



# MONSTER MASH

**THE YOUNG, WRESTLING-CRAZED, COSTUME-CLAD KAIJU COLLECTIVE TURNS NO-HOLDS-BARRED THROW-DOWNS INTO STRUGGLES FOR WORLD CONTROL**

Imagine being strapped down à la *Clockwork Orange* and forced to watch Japanese monster movies, early Pee-wee Herman, and old WWF reruns, while drops of Kikkoman soy sauce are squirted into your eyeballs, and you've almost got the idea behind Kaiju Big Battle.

Kaiju originally began in 1996 as an impromptu Halloween performance with cardboard cityscapes and makeshift costumes. Incited by a three-person crew of Boston-based DIY indie-rock art geeks, this riot act of entertainment has since manifested itself as a live-action comedy show that attracts both parents with their 10-year-olds and rock-and-roll kids alike. Many of the recurring participants were found among the audiences in the galleries, rec rooms, and gymnasiums where Kaiju has performed. The threesome imagined it as a performance piece that incorporated American Gladiators and Japanese anime, and in a matter of years those concepts have been realized in the larger-than-life characters who battle it out over the fate of the world as we know it. The monster collective has grown to forty, and the crowd has gone wild.

Kaiju's pseudo-mythological landscape has the classic struggle between good and evil down. Witness mad scientist Dr. Cube, whose cube-and-crossbones logo is plastered across New York City; he and his posse attempt world domination only to be thwarted by the

"heroes," those who live relatively human lives on Earth but grow to Greek god-like proportions to fight the good fight. Forget Mount Olympus, though. These matches take place either in the ring or in the Kaiju Danger Cage, a steel enclosure suspended eight feet in the air.

It's easy to take in the spectacle all stock-jawed and drooling, but the thing is Kaiju closely mirrors our own social and political climate. One theory claims that the leaders of the Kaiju Regulatory Commission (a select group of humans who, aware of Kaiju's existence, protect the world's population from the pain of its throw-downs) is in fact just a circle jerk of world leaders who are hell-bent on destroying democracy for their own personal gain, using Kaiju solely as a front. You don't have to look far to find an American politician on whom these KRC characters might be based. As it has developed since the late '90s, Kaiju has created its own self-contained universe where society is satirically reflected in the wrestling ring. A sort of Disney world for the ironic intelligentsia.

Stateside, Kaiju has invaded NYC, Philadelphia, and Boston. You can expect the first book by and about Kaiju, which will include the Kaiju Survival Guide, to be published in 2004. The show's scope grows in accordance with its fan base. Seems like world domination might not be out of the question. **Joshua Seidner**

**Photography Michael Halsband**  
Printing and processing Color Edge Art

For information: [www.kaiju.com](http://www.kaiju.com)

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**The young, wrestling-crazed, costume-clad Kaiju collective turns no-holds-barred throw-downs into struggles for world control**

By Joshua Seidner

Photography by Michael Halsband

V, September/October 2003

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