



ITEM# UJKA484

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A SANDAI YASUTSUGU KATANA

SIGNED, SHINTÔ PERIOD (KANBUN ERA: 1661~1673)

Swordsmith:	(Aoi-mon) Yasutsugu Nanban-tetsu o motte Bushû Edo kore o tsukuru (Edo sandai)
Measurements:	Length: 70.1cm (ubu) Sori: 0.9cm Moto-haba: 3.02cm Weight: 790g
Jihada:	Beautifully forged mokume, itame with a dark jigane, ji-nie and plenty of chikei
Hamon:	Bright chû-suguha with notare, uchinoke, niyu-ba, sunagashi, ko-ashi and kinsuji
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-4:	NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (koshirae, fk and tsuba certified as Authentic)
Fujishiro rank:	Jô-saku (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included:	Shirasaya, Edo-koshirae, fabric bags, kit, printed description

\$17,500

This striking katana is by third generation *Yasutsugu*, forged with *Nanban-tetsu* in Edo during the *Kanbun* period. The cutting edge measures a classic *jô-sun* of 70.1cm with a finely forged *itame* and *mokume-hada* with *ji-nie* and plentiful *chikei*. A bright *suguha* *hamon* with brushed *sunagashi* and impressive *kinsuji* can be enjoyed quietly under the light. A spectacular Edo-period *koshirae* features gorgeous depictions of *chidori* birds inlaid in abalone shell. *Chidori* translates to "one thousand birds" as they typically migrate in huge groups to Japan at the end of the rainy season battling head winds, rain and waves. Thus these little forces of nature symbolize gritty determination. A marvellous *fuchi-kashira* with golden waves attributed to master *Teruhide* of the famed *Ômori* school is also a great feast for the eyes. This is a brilliant samurai katana from the illustrious *Yasutsugu* school that will shine brightly in a lucky person's Japanese sword collection.

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Saki-kasane: 4.5mm
Moto-kasane: 7.2mm

Kissaki: 2.47cm
Saki-haba: 1.94cm

Nagasa: 70.1cm

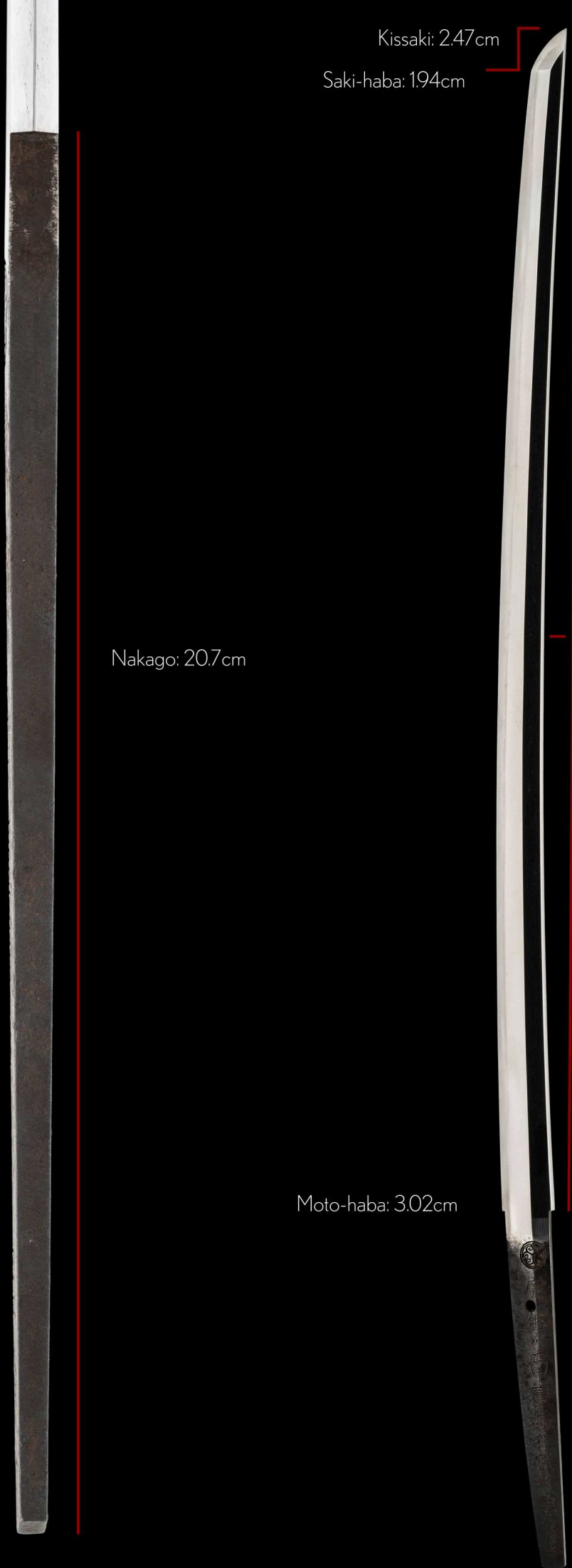
Nakago: 20.7cm

Sori: 0.9cm

Omosa: 790g

Moto-haba: 3.02cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Edo Sandai Yasutsugu, third generation of the *Yasutsugu* line, official swordsmith of the *Tokugawa* shogunate and *jô-saku* ranked superior smith, inherited two extraordinary privileges from the founder: the character 康 from *Tokugawa Iyasu*'s own name, and the right to strike the *aoi-mon* onto the *nakago*. Very few smiths in Japanese history received either.

The lineage split after second generation *Nidai Yasutsugu* died in 1646, dividing into *Edo* (Tokyo) and *Echizen* (Fukui) branches. The Edo house held the senior position, serving directly in the capital. This katana is from such lineage.

