

## Lecture 17

[Finished *Utamaro* film]

Why does Utamaro draw?

- he wants to capture life; dynamic things
- Koide is drawn to him because of the freedom in his art, as opposed to the very structured form of art that the samurai families create.

Do you have any more insights about the merchant women?

- they're not very power-hungry, compared to the wives of political figures
  - o their power/status is based on really different things: skills as a courtesan, popularity, youth, beauty

Today we won't discuss Chikamasu, but we will talk about Bunraku and watch *Double Suicide*.

Bunraku

- a type of puppet theatre
- heads of the puppets are very dynamic: eyeballs, eyebrows can move
- operators dress entirely in black to blend in with the darkened theatre; they bring out props when necessary, as well as control the puppets
- shamisen: 3-stringed instrument; provides accompaniment to the performance
- puppet heads resemble Noh masks; they denote class, status, age, personality, whether the character is good or evil, or comic relief
- can be very lively, even violent

The film *Double Suicide* incorporates Bunraku elements, complete with operators in black who skulk around the human actors as if they're operating them like puppets.

[Clip of Bunraku play]

5-shamisen accompaniment, with chanting

shows the double suicide scene of Tokubei and Ohatsu

[Film: *Double Suicide*]

Think about why the black-clothed figures keep appearing; what purpose do they serve in the film?