

ANIME EXPO

JULY 2-5, 2026



アニメエキスポ



© SPJA

A Legend in the Making

KAGURABACHI

Story and Art by
TAKERU HOKAZONO

VOLUMES 1-7 OUT NOW!

KAGURABACHI © 2023 by Takeru Hokazono/SHUEISHA Inc.



In a world of witches, only
one man has acquired magic

Ichī the Witch

Story by OSAMU NISHI Art by SHIRO USAZAKI

VOLUMES 1-3 OUT NOW!

MADAN NO ICHI © 2024 by Osamu Nishi, Shiro Usazaki/SHUEISHA Inc.



VIZ

J-POP SOUND CAPSULE 2026



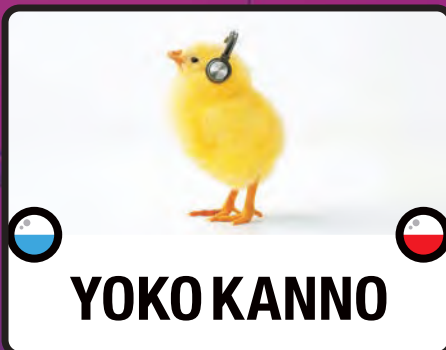
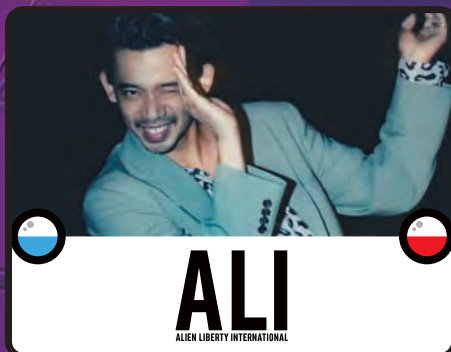
ANIME EXPO 2026



GET
TICKETS
NOW!

July 2, 2026

Crypto.com Arena, Los Angeles



Organized by **spja**

Produced by **AMUSE**



July 2, 2026



Dear Anime Expo Fans and Partners,

On behalf of Los Angeles Tourism, it is my pleasure to welcome you to Los Angeles for Anime Expo, organized by the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation (SPJA).

As the largest celebration of Japanese pop culture in North America, Anime Expo brings together fans, creators, artists, and industry leaders from around the world for an unforgettable experience. Beyond its cultural impact, the event also plays an important role in supporting the hundreds of thousands of Angelenos and local businesses that rely on a thriving visitor industry. Thank you for choosing Los Angeles and for contributing to our community!

This year marks another exciting chapter in Anime Expo's longstanding presence at the Los Angeles Convention Center. For four days, Downtown Los Angeles serves as the backdrop for the creativity, energy and passion that define the global anime community. From groundbreaking entertainment and gaming experiences to music, fashion, art and storytelling, Anime Expo continues to showcase the very best of Japanese pop culture while uniting fans from every corner of the world.

Los Angeles has proudly served as the home of this remarkable event for the past 18 years. As a global capital of entertainment, creativity and cultural innovation, our city shares Anime Expo's spirit of storytelling and artistic expression. Whether you're visiting for the first time or returning as a longtime Anime Expo attendee, we encourage you to experience everything Los Angeles has to offer, including our renowned culinary scene, iconic attractions, vibrant neighborhoods and world-class arts, sports and entertainment experiences.

We are grateful for our continued partnership with SPJA and look forward to many more years of celebrating its mission to inspire the world through Japanese animation and culture.

Sincerely,

Adam Burke
President & CEO
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board

LOS ANGELES TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD • 633 W. 5TH STREET, LOS ANGELES CA 90071 • DISCOVERLOSANGELES.COM

CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN
350 SOUTH GRAND AVENUE, SUITE 1700
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90071
TELEPHONE (213) 617-6700

It is a pleasure to greet the organizers, participants and attendees of Anime Expo 2026, an event that celebrates Japanese pop culture and offers everyone the chance to further explore their interests, including manga, anime, cosplay, and music.

Anime Expo has grown into the largest Japanese pop culture event in North America and its presence here in Los Angeles has helped establish Southern California as a popular destination for Japanese entertainment, music, fashion, and video game enthusiasts in the United States.

The Government of Japan looks forward to further promoting various aspects of Japanese culture to a wide audience through genres such as manga and anime. The Japan International MANGA Award, founded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is currently celebrating its 20th year in expanding international exchanges and mutual understanding through manga. Manga artists from around the world apply for the award each year, highlighting the global reach of manga culture.

Furthermore, Japanese governmental organizations such as the Japan External Trade Organization, JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles, the Japan Foundation Los Angeles, and the Japan National Tourism Organization all come together at Anime Expo to support different types of exchange.

I hope that the community of manga, anime, music, and cosplay fans will continue to grow and flourish in Los Angeles. Let's enjoy Anime Expo 2026!

Sincerely,

Kosei Murota
Consul General of Japan



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ABOUT ANIME EXPO

Anime Expo is North America's largest celebration of anime, manga, and Japanese pop culture. Anime Expo gives fans the rare opportunity to meet and hear from some of the most famous anime, manga, music, game and fashion artists from around the world.

For more information, visit www.anime-expo.org

ABOUT SPJA

The Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to popularize and educate the American public about anime and manga, as well as provide a forum to facilitate communication between professionals and fans. This organization produces several events: Anime Expo® and anime expo chibi®.

For more information, visit www.SPJA.org



HOURS OF OPERATION

EXHIBIT HALL: KENTIA HALL, SOUTH HALL, WEST HALL

KENTIA HALL: ARTIST ALLEY & 18+ ARTIST ALLEY/EXHIBITS

THURSDAY, JULY 2
DAY 1

9:00AM - 6:00PM

FRIDAY, JULY 3
DAY 2

9:00AM - 6:00PM

SATURDAY, JULY 4
DAY 3

9:00AM - 6:00PM

SUNDAY, JULY 5
DAY 4

9:00AM - 3:00PM

REGISTRATION LOCATION: FIGUEROA STREET

GENERAL ATTENDEE REGISTRATION HOURS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 DAY 0	THURSDAY, JULY 2 DAY 1	FRIDAY, JULY 3 DAY 2	SATURDAY, JULY 4 DAY 3	SUNDAY, JULY 5 DAY 4
12:00PM - 10:00PM	8:00AM - 8:00PM	8:00AM - 8:00PM	8:00AM - 8:00PM	8:00AM - 3:00PM

PROFESSIONAL REGISTRATION HOURS (ARTIST ALLEY, EXHIBITOR, PRESS & INDUSTRY)

TUESDAY, JUNE 30 DAY -1	WEDNESDAY, JULY 1 DAY 0	THURSDAY, JULY 2 DAY 1	FRIDAY, JULY 3 DAY 2	SATURDAY, JULY 4 DAY 3	SUNDAY, JULY 5 DAY 4
4:00PM - 9:00PM	8:00AM - 9:00PM	8:00AM - 6:00PM	8:00AM - 6:00PM	8:00AM - 6:00PM	8:00AM - 1:00PM

PROP/REPLICA WEAPONS POLICY

Real weapons are **NOT** allowed at Anime Expo. Do you have a prop weapon for your cosplay? Please be sure to visit a Weapons Check booth to get your prop approved prior to exploring Anime Expo.

For more info, please visit anime-expo.org/legal

LOST BADGE POLICY

Lost credentials are subject to a replacement fee. To purchase a credential replacement, go to the Registration Booth for assistance. All lost badges will automatically be voided upon replacement making them unusable from that point forward even if found. No refunds will be issued for credentials that have been reclaimed/found.

COSPLAY IS NOT CONSENT

Want to take a photo with or of another attendee? Remember these 3 easy steps:

- **STOP:** Did you ask nicely first? Make sure to STOP and take the time to nicely ask for their permission.
- **DROP:** "No" means "NO"! If they say no, please respect that person's right to refuse and DROP the camera.
- **ROLL:** If they say yes, then get your camera ROLL ready and snap away in an appropriate manner.

Remember, being friendly means being respectful of each other, of who they choose to be, and being aware of each other's personal space. Please be kind if someone says "no", "no touchy", "hands off", or any variation of no, then respect their wishes.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION INFO

Attendees ages 13 years old and under must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, age 18 or older, with a valid registration for any General Attendee credential (badge) for the duration of their time at the event. We recommend attendees ages 14-17 have a parent or guardian close by for the duration of the event. Please refer to the full Youth Protection Policy (Section 6) and Registration Policy (Section Age Restriction Policy) on the AX website.

AMENITIES

EVENT OPERATIONS

Need assistance? Visit us at Event Operations (508A). We can provide assistance with any questions or concerns you may have. PARENTS: All lost children are escorted to Event Operations to await your arrival.

ADA ACCOMMODATIONS

SPJA/AX is dedicated to serving all of its attendees. For all questions regarding ADA services, please visit Event Operations in room 508A or any Info Services Booth in the convention center.

LOST AND FOUND

If you have lost an item at Anime Expo, please visit Lost & Found for assistance located in West Hall, Room 507.





BLEACH

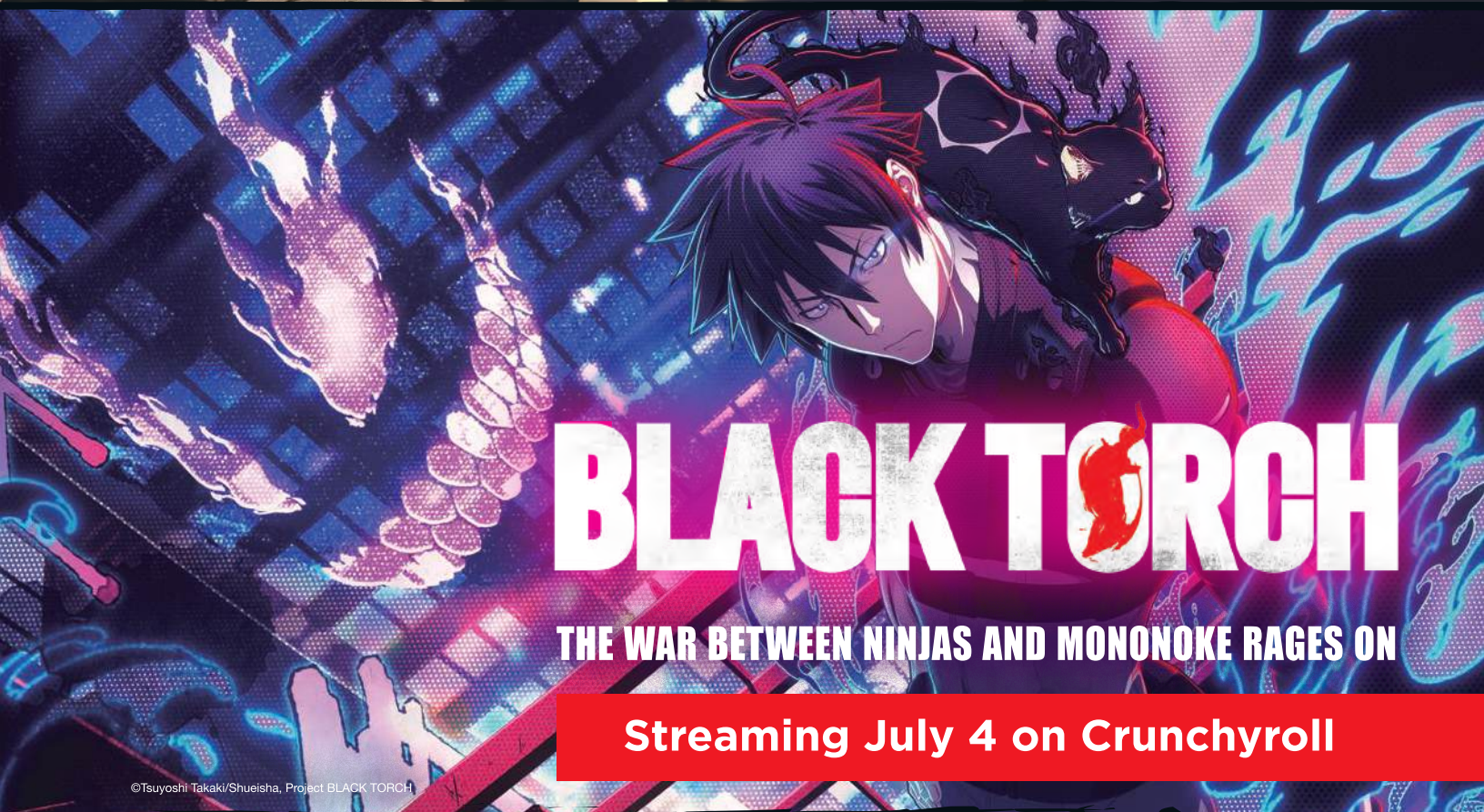
THOUSAND-YEAR BLOOD WAR

THE CALAMITY

THE FINAL BATTLE BEGINS

Streaming July 25 on Hulu

© Tite Kubo/Shueisha, TV TOKYO, dentsu, Pierrot



BLACK TORCH

THE WAR BETWEEN NINJAS AND MONONOKE RAGES ON

Streaming July 4 on Crunchyroll

©Tsuyoshi Takaki/Shueisha, Project BLACK TORCH

VIZ

LITTLE AKIHABARA

Bringing Akihabara to you. This Anime Expo!!



OFFICIALLY LICENSED

SQUARE ENIX Cafe & Shop

LOS ANGELES



© SQUARE ENIX
© ARMOR PROJECT/BIRD STUDIO/SQUARE ENIX

SQUARE ENIX and Little Akihabara have ventured together to open an officially licensed SQUARE ENIX Cafe & Shop in the heart of Little Tokyo.

Themed main courses, drinks, and desserts from popular and notable SQUARE ENIX titles – all carefully selected for both new and longstanding fans!

GASHAPON.



AKIBA POP-UP & LIVE



Kiddleton



New events, new shops, new faces,
All brought together by the same love of Japanese pop culture.

Instagram: [littleakiharalala](#) X: [littleakiba_LA](#)

LITTLE
AKIHABARA



ARA AREA

Only 19 mins
by **Metro** from **AX**
in **Little Tokyo DTLA**

"All Store Business Hours 12:00pm - 8:00pm" from Day 0!!

Buyback Center

Sell back your toys and collectibles at the buyback center. We also buy trading card and model kits, various pop-culture merchandise.

Tel: 213-621-1661



Mail-In Buyback
Now Available!!



1st Store #103,104

The biggest Anime Store in Little Tokyo! We carry over 80,000 new and pre-owned merchandise from figures to keychains as well as a huge selection of Manga and plushies. It's always 100% authentic!



3rd Store #112,113

Find all things Tokusatsu and Mecha here! Tons of Gunpla, plastic model kits and various items from Kamen Rider, Super Sentai, and Ultraman! We also carry the largest selection of Godzilla and different Kaiju Sofubis.



AX DAILY SPECIAL



A different special drops every day—check our Instagram so you don't miss a thing!

Booth SH-725

www.animejungle.net



4th Store #119

Various trading cards for new comers, experts, and collectors. Also hosting tournaments for local TCG players!!



ENTERTAINMENT HOBBY SHOP

JUNGLE

OSAKA • TOKYO • FUKUOKA • SAPPORO • NAGOYA • LOS ANGELES

319 E. 2nd Street, CA 90012, At Little Tokyo Mall



CONVENTION DIRECTORY

ARTIST ALLEY

Kentia Hall

Amateur and semi-professional artists showcase prints, commissions, crafts, apparel, comics, and more. New for 2026: an exclusive 18+ section in Artist Alley.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 6:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

ARCADE

Entertainment Arena @ the L.A. Live Event Deck

Experience non-stop fun with Japanese arcade games, rhythm challenges, and a wide variety of interactive gaming experiences!

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

AUTOGRAPH AREA

Guest and Industry Autograph JW Marriott Gold Ballroom

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	10:00AM - 8:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	10:00AM - 3:00PM



Scan QR code
for Autograph
Schedule

AX CROSSING

Presented by **LALALA**
Media • Marketing • Event

Gilbert Lindsay Plaza & Figueroa St

Inspired by the busiest intersection Shibuya Crossing, AX Crossing is filled with live performances, food collaboration with Weekly LALALA, cosplay gathering sites, and other fun activities!

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

AX DANCE

Concourse Hall E (150+151)

Local DJs and headliners from Japan all come together to play every major popular genre from J-pop to House music. Plus, take part in dance workshops and competitions.

Day 1-2 (July 2-3)	12:00PM - 2:00AM
Day 3 (July 4)	9:00PM - 2:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	12:00PM - 3:00PM

*Idol Summer Escape will be held here on Day 3 (July 4) from 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM. This event requires a ticket. See schedule and info on page 17.

AX MERCH BOOTH

West Hall Lobby

Find official AX merchandise exclusively at the Merch Store.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 8:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 4:00PM

BEER GARDEN

Peacock Place at L.A. Live

Relax under beautiful paper lantern décor while sipping on a variety of Japanese-themed cocktails and food options. This is an experience you don't want to miss!

All Ages	
Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

COSPLAY REPAIR

501ABC

Need to repair your costume and fix your wig? The AX Cosplay Repair Center is provided at no cost as a courtesy to our attendees.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

ENTRANCE GATES

All attendees will be able to enter the Los Angeles Convention Center during the hours listed below.

South Hall (Mahoko Gate)

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 4:00PM

West Hall (Kisegi Gate)

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 4:00PM

North Plaza (Max Gate)

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 4:00PM

EVENT OPERATIONS

508A

Need assistance? Visit us at Event Operations. We can provide assistance with any questions or concerns you may have. PARENTS: All lost children are escorted to Event Operations to await your arrival.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 5:00PM

EXHIBIT HALL

South Hall, West Hall, Kentia Hall

With hundreds of vendors, attendees can explore a vast array of merchandise. Leading anime, manga, gaming, fashion companies will also be previewing upcoming releases and connecting with fans at their industry booths.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 6:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

FIRST AID STATION

South Hall Lobby

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 6:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 4:00PM

West Hall (506)

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 2:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 6:00PM

JW Marriott

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

Peacock Place

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

GAMING & RETRO GAMING

Gaming presented by **MCONROCK**

Entertainment Arena @ the L.A. Live Event Deck

Connect with fellow gamers and make new friends with over 60+ free-to-play gaming stations.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

INDUSTRY & PRESS LOUNGE

308AB & 309 Foyer

The Industry & Press Lounge is open for Industry and Press credential holders to catch up with work on site or hold meetings in-between panels.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:30AM - 6:30PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:30AM - 3:00PM

INFO SERVICES

Info Services can help you if you have questions about where things are located, when things are happening, or how late certain parts of the convention are open until.

South Hall Lobby Booth

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 6:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

Registration Location: Figueroa St

Day 0 (July 1)	12:00PM - 8:00PM
Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	8:00AM - 6:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	8:00AM - 3:00PM

KARAOKE

Gilbert Lindsay Plaza @ AX Crossing

Stop by to watch or take part in showing off your singing skills or just simply sing along!

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	5:00PM - 12:00AM
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KODANSHA HOUSE

701 E. 3rd Street

(Between Arts District and Little Tokyo)

Kodansha House to make its Los Angeles debut July 2-12, in partnership with Anime Expo for its wildly popular immersive pop-up fan event.

LOST AND FOUND

507

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 11:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 5:00PM

LOUNGE 21

Concourse Hall F

Complete with drinks and nightly performances, Lounge 21 is a great place to relax and cool off. (Must be age 21 or over to enter).

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	10:00AM - 2:00AM
Day 4 (July 5)	10:00AM - 3:00PM

MAID CAFÉ

515B

Maid Café are shows and interactive experiences with an array of entertainment, including dances, musical performances, photo ops, and more.

*This event requires a ticket. See schedule and info on page 17.

MANGA LOUNGE

Presented by **VIZ**
502B

Take a break from the hustle and bustle by sitting down with one of over 8000 available volumes of manga.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 10:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

QUIET LOUNGE

502A

A quiet place to sit and relax.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 10:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

TABLETOP GAMING

Entertainment Arena @ the L.A. Live Event Deck

With tournaments, learn-to-play, and free-play sessions, there's something for everyone at all skill levels.

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 4 (July 5)	9:00AM - 3:00PM

WORKSHOP ROOMS

406AB

Workshops are hands-on, interactive sessions that provide an opportunity to learn new skills, such as sewing, origami, and drawing. These rooms will NOT be cleared between panel events but will be cleared before Ticketed Events and 18+ programming.

PROGRAMMING ROOMS

Programming includes panels, Q&As, screenings, gameshows, and more. See schedule or mobile app.

NON-CLEARING ROOM

Rooms will NOT be cleared between panel events, with the exception of Ticketed Events (i.e., concerts and the Masquerade) and 18+ programming. Please refer to the event schedule for details on panels or events that may require room clearing.



FREE SHUTTLE SERVICE

Free transportation is provided to Anime Expo badge holders between the Los Angeles Convention Center on the corner of Olympic Blvd and Georgia Street and select official Anime Expo hotels. Information signs are posted at each shuttle boarding location. If you have any questions about transportation, or if you need to make an advance reservation for a wheelchair-accessible shuttle, please see the Anime Expo shuttle coordinator at the shuttle boarding area.

DATE	SERVICE HOURS	FREQUENCY
JULY 2-4 (DAY 1-3)	7:00AM - 7:00AM	Every 20-60 mins
JULY 5 (DAY 4)	7:00AM - 10:00PM	Every 20-60 mins

For Shuttle Information
& Special Assistance:

(310) 900-9525.

Please call at least 60 minutes
in advance for shuttle
information and special
assistance.

HOTEL	ROUTE	BOARDING LOCATION AT HOTEL
AC Hotel by Marriott Pasadena	No Shuttle Service	N/A
AC Hotel Downtown Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Cambria Hotel Burbank Airport	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Cambria Hotel LAX	No Shuttle Service	N/A
citizenM	3	Walk to Kawada Hotel - Curbside on Hill St
Conrad Los Angeles	2	Walk to Omni Los Angeles - Curbside on Olive St
Courtyard by Marriott Culver City Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Courtyard Los Angeles LA Live	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Delphi Downtown LA	1	Walk to Westin Bonaventure - Figueroa St Entrance
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Los Angeles Downtown	3	Curbside on Los Angeles St
DoubleTree by Hilton Los Angeles - Commerce	No Shuttle Service	N/A
E-Central Hotel	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Four Points by Sheraton Los Angeles Westside	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Freehand Hotel	3	Curbside on Olive St at 8th St
Hilton Checkers Los Angeles	2	Walk to Millennium Biltmore - Curbside on Grand Ave
Hotel Figueroa	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Hotel Indigo Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Hotel Per La	2	Walk to Sheraton Grand - Curbside on Grand Ave
Hyatt House LA University Medical Center	No Shuttle Service	N/A
InterContinental Los Angeles Downtown	1	Curbside on 7th St
JW Marriott Los Angeles at LA Live	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Kawada Hotel	3	Curbside on Hill St
Level Los Angeles at LA Live	3	Curbside on Olive St at 8th St
Millenium Biltmore Hotel	2	Across Street from Entrance on Grand Ave
Miyako Hotel Los Angeles	3	Walk to DoubleTree - Curbside on Los Angeles St
Moxy Downtown Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Omni Los Angeles Hotel	2	Curbside in front on Olive
Residence Inn Los Angeles Downtown LA Live	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Sheraton Grand Los Angeles Downtown	2	Curbside on Hope St
Sheraton Los Angeles San Gabriel	No Shuttle Service	N/A
STILE Downtown Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
The Commerce Casino & Hotel	No Shuttle Service	N/A
The Line Hotel	4	Curbside on Normandy
The O Hotel	2	Walk to Sheraton Grand - Curbside on Hope St
The Ritz-Carlton, Los Angeles	No Shuttle Service	N/A
The Wayfarer Hotel	2	Walk to Sheraton Grand - Curbside on Hope St
USC Hotel	No Shuttle Service	N/A
Westin Bonaventure Hotel & Suites	1	Figueroa St Entrance

PROGRAMMING TRACKS

ACADEMIC PROGRAM



The Anime Expo Academic Symposium invites scholars to lead panels and presentations on research-based academia with emphasis on anime and other aspects of Japanese culture.

*Marked in schedule with

COSPLAY TRACK



Join veterans of the cosplay community to explore a variety of topics such as wig styling, armor craft, and more. Perfect for seasoned cosplayers and someone new to the community alike.

*Marked in schedule with

CAREER TRACK



Professionals who are currently working in Japan's anime industry and/or other various fields within the entertainment industry that are related to anime to present informational panels, discussions, and workshops.

*Marked in schedule with

CULTURAL TRACK



Experience Japanese traditions and Otaku culture through panels and workshops.

*Marked in schedule with

FAMILY TRACK



A selection of programming specifically targeted towards young children and their families with the goal of providing families with content that they can enjoy together in a safe and positive environment.

*Marked in schedule with

For program schedule, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



PROGRAMMING ROOM POLICIES

PROGRAM ROOMS INCLUDE:

Programming (i.e. panels, screenings, and Q&A's)
Workshops

These rooms will be checking badges upon entry. Please ensure that your badge is valid for that day and in clear view of room personnel to assist with line control.

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO ENTER:

Program Rooms: All Program Rooms require verification of your badge and will check your badge upon entry. To help the lines move quickly, please be sure that your badge is valid for that day and is in clear view of room personnel.

Ticketed Events: Requires both a Badge and a Ticket to enter the Event. Please see our Ticketing FAQ for more information.

