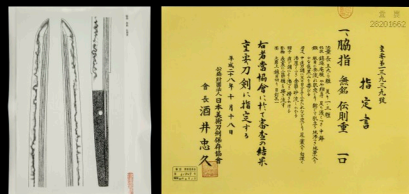


JAPANESE
SWORD
CATALOGUE 31

RELEASED:
MAY 28, 2019

ALL SOLD



(COVER PHOTO)

ITEM# UJWA237

A NORISHIGE KODACHI (伝則重)
LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1308)
62ND NBTHK JUYO TOKEN

ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS

CATALOGUE 31
RELEASED: MAY 28, 2019

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES OF GENUINE ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS THAT WERE SOLD IN CATALOGUE 31. THIS IS A REFERENCE DOCUMENT.

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WE HAVE SERVICE OFFICES IN TOKYO, JAPAN AND NEAR LONDON, ENGLAND.

EACH SWORD CAN BE LEGALLY OWNED AND EXPORTED OUTSIDE OF JAPAN. ALL SWORDS HAVE CERTIFICATION PAPERS (ORIGAMI) SUCH AS FROM NBTHK AND/OR THE NTHK-NPO.

THANK YOU,



PABLO KUNTZ
FOUNDER, UNIQUE JAPAN

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Hi everyone,

I'd like to first congratulate Japan on ushering a new era called *Reiwa* on May 1st. Its direct translation is 'Beautiful harmony'. Emperor Akihito's elder son, *Naruhito*, has now ascended the throne as the 126th Emperor of Japan, marking the end of the 30-year Heisei era. Three Shinto tradition objects – a **mirror**, a **sword** and a **gem** – known as the **Imperial Treasures** are said to have been passed down from the gods through generations of emperors since 660BC. The sword represents bravery for a challenging spirit.

I have personally drawn special inspiration from this fresh start. One big adjustment is that I am now wearing glasses at my Mac and needing to do a lot more back stretching exercises. Middle age has firmly arrived and I am facing it head on! If I was a sword, I think I'm entering the late 1500s *Momoyama period*... Well, I have been determined to introduce a new catalogue celebrating this month of May. Allow me to introduce the swords and fittings in this catalogue covering over 200-pages!

The first piece is a big, beautiful katana by a *shinshinto* period great, *Chôunsai Tsunatoshi*. This katana was especially commissioned to a loyal and patriotic samurai named *Tadashi Mimura* who worked in the *Kaizu fief*. I rarely know the personal background story to a sword; this is one to certainly collect and cherish.

The *Yamato Hosho school*, known especially for their straight-grain *masame-hada*, is another rare katana to treasure. The blade is *ubu-nakago*, polished by *Sasaki-sensei* and has *Tanobe-sensei sayagaki*. The Hosho school is one of my all-time favourites and the activity swimming in the steel is eternally captivating.

Next is a handsome *Juyo token* katana by *Niô Kiyotsuna* from the late Kamakura period, circa 1329. I admire this blade because of its strong inner spirit. This is a blade that speaks to you quietly and confidently. I have included a set of *Niô menuki* that could potentially be used for a custom *koshirae*.

A delightful late Edo period katana by 8th generation *Nobutaka* from *Owari province* with *Tanobe-sensei sayagaki* has a distinct Yamato tradition flair to it, which is rare for *Nobutaka*. This blade is housed in a matching arabesque and *kiri-mon* design *tachi koshirae* that will look stunning on display. Two more special swords that I have with me in the UK on consignment are a Kamakura period katana with lovely *koshirae* by *jojo-saku smith Aoe Yoshitsugu* and a 1943 WWII collectable katana by *Kôa Isshin Mantetsu*.

I am pleased to include two unique pieces from the *Nara school*. One is a *tsuba* stamped *Ryôka*, penname for *Tsuneshige*. This *tsuba* is of the *Taoist immortal Tieguai* with crystal eyes that follow you! The next is a set of *fuchi-kashira* depicting *Shôki*, the *Demon Queller* – these fittings should really be paired together.

Over the past few months a number swords have been sold privately to clients. I have interspersed some notable highlights within this catalogue. One of the most important swords is a *kodachi* by national treasure swordsmith *Norishige*. *Norishige* is a fellow student of *Masamune*. Another *Juyo token* katana sold is by *Shodai Kyo-Tanba Yoshimichi*. Normally one would expect to see a *sudare-ba hamon*, however, this rare gem is forged in *suguha*. An outstanding *Higo* custom *handachi koshirae* was created for the sword.

A *Ko-Bizen tachi* partly signed by *Ietoshi* is another masterpiece. My father (who proofreads the catalogues) calls this sword 'a Cadillac'! All of these swords are museum-worthy. Be sure to also review the *Jumyo katana* that former NBTHK director *Kunzan* once gifted his brother-in-law and an awesome *three-body cutting test katana* by *Yamato no Kami Yasusada* with *Yamano Ka'emon no Jô Nagahisa* gold inlay.

Thank you as always for your genuine support and passion for life.
We look forward to serving you.

Warm regards,



Pablo Kuntz
May 2019



At my desk with my bifocals!

INDEX OF AVAILABLE JAPANESE SWORDS

ITEM#	SWORDSMITH & TYPE	CM	CERTIFICATE	ERA / PERIOD	PRICE
ujka326	A TSUNATOSHI KATANA	70.45	Tokubetsu Hozon	February 1843	SOLD
ujka171	A HOSHO KATANA	73.2	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kamakura (1300~1333)	SOLD
ujka322	A NIÔ KIYOTSUNA KATANA	70.5	JUYO TOKEN	Gentoku (1329~1331)	SOLD
ujwa237	A NORISHIGE KODACHI	59.0	JUYO TOKEN	Enkyo era (1308~1311)	SOLD
ujka314	A NOBUTAKA KATANA	72.1	Tokubetsu Hozon	September 1814	SOLD
ujka273	A YOSHIMICHI KATANA	77.5	JUYO TOKEN	Keicho (1596~1615)	SOLD
ujka328	A YOSHITSUGU KATANA	70.3	Tokubetsu Hozon	Karyaku (1326~1329)	SOLD
ujka312	A MANTETSU KATANA	66.7	N/A	Spring 1943	SOLD
ujka189	AN IETOSHI TACHI	72.0	JUYO TOKEN	Hoji era (1247~1249)	SOLD
ujtu116	A RYOKA TSUBA	7.2	NBTHK Hozon	Mid-Edo (1775~1800)	SOLD
ujfk087	A SHOKI FUCHI-KASHIRA	3.8	NBTHK Hozon	Mid-Edo (1750~1780)	SOLD
ujka327	A JUMYO KATANA	74.6	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kyoho era (1716~1736)	SOLD
ujka302	A YASUSADA KATANA	72.7	Tokubetsu Hozon	Keian era (1648~1652)	SOLD

ALL PRICES ARE IN US DOLLARS

To access current and previous catalogues, please visit:

<http://new.uniquejapan.com/currently-available-swords-at-unique-japan>

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.

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

ALSO, BE SURE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING TO TOKYO AS WE CAN BOOK A PRIVATE MEETING TOGETHER AT OUR STUDIO IN EBISU.

DOMO ARIGATO,
PABLO



ITEM# UJKA326

A TSUNATOSHI KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, EDO PERIOD (14TH YEAR OF TENPO, FEBRUARY 1843)

Swordsmith:	<i>Yonezawa-shi Chōunsai Tsunatoshi (ubu-nakago, shodai - first generation)</i>
Client:	<i>Mimura Tadashi – Hōkoku no Tanshin (for Loyalty and Patriotism!)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.3cm Curvature: 2.15cm Moto-haba: 3.2cm Weight: 925g
Jihada:	<i>Densely forged ko-itame hada in nioi-deki with light shirake utsuri</i>
Hamon:	<i>Gunome-choji-midare with tobiyaki, ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Boshi:	<i>Hakikake (brushed) with midare-komi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation</i>)
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>koshirae, tsuba & fuchi-kashira designated as authentic</i>)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (a superior swordsmith)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

First generation master swordsmith *Chōunsai Tsunatoshi* was a student of the great *Suishinshi Masahide*. Tsunatoshi moved to Edo during the Bunsei era (1818~1830) where he worked in the residence of the *Uesugi family*, the *daimyō* of *Yonezawa domain*.

This remarkable and rare katana was commissioned to Tsunatoshi by samurai *Mimura Tadashi*, a member of the *Kaizu fief*. Boldly chiseled with the characters *Hōkoku no Tanshin* (loyalty and patriotism) this sword embodies a profound devotion in servitude for the Tokugawa family.

Saki-kasane: 5.9mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 8.6mm

Omosa: 925g

Kissaki: 4.55cm
Saki-haba: 2.22cm

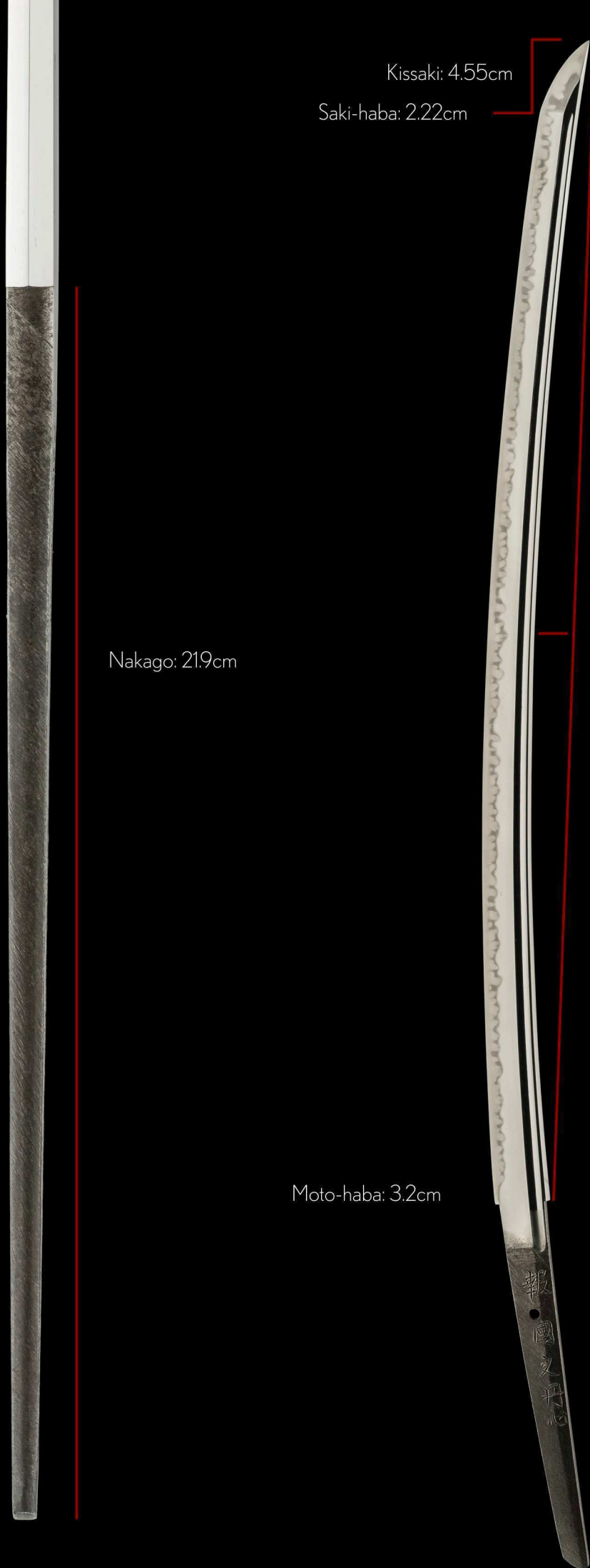
Nakago: 21.9cm

Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Nagasa: 70.45cm

Sori: 2.15cm

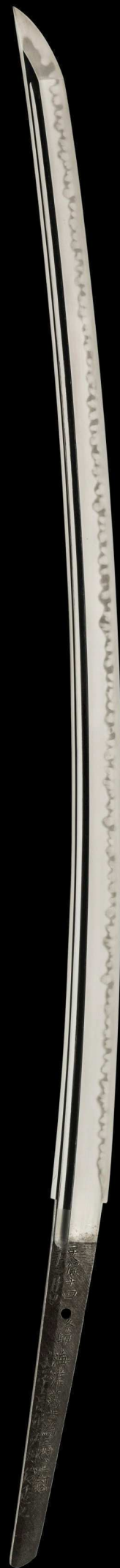
Mekugi-ana: 1



Born *Katô Hachirô*, swordsmith Tsunatoshi was a student of grandmaster *Suishinshi Masahide* just like his father *Katô Kunihide*.

Tsunatoshi moved to Edo during the *Bunsei era* (1818~1830) where he worked in the residence of the *Uesugi family*, the daimyô of Yonezawa.

This wide and formidable katana weighs nearly one kilogram - densely forged with a thick *kasane* (spine). It's a masterclass work of art from a great Shinshintô talent.



Location: *Edo*

Title: *Chôunsai*

Swordsmith: *Tsunatoshi* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

kesho-sujikai-yasurime (cosmetic file marks)

*Yonezawa-shi Chôunsai Tsunatoshi
kore o tsukuru*

Crafted by Chôunsai Tsunatoshi
retained by the Yonezawa fief

*Tenpô 14 mizunoto usagidoshi
2-gatsu bi*

Dated to a day in February 1843,
Year of the Hare (rabbit)

*Kaizu hanshi Mimura Tadashi
nagusami no tame*

For [samurai] Mimura Tadashi,
retained by the Kaizu-han (fief)

(doshi) 年
(ni) 二
(gatsu) 月
(bi) 日

(Yone) 米
(zawa) 澤
(shi) 士
(Chô) 長

(un) 運
(sai) 齋
(Tsun) 綱

(toshi) 俊
(tsukuru) 造
(kore o) 之



天 (Ten)
保 (pô)
十 (jû)
四 (yon)

癸 (mizunoto)
卯 (usagidoshi)

海 (Kai)
津 (zu)

藩 (han)
士 (shi)

為 (no tame)
三 (Mi)
村 (mura)
正 (Tadashi)

慰 (nagusami)

A summary of the inscription:

Samurai *Mimura Tadashi*, a member of the Kaizu fief commissioned this sword to swordsmith *Chounsai Tsunatoshi*, retained by the *Yonezawa fief*.

The sword was completed successfully in February 1843, during the Year of the Hare.

The Kaizu fief was controlled by the *Takasu-Matsudaira* branch of the ruling Tokugawa family during the Edo period.



Samurai Tokugawa Mochinaga (June 11, 1831 – March 6, 1884) was the son of Matsudaira Yoshitatsu of Takasu (Kaizu) han. His brothers included the famous Matsudaira Katamori, Matsudaira Sadaaki, and Tokugawa Yoshikatsu.

Together, the four men were known as the Takasu yon-kyôdai or "Four Brothers of Takasu".

Hôkoku no Tanshin

For Loyalty and Patriotism!



報

報 (Hô)

●
國

国 (koku)

文

之 (no)

丹

丹 (tan)

心

心 (shin)



報
● 國
文
母
心

Samurai *Mimura Tadashi* requested *Tsunatoshi* that the characters '*Hôkoku no Tanshin*' be chiseled on the *ura* (reverse side) as a symbol of his [*Mimura's*] *loyalty and patriotism* for the Tokugawa family.

Talk about a statement.

30201803

No 1008759



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
平成三十年六月十三日
公益財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會



二分 銘

米沢士長運齋網俊造之
天保十四年二月日
海津藩士為三村正慰
報國文丹心

鑑定書

福岡県教育委員会
第 26523 号
昭和31年 4月 12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 30th year of Heisei (2018), June 13th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

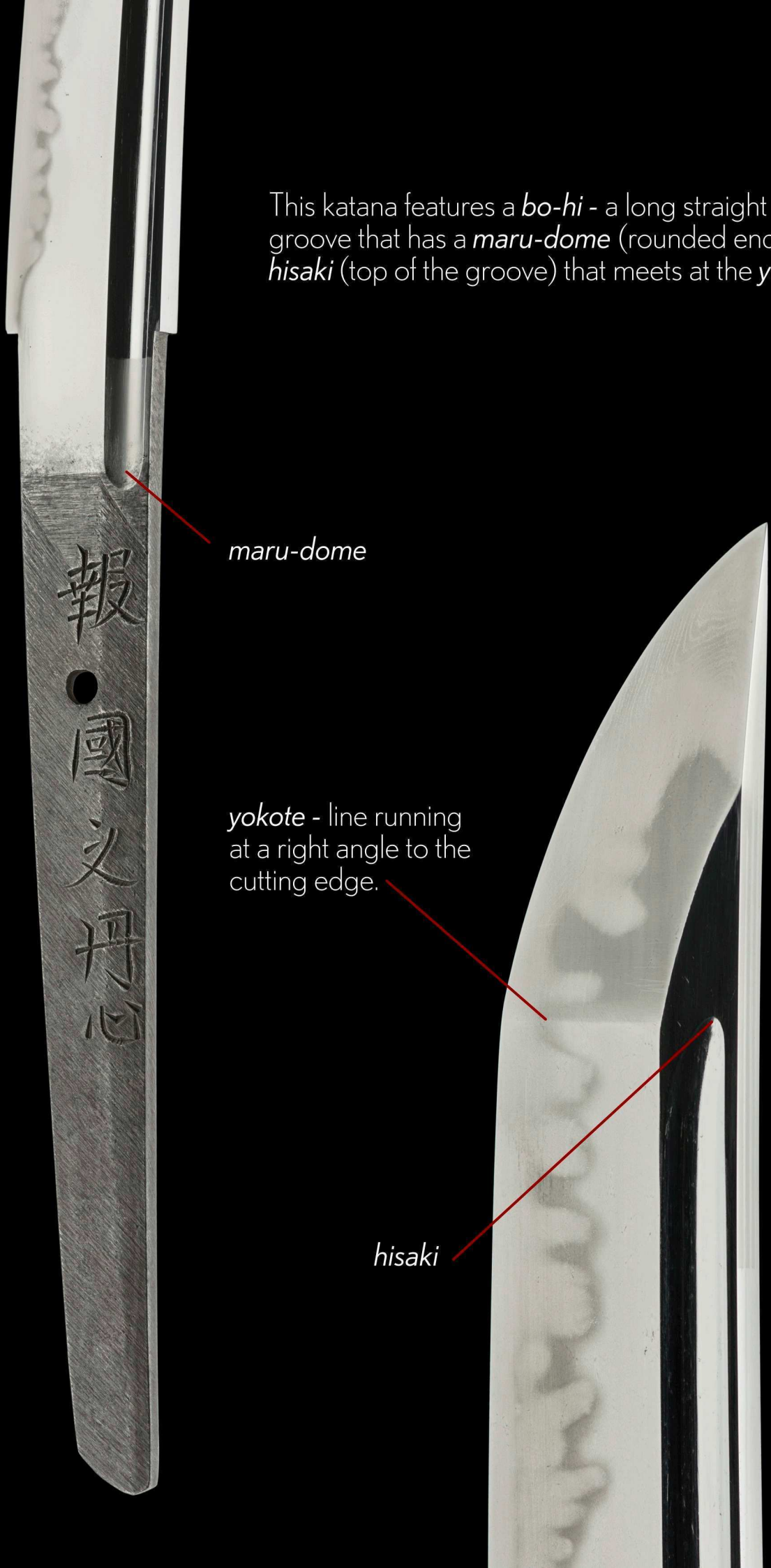
*Yonezawa-shi Chôunsai Tsunatoshi kore o tsukuru
Tenpô jû-yon mizunoto-usagidoshi nigatsu hi
Kaizu hanshi Mimura Tadashi nagusami no tame
Hôkoku no Tanshin*

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu (70.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

This katana features a *bo-hi* - a long straight wide groove that has a *maru-dome* (rounded end) and a *hisaki* (top of the groove) that meets at the *yokote*.



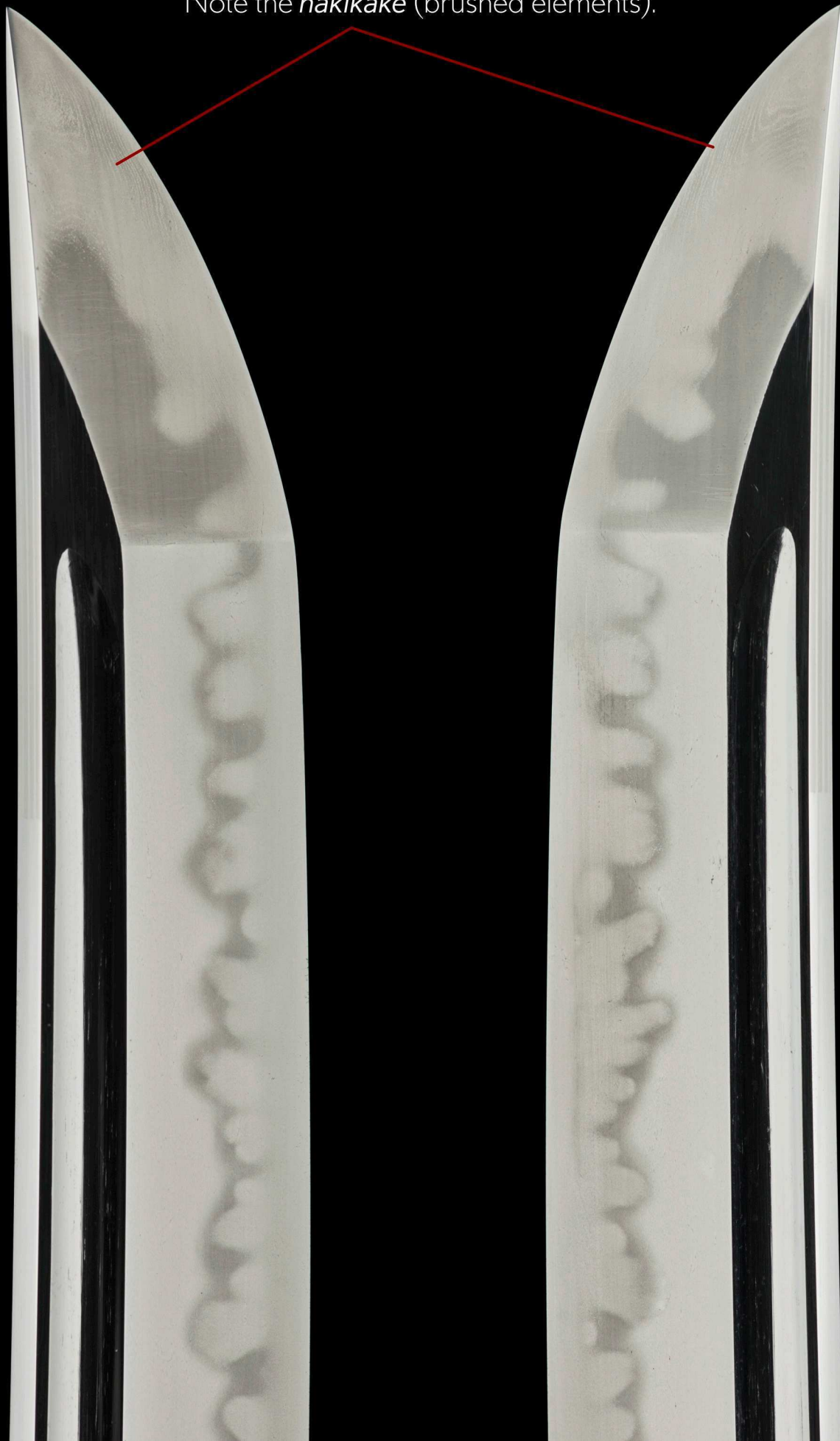
maru-dome

yokote - line running at a right angle to the cutting edge.

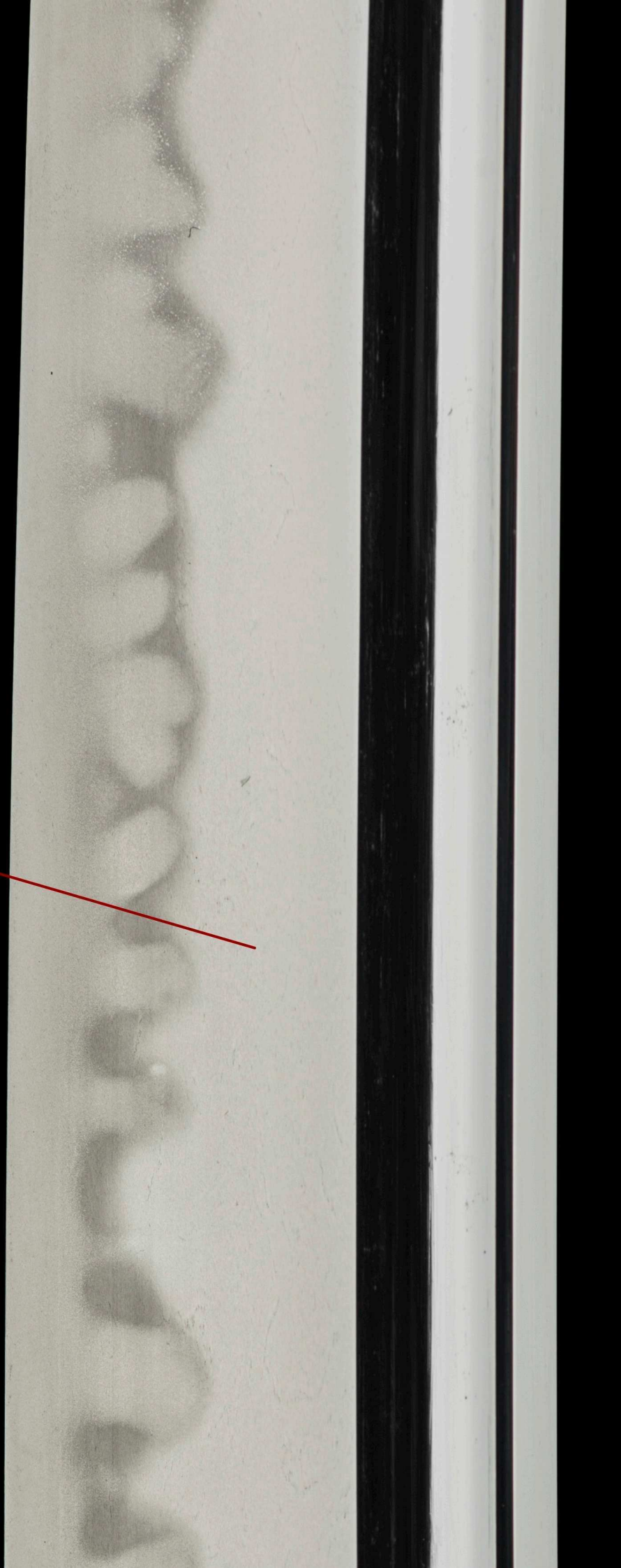
hisaki

Standing tall is a wavy *midare-komi boshi*
that is a flowing continuation of the *hamon*.

Note the *hakikake* (brushed elements).



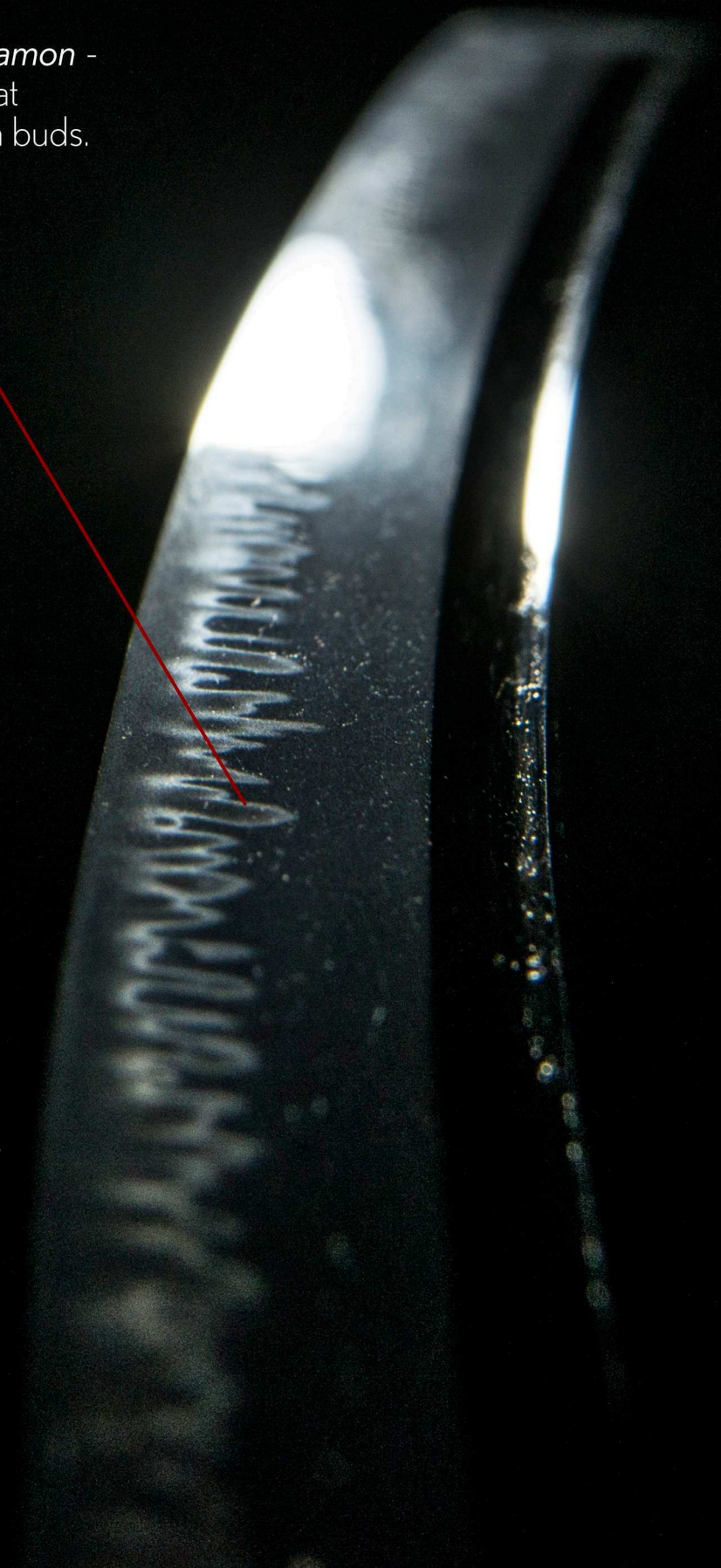
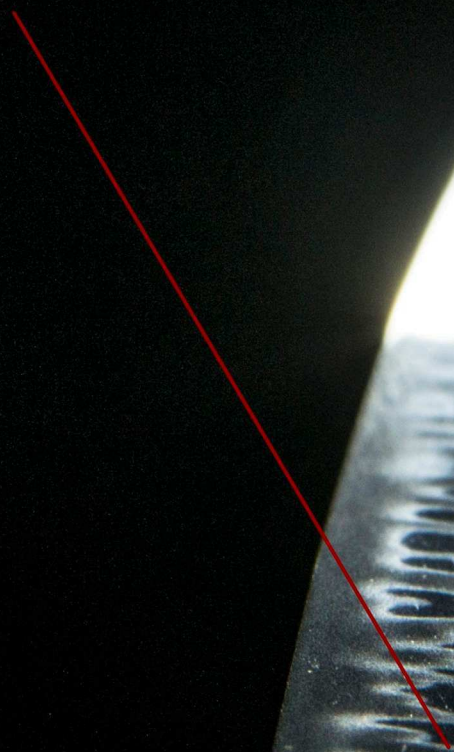
Tsunatoshi enjoys a reputation of forging blades so well-packed that the surface grain pattern has a mirror-like finish referred to as *muji-hada*.





Forged in *noi-deki*, the *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the *hamon*) are uniform in appearance producing a tight wavy beam of light.

