

The Legacy of Akira Toriyama

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There is a saying that goes, “You never truly know what you have until it’s gone.” On Friday, March 7, 2024, at approximately 9 p.m., a tweet was sent out via the Official Dragon Ball Twitter account. The tweet contained a letter stating Akira Toriyama had passed on March 1, 2024 from acute subdural hematoma.

What followed was what could only be described as a day of mourning. On social media, there was an outpouring of support from all corners of the globe. Artists, filmmakers, directors, athletes, content creators, writers and communities within countries came together to mourn the loss of one of the most influential writers of our era. Even government bodies sent out messages, such as the president of France and the foreign ministries of China and Argentina.

It is not hyperbole to state that without the work of Toriyama, more notably the Dragon Ball franchise, many series would not exist today. On the day after his passing was revealed, many

notable writers such as ones from other well known anime like “One Piece” and “Naruto” reflected on the time they had with him. There is also another way to figure out how far his influence reached, and that is through the references many pieces of media make to his works. Whether it is through casual name drops, a character shouting “It’s over 9000,” pushing their palms together or transformation sequences, each of these contain the essence of Toriyama’s work.

Though it has been over a year since his passing, his influence has not stopped. Whether it is through his final work in “Dragon Ball Daima,” that just finished streaming as of the publication of this article, or the stories that will carry the soul he etched into every single one of his drawings.

All I can personally say is that the Dragon Ball franchise has been an integral part of my personality for as long as I can remember. There is not a day that goes by where my life is not directly affected by the work he did, and I will remain grateful for that until the day I get to meet him. So, thank you Toriyama and in the words of Eiichiro Oda, “May heaven be the joyous world he envisioned.”