Interview with “Arsène Lupin III”

**AL** = Arsène Lupin III

**IC** = Iliana Chavez (interviewer)

START

**IC**: Hello, Lupin. Thanks for meeting with me today.

**AL**: You’re welcome.

**IC**: I really appreciate your time. I know you’re a big anime fan. You’ve been a fan since you were 4, right?

**AL**: (Chuckling) Yup, ever since Pokèmon came out. Ever since the good ‘ol WB (Warner Bros.) days, Kids WB. And the Toonami days. And even Adult Swim a little bit. My parents should not have let me watch Adult Swim as a kid, but whatever.

**IC**: Yeah, I even watched Pokémon, you know, as a kid. But I never really followed through with it like you did. You know, I think that must say something about you and your tastes.

**AL**: Yeah, yeah I think so. I think Pokèmon, Dragon Ball Z, and Yu-Gi-Oh are all the...like it’s hard to consider them really anime because they’re so popular in American media. Anime is very kind of like...I feel like anime is very like sub-cultured, but it’s becoming more main-cultured, so that’s good.

**IC**: Right, yes. So, we have some questions for you.

**AL**: Cool.

**IC**: Okay. So, um, to you, what does being a fan of anime mean and how might you define the anime fandom?

**AL**: Um, I think being an anime fan, you have to, you have to kind of...Being an anime fan really just means appreciating the artform of anime. Just appreciating um...Gosh, I mean there’s just so much to appreciate, there’s so many different genres of it to appreciate that it’s hard to say what makes an anime fan. You know, you just enjoy it, and you know, it does...you do take your lickings because it is seen as a nerdy thing in our culture but, you know being an anime fan is just...just enjoying the artform. That’s all you really need to do.

**IC**: Okay. Well said. So what behaviors, activities, or events do you partake in as a fan of anime?

**AL**: I wouldn’t say I’m the biggest fan. I know there are anime conventions that a lot of people go to. My brother included has worked a few anime conventions. Um, the only things I can say I do are, I have marathoned through animes with friends. I have marathoned through Trigun, and Cowboy Bebop, and other titles with friends. It’s like a fun thing to experience with other people. And sometimes, you know, I like collect...I don’t collect anime things, like as an actual collection, but I have accumulated some from fandoms…from certain animes I watch.

**IC**: And what are some of your favorites?

**AL**; Some of my favorites, oh man, ok. Oh damn, that’s a hard question. Um, my favorite for a long time was Trigun, because it is super stylized. And I didn’t even understand it as a kid. I’ve watched it probably like 10 times honestly, completely through. And there’s still new things I learn from it. It’s just very stylized, it’s about an inhuman guy who was taught to love humanity but his brother was taught to destroy humanity, well not really to destroy but like he...He grew up thinking he was superior. It’s just very cool. Some of my other favorites are probably, um, probably like Gurren Laggen, uh, Code Geass, um gosh it’s like my mind is racing right now. Really Attack on Titan is a big one and a very new one is called My Hero Academia, which is very cool, but uh yeah sorry...

**IC**: Oh no that’s very good.

**AL**: (Chuckling)

**IC**: So, do you see any issues or what are some of the problems that you see or experience in the anime fan community?

**AL**: Um, I think the only issue that I’ve ever experienced is the negative stigma. You know, I think in the U.S., it’s a little kind of unnerving like how stigmatized and dorky and belittling we treat Japanese culture. Like it’s seen as like, “Oh, you enjoy Japanese stuff? What a weeb or what a nerd!” But you know, that’s kind of horseshit. You know, you just enjoy a popular thing of another culture, because it’s exciting because it’s beautiful and creative. So, it’s that kind of negative stigma that we kinda have to deal with but it’s getting better. Nerdom is pop culture now. So you know, it’s not a big deal anymore.

**IC**: Gotcha. So, um, yeah. Do you see any problems regarding gender, sexuality um in the anime that could affect the fan community?

**AL**: Um, yeah. I think oversexualization is a big problem in Japanese culture as a whole. Um, and that shows a lot in anime, not all anime. There are plenty that don’t use what’s called “fan service,” which is like when there’s a female character and they just show her skirt being blown up or her boobs bouncing. This has nothing to do with the plot or this doesn’t help her character but we’re just doing it for you. Um, which is unfortunate. I think people can get turned off by that, but there’s a lot of creativity, a lot of just awesome amazing stuff about anime that it’s ...you know, if you overlook it then it’s great. But, yeah, that’s a big problem that hopefully will be worked out. As far as gender, gosh, there are some like transgender...um, I’m getting ahead of myself. I’ve never seen like...Transgender and gay characters tend to be very like, overdone and not real. There was great new anime called Yuri!!! on Ice that does a good, kind of, homo-erotic structure but not like overblown and it was like beautiful in that way. But that’s kind of a big deal.

**IC**: Gotcha. Um, so next question. Our last question.

**AL**: Okay.

**IC**: How do you think being part of this fandom has affected you personally?

**AL**: Um, I think...I don’t know how much it’s affected me besides just watching it. Besides, you know, just enjoying myself… I guess, you know what, no I’ve...there have been times when I’ve connected with people through watching anime. I remember I was at a bonfire with a friend who was hosting, and his girlfriend’s little brother was there and he was kind of quiet and kind of shy. And I think “David” who was hosting said like, “Oh! Hey, ‘Hunter’,” I think was his name, “‘Lupin’ likes anime.” And he’s like, “Oh, really?!” And then we go off to talking about it for like a half an hour and he really lit up. And that’s really cool. So, I think the way it affects people is, you know, making connections within the fandom. Yeah, and it’s also it’s just an amazing experience to watch a show that’s very well done. You know, it’s just like watching a good movie or good television show. You know, you get emotional satisfaction from watching it.

**IC**: Gotcha. Yeah, I know that some people would assume that if you’re a fan of anime that means that you regard it as part of your identity, but that’s not necessarily true in all cases.

**AL**: No, definitely not. And there are some who do. Which is great, you know, if you love it and that’s your passion, you know, more power to you. I do call myself a mid-level anime fan. I’m not going to the conventions, but I’ve watched probably somewhere around 20 to 30 anime series all the way through, which is I think is a lot. So, I’d say I’m a good mid-level anime fan.

**IC**: (chuckling)

**AL**: (chuckling)

**IC**: Well, you still are very knowledgable about the new animes that are coming out there and you definitely have favorites and preferences.

**AL**: Yeah definitely. Erased is really cool which is a new one. I mentioned My Hero Academia, Attack on Titan, One Punch Man is really cool. But yeah, I try to keep up to date.

**IC**: Yes. Well, thank you so much for your time. Your opinions are very valuable. Thank you for helping us out today.

**AL**: No problem!

**IC**: (chuckling)

**AL**: (chuckling)

**IC**: Thank you.