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February 5, 2010

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Morse Museum Expansion Underway; New Wing Will Feature Objects from Louis Comfort Tiffany's Long Island Estate

Note to Editors: You may view renderings and other highlights from the planned installation under the Gallery Expansion Project heading on our Web site, www.morsemuseum.org. High-resolution images are available upon request.

WINTER PARK, Fla.—The Morse Museum has broken ground on a new wing in which to exhibit most of its holdings of objects and architectural elements from Louis Comfort Tiffany's Long Island country estate, Laurelton Hall.

The \$5 million project, to open early in 2011, will increase public exhibition space at the Morse by 6,000 square feet, about 50 percent. The project will also triple the size of the courtyard garden at the museum's rear entrance to 4,450 square feet.

A focal point of the Laurelton Hall galleries will be the recently restored Daffodil Terrace from the estate. The 18-by-32-foot outdoor room is supported by eight marble columns topped with bouquets of glass daffodils. The terrace will be installed in a glass gallery visible from vantage points both inside and outside of the museum. This work has never been on display in Winter Park or as planned at the Morse.

In addition to the Daffodil Terrace, more than 300 objects—including leaded-glass windows, lamps, art glass, furnishings, and more—will be installed in six other new

galleries. About a third of these objects were on view in the major New York exhibition, *Louis Comfort Tiffany—An Artist's Country estate* (November 21, 2006–May 20, 2007), which was organized by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in collaboration with the Morse.

Louis Comfort Tiffany's Laurelton Hall

Laurelton Hall, built between 1902 and 1905 on Long Island, is often cited as Tiffany's greatest work of art. In his 84-room, eight-level mansion, set on almost 600 acres overlooking Cold Spring Harbor and Long Island Sound, Tiffany integrated all the passions and preoccupations his life—nature, color, light, and the art of Eastern and Islamic cultures—into one rapturous whole. The estate evolved to become a school for young artists and a museum housing many of the artist's most important works, but following Tiffany's death, its contents were sold, the property subdivided and redeveloped, and the house devastated by fire.

After the fire in 1957, Hugh McKean and his wife, Jeannette, who together built the Morse Museum's collection over a 50-year period, salvaged architectural elements, windows, and other objects from the ruins of the estate. They continued to search out and collect objects that earlier had been auctioned off from the estate. The Morse, today home to the world's most comprehensive collection of works by Tiffany, is the largest single repository of surviving materials from Laurelton Hall.

Expansion Highlights

The Laurelton Hall galleries will occupy the ground floor of the Museum's new 12,000-square-foot wing. The second level will provide for an expanded library, a conference room, and additional offices for the collection and curatorial staff.

While the Morse has long maintained exhibits of works from Laurelton Hall, it has had no room to display the Daffodil Terrace or to present other major elements from the estate together in one installation that provides context for understanding this pivotal accomplishment in Tiffany's career. In addition to the Daffodil Terrace, permanent exhibits in the Morse Museum's new galleries will include surviving components of Laurelton Hall's dining room, living room, reception hall—also known as the Fountain Court—and other rooms and buildings.

Highlights from the dining room installation are a 13 ½-foot-high marble mantelpiece, 25-foot-long Oriental rug; a domed leaded-glass chandelier 6 ½ feet in diameter; and a suite of six leaded-glass Wisteria transoms. The living room installation will showcase five Turtleback-glass hanging lamps as well as the four leaded-glass panels depicting the four seasons that earlier were part of a single large window that garnered Tiffany a gold medal at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900. From the art gallery Tiffany built on the estate, the Morse will show the pair of intricately carved Indian doors and half-moon-shaped peacock-feather window and glass mosaic that graced the entryway.

Project Team

Architect RLF (Rogers, Lovelock & Fritz Inc.) of Winter Park designed the new wing to complement the museum's current Mediterranean-style features. George Sexton Associates of Washington, D.C., designed the lighting and installation.

The complete expansion project team is as follows:

Architect: RLF (Rogers, Lovelock & Fritz Inc.), Winter Park, Florida

Exhibition/Lighting Design: George Sexton Associates, Washington, D.C.

General Contractor: Brasfield & Gorrie, Lake Mary, Florida

Conservation: Griswold Conservation Associates LLC, Culver City, California

Civil Engineer: Christensen & Associates, Oviedo, Florida

Structural Engineer: Allan & Conrad Inc, Winter Park, Florida

Acoustical Engineer: Quietly Making Noise LLC, Oviedo, Florida

Landscape Architect: Ravensdale Planning & Design, Winter Park, Florida

Security: Steven R. Keller & Associates Inc., Ormond Beach, Florida

The Morse Museum, founded by Jeannette McKean in 1942, 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.

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