



ITEM# UJKA435

## A KUNISUKE KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (SHÔHÔ ERA: 1644~1648)

**Swordsmith:** *Kawachi no Kami Fujiwara Kunisuke (2nd gen, Settsu province)*  
**Measurements:** **Length:** 70.0cm (*ubu*)      **Curvature:** 1.52cm      **Moto-haba:** 3.03cm  
**Jihada:** *Vibrant mix of itame-hada and mokume-hada with ji-nie and plentiful chikei*  
**Hamon:** *Bright suguha with a gentle wave with sunagashi, kinsuji and hakikake bôshi*  
**Certificate #1:** **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)**  
**Certificate #2-4:** **NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (koshirae, fk and tsuba certified as Authentic)**  
**Fujishiro rank:** **Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)**  
**Authentication:** **Sayagaki by Nozomi-san (shodô artist)**  
**Included:** *Shirasaya, Edo-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description*

## SOLD

This katana is the work of second generation swordsmith *Kawachi Kunisuke*, the biological son of *shodai Kunisuke*. Known as *Naka-Kawachi*, the NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate dates this katana to the *shôhō* era (1644~1648), making it one of Kunisuke's very earliest works and collectible for this reason alone. The blade features a hamon based on *suguha* with a tight wave with loads of shining *ji-nie* and *hataraki* such as *sunagashi* and *kinsuji*. There is a certain calm quality exuding from this blade, encouraging one to take time with it. Its formal *uchigatana* black-lacquered Edo-period *koshirae* carries depictions of armour parts on the *fuchi-kashira* and the playful *menuki* features the thieving demon *Shôshitsuki* and the speedy deity *Idaten* chasing him with all his might! The *koshirae* also mounts a precious *tsuba* from the *Owari* school dating back four hundred years.



Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Kissaki: 3.03cm

Saki-haba: 1.88cm

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Nagasa: 70.0cm

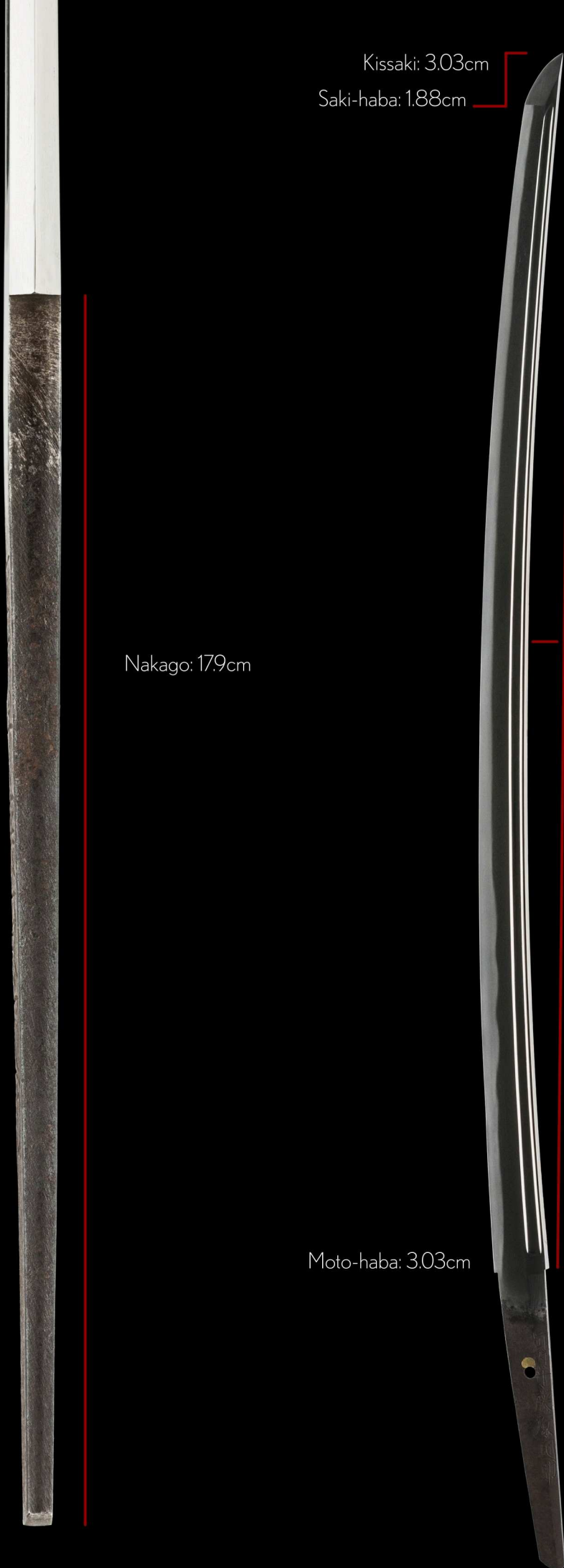
Nakago: 17.9cm

Sori: 1.52cm

Omosa: 635g

Moto-haba: 3.03cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Born *Kobayashi Hachirô'emon*, this katana is the work of the highly talented second generation swordsmith *Kawachi Kunisuke*, the biological son of *shodai Kunisuke*. Known as *Naka-Kawachi* (middle Kawachi), he first signed as *Kunitora*, and enjoyed a long and celebrated career spanning over five decades in which he would go on to master the *Ko-Bizen* and *Ishido* school styles earning him the nickname *Shintô Ichimonji*. Kunisuke died in August 1698 in *Settsu* province, modern-day *Ôsaka*.

The NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate dates this katana to the *shôhō* era (1644~1648), making it one of Kunisuke's very earliest works and collectible for this reason alone. The blade with two long *bo-hi* (grooves) that further lighten the blade features a *hamon* based on *suguha* with a tight wave with loads of shining *ji-nie* and *hataraki* such as *sunagashi* and *kinsuji*. This hamon pattern was normally seen in his younger years. What's beautiful to see are the large chisel strokes that make up his signature on the *nakago* - it shows such confidence for such a young man. Gorgeous dark lines of *chikei* are to be admired in the steel with a *bôshi* that sweeps with *hakikake*. There is a certain calm quality exuding from this blade, encouraging one to take time with it.

Its formal *uchigatana* black-lacquered Edo-period *koshirae* carries depictions of armour parts on the *fuchi-kashira* and the playful *menuki* showcase the thieving demon *Shôshitsuki* and the speedy deity *Idaten* chasing him with all his *vitesse* (!) - a fun story that will be explained later in this description.

The *koshirae* also proudly mounts a precious *tsuba* from the *Owari* school dating back four hundred years to the very early Edo period, maybe even original to the sword itself. This *tsuba* has been featured in the latest NTHK-NPO sword magazine and a copy of the article will be presented to the new owner.





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

Clan name: *Fujiwara*

Swordsmith: *Kunisuke* (second generation)

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

*sujikai-yasurime* (diagonal file marks)

河 (Kawa)

内 (chi, no)

守 (Kami)

藤 (Fuji)

原 (wara)

国 (Kuni)

助 (suke)

Thickly chiseled *mei* (signature).  
Shows confidence.



*Mei* stands out from above.



This extra hole on the nakago was filled in with gold.

The *nakagojiri* (butt-end of the tang) is rounded, similar to that of *kurijiri* (chestnut shaped) but the cutting edge side slants more steeply than the back (*mune* side).

