



ITEM# UJWA228

## A NOBUYOSHI SUNNOBI TANTO

SIGNED, EARLY EDO PERIOD (KEIAN ERA: 1648~1652)

- Swordsmith:** Yamashiro no Kuni Fujiwara Nobuyoshi (first generation)  
**Measurements:** Length: 31.4cm (ubu nakago) Curvature: 0.2cm Moto-haba: 3.0cm  
**Jihada:** Densely forged nagare-hada with chikei  
**Hamon:** Mix of small and large gunome-midare with long ashi and sunagashi  
**Certificate #1:** NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho (a sword that is Especially Precious)  
**Certificates #2-4:** NTHK-NPO Kanteisho (sword, koshirae and fuchi-kashira designated Authentic)  
**Rankings:** Chu-Josaku (an above average smith) & Wazamono (maker of sharp swords)  
**Included:** Shirasaya, Edo koshirae, bags, stand, kit, DVD, printed description

**SOLD**

This beautiful sword is a *sunnobi tanto* - a long tanto that measures just over one *shaku* (30.3cm) in cutting edge - although technically registered as a *wakizashi*. It is in *hirazukuri* (flat) shape with *koshi-bi*, double *goma-bashi* grooves and a *bonji* engraving for spiritual protection. Nobuyoshi was born Takai Kinzaburo and he worked within the highly respected *Mishina* school in Yamashiro (Kyoto) in the mid-1600s. He first signed the clan name *Fujiwara* and later changed to *Minamoto*.

A bright, wavy *hamon* over brilliant *nagare-hada* flows like a stream of reflecting water. The nature scene continues in the Edo period *koshirae* fittings with the majestic *Kami-iso* shrine *tsuba* standing tall while birds and plum blossoms rejoice on the *fuchi-kashira* and *kozuka*. The *kojiri* (end cap) is further decorated with finely detailed pine trees and the *menuki* encourages great dreams in the form of *nasu* (eggplants). A theme of life appreciation encapsulates this little gem.

