



AVAILABLE: Now (Import)
LABEL: Sony Home Entertainment
CERTIFICATE: N/A
NO. OF DISCS: 6 Discs
RETAIL PRICE: \$119.99
RUNNING TIME: 619 mins



Blood+ Series One, Part One

DVD EXTRAS

As well as the usual Japanese and English dubs, the set is packed in a nice box which also includes a T-shirt and a sample of the *Blood+* manga. Unfortunately the only on-disc extras are a series of interviews with the Japanese cast and crew.

A few years back, *Blood: The Last Vampire* was the darling of the anime industry and one of the feature films which helped anime become mainstream. While *Blood* was short and left lots of unanswered questions, this series (also from Production I.G.) should go some way to answering some of them.

The story picks up in modern day Okinawa. Saya Otonashi thinks she's a normal kid – except she's anaemic and amnesiac. Despite this, she lives life to the full, surrounded by a loving family thanks to

adoptive father George and his two children Kai and Riku. Unfortunately her 'normal' life is about to end when Saya is reunited with an old friend named Haji, who is carrying a violin case – and her katana, which she uses to hunt vicious monsters called Chiropterans.

Blood+ is quite a lengthy series, and this box set collects the first 25 action packed episodes. The look of the series is distinctive and beautifully animated, the character designs are sleek, and the plot far-reaching, covering numerous continents and periods

in history. The series is a worthy successor to the original OVA and not only fleshes out the mythos, but answers the lingering questions left by *Blood: The Last Vampire*.

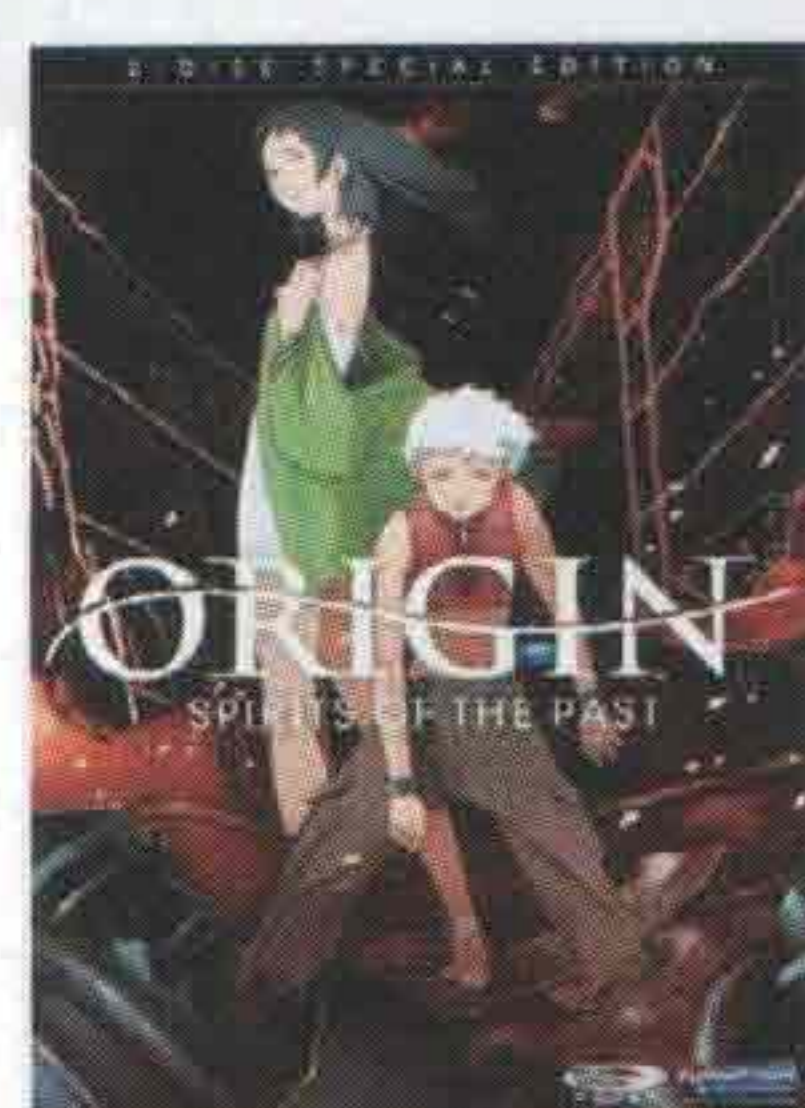
LESLEY SMITH

CHANCE OF RELEASE: MEDIUM

Sony could easily release *Blood+* in the UK, but whether it will remains to be seen.

Beautiful and creepy, *Blood+* is gritty and action-packed.

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★☆☆



AVAILABLE: Now (Import)
LABEL: FUNimation
CERTIFICATE: TV-PG
NO. OF DISCS: 2 Discs
RETAIL PRICE: \$39.98
RUNNING TIME: 90 mins

DVD EXTRAS

Presented in 16:9 with a fantastic pair of audio tracks in Japanese and English, there's no skimping on the extras in this release. As well as a 50 minute 'making of' feature, there are interviews with the cast and crew, featurettes looking at the visuals, the music, and the premiere in China. To top this off, there are also the usual round of trailers and TV spots.

Origin: Spirits Of The Past



In the tradition of environmental anime like *Princess Mononoke*, *Arjuna* and *Nausicaa* comes *Origin: Spirits of the Past*. Three hundred years into the future, the world is a changed place and is slowly being taken over by the Forest, a mass of sentient trees. The remnants of mankind huddle in cities and there is an uneasy treaty between man and nature – at least, until our protagonist, young Agito, discovers a forgotten stasis chamber containing a girl named Toola...

There's something about environmentally-themed anime which

sometimes sends even hardened fans running for the hills. Despite this, the environmental message in *Origin* is subtle enough not to make the film seem preachy. As well as that, Agito is a likeable hero and his journey through a world he thought he knew is truly absorbing. Because of this, *Origin* rises above its environmental message and stands out thanks to ethereal music and truly beautiful visuals.

The epic nature of the film is enhanced by FUNimation's excellent dub and a bonus disc featuring lots of fascinating extras. Blending dystopian futures, the aftermath

of war and a strong environmental message, *Origin* is the kind of anime which lingers in your memory long after the credits roll.

LESLEY SMITH

CHANCE OF RELEASE: HIGH

With FUNimation's current track record of bringing titles to the UK, the chances of *Origin* being released are very high, so keep your eyes peeled!

Origin presents us *Ghost in the Shell: Innocence* for an environmental age.

FILM ★★★★★ EXTRAS ★★★★★