18+ Programming: Admission to 18+ programming requires a valid badge and an 18+ wristband, which can be obtained at an Info Services Booth by presenting a valid government-issued photo ID verifying you are 18 or older.

The below is a list of government-issued photo ID that will be considered valid:

- State Driver's License
- Passport
- State Identification Card
- Military ID

There will be no exceptions to the types of identification. Re-entry into the room will require the wristband. Please refrain from tampering in any fashion with wristbands provided for

entry. If you are over the age of 18 you may not escort another person under the age of 18 into the room. Please do not leave children unaccompanied to attend an 18+ event.

ORDER OF ENTRY

When a room opens for entry we will allow attendees to enter in the following order:

- ADA Priority Access Sticker Holders: These stickers can be retrieved from an Information Booth. Please procure them prior to arriving to the event.
- All other valid Badges with access to Programming and Workshops.

PLEASE NOTE:

Oversize Cosplay Props: These must be placed against the wall; do not place them in the aisle or on adjacent seats

Photo/Video Policies:

- **Panel/Workshop Rooms:** Permissions depend on each individual guest and presenter, therefore photo/video policies will be announced at the beginning of events as each has its own policy.

NON-CLEARING

All Programming, Workshops and Screening Rooms WILL NOT be cleared between normal Panel Events unless specified in the panel description in the program guide, mobile app or online:

Main Events (Crypto.com Arena)	406AB
Peacock Theater	408AB
Petree Hall	409AB
The Novo	411
402A	511ABC
403AB	JW Marriott Platinum Ballroom
404AB	JW Marriott Diamond Ballroom

EXCEPTIONS: Room clearing WILL occur prior to the following:

- Ticketed Event (i.e. concert, Masquerade)
- 18+ Programming

Please refer to the AX Schedule for room clearing information on all panels.

Anime Expo® and the SPJA reserve the right to modify and/or update this policy at any time.

TICKETING POLICIES

TICKETING POLICIES

Some events at Anime Expo require an additional ticket to attend, such as the Maid Cafe, Idol Summer Escape, Masquerade, and concerts. Please be sure to check the event description to be aware of any key information you may need to know prior to check-in at the door. Also, policies and restrictions can vary between events, especially when they take place in different venues, such as the Peacock Theater and the Novo.

To attend any of the events produced by/hosted during Anime Expo, all ticket holders MUST have both a valid Anime Expo participant badge as well as their ticket or wristband for admission. For more information, please visit anime-expo.org/ticketing-faq

REFUND & EXCHANGE POLICY

All sales are final. No refunds or exchanges. No refunds will be given for missed shows. See Door Open and Close Policy.

LOST/STOLEN TICKETS

The ticket purchaser is solely responsible for the tickets purchased. Lost or stolen tickets will not be replaced or refunded.

CHILD ADMISSION POLICY

For most events, children 2 years of age and younger do not require a ticket to be admitted at any ticketed event; however, they must sit on an adult's lap and may not occupy a seat. Any child 3 years of age and older will require a ticket to enter the event area or venue and must occupy their ticketed seat only. Please note that some events may have a different age policy. Please see the specific event page or contact events@anime-expo.org or come to the Ticketing Booth for further information.



For full ticketing policy details please visit www.anime-expo.org/legal

For schedule, talent, exhibitors, and more, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



MAIN EVENTS & HIGHLIGHTS

DAY 1 – JULY 2

Welcome Ceremony	The Novo	10:00AM – 10:50AM
AX Fashion Show	Petree Hall	11:30AM – 1:30PM
Bandai Namco Presents: Echoes from Aincrad an Unanswered//butterfly U.S. First Look Preview	JW Marriott Diamond Ballroom	12:30PM – 1:20PM
Square Enix Manga Presents: The (Psychic) Power of BL with Cherry Magic! Creator Yuu Toyota	408AB	4:45PM – 5:35PM
First Look Star Wars: Visions Presents – The Ninth Jedi	JW Diamond Ballroom	6:00PM – 7:20PM
AMV Finals	The Novo	6:30PM – 9:30PM
J-POP SOUND CAPSULE	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	8:00PM – 11:00PM

DAY 2 – JULY 3

Yoshitaka Amano: Art & Entertainment – A New Creative Challenge	Petree Hall	12:00PM – 12:50PM
STEEL BALL RUN JoJo's Bizarre Adventure Special Panel featuring Yugo Kanno	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	12:30PM – 1:50PM
Kodansha Presents: Blue Lock Creators Muneyuki Kaneshiro and Yusuke Nomura	408AB	1:00PM – 1:50PM
The Basics of Boxing Defense with Mizuki Hiruta	Concourse Hall E	1:30PM – 2:20PM
Sonic the Hedgehog Animated Shorts: A Frame-by-Frame Retrospective	Petree Hall	3:00PM – 3:50PM
HATSUNE MIKU: COLORFUL STAGE! Fan Meeting at Anime Expo 2026	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	3:00PM – 4:20PM
The Art of Color and Character: A Live Drawing with Mika Pikazo	411	3:15PM – 4:05PM
Sukeban World Championship Fight	The Novo	8:00PM – 10:00PM

DAY 3 – JULY 4

BLEACH: Thousand-Year Blood War – The Calamity Stage	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	10:00AM – 10:50AM
Magic Knight Rayearth World Premiere	JW Marriott Diamond Ballroom	12:00PM – 1:20PM
My Hero Academia 10th Anniversary Panel Hosted by TOHO animation	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	2:30PM – 3:20PM
JAPAN MUSIC VOCALOID Powered by DWANGO	The Novo	5:30PM – 8:30PM
Frieren: Beyond Journey's End – Special Event Hosted by TOHO animation	JW Marriott Platinum Ballroom	6:00PM – 6:50PM
Good Smile Company presents Hatsune Miku Exclusive Showcase 2026	408AB	6:45PM – 7:35PM
Anime Expo 2026 Masquerade	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	8:30PM – 11:30PM

DAY 4 – JULY 5

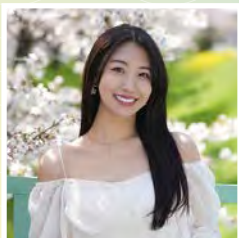
JUJUTSU KAISEN: Celebrating 5 Years of Curses with Cast Hosted by TOHO animation	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	10:00AM – 10:50AM
BIGWEST presents – The Super Dimension Fortress Macross: Do You Remember Love?	The Novo	12:00PM – 2:10PM
Signal Connect: Behind the Character	Petree Hall	12:00PM – 12:50PM
Charity Auction at Anime Expo 2026	Petree Hall	1:30PM – 3:30PM
Closing Ceremony	Main Events at Crypto.com Arena	4:00PM – 4:50PM

IDOL SUMMER ESCAPE

Step into the dazzling world of idols from around the globe in this exclusive, up-close experience! Enjoy live performances and immerse yourself in the excitement of wotagei. Don't miss the rare chance to meet and connect with the idols, browse exclusive merch, and snap some adorable chekkis to remember the evening!



Scan QR
code to
get tickets!



Sasara Sekine
Host



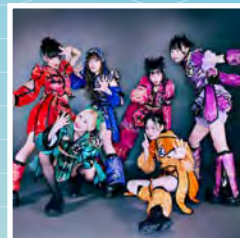
YURAPICO



himi♡chuu



Moe 7 Age!



You'll Melt More!



Maid Cafe

AX
ANIME EXPO 2026

Inspired by the maid cafes of Akihabara, Anime Expo's Maid Café has been one of our most popular events. Our cute and courteous maids are ready to entertain you, whether they break out in song and dance or facilitate an activity. Enjoy a drink and an interactive show, and thank the maids on your way out!

Room 515AB

Session Schedule
(Day 1-4)

10:30AM - 11:30AM

12:00PM - 1:00PM

2:00PM - 3:00PM

3:30PM - 4:30PM

*5:00PM - 6:00PM

*Session only available on Day 1-3



Scan QR
code to
get tickets!

GUESTS

ACKY BRIGHT



Acky Bright is a world-renowned artist and illustrator who collaborates with global powerhouses, including DC Comics, Marvel, Netflix, Red Bull, and Meta. In 2024, he made history as the lead designer for McDonald's global "McDonald's"

campaign. Bright's latest project, a sports manga epic ft. new original characters and including pro baseball players – GalaXic Baseball League – will debut in July, in partnership with MLB Players, Inc., OneTeam Partners, BW NYC Studios, and VIZ Media.

ATSUSHI NOMURA



Business Producer for the Persona team. He is responsible for IP production areas such as project planning and promotion for the series. His works include Persona 4 Revival, Persona 5 Tactica, and the remastered versions of Persona 4 Golden and Persona 3 Portable.



KAMOME SHIRAHAMA



Kamome Shirahama is the author of the critically acclaimed manga series *Witch Hat Atelier*, which was serialized beginning in 2016 and inspired the hit anime in 2026. The manga has won awards all around the world, including the Eisner Award

for Best U.S. Edition of International Material—Asia and the Harvey Award for Best Manga.

KAZUHISA WADA



General Producer of the Persona team. He has served as Design Director since Persona 3, and later worked as Director and Producer. He currently oversees the Persona team. He also serves as General Producer of Persona 4 Revival.

KAZUO MAEKAWA



Kazuo Maekawa is a professional manga artist with over 30 years of experience and the lead instructor at MANGA DOJO TOKYO. He is best known for his work on the globally recognized *Ace Attorney* manga series, with titles that

have been translated and published worldwide. Since his debut in 1997 after winning the Kodansha Chiba Tetsuya Award, he has continued to produce serialized manga and webtoons while remaining active in the industry.

KAZUTAKA KODAKA



Kazutaka Kodaka is a director, scenario writer and the CEO at Too Kyo Games. He is the director and scenario writer for The Hundred Line -Last Defense Academy-, Too Kyo Games first fully-owned and original IP. He is the scenario writer

of the Danganronpa series. His works have been adapted into stage plays and anime, receiving high praise internationally. Kodaka is coming to Anime Expo 2026 to celebrate Danganronpa's 15th anniversary.

MIZUKI HIRUTA



Mizuki Hiruta is a WBO World Champion boxer from Japan and was named The Ring Magazine Female Fighter of the Year in 2025. Competing at the highest level, she is recognized as one of the top fighters in her division. Based between Japan and

Los Angeles, Mizuki continues to grow on the global stage.

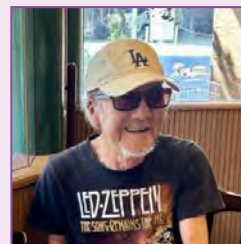
MASAKAZU MORITA



Masakazu Morita made his voice acting debut in 2001 as the protagonist Tidus in the video game "Final Fantasy X." His notable roles include Ichigo Kurosaki in "BLEACH," Shin in "Kingdom," Barnaby Brooks Jr. in "Tiger & Bunny," and many others. He also

works as an actor, stage performer, and narrator, among other activities.

MORIYASU TANIGUCHI



Legendary character creator, animator and founder of Anime R who has helped shape Japanese animation for over six decades. One of the industry's most influential key animators and animation directors, known for classics including Armored Trooper

VOTOMS, Blue Comet SPT Layzner, City Hunter, and Samurai Champloo.

MIKA PIKAZO



Mika Pikazo is an Illustrator and Art Director born in Tokyo in 1993. After graduating high school, she pursued a deep interest in South American film, design, and music—spending approximately two and a half years living in Brazil. Upon

returning to Japan, she launched her career as an illustrator, specializing in character design and vibrant, dynamic artwork. In 2022, she expanded her creative scope into animation production, further showcasing her evolving artistic vision.

MUNEYUKI KANESHIRO



Muneyuki Kaneshiro is best known as the writer of the global hit action soccer manga "Blue Lock." A native of Osaka and graduate of the renowned manga department at Kyoto Seika University, Kaneshiro made his debut in 2011 with the

Japan-inflected death game series "As the Gods Will," which spawned two sequels and a film adaptation directed by the legendary Takeshi Miike. Kaneshiro's current series, "Blue Lock," is one of the top-selling manga of all time, with over 50 million copies in print worldwide. His other works include "Super Ball Girls" and "Jagaaan".

OVER ALLS



OVER ALLS is a Japan-based mural artist collective founded in 2016 by Takato Akazawa and painter Yuki Yamamoto. Since then, the collective has created more than 300 murals in Japan and abroad. Known for bold, large-scale public artworks,

OVER ALLS transforms building exteriors, urban spaces, and cultural venues through dynamic visual storytelling. In Los Angeles, the collective painted a mural inside the flagship Tenkaippin LA restaurant. The collective will also present a live painting performance at Anime Expo.

SHOHEI SAKAKIBARA



Shohei Sakakibara is a producer at Spike Chunsoft, currently working on the highly anticipated Danganronpa 2×2. He has contributed to a diverse lineup of titles, including Master Detective Archives: RAIN CODE, Natsu-Mon: 20th

Century Summer Kid, Danganronpa Decadence, and KATANA KAMI: A Way of the Samurai Story. Producer Sakakibara is coming to Anime Expo 2026 to celebrate Danganronpa's 15th anniversary.

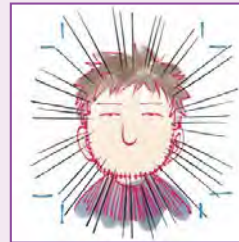
RYOSUKE TAKAHASHI



A legendary anime director, writer, and one of the creators who defined the realistic mecha genre. Since the 1970s, he has shaped Japanese anime through influential works including Fang of the Sun Dougram, Armored Trooper VOTOMS,

Blue Comet SPT Layzner, Panzer World Galient, and The Fable.

TADATOSHI FUJIMAKI



A manga creator, he began "Kuroko's Basketball" in Shueisha's "Weekly Shonen Jump" in 2009, later adapted into a TV anime. In 2017, he launched "ROBOT×LASERBEAM". His latest series "KILL BLUE" has run since 2023, with its TV

anime premiering April 2026.

SHIGENORI SOEJIMA



Character Designer / Illustrator at ATLUS. He has worked on character design and illustrations for numerous titles, including the Persona series since Persona 3, Catherine, and Metaphor: ReFantazio. He serves in a supervisory role overseeing

the character design and key art for Persona 4 Revival.

TAKASHI IIZUKA



Takashi Iizuka is a veteran video game director, producer, and designer. As Creative Officer of Sonic, Iizuka has been the driving creative force behind the Sonic the Hedgehog series for over 30 years. His contributions began with

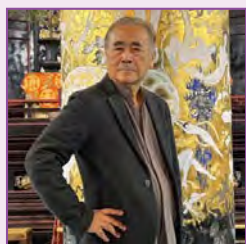
"Sonic the Hedgehog 3" and include "NiGHTS into Dreams," "Sonic Adventure," "Sonic Adventure 2," "Sonic Heroes," "Sonic Generations," and "Sonic Mania," among many others.

TORU YOSHIDA



One of anime's foremost creators of mecha action and effects animation. Since the 1980s, he has brought dynamic mechanical scenes to life in works including Armored Trooper VOTOMS, Blue Comet SPT Layzner, Mobile Fighter G Gundam, and Fullmetal Alchemist, while serving as key animator and mechanical animation director on numerous Gundam series.

YOSHITAKA AMANO



A Japanese artist and character designer. He joined Tatsunoko Production in 1967 and contributed to Time Bokan, Gatchaman, and Casshan. In 1987, he created the iconic character designs for the Final Fantasy series, and also illustrated Vampire Hunter D. His international activities include THINK LIKE AMANO in New York, Lucca Comics & Games 2024, and Além da Fantasia in Brazil (2025-2026). His honors include the Seiun Award, Eisner Award, and Inkpot Award.

YOSHIYUKI ASAI



After working as an animator at Toei Animation, OLM, and Ajiado, Yoshiyuki Asai transitioned to directing in the early 2000s. He made his directorial debut with Charlotte and later directed Fate/Apocrypha and The Day I Became a God. His work Buddy Daddies won the Best Original Anime Award at the Crunchyroll Anime Awards 2024. He is known for his nuanced portrayal of ensemble youth dramas and everyday life, with a directorial style that carefully captures relationships and character dynamics.

YUSUKE NOMURA



Yusuke Nomura is a manga artist best known as the illustrator of the global hit action soccer manga "Blue Lock." After cutting his teeth as an assistant on the long-running basketball manga "Ahiru no Sora" and the horror-fantasy phenomenon "Attack on Titan," Nomura made his debut with the 2014 serialization of the grotesquely cute cult hit alien invasion story "Dolly Kill Kill," which was released digitally in English by Kodansha. Nomura's latest, "Blue Lock," is one of the top-selling manga of all time, with over 50 million copies in print worldwide.

YUU TOYOTA



Yuu Toyota is a manga artist who debuted with "Nobara no Hanayome" in 2008. Their most recent series, "Cherry Magic! Thirty Years of Virginity Can Make You a Wizard?!" & "A Starlit Darkness," are both serialized in "Gangan pixiv." Other notable manga include "Papa and Daddy's Home Cooking" & "Kami-sama wa Ikiru no ga Tsurai".



INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



Abby Trott
Voice Actor



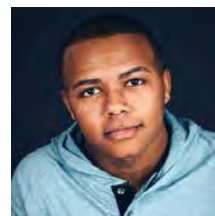
Abel Góngora
Director



Adam McArthur
Voice Actor



Aiko Minowa
Animator



AJ Beckles
Voice Actor



Akira Shimizu
Producer



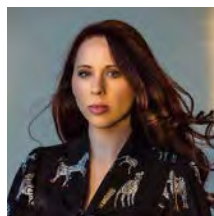
Alan Wan
Producer



Alejandro Saab
Voice Actor



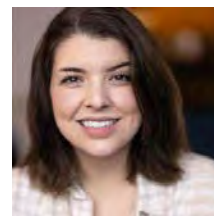
Aleks Le
Voice Actor



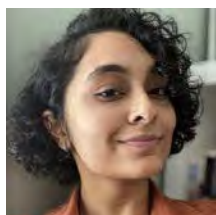
Alexis Tipton
Voice Actor



AmaLee
Voice Actor



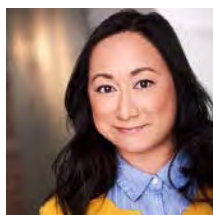
Amanda Parker
Voice Actor



Anjali Kunapaneni
Voice Actor



Anna Nagase
Voice Actor



Anne Yatco
Voice Actor



Atsuo Nakayama
Voice Actor



Audrey (aitaikimochi)
Industry Appearance



Ayako Kawasumi
Voice Actor



Ben Balmaceda
Voice Actor



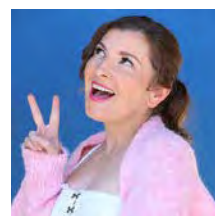
Brianna Knickerbocker
Voice Actor



Britt Baron
Voice Actor



Caitlin Glass
Voice Actor



Cassandra Lee Morris
Voice Actor



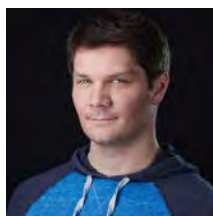
Chibidoki
VTuber



Chris Hackney
Voice Actor



Chris Harada
Creative Director



Clifford Chapin
Voice Actor



cosmosy
Band



D.C. Douglas
Voice Actor

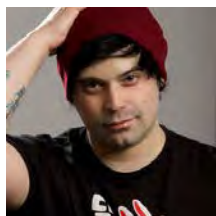


Daiki Yamashita
Voice Actor

INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



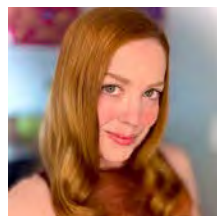
Daisuke Hirose
Voice Actor



Damien Haas
Voice Actor



Dan Salvato
Game Developer



Deneen Melody
Voice Actor



Dokibird
VTuber



Dooby3D
VTuber



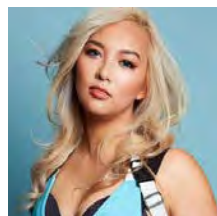
Emi Lo
Voice Actor



Ena Hamabe
Producer



Erica Lindbeck
Voice Actor



Faye Mata
Voice Actor



frettiko
Author



Gabe Kunda
Voice Actor



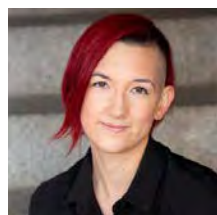
Ginger Root
Musician



Hana Hishikawa
Voice Actor



Haruki Ishiya
Voice Actor



Hayden Daviau
Voice Actor



Hirotaka Kobayashi
Voice Actor



Hiroyuki Watanabe
Editor-in-Chief



Itaru Hinoue
Illustrator



Jeho Son
Writer



Jenny Yokobori
Voice Actor



Jimmie Yamaguchi
Voice Actor



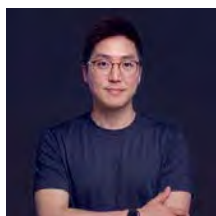
Johnny Yong Bosch
Voice Actor



Joji Furuta
Director & Producer



Joshua Waters
Voice Actor



June Sung Kim
Producer



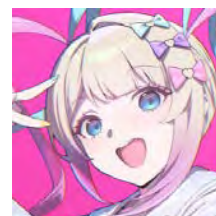
Junichi Katsutani
Producer



Junya Enoki
Voice Actor

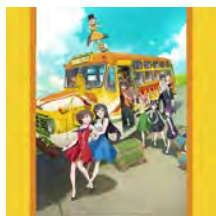


Kana Ueda
Voice Actor



KAngel
Voice Actor

INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



Kanta Kamei
Director



Karory
Illustrator



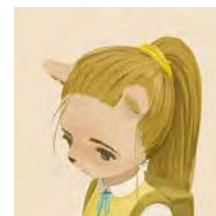
Kazesenken
Writer



Kazuki Endo
Producer



Kazuya Yamashita
Voice Actor



Keiichiro Saito
Animator



Keisuke Kojima
Animator



Keita Yoshinobu
Producer



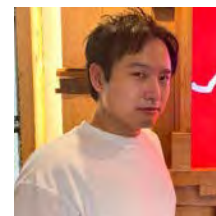
Keith Silverstein
Voice Actor



Kellen Goff
Voice Actor



Kemonono ★
Animator



Ken Miyauchi
Producer



Kevin Andrew Rivera
Voice Actor



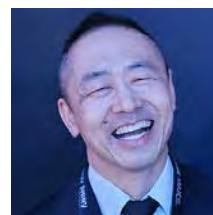
Kim YongHa
Producer



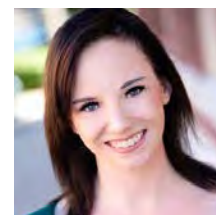
Kirk Thornton
Voice Actor



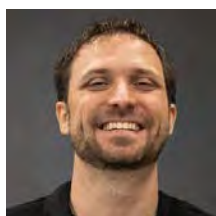
Koki Uchiyama
Voice Actor



Kozo Misawa
Producer



Kristen McGuire
Voice Actor



Kyle McCarley
Voice Actor



Kyohei Yaguchi
Voice Actor



Laura Post
Voice Actor



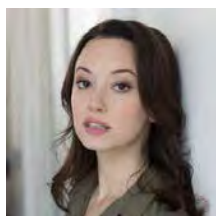
Laura Stahl
ADR Director



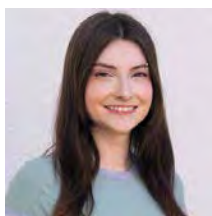
Machico
Voice Actor



Makoto Furukawa
Voice Actor



Mallorie Rodak
Voice Actor



Mana T. Johnson
Voice Actor



MANQ
Director



Marina Nakamura
Producer

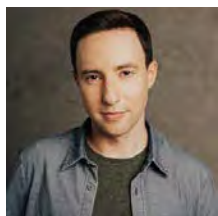


Masahi Masuo
Producer



Masayuki "Yama-P" Yamagishi
Producer

INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



Max Mittelman
Voice Actor



Megumi Toyoguchi
Voice Actor



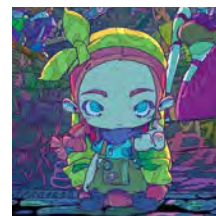
MEME50
Artist



Michelle Ruff
Voice Actor



Miho Okasaki
Voice Actor



MINOMIYABI
Animator



Minoru Ota
Director



Miura Ayme
Voice Actor



Motonobu Hori
Director



Naoko Yamada
Director



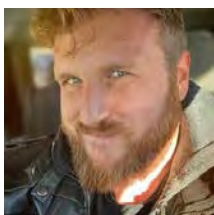
Natsuki "Knacky" Takeuchi
Producer



Norihiro Naganuma
Director



Nyaira
Writer



P.M. Seymour
Voice Actor



Paul Castro Jr.
Voice Actor



Rie Misumi
Producer



Rie Takahashi
Voice Actor



Robbie Daymond
Voice Actor



Rosuuri
Illustrator



Ryan Bartley
Voice Actor



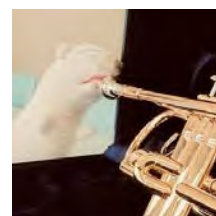
Ryoya Arisawa
Producer



Sam Slade
Voice Actor



Saori Hayami
Voice Actor



Satori Senami
Producer



Satoshi Arima
Editor-in-Chief



Satoshi Hirayae
Director



Satoshi Kada
Voice Actor



Satoshi Onishi
Voice Actor



Sayu Sincro//Nisity
VTuber



Sei Matsumoto
Producer

INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



Shane Tay
Actor



Shinya Sumi
Voice Actor



Shion Wakayama
Voice Actor



Shota Fujii
Producer



Shuji Utsumi
Industry Appearance



Snuffy
VTuber



Sohei Niikawa
Producer



Steve Warky Nunez
Voice Actor



Suzie Yeung
Voice Actor



Taichi Kimura
Deputy Editor-in-Chief



Taihi Kimura
Voice Actor



Takayoshi Aso
Producer



Takeru Noda
Character Designer



Takushi Koide
Director



Tatsushi Yamada
Industry Appearance



Tatsuya Saito
Producer



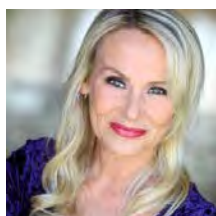
Tomoyo Kitagawa
Director



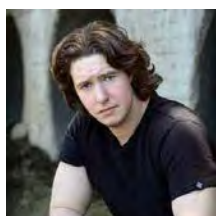
Tony Oliver
Voice Actor



Tyson Hesse
Filmmaker



Wendee Lee
Voice Actor



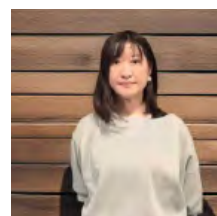
Xander Mobus
Voice Actor



Xanthe Huynh
Voice Actor



Yasutaka Kimura
Animator



Yoko Shiraishi
Producer



Yoshiaki Iwasaki
Director



Yoshiki Nakakoji
Animator



Yoshino Aoyama
Voice Actor



Yoshitaka Kimura
Producer



Yu Sasaki
Producer



Yuichi Fukushima
Producer

INDUSTRY APPEARANCE



Yuichiro Fukushi
Producer



Yuki Yokoi
Director



Zach Aguilar
Voice Actor



Zachary Gordon
Voice Actor



Zeno Robinson
Voice Actor



Zentreyra
VTuber



Zhena
Illustrator

For full list of talent and performer schedule please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



MUSICAL GUEST

J-POP SOUND CAPSULE 2026
at Anime Expo 2026



ALI



Roselia



SPYAIR



Yoko Kanno



Yoko Takahashi

JAPANESE VOCALOID
at Anime Expo 2026



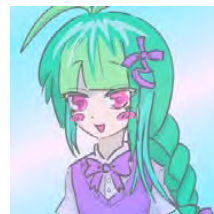
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ENTERTAINMENT!

