
PAGODA RED



TABLE SCREEN WITH SOAPSTONE PANEL

\$2,880

c. 1850 • China • Northern Elmwood, Lacquer, Soapstone • Collection #CMCL032

W: 17.5" D: 10.75" H: 18.75"

Prevalent in fine Chinese interiors as early as the Tang dynasty (618-906), standing screens with decorative stone panels served numerous functions as portable architecture. Used to section off a room or as a backdrop to a throne or floral arrangement, large screens allowed a space to be shaped to one's every need.

Also known as spirit screens, smaller table screens such as this were often used to block drafts and other intrusions in a scholar's workspace. Like every aspect of a scholar's studio, such screens were ornamented with images that inspired contemplation and added beauty to its surroundings. Continued...



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This 19th-century screen is comprised of a square soapstone panel set in a footed frame decorated by oblong cut-outs and floral panels. The stone panel is carved with a lively scene of courtly life on one side, and a reclining mythical qilin protector on the other. Divine and peaceful creatures, qilin are believed to be benevolent protectors of those with good intentions. The wooden frame is finished with a layer of dark brown lacquer, now beautifully worn from centuries of use.

Deaccessioned from the MacLean Collection of Asian Art.



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