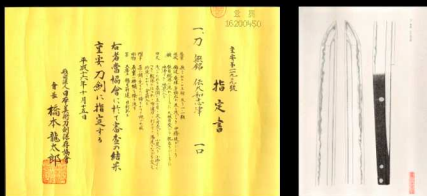


JAPANESE  
SWORD  
CATALOGUE 29.5

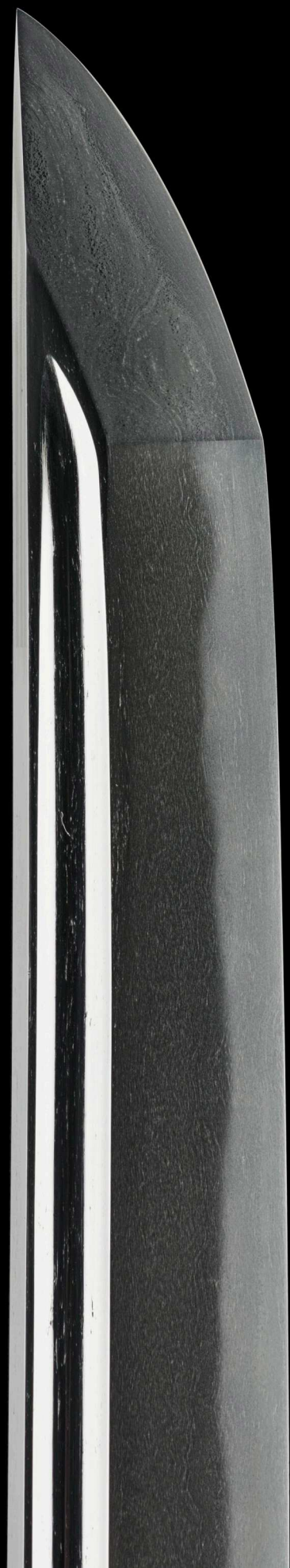
RELEASED:  
JUNE 21/2018



(COVER PHOTO)

ITEM# UJKA298

A YAMATO SHIZU KATANA (伝大和志津)  
LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1319)  
50TH NBTHK JUYO TOKEN



# ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS FOR SALE (VOLUME 29.5)

RELEASED: JUNE 21, 2018 TO VIP CLIENTS ONLY

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES OF GENUINE ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS THAT WERE SOLD IN CATALOGUE 29. THIS IS A REFERENCE DOCUMENT.

PLEASE CONTACT ME AT [SERVICE@UNIQUEJAPAN.COM](mailto:SERVICE@UNIQUEJAPAN.COM) TO BECOME INFORMED ON OUR LATEST ACQUISITIONS AND YOUR NAME WILL BE ADDED TO OUR VIP EMAILING LIST.

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Hello fellow sword enthusiasts!

Wow, lots of excitement in the air. Here in England, World Cup fever has gripped the nation. Passion for the game reminds me of how Montrealers are with Les Canadiens during a Stanley Cup hockey playoff. I'm glad that Japan and England won their first matches. My mother is from Chile, that was the country who I was cheering for four years ago. I miss them this year!

Thank you for downloading Catalogue 29. Many late nights (not always quiet with admiral Nelson) were spent in its creation. I'm proud of all the pieces. So, without further ado, let's get to the swords!

We begin with a beautiful 600-year-old katana by the highly respected *Ko-Gassan school*. This blade was forged in their iconic *ayasugi-hada* that resembles a rhythmic sound wave. A brilliant *handachi koshirae* with a mother-of-pearl bamboo flute pattern continues this musical journey in fine harmony.

A wakizashi by *Ise Daijo Tsunahiro* is the next piece. Tsunahiro is recognized as the finest smith that signed the *Tsunahiro* name in the *Shinto* period. He faithfully carried the torch of the Soshu tradition with tremendous skill. I love the elegant koshirae that comes with this piece, it's very samurai.

The following sword is a classic Edo-period katana by *Hizen Nidai Masahiro* that is stunning in every way. It has a long curvy shape, splendid *gunome midare hamon* and a first class koshirae with a powerful message of strategic perseverance. It is currently on hold; however, it may come available.

Our cover sword is a gorgeous NBTHK Juyo Token katana by *Kaneuji's Yamato Shizu school* from the late Kamakura period, circa early 1300s. This is one seriously impressive sword that oozes self-confidence. A strong, healthy shape with plenty of *hataraki* (activity) in the steel to admire and enjoy. This piece sums up why the Kamakura period is known as the golden age of Japanese swords.

The next three lots are with me here in the UK. The first is a rare *Toppei-koshirae daisho* from the late Edo-period when Japanese uniforms were adapted from the French forces. For any militaria buff, this is certainly a gem to add to your collection. Some clients might recognize the 1937 award-winning *gendaito* katana by master smith *Izumi Tomoyoshi* that commemorates the 2600th anniversary of the Japanese empire. It now comes with a magnificent *tombo* (dragonfly) custom koshirae.

A very sharp katana by *jo-saku* and *ryo-wazamono* smith *Kazusa Kaneshige* with a brilliant *Tokugawa* themed *koshirae* is the third offering. I created a video presenting this sword that can be seen [here](#).

Returning to the *Koto* period, we have a terrific wakizashi attributed to *Uda school Hiraikuni*. If you want get your feet wet with Japanese swords, study this little number, it has great character!

We complete the catalogue with an incredible katana by the *Shinshinto* super artist *Sa Yukihide*. This solidly built creation was originally a *kinnoto*, or royalist sword. It was then carefully modified for battle in WWII by way of *orikaeshi-mei*. It's fantastic dragon-themed koshirae is very inspirational.

Thank you as always for your genuine support and passion for life. It means everything to me. My team and I look forward to serving you. Let's have a great summer!

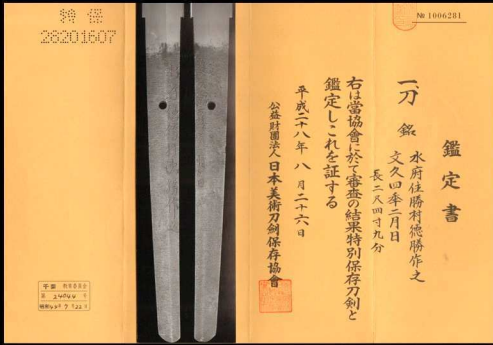
Warm regards,



Pablo Kuntz  
June 2018



Congratulations Hannah on completing elementary school!



Recently sold...

*A Katsumura Norikatsu Katana*  
Dated February 1864

Length: 75.4cm  
Curvature: 1.5cm

A long beautifully forged sword in *masame-hada*. A custom koshirae project is currently in process.





ITEM# UJKA259

## A KO-GASSAN KATANA

UNSIGNED, EARLY MUROMACHI PERIOD (OEI ERA: 1394-1428)

**Swordsmith:** *Ko-Gassan School (attribution, mumei)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 74.8cm (*ubu*)    **Curvature:** 2.1cm    **Moto-haba:** 2.7cm  
**Jihada:** *Classic Gassan ayasugi-hada with utsuri*  
**Hamon:** *Chu-suguha (straight) with slight undulations following the ayasugi wave*  
**Certificate:** **NBTHK Hozon** (a sword Worthy of Preservation)  
**Certificate #2-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (sword, tsuba and koshirae designated as Authentic)  
**Fujishiro:** **Chujo-saku** (ranked as above average)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

## SOLD

The Gassan school is one of the most prestigious and successful lines of sword-forging in Japan and enjoys a close relationship with the imperial family. Their iconic *ayasugi-hada* continues to this very day by current Gassan head and Living National Treasure, *Gassan Sadatoshi*.

This katana has been dated to the first era of the Muromachi period, circa 1400. As it was made before the Edo period, it is referred to as *Ko (ancient) Gassan*. It is a long and graceful sword with classic *ayasugi-hada*, that resembles a pulsing soundwave. A straight *suguha hamon* knits its way neatly through the ayasugi forming a gentle wavy braid. It's a pleasure to handle and admire.

A very handsome 250-year-old *handachi-koshirae* with a mother-of-pearl flute pattern on the *saya* (scabbard) crowns this jewel admirably. There is history entrenched within this piece, its palatable. An influential family surely held this katana in their private collection for generations.

Saki-kasane: 4.0mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 6.5mm

Saki-haba: 1.6cm

Nagasa: 74.8cm

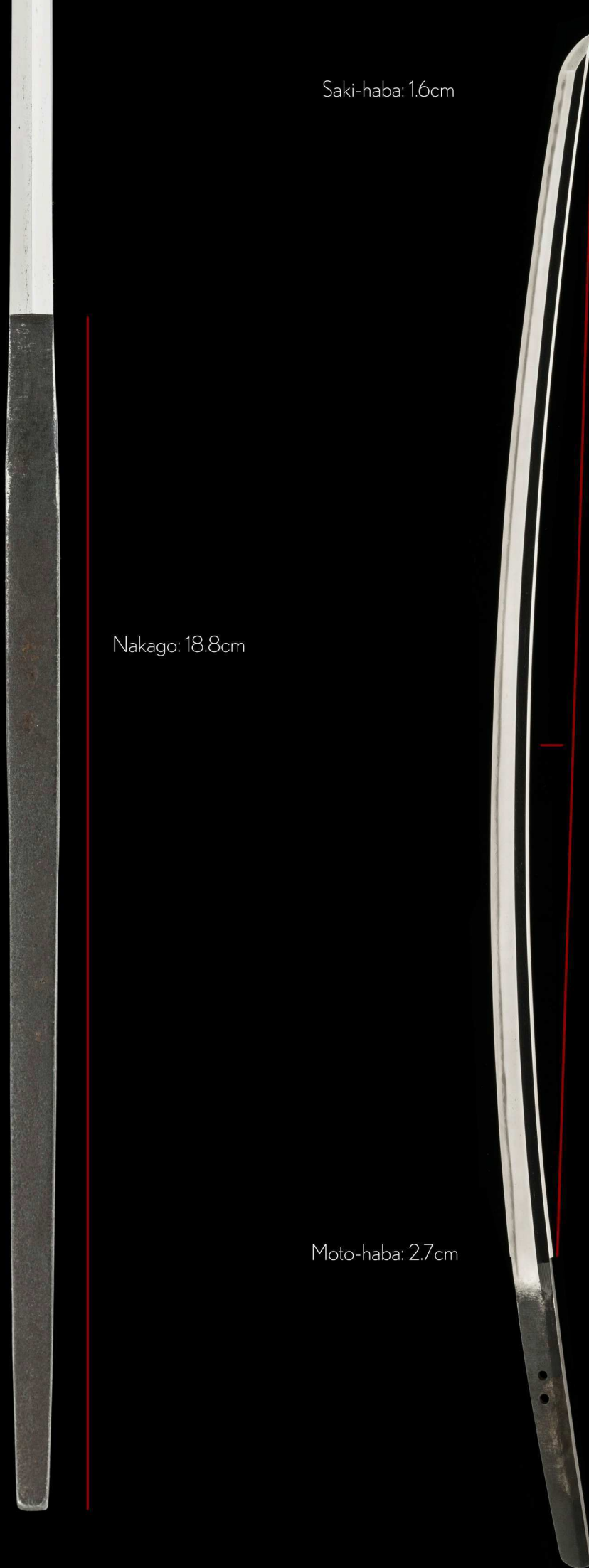
Nakago: 18.8cm

Sori: 2.1cm

Omosa: 650g

Moto-haba: 2.7cm


Mekugi-ana: 2



Elegant *torii-zori* shape, where the evenly distributed *sori* (curvature) resembles a *torii* (archway to a Shinto shrine).

The deepest point resting near the middle of the blade.



The image shows two katana blades vertically against a black background. The blades are made of dark metal with a lighter, polished section near the base. Each blade has two circular holes in the tang. The blade on the right has a signature inscribed on the tang, while the one on the left does not.

This katana was originally left unsigned by the swordsmith. Long after it was crafted, a Gassan signature was added to the *nakago* - an inscription known as *ato-mei*.

Many blades have inscriptions added later, however, as it is not by the original smith it will be judged as *gimei* (false inscription).

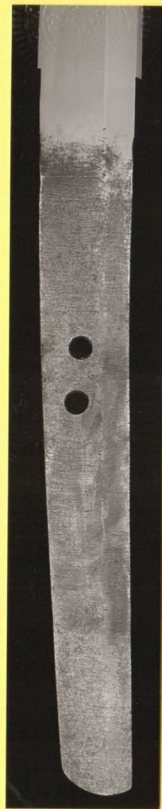
Therefore the signature was carefully removed and submitted to the NBTHK, which formally certified the blade to the *Gassan school*.

This is an *ubu-nakago* - original and unaltered tang length.

特 許  
29201711



No 3016434



鑑 定 書

一 刀 無 銘 ( 月 山 )

長 二 尺 四 寸 七 分

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年三月十五日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京 教育委員会  
第 317367 号  
平成29年 6 月 17 日

## NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 30th year of Heisei (2018), March 15th

One, Katana

*Mei* (signature)  
*Mumei, Gassan*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 4-sun 7-bu (74.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



捺 審 査 印 員	備 考	中 心	彫 刻	錠 子	刃 紋	鍛	造り 込 み	銘 文	第 八 三 五 九 号
	永 永 頭	目 釘 穴  二 個  鍔 切 り		真 下 先 鋒 中 丸 返 り	中 直 心 刃	板 目 鍛 り 之 証 み 綾 杉 肌 映 り 立 り	瑞 造 下 庵 棟	生 心 無 銘	

## NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

This katana was designated as *Authentic*  
by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Katana

*Den Dewa, Ko-Gassan*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 4-sun 7-bu (74.8cm)  
ubu nakago, mumei

Crafted during *Ouei Era* (1394-1427)

Shinsa judging panel:  
*six hanko seals of authenticity*

Issued in 29th year of Heisei (2017), April 17th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai  
(NTHK-NPO)



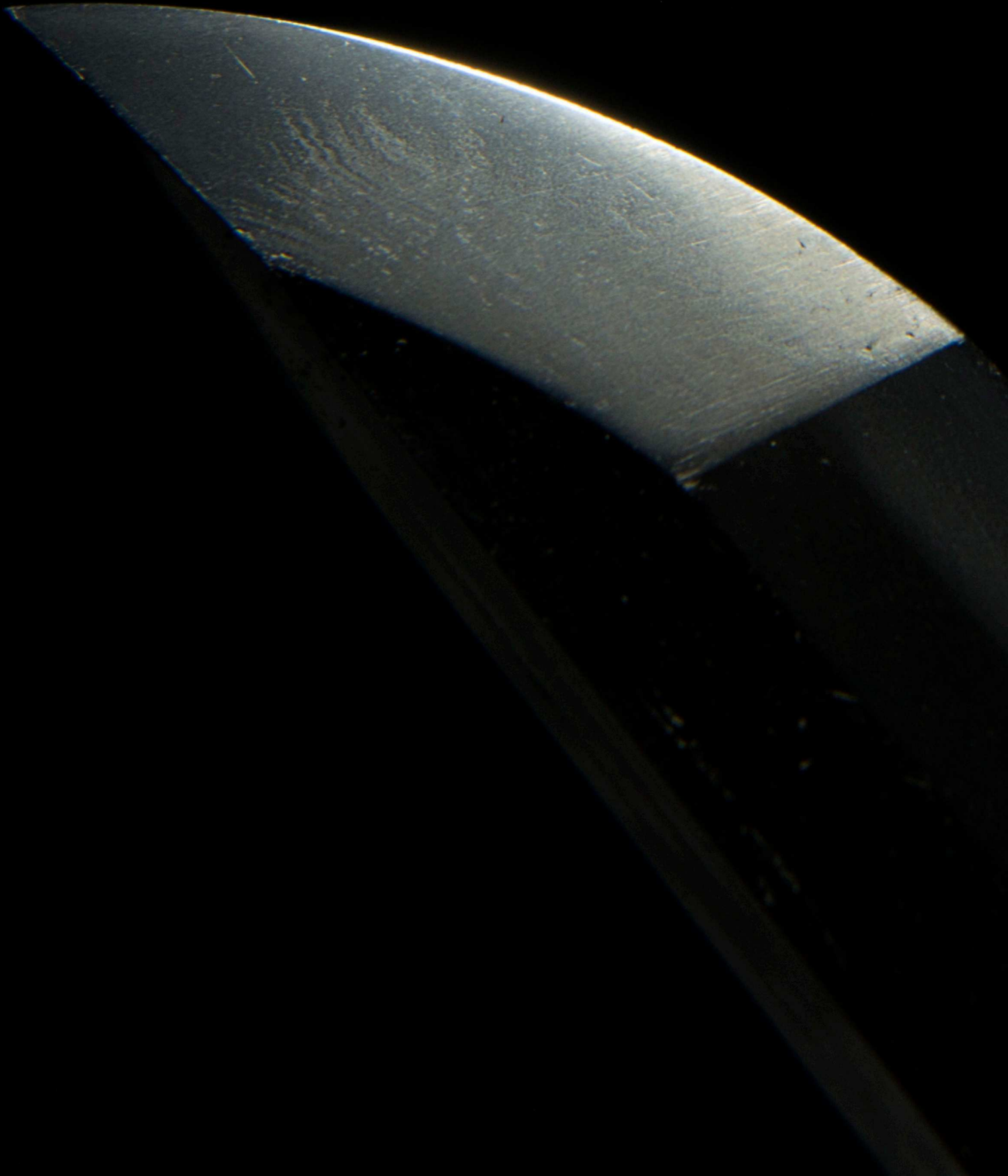
This unique wavy grain pattern in the steel is called *ayasugi-hada*. Also known as *Gassan-hada* (月山肌), this forging structure has remained the trademark of this iconic school for centuries.

Interestingly, this pattern is named after the special wavy carving pattern on certain *koto* or *shamisen* music instruments which enhances its resonance.



