



ITEM# UJDI010

## A SHIKKAKE SCHOOL DAISHÔ

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

**Swordsmith:** *Attributed to the Shikkake school*

**Measurements (k):** Length: 71.2cm (*ô-suriage*) **Curvature:** 1.4cm **Moto-haba:** 3.01cm

**Measurements (w):** Length: 53.6cm (*ô-suriage*) **Curvature:** 1.1cm **Moto-haba:** 2.8cm

**Certificates #1-3:** NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (*swords & tsuba Especially Worthy of Preservation*)

**Certificates #4:** NBTHK Hozon (*diasho fuchi-kashira Worthy of Preservation*)

**Certificates #5-6:** NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (*soroi kanagu,kozuka and koshirae designated Authentic*)

**Authentication:** Sayagaki by Tanzan-sensei (*Tanobe Michihiro*)

**Included:** Shirasaya x 2, daishô koshirae, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

Both the katana and wakizashi have been attributed to the *Shikkake school*, one of the five major *Yamato* schools that wielded enormous influence across Japan's temple networks. Founded by swordsmith *Norinaga* in Yamato province, the *Shikkake* school - along with *Senjuin*, *Tegai*, *Taima*, and *Hoshô* - forged blades to protect temple rights and property throughout the centuries. These blades exhibit the school's distinctive character: wavy *nagare-hada*, weaving *ko-gunome hamon* with abundant *kinsuji* activity, and fine *shikkake-hada* combining *mokume-hada* with clear straight-lined *masame-hada* in the yakiba. Unique Japan was commissioned to build authentic *daishô koshirae* worthy of these historic blades. A land and sea theme was chosen - abalone shells symbolizing longevity, crabs evoking warrior armour, lobsters representing endurance, and paired horses embodying *sessha-takuma*, the spirit of growth through camaraderie. The All Blacks-inspired lacquerwork combines two tones of black - a matte stone finish and high gloss juxtaposed with with gold *sageo* cords. The result honours both Japanese tradition and the client's family heritage.



