



ITEM# UJKA448

A KANEZUMI KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, SUE-KOTÔ PERIOD (MEIÔ ERA: FEBRUARY 1498)

Swordsmith: *Kanezumi (Seki)*
Measurements: **Length:** 69.6cm (*machi-okuri*) **Curvature:** 1.2cm **Moto-haba:** 2.82cm
Jihada: *Finely-forged itame-nagare, mokume, masame-hada with ji-nie and chikei*
Hamon: *Dazzling gunome-chôji-midare with tobiyaki, yô and Jizo-bôshi*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (*Especially Worthy of Preservation*)
Certificate #2-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteishô** (*koshirae, fuchi and tsuba certified as Authentic*)
Included: Shirasaya, koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description

SOLD

We time travel back to February 1498 with the creation of this fiery *tachi* by *Kanezumi* (also read *Kanesumi*) who worked in *Seki* during the tumultuous *Muromachi* period. Born *Jûrôzaemon*, *Kanezumi* was the younger brother of *Kaneyuki* who is said to have worked in the *Nara* school. This is a classic Mino-tradition creation with a *Kanesada* school influence featuring a *jihada* that is a finely forged mixture of *itame-nagare* and also straight grain *masame-hada*. Its dazzling *gunome-midare hamon* is reminiscent of *ôbusa-chôji* from the great *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school. There are also spots of *tobi-yaki* and *yô* that further adds to its charm. The sword is housed in a tasteful set of *koshirae* that imbues class. The *tsuba* features three family *kamon*, each with its own unique story and the wonderful *fuchi-kashira* carries a cross-design that pays a thoughtful tribute to the swordsmith. This is a rather rare, 526-year-old dated reference piece that touches the soul on several levels.

