



ITEM# UJKA325

A YOSHIKANE KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (ENPO ERA: 1673~1681)

Swordsmith:	<i>Chikushû jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane (ubu nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.5cm Curvature: 1.1cm Motohaba: 3.23cm
Jihada:	<i>Splendid itame and o-hada with swirling chikei and ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Bright chu-suguha with kinsuji, sunagashi, yo, and ko-ashi</i>
Certificate 1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (<i>designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation</i>)
Certificate 2:	NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>designated as Extraordinarily Precious</i>)
Certificate 3:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho (<i>koshirae designated as Especially Precious</i>)
Certificate 4-6:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (<i>a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic</i>)
Fujishiro:	Jo-saku (<i>ranked as a superior swordsmith</i>)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This is a remarkable katana crafted in the early Edo period by *jo-saku* Yoshikane of the *Chikuzen Nobukuni* school in Kyushu. The densely forged *itame-hada* contains boundless amounts of swirling *chikei* that's visible in the *kissaki* (tip). A precise *chu-suguha* hamon beams brightly with speckles of *yô* (leaves) falling gracefully toward the cutting edge - an attribute synonymous in the works of Yoshikane. A gorgeous set of Edo period koshirae is led by a slithering snake on the *fuchi* (collar) that is signed and dated to the summer of 1785 by master metalsmith *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki*. A magnificent water dragon is depicted on the iron *tsuba* while long, snake *menuki* weave their magic under the braided silk. Six certificates of authenticity accompany this class act.

Saki-kasane: 4.7mm [^]

