



ITEM# UJKA366

SOLD

A TADAKUNI KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KEIAN ERA: 1648~1652)

- Swordsmith:** *Hizen jû Harima Daijô Fujiwara Tadakuni (shodai, ubu nakago)*
- Measurements:** **Length:** 68.9cm **Curvature:** 2.0cm **Motohaba:** 2.93cm
- Jihada:** *Superbly forged konuka-hada with sparkling ji-nie and chikei*
- Hamon:** *Crisp chû-suguha hamon with kinsuji, ashi and yô*
- Certificate 1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
- Certificate 2:** **NBTHK Hozon** (tsuba designated as Worthy of Preservation)
- Certificate 3-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a koshirae and fk designated as Authentic)
- Fujishiro:** *Jô-saku* (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
- Sharpness:** *Wazamono* (rated as a maker of sharp swords)
- Authentication:** Rare origami valuing the sword to 10 gold pieces by *Hon'ami Kôkan* in 1839
- Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Respecting the esteemed *Hizen* tradition, *shodai Tadakuni* forged a dense *konuka-hada* (pear skin finish) that shines with *ji-nie*. On rare occasions, he tempered a *chû-suguha* (straight temper line) as represented on this remarkable katana. The sword is complimented by an exceptional Edo-period *koshirae* that echoes the *kinsuji* (lightning) *hataraki* on the blade while setting a stormy scene with billowing clouds on the *saya* and a long ruthless hook as its *kashira* (pommel) inspired by master swordsman *Miyamoto Musashi*. Comes with rare *origami* certification from 1839 by *Hon'ami Kôkan* valuing the katana to ten gold pieces. This is a samurai sword to treasure.

^
Saki-kasane: 3.9mm

Moto-kasane: 6.4mm

Kissaki: 3.16cm
Saki-haba: 1.94cm

Nagasa: 68.9cm

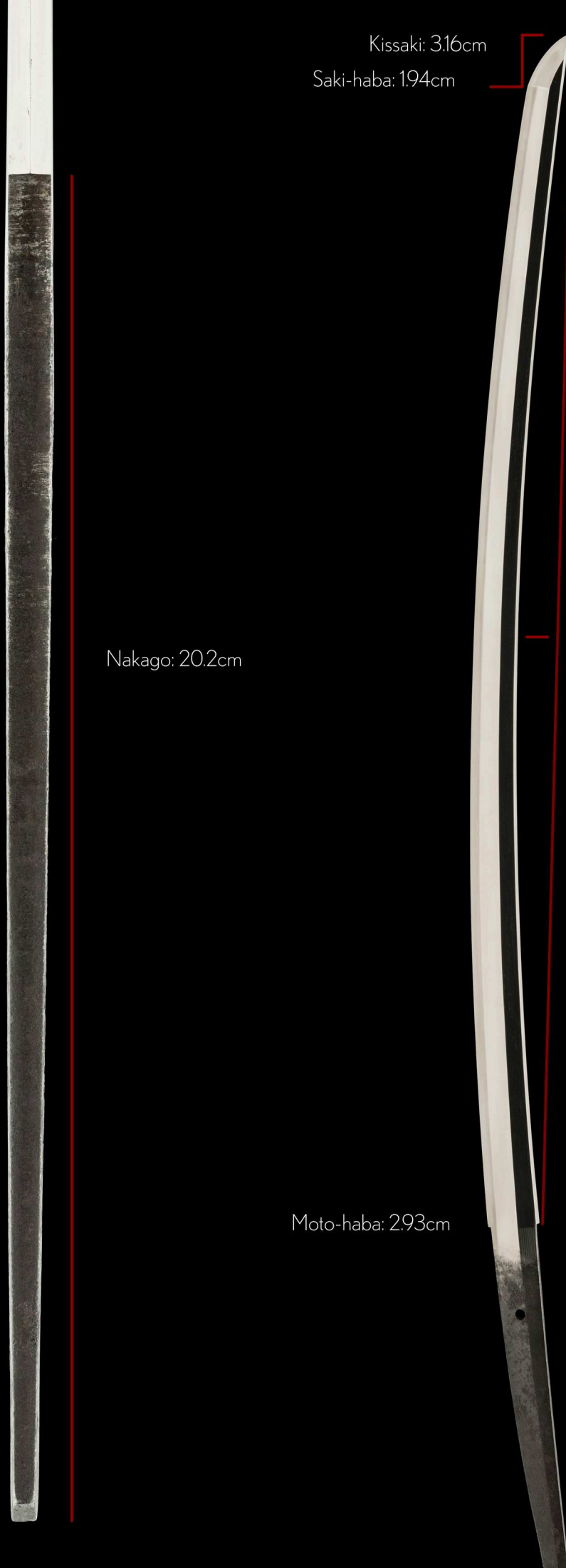
Nakago: 20.2cm

Sori: 2.00cm

Omosa: 685g

Moto-haba: 2.93cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



First generation Tadakuni was born *Hashimoto Rokurôzaemon* - the second son of *Hirosada* - in the third year of *Keichô era* (1598).

