



ITEM# UJWA255

A RYÔKAI WAKIZASHI

UNSIGNED, KAMAKURA PERIOD (SHÔÔ~ENKYÔ ERAS: 1292~1309)

Swordsmith: *Ryôkai (attribution, o-suriage mumei)*
Measurements: **Length:** 51.5cm **Curvature:** 1.0cm **Moto-haba:** 2.46cm **Weight:** 395g
Jihada: *Ko-itame mixed with ji-nie, masame-hada, yô, shirake utsuri*
Hamon: *Suguha with ko-gunome, ko-ashi, sunagashi*
Horimono: *Bôhi on both sides with kaki-tôshi running through the nakago*
Certificate #1: **NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon** (designated as Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificate #2-5: **NTHK-NPO Kanteisho** (koshirae, tsuba, fitting, kozuka designated as Authentic)
Fujishiro rank: **Jô-saku** (ranked as a superior swordsmith)
Included: Shirasaya, Edo dragon koshirae, fabric bags, stand, kit, booklet, description

SOLD

Ryôkai is said to be the son of grandmaster *Rai Kunitoshi*. He left the celebrated Rai family at the age of 16 taking the priest name *Ryôkai*. Existing dated signatures range between the 5th year of *Shôô* era (1292) and the 2nd year of *Enkyô* era (1309) - these dates support his relation to Rai Kunitoshi whose active period was around *Kôan* era (1278~1288). This graceful wakizashi holds true the clear *kôto* period qualities that *Ryôkai* is known for producing. The *jigane* is a dense *ko-itame* with fine *ji-nie* and the *hamon* features a mix of *suguha* with *ko-gunome* and plenty of *ko-ashi*, *sunagashi* and falling leaves (*yô*). What ties this sword together so brilliantly is the fully matching dragon-themed koshirae crafted during the middle-Edo period (1700s). This is a terrific first sword for those starting a collection and will also appeal to seasoned *nihonto* enthusiasts as well.