Saki-kasane: 5.0mm <sup>^</sup>

Moto-kasane: 6.1mm

Omosa: 280g

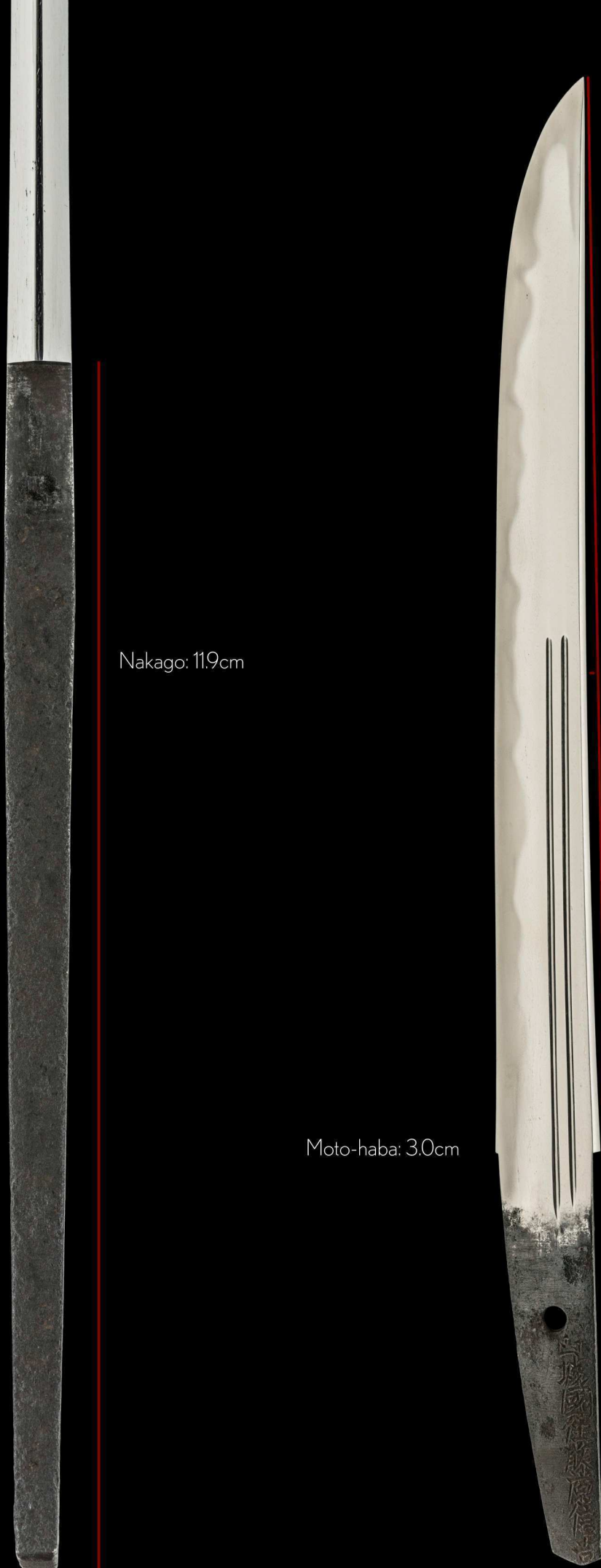
Nakago: 11.9cm

Moto-haba: 3.0cm

Nagasa: 31.4cm

Sori: 0.2cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Technically registered as a wakizashi, this sword is a *sun nobi tanto* that is just over one *shaku* (30.3cm) in cutting edge. It is in *hirazukuri* shape with *koshi-bi* and *goma-bashi* grooves.

Nobuyoshi's real name is *Takai Kinzaburo* and he worked within the *Mishina school* in *Yamashiro* (Kyoto). He first signed the clan name *Fujiwara* and later changed to *Minamoto*.

Dated works exist in the *Shoho* era (1644-1648), which is approximately when this sword was crafted.





Location: *Yamashiro* (resident of Kyoto)  
Clan: *Fujiwara*  
Swordsmith: *Nobuyoshi* (first generation)

*ubu-nakago* (original, unaltered tang)

Yama

shiro (no)

Kuni

Ju

Fuji

wara

Nobu

yoshi

## 認定書

長一尺三寸半

一、振指銘山城國佐藤原信吉

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別貴重

刀剣として認定す

昭和四十七年一月十五日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



殿



## NBTHK Tokubetsu Kicho Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Especially Precious*  
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 47th year of Showa (1972), January 15th

One, Wakizashi

*Mei* (signature)

*Yamashiro no Kuni Fujiwara Nobuyoshi*

*Nagasa* (length)

1-shaku 3-bu han (31.4cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai  
(NBTHK)



捺 審 査 印 員	備 考	中 心	彫 刻	銚 子	刃 紋	鍛	造 り 込 み	銘 文	第九千二百四十七号
	明暦頃	目釘穴 一個 鏝 勝手下がり	表、護摩箸、表裏共区下に掻き流し 裏、腰樋、上に梵字	直ぐに小丸一寸	大小の互の目乱れ交わる	板目流れて詰まる	平造り、真の棟	山城住藤原信吉	

## NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate of Authenticity

This katana was designated as *Authentic*  
by the Non-Profit Society for the Preservation of the Japanese Sword

