



JAPANESE
SWORD
CATALOGUE 32

RELEASED:
OCTOBER 17/2019

ALL SOLD

(COVER PHOTO)

ITEM# UJKA325
A YOSHIKANE KATANA
EARLY EDO PERIOD (CIRCA 1673)
NBTHK TOKUBETSU HOZON TÔKEN
& NBTHK KOSHU TOKUBETSU KICHO
FUCHI SIGNED BY KIKUOKA MITSUYUKI IN 1785

ANTIQUE JAPANESE SWORDS

CATALOGUE 32

RELEASED: OCTOBER 17, 2019

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES OF GENUINE ANTIQUE JAPANESE SWORDS THAT WERE SOLD IN CATALOGUE 32. THIS IS A REFERENCE DOCUMENT.

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

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

SERVICE@UNIQUEJAPAN.COM

+44 7954 102 277 (MOBILE & ON THE 'SIGNAL' APP - BRITISH TIME)

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Hello everyone!

I trust you all had a great summer. We spent some time in Rosemere, Quebec, Canada, which was brilliant seeing many old friends and family. We sure miss the big, tall trees already. It's such a beautiful time of year with the changing leaves parading their full autumn spectrum.

I am proud to introduce ten wonderful swords in this, our 32nd Japanese sword catalogue. The first piece is a katana crafted by *Ise no Kami Kuniteru*, one of the finest smiths in Settsu province. This sword exudes Edo period formal wear in every way – a beautiful, well-forged blade with *Yoshioka school kiri* themed fittings that resemble a tuxedo. This *koshirae* is exactly what a samurai would typically carry if invited to a *daimyo* castle.

The next sword is a terrific wakizashi by *Hikomichi* of the respected *Mishina school*. This sword is full of energy. The blade is made in the *Soshu* tradition with ample *hataraki* to enjoy. The wakizashi is secured in a unique Edo-period set of *koshirae* that celebrates our natural world. For the eco warrior!

The slithering snake crafted by Jûyô level metalsmith *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki* gracing the cover of this catalogue is found on our next katana by *Yoshikane* of the *Chikushu Nobukuni school*. There is so much to admire in this piece. A solid, powerful sword with a *jihada* that jumps out to the eye. A bright, crisp *suguha hamon* and a marvelous set of Edo period fittings in a rare snake and dragon theme making it one of my personal highlights.

Jumping back 700 years to the late Kamakura period is a very special katana by *Rai Kunizane* - son of national treasure swordsmith *Rai Kunitoshi*. Its wide, magnificent shape makes it abundantly clear why this sword has been awarded prestigious **NBTHK Jûyô tôken**. The densely forged *ko-itame-hada* has plenty of *ji-nie* and dark swirls of *chikei*. A set of *Hosokawa kuyo-mon* (9 planets) *menuki* under the lacquered, leather wrapped hilt with a pure gold *kiri habaki* and a signed *Tadatoki Akasaka tsuba* gives this sword stunning aura on display.

Next up is a powerhouse katana crafted by *Kasusa no Suke Kaneshige* that successfully severed three stacked human bodies – a rare *tameshigiri* cutting test performed in 1664 by *Okada Jurôbei*. This sword is on hold.

We then head to the violent Nambokuchô period in the mid-1300s to a remarkable sword by *Shigezane* that was once a fierce *naginata*. Known as a *naginata-naoshi*, this katana bleeds dominance. The *kissaki* (tip) is an intimidating 9.5cm. A massive cut in defense from another sword in battle known as *kirikomi* rests on the base of the blade. This treasured samurai sword was the family heirloom of the *Naitô family* as recorded on the *sayagaki* by *Kanzan sensei*. Awarded **63rd NBTHK Jûyô tôken** certification in 2017. A big-time sword.

A long, splendid katana by 2nd generation *Jojo-saku* swordsmith *Tadatsuna* is the next offering in the catalogue. Crafted in the late 1600s in a calm *suguha hamon* with a smooth, steady stream of *nie* and *nioi*, this is a sword where form and function meet in full glory. A fine opportunity to build a striking custom *koshirae*.

Shodai Masahiro of the *Edo Hôjôji school* is the following katana. This excellent sword echoes the *majime* (serious) character of samurai living in Edo at the time. The *sayagaki* by late Living National Treasure *Hon'ami Nisshû* states that the *yakiba* is gorgeous, which is clear to see why. Its handsome *koshirae* features a *Mino-Gotô* cloud dragon *tsuba* and a *shiokumi* farming scene on the *fuchi-kashira* signed by *Mogarashi Nyûdo Sôten*.

For those wanting a cutting test, this impressive gold-inlayed wakizashi by *ryo-wazamono Yasusada* is one to consider collecting. This light, quick sword successfully severed through two stacked human bodies in one stroke by the renowned sword tester *Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa*. Another potential custom *koshirae* project.

Our final listing in the catalogue is a delightful, freshly polished *gendaito katana* from circa 1926 by *Yoshishige* of Gifu prefecture that has the power of *nata-mame* (sword beans) on its side!

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



Warm regards,

Pablo Kuntz
October 2019



Our kids! Lennon, Nelson and Hannah

INDEX OF AVAILABLE JAPANESE SWORDS

ITEM#	SWORDSMITH & TYPE	CM	CERTIFICATE	ERA / PERIOD	PRICE
ujka306	A KUNITERU KATANA	64.5	Tokubetsu Hozon	Enpo era (1673~1681)	SOLD
ujwa229	A HIROMICHI WAKIZASHI	39.0	Tokubetsu Hozon	Jokyo era (1684~1688)	SOLD
ujka325	A YOSHIKANE KATANA	70.5	Tokubetsu Hozon	Enpo era (1673~1681)	SOLD
ujka334	A RAI KUNIZANE KATANA	68.5	JÛYÔ TÔKEN	Shôwa era (1312~1317)	SOLD
ujka347	A KANESHIGE KATANA	69.7	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kanbun (1661~1664)	SOLD
ujka350	A SHIGEZANE KATANA	67.8	JÛYÔ TÔKEN	Enbun (1356~1361)	SOLD
ujka339	A TADATSUNA KATANA	77.3	Tokubetsu Hozon	Enpo era (1673~1681)	SOLD
ujka313	A MASAHIRO KATANA	63.3	Tokubetsu Hozon	Manji era (1658~1661)	SOLD
ujwa238	A YASUSADA WAKIZASHI	47.9	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kanbun (1661~1664)	SOLD
ujka064	A YOSHISHIGE KATANA	62.8	Kanteisho	Early Showa (~1926)	SOLD

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.

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

PLEASE TAKE REASSURANCE THAT ALL SWORDS FROM UNIQUE JAPAN ARE GUARANTEED AUTHENTIC AND COME WITH A **3-DAY WORRY FREE INSPECTION PERIOD** UPON ARRIVAL TO YOUR HOME.

WE ACQUIRE SWORDS ON A REGULAR BASIS AND CAN SOURCE SWORDS FOR COLLECTORS SEEKING A SPECIFIC SMITH AND/OR SCHOOL. PLEASE INQUIRE ABOUT OUR LATEST ARRIVALS THAT MAY NOT BE LISTED IN THE CATALOGUE.

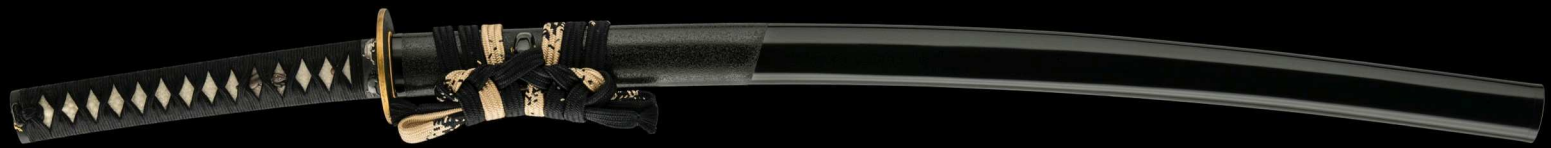
ALSO, BE SURE LET US KNOW IF YOU ARE TRAVELLING TO TOKYO AS WE CAN BOOK A PRIVATE MEETING TOGETHER AT OUR STUDIO IN EBISU.

DOMO ARIGATO,
PABLO

UNIQUE JAPAN, FINE ART DEALER
ANTIQUES LICENSE ISSUED BY MEGURO CITY
TOKYO, JAPAN (NO.303291102398)

A recently completed *custom koshirae* in the theme of *Inoshishi*, commemorating 2019 as The Year of the Wild Boar.

ujka197 - A Hiroshige Katana
(featured in Catalogue 30 - sword is now sold)





ITEM# UJKA306

A KUNITERU KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (ENPO ERA: 1673~1681)

Swordsmith:	<i>Ise no Kami Kuniteru (ubu nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 64.5cm Curvature: 1.45cm Motohaba: 3.17cm
Jihada:	<i>Expertly forged ko-itame with masame-hada in shinogi-ji, chikei and light utsuri</i>
Hamon:	<i>Deep gunome-midare with kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Certificate 1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Certificate 2-3:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>sword & koshirae designated as Especially Precious</i>)
Certificate 4-6:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic</i>)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (<i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i>)
Sharpness:	Wazamono (<i>rated as a maker of good sharp swords</i>)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Dr. Sato Kanzan
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This katana embodies Edo period sophistication. Born *Kobayashi Hayanoshin*, swordsmith Kuniteru was considered one of Osaka's finest swordsmiths after *Tsuda Sukehiro* and *Inoue Shinkai*. Expertly forged with *chikei*, a deep *nioguchi* in *gunome-midare* and a touch of *utsuri*, this extra sharp katana is housed in a high-class black lacquered koshirae with pure *shakudo* and gold *Yoshioka school Inaba no Suke kiri-mon* fittings. This is formal wear for an elite samurai. Six certificates accompany this highly collectible sword that includes *sayagaki* by *Dr. Sato Kanzan*.



Saki-kasane: 3.9mm

Moto-kasane: 6.7mm

Omosa: 620g

Kissaki: 3.92cm

Saki-haba: 2.21cm

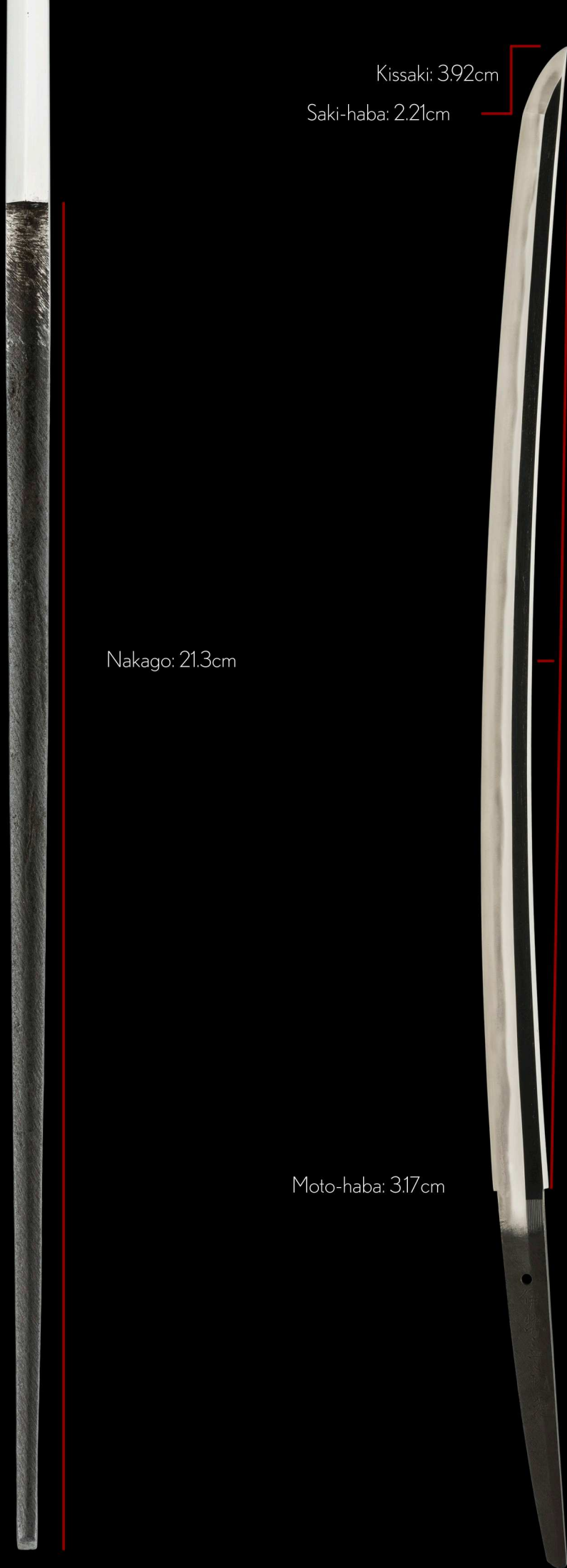
Nakago: 21.3cm

Moto-haba: 3.17cm

Nagasa: 64.5cm

Sori: 1.45cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Born *Kobayashi Hayanoshin*, swordsmith *Kuniteru* studied under first-generation *shodai Kunisuke* of the *Kunisuke School*.

Not only did he become one of his star students, but also his adopted son-in-law by marrying his sensei's daughter.

Kuniteru was granted the title of *Ise Daijo* in 1671, and upgraded it to *Ise no Kami* (Lord of Ise province) in spring 1672.

Once becoming *Ise no Kami* until the Tenna era (1684), Kuniteru was considered the finest swordsmith after *Tsuda Sukehiro* and *Inoue Shinkai* in Osaka.





Location: *Settsu* (resident of Osaka)
Title: *Ise no Kami* (Lord of Ise province)
Swordsmith: *Kuniteru* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)
sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)
ha-agari kuriji (rounded end with upward slant)

伊 (I)

勢 (se, no)

守 (Kami)

國 (Kuni)

輝 (teru)



A crisp, single hole in nakago (*mekugi-ana*)
- perfectly preserved for over 300 years.

A clean, beautiful patina.

(*ura*, reverse)



Chiseled signatures by the very top swordsmiths have an artistic energy, similar to flow of a master calligrapher.

01201903

No 1011189



鑑定書

一刀 銘 伊勢守国輝

長二尺一寸三分強

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

令和元年五月二十三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



石川県 教育委員会
第 334 号
昭和26年3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

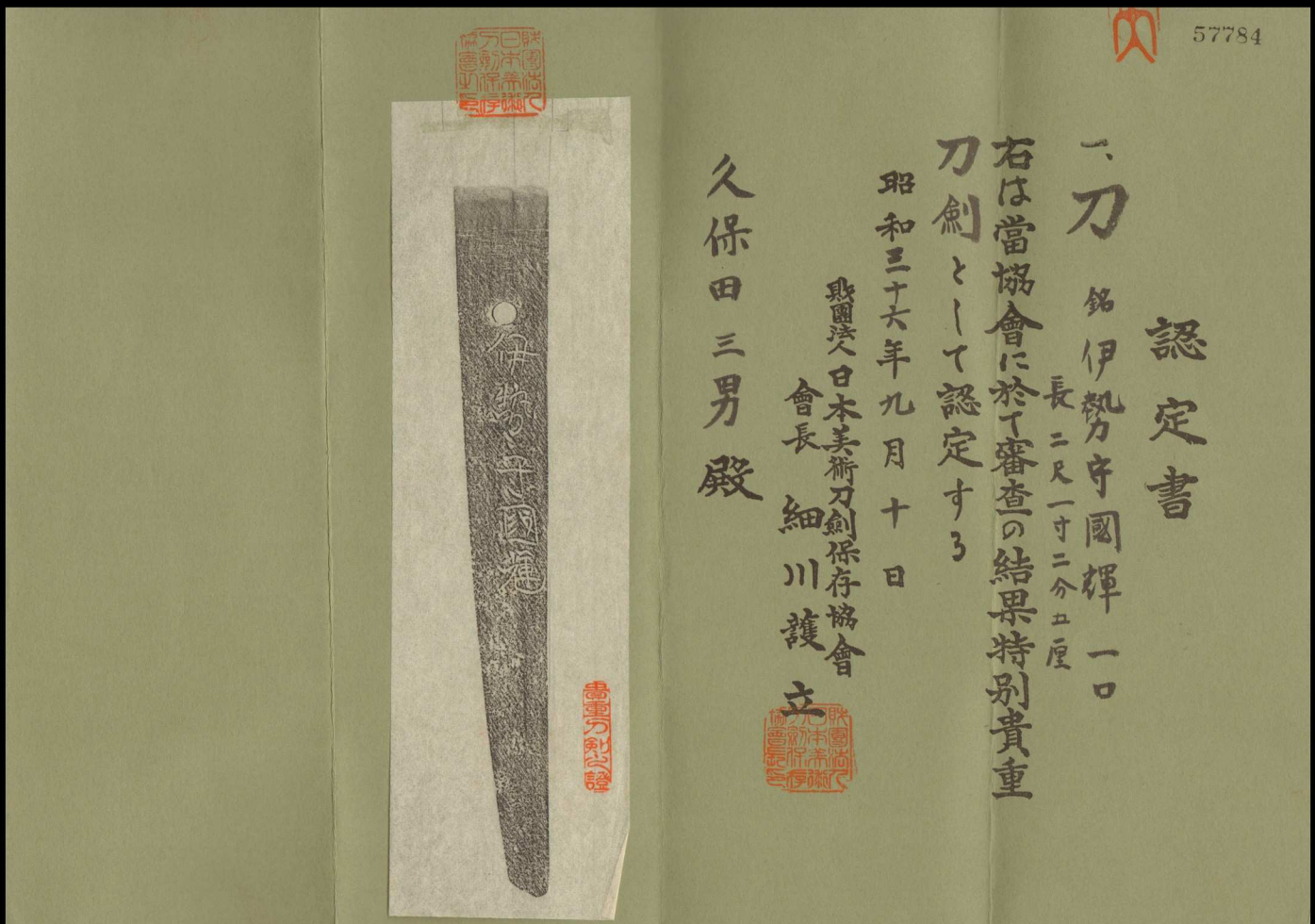
Issued in the 1st year of Reiwa (2019), May 23rd

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Ise no Kami Kuniteru

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 1-sun 3-bu kyō (64.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho Certificate of Designation

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

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

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Ise no Kami Kuniteru

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 1-sun 2-bu 5-rin (64.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



特別貴重刀剣認定

Tokubetsu Kichô tōken nintei

Designated as *Tokubetsu Kichô tōken*

伊勢守國輝

Ise no Kami Kunitaru

刃貳尺壹寸二分五厘有之

Ha nishaku issun nibu gorin kore ari

Blade length: 64.5 cm

昭和丙午歲仲秋日

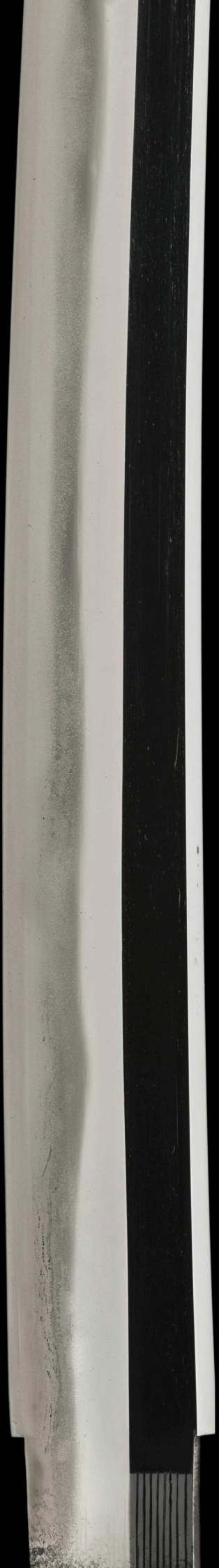
Shōwa hinoe uma doshi chūshū bi

Middle of autumn in hinoe uma year of Shōwa (1966)

寒山誌「花押」

Kanzan shirusu + kaō


Written by Kanzan + monogram





The image features two pieces of Japanese sword blades (boshi) set against a solid black background. The upper blade is positioned diagonally from the top left towards the center, with its tip pointing downwards and to the right. The lower blade is positioned diagonally from the bottom right towards the center, with its tip pointing upwards and to the left. Both blades are highly reflective, showing bright highlights and dark shadows that emphasize their curved, polished surfaces. The lighting creates a strong contrast between the metallic sheen of the blades and the deep black background.

A lavish *ko-maru* boshi fills the *kissaki* with confidence.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is curved and shows a bright, glowing hamon pattern. Two red lines point to specific features: one points to a dark, textured area near the tip, and the other points to a lighter, smoother area further down the blade.

strong *masame-hada* in the *shinogi-ji*

light *utsuri* (shadow hamon)
gently appears



A soft blue tint shines off the cosmic band of nie crystals. The steel is an expertly forged dense *ko-itame hada*.

Ashi (legs) extend from the *gunome midare hamon*.

The image features two close-up views of a sword blade against a black background. The top view shows a curved section of the blade with a bright, glowing hamon pattern. The bottom view shows a similar section, also with a glowing hamon pattern. The text is centered between the two views.

A deep and consistent *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon) - this hamon is reminiscent of the Shinto period works of the great *Kotetsu* and *Inoue Shinkai*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



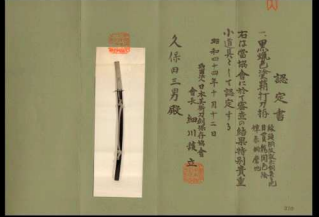
gold *ni-ju habaki* with
finely crafted file marks



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

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



*NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho
Certificate of Authenticity*



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



Tied to the sageo, there is a hand-written note on traditional washi paper that reads:

伊勢守国輝拵・
縁頭赤銅桐紋目貫金龍柄

*Ise no Kami Kuniteru Koshirae - Fuchigashira
shakudô kirimon menuki kinryû gara*

Koshirae for Ise no Kami Kuniteru
Fuchigashira of shakudô with paulownia crest,
menuki of golden dragon motif

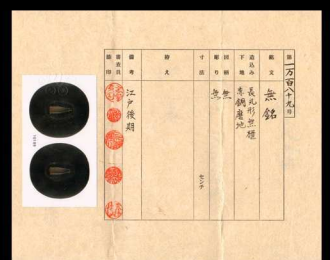
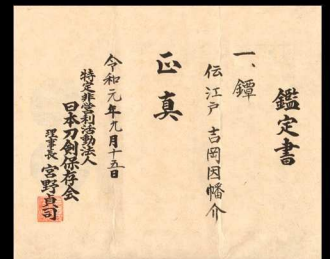
伊勢守国輝拵
縁頭赤銅桐紋目貫金龍柄



This is a pure *shakudo* tsuba that has been attributed to *Yoshioka Inaba no Suke* of the Yoshioka school. This first generation of artists worked in the early 1600's. The Inaba no Suke Yoshioka line of artists lasted until the late 1800's.

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

Note that the *fuchi-kashira* of this koshirae is also attributed to *Yoshioka Inaba no Suke* - a matching set of fittings kept together faithfully since the late Edo period.





Daimyô and *samurai* were required to own a koshirae with a glossy black lacquered *saya* (scabbard), discreet black plain *shakudô tsuba*, and white *same* (ray skin) *tsuka* (hilt) on occasions when visiting the shogunate castle. Exactly the type of koshirae that this Kuniteru katana represents.

If the samurai arrived with a *sukashi* (openwork) tsuba, it is said that the *shôgun* would not be impressed...

This koshirae is the equivalent of modern-day formal attire. A clean black suit, white shirt, simple tie, etc. The Japanese have, and forever will be, particular about showing respect and proper manners.



Samurai class.



Kiri-mon, the paulownia flower has been seen on samurai art for centuries. There is a sense of pride and responsibility captured within this Edo period *fuchi-kashira*.





Kashira (pommel)
attributed to
Inaba no Suke Yoshioka (1700s)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



Scales and braids
merge as one.



ITEM# UJWA229

A HIROMICHI WAKIZASHI

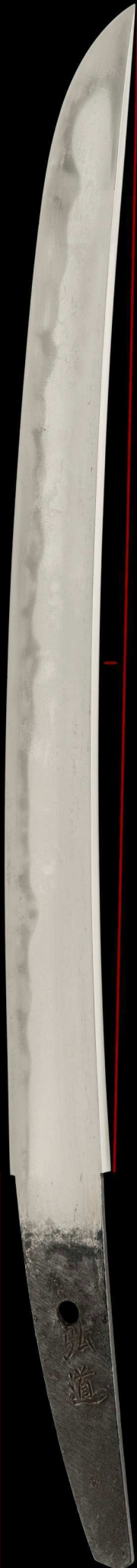
SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (JOKYO ERA: 1684~1688)

Swordsmith:	<i>Hiromichi (ubu nakago, Mishina School)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 39.0cm Curvature: 0.8cm Motohaba: 3.4cm
Jihada:	<i>Itame and mokume hada with chikei and ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Dai-gunome midare with kinsuji, sunagashi, yô, tobiyaki in nie-deki</i>
Certificate 1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Certificate 2:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>designated as Especially Precious</i>)
Certificate 3&4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>a koshirae and fuchi-kashira designated as Authentic</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This rare and spirited *hirazukuri wakizashi* was crafted by swordsmith *Hiromichi*, student of *Iga no Kami Kinmichi* from the prestigious *Yamashiro Mishina School* in Kyoto circa 1684. Plentiful *hataraki* abounds including *kinsuji*, *sunagashi*, *yô* and *tobiyaki*. This is a gutsy sword that was directly inspired by the Koto-period *Soshu tradition* that *Masamune* made famous.

The wakizashi is secured in a unique Edo-period set of *koshirae* that celebrates our natural world. Centipedes, dragonflies, spiders, trees, fish and flowers are depicted in marvelous detail at every turn. The wakizashi was immensely personal to the samurai as it never left his side. This sense of balance and closeness is particularly tangible within this very special piece of Japanese art.