The *mei* (signature) proudly declares *nanban-tetsu o motte kore o tsukuru* - a sword made, in part, using foreign imported steel. By the mid-17th century (when this sword was crafted) the shogunate had moved to formally restrict the use of *nanban-tetsu*. The *Yasutsugu* school's position within the *Tokugawa* orbit, however, meant they remained among the very few lines that could still work with it legitimately. A statement of privilege as much as a technical note.

This fine *Kanbun* era *katana* features a beautifully forged *itame* mixed with *mokume-hada* that swirls like whirlpools across the steel - densely and finely worked, alive with shining *ji-nie*. The *hamon* is a bright *chû-suguha* mixed with shallow *notare*, small *ashi* and plenty of *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* adding a sense of movement. This is also a substantial sword, weighty and powerful. A katana beaming with quiet confidence.

A glorious late Edo-period certified *koshirae* completes the picture with a black lacquered *saya* in gold *maki-e nami-chidori* with spectacular abalone-inlaid plover birds. It would be a real challenge to recreate such masterful lacquerwork today. An eye-catching *fuchi-kashira* attributed to *Ômori Teruhide*, expertly styled with golden *Ômori-nami* waves is simply awesome. A unique *sanmai-awase* brass *tsuba* with a mirrored design of a pine shore and sailing boats brings further balance and also historical measure. Every element chosen with thoughtful intention. A samurai with superb taste commissioned this *koshirae* with great care and attention.

All told, this is a brilliant samurai katana from the illustrious *Yasutsugu* school with several talking points that will shine brightly in a very lucky person's Japanese sword collection.





WATCH PABLO'S YOUTUBE PRESENTATION OF
UJKA484 - A SANDAI YASUTSUGU KATANA
[UNIQUEJAPAN.COM/UJKA484-VIDEO](https://uniquejapan.com/ujka484-video)



Location: *Edo, Musashi province*
Swordsmith: *Yasutsugu* (third generation)

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)
katte-sagari-yasurime (slanting file marks)



Tokugawa Aoi-mon (hollyhock crest)

康 (Yasu)

繼 (tsugu)

以 (motte)

南 (Nan)

蛮 (ban)

鐵 (tetsu)

於 (oite)

武 (Bu)

州 (shû)

江 (E)

戶 (do, ni)

作 (tsukuru)

之 (kore, o)

*Yasutsugu Nanban-tetsu o motte Bushû
Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru*

Crafted by Yasutsugu in Edo, Bushû
(Musashi) province using imported steel



The *aoi-mon* (hollyhock) was the official *kamon* (crest) of the ruling *shogunate* of the Edo period, the *Tokugawa* family who were based in *Owari* province. The use of the *aoi-mon* (葵紋) crest in his signature marks official Tokugawa recognition.



Tokugawa Ieyasu (1543-1616)
Founder and first shogun of the
Tokugawa shogunate (Edo period)

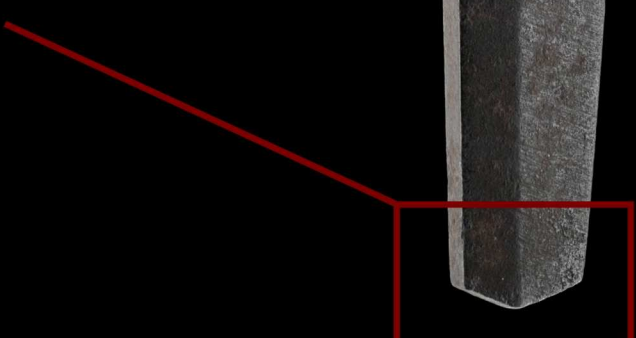
(*ura*, reverse)



one hole, a perfect *ubu-nakago*

The shape of the *nakago-jiri* (butt-end)
is called *iriyama-gata*.

Iri means 'enter' and *yama* is 'mountain',
suggesting the start of the climb ahead.



特保
05202312

No 1022188

鑑定書

一刀 銘 (葵紋) 康継以南蛮鉄於武州江戸作之江戸三代

長 二尺三寸一分強

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

令和六年二月二十一日

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 567 号
昭和26年5月11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 6th year of Reiwa (2024), February 21st

