



# PROJECT ANIME

LOS ANGELES

The Westin Bonaventure Hotel

**JULY 2-3, 2019**

# Welcome



I would like to welcome you to Project Anime: Los Angeles.

For me, growing up in Japan, Hollywood was a fantasy land far far away. But today, it's closer than ever. Who'd thought we would see Pikachu on the big screen or Spike, Jet and Faye come alive?

At Project Anime: Tokyo this past March, we started learning about and exploring the trend in Hollywood of sourcing materials from Japan for the big screen. Now we are going even deeper to learn more about the how and the why during our LA event.

Why do we need to know about that? It is important to understand that anime fandom events are no longer niche experiences. We are seeing that fandom events are growing in general across the board. We are also seeing there is a substantial amount of crossover with anime, comics, and gaming fans. Now that Hollywood is consistently turning out big movies based on Japanese content, we are seeing even greater opportunity for anime fandom events to engage the mainstream audience.

We have dedicated panels for event organizers to discuss marketing strategies, acquiring content from Japan, and enhancing programming to cater to a wide variety of interests. Growing your event means adjusting to new environments. Building demand for international content means catering to global interest and desire.

We are happy to provide an open and professional environment for all our industry partners to share thoughts, ideas, and concerns as we search for solutions amongst the entertainment community.

This is a great opportunity for creators, publishers, and event organizers to learn what works at fandom events that encourages love and support for our content for years to come. It's also a fantastic way to cultivate a new fan base.



Project Anime continues to help act as a bridge between east and west, and we appreciate you joining us on this journey of growth!

*Azusa Matsuda*

Azusa Matsuda  
Sr. Director of Business Development

# Keynote Speaker



## Elie Dekel

Executive Vice President  
Brand Development &  
Consumer Products,  
Legendary Entertainment

A proven leader in global licensing and entertainment brand building, Elie Dekel has enjoyed uncommon success over a storied career spanning three decades. With a proven record of global success in licensing of entertainment and anime brands, Elie Dekel’s experience spans corporate leadership and strategy, production, marketing, branding, licensing, retail development, ecommerce and consumer engagement.

Elie is currently Executive Vice President for Brand Development and Consumer Products at Legendary Entertainment. In this capacity, Elie leads the company’s consumer products licensing initiatives for iconic feature film titles including Godzilla King of the Monsters, Pokémon Detective Pikachu, Legendary’s Monsterverse, as well as television series Lost in Space, and the Pacific Rim anime series now in production. Legendary is also in development of a live-action Gundam feature film.

Earlier in his career, Dekel held senior positions at Saban, CAA and Fox, where he led marketing and licensing for Power Rangers, Digimon, Dragonball Z, Masked Rider and many other Japanese properties.

# Speaker Profiles

## A. Jinnie McManus



**Communications  
Division Director,  
Anime Milwaukee/  
Colorado Anime  
Fest**

Amanda “Jinnie” McManus was born in South Korea and raised in Aurora, CO. An admitted anime newbie, she fell in love with anime conventions at first sight and never looked back. This is her seventeenth year as a high-level convention volunteer staffer, spanning both coasts of the US and some states in between. Currently, she’s on the staff rosters for the Anime Milwaukee (WI) and Colorado Anime Fest (CO), and trains conventions worldwide on counterfeit merchandise prevention and enforcement. She assists and mentors conventions of numerous topics worldwide and is regularly sought out as a global influential voice on the convention circuit.

## Amber Rutland



**Fashion  
Expert**

Featured in the past by media like the New York Times, New York Village Voice and VICE, Amber is known as one of the main faces in Harajuku and Shibuya street fashion countercultures in the New York City area. Besides Japanese culture, she also has a background in events management, travel and tourism.

# Speaker Profiles

## Chris Stuckey



**Co-Chair,  
MomoCon**

From Georgia Tech, to 3 different start up companies, Christopher Stuckey has been working on many projects before finding the true passion in organizing events. Working with his wife Jessica Merriman they took MomoCon from a convention of only 700 attendees into one of the fastest growing conventions in the country, reaching more than 39,000 attendees over a single weekend in 2019. They continue to work on MomoCon as their full-time job, with more than 43,000 attendees expected in 2020.

## Dave Jesteadt



**President,  
GKIDS**

David Jesteadt is President at GKIDS, a distributor of award-winning feature animation for both adult and family audiences. GKIDS' releases have received eleven Academy Award® nominations for Best Animated Feature, including Mamoru Hosoda's *Mirai* in 2019. GKIDS also handles North American distribution for the acclaimed Studio Ghibli library of films, one of the world's most coveted animation collections.

In addition to overseeing all distribution and marketing activities at GKIDS, David is also an Executive Producer of the Academy Award®-nominated film *The Breadwinner*, and has co-produced the English language versions of many GKIDS films.

## Chuck Williams



**Chief Creative  
Officer,  
Marza Animation  
Planet**

A 21 year veteran of Disney (*Beauty & the Beast*, *Lion King*, *Aladdin*, etc.), Chuck Williams has worn many hats- producer, writer, development exec. He produced the academy nominated *BROTHER BEAR*, and worked under Pixar's John Lasseter and Ed Catmull, heading the Disney shorts program, as well as developing features.

