

= Neon Genesis Evangelion =

Neon Genesis Evangelion ( Japanese : ??????????? , Hepburn : Shin Seiki Evangerion , literally " Gospel of a New Century " ) , commonly referred to as Evangelion or Eva , is a Japanese animated television series ( anime ) produced by Gainax and Tatsunoko Production , and directed by Hideaki Anno . It was broadcast on TV Tokyo from October 1995 to March 1996 . The original Japanese cast includes Megumi Ogata as Shinji Ikari , Megumi Hayashibara as Rei Ayanami , and Y?ko Miyamura as Asuka Langley Soryu . The music was composed by Shir? Sagisu .

Evangelion is an apocalyptic anime , set in a futuristic Tokyo fifteen years after a worldwide cataclysm . The story centers on Shinji , a teenage boy who is recruited by the shadowy organization NERV to pilot a giant bio @-@ machine mecha called an Evangelion in combat against monstrous beings known as Angels . The series explores the experiences and emotions of Evangelion pilots and members of NERV as they attempt to prevent another catastrophe . It features religious symbolism throughout the series , including themes and imagery derived from Kabbalah , Christianity , Judaism , Buddhism , and Shinto .

Neon Genesis Evangelion gained widespread critical acclaim . Regarded as a critique and deconstruction of the mecha genre , the series has become a cultural icon and influenced an artistic and technical revival of the anime industry . Subsequent film , manga , home video and other products in the Evangelion franchise have achieved record sales in Japan and strong sales in overseas markets , and by 2013 gross revenues had reached over 150 billion yen ( approximately \$ 1 @.@ 32 billion ) .

= = Plot = =

In 2015 , fifteen years after a global cataclysm known as the Second Impact , teenager Shinji Ikari is summoned to the futuristic city of Tokyo @-@ 3 by his estranged father Gendo Ikari , the director of the special paramilitary force NERV . Shinji witnesses the United Nations forces battling an Angel : one of a race of giant monstrous beings whose awakening was foretold by the Dead Sea Scrolls . Because of the Angels ' near @-@ impenetrable force @-@ fields , NERV 's giant Evangelion bio @-@ machines , synchronized to the nervous systems of their pilots and possessing their own force @-@ fields , are the only weapons capable of keeping the Angels from annihilating humanity . NERV officer Misato Katsuragi escorts Shinji into the NERV complex beneath the city , where his father pressures him into piloting the Evangelion Unit @-@ 01 against the Angel . Without training , Shinji is quickly overwhelmed in the battle , causing the Evangelion to go berserk and savagely kill the Angel on its own .

Following hospitalization , Shinji moves in with Misato and begins settling in to life in Tokyo @-@ 3 . In his second battle , Shinji destroys an Angel but runs away after the battle , distraught . Misato confronts Shinji and he decides to remain a pilot . Evangelion Unit @-@ 00 is repaired and Shinji tries to befriend its pilot , a mysterious , and socially isolated teenage girl named Rei Ayanami . With Rei 's help , Shinji defeats another Angel .

Ritsuko Akagi , NERV 's chief scientist , reveals that the Second Impact was not caused by a meteor strike as officially reported , but instead resulted when the first Angel to arrive on Earth , codenamed Adam , exploded in the Antarctic . The pilot of Evangelion Unit @-@ 02 , teenage girl Asuka Langley Soryu , moves in with Misato and Shinji and joins her fellow pilots in defeating the next Angels . Shinji 's schoolfriend Toji Suzuhara is selected for Unit @-@ 03 , but during his first test synchronization with the Evangelion , Unit @-@ 03 is hijacked by an Angel . When Shinji refuses to destroy the rogue unit , his control over Unit @-@ 01 is cut off and supplanted by a prototype autopilot system known as the " Dummy Plug " system , and his Evangelion rips apart Unit @-@ 03 crushing Toji 's cockpit . Shinji is devastated and quits piloting the Evangelion , but is forced to return to destroy an Angel that has defeated both Asuka and Rei . Asuka loses her self @-@ confidence following her defeat and spirals into a deep depression . In the next battle , Rei self @-@ destructs Unit @-@ 00 and dies to save Shinji 's life . Misato and Shinji later visit the hospital where they find Rei alive but claiming she is " the third Rei " . Misato forces Ritsuko to reveal the

dark secrets of NERV , the Evangelion graveyard and the Dummy Plug system which operates using clones of Rei .

