



ITEM# UJWA248

SOLD

A FUKUOKA-ICHIMONJI NORIFUSA Ô-WAKIZASHI UNSIGNED, MID-KAMAKURA PERIOD (KENCHÔ ERA: 1249~1256)

Swordsmith:	<i>Bizen no Kuni Ichimonji Norifusa</i>		
Measurements:	Length: 57.5cm (<i>ô-suriage</i>)	Curvature: 1.6cm	Moto-haba: 2.45cm
Jihada:	<i>Ko-itame hada with ko-nie deki and</i>		
Hamon:	<i>Gorgeous gunome choji-midare with kinsuji and sunagashi</i>		
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Jûyô Tôken (<i>a sword designated as Profound and Important</i>)		
Certificate #2:	NTHK-NPO Yûshûsaku (<i>a sword designated as Masterwork</i>)		
Fujishiro rank:	Jôjô-saku (<i>ranked as a highly superior swordsmith</i>)		
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Hon'ami Nisshû (<i>former Living National Treasure</i>)		
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Tanzan-sensei (<i>Mr. Tanobe Michihiro</i>)		
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, booklet, description		

SOLD (*custom koshirae in process*)

This rare ô-wakizashi (long wakizashi) has been attributed by the NBTHK to the famed *Fukuoka-Ichimonji* school of the golden Kamakura period. The NTHK-NPO took the attribution a step further to that of *Ichimonji Norifusa* – a national treasure swordsmith. Norifusa was born *Takazu Umanosuke* and flourished during *Kenchô era* (1249~1256). Along with his brothers *Yoshifusa* and *Sukezane*, *Norifusa* is considered one of the three most important *Ichimonji* smiths.

This sword features a beautiful swirling *itame-hada* overlaid with *midare-utsuri* and an icy blue *jigane*. Holding the sword quietly under the light is where the blade truly comes to its own. Glorious variations in its *chôji-midare hamon* captures both the heart and imagination. The world has come a long way in 800 years - it's enjoyable to relive them through this blade.

