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New Chief Judge takes royal wine show throne

Australia's first capital city wine show of the season has welcomed a new Chief Judge, with experienced winemaker Jim Chatto taking over the reins.

Entries open today for the Royal Queensland Wine Show (RQWS), with Mr Chatto replacing David Bicknell after three years.

Mr Chatto owns Isle Vineyard in Tasmania's Huon Valley and has more than 25 years winemaking experience. He also has more than 20 years experience as a wine judge, holding chair of judges' roles at other capital city and regional wine shows.

"I'm really looking forward to this year's Royal Queensland Wine Show - a show with a great history, but with a real eye to the future," Mr Chatto said.

"We are continually evolving the show, so the results have real relevance to both producers and wine lovers.

"We've assembled a great team of judges this year from all walks of wine life including winemakers, sommeliers, restaurateurs, retailers and educators.

"This casts a broad net towards finding, and celebrating, the very best of Australian wine."

Also new to the competition this year is the addition of provenance classes for red and white varieties, where winemakers can enter three different vintages of the same label.

Mr Chatto said he was particularly looking forward to the new classes.

"The provenance classes celebrate some of the most important and inspiring facets of truly great wine - the consistency of quality and personality over time, and deliciousness with that fascinating sense of the familiar," he said.

The RQWS is also celebrating one of the industry's finest, naming its prestigious Grand Champion Wine of Show trophy after Angelo Puglisi - known as 'the father of the Queensland wine industry.'

Mr Puglisi was instrumental in establishing a modern wine industry in Queensland beginning in the 1960s, when he planted recognised wine grape varieties at his family-owned Ballandean Estate Wines in the Granite Belt. Previously, wine in Queensland had largely been made from table grapes.

Mr Puglisi said the Queensland wine industry had been his life for more than 50 years and it was an honour to have the Grand Champion trophy named after him.



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"I hope the award encourages people in the wine industry to always strive to do their best and create the best wines that reflect their region," Mr Puglisi said.

The winner of the Angelo Puglisi Grand Champion Wine of Show will also be awarded a \$12,000 RNA fellowship to be used for travel, training and education to further their winemaking skills.

Winemakers will also have the opportunity to showcase their top drops to more than 900 consumers at the Royal Queensland Food and Wine Show's (RQFWS) Grape Grazing event on Friday July 12.

Entries must be in by Friday 3 May with judging taking place from Monday 1 July and the winners to be announced at an awards presentation on July 12, prior to Grape Grazing.

To enter go to rqfws.com.au

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MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

Veronica Carew
General Manager Communications
Ph: 07 3253 3930/ 0408 323 631
Email: vcarew@rna.org.au

Nicole Clifton
Media and Communications Officer
Ph: 07 3253 3931/ 0417 451 775
Email: nclifton@rna.org.au