

THE ART OF
My Neighbor
TOTORO

A FILM BY HAYAO MIYAZAKI



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My Neighbor TOTORO

I wanted to make a
delightful, wonderful
film set in Japan.

Original Story/Screenplay/Directed by Hayao Miyazaki

I wanted *My Neighbor Totoro* to be a straightforward feature film (it would be only an anime and novel). Its viewers get close with their own after they have left the theatre. I wanted the spirit of the film to linger around to such an extent, inspire people to fondly recall their childhood, and encourage kids to share a world on the grounds of the forest.

What can Japan be doing off until elderly parents and kids have both able to enjoy an anime (nature and the seasonal beauty) but no one can say that any more. There is no one to live in Japan and who are indeed separated from [the reality of] our country where on a person is a form of exception. Is the country that not a lot of people of Japan?

Even in the global age, it is the most used things that can have a worldwide effect. No one doesn't anyone make a delightful and wonderful film set in Japan?

We need a new method and sense of discovery to be up to the task. Maybe that is the real reason the film must be a joyful, enduring film.

The forgotten
The ignored
Those that are considered out.

You make *My Neighbor Totoro* with the film but of this thing is not over.

What is Totoro?

It is the name that our protagonist, the four-year-old Mei, gives these creatures. No one knows what they are, where it is.

They dwell in the forests here a long, long time ago, when the country was mostly one. Rabbits. Suddenly they began a thousand years. The large Totoro is over two meters tall. Big and furry not unlike a big cat, but he has the animal might to stand down to a small, but it has a more gentle spirit. These spirits, or forest creatures, have dwelled in forest since the old time. They have been from humans, but somehow the spirits Totoro and Mei manage to find them.

The Totoros don't really exist, and although this is their first contact with humans, they're opened up to Satsuki and Mei.

Hayao Miyazaki is one of Japan's most beloved animation directors. In September 2016 he was awarded the Venice International Film Festival's Golden Lion Award for lifetime achievement, and he has also been honored by the British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) with the Fellowship Award, one of the 2012 Academy Awards. In 2017, Miyazaki's film *Spirited Away*, winner of the 2002 Academy Award for Best Animated Feature Film, was named as one of the 100 Greatest American Movies of All Time by the American Film Institute. Miyazaki's other achievements include the highly regarded *Kiki's Delivery Service*, and *Castle in the Sky*, which is published in English by DC Media and was also available on DVD.



My Neighbor TOTORO

Initial Concept Sketches

The film *My Neighbor Totoro* was based on a children's book Miyazaki conceptualized while working on the TV series *3000 Miles in Search of Mother* (1976). Some of these initial concept sketches for the children's book ended up in the film, while others were left out. These images provide us a glimpse of the "other" *My Neighbor Totoro* Miyazaki had envisioned.



1-4 Concept sketches from when the big Totoro, medium-sized Totoro, and small Totoro were called Mitsuhiro, Totoro, and Mitsu, respectively. The ages assigned to each character in these early designs for the story script are indicated in the margin.

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1-3 Mid-concept sketches of the main characters. The first sketch depicts a girl resembling Totoro at a time when a large dog-like creature called Guppi (Guppi of Guppi) in the Miyazaki house and another was a dog-like creature with blue fur and a medium-sized Totoro-like head design.

"There was a little girl who played in the yard, and wouldn't be meeting her father at a bus stop so we had to make up with her girl's outfit. And that was difficult. Her hair was shorter than Totoro's, so we had to make it longer. In the end, we made something resembling a girl playing at something with a dog in the yard. It's a very wild." (Miyazaki, Interview with My Neighbor Totoro Storyboard Collection)

11



1-4 Concept sketches for the girl playing with the three Totoros following her mother's story.

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1-10 Initial storyboard also depicting the girl's encounter with the forest.

"Although the addition of the girl presented a problem, I managed to come up with a solution for the 'Neighbor' scene. I made a storyboard out of these sketches and submitted them to Tokyo Movie, asking them to become up with a story. If they could bring it to the screen. Several parties got involved, catching it as a TV special but it never got off the ground. The storyboard was returned to me, and even after I left the company, it remained unused." (Miyazaki)

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1-18 Character design and storyboard for Totoro flying on a kite. The kite is called 'Dororo'.

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1.3 Concept sketch of the story's theme: "Rainy Day Experiences"

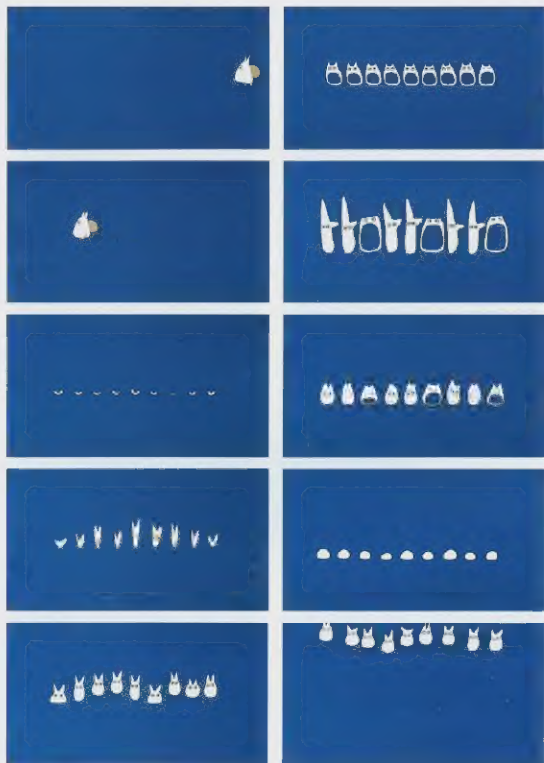
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My Neighbor
TOTORO

The Art of Animated Films

This is a collection of concept sketches, storyboards, concept art, call art, and film images that tell the story of *My Neighbor Totoro*, an animated film conceived, scripted, and directed by Hayao Miyazaki. All concept sketches and storyboards are by Hayao Miyazaki. Concept art is by the art direction supervisor, Kazuo Oga. The commentary has been excerpted from interviews conducted with Hayao Miyazaki and Kazuo Oga published in *Romance Album* and *Storyboard Collection*.

Note: Unprocessed cell art may deviate from corresponding animation shots.



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The storyboards for the opening sequence of *My Neighbor Totoro* don't really follow the form of "storyboards".

Tajiri, to the director, Ghibli, describing the rough layout of the storyboard. The sequence was determined through permutations and combinations determined by the line artist. Each element can be made individually and then combined in the line artist, so there are no storyboards for the sequence. Miyazaki



37



- Three-wheeler truck passing through the wheat fields. (*slow art*)
- Town with rows of apartment buildings. (*storyboard*)
- The film ends on a beautiful, literal day in May. A three-wheeler truck parked in the town slowly crosses through the middle of a wheat field. (*from storyboard*). The first version of the storyboard was still influenced by the sketchbook.

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1-13 Sketchboards depicting Sasaki's family on their way to their new house by the forest

14 Amap of the story's setting Matsuyama, late 1950s

"It's supposed to be 1955, but we weren't heavily through our research." "What we had in mind was 'a recent past' that everyone can relate to." (Miyazaki)



1 Three wheeled truck (Miyazaki)
2 Three wheeled truck (Miyazaki art)
4 Three wheeled truck "searching for" on the trail between the farms and public (2015)

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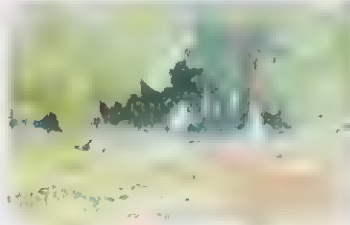


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1. The house is the main subject of the painting. It is a traditional house with a red roof and a chimney. The house is nestled among lush green trees and foliage. The scene is viewed from a distance, showing a path leading towards the house.