He first signed *Hironori* but changed his name to *Tadakuni* after receiving the honorary title *Harima no Daijô* in the eleventh year of *Kan'ei era* (1634).

Towards the end of his long and celebrated career he became a *Nyûdô* (priest) with the name *Kyûtetsu*. Tadakuni died at the age of 94 on April 22, 1691 during the *Genroku era*.

Respecting the esteemed Hizen tradition, Tadakuni forged a dense *ko-itame hada* with sparkling *ji-nie* that appears as *konuka-hada* (pear skin finish).

Most often seen is a flamboyant *chôji-midare* or *gunome-chôji hamon*, however, on rare occasions he tempered a *chû-suguha* (straight temper line) as depicted on this elegant katana.

This deliberate act of restraint creates an indelible impression when the sword is held in hand.

The sword is complimented by an exceptional Edo-period *koshirae* that echoes the *kinsuji* (lightning) *hataraki* on the blade while setting a stormy scene with billowing clouds on the *saya* and a long ruthless hook as its *kashira* (pommel).

Tadakuni is ranked *jô-saku* (superior sword smith) and *wazamono* for the notable sharpness of his blades.

This highly collectible katana comes with rare origami certification from 1839 by *Hon'ami Kôkan* valuing the sword to ten gold pieces.



Location: *Hizen province*

Title: *Harima Daijô* (Title)

Family name: *Fujiwara* (Clan name)

Swordsmith: *Tadakuni* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

(Hi) 肥
(zen) 前
(jû) 住
(Hari) 播
(ma) 磨
(Dai) 大
(jô) 掾
(Fuji) 藤
(wara) 原
(Tada) 忠
(kuni) 國

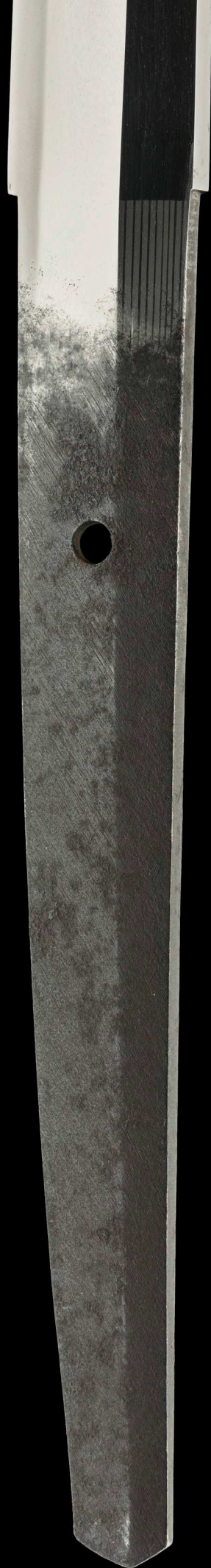
signed tachi side of nakago





A precisely chiseled signature.

The work of a master artist.



(reverse)

22201011

154941



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

平成二十三年一月二十八日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



鑑定書

長二尺三寸七分半

一、刀 銘 肥前住播磨大掾藤原忠国

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 23rd year of Heisei (2011), January 28th

One, *Katana*

Mei (signature)