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Omosa: 800g

Kissaki: 3.64cm
Saki-haba: 2.2cm

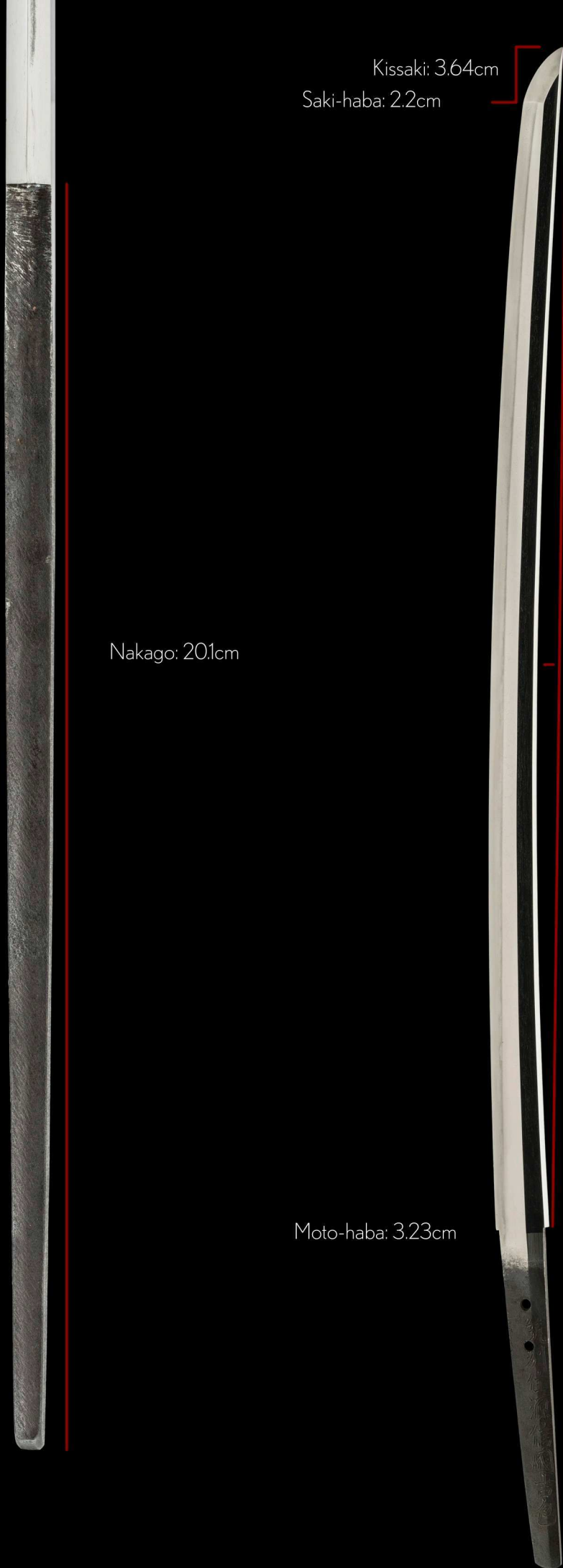
Nakago: 20.1cm

Moto-haba: 3.23cm

Nagasa: 70.3cm

Sori: 1.1cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Born *Nobukuni Sukezaemon*, swordsmith *Yoshikane* is the 14th generation succeeding the founder of the *Nobukuni school*.

Rated a *jo-saku* (superior smith), this katana is consistent in character to other master works he produced. Densely forged with great weight, shallow in curvature and with a *chu-kissaki* (medium sized tip).

Yoshikane died on August 22nd in the sixth year of Genroku, 1693.





Location: *Chikushu* (Kyushu island)

Clan name: *Minamoto*

School: *Chikuzen Nobukuni*

Swordsmith: *Yoshikane*

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

kiri-yasurime (horizontal file marks)

kurijiri: (chestnut-shaped nakago-jiri)

筑 Chiku

州 shu

住 ju

源 Minamoto

信 Nobu

國 kuni

吉 Yoshi

包 kane



An extra *mekugi-ana* (hole) added during the Edo period, possibly for reinforcement.

Top hole is original to the blade.

(*ura*, reverse)

特保
01201903

№ 1011193



鑑定書

一刀 銘 筑州住源信国吉包

長 二尺三寸二分

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

令和元年五月二十三日

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 35218 号
昭和27年5月15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 1st year of Heisei (2019), May 23rd

One, Katana

Mei (signature)

Chikushû-jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu (70.3cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

認定書

次七〇、三センチメートル

一、刀銘筑州住源信國吉包

右は當協會に於て審査の結果甲種特別

貴重刀剣として認定す

昭和五十年四月二十日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 本間 順治

奈良 耕平 殿



NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho Token Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Extraordinarily Precious*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 50th year of Showa (1975), April 20th

