

Animatrix

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What happens when you bring all star talent together to make anime shorts that are supposed to have main stream quality and base them around the Matrix? Exactly, your expectations are let down.

There are 9 shorts in this DVD most of which are entirely different from the next. The one exception, the second renaissance, explains how the machines came to power. This would have been one of the most well done of the dvd if it hadn't been for the long narration throughout the story.

The two most well written of the 9 is, Detective Story and Ghost House. The first, available on the internet months before the DVD was released, is a story of a detective hired by agents to find Trinity, and his ultimate demise. Beyond is a really neat (for lack of a better word) story about a rendering anomaly in the matrix that causes a "haunted house." At first watch this one may bore you, but you'll find yourself drawn to the kids throwing bottles that break and then reassemble back to their hands.

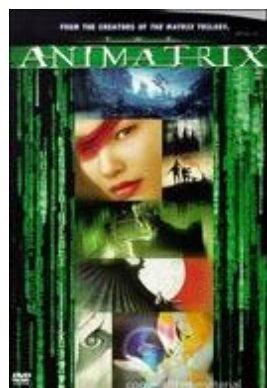
None of the short stories are exceptional poor, they all just feel exceptionally short. For example, Matriculated by Peter Chung, is a great story of a small group that is trying to capture the machines and "reprogram" them or "win" them over to their side by doing to them what the machines did to the humans. Confused? Well, you'll just have to watch it, but lets just say at the end, you'll probably feel a bit empty.

Quite possibly the most influential to the entire matrix storyline is Flight of the Osiris. Visually impressive it tells of the story of the Osiris and it's last flight. The short consists of two parts in this 9 minute clip. Some sword fighting (where we get some fan service) and the Osiris running long enough for a delivery to be made. This one is just plain too short.

Kid's Story, about the character in the movie, shows how he's one of the few that actually made himself wake up from the matrix. World Record is another one in the same vein so to speak. Here an athlete pushes the limits and realizes that injury and physics aren't always what they seem.

Last but certainly not least is the Program. The Program is probably the most well animated and fits the anime stereo type that America is looking for. Animated by Ninja Scroll director, Yoshiaki Kawajiri, there is a heavy influence from his previous films. The samurai program could easily be Ninja Scroll X.

All of the shorts are animated at a high level leaving nothing to be



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Format:	OVA
In Fund:	Ep. 1-9
Media:	avi
Translation:	En. Dub
Year:	2003
Volume:	1
Complete:	FULL

desired to the quality of the short. However, the character design on some of the shorts seems somewhat flawed. It's purely subjective, but Matriculated, World Record and the Renaissance just seem "cheaper" in some aspects, especially Matriculated. It's reminiscent of a flash short found on the internet.

With the exception of the aforementioned, Second Renaissance, most every episode features stellar voice acting. There are a few exceptions where the acting goes to just sub par, but overall it's definitely nice to have a decent dub.

On the other side of the audio coin, the soundtrack delivers exactly what you'd expect. Some hard hitting techno, dance beats that sort of fit the mood. The special edition comes with a soundtrack that makes it an exceptional value. That is of course, if you like that type of music.

The animatrix has a lot going for it, great shorts, great animation, but for some reason it just fails to reach the expectations that it created. Most of the stories while well written, seem entirely too short. An extra 5 minutes in some cases would have been just fine. In other cases, a new character design would be needed for a more enjoyable experience.

It may sound like I hated the animatrix, but that certainly isn't the case. It may not have broken into my top 10 anime of all time, but it's certainly worth watching over again. I'll likely have the same complaints as I do now about it though. Some of the shorts don't feel long enough and the others just seem too long or poorly thought out (Second Renaissance).