



2019 NEW YORK WINE CLASSIC JUDGES

Lorraine Hems, Head Judge, CS, WSET Advanced Diploma, CWE and CSS, AWS CW

Lecturer at Rochester Institute of Technology; Author, Passport to the World of Wines

Lorraine Hems has been involved in the wine and spirits industry for over 35 years. She has experience in retail, wholesale, and education. She is a Lecturer of beverage courses in the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department at the Rochester Institute of Technology. She authored a workbook, *Passport to the World of Wines*, and obtained her Master's Degree in Service Leadership and Innovation from RIT. Lorraine was involved in the opening, hiring, staff training, class development and teaching when the New York Kitchen (formally New York Wine & Culinary Center) in Canandaigua, NY opened in 2006. She continues to teach there. She was a member of the team that delivered the New York Wine and Grape Foundation's Industry Education and Training Grant across New York in 2008.

Lorraine helped start the Rochester chapter of the national organization Women for WineSense in 1999 and received their Lifetime Achievement Award in California in 2012. The NYWGF presented her with their Consumer Award in 2016. She has judged at the New York Wine and Food Classic for years, competitions on the west coast, and in Chile (Catad'Or) and Argentina (La Mujer Elige 2012). Camp Good Days and Special Times awarded her their Teddi Award and Ring of Honor award for her work on their Finger Lakes International Wine Competition and dinner auction. Lorraine served as the Head Judge of the competition in 2017 after judging there for over 15 years. She is a resource for radio, newspapers, magazines, books and the trade. Her researching and presenting (on topics including the Finger Lakes and rest of New York wine industry) have taken her to Argentina, Australia, Chile, Croatia, France, Germany, Italy, the Bahamas, Canada and many domestic locations.

Mollie Battenhouse, MW

National Director of Wine Education of Jackson Family Wines

After graduating in the top of her class at The Culinary Institute of America, Mollie went on to work at acclaimed restaurants like Payard Patisserie and Bistro and Pondicherry in New York City. Her move into wine began with a part-time job at Joshua Wesson's Best Cellars wine shop in Manhattan. Battenhouse found her home in wine at the store; what started as a part-time gig turned into an eight-year tenure. She returned to the restaurant world to work as head sommelier at Tribeca Grill, where she was responsible for maintaining a Wine Spectator Grand Award-winning wine list. Following Tribeca Grill, Mollie moved to the distribution side of the business, and became the Director of Sales and Business Development for V.O.S. Selections in New York and New Jersey. The Education side of the business came calling, and Mollie went to work for Jackson Family Wines in 2016, where she is currently the National Director of Wine Education. Mollie is also an Advanced Sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers. In her free time, Mollie is a WineRing Wine Expert, she teaches classes at The International Wine Center, swims, and trains for half-marathons.

Dan Belmont

Wine & Cheese Specialist, Brand Ambassador of Bedales Wines

From the US to the UK, the restaurant floor to the conference stage – Dan has been a constant advocate and friend to the New York State wine industry. He has worked as a brand ambassador and hospitality consultant for several notable Finger Lakes producers. He found his calling as an educator at Murray's Cheese where he was

an affineur, cheesemonger, and education manager. He has logged thousands of classroom hours thrilling guests with his unique brand of wine & cheese education on both sides of the Atlantic. He currently lives with his wife in London, based at the famed Borough Market, where he continues to advocate for NYS wines, leading tastings & events – and connecting NYS producers with fine wine importers and distributors. He has been featured by *The Independent*, *The Dr. Oz Show*, *Playboy*, *ABC World News Now*, *Imbibe Magazine*, *Interpreting Wine*, *The New York Times*, *Time Out NY*, *Vine Pair*, and more! Certified Level-3 with the Wine & Spirits Education Trust. www.danbelmont.com Instagram @dbcheesynewyork

