

Boisset unveils eye-opening sculpture at Raymond Winery

By John Dunbar



[NAPA VALLEY FEATURES](#)

NOV 16, 2023

NAPA VALLEY, Calif. – History, creativity and innovation are deeply rooted in [Jean-Charles Boisset](#). Born into a storied French winemaking family in Vougeot, Burgundy, his life has been immersed in the world of wine and hospitality.



This new eye sculpture by Tony Tasset, with its reflection of the Mayacamas ridgeline, was recently unveiled at Raymond Vineyards — John Dunbar Photo

In 2009, Boisset purchased the 150-acre [Raymond Vineyards](#) that extends across Rutherford and St. Helena. Since then he has expanded his Napa Valley portfolio to include myriad properties from downtown Napa to Calistoga. Often called a visionary, he recently revealed yet another reason for that moniker.

Boisset hosted more than 100 special guests and employees of [jcbcollection.com](#) on Nov. 11 for the unveiling of a new large-scale sculpture of a human eye. The artwork had been hidden for weeks behind bright red curtains atop the landscaped circle along the property's Avenue of the Senses roadway.

Made of resin and fiberglass with a steel inner frame, the sculpture is a detailed re-creation of Boisset's own right eye captured in a high-resolution photograph. The artwork stands close to 10 feet tall and shines brightly when illuminated by surrounding spotlights. Sunlight casts a reflection of the Mayacamas Mountains to the west.



Jean-Charles Boisset, right, and artist Tony Tasset preside over the unveiling. of the new eye sculpture at Raymond Vineyards - Alexander Rubin Photo

To call the piece dramatic would be an understatement.

“Today, we unveil a marvel, a testament to the transcendent power of vision and creativity. We’re thrilled to present the iconic eye sculpture by [Tony Tasset](#) at our beloved Raymond Vineyards,” Boisset stated in a social media posting following the reveal. “This eye, monumental and piercing, is more than a sculpture. It is a sentinel of art, watching over our vineyards, symbolizing our commitment to seeing the world differently through the lens of beauty, innovation and artistry.”

Based in Chicago, Tasset is an American multimedia artist known for his large-scale sculptures. He has exhibits around the world, including Dallas, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Germany, Canada, Portugal, Italy and London. In 2013 he created a similar eye sculpture that stands three stories tall in Dallas titled “Eye.” The title of this piece was not available at the time of publication.

Tasset told the crowd at the unveiling how he was convinced to take on the project.

“I get an email and then a phone call a while ago asking if I’d be interested in doing this, kind of a variation on something I did before,” Tasset said. “I wasn’t sure I wanted to, but he says ‘Well, come out and we’ll talk.’ So, I meet J.-C., and I say, ‘I really don’t think I’m interested.’ Then he said, ‘Would you like some Champagne?’ I like Champagne. And then another Champagne. ‘How about a little chardonnay?’ Sure. By the time I got to pinot, I was part of the cult. I was all in. For all his talk, in the center of it is enormous generosity and hospitality. It’s just been a really fun experience.”

As the red curtains were pulled back, the crowd let out a loud, extended “Ooh!” that Tasset said was meaningful to him.



More than 100 people attended the unveiling of Tony Tasset's eye sculpture above Raymond Vineyards
— Alexander Rubin Photo

"When something's called art, people think it means something they're not sure about," Tasset said. "There's no mystery here. An eye is one of those icons that I've just noticed throughout history. It's one of those things that usually represents either God or consciousness, which I think is interesting because it's almost two ends of the spectrum. Whatever you bring to it ... it's meant to be fun and weird and bring you into this place."

Boisset shared with the crowd that he had admired and followed Tasset's work for years.

"Our dream at the circle of the Avenue of the Senses was to create something that was very vibrational, something that really represents the vision of Napa Valley, the vision of the Wine Country and as we are at the epicenter of Napa," Boisset said. "We had many ideas about what to do here. A new vision of Napa Valley. A new idea of looking at this incredible landscape that we're very fortunate to share together from the past, present and the future."