



ITEM# UJKA405

## A MORIHIRO KATANA

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

<b>Swordsmith:</b>	<i>Morihiro (2nd generation, ô-suriage nakago)</i>
<b>Measurements:</b>	<b>Length:</b> 68.8cm <b>Curvature:</b> 1.4cm <b>Moto-haba:</b> 2.78cm <b>Weight:</b> 640g
<b>Jihada:</b>	<i>Beautiful mokume-hada mixed with ô-hada, nagare-hada with plentiful chikei</i>
<b>Hamon:</b>	<i>Bright suguha with kaen-boshi,</i>
<b>Certificate #1:</b>	<b>NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon</b> (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
<b>Certificate #2-4:</b>	<b>NTHK-NPO Kanteisho</b> (tsuba, fuchi-kashira & koshirae designated as Authentic)
<b>Fujishiro rank:</b>	<b>Jô-saku</b> (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
<b>Gold inlay:</b>	<b>Senzo kore hairyô</b> (my ancestor received this sword)
<b>Included:</b>	Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, booklet, description

**SOLD**

The *Chiyo-zuru* school began in *Echizen* province in approximately 1337 by way of *Chiyo-zuru Kuniyasu* of the distinguished *Rai school*. This expertly-crafted katana is likely that of second generation superior swordsmith *Morihiro*, son of *Rai Kuniyasu*, who worked during the *Ôei era*, circa 1394~1428. The *jihada* is so beautiful, displaying both *mokume-hada*, some *ô-hada*, *nagare-hada* and plenty of *chikei*. The *hamon* is a clear *suguha* that contrasts nicely against the darkish *jigane*. It's handsome Edo-period *koshirae* features a carved *kizami-saya* and a theme of wind-swept bamboo trees coupled with the tiger and spider predators. Rare gold inlaid characters on the *nakago* states that this katana has been handed down from one generation to the next. This is an ancestral sword that is most worthy of collecting and preserving for the generations to come.



