

## **Yamata no Orochi Sculpture**

This sculpture is inspired by Yamata no Orochi, a mythological serpent with eight heads and eight tails. Created by Itō Takamichi (b. 1939), the stainless-steel sculpture was originally displayed at an international science and technology exposition held in Tsukuba (Ibaraki Prefecture) in 1985. It measures 19 meters long and 6.98 meters tall.

The legend of Yamata no Orochi appears in some of the oldest written records of Japan. In it, the Shinto deity Susanoo no Mikoto descends from the realm of heavenly deities and arrives at Mt. Sentsū (located around 8 kilometers to the east of this museum). He encounters a forlorn husband and wife, who lament that Yamata no Orochi will soon appear to eat their daughter. Susanoo no Mikoto slays the beast and discovers a sword hidden in one of its tails. The sword is one of the three sacred treasures of the imperial regalia of Japan. This story highlights the long-held association between the Okuizumo region and swordsmithing.