



# miteiru!

The Japanese Animation Journal of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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## The Anime Club Office Moves to 50-356

Sean Leonard

If you want to drop off your library tapes late at night, remember to make a left at the top of the stairs. The MIT Anime Club has relocated it a new office, from room 50-354A to 50-356. The office is two doors down from the old office in Walker Memorial.

The new office is two and a half times the size of the old one. It features windows, ventilation, and a small lockable closet.

Librarian Edward Keyes G served as our initial contact with the ASA in negotiations for a new office. He noted that our library collection was suffering from temperatures that were "completely off the chart," and the "the first priority is the preservation of the tapes."

After continued talks throughout Fall 2002, the ASA agreed to moving 50-356 sometime "during IAP" as part of a large office space shuffle between student groups. At 12:33pm on the first day of IAP, however, ASA President Jennifer Yoon '03 issued a statement to the club: "you have officially been reassigned... Please move out of your former room by 9am tomorrow [1/7/03]."

Responding to the crisis, Club President Sean Leonard '04 organized an emergency event to move the contents of the office that evening, which included over a thousand tapes. In addition, several other officers and members were in attendance: Ann Oyama '00, Joung-Mo Kang MEng, Chris Malon G, Daniel Kim '06, Sameer Gandhi '97, and Matt Gruenke. Yoon herself also assisted with the move.

We thank those who attended the move. Communications Officer David Mankins '78 remarked that our old office "was so clean, not one scrap of paper could be found inside" to identify its former tenant. 50-354A was promptly occupied by the Western Hemisphere Club on Wednesday morning. Inventory and renovation in the Club's new office continued throughout IAP.

Office hours and a drop box are in the works. In addition, we plan to install an air conditioner and dehumidifier for the longevity of the tapes, hopefully by late spring.

We are looking for more people to staff the office so we can expand library access. If you are interested in staffing the office for library checkouts, contact [seantek@mit.edu](mailto:seantek@mit.edu).

## The MIT Anime Club Wants Your Help!

Rydia Q. Vielehr

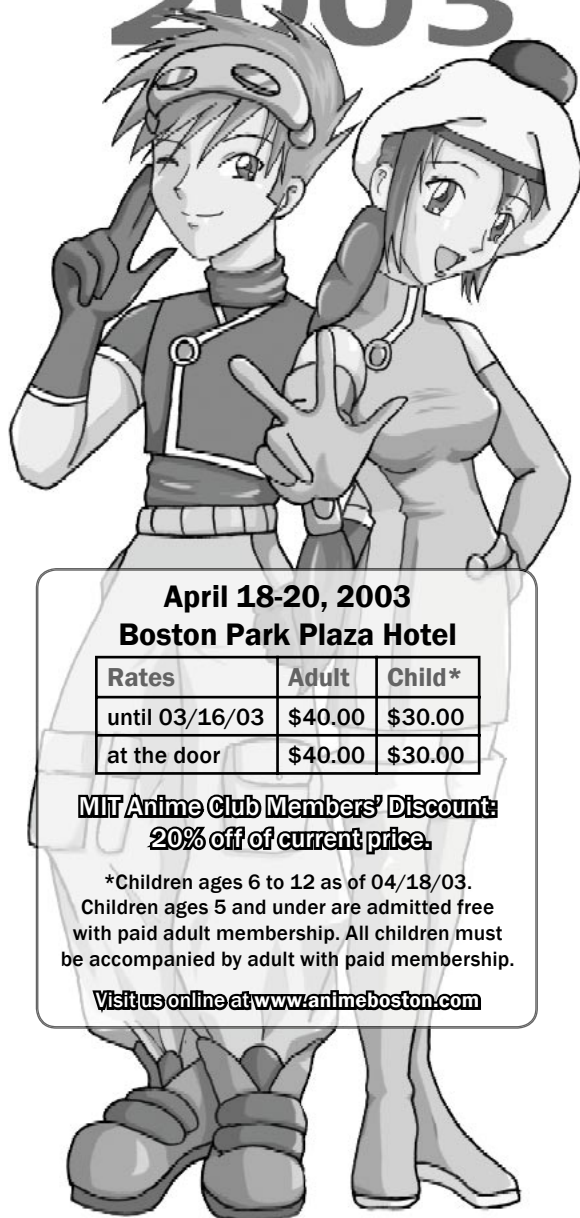
Feeling especially anxious before class on those relaxing Monday and Friday mornings? Concerned that you're not doing enough to help out MIT's only society dedicated to Japanese animation? Fear no more!

