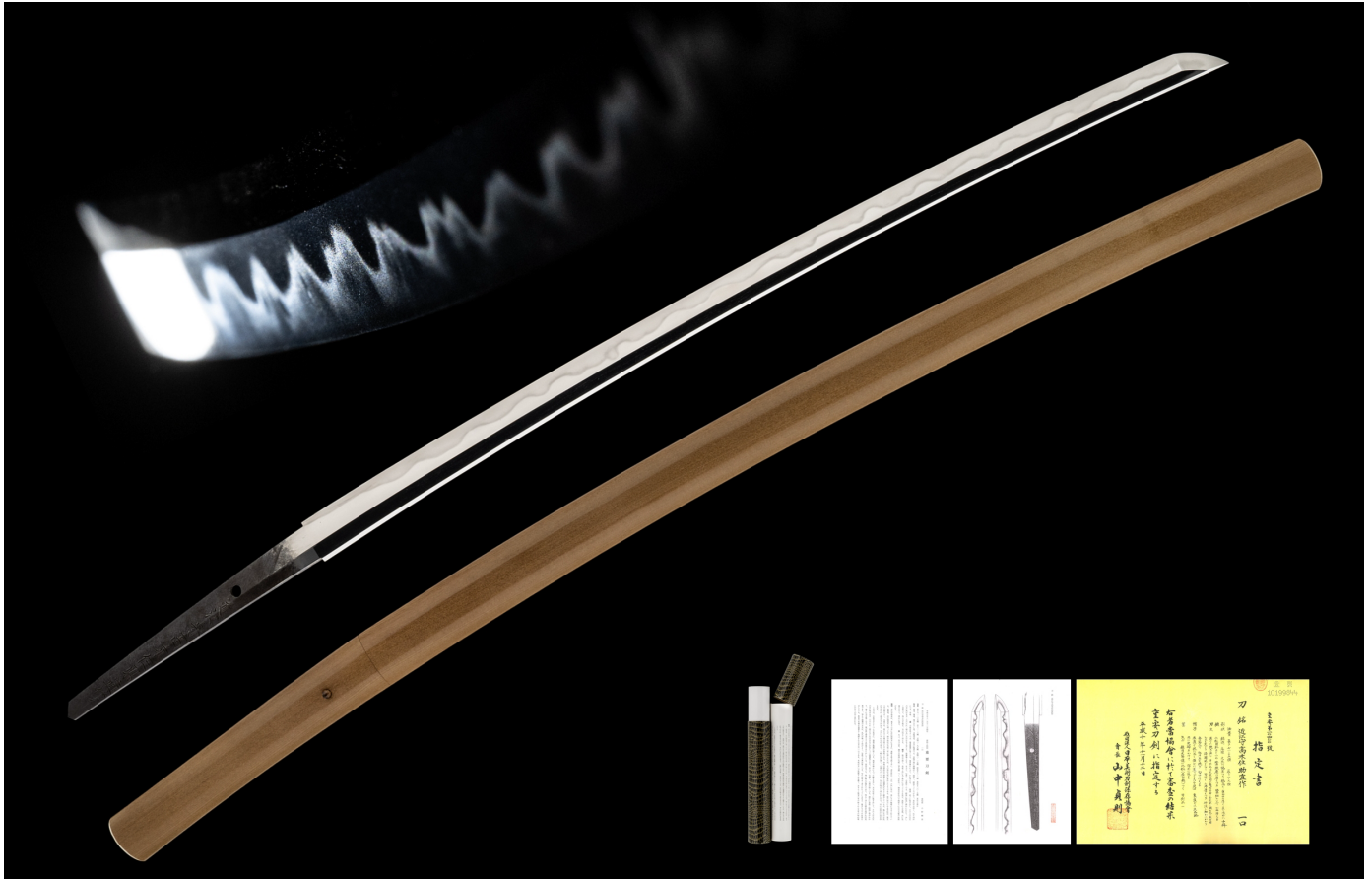




ITEM# UJKA548

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A SUKENAO KATANA

SIGNED, SHINTÔ PERIOD (ENPÔ ERA: 1675~1677)

Swordsmith:	Ômi no Kami Takagi jû Sukenao saku (近江守高木住助直作)
Measurements:	Length: 71.05cm Curvature: 1.3cm Moto-haba: 2.95cm Weight: 795g
Jihada:	Expertly forged ko-itame, with exquisite chikei and shining ji-nie
Hamon:	Gorgeous toranba with bright nioiguchi, ô-gunome, ko-nie, kinsuji and sunagashi
Certificate:	44th NBTHK Jûyô Tôken (designated as an Important sword)
Fujishiro rank:	Jôjo-saku (ranked as a highly superior swordsmith)
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, kit, booklet, description

\$35,000

It gives Unique Japan great pleasure to introduce this spectacular *jûyô tôken katana* by **Ômi no Kami Sukenao**, who trained under the grandmaster *Echizen no Kami Sukehiro*. *Sukenao* is ranked *jôjô-saku* by *Fujishiro*, with 59 blades having reached *jûyô* and a further 4 attaining *tokubetsu jûyô*, placing him firmly among the leading names of *Ôsaka shintô*. This marvellous sword carries the majestic *tôranba* hamon, the iconic surging waves that *Sukehiro* first originated and that continue to inspire and amaze collectors to this day. It is an absolutely thrilling blade with plenty of activity, one that the NBTHK called "especially outstanding", stating plainly that "this is a masterwork in which *Sukenao*'s true ability is fully and unreservedly expressed." If you were to own only one *shintô* period blade in a collection, there is a strong case for it being this sword. As the katana is in *shirasaya* only, this would be more than an ideal candidate for a custom *koshirae* project, wave fittings anyone?