One, Katana

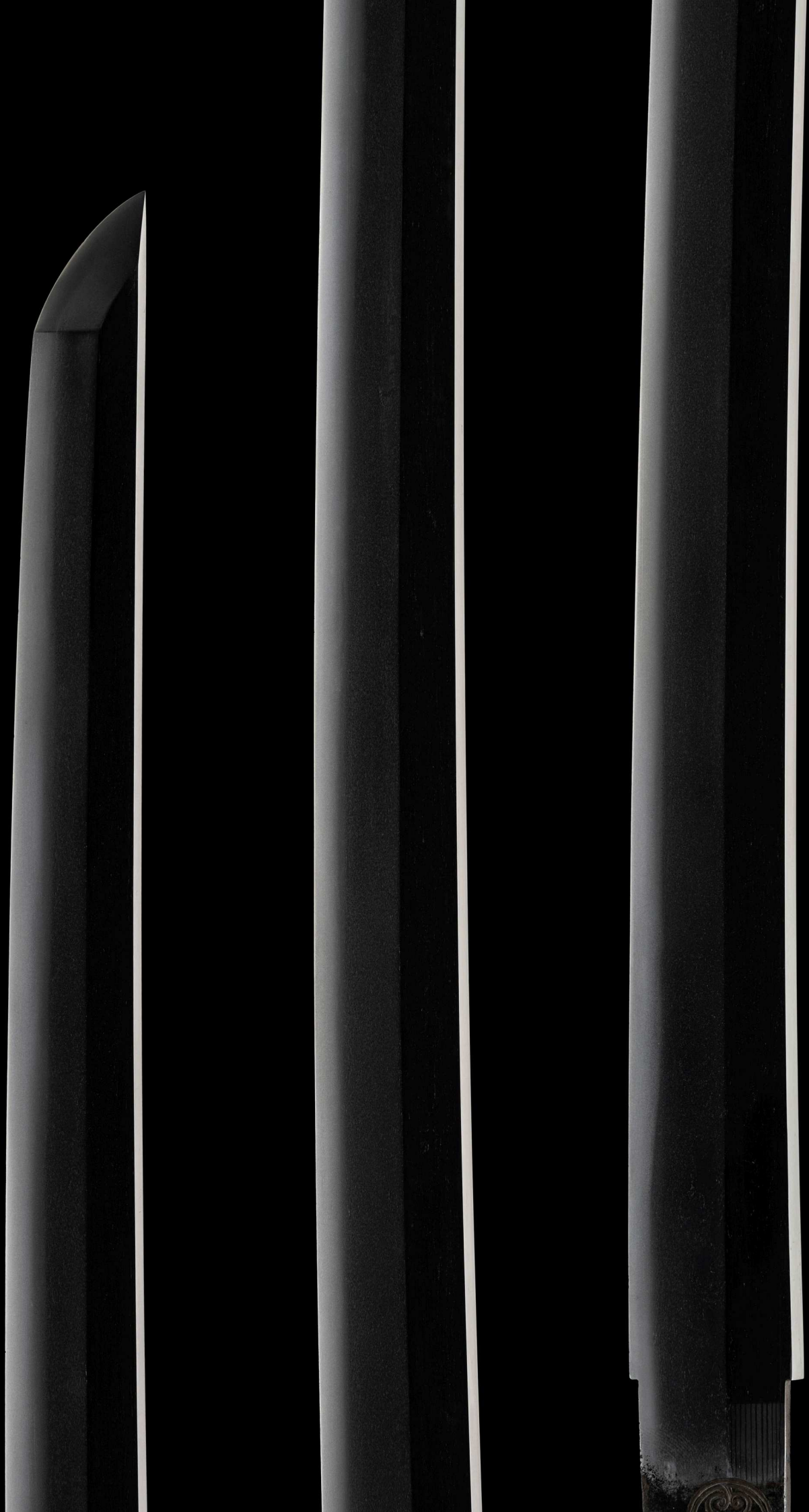
Mei (signature)

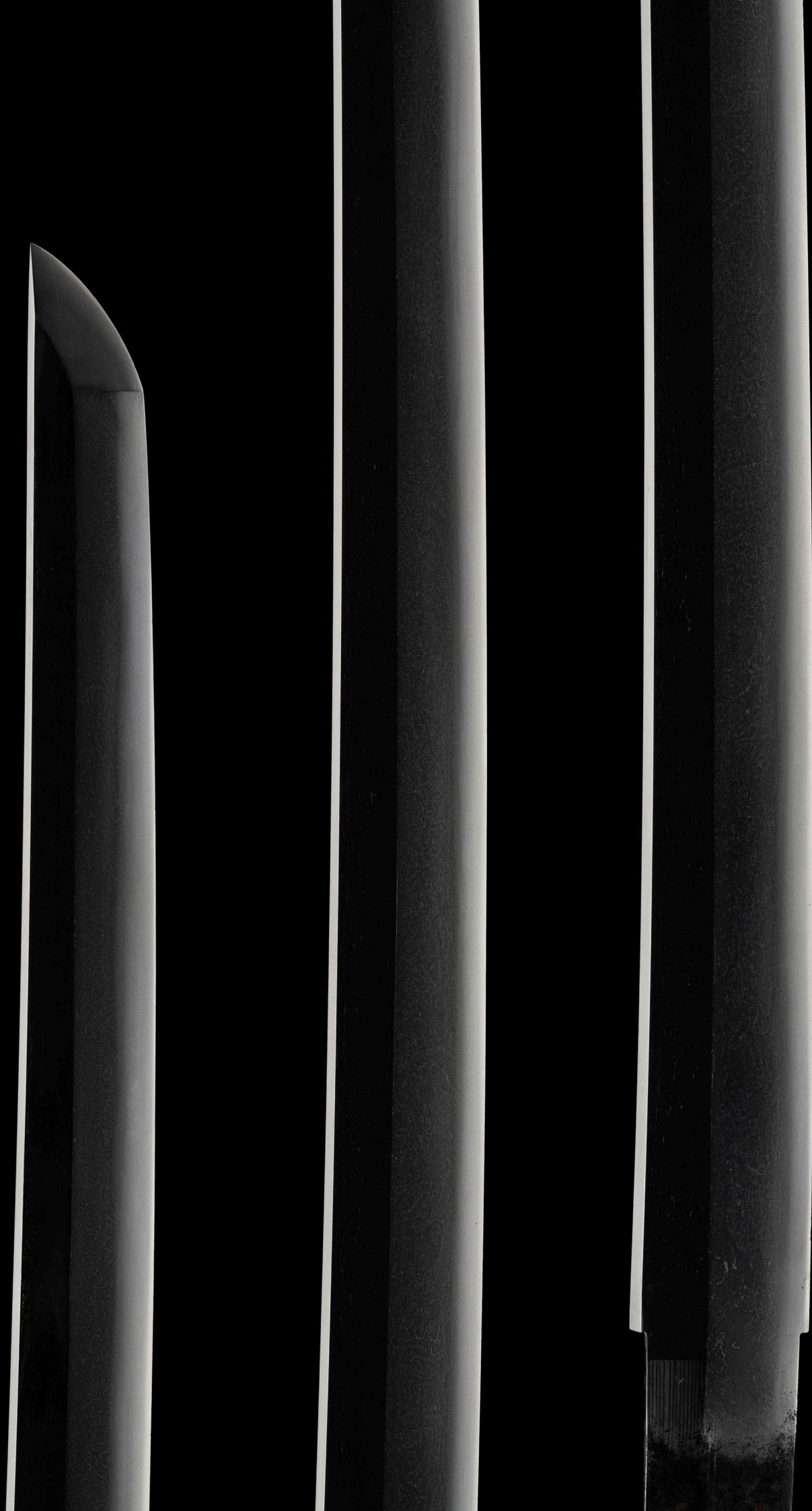
*(Aoi-mon) Yasutsugu nanban-tetsu o motte
Bushû Edo ni oite kore o tsukuru (Edo Sandai)*