Since 2013, Chuck has worked with several Japanese studios and heads up development for Marza -- animated films and the upcoming *Sonic the Hedgehog* live-action hybrid film. Chuck is a passionate filmmaker, a veteran in emotional, big scale stories, and a relentless pursuer of quality family entertainment.

## Deborah Gilels



**Publicist**

DEBORAH GILELS experience in the entertainment industry has run the gamut from film/television production and development, to mergers and acquisitions and public relations. Among the films she has launched: *The War on Kids*, *Mighty Fine*, *Maquia: When the Promised Flower Blooms*, *Liz and the Blue Bird*, *Penguin Highway* and *Fathom Events* release of Hayao Miyazaki's *Lupin the 3rd: The Castle of Cagliostro*, where she set up the filmed interview with John Lasseter to promote the film. She also did publicity for anime series *Lupin 3rd Part 4*, *Megalobox*, and currently films *Sound! Euphonium* and *Millennium Actress*.

## Dallas Middaugh



**Nonlinear  
World**

Dallas Middaugh has worked in the manga and anime field for almost 20 years, during which time he has authored, edited or published over 2000 books. He is the founder of several manga publishing companies and imprints, including Penguin Random House's *Del Rey Manga* in 2004, *Seven Seas* in 2005, and *Kodansha Comics* in 2010. He was the first person in the US to license *Attack on Titan* in 2011, two years before its anime debut. His company, *Nonlinear World*, is a pop culture consultancy working with clients in manga, comics, and anime on events, publishing, marketing, and industry analysis.

## Eric Calderon



**Head of Studio,  
Octopie**

Eric Calderon has over 25 years of experience in writing, development and production in animation, and has worked on globally renowned shows and projects. As the Head of Studio for Octopie Productions, an animation company that counts Joe and Anthony Russo (Avengers film directors) as its partners, he manages productions across the company, developing unique IP as well as bringing to light existing IP to new audiences. He is also the founder and host of 'Surviving Animation,' an original industry-focused YouTube channel.

# Speaker Profiles

## Garth Hill



**Sr. Account Manager, Aloompa**

Since 2015, Garth has partnered with event marketing and production teams to merge the physical and digital fan experiences. Based in New York City, he currently works as part of the Aloompa team to help events leverage their digital offering to drive engagement throughout the event lifecycle. Leveraging Aloompa's cutting edge technology in the proximity and frictionless payment spaces, he's able to facilitate engagement strategies that are centered around measurable ROI and actionable insight for event production and sponsorship teams.

Garth has worked with 100+ festivals across North America and Europe including Bonnaroo Music + Arts Festival, Insomniac's Electric Daisy Carnival, Anime Expo and New York Comic Con.

## Jessica Merriman



**Co-Chair, MomoCon**

Jessica Merriman founded MomoCon, a now-39,000 person animation and gaming festival, while still an undergraduate at Georgia Tech and has overseen its development all the way through to today.

## Geneva Wasserman



**Producer, Project Z**

Geneva is a respected leader in entertainment and technology with experience spanning over 20 years in roles including: intellectual property licensing attorney, business and legal affairs, business development, creative development, technology development, marketing and all aspects of film and television production and distribution. She holds a B.A. with honors from the University of California, San Diego and a J.D. with honors from Hastings College of the Law.

## Jon Baumgardner



**JBranding**

Jon Baumgardner is the CMO of JBranding, an Event Management & Public Relations agency located in Pasadena, California. Catering primarily to Japanese companies looking to grow their market in America, JBranding has proven that cost effective PR services do not have to come with an expensive price tag. The company's services focus on publicity, disseminating news, media management and search engine marketing (SEM & SEO). JBranding's specialized approach brings simplicity to the confusing world of communications and delivers measurable results.

## Jeremy Wan



**Esports Expert**

"This guy loves his games and anime"  
Jeremy is a freelance broadcast producer and operator for Activision Blizzard's premier esports division: Overwatch League. An International esports league that combines the best elements of esports and traditional sports to create an unparalleled pro-level competitive experience for players and fans. The program is now internationally broadcast on multiple platforms including Bilibili, MLG, Twitch, and The Disney Network (ABC, ESPN, Disney XD), and more!  
His past esports project involvements include Heroes of the Dorm, Overwatch World Cup, Wednesday Night Fights, and founder of California State University, Fullerton's Esports Club.

## Justin Rojas



**VP of Events and Social Media, Team Envy / Dallas Fuel**

With over a decade of experience in creating and executing comprehensive marketing campaigns and events in the entertainment industry, Justin is the VP of Events and Social Media for esports organization Team Envy and their Overwatch League team Dallas Fuel. Prior to a career in esports, he led social media and business development at anime industry leader Funimation – working with nationally-recognized brands such as Microsoft, Sony, Twitch, EA Games, and Amazon. Justin is also head of business development at Studio Nano, a boutique recording studio and post-production company in the Dallas, TX area that specializes in voice over and localization.

# Speaker Profiles

## Kaz Sasajima



**Sr. Director, Media Unit, Sumitomo Corporation of Americas**

Launched Media Business Unit as the first international media dept. based in Los Angeles, among Sumitomo's international offices outside of Japan, to ensure growth room of media field, mainly focusing "Digital."

