



ITEM# UJKA357

SOLD

A NIÔ SANEKIYO KATANA

SIGNED & DATED, MIDDLE MUROMACHI (BUNMEI ERA: FEBRUARY 1470)

- Swordsmith:** *Niô Sanekiyo (machi-okuri nakago)*
Measurements: **Length:** 69.4cm **Curvature:** 1.0cm **Motohaba:** 2.72cm
Jihada: *Expertly forged itame-hada and nagare-hada with chikei and shirake utsuri*
Hamon: *Laser beam suguha hamon with ko-ashi and uchinoke*
Certificate 1-2: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (sword and fk are Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate 3-4: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (a koshirae and tsuba designated as Authentic)
Included: Shirasaya, custom koshirae, stand, kit, DVD, booklet, printed description

SOLD

The *Niô* name is said to originate to the *Niho* manor of *Suô* province. *Suô* was home to many properties owned by the *Todaiji* (Great Eastern Buddhist Temple) in *Yamato* (Nara), the former capital of Japan. As *Niô* School blades have a strong resemblance to *Yamato* works, it is assumed that there was a technical exchange between the two places.

This rare and special katana by *Niô Sanekiyo* has been signed and dated to February 1470 and exudes a palpable sense of history. The complex *jihada* is a sublime mixture of *itame-hada*, *mokume-hada* and *nagare-hada*. It casts a velvety glow that lifts the spirit. The bright *suguha hamon* on this freshly polished 550-year-old katana encourages the heart to walk a higher path.

An exquisite set of custom koshirae with an eye-catching ripple design on the *saya* celebrates the journey and struggle towards leading a more virtuous life. This is a gem of a samurai sword.



Saki-kasane: 4.4mm

Moto-kasane: 6.8mm

Omosa: 745g

Kissaki: 2.73cm
Saki-haba: 1.82cm

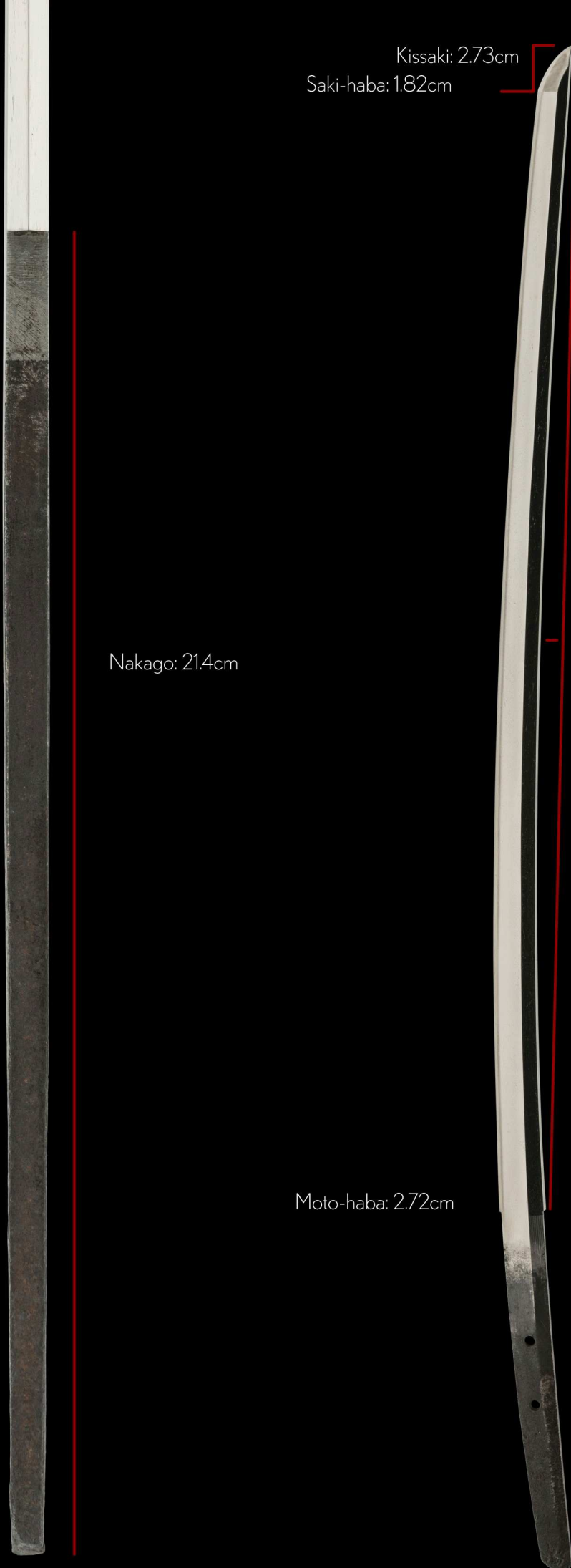
Nakago: 21.4cm

Moto-haba: 2.72cm

Nagasa: 69.4cm

Sori: 1.00cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



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As *Niô School* blades have a strong resemblance to Yamato works, it is assumed that there was a technical exchange between the two places.

Kiyotsuna is the founder of the school. A tachi that was dated to *March 1265* is being preserved at the famous *Itsukushima-jinja*.

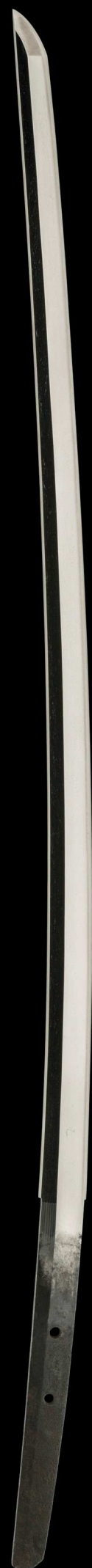


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An exquisite set of custom koshirae with an eye-catching ripple design on the *saya*, a unique *Hakke*-inspired *tsuba* and artistically playful *fuchi-kashira* celebrates the journey and struggle towards leading a more virtuous life.