One, Katana

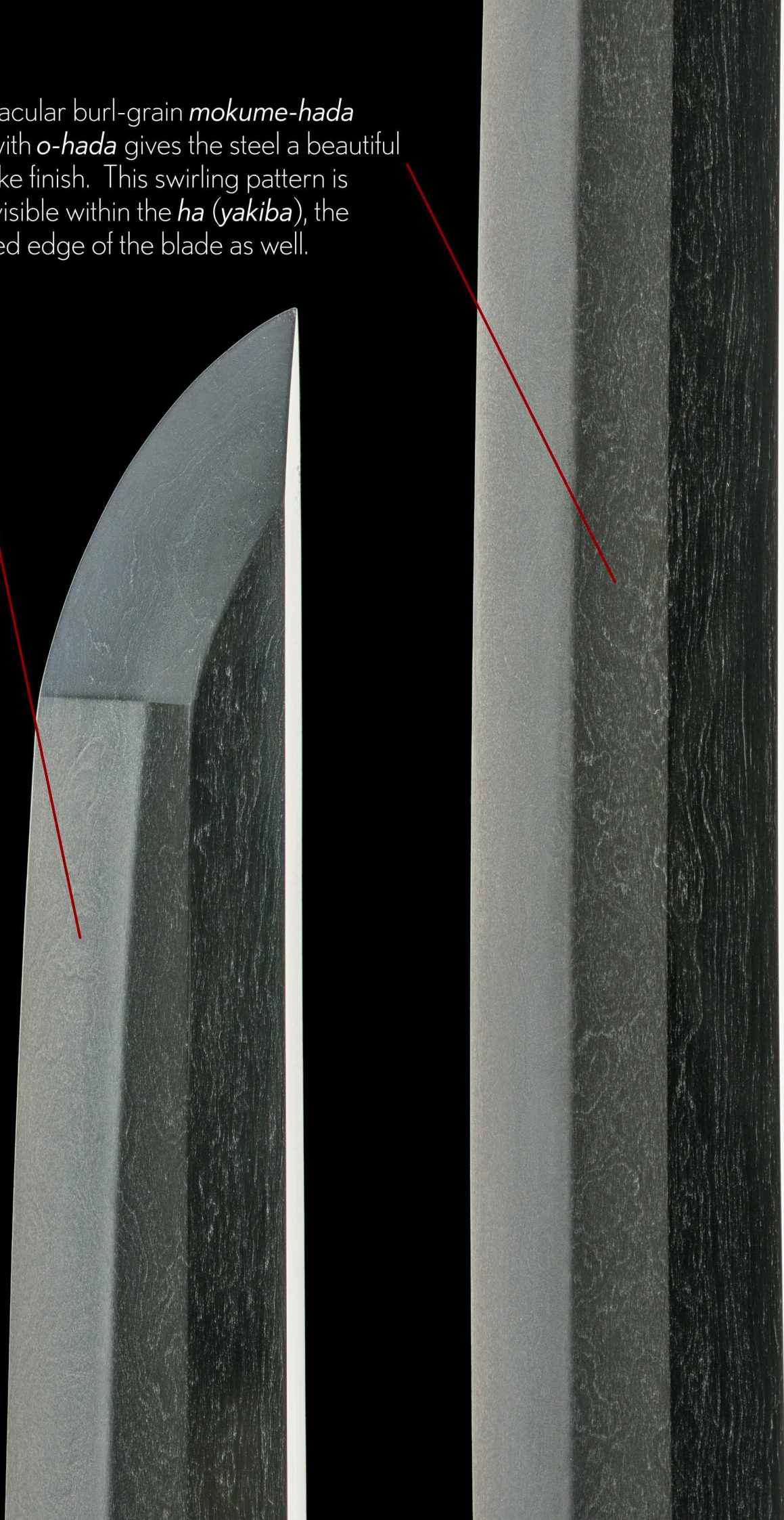
Mei (signature)

Chikushû-jû Minamoto Nobukuni Yoshikane

Nagasa (length)
70.3cm

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

A spectacular burl-grain *mokume-hada* mixed with *o-hada* gives the steel a beautiful wood-like finish. This swirling pattern is clearly visible within the *ha* (*yakiba*), the tempered edge of the blade as well.



The beautiful fibrous wood grain pattern extends into the *kissaki*.



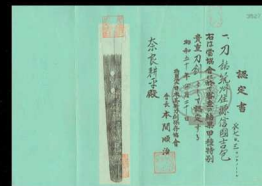


Chikei is the term to describe dark lines of nie-crystals that are interwoven in the *jihada*.

An abundance of chikei can be enjoyed in this formidable katana.

Consistency and brightness of the *nioguchi* (crystals that make up the hamon) is what to look for when it comes exceptional sword-making. Here, a beaming *suguha* (straight) hamon announces its presence under the light.

This katana achieved prestigious NBTHK Koshu Tokubetsu Kicho Tôken (an extraordinarily precious sword) in 1975 - the highest certificate below Jûyô Tôken. This 'blue' certificate was issued for only 9 years (1973-1982).

