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Louis C Tiffany: Rebel in Glass

Robert Koch

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The completely illustrated biography of the American artist, craftsman, and designer Louis C. tiffany has become a classic in its field. Now in its third thoroughly updated edition, it remains an indispensable resource for collectors and designers and for anyone enchanted by the remarkable career of this versatile nonconformist and master craftsman of the Art Nouveau movement. Louis Comfort Tiffany (1848-1933), the luxury-loving son of the founder of Tiffany and Company, had little interest in directing the affairs of the family firm on Fifth Avenue and instead devoted his life to the arts. He was first a painter and than a fashionable decorator. Tiffany's company provided "artistic interiors" for wealthy clients, including a decoration of the White House for President Arthur. Interested, like his rival John Lafarge, in the potential of opalescent glass, he became the head of a firm producing stained glass windows and mosaics. He soon set up his own studio and factory where he could personally supervise the craftsmen. Accused by some of

rampant commercialism, he thought of himself as America's "first industrial artist", offering to museums and to the public a flood of Favre glass vases in strange shapes and textures, many of iridescent hues, tableware, ceramics, jewelry, lamps, and a variety of gift articles in metal and glass. He predicted that arts and crafts would, in time, gain on the "less-prejudiced, more-receptive" patrons of the future. Today, Tiffany's creations continue to be a leading force in the art world as collectors of art glass and modern decorators remain intrigued by the aesthetic and financial rewards Louis C. Tiffany's work offers. This study of Louis Comfort Tiffany began with research done by Robert Koch toward his doctorate. As his interest in Tiffany developed, he became a collector himself. Koch is now professor emeritus of art at Southern Connecticut State College in New Haven.