Saki-kasane: 3.0mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 5.7mm

Kissaki: 2.78cm

Saki-haba: 1.75cm

Nagasa: 69.6cm

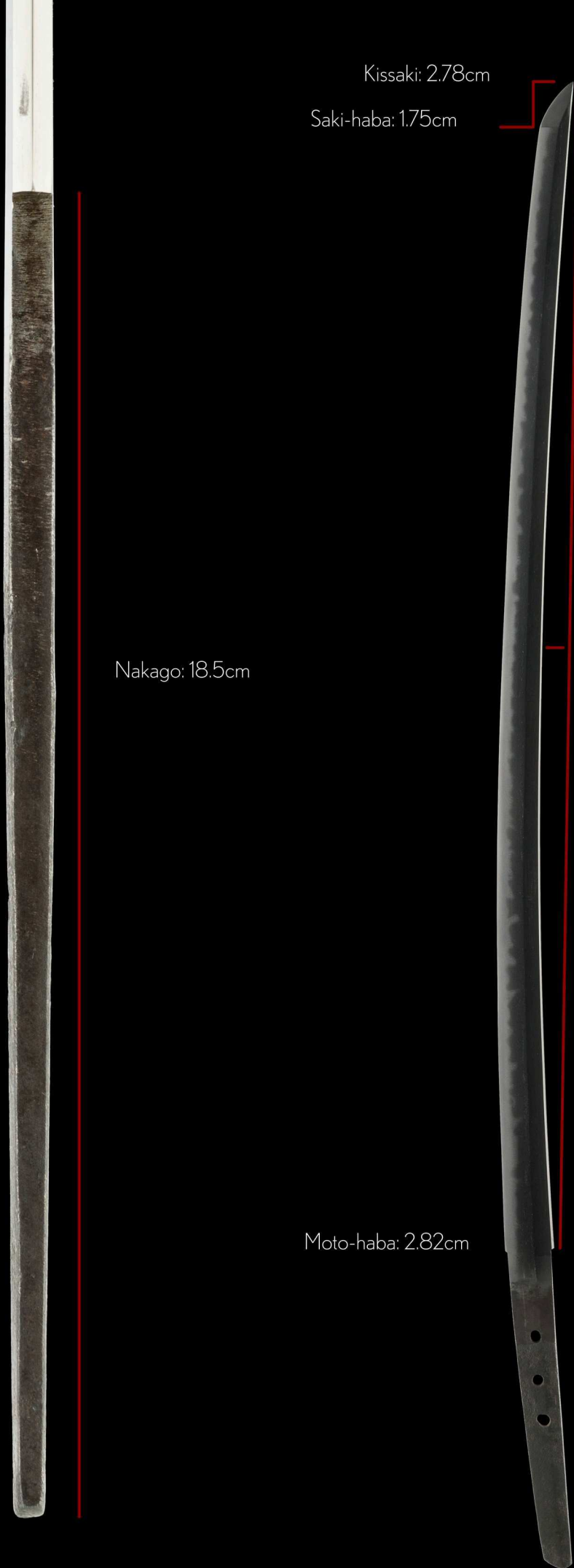
Nakago: 18.5cm

Sori: 1.2cm

Omosa: 620g

Moto-haba: 2.82cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



Let's travel back in time to February 1498 with the creation of this fiery *tachi* by *Kanezumi* (also read *Kanesumi*) who worked in *Mino* province during the tumultuous *Muromachi* period. Born *Jûrôzaemon*, *Kanezumi* was the younger brother of *Kaneyuki* who is said to have worked in the *Nara* school. Historically speaking, not a lot more is known of *Kanezumi*, making this sword a rather rare, dated reference piece.

When we examine this sword, we come to see a classic *Mino*-tradition creation with a *Kanesada* school influence that is superior to traditional *Sue-Seki* blades of the 1500s. The *jihada* is a finely forged mixture of *mokume*, *itame-nagare* and also straight grain *masame-hada*. And its dazzling *gunome-midare hamon* features areas that are reminiscent of *ôbusa-chôji* (long tasselled buds) that stretch high up to the *shinogi* linemade famous by the great *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school. There are also spots of *tobiyaki* and *yô* that furthers the appeal of this 526-year-old blade.

The sword is housed in a tasteful set of *koshirae* that was lacquered by a master artist in modern Japan. Its subtle deep shades of red imbues a sense of class. The *tsuba* features three family *kamon*, each with its own unique story and the wonderful *fuchi-kashira* carries a *jûji* design of crosses with diamond shapes. This is a clever tip-of-the-hat gesture that pays tribute to *Jûrozameon*, the swordsmith.

This is a sword that touches the soul on many levels. And being dated to the late 1400s is a wonderful thing.



Location: *Mino province*

School name: *Seki*

Swordsmith: *Kanezumi*

machi-okuri-nakago (shortened nagasa)
sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

This sword has a whole lot of history as it once was carried on horseback as a tachi, therefore it needed to be long and curvy.

As warfare changed over the centuries, swords needed to be drawn from a standing position. Therefore the *nagasa* (length) had to be physically viable given the height of the warrior. In most cases, a longer blade needed to be shortened, often times by several centimetres.

A way to shorten a sword is through a process called *suriage* where the sword is cut from the nakago and a new nakago is formed where the cutting edge used to be.

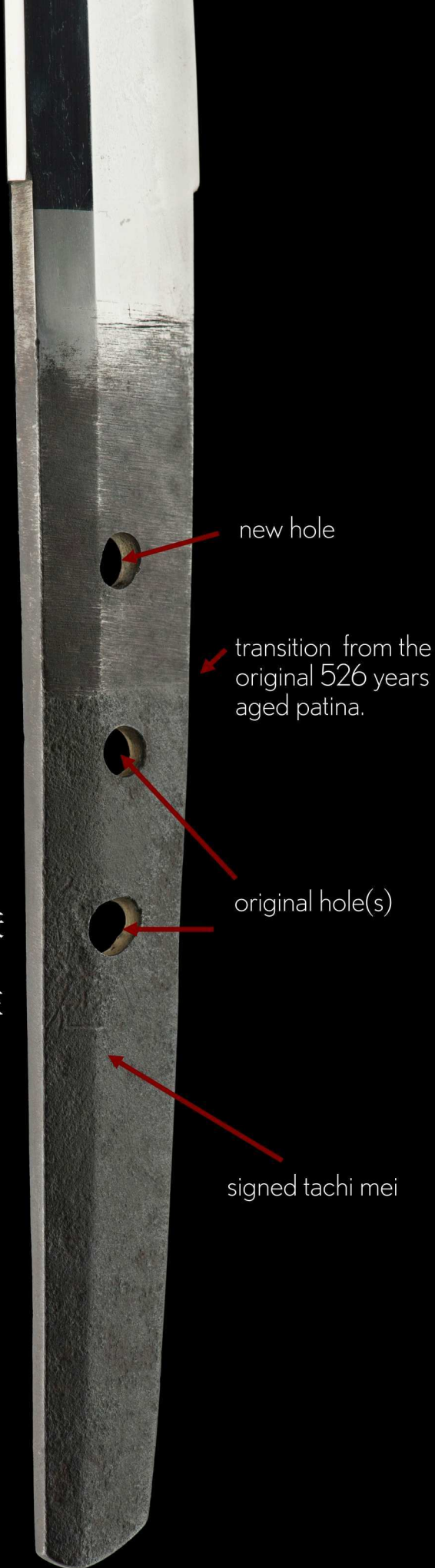
In other cases, such as on this tachi, the shorter nagasa is achieved by simply moving the *machi* (notch) upwards. This process is called *machi-okuri*.

