



The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation

Edited by
Marco Pellitteri

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Palgrave Studies in Sound is an interdisciplinary series devoted to the topic of sound with each volume framing and focusing on sound as it is conceptualized in a specific context or field. In its broad reach, Studies in Sound aims to illuminate not only the diversity and complexity of our understanding and experience of sound but also the myriad ways in which sound is conceptualized and utilized in diverse domains. The series is edited by Mark Grimshaw-Aagaard, The Obel Professor of Music at Aalborg University, and is curated by members of the university's Music and Sound Knowledge Group.

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In loving memory
of friend, mentor, and exceptional scholar
Giannalberto Bendazzi (17.07.1946–13.12.2021),
one of the greatest gifts to our knowledge on animation
and among the kindest, most generous persons
one could meet, be friends with, and learn from

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation fills a substantial gap—at the global level—in the scholarly literature on animation at large, on studies in music, and on Japanese animation more specifically. It is a unique contribution in that it finds its core at the very intersection between the studies on music in popular culture and the studies on Japanese animation (which is often generically called anime) as a medium of entertainment.

The book is an organically designed collection of essays by established scholars and emerging researchers on the development of music, songs, and sound in Japanese animation for cinema and television since the 1930s to the early 2010s; the time hiatus of about 10 years ensures a necessary distance and perspective to the whole Handbook. Each chapter deals with a particular phase of this history, focussing on composers and performers, films, series, and musical genres used in the scores for anime. Organised as an internally very consistent reference book, the work also includes interviews made by the Editor and some Contributors with prominent figures of music in anime, as well as chapter boxes focussing on specific aspects.

The content and writing styles are overall academic; but music is an art, and one that deeply relates to the listener's feelings and memories, especially when associated with a form of entertainment that is strongly visual and dynamic such as animation: that is why at times the Editor and the Contributors take the liberty to share with the reader more personal impressions and ideas on the emotional aspects of the musics discussed in the book.

There exist isolated essays (journal articles, book chapters, blog writings) dealing with a variety of aspects or authors of music or sound design in animation at large and in anime, but never has an entire book been devoted to such a wide range of historical, cultural, and technical aspects of this very topic. Among the unique features of this book, as hinted at above, one of the most important and prestigious is the presence of exclusive interviews with some of the protagonists of this long-running history.

PRAISE FOR *The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation*

“Marco Pellitteri has united a global team of world leading scholars of Japanese music and animation, producing the first extended history of how sound impacts on anime and beyond. The essays included in this Handbook generate thought-provoking analyses of music, the voice, and sound effects in Japanese animation. The collection’s insightful coverage of the history and contemporary worlds of animation sound in Japan should be a starting point for all future scholarship on animation. Not least because of the inclusion of industry professionals’ views alongside those of academics, which provides a rich tapestry of reflection on working within Japan’s music and media industries. More so, because sound and music are major art forms and industries in Japan in their own rights, not merely ancillary industries feeding into anime. By providing careful histories and theorisations of aspects of dubbing, composition, and performance, Pellitteri and his collaborators demonstrate the fundamental roles sound plays within animation production in Japan.

Particular highlights can be found in the global approach, which allows *The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation* to think about the shifting aural worlds of anime as they are distributed outside of Japan. More than this, the industrial reflections provide rich context and confirmation of the theories and histories being discussed in surrounding chapters. Even further, work by established Japanese scholars writing in English affords a window onto long-standing discussions of sound’s significance to Japanese animation that are often otherwise invisible to Anglophone scholars. Minori Ishida, Hideyuki Kitaba, and Aki Yamasaki’s contributions reveal whole worlds of *anison* (anime songs) and *seiyū* (voice actors) providing an in-depth guide to future researchers. At the same time, Pellitteri, Stacey Jacoy, and Yamasaki also provide excellent introductions to generic uses of sound in Japanese animation, while others point to Japan’s most influential composers, such as Jō Hisaishi’s influential scores for Hayao Miyazaki’s films and Yōko Kanno’s jazz-inspired

soundtracks for famed anime series like *Cowboy Bebop*, providing much-needed methods for studying Japanese animation's relationship to music and sound.

In this way, *The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation* will be an essential tool for anyone seeking to understand anime's soundscapes. The collection provides essential, carefully researched and argued interventions into scholarly debates about sound and music's roles in film and television that extend far further than Japan's thriving animation industry, too. The book produces new approaches, theories, and histories essential to understanding the development of music and sound recording in Japan generally, while at the same time, giving space to those who work within these worlds. By placing a global frame around the worlds of Japanese animation music and sound *The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation* demonstrates why animation music and sound matter to all of us, everywhere in the world."