Saki-kasane: 5.4mm

Saki-haba: 2.7cm

Nagasa: 39.0cm

Omosa: 415g

Sori: 0.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.4cm

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

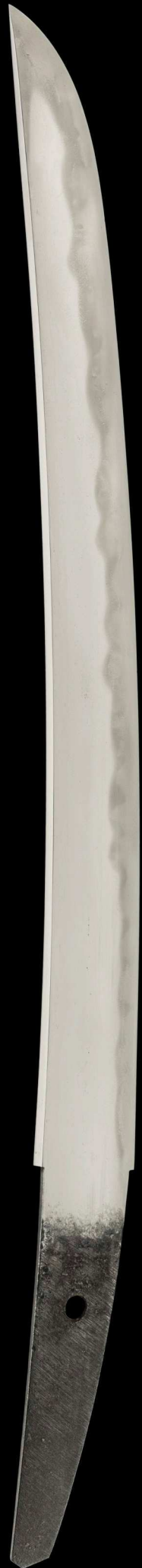
Mekugi-ana: 1

Nakago: 13.3cm

以道

The shape of this wakizashi is referred to as *hirazukuri* (flat construction).

Hirazukuri tanto and wakizashi commencing from the *Kamakura period* (1185 ~ 1333) can be seen with this shape.





Location: *Iwami province (Simane)*

Swordsmith: *Hiromichi*

Hiro (meaning 'vast' or 'wide')

Michi (meaning 'path' or 'way')

Before a signature is engraved into the *nakago* (tang), it is finished with a file - leaving distinctive file marks known as *yasurime*.

A variety of filing patterns were applied by various schools and smiths over the centuries.

This type of file mark is called *katte sagari* (right-handed, downward).

This is the second most common file pattern with *kiri* (horizontal) most commonly applied.



特 保
29201703

No 1007327



鑑定書

一脇指 銘 弘道(新刀)

長一尺二寸八分強

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

平成二十九年五月三十日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



兵庫 教育委員会
第 57922 号
昭和44年 2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), May 30th

One, Wakizashi

Mei (signature)
Hiromichi (*Shinto period*)

Nagasa (length)
1-shaku 2-sun 8-bu han (39.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

358512

認定書

一、短指 銘 弘道 長一尺二寸八分五厘
右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別貴重
刀剣として認定す

昭和五十三年六月十日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

一 殿



NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 53rd year of Showa (1978), June 10th

One, Wakizashi

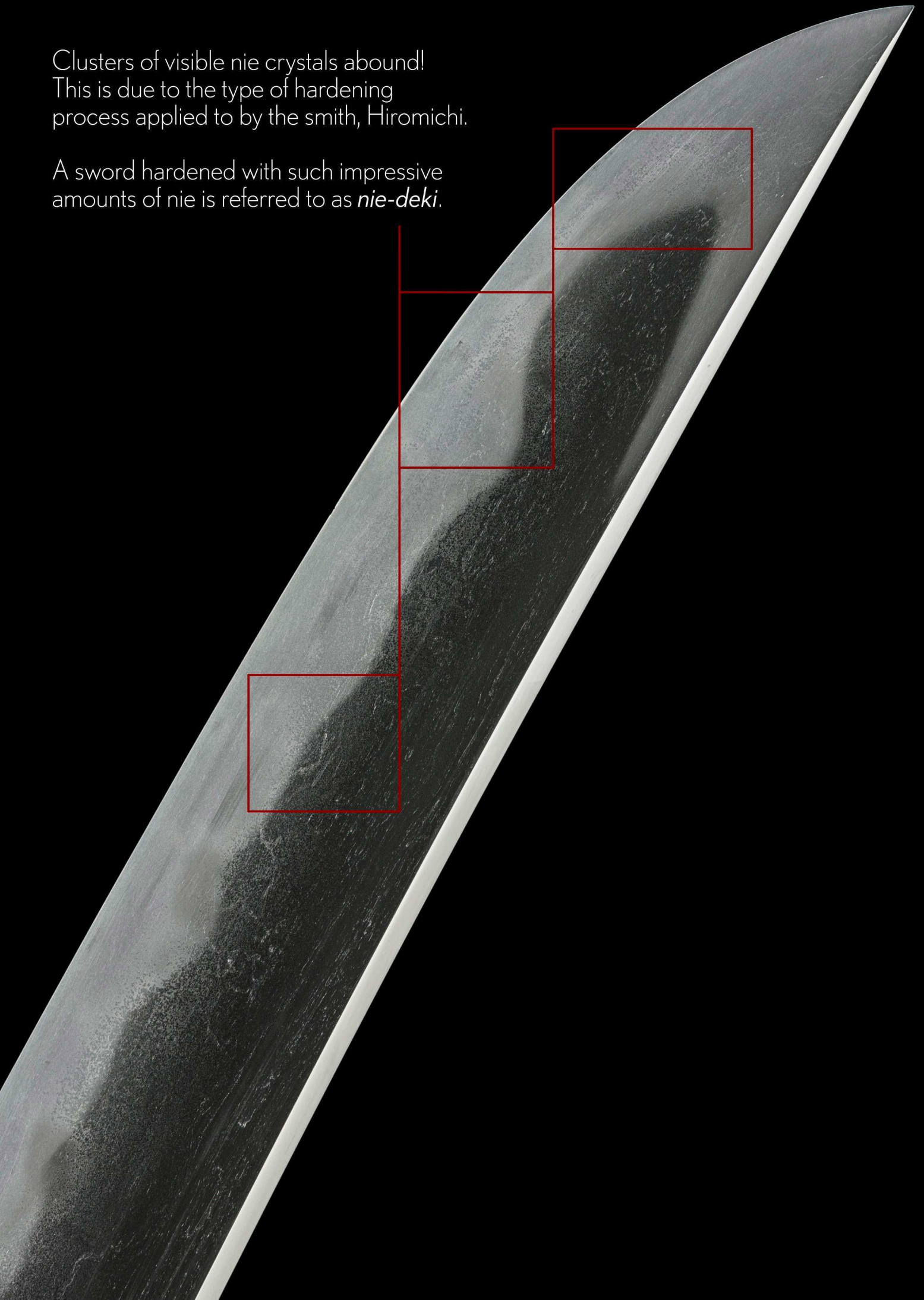
Mei (signature)
Hiromichi

Nagasa (length)
1-shaku 2-sun 8-bu 5-rin (39.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

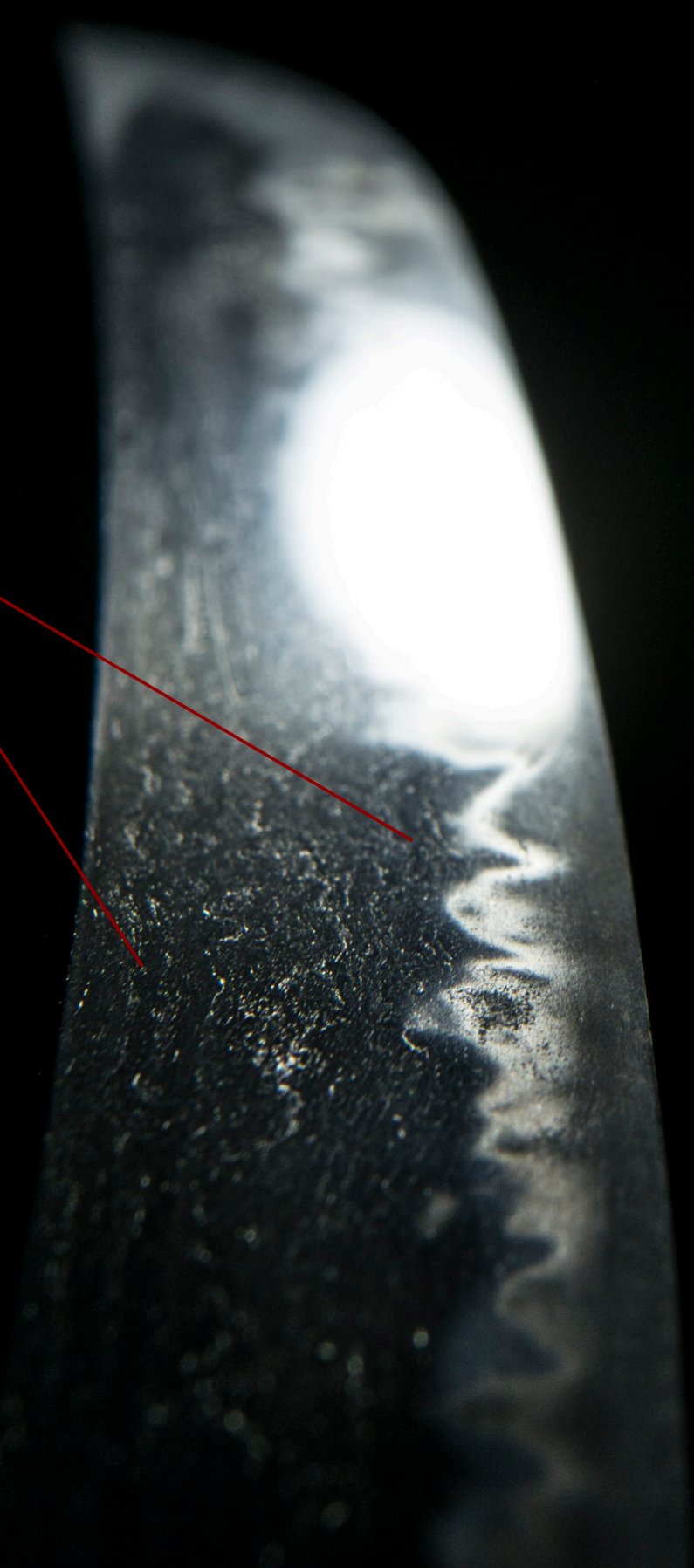
Clusters of visible nie crystals abound!
This is due to the type of hardening
process applied to by the smith, Hiromichi.

A sword hardened with such impressive
amounts of nie is referred to as *nie-deki*.



Literally meaning "*shadow(s) in the steel*", *chikei* are beautiful black gleaming lines of *nie* crystals in the *ji* (body) of the sword that are highly prized.

This tanto is bursting with *chikei*, a feature of well-made swords.



An energetic *dai-gunome midare hamon*
(varied surging waves)



An abundance of *hataraki* (activity in the steel), makes this wakizashi a joy to admire in the light.

kinsuji

golden (black) lines of nie crystals that cut through the hamon.

sunagashi

streams of sand

yo (leaves) are clusters of nie crystals inside the hamon.



A traditionally lacquered antique koshirae certified to the late Edo period (1780-1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



The *kurigata* is adorned with butterflies that are thought to carry the souls of the living and of past ancestors.

They are a symbol of joy and longevity.



signed *kogatana*

This sword's *koshirae* features a *kozuka* with the depiction of what appears to be *buri* (yellowtail fish) - a dream dish for *sashimi* aficionados!

The *kozuka* was used by the samurai to open letters, cut fruit, fix shoes, etc. It was a utility knife, not a weapon per se.

The antique blade inside the *kozuka* - known as the *kogatana* - appears to be signed, however, largely illegible.

The *kozuka* slots neatly in the *saya* (scabbard) and is drawn through the hole of the *tsuba*.





A chrysanthemum theme can be seen on the *shakudo nanako tsuba* (guard). The *kiku-mon* or 'Chrysanthemum Seal', still is the official seal of the Japanese Imperial family.

Hiromichi was a student of the prestigious Mishina School, which was granted permission from the Imperial family to place the 16-petal kiku-mon and variations of the kiku-mon on their swords. It was a great honour and privilege.



(reverse)



A fly and spider share sides on the copper *fuchi* (collar) while a centipede slithers its way along the *kashira* (pommel). Small logs of wood cleverly form the *menuki* (grips).





Rings of a tree are depicted in this celebration of nature's magnificence.





This *fuchi-kashira* was crafted by *Shugensai Hirosada* of the *Uchikoshi school* in Mito province (Hitachi). The inspiration for the creation was a piece of artwork by the Hamano school's founder, *Shozui*.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



kojiri (end cap)

The samurai revered the dragonfly.
For when they flew, they flew forward, and never retreated.

Dragonflies are a symbol of determination and bravery, reflecting
the very essence of the samurai themselves.





ITEM# UJKA325

A YOSHIKANE KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (ENPO ERA: 1673~1681)

Swordsmith:	<i>Chikushû jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane (ubu nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.5cm Curvature: 1.1cm Motohaba: 3.23cm
Jihada:	<i>Splendid itame and o-hada with swirling chikei and ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Bright chu-suguha with kinsuji, sunagashi, yo, and ko-ashi</i>
Certificate 1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Certificate 2:	NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>designated as Extraordinarily Precious</i>)
Certificate 3:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>koshirae designated as Especially Precious</i>)
Certificate 4-6:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic</i>)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (<i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This is a remarkable katana crafted in the early Edo period by *jo-saku* Yoshikane of the *Chikuzen Nobukuni* school in Kyushu. The densely forged *itame-hada* contains boundless amounts of swirling *chikei* that's visible in the *kissaki* (tip). A precise *chu-suguha* hamon beams brightly with speckles of *yô* (leaves) falling gracefully toward the cutting edge - an attribute synonymous in the works of Yoshikane. A gorgeous set of Edo period koshirae is led by a slithering snake on the *fuchi* (collar) that is signed and dated to the summer of 1785 by master metalsmith *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki*. A magnificent water dragon is depicted on the iron *tsuba* while long, snake *menuki* weave their magic under the braided silk. Six certificates of authenticity accompany this class act.

Saki-kasane: 4.7mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Omosa: 800g

Kissaki: 3.64cm
Saki-haba: 2.2cm

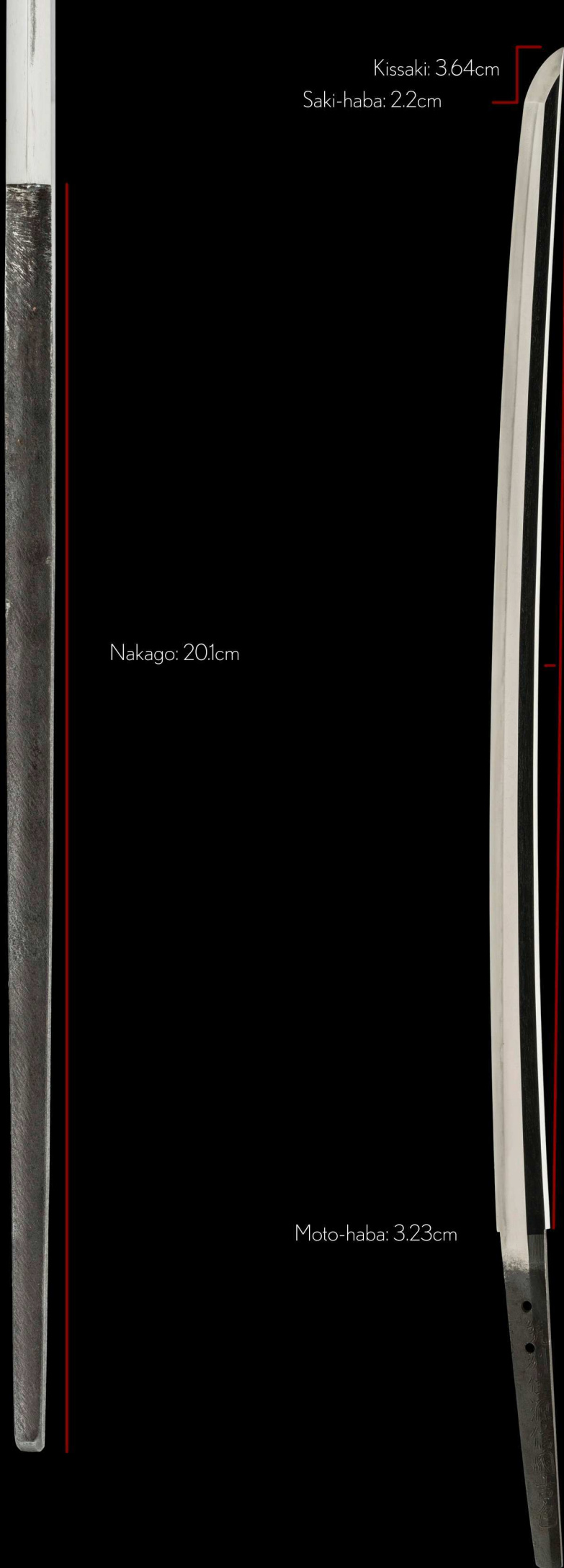
Nakago: 20.1cm

Moto-haba: 3.23cm

Nagasa: 70.3cm

Sori: 1.1cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Born *Nobukuni Sukezaemon*, swordsmith *Yoshikane* is the 14th generation succeeding the founder of the *Nobukuni school*.

Rated a *jo-saku* (superior smith), this katana is consistent in character to other master works he produced. Densely forged with great weight, shallow in curvature and with a *chu-kissaki* (medium sized tip).

Yoshikane died on August 22nd in the sixth year of Genroku, 1693.





Location: *Chikushu* (Kyushu island)

Clan name: *Minamoto*

School: *Chikuzen Nobukuni*

Swordsmith: *Yoshikane*

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

kiri-yasurime (horizontal file marks)

kurijiri: (chestnut-shaped nakago-jiri)

筑 Chiku

州 shu

住 ju

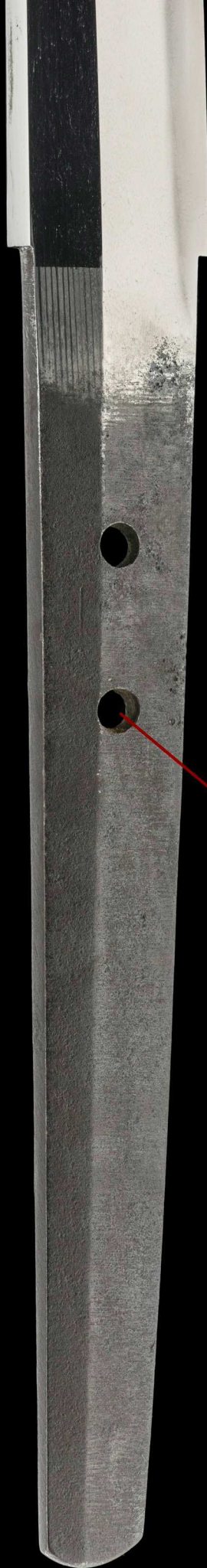
源 Minamoto

信 Nobu

國 kuni

吉 Yoshi

包 kane



An extra *mekugi-ana* (hole) added during the Edo period, possibly for reinforcement.

Top hole is original to the blade.

(*ura*, reverse)

特保
01201903

№ 1011193



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 筑州住源信国吉包

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

令和元年五月二十三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京都 教育委員会
第 35218 号
昭和27年5月15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 1st year of Heisei (2019), May 23rd

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Chikushū-jū Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane

Nagasa (length)

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

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

認定書

水七〇、三センチメートル

一、刀銘筑州住源信國吉包

右は當協會に於て審査の結果甲種特別

貴重刀剣として認定す

昭和五十年四月二十日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 本間 順 治

奈良 耕平 殿



NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho Token Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Extraordinarily Precious*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 50th year of Showa (1975), April 20th

One, Katana

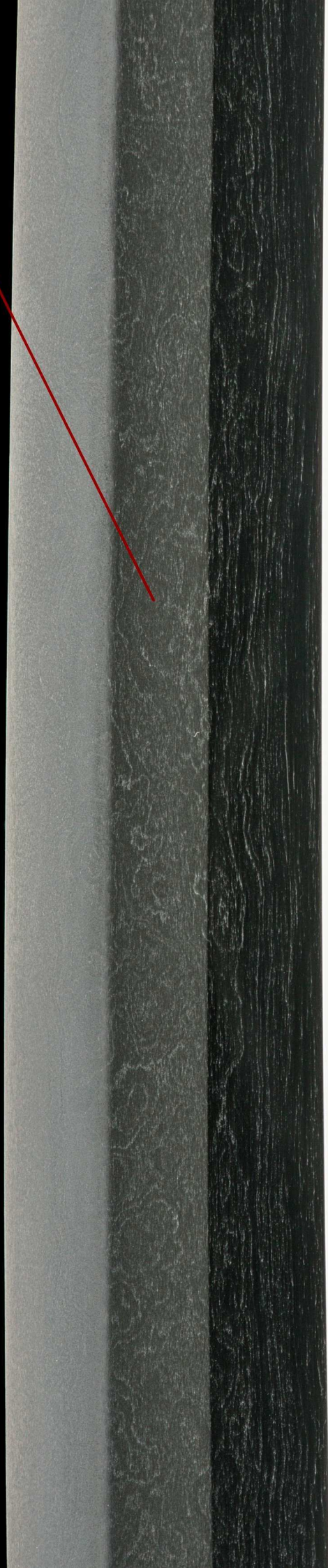
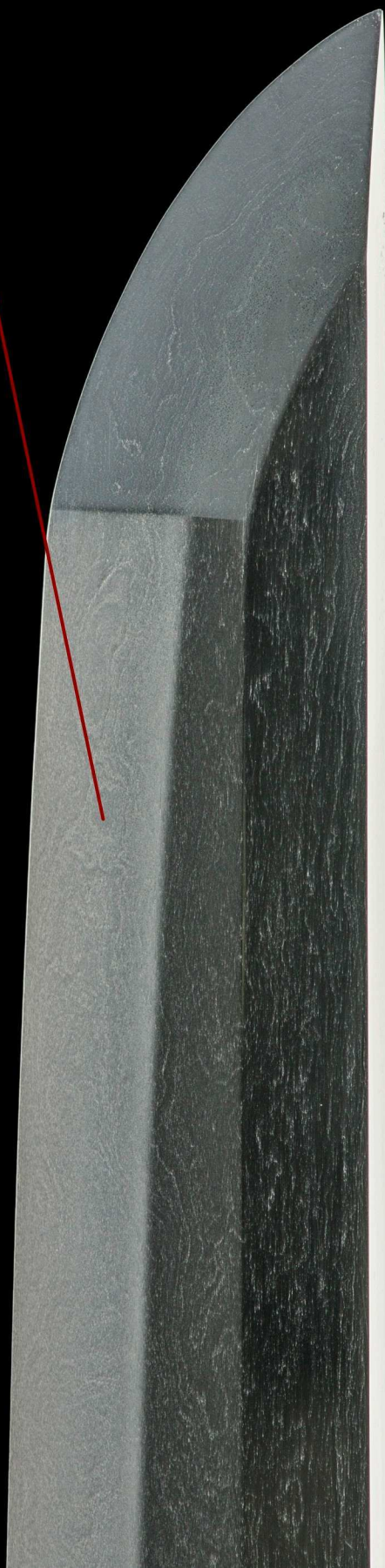
Mei (signature)

Chikushû-jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane

Nagasa (length)
70.3cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

A spectacular burl-grain *mokume-hada* mixed with *o-hada* gives the steel a beautiful wood-like finish. This swirling pattern is clearly visible within the *ha* (*yakiba*), the tempered edge of the blade as well.



The beautiful fibrous wood grain pattern extends into the *kissaki*.



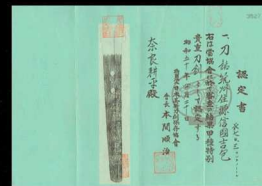


Chikei is the term to describe dark lines of nie-crystals that are interwoven in the *jihada*.

An abundance of chikei can be enjoyed in this formidable katana.

Consistency and brightness of the *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon) is what to look for when it comes exceptional sword-making. Here, a beaming *suguha* (straight) hamon announces its presence under the light.

This katana achieved prestigious NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho Tôken (an extraordinarily precious sword) in 1975 - the highest certificate below Jûyô Tôken. This 'blue' certificate was issued for only 9 years (1973-1982).

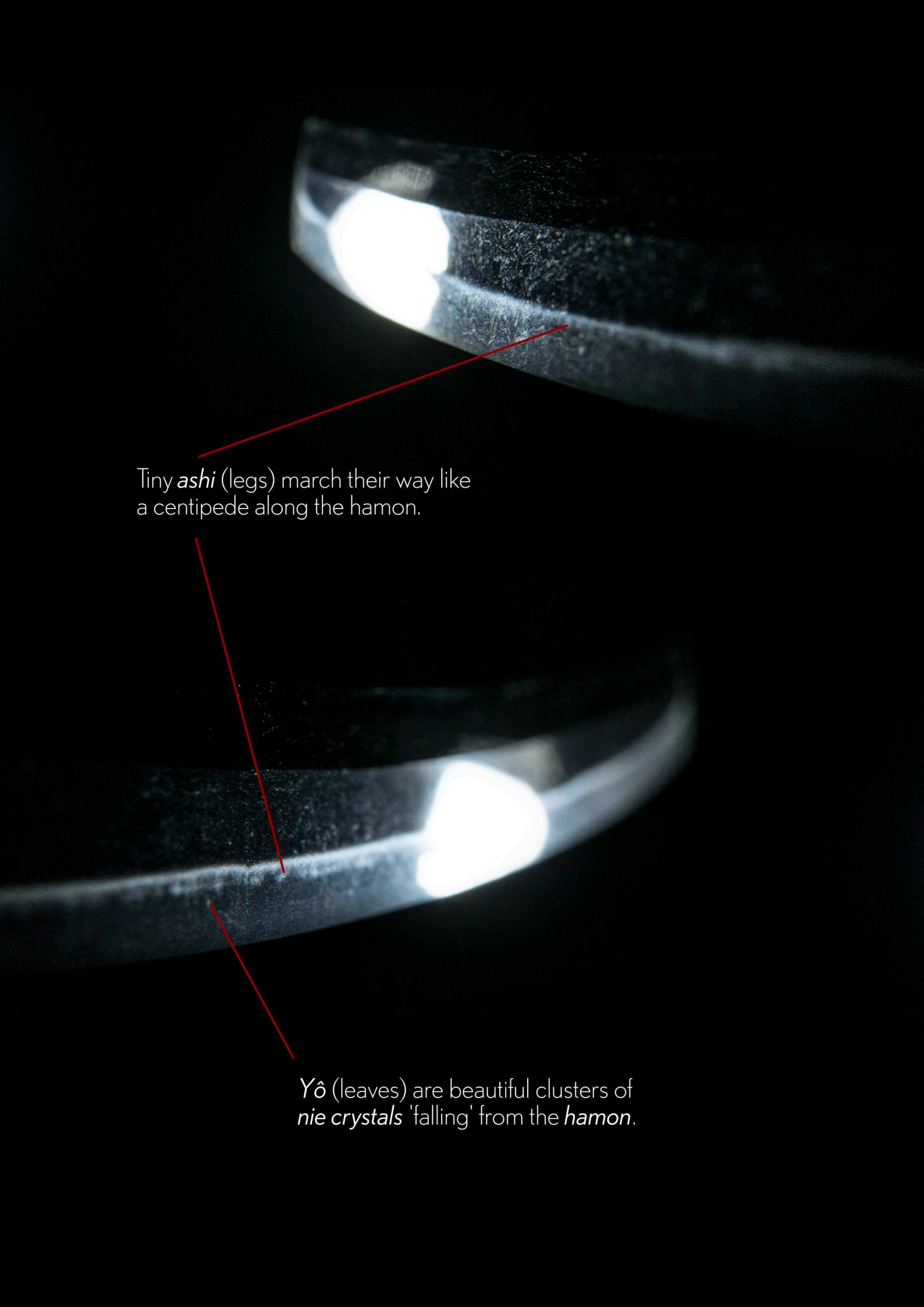


masterful *suguha*





kinsuji and brushed strokes of *sunagashi*

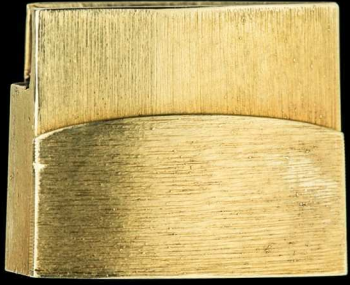
A close-up photograph of a sword blade, focusing on the hamon (the edge of the blade). The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted with a bright, glowing light. Several small, bright spots are visible along the hamon, which are referred to as 'ashi' (legs) in the text. Red arrows point from the text to these spots. The background is dark, making the glowing spots stand out.