Saki-kasane: 5.1mm

Moto-kasane: 7.0mm

Kissaki: 3.2cm

Saki-haba: 2.15cm

Nagasa: 71.05cm

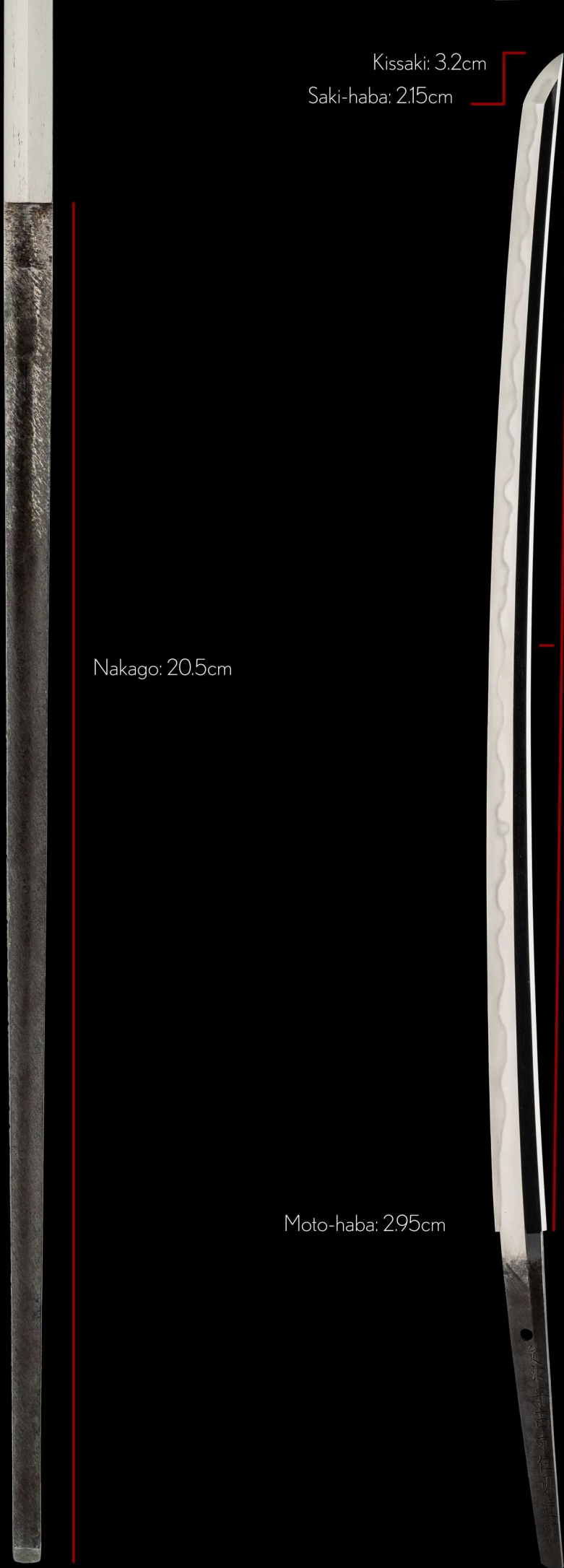
Nakago: 20.5cm

Sori: 1.3cm

Omosa: 795g

Moto-haba: 2.95cm

Mekugi-ana: 1



Ômi no Kami Sukenao was born in the village of *Takagi*, *Ômi* province, in 1639, and given the name *Magotarô*" (孫太郎). He trained under the grandmaster *Echizen no Kami Sukehiro*, one of the finest names of the entire *shintô* period, and the two shared an unusually close bond. Around the third year of the *Enpô* era (1675), *Sukenao* married *Sukehiro*'s younger sister and when *Sukehiro* died without an heir of his own in the second year of the *Tenna* era (1682), *Sukenao* settled permanently in *Ôsaka* and took up the mantle of the *Tsuda* school. Among *Sukehiro*'s students, he is, without question, the finest of them all. He is ranked *jôjô-saku* (highly superior) by *Fujishiro*, with 59 blades at *Jûyô* and a further 4 at *Tokubetsu Jûyô*, placing him firmly among the leading names of *Ôsaka shintô*.

It gives Unique Japan great pleasure to introduce this spectacular katana by *Sukenao* that passed the 44th NBTHK *Jûyô Tôken shinsa* in November 1998. The blade itself was crafted between November 1675 to February 1677 and measures 71cm with a graceful curvature of 1.3cm, and quite weighty at nearly 800g.

This sword carries the majestic *tôran-ba hamon*, the iconic surging waves that *Sukehiro* first originated and that continues to inspire and amaze collectors to this day. It is an absolutely thrilling blade, and NBTHK did not hold back in its assessment, calling the forging "*especially outstanding*", and stating plainly that "*this is a masterwork in which Sukenao's true ability is fully and unreservedly expressed.*"

This is a blade to study closely, a sword to lose yourself in. The incredible *ô-gunome* undulations reward close attention, the *jihada* is an impressively tight *ko-itame* with exquisite *chikei*, and you'll also see these wonderful *tama* (ball) formations, long *ashi*, fine *kinsuji*, and brushed *sunagashi* in both the *hamon* and the *bôshi* as *hakikake*.

Simply put, this is a good, good sword.

If you were to own only one *shintô* blade in a collection, there is a strong case for it being this sword. As the katana is in shirasaya only, this would be more than an ideal candidate for



Location: *Takagi, Ômi province*
Swordsmith: *Sukenao* (first generation)

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

近 (Ô)

江 (mi, no)

守 (Kami)

高 (Taka)

木 (gi)

住 (jû)

助 (Suke)

直 (nao)

作 (saku)



Sukenao's unique stylized signature evolved over time, therefore it is possible to triangulate the date range of an undated blade based on the characteristics of the signature itself.

Sukenao received the title of *Ômi no Kami* in the eleventh month during the third year of *Enpô* era (November 1675), so it must have been crafted after this date. Furthermore, the particular manner of chiseling both the character "*suke* (助)" and the character "*nao* (直)" overlaps only within the period from November 1675 to the second month in the fifth year of *Enpô* era (February 1677). It is thus reasonable to conclude that this blade was produced within that window of time.

直	1668 寛文 8. 3	助	1668 寛文 8. 3
直	1670 寛文 10. 8	助	1670 寛文 10. 3
直	1671 寛文 11. 3	助	1673 寛文 13 頃
直	1675 延宝 3. 11	助	1675 延宝 3. 11
直	1677 延宝 5. 2	助	1677 延宝 5. 2
直	1682 天和 2. 2	助	1681 延宝 9. 2
		助	1682 天和 2. 2

(*ura*, reverse)



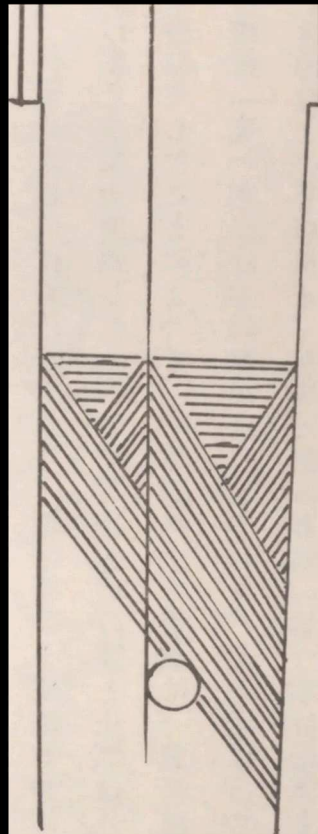
The condition of the *nakago* is simply wonderful.

The shape of the *nakago-jiri* (butt-end of the tang) is called *iriyama-gata*. *Iri* means 'enter' and *yama* 'mountain', suggesting at the '*base of a mountain*'.

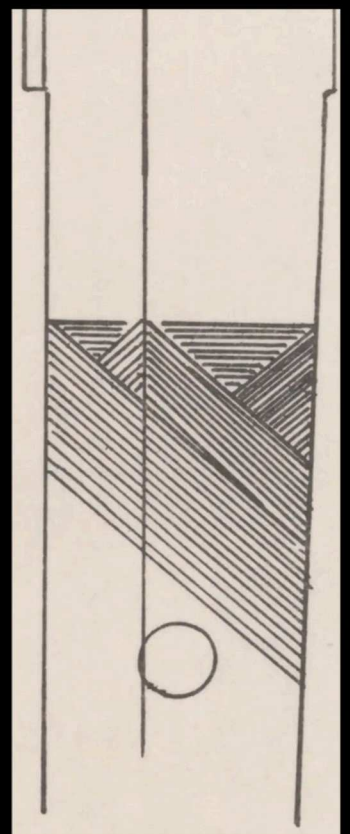


The *yasurime* on the *nakago* originally served the practical purpose of preventing the blade from slipping out of the hilt, but from the *shintô* period onward, decorative file patterns known as *keshô-yasuri* came into use.