This is a gem of a samurai sword.





Location: *Suô* (resident of Yamaguchi)

School name: *Niô*

Swordsmith: *Sanekiyo*

machi-okuri-nakago (shortened tang)

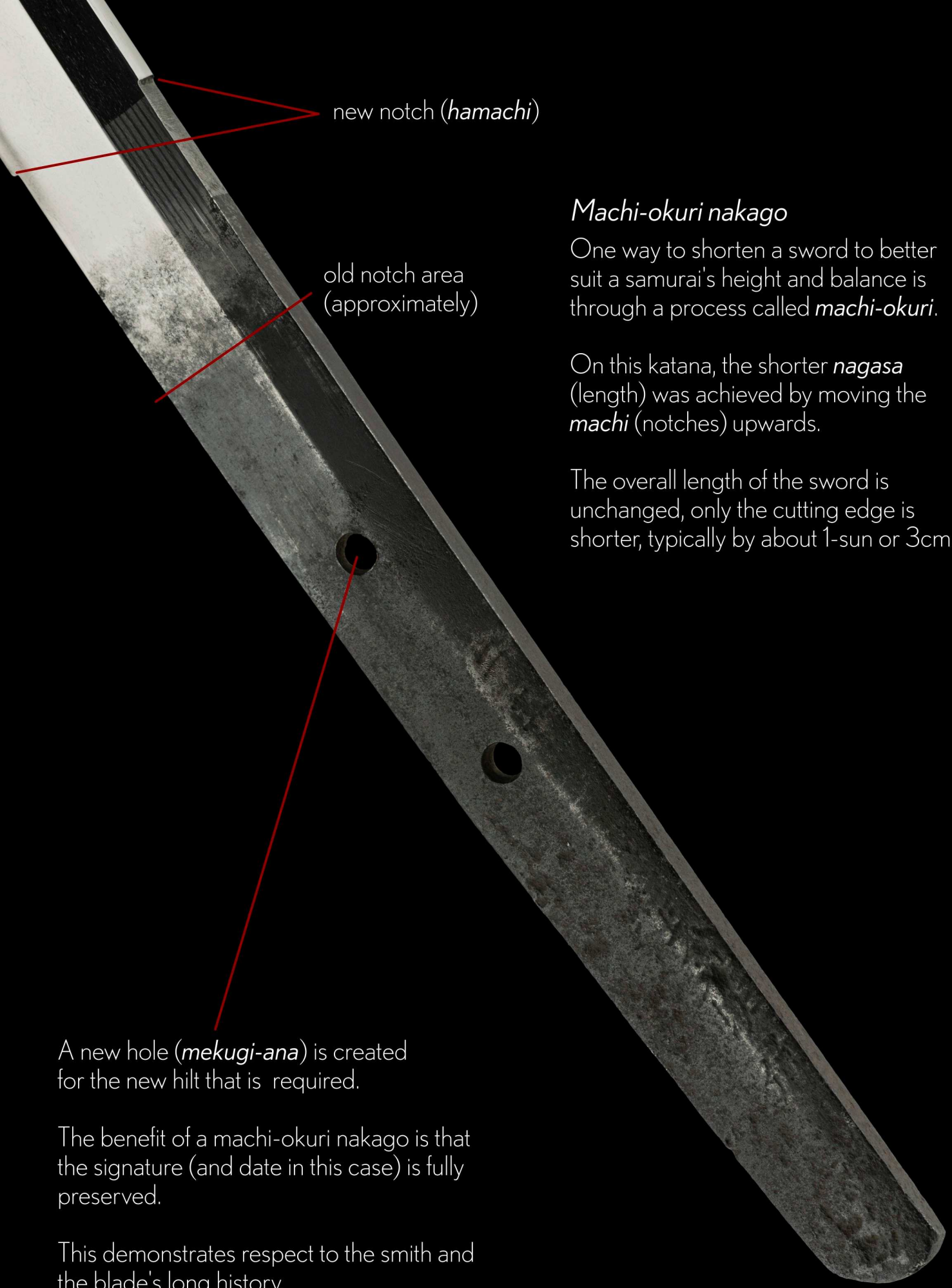
二 (Ni)

王 (ô)

実 (Sane)

清 (kiyo)

作 (saku)



new notch (*hamachi*)

old notch area
(approximately)

Machi-okuri nakago

One way to shorten a sword to better suit a samurai's height and balance is through a process called *machi-okuri*.

On this katana, the shorter *nagasa* (length) was achieved by moving the *machi* (notches) upwards.

The overall length of the sword is unchanged, only the cutting edge is shorter, typically by about 1-sun or 3cm.

A new hole (*mekugi-ana*) is created for the new hilt that is required.

The benefit of a *machi-okuri nakago* is that the signature (and date in this case) is fully preserved.

This demonstrates respect to the smith and the blade's long history.

Bunmei ni toshi nigatsu

This *katana* was dated to a day in the second month during the second year of *Bunmei era* (February 1470).

(Bun) 文
(mei) 明
(ni) 二
(toshi) 歲
(ni) 二
(gatsu) 月





This sword celebrated its 550th birthday in February 2020.

