



Box

Louis Comfort Tiffany

Not on display

Title/Description: Box

Artist/Maker: Louis Comfort Tiffany (Designer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Box, Metalware

Materials: Enamel, Glass, Metal

Technique: Blow moulding, Enameling

Measurements: h. 50 x w. 130 x d. 130 mm

Inscription: '5570 129 Louis C. Tiffany Favrile'

Accession Number: 21037

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 lidded container was produced by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) at the turn of the 20th century. Blown-moulded, the vessel's walls taper inwards at the neck, producing a stout cylindrical form with a wide circular base. A flat, circular lid completes this luxury item. Decorated with concentric rings in pink and purple enamels, the lid's design has been marbled to suggest the overlapping petals of a flower head.

The container is an example of Tiffany's Favrite glass. Golden in colour, the glass shows flashes of fuchsia pink, blue and green depending on the direction of the light.

Tiffany's gold lusterware was inspired by the iridescent forms of excavated Egyptian, Syrian and Roman blown glass. [1] In 1881 Louis Comfort Tiffany patented the technique that would enable his company to produce the same iridescence in contemporary glassware. [2] Tiffany named this type of glass Favrite after the Old English word 'fabrile' meaning 'handmade'.

Artisans, employed at Tiffany's furnaces, were able to produce this iridescent effect by exposing the molten glass to fumes of metallic oxide in an oxidised environment. [3] After this chemical reaction, the glass was then sprayed with chloride, which caused a fine crackle that refracted the light. [4]

Favrite glass was first manufactured at the company's Corona factory in Queens in 1894, and launched as a Tiffany product in 1896. [5] The container has been engraved '5570 129 Louis C. Tiffany Favrite' on its base. This mark was used from the late 1890s. [6]

Vanessa Tothill, December 2020

[1] Vivienne Couldrey, *The Art of Louis Comfort Tiffany* (London: Quarto Publishing, 1989), pp. 41, 45.

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

[3] 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), p. 63.

[4] Couldrey, p. 98.

[5] Couldrey, p. 104.

[6] No.3 <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/tiffany-favrile-glass-marks-148468>

[accessed 7 December 2020]

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)
