



ITEM# UJKA293

## A SA YUKIHIDE KATANA

SIGNED WITH ORIKAESHI-MEI, LATE EDO PERIOD (KAEI ERA: 1848-1864)

**Swordsmith:** *Chikushu Ju Sa Yukihide (orikaeshi-mei, folded-over signature by T. Hidetsugu)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 71.8cm (*orikaeshime*)      **Curvature:** 1.4cm      **Moto-haba:** 3.2cm  
**Jihada:** *Masame-hada with nagare-hada and chikei and bright ji-nie*  
**Hamon:** *Thick nie and nioi with wide notare -kinsuji, sunagashi and gunome-ashi appear*  
**Certificate #1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation*)  
**Certificate #2-3:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*a tsuba and koshirae designated as Authentic*)  
**Fujishiro:** **Jojo-saku** (*ranked as a highly superior swordsmith*)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, koshirae, fabric bag, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, description

**SOLD**

Born in 1813, native of *Chikuzen province* in Kyushu and one of the most celebrated swordsmiths during the *shinshinto* period, *Sa Yukihide* (pronounced *Sah Yoo-key-hee-day*) regarded himself as the thirty-ninth generation of the great *Sa (Samonji)*, who worked in Chikuzen in the early 1300s.

Yukihide travelled up to *Edo* (Tokyo) in about 1830 and became a pupil of *Shimizu Hisayoshi*, himself a disciple of *Hosokawa Masayoshi*. In 1846, he moved to the island of *Shikoku* and became a retained swordsmith of the *Yamanouchi family* of *Tosa province*. There he worked with smith *Sekita Katsuhiro*. In 1862 he returned to *Edo*, taking up residence at the *Yamanouchi yashiki* (urban mansion) however when the *Edo period* came to an end with the *Meiji Restoration* in 1868 he went back to *Tosa*, where he died in 1885 at the age of seventy-four.



In his early years, *Sa Yukihide* (pictured left) worked in a style similar to his master *Hisayoshi* tempering a slanting *chōji-midare* (clove blossom) with a tight *nioiguchi*. After his move to Tosa, and having worked under *Katsuhiko*, he changed his style entirely. From that time, he tempered a *notare* with *gunome-ashi* in very bright and thick *nie* emulating the master works of *Gō Yoshihiro*, *Inoue Shinkai* and *Kotetsu*. And it was in this spirit that this magnificent katana by maestro *Sa Yukihide* was produced.

Plenty of conversation points surrounding this remarkable piece. It was first crafted as a *kinno to* or “royalist sword” that had an extremely long cutting edge of 88.2cm. We know this because in the mid-1900s, WWII swordsmith *Takahashi Hidetsugu*, student of *Gassan Sadatsugu*, chiseled the original *nagasa* on the newly formed *nakago* after he carefully reduced it to 71.8cm by way of *orikaeshi-mei* or folded over signature (see images below).

This is one solidly made sword, weighing nearly 1kg, or 2.2 pounds. Almost certainly, this was a cherished family sword that was carried in WWII by a high-ranking officer that needed it to be modified for military service. Any samurai that was fortunate enough to own a *Yukihide* sword knew his life could depend on it. A sense of invincibility embodies the steel. It’s deep, rich *hamon* further heightens the senses.

Until today, an impressive 58 swords by *Sa Yukihide* have attained prestigious NBTHK Juyo Token. It is a remarkable achievement by a genuine artist of the 19th century. An exquisite *koshirae* with a powerful dragon theme was built for the katana as the following pages describe.

This is a samurai sword for the ages.



