

CRUSHER JOE

A short biography of Takachiho Haruka (stolen with his permission from the Science Fiction Writers of Japan website):

Takachiho Haruka was born on Nov. 7th 1951 in Nagoya, as Takekawa Kimiyoshi. He graduated in social science from Hosei University in 1975 and established Studio Nue in 1972 when he was still a student, to work as an Anime producer and scenario writer. He has served as the SFWJ's executive secretary. His debut as a writer was "Crusher Joe: Wakusei Pizan no Kiki" (Crisis on Planet Pizan) in 1977. In 1980, Mr. Takachiho won the Seiun Award (Japanese short story) for "DirtyPair no Dai Boken" (The Great Adventure of the Dirty Pair) and in 1986, he was given the Seiun Award (Japanese novel) for "DirtyPair no Dai Gyakuten" (The Dirty Pair Strike Again).

Animated Works:

"Crusher Joe" (Movie, Video series)
"Dirty Pair" (TV series, Movie, Video series)
"Dirty Pair Flash" (Video series)

Novels and Stories:

"Crusher Joe" series
"Dirty Pair" series
"Lee Suiron the Godhand" series
"Mezamesi Mono wa Ryu" (Awoke Is the Dragon)
"Madou Shinwa" (Sorcerians' Myth)
"Ookami Tachi no Kouya" (Wolves' Wilderness)
"Bijuu: Kamigami no Senshi" (Beautiful Beast: Warrior of the Gods)
"Ogon no Apollo" (Golden Apollo)
"Igyo Sangokushi" (Deformed Book of Three Dynasties) series
"Natsu, Kaze, Rider" (Summer, Wind, Rider)
"Dirty Pair Flash" series

Takachiho Haruka in his own words, from his WorldCon '92 Panel, Orlando, FL, USA

In 1970, for the first time in my life, I attended an SF convention in Japan.

Back in my high school days, I was a big manga fan, and so I got involved in writing for some fanzines. The format that I was most interested in writing for back then was the "comic strips." Pretty soon, I came up with some great ideas about possibly writing some space opera-ish stuff, but I didn't feel that I had what it took to adapt it into anything suitable for comic form.

So, you see, in the midst of attending that SF convention, I said to myself that becoming a comic SF writer wasn't for me.

In '72, together with some of the illustrators that I had met during that convention, we founded a company called "Studio Nue." Together, we began working on various things necessary for producing animation, especially mechanical designs and layout.

The first major production that we worked on was called "ZEROTESTER." Next came something called "YUUSHA RAIDEEN" [1]. We enjoyed working on these successful productions.

Sometime around '77, I had a certain urge to start writing novels, so I began organizing various comic stories --- a lot of stories that I'd worked on during my high school days --- into a little novel.

You see, SF novels in Japan were heavily influenced by the American SF of the 1950's. What was considered mainstream back then was the only so-called "proper" science fiction, so there were very few published materials that could've been labelled even remotely as "space opera." Understandably, it was very difficult for writers to get works of this kind published.

But then, out of the blue, the movie "Star Wars" came out. Suddenly, the phrase "space opera" became widely-accepted and it was used more and more in Japan, everywhere you'd go. Of course, prior to this, some did exist, though not to such an extent --- Tezuka Osamu deserves credit for first popularizing "space opera" in Japan, through his comics.

While observing this developing trend, thanks to "Star Wars" and all, I began to think that maybe my own stories could finally get published! So I pulled all my scrapbooks from my high-school days out of the storage, and began "novelizing." It took me two whole weeks to complete, and the end result was basically the first printing of "Crusher Joe." Now, this sold rather well, made many people happy, and I was requested to write sequels to it. And thus, it began its life as a series!

Sometime around this time, Bertram Chandler came to visit Japan. To help show him around, Studio Nue's two young female assistants became Mr.Chandler's personal tour guides. One assistant named Tanaka Yuri, and the other, Otoguro Keiko. One thing lead to another, and they came up with an idea of taking Mr.Chandler to a women's wrestling event.

At that time, the most popular women wrestling team was a duo named the "Beauty Pair" [2]. As we were watching the Beauty Pair in action, Mr.Chandler joked, "you know, those two in the ring maybe the Beauty Pair, but these two with you --- Yuri and Kei --- should be called the Dirty Pair!" At that moment, in my mind, I conceived a new story. That was the "Dirty Pair." I think that must have been 1980.

By the way, when I finished writing the first "Crusher Joe", the editors were asking me who I wanted as illustrators for my novel. Without hesitation, I recommended Yasuhiko Yoshikazu, who worked as the character designer for "Raideen."

But Mr.Yasuhiko insisted, "Look, I'm an animator, not an illustrator," so he steadfastly refused to do any illustrations for me. But, after three days and nights of constant begging, he finally said, "Oh, what the hell!" You see, one of the troubles was that Mr.Yasuhiko had this belief: "Real animators draw using pencils only, because real animators don't use ink!" But I told him, "It's no

problem - You just go ahead and draw with pencil, then I'll Xerox them and send the copies to the publisher." He was, at last, convinced. Since that day, Mr. Yasuhiko worked prolifically not only as an animator, but also as an illustrator, and even as a manga author.

