

# CYCLOPAEDIA 18 – KAIJU

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

## OVERVIEW

Kaijū derives from the Japanese for "strange beast" but in more common vernacular these are giant monster stories. Giant monsters attacking cities (especially Tokyo), the military defending the city, giant monsters fighting each other, and secret societies or aliens betting involved. These were all trademarks of the kaiju genre.

*Gojira* (translated as Godzilla in the US) receives credit for being the first ever kaiju film. Released in 1954, it is considered the first kaiju film but it is not the first giant monster movie. *King Kong* and *The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms* were hits in the US and Japan, so *Gojira* was the Japanese cinematic response to those popular films. Tomoyuki Tanaka of Toho Studios combined the Hollywood giant monster concept with the growing fear of atomic weapons in Japan. The movie was a huge success in Japan, spawning the kaiju movie genre. The movie was so popular in Japan it was brought to the US as *Godzilla, King of Monsters*.

In the US, the *Create Double Feature* matinee and *Mystery Science Theater 3000* developed a massive following for these kaiju movies from Japan. Other countries started creating their own giant monster movies or reimagining the Japanese stories. Genres started merging with mecha fighting kaiju, superheroes fighting kaiju, kaiju being heroes defending our planet, and the ever popular kaiju fighting kaiju.

Kaiju have made a comeback recently both in the US and Japan, with new movies and games being released to captivate audiences.

## WHO ARE THE BIGGEST OF THE BIG?

Some debate which are the greatest of the Kaiju. The top quartet are easy to choose (Gamera, Godzilla, King Kong, and Mothra). The most commonly discussed and with the most screen time include...

- Destroyah
- Gamera
- Godzilla
- King Ghidorah
- King Kong
- MechaGodzilla
- Mothra
- Rodan

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

## ARTICLES

**Godzilla: why the Japanese original is no joke**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/film/10788996/Godzilla-why-the-Japanese-original-is-no-joke.html>

**What's In A Roar? Crafting Godzilla's Iconic Sound**

<http://www.npr.org/2014/05/18/312839612/whats-in-a-roar-crafting-godzillas-iconic-sound>

## BOOKS

***Atomic Dreams and the Nuclear Nightmare: The Making of Godzilla (1954)***  
By Brothers, Peter

***Eiji Tsuburaya: Master of Monsters: Defending the Earth with Ultraman, Godzilla, and Friends in the Golden Age of Japanese Science Fiction Film***  
By Ragone, August