2. The house is the main subject of the painting. It is a traditional house with a red roof and a chimney. The house is nestled among lush green trees and foliage. The scene is viewed from a distance, showing a path leading towards the house.

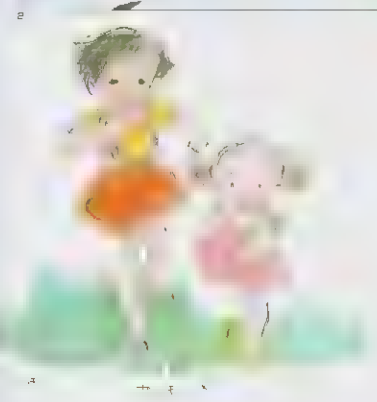




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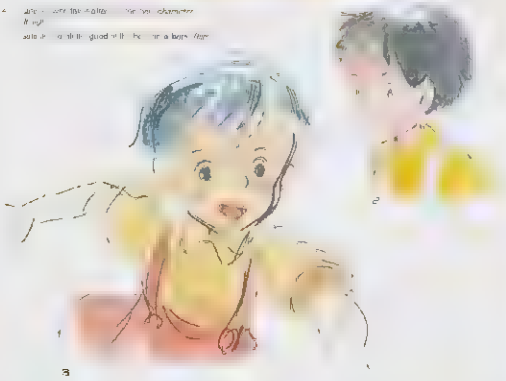
1. The first step is to create a rough sketch of the scene. This should include the main elements of the landscape, such as the path, trees, and sky. 2. Next, you should add more detail to the sketch, including the texture of the ground and the foliage. 3. Once you have a more refined sketch, you can begin to add color. Start with the sky and work your way down to the ground. 4. Finally, you should add some finishing touches, such as highlights and shadows, to give the scene a sense of depth and realism.

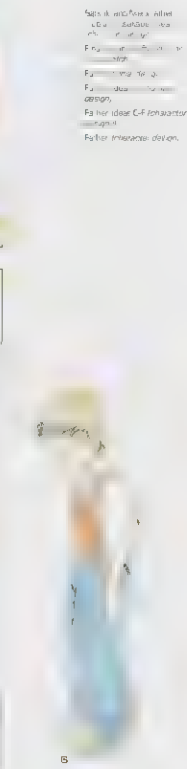
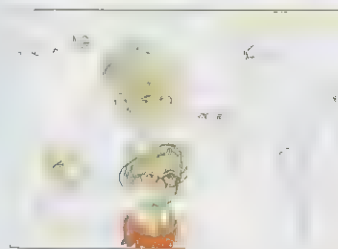
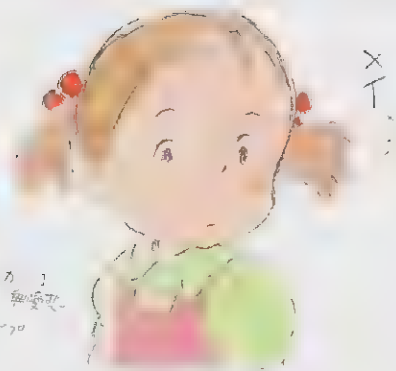


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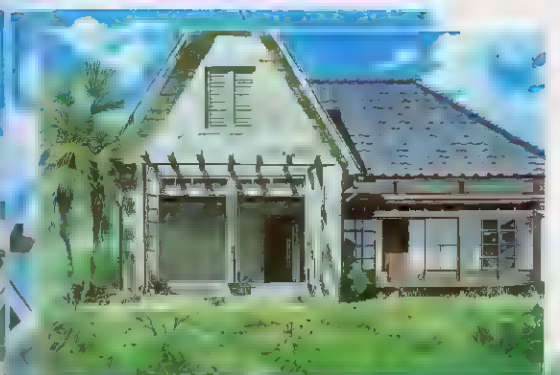
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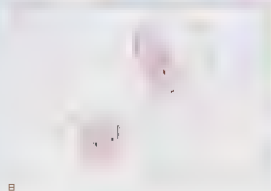
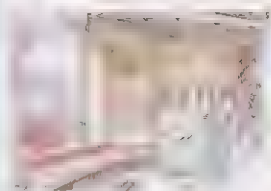
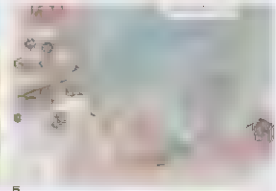
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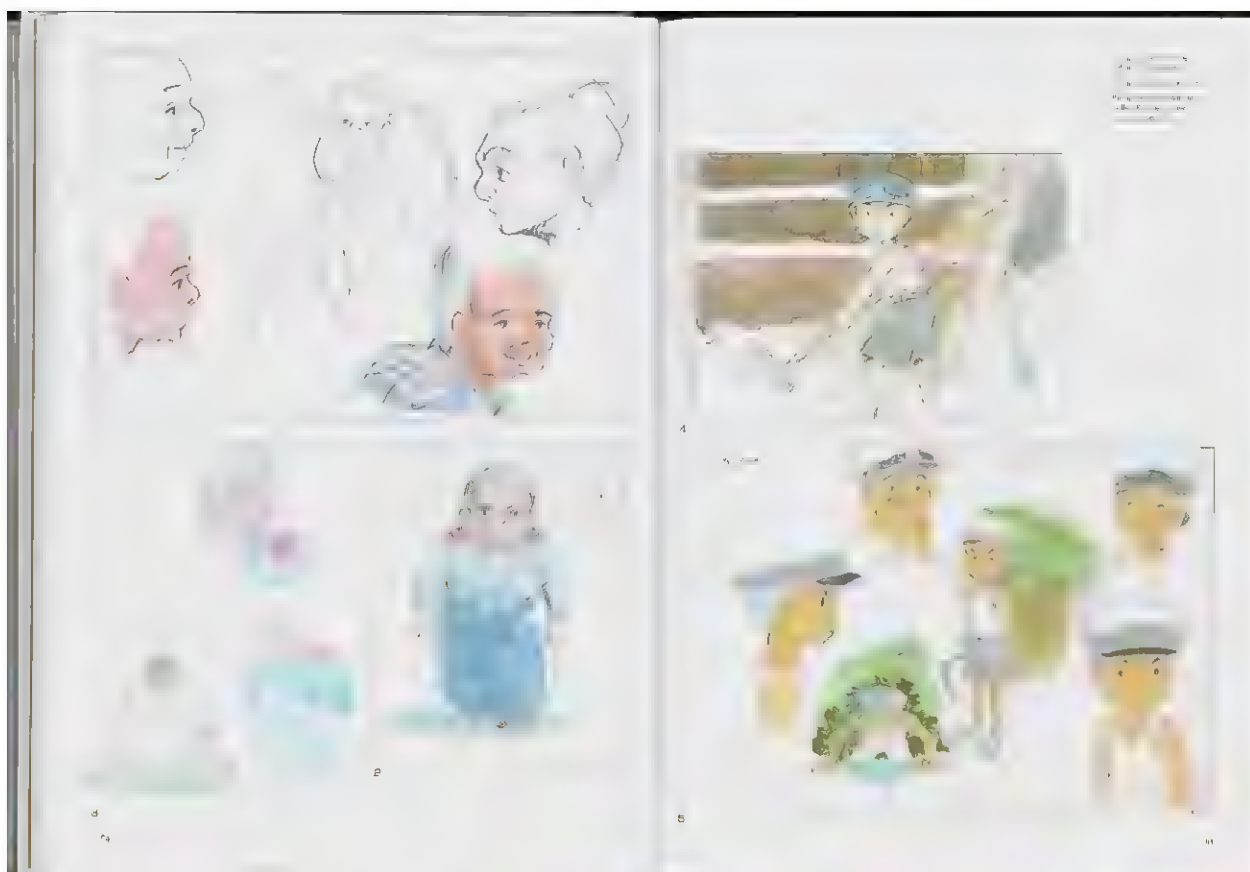