We are looking for a few dedicated people to join the ranks of the *Poster Senshi*. These lucky individuals will pick up posters on either Sunday or Thursday nights and poster the Infinite Corridor, the Student Center, and other areas of campus the following day. People are welcome to take posters to cover their dorms, as well.

As an added bit of incentive, all *Poster Senshi* will be allowed to borrow two extra tapes per week! If you're ready to accept the challenge, or have additional questions, direct your inquiries to [mzsylver@mit.edu](mailto:mzsylver@mit.edu).



# Anime Boston 2003



**April 18-20, 2003**  
**Boston Park Plaza Hotel**

Rates	Adult	Child*
until 03/16/03	\$40.00	\$30.00
at the door	\$40.00	\$30.00

**MIT Anime Club Members' Discount:**  
**20% off of current price.**

\*Children ages 6 to 12 as of 04/18/03.  
Children ages 5 and under are admitted free with paid adult membership. All children must be accompanied by adult with paid membership.

Visit us online at [www.animeboston.com](http://www.animeboston.com)

## Anime Club Acquisitions Update

*Joung-Mo Kang, Acquisitions Officer*

Hi! I'm Joung-Mo Kang, your friendly neighborhood anime acquisitions officer, here to tell you about the wonderful recent acquisitions! Since the beginning of last term, we have purchased the following commercial titles:

### Full Series/OAVs:

*Blue Seed*  
*Golden Boy*  
*Vandread*  
*Princess Nine*  
*Gestalt*  
*Fake*  
*Gatchaman*  
*Hades Project Zeorymer*  
*Blue Gender*  
*Generator Gawl*  
*Miyuki-chan in Wonderland*  
*Lost Universe*  
*Fushigi Yuugi (Second Season)*  
*Evangelion* movies

### Library Hole-Fillers:

*Nuku-nuku v3*  
*Dirty Pair* OAV v2  
4 *Nadia* DVDs  
*Saber Marionettes J* v2  
*Now and Then, Here and There* v3  
*Cardcaptor Sakura* v4  
*Battle Athletes Victory* v2  
*Geobreeders: Breakthrough*

### Series starters:

*Betterman*  
*Soultaker*  
*Strawberry Eggs*  
*Tsukikage Ran*

*Gokudo*  
*Strange Dawn*

The "series starters" in particular warrant your attention as they are the first volume or two of a longer series that we purchased to evaluate member response. We won't get more till you tell us to! Matt Gruenke has also acquired for us several super-cool Region 2 DVDs straight from Japan, including *Hoshi no Koe*, *Laputa*, *Whisper of the Heart*, and *My Neighbors the Yamadas*.

Finally, the fastest-growing arm of club acquisitions, ruled by pizza-guy David Mankins, deserves mention here. His original mission—to explore strange new fansubs—has been effectively completed (due in no small part to the growing popularity of digital fansubs)! As such he has been funding purchases of DVDs of either the commercially released fansub-replacement or somewhat-obscure-and-likely-to-be-overlooked variety. Recent pizza sponsored series include *Berserk*, *Utena* (Black Rose), *Panda Go! Panda*, and, as requested by bishie-loving treasurer Alison, *X TV*.

