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****29 Years Later, Berserk's 1997 Anime Finally Gets a Season 2, and the First Episode is Incredible****

By ****Hannah****

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Berserk fans have spent years waiting for a proper anime return, and now a new adaptation has arrived from an unexpected place. On April 25, 2026, fan animation team ARCHE released the first episode of Berserk: The Dark Age on YouTube, a passion project built as a continuation of the beloved 1997 anime. For longtime followers of Kentaro Miura's dark fantasy epic, it is the closest thing yet to the sequel many have wanted for decades. Rather than reimagining the series from scratch, Berserk: The Dark Age picks up with the Black Swordsman era and drops viewers back into Guts' brutal world after the Eclipse. That alone makes it immediately compelling, but what truly sets the project apart is how carefully it tries to bridge the gap between Miura's original manga and the unfinished promise of past anime adaptations.

****A Fan-Made Anime Return That Understands Berserk****

ARCHE's first episode revisits the opening stretch of Guts' post-Eclipse journey, effectively serving as a continuation of the 1997 anime while restoring key manga material that earlier adaptations skipped. Most notably, the episode includes Puck, the elf companion omitted from the original television version despite being important to the early Black Swordsman arc. That single addition already makes this adaptation feel more complete. The project is framed by ARCHE as a labor of love, with the studio openly describing Berserk: The Dark Age as a fan-animated "Season 2" to the 1997 series. The team says it created the episode to honor both Berserk's legacy and Kentaro Miura's memory, and that reverence is visible throughout the production. It is less an attempt to reinvent Berserk than to finally give one of anime's most unfinished stories a continuation. What makes the premiere land so well is its tone. It captures the bleak, oppressive atmosphere that has always defined Guts' world, leaning into the grim violence and emotional wreckage left behind by the Eclipse. The result feels closer in spirit to Miura's manga than many official adaptations, which is exactly why fans have responded so strongly to it.

****Why Berserk Fans Needed This Now****

The timing of Berserk: The Dark Age matters almost as much as the episode itself. The franchise has been stuck in limbo for years, especially on the anime side. While Berserk received the 1997 series, the Golden Age film trilogy, and later Berserk (2016), no adaptation has fully covered Miura's sprawling story. Huge portions of the manga remain untouched in animated form. The manga has also slowed dramatically. After Miura's death in 2021, his close friend Kouji Mori and Studio Gaga resumed the story, continuing from Miura's notes and discussions. But more than six months have passed since the latest chapter in Young Animal, leaving readers waiting once again. With Guts trapped in a mysterious cave and his allies moving toward open war with Griffith, the pause has only heightened demand for more Berserk.

****What It Means****

That is what makes Berserk: The Dark Age feel so important. It may be unofficial, but it understands exactly what fans have been missing: a faithful, emotionally heavy continuation that respects Miura's world. After years of false starts and unfinished adaptations, Berserk finally has a new episode worth getting excited about.

After digging deeper into the buzz across major forums, here is a more complete picture of what people are saying about the fan-made *Berserk: The Dark Age*—a project hailed for its passion and authenticity but scrutinized in the same breath for its amateur execution.

🏰 The Enthusiastic Praise: "A Dream Come True"

* ****Fulfilling a Decades-Long Dream****: Multiple sources highlight how the project finally provides the continuation fans have wanted for nearly 30 years. ScreenRant was a key voice in this, describing the first episode as ****"incredible"*** and noting that it "captures the bleak, oppressive atmosphere that has always defined Guts' world". The review concluded that the project is "less an attempt to reinvent Berserk than to finally give one of anime's most unfinished stories a continuation".

* ****Restoring What Was Lost****: The inclusion of the elf ****Puck****, a character omitted from the 1997 anime, is frequently praised as a sign of the project's faithfulness to Kentaro Miura's original manga.

* ****A Passionate Labor of Love****: The studio behind the project, ****ARCHE****, described *Berserk: The Dark Age* as a fan-animated "Season 2" to the 1997 series,

creating the episode "to honor both Berserk's legacy and Kentaro Miura's memory, and that reverence is visible throughout the production".

- * ****Nailing the 90s Vibe****: Fans on NeoGAF appreciated the faithful aesthetic, with one user commenting, "Bit of a slow start but it is wild that this entire thing is made by fans. Awesome job. They really nailed the 1997 vibes, too."

- * ****Quick & Positive Buzz****: A popular post on 9gag captured the casual enthusiasm, saying it was ****"surprisingly quite good. Faithfully dark and gory. But funny scene is still funny."****

🔍 The Detailed Critique: "An Amateur Work, and It Shows"

This is the most consistent and detailed part of the conversation, with dedicated fans dissecting nearly every frame of the first episode.

- * ****A Nuanced Administrator's Verdict****: A staff member on ****Skullknight.net****, a central hub for the ***Berserk*** fandom, offered the most thorough and balanced perspective. They opened their review by acknowledging the "enormous amount of effort that likely went into this project, and the enthusiasm of the people who made it" before stating plainly: ****"Now that being said, it's an amateur work and it shows, whether in the storyboarding, artwork, animation or voice acting."****

- * ****Specific Technical & Creative Flaws****: The same reviewer delved into a litany of specific issues:

- * ****Confused Storytelling****: They questioned the logic of presenting the project as a "season 2" when it remakes the first episode. They also noted the confusing choice to start with "two days earlier" and an overall feeling that the timing of suspenseful moments was "off."

- * ****Odd Creative Choices****: The decision to credit ****Studio Gaga and Dark Horse Comics**** was criticized, as these entities don't own the rights to the original Black Swordsman arc. The use of the much-maligned 2016 series' title card was also described as "regrettable."

- * ****Poor Voice Acting & Audio****: This was a recurring criticism. The NeoGAF user cited "the voice acting and the music not being as good as the original" as the worst part, while the Skullknight reviewer found the voice-over introduction so bad they "had me struggling not to close off the window.". They later added that the "Voice acting is also really rough, as is the audio mixing. That more than anything made it kind of hard to watch for me."

- * ****Stiff, Uninspired Animation****: Multiple sources described the animation as stiff, with a ****"sliding PNG" look**** to some movements. The MyAnimeList review called the CGI "stiff, artificial, and clearly poorly integrated with the 2D elements" and said the action was "weightless, without impact."

- * ****Questionable Adaptations****: The reviewer on Skullknight.net meticulously compared scenes to the manga and the '97 anime, pointing out moments where the fan project made the action less cool, the plot less logical, or the characters less

competent. For example, they criticized the ambush scene for making Guts look slow, and the climactic cannon shot as "really underwhelming."

💎 The Pragmatic Hope: "Expect a Slow Burn"

Beyond the praise and critique, many fans are discussing the realistic, grounded context of the project.

- * **The One-Man Army**: The Russian site **Dead Brush** reported that all the key animation is being done by **a single person under the pseudonym Arche**. This fact has tempered expectations for the project's speed and scale.

- * **Slow Release Schedule**: The same report noted that the team has warned fans not to expect a regular weekly release. The current plan is to release a new episode roughly **every three months**, with the first season planned to span **eight episodes**.

The conversation paints a picture of a community that is deeply grateful for the passion project but also highly protective of the source material, holding it to a standard that only the most dedicated fans can. I hope this even deeper dive gives you a complete sense of the buzz. Let me know if you want to explore any of these points further.