The overall length of the sword is unchanged, only the cutting edge is shorter, typically by about 1-sun or 3cm.

A new hole (*mekugi-ana*) is created for the new hilt that is required. It should also be noted that with *machi-okuri* the *mei* (signature and date) has been left intact and preserved, a true blessing.

(Kane) 兼

(zumi) 住



Meiô nananen nigatsu hi

This sword has been dated to a day in the second month in the seventh year of *Meiô* era (February 1498).

明 (Mei)

應 (ô)

七 (nana)

年 (nen)

二 (ni)

月 (gatsu)

日 (hi)

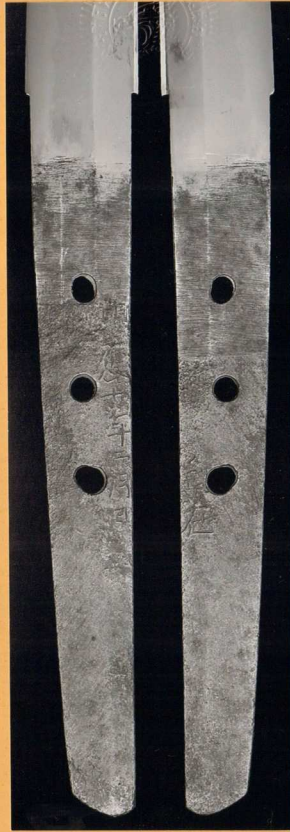


In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed the ocean 'blue'.
In 1498, Seki Kanezumi crafted this tachi 'great'.

Feel the history captain.

特 保
05202303

№ 1020296



鑑定書

一太刀 銘

兼住(関)

明応七年二月日

長二尺二寸九分強

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

令和五年五月三十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京都 教育委員会
第 267690 号
平成6年6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), May 31st

One, Tachi

Mei (signature)

Kanezumi (Seki)

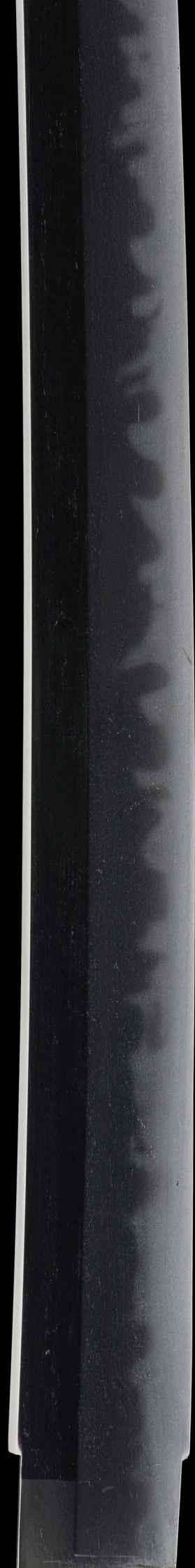
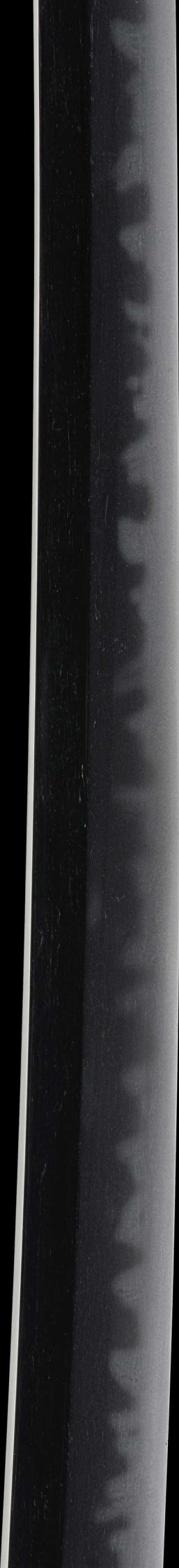
Meiô nananen nigatsu hi

