



A Kanetaka Katana

Early Edo period, circa 1624~1644
Mino province

Length: 67.4cm
NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate
3 x NTHK-NPO certificates



Saki-kasane: 5.7mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 4.25cm

Saki-haba: 2.46cm

Nagasa: 67.4cm

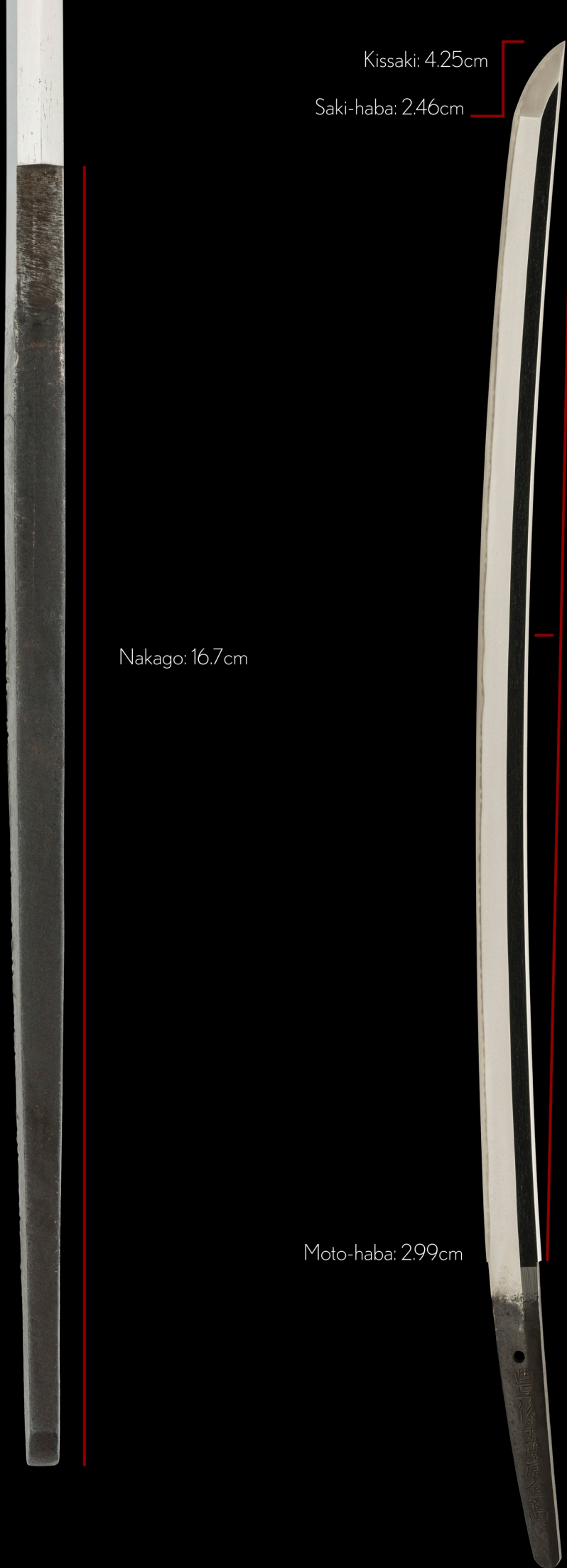
Nakago: 16.7cm

Sori: 1.00cm

Omosa: 760g

Moto-haba: 2.99cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



The Kanetaka line began with *Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka* who lived in *Mino province* (modern-day Gifu prefecture) during the *Bunroku era* (1592-1596).

This katana was crafted during the *Kan'ei era* (1624-1644) by the first of his four sons that also signed swords with the inscription *Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka*.

This sword carries all the known attributes of *shodai* (first generation) Kanetaka; a wide *mihaba* (width), an elongated *kissaki* (tip), with a beautiful *jihada* (sword skin) that features *itame* (plank grain) mixed with *mokume* (rounded burl grain) and *nagare* (wavy grain), *ji-nie* (a glimmering steel) *togari gunome-midare* (a wavy temper line with random action that has *togari* - areas that that 'peak' or are 'pointed').

Fujishiro rated Kanetaka a respectable *chû-jôsaku* (an above average swordsmith).

A gorgeous set of *koshirae* (fittings) preserved from the late Edo period accompanies the sword. The *tsuba* depicts the centuries old fairy tale of *Urashima Tarô* while the signed *fuchi-kashira* captures the beauty and providence of sparrows in a bamboo grove. The unique and complex lacquer work on the *saya* (scabbard) employs a technique that has largely been lost during these modern times.





