



ITEM# UJKA409

SOLD

AN IETSUGU TACHI

SIGNED & DATED, EARLY MUROMACHI PERIOD (ÔEI ERA: AUGUST 1408)

- Swordsmith:** *Bizen no Kuni jû Ietsugu (ubu nakago)*
Location: **Bizen province** (Okayama prefecture)
Measurements: **Length:** 71.6cm **Curvature:** 1.8cm **Moto-haba:** 2.73cm **Weight:** 560g
Jihada: *Itame-hada mixed with nagare-hada bordering on ayasugi with chikei and bô-utsuri*
Hamon: *Suguha mixed with hints of uchinoke and nezumi-ashi*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (*tsuba, fuchi-kashira & koshirae* designated as Authentic)
Included: Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, booklet, description

SOLD

Ietsugu was a swordsmith from the *Bizen Osafune* school that worked in the *Ôei* era, circa 1394~1428. Records state that he was the student of swordsmith *Yukiyoshi* who flourished during the *Kôei* era from 1342~1345. The *jihada* on the sword is quite interesting to study. Nearer the edge of the blade is a running *nagare-hada*, which borders on *ayasugi-hada* in appearance, traditionally associated with the *Naminohira* and *Gassan* schools. This curvy and slender sword is dated to **August 1408** – soon celebrating its 614th birthday. It comes protected in a beautiful *koshirae* that rejoices in the wonders of the natural world with a middle Edo period *Sôten* school *fuchi-kashira* featuring autumn flowers along with depictions of spiders and ants for *menuki*, chrysanthemums and waves on the *tsuba* and a *saya* (scabbard) that takes on the distinct form of aged wood via its lacquer work. A fine, collectible piece of unique Japanese history.

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Saki-kasane: 3.5mm

Moto-kasane: 5.6mm

Omosa: 560g

Kissaki: 2.23cm
Saki-haba: 1.59cm

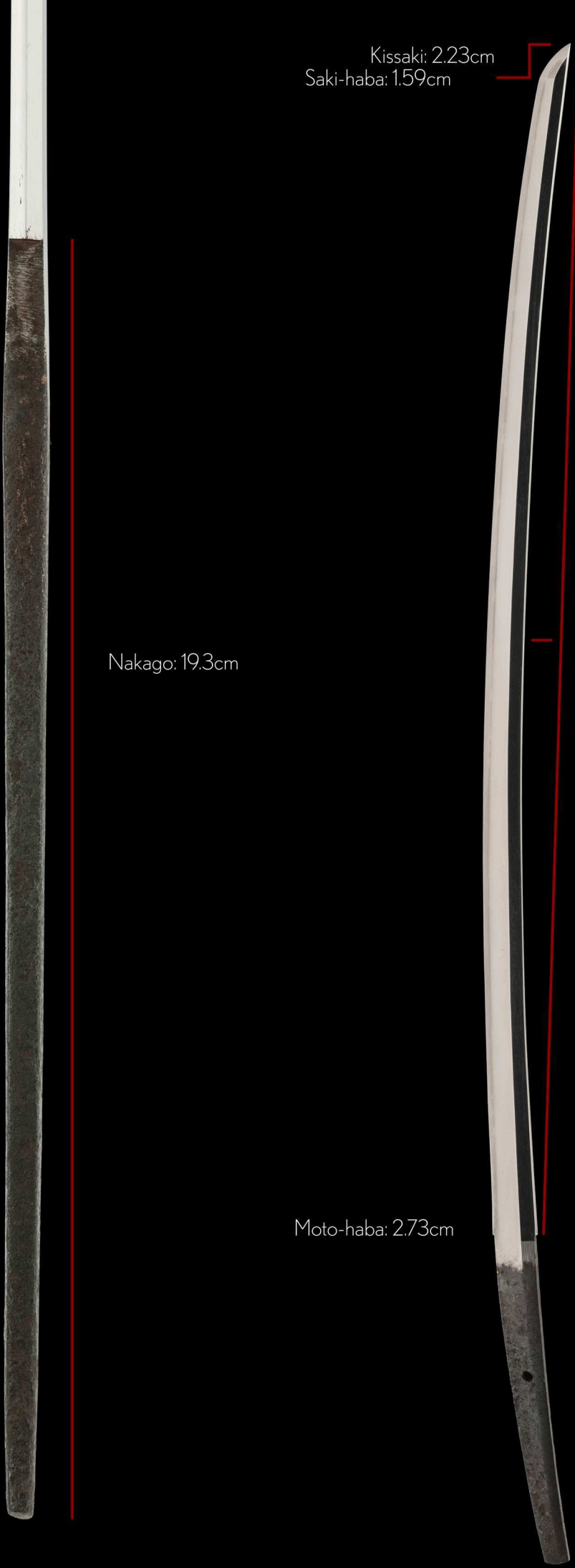
Nakago: 19.3cm

Moto-haba: 2.73cm

Nagasa: 71.6cm

Sori: 1.8cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



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This beautiful, slender sword is dated to **August 1408**, nearly 614-years-old. Clear *bō-utsuri* reflects beautifully on the blade in classic Bizen fashion. It comes protected in a *koshirae* that rejoices in the natural world with a *Sōten* school *fuchi-kashira* in autumn flowers along with depictions of spiders, ants and a *saya* (scabbard) that takes on the distinct form of aged wood via its long brush strokes of expertly finished lacquer work.



