'GENE' THERAPY

TECH TV GETS THE ANIME 'SHAFT'

What's the sci-fi anime series with the funky name? *Geneshaft*, baby Awww, yeah. And that's the series TechTV has picked up to appear in its Anime Unleashed programming block.

"*Geneshaft* has a particularly strong hard-sci-fi vision of the future," says Laura Civiello, TechTV's director of acquisitions and commissions. "With anime unleashed, we especiallly aim for anime that thoughtfully explores the information of humans and technology. Its future society and its relation to genetic engineering and other breakthroughs are richly detailed, and this was one of the big draws for us."

Directed by Kazuki Akane (of *Heat Guy J* and *Vision of Escaflowne* fame) and licensed by Bandai Entertainment, *Geneshaft* ran 13 episodes in Japan in 2001. It was produced by Bandai Visual and Studio Satelight, known for their combining cel and computer generated animation in *Metropolis*, *Macross Zero* and the *Vampire Hunter D: Bloodlust* Movie.

After centuries of abusing and exploiting the earth, humanity is a race on the verge of extinction. An elite group of scientists propose a radical and desperate solution—using genetic engineering to create a new race of humans gifted with special abilities. The plan is a success, and humanity's future seems secure.

Two hundred years later, a mysterious artifact appears in orbit between Earth and the moon after scientists discover the ruins of an ancient alien civilization on Jupiter's moon Ganymede. This seemingly harmless object has the potential to obliterate all of humanity and the entire earth as well. A specially assembled team is sent on the ship Bilkis with the prototype robot "Shaft" to investigate the artifact. But the artifact itself is the least of their worries. The Bilkis crew is wanted for desertion for leaving on their mission without apparent orders, the Shaft still has kinks to be worked out, and a terrorist who will stop at nothing to ensure that the mission fails is hiding amongst the team.

"*Geneshaft* has great action, a complex and well-thought-out future world, strong characters and a well-done combination of CG and cel work," says Civiello. "We're excited to show it!" *Geneshaft* is tentatively scheduled to premiere next March. ■ Caitlin Moriarity

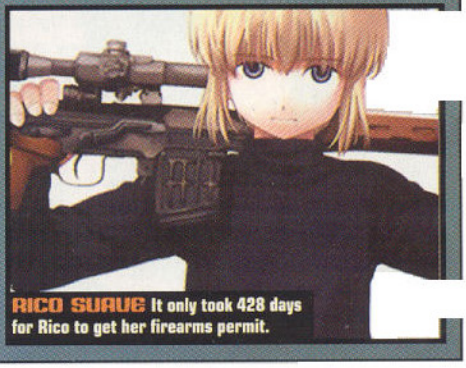
GIRL POWER Mia Lotus (left) and Remmy Leistars are two of the super-powered, genetically-engineered crew of the Shaft.

TUNE IN TOKYO

CHECK OUT THE LATEST ANIME THAT'S ON THE AIR ONLY IN JAPAN

GUNSLINGER GIRL

Every society has people who are homeless, friendless and alone. These unfortunates are invisible to most people...and it's this invisibility that makes them so valuable to the Social Welfare Agency, a sinister consortium masquerading as a benevolent not-for-profit group. Angelica, Claes, Henrietta, Rico and Triela are five young women who have been kidnapped and brainwashed by the Social Welfare Agency. Trained as deadly assassins and given mechanical components, these girls have lost any vestige of a conscience and kill without a trace of remorse. But these cyborg assassins may not be as dead inside as their employers believe. Produced by Bandai Visual in Japan, who also made an accompanying Playstation 2 game. There's no word on if or when it will find its way over here, but the manga (first run in *Dengeki Daioh*) came out from ADV Manga in November. ■ CM



RICO SUAVE It only took 428 days for Rico to get her firearms permit.