



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon is guaranteed. The original NBTHK certificate was lost.

ITEM# UJKA278

A SHODAI MASAHIRO KATANA

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

- Swordsmith:** *Hizen no Kuni Kawachi Daijo Fujiwara Masahiro (shodai, first generation)*
- Measurements:** **Length:** 76.0cm (*ubu*) **Curvature:** 1.5cm **Moto-haba:** 3.3cm
- Jihada:** *Ko-mokume leading to Hizen konuka-hada, thick nie-deki*
- Hamon:** *Gorgeous gunome choji-midare with kinsuji and sunagashi*
- Certificate:** **Guaranteed NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*a sword designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Art Sword*)
- Certificate #2-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a tsuba, fuchi-kashira and koshirae designated as Authentic by the Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword*)
- Fujishiro:** **Jo-saku** (*ranked as a superior swordsmith*)
- Cutting ability:** **Wazamono** (*maker of sharp swords*)
- Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

SOLD

Kawachi Masahiro was born *Sadenjiro* in 1607 and died at only 59 in 1665. He is the son of *Yoshinobu* who was the adopted son of the great first generation *Shodai Tadayoshi*. He began signing as *Masanaga* and even signed for *Shodai Tadayoshi* when he became ill (*dai-me*). Recognizing his clear talent, his employer *Lord Nabeshima Katsushige* suggested he change his name to *Masahiro*, thus becoming *Shodai Masahiro*. This long and splendid katana housed within a striking Edo period koshirae is a tour de force by this powerhouse of a swordsmith. A magnificent *gunome-choji-midare hamon* over a tightly forged *konuka-hada* captures the heart and imagination. This is a top-class samurai sword in every sense of the word.

Saki-kasane: 4.9mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 875g

Saki-haba: 2.1cm

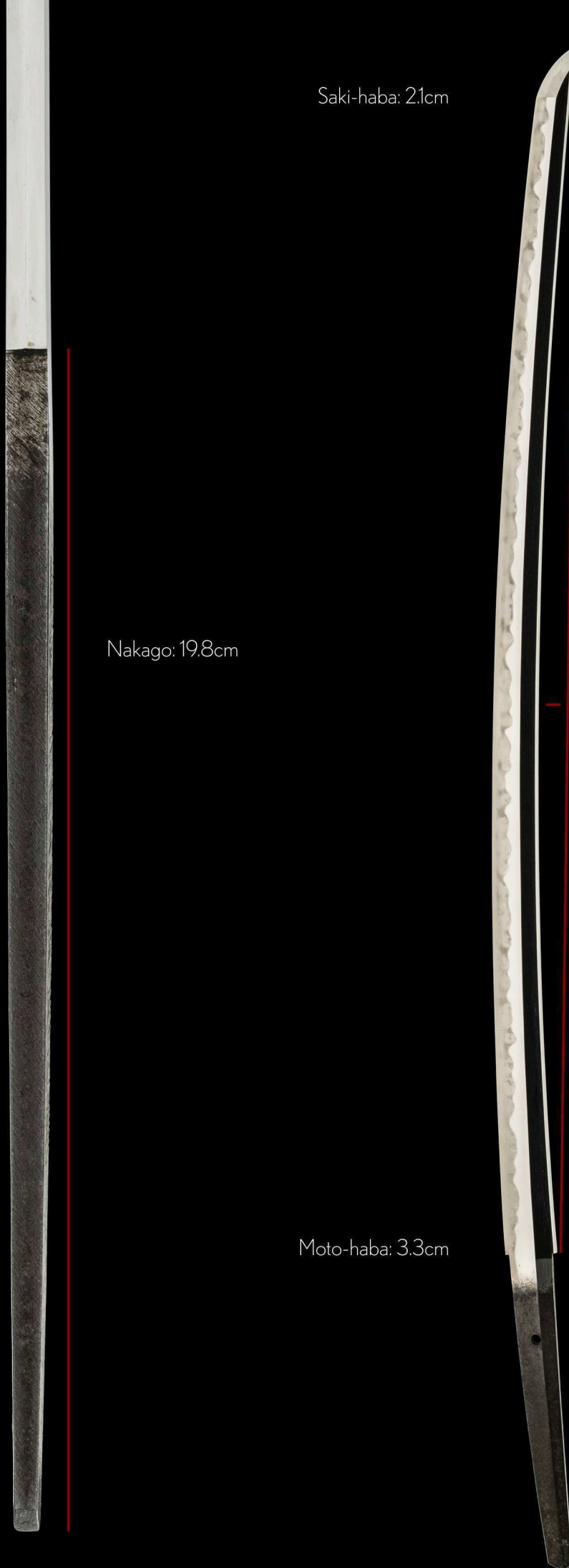
Nakago: 19.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.3cm

Nagasa: 76.0cm

Sori: 1.5cm

Mekugi-ana: 1





Location: *Hizen no Kuni* (Hizen province)

Title: *Kawachi Daijo* (assistant lord of Kawachi province)

Clan: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Masahiro* [first generation]

