

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

September 22, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Catherine Hinman
(407) 645-5311, ext. 109
chinman@morsemuseum.org

Morse Museum Celebrates 75th Anniversary in 2016–2017 Season
New Exhibition Opening in October Showcases Collection's Diversity

Note to Editors: High-resolution images are available by contacting us at pubaffairs@morsemuseum.org.

WINTER PARK, Fla.—The Morse Museum, which celebrates its 75th anniversary during the 2016–2017 season, is best known for its stunning collection of masterworks by Louis Comfort Tiffany. But Jeannette and Hugh McKean, who built the Morse collection, also collected other American art glass—including elegant Three Face glass for the middle class and iridescent carnival glass that sold for pennies to the masses—as well as portraits, landscape paintings, works on paper, and pottery.

In *Celebrating 75 Years—Pathways of American Art at the Morse Museum*, a new exhibition opening October 18, the Morse presents more than 60 objects that illustrate the breadth and depth of the collection assembled by the McKeans over 50 years. Equally important, the exhibition reflects the Museum's foundational values: a belief that art improves lives, a passion for educating, and a respect for all artists and artistic contributions.

“Our 75th anniversary is an occasion to reaffirm the McKeans’ vision for the Museum’s role in the community,” said Director Laurence J. Ruggiero, who curated the new exhibition. “We will be celebrating the values that have steered the institution since its inception and which make it a distinctive benefaction.”

The Morse, founded by Jeannette Genius McKean (1909–89)—granddaughter of Chicago industrialist and Winter Park philanthropist Charles Hosmer Morse (1833–1921)—opened its doors on the Rollins College campus on February 17, 1942. The Museum was led for nearly a

half century by Jeannette's husband, Hugh Ferguson McKean (1908–95), who was an artist, art professor, and for 18 years president of Rollins College.

Pathways of American Art

Though the Museum is now internationally renowned for its collection of works by American artist and designer Louis Comfort Tiffany, the McKeans were less interested in the traditional idea of “masterpieces” than in objects that exemplified important aspects of American art.

For Hugh McKean, the Museum's visionary first director, “pathways” were the various mediums, techniques, styles, subjects, and points of view represented in the visual arts. Through the works selected for its 75th anniversary exhibition, the Morse explores many of these paths and underscores its commitment to teaching and interpretation.

The exhibition is organized into sections by media or themes. These include plaster art replicas; ceramics; portraits; American glass; landscapes; and works on paper. One of the eight sections pays tribute to Hugh McKean with objects such as a John Rogers sculpture and a print by Norman Rockwell that speak to the spirit that inspired his collecting decisions. The exhibition includes 17 of McKean's delightfully conversational labels. Finally for the show, the Morse is replicating the Art Machine, an exhibit at the Museum from about 1988 to 1995 of Thomas Sully's 1871 study of a young Queen Victoria with precise instructions on how to view and appreciate the work of art.

“First and foremost, the McKeans wanted to guide people to love art by providing access to it and a way to approach it,” Ruggiero said. “They believed that all art sincerely made deserves sincere consideration, and that all art enriches the lives of those who take an interest.”

75th Anniversary Public Events

The Museum's season of celebration includes the debut of a book on the collection, new programs, free admission throughout the month of February, and a public reception on its anniversary date. Details are as follows:

Book Debut

September 2016

From Schiffer Publishing, *Timeless Beauty: The Life and Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* presents a chronological view of more than 200 Tiffany objects in the Morse Museum's collection. Hardcover, \$29.99.

Exhibition Opening

Tuesday, October 18, 9:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

Gallery talk, Fridays at 11 a.m. beginning October 21

Objects in *Celebrating 75 years—Pathways of American Art at the Morse Museum* reflect the range of the Morse's collection and the values of the Museum.

Museum Highlights Cell Phone Audio Tour

Wednesday, February 1, 9:30 a.m.

Debut of a new audio tour providing information and history on 40 objects in the Morse Museum's collection.

February Open House

Wednesday, February 1, through Tuesday, February 28

Free admission to the galleries throughout the month to commemorate the Museum's 75th anniversary.

75th Anniversary Reception

Friday, February 17, 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

A public celebration with champagne and live music on the date the Museum opened its doors in 1942.

About the Morse

The Museum, founded as the Morse Gallery of Art on the Rollins College campus in 1942, opened at a location on Welbourne Avenue in Winter Park in February 1978 and at its current site on Park Avenue in July 1995. Two subsequent expansions of the Park Avenue galleries have increased exhibition space to almost 20,000 square feet, five times that at Welbourne.

The Morse Museum is today home to the world's most comprehensive collection of works by American designer and artist Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848–1933), including the chapel interior he designed for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago and art and architectural objects from Tiffany's celebrated Long Island home, Laurelton Hall. The Museum's holdings also include American art pottery, late 19th- and early 20th-century American painting, graphics, and decorative art.

The Museum is owned and operated by the Charles Hosmer Morse Foundation and receives additional support from the Elizabeth Morse Genius Foundation. It receives no public funds.

Public hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday.

From November through April, the galleries are open until 8 p.m. on Fridays. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$1 for students, free for children under 12, and from November through April, free for all visitors after 4 p.m. on Fridays. For more information about the Morse, please visit www.morsemuseum.org.

###