Asuka is reduced to a catatonic state by her depression , and Kaworu Nagisa replaces her as pilot of Unit @-@ 02 . Kaworu , who initially befriends Shinji , is revealed to be the final Angel . Kaworu fights Shinji , then realizes that he must die if humanity is to thrive and asks Shinji to kill him . Despite his initial hesitation , Shinji kills Kaworu . Soon after this act , NERV and SEELE trigger the forced evolution of humanity , termed the " Human Instrumentality Project " , in which the souls of all mankind are merged into one through Rei . Shinji 's soul grapples with the reason for his existence and reaches an epiphany that he needs others to thrive , enabling him to destroy the wall of negative emotions that torment him . This allows him to be reunited with all of the main characters , who congratulate him .

= = Characters = =

Anno attempted to create characters that reflected parts of his own personality . The characters of Evangelion struggle with their interpersonal relationships , their personal problems , and traumatic events in their past . The human qualities of the characters have enabled some viewers of the show to identify with the characters on a personal level , while others interpret them as historical , religious , or philosophical symbols .

Shinji Ikari is the series protagonist and the designated pilot of Evangelion Unit @-@ 01 . After witnessing his mother Yui Ikari 's death as a child , Shinji was abandoned by his father , Gendo Ikari . He is emotionally hyper @-@ sensitive and sometimes does as expected out of fear of rejection , but he has often rebelled and refused to pilot the Eva because of the extremely excruciating harm that has been done to him , or done to his friends . After some difficulty taking the first steps , Shinji gains supremely excellent control of the Eva , surpassing all other pilots ; piloting Evas has become his most well known talent . Throughout the series he says to himself " I mustn 't run away " as a means of encouraging himself to face the threats of the day , and this sometimes actually gives him bravery in battle , but he has a lingering habit of withdrawing in response to traumatic events . He has an Oedipus complex , and likes Rei because she somehow resembles his mother . Anno has described Shinji as a boy who " shrinks from human contact " and has " convinced himself that he is a completely unnecessary person " .

The withdrawn and mysterious pilot of Evangelion Unit @-@ 00 , Rei Ayanami , is a clone made from the salvaged remains of Yui and is plagued by a sense of negative self @-@ worth stemming from the realization that she is an expendable asset . She at one time despised Shinji for his lack of trust in his father Gendo , with whom Rei is very close . However , after Shinji and Rei successfully defeat the Angel Ramiel , she takes a friendly liking to him . Towards the end of the series it is revealed that she is one of many clones , whose use is to replace the currently existing Rei if she is killed .

Asuka Langley Soryu is a child prodigy who pilots Evangelion Unit @-@ 02 and possesses a fiery temper and an overabundance of pride and self @-@ confidence , which often gets her in trouble and difficulty , especially during battles . As a little girl , Asuka discovered the body of her mother shortly after she committed suicide , leading the child to repress her emotions and vow never to cry . Asuka and Rei are presented with their own flaws and difficulty relating to other people .

Misato Katsuragi is the caretaker and commanding officer for Shinji and Asuka . Her professional demeanor at NERV contrasts dramatically with her carefree and irresponsible behavior at home . Character designer Yoshiyuki Sadamoto conceived her as an older " girl next door " and promiscuous loser who failed to take life seriously . Misato has an Electra complex and is consumed with conflicting love and hate for her father , which manifests as a driving force in her decision to work at NERV and her attempts to " [ seek ] her father in Kaji 's embrace . " Anno described Shinji and Misato as " afraid of being hurt " and " unsuitable ? lacking the positive attitude ? for what people call heroes of an adventure . "

