



Dish

Louis Comfort Tiffany

Not on display

Title/Description: Dish

Artist/Maker: Louis Comfort Tiffany (Designer)

Born: 1900 c.

Object Type: Pot

Materials: Glass

Technique: Blow moulding

Measurements: h. 25 x w. 68 x d. 68 mm

Inscription: 'L.C.T. 210'

Accession Number: 21035

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 miniature glass dish, designed by Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933) at the turn of the 20th century, possesses an attractive golden lustre. Formed by blowing glass into a mould, this Tiffany dish is shallow and circular in form with a decorative, undulating rim. The dish is engraved 'L.C.T. 210' on its base.

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'.

Skilled 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]

Intended to function as an open salt cellar, the rippled rim of this dish suggests the organic forms of jellyfish and sea creatures, famously captured in detailed illustrations by the German biologist and naturalist, Ernst Heinrich Haeckel (1834-1919). When Haeckel's studies were published in 1899-1904 as a set of 100 lithographic prints in the 10-volume title, *Kunstformen der Natur* (Art Forms in Nature), they exerted a great influence on artists working in the Art Nouveau style. [5]

Vanessa Tothill, November 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] <http://algorithmic-worlds.net/Haeckel/haeckel.php> [accessed on 14 October 2020]

<https://ocean.si.edu/ocean-life/invertebrates/art-forms-nature-marine-species-ernst-haeckel>
[accessed 14 October 2020]

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)
