



ITEM# UJKA493

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A TAKADA TOKIYUKI KATANA

UNSIGNED, CHÛ-KOTÔ NANBOKUCHÔ PERIOD (CIRCA 1345~1375)

Swordsmith: *Takada Tokiyuki* (高田時行)
Measurements: **Length:** 69.0cm (*ô-suriage*) **Sori:** 1.8cm **Moto-haba:** 2.85cm **Weight:** 780g
Jihada: Gorgeous *nagare-hada* with *mokume*, *ji-nie*, plentiful *chikei* and *shirake utsuri*
Hamon: Wavy *ko-gunome* with sections of *suguha*, *togari*, *ashi* in *ko-nie deki*
Certificate #1: NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon (Especially Worthy of Preservation)
Certificates #2-4: NTHK-NPO Kanteishô (*koshirae*, *fuchi-kashira* and *tsuba* certified as Authentic)
Included: Shirasaya, Edo *koshirae*, fabric bags, kit, printed description

\$13,500

This terrific katana has been attributed to *Takada Tokiyuki*, one of the master smiths of the *Ko-Takada* tradition from the heart of the warring *Nanbokuchô* period. This blade stands tall and graceful, a generous curvature giving it an almost aristocratic bearing, the elongated *chû-kissaki* carrying the full confidence of its era. A *kirikomi* on the *mune* tells you it was once tested in the only way that truly counts. The *jihada* is a vivid *nagare-hada* that flows generously, all mixed with *mokume*, and alive with *ji-nie*. The hamon is a shallow undulating *ko-gunome* mixed with *suguha* and flaring *ashi*. The *koshirae* features a handsome *Nishigaki* iron *tsuba* bearing the two-bar crest of the *Hosokawa* clan, a brilliant sunflower carved themed *fuchi-kashira* signed by *Miyazaki Sukenori* and *toma-bune menuki*, that rest beneath the silk wrap, waiting to be uncovered. All told, this is a katana of rare and balanced character, a dark horse that you'll treasure deeply.



Saki-kasane: 4.1mm

Moto-kasane: 6.1mm

Kissaki: 3.99cm

Saki-haba: 1.94cm

Nagasa: 69.0cm

Nakago: 20.1cm

Sori: 1.8cm

Omosa: 780g

nice weight

Moto-haba: 2.85cm

Mekugi-ana: 2



Takada Tokiyuki (高田時行) was active in *Bungo* province from the *Jôwa* era (1345-1350) through to the *Ôan* era (1368-1375), a period when *Kyûshû* was a theatre of open war and the demand for exceptional blades was a matter of survival rather than ceremony.

Said to be the son of *Tomoyuki*, founder of the *Bungo-Takada* school, and rumoured to have studied under the legendary *Samonji* of *Chikuzen*, Tokiyuki is recognised as one of the master smiths of ancient *Kyûshû* and a defining figure of the *Ko-Takada* tradition. His school represents the earliest and finest generation of Takada work, distinct from everything that followed. This blade belongs to that first and rarest chapter.

This blade stands tall and graceful, a generous curvature giving it an almost aristocratic bearing, the elongated *chû-kissaki* carrying the full confidence of its era without reaching for effect. A *kirikomi* on the *mune* tells you it was once tested in the only way that truly counts. It is a blade that has nothing left to prove.

The *jihada* is an absolute pleasure to examine, a vivid *nagare-hada* flows generously, all mixed with *mokume*, alive with *ji-nie*, and carries a faint misty *shirake utsuri* and a soft *nioiguchi* that are signatures of *Ko-Takada*. The *hamon* is a shallow undulating *ko-gunome* mixed with *suguha* and *ashi* that march their way to the cutting edge.

The katana is housed in a *koshirae* that truly understands the blade it protects. The deep glossy black of the *kuro-ronuri saya*, the handsome *Nishigaki* iron *tsuba* bearing the two-bar crest of the *Hosokawa* clan, all chosen with quiet certainty. The one moment of drama belongs to the *shakudô fuchi-kashira* signed by *Miyazaki Sukenori*, with sunflowers carved in bold relief against the dark ground. The *toma-bune menuki*, still touched with their original gold, rest beneath the silk wrap just as the little boats they depict once sheltered beneath their woven mats, waiting to be uncovered.

