



ITEM# UJKA488

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A SHIKKAKE KATANA

UNSIGNED, KOTÔ LATE KAMAKURA ~ NAMBOKUCHÔ PERIOD (1288~1342)

Swordsmith:	<i>Shikkake school</i> (尻懸, attribution)
Measurements:	Length: 64.4cm (o-suriage) Sori: 1.1cm Moto-haba: 2.69cm Weight: 635g
Jihada:	<i>Textbook shikkake-hada displaying mokume-hada and flowing masame, chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Lovely ko-gunome with sunagashi, kinsuji, tobiyaki and plenty of ashi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (sword Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (koshirae, fk and tsuba certified as Authentic)
Authentication:	Sayagaki & tsunagi-gaki by Nozomi-san (shodô artist)
Included:	Shirasaya, Meiji koshirae, fabric bags, kit, printed description

\$12,000

The *Shikkake* school, one of the five classic traditions of *Yamato-den*, was based in the *Shikkake* area behind *Tôdai-ji* temple in *Nara*. The school produced fine swords primarily for temple protection and identifiable by their skilled, distinctive workmanship. This *katana* is *ô-suriage* blade that retains a clean, graceful presence. The *jihada* is a glorious example of *shikkake-hada* combining *mokume-hada* with clear straight-lined *masame-hada* in the *yakiba*. The *hamon* is bright and wavy *ko-gunome* interwoven with *ashi*, *sunagashi*, *kinsuji* and *tobi-yaki*. A beautiful set of *koshirae* centres around a gorgeous *saya* featuring luxurious *mokume*-style black and gold lacquer work that was inspired by the *jihada* of the sword. The *tsuba* is signed by *Chôshu Tomonori* and takes the form of a meaningful lotus flower and evokes a spiritual impermanence. Powerful gold cloud-dragon *menuki* embody both ferocity and protection, qualities revered by samurai warriors throughout Japan's history.

