

A PURE GUNDAM MAGAZINE THAT PROVIDES  
INFORMATION AT THE FOREFRONT OF GUNDAM



# GUNDAM FORWARD

OPENING  
TOPIC

# 2023

LATEST GUNDAM  
DEVELOPMENTS

SPECIAL  
FEATURE

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM

# the WITCH from MERCURY





# GUNDAM FORWARD

This is the ninth issue of *Gundam Forward*, a Gundam magazine dedicated to “reporting from the forefront of Gundam” by providing the most recent Gundam information and professional modelers’ Gunpla production techniques, as well as other useful information.

This issue features *Mobile Suit Gundam: The Witch from Mercury*, the most recent Gundam TV series after a seven-year hiatus, and introduces the work’s appeal through commentary, Gunpla introductions, and how-to articles on Gunpla construction. In the first feature, we will discuss how Gundam has evolved by 2023 and look at the most recent and popular Gunpla.



2023  
INFORMATION

GUNDAM LATEST

A PURE GUNDAM MAGAZINE THAT PROVIDES INFORMATION AT THE FOREFRONT OF GUNDAM

# GUNDAM FORWARD

HOBBY JAPAN MOOK

GUNDAM APPAREL

MOBILE SUIT

GUNPLA ITEM REVIEW

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COLLECTION

THE WITCH FROM MERCURY

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\*All prices in this document are inclusive of tax.  
\*This book's information is current as of November 2022.

# Gundam developments in 2023

## GUNDAM NEXT FUTURE -ROAD TO 2025-

Gundam Next Future: Road to 2025, a series of events to mark the 45th anniversary of Gundam and Gunpla, was announced at the Gundam Conference on September 29, 2022. It is made up of three projects: visual development, the *Gundam Metaverse Project*, and on-site events. Let's take a look at the first two.

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Animation Powered by Live2D

### Three works set in the Universal Century will be aired on television!

To make the Gundam world more accessible to those who watched *The Witch from Mercury*, three movies set in the Universal Century—the original timeline of the Gundam series—will be aired on TV. They will each be four episodes long, running from January to March 2023: *Mobile Suit Gundam Hathaway*, *Mobile Suit Gundam Thunderbolt*, and *Mobile Suit Gundam Narrative*. Following that, the second season of *The Witch from Mercury* will begin.



*Mobile Suit Gundam Hathaway*



*Mobile Suit Gundam Thunderbolt*



*Mobile Suit Gundam Narrative*

### Gundam works are also featured on the BS11 Gundam Hour!

*Mobile Suit Gundam 00: Season 1*, *Mobile Suit Gundam: Iron-Blooded Orphans*, and *Mobile Suit Gundam: SEED Destiny* are currently being aired on BS11 Gundam Hour. In January, they will show the first season of *Mobile Suit Gundam: The Witch from Mercury*. Check out *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED* because it is going to be made into a movie!



### Gundam connects the world

The *Gundam Metaverse Project* is the first framework being developed by Bandai Namco Group. It aims to bring people together by using the Gundam franchise. It provides a gathering place for fans all over the world to discover new content and interact with one another in a variety of categories, with each community linked by Bandai Namco IDs. The Gundam metaverse's main street is depicted below. Can you see various Gundam-related content in what appears to be the interior of a space colony? Finally, a fantasy world where Gundam fans from all over the world can come together and have fun regardless of geography or language will be a reality!



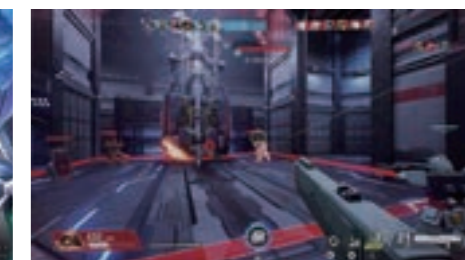
### Gunpla Colony

From September 28 to November 1, 2022, the *Gundam Base Virtual World* was open for testing where fans could submit and share photos of their Gunpla. They intend to add a new feature that will allow you to scan Gunpla and display it as digital data. The "Gunplscan Battle" is also in the works. The world of *Gundam Build Fighters* is becoming a reality!



