



ITEM# UJKA396

SOLD

AN IESUKE TACHI

SIGNED, EARLY MUROMACHI PERIOD (ÔEI ERA: 1394~1428)

Swordsmith:	<i>Iesuke (first generation, suriage nakago)</i>
Measurements:	Length: 70.2cm Curvature: 2.5cm Motohaba: 2.71cm
Jihada:	<i>Gorgeous itame-hada and nagare-hada, bô-utsuri, chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Gunome-chôji-midare, koshi-no-hiraita, mixed with kanitsume, ko-nie deki</i>
Certificate:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate 2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (a koshirae, tsuba and fk designated as Authentic)
Fujishiro:	Chû-jô-saku (ranked as an above average swordsmith)
Sharpness:	Ryô-Wazamono (rated as a maker of highly sharp swords)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo period koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

Here is a terrifically sharp *tachi* from the first era following the vicious *Nambokuchô* period. Crafted and signed by swordsmith *Iesuke* of the *Kozori* group some 600 years ago, *Iesuke* is said to be the son of a latter generation *Nagamitsu* and studied under *Morikage*. This is clearly a sword that has participated in several wars over the centuries. A huge *kirikomi* battle scar exists on the upper third of the blade testifies to such valiant encounters. It has a rather slim and elegant shape now - enjoying a deserved rest from its turmoiled past. Given its Bizen influence, the hamon showcases a bright *gunome-midare* with *chôji*, *kanitsume* and a straight billowing *bô-utsuri*. An aristocratic Edo-period koshirae accompanies the tachi with circular-shaped dragons that govern with glorious power. This is a sword with immense character and flair.