^
Saki-kasane: 3.5mm

Moto-kasane: 5.0mm

Omosa: 635g

Kissaki: 3.2cm
Saki-haba: 1.85cm

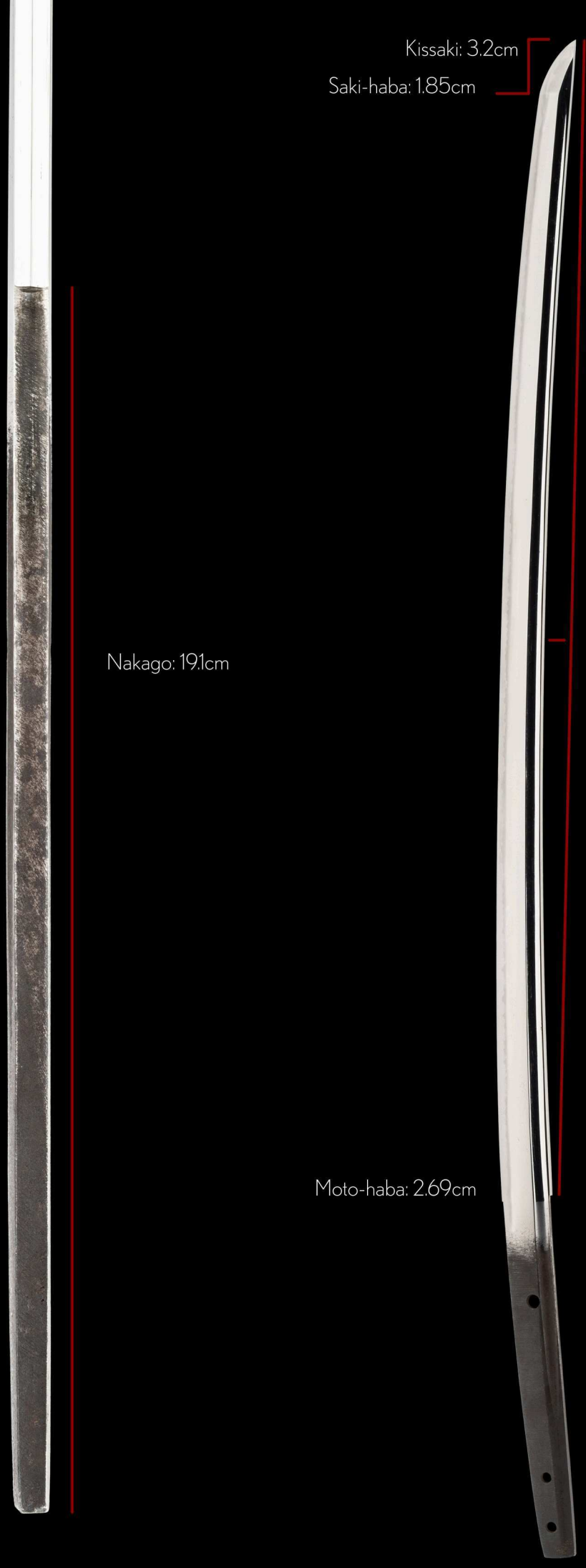
Nakago: 19.1cm

Moto-haba: 2.69cm

Nagasa: 64.4cm

Sori: 1.1cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



The *Shikkake* (尻懸) school, one of the five traditions of *Yamato-den* (大和伝), was active from the late *Kamakura* to the early *Nanbokuchô* period. Based in the *Shikkake* area behind *Tôdai-ji Temple* in *Nara*, the school was part of a group of temple-affiliated swordsmiths. While its founder is traditionally said to be *Norihiro* (則弘), no signed works by him are known to exist. His son *Norinaga* (則長) is regarded as the de facto originator of the *Shikkake* lineage. These smiths produced robust swords primarily for temple use rather than commercial distribution, and many of their extant blades are unsigned but identifiable by their distinctive workmanship.

This katana is a unsigned and *ô-suriage* blade that retains a clean, graceful silhouette suggestive of its original long length. The *jihada* is a glorious example of *shikkake-hada* combining primarily *mokume-hada* in the body of the sword with clear straight-lined *masame-hada* in the *yakiba* (hardened area) - especially prominent in the *kissaki*. The *hamon* is bright *ko-gunome* interwoven with *ashi*, *sunagashi*, *kinsuji* and *tobiyaki*. This is classic *Yamato-den* workmanship of the *kotô* period, where the small details carry big impact. As such, the sword was rightfully awarded a *Tokubetsu Hozon* certificate from the NBTHK.

Its beautiful set of *koshirae* has been dated to the *Meiji* period (1876~1912) and centres around a gorgeous *saya* featuring luxurious *mokume*-style black and gold lacquerwork that echoes the steel grain of the sword. The stunning signed *tsuba* by *Chôshu Tomonori* is in the form of a lovely lotus flower and evokes a spiritual impermanence of all living matter. Powerful gold cloud-dragon *menuki* are a symbol of martial strength and divine power, embodying both ferocity and protection, qualities revered by samurai warriors throughout history.

Centuries-old and commanding. This *Shikkake* katana balances sophistication with martial presence.





WATCH PABLO'S YOUTUBE PRESENTATION OF
UJKA488 - A SHIKKAKE KATANA

[UNIQUEJAPAN.COM/UJKA488-VIDEO](https://uniquejapan.com/ujka488-video)





nakago (tang)

Location: *Yamato province*
School: *Shikkake*

ô-suriage-nakago (shortened tang)
kiri-yasurime (horizontal file marks)

特 保
06202412

No 1024140



鑑定書

一刀 無銘 (尻懸)

長二尺一寸二分半

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

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



楊木準 教育委員会
第 50142 号
平成17年11月17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

