

Ghost in the Shell (1)

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

1 Corinthians 13:11–12, [King James Version](#). The [New Revised Standard Version](#) says “in a mirror, dimly.”

1951	OSHII Mamoru b. Tokyo (father is a private detective)
1976	BA in arts education, Tokyo Gakugei University; student activism around US–Japan security treaty
1982	<i>Blade Runner</i> , dir. Scott
1983	<i>Dallos</i> , dir. Oshii, prod. Studio Pierrot: the first “OVA”
1984	William Gibson, <i>Neuromancer</i> (New York: Ace)
1988	<i>Akira</i> , dir. OTOMO Katsuhiro (based on 1982 manga by Otomo; a hit in Japan and a cult favorite in US on video)
1989–	Shirow Masamune, <i>Kōkaku Kidōtai / The Ghost in the Shell</i> (Tokyo: Kōdansha)
1991	
1995	<i>Kōkaku Kidōtai / Ghost in the Shell</i> , dir. Oshii Mamoru, prod. Production I.G., Bandai Visual, Manga Entertainment: brief Japanese theatrical run
1996	US home video release in English dub, Manga Entertainment: excellent sales
1999	<i>The Matrix</i> , dir. the Wachowskis (cyberpunk blockbuster)
2003	<i>The Animatrix</i> , prod. the Wachowskis
2004	<i>Ghost in the Shell 2: Innocence</i> , dir. Oshii
2008	<i>Ghost in the Shell 2.0</i> (digital re-edit of the first film)
2017	<i>Ghost in the Shell</i> , dir. Rupert Sanders, starring Scarlett Johansson

Sources: Brian Ruh, *Stray Dog of Anime: The Films of Mamoru Oshii* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004); Wikipedia.

Ghost in the Shell struggles to cram its convoluted story into the short running time, and frequently resorts to lengthy exposition scenes to help the audience keep up. This sometimes awkward plotting is masked by how slickly crafted the film is, its fascinating urban images well served by an evocative and ghostly score. But under the surface *Ghost in the Shell* is neither groundbreaking as a work of Cyberpunk nor as an anime. It is nevertheless a well-made action thriller, and while it owes an obvious debt to the work of William Gibson, this makes it less culturally alien to Western eyes, and thus a good introduction to the Anime genre.

Jack Nicholls and Jonathan Clements, “Ghost in the Shell,” in *The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction*, ed. John Clute and David Langford (Reading: Ansible Editions, 2024), sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/ghost_in_the_shell.

According to the soundtrack’s liner notes, the haunting choral song that plays throughout the film is a wedding song, sung to get rid of all evil influences that are about to follow. Kenji Kawai originally wanted to use Bulgarian folk singers, but was unable to find any, so he relied on the Japanese folk song choir he used earlier in the *Ranma 1/2* anime. The song uses an ancient form of the Japanese language mixed with Bulgarian harmony and traditional Japanese notes

Ghost in the Shell Wiki s.v. “*Ghost in the Shell* (film),” ghostintheshell.fandom.com. The wiki gives lyrics and a translation.

Initially, anime, like Bollywood videos, entered the United States through small distributors who targeted Asian immigrants. Fans would venture into ethnic neighborhoods in search of content; in New York and San Francisco they turned to a handful of Japanese bookstores for manga that had not yet been translated or distributed in North America. The Web enabled fans to start their own small-scale (and sometimes pirate) operations to help import, translate, and distribute manga and anime....On college campuses, student organizations build extensive libraries of both legal and pirated materials and host screenings designed to educate the public about anime artists, styles, and genres. The MIT Anime Society, for example, hosts weekly screenings from a library of more than fifteen hundred films and videos. [This was in the early 2000s.]

Henry Jenkins, “Pop Cosmopolitanism: Mapping Cultural Flows in an Age of Media Convergence,” in *Globalization: Culture and Education in the New Millennium*, ed. Marcelo M. Suárez-Orozco and Desirée Baolian Qin-Hilliard (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), jstor.org/stable/10.1525/j.ctt1pnvk4.10.