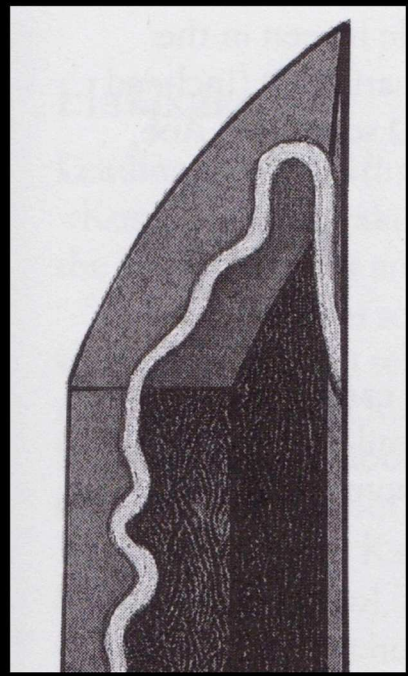
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 2-sun 9-bu kyô (69.6cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)







Jizo boshi
(illustration by Nagayama Kokan)

A *bôshi* resembling the deity *Jizo*, heads its way through the *kissaki*.





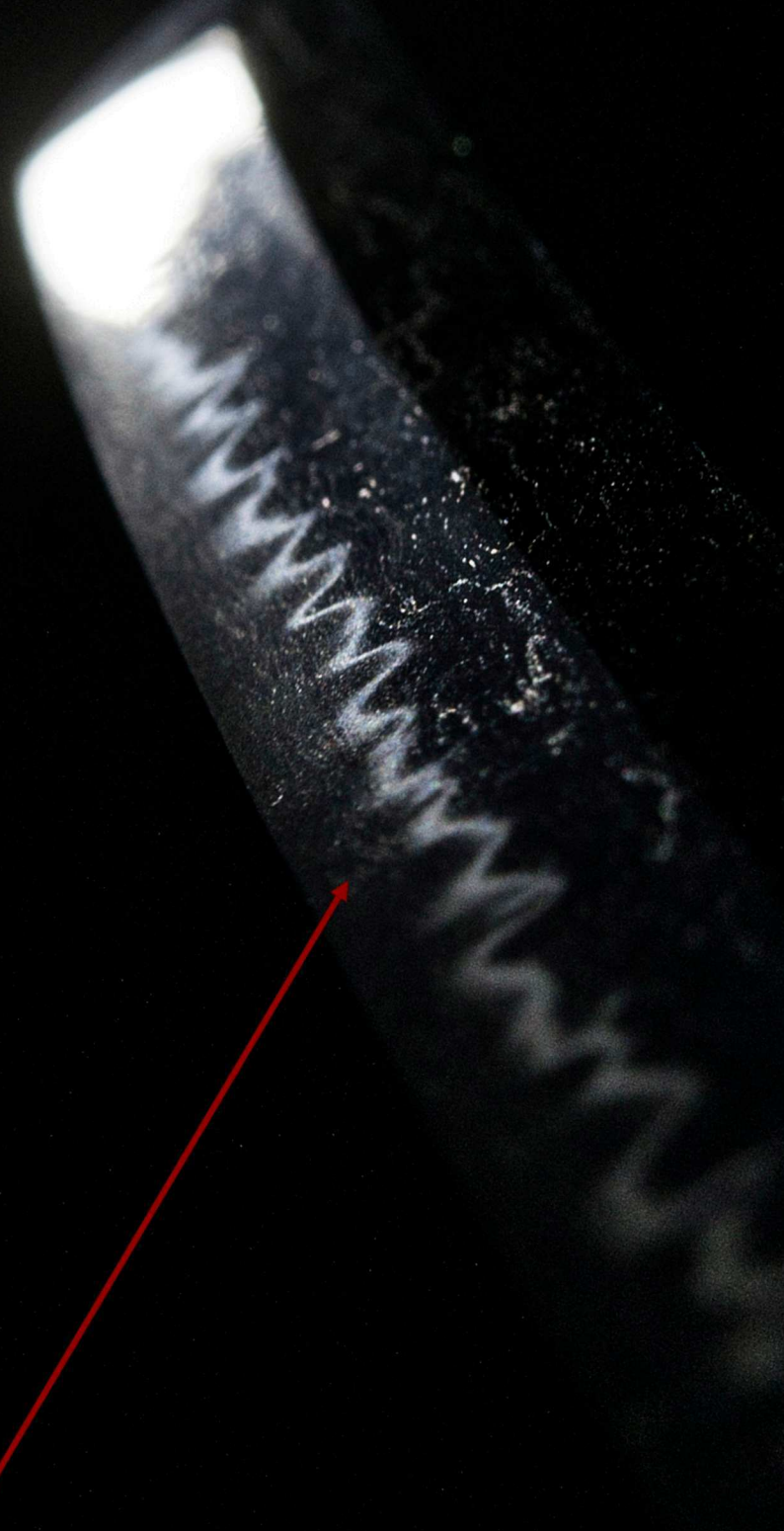
A beautiful *itame-nagare* weaves its way through the body of the sword.