All told, this is a katana of rare and balanced character, a dark horse that you'll treasure deeply.





WATCH PABLO'S YOUTUBE PRESENTATION OF
UJKA493 - A TAKADA TOKIYUKI KATANA
[UNIQUEJAPAN.COM/UJKA493-VIDEO](https://uniquejapan.com/ujka493-video)



Location: *Bungo province*
School name: *Takada school*
Family/clan name: *Fujiwara*
Swordsmith: *Tokiyuki*

ô-suriage-nakago (shortened tang)
katte-sagari-yasurime (slanting file marks)



← *Bungo province*

← *Takada village*

← *Fujiwara Tokiyuki*

Preserved signed works feature a fairly long signature, recording the province, village, and the *Fujiwara* clan followed by "*Tokiyuki*."

(*ura*, reverse)

Under the *Tokugawa* shogunate, the length of swords was strictly regulated by law, and those that did not comply were shortened by cutting down the *nakago*. A finish like this one, where the *nakago*-jiri is cut horizontally with a clean, decisive stroke, is known as *kiri-jiri*.

This suggests a *Keichô-suriage*, shortened around the *Keichô* era (1596~1615).

kiri-jiri



特保
062024-09



No 1023510

鑑定書

一 刀 無銘 (高田時行)

長二尺二寸七分強

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

令和六年十二月四日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



熊本県 教育委員会
第 17777 号
昭和35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 6th year of Reiwa (2024), December 4th

One, Katana

Mumei (unsigned)
Takada Tokiyuki

Nagasa (length)
2-shaku 2-sun 7-bu kyô (69.0cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)



The Takada School of Bungo Province

There are sword schools celebrated for the exquisite beauty of their hamon. The Takada School of Bungo province was celebrated for something else entirely. Their blades did not break. They did not bend. And they cut.

From the *Kamakura* period through to the close of the Edo era, the smiths of Takada maintained an unbroken tradition rooted in a single conviction: that a sword is, above all else, a weapon. Eastern *Kyûshû* was one of the most contested regions in Japanese history, cycles of warfare that never truly stopped, and the warriors who fought there needed blades they could trust absolutely. The Takada School built its reputation on exactly that trust.

The construction reflects the philosophy. A high, broad *shinogi*. A pronounced *mune*. Generous *hira-niku* giving the blade its body. These are engineering decisions, the result of centuries of understanding what a sword must do when armour is involved and lives depend on the outcome. The *jigane* is a robust, standing *nagare* mixed with *mokume*, heavy with *ji-nie* and bold *chikei*, the steel of a province that took its craft seriously. The hamon, most characteristically a *suguha* or *ko-gunome* with *ko-nie*, chosen in part for its practical resistance to cracking under impact. Beauty and function, in the Takada tradition, were never in conflict. They were the same thing.

What is sometimes overlooked is the range of what this school produced. The Takada smiths were technically adaptable to a remarkable degree, absorbing Bizen, Sôshû, and Yamashiro influences and executing *hitatsura*, *gunome*, and other patterns with equal confidence. The school's greatest patrons, the *Ôtomo* clan and later the *Hosokawa*, did not commission merely adequate blades. They commissioned the best available, and Takada delivered. The school counts National Treasures among its works, including a tachi attributed to the *Ko-Takada* master *Tomoyuki* with a blade length of 180 cm, the favourite weapon of the warrior *Ômori Hikoshichi*, who wielded it freely at the *Battle of Minatogawa*. A *tantô* and a *tachi* attributed to *Takada Tokiyuki*, son of *Tomoyuki*, are likewise designated National Treasures.

The Takada School endured earthquake, tsunami, the collapse of their patrons, and the end of the age of war, and still they continued. What they left behind is a body of work that rewards serious attention, blades forged for the world as it actually was, dangerous, demanding, and unforgiving of weakness.