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Saki-kasane: 3.4mm

Moto-kasane: 5.9mm

Omosa: 395g

Kissaki: 2.35cm
Saki-haba: 1.57cm

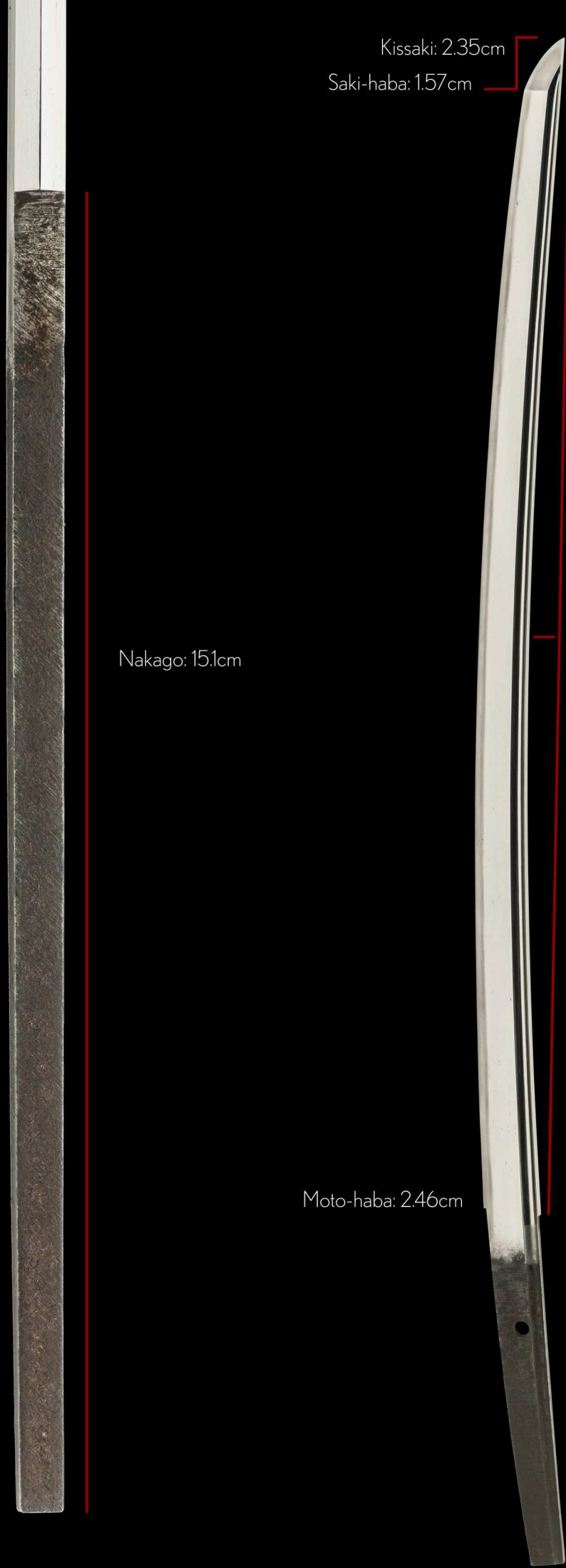
Nakago: 15.1cm

Moto-haba: 2.46cm

Nagasa: 51.5cm

Sori: 1.00cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



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Ryôkai is ranked as *jô-saku* (superior swordsmith), which is an impressive achievement given the class of smiths working at the end of the Kamakura period.

This graceful wakizashi has an old soul. It has a lovely curvature and long grooves extending through the *nakago*. It features a beaming *suguha*-based *hamon* with *ko-ashi* and lots of *ji-nie*.

The sword is complimented by a fine set of middle-Edo period *koshirae* (circa 1700-~1780) in a cloud and crawling dragon theme.



The image shows two views of a sword tang (nakago) against a black background. The tang is a long, narrow, rectangular piece of metal with a hole near the top and a groove running down its length. The metal has a dark, weathered appearance with some lighter patches. The hole is circular and positioned about one-third of the way down from the top. The groove is a narrow channel that runs the length of the tang, starting from the hole and extending to the bottom. The two views are side-by-side, showing the same object from slightly different angles.

This sword was once a long tachi during the late *Kamakura period*. In approximately the late *Muromachi* to early *Edo* period (late 1500s ~ early 1600s), it was greatly shortened to its *ô-suriage nakago* and lost its *mei* (signature).

The nakago features *kaki-tôshi* - grooves that extend right through the butt end of the tang.

04202203

No. 1017977



鑑定書

一脇指 無銘 伝(了戒)

長一尺七寸強

右は當協會に於て審査の結果特別保存刀劍と
鑑定しこれを証する

令和四年六月三日

公益財団法人日本美術刀劍保存協會



東京都 教育委員会
第 324262 号
令和3年12月14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 4th year of Reiwa (2022), June 3rd

One, Wakizashi

Mumei (unsigned)
Den Ryôkai

Nagasa (length)
1-shaku 7-sun kyô (51.5cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)