Hizen jû Harima Daijô Fujiwara Tadakuni

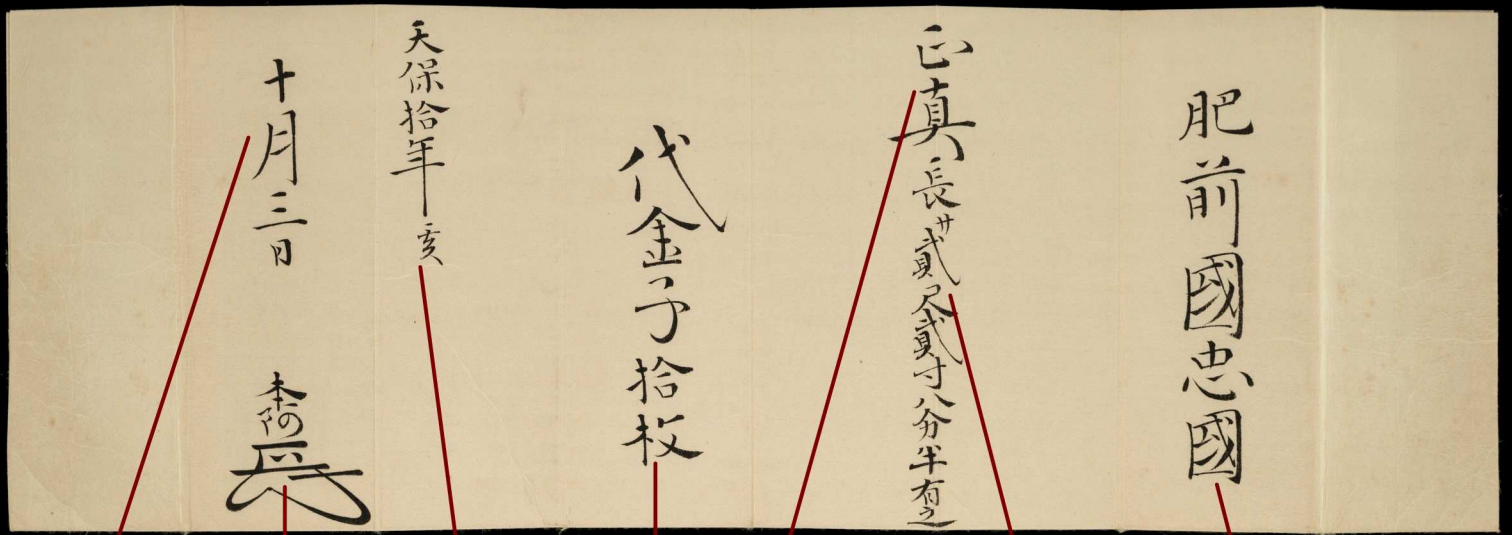
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 2-sun 7-bu (68.9cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

河内物紙

Ontô Origami
(sword certificate)



Hon'a + kaô
[Kôkan 光鑑]

Jûgatsu mikka Hon'a + kaô
(十月三日 本阿「花押」)
tenth month, third day

天保拾年 亥

Tenpô jûnen inoshishi (天保拾年亥)
Tenpô ten (1839), Year of the Boar

代金子拾枚

Dai-kinsu jû-mai
(代金子拾枚)
Value of sword: 10 gold pieces

正真長^廿尺^貳寸^貳分^半有^之

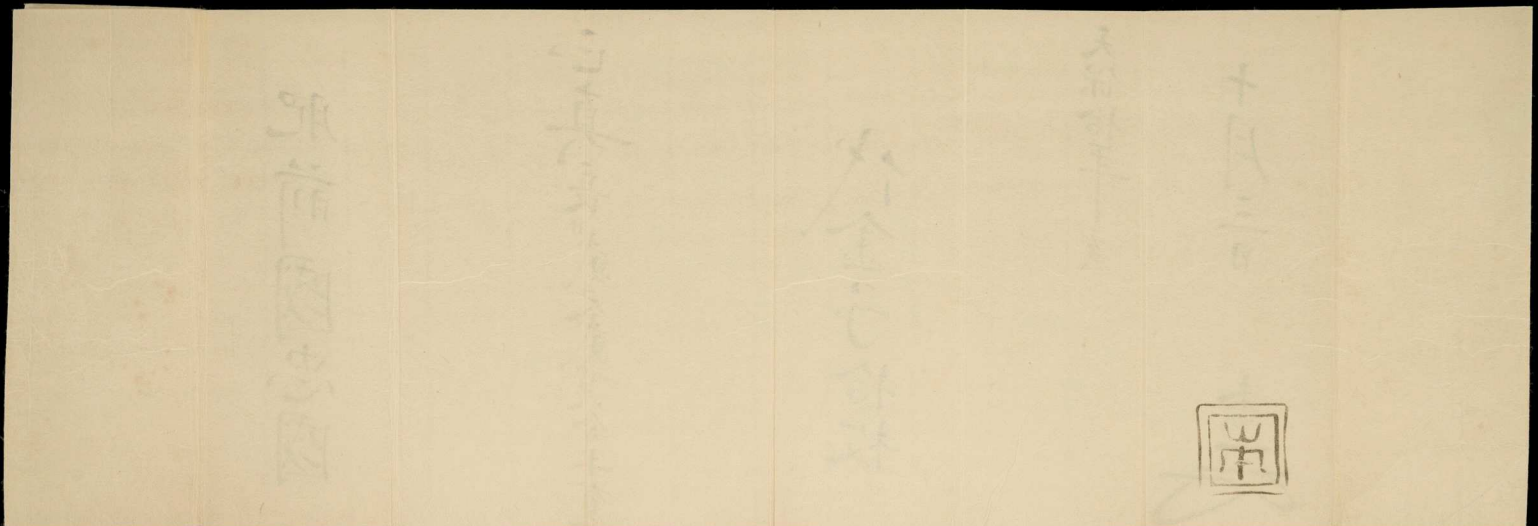
Shôshin
(正真, authentic)

