

INSIDER

NEWSLETTER FROM THE CHARLES HOSMER MORSE MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART

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SPECIAL LAURELTON HALL ISSUE

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On November 21, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York will open its exhibition *Louis Comfort Tiffany and Laurelton Hall – An Artist’s Country Estate* for a six-month run. This exhibition, organized by the Metropolitan in collaboration with the Morse, will feature some 250 Tiffany works, including more than a hundred from the Morse collection. This special issue of the *Insider* focuses on the substantial effort, especially in conservation, that the Morse has invested in support of this major exhibition.

Above: View of Laurelton Hall, from Stanley Lothrop, “Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation,” *American Magazine of Art*, vol. 11, November 1919, p. 49. Photo courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

RESTORING AND REASSEMBLING THE LAURELTON HALL

DAFFODIL TERRACE

IS A MONUMENTAL ENTERPRISE



The restoration of Laurelton Hall's Daffodil Terrace – the largest conservation project undertaken by the Museum since the Tiffany Chapel – has been a monumental effort requiring the orchestration of conservators, technicians, and engineers in studios on two U.S. coasts.

For the specialized artisans in Beverly Hills, California, and Washington, D.C., who have been employed in this symphonic enterprise, only time weighs heavier than the nearly seven tons of Italian marble that support the terrace. Mere weeks remain until the restored terrace will make its debut at The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

When complete, the Daffodil Terrace will measure eighteen feet wide by thirty-two feet long. The restoration has involved the complex reassembly of eight eleven-foot marble columns topped with capitals of glass daffodils, six large panels of iridescent-glass tiles in a pear-tree motif, and hundreds of stenciled wood elements and molded tiles from the coffered ceiling.

John Griswold, principal partner in Griswold Conservation Associates LLC,

in Beverly Hills, is the lead conservator on the project. The California team of four conservators and three technicians was charged with recreating the elaborate coffered ceiling, portions of which Tiffany took from a building in North Africa. In Washington, Mark Rabinowitz of Conservation Solutions Inc., which formed a partnership with Griswold to undertake the Morse project, has supervised the meticulous cleaning, conservation, and reassembly of the columns and capitals. Now, all labors have culminated in New York where conservators from both companies are uniting the ceiling with the columns.

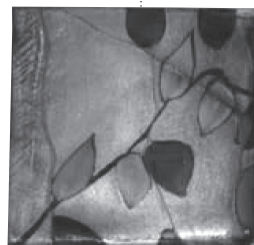
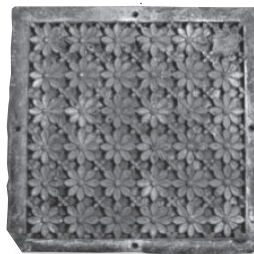
The Terrace Ceiling – Piece by Piece

Tiffany added the Daffodil Terrace to Laurelton Hall sometime between

1915 and 1920. Although the Morse had the architectural plans for the mansion, which was constructed between 1902 and 1905, none existed for the later addition of the terrace. Reassembling the ceiling then, a three-dimensional grid of stenciled cedar planks and recessed molded tiles, was like piecing together a giant jigsaw puzzle with no picture to follow.

Hugh and Jeannette McKean salvaged more than 600 individual tiles and wood planks from the wreckage of Laurelton Hall in 1957, but an additional challenge, according to Mr. Griswold, was the fact that not all were from the terrace. Some pieces from the terrace ceiling were missing, and some of the elements recovered were part of the ceiling in an adjacent walkway, his team discovered.

Mr. Griswold and his crew used some ingenious tools to discern Tiffany's design for the ceiling. First, they created a four-by-five-foot magnet board by riveting a sheet of steel to plywood. Then they attached an architectural drawing of the ceiling to the board. Using this board, conservators were able to develop one piece at a time the logical



Left: Ceiling tile detail from the Daffodil Terrace. The molded floral tiles were cast of a composite material from carved hardwood originals. **Above top:** Another coffer tile design. Trying to visualize the ceiling as Tiffany might have, conservators arranged and rearranged its parts until patterns emerged. **Above:** One of hundreds of iridescent-glass tiles from the terrace's pear-tree skylight.

Photos by John Griswold.

flow of the geometric and floral designs in the planks and tiles. Photographs of each of the several hundred parts were mounted on magnetic material so that they could be placed on the board and moved around like so many game pieces. Trying to visualize the ceiling as Tiffany might have, the conservators arranged and rearranged these pieces until patterns emerged. It was a tedious and methodical process, Mr. Griswold said, but one that rewarded with its “Aha! moments.” Details as seemingly minute as nail holes and water stains provided clues to the correct placement of the wood planks.

The Griswold team eventually converted the magnetic model into a virtual one, using a computer software program to render a three-dimensional framework onto which the conservators pasted a virtual digitized photograph of each surviving element. This 3-D model, which could be viewed from any angle, proved an invaluable tool in developing the superstructure that would hold together the ceiling elements and the columns.

