



ITEM# UJKA446

## A SANEKAGE KATANA

UNSIGNED, NANBOKUCHÔ PERIOD (JÔJI ERA: 1362~1368)

<b>Swordsmith:</b>	<i>Den Kashû Sanekage (Kaga province)</i>		
<b>Measurements:</b>	<b>Length:</b> 64.8cm ( <i>ô-suriage</i> )	<b>Curvature:</b> 0.76 cm	<b>Moto-haba:</b> 2.94cm
<b>Jihada:</b>	<i>Prominent pools of itame and mokume-hada with ji-nie and chikei</i>		
<b>Hamon:</b>	<i>Vibrant gunome-midare with plenty of sunagashi and kinsuji</i>		
<b>Certificate #1-2:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon</b> ( <i>sword &amp; fk Especially Worthy of Preservation</i> )		
<b>Certificate #3:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Kichô</b> ( <i>Especially Precious, vintage certificate</i> )		
<b>Certificate #4-5:</b>	<b>NBTHK Hozon</b> ( <i>a tsuba and menuki Worthy of Preservation</i> )		
<b>Certificate #6:</b>	<b>NTHK-NPO Kanteishô</b> ( <i>koshirae certified as Authentic</i> )		
<b>Fujishiro rank:</b>	<b>Jô-saku</b> ( <i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i> )		
<b>Sharpness:</b>	<b>Ryô-wazamono</b> ( <i>maker of very sharp swords</i> )		
<b>Authentication:</b>	<b>Sayagaki by Nozomi-san</b> ( <i>shodô artist</i> )		
<b>Included:</b>	Shirasaya, Edo-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description		

**SOLD**

Inspired by grandmaster *Norishige*, this brilliant katana has been attributed to *Kashû Sanekage* from *Kaga* province. It is a wide, stout and very sharp sword that proudly stands tall in attention. Large pools of *itame* and *mokume-hada* catch the eye immediately. There is a definite *soshû* energy that abounds with a vibrant *gunome-midare hamon* incorporating plenty of *ji-nie*, glorious *chikei* and spectacular amounts of *sunagashi* and golden lines of *kinsuji*. The sword is housed in a terrific custom koshirae with a dynamic set of NBTHK certified fittings in a theme of rolling waves.



Saki-kasane: 5.3mm

Moto-kasane: 4.8mm

Omosa: 690g

Kissaki: 5.78cm

Saki-haba: 2.42cm

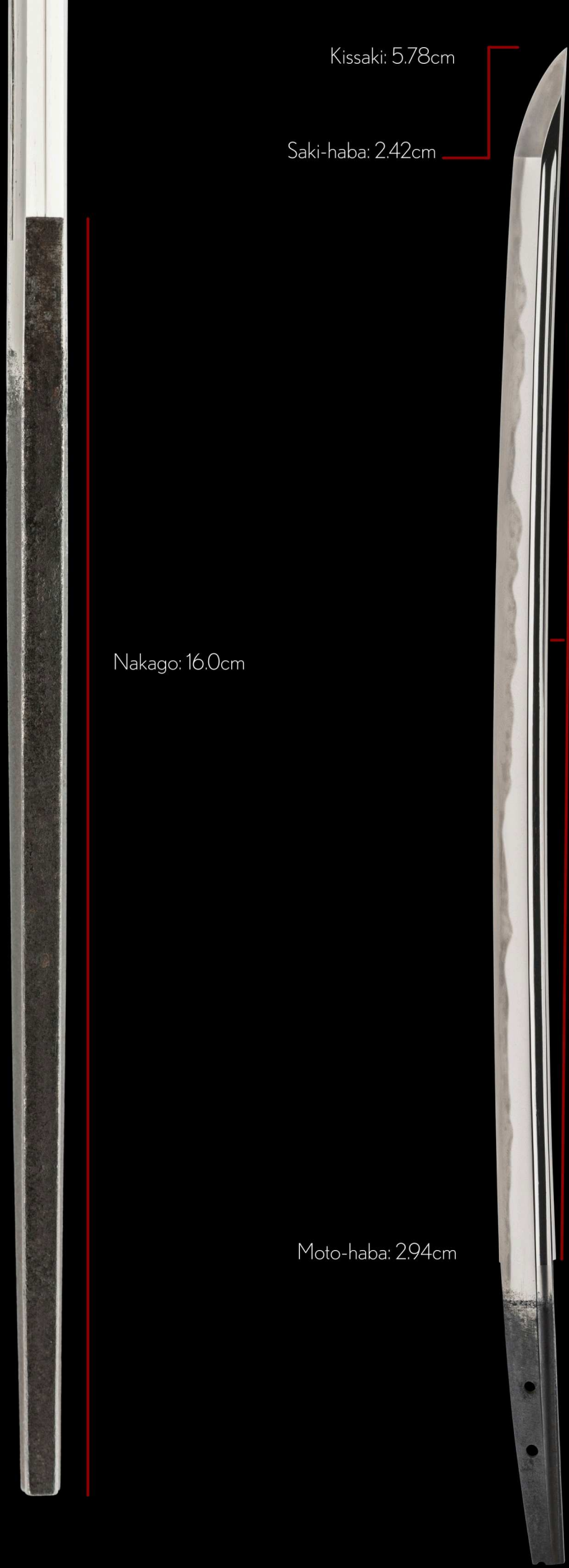
Nakago: 16.0cm

Moto-haba: 2.94cm

Nagasa: 64.8cm

Sori: 0.76cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



*Kashû Sanekage* was said to be a student of grandmaster swordsmith *Etchû Norishige*, however, given that there are dated works by Norishige from the *Shôwa* (1312~1317) and *Gen'ô* eras (1319~1321), and those by Sanekage appear from the *Jôji* era (1362~1368), there is a too large a gap between the active periods of the two smiths for a master-student relationship. It is much more likely that Sanekage was indirectly influenced by Norishige.

This brilliant katana with its dark, rather mysterious steel, reflects the characteristics of northern blades in provinces such as *Etchû* and *Kaga* that nestle along the Sea of Japan known as *Hokkoku-mono*. It is a wide and stout sword with little curvature that proudly stands tall in attention. Large pools of *itame* and *mokume-hada* catch the eye immediately, clearly paying homage to the work of Norishige. There is definite *soshû* energy with a vibrant *gunome-midare* with plenty of *ji-nie*, glorious *chikei* and spectacular amounts of *sunagashi* and golden lines of *kinsuji*. This is a blade that will lift spirits each and every time it is admired under the light.

Sanekage is ranked as a *jô-saku* (superior) swordsmith and rated *ryô-wazamono* for the excellent cutting ability of his finely crafted swords.

The sword is housed in a terrific custom koshirae with a dynamic set of fittings in a theme that incorporates water and waves, all of which have been certified by the NBTHK. The vermilion scabbard speaks to the adage that only sharp swords are held in a red saya.

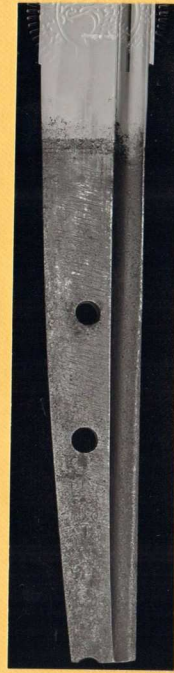




Ô-suriage nakago with a groove running through the tang, known as *kaki-toshi*.

01201906

No. 1011635



鑑定書

一刀 無銘 伝(加州真景)

長二尺一寸四分

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

令和元年八月二十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



秋田県 教育委員会  
第 384 号  
昭和26年4月22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

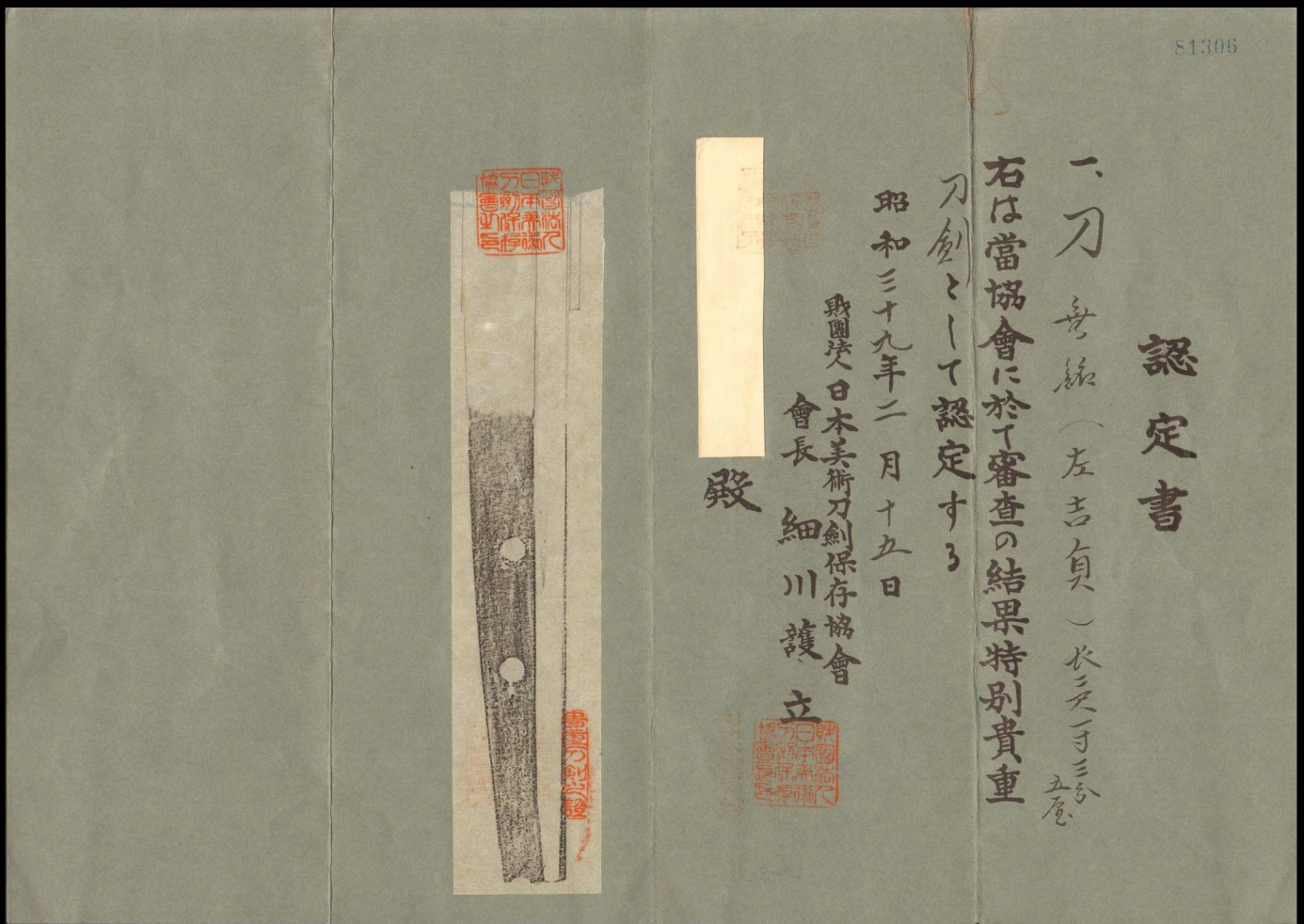
Issued in the 1st year of Reiwa (2019), August 26th

One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Den Kashû Sanekage*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 1-sun 4-bu (64.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



## NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Precious*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 39th year of Showa (1964), February 15th

One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Sa Yoshisada*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 1-sun 3-bu 5-rin (64.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



無銘  
*Mumei*  
Unsigned

加州真景  
*Kashû Sanekage*  
Sanekage from Kashû province

時代貞治頃  
*Jidai Jôji goro*  
Crafted circa Jôji period (1362~1368)

刃長貳尺一寸四分有之  
*Hachô 2-shaku 1-sun 4-bu kore ari*  
Blade length 64.8 cm

令和六甲辰年卯月吉日誌之  
*Reiwa roku kinoe-tatsudoshi Uzuki kichijitsu kore o shirusu*  
Written on a lucky day in the fourth month in the sixth year of  
Reiwa era during the Year of the Dragon (April 2024).