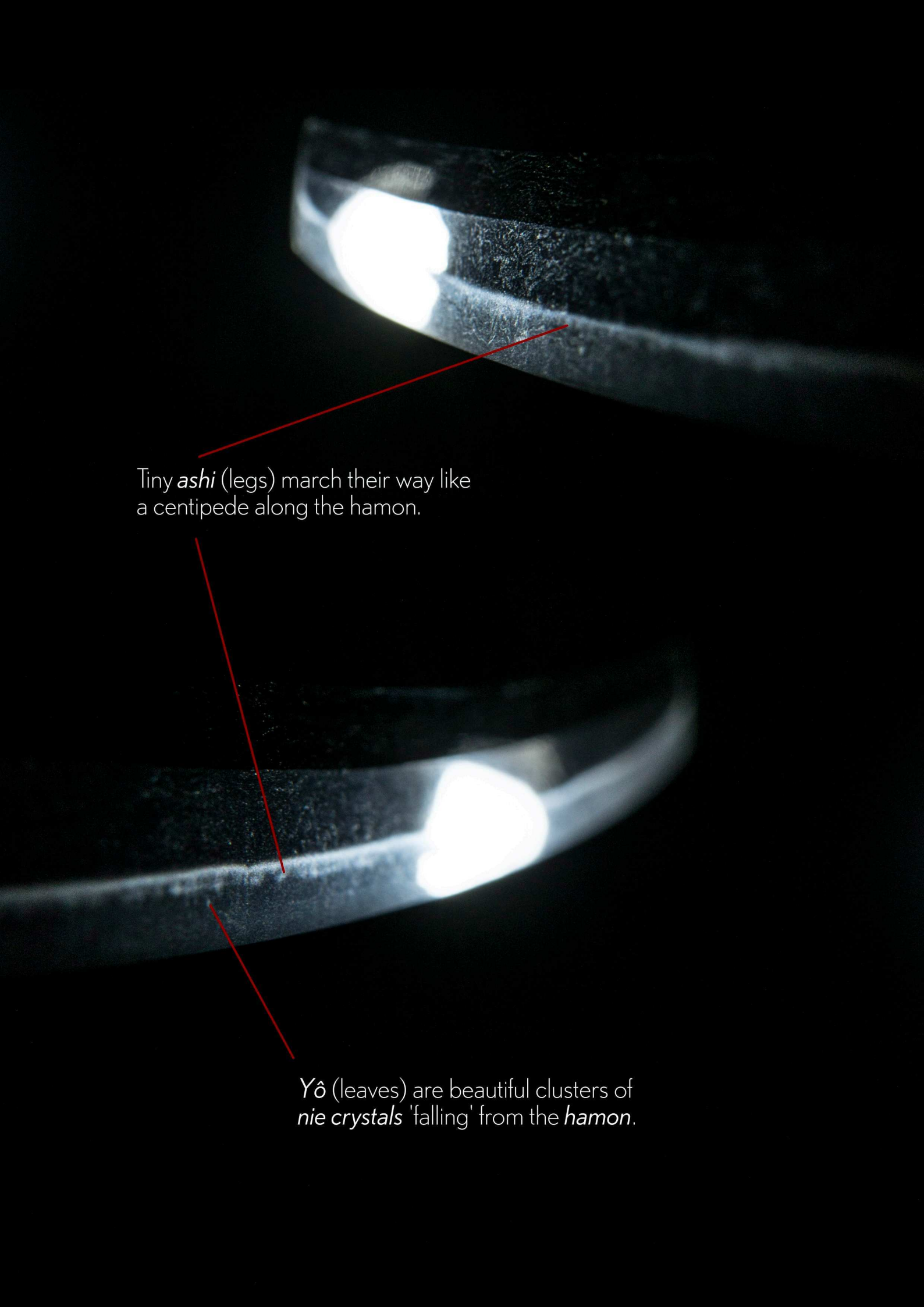


masterful *suguha*





kinsuji and brushed strokes of *sunagashi*

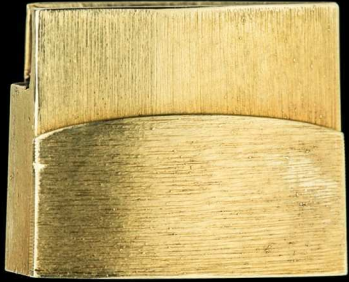
A close-up photograph of a sword blade, focusing on the hamon (the edge of the blade). The blade is dark, and the hamon is highlighted with a bright, glowing light. Several small, bright spots are visible along the hamon, which are referred to as 'ashi' (legs) in the text. Red arrows point from the text to these spots. The background is dark, making the glowing spots stand out.