***Gamera the Guardian of the Universe (Comic)***  
By Dark Horse Comics

***Godzilla***  
By Cerasini, Marc

***Godzilla on My Mind: Fifty Years of the King of Monsters***  
By Tsutsui, William

***Godzilla: Rulers of Earth (Comic)***  
By IDW

***The Handbook for Surviving a Giant Monster Attack***  
By Wendel, Anthony

***Hakaiju (Manga)***

***Ishiro Honda: A Life in Film, from Godzilla to Kurosawa***  
By Ryfle, Steve

***Kaiju Apocalypse***  
By Brown, Eric

***Kaiju Winter***  
By Bible, Jake

***The Kaiju Film: A Critical Study of Cinema's Biggest Monsters***  
By Barr, Jason

***Killer Kaiju Monsters: Strange Beasts of Japanese Film***  
By Vartanian, Ivan

***The Mammoth Book of Kaiju***  
By Wallace, Sean

***Mayday: A Kaiju Thriller***  
By Strange, Chris

***Monster Madness***  
By Zito, Zach and Neuhaus, Mel

***Monster Magnitude 9***  
By Yamamoto, Hiroshi

***Murder World: Kaiju Dawn***  
By Cordova, Jason

***Pacific Rim: The Official Movie Novelization***  
By Irvine, Alex

***Project 731***  
By Robinson, Jeremy

***Project Nemesis***  
By Robinson, Jeremy

***Shambling Towards Hiroshima***  
By Morrow, James K.

***Turtle Talkin': Soaring through the Films of Gamera***  
By Kirkland, Travis

***Ultraman (Manga)***  
By VIZ Media LLC

## GAMES

*The Creature That Ate Sheboygan* - Tabletop Game  
*Daikaijuu Battle: Ultra Coliseum* - Computer Game  
*Gammarauders* - Tabletop Game  
*Gamera 2000* - Computer Game  
*Gamera: The Guardian of the Universe* - Computer Game  
*Gaurodan* - Computer Game  
*Giant Monster Rampage* - Tabletop Game  
*Global Defense Force* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters Melee* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla: Kaiju World Wars* - Tabletop Game  
*Godzilla: Save the Earth* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla: Strike Zone* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla: Unleashed* - Computer Game  
*Godzilla Vs* - Computer Game  
*Karju* - RPG  
*Kaiju City* - Tabletop Game  
*Kaiju Conquest* - Tabletop Game  
*Kaiju Crush* - Tabletop Game  
*Kaiju: Giant Monster Boardgame* - Tabletop Game  
*Kaiju Incorporated* - Tabletop Game  
*Kaiju Incorporated: The RPG* - RPG  
*Kaujulang Battles* - Computer Game  
*K-Day: Kaiju War!* - Tabletop Game  
*King of New York* - Tabletop Game  
*King of Tokyo* - Tabletop Game  
*Mecha vs Kaiju* - RPG  
*Monster Island* - Tabletop Game  
*Monsters Menace America* - Tabletop Game  
*Monsters Ravage America* - Tabletop Game  
*Monsterpocalypse* - Tabletop Game  
*Pacific Rim: The Video Game* - Computer Game  
*Peter Jackson's King Kong* - Computer Game  
*Rampage* - Computer Game

*Rampage: Total Destruction* - Computer Game  
*RARRR!!* - Tabletop Game  
*Terror in Meeple City/Rampage* - Tabletop Game  
*Ticket to Ride: Alvin & Dexter* - Tabletop Game  
*Ultraman Fighting Evolution* - Computer Game

## CINEMA

*All Monsters Attack*  
*Atragon*  
*Bambi Meets Godzilla*  
*The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms*  
*Cloverfield*  
*Colossal*  
*Destroy All Monsters*  
*Dogora*  
*Frankenstien Conquers the World*  
*Gamera: The Giant Monster*  
*Gamera: Guardian of the Universe*  
*Gamera vs. (Barugon, Guiron, Gyaos, Hedorah, Jiger, Viras, Zigra)*  
*Gappa: The Colossal Beast*  
*Garuda*  
*Ghidorah The Three Headed Monster*  
*The Giant Claw*  
*The Giant Gila Monster*  
*Giant Robo* - TV  
*Gojira*  
*Godzilla*  
*Godzilla* - TV Cartoon  
*Godzilla: The Series* - TV Cartoon  
*Godzilla 1985*  
*Godzilla 2000*  
*Godzilla: Final Wars*  
*Godzilla Island* - TV  
*Godzilla, King of Monsters!*  
*Godzilla: Monster Planet*

*Godzilla vs. (Biollante, Destroyah, Gigan, Hedorah, King Ghidorah, Mechagodzilla, Mechagodzilla II, Megalon, Megaguirus, Mothra, The Sea Monster, SpaceGodzilla) Godzilla Raids Again*  
*Gorgo*  
*Great Monster Yongary*  
*The Host*  
*Invasion of the Astro-Monster*  
*Kaiju Booska - TV*  
*King Kong*  
*King Kong Escapes*  
*King Kong vs. Godzilla*  
*Kong: Skull Island*  
*Kraa! The Sea Monster*  
*Kumonga*  
*Manda*  
*The Mist*  
*M.O.G.U.E.R.A.*  
*Mothra*  
*Mothra vs. Godzilla*  
*The Mysterians*  
*Mysterious Island*  
*Pacific Rim*  
*Reptilicus*  
*The Return of Godzilla*  
*Rodan*  
*Son of Godzilla*  
*Space Amoeba/Yog, The Monster from Space*  
*SpaceGodzilla*  
*Super 8*  
*Super Sentai - TV*  
*Terror of Mechagodzilla*  
*THEM!*  
*Ultraman - TV*  
*Ultra Q - TV*  
*The War of the Gargantuas*  
*Wasei Kingu Kongu*  
*The X from Outer Space*  
*Zarkorr! The Invader*

## LOCATIONS

Godzilla Hotel

<http://shinjuku.gracery.com/>

Kaiju Sakaba

<http://kaiju-sakaba.com/>

Tokyo

<http://www.gotokyo.org/en/tourists/attractions/index.html>

## PEOPLE

Teruo Aragaki

Kurt Carley

Hirofumi Fukuzawa

'Hurricane' Ryu Hariken

Shoichi Hirose

Umenosuke Izumi

Tsutomu Kitagawa

Naoaki Manabe

Haruo Nakajima

Akira Ohashi

Seiji Onaka

Rie Ota

Toshinori Sasaki

Kenpachiro Satsuma

Yu Sekida

Fuyuki Shinada

TJ Storm

Jun Suzuki

Shinji Takagi

Ryosaku Takasugi

Tomoyuki Tanaka

Katsumi Tezuka

Kazuhiro Yoshida

Mizuho Yoshida

Isao Zushi