

BlackPenguin's Fall 2021 Anime Reviews

Hello again! My name is BlackPenguin, and I'm finishing out my 2021 seasonal anime reviews with the Fall 2021 Season. Today's offering includes a total of 20 shows, reviewed for your reading pleasure.

My reviews can be found below starting with my Top 5 Anime of the season, my Top 5 OPs/EDs of the season, and then individual reviews for every show I watched, in order from highest to lowest rated (in my own humble opinion). I try to be as spoiler free as possible, & write in a style that is digestible for all audiences from otaku to anime newbie. I also wait until I've watched the entirety of the show, so as to give a complete picture of what I thought (hence why I do them after the season is over). I also give a synopsis for new shows.

I talk about things like plot structure, themes, character progression, the major tones or emotions of a show, & early developments. But no specifics on major plot points, events, endgames, outcomes of final battles, or anything that would steal the majority of your enjoyment away. So someone who hasn't seen the show *should* be able to read the review without issue. And if anything *is* potentially spoilery, I always give a warning. But please keep in mind that when reviewing a *returning* show, I may spoil its *previous* season/cour.

So, give them a read if you'd like! Thanks!

Top 5 Anime of Fall 2021

- 1) Mushoku Tensei: Jobless Reincarnation
(cour 2/2)
- 2) The Heike Story
- 3) Ranking of Kings (cour 1/2)
- 4) Komi Can't Communicate
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Mushoku Tensei: Jobless Reincarnation (cour 2/2)

Genres: Fantasy, Isekai, Adventure

Synopsis

Second half of Mushoku Tensei: Jobless Reincarnation

Review

In its last offering, Mushoku Tensei proved to be a refreshing take on the isekai genre. It felt lived-in and raw, a sharp contrast to the cheap and shallow shows that dominate contemporary isekai. It was an absolute joy to watch...notwithstanding some uncomfortable fan service. I was more than ready to dive in once it returned, and was curious if part 2 could maintain that same level of quality. So, did it stand up to what came before? Well, it may be a mixed bag. Because what was great about it before was far greater this time, but what was bad about it before got worse. Much like the first half, what you may think of the show likely hinges upon your appetite for certain tropes and subject matter in anime.

First, let's talk about what this show did well. This second cour was dominated by Rudeus and company's long journey home. This long road, which takes them through treacherous regions and introduces them to intriguing characters, was fertile ground for intimate storytelling. Eris benefitted from this the most, as she made progress outgrowing her bratty compulsions. She made friends, learned the value of emotional intelligence, and started establishing an identity as a warrior. You could see the maturation process in action, and it was very fulfilling to see her grow. Likewise, Ruijerd made significant strides of his own. He began to see the gray areas of the world, and learned to trust people more readily. Even though he was already quite older than Eris and Rudeus, traveling with the two of them allowed him to experience more perspectives and grow wiser. The kinship he fostered with Eris was especially delightful, as the two of them began to both understand and respect each other more.

There were other returning characters as well, with significant growth and development for Rudeus and some familiar faces. In fact, these events proved to be some of the most impactful moments, rivaling the travels of the main trio. They were bittersweet, frustrating, and cathartic. Superb storytelling for the supporting characters, and their relationships with Rudeus.

And as one might expect from a show about a long journey, many fun and interesting characters were introduced. Because within each of the varied lands and climates they visit, they also come into contact with the people who live there. A tribe of beast people. Inhuman adventurers. Powerful warriors. Corrupt rulers. The characters are as rich as the places they live.

In terms of aesthetic and pacing, Mushoku Tensei continued to knock it out of the park. I don't think I've seen a show that does such a fantastic job of establishing a sense of time, distance, and climate. The characters traveled through all manner of lands and weather. Humid jungles in the midst of a rainy season. Sunbaked desert villages. Breezy coastal kingdoms. Frigid blizzardy mountains. Environments felt alive. So much care was spent on bringing these places to life and depicting the reality of the characters within them. All without over stylized art or high quality animation. Rather, the colors were often muted. The clarity was obscured for effect. Character movements were only given rudimentary animations. Yet somehow, with an eye towards illustration rather than fidelity, this show accurately conveys a physical experience.

Nothing was rushed. No emotional moment was shoehorned in. Every major event felt organic, arriving and concluding at the appropriate moment. And when combined with its awe inspiring yet

bittersweet musical score, you feel the journey alongside the characters. The miles they've trekked. The years of travel. The exhilaration of new experiences. The impermanence of the cherished time they are spending together, and the inevitable tearful goodbyes with those they meet along the way.

Now, the elephant in the room. The first part of *Mushoku Tensei* suffered from the usual anime pitfalls: lucky lechers, fan service, and the uncomfortable sexualization of minors. Which is, if we're being honest, the biggest downside to anime as a whole. It's not in everything, but it's pervasive throughout the genre. The vast majority of anime fans tolerate it for the most part though, as it's usually a throwaway trope or minor distraction in an otherwise good show. Some people even chalk it up to cultural differences in Japan towards age and sexuality. Regardless of how they personally see it, it's something that many anime fans have grown accustomed to, and something that anime newcomers have to contend with. And *Mushoku Tensei* was no exception. Rudeus, as a character, is the classic lecher. He fondles, ogles, and lusts. But what makes him different is that he's an adult in a kid's body. A man in a child's body showing no restraint in his urges, whether they're directed towards adults or children. This is what made some people turn away from *Mushoku Tensei* in the first cour.

However, the second cour got a little more serious with it. Not in quantity, but in quality. The comedic element of these themes diminished, and the sexuality became slightly more real. More earnest. But these developments were not for shock effect or guilty pleasure. Rather, they were deployed as you would within a coming of age tale. This made those elements simultaneously less gratuitous, yet also more visceral. Less fan servicey and tropey, but more sober. Essentially, what was a joke got a little more serious. Some critics were very uncomfortable with this, whereas some fans of the show saw those concerns as an overaction. In my opinion – as someone who consumes a lot of anime – there's no right answer. Because it is true that this show is superbly written, and deftly explores concepts such as loneliness and attachment among its young characters. But it's also true that if this show was live action, it would not have been made. It's a question of a remarkable story with some uncomfortable elements (an assessment very similar to my review of the first cour).

So let's take a beat to sum up everything else, and then arrive at a conclusion based on your own personal opinion of such elements. *Mushoku Tensei* is an expertly-written coming of age saga, set within a world of tangible fantasy. It effortlessly conveys to the viewer a sense of not only geographic scale, but also the varied biomes and climates held within. The passage of time and how it affects the characters is easily felt. The music never fails to set the mood, and the rough-hewn animation makes the plot feel real.

