



ITEM# UJKA442

A YASUUJI KATANA

SIGNED, SHINSHINTÔ PERIOD (KANSEI ERA: 1789~1801)

Swordsmith:	<i>Naminohira Yasuuji</i> (60th Naminohira generation)
Measurements:	Length: 69.7cm (<i>ubu</i>) Curvature: 1.5cm Moto-haba: 3.14cm Weight: 875g
Jihada:	<i>Densely-forged ko-itame and masame-hada with ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Thick suguha in nie-deki with flaring ashi and a komaru-bôshi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (<i>koshirae</i> , <i>fk</i> and <i>tsuba</i> certified as Authentic)
Fujishiro rank:	Chû-saku (ranked as an average swordsmith)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Nozomi-san (<i>shodô</i> artist)
Included:	<i>Shirasaya, Meiji-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description</i>

SOLD

This formidable *shinshintô* period katana was crafted by *Yasuuji*, the early name of *Yasuyuki*, who represented the 60th generation of the prestigious *Naminohira* school from *Satsuma* province in *Kyûshû*. Created during the *Kansei* era, this katana is particularly noteworthy for its adherence to pure *Yamato* tradition characteristics. The steel displays a fine combination of *ko-itame* and *masame-hada* patterns, complemented by a brilliant *suguha-hamon* executed in sparkling *nie* crystals with *ashi* formations reminiscent of solar flares. The *nakago* features the distinctive *higaki* file marks, another *Yamato-den* hallmark. The sword rests in an elegant *Meiji-period* *koshirae* with remarkable fittings that include a *tsuba* depicting insects crawling across realistic wood grain, while the polished brass *fuchi-kashira* contrast scenes of a pensive hermit with joyful birds soaring over waves.

