

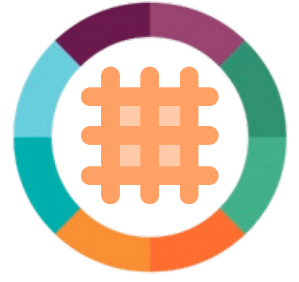
Longbenton High School

The Waffle

3 June 2026

Volume II

Issue 9



Hard work blossoms during Exam Season!!



A Horse Chestnut tree sapling leafing out, by Alma F, Y13

Ms Doucet's Poem of the Moment

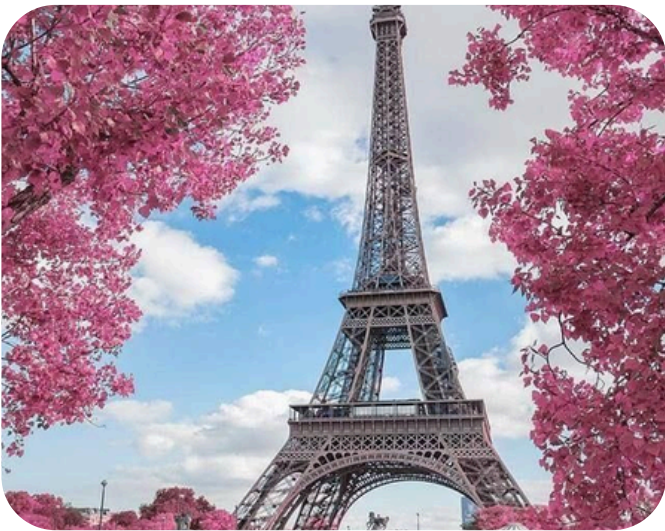
Pastoral

Something in the field is
working away. Root-noise.
Twig-noise. Plant
of weak chlorophyll, no
name for it. Something
in the field has mastered
distance by living too close
to fences. Yellow fruit, has it
pit or seeds? Stalk of wither. Grass-
noise fighting weed-noise. Dirt
and chant. Something in the
field. Coreopsis. I did not mean
to say that. Yellow petal, has it
wither-gift? Has it gorgeous
rash? Leaf-loss and worried
sprout, its bursting art. Some-
thing in the. Field fallowed and
cicada. I did not mean to
say. Has it roar and bloom?
Has it road and follow? A thistle
prick, fraught burrs, such
easy attachment. Stem-
and stamen-noise. Can I lime-
flower? Can I chamomile?
Something in the field cannot.

Jennifer Chang

Fun Fact:

Did you know that every spring and summer, the Eiffel Tower grows about 15 centimetres? This is due to a phenomenon called 'thermal expansion': rising heat causes an increase in the volume of the iron structure of the tower, making it expand. This process reverses in the colder months, with the tower contracting and shrinking!



Anime Rec!

'The Fragrant Flower Blooms with Dignity'



Genre: rom-com, slice-of-life, coming-of-age, wholesome
Age-rating: 12+ (mild profanities, minor violence)

'An elite girls' school resides next to a boys' school for delinquents. One day, two students from each school, Kaoruko and Rintaro, meet and develop a connection.'

Creative Writing Prompt



'Amorphophallus titanum', a flower given the title the 'Corpse Flower' for its revolting scent when in bloom, is known to bloom only once every 12 years, and whose flower only lasts around 2-3 days.

Write a poem or short story surrounding the fulfilment of something that has been a long time in the making. This could entail a long-awaited day of celebration, a solar event, or perhaps an arrival after a long journey...

Prompt by Alma Finnegan, Y13

Alesia's Deep Dives . . .

Human Flourishing

Have you ever wondered what it *actually* means to prosper in life? There's a theory on that. 'Eudaimonia' or better known as 'human flourishing' is a philosophical concept developed by Aristotle. It means to live an ultimately good life, and to ignore hedonistic urges which may only last a short period before dying out. For someone to reach eudaimonia, they must first be a virtuous person; this means their personality traits balance between two extremes (e.g courage as a virtue when compared to cowardice or recklessness). Aristotle claimed that if one were to consistently practice these virtues, they could reach the 'ultimate goal of life'.