Yannick Benjamin

Head Sommelier, University Club; Co-Founder, Wheeling Forward

Yannick is the Head Sommelier at the University Club and an Advanced Sommelier with the Court of Master Sommeliers. He is a proud New Yorker born into a family of French restaurateurs who knew that hospitality was his calling from a young age. Yannick worked at Le Cirque, Oceana, Jean-Georges, and Atlas before becoming a sommelier at Felidia and Atelier at the Ritz-Carlton. In 2003, a car accident left Benjamin paralyzed below the waist and he quickly adapted, outfitting his wheelchair with a table that allows him to work the floor as a sommelier. Benjamin met his best friend Alex Elegudin in rehab and they co-founded Wheeling Forward, a powerhouse nonprofit driving progress in the disability community. Today, Wheeling Forward helps hundreds of New Yorkers get back to living active lives with the resources, community, and inspiration they need to make their dreams a reality. As a way to support Wheeling Forward, Yannick created Wine on Wheels - one of New York City's largest and most exciting wine events. Wine on Wheels brings together hundreds of esteemed sommeliers volunteering to pour over 180 wines from around the world for charity. Yannick is also a para-athlete and competes in marathons to raise money for Wheeling Forward. As an accomplished sommelier, Yannick has competed in more than 20 major sommelier competitions. He is a two-time national finalist in Top Somm hosted by The Guild of Court of Master Sommelier, a three-time 1st place winner of the Northeast Region of the Chaîne des Rotisseurs, grand champion of the 5th Annual Somm Slam at ICC, 2nd Best Sommelier in America 2007, and placed 3rd overall in the National La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs Concours des Jeunes Sommeliers. Yannick has been recognized among Wine Enthusiast's Top 40 under 40 and was named Person of the Year by New Mobility Magazine in 2017. He is currently the resident sommelier on the hit radio show "On The Town with Michael Riedel" on AM 970 The Answer and has made multiple appearances on ABC, NBC, and CBS. In 2015, Yannick starred in "Uncorked," a documentary series about sommeliers on Esquire TV. Jancis Robinson of the Financial Times calls Benjamin "the new star of New York's gastronomic firmament" and The Wine Spectator talks about Benjamin revealing a "kinder, gentler side of the profession." The story of Yannick's journey and the success of Wheeling Forward have been featured in the Wall Street Journal, Village Voice, Wine Spectator, Financial Times, and Forbes.

Jill Blume

Enology Specialist, Purdue University

As the Enology Specialist for the Purdue Wine Grape Team, Jill Blume performs laboratory and sensorial analyses on wine and juice samples from Indiana wineries. She produces experimental wine made from grapes grown at Purdue's vineyards. She teaches and supervises students on winemaking techniques and wine analysis. Jill coordinates Extension workshops and the Indy International Wine Competition. She also serves as a wine judge for major wine competitions in Michigan, Ohio, California, Florida, Missouri, New York, and Tennessee.

Jim Clarke

Writer and Speaker; Marketing Manager for Wines of South Africa

Jim writes about wine, beer, and spirits for several publications both trade and consumer; he is a regular contributor at Wine Enthusiast, Bloomberg, the World of Fine Wine, and Beverage Media as well as a columnist at Wine Review Online. Jim has spoken or lectured at several events including TexSom and the American Wine Society Conference. He trained as a sommelier and was formerly the wine director at Megu New York for five

years and then the Armani Ristorante for two. Today in addition to his writing Jim is also the U.S. Marketing for Wines of South Africa (WOSA), a levy-supported organization devoted to promoting South African wine exports.

Vitalii Dascaluic, CS, CSW, WSET Advance Diploma

Sommelier, La Compagnie (Des Vins Surnaturels)

Vitalii was born and raised in Moldova, the country that holds the world's record for the largest wine collection (1.5 mln bottles in one cellar) as well as the largest wine cellar (over 50 miles of underground galleries). There, he was first exposed to the culture of wine by working in his family's vineyards and made his first barrel of wine at the age of 16. He started working in the restaurant business after moving to the United States. He was able to taste wines from around the world and soon realized how diverse and terroir specific wines can be. It was an eye-opening experience that truly ignited his passion for wine. His first 'Aha' wine experience was a bottle of Chateau Musar Blanc 1996. Currently, Vitalii works as a sommelier at Compagnie des Vins Surnaturels NYC as well as a Wine Educator at Murray's Cheese, Astor Center and City Wine Tours. Vitalii is also a wine judge with The Ultimate Wine Challenge, The International Wine Competition and The NY Wine Classic.