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Ôei jûgonen hachigatsu hi

Dated on a day in the eighth month in the
15th Year of the Ôei era (August 1408).

應 (Ô)

永 (ei)

十 (jû)

五 (go)

年 (nen)

八 (hachi)

月 (gatsu)

日 (hi)

特 選
03202103



No 1015549

鑑 定 書

一太刀 銘

備前国住家次
応永十五年八月日

長二尺三寸六分

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

令和三年五月二十四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



茨城県 教育委員会
第 1436 号
昭和26年3月23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 3rd year of Reiwa (2021), May 24th

One, Tachi

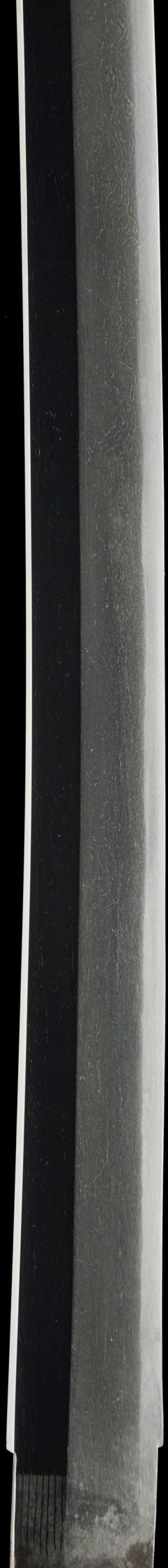
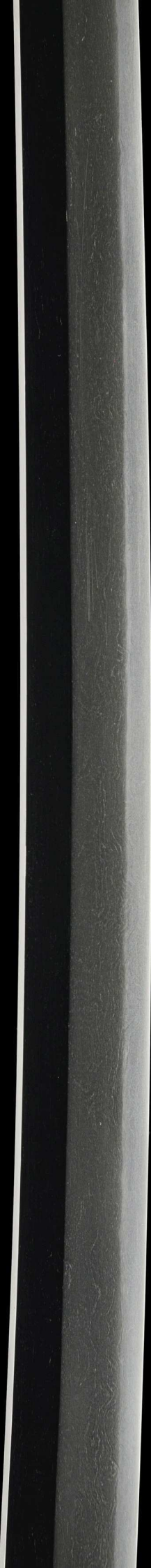
Mei (signature)

Bizen no Kuni jû letsugu
Ôei jûgonen hachigatsu hi

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 6-bu (71.6cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





itame-hada

nagare-hada

A lovely flow to the *jihada*, grain pattern that mixes *itame* (oval plank grain) with deep swells of *nagare-hada*.




Good view of the wavy *nagare-hada*
that is very similar to *ayasugi-hada*.

Literally meaning "reflection", *utsuri* is a beautiful, rather magical, misty reflection appearing in the *ji* (body of sword) above the *hamon*.

It is an appreciated feature of swords, particular those made in the Bizen tradition in the Kotô period (pre 1600).

The type of *utsuri* is called *bô-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that is more straight in appearance.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the hamon and the utsuri patterns. The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, curved line. The utsuri patterns are visible as misty, smoky reflections above the hamon. Two red arrows point from the text to specific areas of the blade.