How far does this go? I'm sure everyone reading this has felt some sort of overwhelming stress from having too many responsibilities at one time. It's a universal experience for humans; it teaches us skills you couldn't learn elsewhere. So when you put the concept of human flourishing into practice, it falls apart. Imagine all the current pressures of day-to-day life, now imagine that with a list of traits you *must* have in order to reach the 'ultimate good'. Aristotle says we can learn from others, or practice being a virtuous person over time, sure, but he forgets that virtues can, and will conflict. For example, once someone, say a lawyer, starts focusing on the virtue of mercy, they may lose the virtue of justice, how do we know which virtue is the right one?

Phronesis is your practical wisdom, a virtuous person should be able to use phronesis to make the right, virtuous decision over what to do in a certain situation where time is important. This is once again unrealistic for many reasons, mainly due to the unpredictable nature of humans. Everyone has a fight or flight response (or in my case, freeze) and there is no logical way to place a virtue on any of these responses, as each will have its positives and negatives; even the most virtuous person will slip up when put into high risk situations, phronesis is only useful when a person has reasonable time and context to make a decision, which defeats the purpose.

Imagine the most stuck-up, snobby or arrogant person you know, someone who believes they're better than everyone. What about millions of that person? Realistically, this would probably be the result of billions of people across the world implementing this philosophy into their life. Aristotle focuses on behavioral traits, things you notice about a person when you speak to them, but this doesn't consider the internal thoughts they might be having. For example, I could look patient when waiting in a line, whilst secretly considering if I could cut the line without anyone noticing. Even if I don't act upon my urge, I'm still considering something which prioritises myself, and I still have an unvirtuous outlook on my life. Also, imagine doing things *just* because you want to flourish, you *only* let someone cut in front of you because of the benefits it will give you, which leads to selfishness. I fail to understand how lying about who you really are can lead to human flourishing; if anything, it would only set us back further.

Aristotle also ironically commits the vice (the deficiency or excess of a virtue) of ignorance. He forgets to, or merely ignores the fact that different cultures have different virtues. A highly religious country may have the virtue of faith, whereas a highly atheist country might view that same virtue as the vice of credulity. How can ultimate 'human flourishing' not be universally accepted? It's a contradiction in itself.

I'm not saying Aristotle is necessarily wrong for creating this concept, I actually think it can be very useful for guiding people into better lives, but I wouldn't recommend it as the end-all philosophy that someone follows. What does some philosopher that died over 2,000 years ago know, anyways?



Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney

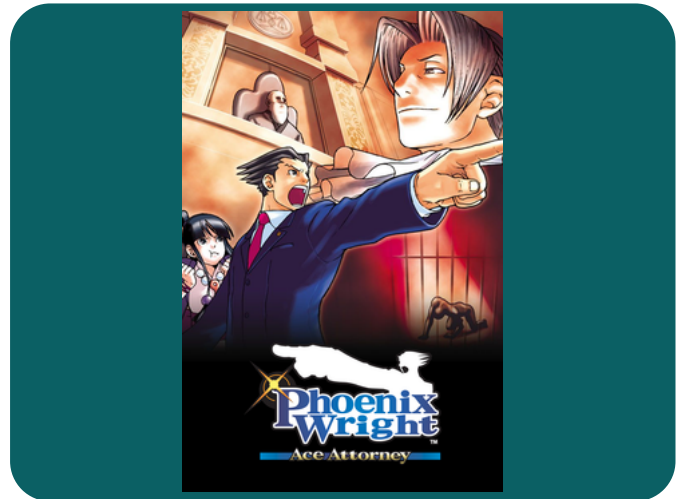
by Max Eagan, Y12

Phoenix Wright Ace Attorney. There was a question about this game on The Chase. Well the fourth game anyway. I am going to talk about the first game here. Phoenix Wright: Ace Attorney is a visual novel (bordering on point and click adventure game) originally released by Capcom in Japan in 2001 on Game Boy Advance and was released in 2005 here in England on the DS as well as being included in the remastered trilogy on 3DS, PS4, PS5, Nintendo Switch, Steam and all modern Xboxes. I must also mention that in the DS version and onward, an extra 5th case is added that doesn't tie in to the overarching story but rather sets up themes explored in the sequel. This is probably the ultimate courtroom drama simulator, accusations fly, testimonies are ripped apart and plots are twisted. But who is the man behind the spikes? What makes him tick? Well there'd be no point in playing the game if I told you now, is there?