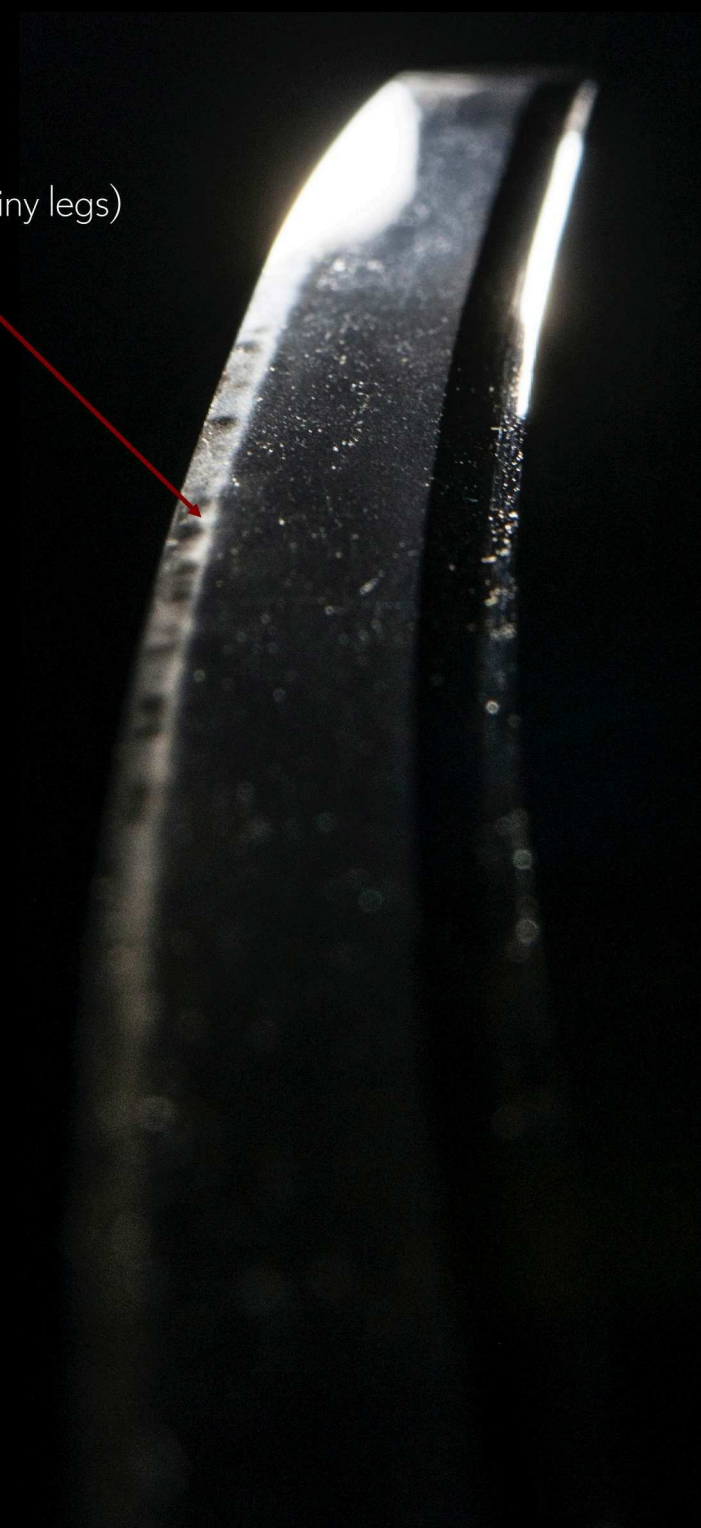
A bright, *suguha*-based *hamon* with unique brush strokes of *sunagashi*. *Utsuri* (shadow pattern) in the *ji* (body) can also be seen and appreciated. History speaks through the steel.



light *utsuri*

Yô (leaves) are delightful clusters of *nie* crystals inside the hamon.

ko-ashi (tiny legs)

