



6959 A kakemono (hanging scroll) painted in ink on silk with bamboo, bamboo shoots, rocks and calligraphy.

Seals:

Lower right: Shikun

Upper Right: Uman'yū

Lower left: Baisen

Calligraphy reading:

Painted on silk, and based on Confucian ethics in the autumn of the year Mizunoe-inu, in the Bunk'yū

period*. Having studied painting with Jiang-yue Xin-pu in Nagasaki I have been painting bamboo in ink for the last fifty years, practicing daily and forgetting that my hair has turned white, though my spirit and brush work remain dynamic. This painting is executed by Sakuken the old man Ka at the age of seventy-six.

Japan 19th century Edo period 1862*

Dimensions:

Scroll: H. 82.7" x W. 57.7" (210cm x 146.5cm)

Painting: H. 54.7" x W. 52.2" (139cm x 132.5cm)

Kusaba Baisen (1787-1867) gō (art names): Sakuken, Ka. Born in Taku, Hizen Province, (modern Saga Prefecture, Kyushu). From the age of eight, he studied at the Tōgen-shōsha, an elite academy run by the feudal lord of Taku based on Chinese Neo-Confucian Studies.

From the age of eighteen he continued his studies at the Kōdōkan, an elite academy in Mito Province. As a scholar he excelled in studies of Neo-Confucianism, Chinese poetry, and painting, he was also an accomplished practitioner of martial arts. Baisen studied Chinese painting under the Chinese painter Jiang-yue Xin-pu and went on to study the Chinese Southern Song style, eventually becoming noted for his ink paintings of bamboo.

He also studied in Edo (Tokyo) at the Shōheikō, an academy run by the Tokugawa government, and was a student of Koga Seiri (1750-1817), known as one of the three great scholars of the Kansei era (1790-1801). He later returned to his home town of Taku where he taught many students and assisted in matters of politics and the economy for local government.

His friendships reached far and wide, among important and influential people of the time in politics, classical studies, and artistic and cultural domains. He was friends with Rai Sanyō (1780-1832), Tani Bunchō (1763-1841) and Kan Chazan (1750-1817) to name but few.

In 1835, he was appointed to teach at the Kōdōkan School, in Taku, Hizen Province, and was made professor in 1855. He was also known as a great scholar on Shushi-gaku the most influential Neo-Confucian school which was deployed as a major political, moral, philosophical apparatus to govern people and society in Edo period Japan.