30201803

No 1008820



鑑定書
二王実清作
文明二歳二月
長二尺二寸九分弱
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
平成三十年六月十三日
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 318470 号
平成30年 2 月 13 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

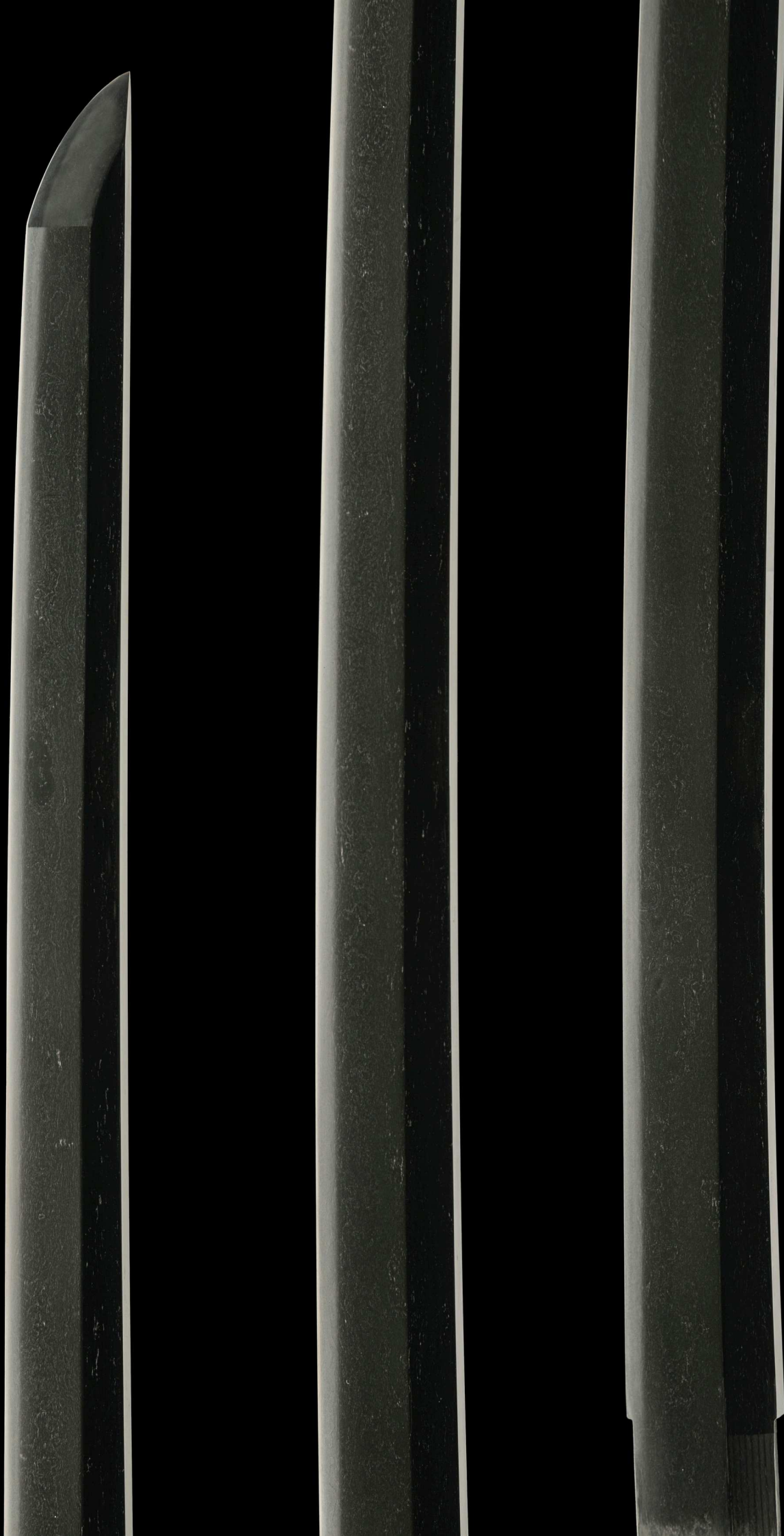
Issued in the 30th year of Heisei (2018), June 13th

