



ITEM# UJKA328

AN AOE YOSHITSUGU KATANA

UNSIGNED WITH GOLD INLAY, KAMAKURA PERIOD (CIRCA 1326~1329)

Swordsmith: *Aoe Yoshitsugu (o-suriage nakago, attribution by Hon'ami Tenrai)*
Measurements: **Length:** 70.3cm **Curvature:** 1.6cm **Moto-haba:** 2.8cm
Jihada: *Ko-itame-hada with namazu-hada (catfish), chikei and dan-utsuri*
Hamon: *Suguha-chô mixed with saka-chôji in ko-nie deki*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Conservation)
Certificate #2-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (koshirae, tsuba & fuchi-kashira designated as authentic)
Fujishiro: **Jojo-saku** (ranked as a highly superior smith)
Authentication: *Sayagaki by Tanobe sensei + Origami and hakogaki by Hon'ami Tenrai*
Included: Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

This beautiful katana from the late Kamakura period has been attributed to *jojo-saku* (highly superior) swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* from the prestigious *Aoe school*. Works by *Yoshitsugu* are rare and highly celebrated with certain works having attained coveted *Tokubetsu Juyo*, *Juyo Bijutsuhin*, and *Juyo Bunkazai*. This particular katana was first attributed to *Yoshitsugu* by *Hon'ami Tenrai* in 1935. He signed the nakago in gold inlay and included a lovely *washi-paper origami* inside a collectible *hakogaki* - signed wood box. This is a blade that carries many of the dignified hallmarks of the *Aoe school* such as the presence of *namazu-hada* (catfish skin), dark spots inside the body and light *dan-utsuri* (reflective linear shadow hamon). The bright *suguha-hamon* slants in parts forming *saka-choji*, which again, gives extra flair to study. A handsome set of certified *koshirae* with *Soten school* fittings and a mother-of-pearl *saya* (scabbard) look superb on display.



Saki-kasane: 4.4mm
Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Kissaki: 3.06cm
Saki-haba: 1.87cm