### Esports colony

In addition to the Gunpla Colony, an esports colony is being developed. *Gundam Evolution*, the first Gundam esports title, has been released for PC, and the home console version will be available from December 2022.



### Mellow, an interactive AI character

*Mellow*, an interactive AI character, is currently in development. She will communicate with Gundam fans via video live-streaming. In the Gundam Metaverse, she will be the prototype AI. She will act like an amusement park character, greeting visitors, acting as a friend, and assisting new people to get along better by providing conversation starters.



# GUNPLA NEW KIT REVIEW

## MGEX STRIKE FREEDOM GUNDAM

The Master Grade Extreme (MGEX) MG high-end brand aims for the "ultimate rendition of a mobile suit" by combining plastic with various materials and Bandai Spirits' technology. The ZGMF-X20A Strike Freedom Gundam is the second installment in the series. Its concept is "reproducing the superb metallic finish in a Gunpla." The striking gold internal frame is recreated with six different part styles, including three specially treated and two types of metallic molds combined with etched stickers. Furthermore, because the exteriors almost entirely conceal the inner frames, the frame exposed through the exterior joints and gaps stands out even more when revealed. Let's take a look at the MGEX Strike Freedom Gundam, which has been meticulously designed down to the last detail!



THE "MOST AUTHENTIC METALLIC FEEL" RECREATED IN A GUNPLA!

**POINT-1**  
Strong silhouette with a visible internal frame

▲ The silhouette of the MGEX Freedom Gundam indicates that it is a significantly upgraded version of the Freedom Gundam. Because it is an MGEX model, it looks voluminous in 3D. The new design emphasizes additional verniers and armaments. Gold frames visible across the body accentuate the figure's color scheme and add to its unique appearance.

**POINT-2** Highly detailed head and chest area



◀ The intricately designed head appears to be more powerful than any Strike Freedom Gundam kit created to date. Its central antenna, 31 mm machine gun for melee combat, and side ducts on the head are all gold. Decorative molds are visible on some of the chest exteriors, lending it a more mechanical feel.

**POINT-3** Includes painstakingly crafted character figures



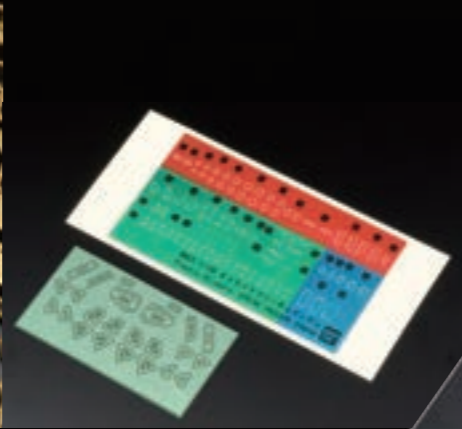
▲ Bandai Spirits is also known for producing high-quality character figures that come with Gunpla. This kit includes Kira Yamato in a pilot suit and the Orb uniform, as well as Lacus Clyne in her Eternal Captain's uniform. You can see their faces, costumes, and even their fingers!

**POINT-4**  
Internal mechanism visible through the transparent exterior

▶ Some of the outer parts are transparent (e.g. the shoulder armor and the forearm armor's red portion), allowing you to see the mechanical details inside. This is an intriguing way to highlight the inner frame.

