

SCHOLIUM PROJECT
THE VESTIBULAR RELEASE: March 2013

All of these wines will age well-- most will hit their acme in two years and continue to develop for another five years. All are absolutely ready to drink-- open any one immediately. They are all powerful wines and crave highly flavored food: all go very well with cheese, with every cheese from burrata to bandage-wrapped cheddar; all go well with grilled and roasted vegetables and meat.

2010 ANDROKTEINOS HUDSON VINEYARDS

Syrah from the Hudson Vineyard in Carneros harvested relatively early for us — long before Halloween — under excellent conditions. 100% whole cluster fermented; foot-treaded in small, wooden puncheons. Tannic, powerful; very good for its intensity and balance, but best for its animal strangeness.

2009 BRICCO BABELICO TENBRINK VINEYARDS

This was a year of early and perfect ripeness for the Tenbrink's Petite Sirah vineyard in Suisun Valley. Steve's careful dry farming brought the fruit to deep richness and concentration without any roasting or over-ripeness, yet the wine is marked by a character related to the passito, or dried-grape wines of Northern Italy. Not a jammy or cooked-fruit richness that can arise in Northern California, but instead a tarry, porcini, and leather character. 36 months in barrel without disturbance.

2011 GARDENS OF BABYLON CALIFORNIA RED WINE

A blended red wine founded on Petite Sirah from Tenbrink; with Cabernet, Syrah and Cinsault. It is dark and powerful, completely ripe, but very different from any other vintage of this wine. The cool of the vintage shows in the high acidity of the wine. This is perhaps the most fragile and least age-worthy of all the wines-- including the white wines.

2010 MIDAN AL-TAHRIR CALIFORNIA WHITE WINE

The only blended white wine: Markus Bokisch's hillside Verdelho from the eastern hills of Lodi is partially skin-fermented in a large open-air vat, then barrel-aged without topping or sulfur for about 15 months. Then it was blended with Chardonnay from Tenbrink, Chuy, and Matthiasson, skin-fermented Gewurztraminer from Lost Slough, Sauvignon Blanc from Farina, and a little Theuth too. The wine is rich but snappy with acid, gravelly with minerality and slightly tannic and nutty from the skins and seeds.

2012 NAUCRATIS LOST SLOUGH VINEYARDS

Verdelho from the Sacramento River Delta in Clarksburg; stainless-steel fermented, limited malolactic and limited lees contact. A crisp, clear, powerful, and direct white wine. 2012 was a special year of low alcohol and perfect ripeness — the wine is lighter on its feet than it has ever been, but no less complex and intense.

2010 THE PRINCE IN HIS CAVES FARINA VINEYARD

Sauvignon Blanc from Sonoma Mountain harvested from both the concentrated upper section of the vineyard and the richer lower section. Fermented with the skins in small puncheons with foot-treading and full-body punchdowns and aged in neutral 60-gallon oak barrels. The wine has more intensity than ever, but with less fierceness. It is tawny, cloudy, saline in the mouth; honeyed in the nose. The most powerful of the whites.

2012 RHODODACTYLOS BECHTOLD RANCH

A rosé of Cinsault from 130-year-old dry-farmed vines in Lodi. The fruit ripened early this year with extraordinarily rich flavors. We made the wine with an absolute minimum of skin contact, aiming for a blanc-de-noir. One still does not taste red fruit; instead, vibrancy, sharpness and power all at once. The lightest and most delicate of the wines.

2012 RIQUEWIHR LOST SLOUGH VINEYARDS

Gewurztraminer from Clarksburg pressed and fermented in neutral barrels and aged for five months. The wine is very powerful and bass-driven. It has no floweriness, certainly no potpourri. Instead, it has a high-degree of minerality, and though it is a very clean wine, it has the funk of Gewurz. Charming but powerful.