Tiny *ashi* (legs) march their way like a centipede along the hamon.

Yô (leaves) are beautiful clusters of *nie crystals* 'falling' from the *hamon*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

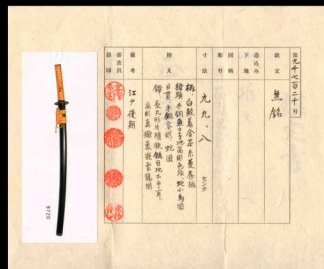


Gold wrapped *nijû habaki*
with diagonal file marks

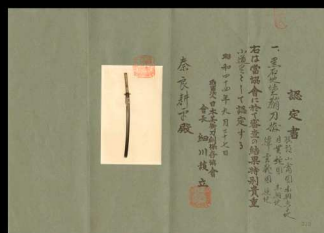
*Kuro-ishime-ji-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒石目地塗打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae with
black saya with stone like surface*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



*NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho
Certificate of Authenticity*

*note: snake artwork on
fuchi is not mentioned on
the certificate*





A gorgeous matching ivy motif appears on the *kurigata* (where sageo is tied) and *kojiri* (end cap) that serves as extra protection for the *saya* (scabbard). Ivy is traditionally associated with resilience and longevity.





This awesome hammered iron tsuba has been attributed to *Hirado Kunishige* from Hizen province in Kyushu - crafted in the middle Edo period, circa 1700~1780.

The fantastically detailed *brass takabori* relief of a 3-clawed Japanese cloud dragon (*unryu no zu*) brings immense force to the sword.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity has been attained.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



(reverse)



A defensive snake coils around the *fuchi-kashira* and under the silk braid in the form of *menuki*. In Japan, the snake is a symbol of protection against misfortune and illness, as well as a symbol of wisdom, good luck, strength, and change.



Tenmei gonen natsu mi-tsuchinoto kore o tsukuru
Kikuoka Mitsuyuki + kaô

This fuchi was crafted in the summer of the 5th year of Tenmei (1785) in the Year of the Snake [of the tsuchinoto cycle]
Signed and dated by *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki* plus his monogram

(Kiku) 菊
(oka) 岡
(Mitsu) 光
(yuki) 行
(kaô) 花押



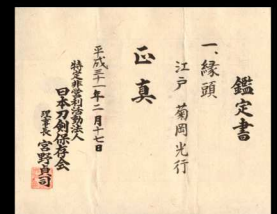
天 (Ten)
明 (mei)
五 (go)
夏 (natsu)
巳 (mi)
巳 (tsuchinoto)
作 (tsukuru)
之 (kore o)



According to Markus Sesko in his *Kinko Kodogu* publication, master metalsmith *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki*, founder of the *Kikuoka school*, was born into a family of significant cultural pedigree. His father and his grandfather were renowned *haiku* and *waka* poets. Their pseudonym *Senryô* was later passed on to Mitsuyuki.

Some of Mitsuyuki's work has attained prestigious NBTHK Jûyô Tôken and hints of poetic inspiration echo in his creations.

This fuchi-kashira comes with a Kanteisho certificate of authenticity from the NTHK-NPO - this piece alone is a rare and valuable work of art.





The kanji character for 'kane' in *Yoshikane*, is curiously shaped like a slithering snake.





kashira (pommel)

Poetry in flight.

Note how the detailed *shakudo nanako* (raised dot pattern) captures the freedom the small birds enjoy in the open sky.







on the move..

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.

A printed and bound copy of the sword's full description from the catalogue is also included!



safe, extra large cloth for adding oil to the blade



ITEM# UJKA334

A RAI KUNIZANE KATANA

UNSIGNED, LATE KAMAKURA PERIOD (SHÔWA ERA: 1312~1317)

Swordsmith: *Rai Kunizane (attribution, o-suriage mumei)*
Measurements: **Length:** 68.5cm **Curvature:** 1.9cm **Moto-haba:** 3.24cm
Jihada: *Ko-itame mixed with mokume, nagare and some jifu, plenty of ji-nie, and chikei*
Hamon: *Suguha-chô in ko-nie-deki with tight nioiguchi, ko-chôji, ko-gunome, many ashi*
Horimono: *On both sides a bôhi (groove) that ends in kaku-dome (square-ended) in the nakago*
Certificate: **44th NBTHK Jûyô Tôken** (a sword designated as *Profound and Important*)
Fujishiro: **Jo-saku** (ranked as superior smith)
Included: Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

SOLD

Rai Kunizane of the esteemed *Rai school* was the son of national treasure swordsmith *Rai Kunitoshi* with national treasured swordsmith *Rai Kunimitsu* being his older brother and *Rai Tomokuni* his younger brother. *Kunizane* flourished in *Yamashiro* (Kyoto) during the late Kamakura period and likely worked into the warring *Nambokucho* period that started in circa 1333.

This wide and powerful katana projects a stately confidence. This is a sword that has been well-cared for. The densely forged *ko-itame-hada* has plenty of *ji-nie* and dark swirls of *chikei* to enjoy. The *hamon* is a bright *suguha-chô* with many *ashi* in typical *Rai* style. The vermilion *saya* and *Hosokawa kuyo-mon* (9 planets) *menuki* under the lacquered, leather wrapped hilt with a pure gold *kiri habaki* and a signed *Tadatoki Akasaka tsuba* respectfully preserve this splendid samurai sword.



Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Moto-kasane: 5.5mm

Omosa: 715g

Kissaki: 4.71cm

Saki-haba: 2.46cm

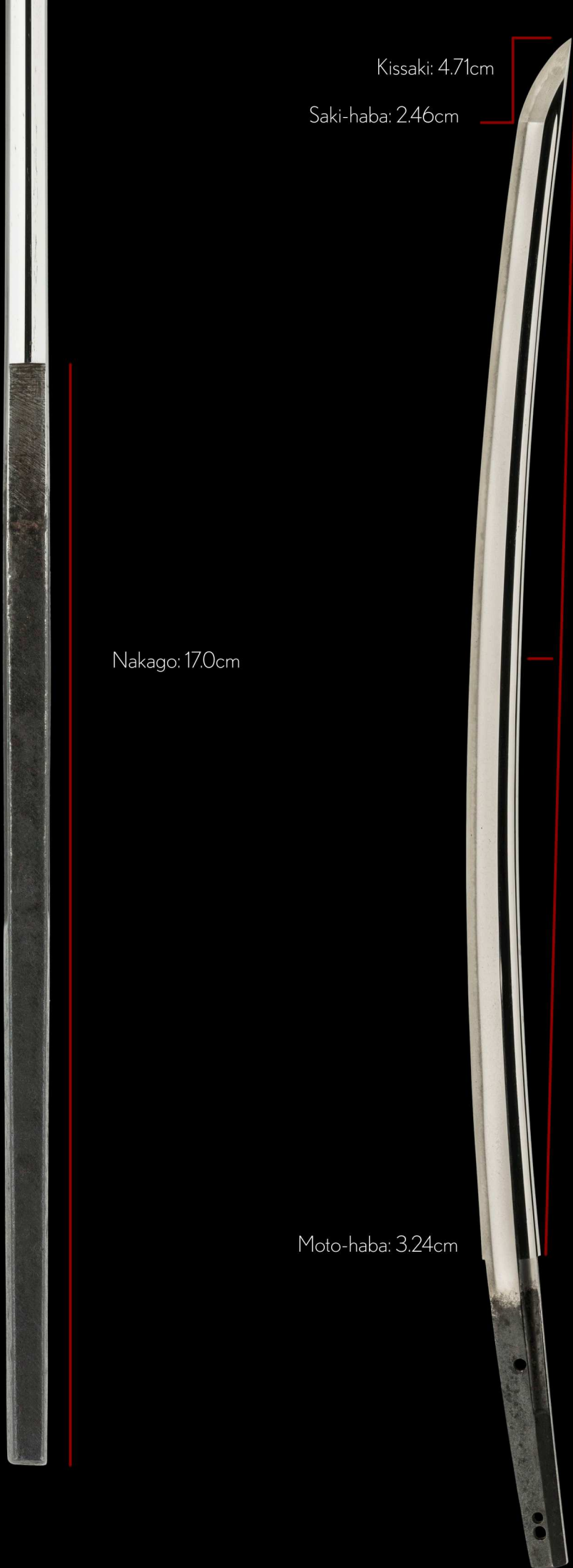
Nakago: 17.0cm

Moto-haba: 3.24cm

Nagasa: 68.5cm

Sori: 1.9cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



Rai Kunizane is said to be the son [or student] of grandmaster *Rai Kunitoshi*, with national treasure swordsmith *Rai Kunimitsu* being his older brother and *Rai Tomokuni* his younger brother.

This wide, muscular katana was crafted during the late *Kamakura period*, circa 1312-1317.

It features a grand *torii-zori* shape, where the curvature is found in the middle of the blade. The original cutting edge of this impressive sword would have been about 80cm.



~10cm

ha-machi (notch at blade)
mune-machi (notch at spine)

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

As there is a *kaku-dome* (square ended groove) in the middle of the nakago, we can deduce that the sword was shortened by about 10cm.

A *kaku-dome* groove generally ends within 3cm of the *machi*, thus making the original length of the cutting edge of the blade approximately 78~80cm.



Mitsu (three) *mune* (spine/ridge) is a rare construction whereby the spine has three surfaces (the top is flat, not pointed).

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



10199844

重要第一〇九二號

指定書

刀 無銘 来国真 一口

法量 長さ六八・五釐 反り一・九釐

形状 鑄造 三ツ棘 身幅広く 元先の幅差少なく 反り深く 大鋒

鍛 小板目処々流肌 空交じり 地斑調の肌合入り 地沸つき 地景合る

刃文 直刃調にすず 小交の目交じり 足頼りに入り 匂口締まり ころ出沸つく

帽子 乱れ込み 表は丸く 裏は尖って返る

彫物 表裏に棒樋を角止め

茎 大磨上 籠目勝手下がり 目釘孔三

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要 刀剣に指定する

平成十年十一月十二日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 山中貞則



Jûyô Certificate No. 10292
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
Katana, mumei: Rai Kunizane (来国真)

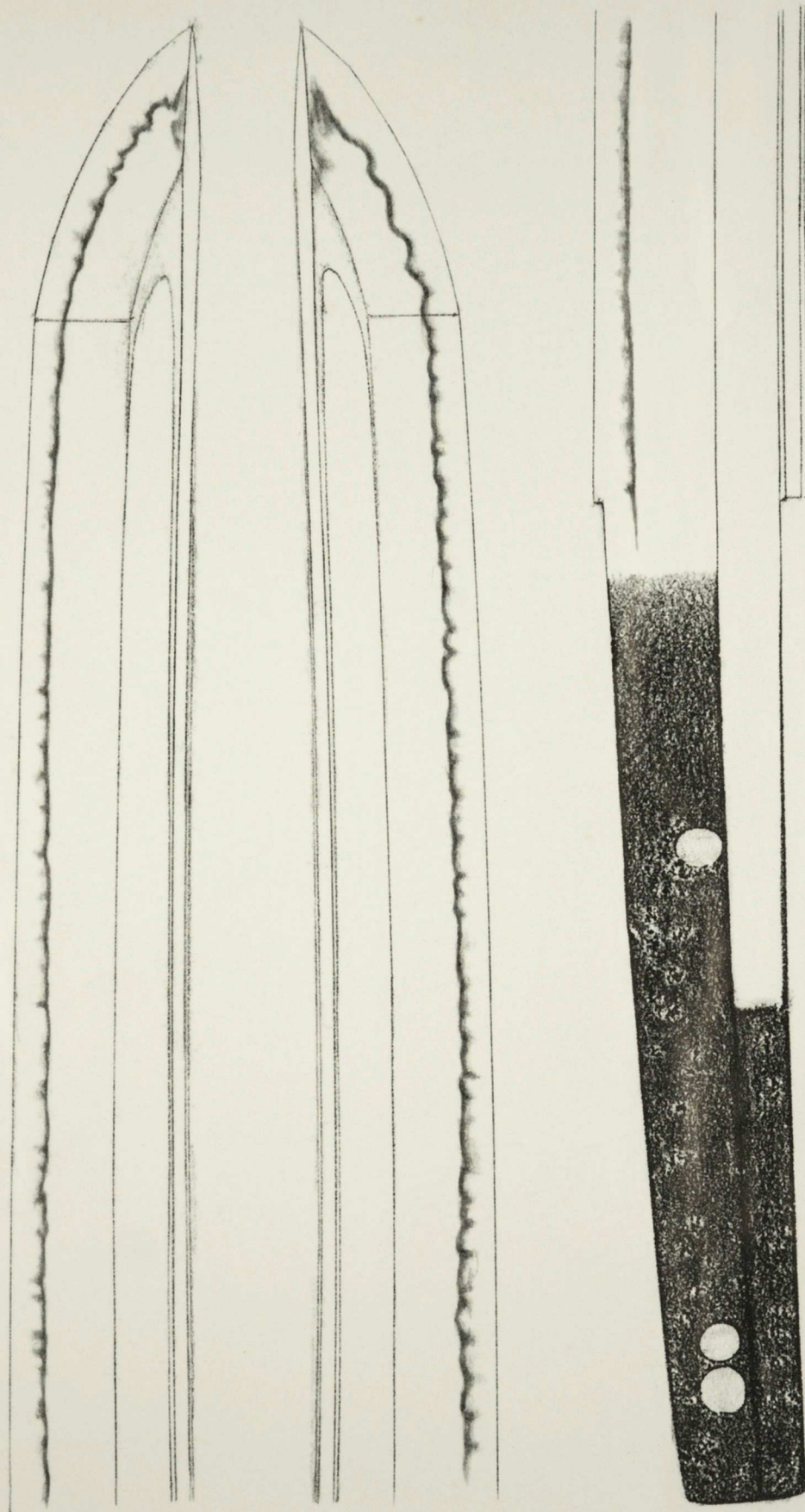
Measurements
nagasa 68.5 cm, sori 1.9 cm

Description
Keijo: *shinogi-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, wide *mihaba*, no noticeable taper, deep *sori*, *ô-kissaki*
Kitae: *ko-itame* that is mixed with *mokume* and *nagare* in places and that features some *jifu*, plenty of *ji-nie*, and *chikei*
Hamon: *suguha-chô* in *ko-nie-deki* with a rather tight *nioiguchi* that is mixed with *ko-chôji*, *ko-gunome*, and many *ashi*
Bôshi: *midare-komi* with a *maru-kaeri* on the *omote* and a pointed *kaeri* on the *ura* side
Horimono: on both sides a *bôhi* that ends in *kakudome*
Nakago: *suriage*, *katte-sagari yasurime*, three *mekugi-ana*

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as *jûyô-tôken*.

November 12, 1998
[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
[President] Yamanaka Sadanori (山中貞則)

刀
無銘
米国真

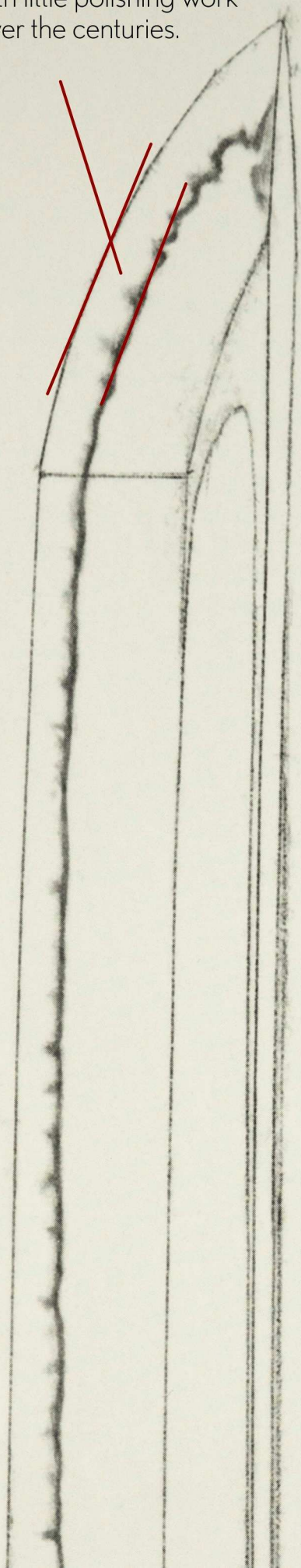


NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper
The *oshigata* provides a clear tracing of the
hamon pattern with the structure of the *nakago*.



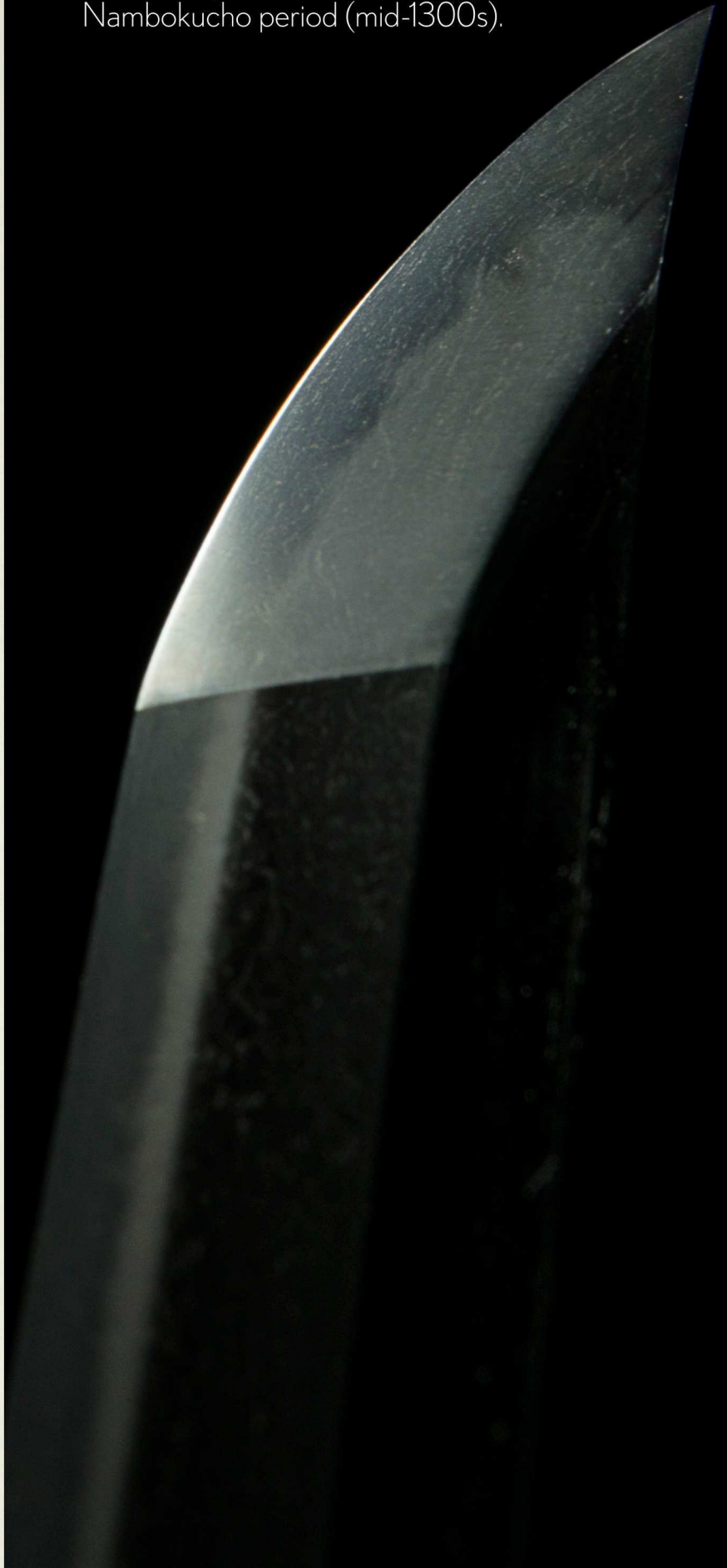


Notice the ample distance between the hamon and cutting edge in the *kissaki*. This shows the sword is healthy with little polishing work applied over the centuries.



The *boshi* is a tight-weaving *midare-komi* that resembles a burning candle.

The powerful *o-kissaki* (tip) is almost 5cm in length, typically found in swords of the late Kamakura period to the warring years of the Nambokucho period (mid-1300s).



A close-up, high-contrast photograph of two curved blades, likely a sword, set against a black background. The blades are positioned diagonally, with the upper blade curving more sharply than the lower one. The lighting highlights the metallic texture and the sharp edges of the blades, emphasizing their strong curvature and magnificient shape.

Strong curvature gives the sword a magnificent shape.



A beautiful tight *nioguchi* with sharp *ashi* (legs) extend from *hamon* like the teeth of a saw.

Generous pools of *chikei* abound in the *ji* (body).



droplets of *ko-choji*, small
clove blossom buds.

sunagashi - sweeping
effect through the hamon

mokume-hada
- rounded burl grain

ji-nie shines brightly





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



A solid gold *habaki* with *kiri-mon*
and arabesque patterned design



This most impressive solid gold *ni-ju habaki* can separate in two pieces.

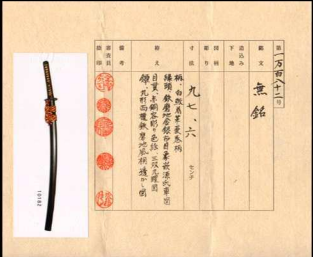
Note how the *kiri-mon* appears to float within the circled window.

*Shuiro-kanshitsu-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(朱色乾漆塗鞘打刀拵え)

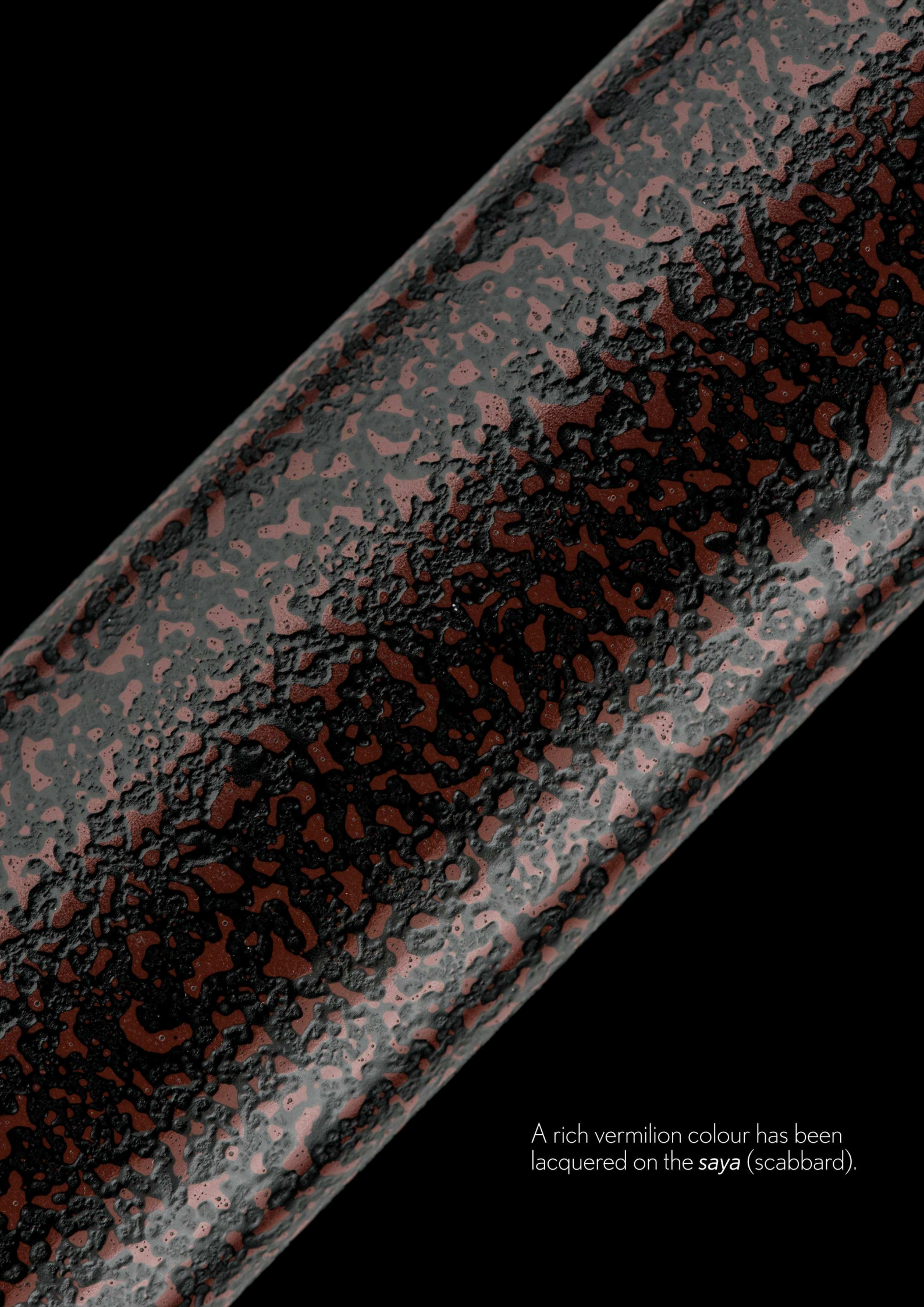
*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in vermilion
with dry lacquer powder*

All fittings are Edo period
antiques crafted pre-1867.