**MGEX Strike Freedom Gundam**  
● Manufacturer: BANDAI SPIRITS Hobby Division Creation Dept. ● 15,400 yen, now on sale ● 1/100, approx. 18 cm  
● Plastic kit





**POINT-5** Combining different styles creates a fantastic metallic feel

▲ The model features "the most authentic metallic feel ever in Gunpla history" as the result of combining three specially processed and two metallic molds with etched stickers, totaling six patterns. It conveys the metallic feel of the inner frame. In the top-left image, you can see the copper-gold coating, yellow-gold coating, white-gold coating, and metallic molding. The image on the right shows etched stickers that replicate mechanical details that molds cannot reproduce (used for chest ducts, shin side ducts, and other body parts). The above 3D metallic stickers are used for sensors and other parts. They add more depth than colored stickers.



**POINT-7** The opening exteriors reveal more of the internal frame

▲ The inner verniers on the shoulder armor protrude when the upper cover is opened. The front and back waist armor, as well as the calf covers, partially unfold revealing verniers inside. As the exterior opens up, more gold inner frames become visible, as if it is transforming into a new form!



**POINT-6** Deployable wings and leg movement

▲ The Super DRAGOON, mobile weapon pods, can extend the bases of their wings and deploy cover parts to simulate ejection. Furthermore, this kit can mimic the distinctive flying posture with closed legs seen in the anime's opening sequence with the retractable crotch joint.

**POINT-8** A powerful display!

▲ Each joint is well-articulated, ensuring any movements do not distort its humanoid form. As a result, it can strike dynamic yet natural poses with or without armaments. It has two hand parts: one that is static with interchangeable fingers and one that is movable and uses the Emotion Manipulator SP structure. A plus for modelers.

# All 5 parts of the theatrical release of *Gundam Reconguista in G* concluded with simultaneous releases on Blu-ray and DVD!

Yoshiyuki Tomino created and directed the television anime *Gundam Reconguista in G*. This 26-episode work has finally ended and will be re-edited into a five-part series with many new cuts. *Reconguista in G IV* and *Reconguista in G V*, the fourth and fifth installments, will be released on Blu-ray and DVD on February 24 and March 24, 2023, respectively. The Blu-ray Special Limited Edition, Blu-ray Perfect Pack, Blu-ray Standard Edition, and DVD will be available on February 24 and March 24, 2023.



Theatrical movies *Gundam Reconguista in G IV: Shouting Love Into a Fierce Fight* and *Gundam Reconguista in G V: Crossing the Line Between Life and Death* Blu-ray & DVD  
 ● Bandai Namco Filmworks ● Scheduled for February 24, 2023 (IV), Scheduled for March 24, 2023 (V)

Blu-ray Special Limited Edition  
 ● 9680 yen each ● 128 minutes approx. (main story BD approx. 103 minutes (main story approx. 101 minutes + video bonus approx. 2 minutes) + bonus BD approx. 25 minutes) (IV), 122 minutes schedule (main story BD approx. 97 minutes (main story approx. 95 minutes + video bonus approx. 2 minutes) + bonus BD approx. 25 minutes) (V)

Blu-ray Perfect Pack (First Limited Run)  
 ● 13200 yen each. Limited sale at A-on STORE and Premium Bandai  
 \* Other specifications are the same as the Blu-ray exclusive limited edition except for the above.

Blu-ray Special Limited Edition  
 ● 7480 yen each (BD), 6380 yen each (DVD) ● 103 minutes approx. (101 minutes for the main story + 2 minutes for the video bonus) (IV), 97 minutes approx. (95 minutes for the main story + 2 minutes for the video bonus) (V) ● Linear PCM (BD), Dolby Digital (DVD)

## Blu-ray special limited edition extras

### Included bonuses

Special booklet *Recompedia in G the Movie* (56 pages) and Special Blu-ray Disc *Yoshiyuki Tomino to You: Part 2: Update of G*, documentary, Mobile Suit Academy, *The Return of G-Reco Koshien*

### Other specifications

The box set includes a newly-drawn illustration by Ikuro Kuwana (Animation Director) and a newly-drawn special jacket by Ippei Katabe (Mechanical Designer)

### Blu-ray Perfect Pack (Limited First Edition) Special Bonuses

Included bonuses  
 Theatrical version storyboard (approx. 600 pages)  
 Theatrical version recording script (2 volumes)

### Shared bonuses

- Included bonus  
Booklet (16 pages)
- Bonus footage  
Trailer / TVCM / Special trailer (\*visual only)
- Audio bonus  
Audio Commentary



▲ New commemorative illustration by character designer Kenichi Yoshida.