Special Offering from *Nikkei Entertainment!*

Nikkei Entertainment! is a monthly entertainment magazine published and sold in Japan. Here it has put together a special article on popular anime and manga for visitors to the Anime Expo.



“Jujutsu Kaisen” Marks 5 Years

What Junya Enoki, Yuma Uchida, and Asami Seto Had to Say

Reconstructed from the November 2025 issue of *Nikkei Entertainment!****

One of the defining appeals of *Jujutsu Kaisen* is its setting: Tokyo Prefectural Jujutsu High School. At the start of the series, protagonist Yuji Itadori (voiced by Junya Enoki) transfers into the school at the invitation of teacher Satoru Gojo. There, he becomes classmates with Megumi Fushiguro (voiced by Yuma Uchida) and Nobara Kugisaki (voiced by Asami Seto). Together, the 1st Year Trio grows through battles against curses and the everyday moments of youth. This special roundtable featuring Junya Enoki, Yuma Uchida, and Asami Seto unfolded in a warm, easygoing atmosphere, much like the anime itself, with a natural sense of camaraderie between them.

First, how do you feel now that the series has reached its fifth anniversary?

Enoki Five years already. It feels like a long time, but throughout these five years, the feedback and reactions to *Jujutsu Kaisen* have never slowed down. If anything, it still feels like it's continuing to grow, which is amazing. There's the anime, of course, and the games too, so in a way, it really has been a long journey... (*chuckle*)

Uchida It really has. (*chuckle*) So much has happened in the world during that time, and I can kind of connect it to changes in my own life when I look back on it. Like Junya said, it's a series that gets an incredi-



Born on April 2, from Saitama Prefecture. Affiliated with StarCrew. Her major roles include Chihaya Ayase in *Chihayafuru*, Shisui / Loulan in *The Apothecary Diaries*, Mai Sakurajima in the *Rascal Does Not Dream* series, and Scarlet El Vandimion in *May I Ask for One Final Thing?*, among many others.

Born on October 19, from Tokyo. Affiliated with ASLEBEN. His major roles include Jona Basta in *Mobile Suit Gundam Narrative*, Yomogi Asanaka in *SSSS.DYNAZENON*, and Seishu Inui in *Tokyo Revengers*, among others. In live-action films, he is the Japanese dub voice for Tom Holland in the *Spider-Man* series.

Born on September 21, from Tokyo. Affiliated with Intention. His major roles include Mukoda in *Campfire Cooking in Another World with My Absurd Skill*, Haruka Sakura in *WIND BREAKER*, Kanata Katagiri in *MF GHOST*, Jun Yodaka in *Medalist*, and Gaku Kabeya in *Wandance*, among many others.



TV Anime Jujutsu Kaisen Season 3 “The Culling Game Part 1”

©Gege Akutami/Shueisha, JUJUTSU KAISEN Project

ble response, and so many people have told me that they're watching it. More than anything, I'm just happy that so many people are enjoying it.

Seto Five years might feel short in some ways, but I have so many memories from it. It really hits me how dense and meaningful those five years with Jujutsu have been. For me personally, my character's role has now reached its climax, so I feel a real sense of completion. Through events like “Juju Fes” and other appearances, I've been able to constantly feel the fans' passion over these five years, and it still doesn't feel like it's over.

The appeal of classic structure and deeper storytelling

Looking back, what do you think makes *Jujutsu Kaisen* so appealing?

Enoki Let me think... It has that classic Jump-style lineup: an energetic protagonist, (glancing at Uchida) a cool partner...
Uchida Partner?

Enoki And then a heroine...a heroine? Well, maybe not exactly...

Seto Huh? (*chuckle*)

Enoki And a powerful teacher. It fits that classic Jump mold, but the story isn't just straightforward. It also dives into deeper human emotions and contradictions, and I think that's what makes it enjoyable for such a wide range of people.

Seto Also, the characters are incredibly popular. Of course, that comes from the strength of the series itself, but Gojo-sensei even became a part of the cosmetic world (*1). (*chuckle*)

Uchida / Enoki That's true!

Seto The story really portrays each character's life in full,

not just the surface, but their darker emotions too. The pasts of the upperclassmen and teachers are explored even more deeply, and even if they're no longer around, they leave a lasting impression you never forget. Because those lives are depicted so vividly, I think viewers can't forget them either. Even though the original manga has ended, there's still so much left to unfold in the anime.

Uchida When you read the original, you just can't stop wondering what happens next. Before you know it, you've torn through it at an incredible pace. I think that sense of speed in the story is part of its appeal, too. You can really feel the energy of characters living in the moment. The anime carefully fills in the spaces between those moments from the manga, bringing out its explosive impact and entertainment value even more. It's crafted in a way that really stimulates your imagination.

Over the course of the series, what kinds of changes have you seen in your characters?

Enoki Yuji has changed in a very clear way. After the “Shibuya Incident” and the deaths of his comrades, he's become more aware of why he fights and what his purpose is. He does talk about his reasons for fighting at the start of Season 1, but he hadn't fully grasped them yet. Then something shocking happens, and he realizes things weren't quite as simple as he thought. There's a huge difference between being aware of something and not being aware of it. Realizing that is his biggest growth. So

*1: In June 2025, a collaboration product featuring Satoru Gojo on limited-edition packaging was released by the global makeup brand KATE.

while he started out bright and upbeat, he's become a character carrying contradictions he can't easily resolve. But I think everyone carries something like that, so it makes him easier to relate to and understand. At his core, though, he hasn't changed.

Seto When the three of us get together like this after a while, it kind of feels like we're back at the beginning. Of course, Yuji, Megumi, and Nobara have all changed in different ways, but the three of them don't really talk about it. Or rather, when they're together, there's something about them that hasn't changed.

Uchida They don't really say things directly. Like when it seemed Yuji might have died in Season 1 (Episode 5), or in the conversation between Yuji and Megumi at the end of the season (Episode 24). I really like the way those three are considerate of each other.

As for Megumi's changes, he was always someone whose core nature was easy to understand, and his way of thinking wasn't overly complicated. But his circumstances were complicated, especially with things related to his family, and that created a lot of uncertainty. Now, I think he's become able to arrive at answers more simply. That said, in Season 2, there were a lot of moments where he was pushed to his physical limits. What's happening around him can be pretty tough. Still, I feel like he'll be able to come to terms with it all. His awareness as a jujutsu sorcerer has grown a lot, too.

Enoki It's true, Megumi's changes are a bit harder to see. He's always had a clear sense of his own beliefs from the start. But it does feel like he's grown up. I think he already had that foundation, but now he's better at controlling his emotions.

Seto My impression is that Megumi has become a more approachable guy with a sense of humor. That's part of his personality, of course, but while he used to be very strict about what needed to be done, through various experiences he's come to think, "There are people like this too," and you can feel a greater sense of openness toward others.

Uchida He used to come across as pretty rigid, and he often had that stern look on his face.

Seto He's the kind of person people misunderstand at first impression. But the more you get to know him, the more you see he's great at playing the straight man in conversations, and he fills in the gaps when needed.

Uchida He's actually pretty particular about things, too, like gyoza.

Enoki / Seto "Juju Stroll!" (Season 1, Episode 22)

Seto The characters in Jujutsu often don't say what they're feeling out loud, and then the next time you see them, they've quietly grown. Nobara hasn't

changed at her core since her introduction, but in her past, she carried feelings of resentment and couldn't forgive those around her. After becoming a jujutsu sorcerer and meeting teachers, upperclassmen, and colleagues, and gaining experience, she begins to notice things she couldn't see back then. That stubbornness and rigidity she had have softened. That said, her sharpness hasn't gone away. She's always been someone who opens up to people she truly trusts, so meeting someone she admires and trusts like Maki, and fighting alongside her fellow first-years who share the same resolve, has deepened her feelings and affection for her comrades.

The "Shibuya Incident" leaves a powerful impact

If there is one scene in the series you especially want people to see, what would it be?

Enoki It has to be Domain Expansion. It is one of the signature elements of this series, and only a limited number of characters can use it. First of all, there is Gojo-sensei's "Unlimited Void." Not many of the allies can use it yet, and surprisingly, there are actually more on the curse side.

Uchida Megumi can technically use it too, but...

Enoki It is still incomplete...

Seto "Unlimited Void" has such overwhelming impact, it really is the number one pick.

Enoki And Ryomen Sukuna's too.

Uchida "Malevolent Shrine."

Enoki It's flashy and so cool.

Uchida Whenever you can see Gojo-sensei's "Six Eyes," it's usually in scenes where he is using Domain Expansion or something major is happening, so those moments are worth watching closely.

Seto For me, it is the camerawork during the fights in the "Shibuya Incident." I really loved the shots that follow the action, like you're actually running through the subway tunnels.

Uchida Every single battle in Shibuya had an incredible impact.

Seto At the same time, battles were breaking out all over Shibuya. And on top of that, all the people who had seemed unbelievably strong up to that point were suddenly being pushed right to the edge.

Uchida It was the kind of battle where it felt like Shibuya itself was going to disappear. It was terrifying, to the point that it hardly felt believable that all of it happened in just one day.

Enoki The tension basically never lets up, and on top of that, the jujutsu sorcerers keep falling further and further behind. There is never really a moment when they gain the upper hand. It constantly feels like the sorcerers are in danger. It was a story arc with an incredible sense of suspense, where you really felt like they might lose.

Seto In the "Shibuya Incident," Megumi Fushiguro in particular opened a new door, didn't he?

Uchida He did. He summons the strongest shikigami, "Mahoraga" (*2), and begins the exorcism ritual, but that is not just a matter of using some big special move. What matters is that he chose it knowing he was prepared to die. In that sense, it really did feel like he stepped into a new dimension. And in that same sense, Nobara also fought one battle through to the end here.

Enoki Even during the fight against the special grade cursed spirit Mahito, Nobara kept to her own pace. The impact of the moment she went down was enormous, but even knowing what might happen to her, she never let that attitude break, and that made her feel truly strong.

Seto Nobara herself understands that she is probably not the strongest among the jujutsu sorcerers there. Even so, she does everything she can to the very end, and even while playing her, I felt that took incredible mental strength. You can really see her strength here, too, in the way she refuses to run

***** MUST SEE ! *****

Yuji Itadori

TV Anime Season 1, Episodes 22-24

"The Origin of Blind Obedience" / "The Origin of Blind Obedience-2" / "Accomplices"

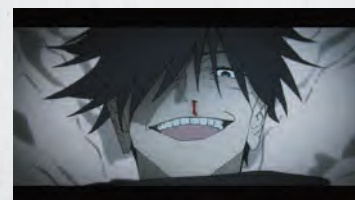


During the climax of Season 1, Episodes 22-24 depict the moment Yuji resolves himself as a jujutsu sorcerer through his battle against the incarnated brothers, Kechizu and Eso. At the same time, these episodes leave a strong impression with how they portray the bond between Yuji, Megumi, and Nobara.

Megumi Fushiguro

TV Anime Season 2, Episode 17

"Thunderclap, Part 2"

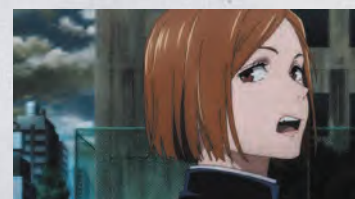


In the midst of his battle with Toji Fushiguro, Megumi finds himself in a desperate situation and summons the ultimate shikigami, Mahoraga. This is one of the scenes that clearly showcases his exceptional talent as a jujutsu sorcerer, while also portraying his circumstances in a deeply emotional way.

Nobara Kugisaki

TV Anime Season 1, Episode 3

"Girl of Steel"



Nobara Kugisaki's debut episode. As she takes on a task from Gojo to exorcise a curse inside an abandoned building, her past before coming to Jujutsu High is revealed. It's an episode that clearly shows her kindness, her dislike of anything crooked or unjust, and her strong inner resolve.

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because her comrades are still fighting.

Uchida Yuji takes immense psychological damage, to the point that it is not something you can put into simple words.

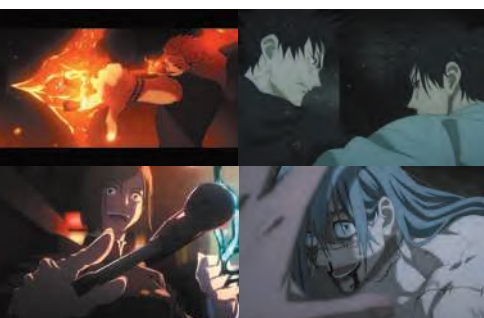
Seto Yuji in the "Shibuya Incident" was so painful to watch...

Enoki Yeah, it was painful, even as the person performing him... I didn't really change my acting approach in any special way, but the warm, easygoing scenes were only in the early part.

Uchida In Season 2, the story with Ozawa-san was about the only one like that, right? (Season 2, Episode 6) It portrayed Yuji's kindness and goodness so beautifully.

Enoki It also showed that Megumi is actually pretty good with people. (*chuckle*)

*2: The strongest shikigami, "Mahoraga," refers to the most powerful shikigami summoned through Megumi Fushiguro's Ten Shadows Technique, formally known as "Eight-Handled Sword Divergent Sila Divine General Mahoraga." Not a single Ten Shadows Technique user in history has ever successfully subdued it. During the Shibuya Incident, it engages in a ferocious battle with Ryomen Sukuna.



A veil falls over the area around Shibuya Station, pushing Japan to the brink of destruction in a single night

TV Anime Season 2, "Shibuya Incident." On October 31, 2018, in a Shibuya packed with Halloween crowds, special grade curse user Suguru Geto and the special grade cursed spirits carry out a massive act of jujutsu terrorism. Tokyo's 23 wards are devastated, countless civilians and people connected to Jujutsu High become victims, and Satoru Gojo is sealed away.

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Seto Call him up, and he comes right away, helping out while clearly finding the whole thing amusing. It was fun to catch a glimpse of his everyday side and that basic kindness that makes him want to do something to help.

A barrage of new characters

Next comes *Jujutsu Kaisen: Execution - Shibuya Incident x The Culling Game*,” followed by TV Anime Season 3, “The Culling Game Part 1.”

Takahiro Sakurai
on SUGURU GETO
“A Kind of Culmination as a Voice Actor,”
and What He Feels Inside



Takahiro Sakurai
Born June 13, from Aichi Prefecture. He made his voice acting debut in 1996. His roles include Meme Oshino in *Monogatari*, Osomatsu in *Osomatsu-san*, Diablo in *That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime*, Giyu Tomioka in *Demon Slayer*, and Sae Itoshi in *Blue Lock* (Photo by Yoshikuni Nakagawa).

His performance evolves with each installment

During Season 1, I couldn’t really decide on my own how to shape the character. I built up an image based on the script while comparing it to the original manga, then presented it during recording and received direction from Director Park (Sunghoo) and the sound director. It wasn’t something I created alone; many people were involved in shaping it. When the fake Geto first appeared in Season 1 Episode 5, he was just “a guy with a scar on his forehead, dressed like a human in robes, standing alongside something clearly not human.” That was all the information we had, but even so, there was a strong sense that there was something more to him. So my initial approach was to make him more overtly villainous. But instead, I was told, roughly speaking, “Think of him more like a kind, easygoing older brother.” With that direction, emphasizing gentleness and calmness, he became the version you see in Season 1. Always wearing a faint smile, as if he’s quietly conducting everything. And yet, he’s still the worst kind of curse user. Rather than a specific goal, the direction was to make him feel like someone you can’t quite figure out. That made it difficult. I worked closely with the anime staff to build the character together.

In the prequel *Jujutsu Kaisen 0* and the Season 2 “Hidden Inventory / Premature Death” arc, he’s the real Geto. Then, in the “Shibuya Incident,” I once again played someone in Geto’s form, just like in Season 1.

Jujutsu Kaisen 0 was a lot of fun. There’s a certain energy to a film made for theaters that feels a bit different from a TV series. There were also fewer constraints than in Season 1, and the directors told me that I could push it further. They said, “Let more expression come through,” and “Go more grand with it.” In the scene where Geto fights Panda and Toge Inumaki at the school, I say, “I am deeply moved!” I was told, “I didn’t expect you to go that far,” though, haha. Since he moves in a slightly theatrical way, I leaned into that fully and expressed it as much as I could. In that sense, Season 1 felt like working within a very narrow range, like only light green, green, and dark green, but in 0, it felt like I

What are the highlights of the “Culling Game”?

Enoki In the “Culling Game,” you can’t predict where things are going, and the action is even more intense.
Uchida The “Culling Game” itself has its own special rules. In the manga, you can follow them in text, so I’m really looking forward to seeing how the anime expresses that.
Seto *Jujutsu Kaisen* already has all kinds of restrictions and rules, but now you get serious battles under a new ruleset with a game-like element added, and a lot of

Suguru Geto is a character with an extremely complex background. In Season 1 of the TV anime, he appears as the worst kind of curse user, leading a group of cursed spirits. However, in *Jujutsu Kaisen 0*, it is revealed that he was once a jujutsu sorcerer and a classmate of Satoru Gojo at Jujutsu High, and that he had already been killed by Gojo. So then, who exactly is the impostor now appearing in Suguru Geto’s form? The truth, revealed in Season 2 Episode 22, came as a shock to many viewers. How has Takahiro Sakurai approached and portrayed Geto in his performance?

could use any color I wanted.
Playing Geto is a culmination of my work as a voice actor
Once Gojo Satoru’s closest friend, Geto turns into the worst kind of curse user, committing mass murder of civilians and orchestrating the Night Parade of a Hundred Demons. Sakurai says he’s someone who “understands and supports” Geto, and that he especially likes the “Hidden Inventory / Premature Death” arc.

I understand how he feels. In this series, I think Gojo Satoru and Yuji Itadori are incredibly extreme. They’re not normal. Gojo is given power so overwhelming that you wonder if the story can even contain him, so I found it fascinating to think about how the narrative would handle someone like that. Yuji, too, lives on without really knowing who he is, just pushing forward and simply existing. Compared to those kinds of powerful beings, Geto’s ability is rare, almost like a gift, but it also places a heavy burden on him, as if it slowly curses him from within. We don’t know when he first had that ability, and since he came to Tokyo from elsewhere, I imagine he grew up without much understanding of jujutsu. Then he came to Jujutsu High and was able to become friends with Gojo. For him, Gojo was probably someone who could ease his suffering. Even after they went their separate ways, I don’t think that ever really changed. That’s why, especially in 0, I relied heavily on Yuichi Nakamura’s performance as Gojo. The line “Hey, Satoru” is almost a direct trace of Gojo’s delivery. Geto may not have been literally mirroring him, but I think there was a kind of resonance between them, a way they coexisted that echoed each other. At the same time, he always carried a sense of loneliness and something within him that held him back. Gojo, who once stood alongside him in a relationship where they could say “We are the strongest,” goes on to become the strongest alone, and I think that’s part of what causes Geto to fall apart. That arc captures that entire progression at once, so it offers a different kind of expressive enjoyment compared to 0, and I really liked it. Up through Season 1 and even in 0, I felt like I was always performing on tiptoe, but here it felt more natural, more grounded. There was a lot I wanted to do in “Hidden Inventory / Premature Death.” If 0 was a spectacle, then I wanted this to be more naive, more delicate, more subdued, almost like expressing it entirely in shades of blue. I wanted to express his inner world, what he sees and feels, through those subtle variations. Even if it was just for my own satisfaction. I also feel that the role of Geto is, in a way, a culmination of the kinds of roles I’ve been cast in throughout my career as a voice actor. You can feel the struggles and pain unique to youth, and in a world where justice clashes with justice and the one who loses is

new characters appear as well. There are even characters whose voice actors have not been revealed yet.
Uchida / Enoki Like Naoya Zen’in!
Seto I’m excited to see those new characters in action, and the theatrical version lets you look back on the tragic events of the “Shibuya Incident” and then immediately be left thinking, “What on earth happens from here?” And in that exact emotional state, you get to watch Episodes 1 and 2 of “The Culling Game Part 1.”
All three Please watch it.



“We are the strongest.” A line from Season 2 Episode 3 that symbolizes Geto and Gojo’s youth. It’s from the scene where they urge Riko Amanai, the girl meant to merge with Tengen and sustain the jujutsu world, to choose between merging or returning to her normal life. Geto’s gentle expression stands out, but what was he really thinking at that moment?
©Gege Akutami/Shueisha, JUJUTSU KAISEN Project

seen as evil, he ends up being portrayed as a villain. Then he becomes something even darker, layered with an even more complex background. This is just my personal feeling, but it’s like all the roles I’ve played so far are packed tightly into this one, and what used to be individual points across different works have now connected into a single line. In the “Shibuya Incident” arc, Season 2 Episode 22 reveals that the one inside the fake Geto is Noritoshi Kamo. Choso was pretty angry about that, haha. I was conscious of making him feel less like he’s putting on an act compared to Season 1. Since the fake Geto says he understands all of Geto’s emotions, meaning he could imitate him more closely if he wanted, I deliberately added a slight sense of unease so that Gojo would feel something was off when facing him. Whenever he appears, the story takes a turn, so I approach those scenes with a lot of thought and experimentation. Starting in November, a special edited version of the “Shibuya Incident” will be released in theaters. It’s a great opportunity to experience it, and with the simultaneously released “The Culling Game Part 1,” the atmosphere shifts so dramatically it almost feels like a different work altogether, so I hope everyone gets swept up in it.

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Yuji Itadori TV Anime Season 1, Episodes 22-24
“Pandemonium”

Geto wields the technique “Cursed Manipulation,” which allows him to absorb and control cursed spirits. “Simply eating something that tastes bad is tough enough. Turning grotesque, cursed spirits into orbs and swallowing them, even without knowing the taste, we can imagine what that must be like. That’s one of the reasons you can’t help but sympathize with him; you can imagine how much suffering he went through,” says Sakurai.



Frieren: Beyond Journey's End Season 2

The Directors Discuss Their New Challenges

From January to March 2026, Season 2 of the TV anime *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* aired on Nippon TV's "FRIDAY ANIME NIGHT" programming block. The first season, which aired in 2023, drew major attention with its broadcast of Episodes 1 through 4 on "Friday Roadshow," becoming a huge hit and boosting sales of the original manga. A special roundtable discussion was held featuring Tomoya Kitagawa, who serves as director for Season 2, Keiichi Saito, the Season 1 director who returns this time as Supporting director, and Tomohiro Suzuki, who continued from Season 1 as series composer and scriptwriter. They share insights into what goes on behind the scenes of production.

Frieren: Beyond Journey's End is a fantasy work that depicts what happens after the demon king is defeated by the hero Himmel and his party. Frieren, an elven mage who has lived for over a thousand years and once journeyed with Himmel as a member of the hero's party, forms a new party with the mage Fern and the warrior Stark, setting out on a journey to understand people.

Nearly two years have passed since the final episode of Season 1. Ahead of Season 2's broadcast, two promotional videos released on YouTube surpassed a combined 5 million views, showing no signs of the series' popularity slowing down. With director Tomoya Kitagawa in his first directing role, Keiichi Saito as Supporting director, and Tomohiro Suzuki as the series composer and scriptwriter, what kind of animation are the three aiming for in Season 2?

Please tell us how the change in director came about and how responsibilities were divided for Season 2.