Saki-kasane: 4.2mm

Moto-kasane: 5.9mm

Kissaki: 3.22cm

Saki-haba: 1.90cm

Nagasa: 71.2cm

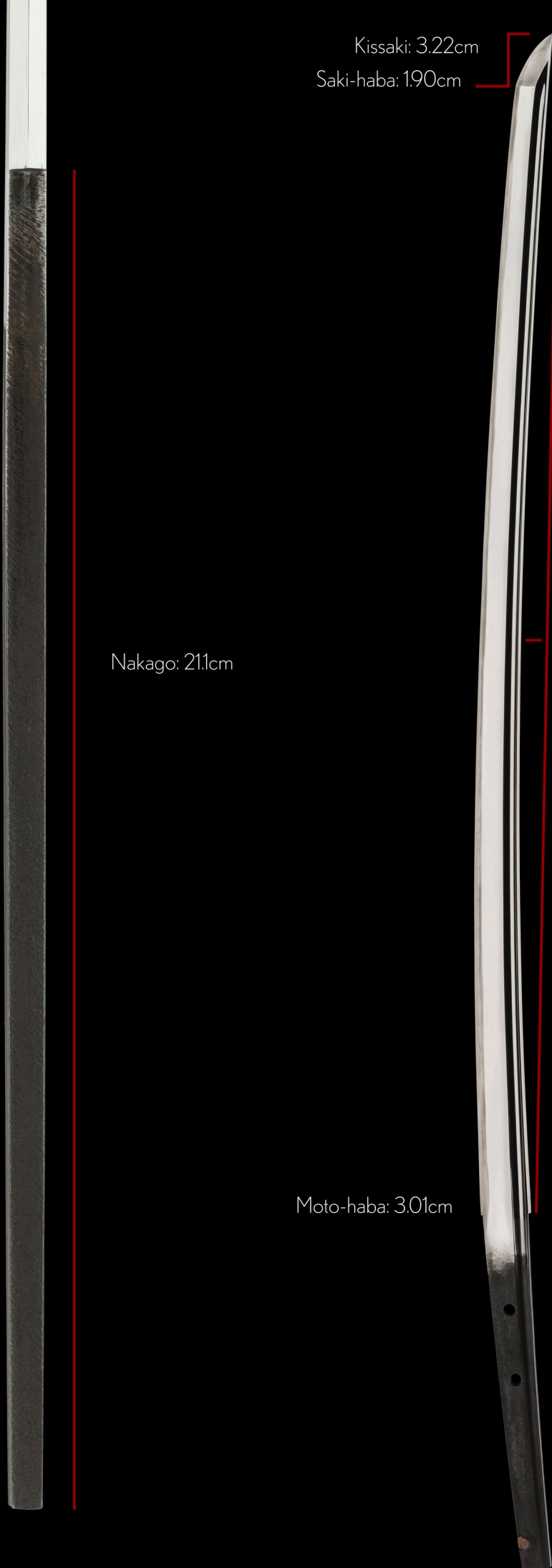
Nakago: 21.1cm

Sori: 1.40cm

Omosa: 585g

Moto-haba: 3.01cm

Mekugi-ana: 2





Saki-kasane: 4.1mm

Moto-kasane: 5.7mm

Kissaki: 3.64cm

Saki-haba: 1.92cm

Nagasa: 53.6cm

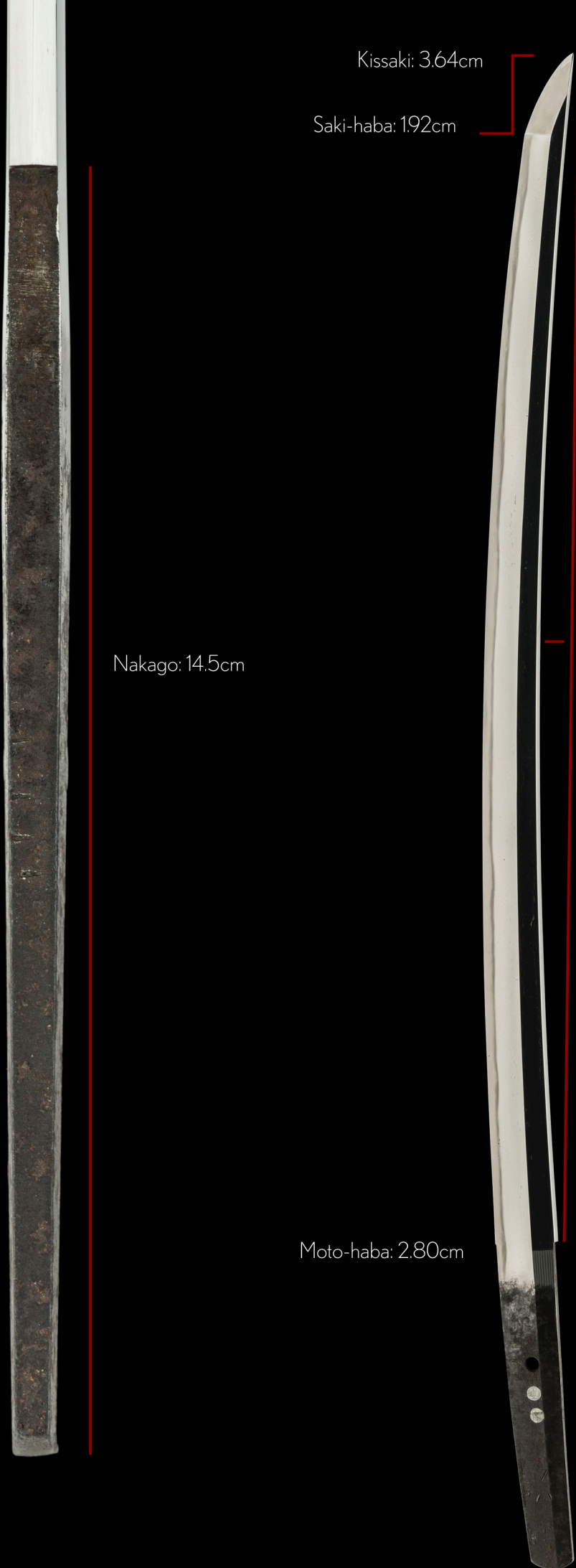
Nakago: 14.5cm

Sori: 1.10cm

Omosa: 555g

Moto-haba: 2.80cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



During the *Nara* period, before the capital was transferred to *Kyôto* in Yamashiro province, the province of *Yamato* was the center of Japanese culture.

The development of swordsmith's trade in Yamato depended on the relationship with temples as they needed to protect their rights and property.

The five major Yamato schools - *Senjuin*, *Tegai*, *Taima*, *Hôshô* and *Shikkake* were groups of swordsmiths that had a huge influence on temples throughout the country. Characteristics of the Yamato tradition can be seen in the works of *Yamato Shizu*, *Akasaka Senjuin*, *Uda*, *Ino*, *Mihara* and *Niô* to name just a few schools.