## TV Series on COMPACT Blu-ray Disc!

*Reconguista in G* COMPACT Blu-ray Box will be released on March 24, 2023. It includes 26 TV episodes as well as video extras such as "The Beginning of Gundam Reconguista in G - From Yoshiyuki Tomino to You" and "Reconguista in G - From the Past to the Future," which are housed in a newly designed box by Kenichi Yoshida, character designer for this series. Furthermore, the A-on Store limited edition will include a newly designed storage box that can hold the five-part Blu-ray special theatrical version limited edition.

*Reconguista in G* COMPACT Blu-ray BOX  
 ● Publisher: Namco Bandai Filmworks ● 19800 yen  
 Scheduled for March 24, 2023  
 ● 695 min. approx. (600 min. main story + 95 min. video extras) ● Linear PCM



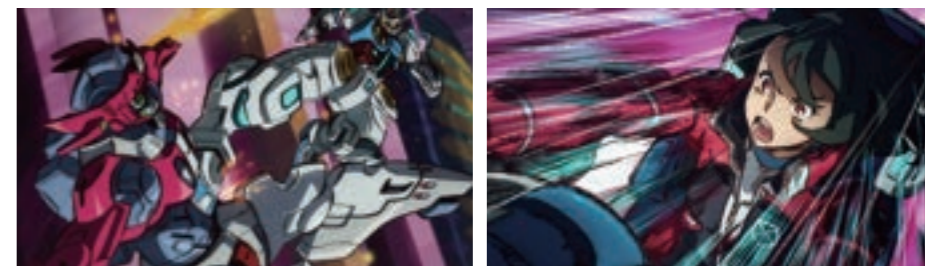
## It comes with Ippei Katabe's special jacket illustrations!



## *Gundam Reconguista in G the Movie IV: Shouting Love Into a Fierce Fight*

### Story

Photon Batteries, a new energy source, have the potential to help combat global energy depletion. Bellri Zenam and Aida Surugan embark on a spaceship named Megafauna in search of this unearthly energy. Arriving at its destination - the Venus Globe colonies near Venus, Aida meets La Gu, president of the Hermes Foundation monopolizing the Photon Batteries after a battle with G-IT Corps who plan to return to earth on the Reconguista operation.



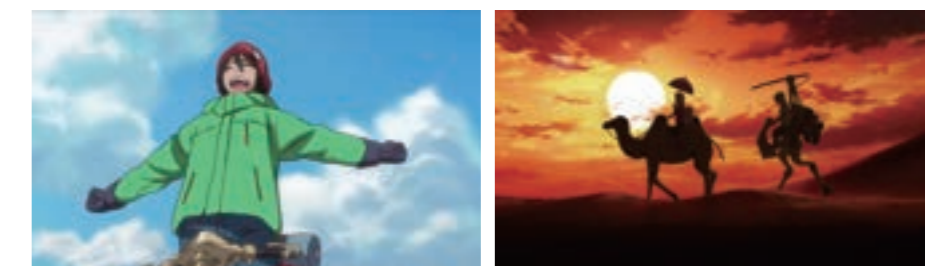
*If you don't stop the war, I'll resort to using Photon Torpedos!*



