

Hayashibara Megumi

Internet Fan Club News
Volume 1, Issue 1

Welcome to the second newsletter of the Hayashibara Megumi Internet Fan Club! Wait a minute, I can hear you saying. Second issue? Doesn't the title say issue 1? Well, yes, it does, but being a computer scientist, I number from 0. Therefore, issue 1 is actually the second issue.

In this issue, we have two "guest articles". The first is an excerpt from Ms. Hayashibara's column in *Animedia* magazine translated by Hitoshi Doi, the second is a review of two of her CD's by Michael Studte (with some comments from Stephen Pearl). The two CD's are her first, called *Half and, Half and* her most recent, called *Shamrock*.

Last issue, we presented a short "biography" of Ms. Hayashibara. We now add some details that were not covered in that recent article.

Did you know that Ms. Hayashibara is a registered nurse? She attended nursing school after graduating high school and, while acting as a nurse, began attending *seiyuu* school.

From Hitoshi Doi: Hayashibara Megumi Jump Up! Station (volume 30), *Animedia* magazine,

September 1993: "At the end of June, I went abroad for the first time. I was invited as a guest to Anime America, which was held in Santa Clara, near San Francisco. It was an event where over 1000



American fans of Japanese animation gathered.

"On the first day, I arrived at San Francisco at 11. In the free time after a meeting, I went to a supermarket. What surprised me was that everything was so big. In Japan the largest size containers of milk is one liter. But in America they have huge 5 liter and 10 liter sizes. There was also vitamins in the shape of Sesame Street's cookie

monster. After I ate dinner I went to sleep.

“On the second say, I had interviews with three American anime magazines [your humble editor was lucky enough to be one of the interviewers]. When they asked what I wanted them to see of Japanese anime, I said ‘Ahiru no Quack’ (Quack the Duck). This had very low ratings in Japan, but was very popular in Holland. It was a story of apartheid using a black duck and a white goose¹. The reporters were very surprised at this. Later there was a cosplay [costume contest]. There were Dirty Pair, Lupin, Saeba Ryo, and Ranma. At night I had my mini-concert. I sang three songs, including an English version of a Nekomusume song.

“The third day was my last day and I had free time. First, I went shooting. Then I played in a park with dogs, went shopping at a fancy harbor town, and returned to the hotel at 11. It was three days like a dream.”

From Michael Studte (and Stephen Pearl): Half and, Half [Why Don't You Come Into My Heart], King Records, KICS-100, released 1991/03/21, ¥3000

This was the first Megumi CD that I ever bought, and I still listen to it

¹Ms. Hayashibara portrays Quack the Duck (a white duck) from the time of his hatching until the end of the series, when Quack is married to a black duck. Ms. Hayashibara also sang both the opening and ending credits.

quite regularly. The CD has 12 tracks and is, as Megumi described it, a “song” CD (ie. she doesn't sing the songs with a particular anime character's voice). It comes with a 24 page full-color booklet of shots of Megumi all around “her home” (cooking, eating, relaxing, etc.). The other insert is a fold-out lyric sheet for the songs.

As for the songs themselves, they are a nice mix of mostly mellow J-Pop (Japanese pop music). From the wonderfully cute DON'T SAY “WAKE UP BABY” to songs such as FRIENDS and KIMI NO ANSWER, we get the full range of Megumi's sweet'n'sour voice range. Megumi shows her ability to sing songs with a very feminine pitch all the way to her slightly masculine pitch. If you have never heard J-Pop before, a couple of the melodies might sound a bit strange, but enjoyment is still guaranteed.

At just over 52 minutes running time, this is a very good buy if you like Megumi's voice, but are not yet too familiar with the songs she has done. This CD is a little “old”, but it's still very good. Megumi's first music video LD also contains a number of the songs from this CD. The only thing I haven't been able to fully enjoy are the scribblings in the picture book in Megumi's own handwriting. My Japanese and kanji reading abilities are below par, especially when it comes to handwritten material.

From Michael Studte: Shamrock, King Record, KICS-345, released 1993/8/20, ¥3000

This CD is Megumi's first "Best of" CD. As well as coming with the usual lyric inlay (a 20-page booklet with colour shots of Megumi), this CD comes bundled with a 40-page (CD-sized) hardcover book of colour and b&w shots of Megumi, which also includes her "English essay" (very cute, and give you an insight into one of her great passions).

For Megumi super-fans, the CD also comes with an entry postcard that you have to send back by October 21, to be entered into a draw. The first 300 people will win a Megumi UFO catcher doll (designed and made by SEGA, the company who makes some of the best dolls of this type). It is, however, somewhat doubtful if, should someone outside Japan win one of the dolls, they will allow the entry.

As for the music, yes, there is some, in fact, quite a lot. The music on this is quite a bit more mellow than on her first "Half and, Half!" CD. Minky Momo fans will be in heaven, with a lot of music either from the series or done with Minky's voice.

This CD will also bring back memories for all those who attended her concert at Anime America, since most songs she did can be found on here. If we can't ever get a video of the event, this is about as close as one can get.

My favourite song would have to be the NukuNuku ED (track 13). Megumi's cat voice version is just too cute.

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