Keiichi Saito Once production on Season 1 wrapped, we started discussing what to do about Season 2, and personally, I felt I had given it my all. That said, when I thought about how to continue bringing *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* to audiences in the best possible way, I knew I'd be stepping back from the front lines. I still wanted to contribute the things I learned throughout Season 1, so I joined this time under the credit of Supporting Director.

As for Kitagawa, he served as chief episode director in the second cour of Season 1, and I felt he had a strong vision and solid technical ability for what he wanted to achieve with *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* as an anime, so I asked him to continue on as director.

Tomoya Kitagawa I was honestly very happy to receive the offer to direct. I've always wanted to be a director, and since it's such a hugely popular series, I felt both excitement and a lot of pressure. Those two feelings were constantly at odds. For Season 2, Suzuki's scripts are just as excellent as ever, and the entire staff is working with a high level of motivation, so I can really feel that it's shaping up into something compelling.

Tomohiro Suzuki My first impression when I read the original manga was how delicate and carefully chosen the wording was. The writing also felt very natural, so even when adding elements, I'm always careful not to interfere with the original. That hasn't changed for Season 2.

Saito When we were working on Season 1, Yamada-sensei told us he didn't want his dialogue to be changed, so we built the direction in a way that would strengthen the impact of the lines

while still making them feel natural. That said, he was very open to expanding on the episodes, which we really appreciated.

Kitagawa There are quite a few original elements in Season 2 that we've expanded on as well. We're always mindful of preserving what makes the original manga so engaging while finding ways to build on it.

"I want people to feel that Frieren really has come back."

(Director Kitagawa)

In Season 1, following the death of the hero Himmel, Frieren regrets that she never tried to truly "understand" people and sets out on a journey to do just that. Along the way, she meets Fern and Stark, forms a new party, and begins traveling with them. During the journey, Frieren resolves to head for Aureole, the resting place of souls, in order to reunite with the late Himmel. After facing a series of battles against demons and completing the First-Class Mage Exam, Season 2 finally marks the true beginning of Frieren and her companions' journey.

How is the production of Season 2 going?

Suzuki At our first script meeting, the producer said they wanted to establish a clear throughline for the series. The idea was to build up episodes that would make viewers want to look back and reflect after finishing them. In response, Kitagawa suggested creating segments, particularly centered on Frieren, Fern, and Stark's party, where we could properly depict how their coordination in battle and their growth as a party gradually

improve. He also mentioned that, unlike in Season 1, the flashback scenes involving Himmel in this season give the impression that Frieren is more actively reflecting on the past herself, so he wanted to portray that aspect with intention.

Kitagawa In Season 1, there were many scenes where Frieren would recall what Himmel taught her and use that to understand people, but in Season 2, I think there are more moments where she passes those lessons on to Fern and Stark. Along with that, Fern learns new ways of fighting by watching Frieren, and the party's overall fighting style evolves as well. So I wanted to shape it into a story where Fern and the others grow alongside Frieren. By expanding on those elements, I hope we can make them stand out more vividly as animation.

Also, this was Suzuki's idea, but since the word "hometown" comes up quite often, we thought it would be meaningful to highlight the journey as one where they take on and protect the feelings of the people who live there. This time, a new setting called the "Northern Plateau" appears, so we once again had Seiko Yoshioka create the concept art, and from there we expanded the visual direction.

What have you carried over from Season 1, and what are you challenging yourselves with in Season 2?

Kitagawa Fundamentally, it's an extension of Season 1. We've carried over what worked well so that it feels like a natural continuation. In particular, the unique pacing, the atmosphere of those vignette-like travel scenes, and the detailed background work. On top of that, we wanted to properly depict the three of them as they set out on a new journey together.

Saito Personally, I thought it might be fine to

completely refresh it with Kitagawa's own style, but perhaps out of respect for those who really appreciated Season 1, I can feel that he's carefully building out Season 2 with heavy inspiration from Season 1. So I have mixed feelings about that, but it also makes me happy.

The opening scene of Episode 1 in Season 2 wasn't in the original script. It actually came from one of Kitagawa's ideas. I think that scene really conveys the tone he's aiming for in *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* Season 2.

Kitagawa Since it's been about two years since Season 1 ended, as things start up again, I wanted to create a feeling that Frieren has really come back. I'd be happy if viewers could feel these intentions.

Season 2 highlights the emotional journey and action

Taking a step back, how do you see the appeal of Frieren, the characters, and the series as a whole? And with that in mind, please tell us what to look out for in Season 2.

Suzuki There are many things that make Frieren appealing, but what stands out most is her sensibility as an elf. There's a line from Serie, a great mage older than Frieren: "There are many times in life when you have to make important decisions, but those children don't have the luxury of putting them off." That line appears in Episode 25 of Season 1. "Those children" refers to humans, and Frieren, who has lived for over a thousand years, naturally has that long-term

characters, we wanted to showcase their teamwork. We structured the battles with Stark taking the front line, while Frieren and Fern fight from the rear with magic. I think these battles represent a new way of portraying action for *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End*.

Season 1 gained momentum with its "Friday Roadshow" broadcast

The first season's initial special broadcast on "Friday Roadshow" recorded a household viewership rating of 6.8% (Video Research, Kanto Region). Its regular broadcasts also maintained ratings in the high 3% to 4% range, an unusually strong performance for a late-night anime. In addition, the original manga's total circulation doubled from 10 million copies before the broadcast to 20 million within six months. It has now surpassed 32 million copies, becoming a major hit. Its popularity has also spread overseas, winning top honors in three categories, including Best Drama, at the Anime Awards hosted by Crunchyroll, the largest anime-focused streaming platform in North America.

What do you think made Season 1 of the anime such a hit?

Saito I saw *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* as a work that explores human thought and inner lives, something almost philosophical. So at first, I wondered if it might be difficult to reach a broad audience. But both the original manga and anime balance that depth with accessibility, which made it easy to get into and helped it reach a wide audience. It has strong storytelling, action, and a good



Frieren (voiced by Atsumi Tanezaki, top left), Fern (voiced by Kana Ichinose, top right), and Stark (voiced by Chisaki Kobayashi, bottom left) travel together toward Aureole, a place where one can commune with the souls of the dead. The action in Season 2 grows even more intense (bottom right).

perspective. She's traveling with Fern and Stark now, but when you imagine what lies far ahead, it brings up a deeply emotional feeling. Yet in her everyday life, she shows none of that, and that contrast really comes through.

Kitagawa I think all the characters are charming because of those contrasts. Frieren has her cool moments, but she also shows these dejected expressions. Fern is serious, but she can be quite sharp with Stark. Stark has his pathetic side, too, but when it counts, he steps up in a really impressive way. We direct the show in a way that brings out those character qualities.

Saito In Season 1, the addition of the priest Sein, who uses advanced healing magic, brought balance to the party. But after he left, the story quickly moved into the First-Class Mage Exam arc (Episodes 18 to 28), so the balance of the three

sense of balance. When creating the anime, we aimed to make it approachable and something anyone could enjoy.

Suzuki I haven't analyzed it formally, but I was struck by how even my nieces and nephews responded to it. It really showed how wide an audience the anime reached. Airing the first four episodes all at once on "Friday Roadshow" really helped viewers grasp the world, and that was a major factor. And that only worked because Saito and the team created animation strong enough to support that format. The end of Episode 4 was also changed from the manga, where we wanted to leave a lingering feeling. So it ends on Frieren's line, "Just ten years," before moving into the ending theme.

Saito The pressure was intense. People who watch four episodes of a TV anime back-to-back are usually really devoted anime fans. Even though it's accessible, I worried that the format might actually narrow the entry point. Once it started airing, we received positive feedback and gained some confidence, but the pressure persisted until the final episode.

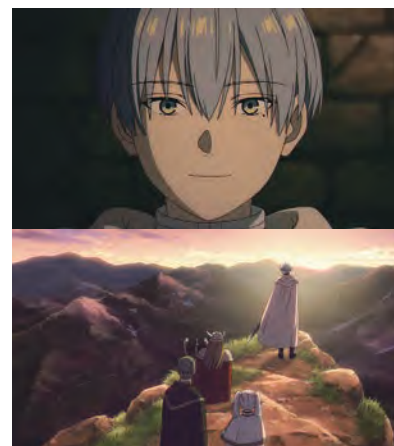
Kitagawa When I read the original manga, what stayed with me most was the dramatic parts. It carefully portrays those everyday feelings people have but don't usually put into words. For example, the sunrise scene in Episode 4 evokes a feeling you don't consciously notice, but once pointed out, it quietly spreads through you. That feeling is incredibly powerful. Then the appearance of demons introduces a sense of tension. I think those two pillars, drama and tension, are what make the series compelling. Because the anime captured that well, it resonated with viewers, so we want to carry that forward in Season 2.

without him remained somewhat unclear going into the final stretch. In Season 2, we get to see the balance of the three characters after their relationships have taken a step forward, and I think that becomes a really interesting point.

Also, Season 2 mainly takes place in the Northern Lands, and as the enemies grow stronger and the battles more intense, you can see through Frieren's movements just how harsh her past adventures have been. I think this season will highlight her appeal as a powerful and seasoned veteran.

Kitagawa I see Frieren as a mentor figure to Fern and Stark, so I want to carefully portray how they change after witnessing her strength.

The season has both the calm, everyday moments of the journey and more dynamic battles. I think it strikes a balance that fans of both can enjoy. Since many of the battles in Season 2 involve all three



Long ago, Frieren traveled for ten years to defeat the demon king alongside hero Himmel (top), the priest Heiter, and the dwarf warrior Eisen. Himmel's words and actions now guide Frieren, and her line, "That's what Hero Himmel would have done," has become one of the series' defining phrases.

Tomoya Kitagawa

Director

Born in 1990, from Shizuoka Prefecture. He served as chief episode director on Season 1 of *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End*, and has worked as an episode director on titles such as *Chihayafuru 3* (2019), *SPY×FAMILY* (2022), and *Orb: On the Movements of the Earth* (2024). This work marks his directorial debut.

Keiichi Saito

Supporting Director

Born in 1993, from Aomori Prefecture. He gained attention with his first TV anime as director, *Bocchi the Rock!* (2022), followed by his second directorial work, *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* (2023), both major hits that brought him into the spotlight.

Tomohiro Suzuki

Series Composition

Born in 1977, from Tokyo. He has worked as series composer and scriptwriter on *One-Punch Man* (2015–), *ACCA: 13-Territory Inspection Dept.* (2017), and *DOUBLE DECKER! Doug & Kirill* (2018), as well as *Boogiepop and Others* (2019) and *Negative Positive Angler* (2024).



KAGURABACHI

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April 2027

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COSPLAY SENPAI

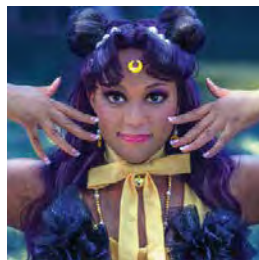
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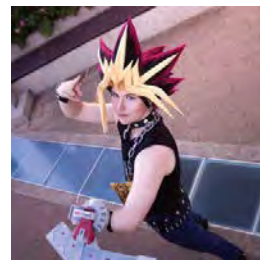
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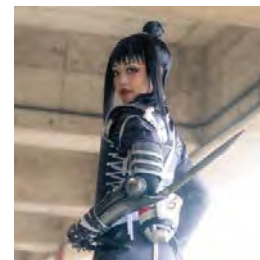
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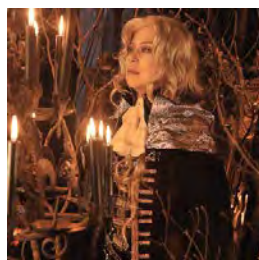


weichiadi

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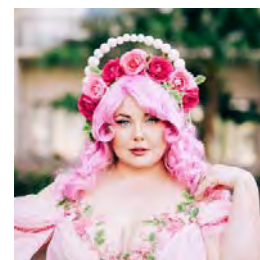
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Fran



K Cosplay



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MASQUERADE

Day 3 (July 4)
8:30PM - 11:30PM
Crypto.com Arena



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ANIME EXPO

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Day 1 (July 2)
11:30AM - 1:30PM
Petree Hall



Rin Rin Doll
Fashion Show MC



Acro Tokyo
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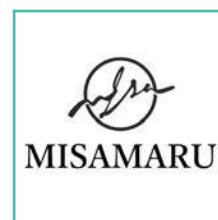
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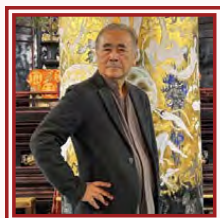
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AMANO GALLERY



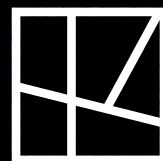
Yoshitaka Amano Gallery presents a special exhibition for ZAN, a new original animation project created by Yoshitaka Amano. The exhibition showcases original artwork, original animation drawings being presented publicly for the first time at Anime Expo 2026, and official ZAN merchandise. Visitors will have a rare opportunity to experience the world and creative vision of ZAN.



**West Hall
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Day 1-3 (July 2-4)
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Day 4 (July 5)
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Artist Alley

18+

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V
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	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20					20	15
	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19	19					19	14
	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18	18					18	13
	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17	17					17	12
	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16					16	11
	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15					15	10
	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14					14	9
	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13					13	8
	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12	12					12	7
	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11	11					11	6
	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10					10	5
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9					9	4
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8					8	3
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7					7	2
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6					6	1
	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5					5	
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4					4	
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3					3	
	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2					2	
	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1					1	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V

144	442	742	1044	1344	1642
142			1042	1342	

138	436	738	1038	1338	1636
136		736	1036	1336	

130	430	732	1030	1330	1630
		730			

126	426	724	1024	1324	1624
124	424		1024	1324	

118	420	718	1020	1318	1618
	418	718	1018	1318	

114	414	714	1110	1314	1612
112	412	712	1110	1312	

106	406	706	1006	1306	1606
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100	400	700	1000	1300	1600
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1942	2146	2546	2646	2746	2946	3046
	2138	2538	2938			
	2128	2528	2928			
		2424	2624	2724		

1918	2220	2518	2618	2819	2920	3118	3218
	2318			2918			

1912	2212	2314	2512	2612	2812	3114
	2312					3112

1906	2406	2906
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1900	2400	2900
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West Hall (WH)



West Hall Hours

Day 1 / July 2 9:00AM - 6:00PM

Day 2 / July 3 9:00AM - 6:00PM

Day 3 / July 4 9:00AM - 6:00PM

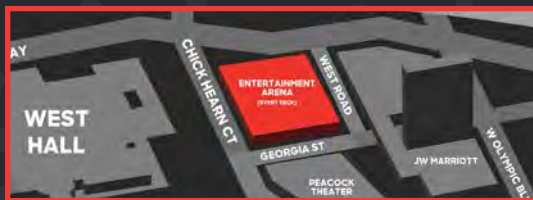
Day 4 / July 5 9:00AM - 3:00PM

Booth Layouts and Exhibitors:

- Top Left Section:** Booths 176, 376, 676, 778, 978, 1278, 1378, 1676, 1776, 1976, 170, 372, 470, 672, 972, 1272, 1372, 1670, 1772, 1970, 2072, 164, 156, 364, 464, 664, 964, 1066, 1266, 1664, 1964.
- Top Right Section:** Booths 2362, 2462, 2562, 2662, 3062, 3162, 3562, 3662.
- Middle Left Section:** Booths 254, 454, 250, 450, 236, ElementA, 936, GRYPLINE, 1650, MIRESI, 2356, POSTMOUNTAIN CANYON, 3056, 3558, 3556, 2350, SXS, 3050, 3552, 3550, 3650, 2342, TRIP POWER, 3042, CHEEKY, 3542, 2336, ENSKY, 3036, TOY ARENA, 3538, 3638, 3536, 3636.
- Middle Right Section:** Booths 1636, BANDAI NAMCO, 2328, ANIQUE, 2324, TMS, 3024, Retro Saikou, 3524, BROWN DUST II, 228, 424, AZUKI, 224, 928, 1128, 924, 1124, 1628, 1928, 1624, 1924, 2316, GungHo, 3016, 3012, OceanVeil, 3512, Ultra-PRO, 216, 412, NTE, 212, 912, DAN DADAN, 1616, 1916, 1612, 1912, 2304, CO-SPLAY, 3004, 3000, AVIOT, 3504, 3500, 200, 900, Gacha, 1600, BEYBLADE X, 2300, BANDAI NAMCO.

Entertainment Arena

(Event Deck)



Entertainment Arena Hours

Day 1 / July 2	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 2 / July 3	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 3 / July 4	9:00AM - 9:00PM
Day 4 / July 5	9:00AM - 3:00PM



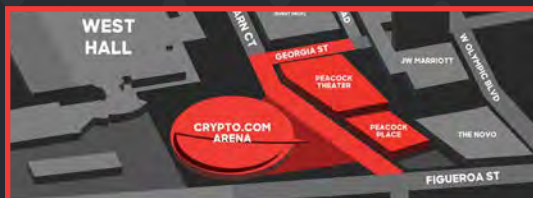
Gaming Area
presented by

MONROCK

FOOD TRUCKS

1. Tropic Truck
2. Stop Bye Cafe
3. Kyoto Hibachi

Peacock Place



FOOD VENDORS

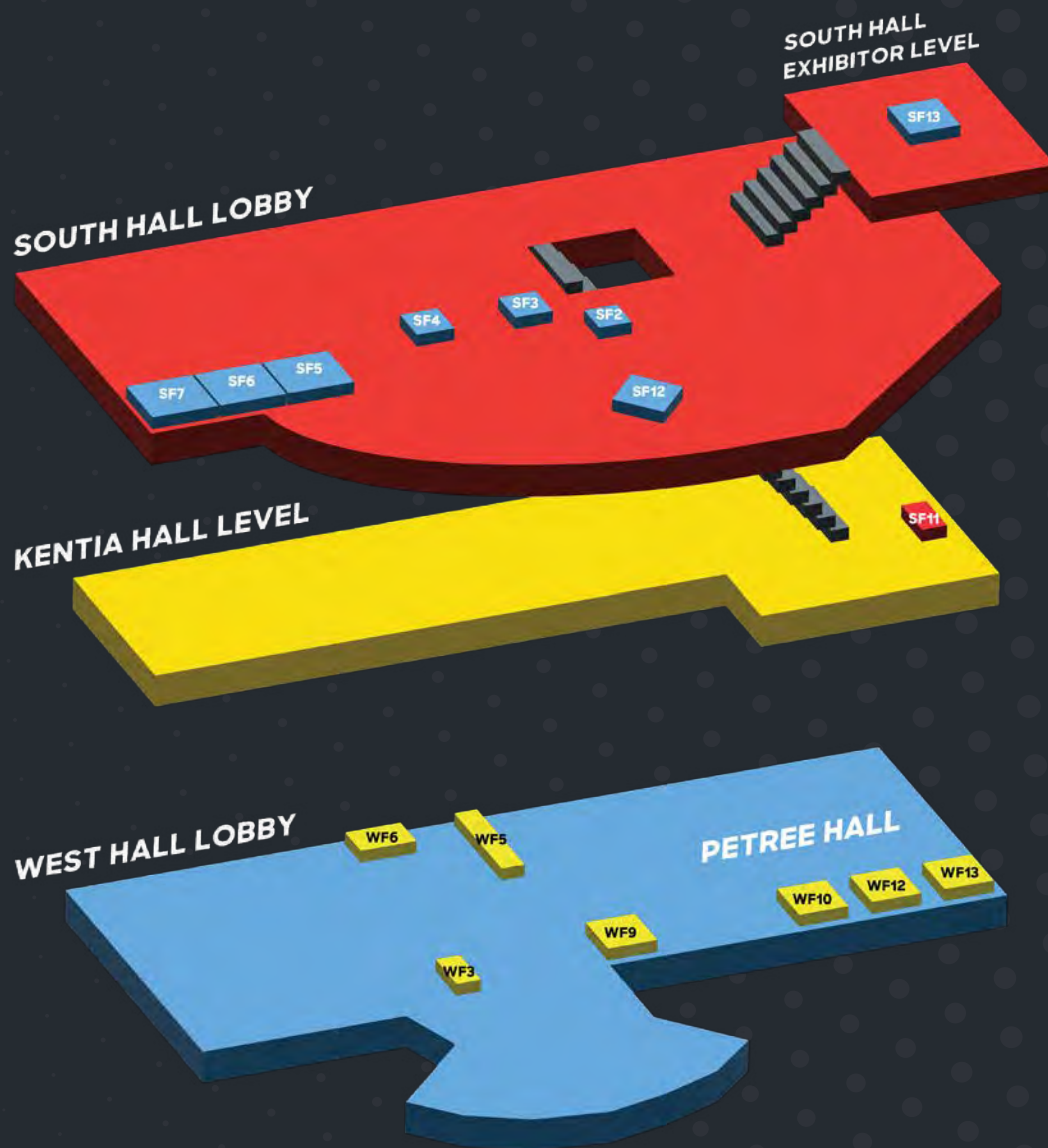
- | | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| 1. Thirsty Waters | 5. Tanghulu |
| 2. Ghostix | 6. Baozza |
| 3. All Dat Chicken | 7. Yum'igiri |
| 4. All Dat Dumpling | 8. Melona |

Peacock Place Hours

Day 1 / July 2	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 2 / July 3	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 3 / July 4	9:00AM - 12:00AM
Day 4 / July 5	9:00AM - 3:00PM



Lobby Activation Spaces



SF2



SF3



SF4



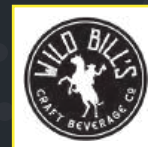
SF5



SF6



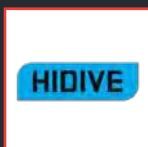
SF7



SF11



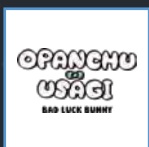
SF12



SF13



WF3



WF5



WF6



WF9



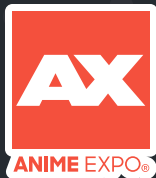
WF10



WF12



WF13



CROSSING

Presented by **LALALA**
Media • Marketing • Event

AX Crossing Hours

Day 1 / July 2 9:00AM - 12:00AM

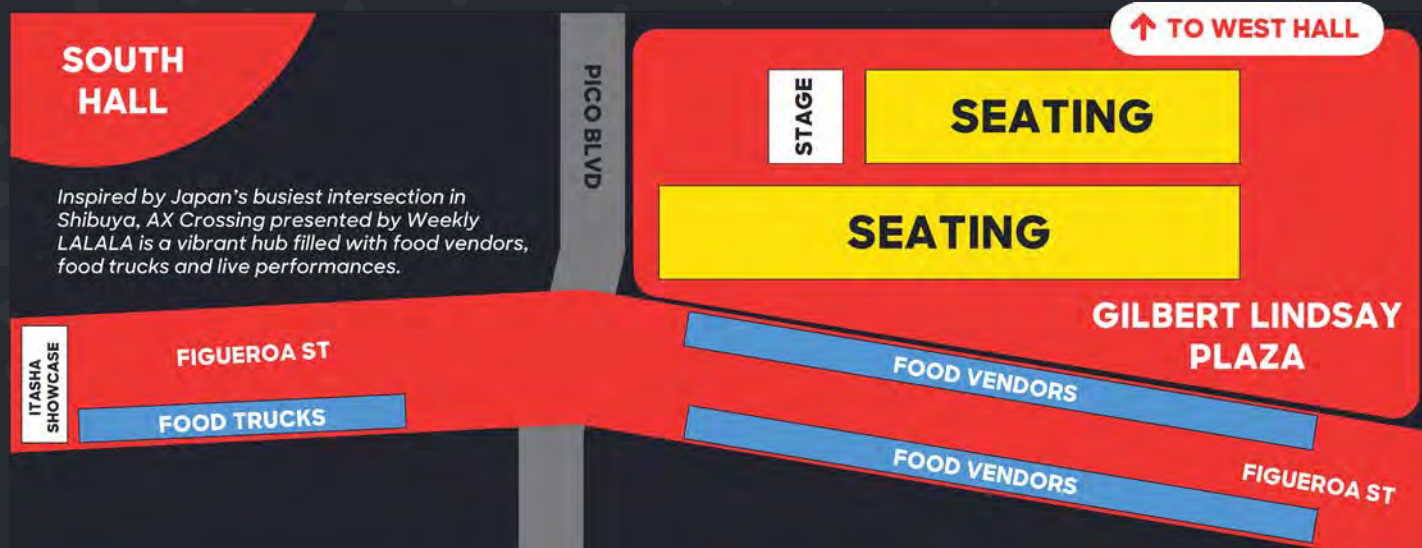
Day 2 / July 3 9:00AM - 12:00AM

Day 3 / July 4 9:00AM - 12:00AM

Day 4 / July 5 9:00AM - 3:00PM

Karaoke Hours

Day 1-3 / July 2-4 5:00PM - 12:00AM



FOOD VENDORS

AFURI
Aki Sushi Taco
All Dat Noodle
AMAMI-YA BABY CASTELLA
Tokyo Hungry Pizza
Beard Papa's
Bearology
BOBA BESTIE
Egghausted Udon
Fuego Me Up
HONDA-YA
House of UBE

KONDO SANDO
Kuramoto Shavery
Mochill Mochi Crepe
Mr. Bully
ONIGIRI SUN
Rated R Ramen Burger
Sandoitchi
Sanuki Pride
Shibuya X Japanese Fried Chicken
Onigiri By Hyuga
Onigiri Edo
Shin-Sen-Gumi Catering

