



ITEM# UJKA401

A YUKIHIRO KATANA

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1663~1673)

Swordsmith:	<i>Dewa no Kami Yukihiro (first generation, ubu nakago)</i>
Location:	Hizen province
Measurements:	Length: 70.4cm Curvature: 1.6cm Motohaba: 3.08cm
Jihada:	<i>Expertly forged konuka-hada with ji-nie and chikei</i>
Hamon:	<i>Stunning gunome-chôji midare with abunomefu, kinsuji and sunagashi</i>
Certificate x 3:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (sword, fk & koshirae Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Fujishiro:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included:	Shirasaya, custom koshirae, bag, stand, kit, booklet, printed description

SOLD

First generation *Shodai Yukihiro* from *Hizen* province on modern-day *Kyûshû* island is one of the Shinto period's most accomplished swordsmiths. There is genuine energy that can be felt in this blade – a robust shape, a bright and powerful *gunome-midare* hamon and a consistent, expertly forged *konuka-hada*. It's no surprise that Yukihiro is rated as *jô-saku* (superior) smith and that Hawley scored him at an impressive 45 points. A brilliant custom koshirae project was produced for this sword by Unique Japan in which top-quality NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon fittings were implemented. From the story-telling *Kurama-yama Tengu tsuba* by *Masamitsu* to *Munetoshi's* demon crushing *Shôki* depicted on the *fuchi-kashira*, a spiritually protective theme runs throughout. With gold lacquered accents on its tuxedo-like *saya* (scabbard), this is a katana filled with nobility - reflective of the excellence that Yukihiro personifies.