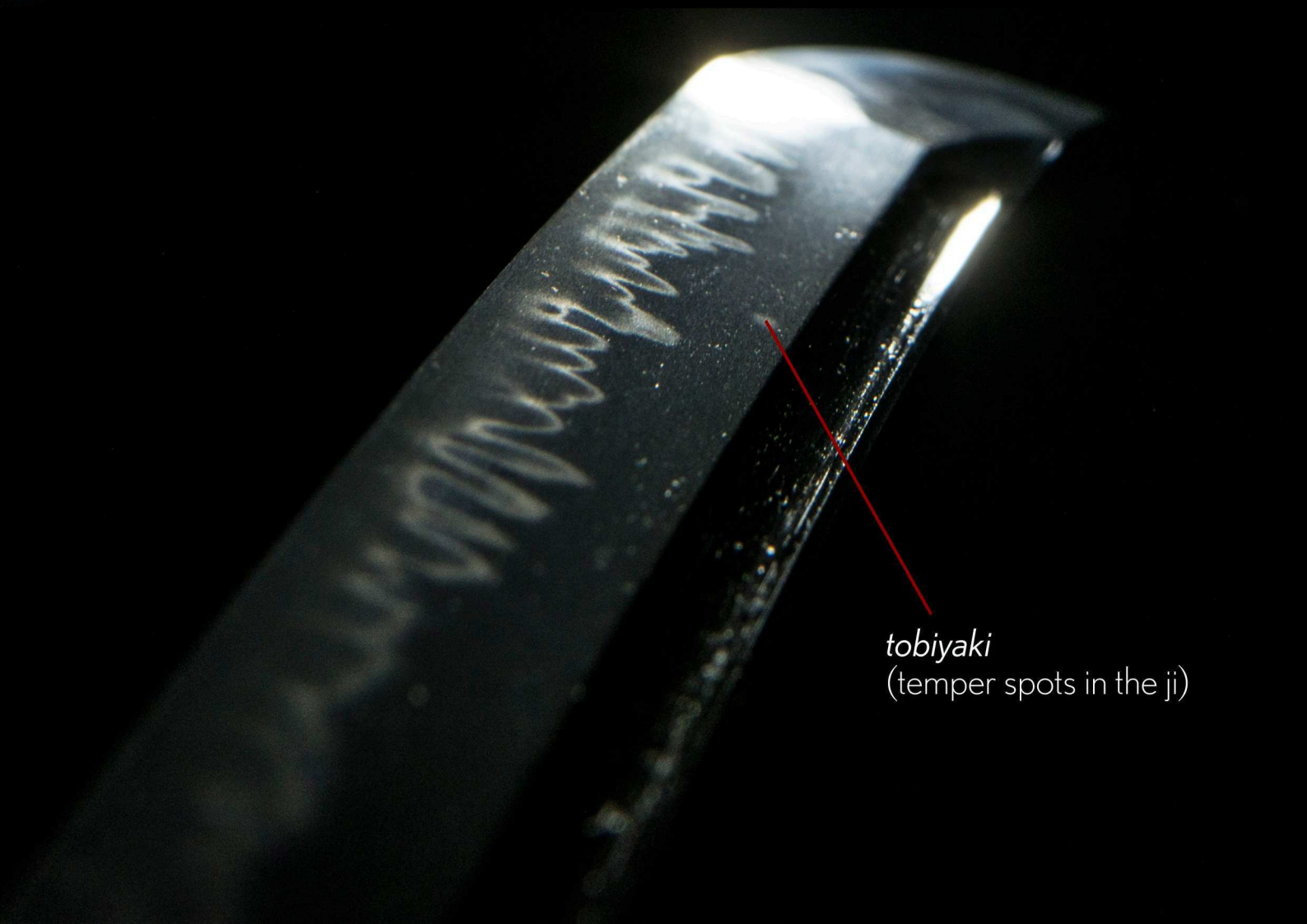
Gunome-choji-midare hamon -
a beautiful temper line that
resembles clove blossom buds.





sunagashi - brushed effect through the hamon

kinsuji - dark line of nie through the hamon



tobiyaki
(temper spots in the ji)

A close-up photograph of a curved blade, likely a katana, showing the jihada (back edge). The blade is dark, and a bright, whitish reflective area is visible on the jihada, forming a shadow-like pattern. A red line points from the text to this area.

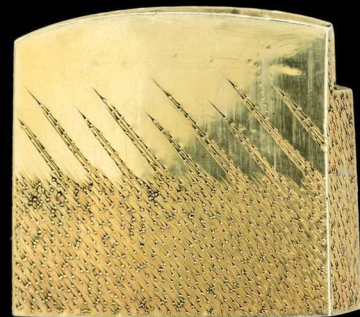
Utsuri

Whitish reflective areas in the *jihada* forming a shadow-like pattern.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

strips of bamboo secure the shirasaya
adding a beautiful finishing touch

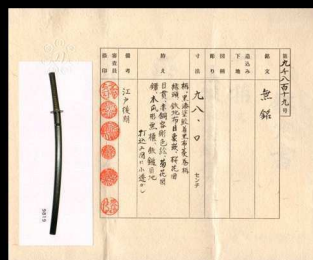


gold *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

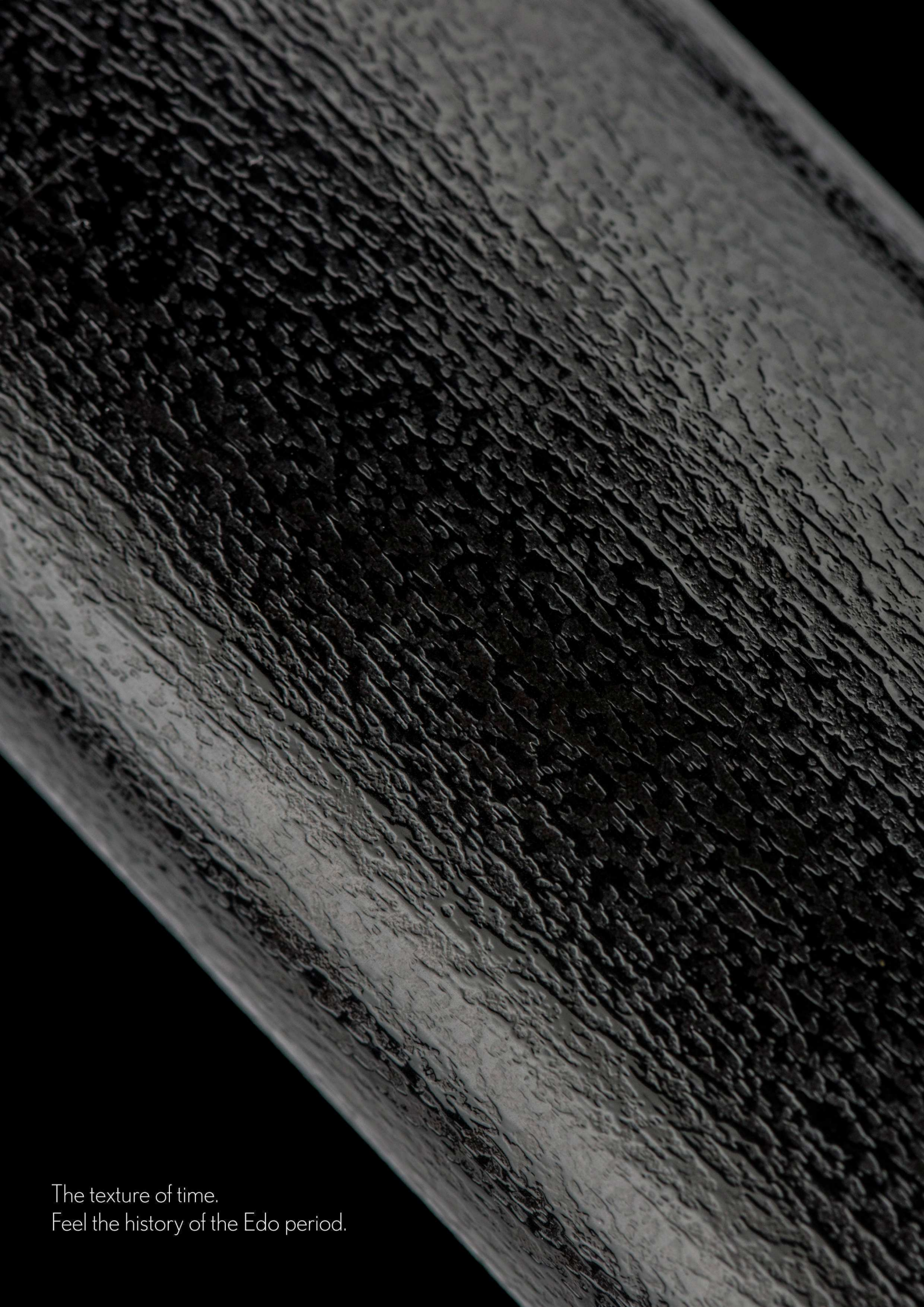
*Kuro-jiwa-kawa-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒皺皮塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae lacquered in
black with wrinkled leather-like
textured saya*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



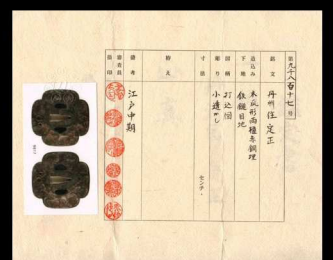
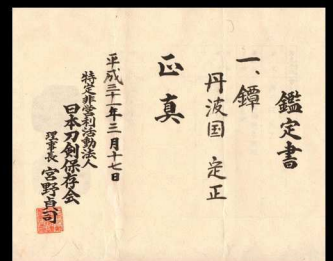
The texture of time.
Feel the history of the Edo period.



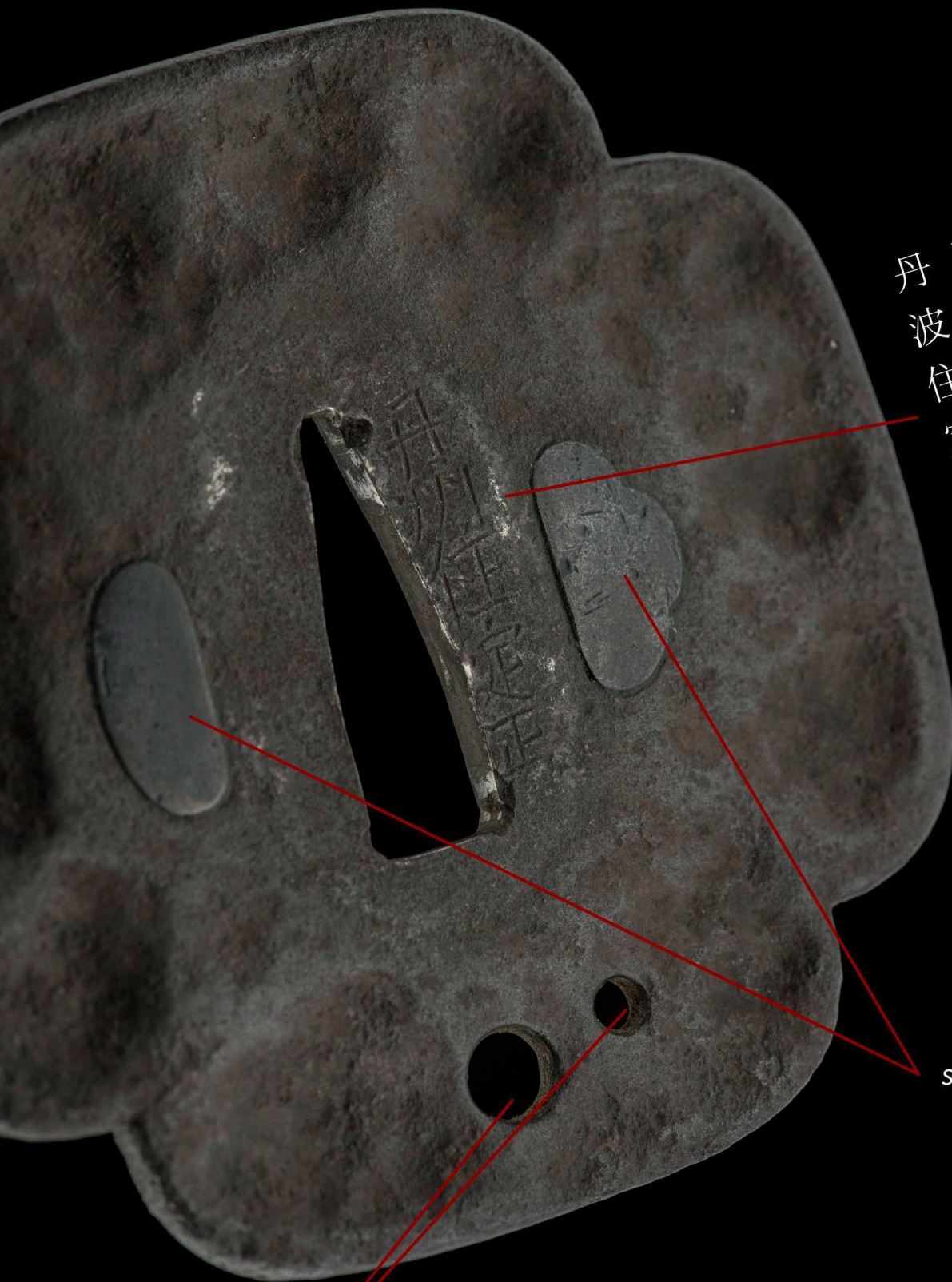
This muscular Tsunatoshi katana is balanced with an imposing *mokko-gata* (lobe-shaped) iron tsuba with a unique hammered pattern. The tsuba is signed by metalsmith *Sadamasa* residing in Tanba province during the mid-Edo period, circa 1700-1780.

As the holes for a *kozuka* and *kogai* were not needed, they were inlaid with pure *shakudo* - a luxury that only a well-to-do samurai could afford.

This tsuba comes with an NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



丹 Tan
波 ba
住 ju
定 Sada
正 masa

shakudo inlay

Udenuki ana (two small holes) were common on older tachi tsuba serving the purpose of a safety wrist strap when the sword is used on horseback. The holes are of different size and close together as seen above.

During the Edo period replicating this design became popular and can be seen on wakizashi and katana sized tsubas.



(reverse)



sakura
(cherry blossoms)



This hilt is a true samurai antique from the late Edo period, locked in time to fully admire. It is uniquely wrapped in black *nuno* (linen) *hishimaki* style over black-lacquered *samekawa* (ray skin). The *fuchi-kashira* is made of iron with gold crosshatches in the motif of falling *sakura* (cherry blossoms). The *menuki* are three dimensional bunches of imperial *kiku* (chrysanthemum) flowers.



This *fuchi-kashira* has been attributed to the Higo region in Kyushu province dating to the late Edo period (1780~1867).

A Kanteisho certificate of authenticity from the NTHK-NPO will be included for the new caretaker of this katana.



Spring winds may blow the petals away - but the sakura tree still strives...

For just three weeks of the year, the sakura blossoms.

The short life and beauty of the cherry blossom is a powerful metaphor for mortality and the absolute loyalty of the samurai.



ITEM# UJKA171

A HOSHO KATANA

UNSIGNED, LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1300~1333)

- Swordsmith:** *The Hosho School (ubu-nakago)*
Location: *Yamato province (present-day Nara prefecture)*
Measurements: **Length:** 73.2cm **Curvature:** 1.4cm **Moto-haba:** 3.0cm **Weight:** 750g
Jihada: *Pure masame-hada in nie-deki with chikei*
Hamon: *Bright suguha, wide nioguchi with nijuba, kuichigai-ba, kinsuji and sunagashi*
Boshi: *Hakikake (brushed)*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation*)
Certificate #2-3: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*koshirae and tsuba designated as authentic*)
Authentication: *Sayagaki by Tanobe sensei*
Included: *Shirasaya, koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description*

SOLD

This magnificent katana has been attributed to the greatly admired *Hosho School*, which produced swords during the *mid-Kamakura* to the end of the *Nambokucho period*. Of the five major schools of the Yamato tradition, the Hosho School holds a special place amongst them by forging exclusively in their iconic straight-grain pattern known as *masame-hada*.

Masterful work in every sense, this is a rare *ubu-nakago* katana to cherish deeply. The infinite layers of visible steel flow like a river and bubble in a multitude of *hataraki* that includes *sunagashi* and brilliant *kinsuji*. Its *uchigatana koshirae* lacquered with Zen pools of red and black with an *Izutsu kamon* hilt and a noble *Heianjo* wheel *tsuba* add extra dimensions of character to enjoy.

Saki-kasane: 4.7mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 750g

Kissaki: 3.26cm
Saki-haba: 1.93cm

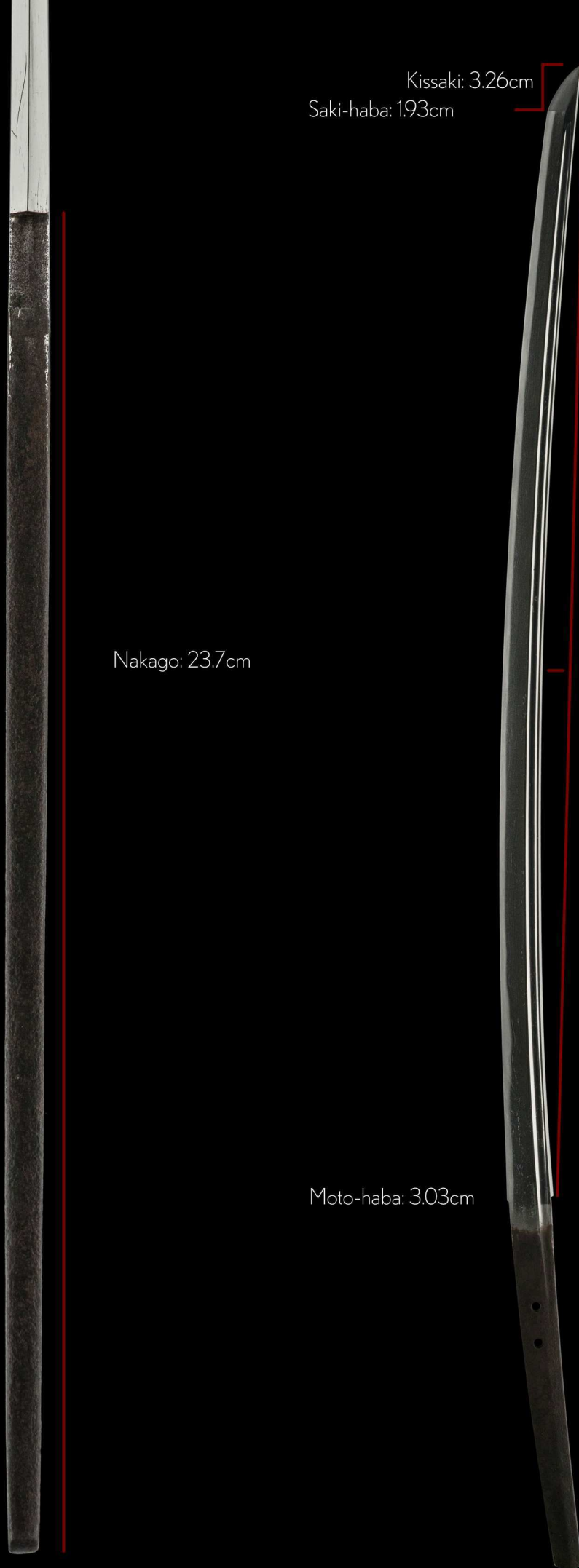
Nakago: 23.7cm

Moto-haba: 3.03cm

Nagasa: 73.2cm

Sori: 1.4cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



This katana was crafted by the *Hosho school* which began in the middle-late Kamakura period (~1280) and extended to the end of the Kamakura period, circa 1333.

Swords attributed to the *Sue-Hosho school* are those blades made in the *Nambokucho period*, circa 1333-1392.

Notable swordsmiths of the Hosho School include *Sadamune*, *Sadayoshi* & *Sadatsugu*.





Impressively rare, the *nakago* of this 700-year-old katana is *ubu*, meaning that has retained its original shape since it was crafted.

The province of Yamato was the heart of Japanese culture during the Nara period before the capital shifted to Yamashiro (Kyôto).

Yamato had many powerful Buddhist temples and armed themselves with swords to guard their property. As a matter of protocol, most swords of the Yamato tradition were not signed as seen on this Hoshô katana.

特 選
27201501

№ 1003558

鑑定書

一刀 無銘 (保昌)

長二尺四寸一分半

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



贈與 教育委員会
第 70375 号
平成 26 年 12 月 9 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

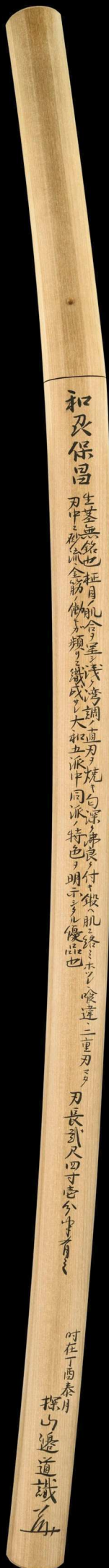
Issued in the 27th year of Heisei (2015), March 26th

One, Katana

Mumei (unsigned)
Hosho [school]

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 4-sun 1-bu han (73.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



Washu [Yamato no Kuni]

Hosho

Ubu-nakago mumei nari. Masame no hada-ai o teishi asaku notare-cho no suguha o yaki nioi fukaku nie yolku tsuki kitae-hada ni karami hotsure, kuichigai, nijuba mata hachu ni sunagashi, kinsuji no hataraki ga shikiri ni shokusei-saru Yamato-goha chu doha no tokushoku o meiji shitaru yuhin nari.

The blade has an ubu-nakago (original shape) that is mumei (unsigned). It displays a masame-hada that is hardened in a nie-laden suguha with a tendency towards a gentle undulating notare. The ha features a wide nioiguchi, visible hada, hotsure, kuichigai and nijuba, and other hataraki with plenty of kinsuji and sunagashi that are interwoven within the forging structure.

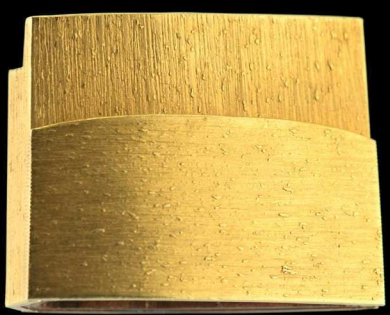
This is a masterwork among the five major Yamato Schools representing the characteristic features of the Hosho School.

Nagasa 2-shaku 4-sun 1-bu han ari kore (73.2cm)

*Jizai hino-tori taigetsu
(January in the year of the rooster 2017)*

*Tanzan hendo shirusu + kao
signed by Tanobe sensei with seal*

Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *ni-ju habaki* with
perpendicular file marks



和及保昌

生基無銘也 証目凡合差我考調直刃ヲ焼白深ノ序良付鍛入肌終ニホシ喰違ニ重刃ニテ
刃中砂流念防働ノ類ノ鐵成ニ大和立派中同派ノ特色ヲ明シテ優品也

刃長貳尺四寸五分中有

時在丁酉春月

探山邊道識ノ



Straight-grain layers of *masame-hada*, knead through the *kissaki* (tip) with admirable skill and confidence.

Only the Hosho School forged their swords with pure masame-hada.

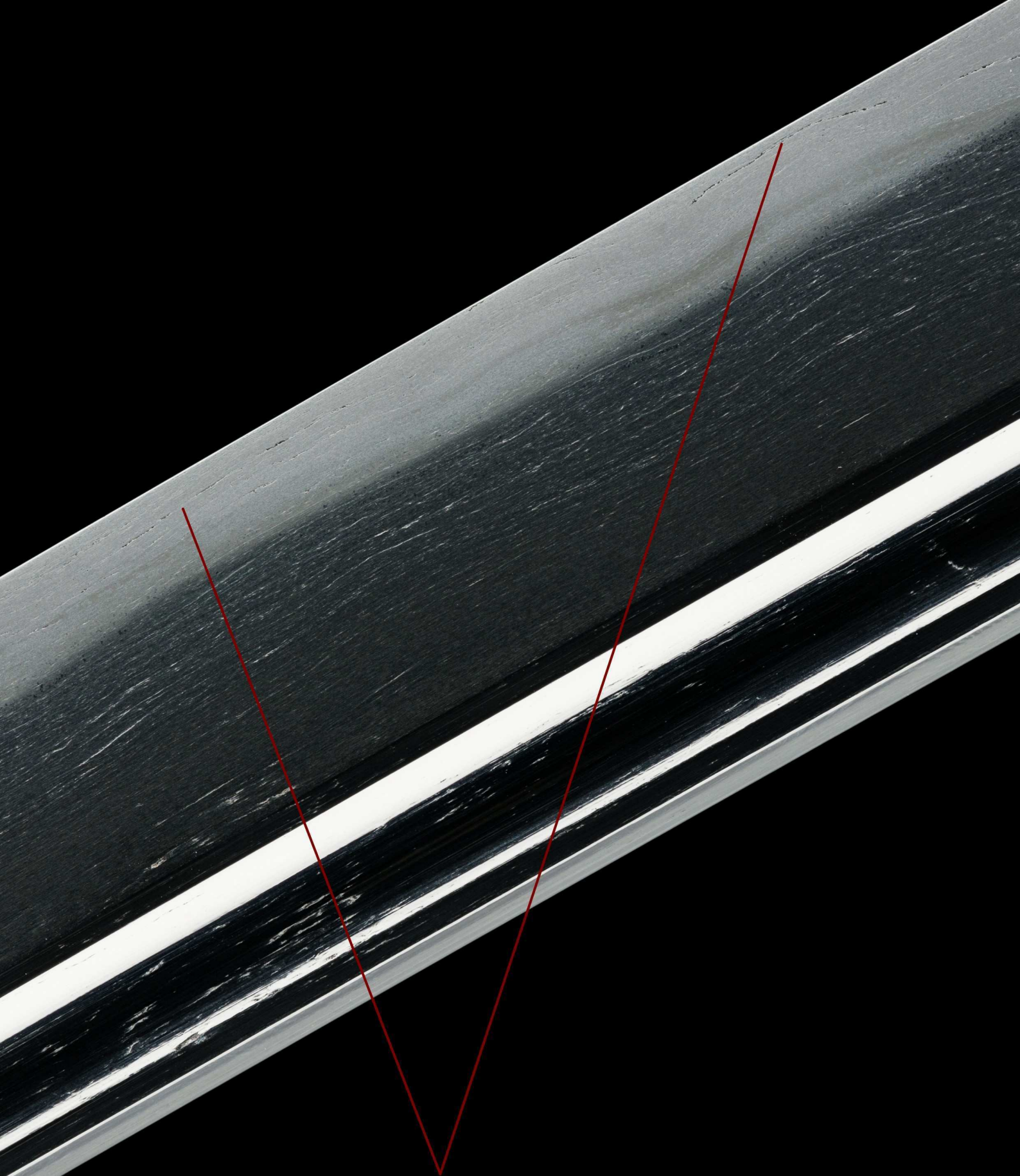
Welcome to the Yamato tradition.

Beautifully brushed *hakikake boshi*.





A bright *suguha* with a wide *nioguchi*,
crystals that make up the hamon.



Hada-ware (crevices along the forging pattern) are very common and to be expected given the unique way the steel is forged with Hosho-crafted swords.

A close-up, diagonal view of a sword blade. The blade is dark and shows intricate patterns of light and dark lines. Two red lines point from text annotations to specific features on the blade. The top part of the blade is brightly lit, while the bottom part is in deep shadow.


Gorgeous dark lines of *nie crystals* in the body are called *chikei*.

Tiny *nie crystals* shine evenly along the *hamon*.

A flowing river of steel.



The sword carries a full-length *bo-hi* (groove) to help lighten the sword and improve cutting ability.

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a sword's blade, focusing on the hamon (the edge of the blade). The blade is dark and textured, with a prominent, wavy pattern of light-colored metal (likely iron) visible along the edge. This pattern is known as kinsuji. The background is black, making the blade stand out. A red line points from the text below to a specific area of the hamon.

Masterful beams of *kinsuji* forge
dark channels in the *hamon*.

A close-up, diagonal view of a sword blade. The blade is dark and shows a complex, swirling pattern known as sunagashi, which is formed by sweeping sand over the steel. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture and the curve of the blade against a black background.

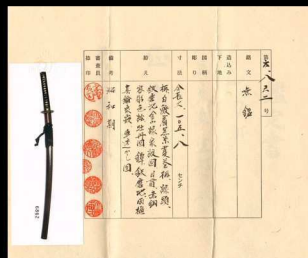
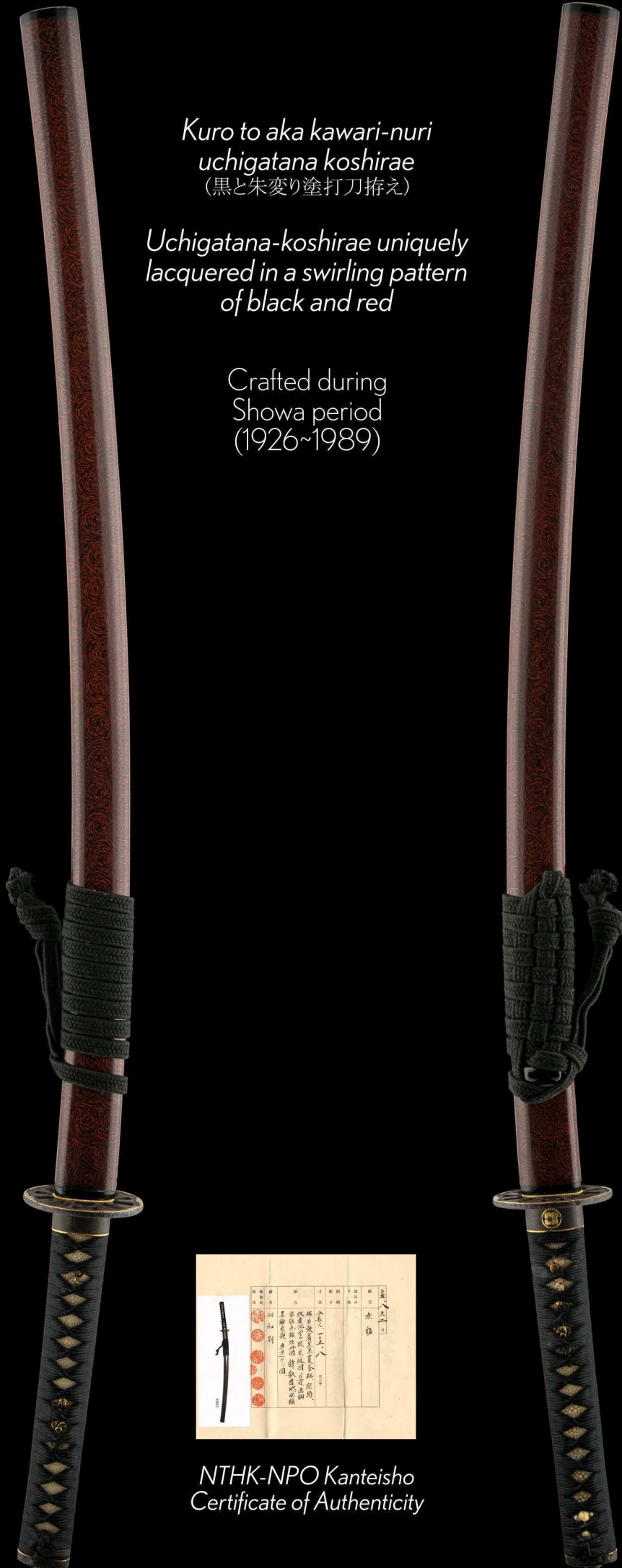
Sweeping sands of *sunagashi* dance with
masame-hada to form joyous patterns in the steel.

This sword was polished by *Sasaki-sensei* in 2016
- one of Japan's most respected sword polishers.