Saki-kasane: 4.6mm

Kissaki: 3.05cm
Saki-haba: 1.77cm

Moto-kasane: 7.1mm

Nagasa: 70.2cm

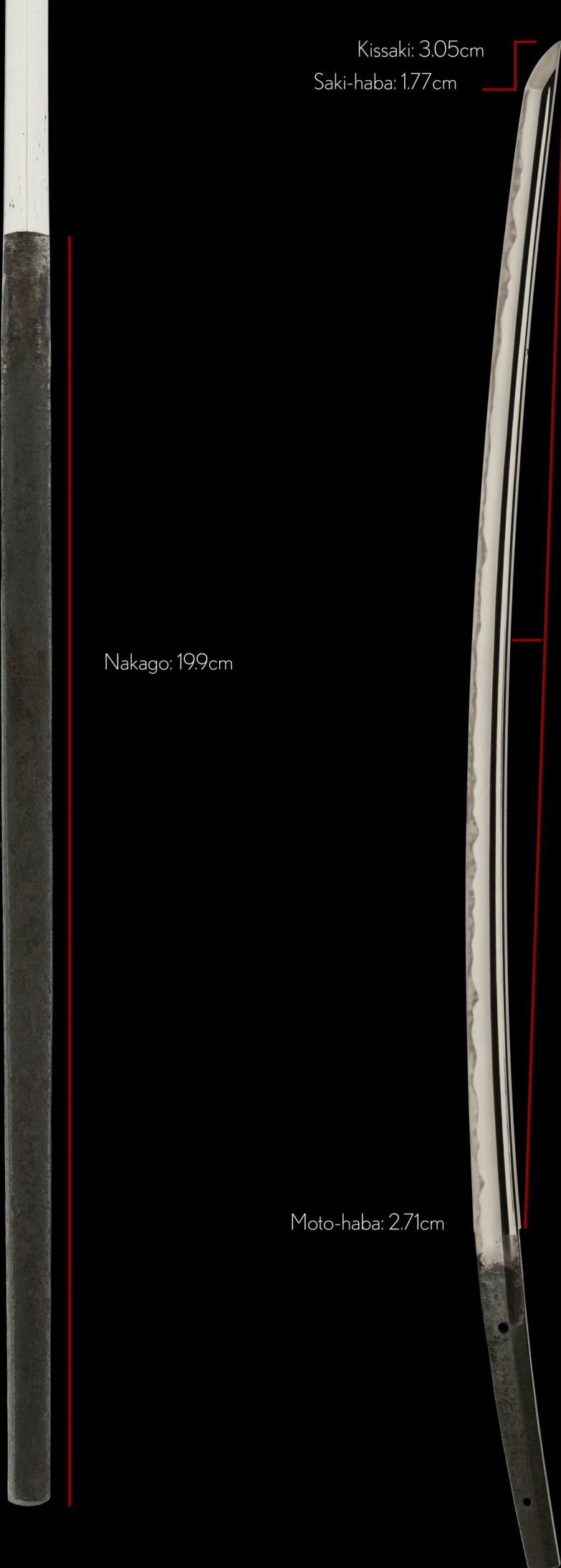
Nakago: 19.9cm

Sori: 2.50cm

Omosa: 655g

Moto-haba: 2.71cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Iesuke was a member of the *Kozori* group. From the end of the *Nanbokuchô* to the early *Muromachi* period, this group of swordsmiths was active in Bizen province and loosely affiliated with the *Kanemitsu school*.

The origins of the Kozori name is unclear. One theory states that the name goes back to the fact that Kozori blades changed from a wide and larger shape to a smaller dimensioned tachi, i.e. having thus a more shallow *sori* (curvature) ie *ko-zori* (small curvature).

Another theory says that the second part *zori* goes back to the verb *soru* that means "to differ, to stray" - ie from the then Bizen main line works. In regards to this tachi, both theories have valid points.

Iesuke is ranked *chû-jô-saku* (an above average smith) and *ryô-wazamono* for the impressive cutting power his blades possess.

This tachi, in a sense, has nothing left to prove. It is an honest blade that is proud of its accomplishments. The elegant, understated koshirae is a testament to how much it was cared for by a past samurai.

Now it deserves a new home to be cherished within.



Location: *Bizen Province*

Swordsmith: *Iesuke* (first generation)

Osafune school, Kozori group

Ōei era (1394~1428)

suriage-nakago (slightly shortened tang)

(le) 家
(suke) 助





ha-machi (now)

maru-dome


ha-machi (past, approx.)

This tachi features a *bo-bi* (wide groove) that helped to lighten the blade for extra quickness and agility. It is finished off in a rounded fashion known as *maru-dome*.

The groove would have originally ended just above the *ha-machi* (notch at the cutting edge) giving it a cutting edge of approximately 76~77cm when first crafted. A sword meant for a samurai riding on horseback that is long enough to strike an opponent.

The sword was shortened likely at the end of the Muromachi period, late 1500s to early 1600s to a standard 'katana length' and would have been coupled with a wakizashi to form a *daisho*.

(reverse)

A close-up photograph of a tachi sword blade, showing its textured surface and a hole near the base. A red line points from the text to a signature on the blade.

A 600-year-old signature...

This tachi represents the transition from swords worn on horseback to the katana that is drawn from a standing position which became more commonplace later on in the Muromachi period.

特 保
02202009



No 1014532



鑑定書

一太刀 銘 家助（長船）

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

令和二年十一月九日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



兵庫県 教育委員会
第 37564 号
昭和38年10月3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