Amy Devahastin

Associate Director of Beverage and Sommelier, Rainbow Room

Amy was born in Bangkok and raised in New York City. She has 23 years of hospitality experience. Amy has a true passion for food and wine. Aside from serving as body and soul nourishers, she believes they bring people together, open-up doors, break barriers, and make us feel alive. Prior to her current position at Rainbow Room, Amy worked as beverage manager for multiple restaurants with BR Guest Hospitality. Before BR Guest, Amy was a wine representative for two years selling wine from South Africa, California, Spain, and France to New York City's restaurants and wine shops. It was during this time that she caught the wine bug.

Carrie Dykes

Wine Writer

Carrie is a wine writer living in the Hudson Valley. Her byline can be found in Wine Enthusiast Magazine, SevenFifty Daily, WineTraveler, Hudson Valley Wine Magazine, Chronogram, InCider Japan and The Cork Report. She served as the Virginia wine reviewer at Wine Enthusiast for a number of years and continues to beat the drum for Virginia and other unsung wine regions. She uses the blind tasting skills learned while earning WSET Diploma when she is judging wines for the IWSC and Concours Mondial de Bruxelles among other panels.

Doug Frost, MW, MS

Wine Consultant and Writer

Doug Frost is a Master of Wine and Master Sommelier as well as an author and wine consultant based in Kansas City, Missouri. Frost is one of four individuals in the world to hold simultaneously the Master of Wine and Master Sommelier titles, achieving his MS in 1991 and MW in 1993. In 1991 he passed the rigorous Master Sommelier examination and two years later became America's eighth Master of Wine. He was the second person in history to complete both exams and a quarter century later he is still *one of only four people in the world* to have achieved both these remarkable distinctions. According to *USA Today*, "Frost likely knows as much as anyone in the world about how to make, market, serve and identify wines." He consults with many retailers, restaurateurs, wineries and distillers in the realms of marketing, merchandising, sales, education and sensory perception. Mr. Frost lives with his wife and two children in Kansas City, where he spends his spare time listening to his massive punk rock, vintage jazz and weird music collection.

Chris Gerling

Manager, Vinification & Brewing Laboratory, Cornell AgriTech

Chris Gerling is an Extension Associate at the Cornell AgriTech @ NYSAES in Geneva, NY. He works with the New York beverage industries to create educational programs that support the growth and improved quality of premium wines, ciders and distilled spirits throughout the state. He is the manager of the Vinification & Brewing

Technology lab, where fermentations are conducted for research projects and applied trials; and the New York Wine Analytical Lab, where products may be submitted for troubleshooting, routine analysis or sensory appraisal. He also organizes and conducts workshops and seminars that focus on production and analytical techniques for farm-based beverages.

Michael Godel

Wine Director, Barque Smokehouse (Toronto) & Wine Critic, Wine Align

Michael Godel is a Principal Critic at WineAlign.com and processes his thoughts about wine, travel, music and pop culture at godello.ca. Godello hung up his 25 year-old chef's apron and is currently wine director at Toronto's Barque Smokehouse and Barque Butcher Bar. Godel is Canada's ambasciatore and educator for Chianti Classico and is a judge for the annual WineAlign National Wine Awards of Canada, The Ontario Wine Awards and TexSom. He lives in Toronto with his wife of 23 years and three children.

Mary Gorman-McAdams, MW

Director, International Wine Center

Mary, as Director of International Wine Center, oversees all the school's activities with a focus on optimizing the learning experience for students. She is an IWC instructor for the WSET Level 3 and the WSET Diploma Level 4. Her specialties are Bordeaux Wines and Champagne and sparkling wine. Based in New York, Mary is also a wine consultant, educator and wine judge. She has worked as the Bordeaux Wine Council's market advisor for North America, where she led its marketing and education programs focused on growing the North American Market for Bordeaux wines. Mary successfully completed the WSET Diploma at International Wine Center back in June 2003. She became a Master of Wine in 2011. During her MW studies Mary was awarded both the Trinity Champagne Scholarship and the Constellation Brands scholarships. In the MW Exam, she won the Errazuriz trophy for the top performance on the subject of the Business of Wine. Mary served on the board of the Society of Wine Educator's (2012-2014) and is a regular speaker at its annual conference. She is a founding advisory board member of SommCon Wine Conference and Winebow's annual Women in Wine Leadership Symposium.