Saki-kasane: 4.9mm

Moto-kasane: 7.0mm

Omosa: 845g

Kissaki: 3.76cm
Saki-haba: 2.14cm

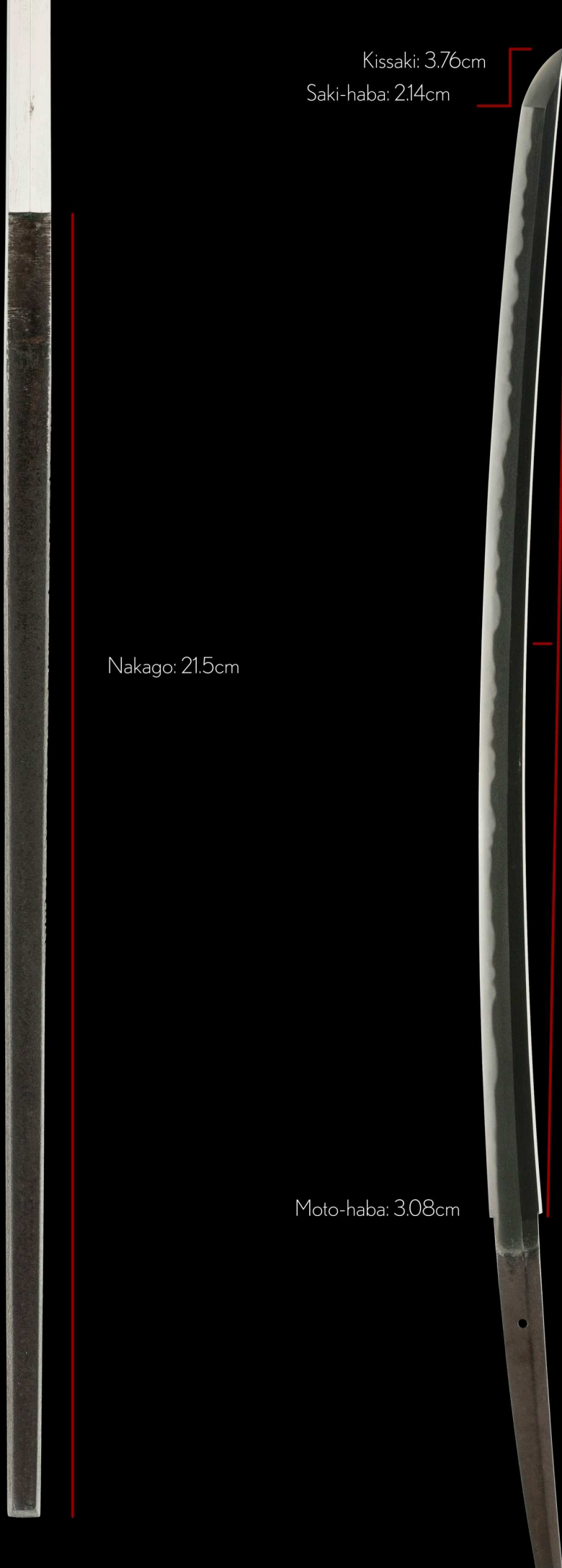
Nakago: 21.5cm

Moto-haba: 3.08cm

Nagasa: 70.4cm

Sori: 1.60cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Maestro *Yukihiko*, son of *Yoshinobu*, younger brother to *Masahiko* was born in 1617. He received his *Dewa no Daijo* title in 1648 and his *Dewa no Kami* title in 1663. This katana was made after he received his "no Kami" title.

In 1650 Yukihiko moved to *Nagasaki* to study Dutch forging techniques with *Hisatsugu* and *Tanenaga*. It is assumed that he also studied the *Bizen Ichimonji* in *Edo* (Tokyo) with *Noriyoshi*.

Swords produced by *Yukihiko* display all the excellence that makes the *Hizen* traditions so sought after. The *hamon* on this spectacular katana is an exquisite example of *gunome midare* with his trademark *abu nomefu* - an iconic horsefly eye appearing as dots in the *ashi*.

Yukihiko died on May 27, 1683, 3rd year of Tenna. No less than six more generations of Yukihiko followed in their master's footsteps.



Location: *Hizen Province*

Title: *Dewa no Kami* (Lord of Dewa province)

Swordsmith: *Yukihiro* (first generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

sujikai-yasurime (diagonal file marks)

(Ichi) 一

(Hi) 肥

(zen) 前

(Kuni) 國

(De) 出

(wa, no) 羽

(Kami) 守

(Yuki) 行

(hiro) 廣





(reverse)

kurijiri

(chestnut shaped *nakagojiri* (butt end))

01201903

No 1011406



鑑定書

一 刀 銘 一 肥 前 国 出 羽 守 行 広 (初 代)

長 二 尺 三 寸 二 分 強

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



大阪府 教育委員会
第 41415 号
昭和38年8月6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), May 23rd

One, Katana

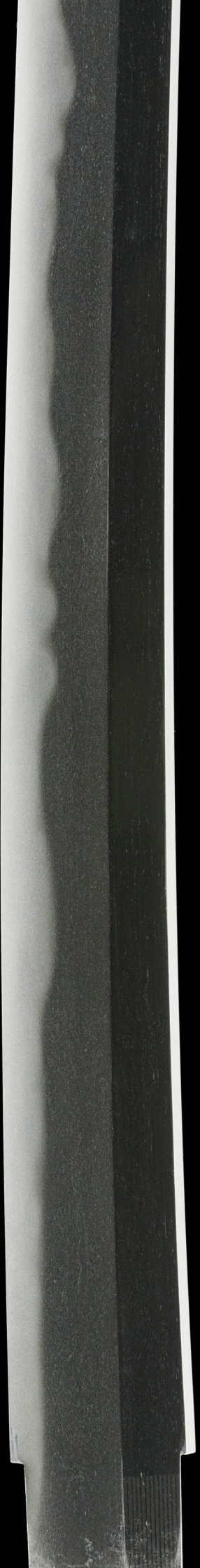
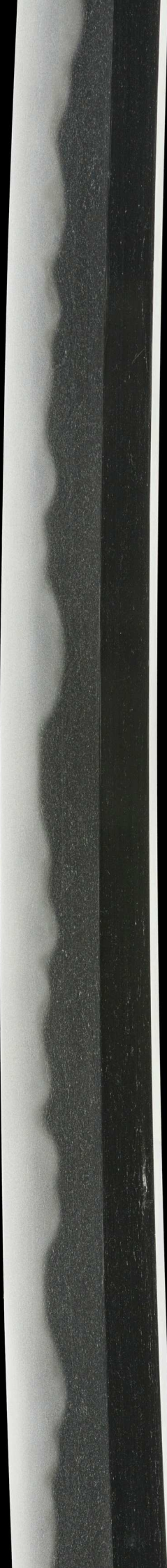
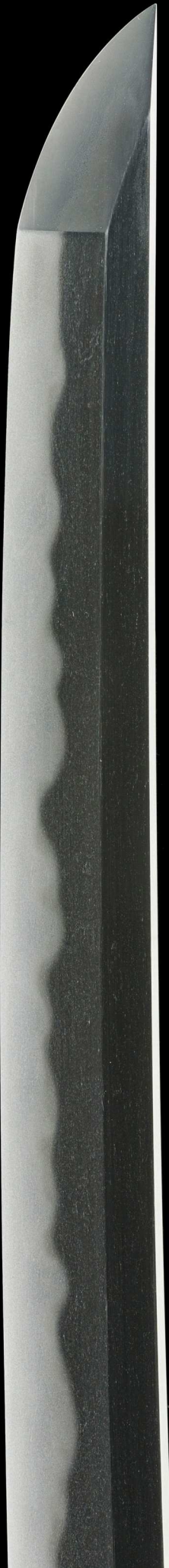
Mei (signature)

