Carol, an iconic portrait in the Tudor Place collection

An object that never fails to attract the attention of visitors is the portrait of a stylishly dressed and attractive woman that hangs prominently in the Tudor Place Dining Room. The woman in the portrait is Caroline Ogden-Jones Peter (1894-1965), wife of Armistead Peter 3rd, the last private owner of Tudor Place. Visitors are often surprised to learn that Mr. Peter was a skilled artist and was responsible for this portrait of his wife and muse, as well as others found throughout the house. Completed late in the summer of 1925, this portrait reflects both Armistead Peter 3rd’s artistic abilities as well as his affection for Caroline, whom he described in his book, Tudor Place, as “the one person in this world whom I loved and trusted completely.”

He titled this portrait, Carol, his preferred nickname for his wife (she in turn called him “Pete”), and the following year submitted it to the National Academy of Design in New York, where it was accepted for the Winter Exhibition of 1926 and hung in close proximity to works by Childe Hassam and Guy Wiggins. The archive of Peter family papers at Tudor Place provides important details about the creation of this portrait as well as its inclusion in the exhibition. Letters written during the summer of 1925, while Armistead was busily engaged in painting this portrait, provide a glimpse of his approach to portraiture. A naturally talented artist, he honed his skills through instruction at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière and the Académie Colarossi during a year the couple spent abroad in 1921-22.

For Armistead Peter 3rd, the selection of his work by the National Academy was significant for two reasons: first, it was a sign of his artistic talent and success, and, second, it continued a family tradition of artistic excellence affiliated with the Academy. Armistead’s maternal great-grandfather, William G. Williams (1801-1846), was an honorary member of the Academy and displayed works in their exhibitions between 1840 and 1845.

Carol by Armistead Peter 3rd
Oil on canvas, 1925
Tudor Place Historic House & Garden Collection
AN ICONIC PORTRAIT, CONTINUED

Sculptor Paul Wayland Bartlett, Armistead’s artistic mentor and stepfather-in-law, had been a student at the Academy and was later elected an academician in 1917. Armistead Peter 3rd later noted that it was Bartlett who encouraged him to pursue formal artistic training in Paris.

Born in Paris on December 26, 1894, while her American parents were living abroad, Caroline’s childhood was spent in France and the United States. Armistead wasn’t the first artist to be enchanted by Caroline. In 1905, George Desvallières painted a full-length portrait of 10-year old Caroline that is now in the Parisian collection of the Fonds de Dotation George Desvallières. When she was 16, Caroline sat for John McClure Hamilton, who completed a pastel and conté crayon portrait in 1910, and Cecilia Beaux painted an oil portrait of Caroline in Paris in 1920. The Hamilton and Beaux portraits are in the Tudor Place collection. From this bi-continental childhood, Caroline developed a sense of style and poise that was fashionably French yet uniquely American. She could speak and correspond in flawless French, and, during one childhood summer in Washington, took judo lessons from Master Yamashita Yoshitsugu. Caroline became engaged to Armistead Peter 3rd in November 1920, and they married in New York City on February 14, 1921.

During their 43-year marriage, Armistead completed at least six portraits of Caroline, but this 1925 portrait was clearly his favorite. In his book, Tudor Place, he recalled that the portrait “looks very much like her and I am tremendously fond of it.” Carol was the third portrait of his wife that Armistead completed. The earliest, a crayon study dated December 26, 1922, was finished just two months after the couple’s return from Paris. The second portrait, in 1923, depicts Caroline in a black dress and red shawl; for this larger-scale, oil-on-canvas portrait, Armistead had her pose in the Southwest Bedroom of Tudor Place. He would complete at least three more portraits and two watercolor miniatures of Caroline before her death at age 70 in 1965.

Carol was painted over a period of several weeks in the summer of 1925 while the family—Armistead, Caroline and daughter Anne—vacationed at their farm in upstate New York. Caroline was then 30 years old. That summer Armistead got into the habit of painting for several hours each afternoon, starting the portrait in late July. The sittings took place in July and early August, and the painting was completed by the middle of the month. “Carol’s portrait is finished down to the signature,” Armistead noted in an August 14 letter to his mother-in-law in Paris. “I am so anxious to have you see it,” he continued, “It is on a canvas 25 x 29 [inches] quite large for me and is more or less like this…” Ever the artist, Armistead included a small, pen-and-ink sketch of the portrait in the body of his letter. He also proceeded to describe for Mrs. Bartlett, and presumably her husband, the colors used for each part of the portrait: “Green felt hat, brown wool coat, yellow silk dress, scarf red on this side and around neck, gray on the other side. Dark brown background, almost black in places, with just a

Sketch in a letter by Armistead Peter 3rd
August 14, 1925
AN ICONIC PORTRAIT, CONTINUED

faint glow throwing the chair into relief. [Caroline] has her arm over the back of the little black chair you gave us and which is on the porch usually. Incidentally, she is also sitting in the chair. I took a picture of it today and will send you. Everyone seems to like it. Carol says that the hand over the chair is beautiful which pleases me very much.”