—Prof. Rayna Denison, *Head of Department for Film and Television, University of Bristol. Author of Anime: A Critical Introduction (Bloomsbury Academic) and Studio Ghibli: An Industrial History (Palgrave Macmillan).*

"This book is an indispensable point of reference for the studies on the music and sound of Japanese animation and their role in world culture. Due to the vastness of the topics covered, the completeness of the references, and the expertises of the contributors, the volume allows wide-ranging and at the same time in-depth dives into the various elements that make up the soul and reasons for the success of an enormous production that is in itself difficult to master. The editor, Marco Pellitteri, one of the leading European experts of Japanese animation, pulls the strings of a true concert of authors' voices which—together—generate a profound and discursively harmonious narrative on the aural dimensions of animation made in Japan."

—Prof. Fausto Colombo, *Pro-Rector, Head of Department of Communication and Performing Arts, Cattolica del Sacro Cuore University. Author of La cultura sottile ('The thin culture', Bompiani) and Il potere sociabile ('The sociable power', B. Mondadori).*

"This ambitious book aims to deliver a thorough and contemporary examination of the intricate interplay of sound, voice, and music within the realm of Japanese animation. Helmed by Marco Pellitteri, a pre-eminent authority in the field of anime studies, this extraordinary volume seamlessly blends cutting-edge historical insights and empirical research. It equips readers with a robust array of methodological and theoretical tools essential for comprehending the enduring allure of the anime phenomenon."

—Prof. Nissim Otmazgin, *Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Author of Regionalizing Culture (University of Hawai'i Press) and co-author of The Anime Boom in the United States (Harvard University Press's Asia Center).*

“This is an essential handbook on sound in Japanese animation, which offers valuable resources for researchers and fans alike, and opens exciting avenues for future research on the topic. Want to read about anime’s music, songs, voice acting, and interviews with key players in the industry? This book is for you.”

—Prof. Marc Steinberg, *Director of the Platform Lab, Concordia University. Author of Anime’s Media Mix (University of Minnesota Press) and co-editor of Media Theory in Japan (Duke University Press).*

“This handbook is truly long-awaited, as there has never been such an ambitious and full-fledged introductory reference on music and sound in Japanese animation. It gives us a first unified overview of the music, songs, voice acting, sound effects, and the music industry that surround Japanese animation. The interviews with prominent anime music and song composers, anime song singers, and anime directors are also extremely valuable. It will be a must-read basic reference for anyone interested in this field.”

—Prof. Akiko Sugawa-Shimada, *Yokohama National University. Guest editor of Mechademia Second Arc, 15:2, “2.5D culture” (University of Minnesota Press) and Co-editor of Animation bunka 55 no keywords (‘55 keywords of animation culture’, Minerva-sho), and Giburi Animation no bunkagaku (‘Cultural studies on the animation of Studio Ghibli’, Shichigatsu-sha).*

“This handbook provides a comprehensive window into the sonic culture of Japanese animation, ranging from songs and thematic music to soundscapes, voice acting, and more. What makes this a particularly rich resource is the inclusion of voices from both academics and non-academics. Alongside scholarly discourse, interviews with key practitioners bring the subject matter to life through first-hand experiences and colourful anecdotes. This text will be essential reading for anyone studying or otherwise interested in this vibrant audio-visual field.”

—Assoc. Prof. Jonathan Weinel, *University of Greenwich. Author of Inner Sound: Altered States of Consciousness in Electronic Music and Audio-Visual Media (Oxford University Press) and Explosions in the Mind: Composing Psychedelic Sounds and Visualisations (Palgrave).*

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FOREWORD

Birth and Structure of the Handbook

Marco Pellitteri

ORIGIN AND REASONS OF THIS HANDBOOK

The Palgrave Handbook of Music and Sound in Japanese Animation fills a substantial gap—at the international level—in the scholarly and academic literature on animation at large, on studies in music, and on the role of music and sound in Japanese animation more specifically. It is a unique contribution, placed at the very intersection between the studies on music in popular culture and the scholarship on Japanese animated productions (which are often generically called anime) as popular art forms and formats of entertainment.

The Handbook is an organically designed collection of assigned studies and essays written by established scholars and emerging researchers on the music, songs, voices, and sound in animation made in Japan for cinema and television since the 1930s and through the 2000s; there is a time hiatus of about ten years between the end of the Handbook's time frame and today, to ensure a reasonable historical perspective. Most chapters deal with a phase and/or side of this history, focussing on composers and performers, films, series, and genres used in scoring for Japanese animation. Organised as an internally consistent treatise, some of its chapters are in connection with interviews conducted by the Editor and Contributors with prominent figures of sound in anime, and/or contain chapter boxes relating specific aspects.

A first specification on the word anime

Many readers and much scholarship designate all Japanese animations with the label anime. This is not correct: distinctions on the diverse array of productions in the animations designed in Japan are needed, wherein anime occupies an enormous, yet not isolated and not all-encompassing position.

