

JAPANESE
SWORD
CATALOGUE 19.5

FIRST RELEASED:
FEBRUARY 8/2015



(COVER PHOTO)

ITEM# UJTA031

A HASEBE KUNIHIRA TANTO
IN AIKUCHI-KOSHIRAE

YAMASHIRO PROVINCE
NAMBOKUCHO, OAN ERA ~1368

NBTHK TOKUBETSU HOZON
CERTIFICATE OF AUTHENTICITY

ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS FOR SALE (VOLUME 19.5)

FIRST RELEASED ON FEBRUARY 8, 2015
UPDATED ON APRIL 8, 2015

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES
OF GENUINE ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS THAT WERE SOLD IN
CATALOGUE 19.

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Konnichiwa!

I have just returned from Japan, where I spent nine full days, most of which was sourcing top quality swords. Pushing through the jet lag was a veritable challenge at times and alas I succumbed once at an IKEA showroom in Tachikawa...

I have acquired some incredible pieces that we have the great pleasure to introduce to you in this catalogue. Every piece has a story, like our own respective life stories that I am certain you will appreciate and cherish for generations.

I am particularly pleased to offer three fabulous tantos within this catalogue. The cover tanto is a rare gem from Juyo Token smith Hasebe Kunihira made 650 years ago.

Other magnificent works are from Nidai Tadatsuna, Shodai Tadakuni, Kashu Nobutomo, Ju Ni Gatsu Kiyomitsu and one of the most spectacular katanas I have ever laid eyes on – a Juyo Token Nambokucho period piece from the Naoe Shizu School. Honestly, I can't speak highly enough about the sword.

When I was in Japan we made YouTube clips of a few featured swords that I trust will shed more light on their sheer beauty. Please copy & paste the links in your browser.

*May I extend massive congratulations to those who inquired and claimed all swords that were listed in our past 18.0 catalogue and within this current catalogue!
Your passion and interest fuels me on!!*

Please contact me at service@uniquejapan.com to become informed on our latest acquisitions and your name will be added to our VIP emailing list.
Thank you to all who have joined our list.

Swords are continuously being sourced, photographed and will be introduced on a regular basis. Please keep in contact with me and stand by for acquisition alerts!

Feel the history and feel your history. Promise to make the most of each day.

Warm regards,



Pablo Kuntz
February 2015



Taking a break at IKEA in Tachikawa, Tokyo...

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For Reference Only

TO ONLINE VISITORS AROUND THE WORLD...

WELCOME! WE COMPLETELY RESPECT THE FACT IT TAKES A HUGE LEAP OF PERSONAL FAITH IN US TO COMMIT TO A PARTICULAR SWORD(S) GIVEN THE RELIANCE ON PHOTOS AND DESCRIPTIONS FOR SUCH A HIGHLY VALUED ITEM.

IT IS OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS ALL YOUR QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO US THAT YOU FEEL COMPLETELY CONFIDENT THAT THE SWORD YOU CHOOSE (AND CHOOSES YOU) IS DESTINED FOR YOUR FAMILY TO CHERISH AND PRESERVE.

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WE ACQUIRE SWORDS ON A REGULAR BASIS AND CAN SOURCE SWORDS FOR COLLECTORS SEEKING A SPECIFIC SMITH AND/OR SCHOOL.

PLEASE INQUIRE ABOUT OUR LATEST ARRIVALS THAT MAY NOT BE LISTED IN THE CATALOGUE.

DOMO ARIGATO!
PABLO



ITEM# UJTA029

A HARUMITSU TANTO

SIGNED & DATED, 8TH MONTH IN 10TH YEAR OF TENSHO
(AUGUST 1582)

Swordsmith: Bishu Osafune HARUMITSU
Location: Bizen province (modern-day Okayama)
Measurements: Length: 23.4cm (ubu nakago) Curvature: 0cm Moto-haba: 2.1cm
Jihada: Itame (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: Hira-sugu with tobiyaki and hitatsura
Certificate: NBTHK Hozon (a sword designated as Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Included: Meiji period aikuchi koshirae, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

During the late Muromachi period, the Great War of Japan, several generations of smiths by the name of Harumitsu took prominent position in Bizen province in the village of Osafune. This splendid tanto, signed and dated to 1582 by Harumitsu is a treasure from this time.

In classic Bizen tradition, the *nioguchi* (whitish band of crystals that form the hamon) is tight and consistent, cutting along the blade like a Milky Way laser beam. The upper area of the steel has been heat-treated, known as *hitatsura*, producing fabulous islands of *tobiyaki*. This tanto is alive.

The Harumitsu family swords were known to have *horimono* (engravings). In fact, not only does the sword carry a curled *tsume* (claw) with *goma hashi* (chopsticks used on the altars of Shinto shrines), but also a magnificent dragon winding around a sword known as *so no kurikura*.

These markings serve as spiritual talismans giving protection to the Samurai owner of the sword.

This tanto is contained in a refined black-lacquered *aikuchi-koshirae* from the Meiji period with three golden illustrations of oak leaves. As oak leaves fall when a new bud appears, it is believed to be a lucky omen for change - harvesting prosperity and protection to descendants.

A silver loop is uniquely fastened on the scabbard in the form of a chrysanthemum, the flower of the Imperial family. Sword is certified with NBTHK Hozon authentication papers.





