These two vertical paintings are part of a group of ten, which make up the panels of a *ch'aekkori* (che-ko-ree or "scholar's books and utensils") folding screen. Such screens celebrate the life of the Confucian **literati** of the Chosŏn dynasty (1392–1910), depicting the sorts of objects, books, and tools with which a highly educated man would surround himself. Korean scholars were trained in the Chinese tradition, and were great admirers and collectors of Chinese ceramics, scrolls, brush pots, and inkstones. *Ch'aekkori* screens became extremely popular in Korea in the 1700s and 1800s, often substituting for the expensive Chinese objects.

At the top of one panel is an organic-shaped seal on a stack of books. The seal—used to stamp one's name on a document or painting—symbolizes power and authority. An arrangement that includes **calligraphy** brushes, scrolls, and a peacock feather in a vase announces the owner's academic achievement. Suspended from this arrangement is a European-style golden watch and a tassel, evidence of the wealth of the patron. An inkstone and ink stick sit on a long, wooden piece of furniture at the bottom.

In the right panel, above a tall stack of books, a bowl of pomegranates, peaches, and citrus fruits sits on a four-legged stand. These fruits represent wishes for plentiful offspring and long life. Above the bowl hangs a lantern, and nearby a ceramic teapot sits on a stand.

The artist has rendered all the objects in great detail and subdued colors, reflecting the refined taste of the cultured patron who commissioned the screen. All the objects are displayed randomly as if they are floating in space. The three-dimensional quality of some of the objects, achieved using shading and **linear perspective,** attests to this artist's familiarity with Western European art.

Ch'aekkori

(Scholar's Books and Utensils)

Screen

Mid-19th century

Korea

(Chosŏn Dynasty, 1392–1910)

Ink and color on linen; mounted as a ten-fold screen

47 x 12 inches (119.4 x 30.5 cm) (each panel)
68 x 17 inches (172.7 x 43.2 cm) (each panel with mount)

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