This katana is filled with *nihontô* goodies. Here we see spots of *tobiyaki* in the *ji*, *yô* (leaves) that fall below the *hamon* line and there is even straight grain *masame-hada*, which is a textbook example of quality *Mino*-den work.

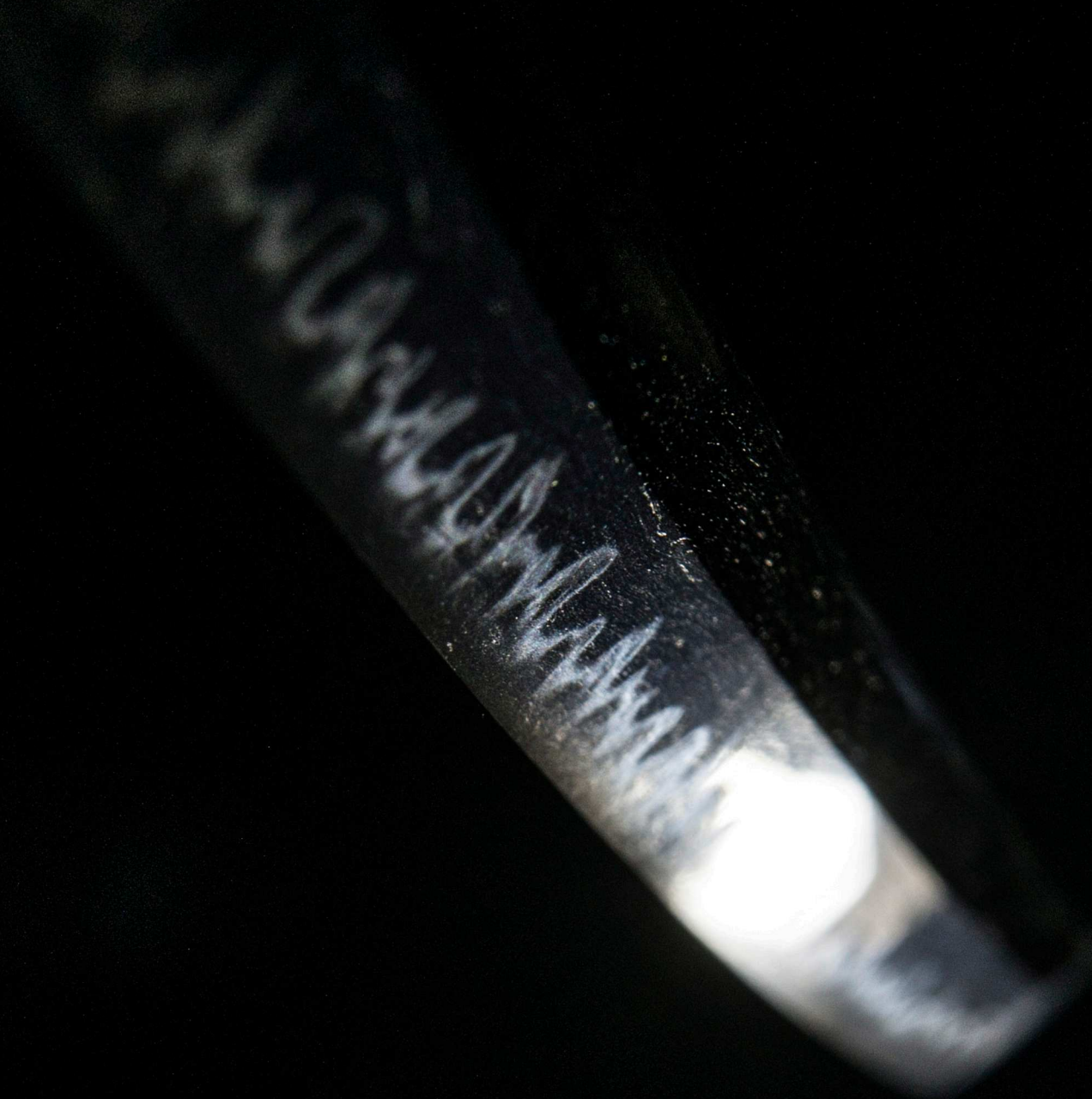


A gorgeous *gunome-midare* stretches dramatically to the *shinogi* line that is reminiscent of *ôbusa-chôji* - tall bubbly clove buds produced by the masterful swordsmiths of the *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school.