豊後國高田時行

豊後國高田時行

Bungo no Kuni Takada Tokiyuki

Takada Tokiyuki from Bungo province

大磨上無銘也
時代貞和頃

大磨上無銘也時代貞和頃

Ô-suriage mumei jidai Jôwa goro

Ô-suriage, unsigned, around Jôwa period (1345~1350)

長貳尺二寸七分強有之

長貳尺二寸七分強有之

Nagasa 2-shaku 2-sun 7-bu kyô kore ari

Blade length 69.0 cm

令和八丙午年
如月吉日誌之

令和八丙午年如月吉日誌之

Reiwa hachi hinoe-umadoshi Kisaragi kichijitsu kore o shirusu

Written on a lucky day in the second month in the eighth year of Reiwa era during the Year of the Horse (February 2026)







Kirikomi (battle scar)

Kirikomi are battle scars, cuts inflicted by an opposing blade in combat, often found on the *mune*, spine of the blade, although sometimes on the actual cutting edge itself.

Polishers leave them untouched, always. They are marks of courage, and they are meant to be admired.

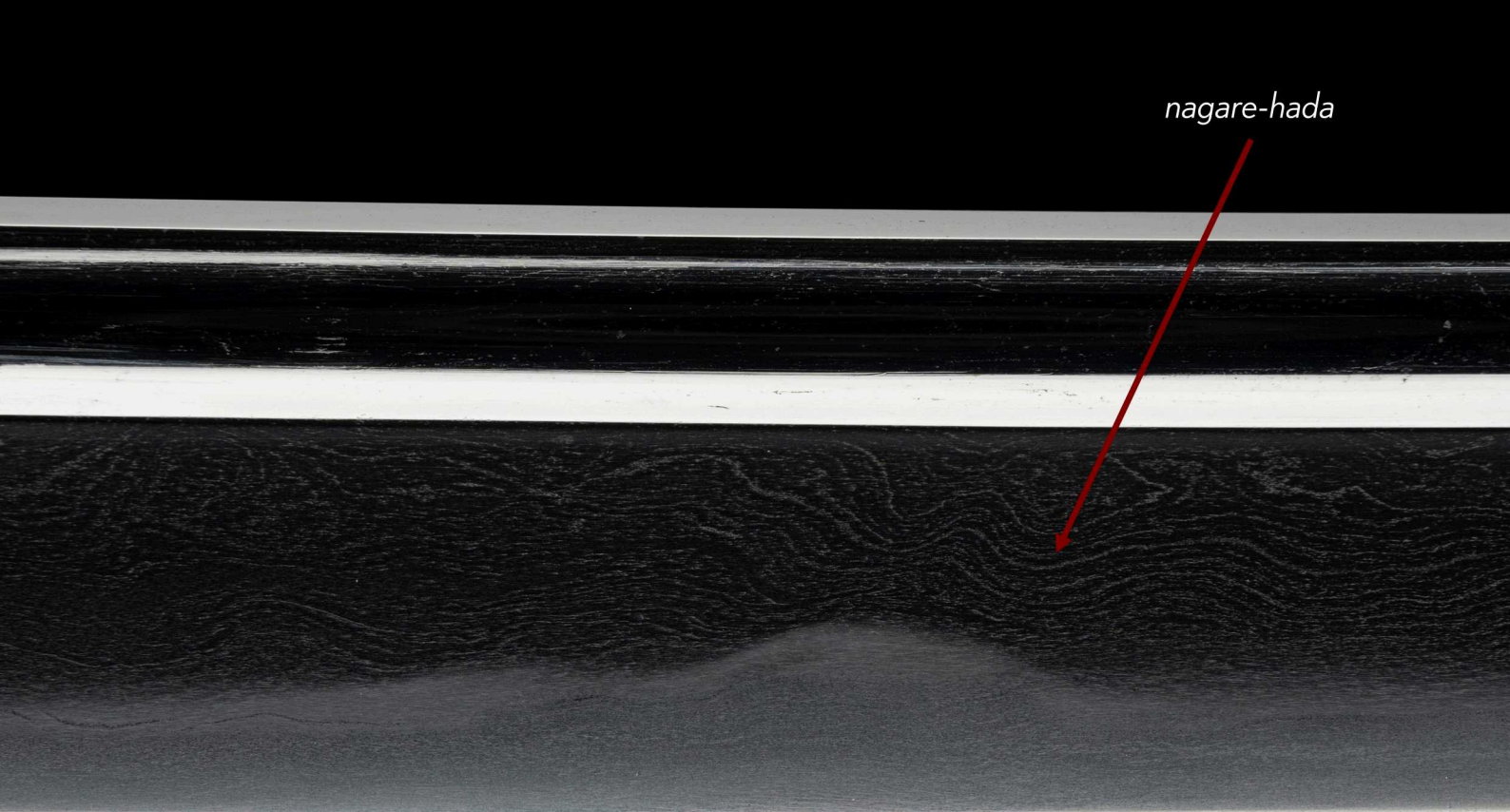
The extended *chû-kissaki* lengthens the effective cutting arc, a proportion developed in response to the demands of the *Nanbokuchô* period wars.