Sunday Cafe
Sutadonya
Takoyaki Yamachan
Tenkatori / Gindaco
The Tea
TOKYO YAKISOBA
TOKYO UDON
Tokyo Street Food Lab
Yakitori Yado
YATAI LA

FOOD TRUCKS

Asian Street Food
Creamy Boys Ice Cream
Daskoi Style Food Truck
Fluff Ice Truck
Makanai is Ready
okamoto kitchen
Rice Balls of Fire
Shake Ramen
Torisoba Tonsho

A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE HIT NETFLIX SHOW



SET SAIL

THE ART & MAKING OF



Written by **MIKE AVILA** Foreword by **JOE TRACZ**

GET IT AT THE VIZ BOOTH SH-1914



ARTIST ALLEY LIST

#	Artist Directory Please start here Yen Pen			Art by Yuxine	E3	Chinnpi	P16
			I2	Art From Mars	O14	CHIOU!	A13
	!!!!-- Kobuta Nori --!!!!		I8	Art of Caitlin Ono	P17	chocojax	D22
	{Wanderella}		O2	Art of Emfitz	H6	chowpan	N5
	@ItsHugosNook		J12	Art of Yingzong Xin	K10	Chumaruko	L7
	@artisticmonkeys		E9	Artist Black	V8	Chumidraws	U18
	Pewchii		K1	Arzonaut	U14	chuteki	L20
	Puts on Monocle Interesting...		B9	Astrawitch	M4	Cinamuffins Art	D21
	03RIN		O19	AthenaWyrn	F10	claireiosity	B11
	108K		P18	AzulArts	O12	Clivenzu	O8
	2jingis2jing		C11			Cloudkourin	B5
	3liemarie		L19	Baaozhe	N6	Colodraws	V15
	95nomi		N18	babeyxiao	U20	Cookiestraw	G9
A	A Baesd World		P14	banh.bells	A3	CorvidArts	K17
	A Sunny Disposish		J2	BaobDraws	P11	cosmicloak	C7
	Acidic Arts		H3	Batsoupe	H4	Cotton Angel	I1
	Actoons		P10	bearibop	F1	Created by OUSIA.	L18
	aeryux		P21	beet	B8	Crimson Chains	L23
	Agi Jagi Shop		I22	Belli-buttons	I23	Crisalys	N15
	AHHH! IT'S SPICYTUNAA!		G3	Besthetz	U15	Cutiepieviv	G14
	Airily Arts		E19	Bionyo Illustrations	B19	Cykedelia	N19
	Akanyte		K19	Blaze Manga Productions	R3	Cypritree	N16
	Akuo		P3	BLUE935	U2		
	Alderion		K15	Brady Evans	Q4	D.SLOOGS	P1
	Aleikats		A7	Breemo Art	L9	daesign studio	L16
	Alisa Draws		J20	Brell Studios Art	G19	daphodoodle	P2
	alyruko		C6	BubbleTeaPenguin	M6	Darqprism Arts	O15
	amaicandy		M9	Bunhiry	N21	darumacat	H21
	AmandaSmurfee		E17	BurntGreenTea	L13	Darwin Rose Studio	I13
	amietita		F15	ByronB Art	A10	Daumilk	C13
	AmoebaBunny		L15			Deacon Shaw	I12
	Angelazy Doodles		A12	Canella Creations	B16	Deb JJ Lee	A6
	Angelic Coffin		D18	CATDADSHOP	K3	Deckitout	D1
	Anime coffee art		M19	Catical Neko	M18	Deerlette	H13
	AnnieChanRamen		K18	cattpucino	H10	DEVILWARU	E15
	Anthony C Studio		H1	CeeVee Illustrations	C20	Diyokama	T1
	aolily		E12	Cesela	K21	DoddleVee	K7
	apurebear		S5	ceyrano	B1	Drawnbylv	J5
	art by rleba		I20	Chellioh	P9	dreadwyrntrance	D17
				cheppoly	F3	Duckmeat	G22
				cherrypugpie	F4	Duludulu Design	K16

dunesand	C15
E eggumu	M10
einiv.art	N22
Einsu	F7
emilieevo	H22
emmikn	R5
epitomime	E8
Eriimyon	V17
Erik Ly	J1
Eroyouchan	U8
EU03	U5
Exodam Artworks	I4
Explodikid	C8
EyYoJimbo	K6

F Fang Fang Comics	V13
Fifth Element Pins	A18
fish :^)	G6
Free DLC Artwork	T6
Freeze-Ex	N12
Frog Well Art	D20
From Caliko	L14
fuwaffy	M5

G Galorious Art	D9
Gazeki Art	K8
gdacted	L8
gelatincups	L11
Genicecream	A16
Gerry Selian	F22
Gigi Murakami	H19
GnomicGabby	M21
gomhearts	A17
Goobers Only	L2
Goyobo Studio	L1
grapeDraws	B23
gravewewaver	F13
gumisoapie	U22
Guryfrog	H11
GYUPPIIMART	A14

H HABAA Mart	U6
Haiimeo	F16

haiyun	B10
Hammling Illustrations	B22
HanaeKariko	E6
HANH CHU	I3
Happys Charms	L4
Harmony Gong	K20
harvestkitty	B3
Hasu	D13
hazmaten	M23
Hoshi Kuma	N9
huoolong	N14
Hyde	M1
Hynori	I9
Hyperbooster Studio	K4
HyperPlanar	U1

I IdentityPollution	M20
irokagi	I7
illu_Zn	N13
Illumerie	P13
ImdrunkonTea Art	O3
imjamiejamzz	J4
Inkwell	K5
Innbean	G7
ippers	K22
IroniconSavage	D23
ItmeZ	O7
ItsJustSuppi	M2
Ivanpatch	I21
iwantyoursoda	G2

J Janet Sung (KURU731)	G21
Jayperior	C12
JD Prints	I11
jeaninidraws	J3
jeanpanzie	H15
jeluto	B13
Jenafrid	J14
Jenni Illustrations	O6
JeriAfterDark	U10
jiadoesart	D12
Jianrou	U3
Jidou Art Studio	I5
JingJiArt	I17

jjolee	H20
JonnyboiG	P5
JubiArtDesign	N3
judgedarts	A4
Jvn	O22

K Kaeilash	I10
Kaejunni	D5
Kailee Rosen	J23
Kaizuart	E23
Kat Tsai	O1
Kazukoto	U23
khuwun	F17
Killamon	E4
Kirseel	E14
Kitagiannu	C4
Kittygorian	G17
kobacake	F2
kozdoma	G16
KrazehKai	J15
krimanga	K9
Kumo Krew	A11
Kuroken	G4
Kwnce	J16
KYOUKARAA	N23

L La Blue Gal	V16
Lambchawps	I16
Lanny Ho Printmaking	P23
Lavender Bee Caps	M17
LeaTanuko's Wardrobes	R4
Leechyee	P22
Leharc BlueHeart	O20
Lemon-Creme	V3
Lexxie Lynn	U16
limpachi	F23
Litarnes	B18
Lokimeku	K13
LucidSky	N1
lynuyu	A5

M M.G.	B14
Made By Nüwa	H8
Maeca Art	B12

N

○

P

Q _____

R 211

S **Stress** is a response to a stimulus that is perceived as a threat or challenge. It is a complex process involving the brain, hormones, and the body's physical response. Stress can be acute (short-term) or chronic (long-term). Chronic stress can lead to various health problems, including heart disease, depression, and anxiety.



Space Fruit Shop	F18
Space Koi	C9
SpaceDey	S4
SpookyDeadSkeleton	V4
Star*Salts	M11
Sticker Zoo Designs	N11
stripedpants	F9
Subconscious Realms	I15
SugarFree by Kamui	H23
Suni	T2
Superlens	L5
Susan Yung	I19
SvvLinh	J17
Syertse	L17

T

Tadano Club	N10
tanjumie	S1
Tannin Arceo	J11
Tarobun	G13
Tenshika	K11
TEOISDRAWING	P4
The Ha-Pi Studio	M14

THEBOGHEART	O13
ThinkNu	J9
timtamart	D10
tkimichi	G1
tncts	F21
ToastyLibertea	F6
Toefuw	E5
Tofublock	B6
tokimekiwaku	D3
ToraPop	C1
TOTALLYiRYANiC	E13
Turtlelaza Designs	E21

U

Uni & Umi	A15
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V

Vanescere Art	J21
verraise	D16
vonnabee	C22

W

Weibun	V14
WETSHRIMB	G10
wheatloaves	H14
wheeskars	O21

X

Xarinesca	A2
Xeph	V12
Xiaobbinc	N8
xinillus	B15
XIO999	M3

Y

Animator Art	J10
Yaoiscum	C21
Yimmygee	C17
yiyuehua	U7
Yojambo	P15
Yokokins	Q7
yoojucha	A8
YUGAN.999	F14
Yukihana Draws	V10
Yvotero	P20

Z

ZeldaCW (Bunny Boss Maru)	P12
Zenzeyi	E11
ZEROTYPE	K2

For full AX 2026 Artist Alley list
please download the Anime Expo
mobile app.



AX AUTOGRAPHS

Guest and Industry Autograph
JW Marriott Gold Ballroom

Day 1-3 (July 2-4) 10:00AM - 8:00PM

Day 4 (July 5) 10:00AM - 3:00PM

AX's autograph sessions provide a rare opportunity
for fans to meet their favorite creators, voice actors,
and artists from the anime and gaming industries!



Scan QR code
for Autograph
Schedule



Connect Through Anime on TikTok

TikTok is full of **Anime Content!**
A community of **Anime Fans!** Discuss and discover on **TikTok!**



@yoshi30244781481



@alli_bugg



@yaseenthatsguy

Anime Fan Creators
Active Around the World!



Join the Anime Fun on TikTok!



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@mikanbom

AX 2026 OFFICIAL MERCH

LOCATED AT WEST HALL LOBBY



SHOW SHIRT

\$32



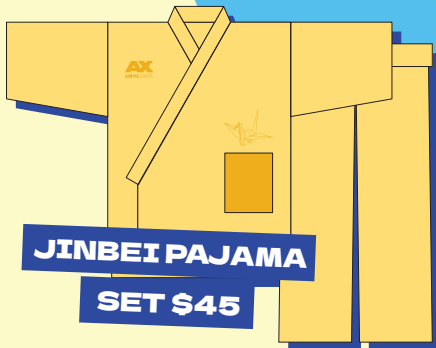
BASEBALL JERSEY

\$55



WINDBREAKER

\$65



JINBEI PAJAMA

SET \$45



LAZY DAD HAT \$25



PORTABLE

CHARGER \$55



TURBO FAN \$20



SHOW PIN \$10



PIN SET \$18



SHOT GLASS \$8



PLAYMAT \$20



WATER BOTTLE

\$28



For full AX 2026 Official Merch list please download the Anime Expo mobile app.

AX Merch Booth will be CASHLESS. Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover Card, Apple Pay, and Google Wallet are acceptable. ALL SALES ARE FINAL. NO REFUNDS. NO RETURNS.



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Day 3 (July 4)
5:30PM - 8:30PM
The Novo



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code for
more info!



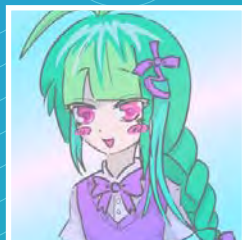
Hachioji-P
Vocaloid DJ



kz(livetune)
Vocaloid DJ



picco
Vocaloid DJ



SatapanP
Vocaloid DJ



TeddyLoid
Special Appearance



2026 CHARITY RECIPIENT

AX 2026 Charity Auction

Day 4 (July 5)
1:30PM - 3:30PM
Petree Hall



Scan QR
code for
more info!

ABOUT LANSKA

Founded in 1959 as part of President Eisenhower's People-to-People Program, the Los Angeles Nagoya Sister City Affiliation (LANSKA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening cultural understanding and friendship between Los Angeles and Nagoya, Japan. Through student and teacher exchanges, cultural programs, art initiatives, and community events, LANSKA promotes meaningful cross-cultural connections and international goodwill.

The SPJA is proud to support a variety of nonprofit organizations through its annual Anime Expo Charity Auction. In 2026, the Anime Expo Charity Auction will benefit the Los Angeles Nagoya Sister City Affiliation (LANSKA), an organization dedicated to fostering mutual understanding between Los Angeles and Nagoya through people-to-people cultural exchange activities.

Anime Expo guests and partners have generously donated artwork, memorabilia, and other incredible items for this year's auction. Turn your love of anime into meaningful support for a great cause!



An epic fantasy of rebellion, resistance,
and the fight for freedom against an empire

CHAMPION OF THE ROSE

CAT AQUINO | DOMINIQUE DURAN

In this tournament, the price of freedom is more than just blood and bone. And in the arena, where life is cheap and spectacle is everything, Rey, a trans swordsman from the colony of Himala, must decide what kind of game he's willing to play to return to his partner, Teo.

LEARN MORE



GET THE BOOK EARLY
AT BOOTH SH-1914

© Cat Aquino, Dominique Duran

VIZ

DAY 1 SCHEDULE - JULY 2


**ACADEMIC
PROGRAM**


**CAREER
TRACK**


**COSPLAY
TRACK**


**CULTURAL
TRACK**


**FAMILY
TRACK**

See page 15 for more information on AX Programming Tracks.

WELCOME CEREMONY

The Welcome Ceremony is one of the most highly anticipated main events programming. It is where many AX attendees kick off the start of their Anime Expo journey.

“GOODBYE, LARA” EP 1 SCREENING & BEHIND THE SCENES TALK WITH DIRECTOR TAKUSHI KOIDE (SUPPORTED BY CRUNCHYROLL)

Join our screen of the premiere episode of “Goodbye, Lara”! 200 years after dissolving into bubbles over a failed true love, Mermaid Princess Lara awakens in Lake Biwa. Following the show, enjoy an exclusive behind-the-scenes talk featuring the director, Takushi Koide! (Supported by Crunchyroll)

AMV FINALS

Celebrate the best in anime and music fusion at the Anime Expo 2026 Anime Music Video (AMV) Competition Awards! Join us as we unveil the winners across various categories, showcasing exceptional artistry, storytelling, and technical prowess.

ANIMATE PRESENTS: ALIEN STAGE - LIVE TALK & SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!

Welcome to the survival audition program, ALIEN STAGE! This is your chance to hear exclusive insights about ALIEN STAGE from Chief Director VIVINOS and KANG PD. Plus, we’ve got a special announcement, so make sure to stay until the end! Guests: VIVINOS, KANG PD.

ANIME EXPO PLUSHIE MAKING WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE PLUSHIE WORKSHOP

Create your very own Plushumi The Plushie Workshop plushie at Anime Expo 2026! Choose between our adorable White Bear or Beige Bunny and bring your plushie to life through stuffing, assembly, and customization. You’ll even get to see our signature knitting devices in action and try them yourself!

ANIME IQ LIVE: THINK YOU’RE AN ANIME EXPERT? PROVE IT!

Think you know anime better than everyone else? Step into Anime IQ LIVE, an interactive anime game show where fans compete in trivia, rapid-fire challenges, and the viral “Guess the Anime in 3 Seconds” round. Volunteer to play or test your knowledge from the crowd!

ANIME NEWS NETWORK RECOMMENDS: WHAT YOU SHOULD BE WATCHING

You can count on the Anime News Network staff to be familiar with every anime each season. Join ANN Executive Editor Lynzee Loveridge and ANN review team members to discuss the season’s best anime and get personalized recommendations of what you should watch next.

ANIME TRIVIA NIGHT BROADCAST 18+

Get ready for the most outrageous trivia show for the truly cultured anime fans. Watch and play along with 3 teams competing for points, knowledge and glory! Who will win and be crowned our “2026 Cultured Anime Fan” and who will be revealed as cringe?

ANIPLEX OF AMERICA INDUSTRY PANEL

Join Aniplex of America as we celebrate our past, present and future of anime and games with our brand new Industry Panel! Come experience the excitement, community, and nostalgia with us on a grander stage!

BANDAI NAMCO PRESENTS: ECHOES FROM AINCRAID AN UNANSWERED//BUTTERFLY U.S. FIRST LOOK PREVIEW

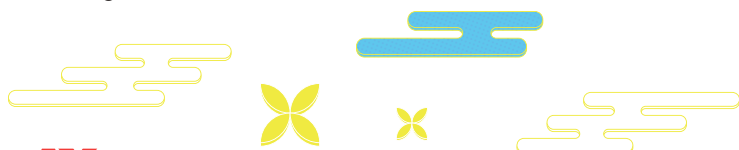
Risk reality and join producer Yosuke Futami, along with special guests, as he welcomes players to Echoes of Aincrad, the latest game in the Sword Art Online franchise. Attendees will receive exclusive giveaways and be among the first to see a teaser for the new anime, Unanswered//butterfly.

BIGWEST MACROSS INDUSTRY PANEL AT ANIME EXPO 2026

Join us for the BIGWEST MACROSS panel at Anime Expo 2026! Be among the first to hear the latest news, upcoming projects, and new merchandise announcements from the world of MACROSS.

BILIBILI LIVE 2026: FIRST LOOKS, EXCITING REVEALS, AND FUTURE SUPRISSES OF MADEBYBILIBILI

The annual MADEBYBILIBILI Party Returns! Join us exclusive cuts and announcements from your favorite MADEBYBILIBILI titles—Link Click, Heaven Official’s Blessing, A Mortal’s Journey, as well as brand-new releases: Tomb Raider King, Eleceed, and many more! Expect quizzes, giveaways, mystery guests, and surprises to be revealed on X @madeby_bilibili.



BLUPETAL INDUSTRY PANEL

Come hang out with BluPetal! We're revealing our latest titles and sharing our love for the BL, GL, Shoujo, and Josei fandoms. Join the conversation and snag an exclusive BluPetal gift while you're there!

BUSHIROAD PANEL AT ANIME EXPO 2026

Join us as we go over upcoming product releases and new information for Bushiroad in 2026! Featuring "Palworld OFFICIAL CARD GAME", "Cardfight!! Vanguard", "Weiß Schwarz" and more! Let's Bushiroad!

CAN WE FIX THEM, OR DO WE MAKE THEM WORSE? RED & GREEN FLAGS IN ANIME CHARACTERS

Come join us as we categorize anime characters into red and green flag categories based on some of their most prominent personality traits! Can we fix your fave or do they deserve to be made worse?

CAPTURING COSPLAY MAGIC

This panel explores the craft of cosplay photography, drawing on five years of experience. I'll share practical strategies for collaborating with passionate, hands-on clients, communicating effectively, and elevating both creative process and final images. Attendees will learn trends, best practices, and common pitfalls in cosplay shoots.

CHANCE TO SWITCH ON WITH COSMOSY

Join cosmosy for a fun and interactive dance workshop where members will teach choreography from their hit songs. Learn signature moves step by step, dance along with the group, and experience the energy of cosmosy up close in this special Anime Expo session.

COLLABORATING WITH INDIE MANGA CREATORS: INSIDE MANGA MAVERICKS BOOKS!

Join the Manga Mavericks Books team (store.mangamavericks.com) for an inside look into the rising indie manga publisher! Learn more about how we work directly with manga creators and be the first to hear our newest manga license announcements! We'll have prizes, surprises, special guests, and more!

CON CRUSH: I WAS TRANSPORTED TO AX26 AND NOW I MUST FIND MY SOULMATE (OR FRIEND) IN THREE MINUTES OR LESS

Think you can find your soulmate - or at least your new favorite con buddy - in 3 minutes? Come test your fate at our speed dating and friending event! Romance, friendship, and chaotic good energy all welcome

COSMIC HORROR: GAMES, ANIME, AND MANGA AT THE EDGE OF REALITY

The term "cosmic horror" has taken the horror world by storm in recent years, but where did it come from? What does it truly mean? Join Angel Rose as she discusses the style, its origins, its effectiveness, and its prevalence in Japanese and inspired media. Bring your favorite examples!

COSPLAY SENPAI ROUNDTABLE

Come meet our 2026 Cosplay Senpai! They'll discuss everything from their favorite techniques and proudest projects to some of their greatest cosplay/conventions fails. Ask them anything as they provide advice for newbies and veterans alike.

COULD YOU REALLY SURVIVE DATING YOUR ULTIMATE ANIME CRUSH?

Fandom is no stranger to falling in love with a character, but if we really had a chance with them, COULD we actually survive even one date? Let alone be their partner? Anime experts and comedians break down their wildest fantasies and whether they would even be a relationship that could last.

DANCING ALL NIGHT: A GUIDE TO J-POP IN THE 80S

Join A-to-J Connections as we examine the various bands, genres, and songs that helped define one of the most memorable decades in music. Chart toppers like THE CHECKERS, Hikaru GENJI, and Anzen Chitai cross paths with City Pop artists like ANRI, Akira Terao, Mariya Takeuchi, and MANY others!

FASHION SHOW

Step into the world of cutting-edge style at Anime Expo's Fashion Show. A showcase of both legacy and up and coming Japanese Fashion brands presented by a diverse range of models. From striking silhouettes to innovative materials, each look on the runway reflects the spirit of creativity and modern expression. Don't miss this unforgettable fusion of fashion, fandom, and art in motion.

FIRST LOOK | STAR WARS: VISIONS PRESENTS - THE NINTH JEDI

Join Production I.G and Lucasfilm for a first look at Star Wars: Visions Presents - The Ninth Jedi, a limited series coming soon to Disney+, and hear about the creative process from Supervising Director Kenji Kamiyama, Director Shunsuke Tada, Producer Hitoshi Ito, and more.

FOUR DECADES OF ROBOTECH

Join Harmony Gold U.S.A. as we celebrate Robotech into its fourth decade of growth. Get the latest news and updates on our new toy lines, comics, board and role playing games, and the reveal of our new video game from JOYCITY! (Yes, you read right)



For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



FROM JAPAN TO THE US: HOW MANGA IS ACQUIRED AND WHAT BREAKS THROUGH

Join Ben Applegate (Kodansha), Hope Donovan (VIZ), Leyla Aker (Square Enix), Rebecca Taylor (Inklore), and Whitney Leopard (Ink Pop) for a behind-the-scenes look at manga acquisition. Featuring editorial perspectives, this talk explores what makes series stand out, trends, and how they break through.

GETTING STARTED WITH MACHINE EMBROIDERY



Interested in adding some machine embroidered touches to your next cosplay project but not sure where to begin? Join Dessi-Desu to learn how to get started creating machine embroidery for your own cosplay projects! Dessi-Desu will discuss topics that include how to get started with digitizing, selecting hoops and stabilizer, and the variety of approaches to machine embroidery to inspire you with your next cosplay.

*Presented by AX26 Cosplay Senpai Dessi-Desu

GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY ✨ 18+

Start your Anime Expo off with the latest and greatest anime from Japan! Be among the first to catch new episodes and series premieres from exciting titles such as: Let This Grieving Soul Retire, Dekin no Mogura: The Earthbound Mole, A Couple of Cuckoos Season 2, and the world premiere of May I Ask for One Final Thing?

GUNDAM COSPLAY 101 🏴‍☠️

A relaxed, beginner-friendly panel that introduces the tools, techniques, and ideas needed to build –and wear!– Gundam and mecha cosplay, hosted by a cosplay veteran with over a decade of experience bringing Gundam Cosplay to Anime Expo. Hang out, ask questions, and connect with other Gundam fans.

HEAVEN OR HELL ✨ 18+

From the creators of Guilty or Not Guilty comes Heaven or Hell! An argumentative court-styled panel where you, the people, will play God and decide if a deceased character will go to heaven or hell based on their past actions.

HEY! IS THAT AN ANIME DOLL? ✨

An anime looking doll? Have you seen those dolls that look like anime characters around the convention? Wanna know more about them? Then come to our panel where you can see them up close and hear more about the ball-jointed doll (BJD) community. And anyone who has a doll is welcome to join us too.

HIDIVE PRESENTS “HELL MODE” 2ND SEASON NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Level grind with us for the North American premiere of the HELL MODE: The Hardcore Gamer Dominates in Another World with Garbage Balancing! 2nd Season.

HIDIVE PRESENTS THE WORLD IS DANCING NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

Why do people dance? Join HIDIVE for the North American premiere of this sweeping historical drama that will make you laugh, cry and maybe even dance.

INK POP: MANGA FOR THE FAMILY

Discover the world of Ink Pop: your go-to for manga, manhwa, and webcomics for kids and teens! Join us for new title announcements, first looks, all-ages recommendations, and behind-the-scenes insights from our editors. Celebrate great stories, big adventures, and don't miss fun giveaways!

INSIDE THE WORLD OF DISNEY+’S “DRAGON STRIKER”

Enter the high-energy, high-stakes world of “Dragon Striker,” where fierce competition meets powerful magic and destiny hangs in the balance. Go behind the scenes with the creative team as they reveal how the series fuses European fantasy and Japanese anime influences into a breathtaking original world full of rich mythology, epic music, and a deeply personal hero's journey. Audiences will be treated to exclusive insights, live artistry, and can't-miss surprises.

INTRODUCTION TO WOTAGEI 101 ✨

Have you seen people going crazy with their lightsticks at your oshi's concert and thought, “That's so cool!”? Have you heard about wotagei from Oshi no Ko but never knew where to start? Join this panel and start your wotagei journey!

INUYASHA HEDBANZ ✨ 🏠

Journey with us to the feudal era for a game of Inuyasha Hedbanz! Win prizes by working together with your team to guess a random person/place/or thing from within the InuYasha universe using only yes or no questions. Difficulty ranges from easy to hard so all fans are welcome!

