



As seen on:  
**CNN** **STYLE**

ITEM# UJDI016

## A KANESADA DAISHÔ

SIGNED, SHINTÔ EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN~ENPÔ ERA: 1669~1680)

- Swordsmith:** *Echigo no Kami Kanesada (2nd gen, Ôsaka)*
- Measurements (k):** Length: 75.4cm (*ubu*) Curvature: 1.9cm Moto-haba: 3.03cm Weight: 815g
- Measurements (w):** Length: 46.3cm (*ubu*) Curvature: 0.9cm Moto-haba: 2.98cm Weight: 500g
- Jihada:** *Expertly forged itame-hada with shining ji-nie and plentiful chikei*
- Hamon:** *Glorious notare and gunome-hako-midare with chôji-ashi, sunagashi*
- Certificate #1-3:** 2 x NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (both swords) + NBTHK Hozon (*kogai/kozuka*)
- Certificates #4:** NTHK-NPO Yûshûsaku (as sword designated as Masterwork and published)
- Certificate #5-6:** NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (*koshirae, & daishô tsuba certified as Authentic*)
- Fujishiro rank:** Jôjo-saku (*highly superior smith*)
- Sharpness:** Ô-wazamonô (*maker of supremely sharp swords*)
- Included:** Shirasaya, daishô-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description

**SOLD**

*Nidai Echigo no Kami Kanesada* was a phenomenal talent inside the Ôsaka-shintô tradition. Out of respect for his *sensei shodai Kanesada*, he relinquished the name *Kanesada* in 1680 and worked under the title *Sakakura Gon-no-Shin Terukane* when his sensei's son came of age. Forty-nine of his swords have achieved NBTHK *jûyô tôken* and two have made it to *tokubetsu jûyô*. This remarkable *daishô* with its glorious *notare hamon* and powerful *gunome-midare* was featured by CNNstyle on the topic of antique Japanese swords in which Pablo was interviewed for in 2015. Read on for the backstory on this special *samurai-daishô* that stands to be cherished by a new and proud owner.

