

How one song creates an atmosphere:

An analysis of “Amadare no Uta”

- To introduce atmosphere, play short excerpt of raindrop sounds from episode

Imagine yourself walking through a destroyed and desolate metropolis after human civilization has fallen. Apart from the occasional rumble of forgotten technology living out its last years of functionality, this immense empty world is framed by a deep silence. As it begins to rain and you find shelter, you notice that traces of music can be heard in the pounding of raindrops on different objects. This setting describes the essence of the piece “Amadare no Uta (雨だれの歌),” meaning “Song of Raindrops,” created for the anime *Girls' Last Tour*.

“Amadare no Uta” was composed and written by Keisuke Hattori for the Anime *Girls' last tour*, and was released in 2017 as part of the secondary soundtrack “More One Night” for the series¹. The song is used as the ending track for the fifth episode of the show, and frames the central scene of the third fragment of the episode titled “The Sound of Rain.” This scene follows the main characters of the show, who are two girls surviving on their own in a mysterious world destroyed by war, as they take shelter from the rain under a strange metallic structure. As the song plays, it creates a wonderful calming atmosphere that puts the listener in the shoes of the girls as they live a brief moment of peace in their difficult situation. It is in this creation of atmosphere that the song

¹ “More One Night / Chito (CV: Inori Minase), Yuuri (CV: Yurika Kubo)” VGmdb: the music of visual arts and games. Accessed October 24, 2020.
<https://vgmdb.net/album/71313>

embodies the “Iyashikei” or healing genre of the anime it was created for. Exploring the relationship between this purpose and the musical devices used in the song will be the main goal of this podcast.

In reviews on anime websites², the anime Girl’s Last tour has been praised for its use of sound design to bring the world the characters live in to life. It is from this sound design that “Amadare no Uta” receives its rhythmic background, which is meant to represent the drumming of raindrops on several metallic objects.

- Play short excerpt from beginning of the song, introduction of rhythm
(0:00 - 0:09)

This rhythmic background forms the core of the song, and consists of an elegant pattern of raindrop inspired sounds that repeats throughout the piece. In general, it is difficult to place the instrumentation used to create the rhythm, but it appears to be a well made electronic mix of recorded raindrop sounds and sounds made by drumming on different objects. The pattern starts off with sounds that could be heard from raindrops hitting cans when everything is silent, and transitions to a mix of light drumming that is accentuated by the sound of raindrops hitting water at regular intervals (0:00 - 0:09). This pattern is fast paced, contains many individual beats, and repeats itself regularly throughout the piece. The light drumming serves to give a more upbeat tone to the song and build up expectation for the melody that begins at around 16 seconds in, while the repeated sound of raindrops maintains the theme of the song and presents a hollow timbre that characterizes the environment the piece is presented in.

² Tinn, Matthew. “Girls’ Last Tour Review.” Anime UK News. Anime UK News, May 12, 2019. <https://animeuknews.net/2019/05/girls-last-tour-review/>.

Due to its unique construction, the underlying rhythm of “Amadare no Uta” is what principally connects the song to the storyline of the show and shows that it is indeed a song of raindrops. But the rhythm of any song is incomplete without the sounds that accompany it, and indeed it is through an introductory vocalized harmony that the song truly starts to take shape.

- Play short excerpt from around 0:16 “Ru ru ru..”

This introductory harmony consists of two voices (The characters Chito and Yuuri) singing in a sequence of parallel fifths that fits in well with the rhythmic background and establishes the tone and calming atmosphere of the song. A very important detail to note at this point is that Amadare no Uta is performed entirely by the voice actors, Yurika Kubo and Inori Minase, of Girl’s Last Tour in the tone of the characters they play³. Thus, the song embodies not only the world the characters live in but the ways in which they add to it through their own existence. This gives an added layer of depth to the song, and truly puts the listener in the place of the girls as they create what may very well be the last music humanity will ever produce in their world.