Nagasa: 70.3cm

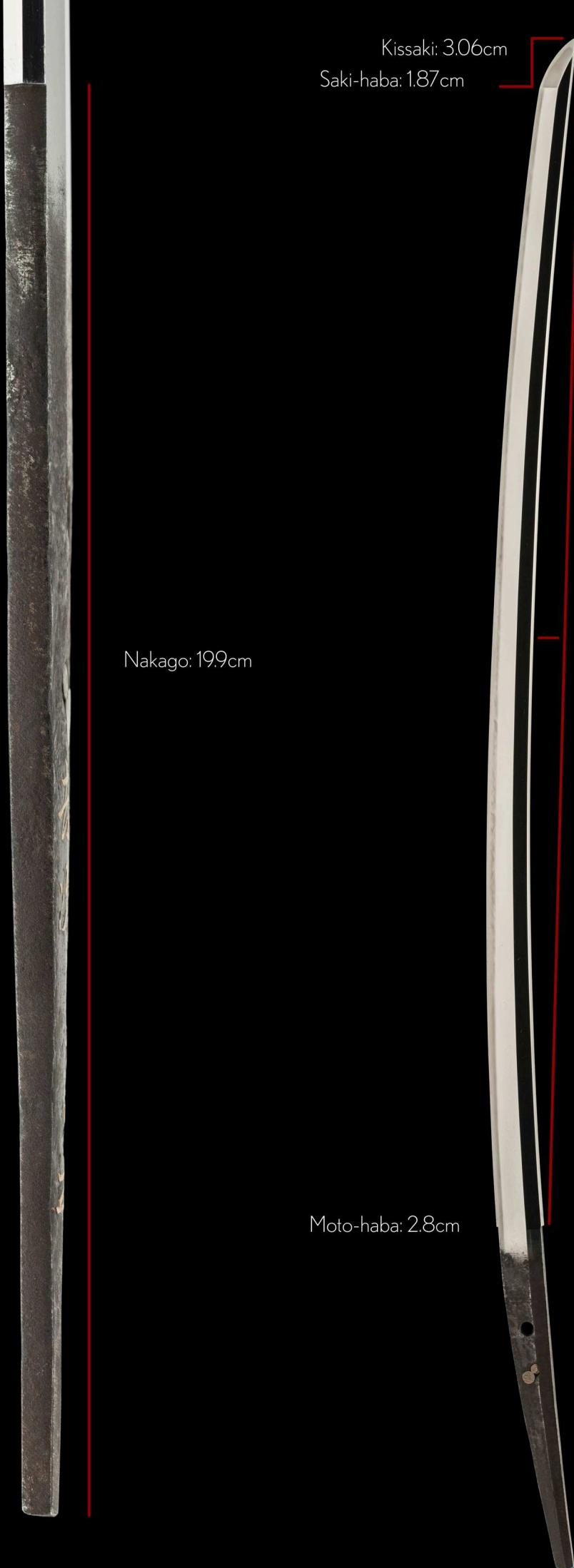
Nakago: 19.9cm

Sori: 1.6cm

Omosa: 710g

Moto-haba: 2.8cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* from the prestigious Aoe school is said to be the son of *Tôshichirô Yoshitsugu*, and bore the honorary title of *Uemon no Jô* that was raised to *Saemon no Jô* during the *Karyaku era*.

Dated signatures are known from the second year of *Genkô era* (1322) to the *Kôei era* (1342-1345).

Yoshitsugu is ranked *Jojo-saku*, a highly superior swordsmith.



Yoshitsugu Hon'a

Yoshitsugu, appraised by *Hon'a [mi Tenrai]*

(Yoshi) 吉

(tsugu) 次

(Hon') 本

(a) 阿

(monogram)

吉次

本阿
本





nakago (*ura*, reverse side)

特保
27201507

№ 1004267



鑑定書

一刀 (金粉銘) 吉次 本阿 (花押) (天籟)

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

平成二十七年 八月十七日

公益財団法人 日本美術刀剣保存協會



證牌 教育委員会
第 21719 号
昭和 29 年 5 月 21 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 27th year of Heisei (2015), August 17th

One, *Katana*

Kimpun-me

(appraisal signature with gold dust)

Yoshitsugu

Hon'a (kaô) (Tenrai)

