



ITEM# UJKA476

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A SANDAI YASUTSUGU KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, SHINTÔ PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: FEBRUARY 1666)

Swordsmith:	(Aoi-mon) Yasutsugu Nanban-tetsu o motte Bushû Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru (Edo sandai)
Measurements:	Length: 72.9cm (ubu) Sori: 1.0cm Moto-haba: 2.95cm Weight: 685g
Jihada:	Beautiful ko-mokume and itame hada with ji-nie and plenty of chikei
Hamon:	Bright and graceful suguha with small gunome and delicate ashi
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)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo-koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description

\$16,500 ([click here](#) to watch Pablo's video presentation of this sword on YouTube)

Here is an outstanding katana by third generation *Yasutsugu*, forged and dated with *Nanban-tetsu* in Edo in February 1666, when the smith was 37 years old. The cutting edge measures an impressive 72.9cm with *futatsu-bi* (two parallel grooves). The *hada* is a finely forged *itame* with *ji-nie* and plentiful *chikei*. A graceful *suguha* *hamon* with *ko-gunome* and delicate *ashi* shines brightly. A secondary *mekugi-ana* near the end of the *nakago* suggests the blade was either used or intended for cutting-test. It's beautiful Edo-period *koshirae* has a lovely *tsuba* attributed to *Sano Naoyoshi* with a *taro* leaf design that symbolizes prosperity and harmony. The *fuchi-kashira* with depictions of chrysanthemums is further certified to *Kaga Kuwamura Katsuhisa* who trained in the *Gotô* school. All told, this is a terrific samurai sword that will shine brightly in a lucky person's collection.