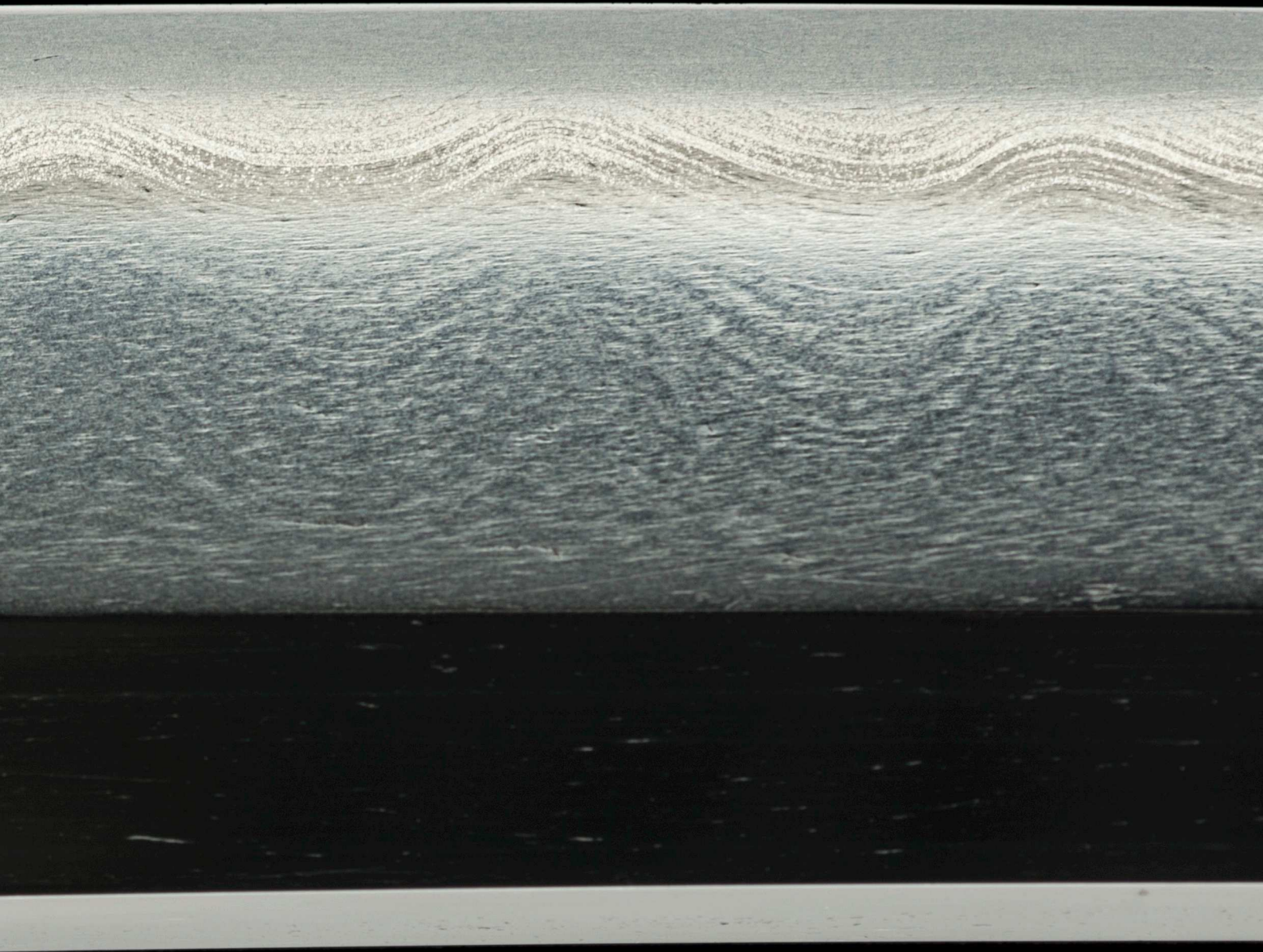
**Koto**  
traditional Japanese musical instrument

*Hakikake boshi* (brushed tip)



The Gassan school derives from Mt. Gassan in the old province of Dewa (present-day Yamagata prefecture).

Mt. Gassan had been a training area of mountain priests since olden times and swordsmiths who used the smith name of Gassan existed there since the Heian Period, though, there is no signed work of Gassan before the end of the Nanbokucho Period (1394).





Meaning "reflection", a misty *utsuri* appears almost magically in the body of sword.

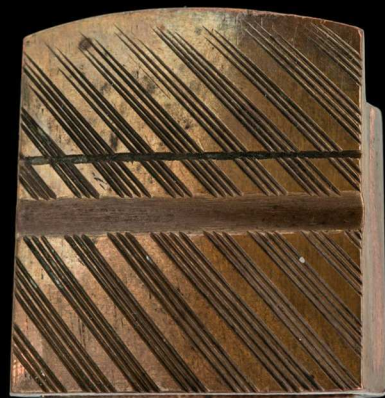
*chu-suguha hamon*  
(mid-size straight temper line)

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line). The blade is dark and curved, with a bright, circular highlight on the right side. A thin red vertical line points from the text below to a specific area on the hamon.

the *ayasugi-hada* places a  
ripple effect on the hamon



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



copper habaki



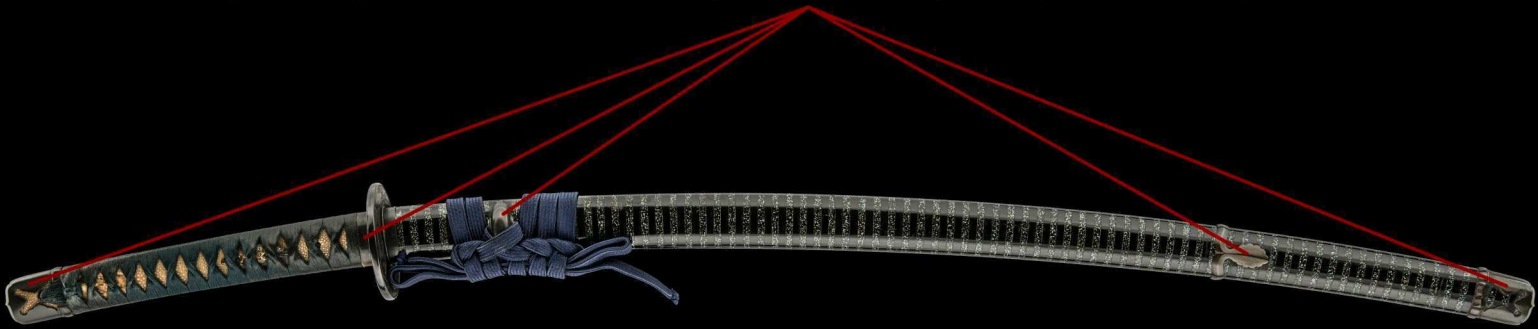
*Raden fuemaki*  
the unique striped design pattern resembles  
a traditional Japanese flute called *fue*.





This handachi koshirae has remained essentially unchanged since the last samurai of the Edo period who owned this piece (early 1800s). Even the *samekawa* (ray skin), while damaged in parts, is original, and should be left to age gracefully.

All major fittings are made of matching *shibuichi* alloy (copper/silver mix).



*Handachi koshirae* (literally “half tachi”) is a hybrid form of the *tachi koshirae* carried on horseback and the *uchigatana koshirae* which drew the sword from a standing position. The handachi originated as semi formal attire of the *bushi* (samurai class) during the Kamakura period, circa 13th century.





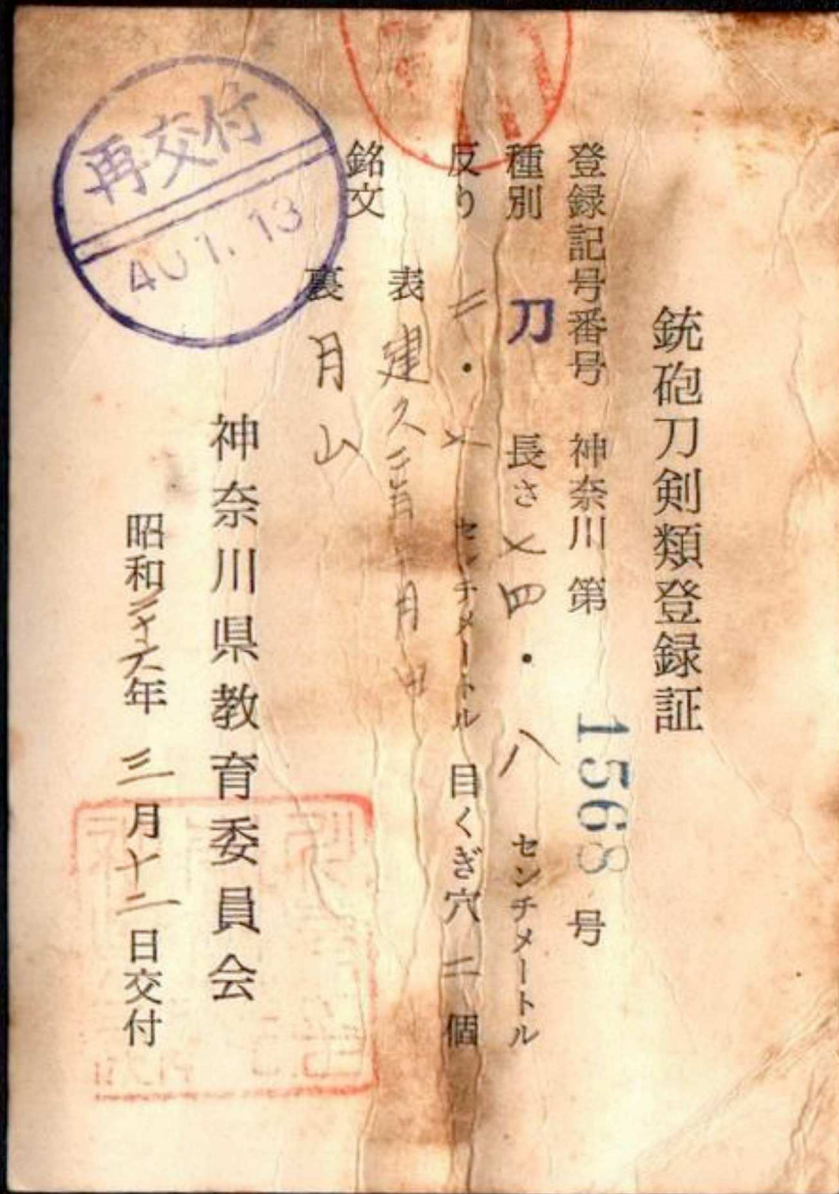
carved by Zoko

A polished iron tsuba from the *Kishu school* from the late Edo period, 1780-1867. The work is signed by *Zoko* and features a *inoshishi* (wild boar) relaxing under a tree. Light relief engravings of peony flowers decorate the scene.





*Menuki* in the form of rain dragons spiritually protect the sword and owner.

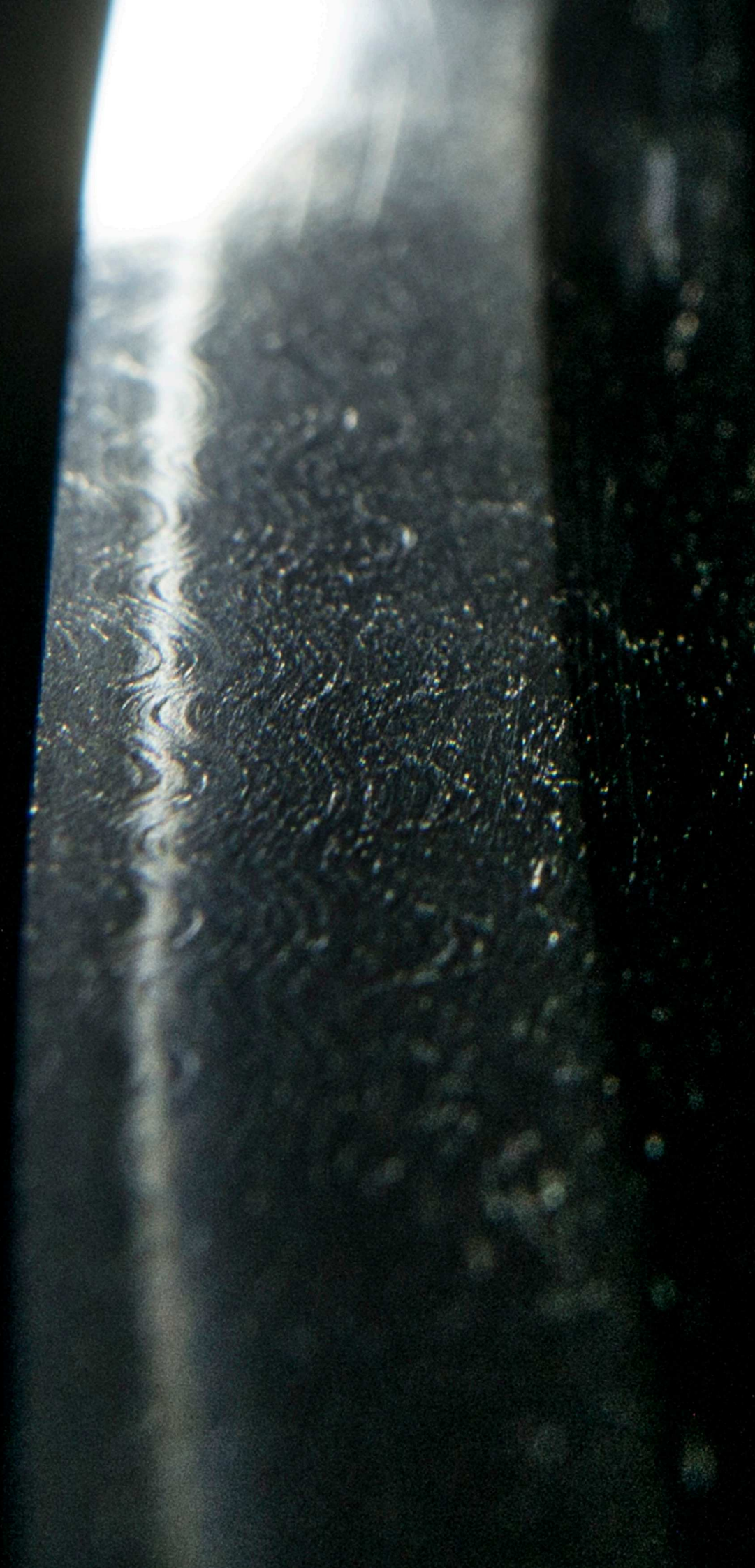


This is the original *torokusho* (registration card) for the Gassan katana. The card was registered in the 26th year of Showa (March 12, 1951) in Kanagawa.

This is significant as 1951 was the very first year that swords were formally registered in Japan. Many former Daimyo families were invited to submit their collections suggesting this blade was once held by a prominent family.

The serial number is just 1568, one of the very first swords registered in Japan.

Feel the music.





ITEM# UJWA231

## A TSUNAHIRO WAKIZASHI

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (MANJI ERA: 1658-1661)

<b>Swordsmith:</b>	<i>Soshu Ju Ise Daijo Minamoto Tsunahiro (5th generation)</i>		
<b>Location:</b>	Sagami province (Kanagawa prefecture)		
<b>Measurements:</b>	<b>Length:</b> 50.7cm	<b>Curvature:</b> 1.85cm	<b>Moto-haba:</b> 2.81cm
<b>Jihada:</b>	<i>Dense ko-itame</i>		
<b>Hamon:</b>	<i>Thick gunome midare (wave pattern) with long ashi and sunagashi</i>		
<b>Certificate #1:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon</b> ( <i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i> )		
<b>Certificate #2:</b>	<b>NTHK-NPO Kanteisho</b> ( <i>a koshirae designated as Authentic</i> )		
<b>Fujishiro rank:</b>	<i>Jo-saku</i> (a superior smith)		
<b>Cutting Ability:</b>	<i>Wazamono</i> (maker of sharp swords)		
<b>Included:</b>	Shirasaya, Edo period koshirae, sword fabric bags, sword stand, kit, etc.		

## SOLD

Here is a wakizashi with immense character by fifth generation *Ise Daijo Tsunahiro*, regarded as the finest smith to carry the *Tsunahiro* name during the Shinto period. *Tsunahiro* was ranked *jo-saku* (superior) and *wazamono* for the cutting ability of his sharp swords.

The wide and very bright *hamon* fills the blade like a comet of crystals, faithfully created in the *Soshu* tradition. The sword is housed in an antique *koshirae* from the 1700s, middle Edo period, that embodies an air of understated sophistication and importance. Very samurai indeed.

Saki-kasane: 4.1mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Omosa: 445g

Kissaki: 2.99cm  
Saki-haba: 1.87cm

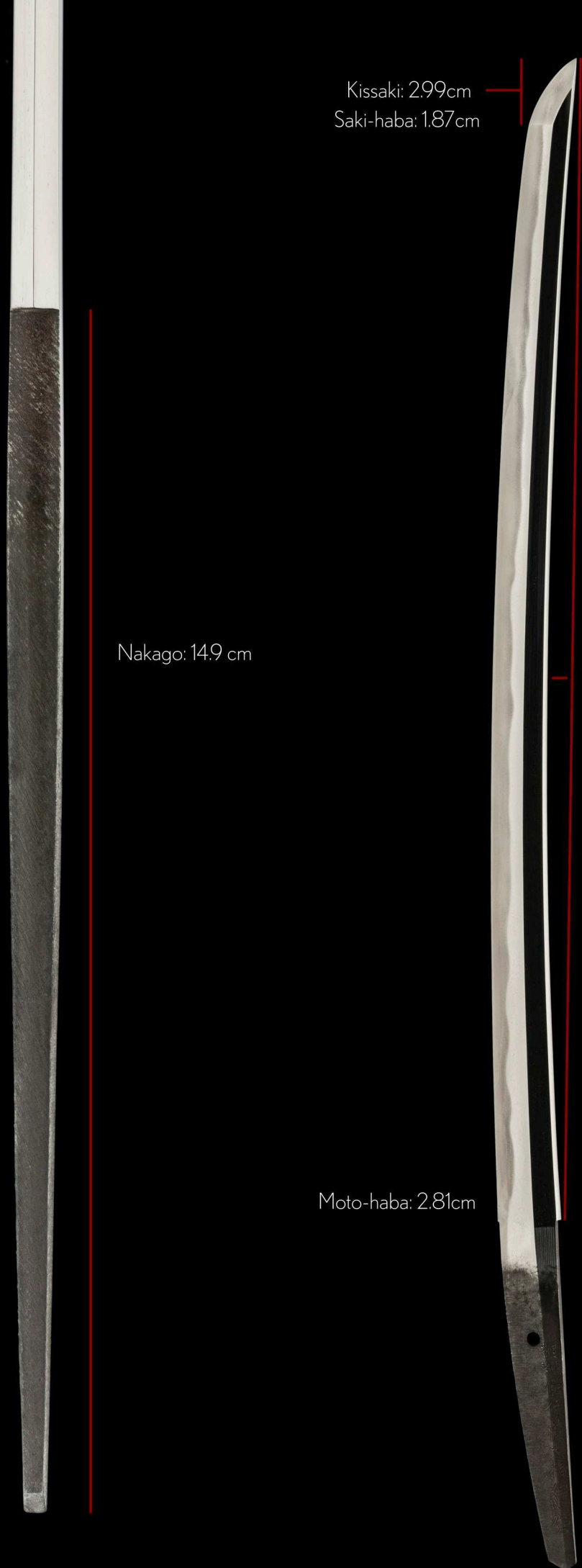
Nakago: 14.9 cm

Moto-haba: 2.81cm

Nagasa: 50.7cm

Sori: 1.85cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



5th generation *Ise no Daijo Tsunahiro*  
was the most outstanding of all shinto-  
era Tsunahiro masters.

Active from the *Manji era* (1658-1661)  
Tsunahiro died in Genroku eleven  
(1698) at the age of 83.



Location: *Soshu Ju* (Sagami province)

Title: *Ise Daijo* (Honorary title of Ise province)

Swordsmith: *Tsunahiro* [fifth generation]

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

*kiri-yasurime* (horizontal file marks)

While residing in Soshu (Kamakura area),  
Ise Daijo Tsunahiro crafted this wakizashi.

So

shu

Ju

I

se (no)

Dai

jo

Tsuna

hiro

相刻位  
伊勢  
大塚  
綱廣

Well-chiseled *mei* (signature) and beautiful patina on the nakago.