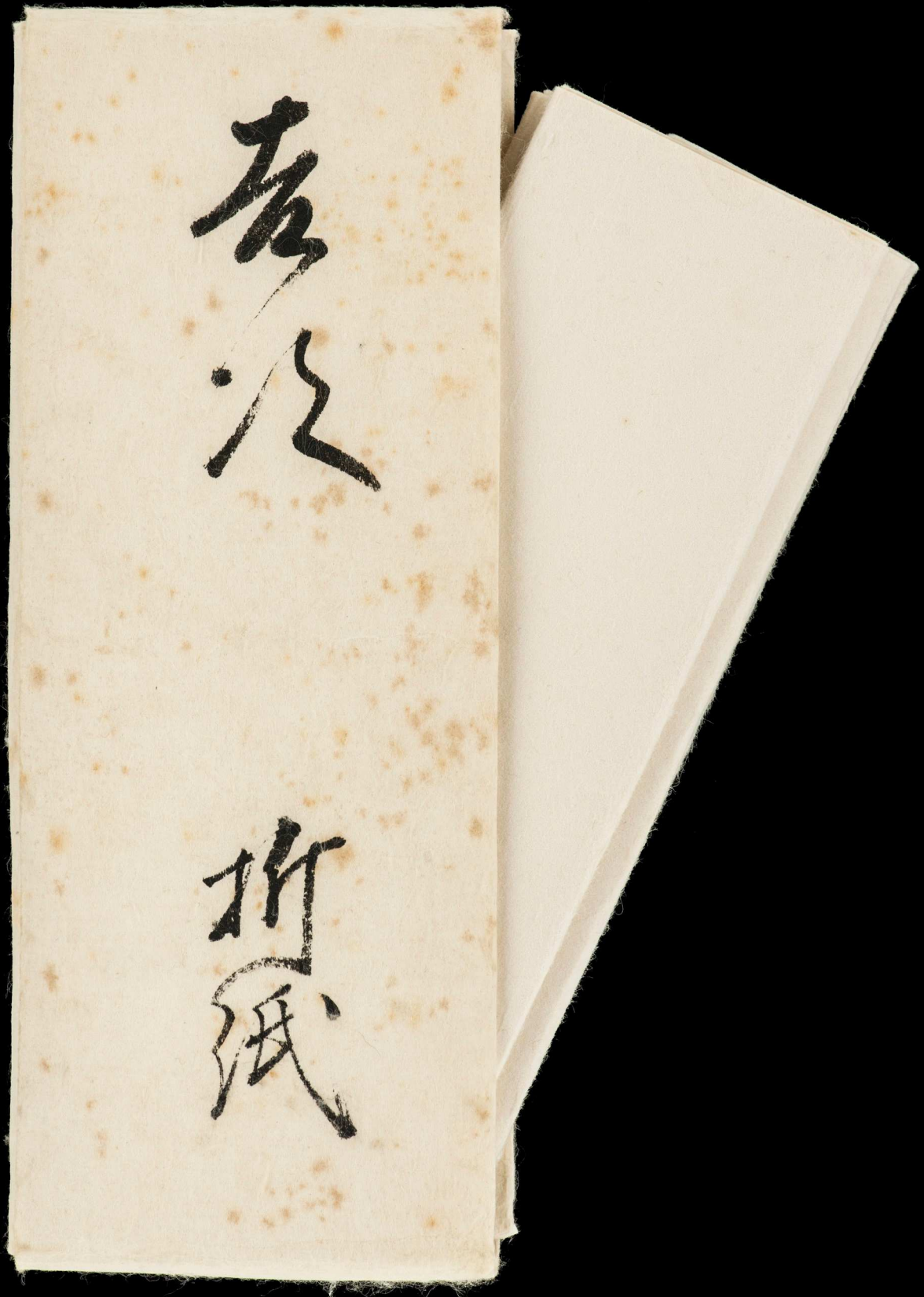
Nagasa (length)

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

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

Yoshitsugu Ontô Origami
Yoshitsugu sword certification
in its original *hakogaki* (signed box)





Yoshitsugu Origami
(Yoshitsugu certificate)

青江吉次

正真

長貳尺參寸貳分有之但シ銘名判入金粉也
今肩之得シ銘名判入金粉也

代貳千貫

昭和拾年亥
八月三日

本阿

Aoe Yoshitsugu (青江吉次)

Shôshin (正真, authentic)

Nagasa 2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu kore ari tadashi mei nahan-iri kinpun nari

(長貳尺參寸貳分有之但シ銘名判入金粉也)

Blade length (70.3cm) and the name of the maker was added in *kinpun* (gold inlay)

Dai nisen-kan (代貳千貫)

Value of sword: 2,000 kan (copper coins)

Shôwa jûnen i hachigatsu mikka (昭和拾年亥八月三日)

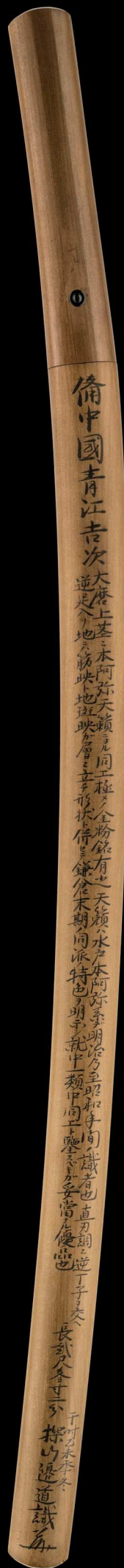
August 3rd, Shôwa ten (1935), Year of the Boar

Hon'a + kaô (本阿「花押」)

Hon'a + monogram

Shōwa jūnen hachigatsu kisshō, Hon'ami Tenrai + kaō (personal seal)
Certified by Hon'ami Tenrai and dated to a lucky day in August 1935