Now, if the aforementioned points of contention do not give you pause, I think you would find *Mushoku Tensei* to be an intense and rich isekai fable that may utterly redefine the genre. If such issues *do* bother you, then you just may find *Mushoku Tensei* to be a fantastic show that lost its potential because it couldn't get out of its own way.

My Score: 8.50/10

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The Heike Story

Genres: Drama, Historical, Fantasy

Synopsis

The Taira clan is one of the most powerful families in late 12th century Japan. But when their leader gets greedy, and they begin to accumulate enemies, they find themselves in a slow and painful

downfall. A traveling girl named Biwa, who has the power to see the future, stands witness to their eventual demise.

Review

If you weren't aware, *The Heike Story* is an adaptation of a real life historical Japanese epic titled *The Tale of the Heike*, which was compiled sometime in the early 1300s. A stylized retelling of the Japanese civil war during the 1180s, it's authorship is not attributed to a single person. Rather, it is an amalgamation of oral stories passed down by Japanese *biwa hoshi* (i.e., lute-playing bards...seriously). The tale remains a classic of Japanese literature, and has been compared to *The Iliad*. And this adaptation captures the scale and sorrow of the source material.

This show is, at its core, a historical sociopolitical drama. It's quite dense in plot and characters, weaving numerous clans and events together into a grand conflict that takes place on a national scale. It takes its time, following multiple generations and exploring a wide variety of regions and parties. Many perspectives are shown, but the show's lynchpin is Biwa, a traveling biwa player who finds herself in the care of the Taira clan. Burdened with an eye that can see the future, she is a reluctant witness to the gradual downfall of the clan.

And I do mean gradual. That first spark of hubris. The worrisome overconfidence. The loss of allies. The futile bargaining. This tale is like a slow motion drowning, to which Biwa, powerless to help, has a front row seat. All she can do is incorporate the various events and important conflicts into her music, turning the Taira clan's tragedies into an oral history.

And I know I called it a sociopolitical drama, but it's not nearly as dry as that characterization might imply. This is a deeply personal and emotional epic, full of tragedy and strife. There were so many great characters, and conflicting motivations. It's impressive that this show was able to fully develop so many characters, from youth to death, across the various parties. The pacing was very deliberate, and not a single cast member was shortchanged. I imagine that the preexisting source material gave the writers a significant head start in outlining the necessary beats for every character, but still, the organization of this character-driven plot was incredibly tidy.

Unfortunately, one side effect of adapting such acclaimed and rich source material might have been the muddling of the plot for those new to the story. The show assumes that the viewer is familiar with the tale, or at least has a working knowledge of 12th century Japanese government and family structure. Furthermore, there are numerous characters, locales, and political titles that are referenced in every scene. It's enough to want to create a flow chart. I often found myself pausing the show and trying to remember the political positions and relationships among the characters. It was not such a nuisance as to sour my experience, but there was definitely some confusion.

Still, it was quite the rich tale. It reminded me of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, a 1967 novel by Gabriel García Márquez (if you've ever read it). It also had a striking art style, reminiscent of traditional Japanese art. Every scene was beautifully composed and stunning, as if those classical artworks were coming to life. If you enjoy epic emotional tales and sweeping political dramas, this is an easy recommendation.

My Score: 8.25/10

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Ranking of Kings (cour 1/2)

Genres: *Fantasy, Mystery, Medieval*

Synopsis

Bojji – a powerless, small, and deaf prince – is the laughingstock of his kingdom. But when a tragedy visits his family, and a conspiracy forms around who will rule the land, he begins a journey to become stronger and save his kingdom.

Review

I took one look at this and was completely ready to pass it up. It looked like a direct-to-VHS Disney movie from the 80's. Though you can see the retro Japanese influence, the art style and setting are more reminiscent of bygone American animation than contemporary anime. If it weren't for some good initial reviews, I would have never given Ranking of Kings a chance. But I'm glad I did, because this show has turned out to be one of the most unpredictable and rich stories I've seen in anime in recent memory.

And when I say unpredictable, I mean it. In anime, you can usually get an idea of the plot's framework and feel where a story may be going. Between established anime subgenres, familiarity with Eastern storytelling, and the myriad of anime tropes, a lot of anime series share many of the same bones. But Ranking of Kings is extremely hard to nail down. It refuses to be tied down by the expected outcome, or usual story progression. Every development feels fresh and ingenious.

Quick aside about writing. There's a [YouTube video](#) in which Trey Parker and Matt Stone – the creators of South Park – talk about “and then” versus “but” and “therefore.” Essentially, if a story's events are only connected by the phrase “and then this happened”, it's already shit and predictable. However, if the story's progression follows a structure of “this happens, *but* then this happens” or “this happens, *therefore*” then you start to have a cohesive narrative that feels organic and enjoyable.

Ranking of Kings takes that concept, puts the events that precede “but” and “therefore” in the *past*, and constructs a riveting epic in the present in which the characters' actions come back to roost. The mystery unfolds in the most methodical way, never leaving the viewer unsatisfied or frustrated. It feels like a more concise Game of Thrones, with the narrative foresight of Attack on Titan.

The characters themselves are quite rich as well. In the first cour, in the span of just 11 episodes, they managed to imbue nearly the whole cast with a level of depth that would take most other shows 24 whole episodes. Even supporting characters are given a level of treatment that other shows would only dole out to their protagonists. I think that's because the show uses its time very wisely, making sure every single scene and piece of dialogue is in line with a character's individual story, and how they fit into the greater narrative.

It should also be mentioned that the sign language used in the show – the protagonist is deaf, I would remind you – is supervised by the Tokyo Foundation of the Deaf. The detail and patience, to animate and write authentic real world sign language while producing such a rich story, is honestly stunning.

This is one of the most pleasantly surprising shows I've seen in a long time. I'm very excited to see how it progresses, and would highly recommend it to anyone.

My Score: 8.25/10

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Komi Can't Communicate

Genres: Comedy, Slice of Life

Synopsis

It's a new school year, and Komi is the talk of the whole school. She's beautiful, athletic, and has a goddess-like air around her. All of her classmates idolize and revere her, with many deciding they're not worthy enough to even interact with her. Tadano, on the other hand, is a mundane and very average guy who finds himself sitting next to her in class. When Tadano realizes that Komi's cool standoffish nature is actually the result of severe social anxiety, he goes out of his way to reach out to her. He finds out that she desperately wants to make friends. He agrees to be her first friend, and help her make more.