J-POP RPD ✨

Join us for a fun Random Play Dance, featuring a variety of different J-Pop songs! Ranging from Vocaloid, idols, and Anisong, come join the crowd and show us your moves!

J-POP SOUND CAPSULE

Turning the volume all the way up, Anime Expo brings you a must-see night where J-POP and anime music take over the stage. From powerful anime theme songs that hit the moment the first note drops, to high-energy rock sets that will have the whole crowd moving, to genre-blending sounds that bring something completely unexpected – this is a concert built to be felt live. Featuring ALI, Roselia, SPYAIR, Yoko Kanno, and Yoko Takahashi.

KINKY SIDE TO ANIME ✨ 18+

Seen some kinky stuff in anime? Wanna talk about and learn about it in a fun way? Welcome to the “Kinky side Anime

LATE COMEDY SHOWDOWN PRELIMINARY ROUND ✨ 18+

Audition to for a chance to compete in the LCS Finals! Contestants will perform a 2-minute set comedy set in front of a live panel of judges. All sets must adhere to AX guidelines.

LET'S DANCE! PARAPARA101 ✨

In this panel we will be exploring the history behind the Japanese line dance called ParaPara that was popularized by Gyaruru girls in the 2000's as well as an interactive demonstration.

LOVE AND DEEPSPACE: AFTER DARK (AN UNOFFICIAL PANEL) 🏴 18+

(*Note: We are NOT affiliated with Infold or Papergames. This is an unofficial panel with unofficial cosplayers). The cast of Love and Deepspace are back for another fun night at Anime Expo! Come and help decide how their night shall go by playing games, asking questions, and much more!

LOVE AND DEEPSPACE: HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE BOYS, MC? 🏴

Calling all MCs, how well do you know your bias from Love and Deepspace? Have you collected every myth? Join the cast of Love and Deepspace in a battle of your game knowledge on your beloved characters!

MAG MAG FROM JAPAN: YURIYAN RETRIEVER (DIRECTOR) IN PERSON – FILM SCREENING + Q&A

International comedian and rising filmmaker Yuriyan Retriever (Netflix Is A Joke Festival, America's Got Talent) returns to Anime Expo following her 2025 Guest of Honor appearance, now presenting MAG MAG, her live-action directorial debut from Japan. Following early buzz from international screenings, including Hollywood's Egyptian Theatre, the film marks the emergence of a distinctive new voice blending horror, humor, and personal storytelling.

MAKE A JAPANESE MASK WITH KIZUNA LITTLE TOKYO! 🌸

Discover the rich history and modern traditions of Japanese masks! From theater to festivals, explore how masks have been used across generations in Japan. In this family-friendly workshop with Kizuna Little Tokyo, you'll design your own paper mask while connecting with Japanese American culture and Kizuna's beloved home, Little Tokyo.

MIN-MAX MAYHEM: THE OVERPOWERED OLYMPICS

Who's truly the strongest? Join J-Novel Club for a high-energy showdown ranking overpowered light novel & manga heroes and villains! Debate mystery matchups before the characters are revealed and vote on who wins. Bold claims, fierce arguments, and ultimate bragging rights—who reigns supreme?

MONSTER GIRLS RISE WITH J18 PUBLISHING AND KEMONONO ★ 18+

Animal girls, monster girls, demihumans: no matter what you call them, they've never been more popular! Join the staff of J18 Publishing and Kemonono ★ as they explore one of the biggest genres in modern hentai manga! (Kemonono ★ will be live drawing during the panel, creating a brand-new original shikishi to give away—stick around for the Q&A!)

MUSIC OF SPYXFAMILY 🎵

From Mixed Nuts to Kura Kura! Close out Day 1 of the JASM@AX Symposium with professors David F. Lopez, Elliott Jones, and John Marr, in their all new panel, as they look at this amazing, and moving music!

NRC HOUSEWARDEN MEETING: A TWISTED WONDERLAND FAN PANEL 🏴

Calling all Housewardens! Come join us at Night Raven College for a special meeting featuring all of the school's dorm leaders! There will be a lively Q&A featuring Twisted Wonderland Cosplayers, filled with games, prizes and more! And don't worry! We will make sure a certain housewarden gets his invitation!

NYALRA: CREATOR OF NEEDY GIRL OVERDOSE

Step into the chaotic world of internet fame with a dive into Nyalra's cult indie hit NEEDY GIRL OVERDOSE. This panel explores and social media simulation and psychological themes examining online identity parasocial relationships and the pressures of stardom, plus a look at their upcoming game.

POKÉSKETCH SHOWDOWN 🌸 🏠

For fans of Pokémon and drawing, challenge yourself by sketching various new Pokémon under multiple categories within the time limit. No two (2) challenges are the same, and the audience will decide who made the best original drawing and receive fun prizes. Use your imagination to draw them all!

REPRESENTATIONS OF HISTORY, AND HISTORY IN ANIME 🎵

Meiji to Doujinshi! Join the scholars of the JAMS@AX Academic Symposium as they discuss anti-war messaging, the history of doujinshi, Ainu narratives, and historical characters.

RESISTANCE, RESILIENCE, COSPLAY, AND BEAUTY IN ANIME! 🎵

Join scholars at the JAMS@AX Academic symposium to discuss anime imagery in protest movements, ornamentation, cosplay, and mental health!

SEKAI PROJECT INDUSTRY PANEL

We are one of the leading publishers of visual novels in the West. Come join us for a discussion on the current state of our part of the gaming industry as well as learn about current and upcoming projects.

SPECIAL CREATOR SESSION:YUNYUN SYNDROME!? RHYTHM PSYCHOSIS & DRUNKEN GODDESS REFLUX

Game creator Fuyuki Hayashi and illustrator & animator odyk join for a special panel. Featuring a live drawing demonstration, the session explores the works' core concepts, development process, and unique visual direction, alongside the creative philosophy behind their distinctive worlds.

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



SQUARE ENIX MANGA & BOOKS INDUSTRY PANEL

Square Enix Manga & Books, the publisher behind Daemons of the Shadow Realm, My Dress-Up Darling, & The Apothecary Diaries invites manga fans to get the exclusive on their newest publishing announcements! Join us for editorial insights, new manga & book licensing announcements, & some surprises!

SQUARE ENIX MANGA PRESENTS: THE (PSYCHIC) POWER OF BL WITH CHERRY MAGIC! CREATOR YUU TOYOTA

Calling all Fujoshi, Fudanshi, & Romance Lovers! Square Enix Manga & Books presents a special panel with the beloved creator of the BL smash hit, Cherry Magic! Thirty Years of Virginity Can Make You a Wizard?! Join Yuu Toyota for a live drawing panel, career retrospective, moderated Q&A, & more!

STORIES MADE TO LAST: INFINITE PRESENTS THEIR NEXT BIG TITLES

Some stories don't just end – they stay. Infinite pours passion and emotion into crafting anime made to be loved for ten years and beyond. Come meet the Producer behind "This Monster Wants to Eat Me" and discover their next unforgettable story: "I Want to Love You Till Your Dying Day" – and more.

TBS ANIME SPECIAL PANEL: TAKOPI'S ORIGINAL SIN PRODUCER TALK & UPCOMING ANIME SHOWCASE

Since its release, Takopi's Original Sin has deeply moved fans and become a major sensation. In this special panel, producers reveal behind-the-scenes stories, creative insights, and the passion that brought the series to life, followed by an exclusive presentation of TBS's upcoming anime lineup.

TEXAS WAIFU WARS 3: 5TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Since 2021 Waifu Wars has brought people all over the anime community from Fujoshis to Power-scalers all under one roof. We have returned to Anime Expo to answer one question on everyone's mind... Who is THE best waifu? Come celebrate the 5th anniversary by defending your one true love!

THE GAME DESIGN OF KINGDOM HEARTS

Ever hear of a game series called Kingdom Hearts? Have you played all of the games, or skimmed some lore videos (or AX panels ;))? If there's one or two games you may have passed on, come take a look with us as we take a little dive into the design of Kingdom Hearts across the series!

THE TALE OF .HACK//Z.E.R.O.: FROM LICENSED IP TO UNPRECEDENTED SELF-PUBLISHING

On its 30th anniversary, Japanese game developer CyberConnect2 announced .hack//Z.E.R.O., a new game in the series, which they'd gained permission from BANDAI NAMCO Entertainment to plan, develop, and publish. CC2 representatives will discuss the company's history, self-publishing, and IP projects.

TOKYOPOP PRESENTS: LOVE IS LOVELOVE!

Join us for an hour-long conversation all about LOVE as TOKYOPOP staff discuss the latest upcoming titles from our LoveLove brand, what LoveLove is all about, and more!

TRUE DIGITAL OWNERSHIP* WITH BOOKWALKER - *TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY

Join BookWalker's Sam Pinansky and Susan McCulloch for a (mostly) fine-print-free look at the digital manga and LN experience. Dive into how LCP tech grants cross-platform freedom and true ownership. Explore 79,000+ licensed volumes and see how BookWalker makes "digital" feel like yours to keep.

UNCLE YUHKI'S SILENT LIBRARY

Come on in! Pick a card! Careful though! Only the strong AND silent survive– and then get prizes! (ooh~) Team up and work together to complete these ANYTHING goes type tasks– BUT without creating a single sound. If you do, you shall be rewarded. Break the silence– and more punishment shall be had.

UNVEILING KODANSHA'S LATEST MANGA

Kodansha—purveyors of exciting manga like Blue Lock, Gachiakuta, Witch Hat Atelier & more—invites fans for a first look at Kodansha's latest slate of print manga licenses coming to a bookshelf near you! Join Kodansha to get this sneak peek, stay for the Q&A, & even come away with surprise giveaways!

VISUAL NOVELS: INTERACTIVE LITERATURE FROM JAPAN!

Join Angel Rose for an exploration the visual novel game style! We'll discuss what factors make up a visual novel, genres within the medium, localization, the role of eroge, Western creations, and which underground stories went on to become your favorite anime.

WAYFORWARD ANIME GAME DEVELOPER PANEL

Game developers WayForward return to Anime Expo to showcase their latest anime-inspired video games with new trailers, behind-the-scenes, Q&A with game directors, prizes, and exclusive reveals!

WHY JAPANESE CONTENT, WHY NOW? – ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM PRESENTED BY POPPOWERPROJECT

Why is Japanese content gaining global momentum now? From anime and live action to games and cross-media projects, this symposium explores the creative, industrial, and international forces driving its rise—and what is needed to sustain that growth.

WORKSHOP: VOICE ACTING FOR JAPANESE ANIME

Join us in voicing your favorite anime in Japanese! We'll learn vocal warmups and tips and tricks from professional voice actors before tackling the ultimate challenge: voicing short scenes together! Don't worry about your Japanese language learning experience or level; everyone is welcome!

WRITING THE DOKI DOKI LITERATURE CLUB CHARACTERS

Doki Doki Literature Club creator Dan Salvato shares his approach to designing and writing characters in DDLC and beyond, and how real human imperfection can be applied to simple character designs in order to bring out their most lovable traits. Q&A at the end.

X-MEN VERSUS MY HERO ACADEMIA

Welcome to the ultimate debate battle between two amazing shows! This will be an audience participation event where two teams will be formed to see who is superior! Quirks Versus the X-gene! Come check out which team will come on top as they are asked various questions in an attempt to win over the crowd!

YAOI & BARA MANGA, ANIME, & DATE SIMS

A panel that will go over even more tropes and trends that occur in many yaoi & bara manga, anime, & date sims..

YAOI JEOPARDY!

Have you ever wanted to play Jeopardy but you have no idea what any of the answers are cause same??? That's why we are hosting Yaoi Jeopardy! Where all the Fujin can play, foolish things are sure to ensue.



For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



ACKY BRIGHT LIVE DRAWING

Catch an exclusive live drawing by world-renowned artist and illustrator Acky Bright! The work will feature Bright's latest project, a sports manga epic ft. a cast of original characters and pro baseball players. GalaXic Baseball League Chapter One is now available from VIZ Media. The finished piece will remain on display through the end of the show, please check the live draw area WF4 in the West Hall lobby for the full schedule.



West Hall Lobby
WF4

Day 1-3 (July 2-4)
9:00AM - 6:00PM

Day 4 (July 5)
9:00AM - 3:00PM

DAY 2 SCHEDULE - JULY 3


**ACADEMIC
PROGRAM**


**CAREER
TRACK**


**COSPLAY
TRACK**


**CULTURAL
TRACK**


**FAMILY
TRACK**

See page 15 for more information on AX Programming Tracks.

“AOASHI” – CHANGING THE GAME OF SPORTS ANIME

Step onto the field with AOASHI! Join our special MC and guests for exclusive sneak peeks of Season 2 (currently in production), behind-the-scenes talks, interactive fan challenges, and giveaways. Don't miss this special session that explores what sets “AOASHI” apart in the world of sports anime.

“KAGURABACHI” ANIME WORLD TOUR - WORLD PREMIERE SCREENING AT ANIME EXPO

Weekly Shonen Jump's Kagurabachi is getting a TV anime adaptation! Join us for the world premiere screening of the first 20 minutes of Episode 1 followed by a special panel discussion with the staff and cast. They will be sharing their passion for the series and taking you behind the scenes!

[U.S. PREMIERE] THE JAADUGAR: A WITCH IN MONGOLIA WITH SCIENCE SARU

Join us for the grand U.S. premiere of Episodes 1 and 2, featuring special guests Executive Director Naoko Yamada, Director Abel Góngora (Science SARU), and more! Be the first to learn exclusive behind-the-scenes details exploring the series' world, themes, and unique setting.

A-1 PICTURES INDUSTRY PANEL

A-1 Pictures, the studio behind hits like Fate/strange Fake, MASHLE: MAGIC AND MUSCLES, and Sword Art Online, invites you to be among the first to watch their new series coming this summer, GROW UP SHOW -Sunflower Circus-! Plus, learn about the studio's other upcoming titles directly from the staff!

AKSYS GAMES PANEL

Aksys Games is back with a panel at Anime Expo delving into our upcoming releases and possibly a few surprises. Come and see what we have in store!

ALL ABOUT COSPLAY IN TOKYO

Are you planning a trip to Tokyo or curious about what cosplay is like there? Come learn about the best places to buy supplies, popular events and photography spaces, and the rules of cosplay culture in Japan!

ANIME PINS - COLLECTORS, TRADE, & SWAP

Join us as we meet up and share our love for the anime pin community and oogle at collections, trade, and swap!

ANIMEIGO INDUSTRY PANEL

New release news and announcements from AnimEigo, the oldest anime label in North America, and parent company MediaOCD.

BANDAI NAMCO FILMWORKS INDUSTRY PANEL

Come join us as we talk about what's new and upcoming at Bandai Namco Filmworks with appearances from special guests!

BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE FATE/STRANGE FAKE ENGLISH DUB

Join the English dub cast and staff for a delightful peek into the dub production of this winter's new anime hit, Fate/strange Fake!

BL BINGO! 18+

After a long day at con theres nothing like a BL... themed game of BINGO?! Swing by! We give great recommendations of new and old BL alike and have fun questions and quizzes. Meet other fujin like yourself and more!

BL COMICS LABEL “GUSH COMICS” INDUSTRY PANEL

Come and learn more about BL (Boy's love) manga and enjoy exclusive announcements from KAIOHSHA, the publisher behind GUSH COMICS, one of the leading BL comic labels in Japan. Join us for a deep dive into the world of BL with insights from the Japanese publishing industry and more!

BLACK FANDOM AND ANIME: HOW WE “ADOPT” OUR CHARACTERS

Join scholars at the JAMS@AX Academic Symposium as they discuss black anime fandom and character identity!

BLACK TORCH ANIME PREMIERE PANEL

Be the first to watch the BLACK TORCH Episode 1 subbed premiere presented by VIZ & Crunchyroll! Join special guests AJ Beckles (Jiro) and Keith Silverstein (Rago) for an exclusive screening, behind-the-scenes insights, and exciting giveaways as this supernatural action series ignites the stage.



BLUE ARCHIVE & BEYOND: A SPECIAL PANEL BY IO DIVISION

To all our beloved Senseis, we've missed you! The IO Division is thrilled to announce our return to Anime Expo 2026. Let's make new memories with untold developer stories of Blue Archive, and step into the future as we unveil our highly anticipated new title. Join us for the next big adventure!

BLUE BOX OFFICIAL PANEL

Don't miss the official Blue Box panel with special guests Yoshino Aoyama (Japanese voice of Yumeka) and Zach Aguilar (English voice of Taiki)! Relive the most unforgettable moments from Season 1, get the latest information on Season 2, and score exclusive giveaways!

BONSAI ARTISTRY 🌿

Eastern Leaf will host a bonsai workshop for registered attendees. Attendees will learn what a bonsai tree is and how to create one from raw plant material. The workshop includes materials to create a bonsai tree with instruction from Jason Chan, the owner of Eastern Leaf.

BRING IT ON "BAKI-DOU"! EXPERIENCE THE SHOWDOWN WITH THE "BAKI-DOU" TEAM

Feel the power of "BAKI-DOU: The Invincible Samurai" in real life with the team behind the anime. Explore how "BAKI-DOU" was adapted into anime and what to expect from the new season's intense fight scenes. Featuring special guests and a fun challenge, be prepared for an action-packed experience!

COSPLAY COURT 🌸 18+

You've been summoned for jury duty! Help us put your favorite characters and friends in cosplay on blast so we can cancel them on TWITTER! Let's charge Goku with public indecency, Sephiroth for environmental pollution via shampoo bottles, and clutch our pearls at other dramatic accusations!

COSPLAY CRASH COURSE: FROM IDEA TO EXECUTION 🦋

This cosplay crash course breaks down the process from concept to completion. Topics include character selection, material choices, build planning, and key techniques to help create cohesive, well-executed cosplays.

*Presented by AX26 Cosplay Senpai Mega Mite

CYBERPUNK: EDGERUNNERS 2 – WELCOME BACK TO NIGHT CITY!

Get ready for Cyberpunk: Edgerunners 2! This brand-new, standalone story will show an even more brutal, raw, and painfully human side of Night City, so join us live to hear directly from voice actors and creators of the series, and brace yourself for what's to come.

DARK HORSE MANGA

Dark Horse Manga returns to Anime Expo! Join us as we celebrate our 40th anniversary--38 of those spent publishing manga! Also, learn about the past, present & future of Dark Horse Manga--including multiple exciting new manga license announcements! Panel attendees will also receive a free poster, and have the opportunity to score some manga prizes!

DELICIOUS IN DATA: ANIME MARKET RESEARCH WITH FANSERVEUS

The consumer insights team at FanserveUs presents all-new data on what fans are watching and what audiences want to see, read, and collect more of. Join us for a palate-cleansing side quest into the techniques and developments shaping research in fandom and market analytics, then flex your smarts and win a treat in our lightning round quiz!

DEMON SLAYER TRIVIA 🌸 🏠

Come play a game of Demon Slayer trivia! Attendees will be called to answer a trivia question and if you're correct, you win a prize! Come test your knowledge! Hosted by @mia.whorror

DENPASOFT INDUSTRY PANEL 18+

Curious about the spicier side of the gaming industry? Join us for a humorous but informative evening discussing all the latest developments with Denpasoft. Check out some of our new projects and perhaps a visit from a special guest as well.

DESIGN YOUR OWN STONEWARE PIECE 🌸

Join us at the 2026 Anime Expo for a paint-your-own pottery workshop. This workshop is a great way to get creative, create a one-of-a-kind keepsake from the Expo, and, as a bonus, you get time to rest your feet after a long day of exploring.

DOKIBIRD'S AX BIRTHDAY BASH 2026 WITH THE SLOPPY SISTERS

Join Dokibird as she celebrates her birthday at Anime Expo! With special guests from the Sloppy Sisters!

EATING ORCS, ROOMING WITH CATS: ECOCRITICISM AND ANIME STUDIES - JAMS KEYNOTE 📖

JAMS' Keynote Speaker, Daniel Ambord, delivers an academic lecture about anime, ecology, and eco-criticism.

EXPLORE YOUR PASSIONS: BL/GL/ROMANCE WITH MANGAPLAZA

Join MangaPlaza and our special MC & influencer guests for the ultimate BL/GL/Romance celebration! Build trope tier lists, test your manga knowledge, and connect with fans who share your passion. Discover original titles, win exclusive giveaways, and fuel your love for the genres you live for!

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



FAKKU MEME50 - GUEST Q&A

Join legendary hentai manga and doujin artist MEME50 as they make their triumphant return to Anime Expo! At a one-of-a-kind Q&A and live-drawing session, MEME50 will share stories and experiences from the industry in Japan and talk about releasing their books in English.

FORGET THE BIG 3 IT'S JUST BIG ME

An unhinged 18+ throwdown with the Big 3 and Dragon Ball (Z/Super), plus a messy debate on the 'new Big 3.' Expect wild takes, shameless character slander, plot roasting, and zero chill.

FROM DIGITAL MANGA TO ANIME: INSIDE C'MOA COMICS' LATEST ADAPTATIONS & FAN SCREENING

Join C'moA Comics, one of Japan's leading digital manga publishers, for an inside look at how digital titles become anime. Enjoy behind-the-scenes stories from recent adaptations and a fan screening (title TBA), plus prize opportunities for attendees.

GAMES, SPORTS, AND GENDER IN ANIME

Join scholars at the JAMS@AX Academic symposium to discuss horsegirls, dungeons and dragons, and women in sports anime!

GO-GO JOJO! A JOJO GAME SHOW

Everything is a Jojo reference, and the stand user can be anyone! Join us for this interactive panel with prizes on the line! We talk about Jojo's Bizarre Adventure, pose like Jojo characters, and answer Jojo trivia.

GUNPLA 101: A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PLASTIC MODEL KITS!

Whether you're a fan of Gundam or a fan of building things, this panel is for you. We'll teach you all about the basics, from deciphering grades, reading manuals, and what tools you'll need. We'll also be raffling out a kit to get you started on your building journey. So kick back, learn a little and join the wonderful world of Gunpla building!

HATER'S DOJO

Do you have beef with an anime character and/or fandom? Are you the biggest and funniest hater at AX? Then sign up for a hilarious roast with the top three fans getting cash prizes.

HATSUNE MIKU: COLORFUL STAGE! FAN MEETING AT ANIME EXPO 2026

The hit rhythm game HATSUNE MIKU: COLORFUL STAGE! comes to Anime Expo for a special one-day fan meeting! Featuring Daisuke Hirose (voice of Tsukasa Tenma) and Machico (voice of Nene Kusanagi). Enjoy talk shows, music, and more. Don't miss it!

HOYO'S FINEST: A SPICY 18+ EXPERIENCE

Come see some of Hoyo's most handsome and beautiful men for a night filled with spicy conversation about their needs & desires. There will be games, prizes and more to be shared so drop on by to support and thirst for your favorite Hoyo man!

I LIKE THE VILLAIN: HEAR ME OUT

Are villains truly evil or just misunderstood? From tragic backstories to questionable life choices, we'll explore what redeeming qualities they might have. Bring your hottest takes, your moral gray flags, and your sense of humor; things are about to get chaotic.

IF BAD, WHY HOT?

It's no secret that everyone loves a hot villain. Today, we're going to be finding out just what makes those villains, scoundrels, and evildoers alike so appealing; if you're down bad for the bad guys (and love seeing them wreak havoc), then you've come to the right place!

IT'S ANIME: NEW ANNOUNCEMENT WITH SPECIAL GUESTS

"It's Anime," the ultimate new destination for anime fans, is unveiling exciting announcements with special voice actor guests! Join us for exciting announcement, exclusive appearances, and more – plus a guaranteed giveaway for every attendee!

J-NOVEL CLUB ANIME EXPO 2026 INDUSTRY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Be among the first to see what's next! Join J-Novel Club at Anime Expo 2026 for exciting new manga and light novel license reveals! From fan favorites to surprise pickups, you won't want to miss it. Stick around for insights, live reactions, and a possible audience Q&A! 

JET PROGRAM 101

Would you like to work and live in Japan while teaching your language and culture to the Japanese people? Our panel of former participants will discuss how the program works and how you can apply. We will share our experiences and take questions. If you like to learn more, please stop by.

JUNJI ITO MASTERPIECE COLLECTION PRESENTED BY GLOBAL STAGE HOLLYWOOD & TV TOKYO

Junji Ito Masterpieces – A horror anthology from TV Tokyo, premiering July 2026. 17 dark masterpieces across 12 episodes. Presented by Global Stage Hollywood Film Festival. Panel & screening at Anime Expo

K-POP DANCE WORKSHOP

From BTS to Blackpink, there are a lot of iconic K-POP songs and dances! Now, you can learn one of these dances! Come and join us to learn one of these iconic K-POP choreographies as well as dance with other K-POP fans alike!

KADOKAWA ANIME 10TH ANNIVERSARY PANEL: RE:ZERO, KONOSUBA, AND BUNGO STRAY DOGS PRODUCERS ROUNDTABLE & RE:ZERO S4 THE RECAPTURE ARC EP 1 PREMIERE! (SUPPORTED BY CRUNCHYROLL)

Don't miss the exclusive Re:ZERO S4 The Recapture Arc Ep 1 Premiere! Celebrate 10 years of KADOKAWA Anime with the producers of Re:ZERO, KONOSUBA, and Bungo Stray Dogs. Enjoy behind-the-scenes stories and announcements for the next decade. Supported by Crunchyroll.