As this is a visual novel, you might think the gameplay isn't much deeper than clicking through text boxes but the point and click aspect adds some variety. The game is split into 2 sections. In investigations you must explore different areas, question witnesses and, of course, investigate clues. These locations range from a hotel across the street to a TV set. Then you use the evidence gathered during the investigation in the trial sections where witnesses are called to testify and you must cross-examine them by either pressing for more information or by calling out contradictions with evidence. This is also where you will battle the prosecutor. They usually have significant overarching plot relevance and this game is no exception. Enter Miles Edgeworth. Who is this guy? Why does Phoenix seem to know him? What are those unnecessary feelings he talks about?

Story-wise, the game excels; the charm of the game is seeing how the relatively straight-edged (pun intended) Wright navigates his way through this crazy world filled with eclectic characters, most notable of which is Maya Fey, his mentor Mia's spirit channeler sister (yes this game gets weird). The final antagonist is done exceptionally well; the way they bend stories and evidence in their favour is truly a sight to behold. Seeing Phoenix 'blossom' (eh?) from a newbie attorney to taking on higher profile clients. As this is the first game in a wide franchise, he still has a long journey ahead of him.

There are many running gags such as the ladders vs stepladders argument and some off beat pop culture references. The use of humour here acts as a counter balance to when the game gets serious as the way the last cases play out in the game can be pretty gruesome. It would have been easy to make the game gritty but there is a unique balance that gives the game a very distinct style. Speaking of style, I think the art style shown by the game has a certain beauty to it. The characters are all very memorable and charming, in their own quirky way.



I know the genre might not seem enticing, an interactive book with added thinking but, at least in my experience, the world pulls you in tight and doesn't let go. Also, if you play and enjoy the game, then I've got good news. There's NINE more! And, as an added bonus, there is an anime, manga and live action film based on this little series. So get out there, readers and remember, when you shout your first 'Objection!' there's no going back.



The Late Blooming of Sonic Unleashed

by Lincoln Minhinnick, Y12

Sonic Unleashed had a difficult launch, coming out 2 years after the disastrous launch of Sonic the Hedgehog 2006 (Sonic 06 for short) people had high expectations. Sonic 06's development team was split up to develop other smaller games for the Nintendo Wii, which caused Sonic the Hedgehog 2006 to release with many game breaking bugs, a poor story, and clunky gameplay. SEGA knew they had to redeem themselves with their next release or they could fall out of the spotlight.

Then on the 18th of November 2008, Sonic Unleashed was released. The ratings from critics were not what they were wanting. The ratings ranged from mixed to negative, with one thing coming up in a lot of reviews. You see, SEGA used two completely new gameplay styles in Sonic Unleashed, which is an incredibly bold move for a game that needed to be SEGA's redemption. During the daytime, Sonic is his normal self, bright blue and speedy; however at nighttime Sonic turns into a werewolf version of himself called the Werehog, mixing werewolf and hedgehog. This werewolf version of Sonic is caused by Eggman and his evil plan in the opening of the game where he uses a machine to remove the Chaos Emeralds from Sonic. During the night Sonic becomes dark blue, slow, but increases in strength. The daytime gameplay was well received by critics and fans for its blisteringly fast gameplay where the player uses the new "Boost" mechanic where Sonic uses ring energy to boost forwards and move at speeds that are unprecedented for Sonic games. However critics and many fans did not enjoy the nighttime gameplay and stages due to the slow and repetitive gameplay. Also, the daytime levels on average lasted around 5 minutes, while the nighttime stages could last over 30 minutes, which made the game feel like small spots of fun with huge chores in between as the stages at night are requirements to progress through the game.

Another issue Sonic Unleashed had at launch was the performance. Sonic Unleashed ran very poorly on the consoles it was designed for, with low FPS (Frames per Second) and stuttering issues. The game couldn't even hit its target FPS on Xbox 360 which was 30FPS, and on PS3 the FPS was left uncapped as it could rarely hit 60FPS in some less graphically intensive areas of the game. The loading times on PS3 were so bad the developers had to make a new loading screen specifically for the PS3 as the loading cutscene for the Xbox would finish before the game would finish loading on the Playstation. This was not a good improvement from Sonic 06 as the 2006 release was well known for the frequent loading screens that would take over 30 seconds to finish.