## 鑑 定 書

長一尺六寸七分

一 脇指 銘 相州住伊勢大掾綱広

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成六年四月五日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



## NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 6th year of Heisei (1994), April 5th

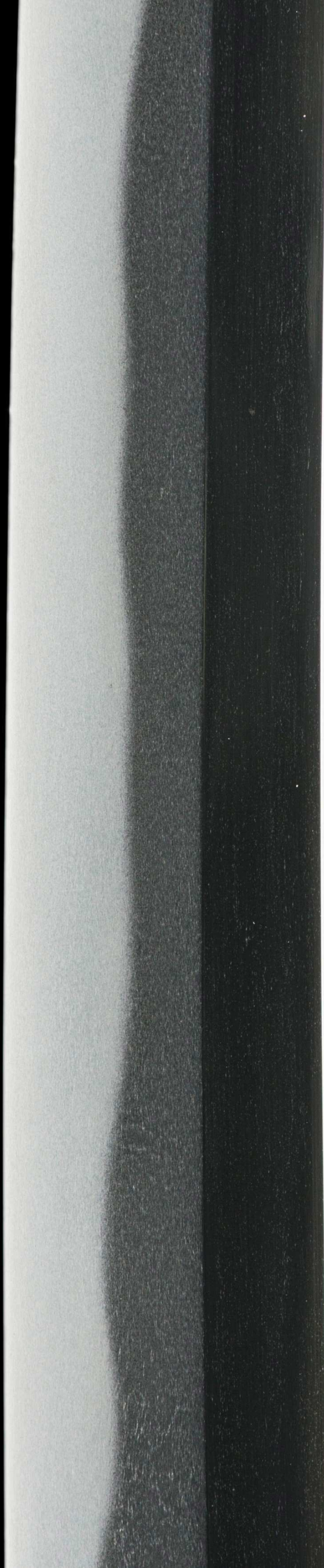
One, Wakizashi

Mei (signature)  
*Soshu-ju Ise no Daijo Tsunahiro*

Nagasa (length)  
1-shaku 6-sun 7-bu (50.7cm)

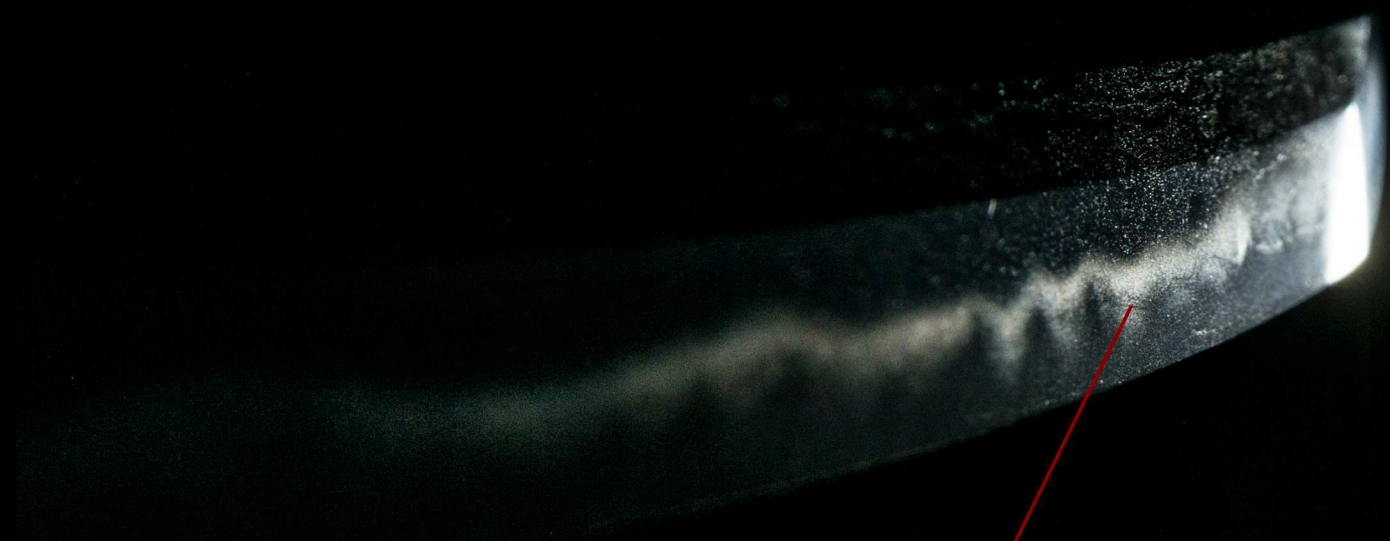
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

Tsunahiro swords have a *jigane* (steel) that is hard and feature a rich, tightly-packed *mokume-hada* (rounded burl-grain).



A wide *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon)  
form a bright celestial cloud of *notare* (gentle wave).





*kinsuji* (black golden lines)

In true Soshu tradition, good *hataraki* (activity) appear on the blade.



*sunagashi* (brushed sand)

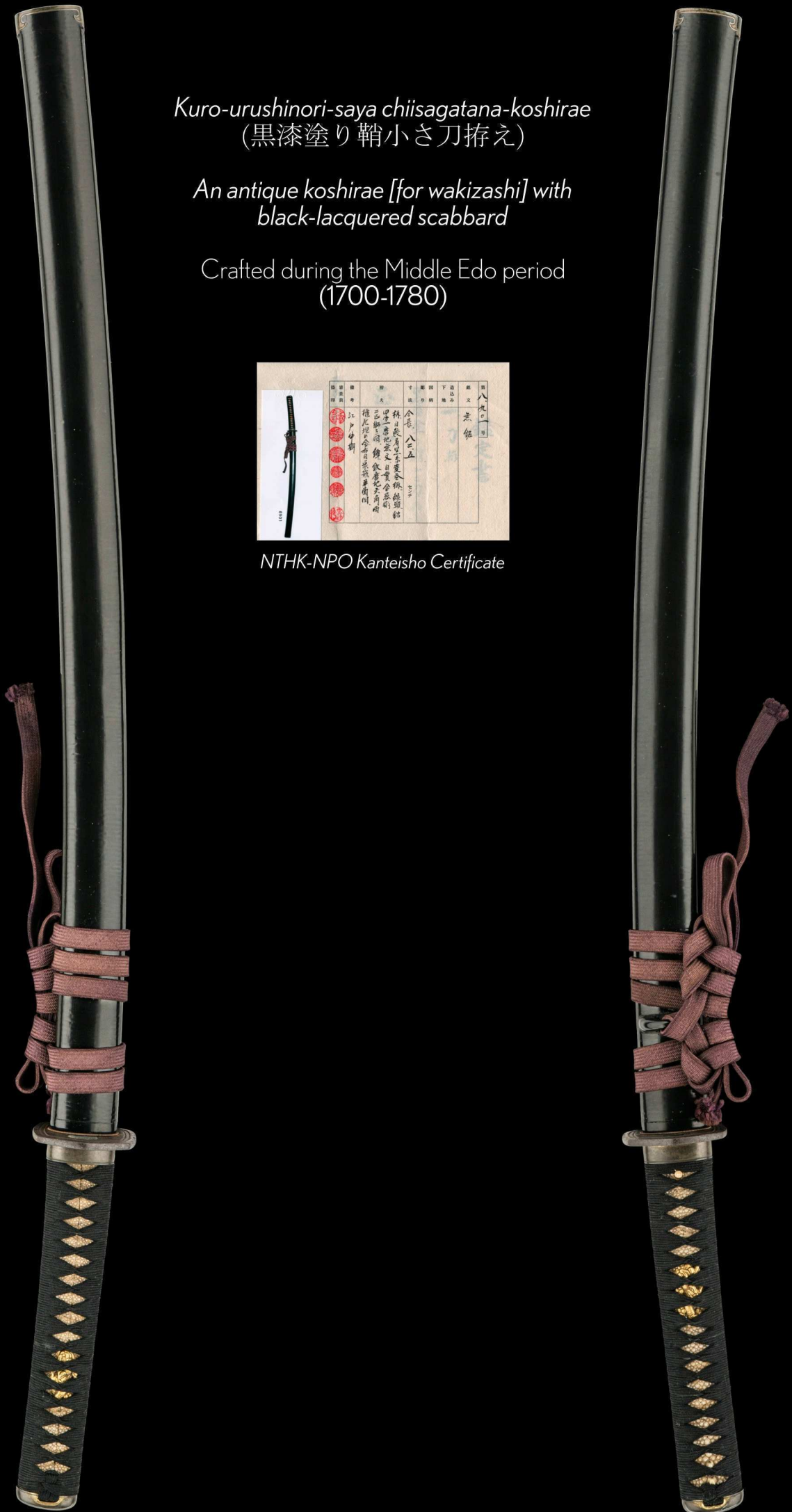
*Kuro-urushinori-saya chiisagatana-koshirae*  
(黒漆塗り鞘小き刀拵え)

*An antique koshirae [for wakizashi] with  
black-lacquered scabbard*

*Crafted during the Middle Edo period  
(1700-1780)*



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate





a polished iron tsuba in a hexagonal shape with one *hitsu-ana* (hole) plugged, featuring a gold *nunome-zogan* fern motif



a hidden cross?

*Nunome-zogan* – lit. “*fabric/texture*” describes a technique where the surface of the ground metal is prepared by rough crosshatching with a file or a fine chisel. Afterwards, soft gold or silver fragments or wires are hammered into these depressions.

This technique was in use during the late Muromachi period among *Shoami* artists and is mainly seen during the subsequent Edo period on *Nanban-tsuba* and work of the *Higo Hayashi* and *Shimizu schools*.

The actual ornamentation is not as firmly connected to the surface, so we frequently find works where parts of the nunome design is lost due to rust or abrasion, leaving only the preparative file mark pattern.

Markus Sesko  
Encyclopedia of Japanese Swords





An artistic silver *kojiri* (end cap on scabbard) gives this 250-year-old *koshirae* an air of sophistication.



Light beyond the horizon.  
Hello world.



A complimentary sword maintenance kit with *mekugi-nuki* and a bottle of *Fujishiro* sword oil (trusted by the Japanese sword museum) is included with all sword purchases.



safe, extra large cloth for adding oil to the blade

## Care and Protection

The maintenance kit also includes a large cloth to comfortably and safely rest the sword when viewing (for hours on end!).

And when the sword is not in hand, watch the **Art of the Japanese Sword DVD** or read the insightful sword picture book from the **All Japan Swordsmith Association** (also included free for clients).



40cm x 40cm cloth  
(in blue and white)



ITEM# UJKA290

## A NIDAI MASAHIRO KATANA

SIGNED, EDO PERIOD (GENROKU ERA: 1688-1700)

**Swordsmith:** *Hizen no Kuni Kawachi no Kuni Fujiwara Masahiro (nidai, 2nd generation)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 69.8cm (*ubu*)    **Curvature:** 2.2cm    **Moto-haba:** 3.22cm  
**Jihada:** *Ko-mokume leading to Hizen konuka-hada, thick nie-deki*  
**Hamon:** *Beautiful gunome midare with kinsuji, ashi and sunagashi*  
**Certificate #1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation*)  
**Certificate #2-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*tsuba, fuchi-kashira & koshirae designated as Authentic*)  
**Fujishiro:** **Jo-saku** (*ranked as a superior swordsmith*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

## SOLD

*Nidai* (second generation) *Masahiro* is the talented son of *Shodai Sadenjiro Masahiro*. He was born in 1627 and, like his father, worked under the patronage of the *Nabeshima Lord Katsushige* in *Hizen* province. He originally used the *Masanaga*, however, in 1661 when bestowed the title of *Kawachi no Kami*, he began signing his swords under the proud name of *Masahiro*. A full ten generations of *Masahiro*-line smiths worked until the very end of the *Edo* period.

Based on the sublime curvature of this katana, it would have been made later in his career during the *Genroku era*. A gorgeous *gunome midare hamon* radiates from the blade that is exquisitely forged in classic *konuka-hada* that *Hizen* school swords were famous for. A beautiful set of *Edo* period *koshirae* compliments the sword like a finely tailored tuxedo. The detailed *Hamono* school warrior-themed fittings speaks of the importance of uniting strategy, courage and perseverance in the quest of victory.

Saki-kasane: 5.2mm <sup>^</sup>

Kissaki: 4.08cm

Saki-haba: 2.22cm

Moto-kasane: 7.8mm

Nagasa: 69.8cm

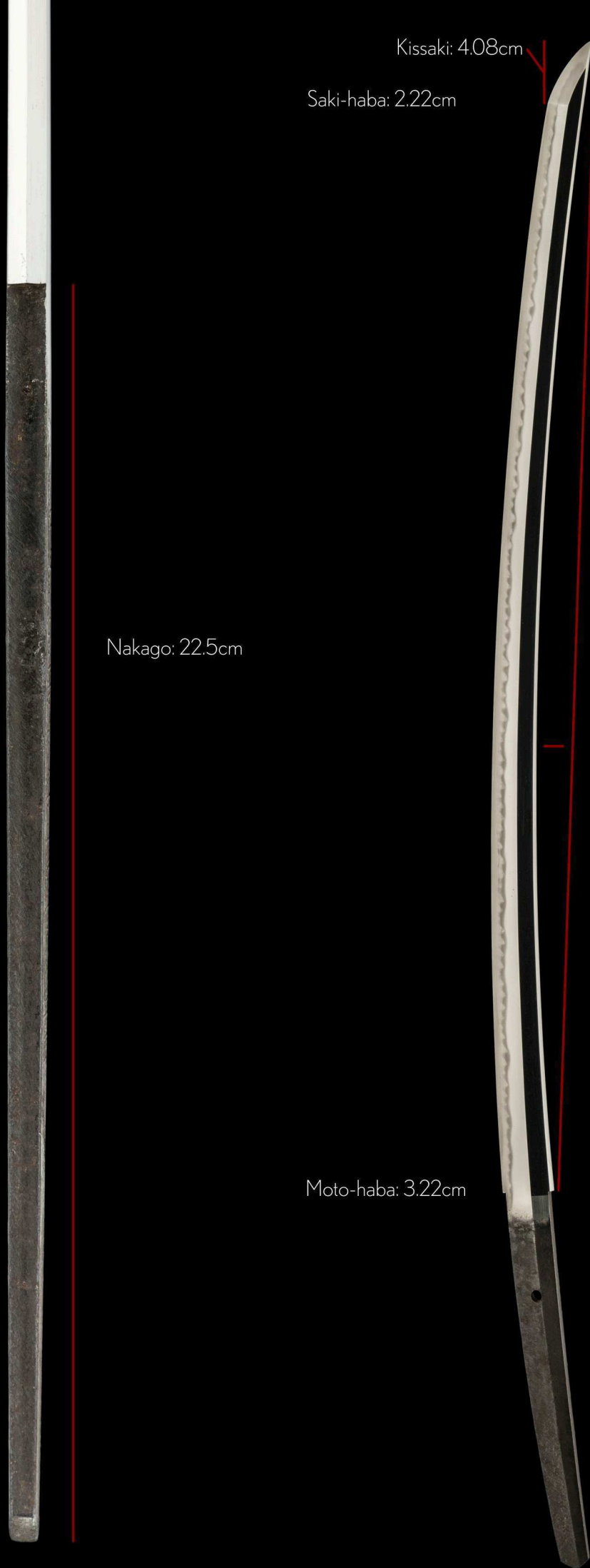
Nakago: 22.5cm

Sori: 2.2cm

Omosa: 890g

Moto-haba: 3.22cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



2nd generation Masahiro died at the age of 73 on August 6th, 1700.

The curvy shape of this sword speaks to the *Genroku era* (circa 1688) towards the end of his exceptional career.



Location: *Hizen no Kuni* (Hizen province)

Title: *Kawachi no Kami* (Lord of Kawachi province)

Clan: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Masahiro* [second generation]

Hi  
zen  
(no) kuni  
Ka  
wachi  
(no) Kami  
Fuji  
wara  
Masa  
hiro



Like his father, shodai Masahiro, Nidai signed his katana *tachi-me* whereby the signature is chiselled on the side of the *nakago* that is facing *away* from the samurai when the blade is worn cutting-edge down.

Signing tachi-me is a characteristic of the majority of katana (not wakizashi) that were crafted in Hizen province.

特保  
10199605



No 143357



鑑定書

長二尺三寸〇半

一、刀銘肥前国河内守藤原正広

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成十年六月十七日

財團法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



## NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 10th year of Heisei (1998), June 17th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

*Hizen no Kuni Kawachi no Kami Fujiwara Masahiro*


Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 0-bu han (69.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

classic *ko-maru boshi*  
(slight turn-back)



A close-up photograph of a curved blade, likely a Japanese sword, showing a serrated edge and a line of kinsuji (black golden line). The blade is dark and metallic, with a bright reflection on the serrated edge. The background is black.

an unusually long and powerful  
line of *kinsuji* (black golden line)  
adds extra zest to the blade.

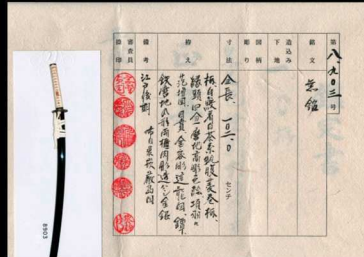


a delightful *gunome-midare hamon*  
with strong brush strokes of *sunagashi*

*Kuro-roiro-nuri saya uchigatana-koshirae*  
(黒呂色塗鞘打刀拵え)

*A classic uchigatana-koshirae with  
glossy black-lacquered scabbard*

*Crafted during the late Edo period  
(1800-1868)*



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate





The *tsuba* (guard) tells a fascinating tale of the *Battle of Miyamjima* in 1555. The inspirational story is *gekokujo* the "weak dominating the strong" - that the underdog shall prevail with smart strategy and emphatic perseverance.

This large polished iron *tsuba* with *nunome-zogan* in openwork design is attributed to the *Hikone school*, crafted in the mid-Edo period, circa 1700s.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate



(reverse)



Miyajima shrine



Fang Zeng (227-204 BC)

The *fuchi*, signed by *Sadayuki* of the *Hamono school*, depicts the great military strategist *Fang Zeng* in brilliant detail.

Fan Zeng served his nephew, *Xiang Yu*, as an advisor. Xiang Yu respectfully addressed Fan Zeng as his "Second Father".

Hama  
no  
Sada  
yuki

kao (seal)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate

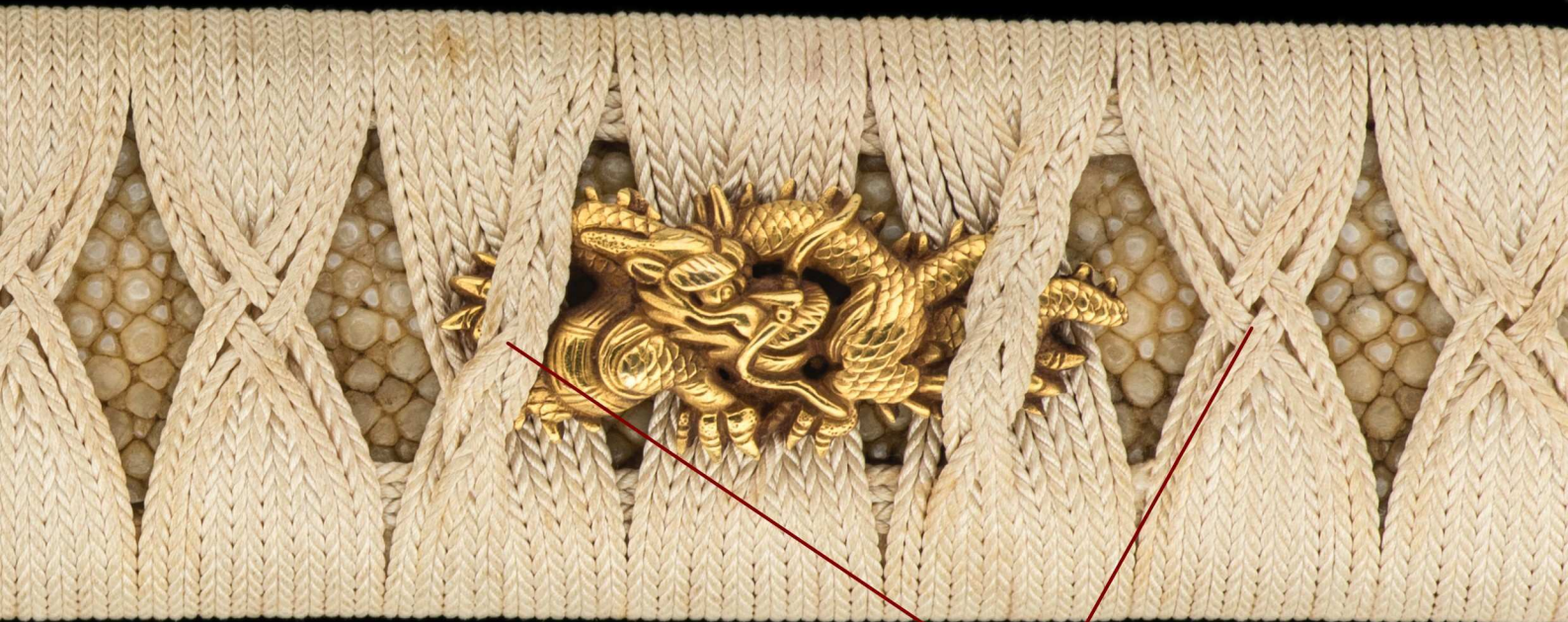
A confident warlord *Xiang Yu* is depicted on the *kashira* (pommel). Xiang Yu is said to have had a double pupil in one eye - a mark of a king or a sage.