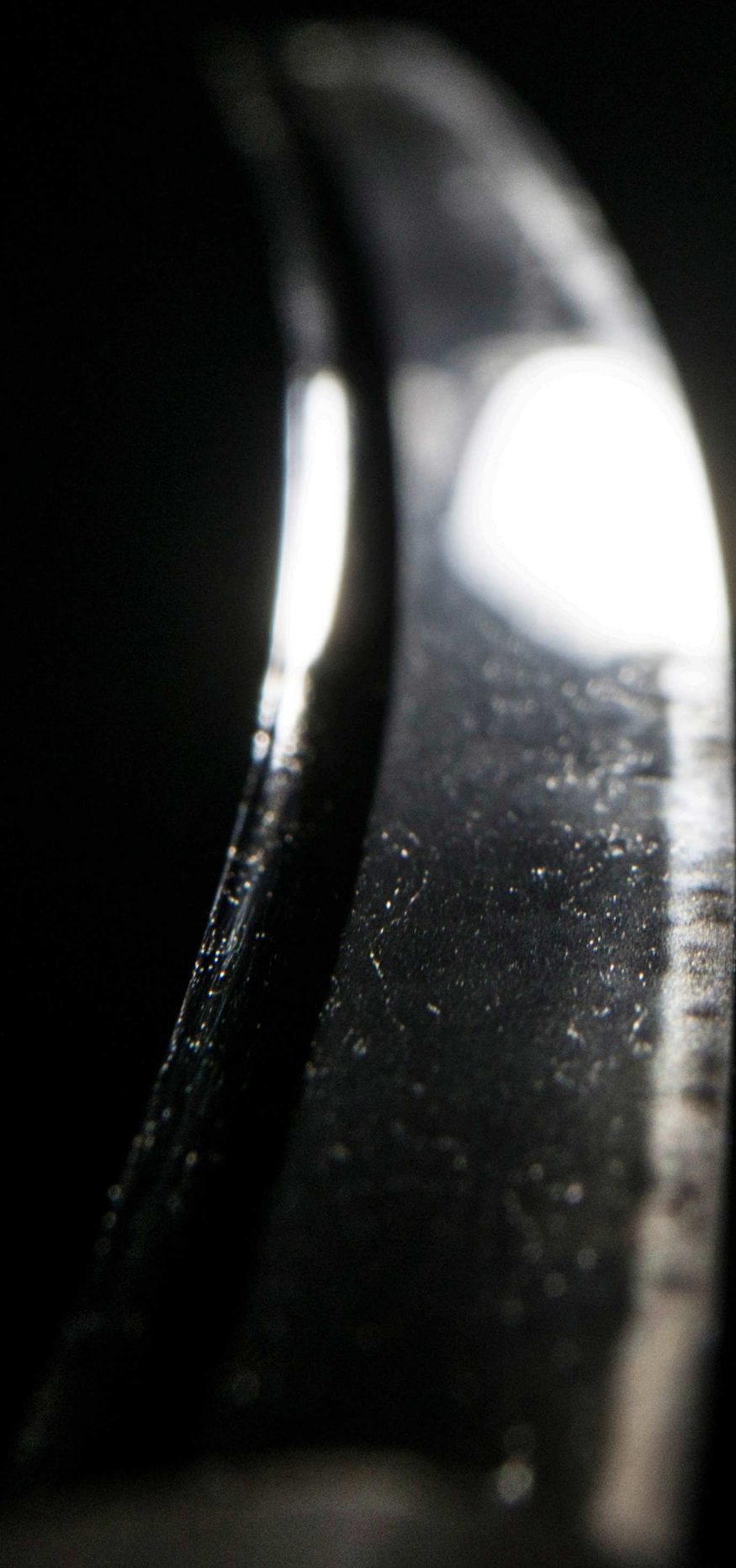


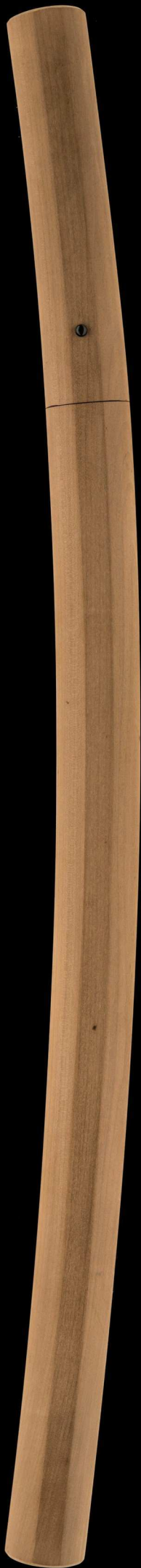


Clean lines, sharp sword.

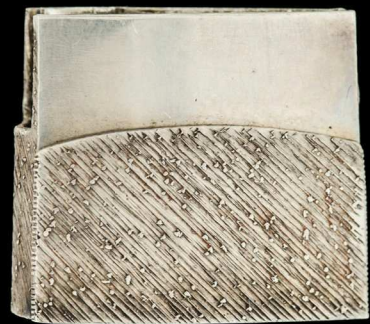


Graceful.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)

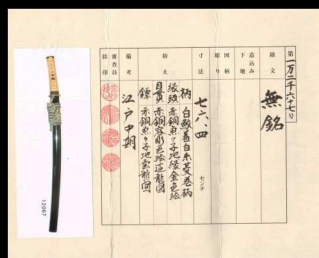


silver *habaki* with
diagonal file marks

*Kuro-roiro-nuri saya
chiisagatana-koshirae*
(黒呂色塗鞘小さ刀拵)

*Chiisagatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Middle Edo period
(1700~1780)



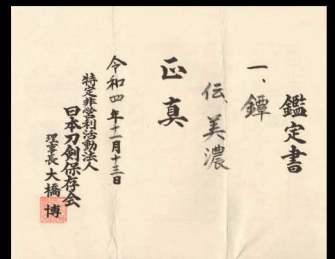
NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



This is a *hamidashi-tsuba*, meaning "protruding tsuba" - a small *tsuba* (guard) that is not much bigger than the *fuchi* (collar) or the *koiguchi* (mouth) of the *saya* (scabbard).

