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MEITO KANSHO:
APPRECIATION OF IMPORTANT SWORDS

Owner: Nitro Plus Co, Ltd.

Mumei: Sadamune (meibutsu Futasuji-hi Sadamune)

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 1 bu 2 rin (70.05 cm)

Sori: 7 bu 1 rin (2.15 cm)

Motohaba: 1 sun 2 rin (3.1 cm)

Sakihaba: 8 bu 6 rin (2.6 cm)

Motokasane: 2 bu 1 rin (0.65 cm)

Sakikasane: 1 bu 7 rin (0.5 cm)

Kissaki length: 1 sun 5 bu 8 rin (4.8 cm)

Nakago length: 6 sun 5 bu 7 rin (19.9 cm)

Nakago sori: 5 rin (0.15 cm)

Commentary

This is a shinogi tsukuri katana with a mitsumune. It is wide, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki does not stand out. It is thick, and although it is suriage, there is a slightly large sori. The tip has sori, and there is a large kissaki. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume. The jigane is well forged, and there are abundant dense ji-nie and frequent chikei. The hamon is based on notare mixed with ko-gunome, angular shaped features, and togariba. On the ura's upper section there is a cursive style midare which has notable variations. There are ashi, yo, and the entire hamon has abundant nie and mura-nie mixed with yubashiri. On the omote, from the moto to the saki there are muneyaki. The boshi on the omote is straight, the tip is a togari-like komaru. The ura boshi is a slightly small notare with a komaru and return, and both sides have yubashiri. The horimono remaining on the omote shows traces of long bonji and hi, and the ura shows traces of bonji and a so style kurikara. The nakago is largely suriage and the tip is kiri. The yasurime are kiri, there are two mekugi ana and the blade is mumei.

Hikoshiro Sadamune is supposed to be Masamune's son or student who elevated Soshu Den work into the realm of art. In the Nanbokucho period sword book

“Shinsatsu Orai” it lists “Goro nyudo, and his son Hikoshiro as masters of their generation. Old token book oshigata are listed with dates in the Gentoku, Kenmu, and Ryakuo periods (1329-42), but today there are no confirmed signatures of their work. To support the period’s oshigata, there is a long katana named “Kikko”, and a tanto named “Taikogane”, which are judged as being Sadamune’s work but without a signature. They are slightly narrow, and have a standard shape. On the other hand, his katana were wide and have futasuji-hi, and his hiratsukuri wakizashi such as “Terasawa”, “Fushimi”, “Saimura” and Tokuzenin” are long and wide, and overall are large which reflects Nanbokucho period characteristic points. From this, his active period is presumed to be around the end of the Kamakura period to the Nanbokucho period.

Sadamune’s style was mostly inherited from his teacher, but overall, his style is usually gentle, and he established own style. However, his hataraki, such as chikei, kinsuji, inazuma, and tobiyaki are not as emphasised as they are on Masamune’s work. His hamon have large and small notare areas mixed with gunome and komidare, and form a gentle hamon which is different from his teacher’s hamon. A conventional description of Masamune’s work is that the work is “lively and active, and shows motion”. A description of Sadamune’s work is that it is “gentle and quiet”. Moreover, most of Sadamune’s work has horimono, and among these, there are many futasuji-hi. Other examples have relatively deep carvings, and truly skillful kasane bori which is supposed to be due to influences from daishinbo (sword carvers), and this is pointed out as a characteristic point.

The “Kyoho Meibutsu Cho” lists 36 Masamune blades, and 18 Sadamune blades which is more than Awataguchi Yoshimitsu’s 16 blades, and this is a testament to the high praise he received in that period.