*orikaeshi-mei* (folded over signature)

Saki-kasane: 6.6mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 7.5mm

Omosa: 985g

Kissaki: 3.44cm  
Saki-haba: 2.1cm

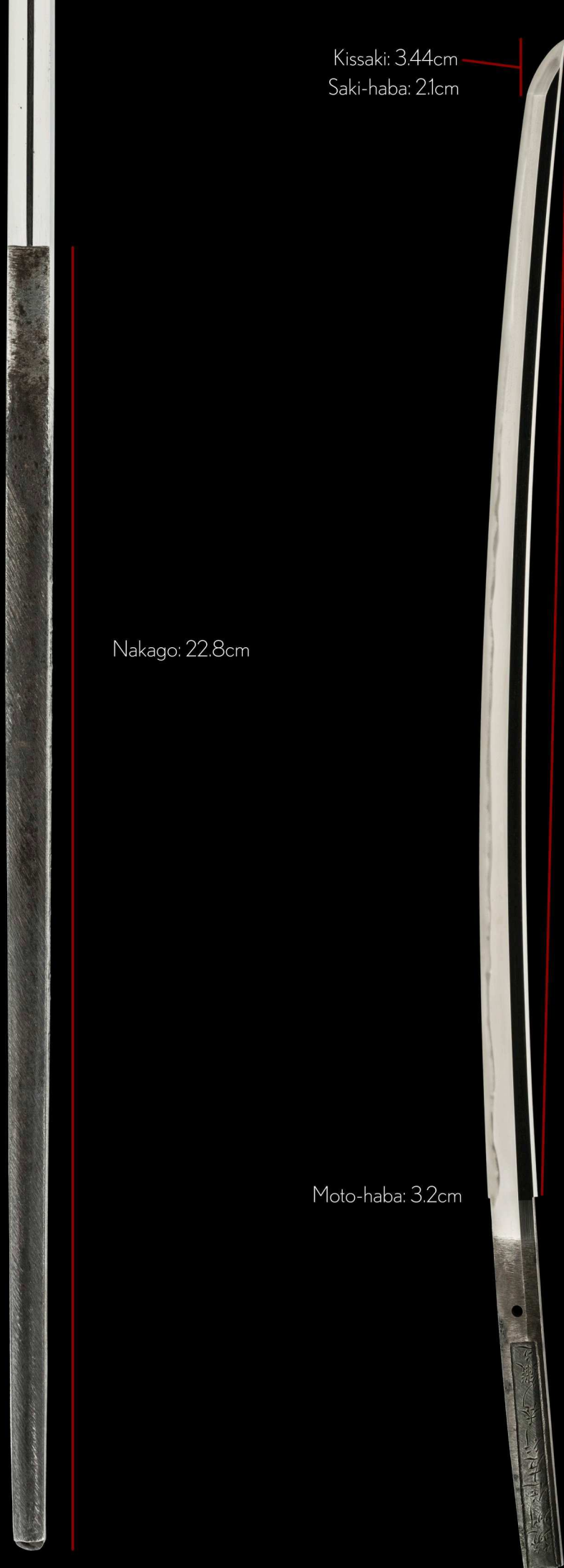
Nakago: 22.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Nagasa: 71.8cm

Sori: 1.4cm

Mekugi-ana: 1

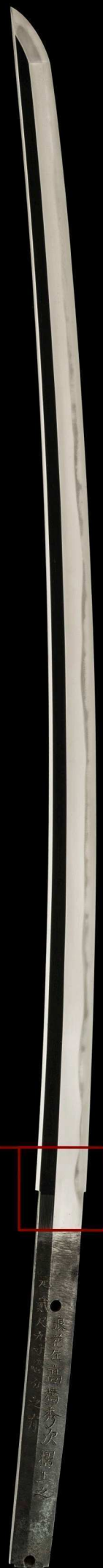


*Mitsu* (three) *mune* (spine/ridge) is a relatively rare construction whereby the spine has three surfaces.

It is generally found in the blades of smiths working in the *Soshu tradition* (such as this katana) as well as tanto of the Yamashiro school of the Koto period.



(top view)



This katana was forged by *Sa Yukihide*, resident of *Chikuzen province* [Kyushu].

This sword features an *orikaeshi-mei*, or “folded-over signature.” When a *nakago* is shortened, the part bearing the signature is sometimes thinned down and folded up onto the opposite side.

This preserves the original signature, which then appears upside-down on the opposite side of the tang.



Translation of the inscription:

This sword was shortened by *Takahashi Hidetsugu* from Naniwa ward [in Osaka].

The original length (cutting edge) of the blade was *2-shaku 9-sun 1-bu* (88.2cm).

