

Louis Comfort Tiffany's Chapel: From the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition to the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art

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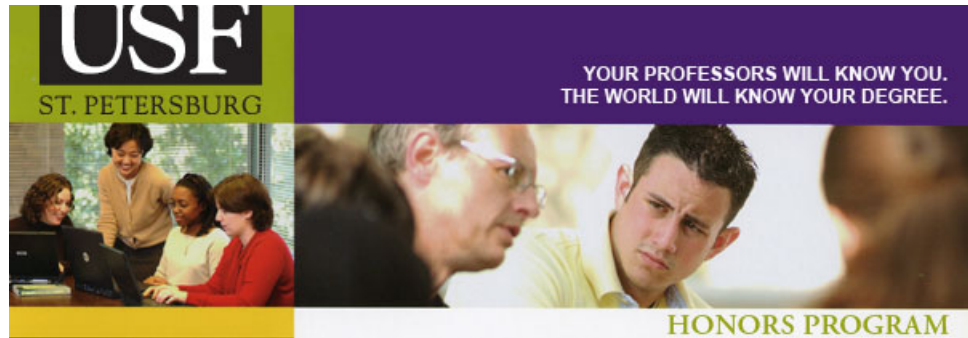


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Abstract

In the history of nineteenth-century decorative arts, Louis Comfort Tiffany stands out as a giant among men. He produced such an imposing quantity of decorative arts that the attention of scholars has been largely focused on them. While this is a well-deserved recognition, Tiffany's oeuvre encompasses so much more than his famous lamps and vases. He created a prodigious amount of art in several different media including oils, watercolors, mosaics, windows, furniture, interior design, and landscape. This paper will examine one of the most famous, and perhaps best, of Tiffany's interiors, the Chapel he created for the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition. In a bold step away from the pre-determined Italian Renaissance style of the Fair, Tiffany created a Byzantine inspired exhibit that included a chapel. Based on archetypes that had existed in European Cathedrals for centuries, Tiffany's Chapel successfully combined elements from the past, with his own unique sense of style. However, Tiffany's Chapel existed only to sell his product. Indeed, while it contained all the necessary aesthetic elements of a sacred space, it lacked spirituality. While the transformation from secular to sacred did occur, the Chapel did not attain its spiritual significance until years later. A nineteenth-century artifact, as well as art object, the Chapel has come full circle and is on display again, this time at the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of American Art. Created to be completely ephemeral, in the years since its original display, the Chapel has taken on a life of its own. No longer either one or the other, secular or sacred, a melding of the two has transpired.

Comments

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the University Honors Program, University of South Florida St. Petersburg.

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Tremendous museum of Luis Tiffany. You could spend hours going back in time to the finely restored pieces that belong to history. It is breathtaking. A real jewel of Winter Park (pardon the pun). Recommended for: Students History Buffs Adventure Travelers Art & Design Lovers. Helpful. The Morse Museum is renowned for its beautiful collection of the works of American artist and designer, Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933). The museum houses a comprehensive collection of exquisite glass works, from Tiffany leaded-glass lamps to unique stained-glass windows. Helpful. Report.