

AESTHETICS OF DESTRUCTION: MUSIC AND THE WORLDVIEW OF IKARI  
SHINJI IN *NEON GENESIS EVANGELION*

by

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## ABSTRACT

Director Anno Hideaki 's series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* caused a sensation when it first aired on TV Tokyo in 1995 and has become one of the most influential anime ever made. Since its premiere, fans across the globe have debated the possible interpretations of the complex plot, but little has been said about how composer Sagisu Shiro's score might contribute to understanding the series. Anno's rehabilitation in a Jungian clinic and subsequent personal study of human psychology plays heavily into understanding the main character Ikari Shinji, and music has much to contribute to appreciating Shinji's view of the world. Shinji is an impressionable fourteen-year old boy, so his musical interpretations of the people and things around him do not always match reality. Sagisu's music gives the viewers welcome insight into Shinji's thoughts and feelings as he matures throughout the series.

## INTRODUCTION

Science fiction films are not about science. They are about disaster, which is one of the oldest subjects of art... Thus, the science fiction film... is concerned with the aesthetics of destruction, with the peculiar beauties to be found in wreaking havoc, making a mess.

-Susan Sontag<sup>1</sup>

Since its premiere on TV Tokyo in October of 1995, the Japanese animation (anime) series *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (*Shin Seiki Evangerion*), or *EVA* as it is called by fans, has become one of the most influential anime ever made. The sale of series-related toys and merchandise set the standard for how anime is marketed today, with countless items currently in production. A search for the term “Evangelion” on the auction site Ebay results in about seven thousand items available for purchase, speaking to the immense popularity of the series both in Japan and internationally. Certain characters, especially the females, are recognizable even to members of the Japanese population who have not seen the series and have become icons for anime fans. Though the series ended in 1996, at the time of this writing the U.S. based website [evageeks.org](http://evageeks.org) had close to 3750 registered members who have contributed more than 400,000 articles to the site on the topic of the *EVA* series and corresponding feature films.<sup>2</sup> This figure is miniscule compared to the popularity of *EVA* in Japan.

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<sup>1</sup> Susan Sontag, “The Imagination of Disaster,” in *Against Interpretation, and Other Essays*, ed. Susan Sontag (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1966), 208.

<sup>2</sup> At the time of this writing only the first two of the *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies have been released: *Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone* and *Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance*.

*EVA* has spawned countless interpretations ranging from issues of internationalism, the destruction of the family unit, the atomic bomb, Japanese culture, religion, and Freudian psychology, to name only a few of the many modes of thinking applied to this complex series. Scholars have only started to publish academic works on the subject of anime within the last few years and *EVA* appears frequently in their research because of its overall popularity and strong influence on other anime makers. Additionally, scholars have easy access to a well-translated version of the series through the licensed U.S. release by ADV Films without relying on internet fansubs that continue to challenge the legal boundaries of international copyright law. Even with the strong interest in film studies shown by the academic community, research into cartoons, both American and those from other nations, has been limited. Since cartoons are generally viewed as being for children and, therefore, less substantial than entertainment designed for adults, cartoons are barely beginning to be accepted as a suitable topic for academic research. American cartoons have been made for adult viewers only relatively recently, with series like *The Simpsons*, *Family Guy*, and *South Park* finding popularity among adults in the United States. In contrast to these cartoons, where a character's good and bad decisions are lived out in a seemingly consequence-free world, much of anime explores serious topics where the consequences of a character's decisions can have harsh results. Some genres of anime examine death, sex, drugs, and extreme violence. This is certainly the case in *EVA*, which looks unflinchingly at human emotions ranging from cruelty to love. As *EVA* director Anno Hideaki said on the topic in a 1996 interview at Anime Expo in California:

I truly believe that sex and violence are part of our human life. These days in Japan, I think Japanese children need to know about those things more...instead of being protected too much from the society. Those matters are a little like a poison: we need to give them to the children little by little to establish an immunity, so they would have the ability and mental strength to resist. A lot of youth I know just don't have this immunity, and when something terrible happens, they can't deal with it. In a way, the poison can be the medication at the same time, and I believe that the more we know about those things, the more we can protect ourselves against specific matters.<sup>3</sup>

The music accompanying live-action film became a substantial topic of research and publication in the 1990s, which allowed for the examination of music use in older American cartoons like Bugs Bunny from Warner Bros. or Betty Boop from Paramount Pictures. Yet for all of its popularity and demonstrated international appeal, anime has been left out of musical research in the United States. This is especially surprising given the tremendous multi-generational attraction shown by American audiences to the Disney-marketed films of Miyazaki Hayao's Studio Ghibli, with music composed by Hisaishi Joe. By examining the music found in *EVA* I hope to contribute to rectifying this deficiency and show that the music found in anime has academic merit equal to its American counterparts.

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<sup>3</sup> Miyako Graham, "Anecdotes from Mr. Hideaki Anno," *Protoculture Addicts* 43 (November-December 1996/January 1997): 40.

## PLOT & CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

*Neon Genesis Evangelion* lasts a little over ten hours and reaches a depth of complexity not found in most anime series. It is famous for being puzzling to first-time viewers, not to mention second or third-time viewers. The plot unfolds erratically, with flashbacks and surreal vision sequences that distort the flow of time, and the characters are highly flawed, with involved emotions uncommon to anime. Many ideas and side stories simply fall away without completion and questions that are solved in the first half of the series are reopened in the second half with a new twist. Scholar Thomas Lamarre described the intricacies of the plot well:

Viewers who watched the series closely (and really, there wasn't much choice but to watch it closely) found that there were patterns of iconic references that led in different directions. Ultimately, Anno would foil all efforts to gather these various information patterns into a single narrative... Viewers to select and followed diverse patterns of information throughout the series, but there is no attempt to hierarchize these different patterns, to draw them all together into an overarching pattern or to select one pattern among the many.<sup>4</sup>

*EVA* takes place in the year 2015 in the aftermath of an apocalyptic event called Second Impact, which killed half of world's population fifteen years earlier. Second Impact was caused by failed contact with and experimentation on a creature called an Angel, though the public has been told that Second Impact was triggered by a meteorite landing in Antarctica. Second Impact also changed the tilt of the Earth, resulting in an endless summer for many of the remaining habitable regions and the destruction of the

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas Lamarre, "The Multiplanar Image," in *Mechademia 1: Emerging Worlds of Anime and Manga*, edited by Frenchy Lunning (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 137.

ecosystem. In 2015, the world has finally begun to stabilize. The paramilitary organization NERV has been formed under the direction of a mysterious group called SEELE, which predicts the coming of new Angels using the Dead Sea Scrolls and deploys NERV to destroy the Angels under the guise of protecting mankind. SEELE's real intention is attain immortality through Human Instrumentality, which will bypass human evolution by merging all human consciousness into one entity. The series opens with the arrival of the third Angel in the city of Tokyo-3. Fourteen-year old Ikari Shinji, son of NERV commander Ikari Gendo, arrives at NERV and reluctantly agrees to pilot EVA-01, a giant biomechanical mecha. Though never having seen an Eva, he syncs with EVA-01 easily and defeats the Angel. It is later revealed that his success is because EVA-01 contains the consciousness of his mother Yui, a researcher for NERV whose soul was absorbed into the Eva during early activation experiments. Shinji begins living with his supervisor Katsuragi Misato and meets the pilot of EVA-00, the mysterious Ayanami Rei. He is inexplicably attracted to Rei, who turns out to be a clone of his mother and the catalyst of Human Instrumentality. A third pilot arrives at NERV from Germany, the self-possessed Soryu Asuka Langley. With Misato and the three pilots in place, *EVA* alternates between the Eva's battle sequences against the Angels and the daily struggle of the central characters to overcome their personal issues and conflicts. Each of the main characters must cope with a variety of social and emotional problems as unresolved sexual tensions, injuries, deaths, and defeats deal blows to their psyches. The final two episodes deviate from the series as they are set entirely inside of the minds of the main characters and happen after the implementation of Human Instrumentality. Each

character is forced to examine their doubts and self-worth through flashbacks, montages, black and white photographs, and depictions of possible alternate realities. Shinji, who has remained hopelessly isolated and self-deprecating through most of the series, is the primary focus of this examination. He concludes that life is worth living and rejects Human Instrumentality, and he is surrounded by a vision of the cast, both living and dead, who congratulate him on his choice. The real-life fates of the characters in the physical world are never revealed.<sup>5</sup>

*EVA* has a large cast of characters and creatures, all of which inspire conflicting emotions in *EVA* viewers. Their personalities are not simply good or evil, but rather multifaceted and complex beings. The primary characters in *EVA* are considerably more complex than those in many anime, where stock personalities abound, though *EVA* is not devoid of stock characters either. Anno expressed his surprise at the immediate attraction fans held for *EVA* characters by calling it “strange that *Evangelion* has become such a hit - all the characters are so sick!”<sup>6</sup> The following is a list of some of the most important characters.

- *Ikari Shinji*: The main focus of *EVA* and the pilot of EVA-01, Shinji is the son of Ikari Gendo, NERV’s chief commander. His mother Yui was absorbed by EVA-01

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<sup>5</sup> The second *EVA* movie, *The End of Evangelion*, defines the ending more clearly: Shinji, acting as a Messiah figure, is tasked to choose whether mankind should live as individuals, rejecting Human Instrumentality, or be combined into a single consciousness. Shinji chooses to reject Human Instrumentality and live as an individual even though that means continuing to endure the social and emotional struggles that define the human condition.

<sup>6</sup> Amos Wong, “Interview with Hideaki Anno,” accessed April 2, 2010, <http://web.archive.org/web/20070613125248/http://www.aoianime.hu/evangelion/index.php?page=interanno>

when he was three years old and Gendo abandoned him to the care of a mentor. Shinji has grown up isolated and withdrawn, unwilling and seemingly unable to make close connections to other people. He learns to be more confident as he develops tenuous relationships with Rei, Asuka, and Misato and gains some normal friends in his junior high classmates Suzuhara Toji and Kensuke Aida. He is an anti-hero, the opposite of the brave and daring mecha pilots that populated earlier anime like *Space Battleship Yamato*, *Mobile Police Patlabor*, or *Mobile Suit Gundam*. EVA character designer Sadamoto Yoshiyuki described Shinji in this way:

In a normal giant robot animated show the main character possesses an enthusiastic spirit for battle...but Shinji is not noted for his enthusiasm, so I had to come up with a different heroic interpretation. Rather than a reflection of a hero, sort of a refraction of a hero... He's a person who doesn't want to be interested in the opinions of others, but he's actually very interested. He's the kind of character who would encase himself in a shell of his own making. I wanted that kind of clean image that a woman intends to project. But also a character that is cold, unambitious - the type who would commit suicide, but can't bring himself to do it. It was my intention to create someone wistful, someone who had given up on life.<sup>7</sup>

- *Ayanami Rei*: Rei is quiet and remote. She pilots the Eva prototype, EVA-00. Her anti-social nature, coupled with her almost emotionless demeanor, has resulted in her being avoided by her classmates at the junior high. She seems to have a close relationship with Gendo, though his concern for her stems from her being a clone of his deceased wife and her importance as the catalyst for Human Instrumentality, not for her as an individual. There are many clones of Rei preserved in a tank underneath

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<sup>7</sup> Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, "My Thoughts at the Moment," in *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Volume 2*, story and art by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto (San Francisco: Viz Media LLC, 2004), 168.

NERV headquarters so she can be replaced if she should die, and this has taken a toll on her feelings of self worth. She considers herself expendable, but her growing relationship with Shinji changes her mind and she comes to believe that she is more than a tool for Gendo's use. Three Rei clones appear in the series, but it is the second Rei that we get to know as the series progresses. She is killed by the Angel Armisael in Episode 23 and replaced briefly by the third Rei, who is markedly more bitter at her position as Gendo's tool. Hair and eye color are meaningful in anime and Rei's ice-blue hair is a sign of her cold exterior, while her bright red eyes show that she can possess strong emotions. *EVA* character designer Sadamoto wrote that Rei "is expressionless but is it that she doesn't *feel* emotion, or that she is merely unable to *express* it?"<sup>8</sup> (emphasis in the original) Rei's *seiyu* (voice actor) felt similarly about Rei's emotional possibilities:

It all began when the director told me, "It's not that she doesn't have emotion, but that she doesn't know what it is." His technical request was that I should read my lines as flat as possible. But she's obviously not a machine; she's a human being, flesh and blood. It's a huge difference between "not having emotion" and "not knowing emotion." After all, she could develop feelings, when she learned...<sup>9</sup>

- *Soryu Asuka Langley*: Asuka was born in Germany and pilots EVA-02. Her mother was also a NERV researcher and, similar to Yui, her consciousness was absorbed into EVA-02, driving her insane. Asuka's father left her mother during her mental illness,

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<sup>8</sup> Yoshiyuki Sadamoto, "Yoshiyuki Sadamoto Writer and Artist," in *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Volume 3*, story and art by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto (San Francisco: Viz Media LLC, 2004), 165.

<sup>9</sup> Megumi Hayashibara, "What I Learned From Meeting a Girl Who I Didn't Know," in *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Volume 3*, story and art by Yoshiyuki Sadamoto (San Francisco: Viz Media LLC, 2004), 170.

prompting her suicide. Asuka is desperate to be noticed and loved, making her arrogant, jealous, and fiercely independent. She is verbally abusive to everyone, especially Shinji, and considers emotion a form of weakness. Her attraction to Shinji is vexing to her since she cannot express her feelings without feeling powerless, so many of her friendships are based on superficiality. Since Asuka is a foreigner, she is often disrespectful of Japanese customs and life as a way to feed her feelings of superiority. Asuka's entire reason for living is piloting EVA-02, so when that ability is taken from her by the Angel Arael she is mentally destroyed. Her hair and eye colors are the opposite of Rei. Asuka's fiery red hair shows her impulsive temperament, but her ice-blue eyes indicate that she is internally closed off to natural feelings and emotion.

- *Katsuragi Misato*: Misato is the chief operations officer at NERV, where she is assisted by Lieutenants Makoto Hyuga and Aoba Shigeru. She directly commands the Evas and pilots in battle and does strategic planning. She is also guardian of Shinji and Asuka, letting them live in her apartment instead of having them live alone. Misato is strict and professional when on duty, but in her home life she is a slob who drinks beer for breakfast and never cleans up, a fact Shinji and Asuka frequently remind her about. She has had one romantic relationship with the double agent Ryoji Kaji, which she broke off after deciding he was too much like her father. Kaji returns to NERV after many years away and their relationship is rekindled, but his

assassination crushes her spirit and makes her question the truth behind NERV and her role in its mysterious aims.