備中國青江吉次
Bitchû no Kuni Aoe Yoshitsugu
 Aoe Yoshitsugu from Bitchû province

大磨上茎二本阿弥天籟ニヨル同工極メノ金粉銘有之
 天籟ハ水戸本阿弥系デ明治乃至昭和年間ノ識者也直
 刃調ニ逆丁子ヲ交ヘ逆足入り地ニハ筋映ト地斑映ガ
 層ニ立チ形状ト併セテ鎌倉末期ノ同派ノ特色ヲ明示
 シ就中一類中同工ト鑒スベキガ妥當ナル優品ナリ

Ô-suriage nakago ni Hon'ami Tenrai ni yoru dôkô kiwame no kinpun-mei kore ari Tenrai wa Mito Hon'ami-kei de Meiji naishi Shôwa nenkan no shikisha nari suguha-chô ni saka-chôji o majie saka-ashi iri ji ni wa suji-utsuri to jifu-utsuri ga sô ni tachi keijô to awasete Kamakura-makki no dôha no tokushoku o meiji shi nakanzuku ichirui-chû dôkô to kansubeki ga datô naru yûhin nari

The blade has an *ô-suriage nakago* that bears a *kinpun-mei* attribution to swordsmith *Yoshitsugu* by *Honami Tenrai*. *Tenrai* was an expert from the *Mito branch* of the *Honami* family who was active from the *Meiji* to the *Shôwa* eras. The blade shows a *suguha-chô* that is mixed with *saka-chôji* and *saka-ashi* and we see layers of linear *utsuri* as well as a *jifu-utsuri*.

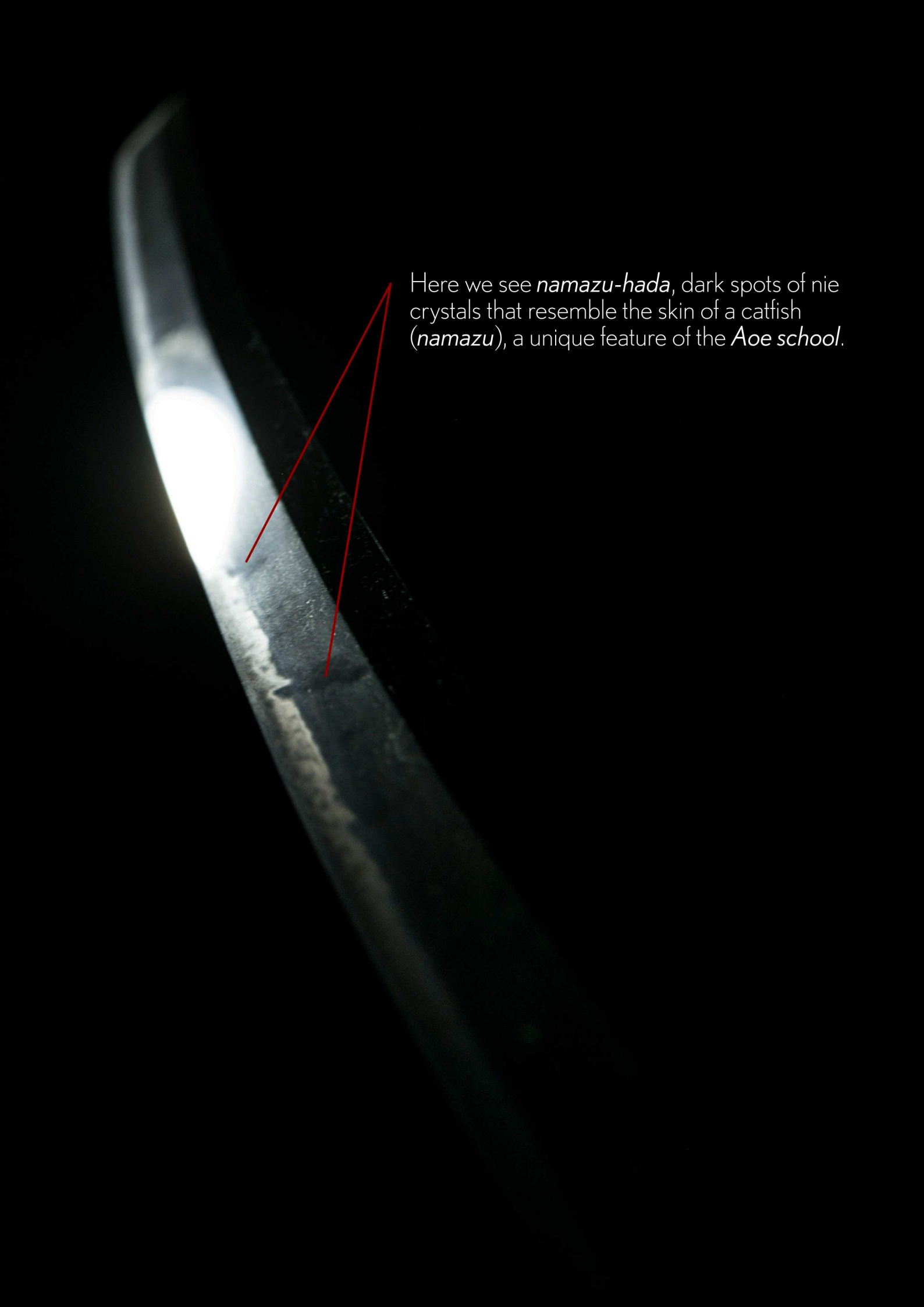
When we combine all of this with the shape of the blade, we not only recognise the characteristic features of the Aoe school from the late Kamakura period but we can also agree that the attribution of this masterpiece to *Yoshitsugu* is entirely accurate.

