

JAPANESE
SWORD
CATALOGUE 37

RELEASED:
DEC 17/2021

ALL SOLD



(COVER PHOTO)

ITEM# UJTA052

A BISHŪ OSAFUNE KANEMITSU TANTO
SIGNED & DATED MARCH (1361~1362)

EDO PERIOD AIKUCHI WISTERIA KOSHIRAE
CRAFTED BY IKEDA TAKATOSHI

2 X NBTHK TOKUBETSU HOZON
A TAMURA FAMILY TREASURE

ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS

CATALOGUE 37
RELEASED: DECEMBER 17, 2021

THE FOLLOWING PAGES CONTAIN DESCRIPTIONS AND IMAGES OF GENUINE ANTIQUÉ JAPANESE SWORDS THAT WERE SOLD IN CATALOGUE 37. THIS IS A REFERENCE DOCUMENT.

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

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

THANK YOU,



PABLO KUNTZ
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Hello everyone,

Thank you as always for downloading the Unique Japan sword catalogue. I am pleased to say that this catalogue will never require a vaccine passport to gain entry to these pages of history. No divisive mandates here my friends. I must say that pouring my heart into this catalogue is a welcomed escape. I turn off all the noise and fear-based, control-drunk policies that we are subjected to on a daily basis. I dedicate this edition to the men and women out there that are awake to this nonsense and stand for freedom. We will ride out this storm with courage. I have always maintained that the Japanese sword stands for personal responsibility and disciplined commitment. As former Navy officer and member of SEAL Team 3, Jocko Willink states, "Discipline Equals Freedom." Amen to that.

A full 13 swords that make up Catalogue 37. Some swords have been sold that have been included for reference and learning purposes. We kick off the catalogue with a rare katana by *shodai* (first gen.) *Ippô* from *Ômi* province. It is essentially flawless in *Yamato-den* qualities with a gorgeous *nakago* and simply superb craftsmanship. If this sword doesn't find an owner soon, I will keep it and I mean it! Good opportunity for a custom koshirae project. Interestingly, later on in the catalogue you'll see a long katana with an *exuberant gunome-midare hamon* by his son, *nidai Ippô*. This is a terrific sword with a great set of koshirae featuring snarling dragons, waves, peonies and protective *shisa* lions.

A wonderful katana by *Chikuzen-Nobukuni Yoshimasa* follows *shodai Ippô*. This sword sings *ying yang* qualities. The blade has a tight *ko-midare hamon* over an expertly forged *ko-mokume jihada*. The set of koshirae that comes with this piece is stunning. Inherited through the *Owari Tokugawa* family, the *aoi-mon* crests speak to class and authority. Switching gears, we move on to a robust katana by *Hôki no Kami Hirotaka*. This is a strong sword built for action. Crafted in my beloved province of *Echizen* it comes with an old set of reflective Edo period koshirae that is pure *zen*.

We now transport ourselves to the *Kôan* era (1361~1362) to a remarkable *tanto* by *shodai Kanemitsu* - one of Japan's sword-making giants. Featuring his iconic *kataochi-gunome hamon* with *kurikara* and *bonji horimono* this is a sword imbued with history. The incredible set of *wisteria aikuchi koshirae* crafted by *Ikeda Takatoshi* is a faithful replica of a koshirae once the property of late *Muromachi* period *shôgun Ashikaga Yoshiaki* and a former *Tamura* family treasure.

Next up is a spectacular 700-year-old *ubu-nakago tachi* from the late Kamakura attributed to the *Niô school*. Standing tall with a full 81.2cm *nagasa* and glorious curvature and a huge *kirikomi* battle scar, this vintage 21st NBTHK *jûyô tôken* sword showcases splendid *chikei* and a beaming *hosô-suguha hamon*. Complimenting the sword is a striking set of vermilion lacquered *tachi koshirae* with matching *Tosa-kashiwa-mon* from the late Edo period. Our following katana jumps back to the *shintô* period's notable smith *Hizen Yukihiro*. There is so much to admire in this sword with his trademark *abu-nomofu* (horsefly eye) *hamon*. We built an amazing custom koshirae for this sword over an 18-month period using excellent Tokubetsu Hozon certified fittings. Gotta love *Shôki* the demon slayer on the *fuchi-kashira*!

The following three swords are all collectible wakizashis. The first is an elegant sword by *Yoshitake* from *Yamashiro* province that achieved *Yûshû-saku* (Masterwork) status. A custom *koshirae* was built for this sword too that tells the story of tug boat teamwork, the beauty of Mount Fuji, and a centuries-old way of catching fish! For those seeking a sharp sword with a multiple body-cutting test, look to the next sword by *Yamato no Kami Yasusada*. In gold inlay, the *nakago* states that the blade severed through two bodies on January 14, 1662 by *Yamano Nagahisa*. Our final wakizashi is a one-handed fighting piece from the *Sengoku Jidai* (Warring States Period) by *Bishû Sukesada* that is dated to August 1514. The blade comes with a handsome set of fittings equipped with a unique *kôgai* and *kozuka*.

The final three reference swords that complete the catalogue are a katana by early *shintô* period *Mino Kanetaka*, an elegant *Nambokuchô* period katana by the *Ko-Mihara school* with a ferocious dragon-guarding koshirae and a wonderful signed *tachi* by *Iesuke* from the *Ôei* era that has seen many battles over the centuries. Rest up well Iesuke.

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

Happy holidays from my family to yours.

Warm regards,



Pablo Kuntz
December 2021



Lord Nelson has started school!

INDEX OF JAPANESE SWORDS

ITEM#	SWORDSMITH & TYPE	CM	CERTIFICATE	ERA / PERIOD	PRICE
ujka388	A SHODAI IPPÔ KATANA	61.2	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kan'ei (1624~1644)	SOLD
ujka397	A YOSHIMASA KATANA	63.9	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kanbun (1661~1673)	SOLD
ujka283	A HIROTAKA KATANA	69.0	Tokubetsu Hozon	Meireki (1655~1658)	SOLD
ujta052	A KANEMITSU TANTO	23.3	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kôan era (1361~1362)	SOLD
ujka394	A NIÔ TACHI	81.2	NBTHK Jûyô Tôken	Gentoku (1329~1331)	SOLD
ujka401	A YUKIHIRO KATANA	70.4	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kanbun (1661~1673)	SOLD
ujka402	A NIDAI IPPÔ KATANA	74.5	Tokubetsu Hozon	Tenna (1681~1684)	SOLD
ujwa153	A YOSHITAKE WAKIZASHI	49.6	NTHK Yûshû-saku	Enpô era (1673~1681)	SOLD
ujwa249	A YASUSADA WAKIZASHI	56.9	NBTHK Hozon	Kanbun (1661~1662)	SOLD
ujwa126	A SUKESADA WAKIZASHI	51.2	NTHK Kanteisho	Eisho 11 (August 1514)	SOLD
ujka391	A KANETAKA KATANA	67.4	Tokubetsu Hozon	Kan'ei (1624~1644)	SOLD
ujka392	A KO-MIHARA KATANA	68.5	Tokubetsu Hozon	Nambokucho (1356~92)	SOLD
ujka396	AN IESUKE TACHI	74.0	Tokubetsu Hozon	Ôei era (1394~1428)	SOLD

ALL PRICES ARE IN US DOLLARS

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<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.

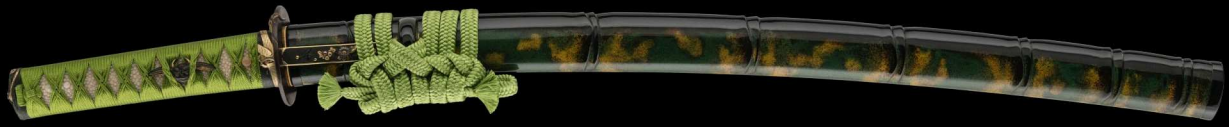
IT IS OUR PROMISE TO ADDRESS ALL YOUR QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF OUR ABILITY. IT'S IMPORTANT TO US THAT YOU FEEL COMPLETELY CONFIDENT THAT THE SWORD YOU CHOOSE (AND CHOOSES YOU) IS DESTINED FOR YOUR FAMILY TO CHERISH AND PRESERVE.

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



Recently Completed Custom Daisho Koshirae (ujdi005)
Katana and wakizashi attributed to Ômiya Morikage (circa 1362~1367)
Inspired by the magnificence of *tombo* (dragonfly)





NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon
Matching set of fittings
by Sonobe Yoshide



Recently Completed Uchigatana Koshirae
A Yosôzaemon Sukesada Katana
28th Jûyô Token, dated February 1525
With *Genji-kô* and *umebachi* crests



Recently Completed Custom Koshirae
A Motoshige Naginata Naoshi Wakizashi
49th Jûyô Token, Kamakura (1312~1317)
In dramatic *Hokusai*-inspired wave design



PHOTOS TAKEN BY **ERIC BOSSICK** FOR **UNIQUE JAPAN**.
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ITEM# UJKA388

A SHODAI IPPÔ KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KAN'EI ERA: 1624~1644)

Swordsmith:	<i>Ippô (shodai, first generation, ubu nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 61.2cm Curvature: 1.2cm Motohaba: 3.11cm
Jihada:	<i>Beautifully forged itame-hada and masame-hada, plentiful chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Bright suguha mixed with ko-midare, ko-ashi, uchinoke, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2:	NTHK-NPO Yûshû-saku (designated as Highly Excellent Masterwork)
Fujishiro:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Sharpness:	Wazamono (rated as a maker of good sharp swords)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Dr. Sato Kanzan
Included:	Shirasaya, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Shôdai (first generation) *Ippô* was the founder of the *Ômi branch* (modern-day *Shiga prefecture*) of the *Ishidô school*. Swords crafted by *Ippô* are rare - more commonly seen are blades by his son *Sasaki Ippô*, making this piece highly collectible and a great pleasure to study. The beautiful consistency of the *jihada* and outstanding *chikei* confirms what a talent *Ippô* truly was. The *hamon* is a bright, snowy *suguha* that embodies the sophisticated qualities of the *Yamato school* such as *uchinoke*. This is a sharp, fighting-length katana that includes *sayagaki* by *Dr. Sato Kanzan*.



Saki-kasane: 5.1mm

Moto-kasane: 8.2mm

Omosa: 710g

Kissaki: 3.74cm

Saki-haba: 2.14cm

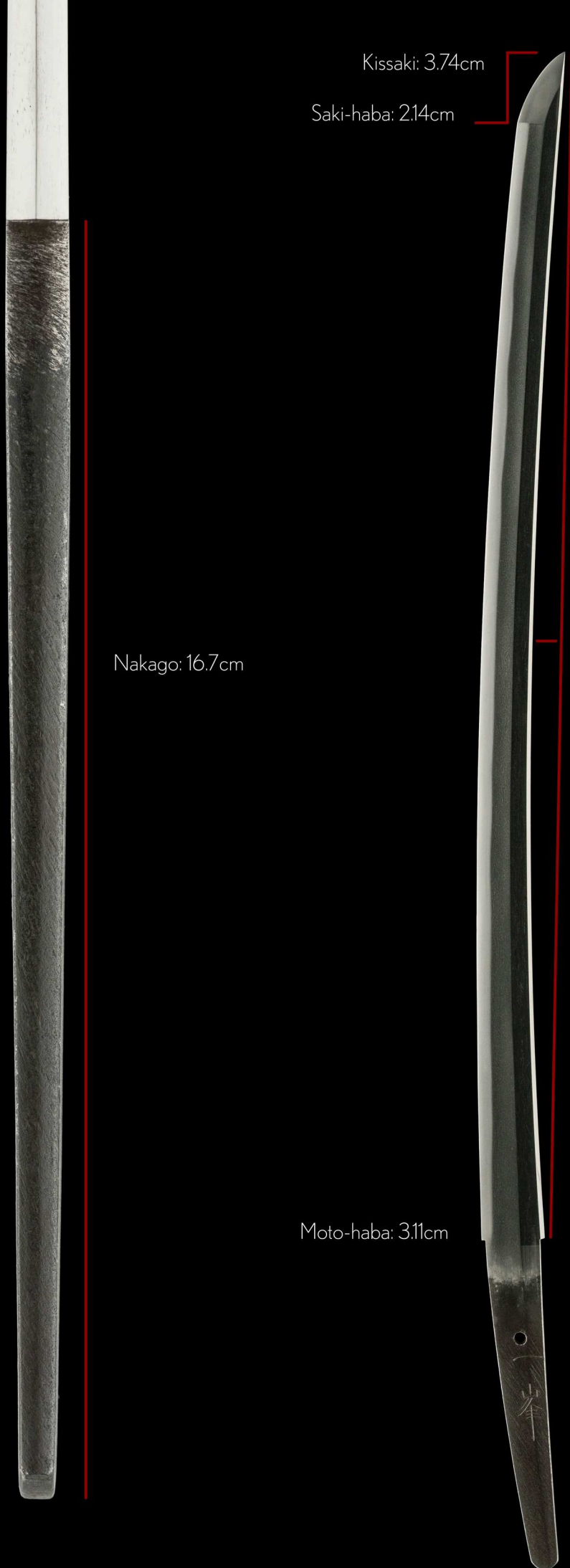
Nakago: 16.7cm

Moto-haba: 3.11cm

Nagasa: 61.2cm

Sori: 1.20cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Shôdai (first generation) *Ippô* was the founder of the *Ômi* branch (modern-day *Shiga* prefecture) of the *Ishidô* school.

As the *Ishidô* school originated at the *Sekido temple* in *Ômi* Province around the start of the *Kanei* period (1624) *Ippô* can be considered the first smith of the school. From there the smiths travelled to various parts of the country and founded branch *Ishidô* schools in *Kii* Province and came to be known as the *Kishû Ishidô*. Later *Tameyasu* led this group to *Ôsaka*. Other smiths went to *Edo* (Tokyo), the most famous of these being *Ishidô Korekazu* and the *Fukuoka-Ishidô* branch was led by *Moritsugu* and *Koretsugu*.

The *Ishidô* school smiths were best known for their ability to make swords in the *Bizen* tradition of the *Ichimonji* school. This piece, however, is more in line with the *Yamato* tradition making this blade quite rare and a valuable reference piece.

There is an undeniable air of sophistication with this katana. It's perfectly preserved in every way, essentially flawless. This is the kind of sword that would suit a custom *koshirae* should the next owner be interested. Or simply enjoyed in *shirasaya*.

In any case, let the journey continue...





Location: *Ômi* (resident of Shiga)

Family name: *Sasaki*

Swordsmith: *Ippô* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

→ (I)

峯 (ppô)

A close-up, vertical view of a sword blade. The blade has a circular hole near the top and a curved, shallow groove below it. The metal surface shows fine, parallel lines, likely from a grinding process.

一 (one)

峯 (summit, peak)

A close-up, vertical view of a sword blade, similar to the one above. It features a large, stylized character engraved into the metal. A red line points from the character to the text below.

山 (mountain)

The direct translation of the name *Ippô* is "one mountain top / summit / peak".

This inspiring name suggests the swordsmith is constantly striving for perfection - a quest towards the pinnacle of crafting excellence.





The condition of the nakago is spectacular.
This is a sword that has been well looked after.

(*ura*, reverse)

25201311



No 1001753



鑑定書

一刀 銘 一峯

長 二尺〇二分

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十六年 一月三十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



福岡 教育委員会
第 033393 号
昭和34年 7 月 28 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 26th year of Heisei (2014), January 31st

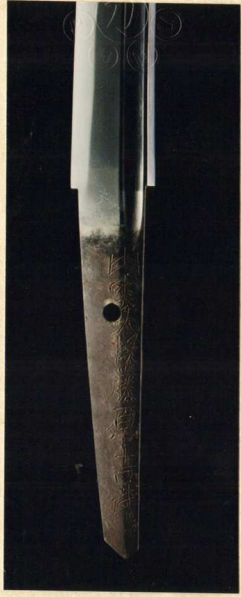
One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Ippô

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-bu (61.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

捺 審 査 員 印	備 考	寸 法	拵 え	中 心	図 柄	彫 り	錠 子	刃 紋	下 地	鍛	造り 込み	銘 文	第 五 七 三 六 号
	延 宝 頃			目 釘 穴 一 個		表 裏 俵 樋 已 下 上 拵 流	真 ん の 丸	太 茂 子 巾 の 真 ん 調 浅 小 灣 水 走 じ り		板 自 詰 七	瑞 造	出 雲 大 孫 藤 原 言 武	
													
				鑑 丈 小 物 子 連									
													
													
													
											巻 棟		



NTHK-NPO Yûshû-saku Certificate of Authenticity

This katana was designated as *Yûshû-saku* (Highly Excellent Masterwork) by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Ippô

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-bu kore ari (61.2cm)

Issued in 3rd year of Reiwa (2021), December 12th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)

This sword has reached the highest level of honour at the NTHK-NPO.
(Sword just passed, certificate arrives middle of January 2022)



近江國一峯
Ōmi no Kuni Ippō
Ippō, a resident of Ōmi Province

直刃出来
Suguha deki
Straight style hamon

刃長貳尺貳分強有之
Hachō 2-shaku 2-bu kyō kore ari
Blade length ~61.2 cm

昭和乙卯年弥生吉日
Shōwa kinoto-udoshi yayoi kichijitsu
Signed on a lucky day in the second month during the
Year of Hare in Showa period (February 1975)

寒山誌 (花押)
Written by Kanzan + monogram

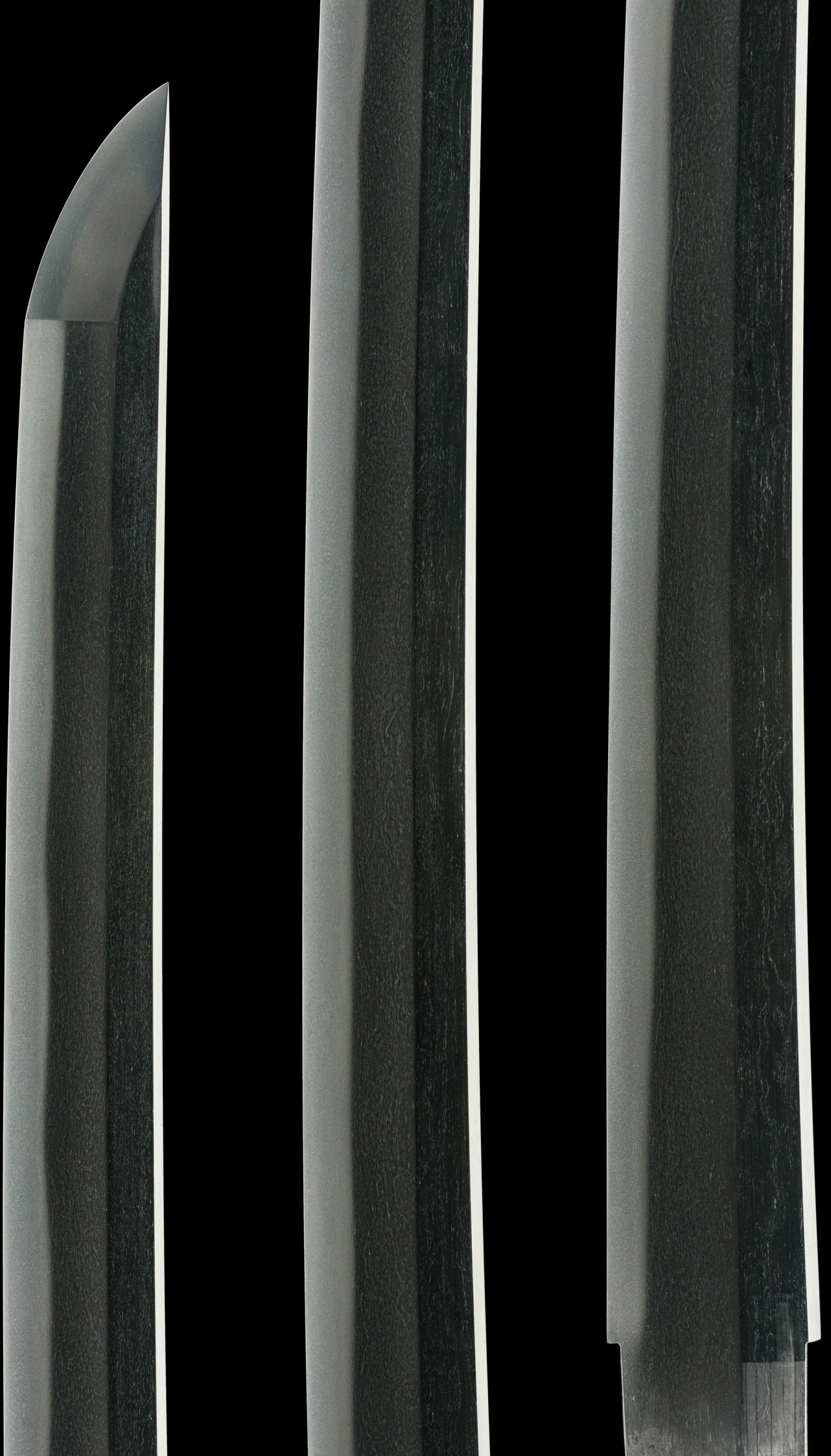


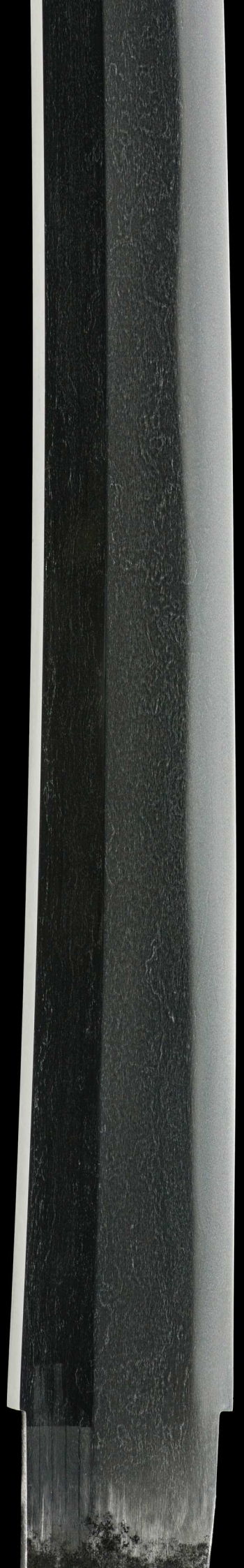
Samurai with sword
Kunisada Utagawa (1786-1865)



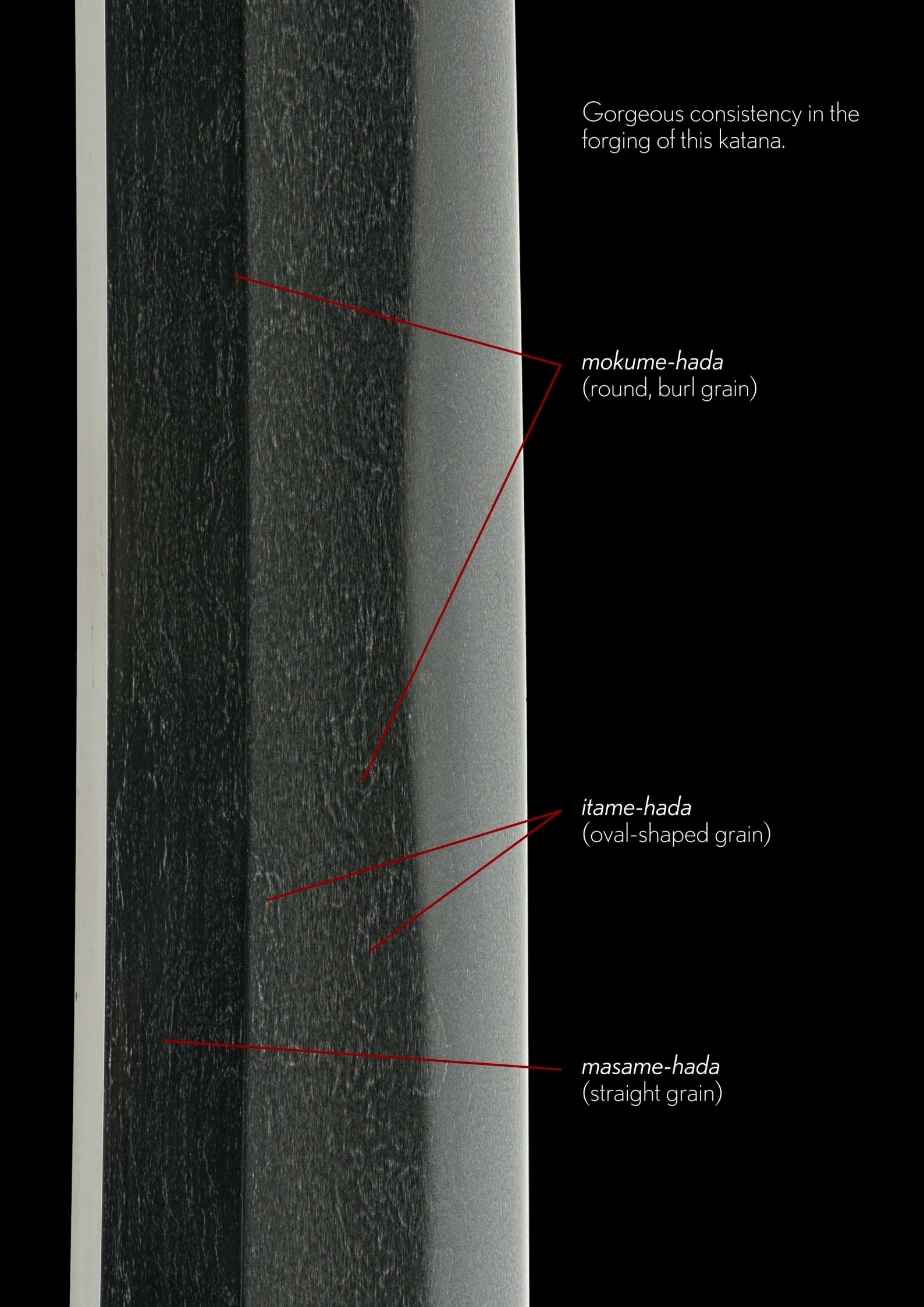
This sword's cutting edge of **61.2cm** is just over the baseline requirement for a blade to be recognized as a katana which is *2-shaku* or **60.6cm**.

This is clearly a custom-ordered katana by a samurai from the early 1600s. One reason for the length may be simply because he was not very tall and the length suited him best. Another, and equally plausible reason is that *a short katana is much easier to use in close-combat situations, such as fighting indoors*. Even in outdoor battle, a shorter, extremely sharp katana is quick, easy to manoeuvre and deadly. It's no secret that the o-wakizashi (long wakizashi) and short katanas were often preferred in the hands of capable swordsmen.





Gorgeous consistency in the forging of this katana.



mokume-hada
(round, burl grain)

itame-hada
(oval-shaped grain)

masame-hada
(straight grain)

Upon close inspection, the sword reveals itself to the eye that pays attention...
Note the following elements: *kinsuji*, *ko-ashi*, *muneyaki* and *chikei*.

muneyaki
(tempering of the *mune*, spine)

ko-ashi (legs extending from hamon)

kinsuji
(bolt of lightning)

chikei
(dark swirls of *nie*)



A gleaming line *suguha hamon* that is as white as a snow leopard.

Notice the visible *nie*-crystals in the *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon).
A tinge of blue shimmers from the blade - the mark of top-class work.

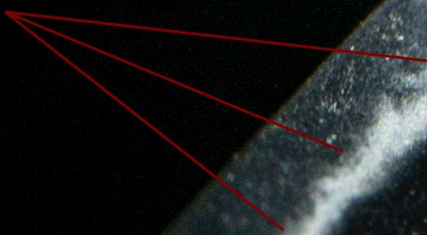




These unique elements are called *uchinoke* - short *nijûba* (second hamon line) that resembles a *crescent moon*.

Uchinoke is a rare, visual treat in the Japanese sword universe - particularly seen in the Yamato tradition on a *suguha hamon* over well-forged *masame-hada*.

uchinoke



uchinoke on the *ura* (reverse side)



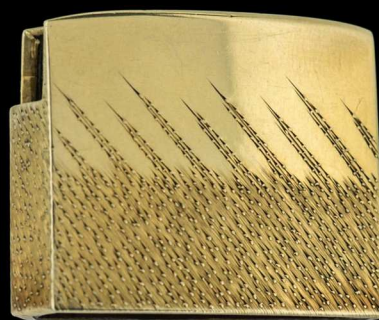


Master craftsmanship.
Let it inspire you.

Become a master.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold wrapped *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

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 humididor, 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 matching *daishô*) 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 \$5,000 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



ITEM# UJKA397

A YOSHIMASA KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1661~1673)

Swordsmith: *Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshimasa (second generation, shortened nakago)*
Measurements: **Length:** 63.9cm **Curvature:** 2.12cm **Motohaba:** 2.87cm
Jihada: *Densely forged ko-mokume hada resembling konuka-hada with ji-nie and chikei*
Hamon: *Ko-chôji midare in ko-nie deki with kinsuji, saka-ashi and sunagashi*
Certificate 1-2: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*sword & koshirae Especially Worthy of Preservation*)
Certificate 3-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a tsuba and fk designated as Authentic*)
Fujishiro: **Jô-saku** (*ranked as a superior swordsmith*)
Included: Shirasaya, Edo period koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This katana is a radiating example of perfectly balanced *ying/yang* energy. Crafted by talented second swordsmith *Yoshimasa* of the *Chikuzen Nobukuni* school, the quality of the steel is immediately apparent; a densely forged *ko-mokume hada* with shimmering *ji-nie* and a bright, tightly coiled *ko-chôji* hamon. Complimenting the sword is a most spectacular set of koshirae that is said to have been inherited from the ruling *Owari Tokugawa* family. The exquisite fittings carry a unified *aoi-mon* presence, the official *kamon* (seal) of the Tokugawa clan. The *fuchi-kashira* was signed by *Akishige* who studied under master *Konô Haruaki*. Both the sword and the koshirae have been awarded NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certification. If you are seeking a katana to proudly display in a home or office environment, this is certainly one to consider.



Saki-kasane: 4.0mm

Moto-kasane: 6.4mm

Omosa: 555g

Kissaki: 2.59cm
Saki-haba: 1.83cm

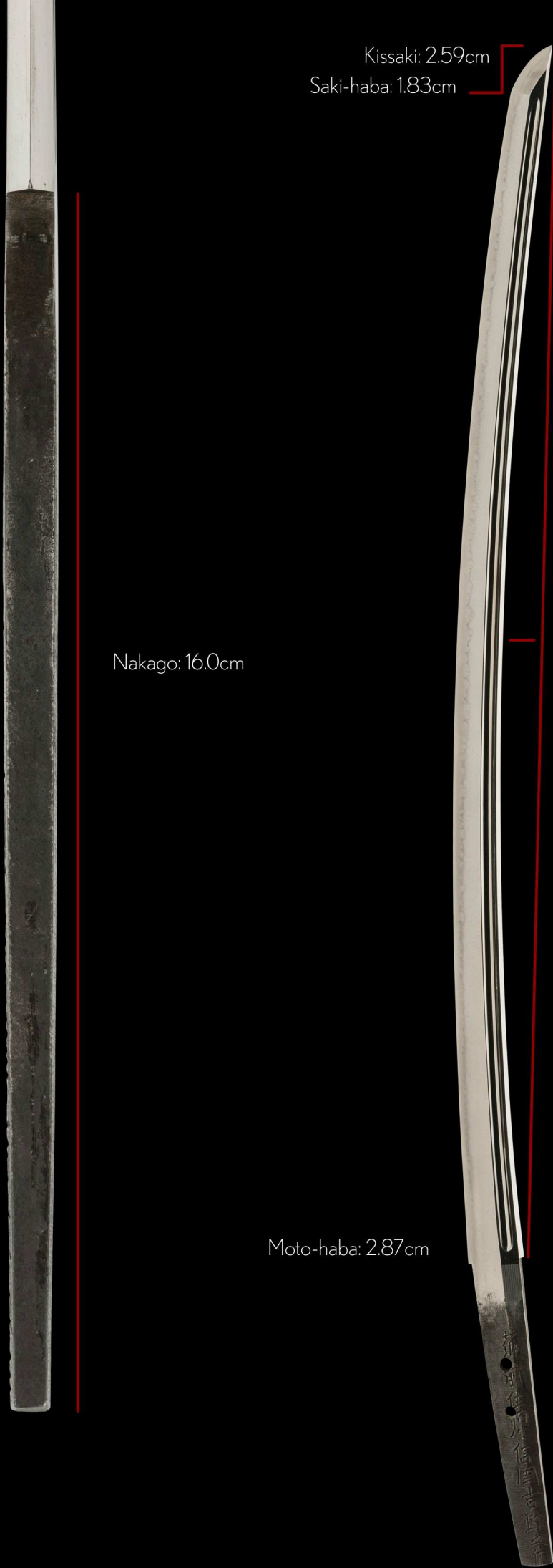
Nakago: 16.0cm

Moto-haba: 2.87cm

Nagasa: 63.9cm

Sori: 2.12cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Chikuzen province has a long and distinguished history dating back to the Warrior *Kongobyoe* Monks over 1,000 years ago.

Nobukuni Yoshisada is the founder of the Shinto-era *Chikuzen Nobukuni School* and referred to himself as the 12th generation descendant of *Yamashiro Nobukuni* and *Tsukushi Nobukuni*.

Yoshisada's eldest son *Yoshimasa* (first generation) was meant to succeed the school however his father "disinherited" him when he packed up his bags at the age of 26 to study the Bizen tradition of the *Ichimonji* school under *Sukemune*. Succession thus went to his younger brother, second generation *Yoshimasa* (maker of this katana) and *Yoshitsugu*.

Fujishiro ranks *Yoshimasa* as a *jô-saku* (superior) smith. *Yoshimasa* was born *Nobukuni Heishirô* in 1622 and died in August 1688.





Location: *Chikuzen Province*

Family name: *Minamoto Nobukuni*

Swordsmith: *Yoshimasa* (first generation)

suriage-nakago (cut nakago at *nakagojiri*)

kiri-yasurime (straight file marks)

筑 (Chiku)

前 (zen)

住 (jû)

源 (Minamoto)

信 (Nobu)

国 (kuni)

吉 (Yoshi)

政 (masa)

之 (kore, o)

作 (tsukuru)

Yoshimasa (吉正)

signature variant of the 2nd generation

Nobukuni Yoshimasa (吉政)



Here is a reference *oshigata* of a nakago crafted by Yoshimasa. As you can see the top hole would have been the original to the blade as they line up perfectly.

In the past, the nakago of this sword was chopped off at the bottom in order to fit a desired *tsuka* (hilt) - rather than having a new hilt made for the nakago.

Sometimes in life a quick solution is demanded!

It's important to note that the edge of the blade has *not* been modified at all.

*nakago
chopped
off here*

Chikuzen-jū Minamoto Nobukuni

Yoshimasa (筑前住源信国吉正)



(*ura*, reverse)

30201809

No 1009915



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
平成三十年十二月十日
公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



一刀

銘 筑前住源信国吉政之作

長二尺一寸〇半

鑑定書

東京都教育委員会
第 11260 号
昭和26年3月24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), December 10th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Chikuzen-jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshimasa kore o tsukuru

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 1-sun 0 han (63.9cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



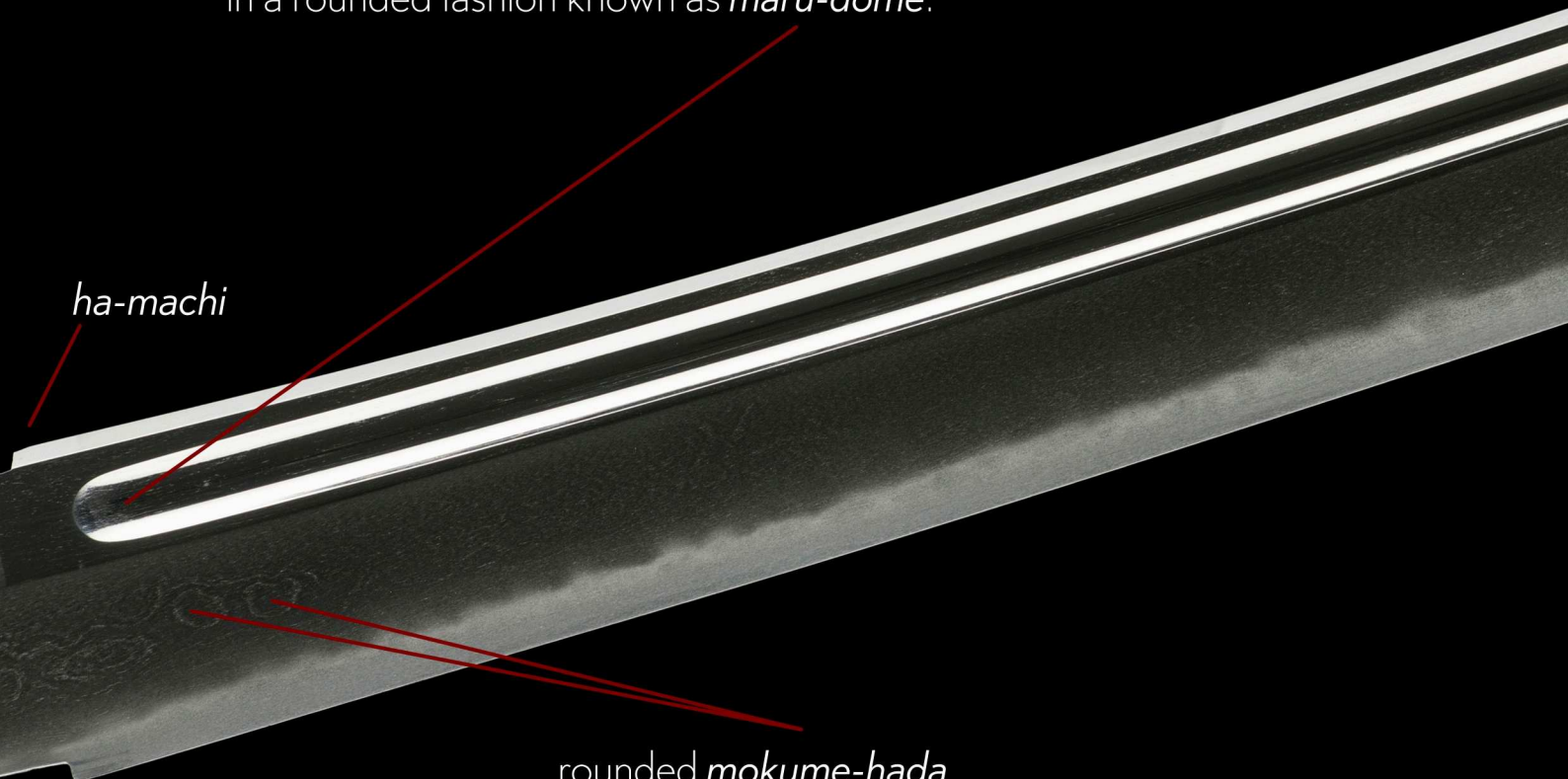




bo-bi

This katana features a *bo-bi* (wide groove). This groove helps to lighten the blade ever so slightly for extra quickness and agility.

The groove ends just above the *ha-machi* (notch at the cutting edge) in a rounded fashion known as *maru-dome*.