Review

It's here. At long last. The anime adaptation that manga lovers have been waiting for. I actually only really started reading the Komi manga in the last year or so myself, but found it to be an absolute gem. So I was very excited for this adaptation. Luckily, the adaptation kept true to the source material for the most part. So first, let's talk about the good (oh no, that means there's bad).

The first few minutes of episode 1 – from the composition to the animation to the music – set a great tone that persisted throughout the show. A solid slice of life with emotional depth, constantly punctuated by comedic situations and observational humor, never faltering in its beautiful art style. The supporting characters were plentiful and not only hilarious, but also rich in personality. They served as great tests of Komi's courage, and made the cast feel very diverse.

As far as protagonists go, Komi and Tadano are a very fun pair to watch. Komi's nervous fretting is endlessly humorous, matched only by her courage and earnestness in trying to break out of her shell. Tadano, rather than being shoehorned into the story as a possible romantic interest, earns that potential role with his well-intentioned and selfless support for Komi.

I also found Komi very easy to identify with. I too scrutinize over the smallest details and become concerned about what others think of me sometimes, so I could *feel* Komi's anxieties. But by turning that anxiety up a notch, the show breathes additional comedy into those relatable situations. Ordering food, handing out tissues, social outings with friends – these ordinary activities that we take for granted prove hilariously difficult for the anxious Komi, as she overanalyzes and struggles to communicate with people. These situations were the primary storytelling element of the show, with each episode offering a handful of short, easily digestible vignettes.

Now, as a critique, episode to episode the show adhered a little too much to this formula. Komi would face a difficult social situation, Tadano would provide friendly support, and Najimi/classmates would serve as the comedic relief. Even if Komi had her cute moments and the situation was hilarious, the show felt just a teensy bit stagnant. Not terrible or boring, but like more could be happening. I think some of the cozy and humorous tone of the manga was lost, and that the anime was more fast-paced. It seemed like things were sometimes a little too zany, or that there could have been calmer iyashikei-esque moments. I think this may have been because the manga had a significant amount of observational commentary and side dialogue. The reader could digest it all at their leisure. But translating that to anime forced them to pick up the pace, speeding through the main dialogue and background commentary. This was also not helped by Netflix having the show. If Komi was on Crunchyroll or Funimation, I imagine the typesetting and subtitle timing would have been more accurate and pleasing to the eye.

But those negatives aside, it was still a fun and humorous slice of life. It felt like the premise of Hitoribocchi (2019), but more mature and with considerably more attention paid to the protagonists and story. Overall, not terribly rich in plot, but rich in fun and aesthetic. A solid recommendation for a comedy. And having read ahead in the manga a bit, I can say that it can only get better.

My Score: 7.75/10

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The aquatope on white sand (cour 2/2)

Genres: *Workplace, Drama*

Synopsis

Second part of The aquatope on white sand

Review

The first cour of Aquatope felt like another solid entry in PA Works' Working Series, which are known for their use of the workplace as a medium for stories about drama and crises of identity. I thought we had a potential hit on our hands, with the great contrast of its pair of protagonists. One who is introduced to us as broken and in need of direction, and another who is desperately holding on to the place that gives her purpose. The juxtaposition of these two characters' journey, and how they helped each other, was great for both the plot and the character development. The show did a good job of showing how your craft can give purpose to your life, and how you can give purpose to your craft. I was very eager to see where Kukuru's journey would lead, and what Fuuka's second act would be. Unfortunately, not only did the second cour fail to deliver on my hopes, but it also kind of floundered towards the end.

My primary complaint had to do with the focus in the second cour. The first was dominated by Kukuru, with Fuuka playing the supportive character. So, I was expecting their roles to change a little in the second cour. This was not the case. Kukuru got even more of the spotlight, so much so that Fuuka seemed more like a minor character. The tagline of the whole show is "The Two Girls Met in the Ruins of Damaged Dream", with both characters being featured prominently in the OPs and EDs. They are very much portrayed as co-protagonists. Yet in reality, this show is all about Kukuru and how Fuuka just helps her. Fuuka was more or less relegated to an emotional footstool for Kukuru. She was there, and indeed given some development and plotlines, but I was sorely disappointed that we did not see more for her. They did her dirty.

Furthermore, I thought Aquatope missed an opportunity in the second cour. The Working Series shows all suffer – to varying degrees – from overly dense or dry plots. Aquatope's first cour kind of broke out of that mold. There was a lot of emotional weightlifting, a plot with distance, and more reliance on the emotions and aesthetics of aquariums than the actual technicalities of managing them. That all changed in the second cour. It was less introspective and philosophical, and more paperwork and pencil-pushing. A return to form for Working Series shows, but a missed opportunity to expand on the awe and wonder of aquariums, and how it affects the characters.

It was still worth the watch, but I was disappointed in the direction it took. Mostly from a character development perspective, but also a general plot one. It's still a good entry in the Working Series, but it could've stood out among its peers much more. But I wonder how much of that is me just not liking

the way it played out.

My Score: 7.50/10

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86 EIGHTY-SIX (cour 2/2)

Genres: War, Science Fiction, Drama

Synopsis

Second part of 86 EIGHTY-SIX

Review

[Disclaimer: The final two episodes of 86 have been delayed into 2022. As such, this is an incomplete review. It's unfortunate, but I will try my best to give my fair impressions so far.]

I thought the first cour of 86 cleverly told a story about the psychological effects of warfare. Not only on the soldiers who live in that darkness, but on those back home who bear the emotional burden of their own powerlessness in the situation. It employed a chronologically offset narrative, telling one side of the story before rewinding and telling the other. This got pretty old after a while, but the overall plot was very cool, and the show had the sci-fi chops to keep me interested. I was definitely eager to see what came next. And when the second cour premiered, I was on board...for about half the season.

It opened well enough, with a new wrinkle that explored the emotional aftermath of a long military engagement. The uneasiness of peace. The relearning of social niceties. Reentering the thin veneer of society. The focus was what it's like to have only known war, and to have to give it up. It was fresh, and very much more personal than the first cour.

But of course, it couldn't last for long. The show immediately jumped back into fighty mech mode, beginning another long military campaign. Except this time, the show completely turned away from the theme of the duality of war, and practically re-told half of the story over again. Seriously, it was almost a one-to-one remake of one side of the story from the first cour, but with new key characters. I mean, it *actually* felt like I had seen it before. It was interesting, and I guess moved the plot along for some characters, but it wasn't exactly fresh territory.