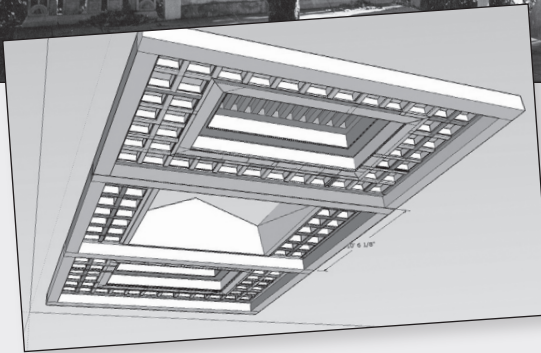
Tiffany unquestionably was very personally involved with the creation of the terrace ceiling. The exotic floral tiles, made of a composite material of plaster and wood fiber, were cast in molds, most likely under Tiffany’s direction. The source of his inspiration remains unknown, but evidence shows that the lost originals were made of carved wood, probably from India. During the course of the treatment, Morse Collection Manager Jennifer Thalheimer turned up additional documentary evidence on the creation of the terrace, including the name of a woman who may have been employed by Tiffany to perform stenciling on part of it.

In working with the wood, it became clear that some stenciled parts were older than others, Mr. Griswold said. “We can definitely recognize the work done later by a different artist,” said Mr.

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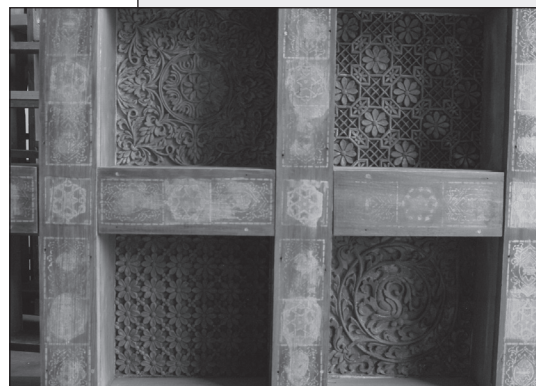


Above: View of the Daffodil Terrace showing ceiling, column capitals, and the iridescent-glass skylight through which a pear tree grows.

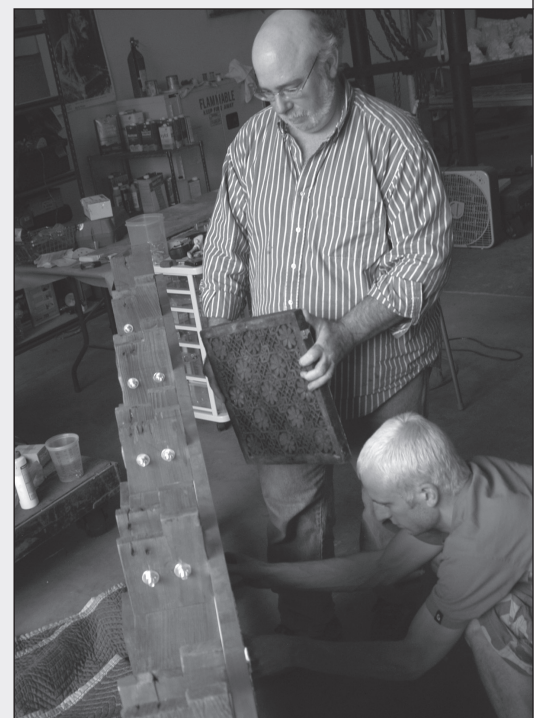


Griswold Conservation Associates LLC produced this three-dimensional model of the Daffodil Terrace ceiling to help in its reconstruction.

Below: Conservators in Beverly Hills, California, place tiles in a reconstructed portion of the Daffodil Terrace.
Photo by John Griswold.



Portion of the terrace's coffered ceiling with tiles and cedar planks in place.
Photo by John Griswold.





Removing mineral buildup from the terrace's column shafts was an extremely time-consuming process.



The yellow of the glass blossoms — each petal formed from a separate mold — brightened when conservators cleaned off a whitish haze, the effect of abrasion or glass deterioration.



The daffodil stems are formed of glass tesserae. During cleaning, conservators discovered watercolor washes on the mortar between the stems nearest the flowers.

Daffodil Terrace *Continued from page 3*

Griswold. “The work ties the whole composition together, unifying the old with the new.”

The terrace ceiling is formed in three sections, or bays. There were enough of the original molded tiles and decorative wood elements in good condition to fill out most of the ceiling. But Mr. Griswold said that there were only enough original wood planks to recreate the lower portion of the two complex, stepped interior features of the two end bays, save for three pieces.

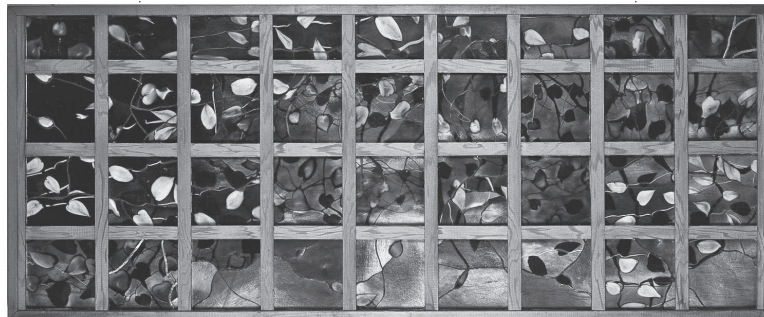
“We found methods to faithfully replicate the missing elements based on archival photos,” Mr. Griswold said, “but we didn’t want to mislead the public by fully replicating the decorative stenciling and hand painting. We used a simplified stencil to establish the general decorative theme, and stained and toned the boards to visually harmonize with the original pieces. One should be able to tell the difference between the original parts and the new ones.” This is in keeping with museum conservation ethics.