The Shikkake school was founded by swordsmith *Norinaga*. There exist two *tantô* which are dated with the third year of *Bunpô* (1319) and the third year of *Ryakuô* (1340) and which are additionally signed with the information "made at the age of 48" and "*made at the age 69*" respectively, what calculates *Bun'ei* nine (1272) as *Norinaga*'s year of birth. The very name was then continued by successive *Norinaga* generations until the Muromachi period.

The workmanship of the school features a high *shinogi*, a wide *shinogi-ji*, a kitae in *itame* that tends to *nagare*, and a hamon that based on *suguha*. The style shares the common features of the Yamato tradition but a unique characteristic of the Shikkake School is a connected *ko-gunome* being mixed into the *ha*, although blades in pure *suguha* were also made.

Both the katana and wakizashi exhibit the centuries-old mystique of the Shikkake school with a wavy *nagare hada*, a weaving *ko-gunome hamon* and plenty of *kinsuji* activity. This is a fine opportunity to build a personal custom *daishô koshirae* for the swords or enjoy them as they are in shirasaya.

Contact Unique Japan for more information on the *daishô* creation process. Please note it will take a minimum of 18 months to complete a traditional *daishô koshirae*, your patience is appreciated and will be rewarded.





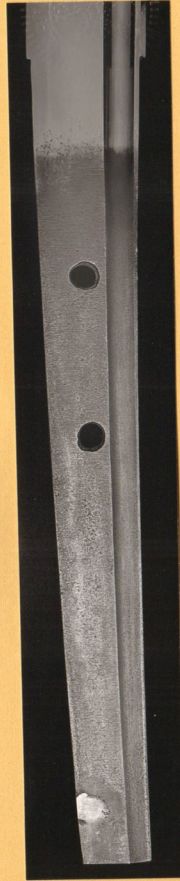
This sword was once a long tachi  
crafted during the 1300s - late  
*Kamakura to Nambokuchô* period.

In approximately the late  
*Muromachi* to early *Edo* period  
(late 1500s ~ early 1600s), it was  
greatly shortened to its *ô-suriage*  
*nakago* and lost its *mei* (signature).

The nakago features *kaki-tôshi* -  
grooves that extend right through  
the butt end of the tang.

28201607

No 1006252



鑑定書

一刀 無銘 伝(尻懸)

長二尺三寸五分

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

平成二十八年八月二十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



鹿児島 教育委員会  
第 31812 号  
昭和 61 年 12 月 9 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

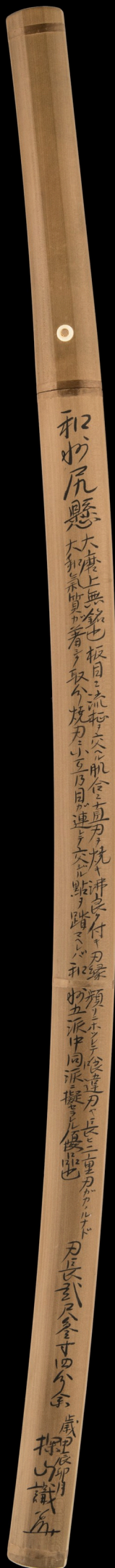
Issued in the 28th year of Heisei (2016), August 26th

One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Den Shikkake*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 3-sun 5-bu (71.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



和州尻懸  
Washû Shikkake  
Shikkake from Yamato province

大磨上無銘也板目ニ流柁ヲ交ヘル肌合ニ直刃ヲ焼キ  
沸良ク付キ刃縁頻リニホツレテ喰違刃ヤ長ヒ二重刃ガ  
カゝルナド大和氣質ガ著シク取分焼刃ニ小互乃目ガ連  
レテ交ジル點ヲ踏マヘレバ和州五派中同派ニ擬セラレ  
ル優品也

*Ô-suriage mumei nari. Itame ni nagare-masame o majieru hada-ai ni suguha o yaki nie yoku tsuki habuchi shikiri ni hotsurete kuichigai-ba ya nagai nijûba ga kakaru nado Yamato kishitsu ga ichijirushiku toriwake yakiba ni ko-gunome ga tsurete majiru ten o fumaereba Washû-Goha-chû dôha ni giserareru yûhin nari.*