This blade is wide, and the difference in the widths at the moto and saki does not stand out with the large kissaki. Although the blade is suriage, it has maintained the Nanbokucho period’s shape, and clearly shows the period’s characteristics. The jigane is itame mixed with mokume, there are some jifu, the entire ji is well forged, there are frequent chikei, and the work shows the iron’s charm which results from the orikaeshi style forging. The hamon is based on notare, and mixed with features such as ko-gunome, but the omote and ura have different appearances. Compared with the omote, the ura has a wide range of variations, just like a “konotegara” (a plant that looks like a child holding his palm upright) and is fascinating, and the muneyaki only on the omote is hard to overlook. There are strong and weak varieties of nie, wide and narrow nioiguchi widths, and such variation produces a rather interesting appearance. These are Sadamune’s characteristic points. In addition, from the futasuji-hi, and Soshu Den’s characteristic kasanebori (more than 2 horimono), there is no other smith’s work to compare this to, and we can say the judgement for this being Sadamune’s work is absolutely appropriate. Also, the upper half of the blade, does not show a strong tapering in the thickness, and the fact that the katana is heavy is notable, and shows Sadamune’s characteristic restrained work, and this is a one of his outstanding works.

This katana is listed in the “Kyoho Meibutsu Cho” which says that this is a masterpiece and an important object in Osaka’s collection. It was known to have been owned by Hideyoshi, and another name for it was “Osaka Sadamune”. In the

Edo period, in the “Tokugawa Jikki” (diary) for Genna 1 (1615), on the May 10 page, it says that “Echizen Shosho Tadanao Ason, whose military accomplishments are formidable, was given this Sadamune sword by Shogun himself” as a reward for military action in the Osaka Summer battle. Tadanao was Ieyasu’s grandson and Yuki Hideyasu’s son. Later, Tadanao’s Echizen Takada lord Mitsunaga confiscated it. The Meibutsu Cho Shosai (list) may have been compiled around Kyoho 4 (1719), and according to Matsudaira Echigo no Kami, the sword was then owned by Mitsunaga’s adopted son Matsudaira Noritomo who was the Tsuyama Matsudaira family’s lord. However, several sword books say that after Mitsunaga retired to the Iyo Matsuyama domain, the Itouogawa Matsudaira family received it, and then gave it to the Shogunate senior councillor who was also the Odawara domain’s lord Okubo. In the “Shouchu Token Meibutsu” written by Takase Ukon and published in Taisho 2 (1913) it says that “the sword is supposed to be with the Odawara viscount Okubo’s family” but this is just hearsay. Because the history of this katana is unknown, some people feel that we need new material to confirm this history. Also, the 7th generation Tsuyama Matsudaira family lord Naritaka ordered his vassal Murayama Heigaku Masayasu to survey and list the domain’s swords. The results list items from Bunka 9 (1812) to Bunsei 28 (1826) at the Tsushima Kyodo Museum. The “Tsuyama Matsudaira domain document (Aizan Bunro)” does not list the Futasuji-hi Sadamune. In that period, we can confirm that the katana had already left the Tsuyama Matsudaira family.

This sword will be exhibited in the newly classified Tokubetsu Juyo Token Exhibition from June 6 to July 20, 2026 in the Special reference section (for a limited time from June 6 to July 5).

Shijo Kantei To No. 832

Information

Tanto

Length: 6 sun 4.5 bu (19.6 cm)

Sori: almost none

Motohaba: 6.5 bu (2.0 cm)

Motokasane: 1.5 bu (0.4 cm)

Nakago length: 2 sun 6.5 bu (9.0 cm)

Nakago sori: sliight

This is hirazukuri mitsumune (the middle ridge is wide) tanto. It is a small size, and wide for the length. It is thin and there is almost no sori, but a slight sori can be seen. The jigane is itame hada, some places are mixed with a large itame, there is a nagare hada and a slight masame hada. The hada is slightly visible, there are frequent fine ji-nie and chikei. The hamon and boshi are as seen in the oshigata. The hamon is a shallow notare mixed with continuous gunome, and there is a togari style hamon mixed with other features. There is a nioiguchi with frequent fine nie, mixed with nijuba and kuichigai-ba. There are some yubashiri and there are sunagashi and a bright nioiguchi. The nakago is ubu and has a furisode style, and the tip is kurijiri. The yasurime are kiri and there are two mekugi ana. On the omote under the mekugi-ana on the center, there is a large square shaped two kanji signature.