Nagasa 2-shaku 2-sun 8-bu han kore ari
(長貳尺貳寸八分半有之)
Blade length (69.2cm)

肥前國忠國

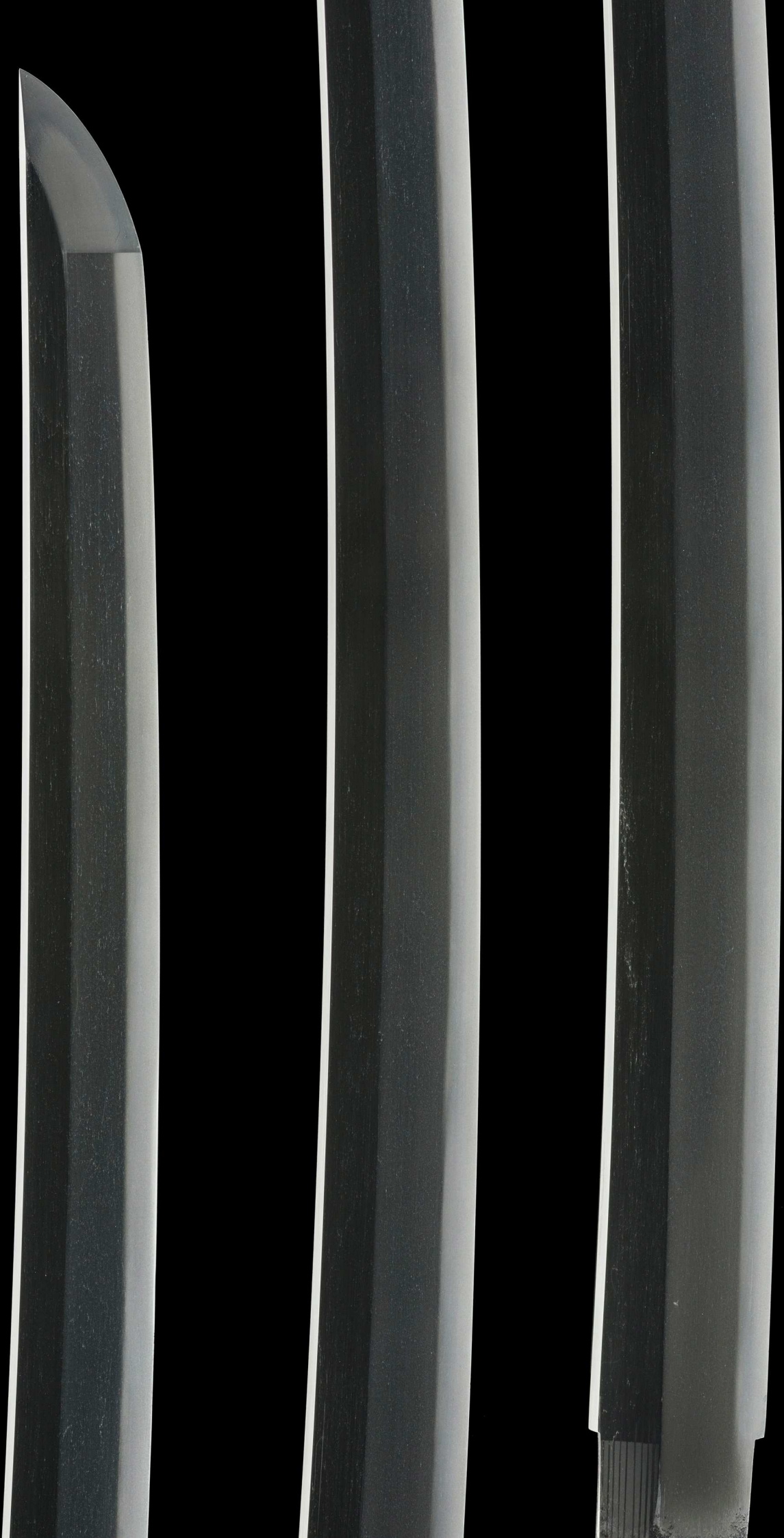
Hizen no Kuni Tadakuni
(肥前国忠國)

