

A Ko-Mihara Katana  
Nambokuchô period, circa 1356~1392  
Bingo province

Length: 68.5cm  
NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certificate  
NBTHK Hozon certificate  
2 x NTHK-NPO certificates



Saki-kasane: 4.3mm

Moto-kasane: 6.6mm

Kissaki: 3.20cm  
Saki-haba: 2.00cm

Nagasa: 68.5cm

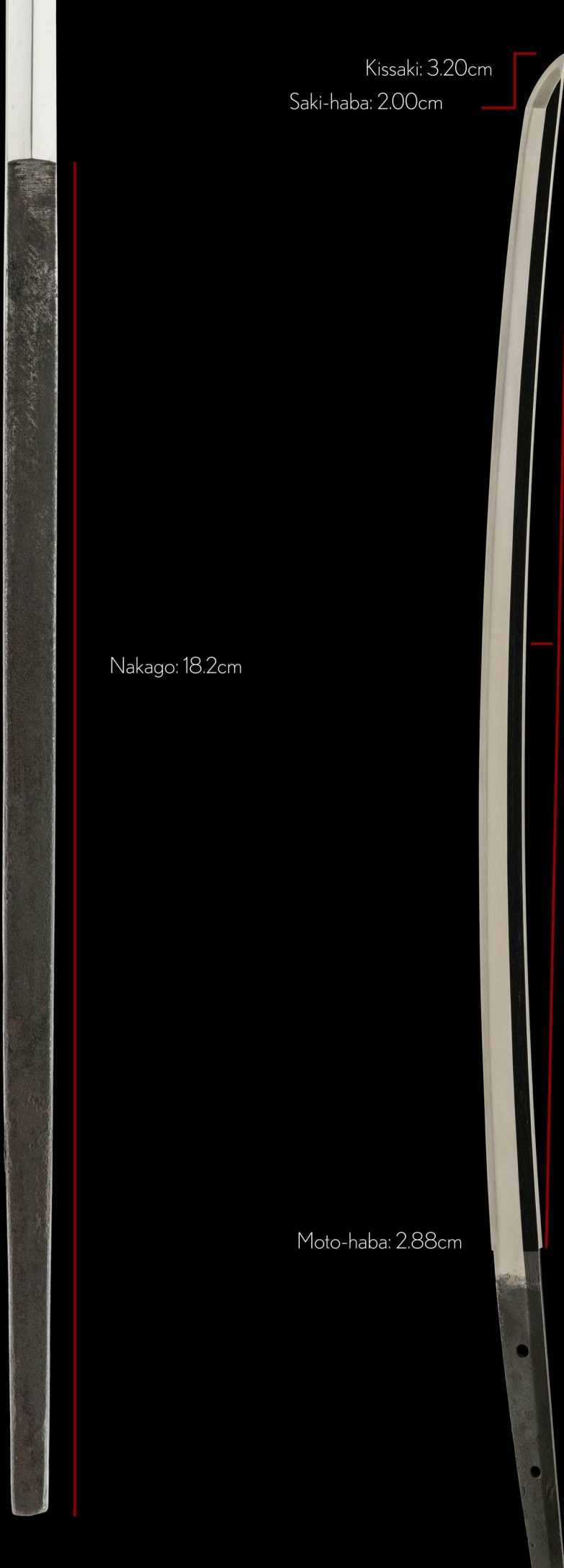
Nakago: 18.2cm

Sori: 1.60cm

Omosa: 660g

Moto-haba: 2.88cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



The *Mihara school* derives its name from a town called *Mihara* in Bingo province, which is today the eastern part of *Hiroshima* province. The school was founded by swordsmith *Masaie* and was active starting from the *Showa* era (1312~1317) at the end of the *Kamakura* period through to the end of the *Muromachi* period (~1600).

The *Yamato* tradition is distinctly recognizable in their workmanship. The school is divided in three terms: smiths active through to the Nambokuchô period are called *Ko-Mihara*. Early Muromachi period work is called *Chû-Mihara* and late Muromachi period is *Sue-Mihara*.

This katana has been judged to be from the *Ko-Mihara* school and certified NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon. The robust and powerful shape of the sword with a fairly broad *kissaki* (tip) is typical of the Nambokuchô period and would have originally been over 80cm in length.

The beautiful jihada is a mixture of *ko-mokume* (rounded burl grain) and *o-hada* and plentiful streaks of *chikei*. The hamon is a bright *chû-suguha* (straight) with long, impressive lines of *kinsuji*.