One, Wakizashi

*Yamashiro-ju Shodai Nobuyoshi*

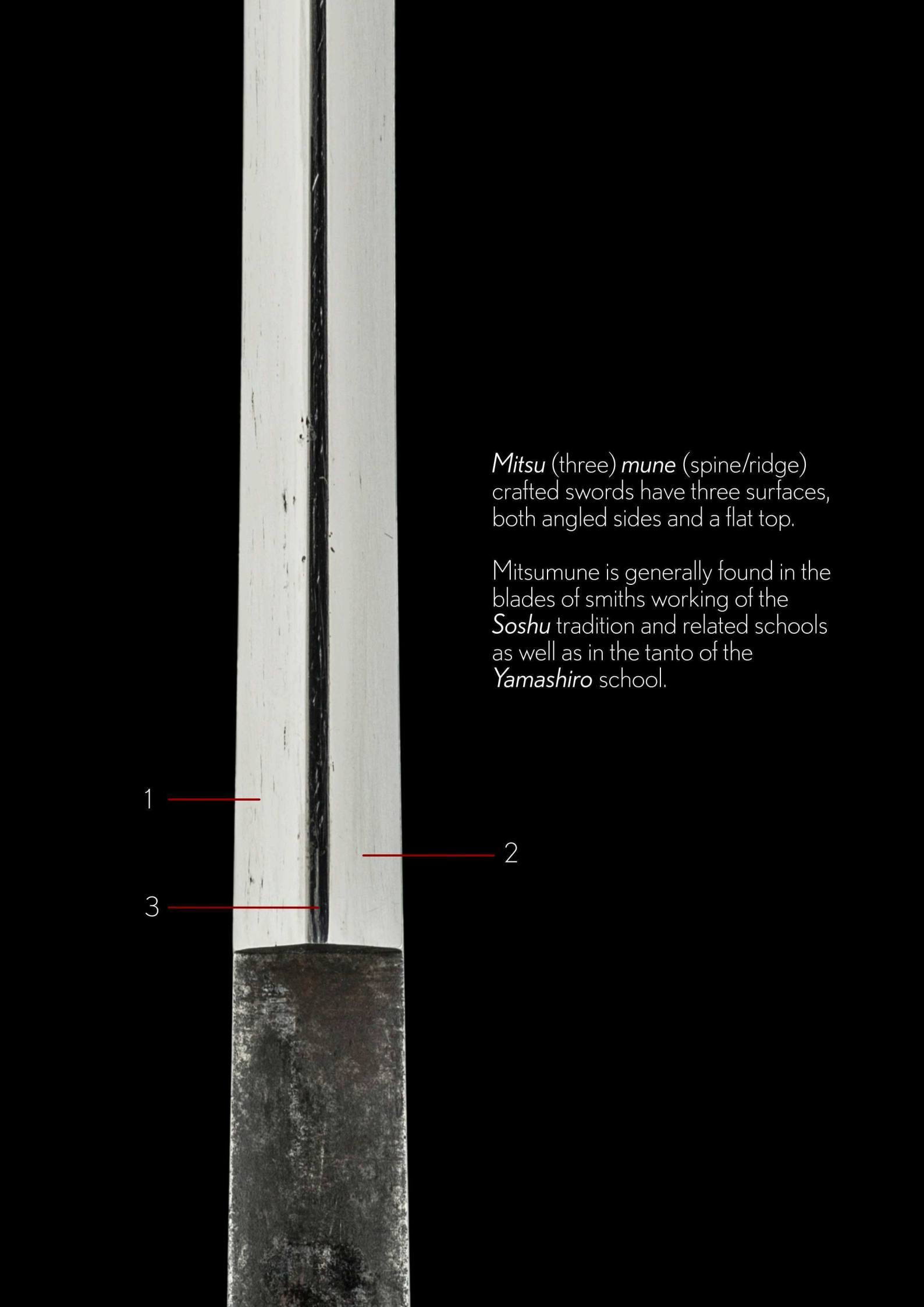
*Nagasa* (length)  
1-shaku 4-bu kore ari (31.4cm)

Crafted during *Meireki era* (1655-1658)

Shinsa judging panel:  
*five hanko seals of authenticity*

Issued in 30th year of Heisei (2018), July 15th

Nihon Token Hozon Kai  
(NTHK-NPO)



*Mitsu* (three) *mune* (spine/ridge)  
crafted swords have three surfaces,  
both angled sides and a flat top.

Mitsumune is generally found in the  
blades of smiths working of the  
*Soshu* tradition and related schools  
as well as in the tanto of the  
*Yamashiro* school.

