

ITEM# UJWA234

## A MUNETSUGU & SUKENAGA WAKIZASHI

SIGNED, LATE EDO PERIOD (CIRCA TENPO ERA: 1830~1844)

<b>Swordsmiths:</b>	<i>Forged by Koyama Munetsugu and hardened by Kosugi Sukenaga</i>		
<b>Cutting Test:</b>	<i>Tameshi chiwari kiri-otoshi Gotō Gosaburō</i>		
<b>Measurements:</b>	<b>Length:</b> 44.4cm ( <i>ubu-nakago</i> )	<b>Curvature:</b> 1.06cm	<b>Moto-haba:</b> 3.48cm
<b>Jihada:</b>	<i>Tightly folded kagami-hada (mirror-like finish)</i>		
<b>Hamon:</b>	<i>Sparkling gunome-midare in nio-deki with kinsuji and sunagashi</i>		
<b>Certificate:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon</b> ( <i>a sword Especially Worthy of Conservation</i> )		
<b>Fujishiro:</b>	<i>Jojo-saku</i> ( <i>Koyama Munetsugu is ranked as a highly superior smith</i> )		
<b>Included:</b>	Shirasaya, sword bag, stand, kit, DVD, printed description		

**SOLD**

This is a highly collectible wakizashi of historic measure. It is the combined work of prized *shinshinto* swordsmith *Koyama Munetsugu* and *Kosugi Sukenaga* - a top-ranking samurai official and trusted advisor to the *Doi* family of the *Koga* fief. As stated on the *nakago*, Munetsugu first forged the sword and then gave the hardening responsibilities to Sukenaga who heated and quenched the blade. It's an amazing scene to picture - a highly respected samurai elder in his spare time literally getting his hands dirty inside the forge with maestro Munetsugu. What passion for the craft! Making this meaty wakizashi even more impressive is that it was used in a *tameshigiri* cutting test with *Goto Gosaburo* in which it severed the body of a deceased convicted criminal in one stroke. The *nakago* of this sword was published in a book by *Mitsuo Shibata*.