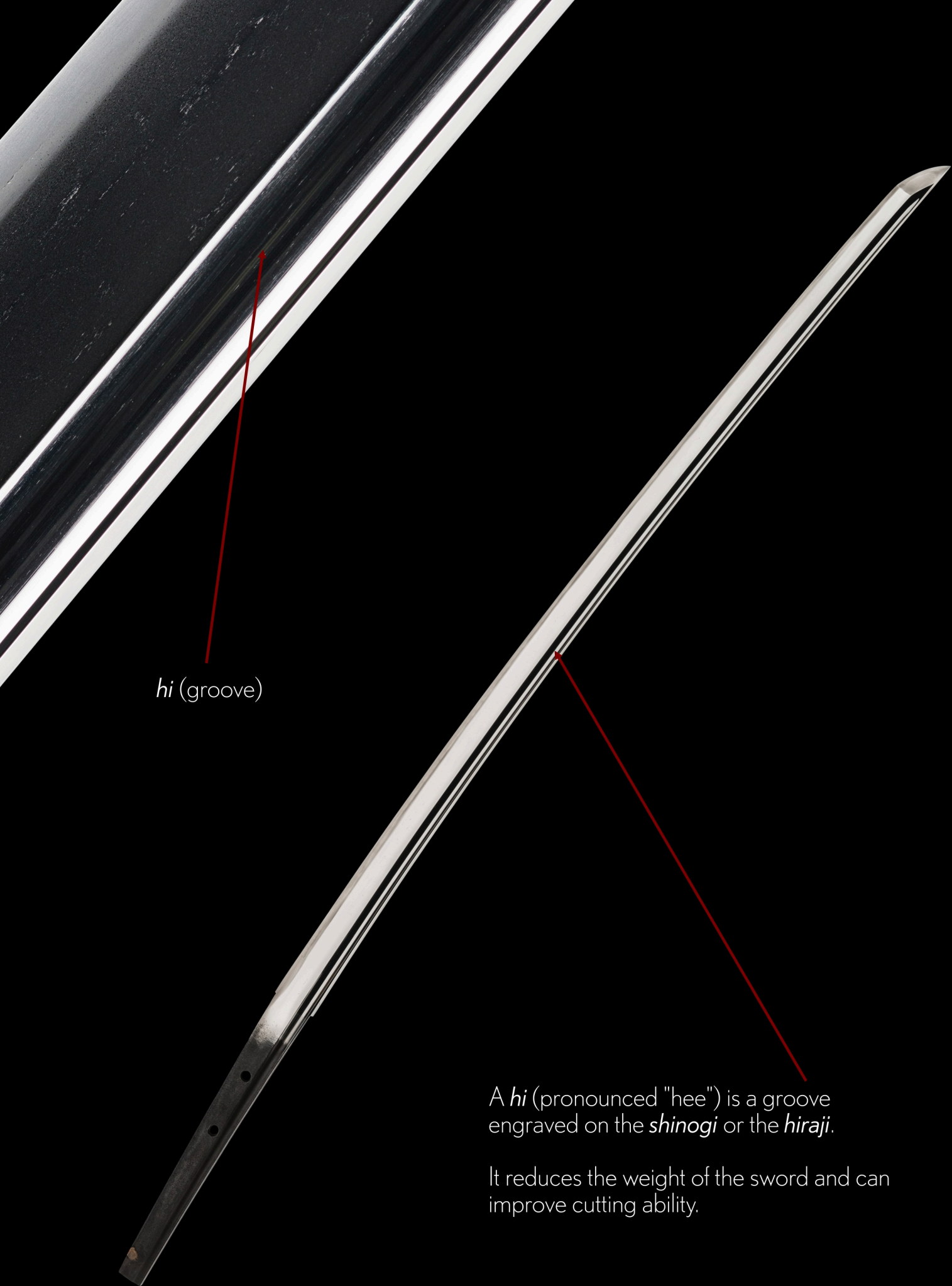
This blade is *ô-suriage mumei*. It displays a forging structure in *itame* mixed with *nagare-masame* and is hardened in a *nie*-laden *suguha* that is mixed along the *habuchi* with plenty of *hotsure*, *kuichigai-ba*, and long *nijûba*. It thus clearly reflects the characteristics of the *Yamato* tradition, and with the connected *ko-gunome* in the *ha*, this masterwork can be narrowed down among the five major currents of sword making in *Yamato* province to the *Shikkake* School.

刃長貳尺參寸四分余  
Hachô ni-shaku san-sun yon-bu yo  
Blade length ~ 70.9 cm

歲甲辰卯月探山識「花押」  
Toki ni kinoe-tatsu uzuki Tanzan shirusu + kaô  
Written by Tanzan [Tanobe Michihiro] in April in the year of the dragon (2024) + monogram.








*hi* (groove)

A *hi* (pronounced "hee") is a groove engraved on the *shinogi* or the *hiraji*.

It reduces the weight of the sword and can improve cutting ability.



*Masame-hada* (straight grain) in the tempered area of the sword.

The *katana* has a line of *kinsuji* that extends into the *kissaki*. *Masame-hada* in the *ha* is a feature of the Shikakke school.




A terrific look at the straight grain *masame-hada* along the *ha* (tempered area of the sword).

