



CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT

Bid Number:
2025.07.01



(For more condition photographs, please see object file)

Date: October 24, 2025

Contact:

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Object:

Floral Embroidered and Painted Velvet

Object ID:

2024.09.09.02

Description:

A piece of black velvet that has been painted and embroidered with a floral motif resembling water lilies. The embroidery threads, which are likely silk, outline the edges of the leaves and stems, provide veining on the leaf structures, and fill in the details of the lily petals. The threads are overpainted, emphasizing the artwork's textural nature. The velvet is secured to a stiffened backing, and a brown fabric has been wrapped around to the front to cover the edges.

Velvet paintings have been an art form for many centuries, with origins in the Kashmir province of India, where the fabric originated. The dark color of the velvet provides contrast for lighter colored paints. Velvet painting was a common hobby or “parlor art” for middle- and upper-class women during the 19th century, popularized in the European royal courts and spreading through commercially available instruction booklets. Widespread subjects included fruits and flowers, and were often used to decorate small personal items, such as purses, fans, and other dress accessories.

Measurements:

Diameter- 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ ”
Circumference- 41”

Category:

Textile
Artwork/Textile Art/Painted Velvet
Needlework/Embroidery

Location:

Box 12
Display Case 102
Charles Whipple Greene Historical Collection
George Hail Free Library

Condition Analysis:

The overall condition of this piece is fair. There is a layer of dust covering much of the velvet pile surface. Additionally, some of the painted areas have been rubbed off, so that the green paint appears blotchy. The backing fabric shows several areas of staining/bleaching/tide lines and has come unsewn from the front. The identity of the support material is unknown at this time but should be examined further.

Recommended Treatments:

Vacuum surface with a conservation grade HEPA vacuum to remove surface accretions and dust. Test the interior support board for fiber content and pH level; replace the board if necessary to maintain the velvet's structural and chemical stability. Replace or resecure the stitching between the velvet and the backing fabric.