Saki-kasane: 4.0mm

Moto-kasane: 6.8mm

Kissaki: 3.51cm

Saki-haba: 1.84cm

Nagasa: 72.9cm

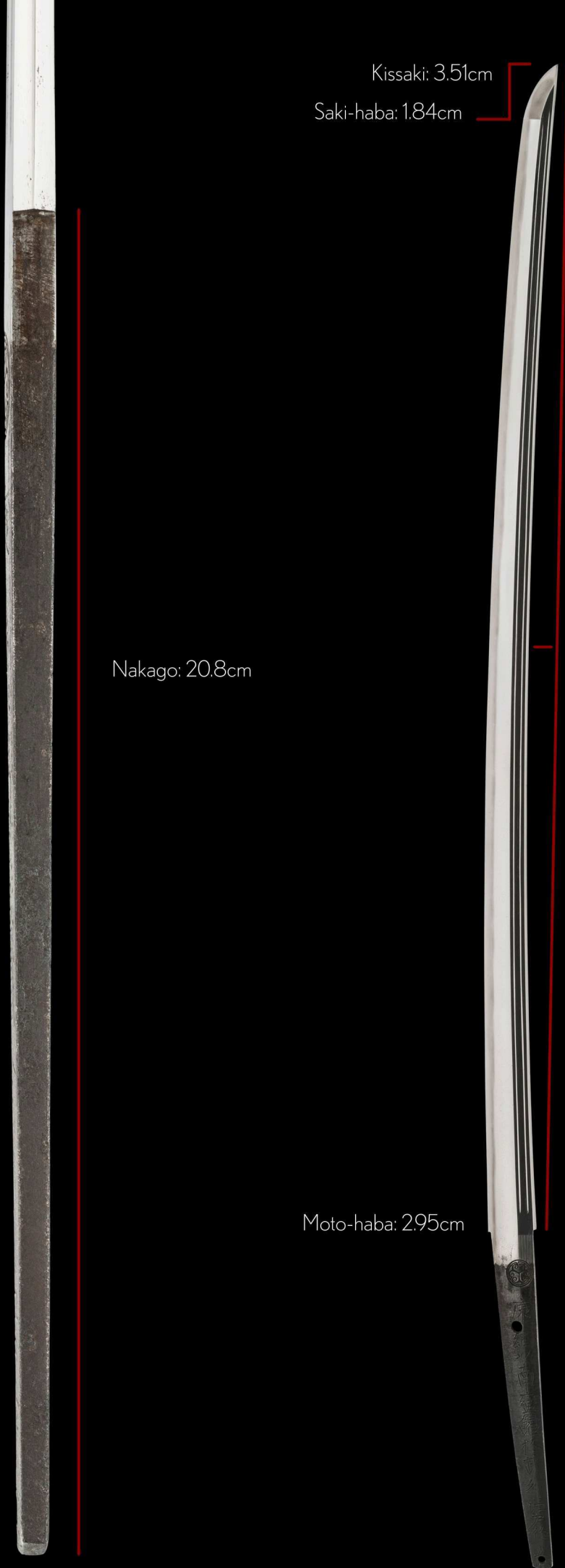
Nakago: 20.8cm

Sori: 1.0cm

Omosa: 685g

Moto-haba: 2.95cm

Mekugi-ana: 2

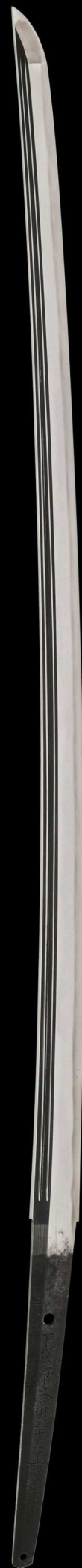


The third-generation *Yasutsugu* (康継), also known as Edo *Sandai Yasutsugu*, was a prominent *jô-saku* swordsmith active in the mid-17th century during the early Edo period. He inherited the name and tradition of the *Yasutsugu* line, originally founded by the first-generation *Yasutsugu*, a distinguished smith from the *Shimosaka* school in *Echizen* who was later summoned to Edo by *Tokugawa Ieyasu* (徳川家康) himself. Under the continued patronage of the Tokugawa shogunate, the *Yasutsugu* lineage became synonymous with both technical precision and elite status, especially through the use of *Nanban-tetsu* (foreign-imported iron), which was rare and valued for its superior metallurgical properties.

Third-generation *Yasutsugu*, often signing as "*Shimosaka Ichinojô* (下坂市之丞)" in addition to "*Yasutsugu*," worked during the Kanbun and Enpô eras (1660s-1670s), a time of consolidation in both politics and sword artistry. He was known for bold yet refined craftsmanship, creating blades that were well-balanced, durable, and finely structured. His works often exhibit *itame-hada* with clear *utsuri*, paired with elegant *suguha* or *ko-gunome* patterns and well-developed *ji-nie*. The use of the *Aoi-mon* (葵紋) crest in his signature marks official Tokugawa recognition, and his detailed *mei* frequently include the type of iron used, his age at the time of forging, and the exact date of creation - testaments to the pride and responsibility of his official position.

This *katana* is a splendid work by *Sandai Yasutsugu*, forged with *Nanban-tetsu* in Edo and dated to February 1666, when he was just 37-years-old. The cutting edge measures an impressive 72.9cm and is constructed with *futatsu-bi* (two parallel grooves) in *shinogi-zukuri* with an extended *chû-kissaki*. The *hada* is a finely forged *itame* with *ji-nie*, *chikei*, and a soft *utsuri*. The *hamon* is a graceful *suguha* with small *gunome* and delicate *ashi*, while the *bôshi* is *ô-maru* with a hint of *hakikake*. A secondary *mekugi-ana* near the end of the *nakago* suggests reinforcement for *tameshigiri*, indicating the blade was either used or intended for cutting-test.

A beautiful Edo-period *koshirae* accompanies the sword with a lovely *tsuba* attributed to *Sano Naoyoshi* with a *taro* leaf design that symbolizes prosperity and harmony. The *fuchikashira* with depictions of gorgeous chrysanthemums is further certified to *Kaga Kuwamura Katsuhisa* who trained in the *Gotô* school. All told, this is a terrific samurai sword that will shine brightly in a lucky person's collection. Currently on hold.



Location: *Edo*

Secular name: *Shimosaka Ichinojô*

Swordsmith: *Yasutsugu* (third generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

katte-sagari-yasurime (slanting file marks)

Aoi-mon crest



康
繼
以
南
蠻
鐵
於
武
州
江
戶
作
之

康 (Yasu)

繼 (tsugu)

以 (motte)

南 (nan)

蠻 (ban)

鐵 (tetsu)

於 (oite)

武 (Bu)

州 (shû)

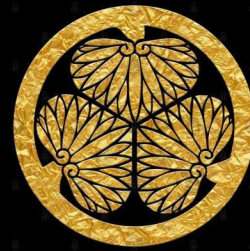
江 (E)

戶 (do)

作 (tsukuru)

之 (kore)

Yasutsugu Nanban-tetsu o motte Bushû Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru
(Crafted by Yasutsugu in Bushû Edo using Nanban-tetsu)



The *aoi-mon* (hollyhock) was the official *kamon* (crest) of the ruling *shogunate* of the Edo period, the *Tokugawa* family who were based in *Owari* province. The use of the *aoi-mon* (葵紋) crest in his signature marks official Tokugawa recognition.