A Harumitsu Tanto

Signed & Dated
8th month in 10th year of Tensho (August 1582)

Black lacquer *aikuchi-koshirae* circa Meiji period
Featuring depictions of golden oak leaves



ITEM# UJTA030

A YOSHISHIGE TANTO

SIGNED & DATED, 2ND MONTH IN THE 5TH YEAR OF ANSEI
(FEBRUARY 1858)

Swordsmith: Hasebe YOSHISHIGE
Location: Kozuke province (modern-day Gunma prefecture)
Measurements: **Length:** 27.5cm (ubu) **Curvature:** 0.cm **Moto-haba:** 2.5cm
Jihada: *Ko-itame* (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: *Gunome choji-midare* (lovely wavy clove blossoms), long *ashi*, *sunagashi*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho** (a sword designated as *Especially Precious* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Certificate #2: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a sword *koshirae* (fittings) designated as *Important* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword)
Included: Edo-period *aikuchi-koshirae*, *shirasaya*, carry bag, stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork to home country

SOLD

Talented swordsmith Yoshishige studied under Masayoshi who he himself studied under the great Masahide – the Shinshinto period maestro. He is said to be a descendant of Hasebe Kunishige, one of Masamune’s ten formidable students thus signs his name *Hasebe Yoshishige*.

Tragically Yoshishige died in 1859 at the age of just 35. This sword would have been one of the very last he ever made as it was produced in 1858 (dated on blade, a year before he died).

There is so much to love in this sword. First, the quality of the blade is sublime. This is a very healthy tanto with a spectacular *gunome choji midare hamon* (clove blossom temper line) that carries brush strokes of sandy *sunagashi*. The *jihada* is a clean tight *ko-itame*.

The tanto is mounted in an Edo-period matching *issaku aikuchi koshirae* that pays tribute to the

ocean. Skillfully carved wave patterns are found on the *kojiri* (scabbard tip) and *fuchi-kashira* (collar/pommel) with an exquisite *ebi* (shrimp) portrayed on the *kozuka* (utility knife).

The *ebi* can be found in a large range of Samurai art. Its message is one of congratulations and wishing longevity in life. The *saya* (scabbard) is formed of shells, interwoven in lacquer in a pristine work of mosaic art. This is 19th century Japanese craftsmanship at its finest.





A Yoshishige Tanto

Signed & Dated
2nd month in 5th year of Ansei (February 1858)

Aikuchi-koshirae circa Late Edo period
Featuring a kozuka with *ebi* (shrimp)



ITEM# UJWA160

A TADAKUNI WAKIZASHI

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KEIAN ERA: 1648-1651)

- Swordsmith:** Harima no Daijo TADAKUNI (Shodai, first generation)
Location: Hizen province (modern-day Tokyo)
Measurements: **Length:** 52.0cm (ubu) **Curvature:** 0.8cm **Moto-haba:** 3.0cm
Jihada: Ko-itame (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: Gorgeous choji midare, sunagashi, yakidaka and hakeru
Certificate #1: NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (a sword designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Certificate #2: NTHK-NPO Yushusaku (a sword designated as Highly Excellent by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword)
Certificate #3: NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (a sword koshirae (fittings) designated as Important by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword)
Fujishiro: Jo-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith) and rated Wazamono
Included: Edo period koshirae, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

continue for details >

Soon after studying under grandmaster Shodai Tadayoshi, swordsmith Hironori (born Hashimoto Tokurozaemon) changed his name to Tadakuni. And the rest, they say, is history.

This wakizashi is a steely Hiizen masterpiece. An exuberant *choiji midare hamon* that extends to the *shinogi* and a pristine *konuka hada* delights the eye. The Keicho Shinto period is known as the second golden era of sword making skills - and this is direct evidence of such.



There is a saying that a sword with a red scabbard must inherently be special.

Matching celebratory *ebi* (shrimp) *kozuka* and *kogai* compliment the traditional boating theme found on the *tsuba*. The *fuchi-kashira* holds a crane and *shakudo menuki* depicts a tortoise with algae that invites health and longevity. Three certificates including Tokubetsu Hozon and NTHK-NPO Yushuto, the sword organization's highest achievement accompanies this sword.





A Tadakuni Wakizashi

Shodai, first generation
Keian era (1648-1651)

Matching *issaku koshirae* with deep
red vermilion saya for good fortune



ITEM# UJKA136

A NAOE SHIZU SCHOOL KATANA

UNSIGNED, MID-NAMBOKUCHO PERIOD (1338-1367)

Swordsmith: The Naoe Shizu School (attribution)

Location: Naoe district in Mino province (modern-day Gifu prefecture)

Certificate: **12th NBTHK Juyo Token** (a sword designated as a *Profound Sword* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword. Certificate issued in 1964, serial no. 1210.)