- *Akagi Ritsuko*: Ritsuko is NERV's head scientist and is one of only three people who know the true purpose of the Instrumentality Project, the others being Gendo and his assistant Fuyutsuki Kozo. She is assisted in her tasks by Lieutenant Ibuki Maya, who idolizes her. Ritsuko is romantically involved with Gendo, but soon realizes he is using her for her scientific abilities. Ritsuko is a workaholic, a trait she inherited from her mother, the previous head scientist for NERV. Ritsuko has been friends with Misato and Kaji since college and often offers Misato advice and friendship.
- *Nagisa Kaworu*: Kaworu is sent to NERV by SEELE to pilot EVA-02 after Asuka is rendered unable to pilot by the Angel Arael. Shinji comes to trust Kaworu and sees him as a close confidant. He is understandably hurt when Kaworu reveals that he is Tabris, the seventeenth Angel, who has been sent by SEELE to hasten Human Instrumentality. Shinji in EVA-01 chases Kaworu underneath NERV and Kaworu allows himself to be captured in EVA-01's hand. Having spent time with humans, Kaworu has come to empathize with human emotion and begs Shinji to crush him rather than allow him to destroy mankind. Shinji does eventually kill Kaworu, destroying Shinji's tenuous grip on sanity in the process.

- *Evangelions*: Evas are the mecha units piloted against the Angels. Evas appear to be fully mechanical on the outside, but are really cyborgs restricted by body armor that both protect it and forces it to remain under human control. Their biological components are derived from the Angels. Evas are controlled through a combination of hand controls and direct nerve impulses from their human pilots and can also be controlled remotely by a dummy system modeled on Ayanami Rei's thought patterns. Seemingly safe, Evas can go berserk in moments where the pilot is extremely stressed. Since Evas 01 and 02 contain the consciousnesses of Shinji and Asuka's mothers, they go berserk in times that their children are in immediate danger of death. A berserk Eva is impossible to control and reverts to basic animal instincts, the most gruesome being their tendency to mutilate and cannibalize the Angels and other Evas.
- *Angels*: The Angels are mysterious beings that attack Tokyo-3, requiring the power of the Evas to defeat them by destroying their small red core. Their objective is to destroy mankind by initiating Third Impact upon reaching Adam, one of the original Angels in the possession of NERV. Each Angel has a different form and abilities, but each exploits a weakness in the NERV staff that must be overcome. As the series progresses the Angels adapt to their human enemies with attacks that increase in complexity; physical attacks give way to psychological attacks culminating in the arrival of the Angel Tabris in human form. They have a variety of self-defense options, but all Angels can generate an impenetrable AT Field (Absolute Terror Field) that serves as a protective shield, a tool the Evas also possess. The Angels have

a genetic code that is 99.89% similar to humans and are thought to be representative of one of the evolutionary paths mankind could have taken.

ORIGINS OF *EVA* & ANNO HIDEAKI

*EVA* was produced by the production company GAINAX and is considered to be their biggest success to date, making GAINAX a superpower in the world of anime production. The company was formed in the early 1980s by a group of university students who decided to make an animated short for the 20<sup>th</sup> annual Japan National Sci-Fi Convention in 1981. Their product, *Daicon III*, was popular, but was eclipsed by their short *Daicon IV* when shown at the same convention two years later. The quality of animation found in *Daicon IV* proved that the group had the capacity to be professional animators and they founded a production company called Daicon Films. In December of 1984 they changed their name to GAINAX, a combination of the obscure Japanese word “*gain*” (which means “giant” in English) from the dialect of the Tottori Prefecture and adding an “x” at the end to make the word seem more international<sup>10</sup> (similar to the brand name Xerox) and to make it seem more robotic.<sup>11</sup> GAINAX had three major animation hits before *EVA*, the film *Royal Space Force: The Wings of Honneamise* from 1987, the film *Aim for the Top! Gunbuster* from 1988, and the thirty-nine episode television series *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water* from 1990. Additionally, the company makes live-action films, the most well-known being *Otaku no Video* from 1991. With the success of these ventures, GAINAX was willing to try something new and accepted the proposal of member Anno Hideaki to direct an anime series based on the story of a young boy who

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<sup>10</sup> “Gainax Conference – Japan Expo 2009,” accessed February 24, 2011, [http://www.gainax.fr/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=388&Itemid=416](http://www.gainax.fr/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=388&Itemid=416).

<sup>11</sup> Yasuhiro Takeda, *Notenki Memoirs: Studio Gainax and the Men Who Created Evangelion* (Houston: ADV Manga, 2005), 20.

pilots a giant robot in a battle to save the earth. Anno had participated as animator or director in GAINAX's previous hits, so his talents were known and respected by his colleagues and by the anime community. Unlike today, where anime is funded and distributed by large corporations, anime in the 1990s was generally produced by small, independent production companies where directors could take experimental artistic risks, so GAINAX was willing to support Anno in making the series even though they were unsure it would be commercially viable.<sup>12</sup> As *EVA* producer Otsuki Toshimichi described the situation in 2006:

Up until that time, there had never been an anime about gigantic robots battling these mysterious monsters invading the planet, while at the same time focusing on what was going on in the minds of the main characters. But, Anno-san said that was the type of work he wanted to make, so I told him I would be backing him up while he made it.<sup>13</sup>

Upon being broadcast *EVA* generated massive media interest, especially after the backlash that followed the final two episodes. The substantial media attention thrust Anno Hideaki into the spotlight as one of the premier anime directors and animators in Japan, but it also brought out many of Anno's personal problems and issues with low self esteem. As *EVA* gained in popularity, Anno was called upon with increasing frequency to do interviews and make appearances promoting the series. His uncomfortable participation in the Japanese television show *Welcome Back for an Extracurricular*

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<sup>12</sup> Dennis Redmond, *The World Is Watching: Video As Multinational Aesthetics, 1968-1995* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004), 123.

<sup>13</sup> NAveryW, accessed June 17, 2010, [http://forum.evageeks.org/search.php?search\\_author=NAveryW](http://forum.evageeks.org/search.php?search_author=NAveryW).

*Lesson, Sempai!*, produced by NHK in September of 1999, is as famous among *EVA* fans as it is painful to watch. The premise of the show is to bring famous people back to their former elementary school for one day, where they can deliver any class content they wish. While walking up to the school in his hometown of Ube City in the Yamaguchi Prefecture of southern Japan, Anno admits that he is terrified of children, though he seems to do well once he is in the classroom. He is meek and self-deprecating at every moment possible, engaging in conversations with the students like the following:

Anno: "I'm not crazy about myself. I'm often told that those who don't like themselves have high ideals, but I think someone who says that doesn't really understand the pain that's involved."

Student: "Do you like the anime you make?"

Anno: "There's parts I like and parts I don't."

Student: "What parts do you dislike?"

Anno: "The parts that I'm in." <sup>14</sup>

Shy and reserved, Anno has been very secretive about his mental health and one can only guess at the reasons behind the four-year depression that he faced as he worked on *EVA*. Whatever the reasons, Anno's depression was severe enough that he entered a clinic specializing in Jungian analysis to receive help and began to read heavily into many different realms of psychology. To those familiar with psychology and its different branches of thought, *EVA* provides a wealth of symbols and events that can be connected

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<sup>14</sup> The origin of the translation is unclear as it was not credited to any individual fansubber or fansubbing group within the video. "Buried Treasure: Hideaki Anno Talks to Kids," accessed September 30, 2009, <http://www.animenewsnetwork.com/buried-treasure/2007-05-03>.

to Freud, Jung, Lacan, Gestalt Therapy, and many others.<sup>15</sup> Episode titles and musical tracks like “Thanatos,” “Oral Stage,” and “Mother is the First Other” all point to a psychoanalytical approach, and Schopenhauer’s “Hedgehog’s Dilemma” is a strong motif in the series, to name only a few examples. Anno’s comments on the series point to the idea that he structured *EVA* through psychology instead of an action-oriented plot framework. He described the connection between the series and psychology to an interviewer at *Newtype Magazine* this way:

...I suppose I always had something in my mind to analyze human psyche. I thought I wasn’t interested in humans very much, but then, when I started talking about myself, I needed words to explain. So, I started reading books on psychology. From Episode #16, *Evangelion*’s story went into the direction to ask just what the human mind is all about inside. I wrote about myself. My friend lent me a book on human psychological illness and this gave me a shock, as if I finally found what I needed to say.<sup>16</sup>

From watching *EVA* and reading Anno’s interviews there is a clear connection between his personal struggle with depression and the psychological content of the series. It is Anno’s powerful expression of his personal struggles through the flawed characters that populate *EVA* that has caused the series to resonate with fans so strongly. One of the most well-known statements made by Anno is an open letter written in July of 1995 that has been published in numerous magazines in a variety of translations and is often

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<sup>15</sup> An excellent example of this connection can be found in Paul Malone’s article “My Own Private Apocalypse: Shinji Ikari as Schreberian Paranoid Superhero in Hideaki Anno’s *Neon Genesis Evangelion*,” in *Super/Heroes: From Hercules to Superman* ed. Wendy Haslem (Washington, DC: New Academia Publishing, 2007), 111-126, and in Frenchy Lunning’s “Between the Child and the Mecha,” in *Mechademia 2: Networks of Desire*, edited by Frenchy Lunning (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 268-282.

<sup>16</sup> Hideaki Anno, “Interview,” trans. Miyako Graham, *Newtype Magazine* (November 1996): 21.

referred to as a suicide letter, though that assessment seems misguided. In the first half of the letter, Anno describes the setting of *EVA* and the personalities of Misato and Shinji as fearing close relationships because they want to avoid being hurt emotionally. According to Anno this makes them unsuitable to be the heroes of the story, but he makes them the heroes regardless of their emotional imbalances and inability to be close to others.<sup>17</sup> The second half of the letter is about Anno himself, his desires for *EVA*, and what *EVA* means to him personally. An excerpt, using the line breaks and formatting printed in the *Neon Genesis Evangelion* manga, is as follows:

They say, “To live is to change.”  
 I started this production with the wish that once the production was complete, the world, and the heroes, would change.  
 That was my “true” desire.  
 I tried to include everything of myself in Neon Genesis Evangelion — myself, a broken man who could do nothing for four years; a man who ran away for four years, one who was simply not dead.  
 Then one thought—  
 “You can’t run away”  
 —came to me, and I returned to this production.  
 My only thought in making this was to burn my feelings into film.  
 I know my behavior was thoughtless, troublesome, and arrogant—but I tried.  
 I don’t know what the result will be.  
 I don’t know what will happen to Shinji, Misato, or Rei. I don’t know where life will take them.  
 Because I don’t know where life is taking the staff of the production.  
 I feel that I am being irresponsible...  
 But—but it’s only natural that we should synchronize ourselves with the world within the production.  
 I’ve taken on a risk:  
 “It’s just an imitation.”  
 And for now, this is all I can write to explain.  
 But—perhaps our “original” lies somewhere within there.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Hideaki Anno, “What Were We Trying to Make Here?” in *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Volume 1* (San Francisco: Viz Media LLC, 2004), 169.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 168.

Anime was designed to appeal to a small market of devoted fans called otaku, who are fanatically devoted to a lifestyle that revolved around the acquisition and consumption of anime, manga, and its related merchandise. As an otaku himself, Anno was well versed in the anime stereotypes that appealed to otaku of his generation and recognized that these stereotypes were not entirely without merit, given that they had contributed directly to the success of GAINAX's productions. Cute girls, battles between giant robots and evil forces, the humorous errors of adolescent romance, a mascot animal, and elitist inside jokes drawn from other anime series were all part of an otaku's expectations for any worthwhile anime. Stock characters, especially for female roles, were the norm and otaku demanded a complex but clear plot that resulted in a predominantly happy ending with no loose ends. Initially, *EVA* met otaku expectations, and Anno quipped that it was a "robot and cute girl anime."<sup>19</sup> This turned out to be false as Anno became disillusioned with the otaku mentality of consumption and isolation and began to reject otaku stereotypes. In an article written two months before the end of *EVA*'s television run, cultural scholar and critic Azuma Hiroki wrote about Anno's change of heart towards otaku during the production of *EVA*:

According to Anno himself, this change of attitude came about while creating and producing the work. "Evangelion" was received enthusiastically among anime fans. He said that in noticing the autistic, enthusiast reception, he thought he should changed [sic] the entire conceptual structure of the work, and in the end that's what he did.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Carl Gustav Horn, "Speaking Once as They Return: Gainax's *Neon Genesis Evangelion*," *AMPlus Magazine* 1 (1996), accessed October 3, 2009, <http://www.stanford.edu/~fenn/eva/eva1.html>.

<sup>20</sup> Hiroki Azuma, "Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion," *Intercommunication* 18, accessed October 23, 2009, [http://www.ntticc.or.jp/pub/ic\\_mag/ic018/intercity/higashi\\_E.html](http://www.ntticc.or.jp/pub/ic_mag/ic018/intercity/higashi_E.html). Note: Azuma's use of the word "autistic" is meant to describe otaku as individuals who have poor social skills

Anno was not the only person frustrated with the single-mindedness of otaku; the Japanese media openly criticized otaku for their refusal to participate in the strictly defined social structure of Japanese life. The abduction and murder of elementary school girls by Miyazaki Tsutomu, the “Otaku Murderer,” in 1988 and 1989 and the use of anime and manga-style materials as recruiting devices by the Aum Shinrikyo cult further fueled the general belief that otaku were detrimental to a harmonious society.<sup>21</sup>

Two clear examples of Anno’s rejection of otaku ideas are his refusal to cater to toy manufacturers and his use of sexual fanservice throughout the series. One need only think of the quantity of merchandise surrounding the series *Transformers* in America to understand how an anime featuring giant robots would have a clear connection to toy development, but Anno refused to allow the Evas to be designed as toy companies wished. Otaku typically bought figurines of their favorite mecha, often filling their rooms from top to bottom with merchandise,<sup>22</sup> so it is logical that toy companies wanted to sponsor anime they knew would be profitable in this area. During planning stages for the design of the Evas, Anno is reported to have said:

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and are so focused on the consumption of anime and manga that they are unable to function in any other capacity. An extensive explanation of this usage can be found in Azuma's text: *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals*, translated by Jonathon E. Abel and Shion Kono (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Richard M. Gardner, “Aum Shinrikyo and a Panic About Manga and Anime,” in *Japanese Visual Culture*, edited by Mark W. MacWilliams (New York: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2008), 200-218.

<sup>22</sup> The massive accumulation of anime-related objects, especially manga, has resulted in the death of more than one otaku in Japan during earthquake season, when piles of manga topple and suffocate them. See: “Man Found Dead at Home, Buried By Magazines,” *The Daily Yomuri Online*, 3 July, 2011, accessed July 15, 2011, <http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110702002720.htm> AND Dale North, “The Best Way To Go: Buried in Your Own Manga” *Japanator*, 16 June, 2008, accessed July 15, 2011, <http://www.japanator.com/elephant/post.phtml?pk=8106>.