Acquired minority share of The Chernin Group, founded and led by former COO of News Corp. Peter Chernin, which covers both traditional major movie productions for FOX and acquisitions of leading digital assets, like the largest MCN, Fullscreen, the largest Anime Streaming Operator, Crunchyroll and a major sports blog, Barstool Sports. With those assets, contributions with Sumitomo's media assets has been creating.

## Kim Meltzer



**CEO, Destination Esports & KidKesty Productions**

Kim Meltzer is a 25 year veteran in the luxury hotel and hospitality industry having worked with Hilton Worldwide, Rock Resorts, Parker Palm Springs and Ojai Valley Inn & Spa to name a few. In her extensive career she has supported and produced more than 500 corporate and entertainment events globally, along with co-producing a top music video hitting 5 million views for Sony Music. In the video gaming industry, her gamer tag, given to her by the Call of Duty community, is "COD Mom". She is also CEO of Destination Esports a creative esports group. DE focuses on working with global destinations and venues, esports teams, talent, broadcasters, investors, gaming publishers, production companies, and brands that want to cohesively activate and be leaders in this one-of-a-kind market.

## Ko Mori



**CEO, Eleven Arts**

Ko Mori is a film producer and distributor. Originally from Japan, Ko now resides in Los Angeles, where he acts as the President and CEO of ELEVEN ARTS. ELEVEN ARTS distributes primarily Japanese Anime to the American market, and produces films in the US and globally. He has previously produced, LORDS OF CHAOS (2018 Sundance Film Festival Official Selection; Dir. Jonas Akerlund), DOWNRANGE (2017 Toronto International Film Festival Official Selection; Dir. Ryuhei Kitamura) MAN FROM RENO (2015 Independent Spirit Award Nominee; Dir. Dave Boyle), UZUMASA LIMELIGHT (2014 Winner of Best Picture and Best Actor at Fantasia International Film Festival; Dir. Ken Ochiai), and other film and tv programs. Ko is currently in Pre-Production for PRISONERS OF THE GHOSTLAND, a feature film directed by Sion Sono, and starring Nicolas Cage and Imogen Poots, and GIFT OF FIRE, a Sundance Film Festival award winning script, co-produced by NHK Japan.

## Marlene Sharp



**Director and Producer, Level-5 Abby**

Currently, Marlene Sharp serves as Director, Production at LEVEL-5 Abby, home of YO-KAI WATCH, INAZUMA ELEVEN, SNACK WORLD, and other Japanese video game-based franchises. Formerly, as Producer (TV Series) at Sega, Marlene worked on much more than the Teen Choice Award-nominated cartoon SONIC BOOM. For example, Hedgehog duties took her to the heights of nerd-dom as an official 2017 San Diego Comic-Con panelist. Marlene holds an MFA degree in Musical Theatre from San Diego State University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Drama/Communications from Loyola New Orleans. She is most passionate about making films starring her dog Blanche DuBois Sharp.

## Marlon Stodghill



**Chairman, Anime Weekend Atlanta**

Marlon Stodghill has been a part of the convention community for 18 years, starting in 2001 as a volunteer at Anime Weekend Atlanta. Since then, he has co-founded two conventions in Hawaii, including Hawaii's longest running convention – Kawaii Kon. He also has taken on the role of chairman of Anime Weekend Atlanta, Kawaii Kon, and Comic Con Honolulu.

Since that first year, Marlon has overseen the production of over 50 conventions, and has always seen it as his role to give back to the community with not-for-profit events. His dream is to produce an event that offers educational and pop-culture related programming that is free for anyone to attend.

When not volunteering for conventions, Marlon is an avid cinephile from old classics to cutting edge indie films.

## Maya Kambe



**Creative Executive, Paramount Pictures**

Maya Kambe is currently the Creative Executive at Paramount Animation where she oversees the development and production of animated features. Her current projects include SPONGEBOB: IT'S A WONDERFUL SPONGE and THE TIGER'S APPRENTICE. Maya previously worked at DreamWorks Animation in both production and development with credits on THE BOSS BABY and CAPTAIN UNDERPANTS. She attended Skidmore College where she majored in Art History and minored in Arts Administration and Business. Maya was born in Tokyo, Japan and raised in Los Angeles, CA.

# Speaker Profiles

## Michael Masukawa



**Manager of Strategy and Business Development, Secret Location**

Michael helps lead Secret Location's growth strategy to support the studio's continued progress towards delivering premium immersive experiences to wide audiences. Identifying new opportunities and prospective partners, he negotiates distribution deals for the studio's immersive entertainment content and VR distribution software, Vusr. In addition to his role in business development, Michael leads co-production and IP licensing project development. He served as co-founder for Secret Location's cinematic VR narrative adaptation of Philip K. Dick's short story, The Great C.

## Paul Benne



**President, Sentinel Security Consulting**

Paul has 33 years of professional experience in emergency management, security assessment, event security management, security technology design and deployment, training and project management. Paul also has 17 years' experience as a first responder. Paul has been responsible for the consulting and design of sophisticated security programs intended to protect critical facilities and high threat target facilities around the world. Paul applies his In-depth knowledge of security, law enforcement, and emergency services operations in the capacity of a consultant. Paul is the President of Sentinel Consulting.