1

2

3

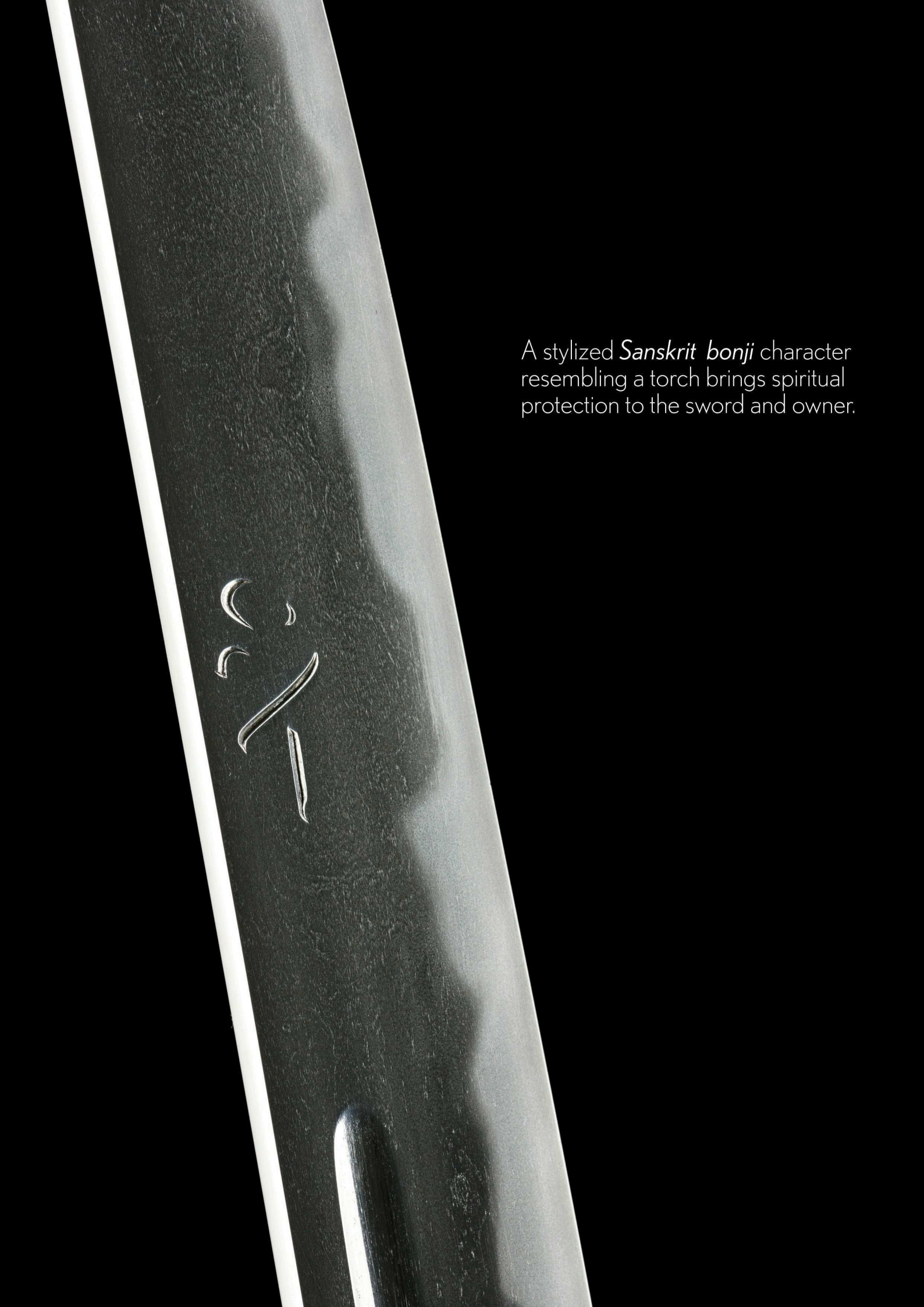
*Gomabashi*

pair of parallel grooves running partway up the blade resembling chopsticks used for the spiritual Buddhist *goma* fire ritual.

