



ITEM# UJKA273

[SOLD]

A SHODAI YOSHIMICHI KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (CIRCA KEICHO ERA: 1596~1615)

Swordsmith:	<i>Tanba no Kami Yoshimichi (ubu-nakago, shodai – first generation)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 77.5cm Curvature: 1.9cm Moto-haba: 3.2cm Weight: 910g
Jihada:	<i>Itame with masame, ji-nie and chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Chû-suguha in ko-nie-deki with a wide nioiguchi mixed with gunome and ashi</i>
Boshi:	<i>Midare-komi with a ko-maru-kaeri, hakikake, and tobiyaki on the omote side</i>
Certificate:	7th NBTHK Juyo Token (a sword designated as Profound and Important)
Authentication:	<i>Sayagaki by Honma Junji (Kunzan)</i>
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)

Shodai Yoshimichi is the third son of Seki Kanemichi who originally travelled from *Noshu Seki*. He moved to *Seidonin* in *Kyoto* with his father and brothers in February of 1593. Yoshimichi received the *Tanba (no) Kami* title on December 7th, 1595 and was still active in 1637. The family stayed in *Kyoto* for eleven generations and are collectively known as *Kyo-Tanba* 京丹波.

This katana is a valuable reference piece for two significant reasons. The first is that Yoshimichi rarely forged long swords - he predominately crafted *wakizashi* and *tanto*. To handle a katana of his measuring 77.5cm is a treasure in its own right. The other, and more importantly, is that this sword is forged in a *suguha hamon*. The *Kyo-Tanba* name is synonymous with the *sudare-ba hamon*, a temper line that resembles a bamboo curtain that shodai pioneered. No nihonto enthusiast would imagine that this magnificent blade was forged by him. It is a museum-grade sword that pays tribute the Yamato roots of his ancestry - and one of the first swords to attain NBTHK Juyo token. A beautiful custom *handachi koshirae* with a brilliant set of matching Higo fittings was built for the client in Japan over several months. It now remains in good, caring hands.