Saki-kasane: 4.2mm

Moto-kasane: 6.2mm

Omosa: 640g

Kissaki: 3.15cm  
Saki-haba: 2.00cm

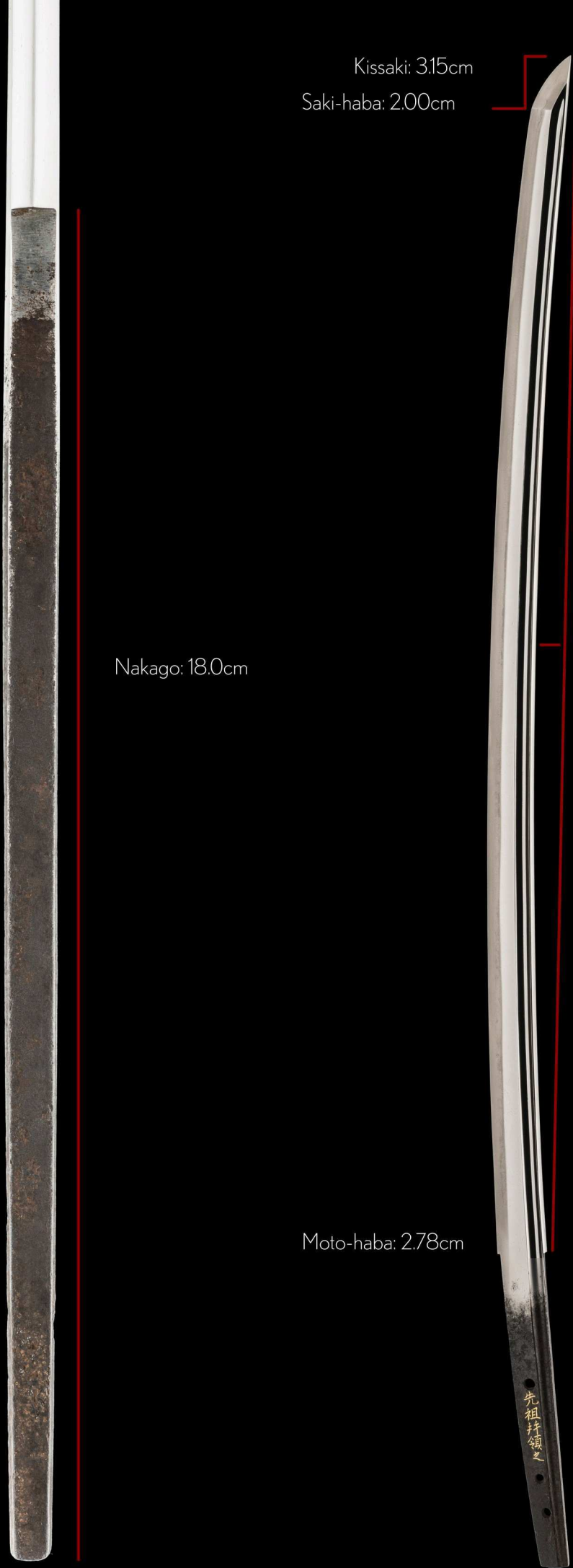
Nakago: 18.0cm

Moto-haba: 2.78cm

Nagasa: 68.8cm

Sori: 1.40cm

Mekugi-ana: 3



先祖并領之

The *Chiyozuru* school began in *Echizen* province in approximately 1337 by way of *Chiyozuru Kuniyasu*. Kuniyasu was in search of the right spring water to forge his swords. He subsequently settled in *Takefu* in *Echizen* and a premier steel crafting industry was born and never looked back.

The *Morihiro* name lasted for about four generations until the early Muromachi period. The first generation Morihiro was the son (or adopted son) of Rai Kuniyasu. This strong and expertly-crafted katana is likely that of second generation Morihiro who worked during the *Ōei* era, circa 1394~1428. Morihiro is ranked as *jō-saku*, a superior swordsmith, and his talents are on full spectacle in this katana.

The *jihada* is beautiful, displaying *mokume-hada*, *ô-hada* and *nagare-hada*. There is plenty of *chikei* to enjoy as well. The *hamon* is a clear *suguha* that contrasts nicely against the darkish *jigane*.

Its handsome Edo-period *koshirae* features a carved *kizami-saya* and a theme of wind-swept bamboo trees coupled with the tiger and spider predators. An underlying message of courage and flexibility that leads to prosperity is embedded within.

Rare gold inlaid characters on the *nakago* states that this katana has been handed down from one generation to the next. And it's clear to see why. This is an ancestral sword that is most worthy of collecting and preserving for the generations to come.



Location: *Echizen Province*

School: *Chiyozuru*

Swordsmith: *Morihiro* (2nd generation)

*o-suriage-nakago* (greatly shortened tang)

先祖并領之

先 (Sen)

祖 (zo)

并 (hai)


領 (ryô)

之 (kore)

*Senzo kore hairyô*

Literal translation:

*My ancestor received this [sword].*



先祖并領之

Whilst the *gold-inlay* translation reads:  
*"my ancestor received this [sword]..."*

The deeper, underlying message is that this katana has been passed down from generation to generation - from one ancestor to the next.

Will your family be the next to care for this sword?

A well-tapered nakago with a dark patina and three visible *mekugi-ana* (holes).



(*ura*, reverse)

02202003

No 1013330



鑑定書

一刀 無銘

(千代鶴守弘)  
(金象嵌) 先祖拝領之

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

令和二年六月二十五日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



静岡県 教育委員会  
第 60463 号  
昭和61年2月19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