*Koshi-bi*

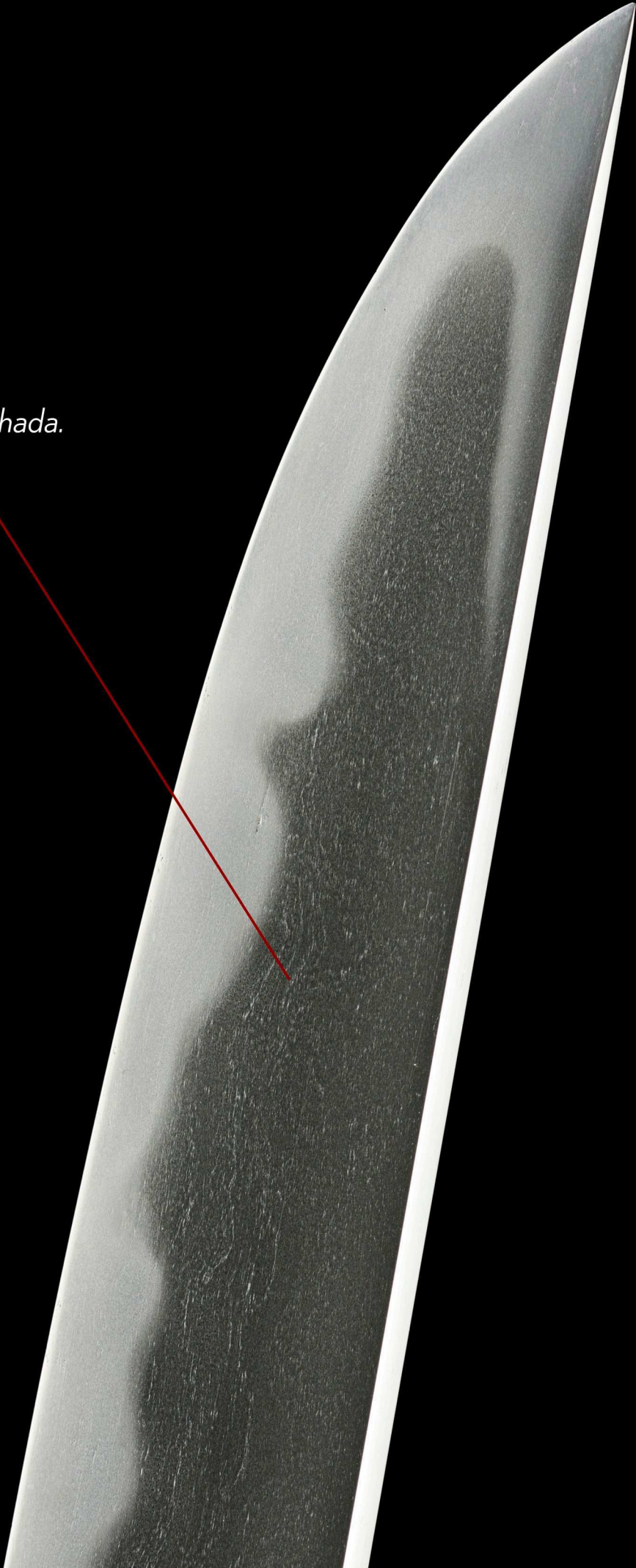
A short groove with a rounded top engraved on the lower part of the blade, close to the tang.

