



ITEM# UJKA480

A GASSAN SADAYOSHI KATANA

SIGNED, SHINSHINTÔ LATE EDO PERIOD (GENJI ERA: NOVEMBER 1864)

Swordsmith:	<i>Gassan Sadayoshi (shodai, first generation of modern era)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 72.1cm (<i>ubu</i>) Sori: 2.1cm Moto-haba: 3.05cm Weight: 905g
Jihada:	<i>Expertly forged straight grain nagare-hada with plentiful chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Vivid suguha with a touch of notare, splendid sunagashi, kinsuji and kuichigai-ba</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificates #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (<i>koshirae, fuchi-kashira and tsuba certified as Authentic</i>)
Fujishiro rank:	Jô-saku (<i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo handachi koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, printed description

SOLD

Gassan Sadayoshi (月山貞吉) was celebrated for his leadership in reviving the *Gassan school* during the *Shinshintô* period. Trained in Edo under *Suishinshi Masahide*, *Sadayoshi* with his adopted son, the great *Gassan Sadakazu*, established a thriving workshop in *Ôsaka* and worked closely with the Imperial family. This strong and powerful katana, was crafted just years before the fall of the *Tokugawa shogunate* and features an exquisitely forged *nagare-hada* with excellent clarity and consistency. The *hamon* is a *suguha* base with a wonderful *bôshi* that contains rare *kuichigai-ba*. A handsome late Edo-period *handachi-koshirae* with matching fittings and a meaningful polished iron *tsuba* with depictions of the moon and mountain compliments the family name and legacy. There is a quiet, stoic confidence in this sword and *koshirae* that is deeply spiritual. This is an excellent katana for the collector who seeks both refined craftsmanship and a piece of *Last Samurai* history.



