



ITEM# UJWA258

A SHODAI NOBUTAKA WAKIZASHI

SIGNED, SHINTÔ MOMOYAMA PERIOD (KEICHÔ ERA: 1596~1615)

Swordsmith:	<i>Hôki no Kami Nobutaka (1st gen.)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 50.0cm (<i>ô-suriage</i>) Sori: 0.6cm Moto-haba: 3.03cm Weight: 480g
Jihada:	<i>Well-forged itame, mokume and nagare-hada with ji-nie, and plentiful chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Vivid gunome-midare with kinsuji, sunagashi, and tobiyaki in nie-deki</i>
Certificate:	NBTHK Hozon (<i>sword Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Fujishiro rank:	Jô-saku (<i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, stand, kit, printed description

SOLD (*building custom daishô koshirae with ujka418*)

Hôki no Kami Nobutaka (伯耆守信高) was a prominent swordsmith who served as an official swordsmith (*goyô kaji*) for the Owari Tokugawa family, and his name is counted among the famed Owari San-saku ("Three Great Smiths of Owari"), alongside Masatsune (政常) and Ujifusa (氏房). Acquired in the UK during the spring of 2023, this splendid wakizashi was initially in very rough condition, but over a period of two years the sword was restored by top craftsmen in Japan to reveal a snowy white *gunome-midare hamon* displaying brilliant *sunagashi* and *tobi-yaki* formations. Preference will go to the client who wants to pair this sword with **ujka418 Nidai Nobutaka**, and a 'family discount' will be offered as such. Building a formal *daishô* for the two swords would be a meaningful undertaking, although it's optional. By the way, there are ten generations of Owari Nobutaka to collect, these two pieces will give you a nice head start in your collecting days ahead!



