


VOICES From

THE NEW YORKERS

‘Alita: Battle Angel’

Justin Tedaldi



Hollywood adaptations of famous anime and manga series have a history of troubled birth followed by an indifferent reception. “Speed Racer,” “Dragonball: Evolution” and “Ghost in the Shell” didn’t click with fans of the source material, nor did they gain new ones through the interpretations of directors who might not have grasped their appeal in the first place. “Alita: Battle Angel” looks to change that trend.

Produced and co-written by James Cameron and directed by Robert Rodriguez (the “Sin City” and “Spy Kids” films), “Alita” brings original creator Yukito Kishiro’s epic to the big screen. Rosa Salazar (“Maze Runner,” “Bird Box”) plays the titular heroine, a cyborg with saucer-like eyes and a combat-scarred past who is revived in the post-apocalyptic future world of Iron City. Using her newfound skills as a bounty hunter, Alita fights to rediscover her humanity and find a place in her new surroundings.

With a cast that includes Academy Award winners Christoph Waltz, Mahershala Ali and Jennifer Connelly, along with a reported \$200 million production budget with Dolby Cinema and IMAX 3D screenings, “Alita” has received advance praise: The A.V. Club calls it Rodriguez’s “best movie in ages,” and The Verge calls it “a worldbuilding triumph.”

First published in 1990 under the title “Gunnm” and recently reissued here as deluxe hardcover editions by “Attack on Titan” publisher Kodansha Comics, the film adaptation was first considered by devotee Cameron as his feature follow-up to “Titanic.” Rodriguez came aboard in 2015 as the steward to his vision, which includes 1,500 CGI shots in native 3D, climaxing with Iron City’s motorball competition, which blends turbo racing with gladiatorial combat.

“Alita: Battle Angel” premieres on February 14. For more information, visit www.foxmovies.com/movies/alita-battle-angel. *(Justin has written about Japanese arts and entertainment in New York since 2005. For more of his stories, visit <http://ljetaany.org/magazine>.)*

THE JAPAN VOICE

COOL JAPAN from New Yorkers’ Viewpoints



Deguchi Joins The World’s Best:

CBS’s Talent Competition Series Gets Post-Super Bowl Premiere

New York-based Japanese Theater Producer Makoto Deguchi appeared on TV as the one of the judges for a talent competition called The World’s Best.

CBS designated the global talent competition to premiere immediately after one of the most nationally viewed programs Super Bowl LIII on Sunday, February 3 at 10 p.m. (ET). 50 judges selected from all over the world participated in this show. Mr. Deguchi will appear on every episode in this series. The show runs every Wednesday at 8 p.m. (ET) from the second show onward.

Mr. Deguchi was born in Nara Prefecture. He was an actor at the Siki Theatre Company who later moved to New York and joined the Circle Repertory Company. He produced “Blue Man Group: Tubes” at the Astor

Place Theatre for which he received the Drama Desk Award. He is the one who introduced the beloved character “Blue Man” to this world. In 2008, he had huge success with an eight-week Broadway Musical tryout performance at the BRAVA! theatre in Osaka which was a world first success in Asia. In 2015, “TRIP OF LOVE” was performed at Stage 42, an Off-Broadway theatre. This performance ran for 11 months, a longest-running record which received the Joe A. Callaway Award by the Actors’ Equity Association.

On the show, Mr. Deguchi focused on observing the competitors’ skills, how they can entertain the audience and how they can control the atmosphere. This show will grab your attention with great performances. *(Ryoichi Miura/Translated by Chikako Iwasaki)*

CATCH US

PERFORMING ARTS

Grand Opening Gala

In November 2018 CATCH US PERFORMING ARTS, a non-profit organization, was founded in New Jersey with the aim to advance performing arts in culture, the arts and entertainment in service to the international exchange between Japan and the United States.

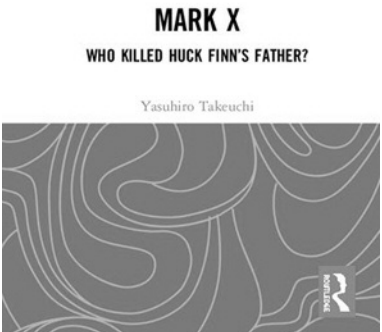
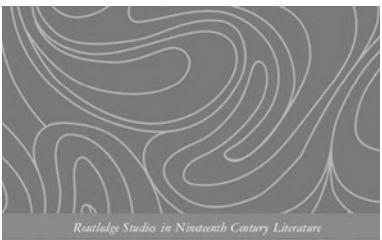
Their grand opening event was held at Opera America in Manhattan on the evening of January 21.

Featured performers were koto player Masayo Ishigure, singer/songwriter Ka-Na (Kana Uemura), dancers Yusaku Komori and Mari Ogata and Japanese calligraphy artist Taisan Tanaka.

Ka-Na sang her socks off to her mega-hit number “*Toire no Kamisama*” (“Goddess in the toilet”) to an acoustic guitar accompaniment. Listening to her voice, something welled up within as members of the audience dabbed their eyes at her love for her grandmother. Currently active in both America and Japan, Ka-Na spoke of her upcoming American performance saying, “I’d like to spread the notion of how wonderful J-pop is to non-Japanese as well.”

