

Subject to Change ‘Cuvee 831’ 2018

Producer: Alex Pomerantz

Farming: Organic, polyculture

Provenance: Monterrey

Grape(s): 2/3 Pinot Noir, 1/3

Chardonnay

Vineyard: An extremely remote, 25 acre mountain top vineyard at 2400 ft with decomposed granite and limestone soils.

Fermentation/ Aging: Whole

clusters of Chardonnay and Pinot Noir were co-fermented with daily pump overs for 8 weeks of maceration before pressing to 500L puncheons for gross lees aging. Racked to blend and bottled a month later.

Fining/ filtration: none.

Sulfite: none added.

Misc: This wine is Alex’s homage to Julien Guillot’s coferment of Chardonnay, Pinot and Gamay called ‘Cuvee 910.’ 831 is the area code for the vineyard.



The Producer:

Founded in 2017, ‘Subject to Change’ has turned out to be a prescient name for Alex Pomerantz’s ever shifting business. He started with two other friends but the partnership didn’t really work out and then he started working with a winemaker buddy and that... also didn’t work out. They began working in a winery that was just too small so they moved to a new one in the Russian River valley which... didn’t work out. They’ve rebranded three times and they’re about to move to the third winery but Alex says “We’re really hitting our stride.” Subject to Change is an impressive project that processes 200 tons a year with a three person team. That’s just an astounding amount of fruit when compared to most other California natural wine producers. Half what they do is for other folks split across custom crush work and private labels for distributors, local wine shops and even Whole Foods. For their own wines, they work entirely naturally, spurning even the barest application of sulfite and making a ton of different wines. ‘We always talking about slimming it down,’ Alex says about their multitudinous cuvees, “it never happens, it’s just what we do: make a lot of wines ‘cuz it’s super fun.”

The Vineyard:

Although the goal has always been to buy a vineyard of their own, Subject to Change is just responsible for production at this time. They focus on relationships first and foremost, working with vineyards for which they can be either the majority buyer or sole purchaser, ‘we really choose place, farming and people over variety.’ They focus on

growers with whom they can have a true partnership that gives the growers peace of mind that their hard earned fruit will always have a home and the level of control over farming decisions that Alex feels he needs. All the vineyards they work with are organic with no exceptions and Alex is focused on regenerative agriculture.

“It’s fucking wild dude,” Alex says gleefully of the breathtaking Coastview Vineyard. The 2400 ft mountain top vineyard is located in eastern Monterey surrounded by the Gabilan Mountains in “the absolute middle of nowhere.” From the top of the vineyard one can see clear out to the Monterey bay. The soils are a mix of decomposed granite and limestone and the proximity to the bay makes for a breezy, maritime climate. Purchased in the 90s by John Allen who farms it alongside his son using a holistic approach focused on sustainability. Weeds are kept in check with a large flock of pygmy sheep and artesian spring wells replace conventional irrigation in times of severe drought. Alex calls it “the most unique vineyard that we work with” but unfortunately it is very difficult to access with the vineyard itself located 45 minutes from the front gate of the property off the highway. They love it but it’s simply “waaaay too far way to really handle the logistics of sampling and hauling fruit.”

The Winery:

Wondering “what’s going to have our unique stamp on the pinot,” Alex settled on a riff on Julien Guillot’s red/ white co-ferment ‘Cuvee 910.’ The Pinot and Chard were foot-crushed and co-fermented as whole-clusters. Alex prefers pumpovers for their more gentle extraction, “we don’t do them every day on every wine, it depends on the fermentation arc, how clean the cap is, how ripping the fermentation is and what our team can handle performing.” After 8 weeks maceration the based wines are pressed to 500L puncheons for 10 months aging on gross lees. Racked to blend one month before bottling without fining, filtration or added sulfite.

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