⤴
Saki-kasane: 4.9mm

Moto-kasane: 7.5mm

Omosa: 875g

Kissaki: 3.86cm

Saki-haba: 2.04cm

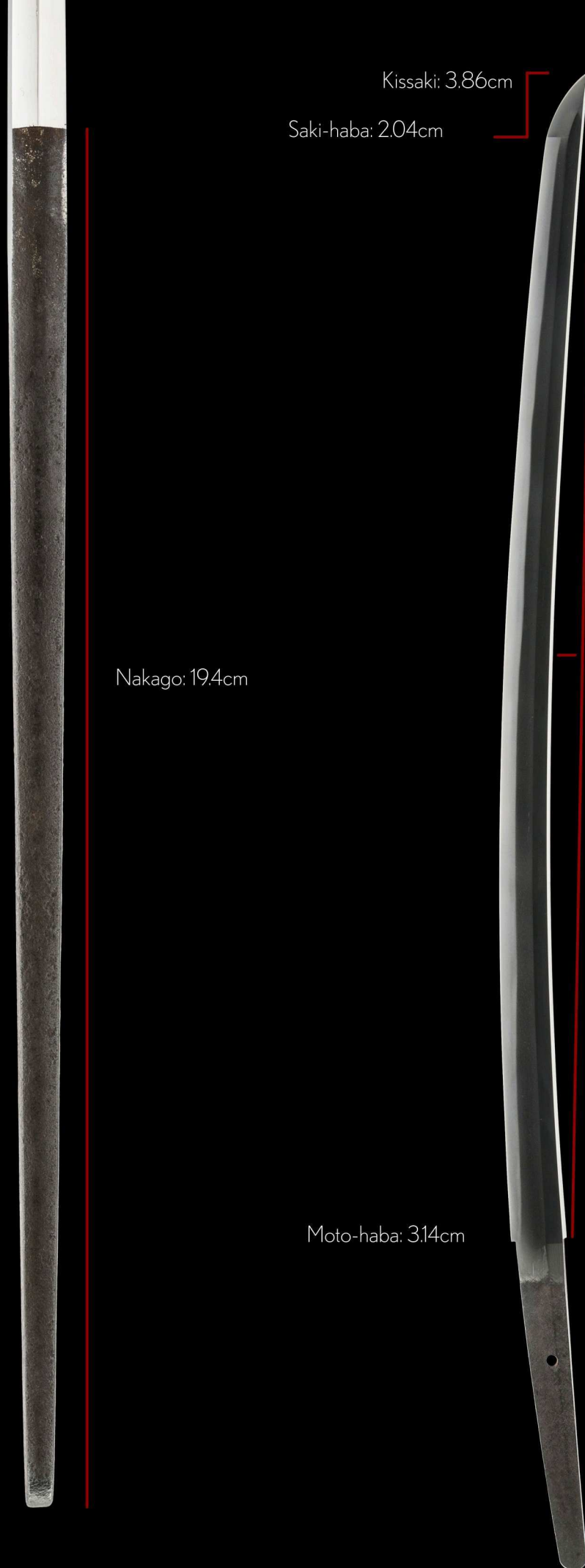
Nakago: 19.4cm

Moto-haba: 3.14cm

Nagasa: 69.7cm

Sori: 1.50cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



The *Naminohira* school is one of the oldest sword-making traditions said to have begun working in *Satsuma* province way back in 987AD. Satsuma province is located at the southern end of Japan's southernmost island *Kyûshû*. The island is known for its high-quality sand iron that was found on its rivers and beaches.

The pioneering smiths of the *Naminohira* school originally travelled from Japan's old capital *Yamato* province, present-day *Nara* prefecture, and most impressively, this school worked uninterrupted right up to the end of the Edo-period 1868.

The two *kanji* characters that form *Naminohira* are *Nami*, meaning 'wave', and *hira* being 'flat', thus translating to *calm seas*. Swords of the *Naminohira* school were said to have been prized by the Japanese navy for their name carried such a good omen.

This strong and valiant katana is the work of *Yasuuji*, the early smithing name of *Yasuyuki* who counted himself as the 60th generation [wow] of the *Naminohira* school. Its NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate states the sword was made during the *Kansei* era (1789~1801) during the *shinshintô* period.

Born *Hashiguchi Kannojô*, *Yasuuji* was the son of the 59th *Naminohira*-gen *Yasutsune*. In the early years of his career, *Yasuuji* also signed *Yasukuni*, but moved on to *Yasuyuki*, the most iconic name of the school, in the first year of *Kyôwa* (1801). *Yasuuji* died on the May 10, 1808 during the *Bunka* era at the age of just 66.

Yasuuji was immensely faithful to his *Yamato-den* roots which makes this sword rather special indeed. The blade is densely forged in *ko-itame* and *masame-hada* with a bright and generous *suguha-hamon* in sparkling *nie-deki* with *ashi* that look like solar flares. Look out for the unique *higaki yasurime* on the *nakago* which another centuries-old trait of its Yamato heritage.

A splendid *Meiji*-period leather-wrapped koshirae houses the sword with gorgeous fittings that include insects crawling over a highly realistic woodgrain *tsuba* and a polished brass *fuchi-kashira* featuring a chilled-out hermit and jubilant scene of birds flying over waves.



Location: *Satsuma province*

School: *Naminohira*

Swordsmith: *Yasuuji* (60th generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

higaki-yasurime (diagonal file marks)



波 (Nami, no)

平 (hira)

安 (Yasu)

氏 (uji)

higaki



The unique criss-cross *yasurime* (file marks) on this nakago is called *higaki*. The name is derived from a fence made of thin, crossed Japanese cypress boards.

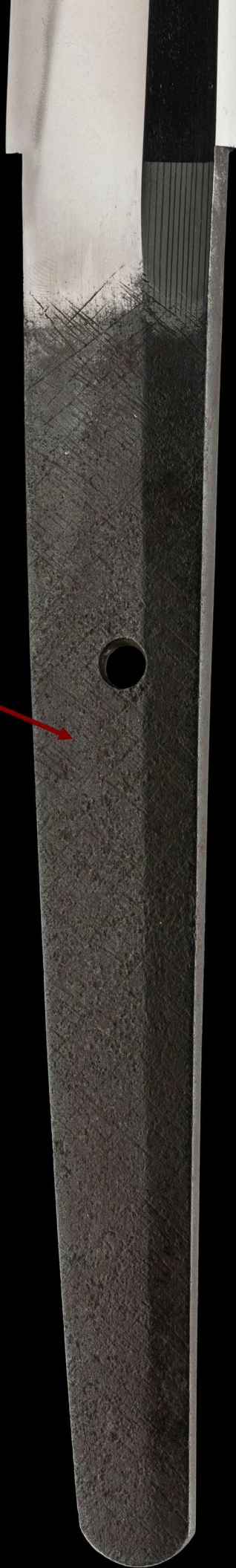
Higaki yasurime can be seen on swords from Yamato province, Mino province and as we see here, the *Naminohira* school.