The *saya* (scabbard) was
crafted/re-lacquered
during the 20th century.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



A rich vermilion colour has been lacquered on the *saya* (scabbard).

(Tada) 忠

(toki) 時

(saku) 作

(Aka) 赤

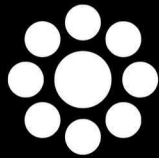
(saka) 坂



(reverse)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) carry *Kuyô-mon*, the nine-planet family crest that was first adopted by the powerful daimyo family leader *Hosokawa Tadaoki* (1563-1646).



The *tsuka* (hilt) has been wrapped in leather and lacquered for long-term conservation.

True Edo period charm.





Cross section of the *nakago*.
History that's divine.



ITEM# UJKA347

A KANESHIGE '3-BODY CUTTING TEST' KATANA SIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA, 1661~1664)

Swordsmith:	<i>Kazusa no Suke Fujiwara Kaneshige (second generation)</i>
Gold inlay (test):	<i>Mitsu-dō kirite Okada Jurōbei + kaō - Ni-san harai dotan iri</i>
Measurements:	Length: 69.7cm (ubu) Curvature: 1.0cm Moto-haba: 3.01cm
Jihada:	<i>Tight ko-itame with ji-nie, chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Thick suguha mixed with gunome-midare with ashi, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (a sword Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Certificates #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (tsuba, soroi kanagu and koshirae designated Authentic)
Fujishiro rank:	Jo-saku (a superior smith)
Cutting Ability:	Ryo-Wazamono (maker of highly sharp swords)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, printed description

SOLD

Sword tester *Okada Jurōbei* documented in gold inlay that with this brilliantly sharp katana, in one stroke, he severed through *three stacked human bodies* and into the earthen mound. The test took place on the August 14, 1664 in the early Kanbun era. The *tameshigiri* cut was made in the mid-belly area of the bodies – a demanding area to cut through.

A thick *suguha nioguchi* reminiscent of the works of *Kotetsu* penetrates the blade with tons of *hataraki* to enjoy. A matching set of fittings (*soroi kanagu*) that features an iron *tsuba* by *Tanaka Toryusai* compliments this mighty heirloom of *Kobayashi samurai* family.

^
Saki-kasane: 3.7mm

Moto-kasane: 6.4mm

Kissaki: 3.15cm
Saki-haba: 1.93cm

Nagasa: 69.7cm

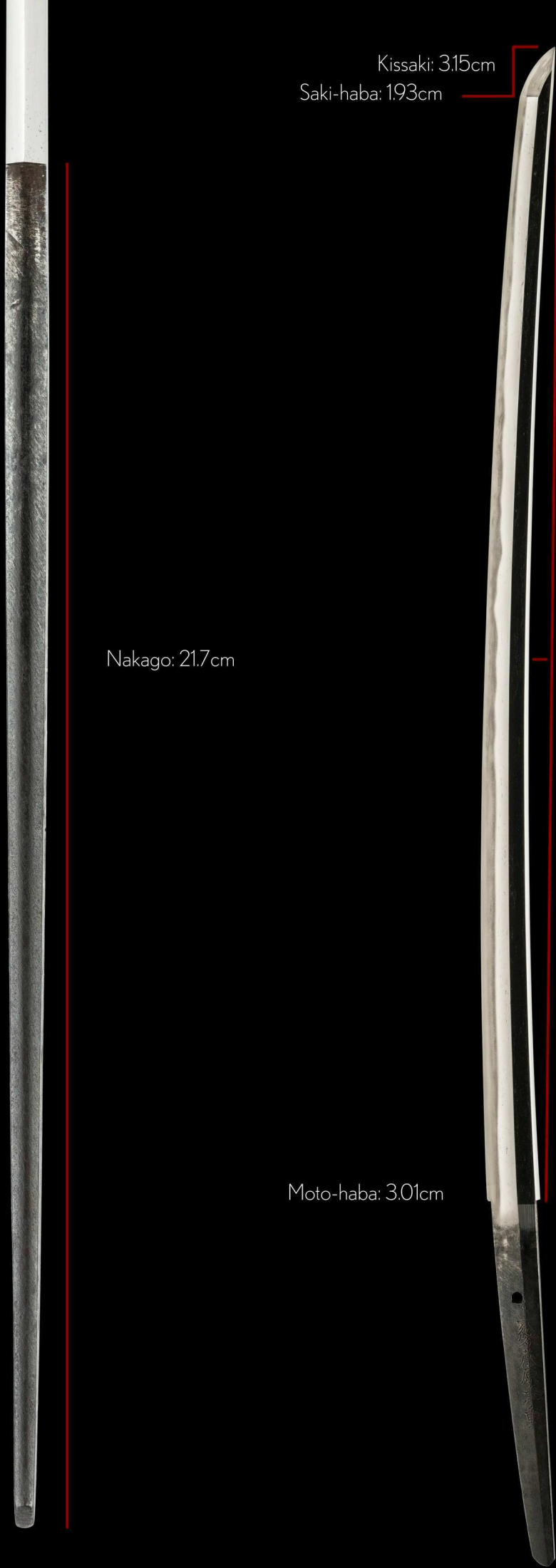
Nakago: 21.7cm

Sori: 1.0cm

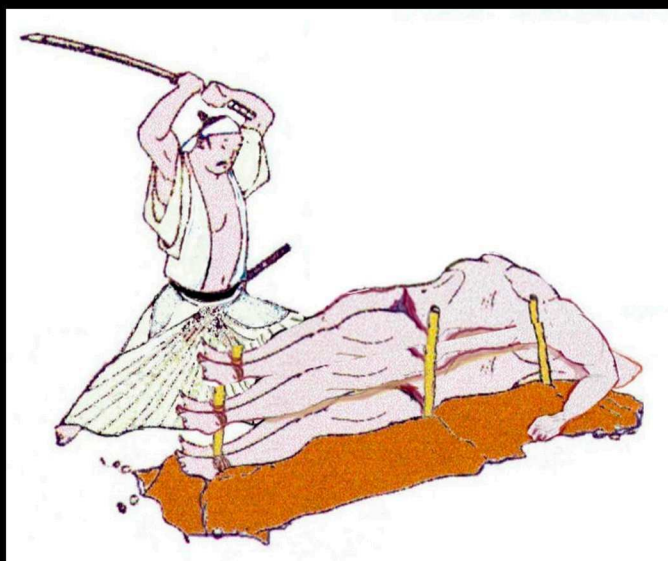
Omosa: 695g

Moto-haba: 3.01cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



This katana successfully performed a 3-body cutting test on the 14th day of the 8th month in the fourth year of Kanbun era (August 14, 1664) by *Okada Jurôbei*.





Location: *Musashi* (resident of Tokyo)

Title: *Kazusa no Suke* (Lord of Kazusa province)

Clan name: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Kaneshige* (second generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

上 (Kazu)

総 (sa, no)

介 (Suke)

藤 (Fuji)

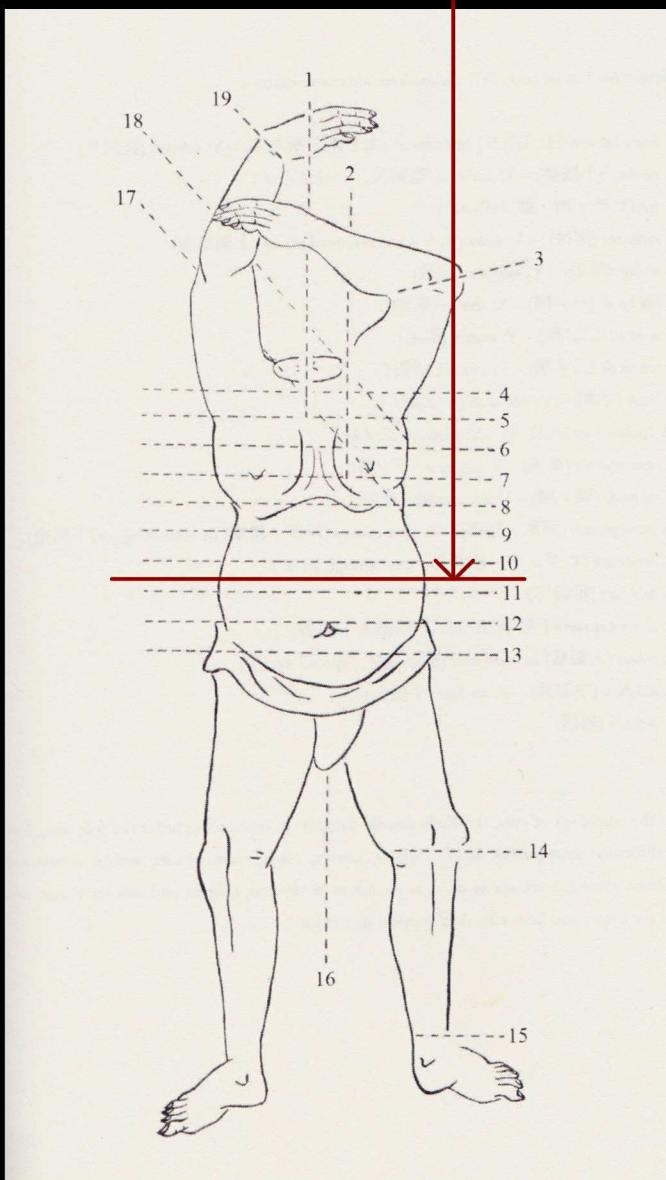
原 (wara)

兼 (Kane)

重 (shige)

Kanbun yonen hachigatsu jûyokka mitsu-
do ni-san barai dodan iri kirite Okada
Jûryôbei + kao

Sword tester *Okada Jurôbei* documented in gold inlay that with this katana, in one stroke, he severed through *three stacked human bodies* and into the earthen mound below. The test took place on the 14th day of the 8th month in the fourth year of Kanbun era (August 14, 1664). The cut was made between the second and the third section of the bodies (*ni-no-do* and *san-no-do*) as highlighted below. This is a demanding area to slice cleanly through.



(Mi) 三
(tsu) ツ
(dô) 胴

(ni) 二
(san) 三
(barai) 拂

(do) 土
(dan) 壇
(iri) 入
(kiri) 切
(te) 手

(Oka) 岡
(da) 田
(Jû) 十

(ryô) 良
(be) 兵
(i) 衛



寛 (Kan)
文 (bun)
四 (yo)
年 (nen)
八 (hachi)
月 (gatsu)
十 (jû)
四 (yo)
日 (kka)

30201803

No 1008552



鑑定書

一刀 銘

上総介藤原兼重
寛文四年八月十四日
(金象嵌) 三ッ桐切手四甲良五衛兵(花押)
三ッ桐土壇入
長二尺三寸

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

平成三十年六月十三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



静岡県教育委員会
第 7170 号
昭和27年 9 月 16 日

(再)平成29年12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), June 13th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Kazusa no Suke Fujiwara Kaneshige

(Kin-zôgan) Kanbun yonen hachigatsu jûyokka

Mitsudô nisan barai dodan iri kirite Okada Jûryôbei + kaô

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun (69.7cm)

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, low-angle shot of a katana blade, focusing on the edge and the hamon. The blade is dark, with a bright, glowing edge that highlights the intricate patterns of the nioguchi and kinsuji. The background is dark and out of focus.

This katana has a Koto-period aura
that pays tribute to the Soshu tradition.

A thick *nioguchi* with impressive
kinsuji in the style of master *Kotetsu*.

A vibrant *hamon* mixed with *ko-gunome* and *ashi* (legs) that look like sharp teeth biting into the edge of the blade.

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

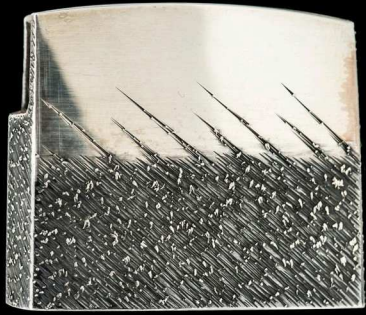
kinsuji

ashi





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

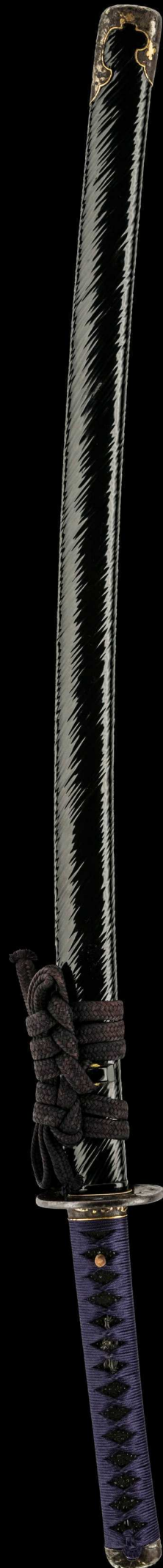
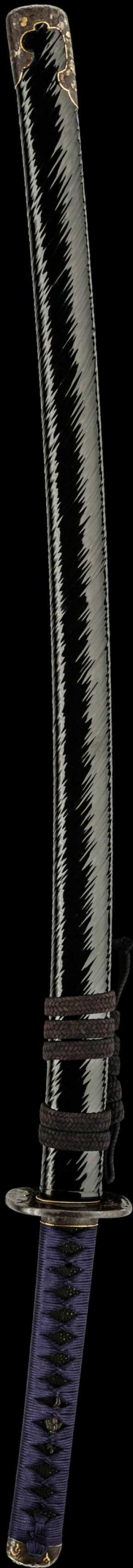


silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

*Kuro-roiro-nuri
naname-kizami saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂色塗斜刻鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black
with slanting notches*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This is a superb polished iron tsuba from the famed *Tanaka Toryusai* School.

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

鑑定書
一、鐔
江戸 東龍齋派
心真
今和元年七月十四日
特選審判官 湯浅 宗久
日本刀剣保存会
理事長 宮野真司

種別	江戸後期
時代	江戸後期
流派	東龍齋派
材質	鉄
寸法	縦八・三、横七・六
特徴	中央に大きな水滴形の孔あり、右側に龍の彫刻あり。
備考	

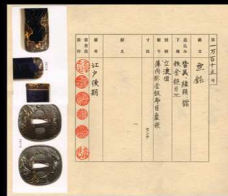


(reverse)



The fuchi-kashira, kojiri and tsuba are an all-matching ensuite of fittings known as *Soroi Kanagu*.

This rare set has been formally certified by the NTHK-NPO.





Kashira

The pommel has an elegant, rustic charm.



dragon power menuki

The *tsunagi* is a duplicate of the blade handmade out of wood. Its purpose is to keep the *koshirae* (fittings) together when the sword is resting in the shirasaya.

This *tsunagi* has been signed with the Kaneshige swordsmith name as it appears on the nakago.

The reverse side of the *tsunagi* states the Kobayashi heirloom reference (see next page).

(Kazu) 上
(sa, no) 総
(Suke) 介

(Fuji) 藤
(wara) 原
(Kane) 兼
(shige) 重



Kobayashi-ke daidai denju no koto.

Jûichidai Yoshitada.

Inherited (passed down) from generation to generation within Kobayashi [samurai] family.

11th generation of Yoshitada appears to be the last caretaker of this katana.

(Jû) 十
(ichi) 一
(dai) 代
(Yoshi) 美
(tada) 忠

小林家代代伝授之事
十一代美忠

小 (Ko)
林 (bayashi)
家 (ke)
代 (dai)
々 (dai)
伝 (den)
授 (ju)
之 (no)
事 (koto)

Kaneshige





ITEM# UJKA350

A SHIGEZANE NAGINATA-NAOSHI KATANA

UNSIGNED, NAMBOKUCHO PERIOD (ENBUN ERA: 1356~1361)

Swordsmith:	<i>Shigezane</i> (attribution, <i>ô-suriage nakago</i>)
Measurements:	Length: 67.8cm Curvature: 0.6cm Motohaba: 3.0cm
Jihada:	<i>Flowing itame-nagare with ji-nie, chikei, namazu-hada and midare-utsuri</i>
Hamon:	<i>Hiro-suguha-cho in ko-nie deki with angularity, ashi, yô, sunagashi and kinsuji</i>
Certificate:	63rd NBTHK Jûyô Tôken (a sword designated as Profound and Important)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Sharpness:	Ryo-Wazamono (rated as a maker of highly sharp swords)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Dr. Sato Kanzan
Included:	Shirasaya, sword bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Behold an intense katana from the violent *Nambokucho* period attributed to *Shigezane* of the *Motoshige* school. This katana was once a fierce *naginata*, a polearm - an effective weapon given their extra length to topple opponents on horseback. Top-class *naginata* were reshaped into katana and wakizashi and immensely treasured by the ruling samurai of the Edo period.

An imposing 9cm *ô-kissaki* dominates this sharp, formidable sword. Flowing *itame-nagare hada* with *midare utsuri* juxtapose the darkish hue of the *jigane*. A massive cut in defense from another sword in battle known as *kirikomi* rests on the base of the blade. The *sayagaki* by Dr. Kanzan states that this katana was a family heirloom of the *Naitô samurai* family. Big time samurai sword.



Saki-kasane: 3.0mm

Moto-kasane: 3.4mm

Omosa: 765g

Kissaki: 9.5cm

Saki-haba: 2.7cm

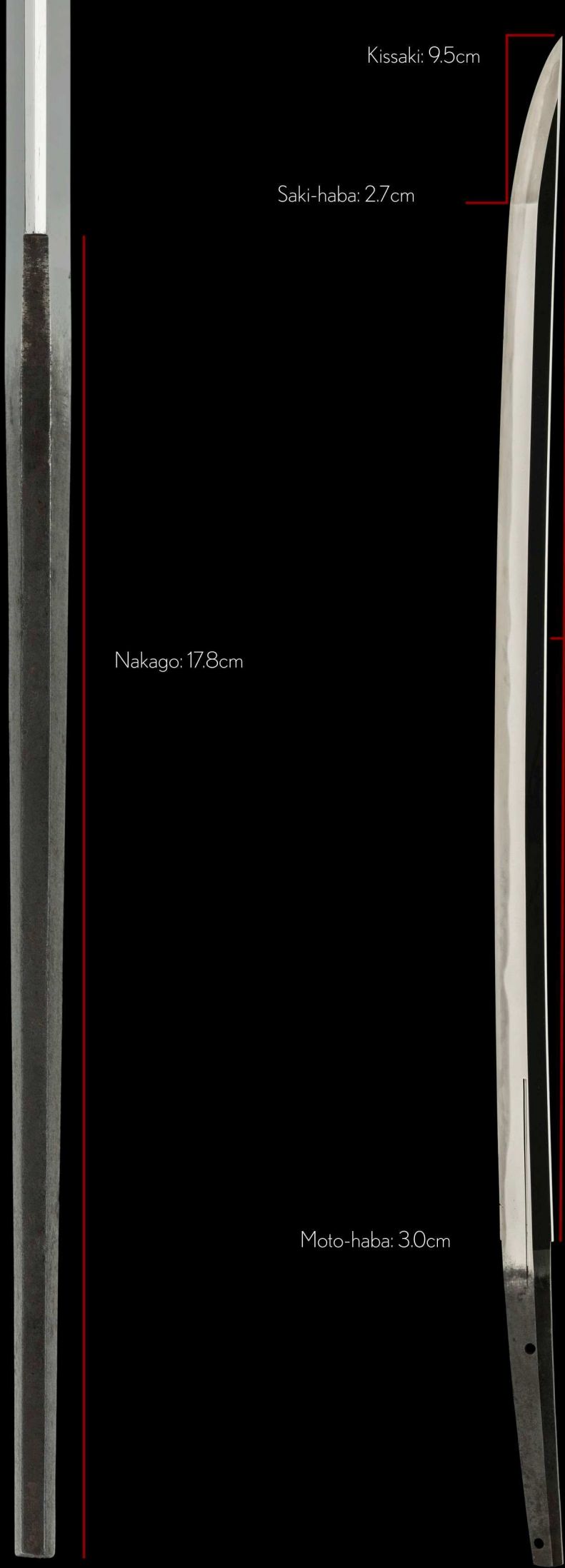
Nakago: 17.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.0cm

Nagasa: 67.8cm

Sori: 0.6cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Shigezane's family name is *Jirôbei* and is said to be the son of the 1st generation *Hatakeda Morishige* and the younger brother of *Motoshige* of the Motoshige school.

His work dates from *Karyaku* era (1326~1329) to *Enbun* era (1356~1361) - an active period of about 35 years.

In the later years, during the warring *Nanbokuchô period*, Shigezane's creations took the form of a wide *mihaba*, a thick *kasane*, and an elongated *kissaki*.

The *jigane* is a vivid *itame* and flowing *itame-nagare* with billowing *midare-utsuri*.

Shigezane is rated *Jo-saku* (superior smith) with a *ryo-wazamono* rank for the intense sharpness of his swords.

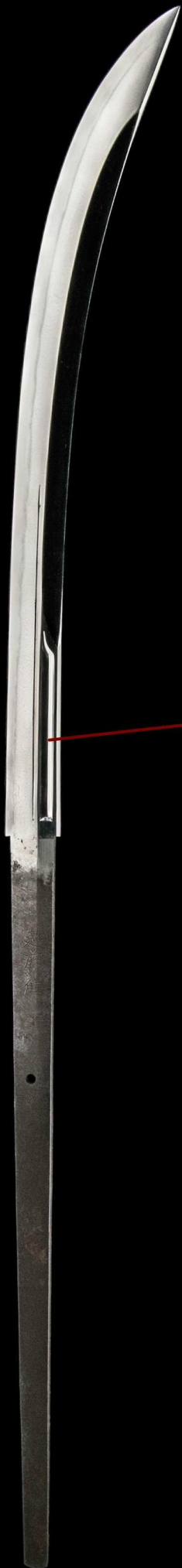




naginata-hi

The *nakago* is *ô-suriage*,
greatly shortened, re-shaped
from a 14th century naginata.

Remnants of the original thin,
naginata-hi (grooves) can still
be seen on the blade.



This sword was first constructed as a *naginata*, a long polearm, back in the mid-1300s. *Sōhei*, warrior monks, were immensely skilled in the use of the naginata.

With the introduction of firearms in 1543 the number of naginata decreased substantially. Many naginata were thus reshaped and preserved as a wakizashi, or a katana, as is the case with the Shigezane katana.

The name given to such swords is *naginata-naoshi* -a fixed naginata. Prominent samurai adored naginata-naoshi swords in the Edo period.

On the left is an example of a naginata crafted in the Edo period by *Echizen Hirotaka* giving a sense of what the Shigezane naginata originally looked like (minus the thick naginata-style groove in the *shinogi-ji*).

Below is an illustration of *Shōhei* warriors with naginata from the book *Japanese Polearms* by Roald M. Knutsen.