Measurements and information from Juyo certificate:

Nagasa (length): 2-shaku, 2-sun, 9-bu (69.4cm)

Sori (curvature): 5-bu (1.4cm)

Moto-haba: 1-sun, 2-bu (~3.6cm) **Saki-haba:** 8-bu, 5-rin (2.5cm)

Kissaki: 3-sun, 5-bu (10.6 cm) **Kuki-naga (nakago):** 6-sun, 4-bu (19.3cm)

Jihada: Clear & shiny itame hada **Boshi:** Jizo-like, midare komi

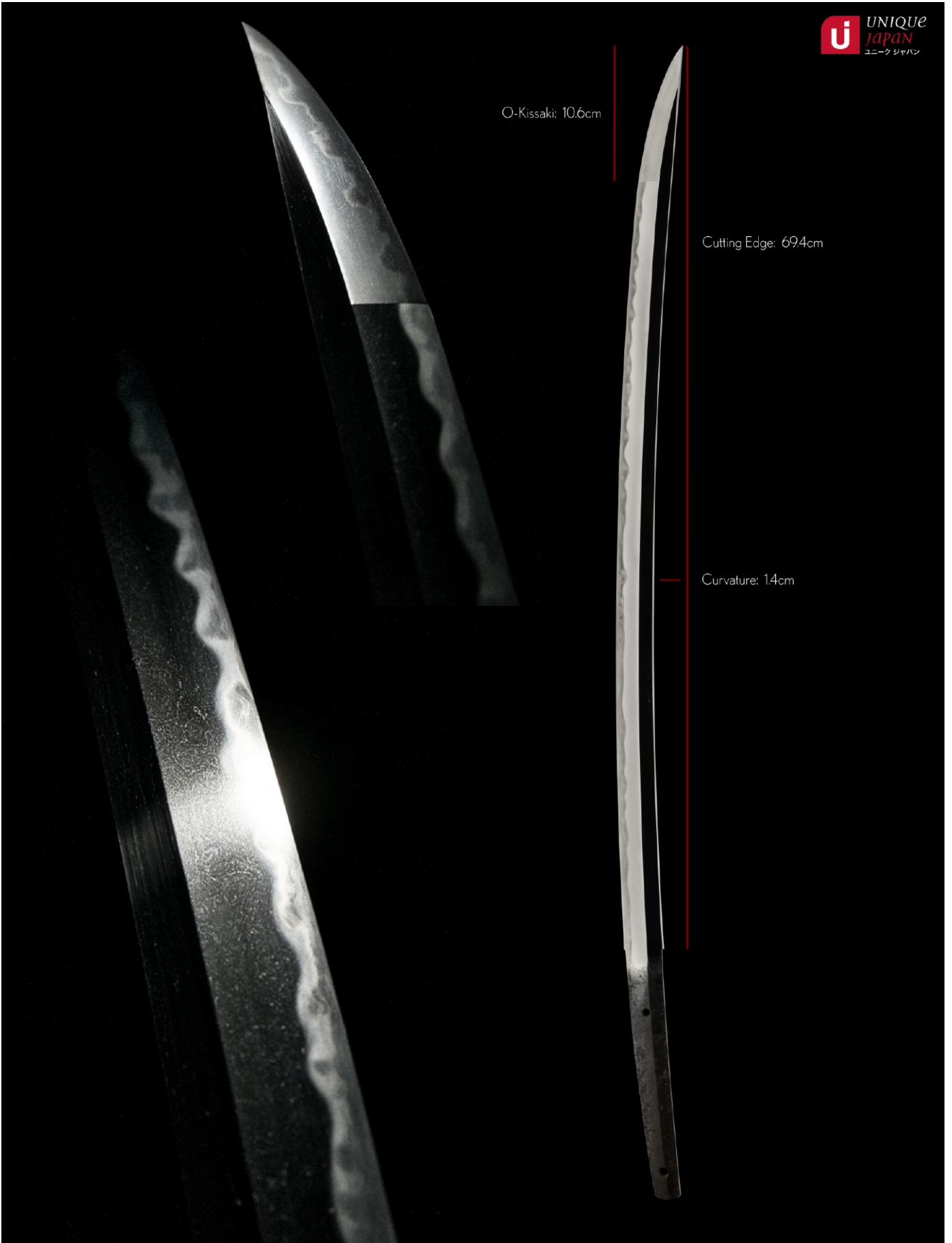
Hamon: Gunome, togariba (pointed), sweeping sunagashi, kinsuji, very sharp nioguchi

Nakago: O-suriage, slightly curved by design (two holes in nakago)

Included: Shirasaya, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork to home country

SOLD (a custom koshirae is in production)

continue for details >



A 12th NBTHK Juyo Token Katana (*A Profound Sword*) attributed to *The Naoe Shizu School*.
Circa Mid-Nambokucho period (1338-1367)

**“[The sword] shows typical features of the Naoe Shizu School.
The blade is distinguished and remarkable.”**

12th NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate
July 30, 1964

It's hard to put down in words just how incredible a sword this is.

Your eyes are, of course, drawn immediately to the blade's *o-kissaki* (long extended tip) that measures almost 11cm in length. It's not just the grandeur of the tip itself but also the wonderful complexity of the *boshi* known as the *hamon* of the *kissaki*.

The *boshi* is an extremely important part of a sword- if one were to liken a sword to a human being, the *boshi* would be her face. The quenching of the *boshi* requires enormous skill and is a clear indicator of proficiency of a swordsmith.

It would be a challenge to find a more impressive *boshi* than that which exists on this Naoe Shizu Katana. In fine Koto-period fashion it weaves through in *midare komi* fashion (irregular waves) in the general shape of a Jizo-*boshi*. It is clear, bright and healthy.



This katana is a classic beauty with a powerful soul. It was once a tachi of course, a formidable sword carried during the warring mid-Nambokucho period (1338-1367).

According to historical records swordsmiths populated Mino province in the *Hogen era* (1156-1159) during the Heian period. However, it's only once the very late Kamakura period (early 1300s) appeared that works by *Shizu Saburo Kaneuji* and *Kinju* have been confirmed.