Saki-kasane: 4.6mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 8mm

Omosa: 548g

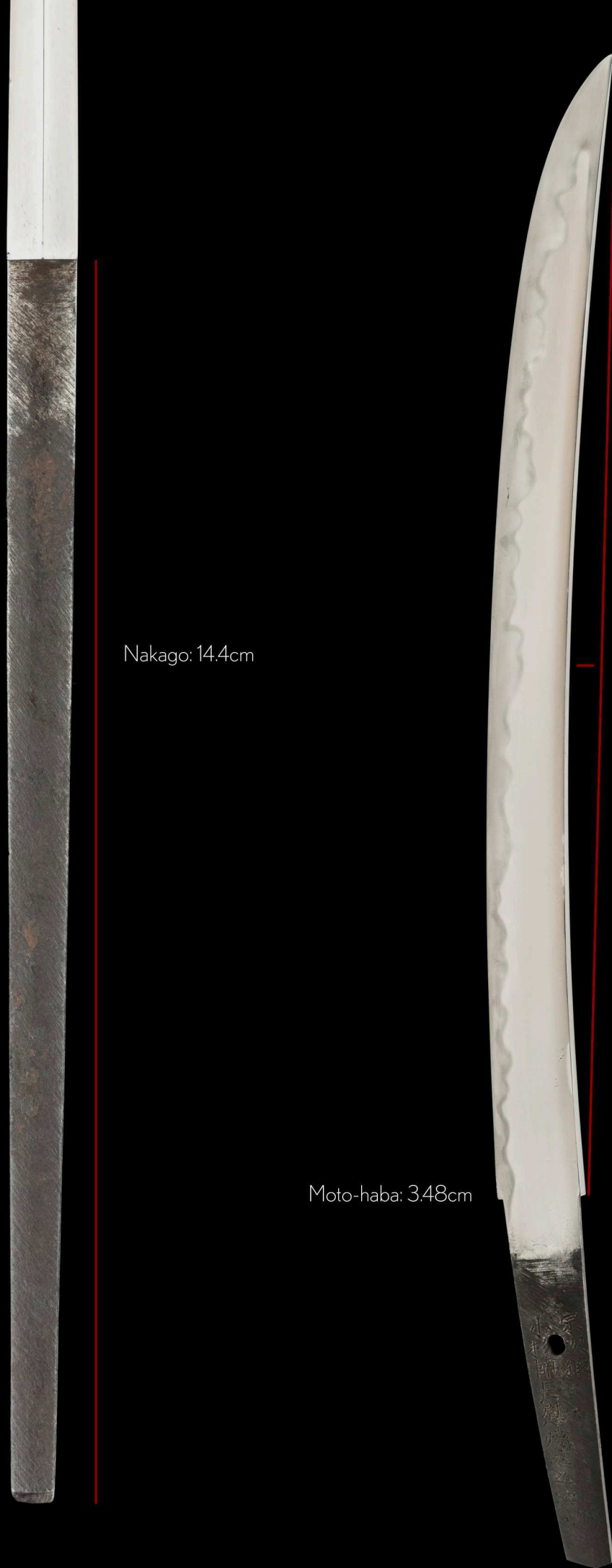
Nakago: 14.4cm

Moto-haba: 3.48cm

Nagasa: 44.4cm

Sori: 1.06cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



This meaty *hirazukuri* (flat) wakizashi was forged by the highly superior swordsmith *Koyama Munetsugu* and hardened by top-ranking samurai official and advisor *Kosugi Sukenaga*, pen name *Kenmotsu*.

*Hirazukuri* constructed swords are without *shinogi* or *yokote*, thus nearly flat on both sides. This type first appeared in *tachi* produced in the *Heian period* (pre-1185).

This sword was crafted circa the *Tempo era* (1830-1844). It was then tested by *Goto Gosaburo* with a cut that severed a human body centrally across the chest in one stroke.



宗次鍛:

*Forged by Munetsugu*

小杉輔長慰湊刃之:

*Hardened as a pastime by Kosugi Sukenaga*

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

*kesho-yasuri* (cosmetic file marks)

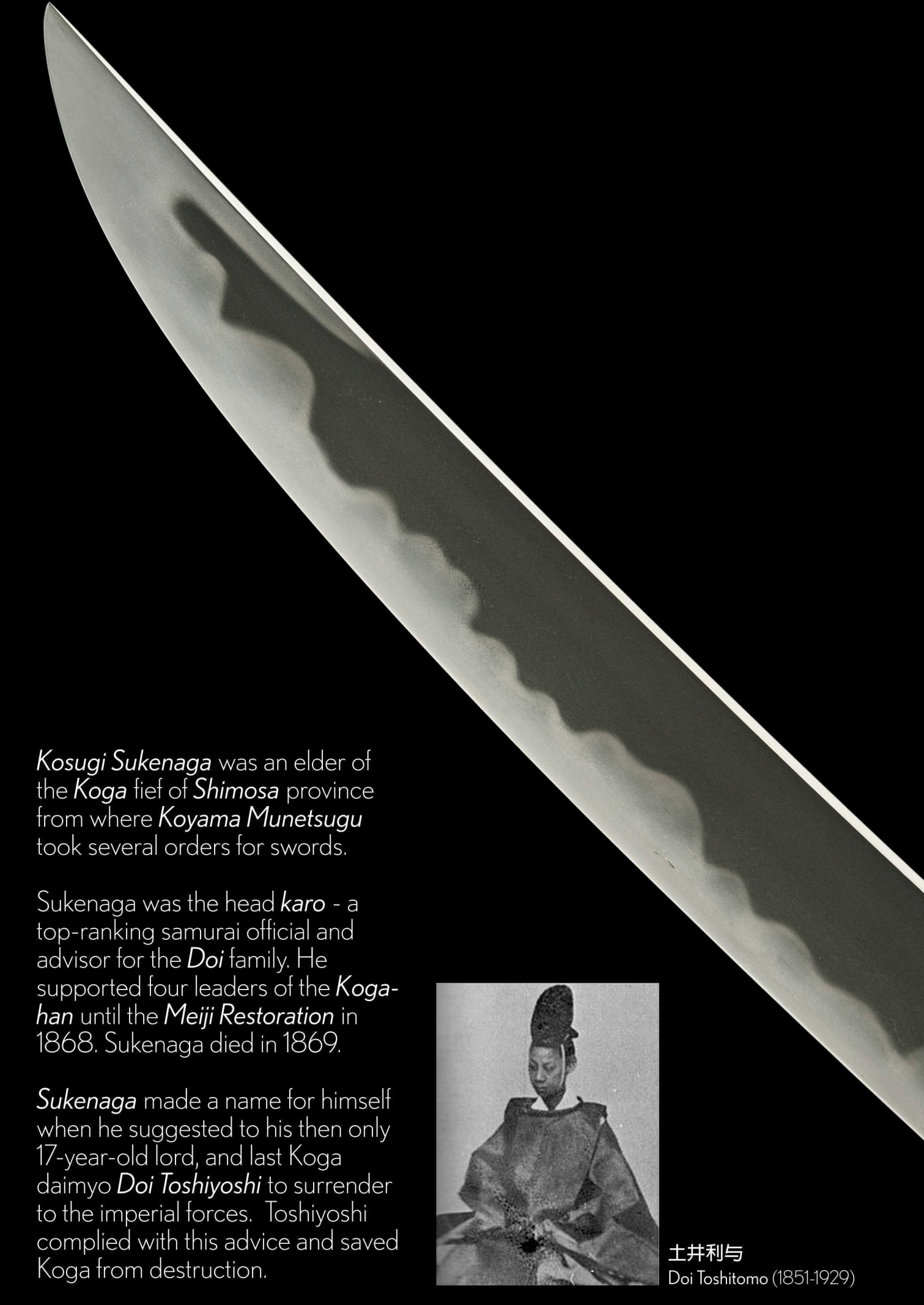
Ko  
sugi  
Suke  
naga  
naga  
sami (ni)  
kore o  
saijin

