

2018 CHARDONNAY

Windsor Oaks Vineyard

Chalk Hill, Russian River Valley

Vineyard

William Knuttel first crushed Windsor Oaks fruit during his tenure as Winemaker/VP at Chalk Hill Estate. The former Balverne Winery site (complete with a prohibition speakeasy!) was re-developed in the 1990s by Vineyard Manager Douglas Lumgair, who has farmed for us ever since. The vineyards are emblematic of the Chalk Hill appellation: hillside plantings on well-drained, gravelly, clay-loam soils, exposed to cool, brisk Russian River Valley breezes. Our Dijon clones hug rolling hills with a southwest exposure.

Winemaking

This Chardonnay synthesizes nearly forty years of winemaking in the style of Burgundy's great whites. Knuttel produced commercial unfiltered Chardonnay (maybe the first in California) at Saintsbury; then, at Chalk Hill Estate, all Chardonnay received the full on treatments utilized in Burgundy, including whole-cluster pressing, barrel fermentation with native yeast in 100% French oak, 100% native malolactic fermentation, *sur lees* aging with weekly *batonage*, and extended aging with a significant percentage of new French oak. Starting with Windsor Oak's meticulously grown fruit, our own practices, complementing those of Windsor Oaks, allow the wine to directly reflect the flavors unique to the vineyard.

Tasting Notes

Creaminess is the all-pervasive character. The complex aromas subtly weave lemon and ripe green apple with notes of key lime, toast and nutmeg. Layers of crème brûlée, caramel, and stone fruits chime in on the palate, highlighting textbook Russian River Valley structure. Lively acidity graces a full bodied, rich and lingering finish, and augurs excellent aging potential.

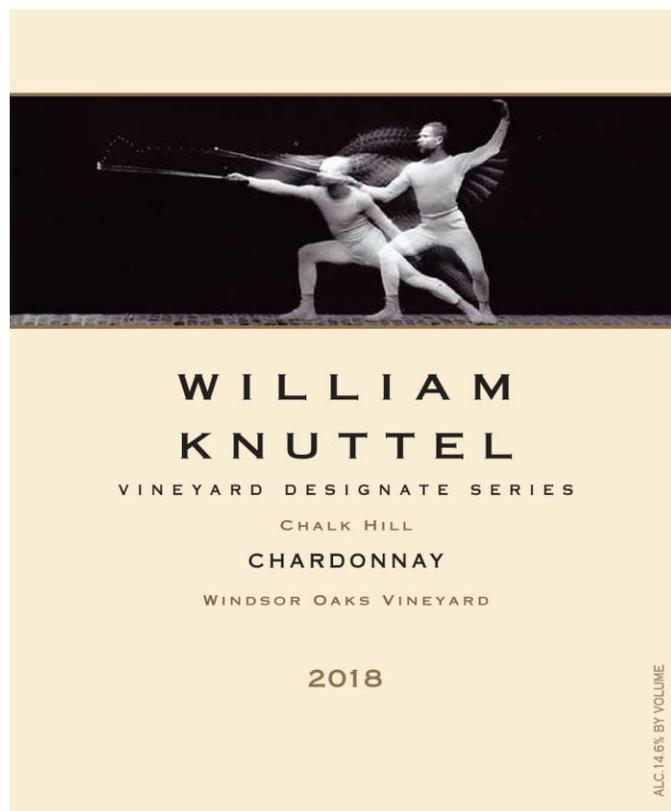
YIELD/BRUX: 2.8 tons/acre at 23.9 Brix

AGING: 18 months in French oak, 50% new, 50% 2 year-old

COOPERAGE: Francois Freres, Damy

TA/pH: 5.7 g/L & 3.72 R.S.: 0.07 g/100ml

CASES: 186 (12 x 750ml)



William Knuttel was formerly Winemaker & Vice President with Chalk Hill Estate from 1996 to 2003, specializing in ultra-premium Cabernet Sauvignon, Chardonnay, & Sauvignon Blanc, and Dry Creek Vineyard's Executive Winemaker from 2003 to 2011. As proprietor of Tria, 1995 to 2003, he produced fine Pinot Noir and Zinfandel. As Saintsbury's winemaker from 1983 to 1996, Knuttel established that brand as a leader in ultra-premium Pinot Noir and Chardonnay.

ABOUT THE LABEL ART:

Designer Jeffrey Caldewey captured William Knuttel's kinetic wine world with Etienne-Jules Marey's 1890 "chronophotograph," in which multiple exposures are superimposed to show the complete motion of "le coup d'eepe." The image metaphorically highlights the balance, finesse, power and poise valued by the wine-maker.