

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

*wakizashi, mumei*: Den Sa Kunihiro (伝左国弘)

## Measurements

*nagasa* 30.4 cm, *sori* 0.3 cm, *motohaba* 2.85 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 9.65 cm, only very little *nakago-sori*

## Description

*Keijō*: *hira-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, wide *mihaba*, *sunnobi*, relatively thin *kasane*, shallow *sori*

*Kitae*: rather standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *ō-itame* and that features plenty of *ji-nie*, rough *ji-nie* in places, and much *chikei*, the steel is somewhat blackish

*Hamon*: *nie*-laden and widely hardened *ko-notare* with a wide and somewhat subdued *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, *ara-nie*, *mura-nie*, *nie-suji* and *sunagashi* all over the blade, *kinsuji*, and some *yubashiri*

*Bōshi*: on the *omote* side *sugu-chō*, on the *ura* side *midare*, on both sides with *nie-kuzure*, plenty of *hakikake*, and *kinsuji*

*Nakago*: *ubu*, tang tapers to a *kurijiri*, *yasurime* indiscernible, four *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

## Explanation

Master Ō-Sa (大左) left behind the so far locally seen traditional Kyūshū workmanship and established new style that features an outstandingly bright and clear *jiba*. His students, e.g. Yasuyoshi (安吉), Yukihiro (行弘), Yoshisada (吉貞), Kunihiro (国弘), Hiroyasu (弘安), Hiroyuki (弘行), and Sadayoshi (貞吉), faithfully continued to work in their master's style.

It is said that Kunihiro (国弘) was either the son of Yoshihiro (吉弘) or the son of Sadayuki (定行). Signed works are very rare but there are a few *zaimei tantō* extant of which one is dated Shōhei twelve (正平, 1357), which roughly outlines his active period. Kunihiro's workmanship features a large dimensioned *midareba* that bases on *notare* or a *suguha-chō* that is mixed with *gunome*. Traditionally, the Hon'ami (本阿弥) family attributed by trend unsigned Sa School blades with the most prominent amount of *midare* to Kunihiro.

This *hira-zukuri* blade has a wide *mihaba*, a *sunnobi-sugata*, a relatively thin *kasane*, and some shallow *sori* which reflects the typical *wakizaashi* shape of the Nanbokuchō period. The *kitae* is a rather standing-out *itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *ō-itame* and that features plenty of *ji-nie*, rough *ji-nie*, and much *chikei*. The *hamon* is a *nie*-laden *ko-notare* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, *ara-nie*, *nie-suji* and *sunagashi* all over the blade, some *yubashiri*, and *kinsuji*. Thus, we recognise the characteristic features of the Sa School, with the large dimensioned and freely interpreted, *nie*-laden *yakiba*, its *hataraki* within the *ha*, and the *yubashiri* pointing towards the hand of Kunihiro. The flamboyant *ha* of this blade has many highlights and the *deki* is excellent.