長貳尺參寸二分
Nagasa 2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu
 Blade length ~70.3 cm

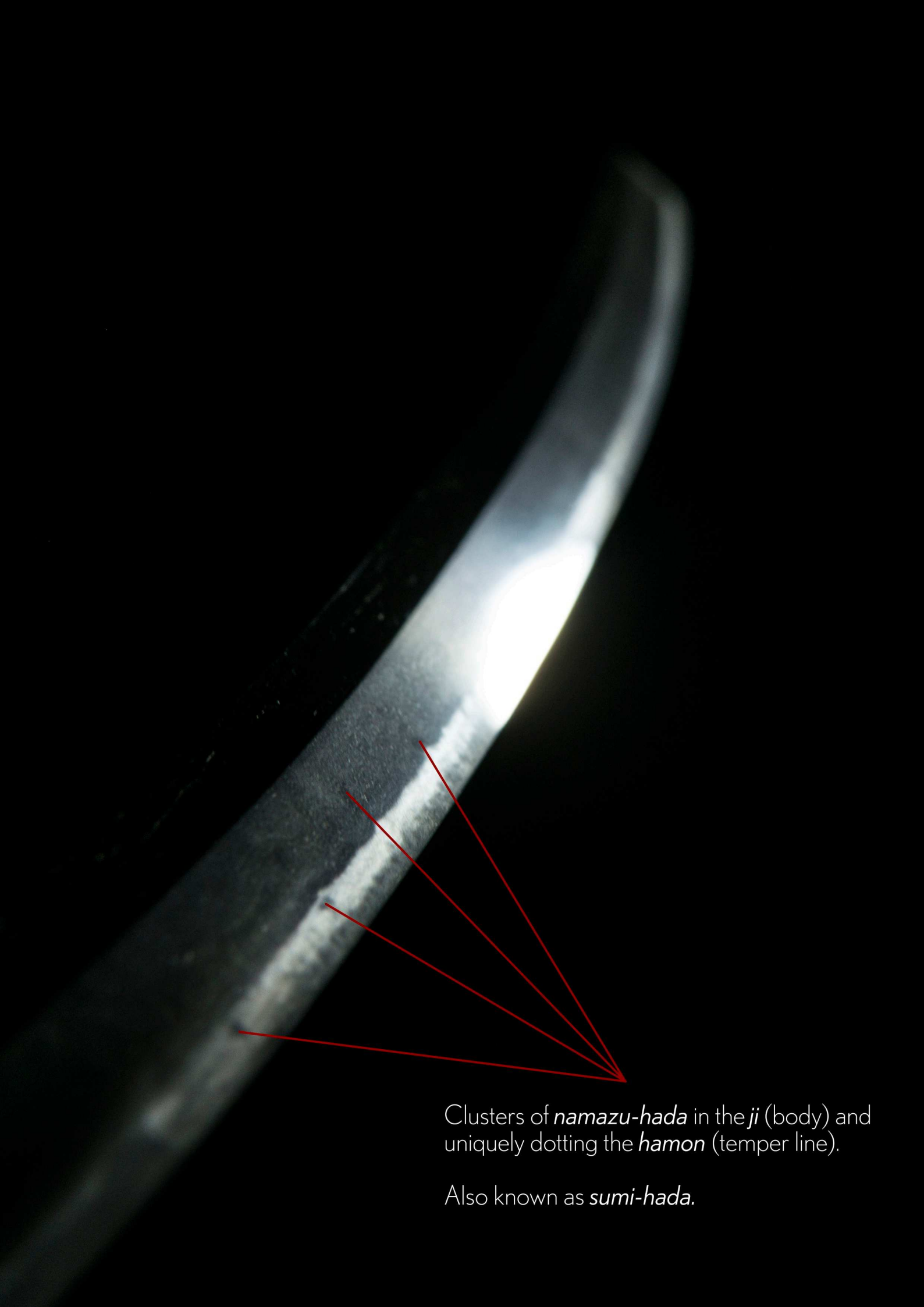
于時乙未季冬探山邊道識「花押」
kono toki kinoto-hitsuji kitô Tanzan Hendô shirusu + kaô
 Written by Tanzan Hendô in December of the Year of the Sheep of this era (2015) + kaô