↑
Saki-kasane: 3.3mm

Moto-kasane: 4.8mm

Omosa: 495g

Kissaki: 2.8cm
Saki-haba: 1.85cm

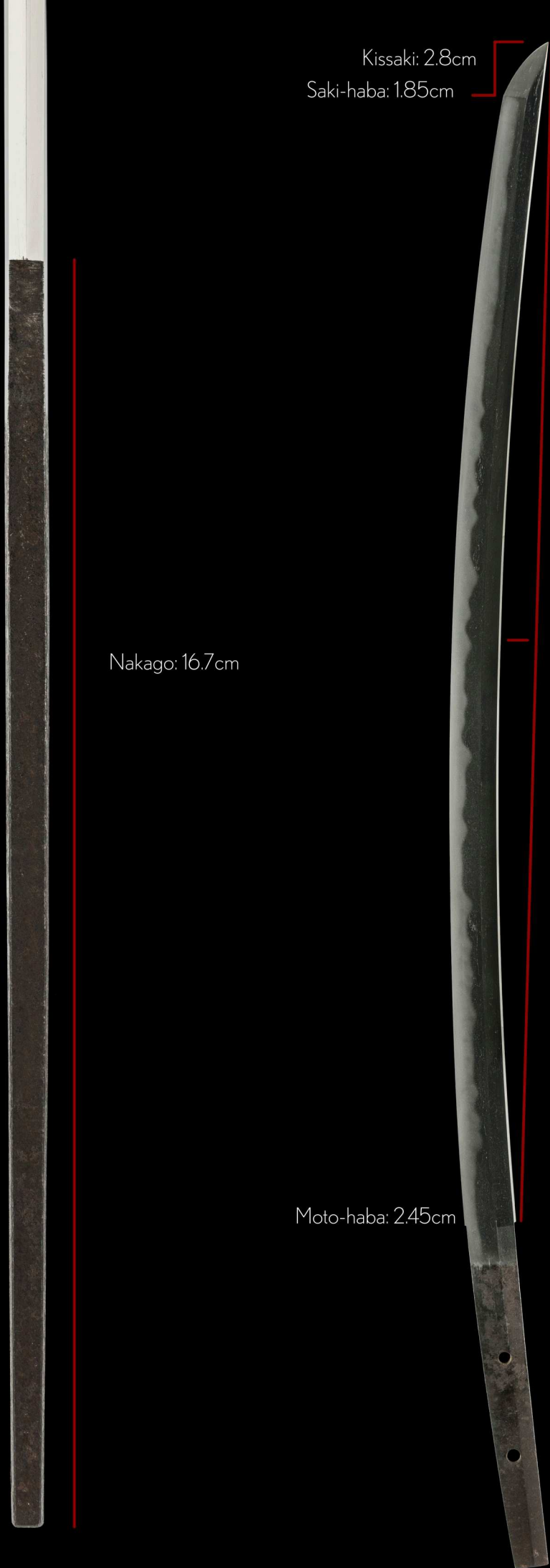
Nakago: 16.7cm

Moto-haba: 2.45cm

Nagasa: 57.5cm

Sori: 1.6cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



This rare *ô-wakizashi* has been attributed by the NBTHK to the famed *Fukuoka-Ichimonji school*. The NTHK-NPO sword organisation took the attribution a step further and designated this work to that of *Ichimonji Norifusa* - one of the most important Ichimonji swordsmiths.

The Fukuoka-Ichimonji school derived its name from the village of Fukuoka in Bizen province these talented smiths worked within. Their iconic chiseled '*ichi*' (number one) on the *nakago* will forever stand in annals of history.

Norifusa was born *Takazu Umanosuke* at the start of the Kamakura period, circa 1200 and flourished during *Kenchô era* (1249~1256). Along with his older brother *Yoshifusa* and his younger brother *Sukezane*, *Norifusa* is considered one of the three most important Ichimonji smiths to have lived.

Two swords by *Norifusa* have reached the highest honour of *Kokuhô* (National Treasure). He is rated *jôjô-saku* (highly superior) by *Fujishiro*.

This sword is a time traveller. The *jihada* with its beautifully swirling *itame-hada* overlaid with *midare-utsuri* transports us instantly to the 13th century Bizen Kamakura period. The *jigane* has a bluish tinge, a characteristic of finer swords shining with *ko-nie* crystals.

Holding the sword quietly under the light is where the blade truly comes to its own. Exuberant variations in its *chôji-midare hamon* captures both the heart and imagination. The world has come a long way in 800 years - it's enjoyable to relive them through this blade.





重要第6446号

指定書

脇指 無銘 福岡一文字 一口

長さ五五糎、反り六糎、元幅二糎、先幅一糎五厘

鑄造庵棟、中鋒。鍛板目肌乱孔映り文

刃丈丁子乱足、葉入り小沸付砂流かり金筋入り

帽子僅かに沸が残り。茎大磨上、先切り、

釘目切り、目釘孔二

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀剣に指定する

昭和五十四年三月二日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協会

会長 本間順治



Jûyô Certificate No. 6446
Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation
Wakizashi, mumei: Fukuoka Ichimonji (福岡一文字)