An elongated *kissaki*, speaks to the warring *Nanbokuchô* period.

The *mokume* and *itame-hada* stands out beautifully on the sword.

The image features two curved blades of a katana, positioned diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right. The blades are highly polished, showing a dark, almost black surface with bright, reflective highlights along their edges and curves. The background is a solid, deep black, which makes the metallic sheen of the blades stand out prominently. The lighting is dramatic, emphasizing the texture and curvature of the blades.

Swirling *jihada*. Welcome to *nihonto*.

Sensational view of the oversized  
pools of *mokume* and *itame-hada*.





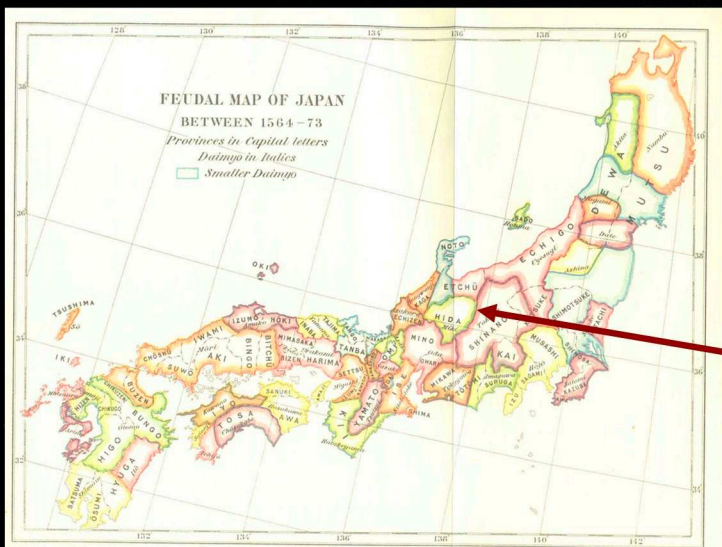
Gorgeous streams of *sunagashi* flow brilliantly on a bedrock of *gunome-midare*. The *sôshû* tradition speaks loud and clear in the steel.



*Ji-nie* shines in all its glory.

The dark *jigane* is an attribute of swords  
crafted in northern regions of Japan.

Although said to be a student of *Etchû Norishige* we can say that *Sanekage* was not a direct student of Norishige given that he worked a half a century later but was surely influenced by him. Sanekage's *nie-laden gunome-chô* mixed with *ko-midare* and *sunagashi* displays the local characteristic features of the northern *Etchû* and *Kaga* smiths.



*Etchû* and *Kaga* provinces  
on northern Sea of Japan side.



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with  
slanting file marks

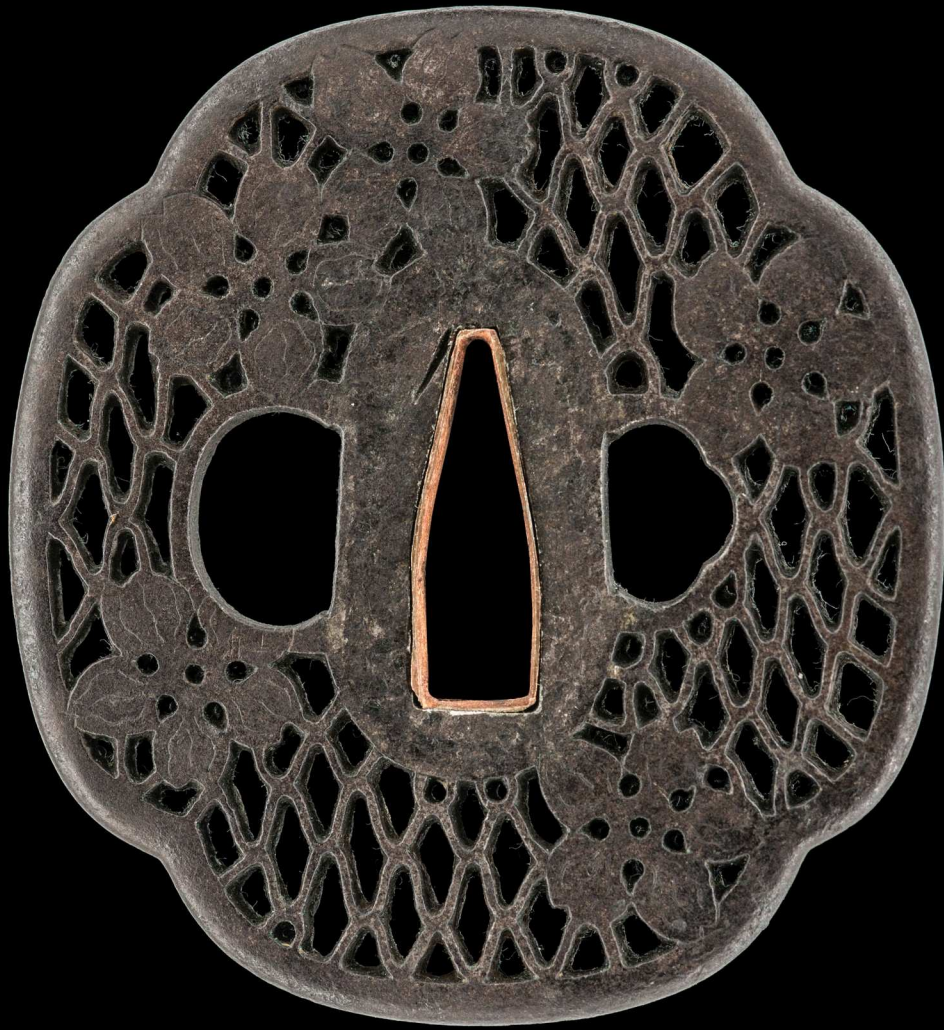
*Aka-ishime-nuri saya  
uchigatana-koshirae*  
(朱石目塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae lacquered  
in vermilion with stone texture*

Crafted during the  
modern era



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity



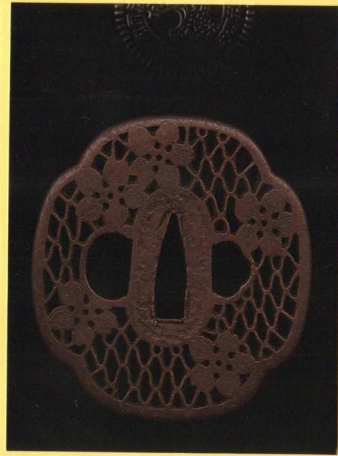
This beautiful polished multi-lobed iron tsuba depicts a *sakura-gawa* motif where sakura petals float along a river. It comes Hozon certified by the NBTHK.



Cherry blossom petals float along the *Shingashi* river

23201106

No 463091



鑑定書

一、桜川透鐔 無銘 肥後  
木皿形 鉄磨地 地透毛彫 丸身

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十三年七月一日

財團法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



# NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A tsuba designated as *Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 23rd year of Heisei (2011), July 1st

One, Tsuba

*Depicting Sakura-gawa  
(Cherry blossoms on a river stream)*

*Mumei (unsigned)  
Higo school*

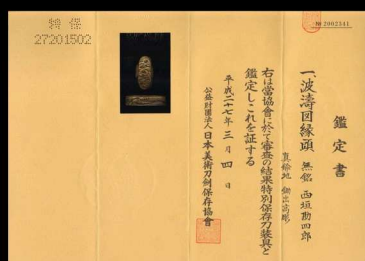
*Multiple lobed round shape, polished iron,  
openworks with linear carvings, rounded edge*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



*Fuchi-kashira*  
attributed to  
*Nishigaki Kanshirô*  
(1600s)

Rolling, rolling, rolling waves...



NBTH Tokubetsu Hozon  
certificate of authenticity

特 選  
27201502

No 2002341



鑑 定 書

一、波濤図縁頭 無銘 西垣勘四郎

真鍮地 鋤出彫

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成二十七年三月四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



## NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A tsuba designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 27th year of Heisei (2015), March 4th

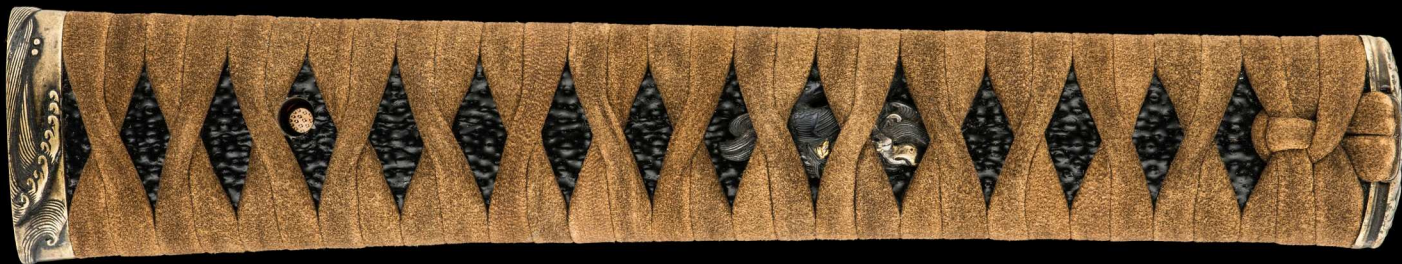
One, fuchi-kashira

*Depicting waves*

*Mumei (unsigned)  
Nishigaki Kanshirô*

*Brass ground, relief carved from the ground plate*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



smoked leather wrap



This enjoyable set of *menuki* sport a raven frolicking in waves set onto glossy black-lacquered *samekawa* (ray skin) that serves as a realistic backdrop of water. These *menuki* have been attributed to the *Gotô* school and certified Hozon by the NBTHK.



30201802



No 4012943

鑑定書

一濡烏凶目貫 無銘 後藤

赤銅地 容彫 金銀色絵

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年三月十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



## NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A tsuba designated as *Worthy of Conservation*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 30th year of Heisei (2018), March 16th

One, menuki

*Depicting a wet raven*

*Mumei (unsigned)  
Gotô school*

*Shakudô ground, three dimensional with motif forming the outline,  
gold and silver accents*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



Koshirae bag



## Making footsteps to Japan?

If you are travelling to Tokyo and are serious about acquiring an authentic Japanese sword, be sure to book a **private meeting** with us in advance.

Many swords from Unique Japan are sold privately every year to proud clients around the world. Private meetings are held at our studio near **JR Meguro station** - only minutes away from all major hotels in downtown Tokyo.

Contact Pablo at [service@uniquejapan.com](mailto:service@uniquejapan.com) where we'll discuss the special qualities you are seeking; type of sword, era, hamon pattern, level of certification, cutting test, etc. along with budget parameters in order to best serve you.

Enjoy your trip!

SOLD  
(for reference purposes only)



ujka425  
*A Fukuoka-Ichimonji Naginata-Naoshi Katana*

Length: 70.1cm  
16th NBTHK Tokubetsu Jūyo Tōken  
Hon'ami Kōchū origami dated September 3rd, 1714  
Tanobe-sensei sayagaki

The *Ichimonji School* (一文字派) emerged in the early *Kamakura* period and subsequently thrived throughout the mid to late *Kamakura* until the early *Nanbokuchô* period in places like *Fukuoka* (福岡), *Yoshioka* (吉岡), *Katayama* (片山), and *Iwato* (岩戸), and gave rise to many excellent smiths.

