

# Basic Detail Report

## Title **The First, Second, and Last Scene of Mortality**

Date 1776-1783

Primary Maker Prudence Punderson

Medium Embroidery: untwisted silk thread, ink on a plain-woven silk ground.

Frame: Wood with black and gold paint.

Description Embroidered picture worked in green, brown, black, gold, cream, and white silk threads on a plain-woven silk ground, using satin stitch and other stitches. The picture is rectangular, oriented horizontally. The lower edge of the silk ground is signed in black ink, "The First Second and Last Scene of Mortality. Prudence Punderson." The picture shows an interior room with three scenes from right to left. The scene at the right shows a child or infant in a crib, tended by an African-American woman; to the left of her is a chair. On the wall above the African-American woman is an embroidery of a framed painting showing a woman leaning against a wall with a male guard standing behind her. The middle scene shows a young woman sitting at a tea table with an inkwell, compass, and ruler on it. She draws in green on white paper. The young woman is wearing an elaborate headdress and fichu. The scene at the left shows a black coffin with the initials "P.P." in front of a mirror draped with white patterned fabric. The scenes are set in front of a wall with three windows, each draped with green curtains. The floor has a black, white, and green rectangular-patterned floor covering. The picture is in a wooden frame painted black, with gold paint at the interior edges. The silk ground has a red/white/red striped selvedge on the

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left side with regularly spaced holes. The silk thread is crinkled, or crimped, and may be unraveled. The thread is S-spun in both the warp and the weft. The ground has 112 yarns per inch in the warp and 80 yarns per inch in the weft.

Stitches: The principal stitch used in the picture is the satin stitch. Other stitches include flat, whip, outline, chain, running, feather, and cross. Condition: The frame is old, but not original. The picture was previously glued to a board; the board and glue have been removed, but some darkening of the edges of the silk ground remains. There is some loss to the original silk ground around the edges and to the left of the African-American woman. The silk ground has discolored and warped. The silk ground has been cleaned, and it is now backed on a matching silk support.

Dimensions Primary Dimensions (height x width):  $12 \frac{3}{4} \times 16 \frac{3}{4}$ in. ( $32.4 \times 42.5$  cm) Frame (height x width):  $15 \frac{9}{16} \times 19 \frac{5}{8}$ in. ( $39.5 \times 49.8$ cm)