Location: *Mino Province*

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

Family name: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Kanetaka* (1st/2nd generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

豊 (Bun)

後 (go, no)

守 (Kami)

藤 (Fuji)

原 (wara)

金 (Kane)

高 (taka)

特 保
15200301



No. 148083



鑑定書

長二尺二寸一分

一 刀 銘 豊 後 守 藤 原 金 高

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

平成十五年二月二十七日

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 15th year of Heisei (2003), February 27th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

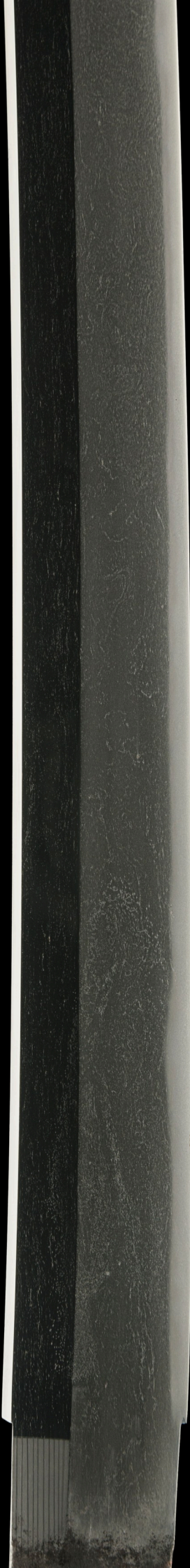
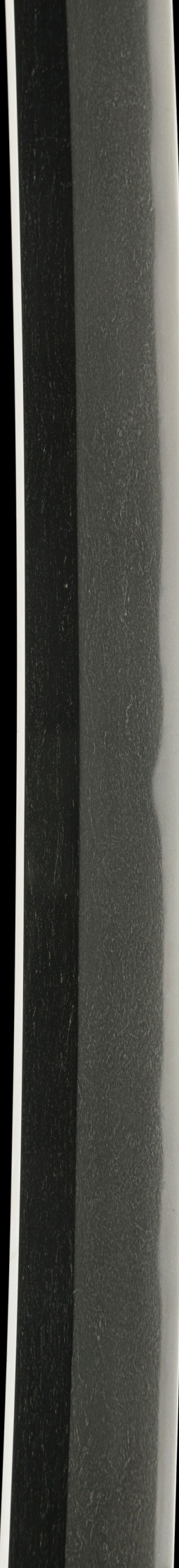
Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka

