

Subject to Change 'Big Sun Energy' 2018

Producer: Alex Pomerantz

Farming: Demeter certified biodynamic

Provenance: Mendocino

Grape(s): 100% Grenache

Vineyard: 8 acres surrounded by forest on a steep, volcanic slope interspersed with olive trees.

Fermentation/ Aging: Made with a variety of carbonic methods and macerated beyond the carbonic stage for a total of 8 weeks skin contact. Pressed to neutral 225L and 500L barrels for 10 months aging on gross lees. Racked to blend 1 month before bottling.

Fining/ filtration: none.

Sulfite: none added.



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.

The 8 acre Sunhawk Vineyard is part of a 300 acre mountainside property next to Duncan Peak, most of which has been left undisturbed wild forest. The Demeter certified vineyard was established at the turn of the 21st century by sustainability and solar power visionary John Schaeffer. John works with farmer Manuel Martinez whom Alex calls ‘one of the best people I’ve ever worked with.’ “The whole property is absolutely breathtaking,” Alex says, “it’s really about regenerative agriculture.” Comprised of 10 different predominantly Rhone varieties, the steep, volcanic parcel is co-planted with 2,500 olive trees. It’s one of the most challenging sites Alex works with because the different varieties are all intermingled making harvest a real challenge.

The Winery:

“There’s a lot of nuance,” Alex says, “not a blanket x, y and z.” Despite all the variations, there are some technical anchors foremost among them a variety of carbonic methods. “we do the full gamut” Alex says describing the different approaches. Most of the carbonic fermentations are carried out in variable capacity, 1000L-8000L stainless steel tanks that they prime with dry ice. From there they’ll do everything from serious dry-capped (no punchdowns or pumpovers) Beaujolais style carbonic method to hybrid techniques like they’re idea of ‘reverse saignee’ wherein tanks full of whole clusters are topped up with directly whole-cluster pressed juice. For their more effete wines like this Grenache, they’ll extend the maceration past the carbonic phase and through full alcoholic fermentation for as much as 4 weeks. The base wines were pressed to a mix of 225L barrels and 500L puncheons for 10 months aging on gross lees. Racked to blend 1 month before bottling. None of the Subject to Change wines have added sulfite.

For more details email info@OlmsteadWine.com

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