The *Hon'ami family* were the official sword appraisers and polishers of the shogunate. They also issued origami appraisals for blades. This highly prized origami certificate was written and signed by *Hon'ami Kôkan* on October 3, 1839 during the Year of the Wild Boar (*inoshishi*). He valued this katana to 10 gold pieces (coins). It is a small miracle that this certificate has survived with the sword after all these years.

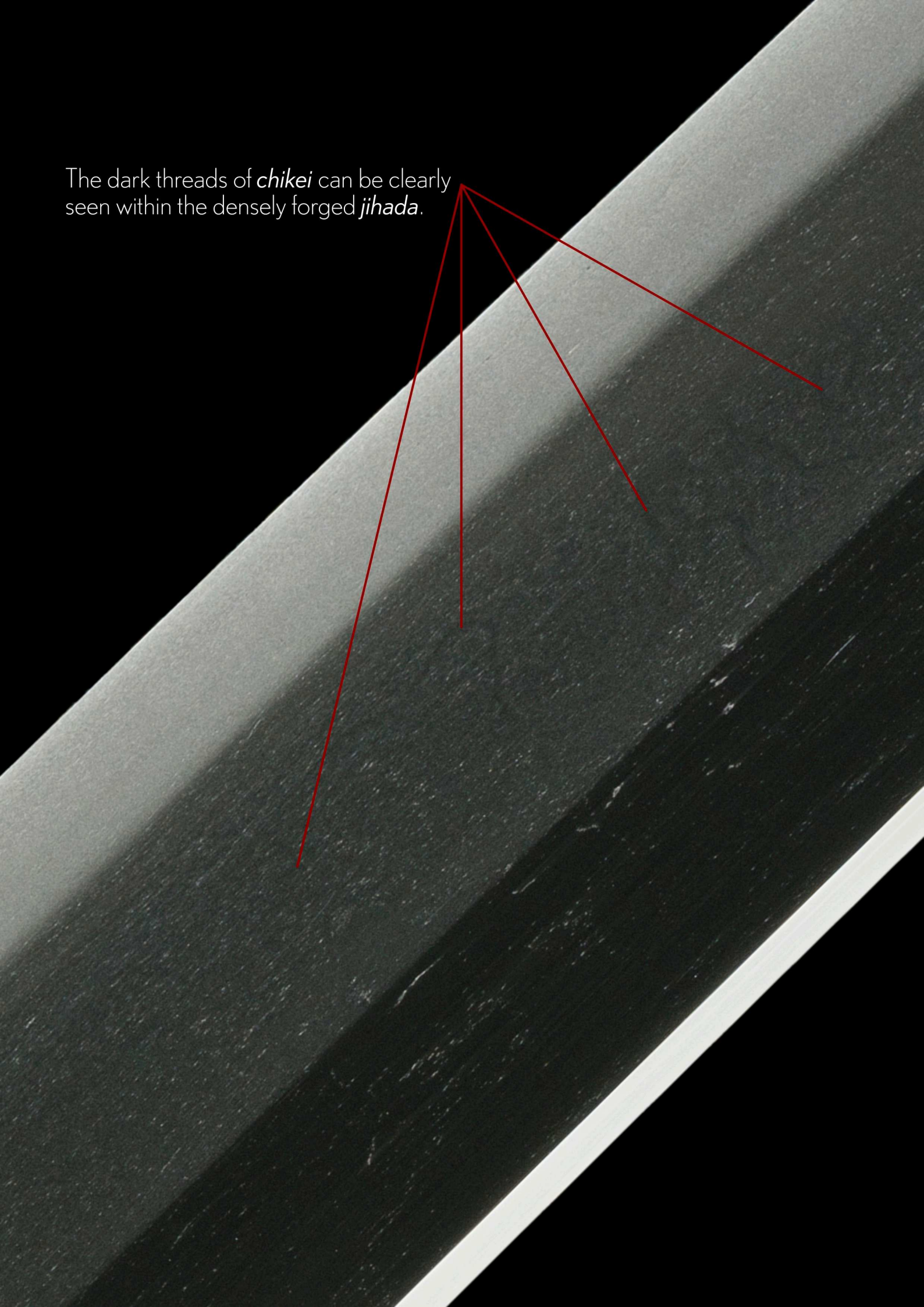


back of the certificate





The dark threads of *chikei* can be clearly seen within the densely forged *jihada*.