The teenaged Evangelion pilots are ordered into battle by the steely Gendo Ikari , Shinji 's father and the commander of NERV . He abandoned Shinji and recalled him only to serve as an

Evangelion pilot . Gendo salvaged the remains of his dead wife 's soul and body to create Rei , whom he viewed as a mere tool at his disposal to defeat the Angels . Similar to Shinji , he is somewhat asocial and is afraid of being insulted by others and often runs away from such , often committing immoralities in the process . He is depicted as relentless in his drive to win , a man who " takes drastic and extreme measures , by fair means or foul , or by hook or by crook , in order to accomplish his own purpose . " According to Sadamoto , the characters of Gendo and Fuyutsuki are based on Ed Straker and Alec Freeman of the television series UFO .

Sadamoto designed the visual appearance of the characters so that their personalities " could be understood more or less at a glance " . The distinctive aesthetic appeal of the female lead characters ' designs contributed to high sales of Neon Genesis Evangelion merchandise . The design of Rei in particular became so popular that the media referred to the character as " Premium Girl " due to the high sales of books with Rei on the cover .

= = Production = =

Director Hideaki Anno fell into a deep depression following completion of work on Nadia : The Secret of Blue Water and the 1992 failure of the Royal Space Force : The Wings of Honnêamise sequel project . According to Yasuhiro Takeda , Anno agreed to a collaboration between King Records and Gainax while drinking with King representative Toshimichi ?tsuki ; King Records guaranteed Anno a time slot for " something , anything " . Anno began development of the new series in 1993 around the notion of not running away , which had been the underlying theme of Aoki Uru , an earlier Anno project that had failed to move into production . Early into the production , Anno stated his intent to have Evangelion increase the number of otaku ( anime fans ) by attracting interest in the medium . According to him , the plot of the series reflects his four @-@ year depression . In the early design phase of the Evangelion project several formats were considered , including a film , a television series and an original video animation ( OVA ) series . The producers finally opted for the television series as it was the most widely accessible media in Japan at that time . The proposed title Alcion was rejected due to its lack of hard consonant sounds .

Evangelion borrowed certain scenarios and the use of introspection as a narrative device from a previous Anno project entitled Gunbuster . He incorporated the narrative structure of Nadia and multiple frames of reference to leave the story open to interpretation . Over the course of the writing process , elements of the Evangelion storyline evolved from the original concept . A female protagonist was initially proposed for the series , but the idea was scrapped . Originally , the first episode presented the battle between an Angel and Rei , while the character of Shinji was only introduced after the Angel had been defeated . Further changes to the plot were made following the Aum Shinrikyo sect 's sarin gas attack on the Tokyo subway in March . Azuma Hiroki has said that the original Evangelion story was " too close to reality " from Anno 's point of view . Basically , Anno thought that the original scenario was not suitable for broadcasting , and he feared censorship . However , he also criticized Aum Shinrikyo , because " they lost any contact with reality " . For this reason , Azuma stated that Evangelion " is an intrinsic critique of Aum " .

The final version of the story reflects inspiration drawn from numerous other anime and fictional works . Chief among these are Space Battleship Yamato , Mobile Suit Gundam , Devilman and Space Runaway Ideon . The series also incorporates tributes to Childhood 's End , the novels of Ry? Murakami , The Andromeda Strain , The Divine Invasion , the poem Pippa Passes , The Hitcher , and several television series including The Prisoner , Thunderbirds , Ultraman and Ultra Seven .