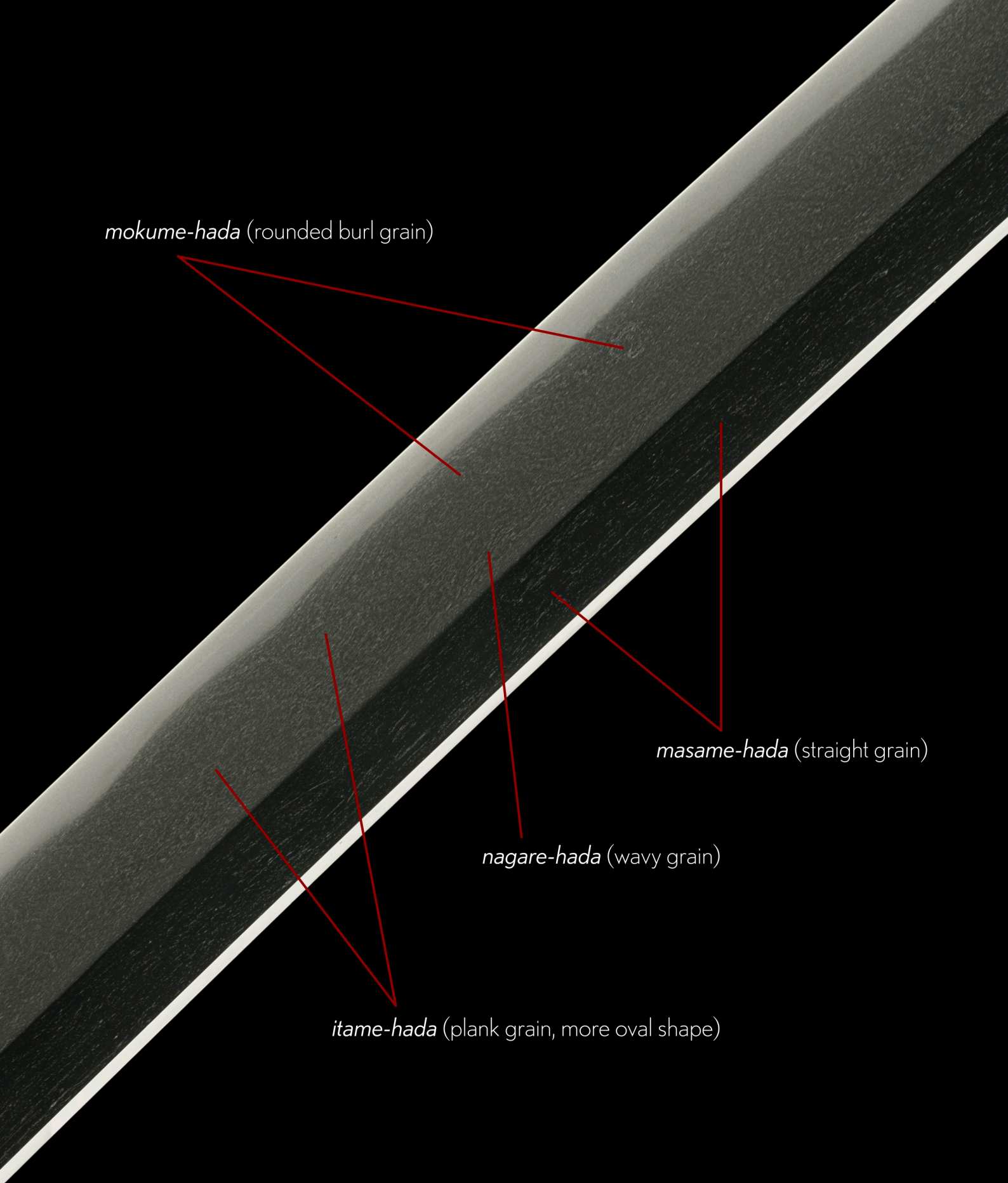
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 2-sun 1-bu (67.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)








mokume-hada (rounded burl grain)

masame-hada (straight grain)

nagare-hada (wavy grain)

itame-hada (plank grain, more oval shape)

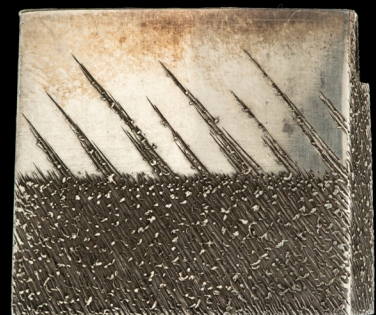
Different types of unique grain patterns found in the steel of the sword that is influenced by the method by which the smith hand-folded the steel.

A close-up, low-angle photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is curved and shows a dark, textured surface with a prominent, light-colored hamon (edge line) that has a pointed, 'ko-gunome' pattern. The lighting highlights the texture and the sharp edge of the blade.