Full-length *bo-hi* (groove) that helps with the sword's cutting ability while reducing its overall weight.

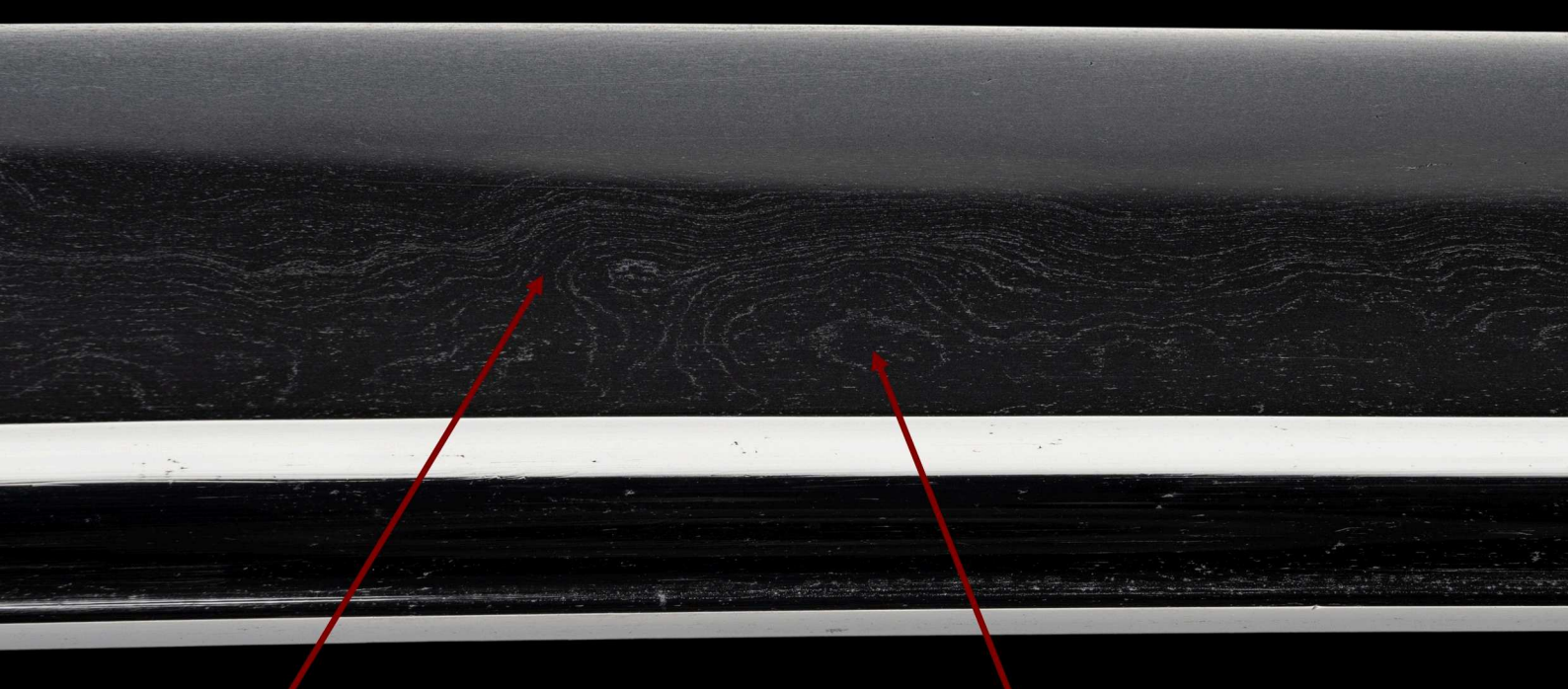


Dig deep.