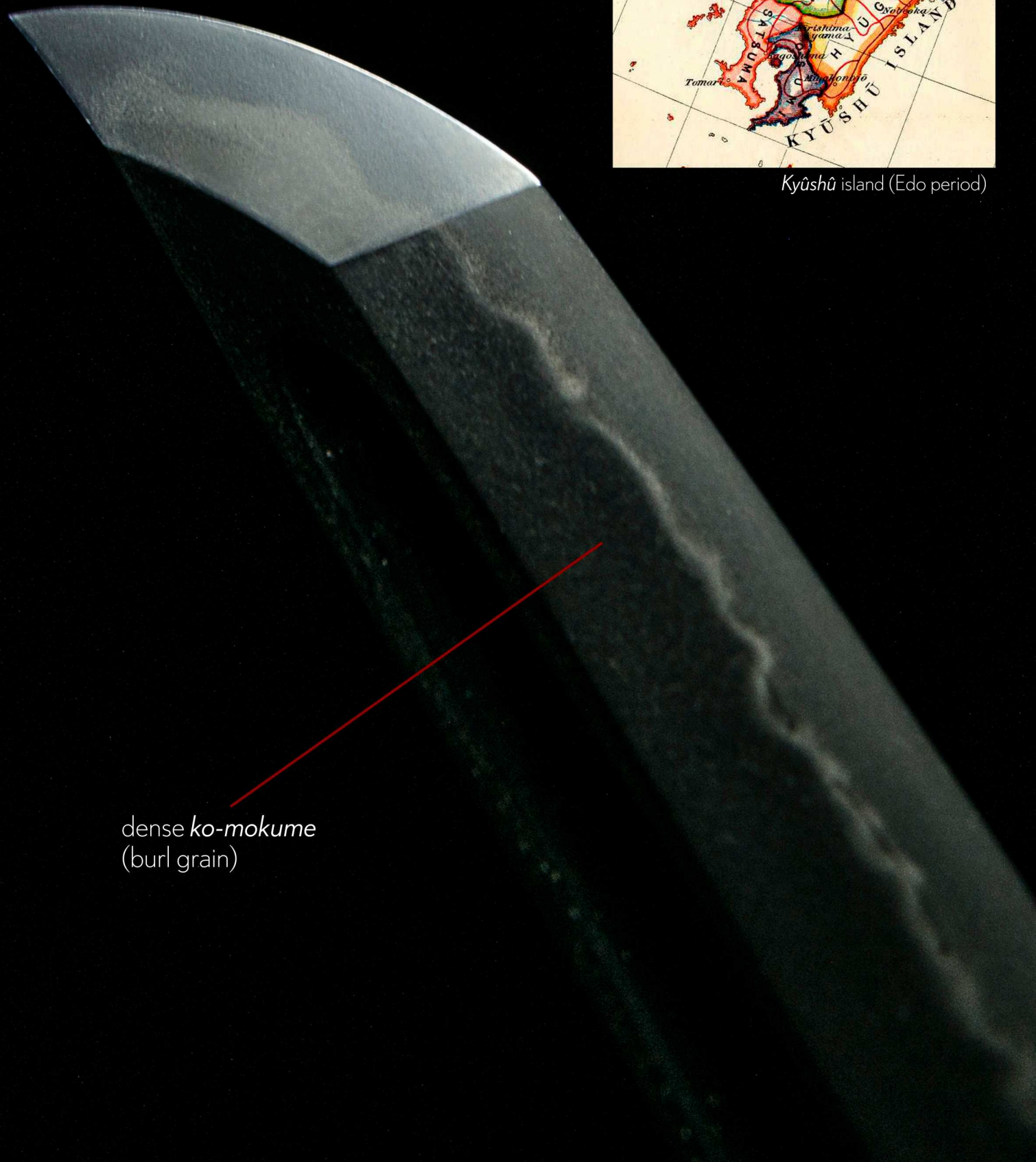
ha-machi

rounded *mokume-hada*

The expertly forged *jihada* is a dense *ko-mokume* that resembles *konuka-hada* (rice bran) of the *Hizen* tradition. *Chikuzen* and *Hizen* were neighbouring provinces on the north side of *Kyûshû* island during the Edo period, so there was likely some skill-sharing.



Kyûshû island (Edo period)



dense *ko-mokume*
(burl grain)

The image shows two blades of a Japanese sword, likely a katana, set against a dark background. The blades are illuminated from the side, highlighting their curved shape and the intricate patterns on their surfaces. A prominent feature is the hamon, a decorative edge pattern that resembles small clove blossoms (ko-chôji). A wide, dark band, known as yakiba, runs along the length of the blades, indicating the hardened area. Red lines point from the text labels to these specific features on the blades.

yakiba

A striking *ko-chôji hamon* (small clove blossom buds) coils itself brilliantly along the blade. Notice how the *yakiba* (hardened area) is quite wide - a unique feature of the *Chikuzen Nobukuni school*.

Remember you need steel that is extra hard in order for it to become extra sharp.



kinsuji
(bolt of *nie* lightning)

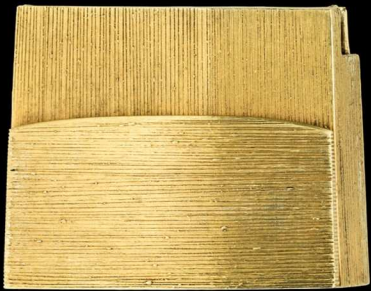
Whatever journey you are on, make it count.



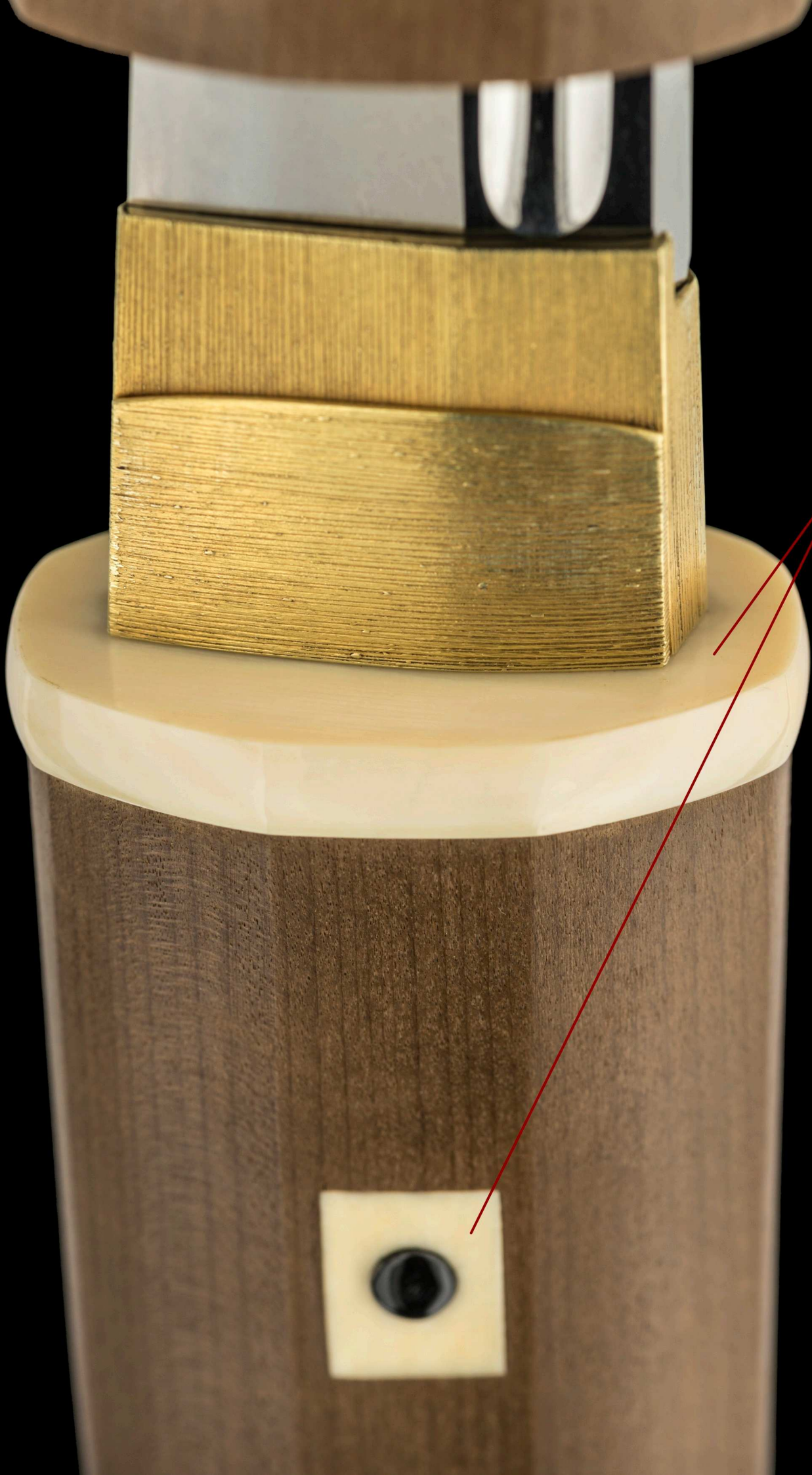


This special shirasaya was created using ivory several years ago. Due to CITES restrictions on the export of ivory in any shape or form, these parts made of ivory will be replaced with buffalo horn prior to export from Japan.

Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold wrapped *ni-ju habaki*
with crisp file marks



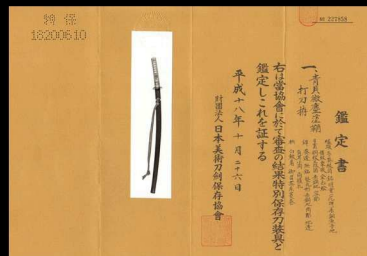
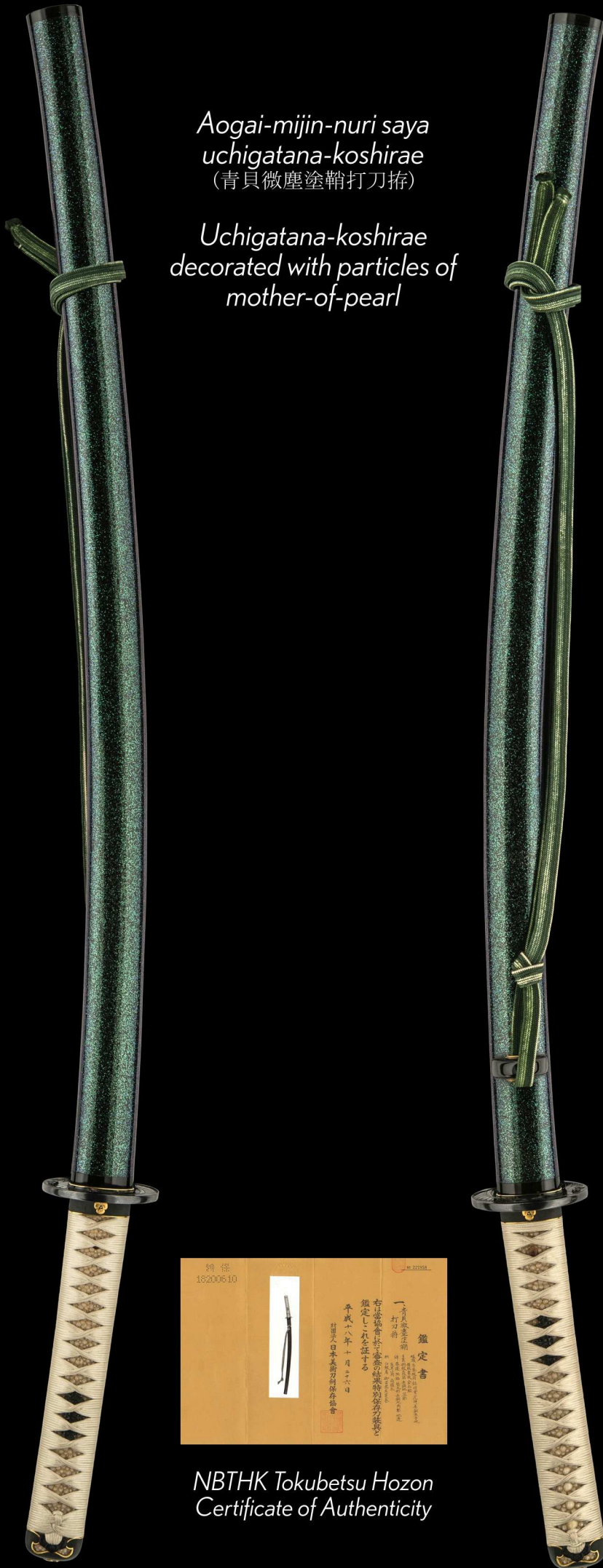
Ivory



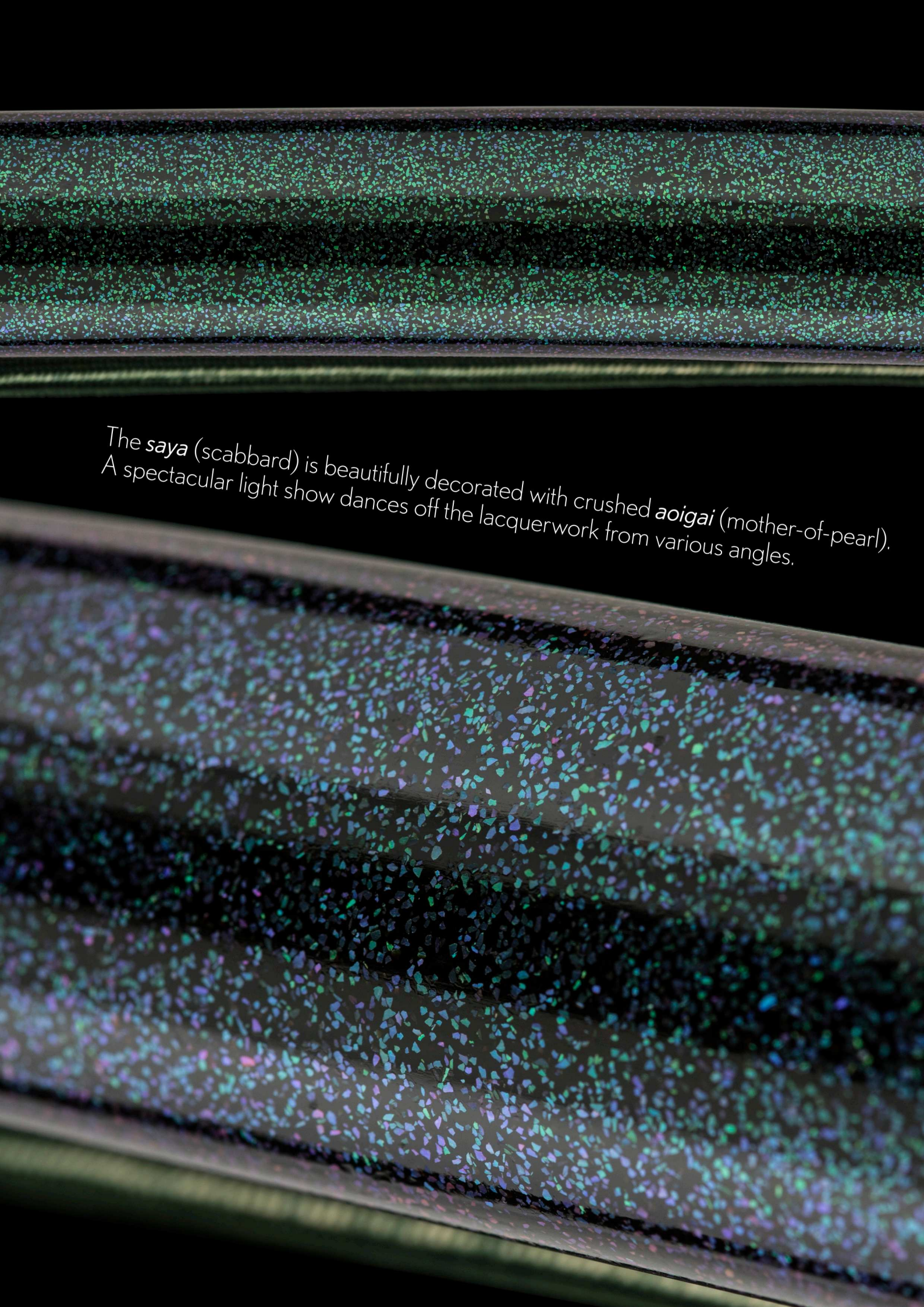
Ivory *fuchi* (collar) and black buffalo horn *mekugi* (peg).
The ivory will be replaced with buffalo horn prior to export.

Aogai-mijin-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae
(青貝微塵塗鞘打刀拵)

Uchigatana-koshirae
decorated with particles of
mother-of-pearl



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon
Certificate of Authenticity



The *saya* (scabbard) is beautifully decorated with crushed *aoigai* (mother-of-pearl).
A spectacular light show dances off the lacquerwork from various angles.



Trusted sources have relayed to Unique Japan that this *koshirae* was inherited through the *Owari Tokugawa family*. This is supported, of course, through the many depictions of the *aoi-mon* (hollyhock) - the official *kamon* (crest) of the ruling *shogunate*, the Tokugawa family.



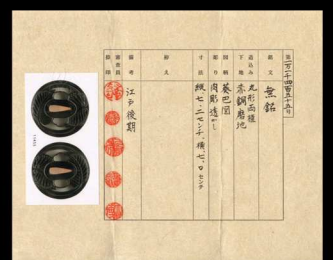
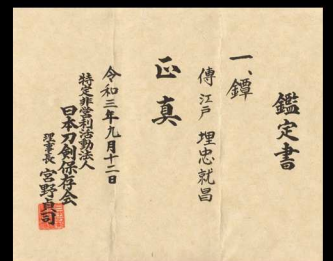
Tokugawa Iyasu (1543-1616)
First shōgun of the Tokugawa shogunate



This absolutely stunning pure, polished *shakudô tsuba* in an interlocked *aoi-mon* (hollyhock) design has been attributed to *Umetada Narimasa* who worked in *Edo* (Tokyo) during the late *Edo period* (1780~1820).

Narimasa was born in 1742 and lived at least until 1814 as there is signed work from that year.

The tsuba comes with NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity. The quality and class is immediately evident.





A blue and purple tone shines on the *shakudô aoi-mon* petals.





This *fuchi-kashira* was signed by *Akishige*, who was a student of master *Kôno Haruaki*, founder of the prestigious *Kôno school*.

The quality of the *nanako*, gold and *shakudô* work is absolutely first class.

(Aki) 明
(shige) 重
(kaô) 花押



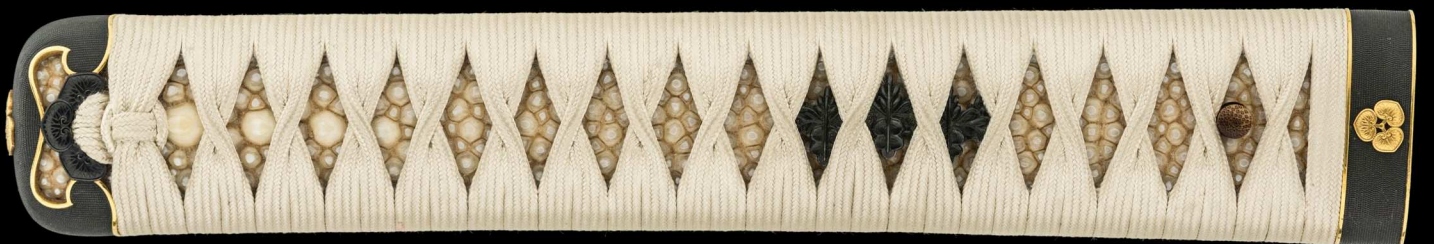


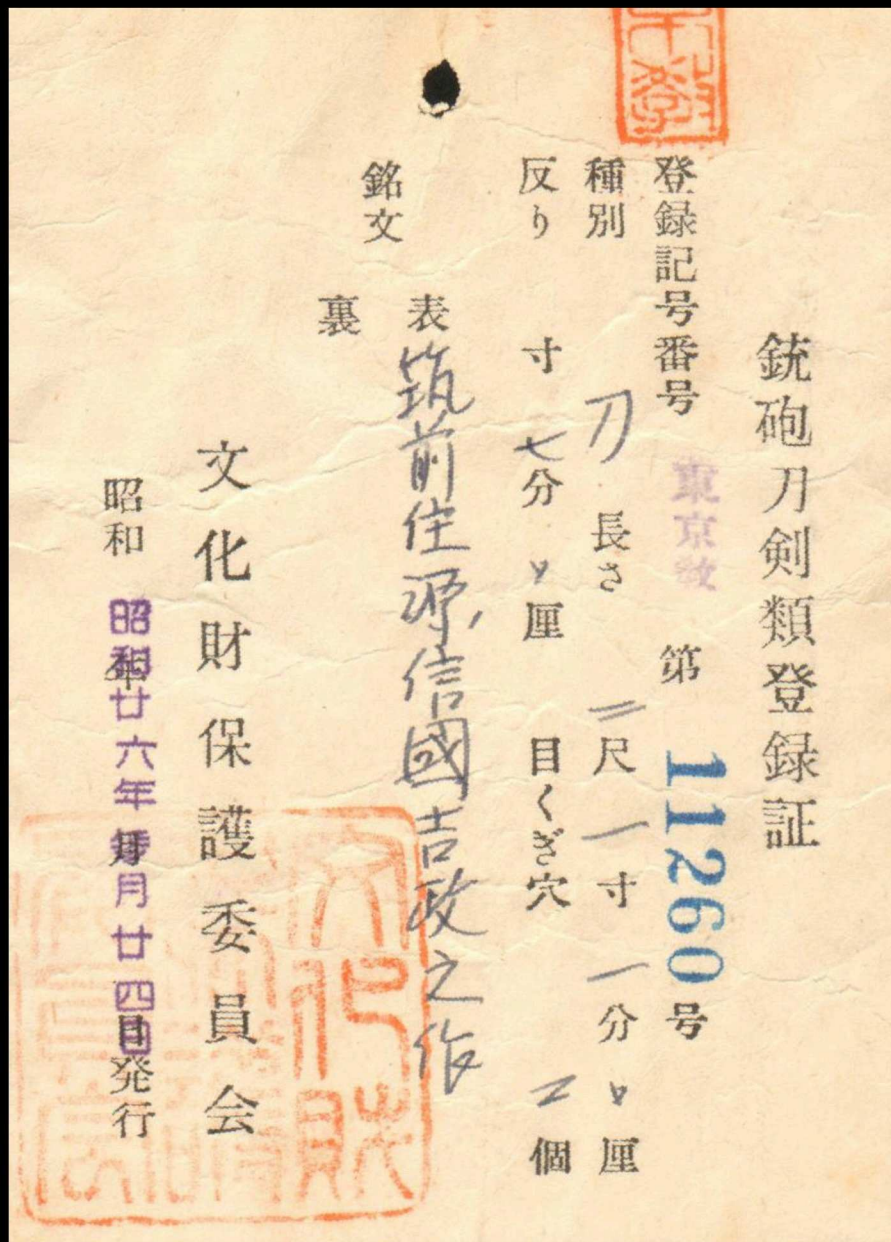
kashira (pommel)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) display three *kiri-mon* in *shakudô*. Originally the *kiri-mon* (paulownia flower crest/seal) was the private symbol of the Japanese imperial family, from as early as the twelfth century.

After the Meiji Restoration in 1868, the seal was eventually adopted as the emblem of the Japanese government.





This is the original *torokusho* (registration card) for the *Yoshimasa katana*. The card was registered in the 26th year of *Showa period* (March 24, 1951).

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

The serial number is just 11260, one of the very first swords registered in Japan (current serial numbers are in the hundreds of thousands). This sword was registered in *Tokyo*, the nation's capital.



Koshirae bag



ITEM# UJKA283

A HIROTAKA KATANA

SIGNED IN ECHIZEN, EARLY EDO PERIOD (MEIREKI ERA: 1655~1658)

Swordsmith:	<i>Hoki no Kami Hirotaka (shodai, first generation, ubu nakago)</i>		
Measurements:	Length: 69.0cm	Curvature: 0.9cm	Moto-haba: 3.31cm
Jihada:	<i>Ko-itame with chikei</i>		
Hamon:	<i>Gunome midare, long ashi, and sunagashi</i>		
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)		
Certificate #2:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>koshirae designated as Authentic</i>)		
Fujishiro:	Chûjô-saku (<i>ranked as an above average swordsmith</i>)		
Asaemon:	Wazamono (<i>maker of sharp swords</i>)		
Included:	Edo-period koshirae, shirasaya, bags, stand, kit, booklet, printed description		

SOLD

This a solidly built, dependable katana from the mid-1600s by *Hoki no Kami Fujiwara Hirotaka* from Echizen province - a *wazamono* ranked swordsmith known for producing strong, healthy blades with excellent cutting ability.

A bright *gunome midare hamon* brightens the blade with long *ashi* and *sunagashi*. This sword was given a recent polish and now shines with confidence. An antique koshirae from the early 1700s (almost original to the blade) accompanies the sword giving it a mystique that transports one back to the heart of the Edo period. Note the unique *gampi* wrap on the *tsuka* (hilt) and reflective *Jakushi school* fittings. This is a samurai sword with a spiritual core, purpose and presence.

Saki-kasane: 4.9mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.0mm

Omosa: 765g

Saki-haba: 2.16cm

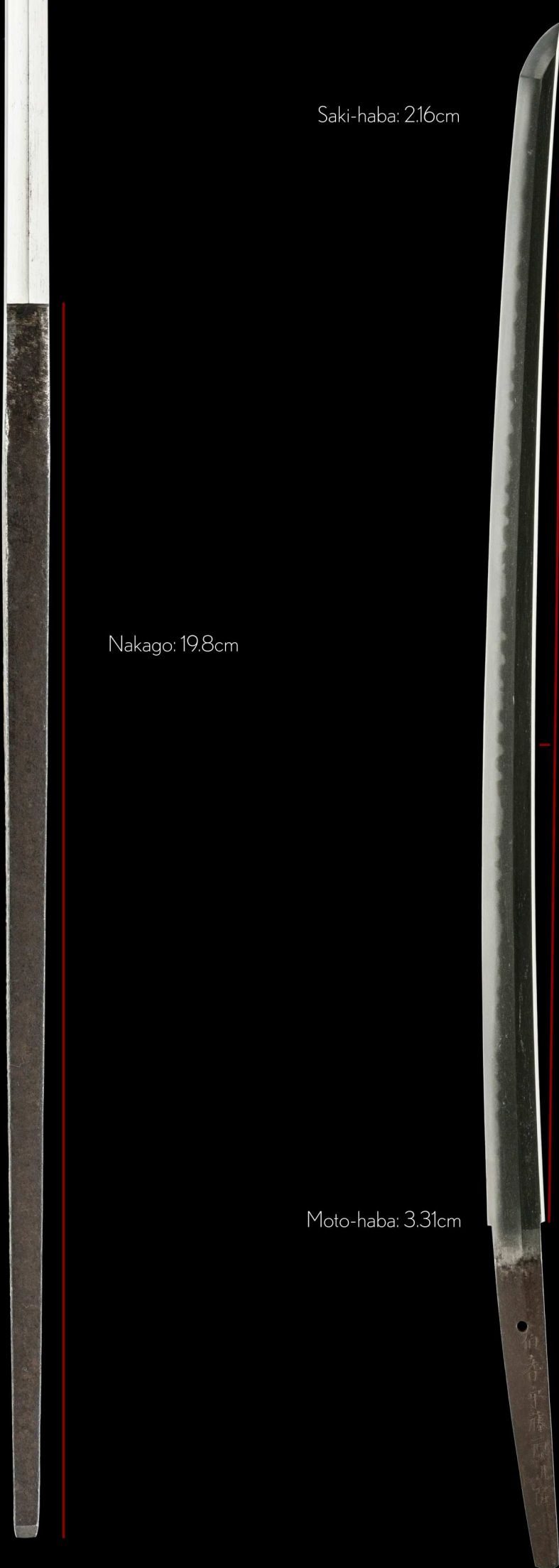
Nakago: 19.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.31cm

Nagasa: 69.0cm

Sori: 0.9cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



One of most prolific students of first generation *Kanetane* was swordsmith *Hiroataka*. Hiroataka was active around *Meireki* era (1655~1658) and although he sometimes signed with the supplement *Shimosaka* he is regarded as an *Echizen-Seki* smith.

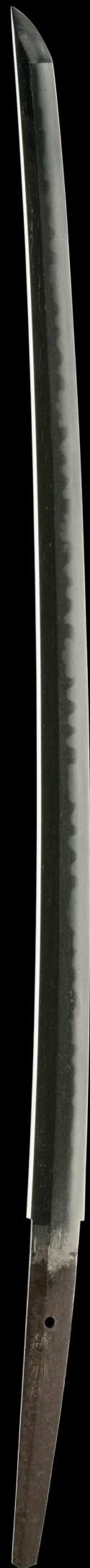
Hiroataka bore the honorary titles *Hôki no Daijô* and later *Hôki no Kami* in which this katana was signed as. The nakago also states that he was living in the castle town of *Echizen* at the time. Hiroataka forged with an *ô-mokume* (large burl grain) with *ji-nie* and produced a range of tempered works in both *suguha* and *gunome-midare*.

Some swords are built with dependability written all over them. This is one such sword. It is weighty, healthy and extra sharp. A sword with a shallow curvature can be drawn from the scabbard quickly - and this is precisely what it was designed to do.

In and out of trouble, *fast*.

A long standing Edo period koshirae accompanies this sword that has a calming zen quality to it.

Be zen, and carry on...





Location: *Echizen Province*

Clan: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Hirotsuna* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

Ho

ki (no)

Kami

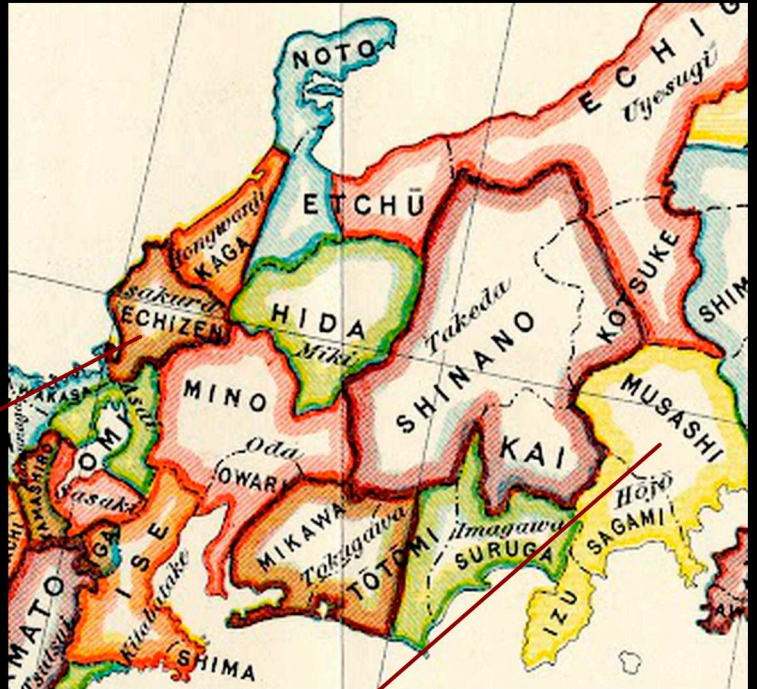
Fuji

wara

Hiro

taka

Swordsmith *Hiroataka* crafted this katana while living in *Echizen* province. Below is a portion of the *Feudal map of Japan* during the Edo period, note how Echizen borders the Sea of Japan.



越前住

Echi
zen
Ju

Musashi (modern-day Tōkyō)

The *nakago-jiri* (butt-end) of the tang comes to a sharp point at the centre.

This type of finish is called *kengyō* or sword-shaped.

特 保
28201611

№ 1006488



鑑 定 書

一 刀 銘
伯耆守藤原汎隆
越前住

長二尺二寸八分

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

平成二十九年二月二日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



富山 教育委員会
第 1297 号
昭和 26年 5月 1 日

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 29th year of Heisei (2017), February 2nd

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Hoki no Kami Fujiwara Hiroataka
Echizen Ju

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 2-sun 8-bu (69.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



ô-mokume hada
(large burl gain)

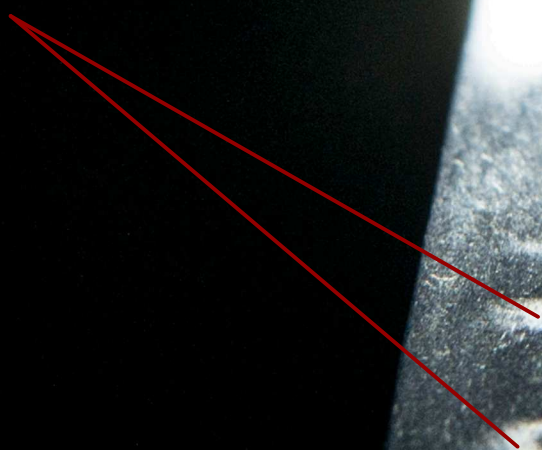
A bright, wavy *gunome midare hamon* over a darkish *jigane* that is typical of swords crafted along the *Sea of Japan* given the unique characteristics of the iron sand.

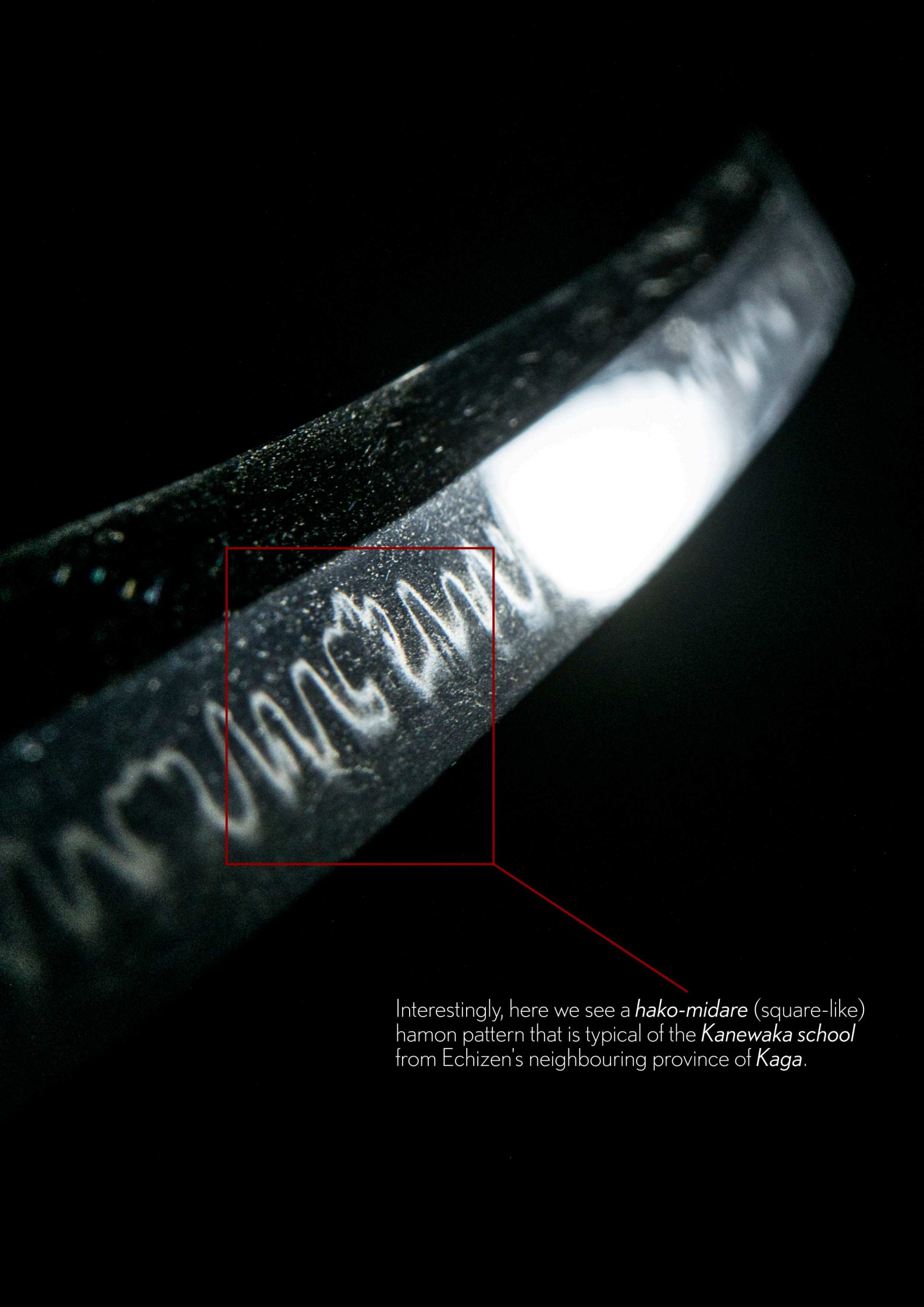


dark *jigane*

gunome midare hamon

Long *ashi* (legs) make strides towards the cutting edge.





Interestingly, here we see a *hako-midare* (square-like) hamon pattern that is typical of the *Kanewaka school* from Echizen's neighbouring province of *Kaga*.

Apex predator.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold wrapped *habaki*
with straight file marks

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

Uchigatana koshirae with
black-glossy lacquer saya

Circa Mid-Edo period
(1688-1780)



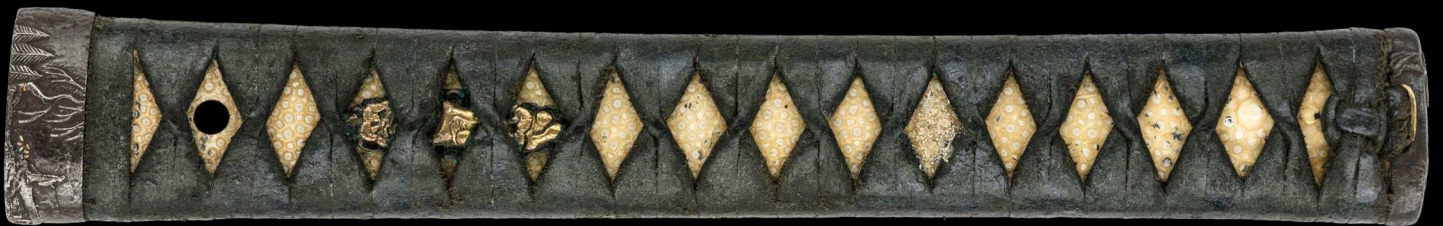


A rounded-off angular shaped polished iron tsuba with two *hitsu-ana* (holes).
Low relief design with coloured accents depicting sparrows in bamboo.





A close-up of the *fuchi* (collar). This rare *tsuka* (hilt) has been well-preserved. It has been handled by several samurai since the mid-Edo period, circa mid-1700s.



The hilt is wrapped in black lacquered *gampi* paper. *Gampi* is made from the inner bark of the gampi bush which must be obtained in the wild. Japanese gampi is very shiny even after being formed into paper, and has a natural sized quality which prevents absorption.





A polished iron *kashira* (pommel) depicting a virtuous man in a deep ravine. The *fuchi* (collar) is signed *Jakushi*, of the Jakushi school which was founded in the early Edo period by *Jakushi Kawamura* who was taught painting in the Northern Sung style by a Buddhist priest called *Itsuzen*.

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



safe, extra large cloth for adding oil to the blade



ITEM# UJTA052

A SHÔDAI KANEMITSU TANTÔ

SIGNED & DATED, NAMBOKUCHÔ PERIOD (KÔAN ERA: 1361~1362)

Swordsmith:	<i>Bishû Osafune Kanemitsu (shôdai, first generation)</i>
Dated:	<i>A day in the month of March during Kôan era 1361~ 1362</i>
Measurements:	Length: 23.3cm (<i>ubu</i>) Curvature: 0.5cm Moto-haba: 2.21cm
Jihada:	<i>Beautifully forged ko-itame & ko-mokume, plentiful chikei, soft in appearance</i>
Hamon:	<i>Kataochi-gunome, ko-gunome with rôsôku (candle) bôshi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>Sword Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Certificate #2:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>Koshirae Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Fujishiro rank:	Saijô-saku (<i>ranked as a grandmaster & jûyô bunkazai swordsmith</i>)
Published:	Catalogued in the book of <i>Tamura Family Treasures</i>
Included:	<i>Shirasaya, Edo aikuchi koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, booklet, description</i>

SOLD

It is our great pleasure to introduce an exceptional *tantô* by *shôdai Kanemitsu* - one of Japan's finest swordsmiths who worked during the heart of the warring Nambokuchô period. Featuring exquisitely crafted steel with plentiful *chikei* and Kanemitsu's trademark sawtooth *kataochi-gunome hamon* and engraved *kurikara* & *bonji horimono* this blade instantly transports the holder to the mid-1300s to when it was forged. Lifting the *tantô* to even greater collectability heights is its stunning *aikuchi koshirae* crafted by *Ikeda Takatoshi* during the late Edo period. With gorgeous painted wisteria artwork, it is a faithful replica of an *aikuchi koshirae* that was once the property of *Ashikaga Yoshiaki* - the 15th and final *shôgun* of the *Muromachi* period. This *tantô* is pure class.