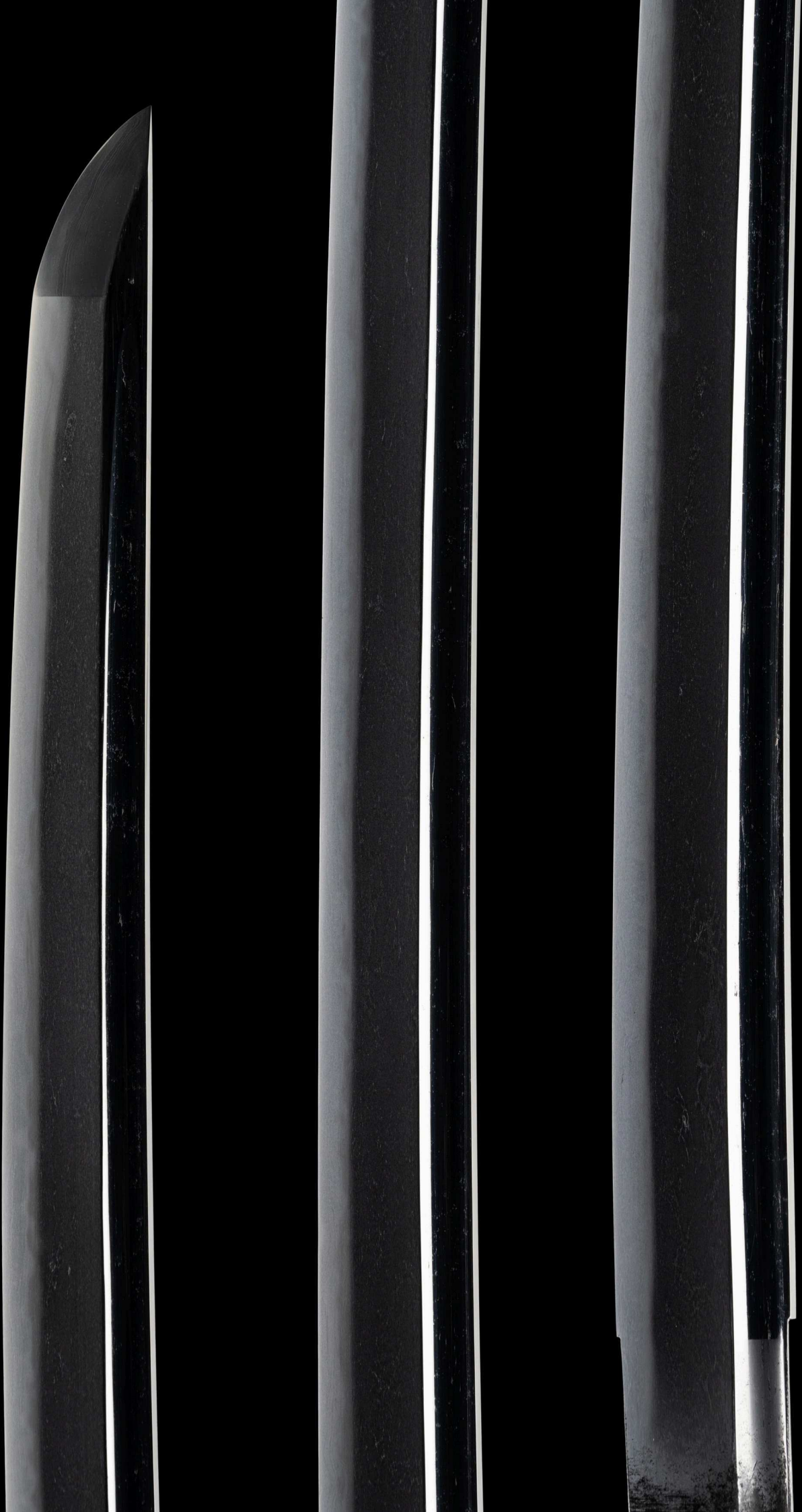
Issued in the 7th year of Reiwa (2025), February 21st