The upper *monouchi* (hitting zone) features a tight *gunome-midare* that's ready for action.

It's great to be alive.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

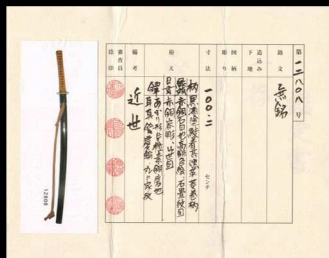


gold *ni-ju habaki* with
straight file marks

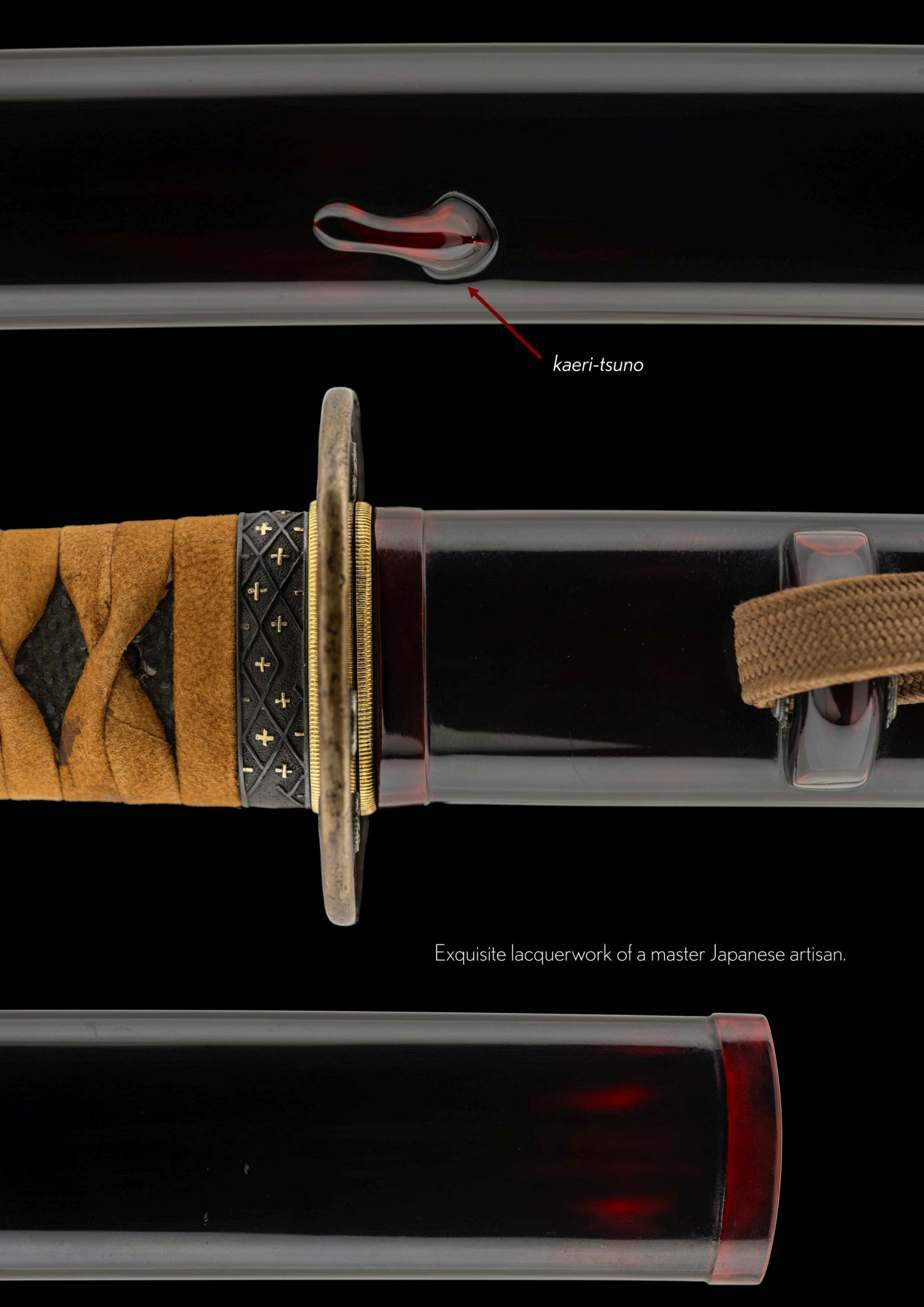
*Kuro-shu bokashi-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒朱ぼかし塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in
blurred black and red*