Saki-kasane: 4.4mm

Moto-kasane: 7.6mm

Kissaki: 4.36cm

Saki-haba: 2.07cm

Nagasa: 72.8cm

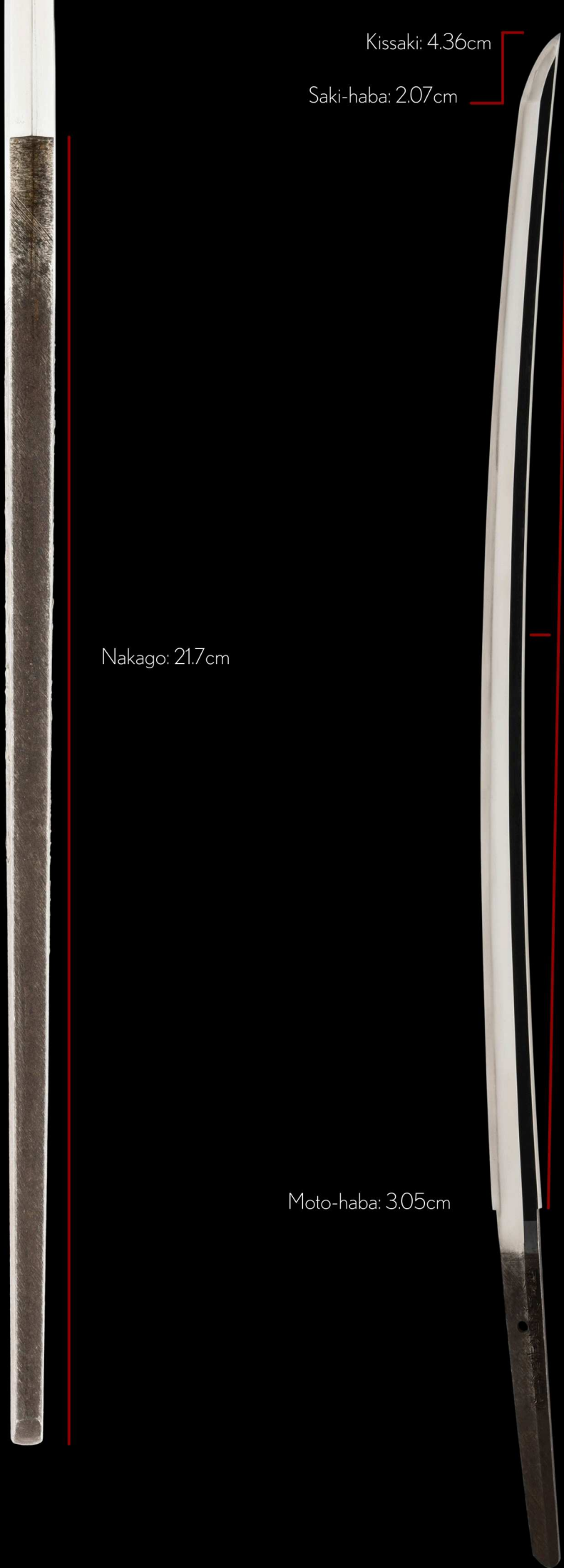
Nakago: 21.7cm

Sori: 2.1cm

Omosa: 905g

Moto-haba: 3.05cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Born *Gassan Yahachirô*, *Gassan Sadayoshi* (月山貞吉, 1781-1870) was a pivotal figure in the *Shinshintô* period, celebrated for his leadership in reviving the *Gassan* school, one of Japan's oldest swordmaking lineages. Trained in Edo under *Suishinshi Masahide* (水心子正秀, 1760~1825), Sadayoshi studied a wide range of classical techniques before settling in *Ôsaka*, where he reestablished the *Gassan* tradition. With his adopted son, the great *Gassan Sadakazu* (月山貞一, 1836~1918), he successfully revitalized the school's hallmark - *ayasugi-hada*, the wave-like grain pattern long thought lost since the Muromachi period.

This strong and powerful katana, was crafted in the first year of *Genji* era (November 1864), and represents Sadayoshi's mature work, crafted just years before the fall of the *Tokugawa shogunate*. The blade measures 72.8 cm in length with a graceful 2.1 cm curvature. Its stately presence forms a commanding silhouette reflecting the aesthetics of the *Shinshintô* period.

The *jihada* is an exquisitely forged *nagare-hada*, that leads to *ayasugi* with subtle *itame-hada* mixed in. The beautiful *jihada* has excellent clarity and consistency - signs of high-quality craftsmanship and carefully selected *tamahagane* that the school was famous for implementing. The *hamon* is a *suguha* base with a slight touch of *notare*, creating a soft, flowing rhythm along the edge. The *nioiguchi* is deep and luminous, with fine *nie* giving the blade a calm, vivid presence.

