



Chinese blue and white plate, Kangxi (1662-1722)

POA

Chinese blue and white plate, Kangxi (1662-1722), decorated to the central roundel with a dream scene from the drama 'Xi Xiang Ji' ('The Romance of the Western Chamber'), in which Zhang Sheng dreams of confronting the bandits who have abducted Yingying (Part IV, Act IV); the sleeper in a lakeside pagoda with overhanging rockwork and branches, the rim with six shaped cartouches containing flowers including peony, prunus, chrysanthemum and lotus against a liewen ground; the reverse with two rocky islets to the rim and a six-character apocryphal Chenghua mark in underglaze blue within a double circle.

Diameter: 32.8cm. (12 7/8 in.)

Notes: A plate of very similar design depicting the dream scene from 'The Romance of the Western Chamber' can be found in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (C. 759-1910).

The Romance of the Western Chamber is a much-loved Chinese tale written in the Yuan dynasty by playwright Wang Shifu (1250-c.1337) and tells of the love between Zhang Sheng and Cui Yinying. Despite setbacks stemming from her family's disapproval, they meet in secret with the help of Yinying's maid Hongniang and eventually marry. The story is one of love overcoming obstacles, but also of the virtues of learning, as it is Zhang Sheng's scholarly brilliance and his passing of the civil service examination that enables the marriage.

Material and Technique	Porcelain with underglaze cobalt blue decoration
Origin	Chinese
Period	18th Century
Condition	Very good
Diameter	32.8cm. (12 7/8 in.)