Explanations on the variety of names, techniques, formats, and genres of animations created in Japan, but also the notion itself of what qualifies and makes us perceive an animation as “Japanese”, “made in Japan”, “designed in Japan”, carrying elements of “Japanese culture”, etc. are in the Introduction.

The scope and aim of the Handbook relate the historical, diachronic, and structural dimensions of the phenomenon of music and sound *in* and *for* Japanese animation. The history of this popular art and creative industry is unfolded through a mosaic of theory-driven, fieldwork-implemented, technique-concerned, and documentation-based chapters.

The writing styles are overall academic in the form, content, and structure; but music is an art, and one that deeply bonds with the listener’s feelings and memories, especially when associated with another form of art that is as visual and stylised as animation. That is why the Editor and Contributors took the liberty to share with the Reader more personal impressions and ideas on the emotional aspects of the music and sounds discussed in the Handbook: this was done not only through a few features of the writing styles and small indulgencies within the chapters, but also in informal “statements” at the top of almost all chapters.

As readers can see in the biographic profiles at the end of the volume (in the Backmatter), the book’s Editor is a mass media and cultural sociologist. The Contributors are either established specialists of solid reputation or younger academics with an already fair experience and publication output.

An intentional strategy for this Handbook was, moreover, that of including, as Contributors, some writers who are not active in academic institutions but are competent professionals and scholars in culture and media: since this is a reference book, as the Editor I did not want to renounce to relevant voices in the field. There are, and there must be, areas of permeability between academia and non-academia: the differences in approach and perspective may be apparent, but they do not necessarily make one more legit than the other. On the contrary, the wisdom and knowledge of extra-academia experts was deemed as necessary and refreshing.

An important aspect I would indulge myself in underlining to this end is that, as the Editor, I did not launch a typical open call for papers on a general subject “Japanese animation and music”. I first created this book project, chapter by chapter, following an outline for each and every expected segment of it; only after which did I look for those authors for whom I have great consideration, inviting them to join the project. In other words, this Handbook is not an accumulation of independent essays that were later organised in a (hopefully) harmonious way, but, on the contrary, the outcome of a design into which all the Contributors involved decided to join (with some key additions at later stages), writing on the topic the Editor proposed them; and, clearly, adding their expertise, personal insight, and ideas, redefining up to a

point the scope and goals of their respective chapters. The final result is in this sense, I daresay, a solid cooperative work.

The implementation of this project would have been faster than it has been if, as we all know, reality had not stepped in: the covid-19 pandemic, which broke out in early 2020, impacted us in various ways for about three years. This affected the Handbook's original production time line. This volume should have originally come out in 2022. But well, here it is, at last.

STRUCTURE, PROGRESSION, AND THEMES OF THE HANDBOOK

After this Foreword, which is part of a Frontmatter containing various preparatory pages and the Introduction, the volume is articulated into four Parts, for a total of 45 chapters, including supplemental essays, interviews (besides the standard chapters, the Handbook offers interviews with professionals of music in Japanese animation and shorter essays), and three appendixes: “micro-encyclopaedias” of the most important historic and current composers and vocal performers for Japanese animation. The book ends with a Backmatter that includes an Afterword, a useful Glossary, the profiles of the Editor and Contributors, and the Index.

The Introduction and the first part provide general historical, theoretical, and technical contextualisations on Japanese animation and on the music and sound industry in the animation sector in Japan. The second part provides many (roughly, chronologically arranged) theoretical-historical discussions, examples of auteurship, and experiences and case studies from the worlds of music, sound, and voice acting in Japanese animation. The third part, which serves as a collection of further, complementary studies of the international dimensions of music and sound for Japanese animation, assembles chapters on how anime in particular, in their journeys outside of Japan, have been received, treated, re-edited, translated, and interpolated in regard to their aural (music, songs, voices) components. The fourth part contains various interviews, supplemental essays, and the three aforementioned micro-encyclopaedias. Finally, the Backmatter hosts the Glossary, an Afterword, the Contributors' bio blurbs, and the Index.

Let me now move on to the summaries of the various areas and segments of this Handbook.

First of all, as an inevitable and contextualising part of the Frontmatter, the Introduction. “Introduction. *Tool kits / 0*: Presenting Japanese Animation and a Summary of Sources on Music and Animation”, by Marco Pellitteri, gives an outlook of the history and feats of Japanese animation. Being this the prime matter upon which music, songs, and sound (voices and noise effects) are added, it was key to introduce animation made in Japan to readers in its main facets as an industry, a media form, and a popular art. The Introduction, in some specific points, hosts three short boxed texts composed by two Contributors, Yōhei Nagato and Guido Tavassi. The label “*Tool kits / 0*” refers to the subgrouping “*Tool kits*” established for the first four chapters of Part I, but it bears the number 0 so as to be intended as a preamble.