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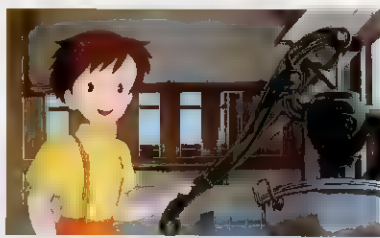


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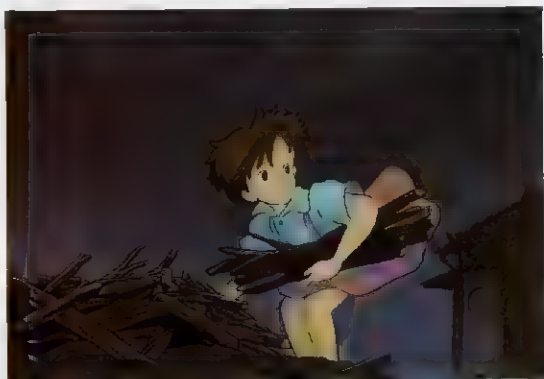




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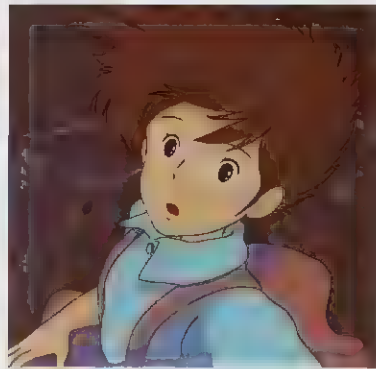
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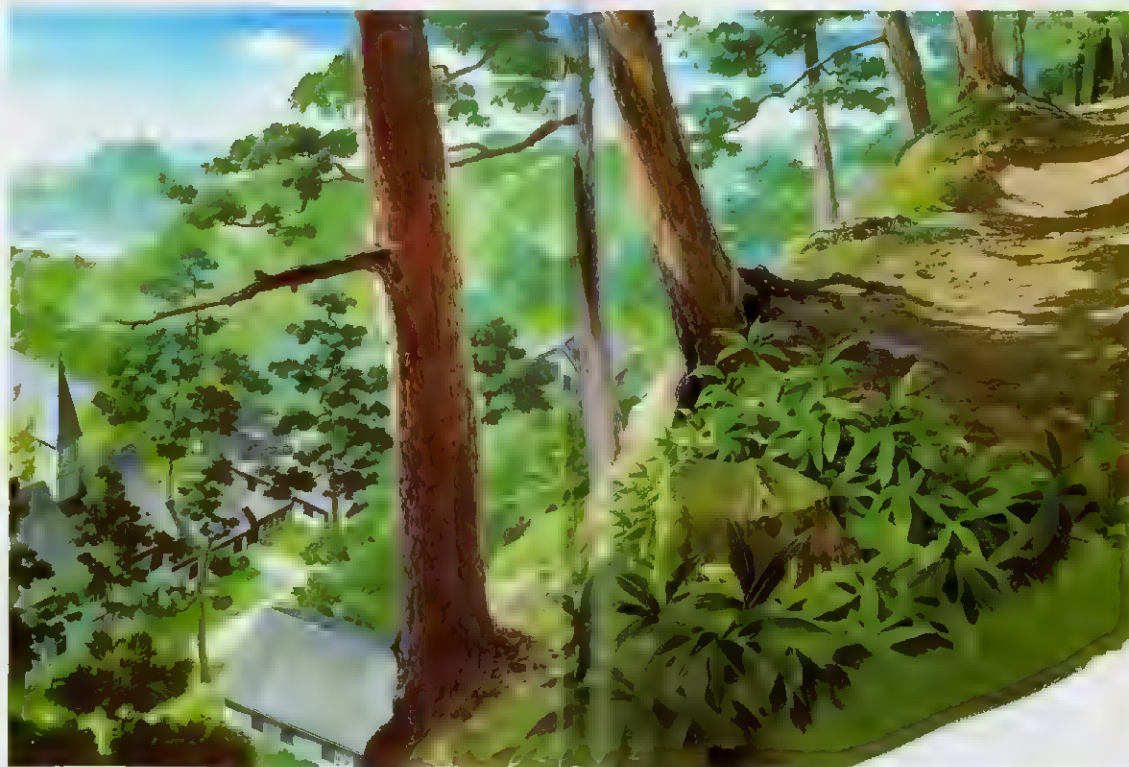
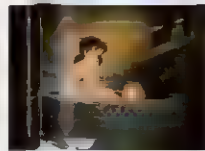
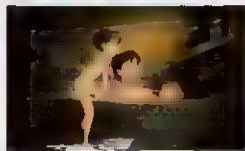
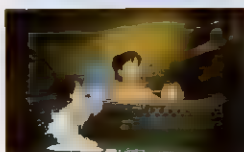
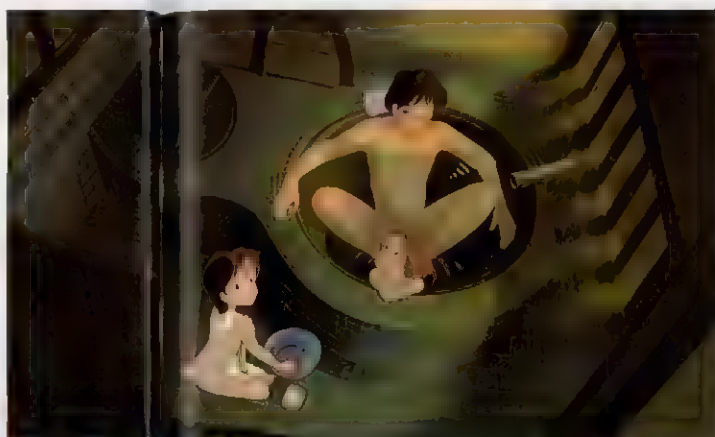


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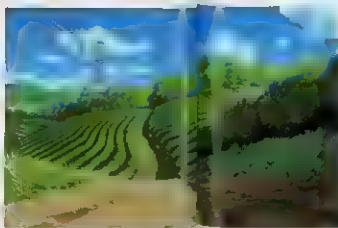
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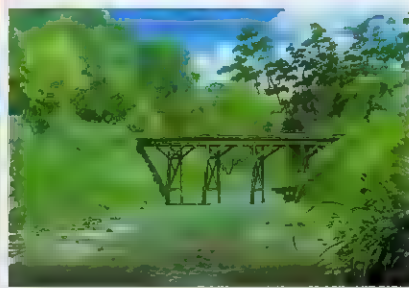
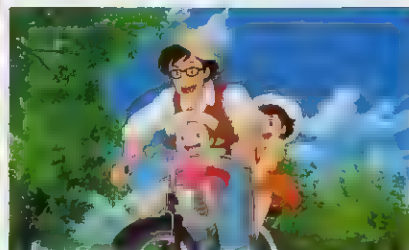
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1. The first scene is a wide shot of a dirt path leading through a lush green field towards a small wooden structure and a distant hill under a blue sky with clouds.