nagare-hada

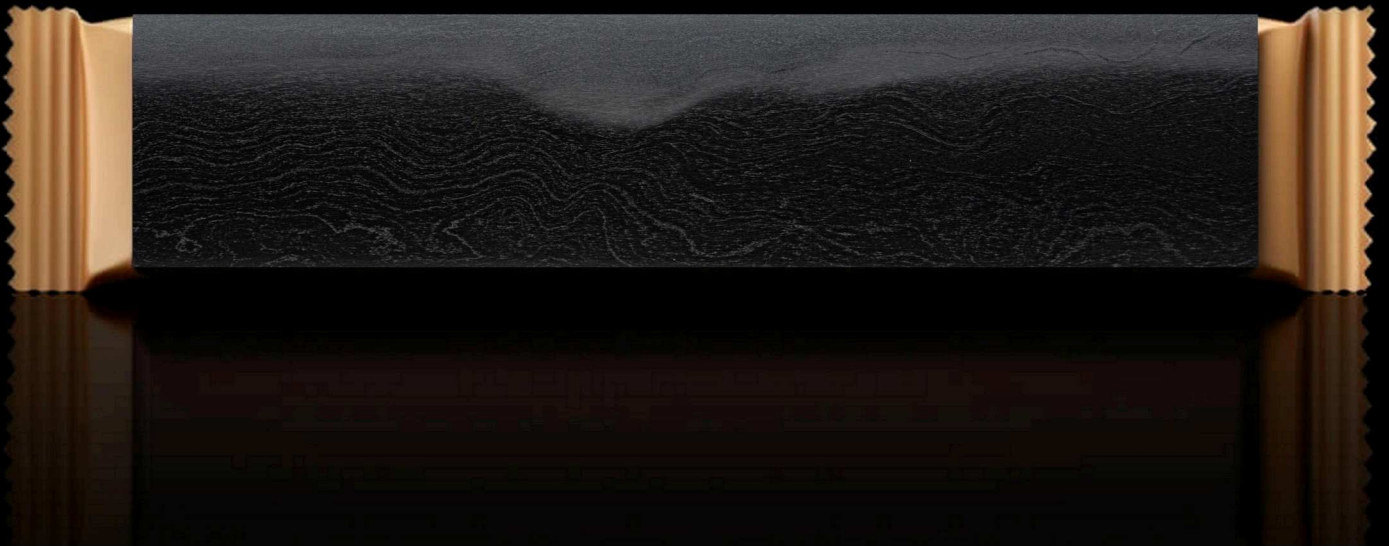
Ajihada lover's paradise. The grain pattern features a sublime mixture of wavy *nagare-hada* and *mokume-hada*, rich with dark, chocolatey *chikei*.



chikei

mokume-hada

Some Things Are Worth Savouring.



Takada Tokiyuki, Vintage 1368. Dark. Complex. Irreplaceable.

Crafted from 74% *chikei-rich jihada* with notes of *nagare-hada*, *mokume*, and a bright finish of *ji-nie*.

Serving suggestion: one lifetime.

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a Japanese sword blade. The blade is dark and curved, with a bright, glowing edge. The hamon (temper line) is visible as a series of bright, wavy lines that resemble legs (ashi) wisp towards the cutting edge. The background is black, making the blade stand out.

A *ko-gunome hamon* with *ashi* (legs) that wisp beautifully towards the cutting edge.

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a Japanese sword blade. The blade is dark and curved, with a bright, wavy line of light reflecting off its surface, which is the hamon. The texture of the blade is visible, showing a fine, wavy pattern. Two red arrows point to specific features: one points to the nagare-hada (the flowing grain of the blade) and the other points to a bend in the hamon.

nagare-hada

Where the *hamon* bends, the *nagare-hada* parts around it like a river finding its way past stone.



