



ITEM# UJKA164

A SUKESADA KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, MUROMACHI PERIOD

8TH YEAR OF EISHO, THIRD MONTH (MARCH 1511, 504 YEARS AGO)

- Swordsmith:** *Bizen Osafune SUKESADA*
Location: Bizen province (Okayama Prefecture)
Length: 72.4cm (ubu)
Curvature: 2.4cm
Moto-haba: 3.0cm
Jihada: *Koitame with midare utsuri*
Hamon: *Gunome midare with choji and ashi*
Certificate #1: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a sword designated as Important by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword*)
Certificate #2,3: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*sword fittings and tsuba designated as Important by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword*)
Included: Edo-period koshirae, shirasaya, sword fabric bags, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and export paperwork from Japan

SOLD

It's always a treat to hold a sword that is dated within the Koto period (pre-1600).

Behold a magnificent Bizen katana crafted by the celebrated Sukesada family dated over 500 years ago to **March 1511**. The late Muromachi period is a time of tumultuous fighting known as the **Sengoku Jidai** or *Warring States Period*.

This is a long, classic Samurai sword with stories to tell. Energy radiates from this piece.

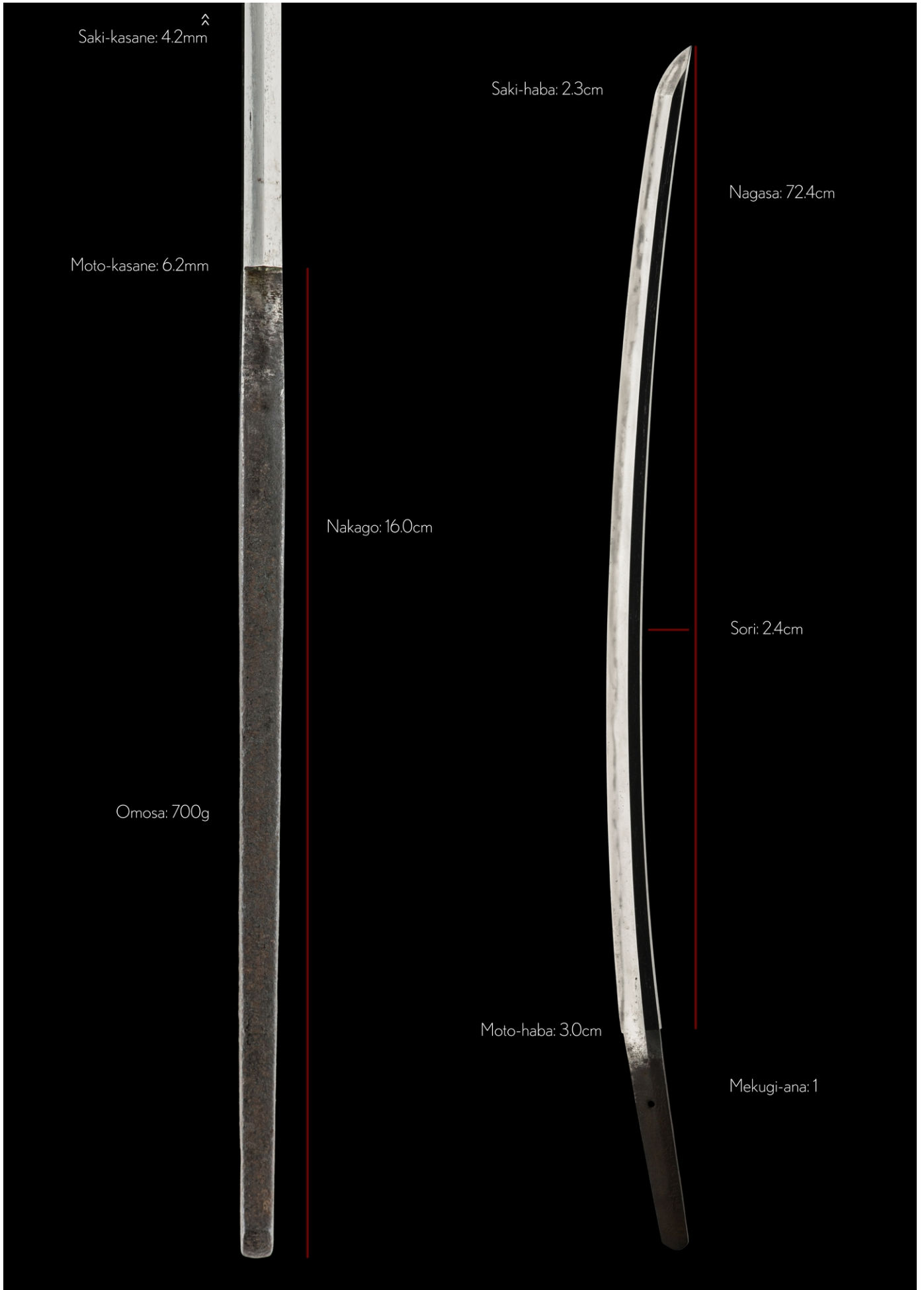
Many fine Sukesada smiths worked during this exact period including **Hikobei** and **Yosozaemon**. It is possible that one of these legendary smiths crafted this beautiful katana but it's very difficult to state with certainty.

