Shiny New Anime – Anime Fusion 2021
Jessi Silver and J.C. Horvath

Entries below are listed in alphabetical order, and date from approximately October 2020 through the end of September 2021. Legal streaming sources are listed, wherever possible.

86: Eighty Six – Spring 2021 – 11 Episodes (continued Fall 2021) - The Republic of San Magnolia is at war with the neighboring Empire using unmanned drones. However, these drones are actually piloted by the so-called "86," members of a racial underclass that has been dehumanized by the ruling Alba. Vladilena is a member of the San Magnolian military who interfaces with the 86 during battle. Because of her past, she sees them as human and searches for a way to stop their use in war. This series deals with heavy topics, including racism and genocide, in a surprisingly nuanced way. **CW: Violence, racism/prejudice, genocide, body horror.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Akudama Drive – Fall 2020 – 12 Episodes – Years ago, Japan was split in half following a war. An Ordinary Person finds herself caught up in a heist plot starring a who's-who of terrifying criminals, called Akudama. This series combines, brutal, creative action with a cyberpunk setting and anti-fascist message. **CW: Violence, threatened sexual assault.** *Available at Funimation and Hulu*

Attack on Titan: The Final Season – Winter 2021 (continuing in Winter 2022)– 16 episodes – The final conflict between the various factions begin to manifest, as our characters begin to interact with the world outside of Paradis Island. The series goes even darker and delves into many complicated ethical situations as the story begins to come to its conclusion. **CW: Violence, racism/prejudice, suicide, psychological trauma.** *Available at Funimation and Crunchyroll*

Back Arrow – Winter 2021 – 24 Episodes – The world of Lingalind is enclosed by a giant wall. The wall is God: it protects and nurtures the land and people, or so the folks inside are led to believe. One day a mysterious stranger literally falls from the sky into Edger village and claims to be from beyond the wall. As this man, named "Back Arrow" (a play on "Baka Yarou"), journeys with the Edger villagers to a place beyond the wall, he keeps getting drawn into other conflicts. This mecha series features over-the-top action and big personalities, thanks to the director of *Code Geass* and the writer of *Promare*. **CW: Violence, classism.** *Available at Funimation*

Backflip!! – Spring 2021 – 12 episodes – Shotaro Futaba catches part of a boys' rhythmic gymnastics competition and falls in love with the sport. He joins a high school with a rhythmic gymnastics program, and as he grows his skills at the sport, he begins to take flight. This series is a solid sports anime drama with some spectacular routines. **CW: Mild slapstick, sports injury.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

The Case Study of Vanitas – Summer 2021 – 12 Episodes (continues Winter 2022) – A Vampire named Noé travels to Paris in search of the grimoire of Vanitas, a book that once belonged to an exiled vampire. The holder of the book happens to be a man who's taken on the name Vanitas, but who uses the power of the book to heal vampire "curse-bearers" – those whose true names have been corrupted. This steampunk vampire tale features magic, intrigue, and an entertaining relationship between Noé and Vanitas. **CW: Violence, sexuality, non-consensual situations, toxic relationship dynamics.** *Available at Funimation*

Cells at Work! CODE BLACK – Winter 2021 – 13 Episodes – The human body is full of many systems working in conjunction to ensure our survival. But what if those systems are beginning to fail? This alternate take on the *Cells at Work!* edu-tainment series follows a red blood cell and his companions in a body that isn't very healthy, drawing comparisons to real life "black companies" that work their employees to death. **CW: Overwork, horror, crude humor.** *Available at Crunchyroll and Funimation*

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The Duke of Death and His Maid – Summer 2021 (with a sequel announced) – 12 Episodes – Due to a childhood curse, any living thing that the Duke touches dies by his hand. He lives alone, separate from his family, with just a butler and his maid, Alice. Alice loves the Duke (and likes to show it), and the Duke loves Alice, but how can that love be expressed between two people who can never touch? This oddly sweet supernatural series often skirts the line with its humor, but its world is fascinating and magical. **CW: Fanservice (mild but frequent), familial alienation, abuse.** *Available at Funimation*

