



WHAT HAPPENS AFTER YOU DIE?

In a digital realm between life and the hereafter, there lies an empty room, a black sphere and the trapped souls of the unfortunate.

by Dennis A. Amith

GANTZ

2004 (ADV Films), 23 min. per episode

We had the opportunity to preview the first two episodes of the unedited/uncut version of the animated TV series "Gantz".

The anime is based on the manga by Oku Hiroya and directed by Itano Ichiro ("Mega Zone 23", "Macross Plus")

The storyline begins with Kuroko Kei. Kei, is a student who has an obsession with pornography, arrogant and has a low opinion of people around him.

Upon waiting for a subway train, he sees an old childhood friend, Kato Masaru.

Masaru is the total opposite of Kei in which he respects Kei because of his braveness but he's

simple, kind and willing to help people.

When a homeless person falls down on the subway tracks, Masaru is their to help him. But to save him, he needs help, thus he asks the help of Kei.

Both managed to save the homeless individual but in the process are ran over by the subway and decapitated.

While dead in reality, in another reality, both end up in an apartment room with other people and a dog (who have also died).

The apartment happens to be a self-contained small universe where chosen individuals are transported to immediately after death.

No one can escape and no one understands why they are there until the black sphere in the middle

of the room known as GANTZ gives them a mission. To kill a strange onion-headed boy.

Since, I haven't watched the original TV episodes that, what I can tell you is that this anime is definitely not for children.

It features graphic scenes, violence, nudity and adult situations that I'm curious what was exactly shown on television.

The animation is top notch work from GONZO and so far, the characters in the anime seem to be quite interesting.

Among the chosen individuals is the lone female of the group, Kishimoto Kei, a girl who attempted suicide but survived but for some reason the GANTZ created an exact digital copy of her and upon arrival to the apartment is nude and Kei is holding on to her.

While most of the chosen ones seem to be decent individuals, among them are two yakuza gangsters. One who tries to rape female Kei but fortunately Masaru is their to prevent it.

Thus Kei becomes smitten with Masaru, while Kei (male) takes a liking to her.

Also among the individuals is Nishi Joichiro, a mysterious person who has been in the GANTZ for one year and is fascinated by it.

For comedy relief is the dog, Butter who seems to have a taste for female Kei.

Although this anime may be a bit dark and graphic for some anime viewers, I actually found it quite intriguing because the storyline is very original and exciting.

The first DVD volume for "Gantz" is planned for release in February 2005. ■