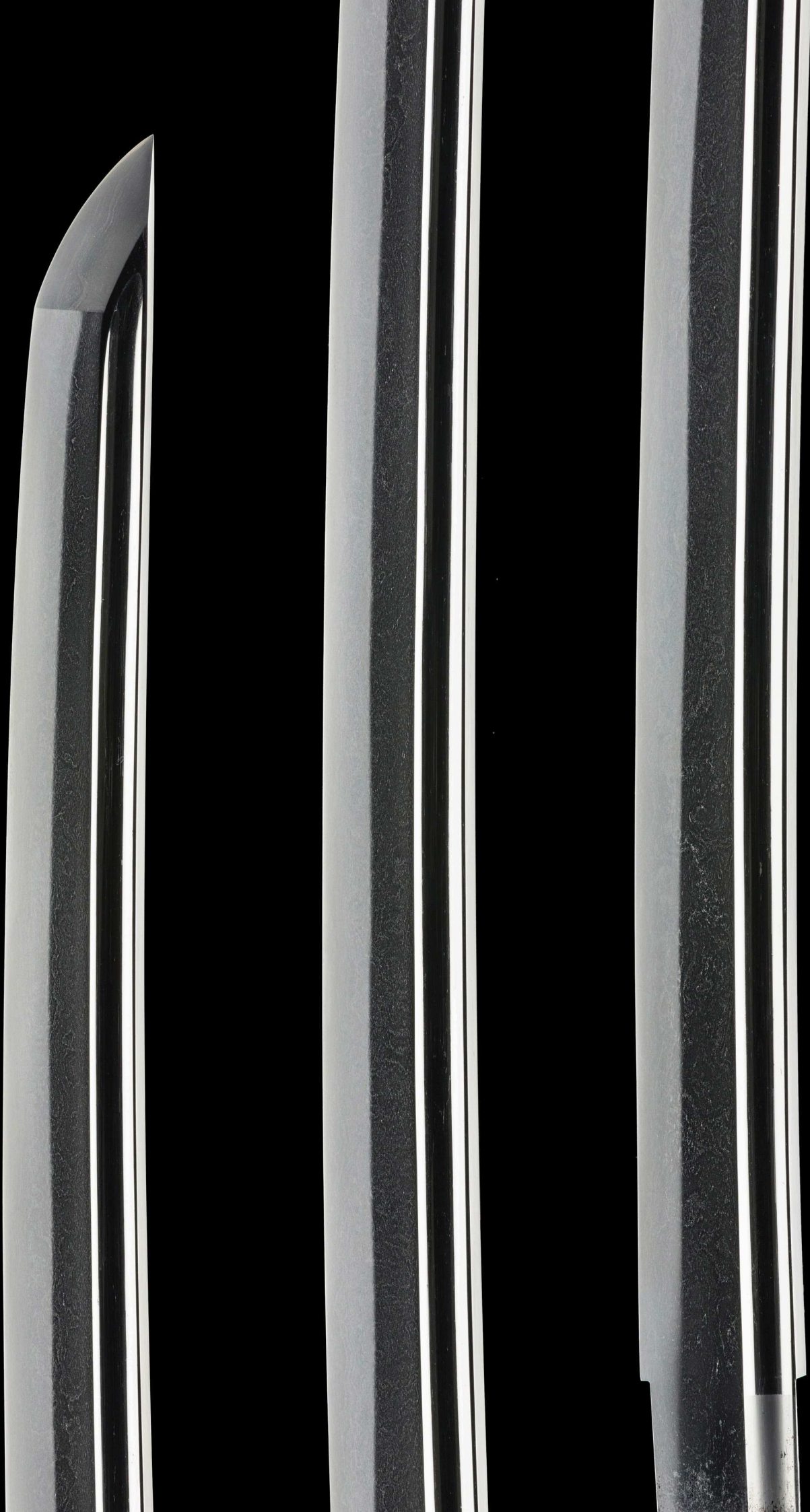
Issued in the 2nd year of Reiwa (2020), June 25th

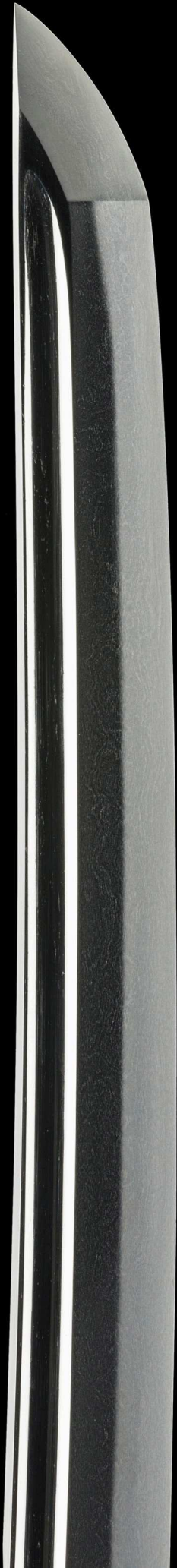
One, Katana

*Mumei* (unsigned)  
*Chiyozuru Morihiko*  
(*kinzôgan*) *Senzo kore hairyô*

*Nagasa* (length)  
2-shaku 2-sun 6-bu (68.8cm)