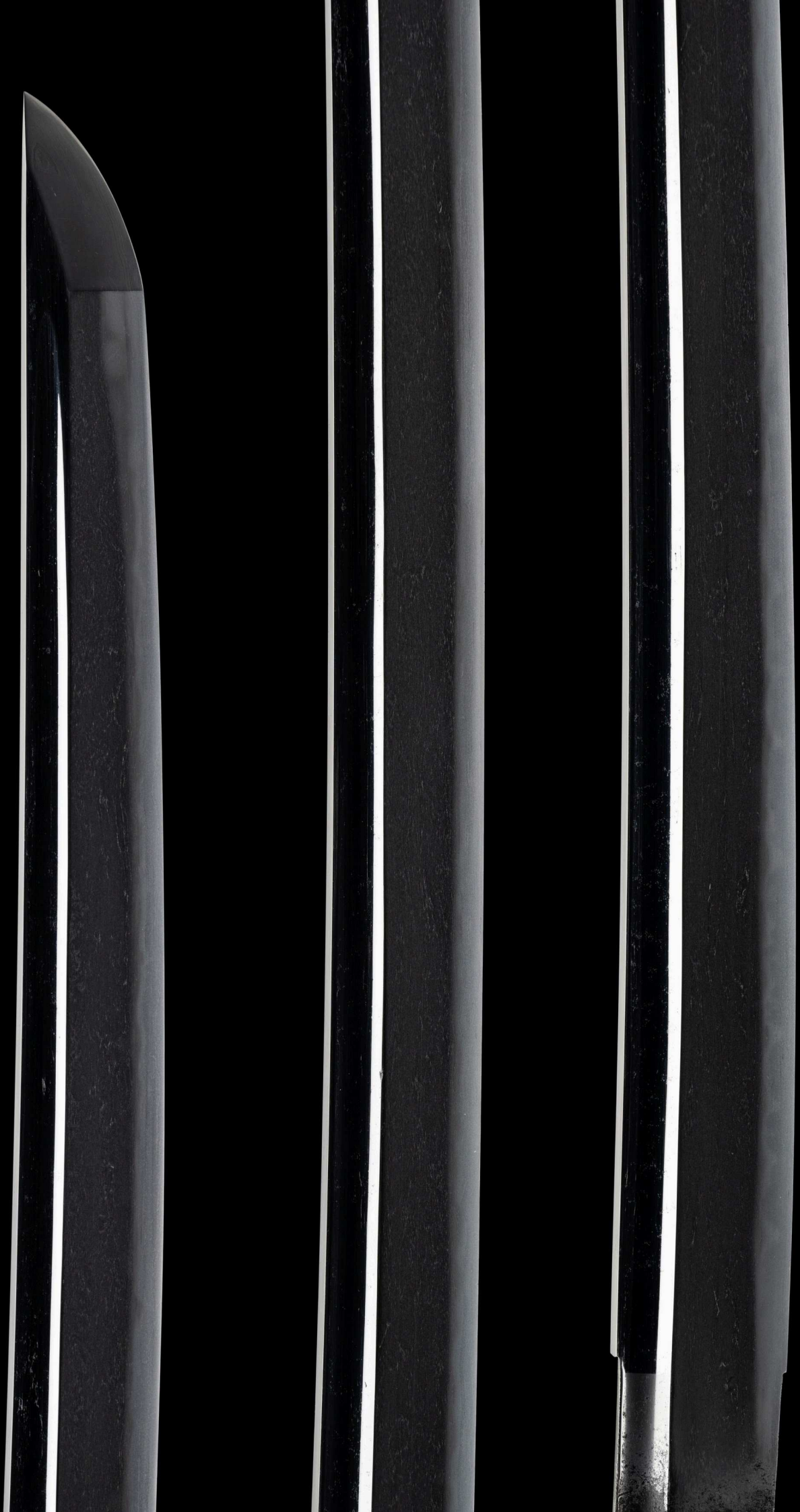
One, Katana

Mumei (unsigned)
Shikkake

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 1-sun 2-bu han (64.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