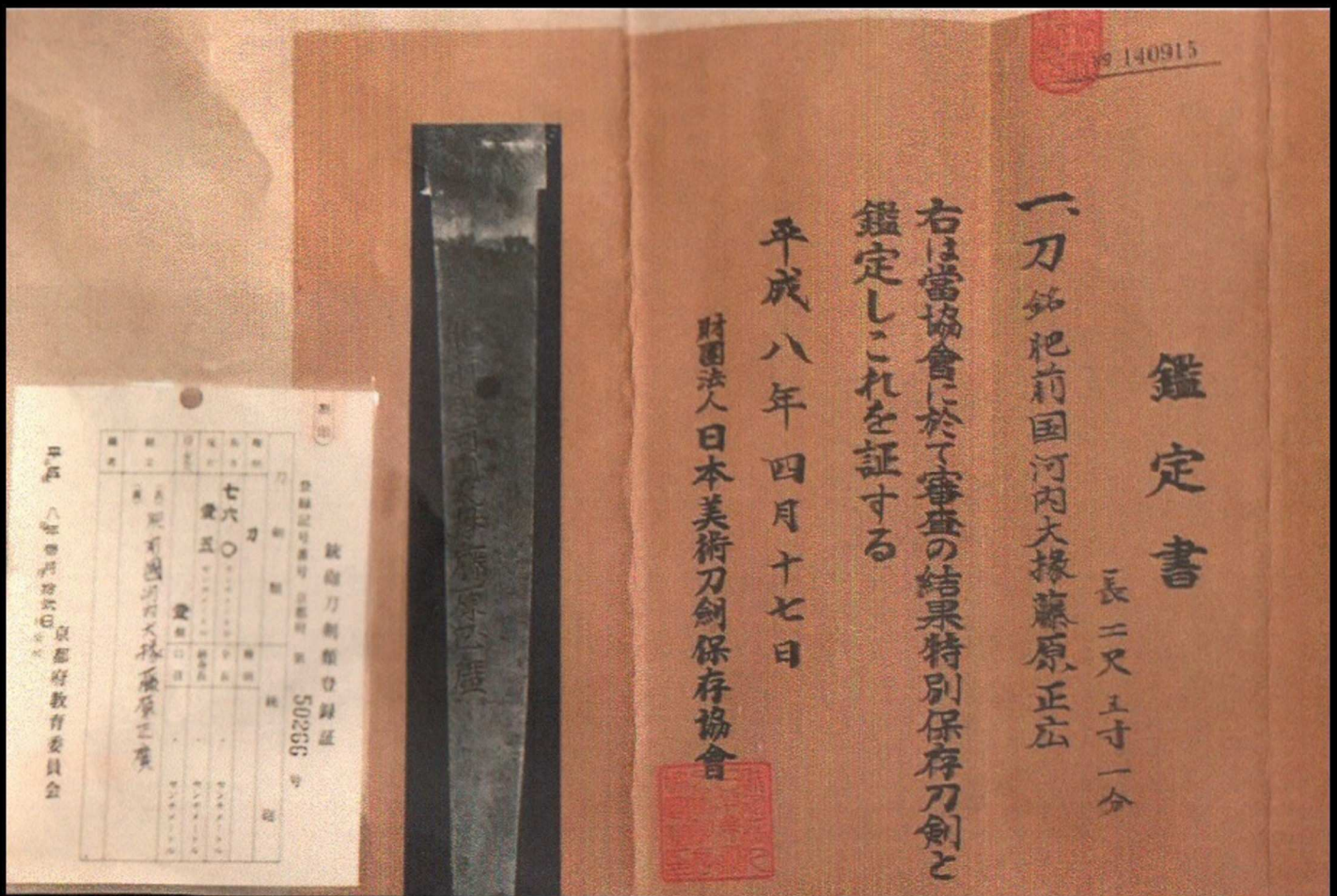
Hi
zen
(no) kuni
Ka
wachi
Dai
jo
Fuji
wara
Masa
hiro

**note that this katana is signed *tachi-me* whereby the signature is chiselled on the side of the *nakago* that is facing *away* from the samurai when the blade is worn cutting-edge down.

Signing *tachi-me* is a characteristic of the majority of katana (not wakizashi) that were crafted in Hizen province.







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 8th year of Heisei (1996), April 17th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Hizen no Kuni Kawachi Daijo Fujiwara Masahiro

