

Tokyo's Nighttime Magic: How Anime Projection Mapping is Transforming the City's Streets

TOKYO, JAPAN, March 31, 2025

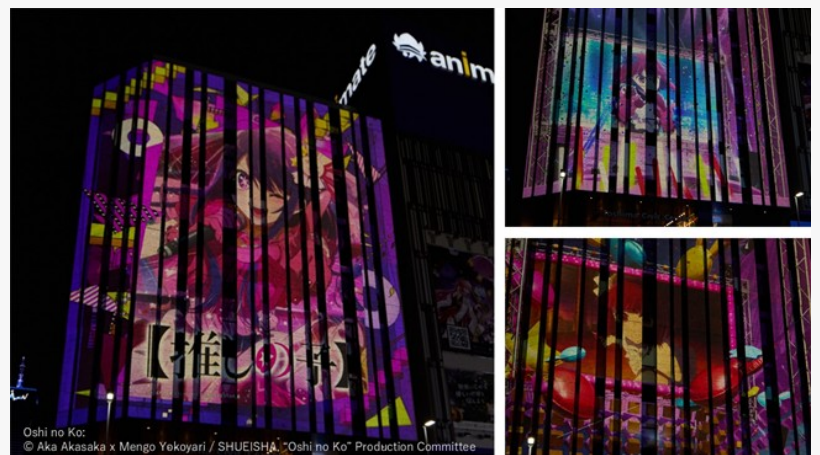
[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Imagine walking through Tokyo at night, where the streets come alive with vibrant anime projections. From March 15 to 23, Naka-Ikebukuro Park in downtown Tokyo was a hub of excitement as spectators gathered to enjoy the nightly anime performances starting at 6 p.m. across the street at the Toshima Civic Center in Ikebukuro. The event, ANIME TOKYO NIGHT, featured famous scenes from four popular anime works: *Oshi no Ko*, *WIND BREAKER*, *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End* and *DANDADAN*. These scenes were projected on the wall one after another, leaving the crowd mesmerized.

A giant outdoor screen, eight state-of-the-art projectors and audio equipment brought these much-loved episodes to life. This experimental event, planned by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (TMG) and its related organizations, aims to highlight Tokyo's cultural potential for nightlife activities.

Jessica, 28-year-old tourist from Germany, passionately responded: "Definitely! In Germany, we enjoy outdoor nightlife and there are many projection mapping events in cities. But they are all art, never anime." Having grown up with Pokémon and other Japanese anime, she was thrilled to find information about the event on X and came to Ikebukuro with her boyfriend. She especially enjoyed the performance of *Frieren: Beyond Journey's End*, which she had been looking forward to seeing.



ANIME TOKYO NIGHT_1



ANIME TOKYO NIGHT_2

Anime and Ikebukuro
Ikebukuro, a vibrant entertainment and commercial district, is a popular destination for anime enthusiasts. The area boasts a wide range of anime businesses and is a bustling hub for otaku individuals shopping at anime stores and other related businesses, as well as cosplayers attending a coven meeting. In early March, the local Toshima Ward Office made headlines by announcing that a 430-meter-long street that is home to the flagship store of Animate, a major chain of anime, comic, and gaming products, will be commonly known as "Animate-Dori" street.

Moreover, this anime projection mapping event coincided with a special exhibition in Ikebukuro that explores the world of "Oshi no Ko". Anime Tokyo Station, located near the projection mapping venue, is hosting an exhibition that will run until May 6. Ito Hiroshi, the operational office staff of ANIME TOKYO NIGHT, confided that he had seen so many audience members who enjoyed projection mapping carrying a shopping bag with the Animate logo on it.

Given its status as a nexus for anime culture and its diverse population, Ikebukuro is uniquely suited to hosting an event of this nature. Jorge, a 35-

year-old American consultant who has lived in Tokyo for 10 years, shared his unique perspective on Ikebukuro. "It's got anime, and there's an American comic bookstore just there. There is no such place like Ikebukuro in Tokyo!" he said, showing a bag from where he had made a purchase. Jorge and his wife came to Ikebukuro not knowing about the ANIME TOKYO NIGHT but ended up happily seeing the show. "We finished eating, walked around, and noticed this. We are here, totally by accident. Really nice," he said with a laugh.