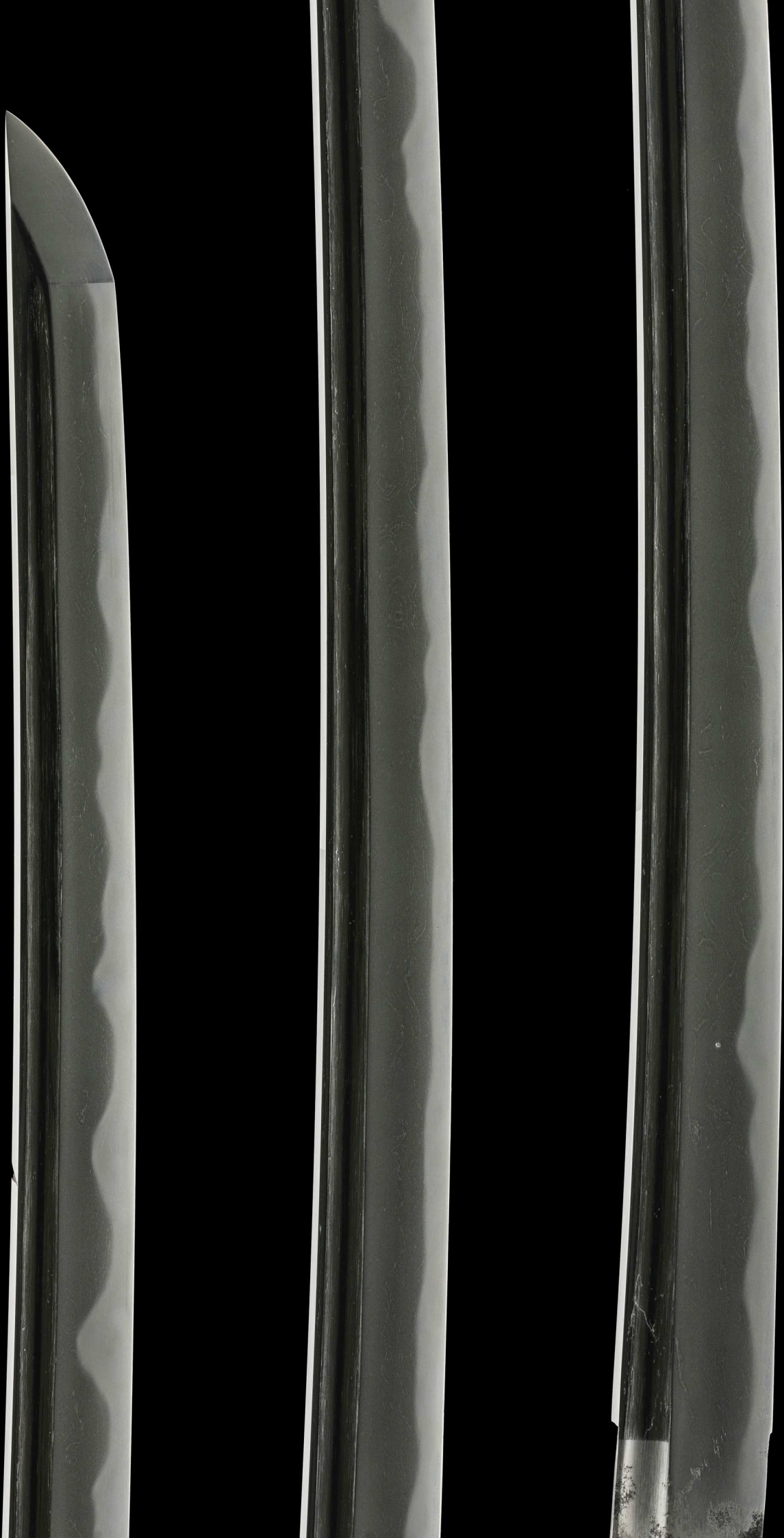
Issued in the 2nd year of Heisei (2020), November 9th

One, Tachi

Mei (signature)
Iesuke (Osafune)

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-sun 2-bu (70.2cm)

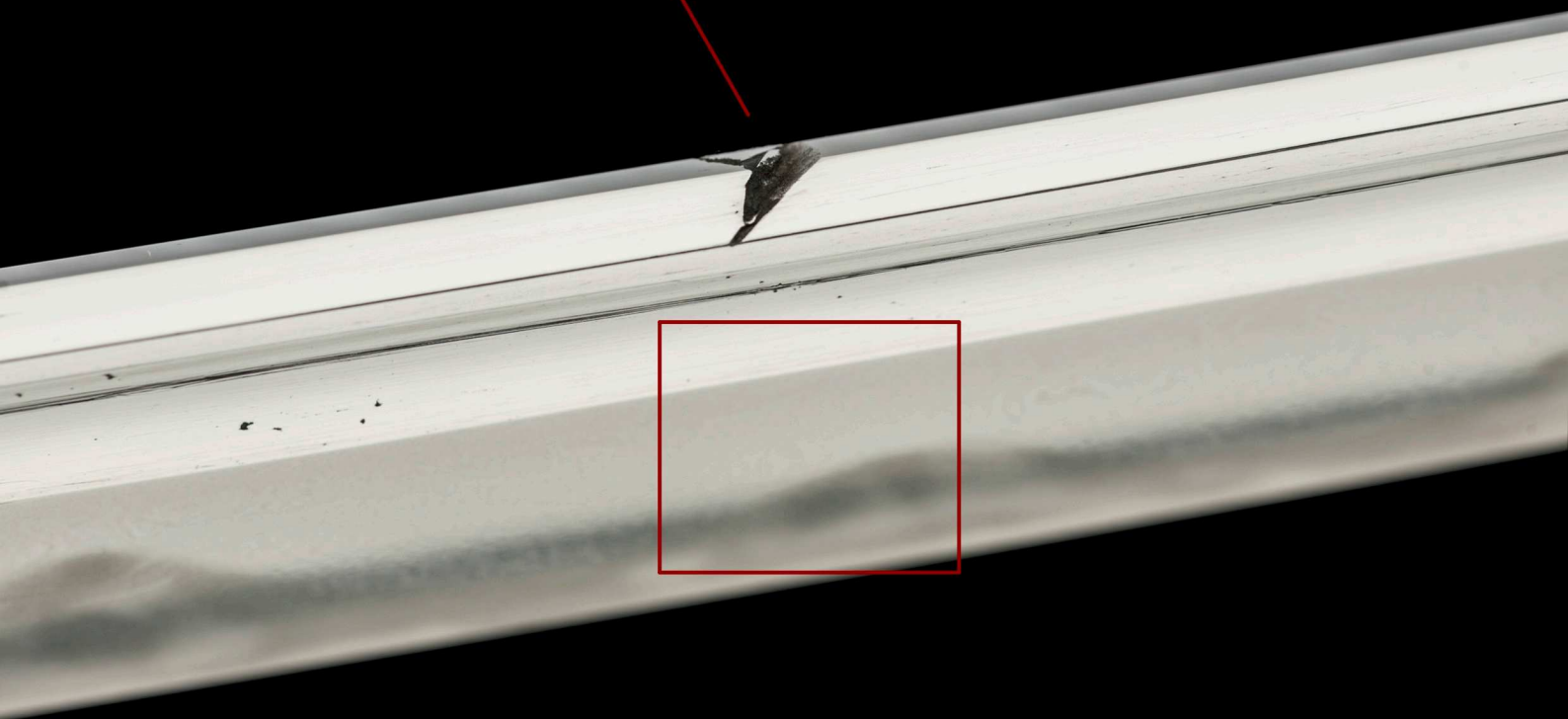
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