The blade is fitted in a stunning set of *koshirae* with Higo style mounts and a gorgeous scabbard with a whirlpool design. It is currently in an older polish, which is understandable given the history this sword has clearly seen. My trusted advisors informed me that any more polishing would only hurt the sword. Photos and information follow.



We have a few new 'floating' acrylic stands at UJ (above), with the traditional wood stand below. It's your choice as a complimentary sword stand is included with all sword investments.







Province: Bizen
Village: Osafune
Smith: Sukesada
Saku (made by)



Bi
zen
ju
Osa
fune
Suke
sada
saku

Era: Eisho


Year: 8th (1511)

Month: March

*this katana has been
dated to March 1511*

*Ei
sho
8
nen

3
gatsu*



Utsuri

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

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

The type of *utsuri* found on this Sukesada katana is called *midare-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that billows towards to the *shinogi* (ridge line).



Hamon

The temper line has a variety of elements to keep the eye entertained. There is classic *choji-midare* - a temper line that resembles cloves (*choji*) in an irregular (*midare*) pattern.

Lower down on the blade is a *midare* based on a thick *suguha* (straight).

Note the plentiful *nioi* crystals that make up the hamon that look like the Milky Way.

The grain pattern (*jihada*) is an *itame* mixed with *o-hada*, large wood-grain swirls.

Nioi

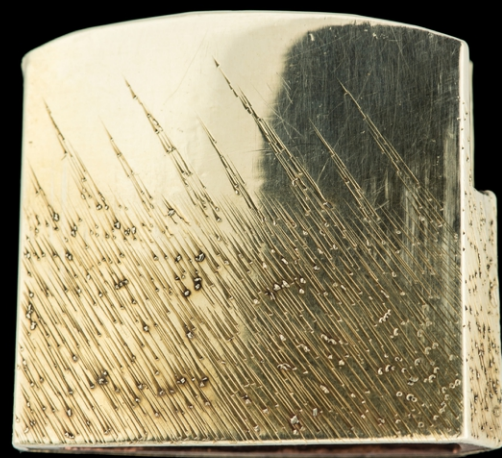
Choji

- * *Choji* is pronounced (*choh-jee*)
- * *Itame* is pronounced (*ee-tah-may*)
- * *Midare* is pronounced (*mee-dah-ray*)
- * *Nioi* is pronounced (*nee-oy*)
- * *Suguha* is pronounced (*soo-goo-ha*)



strips of bamboo to
reinforce the saya

Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



Yujo-habaki
(gold on copper base)





Tsuba

This is a *Nanban tsuba* - a guard from the Edo period. The term *Nanban* or sometimes written *Namban* ("Southern Barbarians") was applied to all foreigners reaching Japan primarily from the south-west corner in Hizen province (Kyushu). They included Portuguese and Dutch traders whose first contact with Japan dates from the middle 16th to start of the 17th century.