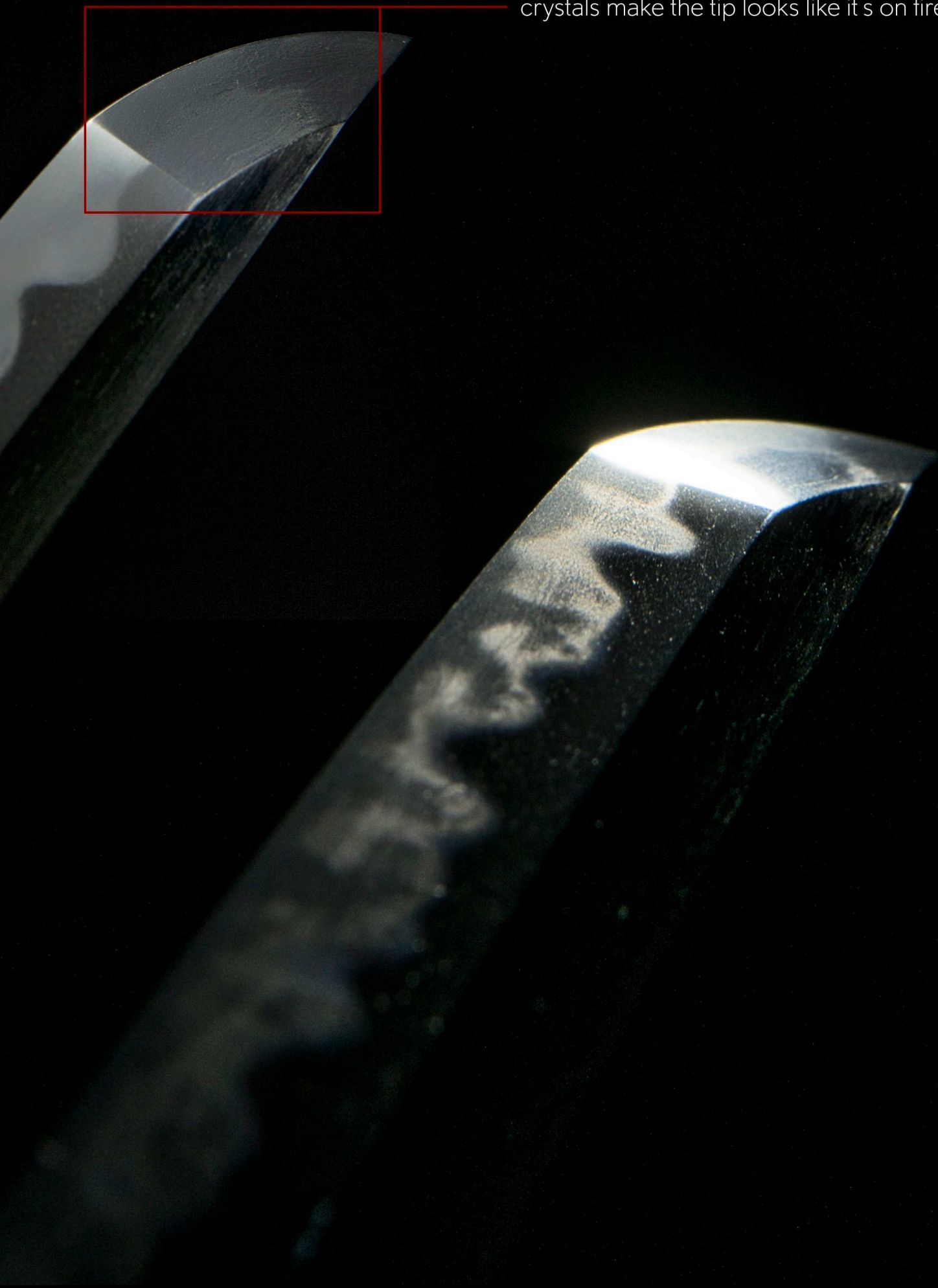
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 5-sun 1-bu (76.0cm)

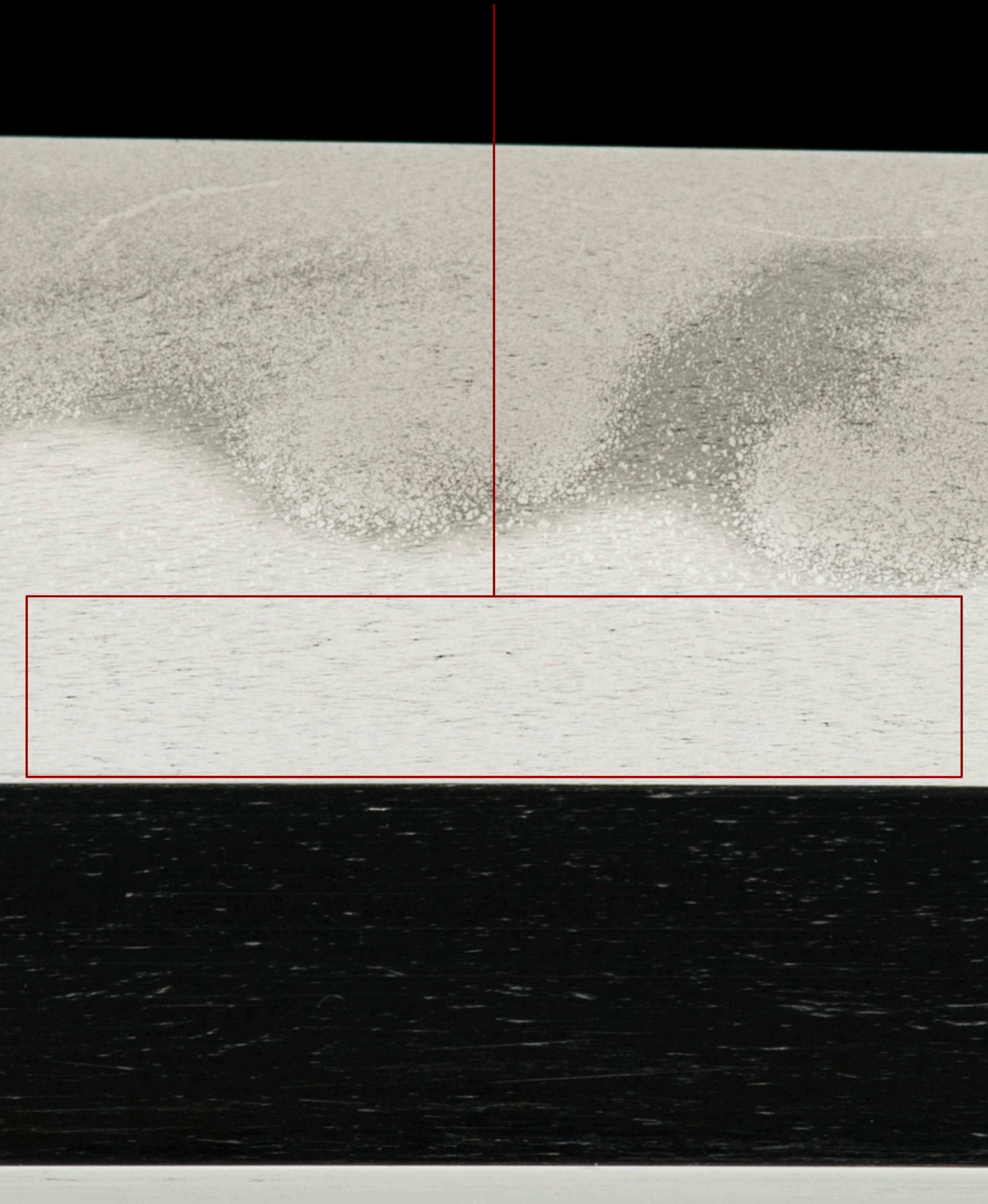
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

