



wine
Richard Watson

Chardonnay has 3 different faces

What is the taste of Chardonnay? This grape produces what the world in general admires to be the greatest of the white wines. Some lovers of Riesling will dispute this, but they can be discounted as a perplexing minority. The Chardonnay reigns supreme wherever it is grown, and it is grown throughout the world: the Finger Lakes in New York, in Napa, in Australia, Italy, Argentina and many other places.

But it is in France that the grape reaches its quintessence. Certainly if consistency is a factor in wine production France must be known as the true home for the grape. Its known production goes back into the 12th century. (Compare that with the few decades that wine has been produced in California.)

Not only does France produce the greatest wines from Chardonnay, it also produces the greatest variety of style of the wine. To answer the opening question of this article, it depends on which Chardonnay one drinks.

HERE ARE, essentially, three possible answers.

The first "taste" is that found in the glorious Cote d'Or of north-central Burgundy, principally from the Cote de Beaune. Here are found the great names of the French White Burgundies: Meursault, the various Montrachets and Corton-Charlemagne.

The wines of this region, as well as those to the north in the Cote de Nuits, are characterized as mouth-filling, rich, buttery; full of earthy elements and highly complex in nature.

The grapes in the Cote d'Or are allowed to mature fully and then are either fermented in oak or are at least

exposed to considerable oak aging following fermentation. From the soils, the wood and the rich fruit come vines of incredible profundity, full of nuances and depth. Associative names are given to the properties of these tastes: wild figs, apples, melons and rich cream among them. The second "taste" of the Chardonnay grape is found only a few miles to the south, still in Burgundy, in the area known as the Macon. Here the wines are dramatically different, owing to weather, soil conditions and the preference of the provincial winemakers.

HERE WOOD is not used in either fermentation or aging, and the wines tend to be harvested with considerably lower levels of sugar. The Maconians want their Chardonnays to be reflective of the true fruit of the grape, a clean, simple, straightforward, direct experience.

And then, some hundred miles to the north, in a colder climate that frequently lacks sufficient sunshine to allow satisfactory ripening, is the region that produces the third "taste" of Chardonnay — Chablis.

Here the preference of the winegrowers is not fruit or butter but steel. The wines, the best of them, from this region are often hard, acidic, unyielding, austere; all of these not especially attractive descriptors. But the wines are great, tremendous backbone, deep character and vigorous body. These are the accompaniments to shellfish and oysters; clean but not simply so.

One may enjoy a Macon, worship a Montrachet, but one loves a Chablis.

So, the taste of Chardonnay? Try them all and choose. I have.

Tom Panzenhagen is on vacation.

"A Lion Is in the Streets" (1933), 1 a.m. Tuesday (late-night Monday) on Ch. 50. Originally 85 minutes. The life of ex-Louisiana governor (and near-dictator) Huey Long inspired no less than two films during the late 1940s and early '50s. In "All the King's Men" (1949) Broderick Crawford won the Best Actor Oscar as the Long-like character. Four years later a middle-aged Jimmy Cagney tackled a similar role in "A Lion Is in the Streets."

The two films, both rarely seen these days, differ in scope. While "All the King's Men" chronicles its protagonist's rise and fall, "Lion" stops when its demigod first reaches the big time. Cagney gives a powerful performance, naturally, with support from John McIntire, Warner Anderson, Barbara Hale and Anne Francis. The director

Performer Steve Mattar featured in U-M musical

Steve Mattar of Bloomfield Hills will perform the role of Bellomy in the University of Michigan Opera Theater production of "The Fantasticks," Aug. 12-15, in Lydia Mendelsohn Theatre, Ann Arbor.

Performances are at 8 p.m. Aug. 12-



second runs
Richard Lech

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

A ratings guide to the movies

Fair \$1
Bad \$2
Good \$3
Excellent \$4

was Raoul Walsh, who earlier had directed Cagney in his last great gangster role, "White Heat" (1949). Rating: \$3.40.

"Sink the Bismarck!" (1960), 11:30 p.m. Monday on Ch. 9. Originally 97 minutes.

The British are just trying up the loose end in the Falkland War, and here's a film about another awesome English naval clash in the Atlantic, this one during World War II. The German

battleship the Bismarck was the biggest warship ever afloat, and the story of how the Royal Navy hunted it down — only after it sank a couple of British battleships — makes for an exciting, near-documentary film, taken from a book by C.S. Forester. The film's star, Kenneth More, may have survived the Bismarck's big guns, but he succumbed to a fatal heart attack in real life several weeks ago. Rating: \$3.10.

"The Big Broadcast of 1938" (1938), 1 p.m. Tuesday on Ch. 50. Originally 80 minutes.

Long before "The Love Boat" sailed, this film put together a mixed bag of celebrities aboard an ocean liner. While nothing can save "The Love Boat" from its swamp of mediocrity, at least this film had the talents of W.C. Fields and a young Bob Hope to keep it afloat. Amid the musical numbers and

silly plot about a race between super liners, the all-too-brief comedy bits by Fields are like a gust of fresh sea air. And Hope, straight from Broadway in his first film, gets to sing "Thanks for the Memories," which to that day forward would be his theme song. Rating: \$2.20.

"The Old-Fashioned Way" (1934), 1 a.m. Saturday (late-night Friday) on Ch. 50. Originally 65 minutes.

Ah, yes, this is more like it. Undiluted W.C. Fields for those who like his comedy straight, without guest stars, musical numbers and other excess baggage. Well, come to think of it, this film is saddled with one of those boring love affairs between the secondary leads. But the story, about a traveling theatrical troupe around the turn of the century, fits W.C. to a T. As well it should; he wrote the screenplay himself. Rating: \$3.30.

14 and 3 p.m. Aug. 15. Mattar is pursuing a bachelor of musical arts degree at Michigan, where he is a student of Beverly Hinaldi. He recently sang the role of Bette in the school of music production of "Gianni Schicchi." He also was seen in "The

Robber Bridegroom," a production at the Theater Guild of Livonia-Redford. "The Fantasticks" is the longest-running show in American musical history. It was premiered at the Apollo Theatre, London, and soon moved to New York, where it has presented up to sev-

en shows a week for 21 years. Tickets for the U-M production are available at the Lydia Mendelsohn Ticket Office. Hours are noon to 4 p.m. Mondays-Fridays. For ticket information, call 763-5551 from 9 a.m. to noon or 763-1885 from noon to 4 p.m.

Albee's 'The Zoo Story' opens at Attic Theatre

Edward Albee's short melodrama "The Zoo Story" will be presented at midnight Friday-Saturdays at the Attic Theatre in Detroit's Greentown.

"The Zoo Story" is about a young man who uncannily tells himself he drawn into conversation with a stranger in Central Park.

Hal Youngblood plays Peter, a self-satisfied young executive in a book publishing house who is reading on a park bench as the story begins. Gary Andrews plays Jerry, a shabbily dressed, aggressive stranger who insists on striking up a conversation with Peter.

Jerry is returning from a visit to Central Park Zoo where he had hoped to find a parallel for himself in the animal people get along with animals and animals get along with each other.

Tickets are \$5 for general admission and \$4 for senior citizens, students and people get along with animals and animals get along with each other. Attic Theatre subscribers.

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