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## Japanese Print 'kabuki Actors' Utagawa Toyokuni III (1786-1865)



230 EUR

Signature : Utagawa Toyokuni III (Utagawa Kunisada)  
(1786-1865)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Etat d'usage

Material : Paper

Width : 37,5

Height : 49,5

### Description

Japanese print signed Utagawa Toyokuni III  
(Utagawa Kunisada) (1786-1865)

Oban Tate-e representing a scene with kabuki  
actors.

Signed in the cartouche lower left.

Note perforations on the right side, probably  
traces of old binding.

Period around 1845 - 1850.

Dimensions of the view: H 35 x W 23.5 cm

Utagawa Kunisada or Utagawa Toyokuni III  
(1786-1865)

Born in Edo, he was accepted around 1800 as an  
apprentice by one of the greatest masters of the  
wooden board drawing, Toyokuni. He began by  
making prints of actors, a specialty of the  
Utagawa school. In 1844-1845, Kunisada

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Utagawa changed his artist name, taking the name of his master, Toyokuni, and thus became Toyokuni III (Toyokuni II being Toyoshige Utagawa, another student of Toyokuni, who became head of the school after his death of Toyokuni in 1825). During this year of transition, Kunisada Utagawa signed many of his prints "Kunisada, soon Toyokuni II", a deliberate affront to Toyoshige whom he thought had usurped the legitimate position. He sometimes collaborated with Hiroshige and Kuniyoshi on series of prints made in the 1840s and 1850s, when Japan was in the midst of a period of expansion and woodblock prints were in great demand. At this time, when this print was made, he was at the height of his career and dominated the market for prints of kabuki actors. He died after his two major contemporaries, Hiroshige and Kuniyoshi, who died in 1858 and 1861 respectively. His last years were marked by a qualitative renewal: his series were much more inspired and stood out from most of his earlier mass-produced works. He died in Edo after training several students such as Toyohara Kunichika and Utagawa Kunisada II.

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