



ITEM# UJKA443

A HIZEN MASASHIGE KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (ENPÔ ERA: 1673~1679)

Swordsmith:	<i>Hizen no kuni Saga jû Masashige (Shodai Shinryô, Hizen province)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.5cm (<i>ubu</i>) Curvature: 1.2 cm Moto-haba: 2.96cm
Jihada:	<i>Well forged ko-itame-hada with masame-hada and plentiful chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Bright gunome-midare with sunagashi and kinsuji</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (<i>koshirae, fk and tsuba certified as Authentic</i>)
Fujishiro rank:	Chûjô-saku (<i>ranked as an above-average swordsmith</i>)
Sharpness:	Wazamono (maker of sharp swords)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description

SOLD

Born *Doi Sakuzae-mon*, in 1680 swordsmith *Masashige* made the voyage from his home in *Hizen* province to *Ôsaka* to study under grandmaster swordsmith *Inoue Shinkai*. Two years later, he returned to *Hirado* in *Hizen* with the name *Shinryô* adopting *Shinkai*'s style of sword making. This handsome katana is forged with a mixture of *masame* and *ko-itame-hada*. Under the light, the sword bursts open with a beautifully bright *gunome-midare hamon* with eye-catching brush strokes of *sunagashi*. A classic black-lacquered Edo period samurai *koshirae* houses the sword with an elegant chrysanthemum designed *sukashi tsuba*, a lovely *fuchi-kashira* with an oak leaf *kamon* by the famed *Yoshioka* school and terrific set of *menuki* that feature a snake entwined around seashells. This is a rather rare opportunity to acquire a sword very early in an influential swordsmith's career.