Tiny *ashi* (legs) march their way like a centipede along the hamon.

Yô (leaves) are beautiful clusters of *nie crystals* 'falling' from the *hamon*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

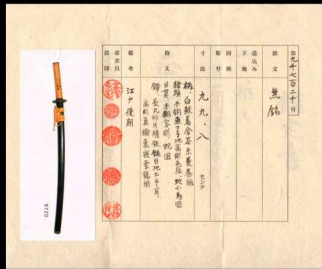


Gold wrapped *nijû habaki*
with diagonal file marks

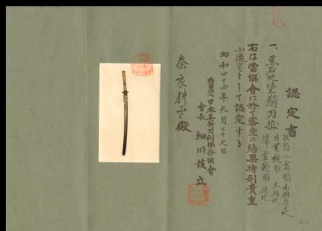
*Kuro-ishime-ji-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒石目地塗打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae with
black saya with stone like surface*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



*NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho
Certificate of Authenticity*

*note: snake artwork on
fuchi is not mentioned on
the certificate*





A gorgeous matching ivy motif appears on the *kurigata* (where sageo is tied) and *kojiri* (end cap) that serves as extra protection for the *saya* (scabbard). Ivy is traditionally associated with resilience and longevity.





This awesome hammered iron tsuba has been attributed to *Hirado Kunishige* from Hizen province in Kyushu - crafted in the middle Edo period, circa 1700~1780.

The fantastically detailed *brass takabori* relief of a 3-clawed Japanese cloud dragon (*unryu no zu*) brings immense force to the sword.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity has been attained.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



(reverse)



A defensive snake coils around the *fuchi-kashira* and under the silk braid in the form of *menuki*. In Japan, the snake is a symbol of protection against misfortune and illness, as well as a symbol of wisdom, good luck, strength, and change.



Tenmei gonen natsu mi-tsuchinoto kore o tsukuru
Kikuoka Mitsuyuki + kaô

This fuchi was crafted in the summer of the 5th year of Tenmei (1785) in the Year of the Snake [of the tsuchinoto cycle]
Signed and dated by *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki* plus his monogram



(Kiku) 菊
(oka) 岡
(Mitsu) 光
(yuki) 行
(kaô) 花押

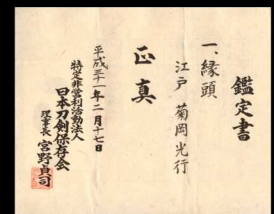
天 (Ten)
明 (mei)
五 (go)
夏 (natsu)
巳 (mi)
巳 (tsuchinoto)
作 (tsukuru)
之 (kore o)



According to Markus Sesko in his *Kinko Kodogu* publication, master metalsmith *Kikuoka Mitsuyuki*, founder of the *Kikuoka school*, was born into a family of significant cultural pedigree. His father and his grandfather were renowned *haiku* and *waka* poets. Their pseudonym *Senryô* was later passed on to Mitsuyuki.

Some of Mitsuyuki's work has attained prestigious NBTHK Jûyô Tôken and hints of poetic inspiration echo in his creations.

This fuchi-kashira comes with a Kanteisho certificate of authenticity from the NTHK-NPO - this piece alone is a rare and valuable work of art.





The kanji character for 'kane' in *Yoshikane*, is curiously shaped like a slithering snake.





kashira (pommel)

Poetry in flight.

Note how the detailed *shakudo nanako* (raised dot pattern) captures the freedom the small birds enjoy in the open sky.







on the move..

A complimentary sword maintenance kit with *mekugi-nuki* and a bottle of *Fujishiro* sword oil (trusted by the Japanese sword museum) is included with all sword purchases.

A printed and bound copy of the sword's full description from the catalogue is also included!



safe, extra large cloth for adding oil to the blade