



2006 Syrah,
Cuvée Orleans
Yakima Valley

Composition:	94% Syrah 6% Viognier
Vineyards:	Ciel du Cheval, Red Mountain Boushey Grande Côte Vineyard, Yakima Valley
Alcohol:	14.8%
pH:	3.86
Titrateable Acid:	5.1 gm/litre
Bottling:	April 15, 2008 — 359 cases

WINEMAKER'S NOTES

Cuvée Orleans is our most exclusive bottling, drawn from our very best Syrah barrels in a tribute to Doug's birthplace, New Orleans. The fruit is sourced from two of Washington's finest vineyards, boasting some of the oldest Syrah plantings in the state. Of our five different Syrahs, Cuvée Orleans is focused on elegance, complexity and finesse. The addition of some Viognier to the Syrah fermenters, in the tradition of wines from Côte Rôtie, produces four distinct and often dramatic outcomes: during co-fermentation the white grape enzymes extract even more color (somewhat counterintuitive); the Viognier adds floral aromatics to heighten and intensify the nose; the acidity is increased, which adds finish on the palate and longevity in the cellar; and most significantly the white wine dissolves and integrates the tannins, allowing the fruit to express and leading to a silky and more seductive wine. The combination of the hot, early ripening, intense fruit from Ciel with the elegant, complex, late- and slow-ripened Boushey results in a classic case of the whole being greater than the sum of its parts — a sensuous flood of aromas and flavors.

2006 was a very warm year overall, one of the top three or four in the past ten years. It began with a cool and wet spring that gave way to a long, rather hot summer, resulting in early sugar maturation. Early fall brought cooler weather towards mid-September, helping to extend hang time and sustain good acidity. The sugar to pH ratio was in a fairly typical range, but acids were somewhat higher. Overall, the red wines have good color and depth while the whites are displaying intense fruit flavors. The vintage promises to be very good.

At harvest, the grapes were gently crushed, then fermented in small lots following several days of cold soak, on a variety of yeast strains isolated from the Rhône valley. Caps were manually punched down two or three times per day during active fermentation. When dry, the wine was dejuiced through large stainless steel strainers and gently transferred to French oak barrels, approximately 20% new. This process results in exceptionally focused, high-quality wine low in phenolic solids.

A pioneer of Rhône varietals in Washington State, winemaker Doug McCrea transforms grapes from the finest Yakima Valley, Red Mountain and Columbia Valley vineyards into wines of extraordinary depth, balance, complexity and finesse. Annual Production: 3500 cases of Syrah, Viognier, Grenache, Mourvèdre, Roussanne, and Counoise.

91 pts - Wine Enthusiast: "... McCrea's Boushey/Ciel blend is powerful, but approachable. The black and blue fruit flavors are pure and spiced with something almost minty; the body of the wine is textural and veined with rock, lead pencil and coffee. This wine has the muscle and concentration to go another decade in the cellar." — Paul Gregutt

Washington State's Premier Rhône Varietal Winery

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