Godzilla: Singular Point – Spring 2021 – 13 Episodes – One day a pterodon-like creature appears in Japan and soon afterward swarms of them, along with strange red dust, begin to wreak terror and destruction in more and more places throughout the world. A graduate student named Mei and an engineer named Yun each use their knowledge and talents to discover the source of this scourge and identify how to stop it. This take on the Godzilla franchise is heavy on speculative science and ideas about time-travel, providing a unique perspective on the story. Creature animation from Studio Orange (*Beastars*) gives it a unique look. **CW: Violence, animal death.** *Available at Netflix*

Golden Kamuy Season 3 – Fall 2020 – 12 Episodes – The continuation of the *Golden Kamuy* story, Asirpa and Sugimoto find their groups separately drawn toward Russian territory. This season continues the series' wonderful combination of brutal survivalism, deep character drama, and comedy. This season features some of the best episodes of the series yet. **CW: Violence, body horror, nudity, scatological humor.** *Available at Crunchyroll and Funimation*

Heaven's Design Team – Winter 2021 – 12 Episodes (plus one bonus ONA) – God created the Earth, the seas, and the skies, but when it came time to populate them with creatures big and small, he outsourced animal development to a specialized R&D team. Now these designers take God's odd requests and attempt to come up with just the right creatures to fulfill them. This cute comedy features many real-life animals and various facts about them that you may not know, presented in a fun way. **CW: Occasional biological grossness.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Horimiya – Winter 2021 – 13 Episodes – Both Hori and Miyamura are different than the images they portray at school. The outgoing Hori is really a homebody, and the sullen, geeky Miyamura is really a soft-hearted guy with tattoos and piercings. By chance, the two become friends, and then even more. This sweet romance story follows Hori and Miyamura as their relationship develops, and they broaden their group of friends. **CW: Brief sexual content, references to depression and trauma.** *Available at Funimation and Hulu*

Jujutsu Kaisen – Fall 2020 – 24 Episodes (with a prequel film in the works) – Yuji Itadori is a boy with immense physical strength. One fateful night he eats a cursed object to save his friends and becomes the vessel for a terrifying cursed being named Sukuna. Yuji's fate rests in his ability to enter a sorcery school and aid the other sorcerers in eliminating other curses. This series features incredible action and a cast of appealing, lovable characters. **CW: Violence, body horror.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Kageki Shoujo!! – Summer 2021 – 13 Episodes - Ai Narata is suddenly forced out of her idol career and joins the Kouka School for the Performing Arts. There she meets Sarasa Watanabe, a tall girl who aspires to play "Oscar" in the Kouka adaptation of "The Rose of Versailles." The two girls work to find their own performing voice in this competitive training environment. This series drives home the amount of work it takes to excel in the performing arts and the way that the talents of the various characters help them achieve their goals. **CW: Sexual harassment, stalking, childhood sexual assault (depicted in flashback), disordered eating.** *Available at Funimation*

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Kiyo in Kyoto: From the Maiko House – Winter 2021 – 12 episodes (broadcast monthly) – Kiyo and Sumire traveled to Kyoto to become Maiko – Geisha-in-training. Sumire's talents have allowed her to quickly develop her skills, but being a Maiko wasn't in the cards for Kiyo. Instead, she stays on as the Maiko house's live-in cook, where she shares her love with others using delicious food. This cute series provides a lot of interesting information on the training undergone by maiko candidates, and features lots of yummy food. **CW: Disordered eating.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Laid-Back Camp Season 2 – Winter 2021 – 13 Episodes – Nadeshiko, Rin, and their friends return for more camping adventures in this cozy, wonderful sequel. **CW: Weather-related peril, one instance of mild body-shaming humor.** *Available at Crunchyroll.*

Let's Make a Mug Too – Spring 2021 (with a sequel currently airing) – 12 Episodes (15 min. apiece) – Himeno and her father move to Tajimi City, which is famous for its local pottery. It's also where her late mother attended high school and developed her pottery skills. There, Himeno joins the pottery club and learns to love making pottery, all while she forms an emotional connection with the mother she barely knew. This heartwarming series is a fun look at a local art form that might not be familiar to many viewers. There is also a companion series featuring the voice actresses as they explore Tajimi City. **CW: Parental death (in flashback).** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Mars Red – Spring 2021 – 13 Episodes – In the Taisho Era, Japan is rapidly modernizing. Lurking in the shadows are a steadily increasing contingent of vampires. The military creates a secret task force called Code Zero to handle the vampire threat – using none other than vampires who've been able to maintain some semblance of their humanity. Captain Maeda is assigned to lead this secret group. This series combines historical themes and theater to bring to life a very unique vampire story. **CW: Violence, suicide**. *Available at Funimation*