Juyo Tosogu

Ryo Daruma zu (Bodhidharma crossing the river on a reed raft) fuchi kashira

Fuchi mei: Kaei tsuchinoe saru tairyo

Haruaki Ho-gen with kao

Kashira mei: Ju-hou okina

Kono Haruaki was a student of Yanagawa Naoharu and a representative Edo gold smith. His was active not only in the Edo area but also travelled to the Tohoku and to the north Kanto area around the Bunsei (1818-29) period and left master works. Also, his later years in the Kaei to Ankei (1843-59) period, he went to the Echigo area and passed way there.

The kashira shows a Daruma, and the fuchi scene shows reeds and the moon reflected on the water's surface. From the design, the subject is supposed to have come from the Ryo Daruma story. The Daruma is supposed to have gone to Nacho Ryo China, for Zen missionary work and engaged in dialogues with the first emperor Butei Shoen. Butei was deeply interested in Buddhism, he wrote about the Buddhist scriptures, and his lifestyle was devoted to following to the precepts. Because of this, he extended a warm welcome to the Daruma who came as a missionary from Tenjiku. However, Butei could not fully understand the teachings of zen. The Daruma is supposed to have thought that the time was not right, and left the Butei's place. There is a legend, at that time he used a reed raft to cross the Choko river and went to Hokugi. Later, the scene became a favorite subject of paintings, and many works with this theme were produced.

Considering the above story, looking the fuchi-kashira, on the kashira the Daruma's facial expression makes sense. He is furrowing his brow, biting his lower lip, his expression is supposed to be telling us the results of the dialogue with the Butei. Even in this kind of expression, his eyes are shining brilliantly, and we can feel the Daruma's strength of will. The white part of his eyes are gold, the black parts are shakudo, and other colored parts show his earrings. This image focusses the eye of

the viewer on the Daruma's eye. The fuchi shows the moon and reeds reflected on the Choko River, and the waves on the water's surface were carved with kebori. From the fine ishime on the ground, the carving of the beard, and the Daruma's light nikuoki (volume), Haruaki's full capabilities are displayed in this fushi-kashira master work.

Explanation by Takeda Kotaro

Teirei Kansho kai

Date: April 11th (the second Saturday of the month)

Place: Token Hakubutsukan Auditorium

Lecturer: Arakawa Fumito

Kantei To No. 1: Tachi

Mei: Bitchu ju Saemon jo Hidetsugu

Karyaku 2 (1327) ? gatsu hi

Length: 2 shaku 3 sun 4 bu

Sori: 4 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada; there are some sumihada; there are abundant ji-nie, and midare utsuri; in places along the hamon boundary, there are utsuri.

Hamon: based on chu-suguha; some places are mixed with ko-gunome and gunome; there are frequent ashi; in some places there are saka-ashi; there is a tight nioiguchi with ko-nie.

Boshi: straight, the tip is sharp and there is a long return.

Hidetsugu is listed in the meikan as Bitchu Kuni Manjusho ju Sanemon-jo, and his dated works are seen in the Kagen (1303-05), Enkyo (1308-10), and Showa (1312-16) periods. He has a blade with the signature Bitchu Kuni ju nin Saemon-jo Hidetsugu saku, Enkyo 2 (1309) 8 gatsu hi, and this was the No. 20 Juyo Token. Another is signed Bitchu Koku ju-nin Saemon-jo Hidetsugu saku Ocho 1 (1311), and below this, the signature is gone. This sword was the No. 50 Juyo Token.