Saki-kasane: 6.3mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.7mm

Omosa: 910g

Kissaki: 4.0cm

Saki-haba: 2.5cm

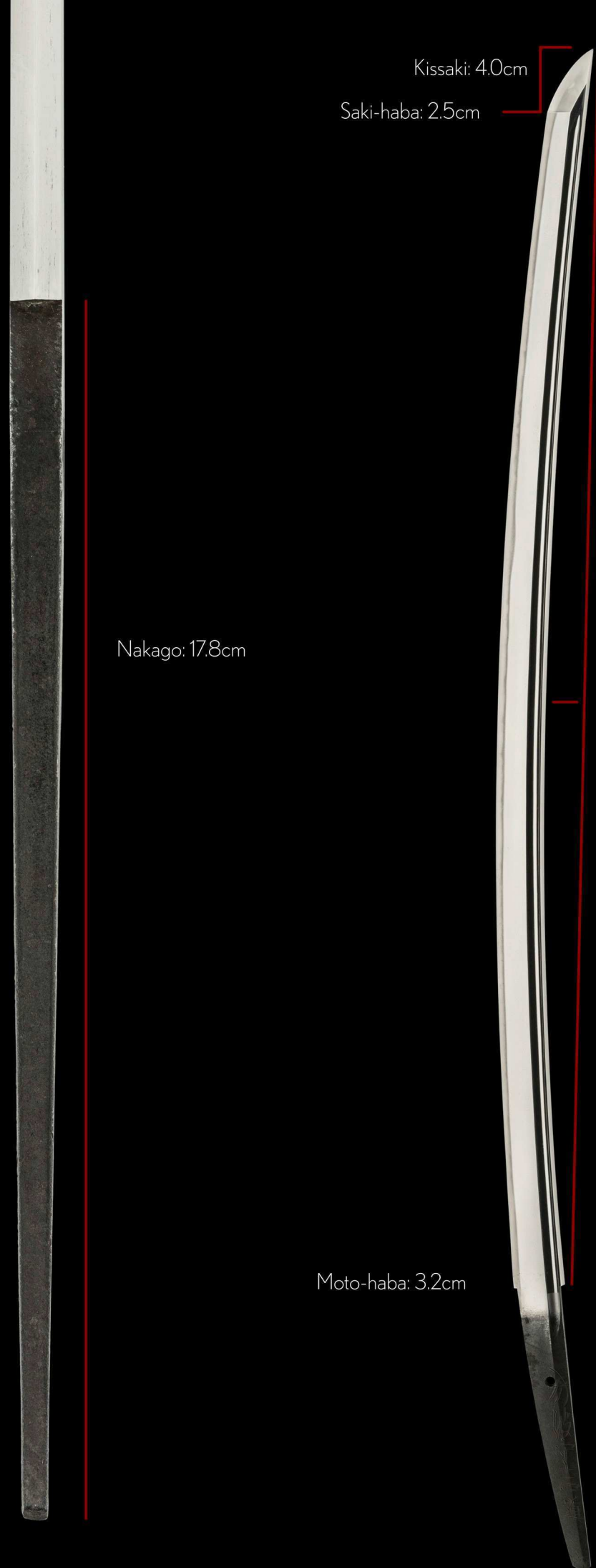
Nakago: 17.8cm

Moto-haba: 3.2cm

Nagasa: 77.5cm

Sori: 19cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



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Yoshimichi predominately crafted wakizashi and tanto - very few katana - making this extra long sword piece a rare find indeed.



Title: *Tanba no Kami*

Location: *Yamashiro province* (Kyoto)

Swordsmith: *Yoshimichi* [shodai, 1st generation]



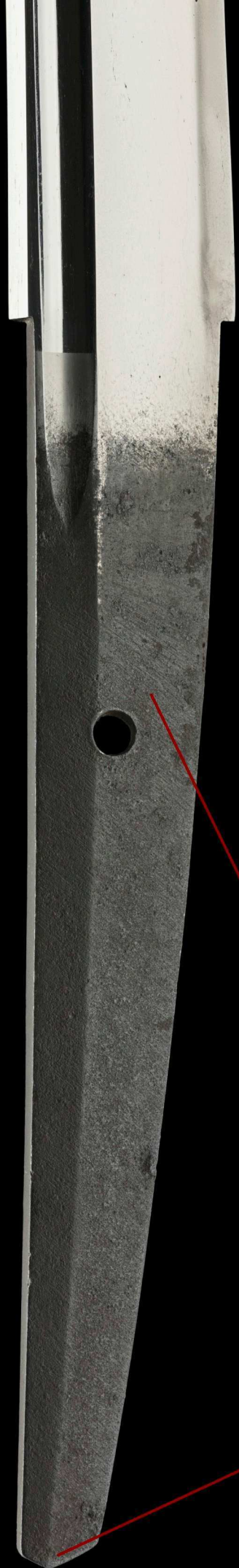
Tan

ba

(no) kami

Yoshi

michi



ubu-nakago
(original, uncut tang)

sujikai-yasurime
(diagonal file marks)

kengyô-jiri
(sword shaped butt end)



重要第四〇二號

指定書

刀銘 丹波守吉道 一口

長二尺五寸六分 反六分半

鎬造 庵棟

鍛 板目 証かゝる

刃文 中直 刃僅々 互の目交る

厥物 表裏 棒樋

莖 生ぶ

右者當協會に於て審査の結果
重要刀劍に指定する

昭和卅六年九月十日

財團法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 細川護立



NBTHK Juyo Token
Certificate of Designation
(#402)

a sword designated as *Profound and Important*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 36th year of Showa (1961), September 10th