Saki-kasane: 4.5mm
Moto-kasane: 5.6mm

Kissaki: 3.96cm

Saki-haba: 2.18cm

Nagasa: 50.0cm

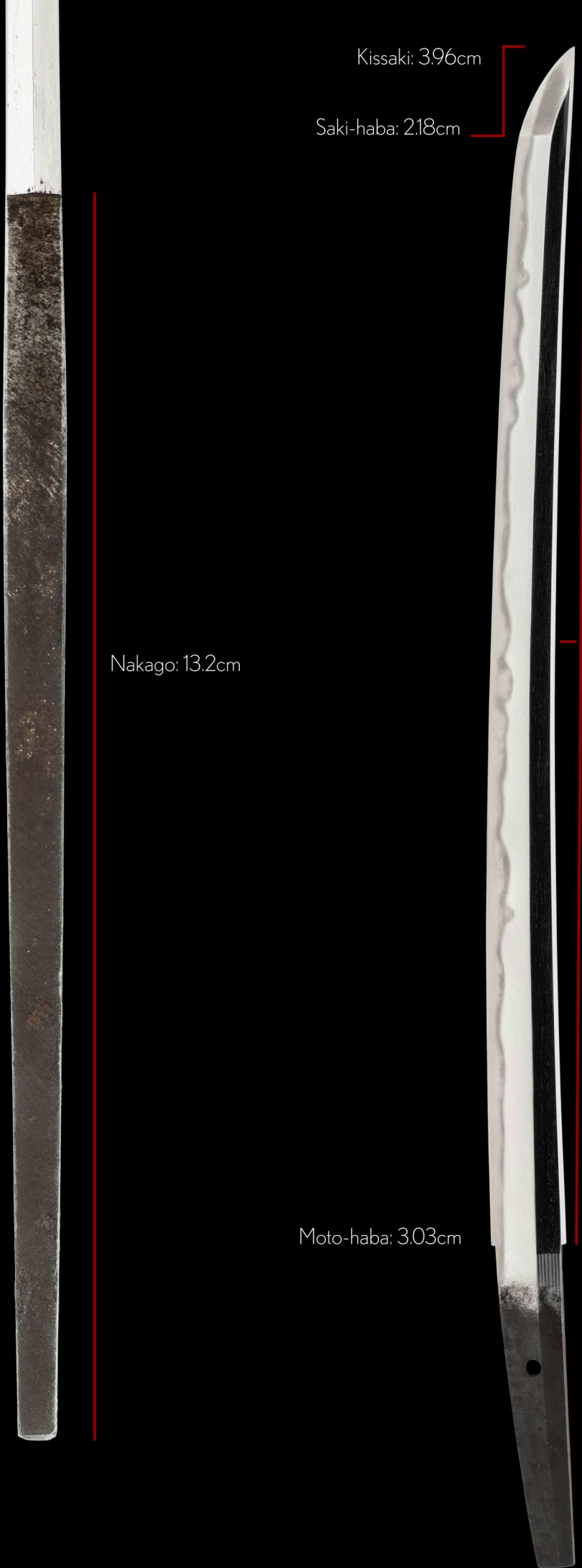
Nakago: 13.2cm

Sori: 0.6cm

Omosa: 480g

Moto-haba: 3.03cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



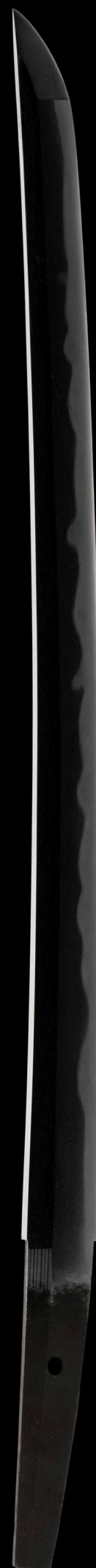
Hôki no Kami Nobutaka (伯耆守信高) was a prominent swordsmith who served as an official swordsmith (*goyô kaji*) for the *Owari Tokugawa* family, one of the three great branches (*Gosanke*) of the Tokugawa clan. Originally from *Mino* province, *Nobutaka* moved to *Owari* in the early 17th century and became a key figure in the region's sword-making tradition. His name is counted among the famed *Owari San-saku* ("Three Great Smiths of Owari"), alongside *Masatsune* (政常) and *Ujifusa* (氏房).

The first-generation *Nobutaka* was born in 1561 and trained in the *Mino-den* before relocating to *Kiyosu* and then Nagoya. He was granted the title of *Hôki no Kami* and forged blades for powerful patrons including *Oda Nobunaga* (織田信長) and *Tokugawa Ieyasu* (徳川家康). His son succeeded him in 1633 as the second-generation *Nobutaka*, who upheld the family tradition and later signed blades as "*Zen Hakushû Nobutaka Nyûdô* (前伯州信高入道)" after taking Buddhist vows.

This terrific wakizashi has been on a transformative journey along with ujka418 *nidai Nobutaka* listed earlier in the catalogue. Acquired in the UK during the spring of 2023, both swords were in rough condition, but over a period of two years the swords were shipped to Japan, re-shaped and polished by expert craftsmen. A new shirasaya was also crafted along with *sayagaki* and it turned out that the swords are related! This wakizashi was certified NBTHK Hozon to be by *shodai Nobutaka* while the katana to his son, *nidai*. How amazing!

Blades from both generations share an aesthetic of strength, clarity, and practical elegance. They typically feature tightly forged *itame* or *mokume* grain with *ji-nie* and prominent *chikei*. The *hamon* often follows a flowing *notare* or *gunome-midare* pattern in *nioi-deki* with *nie* highlights. Activities such as *ashi*, *sunagashi*, and *kinsuji* add visual depth, while the *bôshi* tends to show *hakikake* and a return in *komaru* or *kaen* form.

Preference will go to the client who wants to keep these swords together, and a father/son discount will be offered as such. Building a formal *daishô* for the two swords would be a meaningful undertaking, although that would be optional. By the way, there are ten generations of *Owari Nobutaka* to collect, these two pieces will give the next owner a nice head start!





Location: *Owari province*

Title name: *Hôki no Kami* (Lord of Hôki province)

Swordsmith: *Nobutaka*

ô-suriage (greatly shortened tang)

kiri-yasurime (horizontal file marks)

It is likely that the blade originally bore a signature on the *nakago* when it was first forged. However, at some point in its history, a former owner, prioritising practicality over preservation - had the sword modified into a *wakizashi* for functional use, such as to pair up with a katana to form a *daishô*. As a result of this conversion, the original signature was lost.

