



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

**Morse Museum Opens Comprehensive
Exhibition of Tiffany Blown Glass**

WINTER PARK, Fla. (December 28, 2004) – On February 8, the Morse Museum of American Art opens *Domestic Treasures: Tiffany Art Glass for the Public*, an exhibition of more than 100 blown glass objects from the museum's permanent collection of works by Louis Comfort Tiffany.

The exhibition represents the most comprehensive exhibition ever of the museum's collection of Tiffany blown glass. The objects in the exhibition were chosen from the more than 500 examples in the Morse collection to show the remarkable quality, variety, beauty and drama of Tiffany's artistic achievement in this medium.

Highlights include a recently acquired "A-Coll" calla lily paperweight glass vase from Tiffany's own collection, as well as seven objects made for exhibitions, specifically the 1902 First International Exposition of Modern Decorative Arts in Turin, Italy, 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle, 1914 Paris Salon and 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco.

"The search for beauty is in itself the most wholesome of all quests," Tiffany once said. Tiffany's art glass more than any other medium in which he worked carried Tiffany's crusade for beauty into the American home. After years of experimentation with glass, Tiffany was able to give consumers glass in three-dimensional form that was like no other they had ever seen. Tiffany's blown glass was a sensation, universally praised and widely imitated.

By 1893, Tiffany's success among America's social and economic leaders was clearly established. His next step was to extend his horizon to a broader public made wealthy through industrialization. Providing this increasingly large, educated and moneyed group access to the production of Tiffany Studios meant an enormous increase in demand for Tiffany objects for the home. Tiffany glass, lamps and eventually pottery, desk sets and other fancy goods became hot commodities. Virtually every middle-class American of the day aspired to own a Tiffany.

Tiffany art glass, introduced to the general public in 1893, came to represent the highest achievement in taste and style and the emblem of the well-decorated American home.

The selected objects for this exhibition include not only decorative vases but also functional goblets, decanters and compotes for the table. They also represent virtually every glass-making technique in which he worked. Tiffany, for example, applied the salts of rare metals to achieve luster, he embedded glass flowers in tinted glass vessels to achieve the look of objects floating in water, and he pitted and iridized surfaces to achieve the effect of long-buried objects uncovered from archeological sites.

Each object is unique, and the variety of shapes and surface treatments are astonishing. The colors are sumptuous, the optical effects dazzling. All are examples of the useful made beautiful.

Domestic Treasures will be on view through January 14, 2007. The museum's exhibitions are drawn from the collection built by Jeannette McKean (1909-1989), who founded the museum in 1942, and her husband Hugh McKean (1908-1995), director of the museum until his death. The couple assembled over a period of almost 50 years extensive holdings of Tiffany objects – what is today the world's most comprehensive collection of the designer's work.

Museum hours are 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday and Saturday; and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$3 for adults, \$1 for students, free for children under 12, and free to all visitors after 4 p.m. Friday.

The Morse 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.

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