^  
Saki-kasane: 4.9mm

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Kissaki: 4.23cm

Saki-haba: 2.03cm

Nagasa: 75.4cm

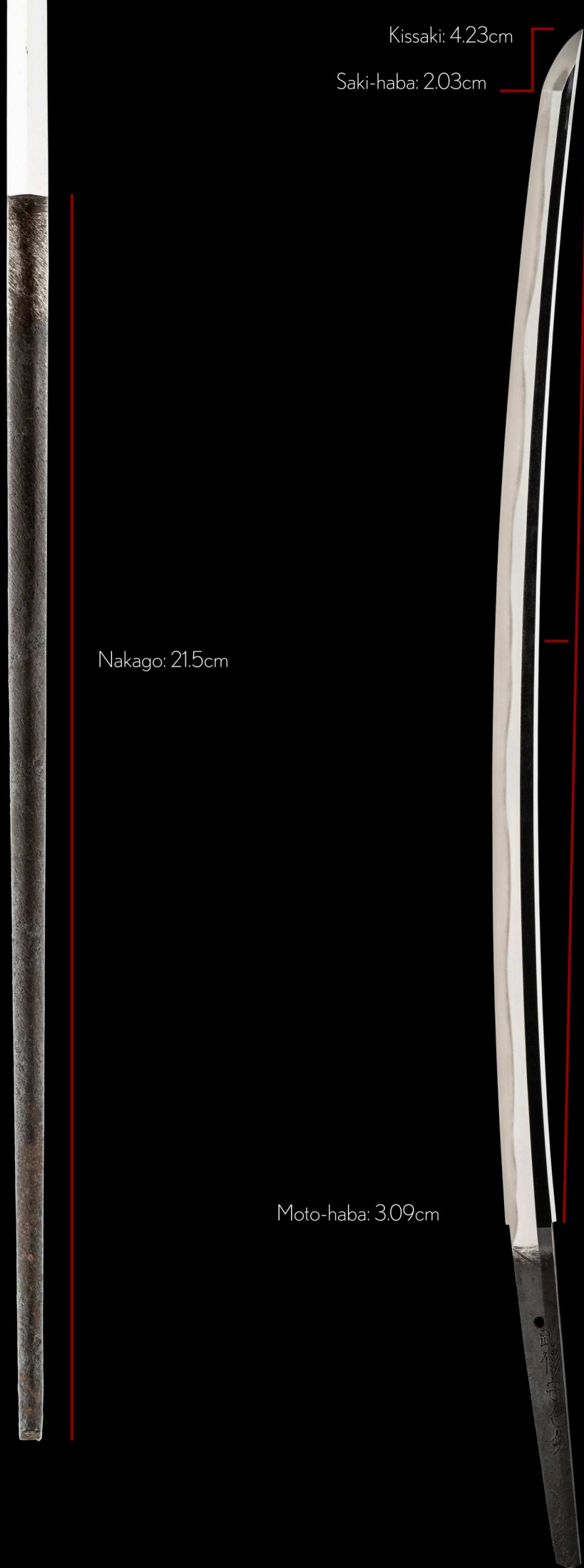
Nakago: 21.5cm

Sori: 1.9cm

Omosa: 815g

Moto-haba: 3.09cm

Mekugi-ana: 1





Saki-kasane: 5.0mm

Moto-kasane: 6.6mm

Kissaki: 3.18cm

Saki-haba: 2.03cm

Nagasa: 46.3cm

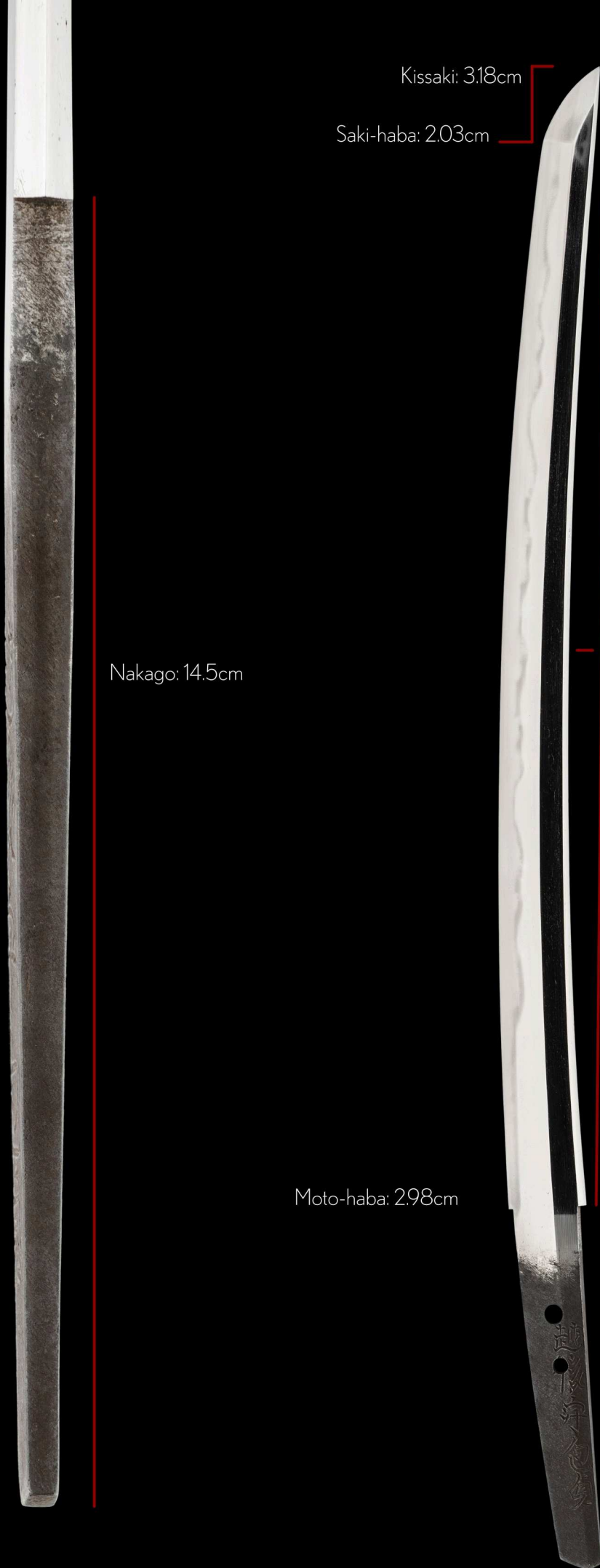
Nakago: 14.5cm

Sori: 0.9cm

Omosa: 500g

Moto-haba: 2.98cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



*Nidai Echigo no Kami Kanesada* (越後守包貞) was a phenomenal talent active in *Ôsaka* during the early *Edo* period. He first studied under *Terukado* (照門) of the *Zenjô* (善定) line from *Mino*, later entering the school of *shodai* (first generation) *Kanesada*. Recognized for his fine talent, he became both the son-in-law and successor to *shodai* and upon his sensei's passing in 1669, he inherited the name [*Nidai*] *Kanesada*. However, when the *shodai Kanesada's* natural son came of age, out of respect, he relinquished the name *Kanesada* and worked thereafter under the title *Sakakura Gon-no-Shin Terukane* (坂倉言之進照包), demonstrating his magnanimous character.

Counted among the great smiths of the *Ôsaka-Shintô* tradition, his works are highly esteemed, and he is rightfully ranked *Jôjo-saku* by *Fujishiro* and designated *Ô-wazamono* for this tremendously sharp sword's cutting ability.

His blades are typically forged with a fine and dense *ko-itame hada*, bright and well-refined, with thick *ji-nie* and lively *chikei*. He is best known for graceful *tôran-ba* (billowing wave patterns) inspired by fellow *Ôsaka*-based grandmaster *Tsuda Sukehiro* (津田助広), with a brilliant *nioiguchi* that gleam with clarity and precision.

This incredible *katana* is forged with a finely executed *ko-itame hada*, with a glorious undulating *notare hamon* pattern that is one of the finest examples of *notare* ever to be seen on a sword. And, important to note, in terms of collectibility, rarely seen on a *nidai Kanesada* sword. Abundant *chôji-ashi* appears from its bright and clear *nioiguchi* giving the sword an atmosphere of serenity and extraordinary elegance.

The *wakizashi* is also forged in refined *ko-itame*, and is more traditional *nidai Kanesada* with a gorgeous *gunome-hakomidare hamon* with a classic *Ôsaka yakidashi* that erupts into a dynamic, storm-like swells at sea. What marvellous juxtaposition these two swords share with one another.

A superb *daishô koshirae* in a *samurai warrior* theme was built more than ten years ago for these swords using top-quality antique *Edo* and *Meiji* period fittings. It was one of the first custom *daishôs* crafted for a client at Unique Japan. This *daishô* was subsequently featured in a 2015 article published online by *CNNstyle* on the topic of antique Japanese swords in which Pablo was interviewed for. Read on for more backstory on this remarkable *daishô* that will always hold a special place in our hearts at Unique Japan.





越 (Echi)

後 (go, no)

守 (Kami)

包 (Kane)

貞 (Sada)

Lovely symmetry in signatures.

Location: *Osaka in Settsu province*

Title name: *Echigo no Kami* (Lord of Echigo province)

Swordsmith: *Kanesada* (second generation)

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

*katte-sagari-yasurime* (slanting file marks)



*Ha-agari kurijiri* is a tang-end style where the rounded tip curves slightly toward the cutting edge.

It is a variation of the *kurijiri* (chestnut-shaped) finish, adding subtle asymmetry.

This shape enhances both the aesthetics and balance of the blade.

Often seen in high-quality *Shintô* swords.