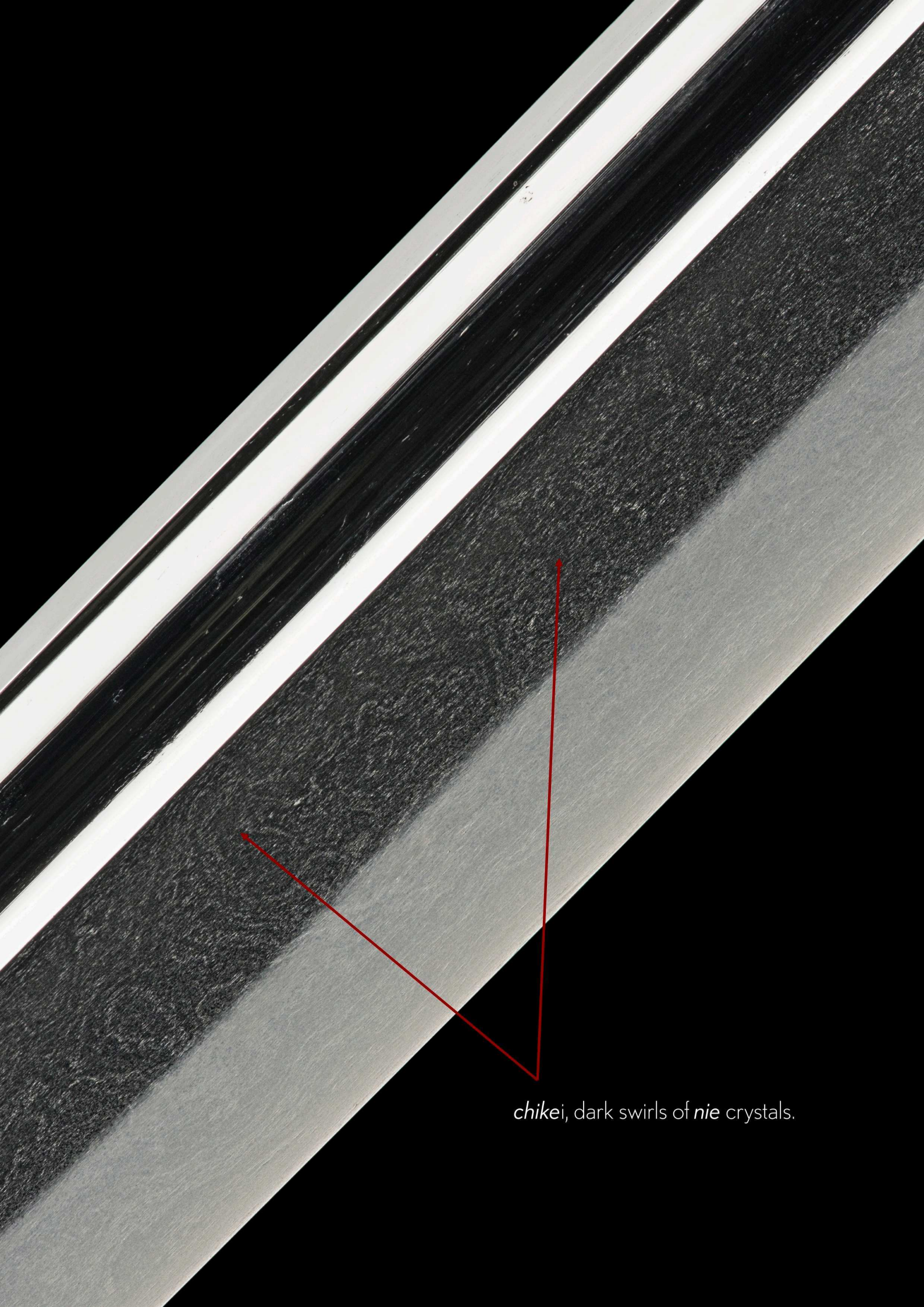
Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