Because this combination --- Takachiho & Yasuhiko --- had produced a hit, Sunrise wanted to release "Crusher Joe" as their first original theatrical anime production. This led to the theatrical version of "Crusher Joe."

Lately I've been thinking that perhaps I should put an end soon to both "Crusher Joe" and "Dirty Pair." So, last year I introduced a new character which comes from the same time period as DP, about 2141 A.D. This is "Dragon Lee", who's yet another WWWA Trouble Consultant, just like Yuri and Kei. Right now, we're planning to make an anime production that will be exploiting this new character.

But, sadly, the anime industry in Japan is experiencing tough times lately [3], so things don't seem to be going very smoothly. I do remain optimistic though!

[1]: Raideen was a classic anime series some 50 episodes long. It featured one of the the most phenomenal transformation sequences of that day.

[2]: The Beauty Pair was quite a popular wrestling duo. They even recorded a self-titled song, which became a huge hit.

[3]: Mr. Takachiho and Mr. Suzuki, President of Artmic, stated (in a different panel) that not only is the post-Bubble-Economy a problem, but also by the fact that not too many staff members stick around to complete a given project. This is because the competing companies are constantly headhunting and offering new projects, with better pay and incentives, etc.

Motion Picture Theme: Hishou (Never End)

(The Flight (Never End))

Lyrics by Fujiwara Tsukihiko

Music by Nishimatsu Kazuharu

Arranged by Aragon

Performed by Nishimatsu Kazuharu (of Aragon)

Birds take flight out to the horizon.
Space is unfolded by the clashing of waves.
We wanderers roam around
in the river of eternity...
... 'til the day the fire dies inside our hearts.

Suiheisen ni tori ga tobitatsu.
Kudakeru nami ni sora ga hirogaru.
Towa no nagare
hito wa sasurau.
Atsui inochi moetsukiru toki made.

The journey will never come to an end...
"Oh, our trip will never end"

Tabi ni owari wa nai...
"Oh, our trip will never end"

...in this infinite universe.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”
So let us fly to the end of time...
“So let’s see eternal grace”
...let us go, with all our friends.
“The trip with all my friends - the human race”

The flame flickers at the edge of darkness.
Beyond the night, a new day is born.
We seek dreams that never end...
...‘til the day we lose our voice of passion.

The journey will never come to an end...
“Oh, our trip will never end”
...in this infinite universe.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”
So let us fly to the end of time...
“So let’s see eternal grace”
...let us go, with all our friends.
“The trip with all my friends”

The journey will never come to an end...
“Oh, our trip will never end”
...in this infinite universe.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”

...hateshinai uchuu.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”
Toki no kanata mezashi...
“So let’s see eternal grace”
...tomo to tabitatu.
“The trip with all my friends - the human race”

Yami no kanata ni honou ga yureru.
Yoru no mukou ni ashita ga umareru.
Mihatenu yume hito wa motomeru.
Atsui sakebi karehateru toki made.

Tabi ni owari wa nai...
“Oh, our trip will never end”
...hateshinai uchuu.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”
Toki no kanata mezashi...
“So let’s see eternal grace”
...tomo to tabitatu.
“The trip with all my friends”

Tabi ni owari wa nai...
“Oh, our trip will never end”
...hateshinai uchuu.
“Travelling in dark, deep space”

OVA Image Song: Innocent Dreamer

Lyrics: Urino Masao

Music: Izumi Tsunehiro

Arrangement: Shinkawa Hiroshi

Performed and Sung by Carlos Toshiki and Omegatribe

Like stardust,
raindrops fall upon the valley.
They call upon each other
to build gentle streams.
Even the ocean
that we can't reach alone
exists because of a thousand streams
flowing into the great river.

Silver stardust,
(Big summer starry night)

Sutaadasuto no yoo ni
soogen ni furu raindrops.
Yobiainagara sasayaka na
suiryuu wo tsukuru.
Hitoribocchi dewa
tadoritsukenai umi mo
sen no nagare ga musubiau
taiga kara tszuletzteru.

Manatsu no Kanate mezasu
(Big summer starry night)

aiming for the end of the summer.
(Just hold on to your dream)
Be not afraid,
(Just hold on to your dream)
hold onto your dream.
(You know it will come true)
Be together as one... together.
(Innocent dream)

One tender raindrop
shines before the boy's eyes.

Someday, in another form,
you'll reach the vast field of waves.
With every new encounter
you become truer to yourself.

gin no hoshikuzutachi yo.
(Just hold on to your dream)
Osorezu
(Just hold on to your dream)
yume wo daite.
(You know it will come true)
Hitotsu ni nare... together
(Innocent dream)

Shoonen no me ni kagayaita
hitotsubu no yureru raindrop.

Itsushika sugata kaete
nami no kooya e tsukeyo.
Darekato majiwarutabi
kimi wa kimi ni naru.