Xiang Yu was slightly taller than eight *chi* (about 6' 1") and possessed unusual physical strength. The samurai have always admired the mastery of strength in battle combined with cunning military strategy. A story often represented in quality sword fittings.





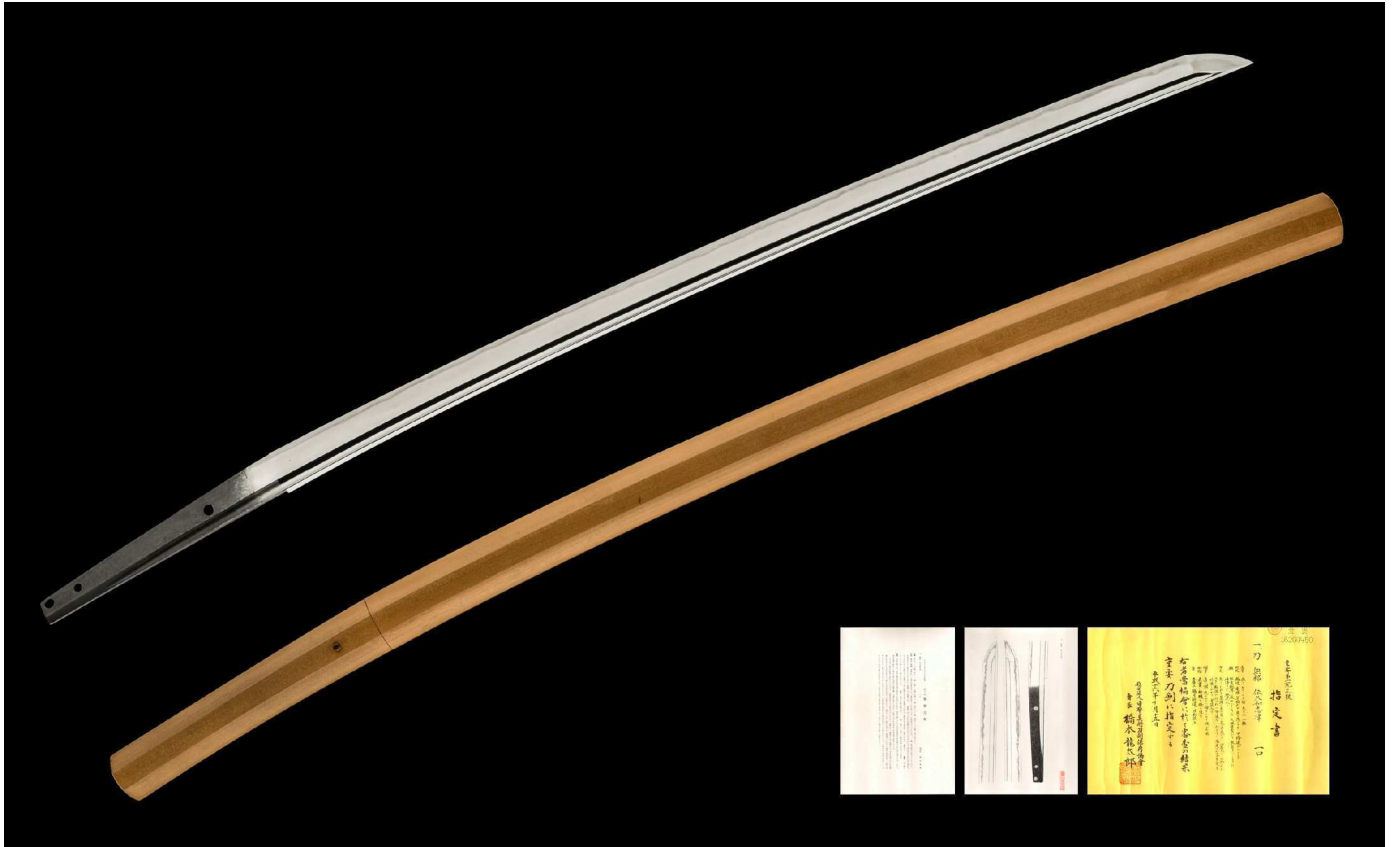
Brilliant gold *Goto school* crawling dragon *menuki* are skilfully woven into the white silk braids of *jabara-ito*.



This type of *tsuka-maki* (hilt wrapping) is called *ajirokumi-agemaki*. Thin braids are used of which the outer four recess cross-laced atop and below of each other.







ITEM# UJKA298

## A YAMATO SHIZU KATANA

UNSIGNED, LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1319~1330)

**Swordsmith:** *Yamato Shizu (attribution, o-suriage mumei)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 72.05cm **Curvature:** 1.1cm **Moto-haba:** 2.9cm **Weight:** 700g  
**Jihada:** *Pronounced itame and nagare-hada with o-itame, ji-nie and chikei*  
**Hamon:** *Ko-nie-laden shallow notare-cho mixed with gunome, togariba, ko-gunome, ko-ashi, and hotsure, kuichigai-ba, uchinoke, yubashiri, sunagashi and kinsuji*  
**Horimono:** Full length *bo-hi* (groove) on both sides with *kaki-nagashi* into the tang  
**Certificate:** **50th NBTHK Juyo Token** (a sword designated as *Profound and Important*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

# SOLD

*Kaneuji* is one of the ten disciples of the great swordsmith *Masamune*, known collectively as *Masamune no Juttetsu*. He is thought to have migrated from Yamato province (Nara). *Kaneuji*'s first sensei was *Kanenaga* of the *Tegai school* and inherited the kanji character for 'Kane' from him.

After studying with *Masamune*, his work took on a mixture Soshu and Yamato traditions. Of all the students, he is considered to have most closely replicated the style of *Masamune*. When *Kaneuji* left *Masamune* in Kamakura, he settled in the town of *Shizu* in Mino province. His blend of Soshu and Yamato traditions was so unique that he is became known as the founder of the Mino tradition, the fifth Koto tradition. He later became known by the nickname "*Shizu*".

After Kaneuji died, his students moved the forge to the village of *Naoe* in Mino. Their school became known as *Naoe Shizu*. Swords made when Kaneuji was in Yamato are given the name *Yamato Shizu*, though it precedes his time in Shizu. Yamato Shizu is also used for the school he left behind in Yamato that faithfully carried on into the late Nambokucho period (mid-1300s).

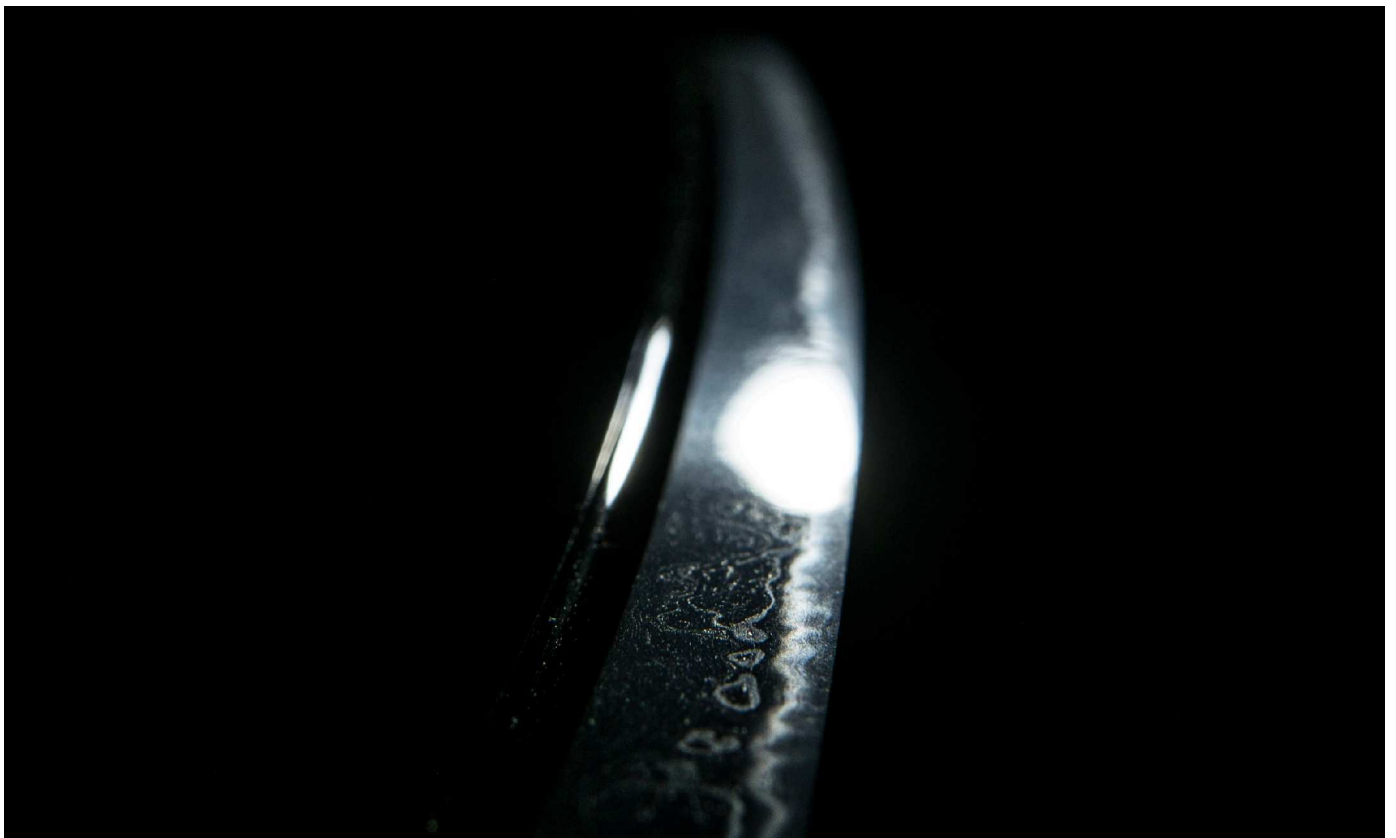
This long and vibrant katana epitomizes the work of Kaneuji and his students in Yamato province. Take first the imposing structure of the katana, which is muscular and awe-inspiring. The thick *kasane* (spine) with high *shinogi* (ridge) and plenty of *niku* (meat) speaks emphatically to the Yamato tradition and the late Kamakura period. This is a sword that has stood the test of time. Quite literally, seven centuries of warring experience under its *obi* (belt).

Moving one's eye to the body of the blade showcases a magnificent blend of the brilliant *Tegai school* and the energy of the Soshu tradition. Vivid spirals of *o-itame* burl grain jump out of the blade. The *jihada* also takes on a waviness in places called *nagare-hada*. Beautiful dark lines of *chikei* are infused in the steel. Like all great swords, it shines with *ji-nie*.

As Kaneuji is a father to the Mino tradition, we see parts of the *hamon* that are *togari* (pointed) - an important characteristic to pick up on. There is an overall flowing *notare* (wave) tight semi-circular undulations called *ko-gunome*.

If there ever was a blade to study *hataraki* (activity) in a blade, this is one such piece. Everything from *kinsuji* (golden lines) to *sunagashi* (brushed sand), to half-moon *uchinoke* (very Tegai) and gorgeous *yubashiri* that look like droplets of water (see image below). There is even *kuichigaiba*, a classic Yamato trait where the hamon overlaps, forming parallel lines for a certain distance.

Every time a sword of this quality is examined, a new bit of sensory treasure will reveal itself. The NBTHK describes this katana as "*Masterwork of the Yamato Shizu school*". It's clear to see why. There is a magic within this steely creation that is most worthy of any serious collection.



droplets of *yubashiri* ('running hot water')

Saki-kasane: 6.1mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 700g

Kissaki: 2.8cm

Saki-haba: 2.1cm

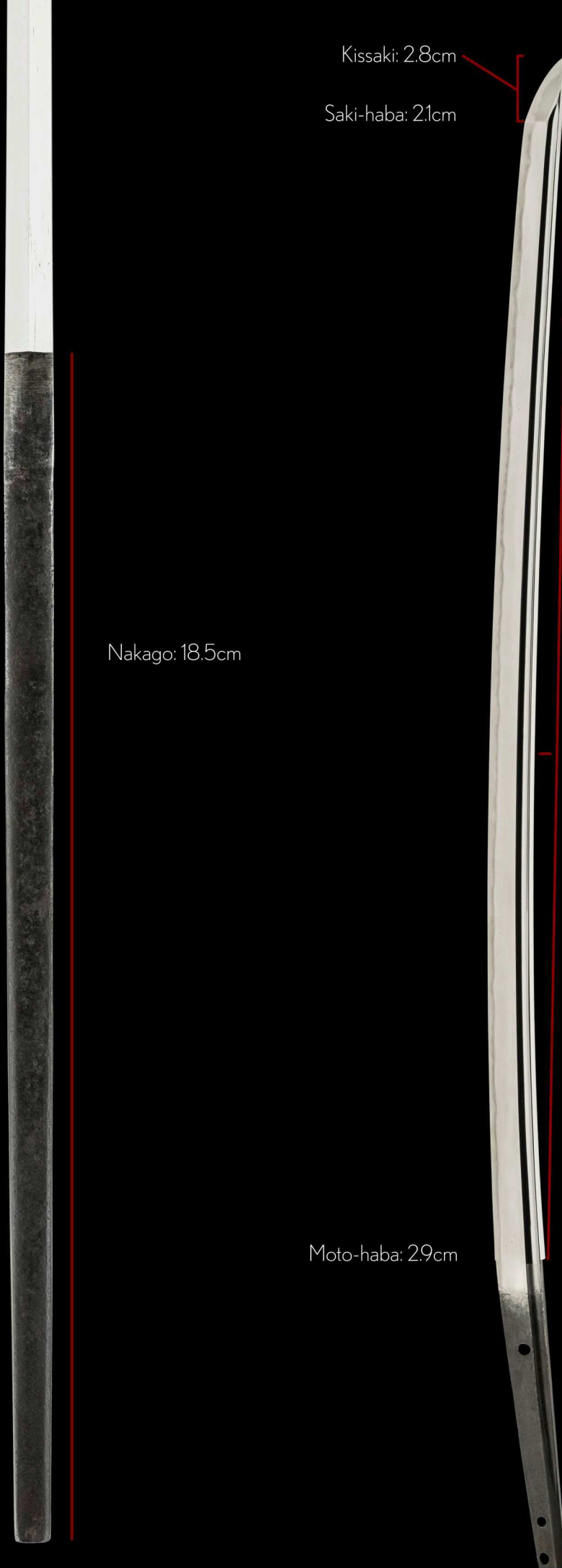
Nakago: 18.5cm

Moto-haba: 2.9cm

Nagasa: 72.05cm

Sori: 1.1cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



The NBTHK Juyo Token certificate highlights the *keijo* or 'shape of the blade' as having a wide *mihaba* (width), and a thick *kasane* (spine area).

These characteristics make a sword 'healthy' - a quality that the NBTHK sword museum prizes on older pieces, such as on this Yamato Shizu katana.

This katana was crafted in the early 1300s during the late Kamakura period - the golden era of Japanese sword making over 700 years ago.

It radiates a strong and powerful presence.



This katana carries an *o-suriage nakago*, where the *nakago* (tang) is greatly shortened. The new nakago is formed from what was originally part of the blade.

In o-suriage blades the original *mei* (signature) is lost, although sometimes preserved as an *orikaeshi* (folded-over signature) or *gakumei* (framed signature).

This bottom *mekugi-ana* (hole) is likely original to the blade.





A groove helps to make a sword lighter and aids in the cutting performance by taking on i-beam construction properties of absorbing energy.

On this katana, there is a *bo-hi* on the *omote* (front) and *ura* (back) of the blade.

The groove then becomes pointed and tapers about halfway down the *nakago* (tang). This is known as *kaki-nagashi*.

16200450

重要第一九三九號

指定書

一、刀 無銘 伝大和志津 一口

法量 長さ七二・〇五種 反り一・二種  
形状 鑄造 庵棟 身筒 広め 反り浅くつき 中鋒 延かこころ  
鍔 板目 総体に流れこころに 天板目 交わり 肌立ちこころに  
地沸つき 地景入り

刃文 浅いたれを基調に互の目・夾り刃 交わり 小足入り 小沸よく  
つき 総体にほつれ・喰違刃・打のけ・湯走りなどを交え  
砂流し かり 金筋入り  
帽子 直ぐ調に先ふんに掃きかりて焼かぬ風  
彫物 表裏に柃樋を掻き流す  
茎 天磨上 鑢目筋違 目釘孔三

右者當協會に於て審査の結果  
重要刀劍に指定す

平成十六年十月十五日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會  
會長 橋本龍太郎



NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Profound and Important* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 16th year of Heisei (2004), October 15th

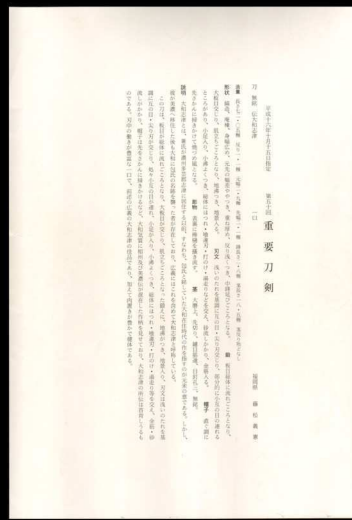
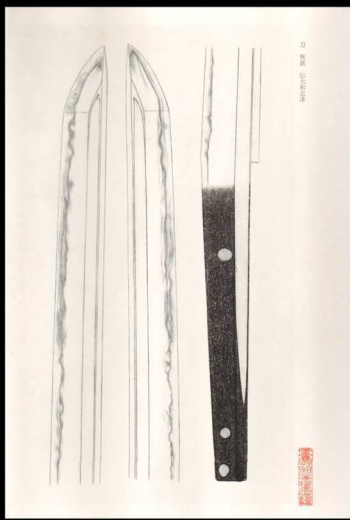
Katana, mumei

Den Yamato-Shizu (伝大和志津)

Length: 72.05cm  
Curvature: 1.1cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai (NBTHK)

[President] Hashimoto Ryutarō (橋本龍太郎)



Below is a translation of the Juyo Token 'white paper'.

