



VERSAILLES

Press release November 2023

EXPOSITION JOUETS

ROBOTS

ÉMERGENCE
D'UNE CULTURE
JAPONAISE

23 DEC. 2023 > 25 FEB. 2024

ESPACE RICHAUD

78 BD DE LA REINE • ENTRY FEE: 7€ - REDUCED: 5€

FREE FOR UNDER 26-YEARS-OLDS

+ D'INFOS SUR VERSAILLES.FR

Poster : Direction de la communication, Ville de Versailles / Delphine Joly - Robot «Kess Jumbo» ©Bulmark - Photo © Daniel Rous



26-Goriking Astekaiser Japan, 1976 © Yonezawa © Daniel Rous

Robots – the beginnings of Japanese soft power

Goldorak, Albator, Captain Future, Ulysses 31, San-Ku-Kai, Astroboy, etc., at the end of the 70s and the beginning of the 80s, these new heroes from Japan arrived in France where the public marvelled at how original and creative the content was.

Western countries had no idea that they were experiencing the beginnings of Japanese soft power (a term invented by the international relations analyst, Joseph Nye, meaning that power is not only military and economic but also cultural). Then came Mangas, animated films, iconic authors (Akira Toriyama, Hayao Miyazaki, Haruki Murakami, Jirō Taniguchi, etc.), and popular series (Akira, Dragon Ball, One Piece, Naruto, Death Note, etc.). This culture met with huge success worldwide from the 90s to today.

At the time, most of these series featured robots in a leading or secondary role. These metal avengers, with shields and armour often inspired by the Samurai, came in the form of toys for Japanese children and made the production of the episodes more profitable.

Today, we are pleased to present to you a hoard of those protean metal heroes from the other side of the globe at the Espace Richaud museum, once more in the scope of our traditional exhibitions on iconic toys that have become part and parcel of our popular culture.



29-Grendizer, Goldorak Jumbo Japan, 1976 © Mattel © Poppy © Daniel Rous



Kress Jumbo Robot - Italy 70s - © Bullmark. © Daniel Rous



The exhibition

Discover the biggest French collection of 70s – 80s Japanese robots! Around 300 robots with their original packages, patiently collected over 25 years by the exhibition's curator, Baptiste Caillaud, are displayed in full for the first time.

These exhibits, which have become rare and precious, offer us a mind-boggling and captivating show of colours and shapes. These machines are intriguing, impressive, or scary. They embody strength, wisdom, and chaos all at the same time.

Immerse yourself in the great odyssey of these superheroes from Japan, iron monsters capable of endlessly transforming themselves to defy or save the world. Special emphasis is given to the mechas, of which Mazinger was the pioneer, and other toys from the Popy brand such as the iconic Goldorak (Ufo Robot Grendizer), Astro Boy, Ulysses 31, etc.

The exhibition also features robots produced by more confidential Japanese manufacturers such as Bullmark, Takatoku Toys, Clover, and Nakajima, displayed in France for the first time. These Manga characters also rapidly became legendary toys, paving the way for a whole series of super robots which

left their mark on Japanese culture before becoming famous worldwide.

The most familiar of these super robots in France is unquestionably Goldorak, whose real name is UFO Robot Grendizer, created in 1975 by Go Nagai, the inventor of robots piloted "from inside", like Mazinger in 1972.

The super robots' development is at the crossroads of children's imagination, ancient martial arts traditions, and modern robotics engineering. In addition to the many characters in popular culture, from Mangas to TV series and cartoons, they became the most coveted toys and an emblem of the surge of Japanese culture in Europe in the 70s and 80s. Toys that combine aesthetic research, attachment to tradition and technological innovation – truly beautiful works of engineering and creativity. The first super robots of the 70s and 80s had numerous offspring, still appreciated by children today through, for example, Power Rangers, Gundam or Transformers.



The curator

Baptiste Caillaud is an actor, collector, drama teacher at the Cours Florent, and public speaking coach. His various professions and ventures are as active as his passion for his unique robots.

Three iconic exhibits

Goldorak

1975: date of creation by Go Naigai in Japan

1978: 3 July - broadcast of the Goldorak TV serial on Antenne 2 in 74 episodes

This series tells the adventures of Actarus, the pilot of the Goldorak robot, with which he escapes the planet Euphor, destroyed by Vega. After finding refuge on Earth, Actarus must continue his mission as Earth is threatened by the Vega Empire.

2023: Goldorak is 48

Astro Boy

1952: date of creation by Osamu Tezuka (a leading figure in the world of Japanese Mangas). Known as Atom in Japan, Astro Boy is a significant reference to atomic energy in the aftermath of World War II. The story, inspired by that of Pinocchio, stages a brilliant robotics engineer in despair over the loss of his son, who creates an "intelligent" robot in his son's image.

With 100 million volumes sold, it is one of the best-selling Mangas in the world.

1963-1966: broadcast in Japan. First animated series.

1964: Film adaptation

2003-2004: broadcast of a third adaptation

2009: 3D film

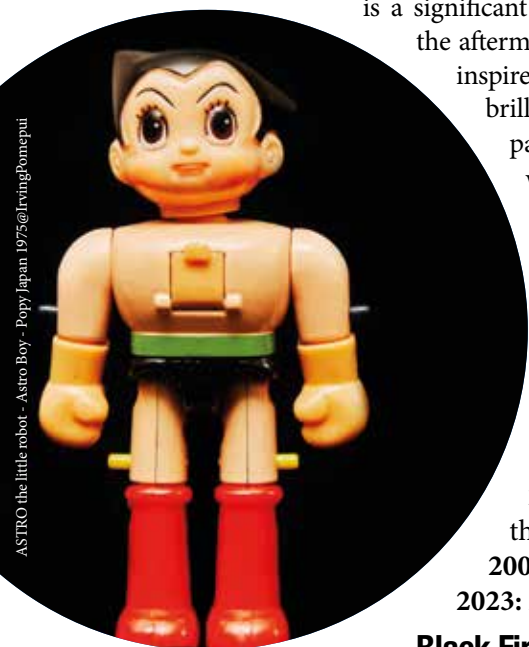
2023: Astro Boy is 71.

Black Fire

2022: creation of the QFX Workshop Studio in Bangkok, for the exhibition Ultime Combat (Final Battle) at the Quai Branly - Jacques Chirac Museum. Unique piece - 4.50m high



Goldorak Jumbo Machinder © Mattel - Europe - 1979
©Irving Pomepis



Bouken! Rockbat «Blazer Zenmai MekaMachine Jumbo» Japon 1975 ©Bullmark



Robocon, «Robocon» Japon, 1975-© Popy © Daniel Rous



Batten Robomaru Karintomate-Series «WANBUNYA» Japon, 80's
©Popy ©Daniel Rous



ZnDc Robots, « Vagatran 2 » Japon, 1970 © Daniel Rous



Captain Ultra « Marushin Garuban » • Japon, années 70 © Marushin



Denjin Zaborger « Zaboga » • Japon, 1974 © grip



Tekkaman The Space Knight « Pegas Jumbo » • Japon, 1977 © Nakajima

Robots - Exhibition catalogue

On sale at the Espace Richaud museum and Gibert Joseph library in Versailles
and at Lulu Berlu vintage toys store in Paris (75011) - 96 pages, Price: 15€





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Informations

Espace Richaud

78, boulevard de la Reine Entry fee 7€ / Reduced fee 5€
Free for under 26-year-olds

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