

## BETHEL HEIGHTS FLAT BLOCK

The Flat Block is a three-acre section of our Estate vineyard planted in 1979 on a flat rocky bench in the center of a south-facing slope. The soil is volcanic, very shallow and gravelly. The vines are 100% own-rooted Pommard selection, some of the last own-rooted Pinot noir remaining in the Willamette Valley.

## THE 2019 VINTAGE

In contrast to the previous five vintages which were all dry and quite warm, 2019 started with cool, moist weather in the Spring that persisted into early summer. Even after it warmed up somewhat in mid-summer, we had unusually high levels of humidity, and this continued into a cool, damp Fall. Maturation was delayed and disease pressure, amplified by the humid conditions, challenged growers every step of the way.

Despite these challenges, 2019 had a happy ending. The crop was small, with small berries and lots of intensity. The cool season also allowed us to outperform on hang time. Instead of the normal 100 days, we were able to leave the fruit on the vines for 110 to 120 days without excess sugar accumulation, giving us enhanced depth and complexity.

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Blackberries with strawberries and dried flowers on the nose. Full-bodied with a tight, firm structure and racy tannins that hold back the fruit. Needs time to soften. Very solid and racy.



## 2019 PINOT NOIR • FLAT BLOCK

### *LIVE Certified*

Harvest date: September 27, 2019

Grapes at harvest: Brix: 22.9, pH: 3.1, TA: 7.8 g/L

Finished wine: Alcohol 13.1%, pH: 3.36, TA: 5.6 g/L

Barrel aged 11 months in French oak

40% new barrels

121 cases produced

Bottled unfined August 2020

**VINIFICATION:** The Flat Block fruit was completely destemmed into one 3-ton stainless steel fermentation tank and cold soaked for 3 days prior to the onset of fermentation. To maintain aromatic intensity and complexity we elected to keep our fermentations relatively cool (peak of 80 F) and extraction minimal to preserve freshness and vibrancy. The new wine was pressed at dryness and settled prior to racking to barrel.

**WINEMAKER NOTES:** The Flat Block is the metronome of Bethel Heights, steadily producing the most singular and recognizable wine in our cellar every year. The red fruit aromas always stand in contrast to other parts of our vineyard, as does the elegant, lissome texture on the palate. We have been very fortunate to farm and make wines from this block now going into a fourth decade, and while phylloxera has taken a toll, we remain committed to keeping the old own-rooted vines thriving for as long as we can.