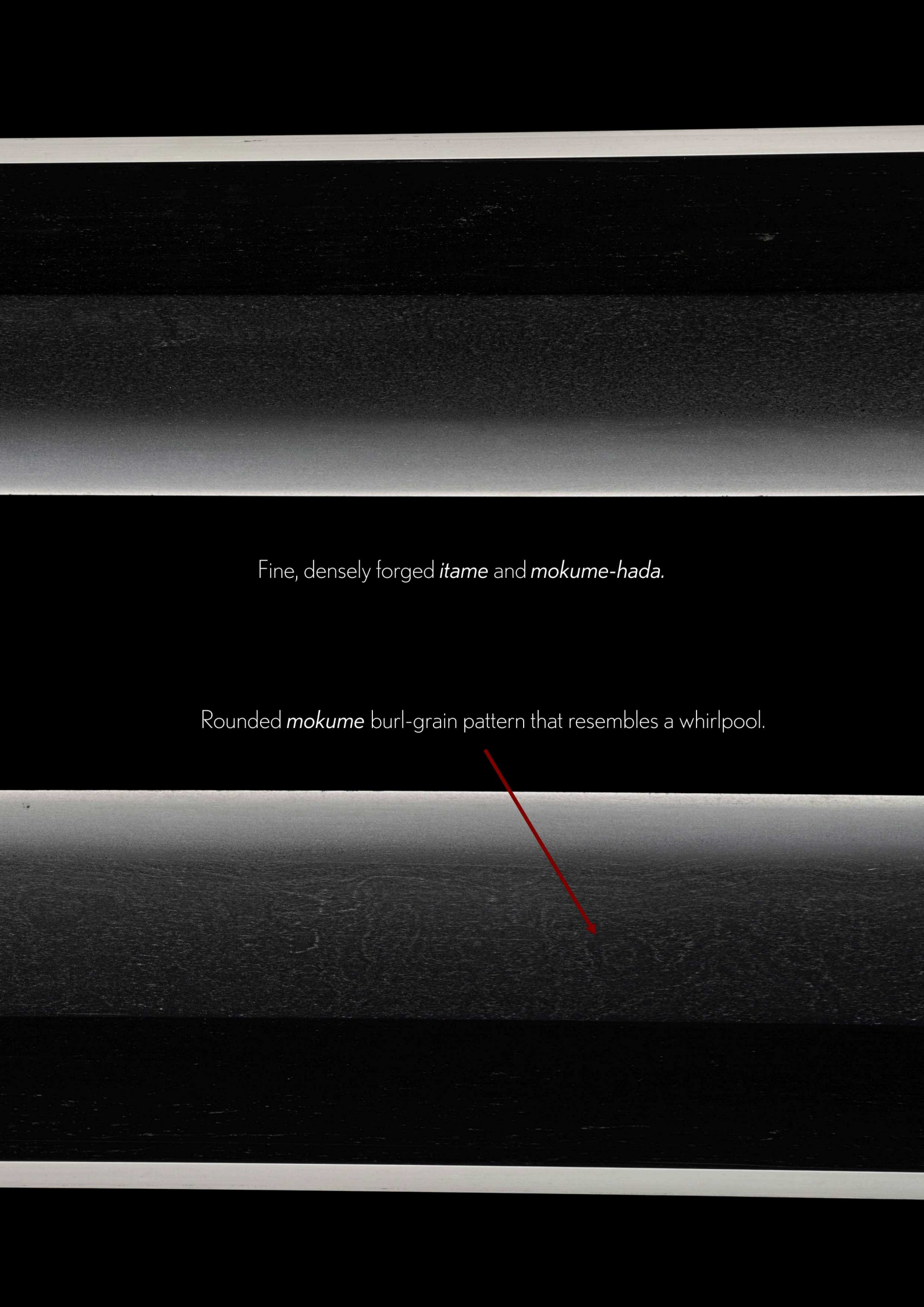
Nagasa (length)

2-shaku 3-sun 1-bu kyô (70.1cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)







Fine, densely forged *itame* and *mokume-hada*.