*ha agari kurijiri nakagojiri*

特 保  
03202109

No 1017051



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 河内守藤原国助(三代正保頃)

長二尺三寸一分

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

令和三年十二月三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



奈良県 教育委員会  
第 3818 号  
昭和27年2月13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), December 3rd

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

*Kawachi no Kami Fujiwara Kunisuke*  
(Nidai - Shôhō goro)

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 1-bu (70.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

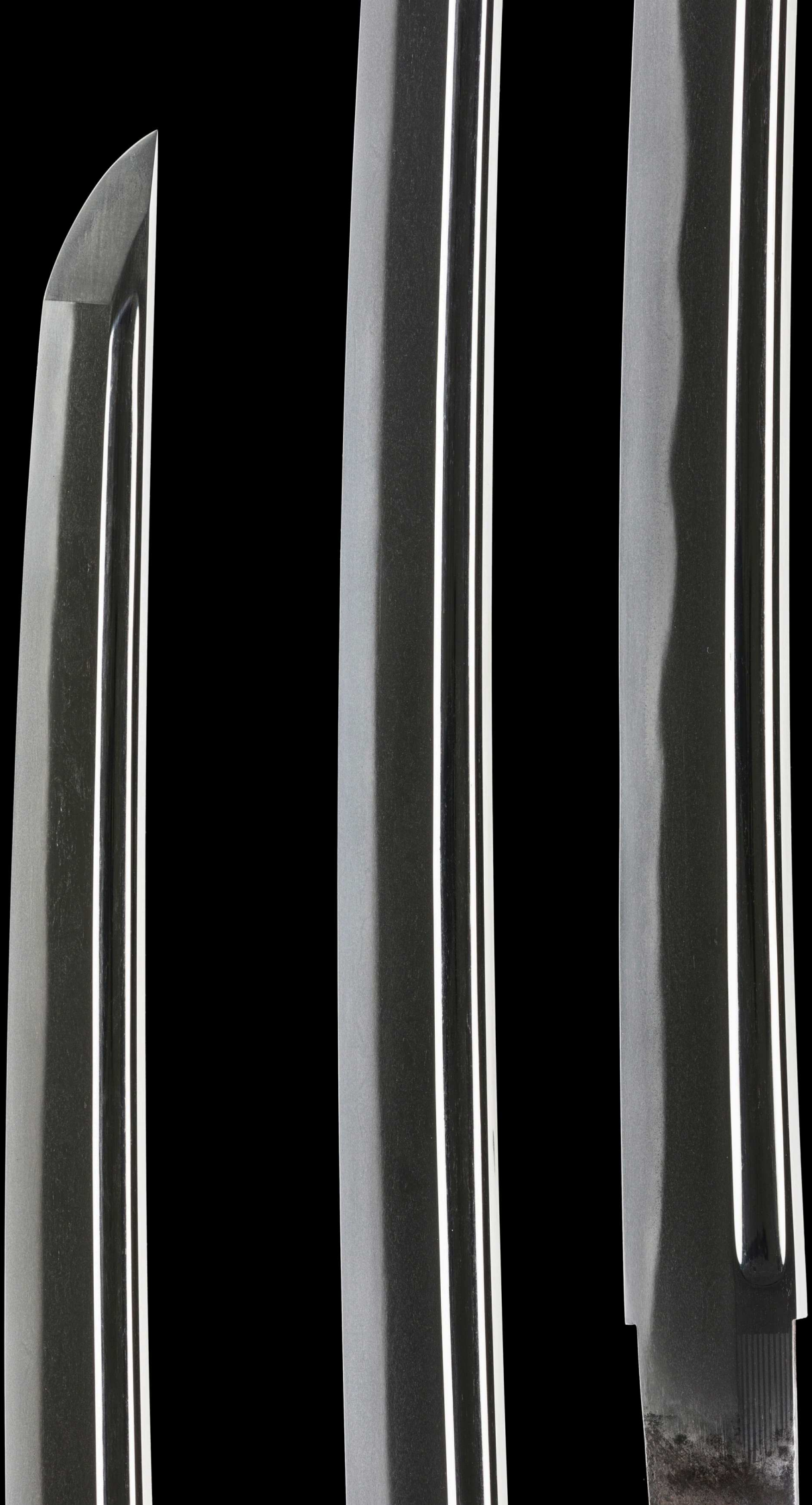


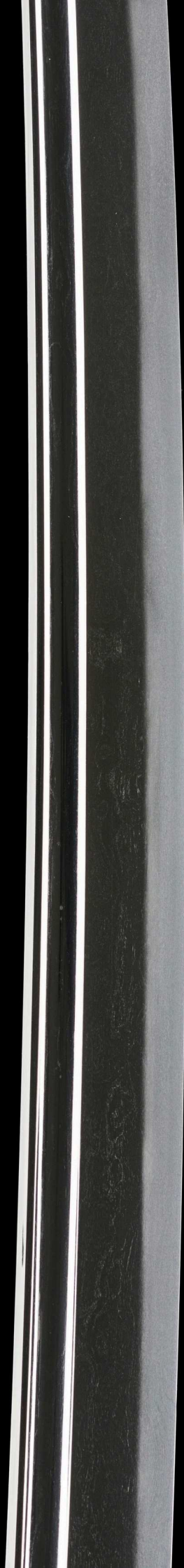
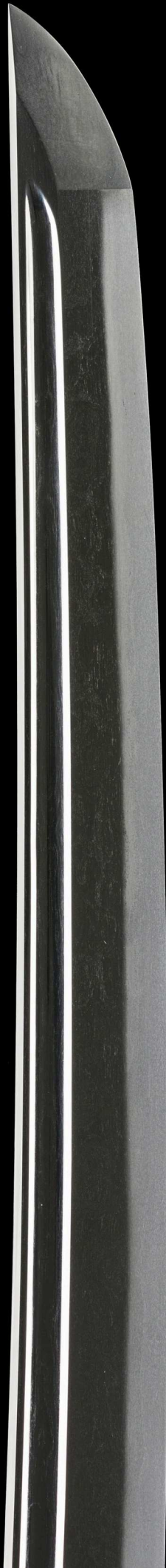
二代河内守藤原国助  
*Nidai Kawachi no Kami Fujiwara Kunisuke*  
Kawachi no Kami Fujiwara Kunisuke (second generation)

時代正保頃  
*Jidai Shôhō-goro*  
Circa Shôhō period (1644~1648)

刃長貳尺參寸一分有之  
*Hachô 2-shaku 3-sun 1-bu kore ari*  
Blade length 70.0 cm