Thanks for your support! If you are interested in becoming more active in the club's acquisitions, feel free to email questions, suggestions, or requests to be added to the discussion list at [mokang@mit.edu](mailto:mokang@mit.edu).

## Cliché Anime Plot Devices: The Childhood Romance

*David Mankins*

*Ai Yori Aoshi*, *Kanon*, *A! Megami-sama*, *Love Hina*, even *Martian Successor Nadesico*. All have half (or completely forgotten) childhood friendships that suddenly reappear as deeply-in-love relationships and as major (sometimes driving) plot-devices.

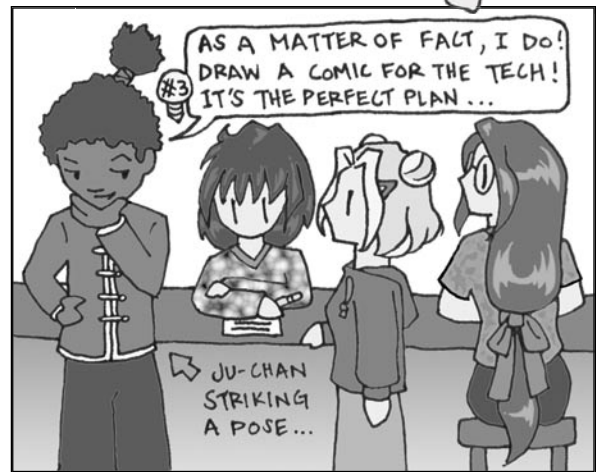
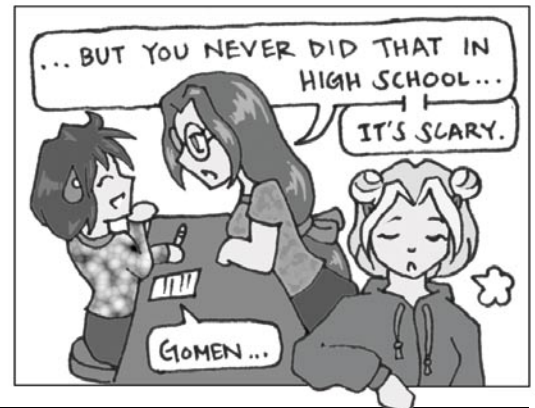
What is this? Are school and cram-school and exam-focus in Japan so grueling that the last time you have any free time to associate with a member of the opposite sex is when you're in second grade? Is that why we see all these childhood friendships turning into lifelong relationships in anime?

It's also interesting how many of these childhood friendships are utterly forgotten by one character or both (Keichi in *A! Megami-sama*, Yuuichi in *Kanon*). Is that holding out a promise of hope for the poor sods who don't have childhood friendships to fall back on?

# The Otaku Oddities

by S. GROSS

Comics by a girl with no sense of humor (or plot)...



# Spirited Away A Possible Oscar Contender

Miteiru Staff

Disney has taken out several “for your consideration” ads in film-industry publications urging members of the Motion Picture Academy to consider Hayao Miyazaki's *Spirited Away* for an Oscar nomination in several areas, including Best Soundtrack and Best Animated Feature (Disney has also advertised its own home-grown animated films *Lilo and Stitch* and *Treasure Planet*, of course).

Miyazaki's film has already garnered an impressive array of awards and has appeared on many, many film critics' top-ten lists for 2002. The fan web site [Nausicaa.net](http://www.nausicaa.net) is keeping track of *Spirited Away's* awards and appearance in critics best-of-lists at <http://www.nausicaa.net/miyazaki/sen/credits.html#awards> It also tops the Internet Movie Database's ranking of animated films, and is in the top 100 of all films.

One film critic, taking Disney's marketing department to task for failing to capitalize on *Spirited Away's* critical acclaim by releasing the film in only 150 theaters, was told that critical acclaim and an Oscar win might bring the film to a wider audience.

