

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

katana, mumei: Rai Kunimitsu (来国光)

Measurements

nagasa 69.4 cm, *sori* 1.9 cm, *motohaba* 3.0 cm, *sakihaba* 2.45 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 4.1 cm *nakago-nagasa* 20.4 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.1 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, despite the *ō-suriage* a deep *toriizori*, slightly elongated *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: dense and beautifully forged *ko-itame* with *chikei* and plenty of *ji-nie*, the steel is clear

Hamon: *ko-nie*-laden *suguha-chō* with a bright *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, *ashi*, *yō*, and a few *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*

Bōshi: *sugu* with a rather late starting *ko-maru-kaeri* and a little bit of *kuichigai-ba* on the *omote* side

Horimono: on both sides a *bōhi* that runs with *kaki-nagashi* into the tang

Nakago: *ō-suriage*, *kirijiri*, gently slanting *katte-sagari yasurime*, four *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Explanation

According to tradition, Yamashiro Rai Kunimitsu was the son of Rai Kunitoshi (来国俊) and he and his junior colleague Rai Kunitsugu (来国次) constituted the next generation of Rai smiths after Kunitoshi which was active from the end of the Kamakura to the early Nanbokuchō period. Kunimitsu displayed the widest stylistic variety of all Rai smiths, what testifies to his great skill, and can be interpreted anywhere from a *suguha* to multifarious *midareba*, and also his *tantō* and *tachi* shapes vary.

This blade is *ō-suriage mumei* and its magnificent *sugata* dates it around Kenmu (建武, 1334-1338). It shows a dense *ko-otame* with plenty of *ji-nie*, has a clear and gorgeous *jigane*, and features a *suguha-chō* that is mixed with *ko-gunome* and that is rich in *ha-nie*, and with the *bōshi* with its late starting *ko-maru-kaeri*, we recognize the characteristic features of Rai Kunimitsu. Apart from that, the blade is in a perfectly healthy condition (*kenzen*).