Here we see *namazu-hada*, dark spots of nie crystals that resemble the skin of a catfish (*namazu*), a unique feature of the *Aoe school*.



Clusters of *namazu-hada* in the *ji* (body) and uniquely dotting the *hamon* (temper line).

Also known as *sumi-hada*.



The *hamon* is comprised of thick blanket
tiny particles of nie, known as *ko-nie*.

Note how the hamon slants ever so
gently, known as *saka-choji*, another
characteristic of the Aoe school.

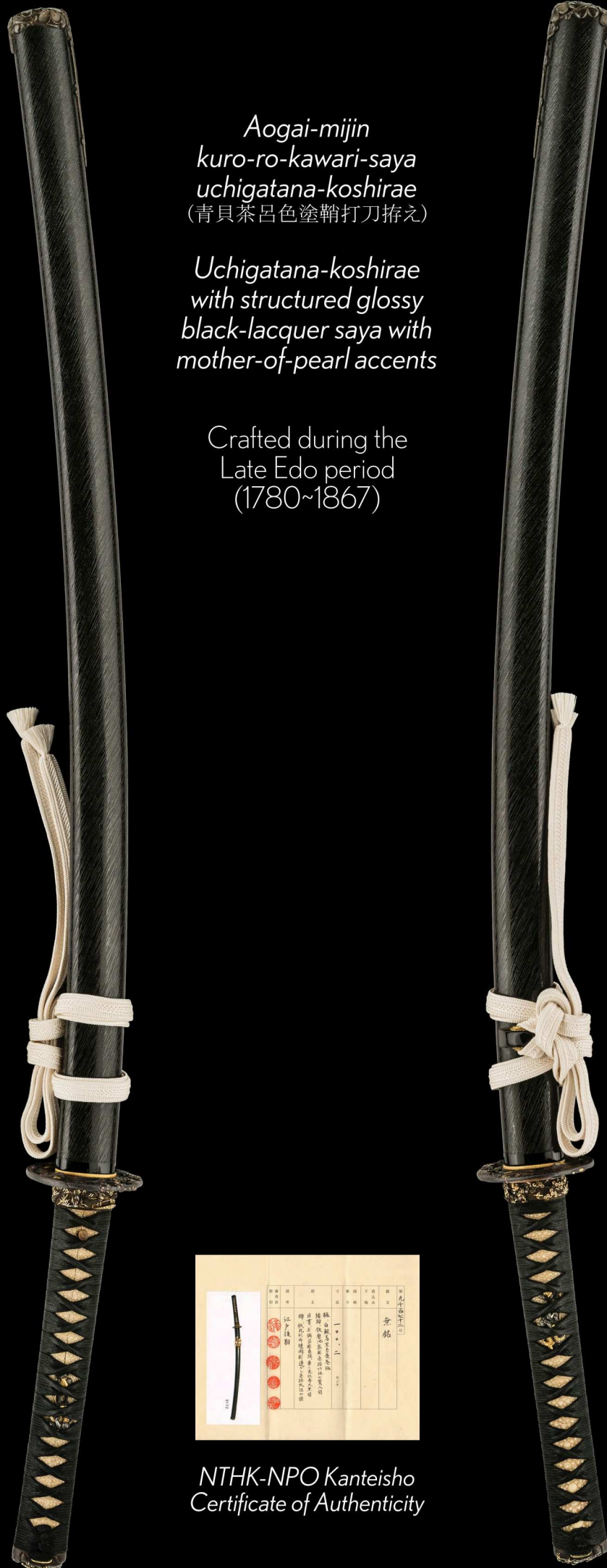


The katana showcases *dan-utsuri*, multiple layers of linear *utsuri* (a type of shadow or reflection in the body) a key characteristic of the Aoe School.

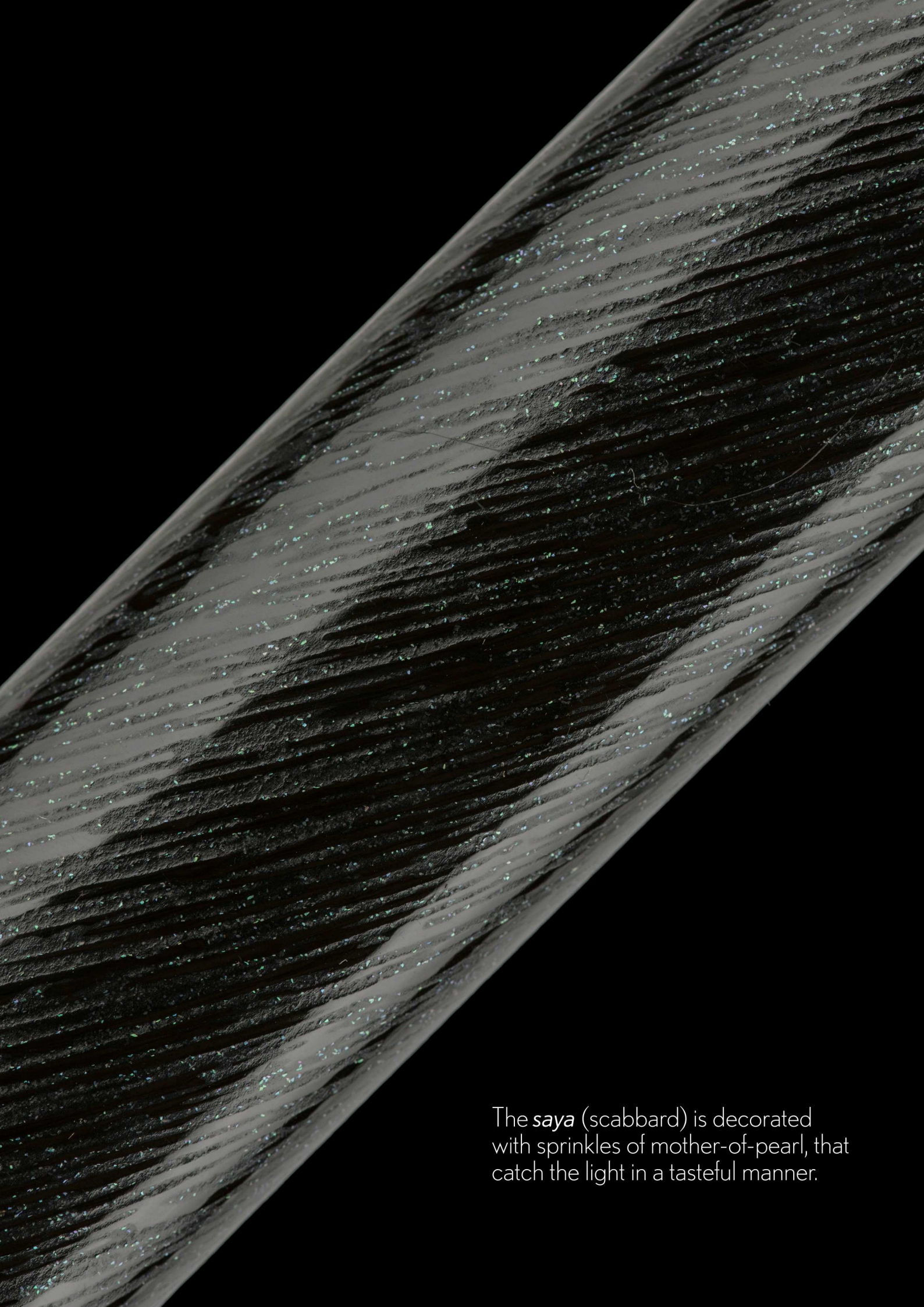
Aogai-mijin
kuro-ro-kawari-saya
uchigatana-koshirae
(青貝茶呂色塗鞘打刀拵え)