With recent robot anime series there have been too many instances of toy makers sticking their big noses in from the design stage so they can get a spec that is easy to turn into a toy. I don't want any interference from toy makers, so I'm going to design a robot that just cannot be turned into a toy.<sup>23</sup>

In spite of toy company's demands, Anno's Evas are lithe and sinuous, more feline than robotic, and toy manufacturers considered them too difficult to manufacture or market.<sup>24</sup>

Fanservice is most commonly sexual in nature and caters to the desires of the fans to win or maintain their loyalty. It generally has little value to the plot, but is meant to grab the viewer's attention. It is predominantly focused on female characters, but can be broadened to include extended battles scenes, mecha, and big explosions. Female-based fanservice could include an image of a girl in a swimsuit, a girl in a shower with conveniently placed steam clouds, an upskirt shot of her panties on a windy day, or images of a more mature nature. Fanservice is certainly present in *EVA*. Misato promises "SABISU, SABISU!" (SERVICE! SERVICE!) in the preview section at the end of each episode and both Asuka and Rei's skirts blow up in the wind. But *EVA* also contains anti-fanservice where the characters are desexualized. The most famous example is in Episode 5 when Shinji delivers Rei's new NERV ID card to her apartment. He enters the unlocked door and is surprised by Rei, who is naked from the shower with a towel draped around her shoulders. Shinji trips and falls on Rei, landing with his hands on her breasts, and the

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<sup>23</sup> Kazuhisa Fujie and Martin Foster, *Neon Genesis Evangelion: The Unofficial Guide* (Tokyo: Cocoro Books, 2004), 97.

<sup>24</sup> Today Eva toys are a huge source of revenue for GAINAX, with popular figurines from Kaiyodo in the *Revoltech* series, Kubrick figures, and Bandai's extensive line of Evas in the *Soul of Chogokin*, *Tamashii*, and *Robot Spirits* lines.

strap of his bag pulls snags her dresser drawer, scattering her underwear all over the room. In a conventional anime Rei would scream “Hentai!” (Pervert!) and try to cover herself, but here she simply lays there, quiet and cold, until Shinji moves. She proceeds to dress calmly in front of him without concern for modesty. Scenes like this do not fulfill otaku desires and raised the ire of otaku viewers.

Even today anime continues to cater to otaku expectations and an increasing number of cultural critics and top anime directors perceive creativity in anime to be dwindling. As early as the 1990s, Azuma Hiroki wrote about the state of anime:

Overwhelmingly in the last 10 years, when compared to the hugeness of the market, it’s hard to believe how dead and barren Japanese anime as a whole has become...I don’t think that we can come up with anything good that’s anime-like and high-level work. This is astonishing. Anime as a genre is dead.<sup>25</sup>

The idea of anime being devoid of original content was echoed by Anno himself around the same time.

There is no longer room for absolute originality in the field of anime, especially given that our generation was brought up on mass-produced anime. All stories and techniques inevitably bring with them a sense of *déjà vu*. The only avenue of expression left open to us is to produce a collage-like effect based on a sampling of existing works.<sup>26</sup>

The people who make anime and the people who watch it always want the same things. The creators have been making the same story for about 10 years; the viewers seem to be satisfied and there's no sense of urgency. There's no future in that.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Hiroki Azuma, “Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion.”

<sup>26</sup> Fujie and Foster, 76.

<sup>27</sup> Amos Wong, “Interview with Hideaki Anno.”

Given that most people involved with anime felt that the genre was at its end, the originality of *EVA* came as a shot in the arm for the anime world. Anno's re-imagination of the genre created admiration for him as a daring director, but also sparked outrage among otaku who expected *EVA* to be conveniently designed for their amusement. The controversial ending of the series provoked anger among fans, bringing *EVA* to the attention of media outlets outside anime. Anno's colleagues said that, as shy as he was, he reveled in the media attention generated by *EVA*'s final episodes, especially when the focus of interviews shifted away from anime and approached *EVA* as art or social commentary.<sup>28</sup> *EVA* was viewed by many as being a revitalizing force in anime, as seen in Azuma Hiroki's thoughts upon watching the series:

It came as a complete shock. It was impossible to predict the ways in which "Evangelion" would transcend standard television anime work, because although the illustrations were very anime-like, the medium was television, and the pre-release propaganda was limited to the specialized anime magazines which made it seem like a simple anime of the giant robot fiction genre...The story and fictional world that it has set up pretty accurately lay out the multiple problems that our society vaguely possesses today in the present. Therefore this work has a power which transcends the small, narrow-minded "anime world."<sup>29</sup>

Today *EVA*'s influence expands far beyond anime and has inspired countless interpretations of the series beyond the psychological analyses that naturally stem from Anno's treatment during production. Christian and Jewish imagery is prominent and it is

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<sup>28</sup> NAveryW, Blog post of two articles translated by the author originally written by Kei Watanabe and published in the Mainichi Daily News, May 2006, accessed June 17, 2010, [http://forum.evageeks.org/search.php?search\\_author=NAveryW](http://forum.evageeks.org/search.php?search_author=NAveryW)

<sup>29</sup> Hiroki Azuma, "Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion."

through this lens that non-Japanese viewers often mistakenly try to find meaning in the series. The Angels explode into giant crosses of fire when defeated and the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Tree of Sephiroth, and the Lance of Longinus are important plot devices. *EVA*'s Assistant Director Tsurumaki Kazuya has stated that Christian elements were only used to make *EVA* mysterious and “look cool” to the non-Christian Japanese audience.<sup>30</sup> The series can just as easily be viewed as containing elements of Shinto with the three child pilots representing the gods Susanoo, Amaterasu, and Uzume using the Lance of Longinus to influence creation like the Spear of Heaven.<sup>31</sup> *EVA* has also been seen as representing a broad spectrum of nationalistic concerns. Azuma Hiroki describes the story as creating “anxiety without a cause,”<sup>32</sup> which certainly tapped into a pervasive fear for the future felt by the Japanese population after the economic bubble burst in the early 1990s and the Cold War had renewed the threat of possible nuclear warfare.<sup>33</sup> These pervasive fears also exist in *EVA*, where the world has been irrevocably altered by Second Impact and the fear of possible destruction by the Angels is ever-present. The sarin gas attack perpetrated by the Aum Shinrikyo cult in the Tokyo subway system

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<sup>30</sup> Dani Cavallaro, *The Art of Studio Gainax: Experimentation, Style and Innovation at the Leading Edge of Anime* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Co., Inc., 2009), 74. The complete quote is as follows: “There are a lot of giant robot shows in Japan, and we did want our story to have a religious theme to help distinguish us. Because Christianity is an uncommon religion in Japan we thought it would be mysterious. None of the staff who worked on *Eva* are Christians. There is no actual Christian meaning to the show, we just thought the visual symbols of Christianity look cool.”

<sup>31</sup> Patrick Drazen, *Anime Explosion! The what? why? & wow! of Japanese Animation* (Berkeley: Stone Bridge Press, 2003), 306.

<sup>32</sup> Hiroki Azuma, “Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion.”

<sup>33</sup> Donald Richie, “‘Mono no aware’: Hiroshima in Film,” in *Hibakusha Cinema: Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and the Nuclear Image in Japanese Film*, ed. by Mick Broderick (London: Keagan Paul International, 1996), 20-37.

contributed to the sense of common dread in the randomness of the attacks.<sup>34</sup> Their membership exposed a cultural crisis where the generations were becoming considerably more conflicted than the close-knit families of previous eras. This tension is seen in *EVA* with the conservative members of Seele as being from the 1950s postwar generation, Gendo from the technology oriented 1970s, Misato and NERV staff from the consumerist 1980s, and the information-driven Eva pilots from the 1990s.<sup>35</sup> Anno believed that the Angels were the ideal enemy to represent this continued societal tension as viewed by members of his generation. With an unlimited array of equally deadly forms, the Angels represent an abstract enemy that goes far beyond the political.<sup>36</sup>

Feminism also comes into play as *EVA* was one of the first anime to feature powerful female characters. Live-action Japanese television in the 1990s was largely made up of serialized dramas that showed women as happy housewives with working husbands. Shows with employed female characters almost always framed their career as secondary in importance to their duties as wife and mother.<sup>37</sup> This same warping of gender reality extended to anime from this time period, which featured predominantly male-oriented plots and few strong female characters. With little certainty about the

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<sup>34</sup> Haruki Murakami, *Underground: The Tokyo Gas Attack and the Japanese Psyche*, translated by Alfred Birnbaum and Philip Gabriel (London: The Harvill Press, 2000).

<sup>35</sup> Dennis Redmond, *The World Is Watching: Video As Multinational Aesthetics, 1968-1995*, 131.

<sup>36</sup> Krystian Woznicki, "Towards a Cartography of Japanese Anime," accessed August 19, 2009, <http://www.nettime.org/Lists-Archives/nettime-1-9802/msg00101.html>.

<sup>37</sup> Hilaria Gössmann, "New Role Models for Men and Women? Gender in Japanese TV Dramas," in *Japan Pop! Inside the World of Japanese Popular Culture*, ed. Timothy J. Craig, (New York: M.E.Sharpe, Inc., 2000), 213-217.

future, Japan's relationship to technology was also strained. Though Japan was highly technologically advanced, its citizen's relationship to technology was hesitant.<sup>38</sup> Unlike Americans, who glorified their technological achievements, the Japanese were not sure about the trustworthiness of technology or how it fit into the broader context of a meaningful human life. The technological world of *EVA* is also strained by the possibility that the technologically advanced Evas, high-tech Tokyo 3, and MAGI Supercomputers will not be enough to prevent mankind's extinction. Beyond nationalism, worldwide concerns have also been suggested as an interpretative possibility for *EVA* and one cannot miss Dennis Redmond's deeply complex multinational reading of *EVA*'s intricacies. Redmond is also the only author to make any appreciable mention of the musical score to *EVA*, making an occasional attempt to mix brief musical commentary into his discussion.<sup>39</sup> In spite of all the interpretative possibilities defined by scholars and the ideas of fans, *EVA* remains cryptic. Possibly the best summation of the series is by Azuma Hiroki, who wrote that *EVA* was "the absurd story of a meaningless battle that takes place while riding on a puzzling machine against an equally puzzling enemy"<sup>40</sup> and director Anno said:

EVANGELION is like a puzzle, you know. Any person can see it and give it his/her own answer. In other words, we're offering viewers to think by themselves, so that each person can imagine his/her own world. We will never offer the answers...As for many EVANGELION viewers, they may expect us to

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<sup>38</sup> Susan J. Napier, "When the Machines Stop: Fantasy, Reality, and Terminal Identity in *Neon Genesis Evangelion* and *Serial Experiments: Lain*," in *Robot Ghosts and Wired Dreams: Japanese Science Fiction from Origins to Anime*, edited by Christopher Bolton, Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, and Takayuki Tatsumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 104.

<sup>39</sup> Dennis Redmond, "Anime and East Asian Culture: Neon Genesis Evangelion." *Quarterly Review of Film and Video* 24 (2007): 183-88. And *The World Is Watching: Video As Multinational Aesthetics, 1968-1995*.

<sup>40</sup> Hiroki Azuma, "Anime or Something Like It: Neon Genesis Evangelion."

provide the “all-about-EVA” manuals, but there is no such thing. Don’t expect to get answers by someone. Don’t expect to be catered to all the time. We all have to find our own answers.<sup>41</sup>

One type of interpretation that has yet to be done is an examination of Sagisu Shiro’s musical score. The type of cues music gives the viewer about the characters and events in the series has not been explored in depth, but certainly can be used to enhance the viewer’s understanding of the plot and character relationships.

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<sup>41</sup> Hideaki Anno, “Interview,” 23.

## COMPOSER SAGISU SHIRO AND MUSIC FOR *EVA*

Sagisu Shiro is both a composer and a producer of music for anime, Japanese pop artists, and other artists of international stature. Over his thirty-year career he has worked with some of the best known popular musicians in Japan and scored some of the most famous anime ever produced. He composed the score to *EVA* as well as the *EVA* movies *Death and Rebirth* and *The End of Evangelion*, and is now scoring the recent *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies. Beyond *EVA*, Sagisu has collaborated with Anno and GAINAX on many prominent anime including *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water*, *His and Her Circumstances*, and *Magical Shopping Arcade Abenobashi*. Since 2004 he has been engaged as the composer for the internationally successful anime series *Bleach*, as well as the *Bleach* films and OVAs (“original video animation” designed for home release). At the 2009 Tokyo Anime Awards he won the award for Best Music for his score to the second *Rebuild of Evangelion* movie *Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance*. Sagisu is also prominent as a composer, producer, and arranger of music in Japan and Europe. The album series *Shiro's Songbook* comprises seven releases containing his arrangements and original compositions, and he has performed on or produced countless other singles and albums by artists from hip-hop to jazz to popular music. As a pianist his most notable collaboration is with British music producer Martin Lascelles in the band LOREN & MASH, which can be heard on some of the tracks in the *EVA* soundtrack.

English-language materials on Sagisu are limited and his personal website “Shiro’s Songbook”<sup>42</sup> seems to have been made as an afterthought rather than a necessity. Unlike many Japanese websites, his does not have an option to convert the content to English and it is very limited in scope. His bio is only updated to 2005, making the brief Wikipedia article on him more current than his own website. Native Japanese speakers who looked at his website on my behalf said that he is clearly a huge name in the Japanese music industry that neither needs nor desires the publicity a website would offer. One of the only English-language documents on the composer is his short statement from the liner notes of the first *EVA* soundtrack album released in November of 1995.

*Who am I?*

*Where am I?*

*What is this?*

*Who: I am Shiro Sagisu. I was born on August 29, 1957. My constellation mark is Virgo,*

*and my blood type is B.*

*My work history: I made my debut as a leader of T-square, hereafter;*

*I released 3 albums (already discontinued).*

*Since 1979, I have a history of composing/arranging for over 2000 popular songs, non-popular*

*songs, commercial songs, songs for TV programs, and movies.*

*Therefore, my occupation is obviously a composer/arranger.*

*This is my second project, after “Nadia-Secret of the Blue Water” to work with Director Anno.*

*Where: I am at my studio in my house of Ogikubo, Suginami.*

*There, I have a piano that hasn’t been tuned even once,*

*for 20 years, a randomly placed, rare synthesizer, and*

*mountains of loud casual clothes...*

*What: I’m revealing the secret of the music for the “Evangelion”*

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<sup>42</sup> Shiro Sagisu, “Shiro’s Songbook,” Ro-JAM co. Ltd, accessed August 18, 2011, <http://www.ro-jam.com/index.html>.

*series and of myself for the first time!  
 The recording studio is filled with memories of recording  
 sessions from “Fantastic Adventure of Yohko-LEDA” I feel the  
 flow of time quietly. My skin is sensing  
 a progression of anime.  
 Is Evangelion’s mecha better than Gundam’s?  
 Is Rei sexier than Yoko Asagiri? Wait a second. How about the music?  
 These questions are for you to know and for you to feel sinking into your skin...<sup>43</sup>*

This short, semi-poetic statement gives an interesting insight into the composer and his understanding of *EVA*. The album was released a month after *EVA* began its television run and before the series had achieved its immense popularity, so Sagisu’s comments about sensing a “progression of anime” and asking the listener to answer their own questions about the series mirrors similar statements made by Anno, highlighting their close collaboration. The men knew each other well, having worked together on the series *Nadia: The Secret of Blue Water* four years earlier, and their personal connection is illustrated by the psychology-oriented titles of many of Sagisu’s background tracks. Anno’s treatment at a Jungian clinic and his study of human psychology while making *EVA* was no secret, but Sagisu’s choice to give many of the tracks titles that referenced Anno’s studies is telling. “Thanatos,” “Oral Stage,” and “Mother is the First Other” are only a few of Sagisu’s tracks that are directly related to psychological ideas and show how closely he collaborated with Anno.

