



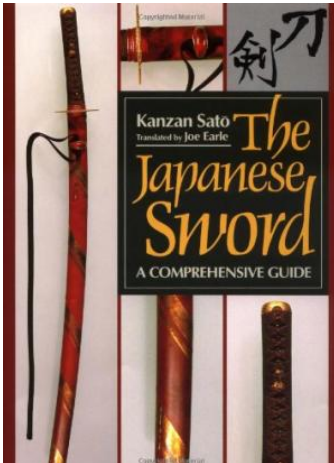
ITEM# UJKA204

A SHODAI KUNIKIYO KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANEI ERA: 1628~1644)

- Swordsmith:** *Echizen no Kami Kunikiyo (Shodai, first generation)*
Length: 70.8cm
Curvature: 1.0cm
Moto-Haba: 3.0cm
Jihada: *Itame with fine ji-nie*
Hamon: *Gunome midare with ko-nie, sunagashi, kinsuji*
Nakago: *Ubu (original)*
Fujishiro: *Jo-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)*
Asaemon: *Wazamono (maker of sharp swords)*
Certificate: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Token** (a sword designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword)
Included: Shirasaya, silk carry bag, sword stand, maintenance kit, DVD, printed care guide, registration and all exportation paperwork from Japan

SOLD (a new custom koshirae is being created)



Dr. Kanzan Sato, former director of the NBTHK (the sword museum of Japan) writes in his book *The Japanese Sword* (left) that *Yamashiro no Kami Kunikiyo* was the *most famous swordsmith* in the Shinto (Edo period) that was granted permission to stamp the *16-petal kiku-mon* imperial family chrysanthemum on the *nakago* of his swords.

Kunikiyo first left his hometown of Suruga province to Kyoto and became a star student of grandmaster swordsmith *Horikawa Kunihiro*.

He received the Horikawa kanji character for *Kuni* whereupon he became Kunikiyo. He left Kyoto in 1614 after his master's death.

Kunikiyo was retained by the powerful *daimyo* (lord) *Matsudaira Tadamas* (right) and moved to Fukui to join him in 1624. Only the finest smiths could be retained by such royalty in Japan.

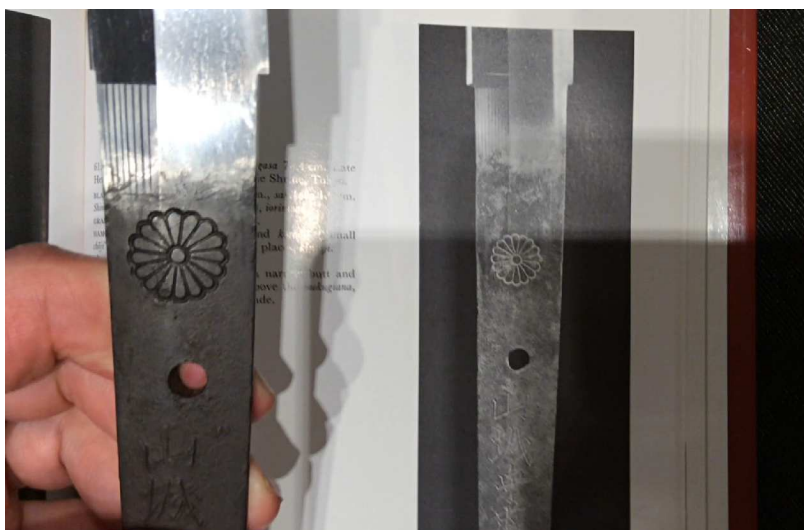
In 1627 he received the honorary title *Yamashiro no Daijo* which is when he received permission to engrave the 16-petal *kikumon*. A year later, in 1628, Kunikiyo's title became the more prestigious *Yamashiro no Kami* (Lord of Yamashiro [Kyoto] province).

Kunikiyo is thought to have died in the second year of Keian (1649) at the age of 60. Several generations of Kunikiyo followed.

Kunikiyo is renowned for producing a fine *suguha* (straight) hamon. Rarely are we treated to such a wonderful Soshu creation with thick *nioguchi* in *gunome midare* and plenty of *hataraki* that we see in this katana. He would have learned these skills from his time under Kunihiro.



The shape of blade makes it easy to draw, a true swordsman's sword. It was surely a custom made katana for a high-ranking Samurai. All told, this is a highly collectible 400-year-old sword with distinguished pedigree. Sword comes with a vintage **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** certificate.



A close-up of the *kikumon* and Dr. Sato's reference book

Custom Koshirae

This katana represents an ideal opportunity to build a custom *koshirae* for, just as the Samurai would have commissioned during the Edo period.

****Update:** A custom *koshirae* in a theme of *chrysanthemums*, drawing on the historical significance of the *kikumon* on the *nakago* is now being planned.