Designated as Juyo Token (a profound and important sword)  
50th juyo shinsa held on October 15, 2004

Katana, *mumei*: **Den Yamato-Shizu** (伝大和志津)

Measurements:

nagasa 72.05cm    sori 1.1cm    motohaba 2.9cm    sakihaba 2.1cm    kissaki-nagasa 2.8cm  
nakago-nagasa 18.5 cm, only very little nakago-sori

Description:

*Keijo*: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, wide *mihaba*, rather noticeable taper, thick *kasane*, shallow *sori*, somewhat elongated *chu-kissaki*

*Kitae*: rather standing-out *itame* that tends overall to *nagare* and that is mixed with *o-itame*, in addition, *ji-nie* and *chikei* appear

*Hamon*: *ko-nie-laden* shallow *notare-cho* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, some connected *ko-gunome* in places, and *ko-ashi*, and all over the blade with *hotsure*, *kuichigai-ba*, *uchinoke*, *yubashiri*, *sunagashi* and *kinsuji*

*Boshi*: *sugu-cho* which runs out in *yakitsume* manner and which features plenty of *hakikake*

*Horimono*: on both sides a *bohi* that runs with *kaki-nagashi* into the tang

*Nakago*: *o-surige*, *kirijiri*, *sujikai-yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*, *mumei*

Remarks

Initially, the term *Yamato-Shizu* referred to *Kaneuji's* (兼氏) time in Yamato, i.e. before he moved to Shizu in the Taki district of Mino province and when he still signed his name with the characters (包氏). However, there were some smiths remaining in Yamato who continued the Kaneuji (包氏) name so in the wider sense, the classification *Yamato-Shizu* can include these smiths too.

This blade shows a rather standing-out *itame* that tends to *nagare* all over, that is mixed with *o-itame*, and that features *ji-nie* and *chikei*. The *hamon* is a *ko-nie-laden notare-cho* that is mixed with *gunome*, *togariba*, some connected *ko-gunome* in places, and *ko-ashi*, and all over the blade with *hotsure*, *kuichigai-ba*, *uchinoke*, *yubashiri*, *sunagashi* and *kinsuji*. The *boshi* shows plenty of *hakikake* and when we combine all this, we recognize characteristics of the Yamato tradition that are mixed with *Soshu* and *Mino* elements whereupon we were in agreement to attribute this blade to *Yamato-Shizu*.

The *ha* is rich in *hataraki* and we have here a masterwork from the wider sense of the above-mentioned *Yamato-Shizu* classification. In addition, the blade has plenty of *niku* and very healthy.

*itame hada* (standing out)

*hakikake* (sweeping sand in boshi)

*yakitsume* (hamon has no turn-back, goes to mune)

刀 無銘 伝大和志津

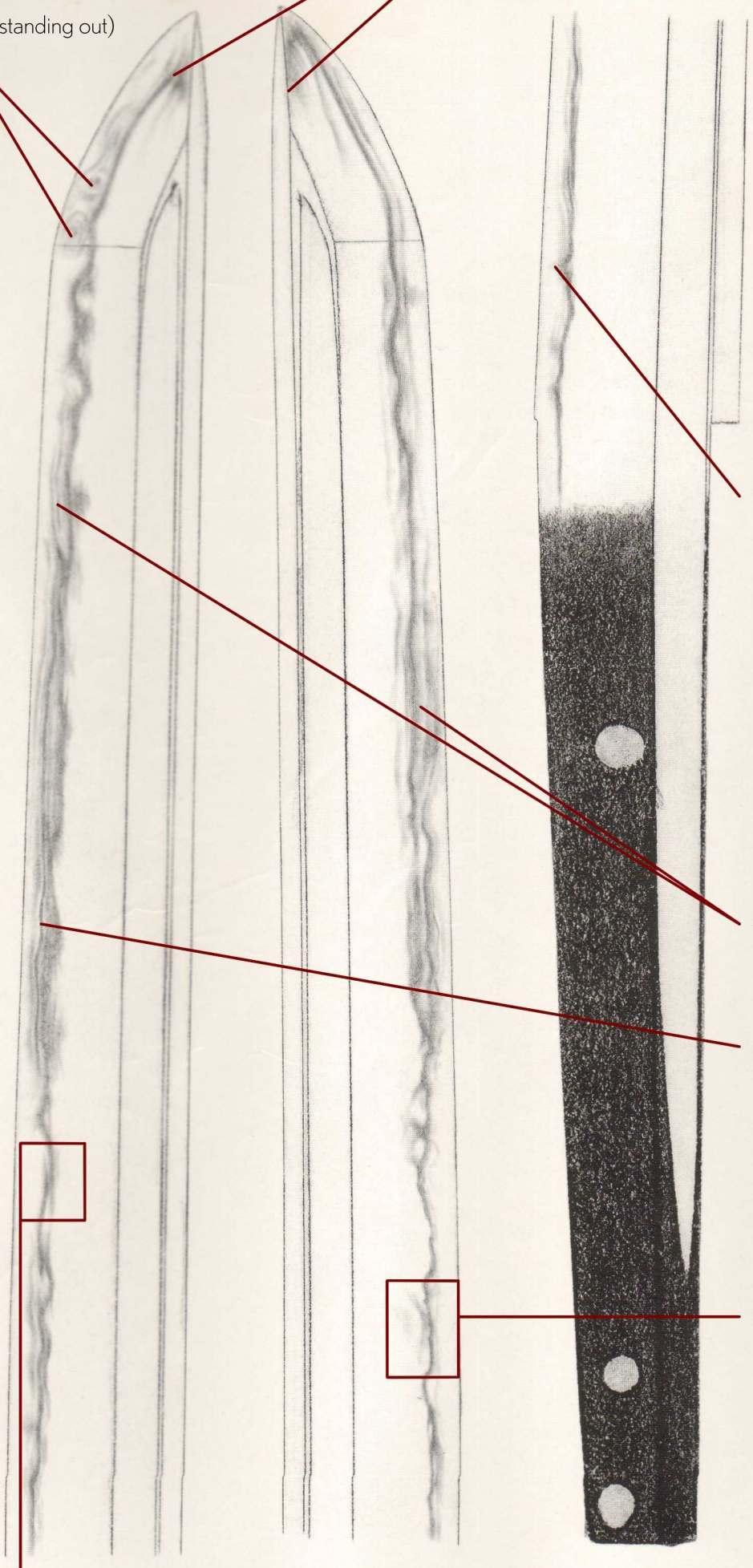
*togari* (pointed area of hamon)

*sunagashi* (sweeping sand)

*kinsuji* (black 'golden lines')

*uchinoke* (crescent moon)

*kuichigai-ba* (hamon splits and overlaps)

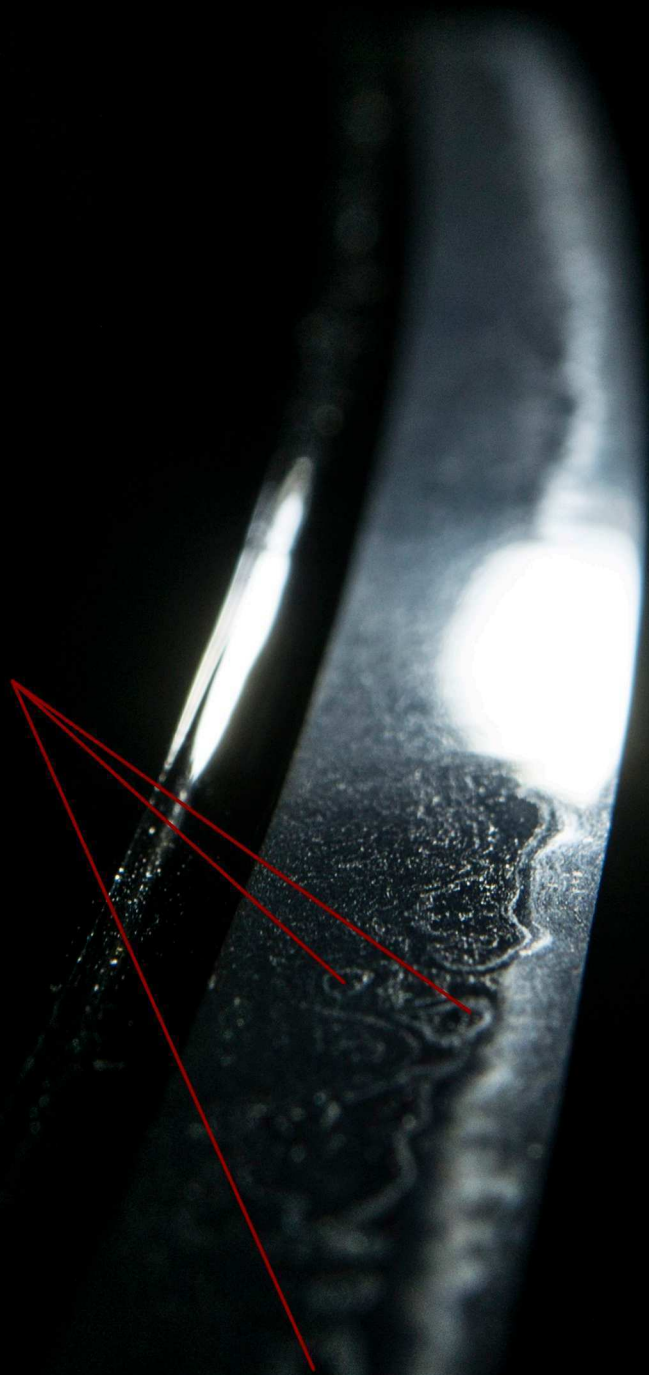



"The *ha* is rich in *hataraki*...a masterwork from the wider sense of the Yamato-Shizu classification."

50th NBTHK Juyo Token  
October 15, 2014

*yubashiri* - concentrated spots of *nie* crystals that resemble droplets of water.

*Yubashiri* is seen in the *jihada* of swords made in the Yamato Tegai school in which Kaneuji initially trained within.





The Juyo Token certificate describes the sword as having rather "standing-out" *itame* (wood grain) that tends overall to *nagare* (wavy grain) and mixed with *o-itame* (large swirls).

Note the channels of dark *chikei* that gently weaves through the body of the blade.

Welcome to steel heaven.

*kinsuji*

black 'golden' lines that slice through the hamon, Soshu style.



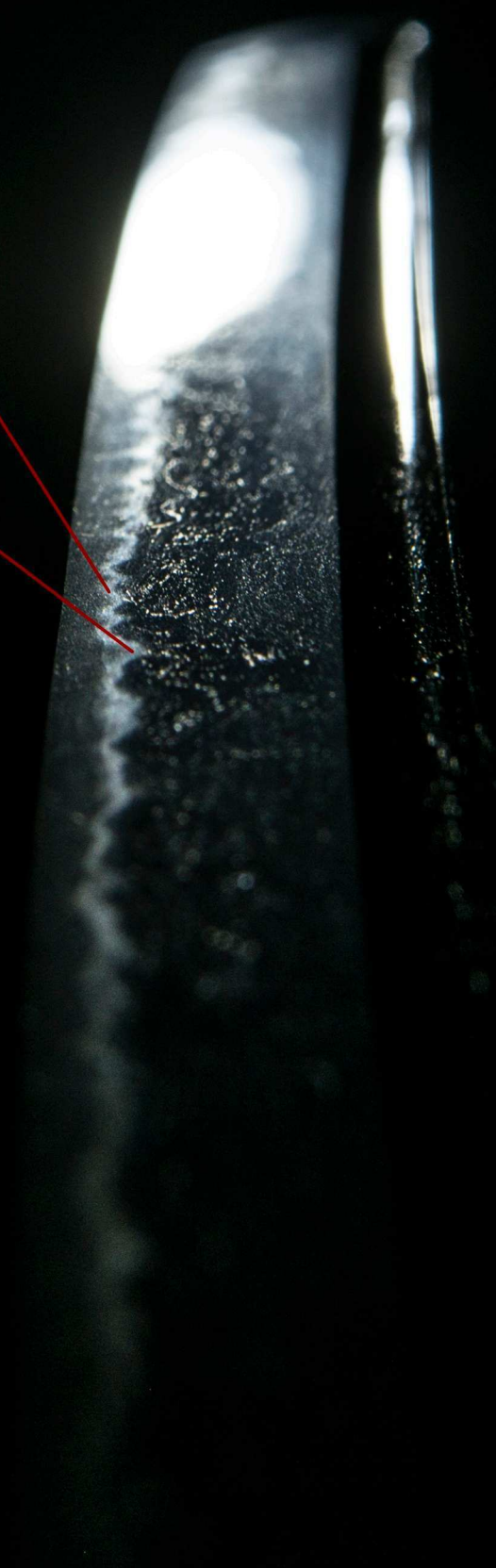
Note the beautiful whirlpools of *itame-hada* inside the *kissaki* (tip)

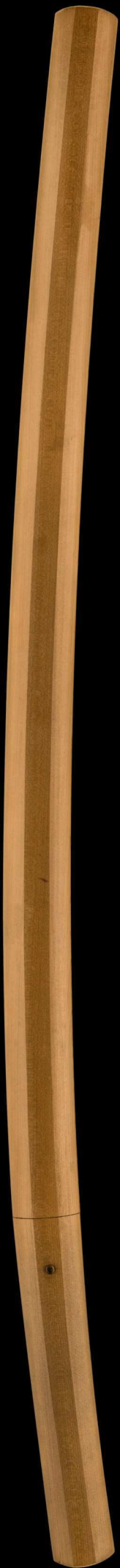


The *hamon* in the tip of the sword is called the *boshi*. It takes great skill by the swordsmith.

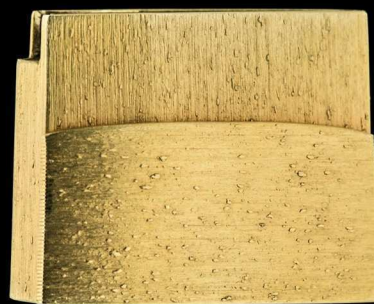
The boshi on this sword is *hakikake*, literally 'sweeping'.

a tightly oscillating *ko-gunome hamon* connects with pointed peaks of *togari-ba*





*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



*ni-ju habaki*



stories to tell.



ITEM# UJDI007

## A TOPPEI-KOSHIRAE DAISHO

SIGNED KATANA, MUMEI WAKIZASHI (EARLY EDO & LATE MUROMACHI PERIOD)

KATANA (DAI)

**Swordsmith:** *Bushu-ju Fujiwara Mitsuoki (Edo Ishido school)*

**Measurements:** **Length:** 68.8cm (ubu)      **Curvature:** ~1.2cm

WAKIZASHI (SHO)

**Swordsmith:** *Sue-Bizen School*

**Measurements:** **Length:** 37.7cm (o-suriage)      **Curvature:** ~1.0cm

**Certificates:** **3 x NBTHK Hozon** (both swords and kozuka designated Worthy of Preservation)  
**NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (daisho koshirae designated Authentic)

**Included:** Two shirasayas, daisho koshirae, fabric bags, stands, kit, etc.

**SOLD**

The traditional samurai *daisho* of the Edo period and the modern *gunto* (military sword) koshirae look very different. This transition did not happen all at once. In between, there were fittings known as *Toppei-koshirae*. It gives us great pleasure to introduce a rare *daisho* that was inspired in design by French military officers [and the introduction of trousers] in the Edo period.

## Your Personal Custom Koshirae and Samurai Daisho



Many fine antique samurai swords today come stored in a *shirasaya* only. A shirasaya acts like a humidior, protecting the steel for the long term.

Just as the samurai would have ordered a custom *koshirae* (outdoor mounts) during the Edo period, you too can have a traditional set of koshirae crafted for your sword like a tailored suit in a theme that connects with your spirit.

At Unique Japan, we have proudly created dozens of custom koshirae projects for our clients over the years - each with their own style and energy.

The *tsuka* (hilt), *saya* (scabbard), *samekawa* (ray skin), silk, and lacquer is all handcrafted by skilled craftspeople in Japan. The *tsuba*, *fuchi-kashira*, *menuki* and other fittings are carefully sourced samurai antiques largely from the Edo period. This unique blend of modern life meeting traditional history is what makes each creation so personally rewarding for every client.

The investment required ranges from \$4,000 to over \$10,000 depending on the quality of the fittings and the complexity of the lacquerwork. Each project also demands patience as many will take one year to complete.

Please contact Unique Japan for further details. It is a pleasure to serve you.



**As Markus Sesko describes in his reference book “Encyclopedia of Japanese swords”:**

When Japanese uniforms were adapted from the French, relative wide trousers, the so-called *danbukuro* were introduced to which the sword was carried in a leather frog hanging vertically from the belt. For this carrying method, the swords had to become shorter to prevent them from touching the ground when hanging this way – blade length from 60 to 65 cm were common – and the *sayajiri* became quite tapering to slip easily through the leather frog.

This tapering butt end reminded of a so-called *toppai-kabuto* (lit. “helmet with tapering helmet bowl”). *Hai* became *hei* and so these *koshirae* were called *toppei-koshirae* (突兵拵). And as they were worn as mentioned with trousers (Jap. *zubon*, ズボン), also the name *zubon-sashi* existed.

Many *toppei* hilts were wrapped with a *katate-maki* (片手巻), an interpretation where just at the *fuchi* and *kashira* some *same* lozenges (*hishi*, 菱) are visible but the middle part of the hilt does not show these *hishi*. The *menuki* sits centrally on this middle part.

---

The *dai* (katana) was crafted by *Mitsuoki* of the *Edo Ishido school*. *Mitsuoki* worked in the *Genroku era*, circa 1688-1704 in typical *Ishido* style, faithfully honoring the *Bizen* artistry centuries back to the *Kamakura Ichimonji school*.

The *sho* (wakizashi) is an actual *Sue-Koto Bizen* piece, made during the late *Muromachi* period when Japan was in full-blown civil war. It is reminiscent of the works of *Sukemitsu* and *Sukesada*, crafted with a bright *koshibiraki-hamon*. Both swords are in good polish and are noticeably light - meeting the requirements for them to be comfortably housed in their *toppei-koshirae*.