## The Legend of CLAMP

All you'll need to know about this infamous manga group

Lisa “Skuld” Wu

Among the modern manga artists of Japan, there are few who actually achieve overseas renown. Many of the new-age otaku today were first introduced to popular, mainstream television series such as *Dragon Ball Z* and *Sailor Moon*, based off of manga created by Toriyama Akira and Takeuchi Naoko, respectively. Even the most naïve of newly initiated otaku have heard something of classic anime greats such as *Ranma ½* and *Urusei Yatsura*. But perhaps the title of most prolific, and most versatile manga group belongs, in the end, to a four woman team that goes by the name of CLAMP.

CLAMP had its first roots in the vast underground world of *doujinshi* (fan manga), in the mid-1980's. By 1987, however, CLAMP separated from *doujinshi* based on fan works, and began creating their own original series, eventually leading to the serialization of *RG Veda* in *Wings Monthly* in 1989. This was the big break for the then 11 member group, their first professionally published manga, which eventually ran for 10 volumes. After its creation in 1991, CLAMP's second manga, *Tokyo Babylon*, ran concurrently alongside *RG Veda*. By then, the numbers of CLAMP had already dwindled down to today's 4 ladies.

Since then, CLAMP has produced a number of notable works, including the more well-known *Card Captor Sakura*, *X*, *Chobits*, *Magic Knight Rayearth*, *Angelic Layer*, and

*CLAMP Campus Detectives*. The number of their manga made into anime surpasses even that of Takahashi Rumiko, who is often hailed as one of the milestones of modern manga history.

While CLAMP's first few series brought them fame as ladies of tragedy, CLAMP produces a great assortment of manga, although their predominant domain is still *shoujo*. Recent works of note are *Chobits*, CLAMP's latest and slightly *ecchi* manga, as well as *Angelic Layer*, another recent and more *shounen*-like battle anime much in the fashion of *Pokémon*, but done with the trademark CLAMP flair.

CLAMP's greatest strength, however, is not quite in the story, the characters, nor the plot devices (although we cannot deny that they are excellent in all these areas), but is instead in their beautiful artwork, most notably displayed in their surreal/futuristic manga series, *Clover*, and their ongoing apocalyptic epic, *X*.

*X*, of all CLAMP's work, has gained the most attention. Rintaro, the famed Japanese director of *Kimba the White Lion* and *Astroboy*, made the *X* movie in 1996 and an *X* TV series was shown on the WOWOW channel in 2001. Currently at 18 volumes, *X* is CLAMP's longest manga.

*X*, which also goes by the name *X/1999*, is set in modern day Tokyo (take a guess, the year is 1999), where a young teenager by the name of Shirou Kamui is to decide the fate of the world. Known by many as CLAMP's most beautiful and painstakingly detailed manga, *X* features a multitude of characters not only from *X's* original world, but also crossing over into two of CLAMP's other prominent manga series. Fans of CLAMP will be pleased to find that not only do Nokoru, Suoh, and Akira, the elementary school troublemakers from *CLAMP Campus Detectives*, appear in *X*, but also the main characters of *Tokyo Babylon*, Subaru and Seishirou, return to play pivotal roles on either side for the battle to decide the end of the world.

Self-declared CLAMP fans should not only know about CLAMP's most famous works, but also about CLAMP's art style and the function of the four members of the group. CLAMP's principal artist is, and has been from the beginning, a woman by the name of Apapa Mokona. Ohkawa Nanase is often regarded as the leader of the group—she negotiates with the publishing companies, writes the stories, and directs the scripts. Nekoi Mick usually stays out of the spotlight as the art assistant and director, but has recently been known to also illustrate CLAMP manga, most notably *Suki Dakara Suki*, *Wish*, and *Gouhou Drug*. Igarashi Satsuki jokingly refers to herself as CLAMP's cook, but also helps with the inking and the screen-toning. Unlike other manga artists, CLAMP does not have any assistants; although they may have as many as 3 or 4 projects going on at the same time, CLAMP insists on doing their own work.