Moriarty the Patriot – Fall 2020 (continued Spring 2021) – 24 Episodes – William James Moriarty, foil to the famous detective Sherlock Holmes, uses his cunning mind and sense of justice to fight against class oppression. This series provides yet another new angle to these famous literary characters in a way that feels very topical. **CW: Violence, class discrimination.** *Available at Funimation*

Nomad: Megalo Box 2 – Spring 2021 – 13 episodes – After his victory, the hero called "Gearless Joe" faded into the shadows. Now struggling with addiction and many emotional scars, he fights in underground rings just to survive. This sequel delves more deeply into themes touched upon in the original *Megalo Box*, including race and class. **CW: Violence, drug abuse, alcoholism, racism, classism, prejudice against immigrant populations.** *Available at Funimation and Hulu*

Odd Taxi – Spring 2021 – 13 Episodes – Odokawa is a taxi driver who seems to have all sorts of connections, making him a person of interest in the case of a missing high school girl. A chance encounter also makes him into the target of a person on the brink. This noir mystery series features an extensive cast of (furry) characters and a very purposeful narrative that ties together many themes and storylines. **CW: Violence, addiction, PTSD/trauma, abuse, financial manipulation.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Otherside Picnic – Winter 2021 – 12 Episodes – Alongside our world exists another, more fragmented and mysterious one called the "Otherside," Sorawo and Toriko are two college students who join forces to explore the Otherside. This series features many unsettling urban-legend style locations and is carried by the cute relationship between the two protagonists. **CW: Violence (including gun violence), body horror, general horror and jump scares.** *Available at Funimation*

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Pretty Boy Detective Club – Spring 2021 – 12 episodes – Mayumi is searching for the answer to a mystery from her childhood, and approaches her school's "Pretty Boy Detective Club," comprised of aesthetically-minded boys from various parts of the school, to help her solve it. Being so impressed by these boys, she decides to become a boy and join their club. This heartwarming series features humorously winding dialog courtesy of Nisioisin's source material, and scenarios that are deliciously over-the-top. **CW: Mild fanservice, jokes involving an age-gap relationship.** *Available at Funimation*

Pui Pui Molcar – Winter 2021 - 12 episodes (3 mins apiece) – In this world, guinea pigs evolved into living vehicles, and interact with people in their everyday lives while enjoying their own lives and adventures. This charming stop-motion series may be for kids, but there's a lot of topical humor that adults will also enjoy. *Available at Netflix*

Shadows House – Spring 2021 – 13 Episodes – The mysterious family known as the Shadows live in a mansion atop a cliff. Their bodies are obscured behind black soot, so they partner with doppelgangers called living dolls who act as the Shadows' "faces." Emilico is the living doll for Kate. As the two grow closer, they discover more of the terrifying mysteries of the Shadows family. This gothic horror series is unsettling and unique, and features a cast of interesting, charming characters. **CW: Body horror. Brainwashing, violence**

SK8 The Infinity – Winter 2021 – 12 Episodes – Reki is obsessed with skateboarding, and when transfer student Langa arrives in his class, Reki makes friends by introducing him to the world of underground skateboarding. But when Langa's skills begin to surpass Reki's and he becomes a star in these underground races, Reki must reconcile with this loss of his identity. This series could be called the "*Jojo's Bizarre Adventure* of competitive skateboarding" with its over-the-top personalities and moves. But at its heart is a great story of friendship. **CW: Violence.** *Available at Funimation*

