



ITEM# UJKA313

## A HOJOJI MASAHIRO KATANA

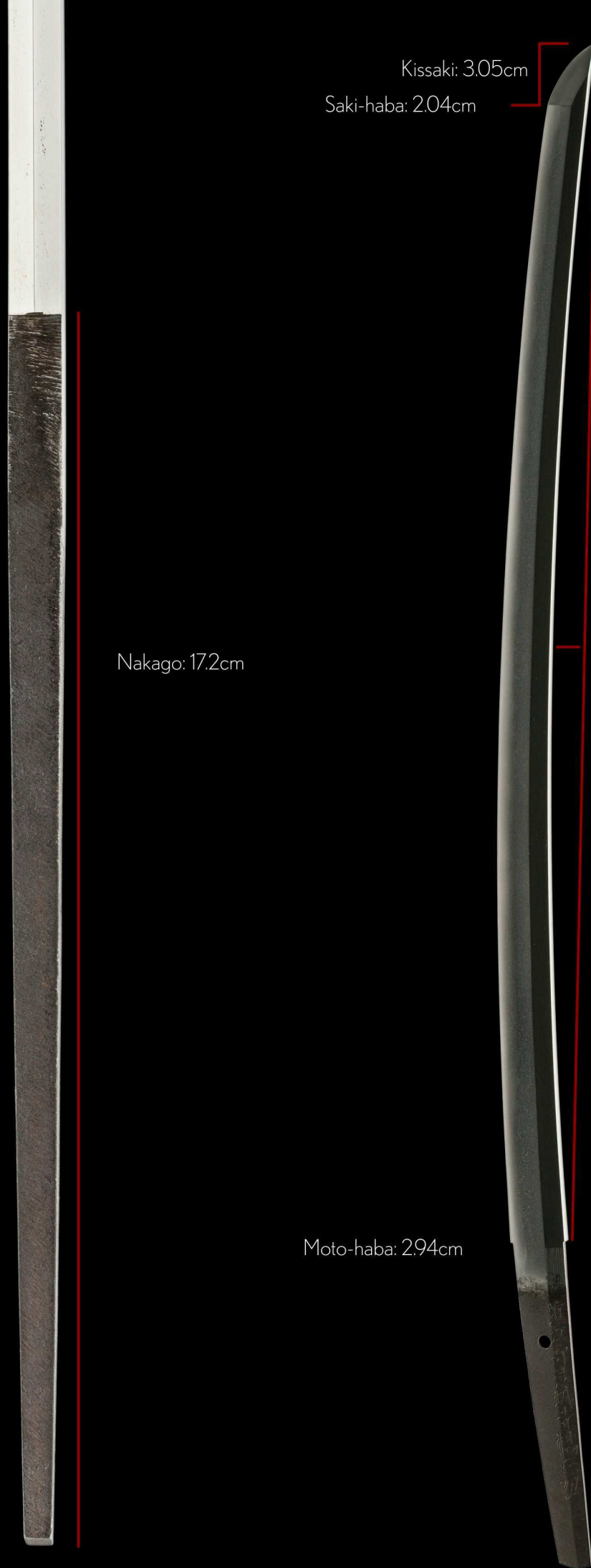
SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (MANJI ERA: 1658~1661)

**Swordsmith:** *Ômi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro (ubu nakago, first generation)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 63.3cm    **Curvature:** 1.3cm    **Motohaha:** 2.94cm  
**Jihada:** *Dense ko-itame with masame-hada in shinogi-ji, chikei, shirake-utsuri ji-nie*  
**Hamon:** *Suguha mixed with wavy gunome-ashi with tobiyaki*  
**Certificate 1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)  
**Certificate 2-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic)  
**Fujishiro:** **Jo-saku** (ranked as a superior swordsmith)  
**Sharpness:** **Wazamono** (rated as a maker of good sharp swords)  
**Authentication:** **Sayagaki by Hon'ami Nisshu**  
**Included:** Shirasaya, koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

**SOLD**

*Shodai Masahiro* was the founder of the *shintô* era *Edo Hôjôji* school that *Kunimitsu* founded in the *Hôjôji* district of *Tajima* province circa 1362. *Masahiro* moved from *Tajima* to *Musashi* (Tokyo) in the early 1650s and carefully developed the school to great respect and prosperity.