The image shows two Japanese blades, likely a tanto and a wakizashi, against a black background. The blades are positioned diagonally, with the top blade above the bottom one. Both blades exhibit a kinsuji pattern, which consists of fine, wispy lines of light and dark metal that cross the blade's surface. Two red lines originate from the text and point to specific areas on the blades: one points to the tip of the top blade, and the other points to the middle section of the bottom blade. The text is in a white, serif font and is located to the left of the blades.

Wisps of *kinsuji* cross the *boshi*
(*hamon* in the *kissaki*, tip of blade)

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing a hamon (temper line). The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, straight line of medium width. Two red lines are drawn on the image: one points to the hamon, and the other points to the ji-nie (the edge of the blade).

ji-nie shines brilliantly

Chû-suguha hamon

A straight temper line of medium width.

This bright and consistent hamon is the result of a solidly forged foundation. If the steel was folded by an average swordsmith, the hamon would show inconsistencies in the width and overall brightness.

In short, it takes skill and confidence to forge a good, clean *suguha hamon*.

Tiny *ashi* (legs) can be seen running for the *hasaki* (edge of the blade).

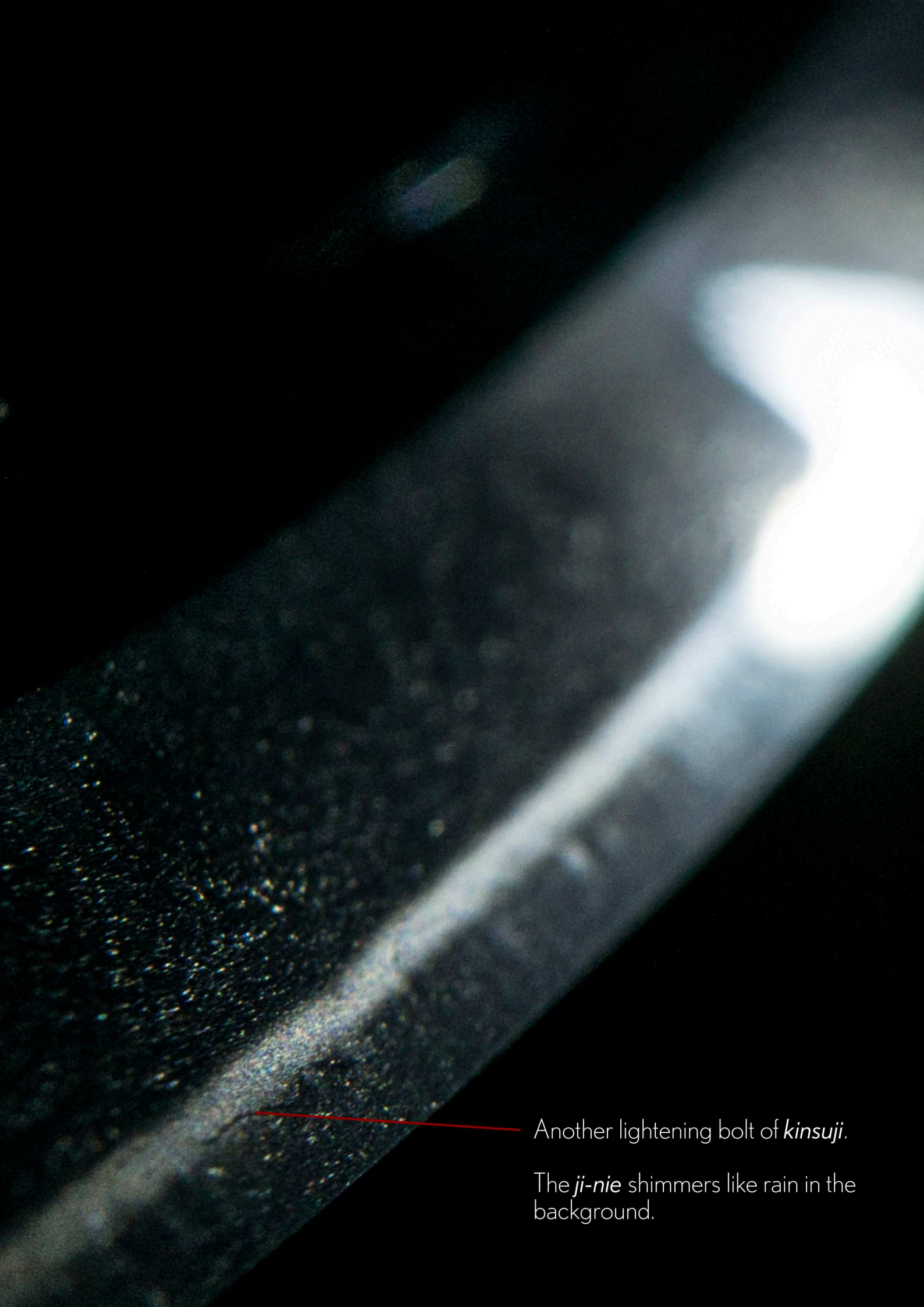
Yô or leaves are white clusters of nie seen in the hardened *yakiba* outside of the hamon.