the-noh.com

Noh play: *Higaki* (cypress wood fence)

(*ura*, reverse)



特選
05202306

№ 1021084



鑑定書

一刃 銘 波平安氏(寛政頃)

長 二尺三寸

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

令和五年八月二十五日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



愛知県 教育委員会
第 6822 号
昭和27年12月21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 5th year of Reiwa (2023), August 25th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)
Naminohira Yasuji (Kansei-goro)

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 3-sun (69.7cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



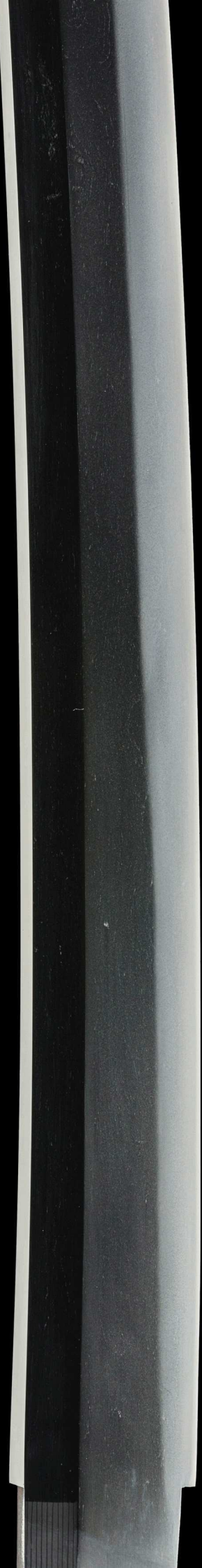
波平安氏
Naminohira Yasuujii
Naminohira Yasuujii

時代寛政頃
Jidai Kansei-goro
Around Kansei period (1789~1801)

刃長貳尺參寸有之
Hachô 2-shaku 3-sun kore ari
Blade length 69.7 cm

令和六甲辰年葉月吉日誌之
Reiwa roku kinoe-tatsudoshi Hazuki kichijitsu kore o shirusu
Written on a lucky day in the eighth month in the sixth year of
Reiwa era during the Year of the Dragon (August 2024)







This is a sharp 'kiss' aki ;)

This clear and serene *hamon* is *suguha* in *nie-deki*.

The *nioiguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon line) are densely concentrated *nie* particles that one can differentiate on an individual level by the naked eye.

When the crystals are so fine that it looks like the milky way galaxy, it is *nioi-deki*. Yamato-den blades are generally forged in *nie-deki*.



nie-deki

This katana is densely forged in *ko-itame* and *masame-hada* exuding an aura of power.



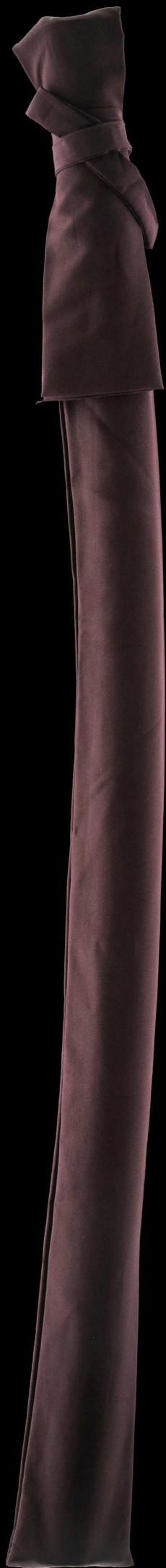
ko-itame with a wavy *masame-hada*

A curious 'bump in the road' can be seen in the *monouchi* (upper third) hitting area of the sword. This katana is filled with little nuggets to be savoured.