One, Katana

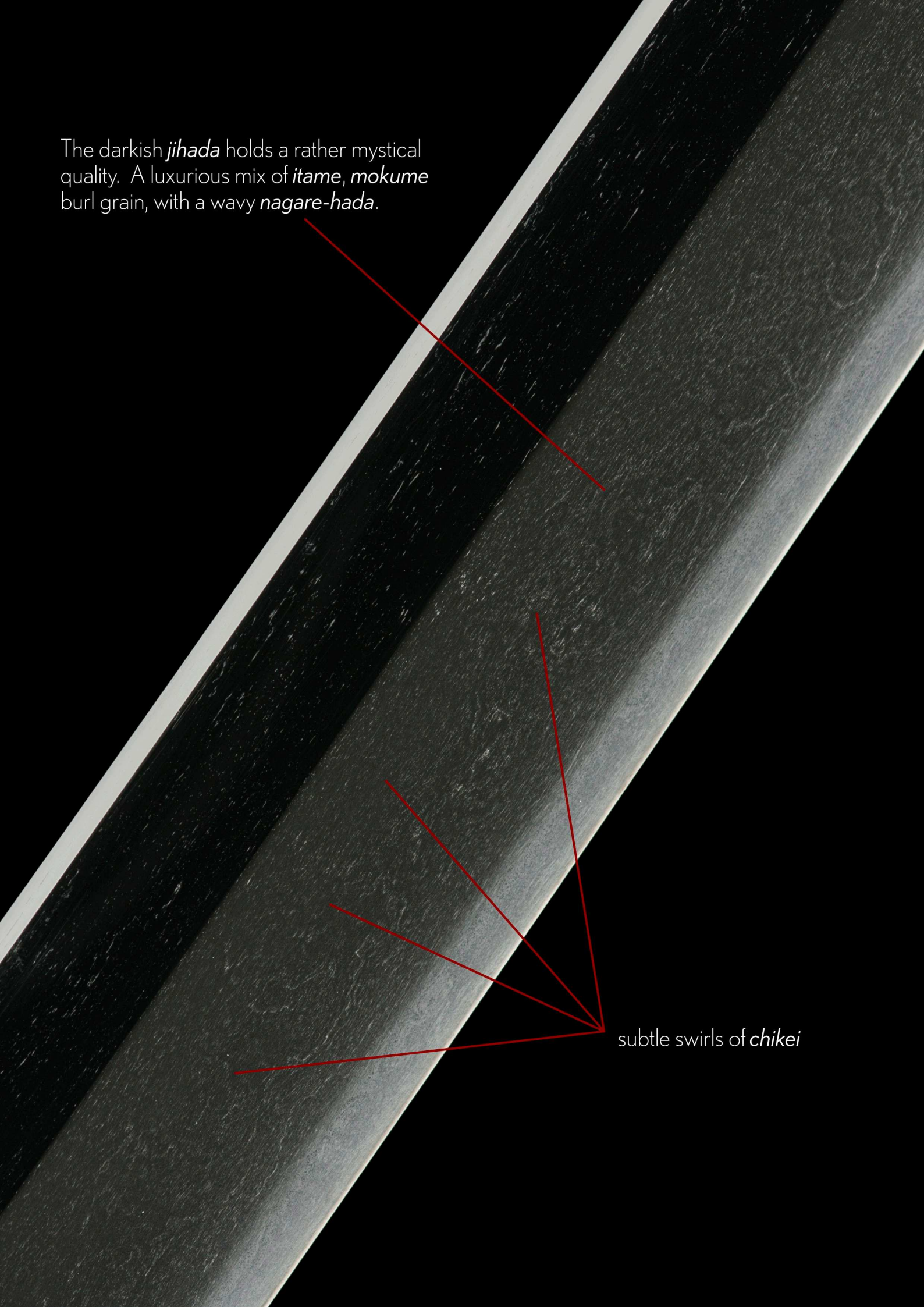
Mei (signature)
Niô Sanekiyo saku
Bunmei ni toshi nigatsu

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-sun 9-bu jaku (69.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)







The darkish *jihada* holds a rather mystical quality. A luxurious mix of *itame*, *mokume* burl grain, with a wavy *nagare-hada*.


subtle swirls of *chikei*



The *suguha hamon* eclipses
into a rounded *komaru-boshi*.



The magnificent, complex texture of
the *jihada* comes alive under the light.



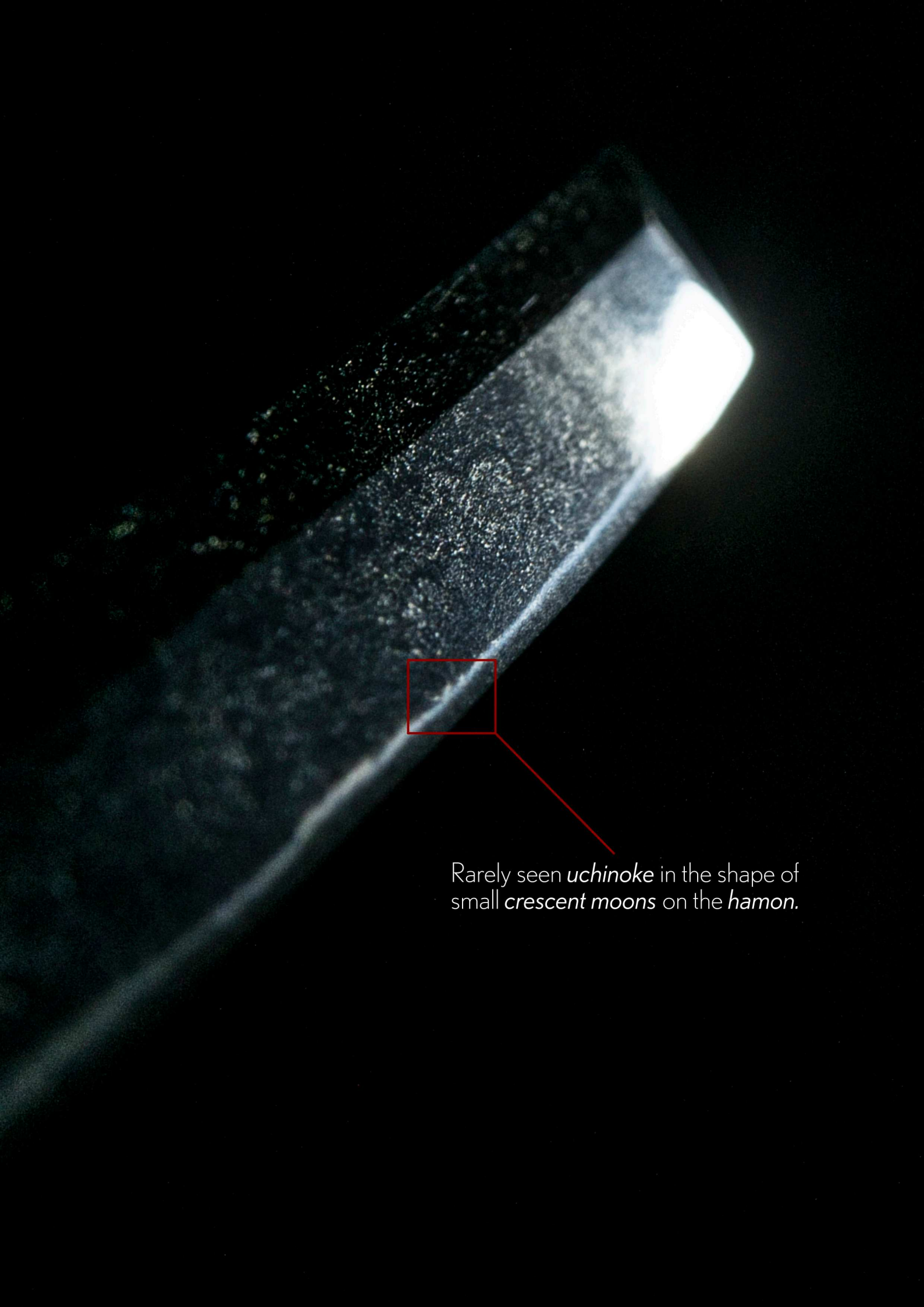
A bright beam of *suguha hamon*
illuminates the *Niô Sanekiyô* katana.