The development of the Neon Genesis Evangelion series ran close to deadlines throughout its production run . The initial cuts of the first two episodes were screened at the second Gainax festival in July 1995 , only three months before they were aired on television . By episode 13 the series began to deviate significantly from the original story , and the initial script was abandoned . The number of Angels was reduced to 17 instead of the original 28 , and the writers changed the story 's ending , which had originally described the failure of the Human Instrumentality Project after an Angel attack from the moon . Starting with episode 16 , the show changed drastically , discarding the grand narrative concerning salvation for a narrative focusing on the individual characters . This

change coincided with Anno 's development of an interest in psychology after a friend lent him a book on mental illness . This focus culminated in a psychoanalysis of the characters in the two final episodes . The production ran so close to the airing deadline that the completed scenes used in the preview of the twenty @-@ fifth episode had to be redesigned to work with the new ending . These episodes feature heavy use of abstract animation , flashbacks , simple line drawings , photographs and fixed image scenes with voice @-@ over dialogue . Some critics speculated that these unconventional animation choices resulted from budget cuts , but Toshio Okada stated that Anno " couldn 't decide the ending until the time came , that 's his style " . These two episodes sparked controversy and condemnation among fans and critics of the series , including significant vitriol directed at Anno himself . Hideaki Anno and Studio Gainax released in 1997 , two animated feature films : Death & Rebirth and The End of Evangelion .

= = Themes = =

The Evangelion series is permeated with references to Kabbalah , Christianity , Judaism , Buddhism , Shinto , and Gnosticism , complicating viewers ' attempts to form an unambiguous interpretation of the series . Of particular influence are the Midrash , the Zohar and other Kabbalistic texts on the Book of Genesis , which are reworked within the series to create a new Evangelion @-@ specific mythology while still maintaining a connection with the original texts . Assistant director Kazuya Tsurumaki said the religious visual references were intended to make the series more " interesting and exotic " , and denied the existence of a " Christian meaning " for the use of Christian visual symbols in the show . However , according to Anno : " As the symbols are mixed together , for the first time something like an interrelationship or a meaning emerges " . The plot combines elements of esotericism and mysticism of the Jewish Kabbalah , including the Angels , which have many common features with the Angels of the religious tradition , such as Sachiel , Sandalphon and Ramiel .

The series contains numerous allusions to the Kojiki and the Nihongi , the sacred texts of Shinto . The Shinto vision of the primordial cosmos is referenced in the series , and the mythical lances of the Shinto deities Izanagi and Izanami are used as weapons in battles between Evangelions and Angels . Elements of the Judeo @-@ Christian tradition also feature prominently throughout the series , including references to Adam , Lilith , Eve , the Lance of Longinus , the Dead Sea Scrolls , the Kabbalistic concept of Adam Kadmon , the Tree of Life , among many others . The merging of all human souls into one through the Human Instrumentality Project at the end of the series is similar to the Kabbalistic concept of tikkun olam . The Evangelions have been likened to the golem of Jewish folklore , and their visual design in the series resembles the traditional depictions of oni ( Japanese demons or ogres ) .

Evangelion has been interpreted as a deeply personal expression of Hideaki Anno 's own emotional struggles . During the production of the series , he became interested in mental illness and psychology . According to him , Rei is a schizophrenic character and she represents the unconscious of Shinji . Shinji has an Oedipus complex , and is characterized by a libido @-@ destrudo conflict . Similarly , Ritsuko has an Electra complex , in which she loves Gendo , a sort of substitute of her father figure . Anno himself stated that the main character reflects his character , " both in conscious and unconscious part " , referring also to Kaworu as his Jungian shadow . It has even been suggested that Shinji 's entering into Unit @-@ 01 is a Freudian " return to the womb " , and that his struggle to be free of the Eva is his " rite of passage " into manhood . In the series there are many references to psychoanalytic concepts , such as the oral stage , introjection , oral personality , ambivalence , and the death drive . In particular , the series references elements of the works of Sigmund Freud , Jacques Lacan , Arthur Schopenhauer , Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel , Jean @-@ Paul Sartre and others .

= = Related media = =

### == Music ==

Shiro Sagisu composed most of the original music for the series . The soundtracks released to high rankings on the Oricon charts , with Neon Genesis Evangelion III reaching the number one slot for highest sales in 1997 ; that same year , Sagisu received the Kobe Animation award for " Best Music Score " for his work on Evangelion . Classical music by Ludwig van Beethoven , Johann Sebastian Bach , Giuseppe Verdi and George Frideric Handel were also featured throughout the series . Additional classical works and original symphonic compositions were used to score later movies produced within the Neon Genesis Evangelion franchise . In total , the series ' discography includes 21 full studio , live , compilation and soundtrack albums and six CD singles .