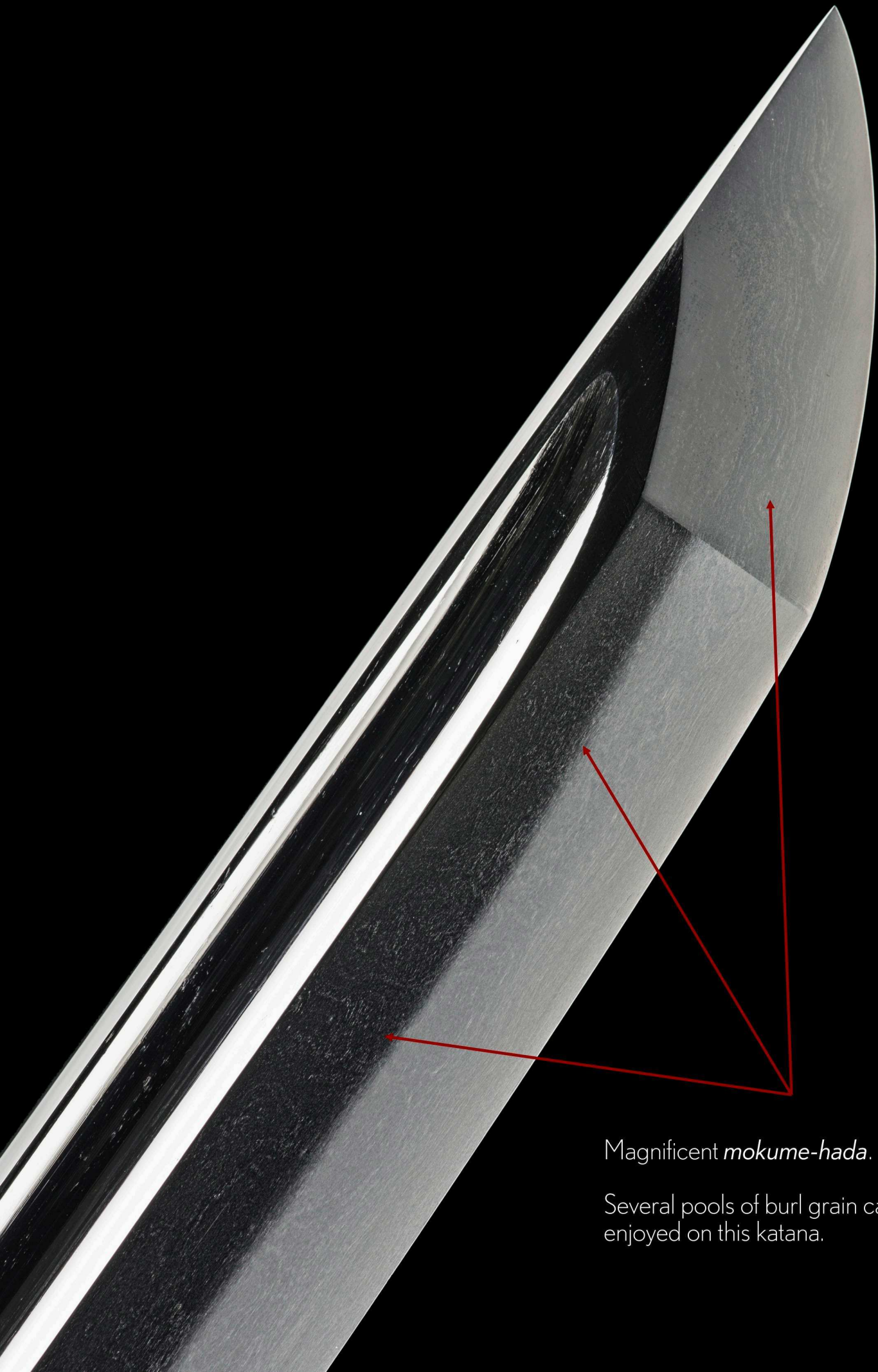




*Kaen-boshi* where the tip's hamon resembles a flame.



*chikei*, dark swirls of *nie* crystals.



Magnificent *mokume-hada*.