Moto-kasane: 5.1mm

Omosa: 115g

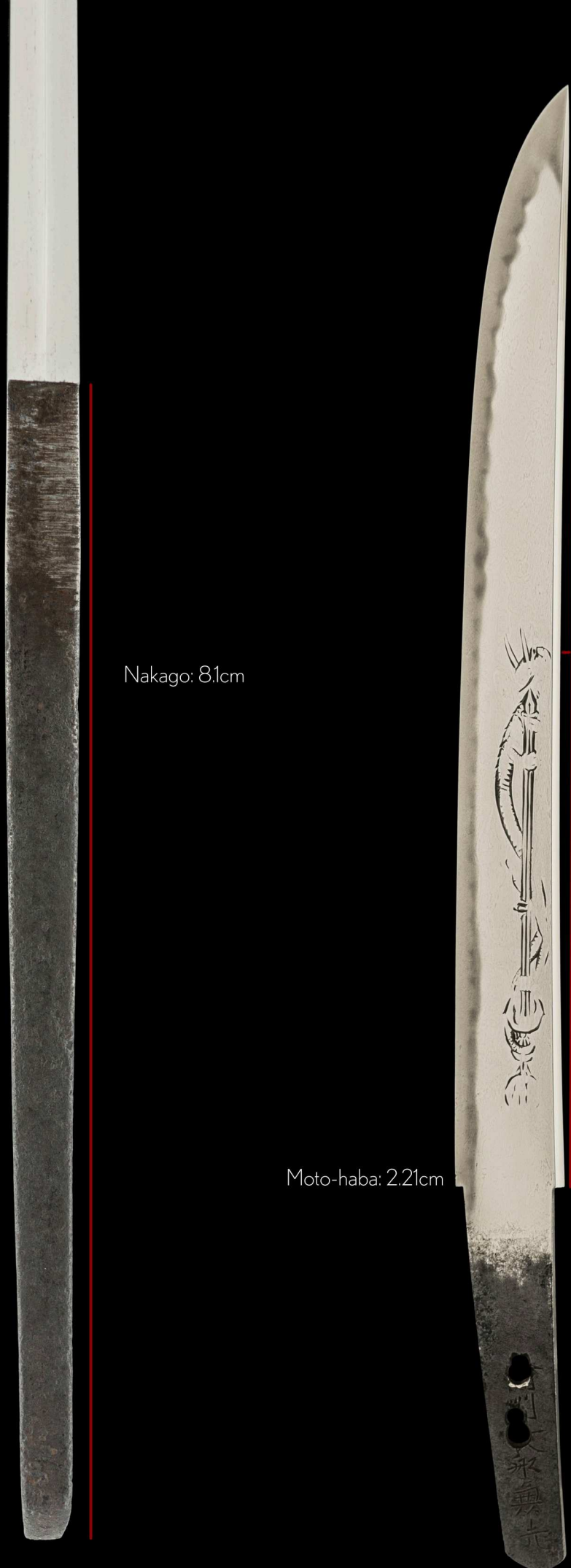
Nakago: 8.1cm

Moto-haba: 2.21cm

Nagasa: 23.3cm

Sori: 0.50cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Born in 1278, grandmaster swordsmith Kanemitsu was the son of *Osafune Kagemitsu* and is said to be one of the *Ten Students of Masamune*.

A theory exists stating that there were two generations Kanemitsu. As there are dated works from the second year of *Genkô* (1322) and the seventh year of *Ôan* (1374) this would suggest a career of about 42 years. This long period is likely the main reason for the two-generations theory but it was not uncommon for a smith to have worked for 40 or more years.

This tantô was crafted during the *Kôan* era, towards the end of Kanemitsu's illustrious career. The blade is classic Kanemitsu with a subdued *kataochi-gunome hamon* and striking horimono work that speaks to its 14th century origin. As this is dated work, it is of historical importance.

Kanemitsu founded the Bizen Kanemitsu school that crafted swords in both *Bizen* and *Sôshû* traditions. Notable students of this school are *Tomomitsu* (who also did fine engraving work), *Yoshimitsu*, *Yoshikage*, *Hidemitsu*, *Masamitsu*, *Toshimitsu* and *Shigemitsu*.





Location: *Bisshû Province*

Village: *Osafune*

Swordsmith: *Kanemitsu* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

katte-sagari-yasurime (right slanting file marks)

備 (Bi)

州 (shû)

長 (Osa)

船 (fune)

兼 (Kane)

光 (mitsu)



This character '*Kane*' has been re-chiseled, likely during the Kotô period (pre-1600).

A plausible reason was to preserve the *mei* (signature) as it was beginning to fade.

This signature is consistent with the way in which Kanemitsu signed during his final working years (*Enbun* era onwards).

Kôan nen sangatsu hi

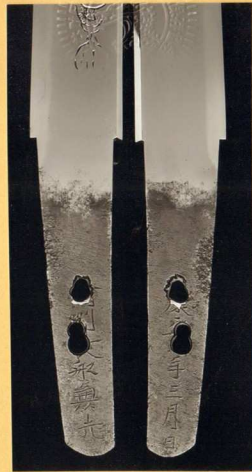
This tanto was dated on a day in the third month during the *Kôan* era (March 1361 or 1362).

(Kô) 康
(an) 安
(nen) 年
(san) 三
(gatsu) 月
(hi) 日



Had this character survived, we would know if it was made in the first or second year of *Kôan* era (only two years in this era, 1361 and 1362).

特 保
01201912



No 1012817

鑑定書

一短刀 銘

園州園船園光(兼の字を改鑿)
康園□年三月日

長七寸六分強

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

令和二年二月十九日

公益財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會



東京都 教育委員会
第 177828 号
昭和48年5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 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), February 19th

One, Tantô

Mei (signature)

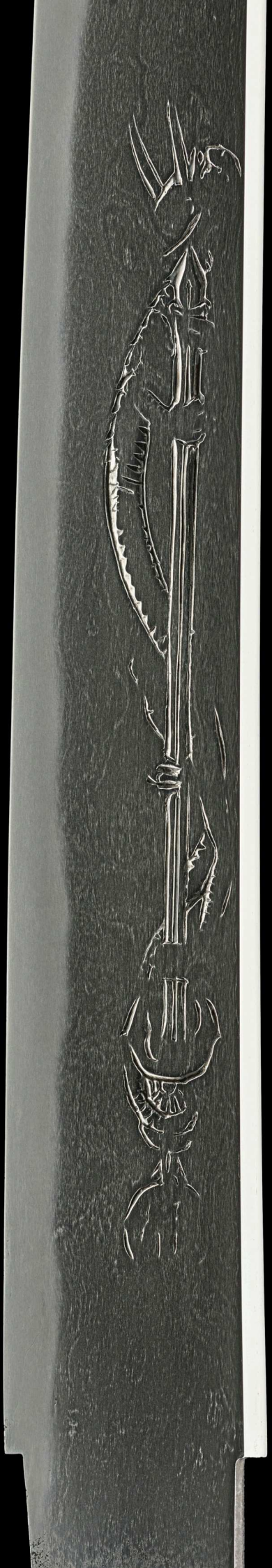
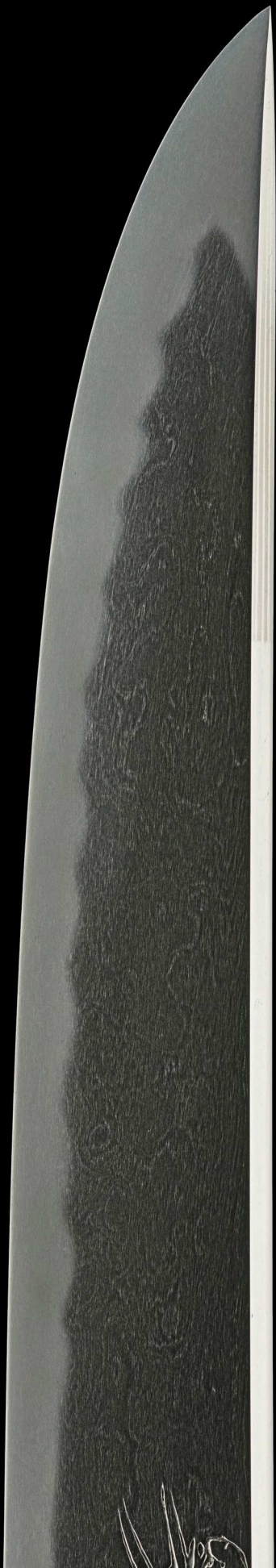
Bishû Osafune Kanemitsu (Kane no ji o kaizan)

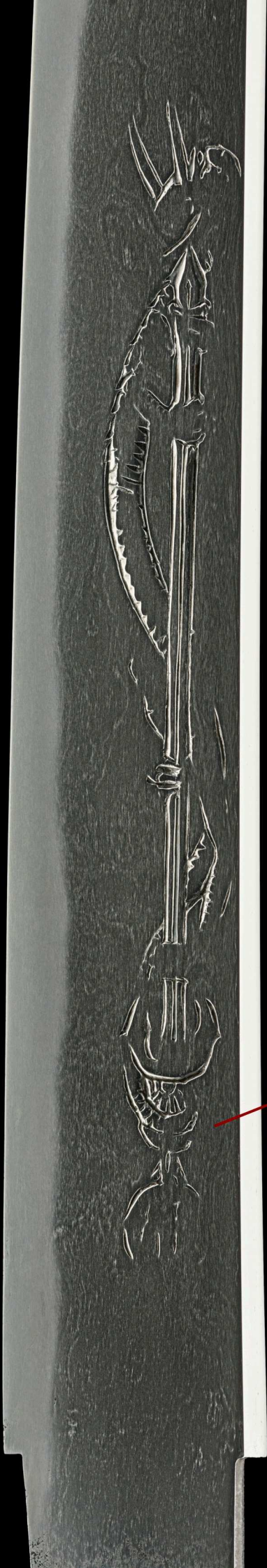
Kôan □ nen sangatsu hi

Nagasa (length)

7-sun 6-bu kyô (23.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





This *horimono* (engraving) is called *Kenmaki-ryu*. It was created by Kanemitsu himself.

It depicts a dragon winding around a sword. According to legend, the guardian deity *Fudo-Myou* once had to fight a deity from another religion, the dragon king *Kurikara*.

He changed himself into a flaming sword but *Kurikara* did the same and the fighting went on without a victor.

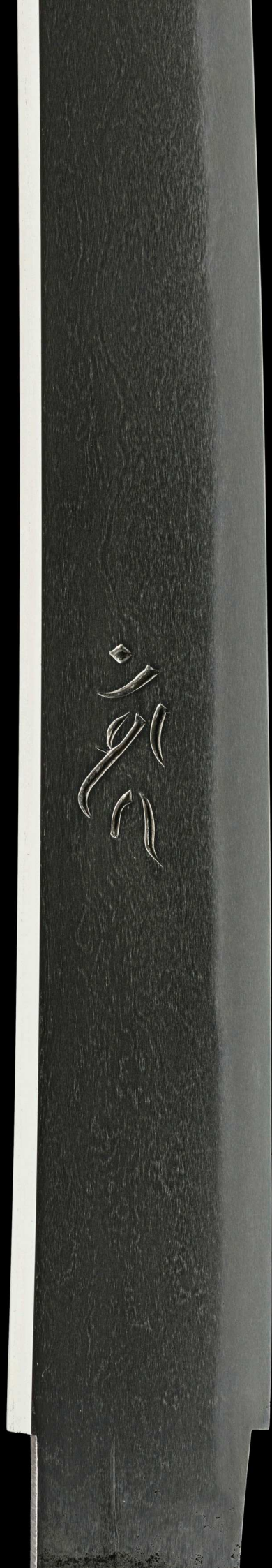
In a manner of ingenuity, *Fudô-Myôô* transformed into the dragon *Kurikara*, wound himself around the opponent's sword and devoured him from atop.

Hence, the dragon *Kurikara* wrapped around a sword is, in fact, another representation of *Fudô-Myôô*.



Vajra in Sanskrit is a symbolic ritual object that symbolizes both the properties of a *diamond* (indestructibility) and a *thunderbolt* (irresistible force).

The vajra is used symbolically by the Dharma traditions of Buddhism, Jainism and Hinduism, often to represent firmness of spirit and spiritual power.



Bonji (Sanskrit character) of *Fudô-Myôô*

Guardian deity primarily revered in *Vajrayana* Buddhism or in Japan respectively in the *Shingo*, *Tendai*, *Yen*, and *Nichiren* sects.

He is usually depicted in a fierce manner, holding a *sankozuka-ken* or *kurikara*, a sword with a dragon coiled around it in the one hand, and a *kensaku* (絹索) rope in the other hand.

Fudô-Myôô brings spiritual protection to the blade and its caretaker.



Bonji of *Fudô-Myôô*

The *bôshi* (hamon in the tip of sword) is a pointed *midare-komi* that reminds one of a candle (*rôsoku*), therefore the name *rôsoku-bôshi* exists to refer to such an interpretation.



The magnificently forged *jigane* (steel) looks soft and appears wet - qualities that made Kanemitsu a grandmaster swordsmith.



In later works of Kanemitsu's illustrious career, the hamon is a little more subdued - a less bright *nioguchi* which blends in with the *jigane*.

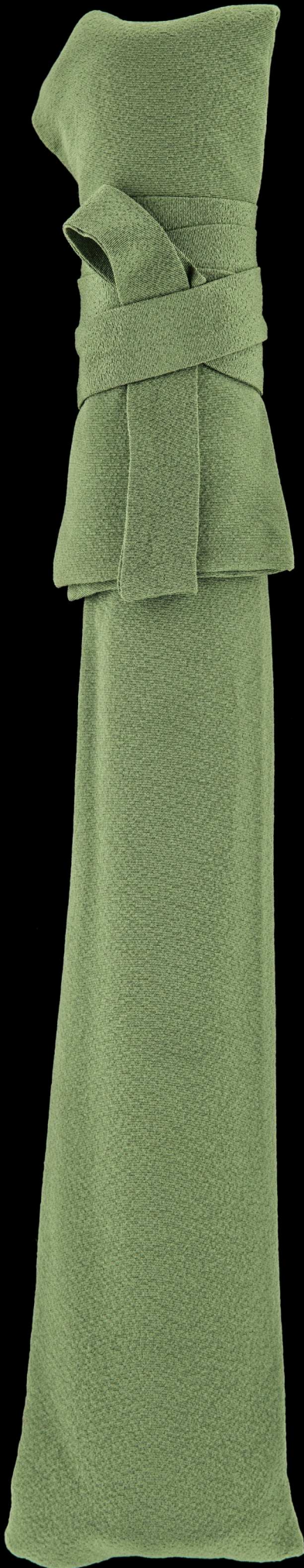
This tantô reflects such characteristics.



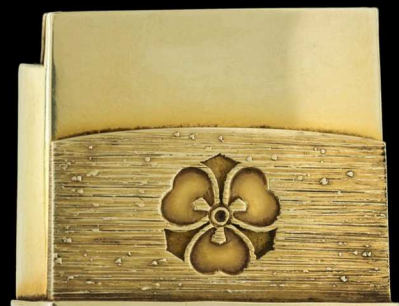
mokume-hada
(burl grain)

glorious formations of *chikei*





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with
oxalis (kind of clover) crest
& horizontal file marks

Takatoshi kore o horu

The habaki was engraved/carved by *Takatoshi*

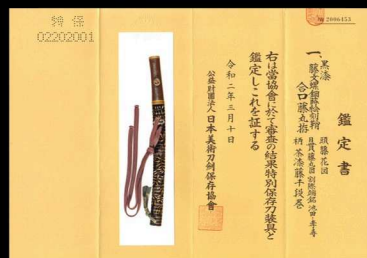
(Taka) 孝
(toshi) 寿
(horu) 彫
(kore) 之



Signed habaki are extremely rare.
It speaks to the importance of this tanto koshirae project.

*Kuro-urushi fujimon
raden-makie kizami-saya
aikuchi-fujimaru-koshirae*
(黒漆藤紋螺鈿時絵刻鞘合口藤丸拵)

*Aikuchi-fujimaru-koshirae with
ribbed saya lacquered in black
with wisteria design decorated in
raden-makie lacquerwork*



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon
Certificate of Authenticity

02202001



右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する
令和二年三月十日
公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



一、黒漆
藤文螺鈿時絵刻鞘
合口藤丸拵
頭藤花図
具貴藤丸図割際端銘池田孝寿
柄茶漆藤千段巻

鑑定書

2006453

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon
Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), March 10th

One,

*Aikuchi-fujimaru-koshirae with ribbed saya
lacquered in black with wisteria design
decorated in raden-makie lacquerwork*

*Wisteria motif on kashira, menuki of fujimaru design with
split signature of Ikeda Takatoshi on the edge,
hilt wrapped sendan style with brown-lacquered braids*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



This absolutely stunning set of *aikuchi koshirae* was commissioned to master *kinkô* artist *Ikeda Takatoshi* circa the early 1800s by the *Tamura daimyô* family.

It is a faithful replica of a *koshirae* that *shôgun Ashikaga Yoshiaki* once carried for a *tantô* by *shôdai Kanemitsu*. The attention to detail in the making of this *aikuchi koshirae* is extraordinary with no expense spared.

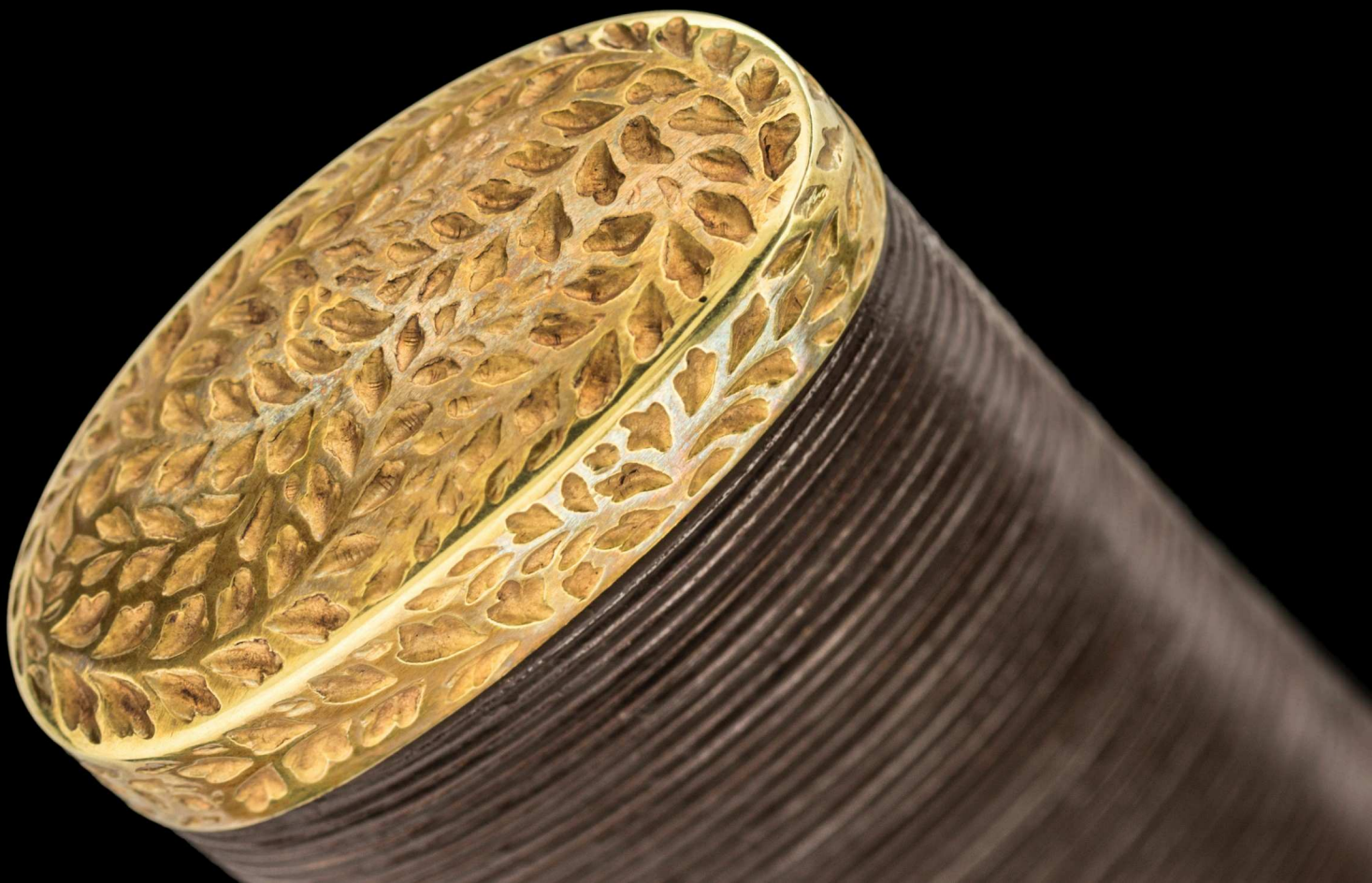




Ashikaga Flower Park, Tochigi prefecture

With its lush, warm beauty, *fujihana* (wisteria flower) represents love, fertility, beauty, creativity, and long life. It also symbolizes patience, persistence and honour.

The flower can live for more than 100 years, so it's often regarded as a symbol of everlasting wisdom. The long, climbing vines are symbolic for the search of new knowledge. A symbol of longevity and endurance, wisteria has been admired in Japan for centuries.



頭金ムク
藤石目
Kashira kin-muku
Fuji-ishime

pure gold kashira
stone-surface ground
with wisteria design

目貫金
Menuki kin

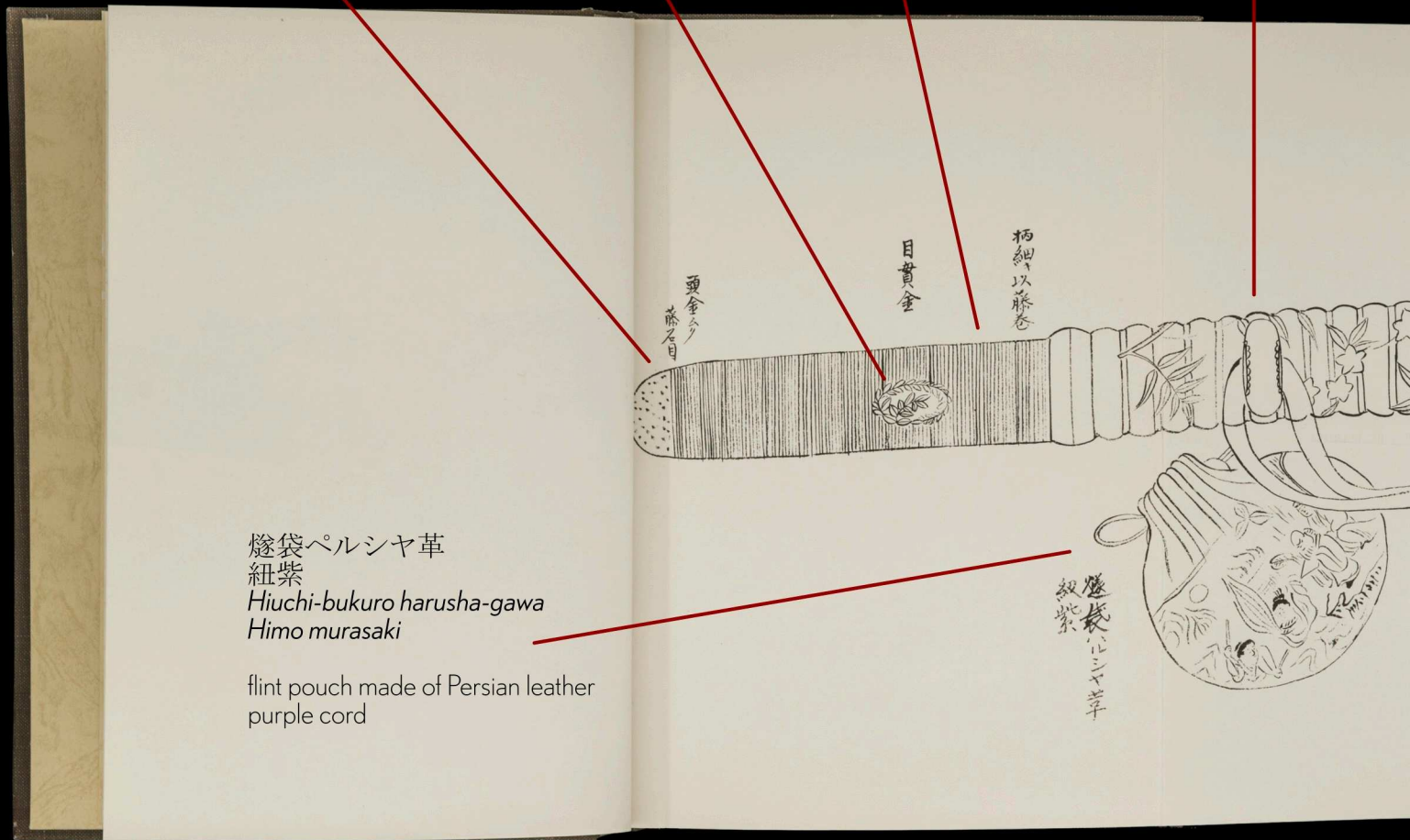
gold menuki

柄細キ以藤卷
Tsuka hosoki fujimaki o motte

Hilt wrapped in thin fujimaki style

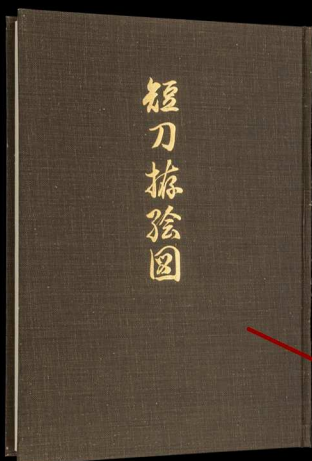
栗形銀
Kurikata gin

silver kurikata



燧袋ペルシヤ革
紐紫
Hiuchi-bukuro harusha-gawa
Himo murasaki

flint pouch made of Persian leather
purple cord



This is a drawing of the original *aikuchi koshirae* that *shôgun Ashikaga Yoshiaki* owned that housed a tantô by *Kanemitsu* dated July 1357.

Both this original *koshirae* and tantô were lost, hence the desire by the Tamura family to help recreate history. This drawing was published in 1978 featuring artwork of notable tantô *koshirae*.

Tantô Koshirae Ezu (短刀拵絵図)
Artwork of tantô-koshirae
(book included with sale of tantô)

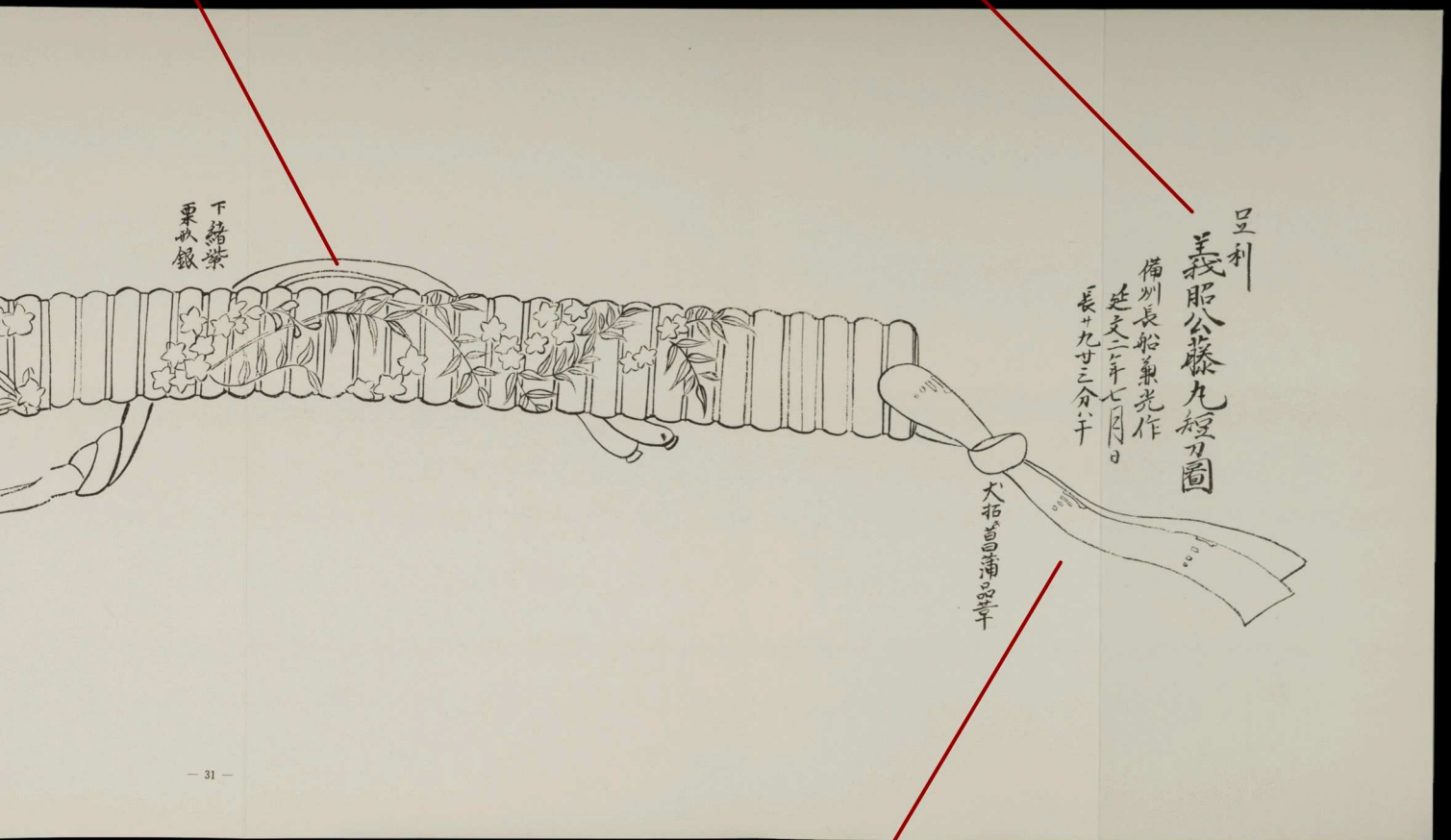
足利義昭公藤丸短刀圖
備州長船兼光作
延文二年七月日
長サ九寸三分半

Ashikaga Yoshiaki Kô Fujimaru Tantô no zu
Bisshû Osafune Kanemitsu saku
Enbun ninen nanagatsu hi
Nagasa 9-sun 3-bu han

下緒紫
Sageo murasaki

purple sageo

Artwork of Ashikaga Yoshiaki's Fujimaru Tantô
Tantô crafted by *Osafune Kanemitsu* from Bisshû Province
On a day in the 7th month in the 2nd year of Enbun era (July 1357)
Blade length ~28.2cm



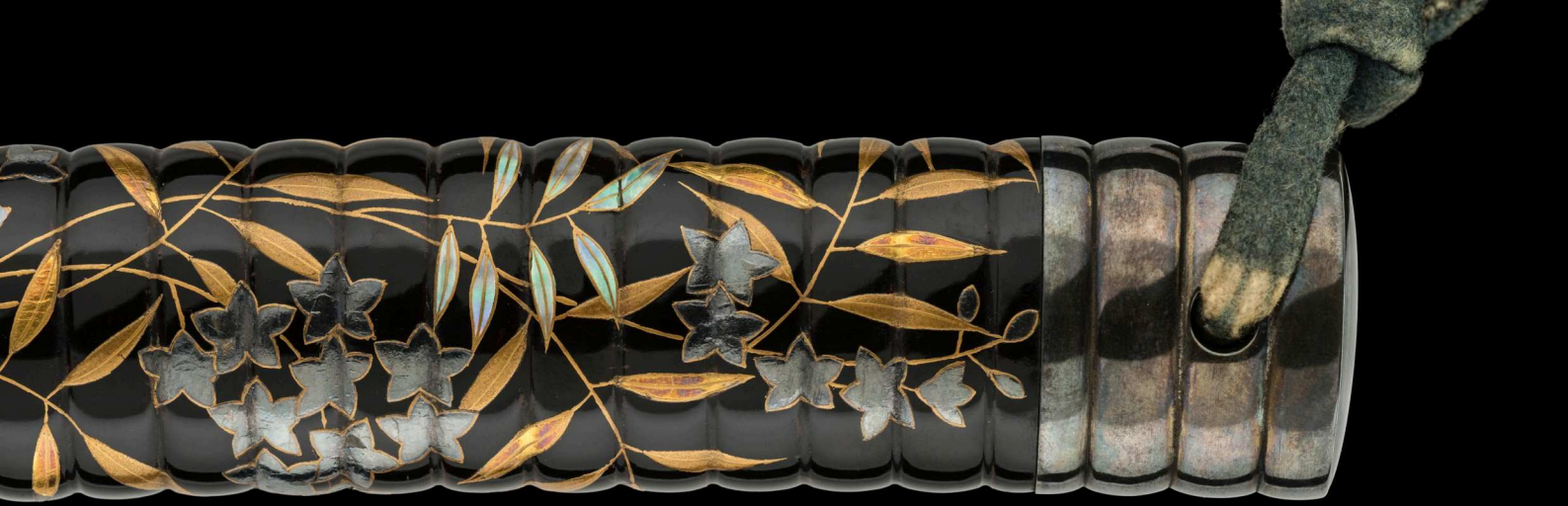
- 31 -



犬招キ菖蒲品革
Izu-maneki shōbu-shinagawa

Kojiri decoration made of wolf leather
with iris motif

Ashikaga Yoshiaki
15th and final shōgun of the Ashikaga shōgunate
Reigned 1568 to 1573



omote (front)





ura (back)





The *tsuka* (hilt) is wrapped in rattan (palm wicker) and lacquered for preservation.



Ikeda Takatoshi was a member of the *Ôtsuki* school and sensei for arguably the greatest *kinkô* (goldsmith) during the late Edo period, *Kanô Natsuo*.





(Taka) 孝
(toshi) 寿

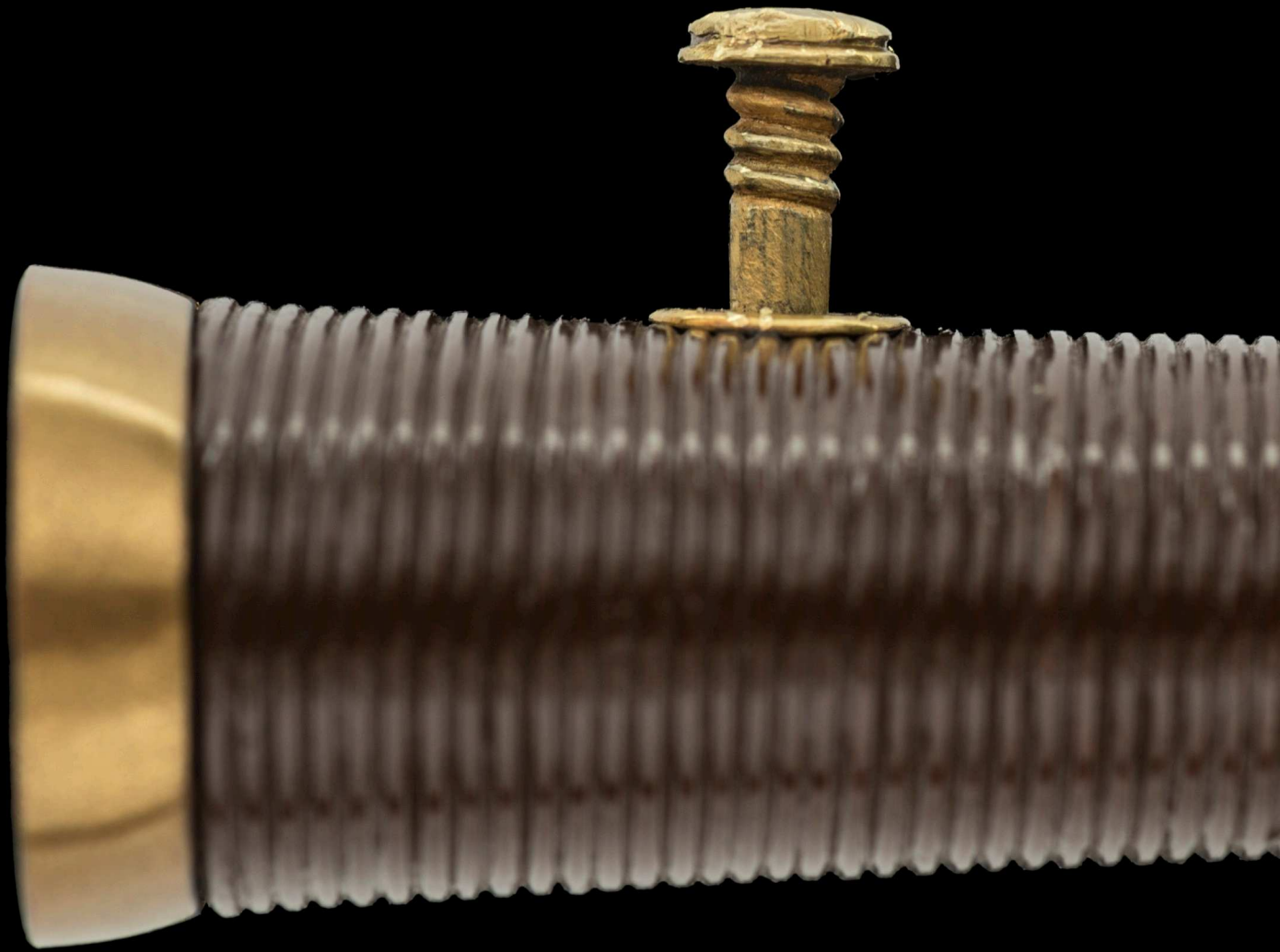


池 (Ike)
田 (da)

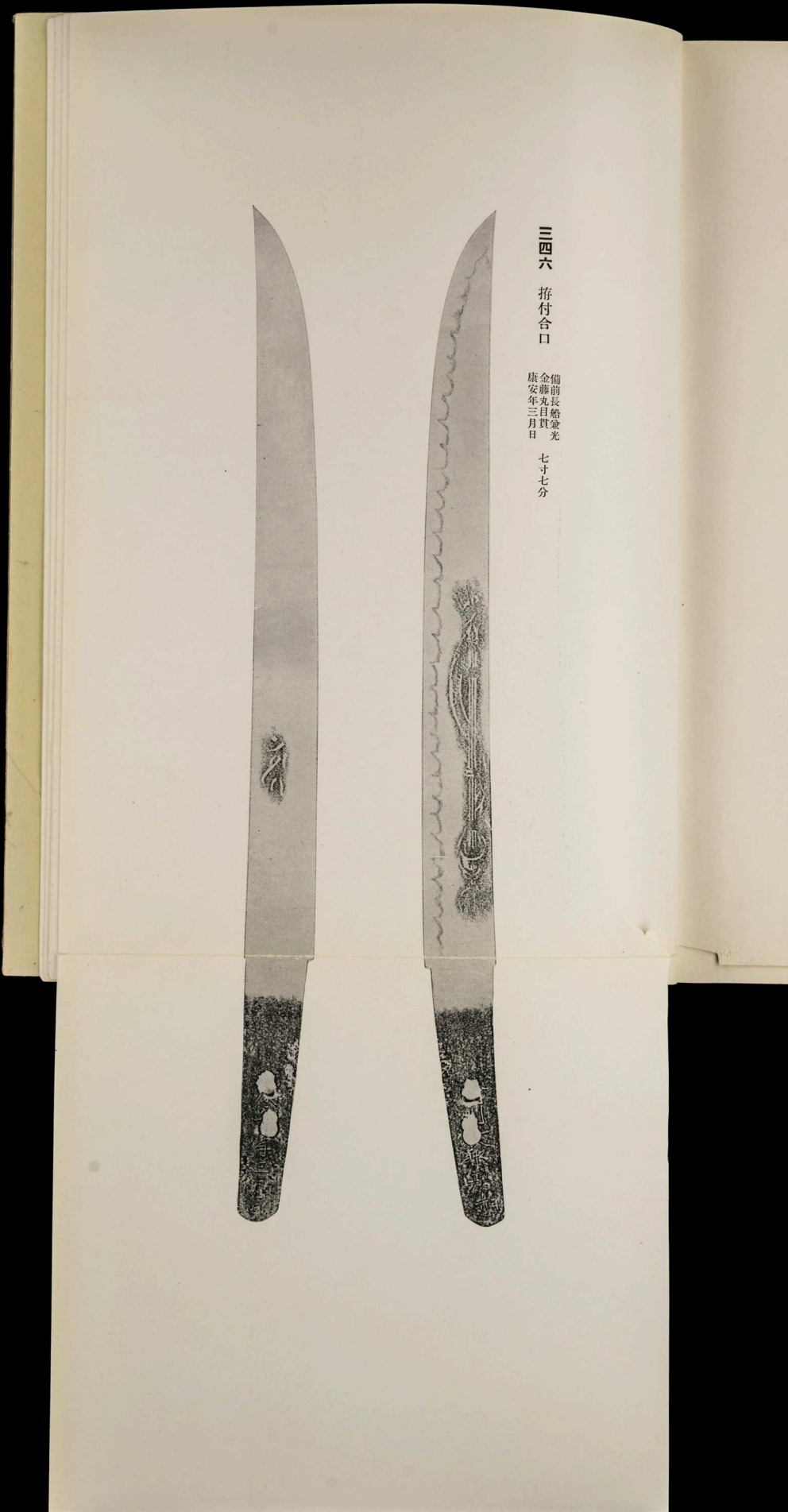


Kashira (pommel)

gold, wisteria design



A metal screw *mekugi* secures the *nakago* to the *tsuka* (hilt).