Sagisu’s music for *EVA* has enjoyed great popularity and has resulted in the release of numerous albums derived from the series, both full-length and in the form of

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<sup>43</sup> Shiro Sagisu, *Neon Genesis Evangelion* (Tokyo: King Record Co., Ltd. CD KICA 286, 1995), 3.

singles. The chart in Illustration 1 lists the full-length albums and their release dates. Anime always start and end with theme songs performed by a famous band or a *seiyu*, who often have dual careers as vocalists. These are generally catchy, upbeat pop songs suitable for frequent airplay on radio stations and in commercials to advertise the series. The invitation to record these songs for a popular anime is greatly sought after because of multi-venue exposure afforded to the performer. A highly anticipated series may even change its opening and closing theme song every season for additional marketing power. The opening and closing themes of *EVA* have been remixed and re-recorded by many artists in many musical styles and can be found on albums containing background music from the series or having been released as singles. Fewer albums have been released internationally than are available to the Japanese public, making some albums difficult to get outside of Japan. They are predominantly distributed by Tokyo-based King Records through their label Starchild, which specializes in music from anime series and films. Thus far, eight soundtracks containing Sagisu's original music have been made available in Japan. Three of these are specific to the *EVA* television series and the other five are derived from the scores of the movies. A six-disc compilation of music up through *The End of Evangelion* is also available, and four other compilation discs have been made featuring special musical collections. An example is *Evangelion: The Birthday of Ayanami Rei* from 2001, which only includes music related to Ayanami Rei or remakes of songs performed by her *seiyu* Hayashibara Megumi. Of the two arranged albums, *Evangelion VOX* contains hip-hop and R&B arrangements of *EVA* background music and *Evangelion Symphony* contains revised orchestral versions of some of the original

soundtrack. *Refrain the Songs Were Inspired by Evangelion* is similar in that it contains *EVA* tracks remixed as electronic dance music. The four classical recordings hold full versions of classical works heard in *EVA*: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Verdi's *Requiem*, a variety of pieces by Handel including excerpts from the *Messiah*, and a variety of pieces by J.S. Bach including the First Cello Suite, the Third Orchestral Suite and the Third Violin Partita.

| <b>Album title</b>   | <b>Release Date</b> |
|--|---------------------|
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion</i>                                   | December 6, 1995    |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion II</i>                                | February 16, 1996   |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion III</i>                               | May 22, 1996        |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Addition</i>                          | December 21, 1996   |
| <i>Evangelion Death</i>  | June 11, 1997       |
| <i>The End of Evangelion</i>                                     | September 26, 1997  |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Classical Volume 1 - Beethoven</i>    | October 22, 1997    |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Classical Volume 2 - Verdi</i>        | October 22, 1997    |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Classical Volume 3 - Handel</i>       | October 22, 1997    |
| <i>Refrain the Songs Were Inspired by Evangelion</i>             | November 6, 1997    |
| <i>Evangelion VOX</i>  | December 3, 1997    |
| <i>Evangelion Symphony</i>                                       | December 22, 1997   |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion: S<sup>2</sup> Works</i>              | December 4, 1998    |
| <i>The Day of Second Impact</i>                                  | September 13, 2000  |
| <i>Evangelion: The Birthday of Ayanami Rei</i>                   | March 30, 2001      |
| <i>Refrain of Evangelion</i>                                     | May 26, 2003        |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Classical Volume 4 - J.S. Bach</i>    | November 11, 2003   |
| <i>Neon Genesis Evangelion Decade</i>                            | November 26, 2005   |
| <i>Music from Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone</i>            | September 25, 2007  |
| <i>Evangelion: 1.0 You Are (Not) Alone Original Soundtrack</i>   | May 25, 2008        |
| <i>Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance Original Soundtrack</i> | July 8, 2009        |

Illustration 1: Full-length albums containing music from the *EVA* series and films.

There have been considerably more albums of arrangements and re-imaginings of the *EVA* score than releases of the original music. Sagisu encourages this sort of treatment and feels that both the original pieces and arrangements made in a wide variety of styles are important parts of composition. He likens it to fashion design, where a fashion designer can either create an original garment or act as a stylist by reworking an existing garment.<sup>44</sup> Both display different types of creativity and are a response to external factors like budget and time limitations. To Sagisu, a musical score is much the same: it can be original compositions, pieces created from samples of other sources, or remixes or arrangements of the originals, all of which can be interesting for the composer and listener.

Performance quality is a mild concern in the soundtracks drawn from the original series. Though not noticeable in context, when divorced from the images and subjected to directed listening the studio orchestra is clearly less than perfect. Whether the orchestra was under rehearsed due to budget constraints or simply of lower quality is unknown. Attacks are not synchronized, tuning is often inaccurate, and the brass are guilty of many missed notes. This is even more apparent when Sagisu mixes tracks of separately recorded electronic instruments like bass guitar into the orchestral tracks. Performance quality improved substantially after *EVA* became popular and production budgets increased. The soundtracks for the movies *Death and Rebirth* and *The End of Evangelion* feature much improved renditions of the score and the playing of the London Studio

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<sup>44</sup> Heim, “対談 庵野秀明×鷺巣詩郎: 序破急,” Haimu, accessed September 10, 2011, <http://johakyu.net/lib/2007/07/2007-07-27-000540.php>.

Orchestra in the recent *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies is remarkable. The original soundtrack to *EVA* blends acoustic and electronic instruments to create a rock-inspired orchestra, a combination with which Sagisu said he was particularly pleased.<sup>45</sup> At the time of writing the score for *EVA* Sagisu's favorite instruments were strings, guitar, and piano, and these instruments are shown clear preference in his orchestration. He calls them his "sacred treasures,"<sup>46</sup> because their combination always seems to bring success to the music he writes.<sup>47</sup> He uses no woodwinds in his studio orchestra, which comprises a small ensemble of strings (6-4-2-2), brass, percussion, and piano. Electric guitar and electric bass guitar are often added to the mix, especially for music accompanying action scenes, and more intimate pieces are written for string orchestra, solo piano, acoustic guitar, or solo flute. Untexted choral music is also prominent and is another sound that Sagisu favors, but has said that he rarely got to use it in anime soundtracks until *EVA*.<sup>48</sup> The overall feeling of the score is that of a Hollywood movie soundtrack and Sagisu's approach is clearly influenced by models of Hollywood and Western art music. The genres of jazz, popular music, Latin music, and country-western all appear in various guises, often in a comedic setting, and many elements of the score are conventional and expected, following the lead of previous mecha anime series: battles are accompanied by

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> This is likely a comparison to the Three Sacred Shinto Treasures of Japan, also known as the Imperial Regalia of Japan. They are a sword, a mirror, and a magatama jewel that were given to Ninigi-no-Mikoto by his grandmother, the Sun Goddess Amaterasu, to pacify Japan, after which they entered the Imperial holdings. They represent valor, wisdom, and benevolence, and are presented to the Japanese Emperor during their enthronement ceremony to this day. As an example of their popularity, the sword Kusanagi could be compared to Excalibur.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

exciting music heavy with brass and timpani and relaxed scenes use calm string settings. Sagisu also deviates from expected musical practices as the series progresses, using Western classical music for key battle scenes in the second half of the series, leaving long stretches of silence in places where music would have been expected, and frequently using music for ironic effect.

Before looking at the score for *EVA*, certain types of music need to be removed from consideration. An anime always has theme songs that accompany the opening and closing credits and has a preview of the upcoming episode that may or may not have a musical background. This music may be written by the primary composer for the anime, the song's performer, or a professional songwriter. Anime directors frequently choose to leave out the opening theme in the final episode to gain a few precious minutes of animation time, but this is not the case with *EVA*, nor does *EVA* include an *omake*<sup>49</sup> after the ending credits. Assuming that an average *EVA* episode is 23' 30" minutes long without commercials, subtracting the opening theme, the closing theme, and the preview leaves 20' 15" minutes of time for narrative animation and its related musical accompaniment. Based on this number, Sagisu's score can be assessed in a number of ways. On the average, 41% of each *EVA* episode contains musical accompaniment, meaning that most episodes have music for less than half of their duration. This percentage ranges from the sparse Episode 17, where only 12% of its content has musical accompaniment, to 90% in the finale Episode 26. The absence of music allows another

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<sup>49</sup> *Omake* literally means "extra" and appears in anime and manga. It is most often a comedy sketch where the characters do things that go against their normal behavior or break the fourth wall. *Omake* characters are generally presented in super-deformed or *chibi* style, a form of caricature where the character's body is made to resemble a child with stubby limbs and an oversized head.

important sound to be heard, that of technology. *EVA* is heavy with images of advanced technology and complex scientific tools, so the hum of electric lights, computer monitors, engines, and airlocks is a constant reminder how strongly the characters' lives are mediated through these systems. The entry plug, a self-contained cylinder from which the pilots control the Evas, hums prominently, giving the pilots no respite from the noise of technology. Outside of NERV headquarters, televisions and radios blast through the shrill noise of the cicadas. Dense populations of cicadas are incredibly loud and their high-pitched "singing" represents summer to most Japanese. Since the world of *EVA* has been thrown into a perpetual summer, the cicadas "sing" oppressively all year long as an ongoing reminder of the tragedy of Second Impact.

Sagisu's music can accompany action scenes or complement scenes of character psychology. (Illustration 2) Approximately 40% of the score can be associated with action-oriented scenes while the other 60% is dedicated to the psychological of the characters. Battle-heavy Episode 8 has the most action music at 84%, but seven episodes have no action music at all, with 100% of the musical content going to character development. This is opposite of the traditional mecha anime, where action music would far outweigh any other type of accompaniment. Music can also be divided into non-diegetic and diegetic usage.<sup>50</sup> Non-diegetic music comprises 85% of Sagisu's score and is generally simple to identify. There is only one situation where this distinction is not clear. In Episode 9, the track "Both of You, Dance Like You Want to Win" is supposedly being

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<sup>50</sup> Diegetic music is within the world of the story. It is music that the characters can hear. Non-diegetic music plays in the background and exists outside the story. It cannot be heard by the characters.

played through the Eva's communication system so that Shinji and Asuka can execute a attack on the Angel Israfel that has been choreographed to music. Diegetic music would change in volume or quality as the battle commenced, but this music does not change. It is orchestrated for strings, brass, and percussion like all of the other non-diegetic battle tracks, but the on-screen battle is coordinated precisely with the music and the pilots are clearly listening to something similar to what the viewer is hearing. I have called this music diegetic in my analysis because of its relationship to the on-screen action, but could certainly see how it could be classified otherwise. Though atypical for a mecha anime, EVA includes quite a bit of diegetic music. 10% of the score is music that the characters can hear but do not directly interact with. This music is often ironic, a trait of Sagisu's anime scores even outside of *EVA*, such as a scene in Episode 2 when Shinji and Misato enter a convenience store to buy dinner. The loudspeaker is playing an upbeat, romantic pop song as Shinji overhears other customers discussing their fear about living in Tokyo-3 after the most recent Angel attack, putting the happy music and frightening topic completely at odds. 5% of the score is diegetic music that the characters interact with directly. Shinji is a cellist and the only human music maker of the series. He makes up most of this 5% along with the Angel Tabris, who sings.

One of the most difficult types of sound to assess is sound effects, because so many of the sounds in *EVA* are musical in nature. Church bells, chimes on the train crossing guard, and bells at Shinji's junior high are all musical, but do not directly contribute to action or psychology and are simply sounds of the *EVA* world. The hum of the entry plug is tuned to a C# and the arrival of the Angel Ramiel is heralded by short

| episode number | total music in each episode                         |            | percentage of episode with music |            | music that supports action |            | music that provides psychological insight |            | diegetic music with which characters do not interact (heard by characters) |            | diegetic music with which characters do interact (heard by characters) |            | total diegetic music (heard by characters) |            | total non-diegetic music (not heard by characters) |  |
|----------------|---|------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|------------|---|------------|--|------------|--|------------|--|------------|--|--|
|                | (not including theme song, end credits, or preview) | total time | %                                | total time | %                          | total time | %   | total time | %  | total time | %  | total time | %  | total time | %  |  |
| 1              | 6:44  | 33%        | 2:58                             | 44%        | 3:46                       | 56%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 6:44                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 2              | 8:21  | 41%        | 4:29                             | 54%        | 3:52                       | 46%        | 0:55                                      | 11%        | 0:15   | 3%         | 1:10   | 14%        | 7:11                                       | 86%        |  |  |
| 3              | 6:52  | 34%        | 5:32                             | 81%        | 1:20                       | 19%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 6:52                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 4              | 2:42  | 14%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 2:42                       | 100%       | 1:24                                      | 52%        | 1:18   | 48%        | 2:42   | 100%       | 0:00                                       | 0%         |  |  |
| 5              | 6:38  | 33%        | 3:50                             | 58%        | 2:48                       | 42%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 6:38                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 6              | 11:15   | 56%        | 8:53                             | 79%        | 2:22                       | 21%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 11:15                                      | 100%       |  |  |
| 7              | 8:01  | 40%        | 5:21                             | 67%        | 2:40                       | 33%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 8:01                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 8              | 8:09  | 40%        | 6:50                             | 84%        | 1:19                       | 16%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 8:09                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 9              | 11:15   | 56%        | 5:11                             | 46%        | 6:04                       | 54%        | 0:20                                      | 3%         | 3:00   | 27%        | 3:20   | 30%        | 7:55                                       | 70%        |  |  |
| 10             | 8:42  | 43%        | 5:00                             | 57%        | 3:42                       | 43%        | 0:44                                      | 8%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:44   | 8%         | 7:58                                       | 92%        |  |  |
| 11             | 5:49  | 29%        | 3:59                             | 68%        | 1:50                       | 32%        | 0:12                                      | 3%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:12   | 3%         | 5:37                                       | 97%        |  |  |
| 12             | 7:30  | 37%        | 4:24                             | 59%        | 3:06                       | 41%        | 0:38                                      | 8%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:38   | 8%         | 6:52                                       | 92%        |  |  |
| 13             | 6:38  | 33%        | 4:58                             | 75%        | 1:40                       | 25%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 6:38                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 14             | 3:30  | 17%        | 1:21                             | 39%        | 2:09                       | 61%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 3:30                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 15             | 7:12  | 36%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 7:12                       | 100%       | 0:22                                      | 5%         | 1:54   | 26%        | 2:16   | 31%        | 4:56                                       | 69%        |  |  |
| 16             | 11:23   | 56%        | 4:35                             | 40%        | 6:48                       | 60%        | 0:33                                      | 5%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:33   | 5%         | 10:50                                      | 95%        |  |  |
| 17             | 2:20  | 41%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 2:20                       | 100%       | 2:15                                      | 96%        | 0:05   | 4%         | 2:20   | 100%       | 0:00                                       | 0%         |  |  |
| 18             | 8:17  | 41%        | 5:28                             | 66%        | 2:49                       | 34%        | 0:46                                      | 9%         | 0:04   | 1%         | 0:50   | 10%        | 7:27                                       | 90%        |  |  |
| 19             | 8:06  | 39%        | 5:49                             | 72%        | 2:17                       | 28%        | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 8:06                                       | 100%       |  |  |
| 20             | 11:12   | 55%        | 1:03                             | 9%         | 10:09                      | 91%        | 1:48                                      | 16%        | 0:00   | 0%         | 1:48   | 16%        | 9:24                                       | 84%        |  |  |
| 21             | 6:06  | 31%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 6:06                       | 100%       | 0:32                                      | 9%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:32   | 9%         | 5:34                                       | 91%        |  |  |
| 22             | 10:47   | 53%        | 0:54                             | 8%         | 9:53                       | 92%        | 2:31                                      | 23%        | 0:00   | 0%         | 2:31   | 23%        | 8:16                                       | 77%        |  |  |
| 23             | 8:46  | 43%        | 3:00                             | 34%        | 5:46                       | 66%        | 0:10                                      | 2%         | 1:05   | 12%        | 1:15   | 14%        | 7:31                                       | 86%        |  |  |
| 24             | 8:31  | 42%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 8:31                       | 100%       | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:47   | 9%         | 0:47   | 9%         | 7:44                                       | 91%        |  |  |
| 25             | 15:27   | 76%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 15:27                      | 100%       | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 15:27                                      | 100%       |  |  |
| 26             | 18:19   | 90%        | 0:00                             | 0%         | 18:19                      | 100%       | 0:00                                      | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 0:00   | 0%         | 18:19                                      | 100%       |  |  |
| average        | 8:24  | 41%        | 3:12                             | 40%        | 5:11                       | 60%        | 0:30                                      | 10%        | 0:19   | 5%         | 0:49   | 15%        | 7:34                                       | 85%        |  |  |