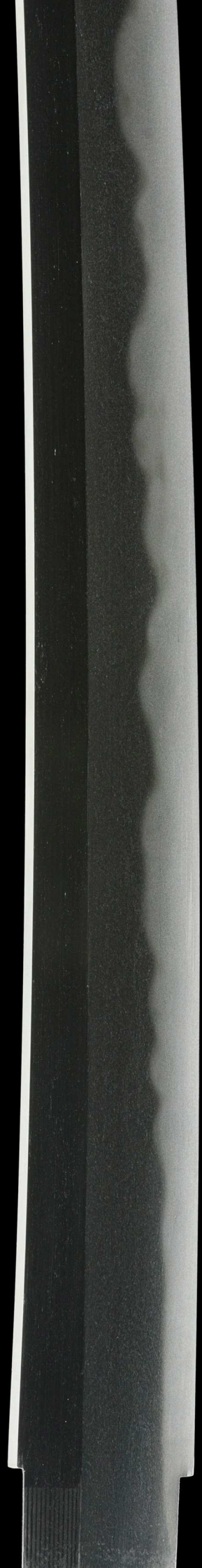
Ichi, Hizen no Kuni Dewa no Kami Yukihiro
(*Shodai, first generation*)

Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 2-bu kyô (70.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)







muneyaki
(tempering of the *mune*, spine)

The *boshi* is *kaen*, meaning **flame** or **blaze**, whereby the thick clusters of nie crystals make the tip look like it's on fire.



Classic Hizen tradition *mokume-hada* that is so tightly forged it is known as *konuka-hada* (resembling rice bran).

Note how the sword 'shines' - it's alive with *ji-nie*.

A dazzling *gunome-choji-midare hamon* with *abunomefu*, unique *rounded nie* elements that is vintage *Hizen Yukihiro*.