A close-up, low-angle shot of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is curved and shows a distinct hamon (temper line) running along its length. The hamon has a textured, grainy appearance. Three red lines originate from a point in the lower-left quadrant and point towards the hamon, highlighting a specific feature.

Here we see *kinsuji*, bolts of *nie* 'lightning' charging through the *hamon*.

Raimon, the traditional lightening pattern seen on the *fuchi-kashira* reflects this unique feature.

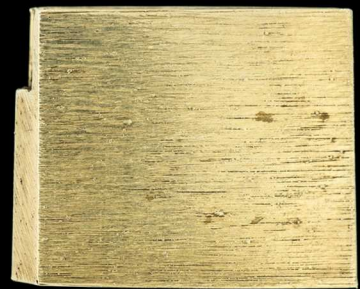


Another lightening bolt of *kinsuji*.

The *ji-nie* shimmers like rain in the background.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

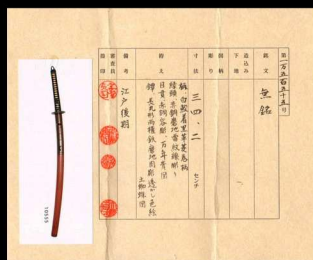


gold-wrapped *habaki*
with straight file marks

*Akacha kanshitsu-nuri
koshi-issun-kizami saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(赤茶乾漆塗腰一分刻鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in dry red brown
and ribbed in every 3cm
on the koshi*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity

A cloud patten sets the stormy scene.

This beautifully lacquered artwork on the *saya* (scabbard) sits at the hip area of the samurai.

The multi-sectioned ribs provide extra stability on the body.



This decorative hook 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.



Tsuchigomu

Yorimitsu

Kintoki

Sadamitsu

Pictured above is a remarkable *Hikone school tsuba* that plays out a scene from the famous *tsuchigumo* story.

Tsuchigumo (the demon ground spider) is dressed up as a monk holding a scepter at the mansion of the *Heian-period Fujiwara clan* commander *Minamoto no Yorimitsu*, who lies sick in bed (far right). Two of his bodyguards, *Usui Sadamitsu* (bottom right) and *Sakata no Kintoki*, play the game of *Go*. They are both tired as they are on the night shift.

When *tsuchigumo* hurls his web, *Yorimitsu* (also read *Raikô*), cuts through the evil being with his celebrated *hiza-maru* sword, and *tsuchigumo* flees.

The sword is renamed *kumokiri* (spider slasher).



(reverse)



Yorimitsu's trusted warriors follow a trail of blood the spider's mound.

Tsuchigumo again casts his web but it's of no use. The monster and his sceptre are surrounded and killed. Peace is triumphantly restored.

The famous Tsuchigomu Noh play

image: the-noh.com





The zigzag geometric formation is known as *raimon* - a design pattern thought to be based on *flashes of lightning*.



This unique pattern with origins from China has been used more than 3,000 years. It can also be seen on architecture, sculptures, ceramics, metalwork, wood sculpture and on dyed and printed fabrics.

The pattern is considered to be a symbol of *fertility and auspiciousness* due to its association with thunder rain, which fertilizes everything including farming fields.