There is an authenticity to this katana that echoes the *majime* (serious) character of samurai living in Edo at the time. This would have been a custom-ordered katana given its shorter length, that fighting samurai generally preferred. The *sayagaki* by late Living National Treasure *Hon'ami Nisshû* states that the *yakiba* is gorgeous. Its handsome *koshirae* features a *Mino-Gotô* cloud dragon *tsuba* and a *shiokumi* farming scene on the *fuchi-kashira* signed by *Mogarashi Nyûdo Sôten*.



Saki-kasane: 5.8mm

Moto-kasane: 7.4mm

Omosa: 755g

Nakago: 17.2cm

Moto-haba: 2.94cm

Kissaki: 3.05cm  
Saki-haba: 2.04cm

Nagasa: 63.3cm

Sori: 1.3cm

Mekugi-ana: 1

Shodai Masahiro's birth name is *Takigawa Saburôdayû* and hailed from *Hirohara* in Tajima province where he was a descendant of the lineage of *Hôjôji Kunimitsu*.

Masahiro moved to the capital Edo (Tokyo) and established the *Edo-Hôjôji* school in the early 1650s, serving the burgeoning demand for quality samurai swords.

Masahiro crafted primarily katana and wakizashi as the daisho was protocol for active samurai.





Location: *Edo* (resident of Tokyo)

Title: *Ômi no Kami* (Lord of Ômi province)

School: *Hôjôji*

Clan: *Tachibana*

Swordsmith: *Masahiro* (first generation)

近 (Ô)

江 (mi, no)

守 (Kami)

法 (Hô)

城 (jô)

寺 (ji)

橘 (Tachibana)

正 (Masa)

弘 (hiro)

*ura* (reverse)

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

*katte sagari-yasurime*  
(right-handed downward slanting file marks)

*kengyo nakago-jiri*  
(sword-shaped butt end)





An exquisitely signed *nakago* that bears the mark of professionalism.

The excellent condition of the *nakago* is evidence of quality care over more than 350 years.

特選  
28201603

No 1005359



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 近江守法城寺橘正弘

長 二尺〇九分強

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

平成二十八年六月一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會



愛知 教育委員会  
第 15270 号  
昭和29年 1 月 29 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), June 1st

One, Katana

*Mei* (signature)

*Ômi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro*

*Nagasa* (length)

2-shaku 0-sun 9-bu kyô (63.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



近江守法城寺橋正弘  
Ômi no Kami Hôjôji Tachibana Masahiro

時代萬治ノ頃  
*Jidai Manji no koro*  
Dates around the Manji era (1658-1661)

地刃共美事也  
*Jiba tomo migoto nari*  
The *jiba* [jihada and yakiba] is gorgeous

長貳尺壹寸有之  
*Nagasa 2-shaku 1-sun kore ari*  
Length 63.3 cm

昭和己巳歲雨月上浣於上州水上認之  
*Shôwa kinoto midoshi ugetsu jôkan Jôshû Minakami ni oite kore o mitomu*  
Appraised in Minakami in (former) Kôzuke province in the first third of May in the year of the serpent of the Shôwa era (1965)

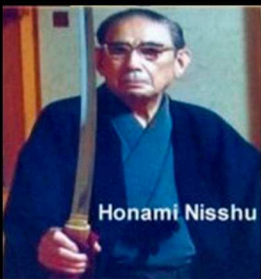
本阿弥日洲(花押)  
*Hon'ami Nisshû + kaô*  
Hon'ami Nisshû + monogram