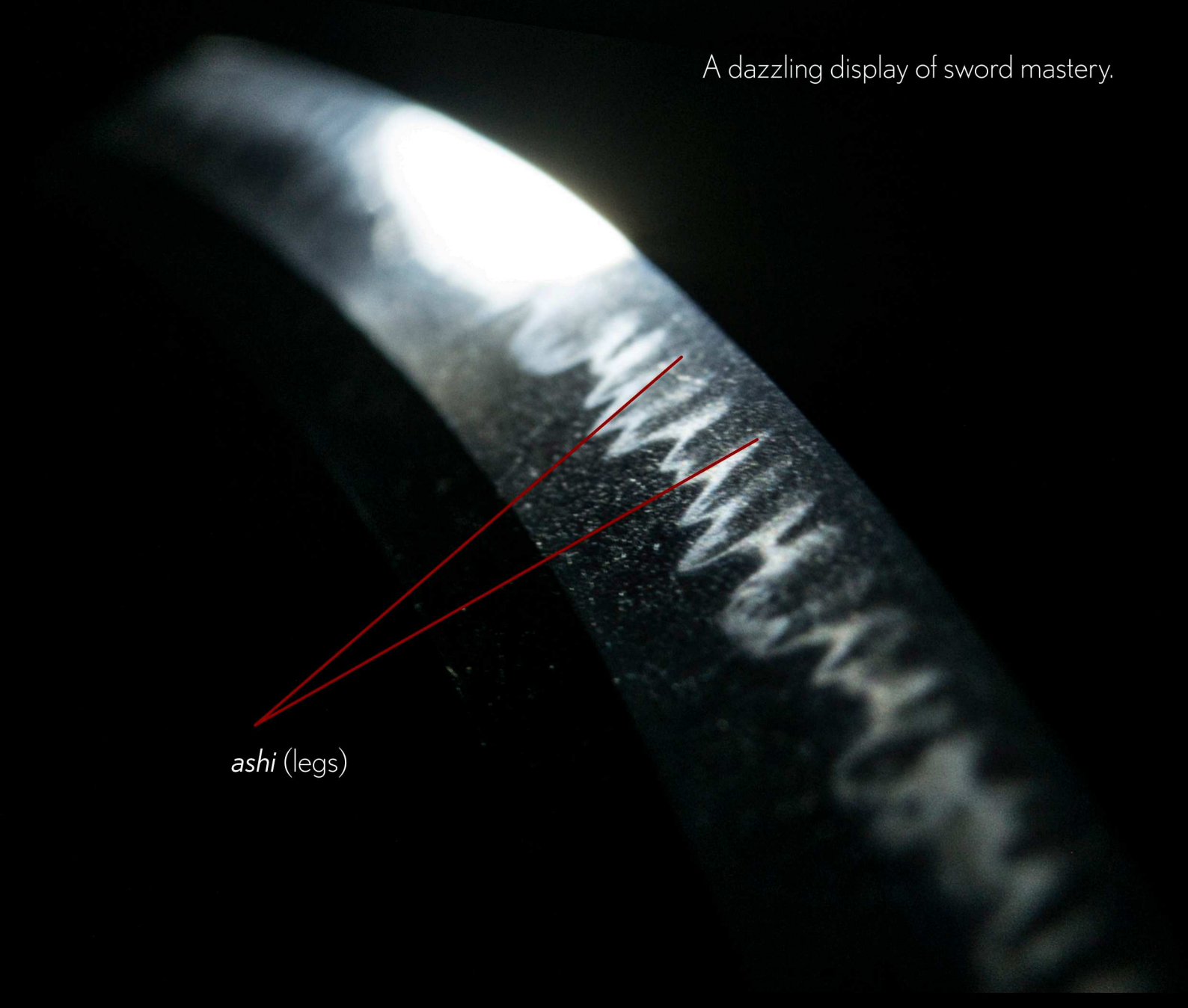
abunomefu



sunagashi

Long *ashi*, sweeping *sunagashi*, a brilliant *gunome-chôji midare hamon*.

A dazzling display of sword mastery.



ashi (legs)



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



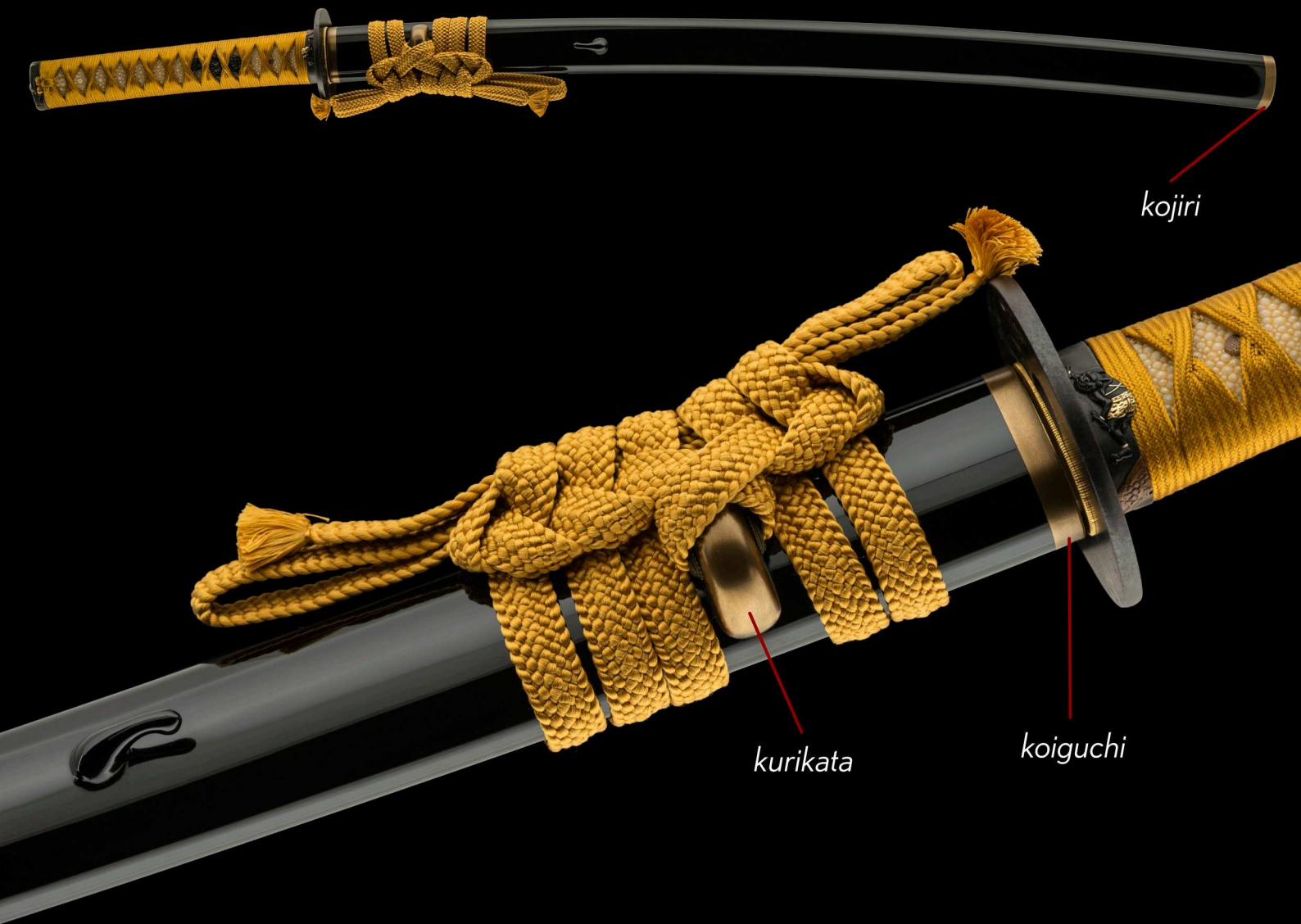
gold wrapped *habaki* with
crisp file marks