*Kuro to aka kawari-nuri
uchigatana koshirae*
(黒と朱変り塗打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae uniquely
lacquered in a swirling pattern
of black and red*

Crafted during
Showa period
(1926~1989)

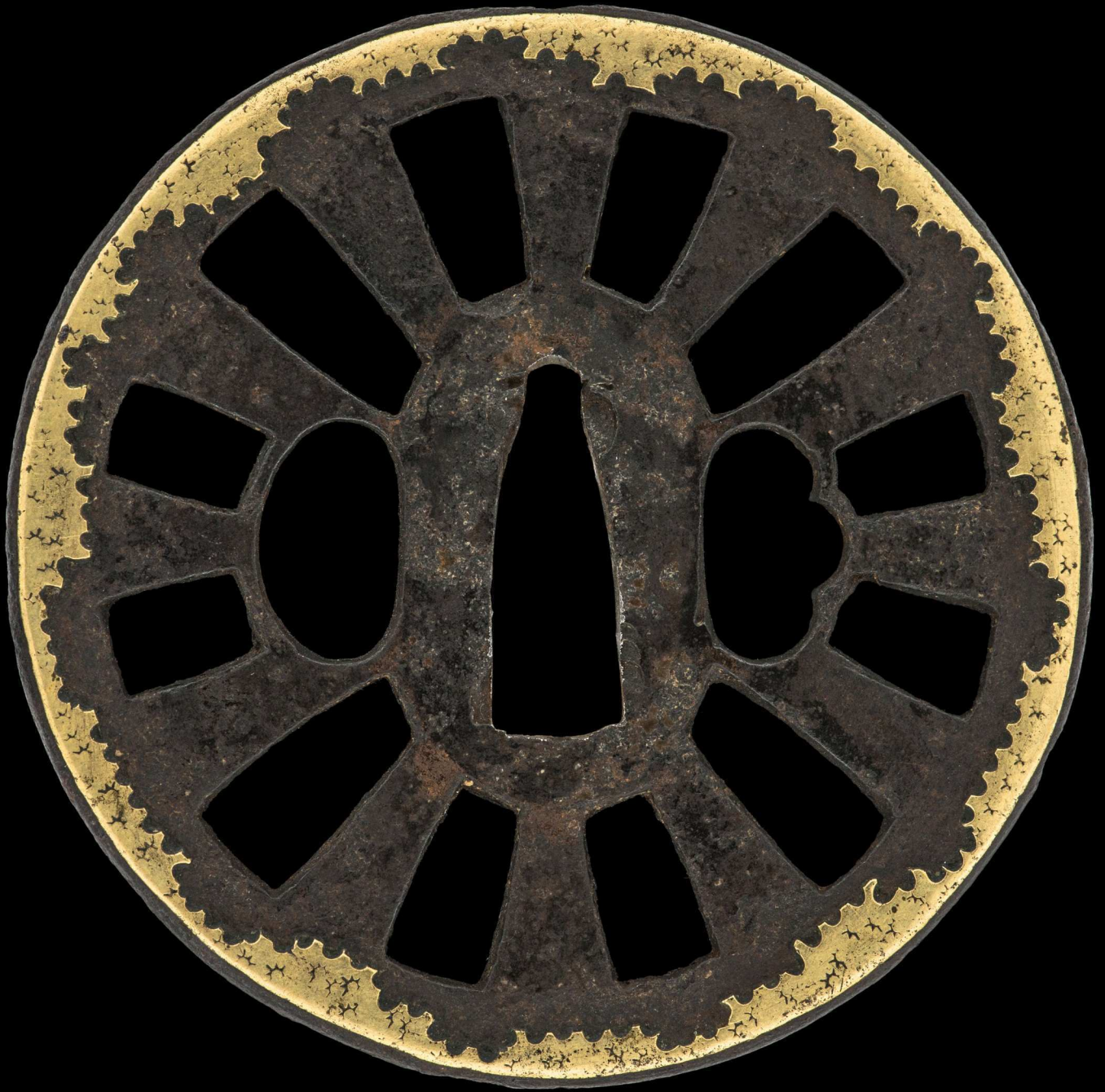


NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity

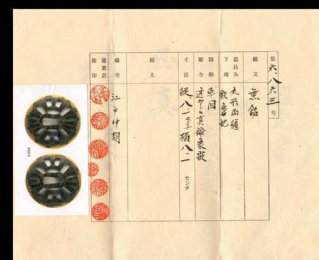
Vibrant whirlpools of black and red lacquer.
A traditional Japanese Zen Buddhist rock
garden comes to mind.



Komyozen-ji rock garden
(Fukuoka, Japan)



A beautiful *Heianjo school zogan tsuba* in the openwork shape of a *kuruma* (cart wheel). Made of polished iron with brass inlay, this 300-year-old tsuba exudes sophistication, reminiscent of noble ox-drawn carriages known as *gosho-kuruma*.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity
crafted circa 1700-1780.



The *menuki* (decorative grips) carry a *botan* (peony) theme.
In Japan, the peony is known as the "king of flowers".

The polished iron *fuchi-kashira* depicts the gold *Izutsu kamon* family crest.





The bold *Izutsu kamon* centred on the *kashira* (pommel).

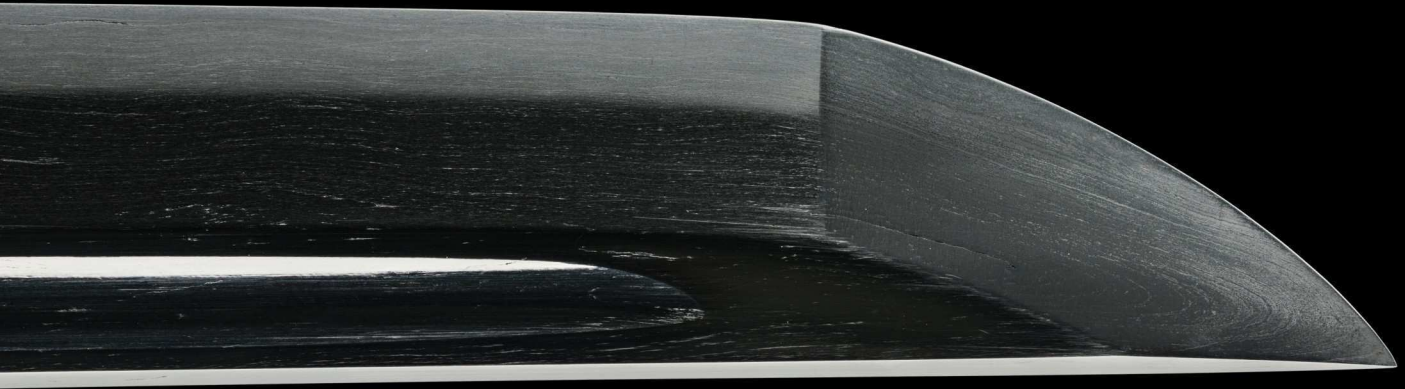
This *kamon* (crest) was used by *Sakai, Imai, Kitamura, Yamashita* families from *Seiwa Genji* stream, and *Ino, Hosoido, Kawai, Kakibe, Sueyoshi* from *Utagawa* family.

The shape is said to be inspired from the wooden frame placed on top of a well.



Parody of the Tsutsu Izutsu Story from the Tales of Ise

by *Hosoda Eishi* (1793)



Layers of history.
Time to forge your own.





ITEM# UJKA322

A NIÔ KIYOTSUNA KATANA

UNSIGNED, LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA GENTOKU ERA 1329~1331)

Swordsmith: *Kiyotsuna of the Nio School (o-suriage, mumei nakago)*
Measurements: **Length:** 70.5cm **Curvature:** 1.2cm **Moto-haba:** 2.83cm **Weight:** 740g
Jihada: *Itame mixed with mokume, nagare and masame, fine ji-nie and shirake-utsuri*
Hamon: *Suguha in ko-nie-deki, tight nioiguchi, ko-gunome, ko-ashi, yubashiri and tobiyaki*
Certificate #1: **52nd NBTHK Juyo Token** (attributed to Niô School designated as Important)
Certificate #2: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a katana authenticated to Nio Kiyotsuna)
Certificate #3: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a set of Nio menuki authenticated to Yokoya school)
Fujishiro: **Jo-saku** (third generation Nio Kiyotsuna is ranked as a superior smith)
Included: Shirasaya, set of menuki, bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

The Niô School was founded in Suo province (Yamaguchi prefecture) on the south-western tip of Japan's Honshu island in the mid-1200s by swordsmith Kiyotsuna. Swords of the Nio tradition have a convincing Yamato-den influence that radiate strength, wisdom and sophistication.

This admirable katana was crafted 700 years ago at the end of the Kamakura period and has been awarded prestigious NBTHK **Juyo Token**. The jihada stands out beautifully - a delightful mixture of itame, mokume, flowing nagare and classic Yamato straight-grain masame. A clean suguha hamon undulates to form a tight ko-gunome. To admire this sword is to appreciate the strong, quiet character. Residing deep within this sword is a self-assured power awaiting to be discovered.

^
Saki-kasane: 5.1mm

Kissaki: 3.67cm
Saki-haba: 2.2cm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Nagasa: 70.5cm

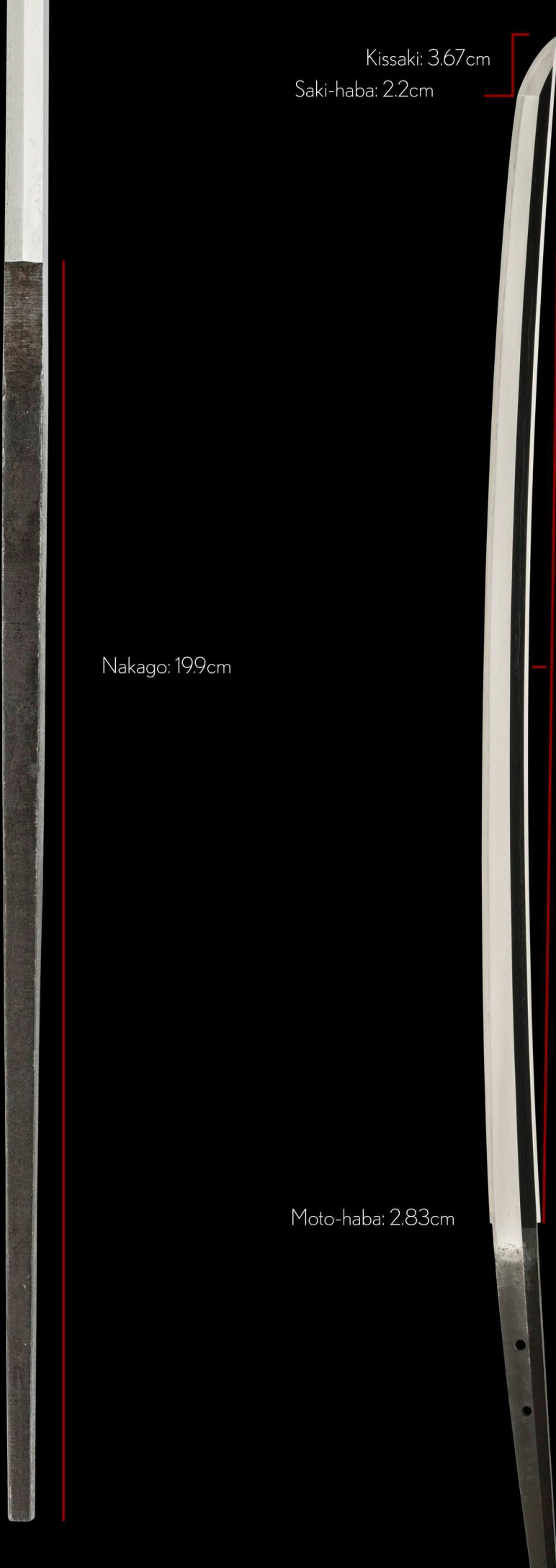
Nakago: 19.9cm

Sori: 1.2cm

Omosa: 740g

Moto-haba: 2.83cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



The Nio name is said to originate to the *Niho manor* of *Suo province*. Suo was home to many properties owned by the *Todaiji* (Great Eastern Buddhist Temple) in *Yamato* (Nara), the former capital of Japan.

As *Nio School* blades have a strong resemblance to Yamato works, it is assumed that there was a technical exchange between the two places.

Kiyotsuna is the founder of the school. A tachi that was dated to *March 1265* is being preserved at the famous *Itsukushima-jinja*.



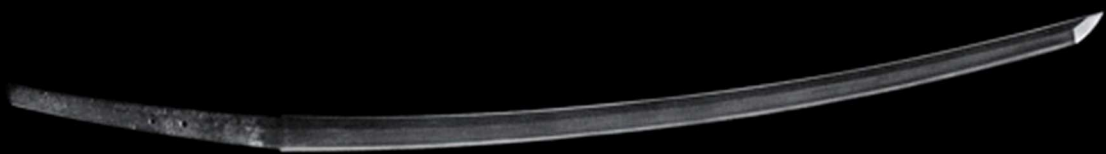
This gracefully shaped katana by the Nio School was crafted at the end of the Kamakura period, circa 1300-1330.



A more dramatic tale on the origin of the Nio name states that a *tachi* by Kiyotsuna was used to cut the chain of a locked door of the Nio-do temple and helped to rescue a pair of Nio guardians from a raging fire.

Nio guardians guard and protect temples from evil spirits and demons, and deter would be modern-day burglars.

The vast majority of Nio are made out of wood and are usually housed in their own gate houses to shield them from the weather.



Tachi by Kiyotsuna, 1265



clean and evenly filed
o-suriage nakago
(*mumei*, unsigned)



18200652

重要第三五七號

指定書

一、刀 無銘 二、主 一口

清量 長さ七〇、四種 反り一、三種

形状 鑄造庵棟 身幅やや細身で反り浅い。つき、中鋒延かこころ

鍛 板目に本交じり、総体は流れこころに、刃を任気ま交え、肌をう

刃文 焼刃、底直刃に小互目交じり、小足入り、白口締まって、小沸つき

物打辺に湯走り・飛焼交じり

帽子 表は直心調に小丸、裏は直心調に小丸にころに返り

茎 天磨上 鱗目表切り・(裏上半)浅膝身下がり・(裏下半)切り

目釘孔二

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀劍に指定す

平成十八年十月十二日

財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會

會長 佐々淳行



NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate of Designation

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

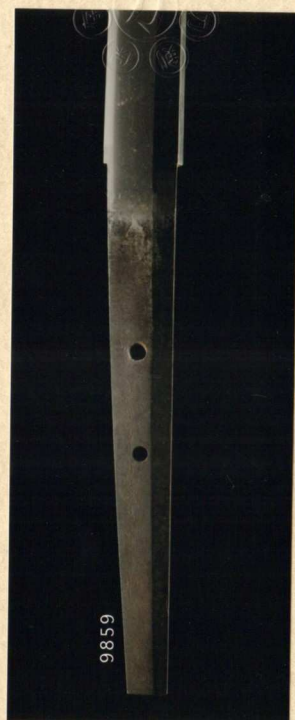
Issued in the 18th year of Heisei (2006), October 12th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Mumei [Niô School]

Nagasa (length)
70.4cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai (NBTHK)



捺 審 査 員 印	備 考	中 心	彫 刻	銚 子	刃 紋	鍛	造 り 込 み	銘 文	第 九 千 八 百 五 十 九 号
	元徳頃	目釘穴 二個			直ぐに 尖り心に 小丸返り	中直ぐ刃調	板目詰み 錬れる。	鎚造り、 庵棟	大磨り上げ無銘

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 Suô province, Niô Kiyotsuna

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 3-sun 3-bu kore ari (70.5cm)
o-suriage mumei

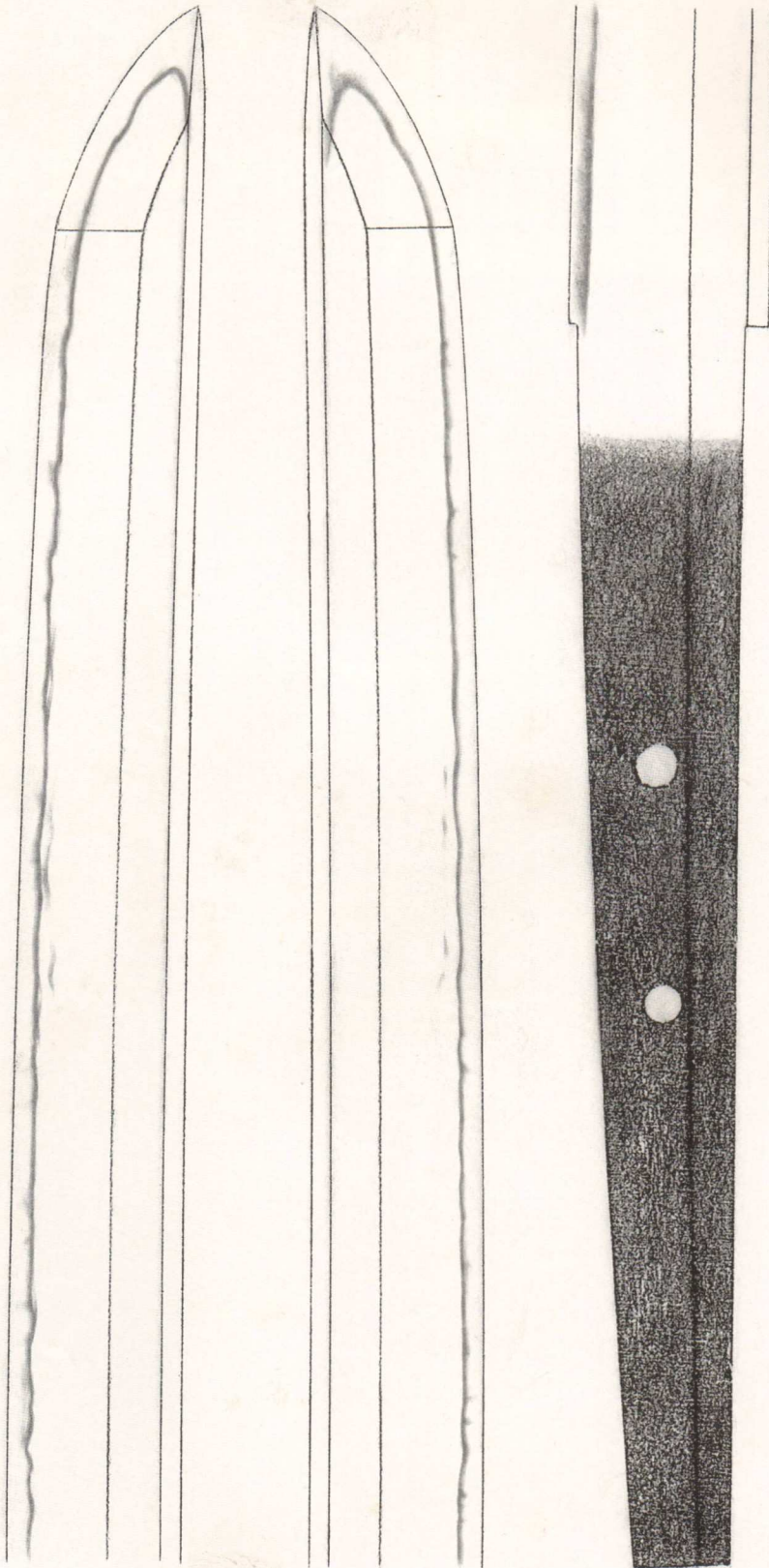
Crafted circa *Gentoku era* (1329-1331)

Shinsa judging panel:
six hanko seals of authenticity

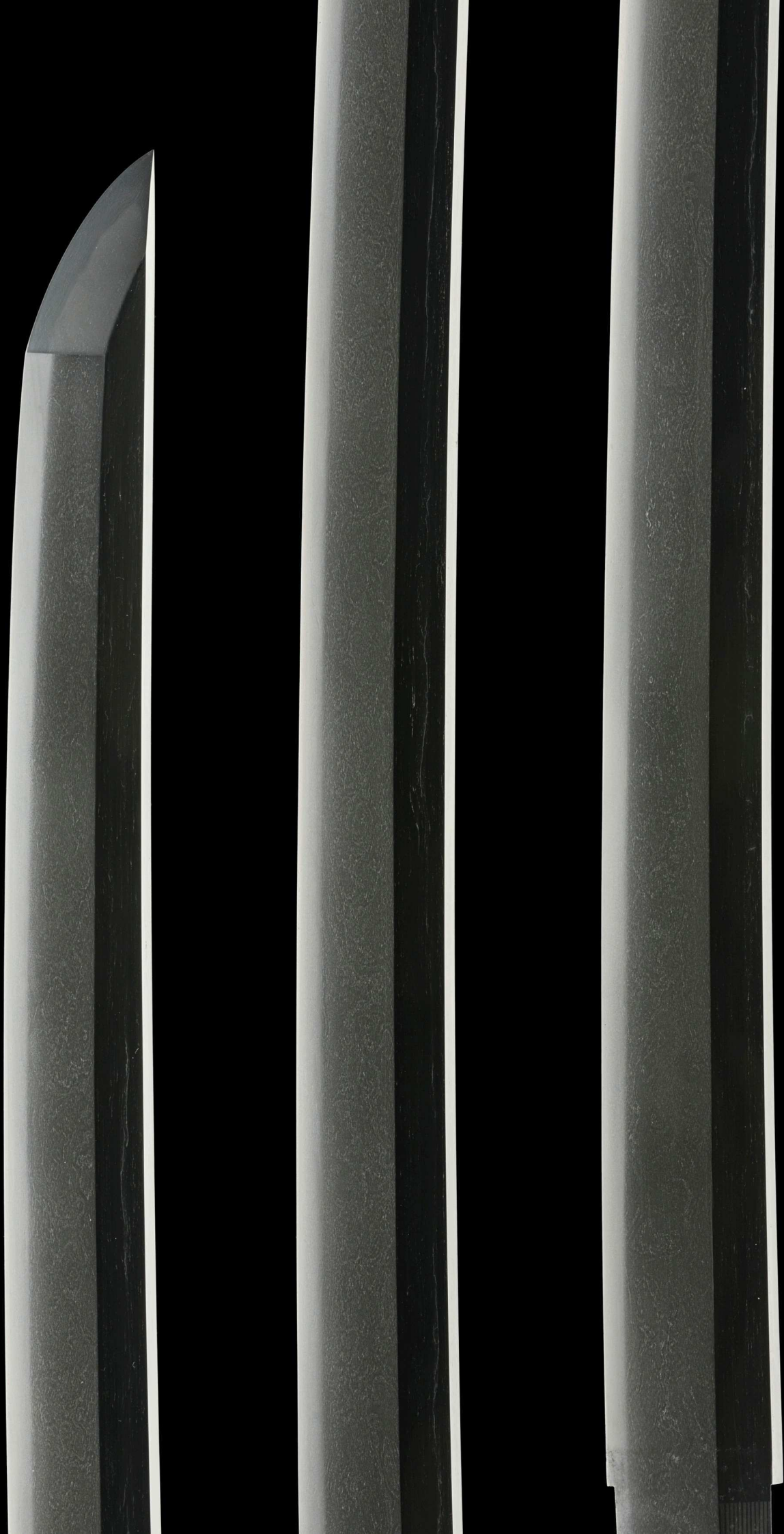
Issued in 31st year of Heisei (2019), April 14th

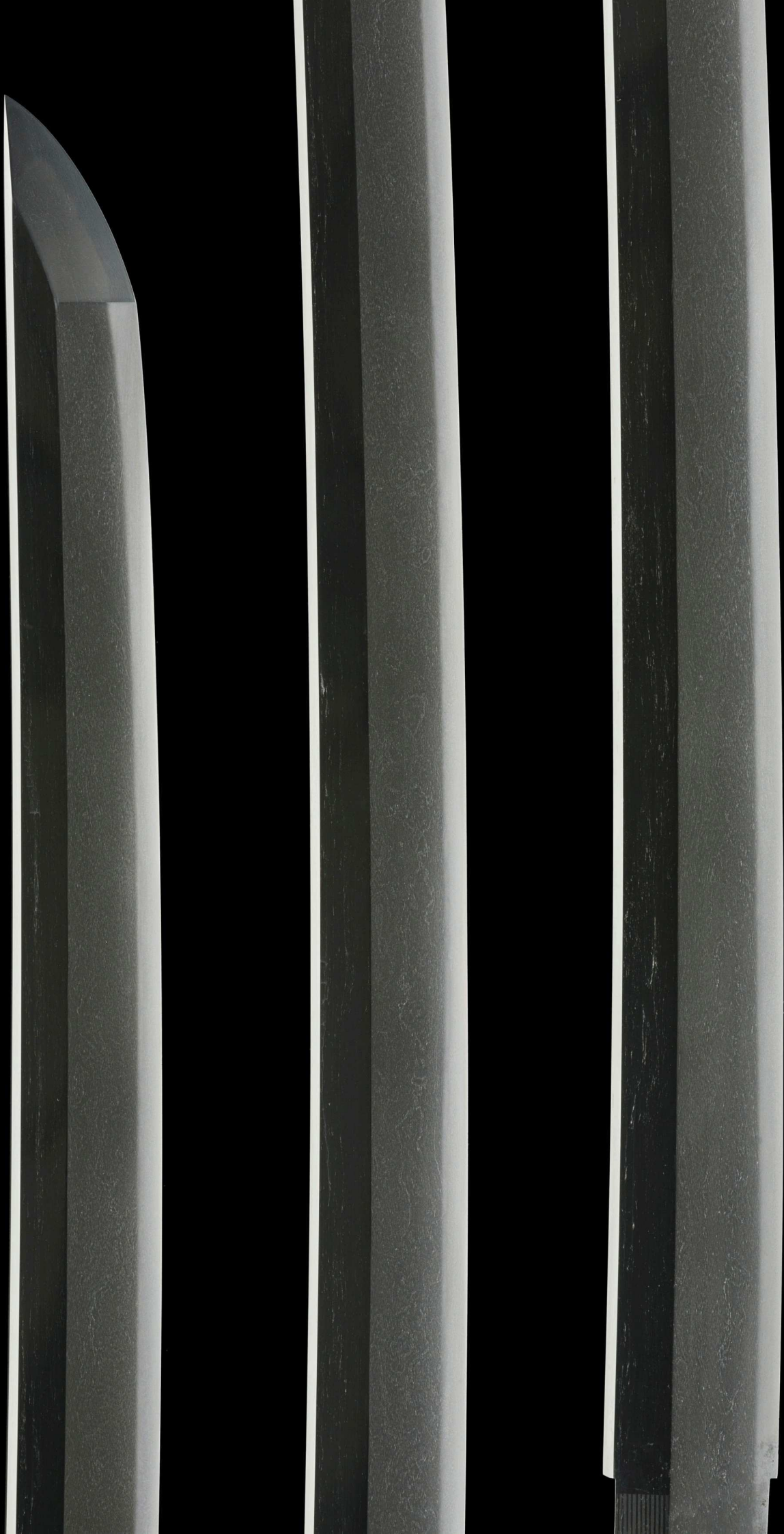
Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)

刀 無銘 二王



NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper
This *oshigata*, tracing of the *hamon* pattern, illustrates the skillful consistency and *hataraki* (activity) in the hamon.







Ample distance from the cutting edge to the gleaming *boshi hamon* in the *kissaki* shows that the sword is healthy and in similar condition from when it was first made 600 years ago.

This is a significant reason why this katana was awarded prestigious NBTHK Juyo Token.



lovely *ko-maru* (turn-back)



The *NBTHK Juyo Token* certificate praises the *ji* (body) and *ha* (hardened edge) for being in very good condition.

The certificate highlights the fact that the wood grain patterns of *ko-itame* and *ko-mokume* "stand out" to the eye.

ko-itame (elongated wood grain)

ko-mokume (more rounded)

masame (straight grain)

A close-up photograph of a katana blade, showing the hamon (temper line) and shirake utsuri (shadow hamon) patterns. The blade is dark and textured, with a bright light reflecting off the top edge. Red lines point from the text to specific features on the blade.

Like many prominent swords from the Kamakura period, the *hamon* is based on a narrow band of *suguha*.

Shirake utsuri (shadow hamon) also appears on the blade. This attribute of the katana is far more impressive in hand than images can hope to capture.

This is a katana with elegance and sophistication. Qualities that the Yamato tradition exemplifies.

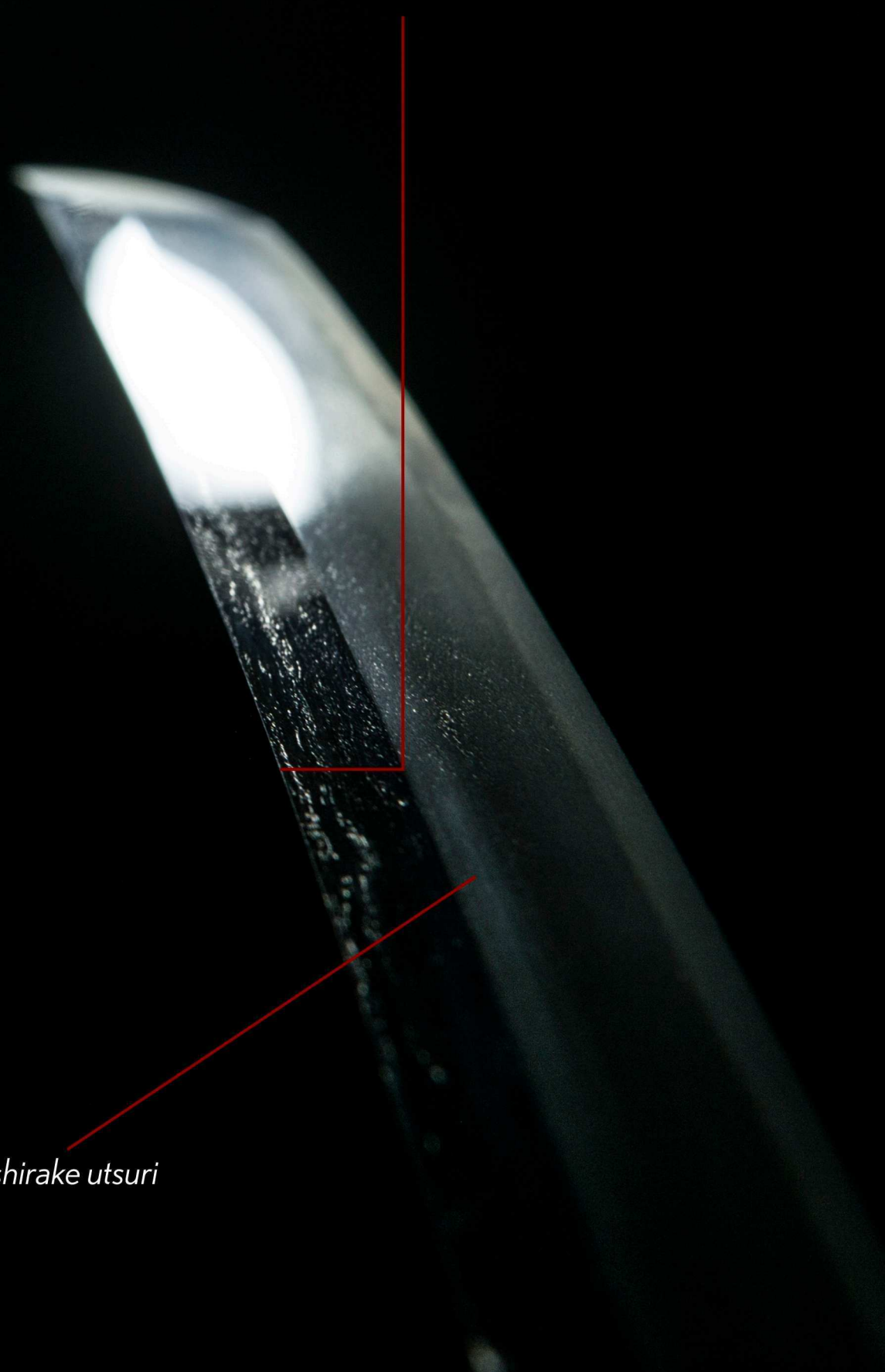


good healthy distance from edge to hamon

body shines with *ji-nie*

A saw-tooth *ko-gunome hamon* rips through the steel with precision.

The *shinogi* is wide and thick. This is in line with meaty, powerfully made Yamato tradition blades that this Nio katana faithfully adheres to.



shirake utsuri



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



a fine gold *ni-ju habaki*
with straight file marks



bamboo strips

buffalo horn fittings

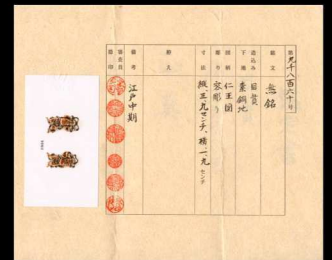
This is a first-class shirasaya. A rich wood-grain pattern secured with bamboo strips and a mekugi fastener that is made from buffalo horn.

Sayagaki by *Tanobe-sensei* can be arranged if desired by the new caretaker.



In celebration of the protective nature of Nio, meaning "*Benevolent Guardian Kings of Buddhism*" - Unique Japan has arranged for a special gift set of a pair of *Nio menuki* to accompany the katana.

These menuki have been attributed to the *Yokoya school* from Edo province and date to the Mid-Edo period (1700-1780).