Bill Mahoney

Wine Manager for Premium Wine & Spirits

Bill Mahoney is the Wine Manager for Premium Wine & Spirits, one of the country's largest independently owned wine retailers located in Buffalo, New York. Appearing regularly on local television, Bill also serves as company spokesperson for his store and two other locations that are members of the nationally recognized Premier Group. Since joining Premier in 1995, Bill has earned a degree in Interdisciplinary Wine Studies and traveled extensively throughout Europe, South America, South Africa and the U.S. He regularly volunteers his time conducting community education wine classes and emcees many charitable fundraisers throughout Western New York. Bill has hosted California wine trips for AAA and The Travel Team and been featured in the Buffalo News as a locally acclaimed wine consultant. He has also been a professional wine judge in several competitions since 2003, is a frequent speaker on beverage alcohol retailing, and co-founded the Buffalo Wine Institute in 2006.

Anna Katharine Mansfield

Associate Professor of Enology, Cornell

Dr. Anna Katharine Mansfield is an Associate Professor of Enology at Cornell University, with a research background in wine flavor chemistry and sensory evaluation. She has judged national and international wine competitions for 14 years and enjoys teaching winemakers practical sensory science.

Lauren Mowery

Contributing Editor for Wine Enthusiast

Lauren Mowery is an award-winning writer, photographer, and blogger who has contributed wine- and spirits-related travel content to publications like Fodors.com, Lonely Planet, Voyeur (Virgin Australia's inflight

publication), *Forbes*, *USA Today*, *Men's Journal* and *TimeOut*, among others. Pursuing her Master of Wine certification, she has also been a regular wine and spirits writer for *Tasting Panel*, *Somm Journal*, *Punch* and *SevenFifty Daily*.

Dominick Purnomo

Wine Director/Owner, dp An American Brasserie & Yono's Restaurant

Dominick grew up in his family's restaurant working alongside his parents at an early age before going on to State University of New York at Morrisville to pursue a degree in Hotel & Restaurant Management. Upon finishing Morrisville in 2000, Purnomo came back to Albany to work in the family business and took over the day to day operations. It was then that he discovered a true passion for wine. After having dined in some of the world's finest restaurants such as Charlie Trotter's in Chicago, Aureole in Las Vegas, and Lespinasse in New York, Purnomo wanted to bring a world class wine program to Albany, more specifically to Yono's. In 2005 Purnomo was elected to his first of two, two-year terms as the President of the Greater Capital District of the New York State Restaurant Association, the youngest President in the history of the state organization. Dominick was a national finalist for the Best Young Sommelier Competition, has been nominated for a James Beard Award for his wine program on 3 occasions. His wine list has been praised by Wine Spectator since 2004 as a Best of Award of Excellence winner and has recently been named one of the 300 greatest wine lists in the world, receiving the 3-star award from The World of Fine Wine. Under his direction, Yono's was named one of the Top 100 restaurants in America by OpenTable for two consecutive years. Dominick was generously recognized for his leadership and business achievements as a 40 Under 40 by the Albany Business Journal and for his sartorial efforts as one of the #BestDressedSoms by GQ Magazine. Mr. Purnomo has presented at the Desmond American Wine Festival, Albany Wine & Dine for the Arts, Nantucket Wine Festival, Martha's Vineyard Wine Festival and the Finger Lakes Wine Festival. He has served on the esteemed wine teams for the James Beard House, Burdigala, Reboule de Rhône, La Tablee & Wine on Wheels alongside the most accomplished sommeliers in America.