令和六甲辰年弥生吉日誌之  
*Reiwa roku kinoe-tatsudoshi Yayoi kichijitsu kore o shirusu*  
Written on a lucky day in the third month in the sixth year of  
Reiwa era during the Year of the Dragon (March 2024).





The image shows two calligraphy brushes against a black background. The brushes are positioned diagonally, with their tips pointing towards the top right. The brush heads are made of dark hair and have a distinctive 'Hakikake boshi' tip, which is a wide, flat, and slightly curved shape. The metal ferrules are visible, connecting the brush heads to the dark wooden handles. The lighting highlights the texture of the hair and the metallic sheen of the ferrules.

*Hakikake boshi* (sweeping)

The hamon is based on *suguha* (straight) with a finely tuned wave giving the blade an air of prestige.



*kinsuji* ripping through the hamon



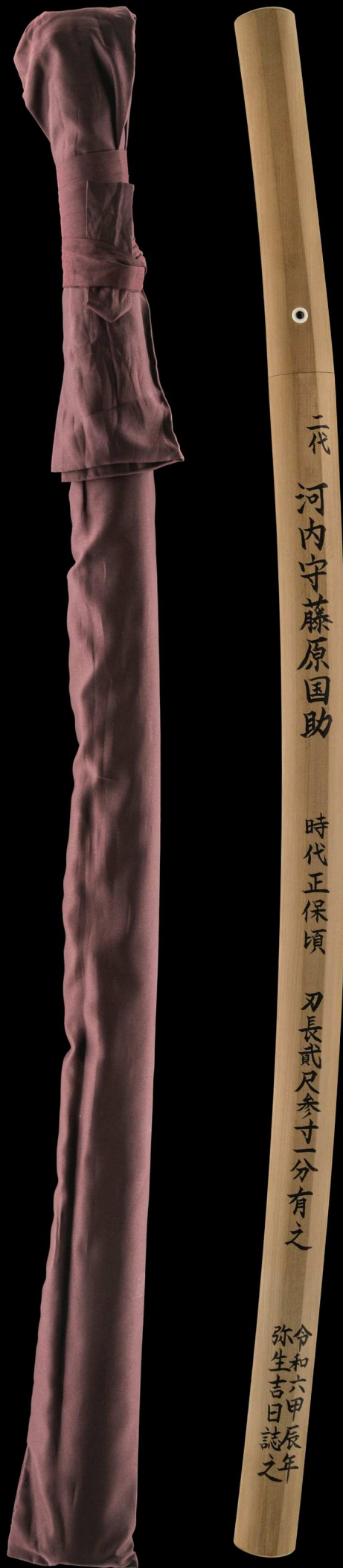
Good view of the *chikei* that  
carves its way through the body.