To give a sense of context, Kaneuji is said to have moved from *Yamato* (Nara) to study under the great Masamune to become one of his ten finest pupils (*Masamune Jutetsu*).

Kaneuji eventually moved to Shizu district in Mino province and is largely considered the founder of the Mino tradition. Incidentally, *Shizu* means 'still' or 'calm' in Japanese.

As one would have expected, Kaneuji's works carry a strong mixture of *Yamato Tegai School* qualities (*a jihada of mokume hada with straight grain masame hada*) and the *Soshu tradition* with a *hamon* displaying *nie-deki* with plenty of *hataraki* such as *sunagashi* (streaks of sand), *kinsuji* (stripes of gold) and *inazuma* (crooked lightning bolts).

A noteworthy difference is that is that the *hamon* carries some *togari* (tapered peaks) in the *hamon*. As a basic rule of thumb, all Mino tradition swords have *togari* in the *hamon*.

Unsigned swords attributed to Kaneuji are known as *Yamato Shizu* (*Shizu* meaning 'Kaneuji').

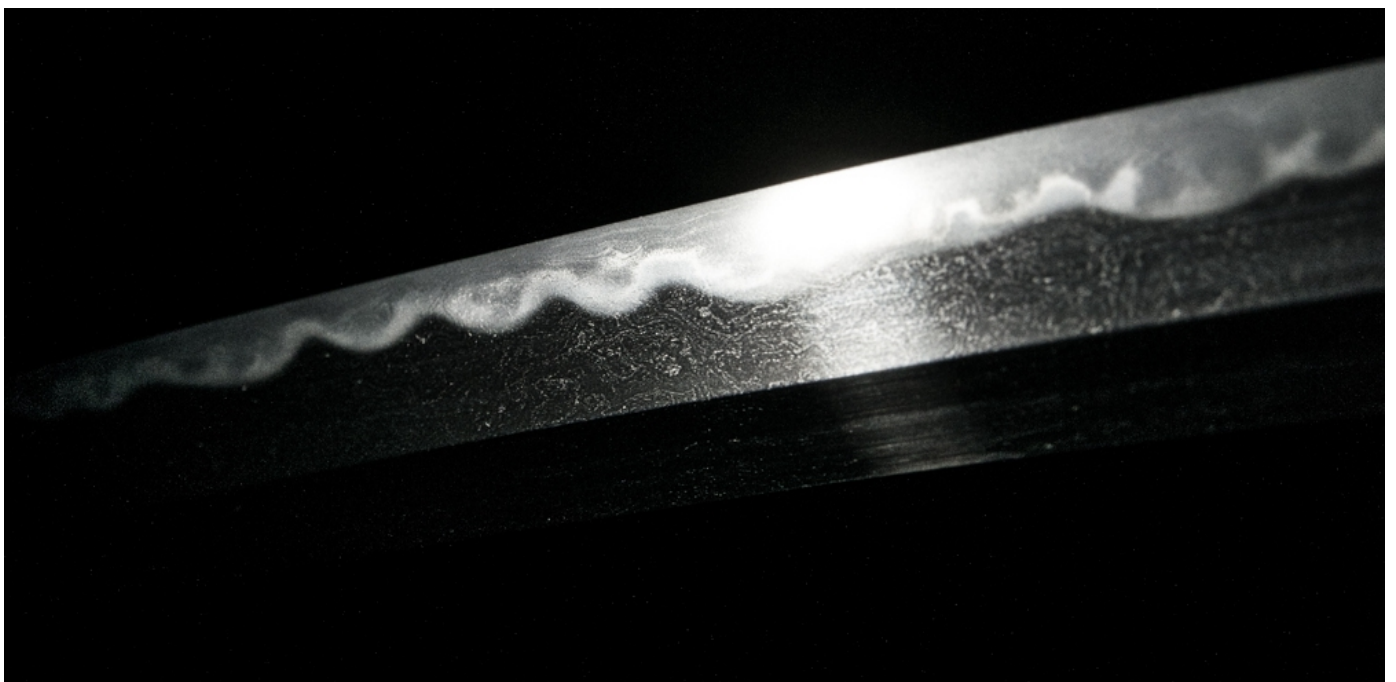
The Naoe Shizu School

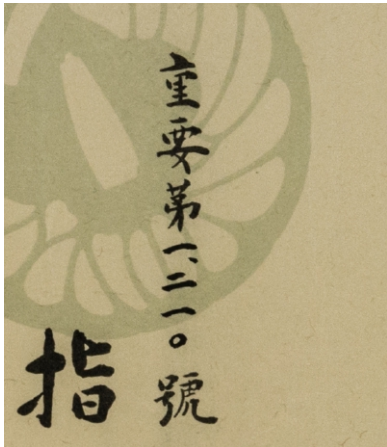
In the beginning, students of the *O-Shizu School* (founded by Kaneuji) and of the *Naoe Shizu School* moved to *Naoe* district also in Mino province to differentiate themselves.

Notable students include *Kaneyuki* (son of *Kaneshige*), *Tametsugu* (a disciple of either *Go Yoshiro* or *Norishige*), *Kanetoshi*, *Kanetsugu*, *Kanenobu* and later generations of *Kaneuji*.

What makes the *Naoe Shizu School* different from that of *O-Shizu* is that the *sugata* (shape) is superior; key traits being that of a wide *mihaba* and *o-kissaki*. Both of which, according to *Nagayama Kokan* of the *Connoisseurs Book of Japanese Swords*, "lend to a grand appearance".