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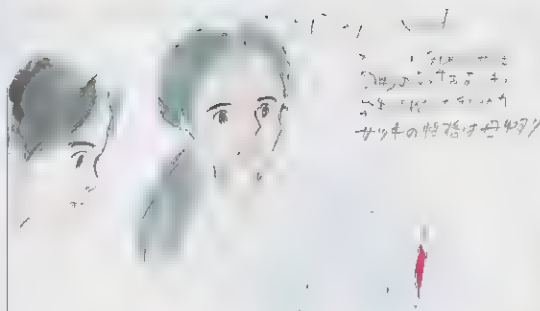
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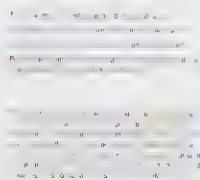
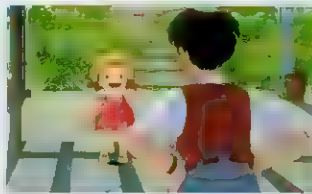
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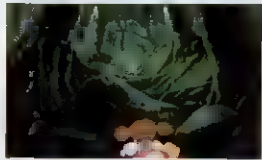
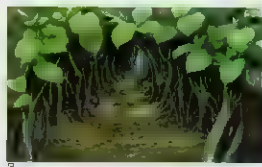
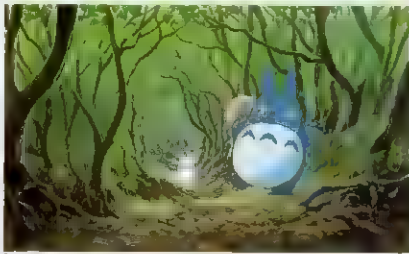
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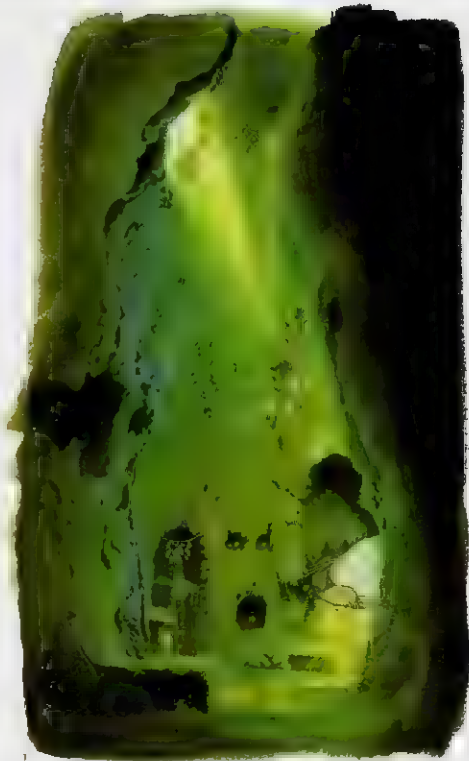
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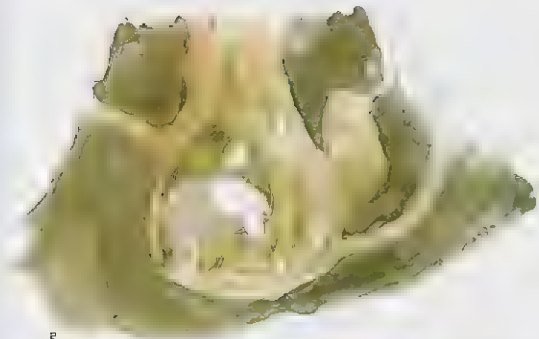
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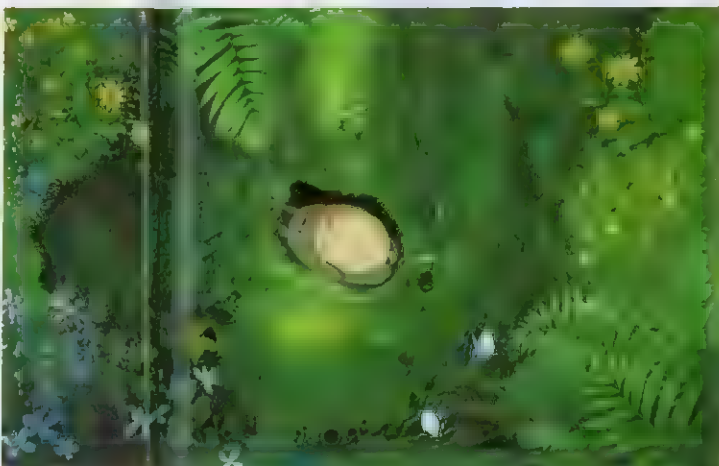
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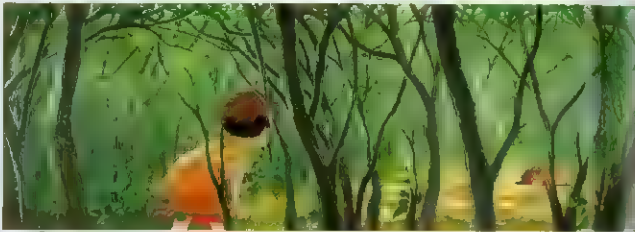
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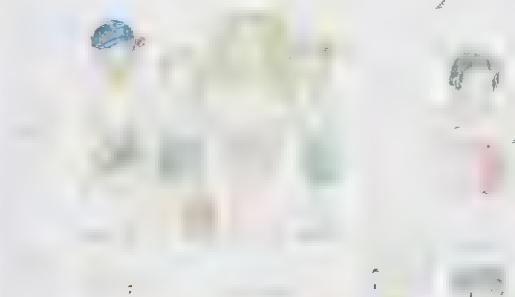
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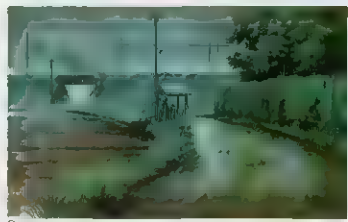


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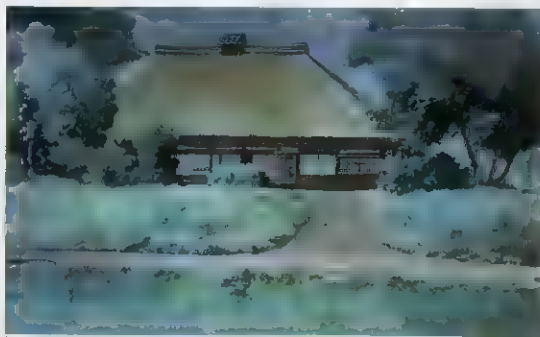


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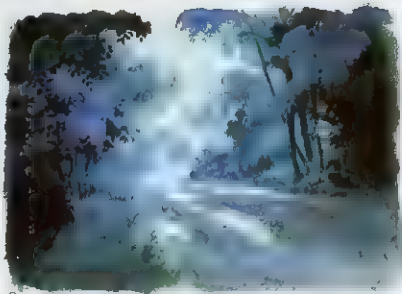