Illustration 2: Types of music used in each episode.

bursts of the pitch F, and it could be argued that these single tones do evoke an emotional response, but without rhythm it is hard to call them music. The most troublesome of all is the pile driver that sounds during Shinji's visits to Rei's run-down apartment in Episodes 5 and 17. In both cases, Shinji's nervousness is accentuated by the intensity of the rhythmic strikes of the pile driver, and the empty metallic ringing also comments on the lonely nature of Rei's existence, as she believes her only reason for living is to act as Gendo's tool. As a sound containing pitch and rhythmic regularity, it is certainly tempting to classify the pile driver as a musical element.

Silence is used to great effect throughout the series, especially as an indicator of power and psychology.<sup>51</sup> As those who hold the ultimate power in the *EVA* world, men are most likely to be characterized by physical stillness and silence. Gendo is almost always pictured seated with his hands folded in front of his mouth and his lips hidden from view, making him devoid of movement even when giving orders in intense battle sequences. The members of Seele often present themselves as large, black obelisks emblazoned with numbers or the words "SOUND ONLY" and speak to each other without a physical presence. Neither Gendo nor Seele have any music associated with them, making their power even more overt through the silence that surrounds them. Anno has included many still shots throughout *EVA*, which are desirably cheap to produce when doing cel animation<sup>52</sup> but also serve to highlight objects or situations. He frequently

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<sup>51</sup> William D. Rount, "Stillness and Style in 'Neon Genesis Evangelion'," *Animation Journal* 8 (2000): 28-43.

<sup>52</sup> Cel animation is an animation technique where each frame is drawn and painted by hand. It was the primary animation technique until computer animation rose to prominence in the late 1990s.

chooses to use a voiceover in these shots instead of showing a character speaking. This contributes to the complexity of the plot as voiceovers allow for greater flexibility on screen<sup>53</sup> since images can be directly related to the topic of voiceover, completely unrelated, or symbolic. Absence of sound also gives us insight into character psychology. Scholar William Rott describes still shots in *EVA* as “cues for ‘a psychologized reading’ for understanding and animating virtually everything that one sees as expressions of a character’s psyche...at the same time, they signal the overt presence of style: they repeatedly and obviously call attention to the considerable artifice of the series’ narration.”<sup>54</sup> This psychological function of stillness extends to silence and is especially true of the mind of Shinji, who is often pictured listening to a cassette player through ear-bud headphones. In moments of extreme emotion and mental stress a close-up of the display reveals that the device is playing, but the viewer cannot hear the sound and Shinji is understood to be shut away in his mind with his fears.

Sagisu finds many ways to use music to help the viewer understand the *EVA* world, but the real purpose of his music is to highlight the thoughts and feelings of main character Ikari Shinji. Though we get to know quite a few characters in the course of the series, *EVA* is really a *Bildungsroman* that explores Shinji’s personal, emotional, and mental growth after he joins NERV and becomes an Eva pilot. The upbeat opening credit sequence, accompanied by the techno-inspired theme song *A Cruel Angel’s Thesis*, is an immediate clue to this idea. The shots are complex and move swiftly through a pastiche

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<sup>53</sup> Rott, "Stillness and Style," 38.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 40.

of images depicting the individual characters, the cosmos, Jewish and Christian symbols, English phrases, and pencil drawings. Every cut is short, with no time to determine the relationship between any of the things being portrayed, and there are no action sequences with battles or military showmanship. Characters are not shown touching each other, so few inter-personal relationships can be inferred before the series gets underway. This is a direct deviation from a conventional anime, where the viewer would bring an understanding of the major friendships, romantic pairings, and enemy figures into the series from the outset based on shots of character interactions in the opening credits. This is not the case in *EVA*'s opening sequence, which is actually a microcosm of the progression of Shinji's mental state. In its most simple form: Shinji is unhappy, he gets to know the people and things in his world and finds happiness. After the title screen, we see a headshot of a serious-looking Shinji surrounded by a blue sky and white clouds. The naked silhouettes of Misato and Rei float behind him, hinting that their connection to him will be important. The next thirty seconds are a blur of individual character images and objects with a strong emphasis on EVA-01. In the final moments of the credits Shinji is superimposed over EVA-01 and seemingly thrust away from its body as EVA-01 spreads its arms. The last cut shows Shinji laughing, free of the Eva. Clearly, Shinji and his emotions are the focus of this series, not epic battles.

Drawing on his time in the Jungian clinic, Anno has made *EVA* an anime about the impact of Shinji's childhood insecurities on his development and his inability to create meaningful relationships with others. Anno lays out his own feelings on personality in the final episodes of the series, where character voiceovers give a distinctly

Lacanian view of personality formation: personality is created in the way a person views themselves, an internal lens, and the way others view that individual, an external lens. As the viewer of the anime, we have an external perspective of Shinji where we see his actions on screen and assess his personality traits. We also hear the *EVA* characters' viewpoints of Shinji's personality, whether they are screamed at him in a rage by Asuka or in private evaluations between adults. The viewer is granted access to the thoughts and memories of the female characters,<sup>55</sup> but we have little access to Shinji's thoughts. Music is the viewer's real window into Shinji's mind, allowing us to get a sense of his worldview, the way he views himself, and the way he views others. This explains why the music will sometimes seem mismatched to a situation or person without clear ironic or humorous intent. Additionally, many cues are only heard once in the entire series. Not counting untitled background tracks, twenty-three of the fifty-seven titled musical cues (40%) are only heard once in all twenty-six episodes. With the exception of Episodes 4, 5, and 17, every episode introduces previously unheard musical tracks, with new tracks even appearing in the final episode. Knowing how much recycling often occurs in film scores to meet save time in meeting tight deadlines, Sagisu's choice to use cues infrequently sometimes seems extravagant, but is less excessive than it first appears. Sagisu has given a distinct name to each track regardless of whether it contains completely new content or is a variation on another track. The tracks "Borderline Case" and "Mother is the First Other" feature chorus with instrumental accompaniment and are

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<sup>55</sup> The most famous example is the fan-named "Rei's Poem" from Episode 14, a mysterious stream-of-consciousness monologue delivered by Rei on the subject of the meaning of her existence as she tries to sync with Eva 01 for the first time.

renamed "Do You Love Me" and "Splitting the Breast" when they become exclusively choral after the accompaniment is removed. In addition to shifts in orchestration, Sagisu also uses tempo to rework tracks. "Ritsuko" has virtually identical melodic and harmonic content to "Three of Me, One of Someone Else," but is heard at a tempo of around 96 beats per minute in comparison to 66-72 beats per minute in "Three of Me, One of Someone Else." Any of these pieces could have been labeled as a second version instead of receiving an entirely different name, but this highlights Sagisu's tendency to name tracks based on the title of the episode in which they first appear. Each episode has both a Japanese and English title that can be different in meaning. Episode 1 is titled "Angel Attack" in both languages, but Episode 2 is titled "The Beast" in English and "Unfamiliar Ceiling" in Japanese. This leads to tracks with titles that seem to have no aesthetic relationship to the scene in which it is placed. The track "She said, 'Don't make others suffer for your personal hatred.'" shares its name with the English title of Episode 12, in which this music its first and only appearance. The title makes one expect an emotionally intense piece with a slower tempo. Instead, it is country-western inspired battle music with a solo trumpet blasting in its high range, amplified solo guitar, and a *William Tell*-style string accompaniment heard as three Evas battle the attacking Angel Sahaquiel. Regardless of the complexities of Sagisu's naming system, subtle shifts in the orchestration or tempo of tracks allow him to respond to the dramatic necessities of the plot. This heightens the key emotional moments related to Shinji's perceptions since the music associated with his initial feelings about a person or object may change once he knows more about them.

## MUSIC AS IKARI SHINJI'S WORLDVIEW

### Adults

Shinji is fearful and distrusting of adults since he was abandoned by Gendo as a child. His hatred of his father and the coldness of their relationship is shown through a conspicuous absence of music in their interactions. In Episode 2, Misato and Shinji wait for an elevator. When it arrives, Gendo is inside and Shinji refuses to enter the compartment as Gendo glares down at his son. The icy silence between them lasts for 12 seconds and is broken by the sound of the elevator doors closing. As the series progresses, Shinji comes to realize that he wishes to be praised by his father, giving this as the reason he pilots an Eva when talking with Misato, Rei, and Asuka at a ramen shop in Episode 12. This important realization is downplayed by the music, a generic pop song playing from a stereo in the ramen shop. Gendo's praise of Shinji in Episode 12 and their visit to his mother's grave in Episode 15 are also without a specific musical cues. Even in the moments where they have potential to reconnect, Shinji has closed his heart to his father and refuses to forgive him, denying him any musical representation.

Adult women are much more likely to earn Shinji's trust and thus have musical significance. Both Misato and Ritsuko have multiple tracks associated with them that show Shinji's developing opinions about them. As a figure of power in NERV headquarters, Misato is extremely competent in her job as Director of Tactical Operations. She is Shinji's superior and his command leader during Eva battles, giving her a powerful persona that keeps Shinji at a distance when they interact at NERV

headquarters. When Misato discovers that Shinji will be assigned to live alone, she intervenes and has him assigned to live with her. For Shinji, this is the first time an adult has ever chosen to be with him, creating a strong affection for Misato and much needed sense of stability in their home life together. His presence is also a salve for Misato, who is troubled by feelings of worthlessness and isolation. Misato's personality at home is the opposite of her behavior at NERV. To Shinji's dismay, she does not conform to the Japanese notion of a typical housewife. She drinks beer for breakfast, and she is noisy, a bad housekeeper, and a terrible cook. Still, it is these elements make her fun and easy going, with an infectious playfulness that sets everyone around her at ease. This attitude is represented by two musical cues: "Barefoot in the Park" and "Misato."

"Barefoot in the Park" is casual and jazzy with a hint of Latin music for a relaxed groove in the accompanying electric bass guitar. Muted trumpets sound a mildly syncopated melody with lively interjections by the solo piano. It is first heard in Episode 1 as Misato and Shinji get to know each other. Misato's car is damaged when the United Nations detonates an N<sup>2</sup> land mine under the Angel Sachiel, so she and Shinji steal the batteries from surrounding cars to get back to NERV headquarters. She and Shinji have just met, but she invites him to use an informal manner of address calling her by her first name and they bicker about the stolen batteries like long-time companions.

Shinji: Um, Misato?

Misato: What?

Shinji: Are you sure you can just take those? (Glances into the backseat at the batteries)

Misato: Never mind about that. It's an emergency, and we need a working car right now, right? And I am a government official, after all, so everything's going to be perfectly fine, okay?

Shinji: I don't think anyone will buy that.

Misato: Don't get so snotty. You're not as cute as I thought you were.

Shinji: You think so?

Misato: Oh, did I upset you? Sorry, sorry! You're just a kid, after all.

Shinji: So are you. You're not as mature as I thought you were.

Misato's response to Shinji's criticism of her maturity is to swing the steering wheel of the car back and forth sharply, causing the car to swerve erratically down the freeway as Shinji shrieks in fear. Clearly, Shinji is not impressed by Misato's easy-going attitude and the laid-back music reveals his first impression of the woman who will become his commanding officer.

Misato's other musical cue, "Misato," figures prominently into the series, appearing eight times in the first sixteen episodes and only playing when Misato is present. The melody is jazzy and improvisatory, played in a swung style with grace-note and glissando ornaments over an ostinato bass line that traces a circle of fifths progression. (Illustration 3) The main instrument is a solo flute and is the only example of woodwind use in the entire series, making a connection between this unique timbre and Misato. "Misato" is heard in Misato's apartment when Shinji, Misato, and later Asuka are gathered around the table during meal times or events like the impromptu party given to celebrate Misato's promotion from Captain to Major. This music embodies what Shinji and Misato really desire, a welcoming home and close companions with whom to share everyday life.



Illustration 3: Melodic line and ostinato accompaniment of "Misato."<sup>56</sup>

This is the music of normalcy, far removed from the terrors of the Evas, NERV, and attacking Angels. This difference is most clearly defined in Episode 7, where "Misato" is heard in three different breakfast scenes. In the episode, Misato and Ritsuko attend a conference given by a private company to demonstrate an unmanned Angel-fighting robot named Jet Alone. Jet Alone goes out of control and Misato is forced to shut it down manually before the nuclear reactor that serves as its power system detonates. The episode opens with Shinji and Misato's pet penguin Pen Pen eating breakfast, underscored with "Misato." Misato enters looking disheveled and scratching herself, and Shinji looks at her disappointedly. His displeasure increases when she grabs a beer and chugs it before taking a piece of toast. They proceed to squabble about what constitutes an acceptable breakfast and the fact that it was Misato's turn to make the meal that morning, culminating with Shinji's comment: "Now I know why you're still single at your age, Misato." Seven minutes later in the episode we see exactly the same scene: Shinji and Pen Pen eat their breakfast with "Misato" underscoring the relaxed events. The door

<sup>56</sup> All musical illustrations used in this document are personal transcriptions.

opens and Misato appears in her full dress uniform, bringing the music to a sudden halt as Pen Pen drops his fish while Shinji stares at her in astonishment. Misato gives some curt instructions to Shinji and leaves for the conference. The morning after the Jet Alone incident everything is back to normal. Shinji and Pen Pen eat their breakfast to the underscore of "Misato" as Misato gulps a beer and half-heartedly tries to find her NERV uniform while Shinji looks on with contempt. In spite of his annoyance, the use of the upbeat "Misato" in these scenes shows how Shinji enjoys his life with Misato and the stability he finds living there.