Ko-ashi (tiny legs) can be seen
marching below the temper line.

shirake-utsuri



Gently rotating the blade under the light
will reveal a gorgeous *shirake-utsuri*.



Rarely seen *uchinoke* in the shape of small *crescent moons* on the *hamon*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
horizontal file marks

The signature of the maker, *Mizuo*.

瑞者
白





Ripples represent the potential influence and effect of wisdom in our hearts and minds, and the hearts and minds of others.

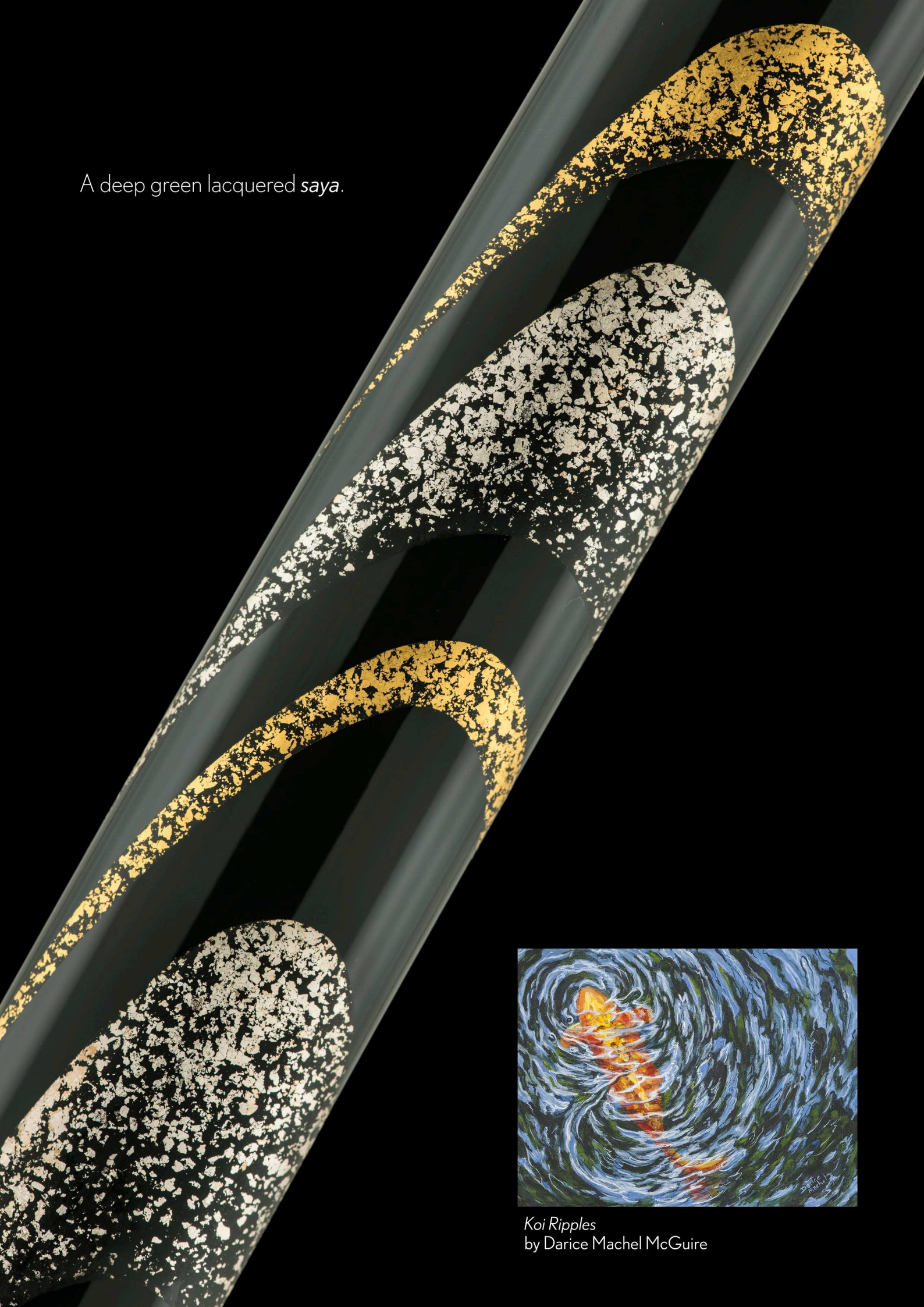
It describes symbolically that an action once completed cannot be reversed.

The cause-effect chain that results from it goes out and out as more effects result from the causes. Your actions have consequences.



Skilfully laid dustings of gold and silver *maki-e* create the ripple effect.

A deep green lacquered saya.



