

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

katana, kinzōgan-mei: Kanemitsu - Hon'a + kaō (兼光・本阿「花押」) (Hon'ami Kōchū)

Measurements

nagasa 72.35 cm, *sori* 2.0 cm, *motohaba* 2.95 cm, *sakihaba* 1.9 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.3 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 17.5 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

Keijō: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, wide mihaba, relatively noticeable taper, deep koshizori, chū-kissaki

Kitae: dense ko-itame that features ji-nie, fine chikei, and a midare-utsuri

Hamon: ko-nie-laden ko-gunome-chō with a bright nioiguchi that is mixed with some togariba, angular elements, ko-ashi, and a few kinsuji and sunagashi

Bōshi: notare-komi with a brief and somewhat pointed kaeri and nijūba

*Horimono: on the *omote* side two *bonji* and a *suken*, on the *ura* side two *bonji* and *gomabashi*, running as *kaki-nagashi* into the tang on both sides*

*Nakago: ō-suriage, shallow *kurijiri* that tends a little bit to *ha-agari*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana* (of which one is plugged), the *sashi-omote* side bears under the *mekugi-ana* and somewhat towards the *ha* the *kinzōgan-mei* "Kanemitsu" and the *ura* side at the equivalent position the *kinzōgan-mei* "Hon'a + kaō"*

Explanation

Kanemitsu (兼光) succeeded Kagemitsu (景光) as head of the Osafune main line. Extant dated works range from the end of the Kamakura period, i.e. the Genkō era (元亨, 1321-1324), to the Nanbokuchō period, i.e. the Jōji era (貞治, 1362-1368), and span so roughly 40 years. Up to around the early Nanbokuchō-period Kōei era (康永, 1342-1345), *tachi* and *tantō* by Kanemitsu have a *sugata* with normal dimensions and either show a *suguha-chō* that is mixed with *gunome* or a *kataochi-gunome*, thus a style that is very similar to that of his father Kagemitsu. Around Jōwa (貞和, 1345-1350) and Kan'ō (觀応, 1350-1352), the blades become larger and show a *notare*-based *hamon* that we do not see on local works prior, with most of such works dating around Bunna (文和, 1356-1356) and Enbun (延文, 1356-1361).

This blade is *ō-suriage mumei* but was attributed by Hon'ami Kōchū (本阿弥光忠, ?-1725) to Kanemitsu, with the result being inlaid in gold. The *kitae* is a dense *ko-itame* that features *ji-nie*, fine *chikei*, and a *midare-utsuri* and the *hamon* is a *ko-nie-laden ko-gunome-chō* that is mixed with some *togariba*, angular elements, and *ko-ashi*. The fineness and beauty of the *jigane* speaks for an Osafune main line work and with the *ko-nie-laden hamon* with its bright *nioiguchi*, this masterwork is of an excellent *deki* whereupon we are in agreement with Kōchū's attribution. Please note that the smaller than usual *kinzōgan-meis* of the appraiser's name and his monogram reflect the style of Kōchū's early active years.