A handsome late Edo-period *handachi-koshirae* with matching fittings and a wonderful polished iron *tsuba* with depictions of the moon and mountain further compliments the family name and legacy. It exudes an understated samurai elegance.

All told, this *katana* reflects the clarity, balance, and tradition of a master who stood at the crossroads of past and future. There is a quiet, stoic confidence in this sword and *koshirae* that is deeply spiritual. An excellent katana of the *Gassan Sadayoshi's* legacy, and a meaningful piece for the collector who seeks both refined craftsmanship and a veritable piece of Last Samurai history.



Family name: *Gassan*

Swordsmith: *Sadayoshi* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

keshô-tsuki ô-sujikai (slanting file marks with *keshô*)



月 (Ga)

山 (ssan)

貞 (Sada)

吉 (yoshi)

作 (tsukuru)

之 (kore)



Mt. Gassan



The *Gassan* school, rooted in the sacred mountains of *Dewa* Province, stands as one of Japan's oldest swordsmith lineages. Originating in the *Kamakura* period, its early blades emerged from a spiritual world shaped by *shugendô* and mountain asceticism. Though remote, the tradition has endured and continuously refined across centuries.

Genji gan kinoe-nedoshi Shimotsuki

Signed in the eleventh month of the first year of *Genji* era, the Year of the Rat (November 1864).

(Gen) 元

(ji) 治

(Gan) 元

(kinoe) 甲

(ne) 子

(doshi) 歲

(Shimo) 霜

(tsuki) 月



Ha agari kurijiri, a type of *nakagojiri* (butt-end of the tang) is rounded, similar to that of *kurijiri* (chestnut shaped) but the cutting edge side slants more steeply than the back (*mune* side).

ha agari kurijiri



This is a powerful, muscular katana, with a weight of over 900g just the blade alone. And being crafted at the end of 1864 makes it one of the final swords to be crafted during the Edo period.

A formidable *Last Samurai* sword.