Now, like I mentioned, there are additional episodes yet to be seen. I think they've laid enough groundwork for some payoffs that'll make this cour worthwhile, but time will tell whether or not that's realized. It's still a good show with good storytelling, but right now, it's spinning its wheels a little bit. Here's hoping it moves forward.

My Score: 7.50/10

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Restaurant to Another World, Season 2

Genres: Isekai, Food, Fantasy, Iyashikei

Synopsis

Second season of Restaurant to Another World

Review

Restaurant to Another World is an extremely niche show. Its focus is so narrow, that it limits its potential audience. As a result, it's difficult to evaluate the show in terms of actual plot. That being said, it's still one of my favorite anime series. For me, the draw of Restaurant to Another World is the constant colliding of worlds. Do you know that feeling when characters from different species or regions interact? Or when someone from a fantasy world is exposed to a modern day environment, or vice versa? This show is that feeling distilled, but through the lens of food and cooking. And the second season managed to fully recapture the magic of the first.

The second season continued to introduce new and varied species of diners. There were additional types of demons, people from aquatic environments, and new beastly adventurers. All of which helped to bring back that sense of awe and novelty from the first season. More humans were introduced as well, helping to expand on the politics and society of the other world. I thought it was an overall efficient use of additional characters. Had the show simply done the same species or characters over again, it would've gotten boring. But with new characters and species – and new dishes – the show also managed to further build the world, which I always thought was pretty rich and deserved more coverage.

And when returning characters *were* featured, the focus was less on their meals and more on their progression. Many of the characters from the first season served as mentors for new customers, connecting the old and new. And in some cases, the returning ones were given significant new developments in the way of their relationships and relevance to Nekoya.

It should also be noted that the production quality was significantly increased. Aletta and Kuro looked great in their outfits. The environments were immersive. The art style was crisp, the colors were sharp, and the sound design was on point. Every technical aspect of the show saw an increase in quality.

Lastly, let us not forget the food. There was no shortage of new and intriguing dishes. Master's creativity really shone in this season, as he came up with new and wonderful dishes for the customers. Some of Nekoya's regulars even branched out more, and tried new foods. And not only that, but it also seemed like there were more instances of our world's food making it into the other world. Seeing the other world's people marvel at the new flavors, and how the introduction of them can have a significant impact on culture and commerce, was a delight.

Overall, it was a fantastic follow up to the first season. It was very well done. If not for being such a niche show with little actual plot, this score would be much higher.

My Score: 7.50/10

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Mieruko-chan

Genres: Horror, Slice of Life, Paranormal

Synopsis

Mieruko can see ghosts, and is extremely afraid of them. Unfortunately, her daily life is full of encounters with the paranormal.

Review

I didn't know it was possible to make a slice of life horror, but Mieruko-chan is just that. And I loved it. I'm a sucker for the mixing of subgenres, and this show was a pleasant mix of easy-going and unsettling.

The basic structure of the show operates much like a slice of life, with Mieruko and her friend going shopping or eating at restaurants. But at every turn, Mieruko encounters ghastly horrors that only she can see. And she can't let the ghosts find out that she can see them either, or else she risks her safety. This leaves her on edge, as seemingly innocent activities – standing in line, trying on clothes, etc. – often turn into tests of her will. This provides great contrast between her fun, innocent social life and her internal panic and despair. Because while she appears to be going about her day like normal, she is often face to face with dangerous ghosts that she can't acknowledge. This dynamic brings horror out of the shadows, and into the seemingly safe and mundane.

But what's nice about the show is that it doesn't let this get too formulaic. Because as much experience as she may have with the paranormal, she still doesn't fully understand it. As the show progresses, she and the viewer learn more about the world of the paranormal. The dangers humanity can't see and the thin veil of safety we all enjoy is delightfully explored. Several types of apparitions are depicted, ranging from frightening to heart-warming. The variety of powers and perceptions of humans is touched on as well. Mieruko-chan risked getting stale with its hook, but it went the extra mile to flesh out the world and explore the rules of the paranormal. I really appreciated it.

I found this show to be a delightful mix of fun and dread. There were some truly frightful moments, as well as enjoyable slice of life vibes. Mieruko's explanations for her ghost-dodging behavior, as well as her friends' eccentricities, were always good for a laugh. If you're a fan of unusual horror, I think you'd enjoy this one.

My Score: 7.50/10

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My Senpai Is Annoying

Genres: Slice of Life, Comedy, Romance, Workplace

Synopsis

Igarashi – a young woman of short stature who is new at her job – grows closer to her senior at the company, Takeda, a towering man with a big personality.

Review

I didn't expect to like this one so much. This was a fun, easy-going, workplace semi-romance that I enjoyed using as a palate cleanser for the more serious shows. Not fluffy or low-stakes mind you, but rather a solid and light-hearted romantic comedy.

The gimmick – of a tiny woman and a hulking man – is easy to get past. In fact, it hardly factors into the actual plot of the show. Instead, the meat of it revolves around Igarashi's efforts to prove herself at work and Takeda's earnest stewardship as her senpai. The potential romantic aspect of their relationship is unforced. Not written into the show at the outset, but instead derived from their close working relationship as the show progresses. Seeing their professional and personal relationship grow, as Igarashi gets better at her job and the two begin to rely on each other more, is what brought me back every week. It was very rewarding from not only a romantic comedy standpoint, but also a basic good writing one.

It offered a secondary potential romantic relationship in a pair of their coworkers as well. This pair was a little more honest with themselves too, giving an enjoyable contrast to the main duo. The budding relationship between these two was also conducted with a more affectionate tone, which I found to be a welcome change when shifting away from the main story. This gave the viewer two potential romantic relationships to digest, one with a slow pace that hasn't gotten off the ground, and another with a faster pace making more headway. It kind of reminded just a tad of Wotakoi, in that it featured two workplace romances. Except in this show, both relationships are in an earlier stage.

The show also did an excellent job of rounding out the cast. Igarashi's overprotective grandfather. Her meddling friend. Her coworker's little brother, who served as a fun x-factor in the events of the show. The various background characters from the office, all providing great comedic relief and interludes from the main story. It had a solid supporting cast.

It was just a funny and calming romantic comedy. Sometimes it was even a little heartwarming. Production quality wasn't especially noteworthy, but it was more than sufficient. A good watch, overall. If you're in the mood for an easy-going office romance show, hit this one up.