The tsuba has been certified by the NTHK-NPO attributing the work to the *Mino school*, circa the *mid-Edo period* (1700~1780).

The material is *shakudô* with *nanako* ground and features a motif of a cloud dragon cleverly circling the rim.





gold accent on the *kurigata*

The profile on this wakizashi is very attractive with subtle gold accents on cloud-dragon *tsuba*, *fuchi-kashira* and the *kurigata*.

There is a classiness to this sword.



cloud


head

claw

mimi (rim) view of the tsuba

了 (Ryô)

戒 (kai)

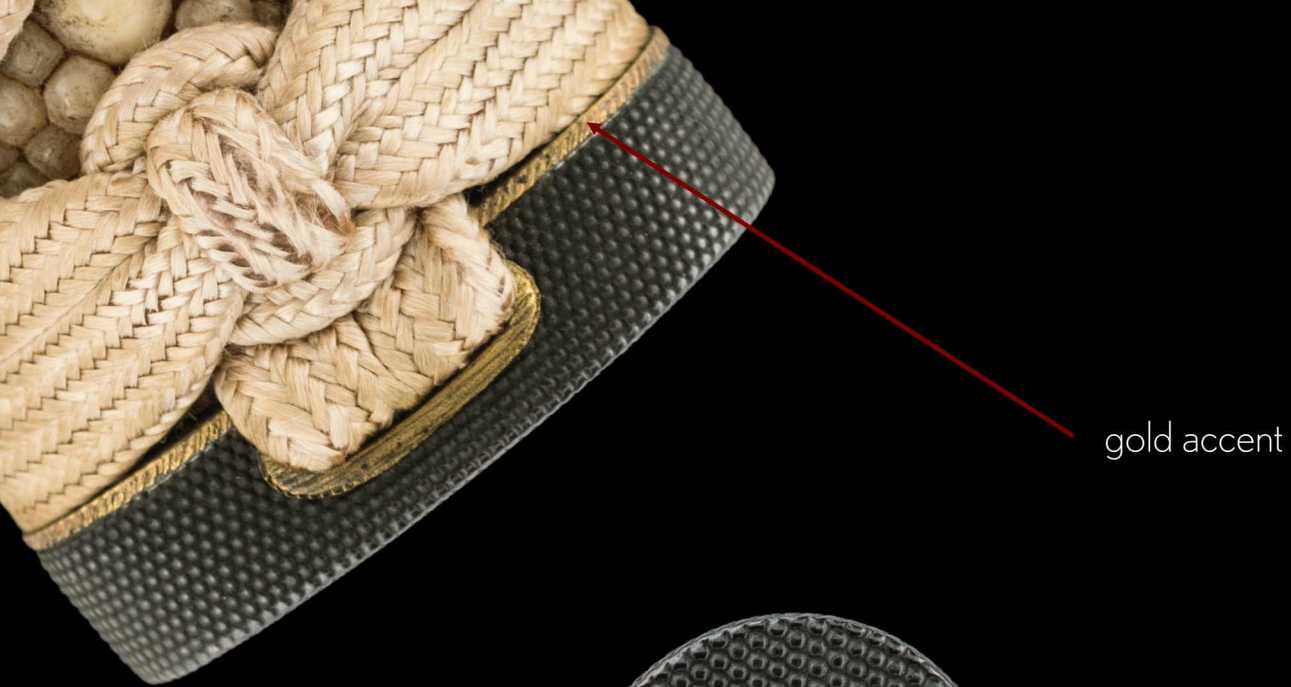


It's almost certainly *gimei* (false signature) but the *kogatana* (short blade) that nestles into the *kozuka* is signed 'Ryôkai'. A neat touch.



Respecting the overall dragon theme, these beautifully detailed *shakudô menuki* wrapped under antique silk are of crawling dragons.





gold accent



Kashira (pommel)
pure *shakudô* with *nanako* ground and
gold accents on the outer edge

Kanagu-shi
(tachi fittings craftsman)

Mid-Edo period
(1700~1780)



Koshirae bag



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