



Nancy Ekholm Burkert

Title

The Emperor Lay in his Huge Magnificent Bed

Medium

Watercolor on paper

Date

1965

Dimensions

7 1/2 × 17 in. (19.1 × 43.2 cm)

Accession number

2021.2.1

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Web Description

Nancy Ekholm Burkert's illustrations are marked by her exhaustive linear detail and extensive research. Her knowledge of early Chinese painting was put to use to illustrate Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale *The Nightingale* in 1965. Originally published in 1843, the fairy tale recounts the story of an Emperor of China said to have sought out a nightingale to provide beautiful songs at his court. When the emperor falls ill, the bird sings to ease him on his deathbed, the scene which is depicted here. Death is so moved by the song of the bird that he allows the Emperor to live.