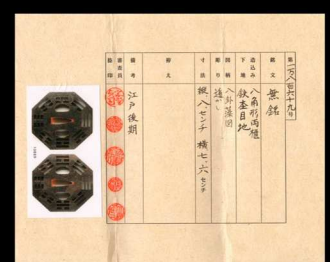
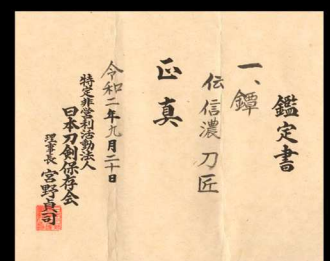
Koi Ripples
by Darice Machel McGuire

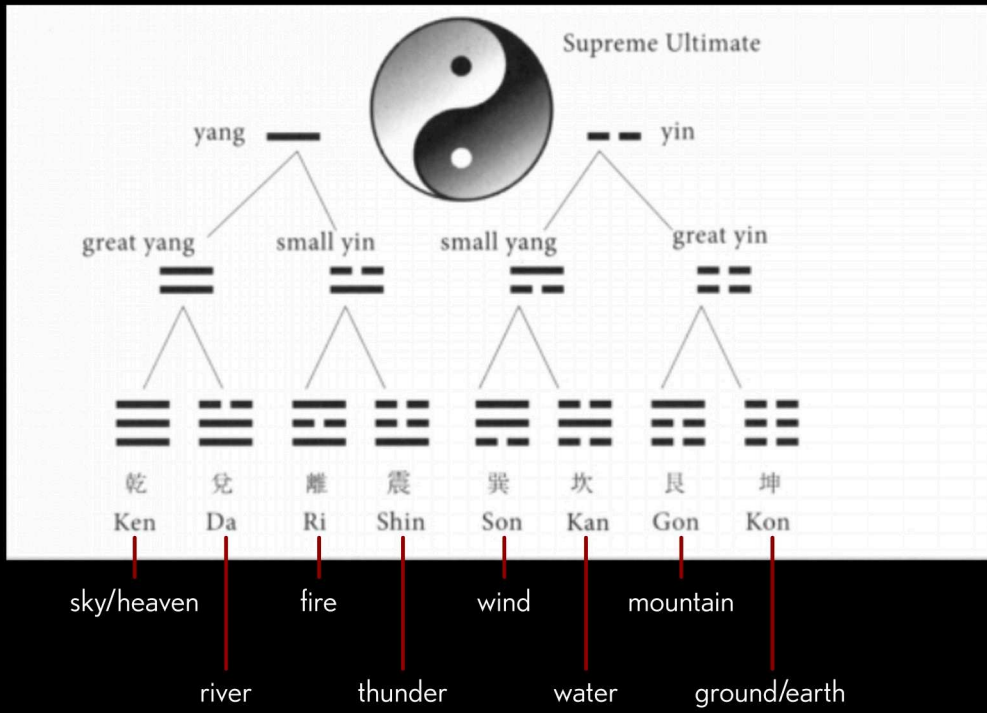


This remarkable polished iron octagonal-shaped *tsuba* in the form of eight *trigrams* known as *Hakke*. These *trigrams* were thought to originate from the two poles (*ying* and *yang*) - a symbolic expression of the creation of the cosmos itself made up of elements of nature such as fire, wind, sky, etc.

Hakke originated from China and was used extensively during the Edo period as a fortune-telling guide towards spiritual enlightenment.

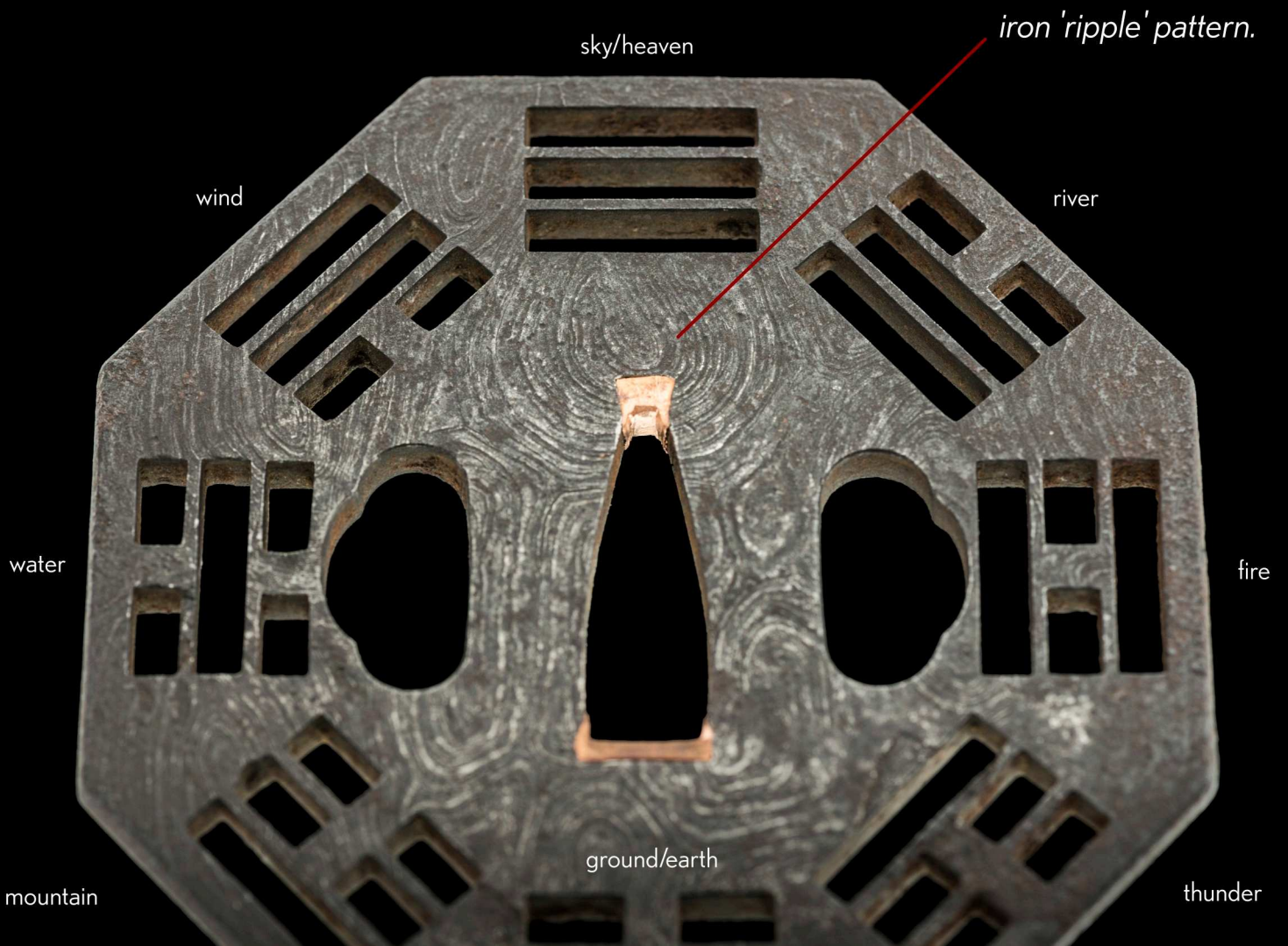
An NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate of authenticity has been attained attributing the piece to *Shinano Tōshō* - the work of a swordsmith during the *late-Edo period* circa 1780~1867.