## Michael Grossman



**Sr. Security Advisor, Sentinel Security Group**

Michael has 40 years of diverse law enforcement experience with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He retired in 2013 as the Chief of the Homeland Security Division, responsible for all special operations, intelligence, counter terrorism and emergency operations. After his law enforcement career, Michael served at the Sr. Vice President of U.S. National Security for the Westfield Corporation. His responsibilities included oversight of security operations for 32 malls across the nation and development of the security plans for the retail space at the World Trade Center. Currently Michael is a Senior Security Advisor for Sentinel Consulting, a security consulting firm.

## Peter Tatara



**VP of Anime Events, Leftfield Media**

Peter Tatara is VP of Anime Events at LeftField Media, a boutique event company focused on creating amazing experiences for passionate audiences around the US, and he directly oversees LeftField's Anime NYC and Anime Frontier. Anime NYC, in only three years, has become one of the largest anime conventions in the US, growth in large part because of the event's professionalism and support of anime and manga publishers across the US and Japan. He and LeftField will next take their relationships and learnings from New York to launch Anime Frontier, a new convention debuting next year in Texas.

## Miles Thomas



**Director, Social Media & Editorial Programming, Crunchyroll**

Miles Thomas is the director of social media and editorial programming at Crunchyroll, the world's most popular anime brand with more than 50 million registered users and two million subscribers. In this role, Thomas leads community marketing and engagement strategy for all owned platforms and social media channels for Crunchyroll, alongside Crunchyroll events, the Crunchyroll Store and more. At Crunchyroll, Thomas has driven the growth of the audience development team, managing a network of more than 350 owned social pages for an audience of more than 30 million followers across platforms.

## Tara McKinney



**Sr. Manager, Conventions, Funimation**

Tara McKinney started in the media department and subsequently moved into Campaign Management where she used her event planning experience to transition into the conventions department. She has transformed and innovated Funimation's presence at a variety of pop culture events across the United States and Canada.

# Speaker Profiles

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## Tony Ishizuka



**VP International  
Productions,  
Sony Pictures  
Entertainment**

Tony Ishizuka is currently in charge of acquiring and producing both live action and animated films and series that involves Asian productions and/or Anime/Game IP franchises. Recent titles he produced include animated features such as RESIDENT EVIL VENDETTA, APPLESEED ALPHA, KINGSGLAIVE FINAL FANTASY XV, and STARSHIP TROOPERS franchise. Prior to producing films, he specialized in Marketing for over 2 decades in international territories, notably Japan and France. Born in Washington D.C., raised in Paris and Tokyo, studied at Waseda University (Japan) and Coe College (U.S.), MBA at INSEAD (France), fluent in Japanese, French, and English.

## Vincent Imaoka



**Head of Toy  
Acquisitions,  
Hasbro**

Vincent Imaoka is the head of Toy Acquisitions at Hasbro, Inc. He works on all their story brands, which include first-party properties like Transformers, My Little Pony, and Power Rangers, to partner brands like Marvel, Star Wars, and Disney Princess. Before joining Hasbro, Vincent worked in Japan in multiple industries, ranging from the financial industry at the company Fisco, to the anime industry at the company DLE. From merchandising to storytelling, Vincent knows it all.

# Also Featuring

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**Brian  
Deulley**  
**Sr. Director of  
Programming,  
Fathom Events**



**David  
Usan**  
**Partner,  
Usan  
Entertainment**



**Nadeshiko  
Nakahara**  
**Vice President,  
Antinos Management  
America Inc.**

# Moderators

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## Giselle Fahimian



**Intellectual  
Property Lawyer &  
Consultant**

Giselle Fahimian is a lawyer, consultant, and published author with over 15 years of experience in the field of intellectual property. After graduating from Harvard Law School, she litigated copyright, trademark, and antitrust cases at an international law firm. In the anime world, Giselle was Associate General Counsel of VIZ Media in San Francisco and Los Angeles. In her spare time, Giselle enjoys reading graphic novels, teaching elementary school art (in case you ever wondered what you might end up doing with an Art History degree), and going to film screenings. She lives in Los Angeles with her family.

## Mario Bueno



**Event Coordinator,  
American Cosplay  
Paradise**

Mario is a vocalist, actor, emcee, and producer specializing in the web and nerd culture. He has appeared on ANIME NEWS NETWORK in their 2007-2008 news webisodes, emceed at a wide range of events since 2009, and spent much time on event staffing/team management for companies across the anime and game industries through affiliates such as ACPARADISE.

From 2012-2016, he worked with SUNRISE INC to develop a first-class Broadway production concept. Currently, he juggles daily responsibilities running his production brand DIGITAL ERA ENTERTAINMENT and recently began hosting content for FREDERATOR NETWORKS' Youtube gaming channel THE LEADERBOARD.

## Jennifer Piro



**Consultant**

Jennifer Piro spends her days advising and mentoring start-ups. She's passionate about bringing Japanese pop culture to America and is always looking for new ways to enable community building across continents.

## Miranda Sanchez



**Executive Editor,  
IGN Entertainment**

Miranda Sanchez is an Executive Editor at IGN. Her lifelong passion for things like Pokémon, Halo, and Sailor Moon prepared her for a dream job of writing about video games and leading IGN's anime coverage. Miranda was the founder of IGN Anime Club and is a host on Anime Omake and Podcast Unlocked. She's served as a judge for The Crunchyroll Anime Awards for three years.