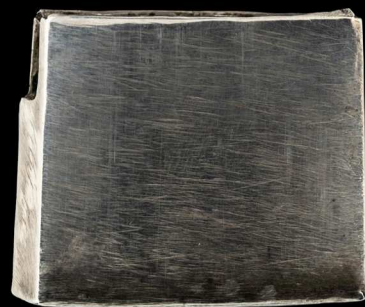
The *ko-gunome hamon* rolls in crests,
each one catching the light as it passes.

May the journey begin.





Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



silver *habaki* with
copper base

*Kuro-ronuri saya
uchigatana-koshirae*
(黒呂塗鞘打刀拵)

*Uchigatana-koshirae
lacquered in glossy black*

Crafted during the
Late Edo period
(1780~1868)



*NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity*



無銘 (高田時行)

無 (Mu)

銘 (mei)

高 (Taka)

田 (da)

時 (Toki)

行 (yuki)



無銘 (高田時行)

Tsunagi

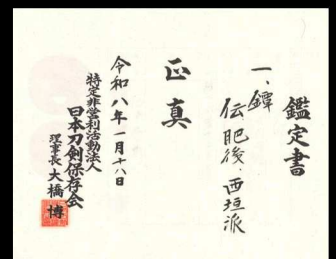
A handcrafted duplicate wooden sword blade that holds together the *koshirae* when the blade is resting in *shirasaya*.



This handsome iron *tsuba* was crafted by the *Nishigaki* school, a prestigious lineage from *Higo* province, during the late Edo period.

The genre of *Higo-tsuba* was born under the direct patronage of the *daimyô* *Hosokawa Tadaoki*, who shaped its aesthetic foundations alongside the *Hirata* and *Hayashi* schools. The first-generation *Nishigaki Kanshirô* studied under the *Hirata* school before founding his own lineage and establishing it as a major school in the service of the *Hosokawa* clan. *Tadaoki* was himself a prominent disciple of the great tea master *Sen no Rikyû*, and that influence runs through every piece the tradition produced.

Higo-tsuba are not made to dazzle. They are made to embody the spirit of *wabi-sabi*, beauty found in quietness and restraint, and in that they succeed completely.





This *tsuba* features a subtle, yet commanding *Futatsu-biki kamon*, the two-bar crest of the *Hosokawa* clan. Iron was the material of choice for *Higo* work, chosen not for austerity but for its deeply composed, understated presence.

That this crest belongs to *Hosokawa Tadaoki* speaks directly to the orthodox and noble lineage from which this entire tradition of *tsuba* craftsmanship descends.



Futatsu-biki



Hosokawa Tadaoki



Fuchi-kashira
attributed to
Miyazaki Sukenori (宮崎資儀)

This beautiful *fuchi-kashira* is attributed to *Miyazaki Sukenori*, active in *Higo* province in *Kyûshû* around the *Kôka* era (1844~1848).

The ground is *shakudô*, upon which dramatic sunflowers are rendered in a bold, dynamic high relief carving. Notably absent are accent colors, which lends the set a restrained, monochromatic elegance.

In many ways, the *Kyûshû* samurai spirit of the *Takada* katana which it proudly houses finds its natural counterpart here.

The *fuchi-kashira* is signed by the artist.