The name of the school goes back to the fact that some of the smiths signed with the character (Japanese: *monji*) for “one” (Japanese: *lchi*). That is, there were *Ichimonji* smiths who just signed with said character, those who signed below with their individual names, and some swordsmiths that only signed with their names and without the character *lchi*. The most flamboyant style within the *Ichimonji* school was the *ôbusa-chôji-midare* hamon that was produced by the *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* group.

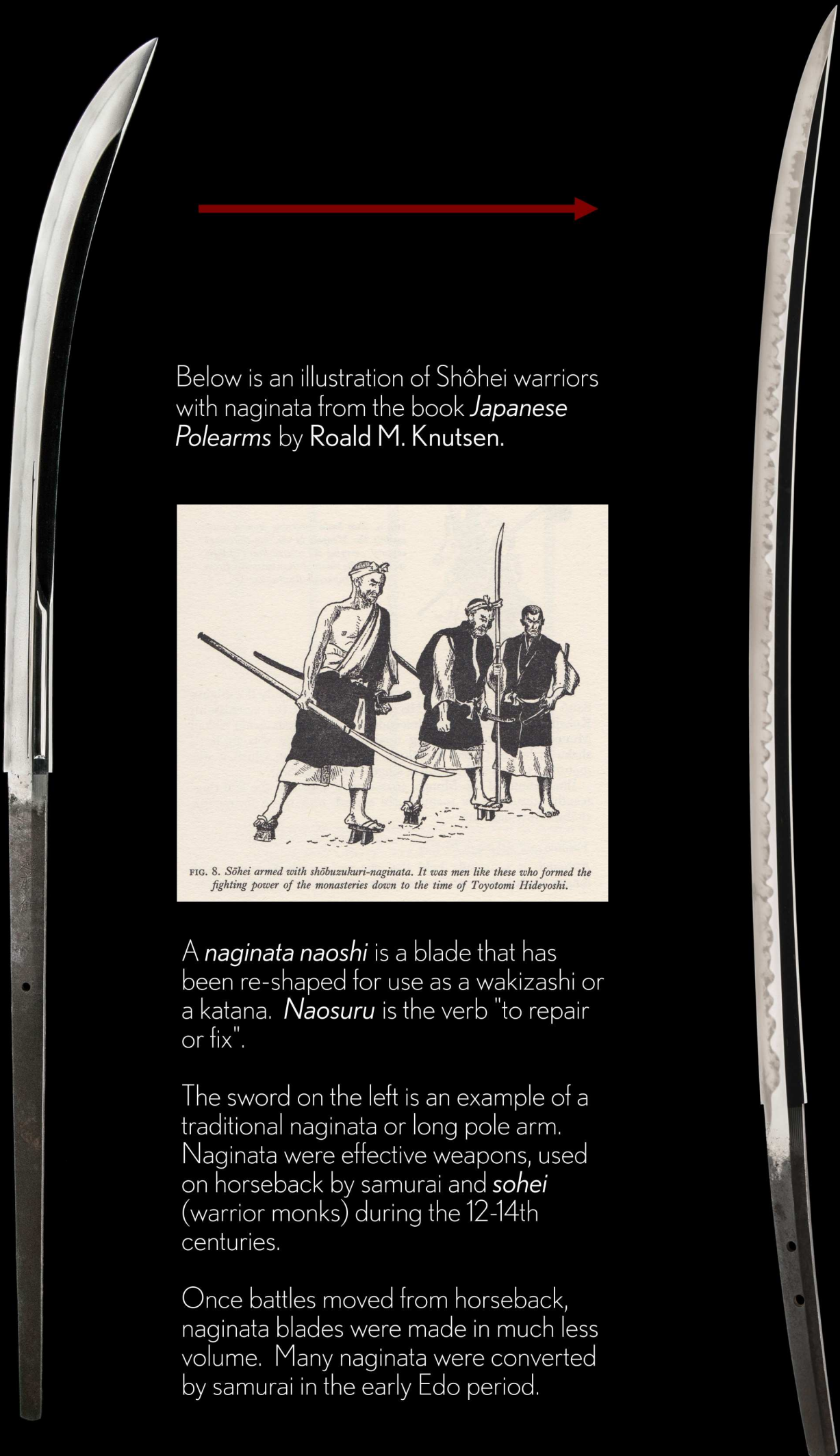
This remarkable blade has been attributed to the *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school from the middle *Kamakura* period (early to mid 1200s). Although it carries a *shinogi-zukuri* structure, this katana was originally crafted as a powerful *naginata* and subsequently reshaped into a katana a couple centuries later in a practice referred to as *naginata-naoshi*.

The sword has attained the highest distinction at the NBTHK (the sword museum of Japan) *Tokubetsu Jûyô Tôken* (a highly profound and important sword). There are only four *Ichimonji* school *naginata-naoshi* swords that have reached such distinction and two of them are from the *Fukuoka Ichimonji* school. And this sword being the very first of the four to be awarded prestigious NBTHK *Tokubetsu Jûyô*.

The body of the katana displays a wonderfully-forged *itame-hada* (grain pattern) and features a lovely reflective *midare-utsuri*. Its gorgeous hamon is a brilliant mixture of *ôbusa-chôji* and *juka-chôji* with some parts of the hamon bleeding over the *shinogi* line in a dazzling fashion.

All told, this is a magnificently rare and significant reference sword that faithfully reflects the flamboyant interpretation approach of the mid-*Kamakura* period *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school.





Below is an illustration of Shōhei warriors with naginata from the book *Japanese Polearms* by Roald M. Knutsen.

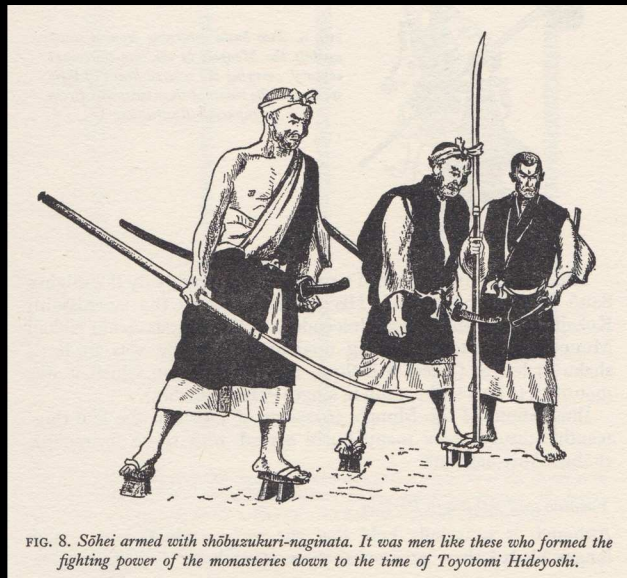


FIG. 8. *Sōhei* armed with *shōbuzukuri-naginata*. It was men like these who formed the fighting power of the monasteries down to the time of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

A *naginata naoshi* is a blade that has been re-shaped for use as a wakizashi or a katana. *Naosuru* is the verb "to repair or fix".

The sword on the left is an example of a traditional naginata or long pole arm. Naginata were effective weapons, used on horseback by samurai and *sohei* (warrior monks) during the 12-14th centuries.

Once battles moved from horseback, naginata blades were made in much less volume. Many naginata were converted by samurai in the early Edo period.

## Background of the *naginata*

The polearm type of the *naginata* emerged in the *Heian* period, likely as a further development from the ancient *hoko* spear. As early as by the end of this period and the then occurring *Genpei* War, high-ranking warriors recognized the efficacy of the *naginata* and made it their weapon of choice when fighting on foot. Accordingly, famous figures of that time period being recorded as fighting preferably with the *naginata* have become a fixture of Japanese lore, e.g., *Minamoto no Tsunemitsu* (died 1146), the warrior monk *Benkei* (1155-1189), female warrior *Tomoe-Gozen* (late 1100s).

The *naginata* henceforth remained much in use until the Muromachi period, when *yari* and firearms became the decisive weapons on the battlefield. By the end of the Muromachi period and entering the Momoyama era, this trend and changes in the way swords were worn and appreciated by the Bushi in civilian life as well ushered in significant changes. In a nutshell, long *tachi* mostly used on horseback were often shortened to be more effective when worn on foot as a *katana*, and *naginata* were facing a similar, yet slightly different fate. That is, mostly designed to be durable and highly effective cutters on the battlefield, their apparent function remained unchanged when being shortened to wear them as a *katana*.

Accordingly, the following saying developed among warriors:

*Naginata-naoshi ni namakura nashi* (薙刀直しに鈍刀なし)  
"No sword made from a *naginata* is dull!"





Saki-kasane: 4.8mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 14.57cm

Saki-haba: 2.64cm

Nagasa: 70.1cm

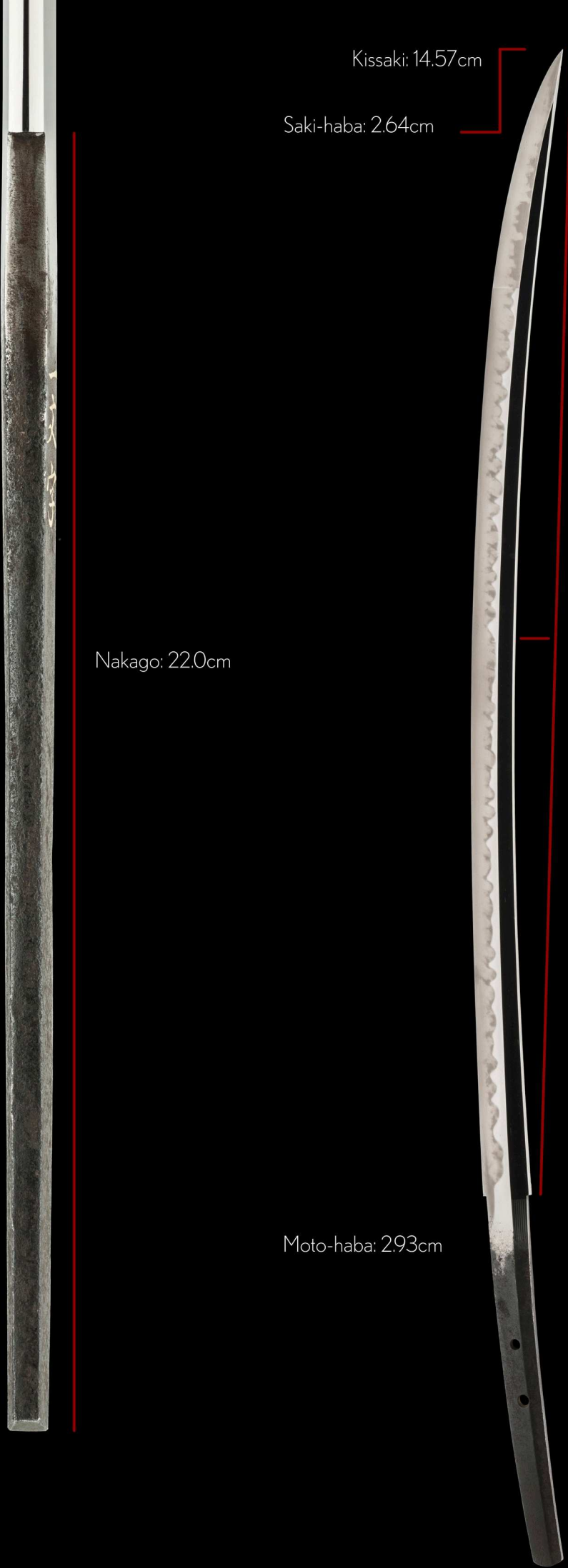
Nakago: 22.0cm

Sori: 2.0cm

Omosa: 960g

Moto-haba: 2.93cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



(lchi) 一  
(mon) 文  
(ji) 字



Location: *Bizen province*  
School name: *Fukuoka Ichimonji*

*ubu-nakago* (ô-suriage)  
with slanting file marks



(*ura*, reverse)