Erin Scala, DWS

Owner, In Vino Veritas Fine Wines

For the better part of a decade, Erin worked in New York City at several Michelin star restaurants, notably JoJo, PUBLIC, and The Musket Room. In 2014, she returned to her home state of Virginia to run the wine programs at local downtown restaurants. Today, she works with the Common House wine program and since 2017, she's owned [In Vino Veritas Fine Wines](#), a wine retail shop in Keswick, Virginia. Erin writes the thinking-drinking wine blog, produces audio essays for the I'll Drink to That wine podcast, and consults about wine privately and commercially through her company, ThinkBev. Her articles about wine have been published in *The Washington Post*, *Wine & Spirits*, *Wine & Country Living*, *Knife & Fork magazine*, and *The C-Ville Weekly*. Named one of Wine Enthusiast's 40 Under 40 wine professionals to watch, her wine list at Fleurie won a Wine Spectator "Best of Award of Excellence" in 2016 and 2017. Erin received a James Beard Rhône Rangers Travel Study Grant to study Rhône varieties in California in 2016.

Gina Shay, CS, CSW

Business Development – Greater North America, Tonnellerie Cadus Barrels & Regional Cork Correspondent, [New York Cork Report](#)

Gina is a certified sommelier and Certified Specialist of Wine with 17 years of experience working with wineries in cooler- and cold-climate regions, first as a supplier of corks and other top-of-the-bottle packaging; then with Petraea Plus, the first cool climate-dedicated barrel company in the U.S.; and now with Tonnellerie CADUS as Business Development Manager for the eastern U.S., Midwest U.S. and Canada. She has served since 2016 on the board of the Michigan Wine Collaborative as the chair of the Membership/Communications committee, helping to grow awareness of Michigan wines throughout the state and across the nation. Gina is also a regional correspondent covering Michigan for The New York Cork Report.

Lenn Thompson

Wine Columnist, Suffolk Times/northforker.com/Founder, thecorkreport.us/Podcaster

Lenn, a proud Pittsburgh, PA native, moved to Long Island nearly 20 years ago and quickly fell in love with the region's dynamic and emerging wine community. A digital and content marketing professional by day, he founded NewYorkCorkReport.com in early 2004 to

share his passion for the wines, beers and spirits of New York State. Quickly, the site became the premier source for independent New York wine commentary, reviews and news. In 2016, he expanded his reach, launching TheCorkReport.us to add coverage of wine from the rest of the East Coast and Midwest, including Virginia, Maryland, Michigan and beyond. Formerly the editor of the Long Island Wine Gazette, a contributor to Edible Brooklyn and Edible East End, wine columnist for Hamptons.com and regional editor for Appellation America covering the Long Island and Hudson River Valley regions, Lenn contributes to SevenFifty Daily, Beverage Media and is the wine columnist for The Suffolk Times. Lenn is also on the board of directors for Drink Local Wine, and is the creator and founder of TasteCamp, a yearly regional wine immersion event for writers and bloggers.

An admitted Riesling and Cabernet Franc fanatic, he's intensely passionate about eating drinking local and the many local wine regions of America. Lenn lives in Miller Place, NY with his wife Nena, son Jackson, daughter Anna and trusty dogs Casey and Hines.

Alice Wentworth

Wine Buyer, Northside Wines & Spirits

Alice has been at Northside Wine and Spirits for 18 years and the primary Finger Lakes wine buyer for over 10 years. Over the past several years she has visited most of the wineries in the Finger Lakes area and has built strong relationship with many owners and winemakers. Based on these visits she's created a Finger Lakes database for the use of Northside employees to gain further knowledge about the local wines, not only for them but our customers.

Amy Zavatto

Wine Writer

Amy writes about wine and spirits for *Imbibe*, *Liquor.com*, *Men's Journal*, *Beverage Media*, *SevenFifty Daily*, *Budget Travel*, *Hamptons*, *Shape*, for whom she is also part of the *Shape* Brain Trust, and many others. She is the author of *Prosecco Made Me Do It: 60 Seriously Sparkling Cocktails*, as well as *Forager's Cocktails: Botanical Mixology with Fresh, Natural Ingredients*, *The Architecture of the Cocktail*, *The Complete Idiot's Guide to Bartending*, and co-author of *The Renaissance Guide to Wine & Food Pairing*. She holds the Level III Certificate from the Wine & Spirits Education Trust. A native of eastern Long Island, Amy is a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier and a board member of the Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden. She lives, drinks, and eats in New York City.