# Schedule

July 2, 2019

	“Where Hollywood Meets Anime” Panel Room 1	“The Growth of Anime Events” Panel Room 2	Roundtables Breakout Room
9:30 AM	<b>OPENING REMARKS</b> Panel Room 1		
10:00 AM	<b>How to Pitch to Japan</b> <small>10:00 AM - 10:45 AM</small>	<b>Social Media Management &amp; Community Management</b> <small>10:00 AM - 10:45 AM</small>	
11:00 AM	<b>Adapting Japanese Properties for a Western Audience</b> <small>11:00 AM - 11:45 AM</small>	<b>Sponsorships and Advertisements for Events</b> <small>11:00 AM - 11:45 AM</small>	<b>SPJA Q&amp;A: Marketing &amp; Cosplay</b> <small>11:00 AM - 11:55 AM</small>
12:00 PM	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b> <i>Visit page 15 for nearby lunch options</i>		
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM	<b>How Anime and Manga Happen in Japan</b> <small>1:30 PM - 2:15 PM</small>	<b>Working with Japan: Assets and Guest Relations</b> <small>1:30 PM - 2:15 PM</small>	
3:00 PM	<b>The Role of the Independent Producer</b> <small>2:30 PM - 3:15 PM</small>	<b>Fashion Programming for Japanese Culture Events</b> <small>2:30 PM - 3:15 PM</small>	
	<b>BREAK</b>		
4:00 PM	<b>Creative Differences: When East Meets West</b> <small>4:00 PM - 4:45 PM</small>	<b>Esports and the Importance of Telling A Good Story</b> <small>4:00 PM - 4:45 PM</small>	<b>Security Roundtable</b> <small>4:00 PM - 4:45 PM</small>
5:00 PM			
6:00 PM	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div> <p><b>Cocktail Networking Reception</b> Bonaventure Brewing Co. <b>6:30 PM - 8:30 PM</b></p> <p><i>Visit page 18 for more information</i></p> </div> </div>		
7:00 PM			
8:00 PM			
9:00 PM			

# Schedule

July 3, 2019



	“Where Hollywood Meets Anime” Panel Room 1	“The Growth of Anime Events” Panel Room 2	Roundtables Breakout Room
9:00 AM	<b>DAY 1 HIGHLIGHTS AND REMARKS</b> Panel Room 1		
10:00 AM	<b>Merchandise and Anime</b> 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM	<b>Anime Cons in the #MeToo Era</b> 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM	<b>Marketing for Conventions</b> 10:00 AM - 10:45 AM
11:00 AM	<b>U.S. Manga Industry White Paper</b> 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Crisis Center: Preparing for the Unexpected</b> 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM	<b>Convention Apps Best Practices</b> 11:00 AM - 11:45 AM
12:00 PM	<b>LUNCH BREAK</b> Visit page 15 for nearby lunch options		
1:00 PM			
2:00 PM	<b>The Anime Influence</b> 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM	<b>Acquiring and Funding Concerts</b> 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM	<b>SPJA Q&amp;A: Sales, Operations, and Entertainment</b> 1:30 PM - 2:15 PM
3:00 PM	<b>Anime Movies in Japan</b> 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM	<b>Bootlegs and How to Deal with Them</b> 2:30 PM - 3:15 PM	
	<b>BREAK</b>		
4:00 PM	<b>KEYNOTE: Spotlight on... Elie Dekel</b> Panel Room 1 4:00 PM - 4:45 PM		
5:00 PM			
6:00 PM			
7:00 PM			
8:00 PM			
9:00 PM			

# Panel Descriptions

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## Where Hollywood Meets Anime July 2: Panel Room 1

### Opening Remarks

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Introduction by Ray Chiang (SPJA CEO)

### How to Pitch to Japan

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Moderator: Mario Bueno

Speakers: Geneva Wasserman & Kaz Sasajima

You're interested in a Japanese property. What next? Do you fly to Japan? Who do you meet with? What do they want to hear from you? Join us as we discuss the procedures, channels, and etiquette for approaching Japanese rights holders.

### Adapting Japanese Properties for a Global Audience

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Moderator: Miranda Sanchez

Speaker: Maya Kambe

It's not easy to figure out how to adapt anime or manga. Elements that work in anime might be more challenging in live action, but you never want to lose what made the original great. Our panelists have had to learn to do just that.

### How Anime and Manga Happen in Japan

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

Moderator: Miranda Sanchez

Speaker: Kaz Sasajima

How does anime get made from a business perspective? It doesn't work the same way in Japan that it does in the U.S. Learn about investment, production committees, and the challenges and benefits of the committee system.

### The Role of the Independent Producer

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

Moderator: Mario Bueno

Speakers: Michael Masukawa, Eric Calderon & David Uslan

U.S. producers handle everything from finance to talent to project creation and acquisition. The role is similar to that of the Japanese anime producer, but also quite different. Find out what a producer who wants to adapt an anime spends their day.