In the course of his distinguished career as a master sword polisher *Hon'ami Nisshû* was entrusted by the Ministry of Education with the polishing of invaluable swords that were classified as:

*kokuhô* (national treasures)

*jûyô bunkazai* (important cultural properties)

*jûyô bijutsuhin* (important works of art)



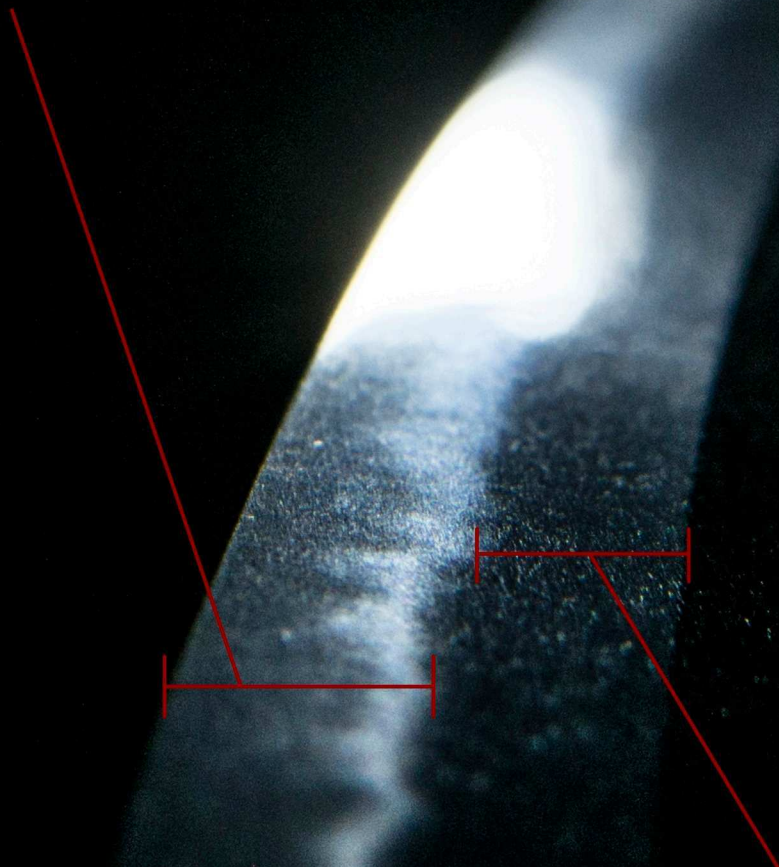
Hon'ami Nisshû was given the title of *Living National Treasure* (*ningen-kokuhô*) on April 23rd, 1975. He died on the 13th of July 1996 at the age of 88.

*Hon'ami Nisshu* sensei describes the sword as having a gorgeous *jiba*.

This word is a fusion of two important sword terms - *jihada* (the grain pattern from the *shinogi* to the hamon) and the *yakiba* (the hardened area along the edge of the blade), in which the pattern is called the *hamon*.

Top-class swords display a uniformity of quality in these sections of the blade. This katana has a clear, bright, well-forged *jiba* - the mark of a superior smith.

*yakiba* (hardened edge of the blade), this section has a greater concentration of carbon allowing it to get razor sharp.



*jihada* (the grain pattern in the *ji* - body of the sword)


A clear, beautiful *jigane* (steel) emits a hue of excellence.



*Muneyaki* (tempering on the mune, spine) is a feature commonly seen on swords of the *Hôjôji* school.

*shirake utsuri*  
-shadow hamon



A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the grain of the metal. The blade is positioned diagonally, with the tip pointing towards the top left. The lighting highlights the texture of the metal, particularly the straight grain (masame-hada) in the shinogi-ji (the upper part of the blade). A red line points from the text below to this specific area of the blade.