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

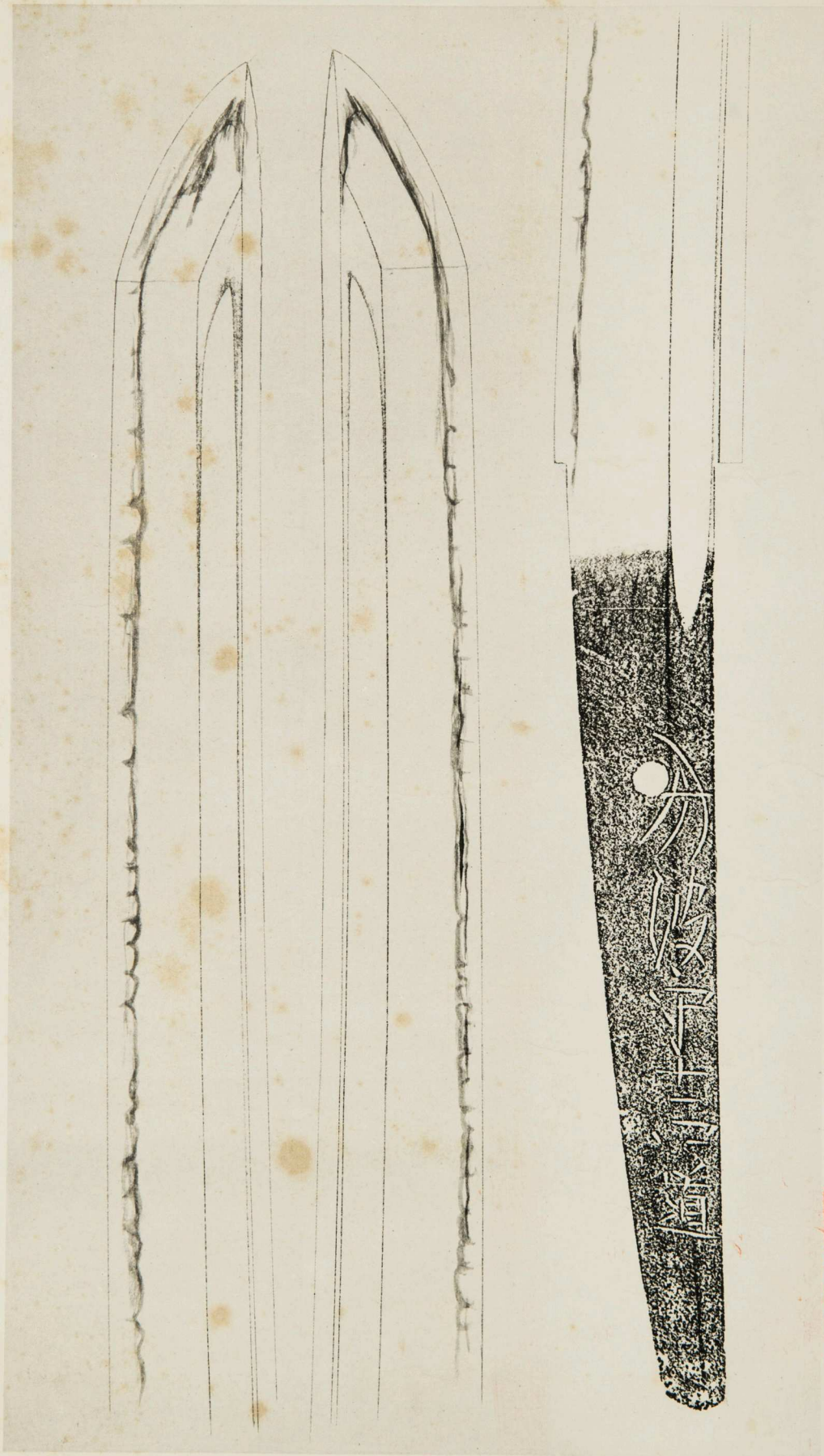
Tanba no Kami Yoshimichi

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 5-sun 6-bu (77.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

刀 丹波守吉道



NBTHK Juyo Token White Paper
This *oshigata*, tracing of the *hamon* pattern.
This certificate is from 1961, from just the 7th Jûyô session.