This sword was once a long tachi made in the *Nambokuchô period*. In approximately the late *Muromachi period* (1500s), it was greatly shortened to its *ô-suriage nakago* thus losing any signature on the blade (if there was one).

The shortening procedure was carefully and the patina of *nakago* is even and well-kept.



特 保  
01201909

No 1012421



鑑定書

一 刀 無 銘 (古三原)

長二尺二寸六分

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

令和元年十二月二日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



愛知県 教育委員会  
第 45120 号  
昭和48年7月20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

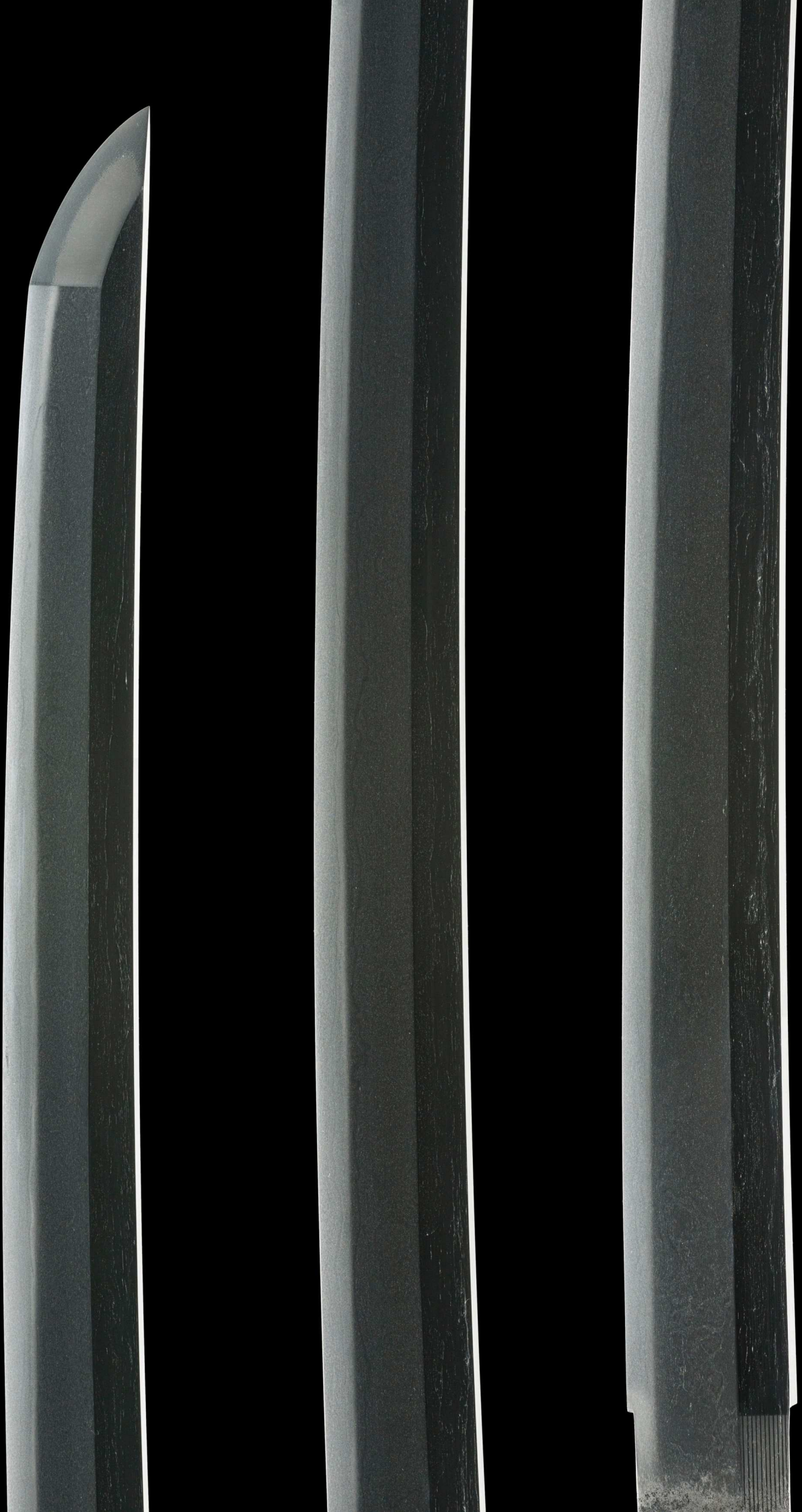
Issued in the 1st year of Reiwa (2019), December 2nd