小宗  
杉次  
輔鍛  
長慰  
湊刃  
之

Mune

tsugu

kitaeru



*Kosugi Sukenaga* was an elder of the *Koga* fief of *Shimosa* province from where *Koyama Munetsugu* took several orders for swords.

Sukenaga was the head *karo* - a top-ranking samurai official and advisor for the *Doi* family. He supported four leaders of the *Kogahan* until the *Meiji Restoration* in 1868. Sukenaga died in 1869.

*Sukenaga* made a name for himself when he suggested to his then only 17-year-old lord, and last *Koga* daimyo *Doi Toshiyoshi* to surrender to the imperial forces. *Toshiyoshi* complied with this advice and saved *Koga* from destruction.



土井利与  
Doi Toshitomo (1851-1929)

## 試乳割切落後藤五三郎

This wakizashi was tested for sharpness by *Goto Gosaburo*. With this sword, he severed the body of a convicted criminal in one stroke with the breast splitter cut.

Goto Gosaburo was the birth name of *Yamada Yoshitoshi* (1813-1884) who was adopted by *Yamada Asae'mon* - the seventh generation of the sword testing family .

*Chiwari* is the Yamada name for the cut that goes centrally across the chest. Other systems of sword testing such as from the *Yamano family* refer to this test as '*ichi no do*' meaning *first body cut*.

This *tameshigiri* cutting result (and the fact *Sukenaga* hardened the blade) was chiseled onto the *nakago* by swordsmith Munetsugu himself given the overall consistency in the characters.

Tameshi

chiwari

kiri-otoshi

Goto

Gosaburo



one body tameshigiri cutting test



特 保  
29201711

No 1007916



鑑定書

一脇指 銘 宗次鍛小杉輔長慰焼刃之  
試乳割切落後藤五三郎

長一尺四寸六分半

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

平成三十年三月十五日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京 教育委員会  
第 83120 号  
昭和32年 3月7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 30th year of Heisei (2018), March 15th

One, Wakizashi

Mei (signature)

*Munetsugu kitaeru - Kosugi Sukenaga nagusami ni kore wo saijin  
Tameshi chiwari kiri-otoshi Goto Gosaburo*

Nagasa (length)

1-shaku 4-sun 6-bu han (44.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)