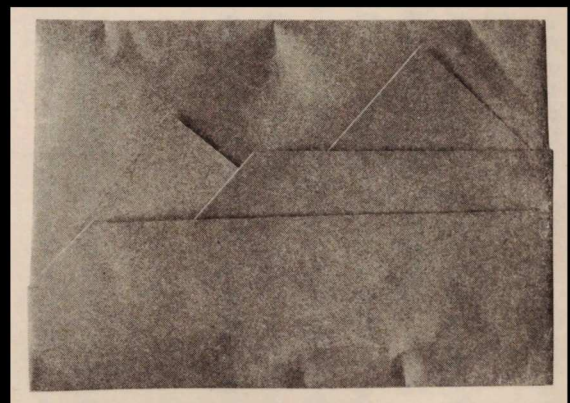
Like his teacher *Sukehiro*, *Sukenao* applied a decorative pattern called *kôzutsumi-yasuri* (incense-wrapper file marks) to the nakago, so named because the pattern resembles the folds of a *kôzutsumi*, the paper wrapper used for incense. *Sukenao's* *kôzutsumi-yasuri* differs from *Sukehiro's* by its steeper angle.



Sukenao



Sukehiro



Kôzutsumi (incense-wrapper)



10199844

重要第10400号

指定書

刀銘 近江守高木住助直作 一口

法量 長さ七〇・五釐 反り一・三釐

形状 鑄造 庵棟 元先に幅差つき 鑄高く 重箱や厚く 反り浅めに 中鋒

鍛 小板目肌よく つみ 地沸微塵に 厚くつき 地景細かに 入り ねね 研えり

刃文 直ぐに 焼き出し その上は 大互の目 へ 角はる 刃ふた 氣・頭 ぬれ 互の目

など 交じり 沸瀾風となり 凹深く 小沸厚くつき 砂流し 細かに ねね

金筋入り 処々玉を 焼き 匂口 研えり

帽子 表直ぐ 状に ぬれ 僅かに 尖り ざらつき 裏直ぐに 大丸風

共に 先掃き かけて 深めに 返る

茎 生ぶ 鑄目 大筋 遠に 他粒 (喬包 鑄) つく 目釘孔 一

右者當協會に於て審査の結果

重要刀剣に指定す

平成十年十一月十二日

財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會

會長 山中貞則



Jûyô Certificate No. 10400

Shiteisho (指定書) Certificate of Designation

Katana, mei: Ômi no Kami Takagi-jû Sukenao saku (近江守高木住助直作)

Measurements

nagasa 71.05 cm, sori 1.3 cm

Description

Keijo: *shinogi-zukuri*, *iori-mune*, tapering from *moto* to *saki*, wide *shinogi*, shallow *sori*, *chû-kissaki*.

Kitae: well-forged and tight *ko-itame*, with *ji-nie* appearing fine and thick, fine *chikei* present, and the steel showing bright clarity.

Hamon: starting straight, and above this shows a mixture of large *gunome* with square-shouldered elements, *ko-notare*, and *gunome* with rounded tops, forming a *tôran*-like pattern. The *nioi* is deep, and *ko-nie* is thick.

Sunagashi runs finely, with *kinsuji* present, and *tama* are formed here and there. *Nioi-guchi* is bright and clear.

Bôshi: on the *omote*, it takes a straight form curving round with a faintly pointed (*togari*) feeling; on the *ura*, it is straight with a large *ô-maru* shape. On both sides, the tip sweeps out (*hakikake*) and turns back in a fairly deep return.

Nakago: *ubu* with slanting file marks bearing a decorative *keshô* (*kôzutsumi-yasuri*). One *mekugi-ana*.

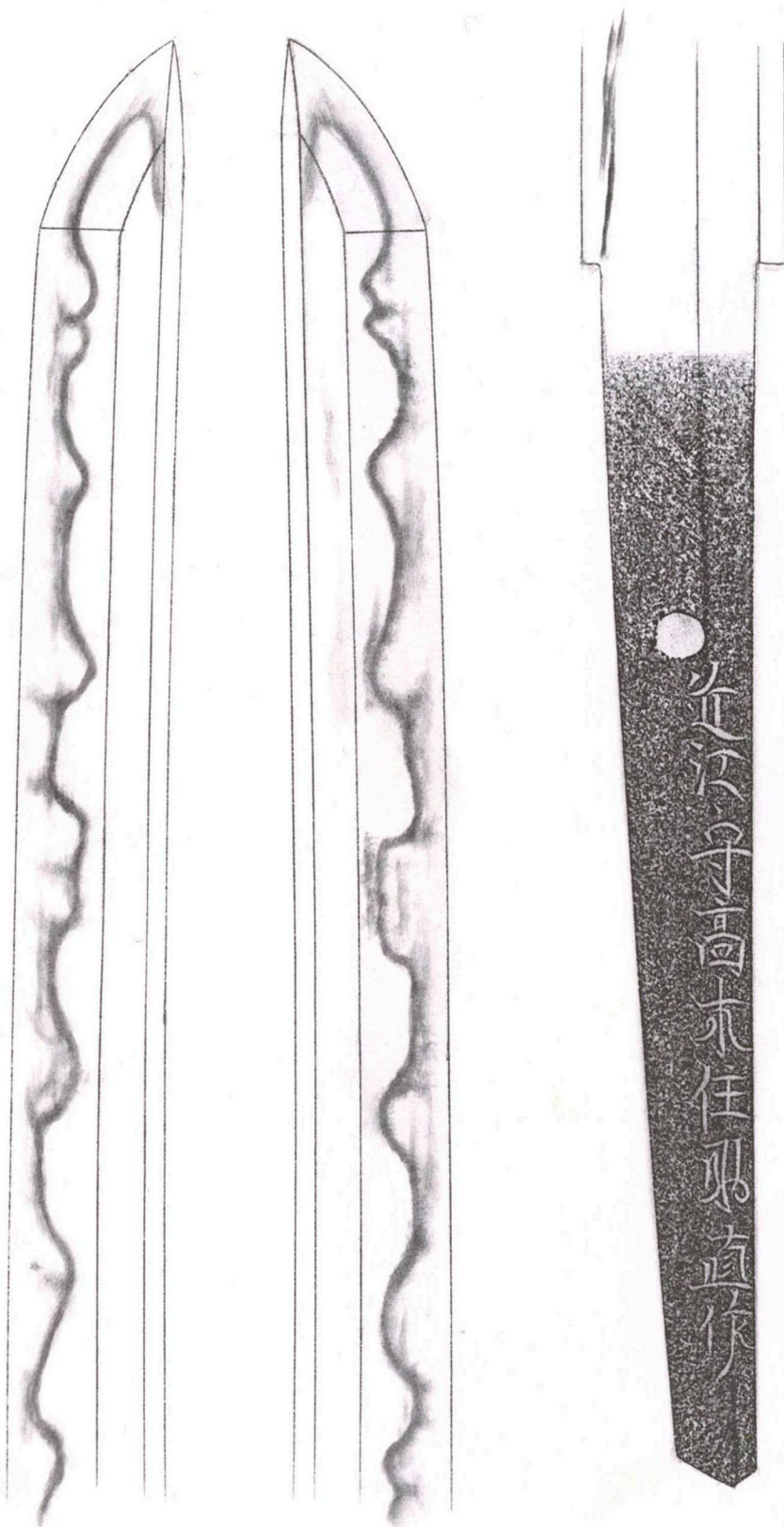
According to the result of the shinsa committee of our society we judged this work as authentic and rate it as *jûyô-tôken*.

November 12, 1998

[Foundation] Nihon Bijutsu Tôken Hozon Kyôkai, NBTHK

[President] Yamanaka Sadanori (山中貞則)

刀 銘 近江守高木住助直作



Jûyô Tôken zûfû (white paper cover)

Note the clean, crisp lines of the *nakago* and tightness of the *hamon*. Good sword.

