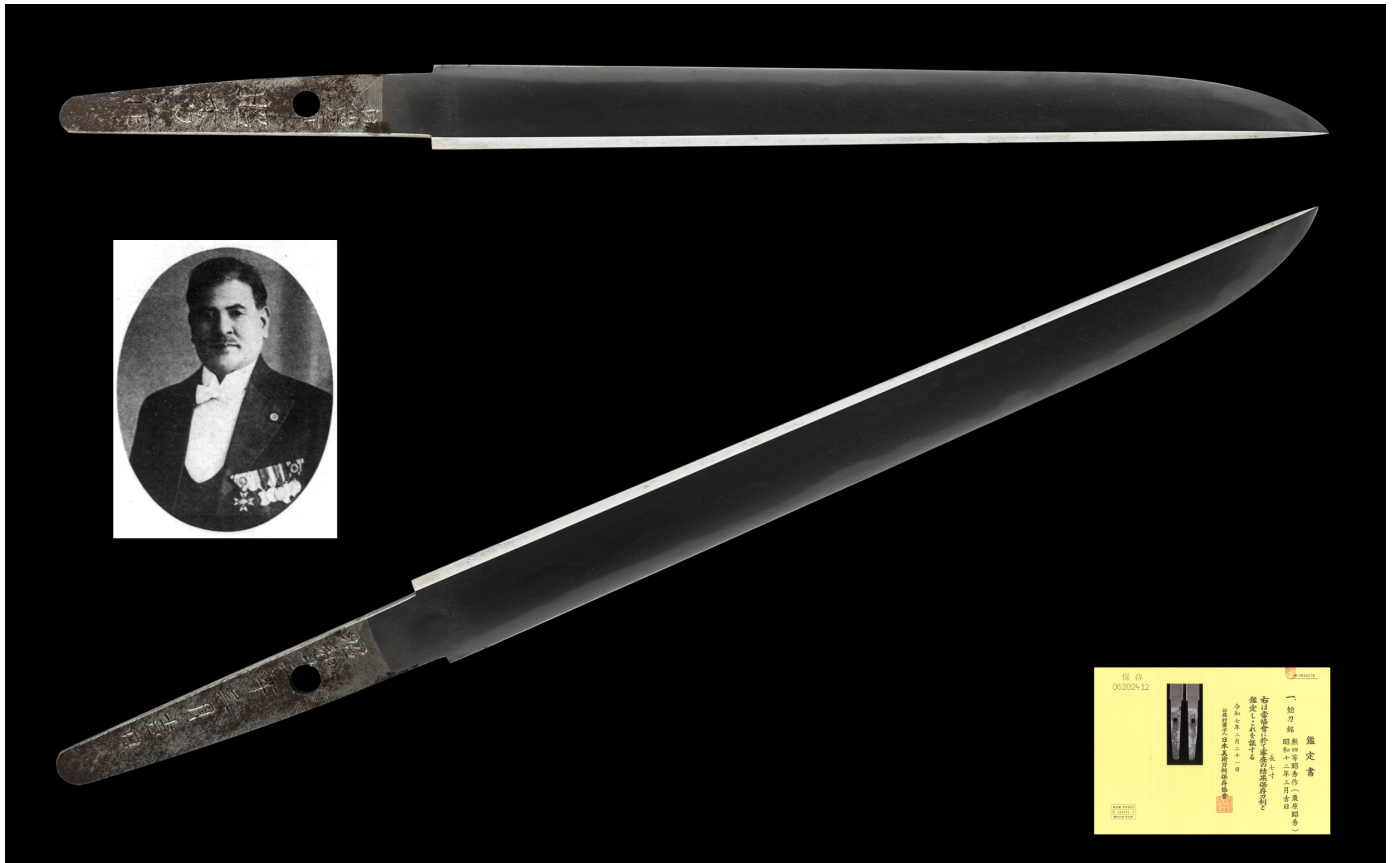




ITEM# UJTA071

CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

A KURIHARA AKIHIDE TANTÔ

SIGNED & DATED, GENDAITÔ (SHÔWA ERA: MARCH 1937)