Tamura Family Treasures
(book included with sword)

This Kanemitsu tantô is featured in a catalogue of *Tamura Family Treasures* published in 1936. The Tamura samurai clan ruled *Ichinoseki* domain in *Mutsu* province during the Edo period's *Tokugawa shôgunate*. The family was closely related to the *Date* clan in *Sendai*.



Pure class.



ITEM# UJKA394

A NIÔ TACHI

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

- Swordsmith:** *Niô School (ubu nakago)*
Measurements: **Length:** 81.2cm **Curvature:** 2.58cm **Moto-haba:** 2.85cm
Jihada: *Itame mixed with mokume, fine ji-nie and plentiful chikei*
Hamon: *Hosô-suguha with ko-nie deki, tight nioguchi*
Certificate 1: **NBTHK Jûyô Tôken** (a sword designated as *Profound and Important*)
Certificate 2-3: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (tachi fittings and koshirae designated as authentic)
Authentication: **Sayagaki by Dr. Sato Kanzan**
Included: Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, booklet, description

SOLD

This absolute gem of a *tachi* has been attributed to the *Niô school* way back seven centuries to the late Kamakura period. This is an *ubu-nakago tachi* that has been proudly preserved for some 700-plus years. It is immensely rare to come across a sword from this time period that has not been shortened at the *nakago* – either *suriage* or *ô-suriage*. Standing tall at 81.2cm in *nagasa* (cutting edge length) and a glorious curvature of over 2.5cm these are precisely the dimensions of a sword wielded on horseback by a warring samurai. A huge *kirikomi* battle scar in the top third of the blade attests to the battles fought with this sword – a reminder to when life was truly tough. The gorgeous swirling pools of *chikei* in the steel speak to generations of old. Oh the stories that can be told with this blade... A spectacular set of *tachi koshirae* accompanies the sword with matching *kamon* (crests) that appears to be the "*Tosa-kashiwa-mon* (oak crest from Tosa Province). This *kamon* was used by *Yamauchi* family with the most famous *daimyô* being *Yamauchi Kazutoyo* who worked for *Toyotomi* family. The family became the feudal lords of Tosa Province during the Edo Period, and later aristocracy within the Meiji Era. This *tachi* is truly history in your hands.



Saki-kasane: 4.0mm

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Kissaki: 2.51cm
Saki-haba: 1.67cm

Nagasa: 81.2cm

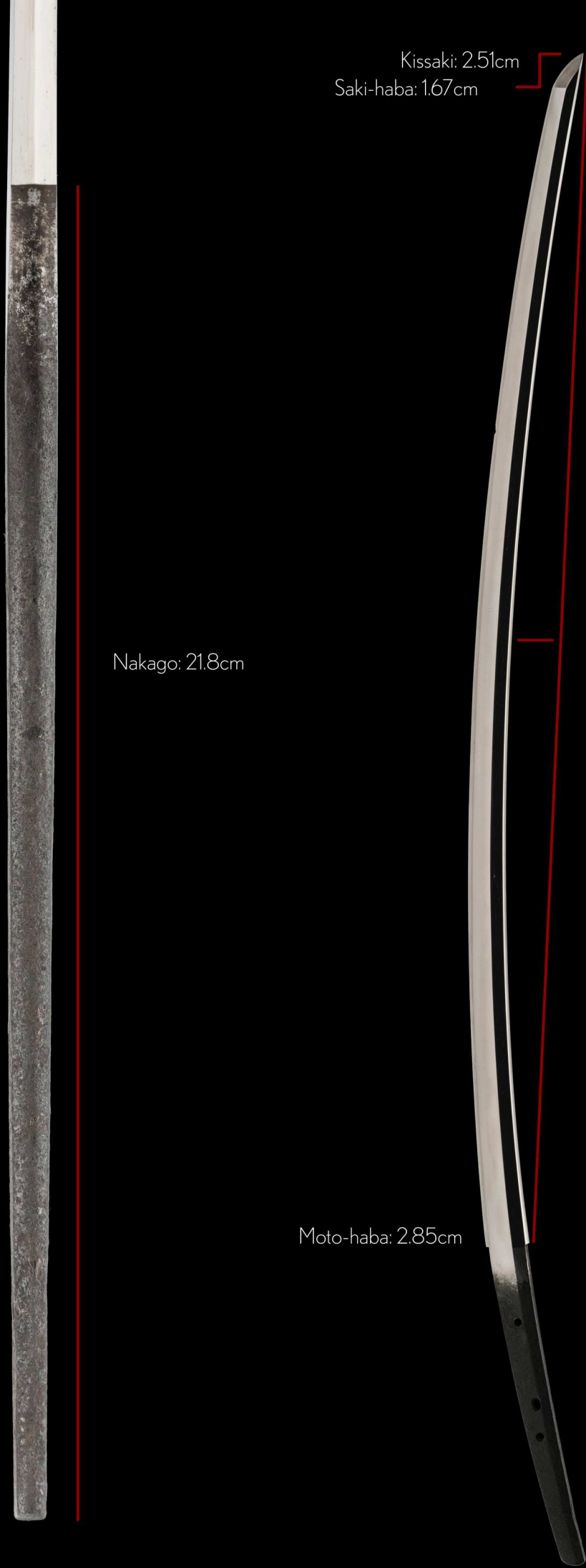
Nakago: 21.8cm

Sori: 2.58cm

Omosa: 885g

Moto-haba: 2.85cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



Traditional sources list either the *Hôen* era (1135~1141) smith *Kiyozane* or the *Bun'ô* era (1260~1261) smith *Kiyohira* as founder of the *Suô* province-based *Niô* School. However, there are no works of these two smiths extant and therefore *Kiyotsuna* is today regarded as the actual founder of the school.

The *Itsukushima-jinja* preserves a tachi that is signed and dated *kakikudashi*-style *Bun'ei ninen sangatsu Kiyotsuna* (third month of *Bun'ei* two, 1265) and the second oldest dated work, a *tantô* from the former possessions of the *Tanzan-jinja* that passed *jûyô* at the 45th *jûyô* shinsa, is from the second year of *Kenmu* (1335) and is signed *Bôshû Kuga-jû Kiyotsuna*. The *Kiyotsuna* name was then handed down throughout the *Muromachi* period and was in continuous use up to the *shintô* era.

A theory says that the name of the school goes back to the *Niho* manor of *Suô* province. *Suô* was home to many properties owned by the *Tôdaiji* and as *Niô* School blades have a strong resemblance to *Yamato* works, it is assumed that there has been a technical exchange between the two places. *Niô* blades show *shirake* along the *kitae* and have a *hamon* that is rather subdued and therefore we can recognize individual features that distinguish them from *Yamato* works.

This tachi *kitae* is formed of *ko-itame* and *mokume* with shining *ji-nie* and plenty of *chikei* to enjoy. The *hamon* is *hosô-suguha* with *shirake utsuri*. This *ubu* (unshortened) tachi holds all the fine qualities of the *Niô* School and the all the glory of the *Kamakura* period in one making it remarkably collectible.





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

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

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



重要第四三五號

指定書

太刀 無銘 二王 一口

長八二二釐 反り三二釐 鋒長三六釐

鑄造 庵棟 鍛小板目に本交じり
又文細直及茎生不先及上栗尻
釘目勝手下り 目釘孔三

右者當協會に於て審査の結果
重要刀劍に指定する

昭和四六年三月一日

盛況日本美術刀劍保存協會

會長 本間順治



Jûyô Certificate No. 4265
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
Tachi, mumei: Niô (二王)

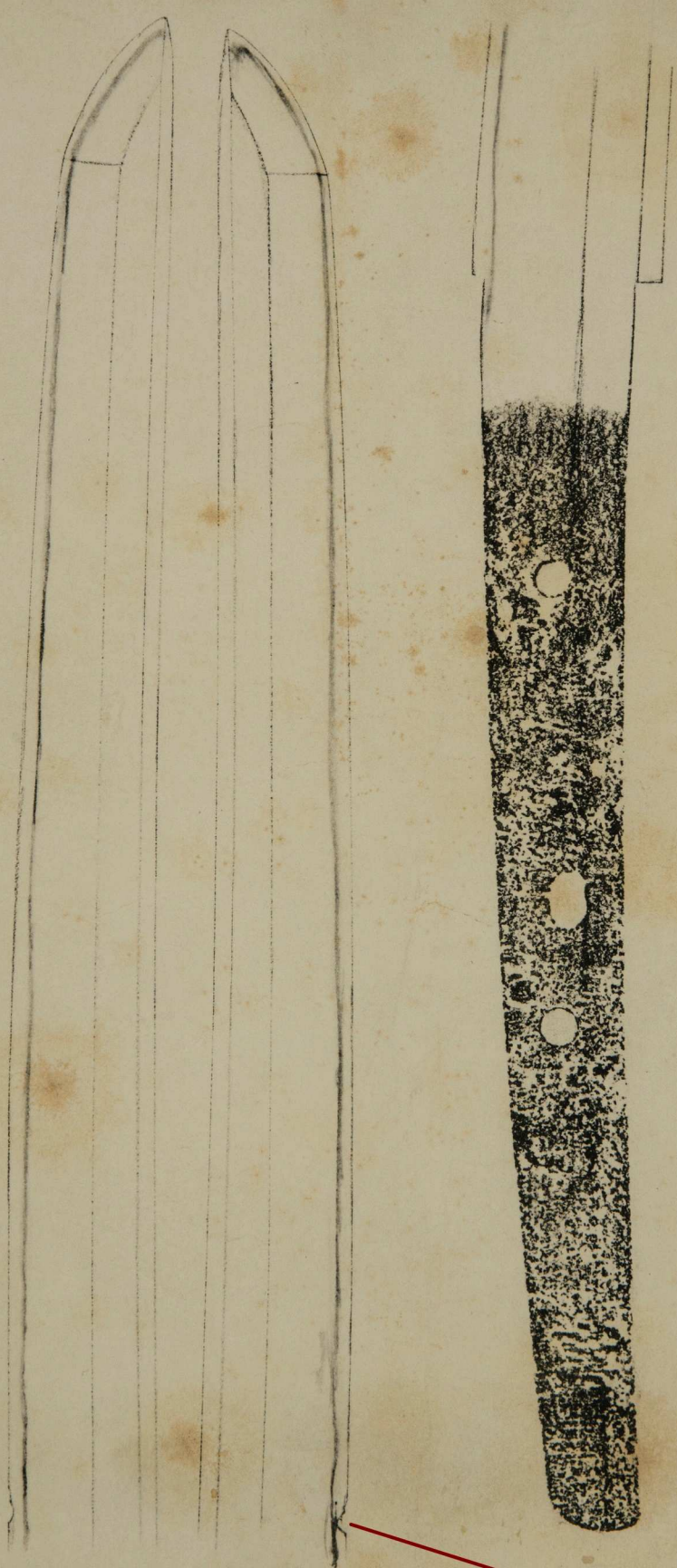
Measurements
nagasa 81.2 cm, sori 2.58 cm, kissaki-nagasa 2.85 cm

Description
Keijo: shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune
Kitae: ko-itame that is mixed with mokume
Hamon: hoso-suguha
Nakago: ubu, ha-agari kurijiri, 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.

March 1, 1973
[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
[President] Honma Junji (本間順治)

太刀 無銘 二王



kirikomi

Vintage Jûyô Token white paper from 1973
(note the gash in the cutting edge)



但生莖無銘也

Tadashi ubu-nakago mumei nari

Ubu-nakago, mumei

刃長貳尺七寸〇分有之

Hachô 2-shaku 7-sun 0-bu kore ari

Blade length ~81.2cm

昭和癸丑年新春寒山誌（花押）

Shôwa mizunoto-ushi doshi shinshun Kanzan shirusu + kaô

Written by Kanzan in early spring of Shôwa

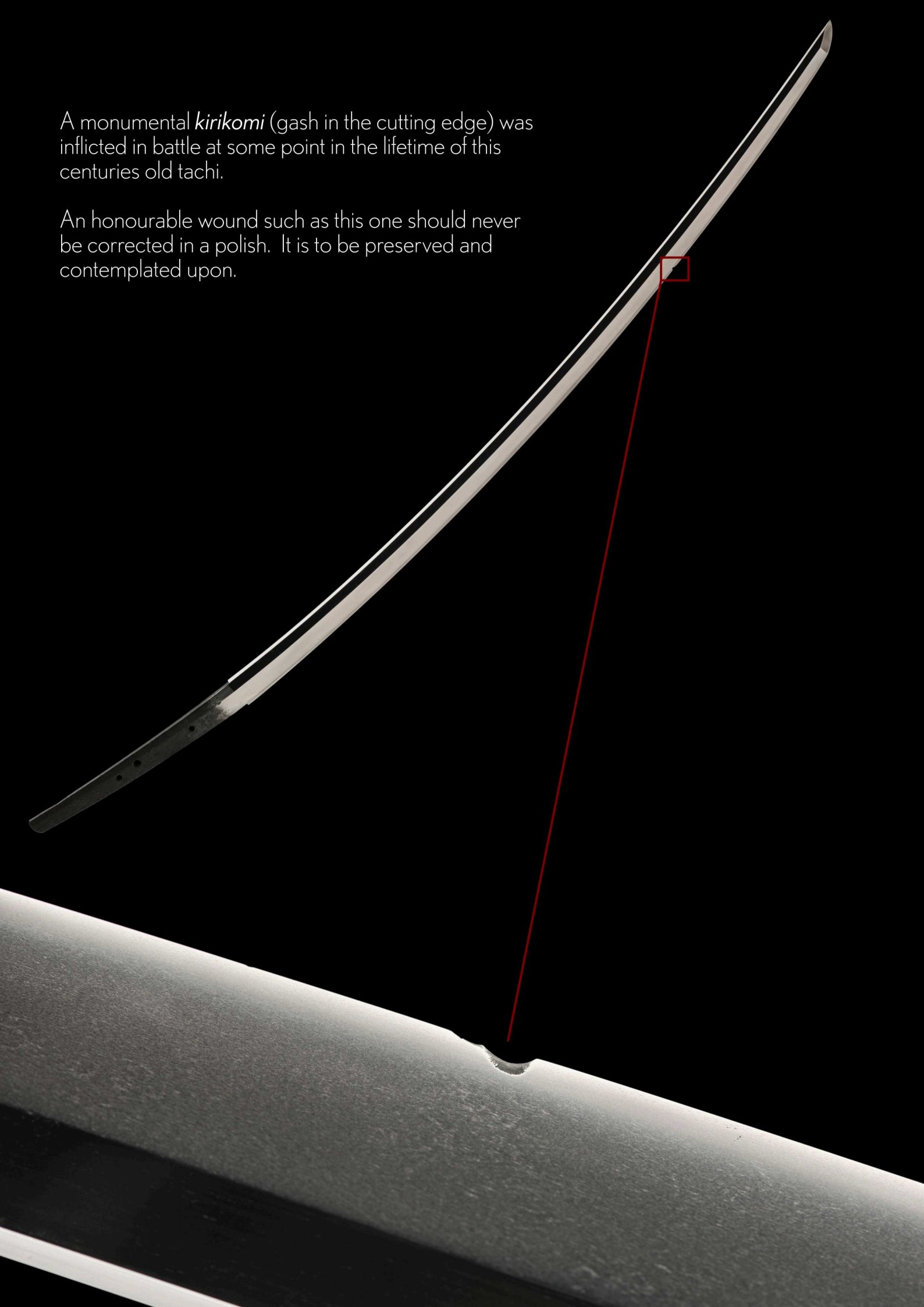
Year of the Ox (1973) + monogram





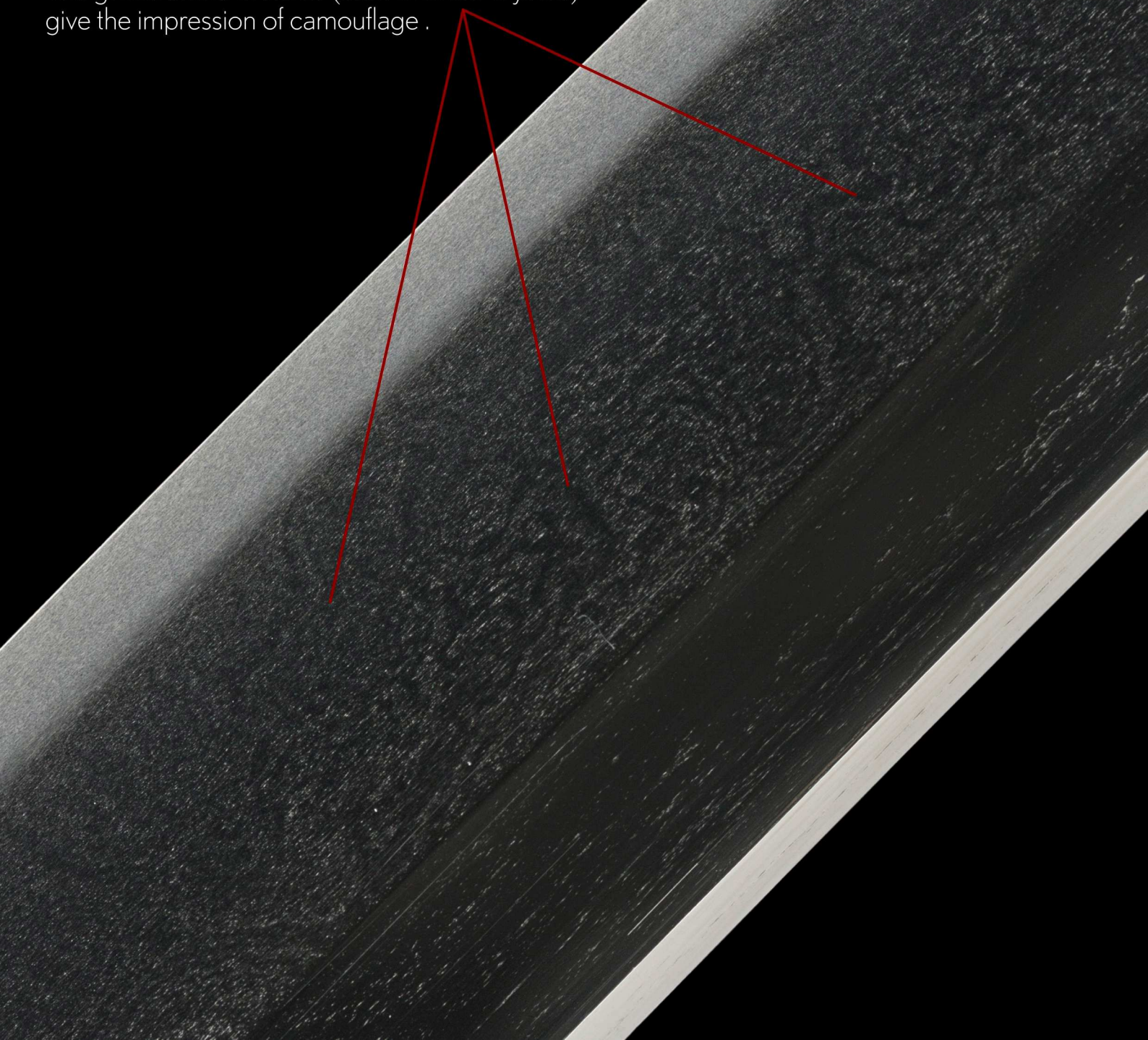
A monumental *kirikomi* (gash in the cutting edge) was inflicted in battle at some point in the lifetime of this centuries old tachi.

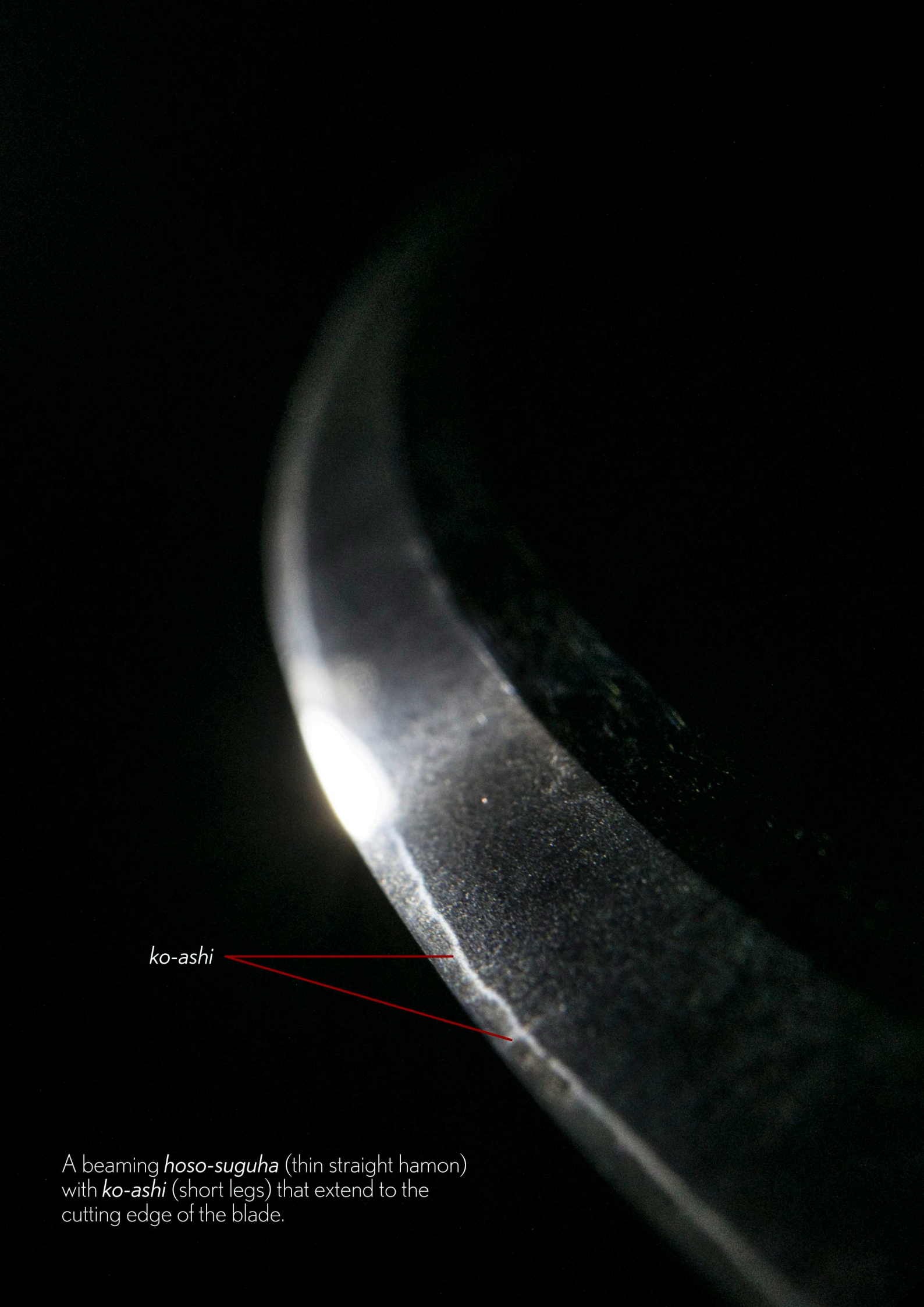
An honourable wound such as this one should never be corrected in a polish. It is to be preserved and contemplated upon.





Gorgeous swirls of *chikei* (dark lines *nie* crystals) give the impression of camouflage .



A close-up photograph of a sword blade, focusing on the hamon (temper line). The blade is dark, and the hamon is a lighter, thin line. The hamon has a beaming appearance and is accompanied by short, thin legs extending to the cutting edge. The background is black.

ko-ashi

A beaming *hoso-suguha* (thin straight hamon) with *ko-ashi* (short legs) that extend to the cutting edge of the blade.



The blade shimmers a bluish tint of *ji-nie*
over the trademark dark hue of *Niô jigane*.



Minamoto Yoritomo (1147~1199)
on horseback attacking an enemy

Artist: Taiso Yoshitoshi (1839 - 1892)

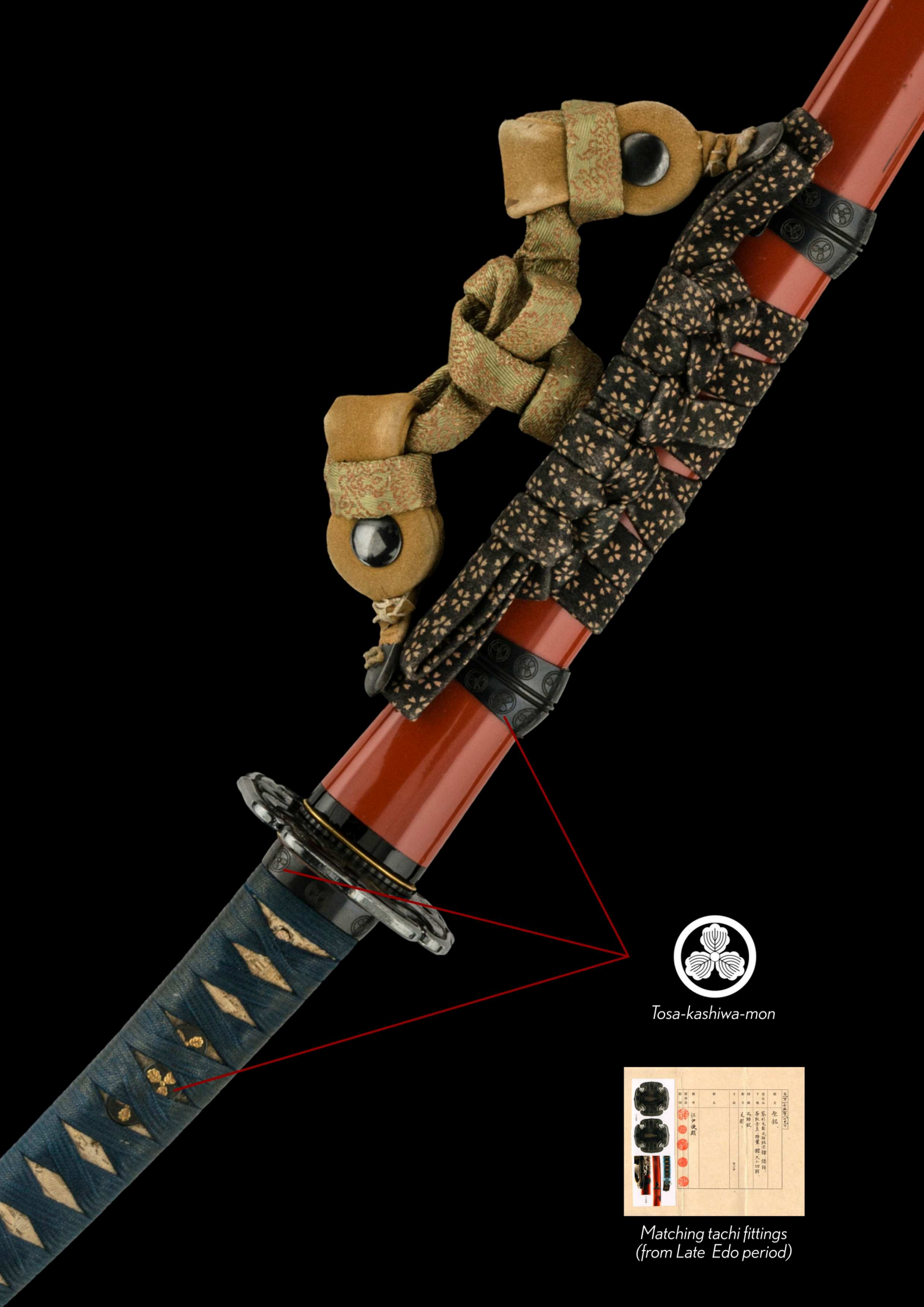
Pierce through the darkness.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



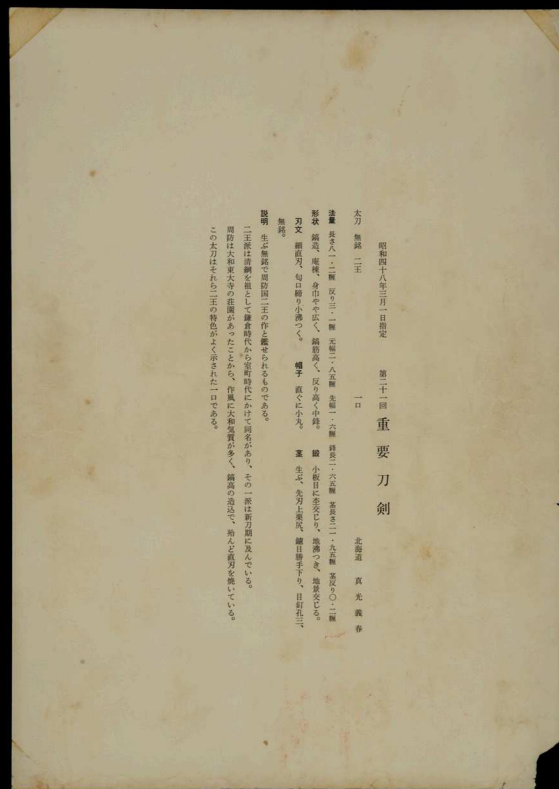
gold wrapped *habaki* with
vertical file marks



Tosa-kashiwa-mon



*Matching tachi fittings
(from Late Edo period)*



21st 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.



You can't break me.



ITEM# UJKA401

A YUKIHIRO KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1663~1673)

Swordsmith:	<i>Dewa no Kami Yukihiro (first generation, ubu nakago)</i>
Location:	Hizen province
Measurements:	Length: 70.4cm Curvature: 1.6cm Motohaba: 3.08cm
Jihada:	<i>Expertly forged konuka-hada with ji-nie and chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Stunning gunome-chôji midare with abunomefu, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Certificate x 3:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (sword, fk & koshirae Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Fujishiro:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included:	Shirasaya, custom koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

First generation *Shodai Yukihiro* from *Hizen* province on modern-day *Kyûshû* island is one of the Shinto period's most accomplished swordsmiths. There is genuine energy that can be felt in this blade - a robust shape, a bright and powerful *gunome-midare* hamon and a consistent, expertly forged *konuka-hada*. It's no surprise that Yukihiro is rated as *jô-saku* (superior) smith and that Hawley scored him at an impressive 45 points. A brilliant custom koshirae project was produced for this sword by Unique Japan in which top-quality NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon fittings were implemented. From the story-telling *Kurama-yama Tengu tsuba* by *Masamitsu* to *Munetoshi's* demon crushing *Shôki* depicted on the *fuchi-kashira*, a spiritually protective theme runs throughout. With gold lacquered accents on its tuxedo-like *saya* (scabbard), this is a katana filled with nobility - reflective of the excellence that Yukihiro personifies.



Saki-kasane: 4.9mm

Moto-kasane: 7.0mm

Omosa: 845g

Kissaki: 3.76cm
Saki-haba: 2.14cm

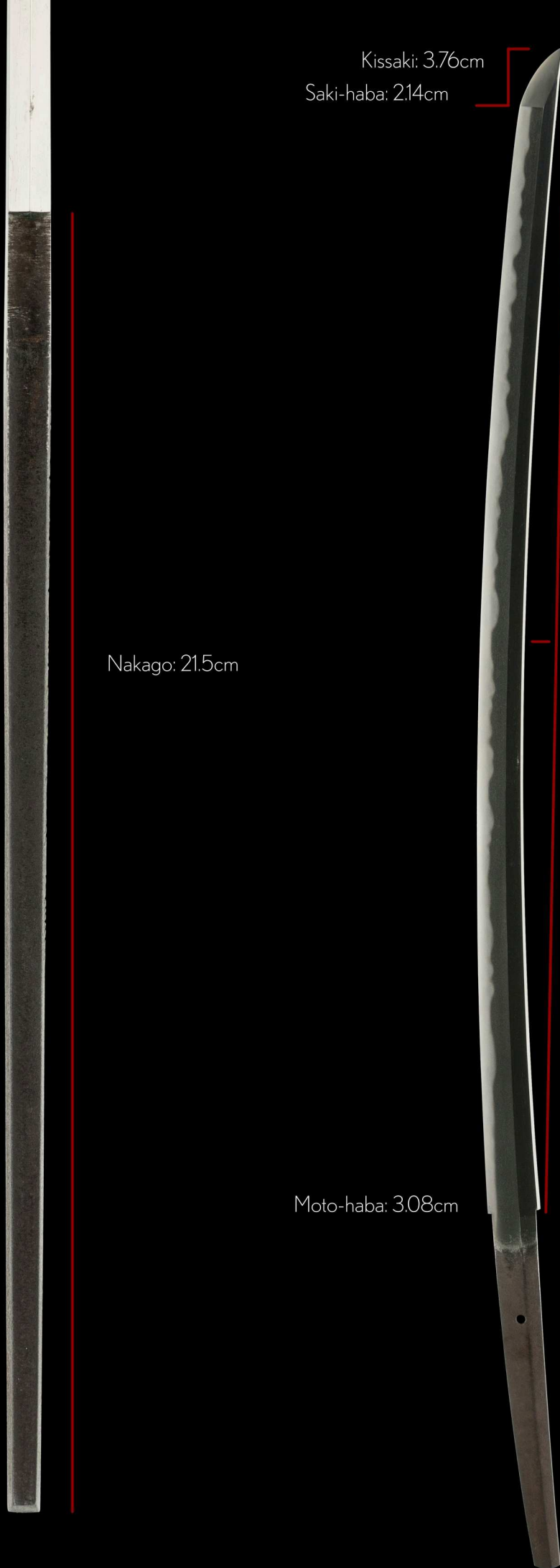
Nakago: 21.5cm

Moto-haba: 3.08cm

Nagasa: 70.4cm

Sori: 1.60cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Maestro *Yukihiro*, son of *Yoshinobu*, younger brother to *Masahiro* was born in 1617. He received his *Dewa no Daijo* title in 1648 and his *Dewa no Kami* title in 1663. This katana was made after he received his "no Kami" title.

In 1650 Yukihiro moved to *Nagasaki* to study Dutch forging techniques with *Hisatsugu* and *Tanenaga*. It is assumed that he also studied the *Bizen Ichimonji* in *Edo* (Tokyo) with *Noriyoshi*.

Swords produced by *Yukihiro* display all the excellence that makes the *Hizen* traditions so sought after. The *hamon* on this spectacular katana is an exquisite example of *gunome midare* with his trademark *abu nomefu* - an iconic horsefly eye appearing as dots in the *ashi*.

Yukihiro died on May 27, 1683, 3rd year of Tenna. No less than six more generations of Yukihiro followed in their master's footsteps.



Location: *Hizen Province*

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

Swordsmith: *Yukihiro* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

(Ichi) 一

(Hi) 肥

(zen) 前

(Kuni) 國

(De) 出

(wa, no) 羽

(Kami) 守

(Yuki) 行

(hiro) 廣





(reverse)

kurijiri

(chestnut shaped *nakagojiri* (butt end))

01201903

No 1011406



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 一 肥 前 国 出 羽 守 行 広 (初 代)

長 二 尺 三 寸 二 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



大阪府 教育委員会
第 41415 号
昭和38年8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 1st year of Reiwa (2019), May 23rd

One, Katana

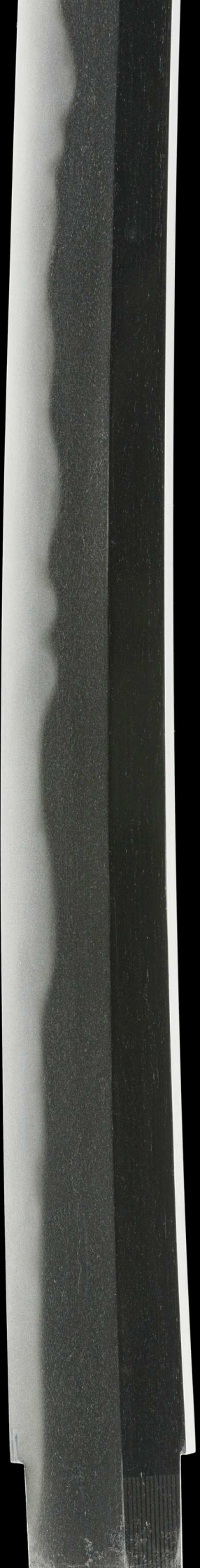
Mei (signature)

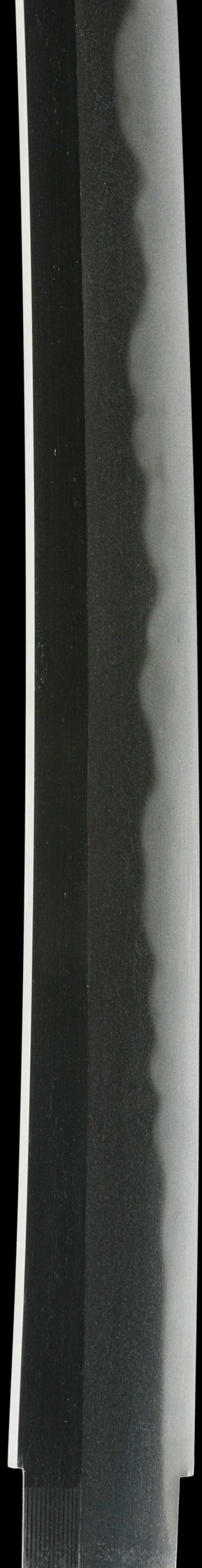
Ichi, Hizen no Kuni Dewa no Kami Yukihiro
(*Shodai, first generation*)

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu kyô (70.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)







muneyaki
(tempering of the *mune*, spine)

The *boshi* is *kaen*, meaning **flame** or **blaze**, whereby the thick clusters of nie crystals make the tip look like it's on fire.



Classic Hizen tradition *mokume-hada* that is so tightly forged it is known as *konuka-hada* (resembling rice bran).

Note how the sword 'shines' - it's alive with *ji-nie*.

