

The Square Piano

The Peters' 1804 Broadwood & Son Pianoforte

One-hour house tour followed by 45-minute illustrated curator's lecture.



In the grand Saloon at Tudor Place, just steps from the dramatic Temple Portico, stands an instrument of elite provenance and unusual design. It is an 1804 pianoforte from the prolific London firm of John Broadwood & Son. While such “square pianos” were common in the early 19th century, this is the only one known to contain a 6-octave keyboard, stretching from DD, at the low end, to d⁴ at the top.

The Tudor Place Square Piano and survives in excellent condition with many of its original parts, including keys, single-throw action, bridge, and soundboard – an unparalleled example of the creativity and craftsmanship of one of England’s most important makers. Its journey from London to a Peter family home in Georgetown (by way of a female piano dealer) tells us about the economic and cultural ties that continued to bind England and America after the Revolution. And the study of its manufacture, purchase, and use, as well as reasons for its unusual note array, can help us better understand the culture of music and entertainment and their democratization in early 19th century America.

Tour with lecture: \$20.00 per person.

For information and to book your tour, contact Visitor Services Director Jeralynn Graham: jgraham@tudorplace.org, ph: (202) 965-0400, ext. 115.