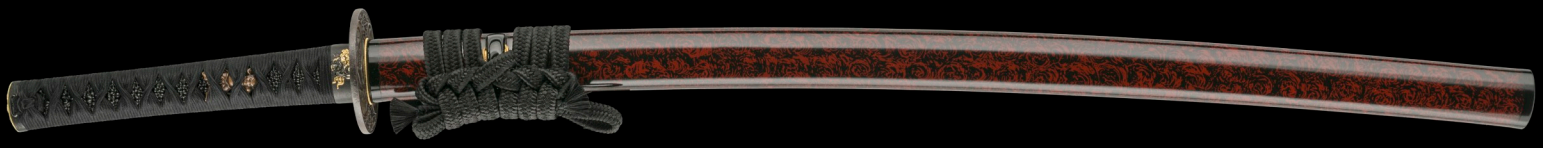


NTHK-NPO Kanteisho





on guard



This *custom koshirae* was built for *ujka322* - A Nio katana with *Juyo Token* certification. As the Nio school derives their name from the *benevolent guardian kings of Buddhism*, we built a koshirae with *Nio guardians* and *Shoki* (the demon slayer) protecting the owner from such evil spirits. The saya is lacquered in a unique *zen whirlpool* design. Congratulations Elliot!



Building Your Own Custom Koshirae



ujka211 - A Shodai Hisamichi Katana
'Red dragon' Koshirae



ujwa130 - A Tadashige o-Wakizashi
'Ray skin' Koshirae

Many top quality samurai swords that Unique Japan acquires 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 (or *daisho*) 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 (but it's well worth it).

Please contact Unique Japan for further details.

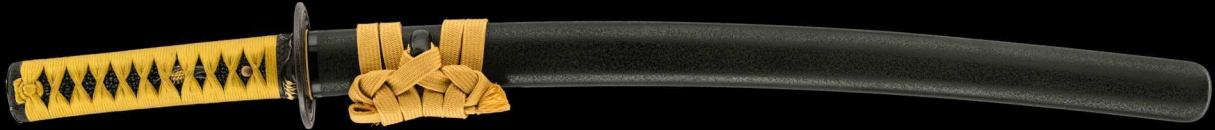


ujka173 - A Sadatsugu Juyo Katana
'Wave theme' Koshirae

Recently completed custom koshirae projects



ujka270 - A Ko-Naminohira Katana
Traditional Akechi Mitsuhide Koshirae



ujwa154 - A Kanekuni Wakizashi
Rice & harvest theme, stone lacquered finish



ujwa244 - A Yasustugu Wakizashi
Chrysanthemum theme, stone & gloss lacquered finish



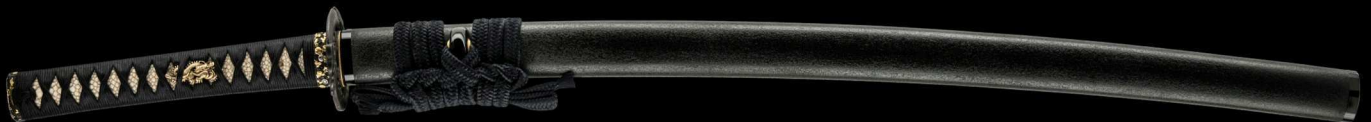
ujwa234 - A Sadahide/Masahide Wakizashi
Goto dragon theme, gloss lacquered finish



ujka271 - A Korehira Katana
Celebration theme, gloss lacquered finish



ujka179 - A Kanenaga Juyo Katana
'Gazing at the stars' theme, gloss lacquered finish



ujdi001 - A Hizen Yukihiro Daisho
Dragon & chrysanthemum theme, stone lacquered finish



ITEM# UJWA237

A NORISHIGE KODACHI

UNSIGNED, LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA ENKYO ERA 1308~1311)

Swordsmith: *Den Norishige (o-suriage, mumei)*
Measurements: **Length:** 59.0cm **Curvature:** 1.3cm **Moto-haba:** 2.6cm **Weight:** 470g
Jihada: *Stand-out itame with mokume and nagare forming matsukawa-hada, darkish steel*
Hamon: *Wide nioguchi mixed with gunome, choji, ko-notare, ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi*
Boshi: *Nie-laden ko-maru kaeri with plenty of hakikake*
Certificate: **62nd NBTHK Juyo Token** (a sword designated as *Profound and Important*)
Fujishiro: **Sai-josaku** (ranked as a *grandmaster sword smith*)

SOLD

It gives us great pleasure to introduce a sword by one Japan's finest swordsmiths. *Norishige* was a fellow student of *Masamune* under *Shintôgo Kunimitsu*. Among the early great *Sôshû* masters, *Norishige's* workmanship is closest to that of the *Masamune*. The major difference is that the *kitae* (body grain) produced by *Norishige* stands out more visibly – primarily in the form of his iconic *matsukawa-hada* - a spiraled grain pattern resembling the bark of old pine trees.

This sword is registered as a *wakizashi*, however, its long cutting edge of 59cm and generous curvature demonstrate the classic shape of a *kodachi* – a small *tachi*. A spectacular amount of *hataraki* featuring *yo*, *hotsure*, *kinsuji*, *sunagashi* and dazzling *ji-nie* abound on this blade. 700-year-old whirlpools of *matsukawa-hada* gives the steel such character. A gorgeous set of antique *Higo-koshirae* with gold-lacquered *samekawa* on the hilt completes this museum-worthy *Juyo* treasure.

Saki-kasane: 3.7mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 4.9mm

Omosa: 470g

Kissaki: 2.37cm
Saki-haba: 1.74cm

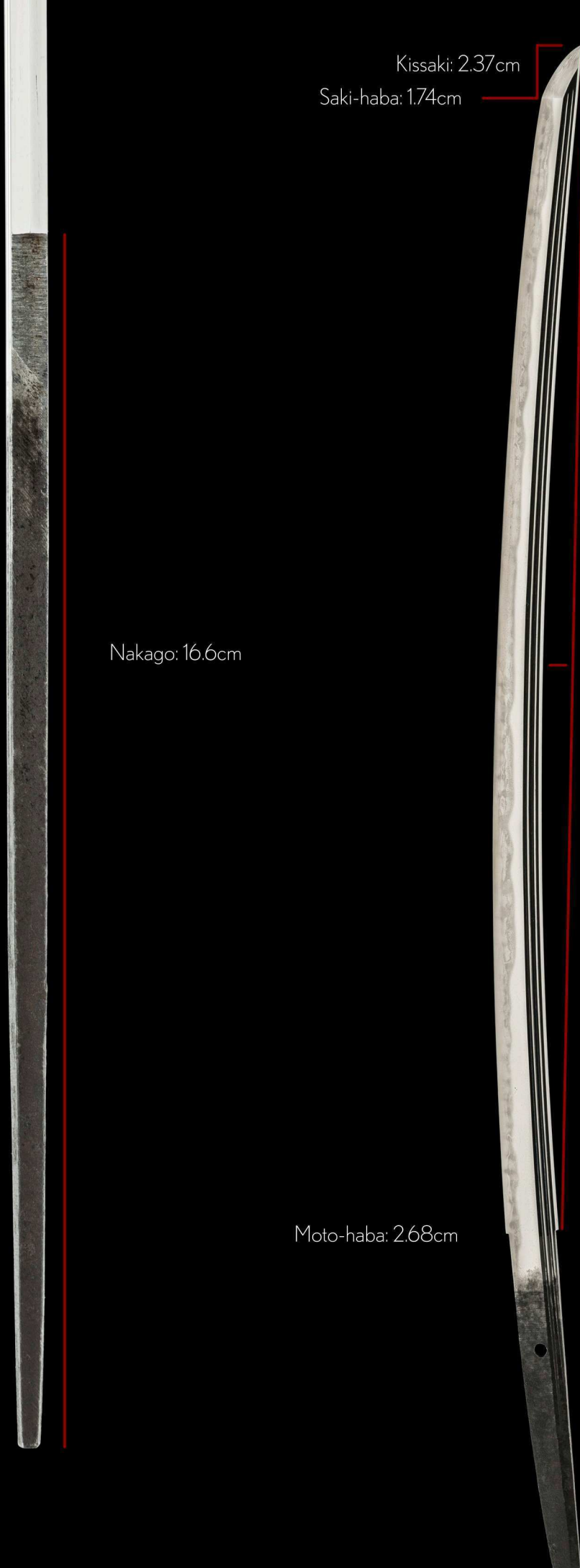
Nakago: 16.6cm

Moto-haba: 2.68cm

Nagasa: 59.1cm

Sori: 1.3cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



According to the NBTHK Token Bijutsu, *Norishige* is superior to *Masamune* in *hataraki* [activity] and forged a unique jihada called *matsukawa-hada*.

Norishige worked at the very end of the Kamakura period, circa 1308 and 1328 and lived in northern *Etchu province* on the Sea of Japan giving his swords a darkish appearance.

This splendid *kodachi* carries a graceful shape with two parallel grooves known as *futatsuji-hi* running the length of the blade.





a clean and precise
o-suriage nakago
(*mumei*, unsigned)

28201662

一、脇指 無銘 伝則重 一口

重要第三九三九號

指定書

法量 長五九〇糎 反り一三糎
形状 鎚造庵棟 やや細身 反り浅くつき 中鋒
鍛 板目に全流れ肌交じり 総じて肌立ち 地滞つき 地景入り
かな色黒みを帯びる
刃文 中直刃調に互の目子小のたれなど交じり 足葉入り 匂深く
沸厚くつき 金筋 砂流しかかる
帽子 直ぐ調によく沸つき 掃きかける
彫物 表裏に二筋樋を掻き流す
茎 天磨上 鑢目切り 目釘孔一

右者當協會に於て審査の結果
重要刀剣に指定す

平成二十八年十月十八日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 酒井忠久

東京 教育委員会
第 61849 号
昭和 30 年 4 月 1 日

NBTHK Juyo Token
Certificate of Designation [#13939]

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

Issued in the 28th year of Heisei (2016), October 18th

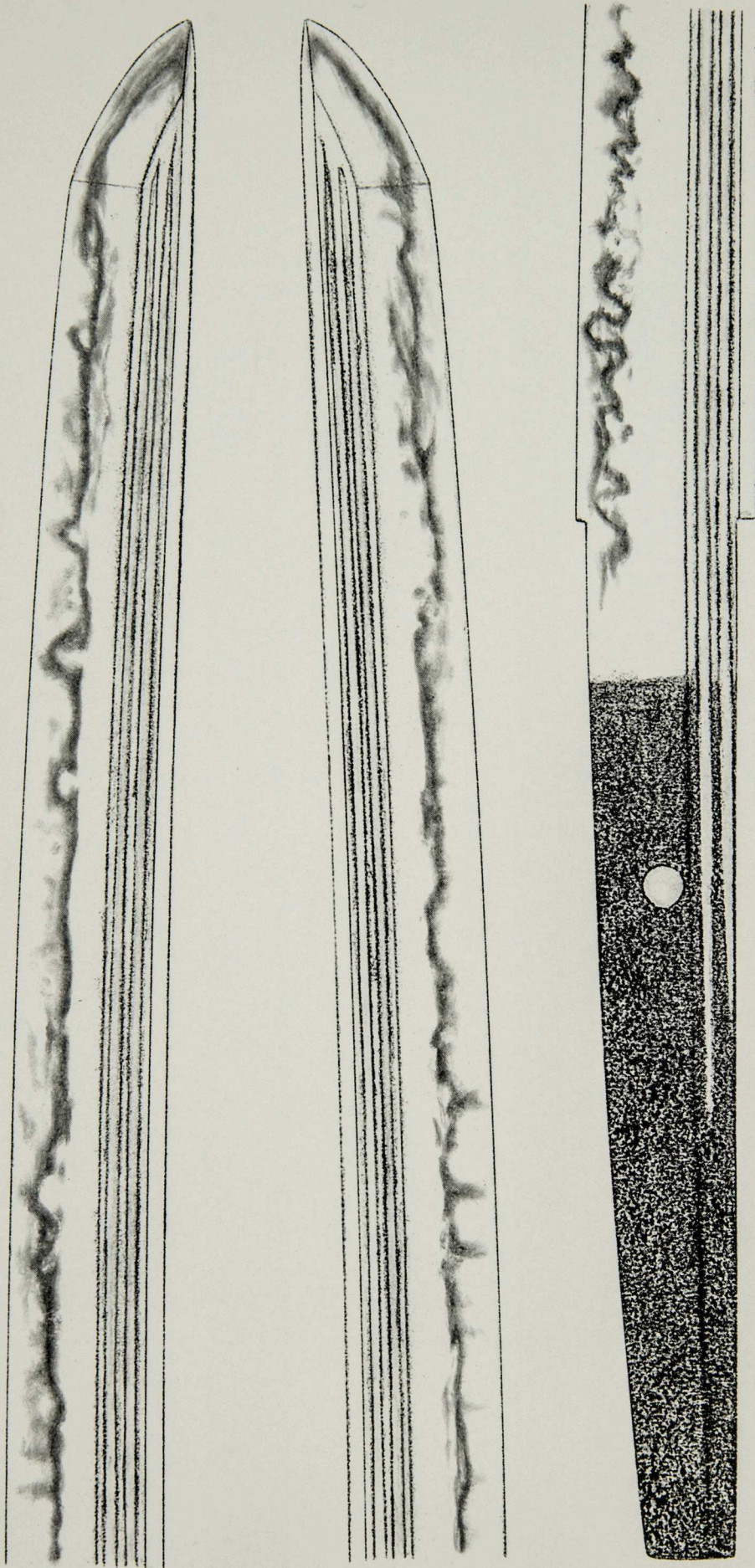
One Wakizashi,
Mumei, Den Norishige

Length: 59.0cm
Curvature: 1.3cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

[President] Sakai Tadahisa (酒井忠久)

62nd NBTHK Juyo Token Oshigata
Wakizashi, Mumei Den Norishige



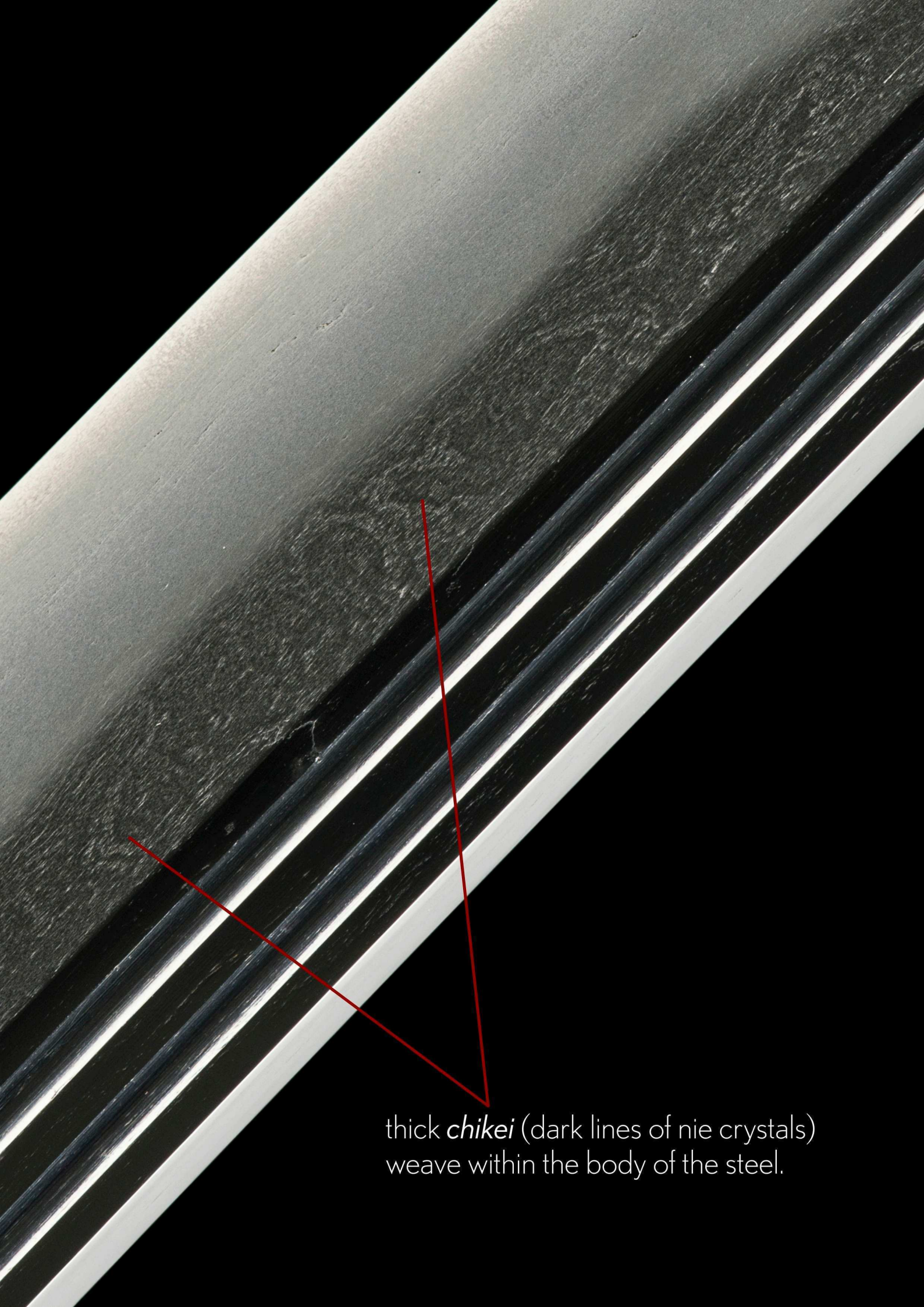
脇指 無銘 伝則重





a beautiful *boshi* (hamon in tip area) made up of brushed streams of *nie crystals* that form *hakikake*.





thick *chikei* (dark lines of nie crystals)
weave within the body of the steel.

A close-up photograph of a metal token's edge, showing a double groove. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture and the sharp edges of the metal. A red line points from the text label to the groove.

futatsuji-hi (double groove)

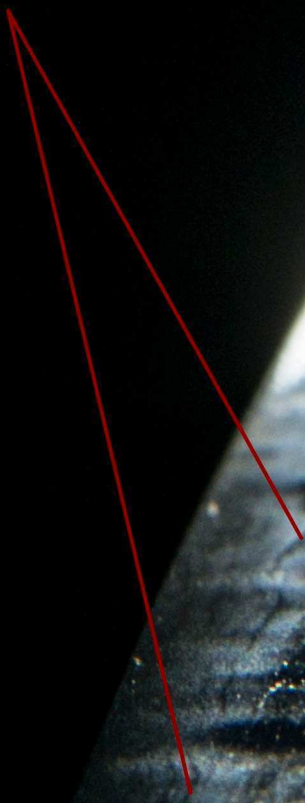
"A wide nioiguchi that is mixed with gunome, choji, ko-notare, many ashi and yo, some hotsure, yubashiri, and plenty of kinsuji and sunagashi ."

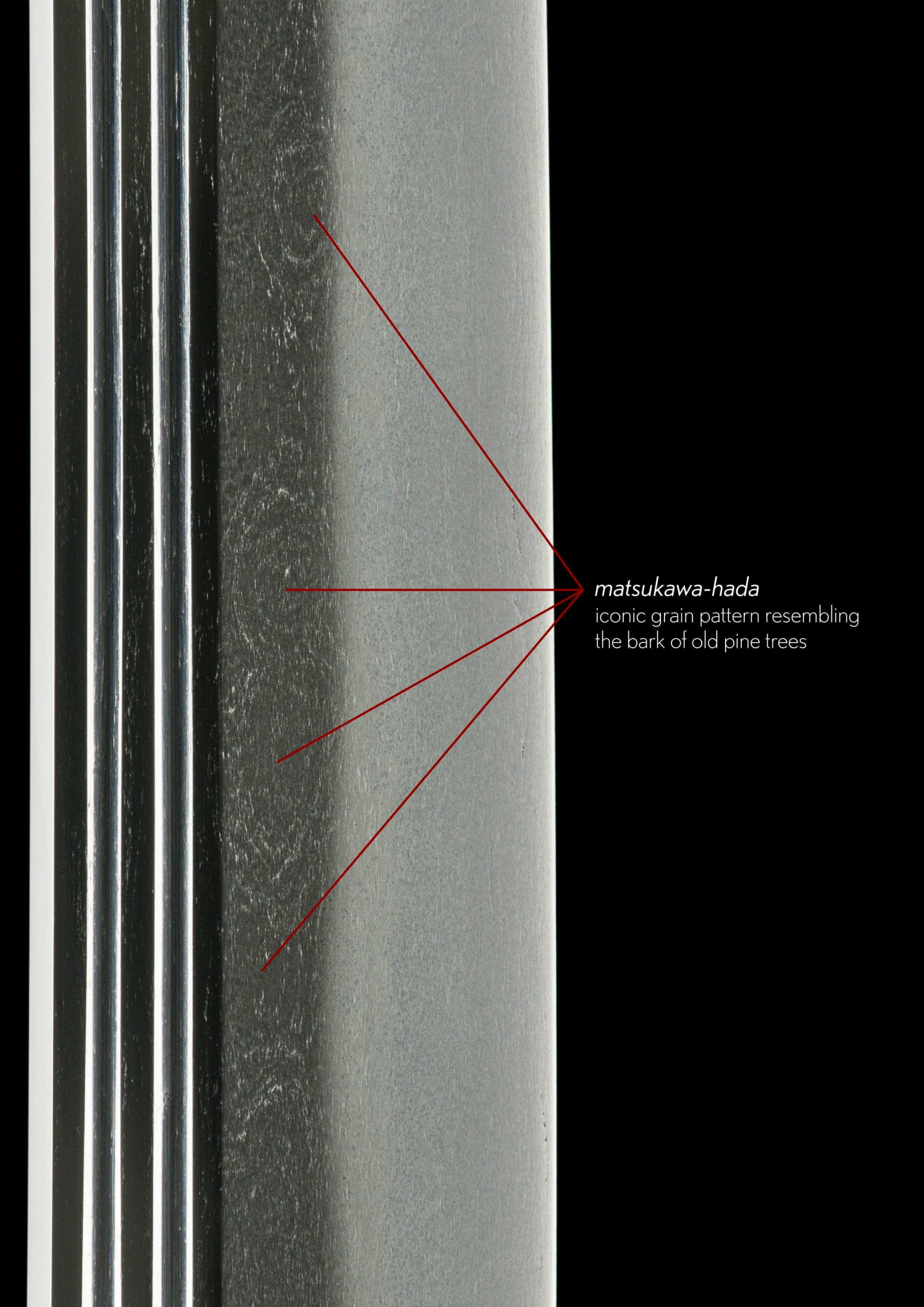
- 62nd NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate

Clusters of *nie crystals* that form *jifu*.



kinsuji dazzles inside
the hamon.





matsukawa-hada

iconic grain pattern resembling
the bark of old pine trees



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



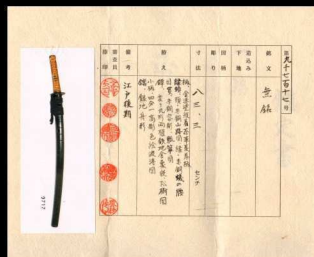
copper *habaki*
with peony design



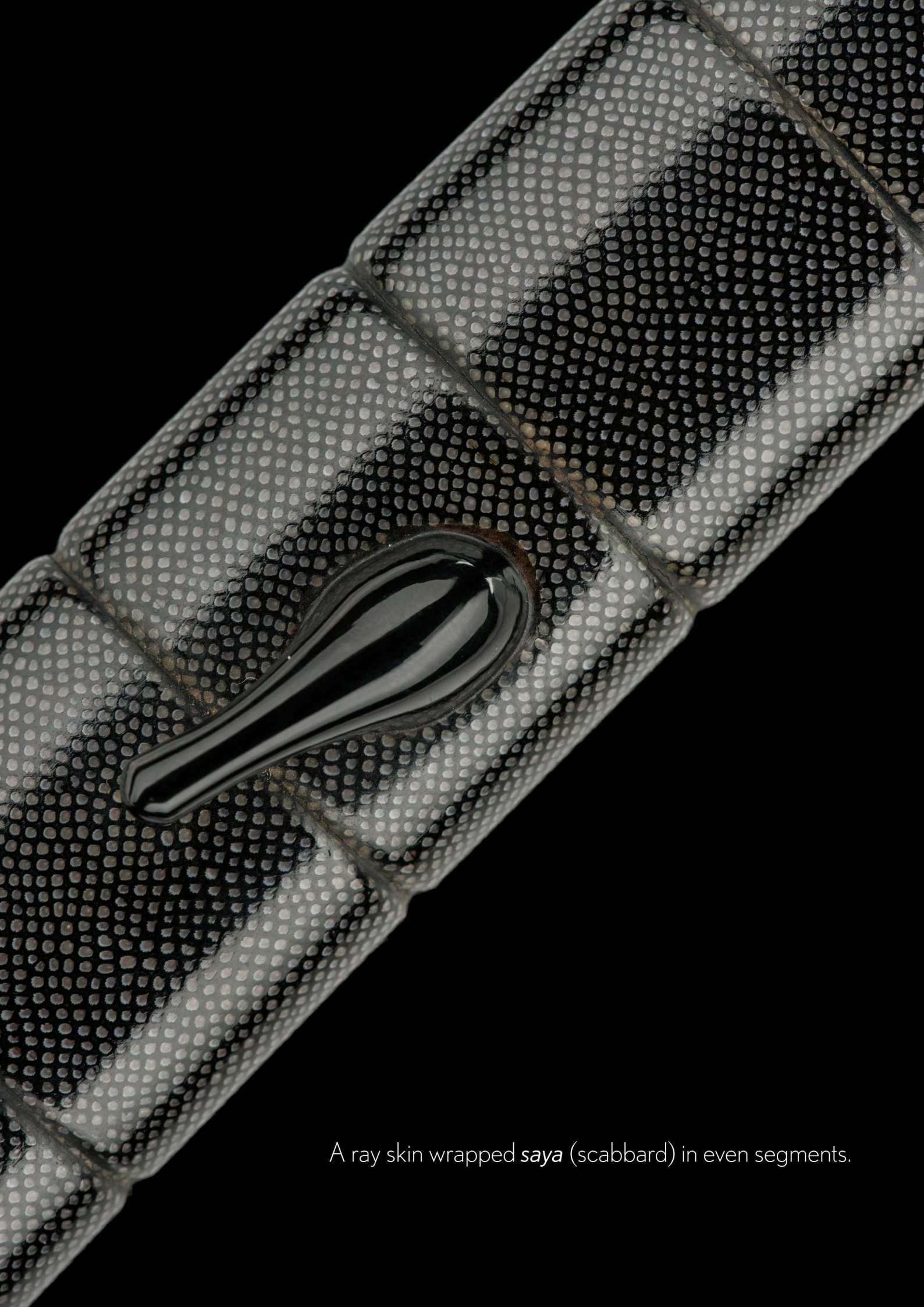
*Aizame-gise koshi-hachi-bu-kizami
saya Higo uchigatana-koshirae
(藍絞着腰八分刻鞘肥後打刀拵)*

*Higo uchigatana-koshirae with ribbed
saya wrapped with navy same*

*Koshirae constructed during
the late Edo period
(1780~1867)*



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



A ray skin wrapped *saya* (scabbard) in even segments.



The tsuba has a design of a pine tree that pays tribute to the *Norishige matsukawahada* that resembles the bark of a pine tree.

Matsu means "*waiting for the soul of a god to descend from heaven*". In ancient Japanese Shinto beliefs, gods were said to have ascended to heaven on a pine tree, where they now reside on a beautiful volcanic mountain in giant or old trees.

Pine trees are also associated with the New Year in Japan. It is customary to hang a bundle of pine twigs and bamboo trunks known as a *kado matsu* (gate pine) on doors to receive blessings from the gods.





NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate to a late generation of the *Nishigaki* school of *Higo* province, circa 1780-1867.



This antique brown-leather wrapped *tsuka* (hilt) is being preserved with luxurious gold lacquer.



Deeply carved waves on the *shakudo kashira* (hilt) have been certified to the work of the *Jingo school* in *Higo province*. Crafted circa the middle Edo period (1780~1868).



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho





kozuka (utility knife carried by the samurai)
wave design with *Omori* signature.



Gold standard.



ITEM# UJKA314

A NOBUTAKA KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, EDO PERIOD (11TH YEAR OF BUNKA, SEPTEMBER 1814)

Swordsmith:	<i>Owari no kuni hachi-dai me Nobutaka (ubu-nakago, eighth generation)</i>
Location:	<i>Owari province (Nagoya)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 71.3cm Curvature: 1.8cm Moto-haba: 2.9cm Weight: 775g
Jihada:	<i>Densely forged ko-itame hada with light shirake utsuri</i>
Hamon:	<i>Chu-suguha with deep kinsuji and nijuba and kuichigaiba</i>
Boshi:	<i>Hakikake (brushed) with ko-maru and long kaeri</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Certificate #2-3:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (tachi fittings & tsuba designated as Authentic)
Authentication:	<i>Sayagaki by Tanobe Michihiro (Tanzan)</i>
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo tachi koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

SOLD

The *Hoki no Kami Nobutaka* school enjoyed the patronage of the *Tokugawa* clan of *Owari* province for an impressive ten successive generations until the end of the Edo period. Born *Shimizu Jinnoshin*, 8th generation Nobutaka was likened to the first three generations in both quality and skill. This katana is a rarity for Nobutaka as it was forged in a bright *suguha*. Bold strokes of *kinsuji* and the presence of *nijuba* pays clear tribute to the classic lines of the Yamato tradition.

A striking *tachi koshirae* with Edo-period fittings in a matching *kiri-mon* theme gives the sword a dignified presence. *Sayagaki* by *Tanobe-sensei* accompanies this collectible *jo-sun katana*.

Saki-kasane: 4.2mm [^]

Kissaki: 3.33cm
Saki-haba: 1.83cm

Moto-kasane: 7.8mm

Nagasa: 71.3cm

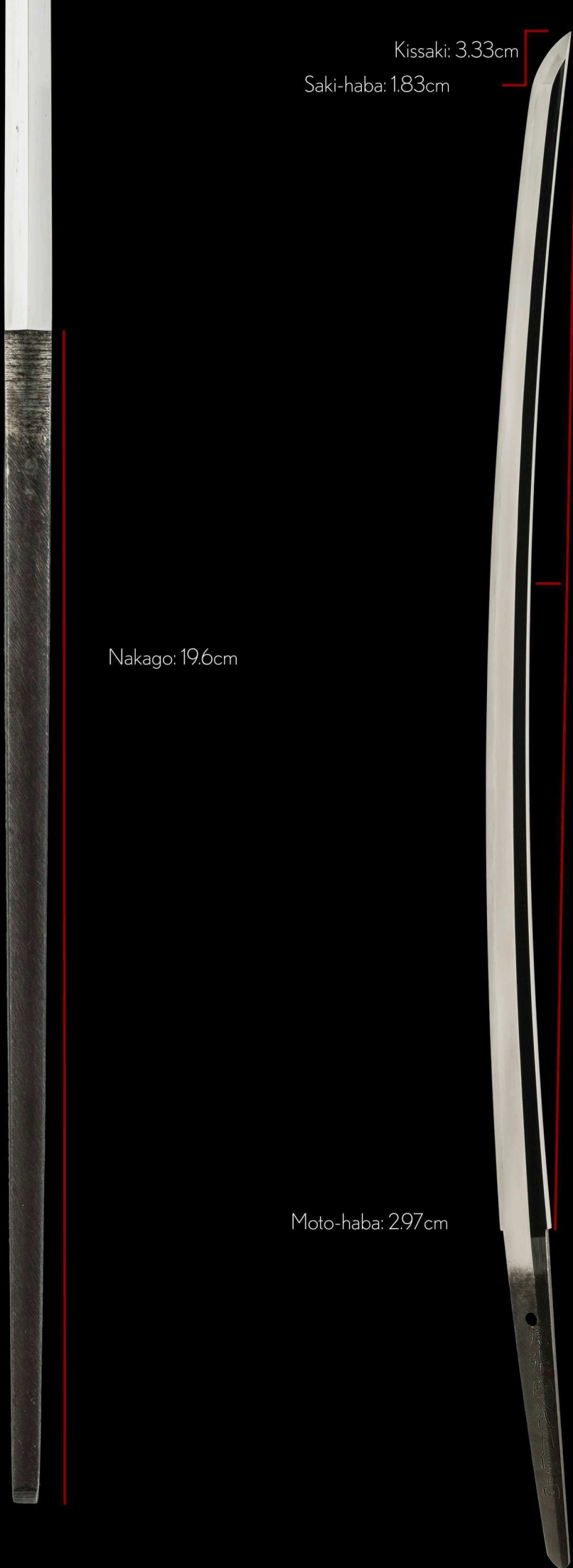
Nakago: 19.6cm

Sori: 1.8cm

Omosa: 775g

Moto-haba: 2.97cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



The *Hoki no Kami Nobutaka school* began with the first generation serving the powerful daimyô (feudal lord) *Oda Nobunaga*.