*Ha-agari kurijiri*

(*ura*, reverse)



First generation

A swordsmith's identity is revealed not only in the workmanship of the blade itself but also, of course, in the *mei* (signature).

When comparing the signature of the first-generation Kanesada with that of the second, there is a subtle difference in the character "Kane (包)," - the lower-left stroke forms a sharper right angle in the first generation, while in the second generation is rendered with a gentler curve.

26201405

No 1002380



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 越後守包貞

長二尺五寸強

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀剣と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十六年七月九日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京 教育委員会  
第 301274 号  
平成21年3月10日

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon  
Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 26th year of Heisei (2014), July 9th

One, Katana

*Mei* (signature)  
*Echigo no Kami Kanesada*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 5-sun kyô (75.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

特 保  
18200603



№ 151262

鑑定書

長一尺五寸三分弱

一、脇指 銘 越後守包貞

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

平成十八年四月十三日

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 18th year of Heisei (2006), April 13th

One, Wakizashi

*Mei* (signature)  
*Echigo no Kami Kanesada*

*Nagasa* (length)  
1-shaku 5-sun 3-bu jaku (46.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

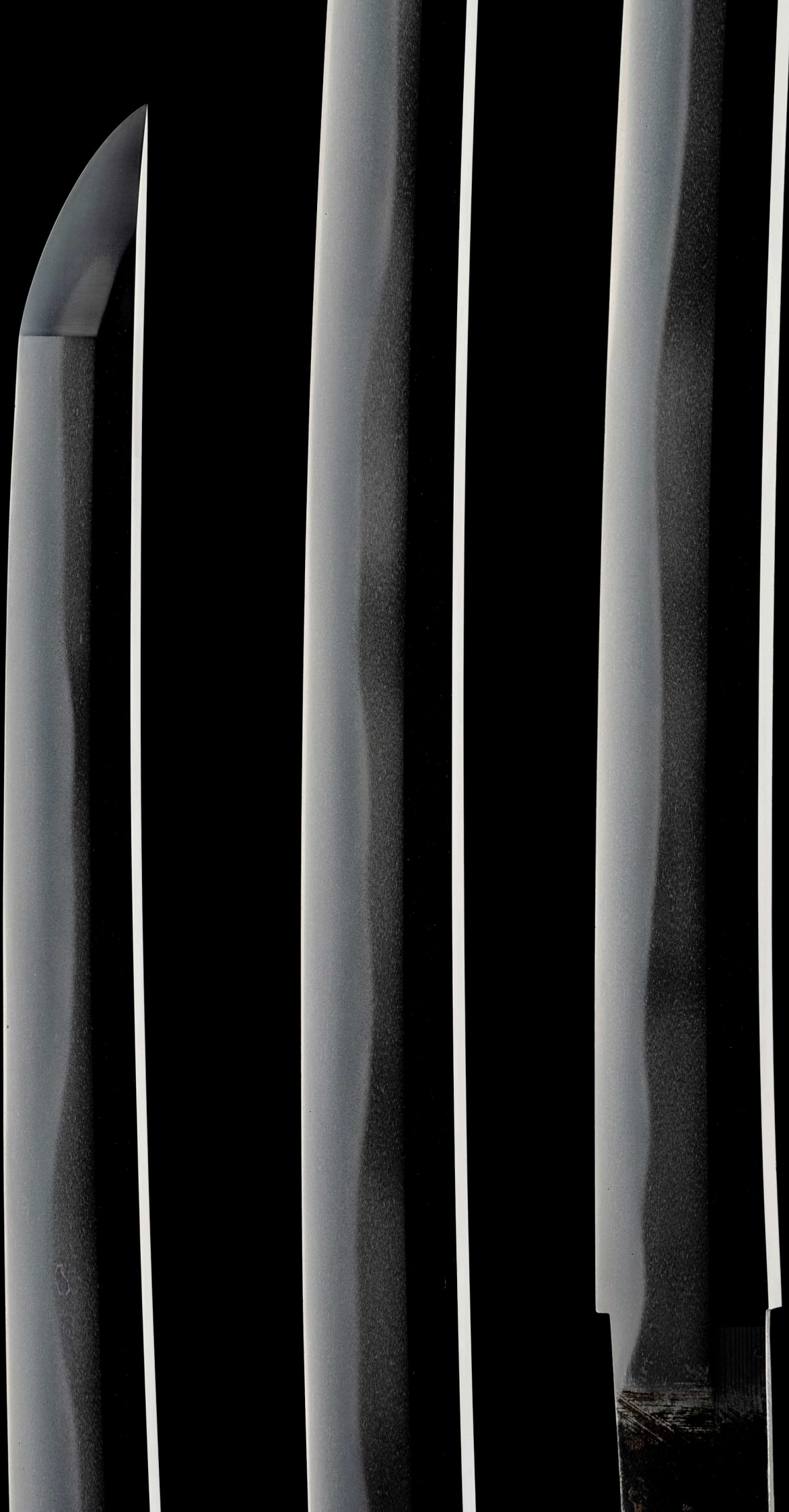


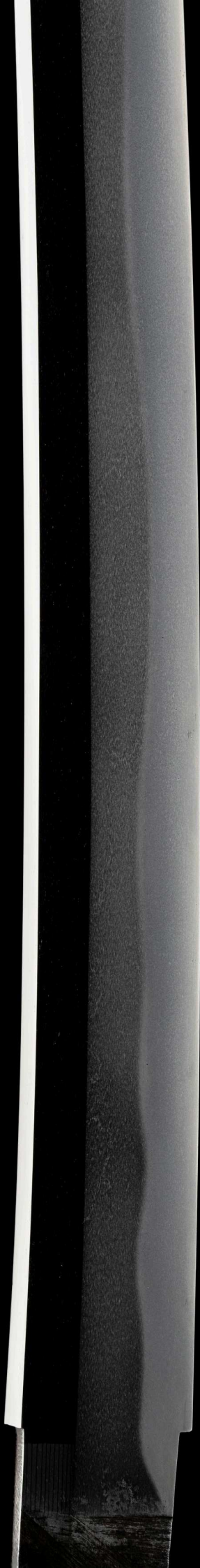
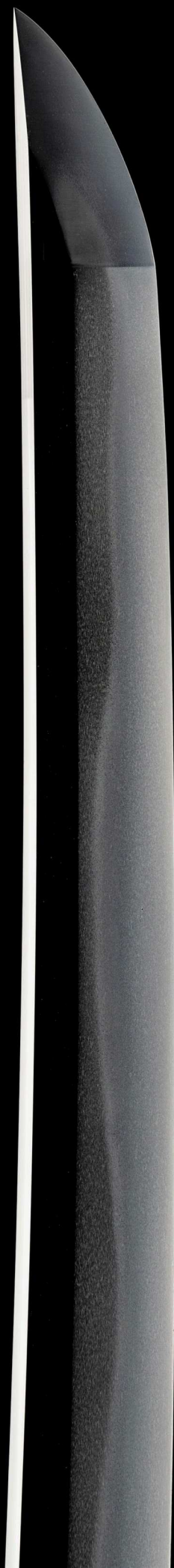
越後守包貞  