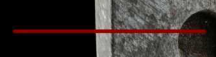
Takahashi Hidetsugu was a *Jojo-saku* (highly superior) WWII swordsmith and student of *Gassan Sadatsugu* - Japan's first swordsmith to be appointed *Ningen Kokuho* (Living National Treasure) in 1955.

Moto  
ni  
shaku  
ku  
sun  
ichi  
bu  
kore  
ari

元  
戴  
尺九寸壹分之二有  
浪花住高橋秀次摺上之

Nani  
wa  
ju  
Taka  
hashi  
Hide  
tsugu  
kore  
o  
suriagaru

original hole



*Sa Yukihide* was commissioned to make a number of blades called *kinno to* (royalist swords) during his career. These extra long katana featured a cutting edge of between 80-90cm with very little curvature. They became popular during the late Edo period among samurai who supported the emperor - the so-called "royalists".



A Kinnoto with nagasa of 86.5cm  
source: Encyclopedia of Japanese Swords (Markus Sesko)

This katana was once a *kinno to* that was carefully shortened by WWII swordsmith *Takahashi Hidetsugu* by *orikaeshi-me* to a more classic katana length. This sword would have likely been carried by a high-ranking military officer in WWII.



*orikaeshi-me*  
(folded-over signature)

25201605

No 1005901



鑑定書

一丁

(折返銘)

筑州住左行秀鍛之

(切付銘)

浪花住高橋秀次摺上之

元貳尺九寸七分弱

長二尺三寸七分弱

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

平成二十八年七月二十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



教育委員会  
第 8413 号  
昭和 28 年 3 月 9 日  
平成 27 年 9 月 11 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 28th year of Heisei (2016), July 21st

One, Katana

*Orikaeshi-mei* (folded-over signature)

*Chikushu-ju Sa Yukihide kore o kitau*

Forged by Sa Yukihide, resident of Chikuzen province

*Naniwa-ju Takahashi Hidetsugu kore o suriagaru - Moto nishaku kusun ichibu kore ari*

Shortened by Takahashi Hidetsugu from Naniwa (Osaka) - Original length 88.2 cm

*Nagasa* (length)


2-shaku 3-sun 7-bu han (71.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



Yukihide forged muscular swords comprising of a dense and uniform *masame-hada* (straight grain) steel grain pattern.

This blade weighs nearly 1kg (2.2lbs), about 25% heavier than most other katana of a similar length.



Yukihide claimed to be a successor of the great swordsmith *Samonji* of *Chikuzen province* (from early 1300s) thus calling himself *Sa Yukihide*.

The works of *Go Yoshihiro*, *Inoue Shinkai* and *Kotetsu* provided inspiration to Yukihide - his unique workmanship firmly places him as one of the shining stars of the shinshinto era (1780-1867).

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the intricate patterns of the metal. The blade is dark, with a bright, curved highlight along its edge. A red line points from the text to a specific area on the blade. The background is black.

*gunome-ashi* (legs with a wave pattern)  
are swept to the edge of the blade like a  
painter's palette.

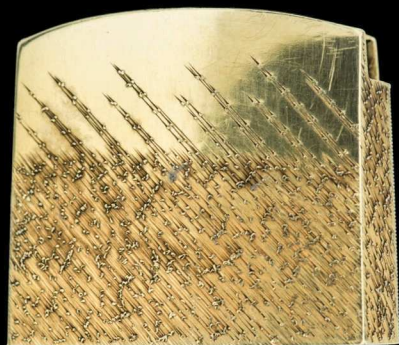
A thick blanket of *nioi* and *nie* crystals illuminate the katana.  
Also deep threads of *chikei* carve through the ji (body).

This is classic Sa Yukihide.





*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



*habaki* with rain pattern



a healthy, earthy glow.





A round *shakudo-nanako tsuba* featuring a gold cloud dragon slithering along the *mimi* (rim) of the piece.

This tsuba has been certified to the prestigious *Yoshioka school* from the late Edo period.





Livin' on the edge...





*crawling dragons in rich shakudo form the menuki*



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*A Sengo Muramasa Tanto in aikuchi koshirae with the Makino family crest.  
Polished by Sasaki-sensei and sayagaki by Tanobe-sensei.*

*Big congratulations Kim!*

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