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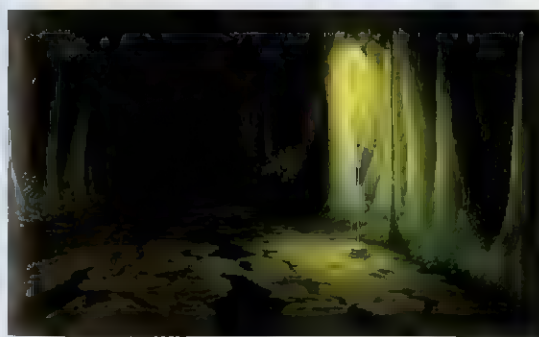
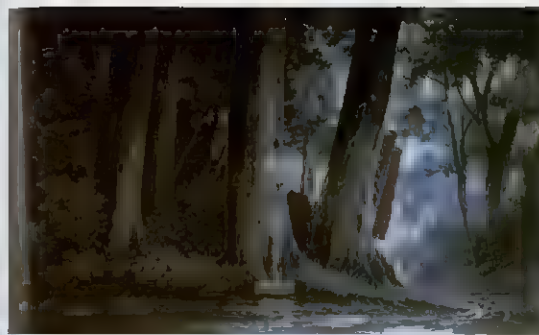


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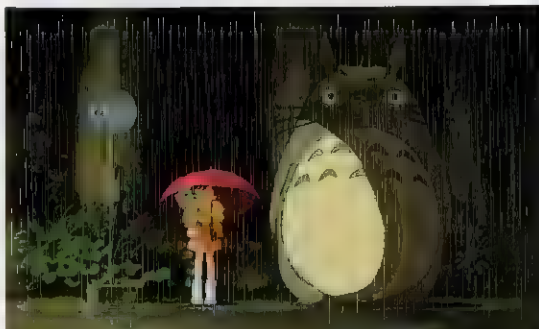


1. 森林の奥深く、
2. 光の源を発する場所へ近づくと、
3. 小さな光の精が現れる。

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1. 大トトロが、
2. 小トトロと、
3. 小トトロの傘を、
4. 大トトロの傘の下に、
5. 大トトロの傘の下に、
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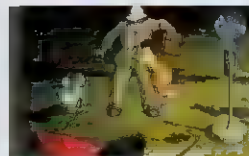


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1. 黄色い斑点の龍
2. 黄色い斑点の龍の尾

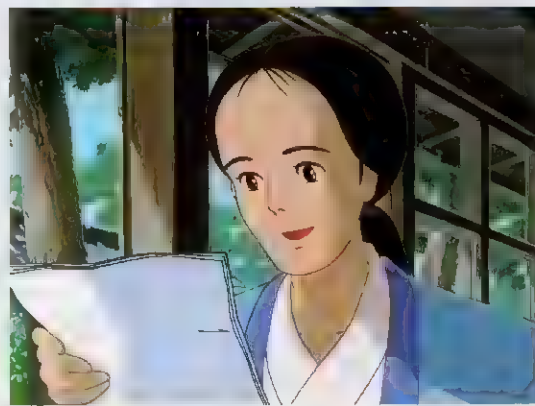
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4. 黄色い斑点の龍の足



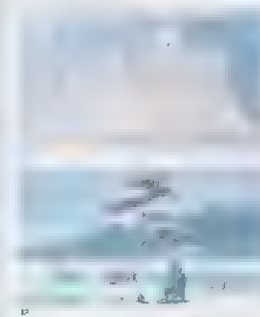
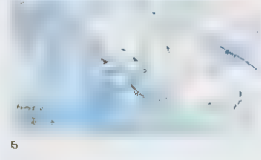
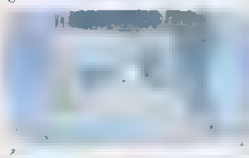
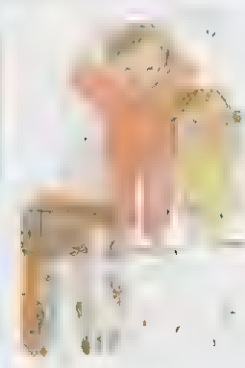
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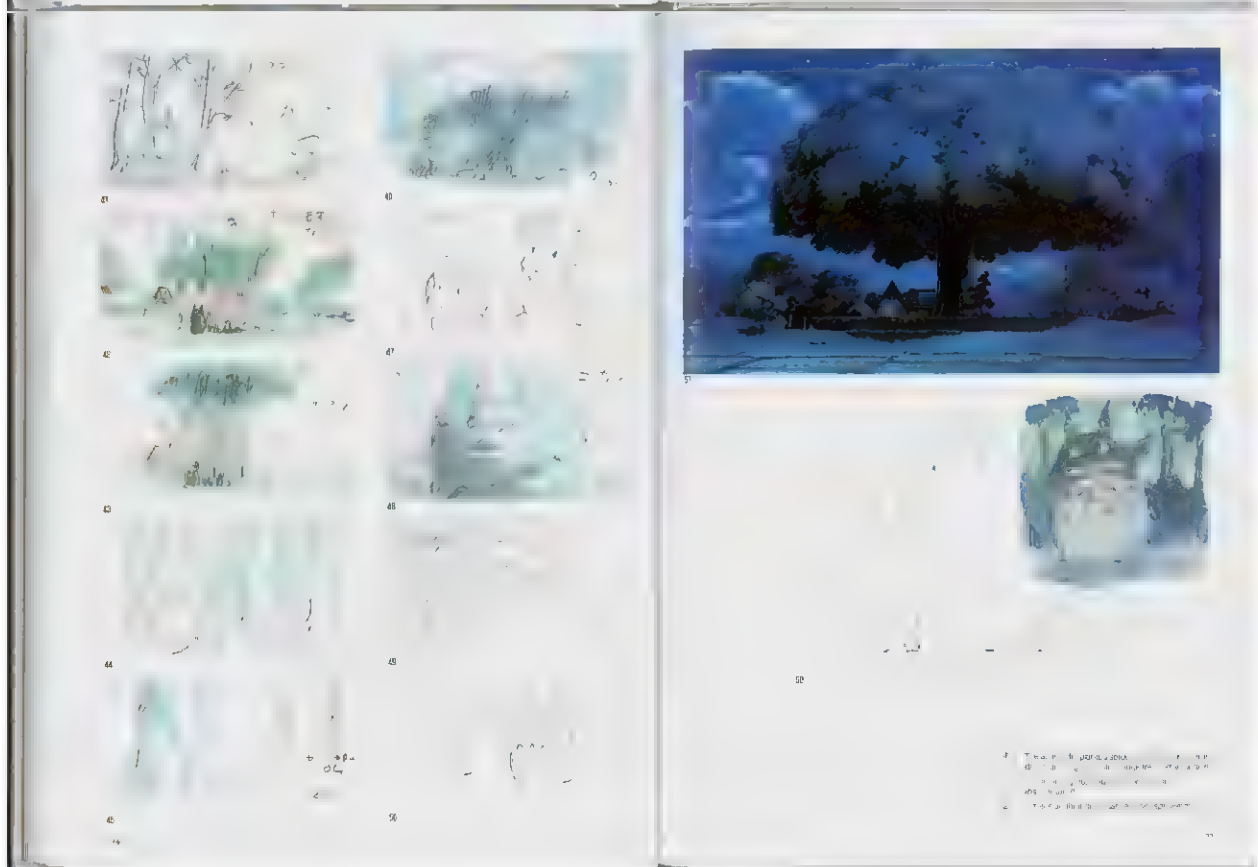
黄色い斑点の龍

