



Powder box

Louis Comfort Tiffany

Not on display

Title/Description: Powder box

Artist/Maker: Louis Comfort Tiffany (Designer)

Born: 1900

Object Type: Box, Metalware, Toilet sets

Materials: Glass, Metal

Technique: Blow moulding

Measurements: h. 65 x w. 115 x d. 115 mm

Inscription: 'Louis C. Tiffany Furnaces Inc. 109'

Accession Number: 21036

Historic Period: 20th century

Production Place: New York, The Americas, USA

School/Style: Art Nouveau

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

This glass, lidded container is a powder box by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) in the Art Deco style. Designed to store a woman's cosmetics, this container would have sat pride of place on a dressing table in a fashionable home.

Blown-moulded as two component parts, the box comprises a truncated cylindrical form and a flat circular lid. The lid has been moulded with a rural scene that pictures a girl playing with a goat. The iridescent, lustrous quality of the glass gives the powder box a finish that resembles mother-of-pearl.

Louis Comfort Tiffany patented his lusterware in 1881, and registered Favrite as a trademark in 1894. [1] Extremely desirable at the turn of the century, the 'soft, incandescent sheen' [2] of Tiffany glassware took inspiration from the lustrous colours of Roman and Syrian excavated blown glass. [3]

Functional and decorative, evenly spaced vertical metal strips connect the gilt foot ring with the neck ring and hinged cover ring. The lidded box is stamped on the metal surround with the mark: 'Louis C. Tiffany Furnaces Inc. 109'. Tiffany's Stourbridge Glass Company in Corona, Queens, New York, was renamed Tiffany Furnaces in 1902 and became Louis C. Tiffany Furnaces, Inc. in 1920. [4] The container's mark of manufacture indicates that the container was made in the 1920s.

It was not unusual for Tiffany to combine metal and glass, as seen in the company's leaded glass lampshades [Object Number: 21022A and 21022B]. Designers for Tiffany experimented with techniques and combined materials to produce exquisite objects for an international luxury goods market. Tiffany glass perfume bottles with gem incrustated gold lids (designed by Paulding Farnham, c. 1900) and glass vases with elaborate silver mounts (by Edward Colonna, c.1899) demonstrate the level of craftsmanship and ingenuity at Tiffany & Co. [5]

Vanessa Tothill, November 2020

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

[2] Vivienne Couldrey, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989), p. 100.

[3] Couldrey, pp. 41, 45.

[4] <https://www.tiffanystudios.org/tiffany-chronology.html>

[accessed 18 November 2020]

[5] Loring, p. 222, in 'Mounted Glass: Favrite Jewels in Tiffany Settings' (pp.220-238).

Further Reading

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

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

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)