康
繼
以
南
繼



Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)
Founder and first shogun of the
Tokugawa shogunate (Edo period)

Shimosaka Ichi no Jô sanjûnana-sai kore o tsukuru
Kanbun rokunen nigatsu kichijitsu

Crafted by *Shimosaka Ichi no Jô* on a lucky day in
the second month in the sixth year of *Kanbun* era
(February 1666) when he was 37-years-old.

(Kan) 寛		
(bun) 文		
(roku) 六		
(nen) 年	下	下 (Shimo)
(ni) 二	坂	坂 (saka)
(gatsu) 月	市	市 (Ichi)
(kichi) 吉	之	之 (no)
(jitsu) 日	丞	丞 (Jô)
	三	三 (san)
	十	十 (jû)
	七	七 (nana)
	歳	歳 (sai)
	造	造 (tsukuru)
	之	之 (kore)

The shape of the *nakago-jiri* (butt-end of the tang)
is called *iriyama-gata*. *Iri* means 'enter' and *yama* is
'mountain', suggesting at the '*base of a mountain*'.





hikae-mekugi-ana



tameshigiri (cutting test)

Although this blade retains *ubu-nakago*, an additional hole has been drilled near its base. This is known as a *hikae-mekugi-ana* - a secondary peg hole used to insert a second mekugi for reinforcement during *tameshigiri* or heavy use. While this sword bears no test-cutting inscription, the presence of the hole strongly suggests that it was either actually used for such purposes or was forged with serious practical application in mind.

特保
062024-09

No 1023802



鑑定書

一刀 銘

菱紋康繼以南蛮鉄於武州江戸作之(江戸元)
下坂市之丞三十七歳造之
寛文六年二月吉日

長二尺四寸強

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

令和六年十二月四日

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 114065 号
昭和38年2月14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 6th year of Reiwa (2024), December 4th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

(Aoi-mon) Yasutsugu Nanban-tetsu o motte Bushû Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru (Edo Sandai)
Shimosaka Ichi no Jô sanjûnana-sai kore o tsukuru
Kanbun rokunen nigatsu kichijitsu

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 4-sun kyô (72.9cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



葵紋

Aoi-mon

Tokugawa hollyhock crest

康繼以南蛮鉄於武州江戸作之

Yasutsugu nanban-tetsu o motte Bushu Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru

Crafted by Yasutsugu from Bushu Edo using Nanban-tetsu

江戸三代作也

Edo Sandai saku nari

Crafted by the third generation of Edo Yasutsugu

下坂市之丞三十七歳造之

Shimosaka Ichinojô sanjûnana-sai kore o tsukuru

Shimosaka Ichinojô made this at the age of thirty-seven

寛文六年二月吉日

Kanbun rokunen nigatsu kichijitsu

On a lucky day in the second month in the sixth year of Kanbun era (February 1666)

