TOKUGAWA Musei short bio

TOKUGAWA Musei (徳川 夢声, April 13 1894 – August 1, 1971): Arguably the most famous Japanese *benshi* narrator during the silent film era. At the end of the silent film era, he became popular as a raconteur, actor, essayist, and radio and television personality. While there were a variety of *benshi* styles among thousands of benshi in their hey day in the 1920s, Musei was known for his sophisticated narration style and became popular particularly among the intellectuals. He was praised especially for his *benshi* narration for such movies as *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* (dir. Robert Wiene, 1920), *A Page of Madness* (dir. KINUGAWA Teinosuke, 1926), *The Fall of House of Usher* (dir. Jean Epstein, 1928). He was also passionate about writing throughout his life. He began publishing short stories and essays in the 1920s, and published nearly fifty books in his life.