Of equal importance to note is that the *jihada* has swirling pools of *itame* mixed with *mokume*. The folding pattern in the steel has a direct influence on the *hamon* displaying *sunagashi* (streaks of sand). Here is a close-up of the sword's *jihada* (grain)...

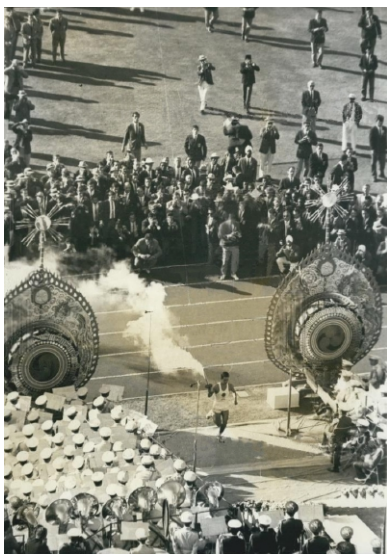




It must be pointed out that the sword was awarded its vintage 12th Juyo Token certificate on July 30, 1964. This is significant as this was *the very highest level of achievement* at the time. NBTHK Tokubetsu Juyo was introduced much later in 1971.

Only the finest swords in Japan could attain this level of prestige. The judging was fierce and illuminates the quality of this sword.

In fact, the serial number (as shown on the left) is numbered 1210. This sword is one of the very first swords ever to receive the coveted NBTHK Juyo Token certificate.



Of further interest, the certificate was issued only six weeks prior to the opening of the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympics.

Opened officially by Emperor Hirohito, the 1964 Summer Olympics in Tokyo celebrated Japan's progress and reemergence on the world stage. The new Japan was no longer a wartime enemy, but a peaceful country that threatened no one, and this transformation was accomplished in fewer than 20 years.

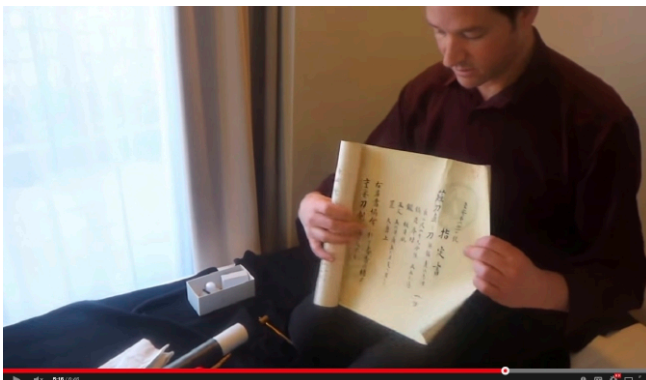
View article: <http://tinyurl.com/tokyo-64>

The 1964 Summer Games were the first Olympics held in Asia and the first to be telecast around the world (partly in colour!).

The words "Juyo Token" are often translated as being an 'Important sword'. However, a closer, more suitable choice of swords would be "*Profound*". This katana is a valuable piece of Japanese history with profound significance that I wholeheartedly recommend.

Please contact me, Pablo, at service@uniquejapan.com for further images and information.

I have made a short video in my apartment/office in Tokyo for you to review this blade:



Copy and paste this link to view:
<http://tinyurl.com/naoe-12juyo>

Thank you,

Pablo Kuntz
Founder, Unique Japan

Reaching High



Living sculptures captured in time.

Ikebana artistry by Donna Canning.
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ITEM# UJKA137

AN 'IKKANSHI' TADATSUNA KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (GENROKU ERA: 1688-1704)

- Swordsmith:** Omi no Kami TADATSUNA (Nidai, second generation)
Location: Settsu province (modern-day Osaka)
Measurements: **Length:** 70.0cm (ubu) **Curvature:** 1.4cm **Moto-haba:** 3.1cm
Jihada: Ko-itame (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: Sublime choji midare, sunagashi, long tails of ashi
Certificate: NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (a sword designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Fujishiro: Jojo-saku (ranked as a highly superior swordsmith)
Hawley: 150 points **Ryo-Wazamono** (good sharp swords)
Included: Shirasaya, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD (a custom koshirae is in production)

We move along to one of the giants of the Osaka Shinto School. Born in 1644, Tadatsuna was the natural son of the Shodai Omi (No) Kami and was commonly known as *Mandayu and Ikkanshi*.

An expert carver of *horimono* as well as an excellent swordsmith, Fujishiro rates Tadatsuna II as *Jojo-saku* (highly superior) with *Ryo-wazamono* cutting test ranking. Hawley assigns a massive 150-points and notes that some of his swords have reached *Bunkasai* or cultural relic status.

The pure construction of the sword is a marvel. With an even 70cm cutting edge and a curvature of 1.45cm, this is a swordsman's sword. Her *choji midare hamon* is beguiling, echoing the

works of the finest Bizen Ichimonji smiths. It is a flawless sword of immense quality.

As this sword is housed in shirasaya only, an opportunity exists to build a custom *koshirae*. It is a chance to infuse some of the new caretakers' personality into the heart of the blade for the next generations to further cherish. NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon papers accompany the sword.