A Pear-Tree Skylight

Fortunately, most all of the hundreds of iridescent-glass tiles that line the open-air skylight in the center bay of the terrace were rescued, even if broken. The beautiful tiles in the skylight were set in a grid, together forming a faceted mosaic of pear-tree branches against a blue sky, one that presented a

refracted mirror image of the actual tree it surrounded. Three sections, which formed only one-and-a-half sides of the whole skylight, were installed in Gallery II at the Museum until last August when they were delivered to Beverly Hills with the rest of the ceiling parts. The skylight opening measures ten feet square, and forty-four inches tall at its highest point. Conservators put each of the distinct sides back together again following original records on how it was taken down.

The fire that burned for three days at Laurelton Hall in 1957 took its toll on



the terrace as did years of neglect. The greatest amount of time being spent on the Daffodil Terrace ceiling project was in cleaning away soot, grime, and water stains and in stabilizing objects to prevent further deterioration. Some minimal “visual reintegration” of damaged areas was performed using reversible “inpainting” media.

The work of conservators is a blend of science and art. The science is in the many methods, chemicals, and processes

Above: The iridescent-glass tiles in the terrace's skylight were set in a grid, together forming a faceted mosaic of pear-tree branches against a blue sky.

used to stabilize ongoing deterioration and to partially restore luster to time-worn objects; the art is in divining the intent of the artist and in striking a balance in how far to take the restoration. In art conservation, Hugh McKean fervently believed that old objects should not be made to look new.

Cleaning the Daffodil-Topped Columns

In Washington, a crew of two conservators and several more technicians with Conservation Solutions began work last November to restore luster to the terrace’s eight marble columns. With hand tools, they carefully scraped off mineral buildup from the eleven-foot column shafts. Cleaning required several repeated procedures, beginning with basic washing and followed by localized applications of a variety of chemicals and poultices to leach out soiling, soot, and copper and iron stains found within the crystalline structure of the Italian marble, said Mark Rabinowitz, Senior Conservator and Vice President of Conservation Solutions.

Other work included chiseling out corroded iron parts and metal eyelets from the marble corbels. These holes, as well as the cracks and breaks from the rusting iron, were filled with lime-based mortar. Also, one corbel — the architectural element between the capital and the ceiling — was missing and was replicated in wood to resemble marble.

Atop these stately columns, spring has returned for the daffodils. The yellow of the glass blossoms – each petal formed from a separate mold – brightened when conservators successfully cleaned away a whitish haze, the effect of abrasion or glass deterioration. “Fine detailing like watercolor washes on the mortar surrounding the glass flowers was revealed during the cleaning, enlivening their beauty but complicating the cleaning process,” Mr. Rabinowitz said.

Putting It All Together

Despite the extremely time-consuming work of cleaning and stabilization, nothing was more challenging, according to Mr. Griswold, than devising the plan for the terrace’s installation.

Mr. Griswold and Mr. Rabinowitz worked with Gary Strand, an engineer with Simpson Gumpertz and Heger Inc. in Washington, D.C., to design the superstructure that will hold all the many disparate elements, both fragile and heavy, of the terrace together. From base to corbel, each complete column alone weighs about 1,700 pounds.

Coordinating the effort between the conservators, engineer, and museums

required constant exchanges of drawings and e-mails to assure all that there would be no surprises when the final assembly began.

The framework has been engineered to do two things that are seemingly at odds: it must support the priceless parts securely, and it must also be relatively easy to assemble and dismantle. With this feat accomplished, the terrace, like an elaborate traveling stage show, can be taken apart in New York and shipped home to Winter Park in sections that attach to one another in a precisely ordered fashion.

The result of the conservation work will be the long-anticipated installation of a complete outdoor environment that recalls Tiffany’s extraordinary artistic vision in ways that the terrace’s individual parts have been powerless to do. When the Daffodil Terrace is unveiled as part of the exhibition at the Metropolitan, it will be the first view of it since it was removed from Laurelton Hall almost fifty years ago. For everyone involved in the coast-to-coast venture of restoring the Daffodil Terrace, Mr. Griswold said, “It has been the chance of a lifetime.” ■

Museum’s Marble Mantelpiece Will Make Its Debut at the Met

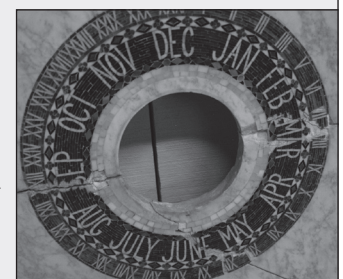
The massive marble mantelpiece that served as a stunning focal point in the Laurelton Hall dining room is one of the few objects from the Morse Museum’s collection that has never been exhibited. It will, however, make its public debut as part of the dining-room vignette planned for the exhibition at the Metropolitan.