**This is a copy of the original NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate that was unfortunately lost by a past owner. By policy the NBTHK does not re-issue certificates that are lost or stolen. Therefore a new shinsa application will be required. We guarantee that this sword will pass NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon and shall cover all associated certification costs.

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



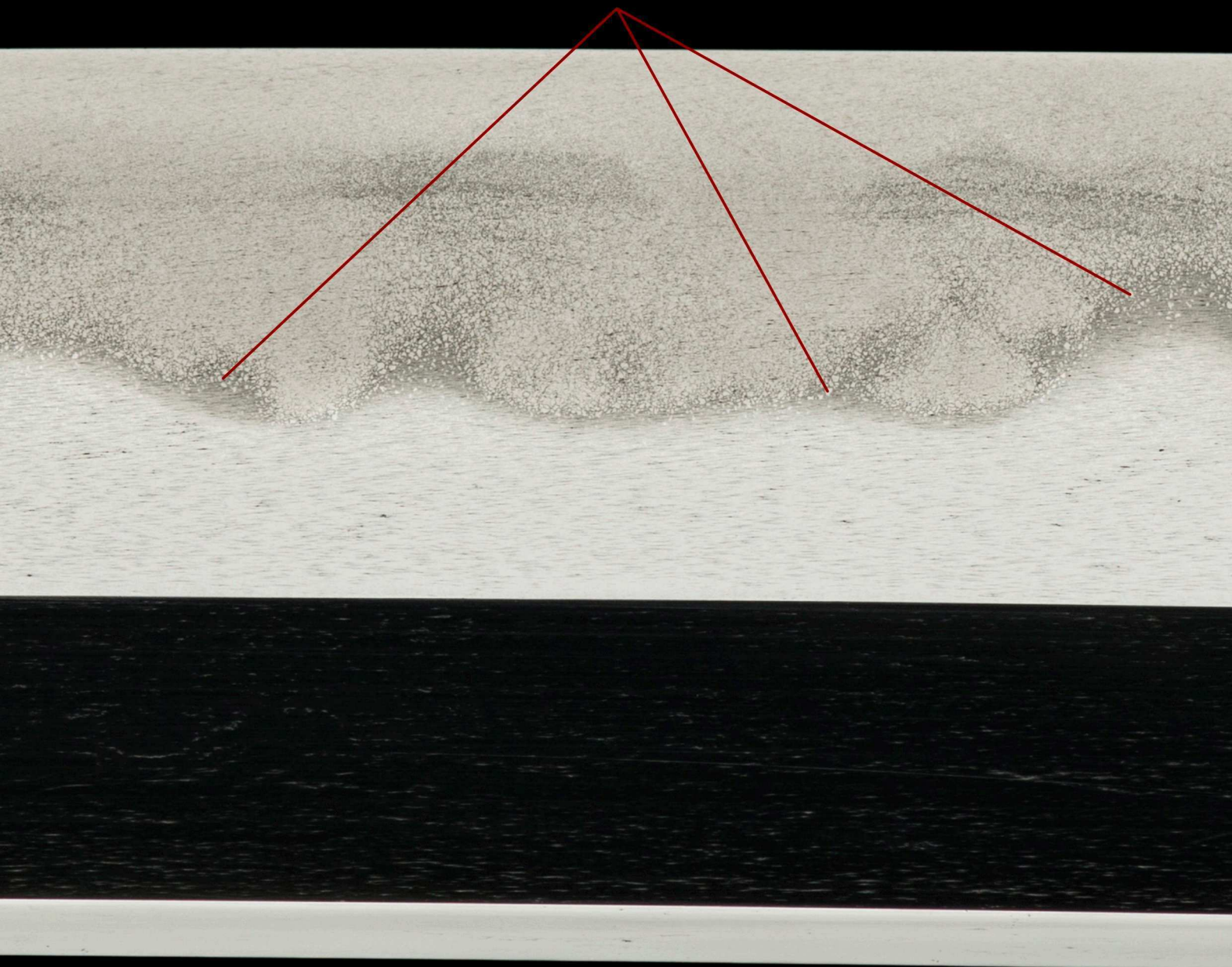
Classic Hizen tradition *mokume-hada* that is so tightly forged it is known as *konuka-hada* (resembling rice bran).