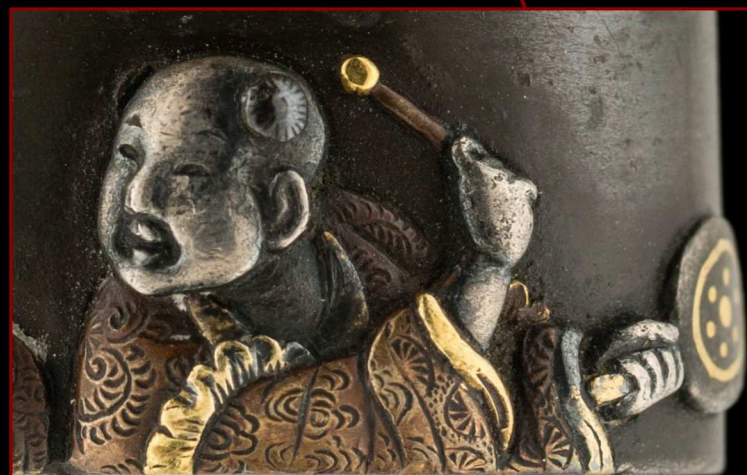
Universal elements that lead us to shine in supreme life balance (maturity).

Notice the burl grain rippled pattern in the iron that comes from folded steel at the hands of a swordsmith.





The *fuchi* (collar) captures a joyful scene of two boys playing a decorative glass flute and drum.



The *fuchi-kashira* is signed:
Jounsai Hirotoishi + *kaô* (his personal monogram)

The calligraphic feel of this artist's signature is most impressive.

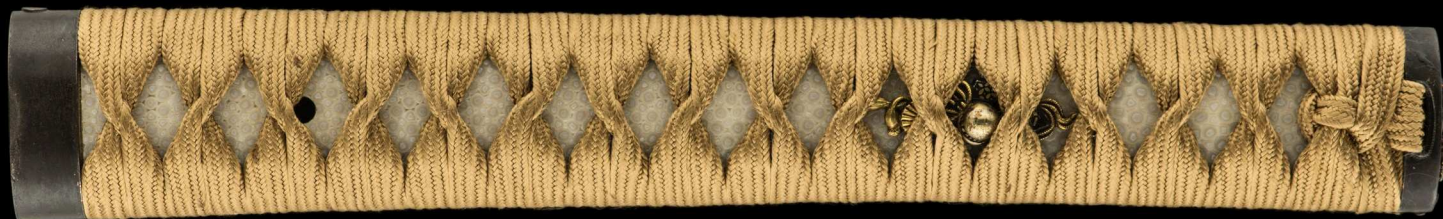




A young boy play gallops with his stick horse.

Given the quality of this chap's clothing and the toy itself, he must certainly belong to an aristocratic family.

The attention to detail in the artwork is to be admired.



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) are of *hōju-no zu* (a precious orb).
This jewel is concealed under the gold-braided silk as the prize of enlightenment.



A katana that evokes a sense of balance,
mystery, joy, wisdom and personal treasure.

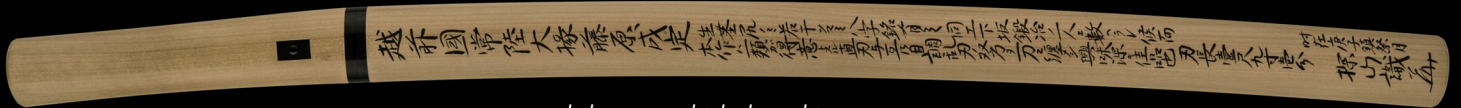


Submit, Repair, Sell & Create!