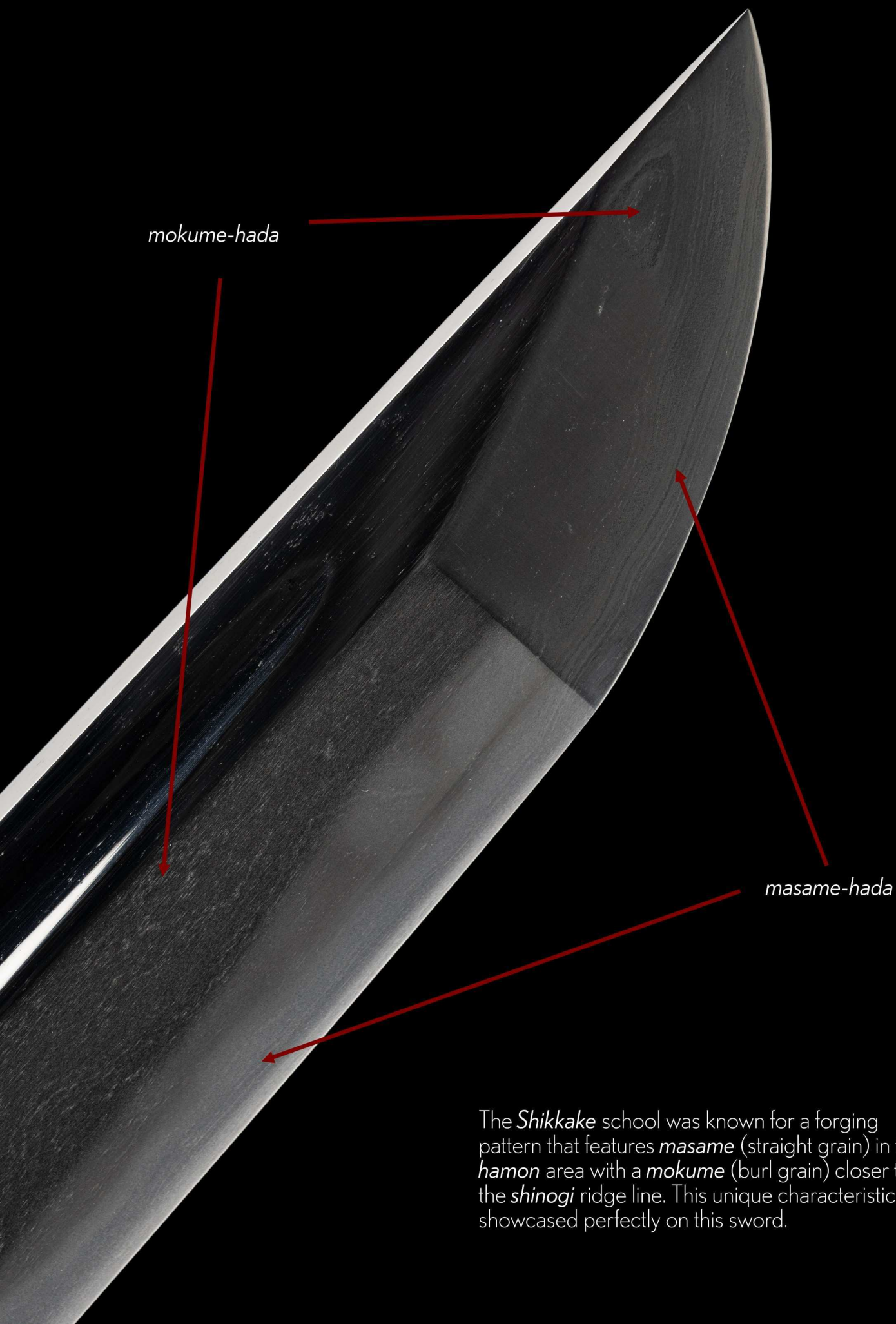


The *hi* (groove) carved into the surface serve both practical and aesthetic purposes. Functionally, they help reduce the overall weight of the blade without sacrificing its structural integrity - allowing for improved handling and responsiveness while maintaining strength. Artistically, a groove adds a sense of rhythm, symmetry, and depth to the blade's visual design.

