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Jérôme

Colors and drawing techniques in Grendizer and Jeeg

Wed Jul 2 21:14:26 2003

212.198.0.96

Well, 1st I'd like to thank Gerdha for the favour she made me by giving me this VHS of Jeeg and of Grendizer in Japanese. It enables me to write this small text on my impressions on Jeeg and Grendizer at the same time. I couldn't help but noticing that somehow there was a huge difference in the whole concept of Grendizer and other anime of the same period of time : the colors and the drawing quality. Although one could always refer to the strong criticism encountered by Goldorak when it has first been aired in France (i.e. poor quality anime compared with the American cartoons! that remains to be still proven!), it's obvious that the quality of the entire anime (even if some episodes are not that great I must admit) is far better than any of its counterparts! Taking Mazinger Z as a comparison would be biased in a way since it was released 3 years earlier. One could always argue that the techniques were not as good as in October 1975 when Grendizer was first aired in Japan. That's where Jeeg comes into my analysis: It was aired the same day as Grendizer, namely on Oct. 5th 1975 on Net TV at 18:00, while Grendizer was on FujiTV at 19:00. What stroke my attention is that the colors are not as bright in Jeeg as they are in Grendizer! The range of colors is not even the same. I may say that Pink, violet/purple, blue are extreme in Grendizer, catching the viewers' eyes while in Jeeg for instance they are more shallow almost passed already (and this is not because of the quality of the VHS, it was excellent!). The drawing as well is far more accurate in Grendizer. To analyse it I would need the expertise of some of you, because some of you (Bernard/gerdha and others I'm sure) know the drawing team of almost each episode.

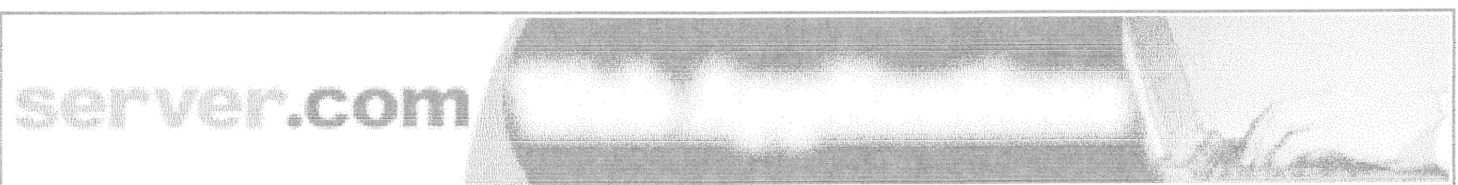
My point here, is that somehow the colors and the drawing quality have had an impact on the viewers we were. I'm quite convinced that during Grendizer, the drawing team(s) developed new techniques or used new techniques that were meant to attract the attention of the viewer in a way. It worked on a new audience (in Europe for instance) but may have disturbed the Japanese one used to the old-fashioned drawing techniques developed in Mazinger/Gt Mazinger and Jeeg for instance.

Therefore I do believe that Grendizer is located at the threshold of a new era in the anime history.

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Suzi

Re: Colors and drawing techniques in Grendizer and Jeeg

Wed Jul 2 23:28:18 2003

210.8.232.2

"Therefore I do believe that Grendizer is located at the threshold of a new era in the anime history. "

Well, it is a good observation and a clever assumption, but for it to be true and complete the comparison should also include other shows that were produced in early 1975, and those produced after October 1975.

It is true that Grendizer was full of vibrant colours unlike Jeeg, but wouldn't the fact that the artists were different and that the story itself was different come into account?

Afterall, there was major emphasis in Grendizer on the beauty of Planet Earth, which is naturally vibrant with life and colour, and this was clearly reflected in its design.

And it is true, that vibrant colours are more "eye catching" than softer ones, but there were other factors that contributed to the success of Grendizer worldwide.

Children in general love colours, bright ones, I mean. Even babies, prefer sharp contrasting colours like red, yellow, dark blue and dark green to softer tones of pale pink and light blue, because it stimulates the development of their vision.