A dazzling *gunome-choji-midare hamon* with *abunomefu*, unique *rounded nie* elements that is vintage *Hizen Yukihiro*.



abunomefu

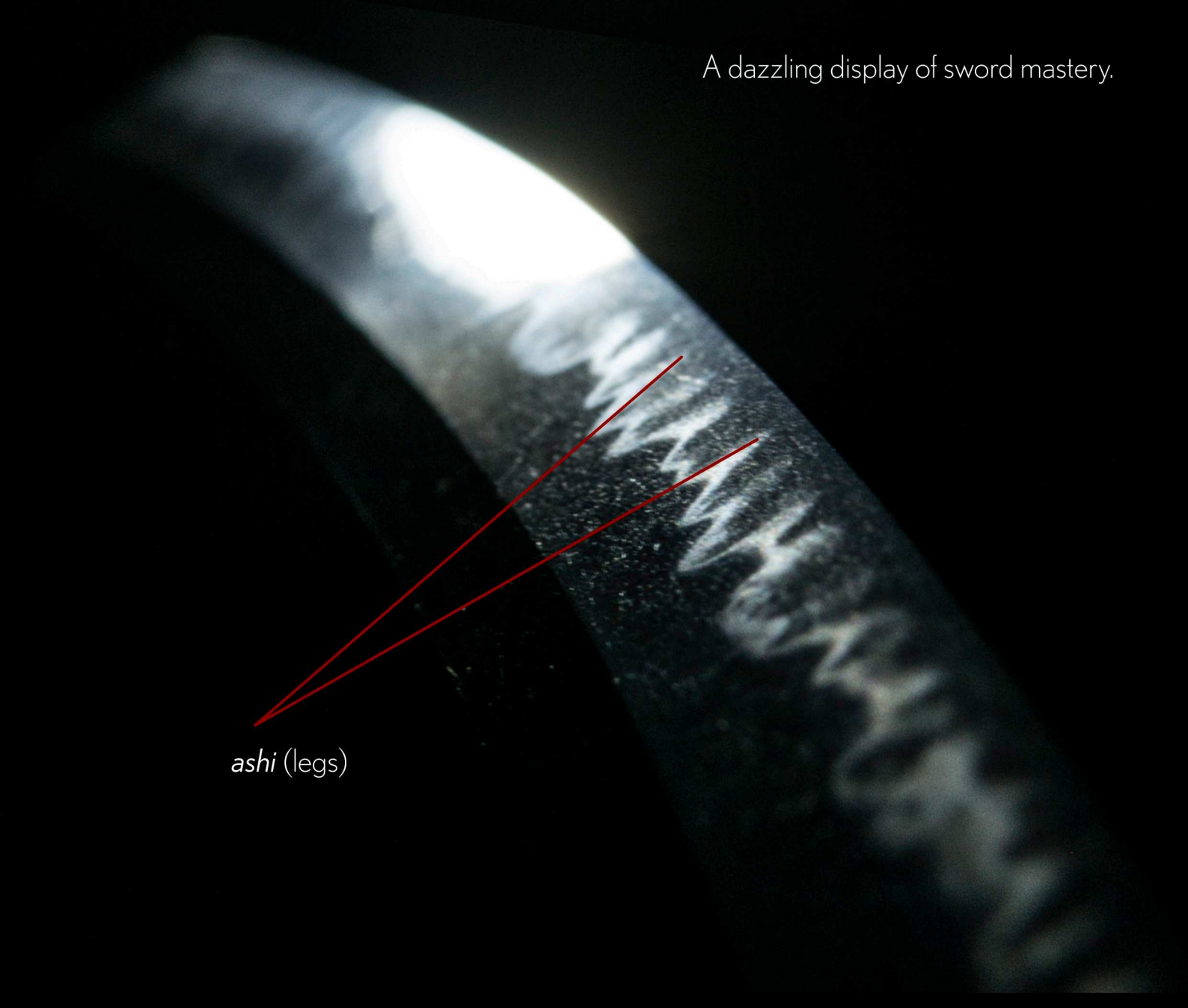


sunagashi

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing a section of the hamon (edge pattern). The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, shimmering line. The pattern is a 'sunagashi' (sweeping) style, characterized by a long, sweeping, and slightly irregular line. A red line points from the text 'sunagashi' to the hamon.

Long *ashi*, sweeping *sunagashi*, a brilliant *gunome-chôji midare hamon*.

A dazzling display of sword mastery.



ashi (legs)

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing a section of the hamon (edge pattern). The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, shimmering line. The pattern is an 'ashi' (legs) style, characterized by a long, sweeping, and slightly irregular line. Two red lines point from the text 'ashi (legs)' to the hamon.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



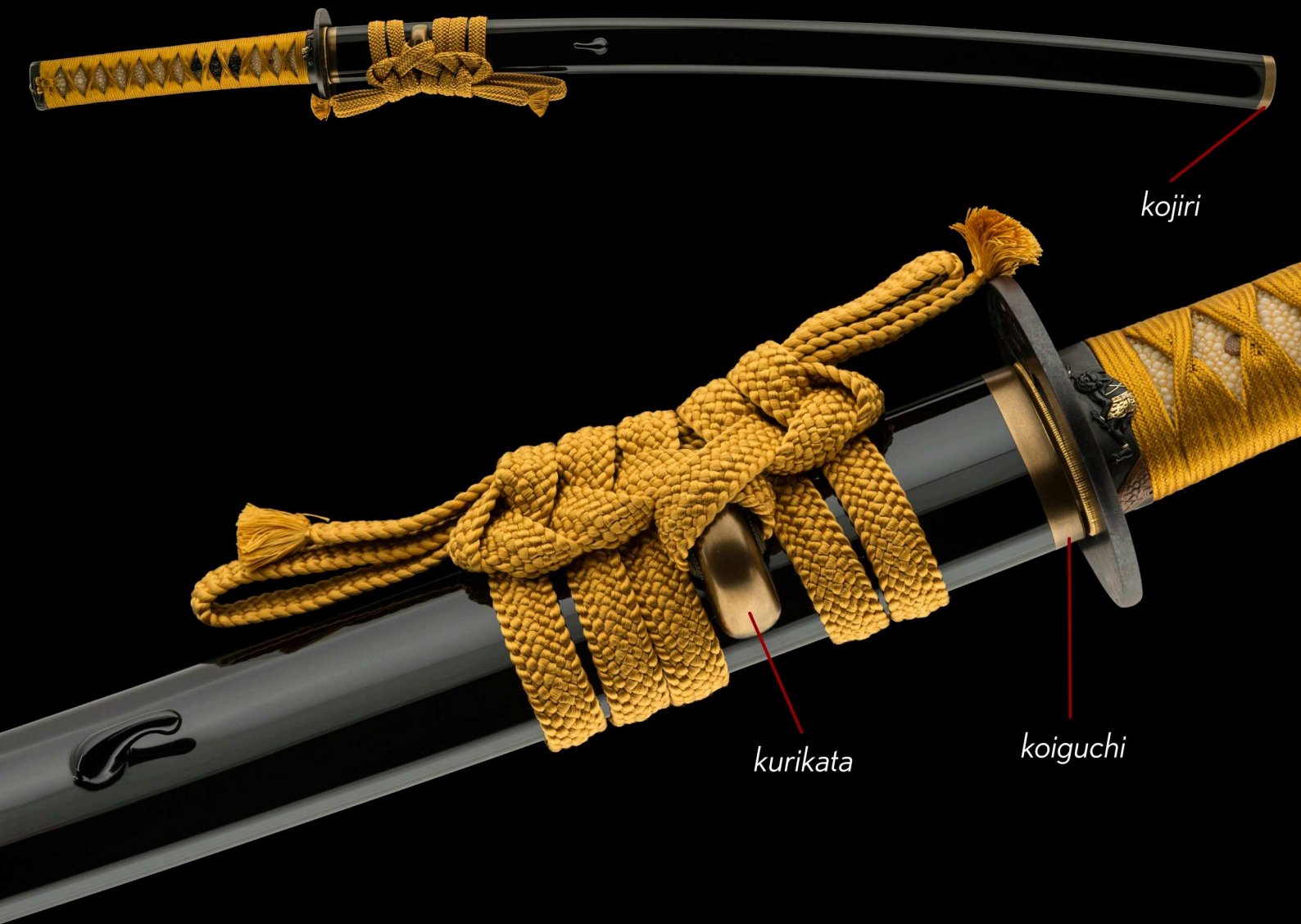
gold wrapped *habaki* with
crisp file marks

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

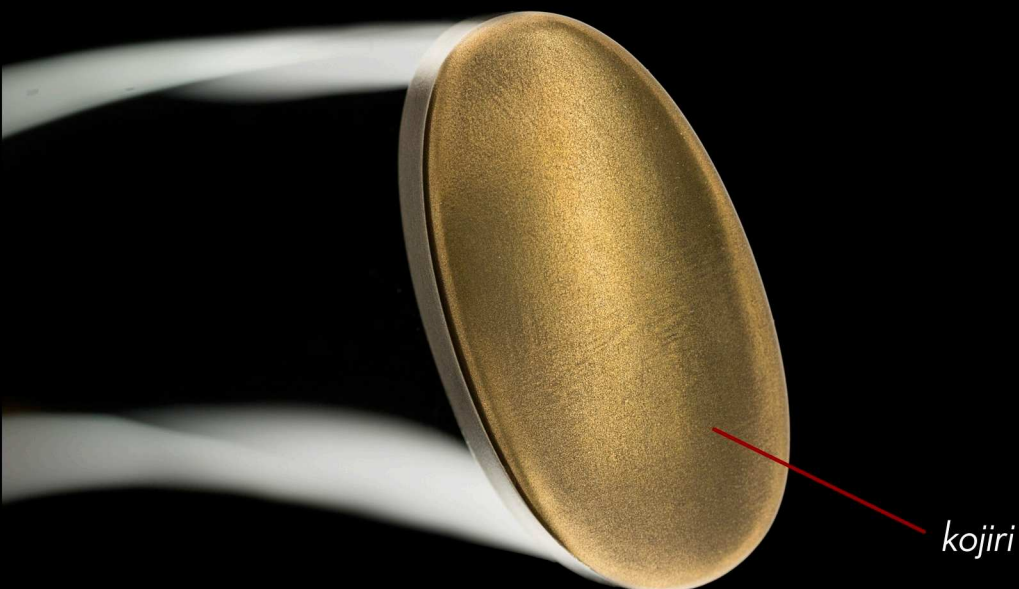
*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black
with gold accents*

Crafted in 2021
by
Unique Japan





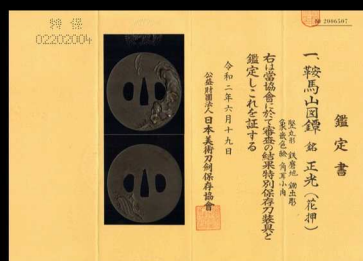
Unique Japan proudly produced this custom koshirae for the Yukihiro katana. The goal of the project was to build a formal koshirae that reflected the statesmanship of the blade. The gold lacquerwork on the *koiguchi* (mouth), *kojiri* (end) and *kurikata* (loop for sageo) was inspired by the gold-leaf work seen on high-end samurai art.





A magnificent polished iron tsuba by depicting a scene from *Mount Kurayama* by master metalsmith *Masamitsu*.

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certification has been attained for this exquisite and highly collectible tsuba.





The tsuba depicts the remarkable scene of a young *Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune* (then called *Ushiwaka-maru*) training under the watchful eye of *Tengu King Sôjôbô* on *Mount Karuma* in *Kyôto*.

Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune (1159-1589), born as the noble third son of *Minamoto-no-Yoshitomo* (1123-1160) and *Tokiwa-gozen*, a concubine. Yoshitomo had nine sons altogether and Yoshitsune was the youngest of them all.

Yoshitomo fell during the *Heiji Rebellion* (1160), culminating to the end of the *Heian* period and start of the *Kamakura* period. Tokiwa-gozen then fled *Kyôto* with her three children. Due to her new marriage, Ushiwaka-maru was separated from his mother at the age of ten and entrusted under the care of the Temple Kurama on Kurama mountain (*Kuramayama*).

There he was trained under Sôjôbô, the protector of Mt. Kurama, to learn the martial arts of fighting strategy as well as to gain supernatural powers of the tengu.



Masamitsu + kaô
(Masamitsu + monogram)

Masamitsu was from *Aizu* in *Iwashiro province* and belonged to the *Aizu-Shoami* school. He was active during the Late Edo Period (early 1800s) and is one of the more notable and collectible craftsmen among the tradition.

02202004

№ 2006507



鑑定書

一鞍馬山図鐔 銘 正光 (花押)

堅丸形 鉄磨地 鋤出彫
象嵌色絵 角耳小肉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

令和二年六月十九日

公益財団法人 日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), June 19th

One, Tsuba

Depicting Mt. Kurama

Mei (signature)
Masamitsu + kaô

*Elongated round shape, polished iron, dug away carvings,
inlay with color accents, angular rim with a little roundness*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



a sneaky demon...

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

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

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



Shôki on guard

(Echi) 越
(go) 後
(Taka) 高
(da) 田
(Mune) 宗
(toshi) 利
(saku) 作



Echigo Takada Munetoshi saku
(Crafted by Takada Munetoshi from Echigo Province)



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

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

Source: onmarkproductions.com/html/shoki.shtml



Shôki on a Kyôto rooftop

30201802



No 2004571

鑑定書

一 鐘馗小鬼図縁頭 銘 越後高田宗利作

四分一磨地 高彫 象嵌色絵

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年三月十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

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

One, Fuchi-kashira

Depicting Shôki and small demon

Mei (signature)

Echigo Takada Munetoshi saku

Polished shibuichi, relief, inlay with color accents

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) display well-carved *shakudô shisa* lions that provides spiritual protection for the owner.





Feel the energy. Feel the freedom.





ITEM# UJKA402

A NIDAI IPPÔ KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (TENNA ERA: 1681~1684)

Swordsmith:	<i>Ippô (nidai, second generation, ubu nakago)</i>		
Measurements:	Length: 74.5cm	Curvature: 1.5cm	Motohaba: 3.0cm
Jihada:	<i>Well forged itame-hada and masame-hada</i>		
Hamon:	<i>Bursting gunome-chôji-midare with long ashi and plentiful sunagashi</i>		
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)		
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (sword, koshirae, tsuba and FK designated as Authentic)		
Fujishiro:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)		
Sharpness:	Wazamono (rated as a maker of good sharp swords)		
Included:	Shirasaya, koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description		

SOLD

For those looking for an extra-long katana with a bright and lively hamon to lift the spirits, here is a sword definitely worth considering. Second generation (*nidai*) *Ippô* was known as *Sasaki Zenjirô* is the son of *shodai Ippô* (featured earlier in this catalogue) and originally from Ômi province. He went on to study with *shodai Korekazu* in Edo (the nation's capital Tokyo) to hone his skills. Nidai Ippo has achieved prestigious *Jûyô Tôken* which reflects the skill of his work. This katana is a full 74.5cm in *nagasa* and has been recently been polished to a superb standard. Complimenting the sword is a terrific set of koshirae that features a *fuchi-kashira* dragon meshed within powerful waves, a long-life arabesque and peony themed *tsuba* with protective *shisa* lions in the form of *shakudô menuki*. Five certificates in total accompany this impressive katana.



Saki-kasane: 4.8mm

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Omosa: 850g

Kissaki: 3.09cm
Saki-haba: 1.97cm

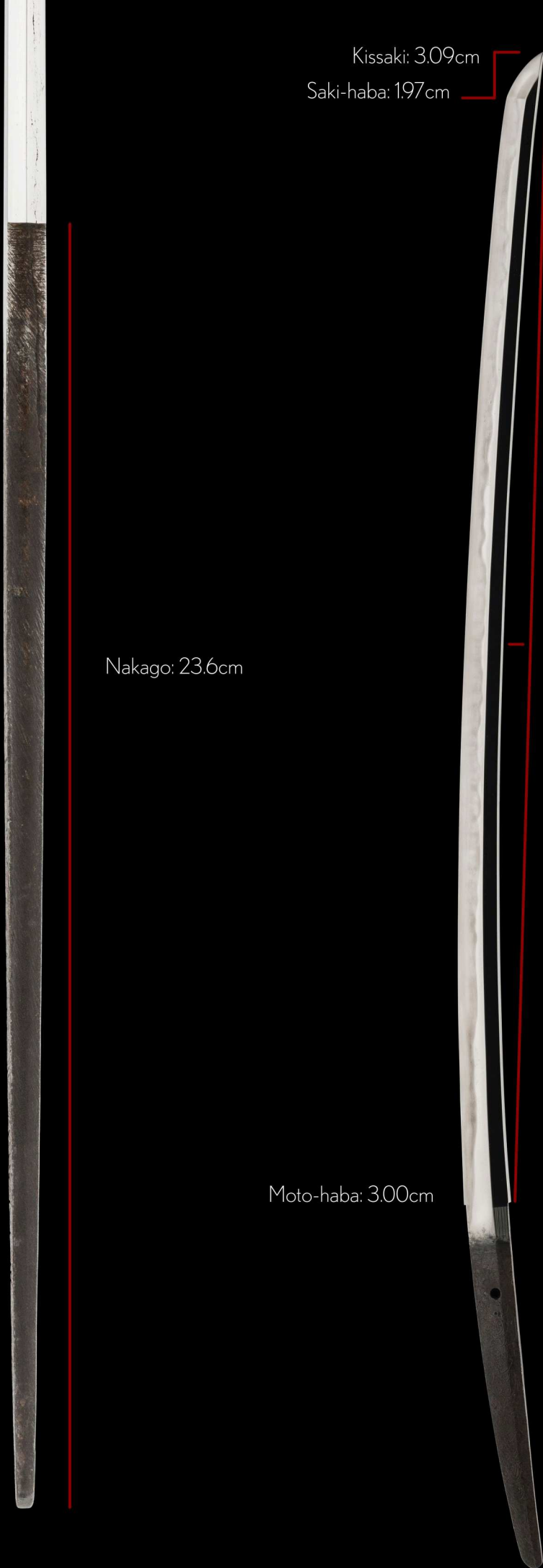
Nakago: 23.6cm

Moto-haba: 3.00cm

Nagasa: 74.5cm

Sori: 1.50cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Known also as *Sasaki Zenjirô*, son of the first generation Ippô, he was ranked *wazamono* (sharp sword maker) and from the famed *Ishido* school that has its roots to the *Bizen Ichimonji* school.

The Ishido school started in Ômi province and multiplied to cities such as Osaka and Tokyo. Shodai remained in Ômi province, and so did Nidai Zenjiro for much of his life. Zenjiro eventually moved to Tokyo later on to work with *shodai Korekazu* of the famed Edo Ishido school.

The steel flows like a stream that bursts into *sunagashi* in several places. The hamon is an extra bright and bubbling *gunome chôji-midare* with long impressive *ashi* (legs) running down the long length of the blade.

Fujishiro ranks Zenjirô a *jô-saku* (superior smith) and one the finest smiths of Ômi province during the shintô period.

Quite interesting to note is that the *nakago* (tang) is signed with the characters *Nyûdô*. This is the name used when a smith becomes a monk, devoting himself to Buddhism.





Location: *Ômi* (resident of Shiga)

Family name: *Sasaki*

Monk name: *Nyûdô*

Clan name: *Minamoto*

Swordsmith: *Ippô* (second generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

o-sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

江 (Gô)

州 (shû)

住 (jû)

人 (nin)

佐 (Sa)

々 (sa)

木 (ki)

入 (Nyû)

道 (dô)

源 (Minamoto)

一 (I)

峯 (ppô)



(*ura*, reverse)

03202103

No 1015542



鑑定書

一刃 銘 江州住人佐々木入道源一峯

長 二尺四寸六分

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

令和三年五月二十四日

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 322853 号
令和2年12月8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 3rd year of Reiwa (2021), May 24th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Gôshû jûnin Sasaki Nyûdô Minamoto Ippô


Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 4-sun 6-bu (74.5cm)

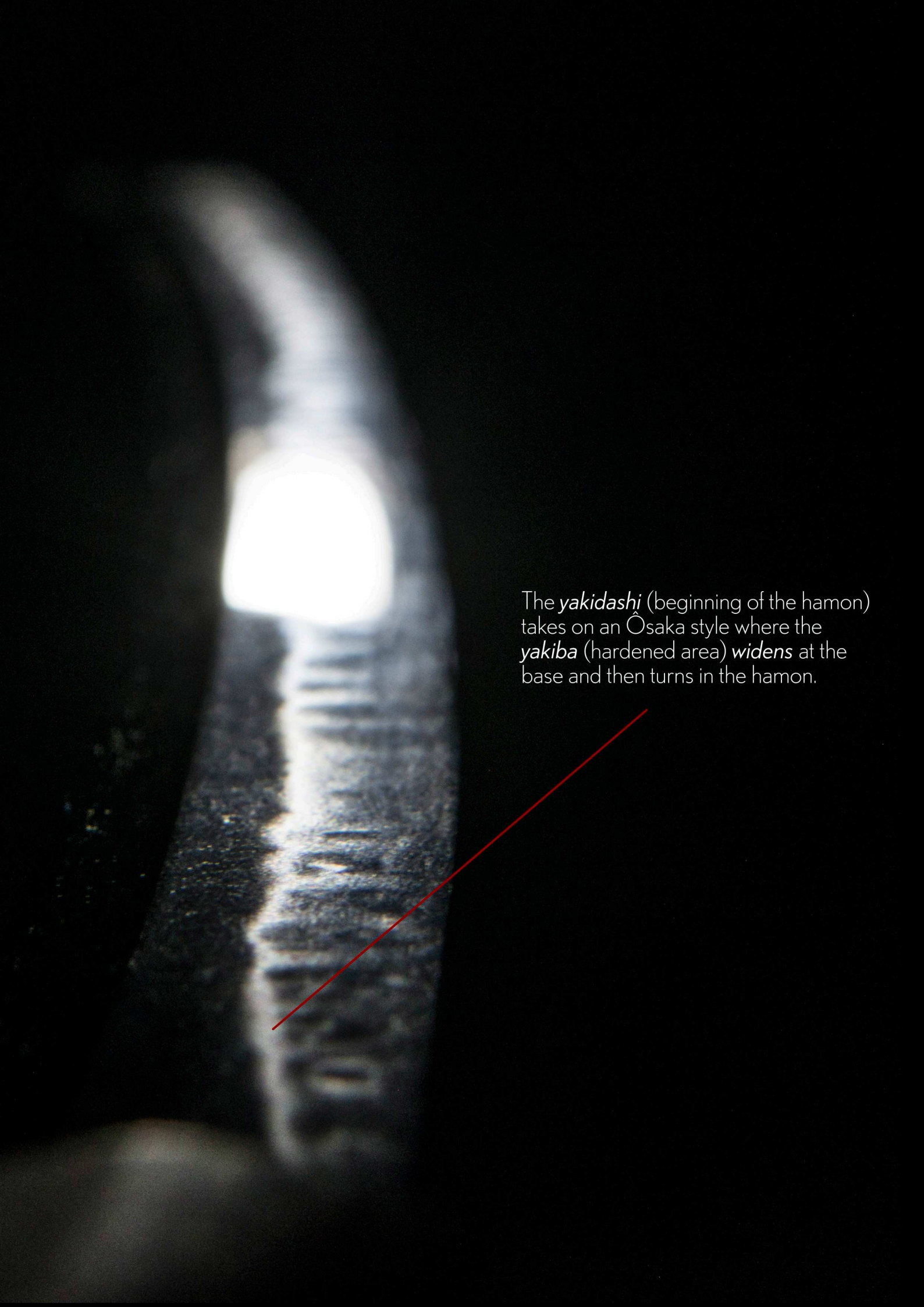
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





A close-up, low-angle shot of a katana blade against a black background. The blade is oriented vertically, with the tip at the top. A bright, circular light source is positioned behind the tip, creating a strong glow. The blade's surface is dark, but a distinct hamon (edge line) is visible, characterized by a series of long, parallel, slightly wavy lines that run down the length of the blade. A thin red line points from the text below to the hamon.

A dazzling *gunome-midare hamon* shines brightly with long *ashi* (legs).

A close-up photograph of a sword's hamon (temper line) against a dark background. The hamon is a bright, wavy line that runs vertically down the center of the blade. A red line is drawn diagonally across the lower portion of the hamon, pointing towards the text on the right. The hamon shows a distinct widening at the base, which is the yakidashi area.

The *yakidashi* (beginning of the hamon) takes on an Ōsaka style where the *yakiba* (hardened area) *widens* at the base and then turns in the hamon.



Sweeping sands of *sunagashi*.

Sparks of divinity.



The hamon marches along...



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



copper *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

*Kuro-ro-utakata-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂泡沫塗鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black
with unique texture like
bubbles in water*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



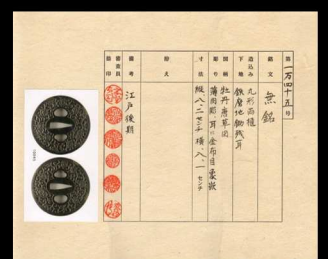
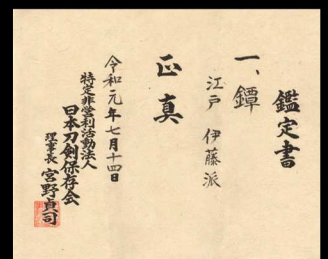
NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This polished iron tsuba with raised rims and *nunome-zôgan* has been attributed to the *Itô* school in Edo province during the late Edo period.

The elegant arabesque design is intertwined with peonies. Arabesque vines symbolize long life and the peony is referred to as the "king of flowers" and a symbol of good fortune, bravery, and honour.

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



Be brave.





Waves flex their strength with a golden dragon in tow.





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Tamagawa School in Mito province
(1780-1867)

Dragon in waves



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) carry a shisa lion and peony theme that brings harmony to the peonies seen on the tsuba.

These high quality shakudô menuki were crafted during the Late Edo period.





ITEM# UJWA153

A YOSHITAKE WAKIZASHI

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

Swordsmith: *Izumo Daijô Fujiwara Yoshitake (shodai, first generation, ubu nakago)*
Measurements: **Length:** 49.6cm **Curvature:** 0.8cm **Motohaba:** 3.05cm
Jihada: *Skillfully forged ko-mokume hada and lovely chikei*
Hamon: *Bright suguha mixed with ko-midare*
Certificate #1: **NTHK-NPO Yûshû-saku** (*designated as Highly Excellent Masterwork*)
Certificate #2: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Kichô** (*FK designated as Especially Precious*)
Certificate #3-5: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*tsuba, kogai & koshirae designated as Authentic*)
Fujishiro: **Jô-saku** (*ranked as a superior swordsmith*)
Sharpness: **Wazamono** (*rated as a maker of good sharp swords*)
Included: Shirasaya, koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Introducing a handsome wakizashi by *Izumo Daijô Yoshitake* - a leading smith from the mid-1600s who lived in *Yamashiro province* (Kyôto) - the cultural capital of Japan. *Yoshitake* was the son of *Horikawa Kunitake* who studied under grandmaster swordsmith *Horikawa Kunihiro*. This sword is splendidly healthy, extra wide and sharp - essentially in the same condition from when it was first crafted. It has been certified *Yûshû-saku* (Masterwork), top honours from the NTHK-NPO. A custom koshirae was built for the sword a few years ago by Unique Japan featuring a *tsuba* depicting the gentle slopes of Mount Fuji, a unique boat tugging scene on the *fuchi-kashira* and the pair of *menuki* celebrating the 1300-year-old *Ukai* cormorant fishing festival.

↑
Saki-kasane: 5.1mm

Moto-kasane: 7.7mm

Omosa: 540g

Kissaki: 3.52cm
Saki-haba: 2.22cm

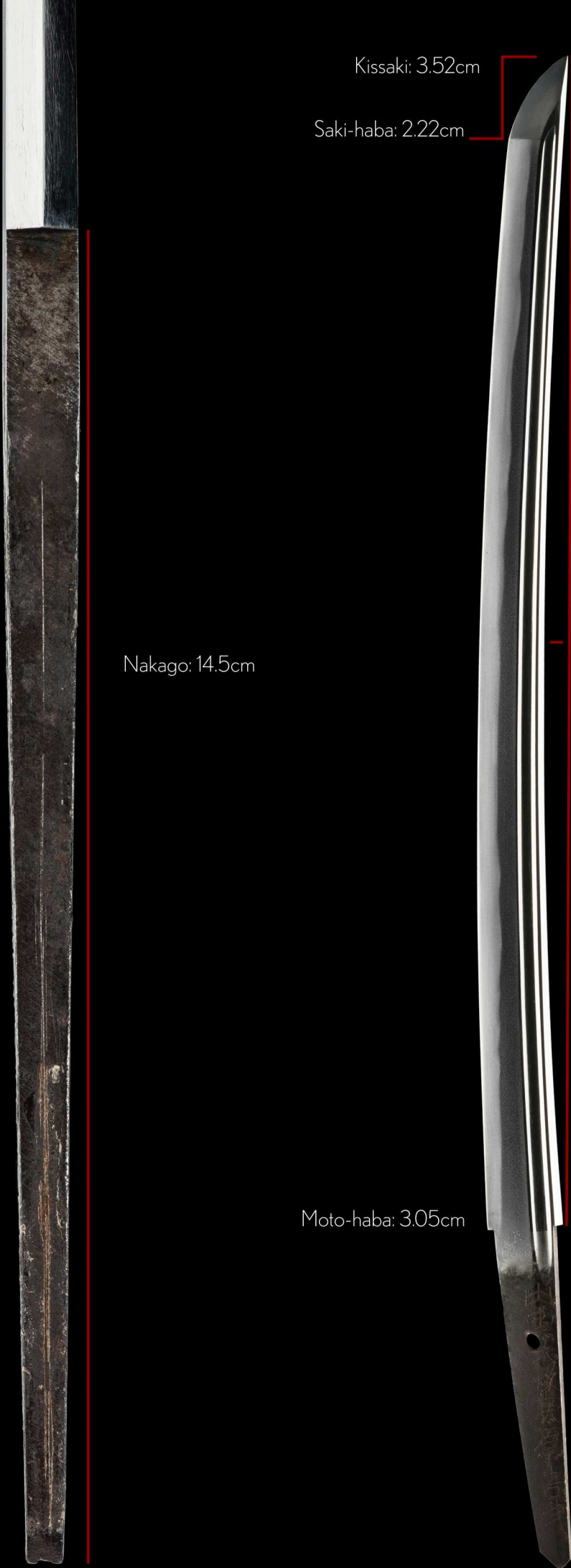
Nakago: 14.5cm

Moto-haba: 3.05cm

Nagasa: 49.6cm

Sori: 0.80cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Shodai (1st generation) *Yoshitake*, originally from *Yamashiro* (Kyôto), flourished as a swordsmith during the *Enpô era* (1673-1681).

He signed his swords as:

Izumo no Daijo Fujiwara Yoshitake

Heianjô-ju Izumo no Daijo Fujiwara Tae Yoshitake

Heianjô-ju Yoshitake

Izumi no Kami Hotetsu Nyudo Yoshitake

His real name was *Kawate Ichitayû* and was the son of *Horikawa Kunitake* - a skilled smith from the lineage of *Sanjo Yoshinori*.

Later in his career *Yoshitake* moved to Edo where he died in the fifth month of the seventh year of *Genroku era* (May 1694).

Yoshitake is formally ranked as a *jô-saku* (a superior smith) and *wazamono* for his brilliantly sharp swords.





Location: *Kyôto*

Title: *Izumo Daijô* (Lord of Izumo province)

Clan name: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Yoshitake* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

出 (Izu)

雲 (mo)

大 (Dai)


掾 (jô)

藤 (Fuji)

原 (wara)

吉 (Yoshi)

武 (take)

捺 審 査 員 印	備 考	寸 法	拵 え	中 心	図 柄	彫 り	銘 子	刃 紋	下 地	鍛	造り 込み	銘 文	第 五 七 三 六 号
	延宝頃			目釘穴 一個 鍔 文少ゆき		表裏 俵樋 已下 下拵 流	真 子 丸	太 茂 子 巾 の 真 子 調 浅 小 灣 水 走 じ り		板 自 詰 七	端 造	出雲 大 孫 藤 原 言 武	
											卷 棟		



NTHK-NPO Yûshû-saku Certificate of Authenticity

This katana was designated as *Yûshû-saku* (Highly Excellent Masterwork) by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Wakizashi

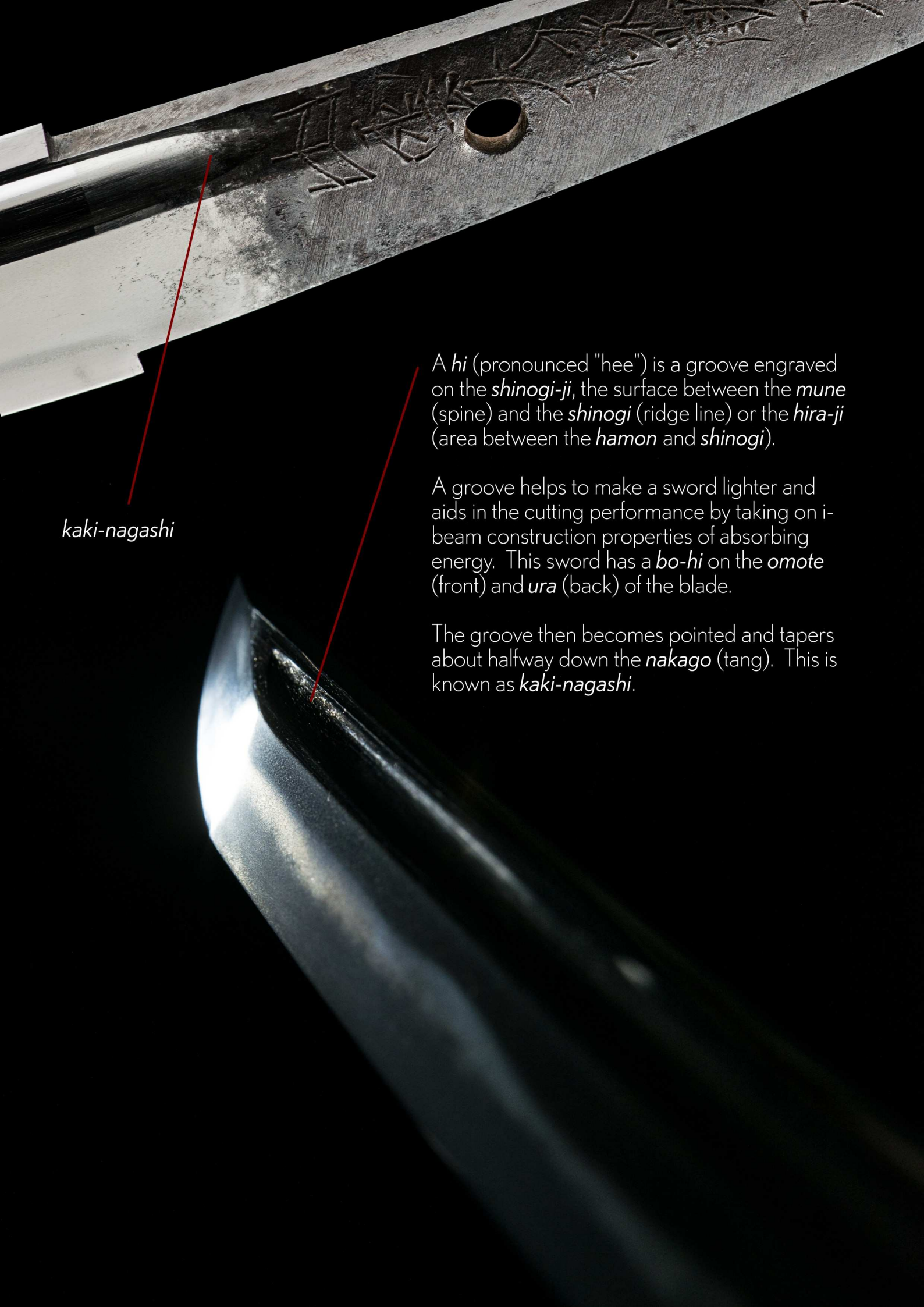
Mei (signature)
Jôshû Izumo Daijô Yoshitake

Nagasa (length)
1-shaku 6-sun 3-bu kore ari (49.6cm)

Issued in 26th year of Heisei (2014), July 23rd

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)

This sword has reached the highest level of honour at the NTHK-NPO.
Five judges have stamped their names to the certificate.



kaki-nagashi

A *hi* (pronounced "hee") is a groove engraved on the *shinogi-ji*, the surface between the *mune* (spine) and the *shinogi* (ridge line) or the *hira-ji* (area between the *hamon* and *shinogi*).

A groove helps to make a sword lighter and aids in the cutting performance by taking on i-beam construction properties of absorbing energy. This sword has a *bo-hi* on the *omote* (front) and *ura* (back) of the blade.

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

nijuba - area of the hamon where it splits and runs parallel. This is a characteristic of top blades traditionally forged in *suguha* (straight temper line).

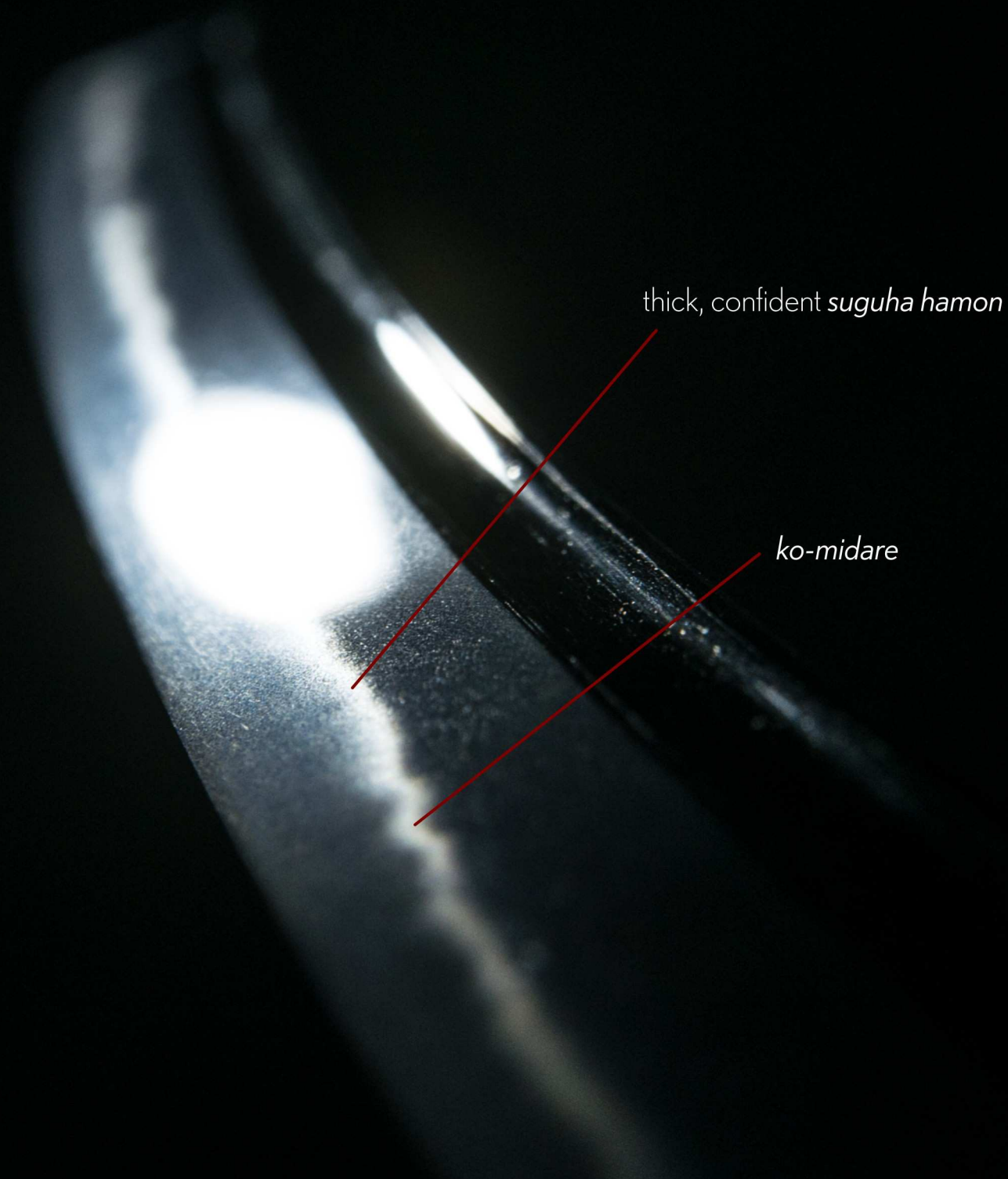


nijuba

A master's brush of *suguha* that is as bright as the stars.