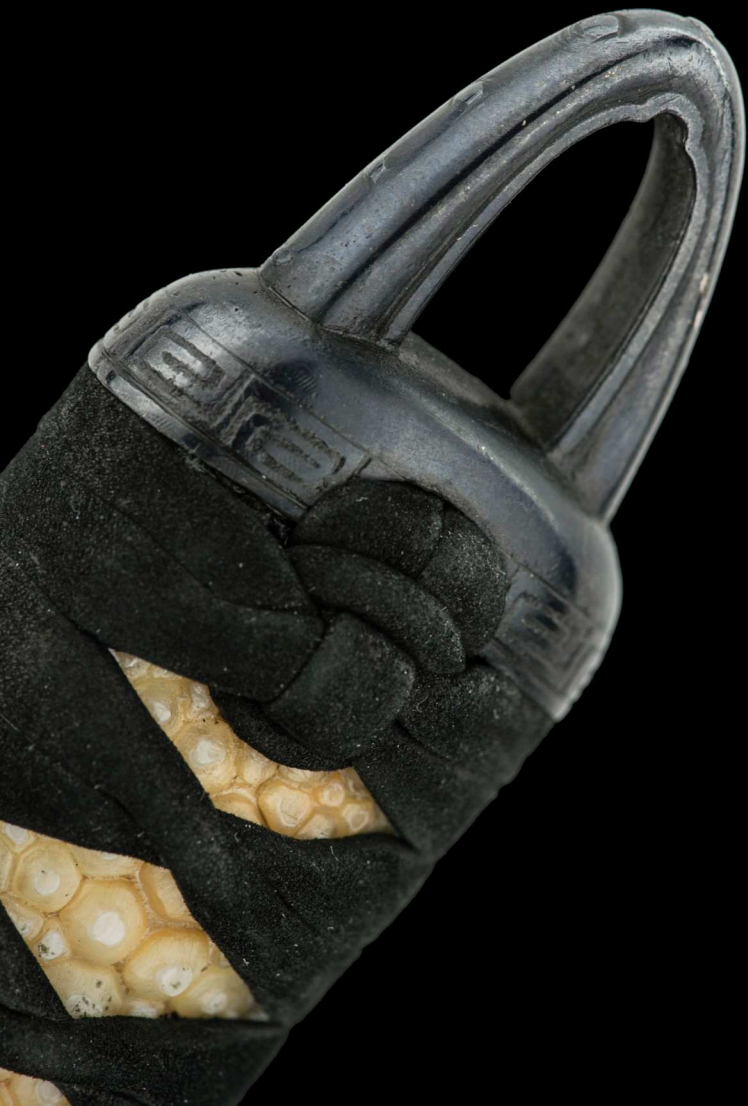


Traditional sake cups with *raimon*





This imposing hook-shaped *kashira* acted as a useful weapon. Rather than drawing the sword, a duelling samurai could thrust his *tsuka* (hilt) forward as a surprise attack on his opponent. The famous *rônin* *Miyamoto Musashi* was said to be fond of such reinforced *kashira* for this reason.



Miyamoto Musashi
ukiyo-e by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)



The *menuki* depict *omoto* (Japanese Sacred Lily). The menuki are wrapped over with black leather and sit on white *samekawa* (ray skin).

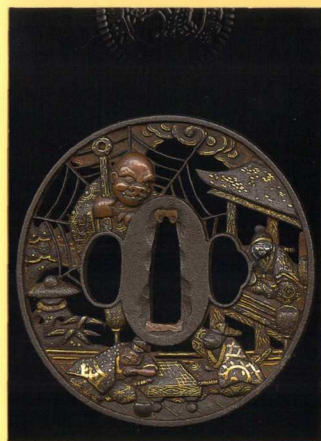
Omoto is one of the most cherished plants used as an ornamental display in traditional *ikebana* (flower arranging).



Kinka Ikenobô school using *omoto* (*rohdea japonica*)

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No 4003993



鑑定書

一 土蜘蛛透鐔 無銘 彦根

豎丸形 鉄地 肉彫地透
象嵌 角耳小肉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十六年 一月十七日

公益財団法人 日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A tsuba designated as *Worthy of Conservation*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 26th year of Heisei (2014), January 17th

One, *Tsuba*

Depicting tsuchigumo

*Mumei (unsigned)
Hikone school*

*Elongated round shape, iron, openworks further curved in a more three-
dimensional manner, inlay, angular rim with a little roundness*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



Traditional brocade koshirae bag