A related track is "When I Find Peace of Mind," which appears in Episodes 7 and 11. On the first *EVA* soundtrack it is orchestrated with either solo flute or strings playing the melodic line. Only the sections with strings are heard in the series, but the music clearly relates to Misato through the use of her characteristic instrument and in the relaxed, jazz-like feel of the piece. It first appears in Episode 7 as Shinji and his friends Kensuke and Toji walk to school in the morning. Shinji complains that Misato is "sloppy, embarrassing, and lazy" and is corrected by Kensuke, who says: "She lets you see a side of her that she won't show to anyone else. That means she's your family." Shinji is delighted by this idea and walks off screen with a happy smile. It is not clear why Sagisu chose to use the sections of "When I Find Peace of Mind" that feature strings rather than those using Misato's characteristic flute in this scene, but there are two possibilities. One is that the composer may have felt that the timbre of the flute would make the dialogue difficult to hear. The other is that the composer only wanted to use the solo flute when

Misato is actually present in a scene. Since she is the topic of discussion but not actually there with the boys as they walk to school, the flute sections were not used.

When Asuka joins their household in Episode 9, she becomes a love interest for Shinji and Misato assumes a more adult role. To Misato's dismay, Asuka has been escorted to Japan from Germany by Misato's old boyfriend Kaji. She ignores him at first, but renews their relationship in Episode 15 before he is assassinated in Episode 21. "The Sorrow of Losing the One Dependence" is heard in Episode 21 as Misato listens to a message from Kaji on the answering machine after his assassination and sobs uncontrollably on the kitchen table. It is a variation on the closing theme "Fly Me to the Moon," with only the melody played by the solo piano and no harmonic accompaniment. Shinji hides his head under his pillow to try to drown out Misato's wailing sobs and we are given rare access to his thoughts: "All I could do was run away from the tragedy Misato was facing. There was nothing I could say. I was just a child. But I understood." The sadness contained in "The Sorrow of Losing the One Dependence" is the opposite of upbeat tracks like "Misato," and shows how Shinji's understanding of Misato as an adult evolves as the series progresses.

Misato's closest friend is Akagi Ritsuko, NERV's chief scientist, with whom Misato attended university. Ritsuko is cold and distant from most people, her work being considerably more meaningful to her than interpersonal relationships. She is carrying on a secret, but failing, sexual relationship with Gendo and will do anything to hasten Human Instrumentality. She treats Shinji politely, but sees him as a means to an end and

generally expendable. Shinji first meets Ritsuko in the elevator on his first trip to NERV headquarters when Misato introduces them. By hearing Misato refer to Ritsuko by her first name and observing the dynamic between them, Shinji realizes that their friendship has existed for quite some time. This gives him a friendly impression of Ritsuko and her music sounds appropriately compassionate and welcoming.

As *EVA* progresses, Ritsuko and Misato slowly find themselves at odds with each other as Misato realizes that Ritsuko is hiding the truth behind NERV and Gendo's true intentions for Human Instrumentality. Ritsuko's music is always heard in scenes connected to the past, since that was when she was truly a friend to Misato and not consumed with subtle deceit. The track "Ritsuko" and its slower variation "Three of Me, One of Someone Else" accompany Ritsuko's reminiscences of her college days with Misato and the early formation of NERV. The music is calm and relaxed, but misleading like Ritsuko in its deceptive harmonic motion, weakly voiced cadences, and added ninths that cloud the harmony. (Illustration 4)



Illustration 4: Opening phrase of "Ritsuko."

"Ritsuko" is unique because it has no clear melody. In the middle section the piano seemingly improvises a decorative line over the chord progression in the acoustic guitar, but no real melody ever materializes. Ritsuko shares little about herself with anyone, so Shinji is not able to form a fully realized musical impression of her and can only base his ideas on the hazy impression he gets during their infrequent meetings and from Misato's comments about Ritsuko as a friend.

## Technology

Just like any fourteen year-old boy, Shinji views technology with wonder and admiration. In the world after Second Impact technology has become vital to the survival of the human race, a circumstance made clear in *EVA* by the proliferation of computer monitors and the ever-present hum of electric appliances. This is even more strongly emphasized in NERV headquarters, where almost every aspect of life is presented as data on a screen to support the technologically superior Evas. NERV headquarters sits in a geofront underneath the city of Tokyo-3, a gleaming metropolis of technological wonder. When threatened by an Angel attack, each building in Tokyo-3 can be lowered into the massive cave using a hydraulic system, leaving almost nothing above ground but heavy armored plates. This prompts Misato to describe the city as "the key to rebuilding the world. A fortress for all mankind." Shinji is clearly excited when he first sees the inside of the geofront from a transport elevator in Episode 1. As he and Misato descend to NERV headquarters, the drab metal walls that line the surface passage suddenly disappear as they enter the geofront, revealing Tokyo-3 (which has been retracted because of the Angel Sachiel) and NERV headquarters bathed in a golden light. The track "Tokyo-3" is heard as the city comes into view, accentuating Shinji's delight and amazement. Strings and chorus sustain chords beneath an understated fanfare in the brass delivered in a call-and-response style between instruments. These statements are simply arpeggios and short scale patterns, which do not contain melodic content as much as they have the potential to become a melody. Tokyo-3 is a place where Shinji feels like there is potential for him to start a new life and makes him hopeful for the future. There is no

functional harmonic movement, just neighbor-tone motion up to and from the tonic. This stable harmony demonstrates Shinji's belief in the strength of the city and the safety within its walls. Shinji is depressed after battle with the Angel Sachiel in Episode 2, so Misato takes him to a viewing point high above the city at sunset to cheer him up. As they look out over Tokyo-3, much of the terrain is still covered with armored plates and Shinji is disappointed, describing the city as desolate and lonely. His mood changes as the buildings start to rise from the geofront. "Tokyo-3" accompanies the city's ascent as Misato explains how Shinji is the savior of the city, giving Shinji renewed faith and hope for his future. "Tokyo-3" is heard twice in the series, both times directly before the internal eyecatch. The final chord of the track rings into the eyecatch, allowing the music to transcend the visual boundaries of the story and makes clear how powerfully Shinji has been affected by his new environment.

Shinji's first trip in EVA-01 is every young boy's fantasy: the chance to become a hero and earn his father's praise by piloting a giant mecha to save the world. In reality, the Evas are a collection of organic parts derived from the Angels and bound by armored plates that subjugate them to human will. The Evas can easily go berserk and are a horrifying necessity in the battle against the Angels. As Shinji comes to know the truth about the Evas, the music associated with them becomes terror-inducing rather than heroic, but Shinji's first experience with EVA-01 is accompanied by the valiant track "EVA-01" since he still believes that the Evas are heroic. "EVA-01" is heard as EVA-01 is prepared for battle with the Angel Sachiel. Protective Bakelite is drained from the hanger chamber, slowly revealing the Eva's powerful body, and it is moved onto the

launch platform with Shinji situated in the pilot's seat. "EVA-01" is set for electric bass guitar and full orchestra without winds. It primarily features the violins in a lush melody in their lower register (Illustration 5) with fanfares and arpeggios in the brass interspersed throughout.



Illustration 5: Heroic violin melody in "EVA-01."

The electric bass guitar sounds a pedal point on F in an ostinato pattern made of half notes followed by quarter-note triplets, changing briefly to an A-flat pedal in the middle section. EVA-01 impresses Shinji initially, but he soon realizes how terrifying the Evas can be after EVA-01 goes berserk during the battle. Shinji's admiration quickly turns to fear and the majestic "EVA-01" is not heard again in the course of the series.

For all of his trepidation about the Evas, Shinji is still a teenage boy who is easily impressed by spectacular feats, so it is no surprise that he briefly reassigns the hero's role to EVA-02 when he first encounters it on a United Nations transport vessel in Episode 8. The transport fleet is attacked by the Angel Gaghriel while bringing EVA-02 and its designated pilot Asuka to Japan. Asuka rushes into action, launching EVA-02 and leaping nimbly from ship to ship as the Angel chases her. Shinji's awe for the bright red Eva and Asuka's daring skills as a pilot is clear in the track "EVA-02." "EVA-02" is

stable and regular, with clear harmony based on F major and a bold melody heard primarily in the violins punctuated by triplet figures. The orchestration imitates her daring jumps and agile maneuvers when the trumpets scream out the melody in their highest register. In this case, it is not Shinji's fear of the Evas that keeps him from being able to continue viewing EVA-02 in the hero's role. "EVA-02" is only heard once in the series because Shinji cannot admire Asuka when her everyday behavior is so unpleasant.

"EVA-01" and "EVA-02" are replaced by more menacing musical cues that show that darker side of the Eva. "EVA-00" is heard when an Eva fails to activate correctly and goes out of control. It is used four times in the series, once for each of the failed start-up attempts of Jet Alone and Evas 00 and 03, and once for Shinji's first tenuous steps in EVA-01. Shinji is aware that the prototype Eva, EVA-00, has consistently failed its start-up experiments and injured its designated pilot Rei in the process. His fear of the physical and psychological damage that can be done if the Eva fails to activate correctly is reflected in the musical cue "EVA-00." The harmony is an ostinato pattern based on tritones and thirds with no clear tonal center. The note B starts the harmonic ostinato and is sounded continually in octaves in the high strings, making it an important pitch through repetition. The music does seem to lend itself to a tenuous interpretation in B minor.

(Illustration 6)



Illustration 6: Harmonic motion and repetitive use of the note B in "EVA-00."

The melodic phrases heard in the brass and electric guitar are just as angular and disconcerting as the bass line and complete Shinji's fearful picture of the consequences of the failed Eva activation. (Illustration 7)



Illustration 7: Melodic phrases played by the brass or electric guitar in "EVA-00."

Similarly, the tracks "The Beast" (a faster version of "EVA-00"), "The Beast II," and "Normal Blood" (a faster version of "The Beast II") accompany situations in which EVA-01 goes berserk after the activation sequence has been successfully completed. These tracks are also harmonically ambiguous and feature highly syncopated melodies in the

electric guitar and brass. "The Beast" and "Normal Blood" use a strong pedal on E in the bass line that makes brief visits to an F chord with a B added as the lowest pitch. These pieces are in E minor, but the third is rarely used and any sense of a strong major or minor tonal center is clouded. All three tracks are well suited to communicating Shinji's distress in situations where EVA-01 has gone berserk and is out of his control.

## Eva Pilots

Shinji's relationship with his fellow pilots can be complex, but their music reveals his feelings for them that Shinji does not display openly. Asuka is arrogant and quick to anger, but also secretly desperate for approval. Her feisty attitude and disdain for the Japanese way of life do not endear her to Shinji when she first arrives in Japan, but he slowly warms to her as he gets used to her non-Japanese approach to the world. Asuka initially considers Shinji to be her primary competition, but finds herself attracted to him as a romantic interest. She never reveals her feelings, but delights in taunting Shinji with sexual comments as an excuse to show off her body. In Episode 10, the pilots go to the NERV pool and Asuka helps Shinji with his thermodynamics homework in a bikini that affords him an excellent view of her breasts.

Asuka: Thermal expansion? That's kid's stuff! To put it simply, things expand when they get hot and shrink when they get cold.

Shinji: Well, it sounds easy enough in theory.

Asuka: (cupping her hands over her breasts) If I were to warm up my breasts, do you think they'd grow bigger?

Shinji: How would I know such things?!?

Asuka: You're such a boring little boy.

Shinji was raised by his mentor in an isolated suburb of Tokyo-3, where it can be safely assumed that he had little interaction with foreigners. The track "Asuka Strikes!" is primarily associated with Asuka, but is also heard when Shinji meets Pen Pen the warm-water penguin in Episode 2 and when he literally runs into a new classmate in the alternate reality scene in Episode 26. "Asuka Strikes!" is music showing Shinji's general impression of foreigners. It is mocking and comical, with a distinctly country-western

style. The guitar and violin alternate solo passages, with seemingly improvised sections in the guitar and a folk-song style melody in the violin using glissandi and frequent grace-note ornaments. (Illustration 8) It is a stereotype in every way possible, just as Asuka is a stereotype of the foreigners who visit Japan to this day.



Illustration 8: Main theme of "Asuka Strikes!"

"Asuka Strikes!" is heard frequently in Episodes 8 and 9 as Shinji gets to know Asuka and tries to accommodate her constant criticisms of his behavior and Japanese life. A good example is at the beginning of Episode 9. "Asuka Strikes!" is heard in the background as Shinji cringes when Asuka greets him loudly in English and German and proclaims that he should be happy that "the gorgeous Asuka is greeting you. You should appreciate your good fortune!" Asuka asks about Rei, and is so caught up in her questioning that she stops walking. The camera zooms back to show that they are standing on the landing of a pedestrian overpass and that Asuka is blocking the stairs, barring her fellow students from getting to school. Shinji finds her to be inconsiderate on both a personal and social level, so the mocking music fits well with his unspoken feelings about her choices. In Episode 9 Shinji sees some of Asuka's weaknesses and

comes to realize that she is no better adapted to the world than him. In the middle of the episode Asuka and Shinji unsuccessfully try to perform a synchronized routine in preparation for a coordinated battle against the Angel Israfel. Asuka blames Shinji for their troubles. Misato asks Rei to take Asuka's place and she and Shinji perform the routine flawlessly, bringing into question Asuka's ability to participate in the battle. Asuka's pride is hurt and she storms out of the apartment to the near-by convenience store, where Shinji finds her moments later pouting in front of the refrigerated drinks. This is Shinji's first realization that Asuka also has limitations and problems that she has to overcome. Later in the episode, Shinji is surprised when Asuka mistakenly sleepwalks into his bed after using the bathroom in the middle of the night. He decides to try to kiss her, but stops when he hears her whisper "Mama" and sees tears filling her eyes. As he turns away and pulls the blanket over his head he mutters: "You're just a child yourself." Because of these insights, "Asuka Strikes!" is not heard in connection with Asuka again. Shinji is still annoyed by her behavior, but knowing that she has problems of her own allows Shinji to empathize with her, making the mocking tone of "Asuka Strikes!" unnecessary.