The mantelpiece, which stretched more than thirteen feet from floor to ceiling and measured more than eleven feet across, is one of the most forward-looking designs Tiffany created for his home. Mounted on its front are three mosaic-and-marble clock faces. These timepieces, from the viewer’s left to right, kept the days of the week, the hours of the day, and the month and date.

At least part of the highly intricate clockworks mechanism still exists. However, it no longer functions, and given the complexity of the task and the short

time frame to prepare for the Metropolitan’s exhibition, it has not been repaired as part of this project. It remains stored at the Morse for possible future conservation.

The three clock faces are made up of very fine glass and marble mosaic pieces of various shapes and sizes, called “tesserae.” The letters and Roman numerals on the clocks are made of white marble that echo the monumental, grey-veined white marble blocks of the mantelpiece itself. The background pieces of the mosaic, working in harmony with the rest of the dining room, are slender rectangles of black, blues,



One of the three clocks on the mantelpiece was a perpetual calendar, keeping both month and date.

Photo by Mark Rabinowitz



The installation of the components of the Daffodil Terrace began at the Metropolitan in mid-October. The marble mantelpiece from the Laurelton Hall dining room can be seen in the background. Photo by Wallace Lewis, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

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CONSERVATION OF LAURELTON HALL DINING-ROOM FURNITURE

RESTORES TIFFANY'S INTEGRATED DESIGN FOR THE ROOM

The dining room at Laurelton Hall embodied Louis C. Tiffany's concept of totally integrated design. It reflected both his inspiration by exotic, in this case Oriental, and historical sources and his prescient sense of approaching modernism. But above all, Tiffany's dining room was uniquely his own creation, and as Hugh McKean observed in *The 'Lost' Treasures of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (page 123), one with a "timeless quality which will make its design forever contemporary."



With the correct paint color and restored upholstery, the dining-room chairs bring new brilliance to Tiffany's harmonious design for the dining room.

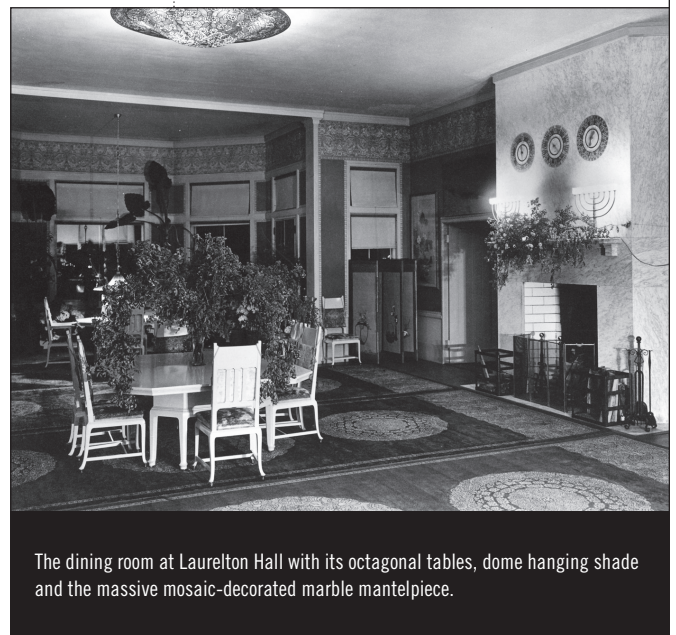
At The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the dining room will be treated as a vignette to evoke something of the original experience of the room at Laurelton Hall. The vignette will include one of two surviving octagonal tables, several chairs, the surviving twenty-five foot jewel-toned mazarine blue medallion rug, the dome hanging shade that echoes the decorative pattern in the rug, six of the original seven *Wisteria* transom windows, and the massive mosaic-decorated marble mantelpiece – all from the Morse collection.

With the exception of the mantelpiece, visitors to the Morse will be familiar with these beautiful objects. The Metropolitan's exhibition, however, promises a view that will go further than ever before toward revealing the aesthetic harmony Tiffany created. The newly conserved furniture has been painted in its original rose-tinted off-white color. Also, the upholstery for the chairs has been replicated, allowing visitors to see what these textiles looked like for the first time since Tiffany's day. The success of this two-year conservation effort is the result of a close collaboration between the Morse and the Metropolitan. The Morse is most grateful for the opportunity this exhibition has given us to receive consultation from the Metropolitan's staff, who include some of the finest object conservators in the world.

A hundred-year journey

The journey of the dining-room furniture began around 1904 when Tiffany designed it and installed it at Laurelton Hall. There were three tables that graduated in size from breakfast to lunch to dinner. Each table had coordinating chairs. These pieces originally sat on Oriental rugs that were later replaced, probably around 1913, with five new rugs designed by Tiffany – three that were twenty-five feet long for the center of the room and two smaller ones for the ends of it. The *Wisteria* windows also appeared around this time in the transom on the garden façade.