As there is no mention of generation on the NBTHK Hozon certificate, we can infer that this sword is the work of shodai, first generation.



Signed examples of first and second generation Nobutaka.

kiri-jiri (horizontal butt)

In 1610, coinciding with the completion of *Nagoya* Castle, the first generation of *Nobutaka* relocated to *Owari* province and took up residence in Nagoya's *Kaji-machi* (blacksmith town). There, he began his official service as a clan swordsmith under *Tokugawa Yoshinao*, the first lord of the *Owari* domain and ninth son of *Tokugawa Iyasu*. This appointment elevated Nobutaka's status and positioned him as a central figure in the arms production of the *Owari Tokugawa* family.



Tokugawa Yoshinao (1601~1650)



(reverse)

保存
062024-12

№ 3036249



鑑定書

一 脇指 無銘（伯耆守信高）

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と
鑑定しこれを証する
長一尺六寸五分弱

令和七年二月二十一日

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 327071 号
令和5年9月16日

NBTHK Hozon
Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Worthy of Conservation*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 7th year of Reiwa (2025), February 21st

One, Wakizashi

Mumei (unsigned)
Hôki no Kami Nobutaka

Nagasa (length)
1-shaku 6-sun 5-bu jaku (50.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



伯耆守信高

伯耆守信高
Hôki no Kami Nobutaka
Hôki no Kami Nobutaka

桃山後期乃至江戸初期

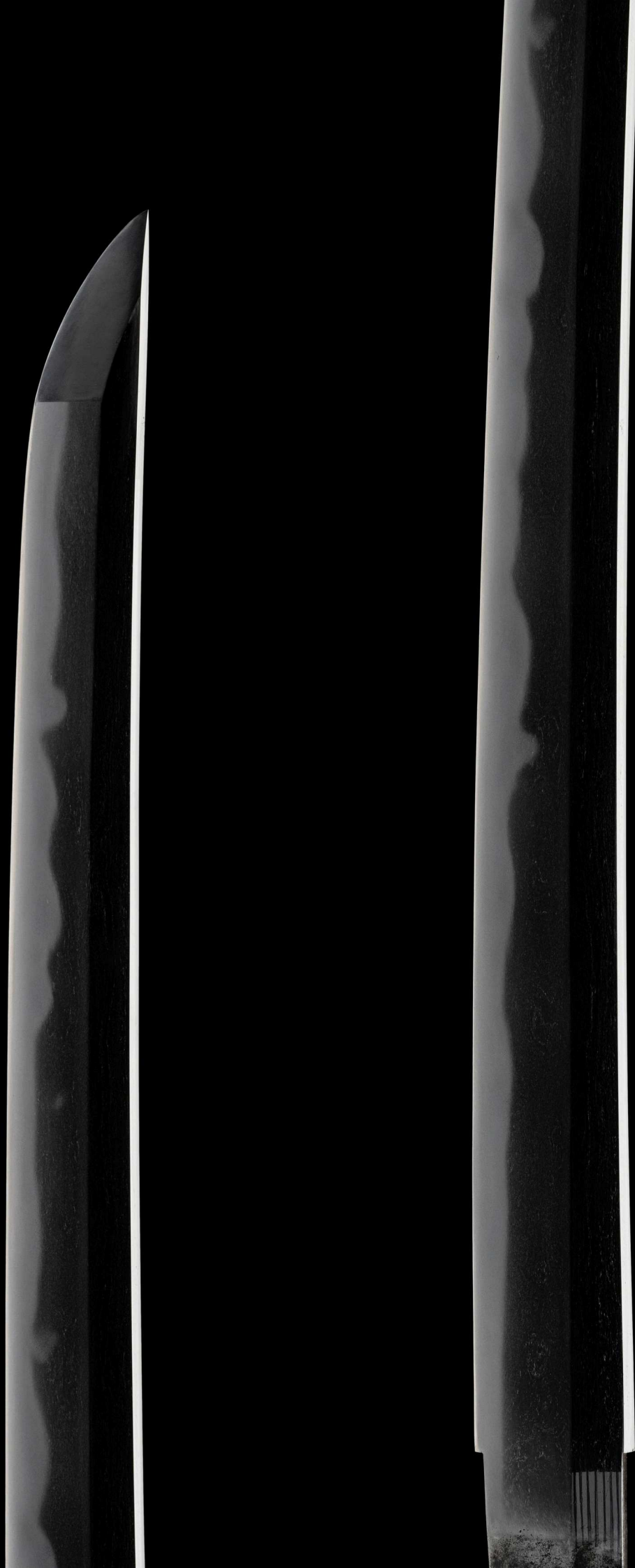
桃山後期乃至江戸初期
Momoyama kôki naishi Edo shoki
From late Momoyama to early Edo period (1596~1652)