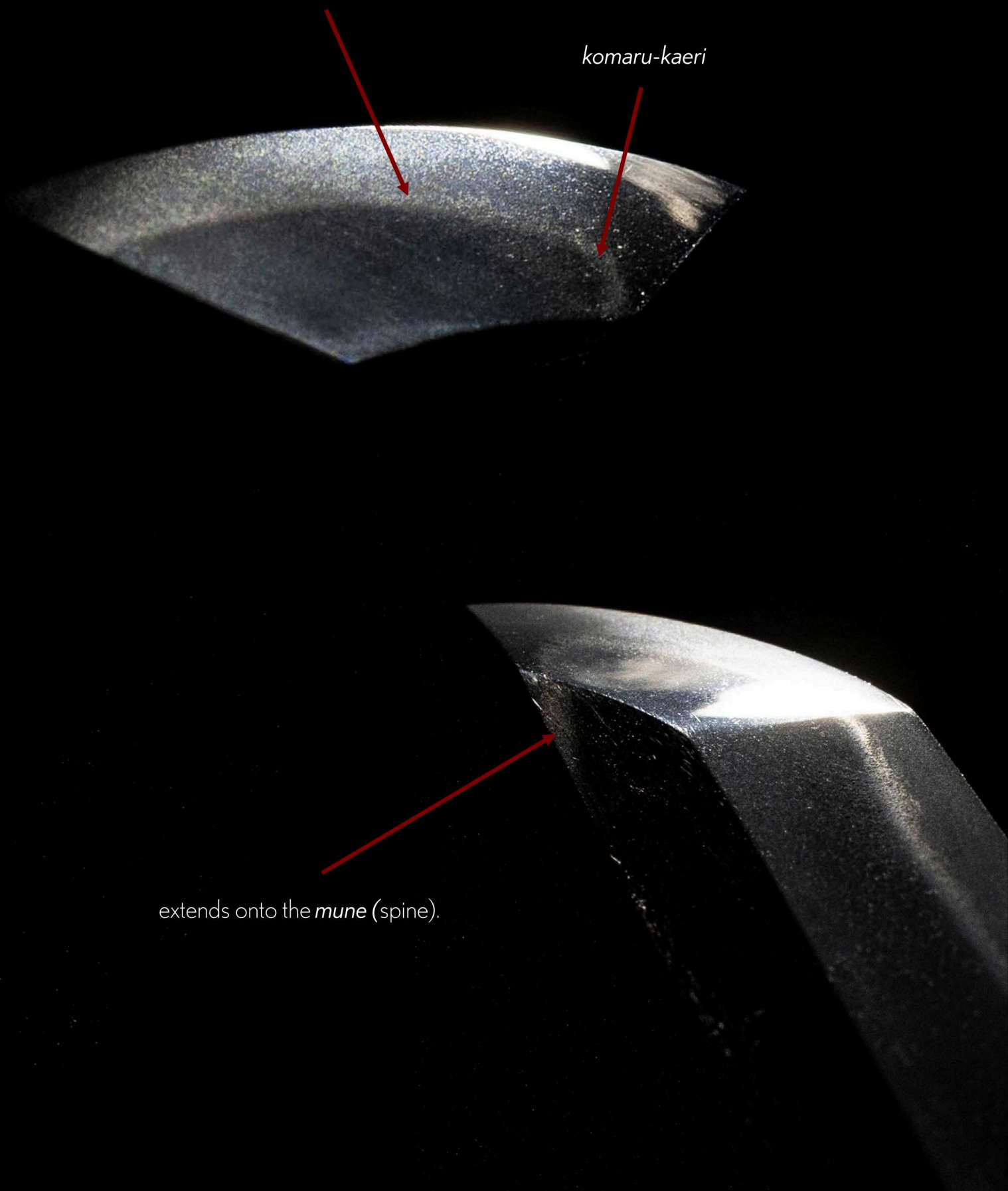
Rounded *mokume* burl-grain pattern that resembles a whirlpool.

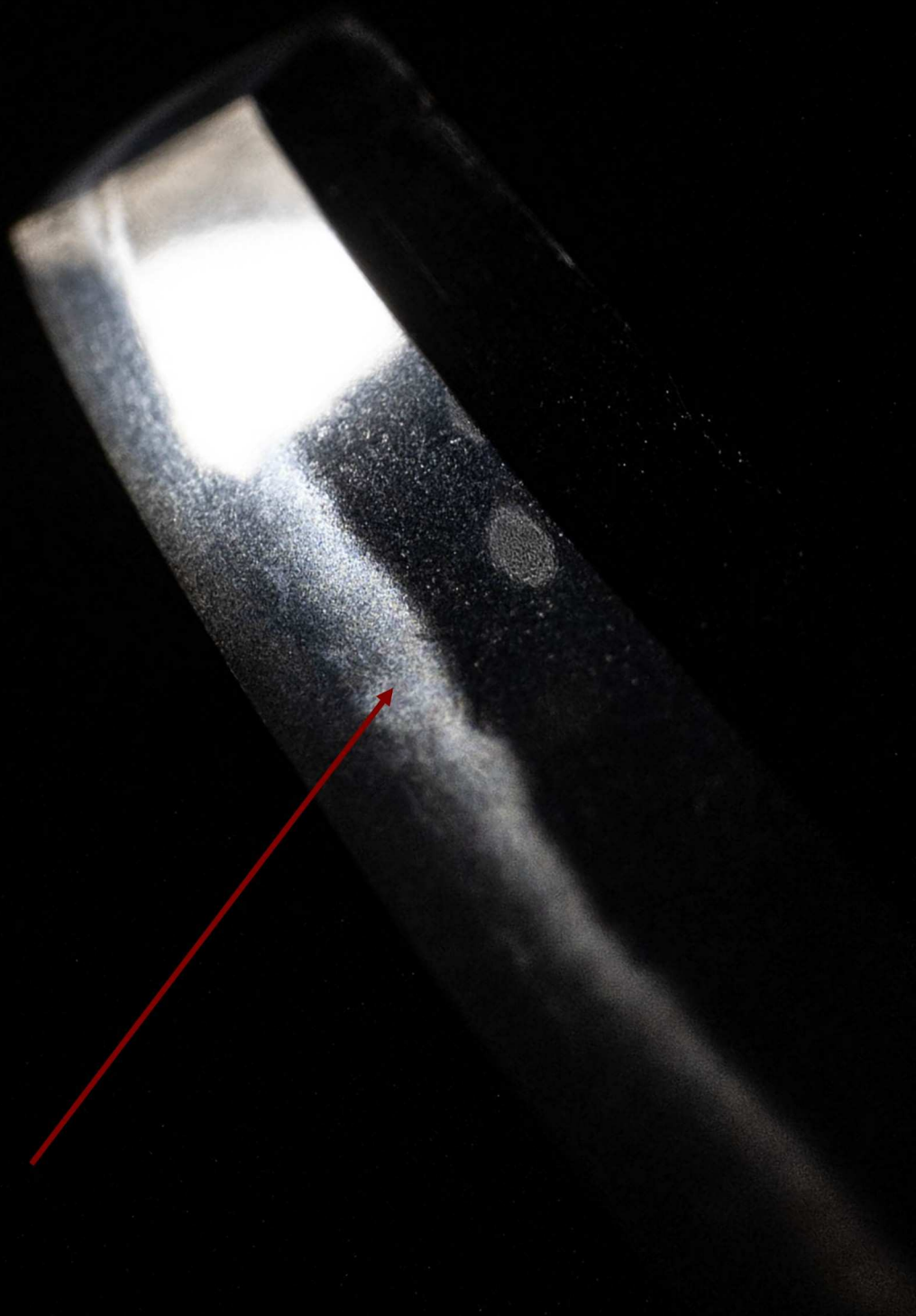
The *bôshi* begins straight, and turns back in a small round consistent manner known as (*ko-maru kaeri*). Note how the *bôshi* tails off onto the *mune* (spine).