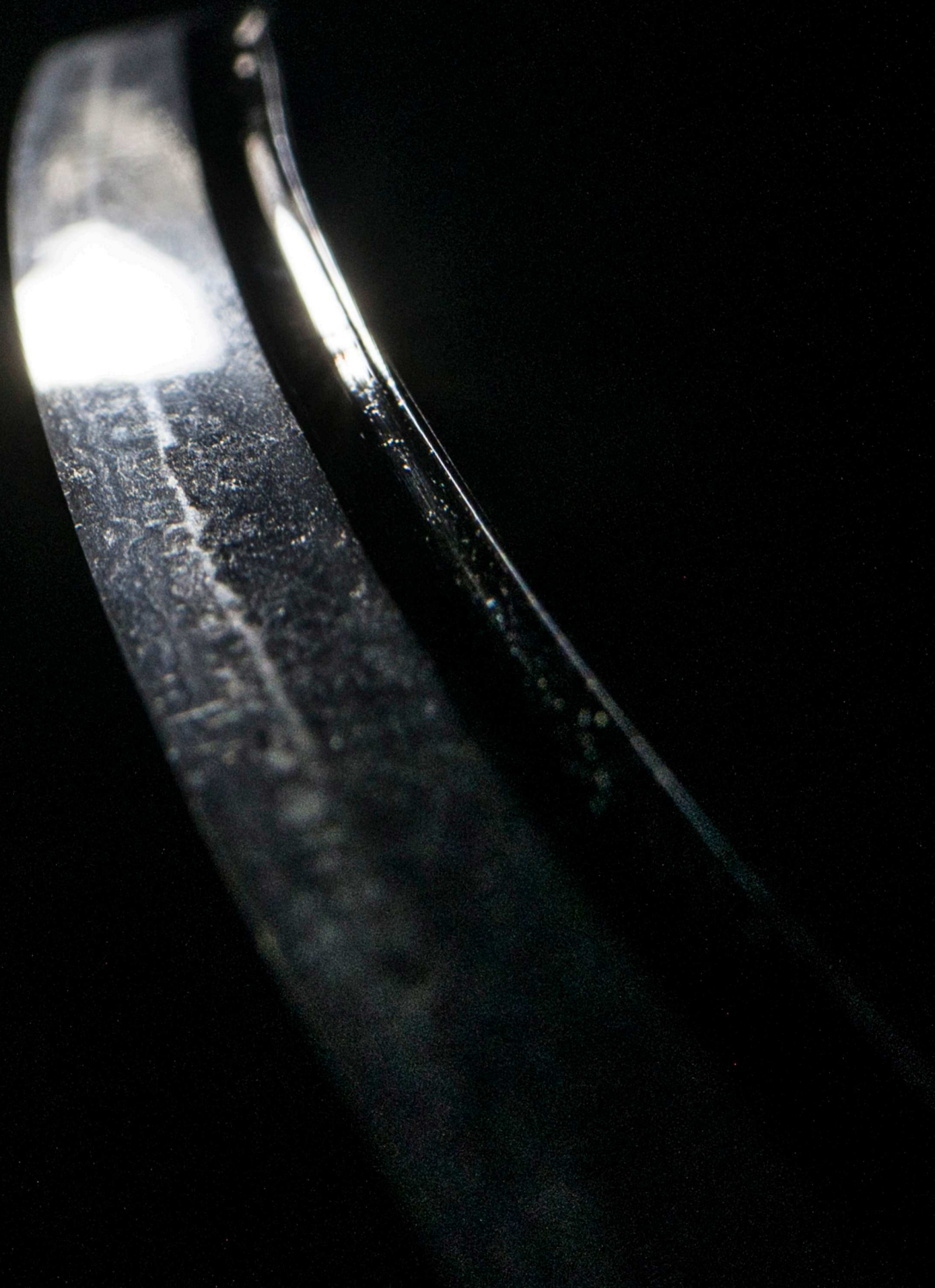
Several pools of burl grain can be enjoyed on this katana.

Close-up on the *jihada* (grain pattern in the body of the sword).

Notice how the *mokume-hada* leads to a wavy *nagare-hada* closer to the edge of the blade.

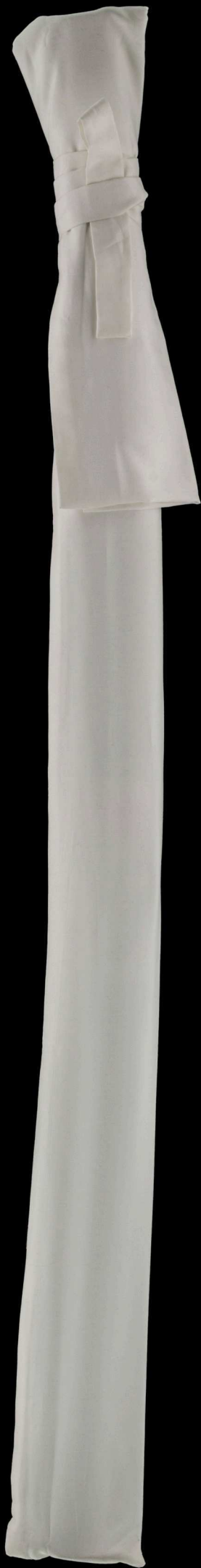


A straight *suguha-hamon* over a darkish *jigane* that is typical of swords from Echizen province along the Sea of Japan.