KAIJU GIRL CARAMELISE: THE KAIJU-SIZED?! NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE

High school girl x Kaiju?! This over-the-top romantic comedy is finally stomping its way into AX! Join us for a special screening of Ep 1 and the North American Premiere of Ep 2. Featuring exclusive giveaways and a Kaiju-sized stage packed with laughs and love!

KIZUNA AI SPECIAL LIVE AT AX 2026

The pioneer of VTubers, Kizuna AI, is coming to Anime Expo for a special live performance! Kizuna AI herself will perform a DJ set featuring her original EDM tracks and remixes of her popular songs, including a live performance. Don't miss this chance to see Kizuna AI at a stage at Anime Expo!

KODANSHA PRESENTS: BLUE LOCK CREATORS MUNEYUKI KANESHIRO AND YUSUKE NOMURA

Kodansha presents a conversation with Muneyuki Kaneshiro & Yusuke Nomura – the egoist creators behind the wildly popular manga and anime, Blue Lock. Enter this panel as lumps of talent to be shaped by Kaneshiro & Nomura's discussion about their process, highs & lows of manga serialization, & more!

KYOTO ANIMATION'S NEW FRONTIER: SPARKS OF TOMORROW U.S. PREMIERE & DIRECTOR MINORU OTA Q&A

This panel includes the U.S. Premiere of episode 1 and episode 2 before Netflix streaming, and the panel discussion of Director Minoru Ota and Producer Satori Senami.

LAST CLOUDIA: FIRST OFFICIAL PANEL

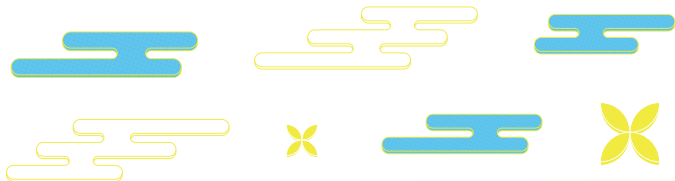
Be part of the acclaimed JRPG Last Cloudia's 7th anniversary celebrations—join the developers, AIDIS, for a panel discussion to mark their first ever Anime Expo appearance! Attendees will get exclusive original merch and a sneak peek at upcoming releases.

LET'S MAKE A COSPLAY PATTERN! ✂

Join Kira and Ari of award-winning Kirari Cosplay for a fun, interactive workshop on making a basic cosplay pattern out of plastic wrap, masking tape, and sharpies! We'll walk you through the basics and help you make a basic pattern of your choice that you can take home with you!

LONGSWORD BASICS - A WORKSHOP BY SOCIAL SWORDS

Join founder RJ McKeehan for a beginner-friendly longsword workshop based on medieval combat manuals. Learn stances, footwork, and cutting techniques in a safe, engaging environment.



LOVE AND DEEPSPACE: LIVE INTERACTIONS 🌸 18+

We are back for a 2nd year! Do you have a favorite love interest from Love and Deepspace? Have you ever wondered what it would be like to interact with them in person? Well, now's your chance! Join our group of Love and Deepspace cosplayers for a night of full of games, prizes, and a Q&A! *Note: We are NOT affiliated with Infold or Papergames!

MAKING GAMES IS HARD PART 3: FEATURING ALEKS LE AND SPECIAL GUEST

Rocket Panda Games returns with Volume 3 of its "Game Making" series, spotlighting Aleks Le and a special guest. Dive into an inside look at how the right voice can make or break a character, complete with live voice-over performances.

MAKING MANGA WITH VIZ ORIGINALS

Are you an aspiring mangaka? Meet the editors and mangaka behind VIZ Originals & One-Shots and discover how to publish your manga with VIZ. From writing to art, walk through the manga creation process! Plus, get advice on what's important to include when pitching your manga series or one-shot!

MANGA 101: CREATE YOUR OWN CHARACTER

Join Kazuo Maekawa (Ace Attorney) for a hands-on introduction to Japanese manga creation. Learn character design, paneling, and storytelling, then create your own 4-panel comic. Open to all skill levels. Presented by JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles.

MANGAGAMER: THE NOW & FUTURE OF VISUAL NOVEL 18+

Join Mangagamer, the largest localizer of Visual Novels, as we discuss the newest games we're bringing to fans worldwide and showcase the steamy appeal of this growing medium. Our staff will also be presenting our newest license announcements, and answer questions from the audience if time permits.

NAGINATA AN ANIME POLEARM WORKSHOP

Learn how to fight with a naginata, the weapon used by One Piece's White Beard, JJK's Maki, and KPop Demon Hunter's Mira. We will cover basic techniques, stances, and fighting combos. Gear will be provided and the workshop will be instructed by US national champions. All ages welcome!

NEW GAME+: AN ANIME MUSIC GAMESHOW 🌸

Congratulations, you've mastered anime OPs and EDs. You have unlocked New Game+. Questions you face will be more difficult, with extra modifiers like OSTs and mismatched anime openings. Come face the next challenge in anime music trivia.

SHIP IT OR SKIP IT 🌸 18+

Prepare your hearts and hold on to your seats! We'll be setting sail and diving into the world of anime romance. Before you jump to a happily ever after let's decide if these couples are truly meant to be or are they toxic AF? In this panel we'll be discussing your OTP is true luv or mirror and fog.

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



SHOEMAKING FOR COSPLAY

Learn about the process of shoemaking from start to finish, including tools, materials, techniques, and other tips to help you get started.

SHONEN JUMP ANIME “KILL BLUE” -SPECIAL HOMEROOM-

Class is in session! As Shonen Jump's breakout hit “KILL BLUE” reaches its Season 1 finale, join creator Tadatashi Fujimaki (Kuroko's Basketball) and the production team for a special homeroom featuring behind-the-scenes insights, live drawing, a “KILL BLUE” pop quiz, and exclusive giveaways.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG ANIMATED SHORTS: A FRAME-BY-FRAME RETROSPECTIVE

Peek into the world of SEGA's short-form animation as we celebrate 35 years of Sonic the Hedgehog. Join Sonic Creative Director Takashi Iizuka, Austin Keys, and Jasmin Hernandez, with special guests Tyson Hesse, Evan Stanley, and Alan Wan to discuss their creative processes.

SOUND! EUPHONIUM THE FINAL MOVIE PART 1 & PART 2 - AX WORLD PREMIERE LONG TRAILER & SPECIAL PANEL

Join Chief Director Tatsuya Ishihara and Producer Satori Senami of Kyoto Animation as they present the Anime Expo-exclusive world premiere of the extended trailer. Discover newly revealed scenes leading into the series' grand finale!

SPIKE CHUNSOFT, INC. OFFICIAL PANEL 2026

Come celebrate Danganronpa's 15th anniversary & pre-launch of STEINS;GATE RE:BOOT! Danganronpa Producer Shohei Sakakibara, Kazutaka Kodaka and English VAs join us as guests. There will be STEINS;GATE quiz, live VA performance, giveaways and more! There might be a sneak peek of Danganronpa 2x2...!?

SPORTS ANIME FESTIVAL!!!

Are you a fan of Haikyuu!!, Kuroko no Basket, BLUE LOCK, Yuri on Ice, SK8, or just sports anime in general? If so, this is the panel you've been waiting for! Join a talented cast of English voice actors from your favorite sports anime. Participate in exciting games like Jeopardy and more, all centered around the world of sports anime!!!

STAY ON TOP OF THE LATEST ANIME NEWS WITH ANIME NEWS NETWORK

With over 25 years of experience, Anime News Network is the leading source of information for anime and manga industry professionals and fans alike. Join the ANN team to learn how we bring you everything you need to know, straight from Japan.

STEEL BALL RUN JOJO'S BIZARRE ADVENTURE SPECIAL PANEL FEATURING YUGO KANNO

Celebrate the highly anticipated STEEL BALL RUN JoJo's Bizarre Adventure with a special panel featuring acclaimed composer Yugo Kanno and more special guests! Experience a special live performance, plus a conversation with the guests you won't want to miss.

STUDIO KAI ANIME “SENTENCED TO BE A HERO” CREATOR TALK SHOW

Founded in 2019, Studio KAI has quickly risen with hits like “Sentenced to Be a Hero” and “Snowball Earth.” This talk show hosted by Studio KAI brings together the creators of “Sentenced to Be a Hero” for a retrospective discussion of the series.

SUKEBAN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT AT ANIME EXPO

A Japanese female pro-wrestling league, will make its triumphant return to Anime Expo with a World Championship Fight. Sukeban brings together the toughest wrestlers and girl gangs from Tokyo to fight for world domination, in an event that will also feature special appearances and surprise cameos.

THE ART OF COLOR AND CHARACTER: A LIVE DRAWING WITH MIKA PIKAZO

Join renowned character designer and illustrator Mika Pikazo for a special live panel and drawing demonstration! Explore her creative process, artistic inspirations, and career journey, followed by audience Q&A and a final artwork reveal.

THE BASICS OF BOXING DEFENSE WITH MIZUKI HIRUTA

Join Reigning WBO World Super Flyweight Champion Mizuki Hiruta for a fun, family-friendly introduction to boxing-inspired movement. This no-contact workshop focuses on balance, footwork, and defensive coordination. Participants will learn how boxers train their bodies through simple, guided exercises that are easy to follow at any age or experience level. Along the way, watch as Mizuki shares insights from her journey and demonstrates how discipline and mindset shape performance.

THE LATEST WITH KOTOBUKIYA!

ARTFX J, BISHOUJO, Oshi Works, scale figures, model kits and more! Kotobukiya presents the latest product updates, first time reveals, and announcements. And as always there will be plenty of giveaways! Don't miss out!”

THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF 2D ANIMATED GAMES & THE MAKING OF CHAOS ZERO NIGHTMARE

8 months per character. Quality without compromise. The untold story of Chaos Zero Nightmare's developer, Super Creative. Join Hyung-seok Kim, director of CZN and Epic Seven, as he shares an honest behind-the-scenes look at the values that those who love animation refuse to give up on.

THE RAMPARTS OF ICE EPISODE 14 SCREENING & SPECIAL TALK

Be among the first to see Episode 14 on the big screen right after its streaming premiere! Stay after the screening for a special talk with director MANQ and producer Yoko, who'll share behind-the-scenes stories and insights into the production. A surprise exclusive preview may be in store!?



TO YOU IN THE BEYOND: WORLD PREMIERE & SPECIAL GUEST PANEL FEATURING ANNA NAGASE

Be among the first to experience the world premiere of *To You in the Beyond*, an animated film based on a novel by Akiko Abe, winner of the 2025 Japan Booksellers' Award for Cafune. The screening is followed by a talk with director Junichi Wada, voice actor Anna Nagase, and producer Koichiro Mukai.

WAFU WARS THE GAMESHOW ♣

Waifu Wars is a panel where audience members are randomly selected to compete in custom challenges to defend the honor of their favorite characters. Winners will walk away with a photo of their Waifu or Husbando while the loser must throw their photo in the trash live on stage.

WARFRAME: VOICES OF THE VOID

Anime and sci-fi collide! Jump into Warframe's gaming panel led by Digital Extremes' Rebb Ford & Megan Everett! Joined by Warframe voice actors, get a look inside the free-to-play hit that's connecting players globally. All Attendees get a code for a new Glyph featuring GARUDA & ASH's PROTOFRAMES!

WHAT'S NEW FROM INKLORE

Join the team from Inklore and discover your next obsession at this sneak peek at what's new and upcoming on our list of best-in-class manga, manhwa, and global pop comics!

WIG STYLING- FROM GETTING STARTED TO ADVANCED TECHNIQUES ♡

Styling wigs can be hard! This panel, open to wig beginners and veterans alike, walks through basic styling techniques, advanced styling techniques, wig care and ways to troubleshoot difficult wigs.

*Presented by AX26 Cosplay Senpai Twinfools

YEN PRESS INDUSTRY PANEL

For over a decade, Yen Press has been one of the biggest publishers of manga, releasing the likes of *Black Butler*, *Fruits Basket* and *Toilet-bound Hanako-kun*. Yen Press has also given a home to fan favorite categories such as light novels, audiobooks and manhwa. Join us for new announcements and Q&A!

YOSHITAKA AMANO: ART & ENTERTAINMENT – A NEW CREATIVE CHALLENGE

Experience the latest updates on Yoshitaka Amano's new anime project, *ZAN*, including an exclusive trailer screening, introductions to the legendary creative team, and previews of upcoming projects from Yoshitaka Amano's newly launched company.

YOU LAUGH YOU LEAVE: LIVE ON STAGE IN ANIME EXPO! ♡

An interactive anime comedy showdown at Anime Expo starring Jimmy Here, where voice actors and creators cosplay on stage while performers embody iconic shonen heroes, villains, and magical girls to make them laugh. Every laugh costs a life in this high-energy celebration of cosplay, fandom, and anime culture!

YOUR INDIE VISUAL NOVEL: ADVICE AND INSIGHT FROM JAST 18+

JAST doesn't just publish VNs, we've got a whole storefront dedicated to selling them. And we take a lot of joy in platforming indie devs and their passion projects! Whether yours is just getting off the ground, totally finished, or still just an idea, we're here to offer some advice from folks just about seen it all.



DAY 3 SCHEDULE - JULY 4


**ACADEMIC
PROGRAM**


**CAREER
TRACK**


**COSPLAY
TRACK**


**CULTURAL
TRACK**


**FAMILY
TRACK**

See page 15 for more information on AX Programming Tracks.

“ASCENDANCE OF BOOKWORM” AND YOUR NEXT OBSESSION PRESENTED BY YTV ANIMATION & YTE

Join YTV group for an exclusive behind-the-scenes journey into the world of their up and coming anime backed by WIT studio, 100studio, LIDENFILMS and more. Enjoy live drawing sessions, a special watch party featuring sneak peeks of exciting titles, meet special guests, and fun surprises.

“HYUNG,” HE SAID: BRINGING KOREAN BL NOVELS TO ENGLISH

In Korean stories, a word like “hyung” can convey character, relationship, and emotion all at once. Join Publang as we explore how we balance cultural nuance, authorial voice, and natural readability in our localization process across our catalog, from shifter rom-com to sweeping military drama.

“THUNDER 3” PREMIERE PANEL WITH PRODUCTION STAFF

Join us for the premiere screening of “Thunder 3” episodes 1-2! The production staff takes the stage to share behind-the-scenes stories, insights into the creative details poured into the animation, series highlights, and insider moments found only at Anime Expo!

15 YEARS AND BEYOND: WARNER BROS. JAPAN ANIME PRODUCTION 15TH ANNIVERSARY PANEL WITH UPCOMING TITLES!

Join Warner Bros. Japan Anime Production’s 15th Anniversary Panel! Celebrate 15 years of acclaimed titles including STEEL BALL RUN JoJo’s Bizarre Adventure, Record of Ragnarok III, and FIST OF THE NORTH STAR: HOKUTO NO KEN, featuring special guests and exclusive giveaways you won’t want to miss!

A FAST TRAVEL UNLOCKED SPECIAL: ZIPPING THROUGH SOLARIS 3.0-3.4

Join us for an exclusive live interview as we fast-travel through Wuthering Waves Version 3.0-3.4, revisiting Startorch Academy’s grounded storytelling and the character journeys that shaped the era. Stay attentive: surprise guests may appear with unexpected moments and exclusive stories.

AKANE-BANASHI - SPECIAL PANEL WITH ANNA NAGASE AND PRODUCER - PRESENTED BY TV ASAHI

Don’t miss this exclusive Akane-banashi panel just after the final episode of the anime, featuring Anna Nagase, the voice of the main character Akane, along with the producer and more! There will be exclusive content, behind-the-scenes stories, character insights!

AMUSE CREATIVE STUDIO PRESENTS : NEW ANIME LAUNCH EVENT

A brand-new anime from the extraordinary world of Mika Pikazo—visionary creator and official guest of AX 2026—is finally here! Plus, a special appearance by the creators of ELECEED, sharing exclusive behind-the-scenes insights from webtoon to anime.

ANIME EXPO 2026 MASQUERADE

The AX Masquerade is Anime Expo’s longest-running and most prestigious cosplay competition, where talented cosplayers will now take the Main Events stage at Crypto.com Arena to compete for incredible prizes and the coveted Best in Show title.

ANIME EXPO PLUSHIE MAKING WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE PLUSHIE WORKSHOP

Create your very own Plushumi The Plushie Workshop plushie at Anime Expo 2026! Choose between our adorable White Bear or Beige Bunny and bring your plushie to life through stuffing, assembly, and customization. You’ll even get to see our signature knitting devices in action and try them yourself!

ANIME JEOPARDY

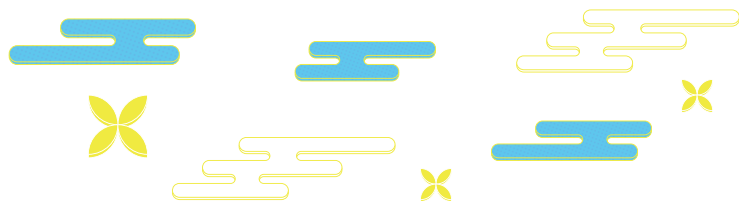
How well do you know your anime trivia? Come challenge other con-goers and see who knows more. Clues are taken from all eras of anime, from classics to the hottest shows currently airing.

ARC SYSTEM WORKS - DEVELOPER TABLE TALK

Get hyped with Arc System Works! Devs share updates, upcoming releases, creative insights, and gameplay from multiple titles, including Guilty Gear -Strive-. Free swag while supplies last!

ATLUS INDUSTRY PANEL

Join Atlus West for an exclusive look at what’s ahead, featuring special guests and exciting updates you won’t want to miss!



BLEACH: THOUSAND-YEAR BLOOD WAR - THE CALAMITY STAGE

The final battle begins! Celebrate BLEACH: Thousand-Year Blood War - The Calamity with special guests Masakazu Morita and Johnny Yong Bosch (Ichigo Kurosaki). Join VIZ for a discussion with the guests, door giveaways, and advanced screening of the subbed Episode 1 of the Final Part!

BOYS LOVE AND FUJOSHI: HISTORY AND INFLUENCE IN MODERN FANDOM

Fujoshi have been a part of fandom since conception. Fans of BL (Boys Love), they have built the genre up from humble shoujo manga and glamrock doujin beginnings into a massive industry. Join us for a deep dive into fujo culture, the history of BL, and the current state of the 2d gay boy industry.

BREAKING INTO ANIME & ANIMATION: HOW STUDIOS FIND AND HIRE TALENT

Want to work in anime or animation? Industry insiders reveal how studios discover, recruit, and hire new talent. Producers, executives, and creative leaders discuss what anime and animation studios look for and how artists, writers, animators, and creators can break in.

BREAKING THE FRAME: STUDIO ORANGE FROM TRIGUN STARGAZE, BEASTARS, AND MORE

Expanding anime storytelling through 3DCG. Join Studio Orange for an inside look at creating dynamic emotion, expressive character acting, and cinematic action, with production insights from TRIGUN STARGAZE, BEASTARS, and Ensemble Stars!! Masterpiece MV—and how these ideas continue to shape the studio's work.

BRIGHT HORIZONS: THE ARTISTIC JOURNEY OF ACKY BRIGHT

Acky Bright is returning to Anime Expo! Known for collaborating with major US brands like McDonald's, Red Bull, Marvel's Predator, Meta, Netflix, and more, Acky will be sharing exciting announcements about his latest projects.

BUILD BOOK BOOT CAMP

What the heck is a build book? What do you even put in it? And do they really expect you to explain your whole costume in 10 pages or less??? Get answers to these questions and more from AX 2025 Cosplay Senpai and build book enthusiast Luluko!

CLOVERWORKS INDUSTRY PANEL

The studio behind SPY x FAMILY, BOCCHI THE ROCK!, My Dress-Up Darling, The Fragrant Flower Blooms with Dignity, and many more, presents the CloverWorks Industry Panel! Don't miss the exclusive info and announcements from special guests visiting Anime Expo from CloverWorks!

COSPLAY JUDGE ROUNDTABLE

Interested to know what cosplay craftsmanship judges are looking for? Wondering what makes a good build book? Dying to know what it takes to win best in show? Come join our 2026 Cosplay Masquerade judges as they answer all your questions! *Moderated by AX26 Cosplay Senpai TwinFools

COSPLAY SUMMER CAMP!

Ever wished you could go to a summer camp just for anime lovers? Well wish no more! In the second installment of Cosplay Summer Camp we'll be making little crafts to swap with other people! As usual we'll be adding a fun nerd-y twist to it, so be ready to laugh, have fun, and make new friends!

DEBATE TIME! HOT SHOUNEN TAKES

Hosted by the so-called King of Shounen from a viral anime street interview, Galaxy Shogun ignites Debate Time. Is Kakashi a failed mentor? Is Demon Slayer boring and overhyped? No safe opinions, no mercy—only the hottest Shounen takes and crowd chaos.

DECODING SUCCESS: THE ANATOMY OF STORYTELLING IN JAPANESE MANGA

Join KADOKAWA to launch your career as MANGA-KA! Legendary editor Hiroyuki Watanabe (Evangelion) shares the core of hit-making and insights from approx. 2,000 global submissions. Master the DNA of manga at this panel and use our new online submission portal to aim for your professional debut!

DETECTIVE CONAN: THE MILLION-DOLLAR PENTAGRAM U.S. PREMIERE SCREENING

Kid the Phantom Thief makes his grand debut at AX! Don't miss the U.S. premiere of Detective Conan: The Million-dollar Pentagon earning \$150+ Million worldwide. Witness the dazzling battle of blades and illusions that thrilled fandom!

DRECOM INDUSTRY PANEL W/ MAKOTO FURUKAWA AND DAIKI YAMASHITA FROM BLADE & BASTARD

With voice actors Makoto Furukawa (V.A of Iarumas) and Daiki Yamashita (V.A of Raraja) as special guests, we'll be hosting a talk session about "BLADE & BASTARD" anime. We'll also share the latest updates on Drecom, including titles with TV anime currently in production! Please come and join us!

DYSTOPIA, GEOGRAPHY, AND MUSEUMS - SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN ANIME

Join scholars at the JAMS@AX Academic symposium as they discuss manga in museum, geographic evolutions, social media, and surveillance in anime!

ELVES, ROBOTS, AND THE INVISIBLE MAN: EXPLORATIONS OF OTHERNESS IN ANIME

Join scholars at the JAMS@AX Academic symposium to discuss ai, elves, monstrosity, and shoujo manga!

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK: NORIHIRO NAGANUMA (“THE APOTHECARY DIARIES”) UNVEILS HIS NEW ACTION-PACKED ORIGINAL SERIES - AVEX PICTURES PANEL

Come join us at AX for the first ever reveal of Director Norihiro Naganuma's (Director of “The Apothecary Diaries”) brand new series! There will be a panel discussion, promotional videos and visuals for this completely original, action-packed series along with a Q&A with the director himself!

FAKKU INDUSTRY PANEL 18+

FAKKU is the largest independent manga publisher in the United States! They have released thousands of manga, games, and anime and quickly became the largest English hentai publisher in the world. Join FAKKU as they talk about their history, current projects, and brand new announcements.

FGO 9TH ANNIVERSARY X TYPE-MOON PROJECTS

It's Fate/Grand Order's 9th anniversary celebration! Join Aniplex of America's Albert Kao and special guests Ayako Kawasumi (Altria Pendragon and Anne Bonny) and Kana Ueda (Ishtar and Ershkigal) to discuss FGO's past, present, and future along with other TYPE-MOON projects!

FOR THE LOVE OF JOSEI MANGA! 18+

Josei manga has embedded itself in the hearts of women around the world. Covering mature themes, career struggles, romances, motherhood, marriages, and even divorce, it is not simply “hentai for women”. See why Josei manga is beloved, our favorite series, and why it gets confused with shōjo manga.

FRIEREN: BEYOND JOURNEY'S END - SPECIAL EVENT HOSTED BY TOHO ANIMATION

Join the “Frieren: Beyond Journey's End” panel! Director Tomoya Kitagawa, Supporting Director Keiichiro Saito, and Animation Producer Yuichiro Fukushi look back at Season 2 and discuss the upcoming Season 3, with a live drawing by Character Designer Keisuke Kojima. See what's next for Frieren!

FROM COSPLAY TO CURTAIN CALL 18+

Cosplay and the performing arts have always intersected. Curious about acting but unsure where to begin? Join a trained actress with 14 years' experience for an introduction to auditions, prep, training opportunities, voice acting resources, and performance skills to level up your cosplay content.

FROM PAGE TO COSPLAY! HOW BLACK GIRLS REDEFINE ICONIC ANIME CHARACTERS 18+

Black girls are taking center stage in the cosplay world, bringing colors, culture, and confidence to characters that aren't always created with us in mind. For this panel, we will explore how Black cosplayers redefine iconic anime through a blend of creativity and cultural expression.

GARAGE KITS: THE REALITY OF BECOMING A MODEL PAINTER - A VETERAN'S EXPERIENCE 18+

Curious about garage kits? Get the unfiltered reality from a 20 year veteran. What it takes before the final photos, the mistakes, the challenges, and what it really means to grow as a painter and artist.

GOOD SMILE COMPANY PRESENTS HATSUNE MIKU EXCLUSIVE SHOWCASE 2026

Join Chairman Takanori Aki & Kahotan & feel the energy at Good Smile Company's Official Hatsune Miku panel! Be there for a worldwide reveal of an all-new special Miku project, latest figure updates, a high-speed look at Racing Miku & GOODSMILE RACING, & a chance to win special prizes—don't miss it!