FIG. 8. *Sōhei* armed with *shōbuzukuri-naginata*. It was men like these who formed the fighting power of the monasteries down to the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

重要第一四一五三號

指定書

一、薙刀直し刀 無銘 重真 一口

法量 長さ六七・八寸 反り〇・六寸

形状 薙刀直し造 庵棟身幅尋常 鑄地を削いで鑄高く

鍛 反り浅くつき、大鋒

板目肌流れ 頻りに肌立ち 地沸つき 地景入り 地斑調の

肌合を交え 乱れ映り立つ

刃文 広直刃基調に角張る刃・互の目など交じり 小沸出来

砂流し・金筋かかる

帽子 横手上や立ち上がり その先は小さく乱れこころなる

彫物 表裏腰元に細樋を掻き流す

茎 大磨上 鏡目切り 目釘孔二

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀剣に指定する

平成二十九年十一月十七日

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 28021 号
昭和26年 3月 31日

63rd session Jûyô Certificate No. 14153
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
Naginata-naoshi katana, mumei: Shigezane (重真)

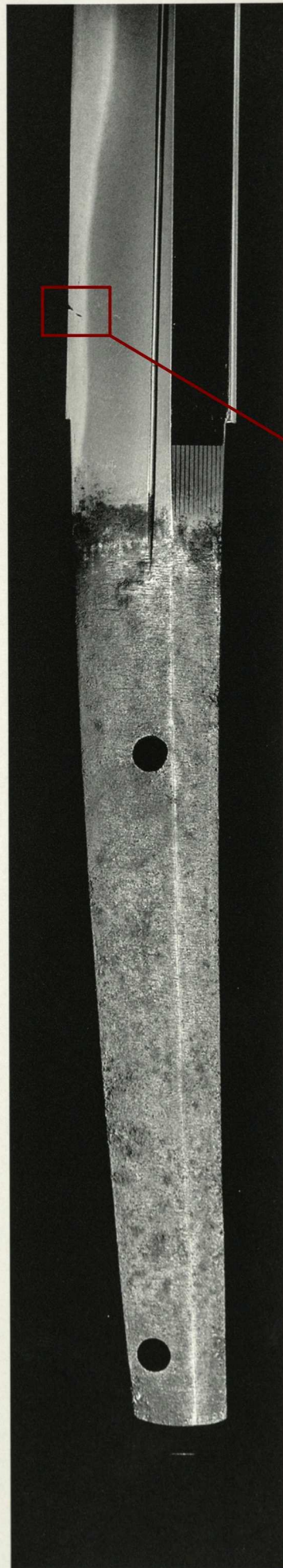
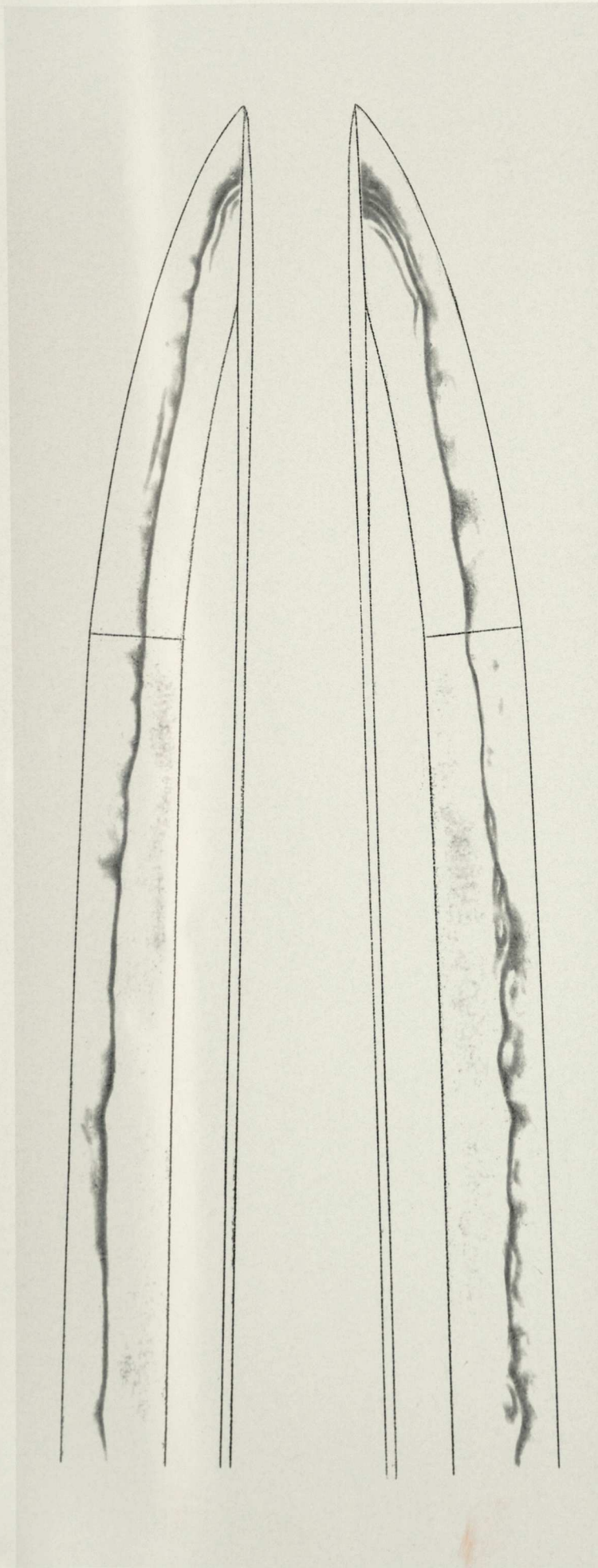
Measurements
nagasa: 67.8 cm, sori: 0.6cm

Description:

Keijô: naginata-naoshi-zukuri, iori-mune, normal mihaba, somewhat widening towards the tip, high shinogi and shinogi-ji dropping off towards the mune, shallow sori, ô-kissaki
Kitae: mostly standing-out itame-nagare that is mixed with mokume and that features plenty of ji-nie, much chikei, some jifu, and a midare-utsuri, the steel is somewhat blackish
Hamon: hiro-suguha-chô in ko-nie-deki with a rather subdued nioiguchi, mixed with angular elements, gunome, ko-gunome, ko-chôji, many ashi and yô, and a few sunagashi and kinsuji
Bôshi: with a slight protrusion over the yokote and then with a slight tendency towards midare-komi, featuring nie-kuzure, and running out as yakitsume
Horimono: on both sides a thin hi at the base that runs as kaki-nagashi into the tang
Nakago: ô-suriage, kurijiri, kiri-yasurime, two mekugi-ana, mumei

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as jûyô-tôken.

November 17, 2017
Foundation: Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
President: Sakai Tadahisa (酒井忠久)



薙刀直し刀 無銘 重真

kirikomi



NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper

The *oshigata* illustrates the *hamon* with *hataraki* and *midare utsuri*. The photograph of the *nakago* shows that the sword passed NBTHK Jûyô Tôken with *kirikomi* (battle scar) at the base of the blade.



備前長船重真
Osafune Shigezane in Bizen province

但大磨上無銘也
Tadashi Ô-suriage mumei nari
Ô-suriage, unsigned

内藤家伝来之一
Naitô-ke denrai no hitotsu
Heirloom of the Naitô family

刃長貳尺貳寸四分有之
Hachô 2-shaku 2-sun 4-bu kore ari
Blade length 67.8cm

昭和五拾壹年端午月吉日
Shôwa gojûichi nen tango-tsuki kichijitsu
On a lucky day in May in the 51st year of Shôwa (1976)

寒山誌(花押)
Kanzan shirusu + kaô
Written by Kanzan + monogram

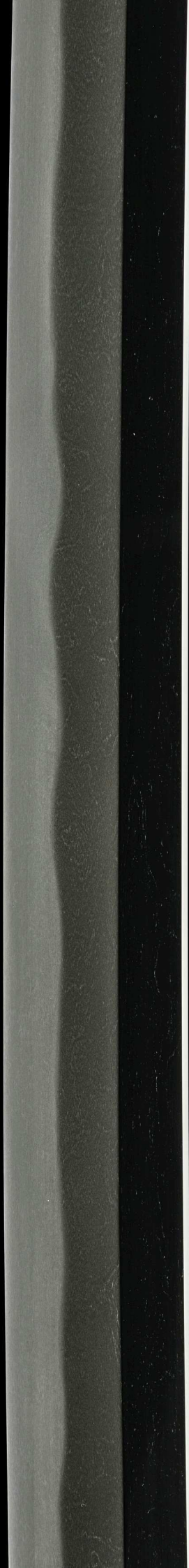


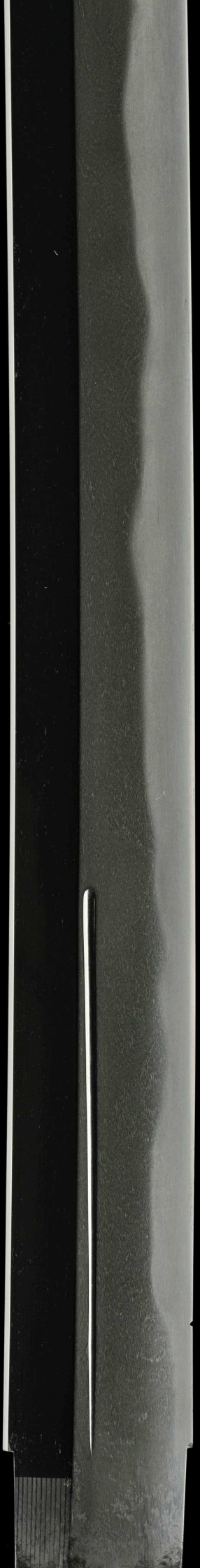
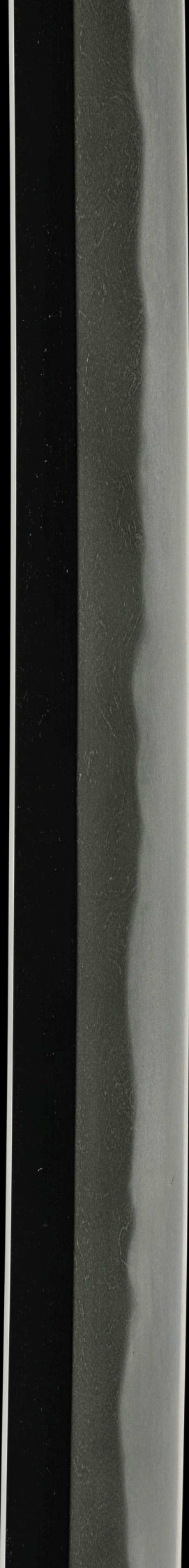
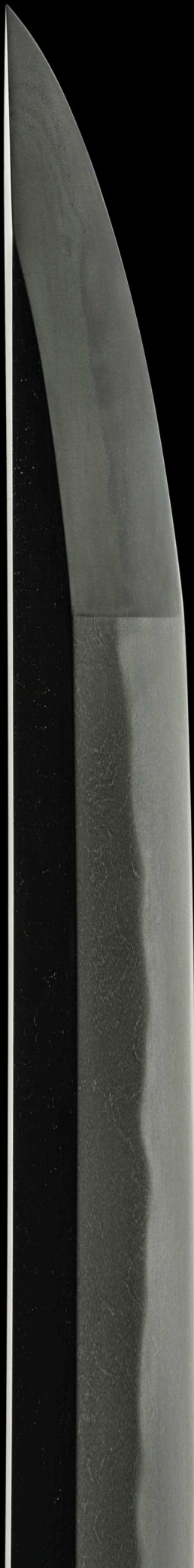
Naitô Nobunari (内藤 信成, June 13, 1545 – August 20, 1612)

As recorded on the *sayagaki* by *Dr. Kanzan*, former director of the NBTHK, this katana was an heirloom of the *Naitô family*. A prominent figure in the Naitô family history was *Naitô Nobunari*, a samurai of the *Sengoku* period through the early Edo period. He served the ruling Tokugawa clan and later became a *daimyô*.

Nobunari is believed to have been the illegitimate son of *Matsudaira Hirotada* - making him the half-brother of *shôgun Tokugawa Ieyasu*. After distinguishing himself in battle during a certain assault upon *Kuroma* castle Nobunari went on to respectively support the Tokugawa within the *Battle of Mikatagahara* in 1573, and *Nagashino* of 1575.

By the year of 1590, Nobunari would be awarded *Nirayama Castle of Izu Province*—respectively holding 10,000 *koku* to its name—and would enter into the Edo period with a 50,000 *koku* fief at *Nagahama* within *Ômi province*, where he remained as daimyô until he died in 1612.





An intimidating *o-kissaki*
of over 9cm (~3.6inch)



Kirokomi - this a monumental battle scar from another sword when defending in combat.

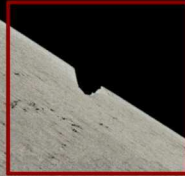
These prized marks of courage are intentionally left by sword polishers - never to be repaired. Their significance cannot be overemphasized.





FIG. 9. Two bushi returning from a sortie against the Mongols in the late thirteenth century, carrying the severed heads of their victims on the points of their weapons. From a Japanese illustration.

Japanese Polearms by Roald M. Knutsen



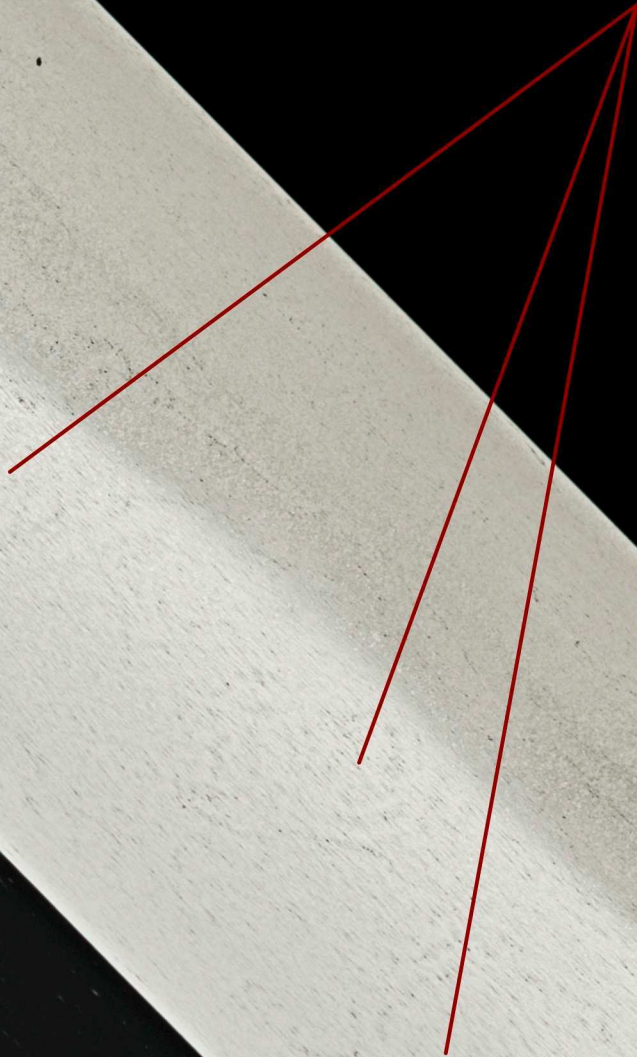
reverse side look at the *kirikomi*

A flowing *itame-nagare-hada* (wavy wood grain pattern) that the Jûyô tôken certificate describes as 'standing out'.

Healthy swords with an age of 600 years or more that have retained their vivid grain pattern (such on this katana) demonstrates that the blade has not been overly polished and thus highly prized.



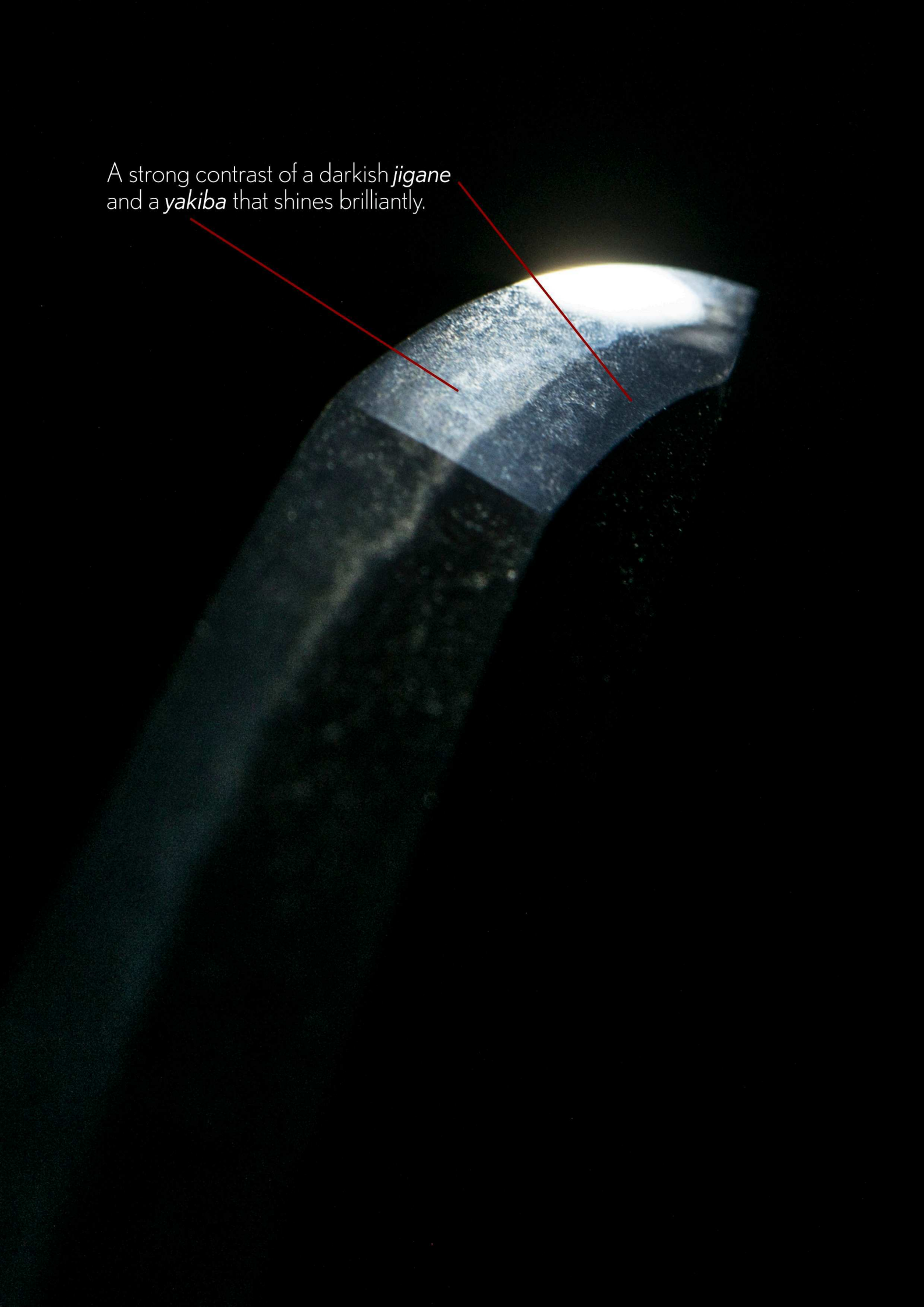
The *jihada* also features sections of a beautiful *mokume-hada*, a rounded burl grain pattern.






A sublime *midare-komi boshi* that features an exciting contortion of *nie-kuzure* (crystals).

A strong contrast of a darkish *jigane*
and a *yakiba* that shines brilliantly.






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.

The type of *utsuri* is called *midare-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that billows in a wavy formation following the hamon pattern.



The Jûyô token white paper describes the sword of having elements of *Aoe tradition*.

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.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (edge) and yo (leaves) pattern. The blade is dark and has a curved shape. The hamon is a bright, glowing line along the edge. The yo are clusters of nie crystals inside the hamon. A red line points from the text to the yo.

Yo (leaves) are beautiful clusters of nie crystals inside the hamon.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line). The blade is dark and metallic, with a bright, glowing edge. Two red lines point from the text to specific areas of the hamon. The top line points to a section where the hamon is relatively smooth and bright. The bottom line points to a section where the hamon is more textured and shows small, shimmering particles, which are the tiny nie crystals mentioned in the text.

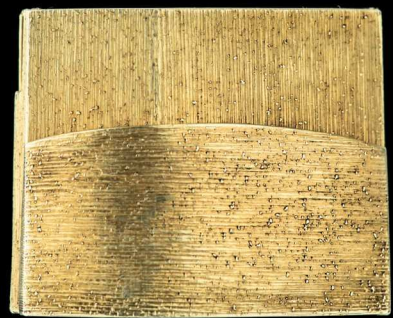
ko-gunome hamon in *ko-nie deki* - tiny nie crystals can be seen making up the hamon.

A close-up photograph of a sword's blade, focusing on the hamon (the line of differential hardening). The hamon is wide and features a hiro-suguha pattern, characterized by a broad, wavy line with sharp, angular peaks and valleys. The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted by a bright, glowing light. Two red lines originate from the text and point to specific angular features on the hamon.

A wide, captivating *hiro-suguha hamon* contains sections of angularity that pulse like a heartbeat.



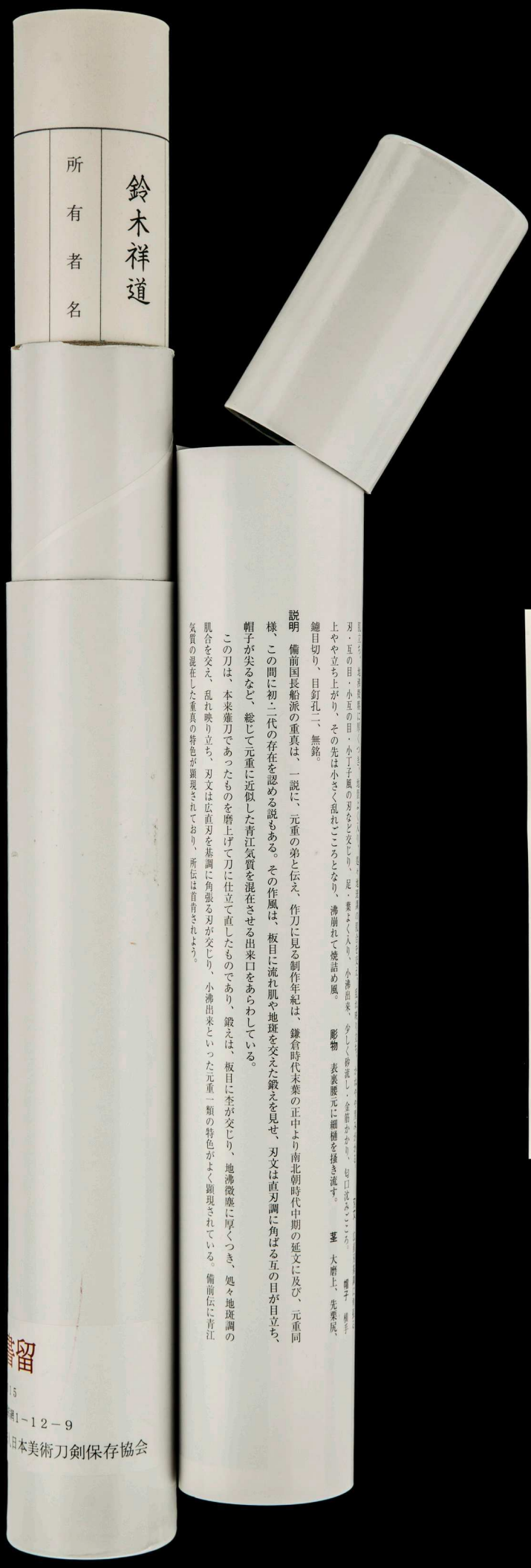
Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold ni-ju habaki



A beautiful gold *niju habaki* secures the sword in the shirasaya.



所有者名
鈴木祥道

留
1-12-9
日本美術刀剣保存協会

刃・互の目・小五の目・小丁風の刃など交じり、足・葉よく入り、小沸出来、少しく砂流し、全幅小かり、切口沈みこころ、帽子、横手、上やや立ち上がり、その先は小さく乱れこころなり、沸削れて洗詰め風。彫物 表裏腰元に細樋を掻き流す。莖 大磨上、先栗尻、鍔目切り、目釘孔二、無銘。

説明 備前国長船派の重真は、一説に、元重の弟と伝え、作刀に見る制作年紀は、鎌倉時代末期の正中より南北朝時代中期の延文に及び、元重同様、この間に初二代存在を認める説もある。その作風は、板目に流れ肌や地斑を交えた鍛えを見せ、刃文は直刃調に角ばる互の目が目立ち、帽子が尖るなど、総じて元重に近似した青江気質を混在させる出来口をあらわしている。

この刀は、本来雄刀であったものを磨上げて刀に仕立て直したものであり、鍛えは、板目に李が交じり、地沸微塵に厚くつき、処々地斑調の肌合を交え、乱れ映り立ち、刃文は広直刃を基調に角張る刃が交じり、小沸出来といった元重一類の特色がよく顕現されている。備前伝に青江気質の混在した重真の特色が顕現されており、所伝は首肯されよう。

平成二十五年十一月十七日指定
第六十三回 重要 刀 剣
鈴木祥道

刀直し方、無銘、重真。二口

遺蹟 長七尺六寸五分、幅三寸四分、厚九分、重七匁、形似一ノ類

形状 刀身直造、味極、身細、先へびでや張有、背地肌を削いで流し、反り沈み、大背、鍔 板目肌流れ、先は互の目、鞘に肌合を交え、乱れ映り立ち、刃文は直刃調に角ばる互の目が目立ち、帽子、横手、上やや立ち上がり、その先は小さく乱れこころなり、沸削れて洗詰め風。彫物 表裏腰元に細樋を掻き流す。莖 大磨上、先栗尻、鍔目切り、目釘孔二、無銘。

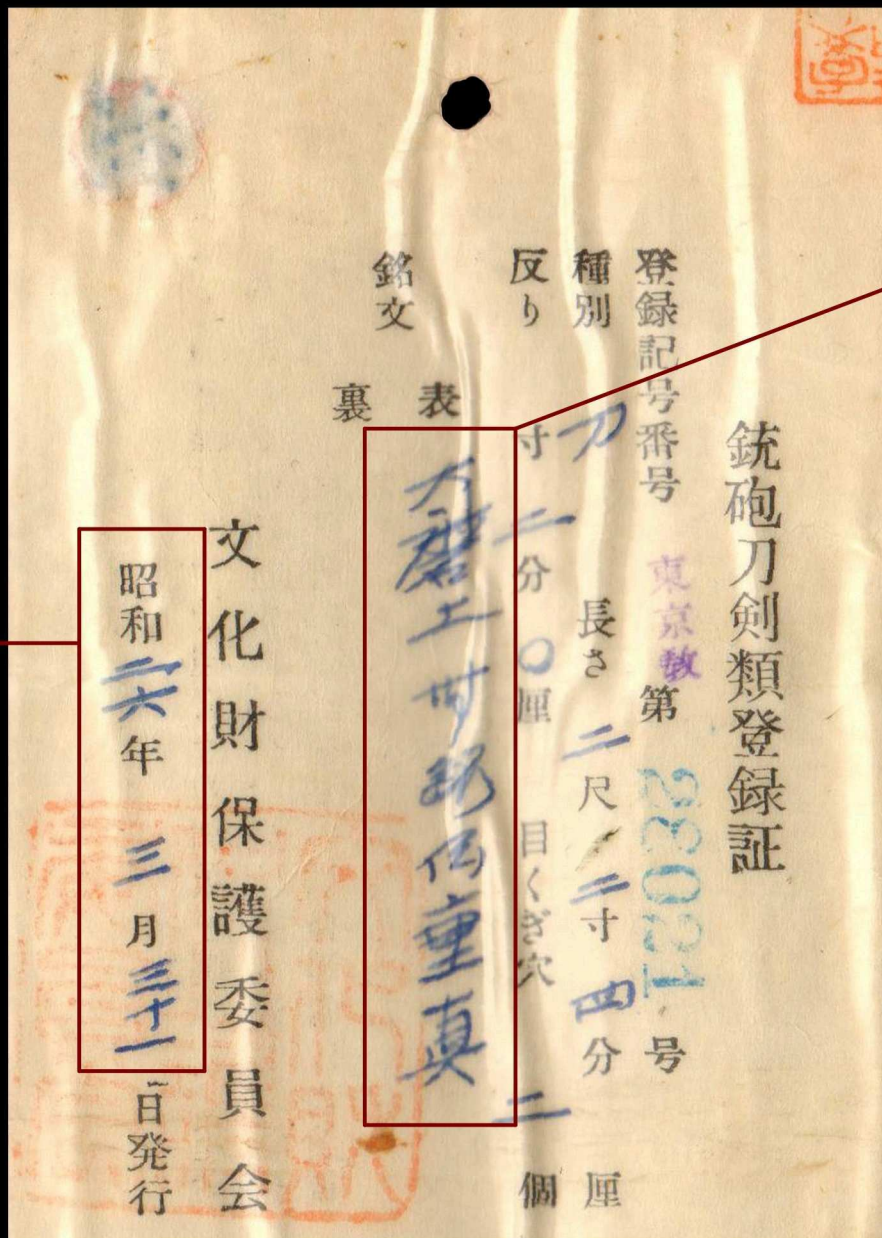
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この刀は、本来雄刀であったものを磨上げて刀に仕立て直したものであり、鍛えは、板目に李が交じり、地沸微塵に厚くつき、処々地斑調の肌合を交え、乱れ映り立ち、刃文は広直刃を基調に角張る刃が交じり、小沸出来といった元重一類の特色がよく顕現されている。備前伝に青江気質の混在した重真の特色が顕現されており、所伝は首肯されよう。

(五刀八七)

63rd NBTHK Juyo Token Certificate
Traditionally rolled in protective tube.