On the organization’s future activities, Ishigure commented, “I hope that the organization spreads and shows Americans our culture.”

Deputy Director Hiroshi Kono said, “Our activities also include discovering new talents. We would like to offer opportunities for hidden artists to come forward.” They plan on hosting performing events, workshops and lectures to raise young performers and support the artists. *(Kaoru Ishiguro)*



Yasuhiro Takeuchi

Is Nominated

for the

Edgar Award

On January 22, the Mystery Writers of America (MWA), an authority on the mystery genre, announced the nominees for the Edgar Award. “Mark X: Who Killed Huck Finn’s Father?” by Professor Yasuhiro Takeuchi of Hokkaido University Graduate School was nominated for the Critical/Biographical category.

This book is an English version based on the book, “Solving the Mystery Behind ‘The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn’” published in 2015.

Yasuhiro Takeuchi was born in 1965 in Aichi Prefecture. He graduated from the English Language Department at the University of Tokyo. He was an Associate Professor of Hitotsubashi University and Nara Women’s University before becoming an author. His written works include “Don’t Want to Discuss ‘Catcher in the Rye’ Anymore? Salinger Kaitai Shinsho” (1998) and “The Mystery of Catcher in the Rye” (2005).

Additionally, Japanese-American writer Naomi Hirahara’s “Hiroshima Boy” was nominated for the Edgar Award’s Paperback Original category. The final results of the Edgar Award will be announced on April 25. *(Yukishige Takesue/Translated by Ai Omae)*

Linked in

THE JAPAN VOICE is the English Edition of SHUKAN NY SEIKATSU
NEW YORK SEIKATSU PRESS, INC., 71 W 47 St, Suite 307, New York, NY 10036 USA
Editor in Chief: Ryoichi Miura, Associate Editor: Ashley Matarama, Editor: Kaoru Komi
Advertise Here! Contact 212-213-6069 info@nyseikatsu.com

NY Seikatsu's Selection

Now is the time to spread Japanese traditional craftsman's skill

Art apron since Edo period

Maekake

Maekake aprons have been used since 19th century for the purposes of advertisement and guarding hips. It is made of 100% cotton, thick fabric. You can enjoy traditional craftsman's handmade aprons. 前掛けは 19 世紀から、広告宣伝と腰を守る目的で使われてきました。綿 100% の厚手の生地が特徴です。ハンドメイドで作られる伝統の技をお楽しみください。



MAEKAKE 'YUME' \$59.00-



MAEKAKE 'Kotobuki' \$59.00-



MAEKAKE 'Daruma' \$49.00-



MAEKAKE Tote 'Kokorozashi' \$59.00-



KOKOROZASHI MAEKAKE \$49.00-



MAEKAKE Tote Bag 'MAKOTO' \$85.00-

Directly shipped from Japan!

Website for overseas mail order only

URL <http://www.anything.ne.jp/newyork/>

●Payment: Paypal or credit card

●Shipping fee: From \$18.75 (varies depending on numbers of ordered products)

●Shipping method: EMS (you can track the packages)

●Manufacturer: Anything (Tokyo, Japan)

●E-mail: web@anything.ne.jp

●TEL: (212)213-6069 (New York Seikatsu Press)

Charity for East Japan Earthquake Disaster

5% of profit through your purchase will be donated for recovery from Earthquake disaster in Tohoku (directly donated to Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture).

Anything

A new Music

Video Star:

Dancer Yuki Sukezane

25 year old Yuki Sukezane was born in Kyoto, Japan and is the youngest in a family of five. Yuki has an older sister named Kiki Sukezane, an actress based in Los Angeles, and an uncle named Tomoki Sukezane, a fashion editor. Ever since she was very young, Yuki and her sister loved dancing and entertaining their family at gatherings and were fascinated by music videos.

Starting dance lessons at the age of 11, it was no surprise that Yuki set her goal to become a dancer rather than going to college while in middle school.

During her high school junior year in Virginia as an exchange student, Yuki entered and was championed at many dance competitions and appeared in the TV program “106 & Park” on BET as a result. That’s when she decided to pursue dancing as her career.

Upon graduating high school in Japan, Yuki worked as a part-timer and honed her dancing skills in preparation to come to New York in 2013. Last year, she passed an audition and signed an exclusive contract with Clear Talent Group, a major talent agency.

She stars in many dance pieces choreographed by Danielle Polanco, an elite dancer who Yuki worships and considers to be her most influential instructor. Also, Yuki performs as a

member of Les Ballet Afrik, a dance company founded by a Senegalese dancer Ousmane Wiles (Omari Mizrahi), as well as entering many battle events as a member of the House of Amazon, charmed by vogue dance and ballroom culture.

Her dance is powerful and magnificent, unimaginable from her quiet and modest speech delivery. Yuki has a big dream to go on tours as a backup dancer for music artists. *(Ryoichi Miura/Translated by Hiroko Makabe/ Photo courtesy of the artist)*