After the introductory harmony, the song begins with the first verse at around 32 seconds in, which is then followed by the chorus at around 1 minute into the song

- Play short excerpt from 0:32 “Ima sekai ga ugoki...”

The lyrics are sung with a fast, yet soft pace, and maintain a texture of heterophony based on the superposition of both voices. As the song reaches the chorus (1:06) “Doko made

³ “More One Night / Chito (CV: Inori Minase), Yuuri (CV: Yurika Kubo)” VGmdb: the music of visual arts and games. Accessed October 24, 2020.
<https://vgmdb.net/album/71313>

mo aruiteku... ”, the density of sounds in the song is at its highest, but still consists of only voices and the rhythmic background. This minimalism fits in perfectly with the purpose of building atmosphere, as the song is meant to be formed only from the voices of the characters and the natural sounds made by the rain. Throughout the series, the song is also played only with the lyrical melody or hummed by the characters to emphasize this point.

The lyrics of the song are delivered in a simple melody that repeats throughout the song. This melody is ornamented by vocalized harmonies that run alongside the lyrics at varying higher and lower pitches (An example of where this is most notable is 1:30 for the verse and 1:12 for the chorus) and give depth to the sound of the main voices. The harmony sounds as if it was performed by the same two lead voices, and laid over the main singing track in editing. These harmonies also accentuate the buildup to the chorus by increasing in volume towards the end of the verse (1:00 - 1:06).

“Amadare no Uta” has a simple structure, consisting of a short introduction followed by a repeating verse and chorus pattern characterized by a mild increase in volume during the chorus, and a bridge near the end of the song (3:11).

- Play excerpt of bridge (3:05)

To transition between individual verses, the song makes use of the accentuating sounds at the end of the rhythmic pattern (0:48) , while the introductory harmony is used to transition to the next segment after the first chorus and verse segment is completed (1:39). None of these transitions are abrupt and are meant to preserve the simple nature of the song.

The lyrics of Amadare no Uta, in combination with their quick and soft delivery, are perhaps the most defining aspect of the song. In difference to the constant repeating melody, the lyrics change throughout the song and use repetition only for the first words of the verse and the two lines that end the piece (Mata kyou mo nemurenu yoru ni ...). This lyrical diversity accentuates the song while still keeping true to its minimalist core. Even without knowing the meaning of a single word in the lyrics, as was my case when first hearing the song, any serious listener is immediately dominated by the bittersweet emotion that emanates from the lower notes that end off the verse/chorus segments (A moment in the song I feel represents this feeling best is 2:54 - 2:57). Bittersweet emotions are characteristic of the Iyashikei genre⁴, and in Girl's Last Tour, the combination of calming and bittersweet sounds from Amadare no Uta is a major tool in building the environment of the series. Indeed, from fan translations of the song⁵ it is clear that the lyrics themselves embody this feeling, with lines such as "If someday we reach the end, I hope I can laugh together with you" and "Tonight we couldn't sleep again, so we count the sound of raindrops."

In general, the lyrics talk about the sound of raindrops and use it to describe the difficult situation and eventual end unavoidably facing the characters of the show. While the lyrics may seem grim in that the end is mentioned several times, they also bring hope in the message of enjoying life and companionship, with lines such as "Always

⁴ Noh, Susan S. "Nostalgia in Anime: Redefining Japanese Cultural Identity in Global Media Texts." PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2017.

⁵ Pizza Ex. "[English Translation] Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou ED 2/Insert Song-Amadare no Uta/ Chito & Yuuri" Pizza Ex World. Blogspot, January 17, 2018
<http://pizzaexofficial.blogspot.com/2018/01/english-translation-shoujo-shuumatsu.htm>

continuing, the precious moments with you.” A major theme in the show, which relates directly to the lyrics and their delivery, is the characters truly coming to peace with the hopelessness of their situation and finding comfort in being together. In showing the characters being able to sing about their feelings in soft tones, the song represents the characters coming to terms with the world around them as much as it embodies their surroundings.