*Echigo no Kami Kanesada*  
Echigo no Kami Kanesada

二代也  
*Nidai nari*  
The second generation

刃長貳尺五寸余有之  
*Hachô 2-shaku 5-sun amari kore ari*  
Blade length 75.4 cm

昭和卅二年卯月日寒山誌  
*Shôwa sanjûyonen Uzuki bi Kanzan shirusu*  
Written on a day in the fourth month in the  
34th year of Shôwa era (April 1959)







Although this may appear as a mirror image, this gentle wave *notare hamon* maintains perfect consistency not only in form, but also in spectacular symmetry on each side of the blade.



(wow)



*Ashi* (legs) extend to the edge of the blade.



Personal note from Pablo:

I have yet to see a more exquisite *notare hamon* on any sword. I first acquired this katana in 2014, when Unique Japan was still in its relative infancy. It represented one of my first significant acquisitions, purchased from my sensei Mr. Osawa, who sadly passed away in 2022. I still remember the day I held this sword with him - the blade seemed to extend for miles in my hands, and I found myself completely transfixed by the *hamon*. It was in that moment that I truly understood that consistency of the *nioguchi*, whether in a straight *suguha*, *notare*, or *gunome-midare*, separates exceptional swords from ordinary ones. The marvellous consistency of the *nioguchi* and its sheer brilliance will knock the socks off the next owner of this sword.

The *daishô koshirae* that we built turned out to be such a special production, but it will always be the memory of first laying eyes on this katana that will stick with me.

Enjoy.

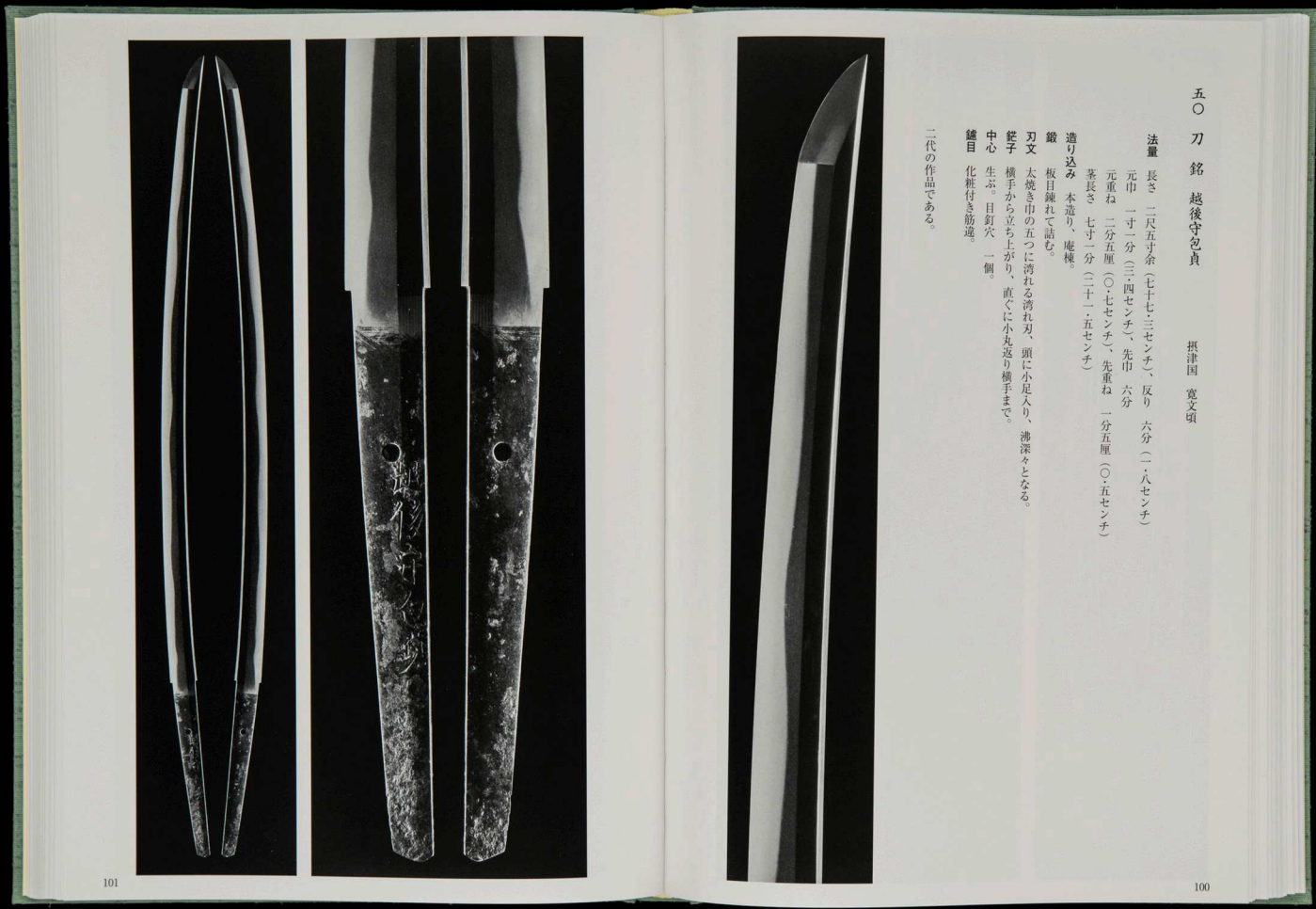


A beautiful hue shines over the  
*ko-itame* and *mokume-hada*.