The dining-room sets remained in the house through the years it was controlled by the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation (1919-1946), and even managed to escape the 1946 auction of the estate's treasures because the tables and chairs were considered "household



The dining room at Laurelton Hall with its octagonal tables, dome hanging shade and the massive mosaic-decorated marble mantelpiece.

furniture." Fortunately, when the pieces were offered at a small additional price to the couple who bought Laurelton Hall in 1949, they purchased them. They were still in the dining room in 1957 when the fire that destroyed most of the mansion burned for three days. Hugh and Jeannette McKean managed to salvage two of the tables, six of the side chairs and one armchair. These restored pieces have been on display almost constantly at the Morse Museum ever since.

Once the plans for the Laurelton Hall exhibition at the Metropolitan were underway, the Morse seized the opportunity to fully address the details of the various surviving components of the dining room.

To prepare the dining-room furniture for exhibition, the first important task was to determine the original color of the furniture by examining the various layers of paint and establishing at what points in time they had been applied. The dining-room table and chairs had been repainted an off-white color with a subtle green tint after they were rescued from Laurelton Hall. But was it historically correct?

The second challenge was the reupholstered chair seats. The original chair seats had all but been destroyed by the fire and subsequent water damage. The McKeans recovered the seats with a simple pale-blue velvet, but had the forethought to store the original fabric covers for two side chairs. The cover remnants proved to be invaluable in determining the height and shape of the seats, the type of material, the exact patterning, and even the original coloring of the covers.

This quest to determine the original furniture color and the color, pattern, and material of the original upholstery would be nothing less than an archaeological project.

A Rose Hue

The dining-room furniture (including the chairs and table not to be included in the exhibition, but to undergo the same restoration) was shipped to the Metropolitan last summer. A wood conservator from the Metropolitan had taken samples of the paint for analysis as early as 2004. Now more paint samples were taken from areas that held the thickest layers, the crevices where paint pools when applied. After complete analysis of samples from several pieces, it was determined that the original paint color had a decidedly pale-rose hue that, though difficult to describe, might be generally considered a rose-tinted off-white.

Collection Manager Jennifer Thal-

Other Conservation

Besides the Daffodil Terrace and the dining-room furniture and mantelpiece, several other objects left Winter Park early for conservation. They will appear in the exhibition in New York looking a bit more as Tiffany designed them originally and in more stable condition. With the exception of the *Wisteria* panel, which was conserved at Venturella Studio in New York, all conservation listed here has been performed at the Metropolitan.



Above: Plaster-and-glass panels from dining-room lunette at Tiffany's 72nd Street house, c. 1885.
Conservation: Stabilize for display.

Right: *Wisteria* transom, after 1908.
Conservation: Replace glass from a visually distracting previous repair with original Tiffany glass.

Right: Fountain Court vase, c. 1903.
Conservation: Clean, stabilize, repair chips and cracks.



Above: *Magnolia* window, c. 1885.
Conservation: Replace frame, clean, correct bowing, replace previous repairs with original Tiffany glass.



heimer then visited the Metropolitan to see the samples taken by the conservator. Compared to the former green hue, it was surprising. But after a bit of fine tuning, it was clear that conservation efforts had turned up a color much closer to what Tiffany himself had chosen in 1904.

While the Museum's dining-room chairs were at the Metropolitan, the original chairs from the breakfast room in Tiffany's 72nd Street apartment in New York, now in the collection of the Mark Twain House in Hartford, Connecticut, were also there for examination. Unlike the Morse chairs, these had their original untouched painted finishes, allowing the conservators to determine the exact texture and degree of sheen to be replicated.

Still, this new paint surface had to be integrated with an antique rug, lighting fixture, and windows. Though these pieces are in excellent condition, their appearance is not crisp and

fresh as new objects would be. The Museum's objective was to reestablish the dining-room setting as a cohesive whole, and any one component that stood out would ruin the effect. In order to ensure this unity, the staff in Winter Park painted a series of blocks with slight variations of the new color. The staff spent several days assessing each different color block alongside the rug under varying lighting. Finally, the most appropriate match was approved.

This sample was then sent to a furniture conservator in Brooklyn, New York, who was recommended by the Metropolitan. He matched the paint and the technique, sent us samples for our approval, and repainted the tables and chairs. It is important to note that this new layer of paint now sits on top of the other layers. The Museum would never strip down and refinish the furniture because our intent is to preserve the history of the pieces, not to alter it.

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Dining-room furniture *Continued from page 7*

Recreating the Upholstery

Even before the Morse began testing the furniture paint and finish, the Metropolitan was looking for a textile manufacturer who could replicate Tiffany's upholstery. During its search, a research assistant in the decorative arts department wore a velvet scarf that had



Template for restored cover of chair seat.

many of the same qualities as the upholstery. The scarf had been sold through the Metropolitan's store and was produced by a Philadelphia artist with

whom the staff was familiar. Jennifer flew to New York in December 2004 with the original remnants for a meeting in which the fabric designer showed examples of textiles and techniques he commonly used. He studied

the original seat covers and was shown several other examples of Tiffany textiles from the Metropolitan's collection for reference. He set out to find a similar material (the original was a fine silk velvet) and develop a compatible technique for the dying process.