Sonic Unleashed Logo featuring Sonics normal form (Left) and the Werehog form (Right).



The flag for the final level, Eggmanland.



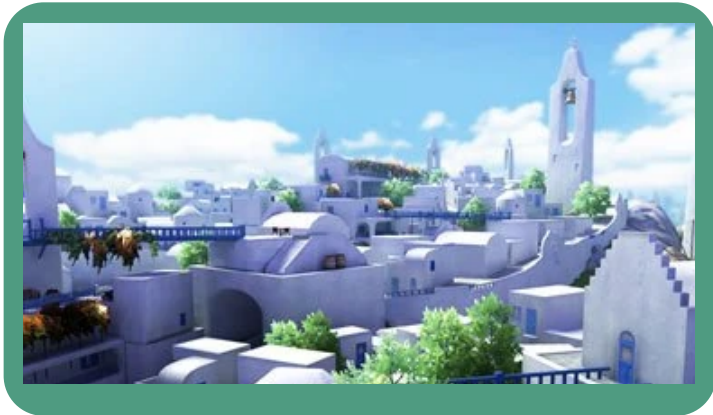
Werehog Sonic (Left) and Normal Sonic (Right) with the level Dragon Road in the background.

For a while this was it, Sonic Unleashed was removed from online stores due to the game being another failure. Another game SEGA would want people to forget about.

However in 2018, a decade after the original release, Sonic Unleashed would be added to the backwards compatibility list for Xbox One and then in 2021 would be added to the Xbox Series X/S compatibility list which included an FPS boost which allowed to game to run at 60FPS with little to no stutters or freezes. This fresh breath of life allowed Sonic Unleashed to be the game it was meant to be. For a few years, this was the best way to play Sonic Unleashed, as PC emulation was not the best for PS3 and Xbox 360. RPCS3 for PS3 emulation was pretty good but it required an extremely powerful computer to run decently, and the Xbox alternative Xenia had many bugs so a separate branch called Xenia Canary was released. Xenia Canary had patches for bugs but fans mainly made patches for daytime levels as not many cared for the nighttime stages, this made the game almost impossible to play from start to finish on an emulator. Though not optimal, as not everyone owns an Xbox Series X/S, that was the best way to play the full game.

A few years later on the 1st of March 2025, a huge surprise was dropped for Sonic Unleashed fans. A group of fans had been working hard to port Sonic Unleashed to PC using a process called static recompilation. Without getting into too much detail, the group of fans had taken the machine code from the Xbox 360 version of the game, and translated it into code that could run on computers. This significantly improved the performance on PC as there was no need for a layer of interpretation which was required for the emulators mentioned earlier. The group of fans called the PC port "Unleashed Recompilation" and fans loved it. The port included many quality of life improvements, including changeable button prompts depending on which controller you use, such as Xbox or Playstation controllers. The port also included graphics settings, which allows users to change the quality of the game to best suit their computer. The game can even go up to 4K resolution if your computer is strong enough to handle it. The changeable level of detail allowed the game to be played on lower end computers, which was not the case for the RPCS3 emulator.

In the end, Sonic Unleashed bloomed. Through the love of the fans behind the game, Sonic Unleashed was revived and became easily accessible. I have loved the game since I was a child, it was one of the first video games I ever played. If you ever have a rough start with something, you will bloom. It may take a while, hopefully not 16 years, but it will happen.



The first country Apotos (Left) and the real-life inspiration Mykonos, Greece.



The flag of Apotos (Left) and the real-life inspiration flag of Greece (Right)

The Melomaniac: Artist Spotlight

Sakura Gakuin

What better group to cover for a Blossoming issue than Cherry Blossom Academy? When I wrote about BABYMETAL in a previous issue, I promised I would cover their origins and the legendary girl group that started it all, and I've finally come around to the task. Doing my research for this article made me realise how much thought and depth went into Sakura Gakuin's concept, and gain a deeper appreciation for their sound and shenanigans, and I hope I can convey their splendiddness with this article.