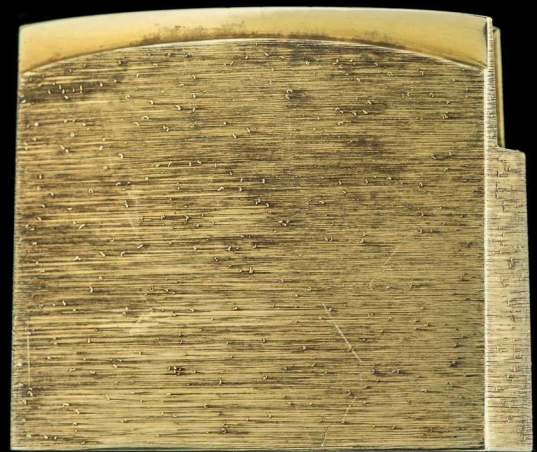
Tanba
(no)kami
Yoshimichi
Shodai



By *Kunzan* (Honma Junji)
Eighth lunar month in the
Year of the Ox (1961)



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



*Habaki with unique horn trim
and horizontal file marks*



Yoshimichi uniquely signed the *Tan* 丹 character of his title like the billowing sails of a sailboat.

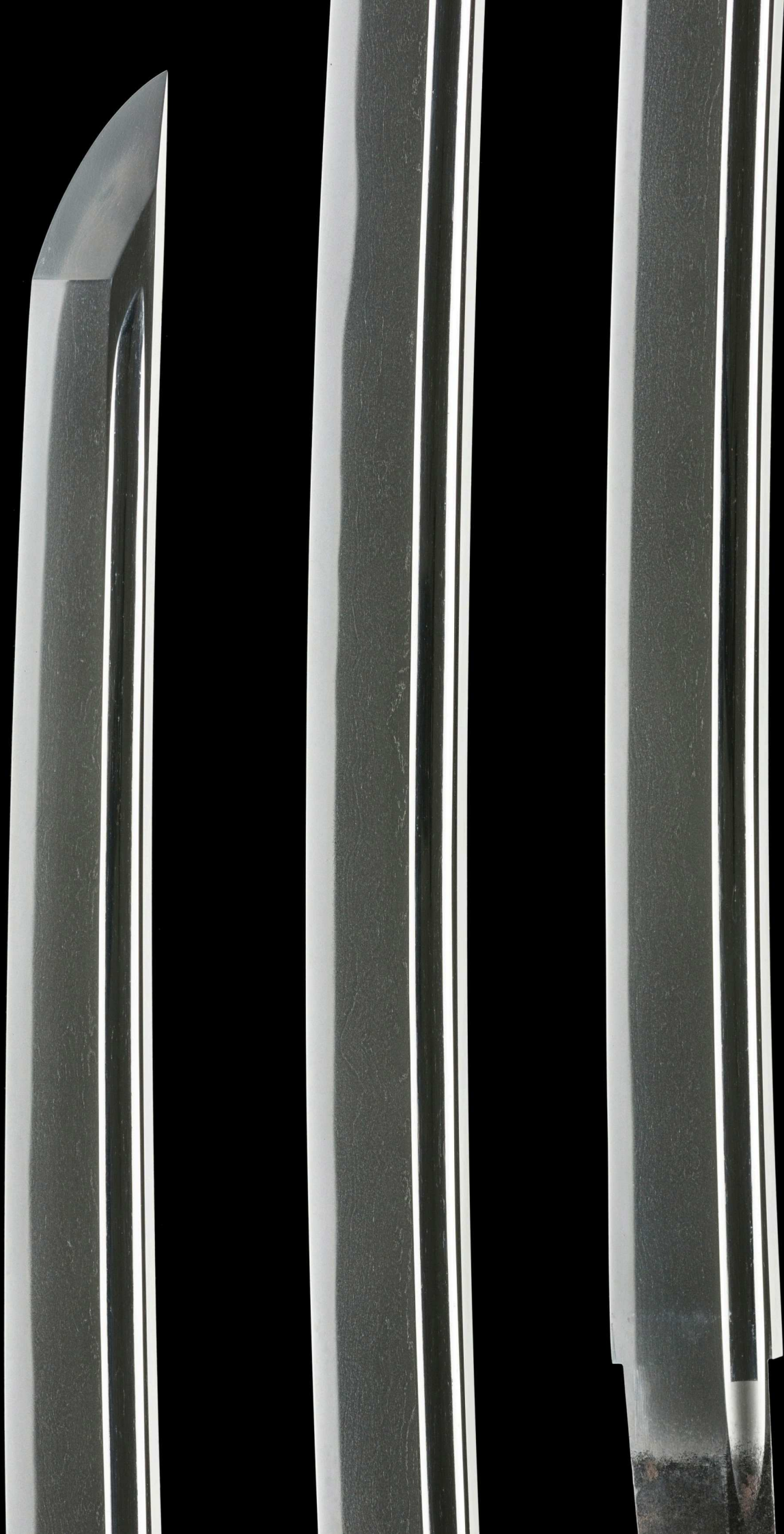
Thus he is referred to as *Hokake* (meaning 'sail') *Tanba* 帆掛丹波.



