

WHAT'S UP ON TELEVISION

j!-ent **Totally Hot** selection!



Follow the wacky adventures of Japan's rockin' duo Puffy AmiYumi in an upcoming animated series titled "Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi" debuting on November 19th on the Cartoon Network. **by Dennis A. Amith**

J!-ENT | NOVEMBER 04

HI HI PUFFY AMI YUMI PHOTO COURTESY OF CARTOON NETWORK. PUFFY AMIYUMI PHOTO COURTESY OF SONY MUSIC ENTERTAINMENT JAPAN

PUFFY AMIYUMI ARE BACK! This time in an animated format for their upcoming show “Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi” which is set to debut on the Cartoon Network on November 19 (7:30 p.m., Friday).

Many Cartoon Network fans will know the duo from their theme to the popular animation “Teen Titans”.

For many of fans familiar with their music, they are known as the cute, humorous but hard rockin’ duo who had many #1 hits in Japan, sold millions of records, had their own television variety show, their own video game and also have rocked America with performances in New York, California and Texas.

With animation that is reminiscent to the popular “Power Puff Girls”, “Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi” is a very fun series which features Ami, the peppy, optimistic member and Yumi, the tough, hard rocking member along with their square manager, Kaz.

The animated series mixes live performances and short skit segments by Puffy AmiYumi. One example features Yumi explaining she’s from Osaka, Japan and Ami explaining she’s from Tokyo and the two get into a humorous argument of which city is better.

As for the spoken language of the animated series, the characters are dubbed by talented voice actors Janice Kawaye as Ami, Grey Delisle as Yumi and Keone Young as Kaz.

One of the cool aspects of this animated series which I enjoyed is the use of music by Puffy AmiYumi. So, although the series is all-English, the show does incorporate the popular music (Japanese and English) by the duo.

Andy Sturmer who has worked with the duo on their English tracks for their previous American albums is on-board with this animated series as the music director and consulting producer.

To accompany the debut of their show, Ami and Yumi have put together a soundtrack (available from Sony Epic on November 16) of some of their best

THE FIRST DUO FROM JAPAN



Believe it or not but Puffy AmiYumi are the second female Japanese duo to have a major appearance on American television. The first was PINK LADY who debuted on the 1980 NBC variety show “PINK LADY & JEFF” (now available on DVD from RHINO). Despite their hotness, the women didn’t understand nor could they speak any English, participated in horrendous skits and had to sing (or lip-sync) covers of current popular songs at that time in English. Unfortunately, it is viewed as one of the top 10 terrible shows of all time. Fortunately, Puffy AmiYumi are not following the exact same route. (photo by Victor Records)

tracks spanning their 9 year career.

Songs included in this album feature the popular “Teen Titans Theme” as well as the “Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi” show theme. Also, “Friends Forever” (from “Scooby-Doo 2”) and popular Japanese hits such as “Kore ga watashi no Ikiru Michi”, “Vacation”, “Asia no Junshin”, “Boogie Woogie No. 5”, “Love So Pure” and many more.

From the J!-ENT point-of-view, I’m pretty stoked to see Puffy AmiYumi with an animated show in America.

Sam Register (Cartoon Network Vice President) and the Cartoon Network have been very hip to bridge the gap between American and Japanese culture with their programming. With the inclusion of Puffy AmiYumi singing the theme song for “Teen Titans” (both in Japanese and English) as well as giving them the opportunity to have their own

show, I really like the direction the network is going.

As for the animation of “Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi”, although the American character animation is different from the Rodney Greenblat style of artwork (used on the duo’s Japanese merchandise) that some of us are used to, I do feel that their intended targeted audience (ages 6-11) and fans will feel comfortable and enjoy it.

The voice acting is very well done and so far, from what I have seen, you can understand Ami and Yumi’s English during the live segments..

“Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi” is definitely quite unique.

Although “Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi” is not anime, it manages to carry both the Japanese elements of Puffy AmiYumi’s music and how they are in Japan and the American element through the animation.

All in all, it helps to have a balance of cool but simple animation and well-done voice acting which helps make this animation enjoyable. **B**



For more information on Puffy AmiYumi, please check out their official US Web site at: www.puffyamiyumi.com.