特保
05202312

№ 1022094



鑑定書

一 刀 銘

月山貞吉作之
元治元甲子歳霜月

長 二尺四寸

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

令和六年二月二十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



和歌山県教育委員会
第 11194 号
昭和41年7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 6th year of Reiwa (2024), February 21st

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Gassan Sadayoshi kore o tsukuru
Genji gan kinoe-nedoshi Shimotsuki

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 4-sun (72.8cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

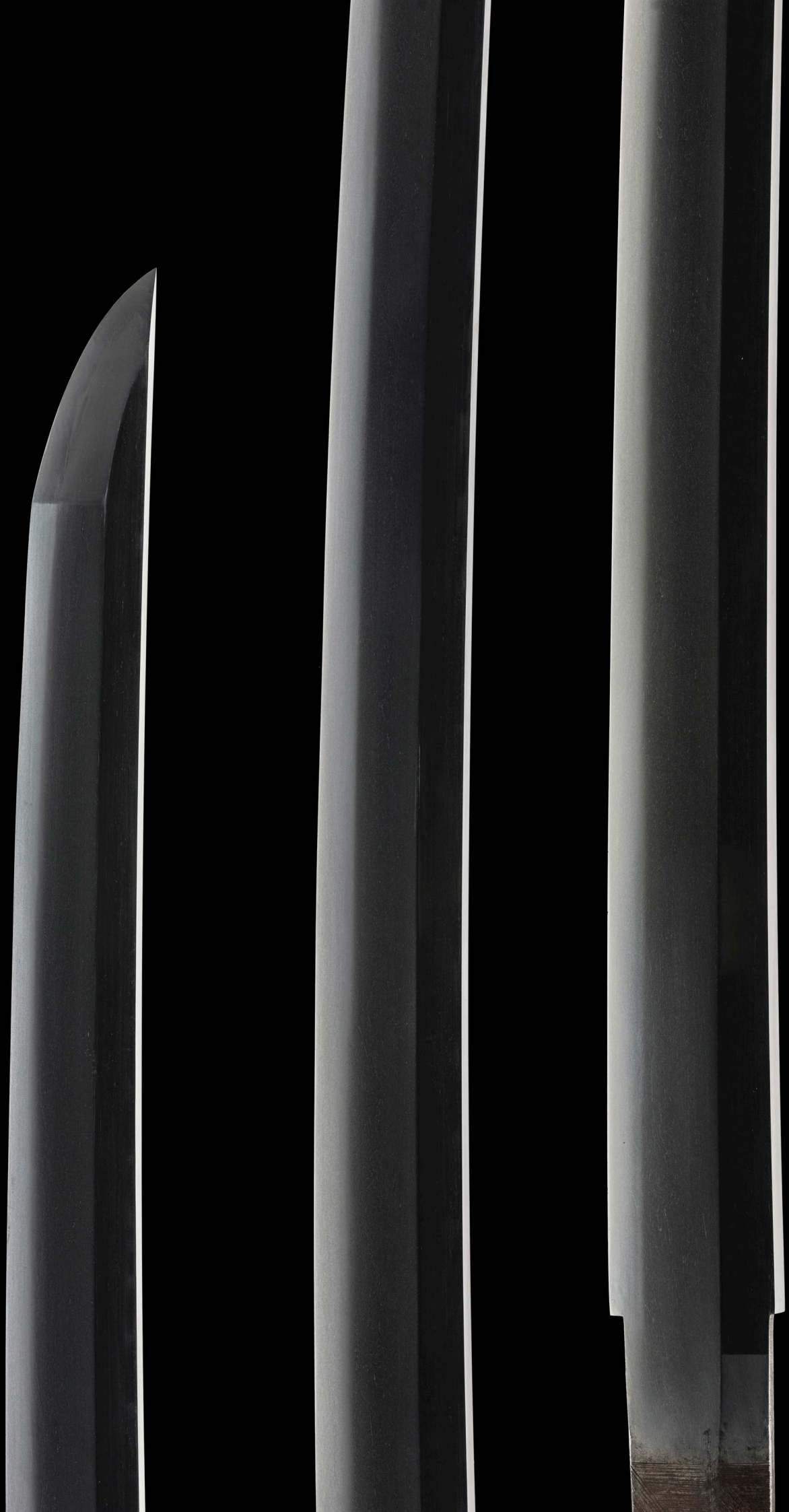


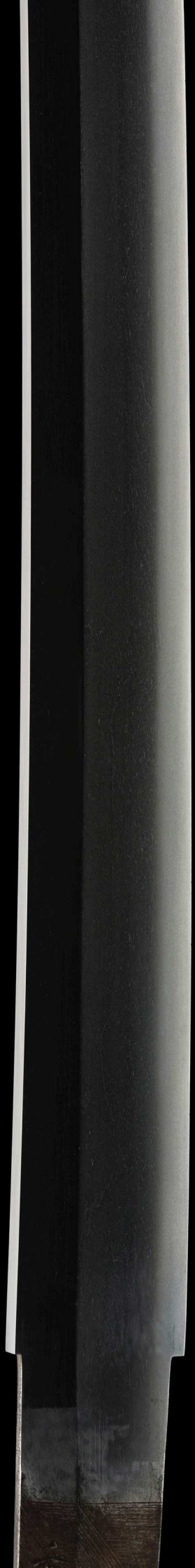
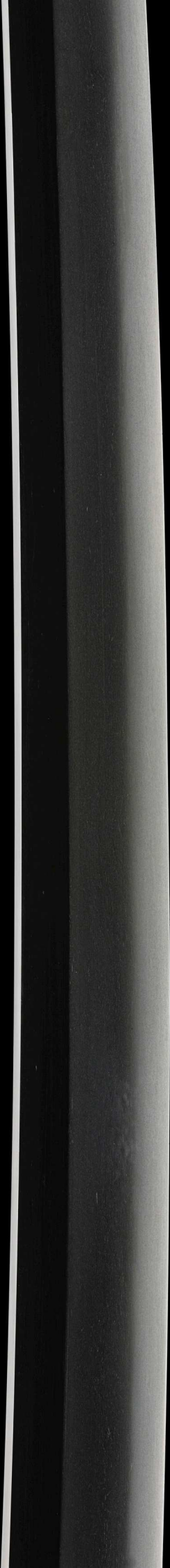
月山貞吉
Gassan Sadayoshi
Gassan Sadayoshi