The series ' opening theme was " A Cruel Angel 's Thesis " , performed by Yoko Takahashi . It ranked on two TV Asahi polls , reaching # 55 for best anime theme songs of all time , and # 18 for best anime theme songs of the 1990s . Fifteen years after its release , the theme won JASRAC 's annual award for the royalties it continues to generate from its usage in pachinko , pachislo , karaoke and other venues . The end theme of the series was a version of " Fly Me to the Moon " arranged and sung by Claire Littley .

### == Films ==

In May 1996 , Gainax announced an Evangelion film in response to fan dissatisfaction with the series finale . In advance of the promised film , on March 15 , 1997 Gainax released Death & Rebirth , consisting of 60 minutes of clips taken from the first 24 episodes of the series and 40 minutes of the upcoming movie , The End of Evangelion .

The End of Evangelion , which premiered on July 19 , 1997 , provided a complete retelling of the final two episodes of the television series . Rather than depicting series ' climax within the characters ' minds , the film provides a more conventional , action @-@ based resolution to the series ' plot lines . The film won numerous awards and grossed 1 @.@ 45 billion yen within six months of its release . EX.org ranked the film in 1999 as the fifth best ' All @-@ Time Show ' , with the television series at # 2 @.@ and in 2009 CUT Magazine ranked it the third greatest anime film of all time .

On September 9 , 2006 , Gainax confirmed a new animated film series called Rebuild of Evangelion , consisting of four movies . The first film retells the first five episodes from the series but from the second film onward the story is completely different , including new characters , EVAs and Angels . The first film , Evangelion : 1 @.@ 0 You Are ( Not ) Alone was released in Japan on September 1 , 2007 , with Evangelion : 2 @.@ 0 You Can ( Not ) Advance and Evangelion : 3 @.@ 0 You Can ( Not ) Redo released on June 27 , 2009 and November 17 , 2012 . The final film , titled Evangelion : 3 @.@ 0 + 1 @.@ 0 , was said to be released in winter 2015 , but a final release date is still unknown .

### == Manga ==

Ten months prior to the television broadcast of Evangelion , Anno worked with author and illustrator Yoshiyuki Sadamoto to publish a manga version of the story designed to generate popular interest in the upcoming anime series . The first installment of the manga was published in the February issue of Sh?nen Ace in December 1994 with subsequent installments produced on an irregular basis over an eighteen @-@ year period . The final installment was published in June 2013 . Several publishers were initially concerned at the selection of Sadamoto to develop the manga adaptation , viewing him as " too passé to be bankable " . These concerns proved unfounded upon the strong commercial success of the manga : the first 10 volumes sold over 15 million copies , and the eleventh volume reached number one on the Tohan charts , selling an additional two million copies . The manga series won the 1996 Comicker fan manga poll .

### == Other media ==

Several video games based on the series have been developed , ranging from RPG and adventure games to mahjong and card games . The series has also spawned numerous art books and visual novels , one of which inspired the derivative manga series *Angelic Days* . The story has been adapted into two other manga series in addition to the original Sadamoto project : *Petit Eva : Evangelion @ School* , a parody series which received its own original net animation serial show , and *Campus Apocalypse* , a character @-@ focused story that omits the Evangelion robots . Several radio dramas have been released on CD and cassette to make the material more accessible to non @-@ traditional audiences .

On February 8 , 2015 , *Evangelion : Another Impact* , a 3D rendered short directed by Shinji Aramaki was released and streamed by Japan Animator Expo . It depicts " the story of an Evangelion 's activation , rampage and howling in another world " .