On a personal note, I have seen a few *toppei-koshirae* before, however this is truly unique and my first *toppei-daisho*. There are many details to appreciate. The *kurigata* (knobs on the scabbard) in the design of the Japanese rising sun flag suggest this *daisho* was carried by a member of the Japanese Imperial Navy. The matching silver inlay in the scabbards is also a classy touch. The redwood hilts with iron fittings juxtaposed with dragon *menuki* gives it further character. Both the swords and *daisho koshirae* are with me in the UK. - PK



*Kyokujitsu-ki - The Japanese Rising Sun Flag*

Saki-kasane: 4.5mm

Kissaki: 2.80cm  
Saki-haba: 1.8cm

Nagasa: 68.8cm

Omosa: 601g

Sori: ~1.2cm

Moto-kasane: 7.0mm

Moto-haba: 2.9cm

Nakago: 23.7cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Saki-kasane: 5.0mm

Kissaki: 3.20cm  
Saki-haba: 21cm

Nagasa: 37.7cm

Omosa: 327g

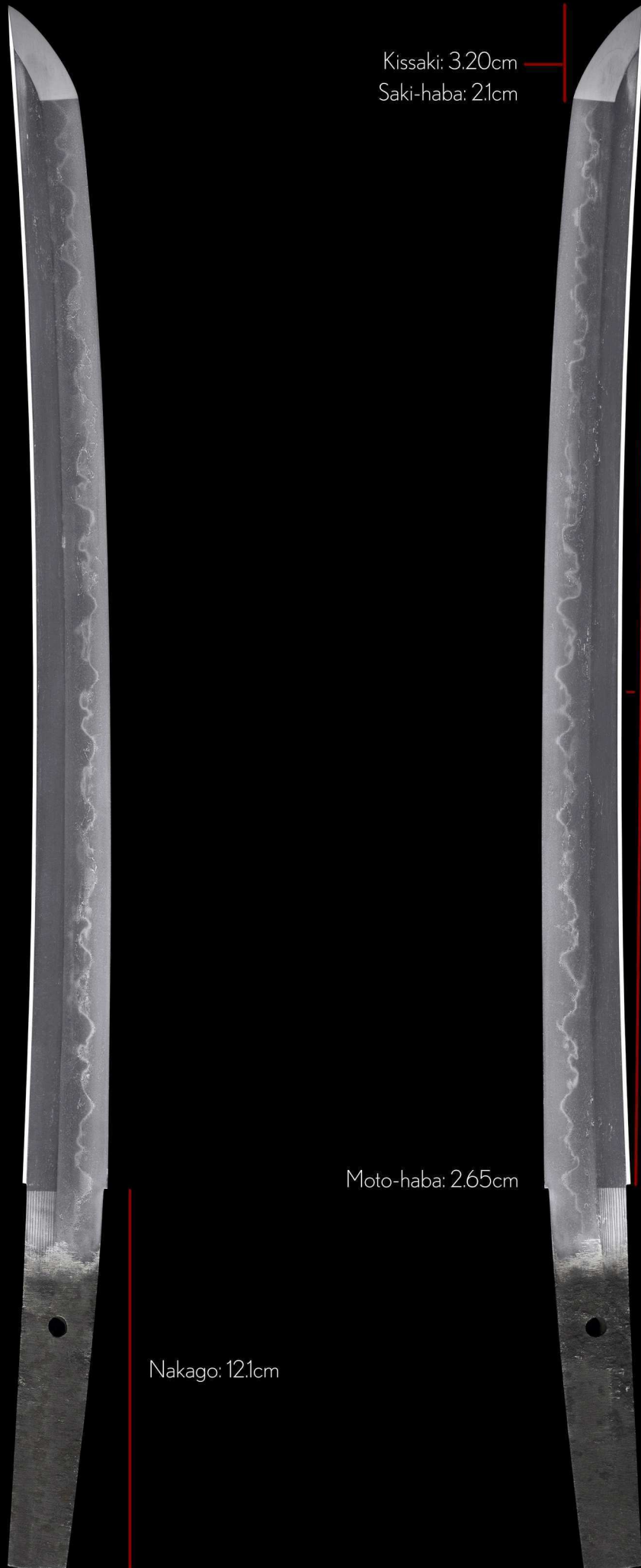
Sori: ~1.0cm

Moto-kasane: 6.0mm

Moto-haba: 2.65cm

Nakago: 12.1cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



特許  
27301501



No 3008105

鑑定書

一刀 銘 武州住藤原三與作(石堂)

長二尺二寸七分

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十七年三月二十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



埼玉 教育委員会  
第 2901 号  
昭和26年 9月13日

## NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 27th year of Heisei (2015), March 26th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

*Bushu-ju Fujiwara Mitsuoki saku (Ishido)*

Nagasa (length)

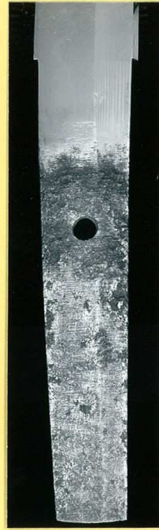
2-shaku 2-sun 7-bu (68.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

徳 森  
27201501



No 3008110



鑑 定 書

一、脇指 無銘 (末備前)

長一尺二寸三分

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十七年三月二十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



埼玉 教育委員会  
第 2902号  
昭和26年 9月13日

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by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 27th year of Heisei (2015), March 26th

One, Wakizashi

Mei (signature)  
Sue-Bizen

Nagasa (length)  
1-shaku 2-sun 3-bu (37.7cm)

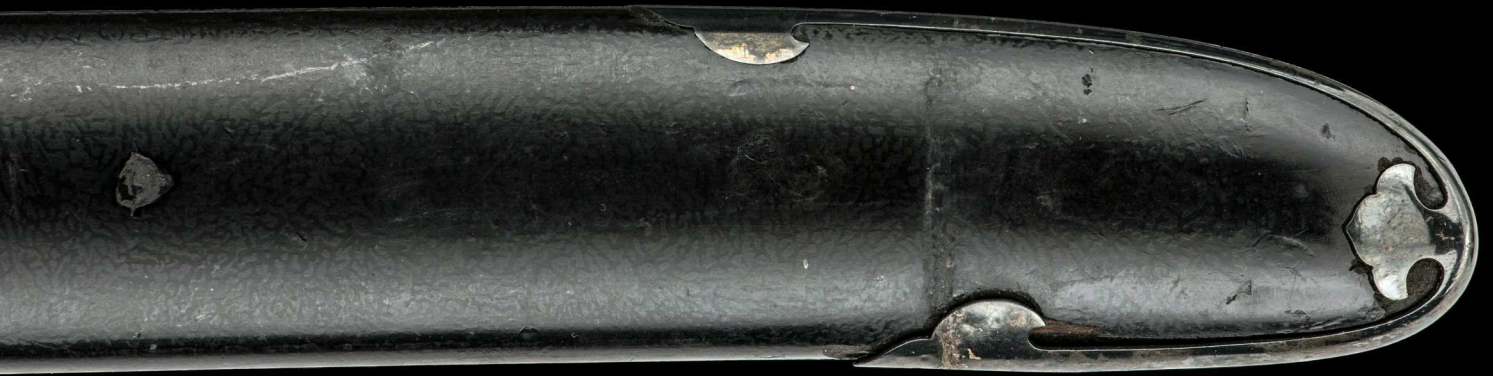
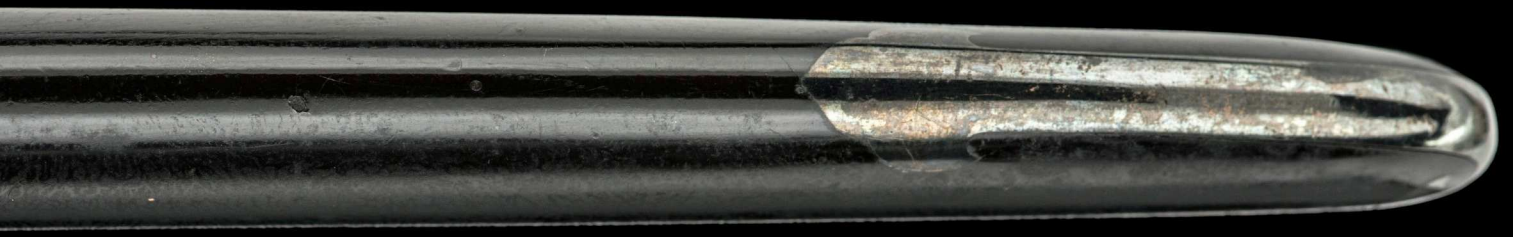
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

*Dai* (katana)

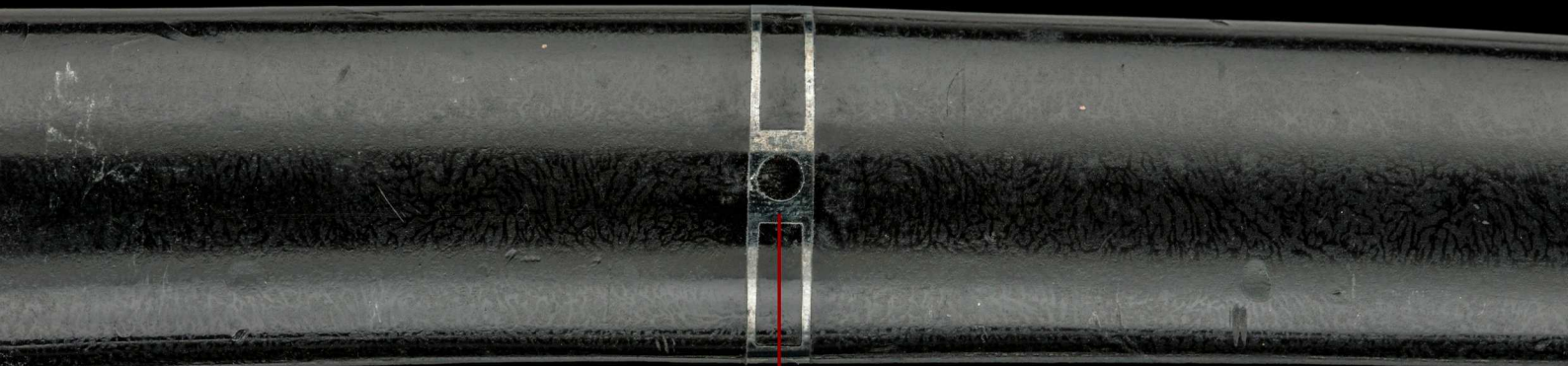


*sho* (wakizashi)

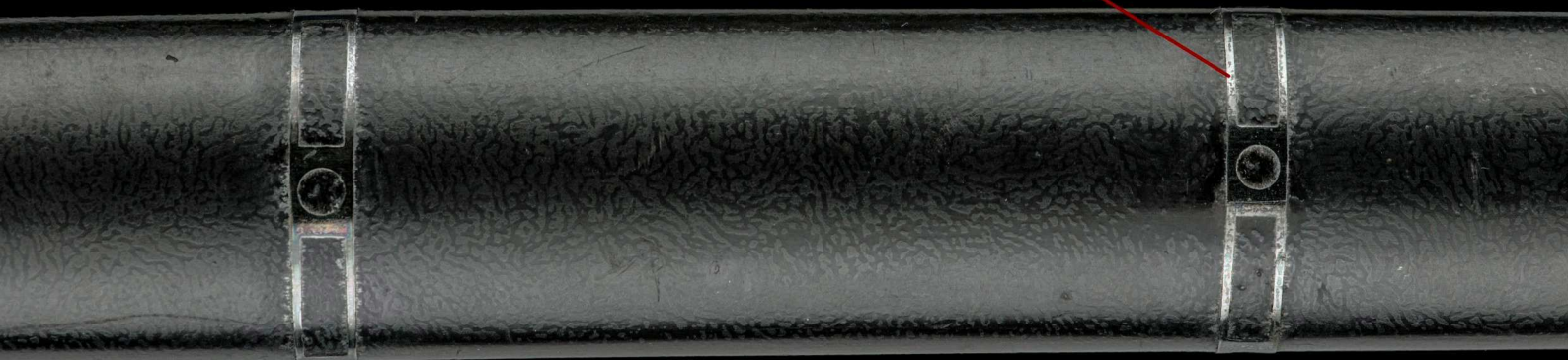




The name '*toppei-koshirae*' comes from how the end of the scabbard resembles a *toppai-kabuto* (a tapered helmet bowl).



beautiful silver en-suite fittings



*ukyo-tsuka* (matching hilts made of redwood)

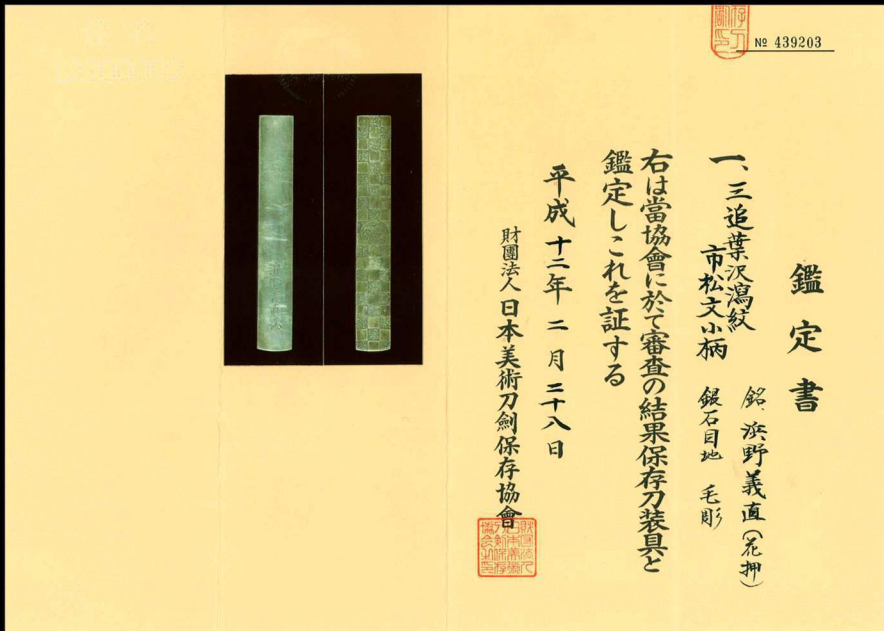




A *daisho* set of tsuba made of iron with *Amida-yasurime* file strokes that resemble the corona or sun rays attached to the back of an *Amida-Nyorai Buddha* statue.

Amida (Amitabha) is called "*The Buddha of Immeasurable Light and Life*", known for longevity.

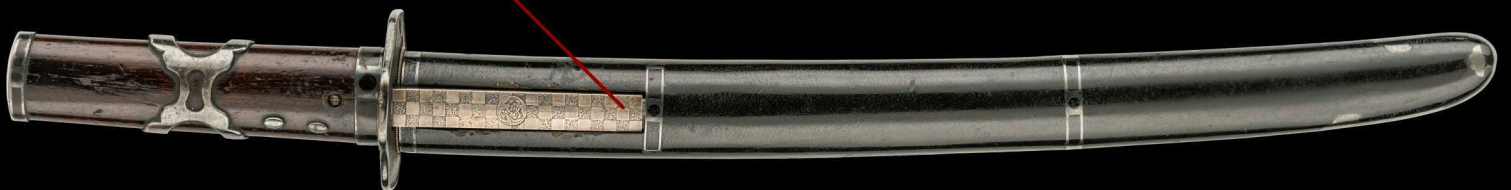




*Mitsu-tsuiha omodaka-mon ichimatsu-mon kozuka*  
(一、三追葉沢瀉市松文小柄)

A *kozuka* (utility knife) depicting the three-arrowroot-leaves crest on a checkerboard pattern.

Signed by *Hamano Yoshinao + kao*





fearless.

## Thinking about how to best display?

Clients can select from one of three types of complimentary sword stands to proudly showcase their work of art.



traditional double-hook black wood sword stand



acrylic 'floating' type



small stand for tanto



**ITEM# UJKA143**

## A TOMOYOSHI KATANA

SIGNED, DATED & AWARDED, (12TH YEAR OF SHOWA, AUGUST 1937)

- Swordsmith:** *Osaka Ju Izumi Tomoyoshi*
- Measurements:** **Length:** 68.4cm (*ubu*)      **Curvature:** 1.5cm      **Moto-haba:** 3.3cm
- Jihada:** *Standing out wavy nagare-hada with muneyaki*
- Hamon:** *Naka-suguha (straight) with tight wavy ko-midare, long ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi*
- Certificate #1-3:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (sword, tsuba & koshirae designated as Authentic)
- Certificate #4:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho** (a kozuka designated as Especially Precious)
- Designation:** *This blade was awarded the "Recommendation Work" prize at the Kigen 2600th memorial ceremony Art Show in commemoration of Emperor Jimmu*
- Akhide ranking:** **Joko-no-retsu** (ranked as a master swordsmith)
- Included:** Shirasaya, koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

**SOLD**

This special *gendaito* (modern) katana has made its way to me in the UK. This piece was originally sold in Catalogue 20 in *shirasaya* only. A striking custom koshirae in the theme of dragonflies was completed in 2015 for the client. Unfortunately, due to certain circumstances, he needed to part with the blade. This unique katana with an imperial story now stands available.

Swordsmith Tomoyoshi from Izumi city in Osaka produced this impressive katana in the summer of 1937. It was then submitted for sword forging competition in 1940 commemorating the 2600th enthronement anniversary of Japan's first emperor, *Emperor Jimmu* and the establishment of the Japanese empire.

This sword was highly received and won the *Endorsement Award* prize. This honour was subsequently chiseled in great detail onto the *nakago*.

Tomoyoshi was a skilled smith who was ranked by *Kurihara Akihide* as *Joko-no-retsu* (a master smith). *Akihide*, who was one of the major promoters of *gendai* swords before and during WWII and a smith himself, ranked about 300 contemporary smiths in 1942.

Tomoyoshi's highest achievement came in 1941 when he won the *Second Seat* at the 6th *Shinsaku Nihontō Denrankai* - an annual sword making contest that was held in pre-wartimes and wartimes, and the forerunner of the sword-making contest of the NBTHK. It had six ranks, the *Second Seat* being equal to the second prize.

This katana pays proper respect to the life of Emperor Jimmu who is said to have captured *Yamato* (Nara city). The steel was produced in the *Yamato* tradition with free-flowing *nagare-hada*. The *hamon* is a beautifully crafted straight *suguha* - the predominant temper line of the *Yamato* tradition. It has the aura of an older sword. The construction is wide, healthy and strong with a formidable *moto-haba* of 3.3cm.

It is interesting to note that in 1940, a Peace Tower was built in *Miyazaki* in honour Emperor Jimmu. On the front of the tower reads "*Hakko Ichiu*" (eight crown cords, one roof), or "**United under one roof**". This was often used as a rallying cry for imperialists who believed that peace would reign once Asia was united under Japanese leadership. This is a sword that was certainly carried in WWII by a military officer.



Saki-kasane: 5.0mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 7.5mm

Kissaki: 3.0cm  
Saki-haba: 2.2cm

Nagasa: 68.4cm

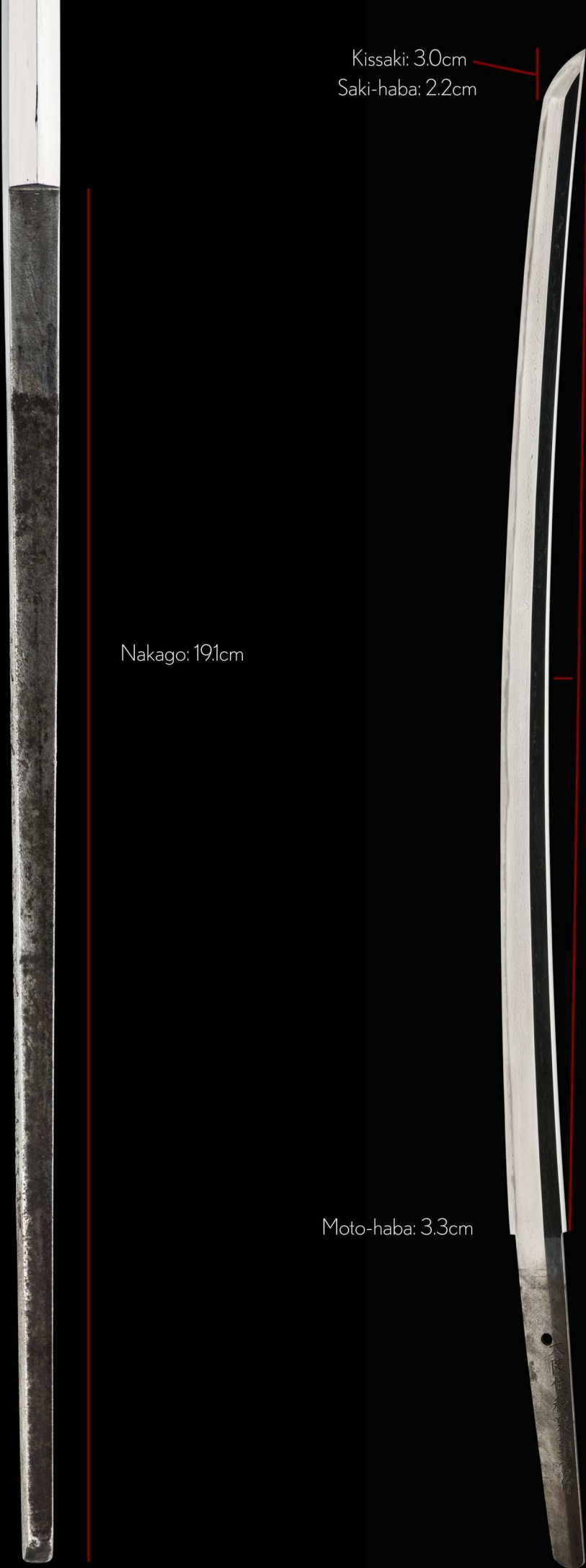
Nakago: 19.1cm

Sori: 1.5cm

Omosa: 796g

Moto-haba: 3.3cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Swordsmith *Tomoyoshi's* family name was *Izumi* and lived in Osaka.