Notice the *nie* crystals twinkling away...

Little waves of *ko-midare* add an extra dimension to the steel.



thick, confident *suguha hamon*

ko-midare

Tightly forged *itame-hada*.

The steel is dense and packs a punch.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

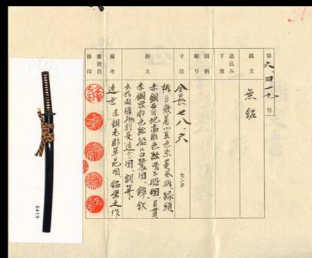
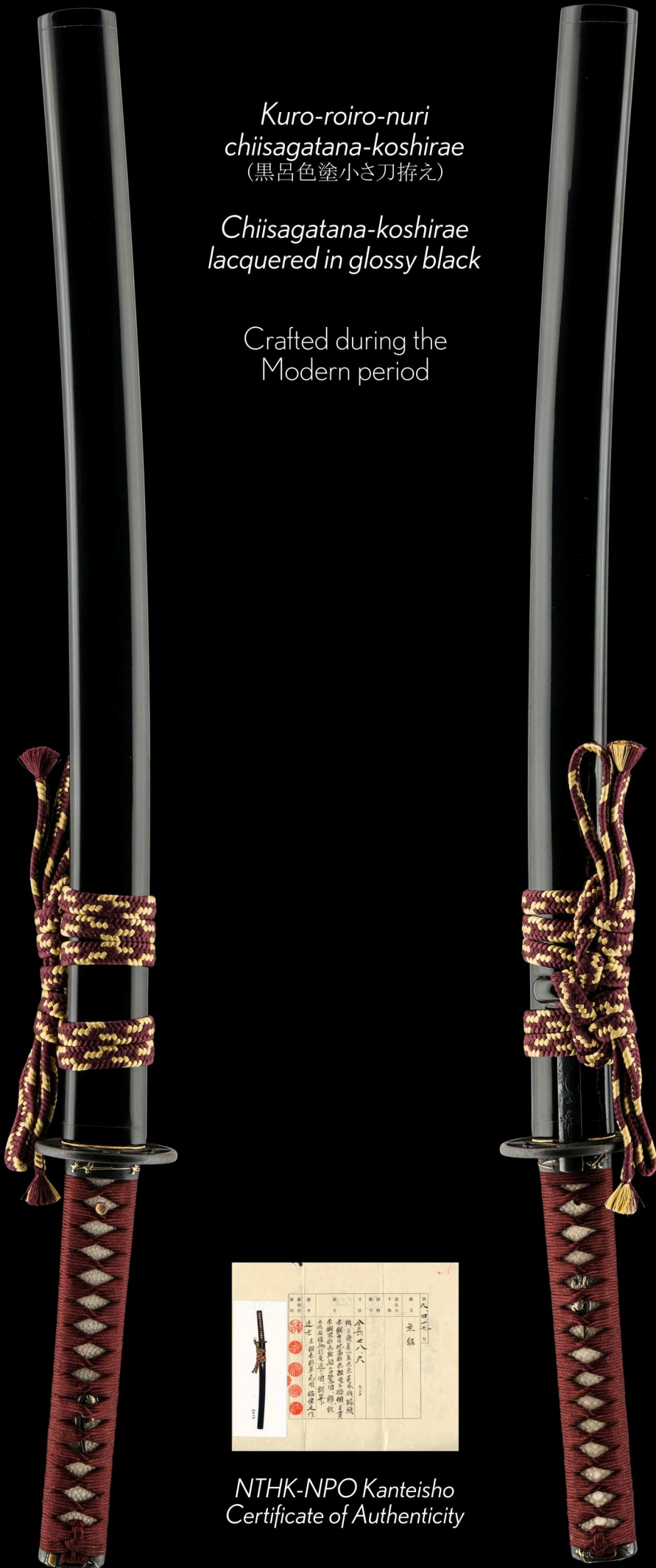


silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

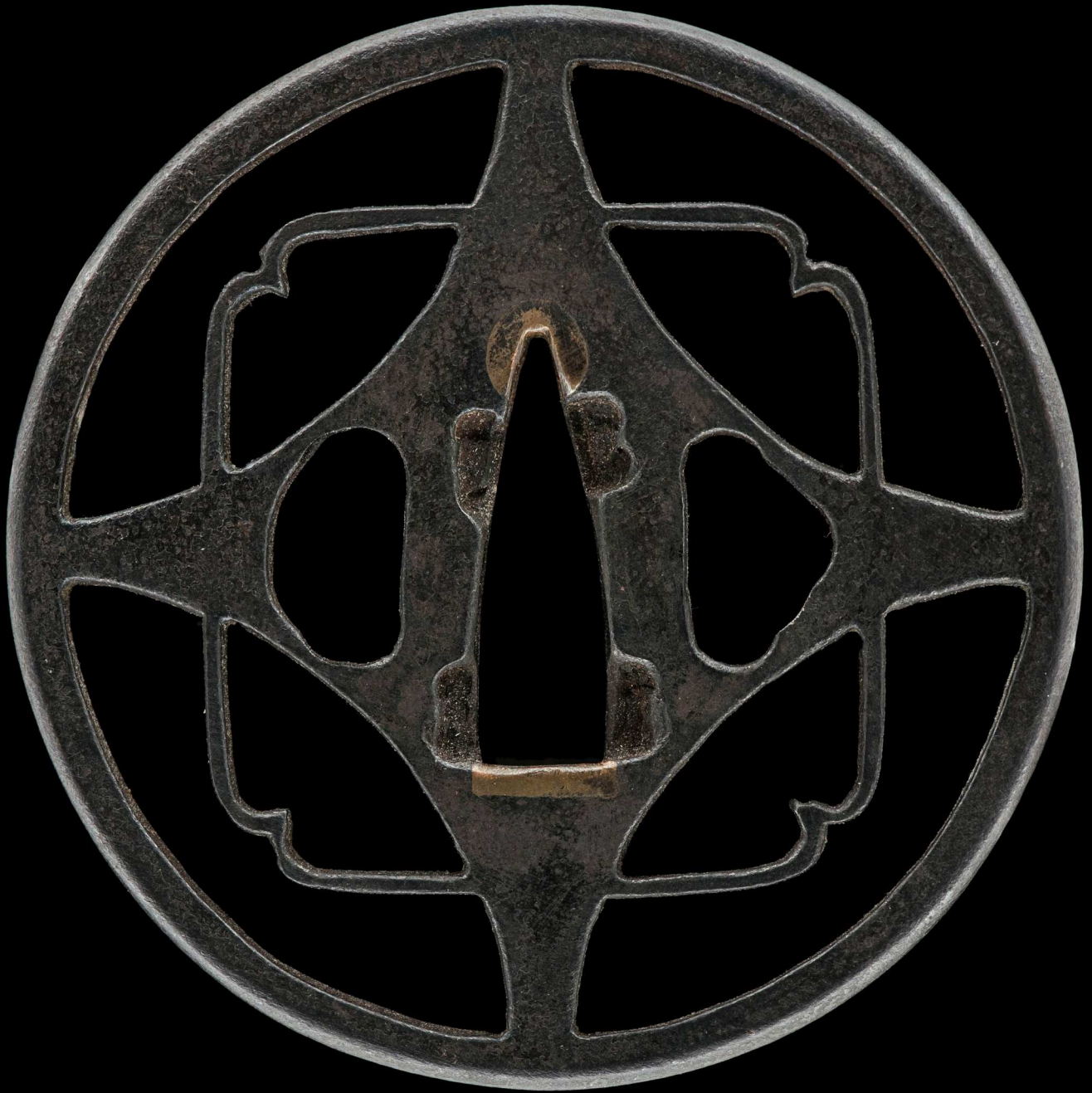
*Kuro-roiro-nuri
chiisagatana-koshirae*
(黒呂色塗小さ刀拵え)

*Chiisagatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Modern period



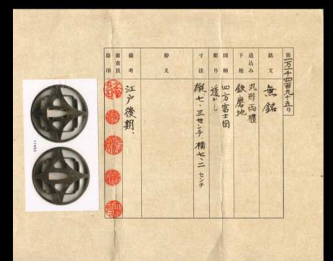
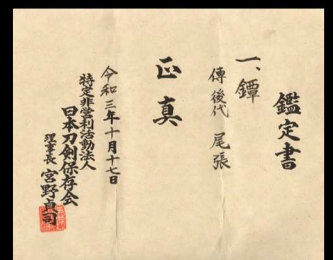
NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This lovely polished iron tsuba has been attributed to a latter generation smith of the *Owari* school from modern-day *Aichi-ken* (prefecture).

Designs and the patterns of the *Owari* school are generally symmetrical but exceptions with independent patterns like landscapes or symbolized historic events also appear.

This particular piece displays elegant silhouettes of Japan's cherished Mount Fuji in all four corners. An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributing the piece to the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1867 has been attained.





Mount Fuji and Shoji Lake
Artist: *Tsuchiya Koitsu*

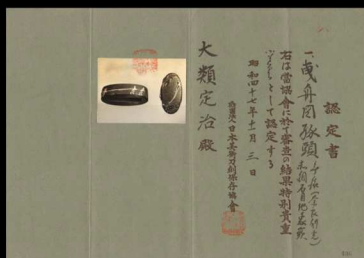
The four oval corners of the *tsuba* (guard) depicts Japan's much loved volcanic cone, Mount Fuji. A frequent subject of Japanese art, *Fuji-san* has been a sacred site for practitioners of Shinto since at least the 7th century. Shinto is the indigenous faith or spirituality of Japan. Many Shinto shrines dot the base and ascent of Mount Fuji. Shinto shrines honour *kami*, the supernatural deities of the Shinto faith.





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Nara Toshimitsu
(Edo period, 1800s)

*shakudô with stone surface
depicting people towing a boat*



*Vintage Tokubetsu Kicho Certificate of Authenticity
Issue in 1972, serial number 406*

Teamwork, friendship, community.
We are stronger, together.





PULL!





These *menuki* depict the 1,300 year old *Ukai* festival. Ukai is practiced by master fisherman working from long wooden boats. Each fisherman leads about a dozen cormorant birds on leashes who swim alongside the boat and dive under the water to catch fish by swallowing them whole. The fish are kept in a special pouch in the cormorant's throat to be retrieved later and are prevented from being swallowed by a snare around the bird's neck. Each boat carries a large fire to provide light for the boatmen to steer and the birds to fish by.



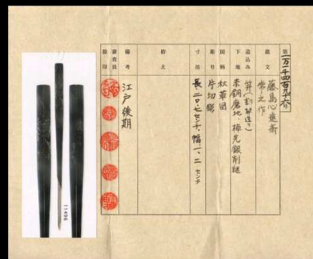
(Tsune) 常
(yuki) 之
(saku) 作



藤 (Fuji)
島 (shima)
心 (Shin)
遠 (en)
齋 (sai)

A kogai is a thick blunt needle that was primarily used as a hair arranging tool by the samurai.

It is fastened into a special notch built inside the *saya* (scabbard) and drawn through the 'bumpy' hole in the *tsuba*.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity

Wari kôgai (hair pick) crafted by *Fujishima Shin'ensai Tsuneyuki*
Autumn leaves design





Koshirae bag



ITEM# UJWA249

A YASUSADA '2-BODY CUTTING TEST' Ô-WAKIZASHI SIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA, 1661~1662)

Swordsmith:	<i>Yamato no Kami Yasusada (first generation, ubu-nakago)</i>
Gold inlay (test):	<i>Futatsu-dô setsudan Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa + kaô</i>
Measurements:	Length: 56.9cm Curvature: 1.3cm Moto-haba: 3.02cm
Jihada:	<i>Ko-itame with ji-nie, masame-hada in shinogi-ji, deep chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Bright gunome-midare with extra-long ashi, wide yakiba</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Hozon (designated as Worthy of Conservation)
Fujishiro:	Jô-saku (a superior smith)
Cutting ability:	Ryô-Wazamono (maker of highly sharp swords)
Included:	Shirasaya, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Our next sword is by one of the most recognizable names of the Shinto period, *Yamato no Kami Yasusada*. This long and authoritative *ô-wakizashi* sports a vibrant *gunome-midare* hamon with spectacular *ashi* bursting over its wide *yakiba* - elements synonymous with this superior swordsmith. The *jihada* is well-forged with clear *itame-hada*, impressive tunnels of *chikei* and shining *ji-nie*. Rather fittingly, the beautiful *shirasaya* mirrors the *itame* grain pattern in the steel.

Yasusada gained great fame for the remarkable sharpness of his swords earning himself the rank of *ryô-wazamono*. On the *ura* (reverse) side of the *nakago*, in gold inlay, reads the following:
On 14th day in the first month in the second year of Kanbun era (January 14, 1662), this sword severed through two bodies (in one stroke). Test performed by Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa + monogram.



Saki-kasane: 3.8mm

Moto-kasane: 6.4mm

Omosa: 560g

Kissaki: 2.47cm

Saki-haba: 1.79cm

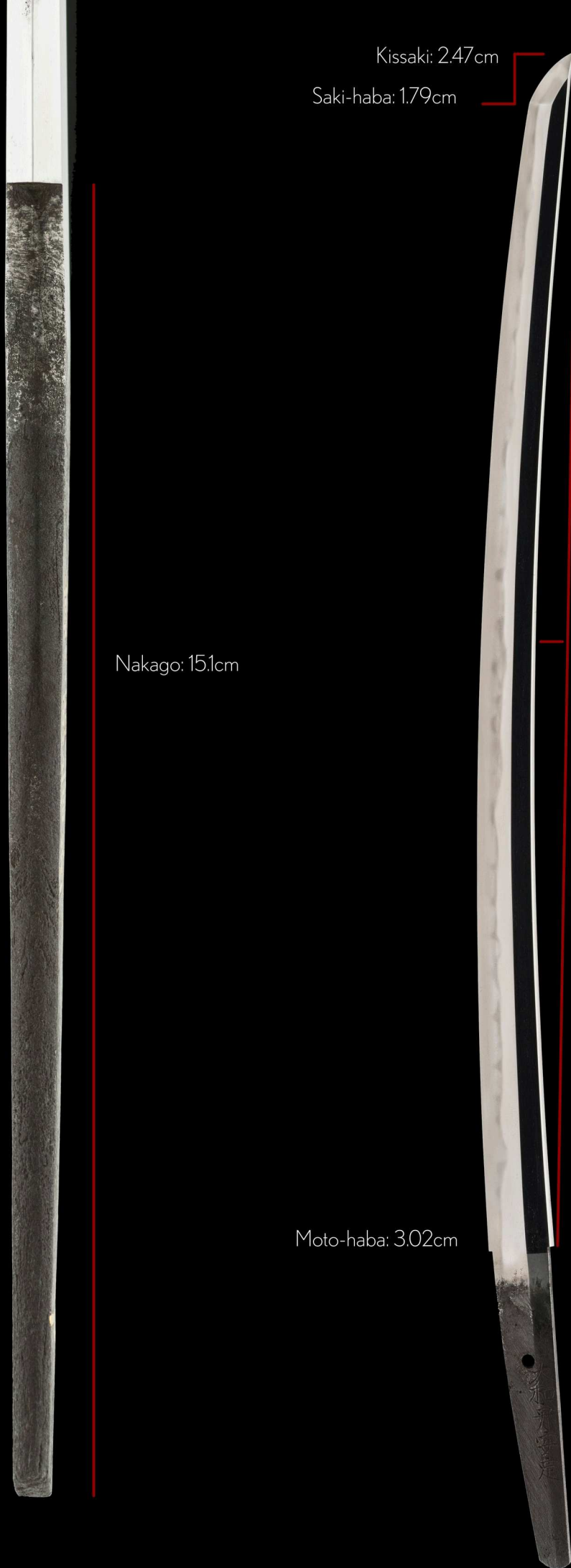
Nakago: 15.1cm

Moto-haba: 3.02cm

Nagasa: 56.9cm

Sori: 1.30cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



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

Another theory is that he travelled to *Edo* (Tokyo) by way of the *Kishû Ishido School*. Yasusada flourished during the *Kanbun era* (1661~1673) and forged a close relationship with grandmaster sword tester *Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa*.

Fujishiro ranks Yasusada as *jô-saku* (a superior swordsmith) and is rightfully rated *ryô-wazamono* for the highly effective cutting ability of his excellent swords.

This long and mighty two-body cutting tested *o-wakizashi* features a well-crafted dense *itame-hada* with plenty of *chikei* to admire.





Location: *Musashi* (resident of Edo)

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

Swordsmith: *Yasusada* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

o-sujikai-yasurime (greatly slanting file marks)

大 (Ya)

和 (mato, no)

守 (Kami)

安 (Yasu)

定 (sada)

*Kanbun ninen shôgatsu jûyokka, futatsu-dô setsudan
Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa + kaô*

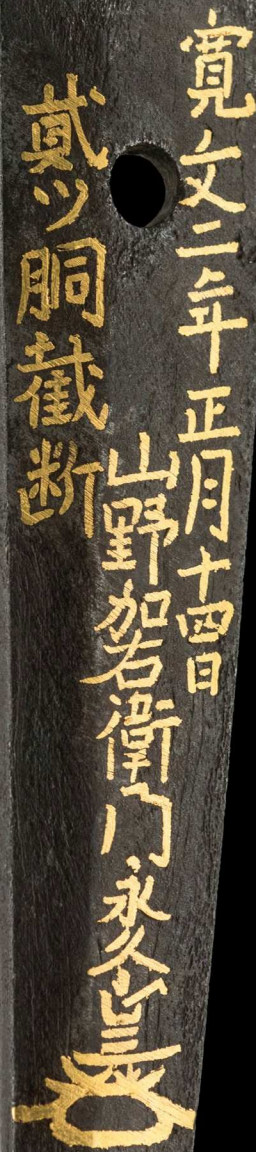
On the 14th day in the first month in the second year of Kanbun era (January 14, 1662), this sword severed through two bodies (in one stroke). Test performed by Yamano Ka'emon Nagahisa + monogram



寛 (Kan)
文 (bun)
二 (ni)
年 (nen)
正 (shô)
月 (gatsu)
十 (jû)
四 (yo)
日 (kka)

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

寛文二年正月十四日
山野加右衛門永久
貳ツ洞截断







Vibrant *gunome-midare hamon* with
a wide *yakiba* (hardened edge).

Classic Yasusada.



wide *yakiba*



Long *ashi* erupt like geysers
towards the cutting edge.

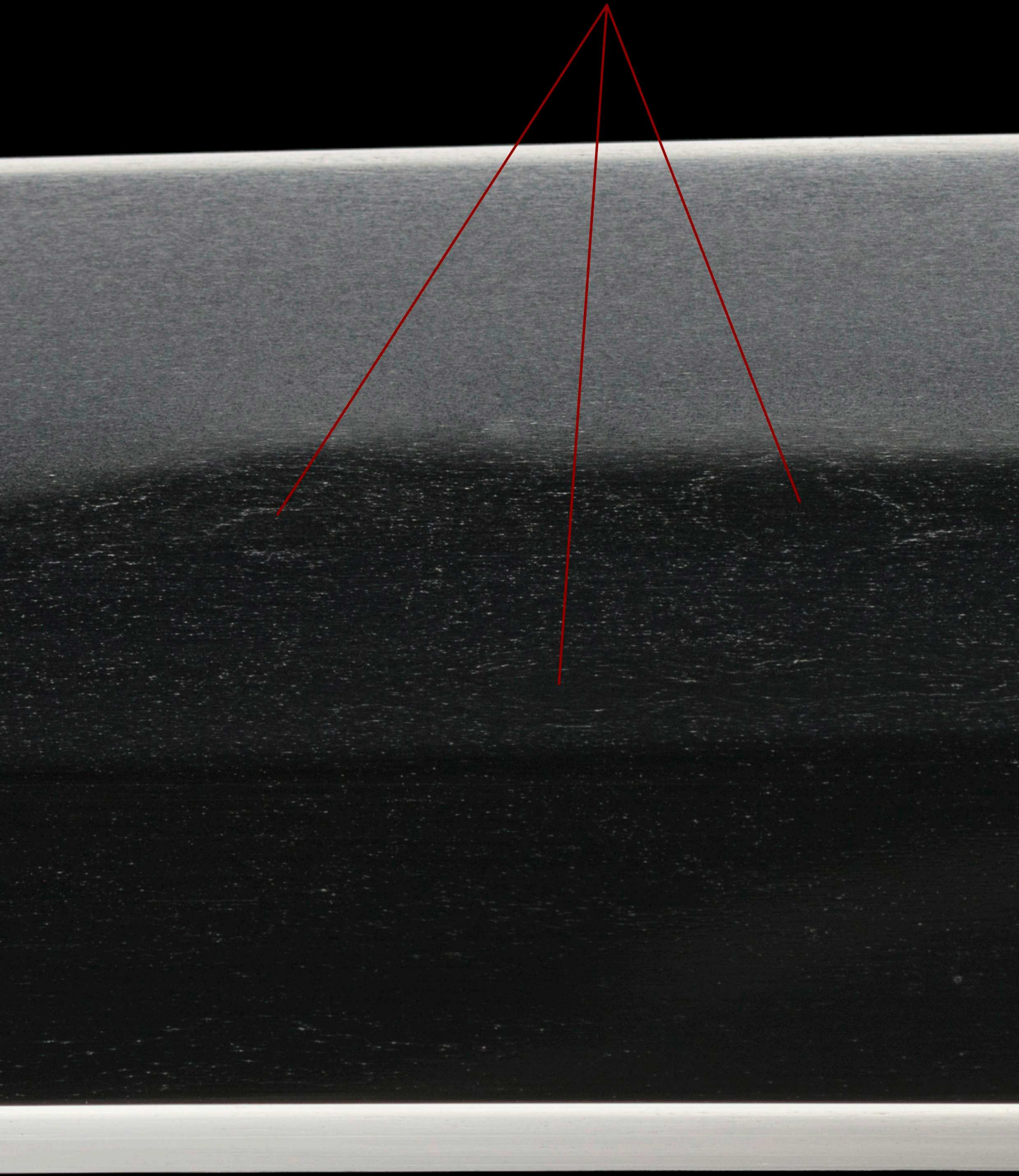


Impressive tunnels of *chikei*
burrowing within the *jihada*.



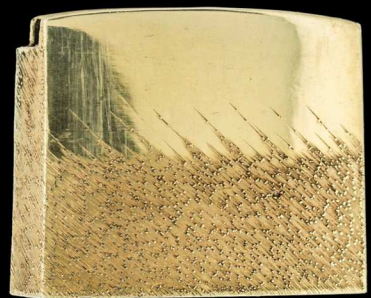
Battle scars, *kirikomi*.

A close-up view of expertly forged *itame-hada* (plank grain).





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold-wrapped *habaki*
with diagonal file marks



The beautifully crafted shirasaya mirrors the *itame-hada* grain pattern seen in the *jihada*.



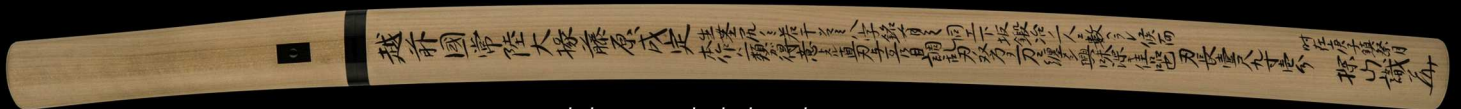
Feel the energy.

Submit, Repair, Sell & Create!

Unique Japan offers a *full-service menu* to assist clients with their Japanese swords and fittings. All services are performed in Japan with top quality craftsmen and women.

Services include (non exhaustive):

- * NBTHK and NTHK-NPO *shinsa* certification (swords and fittings)
- * polishing for all types of Japanese swords (standard to Jûyô-level quality polish)
- * *shirasaya* making (standard to high quality with horn fittings)
- * *habaki* making (gold, silver, copper in most any design pattern)
- * fix wobbly koshirae, repair cracked scabbards, new lacquer work, etc.
- * *otoshi* presentation boxes for your beautiful *tsuba*, *menuki*, *fuch-kashira*, etc.
- * *tsuka-maki* (re-wrap your hilts in silk or leather in most any colour, weave or braid)
- * *oshigata* (sword/hamon tracing on a scroll with a large choice of background)
- * *sayagaki* services with *Tanobe-sensei* (qualifying conditions apply)
- * sword boxes with *hakogaki* (with humidifying options for dry climates)
- * custom koshirae projects (see separate page)
- * sell your sword(s) on consignment (qualifying conditions apply)



polish, sayagaki, hakogaki



tsuka-maki



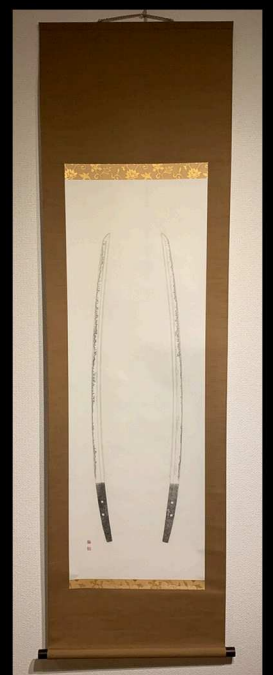
All NBTHK and NTHK-NPO Shinsa authentication services



habaki creations



otoshi boxes



oshigata scrolls



ITEM# UJWA126

A SUKESADA WAKIZASHI

SIGNED & DATED, LATE MUROMACHI PERIOD (EISHÔ ERA: AUGUST 1514)

Swordsmith:	<i>Bishû Osafune Sukesada (ubu nakago)</i>
Dated:	<i>On a day in the eighth month during the 11th year of Eishô era</i>
Measurements:	Length: 51.1cm Curvature: 1.5cm Motohaba: 2.72cm
Jihada:	<i>Ko-itame hada</i>
Hamon:	<i>Koshibiraki gunome midare with sunagashi</i>
Certificate #1-5:	NTHK Kanteisho (<i>sword, tsuba, kôgai, kozuka, koshirae designated as Authentic</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, koshirae, bags, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Signed and dated to *August 1514* (11th year of Eishô era), this charming wakizashi by swordsmith *Bishû Osafune Sukesada* was crafted during the late *Muromachi* period - a time of continuous upheaval and war. The demand for swords was high and they needed to have excellent cutting ability. As such, many swords from this time period have survived to this day.

This wakizashi has a long *bo-hi* (groove) with deep *saki-sori* (strong curvature at the top of the blade), consistent for its time period. The *hamon* is classic *Sue-Bizen* with a *koshibiraki gunome midare* - an eye-catching series of valleys that pop out from the blade. Sword is housed in a beautiful set of *koshirae* (fittings) with a signed landscape *tsuba* by *Fushimi Kanie* and that has both a *kozuka* (utility knife) and *kogai* (hair pick). The chocolate brown coloured *saya* (scabbard) has gorgeous *ishime* (stone surface) lacquer work. A fine sword and koshirae to take care of.

Kissaki: 2.61cm

Saki-haba: 1.79cm

Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Nagasa: 51.1cm

Omosa: 440g

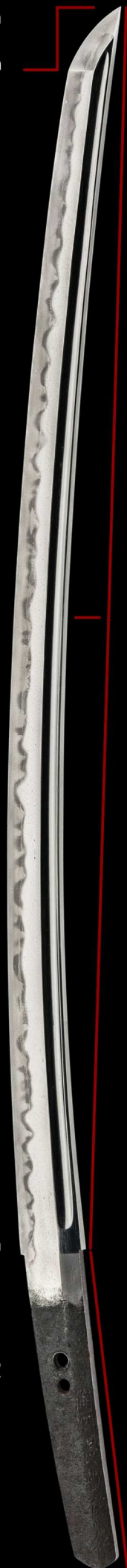
Sori: 1.50cm

Moto-haba: 2.72cm

Moto-kasane: 6.7mm

Mekugi-ana: 2

Nakago: 13.1cm



The *Sukesada* name spans over 60 generations and this blade carries all the qualities one would expect from the late Muromachi period.

Although technically a wakizashi with its cutting edge being 51cm, one must regard this sword as a shorter version of the atypical katana of the time, which was about 63cm. It was crafted for a warrior that demanded this length of sword to comfortably fight with.

Swords from this era were known as *katate-uchi* (made for one-handed use).



Ishikawa Sôsuke Sadatomo
(Ishikawa Hyôsuke Kazumitsu)
Battle of Shizu-ga-mine in 1583.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797~1861)





Location: *Bishû Province*

Village: *Osafune*

Swordsmith: *Sukesada*

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

katte-sagari-yasurime (gentle slope file marks)

備 (Bi)

州 (shû)

長 (Osa)

船 (funé)

祐 (Suke)

定 (sada)

作 (saku)

Eishô jûichinen hachigatsu hi

This sword has been dated to a day in the eighth month in the 11th year of *Eishô* era (August 1514)

(Ei) 永

(shô) 正

(jû) 十

(ichi) 一

(nen) 年

(hachi) 八

(gatsu) 月

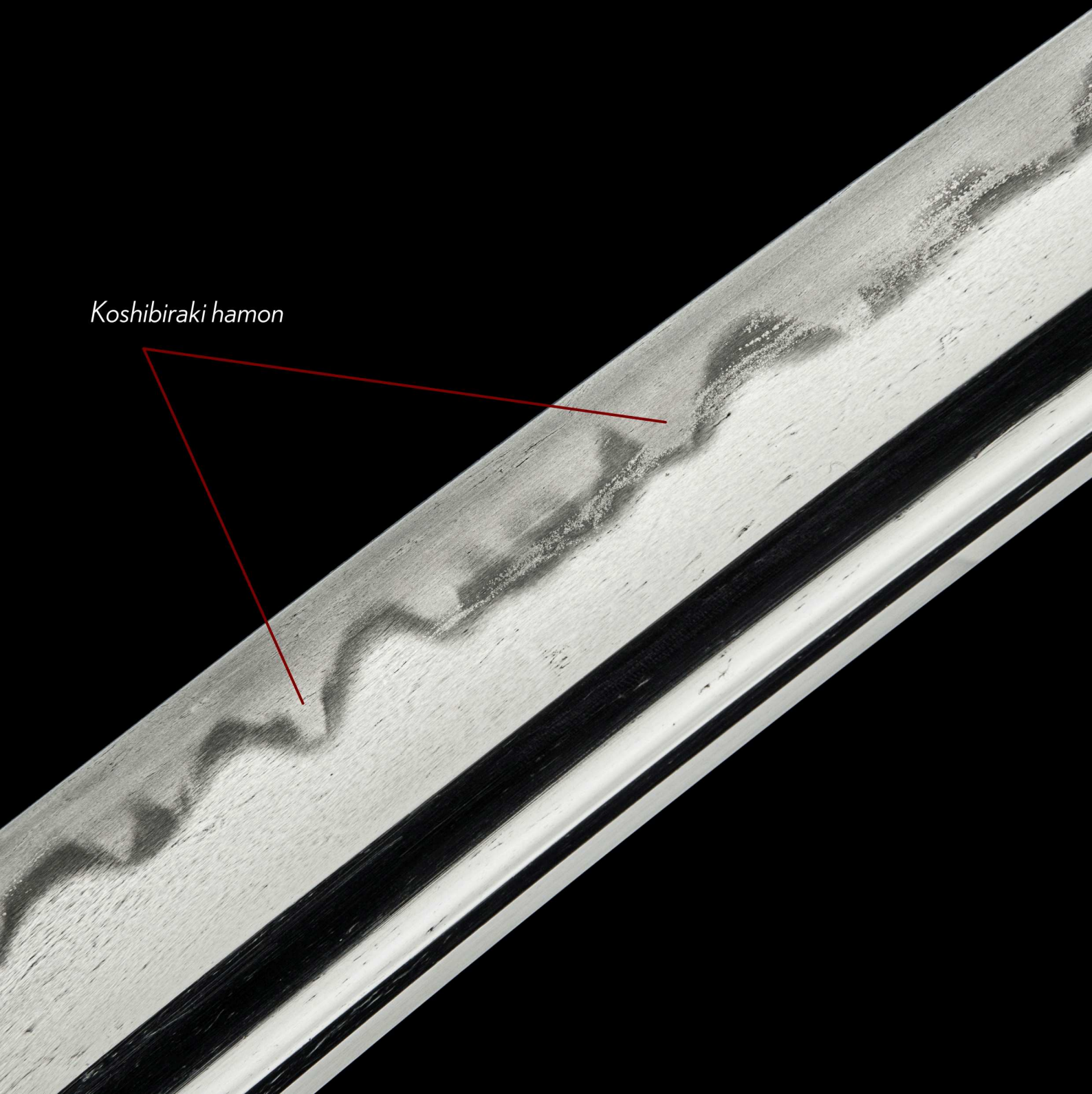
(hi) 日

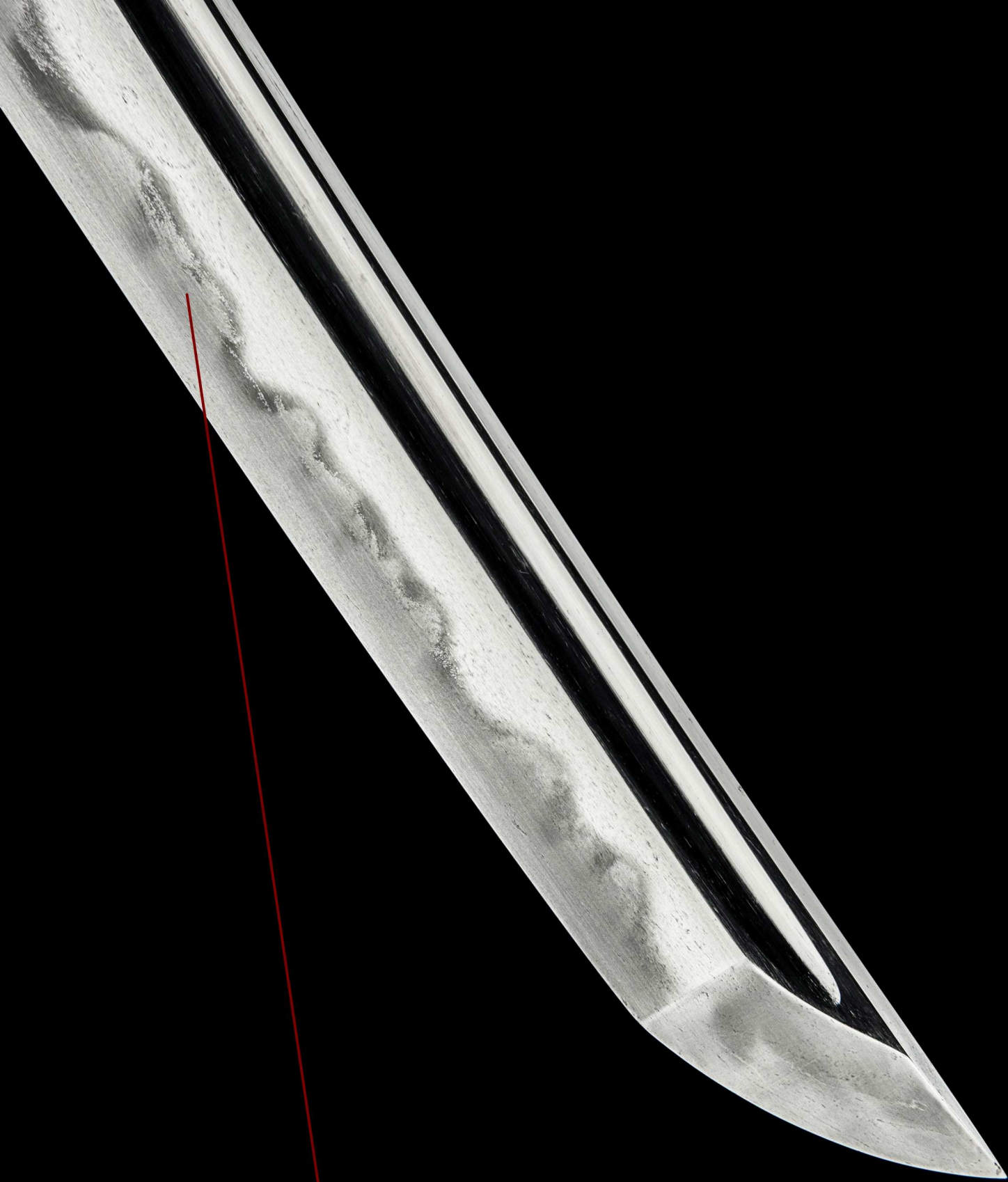


Koshi means 'waist'. This temper line is synonymous with the Bizen tradition. It widens like a valley towards the edge of the blade with gentle peaks.

The *koshi* areas of the hamon are before and after a peak.

Koshibiraki hamon





sweeping *sunagashi*
with visible *nie* crystals.

itame-hada (plank grain)





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



attractive copper *habaki*
with diagonal file marks

*Cha-ishime-ji-nuri saya
wakizashi-koshirae*
(茶石目地塗鞘脇指拵え)

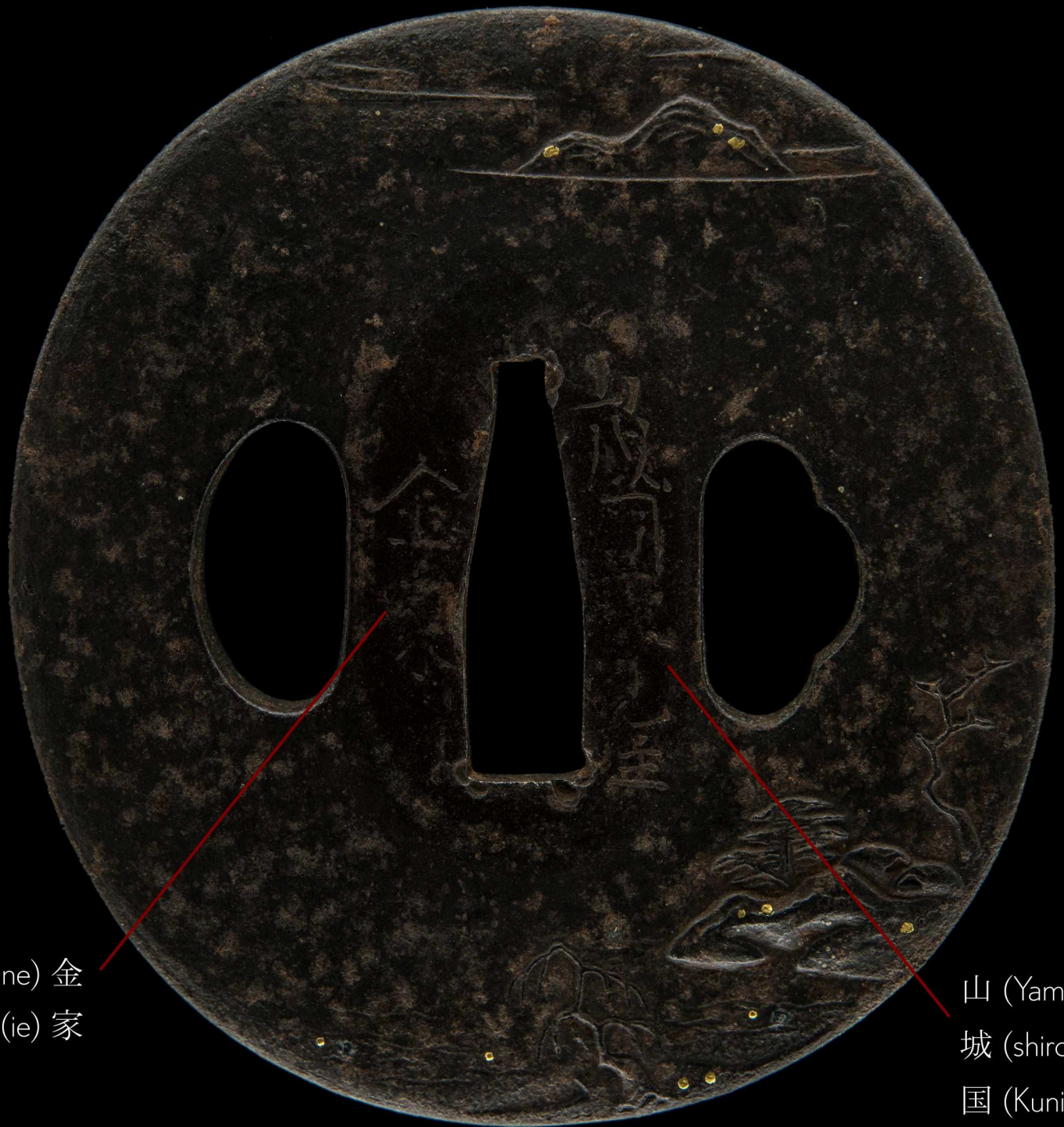
*Wakizashi-koshirae
lacquered in brown
with unique texture of
stone-surface*

Crafted during the
Modern period



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity

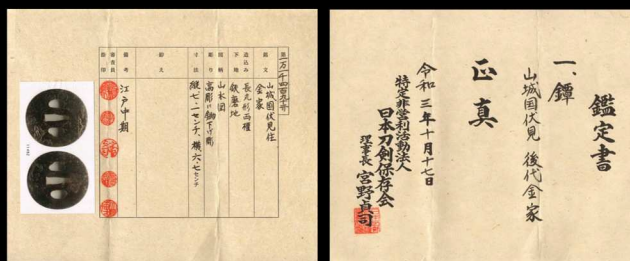
(Kane) 金
(ie) 家



山 (Yama)
城 (shiro, no)
国 (Kuni)
伏 (Fushi)
見 (mi)
住 (jū)

This polished iron *tsuba* of a natural landscape is the work of metalsmith *Kaneie* from *Fushimi* in *Yamashiro* province (Kyôto).

