



THE CHARLES HOSMER  
MORSE MUSEUM  
*of American Art*

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Contact: Emily Sujka  
(407) 645-5311, ext. 109  
[esujka@morsemuseum.org](mailto:esujka@morsemuseum.org)

**The Morse Celebrates Iridescence and Pays Tribute to  
Its Namesake in Two Exhibits Opening in February**

*Note to editors: High-resolution images are available by contacting us at [pubaffairs@morsemuseum.org](mailto:pubaffairs@morsemuseum.org).*

WINTER PARK, FL—In two installations opening on February 12, The Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art celebrates late 19th- and early 20th-century decorative art and interior design that reflect the eclecticism of the period.

In *Iridescence—A Celebration*, the Morse will present about 50 objects from its collection that shimmer and dazzle. The Museum's new vignette, *Charles Hosmer Morse's Study at Osceola Lodge*, is a setting for the elegant simplicity and functionality of décor inspired by the Arts and Crafts movement in America.

During the second half of the 19th century, iridescence—the optical light phenomenon natural to seashells, butterfly wings, and peacock feathers—captured the interest of glassmakers and potters in both Europe and America. The enthusiasm for mimicking these color-changing effects followed exciting discoveries of antique glass that had become iridescent after centuries of burial in mineral-rich soils. The premier decorative art studios of the West developed chemical techniques to reproduce iridescent rainbow colors on par with nature.

For its new exhibition, the Morse has selected objects by various designers, including Louis Comfort Tiffany's firm in the United States and Glasfabrik Johann Loetz Witwe in Europe, to showcase these lustrous visual effects. Although interest in iridescence waned after World War I, it has never died.

"Iridescence represents instantaneous metamorphosis—impermanence, fragility and magic," said Laurence J. Ruggiero, director of the Morse. "Our momentary fascination with this visual phenomenon removes us from the humdrum of life and relieves us for just a moment of the burdens of the day."

A highlight of the show is a recent acquisition, a rare c. 1910 iridescent vase by Tiffany Studios that features the draping of Aventurine glass, a name that references green quartz with sparkling particles. The piece was in Louis Comfort Tiffany's personal collection.

In its new vignette, the Morse has decorated a gallery with furnishings and other objects from Charles Hosmer Morse's study at Osceola Lodge in Winter Park. Morse (1833–1921), the Chicago industrialist and philanthropist for whom the Museum is named, began wintering in Winter Park in 1883.

In 1904, he purchased an 1886 house on Lake Osceola and over the next decade transformed it into a modern residence fitted with the latest and best furnishings in the Arts and Crafts style. These included chairs and tables and decorative objects from such respected firms as Tobey Furniture Company in Chicago and the workshops of Gustav Stickley (1858–1942), the influential figure who helped popularize the movement's ideals across the United States.

Adherents of the movement set out to reform the look of the everyday visual environment that had become, in their view, corrupted by the ugliness of machine production. Osceola Lodge, named for the lake and the famous chief of the Seminole tribe, became Morse's permanent home in 1915.

The Morse Museum, located at 445 N. Park Avenue, is open 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday



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through Thursday and Saturday; 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. Friday; and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.  
Regular admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for seniors, \$1 for students, and free for children younger than age 12. All visitors are admitted free 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Friday, November through April.  
For more information, call (407) 645-5311 or visit [morsemuseum.org](http://morsemuseum.org).

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