CLAMP style has evolved throughout the years, their earlier manga being regarded as more ‘old-school,’ and their

newer style (especially in *X*) has brought on the trademark of being ‘distinctively CLAMP.’ Yet in truth, CLAMP’s style varies even with the same artist: Apapa Mokona has both a heavy, well-detailed hand in *X* and *Magic Knight Rayearth*, but also a light, simple style as seen in *Card Captor Sakura* and *Chobits*. Even Neko Mick’s art style is distinct from that of her fellow, her major work being marked as the ‘realistic-looking’ *Suki Dakara Suki*, just going to show that while there is a general CLAMP atmosphere, there is no concrete CLAMP style.

Last of all, fans of CLAMP often note the group’s homoerotic undertones, which run rampant in *Miyuki-chan in Wonderland*, take a front-seat in the breathtaking beauty of *X*, and appear in the more playful moments of *Tokyo Babylon*. From CLAMP’s early *doujinshi* publications, even before the earliest days of their professional career, CLAMP seems to have joined the growing numbers of *yaoi* and *shounen-ai* fan girls in Japan. Their works, even today, subtly explore the darker aspects of homosexuality, which has also become a hallmark of the CLAMP style.

From whichever way you want to look at them, whether *shoujo*, *shounen*, or *magical girl*, CLAMP has grown into one of the manga legends of today. They’re still churning out works like *X*, and the delightfully *shounen-ai* *Gouhou Drug*, with no sign of stopping. It doesn’t look like CLAMP is losing steam, and since they are only gaining popularity, in Japan and around the world, it seems as if CLAMP is here to stay. So keep your eyes peeled for the latest CLAMP hit, because this is one group that will surely go down in the manga history books.

Skuld introduces CLAMP’s most famous works! If you’re not sure what you’d like to check out, read Skuld’s suggestions of her favorite titles from her favorite manga group.

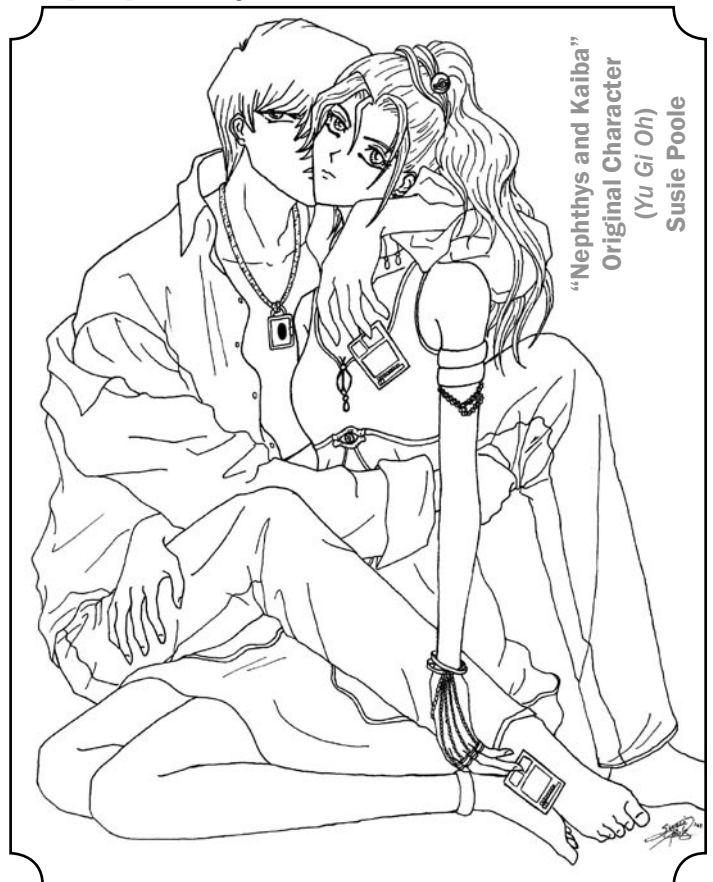
**X:** It’s not just the hype. Although the movie may have been very disappointing plot-wise, the manga and TV series sure live up to the CLAMP name. In spite of its length at 18 volumes and counting, *X* is not to be missed as CLAMP’s most gorgeous series. Full of sprawling Tokyo imagery, vibrant characters, and big explosions, *X* is sure to satisfy both the *shounen* and the *shoujo* fan.