*Kuro-roiro-nuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(茶呂色塗鞘打刀拵え)

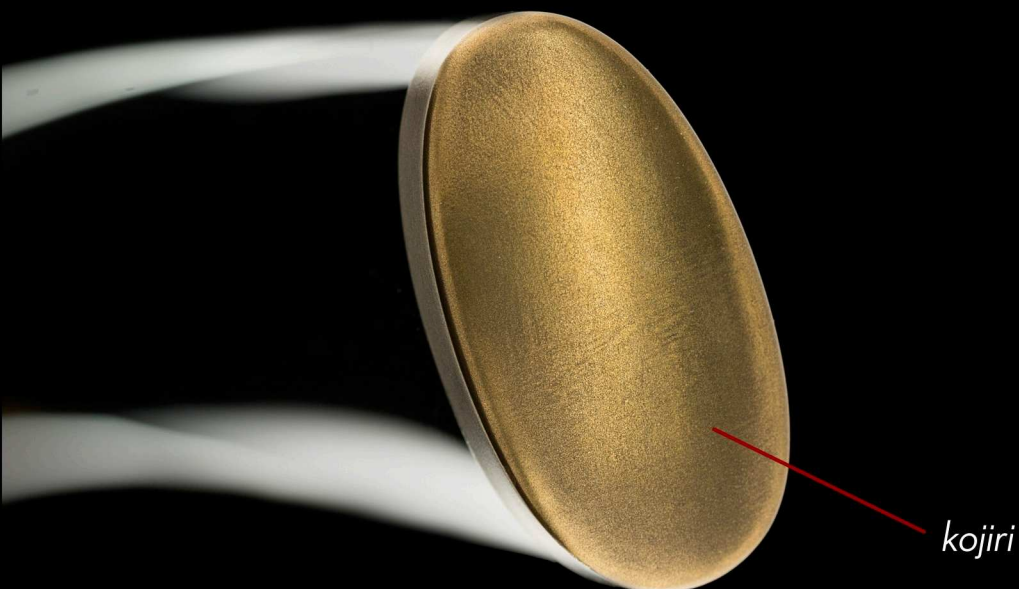
*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black
with gold accents*

Crafted in 2021
by
Unique Japan





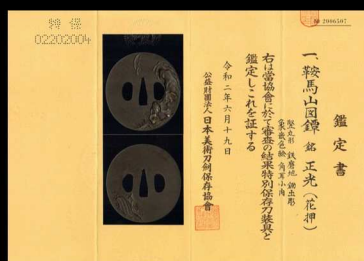
Unique Japan proudly produced this custom koshirae for the Yukihiro katana. The goal of the project was to build a formal koshirae that reflected the statesmanship of the blade. The gold lacquerwork on the *koiguchi* (mouth), *kojiri* (end) and *kurikata* (loop for sageo) was inspired by the gold-leaf work seen on high-end samurai art.