There were two main branches of the Mishina school, one in Kyoto and the other in Osaka. Blades of the two branches can be distinguished by the way in which they chiseled the "*kami*" character.

The Kyoto branch (*Kyo-Tanba*), which this katana is from, placed the stroke pointing to the west to north-west position.

The Osaka branch (*Osaka-Tanba*) wrote the same stroke pointing to the south.



full length *bo-hi* (groove)





hakikake (brushed tip)

The *Mishina boshi* runs straight up from the *yokote*.

ko-maru (turn back)

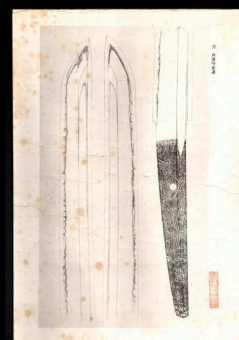


From the NBTHK Juyo White Paper:

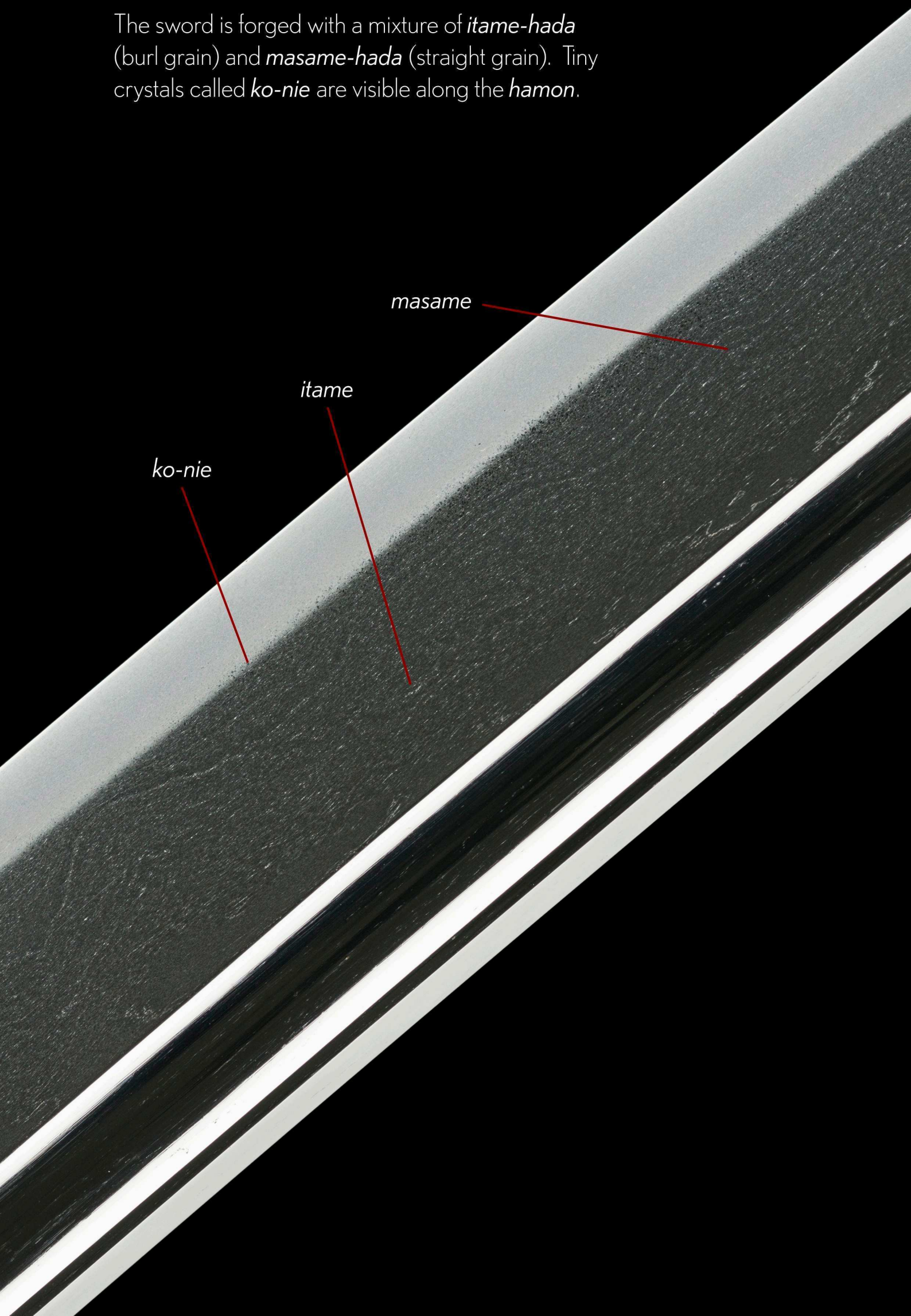
"This blade is the work of the first generation Tanba and shows a suguha that is very rich in variety. Smiths who worked in the Mino tradition did harden in suguha but such an interpretation is very rare for the Mishina School.