*Nidai Kanesada* is ranked *jôjô-saku*  
(highly superior) and *ô-wazamono* for  
the supreme sharpness of his swords.

Behold sword mastery.



五〇 刀銘 越後守包貞

摂津国 寛文頃

法量 長さ 二尺五寸余 (七十七センチ)、反り 六分 (一・八センチ)

元巾 一寸二分 (三・四センチ)、先巾 六分

元重ね 二分五厘 (〇・七センチ)、先重ね 一分五厘 (〇・五センチ)

莖長さ 七寸一分 (二十一・五センチ)

造り込み 本造り、庵棟。

鍔 板目練れて詰む。

刃文 大鏡き巾の五つに汚れる汚れ刃、頭に小足入り、沸深々となる。

拵子 櫛手から立ち上がり、直ぐに小丸返り横手まで。

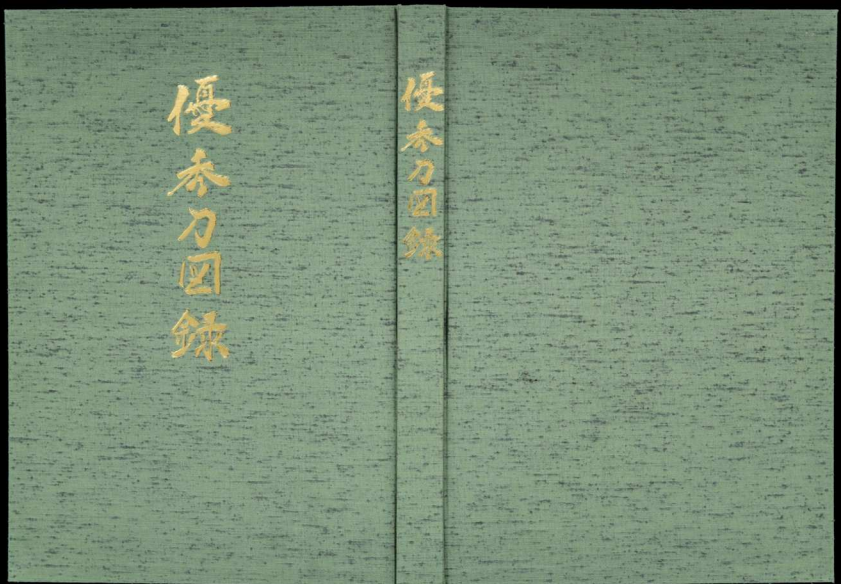
中心 生糸。目釘穴 一個。

鑓目 化粧付き筋違。

二代の作品である。

This *katana* is featured on page 100 & 101 in the NTHK-NPO Collection of *Yûshûsaku Masterwork* swords, published in the twenty-seventh year of *Heisei* era, June 2015.

It details the measurements along with well-taken photos of the sword.









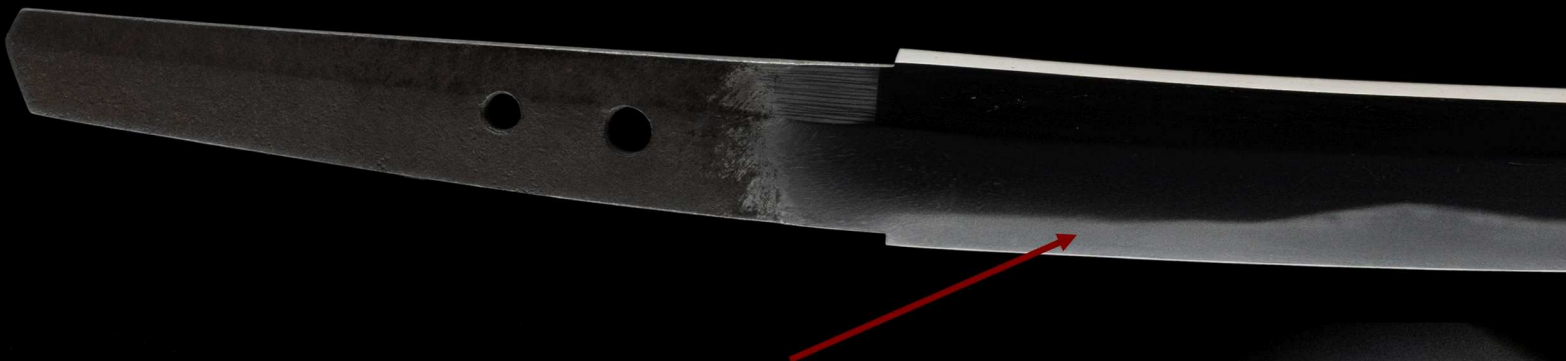
katana

The *boshi* begins in an almost straight line and turns back in a small, rounded circle (*ko-maru kaeri*).



Thick *nie* forming a flow of *sunagashi* forming a *kaen* (candle) *boshi*.

