

THE PRODUCERS OF THE YEAR- THE WINNERS

DOMAINE FAIVELEY, DOMAINE DE LA POUSSE D'OR *The investor-winemakers*

With Domaine Faiveley and Domaine de la Pousse d'Or, *Burgundy Today* rewards winemakers continually in search of techniques that will improve their wines and also new investment opportunities.

The meeting between Patrick Landanger and Erwan Faiveley takes us away from traditional canons of Burgundy, from clock towers and winemakers from “father to son.” Successful in the industrial field of medical prostheses at Chaumont, Patrick Landanger is recognized for coming to wine with an investor’s logic. Erwan Faiveley is the umpteenth generation of a long history that began in 1825 with the creation of the eponymous domaine.

Patrick Landanger took over the Domaine de la Pousse d'Or (17.6 hectares) in December 1997 “without knowing anything.” After having wanted to delegate, he changed his vision when Henri Boillot, vigneron in Volnay, arrived at the domaine. I did not know him and he spends the better part of an hour telling me in no uncertain terms: “If you came here, it is for you to make the wine and no one else.” I said “okay, let's go, I have no choice.”

Has his industrial past been helpful? “Yes, for the hygiene, the organization, the rationalization of work. But you know, the world of industry, medical, this is not fun. With wine, the dream we sell and we sell it well,” he said. “In industry, there is always the concern for productivity, to produce better and cheaper, while in regards to Burgundy wine, it must be clearly better, but not necessarily cheaper” says Erwan Faiveley.

At Pousse d'Or the winemaking fundamentals have been in place since the early 2000s, with later harvest dates as one of the most important, at the recommendation of another famous Volnay winemaker. “I had not even bought the domain, and I met Hubert de Montille. We drank a nice bottle in his garden and he said to me, ‘sir, if you come here, you should know that you must harvest very late.’ Still today I relish this advice because there are many things that can be corrected in the winery, but not the maturity.” Stylistically, he is focused on a quest for wealth and charm without excess and with beautiful equilibrium. Of particular note is the recent experimentation with vinification and aging in 800-liter clay amphorae, which debuted in 2015 with the Volnay 1er Cru “Caillerets.” “The presence of wood in the wine bothers me more and more. It's a shame to hide the elegance and fruitiness of our red wines,” explains cellar master Hubert Rossignol. “Tasting in the cellar, we spend a third of our time speaking of the wood. This is not optimal, so we

are trying amphorae and if it is better, we do not exclude anything that we can do.” adds Patrick Landanger ...

...Beyond the different technical approaches, the two domaines -Pousse d’Or and Faiveley- share a goal of producing great wines, but also to be part of this limited category of investors with significant financial resources. Several times during the meeting, they realized that they had been competing unwittingly in several recent purchases of vines. “In 2008, I bought Domaine Moine-Hudelot for 7 million euros. At first, it was 5 million but there were other offers and the price took off,” explains Patrick Landanger. “It is a fine purchase. You know we were also interested?” Erwan Faiveley suggests. “That is true? You countered my offer?” replied Landanger. “No it is that you're connected!” Faiveley concluded in a big burst of general laughter. It is certain that Burgundy, at least in a few of its top appellations, has changed, exiting the primary world of wine to put a foot in that of luxury and sometimes, its excesses.