**Clover:** One of CLAMP’s better and more obscure manga titles, it has recently been translated and revealed in full original glory by TokyoPop. *Clover* features Mokona Apapa in an experimental stage that both strikingly sparse, and brilliantly beautiful. Another must-read for both *shounen* and *shoujo* fans alike.

**Wish:** Also in the midst of translation by TokyoPop, *Wish* is an endearingly cute love story between an angel, Kohaku, and a doctor from the earthly plane, Kudou Shuichirou. Light-hearted and happy, but not without its angsty plot twists, this is a welcome break from CLAMP’s darker series.

**Tokyo Babylon:** A story about a young *onmyouji* (exorcist), Sumeragi Subaru, and his adventures around Tokyo performing exorcisms, solving mysteries, getting dressed up by his twin sister, and hit on by his good friend Sakurazuka Seishirou; it’s all in the life of a 16-year-old medium. An intriguing story serialized in short adventures darkening into a more complicated ending. A must-read for a deeper understanding of *X*.

**Gouhou Drug:** Translated as “*Lawful Drug*,” it is the story of a group of young men with strange psychic powers working at an ordinary looking pharmacy. Although comparatively new, it is filled from the beginning with CLAMP intrigue and mystery and already looking quite promising.



“Nephthys and Kaiba”  
Original Character  
(Yu Gi Oh)  
Susie Poole

## Disney to Release Three Miyazaki Films to DVD in US

Miteiru Staff

Online anime vendors, as well as sites like Amazon.com, are now taking pre-orders for the April release of two, or possibly three, Miyazaki films on DVD.

The three films are: *Kiki’s Delivery Service*, *Castle in the Sky (Laputa)*, and maybe *Spirited Away (Sen to Chihiro no Kamikakushi)*. Expected to retail at \$29.95, the films appear to be getting the same serious treatment they have received in the Japanese and Chinese releases, packed with an extra disk full of extras. Each of the films will have several language tracks and is expected to have true subtitles.





# Haibane Renmei

David Mankins

A girl dreams of falling and awakens inside an enormous translucent egg. From outside of the egg she can hear the excited chatter of young women preparing for her “arrival.” When she emerges, she is named “Rakka” (falling) after her dream. In the days after her arrival, wings emerge painfully from the flesh of her back and, as she recovers, her new companions present her with a halo. The halo emerges from a mold, and needs to be tethered while it learns to “stick.” When Rakka goes into the village to obtain second-hand clothes, a tailor installs vents for her wings.

*Haibane Renmei* is Japanese for “Charcoal Feather Federation” (perhaps more lyrically translated as “Ashwing League”), a creation of Yoshitoshi ABe, who also did the character designs for *Serial Experiments Lain* and whose work was the inspiration for *NieA\_7*.

Haibane live in an isolated old building (referred to as “Old Home”) outside a small town (of humans) that sits isolated inside a huge walled enclosure. The wall is too high to see over, and the only people who are allowed to go outside are the silent, mysterious (and somewhat ominous) masked Toga. The Toga also provide for the haibane, who are not allowed to own new things, and may only use what people have cast off.

In the first few episodes we accompany Rakka as she learns about this new world she has been born into. All the (non-child) haibane have jobs, and Rakka accompanies each of them, looking for a place for herself. It is clear that the haibane are outsiders, and there are many traditional restrictions on how they may deal with humans, and how humans may deal with them.

