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## Taft Museum gets first stop on national tour of Tiffany treasures: PHOTOS

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Bejeweled lampshades cast a glow from within. Slender vases evoke the delicate features of flowers. Exquisite leaded glass windows offer luminous views of landscapes.

Many people don't realize that Louis Comfort Tiffany created much more than stained glass windows. A new exhibition, "Louis Comfort Tiffany: Treasures from the Driehaus Collection," at the Taft Museum of Art Feb. 17-May 27, will span 30 years of the design career of the craftsman, artist and visionary.

The pieces date from the late 19th to early 20th centuries, when Tiffany's decorative creations were shaping America's tastes. Click on the images above for a preview.

More than 60 masterpieces will be on display from Chicago's Richard H. Driehaus Museum, considered one of the top three collections of Tiffany in the United States. It is the first time that the treasures, part of a private collection of 1,500 pieces, will be seen outside of Chicago.

Cincinnati's Taft Museum is the first venue to present it before the show travels to eight other cities through January 2021. Curated by David A. Hanks of the Stewart



JOHN FAIER

Program for Modern Design in Montreal, the exhibition was originally shown in 2013-14 in the Driehaus Museum, which opened in 2008 in a Gilded Age mansion.

“These are objects selected for their great beauty and their historical significance,” said Lynne Ambrosini, the Taft Museum’s deputy director and chief curator.

“There’s more early material in this collection. The quality of this collection of Tiffany is extraordinary.”

Driehaus, a Chicago fund manager and founder of Driehaus Capital Management, began collecting Tiffany in the 1970s. Initially, he was aiming to decorate a restaurant he co-owned, Gilhooley’s Grande Saloon. It was then affordable because Tiffany glass had fallen out of favor with the advent of Art Deco in the 1930s.

“Basically, no one wanted the stuff from the 1930s to the 1960s,” Ambrosini said. “In the ‘60s and ‘70s, the pendulum swung back and people began to appreciate it again.”

Visitors will first encounter early home interior designs from the 1880s and ‘90s, when the Aesthetic movement favored art and beauty in home décor. One of the most spectacular items is a decorative fire screen in wrought iron and glass.

Tiffany’s home designs, Ambrosini said, were “heavily ornamented with many different media at once, everything from patterned and stamped leather to glass chandeliers to carved wood and stained glass. It was a real mix of media, but all harmonized and unified into an aesthetic whole.”

The tour will continue with metalwork items, such as finely-crafted metal objects, candlesticks, jewelry boxes and humidors. Made of silver, bronze or brass, they are ornamented with materials such as mother-of-pearl, enamels and even jewels.

“They are sumptuous. In that space, you’re not seeing Tiffany the glass-maker. You’re seeing Tiffany the designer of very high-end decorative art objects,” Ambrosini said.

Sixteen stained-glass lamps and 24 blown-glass vases will offer examples of Tiffany’s innovations in glass. Although he was also a landscape painter, he did not paint the glass, as was done by his predecessors. Instead, he was famous for using