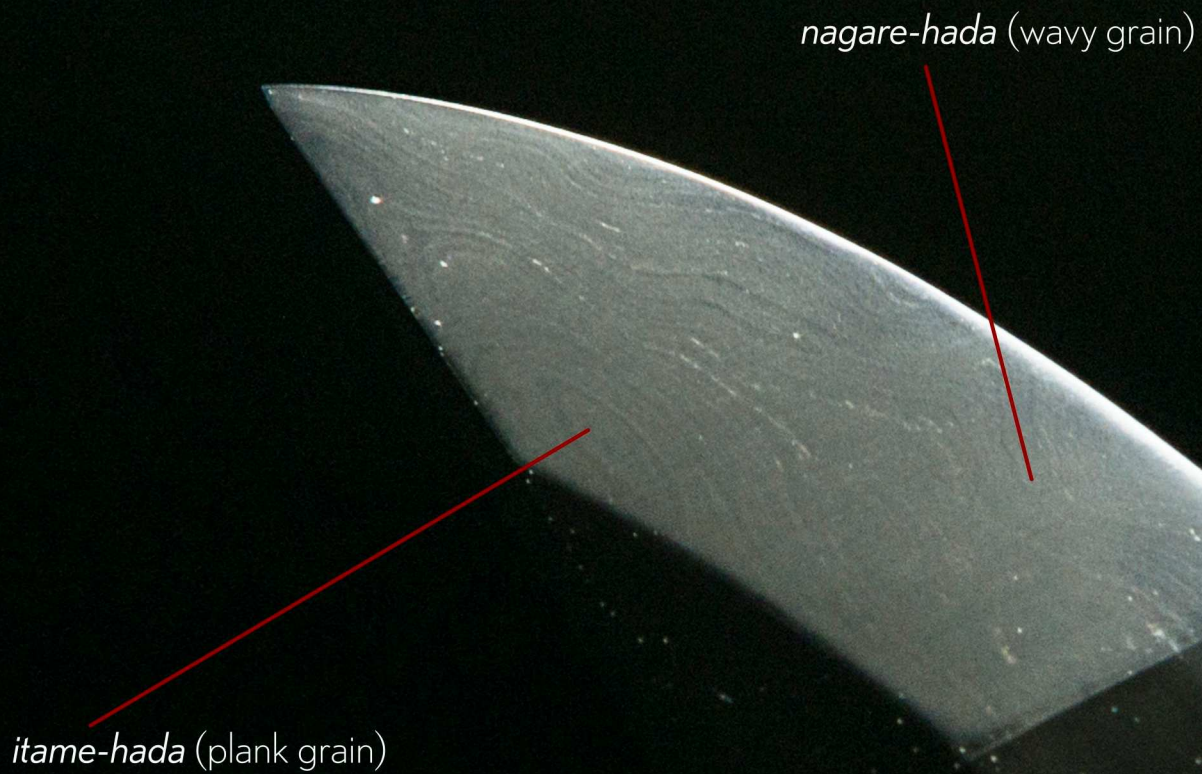


Kirikomi (battle scar)