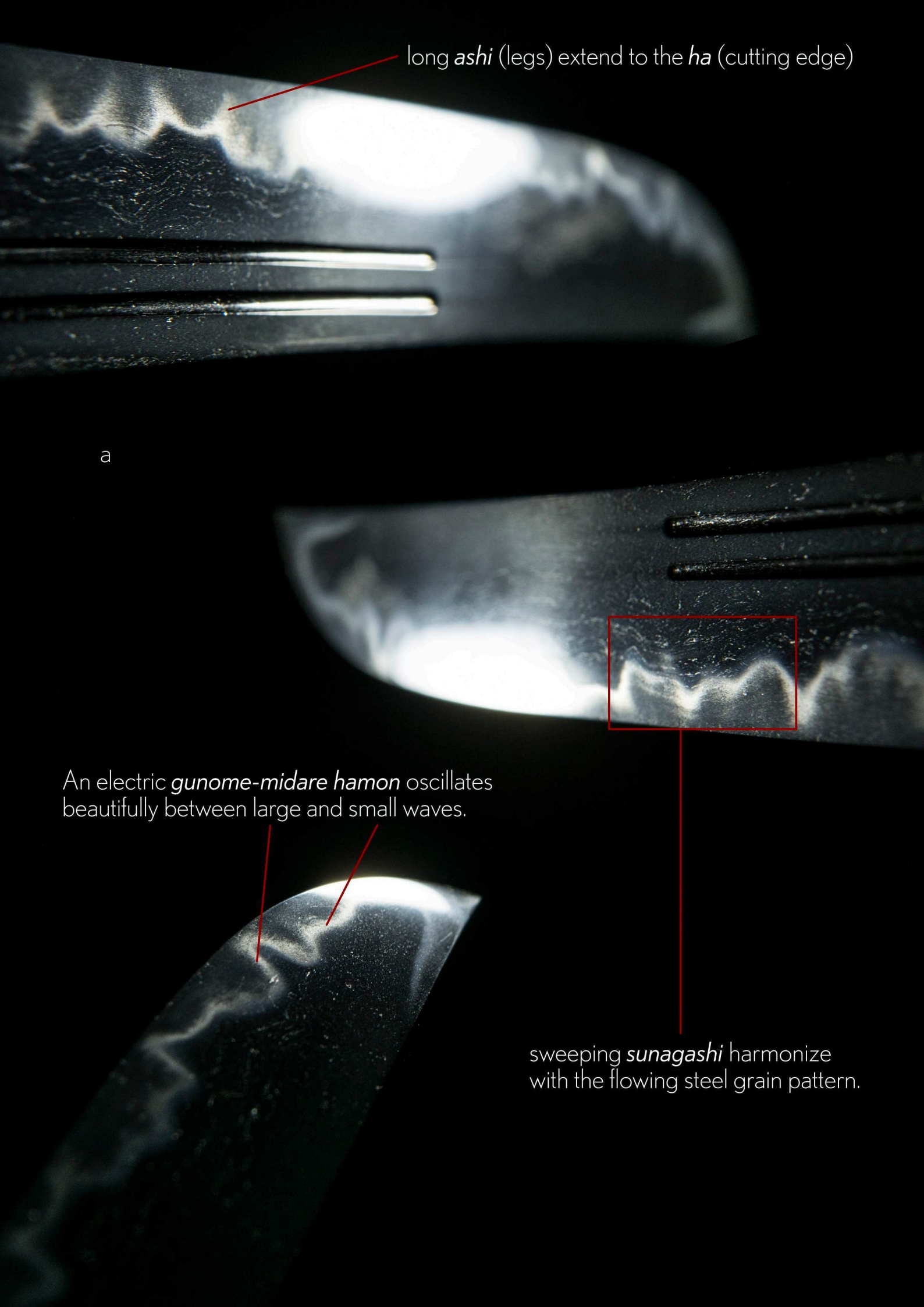




A stylized *Sanskrit bonji* character resembling a torch brings spiritual protection to the sword and owner.

Gently flowing *nagare-hada*.





long *ashi* (legs) extend to the *ha* (cutting edge)

a

An electric *gunome-midare hamon* oscillates beautifully between large and small waves.

sweeping *sunagashi* harmonize with the flowing steel grain pattern.



A brush stroke of *sunagashi*  
confidently paints the *hamon*.



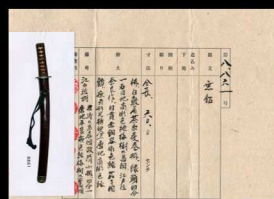
*Shirasaya*  
(protective scabbard)



*niju habaki*  
gold wrapped over copper base  
with *kiri* straight file pattern

*Cha-urushinuri-saya  
chiisagatana-koshirae*  
茶漆塗鞘小さ刀拵え

*Small katana koshirae in  
brown-lacquer saya*



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho Certificate  
dates the koshirae to the Late Edo period  
circa 1800~1868*



A glorious depiction of *Kami-iso no Torii* (Kami-iso shrine) graces this *tsuba*. Located on the *Oarai* coast in *Ibaraki-ken*, this gate is one of three gates affiliated with nearby *Oarai Isosaki Jinja* that was originally built in 856AD. It was rebuilt in the 1600s after being destroyed in the battles of the Muromachi period.

Kami-iso faces east and provides a prime spot to watch the sunrise. As the sun appears on the eastern horizon, its rays immerse the gate in red. The gate is also stunning at night when bathed in moonlight.