### Creative Differences: When East Meets West

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Speaker: Chuck Williams & Eric Calderon

Animation is not made the same way in Japan and the US. What a producer does isn't the same, and even the director's role can be wildly different. Chuck Williams and Eric Calderon are here to talk to you about the differences in the creative process between Japanese and American animation.

## Where Hollywood Meets Anime July 3: Panel Room 1

### Day 1 Highlights and Remarks

9:30 AM - 10:00 AM

Dallas Midaugh

### Merchandise and Anime

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Moderator: Miranda Sanchez

Speakers: Vincent Imaoka & Marlene Sharp

It's not just about telling stories; sometimes, it's about making goods in the U.S. for Japanese properties. How does it differ from the domestic process and what's it like working with Japan, which has its own vibrant merch industry?

### U.S. Manga Industry

#### White Paper

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Speaker: Dallas Midaugh

Manga sales continue to rise in the U.S., outpacing publishing in general, and performing better than most other graphic novel categories. Dallas Midaugh walks you through where this industry has been and where it's going.

### The Anime Influence

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

Moderator: Miranda Sanchez

Speaker: David Uslan

How does anime get made from a business perspective? It doesn't work the same way in Japan that it does in the U.S. Learn about investment, production committees, and the challenges and benefits of the committee system.

### Anime Movies in Japan

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

Moderator: Mario Bueno

Speakers: Ko Mori, Deborah Gilels & Dave Jesteadt

There's a shift taking place right now -- Japan is developing a lot more anime films in 2019 and 2020 than in previous years. Our panel of experts will tell you why, and what to expect in the future.

### Keynote: Spotlight On... Elie Dekel

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Moderator: Dallas Midaugh

Speaker: Elie Dekel

Elie Dekel has been involved with some of the most influential and well known Japanese properties in the world, including Godzilla and Power Rangers. Dallas Midaugh talks with him about his many interesting experiences and behind-the-scenes stories.

# Panel Descriptions

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## The Growth of Anime Events July 2: Panel Room 2

### Social Media Marketing and Community Management

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Moderator: Jenn Piro

Speakers: Miles Thomas, Joanna Metoki & Justin Rojas

Conventions are nothing without community, and communicating with them authentically is essential for engagement and success. But how do you communicate authentically when you're trying to sell them something? And when should you be talking to them - right around your event, or year round? Our panel of experts will walk you through their experience and best practices.

### Sponsorships and Advertisements for Events

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Moderator: Dallas Middaugh

Speakers: Jon Baumgardner

Learn how to create sponsorships around interactive events. We will cover topics such as understanding the structure and how to pitch it.

### Working with Japan: Assets and Guest Relations

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

Moderator: Mario Bueno

Speakers: A. Jinnie McManus, Tara McKinney & Peter Tatara  
Word gets around - treat your guests well and they'll not only want to come back, they'll tell other people in the industry about their experience. Our panelists will walk you through the most effective ways to make guests - especially Japanese guests - comfortable and happy, and also how to best procure the approved assets you need for promotion.

### Fashion Programming for Japanese Culture Events

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

Moderator: Jennifer Piro

Speakers: Amber Rutland

Handling fashion at a convention is a whole other skill set. Come learn from the expoerts how to program fashion in a way that will leave your attendees want more!

### Esports and the Importance of Telling a Good Story

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Moderator: Mario Bueno

Speaker: Jeremy Wan, Kim Meltzer & Justin Rojas

The overlap between anime and gaming is huge - Crunchyroll says that 90% of their audience identifies as a gamer. If you aren't bringing gaming to your event, you're doing a disservice to your fans. Learn how to pull off a successful esports event, and what game companies are looking for in order to support it.

## The Growth of Anime Events July 3: Panel Room 2

### Anime Cons in the #MeToo Era

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Moderator: Dallas Middaugh

Speakers: A. Jinnie McManus

As a movement, #MeToo has signaled a sea change across many industries, and anime conventions are proving to be no exception. Knowing the right path can seem intimidating for even the most well-meaning conventions. How can convention staffers choose the best way forward, both internally and externally? Join us to brainstorm best practices for the current social climate.

### Crisis Center: Preparing for the Unexpected

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Speakers: Marlon Stodghill & Peter Tatara

Nothing ever goes according to plan, but how do you anticipate the unanticipated? Join veteran event organizers as they talk about what they've learned over the years and how to respond quickly if bad things happen.

### Acquiring Japanese Musical Acts and Funding Them

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

Moderator: Jenn Piro

Speakers: Peter Tatara & Nadeshiko Nakahara

Planning and executing a concert is a massive undertaking. Contacting the artists (and their agents), promoting the event, and figuring out how to pay for it are tough issues to tackle. Our panel knows how to get this done and is here today to share that knowledge with you.

### Bootlegs and How to Deal with Them

2:30 PM - 3:15 PM

Moderator: Giselle Fahimian

Speakers: A. Jinnie McManus & Evan Stone

Piracy is a problem for any intellectual property, but it's worse for anime and manga. With bootleg merchandise that is designed to look legit, how can you get the fakes out and keep everyone happy? Get the tips and pointers you need here.