bôshi

komaru-kaeri

extends onto the *mune* (spine).





Here we see a thick snowy white *nioiguchi*, crystals that make up the *suguha* hamon.

The circular bright spots are studio light reflections, a hazard of working with steel this well polished!

This is a katana to savour the subtleties. There is plenty of Yamato-den characteristics to enjoy such as *uchinoke* (crescent moon) and *nijuba* where the hamon splits for a distance. Prominent dark lines of *kinsuji* and brushed *sunagashi* also appear in the hamon.

uchinoke

niju-ba

sunagashi

kinsuji

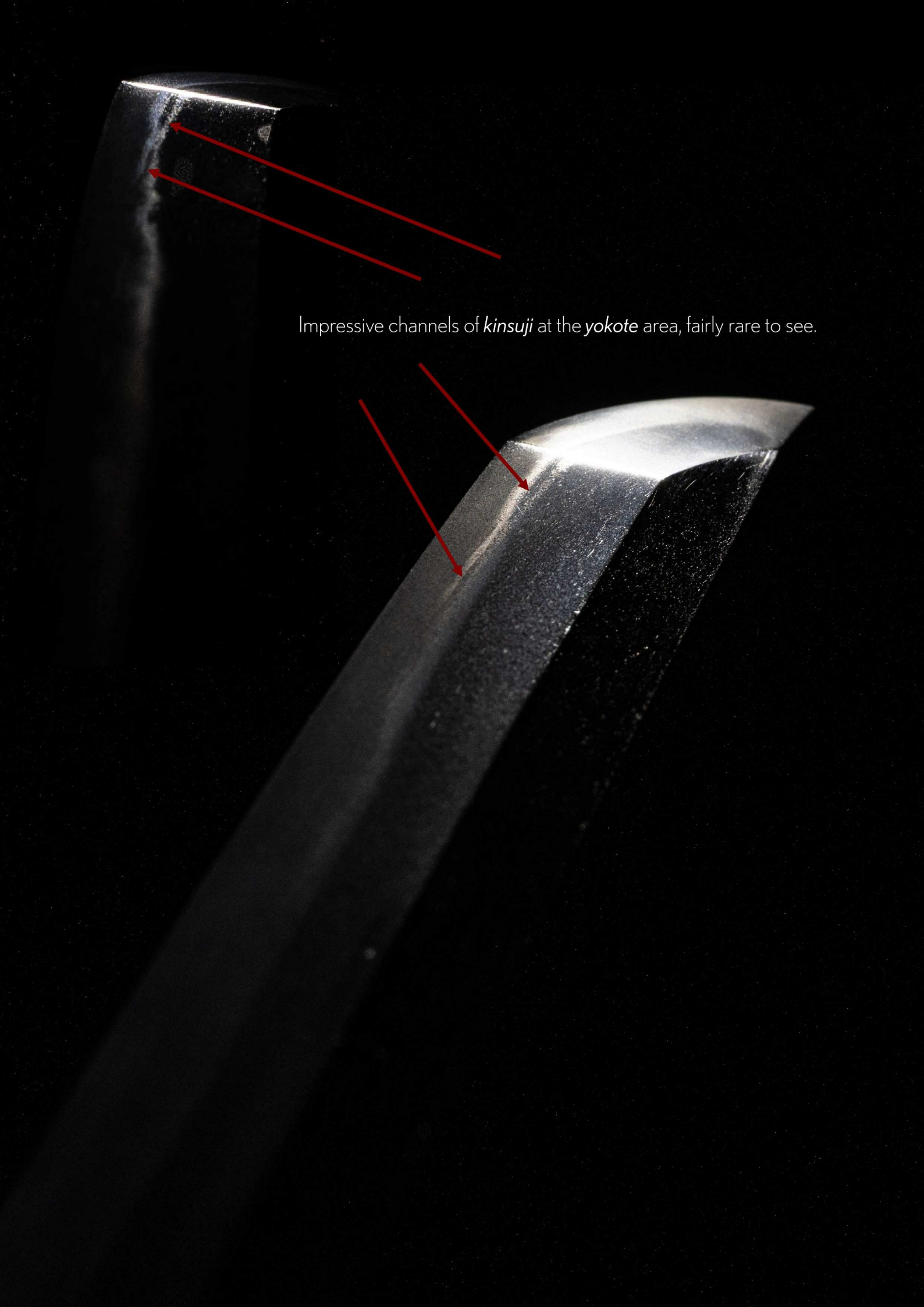


Gentle *notare* wave formations gives
the sword a sense of movement.