The Metropolitan's Photograph Studio produced full-scale, high-resolution digital images of the remnants from which distinct patterns could be discerned. From these came the templates for the seats of the chairs. The blue color was determined by studying parts of the remnants that had been folded under at the corners of the seat, thus preserving some of the richness of the dye.

Once the materials and technique were decided, experiments in applying the dye to the material in the approved pattern began. This process took several months and involved much trial and error before all were satisfied that the look – even if new – was Tiffany's.

Meanwhile, Nancy Britton, the Metropolitan's upholstery conservator,

examined the remnants, measured the chairs, and began the process of reestablishing the original profile of the seats. The various layers of cushioning were determined by the height and shape of the original remnants. The conservator also studied enlarged archival images of the dining-room chairs *in situ* at Laurelton Hall to recreate the back cushions, cord and tassels, and gimp that covered the tack lines.

Because of the restoration process on the dining-room furniture, visitors to the Laurelton Hall exhibition at the Metropolitan will be able to see a creation that hasn't existed in nearly fifty years. The slight adjustment in paint color adds a new brilliance to the room's overall scheme, serving to unify the complicated patterns of the rug, windows, hanging shade, and new seat covers into the harmony of design that Tiffany envisioned. In this way, the restored pieces will do their part in bringing new understanding and appreciation of the masterpiece that was Laurelton Hall. ■

Laurelton Hall mantelpiece *Continued from page 5*

and greens. There are matching inner borders on the three faces comprised of circular, triangular, and diamond-shaped tesserae forming two patterns, one purely geometric, the other combining a geometric and floral motif.

The detached tesserae have been re-adhered, and only a few had to be replicated along with the missing marble centers of the clock faces and the mantelpiece's hearth and firebox. The original hands of the clock, presumably of cast or hand-cut metal, are long gone too and have been replicated based on enlargements of historical photographs.

Mark Rabinowitz of Conservation Solutions Inc. in Washington, D.C., has overseen the mantelpiece restoration with guidance from John Griswold of Griswold Conservation Associates LLC, in Beverly Hills, California. The work was carried out as part of the overall conservation project that included the Daffodil Terrace.

"The main issue with the mantelpiece," Mr. Rabinowitz said, "is the

design and fabrication of a display frame capable of holding the pieces in place and which can be disassembled and shipped readily."

The entire mantelpiece was removed from Laurelton Hall in almost a dozen panels. Putting it back together as an object in a temporary museum installation is even more difficult than what Tiffany had to do originally. The panels were intended to be permanently mounted to a solid brick chimney core, Mr. Rabinowitz said. Today's challenge is to have the panels both free-standing and easy to dismantle.

Another challenge has been in repairing and removing stains on the huge

marble panel on which the clock faces are installed. At some point, this panel had broken apart and an early repair had not been entirely successful. The broken sections were out of proper

alignment, and there was yellowing adhesive visible along the mend. Conservators have been reversing these repairs and realigning the parts, which in turn has made it possible to reset the detached pieces of the mosaic in the proper plane. The multiple cracks in the façade are now far less visible.

The repairs are designed to be reversible and identifiable to future conservators, but as invisible as possible to museum visitors. ■



Conservators in Washington, D.C., reassemble the dining-room mantelpiece for the first time since it was removed from Laurelton Hall.

Photo by Mark Rabinowitz.

MORSE COLLECTION MANAGER OVERSEES LOAN TO THE MET AND REVISITS

CHILDHOOD PLAYGROUND

Louis Comfort Tiffany inspired many people to pursue careers in art through his foundation at Laurelton Hall, and that included, even many years after his death, Jennifer Perry Thalheimer, who wandered the ruins of his once-magnificent estate as a child growing up in the Long Island village of Laurel Hollow.

Jennifer, Collection Manager at the Morse since 1999, credits Laurelton Hall and the many other large estates built at the turn of the twentieth century on Long Island's beautiful North Shore for her career choice. Moved and fascinated by the fabulous detail and grandeur of these mansions, many in disrepair, many being sold off, she dedicated herself to the study of historic preservation and the decorative arts.

In 1996, she received her graduate degree from the Parsons/Cooper-Hewitt Master's Program in the History of Decorative Arts and Design in New York. She holds a bachelor's degree in Historic Preservation from Pennsylvania State University.

Today, Jennifer is directing the Morse's loan of materials to the Metropolitan for the exhibition *Louis Comfort Tiffany and Laurelton Hall – An Artist's Country Estate*, as well as overseeing the conservation of objects for the show, including the Daffodil Terrace and the dining-room furniture. She is also one of five contributors to the catalogue that will accompany the exhibition,

In 1989, Jennifer Perry Thalheimer, then a college student and now Collection Manager at the Morse, was photographed on the shore of Cold Spring Harbor at the site where Louis Comfort Tiffany once built his dock.



which is authored by Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, Anthony W. and Lulu C. Wang Curator of American Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan. Jennifer wrote an essay about the Louis Comfort Tiffany Foundation at Laurelton Hall.