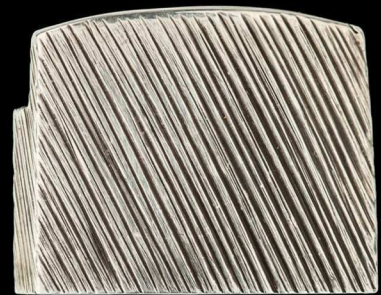




*Hamon* bursting through the clouds.



*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)

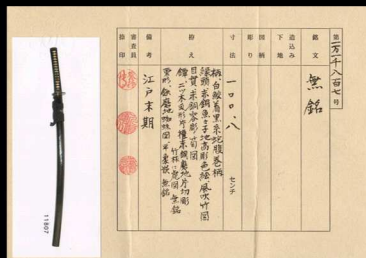


silver *habaki* with  
diagonal file marks

Naname-kizami  
 kuro-ro-nuri saya  
 uchigatana-koshirae  
 (斜め刻黒呂塗鞘打刀拵)

Uchigatana-koshirae  
 with slantingly carved scabbard  
 lacquered in glossy black

Crafted during the  
 Late Edo period  
 (1780~1867)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
 Certificate of Authenticity

*Kizami-saya*

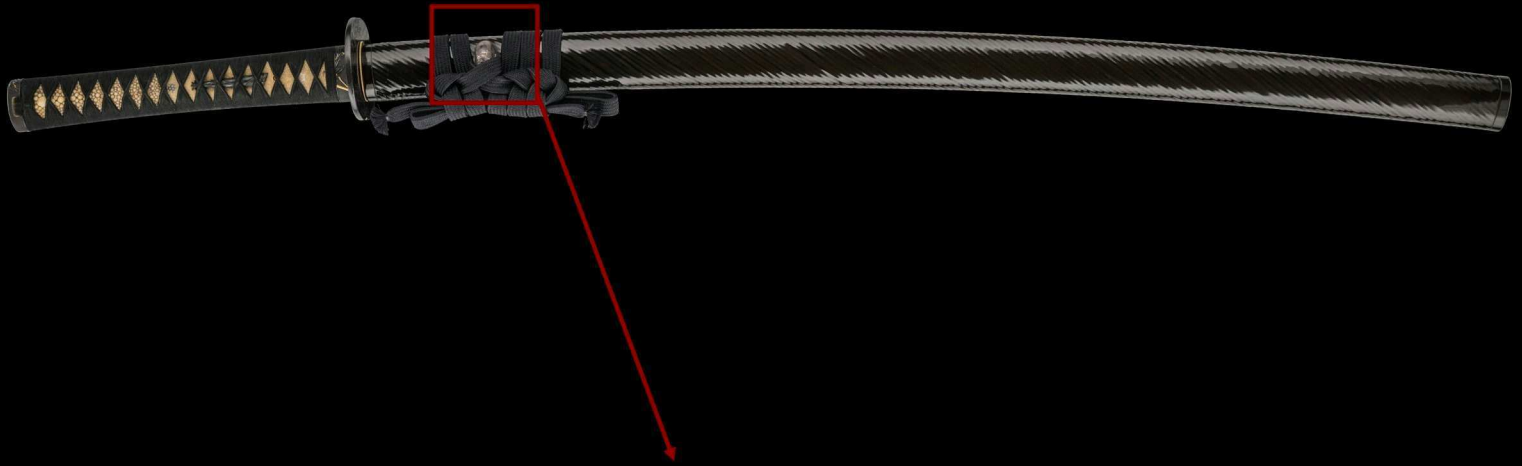
Hand-carved angled spirals that casts  
unique zig-zag shadows.



A spider and its web depicted on the iron *kurigata*, where the *sageo* cord is secured to.

The spider is known for being an intelligent arachnid who is capable of strategizing and planning. Weaving an intricate web is painstaking work that requires dedication and patience for its prey to arrive. And even when the web is done, a strong wind (which we see illustrated in the swaying bamboo trees on the *fuchi-kashira*) can come along and break it. Thus the web must be repaired. The spider is not deterred, though.

The spider reminds us that good things come for those who wait.

