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## Skeletons Studying, Shaku Kaiyin, Japan Meiji Period



1 900 EUR

Signature : Shaku Kaiyin

Period : 19th century

Condition : Bon état

Material : Paper

Width : 58

Height : 206

### Description

Ink on paper, Skeletons Studying, Shaku Kaiyin, Japan Meiji Period

This ink-on-paper painting, mounted as a scroll with colored paper borders, is titled Skeletons Studying. It portrays a circle of skeletons seated around a teaching master, creating a scene that is both whimsical and philosophical. The skeletons, robed like monks, sit attentively, listening to their mentor in the center. The circular composition symbolizes equality and unity in the pursuit of spiritual truth. Despite its caricature-like appearance, the piece reflects a concept akin to European vanitas--a meditation on the ephemeral nature and superficiality of the body in contrast to the eternal spirit.

### Dealer

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Liu Chao, also known as Shaku Kaiyin, was a Japanese monk from Tokoname active during the Meiji era. In addition to his paintings, he authored numerous educational manuals published in Tokyo, such as the Japanese Complete Maps Guidebook and the Bankoku Geographical Summary. He initially served as the head of a public primary school before dedicating himself to Buddhist reform, collaborating with scholars Fumio Nanjo and Enryo Inoue to co-found the reflection circle "Ho no Tomo." Toward the end of his life, Liu Chao specialized in painting skeletons, employing this imagery to convey Buddhist messages on the emptiness of appearances and spiritual liberation.

Good overall condition, with minor stains or creases visible in the photos, and a repair in the upper part of the mounting.

Dimensions: 206 x 58 cm (scroll), 139 x 47 cm (painting only)

Includes a storage box.