# 脇差の魅力

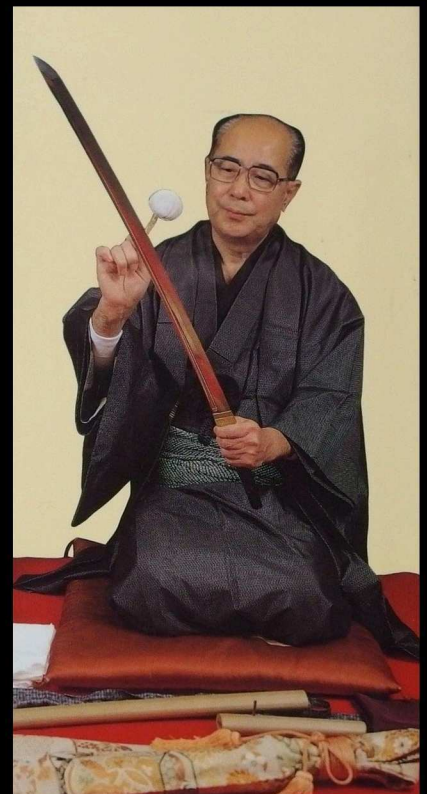
柴田光男



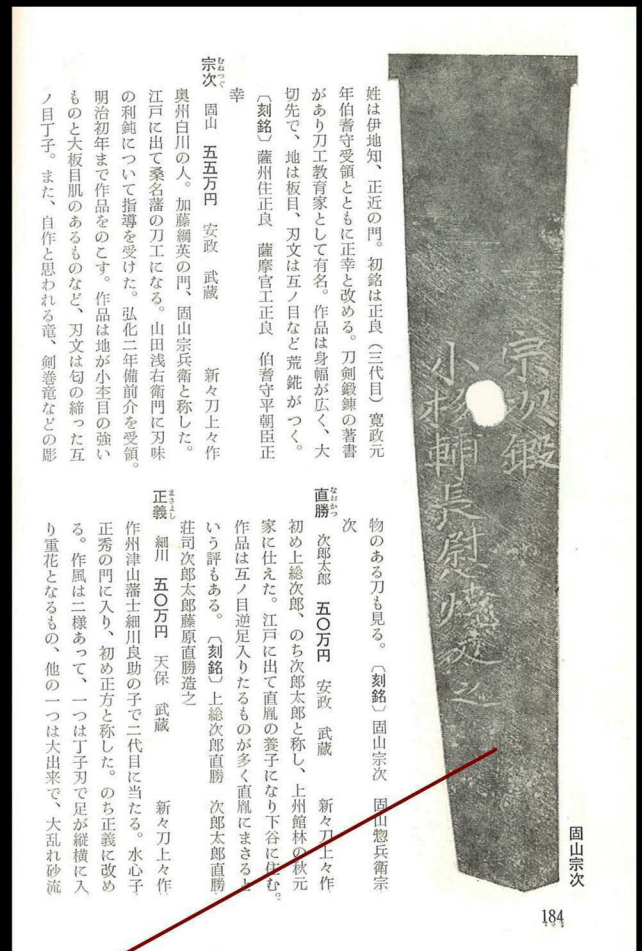
An *oshigata* (rubbing) of the *nakago* of this wakizashi was featured in a 1968 book called *Wakizashi no Miryoku* (Charm of the Wakizashi) by *Mitsuo Shibata* in the section where he introduces master swordsmith *Koyama Munetsugu*.

Born in August 1923 in *Tochigi* prefecture, *Shibata-sensei* studied the Japanese sword under *Fujishiro Yoshio*. He was a prominent sword dealer who wrote a number of helpful books introducing Japanese swords and fittings to the general public.

As one of the most distinguished appraisers of *shinto* and *shinshinto* swords, discovering that this *nakago* was published in such a notable compilation was a happy find indeed. *Shibata sensei* died in 2006.



Shibata Mitsuo





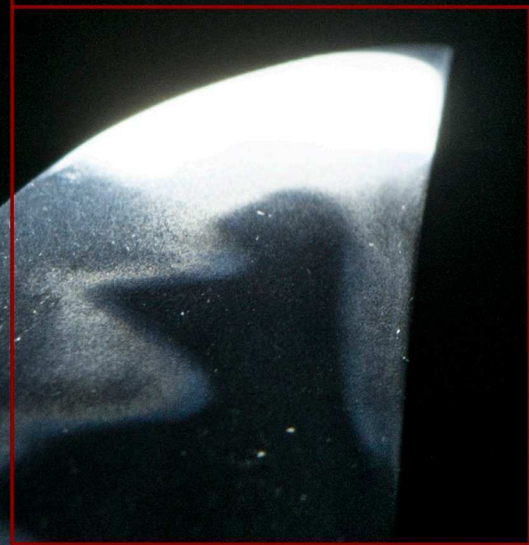
Munetsugu forged a beautiful,  
*bright*, clear *jigane* (surface steel).

The sword is so tightly folded that  
its grain pattern becomes mirror-  
like, referred to as *kagami-hada*.

The hamon of the *kissaki* (tip) is called the *boshi*, which literally means "hat". The quenching of the *boshi* requires great skill and timing.

The shape of this boshi is a combination of two patterns, *midare komi* (irregular wavy pattern) to the *rounded head of Jizo* at the very tip, or *saki*. These words are combined to become "*saki-Jizo*".

Jizo derives itself from *Jizo Bosatsu* is an important deity seen as a saviour for both pregnant women and children.





A clean and consistent *nioguchi*, crystals that make up the hamon. The work of a master smith.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing a complex hamon pattern. The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted by a bright light source, creating a sparkling effect. The pattern consists of irregular, wavy lines that resemble a gunome (shell) shape. A red line points from the text below to a specific part of the hamon.

A sparkling *gunome-midare hamon* in *nioi-deki*.

*kinsuji* (golden lines)

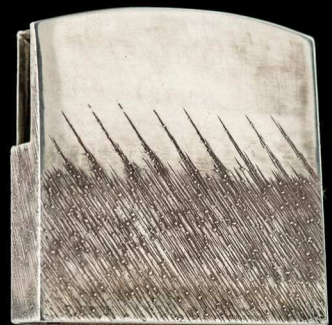
A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing a kinsuji pattern. The blade is dark, and the kinsuji is highlighted by a bright light source, creating a sparkling effect. The pattern consists of thin, wavy lines that resemble a gunome (shell) shape. Two red lines point from the text below to specific parts of the kinsuji pattern.

A blade nearing 200 years old.  
As sharp now as it was then.





*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



a silver *yujo-habaki* with  
slanted file marks.