Uchigatana-koshirae
with structured glossy
black-lacquer saya with
mother-of-pearl accents

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



The *saya* (scabbard) is decorated with sprinkles of mother-of-pearl, that catch the light in a tasteful manner.



The *kijiri* (protective end cap) of the *saya* (scabbard) is a prime example of form meeting function. The intricate metal design of a branch of plum blossoms symbolize change as they bloom earlier than *sakura* (cherry blossom).

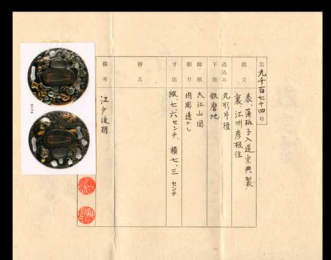
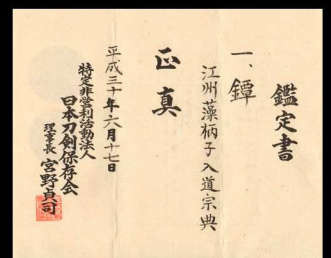




This is a stunning polished iron tsuba signed *Goshu Soheishi Nyudo Soten* crafted during the late Edo period.

The design tells the story of *Shuten-doji* a mythical *oni* or demon leader of Japan, who according to legend, was killed by the hero *Minamoto Raiko*. Although decapitated, the demon's detached head still took a bite at the hero, who avoided death by wearing multiple helmets stacked upon his head. Shuten-doji had his lair at *Mt. Oe* northwest of the city of Kyoto.

An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity attributing the piece to the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1867 has been attained.





(reverse)





Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Mogarashi Sôten in Edo
(1700 - 1780)

Chikurin nana-kenjin
(the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove),



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) depict the joyful scene of the lucky gods of *Ebisu-ten* and *Daikoku-ten* on a cart.





Ebisu is the famous Japanese god of fishermen, luck, and workingmen, as well as the guardian of the health of small children. Ebisu is often portrayed holding a rod and a large red sea bream or sea bass.

Daikokuten or *Daikoku* is widely known in Japan as the happy-looking god of wealth, farmers, food, and good fortune, although in earlier centuries he was considered a fierce warrior deity.



Koshirae bag