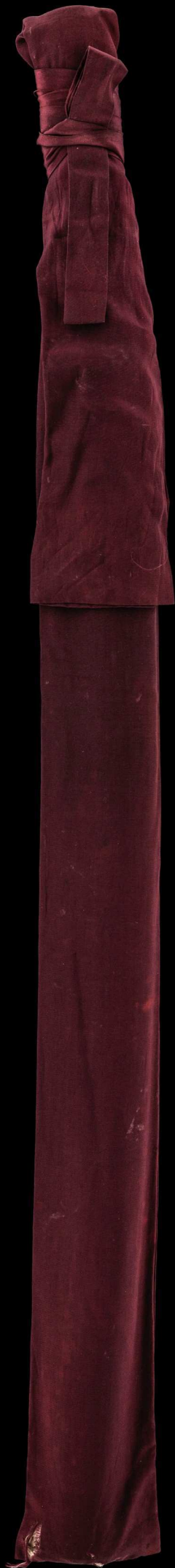
Splendid *masame-hada*  
(straight grain) in the *shinogi-ji*.

Another prominent feature is the presence of *tobiyaki*, tempered spots in the *ji* (body) of the sword.

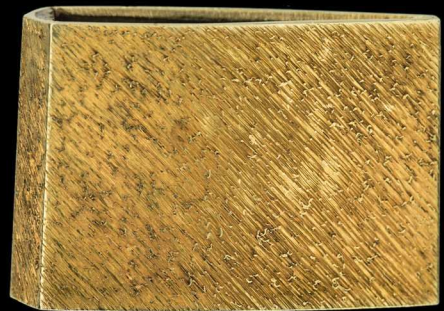




Bright, symmetrical *gunome-ashi* (legs)  
reach out for the cutting edge.



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)