Sakura Gakuin was formed in 2010 by the AMUSE talent agency as a kind of training group for young people in the entertainment industry. The concept was a 'limited to growth period' idol unit, wherein each member was aged 10-15 and currently undergoing compulsory education in Japan (between 5th and 9th grade). Every year, members who finished their compulsory education would 'graduate' from the group in a Graduation Ceremony, while new members from younger grades would transfer in to begin their idol studies. They always had around 6-15 members per year, who would be trained in how to act, sing, dance, perform, go on talk shows, and become professionals in the entertainment industry in general. The members who went through this group would go on to be idols, actors, voice actors, models, stage managers, social-media personalities, songwriters and so on.

As Cherry Blossom Academy was a training scheme, the entire unit's theme was centered around school life. The members would wear school uniforms all the time, split themselves up into subunits called 'clubs', participate in various school activities, post on class blogs, and elect each other for student council (each of whom would oversee some different aspect of the group).



Sakura Gakuin Class of 2020

At the end of every school year (mid-March in Japan), they'd release an album titled 'Nendo' or 'School Year' with its own message reflecting on the lessons the girls had learned during that grade. You can find so many hilarious videos online of them attending classes and reviewing their nendo tests with their teacher, Mori-sensei, as well as pulling pranks on him and each other, rehearsing shows and solving murder mysteries. The graduates of the group would go on to pursue whatever career they wished, whether in the entertainment industry or not. I do have to mention that Sakura Gakuin did not function as an actual school (lots of people get misled on that): the girls would all attend their own legitimate schools as well as the talent agency. SG was just a girl group for young members to participate in and enrich their experience for the future, with the theme of school life.

The girls had their own show called 'Sakura Gakuin SUN!', as well as participating in the programme 'Sakura Gakuin FRESH!' on the LoGiRL broadcast, where you could see some of the different school activities and classes they'd attend. 'Open classes' were held, which were kind of workshops where the members could learn different skills, such as calligraphy, action, song archeology, English, and so on. They'd also hold livestreams and video specials for significant events, such as the Graduation concerts and the revelation of the next student council members.

The ultimate goal of the Academy was to become a 'Super Lady'. Every album includes a song titled 'Mezase! Super Lady' wherein that nendo's class would sing about their desire to become the ultra-powerful version of themselves when they grow up, and show off their individual personalities. The idea behind the Super Ladies was all about embracing individuality and curiosity, taking life in



Sakura Gakuin meeting an Ewok



The Baton Club! Twinklestars!



stride, and realising your true potential as a young person. SG to this day have a devoted fanbase referred to as 'fukei', meaning 'guardian' or 'parent', whose role in the concept was to support the girls in their growth and journey to becoming a Super Lady. Some of the clubs the girls formed to explore and express their interests included the Science Club 'Kagaku Kyumei Kikoh LOGICA?', the Baton Club 'Twinklestars', the Newspaper Club 'Scoopers', the Art Club 'Art Performance Unit trico dolls' and the beloved Cooking Club 'Mini Pati'. Fun fact: BABYMETAL originally started out as the group's Heavy-Music Club, before graduating as their own unit in 2013.

Of sound, Sakura Gakuin created the ultimate motivational J-pop. As idols, they'd employ the usual cutesy optimism and positivity, made 1000× more adorable with their tiny voices. Their overarching sound was J-pop, though they did a good job of combining lots of different genres into their songs, including rock, epic, R&B, EDM, punk, metal and jazz, with different clubs employing different sounds (the Science Club used a more electronic sound, for example). You can usually hear an electric guitar and some very upbeat drums in the background, underlining their high-energy voices, and you know whatever they're singing will be inspirational and encouraging. One of my favourite SG tracks sonically is 'Let's Dance', which is a surprisingly intense EDM/house instrumental that is great for a last-minute study grind.

A lot of their songs reflected the subjects they studied and sought to teach them to the listener. 'Sakura Hyakunin Isshu', for example, recites different classical Japanese poems, while 'Mathematica' focuses on notable mathematicians and their accomplishments. 'Planet Episode 008' is an insanely catchy track teaching about the planets in the solar system, courtesy of the Science Club. The clubs specifically make songs consistent with their theme, with Mini Pati singing about cooking and eating, for instance, or the Go-Home Club 'sleepiece' lamenting wanting to go home and sleep. Their tracks would also reflect on growing up and school life, with songs like 'Identity', 'See you . . . See You' and 'Friends' exploring themes of friendship and figuring out who you are. 'Ganbare!!' (Do Your Best!!) is an especially popular track that

I hold close to my heart, an anthem about keeping motivation through tough times and exams at school and never failing to try your hardest. Another fan favourite is 'My Graduation Toss', a wistful track about the bittersweetness of growing up and moving on, yet having to say goodbye to your friends and normalcy.