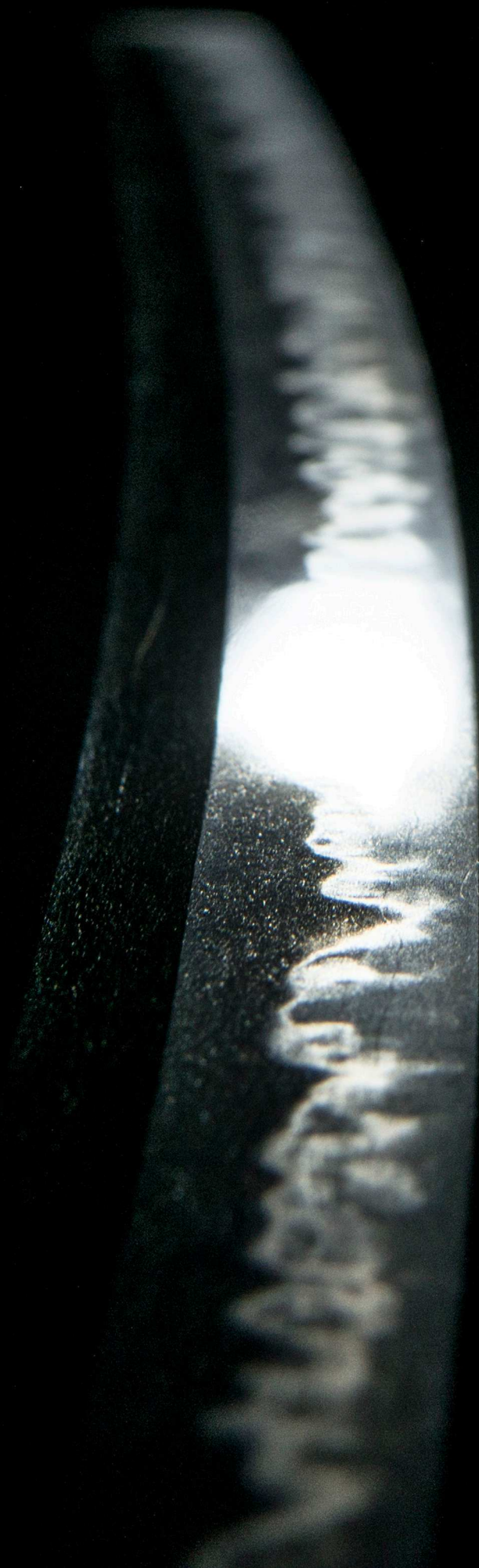
Shodai Masahiro was known for forging swords in thick *nie-deki*, where generous splashes of visible nie crystals cover the blade like twinkling stars.

Tip! Using a strong magnifying glass when examining a sword such as this piece in hand opens up a whole new world of visual appreciation.