This is *Shikkake*.

The *nagare-hada* is in full flow.

This katana has seen countless battles over its vast lifetime and thus there are areas where the core steel is exposed. The *daishô* will appeal to the collector who appreciates a bit of wear and tear.

The grittiness of life captured in steel.

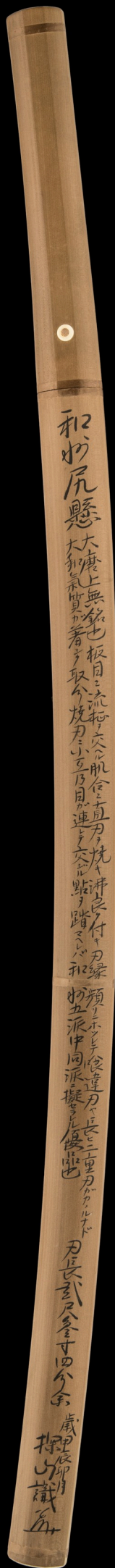


*nagare-hada*



An icy blue tint appears from the *suguha* hamon, a sign of a well-made sword.

Come to the light.



Shirasaya  
(protective scabbard)



new gold-wrapped *habaki* with  
horizontal file marks

*No Ha* is 'the third of ~'

During the *Shōwa* era (1926~1989) there were sword rental shops for men who were too poor to afford their own swords when going to war.

Thus the characters "*No Ha*" meaning 'the third of' chiseled onto both sides of the nakago was done by one of these shop owners purely for internal stock management.

ノ (No)

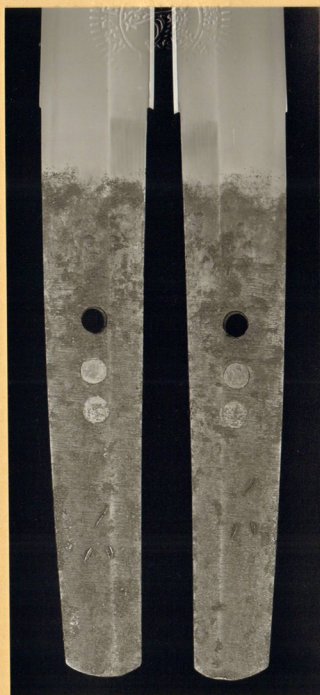
ハ (Ha)

(No) ノ

(Ha) ハ

03202109

No. 016750



鑑定書

一脇指 無銘 (尻懸)

(切符銘) □ノハ

長一尺七寸七分

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

令和三年十二月三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



京都府 教育委員会  
第 58043 号  
平成26年5月23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 3rd year of Reiwa (2021), December 3rd

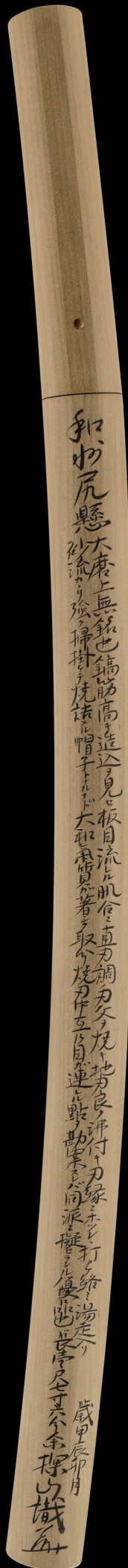
One, Wakizashi

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Shikkake*

*(kiritsukemei) No hachi □ no hachi*

*Nagasa* (length)  
1-shaku 7-sun 7-bu (53.6cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



和州尻懸  
 Washû Shikkake  
 Shikkake from Yamato province

大磨上無銘也鑄筋高キ造込ヲ見セ板目流レル肌合ニ直刃調ノ刃文ヲ焼キ地刃良ク沸付キ刃縁ニホツレ打ノケ絡ミ湯走入リ砂流カヽリ強ク掃掛ケテ焼詰メル帽子トナルナド大和氣質ガ著シク取分焼刃中互乃目ガ連レル點ヲ勘案スレバ同派ニ擬セラレル優品也