*A ko-gunome hamon with togari
(pointed) accents along the blade.*



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

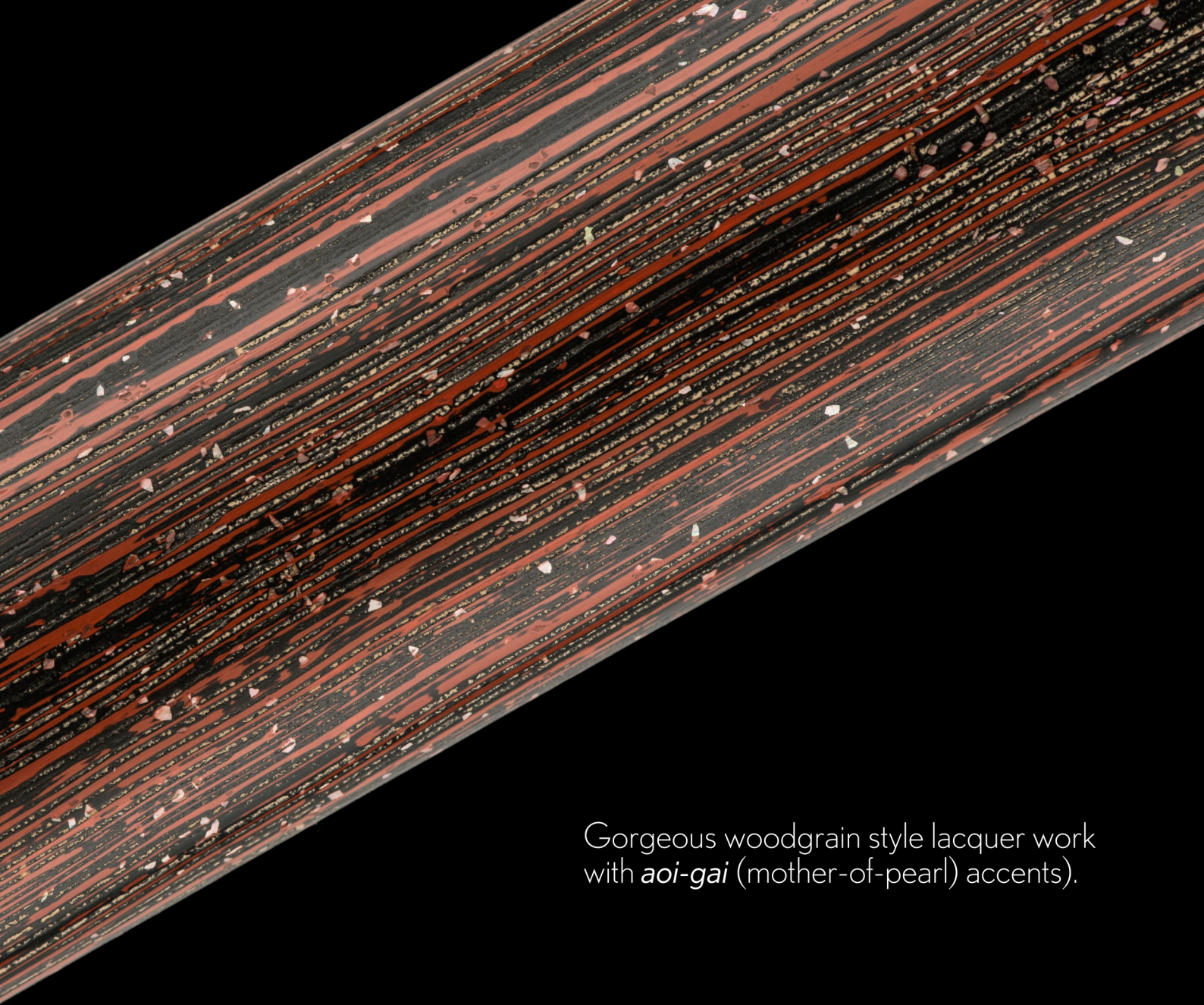
*Shuguro-kawari-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(朱黒変塗鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in red and black
with unique texture*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



Gorgeous woodgrain style lacquer work with *aoi-gai* (mother-of-pearl) accents.

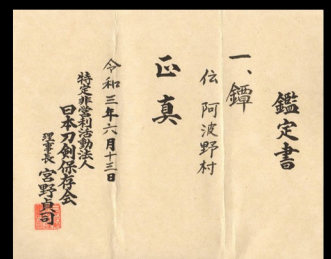




This beautiful *tsuba* (guard) was crafted by the *Nomura school* from *Awa province*. It was made using the prized bullion called *shakudô* (~95% copper, 5% gold) and features a sandy finish and a rim that shines in shakudô.

The artwork features the final scene from the centuries old Japanese fairy tale of *Urashima Tarô* with the recently opened *tamatebako* (jewelled box).

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





Urashima Tarô and princess of Horai, by Matsuki Heikichi (1899)

Urashima Tarô

One day a young fisherman named *Urashima Tarô* is fishing when he notices a group of children torturing a small turtle. Tarô saves it and lets it go back to the sea. The next day, a huge turtle approaches him and tells him that the small turtle he had saved is the daughter of the Emperor of the Sea, *Ryûjin*, who wants to see him to thank him. The turtle magically gives Tarô gills and brings him to the bottom of the sea, to the Palace of the Dragon God (*Ryûgû-jô*). There he meets the Emperor and the small turtle, who was now a lovely princess, *Otohime*. On each of the four sides of the palace it is a different season.

Tarô stays there with Otohime for three days, but soon wants to go back to his village and see his ageing mother, so he requests permission to leave. The princess says she is sorry to see him go, but wishes him well and gives him a mysterious box called *tamatebako* which will protect him from harm but which she tells him never to open. Tarô grabs the box, jumps on the back of the same turtle that had brought him there, and soon is at the seashore.

When he goes home, everything has changed. His home is gone, his mother has vanished, and the people he knew are nowhere to be seen. He asks if anybody knows a man called Urashima Tarô. They answer that they had heard someone of that name had vanished at sea long ago. He discovers that 300 years have passed since the day he left for the bottom of the sea.