Measurements
nagasa 57.5 cm, sori 1.6 cm

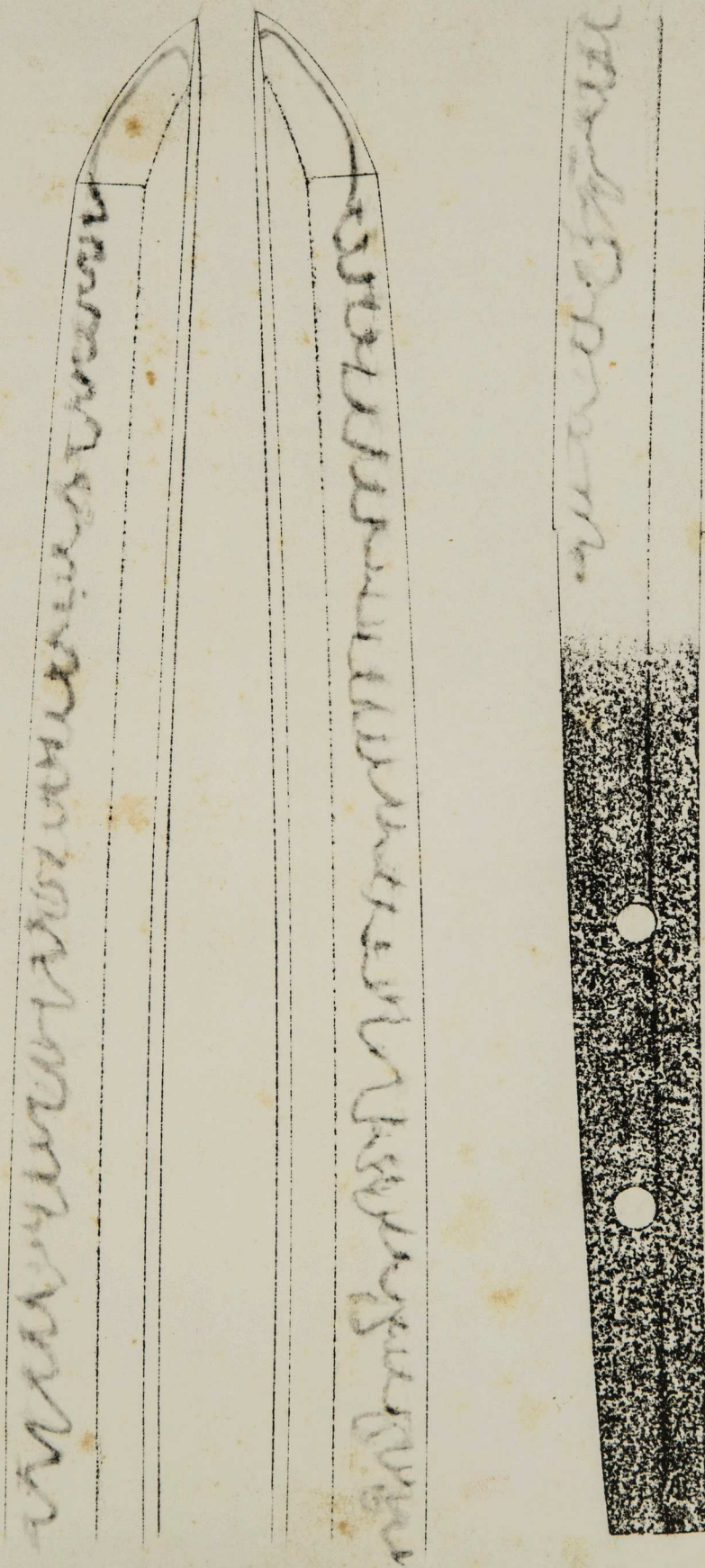
Description
Shinogi-zukuri, iori-mune, chû-kissaki
Kitae: *itame-hada* with *midare-utsuri*
Hamon: *chôji* (clove blossoms) in *ko-nie-deki* that is mixed with *ashi, yô, sunagashi*, and *kinsuji*
Bôshi: a few *nie* remaining
Nakago: *ô-suriage, kirijiri, kiri-yasurime*, two *mekugi-ana*

According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as *Jûyô-tôken* (a profound and important sword).


March 2, 1979

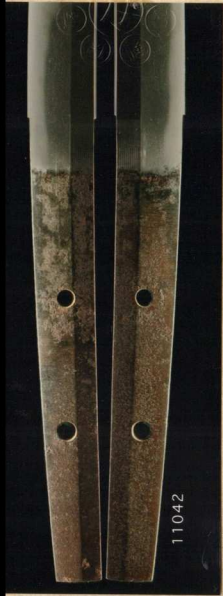
[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK
[President] Honma Junji (本間順治)

脇指 無銘 福岡一文字



Jûyô tōken oshigata (tracing of blade and hamon)

捺 審 査 印 員	備 考	寸 法	拵 え	中 心	図 柄 り	鍔 子	刃 紋	下 地	鍛	造り込み	銘 文	第 一 万 一 千 四 十 二 号
	建長頃			目釘穴 二個 鍔切り		一文字返り	華麗な丁子乱れ		板目詰む	鎗造り 庵棟	大磨り上げ無銘	
										棟		



NTHK-NPO Yushusaku Certificate of Authenticity

This wakizashi was designated as *Yushusaku* (Masterwork) by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Wakizashi

Mumei (unsigned)

Den Bizen no Kuni Ichimonji Norifusa

Nagasa (length)

1-shaku 9-sun kore ari (57.5cm)

Issued in 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), December 13th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai
(NTHK-NPO)

This sword has reached the highest level of honour at the NTHK-NPO.
Four judges have stamped their names to the certificate.



Master sword polisher *Hon'ami Nisshû* was given the title of *Living National Treasure (ningen-kokuhô)* on April 23rd, 1975. He died on July 13, 1996 at the age of 88. Although we have no records to prove so, it is possible that Hon'ami Nisshû polished this sword. Note that he dated the blade to the *Jôkyû* era circa 1219~1222, exactly 800-years ago.