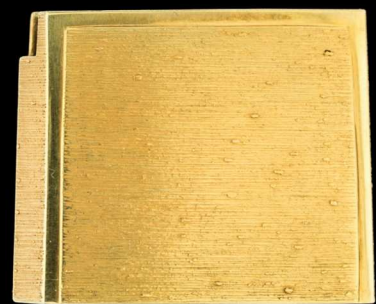
Glittering *ji-nie*.  
Shine on.



Appreciate life's moments.

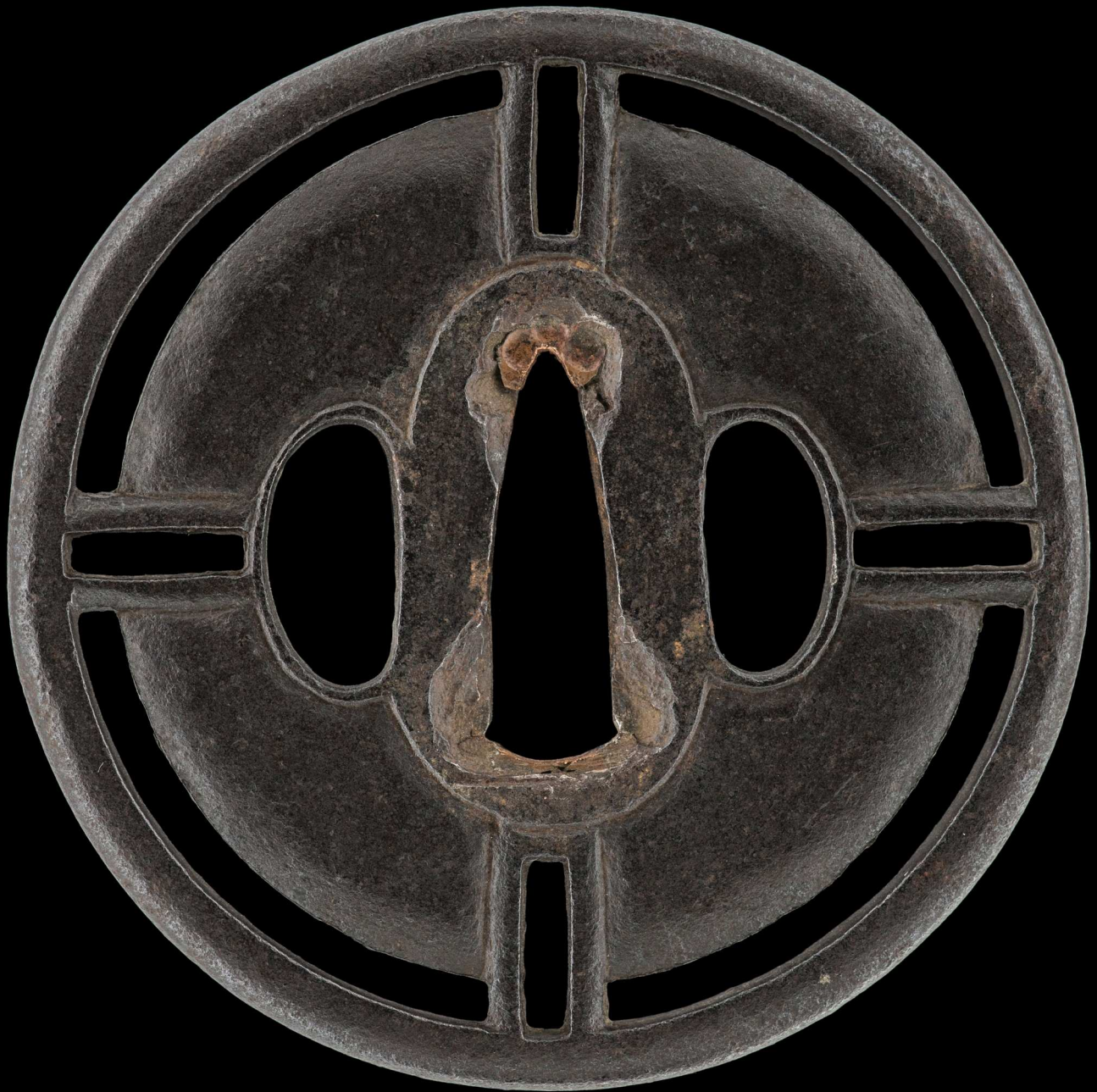


*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with  
horizontal file marks in a  
picture frame motif

