

Judges Award Wine Packaging Design Honors

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JUDGES AWARD WINE PACKAGING DESIGN HONORS

Small Paso Robles, Calif., winery wins Best in Show; wooden boxes and pewter labels are keys to gold

Yountville, Calif.—The Fableist Wine Co., a 3,000-case winery from Paso Robles, Calif., won the Best in Show prize at the third annual **Wine Packaging Design Awards**. TV host and author Leslie Sbrocco announced the winners of five juried categories plus the People's Choice award at the close of the Wine Packaging Conference organized by Wines & Vines magazine Aug. 16.

Encore Glass of Fairfield, Calif., submitted The Fableist for the Best Series Package Design category, including bottles of six different varietals at \$20 per bottle, each with unique label art and names drawn from classic fables.

Curt Schalchlin, a principal in The Fableist, said, "My partner Andrew Jones and I have spent the majority of our adult lives in the wine business. We like to tell people that pretty much every fable or life lesson is something we can both relate to the world of wine."

An independent panel of judges appreciated the detailed drawings on each label and their correlation with the fables that inspired each wine. Five judges representing the confluence of the wine retail, wine media and design fields selected gold, silver and bronze winners in the categories of Best Alternative Format, Best Classic Format, Best Luxury Package, Best Redesign and Best Series from 143 packages entered by wineries across North America. Best in Show was selected by the judges from among the five gold award winners.

The Wine Packaging Design Awards are unusual in the world of wine competitions since the wines are not tasted and rated on wine quality, but graded on their design quality, functionality, materials, creativity and appropriateness for their price segments, among other criteria.

"We were excited to see 18% more entries this year," said Rebecca Arnn, the awards program manager and graphic designer at Wines & Vines. "And with our great panel of judges we were able to evaluate them carefully and professionally to pick outstanding examples of design."

Judges were: Curtis Mann, wine, beer and spirits buyer at Raley's Family of Fine Stores; Barbara Phillips-Barrett, creative director at Lamfers and Associates; Sara Schneider, wine editor of Sunset magazine; Barbara Gelfand Summer, graphic designer and owner of bibisummer.com; and Debbie Zachareas, proprietor and managing partner at Ferry Plaza Wine Merchant and the Oxbow Cheese and Wine Merchant.

People's Choice Award

Raymond Vineyards, St. Helena, Calif., 40th anniversary Cabernet Sauvignon

Of the 16 award winners, 12 were from California, and one each from Washington, Oregon and Pennsylvania.

Design elements beyond the ordinary helped capture the judges' approval in several categories. A wine by Element Cellars won Gold in the Alternative Format category for its unusual wooden box with a bladder inside. A hand-applied, embossed pewter medallion helped King Estate take the gold in the Luxury category for wines retailing at \$50 and above.

The People's Choice Award, chosen by conference attendees from among the top 50 juried wines, went to Raymond Vineyards for its 40th anniversary Cabernet Sauvignon that carries a red velvet-textured label.

Read more on the **Wine Packaging Design Awards** [here](#). Read more about the **Wines & Vines Packaging Conference** [here](#). To enter the awards competition next year, please visit wvpack.com in early 2018.

For more information and photos, please contact Rebecca Arnn at Wines & Vines magazine, Rebecca@winesandvines.com, or call 415 453-9700.

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