

CYCLOPAEDIA 8 – MECHA

BY T.R. KNIGHT (INNROADS MINISTRIES * ARTICLE SERIES)

OVERVIEW

Mecha is a subgenre of science fiction devoted to giant armored fighting machines with legs instead of treads or wheels. A mecha is piloted while a powered armor is worn and a robot or android has its own intelligence. The term "mecha" derives from the Japanese abbreviation meka. In Japanese, meka encompasses all mechanical objects, including cars, robots, phones and other devices. The Japanese use the term "robotto" or "giant robots" to distinguish limbed vehicles from other meka. English speakers have repurposed the term as mecha (or the shorthand mech) for limbed humanoid shaped vehicles, made popular by the BattleTech game. In Japanese, these machines are seldom called "mecha" but instead are robots or super robots.

The first occurrence of mecha in fiction is thought to be the *The War of the Worlds* by H. G. Wells, where the Martians use tripod walkers as machines of death and destruction. The modern mecha genre was defined mostly by author Go Nagai. His *Mazinger Z* was the first successful super robot anime series which defined the mecha genre, even defining a now iconic maneuver of pilots calling out their weapon names to activate them ("Rocket Punch!").

Mecha and super robot stories are extremely popular as topics of cartoons and anime. You also see them in combination with Sentai and Kaiju stories quite a bit. They have also spawned numerous toy and game lines because of their visually unique design.

RELATED HUMANOID TECHNOLOGIES

Mecha as defined in this article must be giant robots or limbed war machines with living pilots and thus this related humanoid technologies are not included.

- Androids
- Cyborgs
- Exoskeletons
- Robots
- Transformers

Following are sources of information pertaining to Mecha to assist prospective game masters, game designers, writers, and storytellers in knowing where to start their research.

ARTICLES

BattleTech Masters: Emergence of the First U.S. Virtual Reality Subculture

By Heeter, C

Source: MULTIMEDIA REVIEW, 3, no. 4, (1992): 65

A Brief History of Japanese Robophilia

By Gilson, Mark

Source: Leonardo, v31 n5 (19980101): 367-369

Plausible Reasons for usage of Combat Mecha

<http://worldbuilding.stackexchange.com/questions/10320/plausible-reasons-for-usage-of-combat-mecha>

Sci-fi Rant: Why Giant Mecha Robots Are Stupid
<http://www.techrepublic.com/blog/geekend/sci-fi-rant-why-giant-mecha-robots-are-stupid/>

BOOKS

ABAKAN 2288: Kallamity's World of Mecha Design
By Zampriolo, Luca

BattleTech: 25 Years of Art & Fiction
By Bills, Randall

The Corps: BattleCorps Anthology
By Coleman, Loren L.

Dead Mech: (Apex Trilogy)
By Bible, Jake

Bane of the Dead (Seraphim Revival)
By Holo, Jacob

The Big O - Manga
By Ariga, Hitoshi

Decision at Thunder Rift (Saga of the Gray Death Legion)
By Keith, William

Embers of War
By Schmetzer, Jason

En Garde (The Warrior Trilogy)
By Stackpole, Michael A.

Exodus Road (Twilight of the Clans)
By Pardoe, Blaine Lee

Full Metal Panic!
By Gatou, Shouji

Ghost of Winter
By Kenson, Stephen

Ghost War
By Stackpole, Michael A.

Heir to the Dragon
By Charrett, Robert N.

Highlander Gambit
By Pardoe, Blaine

Inside the Robot Kingdom: Japan, Mechatronics and the Coming Robotopia
By Schodt, Frederik L.

Knights of Sidonia 2 - Manga
By Nihei, Tsutomu

Lethal Heritage (Blood of Kerensky Trilogy)
By Stackpole, Michael A.

Leviathan
By Westerfeld, Scott

Mazinger Z
By Nagai, Go

Mecha Corps: A Novel of the Armor Wars
By Patton, Brett

Mobile Suit Gundam: THE ORIGIN - Manga
By Yasuhiko, Yoshikazu

Mobile Suit Gundam: Awakening, Escalation, Confrontation Paperback
By Tomino, Yoshiyuki

Natural Selection
By Stackpole, Michael A.