He was active during the early *Showa era* (1926-1989), particularly so during the period leading and during WWII.





○ saka  
Ju  
Izu  
mi  
Tomo  
yoshi  
saku

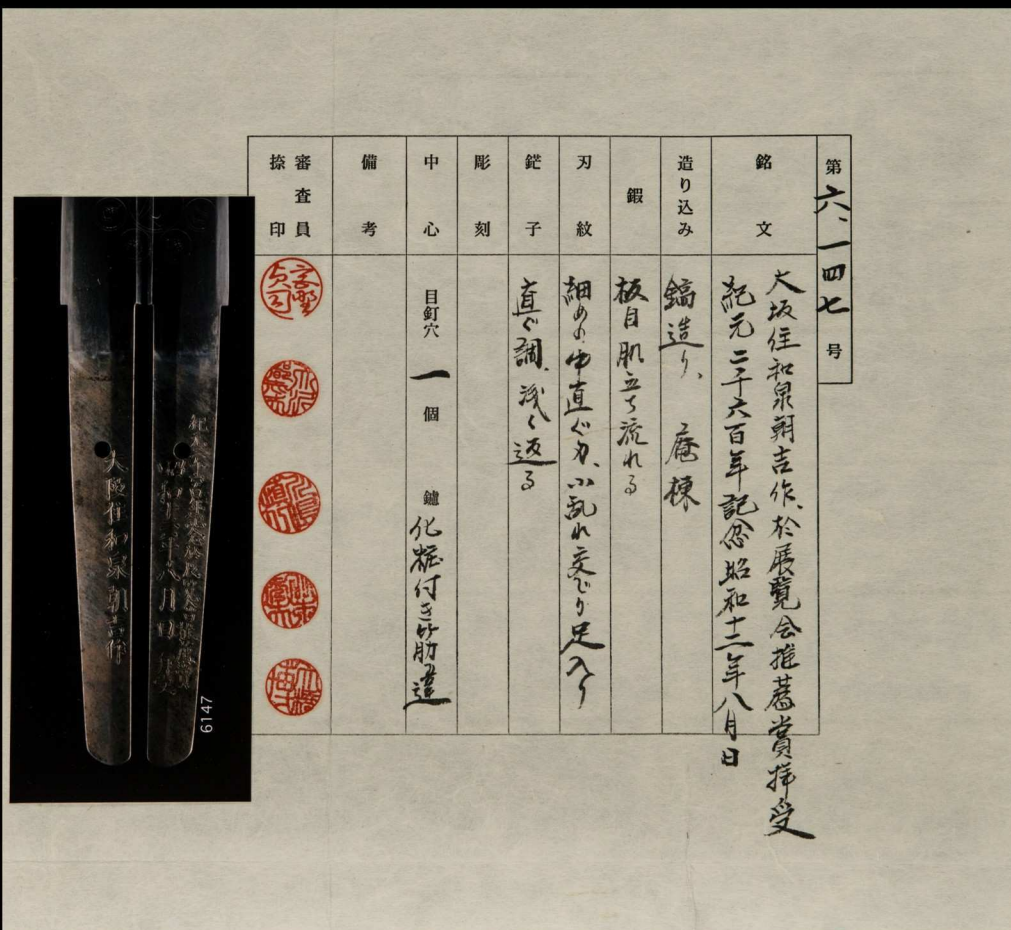
Swordsmith Tomoyoshi of Izumi city in Osaka, crafted this sword



Sho  
wa  
ju  
ni  
nen  
hachi  
gatsu  
hi  
Hai  
ju  
Ki  
gen  
ni  
sen  
ro  
ppyaku  
nen  
Ki  
nen  
ni-oite  
ten  
ran  
kai  
Sui  
sen  
sho

This sword received an *Endorsement Award* at the sword forging competition, on a day in the eighth month of 1937, commemorating the 2,600th anniversary of the establishment of the Japanese Empire

Dated 8th month in 12th year of Showa (August, 1937)



## NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

This katana was designated as *Authentic*  
by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Katana

*Osaka Ju Izumi Tomoyoshi saku  
Tenraikai ni oite suisen-sho haiju - Kigen nisenroppyakunen kinen  
Showa juninen hachigatsu hi (August 1937)*

*Nagasa (length)  
2-shaku 2-sun 6-bu (68.7cm)  
ubu nakago*

*Shinsa judging panel:  
five hanko seals of authenticity*

Issued in 27th year of Heisei (2015), February 15th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai  
(NTHK-NPO)

Free-flowing *nagare-hada*  
wavy straight grain *masame*.



a bright *suguha hamon* (straight)  
with *ko-midare* (small wavy pattern)

*kinsuji*

*sunagashi*

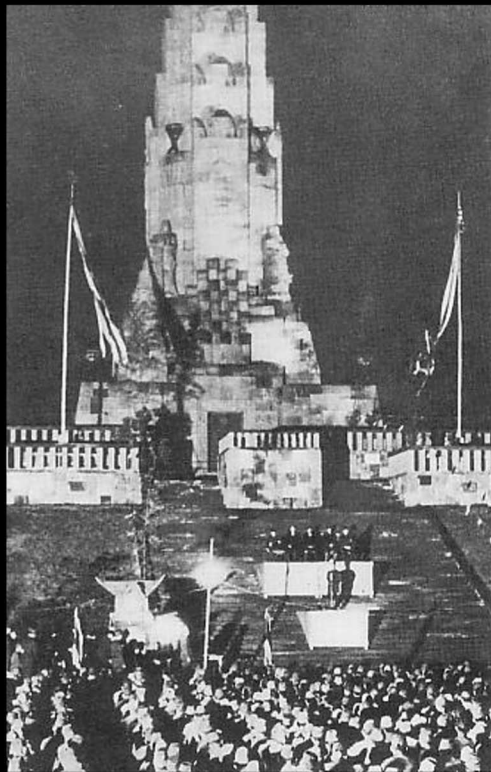


## Emperor Jimmu

According to legend, Emperor Jimmu was the first emperor of Japan. His accession is traditionally dated as 660 BCE.

He was seen as a descendant of both the sun goddess *Amaterasu* through her grandson *Ninigi*, and storm god *Susanoo*. He launched a military expedition from *Hyuga* near the Inland Sea, captured *Yamato* (Nara), and established this as his center of power.

Official homage of Emperor Jimmu began in 1872-73 with a new holiday called *Kigensetsu* (National Foundation Day) commemorating the anniversary of Jimmu's ascension to the throne 2,532 years earlier.



## Peace Tower

*Heiwadai* or Peace Tower Park, was built by the imperialist Showa regime in 1940 to celebrate the 2600th anniversary of the ascension of Emperor Jimmu. The focal point was the construction of a 37 meter *Hakko Ichiu* pillar upon the legendary site of Emperor Jimmu's palace.

On the front of the tower reads "*Hakko Ichiu*" (eight crown cords, one roof), which is attributed to Emperor Jimmu and means "United under one roof". This was often used as a rallying cry for imperialists who believed that peace would reign once Asia was united under Japanese leadership.

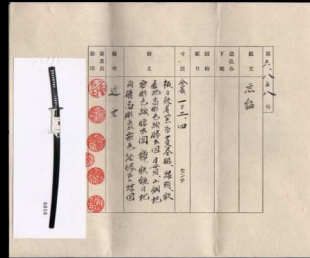
Bottom left: Prewar 10-sen Japanese banknote, illustrating the *Hakko Ichiu* monument in *Miyazaki*



*Kuro-roiro-nuri saya uchigatana-koshirae*  
(黒呂色塗鞘打刀拵え)

*A classic uchigatana-koshirae with  
glossy black-lacquered scabbard*

This was a custom koshirae project  
produced in 2015 using antique fittings.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate





The *tombo* (dragonfly) has been revered by the samurai for centuries.

When a *tombo* flies, it flies forward, and never retreats.  
It symbolizes bravery, agility and victory.

This impressive 9cm iron tsuba with spirited butterflies has been certified by the NTHK-NPO to the *Umetada school*, circa the late Edo period (1780-1867).

The tail of the dragonfly creatively  
digs into the iron on the reverse side.





an imperial purple silk nestles in the *menuki* dragonflies



*kozuka* (utility knife)



The *kozuka* and *kogai* were handy tools of the Edo period samurai. They were both fitted into specially made slots in the *saya* (scabbard).



*kogai* (hair pick)



The *kajiri* (end cap on the scabbard), where an antique dragonfly faithfully continues the theme.



## Flying into Japan?

If you are travelling to Tokyo and would like to acquire an authentic Japanese sword, be sure to book a **private meeting** with us in advance.

Many swords every year are sold this way to happy clients around the world. Contact [service@uniquejapan.com](mailto:service@uniquejapan.com) where we'll discuss the type of sword, age and other special qualities you are seeking along with budget parameters. Meetings are held at our studio near JR Ebisu station.



ITEM# UJKA282

## A KANESHIGE KATANA

SIGNED WITH LOCATION, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1661-1673)

<b>Swordsmith:</b>	<i>Bushu Ju Kasusa no Suke Fujiwara Kaneshige (2nd generation)</i>
<b>Measurements:</b>	<b>Length:</b> 68.7cm <b>Curvature:</b> 1.4cm <b>Moto-haba:</b> 2.9cm
<b>Jihada:</b>	<i>Tight ko-itame with ji-nie</i>
<b>Hamon:</b>	<i>Thick suguha mixed with gunome-midare with ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
<b>Certificate #1:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon</b> (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
<b>Certificate #2-3:</b>	<b>NTHK-NPO Kanteisho</b> (a tsuba and tsuka designated as Authentic)
<b>Fujishiro rank:</b>	<i>Jo-saku</i> (a superior smith)
<b>Cutting Ability:</b>	<i>Ryo-Wazamono</i> (maker of good sharp swords)
<b>Included:</b>	Shirasaya, koshirae, sword fabric bags, sword stand, kit, etc.

### Sword currently not available

This very sharp katana is with me in the UK on consignment. *Kasusa no Suke Kaneshige* studied under his father/sensei first generation *Izumi no Kami Kaneshige* who, interestingly, began his career an arrow smith in Echizen before being hired by the *Todo daimyo* family as a swordsmith.

*Kasusa Kaneshige's* workmanship has *Soshu-den* qualities; a thick *suguha* base mixed with wavy *gunome* in the style of master *Kotetsu*. The *hamon* shines impressively in the light. Full-length *bo-hi* (grooves) gives the blade fine balance and quickness. It feels like a swordsman's sword.

A splendid set of decorative koshirae with the Tokugawa family crest *aoi-mon* (hollyhock) theme accompanies the katana. The *tsuba* is particularly impressive attributed to the Yoshioka school.

Please watch my video presentation here (14min), arigato!

<https://youtu.be/Rn872AbZC5Y>



ITEM# UJWA207

## AN UDA HIRAKUNI WAKIZASHI

UNSIGNED, MUROMACHI PERIOD (BUNKI ERA: 1501-1504)

**Swordsmith:** *Uda Hirakuni (attribution, o-suriage)*  
**Location:** Etchu province  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 49.0cm      **Curvature:** 0.6cm      **Moto-haba:** 2.6cm  
**Jihada:** *Itame with swirling chikei*  
**Hamon:** *Bright gunome midare with kinsuji, sunagashi, full of activity*  
**Certificate:** **NBTHK Hozon** (a sword designated as *Worthy of Preservation*)  
**Fujishiro:** **Chujo-saku** (ranked as an *above average swordsmith*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, sword fabric bag, sword stand, kit, etc.

## SOLD

This is a wakizashi crafted in *Etchu province* during the turbulent *Muromachi Period*, circa late 1400s to early 1500s. Etchu is on the northern coast of Honshu, the main island of Japan and overlooks the Sea of Japan.

*Kunimitsu* is considered the founder of the *Ko-Uda school*, originally from the *Uda district* of **Yamato Province** circa 1317 at the end of the Kamakura Era. As remaining works by Kunimitsu are non-existent, his students, *Kunifusa* and *Kunimune*, both said to be students of *Go Norishige* school, are thought to be the true founders of this school.

This wakizashi is attributed to *Uda Hirakuni*, a pupil of *Kunikiyo*. This is a sword bursting with personality and history. The workmanship is an attractive mixture of *Soshu*, *Yamato* and *Bizen* traditions all working in harmony. There is so much to study and enjoy. The whirlpools of *chikei* are very impressive. All told, this is a fearless piece of Koto-period steel artistry.

Saki-kasane: 3.7mm

Kissaki: 2.90cm  
Saki-haba: 1.8cm

Nagasa: 49.0cm

Omosa: 360g

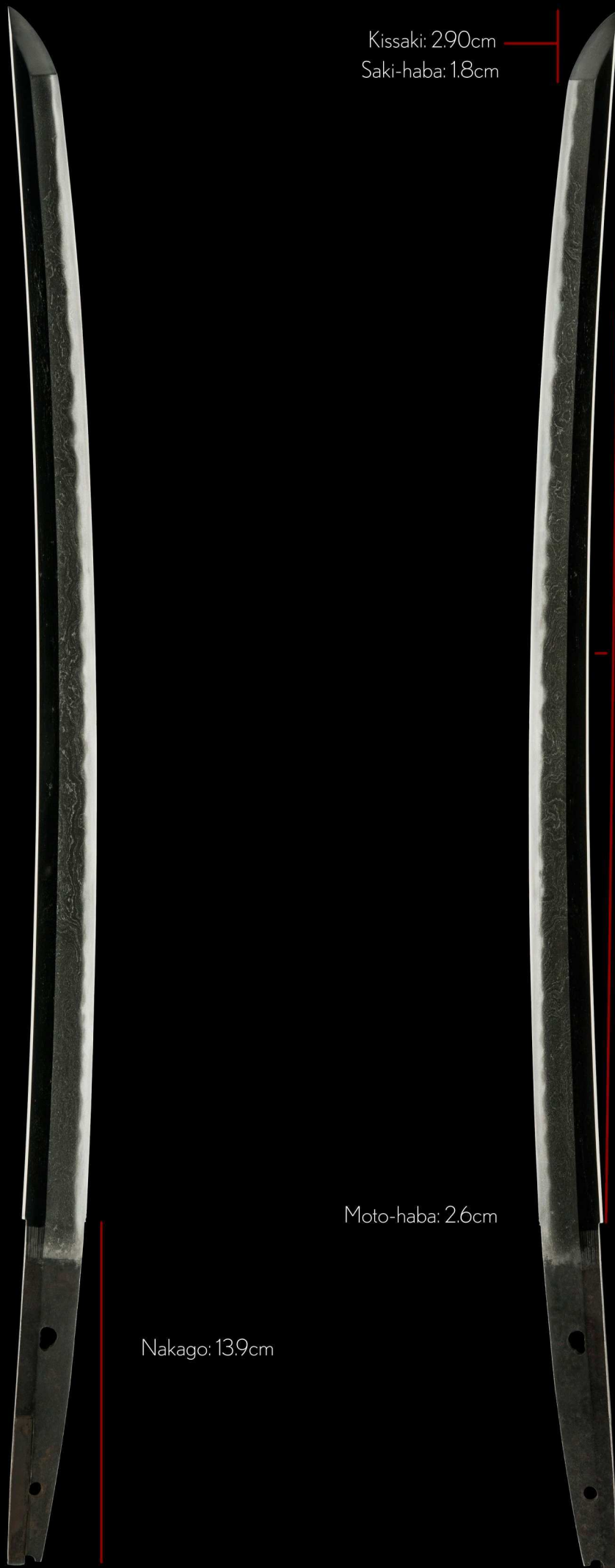
Sori: 0.6cm

Moto-kasane: 5.2mm

Moto-haba: 2.6cm

Nakago: 13.9cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



29201703



No 3015695



鑑定書

一脇指 無銘 (宇多平因)

長一尺六寸二分強

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十九年五月三十日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京 教育委員会  
第 316680 号  
平成29年 1 月21日

# NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

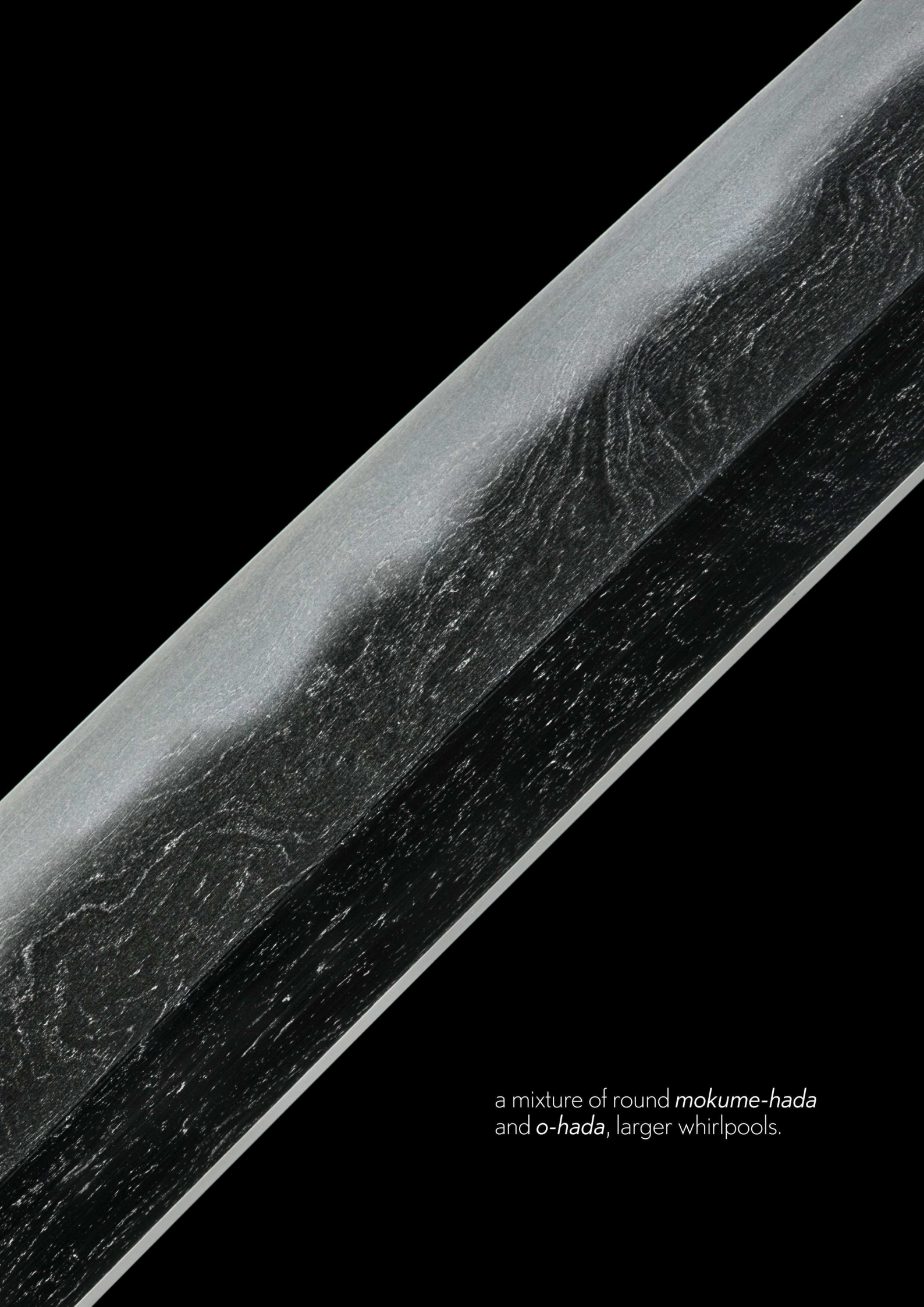
Issued in the 29th year of Heisei (2015), May 30th