Rei is an enigmatic presence for Shinji. He feels a sibling-like bond to her and is jealous of her close relationship with his father. Rei has very low self esteem because she views herself as Gendo's tool as the catalyst for Human Instrumentality and feels unworthy of meaningful relationships. Though she seems cold and unfeeling to those around her, Rei thinks deeply about the meaning of her existence and the nature of her life. The fact that she can be replaced easily by a clone does nothing to enhance her

feelings of self worth. Shinji gives her the emotional tools to build her self esteem and feel that she can make meaningful connections to other people, something Shinji finds very difficult to do himself.

Like Misato, Rei's music develops over time as Shinji recognizes her emotional changes.<sup>57</sup> "Rei I" is heard four times at points when Rei questions the purpose of her life. It appears in Episode 1 as Rei is wheeled into EVA-01's hangar on a stretcher after Shinji refuses to act as a pilot. Though severely injured from a failed activation experiment in EVA-00, Gendo orders her to fight the Angel Sachiel in EVA-01. "Rei I" underscores Shinji's turmoil as he sees Rei for the first time and he feels a connection to Rei because he perceives both of them to be tools at his father's command. "Rei I" is set for solo piano in A minor. (Illustration 9) The first four measures feature block chords in the high range of the piano that sound fragile and delicate, much like Rei's physically slender body. The piece is filled with deceptive musical techniques that make it as mysterious as Rei herself. Infrequent cadences, tritone relationships, and accented passing tones influence long progressions of inverted chords that never find a satisfactory resolution. Examples of planing are abundant, also serving to deny any sense of harmonic arrival. Without a strong tonal center "Rei I" sounds hollow and cold, much like her initial personality. The performance on the soundtrack also contributes to this sense because the pianist leaves

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<sup>57</sup> For clarity, there are three clones of Rei and three musical cues that use Rei's name in the title. Shinji did not know the first Rei, who was killed by Ritsuko's mother long before Shinji came to NERV, so the first Rei has no music associated with her. The second Rei is represented by the tracks "Rei I" and "Rei II." It seems safe to assume that the third Rei is represented by the track "Rei III," though this track was never used in the series. "Rei III" is the most intense of the Rei-titled tracks, with a full orchestra aggressively pounding out the primary chord progression from "Rei I" at full volume. Though we only meet her briefly in Episodes 23 and 24, the third Rei is the most hostile to the circumstances of her life and "Rei III" does seem to capture her angry outlook.

the sustain pedal down during the series of chords, causing them to overlap and ring emptily against each other.



Illustration 9: Main theme of "Rei I."

Another notable example of the use of "Rei I" is in Episode 11. Shinji, Asuka, and Rei have to find their way to the Eva hangars through the service shafts because of a power outage cause by the Angel Matariel. Asuka appoints herself as the leader, but continually gets lost, and Rei gets tired of the situation and walks ahead of the group at a split in the corridors. Asuka begins to mock her.

Asuka: I've heard that you're the Commander's [Gendo's] favorite, aren't you?

You're a favored smart ass who's treated differently than us.

Shinji: Stop it! This isn't the time for that!

Asuka: You've always got the smug look on your face. Do you think you can act superior just because you're treated better?

Rei: I don't act superior and I'm not treated better either. I know that quite well.

Rei recognizes that she is being used by Gendo and the underscore of "Rei I" in this scene shows how Shinji empathizes with her feelings of loneliness. "Rei I" also exists in two variations in the tracks "Hostility Restrained" and "Crime of Innocence." Both tracks are for solo piano and are performed slower than "Rei I," with increased syncopation and some reorganization of the melodic content. They are heard when Rei thinks about herself, such as in Episode 23 when the Angel Armisiel tries to communicate with Rei and brings her to tears when she admits the depths of her loneliness.

Rei's emotional progression is heard in the tracks "Rei II" and "Thanatos," both of which are related to the idea of Rei's death. "Rei II" is only used once in Episode 6 after the defeat of the Angel Ramiel. Rei has used a powerful shield to deflect Ramiel's proton blasts while Shinji destroyed it with an experimental positron canon, but much of EVA-00 melts in the process. The access door to the entry plug is melted shut and Shinji rushes over to try to free Rei. Before the mission, Rei had stated her willingness to die in the process of defending Shinji and had parted from him with the word *sayonara*, which carries the meaning of a permanent, rather than short-term, goodbye. Rei's use of this word reveals her belief that there is a high likelihood she will die in the battle, which clearly distresses Shinji. When he pulls open the entry plug hatch after the battle, the disoriented Rei envisions Gendo smiling down on her only to realize that it is Shinji instead. At that moment she realizes that Shinji cares about her as an individual and that she has no idea how to react.

Shinji: Ayanami! Are you all right? Ayanami! Don't say that you have nothing else. Don't say goodbye [*sayonara*] when you leave on a mission. It's too sad.

Rei: Why are you crying? I'm sorry. I don't know what to do or feel at a time like this.

Shinji: Why don't you try smiling?

This important scene is underscored by the highly romantic "Rei II." Some chord progressions and planing in the accompaniment instruments make a clear musical connection to "Rei I" and the overall harmonic structure is shared with "Thanatos," but the flowing main theme in the violins and cellos is entirely new. (Illustration 10) It is predominantly in the minor mode, but this bittersweet track is more tender than sad. The blossoming of affection between Shinji and Rei gives her new confidence in her self worth and provides both pilots a sense of companionship.



Illustration 10: Main theme of "Rei II."

"Thanatos" has much in common musically with "Rei II," but is distinctly more melancholy. While "Rei II" underscored a scene filled with hope, "Thanatos" accompanies scenes where Shinji believes Rei has died. It is fittingly named after the Greek daemon of death. In Episode 19, "Thanatos" is heard as Shinji watches Rei blow herself up with an N<sup>2</sup> mine in a desperate attempt to stop the Angel Zeruel. She survives, but dies in Episode 23 by self destructing EVA-00 in order to protect Shinji from the Angel Armisael's psychological attacks. "Thanatos" underscores the scene as Shinji listens to Rei on the intercom system as she arms EVA-00's self-destruct system and is incinerated in a giant ball of fire. The cello voices the longing melody showing Shinji's grief at the loss of his friend and his understanding that Rei had grown to care for him more than she cared for herself.

## Angels & Kaworu

The primary goal of the Angels is to destroy humanity by initiating Third Impact. To do this they must reach their creator Adam, who is being held captive in NERV headquarters. The Angels grow in intelligence and systematically test every battle scenario in which mankind might show weakness. Every Angel is unique in appearance and abilities, but they are tied together by a common musical thread in Shinji's mind. The music for the Angels is ominous and scary, generally set for full orchestra without woodwinds. It features the brass and shrieking solos in the electric guitar. Shinji clearly fears the Angels immensely and the intensity of his terror does not lessen over the fourteen Angels he has to fight directly. Though the Angels are frightening, the music also becomes monotonous because the same tracks are used every time an Angel appears. "Angel Attack" and its variations "Angel Attack II" and "Angel Attack III" are heard a combined total of fifteen times, at least once for every Angel. "Spending Time in Preparation" is heard twelve times during the preparations for yet another epic battle. Shinji may be scared, but he quickly becomes used to patterns of battle preparation and facing off against the Angels to the point that the music repeats from battle to battle. The arrival of the Angel Arael in Episode 22 marks a turning point in this musical repetition. Arael floats in orbit and Rei is instructed to fire at it using a long-range rifle, but Asuka is jealous that she was not selected to be the shooter and launches in EVA-02 without permission. Until now, Arael has made no attacks, but when Asuka reaches the surface Arael launches a psychological attack that destroys Asuka's mind. This is the first mental attack made by the Angels, the previous battles having been a matter of physical or

intellectual strength. Arael slowly and systematically scans Asuka's mind in an attempt to learn as much as it can about mankind's mental weaknesses. The scanning beam is a pure white light that cuts through the cloudy sky like a God-sent ray from heaven, and the entire event is brilliantly underscored by the "Hallelujah" chorus from Handel's *Messiah* in a moment of exquisite musical irony. It is one of the few musical moments that has been noticed by anime scholars.

A luminous wing-like entity that overwhelms Asuka with some sort of mind ray, gorgeously choreographed to the music of Handel's *Messiah*. One of the many deliberate ironies of this episode is Anno's insistence that beautiful images can be pure poison, while the ugliest of images can be a healing salve. Although Tokyo-3 is shadowed in pouring rain, the angel shines like a blistering sun, flooding the screen with light; similarly, the glorious sound track signals terrible violence, in the mold of Kubrick's *A Clockwork Orange*.<sup>58</sup>

Arael has violated the sanctity of the human mind and stolen Asuka's deepest secrets. This new reality in the Angels' capabilities is so profoundly horrifying to Shinji that Sagisu has turned to his favorite device of irony to make this game-changing moment in mankind's battle against the Angels even more intense.

The final Angel Tabris appears in Episode 24 in the form of Nagisa Kaworu. Kaworu is the ultimate weapon against mankind and is designed to deliver a mental attack targeting loneliness, which the Angels have determined is the primary driving force behind human behavior. Kaworu meets all of Shinji's emotional needs by listening carefully to his troubles and empathizing with his concerns, all with the intent of

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<sup>58</sup> Dennis Redmond, *The World Is Watching*, 165.

destroying Shinji by betraying his trust. The anguish Shinji feels when Kaworu's real identity as an Angel is revealed throws him into despair. They face off in the basement of NERV headquarters as Kaworu stands inches from initiating Third Impact, but chooses to sacrifice himself so that mankind can survive. Kaworu is such a perfect copy of a human that he feels a strong compassion for mankind and cannot destroy it. He begs Shinji to kill him and Shinji crushes him with EVA-01's hand.

Kaworu gains much of his power over Shinji by being a diegetic music maker. He and Shinji have a strong connection because they are the only two characters that make music or interact with it directly. Kaworu is able to influence Shinji's diegetic musical realm as well as his mental and emotional states, making him Shinji's only equal in the series. At the beginning of Episode 24 Shinji is at the height of loneliness because many of his friends at NERV have suffered tragic blows in their personal lives and his school friends have evacuated the city. Shinji desperately calls out to his mother for help, but the answer comes in Kaworu humming the *Ode to Joy* melody from fourth movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. When Shinji gets close, Kaworu says: "Singing is good. Singing brings joy and revitalizes the soul. I think that Song is the greatest achievement of the Lilim culture. Don't you agree, Ikari Shinji?"<sup>59</sup> By asking his musical opinion, Kaworu has engaged Shinji as a fellow music maker and created a solid foundation for earning Shinji's trust. The choice of melody is certainly conspicuous. In another of Sagisu's brilliant ironic musical gestures, the Angel that has the best chance of destroying

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<sup>59</sup> Kaworu's phrase "that Song" refers to the *Ode to Joy* and the "Lilim culture" refers to mankind, who are considered to be the descendants of the Angel Lilith while Angels are the descendants of the Angel Adam.

mankind is represented by one of humanity's greatest expressions of brotherhood and hope. He has come to destroy man and ends up being its savior instead. The choice of the *Ode to Joy* was also meant to influence the perceptions of Japanese viewers. Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is a communal experience in Japan during the New Year, where both audience and chorus sing along to the last movement as if in a giant karaoke. Audiences have learned the German text phonetically so that they can participate in singing the *Daiku* (or Big 9) at one of the many performances given as part of the New Year tradition. As one musician explains:

For Japanese, listening to the Beethoven's Ninth at the end of the year is a semi-religious experience. People feel that they have not completed the year spiritually until they hear it.<sup>60</sup>

Both the viewers and Shinji are tricked into believing Kaworu is human based on his knowledge of this meaningful piece of music.

Kaworu does such an effective job earning Shinji's trust that the *Ode to Joy* is the only music heard in Episode 24. Not long after they meet we discover that the *Ode to Joy* has taken the place of Shinji's normal pop music on his cassette player, a major shift in Shinji's listening habits that signal a substantial change in his way of thinking and his developing faith in Kaworu. The *Ode to Joy* underscores the dramatic battle as EVA-01 chases Kaworu through the large service corridors NERV headquarters, interspersed with scenes of Misato and other NERV staff frantically trying to take control of the situation.

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<sup>60</sup> Steven R. Weisman, "Japan Sings Along With Beethoven." *New York Times*, accessed December 16, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/1990/12/29/arts/japan-sings-along-with-beethoven.html>

Shinji finally catches up to Kaworu and grabs him in the Eva's hand, but cannot will himself to crush his friend. The *Ode to Joy* continues as Shinji and Kaworu discuss the future of mankind and Kaworu insists that Shinji destroy him to save humanity. What follows is still a breathtaking moment in anime history. The next one minute and three seconds contain only a still shot of EVA-01 clutching Kaworu underscored by some of the more tender sections from the fourth movement of the Ninth Symphony. As Shinji comes to accept the course of action he must take, the audience is forced to wait with him and reflect on his difficult position through the musical medium of the *Ode to Joy*. We know Shinji has accepted the inevitable when the music halts suddenly and Kaworu's severed head falls across the screen. Kaworu has accomplished his mission to destroy Shinji's psyche, but not the larger goal of annihilating mankind.

## Shinji

As the primary character of *EVA*, Shinji reveals his emotional states through a variety of types of musical cues. He interacts directly with music by playing the cello and listening to music on a cassette player, diegetic background music is controlled by his moods, and he has non-diegetic underscoring associated with him as well. In Episode 15 Shinji visits his mother's grave with Gendo. They have little to talk about but do manage to exchange a few words, and Shinji returns to Misato's apartment feeling reflective. The apartment is empty, so Shinji gets out his cello and begins to play the track "Childhood Memories, Shut Away," which is the first twenty-three seconds of Bach's Cello Suite No. 1 with a superficial cadence tacked onto the end. There are many ways Shinji's skills playing an instrument can be interpreted. Shinji's feelings of nostalgia are captured in his selection of music by a pre-Second Impact composer. It reminds him of the past: his deceased mother, the relaxing setting of the house where he was raised, and the mentor who taught him to play the cello at age 5. Studying Western music and Western instruments is compulsory at the middle-school level in Japan, so Shinji's knowledge of this music as an eighth grader identifies him as an average Japanese boy with whom the viewing audience can relate. Unlike Asuka, a foreigner brought up outside Japan; Rei, a clone born in a laboratory; Toji, a delinquent; and Kensuke, a military otaku; Shinji is the only child who seems to have had a regular education in the Japanese school system and that any viewer might consider a "normal" middle-school student. In Japan Western music is viewed as

having high moral content and character-building qualities,<sup>61</sup> and Shinji epitomizes this in his controlled rendition of the cello suite. The cello can also be seen as a communication device. As he plays, Shinji closes his eyes and sways in his chair as he enjoys the act of music making. He has difficulty sharing his feelings with others, but the cello allows for a safe method of communication. He hinders his musical communication by playing in the empty apartment where there is no one to listen, but has installed himself in the living room where Misato or Asuka might hear him when they return. Asuka does, in fact, come back while he is playing and is so impressed by what she hears that she lowers her guard and offers Shinji a genuine compliment. As the only human music maker in *EVA*, Shinji embodies what many consider to be one of mankind's highest achievements and is the sole protector of this valued cultural and artistic legacy. His role as a kind of musical messiah foreshadows his role in controlling Human Instrumentality and shaping the future of mankind.

