

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

katana, mei: Kanenori (兼則)

Measurements

nagasa 74.3 cm, *sori* 2.4 cm, *motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 1.85 cm, *kissaki-nagasa* 3.2 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 19.2 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.2 cm

Description

Keijō: *shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune*, normal *mihaba*, thick *kasane*, deep *sori* with *sakizori, chū-kissaki*

Kitae: *itame* that is mixed with a little bit of *nagare* and that features *ji-nie* and that tends overall to *shirake*

Hamon: widely hardened *gunome* in *ko-nie-deki* with a bright and rather tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *togariba, gunome-chōji, yahazu* elements, *ko-ashi, yō, sunagashi*, fine *tobiyaki*, and some *muneyaki* in places

Bōshi: *midare-komi* with a constricted *maru-kaeri* that runs back in a long fashion, in particular on the *omote* side

Nakago: *ubu*, very shallow *ha-agari kurijiri, takanoha-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*, the *sashi-omote* side bears under the lower, the original *mekugi-ana*, and towards the back of the tang a *niji-meい*

Explanation

Period sword texts and the *meikan* list Kanenori as being active somewhere from the Nanbokuchō to the early Muromachi period, i.e. around Ōei (応永, 1394-1428), and there are indeed *niji-meい* signed Kanenori *tachi* extant which date not later than Ōei. It appears that afterwards, the name Kanenori was no longer in use but reappears somewhat later, i.e. around Eishō (永正, 1504-1521) and Daiei (大永, 1521-1528), and in noticeably larger quantities around Tenbun (天文, 1532-1555), which suggests that there were several generations Kanenori active through these eras. The workmanship of that latter, the Sue-Seki Kanenori group can be described as showing a simple *gunome-midare*, a flamboyant *gunome-midare*, or sometimes even a *suguha*, i.e. it was quite varied, but the highest quality works are those interpreted in a flamboyant *gunome-midare*.

This blade can be attributed in terms of shape, interpretation of the *jiba*, and signature style to the Tenbun-era Kanenori. The *kitae* is an *itame* that is mixed with *nagare* and that tends overall to *shirake*. The *hamon* is a widely hardened *gunome* in *ko-nie-deki* with a rather tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *togariba*, *gunome-chōji*, *yahazu* elements, *sunagashi*, fine *tobiyaki*, and some *muneyaki* in places. That is, the workmanship of this blade can surely be described as flamboyant, and its *deki* is excellent. The blade is of an outstanding quality, not only for the smith but for Sue-Seki works in general, and a plus is that both *ji* and *ha* are in perfect condition (*kenzen*).