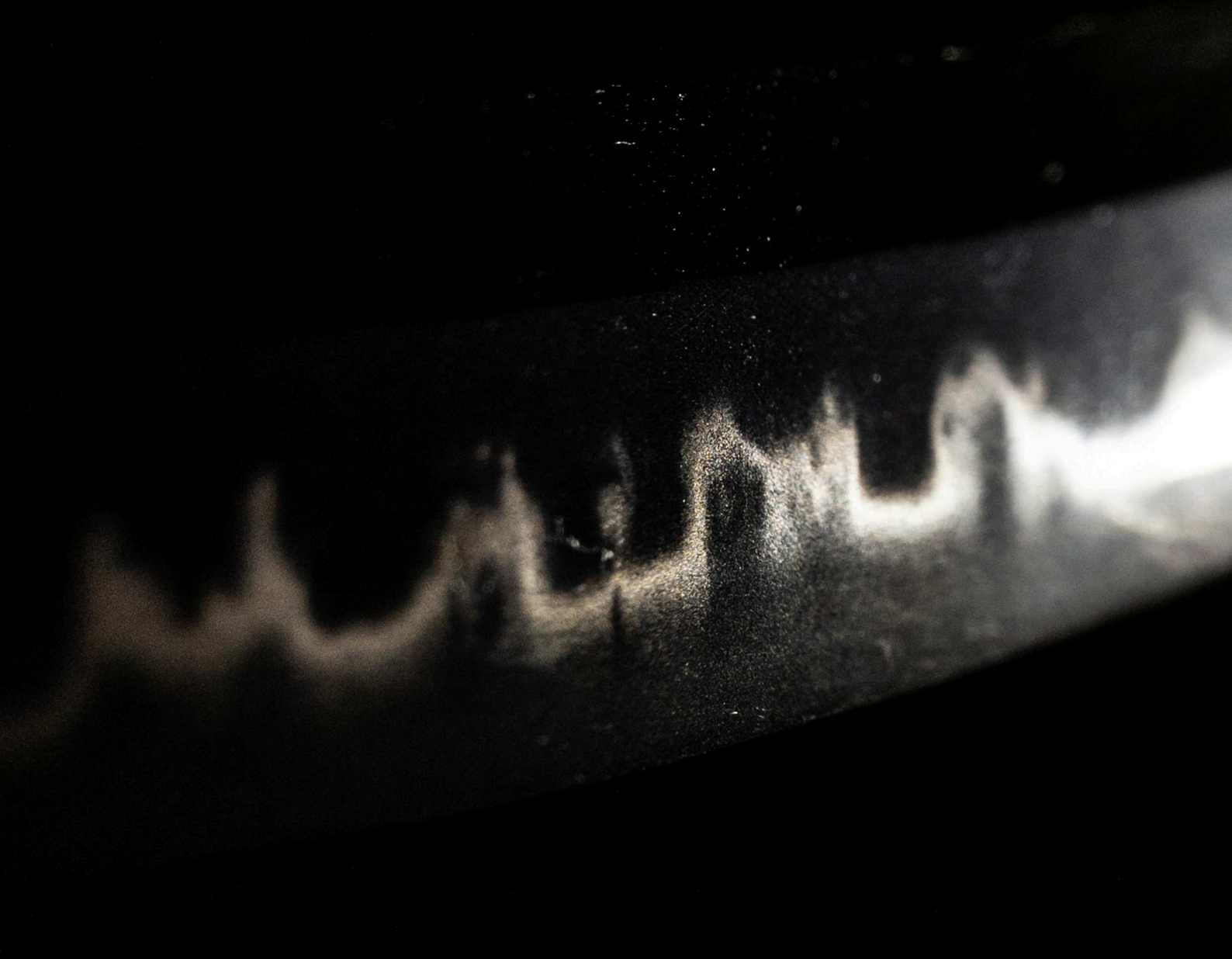
Wakizashi



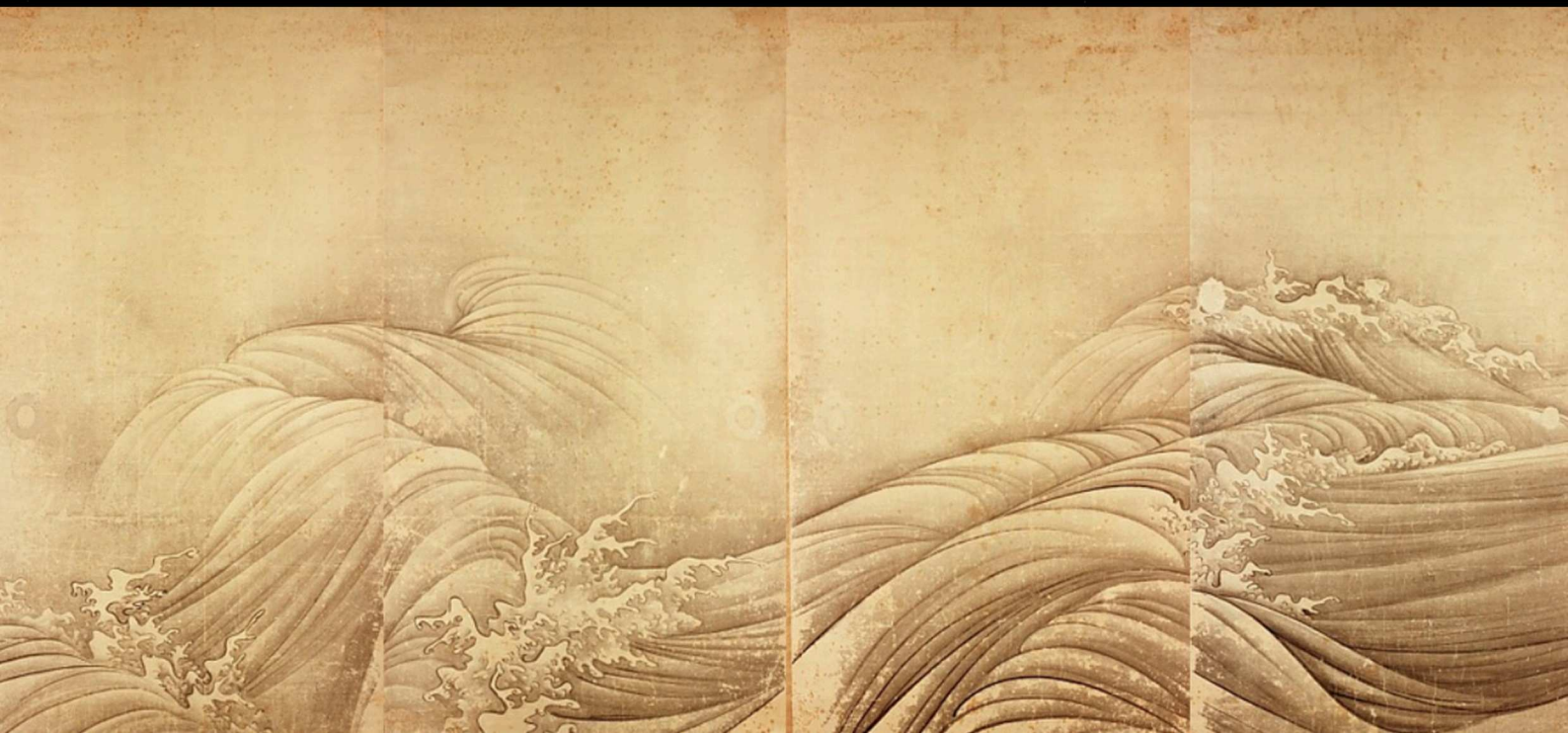
The *wakizashi* in this dynamic duo features an *Ôsaka-yakidashi* is a distinctive feature of *Osaka-Shintô* blades, where the *hamon* begins to widen with a gentle *notare* before developing into a more wavy pattern.