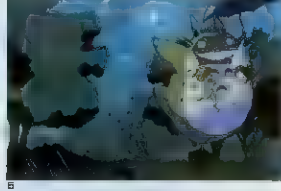
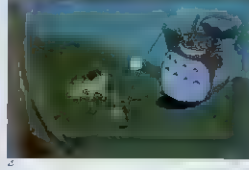
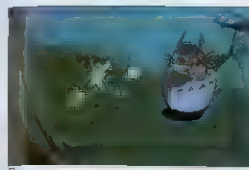
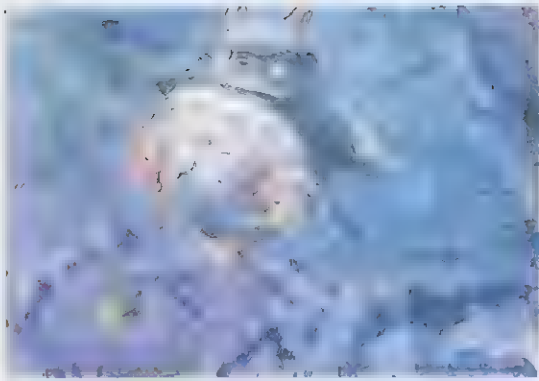
1. 黄色い斑点の龍
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4. 黄色い斑点の龍の足



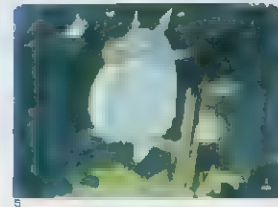
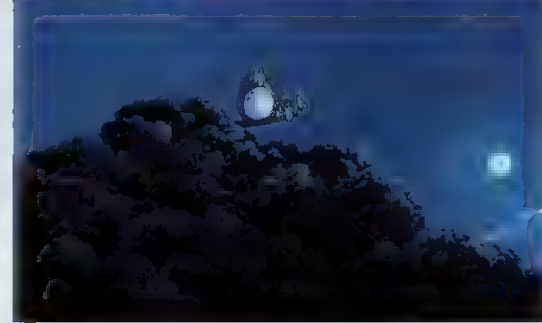
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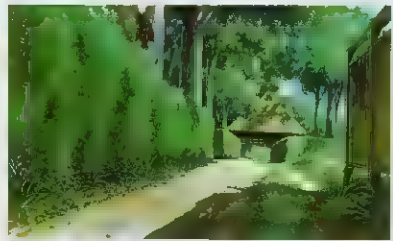
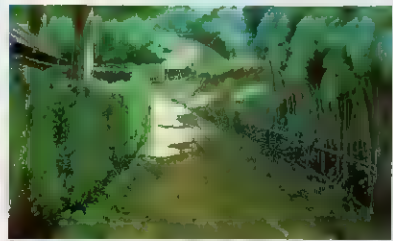
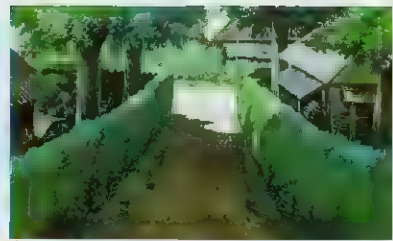
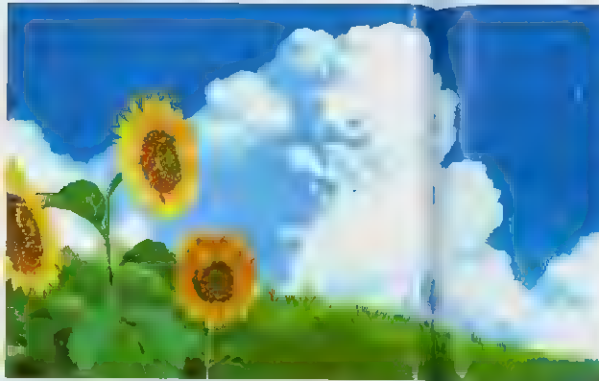




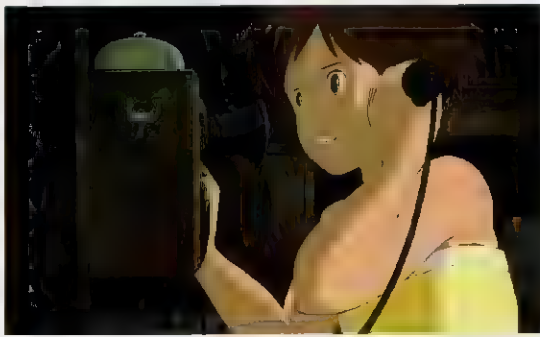
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 of the world's most beautiful and most interesting



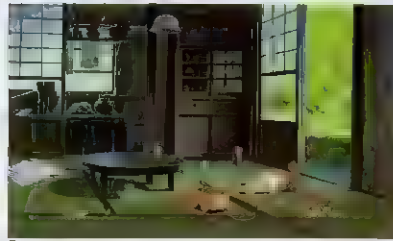
Two of the most beautiful and most interesting
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 of the world's most beautiful and most interesting
 of the world's most beautiful and most interesting



「おばあちゃん、おはようございます。」
 「おはよう、おひさまが綺麗だね。」
 「おひさまが綺麗だね。」

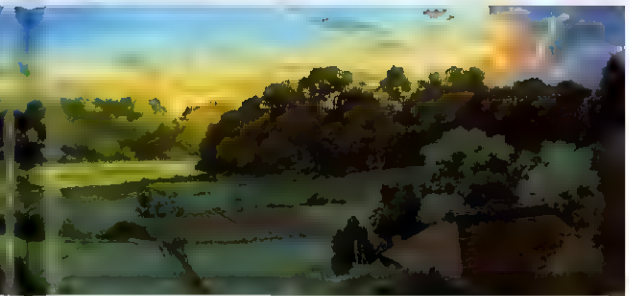


「おひさまが綺麗だね。」



「おひさまが綺麗だね。」
 「おひさまが綺麗だね。」
 「おひさまが綺麗だね。」

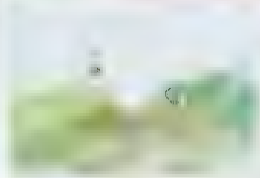
「おひさまが綺麗だね。」
 「おひさまが綺麗だね。」
 「おひさまが綺麗だね。」



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3

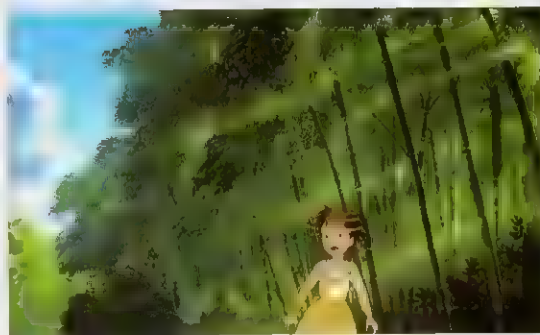
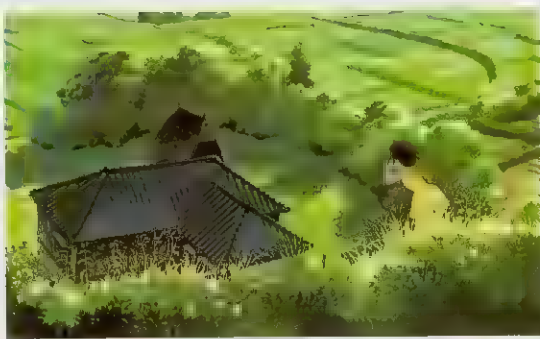