My Score: 7.25/10

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Blue Period

Genres: *Drama, Art*

Synopsis

Yaguchi just floats through life. He goes to school, works hard, and has friends, but lacks any sense of drive or passion. He's a great student, but he laments the fact that his success is only attainable through hard work, and not inherent talent or ability. One day, he finds himself in the school's art club. He happens across a painting from another student, and becomes obsessed with art. Realizing that he wants to create art himself, and that he might be interested in going to art school, he decides to learn how to make art.

Review

Blue Period is a carefully written show that has a lot to say about talent, work, and success when it comes to art and personal expression. And as much I enjoyed the characters and plot, I found it to be a very frustrating and self-absorbed show.

The central theme can be summarized as talent vs hard work. Which is actually a very interesting concept that you see explored in anime about artistic endeavors. However, Yaguchi as a protagonist is a terrible vehicle for exploring that. He's a very good student and a hard worker, but thinks little of himself for not having a particular talent. He dismisses any praise, believing his successes are only due to him putting in a lot of effort...as if that's a bad thing. He is introduced to the viewer as wholly lacking the comprehension that it takes effort to be good at something. Like, it doesn't even enter his head. He thinks people who aren't effortlessly good at something are inferior. So from the outset, I did not enjoy such a shortsighted perspective from the protagonist.

So when Yaguchi encounters a painting that stirs something within him that makes him want to paint, his whole approach is frustrating. He works to better his skills, all the while cursing his lack of talent. He wants to create art, but is more concerned about getting good fast than expressing or enjoying himself. Then, when he realizes that that may not be a productive mindset, he beats himself up for needing to learn artistic techniques instead of naturally being able to express himself. And as he learns techniques and gains knowledge, he often thinks of his earned skills as compensation for a lack of born talent. He idolizes skilled artists, putting them on a pedestal instead of seeing them further along the same path. It almost extends beyond admiration of an accomplished peer to a fetishization of their "natural" abilities. It's a very annoying trait to see in an artist. He admires but doesn't necessarily respect art, and approaches it too quantitatively. Even when he's in the thick of it, he tries to protect himself by playing an outsider to the world of art.

Now, that isn't his perspective for the duration of the show. He does exhibit significant growth and nuance as the series progresses. But this approach of his plays a dominant part for a long time, and it makes him a very frustrating character to follow.

But an additional source of annoyance for me was the rate at which he developed his skills. The show starts with him being a total novice, never having painted or drawn before in his life. Yet, he picks up techniques at an alarming rate. He exhibits almost prodigy-like comprehension and retention. Which sounds cool to watch, but is annoying for two reasons. One, it's a little too convenient and fast. It lines up with his character and how he puts a lot of effort in, but it just happens a little too quickly. Two, by virtue of him seeing his accumulated skills as technical compensation for a lack of innate talent, he completely cheapens the insightful and useful tools of an artist. He sees them as tricks, and not craft. So even as he gets good, it doesn't necessarily *feel* good to see. This also doesn't allow the audience to see the full value and application of the techniques, robbing them of opportunities to actually learn about art.

I will give kudos to the supporting characters though. Yaguchi's classmates were varied and complex. Each was a joy to watch and nearly all were given a chance to be fleshed out. My favorite characters were his teachers. They were incredibly insightful when it came to art, and offered him great advice. I could feel their passion about art, so much so that even I kind of wanted to draw or paint myself. They were knowledgeable, very encouraging, and great stewards of Yaguchi's artistic aspirations. Through these characters, the show did a pretty good job of not only romanticizing art, but also peeling back the curtain on how art is created.

Lastly, Blue Period seemed to lean a little too much into a classic pitfall of perspectives on art and creativity. That pain or suffering is beneficial or necessary for the creation of art. It wasn't a persistent

or overt theme in the show, but it was present at times. Characters' efforts and motivations were often shown as coming from a place of pain. Hardly anyone in this show enjoyed making art without undergoing some stressor.

Blue Period was good enough. It wasn't bad, but it was just good enough. It was a good story but with some aspects that I found to be very annoying. I know I really excoriated it, but I find that it's very easy to point out the bad aspects of a good show. Because at the end of the day, the fact that I was able to say this much suggests that the show had a lot to offer.

If you at all enjoy art or the technical expertise of making art, this could possibly be up your alley. If you're looking for a good drama...well, you'll have to weigh the negatives yourself.

PS – Also, he just painted *one* blue painting in the beginning of the show. It wasn't really a "blue period". False advertising.

My Score: 7.25/10

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Irina: The Vampire Cosmonaut

Genres: Space, Fantasy, Military, Romance

Synopsis

The Republic of Zirnitra (a nation based on the Soviet Union) is in a space race with the United Kingdom of Arnak (based on the US). But before Zirnitra sends a human into space, they must first test their spacecraft. For this purpose, they use a vampire as an experimental subject – Irina. She is trained by cosmonaut candidate Lev, and the show follows their journey together as they both try to go to space.

Review

I wasn't big on this show when reading about it, but I was eager to check out such an unusual premise. Vampires and space? Sounds cool. The odd use of not-so-subtle Soviet and American analogues? A little weird, but whatever. Maybe it'll be good. So, was it good? It was...ok. It wasn't terribly exciting, but it was a tender and enjoyable story of star-crossed companions set against the machinations of a heavy-handed communist nation. I found Irina and Lev's relationship – a forced association – to be an interesting tale.

Lev is a disgraced cosmonaut candidate, trying to fight his way back into the program. He has dreams of going to space, but must contend with the politics and fascism of The Republic of Zirnitra. He's an earnest individual, who tries to stay true to himself as he tolerates the regime for the sake of his goals. Irina, on the other hand, comes into the show with a chip on her shoulder. Vampires in this show are seen as monsters, often forced into slums, enslaved, or even killed. So naturally, Irina has a distrust of humans, only tolerating her circumstances for the sake of her dream of going to space. Watching Lev and Irina grow more reliant on each other through their shared dream of space flight—while fighting against a corrupt nation and a society that discriminates against vampires—was entertaining. Lev, seeing Irina as a peer, fearlessly confronting the status quo of human/vampire society. Irina, learning to trust humans, allowing herself to rely on Lev and see him for who he is. It was a neat premise.