In his book, Tudor Place, Armistead Peter 3rd suggested that Caroline wore a green hat while posing for the portrait because of its popularity that year. In 1924, Michael Arlen published his bestselling novel, The Green Hat. Women who read the novel began emulating its rebellious heroine, Iris Storm, by wearing green felt cloche hats. In the novel’s opening sentence, the narrator confessed that he named the novel after Iris’s hat because it “was the first thing about her that he saw: as also it was, in a way, the last thing about her that he saw.” None of Armistead’s surviving correspondence from the summer of 1925 suggests a particular reason for the choice of the green hat. It’s equally possible that Caroline selected a green hat because it was a color that complemented her alabaster skin and dark brown hair. In terms of artistic composition, the green hat, like the red scarf, draws the viewer’s eye to the center of the portrait. The pose is also unique—Caroline sits at an angle, her right arm resting on the top rail of the chair and her left arm akimbo, hand on hip.

In October of 1926, Armistead learned that Carol had been selected for the National Academy’s Winter Exhibition. Chartered in 1825, the National Academy’s mission was to “promote fine arts in America through instruction and exhibition.” The 101st annual Winter Exhibition took place from November 27 to December 19, 1926 at the Fine Arts Building, located at 215 W. 57th Street, the Academy’s headquarters at that time. Carol was displayed in close proximity to Childe Hassam’s Virginia, Guy Wiggins’ Valley of the Var, and Bruce Crain’s Clouds on the Way.

Following the close of the exhibition in December 1926, Carol was shipped back to Tudor Place. For the rest of the 20th century and to the present day, the portrait has hung in the Dining Room, either over the mantel as it is shown in a 1944 photograph or in its present location on the north wall.

By 1925, when Armistead completed this portrait, photography had largely overtaken portrait painting as the preferred medium for capturing a likeness. Armistead Peter 3rd must have been thinking about permanence when he placed this portrait in the Tudor Place Dining Room. Especially after Caroline’s 1965 death, the portrait served as a visual memorial to her, the woman he loved, even giving her a presence at mealtimes in that room for the next eighteen years until his own death in 1983. He clearly wanted the portrait to remain here, as it has done, long after both he and Caroline passed away. He also wanted her portraits—including a later 1932 double portrait he painted of Caroline with their daughter—to join the portraits of the earlier generations of Peter family women at Tudor Place. Today, Carol continues to evoke the presence of the woman Armistead Peter 3rd acknowledged as the co-creator of the foundation that now operates Tudor Place.

Caroline’s stepfather, Paul Wayland Bartlett, once observed that an artist must possess three characteristics: “observation, synthesis, and then the power to put it on paper.” This statement is certainly applicable to Caroline’s portrait. As an artist, Armistead Peter 3rd was able to capture a sense of his wife’s personality and poise and translate it onto this canvas, and that’s why this portrait remains such an iconic piece in the Tudor Place collection more than 90 years later.

— Grant Quertermous, Curator

*to read the full story of the portrait, visit: www.tudorplace.org/carol
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

In March we held our first Tudor Nights since the passing of Ray Kukulski. While the evening included a wonderful exhibition and reception, I felt something was missing. That something was the presence of Ray Kukulski, a member and friend of Tudor Place whose love and dedication was so deep we referred to him as a “super fan.”

Whether it was a lecture, Tudor Nights, the Garden Party or another special event, Ray was here to celebrate, to learn, and to encourage others to fall in love with Tudor Place in the same way he had. He freely shared his ideas and offered opinions about the work we’re doing, but mostly he gave us a warm smile and a pat on the back. In addition to bringing guests, Ray served as ambassador, telling people at events about Tudor Place activities and even pitching membership to them.

I often saw Ray at other events in Georgetown, but it was only after he died in early January that I learned the full extent of his engagement with our community. Through the Advisory Neighborhood Commission, Citizens Association of Georgetown, and other organizations, he strove to make our community better and understood how each of us played an important role in making that happen.

We were honored to host Ray’s memorial service at Tudor Place and have been deeply touched that his family designated Tudor Place as the recipient of contributions in his memory.* People like Ray Kukulski come into our lives too infrequently, which is why the loss is felt so deeply. Thank you, Ray, for being a Tudor Place “super fan.” Thank you for being my friend.

Mark S. Hudson
Executive Director

*Contributions in Ray’s memory may be directed to Tudor Place Foundation, Attn: Development, 1644 31st Street, NW, Washington, DC 20007.

2019 TUDOR PLACE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:
We are pleased to welcome Susan Ebersole to the Tudor Place Board of Trustees. Susan was elected at the Board’s meeting in March.