The group unfortunately disbanded in 2021, with every member having been promoted to student council status, releasing the send-off album 'SakuraGakuin 2020 - Thank you -', which, in my opinion, contains some of the best songs in their entire discography. My personal favourite tracks are and 'Science Girl ▽ Silence Boy' and 'School Days', with the former being a track about a very studious girl struggling to understand her feeling towards a boy through her mathematical mind, and the latter being a gorgeous ballad about the hopefulness of your formative school years.

Only a total of 36 graduates ever went through this group, but you can find their influence EVERYWHERE. There are so many successful projects out there with ties to Sakura Gakuin, such as Project SEKAI, Love Live!, Sakurazaka46, Uma Musume Pretty Derby and so on. A few projects even originated from Sakura Gakuin, including the legendary BABYMETAL, METALVERSE (a spin-off of BABYMETAL), and @onefive. Some of the members even have their own solo careers now, such as Ayami Mutō and Marina Horiuchi.

I hope this music group can provide some kind of motivation or emotional support for those of you currently taking your exams. I know times like these can be incredibly stressful and demoralising, but from my experience, having some good music always manages to cheer you up - especially when they're singing about doing well in your exams. Thank you so much for reading, and in the words of Sakura Gakuin, ganbare!



Top tracks:

'Mezase! Super Lady -(Any Version)-', 'Ganbare!!', 'FLY AWAY'

By Keira Nightingale, Year 12

Godzilla, continued...

In my previous article I covered the first twelve Godzilla movies, up to *Godzilla vs Hedorah*. This article will be covering the following eleven films, up to *Godzilla vs Destoroyah*. When we left last time I was hopeful for the future of the franchise after *Godzilla vs Hedorah* made up for a lot of the things I disliked about the last few films. I had been hoping that it would be the beginning of an upward trend for the franchise but, unfortunately, it would seem that *Hedorah* was very much the exception to the rule. Despite the introduction of some cool and iconic monsters, the rest of the Showa era never reached the heights of the pre-Ebirah movies.

Despite this decline in quality, there are still a few notable creatures from these films that deserve a spotlight. The first is *Megalon*, one of my personal favourite Godzilla villains. Many of the late Showa movies feature a group of bland evil aliens invading Earth, invariably bringing a giant monster with them to (unsuccessfully) defeat Godzilla. However, *Godzilla vs Megalon* puts an interesting twist on this formula by introducing an actually unique piece of worldbuilding. *Megalon* is a giant bug-like creature worshipped as a God by the Seatopians, an Atlantis-esque civilisation attempting to conquer the surface world.

Another interesting character from this era is *Jet Jaguar*, the size changing robot who helps Godzilla defeat *Megalon*. The most interesting thing about *Jet Jaguar* is that he was actually created by a child, as part of a competition to design a character to appear in the film. Although the original winning design went through some major changes to become the *Jet Jaguar* that actually appears in the film.

Of course, *Jet Jaguar* isn't the most iconic robot to show up in this era. The final two Showa era movies both feature arguably Godzilla's most iconic villain of all time: *Mechagodzilla*. Whilst *Mechagodzilla* is a very cool idea for a character, I really don't think these two movies deliver on the concept at all, he's fairly interchangeable with the other bland alien invaders that show up. So, with *Terror of Mechagodzilla* being in the wrong place at the wrong time amidst the monster genre losing popularity, the franchise was put on hold for a while. However, Toho never intended for the franchise to go away forever, although it wouldn't return until *The Return of Godzilla* in 1984.

Return of Godzilla is a fantastic sequel, acting as a followup to the original 1954 movie and disregarding everything that came after. The following series of films, known as the Heisei era, form a much more comprehensive story than the Showa era ever did, with each film's story directly impacting the next. After *Godzilla* is defeated at the end of the first film, his cells are used to genetically engineer plants to be grown in the desert, which creates the plant monster *Biollante*. In *Godzilla vs King Ghidorah*, one of my personal favourites from the franchise, a group of time travellers arrive in "present day" (1991) Japan with seemingly benevolent intentions. However, it is eventually revealed that they were plotting to lay Japan to waste with *King Ghidorah* to prevent its development into an economically prosperous nation in the future. *Ghidorah* is eventually defeated



Jet Jaguar's original design "Red Alone"

by *Godzilla* but returns from the future as *Mecha King Ghidorah*, sacrificing itself to defeat *Godzilla*. After the next film, in which *Godzilla* inserts himself into a conflict between *Mothra* and her dark counterpart *Battra*, the remains of *Mecha King Ghidorah* are brought back to build the new incarnation of *Mechagodzilla*.