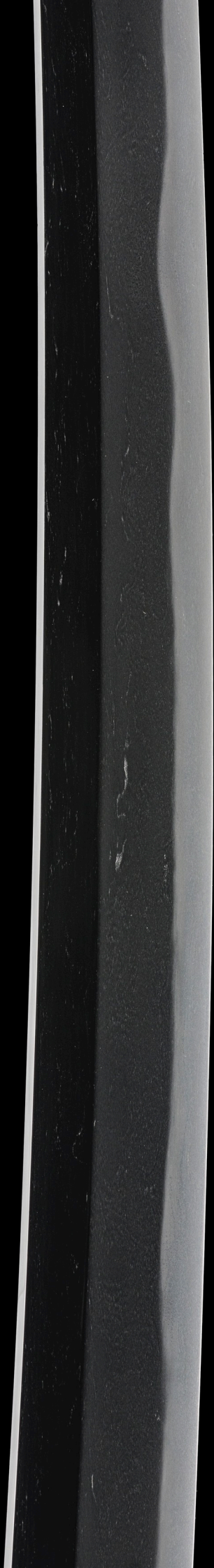
*Ô-suriage mumei nari. Shinogi-suji takaki tsukurikomi o mise itame-nagareru hada-ai ni suguha-chô no hamon o yaki jiba yoku nie-tsuki habuchi ni hotsure, uchinoke karami yubashiri hairi sunagashi kakari tsuyoku hakikakete yakitsumeru bôshi to naru nado Yamato kishitsu ga ichijirushiku toriwake yakibachû gunome ga suretru ten o kan'an-sureba dôha ni giserareru yûhin nari.*

This blade is *ô-suriage mumei*. With its shape featuring a high *shinogi*, its forging structure in *itame nagare*, its *nie*-laden *jiba*, its *hamon* in *suguha-chô* mixed with *yubashiri* and *sunagashi* and displaying a *habuchi* that is interwoven with *hotsure* and *uchinoke*, and its *yakitsume-bôshi* with much *hakikake*, the blade prominently reflects the characteristics of the *Yamato* tradition. This combined with the connected *gunome* in the *ha*, this masterwork can be narrowed down to the *Shikkake* School.

長壹尺七寸六分余  
 Nagasa isshaku shichi-sun roku-bu-yo  
 Blade length ~ 53.3 cm

歳甲辰卯月探山識「花押」  
 Toki ni kinoe-tatsu uzuki Tazan shirusu + kaô  
 Written by Tazan [Tanobe Michihiro] in April in the year of the dragon (2024) + monogram.






*Hakikake* (beautiful brushed boshi)

A magnificent long line of *kinsuji* ripping through the *kissaki* (tip) of the wakizashi.



Swords of the Shikkake school has a wide *shinogi-ji* as seen on this wakizashi



The image shows a close-up of a wakizashi blade, highlighting its distinctive features. The blade is dark and polished, with a prominent wide shinogi-ji (ridge) running along its length. The inazuma (bolts of nie crystal lightning) is visible as a bright, irregular pattern near the edge. The ko-ashi (small legs extending to the edge) is also visible as a series of small, dark marks along the blade's edge.

*shinogi-ji*

*inazuma*  
(bolts of nie crystal lightning)

*ko-ashi*  
(small legs extending to the edge)



The darkish *jihada* speaks of history.

We can see *mokume-hada* (rounded) burl grain, wavy *nagare-hada*, and *itame-hada* as well.

channels of *chikei*

A tightly waving *ko-gunome hamon* based on *suguha*.



A close-up look at the wonderful *nagare-hada*  
(flowing grain pattern) as seen on the wakizashi.

*nagare-hada*



*Ue-sanbu kuro-ishime-ji shita-nanabu kuro-ro-nuri saya daishô-uchigatana-koshirae*  
(上三分黒石目地下七分黒呂塗鞘大小打刀拵)

*Daishô-uchigatana-koshirae lacquered in black and finished in a two-tone texture, combining stone-like and glossy surface*

The *daishô*, restricted to the *samurai* class, emerged as the defining symbol of their status. The paired-sword tradition gained prominence near the close of the *Muromachi* period (1336-1573), with surviving examples dating to the late sixteenth century. A 1629 edict formalized the *daishô* requirement for samurai on official duties. The tradition ended in 1871 when a *Meiji* edict removed the samurai's obligation to wear *daishô*, followed by a public sword ban in 1876. These reforms effectively ended both the *daishô* tradition and the samurai class itself.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
Certificate of Authenticity



dai

This splendid *daishô tsuba* is the work of the *Echizen* school, characterized by three-dimensional carving and openwork on iron plates with round forms, angular rims (*kakumimi*), and auspicious motifs like hollyhock crests, shrimp, and pine-bark diamond patterns. Renowned masters such as *Kinai* exemplify the school's blend of practicality and artistry. While influenced by *Kyo-sukashi*, *Echizen tsuba* developed a distinctive style noted for refined and intricate openwork.

These *tsuba* depict abalone shells rendered in superb three-dimensional openwork. The abalone's flexible, stretching flesh has long symbolized longevity - fitting, since *Echizen* (present-day *Fukui prefecture*) remains famous for high-quality abalone.