*Osaka-yakidashi*





The *tōranba hamon* resembles the billowing waves and spray of a stormy sea.





Big swells of *gunome-midare*, note the consistent stream of *nie* crystals.

*Nidai Kanesada* is such a talent.



Peak performance.



sayagaki potential



Shirasaya  
(protective scabbard)



silver habaki with  
rainfall file marks



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with  
horizontal file marks

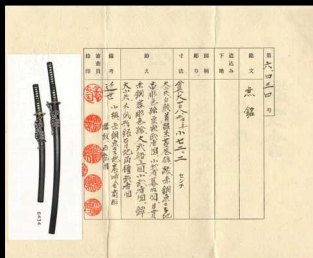
*Cha-ishime-ji-nuri*  
*daishô-uchigatana-koshirae*  
(茶石目地塗大小打刀拵)

*Daishô-uchigatana-koshirae* lacquered in brown with stone-like surface

Crafted during the modern era

The *daishô*, restricted to *samurai* class wear, emerged as a defining symbol of their status. This paired-sword tradition gained prominence near the close of the *Muromachi* period (1336-1573), with surviving examples dating to the late sixteenth century. A 1629 edict formalized the *daishô* requirement for *samurai* on official duties.

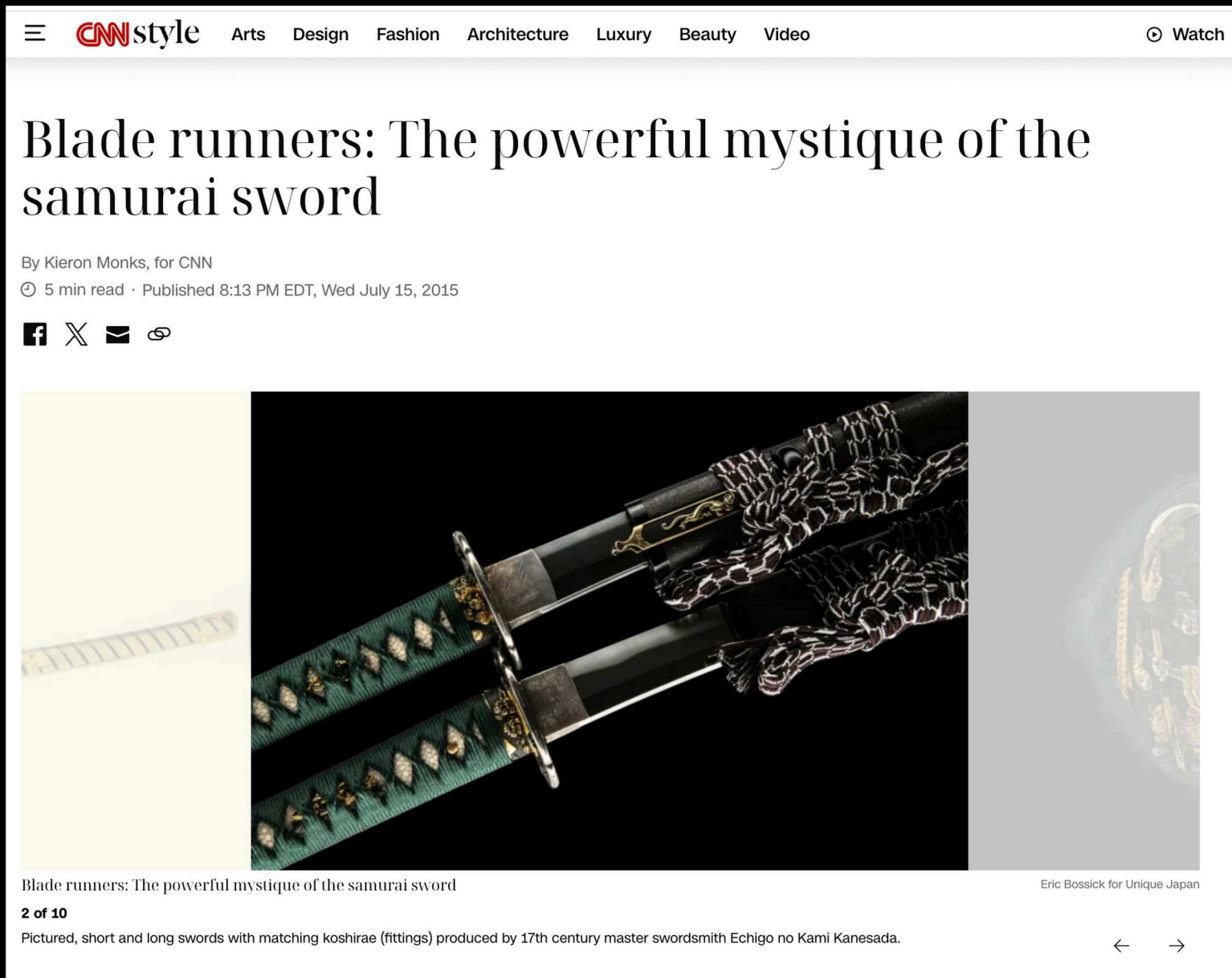
Far beyond their practical function, the *daishô* came to embody the very spirit of the *samurai*. To wear the paired swords was to stand as a true *samurai*, a visible expression of honour, duty, and martial identity.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity

