

BAFTSS Animation SIG.

**'Doing things with anime materials: Approaching Japanese animation 'away from the screen'  
Durham University, 21 November 2023**

This symposium brought together scholars, animators, archivists and collectors to discuss the rare materials produced by Japanese animators in the act of making anime. Anime is today one of the most successful and recognisable Japanese cultural exports, but the study and preservation of its production materials is still neglected and fragmentary even in Japan. Artefacts such as design sheets, storyboards, cel layers, and background illustrations are the ephemeral result of a fast-paced, labour-intensive production process; they are neither intended to last nor to be collected by their creators after production. Yet, these materials provide us with unique windows to labour and creativity at specific moments of Japanese studio culture, thus representing precious objects for fans, researchers and cultural institutions. The symposium investigated the shifting meaning of these objects and what different methods and approaches they can bring to the study of anime and animation 'away from the screen'. After an introductory talk by Dr Dario Lolli (Durham University), the keynote presentation by Professor Joon Yang Kim (Archive Centre for Anime Studies, Niigata University) provided a series of concrete examples of how anime materials allow us to reconstruct the creative processes once employed to produce animated movement on screen. Afterwards, a visit of the Durham University Oriental Museum allowed participants to engage first hand with the anime production materials collected therein, learning from the curators Gillian Ramsey and Carolyn Waterworth how these rare artefacts are stored, preserved and displayed in Japan and beyond. A final panel chaired by Professor Jaqueline Berndt (Stockholm University) concluded the event with a critical summary of the main issues raised by the symposium, opening the floor to a very engaged discussion with all participants.

Dr Dario Lolli, Assistant Professor in Japanese & Visual Culture, Durham University.  
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