The pieces display the characteristic iron colour of the *Echizen* school and highly realistic shell representation. The set was awarded NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certification.



shô

(reverse)



dai



shô

鑑定書

一、鮑貝尽透大小鐔 無銘 越前

堅丸形 鉄地 肉彫地透 象嵌 角耳小肉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

令和三年十二月二十四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon  
Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 3rd year of Reiwa (2021), December 24th

One, *Daishô Tsuba*

*With openwork design depicting a plenty of abalones*

*Mumei (unsigned)*  
*Echizen*

*Elongated round shape, iron, three dimensional openworks,  
inlay, angular rim with a little roundness*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



The *daishô tsuka* (hilts) are formally wrapped in *hishimaki* style with black *ito* (silk) over white *samekawa* (ray skin).





The *daishô fuchi-gashira* is the work of the *Akita Shôami* school, established in the Edo period when the first-generation *Shoami Denbei* relocated to Akita. The school is known for designs rich in regional character.

These *fuchi-kashira* feature exceptionally fine carving depicting a lobster and crab. The lobster, with its bent back, symbolizes longevity. The crab, whose shell resembles samurai armour, was especially favoured by warriors.

The *daishô* set holds an NBTHK Hozon certificate.



02202001



No 4016828

鑑定書

一、海老蟹大小縁頭無銘秋田正阿弥  
赤銅石目地据紋象嵌象嵌

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀装具と  
鑑定しこれを証する

令和二年三月十日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Hozon  
Certificate of Designation

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

Issued in the 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), March 10th

*One, Daisho Fuchi-kashira*

*Depicting lobster and crab*

*Mumei (unsigned)  
Akita Shôami*

*Shakudô with stone-surface ground, set-in motif, inlay*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



These *menuki* depict two horses on *shakudô* ground accented with gold. In Japanese art, paired horses symbolize more than rivalry - they represent *sessha-takuma*, the spirit of mutual growth and self-improvement through friendly competition and deep camaraderie.