After Nobunaga's death in 1582, the school enjoyed the patronage of the *Tokugawa clan* of *Owari province* for an impressive 10 successive generations until the end of the Edo period.

Born *Shimizu Jinnoshin*, 8th generation Nobutaka was likened to the first three generations in quality and skill.



Location: *Owari* (resident of Aichi-ken)
Swordsmith: *Nobutaka* (8th generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)
kesho-yasurime (decorative file marks)



尾 (O)

張 (wari no)

國 (kuni)

八 (Hachi)

代 (dai)

目 (me)

信 (Nobu)

高 (taka)

Bunka 11-nen 9-gatsu kichijitsu

(sword is dated to a lucky day in September 1814)

(Bun) 文

(ka) 化

(jū) 十

(ichi) 一

(nen) 年

(ku) 九

(gatsu) 月

(kichi) 吉

(jitsu) 日



Clear and confident signature by one of the final generation swordsmiths of the proud Nobutaka family lineage.



hachi-dai
8th generation

特 保
28201611

No 1006495



鑑定書

一 刀 銘
尾張國八代目信高
文化十一年九月吉日

長二尺三寸五分強

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

平成二十九年 二月 二 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 284939 号
平成 13 年 / 月 / 6 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 29th year of Heisei (2017), February 2nd

One, Katana

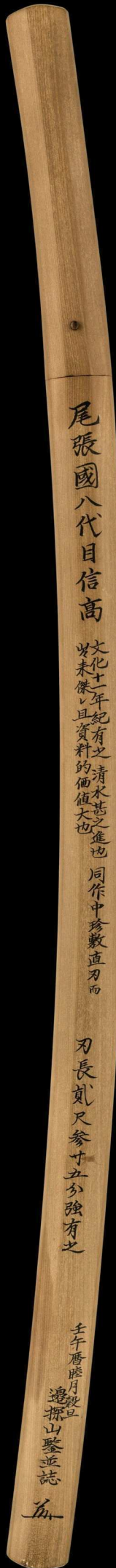
Mei (signature)

*Owari no kuni Hachi-daime Nobutaka
Bunka 11-nen 9-gatsu kichijitsu*

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 5-bu kyo (a little over 71.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



This shirasaya has a trusted form of authentication known as *sayagaki* (writing in ink on the shirasaya).

尾張國八代目信高

Owari no Kuni Hachi-daime Nobutaka [signed]

Eighth Generation Nobutaka from Owari province

文化十一年紀有之清水甚之進也

同作中珍敷直刃而

出来傑レ且資料的価値大也

*Bunka jūichi nenki kore ari Shimizu Jinnoshin nari
Dōsaku-chū mezurashi suguha shikamo deki sugure
katsu shiryō-teki kachi dai nari*

Dated with the eleventh year of Bunka (1814). Smith's real name was Shimizu Jinnoshin. The blade is an important reference as it is not only of excellent craftsmanship, but also hardened in suguha, which is rare for this smith.

刃長貳尺參寸五分強有之

Hachō 2 shaku 3 sun 5 bu kyō kore ari

Blade length 71.2 cm

壬午曆睦月穀旦

Mizunoe-umadoshi mutsuki kokutan

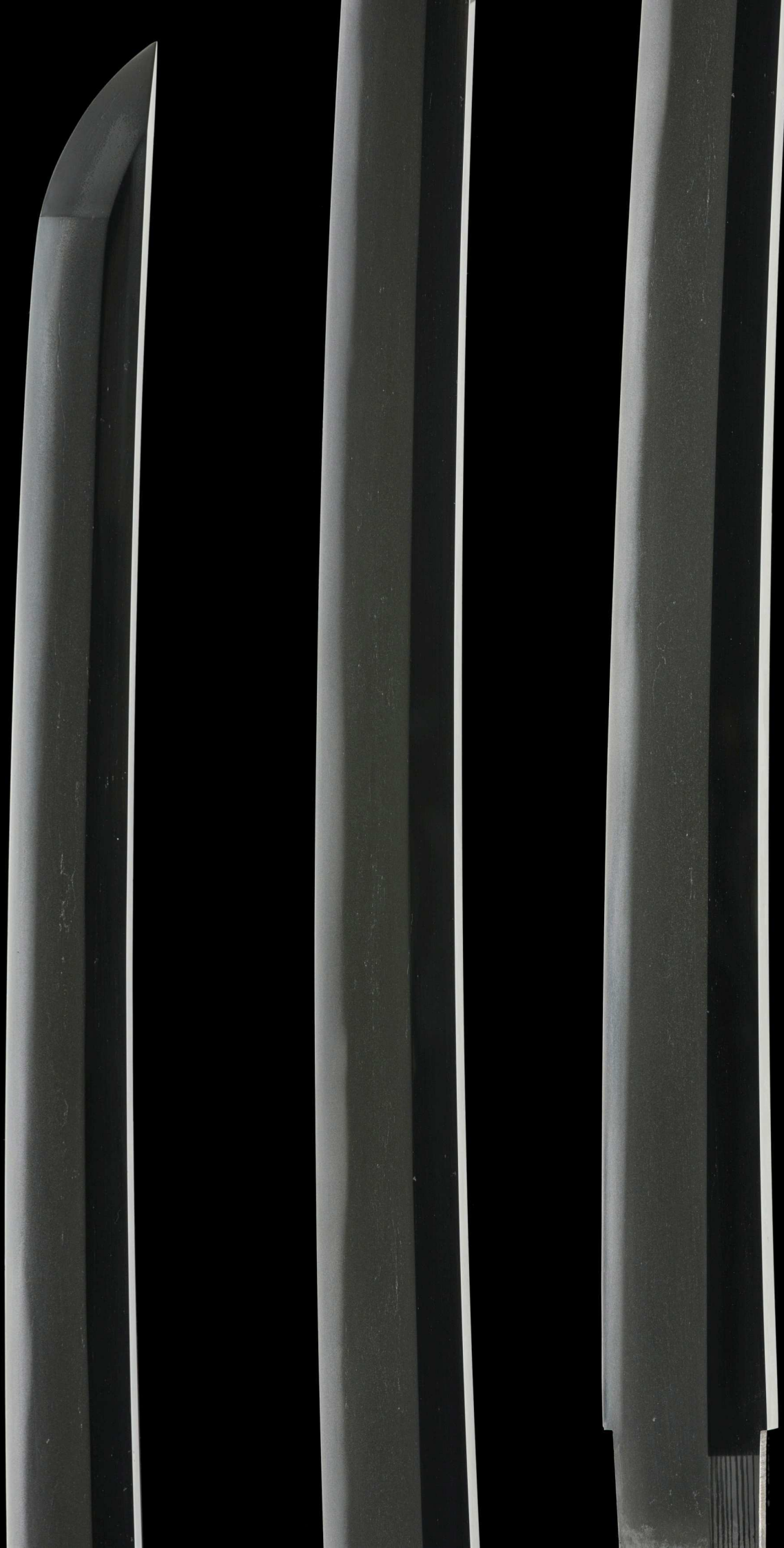
On a lucky day in January of the year of the horse of this era (2002)

邊探山鑒並誌「花押」

Hen Tazan kangamite narabi ni shirusu + kaō

Examined and written by Hen Tazan

[pen name of Tanobe Michihiro] + kaō



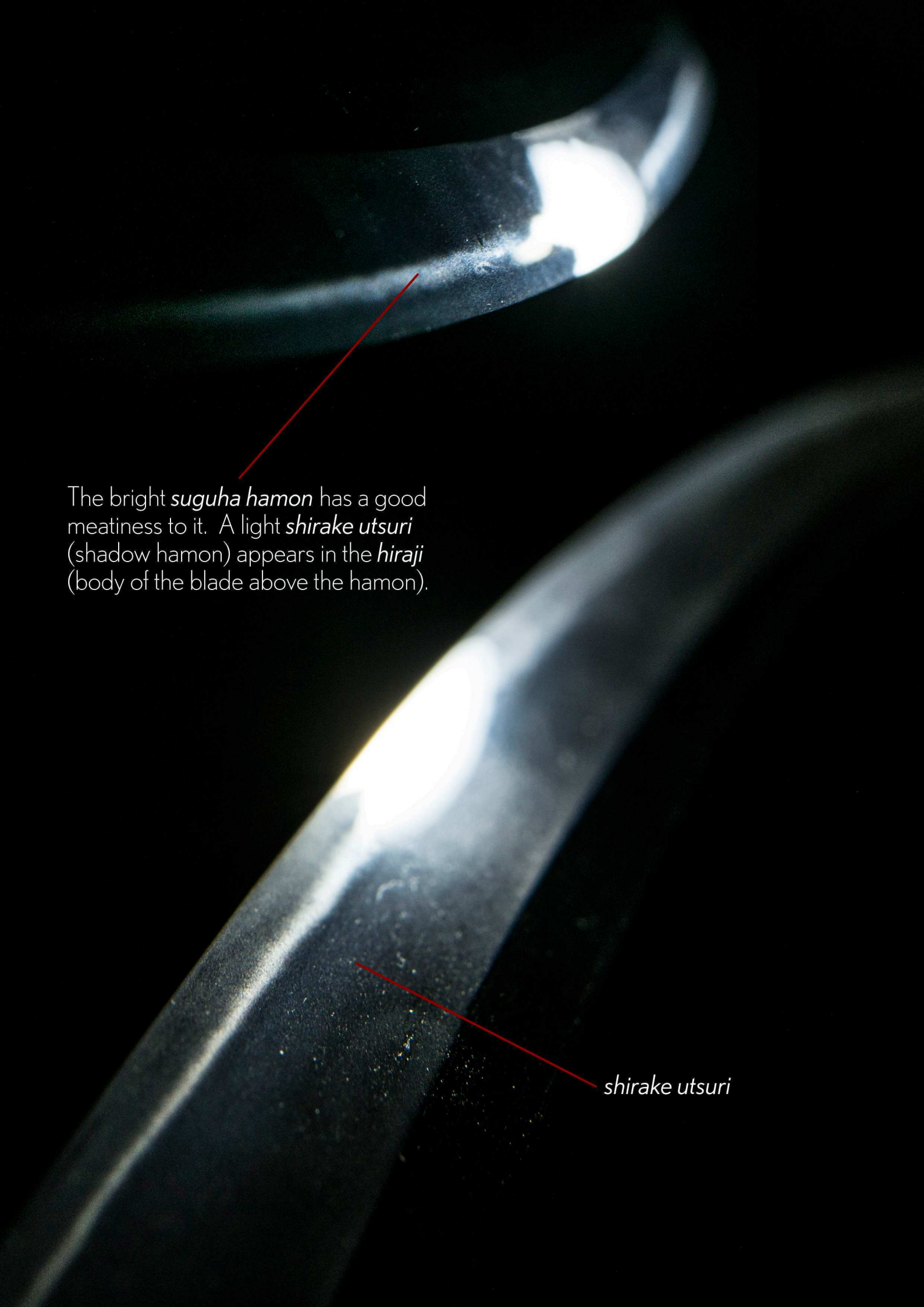




a *komaru boshi* (small circle)
with a long *kaeri* (return)

a cluster of bright *nie*
crystals in the *boshi*

kaeri returns along the
mune (spine)

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line). The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted by a bright light source. A red line points from the text to a specific part of the hamon. The background is black, making the blade stand out.

The bright *suguha hamon* has a good meatiness to it. A light *shirake utsuri* (shadow hamon) appears in the *hiraji* (body of the blade above the hamon).

shirake utsuri

Like strokes of ink from a fountain pen, bold lines of *kinsuji* draw through the *suguha hamon*.

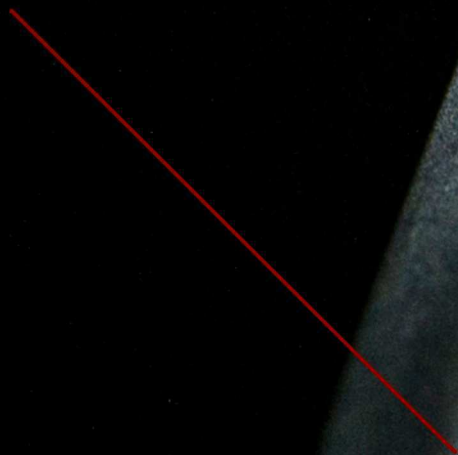




an additional flurry of *kinsuji*

A clear and densely forged *jihada*.
This is typically seen on later generation swords from the
Nobutaka family of smiths from *Owari province*.

kuichigai-ba is the area of the *hamon* where the *nioguchi* splits over a noticeable distance.

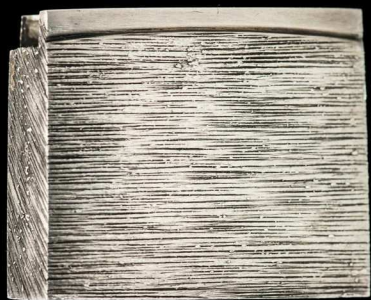


nijubu - area of the hamon where it splits and runs somewhat parallel. This is a characteristic of blades traditionally forged in the Yamato tradition.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
horizontal file marks

*Traditional set of tachi
koshirae with matching
Edo period arabesque and
kiri-mon fittings.*

*A deep vermillion red
stone-lacquered finish.*

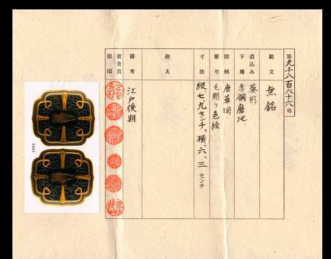




This is a beautiful polished *shakudo tsuba* that was crafted during the late Edo period by the maker of the matching arabesque *tachi* fittings.

It is made of multiple lobed plates measuring 7.9cm in height x 6.3cm in width. A certificate of authenticity by the NTHK-NPO is included with this sword.

The heart-shapes in the corners are called *inome* - meaning the *eye of a wild boar* or *inoshishi*. The *inoshishi* is known for its single-minded focus, which the samurai greatly admired. For when it charges, it never retreats.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



karakusa
(arabesque foliage pattern)

This *tsuba* and *semegane* contain the arabesque *karakusa* pattern.

Karakusa symbolizes health and longevity as its vitality strengthens a vine without breaking.



semegane (scabbard ring)

Originally the *kiri-mon* (paulownia flower crest/seal) was the private symbol of the Japanese imperial family, from as early as the twelfth century. After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the seal was eventually adopted as the emblem of the Japanese government.

There are many *kiri-mon* patterns, this particular one is called *maru ni go-san no kiri-mon* - a roundel arrangement of 3-5-3 leaves.

It is found in the emblem of the **Ministry of Justice** and the **Imperial Guard Headquarters**.





Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) also carry *go-san no kiri mon* (paulownia crest).





kabuto-game (pommel cap)

Traditional *tachio sageo* knot secured with multiple *kiri-mon* emblems continuing on the *kawasaki-gane*.



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# UJKA273

[SOLD]

A SHODAI YOSHIMICHI KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (CIRCA KEICHO ERA: 1596~1615)

Swordsmith:	<i>Tanba no Kami Yoshimichi (ubu-nakago, shodai – first generation)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 77.5cm Curvature: 1.9cm Moto-haba: 3.2cm Weight: 910g
Jihada:	<i>Itame with masame, ji-nie and chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Chû-suguha in ko-nie-deki with a wide nioiguchi mixed with gunome and ashi</i>
Boshi:	<i>Midare-komi with a ko-maru-kaeri, hakikake, and tobiyaki on the omote side</i>
Certificate:	7th NBTHK Juyo Token (a sword designated as <i>Profound and Important</i>)
Authentication:	<i>Sayagaki by Honma Junji (Kunzan)</i>
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)

Shodai Yoshimichi is the third son of Seki Kanemichi who originally travelled from *Noshu Seki*. He moved to *Seidonin* in *Kyoto* with his father and brothers in February of 1593. Yoshimichi received the *Tanba (no) Kami* title on December 7th, 1595 and was still active in 1637. The family stayed in *Kyoto* for eleven generations and are collectively known as *Kyo-Tanba* 京丹波.

This katana is a valuable reference piece for two significant reasons. The first is that Yoshimichi rarely forged long swords - he predominately crafted *wakizashi* and *tanto*. To handle a katana of his measuring 77.5cm is a treasure in its own right. The other, and more importantly, is that this sword is forged in a *suguha hamon*. The *Kyo-Tanba* name is synonymous with the *sudare-ba hamon*, a temper line that resembles a bamboo curtain that shodai pioneered. No nihonto enthusiast would imagine that this magnificent blade was forged by him. It is a museum-grade sword that pays tribute the Yamato roots of his ancestry - and one of the first swords to attain NBTHK Juyo token. A beautiful custom *handachi koshirae* with a brilliant set of matching Higo fittings was built for the client in Japan over several months. It now remains in good, caring hands.

Saki-kasane: 6.3mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.7mm

Omosa: 910g

Kissaki: 4.0cm

Saki-haba: 2.5cm

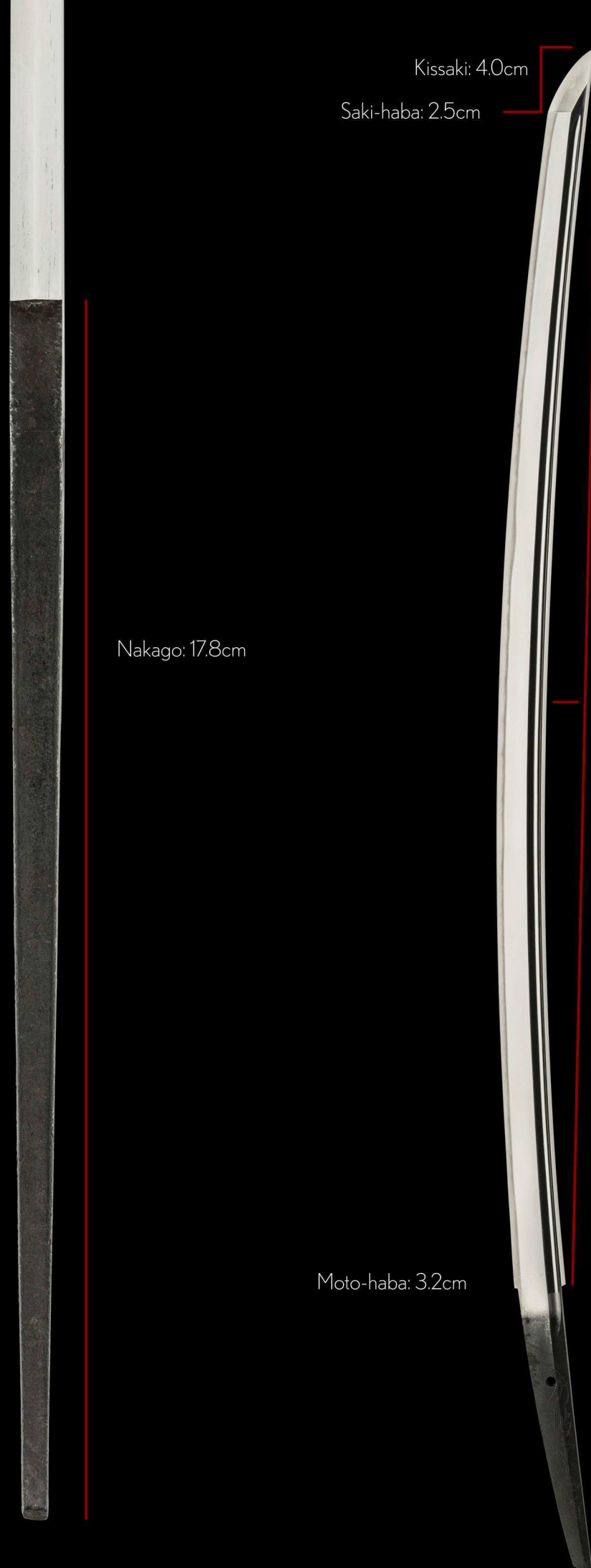
Nagasa: 77.5cm

Nakago: 17.8cm

Sori: 19cm

Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Shodai Yoshimichi is the third son of *Seki Kanemichi* who originally came from *Noshu Seki*. He moved to *Seidonin* in *Kyoto* with his father and brothers in February of 1593.

Yoshimichi received the "*Tanba (no) Kami*" title on December 7th, 1595 and was still active in 1637. The family stayed in *Kyoto* for eleven generations and are collectively known as *Kyo-Tanba* 京丹波.

Yoshimichi predominately crafted wakizashi and tanto - very few katana - making this extra long sword piece a rare find indeed.



Title: *Tanba no Kami*

Location: *Yamashiro province* (Kyoto)

Swordsmith: *Yoshimichi* [shodai, 1st generation]



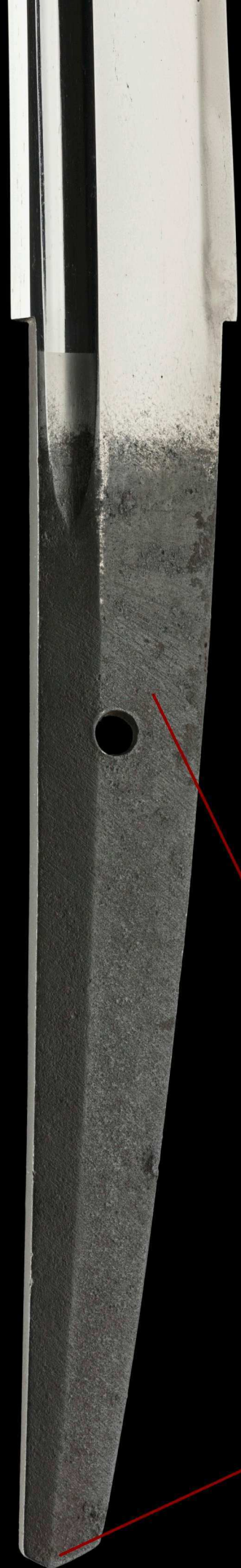
Tan

ba

(no) kami

Yoshi

michi



ubu-nakago
(original, uncut tang)

sujikai-yasurime
(diagonal file marks)

kengyô-jiri
(sword shaped butt end)



重要第四〇二號

指定書

刀銘 丹波守吉道 一口

長二尺五寸六分 反六分半

鎬造 庵棟

鍛 板目 証かゝる

刃文 中直 刃僅々 互の目交る

厥物 表裏 棒樋

莖 生ぶ

右者當協會に於て審査の結果
重要刀劍に指定する

昭和卅六年九月十日

財團法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 細川護立



NBTHK Juyo Token
Certificate of Designation
(#402)

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

Issued in the 36th year of Showa (1961), September 10th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

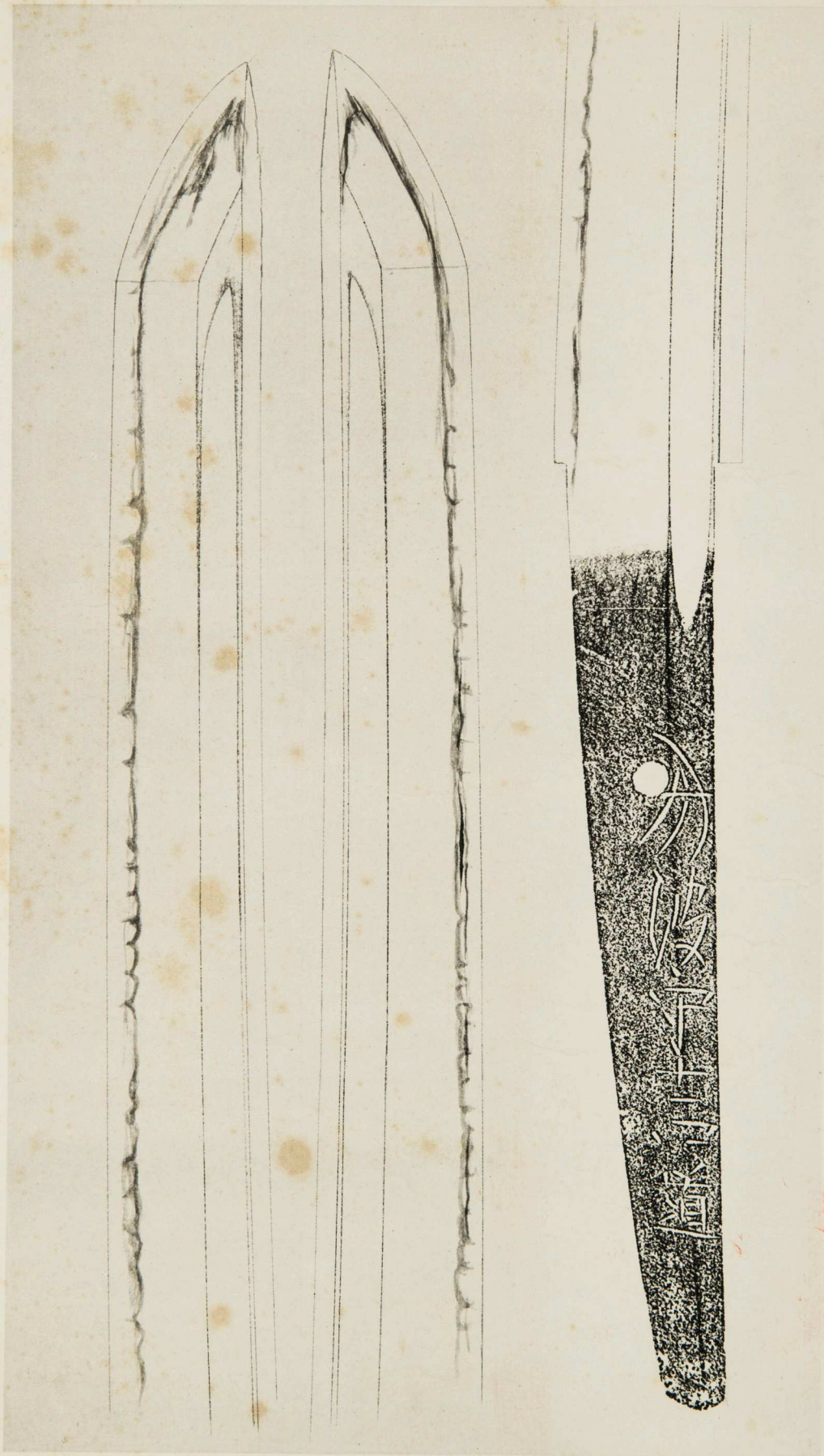
Tanba no Kami Yoshimichi

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 5-sun 6-bu (77.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

刀 丹波守吉道



NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper
This *oshigata*, tracing of the *hamon* pattern.
This certificate is from 1961, from just the 7th Jûyô session.



Tanba
(no)kami
Yoshimichi
Shodai



By *Kunzan* (Honma Junji)
Eighth lunar month in the
Year of the Ox (1961)



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



*Habaki with unique horn trim
and horizontal file marks*



Yoshimichi uniquely signed the *Tan* 丹 character of his title like the billowing sails of a sailboat.

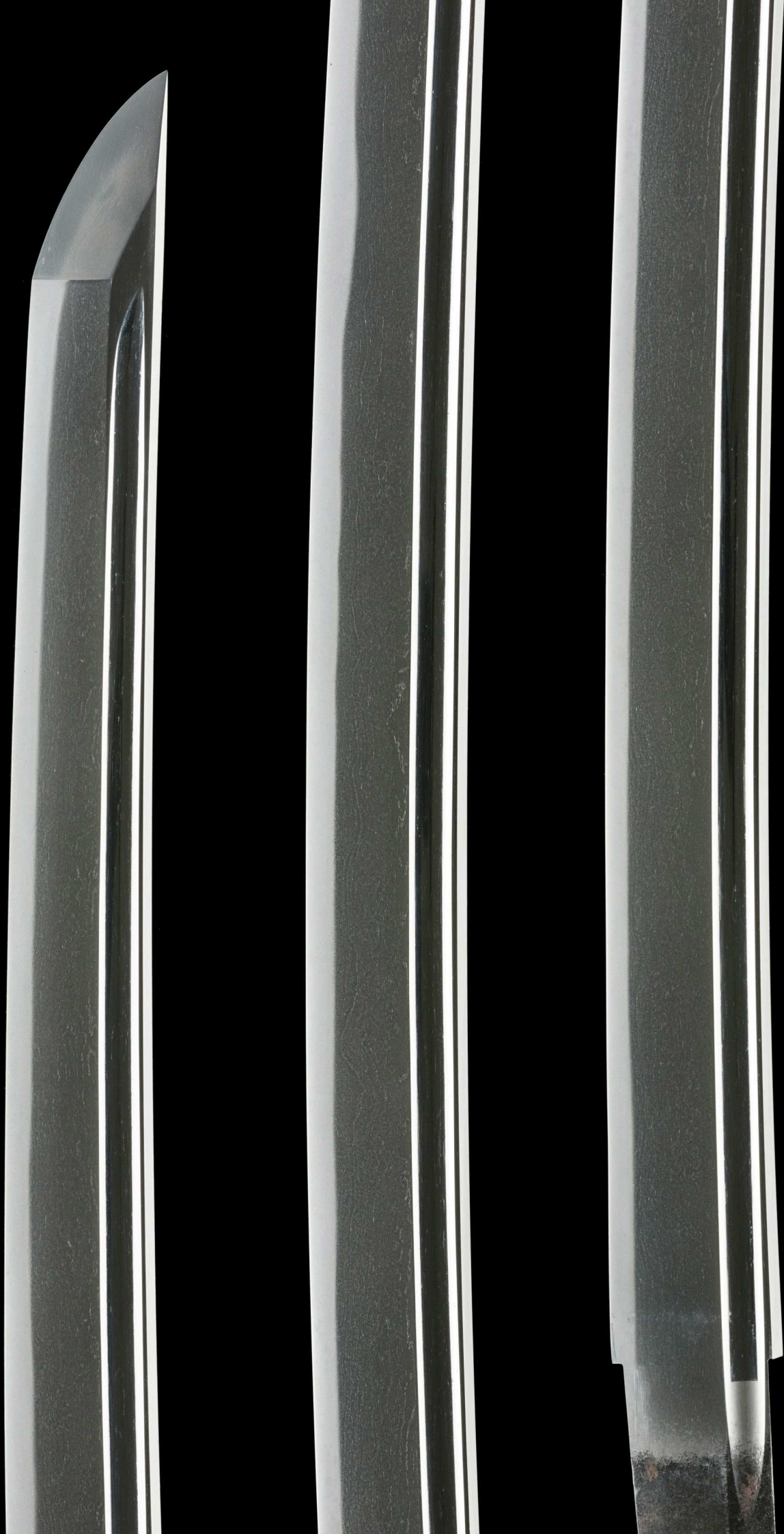
Thus he is referred to as *Hokake* (meaning 'sail') *Tanba* 帆掛丹波.



There were two main branches of the Mishina school, one in Kyoto and the other in Osaka. Blades of the two branches can be distinguished by the way in which they chiseled the "*kami*" character.

The Kyoto branch (*Kyo-Tanba*), which this katana is from, placed the stroke pointing to the west to north-west position.

The Osaka branch (*Osaka-Tanba*) wrote the same stroke pointing to the south.