Crafted during the
Modern period



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



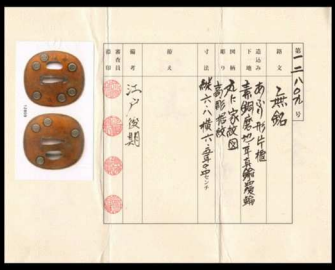
kaeri-tsuno

Exquisite lacquerwork of a master Japanese artisan.



This chic *tsuba* has been attributed to the *Nishigaki* school from *Higo* province. It features the following *mon* (family crests):

- kuyô-mon* (nine planets)
- sumitate-yotsume* (diagonal four eyes in a ring)
- shihô-hanabishi* (four petals)



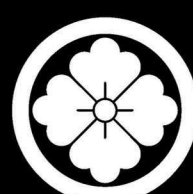
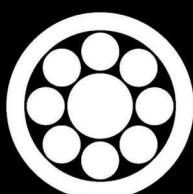
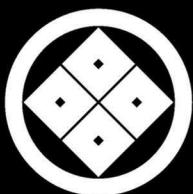
(reverse)



Kuyo-mon (nine planets) the family crest of the *Hosokawa* family, represents nine planets, which are the seven luminaries (the sun, moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn) and *Rahu* and *Ketu* (planets that are associated with eclipses and comets).

Sumitate-yotsume (diagonal four eyes in a ring), from a symbolic perspective, the number four is often associated with balance, stability, and completeness. It represents the four cardinal directions (north, south, east, west), the four elements (earth, air, fire, water), and the four seasons (spring, summer, autumn, winter). When combined with the symbolism of eyes, this signifies a holistic view that encompasses all aspects of existence.

Shihô-hanabishi (four petals) originates from the arrangement of four *hishi-like* (water chestnut-like) leaves as petals into a flower. During the *Heian* period, *hanabishi* was used as traditional design motifs of court nobles for furnishing goods and costumes of court nobles. It is said that *hanabishi* was first used as a family crest by the *Kai-Takeda* clan.

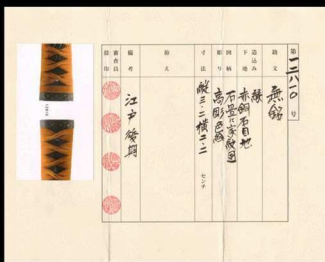




This eye-catching *fuchi* (collar) has been attributed to the Edo branch of the *Yoshioka* school, crafted Late Edo period (1780~1867).

The unique cross diamond design pattern is called *jûji-mon* as the Japanese character for *jû* (ten) is a cross. This is a 'fitting' choice as this *tachi* was crafted by *Jûrozaemon* (十郎左衛門) - the first character of his name being *Jû*. It thoughtfully pays tribute to him in a clever way.

The *Shimazu* clan was the most prominent family to have a cross *kamon* (family crest) albeit rounded.



Shimazu kamon



Kashira is crafted from buffalo horn and lacquered to match the *saya*.



Illustration by John Sims
(1749~1831)

The *menuki* depict *omoto no zu* (*Rohdea japonica*), a species of plant known as the Japanese sacred lily.

Paired with the generic lily, it means *a long-lasting peaceful union* thus a popular wedding gift.

Time to pass the baton.
Yours for the next 500 years.





Koshirae bag