This tachi is wide, and the widths at the moto and saki are slightly different. There is a shallow sori with a koshizori, the tip has sori, and there is a chu-kissaki. From the shape, you can judge this as work from the end of the Kamakura period to the early Nanbokucho period. The jigane is a tight ko-itame hada, there is refined forging, some places have a unique dark hada called sumi hada. The utsuri are midare and

form straight lines, or so-called dan-utsuri, which indicates the period's Aoe school's characteristic points. The hamon is based on a nioiguchi and is chu-suguha mixed with few ko-gunome. there are frequent ashi and some saka-ashi, and these details show Aoe's characteristic points very well. From these details, many people voted for Aoe work, some people voted for end of Kamakura period individual smiths such as Yoshitsugu, Yoritsugu, and Naotsugu, and these are all treated as correct answers. Also, some people voted for slightly later period Nanbokucho smiths such as Tsugunao and Tsuguyoshi, and these smiths do have work dated Ryakuo (1338-41) and Jowa (1345-49), and from this, they are treated as correct answers at this time. But usually they are thin, have Nanbokucho period characteristic styles, so please take note.

Besides other answers which were as good as the correct answer, some people voted for Ko-Mihara smiths, such as Unjo and Unji. If it were Unrui work, their characteristic points are utsuri that form jifu utsuri, the hamon's upper half become monotonic compared with the bottom half, and the boshi have a large round return. For sure some Ko-Mihara works have a tight nioiguchi with ko-nie hamon, which reminds us of Aoe school work, but their hamon edges have fine hotsure and kuichigai-ba variations, and their boshi tips have hakikake, and these are Yamato-den characteristics.

Kantei To No. 2: Wakizashi

Mei: Bichu no Kami Tachibana Yasuhiro
Kiku mon Settu Fu oite jo-ka tsukuru kore

Length: 1 shaku 7 sun 5 bu

Sori: 4 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: tight ko-itame hada, there are frequent ji-nie, chikei and pale midare utsuri.

Hamon: at the moto, there is a long diagonal yakidashi; the hamon is composed of choji mixed with ko-choji, and togari. The entire hamon has high and narrow areas. Some areas have saka-ashi, there are frequent ko-ashi, some yo, a nioiguchi with ko-nie, some muneyaki, and a tight nioiguchi.

Boshi: straight; the tip is round and there is a long return.

This wakizashi has a choji midare hamon and the jigane has midare utsuri, so at first glance it appears like Ichimonji school work. But from the tight even ko-itame hada, long yakidashi, and tight nioiguchi, we wish think about not Ichimonji work, but also Shinto period work. The smiths who were good at this kind of work to consider first would be the Ishido school. The school worked in various regions such as Edo, Kyoto, Kishu, Osaka and Fukuoka. Among these groups, a long yakidashi just like this one, an entire hamon which has a small size with tight nioiguchi fit the Kishu Ishido school's characteristic points.

In voting, based on the above characteristic points, many voted for Kishu Ishido smiths such as Yasuhiro and Mutsu no kami Tametsugu. There is not much difference between these smiths' styles, so Tametsugu was treated as a correct answer at this time. Besides these smiths, some people voted for other Ishido school smiths. Notably, since some parts of the hamon have a saka-ashi style, many voted for Musashi Daijo Korekazu and his students such as Koretsugu and Morotsugu. That certainly makes sense, but as pointed out, Yasuhiro has some saka ashi style hamon. More than anything else, if it were Korekazu and Fukuoka Ishido work, some parts of their jigane are mixed with masame hada. Also, in the case of the Edo Ishido school's Mitsuhiro's hamon there are choji mixed with large choji, and prominent high and low widths in the hamon, and many midare hamon elements. Tsunemitsu has some small sized hamon, but neither of these smiths have a yakidashi. In the case of Osaka Ishido Nagayuki, his boshi are midarekomi, and have a sharp tip and long return.

Kantei To No. 3: Katana

Mei: Mondo no Kami Fujiwara Masakiyo
with Ichiyo Aoi Mon

Length: 2 shaku 4 sun 2 bu

Sori: 4.5 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: ko-itame hada mixed with some nagare hada; the entire ji is tightly forged; there are abundant dense ji-nie and chikei.