So I'm a Spider, So What? – Winter 2021 – 24 Episodes – An explosion transports an entire classroom full of students to another world, where they're reborn in various places. But one of the students isn't reborn in human form – she hatches out of an egg as a spider. Kumoko must use her wits and gaming knowledge to power up for the sake of survival. Meanwhile, her classmates become involved in a conflict that's slowing coming to a head. This is a silly, entertaining take on the *isekai* story framework, starring a hilarious arachnid heroine. **CW: Violence (physical and magical), body horror.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Sonny Boy – Summer 2021 – 12 Episodes – Nagara's high school has drifted into another dimension. In addition, several students have started to exhibit strange powers. As the students begin to navigate this strange new world, they must reestablish their own rules and society as they struggle to determine whether they'll ever be able to get back home. This metaphysical series is much less a contiguous narrative as it is a series of wonderful, speculative ideas and philosophies, courtesy of creator/director Shingo Natsume (*One Punch Man*, *ACCA-13*). **CW: Violence, body horror, brief nudity, bullying, animal harm.** *Available at Funimation*

SSSS.Dynazenon – Spring 2021 – 12 episodes – High school student Yomogi runs into a mysterious man named Gauma who claims to be a "kaiju user." Yomogi eventually discovers that there may be some truth to this statement when he and some fellow compatriots suddenly find themselves piloting a giant robot called Dynazenon. This spiritual sequel to *SSSS.Gridman* contains some tantalizing connections to that previous work. Its character drama is top-notch. **CW: Suicide, depression, complicated family dynamics, implied self-harm.** *Available at Funimation*

Super Cub – Spring 2021 – 12 Episodes – Koguma doesn't have any parents or friends and lives alone. But one day her world gets much larger when she buys a second-hand Honda Super Cub motorbike, allowing her the

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freedom to travel and providing her a connection to a fellow Super Cub enthusiast. This series delicately represents loneliness and depression, as well as the elation that comes with finding a purpose. **CW: Depression, peril.** *Available at Funimation*

To Your Eternity – Spring 2021 – 20 Episodes (New season airing Fall 2022) – One day an orb is cast to earth. It learns and changes through stimulation and is effectively immortal. As the orb gains experiences and feels the warmth of human kindness, it becomes more and more human. Yet there are opposing forces in the world that challenge its existence. This series muses on the things that make us human and will likely do a good job of wringing some tears out of you. **CW: Violence, body horror, despair, suicide.** *Available at Crunchyroll*

Vivy: Fluorite Eye's Song – Spring 2021 – 13 Episodes – Diva is the world's first autonomous AI, whose purpose it is to bring joy to humans through her singing. One day she's approached by an AI from the future calling itself Matsumoto, who warns her that, in a century, an AI revolt will result in the deaths of countless humans. Diva, taking on the persona "Vivy," works with Matsumoto through various eras to try to change the course of history and prevent disaster. This original series, with a scenario written by the author of *Re:ZERO*, features great animation and a compelling sci-fi premise. **CW: Violence, body horror, suicide, terrorism.** *Available at Funimation*

The Way of the Househusband – Spring/Fall 2021 – 10 Episodes (varying lengths) – As a yakuza, Tatsu was formerly known as the "Immortal Dragon." Now retired and married to a career woman, he's transitioned to the role of homemaker, though his previous skill set often comes in handy. This delightful comedy, presented in motion-comic form that preserves the art style of the manga, adds in charming voice acting to create an entertaining, humorous series. **CW: Slapstick humor.** *Available at Netflix*

Wonder Egg Priority – Winter 2021 – 13 episodes – Ai Ohto became a shut-in after the death of her friend by suicide. One day she's drawn to a mysterious underground arcade where she's provided with a "wonder egg" containing another girl. As Ai fights to defend the girl inside the egg, she begins to believe that doing so may allow her to bring her friend back to life. This series deals with many heavy topics and bites off a bit more than it can chew, but through much of its run time is a thought-provoking watch. **CW: Violence, body horror, suicide, grooming, sexual assault, disordered eating.** *Available at Funimation*

Zombie Land Saga Revenge – Spring 2021 – 12 episodes – After an embarrassing and costly failure, Franchouchou retreats back into the shadows of mundane life, working odd jobs to pay back a debt. Kotaro is nowhere to be found. But it's hard to keep this girl-group down and eventually they work through many hardships to earn their revenge performance. This sequel provides more insight into the various characters and also give some tantalizing hints as to what Kotaro's goal is. **CW: Body horror.**

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