

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

wakizashi, mei: Shūri no Suke Morimitsu - Ōei sanjūsannen nigatsu hi (修理亮盛光・応永卅三年二月日) - "Shūri no Suke Morimitsu, on a day in the second month of Ōei 33 (1426)"

Measurements

nagasa 52.6 cm, *sori* 1.25 cm, *motohaba* 2.6 cm, *sakihaba* 1.7 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.35 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 12.45 cm, no *nakago-sori*

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, normal *mihaba*, noticeable taper, thick *kasane*, relatively deep *sori* with a tendency towards *sakizori*, *chū-kissaki*

Kitae: standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* that features fine *ji-nie* and a *sugu-utsuri*

Hamon: *koshi no hiraita-gunome* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* and a bright and clear *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *chōji*, *gunome*, angular elements, *ashi*, some few *yō*, and fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* and that appears overall as a large and flamboyant *midareba* with many ups and downs

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with a small and pointed *kaeri* on the *omote* and a brief *ko-maru-kaeri* on the *ura* side

Horimono: on both sides a *bōhi* that ends above of the *machi* in *marudome* and a *soebi* that ends in *kaki-nagashi* at the same height

Nakago: *ubu*, bulbous *kurijiri*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears below of the second, the *ubu-mekugi-ana*, and towards the *nakago-mune* are rather thickly chiseled five character signature, the *ura* side bears an identically positioned date

Explanation

Morimitsu (盛光) and Yasumitsu (康光) were two greatest masters of the early Muromachi-period Bizen smiths which are referred to as Ōei-Bizen (応永備前). The workmanship of this school reminds us at first glance of Kamakura-period Ichimonji or Osafune School works as it features a *kitae* in a standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *chikei*-like elements, a *yakiba* with a prominent amount of *koshi no hiraita-gunome*, and a pointed *bōshi* which is referred to as "candle wick" (*rōsoku no shin*, ロウソクの芯). Apart from that, the Ōei Bizen smiths were also skilfully hardening in a calm *suguha*.

This *wakizashi* shows a standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and that is very typical for Ōei-Bizen. It features fine *ji-nie* and a *sugu-utsuri* and the *hamon* is a *koshi no hiraita-gunome* in *nioi-deki* with *ko-nie* that is mixed with *chōji*, *gunome*, angular elements, *ashi* and *yō*, and with the somewhat pointed *kaeri* of the *bōshi*, we clearly recognize the characteristic features of this school. Also a *bōhi* ending in *marudome* above of the *machi* is typical for Ōei-Bizen. The blade is of an excellent *deki*, showing a prominent amount of the so representative *koshi no hiraita-gunome* and a large and flamboyant *midareba* with many ups and downs. The *ha* is full of fine *hataraki* and the *nioiguchi* is bright and clear and shows accents, and the long signature with the prefix Shūri no Suke makes this blade an important reference for studies on this smith.