特 定  
12200016

特重要第六六號

指 定 書

薙刀直し刀 (金象嵌銘) 一文字 一口

法量 長さ七〇・二釐 反り二・〇釐  
形状 薙刀直し造 三ノ棟 身幅やや広く 重厚め 先反りつき 大鋒  
鍔 板目肌 地沸つき 乱れ映り立つ  
刃文 丁子乱れに大房丁子交じり 焼幅広く 出入りがあり 華やかであり  
足・葉入り 匂ひ揃まりこころに小沸つき 飛跳いかる  
帽子 乱れ込み 落ど焼詰め 僅かに返る  
茎 大磨上 鑿目筋造 目釘孔二  
作者 備前国福岡一文字派  
時代 鎌倉時代中期

右者當協會に於て審査の結果  
特別重要刀剣に指定する

平成十二年四月二十八日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會  
會長 山中貞則



Tokubetsu-Jûyô Certificate No. 686  
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation  
Naginata-naoshi-katana, kinzôgan-mei: Ichimonji (一文字)

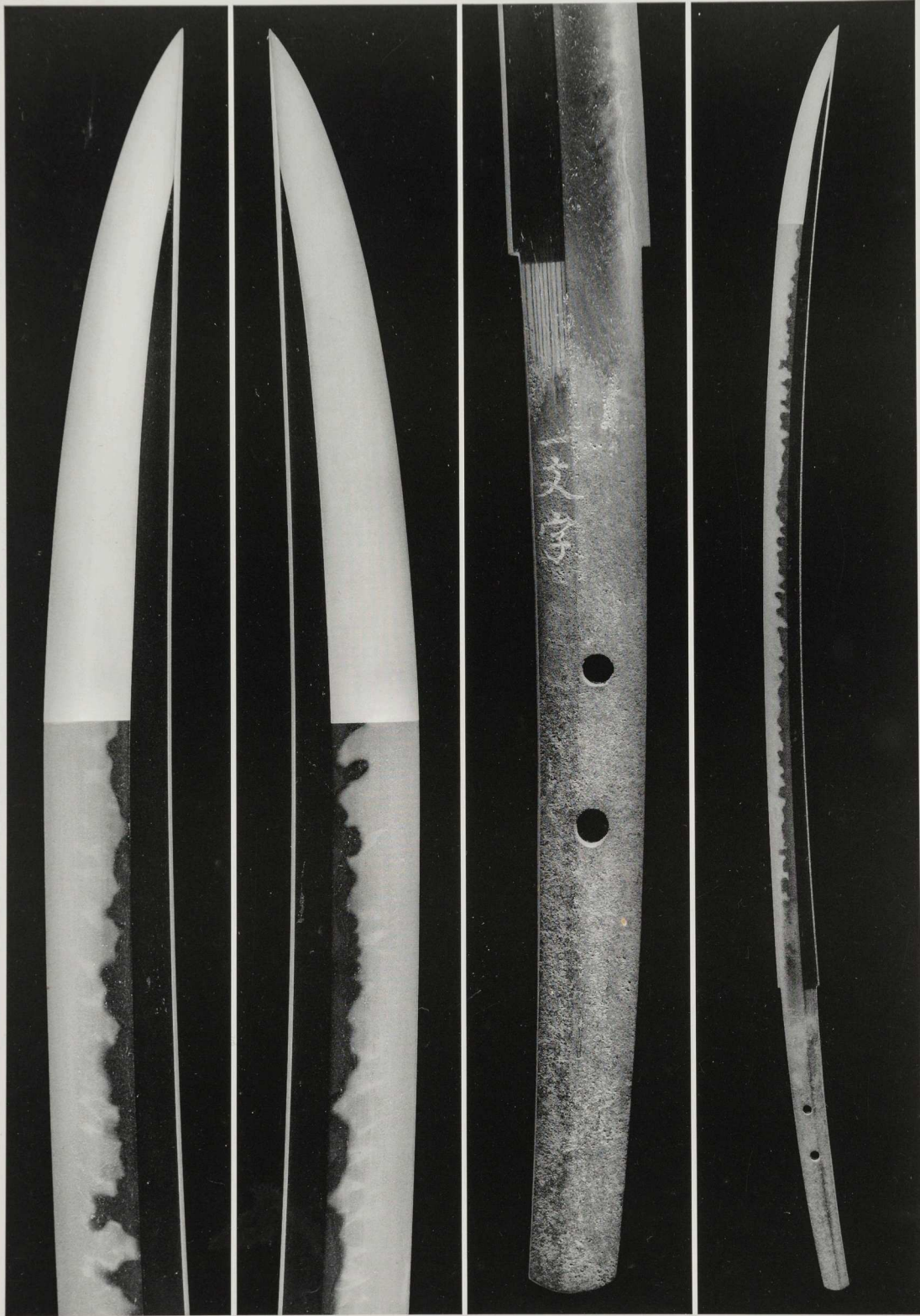
Measurements  
nagasa 70.1 cm, sori 2.0 cm

Description

Keijo: naginata-naoshi-zukuri, mitsu-mune, rather wide mihaba, thick kasane, sakizori, ô-kissaki  
Kitae: itame with ji-nie, featuring midare-utsuri  
Hamon: chôji-midare that is mixed with ôbusa-chôji, wide yakihaba, noticeable undulations, ashi and yô rather tight nioi-guchi with ko-nie and tobiyaki  
Bôshi: midare-komi, almost no turnback  
Nakago: ô-suriage, , slanting file marks, two peg holes  
Sakusha: Fukuoka Ichimonji school from Bizen province  
Jidai: Middle Kamakura period

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as tokubetsu-jûyô-tôken.

April 28, 2000  
[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK  
[President] Yamanaka Sadanori (山中貞則)



薙刀直し刀 (金象嵌銘) 一文字



Designated as *Tokubetsu-Jûyô-Tôken* (a profound and important sword)  
at the 16th *tokubetsu-jûyô shinsa* held on April 28, 2000

### *Naginata-naoshi-katana, kinzôgan-mei: Ichimonji* (一文字)

#### Measurements

*nagasa* 70.1 cm

*sori* 2.0 cm

*motohaba* 2.9 cm, *sakihaba* 2.6 cm

*kissaki-nagasa* 14.7 cm, *nakago-nagasa* 22.0 cm, *nakago-sori* 0.3 cm

#### Description

*Keijo*: *naginata-naoshi-zukuri*, *mitsu-mune*, rather wide *mihaba*, thick *kasane*, *sakizori*, *ô-kissaki*

*Kitae*: *itame* with *ji-nie*, featuring *midare-utsuri*

*Hamon*: *chôji-midare* that is mixed with *ôbusa-chôji*, wide *yakihaba*, noticeable undulations, *ashi* and *yô*, rather tight *nioi-guchi* with *ko-nie* and *tobiyaki*

*Bôshi*: *midare-komi*, almost no turnback

*Nakago*: *ô-suriage*, slanting file marks, two peg holes, gold signature of 'Ichimonji' just above the peg hole on the front side.

#### Artisan

Fukuoka Ichimonji school from Bizen province

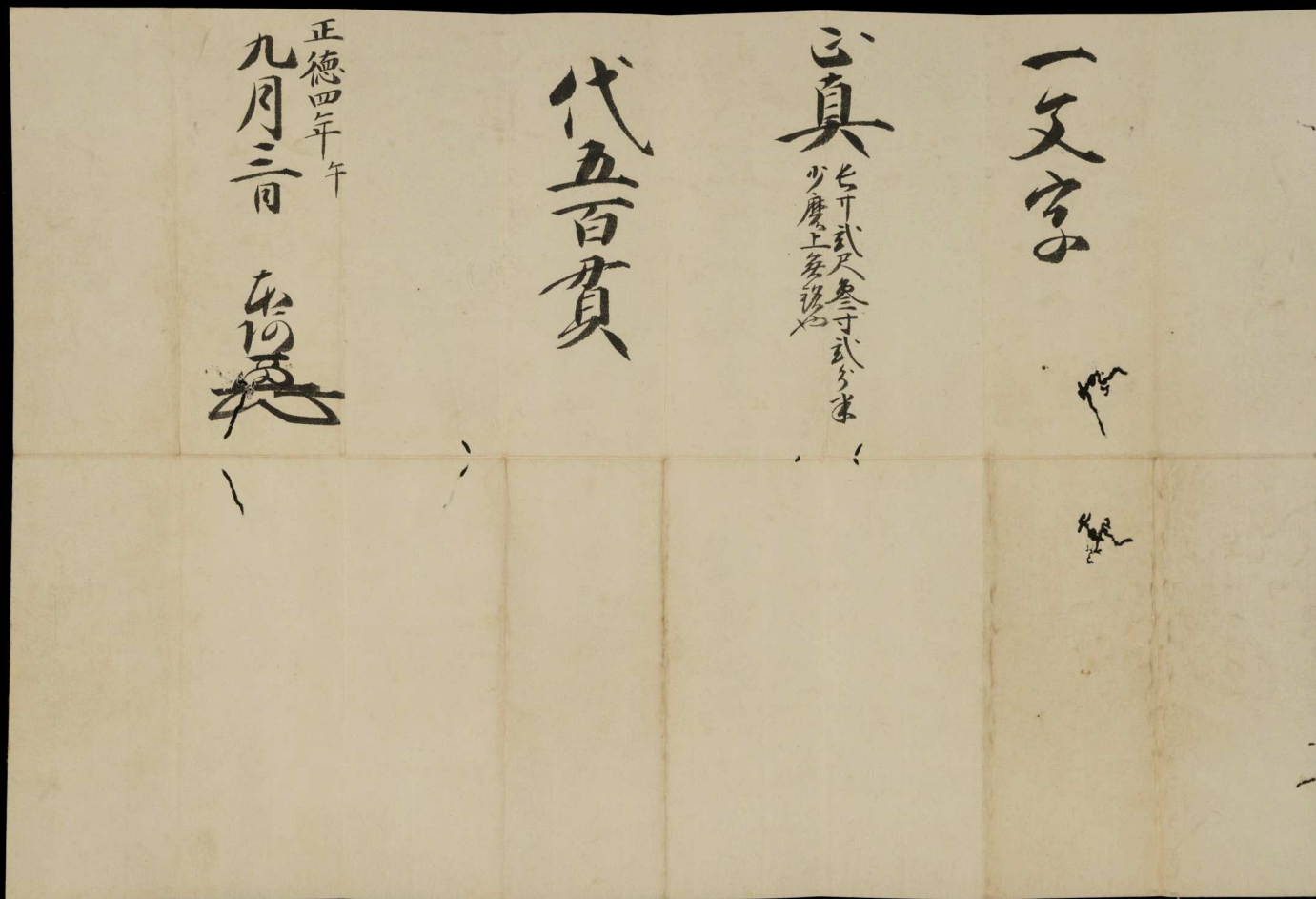
#### Era

Mid-Kamakura period

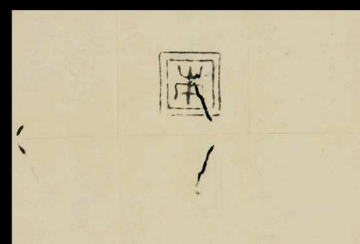
#### Remarks

The Ichimonji School (一文字派) emerged in the early Kamakura period, subsequently thrived throughout the mid and late Kamakura until the early Nanbokuchô period in places like Fukuoka (福岡), Yoshioka (吉岡), Katayama (片山), and Iwato (岩戸), and gave rise to many excellent smiths. The name of the school goes back to the fact that some of the smiths signed with the character (Japanese: *monji*) for "one" (Japanese: *Ichi*). That is, there were Ichimonji smiths who just signed with said character, such who signed below with their individual names, and such who only signed with their names and without the character *Ichi*. The most flamboyant style within the Ichimonji School was the *ôbusa-chôji-midare* that is so rich in variety that was produced in the mid-Kamakura period by the Fukuoka-Ichimonji group.