Shinji's other form of interactive diegetic music is the pop music he listens to on his cassette player and headphones. He uses an imaginary media player called an SDAT (Super Digital Audio Technology), which seems to be a hybrid between a cassette-playing Walkman and the digital display of a DAT player. This made-up device might be intended to look futuristic, but is more likely a way to avoid using products from companies that are not sponsors of the series. Shinji listens with ear-bud headphones, which were still a new style of headphone when *EVA* was made, but it is not clear why or

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<sup>61</sup> Ury Eppstein, *The Beginnings of Western Music in Meiji Era Japan*, Studies in the History and Interpretation of Music 44 (Lewiston, NY: E. Mellen Press, 1994), 63-68.

how Shinji acquired this technologically advanced equipment for private use.<sup>62</sup> The SDAT player serves as an effective measuring tool for Shinji's mental health because it is his primary mode of escapism when feels distressed. There are many instances when Shinji's pop music is audible through his headphones, sometimes reinforcing situations where he feels normal and other times acting as an ironic contrast to his depression. Shinji likes to listen to music while doing his homework and before going to sleep at night, two times when his life seems pleasantly average, but the absence of music from his headphones is a clue that he has retreated from the world. The connection between escapism and the SDAT machine is made explicit in Episode 26 when Shinji is being questioned about his escapist tendencies by Rei.

Shinji: I mustn't run away!

Rei: Why mustn't you run away?

Shinji: Because escaping from the reality can be painful too.

*(Image of the SDAT player playing a tape)*

Rei: Even though you're running from something more painful?

Shinji: I can't bear it.

*(Image of Shinji's ear-bud headphones)*

Episode 9 contains a scene mentioned previously, but is worth reexamining from the viewpoint of Shinji's headphones. Shinji is laying on his futon listening to music while trying to go to sleep, but is disturbed by Asuka when she gets up to use the

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<sup>62</sup> We learn in the recent *Rebuild of Evangelion* movie *Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance*, that the SDAT player was discarded by Shinji's father after Yui's death and Shinji has been using it since. This makes it at least twelve years old and not technologically advanced at all, deepening the confusion about how to interpret its design.

bathroom and mistakenly sleepwalks into his bed. We can hear his music until the door opens, when he quickly switches it off, closes his eyes, and pretends to be asleep. Asuka startles him by falling onto the futon and he accidentally hits the "rewind" button, causing the tape to play backwards at an accelerated rate. The distorted sound of the music mimics Shinji's conflicted emotions as Asuka sprawls next to him with her pajama shirt disheveled and her breasts partially exposed. He decides to try to kiss her, but holds back when he hears her whisper "Mama" and sees tears filling her eyes. The tape reaches its end and snaps sharply to a stop, halting the deranged music and jolting Shinji back to reality.

In Episode 4, Shinji runs away from NERV after being traumatized by his battle with the Angel Shamshel. He gets on a commuter train and sits next to the door with his headphones on and head bowed. The upbeat pop music is audible through the headphones and is in direct contrast to his depression as he sits for hour after hour without changing position. The passage of time is clear as other passengers board and exit the train and we see the digital display of the SDAT player as Shinji flips over the tape when it runs out at seventy-six minutes, indicating that he has been there for some time. A single song plays uncut for the Shinji's entire journey and is not influenced by the passage of time, showing how Shinji has completely divorced himself from the world. Both time and music have stopped for him and he is lost in his thoughts. He does not notice any of the passengers, even the middle-school girls standing directly in front of him whose shirts pull up to expose their midriff when they reach up to hold the handrail. Sitting at the station at the end of the line, we hear the driver's announcement that everyone must disembark. Shinji's

music is no longer audible, but we can still hear the click of the tape as he reverses it, a sign of his feelings of indecision. Suddenly he sits up and seems to break the fourth wall as he looks directly at the camera and says: "I've got to go back." There is immediately a close up of the SDAT player and Shinji flips the tape to the other side. He is going back to NERV, but not quite yet.

Like the SDAT player, Shinji's moods can also be determined through diegetic background music because the presence of these sounds comes at times when Shinji feels normal and accepted. In Episode 4, Shinji has decided to leave NERV and is escorted to the train station by two members of NERV security. He asks about Misato and is told that she is too busy to see him off. Shinji is disappointed, but is surprised to find Kensuke and Toji waiting to say goodbye. Toji had blamed Shinji for his sister being injured during the battle with the Angel Sachiel and had beaten up Shinji behind the school, but now regrets his actions and insists that Shinji punch him in the face to make everything even. Shinji punches Toji hard and the three boys smile at each other, satisfied with the result. At that moment, the pop music coming from the station loudspeakers is suddenly audible as Shinji experiences the acceptance of his classmates. NERV security roughly leads him to the platform, where it is again silent as Shinji hangs his head in regret for this lost possibility of friendship. As the train pulls out, Misato rushes into the station in her car, only a few seconds too late to see Shinji go. She is disappointed, but as the last train car exits the station she sees that Shinji is still standing on the platform. As their eyes meet the station music returns and remains through a forty-nine second still shot of Misato and Shinji looking at each other across the tracks. The station music plays as long as their

gaze holds and is accompanied by the sounds of cicadas, street traffic, and train safety announcements. When the first train safety announcement plays, the volume of the station music increases noticeably so that it will not be drowned out by the other sounds. This everyday music is an important tool in demonstrating that Shinji feels he has found acceptance in Tokyo-3 and his recognition that there are people who care about him.

Shinji is also represented by non-diegetic music in the tracks "Hedgehog's Dilemma" and "Shinji." "Hedgehog's Dilemma" occurs frequently in *EVA*, especially in cases where Shinji is thinking about his father and in Episode 3 when Misato and Ritsuko discuss Shinji's problem making friends at his new school. Shinji is curious about Gendo and asks many of the NERV personnel about his father's personality, but none of his questioning is able to ease his pent-up anger. The "hedgehog's dilemma" (a mistranslation of "porcupine") originated as an analogy about human intimacy in the works of Schopenhauer. Because of their sharp quills, porcupines are unable to get close to each other without being stabbed, just as Schopenhauer felt that human beings could not form close interpersonal bonds without mutual harm, making people too cautious to form strong relationships. This certainly seems to be the case for Shinji, who chooses to live in a self-imposed isolation and hesitates to form close bonds with anyone. "Hedgehog's Dilemma" features the solo piano prominently in a melancholy tune accompanied by strings and acoustic guitar. The piano represents an important element of humanity. It is associated with loneliness and emotional isolation, being heard most prominently in music for Shinji and Rei, but also in Misato's cheerful underscores as well. It represents more than the self-imposed psychological isolation of a character like Shinji, but the

borders of the human consciousness that allow for discrete personalities, which Gendo is trying to erase through Human Instrumentality. As an instrument that can be played just as successfully alone as it can be a complement to other instruments, the piano embodies everything about humanity that Shinji hates but ultimately chooses to protect when he rejects Human Instrumentality.

Solo piano also features prominently in the track "Shinji," which we hear in Episode 1 as Gendo, Misato, and Ritsuko try to get Shinji to pilot EVA-01 against the Angel Sachiel. "Shinji" is only heard once in *EVA* and is one of few tracks where the orchestration is specifically timed to coordinate directly with the action. The piano sounds a solemn melody over a militant triplet pattern in the strings (Illustration 11) as Shinji listens to Ritsuko and Misato argue about whether he should be allowed to pilot and Gendo watches their discussion from the window of a control room.



Illustration 11: Main theme of "Shinji."

The piano captures Shinji's internal turmoil as he grapples with seeing his father after such a long time and the military-sounding trumpet takes over the solo line as Shinji realizes he may have to act as a soldier in the battle. He questions his father as to why he has to pilot the Eva and Gendo answers: "Because no one else can." Shinji's anger boils over as he realizes that he was only called to Tokyo-3 because Gendo needed a pilot compatible with the Eva, and the violins take the melody from the trumpet an octave higher to match the increase in emotional intensity. Shinji insists he cannot pilot and Gendo replies: "If you're going to pilot it, do it now and quickly. If not, then leave!" Humiliated and hurt, Shinji rages silently as Misato, Ritsuko, and the hangar crew watch. A blast from the Angel shakes NERV headquarters and the music fades out as Shinji's problems are forgotten in the wake of this very real threat. Misato and Ritsuko walk away as Gendo calls for Rei to be brought to the hangar and the only sound is the empty hum of electronics. Shinji stands in front of EVA-01, isolated and forlorn as he accepts that Gendo does not need him to achieve his goals. The intensely dramatic "Shinji" revealed the depths of Shinji's emotional confusion, but also that he had taken some pleasure in being the center of attention and his feelings of martyrdom. After reaching such a high point of musical and emotional power in his own mind, the reality of the electric hum of the hangar and his easy replacement by Rei is a crushing blow. It is to Shinji's credit that he is able to recover himself and pilot EVA-01, and it is this tiny spark of determination to continue living that will eventually lead Shinji to reject Human Instrumentality and protect mankind.

## CONCLUSION

For all of the trials Shinji experiences throughout *EVA*, the series does ultimately have what might be called a happy ending. Episodes 25 and 26 suggest that everything has been a dream and that the Angels are expressions of Shinji's adolescent fears given monstrous form in an extended fantasy. As anime scholar William Rott writes:

By suppressing the Angel attacks almost entirely, the final episodes strongly imply that those attacks may have existed only as manifestations of what was going on inside Shinji.<sup>63</sup>

Shinji rejects Human Instrumentality after deciding that his life has value and he is determined to give living another try. He forgives those who he feels have wronged him, most importantly Gendo, and all of the *EVA* characters cheer and congratulate him on his choice. This final scene is underscored by the tracks "Heady Feeling of Freedom" played by the strings and "Good, or Don't Be" for solo piano and acoustic guitar, making use of Sagisu's three instrumental "sacred treasures." Both are variations of the opening theme song "A Cruel Angel's Thesis," which has been converted from a techno-pop song into music that is lyrical and reflective. The solo piano has the last word, playing into dedication cels added by Anno and carrying the message of its new role beyond the world of *EVA*. The piano is no longer a long-suffering voice of loneliness. Instead, it represents mankind's freedom from Human Instrumentality and a respect for the individual. Shinji is content to have accepted a world where he has to acknowledge the physical and mental

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<sup>63</sup> William D. Rott, "Stillness and Style in 'Neon Genesis Evangelion'," *Animation Journal* 8 (2000): 40.

pain that comes with being human. "Good, or Don't Be" ends with a weak cadence in the tonic key that is prepared without leading-tone or dominant-tonic motion. In the second to last measure, C minor leads to an F minor7 chord and then to what could be B-flat major or a very weak G minor before resolving by parallel motion to the C minor tonic. (Illustration 12) The course of Shinji's future and that of the reborn mankind are open ended and filled with possibilities for development.

The image shows a musical score for the last four measures of the song "A Cruel Angel's Thesis." It is written for Voice and Piano. The key signature is C minor (three flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The voice part consists of a melodic line that ends with a weak cadence. The piano accompaniment features a complex rhythmic pattern with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a harmonic structure that includes chords like F minor7 and B-flat major, resolving to the C minor tonic.

Illustration 12: Last four measures of "A Cruel Angel's Thesis."

The many possibilities in life is the basis of Anno's choice to use twenty-six different versions of the American popular standard "Fly Me to the Moon" for the ending credits. The variations span instrumental arrangements from full orchestra to techno to solo piano, and could include a vocal soloist or group of up to three singers. Some of the variations are only subtly different, possibly changing only the singer and keeping the same accompaniment, while others are drastically different. Even more variations by Sagisu and other artists that are not used in the series appear on the *EVA* discography. Using a popular song in a medium like anime shares many of the pitfalls of using

classical music because the audience has preconceived ideas about the work and its meaning. "Fly Me to the Moon" has been popular since it was composed in 1954 and has been recorded by many of the most famous American musical legends in the 1960s. The song carries strong romantic sentiments that can be used to forge a strong connection to the audience and make them invested in the activities of the characters.

The songs are seen to possess a sense of confidence in their own romantic sentiments. As such, the music acts as a type of counsel for the characters whose romantic adventures it soundtracks: the happy resolution of these intrigues relies on the leads gaining the sense of self-belief that has been discernible all along in the songs that have accompanied their faltering progress.<sup>64</sup>

Like the Bach Cello Suite in Episode 15, "Fly Me to the Moon" looks back to the simpler times before Second Impact. The lyrics of the song depict one member of a couple asking their partner for physical, sensual, and emotional pleasures, a heightened version of what Shinji and other *EVA* characters seek with the belief that human connections will bring them happiness and acceptance. This musical association creates a strong bond between the characters and the audience, who are also presumably searching for similar human relationships in their own lives.

With the creation of the first two *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies in 2007, Anno and Sagisu have been afforded the opportunity to revisit their past work and re-imagine the EVA world (with a substantially increased budget) after a hiatus of ten years from the project. Even though they have only completed two of the four intended movies, already

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<sup>64</sup> Ian Garwood, "Must You Remember This? Orchestrating the 'Standard' Pop Song in *Sleepless in Seattle*," in *Movie Music, The Film Reader*, edited by Kay Dickinson (New York: Routledge, 2003), 110.

huge changes have taken place in the *EVA* world in terms of plot, character development, and music. The *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies contain both newly composed underscores and tracks from the original series that have been gloriously reorchestrated. Shinji's headphones and his relationship to diegetic background music remain, but new insights into his SDAT player are made. Just as when he directed the original series, Anno clearly has grandiose plans for the *Rebuild of Evangelion* movies. Each movie has both an English and Japanese title and Anno has named them after the traditional formal structure of dramatic development used in *gagaku* music and *noh* plays called *jo-ha-kyu*, which roughly means beginning-middle-end or, more specifically, introduction-development-acceleration.<sup>65</sup> Following this aesthetic framework, the Japanese title of the first movie is *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Jo*, and the second movie is *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Ha*. Anno makes a break with tradition in the third movie, naming it *Neon Genesis Evangelion: Q* using the Roman letter to create a heterographic relationship to the Japanese *Kyu*. The Japanese trailer for the third film displays the English word "Quickening" after the Japanese title and the current interpretation is that it is related to the stage of pregnancy where a woman first perceives the movements of her fetus. In this moment (especially in pre-ultrasound eras), the mother recognizes the fetus as an individual being and the Lacanian process of internal and external personality formation begins. It is a daring gesture to toy with the interpretation of such a fundamental artistic

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<sup>65</sup> William P. Malm, *Japanese Music and Musical Instruments* (Rutland: Charles C. Tuttle Company, 1959), 110-112, 119.

tradition, but Anno has indeed done just that. Will Sagisu's music also achieve new heights when the third film is released this fall? Only time will tell.

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