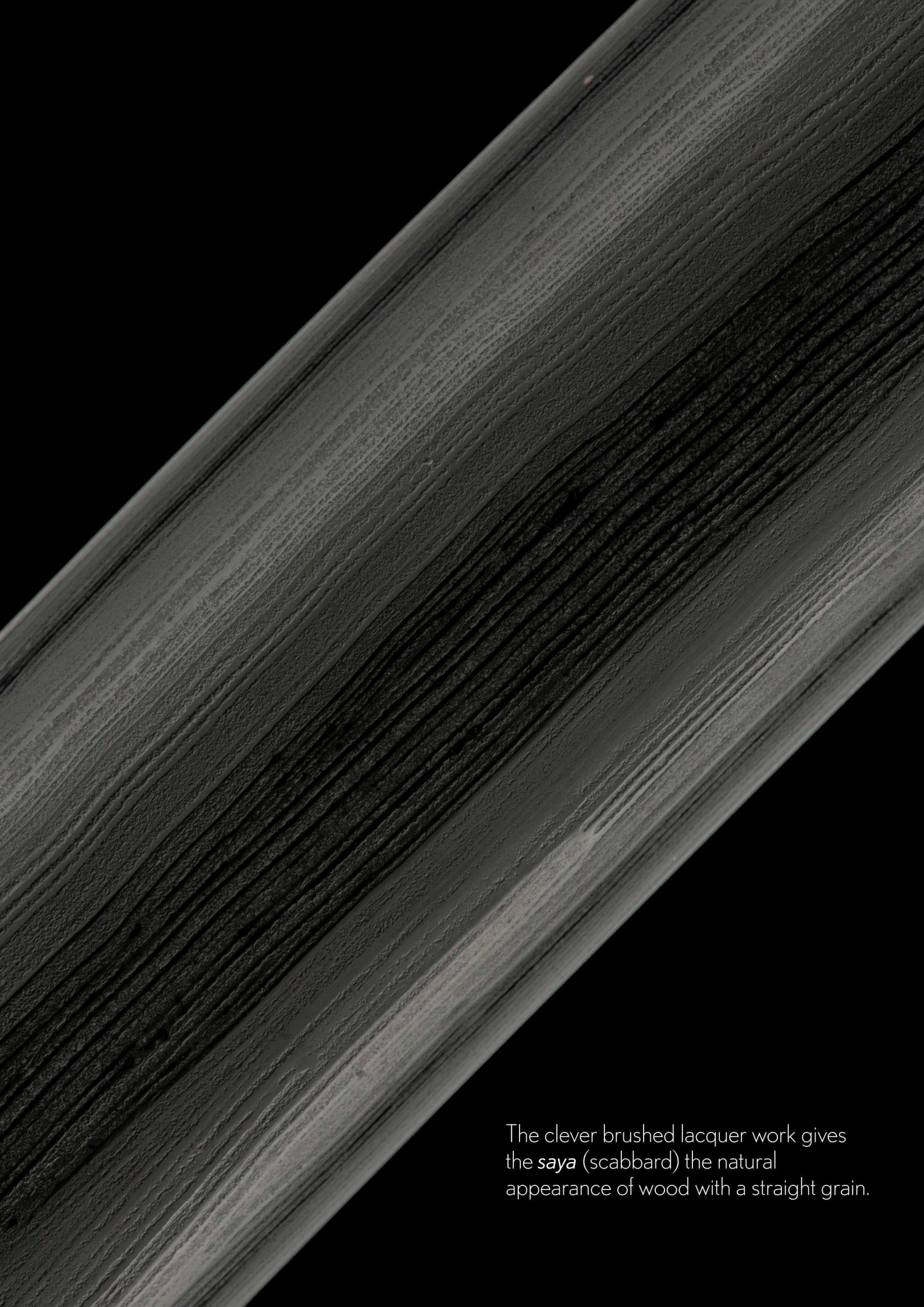
An attractive *suguha* (straight) *hamon* (temper line) with tiny *zezumi-ashi* (legs) that gives the blade an 'old soul' feel.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
horizontal file marks

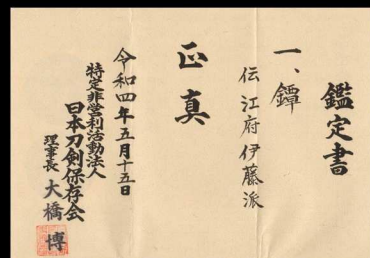


The clever brushed lacquer work gives the *saya* (scabbard) the natural appearance of wood with a straight grain.



A *kiku* (chrysanthemum) and *nami* (wave) motif is depicted here on this beautiful, round polished iron *sukashi* (openwork) *tsuba*.

Its NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributes the piece to the *Itô* school from Edo province circa 1780~1867.



(reverse)

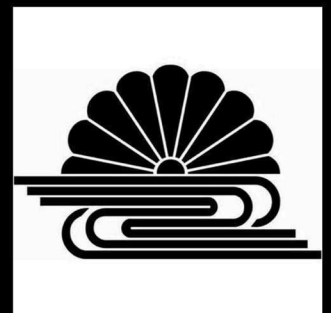


kikusui mon

Combining *kiku* (chrysanthemum) and *sui* (water) is known as *kikusui kamon* (family crest). The kikusui mon was used by *Masashige Kusunoki*, the samurai lord who contributed to the overthrow of the Kamakura shogunate and stayed loyal to *Emperor Godaigo* until his death.

It is said that Emperor Godaigo gave Kusunoki the kiku-crest for his loyalty and honour, however, Kusunoki thought he was unworthy and added floating water below it to show his modesty.

An ukiyo-e print from *Utagawa Yoshikazu* in 1856, entitled *Jingi hachigyo no uchi, Kusunoki Masashige* illustrates large kikusui crests on Kusunoki's clothing.





Spiders and ants form the *menuki* that continues the celebratory nature theme of this splendid antique koshirae.





spiders and ants crawling their way to the garden...



kiku (chrysanthemum)



hama-giku (Japanese daisy)



kuzu (arrow root)

kashira (pommel)



kashiwa (Japanese oak)

A beautiful arrangement of autumn leaves and flowers skilfully carved into a *shakudô* base.

Gôshû Hikone jû Mogarashi Sôten tsukuru

The *fuchi-kashira* was crafted by Mogarashi Sôten, a resident of Gôshû province



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity

Dating the piece to the middle Edo period (circa 1700~1780)



(Mo) 藻

(gara) 柄

(shi) 子

(Sô) 宗

(ten) 典

(tsukuru) 製

江 (Gô)

州 (shû)

彦 (Hiko)

根 (ne)

住 (jû)



"Life is like a garden, you reap what you sow."
Paulo Coelho





Koshirae bag