This blade is in *shinogi-zukuri* and was originally a *naginata*, which was reshaped into a *katana*, a practice referred to as *naginata-naoshi*. It displays a *kitae* in *itame* that features a *midare-utsuri* and a widely hardened *hamon* in *chôji-midare* that is mixed with *ôbusa-chôji*. Some parts of the *hamon* reach the *shinogi*, and the *ha* exhibits overall noticeable undulations, resulting so in a very flamboyant interpretation. Thus, we have here a magnificent and gorgeous work that reflects the typical approach of the mid-Kamakura period Fukuoka-Ichimonji School, which is also in excellent condition.



This precious traditional *washi* paper *origami* (折紙) certificate of appraisal by *Hon'ami Kōchū* has been preserved for over three hundred years. The Hon'ami family were the official sword appraisers and polishers of the *Tokugawa shogunate*. They also issued *origami appraisals* for blades.



The *origami* appraises the sword to the *Ichimonji* school and values the blade to 500 *kan* - an amount that only *daimyō* or near *daimyō* ranks could realistically afford. Consider that a samurai with no rank would earn about 12 *kan* per year in the mid-Edo period.

Translation as follows:

*Ichimonji*

Authentic

Blade length: ~70.2 cm, shortened and unsigned

Value 500 *kan*

Dated in the sixth year of *Shōtoku* era, Year of the Horse

Ninth month, third day (September 3rd, 1714)

Hon'ami + *kaō* [Kōchū, 光忠]





第二〇号

# 指定書

太刀

一口

無銘金象嵌一文字

長卷直し、鋳造

長さ二尺三寸一分五厘

70.1

右を静岡縣指定文化財に  
指定する

昭和三十三年四月十五日

静岡縣教育委員会



H26.1.22 拜受

## Certificate of Designation

One, Tachi

Mumei kinzôgan "Ichimonji"  
Nagamaki-naoshi shinogi-zukuri

Unsigned with gold inscription "Ichimonji"  
Reshaped from nagamaki, *shinogi-zukuri*

Nagasa 2-shaku 3-sun 1-bu 5-rin  
Blade length (70.1 cm)

This sword has been designated as a *Shizuoka Prefecture's Shitei Bunkazai*  
(a Cultural Property)

Issued in 33rd year of Shôwa (1958), April 15th

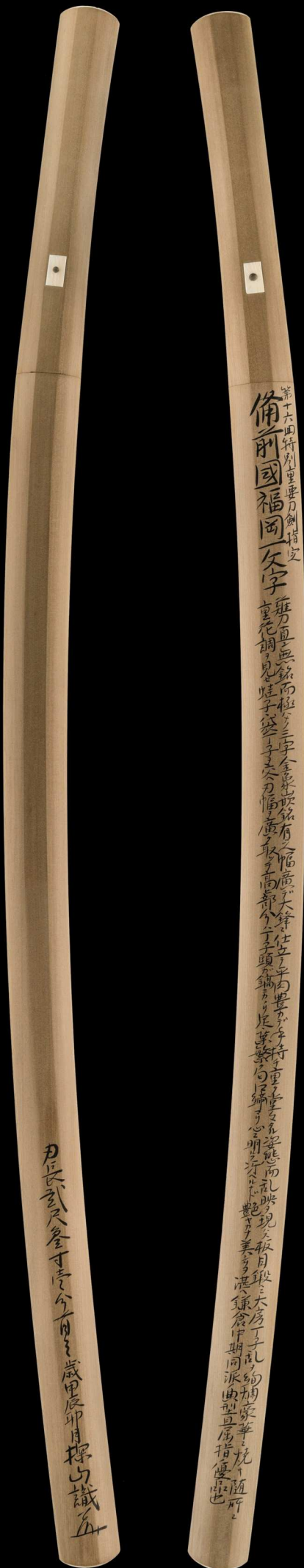
Shizuoka-ken Kyôiku linkai  
The Board of Education in Shizuoka Prefecture

\*\*This sword was held in Shizuoka for many years as a cultural property of the prefecture.  
This is a copy of the certificate.



Judging by how the *kinzogan* (gold inlaid characters) has aged, it was likely written/created circa the late Edo period (early 1800s).

These characters were probably not done by the original sword appraiser *Hon'ami Kôchû* who lived during the late 1600 to early 1700s.



第十六回特別重要刀劍指定

*Dai jûroku-kai tokubetsu-jûyô-tôken shitei*

Designated as Tokubetsu-Jûyô Tôken at the 16th Tokubetsu-Jûyô shinsa

備前國福岡一文字

*Bizen no Kuni Fukuoka-Ichimonji*

Fukuoka-Ichimonji from Bizen Province

薙刀直シ無銘而極ハメノ三字金象嵌銘有之幅廣デ大鋒ニ仕立テ平肉豊カデ手持チ重ク堂々タル姿態而乱映ヲ現ハス板目鍛ヘニ大房丁子乱ヲ絢爛豪華ニ焼キ随所ニ重花調ヲ見セ蛙子・袋丁子ヲ交ヘ刃幅ヲ廣ク取ッテ高ヒ部分ハ丁子頭ガ鑄ニカヽリ足・葉繁ク匂口締マリ心ニ明ルク冴ヘルナド艶ヤカナ美シサヲ湛ヘ鎌倉中期同派ノ典型且屈指ノ優品也

*Naginata-naoshi mumei shikamo kiwame no sanji kinzôgan-mei kore ari. Haba-hiro de ô-kissaki ni shitate hira-niku yutaka de temochi omoku dôdô-taru shitai shikamo midare-utsuri o arawasu itame-gitae ni ôbusachôji-midare o kenran-gôka ni yaki zuisho ni jôka-chô o mise kawazu no ko, fukuro-chôji o majie ha-haba hiroku totte takai bubun wa chôji-gashira ga shinogi ni kakari ashi, yô shigeku nioiguchi shimarugokoro ni akaruku saeru nado tsuyayaka na utsukushisa o tatae Kamakura-chûki dôha no tenkei katsu kusshi no yûhin nari.*

This blade is a *naginata-naoshi* and is *mumei*, but bears a gold-inlaid attribution comprising of three characters. With its wide *mihaba*, shaped *ô-kissaki*, and plenty of *hira-niku*, the blade feels heavy in hand and is of a magnificent shape. The forging is in *itame* with a *midare-utsuri*, and the hardening is a flamboyant *ôbusa-chôji-midare* that tends to *jûka-chôji* in many places that also features *kawazu no ko* and *fukuro-chôji*. The *ha* is wide and the tops of the *chôji* reach the *shinogi* in places. It has plenty of *ashi* and *yô* and the somewhat tight and a bright and clear *nioiguchi*, the blade is truly an enchanting beauty. Thus, we have here a masterwork of outstanding quality that is textbook for the mid-Kamakura period works of this school.

刃長貳尺參寸壹分有之

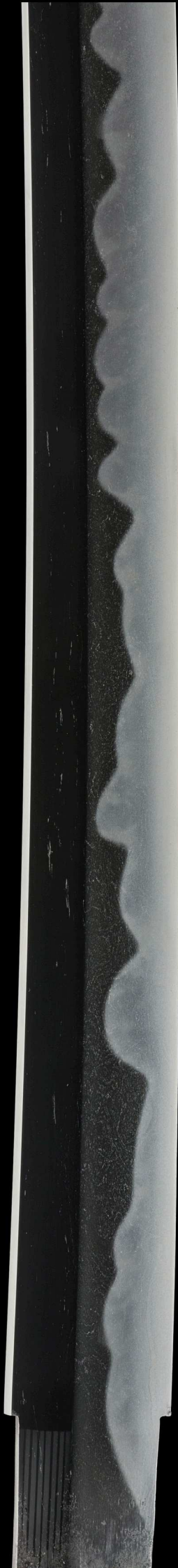
*Hachô ni-shaku san-sun ichi-bu kore ari*

Blade length ~ 70.0 cm


歳甲辰卯月探山識「花押」

*toki ni kinoe-tatsu uzuki Tanzan shirusu + kaô*

Written by Tanzan [Tanobe Michihiro] in April during the Year of the Dragon (2024) + monogram.







*Mitsu* (three) *mune* (spine/ridge) is a rare construction whereby the spine has three surfaces (the top is flat, not pointed).

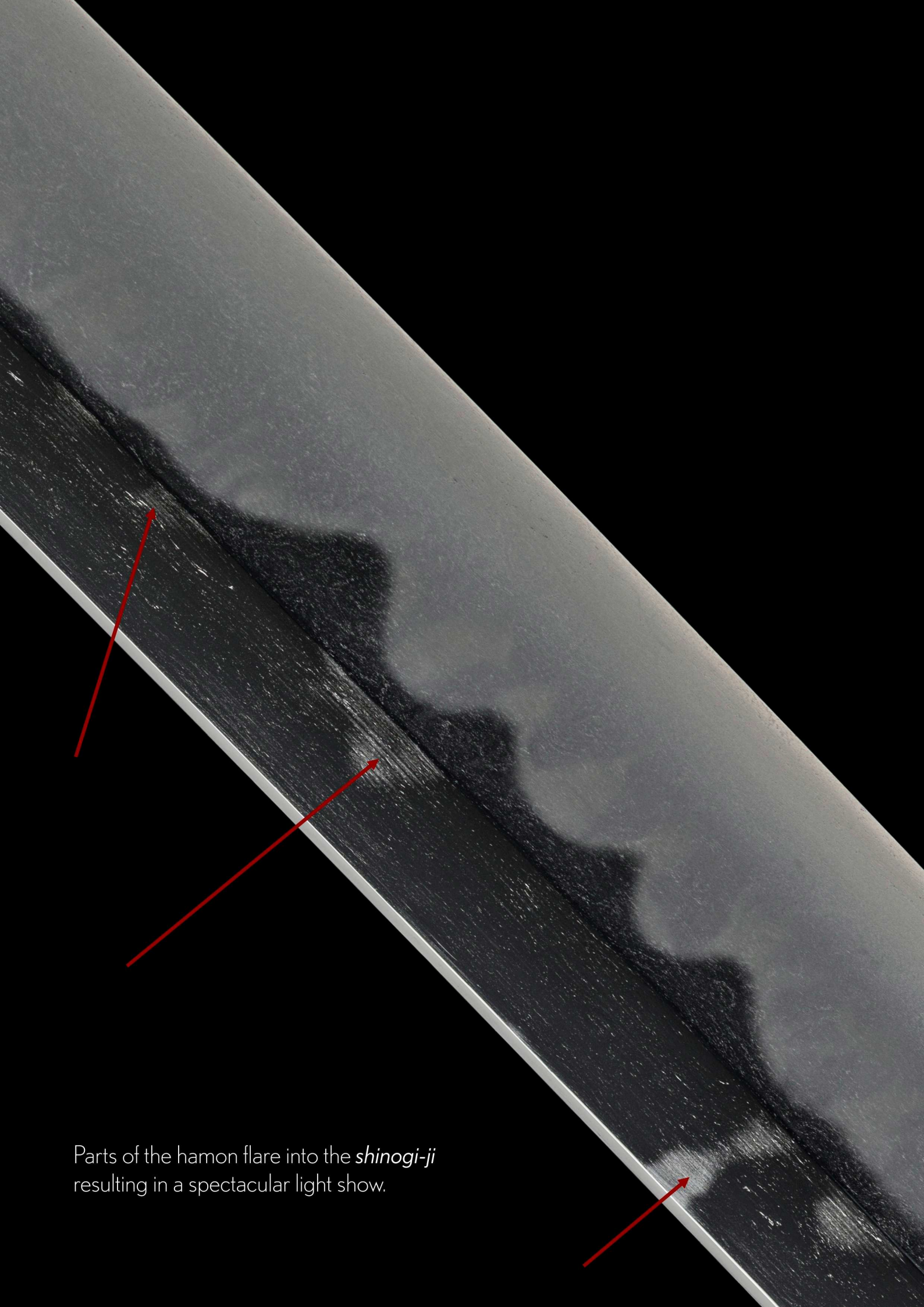
It is generally found in the blades of smiths working in the *Sosho tradition*, but can also be seen on other *Koto* period swords such as from the *Yamashiro* and *Bizen* schools.