'wet' *jigane*.

ashi (legs)

A good view of the *ko-ashi* (small legs) that run along the hamon towards the cutting edge. Notice how the steel looks 'wet', that's the sign of a fine, healthy sword.

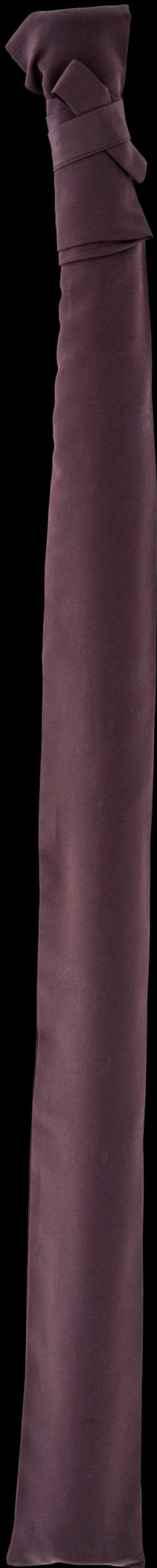


Impressive channels of *kinsuji* at the *yokote* area, fairly rare to see.

Holding the sword just right, reveals a delightful bright white *shirake-utsuri* reflecting the *hamon* inside the dark *jigane* (body) of the sword.

splendid *chikei* can be seen mixed in with the *itame* and *mokume-hada*.

shirake utsuri



This shirasaya has potential for *sayagaki* with our in-house artist *Nozomi-san*.



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

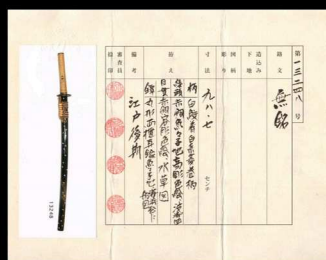
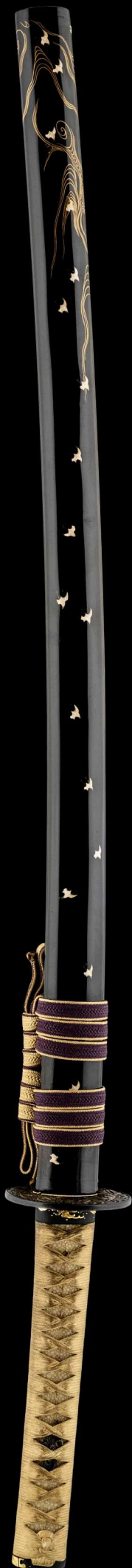


gold *nijû-habaki* with
copper ground (fine quality)

*Kuro-roiro-nuri nami-ni-chidori-makie-saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂色塗波に千鳥蒔絵鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in black with maki-e decoration
depicting wave and birds*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1868)



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity

each *chidori* bird inlaid in abalone shell.



Chidori in Ukiyo-e

The *saya* (scabbard) is finished in glossy black lacquer, decorated in gold *maki-e* waves with *chidori* (plover birds), each one expertly inlaid in *awabi* (abalone shell).

Nami-chidori. Waves and birds.

This is one of the most beloved motifs in Japanese art, and the meaning runs deep. The waves represent the hardships of life. The birds are family, flying together above them, facing whatever comes their way.

And there is wordplay too, as there so often is in Japanese art - *chidori* echoes *chidoru*, meaning to seize a thousand, and so the pattern quietly carries prayers for victory and the attainment of goals. This koshirae was clearly commissioned with great care - and great hope.

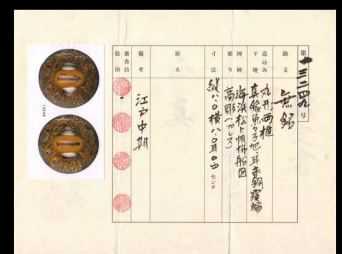
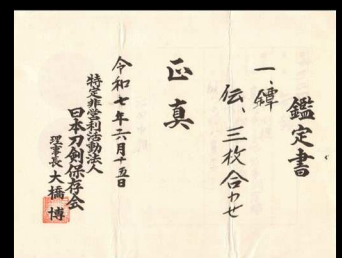
Underlying copper is visible,
years of samurai wear and tear.



This meaningful brass *tsuba* depicts pine trees on the shore and a sailing boat moving across the surface. The imagery is filled with positivity- safe voyages, prosperity, the open seas ahead.

The construction is *sanmai-awase* - three plates laminated together, the outer surfaces shaped through a form of press work. This method emerged from necessity rather than choice: working with thinner plates minimized flaws at a time when quality materials were scarce.

Creativity and resourcefulness on full display.





(front)

That the front and reverse bear exactly the same design is no accident, it is one of the defining characteristics of *sanmai-awase* construction.
Made to be admired from every angle.



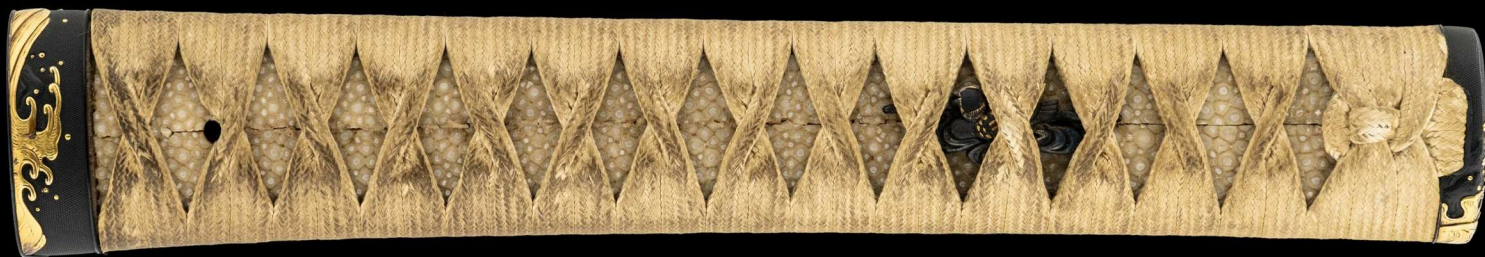
(reverse)



Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Ômori Teruhide
(大森英秀, 1730 ~ 1798)

What a glorious *fuchi-kashira*. *Ômori Teruhide* was born in Edo in 1730, the nephew of *Ômori Hidemasa* and eventual adopted son and second-generation head of the highly respected *Ômori* school. *Hidemasa* himself studied under the legendary *Yokoya Sômin*, the man who effectively defined the aesthetic vocabulary of Edo-period metalwork. Teruhide inherited that tradition and made it his own.

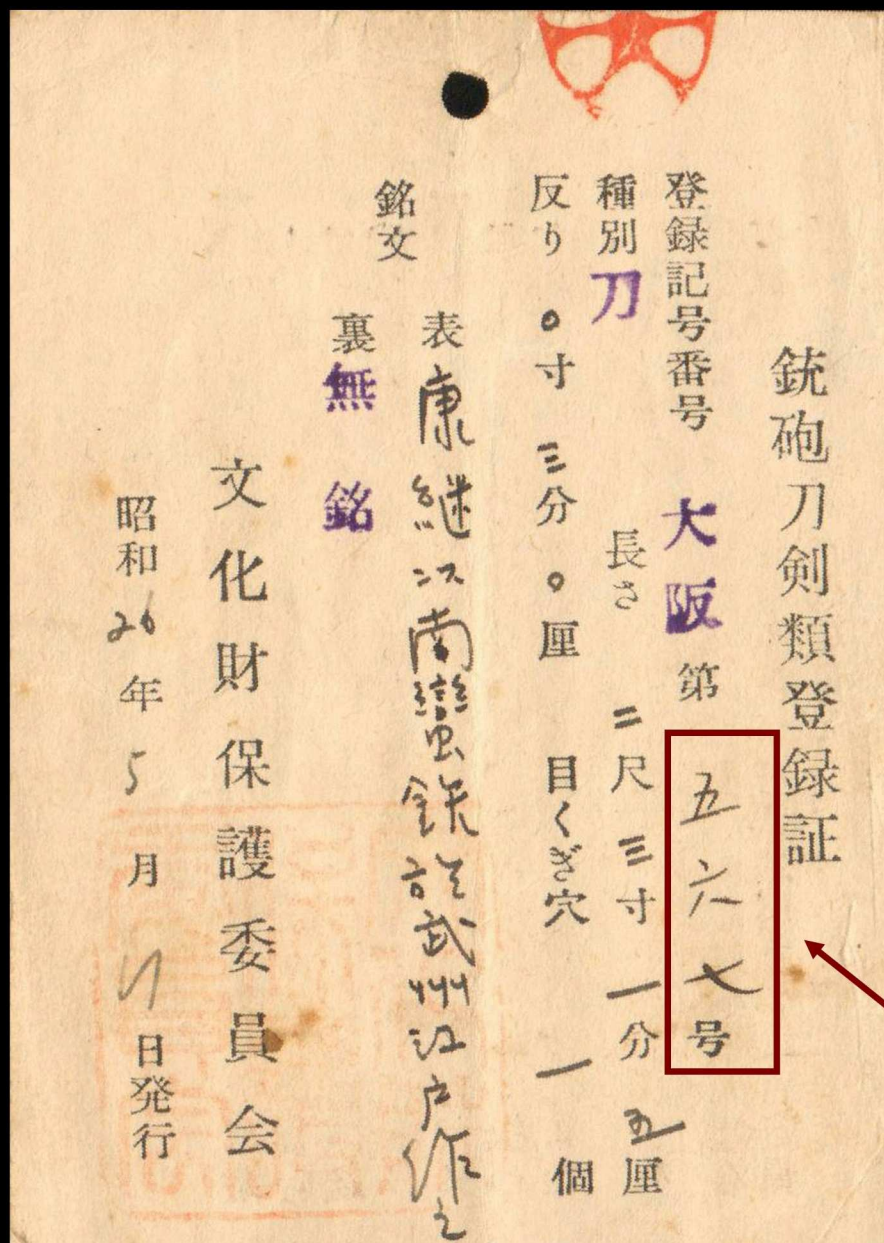
The groundwork is a top-quality base of *shakudô nanako* with gold accents - rich, deep, and rather moving. The wave (*nami*) carving here is, of course, the signature technique of the school. *Ômori-nami* is the term collectors use. No other school rendered the energy of the open sea quite like the *Ômori* school.



The *tsuka* (hilt) is a samurai classic - white *samekawa* (ray skin) beneath an ivory coloured braid that has aged like a fine wine. Feel the history...



The *menuki* are *shakudô* with gold accents, carrying a motif of aquatic plants - a natural companion to the waves rolling across the *fuchi-kashira*.



567 (!)

This is the original *torokusho* (registration card) for the 3-dai Yasutsugu katana. The card was registered in the 26th year of *Shōwa* (1951).

This is significant as 1951 was the very first year that swords were formally registered in Japan. Many former *daimyō* (great) families were invited to submit their collections suggesting this blade was once held by a prominent family.

It also shows this sword had never left Japan, even after WWII when many swords were confiscated by allied forces.

This katana of the very first swords registered in Japan. It was registered in *Ōsaka* and the registration number is only 567 (wow).



Koshirae bag with a beautiful
chrysanthemum wave pattern.