Struck by grief, he absent-mindedly opens the box the princess had given him, from which bursts forth a cloud of white smoke. He is suddenly aged, his beard long and white, and his back bent. From the sea comes the sad, sweet voice of the princess: "*I told you not to open that box. In it was your old age...*"



reverse side of tsuba
(his fishing rod)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) carry a *shisa lion* and *peony* theme.

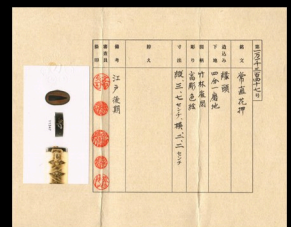




(Tsune) 常

(nao) 直

(kaô) 花押



The warrior, like bamboo, is ever ready for action
-Kensho Furuya

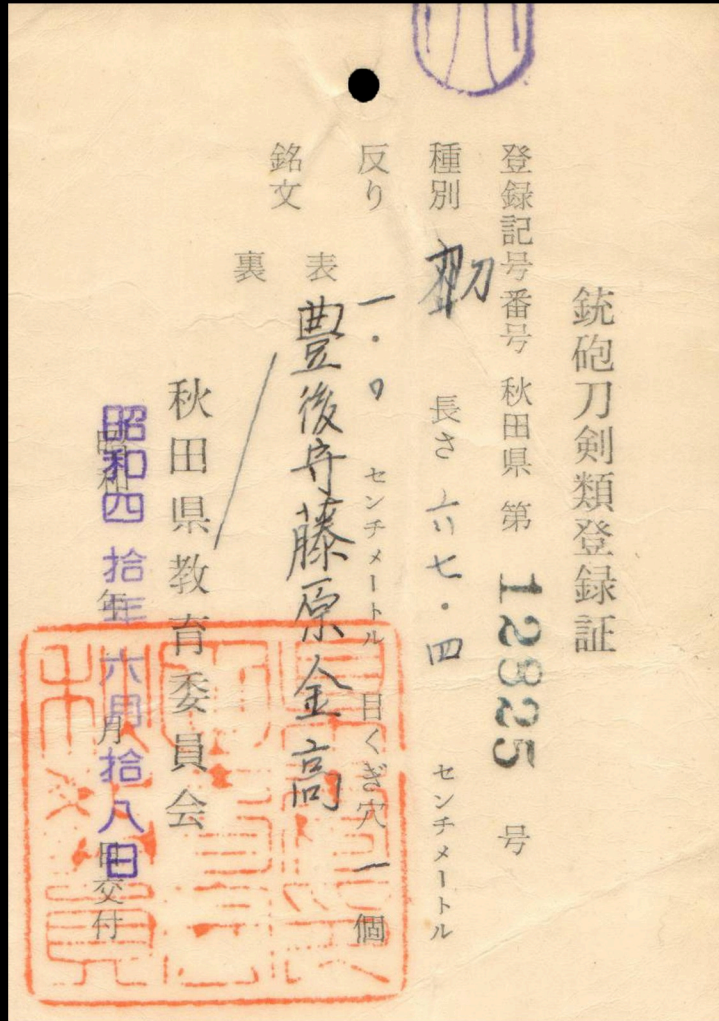
Kanteisho certificate

The Japanese admire bamboo for its durability, strength, but most importantly it's flexibility. On samurai sword fitting artwork, depictions of tigers can be seen alongside bamboo. The meaning is a significant one: the tiger pounces with commitment, it's determination is wildly impressive, yet in order to be an effective predator, it needs to be flexible as situations can shift quickly.

Sparrows are believed to symbolise joy, community, teamwork, protection, simplicity, hard work or self-worth.

They are an auspicious bird, thought to bring good fortune. This *fuchi-kashira* by *Tsunenao* captures the quintessentially Japanese scenes of sparrows within a bamboo grove relaying a peaceful, hard-working, prosperous image.

The fuchi-kashira was reviewed by the NTHK-NPO and awarded *Kanteisho* (certificate of authenticity) dating the piece to the late Edo period (1780~1867).



Torokusho
(registration card for guns and swords)

No. 12825, issued by Akita Prefecture

Classification
Katana

Blade length
67.4 cm

Curvature
1.0 cm

Signature
Front: Bungo no Kami Fujiwara Kanetaka
Back: -

Registered by the Board of Education of Akita Prefecture
On 18th June, Shôwa 46 (1971)



Koshirae bag