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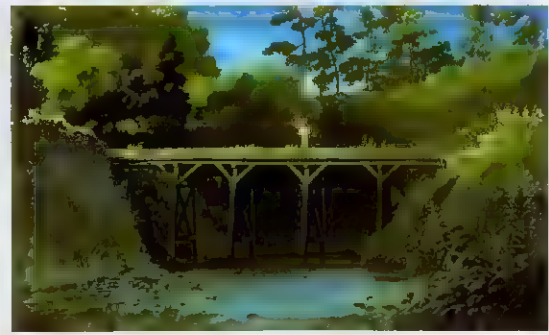


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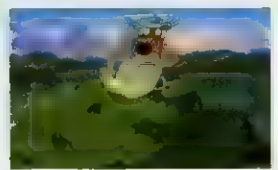
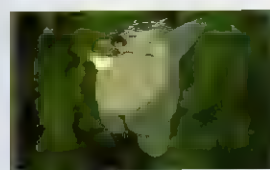
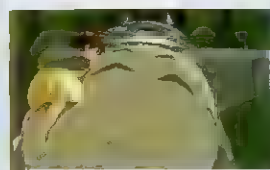
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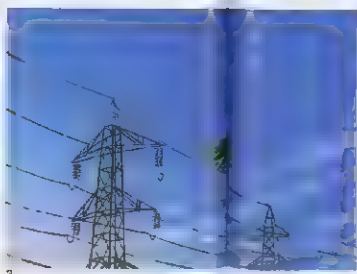
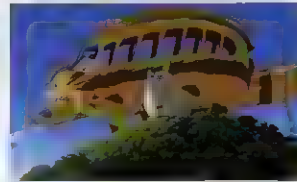


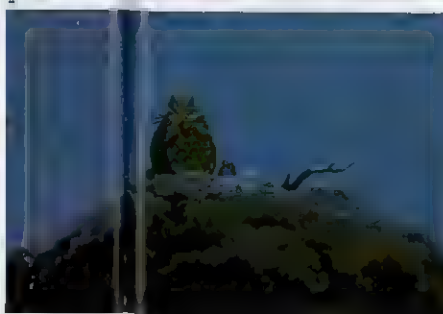
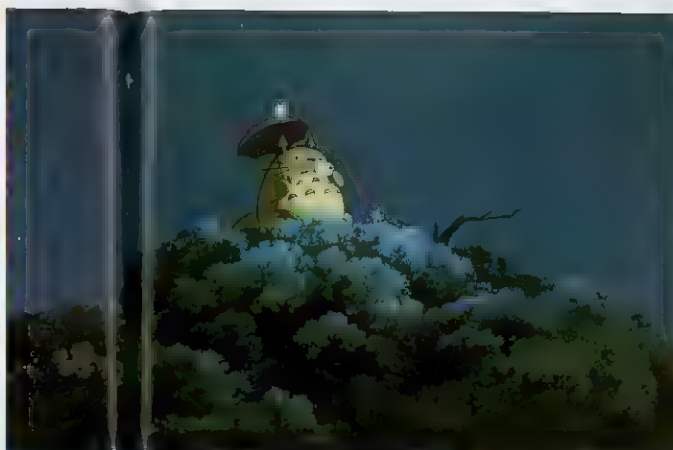
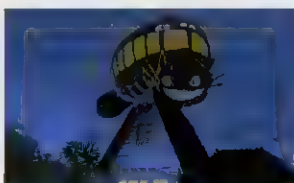
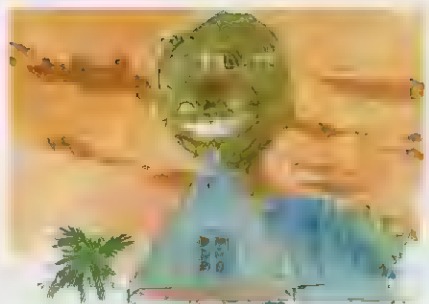
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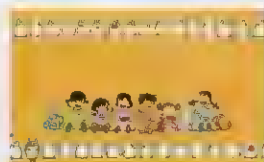
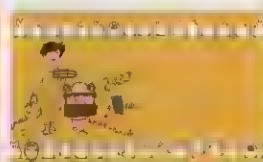
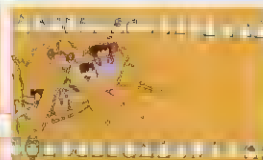
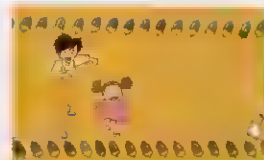
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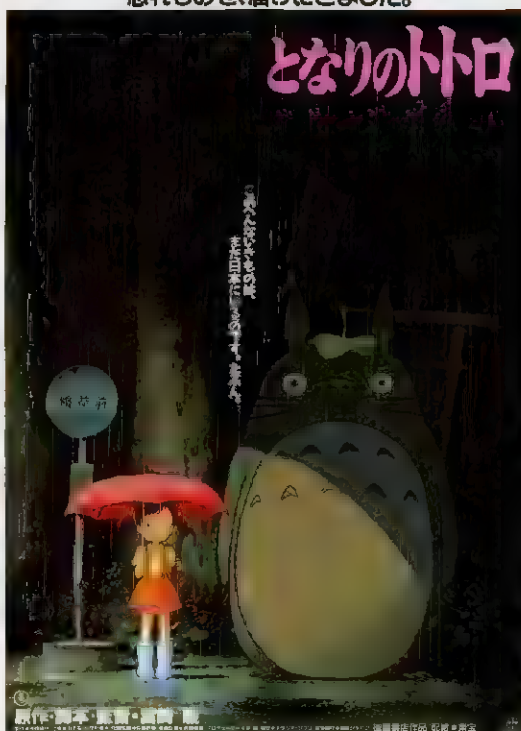
148



There are many scenes in the film that are very beautiful and touching. The scenes of the forest and the catbus are particularly memorable. The animation is very beautiful and the story is very touching. I hope you can enjoy the film and the animation.

149

忘れものを、届けにきました。



150

My Neighbor TOTORO

Totoro Animation Technique

The animation technique of 'My Neighbor Totoro' is very beautiful and touching. The scenes of the forest and the catbus are particularly memorable. The animation is very beautiful and the story is very touching. I hope you can enjoy the film and the animation.

151

Brown Charcoal



When the cat returns to the house, the cat is not the same as before. It is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.

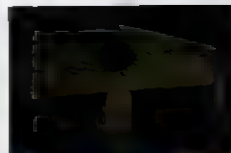
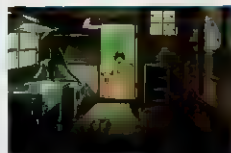
The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.

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The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.



Special Effects



The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.



Making the Soot Sprites



- 1. Draw a circle with a diameter of 10 cm.
- 2. Draw a circle with a diameter of 5 cm.
- 3. Draw a circle with a diameter of 2 cm.
- 4. Draw a circle with a diameter of 1 cm.
- 5. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.5 cm.
- 6. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.2 cm.
- 7. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.1 cm.
- 8. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.05 cm.
- 9. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.02 cm.
- 10. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.01 cm.

- 1. Draw a circle with a diameter of 10 cm.
- 2. Draw a circle with a diameter of 5 cm.
- 3. Draw a circle with a diameter of 2 cm.
- 4. Draw a circle with a diameter of 1 cm.
- 5. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.5 cm.
- 6. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.2 cm.
- 7. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.1 cm.
- 8. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.05 cm.
- 9. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.02 cm.
- 10. Draw a circle with a diameter of 0.01 cm.

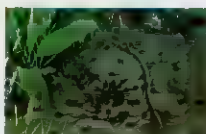
Brush—Little Totoro Appears



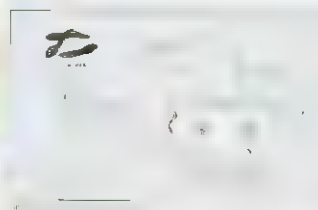
The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.



