



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

**Tiffany's Long Island Estate
Is the Focus of New Exhibition**

WINTER PARK, Fla. (May 8, 2000) – Laurelton Hall, Louis Comfort Tiffany's 580-acre estate on Long Island, was one of the most talked about homes in America at the turn of the century.

Today, Tiffany's unique country home – a showplace for art objects either designed or collected by the famed artist -- is the focus of a new exhibition at the Morse Museum. Completed this month after a year of research, the exhibition is the largest collection of objects from Laurelton Hall ever shown.

It includes almost 100 objects from the Morse's permanent collection of Laurelton Hall materials. In the three galleries housing the exhibition, the museum has on view leaded-glass windows, ceramics, blown glass and furniture from the house, plus historical photographs, architectural plans and a 1 - minute video of archival film footage from Laurelton Hall.

Also on permanent exhibit at the museum is the Chapel Tiffany created for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. The Chapel, which opened at the Morse last year after 2 _ years of conservation, was installed by Tiffany in a specially built building at Laurelton Hall.

The nucleus of the Morse's collection of Louis Comfort Tiffany works – the most comprehensive in the world – is from Laurelton Hall. At the invitation of a Tiffany daughter in 1957, Hugh and Jeannette McKean, who built the collection at the Morse, traveled to Laurelton Hall to rescue what they could after a fire left the house in ruins.

But the many objects, architectural elements and ornaments the McKeanes purchased then and later have never been exhibited together in relationship to their place at Tiffany's grand estate. This new exhibition advances the McKeanes dream of telling the story of a nearly lost chapter in the history of American design.

Understanding Laurelton Hall, which was an art school, museum and retreat as well as a home, is essential to understanding Tiffany, said museum Director Laurence J. Ruggiero. Tiffany's

estate on Long Island was the most personal and far-reaching design project of the artist's career.

"Tiffany was many things: innovator, inventor, tinkerer, designer, collector and artist." Ruggiero said, "Laurelton Hall was a reflection of his complex personality and vision."

The Laurelton Hall estate, by all accounts magnificent, included an 84-room mansion, conservatories, tennis courts, a bathing beach and 60 acres of formal gardens said to cost more than the house itself. Its design, which rejected the prevalent European influences of the day, was at once straightforward and exotic. One writer of the day noted the estate embodied the dream of "an intensely original mind." "The perfume of the Orient and the horse sense of America, with its revitalizing influence, are seen everywhere," wrote another. And yet another remarked upon entering a reception hall bathed in the rays of a leaded glass skylight, "One feels that he must half-close his eyes so as to take in more slowly the great rush of color."

Hugh McKean, a resident artist at the estate in 1930, said, "After seeing it for the first time, I wrote home that Laurelton Hall did seem like a dream to me."

The Laurelton Hall exhibition suggests something of the Tiffany estate's former splendor. It also represents the museum's commitment to continue in months and years to come its research on Laurelton Hall, the expansion and refining of its installation and the conservation of objects from the estate still in archival storage.

Museum hours are 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday and 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday. September through May, the museum has special Friday hours: it remains open until 8 p.m. and is free to all visitors from 4-8 p.m. Admission during regular daytime hours is \$3 for adults, \$1 for students and free for children under 12.

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