

Ginko wanders Japan helping those affected by the mysterious mushi.



Mushi-Shi Starter Set

MAGIC POWERS Sedate, serious and otherworldly, Mushi-Shi instantly captivates

Studio Revelation Films **Certificate** PG **Price** £22 **Release** Out now

Hot on the heels of its release in America comes the first volume of Mushi-Shi, a remarkable collection of tales about people with extraordinary abilities and mushi, amorphous creatures close to life itself.

White-haired Ginko is a mushi-shi, a travelling expert on these strange creatures who wanders ancient Japan conducting research and helping people where he can. He remains, for the majority of the series, just a mysterious loner who attracts mushi like a magnet but his story will eventually be told and the mystery makes Mushi-Shi that much more interesting.

Each tale is self-contained, with Ginko the lynch-pin around which the series revolves. This includes a boy who can bring to life anything drawn with his left hand, a girl who cannot stand light and is locked in a shed, a mother and child with horns on their heads and a farmer who can make his dreams

become reality. But the stories are not always uplifting; most are touched with personal tragedy, something which makes each episode profoundly moving and emotive.

The animation is breathtaking, focusing on the natural beauty of Japan enhanced by the ethereal mushi.

A delicate score accentuates each story making the series quite different; sedate and yet retaining that distinctive supernatural undertone, itself given a uniquely Japanese twist.

The slow pace enables each episode to be savoured and the ancient Japanese setting is an almost ambiguous afterthought, enough to enchant fans of anime while not enough to put off newcomers to the genre.

At the same time it taps into the current vogue for ancient Japan so if you like Tactics or Otogi-Zoshi, then Mushi-Shi will be right up your street.

RATING



Also look at...

Exploring your other self in a parallel universe and a world of computer generated demons



Noein - To Your Other Self: The Complete Series Boxset

Studio Manga Entertainment

Certificate 12

Price £50

Release date Out now

RATING

A sumptuous sci-fi coming of age tale set across multiple realities, Noein - To Your Other Self is one of this year's most popular releases and has now been collected together into one boxset.

In our world, Haruka and Yuu are thinking about running off to Tokyo, blissfully unaware that there is an epic struggle ahead. The dimensions of La'cryma, who are sworn to protect humanity, and Shangri-La, who wish to eradicate it, are at war and their fight is rippling out to other dimensions. At its heart is the mysterious Noein who is determined to warp reality to best suit his own twisted reasons.

Beautifully animated with entertaining characters and a sumptuous plot, Noein - To Your Other Self is the kind of series which instantly hooks with a unique premise. If you haven't already picked it up, this is the ideal time to do so.



Karas: The Revelation

Studio Manga Entertainment

Certificate 15

Price £20

Release date Out now

RATING

In August last year Karas: The Prophecy caused a stir when the first half of the series was released on DVD. Now the sequel is finally released and fans are in for a treat. Unfortunately, though, if you've not seen this original video animation then you might be a little bit lost.

Karas are warriors sworn to defend the city of Tokyo. They're sorrowful souls who, after being given the blessing of Yurine, exist between the worlds of humans and demons. Karas: The Revelation continues where the original left off. Hero and new Karas Yousuke Otohwa was left stripped of his powers and in a coma after facing off with his nemesis and predecessor, Eko.

The computer-generated animation looks nice but the story can be a little too complex for easy viewing. Nevertheless, Karas is still a good addition to the annals of sci-fi anime. ●