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**Current Projects and Spring in the Gardens**

**Perimeter Beautification and Enhancements**
Enhancement of the O Street hillside perimeter garden will focus on the landscape closest to 31st Street. The goals are to remove invasive plants, and add layers of border plantings to recapture the historic character of this garden area. Goats occupied this space in the first week of April and helped eradicate troublesome, invasive plants.

**Boxwood Conservation**
After suffering boxwood blight on approximately 30% of the collection in the fall of 2018, the winter dormant months were a time to fine-tune the boxwood health care strategy. Visits from nationally known boxwood experts such as Lynn Batdorf and Bennett Saunders were valuable in crafting a customized approach to preserving the historic collections. There is no cure for boxwood blight, and plants, once infected, must be treated and closely monitored perpetually. Many of the English boxwood in the North Garden have been removed for these reasons. This species is the most susceptible to blight. In these areas, the soil will rest for the summer and replacements are scheduled for the fall. For more information, go to the Boxwood Health page on the website tudorplace.org/boxwood.

**New Temporary Pollinator Garden**
The fall of a great white oak in the North Garden in November destroyed several hollies, a specimen magnolia and many understory shrubs. These trees will be replanted in fall 2019 with young stock to honor Armistead Peter 3rd’s will and wishes. This once shady area will now be open and sunny for about five years until the young trees mature. A temporary pollinator garden was installed at the end of April with the goals of increasing biodiversity, supporting butterfly migrations and breeding habitats, and supplementing the already wonderful plant palate with native flowering plants of high ecological value. This garden space will also be used to increase and breed plants for the property, following Peter family tradition.

**Welcome Abbey**

Abbey Toth joins us as a Visitor Services Assistant. She has undergraduate degrees in sociology and criminal justice from Metropolitan State University of Denver, and is currently a graduate student at the University of Maryland studying library and information science. She was previously with the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.
**PLEASE JOIN IN THESE UPCOMING EVENTS**

**TUESDAY, MAY 14 | 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM**
**Free Landmark Lecture: the World’s Columbian Exposition of 1893**
Hear Tudor Place Curator Grant Quertermous speak about Peter family members, including Britannia Kennon, who travelled to Chicago in 1893 to experience the World’s Columbian Exposition.
**Tudor Place Member FREE | Non-Member FREE**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 22 | 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**
**2019 27th Annual Spring Garden Party**
Join us for Tudor Place’s annual fundraising gala that provides over 20% of the annual operating budget – a grand fête under a sailcloth tent on the sprawling South Lawn.
**Tudor Place Member $225 | Non-Member $250**

**THURSDAY, MAY 23 | 11:30 AM – 2:00 PM**
**Garden Luncheon: Amanda Nisbet Design**
Enjoy a lovely lunch with friends and a presentation by lauded interior designer and author of Dazzling Design, Amanda Nisbet of Amanda Nisbet Design.
**Tudor Place Member $75 | Non-Member $85**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 8 | 10:00 AM – 8:30 PM**
**Women of Tudor Place Tea & Tour**
Commemorate the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 19th Amendment by experiencing a Tudor Place Tea & Tour focused on amazing women throughout Tudor Place’s 200 years of history.
**Tudor Place Member $40 | Non-Member $45**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 13 | 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM**
**Jazz on the South Lawn**
Tudor Place is pleased to welcome jazz fans to the historic grounds featuring bassist Nicole Saphos as part of the 2019 DC Jazz Festival. Rain or shine.
**Tudor Place Member $15 | Non-Member $20**

**SATURDAY, JULY 6 | 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**
**Summer Cool-Off**
Explore fun and sustainable ways to stay cool all summer long! Dash through mist, enjoy a cool iced tea in the shade, decorate a paddle fan and try your hand at ice painting.
**Tudor Place Member Child: $10 | Non-Member Child: $15 | Adult Chaperone: $5**

**AUGUST 5-9 | 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**
**Summer Camp at Tudor Place!**
Sign up for August summer camp at Tudor Place: Great Garden Adventure (4-6 year olds).
**Registration available online.**

**VISIT US AT**
[www.tudorplace.org/programs](http://www.tudorplace.org/programs)
**OR CALL 202.965.0400.**

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**Tudor Place History Quiz**

1. What was the nickname Armistead Peter 3rd fondly called his wife?
   a) Caroline  
   b) Carostead  
   c) Carol   
   d) Carrot

2. Paul Wayland Bartlett was a ________?
   a) Novelist  
   b) Engineer  
   c) Sculptor  
   d) Historian

3. Armistead Peter Jr. wrote a book titled, Tudor Place. True or False?
   a) True  
   b) False

4. In which room of the historic house does the painting, Carol, hang?
   a) Parlor  
   b) Dining Room  
   c) Caroline’s bedroom upstairs  
   d) Vestibule

5. What shape does the green felt cloche imitate?
   a) Pillbox  
   b) Bell  
   c) Flower pot  
   d) Square

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ANSWERS: 1. c  2. b  3. a  4. c  5. b

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