Watch the introductory video here:
<http://tinyurl.com/ujka204-kunikiyo>

Saki-kasane: 4.5mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 6.5mm

Omosa: 745g

Saki-haba: 2.0cm

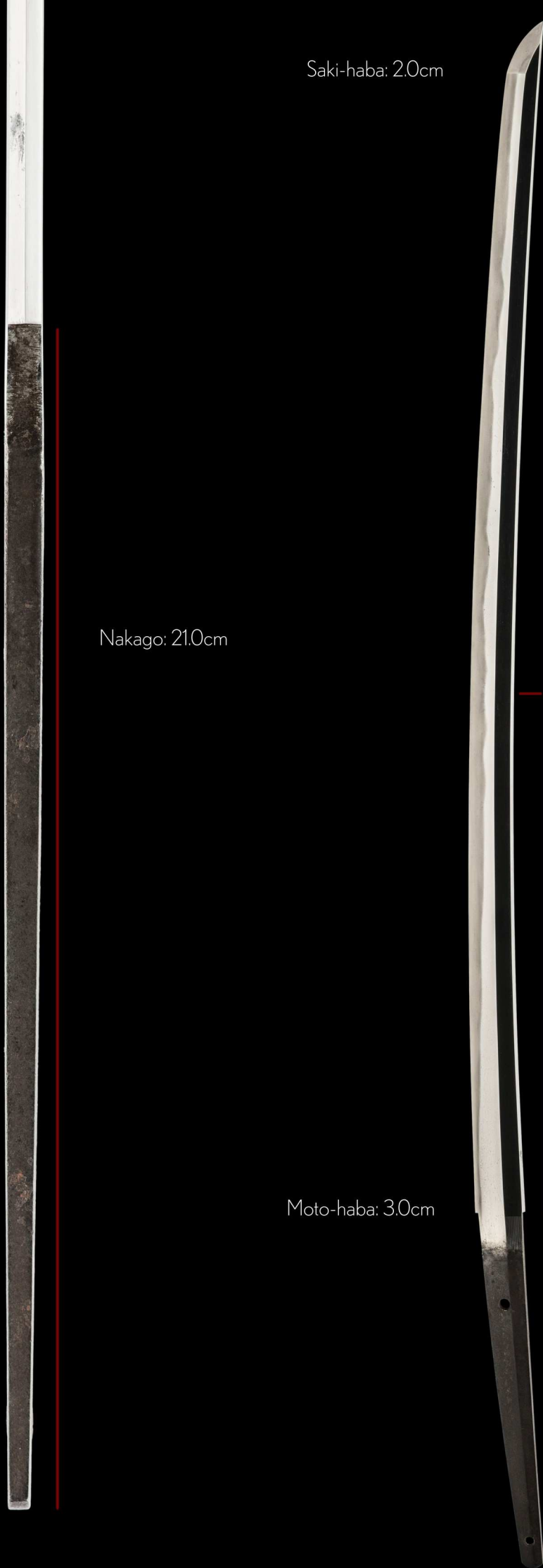
Nakago: 21.0cm

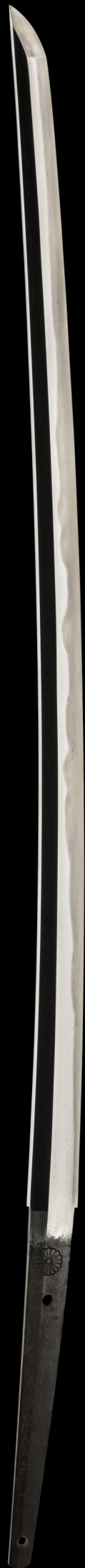
Moto-haba: 3.0cm

Nagasa: 70.8cm

Sori: 1.0cm

Mekugi-ana: 2





Title: Yamashiro no Kami
Clan: Fujiwara
Swordsmith: Kunikiyo (1st gen)

Kiku-mon

Yama
shiro
(no) Kami
Fuji
wara
Kuni
kiyo



特保
71995001

№ 140216



鑑定書

長二尺三寸三分

一刀 銘 (菊紋) 山城守藤原國清

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

平成七年四月十四日

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 7th year of Heisei (1995), April 14th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

(Kiku-Mon) Yamashiro no Kami Fujiwara Kunikiyo

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 3-bu (70.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

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Jihada

Yamashiro no Kami Kunikiyo was admired for his fine *masame hada* (straight grain) in the *shinogi-ji* and a dense *itame* in the *jihada*.

a resilient itame hada



Kunikiyo studied under master swordsmith *Horikawa Kunihiro* in the early 1600s.

As such, when he crafted swords in a *midare hamon*, the steel takes on a *Soshu tradition* look and feel with plentiful *hataraki* (action in the hamon).

Kunikiyo was famous for a wide, bright and consistent *nioguchi*.

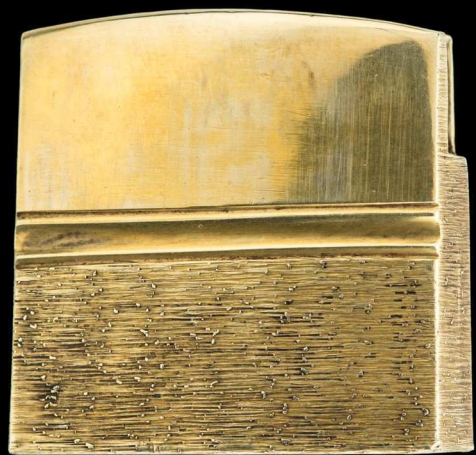


A close-up, low-angle shot of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (edge) with a golden line. The blade is dark and textured, with a bright, circular highlight on the edge. The background is black.

Kinsuji
beautiful golden lines
in the hamon...



Shirasaya



Yokoyasuri-habaki
(brass)

Timeless appreciation.