# Panel Descriptions

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## **Roundtables** **July 2: Breakout Room**

### **SPJA Q&A: Marketing & Cosplay**

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Meet and Greet

Are you interested in learning more about the Marketing and Cosplay initiatives of Anime Expo? Come meet some of the representatives from the Marketing and Cosplay teams as they hold a roundtable session to answer questions and discuss how they support Anime Expo. This is an open and unstructured forum to share ideas.

### **Security**

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Speaker: Michael Grossman & Paul Benne from Sentinel Security Consultants

Security is a key component of any convention or event. Sentinel Security will discuss how to build comprehensive Security plans and create your own Security Command Center to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for your attendees and staff.

## **Roundtables** **July 3: Breakout Room**

### **Marketing for Conventions**

10:00 AM - 10:45 AM

Speakers: Chris Stuckey & Jessica Merriman

Marketing for conventions can be difficult and expensive, but ultimately necessary to grow. The panel will cover some ways that you as organizers can start leveraging your marketing budget more effectively, no matter the size.

### **Convention Apps: Best Practices**

11:00 AM - 11:45 AM

Moderator: Jennifer Piro

Speakers: Garth Hill

Meet Garth Hill from Aloomba, provider of the Anime Expo app, to learn what a robust app can do for your con.

### **SPJA Q&A: Sales and Operations/Entertainment**

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM

Meet and Greet

Are you interested in learning more about the Sales and Operations/Entertainment that sustain Anime Expo? Come meet some of the representatives from the Sales and Operations/Entertainment teams as they hold a roundtable session to answer questions and discuss how they support Anime Expo. This is an open and unstructured forum to share ideas.



## 1. George's Greek Grill

\$\$ | Mediterranean, Burgers  
10:00 AM - 9:00 PM

## 2. Border Grill

\$\$ | Mexican  
11:30 AM - 9:00 PM

## 3. Drago Centro

\$\$\$ | Italian  
11:30 AM - 2:30 PM / 5:00 PM - 10:00 PM

## 4. Lemonade

\$\$ | Californian  
8:00 AM - 3:35 PM

## 5. Bonaventure Brewing Company

\$\$ | Brewpub  
11:00 AM - 12:00 AM

## 6. Mendocino Farms

\$\$ | Sandwiches  
11:00 AM - 7:15 PM

## 7. Starbucks

\$ | Coffee, Sandwiches  
11:00 AM - 6:30 PM

## 8. Food Court

\$-\$\$ | American, Asian, Sandwiches  
11:00 AM - 8:30 PM

# Anime is on the Verge of Another Massive Growth Spurt - Here's Why

By Dallas Middaugh

## Seismic Change

Anyone who's been watching anime over the past ten years or so can tell you how much things have changed. It's gone from a couple of shows on Toonami and piles of really expensive DVDs to almost every new anime being streamed in English within hours of its Japanese release - typically over 200 series per year.

In 2018 and 2019, however, anime underwent another massive change. The implications are huge and will have an impact on animation through the world over the next five years.

These changes had been brewing for some time; many things happened over the period from September 2016 to March 2017 that would have major implications for anime in America and Japan.

## Seven Months That Would Redefine Anime in North America

In 2016, the major players in anime were, as usual, Funimation and Crunchyroll. Funimation had been around for 23 years at that point, having helped to create the US market for anime on VHS and then DVD. Crunchyroll was 10 years old and closing in on one million paid subscribers (and 20 million registered users of the ad-supported free service). The two companies battled against each other in pursuit of the top anime licenses, while Netflix and Amazon were starting to notice just how popular anime could be. Hulu, meanwhile, in partnership with Funimation, had a healthy anime library that consistently ranked among their most popular shows.

In September 2016, all this changed when Crunchyroll and Funimation, rivals for the past decade, entered into a partnership. The two companies would now work together to acquire anime, at least partially with the goal of reducing the ever-increasing advances that had to be paid to get the best series. Even better, with both services on Crunchyroll's VRV aggregation platform, anime fans could now get most of the anime coming out every week for one subscription fee. Everybody was happy.

Well, okay, not everybody. Japanese companies no longer saw the two companies enter bidding wars for their shows, and Hulu lost the majority of its anime library overnight. Ouch.

## Amazon and Netflix Make Their Play

In January, Amazon threw its hat in the ring by launching Anime Strike, a new subscription service. It would go down in flames a year later due to its requirement that users have an Amazon Prime account (\$10 per month) in addition to paying for Anime Strike (\$5 per month), but at the time, it was a sign of how seriously the REALLY big players beyond Crunchyroll and Funimation were taking the category.

If Amazon threw its hat, Netflix threw its wallet. Offering advances far beyond what the other players could generally afford, the company began to pay the entire bill for anime series in development, a move that would bag them some big series like Devilman Crybaby and classic series like Neon Genesis Evangelion. With a goal of simultaneous worldwide release, Netflix immediately achieved their goal of becoming a major player in anime. However, they didn't go for as many series as their competitors, ensuring that there was still plenty of anime for everyone to buy.

## Hollywood Takes Notice

March 2017 saw the release of a live-action US version of The Ghost in the Shell. Although the movie under-performed and could never get out from under the shadow of accusations of whitewashing after casting Scarlett Johansson in the role of a Japanese woman, it marked an important milestone. Recognizing that many anime were hugely popular throughout the world, movie studios were beginning to move to capitalize on that popularity.