重要刀剣

Jûyô-tôken

Jûyô-tôken

福岡一文字

Fukuoka-Ichimonji

Fukuoka-Ichimonji

大磨上無銘

時代承久之頃

Ô-suriage mumei

Jidai Jôkyû no goro

This blade is *ô-suriage mumei* (unsigned) and dates to approximately the *Jôkyû* era (1219~1222)

佳品也

Kahin nari

Masterwork

長サ壹尺九寸有之

Nagasa isshaku kyû-sun kore ari

Blade length ~ 57.5 cm

昭和己未歳水無月誌之

本阿弥日洲「花押」第廿六回重要刀剣指定品

Shôwa tsuchinoto-hitsujidoshi minazuki kore o

shirusu, Hon'ami Nisshû + kaô

Written by *Hon'ami Nisshû* in June during the Year of the Sheep in the *Shôwa* era (1979) + monogram

第廿六回重要刀劍指定品
備前國福岡一文字

大磨上無銘闊達ナ丁子乱ヲ焼キ地映ヲ顯ハシ鎌倉中期同派ノ艶ヤカナ美シサヲ湛ヘル典型的優品也
珍々重々

時在丙申曆蘭月
後學探山邊道識
花押

第廿六回重要刀劍指定品

Dai nijûrokkai jûyô-tôken shitei-hin

Designated as *Jûyô-tôken* at the 26th *Jûyô-shinsa*

備前國福岡一文字

Bizen no Kuni Fukuoka-Ichimonji

Fukuoka-Ichimonji school from *Bizen* province

大磨上無銘闊達ナ丁子乱ヲ焼キ地映ヲ顯ハシ鎌倉中期同派ノ艶ヤカナ美シサヲ湛ヘル典型的優品也
珍々重々

Ô-suriage mumei kattatsu na chôji-midare o yaki ji utsuri o awarashi Kamakura-chôki dôha no tsuyayaka na utsukushisa o tataeru tenkei-teki yôhin nari - chinchin-chôchô

This blade is *ô-suriage mumei*. It is an archetypal masterwork that reflects the alluring beauty and bold hardening in *chôji-midare* that is synonymous of works from this school from the middle Kamakura period. Very rare and very precious.