All information will be precisely translated for the new caretaker. A printed and bound description of the sword from this catalogue will also be included along with a sword stand and a Unique Japan maintenance kit.



Ô-suriage mumei
den Shigezane

March 31, 1951

The original *torokusho* (registration card) has been preserved for the *Shigezane katana*. The card was registered on the 31st day of the 3rd month in the 26th year of the Shōwa era (March 31, 1951).

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

What makes this *torokusho* particularly noteworthy is that we read on the card *Ô-suriage mumei den Shigezane* (greatly shortened, unsigned, attributed to Shigezane). This is extremely unusual because protocol dictates that the *torokusho* should simply state *mumei* (unsigned) if there is no signature on the *nakago*. Attributions are left to sword preservation societies like the NBTHK to assess.

What is possible is that on the registration day the sword had an old *shirasaya* with *sayagaki* or *origami* (paper certificate possibly from the Hon'ami family) stating that this sword was attributed to Shigezane. The registration officer then decided it was appropriate to record this attribution on the *torokusho*.

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.

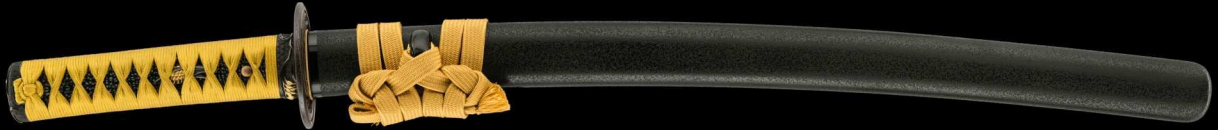


ujka173 - A Sadatsugu Juyo Katana
'Wave theme' Koshirae

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# UJKA339

SOLD

A NIDAI TADATSUNA KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (ENPO ERA, 1673~1681)

Swordsmith: Awataguchi Ômi no Kami Tadatsuna (*second generation*)
Location: Settsu province (Osaka)
Measurements: Length: 77.3cm (ubu) Curvature: 1.0cm Moto-haba: 3.2cm
Jihada: Ko-itame with ji-nie, itame-hada in shinogi-ji, chikei
Hamon: Gorgeous suguha in nie-deki mixed with ashi, suguha and kinsuji
Certificate: NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (a sword Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Fujishiro rank: Jojo-saku (a highly superior smith)
Authentication: Sayagaki by Tanzan-sensei (Tanobe Michihiro)
Included: Shirasaya, bag, stand, kit, DVD, printed description

SOLD

Standing tall with an extra-long *nagasa* (cutting edge) of 77.3cm this is a towering katana by second generation *Awataguchi Tadatsuna* of Settsu province. Crafted early in his career before he signed with his art name *Ikkanshi*, this shinto tour de force is quite simply, a beautiful sword.

Forged in exquisite *ko-itame* that extends into the *shinogi-ji*, streams of *nie* follow the bright *suguha* *hamon* with wide *nioguchi*. Fine *hataraki* of *sunagashi*, *kinsuji*, and playful *gunome-ashi* are a treat for the sword connoisseur. *Sayagaki* by Tanobe sensei describes the *hamon* as being *odayakana* meaning 'calm/gentle' echoing a level of elegance embedded in such courageous workmanship.

First generation *Tadatsuna* claims lineage to *Kunitsuna* of the *Awataguchi school* in *Yamashiro province* during the *Kamakura period*, thus the inclusion of *Awataguchi* in the signature.

Shodai *Tadatsuna* was a talented smith, however, it was not long that his son, *nidai Tadatsuna*, surpassed his father in every way. With the ability to replicate numerous traditions as well as carving elaborate *horimono*, *nidai Tadatsuna* is regarded as one of the finest smiths working in *Osaka* during the early *Edo period*.

Nidai Tadatsuna is rated *Jojo-saku* (highly superior swordsmith) by *Fujishiro*.

This long, gorgeous blade carries a beautifully forged *jigane* with a sublime *suguha hamon*.

Powerful in stature, elegance in its craftsmanship. This is the definition of form meeting function.





Saki-kasane: 4.6mm

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 905g

Kissaki: 3.81cm

Saki-haba: 2.12cm

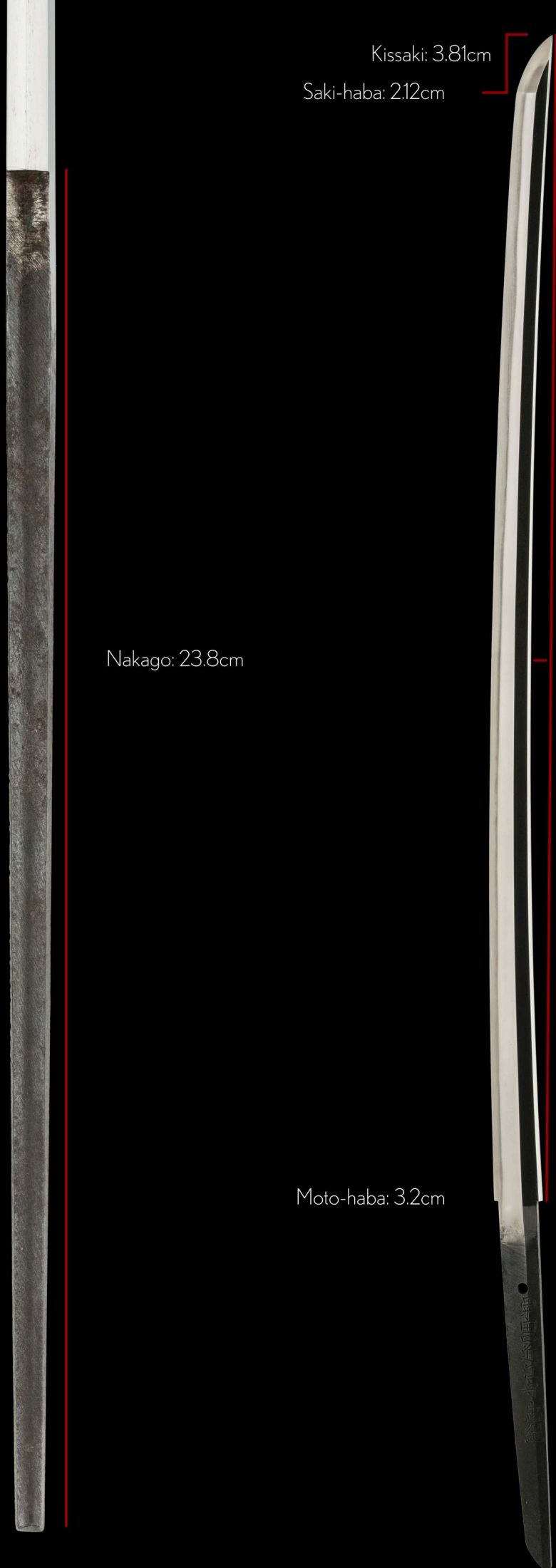
Nakago: 23.8cm


Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Nagasa: 77.3cm

Sori: 1.0cm

Mekugi-ana: 1





Location: *Settsu* (resident of Osaka)
Title: *Ômi no Kami* (Lord of Ômi province)
Swordsmith: *Tadatsuna* (second generation)

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

粟 (Awa)

田 (ta)

口 (guchi)

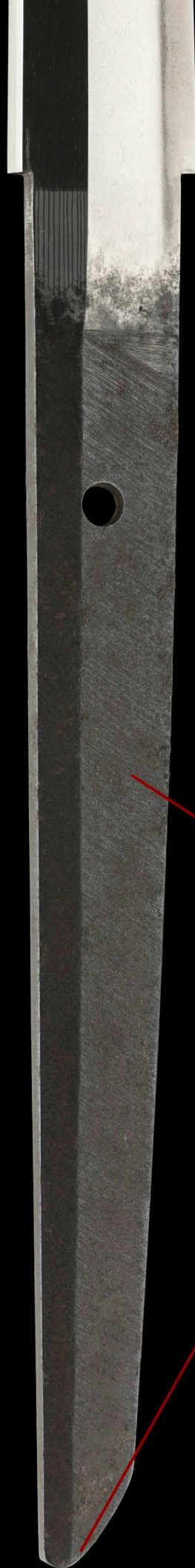
近 (Ô)

江 (mi, no)

守 (Kami)

忠 (Tada)

綱 (tsuna)



gorgeous patina on nakago

ha agari kurijiri
rounded end with a steep
climb towards the cutting edge

(*ura*, reverse)

特 保
27201505

No. 1003947



鑑定書

一刀 銘 栗田口近江守忠綱

長二尺五寸五分

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

平成二十七年七月十四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



大阪 教育委員会
第 126625 号
平成27年 3月10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), July 14th

One, Katana

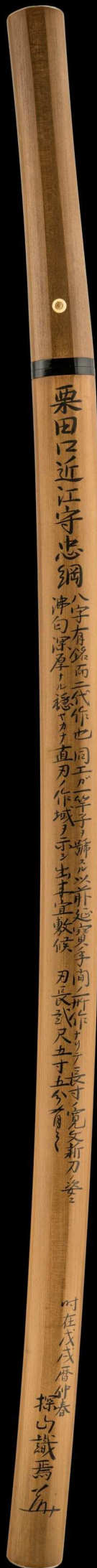
Mei (signature)

Awataguchi Ōmi no Kami Tadatsuna

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 5-sun 5-bu (77.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



粟田口近江守忠綱

Awataguchi Ōmi no Kami Tadatsuna

八字有銘而二代作也同工ガ一竿子ヲ號スル以前延寶年間ノ所作ナリテ長寸ノ寛文新刀ノ姿ニ沸匂深厚ナル穩ヤカナ直刃ノ作域ヲ示シ出来宜敷候

Hachiji arimei sikashite nidai saku nari. Dôkô ga ikkanshi o gôsuru izen enpô nenkan no shosa saku narite chôsun no Kanbun shintô no sugata ni nie nioi shinkô naru odayakana suguha no sakuiki o shimeshi deki yoroshiku sôrô

This blade bears an eight character signature and is a work of the second generation. It is of a Kanbun-shintô shape with a long nagasa and dates around Enpô (1673-1681), i.e., it was made before the smith used the art name Ikkanshi. It shows a calm suguha with a wide nioiguchi and much nie. It is of an excellent deki (quality craftsmanship).

刃長貳尺五寸五分有之

Hachô 2-shaku 5-sun 5-bu kore ari

Blade length 77.3 cm

时在戊戌曆仲春探山識焉

Ima tsuchinoe-inu doshi chûshun Tanzan shirusu + kaô

Written by *Tanzan* [Tanobe Michihiro] in the second month of the lunar calendar and in the year of the dog of this era (2018) + monogram.





A close-up photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is oriented diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right. The upper portion of the blade is bright and polished, showing fine longitudinal lines. The lower portion is darker and has a more textured, possibly ground or aged appearance. A thin red line originates from the text and points to the edge of the blade.

A thick *kasane* of over 7mm, gives the sword a healthy weightiness.

A spectacularly forged katana with
a beautiful stream of nie crystals.

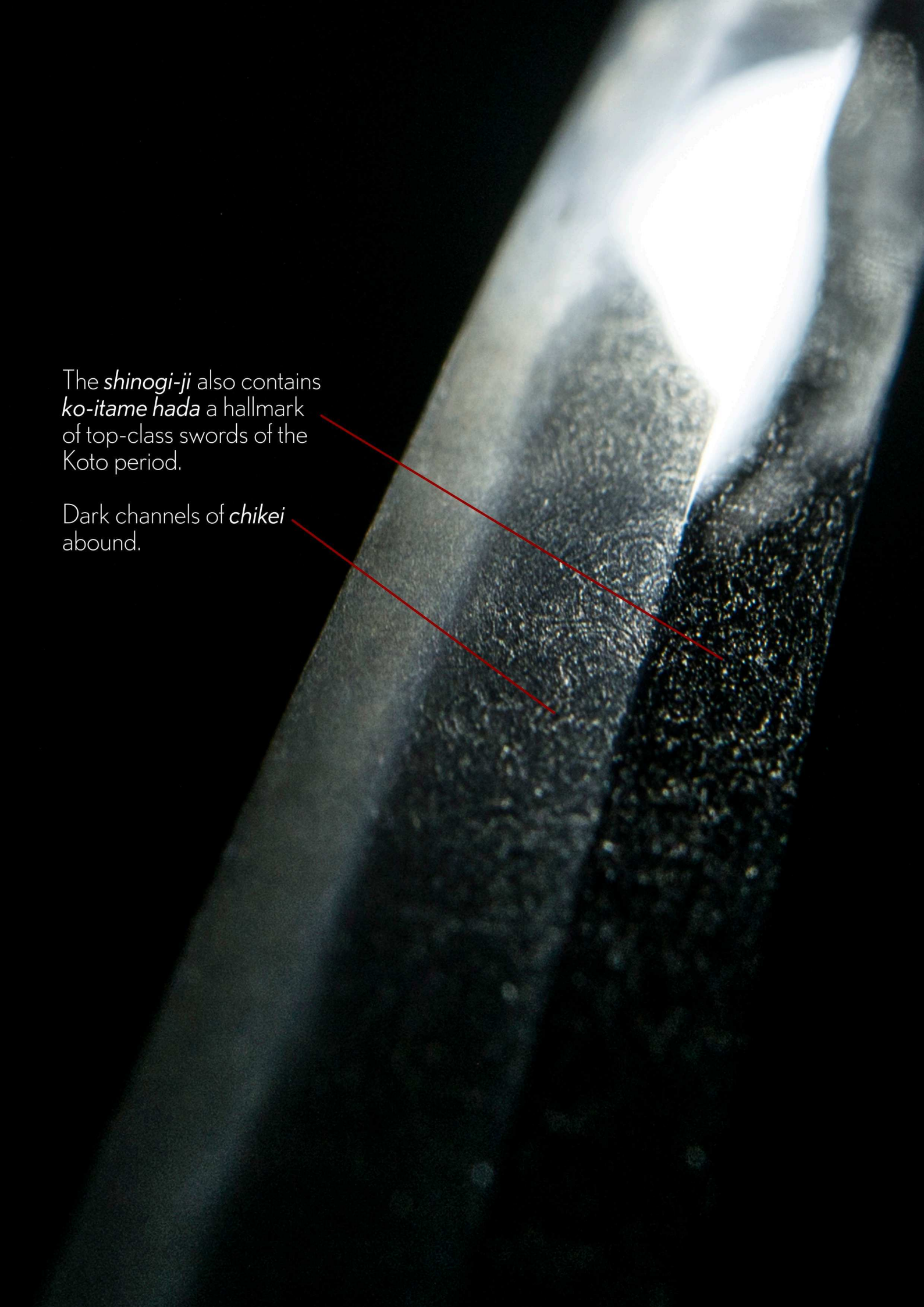


Tightly forged *ko-itame hada* that resembling
nashi-ji hada of the *Hizen tradition*.



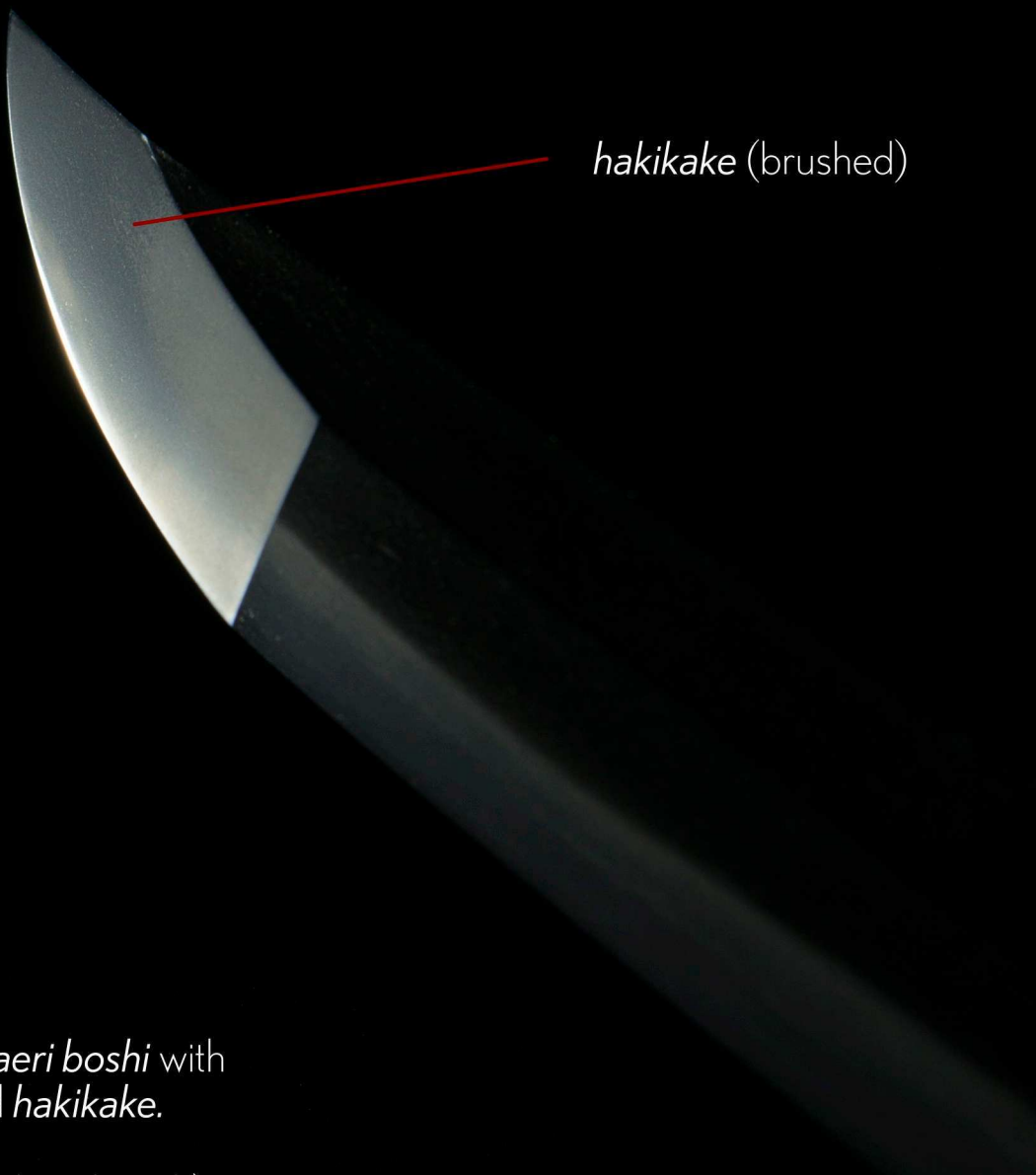


Inspiring excellence.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the shinogi-ji (the upper edge of the blade) and the chikei (the dark channels or grooves). The blade is dark and textured, with a bright, reflective edge. The background is black. Two red lines point from the text to the chikei.

The *shinogi-ji* also contains *ko-itame hada* a hallmark of top-class swords of the Koto period.

Dark channels of *chikei* abound.



hakikake (brushed)

Sugu ko-maru kaeri boshi with
a hint of brushed *hakikake*.

Chu-kissaki (medium length).





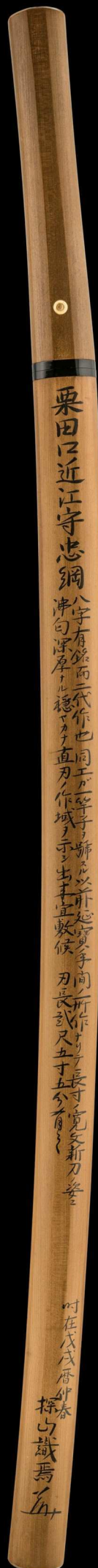
A bolt of *kinsuji* cracks
through the *suguha hamon*.



a river of *sunagashi*



A playful section of wavy *gunome-ashi*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks



The art of steel.

Excited about your next trip to 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 or Meguro station - only minutes away from all major hotels in downtown Tokyo.





ITEM# UJKA313

A HOJOJI MASAHIRO KATANA

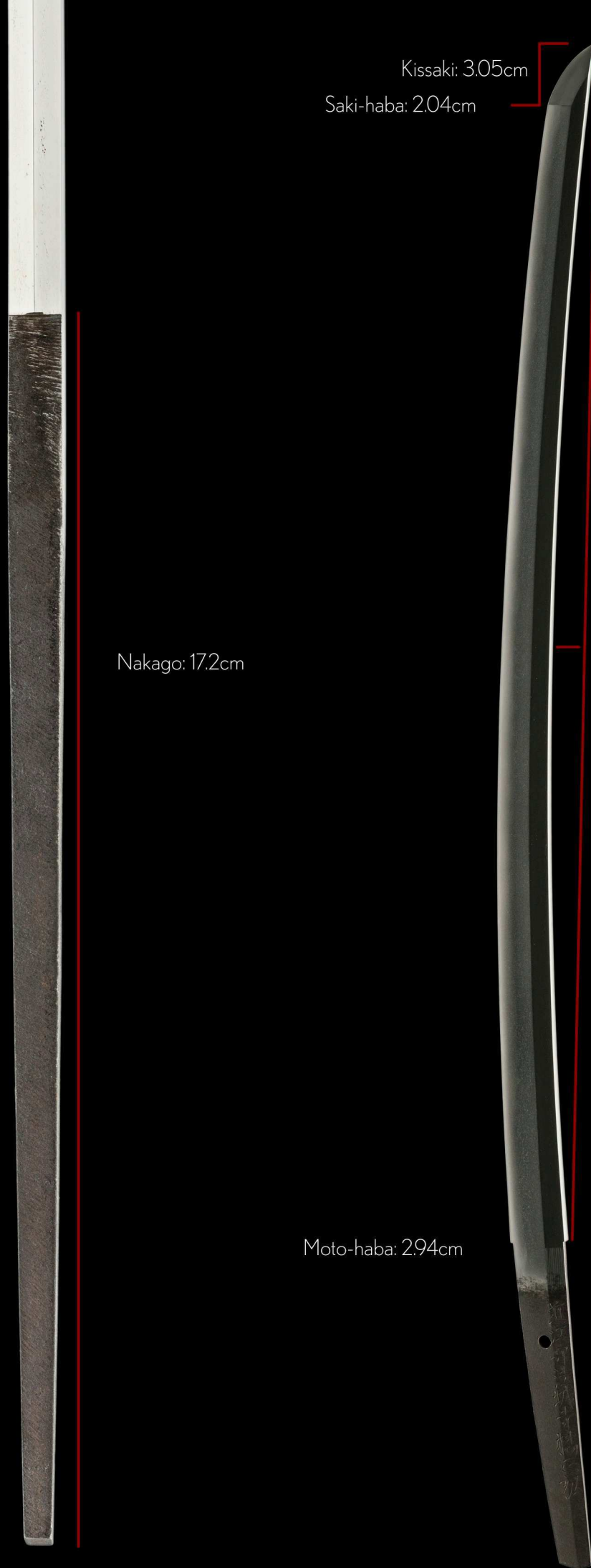
SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (MANJI ERA: 1658~1661)

Swordsmith: *Ômi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro (ubu nakago, first generation)*
Measurements: **Length:** 63.3cm **Curvature:** 1.3cm **Motohaba:** 2.94cm
Jihada: *Dense ko-itame with masame-hada in shinogi-ji, chikei, shirake-utsuri ji-nie*
Hamon: *Suguha mixed with wavy gunome-ashi with tobiyaki*
Certificate 1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate 2-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic)
Fujishiro: **Jo-saku** (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Sharpness: **Wazamono** (rated as a maker of good sharp swords)
Authentication: **Sayagaki by Hon'ami Nisshu**
Included: Shirasaya, koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Shodai Masahiro was the founder of the *shintô* era *Edo Hôjôji* school that *Kunimitsu* founded in the *Hôjôji* district of *Tajima* province circa 1362. *Masahiro* moved from *Tajima* to *Musashi* (Tokyo) in the early 1650s and carefully developed the school to great respect and prosperity.

There is an authenticity to this katana that echoes the *majime* (serious) character of samurai living in Edo at the time. This would have been a custom-ordered katana given its shorter length, that fighting samurai generally preferred. The *sayagaki* by late Living National Treasure *Hon'ami Nisshû* states that the *yakiba* is gorgeous. Its handsome *koshirae* features a *Mino-Gotô* cloud dragon *tsuba* and a *shiokumi* farming scene on the *fuchi-kashira* signed by *Mogarashi Nyûdo Sôten*.



Saki-kasane: 5.8mm

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 755g

Nakago: 17.2cm

Moto-haba: 2.94cm

Kissaki: 3.05cm
Saki-haba: 2.04cm

Nagasa: 63.3cm

Sori: 1.3cm

Mekugi-ana: 1

Shodai Masahiro's birth name is *Takigawa Saburôdayû* and hailed from *Hirohara* in Tajima province where he was a descendant of the lineage of *Hôjôji Kunimitsu*.

Masahiro moved to the capital Edo (Tokyo) and established the *Edo-Hôjôji* school in the early 1650s, serving the burgeoning demand for quality samurai swords.

Masahiro crafted primarily katana and wakizashi as the daisho was protocol for active samurai.





Location: *Edo* (resident of Tokyo)

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

School: *Hôjôji*

Clan: *Tachibana*

Swordsmith: *Masahiro* (first generation)

近 (Ô)

江 (mi, no)

守 (Kami)

法 (Hô)

城 (jô)

寺 (ji)

橘 (Tachibana)

正 (Masa)

弘 (hiro)

ura (reverse)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

katte sagari-yasurime
(right-handed downward slanting file marks)

kengyo nakago-jiri
(sword-shaped butt end)





An exquisitely signed *nakago* that bears the mark of professionalism.