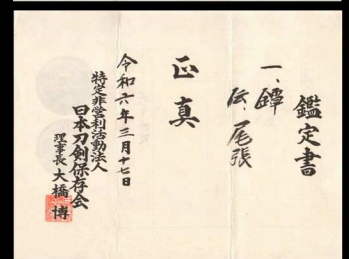


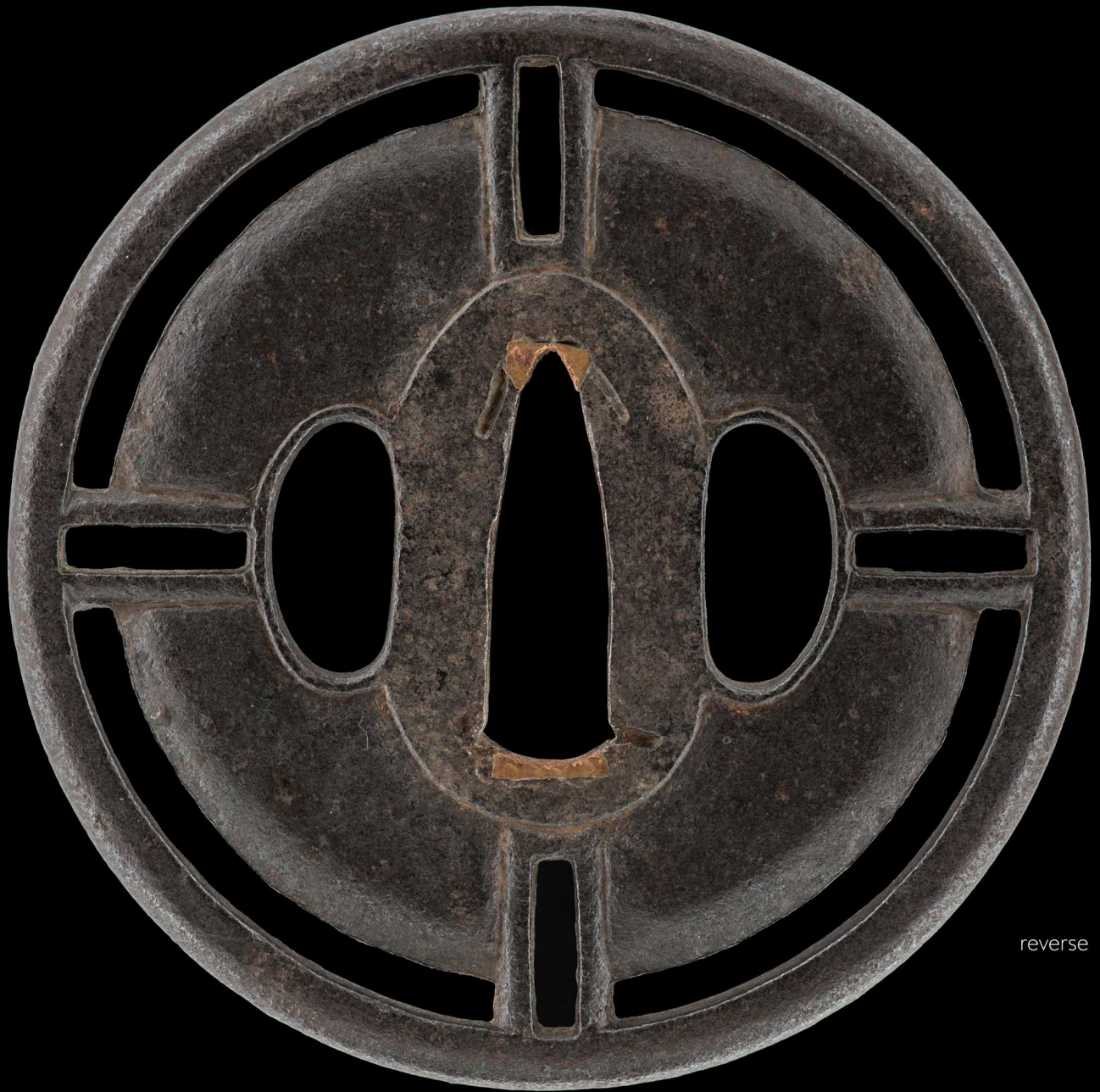


This wonderful tsuba has been attributed to the *Owari* school crafted in the early 1600s Edo period. It has been featured in the June 2024 NTHK-NPO magazine with the following remarks:

This *tsuba* has a thin openwork between the ground and the rim, a cross in the centre, and a border on both *hitsu-ana*. The ground is soft and rounded. The center is thick and thins towards the outside, which is the typical style of swordsmith tsuba loved by *bushi* (samurai). The base iron is well-forged and the openwork is carefully executed.