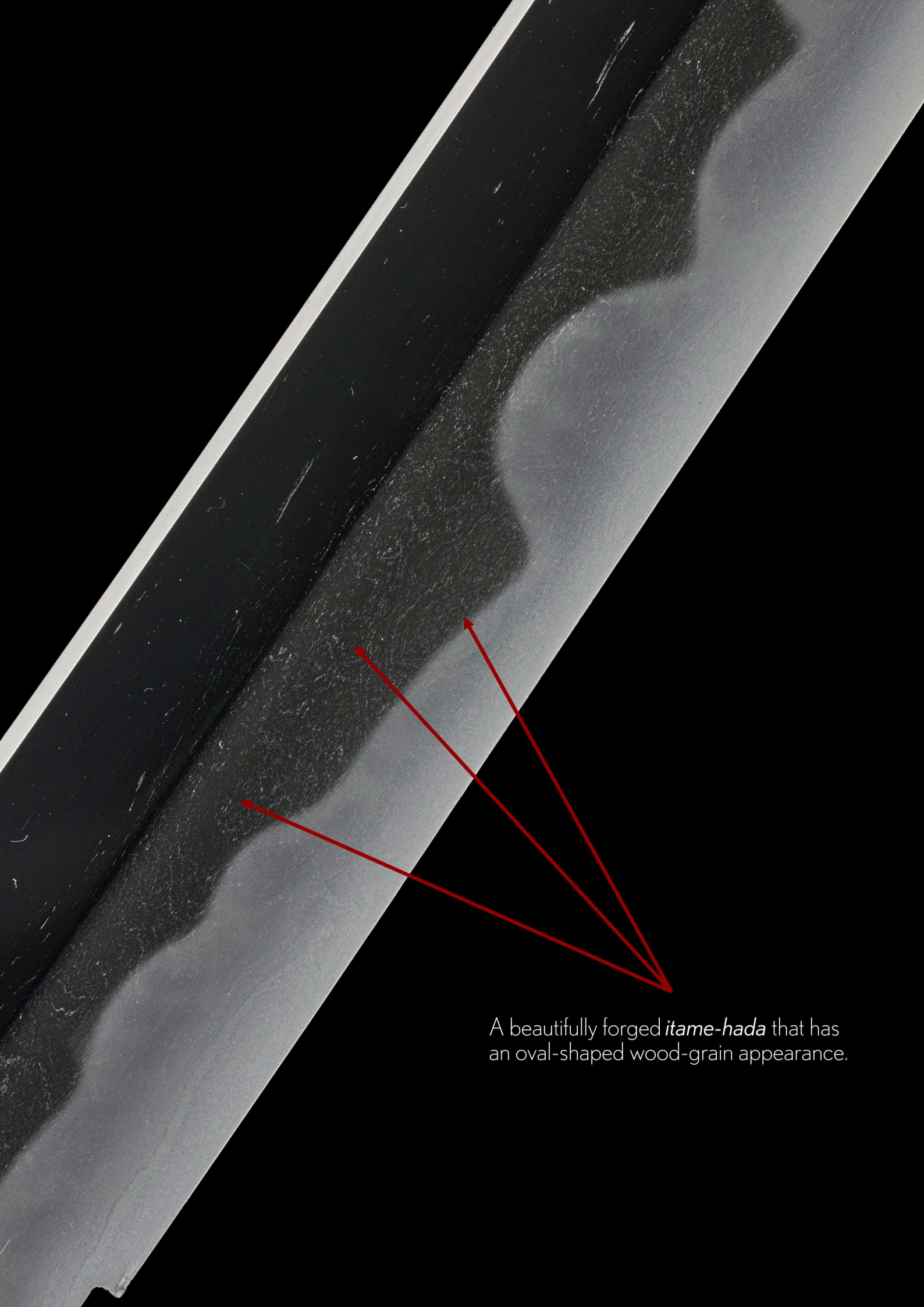
From this cross-section at the *nakago-jiri* (base of tang) and top view of the nakago, we can appreciate the overall "meat" of the sword - referred to as *niku* in Japanese sword terminology. *Hira-niku* essentially means a thick, bulging blade and it directly translates to the healthiness of a sword - one that has maintained close to its original shape and not been polished down too many times over the centuries.



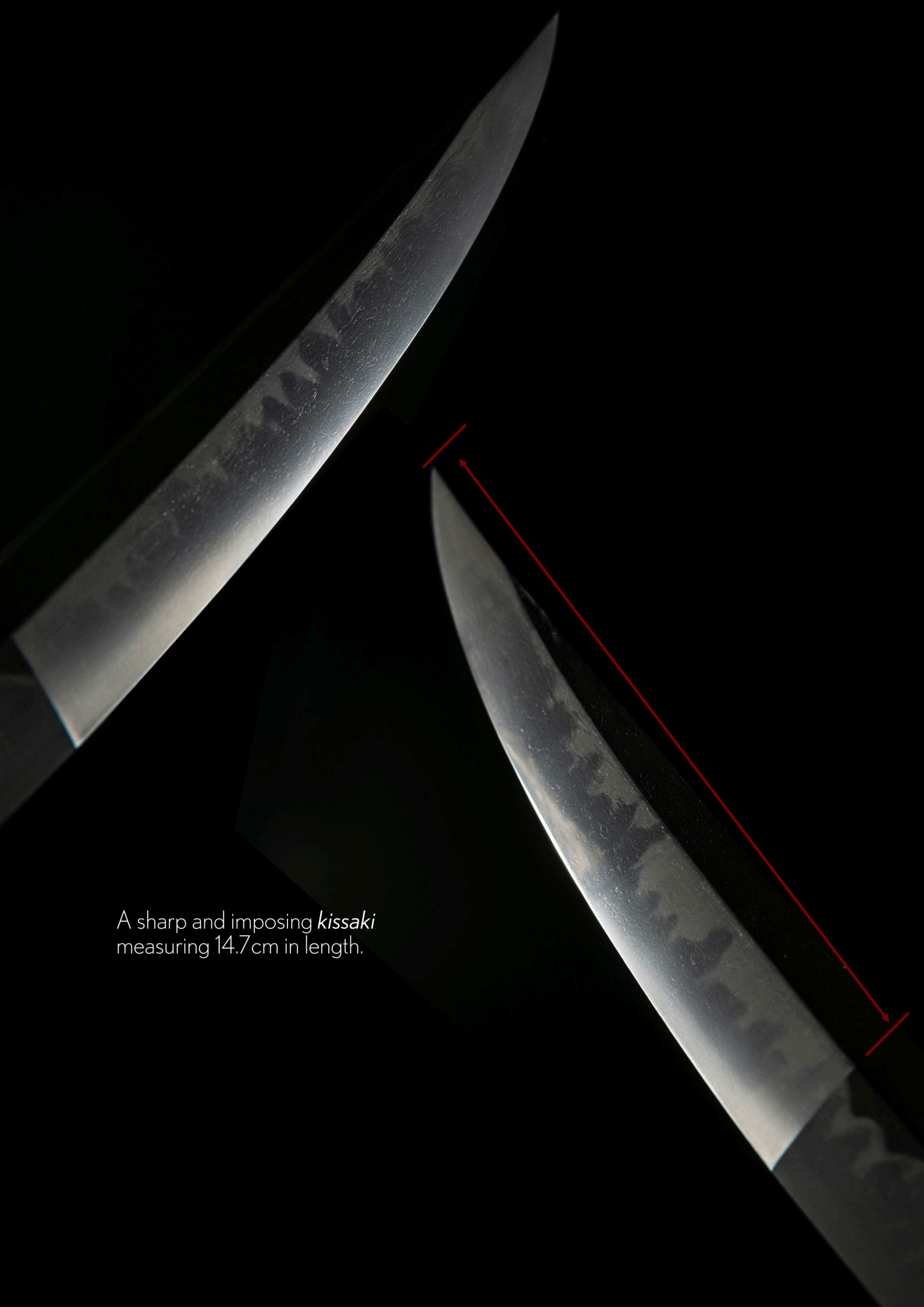
A magnificent *mihaba* (width of blade).



Parts of the hamon flare into the *shinogi-ji* resulting in a spectacular light show.



A beautifully forged *itame-hada* that has an oval-shaped wood-grain appearance.



A sharp and imposing *kissaki* measuring 14.7cm in length.



*kissaki* brilliance



*ôbusa-chôji*

This section of the hamon features *ôbusa-chôji*, long tasseled *chôji* (cloves) that bunch up to form gorgeous *juka-chôji* (overlapping).

This sword has been polished in *sashikomi* tradition, which delivers a more 'classical finish' without the use of hadori that can exaggerate the contrast of the hamon and body of the blade.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the hamon (temper line) and the body of the blade. The blade is curved and has a dark, polished finish. The hamon is visible as a lighter, textured line along the edge. Three red arrows point to specific features: one to the *ôbusa-chôji* pattern, one to the *juka-chôji* pattern, and one to the *shinogi* line where the hamon bleeds through.

*ôbusa-chôji*

*juka-chôji*

hamon bleeds through the *shinogi* line.



Mid-Kamakura mastery. Profound energy.

Literally meaning "reflection", *utsuri* is a beautiful, rather magical, misty reflection appearing in the *ji* (body of sword) above the *hamon* and generally ends at the *shinogi* ridge line.

It is much loved and appreciated feature of swords, particular those made in the Bizen tradition in the Koto period.

The type of *utsuri* is called *midare-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that billows in a wavy formation following the hamon pattern.



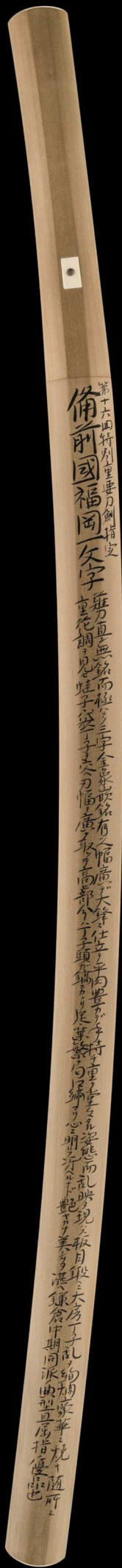
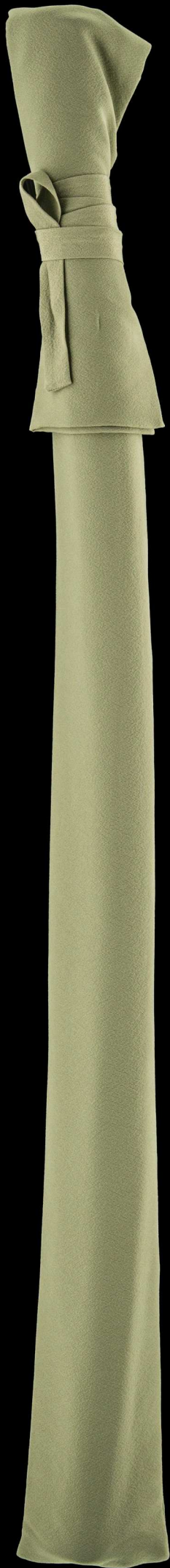
The image shows a close-up, diagonal view of a sword blade. The blade is dark, with a prominent, lighter-colored hamon (edge line) running along its length. Above the hamon, there is a misty, wavy pattern known as utsuri. The blade is set against a dark background, which makes the lighter patterns stand out. Three red arrows point from text labels to specific features on the blade: one points to the hamon, another points to the utsuri pattern, and a third points to the shinogi ridge line.