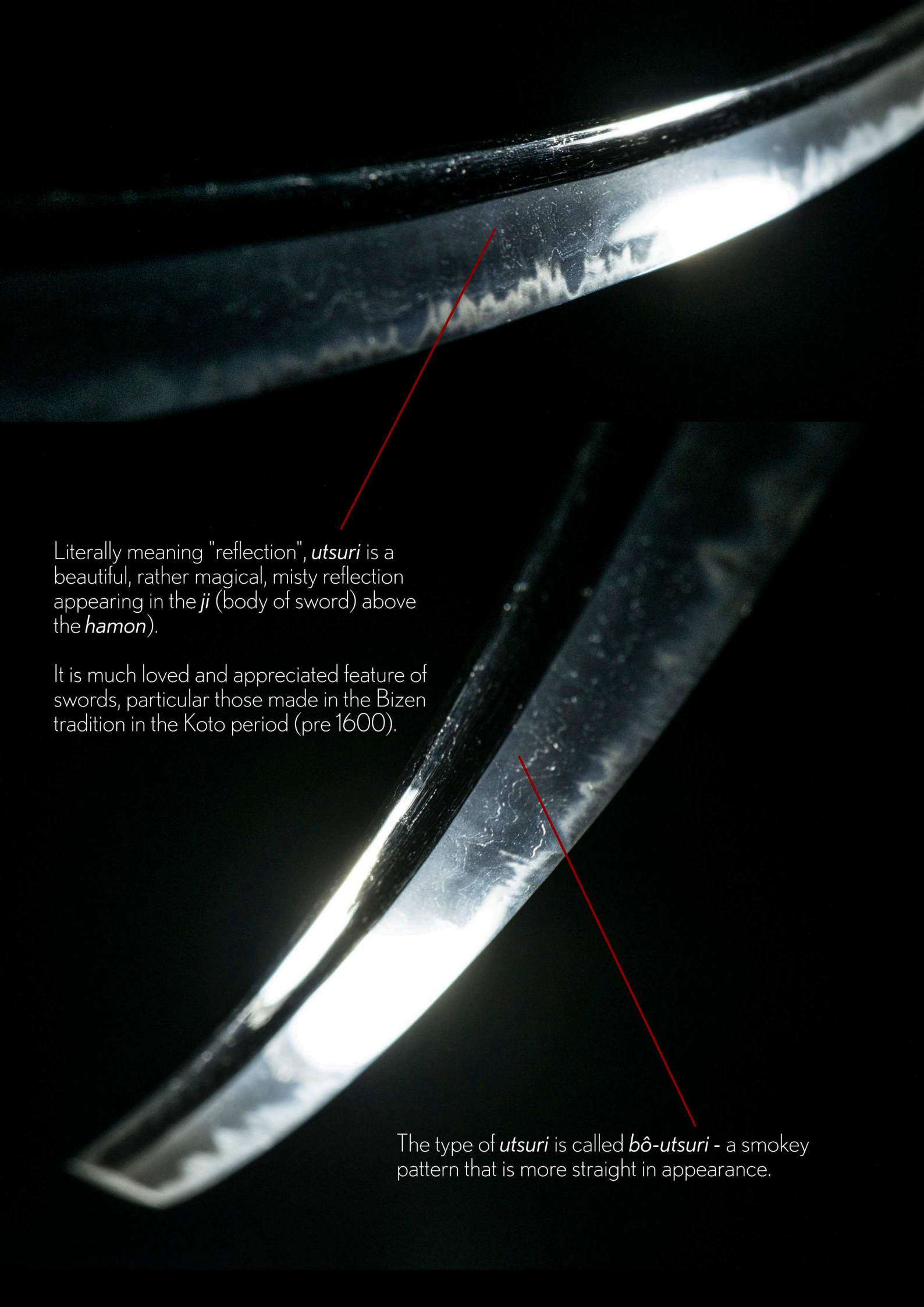
Kirikomi - this an awesome defensive battle scar inflicted from another sword in combat. It is located on the *mune* (spine) in the *monouchi* (cutting zone) of the blade.