The excellent condition of the nakago is evidence of quality care over more than 350 years.

特選
28201603

No 1005359



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 近江守法城寺橘正弘

長 二尺〇九分強

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀劍と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十八年六月一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會



愛知 教育委員会
第 15270 号
昭和29年 1 月 29 日

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 28th year of Heisei (2016), June 1st

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Ômi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 0-sun 9-bu kyô (63.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



近江守法城寺橋正弘
 Ōmi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro

時代萬治ノ頃
Jidai Manji no koro
 Dates around the Manji era (1658-1661)

地刃共美事也
Jiba tomo migoto nari
 The *jiba* [jihada and yakiba] is gorgeous

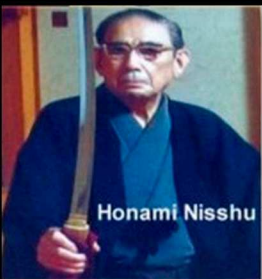
長貳尺壹寸有之
Nagasa 2-shaku 1-sun kore ari
 Length 63.3 cm

昭和己巳歲雨月上浣於上州水上認之
Shôwa kinoto midoshi ugetsu jôkan Jôshû Minakami ni oite kore o mitomu
 Appraised in Minakami in (former) Kôzuke province in the first third of May in the year of the serpent of the Shôwa era (1965)

本阿弥日洲(花押)
Hon'ami Nisshû + kaô
 Hon'ami Nisshû + monogram

In the course of his distinguished career as a master sword polisher *Hon'ami Nisshû* was entrusted by the Ministry of Education with the polishing of invaluable swords that were classified as:

kokuhô (national treasures)
jûyô bunkazai (important cultural properties)
jûyô bijutsuhin (important works of art)



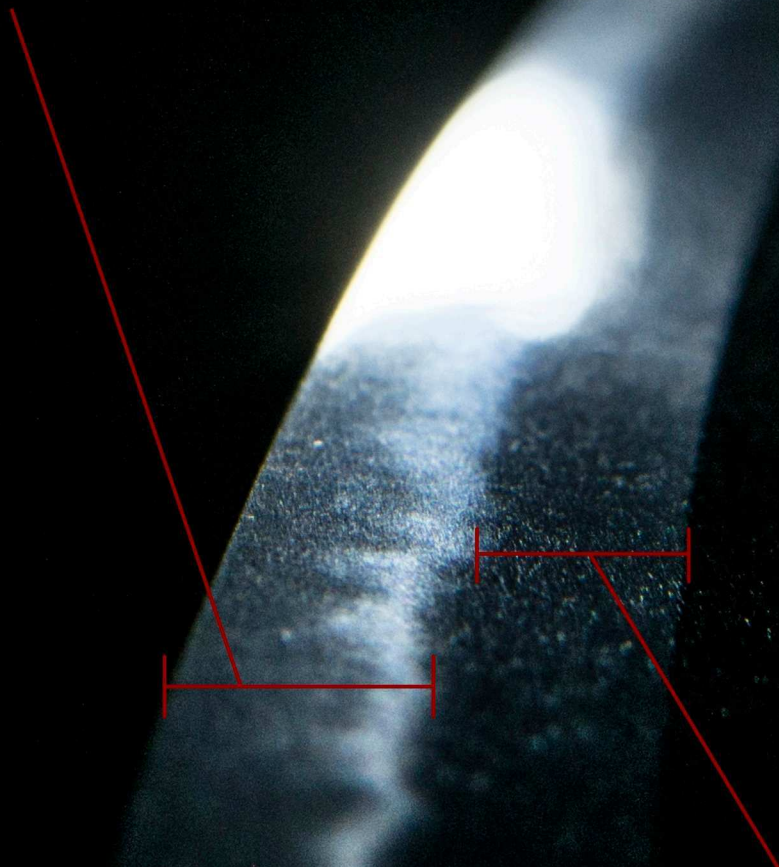
Hon'ami Nisshû was given the title of *Living National Treasure* (*ningen-kokuhô*) on April 23rd, 1975. He died on the 13th of July 1996 at the age of 88.

Hon'ami Nisshu sensei describes the sword as having a gorgeous *jiba*.

This word is a fusion of two important sword terms - *jihada* (the grain pattern from the *shinogi* to the hamon) and the *yakiba* (the hardened area along the edge of the blade), in which the pattern is called the *hamon*.

Top-class swords display a uniformity of quality in these sections of the blade. This katana has a clear, bright, well-forged *jiba* - the mark of a superior smith.

yakiba (hardened edge of the blade), this section has a greater concentration of carbon allowing it to get razor sharp.



jihada (the grain pattern in the *ji* - body of the sword)


A clear, beautiful *jigane* (steel) emits a hue of excellence.



Muneyaki (tempering on the mune, spine) is a feature commonly seen on swords of the *Hôjôji* school.

shirake utsuri
-shadow hamon



A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the grain of the metal. The blade is positioned diagonally, with the tip pointing towards the top left. The lighting highlights the texture of the metal, particularly the straight grain (masame-hada) in the shinogi-ji (the upper part of the blade). A red line points from the text below to this specific area of the blade.

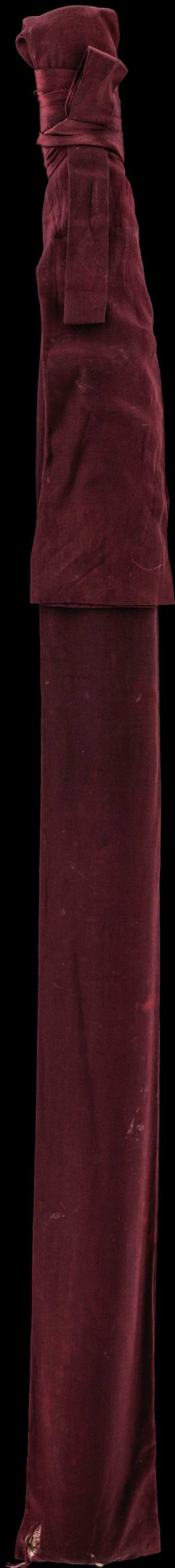
Splendid *masame-hada*
(straight grain) in the *shinogi-ji*.

Another prominent feature is the presence of *tobiyaki*, tempered spots in the *ji* (body) of the sword.

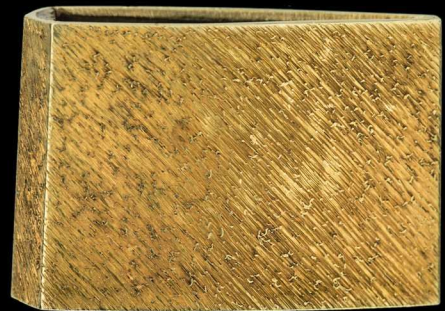




Bright, symmetrical *gunome-ashi* (legs)
reach out for the cutting edge.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

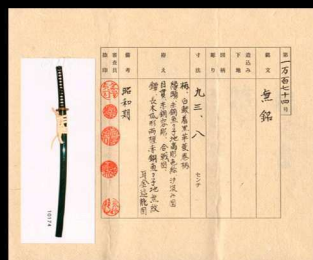


gold *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

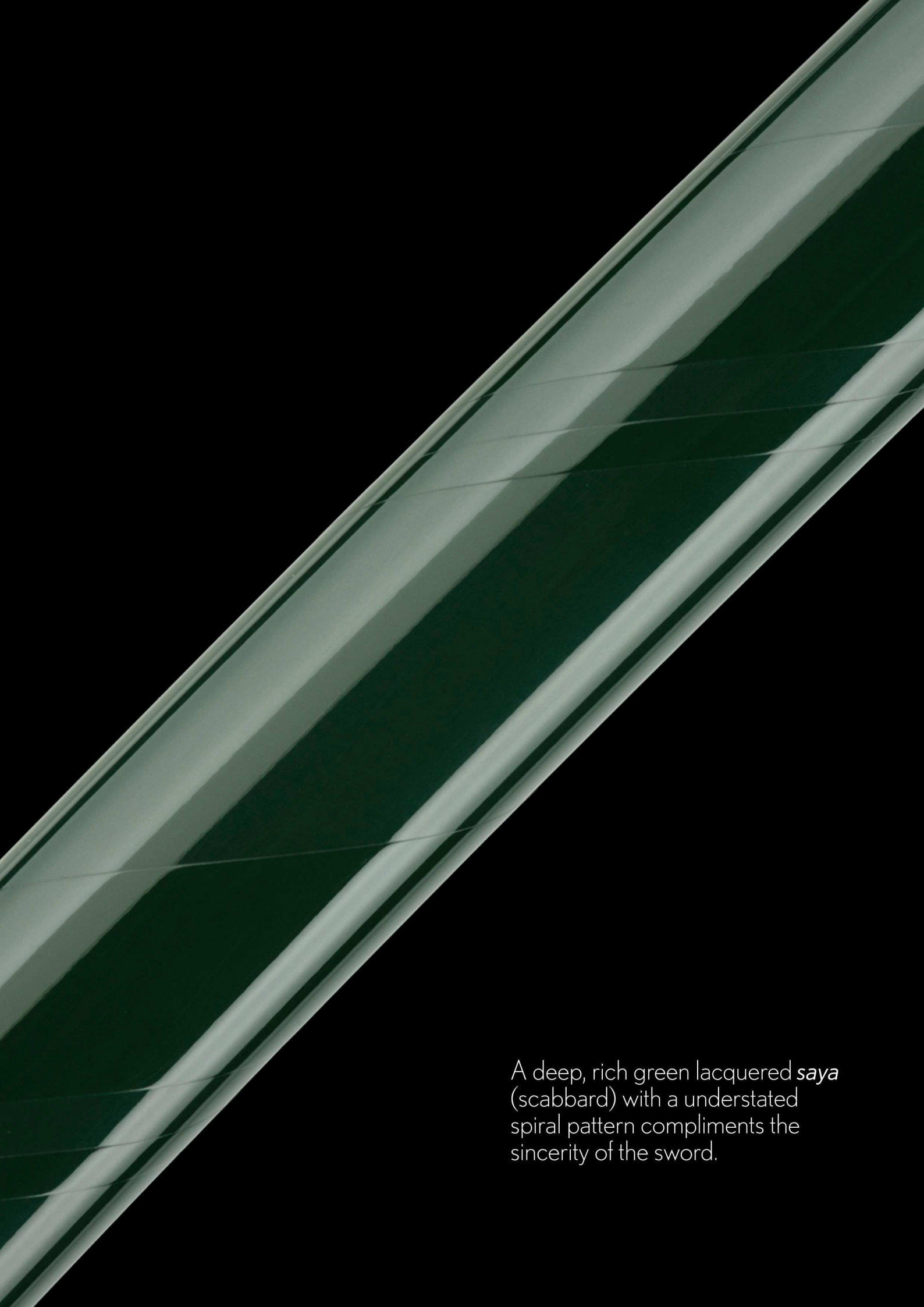
*Midoriiro-hirumaki-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(緑色蛭巻塗鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in green with
spiral pattern*

Crafted during the
Shôwa period
(1926~1989)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



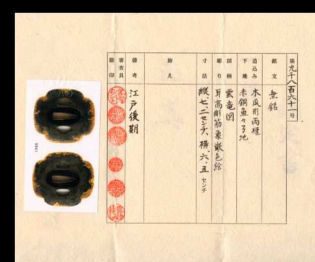
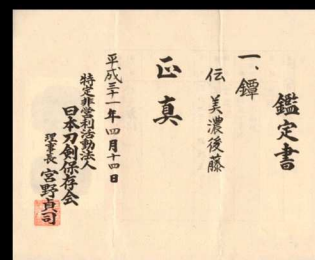
A deep, rich green lacquered *saya* (scabbard) with a understated spiral pattern compliments the sincerity of the sword.



Here is a brilliant *shakudo* with *nanako* ground *tsuba* depicting the motif of a dragon wrapped up in clouds (*unryû on zu*). The way in which the dragon encircles the multi-lobed *mimi* (rim) of the *tsuba* is great fun.

This *tsuba* has been attributed to the work of the famed *Gotô school* in *Mino province (Mino-Gotô)*.

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





reverse view



claw

head

cloud

mimi (rim) view of the tsuba

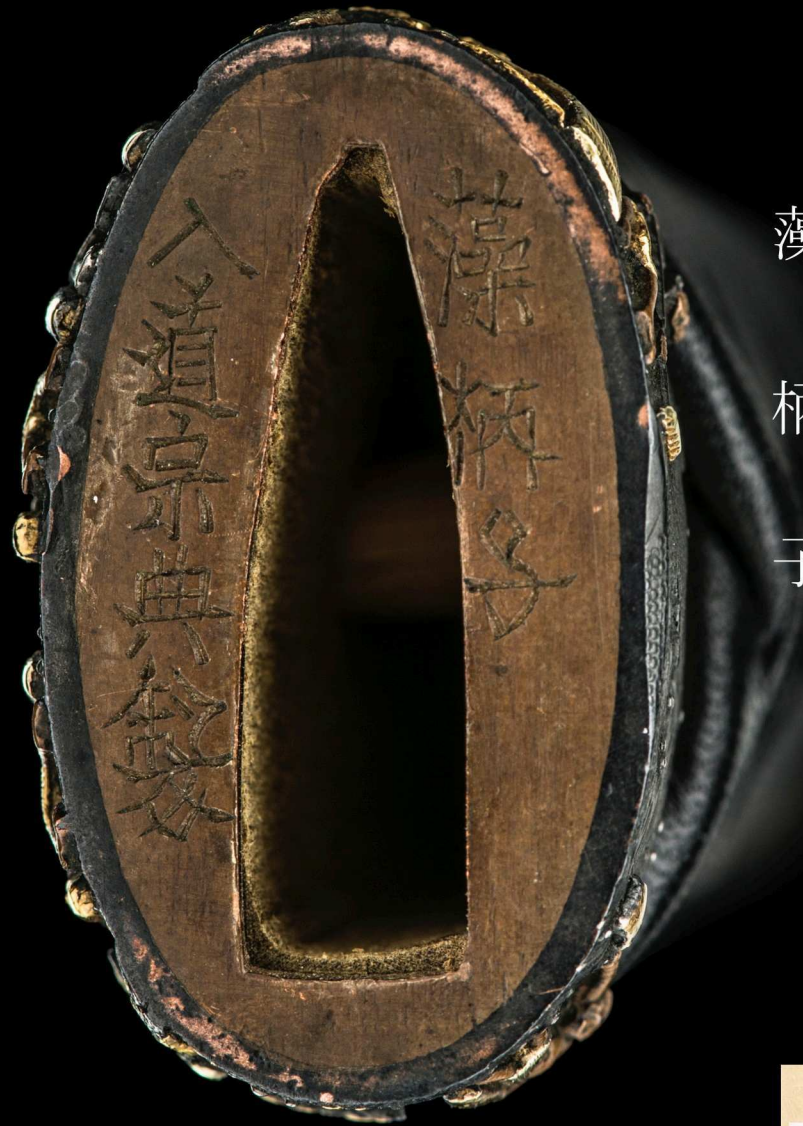


A tightly wrapped leather hilt gave the samurai better grip during battle.
Here a samurai takes on the high seas, preparing for the Mongol invasion.





(Nyû) 入
(dô) 道
(Sô) 宗
(ten) 典



藻 (Mo)
柄 (gara)
子 (shi)

This fuchi-kashira is crafted and signed by:
Mogarashi Nyûdô Sôten [school] + monogram
藻柄子入道宗典 + 花押



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



These farmers are **brine carriers** known as *shiokumi*. For centuries, salt production has been an important activity throughout Japan and coastal communities developed sophisticated techniques for producing this vital mineral from seawater.

During the Edo period, rice was the basis of the taxation system, but cultivable land was scarce in *Noto Peninsula* in *Ishikawa Prefecture*. Under the *Kaga clan's* 'rice for salt' system, farmers who did not own enough land to allow them to pay their rice taxes and secure the food necessary for their subsistence borrowed rice from the government, paying for it in salt at a fixed rate.

The rice for salt system was instrumental in making salt production one of the most important occupations of people along the coasts of Noto.

source:
<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/preserving-japans-sea-salt-making-tradition>



Shiokumi (Brine Carriers)
Katsukawa Shunko (1743~1812)



Salt farmers hard at work as depicted on the *kashira* (pommel).
Today, the tradition continues in parts of Ishikawa prefecture.



satoumi production



ITEM# UJWA238

A YASUSADA '2-BODY CUTTING TEST' WAKIZASHI SIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA, 1661~1664)

Swordsmith: *Yamato no Kami Yasusada (first generation)*
Gold inlay (test): *Futatsudo kiriotoshi Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa*
Measurements: **Length:** 47.9cm (ubu) **Curvature:** 0.5cm **Moto-haba:** 2.73cm
Jihada: *Ko-itame with ji-nie, masame-hada in shinogi-ji, chikei*
Hamon: *Bright suguha mixed with ashi and kinsuji*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (a sword Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Fujishiro rank: **Jo-saku** (a superior smith)
Cutting ability: **Ryo-Wazamono** (maker of highly sharp swords)
Included: Shirasaya, bags, stand, kit, DVD, printed description

SOLD

This commanding wakizashi was crafted by Shinto maestro *Yamato no Kami Yasusada*. It is said that Yasusada is originally from *Echizen province* and studied under *Shodai Yasutsugu*. Another theory states 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 daisho-sized wakizashi is a testament to the remarkable sharpness of Yasusada's swords as this blade severed cleanly through *two deceased convicted criminals in one stroke* by *Nagahisa*. The sword has a lovely tapered shape with a well-forged *itame-hada* and shining *ji-nie*. There is a calculating quickness to this blade with a rare and brilliant *suguha hamon* with intermittent *ashi*.



Saki-kasane: 3.9mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Omosa: 425g

Kissaki: 3.15cm

Saki-haba: 1.84cm

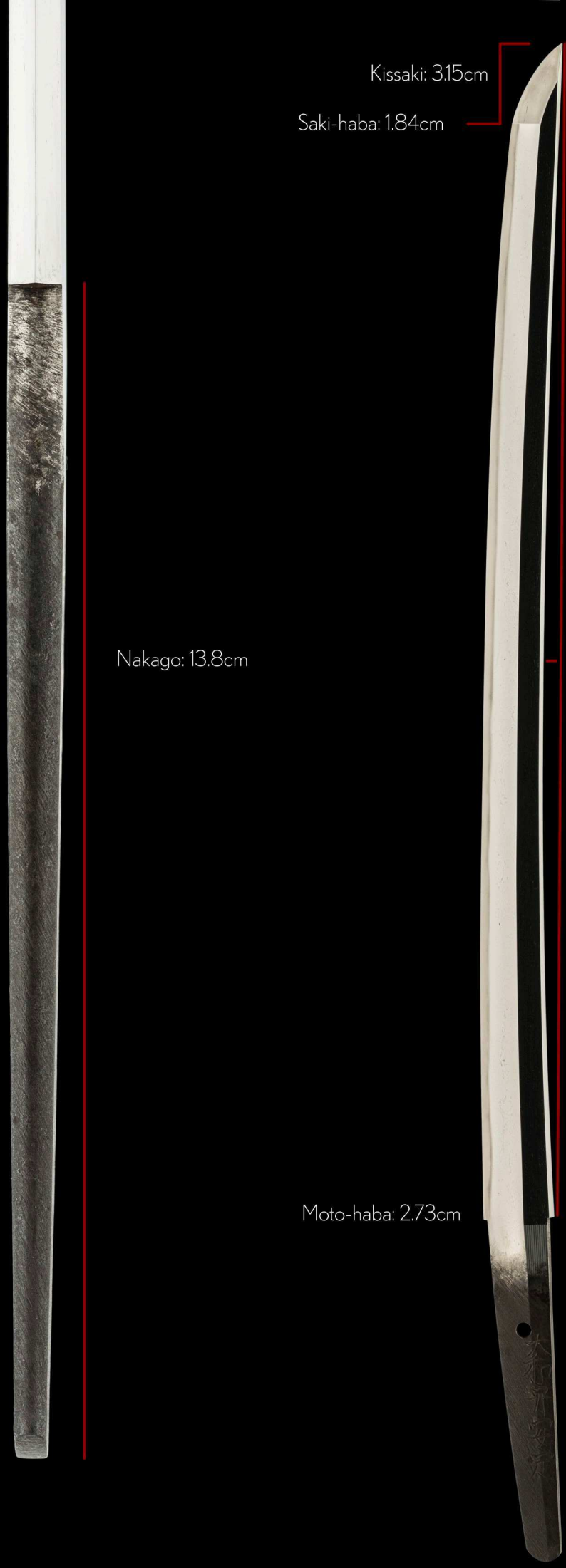
Nakago: 13.8cm

Moto-haba: 2.73cm

Nagasa: 47.9cm

Sori: 0.5cm

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 highly effective cutting ability of his swords.

He flourished as a craftsman during the *Kanbun era* (1661~1673) and forged a close relationship with grandmaster sword tester *Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa*.





Location: *Musashi*

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

Swordsmith: *Yasusada* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

o-sujikai-yasurime (steep diagonal file marks)

大 (Ya)

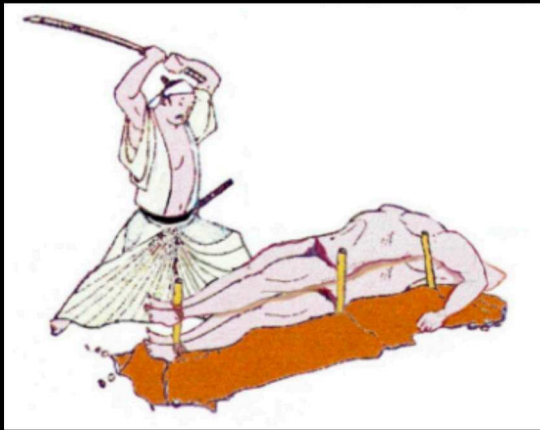
和 (mato, no)

守 (Kami)

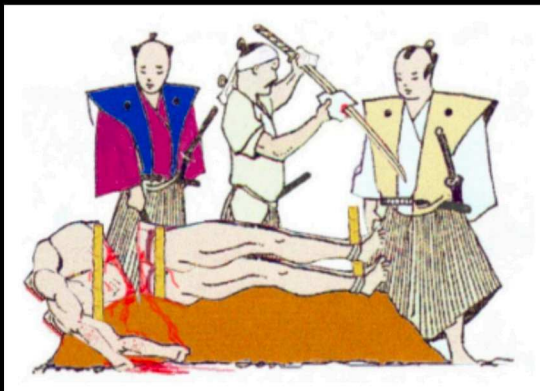
安 (Yasu)

定 (sada)

Kanbun yonen gogatsu nijûsannichi
Futatsu-dô saidan Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa
 On the 23rd day in May of 1664, sword tester
Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa severed through
 two bodies in one stroke.



before



after

(Futa) 貳
 (tsu) ツ
 (dô) 洞
 (sai) 截
 (dan) 断
 (Yama) 山
 (no) 野
 (Ka) 加
 (') 右
 (e) 衛
 (mon) 門
 (Naga) 永
 (hisa) 久

寛文四年五月廿三日
 貳洞截断
 山野加右衛門永久

寛 (Kan)
 文 (bun)
 四 (yo)
 年 (nen)
 五 (go)
 月 (gatsu)
 廿 (nijû)
 三 (san)
 日 (nichi)



a finely chiseled signature with
one clean hole in the *nakago*.



Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa was born in *Keichô three* (1598) and took his work as the leading sword tester very seriously.

He is said to have performed *tameshigiri* virtually every day, numerous times a day.

A typical day would see him sever five to seven bodies. A certain occasion has been noted where he disposed of 27 bodies in a single day.

The earliest extant *tameshi-me* of Nagahisa was performed on August 13, 1639 and the last is from Kanbun seven (1667), the year he died. An active period of around 30 years.

This cutting test was performed in 1664, not long before he died.

Markus Sesko writes in his book *Tameshigiri*:

"Nagahisa was able to judge the cutting ability, smith, and age of the smith simply from looking at a blade when preparing it for the cut, and just by listening to the sound of a blade when another person performs a cutting test."