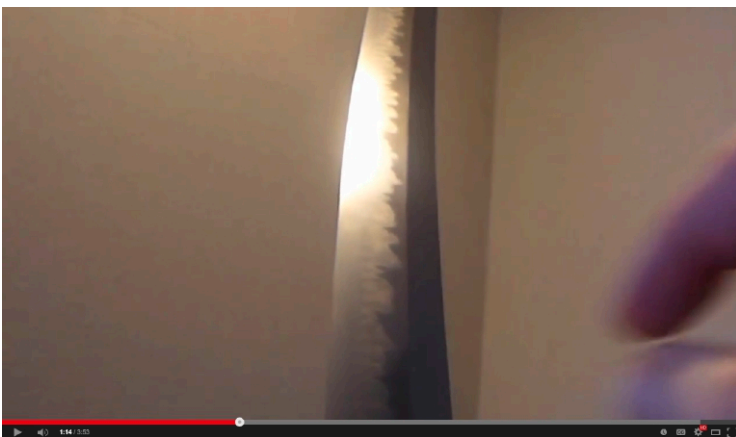




See the sword up close...

Copy and paste the link below to view a video clip of Pablo introducing the Omi no Kami Tadatsuna Nidai Katana:

<http://tinyurl.com/tada2-katana>



Steps to Building Your Own Koshirae

Many fine antique Samurai swords today come stored only in a shirasaya. A shirasaya acts like a humididor, protecting the steel for the long term. Just as the Samurai would have custom ordered during the Edo Period we can build a traditional set of outdoor koshirae (sword mounts) for your sword.

Step 1: Choose your sword (find the sword that chooses you)



Step 2: Select your antique fittings & colours (decide on a theme that speaks to you and your sword)



Step 3: Patience...

(it takes about 3-6 months to build as it is handmade by master craftsmen in Japan)

Total production cost ranges from \$2,500 ~ \$5,000

Please speak to a member of the Unique Japan team to get started!



ITEM# UJKA141

A YOSHIHIRA KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (JOKYO ERA: 1684-1688)

Swordsmith:	Bushu Ju Fujiwara YOSHIHIRA
Location:	Musashi province (modern-day Tokyo)
Length:	68.2cm (suriage)
Curvature:	0.7cm
Moto-haba:	2.9cm
Jihada:	<i>Itame</i> (wood grain pattern)
Hamon:	<i>Choji midare</i>
Certificate:	NBTHK Hozon (a sword designated as <i>Worthy of Conservation</i> by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Included:	Edo period koshirae, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

Swordsmith Yoshihira was a proud member of the Edo Ishido School and apprenticed under notable smith Mitsuhiro. In typical Bizen tradition, this strong katana is blessed with a striking *choji midare hamon*.

The Ishido School originated at the Sekido Temple in Omi Province around the Kanei period (1624). From there smiths travelled to various sections of the country propagating the famed expertise of the Bizen Ichimonji School, of which they claim dependency from.

Some smiths went to Kii Province and came to be known as the *Kii Ishido*. Others went to Edo, modern-day Tokyo, and the most famous of these being *Ishido Musashi Korekazu*.

This katana carries only slight curvature, a popular construction for swords of the Shinto period. The nakago was shortened to suit a previous owner's stature. This is definitely a fighting sword for it is said that straight swords can cut and manoeuvre extremely well.

Full koshirae fittings adorn the sword with Imperial family chrysanthemums lining the *shakudo* and gold *fuchi* (collar). The iron *tsuba* (guard) depicts a classic wave motif called *seigaiha*. This pattern represents waves lapping the seashore. Since the sea is a source of life and its waves neither change shape nor stop repeating, it is a pattern that brings good fortune many times over.

The katana comes with NBTHK Hozon papers attesting to the authenticity of the signature.





ITEM# UJWA065

A KANEMUNE WAKIZASHI SIGNED, EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1661-1672)

Inscription: 大和国包宗 (omote)
Swordsmith: Yamato no Kuni KANEMUNE
Length: 48.9cm
Curvature: 0.8cm
Hamon: *Gunome midare (circular waves) with sunagashi (streaks of sand), kinsen*
Jihada: *Masame (straight grain - typical of Yamato tradition workmanship)*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Hozon** (a sword designated as Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword)
Certificate #2: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a sword designated as Important by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword)
Included: Edo period koshirae, shirasaya, silk carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

According to the *Toko Soran* (book of swords), swordsmith Kanemune belonged to the highly respected *Yamato Tegai School* - a school steeped in rich history.

Their name, Tegai, is derived from the *Tegaimon* (gate) of *Todaiji* temple in Nara. The smiths lived in the temple town. It was founded in the late Kamakura period by Kanenaga and carried on into the late Muromachi period and early Edo period.

This sword can be considered one of the last swords produced by the Tegai School.

For purists, there is nothing like a Yamato sword. Swords made over generations in this tradition share a tremendous amount of commonality. One such trait is the *masame* straight-grain forging pattern.

They were pioneers, and given the fact large, powerful temples in Nara provided the majority of funds to smiths, there is a strong religious and imperial element to the tradition.

An important point to observe on this sword is where the *hamon* (temper line) originates at the bottom of the blade. For about 5 or 6 cm, the *hamon* is *suguha* (straight), and then extends into an attractive wavy *gunome midare hamon*.

This is referred to as *suguha yakidashi* typically seen in swords of the Shinto era.

The *fuchi-gashira* (collar/pommel) is of *shakudo* (gold copper) with Japanese plum flowers (*ume*). The *menuki* (ornamental grips) features a horse, plants and flowers symbolic for a healthy life.