(Miya) 宮

(zaki) 崎

(Suke) 資

(yoshi) 儀



NTHK-NPO Kanteisho
Certificate of Authenticity



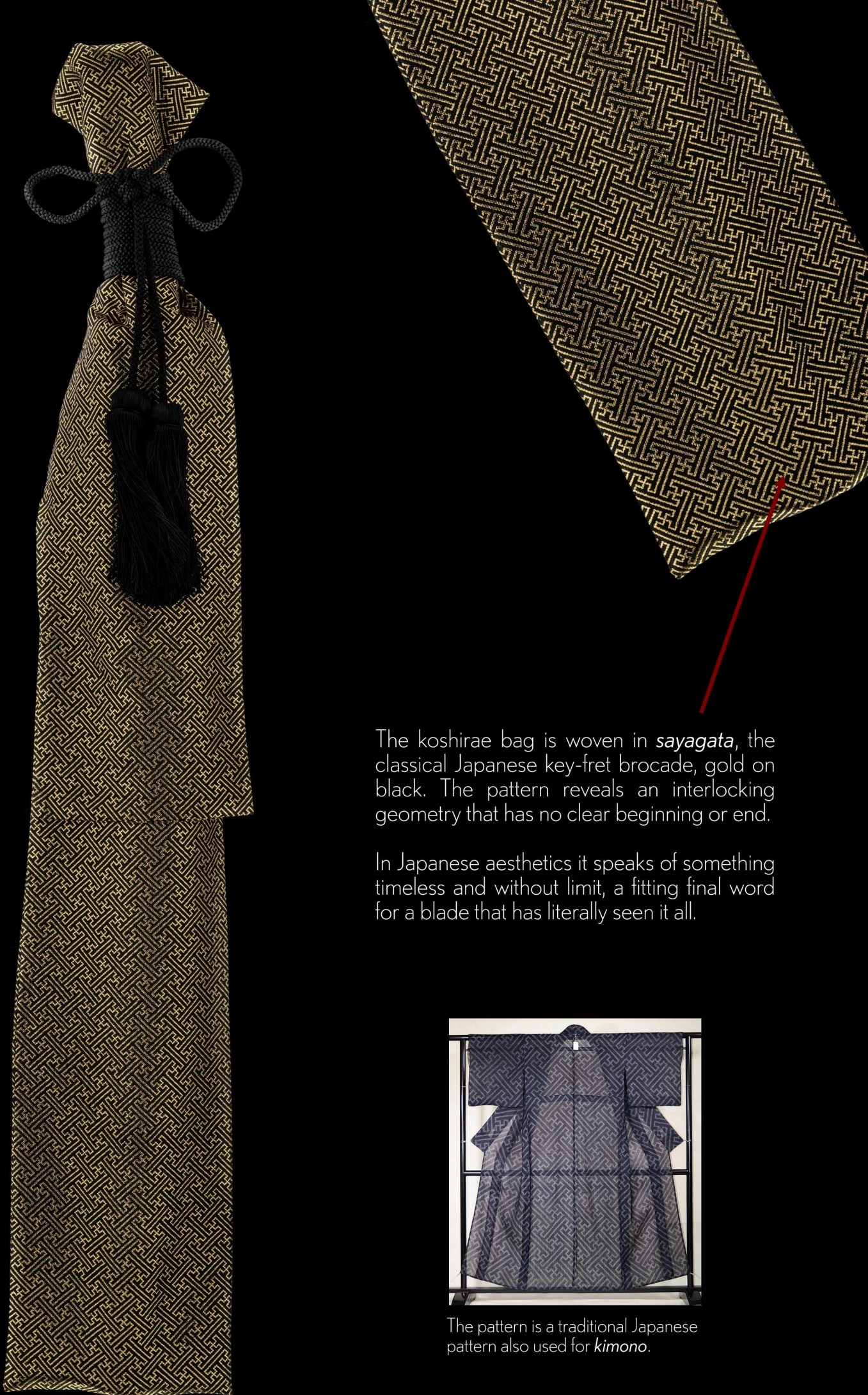
The *menuki* take the form of a *toma-bune*, a traditional Japanese watercraft sheltered by a woven mat laid over the hull as protection against wind and rain.

There is a quiet poetry in how these little boats now find their own shelter beneath the silk wrap of the *tsuka*, tucked away just as the *toma-bune* itself once was, waiting to be uncovered.



toma-bune by Hokusai





The koshirae bag is woven in *sayagata*, the classical Japanese key-fret brocade, gold on black. The pattern reveals an interlocking geometry that has no clear beginning or end.

In Japanese aesthetics it speaks of something timeless and without limit, a fitting final word for a blade that has literally seen it all.



The pattern is a traditional Japanese pattern also used for *kimono*.

A high-contrast, black and white close-up photograph of a sword blade. The blade is positioned diagonally, running from the top left towards the bottom right. The surface of the blade is highly textured, showing a prominent hamon pattern, which is a traditional Japanese sword-making technique. The pattern consists of a series of fine, wavy lines that create a shimmering, almost crystalline appearance. The lighting is dramatic, with a bright highlight along the top edge of the blade, contrasting sharply with the deep shadows and the dark, textured surface. The background is a solid, dark black, which emphasizes the blade's form and texture.

Feel the history.

ARIGATO!

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