Swordsmith:	Kun-Yontô Akihide saku (Kurihara Akihide) 等昭秀作 (栗原昭秀)
Measurements:	Length: 21.2cm Sori: 0cm Moto-haba: 1.81cm Weight: 115g
Jihada:	<i>Well-forged itame-hada with ji-nie</i>
Hamon:	<i>Splendid notare with kinsuji, sunagashi, ko-ashi</i>
Certificate #1:	NBTHK Hozon (sword Worthy of Preservation)
Authentication:	Sayagaki by Nozomi-san (shodô artist)
Included:	Shirasaya, fabric bag, kit, printed description

\$3,300

Kurihara Akihide was an extraordinary figure that mentored legendary craftsmen such as the future Living National Treasure *Miyairi Yukihira* and *Amata Akitsugu*. This delightful tantô was crafted by Akihide himself, and it carries a deeply personal history. It was presented as an *omamori-tantô*, a talismanic gift, to celebrate the birth of his granddaughter. The blade features a beautifully forged itame-hada, and the hamon is a flowing *notare* alive with *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, *ko-ashi* and thick *nie* throughout. But a sword like this is much more than what can be seen in the steel. Following Akihide's passing, his disciple *Amata Akitsugu*, himself destined to become a Living National Treasure, continued to visit Akihide's granddaughter and personally maintained this blade each time he came. It was a most cherished piece, tended by a master's hands out of devotion to his teacher's memory. This is a tantô that deserves to be gifted again. Perhaps to celebrate a birth, as it once was. Whatever the occasion, let this tantô carry its story forward into a new home.

Moto-haba: 1.81cm

Mekugi-ana: 1

Nakago: 8.65cm

Nagasa: 21.2cm

Sori: *uchizori*
(inward curvature)

Omosa: 115g

Kurihara Akihide (栗原昭秀) was an extraordinary figure who left a profound impact on the sword world from the *Meiji* through the early *Shôwa* eras. By mentoring legendary craftsmen such as the future Living National Treasure *Miyairi Yukihiro* (宮入行平) and *Amata Akitsugu* (天田昭次), who dedicated himself to the research of classical masterpieces, Akihide helped build the foundation of the modern swordsmithing community that thrives to this very day.

This delightful tantô was crafted by Akihide himself, and it carries a deeply personal history. It was presented as an *omamori-tantô*, a talismanic gift, to celebrate the birth of his granddaughter. From the very beginning, this was a sword made not for battle but for love.

The blade features a beautifully forged *itame-hada*, and the hamon is a flowing *notare* alive with *kinsuji* and *sunagashi*, *ko-ashi* and thick *nie* throughout.

But a sword like this is much more than what can be seen in the steel. Following Akihide's passing, his disciple *Amata Akitsugu*, himself destined to become a Living National Treasure, continued to visit Akihide's granddaughter and personally maintained this blade each time he came. It was a most cherished piece, tended by a master's hands out of devotion to his teacher's memory.

This is a tantô that deserves to be gifted again. Perhaps to celebrate a birth, as it once was. Perhaps as a wedding gift to mark the beginning of a new life together. Whatever the occasion, let this tantô carry its story forward into a new home.



Location: *Tokyô*

Family name: *Kurihara*

Swordsmith: *Akhide*

ubu-nakago (original, unaltered tang)

keshô-yasurime (slanting file marks)

Keshô yasurime

A beautifully decorative style of file marks, combining the "*kiri*" (horizontal) and "*sujikai*" (slanting) patterns.

Originally, file marks were applied to the nakago for the practical purpose of providing a non-slip surface to prevent the blade from slipping out of the hilt.

However, by the early *Edo* period, swordsmiths began to create their own designs to enhance the aesthetic appearance of the *nakago*.