Plum flowers adorn the *fuchi-kashira* with the *menuki* depicting a skillfully carved horse with flowers.

This sword is currently in the UK. Shipping to countries within the Eurozone will be import tax free.

Please contact Unique Japan for further details.



ITEM# UJKA142

A NOBUTOMO KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (JOO ERA: 1652-1655)

- Swordsmith:** Kashu Ju Fujiwara NOBUTOMO
Location: Kaga province (modern-day Ishikawa-ken)
Measurements: Length: 69.3cm (ubu) Curvature: 2.1cm Moto-haba: 3.1cm
Jihada: Itame (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: Spendid gunome midare
Certificate: NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (a sword designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword)
Fujishiro: Chujo-saku (ranked as an above average swordsmith)
Included: Vintage matching koshirae, shirasaya, carry bags, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

Graceful and elegant are two words that come to mind when describing this katana by Kaga province smith Nobutomo. From *kojiri* to *kashira*, this Samurai sword is a class act.

Nobutomo is one of Kaga's better swordsmiths and this sword is testament to the skill he possessed – surely this would have been one of his greatest accomplishments. It's little wonder that the sword has reached the greatly prized distinction of NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon.

The *koshirae* carries a matching set of fittings that pay tribute to the rooster. The rooster is synonymous with courage and loyalty, traits that the Samurai highly regarded. The *saya* (scabbard) displays an especially gorgeous lacquer technique that remains in pristine condition.

To get a full taste of this katana and *koshirae*, copy and paste the link below to watch a 7-minute video presentation → <http://tinyurl.com/nobutomo-katana>





ITEM# UJKA144

A 'JU NI GATSU' KIYOMITSU KATANA SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1661-1673)

Swordsmith: Harima no Daijo KIYOMITSU
Location: Etchu province (modern-day Toyama)
Length: 70.6cm (ubu)
Curvature: 2.0cm
Moto-haba: 2.8cm
Jihada: *Itame* (wood grain pattern)
Hamon: *Gunome midare*
Certificate: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (a sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword*)
Fujishiro: **Jo-saku** (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included: Shirasaya, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork

SOLD (a custom koshirae is in production)

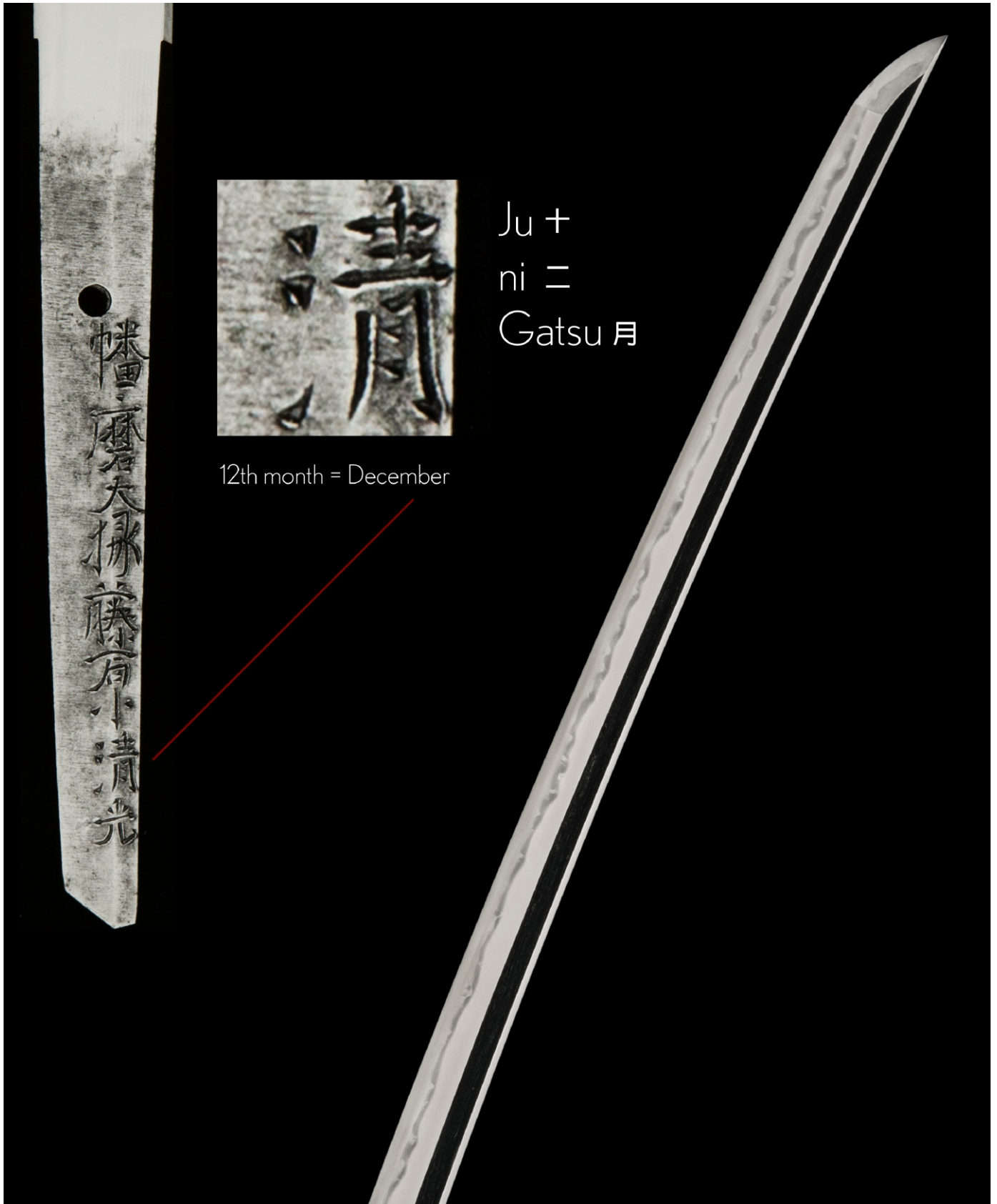
Celebrated swordsmith Harima no Daijo Kiyomitsu crafted this elegant katana in Etchu province on the Sea of Japan during the distinctive Kanbun era, circa 1661.