These prized marks of courage are intentionally left by sword polishers - never to be repaired. Their courageous significance is to be forever admired.



What splendid *jihada* (grain pattern) to be enjoyed in the *kissaki* (tip of the sword).

Like a master baker, swordsmith Iesuke has managed to knead the steel in such an irresistible way that *itame-hada* (plank grain) and *nagare-hada* (wavy-grain) are served up on delicious display.

A close-up photograph of a sword blade, showing the hamon (edge) and the utsuri (misty reflection) pattern. The blade is dark and curved, with a bright, shimmering edge. The utsuri pattern is a misty, wavy reflection that appears above the hamon. Two red lines point from the text to specific areas of the blade: one points to the upper part of the utsuri pattern, and the other points to a lower, more straight section of the utsuri pattern.

Literally meaning "reflection", *utsuri* is a beautiful, rather magical, misty reflection appearing in the *ji* (body of sword) above the *hamon*).

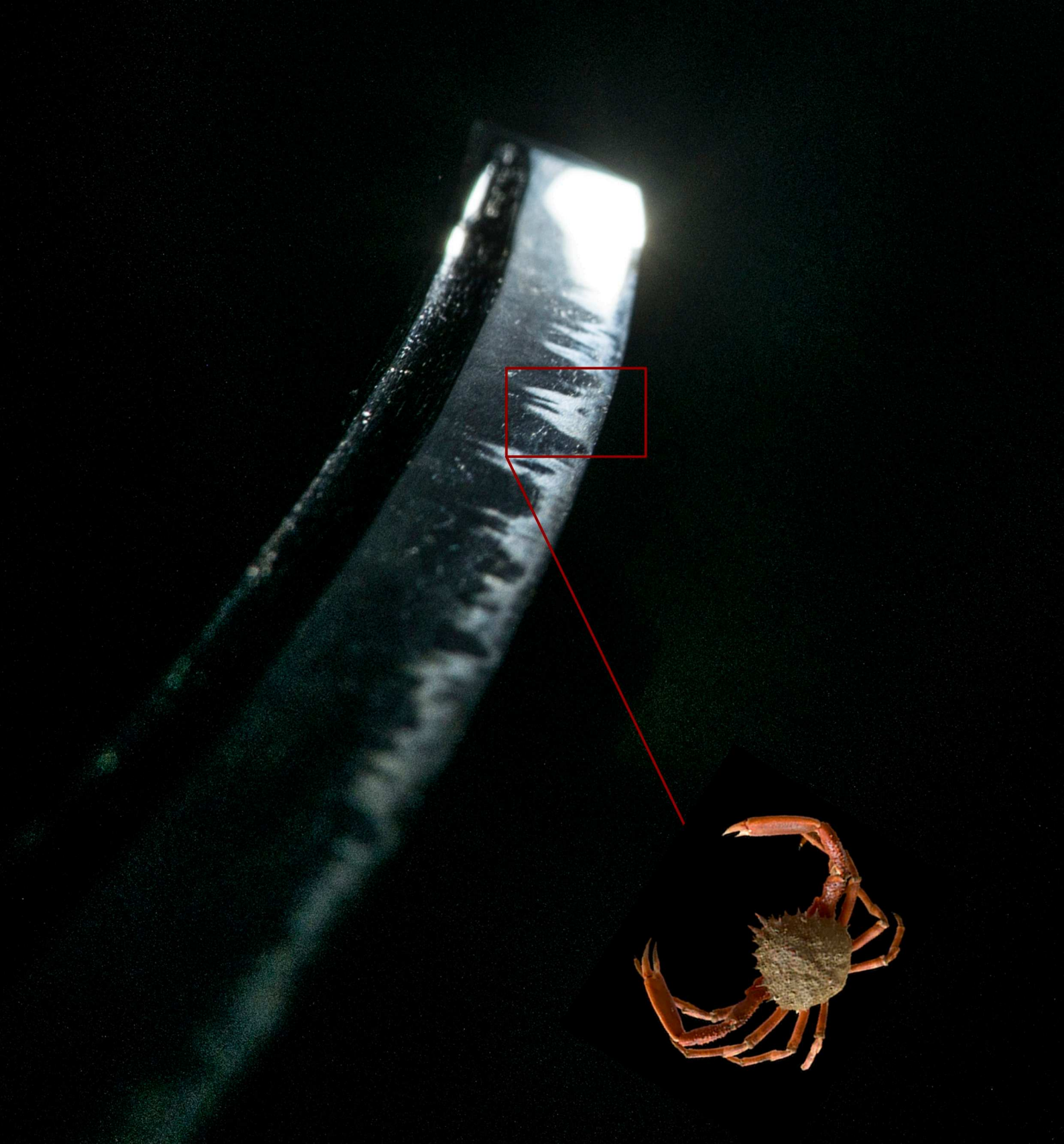
It is much loved and appreciated feature of swords, particular those made in the Bizen tradition in the Koto period (pre 1600).