刃長壹尺九寸弱有之

Hachô isshaku kyû-sun jaku kore ari

Blade length ~ 57.5 cm

時在丙申曆蘭月

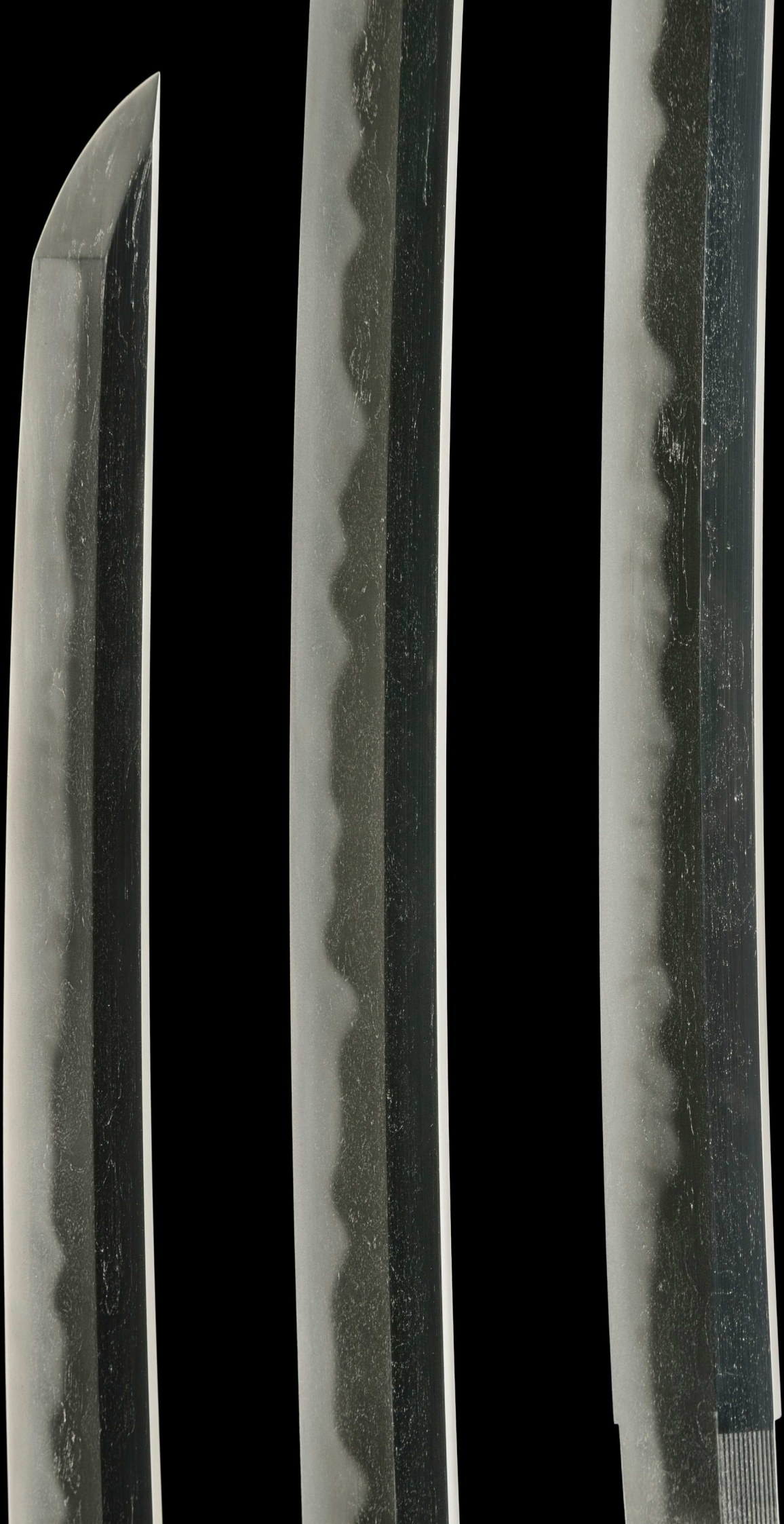
後學探山邊道識「花押」

Jizai hinoe-sarudoshi rangetsu

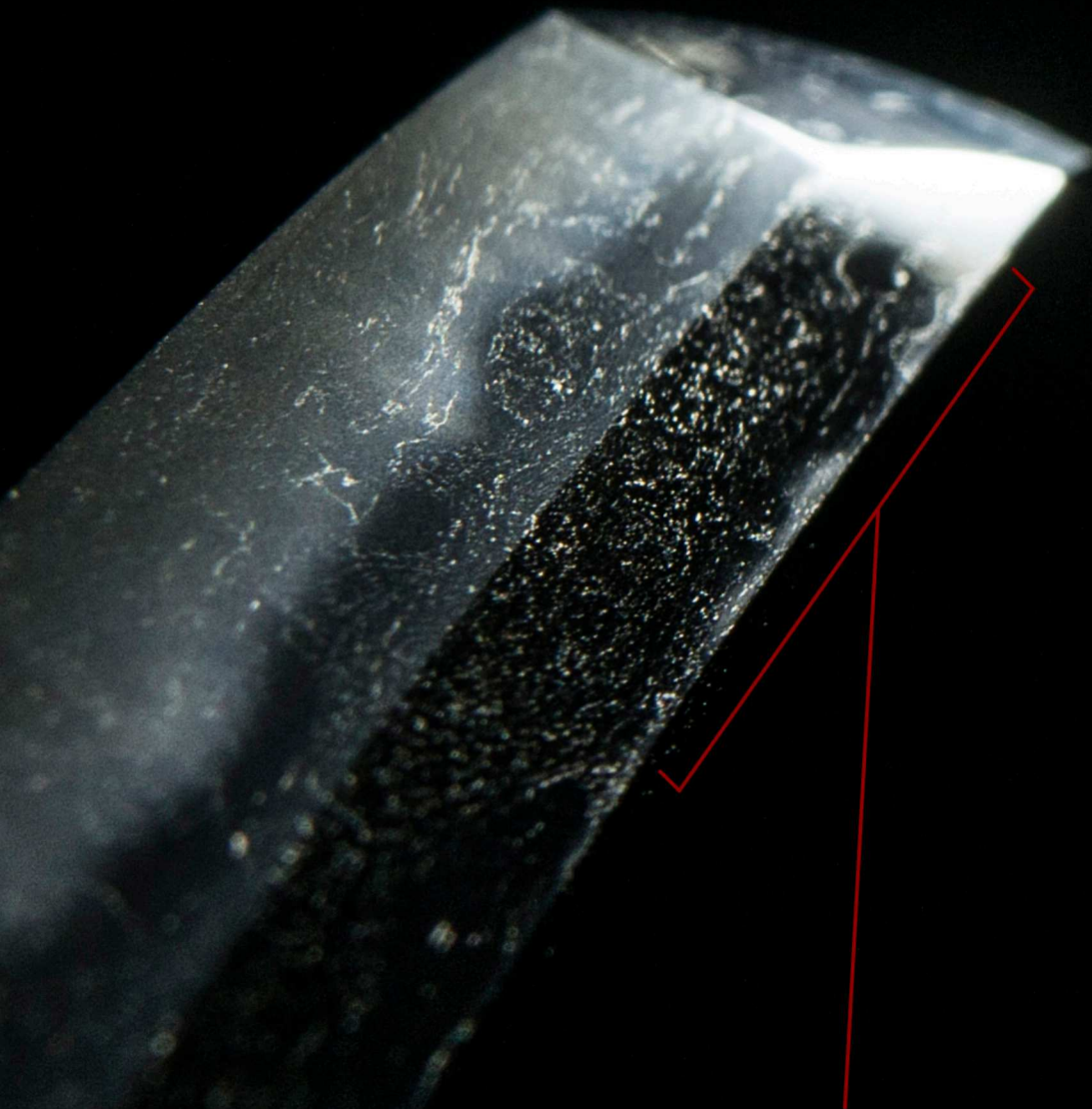
Kôgaku Tanzan Hendô shirusu + kaô

Additional assessment added by *Tanzan Hendô*

[*Tanobe Michihiro*] in July during the Year of the Monkey of this [Heisei] era (2016) + monogram







Muneyaki
tempering along the *mune*, spine of the blade.

The *jigane* (surface of the steel) shines an icy blue hue that is characteristic of swords crafted at the highest level. This is how great history speaks.



Literally meaning "reflection", *utsuri* is a beautiful, rather magical, misty reflection appearing in the *ji* (body of sword) above the *hamon*).

It is a 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.




A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line) patterns. The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted in a bright, glowing blue-white light. The patterns are intricate and vary in width and shape. Two red lines point from text labels to specific areas of the blade. One line points from the label 'ô-chôji' to a wide, horizontal hamon pattern. Another line points from the label 'kinsuji' to a narrow, vertical hamon pattern.

ô-chôji


kinsuji