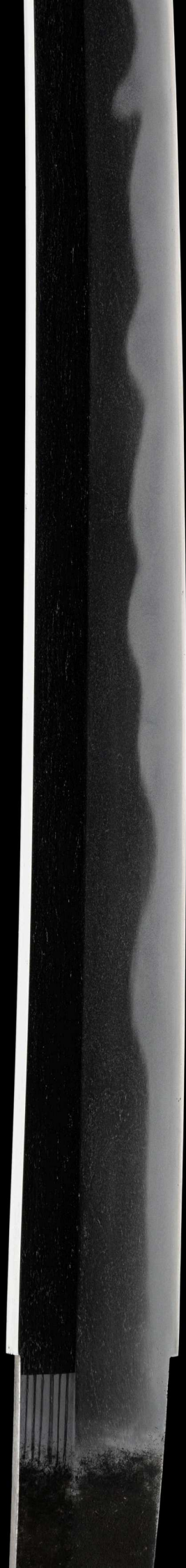
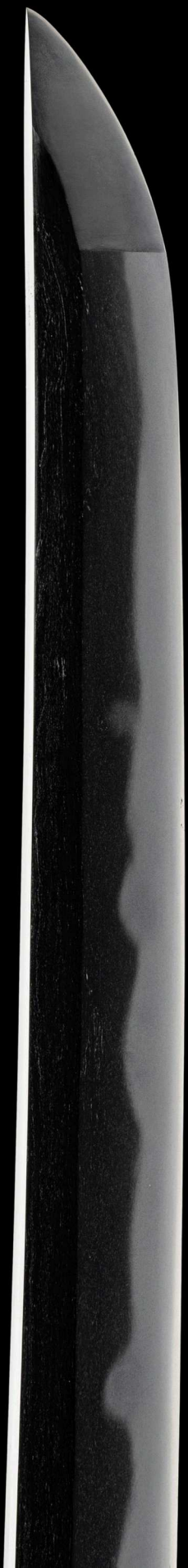
長壹尺六寸五分弱有之

長壹尺六寸五分弱有之
Nagasa 1-shaku 6-sun 5-bu jaku kore ari
Blade length 50.0 cm

令和七乙巳年
葉月吉日誌之

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)





This *Nobutaka* wakizashi went through a transformation like its big brother, although it started out in not quite as rough condition (but still rough!). Therefore, a full polish was invested in the sword, with new *habaki*, new *shirasaya* and eventually *sayagaki* with *Nozomi-san*. It was quite the delightful surprise to see both swords certify to first and second generation *Nobutaka*.