Tiffany established the foundation in 1918 at Laurelton Hall intending that the estate should serve into posterity as both a museum and a school through which he could preserve his artistic vision and inspire generations of artists to come. Sadly, his dream did not endure, but the foundation, among other things, provided young and promising artists an opportunity to practice their skills in inspirational surroundings. In 1930, Hugh McKean was one of those artists.

Throughout the 1980s, Jennifer explored the ruins and history of the Long Island Gold Coast – first on horseback and later in a red 1965 Mustang convertible. All that remained of Tiffany's estate then was the lower section – the greenhouses, servant quarters, and stables that had been converted into a residential hall for the artists. Much of it remained a mystery to her until she read Mr. McKean's 1980 book *The 'Lost' Treasures of Louis Comfort Tiffany*.

In the early 1990s, Jennifer mailed Hugh McKean some photographs from the estate. By then her parents had relocated to Central Florida, and she had had the opportunity to see the Morse collection.

"I remember thinking that it was just so wonderful that there was someone preserving what remained of Laurelton Hall," she said. "I was grateful."

Destiny, it seemed, brought her to the Morse in 1999 where she could work with objects that held so many personal memories for her. Now working with the Metropolitan on the upcoming exhibition, she feels gratified that the McKean's vision is being validated and that in some small way she is helping to advance Tiffany's hope that Laurelton Hall would exist to inspire future generations. ■



Collection Manager Jennifer Thalheimer photographs Tiffany's 1885 *Butterfly* window as part of the condition reporting on objects being loaned to the Metropolitan. Photo by Roberto Gonzalez courtesy of the Orlando Sentinel. Originally printed June 4, 2006.

MOST OF MUSEUM'S OBJECTS HAVE JUST ARRIVED AT THE MET

Although such notable objects as the Laurelton Hall dining-room furniture and the components of the Daffodil Terrace left the Morse Museum for conservation many months ago, most of the 114 objects being loaned to The Metropolitan Museum of Art only left Winter Park in October.

They set off on their nonstop journey to New York in almost a hundred custom-designed crates, all carefully placed in climate-controlled tractor-trailer trucks. Preparing these objects for their relatively short trip north took almost a year.

Before any object was set in a crate, Collection Manager Jennifer Thalheimer and Collection Assistant April Brown inspected every inch, noting in individual reports every scratch, crack, or irregularity. Then Museum Prepara-

tor Andrés Pérez cleaned each object with a mild detergent solution.

While this painstaking process was underway, Chief Preparator Dave McDaniels directed his team in designing and constructing crates. A few objects, such as small vases, were packed in compartmentalized crates, but most had their own precision-engineered container. Not only did Dave have to consider how the crates would fit the objects, but also how they would fit into the trucks. The crate for our

large teak doors from India had to be designed so that the object lay on the diagonal. It was too big to either stand up straight in the truck or to lie down flat. The objects are surrounded with two types of packing foam – a dense outer layer to absorb impact and a softer inner layer for cushioning.

The Museum's loan to the exhibition includes twenty major windows, eight lighting fixtures, eight paintings or works on paper, and twenty glass, ceramic, and enamel works that were exhibited throughout Laurelton Hall.

When the objects arrived at the Metropolitan, Dave was on hand to help the Metropolitan's staff unpack the objects. And Jennifer, with the Metropolitan's conservators, once again went through the meticulous documentation of each object's condition. This process will be repeated next year when the materials are deinstalled in New York and yet again when they come home to Winter Park. ■



Left to Right: Preparators Jeff Spycaboer and Andrés Peréz with Chief Preparator Dave McDaniels and the custom-designed crates they have carefully packed with objects headed for New York.

Photo by Raymond Martinot.

RESERVE YOUR COPY OF THE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE EARLY AND RECEIVE WISTERIA POSTER

The Laurelton Hall exhibition at The Metropolitan Museum of Art will be accompanied by a 350-page, richly illustrated catalogue that will contribute important scholarship on Tiffany's country estate and the many objects from the Morse collection that are part of the exhibition.

Members who reserve their copy early in the Morse Museum Shop will also receive a free poster that displays one of the *Wisteria* panels from the Laurelton Hall dining room. (The posters are available for pickup only.) The shop staff is taking phone numbers and e-mail addresses for all who want to ensure they obtain one of the first copies of the book to arrive. Members, of course, will receive a 10 percent discount on their purchase.

The book will be published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and distributed by Yale University Press. The

hardcover book is priced at \$65 and the softcover at \$45.

Period photographs and color images of objects accompany essays that describe the interiors, the gardens, and the social life at Tiffany's remarkable home.

Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, the Metropolitan Museum's Anthony W. and Lulu C. Wang Curator of American Decorative Arts and the curator of the exhibition, is the author of the catalogue. Contributors are Richard

Guy Wilson (Professor of Architectural History, University of Virginia), Elizabeth Hutchinson (Assistant Professor of American Art History, Barnard

College/Columbia University), Julia Meech (Consultant, Christie's and independent scholar), Jennifer Perry Thalheimer (Collection Manager, Morse Museum), and Barbara Veith (Research Associate, Metropolitan Museum).