平成十年十一月十二日指定

第四十四回 重要刀剣

刀 銘 近江守高木住助直作

一口

愛知県 小野剛資

法量 長さ七一・〇五握 反り一・三握 元幅二・九五握 先幅二・一五握 鋒長さ三・二握 茎長さ二〇・五握 茎反り僅か
形状 縮退、庵棟、棟のおし急、身幅尋常、元先に幅差つき、身幅の割に縮幅広く、縮高く、踏張りころがあり、重ねや厚、反り決めの目にばる刃、小のたれ・頭の丸い互の目など文しり、地味微塵に厚つき、地味細かに入り、かね返える。刃文 直ぐに焼き出し、その上は互の目、金筋入り、延々玉を焼き、匂ひ明るく返る。帽子 焼や深く、表直ぐに丸く焼く、総体に砂流し細かにかかり、少しく掃きかけて、深めに返る。茎 生ぶ、先入山形、鑢目大筋道に化粧（香包懸）つく、目釘孔一、指表目釘孔の下横寄りにやや太極の長銘がある。

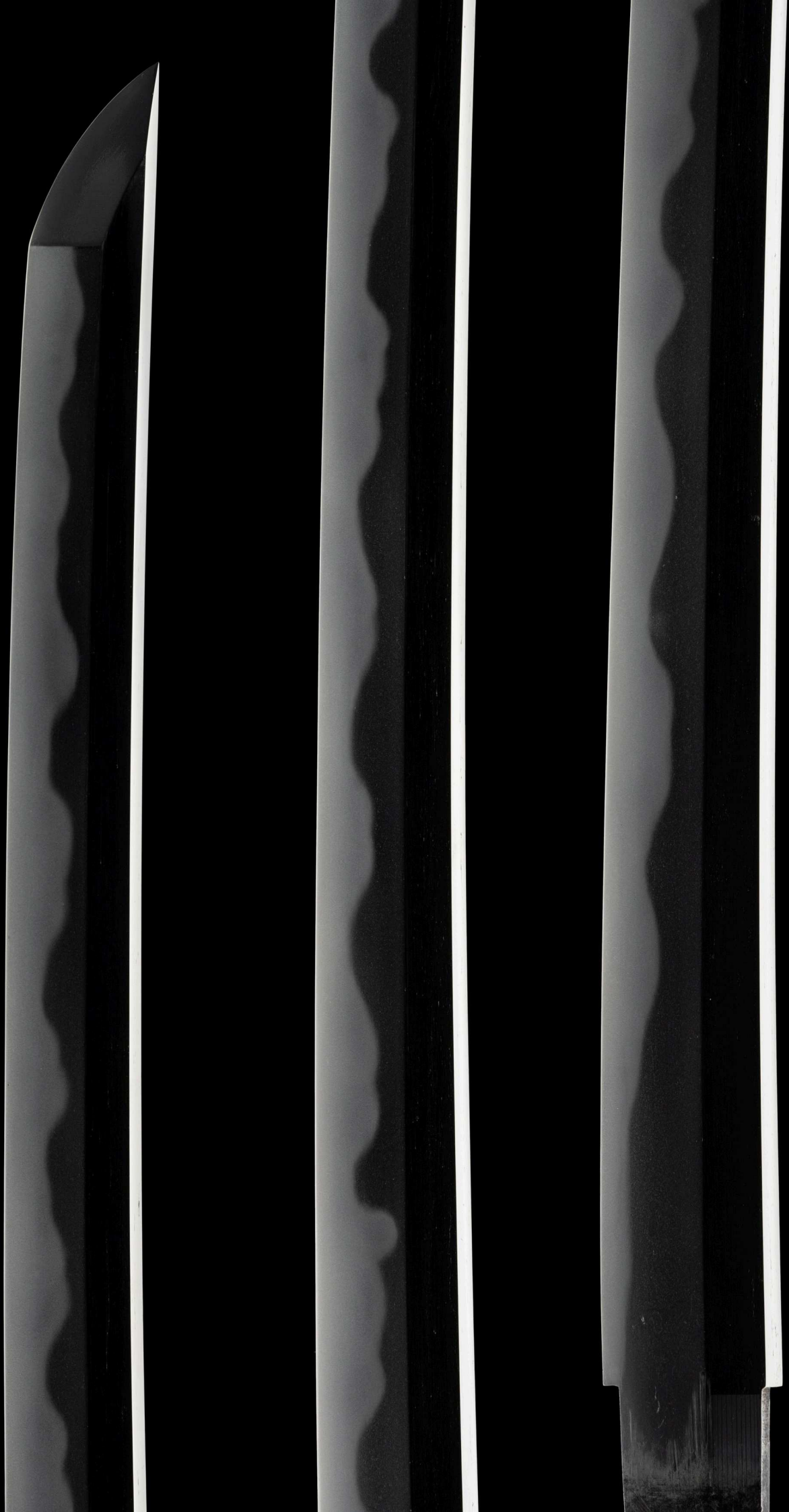
説明 近江守助直は、寛永十六年に近江国高木に生まれ、通称を孫太郎と言ひ、津田助広（二代）の門に学び、後にその継嗣になると伝へてゐる。成業後、近江国高木に帰ったが、師の助広が天和二年に歿したため、その後は大坂に常住したとある。彼の作刀にみる年紀は、寛文八年が最も古く、元禄六年、彼が五十五歳の時のものが最終である。作風は師助広の開始した砂濺乱れをよく継承しているが、他に互の目乱れやのたれ・直刃などがあり、そのいずれもが上手で、一般に匂ひが深く、小沸がよくつき、匂ひが明るく返るもので、中には助広に迫る作もある。
この刀は、小振目がよくつんだ組合に、地味微塵に厚つき、地味が細かに入った銀を呈し、刃文は直ぐに焼き出して、その上は大互の目にばる刃、小のたれ・頭の丸い互の目などが交じって砂濺風となり、足入り、匂ひ深く、小沸が厚つき、細かに金筋・砂流し等がかかり、延々に玉を焼くなど、彼が最も得意とする作風をあらわしている。同作中でも、殊に銀えが優れており、明るく返る精良な地がねは見事であり、加えて砂濺の刃文は、乱れが整って形がよく、匂ひで小沸が厚つき、匂ひが明るく返るわつてゐるなど、焼刃も上々の出来を示している。助直の本領が遺憾なく発揮された会心の一口である。年紀はないが銘振から推して、おそらく延宝三年の終りから五年の初め頃にかけての作と思われる。