original condition

polished

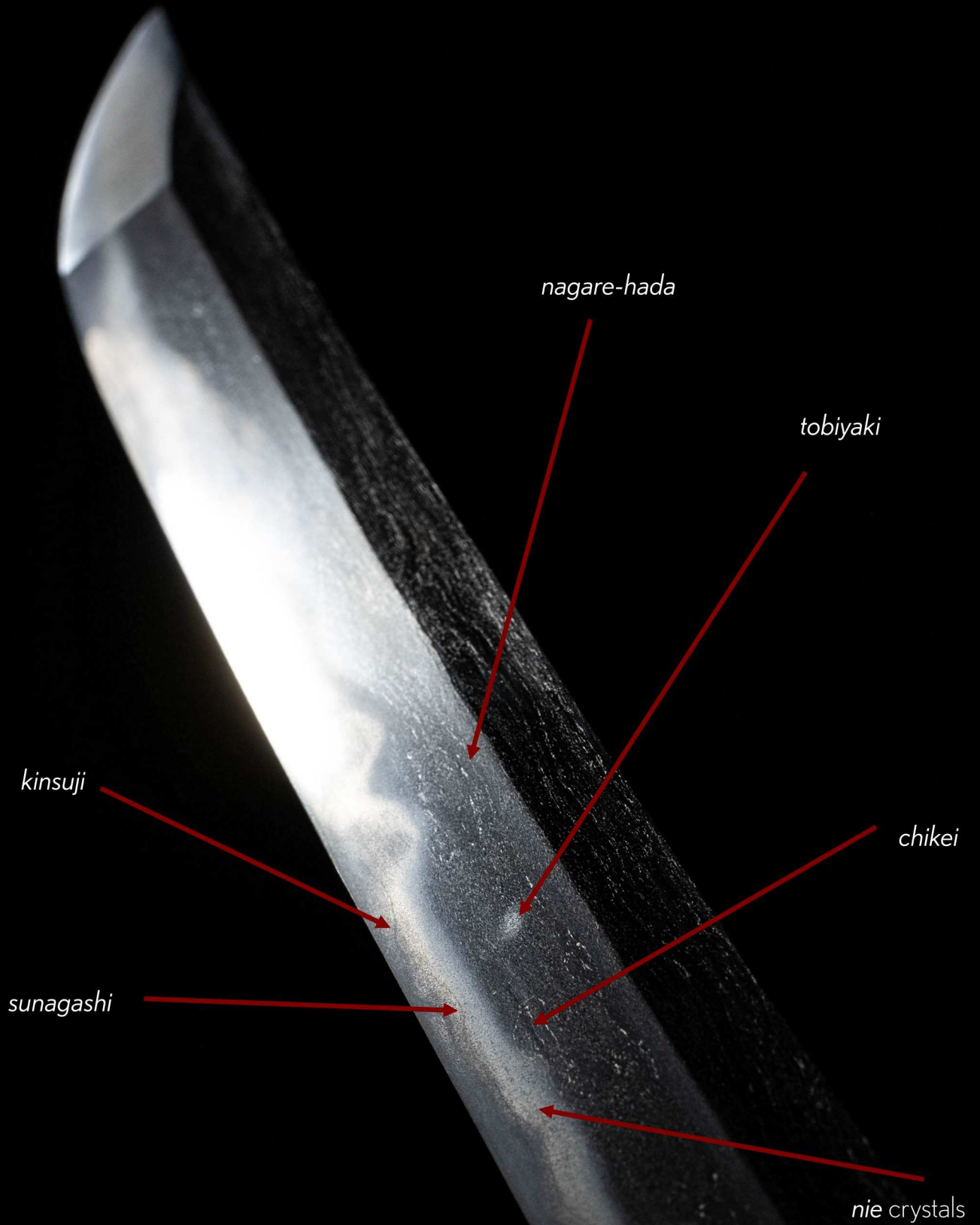
original condition

polished



hakikake (brush swept pattern)

Wild *kaen boshi* that resembles a flame.



A hardened spot of *tobiyaki* appears in the body of the sword. An icy mix of *nagare-hada*, streams of *sunagashi*, impressive *kinsuji*, and *chikei* all in *nie-deki* brings such character to this *Nobutaka* wakizashi.

This glorious hamon features depictions of *yahazu-ba* - forked or dove-tail shaped wavy *midare* elements that resemble arrow notches known as *yahazu*.



yahazu-ba



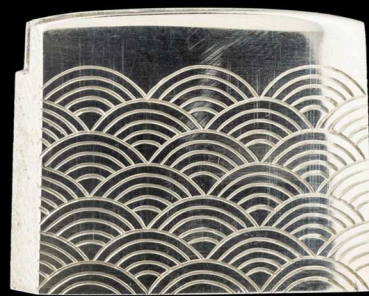
A gorgeous *gunome-midare hamon* that resembles freshly fallen snow.

Winter is coming.
Embrace it like a *samurai*.