Unfortunately, outside of this more intimate tale, the show didn't have much bite. The supporting characters weren't particularly interesting or even impactful. The geopolitical intrigue – meant to serve as a grand backdrop for Lev and Irina's relationship – could have used more attention. The animation and production quality were satisfactory, but left little to awe the viewer. The pacing was a little quicker than I would have liked, failing to linger on the hard hitting emotional moments and instead advancing the plot too hurriedly. And though it wasn't necessarily billed as a romance, I still found myself wishing to see more romantic elements. I did enjoy the romanticization of space though. Seeing Lev and Irina tell each other what space means to them was fulfilling and poignant. It served as the spark of their relationship, and the place from which better human/vampire relations may grow.

The actual mechanics and business of space flight was explored as well. There were many a scene of engineers or scientists providing exposition on the technical obstacles to human space flight. They also did a somewhat decent job of recreating the concerns and milestones of the actual space race, taking the viewer back to that time when the thought of mankind seeing the stars was nearly impossible. So that was neat.

Overall, I found it enjoyable, but not terribly entertaining. But if you really like space or stories about humans and vampires learning to coexist, it may provide enough for you to sink your teeth into.

My Score: 6.75/10

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takt op.Destiny

Genres: Drama, Mystery, Action, Music

Synopsis

Aliens called "D2" fall to earth, attacking humanity whenever they hear music. The only way to fight the D2s is with a duo of one Musicart (powerful beings born from music) and one Conductor (one who controls and directs the Musicart). For a time, the Conductor/Musicart pairs were successful. Now, after a long peaceful period, reclusive pianist and Conductor Takt and the mysterious Musicart Destiny – with the help of Anna – are on their way to New York to solve the mystery of why the pair became Conductor and Musicart. Along the way, the three find themselves battling D2s and stumbling upon a more sinister mystery.

Review

This show had a super intricate plot, mysterious characters, a killer soundtrack, and some of the best action I'd seen in a while. It came out swinging, and I was totally on board for it.

Unfortunately, it was pretty much downhill after a couple episodes.

First, let's talk about the good. The premise – as dense and hard to digest as it was at first – was really cool. Monsters who hate music attacking humanity, robbing them of an essential element of the human experience. A world mostly without music for years, only ever enjoyed in secret, akin to alcohol in a speakeasy during prohibition. And the only defense? Musicarts. Essentially magical girls by anime standards, but with more poignance, as they are literally born from music. And who controls them? Conductors, of course. A little on the nose, but a very neat premise.

The action was also very good. Some of the best I've ever seen, actually. The fights were

choreographed incredibly well. It wasn't super cutty or blurry either. Do you know how some action scenes are full of cuts or fast movements, to the point that it becomes hard to follow or gives you a headache? This show was the complete opposite. You could follow each punch. The angles were always perfect. The camera tracked the characters perfectly, and at the right distance. The sound design was stellar. There were many sakuga-esque moments as well, when the animation kicked into high gear and your jaw would hit the floor.

The music was great too, often juxtaposing hard hitting popular classical music with more ominous background scores. From a technical standpoint, this show was hitting on all cylinders.

But here comes the bad.

The story just...got too lazy. It didn't seem to be planned out well. The show started with a more entertaining and intimate focus, with sci-fi plot-driven drama through Takt, Destiny, and Anna. And for a time, that was more than enough. But as this personal drama was tied into the wider plot, the episodes seemed to lack focus. Some events didn't seem to happen for a particular reason. Whole episodes seemed to have no effect on the greater story, or even the characters. In some cases, they did help to establish an aesthetic and put the show back on the rails, but little occurred that was related to the underlying plot until the second half of the show.

And even when the story finally got underway, it just wasn't that great. Revelations weren't very exciting or shocking. Adversaries didn't have a particularly nuanced or well-written perspective. Seemingly meaningful events failed to land. In fact, little was done to expound upon the world or how it came to be. The show just hurtled towards its end, as if to wrap up quickly.

And upon writing this review, I am seeing that this was part of a mixed-media project. Knowing this, I suppose I should not be surprised by the direction of the show. Too often anime that has other money-making avenues – games, manga, music – is created to sell an idea, rather than put forth a cohesive plot.

takt op. Destiny did feel like such a property. It was cool looking, full of great music, and had a great initial premise. But when the time came to turn all that into an actual story, it mostly fell short.

My Score: 6.75/10

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SAKUGAN

Genres: Adventure, Mystery

Synopsis

In the post-apocalyptic Underworld – a series of underground settlements connected by caverns and passageways - Memempu is a child prodigy. She lives with her single father Gagumber, who spends his days drinking and lazing about. But Memempu grows tired of her lifestyle, and seeks action. She desires to become a Marker, adventurers who explore the underworld. One day she receives a mysterious map from an infamous Marker, and resolves to leave the colony to explore Underworld. She is stopped by her father...just before the colony is attacked by a kaiju. Even in the face of danger, Memempu can't resist the urge to venture outside. Realizing he can't stop her, Gagumber decides to accompany his daughter on her mission to find herself.

Review

This one started out pretty well. It felt similar to Deca-Dence or Gurren Lagann, with its post-apocalyptic industrial steampunky society and hints of mystery. The exchange between Memempu and Gagumber during the kaiju fight was a little annoying – I'm reminded of Tom Cruise's argument with his son in War of the Worlds – but it hit deep enough. The art style was average and the mechs were unremarkable, but the conclusion of the first episode and suggestion of future high stakes encounters were encouraging.

Then it just fell flat.

For one, SAKUGAN suffered from an overreliance on wackiness. It had a rich world and ripe mysteries to explore, but focused too much on comedic relief and slapstick humor. Mech fights were cartoonish, and lacked realism. Moments that should have had weight felt cheap. Opportunities for serious exposition or hard hitting action were kneecapped by the aloof characters. Whenever the show got into the meat of the plot, it resolved too quickly and returned to a road trip comedy. There were times when something interesting would actually happen, but the show would turn away from it right after. It left the viewer unsated, as if they were purposefully teasing you.

This person has cool sci-fi tech that hasn't been talked about yet? Anyway, here's a beach episode. Oh, someone is having a big fight? Well forget about that, we need them to crack jokes in the next scene. Wait, were you enjoying learning more about the whole reason everything in this show is happening and how it's all connected? Fuck that, let's have all the characters ignore all the plot and skip town like Wile E. Coyote. This was an incredibly frustrating way to write a show.

The characters were also annoying. Petty motivations. Unrealistic plans. Illogical reactions. Nauseating catchphrases. Played out shticks. There wasn't a good character in this whole show. Also, people were constantly shitting on the dad for some reason. To the point that it got a little heavy handed. Ha ha, let's constantly physically assault him, con him out of money, make him do hard labor, and dismiss everything he's saying. Let's also call him a shitty father and tell him that to his face at every turn. Like damn, we get it. He's the punching bag of the show.