長貳尺四寸強有之

Nagasa 2-shaku 4-sun kyô kore ari

Blade length 72.9 cm

令和七乙巳年長月吉日誌之

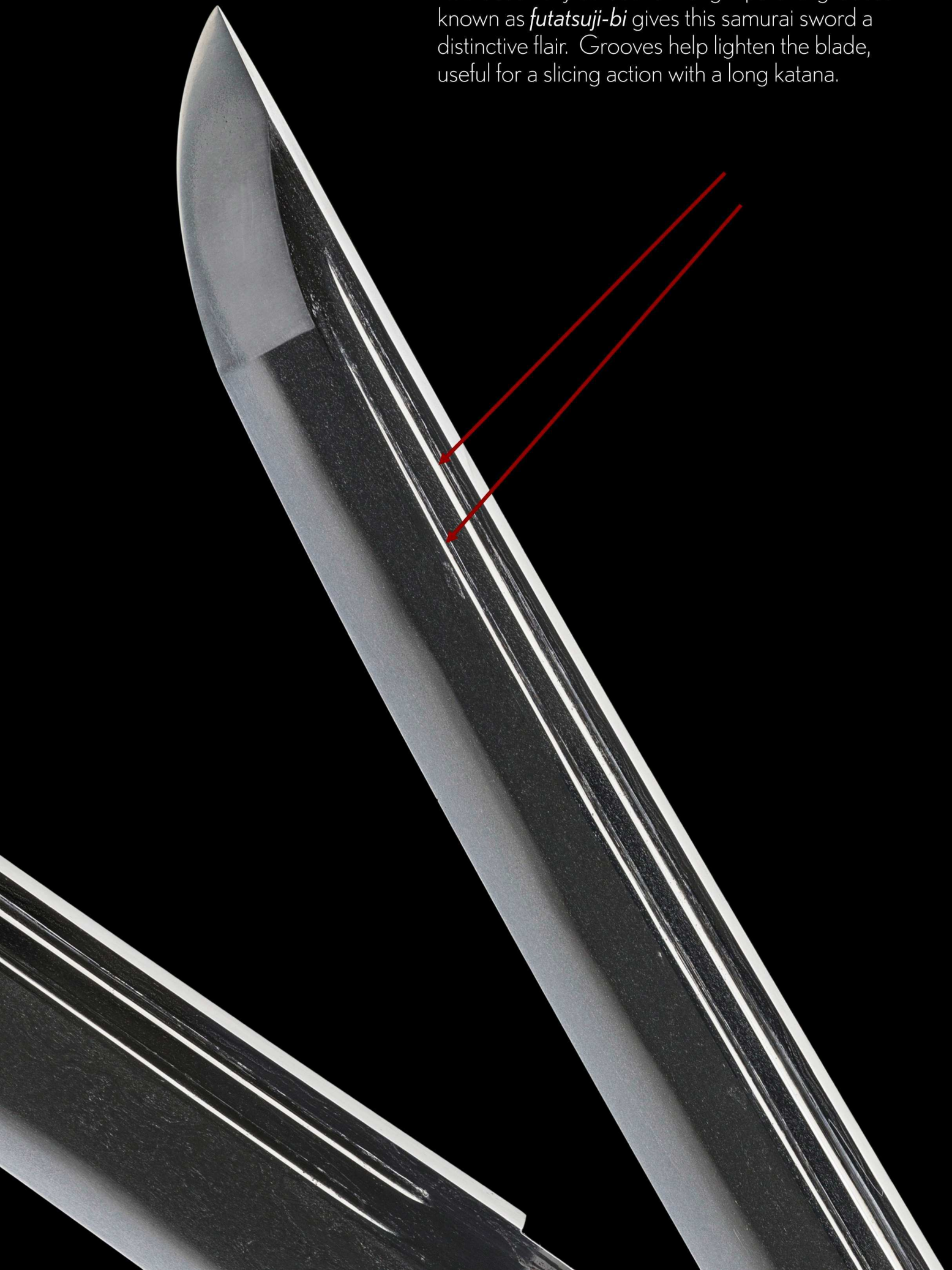
Reiwa nana kinoto-midoshi Nagatsuki kichijitsu kore o shirusu

Written on a lucky day in the ninth month in the seventh year of Reiwa era during the Year of the Snake (September 2025)





Two beautifully carved full-length parallel grooves known as *futatsuji-bi* gives this samurai sword a distinctive flair. Grooves help lighten the blade, useful for a slicing action with a long katana.





The *bôshi* gleams like a crescent moon.

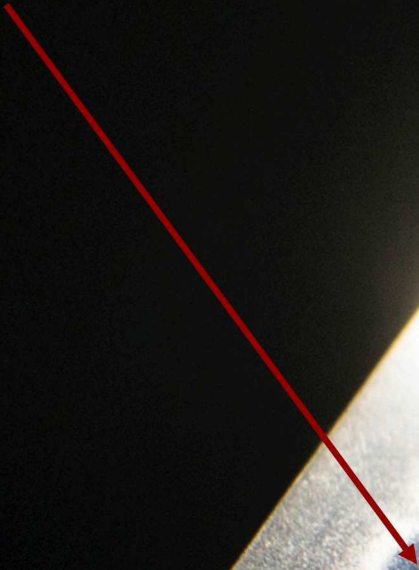


The *kissaki* takes on a *suguha*-like straight temper with an elegant *ô-maru bôshi*

The *bôshi* is finished with *hakikake* (swept pattern)



chikei
dark solid lines of *nie* in the *ji*




ji-nie
twinkling *nie* crystals in the *ji*



A light *utsuri* (shadow hamon) appears in the *hiraji* (body of the blade above the hamon).



A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (edge) pattern. The blade is dark and polished, with a bright reflection along the edge. A red arrow points to a specific feature on the hamon labeled 'ashi'.