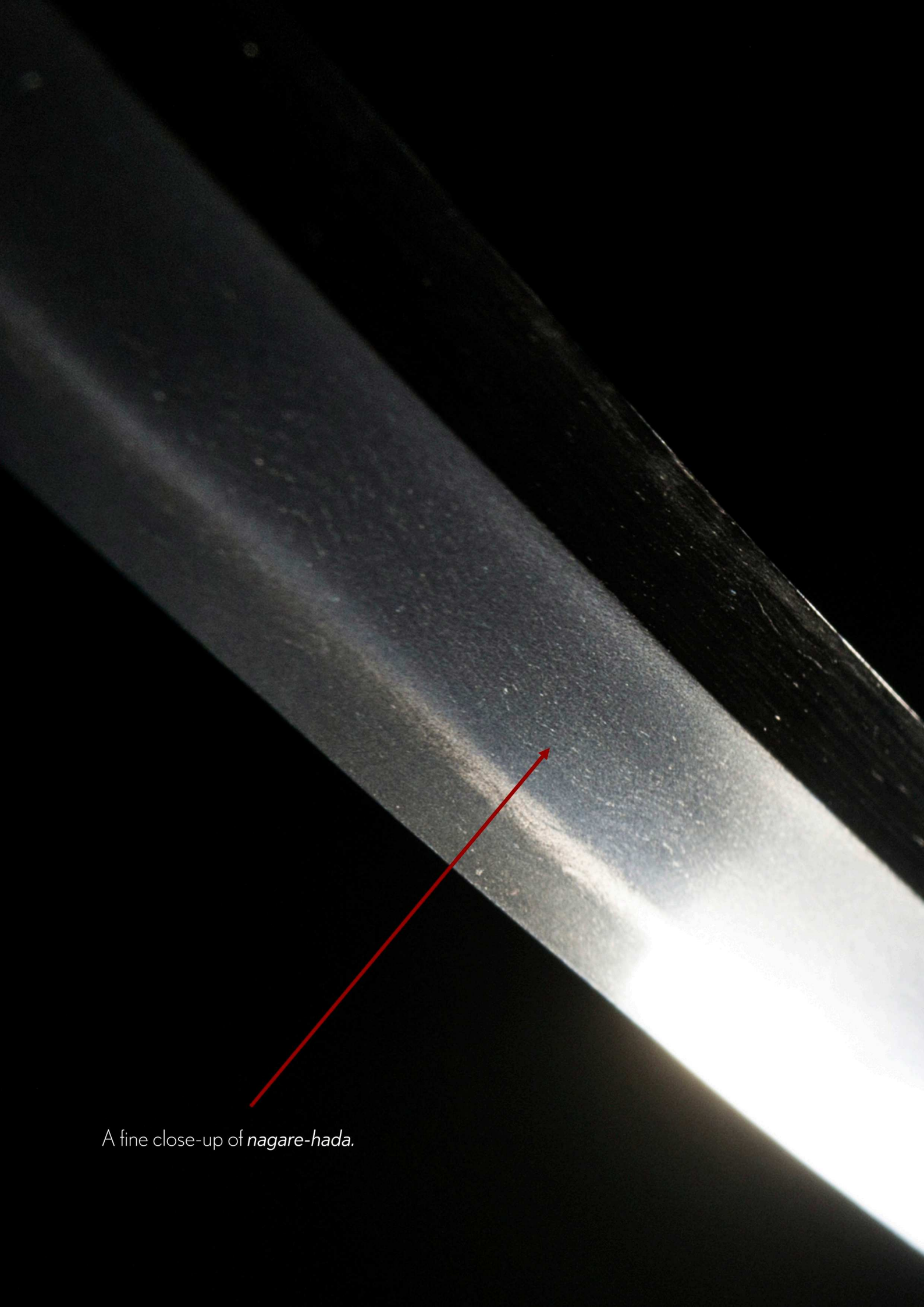
元治元甲子歳霜月
Genji gan Kinoe-nedoshi Shimotsuki
In the eleventh month of the first year of Genji era,
Year of the Rat (November 1864)

長貳尺四寸有之
Nagasa 2-shaku 4-sun kore ari
Blade length 72.8 cm

令和七乙巳年葉月吉日誌之
Reiwa nana kinoto-midoshi Hazuki kichijitsu kore o shirusu
Written on a lucky day in the eighth month in the seventh year
of Reiwa era during the Year of the Snake (August 2025)







A fine close-up of *nagare-hada*.

