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**PMExcellent****Pacific Media Expo**by [Kat Avila](#)

I got Masaki Asai's (aka APSY) autograph. He was the modeling guest-of-honor at **Pacific Media Expo (PMX)**, September 3-5, 2005, at Long Beach Convention Center, California. I don't usually stand in line for an autograph, but the freelance modeler's panel, the slide show of his work, and his deep passion for sculpting got me all enthused about otaku models and resin kits. A fire alarm during the panel didn't stop a small group of us from clustering around Asai and continuing the panel outside the convention center. Asai said he has been having fun talking to people of other countries. **Geneon** is releasing the **Hellsing Ultimate OVA Series**; Asai told me his figurines will be attached to the odd-numbered DVDs.

Other **PMX** guests of honor were **Burst Angel** director Koichi Ohata, voice actress Naoko Matsui, **Chrono Crusade** creator Daisuke Moriyama, **Fullmetal Alchemist** director Seiji Mizushima, and Filipino American comedian Rex Navarrete. There were a number of musical guests as well; if any of them had been Visual Kei I would have made time in my schedule.

**Burst Angel** director Koichi Ohata is currently working on an anime based on a Korean manhwa. The project is using staff from both Korea and Japan, with the Korean government providing funding through grants. Normally, money needs to be raised first to fund character designs and a pilot film. But

because the Korean government is jumpstarting the project, they are able to work on storyboards right now.

At the end of Ohata's panel, he talked about how the subject of otaku is a touchy one in Japan, that media coverage has been very negative, linking criminal behavior to the consumption of anime and manga. Ohata said that is akin to saying murder mystery writers encourage ax murderers.

**PMX** was freelance voice actress Naoko Matsui's second visit to the U.S. This past April she spent five days in New York and saw several Broadway musicals. She was happy to be back in the U.S. so soon. Matsui has done a variety of voiceover work, not just anime characters; for example, she was the voice of Meg Ryan in *French Kiss* and of Demi Moore in *Ghost*. She is the co-leader of a theatrical troupe. When she was younger, she wanted to be a musical actress. Having the responsibilities for the troupe is like having part of her dream come true, she said.

Matsui shared voice acting tips. First, you must learn to turn the pages of your script without making noise. Second, do not make any noise stepping toward or away from the microphone; that includes noise from a chair squeaking, a hungry stomach grumbling, and coughing. Third, have good posture for a good voice. Lastly, match your voice to the character's lip flaps; this improves with experience.

Daisuke Moriyama missed **Comic-Con International** this year because of his schedule, but that didn't stop him from flying in the day after to enjoy a barbecue with friends. **PMX** is his fourth visit to the U.S. He was enjoying seeing his American **Crno Crusade** characters being cosplayed by actual Americans, and they were all sitting in the front rows of the panel audience. It gives him a lot of energy to see American fans demonstrating such a passion for his work.

With Seiji Mizushima, when I asked why he was chosen to direct **Fullmetal Alchemist**, he replied, "Because I'm easy to get along with" before he answered seriously it was

because he had worked with the president of studio **BONES** before. His coming to conventions like **PMX** helps him to understand the popularity of his work abroad. He was at **Otakon** in Baltimore, Maryland, just two weeks before. He noted that American fans are very happy and open in comparison to Japanese fans.

At the Exhibit Hall, I stopped by the *Winds-Turbo* booth where the T.M. Revolution historical museum was; T.M.R.'s 10th anniversary is next year. *Winds-Turbo* is T.M.R.'s and Takanori Nishikawa's unofficial international fan club. I remembered reps Yoshiko Nishiyama and Kat Parker from **Anime Expo**. We talked about T.M. Revolution's latest releases, i.e., the **Vertical Infinity** album and *Vestige* single. I also chatted with Albert Almuete of **Aswembar Productions** and with Yamila Abraham and Laila Reimoz of **Yaoi Press**.

The Rex Navarrete show was a nice change of pace: "For those of you who aren't Filipino, you're honorary Filipinos for the evening. Enjoy your tans while you have 'em." The comedian lives in Hawaii right now, but he was born in the Philippines and grew up in South City in Northern California.

I caught the tail end of the Cosplay Festival and stood hugging the wall as the award winners lined up beside me to accept their prizes for craftsmanship and presentation. It was a beautiful parade of feather headdresses, cat ears, monster fur, angel wings, and sparkling boots, like some weird club scene.

**Pacific Media Expo** was a lot of fun for a small convention. It tries to offer a bit more diversity in entertainment than its big brother **Anime Expo** and embraces more Pacific Rim cultures.



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