Neon Genesis Evangelion - Manga

By Sadamoto, Yoshiyuki

Pacific Rim: Tales From Year Zero - Comic

By Beacham, Travis

The Science of Anime: Mecha-Noids and AI-Super-Bots

By Gresh, Lois H.

Shogun Warriors - Comic

By Moench, Doug

A Silence in the Heavens (The Proving Grounds)

By Delrio, Martin

The Sword and the Dagger

By Mayhar, Ardath

Way of the Clans (Legend of the Jade Phoenix)

By Thurston, Robert

War of the Worlds

By Wells, H.G.

Wolf Pack

By Charrette, Robert N.

Wolves on the Border

By Charrette, Robert N.

Cthulhutech - RPG

DragonMech - RPG

Dust Tactics - Tabletop Game

Earthsiege 2 - Computer Game

Front Mission: Evolved - Computer Game

Gier Krieg - Tabletop Game

Golem Arcana - Tabletop Game

Gundam Battle Assault - Computer Game

Jovian Chronicles - RPG/Tabletop Game

Hawken - Computer Game

Heavy Gear - RPG/Tabletop Game

Heavy Steam - Tabletop Game

Iron Kingdoms - RPG

Mecha! - RPG

Mecha Vs Kaiju - RPG

MechAssault - Computer Game

MechWarrior series - Computer Game

MechWarrior - RPG

MechWarrior Online - Computer Game

Mekton: Anime Mecha Roleplaying - RPG

Mekton II & Zeta - RPG

Metal Gear Solid (1-4) - Computer Game

Remnants - RPG

Metal Wolf Chaos - Computer Game

Robotech - RPG

Scythe - Tabletop Game

SHOGO: Mobile Armor Division - Computer Game

Steel Battalion - Computer Game

Strike Suit Zero - Computer Game

Super Robot Wars - Computer Game

Terra Nova: Strike Force Centauri -

Computer Game

Titanfall - Computer Game

Warhammer 40,000 - Tabletop Game

Xenogears - Computer Game

Zone of Enders (1 & 2) - Computer Game

GAMES

A.E.G.I.S.: Combining Robot Strategy Game

– Tabletop Game

Armored Core - Computer Game

BattleTech - Tabletop Game

BESM - RPG

BRP Mecha - RPG

CINEMA

9

Avatar

The Big O - Anime

Blue Gender - Anime

Broken Blade - Anime

Code Geass - Anime

Eureka Seven - Anime

Genesis of Aquarion - Anime

Getter Robo - Anime

Giant Robo - Anime

Gunbuster/Diebuster - Anime

Gunhed

Macross/Robotech - Anime

Mazinger Z - Anime

Mobile Police Patlabor - Anime

Mobile Suit Gundam - Anime

Neon Genesis Evangelion - Anime

Pacific Rim

Power Rangers - Movie

Power Rangers - TV Show

RahXephon - Anime

Robot Jox

Sakura Wars - Anime

Sentinel 2099

Space Runaway Ideon - Anime

Star Musketeer Bismarck - Anime

Starship Troopers 3

Tengen Toppa Gurren Lagann - Anime

Vision of Escaflowne - Anime

Voltron: Defender of the Universe/Beast

King GoLion/Armored Fleet Dairugger XV -
TV Series

Voltron: Legendary Defender - TV Series

War of the Worlds

Zoids - Anime

LOCATIONS

BattleTech Centers

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BattleTech_Centers

Cybernetic Walking Machine - U.S. Army
Transportation Museum

<http://www.transportation.army.mil/museum/transportation%20museum/cybernetic.htm>

Giant Robot Japanese Attractions

<http://muza-chan.net/japan/index.php/blog/giant-robot-japanese-tourist>

Gundam Front Tokyo

<http://gundamfront-tokyo.com/assets/pdf/gft-en.pdf>

Mechacon

<http://www.mechacon.com/>

Toei Animation Gallery

<http://www.gotokyo.org/en/kanko/nerima/education/104.html>

PEOPLE

Tohru Furuya

Shoji Kawamori

Carl Macek

Go Nagai

Michael A. Stackpole

Yoshiyuki Tomino

Jordan Weisman

Hajime Yatate

Saburo Yatsude

Mitsuteru Yokoyama