A magnificent polished iron tsuba by depicting a scene from *Mount Kurayama* by master metalsmith *Masamitsu*.

NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon certification has been attained for this exquisite and highly collectible tsuba.





The tsuba depicts the remarkable scene of a young *Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune* (then called *Ushiwaka-maru*) training under the watchful eye of *Tengu King Sôjôbô* on *Mount Karuma* in *Kyôto*.

Minamoto-no-Yoshitsune (1159-1589), born as the noble third son of *Minamoto-no-Yoshitomo* (1123-1160) and *Tokiwa-gozen*, a concubine. Yoshitomo had nine sons altogether and Yoshitsune was the youngest of them all.

Yoshitomo fell during the *Heiji Rebellion* (1160), culminating to the end of the *Heian* period and start of the *Kamakura* period. Tokiwa-gozen then fled *Kyôto* with her three children. Due to her new marriage, Ushiwaka-maru was separated from his mother at the age of ten and entrusted under the care of the Temple Kurama on Kurama mountain (*Kuramayama*).

There he was trained under Sôjôbô, the protector of Mt. Kurama, to learn the martial arts of fighting strategy as well as to gain supernatural powers of the tengu.



Masamitsu + kaô
(Masamitsu + monogram)

Masamitsu was from *Aizu* in *Iwashiro province* and belonged to the *Aizu-Shoami* school. He was active during the Late Edo Period (early 1800s) and is one of the more notable and collectible craftsmen among the tradition.

02202004

№ 2006507



鑑定書

一鞍馬山図鐔 銘 正光 (花押)

堅丸形 鉄磨地 鋤出彫
象嵌色絵 角耳小肉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

令和二年六月十九日

公益財団法人 日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A tsuba designated as *Especially Worthy of Conservation*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), June 19th

One, Tsuba

Depicting Mt. Kurama

Mei (signature)
Masamitsu + kaô

*Elongated round shape, polished iron, dug away carvings,
inlay with color accents, angular rim with a little roundness*

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



a sneaky demon...

Shôki 'The Demon Queller' was a Tang-era physician in the Chinese province of *Shensi*, but he was very ugly. To advance his career, he took the national examination to enter imperial service, and performed brilliantly, scoring first place among all applicants.

But when *Shôki* was presented to the emperor, he was rejected because of his ugliness, and in shame, *Shôki* committed suicide. Overcome with remorse, the emperor ordered *Shôki* to be buried in the green robe reserved for the imperial clan.

In gratitude, *Shôki*'s spirit vowed to protect the ruler (and all male heirs) from demons of illness and evil. He is often depicted drawing a large sword or using it in battle with demons.



Shôki on guard

(Echi) 越
(go) 後
(Taka) 高
(da) 田
(Mune) 宗
(toshi) 利
(saku) 作



Echigo Takada Munetoshi saku
(Crafted by Takada Munetoshi from Echigo Province)



Shôki's popularity peaked in Japan during the Edo period, when people began to hang images of Shôki outside their houses to ward off evil spirits during the Boys' Day festival (May 5th each year, but now a festival for all children of both sexes) and to adorn the eaves and entrances of their homes with ceramic statues of the deity.

Today, residents still adorn the eaves and rooftops of their homes with Shôki's effigy to ward off evil and illness, and to protect the male heir to the family.

Source: onmarkproductions.com/html/shoki.shtml



Shôki on a Kyôto rooftop

30201802



No 2004571

鑑定書

一 鐘馗小鬼図縁頭 銘 越後高田宗利作

四分一磨地 高彫 象嵌色絵

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀装具と
鑑定しこれを証する

平成三十年三月十六日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon Certificate of Designation

A fuchi-kashira 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), March 16th

One, Fuchi-kashira

Depicting Shôki and small demon

Mei (signature)
Echigo Takada Munetoshi saku

Polished shibuichi, relief, inlay with color accents

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



Menuki (decorative grips on the hilt) display well-carved *shakudô shisa* lions that provides spiritual protection for the owner.





Feel the energy. Feel the freedom.