特 選
91997001

№ 141614



一脇指 銘 大和守安定
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
平成九年二月十三日
財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



長一尺五寸八分
金象嵌 寛文四年五月廿三日
武州關叢断 山野加右衛門永久

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 9th year of Heisei (1997), February 13th

One, Wakizashi

Mei (signature)

Yamato no Kami Yasusada

Kinzôgan Kanbun yonen gogatsu nijûsannichi
Futatsu-dô saidan Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa

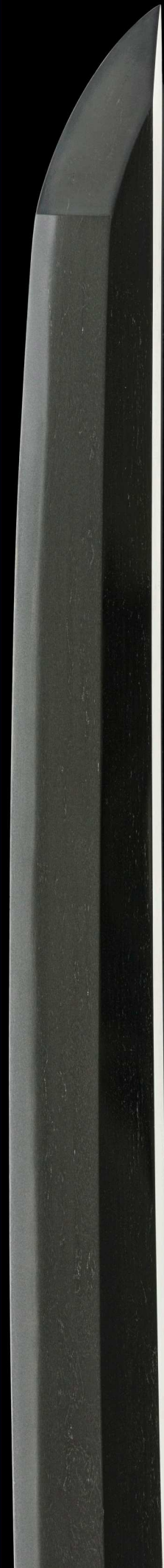
Nagasa (length)

1-shaku 5-sun 8-bu (47.9cm)

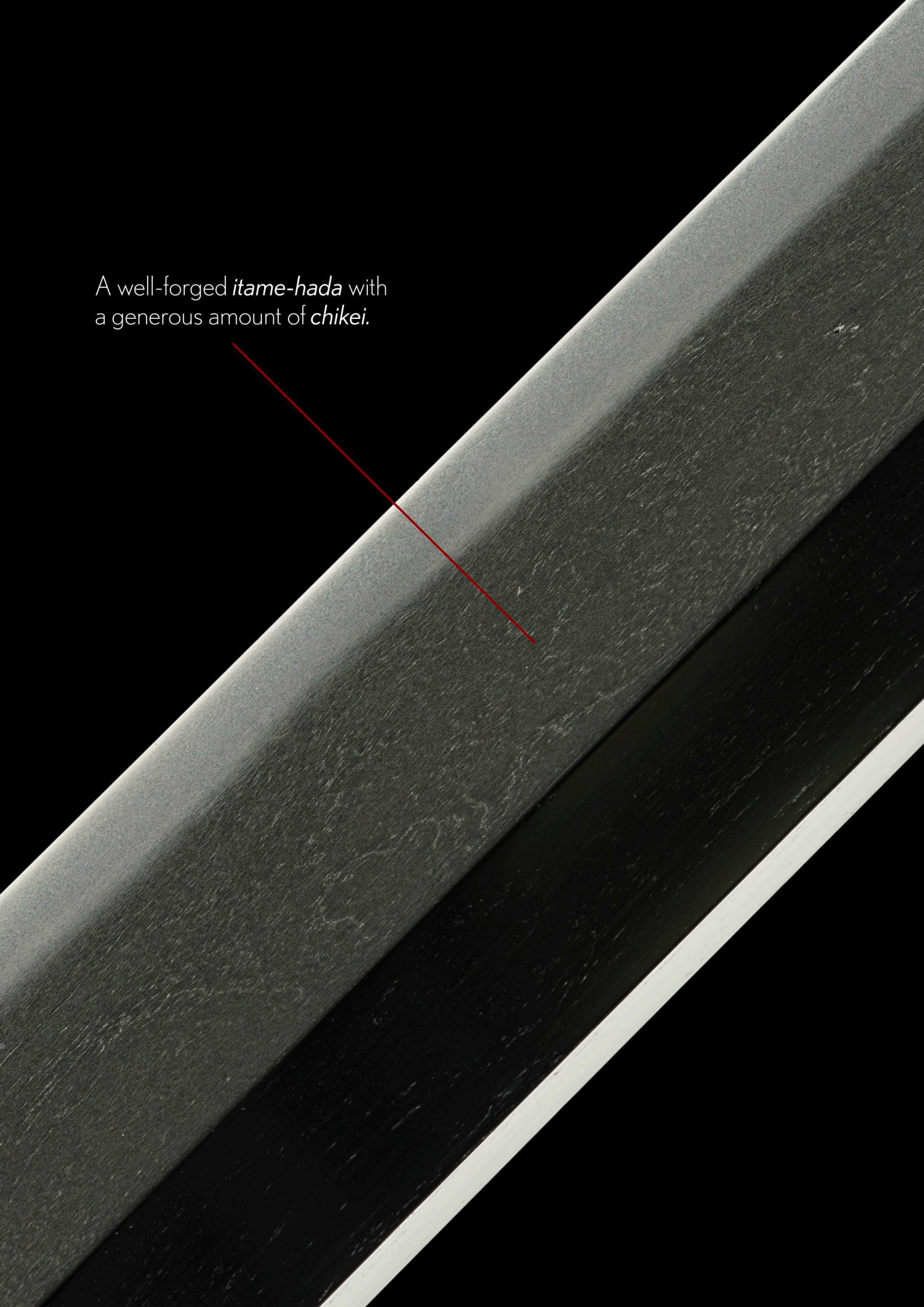
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



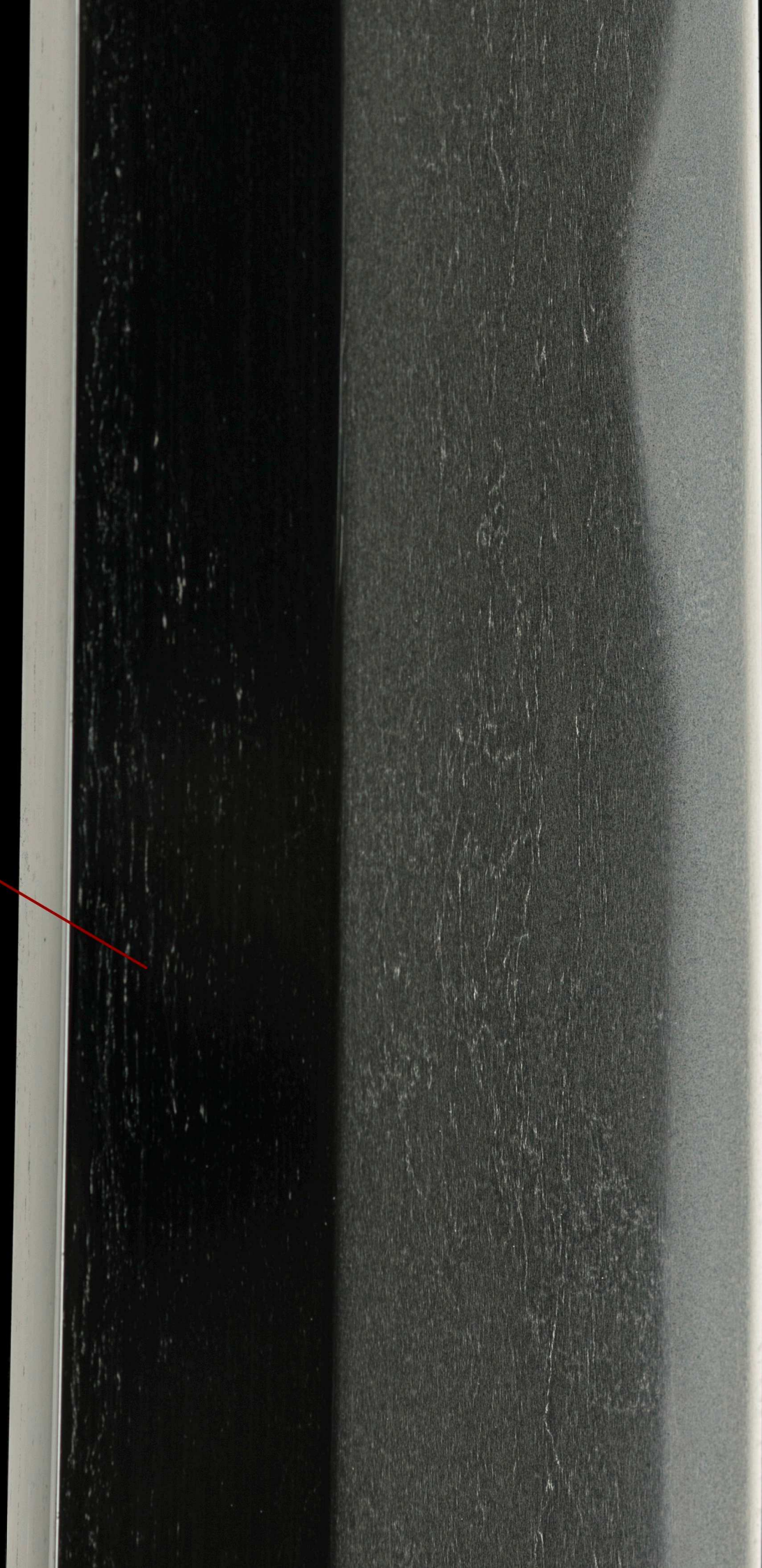
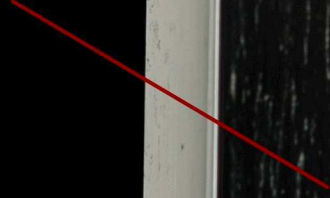
Yasusada's swords
feature a tapering
mihaba that noticeably
widens at the base.



A well-forged *itame-hada* with
a generous amount of *chikei*.



Beautiful straight grain *masame-hada* in the *shinogi-ji*.

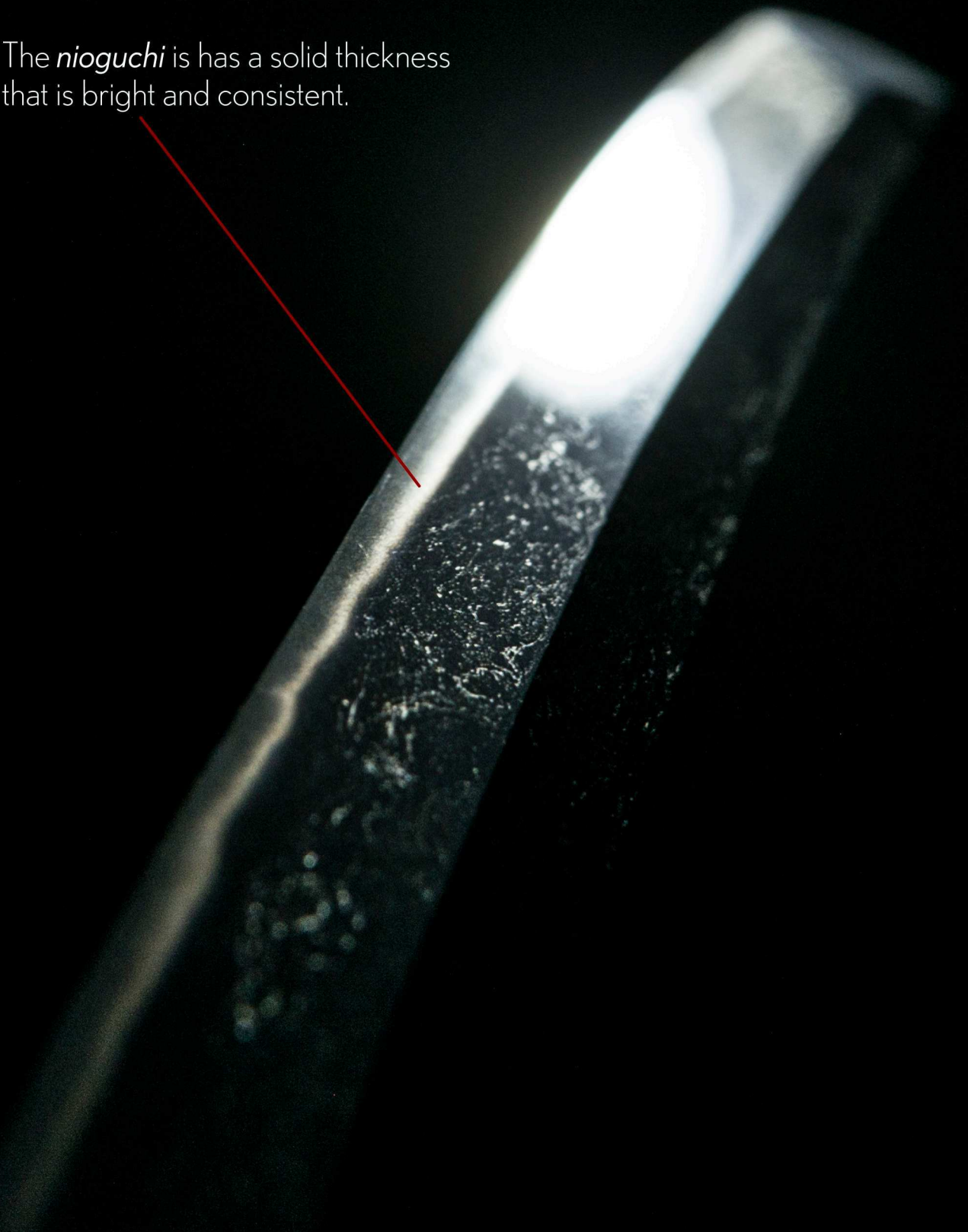




The *boshi* is a straight *sugu* with a *ko-maru kaeri* (rounded return).

A *hamon* based on *suguha* (straight) is rarely found on swords by Yasusada making this a good reference piece.

The *nioguchi* is has a solid thickness that is bright and consistent.



A good look at *ji-nie* where the
nie crystals in the *ji* (body) shine
like a diamond under light.

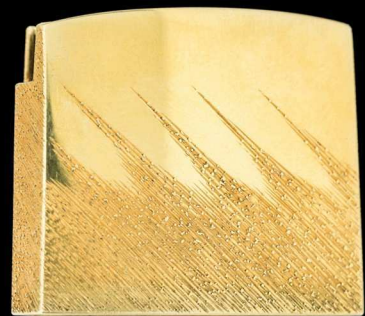




Ashi (legs) periodically kick out from the hamon towards the *ha-saki* (cutting edge).



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

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welovedaruma.com

...and discover the power of goal setting
(Japanese zen style!)





ITEM# UJKA064

A YOSHISHIGE KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY SHOWA PERIOD (CIRCA ~1926)

Swordsmith:	<i>Yoshishige (two-character signature)</i>		
Location:	Gifu prefecture		
Measurements:	Length: 62.8cm	Curvature: 1.2cm	Motohaba: 3.0cm
Jihada:	<i>Tight itame-hada</i>		
Hamon:	<i>Sugu-yakidashi into ko-gunome midare with togari, sunagashi and kinsuji</i>		
Nakago:	<i>Ubu-nakago with kengyo nakago-jiri and saka-takanoha file marks</i>		
Certificate 1:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (a sword designated as Authentic)		
Certificate 2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (koshirae, tsuba & soroi-kanagu designated as Authentic)		
Included:	Shirasaya, koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description		

SOLD

This delightful *gendaito katana* by Yoshishige was signed with a two-character inscription a few years prior to the start of WWII. The blade has been freshly polished in 2019 and displays a beautiful *ko-gunome midare hamon* with plenty of *togari*, respecting the Mino tradition.

Complementing the sword is a unique matching set of mid-Edo period fittings (*soroi kanagu*) in the design of *nata mame* – Japan’s beloved sword beans. Known for the medicinal powers that improve one’s immune system, these terrific silver and iron pieces crafted by the *Oda School* in Satsuma province reinforce the healthiness of the sword. A near 400-year-old *Kô-Kinkô sukashi tsuba* in the form an *ume* (plum blossom) adds extra energy and flow to this original piece.



Saki-kasane: 4.2mm

Moto-kasane: 7.3mm

Omosa: 715g

Kissaki: 3.40cm

Saki-haba: 2.15cm

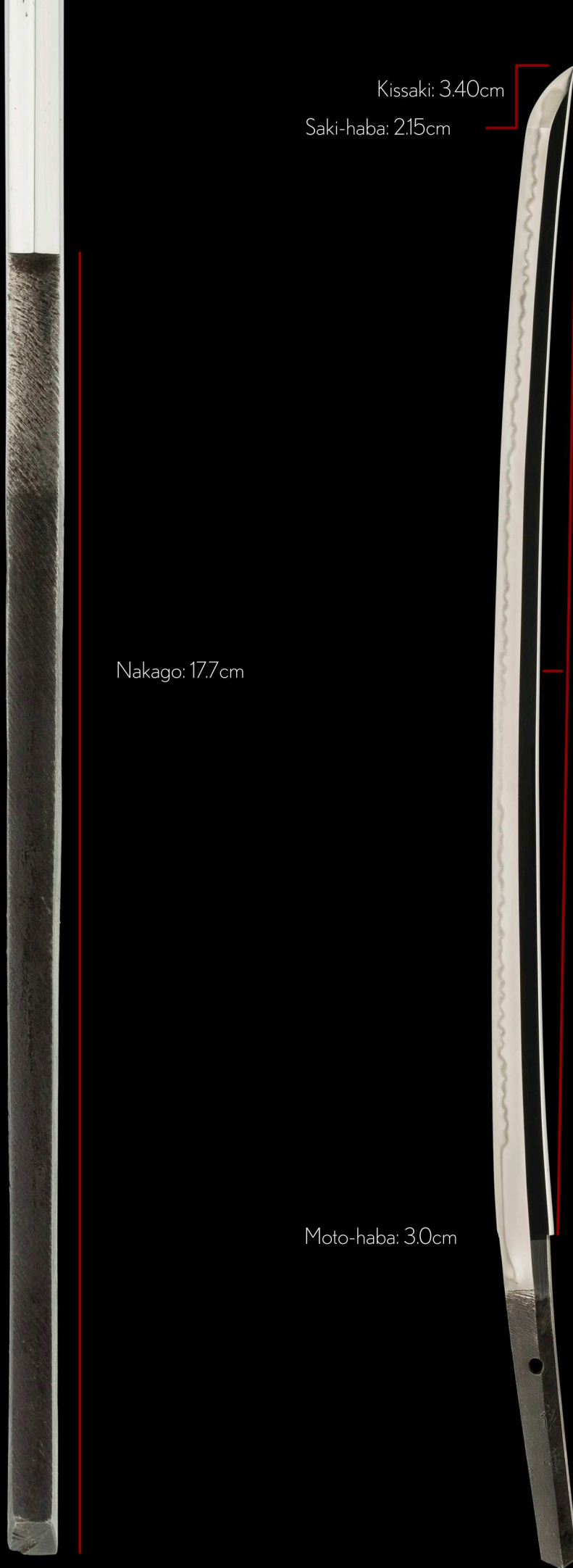
Nakago: 17.7cm

Moto-haba: 3.0cm

Nagasa: 62.8cm

Sori: 1.2cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Freshly polished in 2019 with a new shirasaya, this is a beautiful *gendaito katana* crafted circa 1926 by *Yoshishige* from modern day Gifu province.





Location: *Gifu prefecture*

Swordsmith: *Yoshishige*

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

saka-takanoha-yasurime (hawk feather file marks)

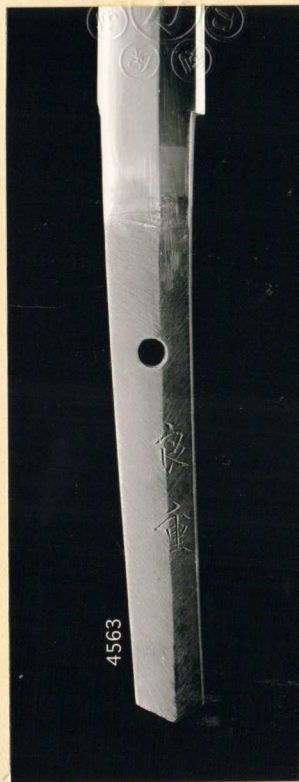
kengyo (sword-shaped) *nakago-jiri*

良 (Yoshi)

重 (shige)



(*ura*, reverse)



捺 印	審 査 員	備 考	中 心	彫 刻	鈍 子	刃 紋	鍛	銘 文	第 四 五 六 三 号
		国不明 昭和前期	目釘穴 一個	鑓 造 磨 り 研	直 造 調 大 刃 返	直 造 磨 出 し と 尖 り 小 互 の 自 乱 水	小 板 目	良 重	

NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

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

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Yoshishige

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 7-bu (62.9cm)

Issued in 24th year of Heisei (2012), July 15th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)




This part of the hamon is called *sugu-yakidashi*, where it commences in *suguha* (straight) before heading into its *gunome-midare* formation.





kinsuji (golden lines in the hamon)

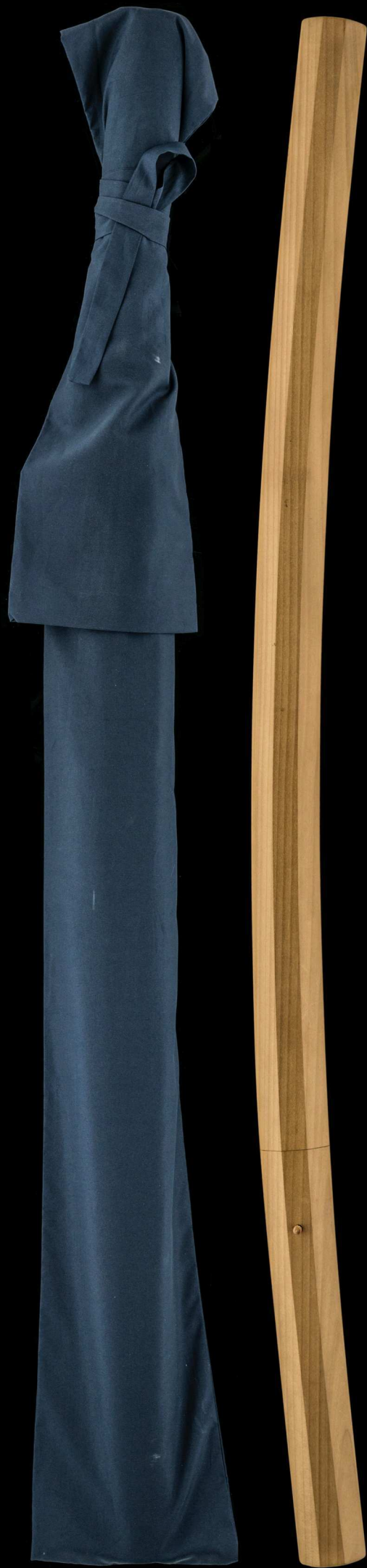
ko-maru boshi (turn back)



Respecting the Mino tradition, this katana features a wavy *ko-gunome hamon* with *togari* (peaks) and valleys.

This hamon pattern is said to be inspired by the magnificent cedar forest tree lines of the Gifu region.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



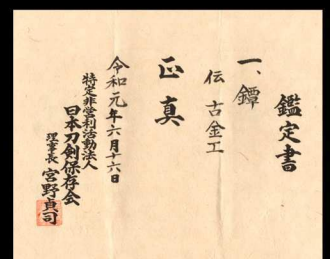
copper *habaki* with
horizontal file marks



This is lovely *Kô-Kinkô* iron tsuba crafted several hundred years ago to the early Edo period (1600~1691).

Ume (plum blossom) design are mentioned in Japanese poetry as a symbol of spring. They have a protective charm against evil and wrongdoing. There is a calm feeling of movement and flow in this openwork design.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributing the piece to the *mid-Edo period* circa 1700~1780 has been attained.



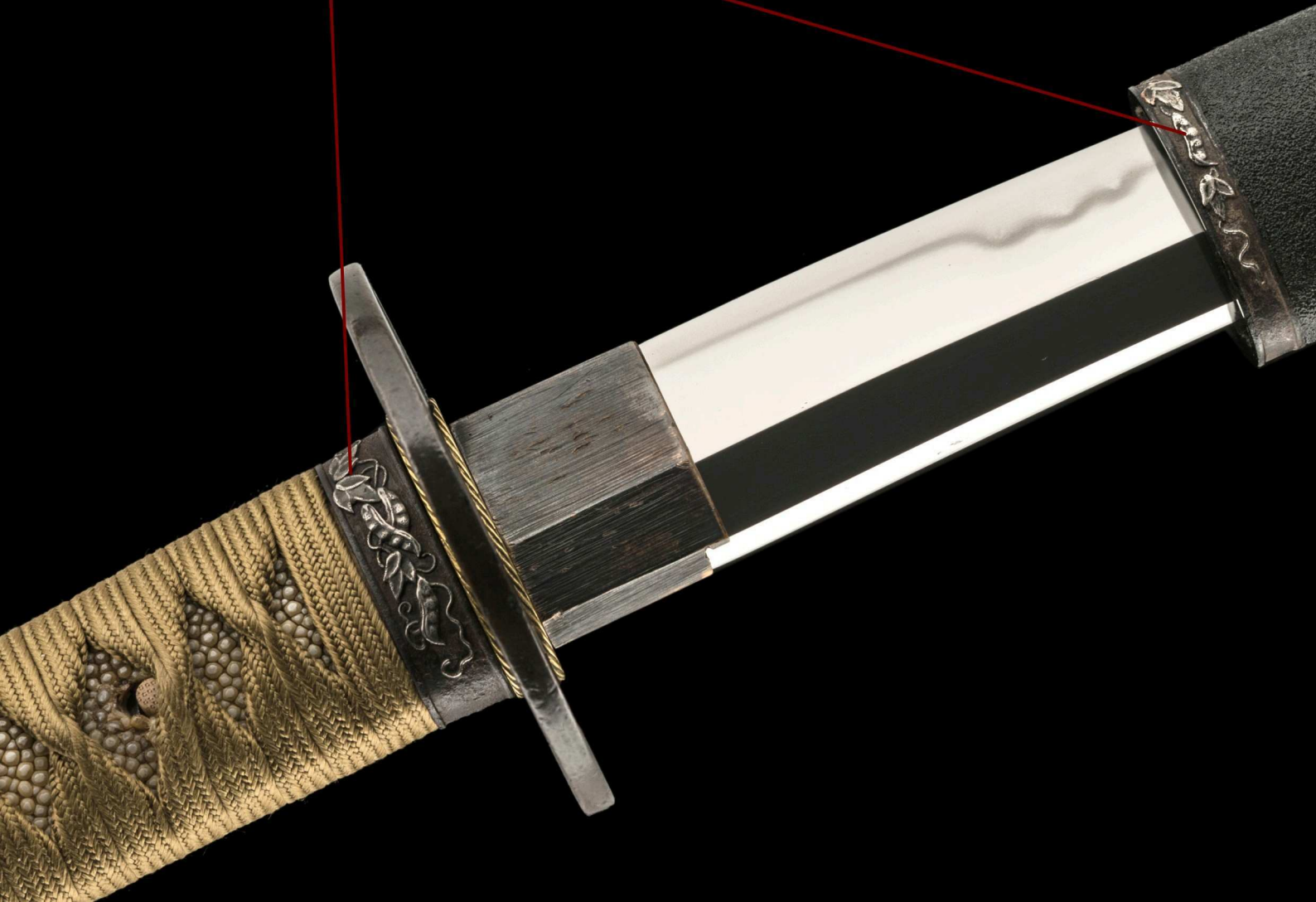


(reverse)



Soroi Kanagu (matching fittings)
of the great sword bean, *nata mame*.

Crafted by the Oda School,
Satsuma province, circa 1700s.
Certified by the NTHK-NPO.





Kashira (pommel), depicting *nata mame*

Nata mame - the Japanese sword bean - aptly named due to its curved sword-like shape, is considered a miracle food that is said to prevent pneumonia, strengthens the immune system, reduces the risk of diabetes and relieves hay fever - even helps to cure bad breath. Its medicinal qualities have been revered for centuries.

It should be noted that *soroi kanagu* (ensuite of matching sword fittings) from the Edo period is rare - a testament to the longevity power of the *nata mame*!



nata mame



The *menuki* are beautiful depictions of imperial family gold chrysanthemums resting on a *shakudo* branch.

The *same-kawa* (ray skin) has been carefully preserved from the Edo period, matching the elegant iron and silver fittings.



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*ujta048 - A Hosho School Tanto in aikuchi koshirae
Kamakura period*

*Family heirloom of the Satake clan in Akita province
Congratulations Nick!*