The type of *utsuri* is called *bô-utsuri* - a smokey pattern that is more straight in appearance.



Bright impulses of a *gunome-choji-midare hamon*.

The heartbeat of the Bizen tradition lives on.

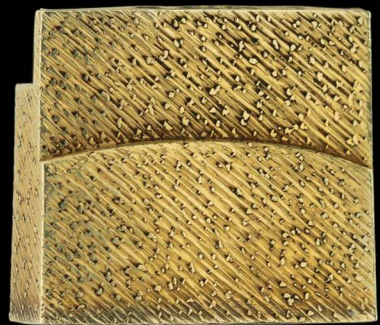


The *hamon* displays a unique pattern called *kanitsume* or "crab claws" in the upper cutting zone of the blade.

Crabs are symbolic of ninja warriors for they both move sideways, silently approaching their target.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



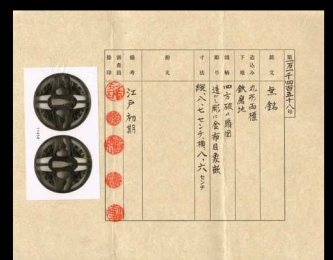
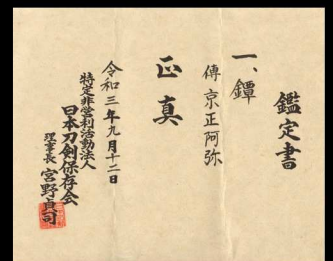
gold-wrapped *habaki*
with diagonal file marks



This is a large, elegant 400-year-old polished iron tsuba from the *Kyô-Shoami* school in *Kyôto* - thus the prefix "*Kyô*".

The design is of four "torn" fans in separate quadrants. A torn fan design was cherished by many samurai. Its origin rests with *Tokugawa Ieyasu*, the first *shôgun* of Edo period. Before he became *shôgun*, he was defeated by *Takeda Shingen*, whose favourite weapon was a *tessen* (war fan). Although Tokugawa was about to be killed, he managed to escape with shame.

After this encounter, Tokugawa began to incorporate torn fan artwork to symbolize his resolution (and humility) to keep fighting even if defeated - just like a broken fan.



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho certificate attributing the tsuba to 1600~1700.



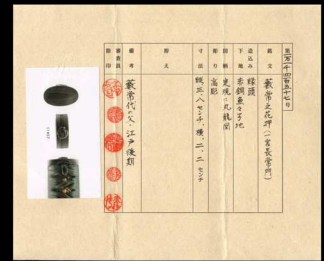
The heart-shaped motif is called *inome* - referring to the *eye of a wild boar*. The samurai greatly admired the *inoshishi*, known for its single-minded focus.

The remnants of *nunome-zôgan* (crosshatched gold inlay) - a technique where the surface of the metal (iron) is prepared by rough crosshatching with a file or fine chisel. Soft gold (or silver) fragments or wires are then hammered into these depressions.

Yabutsune kore + kaô

This *fuchi-kashira* was crafted and signed by *Yabu Tsuneyuki* along with his monogram.

Tsuneyuki lived in Osaka



Certified by NTHK-NPO



薮 (Yabu)

常 (tsune)

之 (kore)

花押 (kaô)



A curled dragon sitting on a long, perfectly straight ruler. The symbolism is clear - the dragon represents the bundled concentration of *power* (samurai class). The ruler represents the *strict samurai code* that governs the country under its military authority.

The hundreds of individually hand-punched dots of *nanako* forms the backdrop (ie. the general populace of the nation). This is art depicting Edo-period reality.





Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) depict a shell theme.
These *menuki* were crafted during the Late Edo period.



Tachi, signed by *lesuke*

(Ta) 太

(chi) 刀
(Mei) 銘

(le) 家

(suke) 助