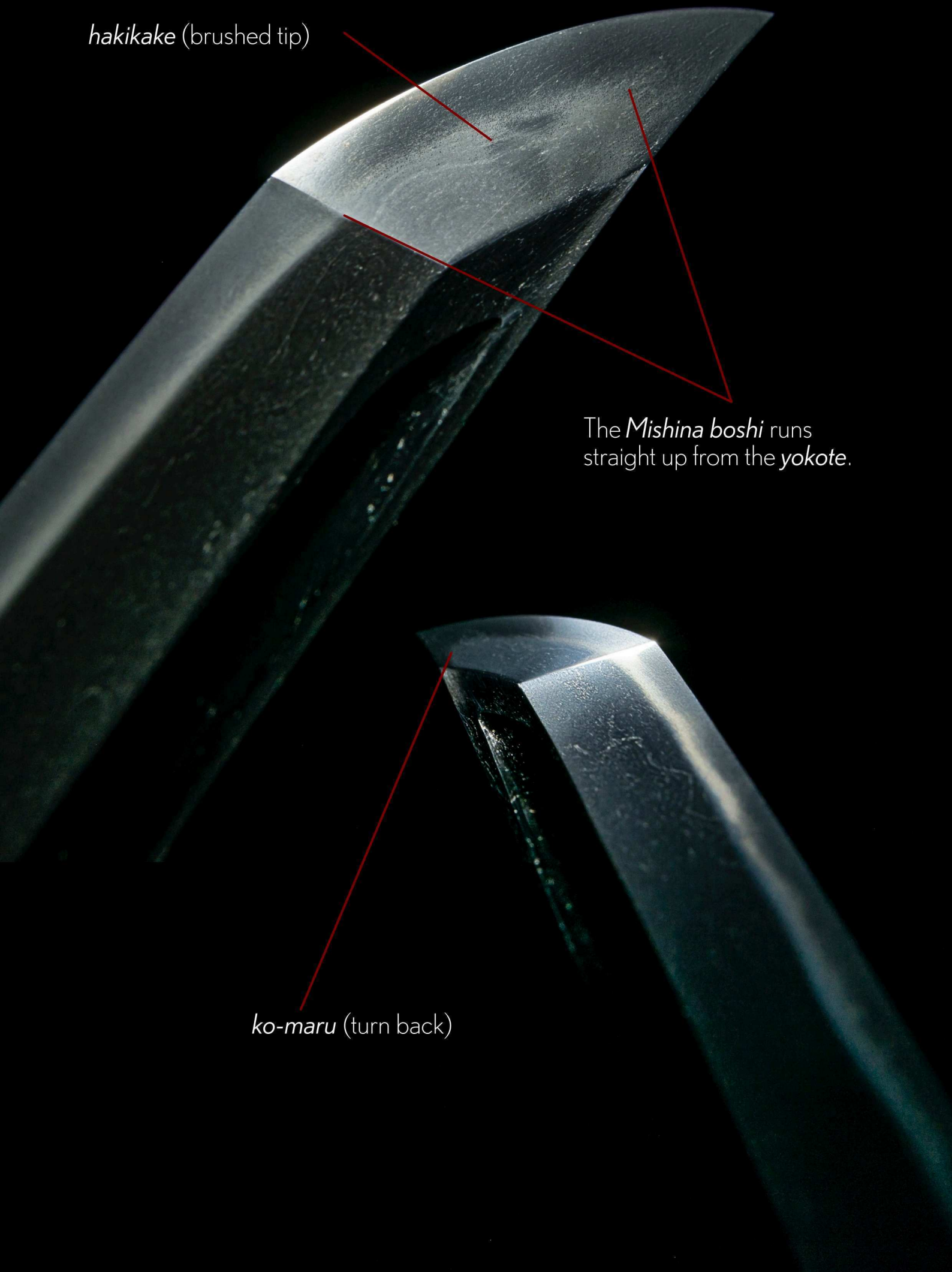
full length *bo-hi* (groove)



hakikake (brushed tip)

The *Mishina boshi* runs straight up from the *yokote*.

ko-maru (turn back)



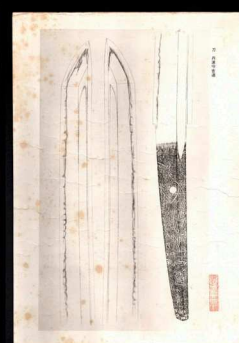


From the NBTHK Juyo White Paper:

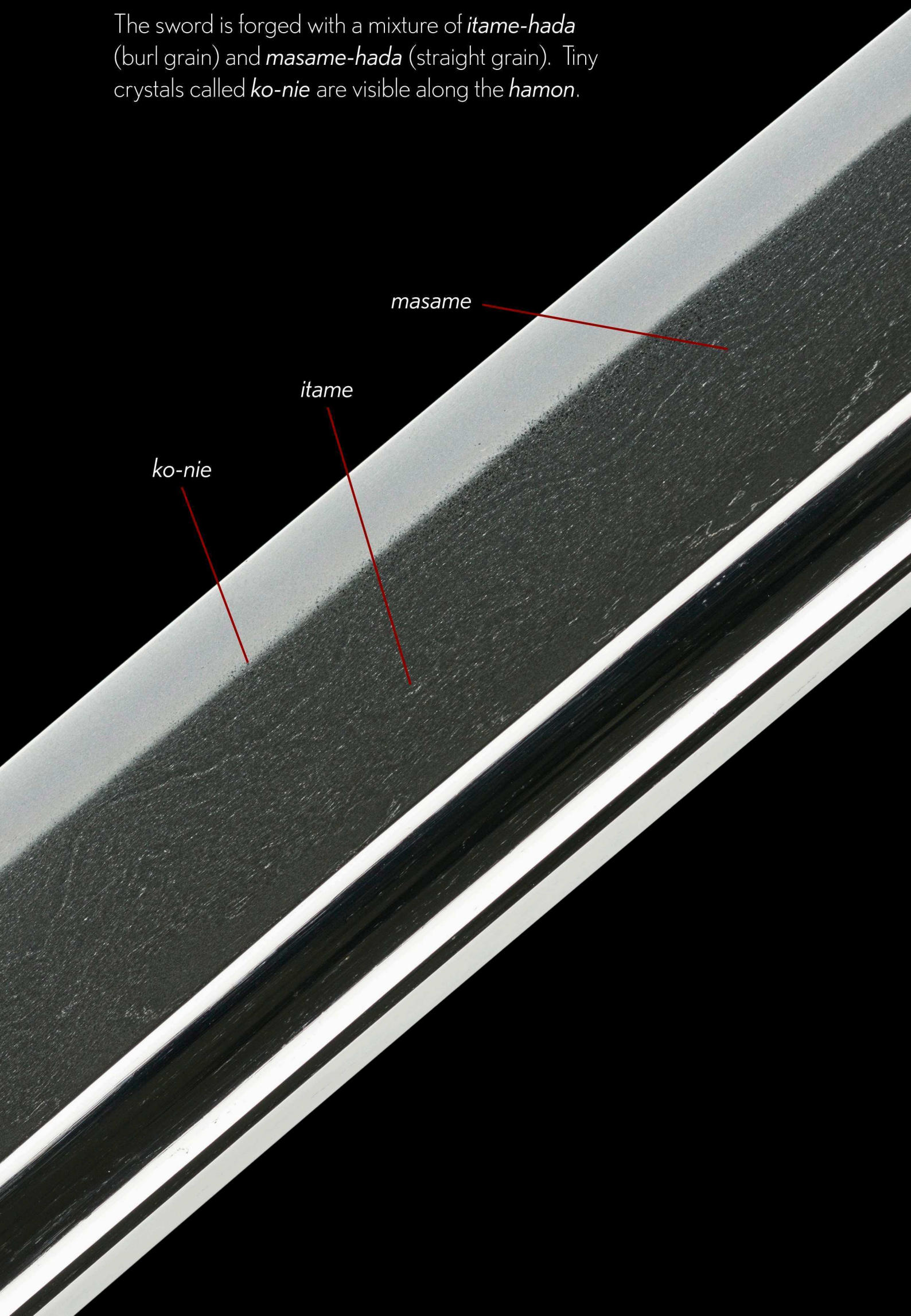
"This blade is the work of the first generation Tanba and shows a suguha that is very rich in variety. Smiths who worked in the Mino tradition did harden in suguha but such an interpretation is very rare for the Mishina School.

With the abundance of ko-nie and the hamon tending towards hotsure, we recognize here that the ha is based on the Mino tradition with elements of Yamato influence.

Later generations specialized in the hardening of a unique sudareba hamon."



The sword is forged with a mixture of *itame-hada* (burl grain) and *masame-hada* (straight grain). Tiny crystals called *ko-nie* are visible along the *hamon*.




masame

itame

ko-nie



Gorgeous *chikei* weaves
within the body of the sword.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line) patterns. The blade is dark and has a sharp edge. The hamon is a light-colored, wavy line that runs along the length of the blade. The patterns include a vibrant chu-suguha hamon, ko-gunome, and ashi (legs) that extend to the cutting edge. There are also black 'golden lines' of kinsuji visible in the hamon. Two red lines point from the text labels to the corresponding features on the blade.

A vibrant *chu-suguha hamon* mixed with *ko-gunome* and plenty of *ashi* (legs) that extend to the cutting edge.

Black 'golden lines' of *kinsuji* are also seen in the hamon.

kinsuji

ashi

Sô-handachi kanagu cha-ishime-jinuri saya uchigatana-koshirae
総半太刀金具茶石目地塗鞘打刀拵え

Uchigatana-koshirae with handachi fittings and brown saya in stone-surface like finish



A genuine handachi
koshirae certificate from
the NTHK-NPO



A complete set of Higo handachi fittings from the Mid-Edo Period (early 1700s) were acquired and certified especially for the project.

The motif of rain dragons is consistent throughout the design providing a wonderful sense of continuity and balance.

Deer skin was used to tightly wrap the *tsuka* (hilt). Long, rare rectangular menuki meant for a handachi build was sourced as well.





A polished iron tsuba attributed to *Higo tradition*,
a later generation of the *Jingo School*.

A motif of rain dragons in gold inlay.

NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity
to the Late Edo Period (1780~1867).



Oversized characters carved into the tsuba with depictions of clouds in gold inlay on the lobes.



come sail away.



ITEM# UJKA328

AN AOE YOSHITSUGU KATANA

UNSIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1326~1329)

Swordsmith: *Aoe Yoshitsugu (o-suriage nakago, attribution by Hon'ami Tenrai)*
Measurements: **Length:** 70.3cm **Curvature:** 1.6cm **Moto-haba:** 2.8cm
Jihada: *Ko-itame-hada with namazu-hada (catfish), chikei and dan-utsuri*
Hamon: *Suguha-chô mixed with saka-chôji in ko-nie deki*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Certificate #2-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (koshirae, tsuba & fuchi-kashira designated as authentic)
Fujishiro: **Jojo-saku** (ranked as a highly superior smith)
Authentication: *Sayagaki by Tanobe sensei + Origami and hakogaki by Hon'ami Tenrai*
Included: Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This beautiful katana from the late Kamakura period has been attributed to *jojo-saku* (highly superior) swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* from the prestigious *Aoe school*. Works by *Yoshitsugu* are rare and highly celebrated with certain works having attained coveted *Tokubetsu Juyo*, *Juyo Bijutsuhin*, and *Juyo Bunkazai*. This particular katana was first attributed to *Yoshitsugu* by *Hon'ami Tenrai* in 1935. He signed the nakago in gold inlay and included a lovely *washi-paper origami* inside a collectible *hakogaki* - signed wood box. This is a blade that carries many of the dignified hallmarks of the *Aoe school* such as the presence of *namazu-hada* (catfish skin), dark spots inside the body and light *dan-utsuri* (reflective linear shadow hamon). The bright *suguha-hamon* slants in parts forming *saka-choji*, which again, gives extra flair to study. A handsome set of certified *koshirae* with *Soten school* fittings and a mother-of-pearl *saya* (scabbard) look superb on display.



Saki-kasane: 4.4mm
Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 3.06cm
Saki-haba: 1.87cm

Nagasa: 70.3cm

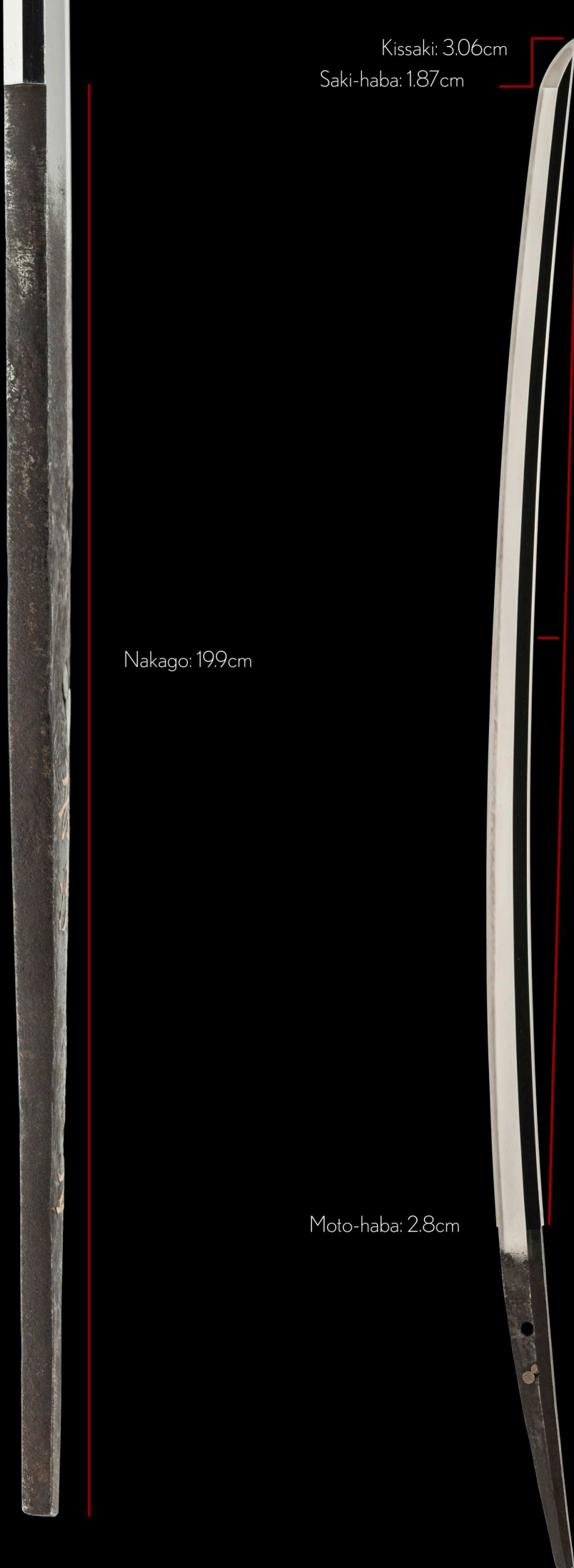
Nakago: 19.9cm

Sori: 1.6cm

Omosa: 710g

Moto-haba: 2.8cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* from the prestigious Aoe school is said to be the son of *Tôshichirô Yoshitsugu*, and bore the honorary title of *Uemon no Jô* that was raised to *Saemon no Jô* during the *Karyaku era*.

Dated signatures are known from the second year of *Genkô era* (1322) to the *Kôei era* (1342-1345).

Yoshitsugu is ranked *Jojo-saku*, a highly superior swordsmith.



Yoshitsugu Hon'a

Yoshitsugu, appraised by *Hon'a [mi Tenrai]*

(Yoshi) 吉

(tsugu) 次

(Hon') 本

(a) 阿

(monogram)

吉次

本阿
本





nakago (ura, reverse side)

特保
27201507



No 1004267



鑑定書

一刀 (金粉銘) 吉次 本阿 (花押) (天籟)

長二尺三寸二分

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

平成二十七年 八月十七日

公益財団法人 日本美術刀剣保存協會



證牌 教育委員会
第 21719 号
昭和 29 年 5 月 21 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 27th year of Heisei (2015), August 17th

One, *Katana*

Kimpun-mei

(appraisal signature with gold dust)

Yoshitsugu

Hon'a (kaô) (Tenrai)

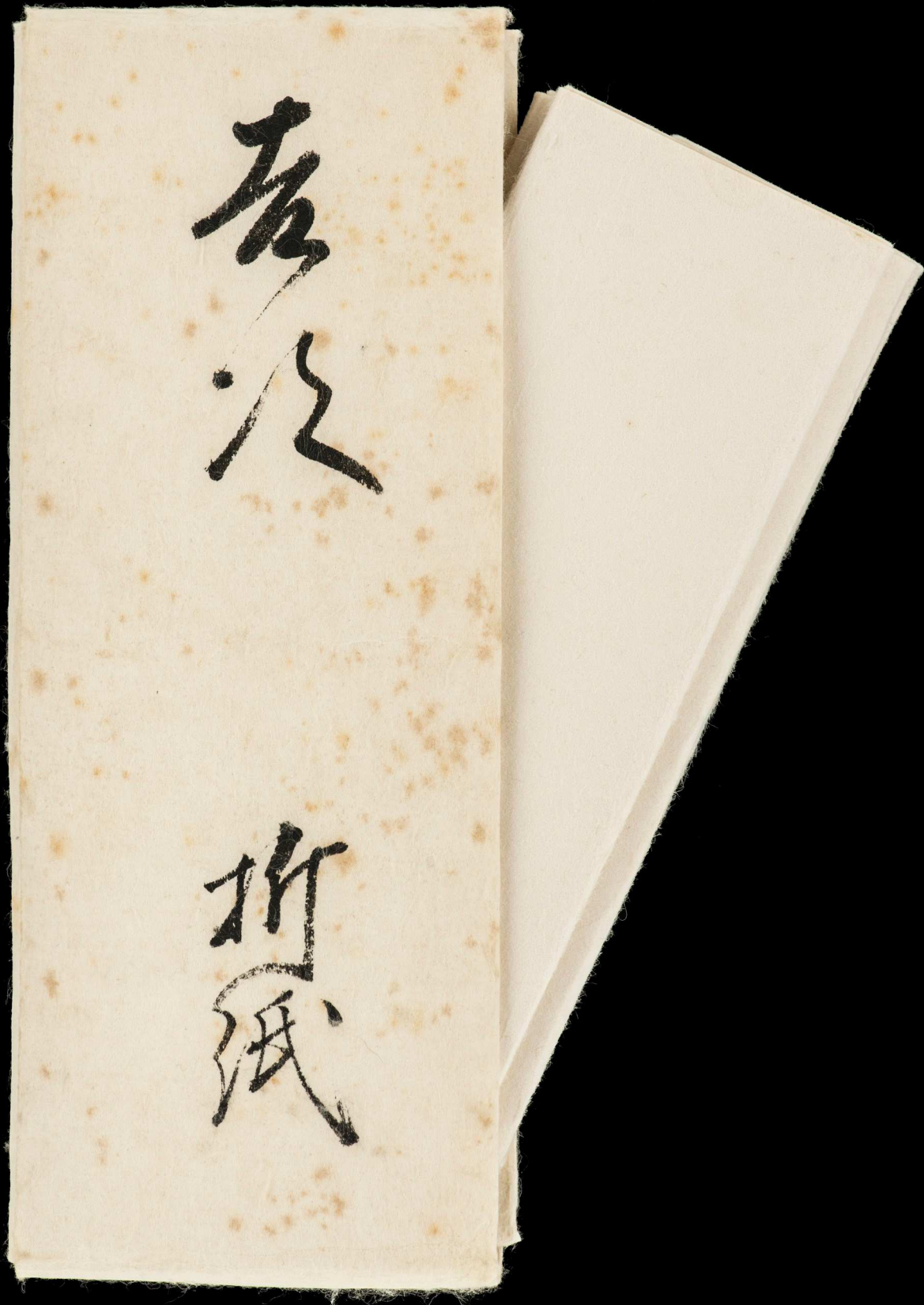
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu (70.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

Yoshitsugu Ontô Origami
Yoshitsugu sword certification
in its original *hakogaki* (signed box)





Yoshitsugu Origami
(Yoshitsugu certificate)

青江吉次

正真

長貳尺參寸貳分有之但シ銘名判入金粉也
今肩之得シ銘名判入金粉也

代貳千貫

昭和拾年亥
八月三日

本阿

Aoe Yoshitsugu (青江吉次)

Shôshin (正真, authentic)

Nagasa 2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu kore ari tadashi mei nahan-iri kinpun nari

(長貳尺參寸貳分有之但シ銘名判入金粉也)

Blade length (70.3cm) and the name of the maker was added in *kinpun* (gold inlay)

Dai nisen-kan (代貳千貫)

Value of sword: 2,000 kan (copper coins)

Shôwa jûnen i hachigatsu mikka (昭和拾年亥八月三日)

August 3rd, Shôwa ten (1935), Year of the Boar

Hon'a + kaô (本阿「花押」)

Hon'a + monogram

Shôwa jûnen hachigatsu kisshô, Hon'ami Tenrai + kaô (personal seal)
Certified by Hon'ami Tenrai and dated to a lucky day in August 1935





備中國青江吉次
Bitchû no Kuni Aoe Yoshitsugu
 Aoe Yoshitsugu from Bitchû province

大磨上茎ニ本阿弥天籟ニヨル同工極メノ金粉銘有之
 天籟ハ水戸本阿弥系デ明治乃至昭和年間ノ識者也直
 刃調ニ逆丁子ヲ交ヘ逆足入り地ニハ筋映ト地斑映ガ
 層ニ立チ形状ト併セテ鎌倉末期ノ同派ノ特色ヲ明示
 シ就中一類中同工ト鑒スベキガ妥當ナル優品ナリ

Ô-suriage nakago ni Hon'ami Tenrai ni yoru dôkô kiwame no kinpun-mei kore ari Tenrai wa Mito Hon'ami-kei de Meiji naishi Shôwa nenkan no shikisha nari suguha-chô ni saka-chôji o majie saka-ashi iri ji ni wa suji-utsuri to jifu-utsuri ga sô ni tachi keijô to awasete Kamakura-makki no dôha no tokushoku o meiji shi nakanzuku ichirui-chû dôkô to kansubeki ga datô naru yûhin nari

The blade has an *ô-suriage nakago* that bears a *kinpun-mei* attribution to swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* by *Honami Tenrai*. *Tenrai* was an expert from the *Mito branch* of the *Honami* family who was active from the *Meiji* to the *Shôwa* eras. The blade shows a *suguha-chô* that is mixed with *saka-chôji* and *saka-ashi* and we see layers of linear *utsuri* as well as a *jifu-utsuri*.

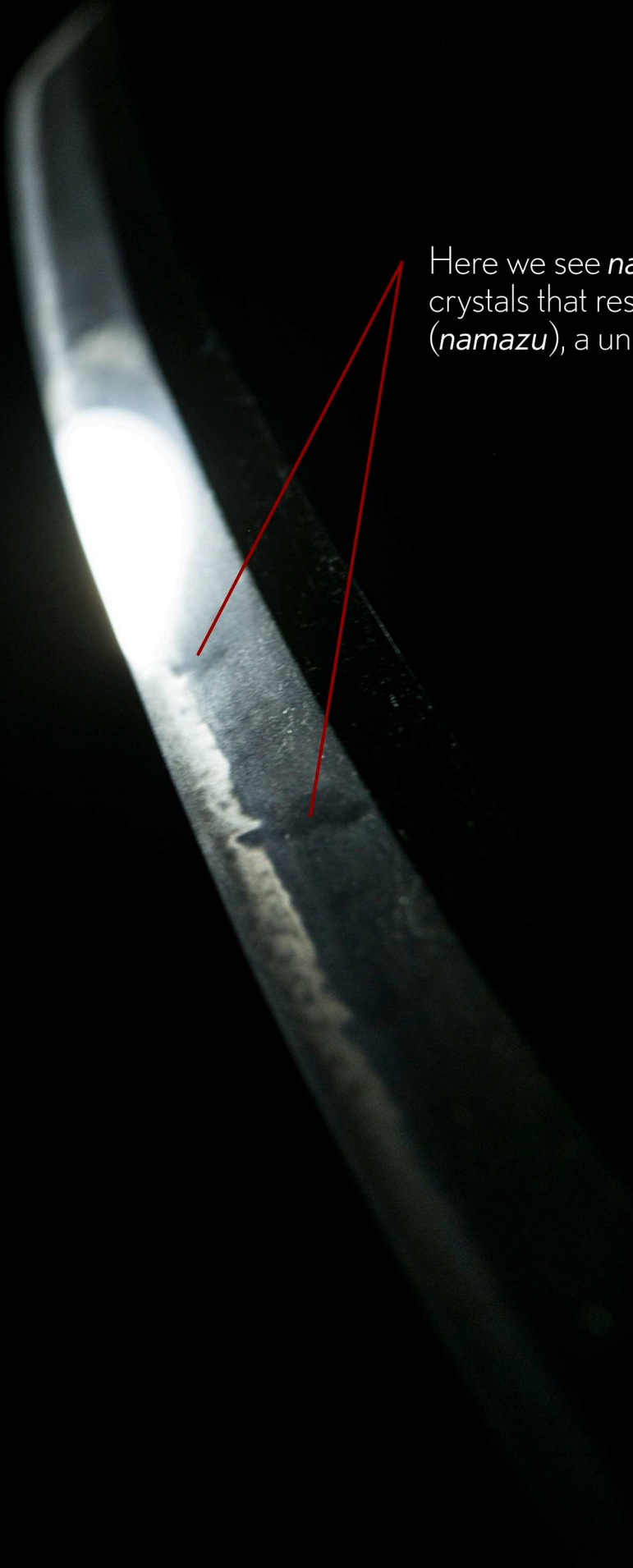
When we combine all of this with the shape of the blade, we not only recognise the characteristic features of the Aoe school from the late Kamakura period but we can also agree that the attribution of this masterpiece to *Yoshitsugu* is entirely accurate.

長貳尺參寸二分
Nagasa 2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu
 Blade length ~70.3 cm

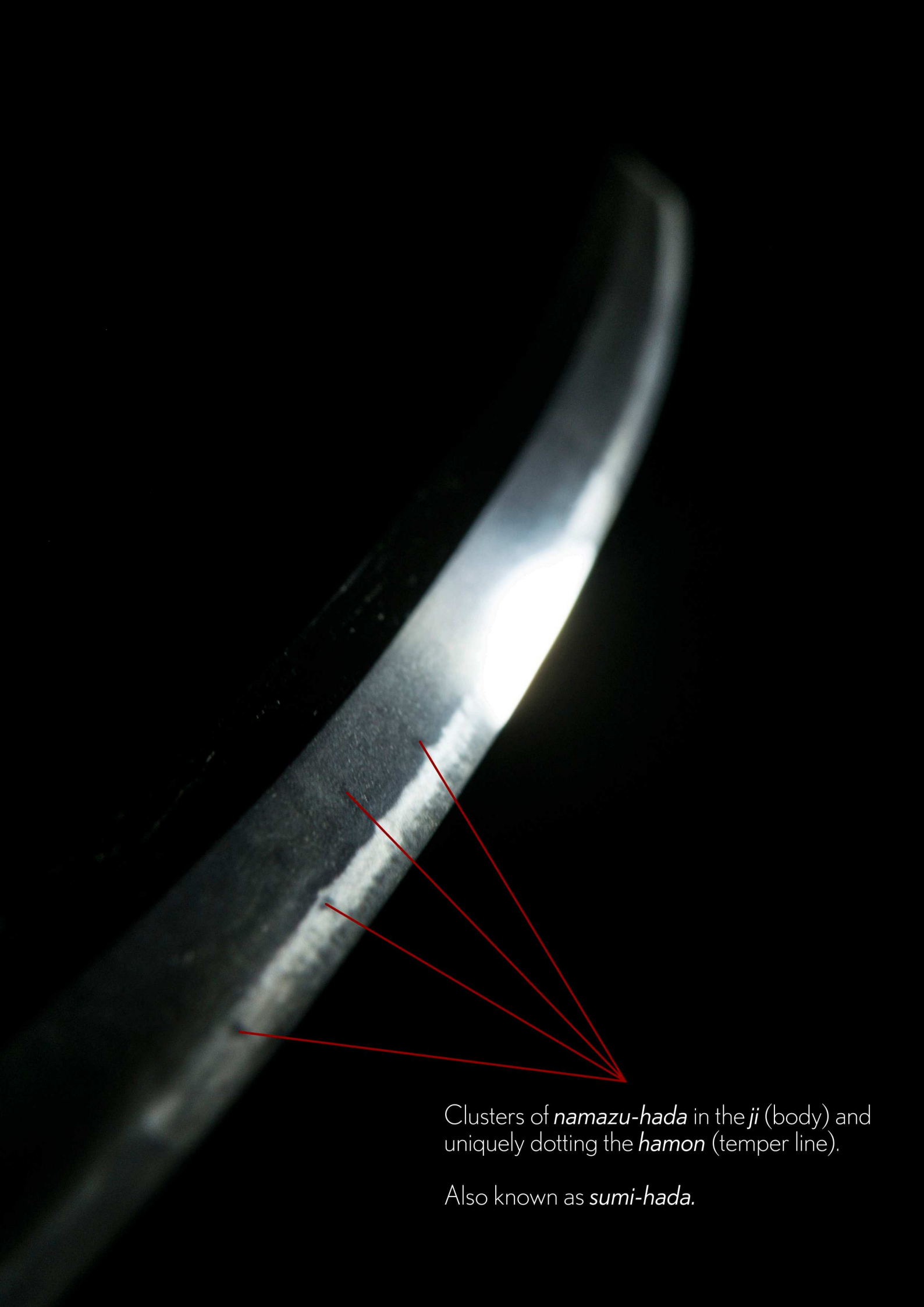
于時乙未季冬探山邊道識「花押」
kono toki kinoto-hitsuji kitô Tanzan Hendô shirusu + kaô
 Written by *Tanzan Hendô* in December of the Year of the Sheep of this era (2015) + *kaô*







Here we see *namazu-hada*, dark spots of nie crystals that resemble the skin of a catfish (*namazu*), a unique feature of the *Aoe school*.



Clusters of *namazu-hada* in the *ji* (body) and uniquely dotting the *hamon* (temper line).

Also known as *sumi-hada*.

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is curved and shows a bright, glowing temper line (hamon) that runs along its length. A red line points from the text below to a specific section of the blade. The blade's surface has a fine, granular texture.

The *hamon* is comprised of thick blanket
tiny particles of nie, known as *ko-nie*.

Note how the hamon slants ever so
gently, known as *saka-choji*, another
characteristic of the Aoe school.



The katana showcases *dan-utsuri*, multiple layers of linear *utsuri* (a type of shadow or reflection in the body) a key characteristic of the Aoe School.

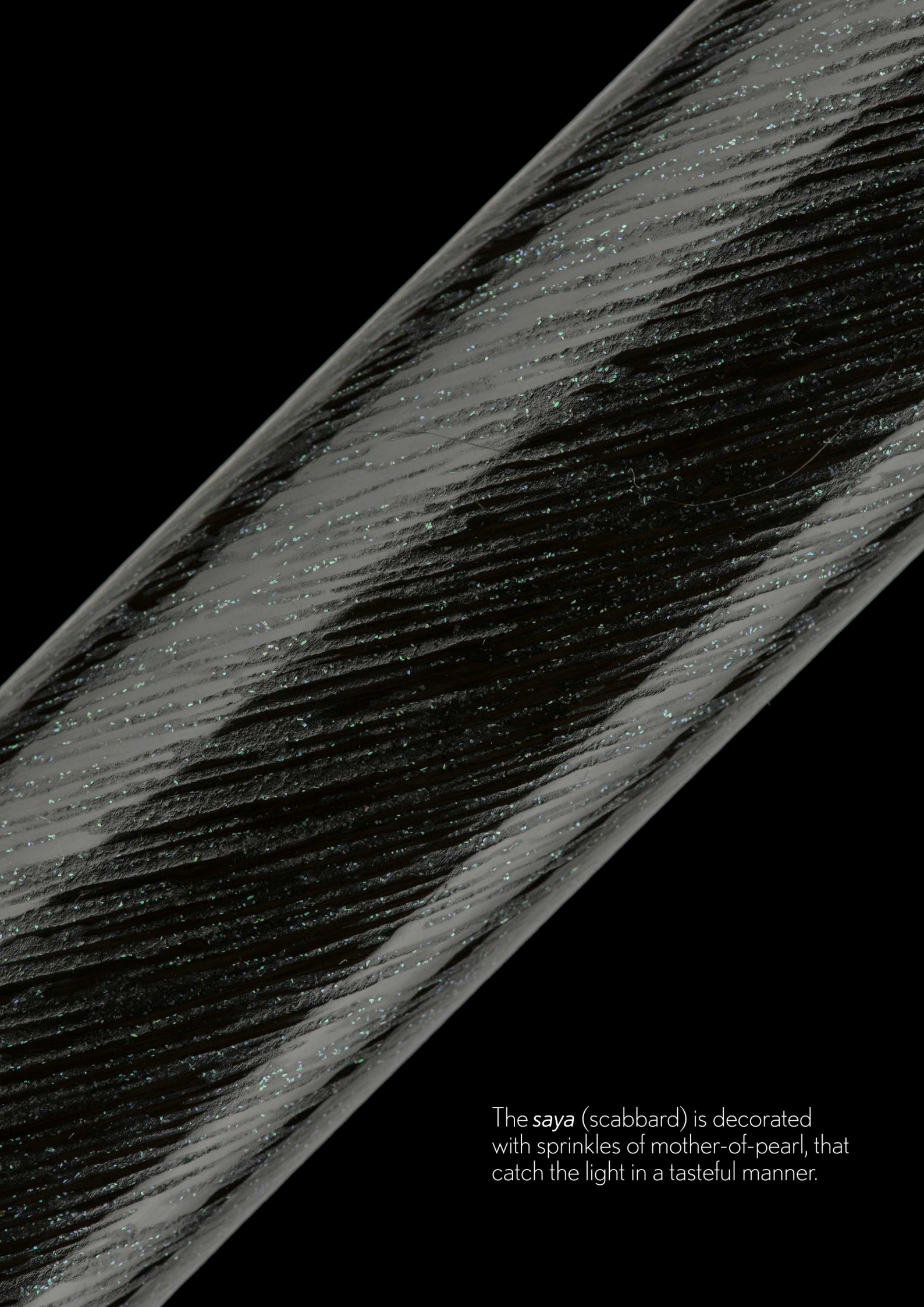
Aogai-mijin
kuro-ro-kawari-saya
uchigatana-koshirae
(青貝茶呂色塗鞘打刀拵え)

Uchigatana-koshirae
with structured glossy
black-lacquer saya with
mother-of-pearl accents

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



The *saya* (scabbard) is decorated with sprinkles of mother-of-pearl, that catch the light in a tasteful manner.