= = Releases = =

The original home video releases in Japan included VHS and Laserdisc sets using a release structured around " Genesis 0 : ( volume number ) " , with each of the first 12 releases containing two episodes each . " Genesis 0 : 13 " and " Genesis 0 : 14 " contained the original and the Neon Genesis Evangelion : Death & Rebirth versions of episodes 25 and 26 . The fifteenth and final release for Laserdisc , entitled " Genesis 0 : X " , contained episodes 21 to 24 and was a special mail @-@ in offer for fans who purchased all 14 discs . The Japanese DVD release was spread across seven volumes ; all contained four episodes except the seventh volume , which included both the original and alternate versions of episodes 25 and 26 . The Second Impact Box released in 2001 contained the 26 uncut and remastered original episodes and both movies . In 2003 , the Japanese @-@ only , nine volume " Renewal of Evangelion " DVDs were released , with improved acoustic effects , remixed dialogue and remastered soundtrack for 5 @.@ 1 stereo sound . The first eight volumes covered the original 26 episodes , including two versions of episodes 21 to 24 : the uncut version and a reconstruction of the edited version ) . The ninth volume , containing two discs , was named *Evangelion : The Movie* and contained *Death ( true ) <sup>2</sup>* and *End of Evangelion* . The Renewal Project release formed the basis for the western " Platinum Edition " . On December 1 , 2014 , Studio Khara announced a Blu @-@ ray boxset that will contain a new HD @-@ remastering of the television series , the video versions of Episodes 21 @-@ 24 , as well as the two movies and the Renewal of Evangelion . In addition , another DVD set was announced that contains the broadcast version of the television series , as well as the broadcast version of *Death ( True ) & Rebirth* . Both sets were released on August 26 , 2015 , to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the TV series .

The series is distributed in North America and Europe by ADV Films . The 13 English VHS tapes , released from August 20 , 1997 to July 7 , 1998 , contained two episodes each and were released using the same " Genesis 0 : ( volume number ) " titling convention as the first Japanese home video release . Two laserdisc collections were released as *Collection 1 Deluxe Edition* and *Collection 2 Deluxe Edition* , containing episodes one to four and five to eight , respectively . The first DVD release by ADV Films was the eight disk *Perfect Collection* in 2002 , containing the original 26 installments . In 2004 , ADV released two DVD compilations titled *Neon Genesis Evangelion : Resurrection* and *Neon Genesis : Reborn* , encompassing the directors ' cuts of Episodes 21 through 24 . In the same year , the *Platinum Edition* release was announced by ADV in 2004 , consisting of seven DVDs released between July 27 , 2004 and April 19 , 2005 . The *Platinum Edition* contained the original 26 episodes and the four " Director 's cut " versions of episodes 21 to 24 . A six @-@ disc version of the *Platinum Edition* , the *Platinum Complete Edition* , was released on November 22 , 2005 , and omitted several extras included in other versions , including commentary and trailers .

= = Reception = =

Neon Genesis Evangelion received critical acclaim both domestically and internationally . Evangelion has developed into a social phenomenon beyond its primary otaku fan base , generating national discussion in Japan . The series has also been the subject of numerous media reports , debates and research studies .

Following the conclusion of the series ' original television broadcast , the public and critical reception to Neon Genesis Evangelion was polarized , particularly with regard to the final two episodes . The experimental style of the finale confused or alienated many fans and spawned debate and controversy ; Hideaki Anno received anonymous online death threats . The criticism was largely directed toward the lack of storyline resolution in the final two episodes . Opinion on the finale was mixed , with the audience broadly divided between those who considered the episodes " deep " , and those who felt their meaning was " more apparent than real " . The show 's American voice actors admitted that they also had trouble understanding the series ' conclusion . The Mainichi Times wrote that after episode 25 , " nearly all viewers felt betrayed ... When commentator Eiji ?tsuka sent a letter to the Yomiuri Shimbun , complaining about the end of the Evangelion series , the debate went nationwide . " Despite the criticism , Anno stood by his artistic choices for the series ' conclusion . The controversy surrounding Evangelion has not negatively influenced the popularity of the series , which retains strong popularity within and outside the otaku subculture .