These events - the partnership and the movie - probably didn't seem earth-shattering at the time. Two rivals came together, two of the biggest entertainment companies on the planet increased their interest in anime, and a big budget movie was released. But in reality, it changed everything, and behind the scenes negotiations were taking place that would change the equation forever.

In October 2017, Sony announced that it was acquiring Funimation, which it had valued at an astounding \$150 million. In August 2018, AT&T announced it was buying Crunchyroll as part of a portfolio of companies owned by Otter Media. And in October 2018, Funimation left the Crunchyroll partnership.

*“They wouldn’t budge.”*

“We did try to renew... but there were some terms that they would not give on that we really had to have,” said then Funimation President and CEO, Gen Fukunaga, in an interview with Newsweek, “and they wouldn’t budge.” Crunchyroll, for its part, would only say “unfortunately, Funimation has decided to go their separate way,” lending credence to Fukunaga’s version of events.

And just like that, it wasn’t Crunchyroll versus Funimation; now it was WarnerMedia versus Sony, and that’s a whole new ballgame.

### **WarnerMedia vs. Sony vs. Netflix**

Shortly after the split, Funimation’s titles returned to Hulu, where anime once again rose in popularity. In recent days, Funimation has made bold moves, including partnering with Chinese streaming giant Bilibili to co-acquire new anime for worldwide release; acquiring UK anime distributor, Manga Entertainment; and hiring Colin Decker, one-time COO of Crunchyroll as the new General Manager of Funimation, replacing Gen Fukunaga. Sony, which also owns US anime distributor Aniplex, is clearly prepared to invest in anime in a big way.

Meanwhile, Crunchyroll also hired a new GM, Joanne Waage, previous CEO of Rakuten Viki, a streaming service dedicated to live-action Asian drama. The company additionally announced it had moved past two million subscribers, and WarnerMedia is planning to launch its own streaming service in 2020 to compete with Netflix and Disney+ and it remains to be seen what part anime will play in that service.

2019 also marked the release of both *Alita Battle Angel* (based on the original manga) and *Detective Pikachu* (based on *Pokemon*). Neither of these movies were huge at the box office, but it looks like both were profitable, a shift from what happened with *Ghost in the Shell*.

The slate of upcoming live action anime adaptations includes *Cowboy Bebop*, *Gundam*, and *My Hero Academia* - and that’s only scratching the surface. Global interest in anime has never been higher, but it’s nowhere near its peak. Major media corporations and movie companies are lining up to invest in anime, and I haven’t even started talking about how China’s moves in the market are affecting how anime is made.

At Project Anime, in addition to talking about how to approach Japanese companies, how anime gets made, and best practices for anime conventions and events, we’re doing a deep dive into what the future holds. The only thing we know for sure is that with so many major players taking an interest, we’re in for a wild ride.

# Networking Reception

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Interested in continuing the discussion with our speakers, meeting more professionals in the Japanese pop culture industry, or having the opportunity to build some influential partnerships?



Join us for a 2-hour exclusive networking event at the Bonaventure Brewing Co. outdoor lounge from 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM on July 2nd.

Take advantage of this opportunity to meet with colleagues in the Japanese pop culture industry, build partnerships, and share ideas.

This Networking Reception is a designed space to facilitate discussion and lay the foundation to grow your businesses and events.

The Bonaventure Brewing Co. is located on the 4th floor the Westin Bonaventure Hotel. To access this venue, please use the escalators to reach the this floor.

## We want to hear from you!

To help us continue to improve our programs, please fill out our survey form included in the folder and submit them to one of our staff. We use your suggestions to plan future events, so we appreciate your feedback! You can also submit your feedback online at [bit.ly/PALA2019](https://bit.ly/PALA2019) or scan the QR code here.



Project Anime will be hosting informative Tours inside of Anime Expo from July 4 - July 7 from the Project Anime Lounge.

The Lounge is located in Room 302 inside of the Los Angeles Convention Center.

There will be two types: “Behind the Scenes” Tour and the “Attendee Experience” Tour. These Tours are designed to supplement the topics and processes discussed with SPJA staff and during the panels at the Project Anime Conference.

The Behind the Scenes Tour is a guided tour through the backside of some of Anime Expo’s most important locations and activations. We will discuss some of the logistics and operational successes that allow this convention to continuously provide a high-quality experience to its attendees.

The Attendee Experience Tour is a guided tour through the interactive content that Anime Expo creates for its attendees.

## **The Behind the Scenes Tour will cover the following:**

- Exhibit Hall
- Volunteer Resources
- Registration
- Onsite Marketing
- Guest Relations
- Lounge 21
- Live Programming 1
- Entertainment Hall
- Event Operations
- Security

## **The Attendee Experience Tour will cover the following:**

- Kentia Hall and the Annex
- RFID
- Merchandise
- Immersive Themed Experiences
- Lounges
- Entertainment Hall
- AX Beer Garden

Please note that routes are subject to change based on the availability.  
Anime Expo badge required.

The Project Anime Lounge will be open to Project Anime Attendees July 4 - July 7 from 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM daily.

More information and registration for these tours is available now!  
Please visit [bit.ly/AXTours2019](http://bit.ly/AXTours2019) to register for your tour today.  
Space is limited.



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