Hamon: shallow notare mixed with gunome, kogunome, and togariba; there are nie and rough nie; there are some yubashiri, ni-juba, san-juba, kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: straight, and the tip has hakikake; on the omote there is a komaru; on the ura there is a togari like point and a return.

Mondo no Kami Masakiyo is good at making ko-notare hamon mixed with gunome and togariba, and various Shizu style midare hamon. This hamon is notare mixed with gunome, ko-gunome, togariba, and large and small size elements and a wide and narrow variable nioiguchi. The hamon is nie-deki and there are some ni-juba and san-juba which show his characteristic points. Also, it is different from Yasuyo's hazy appearing forging, and Satsuma Shinshinto's forging which has dark kawari-gane. Many of Masakiyo's characteristic jigane are a tight ko-itame hada with abundant dense ji-nie and chikei.

In voting, besides votes for Masakiyo, people voted for Satsuma Shinto and Shinshinto smiths such as Yasuyo, Masayuki and Motohira. If it were Yasuyo's work, his shinogi is higher, his hamon are either a notare style suguha, or suguha mixed with widely spaced gunome and are gentle hamon. If it were Masayuki's work, the forging has prominent whitish lines, a less tight ko-itame hada like this one, and many kissaki are large. In the case of Motohira, his tight ko-itame hada with abundant ji-nie

is the same as Masakiyo's, but his midare hamon from the moto to the saki have similar repeat elements, and around the koshimoto the hamon nioiguchi becomes tight and dense.

Note: the nakago is shown at 94% of the actual size.

Kantei To No. 4: Wakizashi

Mei: Bizen Kuni Osafune Kanemitsu
Jowa 3 nen (1347) 12 gatsu hi

Length: 1 shaku 7 sun 5 bu

Sori: 4 bu

Style: hiratsukuri

Mune: mitsumune

Jigane: itame hada mixed with mokume and nagare hada; there is a slightly visible hada; there are frequent nie, chikei, and utsuri along the mune side.

Hamon: notare mixed with gunome; there are some small ashi, yo, the hamon is nie-deki. In places there are yubashiri, tobiyaki, kinsuji, and sunagashi.

Boshi: notarekomi; the tip has hakikake; the omote point is a togari; the ura point is a large round shape; there is a return.

Horimono: on the omote there is a long bonji and harami-ryu (a bloated ryu) kurikara; on the ura there is a long bonji, and under the bonji there is a suken carved through the nakago.

This is long hiratsukuri wakizashi, and at first glance it is hard to judge the period. This style of famous works includes the Juyo Bunkazai Awataguchi Kuniyoshi's "naki kitsune" and Kanemitsu's "suishin giri". The shape is wide, it is long and thin, and from this we can judge this as being Nanbokucho period work. Also, the hamon is itame mixed with mokume, there are chikei, the hamon is based on notare with frequent nie. This shows a Bizen style plus Soshu Den elements and we call it a "Soshu Bizen" style. Moreover, the ryu looks like it is bloated which is a characteristic kurikara horimono which are seen in the work of relatively many Osafune smiths after Nagamitsu, and this would be reference point for an appraisal. Notably, Kanemitsu, in his shin style harami-ryu kurikara carvings, has the ryu's tail coiled around the sankosho handle or hilt.

In voting, people noticed these characteristic points, and in addition, this is a famous work by Kanemitsu with an early notare style hamon with a signature, and a majority of people voted for him. Other candidates, beside Kanemitsu, were Morikage and Tomomitsu.

In the case of Morikage's work, his notare hamon valleys are short compared with Kanemitsu's, and show a slightly angular effect in the hamon elements. If it were Tomomitsu's work, his notare hamon intervals are slightly small, many of his notare hamon elements are sharp, and they appear different from this wakizashi.