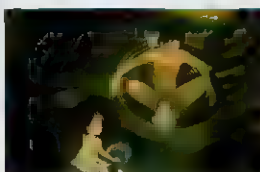
Tadpoles



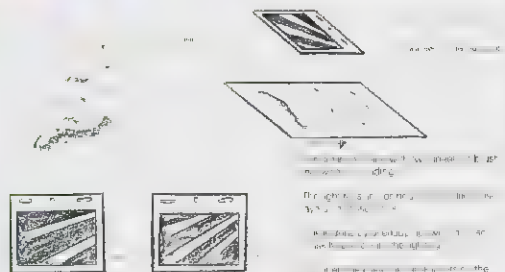
The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.



Bathtub steam

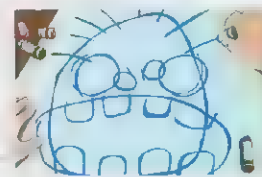


The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.



Negation

The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human. The cat is now a cat with a human face and a human body. It is now a cat that can talk and think like a human.

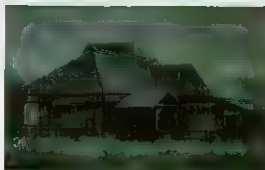


The Rain



There's a lot of rain in this scene. When it starts to rain, the character is in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

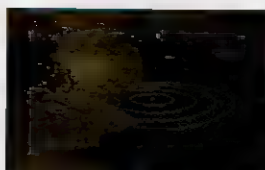
The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

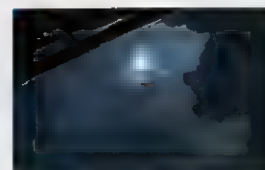
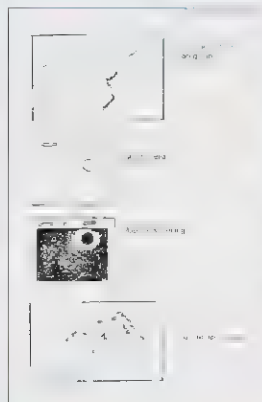


Ripple



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

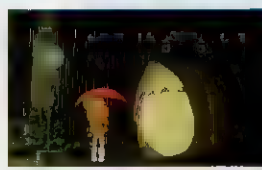
Superimposition



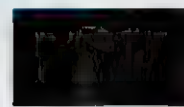
The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

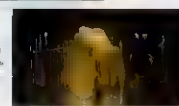
Spot Superimposition



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.



Mosquito Net



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

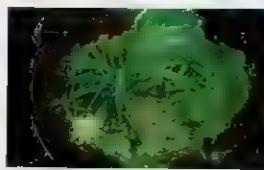


A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.

ART



A character is seen in a dark, rainy environment. The rain is a key element of the scene, and it's a key element of the scene.





Small spirit



Apples



Leaves



Kiki and the view from the front window of the house



Close-up of the spirit



Working on the



Close-up of the spirit of the evening
marches up the road on both the background

Although I could not penny it at other
examples, I'll have to stop here
because of limited space.

My Neighbor TOTORO

Totoro Production Report

"Masaaki Nomura's Ghibli Production Report" by film critic Masaaki Nomura was originally serialized in the monthly magazine *Animage* in December 1987. Nomura's on-site report on (animation production company) Studio Ghibli's double feature production of *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Grave of the Fireflies* (directed by Isao Takahata) is a valuable resource on animation production. The original text of this report on *My Neighbor Totoro* has been modified.



Masaaki Nomura's Ghibli Production Report

This article is based on the column "Masaaki Nomura's Ghibli Production Report," serialized from December 1987 to May 1988 in *Animage* magazine. At the time, I was also assigned to cover the simultaneous production of *Grave of the Fireflies*. This would have been a double-edged sword for *My Neighbor Totoro*. However, it was a good thing that I was able to witness the process of the production of the Ghibli production.

On Hayao Miyazaki

The cordial atmosphere of Totoro Studio was due in large part to Miyazaki's endearing personality. From the very moment our interview began, Miyazaki shared his thoughtful observations, covering a wide range of topics. I listened with rapid attention.

The scene was set on the very first day of my assignment. If this were a live-action film, the shooting would have been canceled, of course, but the studio production continued without any interruption. With the exception of that short interval (the Studio Yamashita) the live shooting of *My Neighbor Totoro* was mostly done in the studio. The shooting conditions for live-action films almost entirely depend on weather conditions. As a result, poor scheduling and time relationships are often another dependency. "What happens when the weather is not ideal?" The director's office asks, and if so, how do they get around it? How do they affect the film production? I pondered these as I sat in the studio (Ghibli) in Kichijoji, Tokyo.

When the relevant department prepared the project, I immediately jumped at the opportunity to report on the studio production of *My Neighbor Totoro*. The more opportunity to get an early viewing of Miyazaki's latest work excited me. But when I stepped down, I began to realize how difficult the assignment was going to be. When you're reporting on a live-action film, you observe or the director physically direct the scene's execution. You watch and then separate part of the process into a report. So even a movie can get a sense of live shooting process with such scene. But animation is different. It was going to be a completely different ballgame. It would be hard to relate each specific activity inside the studio to the overall filmmaking process. If I were reporting on

the animation process, all I'd have to do is report on the studio's environment. But I had that reporter's eye, so I tried to make the most of my limited eye, using my curiosity guide me.

I went into Studio Ghibli to interview Miyazaki right before the completion of *Castle in the Sky*. During that time, they had to leave another floor in a new building, so most expanding production demands due to the increasing production of Takahata's *Grave of the Fireflies*. Studio Ghibli Number One was in use for *Grave of the Fireflies*, so the production of *My Neighbor Totoro* was moved to Studio Ghibli Number Two. The new studio was approximately 100 meters apart, and the two buildings were almost identical. Apparently, both buildings had the same owner—Haseki, the studio design. While Miyazaki frequent Studio Number One in his production—barring with the outside staff—Takahata placed himself there, without ever visiting the Totoro Studio. This contrast illustrates in a good way I might add the two different working temperaments.

So I'm entrenched in the production assistant. Mr. Kikuchi and Mr. Tanaka, Totoro were very helpful in showing me around the studio. I also met Miyazaki, who welcomed me with a friendly acquaintance. It felt good knowing he remembered me. The environment at the Totoro studio was warm and friendly. Instead of being directed by others and responsibility, he made his staff responsible for his education and his career. Animation was useful to him. Apparently, the Totoro was based on their personal story, including blood type (a colored flag was posted on the wall). Handmade Totoro characters are placed in designated spots. It was such an endearing sight. Examining the character on the wall, I acquainted myself with the character Sasaki and Mui. The character house (I remember from the rough draft of the screenplay) turned out to be more modern looking and brightly lit than I'd expected.

And while the figure lines for the previous animation film were drawn in black, I was struck by how they were drawn for *My Neighbor Totoro* and *Grave of the Fireflies*. The blend between the character and the background seemed all the more natural because of the brown. I was curious to find out how they would appear in screen. I could see Sasaki and Mui peering up their chests, meeting



Original
Story/Screenplay Director,
Masaaki Nomura was born in
1941 in Tokyo. Miyazaki
met him in 1960 as an as-
sistant to Takahata at the
Adventure of Ghibli. Miyazaki
has directed films like *Castle in
the Sky*, *Grave of the
Fireflies*, *Spirited Away*, and
the new film *The Cat Returns*.

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