One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Ko-Mihara*

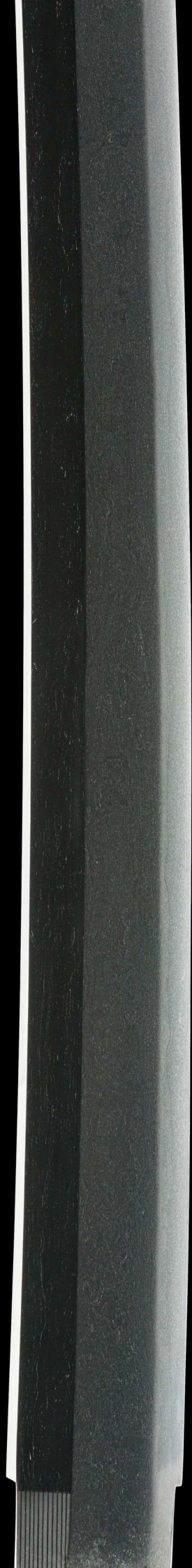
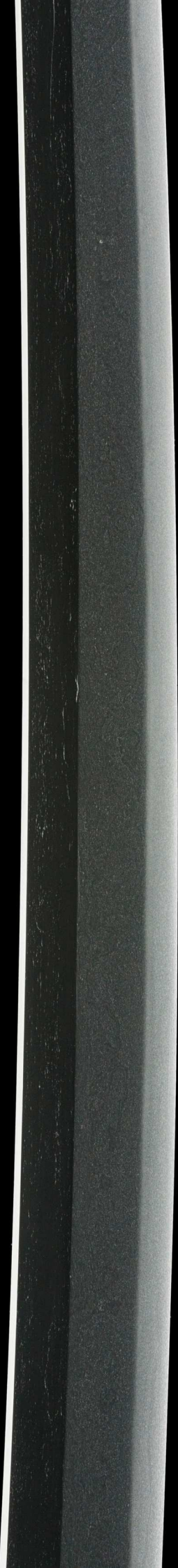
*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 2-sun 6-bu (68.5cm)

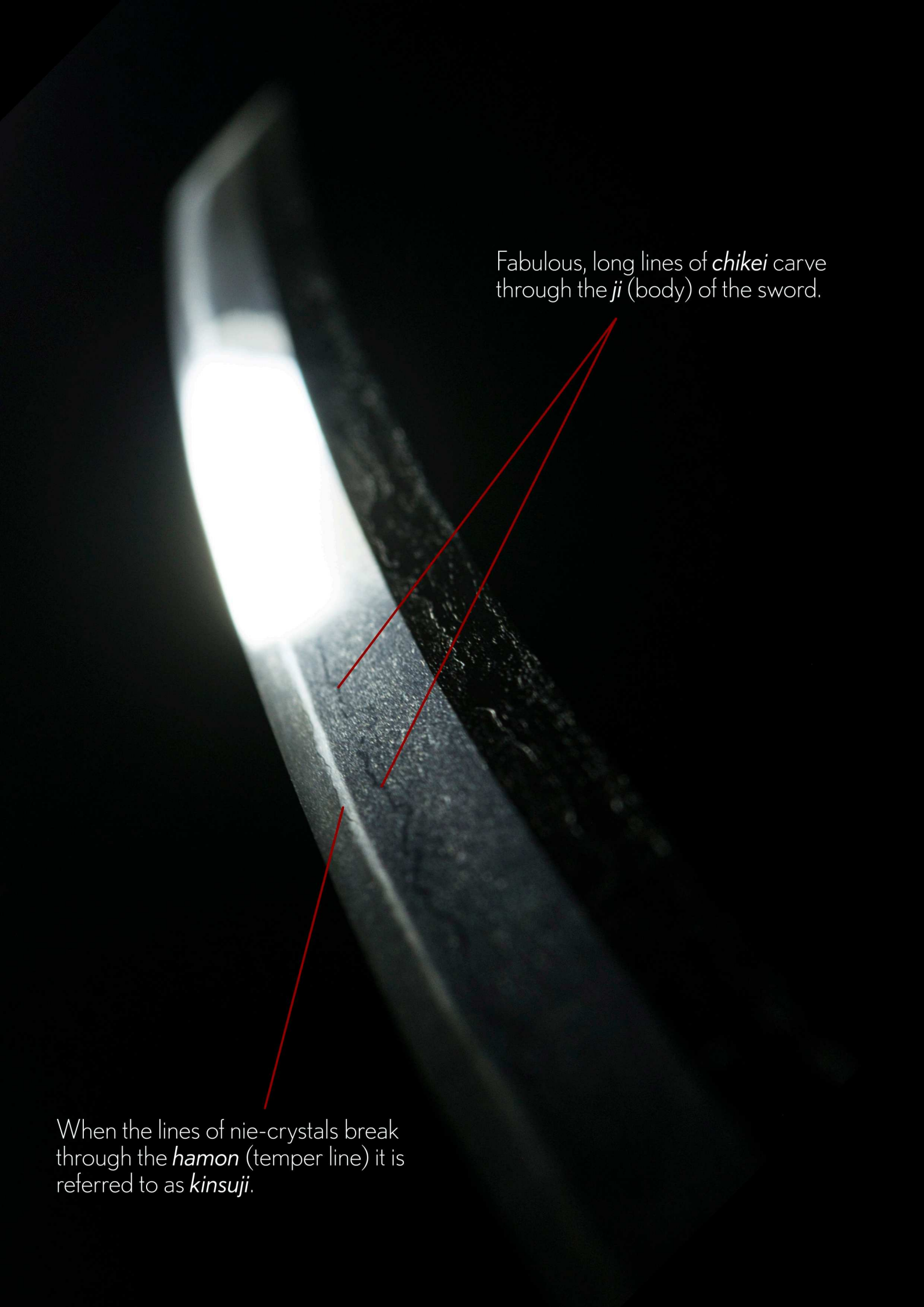
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)