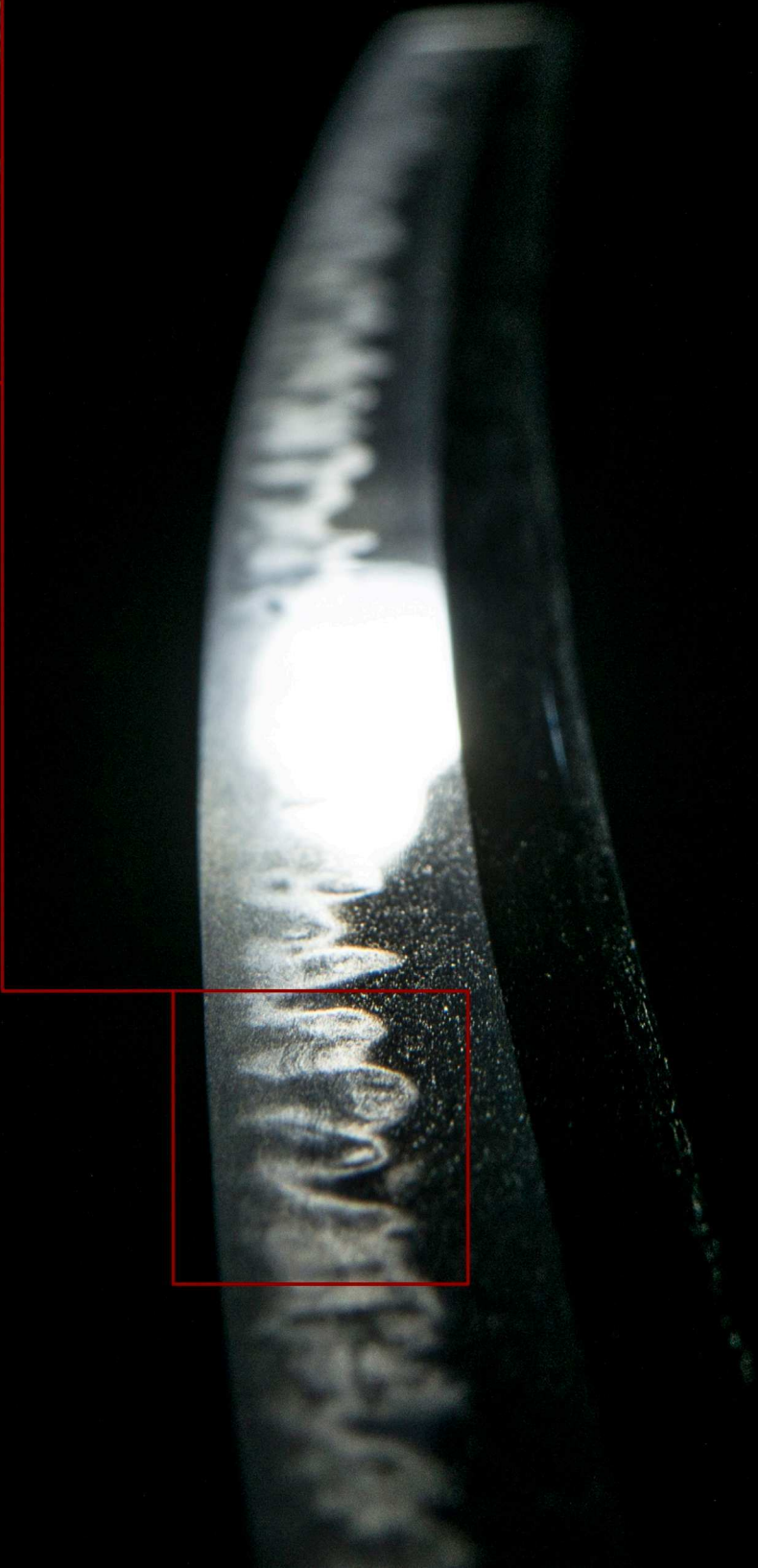
nie crystals

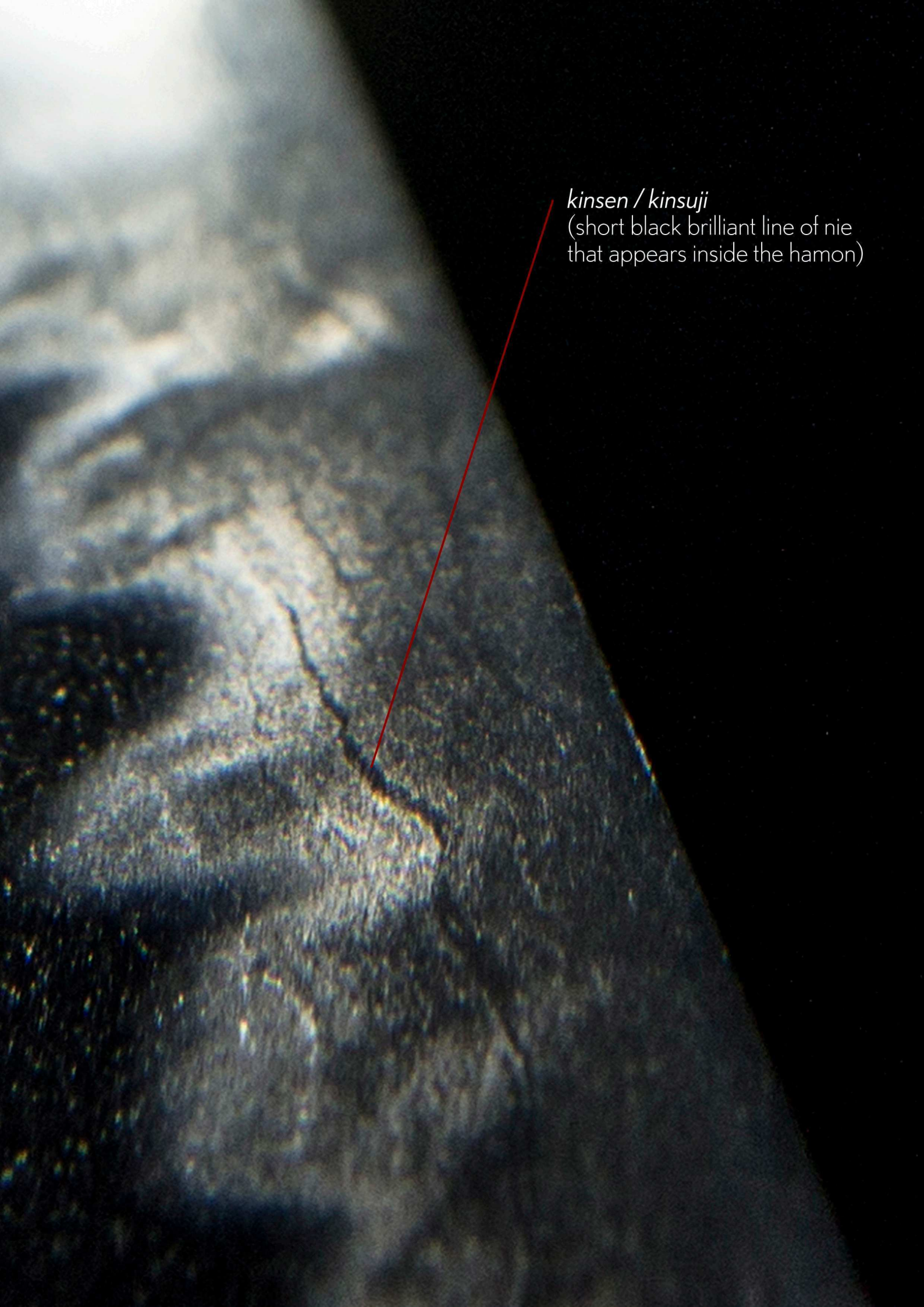


A marvellous *gunome choji midare hamon*, a wild temper line of clove blossom buds, illuminates the blade.