Neon Genesis Evangelion has scored highly in numerous popularity polls . In 1996 , the series won first place in the " Best Loved Series " category of the Anime Grand Prix , a reader @-@ polled award series published in Animage magazine . The show was again awarded this prize in 1997 by a large margin . The End of Evangelion won first place in 1998 , making Neon Genesis Evangelion the first anime franchise to win three consecutive first place awards . The website IGN ranked Evangelion as the 10th best animated series in its " Top 100 Animated TV Series " list . The series placed third in Animage 's " anime that should be remembered in the 21st Century " . In 1998 , EX.org 's readers voted Neon Genesis Evangelion the # 1 US anime release and in 1999 , the # 2 show of all time . In 2007 , a large @-@ scale poll by TV Asahi found Evangelion was the second most appreciated anime in Japan . The series was ranked as the most popular of all time in a 2006 survey of 80 @,@ 000 attendees at the Japan Media Arts Festival . Evangelion won the Animation Kobe award in 1996 , and 1997 . The series was awarded the Nihon SF Taisho Award and the Excellence Award Japan Media Arts Festival in 1997 . The film ranked # 6 on Wizard 's Anime Magazine on their " Top 50 Anime released in North America " .

In the August 1996 issue of Animage , Evangelion characters placed high in the rankings of best characters with Rei ranked first , Asuka third , Kaworu fourth and Shinji sixth . Rei Ayanami won in the Female Character category in 1995 and 1996 and Shinji Ikari won the Male Character category in 1996 and 1997 . In 2010 , Newtype magazine recognized Rei Ayanami as the most popular character of the 1990s in the female category , and Shinji Ikari in the male category . TV Asahi recognized the " suicide of Ayanami Rei " as the ninth most touching anime scene ever . " A Cruel Angel 's Thesis " won the Animage award in the Best Song category in 1996 , and TV Asahi recognized it as the 18th best anime song since 1990 .

The series has captured the attention of cultural theorists inside and outside Japan , and many critics have analyzed or commented on it , including Susan J. Napier , William Rout , Mick Broderick , Mari Kotani , and the sociologists Shinji Miyadai , Hiroki Azuma , Yuriko Furuhashi , and Marc Steinberg . The series has been described as both a critique and deconstruction of the mecha genre . Mike Hale of The New York Times described it as " a superior anime , a giant @-@ robot tale of unusual depth , feeling and detail " . Theron Martin ( Anime News Network ) described the character design as " distinctive , designed to be sexy rather than cutesy " , and the mecha designs as " among the most distinctive ever produced for an anime series , with sleek , lithe appearances that look monstrous , fearsome , and nimble rather than boxy and knight @-@ like " . Mike Crandol stated " It no longer seems contrite to say that Evangelion is surely one of the all @-@ time great works of animation " . Zac Bertschy remarked that " Most of the backlash against Evangelion existed because people don 't like to think " . Evangelion has been described as possessing complex characters and richness of narrative .

= = Influence and legacy = =

Evangelion has had a significant impact on Japanese popular culture . The series also had a strong influence on anime , at a time when the anime industry and televised anime series in particular were in a slump period . CNET reviewer Tim Hornyak credits the series with revitalizing and transforming the giant mecha genre . In the 1980s and 1990s , Japanese animation knew a period of crisis and decreased production that coincided with the economic crisis in Japan . This was followed by a crisis of ideas in the years to come . Against this background , Evangelion imposed new standards for the animated serial , ushering in the era of the " new Japanese animation serial " , characterized by innovations that allowed a technical and artistic revival of the industry . The production of anime serials began to reflect greater author control , the concentration of resources in fewer but higher quality episodes ( typically ranging from 13 to 26 ) , a directorial approach similar to live film , and greater freedom from the constraints of merchandising .