WIND BREAKER
© 2024 WIND BREAKER Project
© 2024 Oshi no Ko Production Committee
© 2024 Frieren: Beyond Journey's End Production Committee

ANIME TOKYO NIGHT_3



Frieren: Beyond Journey's End:
© Kanehito Yamada / Tsukasa Abe / Shogakukan, Frieren: Beyond Journey's End Production Committee

ANIME TOKYO NIGHT_4



<https://www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html>

ANIME TOKYO NIGHT_5

Anime Industry Keeps Growing

The Japanese anime industry is experiencing unprecedented growth, reaching an all-time high of over 3 trillion yen in 2023, according to The Association of Japanese Animations (AJA). This remarkable achievement was included in the Anime Industry Report 2024, which was released at the end of last year. The industry saw a substantial increase of 114.3% or 418.8 billion yen, compared to the previous year, based on estimated revenues in animation and animation-related product markets.

The overseas market has been the powerhouse behind this surge, growing significantly to 1.7 trillion yen (118% year on year) and increasing its share to 51.5%, surpassing the domestic market. This global appeal is vividly illustrated by Tia, a 62-year-old Thai tourist who often visits Japan. She was captivated by the anime projection mapping event, "Anime is the best Japanese soft power,." Tia fondly recalled how her generation in Thailand grew up with Doraemon and Godzilla, while today's kids adore Pokémon. "A lot of tourists come to Japan because of anime, for sure," she added, highlighting the cultural impact of anime on international tourism.

Timeless Influence of Japanese Animation: Legacy from Edo Lingers

Takahata Isao, the late legendary Japanese animator and founding member of Studio Ghibli, once shared his insights on the 12th-century hand-painted scrolls that, in his opinion, so effectively illustrated the concept of animation. However, more commonly, many see ukiyo-e as embodying the early examples of manga and anime that flourished in the city of Edo, an old name for Tokyo. Katsushika Hokusai, a renowned ukiyo-e artist believed to be a native of Edo, is particularly associated with this genre, as evidenced by his famous works.

From Astro Boy to Doraemon to One Piece, anime has grown to be appreciated all over the world, making the influence of Japanese culture deeply embedded in the minds of viewers. Today, Tokyo has a compelling reason to collaborate with the anime industry to boost its night-time tourism offerings. The animation industry is highly concentrated in Tokyo, with a gradual spread to other regions in Japan. According to an AJA 2020 survey, 692 of the 811 animation production companies are still headquartered in Tokyo. This highlights the enduring cultural significance of anime in Tokyo.

Anime Boosts Night-time Tourism of Tokyo

Revitalizing Tokyo's nightlife has been a focal point of discussion in the city. In February, Tokyo Governor Koike Yuriko embarked on a three-day visit to Thailand, where she and her Bangkok counterpart explored the city's major night-time attractions and observed the illuminated historic buildings along the iconic Chao Phraya River. Inspired by this tour, Governor Koike shared insights with reporters, highlighting the potential of leveraging the night-time economy to breathe new life into Tokyo.

One example of Tokyo's efforts to promote night-time tourism is the nightly projection mapping show "Tokyo Night & Light," organized by her administration and related entities. Building on the

success of this initiative, TMG introduced a similar program five weeks after her visit to Bangkok, seamlessly integrating Japan's renowned cultural strength in anime.

As part of Tokyo's strategy for 2050, Ms. Koike's administration has recently set policy goals for 2035, including an effort to make Tokyo the "best city in the world." This vision includes striking a balance between continued "growth" and "maturity," ensuring that residents and visitors alike feel happy and fulfilled. A key component of this plan is to attract more tourists at night with anime playing a pivotal role in enhancing night-time activities.

In today's digital age, social platforms such as X and Instagram have become the go-to sources of information for tourists. However, visitors to Tokyo are strongly encouraged to consult the Go Tokyo website (<https://www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html>) for reliable information. Recently upgraded, this site offers a seamless experience, allowing visitors to purchase tickets and plan their adventures.

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