Kantei To No. 5: Katana

Mumei: Ko-Senjuin

Length: 2 shaku 2 sun 2.5 bu

Sori: 6 bu

Style: shinogi tsukuri

Mune: ihorimune

Jigane: itame mixed with some nagare hada; the entire ji is tight, there are ji-nie, and chikei.

Hamon: based on a narrow suguha komidare and mixed with ko-gunome; it is ko-nie deki; there are some hotsure, kuichigaiba, uchinoke, frequent yubashiri, ni-juba, kinsuji and sunagashi.

Boshi: straight; the tip has some hakikake. There is a komaru and return.

The Senjuin school is the oldest among Yamato's five schools. The historical token book is the Ko-Densho which lists Yukinobu and Shigehiro as sword smiths in the latter half of the Heian period. The swords are either slightly narrow or have standard widths, and the widths at the moto and saki are different. There are suguha style hamon with hotsure, kuichigaiba, uchinoke, and nijuba.

The funbari is gone, so this katana seems to have suffered from a large suriage. The original shape would have a large koshizori, the tip goes down going forward (the sori becomes more shallow going towards the tip) and there is a small kissaki. So, this could be judged as work from the end of the Heian period to the early Kamakura period, and is an old tachi. The jigane is a tight itame, and when examined carefully there is some nagare hada, the hamon is based on a narrow suguha mixed with hotsure, kuichigai-ba, uchinoke, and niju-ba. The jiba (jigane and hamon) shows Yamato-den characteristic points. From these elements, among the Yamato five schools, you can judge this as an early period Senjuin school work.

In voting, people voted for early period Ko-Bizen and Ko-Hoki work, and many people voted for Yamato school smiths such as Toma and Shikkake besides Senjuin. For the period, Ko-Bizen and Ko-Hoki are proper, but in looking at this as Ko-Bizen work, note that the jigane has no utsuri, the hamon has prominent nijuba and hotsure, and these are different characteristics from Bizen work. Looking at this as Ko-Hoki work, part of jigane has no visible hada, and no hamon elements are entangled with the ji, and these characteristics are different from Ko-Hoki. From the jiba (jigane and hamon), the Toma and Shikkake Yamato schools are a reasonable source of this blade. But besides the Senjuin school, the other Yamato schools were active in the latter half of the Kamakura period, and their shapes would not be like this old style shape.

Shijo Kantei To No. 830 in the March, 2025 issue

The answer for the March Shijo Kantei To is a katana by Muramasa.

There were two generations of Muramasa, and descriptions of Sengo Muramasa's work varies when reading various sword books and research books, and it can be difficult to decide that something is the work of a specific generation. According to generally accepted theories based on existing works, the Shodai worked around the Bunki period (1501-03), and the Nidai worked around the Tenmon period (1532-54). The Nidai left many works and the average quality is considered to be high.

This is supposed to be the Shodai's work and is dated in the Bunki period when there were many long signatures. In the mei, the kanji lines are dull and slightly inelegant. In the so-sho style "masa" kanji, the 2nd and 3rd strokes are connected together, making one long line.

The Nidai's work dated during the Tenmon period shows the same kind of work, and many of signatures are a fluent kanji style, and there are fluid chisel strokes. The so-sho style "masa" kanji's 4th and 5th strokes are connected, the same as we see in the Shodai's mei, however, his kanji styles appear to look like a fishing hook with their round shapes, and we often seen smooth carving. Also, his characteristic points are that the 2nd and 3rd strokes are not connected, and each stroke appears cleanly carved. His nakago are kaku-mune (and some of his katana have a small niku like we see on this blade) and often the nakago have a tanago bara shape, and considering these elements, this appears to be a Nidai Muramasa katana. But a Juyo Bijutsuhin katana (Myohou Muramasa) has a nakago mune with a "kashin" silver inlay. This is the Shodai's work, but Muramasa's "masa" kanji's 2nd and 3rd strokes have a Nidai style inscription which means that both smiths' style of characters are present, and so it is hard to judge the generation. Also, according to the "Kokon Kaji Biroku" the Shodai started working in the Nanbokucho period, but even after examining various books, determining the generation is difficult, so in voting, the Muramasa name was treated as a correct answer without specifying the generation. So, at this time we treated votes for both generations of Muramasa as correct answers.