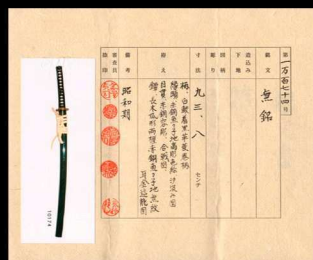


gold *habaki* with  
diagonal file marks

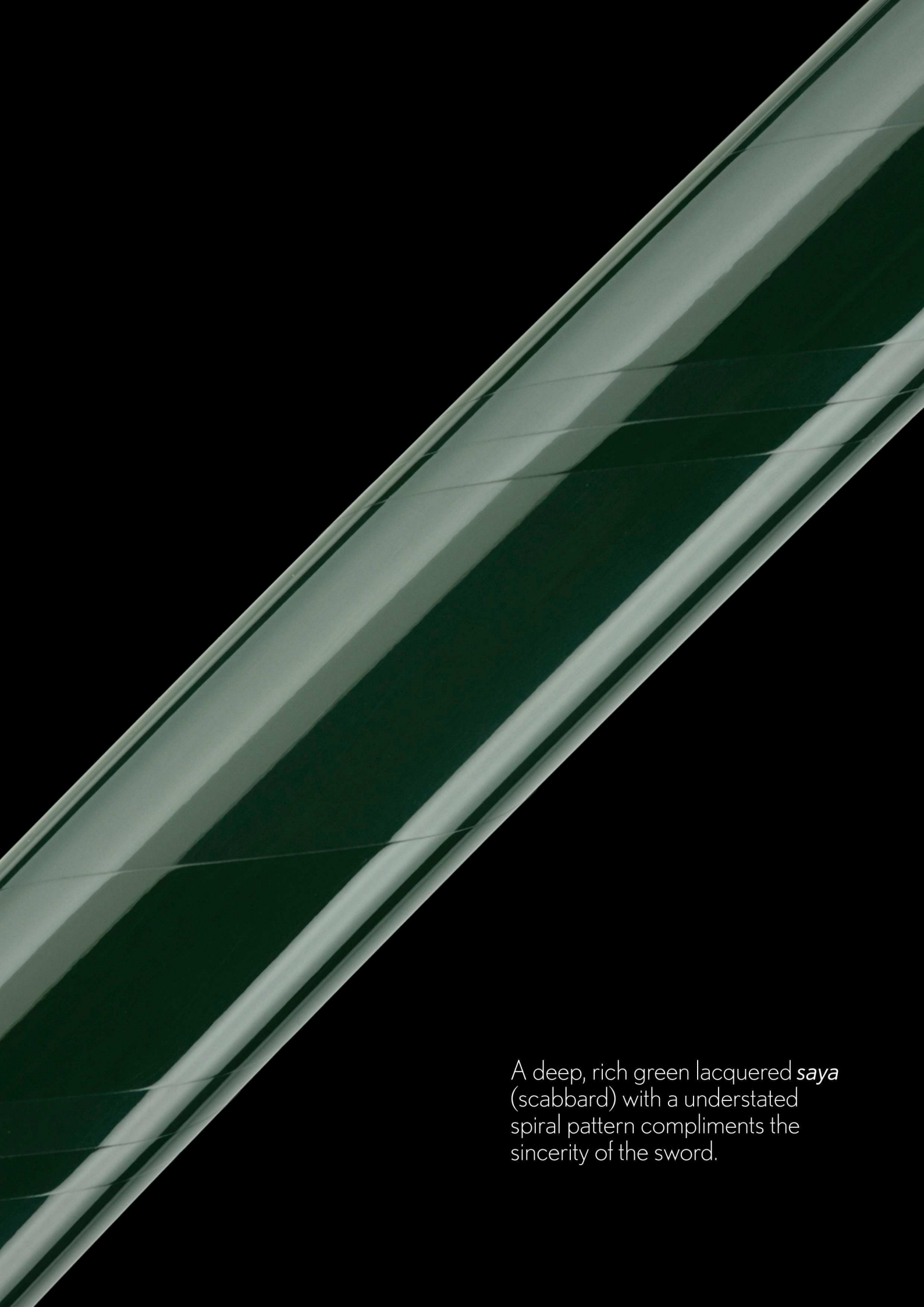
*Midoriiro-hirumaki-nuri saya  
uchigatana-koshirae*  
(緑色蛭巻塗鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae  
lacquered in green with  
spiral pattern*

Crafted during the  
Shôwa period  
(1926~1989)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity



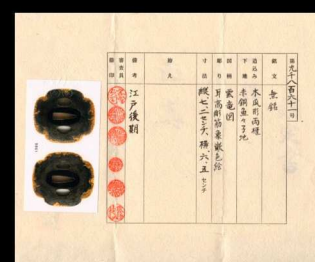
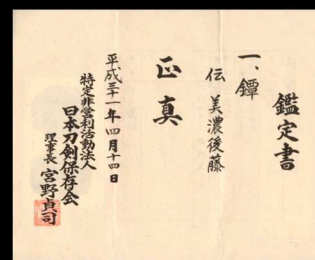
A deep, rich green lacquered *saya* (scabbard) with a understated spiral pattern compliments the sincerity of the sword.



Here is a brilliant *shakudo* with *nanako* ground *tsuba* depicting the motif of a dragon wrapped up in clouds (*unryû on zu*). The way in which the dragon encircles the multi-lobed *mimi* (rim) of the *tsuba* is great fun.

This *tsuba* has been attributed to the work of the famed *Gotô school* in *Mino province (Mino-Gotô)*.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity dating the piece to the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1867 has been attained.