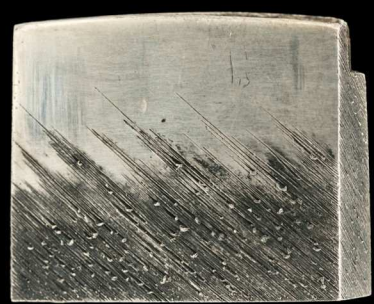




Solar flares of *ashi* (legs) shoot out to the cutting edge.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

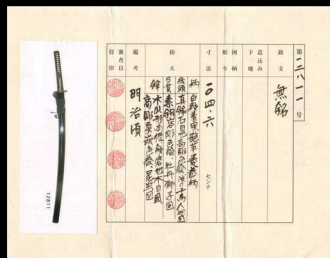


silver *habaki* with
diagonal rain file marks

*Kuro-ronuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Meiji period
(1868~1912)



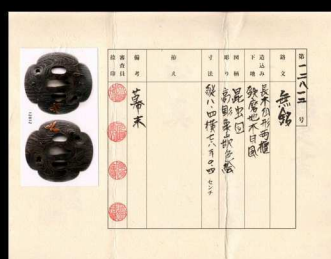
*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



This wonderful *tsuba* has been attributed to the collaborative effort between a *tôshô* (swordsmith) and *kinkô* (metalsmith).

It is made of polished iron with a marvellous woodgrain texture depicting insects in such a realistic manner.

Crafted during the very late Edo period, 1853~1868.



Udenuki ana



Udenuki ana (two small holes) were common on older tachi tsuba serving the purpose of a safety wrist strap when the sword is used on horseback. The holes are of different sizes and generally close together.

During the Edo period this design enjoyed a resurgence as seen here.





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Nara Tsuneshige
Late Edo period (1780~1868)

A hermit is depicted on the *kashira*.
Crafted from polished brass.

Edo Japan was a rigidly stratified society, where one's role was pre-determined and an individual's movements were both limited and regulated. Unsurprisingly, the longing to escape the tensions inherent in living in such an environment manifested itself in visual art as well as in literature, poetry, drama, and music. Artists found parallels for their current circumstances in the Chinese traditions of centuries before, as well as in the long tradition of Japanese recluses and exiles in poetry, literature and history.

The ideals of reclusion and retirement were visualized in a number of ways. Most commonly, painters created mountain landscapes sparsely populated by diminutive figures and minimal signs of human habitation. The pavilions, cottages and huts nestled in the cliffs and coves provide shelters wherein gentlemen and their friends could engage in scholarly pursuits or the contemplation of nature. Here, one could escape the worries and cares of everyday life, either permanently, through retirement; or temporarily, through an excursion to the mountains or a visit to a retired friend.

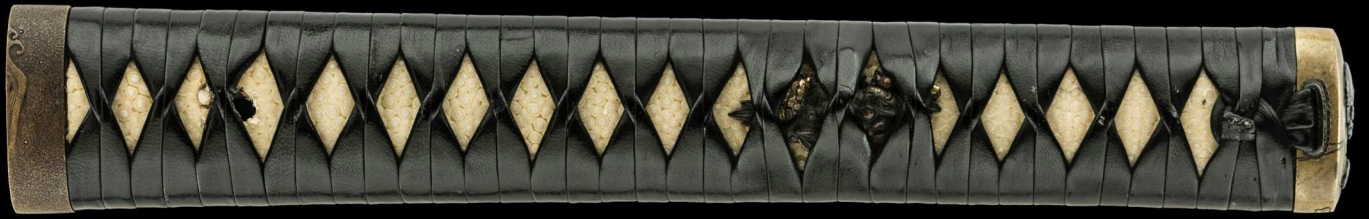
By following the paths, walkways and footbridges as they wind past rivers and cliffs, we too can momentarily retreat into this idealized world.



The two kanji characters that form *Naminohira* are *Nami* meaning 'wave' and *hira* being 'flat', thus translating to *calm seas*. This beautiful brass-inlaid *fuchi* pays tribute the school with birds flying high above waves with great delight.

