

Jūyō-tōken at the 48th *jūyō shinsa* held on October 11, 2002

tantō, *mei*: Masashige (正重) (Sengo, 千子)

Measurements

nagasa 27.7 cm, *sori* 0.3 cm, *motohaba* 2.65 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 0.3 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *hira-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, wide *mihaba*, *sun nobi*, some *sori* which appears as *sakizori*, scarce *fukura*

Kitae: *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *chikei* plenty of *ji-nie*

Hamon: *nie*-laden *ko-notare* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, angular elements, *chōji*, *ashi*, *yō*, some *nie-kuzure*, plenty of *sunagashi*, *kinsuji*, *yubashiri*, and *muneyaki*, the *ha* is identical on both sides

Bōshi: widely hardened *midare-komi* with a rather late starting and pointed *kaeri* that runs back in a long fashion and connects with the *muneyaki*

Nakago: *ubu*, tapers to an *iriyamagata-jiri*, *kiri-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana* (one plugged), the *sashi-omote* side bears in the upper half and above of the first, the *ubu mekugi-ana*, a thickly chiseled *niji-mei*

Explanation

Masashige (正重) was with Masazane (正真) one of the outstanding students of the first generation Muramasa (村正). Masashige's workmanship is very close to that of the master but his *jiba* is somewhat more *nie*-laden and the *hada* stands more out than that of Muramasa, giving his blades usually a more rustic character.

This *tantō* shows a *kitae* in *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* and that features *chikei* and plenty of *ji-nie*. The *hamon* is a *nie*-laden *ko-notare* that is mixed with *gunome*, angular elements, *chōji*, *ashi*, *yō*, plenty of *sunagashi*, *kinsuji*, *yubashiri*, and *muneyaki*. The *ha* is rich in variety and identical on both sides and so we clearly recognize the characteristic features of the Sengo School. Also very typical is the *tanagobara*-shaped tang. The *ha* is noticeably *nie*-laden and with its tendency towards *nie-kuzure*, its plenty of *sunagashi*, and the *bōshi* with its widely hardened, late starting and pointed *kaeri*, we have here quite a bold interpretation that displays the individual workmanship of Masashige. A masterwork that truly reflects the style of this smith.