



## **JAPANESE**

### **Chinese Character for Long Life**

#### **Fukusa**

silk embroidery

27 x 25 in. (38 x 36 in.)

Meiji Period (1868-1912)

6953

#### **PROVENANCE:**

Private Collection, California

The character shown here is the character for long life, read shou in Chinese and kotobuki in Japanese. The elegance of the characters, especially when depicted in their cursive forms, has made them popular decorative motifs on textiles, ceramics, lacquer and many other media. Here the character, built up using gold-wrapped threads, is surrounded by chrysanthemums, which are also symbols of long-life because of their health-giving properties. Such a fukusa was likely made as a cover for a birthday gift.

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