(reverse)



Nature inspires.  
Look up and take notice.





Edo Ju

Nara saku

A beautiful *shibu-ichi fuchi-kashira* signed by the *Nara school* in *Edo* (Tokyo). The *Nara school* were known for their wonderful works of art in a host of nature themes.

Here, a motif of nightingale and plum blossom is crafted on a *chirimén* base.

This *fuchi-kashira* has been authenticated certified by the NTHK-NPO.

## Menuki Dreams of Eggplant



*Hatsuyume* is the first dream one has in the new year. Traditionally, the contents of such a dream would foretell the luck of the dreamer in the ensuing year.

It is considered to be particularly *good luck to dream of Mount Fuji, a hawk, and an eggplant*. This belief has been in place since the early Edo period but there are various theories regarding the origins as to why this particular combination was considered to be auspicious. One theory suggests that this combination is lucky because Mount Fuji is Japan's highest mountain, the hawk is a clever and strong bird, and the word for eggplant (*nasu* or *nasubi*) suggests achieving something *great* (*nasu*). Another theory suggests that this combination arose because Mount Fuji, falconry, and early eggplants were favourites of the shogun *Tokugawa Iyasu*.

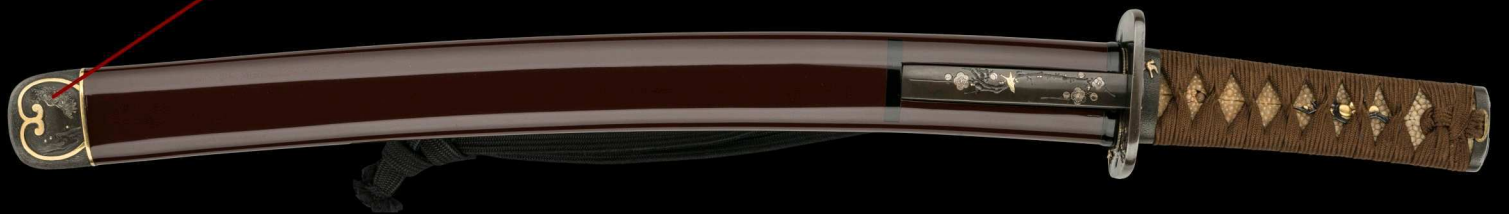
*thanks wiki*





A skilfully carved protective *kijiri* (end-cap) mimics the subtle texture of wood in keeping with the koshirae's nature theme.

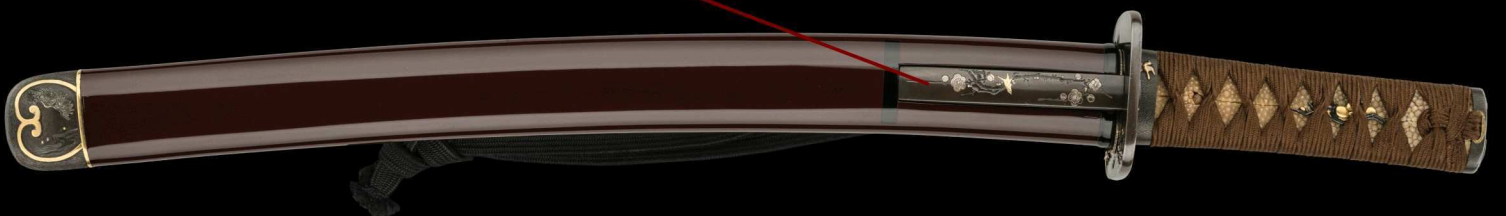
The branch of a pine tree admires a free-flowing stream from above.





This sword's koshirae features a *kozuka*. It is a small utility knife mounted on the inside of the *saya* (scabbard). A *kozuka* was used by the samurai to open letters, cut fruit, fix shoes, etc. The 'Swiss Army' knife of the Edo period. ;)

The beautiful bird and plum design continues from the *fuchi-kashira*. Plum (*ume*) blossoms are often mentioned in Japanese poetry as a symbol of spring and a protective charm against evil.



stand tall.