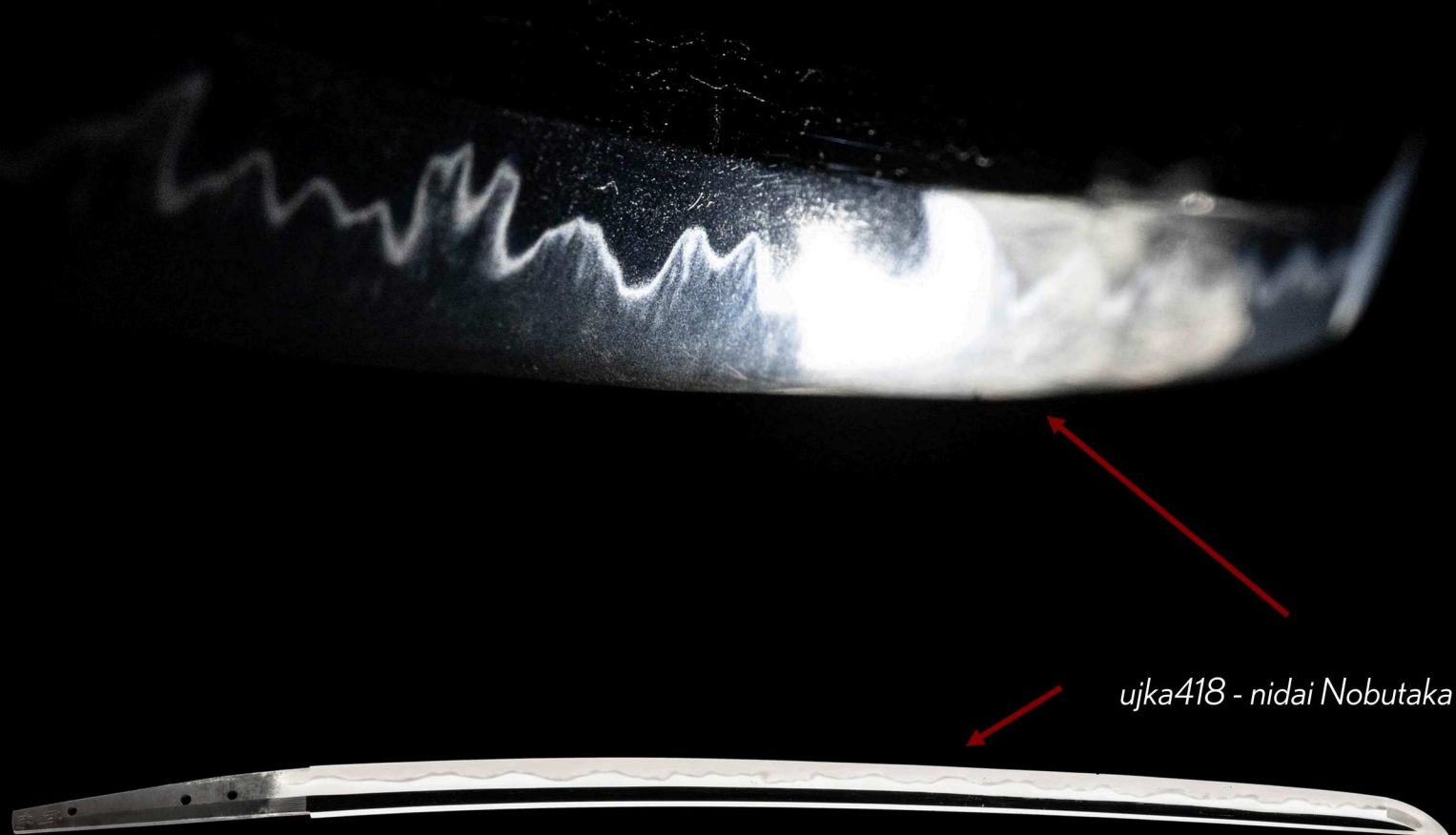




Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
wave pattern file marks
inspired by the wavy hamon



ujka418 - nidai Nobutaka



ujwa258 - shodai Nobutaka



Priority will be given to the client that asks to acquire both Nobutaka swords listed in this catalogue. Note, the client does not have to build a daishô with Unique Japan. It would just be nice to keep this family together!



Good gunome vibrations.

ARIGATO!

THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING OUR CATALOGUE.
WE LOOK FORWARD TO SERVING YOU.



Hannah and I in NYC, summer 2025. Yes, I am sporting a beard these days!

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