

A Saudi Female Character and Fighting Stage to appear in SNK “KING OF FIGHTERS XIV”! “Manga Productions” from Saudi Arabia held the Character and Stage Design Competition

Manga Productions (based in Riyadh) and SNK Corporation (based in Suita, Osaka) signed an agreement on the 16th of November to bring a Saudi inspired character and fighting stage into the opponent-dueling battle game “KING OF FIGHTERS” (KOF).



Last September, via its social media accounts across a wide area of the Middle East, Manga Productions held a design competition to find a new Saudi inspired character and fighting stage to appear in an upcoming KOF video game. One character and one stage were selected from among more than 300 entries from countries such as Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iraq, UAE and Oman.

Manga Productions and SNK formed a selection committee, with the selections being made on the 18th of October at SNK head office. The selection committee is comprised of 13 people, with SNK represented by ten people, including King of Fighters series director: Yasuyuki Oda, Character Designer: Eisuke Ogura and Art Director: Nobuyuki Kuroki, and Manga Productions represented by three people, including CEO: Essam Bukhary and COO: Amr Almaddah.

Mashaal Al-Barrak, a 22-year-old female Saudi university student, won the first prize with her design of “Najd”, a female warrior character with mysterious superpowers. Zainab Al-Lawaty, a female entrant from Oman, won the best fighting stage design contest with her new battle arena featuring Riyadh’s skyline and Masmak Fort.



The awards for both winning designs were announced at MiSK Global Forum (MGF), held on the 16th of November (Thu). Forum participants from Japan included SNK Chairman: Zhihui Ge, SQUARE ENIX President: Yosuke Matsuda and Toei Animation Senior Director: Shinji Shimizu, who all spoke about the emerging contents industry in the region and the hope for stronger cultural collaborations between Saudi Arabia and Japan.



■ The following are some of the comments from the contract signing event

□ Bader Al-Asaker, Manga Productions Chairman and the Secretary General at MiSK Foundation, spoke about MiSK and Manga Productions role in taking initiatives, encouraging innovation, and fostering talents in the region.

□ Essam Bukhary, the CEO of Manga Productions, said that this collaboration is only the first step for bigger projects and partnerships in the near future which in turn will help bring contents from the region to the global stage.

□ Zhihui Ge, SNK Chairman, who attended MGF and the awarding ceremony, said that thanks to this design competition, now youth in the Arab world can enjoy the KOF game with new character and stage that they can relate to even better. This KOF game is scheduled for release with screen messages in Arabic and Japanese in spring of 2018.

Najd (*1): The name of a region that includes Riyadh, central region of Saudi Arabia.

Masmak Fort (*2): A fort in the old quarter of Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia. It was the stronghold of the Al-Rashid family, but, in 1902, it was captured by Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, who was to become the first king of Saudi Arabia. The fort is now open to the public as a history museum.