

Editor's Note

Anime is a visual enigma. Its otherworldly allure and burgeoning popularity across the globe highlights its unique ability to be more than *just* another type of animation. Originally a novelty export from post-war Japan, anime has now become a subtle yet important part of Western popular culture. Furthermore, it remains a key area of audience and fan research that crosses all generations – children, teenagers, and adults. From Osamu Tezuka to Hayao Miyazaki, *Akira* (Katsuhiro Ôtomo, 1988) to *Ghost in the Shell* (Mamoru Oshii, 1995), anime's extraordinary characters and oneiric content still enable it to be regarded as one of the most awe-inspiring visual spectacles going into and during the twenty-first century.

Keenly aware of anime's rich history, cultural and global context, and increasing presence and influence on Western art, literature and film, the theme of this issue of *Cinephile* is 'Reassessing Anime.' The six articles included herein aim to address and tackle some of the overlooked aspects of anime. Such a reassessment by each author hopes to encourage future academic scholarship into the evolution and value of anime and, moreover, its impact not only on film but also on TV, comic books, video games, music videos, and corporate marketing strategies.

To begin this issue, Paul Wells explores authorship, 'magic realism,' and postmodernism in the films of the late Satoshi Kon, reassessing the Japanese film director's oeuvre via a range of theoretical and philosophical perspectives on anime and animation. Next, Philip Brophy discusses the importance of sound in *Time of Eve* and how music, muzak, and MIDI (Musical Instrument Digital Interface) work on multiple levels to create a singular soundscape within this very recent anime product. Focusing on a rather uncharted area of anime studies, Michael R. Bowman then unpacks and elaborates upon the issue of *moe* and, in turn, explains how this misunderstood type of anime continues to be a growing Japanese phenomenon in contemporary popular culture. Paying close attention to fan spectatorship and genre theory in relation to anime, Jane Leong's article seeks to challenge the notion of 'Japaneseness' on Japanese anime through various interpretations of film theory and audience research. Mindful of the relationship between anime, video games, and popular entertainment, John Wheeler then takes a critical look at 07th Expansion's *Higurashi When They Cry* (*Higurashi no Naku Koro ni*) and especially *dôjin* video games. Finally, Frédéric Clément's article concludes this issue of *Cinephile* through a careful study of Mamoru

Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence* (2004), exploring how theories pertaining to science fiction, femininity and the 'possessed body' can recast this complex sequel in new and refreshing lights.

Since nomenclature plays a chief factor in trying to comprehend the jargon and idiosyncrasies of anime, I would like to briefly draw your attention to several key Japanese terms that are mentioned in many of the articles ahead. Two of the most common Japanese terms in anime studies are *manga* (i.e. comic books) and *otaku* (i.e. highly enthusiastic, 'obsessive' anime fans). While these two terms may or may not receive full explanations in the included articles, please be aware that efforts have been made by each contributor to translate *and* also explain other Japanese terms and their English equivalent(s).

Unwavering dedication, remarkable creativity, and strong teamwork all enabled this issue of *Cinephile* to be brought to fruition. First, I wish to thank my advisor Ernest Mathijs for monitoring the progress of this issue and for all of his advice and insight along the way. Second, I want to extend my thanks to the entire editorial board for their hard work and assistance throughout each step of this scholarly endeavor. Together, we worked hard to create and promote this issue on anime and I am extremely fortunate to have worked with each and every one of you. Thank you, in particular, to Andrew deWaard and Shaun Inouye for each providing extra assistance with some of the more technical and computational aspects of the journal. On a final note, I'd also like to express my gratitude to Chloe Chan for sharing her incredible artistic talent with *Cinephile* and for producing such exquisite artwork to enhance this publication.

Whether you're a cinephile, bibliophile, technophile or *even* a proud Japanophile, this issue hopes to attract and unite an eclectic array of individuals and bring the topic of anime to the forefront of academic inquiry. So what are you waiting for? Read on! Enjoy! And get 'animated' about anime!

- Jonathan A. Cannon

Contributors

Michael R. Bowman received his M.A. in History of Art from the Ohio State University in 2011 and his B.A. in Archaeology and Classical Civilization from Cornell University in 2009. Currently, he is a Ph.D. student at the Ohio State University continuing his studies of the art and archaeology of the ancient world. His fieldwork has included archaeological excavations in Greece at the site of Halai, working under the Cornell Halai and East Lokris Project, and at the Ohio State University excavations at the sanctuary of Isthmia. An avid anime enthusiast, his interests also include the development of the *otaku* community, especially outside of Japan, and the creation of *otaku* identity.

Philip Brophy is an internationally renowned author, musician, filmmaker and educator based in Australia. He has edited three books from the *Cinesonic Conferences* and has written series and occasional columns for *Real Time* (Sydney), *The Wire* (London), *Film Comment* (New York) and *Empire* (Sydney). His book *100 Modern Soundtracks* (BFI, London) has been translated into Japanese and published by Film Art, Tokyo. His most recent books are *100 Anime* (BFI, London) and *Priscilla* for the Australian Film Classics series (Currency Press). As a writer and speaker on art, Philip has contributed numerous essays and articles for journals and catalogues. Additionally, he has also edited books to accompany two major exhibitions he curated: *Kaboom! Explosive Animation From America and Japan* (MCA, Sydney) and *Tezuka: The Marvel of Manga* (NGV, Melbourne).

Frédéric Clément is a Ph.D. candidate in Cinema Studies at the Université de Montréal in Québec, Canada. His current research focuses on the legacy of animated cinema in video games, as well as the depiction of women in films, animation and graphic novels. His first book, *Machines désirées: La représentation du féminin dans les films d'animation Ghost in the Shell de Mamoru Oshii*, was published by Éditions L'Harmattan in 2011.

Jane Leong received her Ph.D. in English from the University of Western Australia in Perth. Her research interests are centred on audience consumption and production of popular cultural texts in a global age. Her Ph.D. thesis examined how online English-language fan fiction based on Japanese comics and cartoons might be viewed as a complex process of cross-cultural translation within a globalised context.

Paul Wells is Professor and Director of the Animation Academy at Loughborough University in the UK. He has published widely in the field of Animation Studies, including *Understanding Animation* (Routledge), *Re-Imagining Animation: The Changing Face of the Moving Image* (AVA Academia), and *The Animated Bestiary* (Rutgers), and is an established writer and director for radio, TV and film. He conducts workshops worldwide based on his book, *Scriptwriting* (AVA Academia), and is currently making a film with the Oil Museum in Stavanger, Norway. He is also the Chair of the Association of British Animation Collections.

John Wheeler is an M.A. student in modern Japanese literature with a focus in Japanese cinema at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He also moonlights as a closeted *otaku*. Before entering graduate school he worked sporadically as an entertainment journalist in Los Angeles, California covering Asian popular culture for publications such as *LA Weekly* and *Asia Pacific Arts*. His greatest professional (and personal) moment came in 2009: an exclusive interview with legendary Japanese animator and film director Hayao Miyazaki. John would like to thank his academic adviser Robert Tierney and fellow colleague Colin Raymond for reading drafts of the article included in this issue of *Cinephile*, as well as Makiko Ishizawa for correcting a Japanese translation.