This sword features a wide *bôhi*, a thick straight groove running along the blade.

bôhi





mokume-hada

masame-hada

The *Shikkake* school was known for a forging pattern that features *masame* (straight grain) in the *hamon* area with a *mokume* (burl grain) closer to the *shinogi* ridge line. This unique characteristic is showcased perfectly on this sword.



ashi

A bright *ko-gunome* with pointed *ashi* (legs) gives the hamon an imposing personality.

This image captures the *Shikkake-hada* brilliantly with large rounded *mokume-hada* near the *shinogi* and a straight *masame* along the *habuchi* (tempered edge).

masame-hada

mokume-hada



There is a genuine *kotô* period feel to this katana. With its deep lines of *kinsuji* mixed with *sunagashi*, *chikei* and *tobiyaki*, it's a sword that offers an invitation to the distant samurai past.



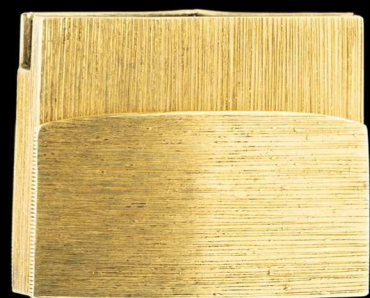


History flows like a river.
Harness that energy.



尻懸
Shikkake
Shikkake school

Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



Well-made gold *habaki*
with copper base

*Kin-mokume-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(金杳目塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in gold with
wood grain texture*

Crafted during the
Meiji period
(1868~1912)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



The *saya* is black lacquer with a gold *mokume* pattern - swirling cycles suggesting reincarnation. A fitting design for a blade from the *Shikkake* school, whose smiths worked for temples.



This *tsuba* is the work of *Nakai Tomonori* (中井友則), a metalworker active in late *Edo*-period *Hagi*, *Chôshû* province. *Chôshû* was one of the regions in Japan with the highest concentration of *tsuba* artisans. While the most prominent school there descended from the *Umetada* lineage that had migrated from *Kyôto*, the *Nakai* family had already established itself as a distinguished line of *tsuba* makers prior to their arrival. Their style traces its roots to the *Shôami* tradition.

The motif is that of a lotus flower. Executed in masterful openwork with deep carving, even the *hitsu-ana* has been seamlessly integrated into the leaf design. The *tsuba* was originally adorned with extensive gold inlay, giving it a lavish appearance. Now, with only traces of the gold remaining, it exudes a quiet elegance that evokes the impermanence of all things.



Chôshû Hagi jû Nakai Tomonori saku
crafted by *Nakai Tomonori*, a resident of *Hagi* in *Chôshû* province



(Naka) 中

(i) 井

(Tomo) 友

(nori) 則

(saku) 作

長 (Chô)

州 (shû)

萩 (Hagi)

住 (jû)



(reverse)



A mysteriousness resonates from the *tsuka* (hilt) with its *samekawa* (rayskin) lacquered in black, and further braided in a traditional black silk. A waxy look has developed on the silk through years of natural use by its former owner, possibly a former *iaido* practitioner.



A solid gold cloud dragon (*unryû*) *menuki* emerges from the depths below. In Japanese iconography, the cloud dragon is often seen as a symbol of martial strength and divine power, embodying both ferocity and protection – qualities revered by warriors throughout history.





The *fuchi* and *kashira* were crafted by different artisans.

The *fuchi* has been attributed to the *Kusakari* (草刈) school of *Sendai*, known for its fine linear *hira-zôgan* inlay work, a hallmark of the school. Its motifs include a combination of two interlocking circles – known as the *wachigai-mon* – paired with pine needles. The *wachigai-mon* is a motif seen as far back as the *Heian* period on scrolls carrying Buddhist symbolism, said to represent the interlocking realms of wisdom and reason.

The *kashira* features a dynamic wave design with subtle touches of gold that harmonizes with the gold-lacquered *saya* (scabbard).



A katana that draws you in.



Koshirae bag with floral pattern.

ARIGATO!

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