勲 (Kun)

四 (yon)

等 (tô)

昭 (Aki)

秀

(hide)

Shôwa jûni-nen sangatsu kichijitsu

Dated on a lucky day in the third month in the
twelfth year of Shôwa era (March 1937)

(Shô) 昭

(wa) 和

(jû) 十

(ni) 二

(nen) 年

(san) 三

(gatsu) 月

(kichi) 吉

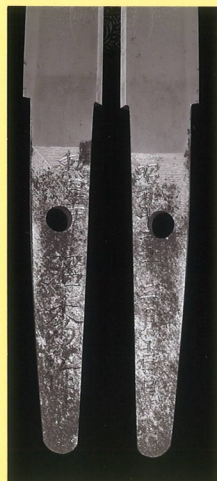
(jitsu) 日



保 存
06202412



No 3036178



鑑定書

一、短刀銘

勲四等昭秀作（栗原昭秀）
昭和十二年三月吉日

長七寸

右は當協會に於て審査の結果保存刀剣と
鑑定しこれを証する

令和七年二月二十一日

公益財団法人日本美術刀剣保存協會



東京都教育委員会
第 243275 号
昭和63年1月28日

NBTHK Hozon Certificate of Designation

A sword designated as *Worthy of Conservation*
by the Society for the Preservation of the Japan Art Sword

Issued in the 7th year of Reiwa (2025), February 21st

One, Tanto

Mei (signature)

Kun-Yontô Akihide saku (Kurihara Akihide)
Shôwa jûni-nen sangatsu kichijitsu

Nagasa (length)
7-sun (21.2cm)

Nihon Bijutsu Token Hozon Kyokai
(NBTHK)

The Man Who Helped Revive the Japanese Sword

Kurihara Hikosaburô Akihide was born in 1879 in *Sano, Tochigi* Prefecture, into a Japan still adjusting to the sweeping reforms of the *Meiji* era. The 1876 *Haitorei* (Sword Abolishment Edict), which expressly forbade the wearing of swords in public, had struck at the heart of a tradition samurai had upheld for centuries. The Japanese sword was no longer a social institution. The thousand-year-old lineage of professional swordsmithing, with its glorious amount of accumulated knowledge faced the very real prospect of extinction within a generation.

For *Akihide*, as a *Member of the Lower House of Tochigi Prefecture*, he possessed both the political standing and the means to act, and he felt the weight of that responsibility acutely. He had studied the craft himself, training under *Inagaki Saijirô Masanori* and later under *Horii Taneaki*, and understood from the inside what would be lost if the living transmission of technique were broken. On July 5th, 1933, he opened the *Nihontô Tanren Denshûjo* at his private residence in *Akasaka, Tokyo*, investing his own fortune to create a place where the tradition could be passed on.

The school's reach proved transformative. The roster of smiths who trained or were ranked there, documented across the results of the *6th Shinsaku Nihontô Denrankai* (1941) and the careers that followed, testifies to what one man's conviction made possible. Among its students was *Amata Akitsugu*, who achieved *mukansa* status in 1972 and was designated a *ningen-kokuhô* (Living National Treasure) in 1997.

Akihide died on May 5th, 1954, at the age of 76. His signed blades carry the *mei Kun-yontô Akihide saku* (勲四等昭秀作), identifying him as a bearer of the *Order of Merit*, fourth class. That a statesman would inscribe a state honour into a sword signature speaks to a man who did not separate his public life from his life at the forge.

The sword and the office were, for *Akihide*, expressions of the same commitment. And for those of us that adore *nihontô*, we owe a big debt of gratitude.



Kurihara Akihide
(1879-1954)

The existing shirasaya does not carry *sayagaki*. As part of the package, Unique Japan will arrange *sayagaki* for the new caretaker, and if the tantô is being given as a gift, a personal message can be incorporated into the inscription.



current shirasaya
(sayagaki potential)

example of sayagaki
by Nozomi-san