The *kajiri* (protective end cap) of the *saya* (scabbard) is a prime example of form meeting function. The intricate metal design of a branch of plum blossoms symbolize change as they bloom earlier than *sakura* (cherry blossom).

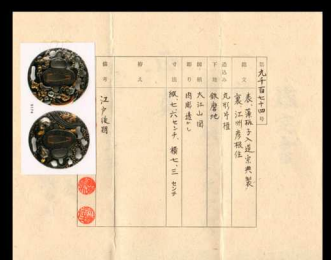
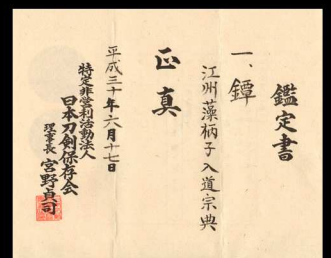




This is a stunning polished iron tsuba signed *Goshu Soheishi Nyudo Soten* crafted during the late Edo period.

The design tells the story of *Shuten-doji* a mythical *oni* or demon leader of Japan, who according to legend, was killed by the hero *Minamoto Raiko*. Although decapitated, the demon's detached head still took a bite at the hero, who avoided death by wearing multiple helmets stacked upon his head. *Shuten-doji* had his lair at *Mt. Oe* northwest of the city of *Kyoto*.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributing the piece to the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1867 has been attained.





(reverse)





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Mogarashi Sôten in Edo
(1700 - 1780)

Chikurin nana-kenjin
(the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove),



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) depict the joyful scene of the lucky gods of *Ebisu-ten* and *Daikoku-ten* on a cart.





Ebisu is the famous Japanese god of fishermen, luck, and workingmen, as well as the guardian of the health of small children. Ebisu is often portrayed holding a rod and a large red sea bream or sea bass.

Daikokuten or *Daikoku* is widely known in Japan as the happy-looking god of wealth, farmers, food, and good fortune, although in earlier centuries he was considered a fierce warrior deity.



Koshirae bag



ITEM# UJKA312

A MANTETSU KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, SHOWA PERIOD (SPRING 1943)

Swordsmith: *Kôa Isshin Mantetsu saku (ubu nakago)*
Date: *Shôwa mizunoto-hitsuji haru (spring time, Year of the Sheep in Showa era)*
Measurements: **Length:** 66.7cm **Curvature:** 1.6cm **Moto-haba:** 3.0cm **Weight:** 746g
Jihada: *Muji-hada*
Hamon: *Hoso-suguha (thin straight hamon)*
Included: Modern koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

For collectors of second world war memorabilia, this is a katana worth considering. Signed *Kôa Isshin* meaning "Asia-one heart" this katana personifies the immense patriotism Japan demonstrated during WWII. Curiously, *Mantetsu* steel was developed at the *Dairen Manchurian Railroad Factory* beginning in September of 1937. The phrase "*Kôa Isshin*" was used from 1939. Metallurgical examination of the steel has revealed that it is very close to pure iron.



This katana is dated to the spring of 1943, making it one of the later made Mantetsu katanas. It has a thin laser-beam like *hamon*, which is characteristic for swords from this factory. The sword feels solid in hand, and carries a cutting-edge length that is often seen in *gunto*, military mounted swords. A modern custom koshirae with a warrior and dragon theme was created especially for the sword. The red-vermillion lacquered *saya* matches the passion that this sword epitomizes. Please ask for video and photos. Blade is in the UK.



ITEM# UJKA189

[SOLD]

A KO-BIZEN IETOSHI TACHI

PARTLY-SIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY
MIDDLE KAMAKURA PERIOD (HOJI ERA: 1247-1249)

- Swordsmith:** *Ietoshi (Ko-Bizen School)*
- Measurements:** **Length:** 72.0cm (*suriage*) **Curvature:** 2.3cm **Moto-haba:** 2.6cm
- Jihada:** *itame mixed with mokume, in addition ji-nie, fine chikei, and a vivid midare-utsuri*
- Hamon:** *ko-nie-laden suguha-chō that is mixed with ko-gunome, ko-midare, many ashi and yō, some yubashiri-like tobiyaki above the yakigashira, kinsuji, and sunagashi*
- Certificate #1:** **62nd NBTHK Juyo** (*sword designated as Profound and Important*)
- Certificate #2:** **NTHK-NPO Yushusaku** (*koshirae certified as Masterwork*)
- Certificate #3:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*kozuka certified Especially Worthy of Preservation*)
- Certificate #4-5:** **NBTHK Hozon** (*tsuba and kogai certified Worthy of Preservation*)

This remarkable *tachi* was crafted *Ietoshi* of the *Ko-Bizen* school during the heart of the Kamakura period, circa 1247AD. When it was first made, this sword would have been a good 10cm longer and carried on horseback by a samurai. Over the centuries, the sword was shortened many times, evident by the five of holes in the nakago due to the changing demands of battle. Thankfully the first character “*Ie*” was preserved at the very bottom of the nakago making the attribution that much more discernible. Gold inlay of *Ietoshi* was added to the nakago during its lifetime.

This is the only sword by *Ietoshi* that has attained prestigious NBTHK Juyo Token, thus being a rare and important reference piece. All the classic qualities of *Ko-Bizen* forging techniques can be enjoyed within this elegant *tachi*. A splendid set of *koshirae* accompanies this fine collectible.

Saki-kasane: 3.5mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 5.8mm

Kissaki: 2.5cm

Saki-haba: 1.6cm

Nagasa: 72.0cm

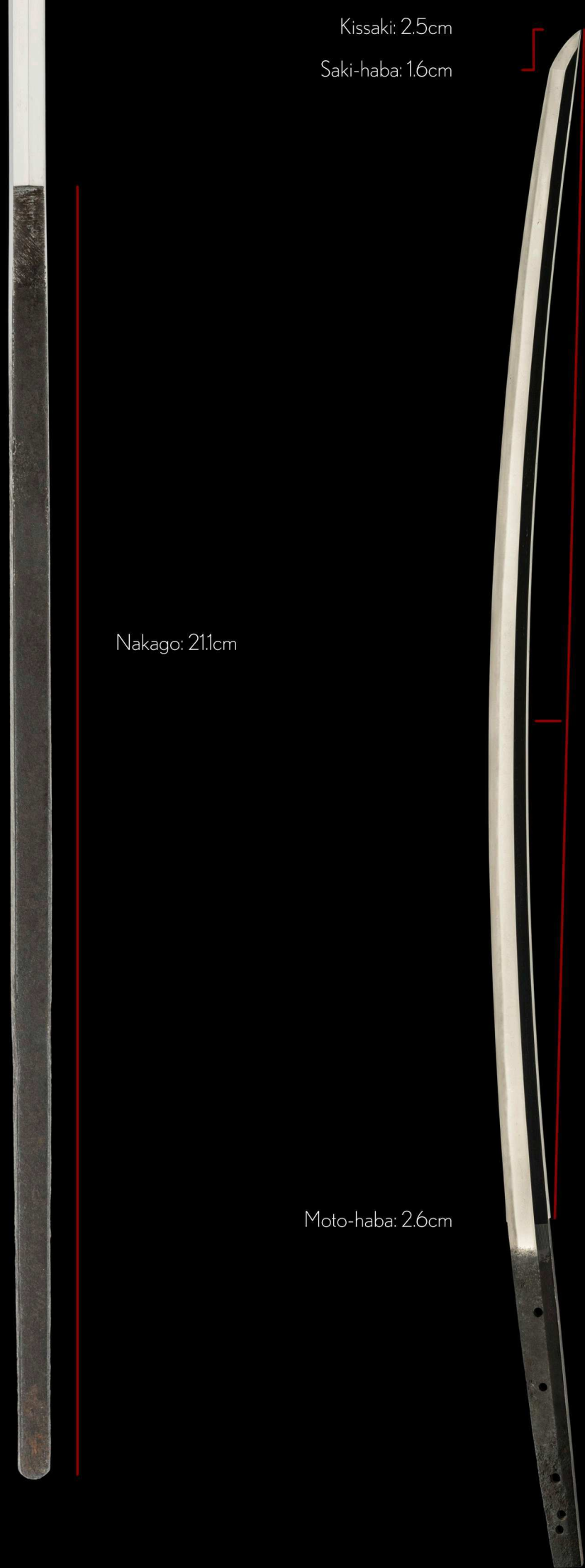
Nakago: 21.1cm

Sori: 2.3cm

Omosa: 635g

Moto-haba: 2.6cm

Mekugi-ana: 5

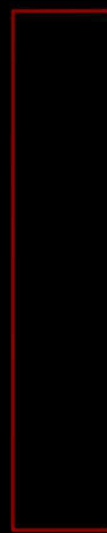


Koshizori

(curvature at the waist)

This term is used to describe swords with its deepest point towards the base of the blade.

Swords of the *Heian* and *Kamakura* periods generally carry *koshizori* shape as these swords were carried on horseback as *tachi* 'wrapping' around the waist of the Samurai.



Signed on tachi side: *le* (家)
(rest of the signature has been cut off).

In *kinzogan* (gold inlay) are the characters
letoshi.

This tachi has been attributed to letoshi of
the Ko-Bizen school circa 1247~1249.

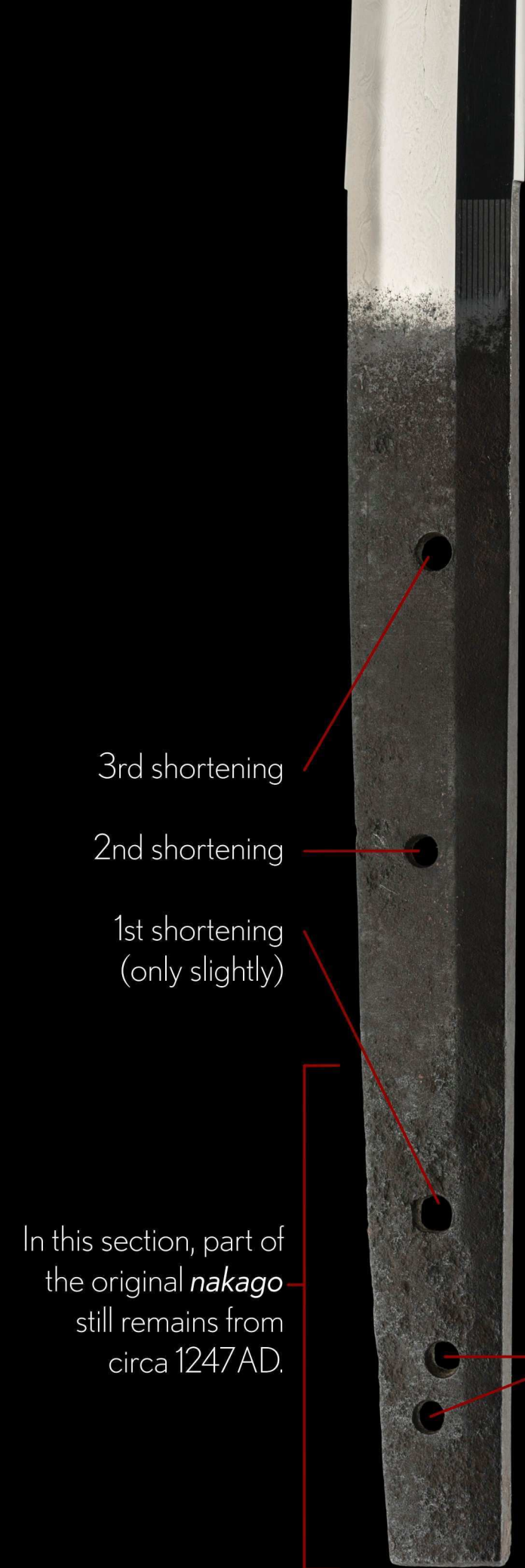
le 家

toshi 俊

家
俊

家





3rd shortening

2nd shortening

1st shortening
(only slightly)

In this section, part of
the original *nakago*
still remains from
circa 1247AD.

This *tachi* carries a *suriage nakago*, where the *nakago* (tang) is shortened and a part of the signature remains.

Note how the *nakago* is smoother here as it was once part of the cutting edge. A new *nakago* is formed from what was originally part of the blade each time it is shortened.

Given the number of holes, this sword has likely been shortened three times in its lifetime.

These two holes (mekugi ana) are the original/earliest holes on the sword.

20201662



重要第一三九四號

指定書

一
分

銘家(以下切)(家俊・古備前)
(金象嵌)家俊

一口

法量 長さ七二〇種 反り二・三種

形状 鑄造庵棟やや細身 磨上ながらも反り深く中鋒

鍛 板目に歪交じり地沸つき地景入り乱れ映り立つ

刃叉 直刃調に小互の目・小乱れ交じり足・葉入り小沸つき

全筋入り 砂流しかかる

帽子 直ぐに小丸に返る

茎 磨上 鑲目(目)不明(新切り)目釘孔五

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀剣に指定する

平成二十八年十月十八日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 酒井忠久



東京 教育委員会
第 203332 号
昭和52年 4 月 14 日

NBTHK Juyo Token
Certificate of Designation [#1394]

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

Issued in the 28th year of Heisei (2016), October 18th

Tachi, mei: *le* (家) (ika-kire, 以下切) (rest cut off)

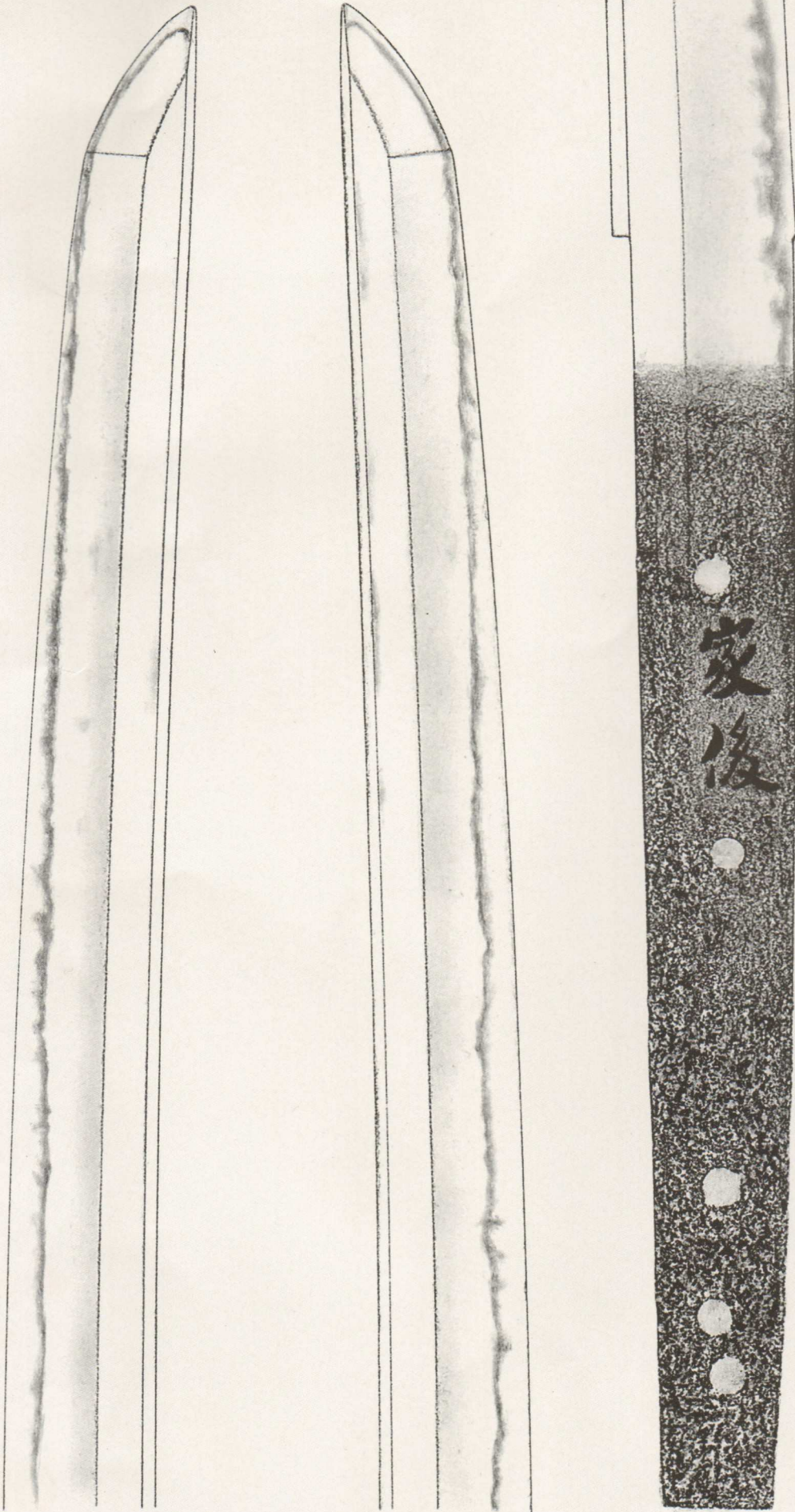
letoshi, 家俊, Ko-Bizen

kinzogan-mei (gold inlay): letoshi (家俊)

Length: 72.0cm
Curvature: 2.3cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

[President] Sakai Tadahisa (酒井忠久)



太刀 銘 家(以下切) (家俊・古備前)
(金象嵌) 家俊




A close-up photograph of a metal blade, likely a katana, showing the grain patterns in the steel. The blade is oriented diagonally from the bottom-left to the top-right. The background is black. Two red lines point from text labels to specific grain patterns on the blade. One label, 'mokume-hada', points to a rounded, concentric grain pattern. The other label, 'itame-hada', points to an oval-shaped grain pattern.

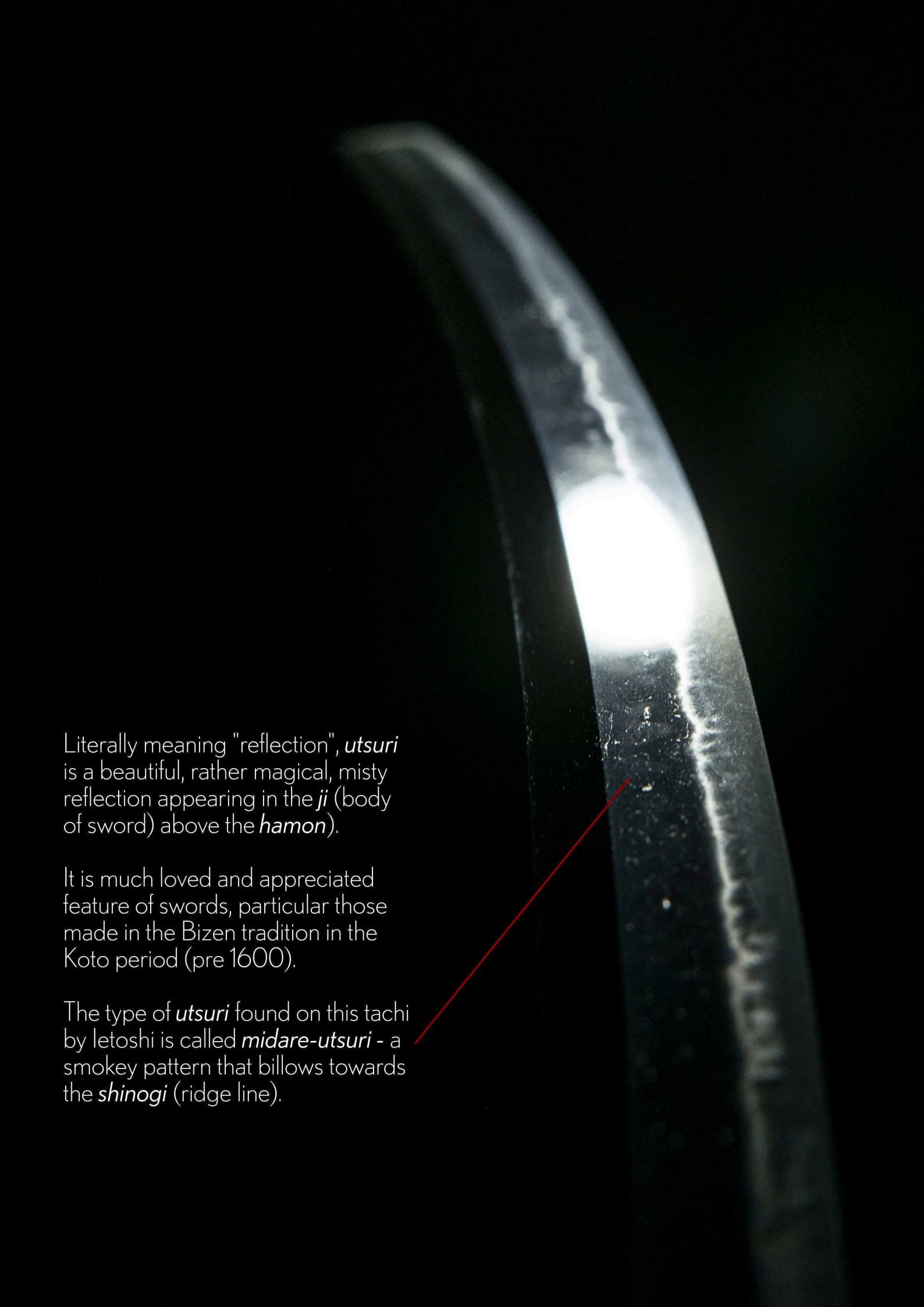
mokume-hada

itame-hada

The *kitae* (forging technique) shows an eclectic mix of *itame-hada* (oval-shape) and *mokume-hada* (rounded-shape) grain patterns in the steel.



A mix of *straight and choji midare hamon*, a temper line resembling clove blossom buds cascades along the steel.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a tachi, showing the hamon (edge line) and utsuri (misty reflection) patterns. The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, wavy line. The utsuri is a misty, smoky pattern that billows towards the ridge line. A red line points from the text to the utsuri pattern.

Literally meaning "reflection", *utsuri* is a beautiful, rather magical, misty reflection appearing in the *ji* (body of sword) above the *hamon*).

It is much loved and appreciated feature of swords, particular those made in the Bizen tradition in the Koto period (pre 1600).

The type of *utsuri* found on this tachi by Ietoshi is called *midare-utsuri* - a smoky pattern that billows towards the *shinogi* (ridge line).

Striking waves of *kinsuji* (black golden lines that slice through the hamon) are particularly evident at the base of the sword.

kinsuji

A close-up photograph of a sword's hamon, showing a wavy, shimmering line of light against a dark background. The hamon is a traditional Japanese sword tempering pattern. The image highlights the kinsuji, which are black golden lines that slice through the hamon, particularly evident at the base of the sword. Two red arrows point from the word 'kinsuji' to these lines.

*Kuro Iro Aka Nuri Wake
Uchigatana Koshirae*

black/red traditional
uchigatana koshirae



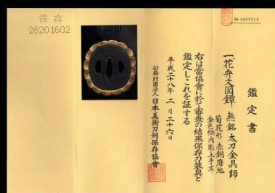
designated
NTHK-NPO Yushusaku
(masterwork)
in December 2015





A splendid *Tachi Kanagu-shi school* polished *shakudo* tsuba. Kanagu-shi is the term used for "metal fittings maker."

The design is of 16 gold chrysanthemum petals. This tsuba was especially made for a tachi and has been certified as **NBTHK Hozon** - a tsuba worthy of conservation.





Beautiful shakudo and gold *menuki* with *kiri-mon* (paulownia crests).
The *samekawa* (ray skin) has been lacquered black and red.





kashira (pommel)

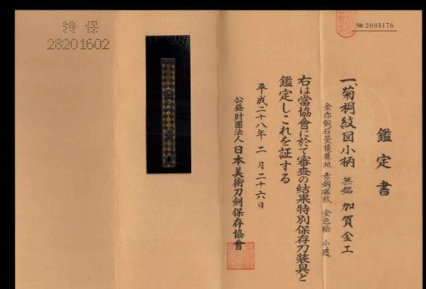
intricately carved waves
with *kiri-mon*



kozuka (utility knife) crafted in *Kaga province* with a chrysanthemum design

Kin shakudo (gold shakudo), *ishidatami moyou ji* (stone pavement design), *shakudo suemon* (shakudo mounted), *konjiki* (gold design), and *ko-sukashi* (small sukashi)

This *kozuka* has been certified as **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** - a *kozuka* especially worthy of conservation.

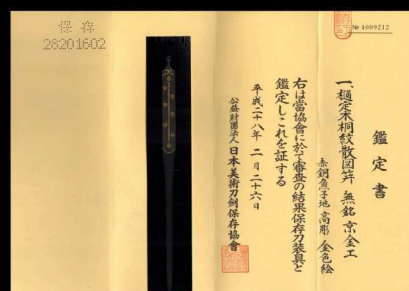


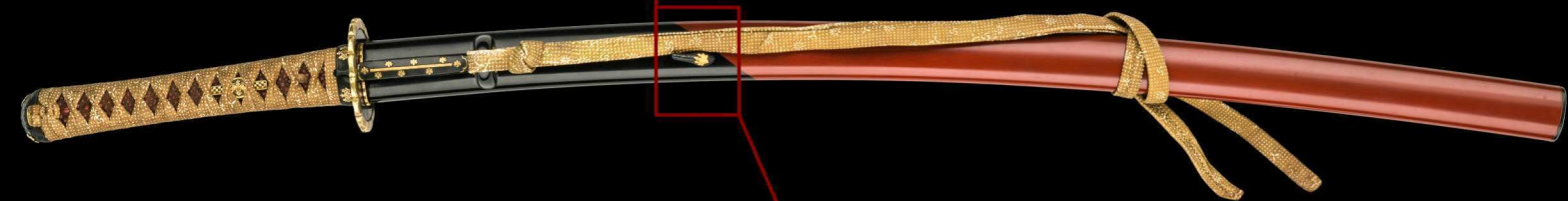
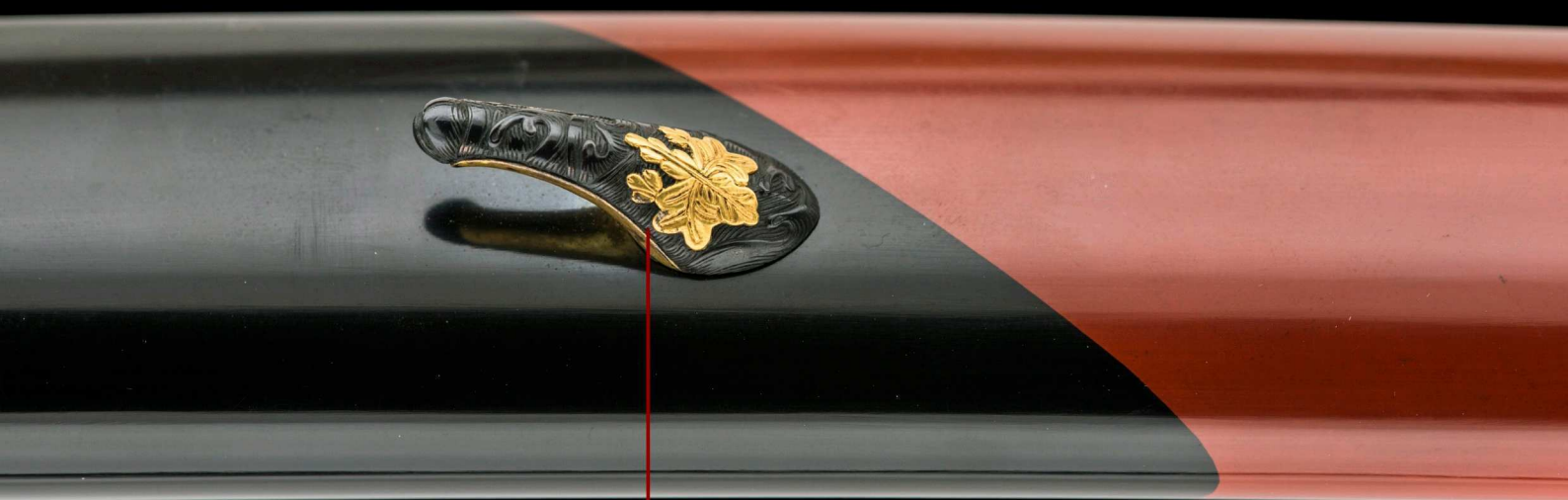


The *kogai* is a thick blunt needle that was primarily used as a hair arranging tool by the *samurai*. It is fastened into a special notch built inside the *saya* (scabbard) and drawn through the 'bumpy' hole in the *tsuba*.

This particular *kogai* was created in Kyoto during the Edo period. It carries a *kiri-mon* and ruler design

It has been certified NBTHK Hozon - a kogai worthy of preservation.





This decorative hook on the saya is called *kaerizuno*. It secures the sword in the belt and stops it from slipping out or being pulled out by an opponent.



ITEM# UJTU116

A RYÔKA TIEGUAI TSUBA

SIGNED WITH STAMP, MID-EDO PERIOD (CIRCA 1775~1800)

Metalsmith:	<i>Ryôka (Kawamura Tsuneshige of the Nara school)</i>
Location:	<i>Edo province (present-day Tokyo)</i>
Measurements:	Height: 7.2cm Width: 6.7cm Thickness: 4.6mm Weight: 145g
Material:	<i>Brass with stone-like surface finish</i>
Design:	<i>Motif of Taoist immortal Tieguaai (Japanese Tekkai)</i>
Engraving:	<i>Sunken relief, gold accents, the eyes are an inlay of crystals (extremely rare)</i>
Certificate:	NBTHK Hozon (a tsuba designated as Worthy of Conservation)
Included:	Tsuba box and printed description

SOLD

Say hello to a rare brass *kinko tsuba* by Kawamura Tsuneshige of the Nara school who stamped the penname of *Ryoka*. Tsuneshige was active in the mid-Edo period and is said to be a student of *Nara Shigetsugu*. His specialty was depicting characters from Chinese and Japanese legends. On this tsuba, the benevolent (and rather disheveled) *Taoist immortal Tieguaai* is the feature attraction.

Rather unsettlingly, in whichever angle you hold the tsuba, the deep powerful crystal eyes of Tieguaai appear to stare back at you. It's a fantastic curiosity that is delightfully intimidating and completely irresistible once you lock into a personal staring contest with this grumpy immortal. Have a look at this video to see him in action → <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRjUzTCcMsc>



Tiegui (*Tekkai* in Japan) is a Chinese mythological figure and one of the *Eight Immortals* in the *Taoist pantheon*.

Despite being portrayed as a dishevelled, ill-tempered old man that walks with the aid of an iron crutch, Tiegui has a benevolent character. Using medicine from his gourd, he graciously treats the poor and needy.