The *hamon* is based on *suguha* with tasteful *ko-gunome* wave and *ashi* mixed in. Sweet.

ashi



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with
copper base

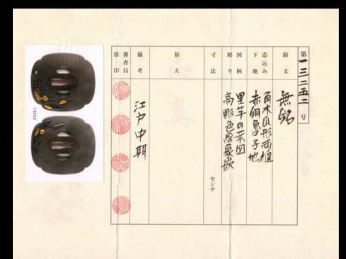
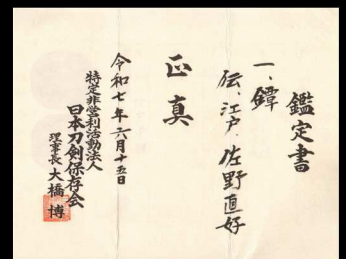


This fine *tsuba* is attributed to *Sano Naoyoshi* (佐野直好) - a late 18th-century Edo-period metalsmith. Crafted from *shakudô* with a sublime *nanako* texture, it features high-relief carving and restrained inlay, merging *Yokoya* school elegance with Naoyoshi's individual style. The *taro* leaf motif, with its soft curves and veins, adds a quiet gracefulness.

Naoyoshi trained under *Yanagawa Naomasa* (柳川直政) and *Nakamura Naonori* (中村直矩), later becoming Naonori's adopted son. He served the *Akimoto* clan of *Yamagata* and lived in *Shirokanemachi* in Edo (Tokyo) during the *Tenmei-Kansei* eras (1781-1801).

In Japanese culture, the taro leaf symbolizes prosperity, harmony, and Buddhist detachment - its water-shedding surface compared to a mind unbound by attachments.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteishô certificate accompanies the *tsuba*.





(reverse)



NTHK-NPO Kanteishô



This lovely *fuchi-kashira* is attributed to *Kuwamura Katsuhisa* (桑村克久), a mid-Edo period metalworker of the *Kaga* region. Born in 1694, Katsuhisa was the son of *Kuwamura Morikatsu* (桑村盛勝) and a key figure in the founding of the *Kuwamura-bori* style. Trained in the *Gotô* tradition, he developed a distinct Kaga aesthetic and became known for his expertise in *zôgan* (inlay work).

The fittings are crafted in *shakudô* with *nanako* ground, featuring high relief with coloured metal inlay depicting blooming chrysanthemums. The motif of chrysanthemums - symbols of longevity, nobility, and seasonal beauty - was especially favoured in the Edo period for its refined presence and classical elegance. This set exemplifies the sophisticated decorative metalwork of the Kaga domain and the artistic legacy of the Kuwamura lineage.

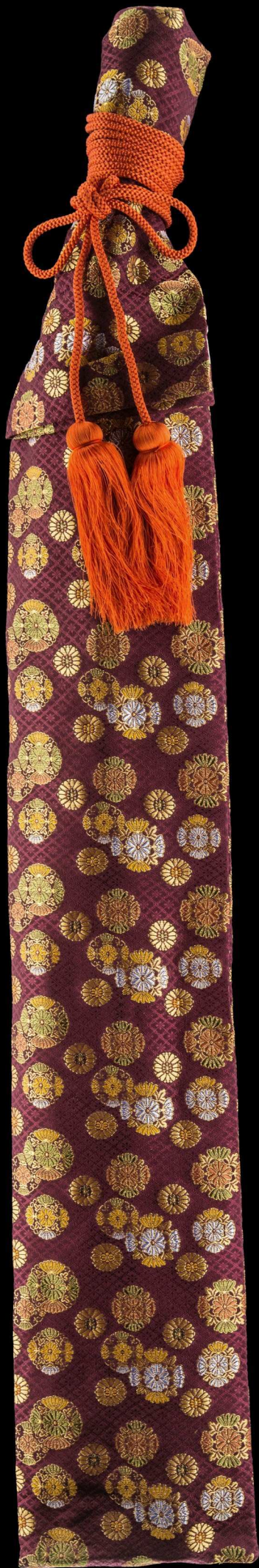


Tsuka (hilt) is in excellent preservation, retaining its antique character and atmosphere. It features aged white *samekawa* and *hishi-maki* wrapping in *tsuka-ito* that was originally black, now gently faded with time, adding to its historical charm.



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) are delicately carved in high relief to depict *suisen* - a flower associated in Japanese culture with grace, renewal, and quiet dignity. Often blooming in winter, the narcissus symbolizes inner strength and hope, making it a fitting motif for a sword carried with calm resolve.





Koshirae bag with
chrysanthemum pattern.

