

# Basic Detail Report

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## Robe

### Date

1644-1911

### Medium

Silk, thread and gold

### Description

For centuries the Chinese have emphasized forms of clothing as a way to distinguish the rank or social position of the wearer. This custom was practiced in the Chinese court and some of the earliest documentation on the Han

tomb tiles in China (206 BCE - 221 CE). Court costumes are long robes with full sleeves which overlap across the front to the right side. First they are secured by cloth tapes, and later under the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) with buttons. The fullness of the gown and the woven or embroidered designs varied according to the class and the period. This 19th century Chinese robe which was imported by L. & S. Gump & Co., San Francisco, carries on the tradition of the informal court style robe. With a 24 carat gold wrapped thread background, the embroidered roundels illustrate figures in landscapes. The main body of the robe also features colorful interspersed butterflies, as well as the attributes of three of the eight Taoist immortals: baskets of peaches in handled containers, pairs of castanets, and the fan. This is an elegant robe embroidered in satin stitch and tiny Peking knots. The designs and symbols incorporated into the robe show that the original wearer should have enjoyed long life and prosperity. The deer used in the outer band of embroidery on the sleeves represent long life, as it was thought to be the only animal that could find the sacred fungus of immortality. Coins, embroidered in dark blue silk thread, were the symbol for prosperity and appear on the sleeve bands and bindings.

### Dimensions

54 × 44 in. (137.2 × 111.8 cm)