

# Japan's Carnival War

*Mass Culture on the Home Front, 1937–1945*

---

Benjamin Uchiyama

*University of Southern California*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

# Contents

---

<i>List of Figures</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	x
Introduction	1
The Circus Freak	1
Writing a History of Total War	5
Cultural Practice versus Cultural Ideology	14
The Idea of Carnival	16
Carnival War	17
The Five Kings of Carnival War	20
1 The Reporter	23
The Censor Becomes the “Effeminate Bookworm”	27
The Reporter Becomes the “War Correspondent”	31
The Thrills of Total War and the Crowning of the “Thrill Hunter”	36
The Speed of Total War	40
Thrills and Kills	45
“’Tis the Season for the Fall of Nanjing!”	54
Wild Dancing in Ginza	61
The Decrowning of the “Thrill Hunter”	62
2 The Munitions Worker	67
Early Wartime Mobilization and Its Consequences	70
The Profile of the Munitions Worker	77
The Munitions Worker in Disguise	81
The Munitions Worker Becomes the Industrial Warrior	89
Conclusion	101
3 The Soldier	105
The Soldier Speeds Up	106
The Military God Becomes a Sentimental Soldier	109
The “Humanity” of the Wakizaka Unit	117
“Heartfelt Comforts” from the Home Front	121
The “Comforts” of the Warfront	131
The Crowning of the Returned Soldier	136
The Returned Soldier as Soldier-Freak	144
The Rage of the Returned Soldier	147

	The Sorrow of the Returned Soldier	150
	The Guardians of the Returned Soldier	152
	Decrowning the Soldier	160
4	<b>The Movie Star</b>	<b>162</b>
	Controlling the Movie Star: The Road to the Film Law	165
	The Film Law and the Registration System	170
	The Movie Star in the New Film Order	176
	The Case of Mito Mitsuko	178
	The Limits of Mobilizing Movie Stars	181
	Conclusion	198
5	<b>The Youth Aviator</b>	<b>202</b>
	The Tragic Kamikaze Pilot	204
	The Foundations of Aviation Culture	207
	The Crowning of the Youth Aviator	209
	The Youth Aviator as Consumer-Fan	225
	The Youth Aviator Becomes the Kamikaze Pilot	240
	The Kamikaze Pilot Listened to Jazz Before Killing Americans	249
	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>253</b>
	Gendering Carnival War	255
	Global Echoes of Carnival War	258
	The Circus Freak Next to the Policeman	261
	<i>Bibliography</i>	263
	<i>Index</i>	277