As the series progresses, we learn more about the haibane world and the series begins to explore loss and redemption, coming to a beautiful and poetic close.

## Voice talents:

- **Rakka:** Hirohashi Ryo
- **Reki:** Noda Junko
- **Kana:** Miyajima Eri
- **Kuu:** Yajima Akiko
- **Hikari:** Orikasa Tomiko
- **Nemu:** Murai Kazusa
- **Kunomori:** Hisakawa Aya

## First Impressions of *Hellsing*

Joung-Mo Kang

*\*Note from Editor: This article was written for an earlier issue, but could not be included due to space restrictions.*

*Hellsing* is a 13-episode series released by Pioneer; the first two volumes are already out, and the third and fourth are due on 11/12/02 and 1/21/03 respectively.

Since it's the first thing you see, let me begin with the packaging. The first volume came with an optional box,

complete with a spacer that contains... a blood bag. It's cheesy, yet still pretty fun. The bag has the *Hellsing* seal where the traditional medical symbol would be, and bears hilarious warnings like “not a toy,” “not for consumption,” and “not for transfusion.” The third and fourth volumes will release with figures of the main characters. The promotional website, which introduced me to the show, was up before the series' release. This well-designed website made me uncharacteristically excited to buy this series as it came out, as I usually just wait for the entire set to come out both to make sure it's a good series from start to finish, and to try to get a better deal on the whole thing.

*Hellsing*'s “main” character is Arucard, who is (shockingly) an old, powerful vampire. I quote “main” because he is not the character on the screen most of the time—they might be saving a full description of him for later in the series (I have seen the first 6 episodes so far). Other primary characters include Victoria Seras, a naive police girl whom Arucard both turns into a vampire and enlists into his service, and Integra Wingates Hellsing, head of the Hellsing family, which runs an organization devoted to eliminating non-human entities. Integra has convinced Arucard to join this organization, despite the fact that its mission would target him as well. Arucard apparently has joined partly out of ennui and partly out of disgust for the “instant vampires” being manufactured of late.

The premise and artwork showed a lot of promise, so I let myself get all excited about collecting it as it came out and watching it with an actual break between discs. Did it live up to expectations? Not quite. The first disc let me down a bit—it was not what I was expecting. Arucard is a wacko: he starts fights by taunting his enemies and goading them into shooting all his limbs off, then after regenerating everything until the target gets scared, he finishes them off violently. I was expecting cool fight scenes, but a lot of the first few got a “huh?” response more than a “woo!”

However, I started warming to the series based on the combination of a serious background lurking beneath this sort of goofy action, entertaining battle dialogue, and over-the-top gore. In other words, it's campy! It starts running certain cliched gimmicks throughout that add to the campiness, like how the girl wears a ridiculously tight shirt and short skirt over her slim-yet-busty frame, and while looking thusly imbalanced already, they **always** give her a monstrously huge bazooka-like contraption. Arucard is a total nut, but it is still amusing to laugh with him as he freaks out his opponents with various mutations of his nightmarish form before he eats or obliterates them.

So those are my impressions of the first half of *Hellsing*. It might very well get more serious and thought-provoking towards the end, but I have faith they will still leave an underlying tone of irreverence and John Woo-style unnecessary, gratuitous violence to soften the strain to your thought and reasoning centers.

## Newsletter Submissions

*miteiru!* is always looking for submissions from you, our esteemed readers! For submissions guidelines please visit:  
[web.mit.edu/anime/www/miteiru.html](http://web.mit.edu/anime/www/miteiru.html)

Please send to [anime-miteiru@mit.edu](mailto:anime-miteiru@mit.edu)!  
*Doumo arigatou gozaimasu!*



Stephanie Cross  
Editor-in-Chief

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*Thank you for your submissions!*

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Feature Review:  
*Princess Tutu*

# miteiru!

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