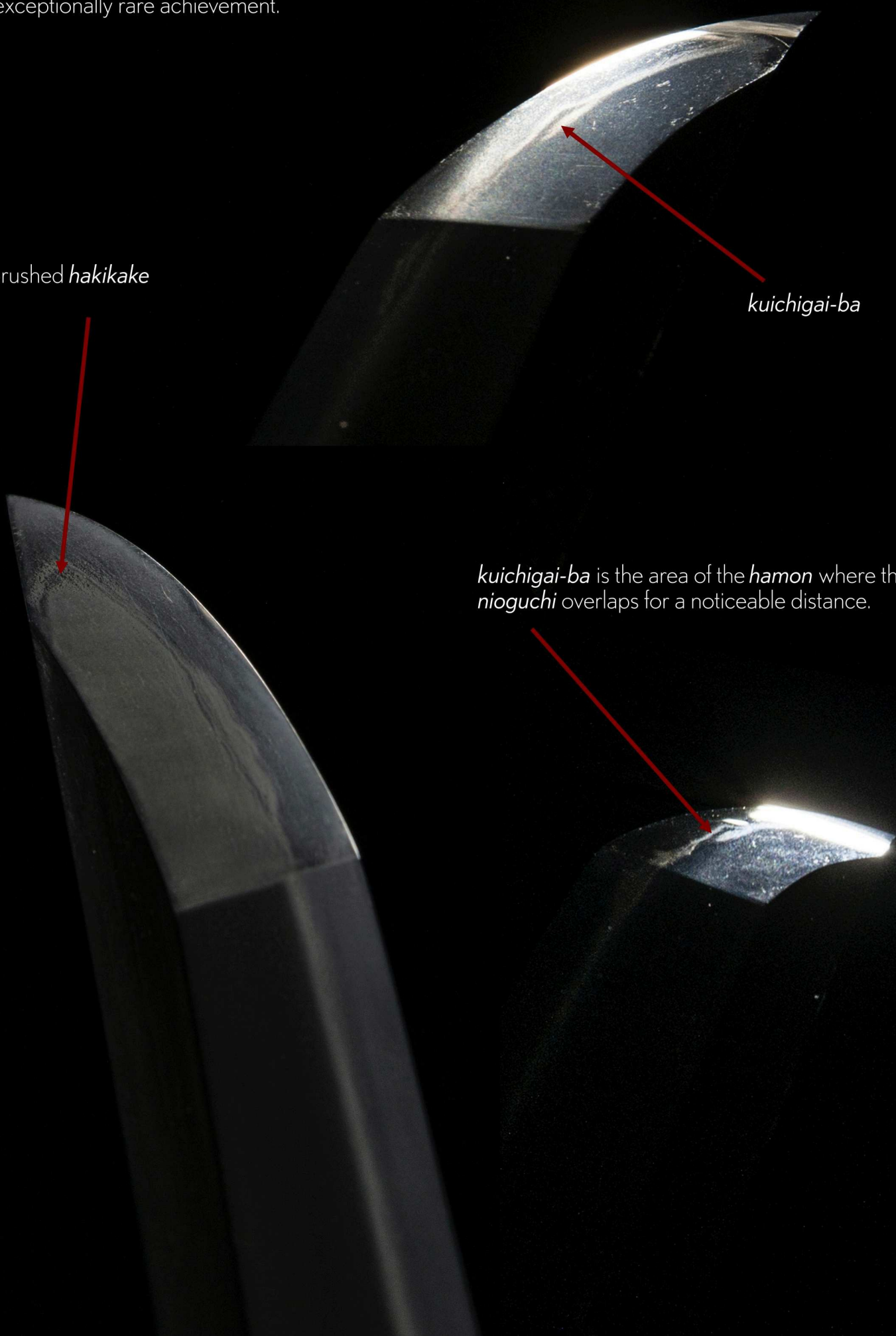
The *bôshi* showcases the mastery of *Gassan Sadayoshi*.

The presence of *kuichigai-ba* in the *kissaki* is an exceptionally rare achievement.

brushed *hakikake*

kuichigai-ba

kuichigai-ba is the area of the *hamon* where the *nioguchi* overlaps for a noticeable distance.






shirake-utsuri

long, impressive line of *kinsuji*

This is a sword that calms the soul.

The *jihada* is a running straight grain *nagare-hada* that forms the *Yamato-den* foundation of the sword. This allows the blade to showcase brushed strokes of *sunagashi* with dark lines of *kinsuji* piercing through the bright *suguha* (straight) *hamon*.

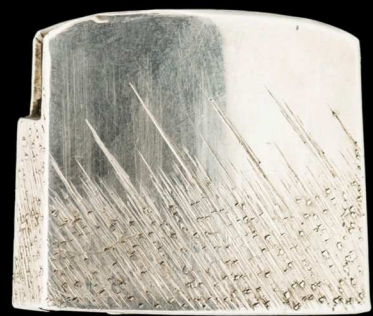
Kinsuji and sunagashi flowing through the brilliant *suguha hamon*.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the hamon (edge) and the grain patterns. The blade is dark, and the hamon is a bright, straight line. The grain patterns are visible as dark lines (kinsuji) and brushed strokes (sunagashi) flowing through the hamon. Two red arrows point to the hamon and the grain patterns.

nagare-hada (running)



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard, brand new)

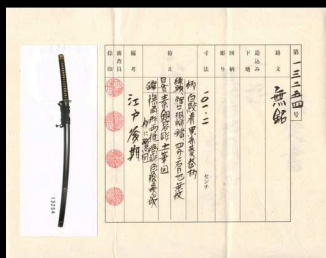


silver *habaki* with
diagonal rain file marks

*Kuro-ishime-ji-fû-nuri saya
handachi-koshirae*
(黒石目地風塗鞘半太刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in black with
stone-like surface style*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1868)

