



# Lampshade

Louis Comfort Tiffany

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## Not on display

**Title/Description:** Lampshade

**Artist/Maker:** Louis Comfort Tiffany (Designer)

**Born:** 1900 c.

**Object Type:** Lamp, Lampshade

**Materials:** Glass, Lead

**Technique:** Leading

**Measurements:** h. 170 x w. 406 x d. 406 mm

**Inscription:** Stamped 'Tiffany Studios New York 1455-44'

**Accession Number:** 21022A

**Production Place:** New York, The Americas, USA

**School/Style:** Art Nouveau

**Credit Line:** Donated by Sir Colin and Lady Anderson, 1978

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The son of a fashionable jeweller, Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) established his own company of Associated Artists in 1878 [1]. Intent on designing beautiful objects for 'a new society of newly rich' clients, Tiffany took inspiration from the English Arts & Crafts and Aesthetic movements. [2]

Hemispherical in form, this Louis Comfort Tiffany lampshade is decorated with apple blossom in green and pink marbled glass. Its attractive bright colours have been set within a bold black line of leading, producing an effect that evokes compositions by fin-de-siècle Symbolist-Synthesist painters, such as Paul Gauguin, Émile Bernard, Paul Bonnard, Édouard Vuillard, and others. [3]

Tiffany patented the technique for producing iridescent glass in 1881 and registered his trademark opalescent 'Favrile' glass in 1894. [4] Initially Tiffany produces glass mosaic tesserae before developing leaded stained glass, in which each glass segment is outlined in bronze patinated-leading to give a mosaic effect.

From 1878, Louis C. Tiffany and Associated Artists fulfilled commissions for private domestic interiors and public building in North America. [5] Tiffany's leaded glass was first exhibited in Europe in 1892 with *Four Seasons*, a domestic window design from 1890. Tiffany & Co. also displayed leaded glass by the newly founded firm, Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company, in the 'Tiffany Chapel' at the World's Columbian Exposition that was held in Chicago in 1893. [6]

Tiffany's first commercially produced leaded glass lamps date from around 1895, which, together with its stained glass window designs, were to prove a main staple of the company's production.

Manufacturing the shades was labour intensive and involved assembling pieces of cut glass over a solid wooden form: a process that took a skilled worker approximately one week to complete. [7]

The lampshade is stamped with the mark, 'Tiffany Studios New York 1455-44' on the inside of the lower rim. The date of the lamp is an estimate based on the knowledge that the Tiffany Glass and Decorating Company changed its name to the Tiffany Studios in 1902. [8]

Vanessa Tothill, November 2020

[1] Mario Amaya, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966), p. 68.

[2] Amaya, p. 68; Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *Louis Comfort Tiffany at The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999); adapted from *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 56:1 (Summer 1998), pp. 9-10.

[3] Amaya, p. 71; <https://www.morsemuseum.org/louis-comfort-tiffany/tiffany-chapel> [accessed 16 November 2020]

[4] John Loring, *Louis Comfort Tiffany at Tiffany & Co.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2002), pp. 241-42.

[5] Frelinghuysen, p. 9.

[6] Amaya, p. 71.

[7] Frelinghuysen, p. 71.

[8] <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG80102> [accessed 16 November]

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## Further Reading

Mario Amaya, *Art Nouveau* (London: Dutton Vista, 1966)

Vivienne Couldrey, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989)

Alice Cooney Frelinghuysen, *Louis Comfort Tiffany at The Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999); adapted from *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 56:1 (Summer 1998)

Amanda Geitner and Emma Hazell, eds., *The Anderson Collection of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2003)

Paul Greenhalgh, ed., *Art Nouveau, 1890-1914* (London: V&A Publications, 2000)

Paul Greenhalgh, ed., *The Nature of Dreams: England and the Formation of Art Nouveau* (Norwich: Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, University of East Anglia, 2020)

John Loring, *Louis Comfort Tiffany at Tiffany & Co.* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2002), pp. 241-42.

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