despite this complaint , Last Exile 's action sequences and cliffhangers compelled viewers to wait and see these mysteries resolved .

TechTV vice president Laura Civiello stated that Last Exile " had more universal appeal than other types of anime shown on the network , which often contained lots of references recognizable only by hard @-@ core fans . " When the series premiered on the network , The New York Times recommended it for younger viewers as well with the headline " An Anime Marathon , and It 's Not Just for Adults . " The network moved its Anime Unleashed programming block into prime time to take advantage of the quality of the series , eventually launching it into a top ten position on the Nielsen VideoScan anime survey in the middle of 2004 . Sony Pictures Entertainment selected Last Exile , Blood + , Gankutsuou : The Count of Monte Cristo , and R.O.D the TV as part its promotional campaign throughout 2007 and 2008 targeting audiences ages 15 ? 35 . It streamed the four series throughout Europe , Latin America , and other parts of Asia on Animax and Animax Asia through various 3G mobile phone services .