Plenty of *sunagashi*, where the hamon appears brushed.





kinsen / kinsuji
(short black brilliant line of nie
that appears inside the hamon)

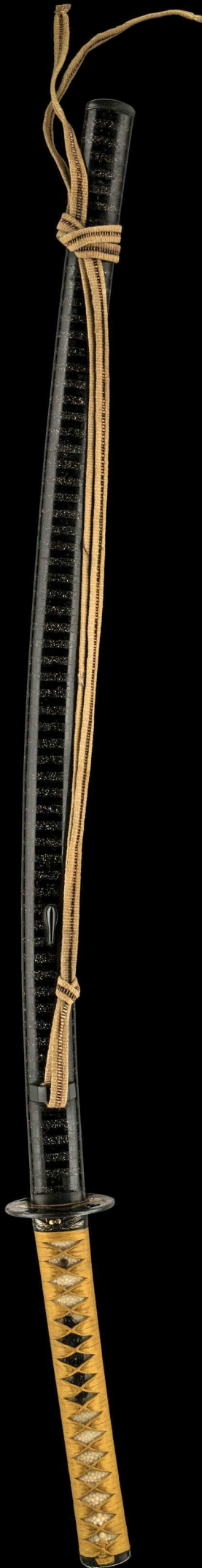
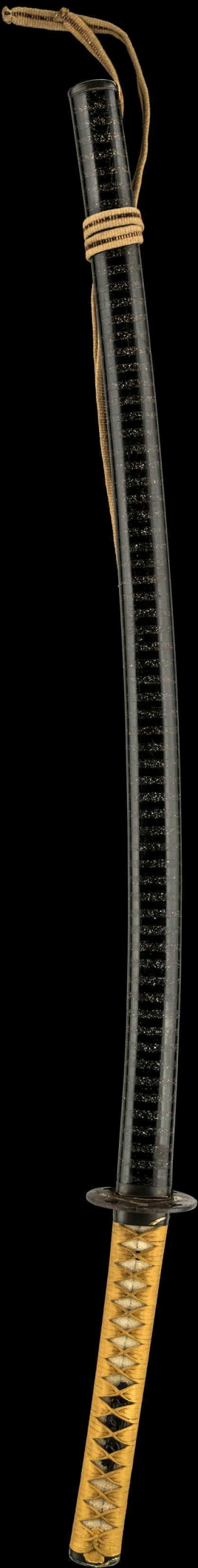


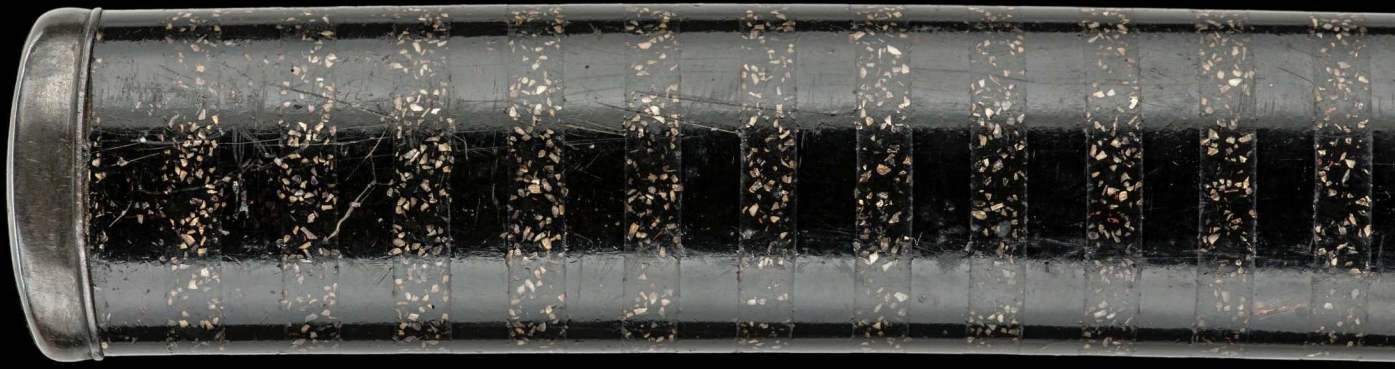
Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



Ibushigin Flower Niju-habaki
(oxidized silver)

