

the regular autumn exhibition, where he sold 75 per cent of his work. And so his professional career had begun. "During the next few years, I continued to paint landscapes but they began to get smaller and more defined, probably following the style of the Dutch Landscape painters, Jacob van Ruysdael in particular."

Peter's art profession was really taking off—he was approached by Royal Doulton and commissioned to paint a series of collectors' plates *Harvest Home*, which proved very popular. He was also getting numerous card designs published by various card companies including Hallmark and Polyntint.

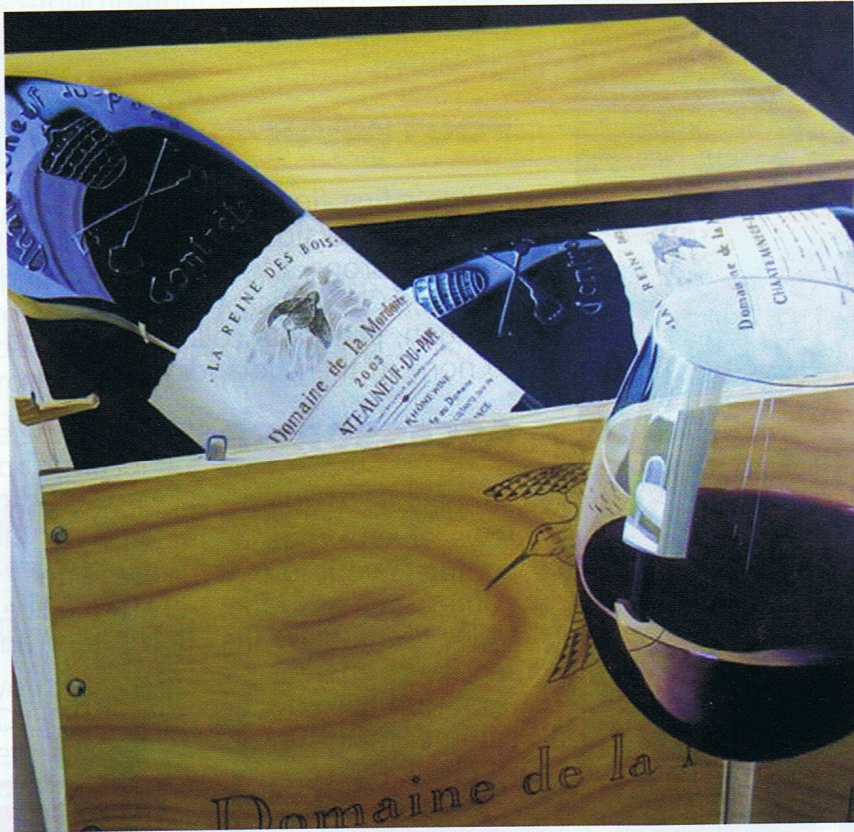
"In 1987, in order to help supplement my income I applied for a part-time adult education teaching post," he said. He got the job and still has two local classes

the viewpoint for some of his paintings giving them a bold contemporary look. In 2004 Peter was invited to take part in a prestigious still life exhibition in California, with the biggest independent chain of galleries on the west coast of America, where he was best selling artist in the show. Early last year he also successfully toured California and Arizona and in October 2005 he had his first one-man show in the UK at the Davie Gallery in Tickhill.

His latest project was recreating Leonardo da Vinci's *The Last Supper* as a still life in which, instead of painting figures, has wine bottles to represent those seated around the table.

Peter said: "I think the reason I painted *The Last Supper*, was through listening to the radio. During the last two to three months there has been a lot of talk about

followed by Judas who because of his links to Jesus is represented by the 2nd wine of Angelus, Le Carillon De Angelus. In front of both of these lies a bone handled knife, the blade pointing to Judas who is said to have betrayed Jesus, but another theory is that Peter was the betrayer so the handle of the knife is immediately in front of Peter, but again to show all is not what it seems, the handle casts no shadow on the table cloth, but the blade does. Andrew is Château Ausone, James Château Quinault, and Bartholomew Château Moulinet. "To the left of Jesus sits Thomas Château D'Issan, James the Great, Château Yon Figeac, Philip, Château Leoville Las Cases, Matthew, Château Poujeaux, Thaddeus, Château Canon and finally Simon Château d'Angludet. All the bottles are lined up behind fruit, cheese



running to this day. Peter has an "absolute love" of oil painting and especially admires the masters of 17th century Dutch painting, which is reflected in his work. However, a visit to Tallinn in Estonia to visit relatives sent him in a different direction to his landscapes.

"I saw the work of Olav Maran, which had a great effect on me," he said. When he returned to this country he decided to start looking at still life painting and decided to study the work of Olav Maran, and other still life painters such as William Kalf and De Heem—a genre which he had never considered or even liked before. He experimented with priming his own panels and canvases with different colours, then painting with thick and thin paint and glazing on top, in the way of the old masters.

"My art changed drastically, and still life 'wine' art in particular took over," he said. Peter has since produced many such still life paintings featuring fine wines, fruit and cheeses, and recently he has changed

Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* and other authors with books on similar themes, I think eventually, as I new the image, I just decided to paint my own version with wine bottles and try and depict within that the controversy surrounding the painting without making any judgements, and that is what I did."

Peter's *The Last Supper* is a two feet by four feet painting, based on the original. "Jesus, represented by Château Angelus sits proudly at the centre of the table; to his right should be John who some people think is painted far too feminine and more likely to be Mary Magdalene, so there, sits a bottle of Château Magdalene 1999, this is quite a young wine but it is caked in dust, so in keeping with the painting all is not what it appears to be.

"At this *Last Supper* they should have been eating lamb, but not in my painting but there are sheep on the hills behind, and all of the wines are clarets which generally go well with lamb.

"Next in line comes Peter, Château Petrus

and bread, but only three glasses which are for the three main protagonists," he said.

"*The Last Supper* will be staying with me until my agent and I decide the best place to put it, maybe the centre-piece for another exhibition, and America has also shown interest in it." Peter opened his latest exhibition at the Ric James Gallery in Cheltenham at the beginning of this month. It runs for three to four weeks. He also plans a further tour of exhibitions in the US in August when he will be doing two shows, one in Carmel 'Concours de Elegance' weekend and La Jolla (San Diego) Wine Art One Man Exhibition, both in California. He added: "Meanwhile, I will continue to confuse myself with compositions and ideas based on Wine Art and realism which are both things that I am passionate about."

A collection of Peter's limited edition prints are also available from Venue Xpresso in Alcester High Street.