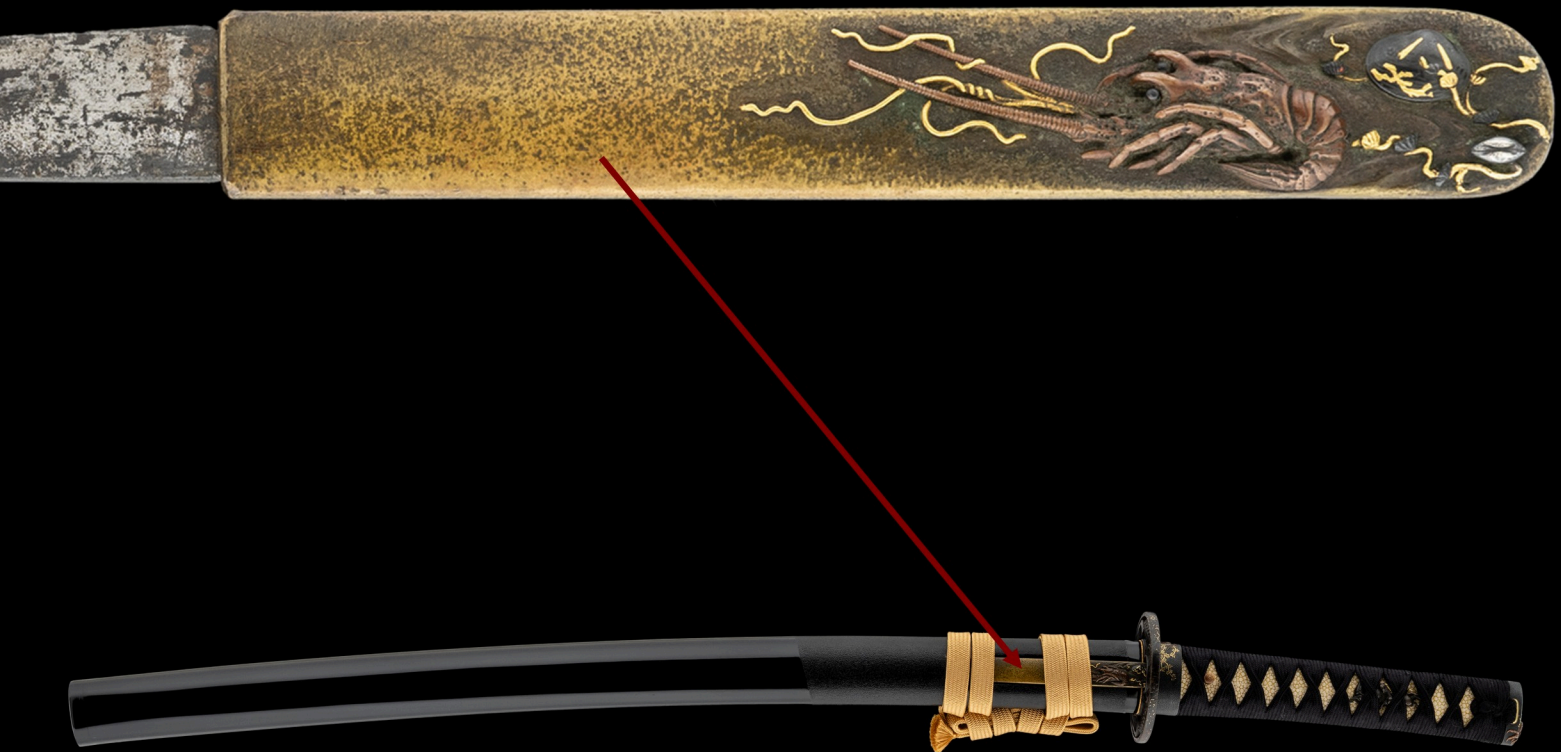




*Kozuka* (utility knife)

Fastened into a special notch built inside the *saya* (scabbard) and drawn through the slotted space of the *tsuba*.

This work was crafted by *Okihide* of the *Ôtsuki* school during the late *Edo* period. It features a lobster rendered in high relief on a brass ground.

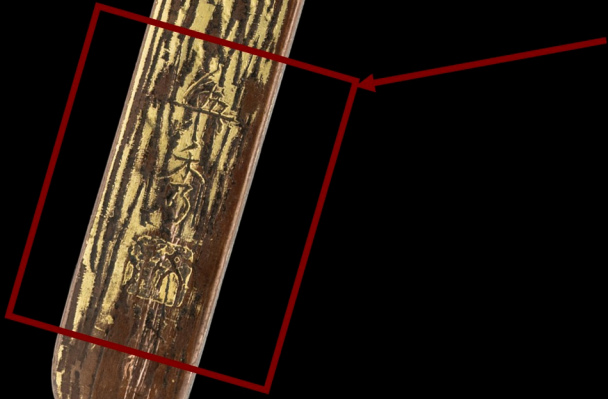


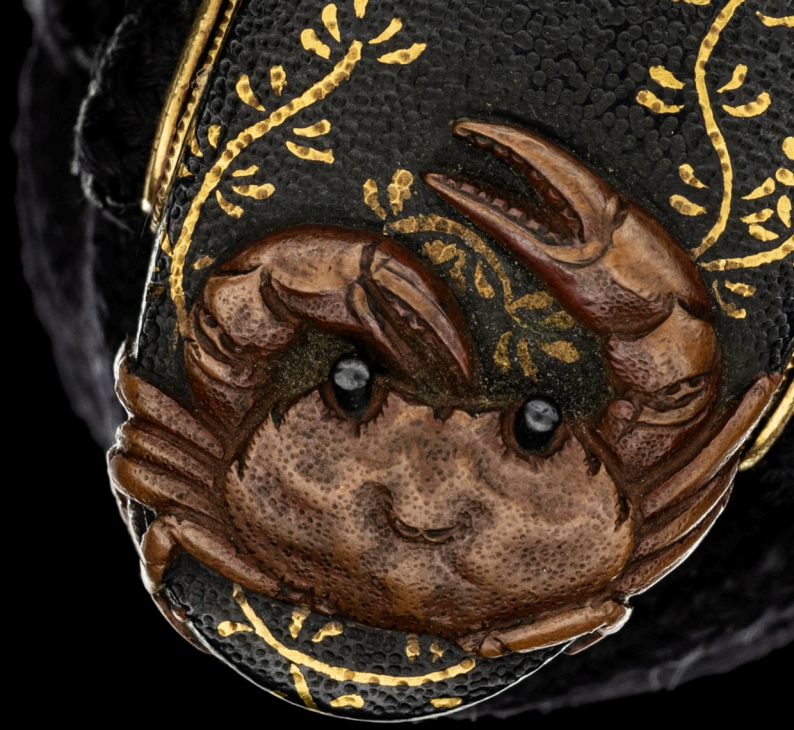


(Oki) 興

(hide) 秀

monogram





Warriors of land and sea.





Congratulations Tom.

Warm regards,  
Pablo

The *daishō koshirae* bags feature the *sayagata* pattern (fretwork), symbolizing *fudan-choku* - eternal continuity of prosperity and longevity.