The catalogue will feature new

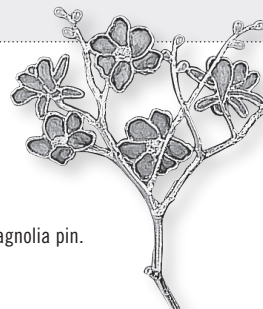
digital photography by Joseph Coscia Jr., Associate Chief Photographer in Charge of Collections Photography in the Metropolitan's Photograph Studio. Last year, Mr. Coscia spent a combined total of four weeks at the Morse photographing objects from the Museum's collection for the publication. ■



Tiffany silver and onyx jewelry.



Wisteria music box.



Magnolia pin.



Dragonfly pin.

Laurelton Hall Inspires Merchandise Collection

A large selection of merchandise has been developed in support of the Metropolitan's exhibition about Louis C. Tiffany's Laurelton Hall.

These items include jewelry, scarves, notecards, and a wide variety of gift merchandise inspired by Tiffany works ranging from the *Magnolia* and *Wisteria* windows to the upholstery for his dining-room chairs. Some pieces were developed together by the Metropolitan and the Morse; others were produced exclusively by the Morse. The Laurelton Hall merchandise is available to Museum members in the Morse Museum Shop at a 10 percent discount.

The items are also being sold nationwide through Metropolitan Museum of Art stores and the Metropolitan's gift catalog.

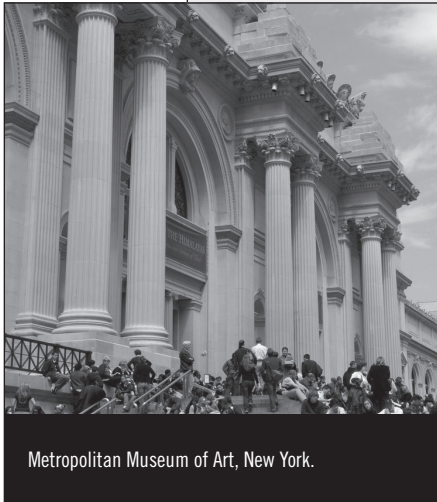
**Join Friends at the Morse for
New York City Art Trip**

Join the Morse next April for a trip to New York City for a special members-only experience that will include a docent-guided tour through the exhibition *Louis Comfort Tiffany and Laurelton Hall – An Artist's Country Estate* and a day's excursion to Long Island to see the countryside Tiffany loved so well.

The trip is set for Wednesday, April 18 through Sunday, April 22. The price is \$1,500 (airfare not included) for double-room occupancy in a Midtown hotel. Single supplements are available.

We plan to spend the day at the Metropolitan on Thursday, which includes not only the exhibition tour, but also a three-course lunch. On Friday, we will take a bus to Long Island for a tour guided in part by our own Jennifer Thalheimer and Dr. Robert B. McKay, Director of the Society for Preservation of Long Island Antiquities; Saturday will be a free day in the city; and on Sunday, we will conclude our visit with brunch at Tavern on the Green.

Space is limited for this trip and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call (407) 645-5311, ext. 111 for a complete itinerary or to RSVP.



Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

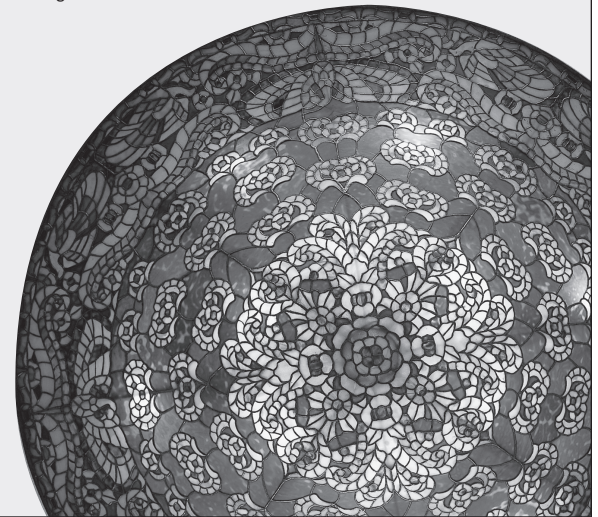
These Morse treasures will be on view soon at the Metropolitan.



Hanging turtleback lamp from Laurelton Hall living room.



Spherical turtleback globe from Laurelton Hall living room.



Dome hanging shade from Laurelton Hall dining room.

Call to Reserve a Special Presentation on Exhibition

From mid-November through mid-May, the Morse will offer a PowerPoint program for local organizations interested in learning more about the milestone exhibition on Laurelton Hall at the Metropolitan and about the Morse Museum's role as collaborator.

This free presentation by Museum

staff will address the objects loaned for the exhibition, the conservation on the Daffodil Terrace and other objects, Laurelton Hall itself, and Hugh and Jeannette McKean's remarkable vision in collecting these materials.

Reservations should be made at least two weeks in advance and can be made by calling (407) 645-5311, ext. 111.



THE CHARLES HOSMER
MORSE MUSEUM
of American Art

(407) 645-5311
www.morsemuseum.org

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