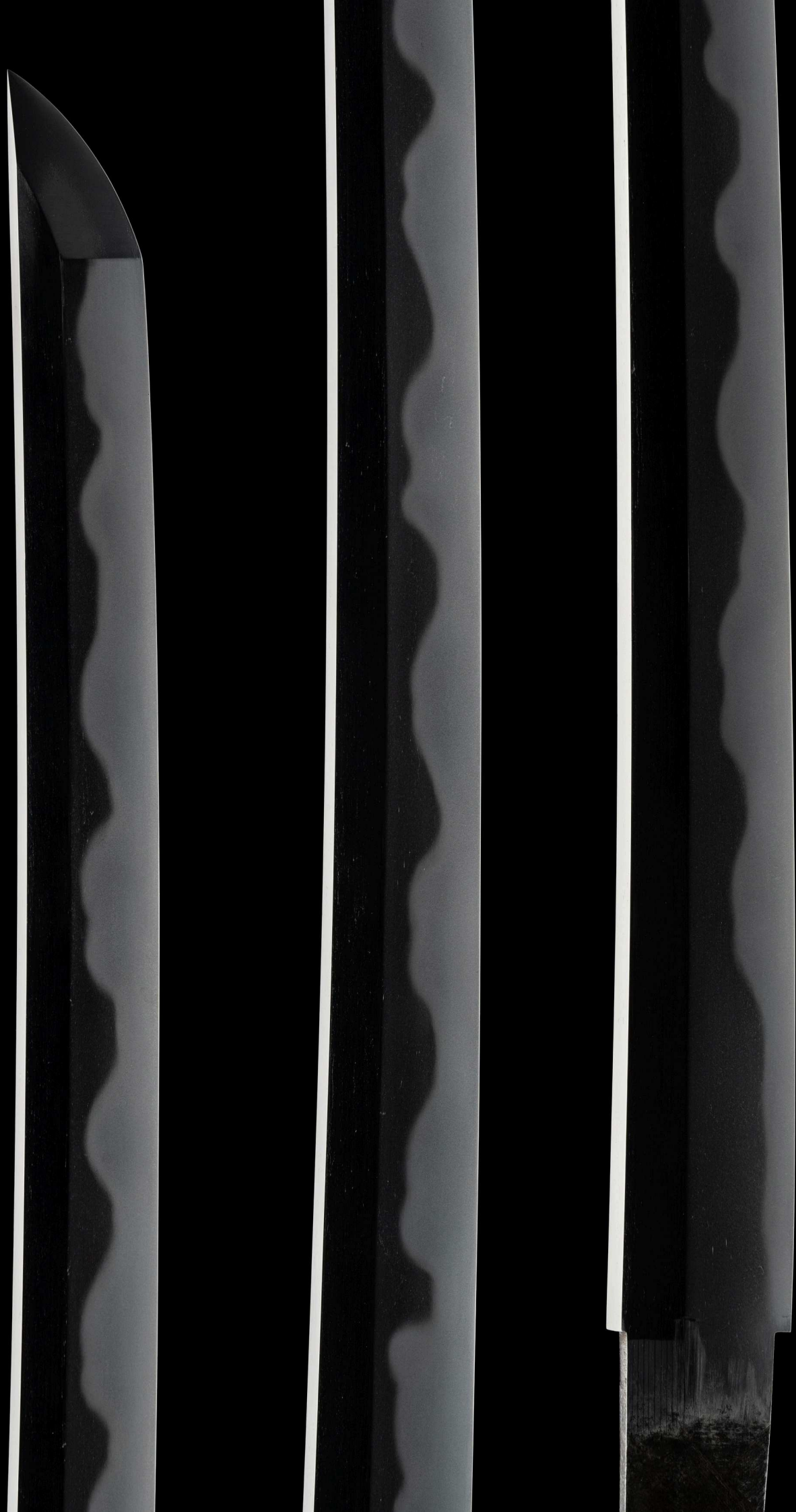
Translation of the Remarks section of the Jûyô zûfû:

Ômi no Kami Sukenao (近江守助直) was born in the sixteenth year of *Kan'ei* era (1639) in *Ômi* Province, *Takagi*, and was known by the common name *Magotarô* (孫太郎). He studied under the second generation *Tsuda Sukehiro* (津田助広), and it is said that he later became his brother-in-law by marriage. After completing his training, he returned to *Takagi* in *Ômi* Province, but after his teacher *Sukehiro* died in the second year of *Tenna* era (1682), *Sukenao* appears to have subsequently taken up permanent residence in *Ôsaka*. The dated works known from his hand range from the eighth year of *Kanbun* era (1668), the earliest, to the sixth year of *Genroku* era (1693) when he was fifty-five years old. His style faithfully continues the *tôran-midare* hamon pattern originated by his teacher *Sukehiro*, though he also produced *gunome-midare*, *notare*, and *suguha*, all executed skillfully. In general his work shows deep *nioi*, well-formed *ko-nie*, and a bright, clear *nioi-guchi*; some examples even approach the quality of *Sukehiro* himself.

This blade displays a well-grained *ko-itame* texture, with *ji-nie* appearing fine and thick and fine *chikei* present. The *hamon* begins straight, above which large *gunome* with square-shouldered elements, *ko-notare*, and *gunome* with rounded tops mingle to form a *tôran*-like pattern, with *ashi* present, deep *nioi*, thick *ko-nie*, fine *kinsuji* and *sunagashi* running throughout, and *tama* formed here and there fully expressing the style at which he most excelled.

Among his works, this blade is especially outstanding in its forging: the bright, clear, and refined *jigane* is superb, and in addition the *tôran* hamon shows well-ordered, well-shaped *midare*, deep *nioi*, thick *ko-nie*, and a bright, clear *nioi-guchi*, the temper itself being of the highest quality throughout. This is a masterwork in which *Sukenao*'s true ability is fully and unreservedly expressed. Although undated, judging from the style of the signature it is thought to date from around the end of the third year of *Enpô* era (1675) to the beginning of the fifth year of *Enpô* era (1677).







sweeping hakikake bôshi



The following pages will showcase all the *jihada* and *hamon* elements highlighted in the remarks section of the *jûyô zûfû* certificate.