Even mounted on a *koshirae*, it is a piece of [art]work that never tires to the eye and has been carefully passed down through the generations.





reverse



一、鐺、無銘、伝、刀匠

造込み、丸形両櫃、下地、鉄磨地、彫り、地透かし、図柄、丸に十字図  
縦、6.7cm、横、6.5cm、耳、0.4cm 時代 江戸初期

此の鐺は地と耳の間に細い透かし、中央には十字透かし、両櫃に縁地残し、鍛地は柔らかかそうで肉を持ち丸みがある。如何にも刀匠らしく中央あたりは肉を持ち、耳に向かって肉を落とす造込み、十字図を透かし、櫃の縁取りをして、耳と地の境目を細い輪透かしに造っている。武士好みの鐺で、地鉄も良く鍛えられ、透かしも丁寧。拵えに付けても、厭味が無く飽きの来ない作品で、大事に伝えられて来た事が窺えます。

NTHK-NPO June 2024 magazine article featuring this tsuba  
(a copy will be presented to the new owner of this sword)

*Fuchi-kashira*  
attributed to  
*Kaga Kuwamura Katsuhisa*  
(mid-Edo period 1700s)

Depicting samurai armour.



*kabuto* (helmet)

*do* (cuirass) &  
*kusazuri* (thigh covers)



*sode* (shoulder protection)