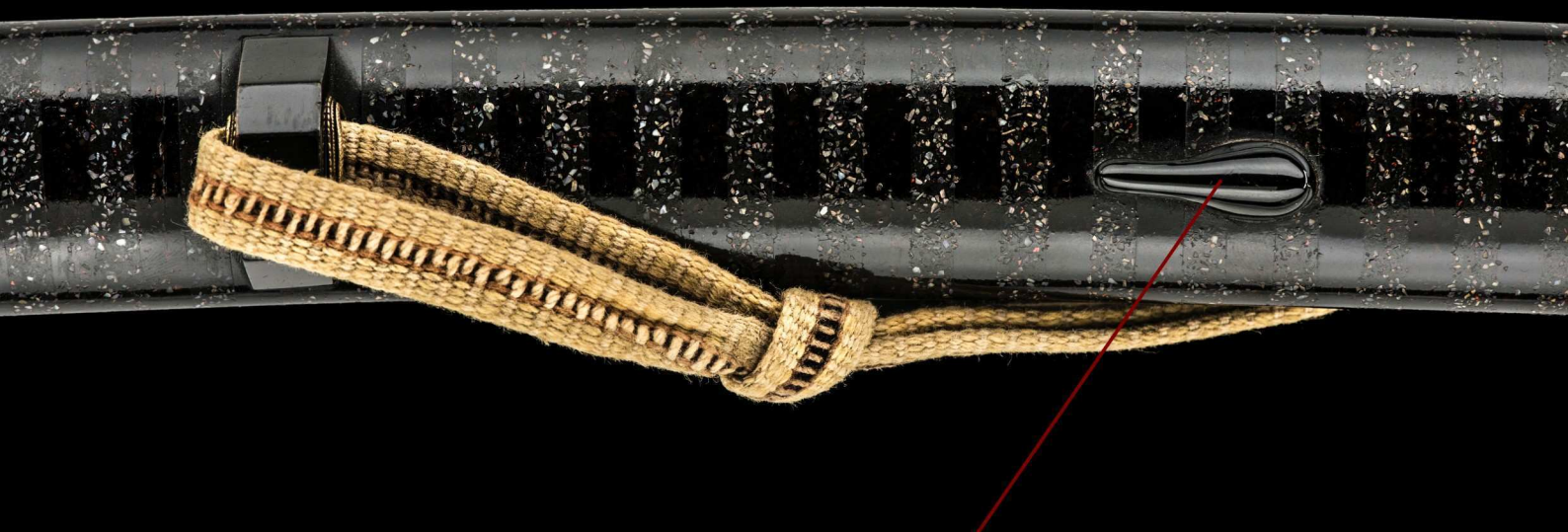
a classic samurai
uchigatana koshirae





This *saya* (scabbard) has been dated and certified to the middle Edo period (circa 1688 to 1780). The *urushi* (lacquer) technique is called *raden fuemaki*, where symmetrical flute-like stripes of mother-of-pearl decorate the piece.

This skilful, understated design is very samurai. Note the thin scratches of time near the tip of the *saya* that denotes decades and decades of history.



This hook made of horn on the *saya* is called *kaerizuno*. It secures the sword in the belt and stops it from slipping out or being pulled out by an opponent.



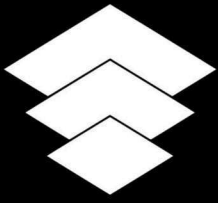
A fine polished iron tsuba with gold cloth inlay attributed to the famous *Umetada school* dated to the mid-Edo period, circa 1700s.

The four triple-diamond shapes in the corners of the tsuba are called *sangaibishi*.

This is the official *kamon* (family crest) of the *Ogasawara daimyo* that ruled the *Karatsu domain* in Hizen province from 1817 to 1871.



This tsuba is certified with NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certification



(reversed)

The *sangaibishi* (triple diamond) *kamon* of the *Ogasawara clan* that ruled the Karatsu domain in Hizen province (modern-day Saga prefecture) from 1817-1971.



Karatsu castle





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

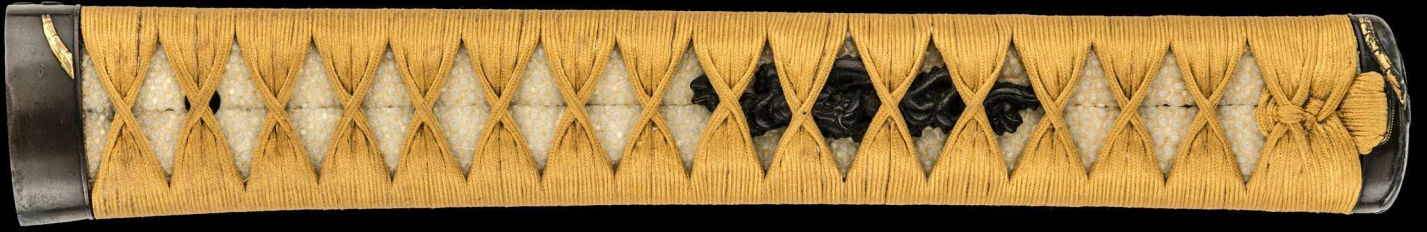
Dragonflies are a symbol of determination and bravery, reflecting
the very essence of the samurai themselves.





kashira (pommel) of a dragonfly.

This *fuchi-kashira* has been certified by the NTHK-NPO to the *Iga school* from the late Edo period, early 1800s.



Large and powerful *shakudo menuki* in the form of crawling dragons give grip to the samurai while providing spiritual protection to the sword.

They are secured by a beautiful two-strand *tsukamaki* weave called *tsunegumi-kumiagemaki*.





Hiizen
Masahiro



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

Many swords every year are sold this way to happy clients around the world. Contact service@uniquejapan.com where we'll discuss the type of sword, age and other special qualities you are seeking along with budget parameters. Meetings are held at our studio near JR Ebisu station.