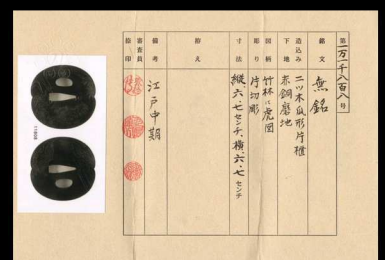
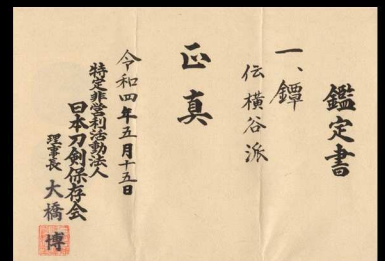




This enticing polished *shakudô tsuba* (guard) features a tiger in a bamboo grove. The tiger represents the spiritual force necessary to confront life's adversities. Of moon and fire, full moon and new moon, light and darkness, orange with black stripes, the tiger is at once *Yin* and *Yang*. \*\*

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 attributing the tsuba to the school from the mid-Edo period circa 1700~1780.

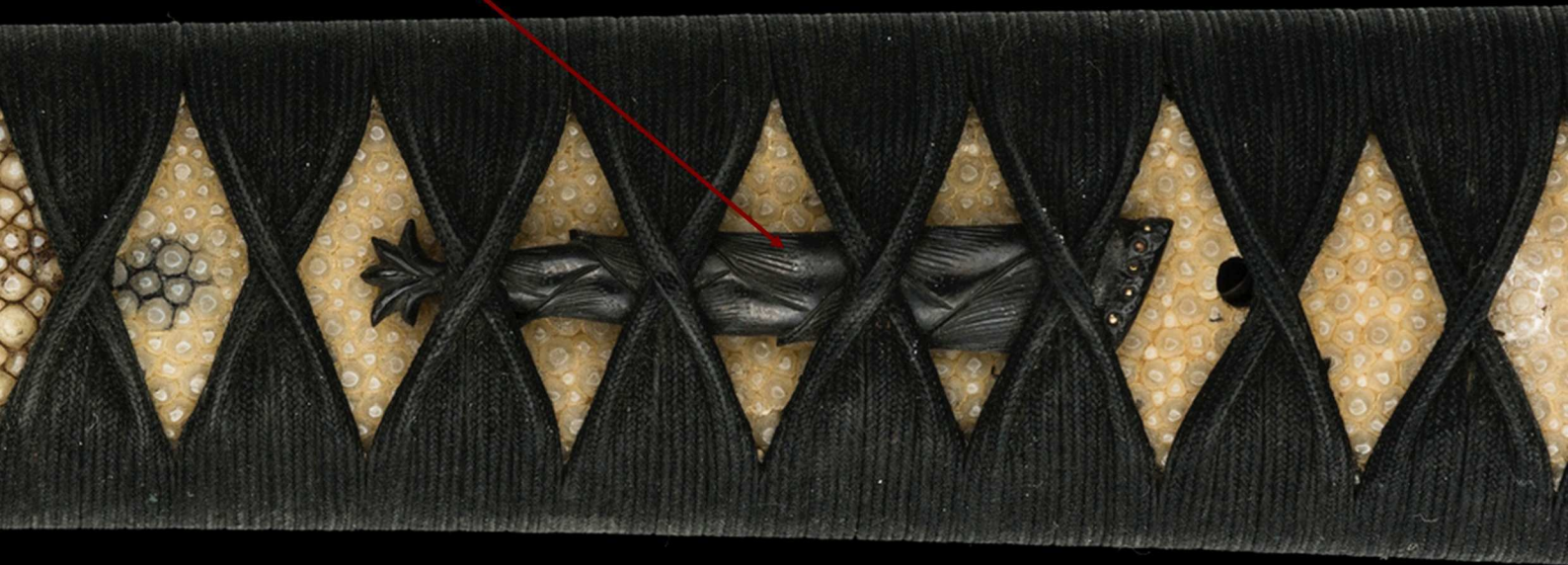




(reverse)



bamboo stalk as menuki



Durable yet incredibly flexible, *take* (pronounced *ta-keh*, bamboo) it is a symbol of prosperity in Japan. For generations, people were told to run into the bamboo groves in the event of an earthquake, as the bamboo's strong root structure would hold the earth together.

Simple and unadorned, the bamboo is also symbolic of purity and innocence.





*Fuchi-kashira*  
 attributed to  
*Kikuoka school*  
 (1780~1867)

*Bamboo trees swaying in the wind*



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho  
 Certificate of Authenticity





Koshirae bag