With the abundance of ko-nie and the hamon tending towards hotsure, we recognize here that the ha is based on the Mino tradition with elements of Yamato influence.

Later generations specialized in the hardening of a unique sudareba hamon."



The sword is forged with a mixture of *itame-hada* (burl grain) and *masame-hada* (straight grain). Tiny crystals called *ko-nie* are visible along the *hamon*.




masame

itame

ko-nie



Gorgeous *chikei* weaves
within the body of the sword.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, likely a katana, showing the hamon (temper line) patterns. The blade is dark and has a sharp edge. The hamon is a light-colored, wavy line that runs along the length of the blade. The patterns are intricate and include a vibrant chu-suguha hamon, ko-gunome, and ashi (legs) that extend to the cutting edge. There are also black 'golden lines' of kinsuji visible in the hamon. Two red lines point from the text labels to the corresponding features on the blade.

A vibrant *chu-suguha hamon* mixed with *ko-gunome* and plenty of *ashi* (legs) that extend to the cutting edge.

Black 'golden lines' of *kinsuji* are also seen in the hamon.

kinsuji

ashi

Sô-handachi kanagu cha-ishime-jinuri saya uchigatana-koshirae
総半太刀金具茶石目地塗鞘打刀拵え

Uchigatana-koshirae with handachi fittings and brown saya in stone-surface like finish



A genuine handachi
koshirae certificate from
the NTHK-NPO



A complete set of Higo handachi fittings from the Mid-Edo Period (early 1700s) were acquired and certified especially for the project.

The motif of rain dragons is consistent throughout the design providing a wonderful sense of continuity and balance.

Deer skin was used to tightly wrap the *tsuka* (hilt). Long, rare rectangular menuki meant for a handachi build was sourced as well.





A polished iron tsuba attributed to *Higo tradition*,
a later generation of the *Jingo School*.

A motif of rain dragons in gold inlay.

NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity
to the Late Edo Period (1780~1867).



Oversized characters carved into the tsuba with depictions of clouds in gold inlay on the lobes.



come sail away.