While its structure follows a simple pattern found in many other songs in popular music, *Amadare no Uta* is much harder to classify within a genre of music than some of the other songs used in *Girl's Last Tour*, such as the clearly pop music introduction and ending theme. The main point I want to make in this podcast is that this is no accident on the part of the artists and creators of the piece, as the song was not created to fit within a particular genre but instead for the sole purpose of creating and embodying the atmosphere and emotional state that the characters live in. If there is any genre that best characterizes the entirety of the song and its purpose, it is the *Iyashikei* genre of the anime itself, representative of how anime music is deeply related to storytelling. In every aspect of the song, from the inventive rhythm to the simple melody and surrounding harmonies, the purpose of creating a song that both embodies the atmosphere of a dead world and represents finding peace within it is crystal clear. Thank you for listening to this podcast!! To end off, why not take some time to listen to the end of *Amadare no Uta*, and step into the shoes of Chito and Yuuri as they watch the rain slowly recede. Also, stay tuned for some fan covers at the end!

-To end, play excerpt from end of song (3:20 - 4:21)

Note: The fan covers at the end are meant to be a fun addition and a way to show how anime music is unique in the great creativity of its fanbase.

Amadare no Uta Romaji Lyrics⁶ (English translation available in Bibliography):

Ima sekai ga ugokidashita arayuru ongaku to tomoni

Futo ki ga tsukeba itsumademo sou kurikaesu you ni

Furidashita ame no oto wa zutto tooku made hibiita

Owaru koto nai michi no hate made sou todoite iru hazu

Dokomademo aruiteku kimi to te wo tsunagi nagara

Itsuka tadoritsuita sono toki wa tomoni waraeru you ni

Mata kyou mo nemurenu yoru ni amadare no oto wo kazoeta

Kitto onaji yozora wo miage kokoro tsunagu you ni

Soshite asahi ga nobori ichinichi ga hajimari owaru

Kitto nando demo kurikaeshi sou ongaku no you ni

⁶ Pizza Ex. “[English Translation] Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou ED 2/Insert Song-Amadare no Uta/ Chito & Yuuri” Pizza Ex World. Blogspot, January 17, 2018
<http://pizzaexofficial.blogspot.com/2018/01/english-translation-shoujo-shuumatsu.html>

Kore kara mo kono fureezu zutto tsudzuku to omotteta

Hajimari areba owari mo kuru sa

Demo mata aeru hazu sa

Itsumademo tsudzuiteku kimi to no taisetsu na hibi

Futari hanare sou de hanarenai

Sonna ki ga shite iru yo

Mata kyou mo nemurenu yoru ni yozora no hoshi wo kazoedasu

Kitto kazoe owaru koto nado nai to shiri nagara

Furiyamanai oto no nami ga hirogari tsudzuke teta

Dokomademo aruiteku kimi to te wo tsunagi nagara

Itsuka tadoritsuita sono toki wa tomoni waraeru you ni

Mata kyou mo nemurenu yoru ni amadare no oto wo kazoeta

Kitto onaji yozora wo miage kokoro tsunagu you ni

Annotated Bibliography

Hattori, Keisuke. "Amadare no Uta." *More one night*. Kadokawa, 2017.

The main piece that will be used for the podcast analysis, “Amadare no Uta,” meaning song of raindrops, is a song composed by Keisuke Hattori for the anime Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou. It was performed by Inori Minase and Yurika Kubo, and is part of the “More one night” album, a secondary album for the anime composed of two ending songs that accompany the main soundtrack. The audio for this song was obtained from a Youtube upload by user Magestzika at this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ky0YYa_kpl4

Tinn, Matthew. “Girls' Last Tour Review.” Anime UK News. Anime UK News, May 12, 2019. <https://animeuknews.net/2019/05/girls-last-tour-review/>.