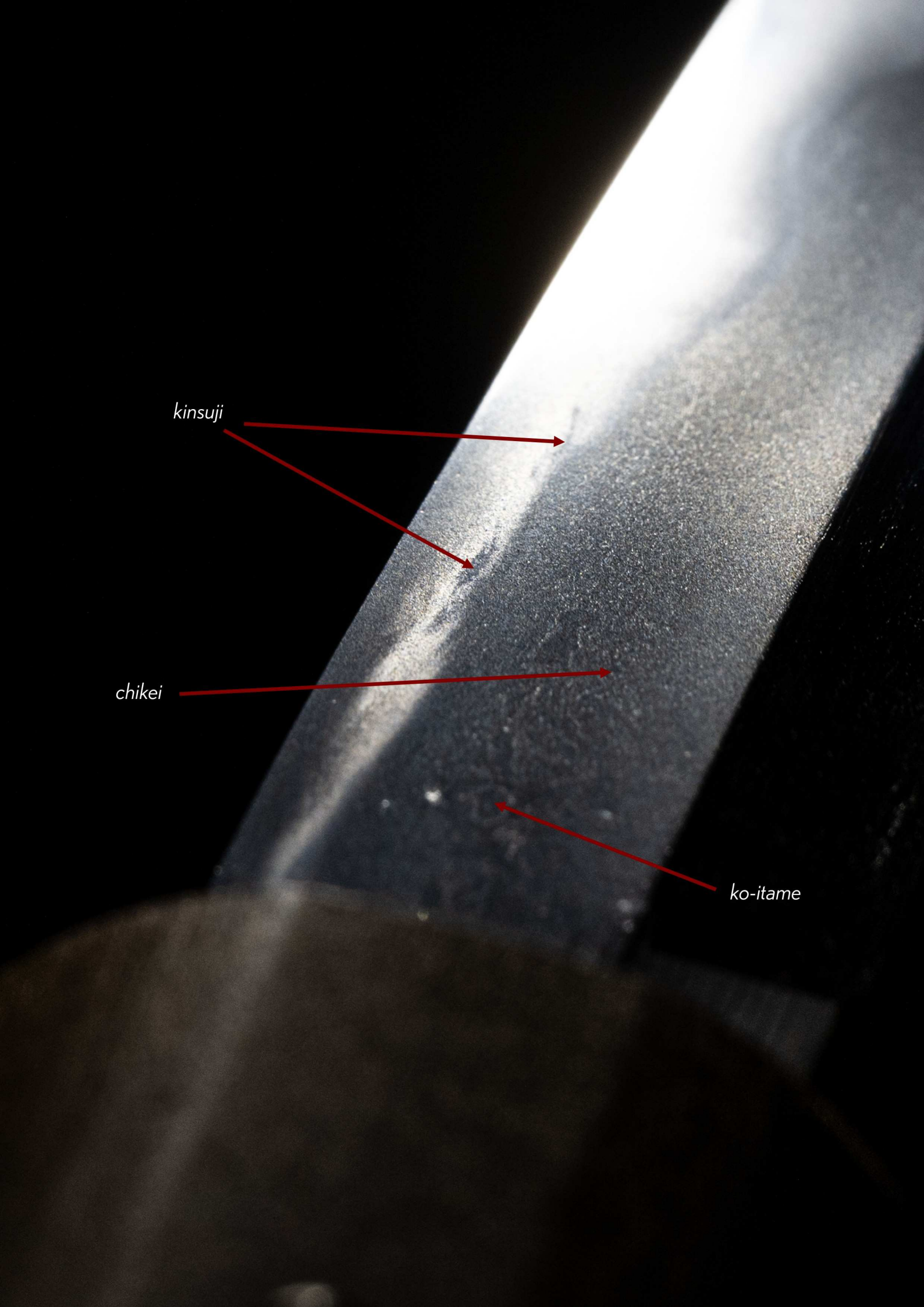
fine chikei

well-grained ko-itame

kinsuji

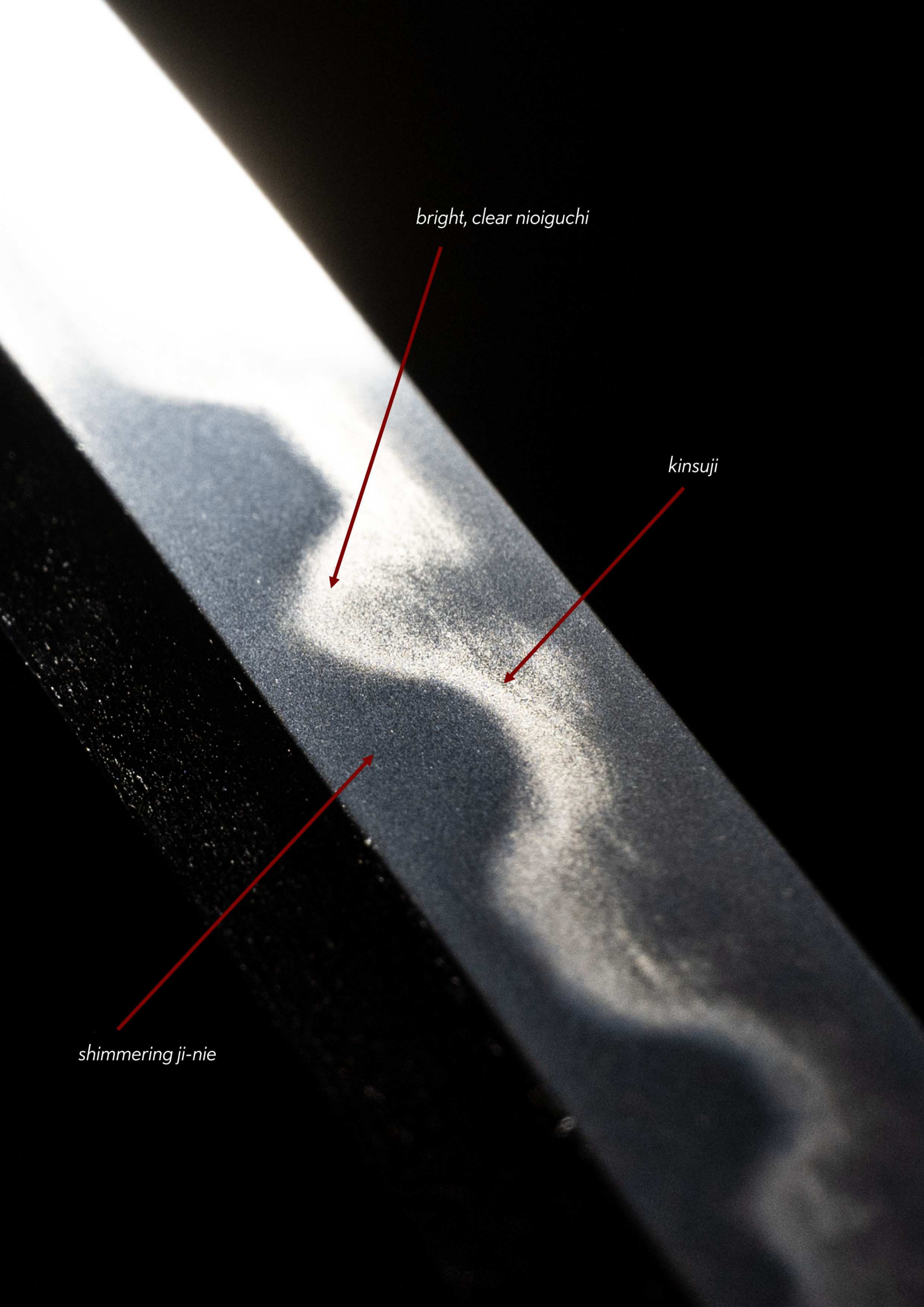
chikei

ko-itame



spectacular brushed sunagashi





bright, clear nioiguchi

kinsuji