One, Wakizashi

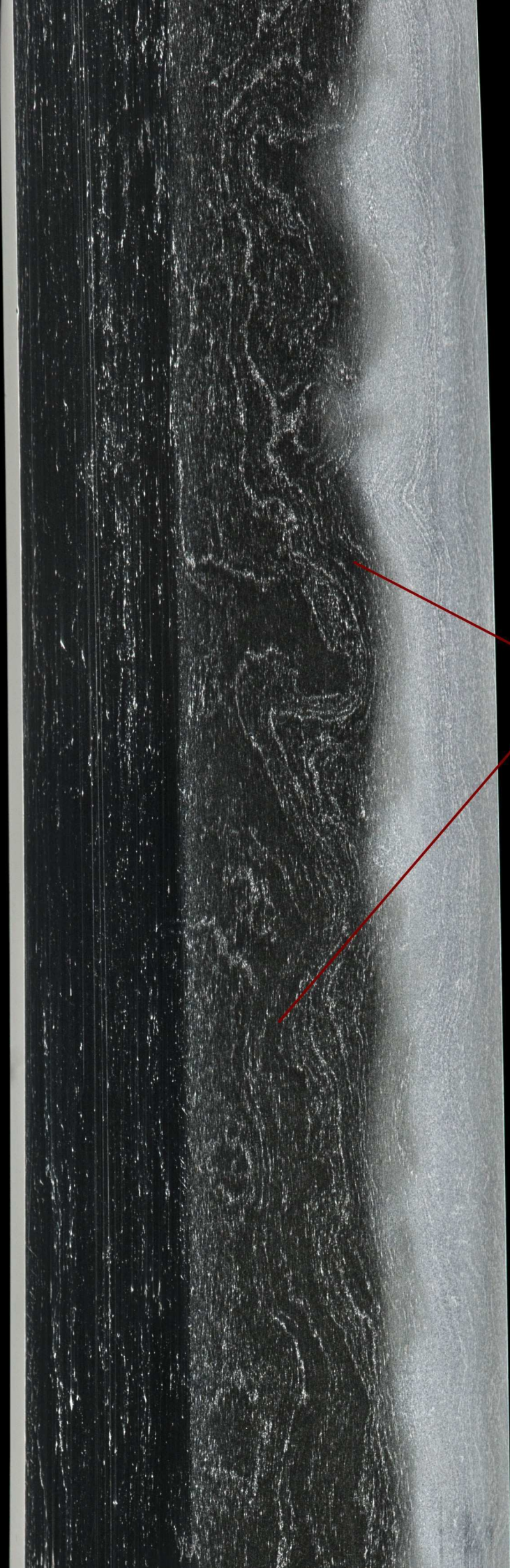
Mei (signature)  
Mumei, Uda Hirakuni

Nagasa (length)  
1-shaku 6-sun 2-bu (49.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



a mixture of round *mokume-hada*  
and *o-hada*, larger whirlpools.



Dark lines of *chikei*  
swimming in the steel.



a brilliant *ko-gunome midare hamon*



*kinsuji and sunagashi*



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



sword bag



a uniquely designed  
silver and gold *habaki*



ITEM# UJKA293

## A SA YUKIHIDE KATANA

SIGNED WITH ORIKAESHI-MEI, LATE EDO PERIOD (KAEI ERA: 1848-1864)

**Swordsmith:** *Chikushu Ju Sa Yukihide (orikaeshi-mei, folded-over signature by T. Hidetsugu)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 71.8cm (*orikaeshime*)    **Curvature:** 1.4cm    **Moto-haba:** 3.2cm  
**Jihada:** *Masame-hada with nagare-hada and chikei and bright ji-nie*  
**Hamon:** *Thick nie and nioi with wide notare -kinsuji, sunagashi and gunome-ashi appear*  
**Certificate #1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation*)  
**Certificate #2-3:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a tsuba and koshirae designated as Authentic*)  
**Fujishiro:** **Jojo-saku** (*ranked as a highly superior swordsmith*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, koshirae, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

## SOLD

Born in 1813, native of *Chikuzen province* in Kyushu and one of the most celebrated swordsmiths during the *shinshinto* period, *Sa Yukihide* (pronounced *Sah Yoo-key-hee-day*) regarded himself as the thirty-ninth generation of the great *Sa (Samonji)*, who worked in Chikuzen in the early 1300s.

Yukihide travelled up to *Edo* (Tokyo) in about 1830 and became a pupil of *Shimizu Hisayoshi*, himself a disciple of *Hosokawa Masayoshi*. In 1846, he moved to the island of *Shikoku* and became a retained swordsmith of the *Yamanouchi family* of *Tosa province*. There he worked with smith *Sekita Katsuhiro*. In 1862 he returned to *Edo*, taking up residence at the *Yamanouchi yashiki* (urban mansion) however when the *Edo period* came to an end with the *Meiji Restoration* in 1868 he went back to *Tosa*, where he died in 1885 at the age of seventy-four.



In his early years, *Sa Yukihide* (pictured left) worked in a style similar to his master *Hisayoshi* tempering a slanting *chōji-midare* (clove blossom) with a tight *nioiguchi*. After his move to Tosa, and having worked under *Katsuhiko*, he changed his style entirely. From that time, he tempered a *notare* with *gunome-ashi* in very bright and thick *nie* emulating the master works of *Gō Yoshihiro*, *Inoue Shinkai* and *Kotetsu*. And it was in this spirit that this magnificent katana by maestro *Sa Yukihide* was produced.

Plenty of conversation points surrounding this remarkable piece. It was first crafted as a *kinno to* or “royalist sword” that had an extremely long cutting edge of 88.2cm. We know this because in the mid-1900s, WWII swordsmith *Takahashi Hidetsugu*, student of *Gassan Sadatsugu*, chiseled the original *nagasa* on the newly formed *nakago* after he carefully reduced it to 71.8cm by way of *orikaeshi-mei* or folded over signature (see images below).

This is one solidly made sword, weighing nearly 1kg, or 2.2 pounds. Almost certainly, this was a cherished family sword that was carried in WWII by a high-ranking officer that needed it to be modified for military service. Any samurai that was fortunate enough to own a *Yukihide* sword knew his life could depend on it. A sense of invincibility embodies the steel. It’s deep, rich hamon further heightens the senses.

Until today, an impressive 58 swords by *Sa Yukihide* have attained prestigious NBTHK Juyo Token. It is a remarkable achievement by a genuine artist of the 19th century. An exquisite *koshirae* with a powerful dragon theme was built for the katana as the following pages describe.

This is a samurai sword for the ages.



*orikaeshi-mei* (folded over signature)

Saki-kasane: 6.6mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 7.5mm

Omosa: 985g

Kissaki: 3.44cm  
Saki-haba: 2.1cm

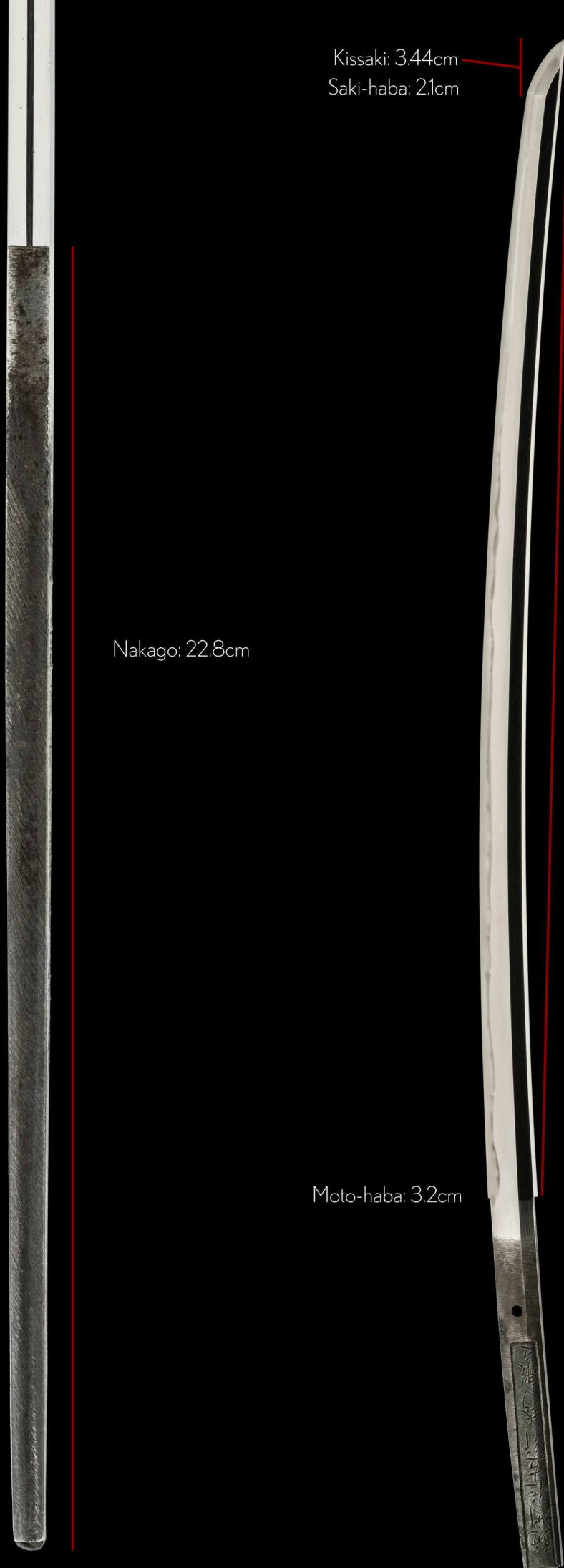
Nakago: 22.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Nagasa: 71.8cm

Sori: 1.4cm

Mekugi-ana: 1

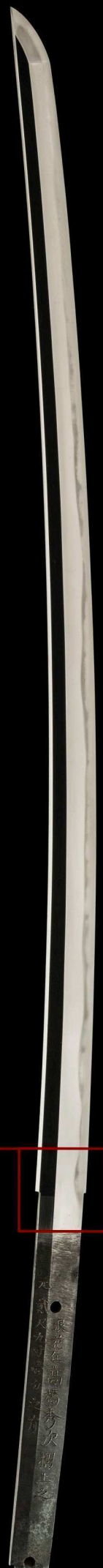


*Mitsu* (three) *mune* (spine/ridge) is a relatively rare construction whereby the spine has three surfaces.

It is generally found in the blades of smiths working in the *Soshu tradition* (such as this katana) as well as tanto of the Yamashiro school of the Koto period.



(top view)



This katana was forged by *Sa Yukihide*, resident of *Chikuzen province* [Kyushu].

This sword features an *orikaeshi-mei*, or “folded-over signature.” When a *nakago* is shortened, the part bearing the signature is sometimes thinned down and folded up onto the opposite side.

This preserves the original signature, which then appears upside-down on the opposite side of the tang.



Translation of the inscription:

This sword was shortened by *Takahashi Hidetsugu* from Naniwa ward [in Osaka].

The original length (cutting edge) of the blade was *2-shaku 9-sun 1-bu* (88.2cm).

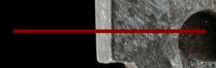
Takahashi Hidetsugu was a *Jojo-saku* (highly superior) WWII swordsmith and student of *Gassan Sadatsugu* - Japan's first swordsmith to be appointed *Ningen Kokuho* (Living National Treasure) in 1955.

Moto  
ni  
shaku  
ku  
sun  
ichi  
bu  
kore  
ari

元  
戴  
尺九寸壹分之二有  
浪花住高橋秀次摺上之

Nani  
wa  
ju  
Taka  
hashi  
Hide  
tsugu  
kore  
o  
suriagaru

original hole



*Sa Yukihide* was commissioned to make a number of blades called *kinno to* (royalist swords) during his career. These extra long katana featured a cutting edge of between 80-90cm with very little curvature. They became popular during the late Edo period among samurai who supported the emperor - the so-called "royalists".



A Kinnoto with nagasa of 86.5cm  
source: Encyclopedia of Japanese Swords (Markus Sesko)

This katana was once a *kinno to* that was carefully shortened by WWII swordsmith *Takahashi Hidetsugu* by *orikaeshi-me* to a more classic katana length. This sword would have likely been carried by a high-ranking military officer in WWII.



*orikaeshi-me*  
(folded-over signature)

25201605

No 1005901



鑑定書

一丁

(折返銘)

筑州住左行秀鍛之

(切付銘)

浪花住高橋秀次摺上之

元貳尺九寸七分弱

長二尺三寸七分弱

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀劍と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十八年七月二十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



教育委員会  
第 8413 号  
昭和 28 年 3 月 9 日  
平成 27 年 9 月 11 日

# NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation* by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 28th year of Heisei (2016), July 21st

One, Katana

*Orikaeshi-mei* (folded-over signature)

*Chikushu-ju Sa Yukihide kore o kitau*

Forged by Sa Yukihide, resident of Chikuzen province

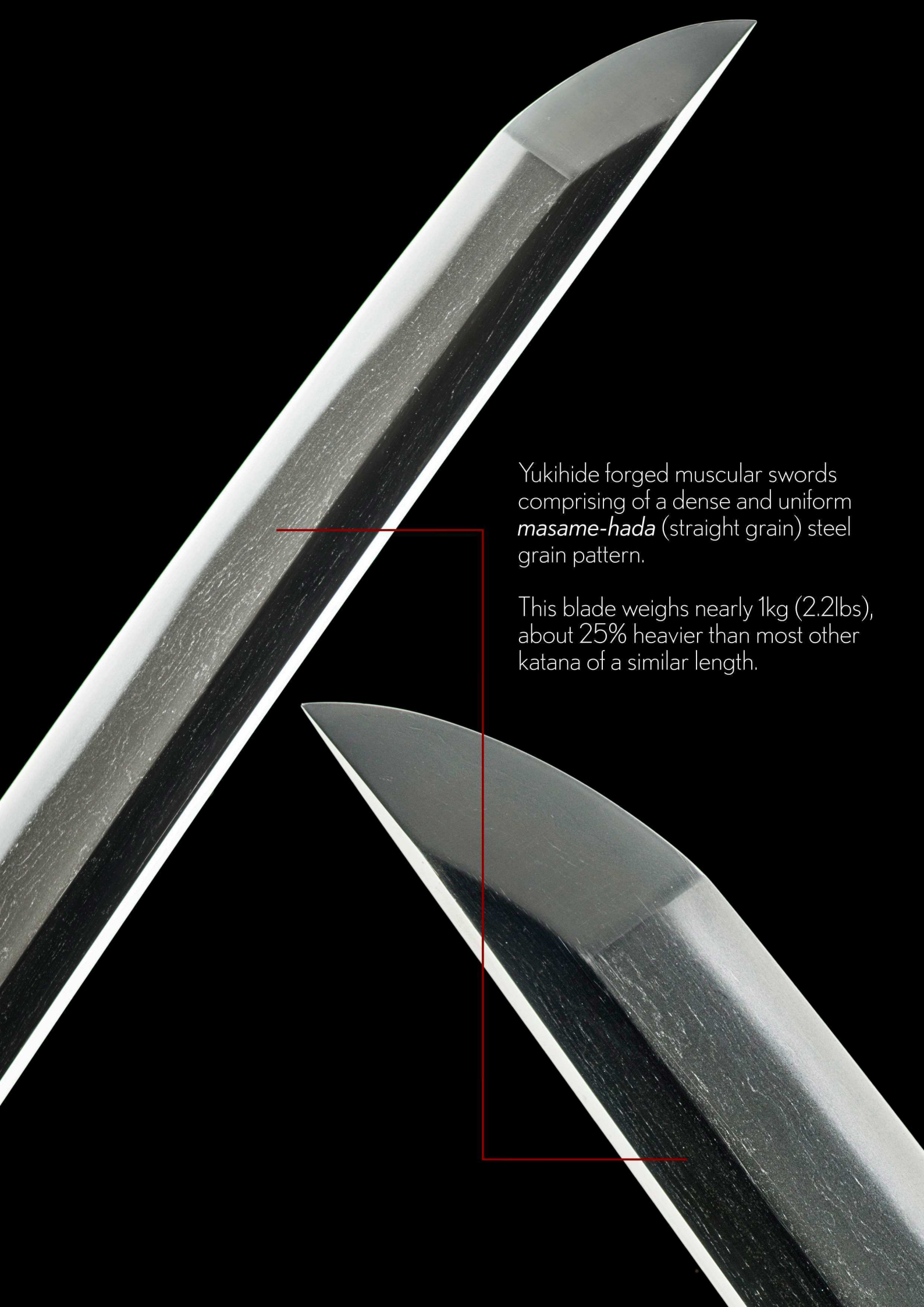
*Naniwa-ju Takahashi Hidetsugu kore o suriagaru - Moto nishaku kusun ichibu kore ari*

Shortened by Takahashi Hidetsugu from Naniwa (Osaka) - Original length 88.2 cm

*Nagasa* (length)


2-shaku 3-sun 7-bu han (71.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



Yukihide forged muscular swords comprising of a dense and uniform *masame-hada* (straight grain) steel grain pattern.

This blade weighs nearly 1kg (2.2lbs), about 25% heavier than most other katana of a similar length.



Yukihide claimed to be a successor of the great swordsmith *Samonji* of *Chikuzen province* (from early 1300s) thus calling himself *Sa Yukihide*.

The works of *Go Yoshihiro*, *Inoue Shinkai* and *Kotetsu* provided inspiration to Yukihide - his unique workmanship firmly places him as one of the shining stars of the shinshinto era (1780-1867).

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the intricate patterns of the hamon. The blade is dark, with a bright, curved line of light reflecting off its surface. A red arrow points to a specific area of the blade, which is the gunome-ashi pattern. The background is black, making the blade stand out.

*gunome-ashi* (legs with a wave pattern)  
are swept to the edge of the blade like a  
painter's palette.

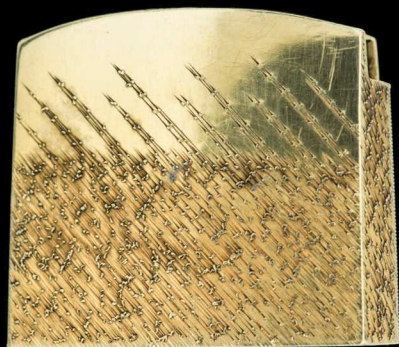
A thick blanket of *nioi* and *nie* crystals illuminate the katana.  
Also deep threads of *chikei* carve through the ji (body).

This is classic Sa Yukihide.





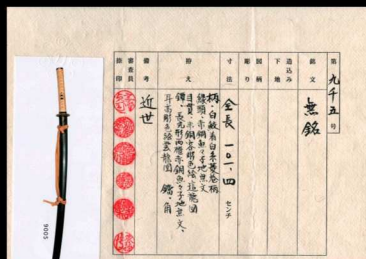
*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



*habaki* with rain pattern

*Cha ishimeji-nuri saya uchigatana-koshirae*  
(一、茶石目地塗鞘打刀拵え)

*One uchigatana-koshirae with  
brown stone surface-lacquer saya*



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate



a healthy, earthy glow.





A round *shakudo-nanako tsuba* featuring a gold cloud dragon slithering along the *mimi* (rim) of the piece.

This tsuba has been certified to the prestigious *Yoshioka school* from the late Edo period.





Livin' on the edge...





*crawling dragons in rich shakudo form the menuki*



# ARIGATO!

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*A Sengo Muramasa Tanto in aikuchi koshirae with the Makino family crest.  
Polished by Sasaki-sensei and sayagaki by Tanobe-sensei.*

*Big congratulations Kim!*

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