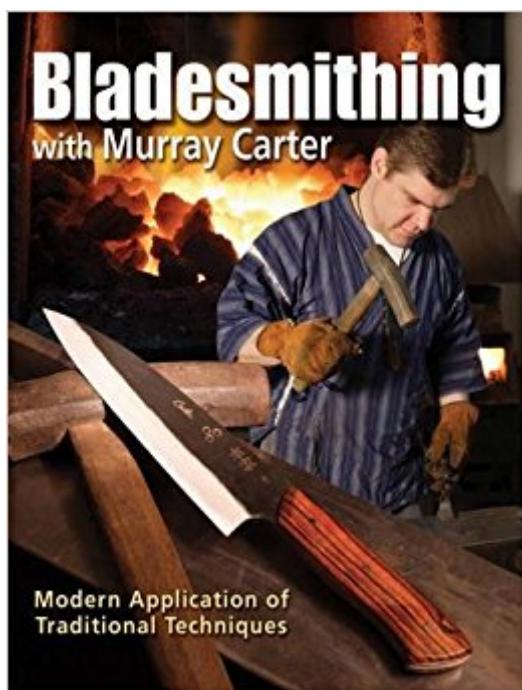


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Bladesmithing With Murray Carter: Modern Application Of Traditional Techniques



Synopsis

Bladesmithing with Murray Carter provides the reader with an in-depth look into traditional Japanese Cutlery forging techniques and their modern applications. A non-stop flow of inquiries to Murray has prompted him to reveal the secret techniques learned during 18 years in Japan, where he lived and worked as a village bladesmith. He now shares this wealth of information for the benefit of the curious reader and Japanese knife enthusiast alike. Owners of nearly 15,000 of Murray's knives will be delighted to see a comprehensive book written by the knives' creator. Features: 250+ dazzling, full-color images, including many by renowned photographer Hiro Soga. Unique and extremely rare insight into the Japanese culture through the (blue) eyes of a Japanese village bladesmith. Detailed explanations of Traditional Japanese Bladesmithing techniques that until now have been cloaked in mystery and myth. Enough detailed information to guide an aspiring bladesmith to become a successful smith in the Japanese style of blade making.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Murray Carter is one of the most popular custom knifemakers at the annual BLADE Show, regularly conducts wildly popular seminars on shaving with a machete, and is known for standing at his booth sharpening knives while teaching the techniques to interested attendees. Carter lives in Vernonia, Oregon.

This book is not by any means a "how to" book, or contains any meaningful discussion of technique.

It is a catalog or other sales tool for Murray Carters knife making business. Lots of pretty pictures of knives (mostly the kitchen variety), some *extremely* brief discussions of the forgecraft Mr. Carter employs, but not likely enough to appreciate or learn those techniques without an undue amount of wasted time and material--even if one can get past the preachy, self-promotional writing style. For whatever reason, there is the usual Health and Safety stuff, which should be obvious ("red hot steel shouldn't be touched with your hands cause its hot" or "wear safety glasses" sort of thing) and then ignores further mention of blacksmithing fundamentals. There are a few pages on various steels, some by their commercial names and others by composition, which is kind of nice, but there is barely enough to get started and someone with a reasonable degree of experience will likely know about the materials mentioned. Making handles and sheaths is summarized in few pages. (Surprisingly, Loctite and 5 minute epoxy is apparently within the boundary of "Traditional Technique". Who knew?) Sharpening and surface finish is dealt with in a similarly truncated manner. Its almost as if Mr. Carter had been thinking at some early point about writing a book about basic blacksmithing employing some of the body of Japanese technique, but forgot what he was doing a few pages into each chapter. This volume is unlikely to teach much, if anything, of practical value. It does not offer basic/intermediate/advanced or culture-specific technique. People looking for information on the construction of Japanese cutlery, the design or reasoning behind the shape of the wide variety of knives available for various tasks in the kitchen, would be sorely disappointed. (Alex W Bealer's book, "The Art of Blacksmithing" is a much better general discussion of the topic of blacksmithing and a useful teaching tool, and Leon Kapp's volume, "The Craft of the Japanese Sword" has far more coherent discussion of blade construction and finishing techniques of Japanese forgecraft, to name but two infinitely superior alternatives.) "Bladesmithing with Murray Carter" is merely a 160 page infomercial for Carter Cutlery, and one in need of an editor at that. I got my copy for \$5, and somewhat resent having wasted that much for so little.

Bladesmithing with Murray Carter is a must have for anyone interested in Japanese style bladeware. Visually stunning colour photographs of Carter Cutlery's kitchen and other utility knives complement the detailed information on the creation of these works of art and function. This reader friendly volume is both instructional and informational and has enough to satisfy collectors, knifemakers and those simply fascinated by Japanese cutlery. I personally found the section on the author's perspective on the differences between the Western and Japanese knife traditions to be especially interesting. A real eye opener. The serious student of the forge (myself included) with some bladesmithing experience will find this volume to be a valuable resource. A comprehensive

work containing detailed chapters on forging, lamination, grinding, sharpening and blade straightening using the author's own experience gained from his extensive study and training at the craft in Japan. If you are an absolute beginner at knife making I would strongly suggest that you purchase this book along with Tim Lively's CD "Knifemaking Unplugged" and the volume "Blades Guide To Making Knives" (available at). For more on Japanese blademaking read "The Craft of The Japanese Sword" by Leon and Hiroko Kapp with Yoshindo Yoshihara. The rest is getting your hands dirty, starting small and lots of practise at the forge. Definitely get Bladesmithing with Murray Carter. You will be glad you did.

A great book for both a someone who wants to learn how to forge a blade and intermediate smith looking to learn some new skills when forging a blade. The book is more geared to learning the Japanese style of forging a laminated blade, However the hammering technique can easily be applied to forging western mono steel blades. This book using easy to understand language walks you through each step needed to forge a blade. It covers everything from steel selection, Damascus and lamination techniques. It even covers how to properly sharpen a blade using sharpening stones. I have about 23 years of experience sharpening blades and even I learned how to put an even better edge onto my blade. This book is now a favorite of mine that I will likely go back and read every now and then. I highly recommend picking this book up regardless of your bladesmithing experience.

This book is more about techniques than principles. He teaches the old school method of Japanese blade smithing, with a faithfulness to the tradition almost on the level of an historical re-enactment. He insists on annealing in rice straw ashes, and he imports all his pine charcoal from Japan. The book ONLY covers Japanese techniques, but if that's what you're looking for, this is basically a good book. There are lots of god quality pictures (though I think it would be better if he'd included more pictures of the involved processes and less pictures of himself).

Simply put, this is a great book. There is some very good information here and Murray Carter's writing is as pleasant as his perspective. This book is the most factual and well balanced of any knife book that I've read from Kraus Publishing. He openly recognizes others techniques and peacefully leaves them be as acceptable, then moves on to the way he does things...and he does great. Carter covers some tools, safety, and techniques that are unique to his methods that are, atleast for me, revealing. All in all, a great book that I would buy 100 times again. If you have read a

few of the other knife making books out there, there are still some worth while tips in here. If you aren't familiar with those, consider picking them up too.

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