*shinogi* (ridge line)

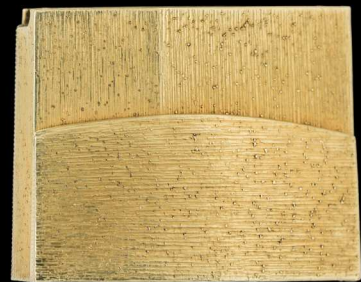
*midare-utsuri*

To the heavens.





Shirasaya  
(protective scabbard)



gold *ni-ju habaki* with  
crisp file marks

Close-up of the  
shirasaya's *mekugi-nuki*.





Congratulations Anthony.

Warm regards,  
Pablo

ujka404  
 A Koyama Munetsugu Katana  
 11th year of Tenpô era (Aug 1841)

Length: 63.3cm  
 NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon  
 & NTHK-NPO certificates  
 Complete custom koshirae production in Japan

SOLD (for reference purposes only)



<p>鑑定書        27201502</p> <p>一葉鎌新打拵        此拵は、享和元年（1811年）に        右は、鑑定書に於て、        鑑定し、これを証明する。        平成十七年三月十四日        宝珠社 日本美術刀剣保存協会</p>	<p>鑑定書        02202003</p> <p>一刃        於、享和元年（1811年）に        右は、鑑定書に於て、        鑑定し、これを証明する。        平成十七年三月十四日        宝珠社 日本美術刀剣保存協会</p>												
<p>江戸中期</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>刀身</td><td>一葉鎌</td></tr> <tr><td>拵</td><td>新打拵</td></tr> <tr><td>鑑定書</td><td>27201502</td></tr> </table>	刀身	一葉鎌	拵	新打拵	鑑定書	27201502	<p>一刃</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>刀身</td><td>一葉鎌</td></tr> <tr><td>拵</td><td>新打拵</td></tr> <tr><td>鑑定書</td><td>02202003</td></tr> </table>	刀身	一葉鎌	拵	新打拵	鑑定書	02202003
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<p>江戸後期</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>刀身</td><td>一葉鎌</td></tr> <tr><td>拵</td><td>新打拵</td></tr> <tr><td>鑑定書</td><td>27201502</td></tr> </table>	刀身	一葉鎌	拵	新打拵	鑑定書	27201502	<p>江戸後期</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>刀身</td><td>一葉鎌</td></tr> <tr><td>拵</td><td>新打拵</td></tr> <tr><td>鑑定書</td><td>02202003</td></tr> </table>	刀身	一葉鎌	拵	新打拵	鑑定書	02202003
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拵	新打拵												
鑑定書	02202003												



Saki-kasane: 5.5mm

Moto-kasane: 7.9mm

Kissaki: 4.64cm

Saki-haba: 2.20cm

Nagasa: 63.3cm

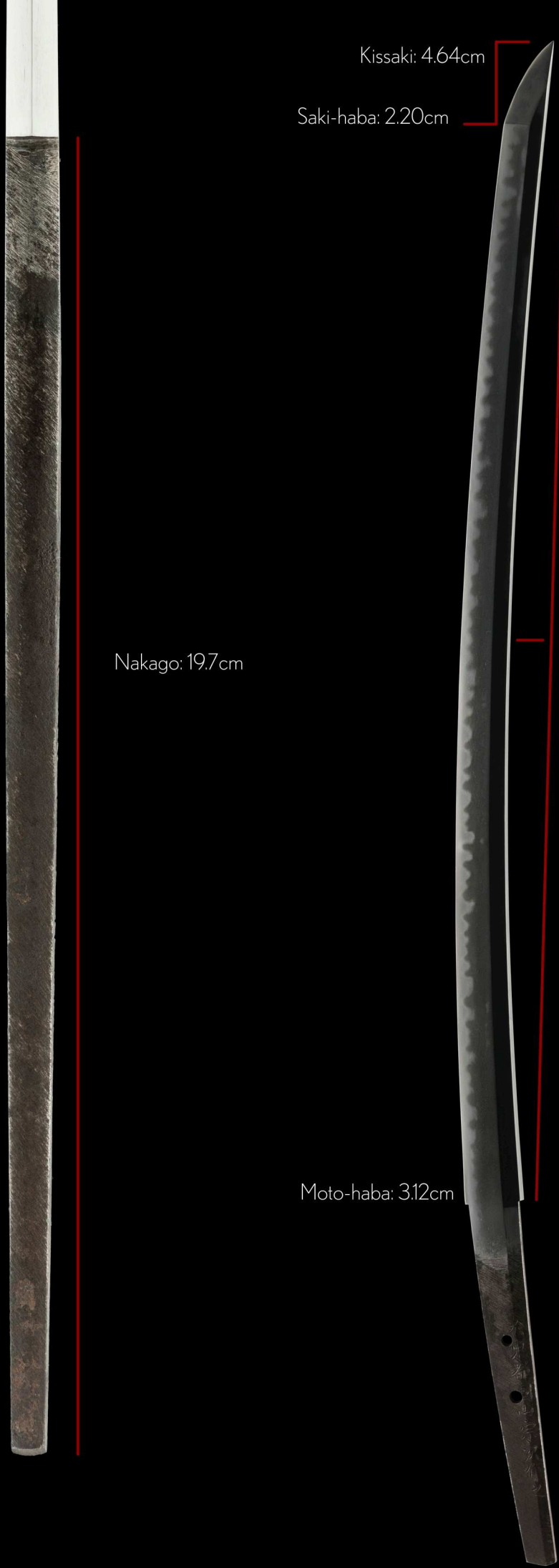
Nakago: 19.7cm

Sori: 1.30cm

Omosa: 785g

Moto-haba: 3.12cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



This formidable katana was crafted in Edo (Tokyo) in 1841 by one of the great maestros of the *shinshinto* period, *Koyama Munetsugu*. *Fujishiro* ranks Munetsugu as *jôjô-saku*, a highly superior swordsmith.

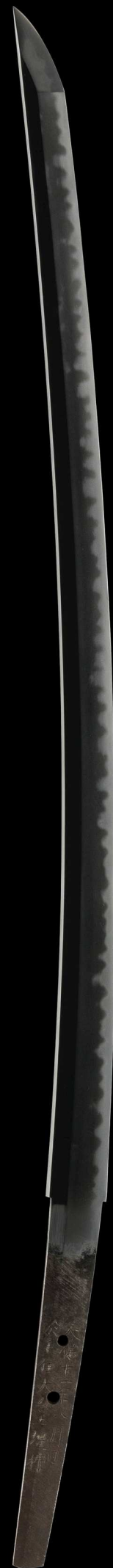
Koyama Munetsugu was born in the castle town of *Shirakawa* in *Mutsu* Province and was retained by Lord *Matsudaira Sadanobu (Rakuô)*. In 1830 he moved to *Kuwana* in *Ise* Province, a year or two later to Edo (modern-day Tokyo), where he lived as a retainer of the ruling clan of Ise.

It is believed that *Koto Tsunahide* was his sensei during his time in Edo. Munetsugu is known to have had a good relationship with the sword tester *Yamada Asaemon*. A number of his blades have *tameshigiri* (test cuts) recorded on their *nakago* by Yamada san.

Like other smiths of his time Munetsugu experimented in the *soshû* style, however he is best known for his Bizen style *chôji hamon* (clove blossom temper line) in *nioi-deki* and finely forged *mokume-hada* (burl grain), which this sword represents.

Crafted with a length of 63.3cm, this thick, robust katana was inspired by the tough one-handed *katate-uchi* (one-handed) swords of the late Muromachi period (early 1500s) when Japan was engulfed in a country-wide civil war known as the *Sengoku-jidai*.

The *nakago* contains a chiseled *tameshigiri* cutting test in which this sword severed cleanly through the body at chest-level of a convicted criminal in one stroke and into the earthen mound in which it lay upon. The test took place at *Senju*, a well-known execution site in which about 200,000 criminals were executed from 1651 to 1873.





Location: *Totô* (Edo, modern-day Tokyo)  
Family name: *Koyama*  
Swordsmith: *Munetsugu* (first generation)

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

於 (oite)

東 (Tô)

都 (to)

固 (Ko)

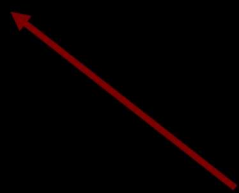
山 (yama)

宗 (Mune)

次 (tsugu)

作 (tsukuru)

之 (kore, o)

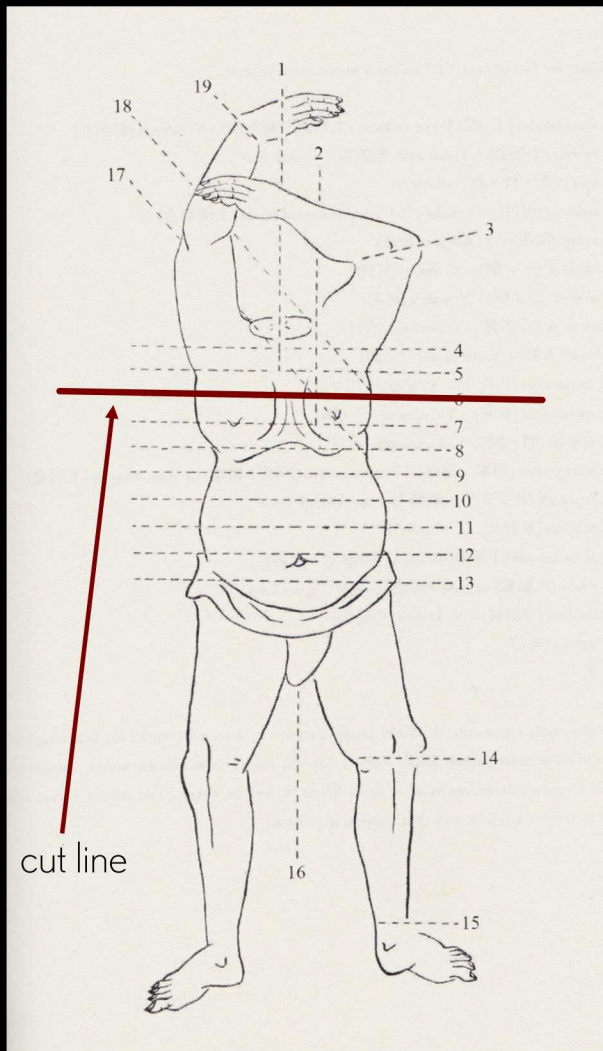


*tsukuru kore* (this was crafted by)

*Tenpô jûichinen hachigatsu hi  
Senju ni oite taitai dotan barai*

Dated on a day in the eighth month in the 11th year of *Tenpô* era (August 1840).

This sword was tested in *Senju*, severing through the chest [of a convicted criminal] below the armpits and into the earthen mound.

