



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

**Morse Announces 28th Annual Christmas in the Park
Celebration and Annual Christmas Eve Open House**

WINTER PARK, Fla. (July 6, 2006) - The Morse Museum continues a Winter Park holiday tradition Thursday, Dec. 7 in Central Park when it will light up century-old Tiffany windows from its renowned collection and sponsor the Bach Festival Choir in concert at the 28th annual Christmas in the Park celebration.

The nine leaded-glass windows, one more than in previous years, set the stage for seasonal favorites by the 150-voice Bach Festival Choir, one of America's premier oratorio ensembles.

On Sunday, Dec. 24th, the Morse invites the public to its annual Christmas Eve Open House to enjoy at no charge works that include many other leaded-glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany as well as his celebrated 1893 chapel. Hours will be 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Eight of the Tiffany windows are memorials with religious themes that were installed in the chapel at the Association for the Relief of Respectable Aged Indigent Females in New York. One of these, an arched window featuring lilies and a border of glass jewels, makes its comeback to the annual park exhibition after having undergone extensive cleaning and conservation.

The Association was founded in 1814 by a group of wealthy New Yorkers as a genteel private charity for elderly, indigent women. When the residence was threatened with demolition in 1974, Hugh and Jeannette McKean - the couple who assembled the Morse collection - bought its Tiffany chapel windows at the request of the Association board. The Association residence is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

Tiffany Studios' *Christmas Eve* window, c. 1902, in which a figure resembling Father Christmas holds the Christ child, will also be on view at the event and in the Morse Museum following Christmas in the Park. The window was designed by

Thomas Nast Jr. - son of the famous political cartoonist - for his sister's home in New Rochelle, New York.

The almost two-hour program begins at 6:15 p.m. when the signal will be given to turn on the window lights. The rain date will be the following night, Dec. 8, at the same time.

Christmas in the Park was begun in 1979 by the McKean family to share a part of their rare Tiffany collection with the public in an informal setting. The Morse Museum is home to the world's most comprehensive collection of works by Tiffany.

Hugh McKean especially liked the idea of getting art out into public places where more people might see it. "Some people just don't visit a museum," Mr. McKean said in 1993. "So on this one night, we put these windows around in the bushes, turn the lights on, and they love it. And we love it, too."

This year, as usual, the Morse Mobile Museum will be stationed on Park Avenue. The mini-museum has been enjoyed by thousands of students and adults at schools, civic events and art festivals since it went "on the road" in 1992.

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