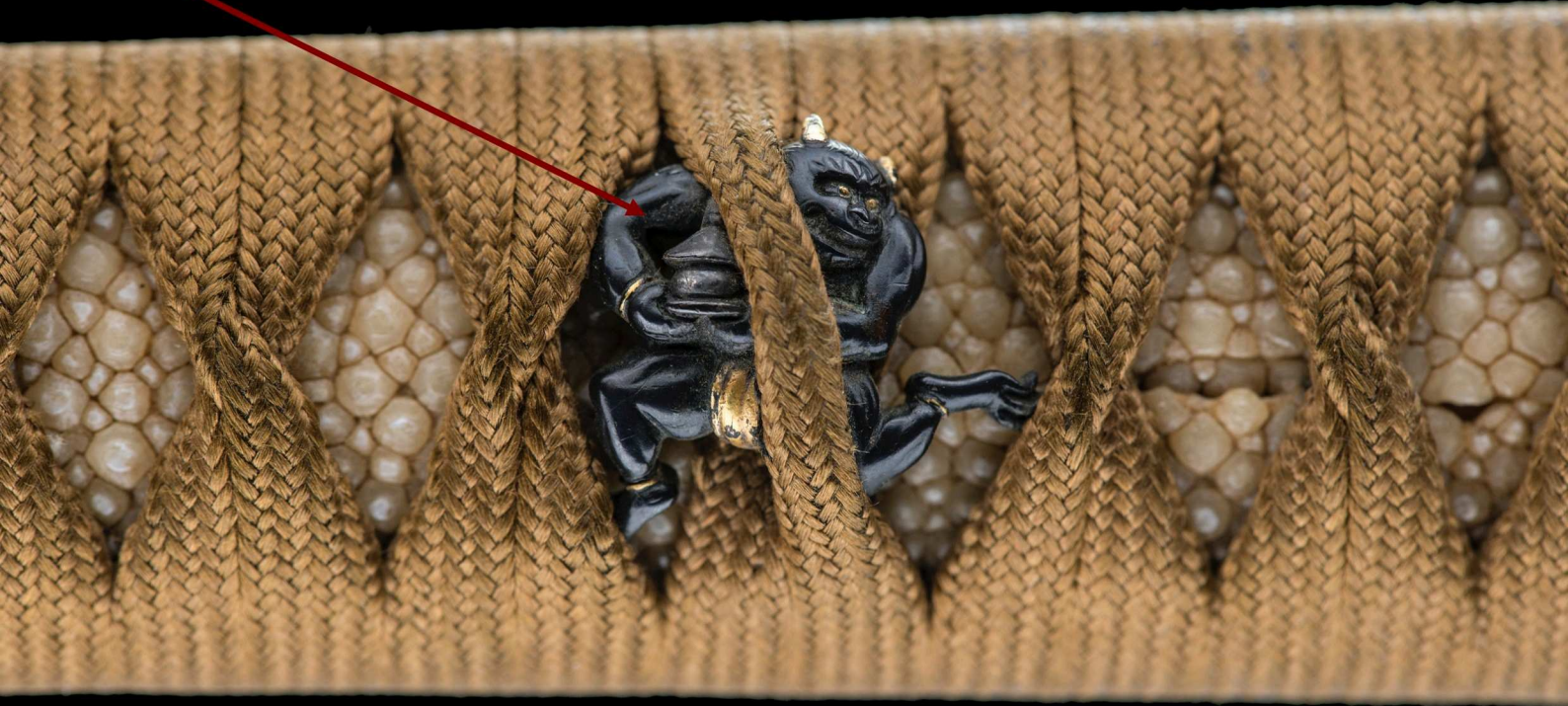




The thieving demon *Shôshitsuki* (below) and the speedy deity *Idaten* (above) are depicted wonderfully as *menuki*. Turn to the next page to learn the background story!



*Shôshitsuki* (evil demon)



When Lord Buddha died, a swift-footed demon called *Shôshitsuki* took the remains of Lord Buddha and fled to *Mount Shumi Idaten*, seeing this, chased it to the top of the mountain and in an instant, retrieved the remains without incident. Since he ran so far so fast, Idaten became famous for his quickness on foot, giving rise to the term *Idaten run*. Due this origin story, Idaten is said to run to remove evil obstacles whenever obstruction comes to spiritual progress, and is thus worshipped as a guardian deity at places of worship.



Quick-footed *Idaten* (good guy)



Catch me if you can!



Koshirae bag