shimmering ji-nie

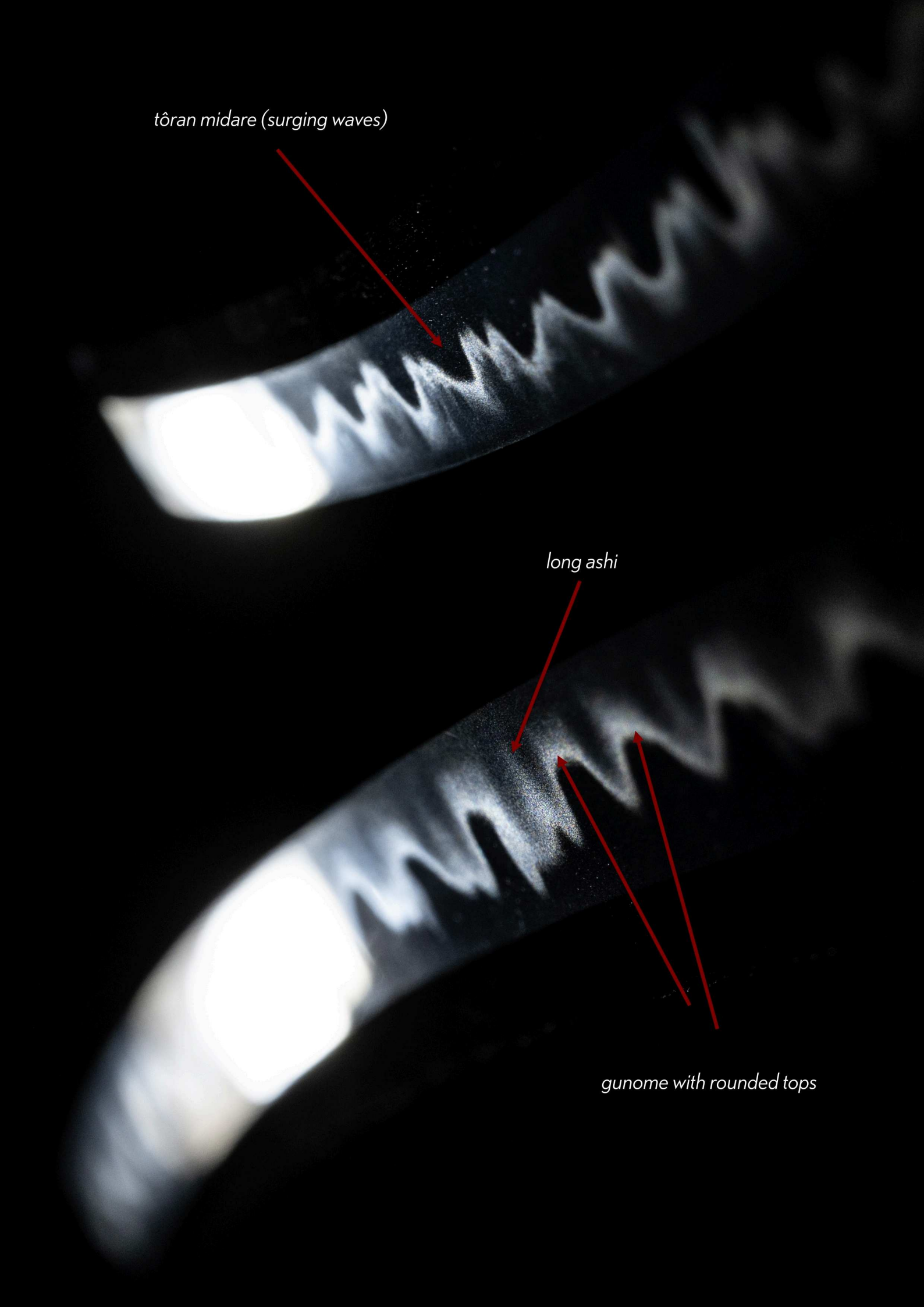


hamon starts straight

tôran midare (surging waves)

long ashi

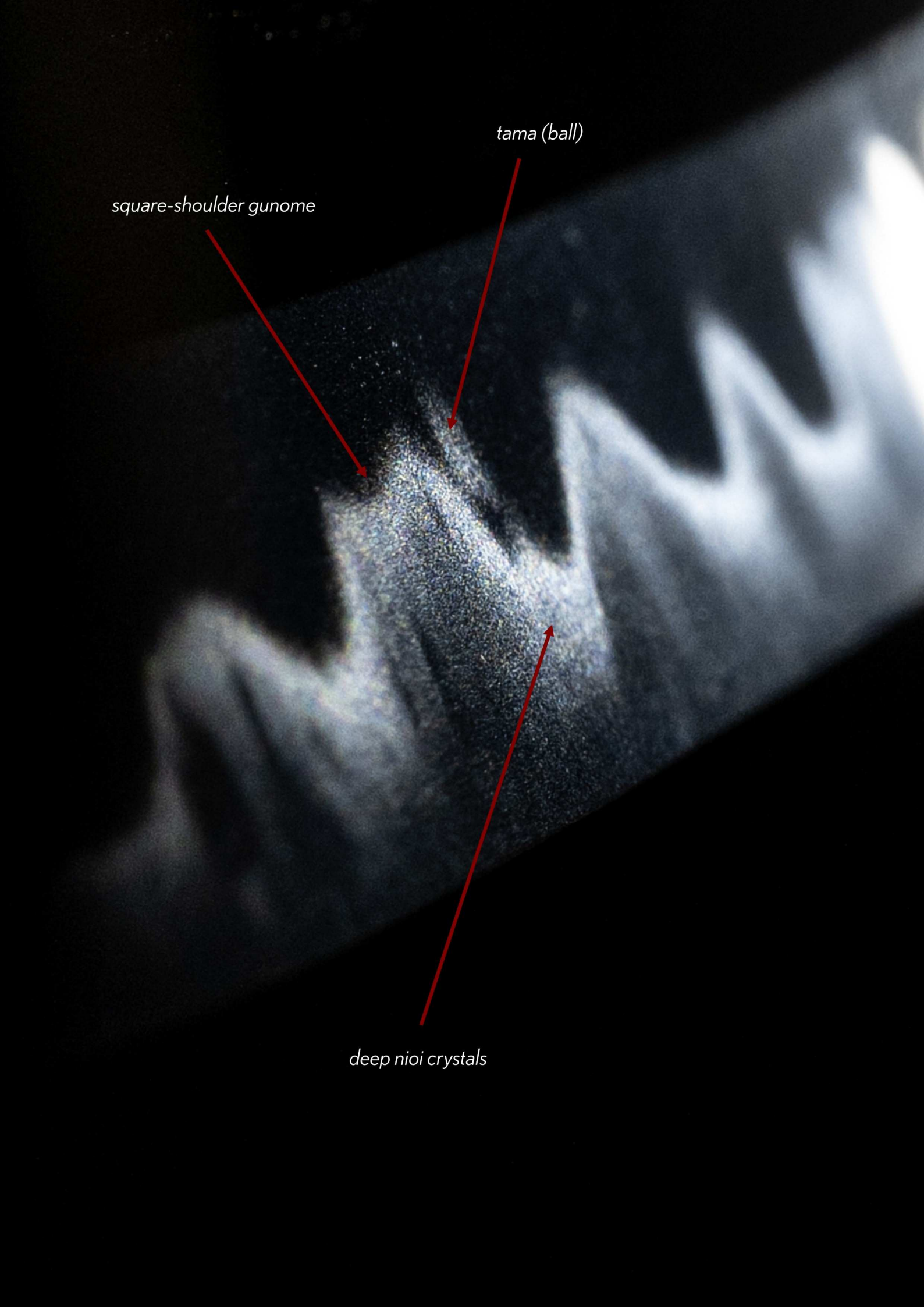
gunome with rounded tops



square-shoulder gunome

tama (ball)