Saki-kasane: 4.4mm

Moto-kasane: 6.9mm

Omosa: 780g

Kissaki: 2.66cm
Saki-haba: 1.75cm

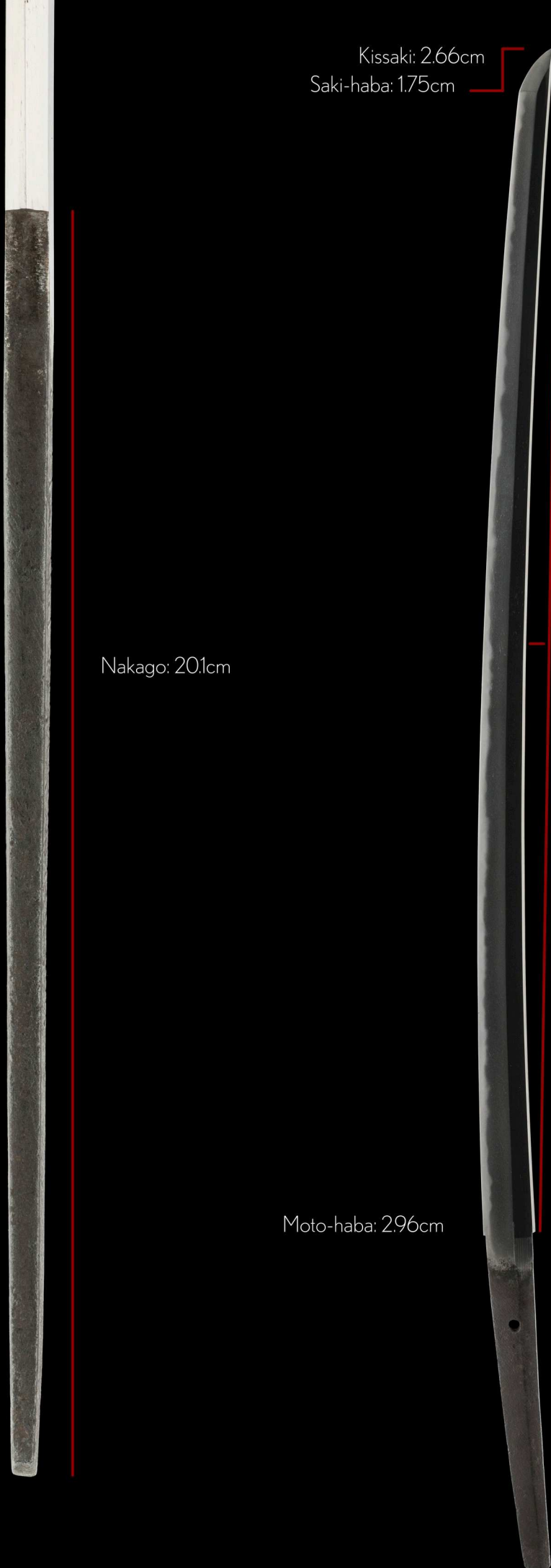
Nakago: 20.1cm

Moto-haba: 2.96cm

Nagasa: 70.5cm

Sori: 1.20cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Born *Doi Sakuzaemon*, swordsmith *Masashige* was son of *Hizen Hirado Doi Masanori*, and first signed swords with the name Masashige. In 1680 Masashige made the big trip from Hirado in Hizen province in southern *Kyûshû* to *Settsu (Ôsaka)*, a journey of over 700 km (435 miles), to study under grandmaster swordsmith *Inoue Shinkai* to further sharpen his skills.

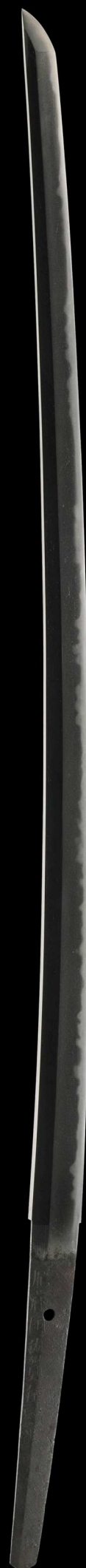
Two years of formal apprenticeship later, Shinkai (nicknamed *Ôsaka Masamune*) died unexpectedly at the age of 53 in the second year of *Tenna* era (1682). That same year, in honour of his teacher, Masashige took the name *Shinryô* and returned to *Hirado* and adopted Shinkai's style of sword workmanship. Six generations of swordsmiths followed in his footsteps in Hizen each passing on the Shinryô name.

This handsome katana is forged with an interesting mixture of *masame* and *ko-itame-hada*. Under the light, the sword bursts open with a beautifully bright *gunome-midare hamon* with eye-catching brush strokes of *sunagashi*. Masashige's young skills were clearly all there, ready to be strengthened by Shinkai.

A classic black-lacquered Edo period samurai koshirae houses the sword with an elegant chrysanthemum designed *sukashi tsuba*, a lovely *fuchi-kashira* with an oak leaf *kamon* by the famed *Yoshioka* school and a terrific set of *menuki* that feature a snake entwined around seashells.

Masashige (*Shinryô*) is ranked as a *chûjô-saku* (an above average smith) by *Fujishiro* and gained *wazamono* status for his sharp sword-making prowess.

This is a rather rare opportunity to acquire a sword very early in a swordsmith's career. One could further enhance such a collection with a sword when he later signed Shinryô or even go large with a Shinkai katana.



Location: *Hizen* (resident of Saga province)
Swordsmith: *Masashige* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)
sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

肥 (Hi)

前 (zen, no)

國 (Kuni)

佐 (Sa)

賀 (ga)

住 (jū)

正 (Masa)

重 (shige)



Signature on tachi side of the nakago,
typical of swords from Hizen province.



An illustration said to be of 5th generation *Shinryô*.

This katana is signed *Masashige* when he was living in the city of *Saga* in *Hizen* province and *before* *Masashige* travelled to *Ôsaka* to train under grandmaster *Inoue Shinkai* in 1680, subsequently changing his name to *Shinryô*. He later returned to *Hizen* in *Kyûshû* to live in the coastal area of *Hiradô*.