Rated as *Jo-saku* (a superior swordsmith), Kiyomitsu is known as *Ju Ni Gatsu*, or the 'December Kiyomitsu'. This nickname was earned from the way he uniquely chiseled the right side of the kanji character for KIYO. The three characters form *Ju* (10) *Ni* (two) *Gatsu* (month).

He must have been very proud of the work he produced to sign in such a distinctive manner. Please refer to the images on the next page that breaks down the strokes.

A gracefully curved katana blessed with a fine *gunome midare hamon* (random semi-circular waves) reflects the natural environment that he lived within. It has a well-forged *itame hada* and a heathly *boshi* – it is a sword that beckons for a custom *koshirae* to be made for her.

This katana has earned prestigious NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certification. This is a classic Samurai sword from the early Edo Period to be proud to own. More photographs can be shared.





ITEM# UJTA031

A HASEBE KUNIHIRA TANTO

SIGNED, MID-NAMBOKUCHO PERIOD (OAN ERA: 1368-1375)

- Swordsmith:** Hasebe KUNIHIRA
Location: Yamashiro province (modern-day Kyoto)
Measurements: Length: 27.0cm (ubu) Curvature: 0.2cm Moto-haba: 2.6cm
Jihada: *Itame mixed with masame, abundant ji-nie*
Hamon: *Ko-gunome, ko-midare, slight hitatsura*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (a sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword*)
Certificate #2: **NBTHK Hozon** (a kozuka designated as *Worthy of Conservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword*)
Fujishiro: **Jo-saku** (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included: Vintage dashizame aikuchi koshirae, shirasaya, brocade carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, and all exportation paperwork

SOLD

Handling a signed Japanese sword in original condition from the Nambokucho period is a rare and precious adventure. An instant time warp takes hold, transporting one 650 years in the past.

Hasebe Kunihiro, in the capital province of Yamashiro, crafted this special tanto in circa 1368. His pedigree is impressive. His father, Hasebe Kunishige, a talent who provided inspiration to countless smiths is said to be one of Masamune's ten celebrated students (see chart below).

What we have here is a classic Hasebe School *hirazukuri* tanto made in the middle-period Soshu tradition. Of all the major sword-making traditions, living examples of the Soshu are particularly

scarce, let alone signed. There is an impenetrable force that lies deep within this tanto. *Itame* mixed with *masame hada* with an irregular *ko-midare hamon* that travels up the blade with purpose. Refined elements of *hitatsura* can also be enjoyed.

Like the Nambokucho period Juyo Token Naoe Shizu katana featured earlier in this catalogue (ujka136), the *boshi* (hamon in the kissaki area) is *midare-komi* and curls back with a long *kaeri*.



Looking back, the vicious warring Nambokucho period of the Northern and Southern courts of Kyoto would have been in full force. This tanto was made right in the thick of the action.

What stories this tanto can tell...Carried by elite Samurai over the centuries, Kunihiro is ranked as a *Jo-saku* (superior swordsmith), which speaks volumes. At least three swords by Kunihiro have reached NBTHK Juyo status and this piece has a chance of attaining such distinction.



Masamune
(1264-1343)

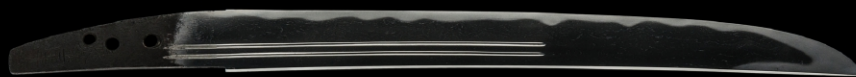
Juttetsu
(10 celebrated students)

Choji Kanemitsu Kinju Naotsuna Kunitsugu **Kunishige** Saemonsaburo Norishige Yoshihiro Kaneuji
(~1334)

Moved to Kyoto

Started the Hasebe School
(had three sons)

Kunishige (2nd) **Kunihira** Kuninobu
(~1356)



A Hasebe Kunihira Tanto
(~1368-1375)

A charm point of the sword is its *nakago*, the *funagata* shape. *Funa* (or “*funé*”) means boat as the line of the cutting edge has a deep outward bulge. The *funagata* is closely associated with Masamune and his Soshu School. In a sophisticated way, it pays respect to its great forefathers.

The blade is complimented by a magnificent *dashizame aikuchi-koshirae* from the Edo period where the hilt is wrapped in ray skin. The *kozuka*, with lucky god Hotei, is further NBTHK certified.



A Hasebe Kunihira Tanto

Signed, *ubu funagata nakago*
circa Oan era (1368-1375)

Dashizame Aikuchi-koshirae
circa Late Edo period

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon origami

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*A Chiyozuru School Katana by Morihiro circa 1394
Custom koshirae was recently built with a 'matsu' (pine) theme*