Overall, a disappointment. It could have been a good show, if they had ever actually touched the plot. I'm hoping they don't make more, so I don't have to feel obligated to find out what happens.

My Score: 6.50/10

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Ganbare Douki-chan

Genres: Romance, Comedy, Slice of Life

Synopsis

An office woman has a crush on her co-worker, and must fend off the women who get in her way.

Review

Where other feature-less male main character harem shows fail, Ganbare Douki-chan manages to carve out a funny niche for itself. It's still a trashy show, but I found it to be a funny and saucy way to spend five minutes each week.

If you're new to this subgenre of anime, these types of shows specifically cater to viewers (typically dudes) who enjoy inserting themselves into the show. It's pretty simple as that. The protagonist is almost always a guy whose eyes and face are never shown, with perspectives that usually follow his point of view (often with a heavy helping of male gaze). All this to immerse the viewer. Examples of shows in this subgenre might include Tawawa on Monday, or the literal POV-based One Room.

But Ganbare Douki-chan puts a little more effort into it. By making Douki-chan the protagonist – instead of a bland male who simply trips into women's affections – the show doesn't rely on the capacity of the viewer to imagine themselves in the show. Instead, the viewer finds themselves rooting for Douki-chan. The male in the story is still featureless, but this has an interesting effect. Since the focus has shifted away from the guy, who is already lacking in character, the show virtually removes his impact on the story. This allows Douki-chan to truly shine, even if the story is about her wanting to be with him.

It's also pretty funny. Douki-chan is full of humorous expressions and reactions, and her shock and dismay at her missed chances with the guy is what drives the show. That comedic tone also softens the saucier portions of the show, so you don't feel *too* bad about watching it. There's also a surprising lack of fan service, outside of the occasional cleavage shot or dream sequence.

It's still one of "those" shows though, so beware. It also clocks in at five minutes per episode, so there's not a lot of substance to the plot. Still, if you have five minutes to burn and want to watch a funny anime woman's schemes to hook up with her coworker, it might be fun.

My Score: 6.25/10

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The Faraway Paladin

Genres: *Fantasy, Adventure, Isekai*

Synopsis

A young boy is reincarnated into a world of fantasy. He is raised by three undead heroes, before setting off to rid the land of evil in the name of a goddess.

Review

This show was a slog. The premise was unremarkable, the set up tedious, the animation only passable, and the story annoying.

My first issue is with the introduction of the world and the establishment of the protagonist. The first *five* episodes are practically all prequel. Just the initial exposition to get things out of the way. Which is not offensive on its face, but it just felt so constrained. It was like watching a stage play about four characters locked in a room, with extended soliloquies and introspection. It got boring fast, to the point that I started to care less and less about the characters and just wanted to move on.

But even when it did move on, and the story opened up, it wasn't that exciting. It didn't feel like much more than your standard fantasy isekai in which the protagonist sets out on a journey and accumulates companions. It did give a sense of time and scale, and put forth a world with noticeable depth and tending, but it still came off as bland. The art style and animation did it no favors either,

with its dull color palette and timid action.

But I think what turned me off the most is the aspect of religion. Religion plays a huge part in the show. There are multiple gods and goddesses to which the people pray to. And if they are especially devout and qualified, they can receive “blessings” with which they can use to carry out the deity’s will. But somehow, even with multiple deities and tangible proof of their existence, the show still comes off very Christian in its depiction of religion. The houses of worship closely resemble churches, holy authorities are dressed similar to that of Christian clergy, and the physical/vocal practice of worship is very reminiscent of Christianity. The influences are clearly there, to the point that it doesn’t feel original or fantastical, so much as an evangelistic advertisement for traditional western concepts of religion.

Not that that’s bad per se – I’m not anti-religion or disapproving of Christianity, in the *least* – but the way religion is portrayed, it just lacked that other-worldly feel. It didn’t feel like fantasy. It felt like watching a missionary doing outreach. It almost even had an air of a crusade. Which is surprising, since society in the show is quite polytheistic. I mean, goddesses in isekai are nothing new. It’s practically baked into the genre. But for some reason, this one felt different. Perhaps it’s because the protagonist is so devout and on a holy mission. I don’t know.

The religious element, coupled with the unexciting story and aesthetic, did not make for a particularly enjoyable watch. I’m hoping that subsequent developments will spice things up.

My Score: 6.00/10

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Taisho Otome Fairy Tale

Genres: Historical, Romance, Slice of Life

Synopsis

In early 1900s Japan, Yuzu is given to the Shima family’s physically disabled son, Tamahiko, for marriage. Finding Tamahiko in somber spirits – due to his exile from the family on account of his condition – she makes the best of the situation and attempts to brighten his life.

Review

Yikes, right? That premise is a doozy. But according to what I’ve read, there is some historical context to be understood here. Being disabled was commonly a source of shame for individuals in the Taisho era, and often resulted in shunning by their families. And apparently sending away family members to resolve debt was not uncommon either. The thought of couching a romance within this premise is still odd, but knowing the context, it does make things a little less edgy. And when you consider the fact that many classical western romance novels feature stories about women forced into arranged marriages or even held captive, perhaps the concept isn’t too unfamiliar after all. Still, that didn’t make it much easier to digest the story.

The whole show felt like a mix of two shows in recent memory: The Helpful Fox Senko-san and The Duke of Death and His Maid. Yuzu, for some reason, just decides to dedicate herself to her unknown future husband, trusting that he will treat her well and grow to love him. She tends to his every need, and serves as a sponge to soak up his negativity and bring him out of his shell. The whole thing felt uncomfortably domestic and servient. The character of Tamahiko was indeed courteous and

well-mannered, but this did little to dispel the air of indentured servitude.

Turning away from how they met and their home life, the actual romance of the show was quite tame. I was not entertained by the overly cutesy and bashful exchanges. There was no spark, no passion, and certainly no steaminess. Perhaps it was due to the story taking place in the early 1900s – or the fact that the main duo was in their mid-teens – but there was hardly any romance.

The supporting cast ranged from boring to annoying. Some characters were downright infuriating in their treatment of the main duo. The art style was cute, but not especially noteworthy. The show was not lacking in production quality, but was certainly not amazing.