A close-up of the *jihada*, note the skilfully forged steel that speaks 700 years of history.



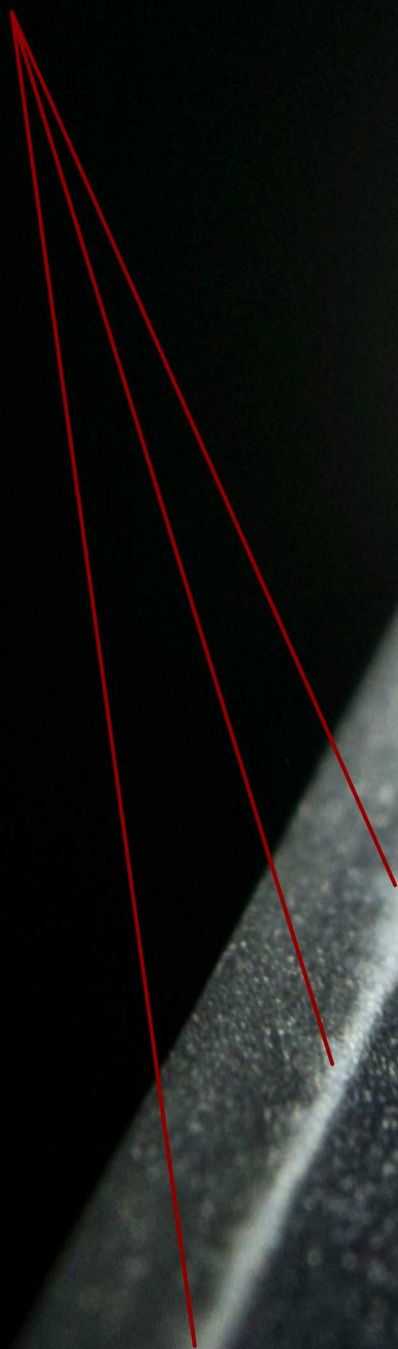
A close-up, low-angle photograph of a sword blade against a black background. The blade is illuminated from the left, highlighting its metallic texture and the intricate patterns of the chikei and kinsuji. Three red lines originate from the text blocks and point to specific features on the blade: one points to the chikei pattern, another to the kinsuji pattern, and a third to the hamon line.

Fabulous, long lines of *chikei* carve through the *ji* (body) of the sword.