A vertical, tapered metal blade, likely a traditional Japanese sword component, shown against a black background. The blade is wider at the top and tapers to a rounded, chestnut-shaped tip. A small circular hole is visible on the left side of the blade. The blade has a textured, slightly mottled appearance, possibly due to oxidation or specific metal treatment. A red arrow points from the text 'crisp hole in nakago' to the hole. Another red arrow points from the text 'kurijiri nakagojiri (chestnut shaped)' to the tip of the blade. The text '(ura, reverse)' is located to the right of the blade.

crisp hole in nakago

(*ura*, reverse)

kurijiri nakagojiri (chestnut shaped)

特 保
03302103

No 1015816



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 肥前国佐賀住正重

長 二又三寸三分弱

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

令和三年五月二十四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



京都府 教育委員会
第 54447 号
平成16年8月3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, Katana

Mei (signature)

Hizen no Kuni Saga jû Masashige

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 3-bu jaku (70.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



土肥真了前銘

Doi Shinryô zenmei

The former signature of *Doi Shinryô*

肥前國佐賀住正重

肥前國佐賀住正重

Hizen no Kuni Saga jû Masashige

Masashige, a resident of Saga in Hizen Province

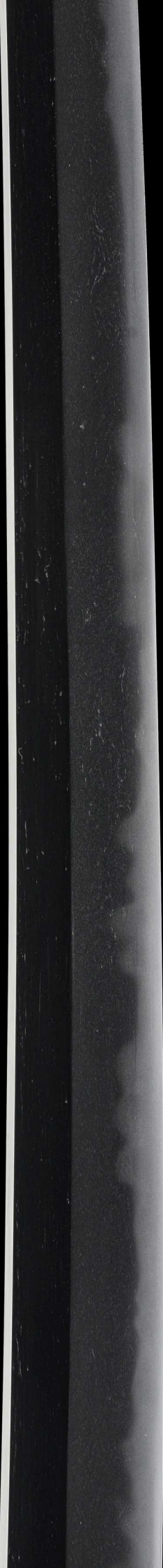
二尺三寸二分

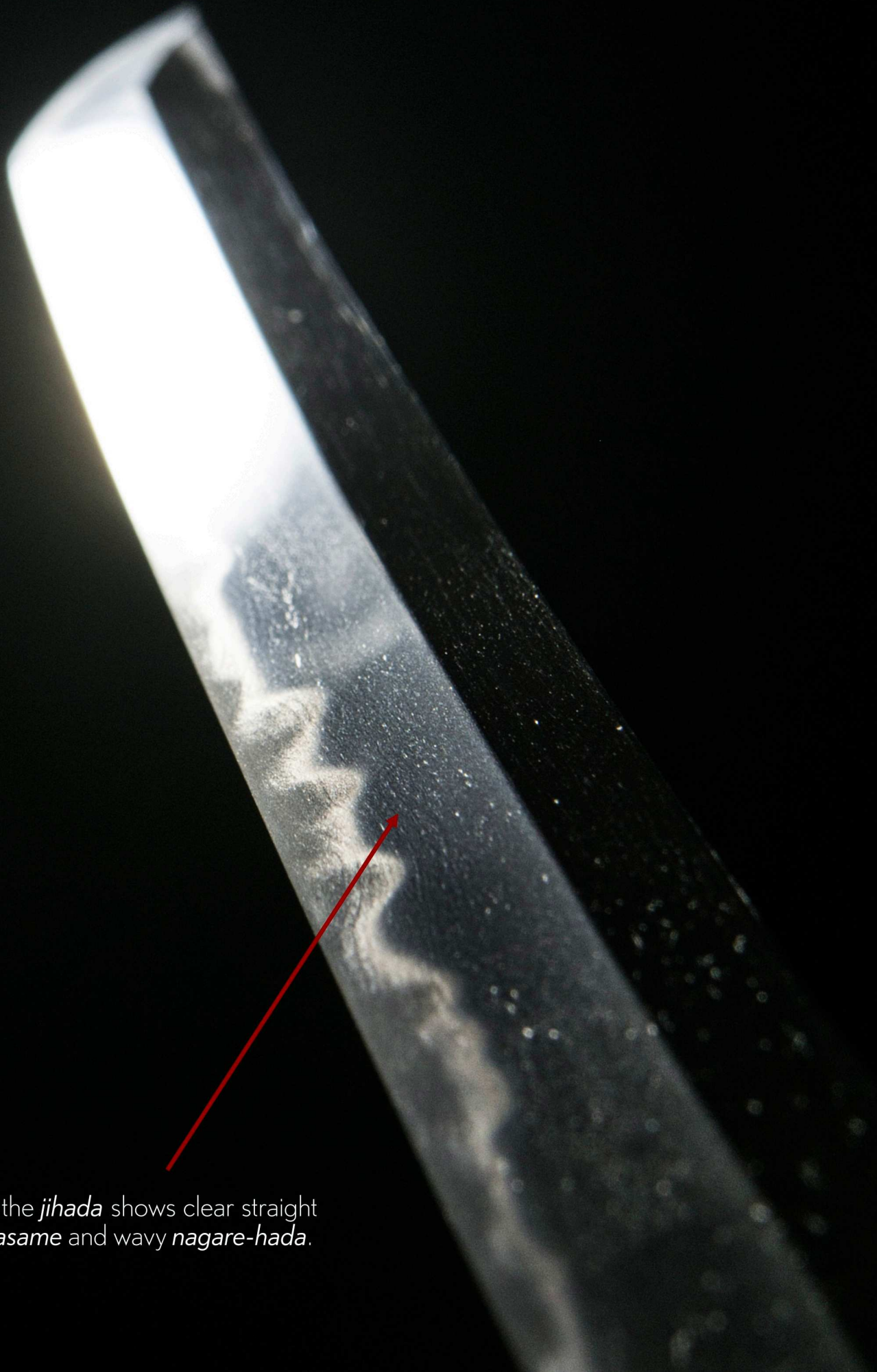
二尺三寸二分

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu

Blade length ~70.5 cm







Parts of the *jihada* shows clear straight grain *masame* and wavy *nagare-hada*.



Ko-itame hada with dark lines of *chikei*.



No evidence of *Ôsaka-yakidashi*, thus prior to working under *Shinkai*.