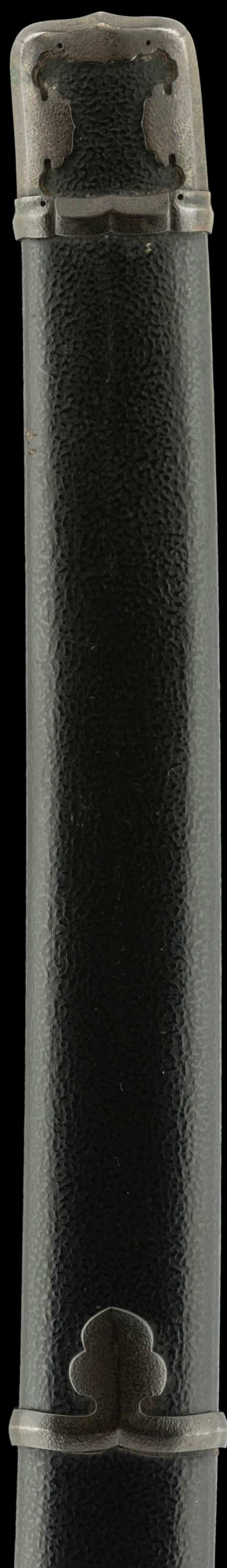


NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



fuchi

kojiri

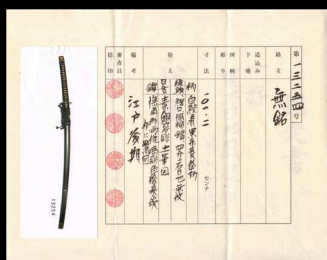


dôrin



A superb set of fittings crafted entirely in *shibuichi* (a lovely alloy of 1/4 silver and 3/4 copper) adorns this fine *handachi-koshirae* - evoking the true samurai taste of understated elegance.

The *fuchi*, *kashira*, *kojiri*, and *dôrin* are perfectly matched, lending a subtle yet powerful uniformity. As this *koshirae* has been certified to the late Edo period, it would be the *original koshirae* to this katana. Even the *ishime* (stone) finish of the *koshirae* matches the aesthetic of fittings.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho



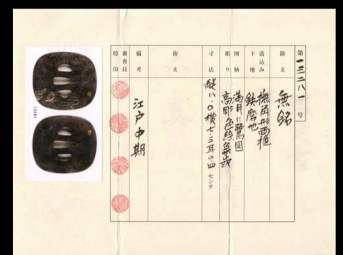
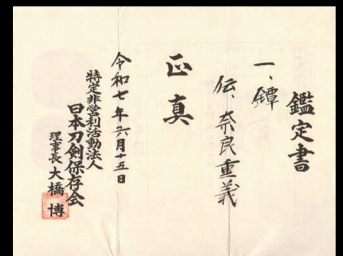
kashira



This elegant polished iron *tsuba*, attributed to *Nara Shigeyoshi* of mid-Edo period, features a refined depiction of a heron beneath a full moon, quietly resting among reeds and flowing water. Shigeyoshi was a metalsmith within the *Nara* school, known for its sophisticated metal inlay and carving techniques.

In poetic harmony with the smith's name, "Gassan" (meaning *Moon Mountain*), this *tsuba* features a gorgeous moon over a mountain range rendered subtly in silver and gold accents.

The scene embodies the natural beauty of Japan and deepens the symbolic resonance of the mounted *koshirae* as a whole.





(reverse)



This pair of extra-long copper *menuki* (decorative grips on the hilt) depicts *tsukushi* – the horsetail plant – in fine naturalistic detail. A humble yet seasonally significant motif, *tsukushi* emerges in early spring, symbolizing quiet resilience, new beginnings, and the subtle cycles of nature.

Though unassuming in form, the choice of horsetail carries layered meaning in sword mountings. In Japanese culture, *tsukushi* evokes the spirit of renewal and perseverance – qualities resonant with the ethos of the *samurai*. It also reflects an aesthetic sensitivity toward the transient beauty of seasonal change, a hallmark of Edo-period artistic sensibility.

Worn beneath the tightly woven *tsuka-ito* of the sword's hilt, these *menuki* serve both a functional and symbolic role – enhancing grip while embedding poetic imagery into the very hand of the warrior.





Koshirae bag with kiku-mon (chrysanthemums) and the Tokugawa aoi-mon.