Therefore the use of colour in children shows is essential for success in attracting audience initially (even if it is a subconscious attraction), then comes the story of the show.

To understand why Grendizer was as popular in Japan, you have to understand the "japanese" personality in general and as an audience in particular.

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Jerome
yes but...
Thu Jul 3 03:55:04 2003
212.198.0.96

I merely stated an idea somehow. I didn't want to get into a MM especially since many aspects of the Japanese culture and audience have already been 'studied' or mentioned on the forum. This was only an attempt to add another reason or explanation that might explain the success of the anime.

As far as the other anime of the same year for instance are concerned, it would definitely be of importance to watch and analyze them, but unfortunately I don't own them at the moment and can't watch them! As far as the colours are concerned, Children are indeed attracted by brighter colours, then we reach my point, if it was a common rule to be applied to anime, then why not on Jeeg for instance? Ok another team, but let us not forget that these anime are meant to be a business, therefore when there's a rule, it should be applied, esp. one which is as important as this one.

I might be inclined to think somehow that the bright colours in Grendizer were a way to counter effect the somewhat dark side of the anime itself (Actarus being sick with his injury, etc.). But that's only a speculation and indeed I should maybe not even mention it as my mind is erratic...

I just wanted to pay a tribute to Grendizer on that special day in France!

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Gerdha
Grendizer and Jeeg design styles
Thu Jul 3 18:37:00 2003
151.26.197.254

Welcome back, Jerome!!! As usual, your posts are very interesting!

I never thought to this aspect actually before. I am aware that a very few people in the Forum has seen Jeeg, but I hope they will trust us on the fact that its colours are mostly "monochromatics" (Jeeg is yellow, green and black; Hiroshi's suite is yellow, his mum's is pale blue, and the atmosphere in general is "darker" than Grendizer). About the drawing style, I find it more "stable" in Jeeg than in Grendizer, in the sense that it seems to me that in the first case the developing team has been more or less the same for the whole anime and of medium quality, while Grendizer had at least 4 or 5 drawing teams according to the visual aspects, ranging from the incredible Araki episodes to other very poor ones. Unfortunately I have no det about the staff of Jeeg episodes (as a matter of fact to find information about production notes of this anime is quiet impossible - my friend Alcor is getting mad for example to identify its location!), but I think what I said can be agreed by whoever has seen both series.

The reason behind this discrepancy between the two animes drawing style can be found in my opinion in the different background story of Jeeg and Grendizer.

Jeeg born as a manga at the beginning of 1975 (or late 1974) written by Nagai and Ishikawa, but it lasted few episodes as Toei decided nearly immediately to create an anime for it. So the development phase of Jeeg in my opinion lasted some months: first the drawing style seems to be entitled to a stable team, then the story itself (even if a bit different from the manga) seems to not suffer of sudden "mood changes", like if it has been devised from beginning to end as a whole completely before the production phase. About the colours, yes, I agree with Jerome, Jeeg uses a poor range of colours and no brightness.

At the contrary, Grendizer had only 2 months of pre-production phase with a story to tell in itself. For sure the budget was high - it should have been "the third chapter of Mazinger" while Jeeg was a complete isolated story - but I agree with Jerome about the idea that it was used as an experimental field to use different drawing choices. I have already underlined that this consideration can be applied to me to the storytelling, but as a matter of fact also the drawing style could be considered in the same way. After all, for example, Michi Himeno started to cooperate with Araki at ep50 for the first time ever.

About the other animes of that period, well, I have seen I suppose nearly all of them and actually Jerome is right, the brightness of Grendizer is unknown in other stories. For example, Yamato is darker - of course it is located in deep space, but the use of colours for the people, for example, is not comparable to Grendizer. For sure, the fact that Grendizer location is in a farm helped the choice of brightness, but actually - for example - even the main control room of Research Centre is designed with vivid colours.

So yeah, Grendizer was used as a sort of experimental territory for various fields. I am sure about it.

^ ^
Gerdha

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