

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

*katana*, *mumei*: Unjū (雲重)

## Measurements

*nagasa* 69.8 cm, *sori* 1.0 cm, *motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 2.2 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 4.4 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 21.9 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

## Description

*Keijō*: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, hardly any taper, shallow *sori*, elongated *chū-kissaki*  
*Kitae*: overall finely standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and fine *chikei*

*Hamon*: *suguha-chō* to gently undulating *notare* in *ko-nie-deki* with a rather tight, bright, and clear *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, many *ashi* and *yō*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*

*Bōshi*: some *notare* with a *ko-maru-kaeri* and *hakikake*

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

*Nakago*: *ō-suriage*, *kirijiri*, *kiri-yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

## Explanation

The Ukan manor (宇甘庄) of Bizen province was home to a group of swordsmiths which was active from the end of the Kamakura to the Nanbokuchō period. The smiths of this group, for example Unshō (雲生), Unji (雲次), and Unjū (雲重), shared the character for “Un” whereupon they are referred to as “Un group.” However, due to their place of residence, the smiths are also referred to as Ukan (宇甘) School or Ukai (鵜飼) School, as Ukai was another local name for that region. The Ukan workmanship is quite unique among Bizen blades as we see the Bizen tradition being mixed with elements of the Rai (来) and Bitchū Aoe (青江) Schools, and as there also exist works which show Yamato characteristics, we can say that the Ukan style is quite varied.

This blade shows an overall finely standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that features plenty of *ji-nie* and fine *chikei*. The *hamon* is a *suguha-chō* in *ko-nie-deki* with a rather tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-gunome*, and many *ashi* and *yō* and so we recognize the Bizen tradition being enlarged with Aoe elements whereupon we clearly face the characteristic features of the Un group. With the wide *mihaba* and the noticeably elongated *kissaki*, the blade can be dated to the Nanbokuchō period and thus within the group to Unjū. The blade is of an excellent *deki* and its *jiba* is very healthy.