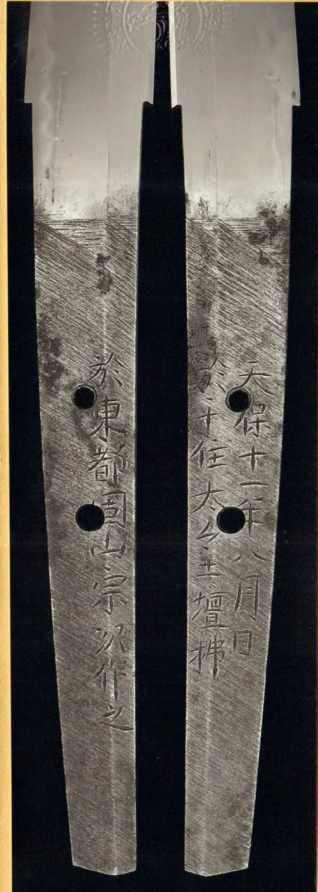


(oite) 於	天 (Ten)
(Sen) 千	保 (pô)
(ju) 住	十 (jû)
(tai) 太	一 (ichi)
(tai) 々	年 (nen)
(do) 土	八 (hachi)
(tan) 壇	月 (gatsu)
(barai) 拂	日 (hi)



02202003

No 1013233



公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協会



令和二年六月二十五日

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

一刀 銘

鑑定書

於東都固山宗次作之  
天保十一年八月日  
於千住太々土壇拂

長二尺〇九分弱

愛知県 教育委員会  
第 2405 号  
昭和26年3月16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 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), June 25th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

*Tôto ni oite Koyama Munetsugu kore o tsukuru  
Tenpô jûichinen hachigatsu hi  
Senju ni oite taitai dotan barai*

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 9-bu jaku (63.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)





A *kaen-boshi* (flames)  
burning like a candle.

*kaen*

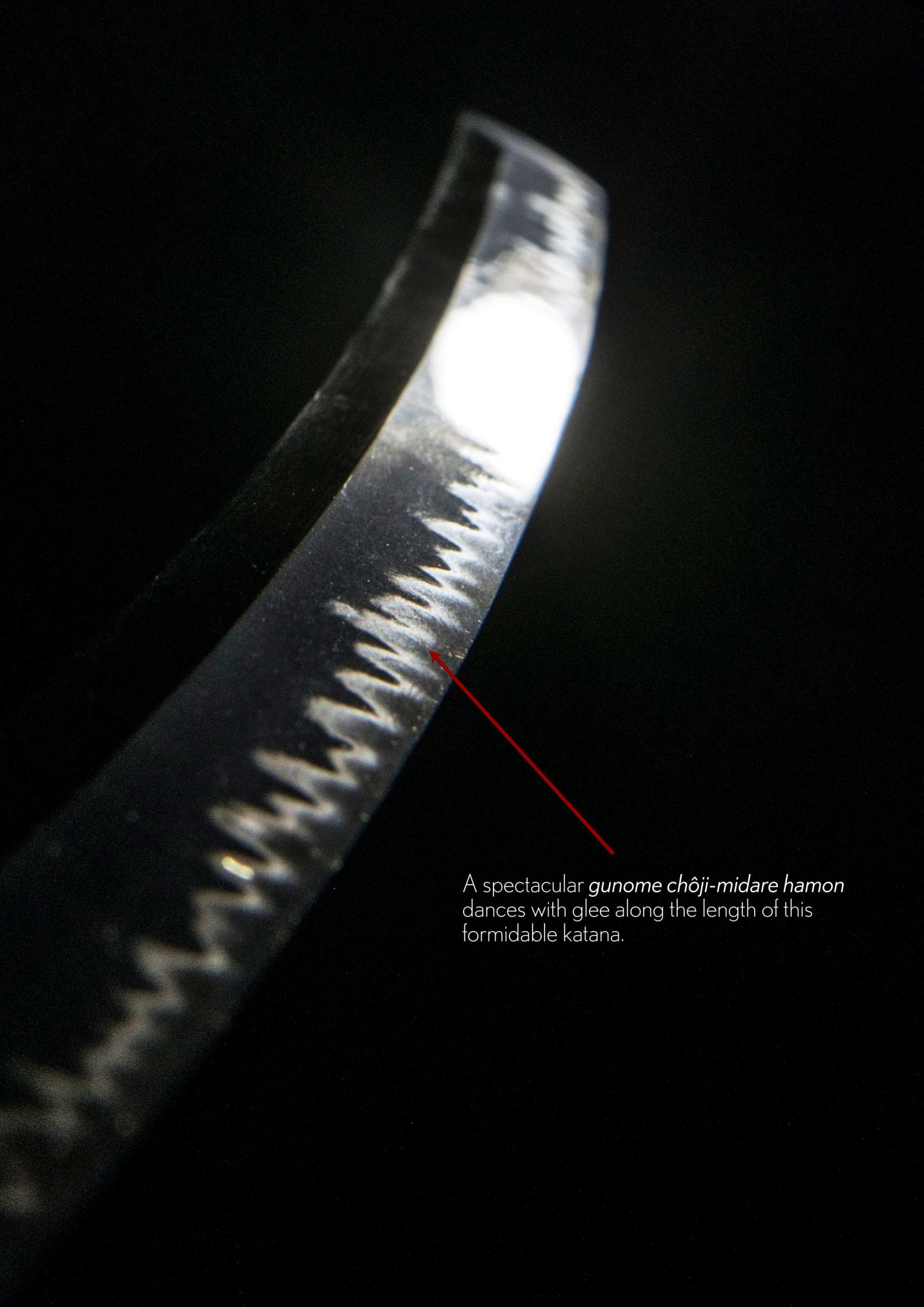


burn, baby burn.



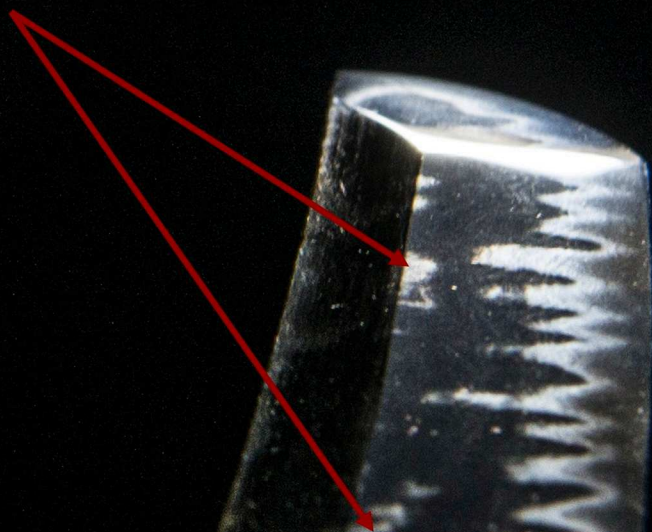


A beautiful *nagare-hada*, wavy *jihada*.



A spectacular *gunome chôji-midare hamon* dances with glee along the length of this formidable katana.

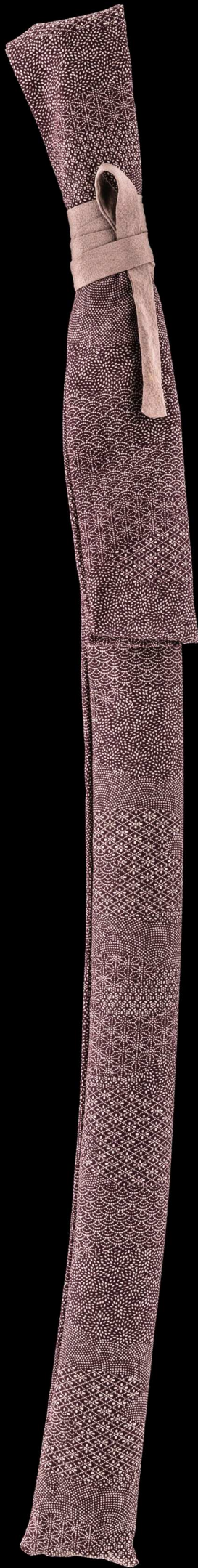
*tobiyaki* (tempering on the body of the sword)



shine on.



Several lines of *kinsuji* tear their way through the hamon with conviction.

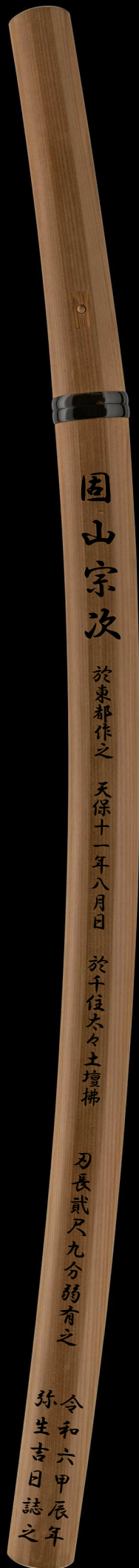


pre-sayagaki with *shodô*  
(calligraphy artist)

*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



antique copper *habaki*



固山宗次

固山宗次  
*Koyama Munetsugu*  
Koyama Munetsugu

於東都作之

於東都作之  
*Tôto ni oite kore o tsukuru*  
Crafted in Tôto (Edo)

天保十一年八月日

天保十一年八月日  
*Tenpô jûichinen hachigatsu hi*  
On a day in the eighth month of Tenpô 11 (1840)

於千住太々土壇拂

於千住太々土壇拂  
*Senju ni oite taitai dotan barai*  
Tested in Senju, cutting through the chest below the armpits to the mound

刃長貳尺九寸弱有之

刃長貳尺九寸弱有之  
*Hachô 2-shaku 9-sun jaku kore ari*  
Blade length 63.3 cm

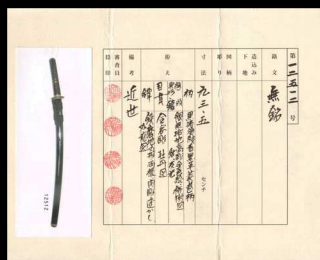
令和六甲辰年  
弥生吉日誌之

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 of Reiwa 6, the year of the dragon (2024)

*Kuro-ro aogai-mijin-nuri saya  
uchigatana-koshirae*  
(黒呂青貝微塵塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae  
lacquered in glossy black  
with particles of mother-of-pearl*

Crafted during the  
Modern period



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity

The *saya* sparkles like the sky...



*aoigai* (mother-of-pearl) lacquerwork.



A lovely *kojiri* (end cap) representing a plum tree.



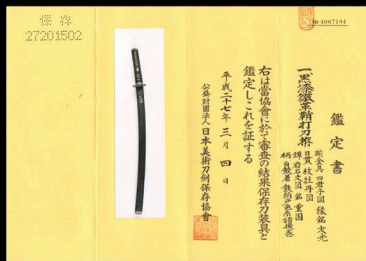


An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributes this handsome polished iron openwork tsuba of a three-dimensional dragon to the *Echizen* school from the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1868.





(reverse)



NBTHK Hozon  
Certificate of Authenticity



(Tomo) 友

(mitsu) 光



The matching fittings for the custom koshirae was sourced from an antique koshirae that was signed by *Tomomitsu*. The theme contains orchids, bamboo, chrysanthemums and plums.



*Fuchi-kashira*  
crafted by *Tomomitsu*  
from *Hitotsuyanagi* school

Depicting four elegant plants.  
Orchid, bamboo,  
chrysanthemum and plum.



The *tsuka* (hilt) was specially wrapped in deer leather and lacquered for long term preservation. Gorgeous golden peony *menuki* set on black lacquered *samekawa* (ray skin) shines through with grace and elegance.





Two custom *otoshi* tsuba boxes were produced, courtesy of Unique Japan. The top tsuba signed by *Umetada* features a design of a lotus, a symbol of purity, grace and beauty. The tsuba below depicts a powerful scene of a dragon and tiger in a raincloud and waves.

Both tsubas come with certification from the NTHK-NPO.





Congratulations Leon.

Warm regards,  
Pablo