deep nioi crystals





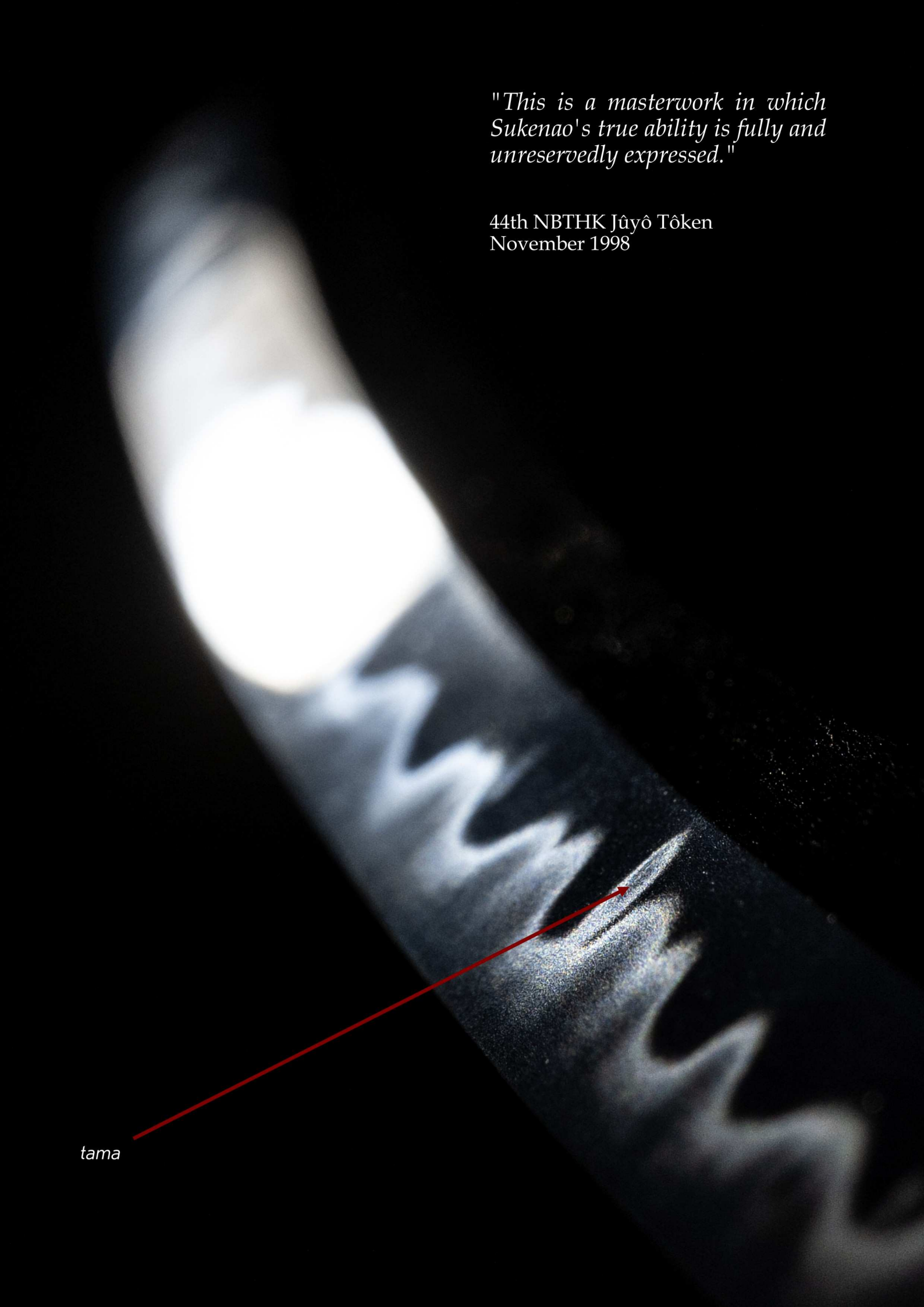
"Among his works, this blade is especially outstanding in its forging: the bright, clear, and refined jigane is superb, and in addition the tôran hamon shows well-ordered, well-shaped midare, deep nioi, thick ko-nie, and a bright, clear nioi-guchi."

44th NBTHK Jûyô Tôken
November 1998

*"This is a masterwork in which
Sukenao's true ability is fully and
unreservedly expressed."*

44th NBTHK Jûyô Tōken
November 1998

tama

A close-up, diagonal view of a Japanese sword (tōken) against a black background. The blade is dark with a prominent, wavy, light-colored pattern (hada) running along its length. A bright, circular highlight (tama) is visible on the upper left portion of the blade. A red arrow originates from the word 'tama' in the bottom left corner and points to a specific feature on the blade's surface.



Tanobe-sensei sayagaki potential



Shirasaya
(protective scabbard)



gold *habaki* with
copper ground

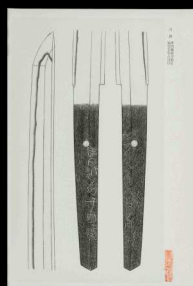
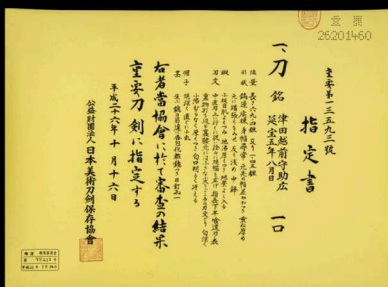
Custom Koshirae Inspiration

A number of years ago we completed a beautiful custom *koshirae* for a *jûyô tôken katana* by grandmaster *Sukehiro*, *Sukenao*'s sensei, its fittings built entirely around dramatic wave formations. Imagine that same theme carried through onto the *ujka548 Sukenao katana*, its own *tôran-ba* hamon surging beneath fittings that echo the very waves forged into the steel. Let's build something extraordinary together.



Tsuba crafted by *Chôshû Masatomo*
NBTHK Tokubetsu Hozon

A Tsuda Echizen Sukehiro Katana (ujka253)
60th Jûyô Token, dated August 1677
With *Raden Fuemaki saya* in wave design



ARIGATO!

THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING THIS PDF DESCRIPTION.

ALL AVAILABLE SWORDS ARE OFFERED ON A "FIRST-SERIOUS-HOLD-REQUEST", FIRST SERVED BASIS. PLEASE PLEASE VISIT [HTTPS://UNIQUEJAPAN.COM/ENQUIRE](https://uniquejapan.com/enquire) OR EMAIL ME (SERVICE@UNIQUEJAPAN.COM) STRAIGHT AWAY WITH QUESTIONS AND FURTHER PHOTOS AND/OR ADVICE REGARDING ANY SWORD OF INTEREST.

SWORDS CAN BE PAID OVER A FEW MONTHS IF REQUIRED. WE CAN DISCUSS PAYMENT PLANS AS CERTAIN PIECES REQUIRE A MORE SIZEABLE INVESTMENT.

EACH SWORD CAN BE LEGALLY OWNED AND EXPORTED OUTSIDE OF JAPAN. ALL SWORDS HAVE CERTIFICATION PAPERS (ORIGAMI) SUCH AS FROM THE NBTHK AND/OR THE NTHK-NPO.

I COMPLETELY RESPECT THAT PURCHASING A SWORD REMOTELY REQUIRES TRUST. YOU'RE RELYING ON PHOTOGRAPHS AND DESCRIPTIONS FOR SOMETHING DEEPLY IMPORTANT. IT'S MY PROMISE TO ANSWER EVERY QUESTION THOROUGHLY. I WANT YOU TO FEEL ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENT THAT THE SWORD YOU CHOOSE IS MEANT FOR YOUR FAMILY TO CHERISH AND PRESERVE.

ALL SWORDS FROM UNIQUE JAPAN ARE GUARANTEED AUTHENTIC AND COME WITH A 3-DAY WORRY-FREE INSPECTION PERIOD UPON ARRIVAL TO YOUR HOME.

DESCRIPTIONS AND AVAILABILITY ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

FIVE STEPS TO OWNING A JAPANESE SWORD
WWW.UNIQUEJAPAN.COM/RESOURCE

WE LOOK FORWARD TO HEARING FROM YOU. WE HAVE SERVICE OFFICES IN TOKYO AND NEAR LONDON, ENGLAND.

THANK YOU,



PABLO KUNTZ
FOUNDER, UNIQUE JAPAN

SERVICE@UNIQUEJAPAN.COM

+44 7954 102 277 (MOBILE ON 'SIGNAL & WHATSAPP' / BRITISH TIME)

UNIQUE JAPAN, FINE ART DEALER
ANTIQUES LICENSE ISSUED BY MEGURO CITY
TOKYO, JAPAN (NO.303291102398)

UNIQUE JAPAN IS THE TRADING NAME OF MARCHFORTH INTERNATIONAL LIMITED.