This article is a review of the anime “Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou” on the Anime website “AnimeUK News.” Of most relevance to this podcast piece, the article mentions the strong presence of music and sound design in the show.

“More One Night / Chito (CV: Inori Minase), Yuuri (CV: Yurika Kubo)” VGmdb: the music of visual arts and games. Accessed October 24, 2020. <https://vgmdb.net/album/71313>

This is the entry on the album “More One Night” in the record website VGmdb, which contains a lot of information about different anime soundtracks. This source identifies the author and artists of “Amadare no Uta” and the other songs in the soundtrack of Girl’s Last Tour.

Noh, Susan S. "Nostalgia in Anime: Redefining Japanese Cultural Identity in Global Media Texts." PhD diss., Georgetown University, 2017.

This dissertation explores the relationship between Japanese Culture and anime as part of global media. Of great importance for the piece “Amadare no Uta,” it also focuses on the historical origins of the *Iyashikei* (meaning “healing” or “calming”) genre in post-war Japan, and studies its first examples and later importance in the animated movie “Kimi no na wa,” one of the most popular anime films worldwide.

PIMUS RE:Z-A. “雨だれの歌(Amadare no Uta) [Hatsune Miku & Kagamine Rin]-Vocaloid Cover” Youtube. Youtube, December 29, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FleL-oJzIBw>

This is the first of the fan covers that will be played at the end of the podcast and is a cover of “Amadare no Uta” in the Vocaloid style (Synthetic voices) by Youtube user PIMUS RE: Z-A. In this cover, the voices of the characters Chito and Yuuri are attributed to the Vocaloid characters Hatsune Miku and Kagamine Rin. This cover is important in that it represents the notable Vocaloid trend in Japan.

Pizza Ex. “[English Translation] Shoujo Shuumatsu Ryokou ED 2/Insert Song-Amadare no Uta/ Chito & Yuuri” Pizza Ex World. Blogspot, January 17, 2018
<http://pizzaexofficial.blogspot.com/2018/01/english-translation-shoujo-shuumatsu.html>

This is an english translation of Amadare no Uta by blogspot user Pizza Ex, who runs a blog dedicated to translations of anime songs and has also worked on AMV's. While this is not an official translation, I have verified a few of the lines with google translate and they mostly agree up to rearrangement and use of synonyms. The Romaji (Japanese Romanization) lyrics on this website also agree with what can be found elsewhere such as on animeasialyrics.fr:
<https://animeasialyrics.fr/anime/shoujo-shuumatsu-ryokou/amadare-no-uta-33902-3203.html> .

R3 Music Box. “Amadare no Uta/Chito, Yuuri [Music Box] (Anime "Girls' Last Tour" Insert Song)” Youtube. Youtube, September 6, 2018.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Q-ccH8wc1Q>

This is the second of the three fan covers that will be played at the end of the podcast and is a cover of “Amadare no Uta” in a music box style by Youtube user R3 Music Box.

Shironi, Tuntown. “Amadare no Uta - Girls' Last Tour - Recorder quintet” Youtube. Youtube, January 5, 2018.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXDJacDU1tE>

This is the third of the three fan covers that will be played at the end of the podcast and is a Recorder quintet cover of “Amadare no Uta” by Youtube user Tuntown Shironi.

Kenmochi, Hideki. "VOCALOID and Hatsune Miku phenomenon in Japan." In *Interdisciplinary Workshop on Singing Voice*. 2010.

This article provides an introduction to the “Vocaloid” phenomenon, which rose to popularity about ten years ago and consists of digitally synthesized singing voices that are used by creators as a replacement for human singers in songs. Most notable in the context of anime music, the popularity of Vocaloid was also due to the identification of these songs with the animated character “Hatsune Miku,” who remains a recognized figure in popular culture. The popularity of vocaloid will be used as another aspect of the research done on AMV’s, and is also relevant to other work of the composer of the podcast piece.