

Blurring Boundaries

A SEMINAR AT THE **WORLD OF PINOT NOIR** FESTIVAL EXAMINED THE LINKS BETWEEN BURGUNDY AND THE NEW WORLD

by Allison Levine

For more than 20 years, the annual World of Pinot Noir festival in Santa Barbara has gathered Pinot Noir winemakers from around the globe to celebrate the beloved grape with its fans. The universal passion for Pinot Noir is due to its elegance, versatility, and food-friendliness as well as its ability to express terroir.

In its birthplace of Burgundy, Pinot Noir has a 1,000-year-long history; the cool-climate French region with limestone soils has set the bar for the grape. When New World producers first started making Pinot Noir, they looked to Burgundy as their inspiration. Today, regions like Central Otago, the Willamette Valley, and Sonoma County have developed their own identity and style. However, there is still a connection between the Old World and the New, as six Pinot Noir producers showed attendees during a seminar and comparative tasting at World of Pinot Noir in March, moderated by David Glancy of the San Francisco Wine School.

Paul Pujol

Owner/winemaker, Prophet's Rock, Central Otago, New Zealand
Paul Pujol was born in New Zealand but, thanks to a French father, he had a French passport. He studied viticulture in New Zealand and worked in France as well as Oregon before returning home in 2005. After a visit in 2009 from François Millet, then the chief winemaker at Domaine Comte Georges de Vogüé, Pujol again traveled to France to work the harvest with him, and a friendship was formed between the two men.

In 2016, Millet started his own label, François Millet et Fils, and retired from Domaine Comte Georges de Vogüé in 2019. Pujol established his brand,

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The "Blurring Boundaries: Burgundy and the New World" seminar took place at the World of Pinot Noir festival in Santa Barbara, CA, in March.

Prophet's Rock, in 2017. They share similar philosophies on wine, focusing on sense of place over house style.

François Millet et Fils 2018 Les Fouchères Chambolle-Musigny, Burgundy, France Floral and dried herb notes lead to a lovely texture with a rush of juiciness and beautiful minerality.

Prophet's Rock 2019 Cuvée Aux Antipodes, Central Otago, New Zealand This wine opens broadly, leaving delicate acidity that tingles on the palate.

Jay Boberg

Co-founder, Nicolas-Jay, Willamette Valley, Oregon

In 1988, Jay Boberg was invited to his sister's house for dinner, where he met a college friend of hers, Jean-Nicolas

Méo of Domaine Méo-Camuzet in Burgundy. Méo and Boberg became fast friends. At the time, Boberg, who worked in the music industry, was living in Napa and had a small vineyard, but he had never made wine. Still, with a shared love for Pinot Noir, the pair decided to start a project together in Oregon's Willamette Valley called Nicolas-Jay. They purchased a vineyard, Bishop Creek, and have more recently invested in land on the north side of Dundee Hills.

Méo is now winemaker at both Méo-Camuzet and Nicolas-Jay, where he takes the same approach: Vineyards are dry farmed organically or biodynamically, grapes are fermented with native yeasts, and wines are aged in (30% new) oak before they're bottled unfiltered and unfined.



Domaine Mèo-Camuzet 2020 Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru, Burgundy, France

This wine has a pretty floral nose and is very textured, with a juicy finish.

Nicolas-Jay 2019 L'Ensemble, Willamette Valley, Oregon A blend of eight vineyards, this is a more structured wine, with a vibrant, floral, and fruity nose.

Ian Burch

Winemaker, Archery Summit, Willamette Valley, Oregon

Ian Burch studied at California Polytechnic State University before going to work in the Loire Valley. It was while he was in France that he met Dominique Lafon of Domaines des Comtes Lafon.

Burch's love for Pinot Noir and Chardonnay eventually brought him to the Willamette Valley. Before joining Archery Summit, Burch worked the 2010 and 2011 harvests at Evening Land Vineyards in the Willamette Valley and reunited with Lafon, who was serving as the consulting winemaker. Today Burch considers Lafon among his greatest mentors as someone who, in his words, "would come up with solutions quickly and was always mindful of what it took to make an intelligent decision."

Domaine des Comtes Lafon 2019 Volnay-Santenots du Milieu Premier Cru, Burgundy, France

Flinty notes meet aromas of wildflowers and herbs. The beautiful mouthfeel lingers on the palate.

Archery Summit 2018 Arcus, Dundee Hills, Willamette Valley, Oregon Well structured, with spice notes and a fresh lift on the back of the palate that leaves behind a mouthwatering finish.

Guillaume Large

Winemaker, Résonance, Willamette Valley, Oregon

Guillaume Large was born in Burgundy but is now based in Oregon. As a young man, he was the cellar master at Louis Jadot, where he learned about the meticulous work required to express terroir. Meanwhile, the team at Jadot was committed to learning about other regions and took an interest in Oregon, which sits at the same latitude as Burgundy. (Here's another fun fact: Jadot was founded in 1859, the same year Oregon became a state.)

After 42 harvests at Jadot, winemaker Jacques Lardière came to the Willamette Valley with Jadot proprietor Thibault Gagey. In 2013 they purchased Résonance, a vineyard planted in 1981, and in 2017 brought Large on board as winemaker.

Louis Jadot Domaine des Héritiers 2017 Beaune Clos des Ursules Premier Cru, Burgundy, France

Vibrant notes of red and black fruit join minerality, chewy tannins, and a long finish.

Résonance 2017 Estate Vineyard, Yamhill-Carlton, Willamette Valley, Oregon Pretty red-fruit aromatics. Powerful and structured on the palate, with savory notes.

Jeff Mangahas

Winemaker, Williams Selyem, Russian River Valley, Sonoma, California

Williams Selyem was started in 1979 by two friends, Burt Williams and Ed Selyem, who handcrafted wines on a shoestring budget as they worked toward setting a new standard for American-made Pinot Noir. Twenty years later, in 1998, they sold the winery to John Dyson, and Bob Cabral became the head winemaker. He was succeeded in 2011 by Jeff Mangahas, who makes

wines the same way his predecessors did: doing whole-cluster fermentation, crushing the grapes by foot, and working in a gravity-fed environment.

In 2019, the seventh generation of the Faiveley family of Nuits-Saint-Georges—who had been looking for a vineyard in the United States and admired Williams Selyem—bought a minority stake in the winery, with the possibility of an eventual ownership transition. The producers share the philosophy that winemaking should respect terroir.

Faiveley 2017 Vieilles Vignes Gevrey-Chambertin, Burgundy, France

Aromas of red and dark fruit and sweet spice plus crunchy tannins.

Williams Selyem 2014 Allen Vineyard, Russian River Valley Beautifully fresh, with red fruit, floral, and spice notes; soft tannins; and a mineral finish.

Clare Tooley

MW, VP of guest experience, Boisset Collection

As Boisset Collection VP of guest experience Clare Tooley, MW, explained, the Boisset family entered the wine trade in Burgundy in 1961, first as sellers and then as producers. Eventually, second-generation proprietor Jean-Charles expanded the business to the United States, and today the family is the owner of a portfolio that includes some 30 properties in both France and California.

Domaine de la Vougeraie 2018 Clos de Vougeot Grand Cru, Burgundy, France

Rose petal, cherry, and herbal notes give way to an elegant yet powerful wine with a savory finish.

DeLoach 2018 Estate, Russian River Valley Intense aromatics of bright red fruits with a touch of spice lead to a wine with bright acidity, smooth tannins, and a mouthwatering finish. **LV**