The spectacular hamon light show continues to the very base of the blade where the choji hamon stretches the full width of the *ji* (body), this is known as *ô-chôji*.

Swordsmith Norifusa, a representative smith of the Fukuoka Ichimonji school was known for his choji variations, thus the NTHK-NPO made such an attribution.


A close-up photograph of a sword blade, similar to the one above, showing the hamon patterns. The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted in a bright, glowing blue-white light. The patterns are intricate and vary in width and shape. A red line points from the label 'ô-chôji' to a wide, horizontal hamon pattern.

ô-chôji



Notice how the hamon here is pointed, resembling the tip of a burning candle.

The gorgeous *chôji-midare* (clove blossoms *hamon* in the *monouchi* area (upper third strike zone) is more spaced out.



As we move further down the blade, we see that the hamon begins to huddle and overlap, thus displaying more a *juka-chôji*.

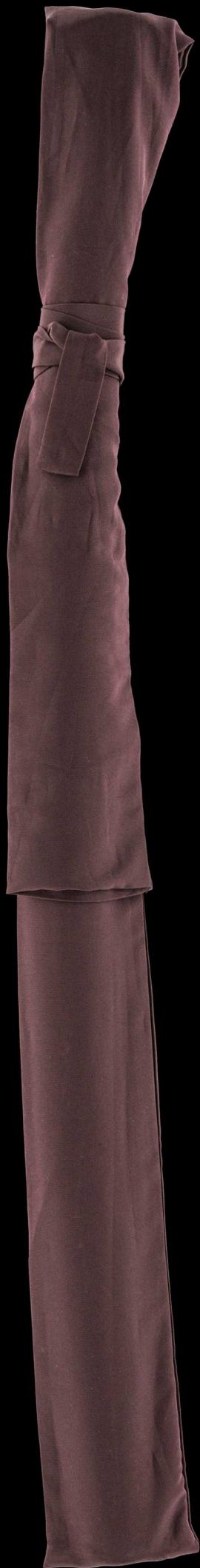


sunagashi

A beautiful example of *sunagashi*, where the hamon exhibits a brushed appearance.



Long *ashi* (legs) form a set of dramatic cliffs that tower over the cutting edge of the blade.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

Note there is *sayagaki* authentication on both sides of the shirasaya.



gold *habaki* with straight file marks

History tells a story.
It's time to create yours.