(reverse)



Sekiguchi was the initial family name of *Tsuneshige*. He later used the surname *Kawamura* - likely having been adopted into the Kawamura family and made their heir.

Signed with his stamped seal *Ryôka*, metalsmith Kawamura Tsuneshige lived in Edo and was faithful to the Nara tradition.

Tsuneshige had his own school and worked almost entirely in brass. He rarely signed his work, making this piece even more collectible and worthy of study.

30201507



No 4013937



鑑定書

一、鉄拐仙人図鐔 印銘 了嘉（常重）

豎丸形 真鍮石目地 鋤出彫
金色絵 玉眼角耳小肉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年八月十日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 30th year of Heisei (2018), August 10th

One, Tsuba

Depicting the Taoist immortal Tieguai (Tekkai)

Mei (signature)

Signed via seal: Ryôka (Tsuneshige)

*Elongated round shape, brass, stone like surface finish, sunken relief,
gold accents, crystal eyes, angular rim with a little roundness*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



Before becoming an immortal, Tieguai was a very handsome man. However, on one occasion, his spirit travelled to Heaven to meet other immortals.

He had told his apprentice, Li Qing, to wait for seven days for his spirit to return. If he did not return by then, Li Qing was to burn the body because that meant that he had become an immortal.

But after six and a half days Li Qing had to go home to see to his sick mother one last time before she died. Li Qing thus cremated Li Tieguai's body. He passed by a dying beggar on his way to his mother's but did not have time to bury him.

Upon returning, Li Tieguai's spirit found that his body had been cremated and had to enter the only body available at the time, the corpse of the homeless beggar who had just died of starvation.

The beggar, unfortunately, had a long and pointed head, large ears with one large brass earring, a woolly and dishevelled beard and hair.

He also had long, scraggy, and dark eyebrows, dark eyes, and he had a pan lid on his head and a lame leg. Laozi [founder of Taoism] appeared and gave him a medicine gourd that could cure any illness and never emptied. Li then brought his apprentice's mother back to life using the liquid from his gourd.

Li Qing was then dismissed as his apprentice, after being given a small pill and being told that he would work hard enough to become an immortal himself.

This turned out to be true.

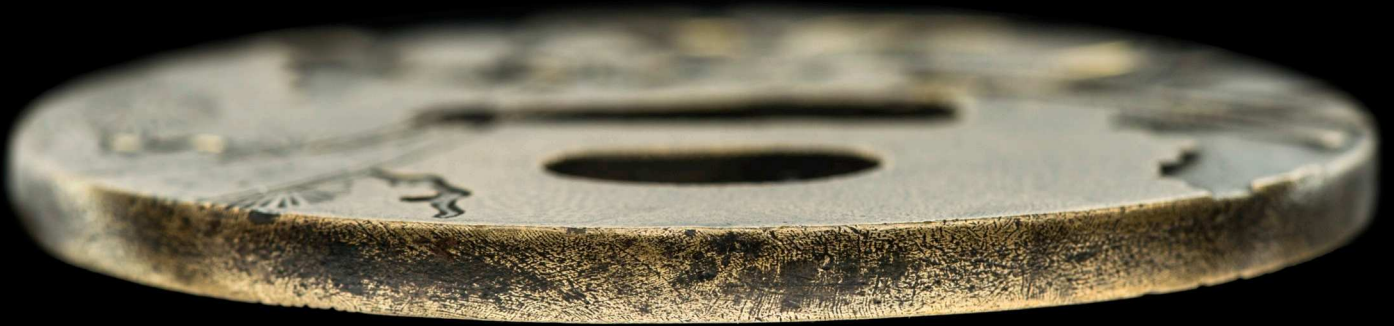
The Eight Immortals of Taoism: Legends and Fables of Popular Taoism. Ho, Kwok Man (1990). Translated and edited by Joanne O'Brien. New York: Penguin Books.

Whichever angle you hold the
tsuba, the all-knowing crystal eyes
of Tieguaï follow yours...





nature elements in the design are cleverly sunken into the brass base





(presentation box)





ITEM# UJFK087

A NARA SHÔKI FUCHI-KASHIRA

UNSIGNED, MID-EDO PERIOD (CIRCA 1750~1780)

Metalsmith:	<i>Nara School (Tsuchiya Yasuari attributed by the NTHK-NPO)</i>
Location:	<i>Edo province (present-day Tokyo)</i>
Measurements:	Height: 3.8cm Width: 2.2cm
Material:	<i>Brass with stone-like surface finish</i>
Design:	<i>Motif of Taoist Shôki 'The Demon Slayer' and hiding demons</i>
Engraving:	<i>High relief, inlay and colour accents</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Hozon (a fuchi-kashira designated as Worthy of Conservation)
Certificate #2:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (a fuchi-kashira designated as authentic)
Included:	Fuchi-kashira box and printed description

SOLD

Crafted in the mid-Edo period by the *Nara school*, this brilliant *fuchi-kashira* depicts very anxious demons hiding from *Shôki*, the sword-wielding demon slayer. The expressions are so life-like! To this day in Japan, many homes have an effigy of *Shôki* to ward off evil spirits and illness.

As this *fuchi-kashira* has the same *Taoist* origins as the *ujtu116 Ryoka Tieguai tsuba* along with the fact they were both created by *Nara school* and collectively have a material of brass with stone surface finish, a preference will be granted to the client who acquires both these fittings as a set.



Shôki 'The Demon Queller' was a Tang-era physician in the Chinese province of Shensi, but he was very ugly. To advance his career, he took the national examination to enter imperial service, and performed brilliantly, scoring first place among all applicants.

But when Shôki was presented to the emperor, he was rejected because of his ugliness, and in shame, Shôki committed suicide. Overcome with remorse, the emperor ordered Shôki to be buried in the green robe reserved for the imperial clan.

In gratitude, Shôki's spirit vowed to protect the ruler and all male heirs from demons of illness and evil. He is often depicted drawing a large sword or using it in battle with demons.

Shôki's popularity peaked in Japan during the Edo period, when people began to hang images of Shôki outside their houses to ward off evil spirits during the Boys' Day festival (May 5th each year, but now a festival for all children of both sexes) and to adorn the eaves and entrances of their homes with ceramic statues of the deity.

Today, residents still adorn the eaves and rooftops of their homes with Shôki's effigy to ward off evil and illness, and to protect the male heir to the family.

Source: onmarkproductions.com/html/shoki.shtml





The *fuchi-kashira* is unsigned and attributed to the Nara [*Tsuchiya Yasuari*] school.

30201810

No 4014549



鑑定書

一、鍾馗隱鬼図縁頭 無銘 奈良派

真鍮石目地 鋤出高彫
象嵌色絵

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年十一月十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 30th year of Heisei (2018), November 16th

One, Fuchi-Kashira (unsigned)

Depicting Shôki and hiding demons

Unsigned

*Brass, stone like surface finish, high relief,
inlay, and colour accents*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

捺 印	審 査 員	備 考	拵 え	寸 法	彫 り	図 柄	下 造 込 み 地	銘 文	第 九 千 百 一 号
		江戸中期		縁綻三ハセンチ横、ニニセンチ	高彫	鐘馗に鬼図	縁頭 真鍮磨地	無銘	
									
									



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

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

One, Fuchi-kashira

Den Edo Tsuchiya Yasuari
[Nara school]

Crafted circa *Mid-Edo period*
(1700-1780)

Shinsa judging panel:
six hanko seals of authenticity

Issued in 30th year of Heisei (2018), May 20th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)



捺 審 査 員 印	備 考	拵 え	寸 法	彫 り	図 柄	下 造 込 み 地	銘 文	第 九 千 百 一 号
	江戸中期		縁綻三、八センチ横、二、二センチ	高彫	鐘馗に鬼面	縁頭 真鍮磨地	無銘	

NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

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

One, Fuchi-kashira

Den Edo Tsuchiya Yasuari
[Nara school]

Crafted circa *Mid-Edo period*
(1700-1780)

Shinsa judging panel:
six hanko seals of authenticity

Issued in 30th year of Heisei (2018), May 20th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)



(presentation box)



Is that...Shôki?



Flying into Japan?

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

Many swords from Unique Japan are sold privately every year to proud clients around the world. Contact 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 - only minutes away from all major hotels in downtown Tokyo.



ITEM# UJKA327

A JUMYO KATANA

SIGNED, MIDDLE EDO PERIOD (CIRCA KYOHO ERA 1716~1736)

Swordsmith:	<i>Hitachi no Kami Fujiwara Jumyo (ubu-nakago trimmed slightly at nakago-jiri)</i>			
Location:	<i>Shimizu in Mino province</i>			
Measurements:	Length: 74.6cm	Curvature: 1.5cm	Moto-haba: 3.17cm	Weight: 765g
Jihada:	<i>Itame hada in ko-nie deki</i>			
Hamon:	<i>Gunome-midare with rhythmic togari, ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>			
Boshi:	<i>Hakikake (brushed) with ko-maru (turnback)</i>			
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation)			
Certificate #2-3:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (Edo period tsuba and koshirae designated as authentic)			
Authentication:	<i>Sayagaki by Honma Junji (a personal gift from Kunzan)</i>			
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description			

SOLD

The Jumyô school, originating from Yamato (Nara), moved to Mino province during the Kamakura period. The school continued until the end of the Edo period, prospering under the patronage of *Owari Tokugawa clans*. Jumyô (also read Toshinaga) translates to “happy [long] life” and were celebrated gifts of good fortune to *daimyo* (great) families. This long, impressive katana was the personal gift of *Honma Junji* (Kunzan) to his brother-in-law *Mori Kazuo*. The *hamon* is a bright rhythmic *gunome-midare* in rich *ko-nie deki* with plenty of *hataraki*. Its Edo period *koshirae* has a unique leather-like texture on the *saya* with *shisa lions* standing guard.

Saki-kasane: 5.4mm [↑]

Moto-kasane: 6.8mm

Omosa: 765g

Kissaki: 3.16cm
Saki-haba: 2.12cm

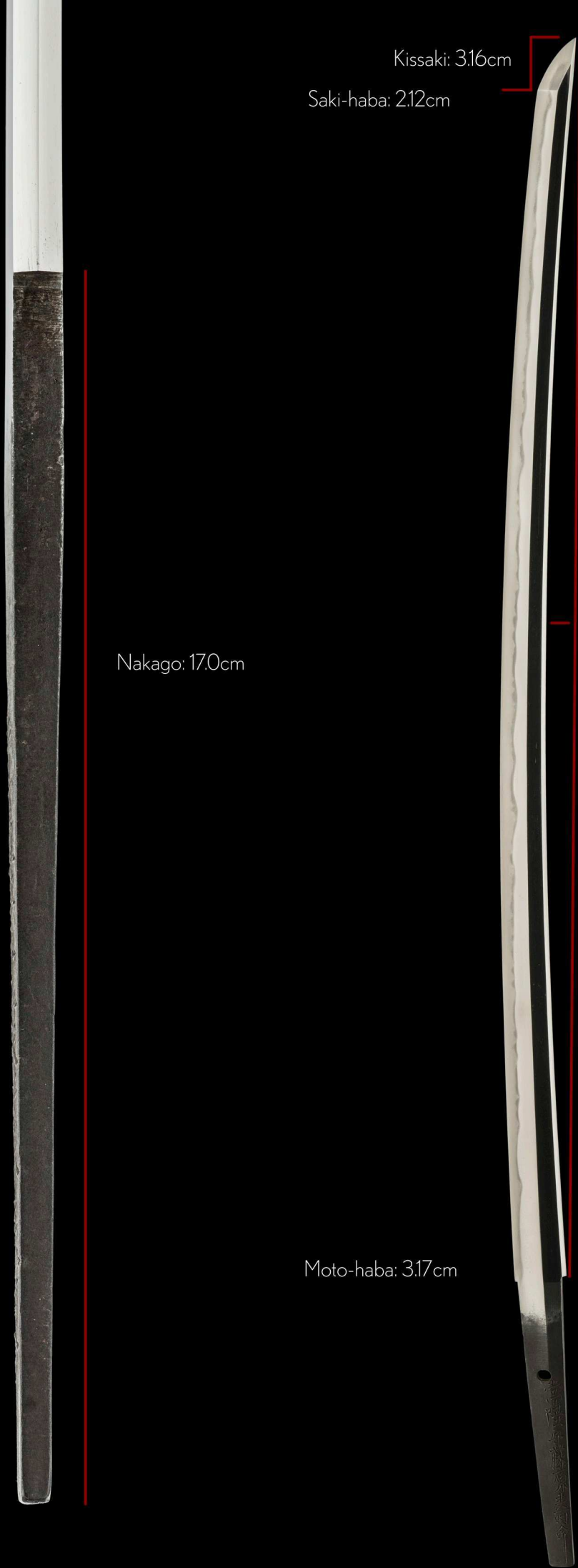
Nakago: 17.0cm

Moto-haba: 3.17cm

Nagasa: 74.6cm

Sori: 1.5cm

Mekugi-ana: 1





The bottom two characters of this sword are signed 寿 that translates to *kotobuki* meaning "congratulations" and 命 (inochi) "life".

When paired together, the characters are read *Jumyô* [or *Toshinaga*] and it's meaning becomes "*happy [long] life.*"

The Jumyo school prospered during Edo period under the patronage of the ruling *Owari Tokugawa clans*.

Jumyo crafted blades were thought to bring good fortune and longevity and were celebrated gifts to *daimyo* (great) families during the Edo period.





Location: *Mino province* (resident of Gifu)
Title: *Hitachi no Kami* (Lord of Hitachi province)
Clan: *Fujiwara*
Swordsmith: *Jumyô*

ubu-nakago (original tang that has been trimmed about 2cm at the bottom)
kiri-yasurime (horizontal file marks)

常 Hi

陸 tachi (no)

守 Kami

藤 Fuji

原 wara

寿 Ju

命 myô



As this katana is extra long, the *nakago* was trimmed slightly (~2cm) in order that it could fit into a desired *tsuka* (hilt) at some point in the sword's life time.

Respectfully, the full *mei* (signature) was left perfectly preserved in the process.

特 保
14200211

№ 147762



鑑定書

長二尺四寸六分弱

一刀銘常陸守藤原寿命

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

平成十五年一月十六日

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 15th year of Heisei (2003), January 16th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Hitachi no Kami Fujiwara Jumyô

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 4-sun 6-bu jaku (74.6cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

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 close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (edge) and the jihada (grain pattern). The blade is curved and has a dark, polished surface. The hamon is a light-colored, wavy line that runs along the edge. The jihada is a fine, tree-grain pattern that is visible in the upper part of the blade. The background is black.

sunagashi
(brushed streams of sand)

kinsuji formations

The *jihada* (grain pattern) is a tight *itamehada* resembling a tree-grain pattern with rounded *kinsuji* (dark lines of nie-crystals) within the hamon.



A bright *gunome-midare hamon* in *ko-nie deki* (small visible crystals) with sections that point called *togari* illuminate the katana.

togari

Mino tradition crafted swords to have *hamon* (temper line) patterns that follow a certain rhythm - such as peaking every third pass. This sword is made with classic Mino qualities.





This katana was appraised by *Dr. Honma Junji*, (1904-1991) also known as *Kunzan*, the former director of the NBTHK.

It is a highly trusted form of authentication known as *sayagaki* (writing in ink on the shirasaya).

This katana was gifted from Dr. Honma to his brother-in-law (or close friend), *Mori Kazuo*. Possibly a wedding present given the positive nature of swords signed Jumyô.

家久餘慶壽命
Iehisa Yokei Jumyô

Lit. "Fortunate Family Heredity Jumyô"

為森一夫兄

Mori Kazuo-kei no tame

For my brother-in-law Mori Kazuo

薰山本間順題

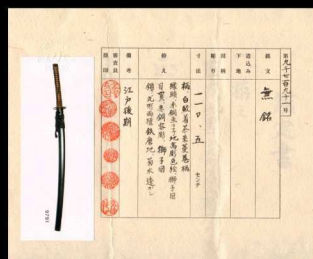
Kunzan Honma Jun dai-su

Named by Kunzan Honma Jun[ji]

Kawa-omote-fû kuro-kawari-nuri saya uchigatana-koshirae
革表風黒変り塗鞘打刀拵え

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in black with unique
leather-like textured saya*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



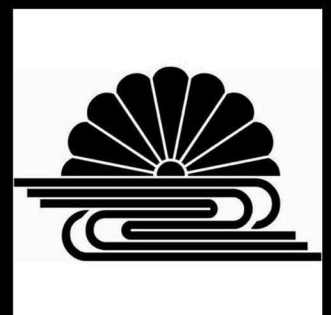
kikusui mon

This is an antique cast iron tsuba with a *sukashi* (openwork) design of a *kiku* (chrysanthemum) and *sui* (water).

Together this *kamon* (family crest) is known as *kikusui*. The kikusui mon was used by *Masashige Kusunoki*, the samurai lord who contributed to the overthrow of the Kamakura shogunate and stayed loyal to *Emperor Godaigo* till his death.

It is said that Emperor Godaigo gave Kusunoki the kiku-crest for his loyalty and honour, however, Kusunoki thought he was unworthy and added floating water below it to show his modesty.

An ukiyo-e print from *Utagawa Yoshikazu* in 1856, entitled *Jingi hachigyo no uchi, Kusunoki Masashige* illustrates large kikusui crests on Kusunoki's clothing.





(reverse)

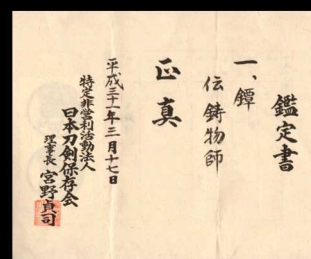


Kusunoki Masashige (1294 - 1336) was a 14th-century samurai who fought for Emperor Go-Daigo in the Genkō War, the attempt to wrest rulership of Japan away from the Kamakura shogunate and is remembered as the embodiment of samurai loyalty.

He received the highest decoration from the Meiji government of Japan in 1880.

Kusunoki was a scholar and a devout Buddhist. A statue of Kusunoki (left) sits outside the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity dates the tsuba to the *Late Edo period* circa 1780~1867.





Shisa (or shishi) lion, resembling a cross between a lion and a dog, shisa serve as protectors from certain kinds of evil.

Shishi traditionally stand guard outside the gates of Japanese shinto shrines and buddhist temples. Shishi are depicted in pairs, one with mouth open and one with mouth shut. The shisa with the open mouth is said to scare off demons, and the closed mouth to shelter and keep in the good spirits.





ITEM# UJKA302

[SOLD]

A YASUSADA 'CUTTING TEST' KATANA

SIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KEIAN ERA, 1648~1652)

- Swordsmith:** *Yamato no Kami Yasusada (ubu-nakago, shodai)*
- Gold inlay (test):** *Mitsu-dō otoshi kirite Yamano Ka'emon no Jō Nagahisa + kaō*
- Measurements:** **Length:** 72.7cm **Curvature:** 0.9cm **Moto-haba:** 3.2cm **Weight:** 760g
- Jihada:** *Densely forged itame-hada with chikei*
- Hamon:** *Wide yakiba with a mixture of gunome-midare and notare*
- Certificate #1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (a sword Especially Worthy of Conservation)
- Certificate #2:** **NBTHK Hozon** (a koshirae Worthy of Conservation)
- Certificates #3:** **NTHK-NPO Yushusaku** (as sword designated as Masterwork)
- Certificates #4-6:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (tsuba, fuchi-kashira and koshirae designated Authentic)
- Fujishiro:** **Jo-saku** (a superior swordsmith)
- Sharpness:** **Ryo-Wazamono** (maker of very good cutting ability sword)
- Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, printed description

This powerful katana was crafted by Shinto period maestro *Yamato no Kami Yasusada*. It is said that Yasusada is originally from *Echizen province* and studied under *Shodai Yasutsugu*. Another theory reckons he travelled to *Edo (Tokyo)* by way of the *Kishu Ishido School*. Yasusada enjoyed a close relationship with the great *tameshigiri* (cutting test) master *Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa*. This sword is a testament to the fantastic sharpness of Yasusada's swords as this blade severed cleanly through *three deceased convicted criminals in one stroke* by Nagahisa. Gold inlay on the nakago attests to this accomplishment. An outstanding set of Edo period koshirae accompanies the sword with a *fuchi* signed by metalsmith master *Hamano Shōzui* at the age of 65. This is a classic Edo period katana of grand proportions that was featured in the *NBTHK Token Bijitsu* magazine.

Saki-kasane: 4.4mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 6.1mm

Omosa: 760g

Kissaki: 3.3cm
Saki-haba: 2.09cm

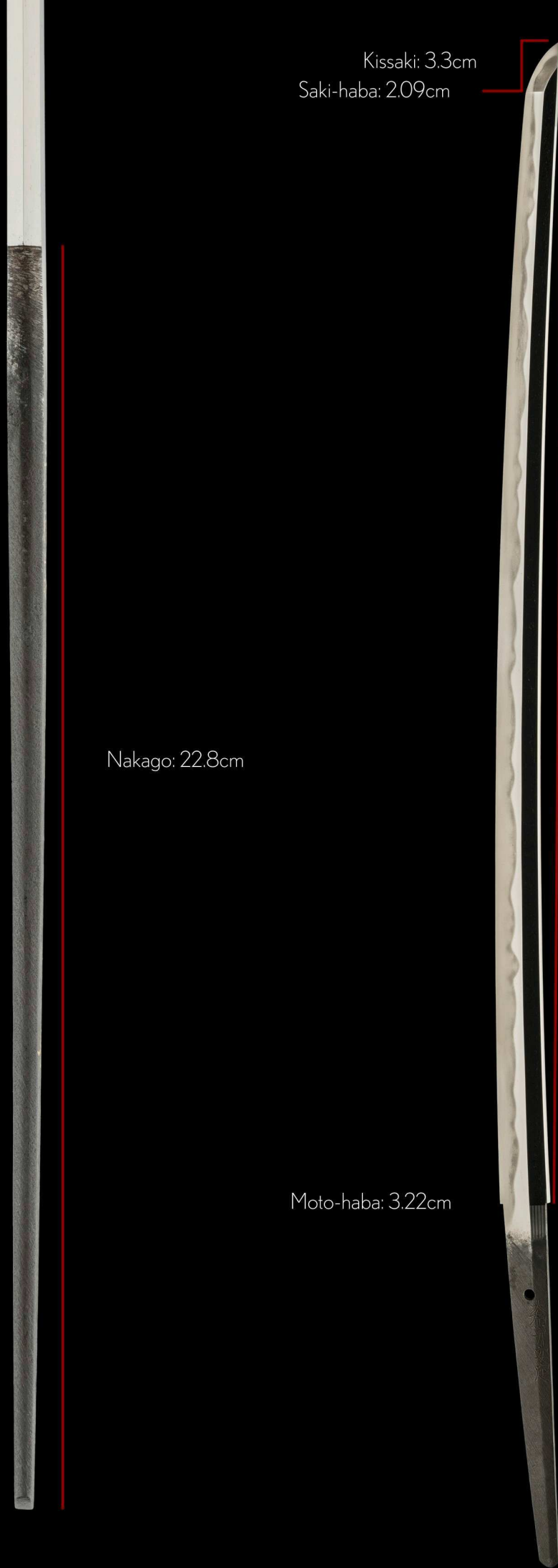
Nakago: 22.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.22cm

Nagasa: 72.7cm

Sori: 0.9cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Yamato no Kami Yasusada is a talented swordsmith that is said to come from *Echizen province* and studied under *Shodai Yasutsugu*.

Another theory is that he travelled to Edo (Tokyo) by way of the *Kishu Ishido School*.

Fujishiro ranks Yasusada as *Jo-saku* (a superior swordsmith). He is also rated *Ryo-wazamono* for the very good cutting ability of his swords.





Title: *Yamato no Kami* (Lord of Yamato province)
Swordsmith: *Yasusada* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)
sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

大 (Ya)
和 (mato no)
守 (Kami)
安 (Yasu)
定 (sada)

Mitsu-do otoshi kirite Yamano Ka'emon no Jo
Nagahisa + kao

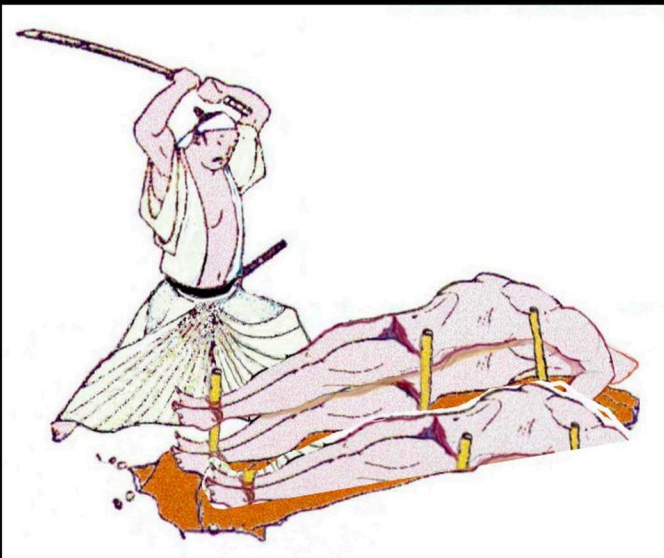
(severed through three bodies in one stroke by
sword tester Yamano Ka'emon no + monogram)

(Mi) 三
(tsu) ツ
(do) 洞
(otoshi) 落

三
ツ
洞
落

切
手
山
野
加
右
衛
門
尉
永
久
正
長

切 (Kiri)
手 (te)
山 (Yama)
野 (no)
加 (Ka)
右 (')
衛 (e)
門 (mon no)
尉 (Jō)
永 (Naga)
久 (hisa)



三少同浴

切年止野加右衛門尉
永念

特選
2920711



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
平成三十年三月十五日
公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



No 1007804

一刀

銘

大和守安定

(金象嵌) 三ツ胴落切手山野加右衛門尉永久(花押)

長二尺四寸強

鑑定書

大阪 教育委員会
第 10043 号
昭和 37 年 10 月 7 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 30th year of Heisei (2018), March 15th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Yamato no Kami Yasusada

(kinzogan-mei) Mitsu-do otoshi kirite Yamano Ka'emon no Jo Nagahisa + Kao

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 4-sun kyo (a little over 72.7cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



The ujka302 Yamato no Kami Yasusada Katana was featured in the *Kantei* section of the *NBTHK Token Bijitsu magazine* in June 2004. Above is the cover of the magazine and the page spotlighting the qualities of this sword. Below is a translation of the article. This magazine will accompany the sword.

Kantei Blade No. 3

katana, mei: **Yamato no Kami Yasusada** (大和守安定)

kinzōgan: **Kirite Yamano Ka'emon no Jō Nagahisa + kaō** (切手山野加右衛門尉永久「花押」) - the gold inlay reads: "Tester Yamano Ka'emon no Jō Nagahisa + monogram" **Mitsu-dō otoshi** (三ツ胴落) - "Severed through three bodies"

nagasa 72.7 cm, *sori* 0.9 cm, *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*

ji: dense *itame* that tends to stand out and that features plenty of *ji-nie*

ha: widely hardened and gently undulating, *nie*-laden *notare* with a wide *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *gunome*, *ō-gunome*, and some *sunagashi* in places, the *gunome* elements prominently tend to an angular (*hako*) shape

bōshi: *ha* runs continuously into the *bōshi* for a little and then turns into a little bit of *notare* which runs back with a *ko-maru-kaeri*

Explanation: The blade has a wide *mihaba*, tapers noticeably, has a shallow *sori*, and ends in a *chū-kissaki* and so we are dealing here with a typical *Kanbun-shintō-sugata*. And with the prominent *masame* in the *shinogi-ji* and the rather robust overall shape we arrive at *Edo-shintō* for that time period. Hardening such a wide *ha* that appears as a large *notare-gunome*-based *midare* whose elements tend to be angular and towards *hakoba* combined with a shallow *notare-bōshi* with a *komaru-kaeri* is among all Edo smiths of that time typical for Yasusada and so almost all participants deduced correctly on him.

Now due to the excellently forged *kitae* and the *nioiguchi* brighter than usually seen at Yasusada, some also went for other Edo smiths, like for example *Kotetsu* (虎徹), *Okimasa* (興正), and *Kaneshige* (兼重), or to other smiths who worked in a similar manner, like for example *Miyoshi Nagamichi* (三善長道), but there were also a few bids on *Kanewaka* (兼若).

Kotetsu did work in his *hanetora* phase in *gunome* but his *gunome* consists of pairs of connected *gunome* which are mixed with thick *ashi*. Apart from that, his *ha* starts with a *sugu-yakidashi* and his *bōshi* features a protruding *yakikomi* element right at the *yokote*. In addition, his *jiba* is even more bright and clear than it is the case with the *kantei* blade. *Okimasa* in turn hardened a *gunome* that is composed of a peculiar rhythm of two-three-two-three *gunome* elements.

Izumi no Kami Kaneshige (和泉守兼重) usually hardened a *nie*-laden *suguha-chō* with a wide *nioiguchi* that reminds us of the workmanship of *Inoue Shinkai* (井上真改), so works in shallow *notare-chō* mixed with *gunome* and *ashi* are hardly ever seen at *Kaneshige*. *Kazusa no Suke Kaneshige* (上総介兼重) usually worked in a connected *gunome* that tends to a *juzu-ba* so we can see a different approach in workmanship.

At *Miyoshi Nagamichi* the *nie* would accumulate to *mura-nie* at some areas on the blade and his *ha* shows by trend more prominent *sunagashi*. *Kanewaka* did harden a *ha* with angular elements that tend to *hakoba* so this approach is understandable but he too applied *mura-nie* and his *jigane* would be mixed with *nagare-hada*.

Well, there is another important characteristic feature seen at Yasusada's works that has not been mentioned so far, and that is a steep *iori-mune*. So, participants should not overlook that.

a smooth wavy notare hamon



*an awesome display of nie
crystals forming the hamon.*

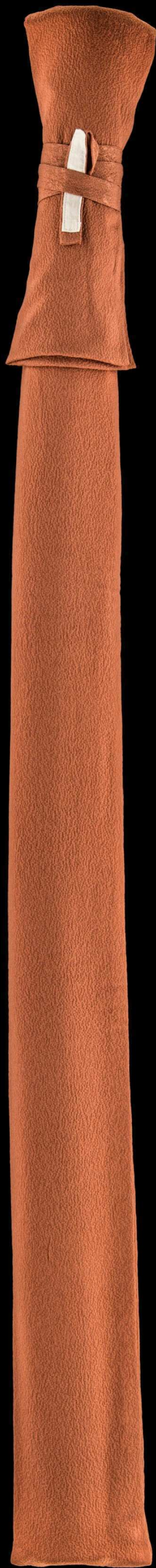


notare and ko-maru boshi

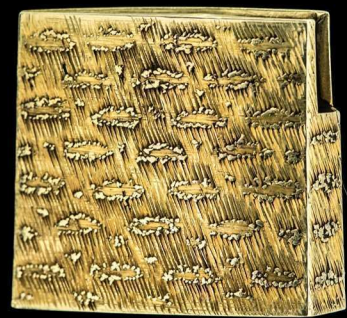




a bright and vibrant gunome-midare hamon



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

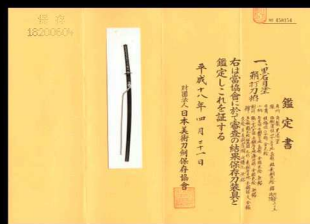


habaki with peony design
and diagonal file marks

*Kuro-ishimejinuri-saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒石目地塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae in black
stone-surface lacquer*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



*NBTHK Hozon
Certificate of Authenticity*



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*





一、鐔
 鑑定書
 伝江戸 三代安親
 正真
 平成二十九年九月十六日
 特定非営利活動法人
 日本刀剣保存会
 理事長 宮野真司

品名	材質	形状	寸法	備考
江戸鐔	鋼	鐔	全長 10.5cm 幅 4.5cm	本館蔵
江戸鐔	鋼	鐔	全長 10.5cm 幅 4.5cm	本館蔵



left: 2 characters, *Shozui*

right: *Gyonen rokujugo*

Fuchi crafted by Shozui of the Hamono school age of 65.

ARIGATO!

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*ujng004 - A Kawachi Daijo Masahiro Naginata
Dated on a lucky day in August 1653*

A rare naginata by this Hizen master

Big congratulations Thomas!

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