reverse view



claw

head

cloud

*mimi* (rim) view of the tsuba

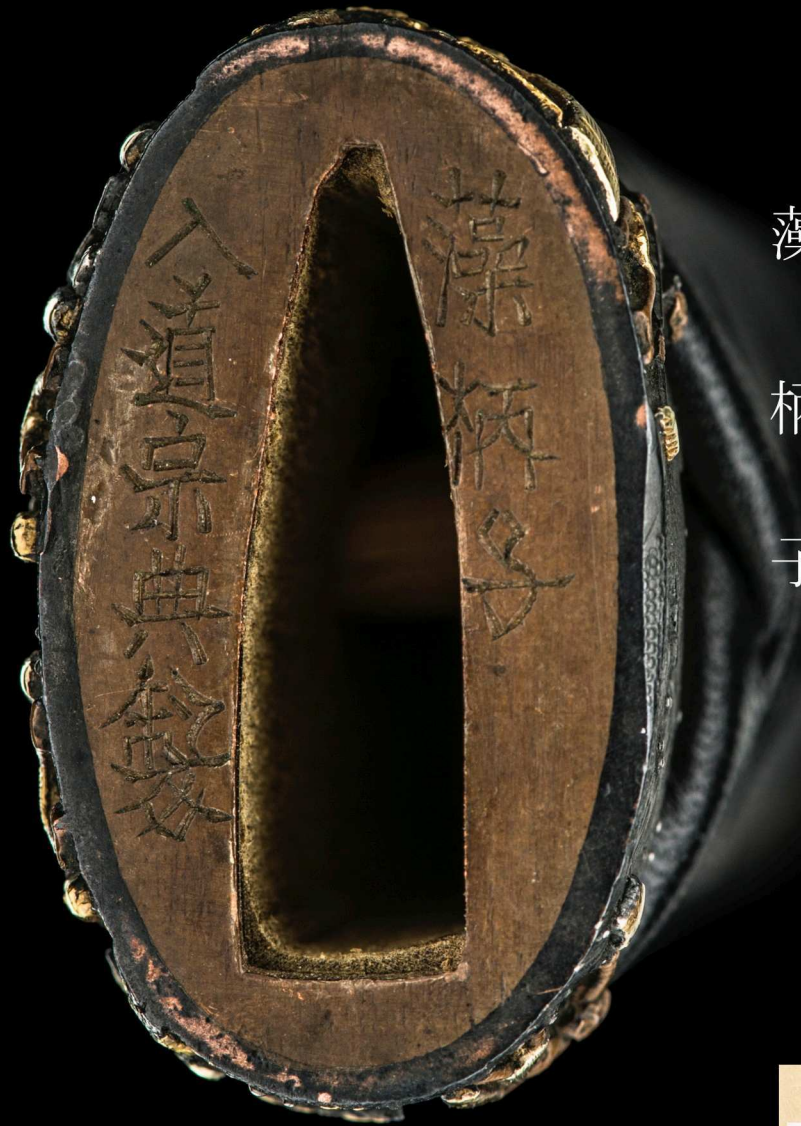


A tightly wrapped leather hilt gave the samurai better grip during battle.  
Here a samurai takes on the high seas, preparing for the Mongol invasion.





(Nyû) 入  
(dô) 道  
(Sô) 宗  
(ten) 典



藻 (Mo)  
柄 (gara)  
子 (shi)

This fuchi-kashira is crafted and signed by:  
*Mogarashi Nyûdô Sôten [school] + monogram*  
藻柄子入道宗典 + 花押



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity



These farmers are **brine carriers** known as *shiokumi*. For centuries, salt production has been an important activity throughout Japan and coastal communities developed sophisticated techniques for producing this vital mineral from seawater.

During the Edo period, rice was the basis of the taxation system, but cultivable land was scarce in *Noto Peninsula* in *Ishikawa Prefecture*. Under the *Kaga clan's* 'rice for salt' system, farmers who did not own enough land to allow them to pay their rice taxes and secure the food necessary for their subsistence borrowed rice from the government, paying for it in salt at a fixed rate.

The rice for salt system was instrumental in making salt production one of the most important occupations of people along the coasts of Noto.

source:  
<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/preserving-japans-sea-salt-making-tradition>



**Shiokumi (Brine Carriers)**  
Katsukawa Shunko (1743~1812)



Salt farmers hard at work as depicted on the *kashira* (pommel). Today, the tradition continues in parts of Ishikawa prefecture.



satoumi production