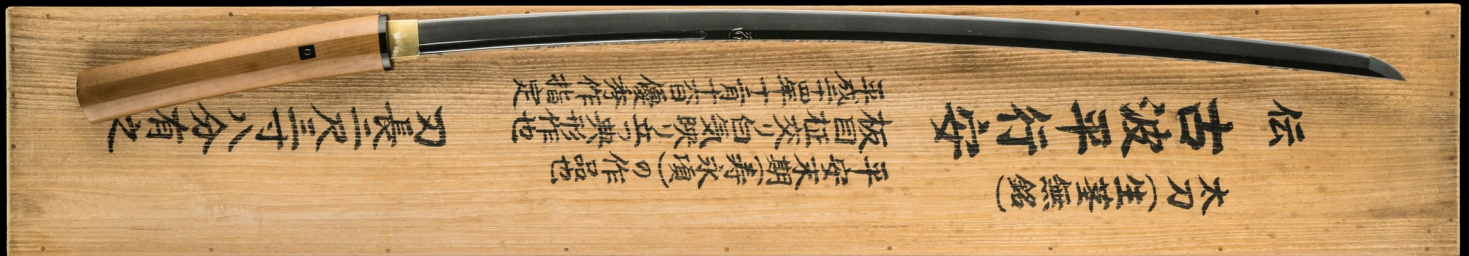
Unique Japan offers a *full-service menu* to assist clients with their Japanese swords and fittings. All services are performed in Japan with top quality craftsmen and women.

Services include (non exhaustive):

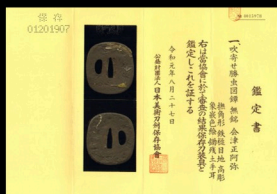
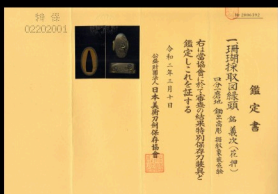
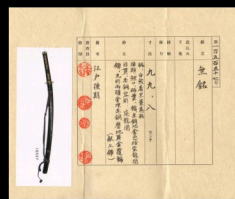
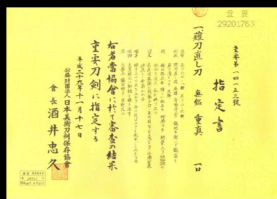
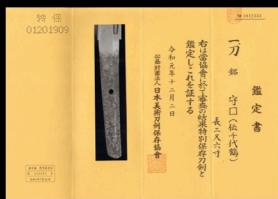
- * NBTHK and NTHK-NPO *shinsa* certification (swords and fittings)
- * polishing for all types of Japanese swords (standard to Jûyô-level quality polish)
- * *shirasaya* making (standard to high quality with horn fittings)
- * *habaki* making (gold, silver, copper in most any design pattern)
- * fix wobbly koshirae, repair cracked scabbards, new lacquer work, etc.
- * *otoshi* presentation boxes for your beautiful *tsuba*, *menuki*, *fuch-kashira*, etc.
- * *tsuka-maki* (re-wrap your hilts in silk or leather in most any colour, weave or braid)
- * *oshigata* (sword/hamon tracing on a scroll with a large choice of background)
- * *sayagaki* services with *Tanobe-sensei* (qualifying conditions apply)
- * sword boxes with *hakogaki* (with humidifying options for dry climates)
- * custom koshirae projects (see separate page)
- * sell your sword(s) on consignment (qualifying conditions apply)



polish, sayagaki, hakogaki



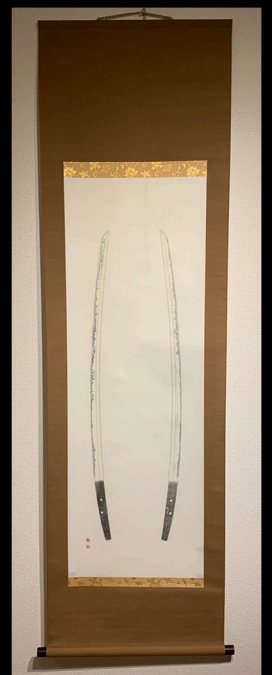
tsuka-maki



habaki creations



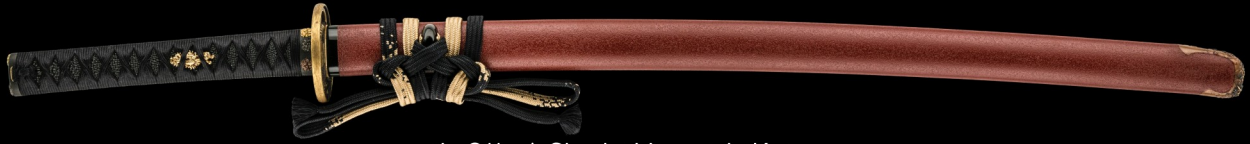
otoshi boxes



oshigata scrolls

All NBTHK and NTHK-NPO Shinsa authentication services

Building Your Own Custom Koshirae



ujka211 - A Shodai Hisamichi Katana
'Red dragon' Koshirae



ujwa130 - A Tadashige o-Wakizashi
'Ray skin' Koshirae

Many top quality samurai swords that Unique Japan acquires come stored in a *shirasaya* only. A *shirasaya* acts like a humidior, protecting the steel for the long term.

Just as the samurai would have ordered a custom *koshirae* (outdoor mounts) during the Edo period, you too can have a traditional set of *koshirae* crafted for your sword (or *daisho*) like a tailored suit in a theme that connects with your spirit.

At Unique Japan, we have proudly created dozens of custom *koshirae* projects for our clients over the years - each with their own style and energy.

The *tsuka* (hilt), *saya* (scabbard), *samekawa* (ray skin), silk, and lacquer is all handcrafted by skilled craftspeople in Japan. The *tsuba*, *fuchi-kashira*, *menuki* and other fittings are carefully sourced samurai antiques largely from the Edo period.

This unique blend of modern life meeting traditional history is what makes each creation so personally rewarding for every client.

The investment required ranges from \$4,000 to over \$10,000 depending on the quality of the fittings and the complexity of the lacquerwork. Each project also demands patience as many will take one year to complete (but it's well worth it).

Please contact Unique Japan for further details.



ujka173 - A Sadatsugu Juyo Katana
'Wave theme' Koshirae