## *Gundam Reconguista in G V: Crossing the Line Between Life and Death*

### Story

The Megafauna carrying Bellri and others flee the Venus Globe colonies in pursuit of the G-IT Corps. However, the global war has deteriorated dramatically. The Capital Army, Amelia's forces, and the Dorette Fleet, who have been fighting outside the atmosphere, clash even more violently in the vicinity of the forbidding Kashiba Mikoshi. During the conflict, Bellri begins to dream of eradicating the tragedy and hatred brought on by war, while his sister Aida, who has learned of the danger it poses to humanity, seeks a new era. The Capital Army, on the other hand, joins forces with the G-IT Corps, and the Amelian Army, bolstered by new troops brought by the Megafauna, joins forces with the Dorette Fleet. They form a mighty swarm of mobile suits capable of sinking space battleships one after the other into the battlefield. The space battle continues, claiming countless lives. The forces are drawn into the earth's gravity, and the final battle takes place in the atmosphere. Standing on Earth, G-Self is about to lead Bellri to the end of his long journey.



*We will be fighting as pirates on this ship, Megafauna*

## The Blu-ray, DVD, and 4K UHD Blu-ray of *MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: Cucuruz Doan's Island* released on November 25!

*MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: Cucuruz Doan's Island*, which hit theaters on June 3, became available on Blu-ray and DVD on November 25, 2022. A special press conference for *MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM Cucuruz Doan's Island* on Zaku Day is included on the bonus disc, as is the sixth draft of the scenario digital archive (finalized draft) (\*still image).



▲ Limited edition Blu-ray unfolded. The special limited edition Blu-ray will include a disc case designed by Yoshikazu Yasuhiko, as well as a new jacket with illustrations by Atsushi Tamura and Yamatoworks.

*MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: Cucuruz Doan's Island* Blu-ray & DVD  
 ● Publisher: Bandai Namco Filmworks ● 9900 yen (Blu-ray special limited edition), 5000 yen (Blu-ray regular edition), 4000 yen (DVD regular edition), 7000 yen (4K ULTRA HD Blu-ray) ● 112 minutes of the main story BD (108 minutes of the main story + 4 minutes of the video bonus), 51 minutes of the bonus BD (Only the Blu-ray special limited edition includes this bonus disk) ● Linear PCM (BD), Dolby Digital (DVD)

## *SD Gundam World Heroes* Blu-ray Collection Box will be released on January 23, 2023!!

*SD Gundam World Heroes* Blu-ray box set is now available. In addition to the previous *SD Gundam World Sangoku Souketsuden*, the comics *SD Gundam World Sangoku Souketsuden Soushouki* and *SD Gundam World Sangoku Souketsuden Enkotan*, the package includes a novel (32 pages) written by the series' director, Doji Waita, a special liner note (32 pages), and special CARDASS cards (10 cards).



*SD Gundam World Heroes* Blu-ray Collection Box  
 ● Publisher: Bandai Namco Film Works ● 55000 yen, Approx. 770 minutes (Approx. 520 minutes for the main story + Approx. 250 minutes for the special bonus) ● Linear PCM ● Only Available at A-on STORE, and Premium Bandai

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM

# the WITCH from MERCURY

*Mobile Suit Gundam: The Witch from Mercury*, the latest Gundam TV series after a seven-year hiatus, premiered on October 2, 2022, introducing many new elements such as a female lead protagonist, a school setting, duels, and so on. In this special issue, we look at the work's worldview, main characters, and mobile suits, as well as going behind the scenes with the script composer, Ichirou Ohkouchi, MOGUMO, who designed the characters, and mechanical designer JNTHED.

As for the main Gunpla articles, we introduce the HG Gundam Lfrith, the main suit in the *Prologue*, as well as the HG Gundam Aerial, the series' leading mech, each with a distinct theme and built by professional modelers. We also provide step-by-step assembly instructions for the HG Gundam Aerial for intermediate and advanced builders.

Every Sunday at 5 p.m. October 2022, on 28 MBS/TBS affiliated TV stations throughout Japan. Various streaming sites offer free streaming with unlimited viewing, pay-as-you-go, and advertisements.

BANDAI SPIRITS 1/144 scale plastic kit  
"High Grade" GUNDAM AERIAL  
XVX-016 GUNDAM AERIAL  
modeled by sannoji