

THE LEN EVANS *Tutorial*

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ANDRE BONDAR AWARDED DUX OF LEN EVANS TUTORIAL 2023

On Friday, 3 November, Andre Bondar was announced as the recipient of the Basil Sellers Prize for Dux of the Len Evans Tutorial 2023 (LET) at a presentation lunch at Spicers Guesthouse in the Hunter Valley. James Halliday AM and Basil Sellers AM were both in attendance to present Andre with his award.

Andre, winemaker at McLaren Vale's Bondar Wines, will fly Business Class to Europe with Len Evans Tutorial Principal Sponsor, Singapore Airlines, to visit some of the most famous wine producing regions and producers in the world.

Andre, with his wife Selina, handpicked Shiraz for their first vintage at Bondar in 2012. Andre's wine career began in 2001 at Nepenthe in the Adelaide Hills. He has since spent time in the Northern Rhone at Domaine Allain Graillot. Andre is currently the co-chair of the McLaren Vale Wine Show committee.

Andre said: "What a week and what an honour to be named Dux of the 2023 Len Evans Tutorial. It was every bit as incredible as expected, with great wine after great wine blowing our minds. Every time we walked nervously into the judging room or dinner hall, there was a palpable energy in the air; it was magical. Listening to the tutors discuss the wine and then interrogate us on our thoughts was thrilling and we learnt so much. Listening to the other scholars discuss the wines was also fascinating. There was a huge depth and range of knowledge and opinion with a singular focus on what was in the glass. I do feel incredibly honoured and proud to receive the Dux award. I would like to acknowledge the other eleven scholars though, who all brought a collective positive energy and made the week even more memorable and fun."

Many of the rarest, oldest, and greatest wines were opened in an extraordinary few days from 30 October – 3 November, when 12 Australian wine professionals including sommeliers, educators, trade and winemakers were put through some of most rewarding tastings of their lives.

This year was the 21st rendition of the Tutorial which began in 2001. The 2023 Tutorial featured five judging sessions covering Riesling, Shiraz/Syrah, Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Cabernet et al. Wine highlights from these sessions included a 2015 Egon Müller Scharzhofberger Kabinett, 2018 Domaine Jamet Côte-Rôtie, 2019 Penfolds Reserve Bin 19A, 2021 Stargazer Palisander Vineyard Pinot Noir and 2018 Vasse Felix Tom Cullity.

Masterclasses this year included 'Barolo' led by Jane Faulkner, 'Wendouree' led by Michael Hill-Smith AM MW, 'Champagne Prestige' led by Tyson Stelzer, 'Grenache' led by Steve Pannell and 'A Short Tour of Burgundy' led by Philip Rich, with the coveted 'Domaine de la Romanée-Conti' led by Tom Carson on the Friday morning.

Wine highlights from these masterclasses included 2016 Giacomo Conterno Barolo 'Francia', 1994 Wendouree Cabernet Malbec, 2012 Salon S' Blanc de Blancs Le Mesnil Brut, 2011 Château Rayas Châteauneuf-du-Pape Reserve and 2017 Domaine du Clos de Tart Grand Cru. A new inclusion this year was a session on the History of The Australian Wine Industry presented by Andrew Caillard MW.

The Len Evans Tutorial has proved to be an invaluable training ground for its scholars many of whom have gone on to become wine show chairs, senior wine judges and industry leaders.

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According to new Chair Sally Evans: My father's vision was all about evolving the skills - tasting, wine literacy, understanding of quality - of Australian wine professionals. He achieved many things in his life, but the LET is perhaps his most meaningful legacy.

Basil Sellers AM, Patron of the Len Evans Tutorial said: "The Tutorial's contribution to the Australian wine industry is multi-fold, but most importantly it aims to improve the quality of Australian wine and the calibre of Australian wine professionals."

"The Tutorial presents wines otherwise largely unavailable to the 12 scholars, either because of their price or scarcity. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all those who attend," noted Board Member and founding tutor, James Halliday AM.

The 21st Tutorial included an expanded group of national tutors including Deputy Chair Sarah Crowe, Michael Hill-Smith AM MW, Tyson Stelzer, Tom Carson, Louisa Rose, PJ Charteris, David Bicknell, Amanda Yallop, Sam Connew, James Halliday AM, Jane Faulkner, Jim Chatto, Patrick Walsh, Philip Rich, Mike De Iuliis, Adam Wadewitz, Stuart Hordern, Randall Pollard, Sue Bell, Steve Pannell, Sally McGill, Virginia Willcock, Andrew Caillard MW and Rhys Eather.

252 scholars have now graduated from the Tutorial over two decades and this year included:

Steve Baraglia	Pikes Wines	SA
Andre Bondar	Bondar Wines	SA
Emma Farrelly	The State Buildings	WA
Jack Glover	Accolade Wines	NSW
Liz Heidenreich	Liz Heidenreich Wines	SA
Louella Mathews	Trippas White Group	NSW
Kayleen Reynolds	Prince Wine Store	VIC
Tim Shand	Voyager Estate	WA
Kate Sturgess	Brokenwood Wines	NSW
Alister Timms	Shadowfax Winery	VIC
Matthew Turnbull	A Good Bunch	SA
Penelope Vine	Trader House	VIC

Foundation Sponsors for 2023 include:

Brokenwood, Leeuwin Estate, Shaw + Smith, Tahbilk Wines, Tyrrell's Vineyards & Yalumba Wine Company.

Principal Sponsors for 2023 include:

Brown Brothers Family Wine Group, Cullen Wines, De Iuliis Wines, Deep Woods Estate, Eden Road, Evans Family, Hand Picked Wines, Jackson Family Wines, Joval, Merivale, Mount Pleasant, Pernod-Ricard Winemakers, Riedel The Wine Glass Company, Singapore Airlines, Spicers Guesthouse, Sydney Royal Wine Show, Tapanappa, TarraWarra Estate, The Royal National Capital Agricultural Society, The Royal Queensland Wine Awards, Torbreck Vitners, Trevor Drayton Foundation, Wine Ark, Wirra Wirra & Yarra Yering.

All tuition, accommodation, travel, wine and food is covered by Tutorial sponsors and donors.

Applications for the 2024 tutorial will open in June 2024.

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About the Len Evans Tutorial:

The Len Evans Tutorial was founded by Len Evans AO OBE in 2001. It is a not-for-profit organisation funded entirely by donations and sponsorships from companies and individuals related to the wine industry. All tutors and pourers volunteer their time each year to run the Tutorial.

Board Members: Sally Evans (Chair), Sarah Crowe (Deputy Chair), Tom Carson, Samantha Connew, James Halliday AM, Michael Hill Smith AM MW, Iain Riggs AM

www.lenevanstutorial.com.au

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