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





Nasu (eggplants)

kozuka (utility knife)

Kurikara (dragon swallowing a sword)

Hatsuyume is the *first dream* one has in the new year. The contents of such a dream would traditionally foretell the luck of the dreamer in the ensuing year.

It is considered to be particularly *good luck to dream of Mount Fuji, a hawk, and an eggplant*. This belief has been in place since the early Edo period.

One theory suggests that this combination is lucky because Mount Fuji is Japan's highest mountain, the hawk is a clever and strong bird, and the word for eggplant (*nasu* or *nasubi*) suggests achieving something *great* (*nasu*).

Another theory suggests that this combination arose because Mount Fuji, falconry, and early eggplants were favourites of the shogun *Tokugawa Iyasu*.



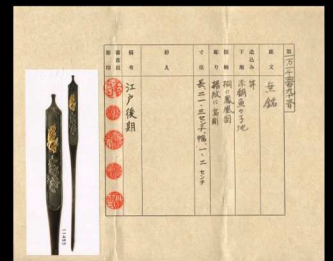
The menuki (ornamental grips) portray *bagu no zu* (horse stirrups).





A *kogai* is a thick blunt needle that was primarily used as a hair arranging tool by the samurai. It is fastened into a special notch built inside the *saya* (scabbard).

This kogai has been attributed to *Umetada Narikazu* who worked during the late Edo period. The base material is *shakudô* and contains a design of a rising *phoenix* and *kiri-mon* (paulownia).



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



A successful culture understands that it needs to burn off the old in order to rejuvenate and become born again.

The old phoenix burns to make way for the new phoenix to emerge.





A Kanetaka Katana

Early Edo period, circa 1624~1644
Mino province

Length: 67.4cm
NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate
3 x NTHK-NPO certificates

SOLD, reference only



Saki-kasane: 5.7mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 4.25cm

Saki-haba: 2.46cm

Nagasa: 67.4cm

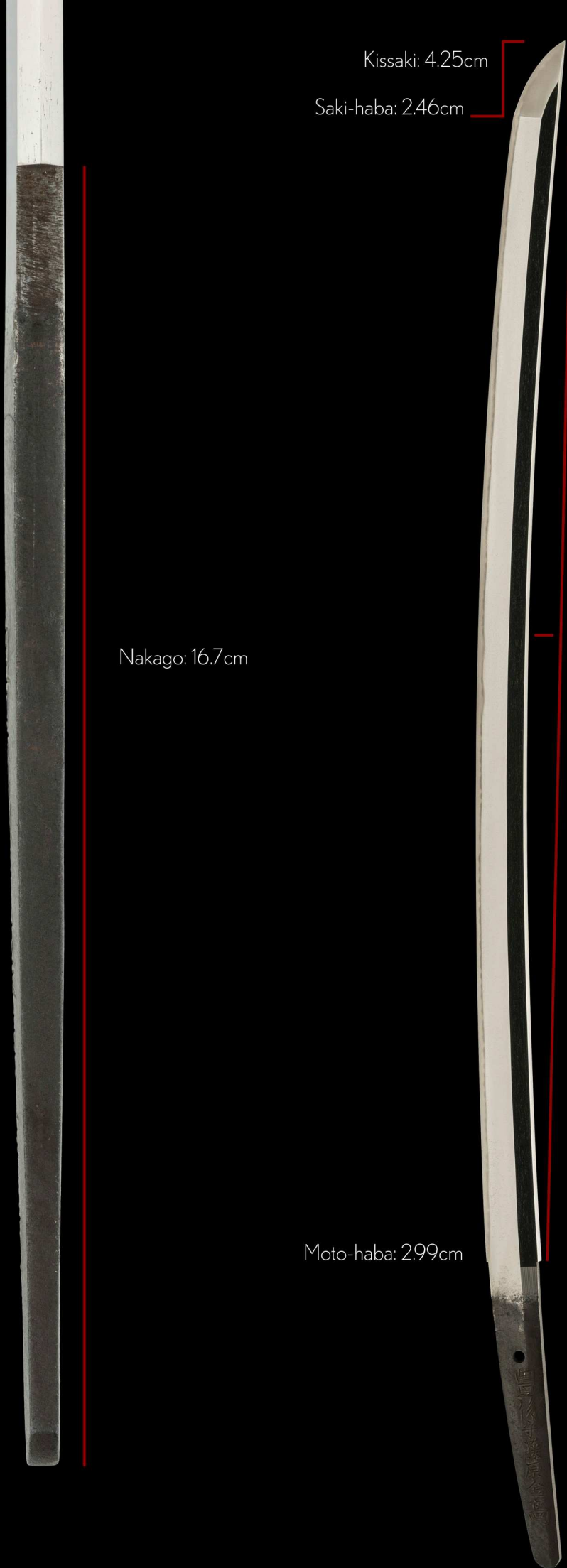
Nakago: 16.7cm

Sori: 1.00cm

Omosa: 760g

Moto-haba: 2.99cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



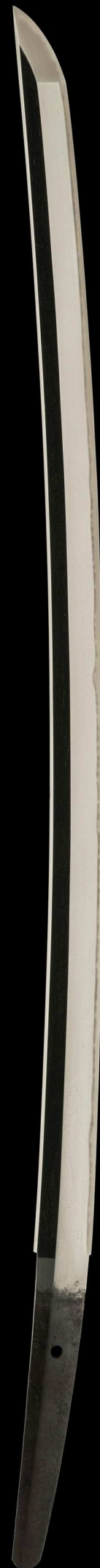
The Kanetaka line began with *Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka* who lived in *Mino province* (modern-day Gifu prefecture) during the *Bunroku era* (1592-1596).

This katana was crafted during the *Kan'ei era* (1624-1644) by the first of his four sons that also signed swords with the inscription *Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka*.

This sword carries all the known attributes of *shodai* (first generation) Kanetaka: a wide *mihaba* (width), an elongated *kissaki* (tip), with a beautiful *jihada* (sword skin) that features *itame* (plank grain) mixed with *mokume* (rounded burl grain) and *nagare* (wavy grain), *ji-nie* (a glimmering steel) *togari gunome-midare* (a wavy temper line with random areas that 'peak' or are 'pointed').

Fujishiro rated Kanetaka a respectable *chû-jôsaku* (an above average swordsmith).

A gorgeous set of *koshirae* (fittings) preserved from the late Edo period accompanies the sword. The *tsuba* depicts the centuries old fairy tale of *Urashima Tarô* while the signed *fuchi-kashira* captures the beauty and providence of sparrows in a bamboo grove. The unique and complex lacquer work on the *saya* (scabbard) employs a technique that has largely been lost during these modern times.





Location: *Mino Province*

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

Family name: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Kanetaka* (1st/2nd generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

豊 (Bun)

後 (go, no)

守 (Kami)

藤 (Fuji)

原 (wara)

金 (Kane)

高 (taka)

特 保
15200301



No. 148083



鑑定書

長二尺二寸一分

一 刀 銘 豊 後 守 藤 原 金 高

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成十五年二月二十七日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 15th year of Heisei (2003), February 27th

One, Katana

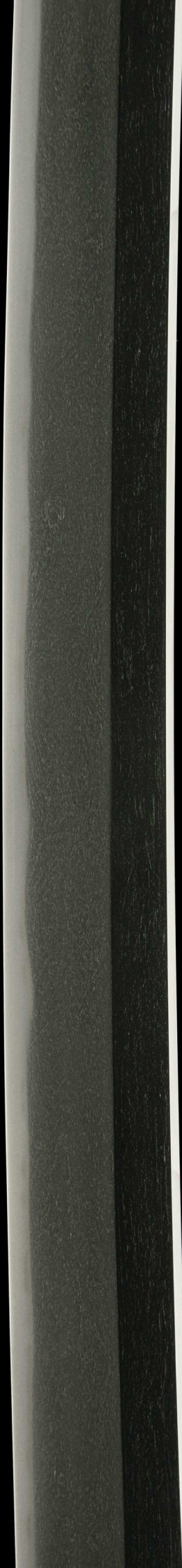
Mei (signature)

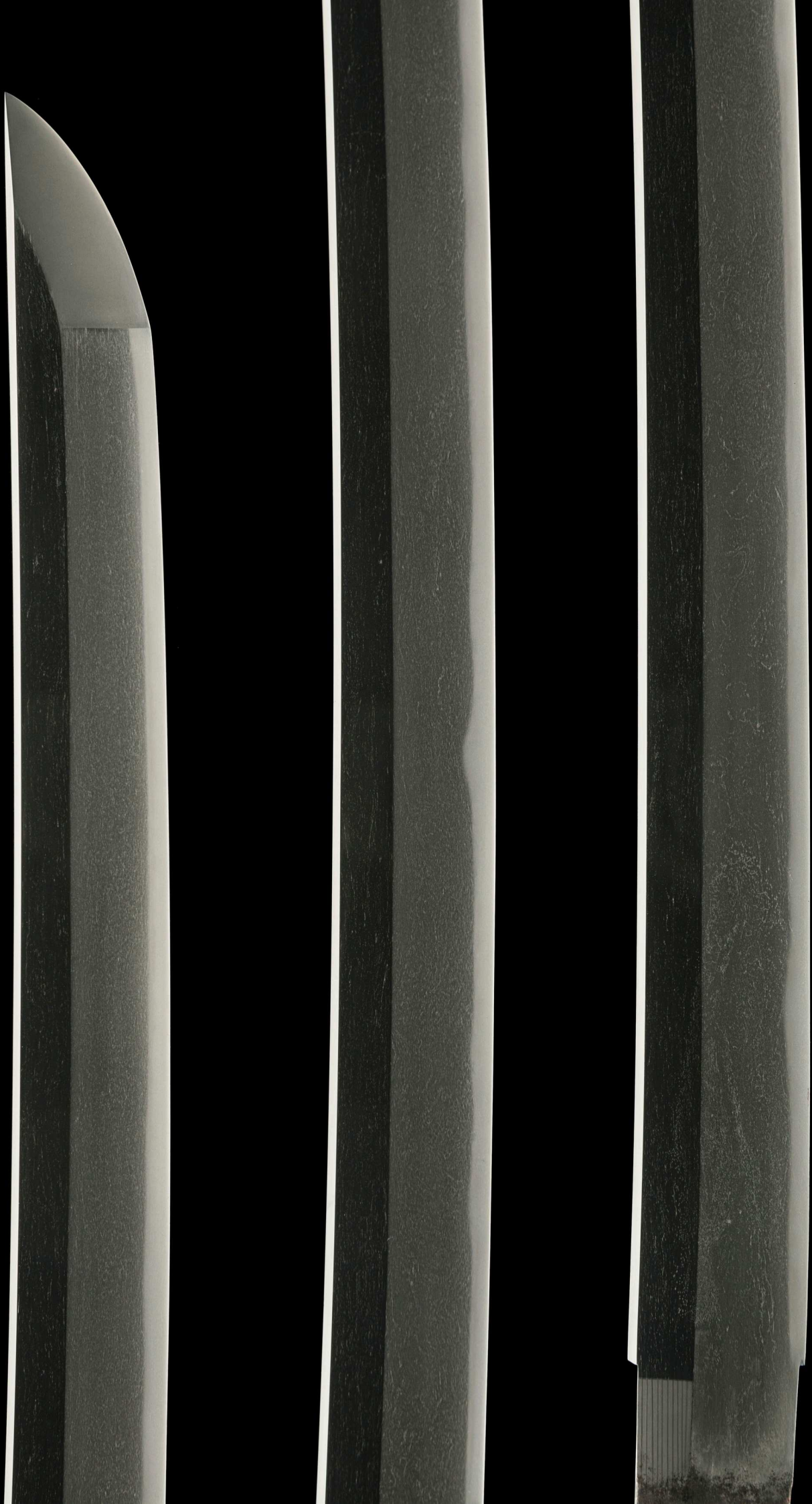
Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka

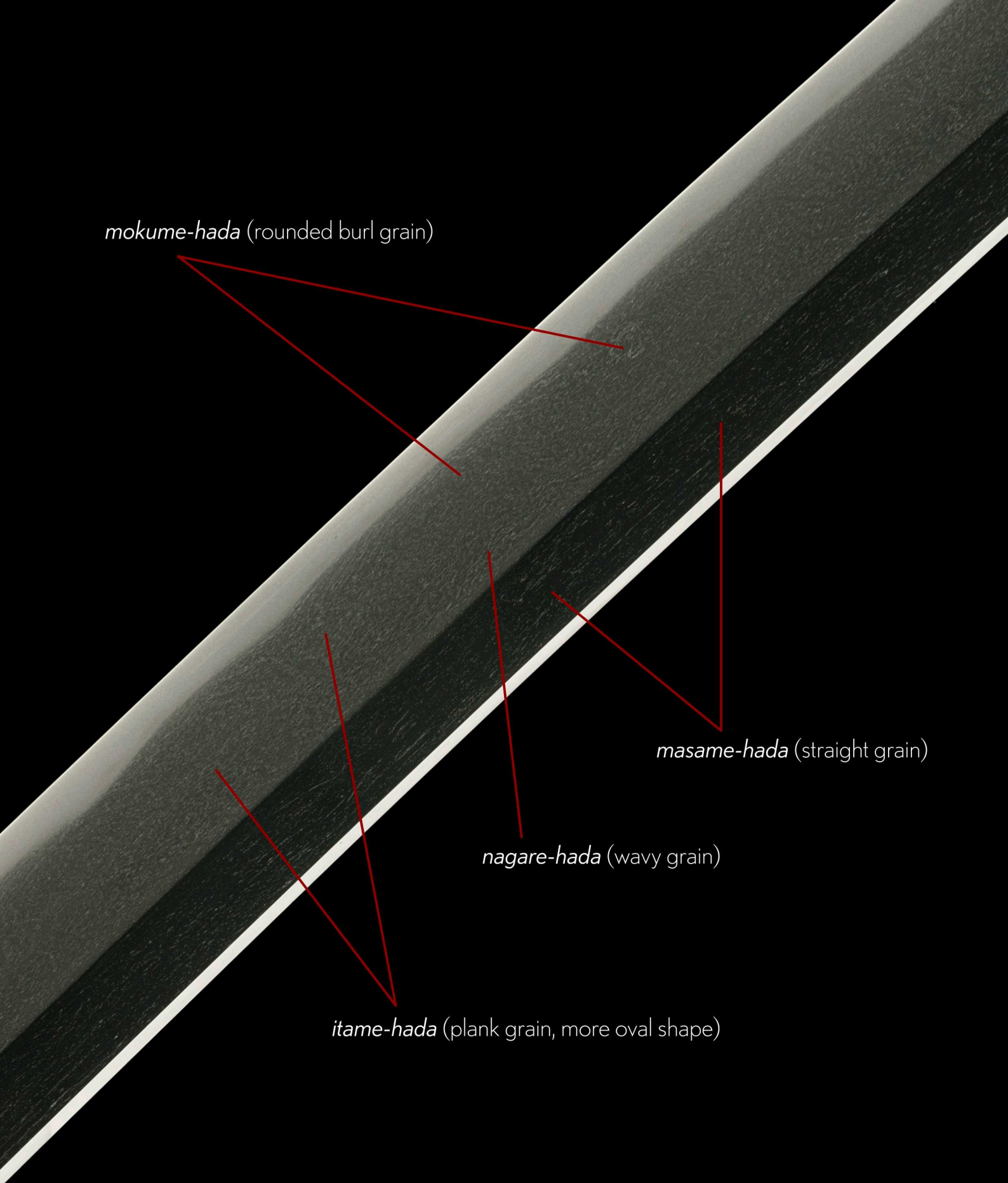
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 2-sun 1-bu (67.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)








mokume-hada (rounded burl grain)

masame-hada (straight grain)

nagare-hada (wavy grain)

itame-hada (plank grain, more oval shape)

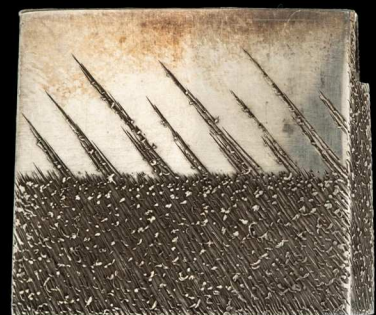
Different types of unique grain patterns found in the steel of the sword that is influenced by the method by which the smith hand-folded the steel.

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is curved and shows a dark, textured surface with a prominent, light-colored hamon (edge line) that has a pointed, 'ko-gunome' pattern. The lighting highlights the texture and the sharp edge of the blade.

*A ko-gunome hamon with togari
(pointed) accents along the blade.*



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

*Shuguro-kawari-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(朱黒変塗鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in red and black
with unique texture*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



Gorgeous woodgrain style lacquer work with *aoi-gai* (mother-of-pearl) accents.

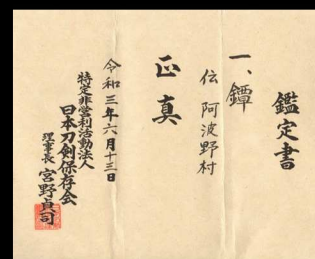




This beautiful *tsuba* (guard) was crafted by the *Nomura school* from *Awa province*. It was made using the prized bullion called *shakudô* (~95% copper, 5% gold) and features a sandy finish and a rim that shines in shakudô.

The artwork features the final scene from the centuries old Japanese fairy tale of *Urashima Tarô* with the recently opened *tamatebako* (jewelled box).

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





Urashima Tarô and princess of Horai, by Matsuki Heikichi (1899)

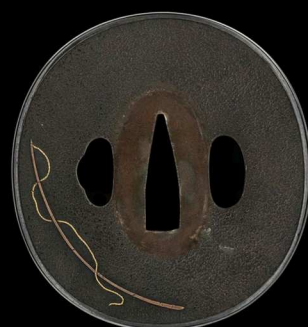
Urashima Tarô

One day a young fisherman named *Urashima Tarô* is fishing when he notices a group of children torturing a small turtle. Tarô saves it and lets it go back to the sea. The next day, a huge turtle approaches him and tells him that the small turtle he had saved is the daughter of the Emperor of the Sea, *Ryûjin*, who wants to see him to thank him. The turtle magically gives Tarô gills and brings him to the bottom of the sea, to the Palace of the Dragon God (*Ryûgû-jô*). There he meets the Emperor and the small turtle, who was now a lovely princess, *Otohime*. On each of the four sides of the palace it is a different season.

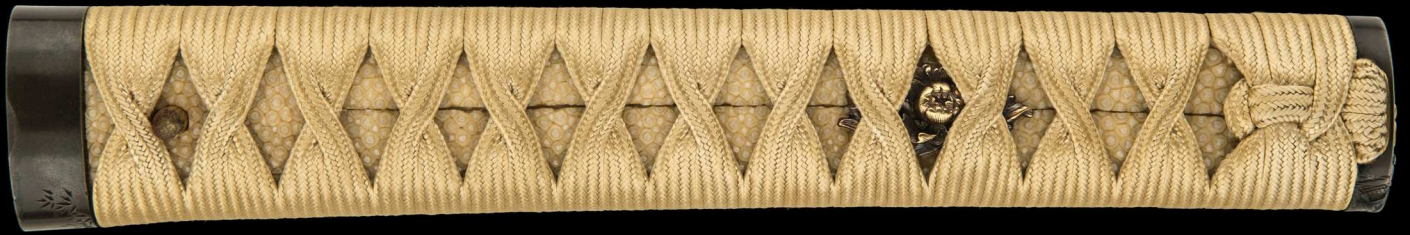
Tarô stays there with Otohime for three days, but soon wants to go back to his village and see his ageing mother, so he requests permission to leave. The princess says she is sorry to see him go, but wishes him well and gives him a mysterious box called *tamatebako* which will protect him from harm but which she tells him never to open. Tarô grabs the box, jumps on the back of the same turtle that had brought him there, and soon is at the seashore.

When he goes home, everything has changed. His home is gone, his mother has vanished, and the people he knew are nowhere to be seen. He asks if anybody knows a man called Urashima Tarô. They answer that they had heard someone of that name had vanished at sea long ago. He discovers that 300 years have passed since the day he left for the bottom of the sea.

Struck by grief, he absent-mindedly opens the box the princess had given him, from which bursts forth a cloud of white smoke. He is suddenly aged, his beard long and white, and his back bent. From the sea comes the sad, sweet voice of the princess: "*I told you not to open that box. In it was your old age...*"



reverse side of tsuba
(his fishing rod)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) carry a *shisa lion* and *peony* theme.





(Tsune) 常

(nao) 直

(kaô) 花押



The warrior, like bamboo, is ever ready for action
-Kensho Furuya

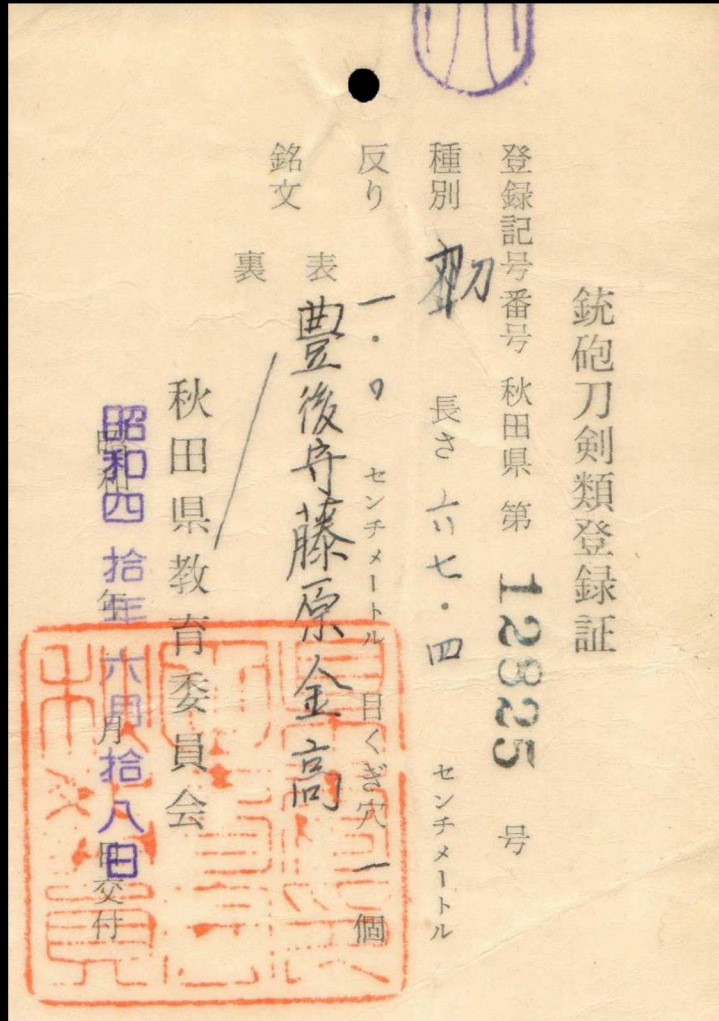
Kanteisho certificate

The Japanese admire bamboo for its durability, strength, but most importantly its flexibility. On samurai sword fitting artwork, depictions of tigers can be seen alongside bamboo. The meaning is a significant one: the tiger pounces with commitment, its determination is wildly impressive, yet in order to be an effective predator, it needs to be flexible as situations can shift quickly.

Sparrows are believed to symbolise joy, community, teamwork, protection, simplicity, hard work or self-worth.

They are an auspicious bird, thought to bring good fortune. This *fuchi-kashira* by *Tsunenao* captures the quintessentially Japanese scenes of sparrows within a bamboo grove relaying a peaceful, hard-working, prosperous image.

The fuchi-kashira was reviewed by the NTHK-NPO and awarded *Kanteisho* (certificate of authenticity) dating the piece to the late Edo period (1780~1867).



Torokusho
(registration card for guns and swords)

No. 12825, issued by Akita Prefecture

Classification
Katana

Blade length
67.4 cm

Curvature
1.0 cm

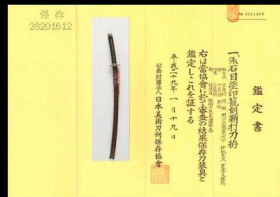
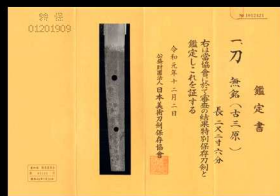
Signature
Front: Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka
Back: -

Registered by the Board of Education of Akita Prefecture
On 18th June, Shôwa 46 (1971)



Congratulations Reid.

Warm regards,
Pablo



A Ko-Mihara Katana
Nambokuchô period, circa 1356~1392
Bingo province

Length: 68.5cm
NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate
NBTHK Hozon certificate
2 x NTHK-NPO certificates

SOLD, reference only



Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Moto-kasane: 6.6mm

Kissaki: 3.20cm
Saki-haba: 2.00cm

Nagasa: 68.5cm

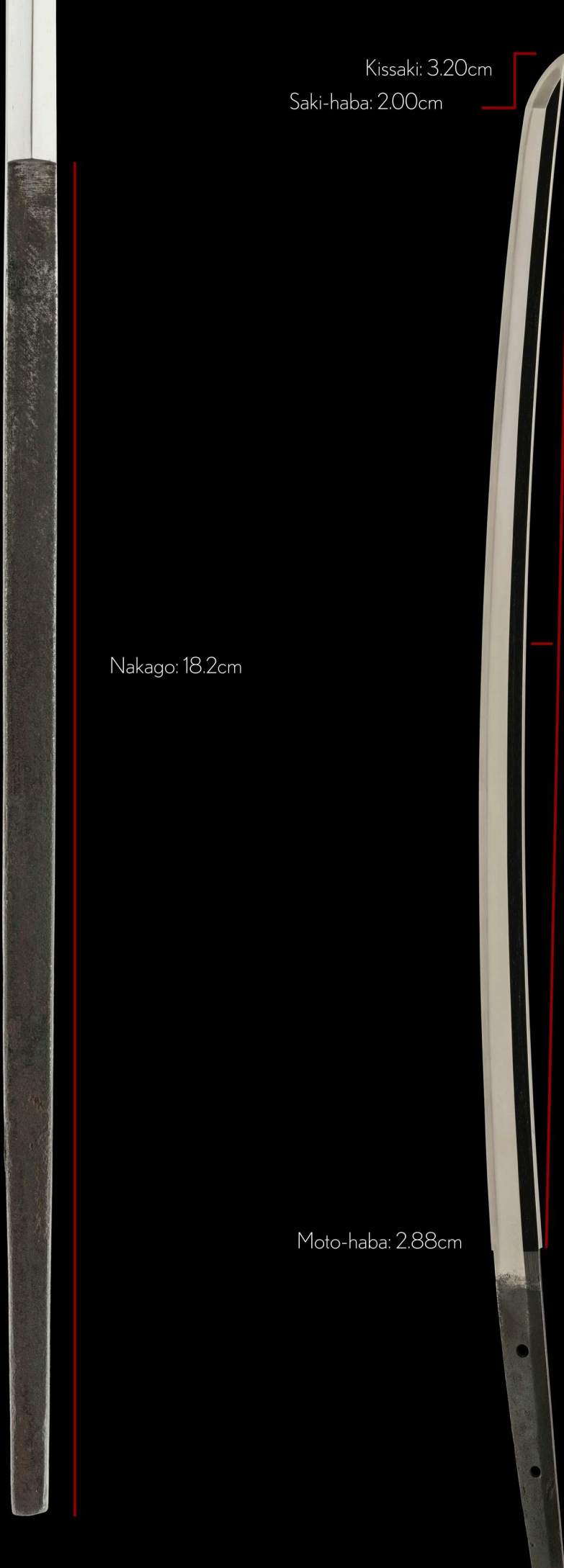
Nakago: 18.2cm

Sori: 1.60cm

Omosa: 660g

Moto-haba: 2.88cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



The *Mihara school* derives its name from a town called *Mihara* in Bingo province, which is today the eastern part of *Hiroshima* province. The school was founded by swordsmith *Masaie* and was active starting from the *Showa* era (1312~1317) at the end of the *Kamakura* period through to the end of the *Muromachi* period (~1600).

The *Yamato* tradition is distinctly recognizable in their workmanship. The school is divided in three terms: smiths active through to the Nambokuchō period are called *Ko-Mihara*. Early Muromachi period work is called *Chū-Mihara* and late Muromachi period is *Sue-Mihara*.

This katana has been judged to be from the *Ko-Mihara* school and certified NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon. The robust and powerful shape of the sword with a fairly broad *kissaki* (tip) is typical of the Nambokuchō period and would have originally been over 80cm in length.

The beautiful jihada is a mixture of *ko-mokume* (rounded burl grain) and *o-hada* and plentiful streaks of *chikei*. The hamon is a bright *chū-suguha* (straight) with long, impressive lines of *kinsuji*.





This sword was once a long tachi made in the *Nambokuchô period*. In approximately the late *Muromachi period* (1500s), it was greatly shortened to its *ô-suriage nakago* thus losing any signature on the blade (if there was one).

The shortening procedure was carefully done and the patina of *nakago* is even and well-kept.



特 保
01201909

No 1012421



鑑定書

一 刀 無 銘 (古三原)

長二尺二寸六分

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

令和元年十二月二日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



愛知県 教育委員会
第 45120 号
昭和48年7月20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

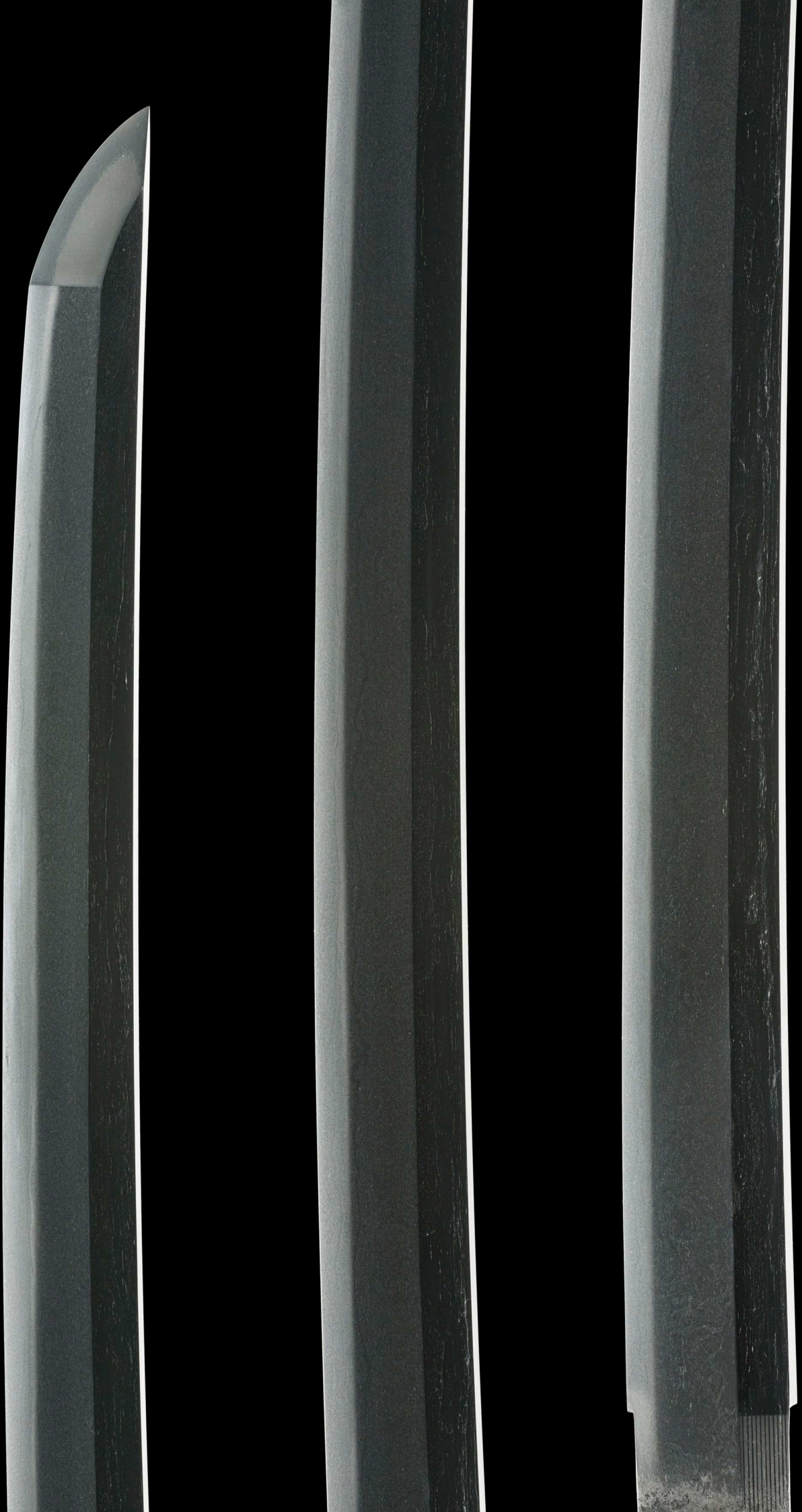
Issued in the 1st year of Reiwa (2019), December 2nd


One, Katana

Mumei (unsigned)
Ko-Mihara

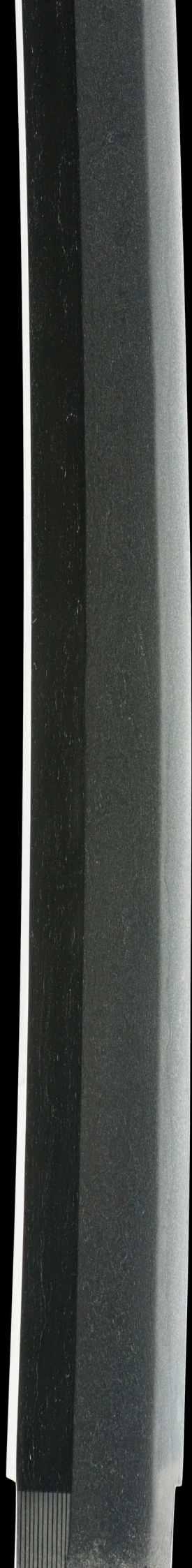
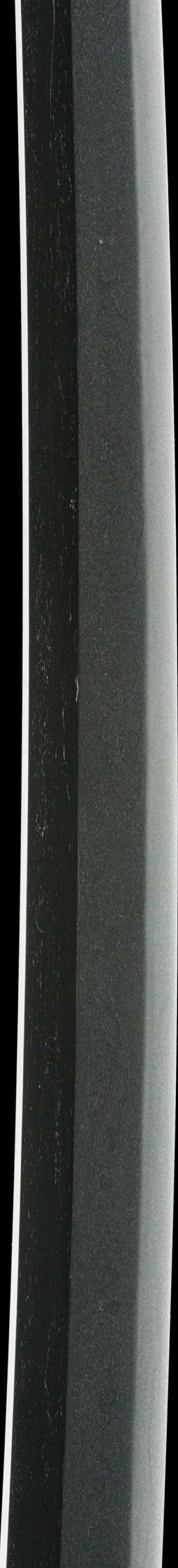
Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-sun 6-bu (68.5cm)

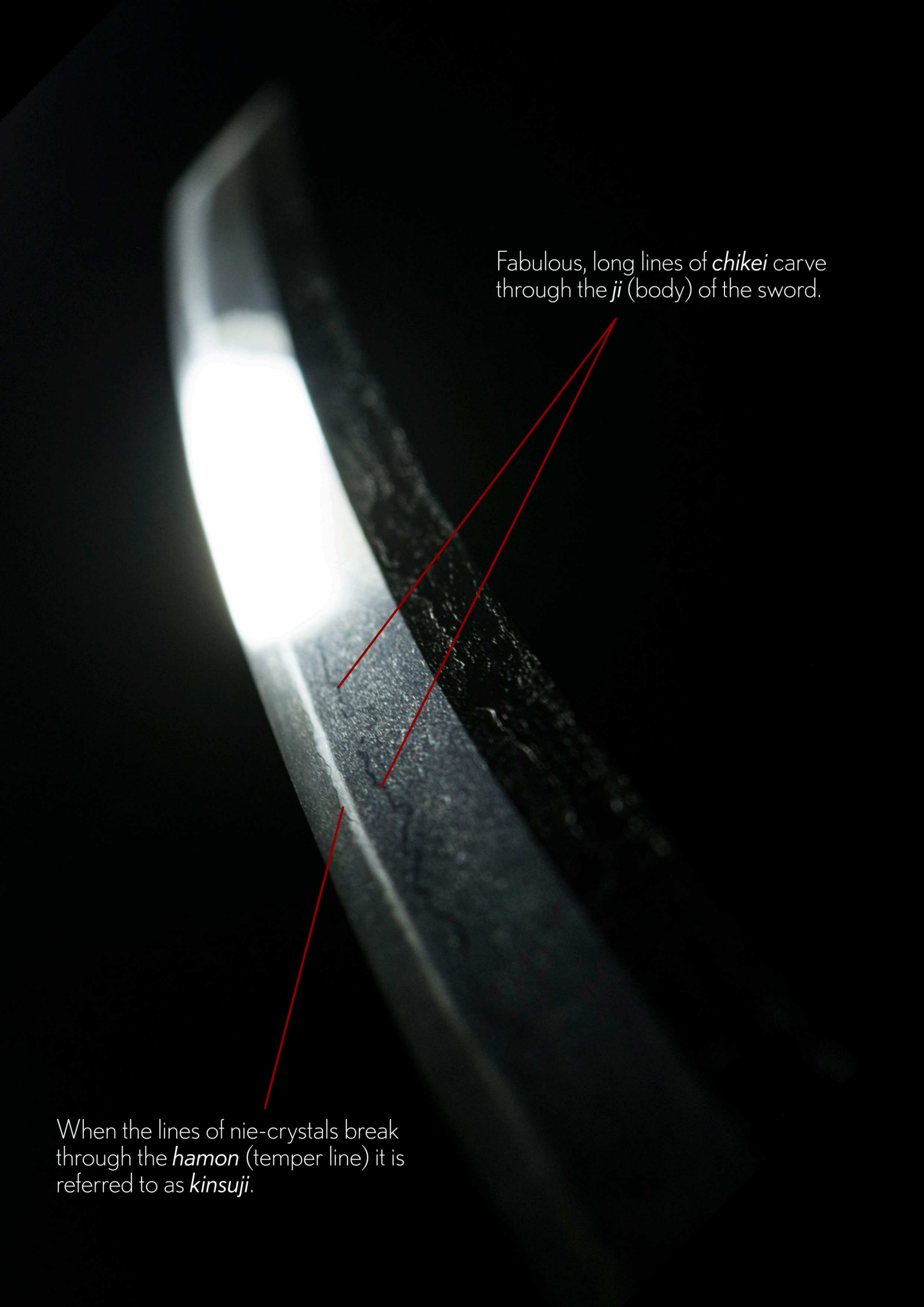
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





A close-up of the *jihada*, note the skilfully forged steel that speaks 700 years of history.