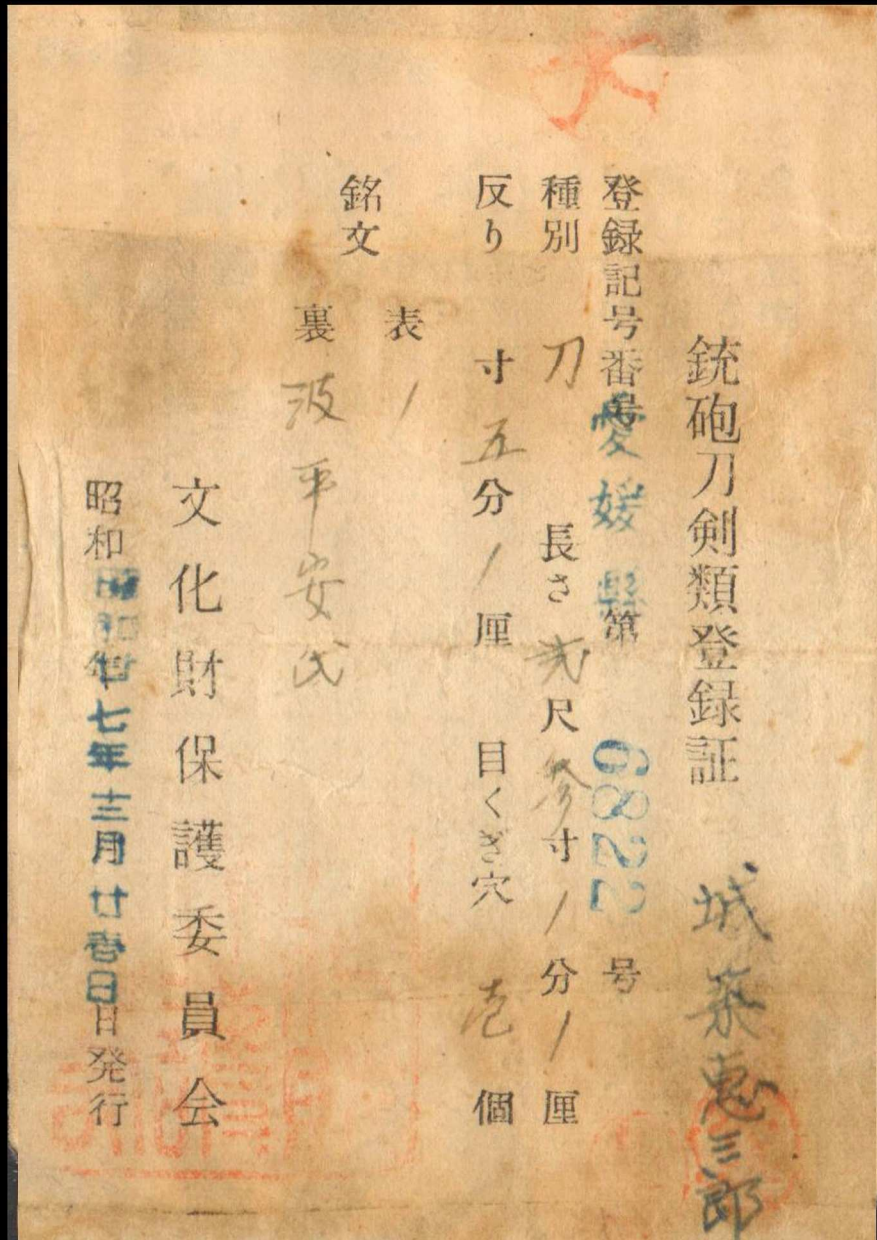


NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
certificate of authenticity



A tightly wrapped black-leather *tsuka* (hilt) provides enhanced grip for the samurai swordsman. The menuki are spiritually protective *shisa* lions and peonies made from copper with gold accents.





This is the original *torokusho* (registration card) for the *Yasuuji katana*. The card was registered in the 27th year of Showa (1952).

This is significant as 1952 was the second year that swords were formally registered in Japan. Many former *daimyô* (great) families were invited to submit their collections early suggesting this blade was once held by a prominent family.

The serial number is **6822**, one of the very first swords registered in Japan. It was registered in *Ehime* prefecture on the island of *Shikoku*.



Koshirae bag

Meet *Nozomi-san*, *sayagaki shodô* artist!

Inside this catalogue you will notice that many of the shirasaya have *sayagaki* by our new *shodô* (calligraphy artist) Nozomi-san. Her artwork is splendid and most definitely spruces up the shirasaya. If you are interested in this *sayagaki* service reach out to UJ by email. We can also produce a beautiful sword box with *hakogaki* as well.

Of course, we still offer *sayagaki* services with *Tanobe-sensei*, but because of his age and time required, we submit primarily *Jûyô* and *Tokubetsu Jûyô* swords to him.



Nozomi-san & UJ's Ayumu Ogusu appeared together on the YouTube channel called *Shigoto Rich!*