Not long after the *Kanesada daishô koshirae* was built, I was interviewed by CNN in July 2015 on the topic of antique samurai swords, the Unique Japan business and general thoughts on collecting Japanese swords. Paul Martin was also interviewed for the piece.

When they asked me to provide sword-related images for their CNNstyle article and I naturally thought of the *Kanesada daishô*. Below is a screenshot of the web page that remains online today.



The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a CNNstyle article. At the top, the navigation bar includes the CNNstyle logo and categories: Arts, Design, Fashion, Architecture, Luxury, Beauty, and Video. On the right, there is a 'Watch' button. The main heading is 'Blade runners: The powerful mystique of the samurai sword'. Below the title, it says 'By Kieron Monks, for CNN' and '5 min read · Published 8:13 PM EDT, Wed July 15, 2015'. There are social media sharing icons for Facebook, X, Email, and a link icon. The main image is a close-up of two samurai swords with green koshirae (fittings) and a black scabbard with a white and black patterned tassel. To the right, a smaller, faded image shows a circular object, possibly a sword guard or a piece of armor. Below the main image, the text reads 'Blade runners: The powerful mystique of the samurai sword' and 'Eric Bossick for Unique Japan'. At the bottom left, it says '2 of 10' and 'Pictured, short and long swords with matching koshirae (fittings) produced by 17th century master swordsmith Echigo no Kami Kanesada.' There are left and right arrow navigation icons at the bottom right.

Access the article here:  
<https://edition.cnn.com/style/article/samurai-swords>





*The spirit of the samurai lives on.*



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
 Certificate of Authenticity



This *fuchigashira* on the *katana koshirae* is the signed work of *Gotô Mitsukuni* (後藤光邦), second son of *Gotô Teijô* (後藤程乗), the ninth head of the *Gotô* main line, and widely known as *Gotô Etsujô* (後藤悦乗). Retained by the *Maeda* family of *Kaga*, he produced metalwork and related commissions. By training many disciples, he greatly advanced the *Kaga* metalworking tradition.

The design depicts Kamakura-period *samurai* warriors. The armoured figure, poised for combat, embodies strength and resolve. The precise carving showcases Mitsukuni's mastery and aesthetic sense.

(Go) 後  
(tô) 藤  
(Mitsu) 光  
(kuni) 邦  
(kaô) 花押





This *fuchigashira* on the *wakizashi koshirae* depicts figures from the *Chinese Three Kingdoms* period during the 3rd century.

The central motif in the foreground, with his flowing beard and the distinctive curved halberd can be identified as *Guan Yu*. Behind him stands another figure whose unusually large ears suggest *Liu Bei*, founder of the *Shu* kingdom. Known for their oath of brotherhood, the pairing of *Liu Bei* and *Guan Yu* symbolizes valour and loyalty.





The *tsukas* (hilts) are made as a matched *daishô* pair, covered with classic white *same* (ray skin) and wrapped in *hishimaki* style with green braid.



boat

The *menuki* on both the katana and wakizashi continue the *samurai* warrior motif, with the katana depicting warriors advancing by boat while the wakizashi shows warriors preparing for battle.

Determination makes life happen.

*kozuka* (utility knife)



The set of *kozuka* and *kogai*, often referred to together as *futatokoro*, were practical accessories for the Edo-period *samurai*, housed in dedicated slots along the *saya* (scabbard).

These pieces are the work of *Kyô-Kinkô* school. While not attributable to a specific school, they can be securely dated to the Edo period. The ground is of *shakudô* with a *nanako* ground, upon which motifs of *Amaryû* (rain dragons) are set. The motif of the rain dragon conveyed wishes for fertility and good fortune, and for the warrior class it also represented victory in battle and the safeguarding of one's household.

Certified NBTHK Hozon, certificate on next page.



*kogai* (hair pick)

(U) 宇

(da) 多

(jū) 住

(Kuni) 國

(mune) 宗

宇  
多  
住  
金  
國  
宗

器 名  
23201102

№ 462503



鑑 定 書

一、這龍図二所

無銘 京金工

小柄・筭 赤銅魚子地

金紋

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十三年三月一日

財團法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Hozon  
Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 23rd year of Heisei (2011), March 1st

One, Futatokoro

*Depicting crawling dragons*

*Mumei (unsigned)  
Kyô-Kinkô*

*Shakudô with nanako ground, gold crest*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



*Kamakura samurai meets warriors  
of the Three Kingdoms*





*Daishô koshirae bags*



## Flying to Japan?

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

Many swords from Unique Japan are sold privately every year to clients around the world. Contact [service@uniquejapan.com](mailto:service@uniquejapan.com) where we'll discuss the type of sword, age and other qualities you are seeking along with budget parameters.

Meetings are held at our studio near **JR Meguro station** - only minutes away from all major hotels in downtown Tokyo.