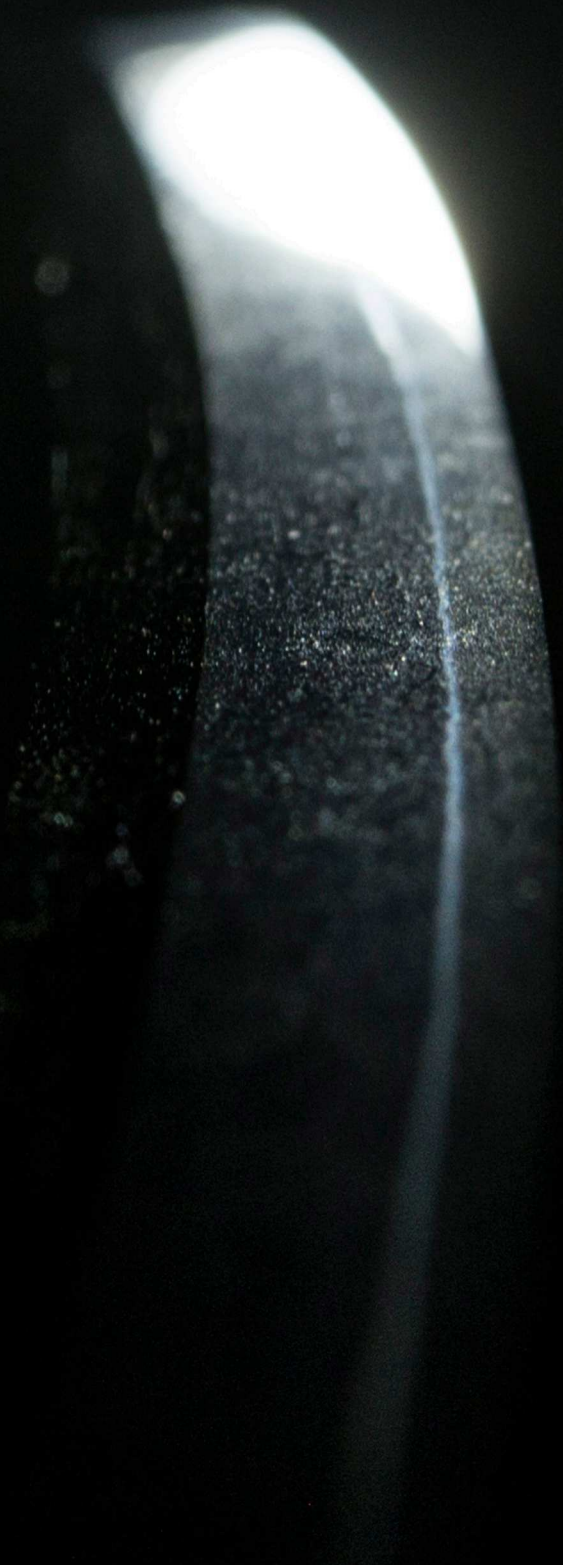
When the lines of nie-crystals break through the *hamon* (temper line) it is referred to as *kinsuji*.

This is called *ko-ashi* (tiny legs) that extend from the hamon forming a serrated appearance. Ko-ashi is typically found on older blades such as this piece.