Another part of what makes the Heisei era films so great is that they return to the series roots in a thematic sense. *Return of Godzilla* plays out like a tense political thriller, commenting on the political atmosphere of the Cold War, while many of the other movies (*Godzilla vs Biollante* especially) discuss environmentalism and the complete environmental devastation that mankind will eventually bring about.

Godzilla vs Mechagodzilla II also sees the introduction of another character, *Godzilla Jr*. After my last article viciously, yet justifiably, slandered *Minilla*, *Godzilla's* first child, you might expect me to feel similarly about *Godzilla Jr*. However, I actually find *Godzilla Jr* quite endearing and he goes on to be a welcome presence throughout the next few films.

After the return of *Mechagodzilla*, who I previously named as *Godzilla's* most iconic foe, we are introduced to another of *Godzilla's* most iconic enemies: *SpaceGodzilla*. Although I think that *Godzilla vs SpaceGodzilla* is actually one of the worst films of the Heisei era, *SpaceGodzilla* himself is an incredible villain with a beautiful design. This film also continues

the trend of bringing back elements from the previous films, with Mothra's sacrifice at the end of *Godzilla vs Mothra* causing a clump of Godzilla's cells to be sent into a black hole, where they evolve into this film's villain.

Although the first four Heisei films were fantastic, especially *Godzilla vs King Ghidorah* and *Godzilla vs Mothra*, I was a bit worried. *Godzilla vs Mechagodzilla II* and *Godzilla vs SpaceGodzilla* weren't nearly as good as the films that preceded them, so I was unsure of how I would feel about the final Heisei era film, *Godzilla vs Destoroyah*. I'm happy to say that my fear was unwarranted. *Godzilla vs Destoroyah* is an absolutely incredible end to this era of the franchise. The tension induced by Burning Godzilla's condition, drawing closer to the complete destruction of all life on earth with every appearance, is brilliantly done. Destoroyah is also one of the greatest antagonists the franchise has ever seen; being a strong contender for my favourite villain, along with Ghidorah and the aforementioned Megalon.

Part of what makes Destoroyah such a compelling villain is the metamorphosis it undergoes throughout the film, along with its thematic connection to Godzilla. When we're first introduced to Destoroyah it takes the form of a colony of precambrian organisms that were mutated by the oxygen destroyer, the weapon used to kill the first Godzilla in 1954, but these organisms quickly combine into much more intimidating creatures. Unlike most Godzilla villains, which are too colossal to properly register as menacing, Destoroyah's second form is scaled down enough to make for a genuinely imposing threat. The film takes some not so subtle queues from the *Alien* movies both in the conveyance of the threat and in its actual design, with the Destoroyah larvae having extendable mouths just like the Xenomorphs. However, when the several small Destoroyahs eventually fuse into a more typical kaiju, it remains an incredible villain. Destoroyah's final form is still incredibly unique, being a somewhat humanoid crustacean with wings and a large horn atop its head. This blend of features leads to it being remarkably distinct, both in its design and in the way it fights.

The film ends with Godzilla's death, melting away to a skeleton after the Super X III narrowly averts the world ending explosion his death was going to bring about. This was done because *Godzilla vs Destoroyah* was initially made to be the last ever Godzilla movie, hence the thematic link between Destoroyah and the oxygen destroyer which first killed Godzilla. After Godzilla is killed we see Godzilla Jr, who was killed by Destoroyah, return to life and give a triumphant roar amidst the ruins of Tokyo. Seeing Godzilla Jr fully matured, looking almost exactly like his dead old dad, was a nice moment. I think the fact that this plotline was never continued is actually for the better; as seeing Godzilla Jr, who had consistently been portrayed as friendly with humans, rampaging through the city like a typical kaiju would have tarnished the hopeful ending of this era. Whilst I personally think that this film would have been a great sendoff to the character and the franchise as a whole, that simply couldn't be.