Namban work is thus a unique blend that draws upon European-flavoured designs. Looking closely at the above iron *tsuba* one will see dragons looking skyward entwined within a stunning *karakusa* (arabesque) pattern.



Where's Waldo?

a whip (horse)



Higo Koshirae

A striking set of Edo-period mounts in the Higo tradition first inspired from the personal taste of *Hosokawa Tadaoki* (1563-1645) of Higo province in Kyushu. Two elaborate *o-seppas* (large washers) below typify the understated elegance of Japanese aesthetic.



The *tsuka*, bound in leather, remains in excellent condition since the 1800s.



Yin-Yang

phoenix



Kojiri

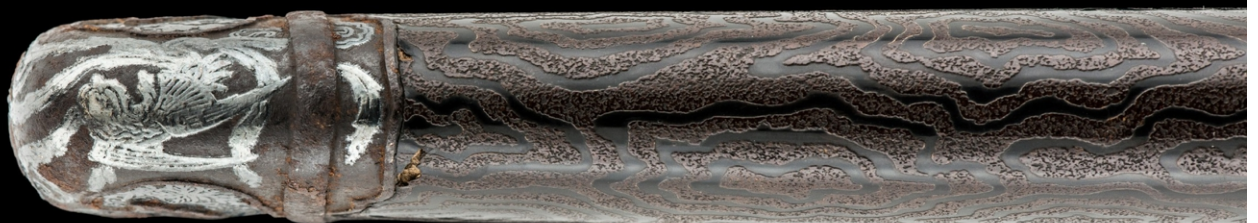
The reinforced iron protection at the end of the saya (*kojiri*) carries depictions of a rising phoenix and a snarling dragon. The *koshirae* exudes harmony.



Saya

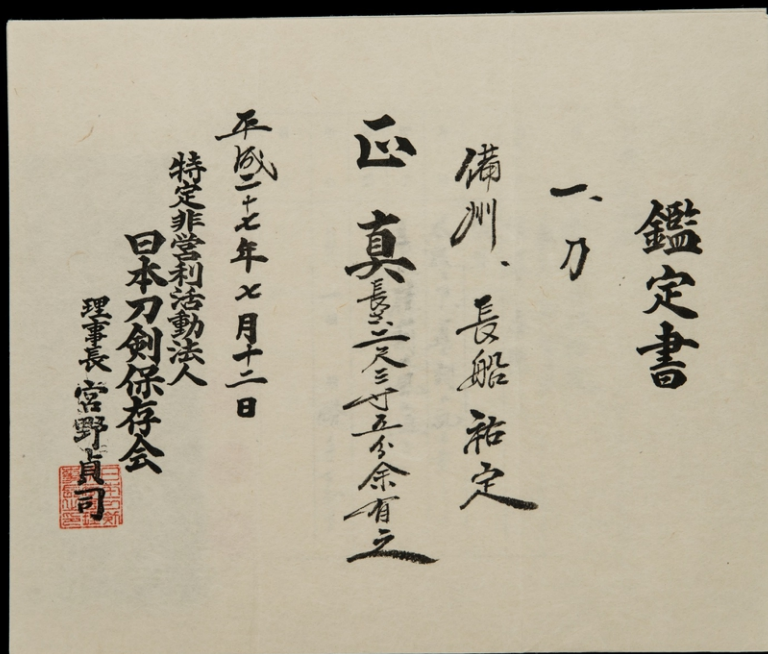
The magnificent *saya* (scabbard) is uniquely lacquered in a whirlpool design that resembles the swirling *jihada* grain pattern in the steel of the katana.

dragon





NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity for the sword



Cover page that contains information such as the smith, length, the date of issue and official seal of the NTHK-NPO.

All information will be translated and printed by Unique Japan for the next caretaker of this katana.



*"Take the first step in faith.
You don't need to see the
whole staircase.
Just take the first step."*

Martin Luther King Jr.

ARIGATO!

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