This show was actually very unentertaining, in my opinion. The premise made the domestic nature of Yuzu and Tamahiko's relationship unrealistic, and the romance was nearly non-existent. The episodes were uninspiring, and did little to endear me to the supporting cast. Overall, I didn't find it worth watching. It wasn't terrible or of substandard quality, but it really didn't do anything that well.

My Score: 5.75/10

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The World's Finest Assassin

Genres: *Isekai, Fantasy*

Synopsis

An aging assassin dies, after which he comes face to face with a goddess. She offers to reincarnate him into another world, as long as he grows up and uses his skills to assassinate the world's hero. He agrees, and begins a new fantasy life as an assassin, reborn with the name Lugh Tuatha Dé.

Review

I padded out my Fall schedule with this isekai for flavor, without knowing much about it. A mistake on my part, as it turns out the source material is from the same author as Redo of Healer.

While not nearly as edgy or devoid of plot as Redo, once you realize The World's Finest Assassin is from the same creator, the similarities start to emerge. It features a male protagonist who manipulates and exploits women for his purposes, brainwashing them to rely on and worship him. He then makes them complicit in his murderous activities, all in the pursuit of his own ideals of justice. So not *exactly* the same, but it definitely suffered from many of the same shortcomings.

That aside, Lugh was basically a cookie cutter isekai protagonist. Extremely OP, lucky as hell, and constantly applying knowledge from his previous life to great effect. It never felt like the stakes were that high. In fact, it got kind of boring, with how easy everything was coming to him. The abundance of video game logic did little to pique my interest either. The scene in which he picks out his skills for his new life might as well have been a card game. It was seriously like a damn game of Magic The Gathering. It was like the worst of isekai, slathered in video game logic, and sprinkled with a nauseatingly cold misogynist of a protagonist. Not to mention that the production quality left much to be desired. It wasn't the worst, but boy was it not pleasing on the eyes.

I suppose I should give the show credit for having somewhat of an intricate and well-paced plot. The way that Lugh approached his assassinations was indeed a little cerebral at times. I also appreciated

that there was a clear Point A and Point B to the plot, and how they traveled that line in an organic way. But boy, were the characters and plot just not good. Even the saucy portions were more cringy than sexy.

Maybe what follows – if something follows – will be an improvement. I don't know. But as is, it's just another isekai to throw on the pile.

My Score: 5.50/10

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The Great Jahy Will Not Be Defeated! (cour 2/2)

Genres: *Reverse Isekai, Comedy, Slice of Life*

Synopsis

Second part of The Great Jahy Will Not Be Defeated!

Review

My biggest complaint with the first half of Jahy was that it was boring, and that there was little substance for me to actually write a review on it. That seemed to be the case this time as well. Granted, the show actually progressed the story and connected some of the events, but this cour was still mostly fluff.

While the episodes were a little less formulaic this time, the character development we got instead was still shallow and not very entertaining. I would characterize it as mildly heartwarming, and not terribly chuckle-worthy. And while supporting characters were given more screen time, they had little relevance to the main plot and seemed more like filler. In fact, not much was offered in the way of plot for most of the show. Things only got moving towards the end. And when they did, it wasn't very impactful or satisfying.

Honestly, this show wasn't much of anything. It was full of gags and funny situations that lost their appeal by the end of the first cour. By the time you get to the second, the shtick gets old and can't really be saved by the plot limping to the finish line. This was a humorous show, but not necessarily a good one.

My Score: 5.50/10

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Tawawa on Monday, Season 2

Genres: *Slice of Life, Romance, Ecchi*

Synopsis

Second season of Tawawa on Monday

Review

If you didn't see the first season of Tawawa on Monday, all you need to know is that it's another one of *those* shows. Shows with a feature-less male main character who interacts with a host of buxom beauties, with whom the viewer can imagine themselves with. Knowing that, and having watched the first season – ahem, in “preparation” – I can tell you that this show doesn't really offer more than the standard fare of fan service and self-insert male characters.

Though there were some improvements over the first season. Supporting characters were fleshed out much more, and given significantly more airtime. The actual romance and sauciness were kicked up a degree. The production quality saw a noticeable bump as well, compared to the first season.

If I had to be critical, the biggest negative was the change in character design from the first season. Tawawa looked more...“cheeky”, might be the right word. Faces were wider, and the designs were far more stylized than the simple yet effective approach that was seen prior. This difference is all the starker when the two seasons are watched in succession, as was the case for me.

In the end though, it was really still just a fan servicey romp. A guilty pleasure that doesn't offer much in substance, beyond scratching the occasional mildly saucy itch.

My Score: 5.50/10

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Let's Make a Mug Too: Second Kiln

Genres: Slice of Life, Pottery, Feel-Good

Synopsis

Second season of Let's Make a Mug Too

Review

Anime Law dictates that if you watch the first season of a show, and the second comes out soon after, you must watch it as well. As such, I was forced to sit through this boring travel brochure of a show for a whole other season. Why did I call it a “travel brochure”? Well, if you aren't familiar with the show, it's because Let's Make a Mug Too is literally not much more than a marketing campaign for the city of Tajimi, which is known for its pottery and ceramics. In fact, each episode is accompanied by a live action featurette in which the voice actors participate in activities within Tajimi. It's quite the touristy affair.

Now, marketing aside, the show did try to continue the story from the first season and build on the characters. Himeno's journey through pottery was more serious, and the supporting cast was given their own developments as well. It was also pleasant to see the show focus just a tad more on the hobbyist vibes, which is something I thought was sorely lacking in the first season.

Still, those factors did not do much to alleviate the lack of stakes or complexity of plot. Just like the first season, it was quite boring. A tourism marketing campaign disguised as a CGDCT show with little in the way of story or appeal. Much like 3.6 roentgen, it was not great, not terrible.

My Score: 5.25/10

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Wrap Up

Those are the reviews! If you watched any of these shows, how did my reviews stack up against yours? If you didn't watch any of these shows, have my reviews influenced you at all on them? Let me know! I'd love to hear about it.

So, that's it! My last batch of reviews for 2021 anime. That makes a whopping 72 *shows* (out of 82 seasonal broadcasts) that I watched in 2021. Nice! I also usually make a Top 10 video early in the year as well (*check out my videos for [2019](#) & [2020](#)*), but I don't think I'm going to get to 2021 until next month this time. But that's cool, I lag behind on these things because I try to form full opinions, you know.

Anyway, I hope my reviews have helped you somewhat in the last year. I like pouring my thoughts out about anime, so I plan to continue writing into 2022. I hope you'll join me.

Thanks for reading!