



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

**Architectural Historian Richard Guy Wilson Will Speak
at
a Morse Museum/Rollins College Public Lecture**

WINTER PARK, Fla. (February 27, 2004) – Louis Comfort Tiffany's Long Island summer estate, Laurelton Hall, was the most personal and extensive project of the artist's career and one of the most talked about homes in America in the early 1900s.

On March 25, the Morse Museum in association with The Arts at Rollins College (ARC), will present a public lecture on Laurelton Hall by architectural historian Richard Guy Wilson, a widely published author and lecturer who outside of scholarly circles is also known for his role as host of the popular A&E series, *America's Castles*.

In his talk – "Louis Comfort Tiffany's Laurelton Hall: Mysticism and Symbol" – he will discuss the design of the house and some of its meanings with special reference to the collections of the Morse Museum. The Morse houses the world's most comprehensive collection of works by Tiffany and the largest single collection anywhere of surviving materials from Laurelton Hall.

The lecture by Dr. Wilson will be at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 25, in the Bush Auditorium on the Rollins College campus. Admission is free. A reception, also open to the public, will follow the lecture.

Parking is available in the SunTrust Parking Garage in Winter Park, which is accessed via Lyman or Comstock avenues off of Park Avenue.

Tiffany designed and built Laurelton Hall between 1902 and 1905, though he added and modified it for the remainder of his life. In its day, it was said that the estate combined "the perfume of the Orient and the horse sense of America." Today, Laurelton Hall can be understood as the ultimate manifestation of Tiffany's lifelong "quest for beauty." Set amongst 580 acres of woodlands and gardens, the house was decorated with thousands of exotic objects he had collected or designed himself. Its design celebrated the influences and passions of his life, and as such provides a window into the soul of one of America's most influential designers.

Dr. Wilson holds the Commonwealth Professor's Chair in Architectural History at the University of Virginia (Thomas

Jefferson's University) in Charlottesville, Virginia, where he is also chair of the Department of Architectural History. His specialty is the architecture, design and art of the 18th to the 20th centuries, both in America and abroad.

His credits include serving as an advisor and commentator for a number of television programs on PBS and A&E, including more than 65 segments of *America's Castles*. In addition to articles and reviews, he is the author or joint author of 10 books that deal with American and modern architecture, most recently The Society of Architectural Historians' book, *The Buildings of Virginia: Tidewater and Piedmont* (2002).

Dr. Wilson also has been a guest curator and contributing author for such major museum exhibitions as "The American Renaissance, 1876-1917" (The Brooklyn Museum in association with Pantheon Books, 1979) and "The Art that is Life: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America, 1875 -1920" (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 1987).

The Morse Museum's collections were built over several decades by Jeannette Genius McKean (1909-1989), who founded the Museum in 1942, and her husband, Hugh F. McKean (1908-1995), president of Rollins College from 1951 to 1969 and the Museum's director until his death. The McKeans endowed the Museum to ensure that it would survive forever as a community resource. It receives no public funds.

ARC is a dynamic program that brings together the nationally recognized Annie Russell Theatre, Cornell Fine Arts Museum, and Winter Park Bach Festival with the College's programs in art, dance, film, literature, music and theatre.

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