GUESS THAT ANIME - DOG !! 18+

Do you love dogs? Do you love anime dogs? Well here's your chance to test your knowledge of man's best friend in the anime universe. How many good bois to do you and how many more do you need to learn about and give them some pets! A fun spin on the guess that anime game. Small prizes for the winners. Hosted by 2 cosplay wolves

GUESS THAT ANIME INTRO 18+

Think you know your anime intros? Come test your knowledge and win a prize! Hosted by @mia.whorror

HEAR ME OUT WEBB EDITION 18+

Do you have a really embarrassing anime crush? Did you think Panda was hotter than Gojo? Does Zooble make you blush? We want to know! Come give us your best “hear me out” and see if you're alone in your love or if your take is based! UwU

HIDIVE PRESENTS “THE FORSAKEN SAINTESS AND HER FOODIE ROAD TRIP IN ANOTHER WORLD” NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE & Q&A

Pitch a tent with HIDIVE for this simulcast premiere where being isekai'd meets gourmet, campfire cooking! Plus, savor a Q&A with special guest director Atsushi Nigorikawa!

HORROR/THRILLER/DARK ANIME 18+

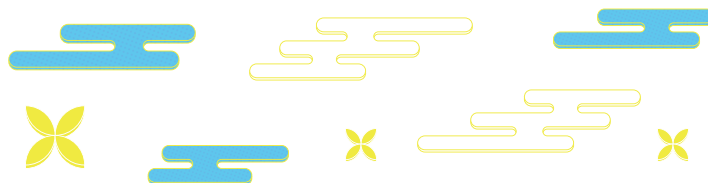
Back for year five! Join our open discussion on horror, thriller, and dark anime, manga, and light novels as we navigate through the decades. Share hidden gems and classics alike while connecting with others to explore the darker side of storytelling. All fans and newcomers welcome!

HOW TO STUDY JAPANESE IN JAPAN WITH GO! GO! NIHON 18+

You dream of moving to Japan? At Go! Go! Nihon, we have helped over 17,000 people from all over the world live in Japan and learn Japanese at a language school. In this panel we will share everything you need to know about our free service and how to get started.

INS AND OUTS OF INTERNATIONAL COSPLAY COMPETITIONS 18+

Are you a cosplay enthusiast looking to take the next step in your competitive cosplay career? Learn what it takes to achieve success in the preliminary and final rounds of the international competitive opportunities available from two-time USA representative and AX26 Cosplay Senpai Chikkupaea.



I WAS TRANSPORTED TO AN ANIME CONVENTION BUT NOW I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO WEAR! (INTRO TO COSPLAY 101) 🌸

Want to try cosplaying but don't know where to start? Then join SuncakeMooncake Cosplay in this beginner-friendly panel and see what all the buzz is about! We'll discuss just what cosplay is, how to assemble your first outfit, and our favorite tips for wearing costumes and attending conventions!

IRONMOUSE & CDAWGVA: CHAOS ASCENDANT - AX V

The saga continues! Ironmouse and CDawgVA are back at AX for their fourth chaotic showdown. Bring on your questions and show off your best cosplays! You don't want to miss the kind of unpredictable energy that's made their panels legendary.

JAPAN MUSIC VOCALOID AT ANIME EXPO 2026

JAPAN MUSIC VOCALOID Powered by DWANGO is coming to Anime Expo 2026! Get ready for an electrifying night celebrating the sound of Vocaloid with an incredible line-up of legendary DJs straight from Japan! This one-of-a-kind event brings together some of the most influential producers in the Vocaloid scene for an unforgettable live experience.

JAST: A 30TH ANNIVERSARY RETROSPECTIVE FEATURING ITARU-SENSEI 18+

Come listen to the folks at JAST talk about the Visual Novel industry, how it's changed over the years, and what it might look like going forward. With help (and live drawing!) from our special guest, Itaru Hinoue; founding member of Key, and artist behind Clannad, Air, and other works you love.

LATE COMEDY SHOWDOWN 🌸 18+

Which comedian will hold the championship title for LCS? Watch the finalists compete in a night full of endless laughter!

LIAR GAME AND SUMMER ANIME SNEAK PEEK PRESENTED BY REMOW

REMOW returns to Anime Expo 2026—welcome to the game. Step into LIAR GAME with special guests, exclusive reveals, and a live game experience. Plus, sneak peeks of upcoming anime, including *Livid Lady's Guide to Getting Even*. Free giveaways for all attendees!

LOBOTOMY KAISEN 🌸 18+

Gege Akutami had captured and crushed the hearts of millions when writing *Jujutsu Kaisen*. This has created the fandom subsect, *Lobotomy Kaisen*. We will go over its history; the cursed memes created and discuss how it is a coping mechanism and a way to gain partial ownership of the characters.

LOVE AND DEEPSPACE: DATING GAMES WITH YOUR FAVORITE LOVE INTERESTS 🌸 18+

Ready to risk it all for your (no longer pixelated) husbandos? From flirty questions to spicy scenarios, MCs shoot their shot in a collective delulu era. Come laugh, flirt, debate and maybe even embarrass yourself a little in this intergalactic romance. [This panel is not affiliated with INFOLD]

MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH WORLD PREMIERE

Join special guest Rie Takahashi and more for the world premiere screening of the upcoming *Magic Knight Rayearth* anime, along with the first reveal of exciting new updates.

MANGA 101: CREATE YOUR OWN CHARACTER

Join Kazuo Maekawa (*Ace Attorney*) for a hands-on introduction to Japanese manga creation. Learn character design, paneling, and storytelling, then create your own 4-panel comic. Open to all skill levels. Presented by JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles.

MANGA LICENSING WITH DENPA AND KUMA BOOKS

Manga publishers DENPA and KUMA return to AnimeExpo to share their publishing insights and discuss new acquisitions.

MARRIAGETOXIN ROAD TO THE BEST MARRIAGE! AT ANIME EXPO

Come and join a special panel discussion featuring the main staff and cast of *MARRIAGETOXIN*. Join us as we dive deep into all the work and details that make this series so charming!

MASTERS OF ANIME: EXPLORING JAPANESE ANIMATION PRODUCTION

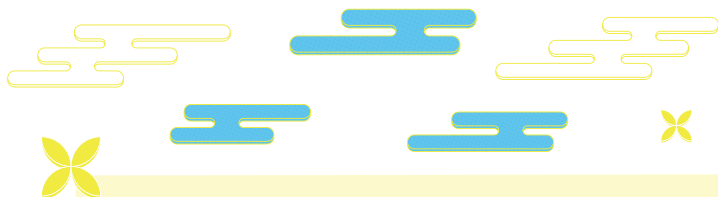
Hear behind-the-scenes stories from legendary anime creators Moriyasu Taniguchi, Ryosuke Takahashi, and Tooru Yoshida, whose careers span over half a century. Explore the past, present, and future of Japanese anime production through the eyes of industry masters with MyAnimeList staff.

MIRESI: INVISIBLE FUTURE, ART DIRECTOR HYULLA'S THICC CHARACTER DRAWING SHOW 18+

Art Director Hyulla, known for his work on *Goddess of Victory: NIKKE!* Join a live drawing show with a surprise guest as MIRESI's bishojo characters come to life on stage, plus a talk on the Art of Thicc Proportions. Enjoy our free limited-edition merch, too!

MY HERO ACADEMIA 10TH ANNIVERSARY PANEL HOSTED BY TOHO ANIMATION

My Hero Academia hits its 10th anniversary! Join Daiki Yamashita (Deku) and Koki Uchiyama (Shigaraki) to celebrate this incredible milestone. Don't miss the world premiere of the short clip, "I am a hero too"! Go beyond, Plus Ultra!



For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



NEEDY GIRL OVERDOSE IRL EVENT

Are you ready to gaze upon the greatest “Internet Angel” to captivate the world wide web? Welcome our special guests (including the voice of KAngel) as they look back on the world of NEEDY GIRL OVERDOSE and delve into this chaotic internet of the modern day!

OCEANVEIL & ASCENDENT ANIMATION PRESENT: SPECIAL SCREENING AND BEHIND THE MIC – LIVE WITH ENGLISH VOICE ACTORS

Step into the fascinating world of voice acting with OceanVeil, a new streaming platform, and its partner studio, Ascendent Animation! Enjoy a special screening of a brand-new dubbed title and go behind the scenes to see how your favorite dubbed moments come to life—featuring English voice actors!

OMOI MANGA INDUSTRY PANEL

Omoi (omoi.com) is a manga app and publisher that provides easy access to hundreds of series, including Hikaru in the Light!, Natsume & Natsume, and The Elf Husband and Dwarf Wife. Meet the team and learn about our upcoming digital + print releases, app features, and more. We'll have prizes too!

ORIGAMI ✨

Learn the step by step origami basics of folding paper. Fold a claw for your finger, a swan, a jet plane and a hopping frog.

PERFORMATIVE MC PANEL 🎭 18+

In a world of Mc (main characters) who's the real deal and who's performing for a audience? Join us as we jump into the world of anime series dissecting your favorite protagonist and by audience voting we'll decide if they're the real deal or performative. Let's decide where the lines blur!

PHYSICS OF ANIME 📖

Join 3 NASA scientists for one-part physics lecture, and one-part geek-out session. For the Closing Seminar of the JAMS@AX symposium, math, science, and anime will combine to reveal the Physic of Anime! Thanks for another INCREDIBLE JAMS@AX!

PRODUCTION I.G X WIT STUDIO INDUSTRY PANEL 2026

Hosted by Maki Terashima-Furuta, the Production I.G and WIT STUDIO joint panel returns to AX once again! In addition to Founders Mitsuhiro Ishikawa and George Wada, this year features an incredible lineup with directors Kenji Kamiyama, Tetsuro Araki, and Shunsuke Tada. These three leading directors will gather to discuss everything from behind-the-scenes stories to the future of animation. The panel will also feature an “Interactive Cult Quiz” where you can win autographed items directly from the directors, and a “Q&A session” with the creators! July 4th at 12 PM, at the Crypto.com Arena. Don't miss this historic moment in anime!

SAVAGE FIGHT SCENES IN ANIME ✨ 18+

Panel going over some of the most over the top violent scenes in numerous anime this panelist has encountered. Back for a second year of even more gory goodness!

SEVEN SEAS INDUSTRY PANEL

Seven Seas Entertainment is an award-winning publisher that specializes in bringing the best of Japanese manga and light novels to English-language audiences, alongside the hottest danmei, webtoons, and other books from around the globe. Join us for news, announcements, and more in this exciting industry panel!

SOLO LEVELING: KARMA - EXPANDING UNIVERSE

Step into the story of the UNTOLD 27-YEAR WAR in SOLO LEVELING: KARMA. Get a first look at gameplay for this upcoming roguelite action RPG, featuring Aleks Le (voice of Sung Jinwoo), development insights, line readings, exclusive giveaways, surprise guests, and more!

STUDIO TRIGGER PANEL 2026

Studio TRIGGER is BACK at AX 2026! Join the director and scriptwriter of Cyberpunk: Edgerunners 2 for behind-the-scenes insights into the upcoming anime! We'll also share the latest updates on our current projects... and unveil our next flagship title!

THAT TIME I GOT REINCARNATED AS A SLIME SPECIAL PANEL

“That Time I Got Reincarnated as a Slime” Season 4 is underway! Miho Okasaki (Voice of Rimuru) and Megumi Toyoguchi (Voice of Raphael) from “SLIME” are coming to Anime Expo 2026!

THE ANIME ECONOMY: FROM PIRACY TO POKÉMON TO SONY

Anime is a \$30 billion industry, but how did we get here? Industry veteran Dallas Middaugh – BluPetal, Kodansha, Crunchyroll – traces the business behind anime's American conquest. This isn't a nostalgia panel, it's a front-row account of one of entertainment's strangest shifts... and what comes next.

THE BEST MANGA FOR CLASSROOMS & LIBRARIES

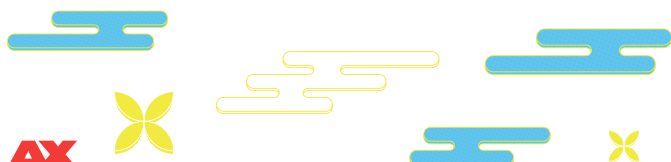
Keeping current with the most popular manga & anime can be tough—especially for busy librarians & educators. From age-appropriate starter manga, to anime-inspired hits, join this panel of manga pros & experts eager to help with recommendations & resources perfect for any growing manga section!

THE GHOST IN THE SHELL * SCIENCE SARU: SPECIAL PANEL & PREMIERE

The legendary cyberpunk series “THE GHOST IN THE SHELL” returns in a bold new form, brought to life by animation studio “Science SARU”. We present the U.S. premiere screening from the new series. Staff members will also share insights into the concept, and visual world behind the new series.

THOUGH I AM AN INEPT VILLAINESS: U.S. PREMIERE WITH CAST HOSTED BY TOHO ANIMATION

When the heroine and the villainess switch places, the unlikely pair must work together to survive. TOHO animation (The Apothecary Diaries, My Hero Academia) presents the North American premiere of episodes 1-2 of *Though I Am an Inept Villainess* with special guests Hana Hishikawa & Makoto Furukawa!



TOKYO REVENGERS: WAR OF THE THREE TITANS ARC - WORLD PREMIERE FOOTAGE & SPECIAL CAST PANEL

The final revenge begins at Anime Expo! Don't miss the world premiere of a special recap video leading into the War of the Three Titans Arc, revealed exclusively at AX. Join Yuki Shin and Masaya Fukunishi for a special talk panel with behind-the-scenes stories.

TOUZAN TAIKO DRUMMING WORKSHOP

Cal Poly Pomona's Japanese drumming group, Touzan Taiko, will be hosting a workshop that will teach the basics of the taiko! Members of the group will first briefly introduce the history of taiko, their personal experiences as performers, and highlight how taiko fosters community, cultural identity, and passion. Attendees will then be able to try the instruments themselves while also learning basic stances and forms often used during performances.

VIZ ANIME PANEL

VIZ presents a powerhouse anime showcase with special guests Masakazu Morita and Johnny Yong Bosch (BLEACH: Thousand-Year Blood War), AJ Beckles and Keith Silverstein (BLACK TORCH), sharing behind-the-scenes stories. Fans won't want to miss exciting exclusive announcements revealed live!

VOICE ACTING OPEN AUDITIONS WITH BANG ZOOM! STUDIOS

Step up to the mic & take your shot at LIVE Voice Acting Open Auditions featuring auditions in front of our casting director, live anime dubbing on stage, and special industry & voice actor guests. Whether you're trying out or cheering on, don't miss the action! Follow @bangzoom for more details!

WHERE TO GO IN JAPAN: ANIME AND MANGA BASED TOURISM 🌸

Planning a trip to Japan? Discover real-world locations from anime and manga. Then find yourself standing next to a giant robot, eating in themed cafes, snapping pictures of character statues, and spending all day at manga and anime museums. You will have a full itinerary of all things nerdy!

WORLD PREMIERE: "FROM OLD COUNTRY BUMPKIN TO MASTER SWORDSMAN" & BEYOND PRESENTED BY NBCUNIVERSAL ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN

Experience the World Premiere of "From Old Country Bumpkin to Master Swordsman" S2 with Director Akio Kazumi! Plus big reveals for "Suikoden: The Anime," "A Certain Dark Item," "Mission: Yozakura Family" S2, and score exclusive limited-edition giveaways!

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



ENTERTAINMENT ARENA

@ THE L.A. LIVE
EVENT DECK

Step into the Entertainment Arena, Anime Expo's ultimate playground for fans of all ages! Strike a pose at immersive cosplay photo sets, challenge friends in the latest video games, relive gaming history in the retro gaming zone, and test your skills on a variety of classic and modern arcade machines. Looking for a different kind of adventure? Gather your party for tabletop gaming, where strategy, storytelling, and friendly competition await.



Day 1-3 (July 2-4)
9:00AM - 9:00PM

Day 4 (July 5)
9:00AM - 3:00PM



Scan QR code
for Tournament
Schedule

DAY 4 SCHEDULE - JULY 5


**ACADEMIC
PROGRAM**


**CAREER
TRACK**


**COSPLAY
TRACK**


**CULTURAL
TRACK**


**FAMILY
TRACK**

See page 15 for more information on AX Programming Tracks.

A PSYCHIATRIST ON ANIME CULTURE: HOW YOUR FAVORITE ANIME COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

What if the anime you love could improve your mental health? Dr. Francesco Pantò, the only Italian-born psychiatrist licensed in Japan, presents Anime Therapy®—a clinical framework using characters to support real healing. Learn how pop culture becomes medicine, and explore tools for your journey.

ANIME EXPO 2026 FEEDBACK PANEL 🌸

Anime Expo has come and gone once again. Let us know what you loved, what you want to see more of, and what we can improve on for next year. A team of SPJA staff who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to bring you this year's event will be there to listen. Thank you for your continued support!

ANIME TRENDING INDUSTRY PANEL

Join the team from Anime Trending, the industry recognized platform for Top 10 anime rankings/charts, awards, news and more! The team has worked on promoting hit titles like Delicious in Dungeon, Re:ZERO, IOSHI NO KOI, and more, helping bring these titles to fans outside of Japan.

BASEBALL IN JAPAN: 101 🦋

Did you also know that baseball is the most popular sport both played and viewed in Japan? Join us for an hour as we discuss how popular and impactful baseball has been in Japan, using the anime Ace Of Diamond to help better understand the sport and its impact!

BIGWEST PRESENTS - THE SUPER DIMENSION FORTRESS MACROSS: DO YOU REMEMBER LOVE?

Experience the first official North American screening of The Super Dimension Fortress Macross: Do You Remember Love? during Anime Expo 2026. Join the premier presentation of the legendary masterpiece that has come to define the MACROSS franchise.

CHARITY AUCTION AT ANIME EXPO 2026

Anime Expo works with our special guests from the industry to provide one-of-a-kind items for the annual Charity Auction. By participating, you can support this year's charitable cause, Los Angeles and Nagoya Sister City Affiliation (LANSCA)!

CON CRUNCH SURVIVAL GUIDE 🦋

Are you always rushing to finish your cosplays at the last minute? Do you show up to conventions sleepless and covered in hot glue? If so, you're not alone! Learn how to avoid the dreaded con crunch and manage your time when deadlines get tight at this fun and interactive panel!

COSPLAY SPELLING BEE 🦋 🏠

From "thermoplastic" to "chiaroscuro," how strong is your cosplay vocabulary? Step up to the mic for a cosplay-themed spelling bee where crafting knowledge meets friendly rivalry. Expect laughs, tricky words, and plenty of "wait... how do you spell that?" moments. Come compete or just enjoy the chaos!

DEBATES AND HOT TAKES - APOTHECARY DIARIES EDITION 🌸

Are Maomao and Jinshi endgame? Who would be the best emperor? Is cat Maomao the best animal sidekick? Let's find out! Come to this Apothecary Diaries fan panel to discuss, debate and determine whose actions were justified and if we would have done the same.

DESIGN YOUR OWN STONWARE PIECE 🌸

Join us at the 2026 Anime Expo for a paint-your-own pottery workshop. This workshop is a great way to get creative, create a one-of-a-kind keepsake from the Expo, and, as a bonus, you get time to rest your feet after a long day of exploring.

EARLY IDOLS & CITY POP: MUSIC OF THE SHOWA ERA 🌸

A timeline of Japanese Pop music from the 60s-80s. Learn about the origins of Japanese Idols, the rise and fall of City Pop, hear 80s anime themes, and answer trivia questions for media prizes!

GKIDS INDUSTRY PANEL

From the team that brings you films from celebrated filmmakers like Mamoru Hosoda, Masaaki Yuasa, and Studio Ghibli, comes the GKIDS Industry Panel! Join us for an inside scoop on what it takes to release the best animation from around the world, and a sneak peek at what's to come!

GRAND SUMMONERS DEVELOPER PANEL

Join in on this panel by game developer NextNinja to learn about the latest and upcoming news for the hit Anime RPG Grand Summoners! All participants will receive a free original gift as well as have a chance to receive exclusive merch!

HIDIVE PRESENTS "HELL MODE SEASON 2" DUB WORLD PREMIERE

Life on hard mode is a total grind! Kenichi Yamada leaps at the chance to try out a game with a "Hell Mode" difficulty but finds himself reborn in the game! Join HIDIVE for the 2nd season dub premiere of the isekai smash hit!

HOW TO BECOME A MANGA PROFESSIONAL & STAY SANE DOING IT

From editing, marketing, translation, production, sales & more, learn about the many ways to start a career in the exciting (but exhausting) manga industry! Join this panel of veteran manga pros ready to discuss how they got their start, how you can too, & how we all can survive the experience.

J-POP DANCE WORKSHOP 🌸

Get ready to dance like your favorite anime idols! Join us as we will go over a fun J-Pop dance routine that will have you dancing like your favorite performers! Bring your energy, and show us what you've got!

JUJUTSU KAISEN: CELEBRATING 5 YEARS OF CURSES WITH CAST HOSTED BY TOHO ANIMATION

JUJUTSU KAISEN 5th Anniversary Panel – celebrating five thrilling years of this blockbuster anime! Reflect on its journey so far, including Season 3, key battles, story milestones, and character moments. Hear behind-the-scenes stories and enjoy fan experiences you won't want to miss!

K-POP RPD 🌸

Time to put your K-POP dance knowledge to the test! Join other K-POP Fans and Dancers and come together on the dance floor as you all dance together to different songs from different K-POP generations, artists, and styles!

MAKE YOUR DEBUT AS AN AUTHOR IN JAPAN!

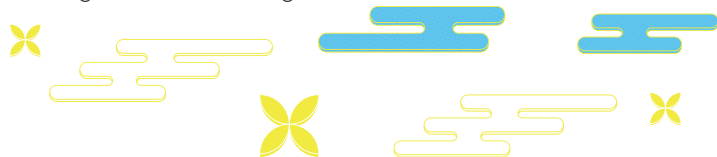
Ever dreamed of publishing your story as a light novel –manga or even an anime– in Japan? Join KADOKAWA editor Satoshi Arima (The Rising of the Shield Hero, Full Metal Panic!) and authors Frettiko & Kazesenken, to learn how English writers can break into the Japanese market via our upcoming contest.

MAKE YOUR FIRST HELMET WIG (THEY'RE NOT AS DAUNTING AS YOU MIGHT THINK) 🦁

Intimidated by helmet wigs? Join Wei's beginner-friendly ponytail wig panel to learn how to build a structured base, budget-friendly ponytail attachment/core, and select the right glue for each step. This class is ideal for cosplayers who've been eyeing a character but need a detailed walkthrough.
*Presented by AX26 Cosplay Senpai Weichiadi

OVER ALLS

OVER ALLS is a mural artist collective specializing in large-scale public murals. We create works for buildings and urban spaces worldwide. This April, we painted murals in Los Angeles for OC Japan Fair, Tenkaippin Little Tokyo, and Fame Yard. Enjoy our live drawing on the NOVO stage!



RIOT GAMES: BRINGING TEAMFIGHT TACTICS TO LIFE!

Join us for a special behind-the-scenes look at how the team delivers each Set, including the creative process from concept to live gameplay, and how the team prepares for future Sets. We will also have a dedicated Q&A to get to know our panelists!

SIGNAL CONNECT: BEHIND THE CHARACTER

Step into the world of Zenless Zone Zero at our special voice actor panel, where the voices behind this urban fantasy action RPG bring its fast-paced combat and stylish, story-driven city to life through behind-the-scenes stories, live interactions, and exclusive insights.

TOKYOPOP INDUSTRY PANEL

TOKYOPOP Presents: An industry panel all about the latest and greatest from TOKYOPOP! Join us as we unveil news about upcoming releases, licensing announcements, and more!

TURNING FANDOM INTO A CAREER: GETTING STARTED IN MANGA PUBLISHING

Are you dreaming of a career in the manga/manhwa/comics industry? This panel of editors, marketers, and other industry professionals will talk about how they got their start working in the field and share insight on how you can reach your own career goals!

VOICES, GAMES, AND IP: AN INDUSTRY TALK WITH JIMMIE YAMAGUCHI

Learn more about the gaming and voice acting industry! Voice actor Jimmie Yamaguchi (Zenless Zone Zero, 2XKO, Star Wars) is joined by game industry veteran Chris Harada (Square Enix, Gearbox, and more) and Audrey, CEO of Japan-based Aitai Japan, to discuss how voices, games, and IP come together—from performance and production to global releases.

WALT'S FOOTSTEPS- THE OSAMU TEZUKA STORY 🌸

Join The American Anime Otaku as he takes a look at the careers of two legendary animators and how they indirectly influenced each other and the medium of Japanese animation.

YOUR GUIDE TO LIVING IN JAPAN IN 2026 🇯🇵

You're thinking of living in Japan? Whether you want to study, find work or just stay temporarily, understanding your visa options is crucial. This panel will cover the different visa types, their requirements and benefits, so you can make your transition to life in Japan as smooth as possible.

CLOSING CEREMONY 🌸

As Anime Expo 2026 concludes, the Closing Ceremony will give AX attendees the chance to reflect and wrap up their experiences with various performances and closing traditions.

For scheduled time and room location, please download the Anime Expo mobile app.



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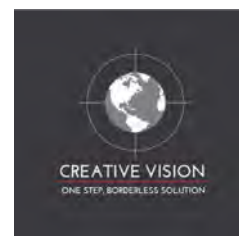
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