

MECHANICAL PANDA ROCKS L.A.!



THE HARD HITTING ROCK DUO FROM JAPAN KNOWN AS MECHANICAL PANDA ROCKED LOS ANGELES FOR PACIFIC MEDIA EXPO 2006. J!-ENT INTERVIEWS REN AND ISA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BAND AND THEIR MUSIC!
BY DENNIS A. AMITH & WYNNE IP

WHAT'S HOT IN MUSIC



TOP PHOTO: isa and Ren aka MECHANICAL PANDA

Panda Mania has swept Los Angeles with the explosive performance from the hard hitting girl band known as Mechanical Panda.

Coming from Japan were duo Ren (vocals, guitar and programming) and isa (bass and programming) along with their supporting band members korosuke (on guitar) and Noriko "Boss" Hasegawa (on drums) rocked the hundreds of people in attendance at Pacific Media Expo at the LAX Hilton on October 29.

With the release of three CD singles ("Mechanical Panda", "FAKE" and "MUGEN"), the duo has rocked Japan performing in Japan featuring their street punk style of music and with their performance in Los Angeles, have now gained the respect of many Japanese music fans.

Lead vocalist Ren is a big fan of films such as "Bio Hazard" (Resident Evil), "Akira" and "Harry Potter". Enjoys manga such as "20th Century Boy", "Pataliro" and "One Piece". Rena also plays video games such as "Kingdom Hearts", "Sangoku Musou" (Dynasty Warriors) and "Grand Theft Auto".

Bass player Isa favors films such as "The Nightmare Before Christmas" and "Sleep Hollow" and manga such as "Pataliro!", "Nana" and "Cat Street". For video games she enjoys "Otome Game".

The two also share a passion for taking pictures of combini (convenience stores) which they share with their fans through their official website at: www.mecha-panda.com.

The day before their concert, J!-ENT had the opportunity to interview Mechanical Panda.

DENNIS: When you were younger, was it both your dreams to become music artists?

ISA: When I was younger, I was playing the piano and my dream at the time was to become a piano teacher. But in high school, through friends, I started to learn about the enjoyment of being part of a band and rock music. So, I decided I want to become a rock musician.

REN: I liked to sing when I was young.



* L-R: Ren and isa of MECHANICAL PANDA. Photography courtesy of addone ltd.

I studied when I was younger but I was influenced by artists Hide and Nine Inch Nails and when I saw that, I knew that I wanted to go the music route.

WYNNE: How do you feel to be an all female rock band?

ISA: Because it's rare, we are using that as our strength. Sometimes you find most female bands in pop music but rarely in the rock genre. So, it gives us strength into what we are.

DENNIS: Were you influenced by female rock bands such as Princess Princess or Shonen Knife?

ISA: We heard their songs on

television but they were really not much of an influence for us.

DENNIS: How did you come up with the name Mechanical Panda for your band?

ISA: When we first got together, Ren would have white and black on her hair like a panda and we like pandas. And the Mechanical part is because of the digital influences in our music.

DENNIS: You will be performing in front of hundreds of people for PMX, has it been



* MECHANICAL PANDA'S REN. Photography by Nergene Arquealada

your dream to perform in front of an American audience?

REN and ISA: Yes!

DENNIS: Are you curious to see how Americans will perceive your music?

ISA: We never thought about the differences of American and Japanese fans and how they will react to the music but we did wonder and think about how we were going to MC in front of the American audience.

WYNNE: Ren, For your performance, by adding a supporting guitarist, does that change the way you play your music compared to being just the main guitarist before?

REN: I wanted to concentrate more on vocals to be more expressive, so that's why we added a supporting another band member to play the

guitar.

WYNNE: I read on the Internet that your old sound was more hard rock and your new sound is more rock/pop? What do you think about that?

REN: We wanted to broaden our music, so that is why we added songs like that to our performances.

WYNNE: Since you both are strong females. How would you change the perception of the stereotype of Japanese women that they are weaker.

REN: We believe in living our life to the fullest. It doesn't matter if you were a man or a woman. So, we would like to get rid of those sexist barriers.

DENNIS: If you had one word to describe each other, what word would that be and why?

ISA: That's so hard! I would say passionate.

REN: Usagi...rabbit. Because she eats a lot of vegetables.

DENNIS: Well being in America, has there been anything in America that you both wanted to eat?

ISA and REN: Steak!

DENNIS: One thing that I was curious about on the Websites was that you both have this passion for taking pictures of combini. Why is that?

ISA: When we walk around town, we see so many convenience stores but we started to notice local combini and were interested in seeing what was in those?

DENNIS: Now have you seen any of our American combini? Especially how uncool ours are



* MECHANICAL PANDA'S ISA. Photography by Nergene Arquealada

to what is in Japan.

ISA: (laughing) Not yet.

REN: We just only been to the super-market very quick.

DENNIS: Now, if we were to look into your CD or MP3 player, which artist would you be listening to right now?

REN: Zebrahead.

ISA: A decent variety of JPOP, Rob Zombie and Nine Inch Nails.

DENNIS: I notice that many ladies in rock had a signature move that they like to do on stage. Does Mechanical Panda have any signature moves on stage?

REN: Yes, on our song "MUGEN", there is a part where we raise our right hand and we like everyone to raise their hand. That would be nice if everyone in at the PMX concert raises their hand!

DENNIS: Which type of guy would you both go for. A Kawamura Ryuichi, a Katori Shing or a Brad Pitt?

ISA and REN: Brad Pitt!
(Laughing!)

DENNIS: In the tradition of J!-ENT, we ask the people we interview five words, you give us your definition of each word.

LOVE

ISA: Something warm.

REN: Something deep.

SUCCESS

ISA: Being on top.

REN: Rich.

SADNESS

ISA and REN: Tears

SEX

ISA and REN: Something that's... in the broad sense... children.

PANDA

ISA: Something that is very cute.

REN: Something that I love.

DENNIS: What final words would you like to leave with your fans?

REN: We wish that everyone comes to our concerts and enjoy! ■

DENNIS A. AMITH is the founder/owner of J!-ENT and is an entertainment-writer-at-large for J!-ENT.

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For more information on UchuSentai NOIZ, please visit noiz.main.jp

J!-ENT MECHANICAL PANDA PHOTO GALLERY



* MECHANICAL PANDA'S ISA AND REN AT THE INTERVIEW WITH J!-ENT. Photography by Nergene Arquealada



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* MECHANICAL PANDA'S ISA AND REN AT THE INTERVIEW WITH J!-ENT. Photography by Nergene Arquealada

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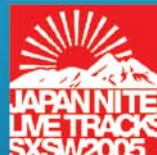
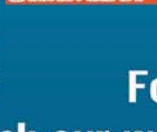
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