Evangelion has influenced numerous subsequent anime series , including Serial Experiments Lain , Eureka Seven , RahXephon , Texhnolyze , Gasaraki , Boogiepop Phantom , Blue Submarine No. 6 , Mobile Battleship Nadesico , Rinne no Lagrange , Dual ! Parallel Trouble Adventure , Argento Soma , Pilot Candidate , Generator Gawl , Brain Powerd , and Dai @-@ Guard . FLCL contains allusions to Evangelion , and the series is also mentioned in the third episode of Magical Shopping Arcade Abenobashi . References and homages to the show are also contained in Koi Koi Seven , Hayate the Combat Butler , Baka and Test , Regular Show , My Little Pony : Friendship is Magic and Keroro Gunso . The show 's mixture of religion and mecha also influenced several Japanese video games , including Xenogears and El Shaddai : Ascension of the Metatron . The design and personality traits of the character Rei Ayanami were reused for many anime characters of the late 1990s , such as Ruri Hoshino of Nadesico , Ruriko Tsukushima ( The Droplet ) , Miharuru ( Gasaraki ) , Anthy Himemiya ( Revolutionary Girl Utena ) , and Lain Iwakura ( Serial Experiments Lain ) . The character of Asuka was parodied by Excel ( Excel Saga ) , and some of her traits were used to create the character of Mai in Gunparade March . Evangelion 's mecha design , characterized by a greater resemblance to the human figure , and the abstract designs of the Angels , also had a significant impact on the designs of future anime productions .

According to Keisuke Iwata , the global spread of Japanese animation dramatically expanded due to the popularity of Evangelion . After the success of the show , otaku culture gained wide attention . In Japan , Evangelion prompted a review of the cultural value of anime , and with its success , anime reached a new point of maturity . With the interest in the series , otaku culture became a mass social phenomenon . The show 's regular reruns increased the number of otaku , which Lynden links to a boom in interest in literature on the Dead Sea Scrolls , Kabbalah and Christianity . Anime director Makoto Shinkai declared that the genre of anime owes a cinematographic debt to Evangelion . In the aftermath of Evangelion , Anno reused many of its stylistic conceits in the live @-@ action Love & Pop and the anime romance Kare Kano . The UK band Fightstar 's debut album , Grand Unification , was heavily influenced by Neon Genesis Evangelion . The Japanese band Rey derived its name from that of the character Rei Ayanami .

= = Merchandising = =

The popularity of Neon Genesis Evangelion extends to its merchandising which exceeded \$ 400 million within two years of its release . The series has established itself greatly on the Japanese market , developing a varied range of products for adult consumers , such as cell phones ( including a special NERV and MAGI @-@ themed Sharp SH @-@ 06D smartphone released in 2012 ) , laptop computers , many soundtracks , DVDs , action figures , and telephone cards . The stylized mecha design that would later earn praise for Evangelion was initially criticized by certain toy companies as being too difficult to manufacture , with some expressing concern that models of the Evangelions " would never sell . " Eventually , Sega agreed to license all toy and video game sales . At the time of the release of the Japanese film Death & Rebirth and The End of Evangelion , estimated sales of Evangelion merchandise topped \$ 300 million , of which 70 % derived from sales



of video and laser discs , soundtrack CDs , single CDs , computer software and the three @-@ volume manga . Multiple merchandising products were released during the Renewal Project , such as CDs , video games , cel @-@ art illustrations and collectible models .

The commercial exploitation of the series for the home video market achieved record sales and remained strong over a decade later . The fame of the show has grown through home video sales , which exceeded two or three times the sales of other contemporary anime series and films . The series contributed significantly to the spread of the DVD format in Japan and generated a considerable impact on the Japanese economy , calculated in billions of yen . A 2007 estimate placed the total value of the franchise at over 150 billion yen .

= = = Official websites = = =

( Japanese ) Neon Genesis Evangelion ? Gainax official Evangelion page

Madman Entertainment Evangelion page

( Japanese ) ???????????? ? King Records Evangelion page

= = = Articles and information = = =

Neon Genesis Evangelion at the Internet Movie Database

Neon Genesis Evangelion ( anime ) at Anime News Network 's encyclopedia

Neon Genesis Evangelion at DMOZ