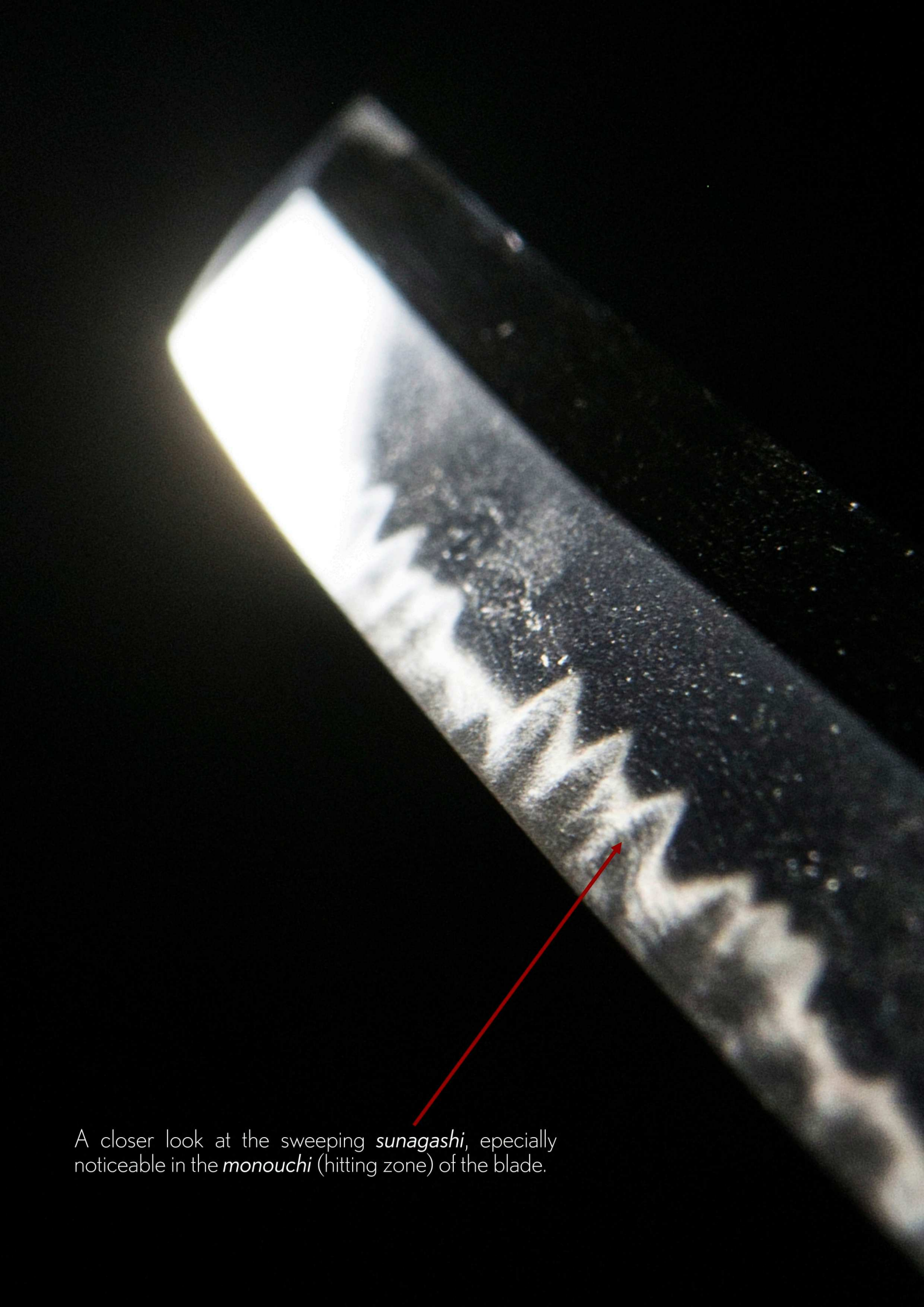


super *sunagashi*



A vibrant *gunome-midare hamon* with surging peaks and valleys.

kinsuji 



A closer look at the sweeping *sunagashi*, especially noticeable in the *monouchi* (hitting zone) of the blade.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