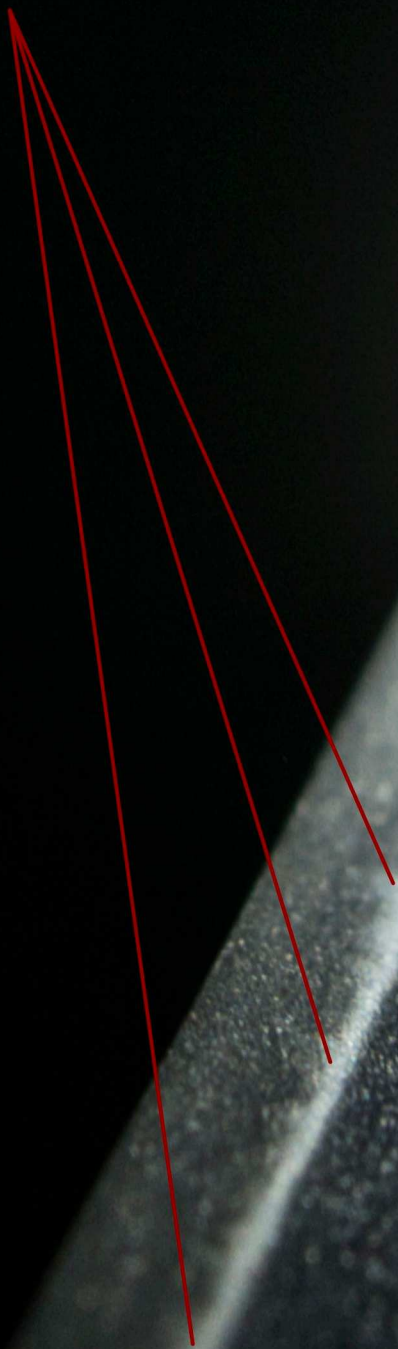
A close-up, low-angle photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is illuminated from the left, highlighting its metallic texture and the intricate patterns of the chikei and kinsuji. Three red lines originate from the text blocks and point to specific features on the blade: one points to the chikei pattern, another to the kinsuji pattern, and a third to the hamon line.

Fabulous, long lines of *chikei* carve through the *ji* (body) of the sword.

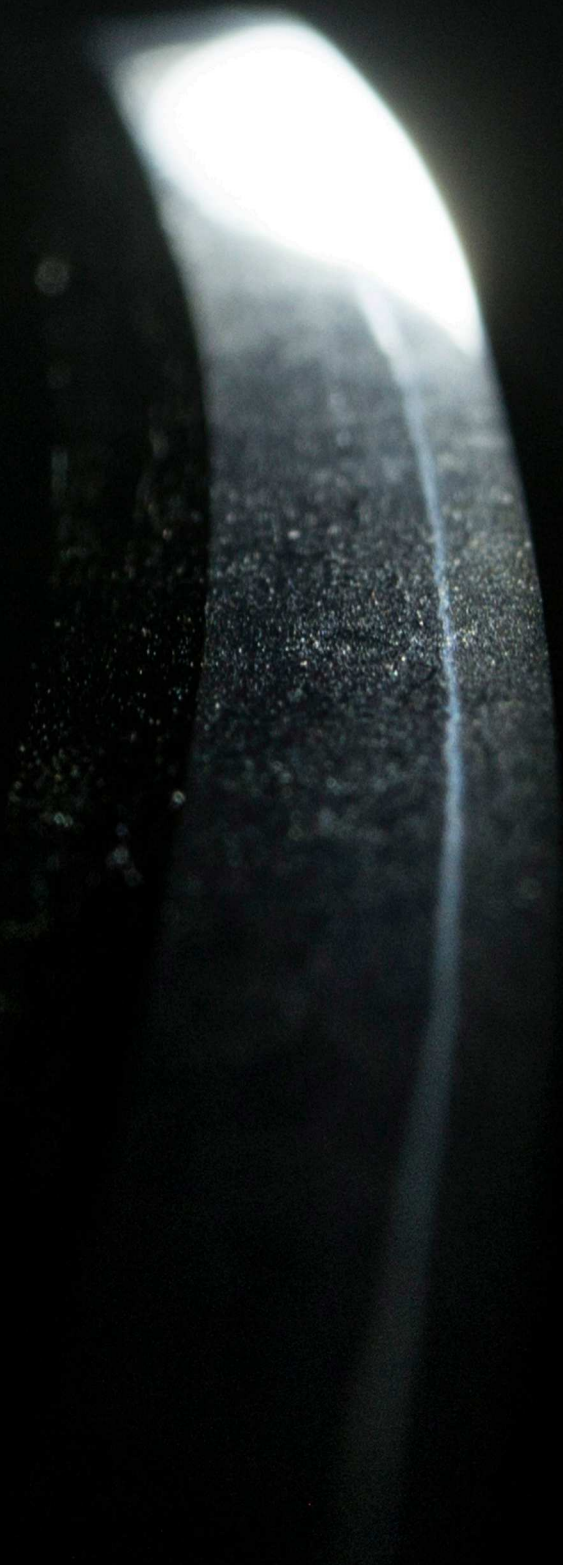
When the lines of nie-crystals break through the *hamon* (temper line) it is referred to as *kinsuji*.

This is called *ko-ashi* (tiny legs) that extend from the hamon forming a serrated appearance. Ko-ashi is typically found on older blades such as this piece.

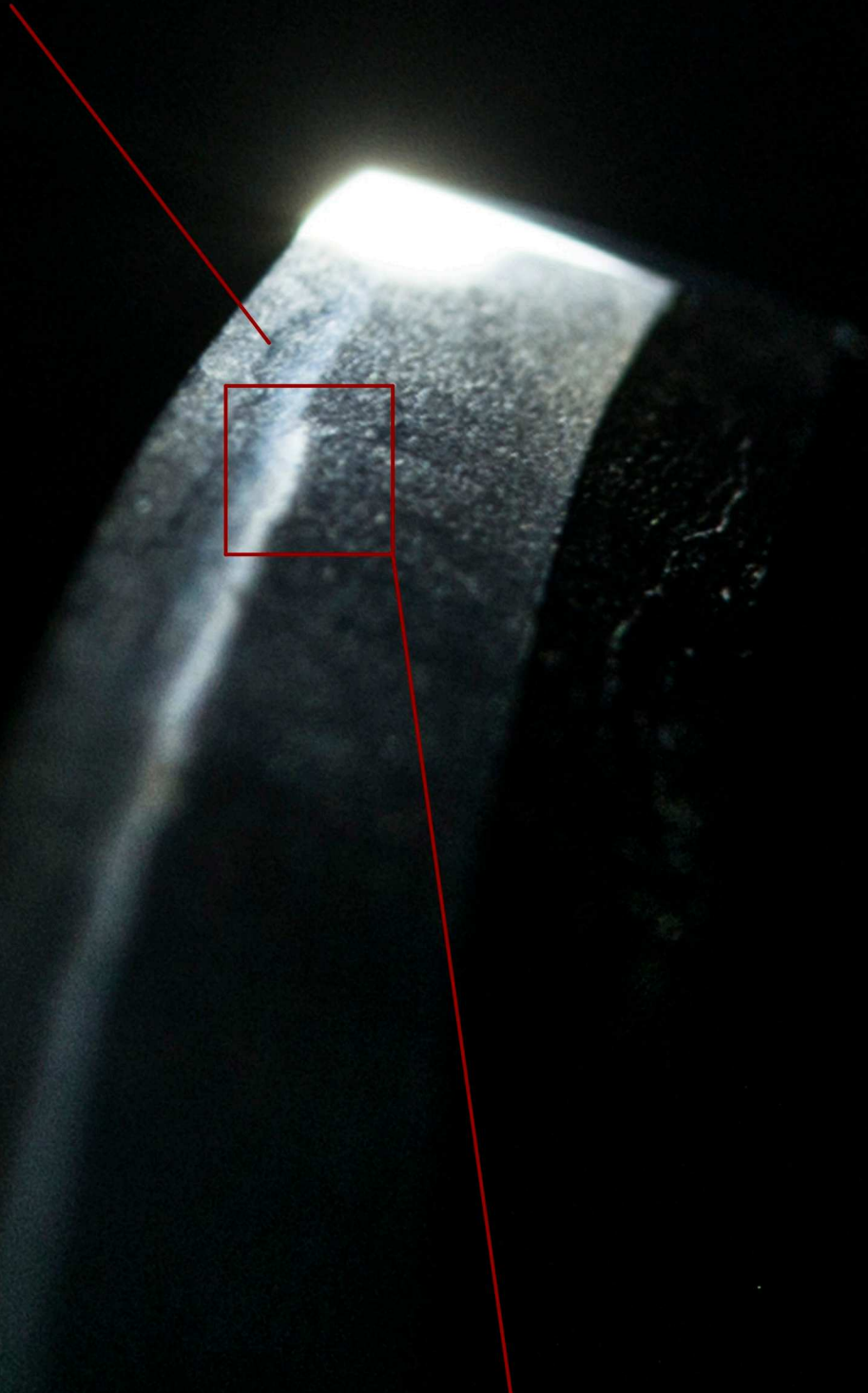
Ko-ashi



Majestic *suguha hamon*.

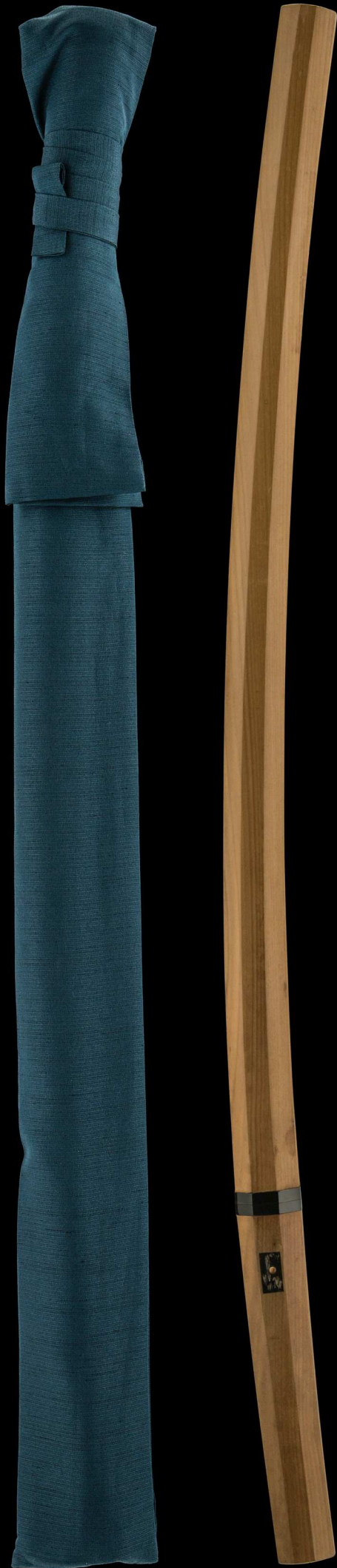


Glorious *kinsuji* zipping through the hardened *yakiba* of the blade.



kuichigai-ba is the area of the *hamon* where the *nioguchi* overlaps for a noticeable distance.

This unique and sophisticated feature is generally seen on swords with a *suguha hamon* crafted in the Yamato tradition.



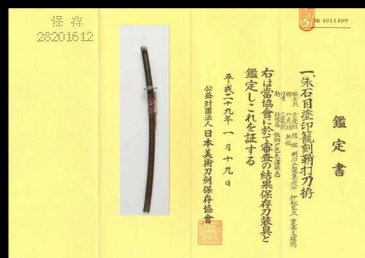
Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



antique *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

*Aka ishime-nuri
inrô-kizami saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(朱石目塗印籠刻鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in rusty vermilion
with inrô-kizami grooves*



NBTHK Hozon
Certificate of Authenticity



all matching dragon-themed fittings (*soroi kanagu*)

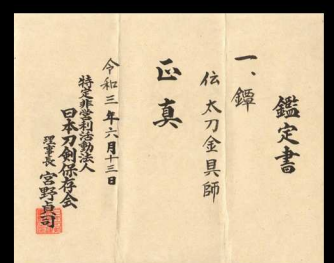




This silver *tsuba* (guard) features a tiger in a bamboo grove. The tiger represents the spiritual force necessary to confront life's adversities. Of moon and fire, full moon and new moon, light and darkness, orange with black stripes, the tiger is at once Yin and Yang. **

However brave, a valiant warrior must show humility. Hence the tiger embraces the flexibility of bamboo. *"The strength, courage and determination of the tiger are not enough to overcome the challenges to which nature submits us; we must also have the flexibility of bamboo".*

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





(reverse)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) carry crawling dragon theme in gold.
The *samekawa* (ray skin) is original to the late 1800s.





The ferocious stare of a dragon captured on the *kashira* (pommel).





Congratulations Slava.

Warm regards,
Pablo

← Koshirae Bag



ITEM# UJKA396

SOLD

AN IESUKE TACHI

SIGNED, EARLY MUROMACHI PERIOD (ÔEI ERA: 1394~1428)

Swordsmith:	<i>Iesuke (first generation, suriage nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.2cm Curvature: 2.5cm Motohaba: 2.71cm
Jihada:	<i>Gorgeous itame-hada and nagare-hada, bô-utsuri, chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Gunome-chôji-midare, koshi-no-hiraita, mixed with kanitsume, ko-nie deki</i>
Certificate:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate 2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic)
Fujishiro:	Chû-jô-saku (ranked as an above average swordsmith)
Sharpness:	Ryô-Wazamono (rated as a maker of highly sharp swords)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo period koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Here is a terrifically sharp *tachi* from the first era following the vicious *Nambokuchô* period. Crafted and signed by swordsmith *Iesuke* of the *Kozori* group some 600 years ago, *Iesuke* is said to be the son of a latter generation *Nagamitsu* and studied under *Morikage*. This is clearly a sword that has participated in several wars over the centuries. A huge *kirikomi* battle scar exists on the upper third of the blade testifies to such valiant encounters. It has a rather slim and elegant shape now - enjoying a deserved rest from its turmoiled past. Given its Bizen influence, the hamon showcases a bright *gunome-midare* with *chôji*, *kanitsume* and a straight billowing *bô-utsuri*. An aristocratic Edo-period *koshirae* accompanies the *tachi* with circular-shaped dragons that govern with glorious power. This is a sword with immense character and flair.



Saki-kasane: 4.6mm

Kissaki: 3.05cm
Saki-haba: 1.77cm

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Nagasa: 70.2cm

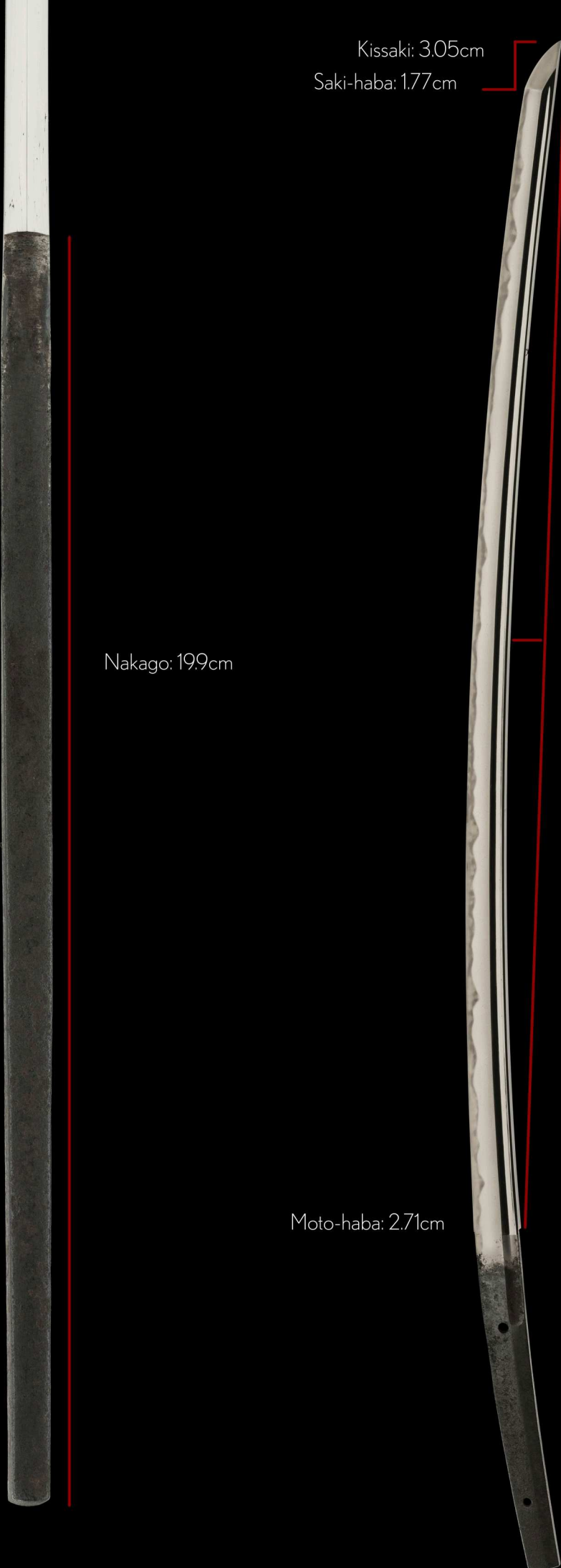
Nakago: 19.9cm

Sori: 2.50cm

Omosa: 655g

Moto-haba: 2.71cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Iesuke was a member of the *Kozori* group. From the end of the *Nanbokuchô* to the early *Muromachi* period, this group of swordsmiths was active in Bizen province and loosely affiliated with the *Kanemitsu school*.

The origins of the Kozori name is unclear. One theory states that the name goes back to the fact that Kozori blades changed from a wide and larger shape to a smaller dimensioned tachi, i.e. having thus a more shallow *sori* (curvature) ie *ko-zori* (small curvature).

Another theory says that the second part *zori* goes back to the verb *soru* that means "to differ, to stray" - ie from the then Bizen main line works. In regards to this tachi, both theories have valid points.

Iesuke is ranked *chû-jô-saku* (an above average smith) and *ryô-wazamono* for the impressive cutting power his blades possess.

This tachi, in a sense, has nothing left to prove. It is an honest blade that is proud of its accomplishments. The elegant, understated koshirae is a testament to how much it was cared for by a past samurai.

Now it deserves a new home to be cherished within.



Location: *Bizen Province*

Swordsmith: *Iesuke* (first generation)

Osafune school, Kozori group

Ōei era (1394~1428)

suriage-nakago (slightly shortened tang)

(le) 家
(suke) 助





ha-machi (now)

maru-dome


ha-machi (past, approx.)

This tachi features a *bo-bi* (wide groove) that helped to lighten the blade for extra quickness and agility. It is finished off in a rounded fashion known as *maru-dome*.

The groove would have originally ended just above the *ha-machi* (notch at the cutting edge) giving it a cutting edge of approximately 76~77cm when first crafted. A sword meant for a samurai riding on horseback that is long enough to strike an opponent.

The sword was shortened likely at the end of the Muromachi period, late 1500s to early 1600s to a standard 'katana length' and would have been coupled with a wakizashi to form a *daisho*.

(reverse)

A close-up photograph of a dark, textured metal blade, likely a tachi, with a red line pointing to a faint signature. The blade is oriented diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right. The surface is rough and weathered. A small circular hole is visible near the bottom right. The background is black.

A 600-year-old signature...

This tachi represents the transition from swords worn on horseback to the katana that is drawn from a standing position which became more commonplace later on in the Muromachi period.

特 保
02202009

No 1014532



鑑定書

一太刀 銘 家助（長船）

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

令和二年十一月九日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



兵庫県 教育委員会
第 37564 号
昭和38年10月3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 2nd year of Heisei (2020), November 9th

One, Tachi

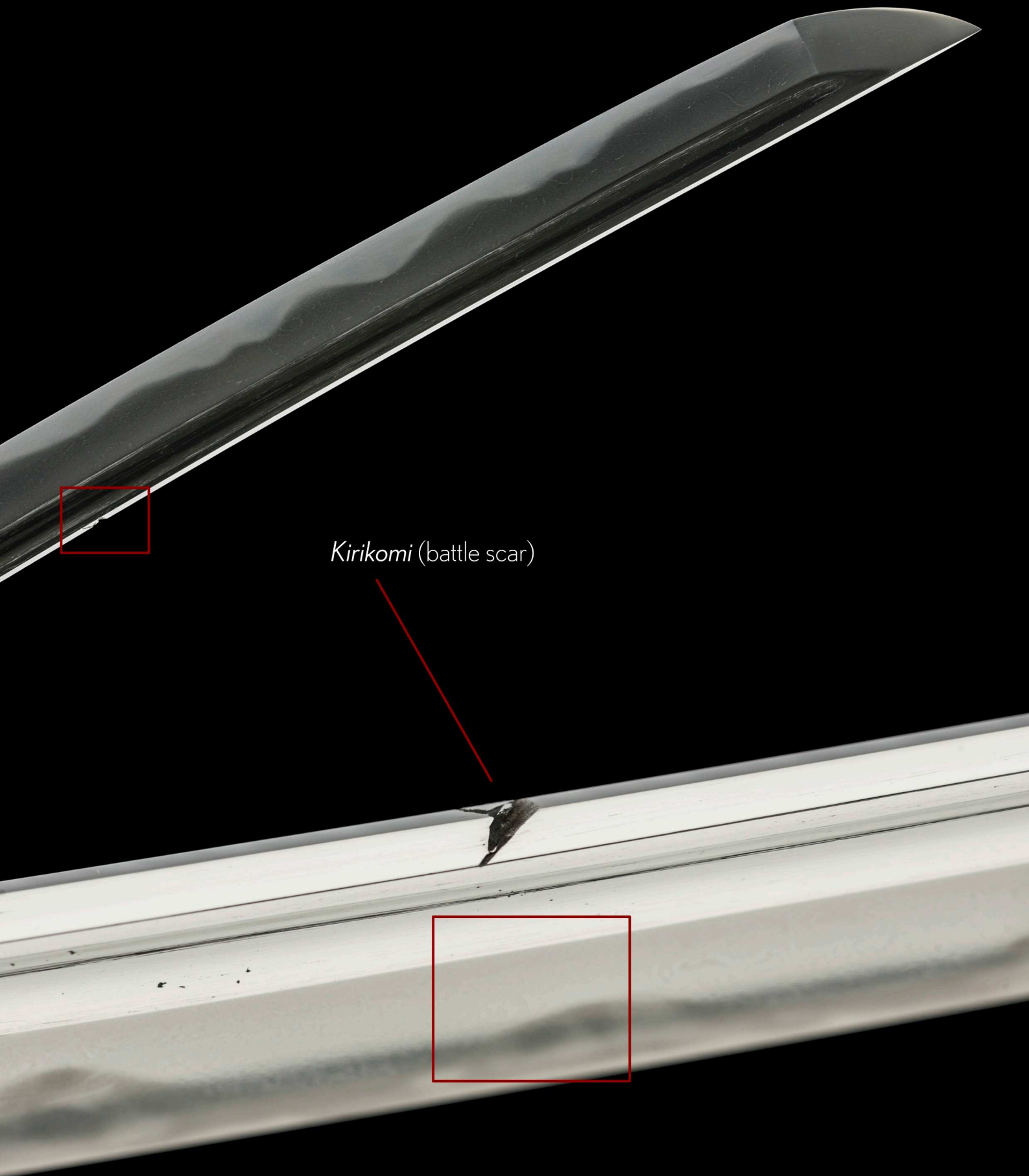
Mei (signature)
Iesuke (Osafune)

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-sun 2-bu (70.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



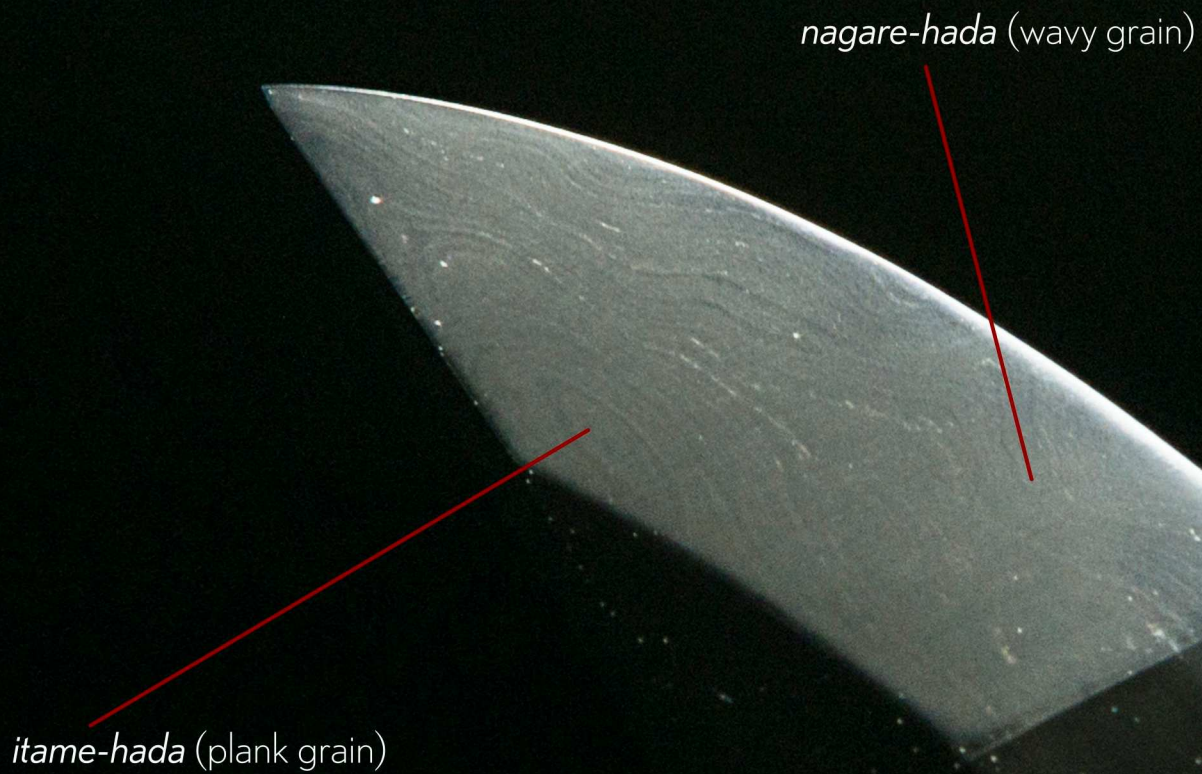




Kirikomi (battle scar)

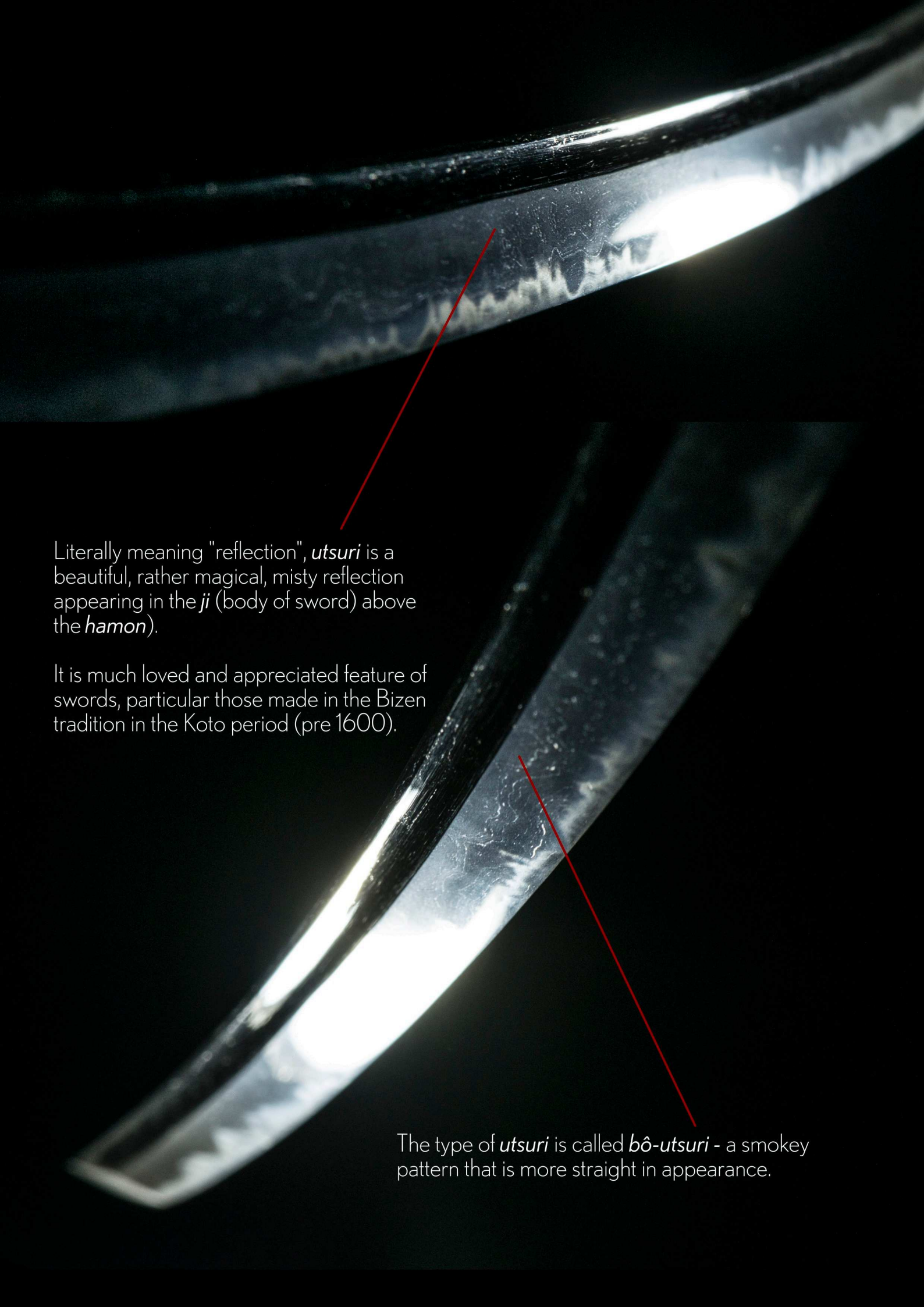
Kirokomi - this an awesome defensive battle scar inflicted from another sword in combat. It is located on the *mune* (spine) in the *monouchi* (cutting zone) of the blade.

These prized marks of courage are intentionally left by sword polishers - never to be repaired. Their courageous significance is to be forever admired.



What splendid *jihada* (grain pattern) to be enjoyed in the *kissaki* (tip of the sword).

Like a master baker, swordsmith Iesuke has managed to knead the steel in such an irresistible way that *itame-hada* (plank grain) and *nagare-hada* (wavy-grain) are served up on delicious display.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the hamon (edge) and the utsuri (misty reflection) patterns. The blade is dark and curved, with a bright, shimmering edge. The utsuri patterns are visible as misty, wavy reflections above the hamon. Two red lines point from the text to specific areas of the blade: one points to a wavy utsuri pattern, and the other points to a straighter, smokier utsuri pattern.

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

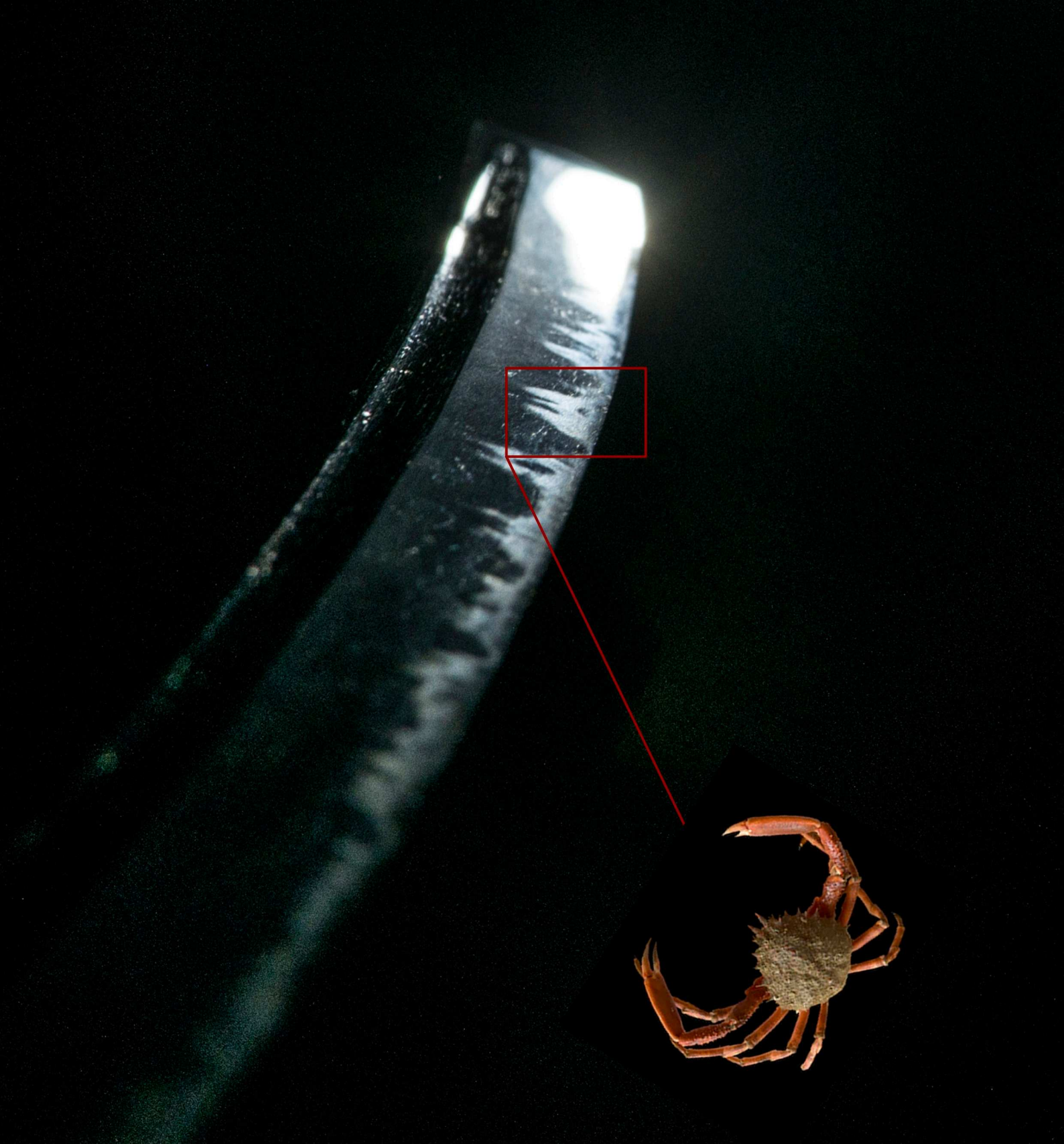
It is much loved and appreciated feature of swords, particular those made in the Bizen tradition in the Koto period (pre 1600).

The type of *utsuri* is called *bô-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that is more straight in appearance.



Bright impulses of a *gunome-choji-midare hamon*.

The heartbeat of the Bizen tradition lives on.

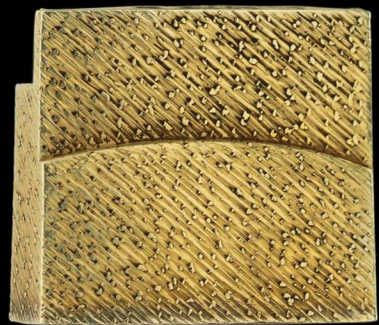


The *hamon* displays a unique pattern called *kanitsume* or "crab claws" in the upper cutting zone of the blade.

Crabs are symbolic of ninja warriors for they both move sideways, silently approaching their target.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

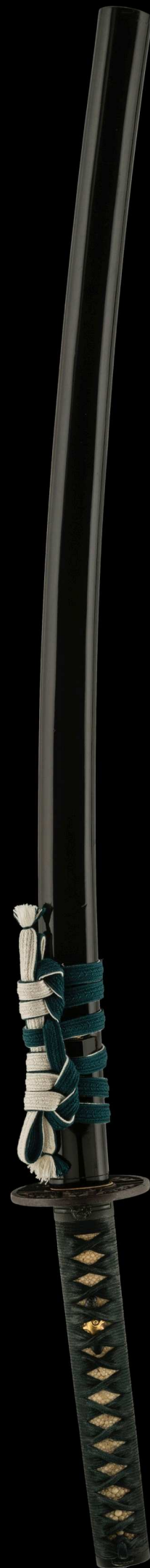


gold-wrapped *habaki*
with diagonal file marks

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

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in gloss black*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



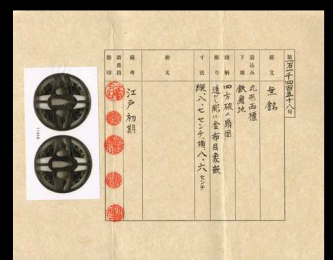
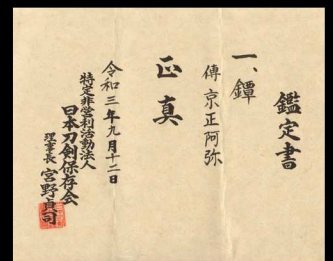
NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This is a large, elegant 400-year-old polished iron tsuba from the *Kyô-Shoami* school in *Kyôto* - thus the prefix "*Kyô*".

The design is of four "torn" fans in separate quadrants. A torn fan design was cherished by many samurai. Its origin rests with *Tokugawa Ieyasu*, the first *shôgun* of Edo period. Before he became *shôgun*, he was defeated by *Takeda Shingen*, whose favourite weapon was a *tessen* (war fan). Although Tokugawa was about to be killed, he managed to escape with shame.

After this encounter, Tokugawa began to incorporate torn fan artwork to symbolize his resolution (and humility) to keep fighting even if defeated - just like a broken fan.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate attributing the tsuba to 1600~1700.



The heart-shaped motif is called *inome* - referring to the *eye of a wild boar*. The samurai greatly admired the *inoshishi*, known for its single-minded focus.

The remnants of *nunome-zôgan* (crosshatched gold inlay) - a technique where the surface of the metal (iron) is prepared by rough crosshatching with a file or fine chisel. Soft gold (or silver) fragments or wires are then hammered into these depressions.

Yabutsune kore + kaô

This *fuchi-kashira* was crafted and signed by *Yabu Tsuneyuki* along with his monogram.

Tsuneyuki lived in Osaka



Certified by NTHK-NPO



薙 (Yabu)

常 (tsune)

之 (kore)

花押 (kaô)



A curled dragon sitting on a long, perfectly straight ruler. The symbolism is clear - the dragon represents the bundled concentration of *power* (samurai class). The ruler represents the *strict samurai code* that governs the country under its military authority.

The hundreds of individually hand-punched dots of *nanako* forms the backdrop (ie. the general populace of the nation). This is art depicting Edo-period reality.





Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) depict a shell theme.
These *menuki* were crafted during the Late Edo period.



Tachi, signed by *lesuke*

(Ta) 太

(chi) 刀
(Mei) 銘

(le) 家

(suke) 助



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*ujwa001- A Narisada Wakizashi crafted in Echizen province
Kan'ei era (1624~1644)*

*My first sword just had a fresh polish, new habaki & sayagaki from Tanobe sensei
This sword will eventually go to you, Hannah.*

*Love you,
Dad*