

G A L L E R Y V I I I
THE FAVRILE POTTERY
OF L.C. TIFFANY

O B J E C T G U I D E

LOUIS COMFORT TIFFANY (1848–1933) introduced his ceramics in St. Louis at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in 1904. All evidence suggests that Tiffany had a great affection for pottery and that for a period of time was greatly absorbed in its creation at his studios.



VASE, CELERY STALKS, c. 1904–14. Glazed white clay (74-026).

Relative to the widely appreciated Tiffany glass—his windows, blown glass, and lamps—the pottery is rare. It is believed that the total pottery production of Tiffany Studios is around two thousand pieces. Given this, its fragility and, until recently, its relative neglect by collectors, the number of pieces extant is doubtless small. The Morse, with its collection of more than ninety examples, is the largest known repository of the remaining Favrile pottery, as Tiffany called his ceramics.

In Tiffany's pottery, one can readily see the influences that distinguish his work in other mediums, but which also link it to his times. Tiffany's pottery reflects the following formal and thematic concerns:

Naturalism—The use of artistic illusion to represent the natural world. In Tiffany's ceramic garden, one is struck by the artist's ability to pro-

duce what amounts to representational sculpture, often nearly life-size, of the natural world. In these pottery examples, the aesthetic qualities of the pieces as sculpture are so heightened that the actual function of the vase or bowl becomes irrelevant.

Historicism and Exoticism—The use of historical styles and exotic forms and images. These include ideas and forms from Oriental sources—Japan, China, North Africa, ancient Assyria (Iraq), and Persia (Iran)—as well as early Irish decorative art. The use of such a wide variety of sources was not unique to Tiffany at the time as interest in the exotic generally reflected new travel and trade opportunities.

Abstraction—The movement away from realistic images to simplified forms that either reduced natural representation or abandoned the natural world altogether. The original source of inspiration—a flower or plant, for example—disappears either to a large extent or entirely in some of Tiffany’s pottery. This forward-looking characteristic of some of his ceramics and his work in general heralded the development of the abstract art that achieved primacy for a time in the latter twentieth century.

These ideas were part of Tiffany’s conscious approach to artistic creation. They were part of the creative milieu of virtually all artists and designers of the period in whatever style or within whatever movement they worked, including Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau, and Aestheticism. In the end

Tiffany’s ceramics offer a particularly good introduction to his entire oeuvre as well as a splendid aesthetic feast in themselves.

CLOCKWISE FROM NORTH WALL:

- 1) **Vase, 1910–14**
Poinsettia
Bronze over glazed white clay
Marks: *B.P. 346 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrile Bronze Pottery* / [LCT conjoined monogram] / *BP 190* (78–0015)
- 2) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Milkweed
Glazed white clay
Alice Gouvy, designer, 1870/1875–1924
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / *P / AG* (76–013)



VASE, MILKWEED, c. 1904–14. Glazed white clay; Alice Gouvy, designer, 1870/1875–1924 (76–013).

- 3) **Vase, 1904–14**
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 / *P. 1271 / L.C. Tiffany Favrile Pottery*
Portion of paper label: [TIFFANY] *FAVRILE* [GLASS REGISTERED TRADE MARK] / [LCT conjoined monogram]
Museum membership purchase, 1999 (1999–114)
- 4) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] (74–032)
- 5) **Vase, c. 1906**
Exhibited: *Société des Artistes Français*, Paris, 1906
Pitcher plant
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 / *P. 525 / L.C. Tiffany Favrile – Pottery / Salon – 1906* (89–002)
- 6) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay, copper, glass
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 (66–030)
- 7) **Vase, c. 1910–14**
Leaf motif
Glazed white clay with bronze overlay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 / *B.P. 512 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrile – Pottery*
Marks on overlay: *Louis C. Tiffany FAVRILE 102* (76–030)
- 8) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 / *P. 1085 / L.C. Tiffany Favrile – Pottery* (69–007)



VASE, c. 1904–14. Glazed white clay (74–032).

- 9) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 (85–015)
- 10) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / *P. 1148 / Tiffany Favrile Pottery* (70–014)
- 11) **Vase, c. 1904–14**
Glazed white clay on bronze base
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 (62–012)
- 12) **Pair of vases, c. 1904–14**
Wisteria seed pod
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7 (76–003, 64–002)

A NOTE ABOUT THE MARKINGS THAT APPEAR ON THE UNDERSIDE OF THE OBJECTS: The LCT conjoined monogram appears on the base of all Tiffany pottery and often the words “L.C. Tiffany Favrile Pottery.” The LCT conjoined monogram was usually incised, or carved, before the piece was fired. Other identifying marks were etched into the glaze or penciled onto the glaze after firing. In some cases, paper labels were added to finished works.

13) Vase, c. 1904–14

Water lilies
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7
/ P 1304 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrite Pottery
(66-031)

14) Vase, c. 1904–14

Queen Anne's Lace
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / P
534 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrite – Pottery
(95-003)
*Note: Louis Comfort Tiffany designed a tea
service for his Long Island country estate,
Laurelton Hall, using the same motif.*

15) Left to right:

Vase, c. 1910–14

Maple leaves
Bronze over glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / B.
P. 298 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrite
Bronze Pottery
(79-555)

Vase, c. 1910–14

Sparrow and thistles
Gold over glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7
(66-002)

16) Vase, c. 1904–14

Fern frond
Unglazed white clay (bisque) with thin
wash and glazed interior
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram]
(63-001)



VASE, QUEEN ANNE'S LACE, c. 1904–14. Glazed white clay (95-003).

17) Pitcher, c. 1904–14

Cattails
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7
/ P. 1157 / L.C. Tiffany – Inc. Favrite Pottery
(79-527)

18) Vase, c. 1904–14

Celery stalks
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram]
/ P 1343 / L.C. Tiffany – Favrite Pottery
(74-026)

19) Vase, c. 1904–14

Artichoke
Glazed white clay
Marks: [LCT conjoined monogram] / 7
(80-015)



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