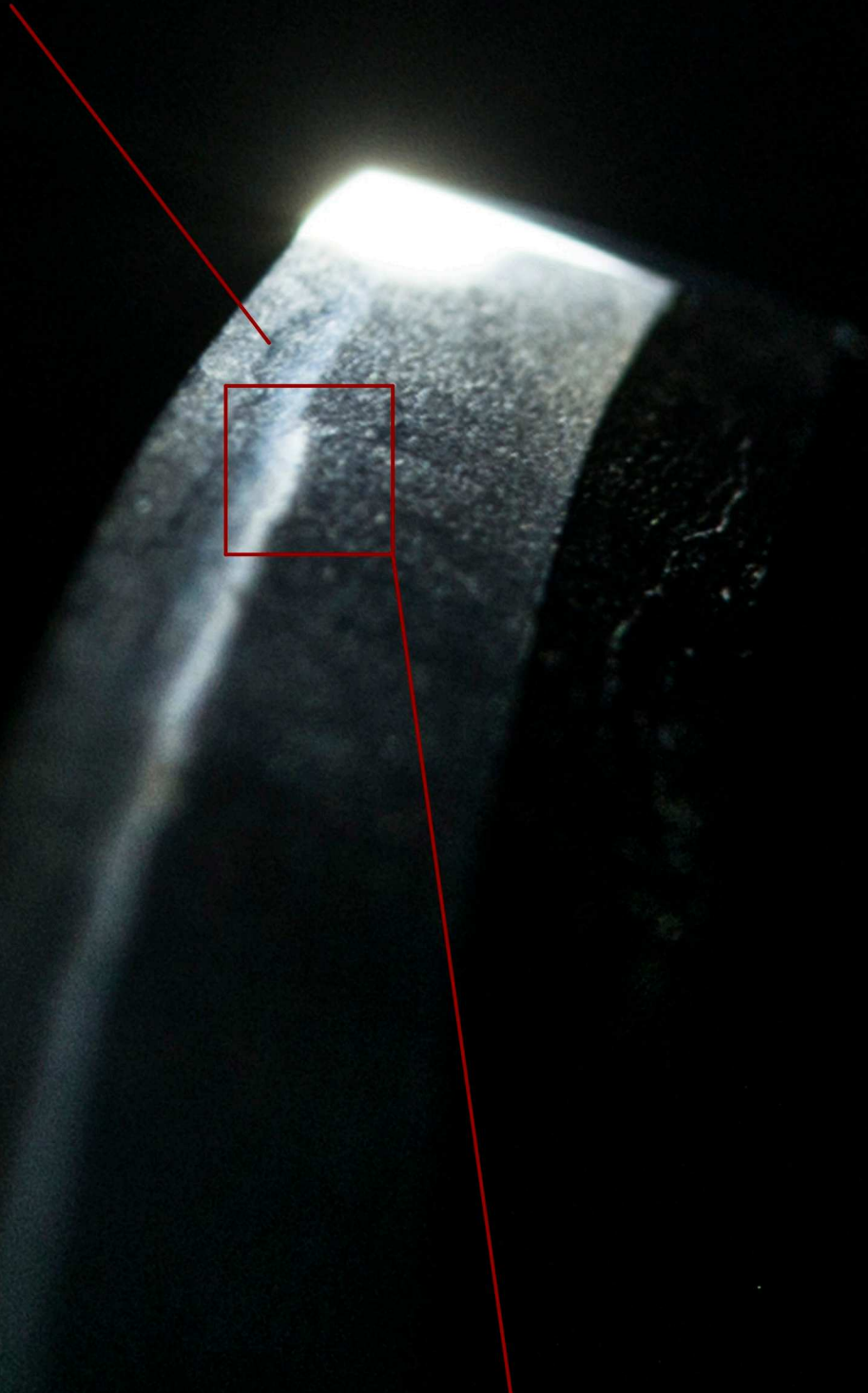
*Ko-ashi*



Majestic *suguha hamon*.



Glorious *kinsuji* zipping through the hardened *yakiba* of the blade.



*kuichigai-ba* is the area of the *hamon* where the *nioguchi* overlaps for a noticeable distance.

This unique and sophisticated feature is generally seen on swords with a *suguha hamon* crafted in the Yamato tradition.



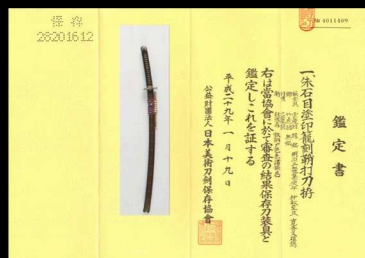
*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



antique *habaki* with  
diagonal file marks

*Aka ishime-nuri  
inrô-kizami saya  
uchigatana-koshirae*  
(朱石目塗印籠刻鞘打刀拵え)

*Uchigatana-koshirae  
lacquered in rusty vermilion  
with inrô-kizami grooves*



NBTHK Hozon  
Certificate of Authenticity



all matching dragon-themed fittings (*soroi kanagu*)

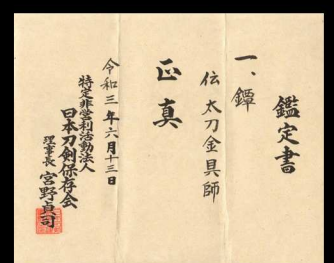




This silver *tsuba* (guard) features a tiger in a bamboo grove. The tiger represents the spiritual force necessary to confront life's adversities. Of moon and fire, full moon and new moon, light and darkness, orange with black stripes, the tiger is at once Yin and Yang. \*\*

However brave, a valiant warrior must show humility. Hence the tiger embraces the flexibility of bamboo. *"The strength, courage and determination of the tiger are not enough to overcome the challenges to which nature submits us; we must also have the flexibility of bamboo"*.

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





(reverse)



*Menuki* (decorative grips on the hilt) carry crawling dragon theme in gold.  
The *samekawa* (ray skin) is original to the late 1800s.





The ferocious stare of a dragon captured on the *kashira* (pommel).





Koshirae bag