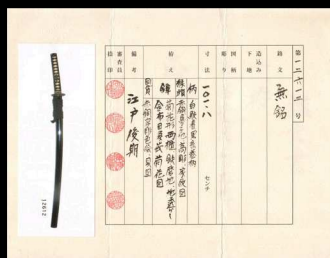


gold *habaki* with
falling rain file marks

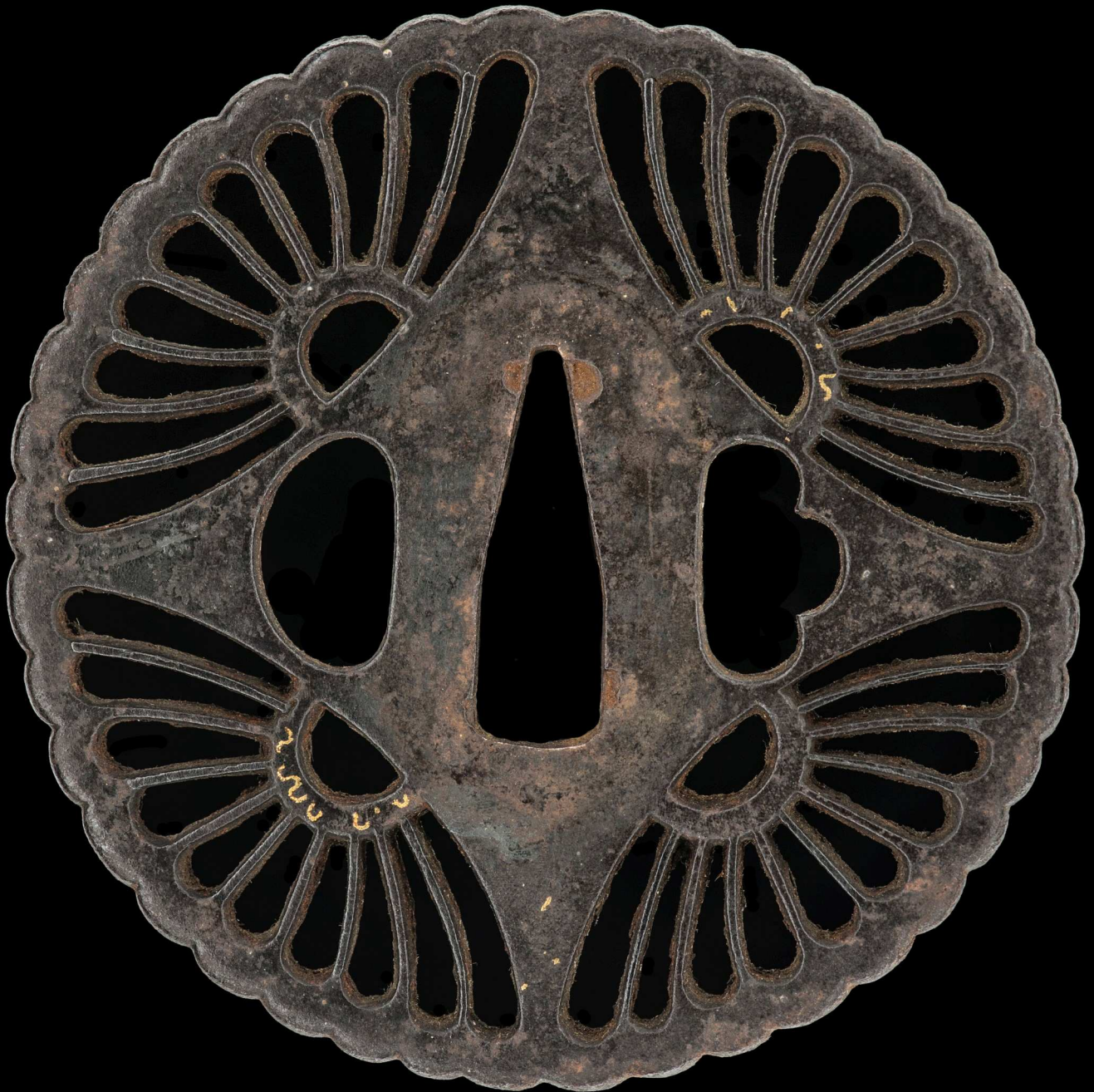
*Kuro-ro-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



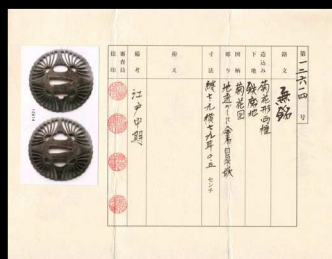
NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This attractive polished iron tsuba has been attributed to the *Kyô-Shôami* school from *Yamashiro* (*Kyôto*) province.

Its unique *sukashi* (openwork) design features elegantly arranged motifs of chrysanthemums.

Middle Edo period
circa 1700s





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Yoshioka Shigetsugu

Late *Edo* period
(1780-1867)

This beautiful *fuchi-kashira* displays the *Mitsukashiwa-mon* (oak leaves), a popular motif with *daimyô* families during the Edo period such as the *Yamauchi family* from *Tosa* clan, *Makino family* from *Nagaoka* clan.



This rare set of *shakudô menuki* depicts a snake wrapping itself around a shell. Masashige worked in coastal Hizen province so these menuki work with his story.



History in your hands.





Koshirae bag
with fan design