Godzilla is a character born from tragedy and, in 1998, a tragedy would occur that left the world in desperate need of Godzilla more than ever. That tragic event was the release of Roland Emmerich's *Godzilla*, an insult to the character, the franchise and art itself. Having *Godzilla 98* be the last ever Godzilla film would have left the franchise off on a bad note, especially after the planned last film did such a good job. So, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, the Godzilla franchise would return in 1999 with the confusingly named *Godzilla 2000: Millennium* and go on to enter the 6 film Millennium era.

My next article will go over the terrible catastrophe of *Godzilla 1998*, the Millennium era that followed and the several disconnected series that have come since; including the American *Monsterverse* movies, *Shin Godzilla*, the *Godzilla* anime trilogy and *Godzilla Minus One*.



Godzilla Jr



Destoroyah's larva form

Bert and Ernie: Glass Movers

Written and illustrated by Aidan Rickard



Only one issue this week so unfortunately no theme.
Last issue (The Pancake) the theme was 'explosion'.

Max's Musical Musings: Reviews and Recommendations!

Little Shop of Horrors

Little Shop of Horrors, directed by Frank Oz and starring people like Rick Moranis, Steve Martin, Jim Belushi, Bill Murray, and John Candy (two of which are in Spaceballs), is a catchy classic horror musical (aka one of the most entertaining combinations of genres). You've definitely heard of this one, or at least seen the crazy interpretations of Audrey II.

This is a hilariously catchy musical about a lonely florist called Seymour, who finds a plant who starts to sing about its own bloodlust. There have been a million adaptations but my top two are probably the film, because of the visuals, and the stage version with Christian Borle as the dentist, since it's the funniest version I've seen. You can find a mass of clips of Christian Borle trying to break Johnathan Groff (who was in Mindhunter and Frozen), which is what convinced me to watch that version in the first place

My stand out songs are, Dentist! (one of my go-to karaoke songs), Mean Green Mother From Outerspace, and Skid Row. All of the songs are delightful though, but overlapping voices in any song will usually make it one of my immediate favourites. My friends and I have burst out singing Feed Me too many times to count. I remember watching this for the first time and I really feel like this is one of the reasons why I like comedy horrors so much (that and Young Frankenstein).

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I know this is controversial, but the dentist (played by Steve Martin) is one of my favorite characters because he's just so absurd. I know he's a horrible guy but I can't ignore how funny he is. Seymour is my other favorite because I love a loser, especially a loser played by Rick Moranis. I mean the guy is both Louis Tully in Ghostbusters and Dark Helmet in Spaceballs!



Our Longben-tunes:

Jonah G



All Cleaned Out by Elliott Smith

Alesia M



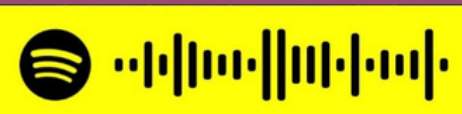
In Bloom by Nirvana

Alma F



Blume by Anita Lane

Max F



Neat Neat Neat by The Damned

Keira N



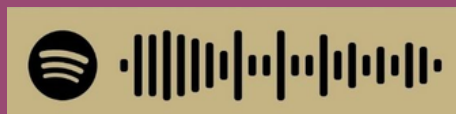
春風 Spring Breeze by
Hiperson 海朋森

Aidan R



Wor Jackie by Knats

Elliott S



Doctor Wu by Steely Dan

Featured Lyrics

'Stem the Flow'

by Paris Paloma

**"I want you to try
so that I can thank you for trying,
and then maybe
that'll make you try some more.
I can't stem the flow,
and God only knows,
it's not in my nature
to forgive bad behaviour,
especially yours."**

"I remember being struck when I first heard this chorus. The lyrics describe a painful, almost childish desire to reward a lover for their hard work in the relationship - if only to motivate them to work even harder - and the way that their withholding of this effort warps your perception of love. These lyrics are different from the embellished prose Paris usually employs; they're so straightforward and simple, yet they manage to convey a rawness and vulnerability that I feel pretty words wouldn't be able to replicate. She brings to light a feeling many would find difficult to articulate, and I fell in love with this song immediately because of it."

- Keira N

Any views of opinions presented are only those of the student author and not those of Longbenton High School.