This blade has a standard width, the widths at the moto and saki are different, and there is a saki sori. The nakago length is 5 sun 5.5 bu which is a short length for a katate-uchi. The hamon's upper part and lower part are different, the boshi has a wide yakiba and a long return. There are frequent muneyaki, which suggests Sue-Koto elements, and from these, we can judge this as work from the latter half of the Muromachi period.

The jigane has a slightly visible itame hada mixed in places with a nagare style hada, and a pale whitish jigane which is similar to Seki work. This kind of jigane is often seen in Sengo school work by smiths such as Muramasa, and among these smiths, darker jigane are more often seen.

The hamon's upper part is straight or a shallow large notare style. The lower half has a koshiba style hamon, and the vertical activity or variations are the first thing to catch your eye. The midare hamon shapes are gunome or angular shaped features (many of them are groups of 3 to 4 elements). The slightly angular sharp tipped shapes form clusters. The valleys extend down and close to the hamon's edge, and the vertical variations stand out. Among the Sue works, people used to say that if the omote and ura hamon were the same style, they would think about Muramasa first. Muramasa was good at this style, but there are not too many of these features. Other characteristic points for Muramasa are a hakoba style hamon, groups of midare hamon with round bottom valleys, and his nioiguchi with nie are slightly worn down.

The nakago reflects the period's short size, and the nakago's lower part is notably narrow, and this is because of the unique tanago-bara shape. Also, the nakago yasurime are either katte sagari or iriyamagata. The yasurime are a shallow katte sagari (with some kiri yasurime), and his signatures are signed along the mune side. These details show his characteristic nakago style, and his fluent two kanji signature.

For another proper answer, people voted for the same school's smiths Masashige and Heianjo Nagayoshi who was supposed to be Muramasa's teacher.

Masashige's forging produces a visible hada, and more so than Muramasa. There are strong ha-nie, some places have nie kuzure, there are frequent sunagashi and kinsuji, and we often see a bold style, and these are supposed to be his characteristic points. Also, many of his signatures are slightly rough, and from these details, voting for him requires careful consideration.

Nagayoshi's midare hamon variations are gentle compared with Muramasa's, there is a narrower width, and a lower yakikiba for the blade's width. Since it is Kyoto work, there is a clear jigane and the jiba (jigane and hamon) is bright. Also, most of his work has horimono, his nakago are a smooth narrow funagata, his nakago tips are either kurijiri or ha-agari kurijiri. This is different from the hints which said he has iriyama-gata tips too, and many of his signatures have five kanji. Furthermore, many of Masashige and Nagayoshi's nakago mune are round.

Besides the correct and proper answer, votes for Sue Seki smiths stood out. Surely Seki smiths and Muramasa's work show many similarities. One theory says that Muramasa was the son of Seki Kanemura (in the token book "Hikuhiki-sho"), or Kaneharu's student (in the "Mino Kune Seki Kaji Keizu"). Kanesada has an Ise Yamada uchi (forged) blade dated in the Eisho period which shows he had some communications with neighboring areas. Also, the branch school's Itakura Seki Masatoshi's blade's upper part has a style and signature very similar to Muramasa's. From these observations, Muramasa is supposed to have had significant contacts with Seki smiths. But the usual Seki jigane has a strong whitish cast, many of their boshi fall down to hamon edge or are a jizo boshi. Their yasurime are takano-ha and sujichigai, and a strong deep katte sagari with a sharper angle which is different from Muramasa's style. Also, there are almost no tanago-bara shapes.

Explanation by Ooi Gaku

Attention: Once you vote for an answer and submit it, you cannot change it. Also, some people submit several answers, and in this case, even if one is correct answer, all of their entries will become invalid. So please be careful and submit only one smith's name.