While my hair somehow didn’t turn grey, it should have considering the 2011 harvest had more nicknames than a rapper – amongst them: “The Summer That Wasn’t”, “Junuary”, and, thankfully, “The Miracle Vintage”. This vintage started late and we trailed normal ripeness indicators by 3-4 weeks all year long. The last two weeks of August and all of September brought warmer than normal temperatures that helped catch us up some. Still, we didn’t receive our first grape until October 4th, with the tease of some Bob Healy Merlot to warm up the crew. Then, due to an early October cool streak, we didn’t receive another block until October 15th, when we picked our first cabernet. The rest of the cabernet came in a flurry over the next 16 days. Thankfully, the end of October could not have been more perfect and dry, and with the threat of frost approaching, we completed harvest on the 1st of November with the McQueen Cabernet.

I’m learning to have a love/hate relationship with these cooler vintages. 2011 was stressful! In late September we weren’t sure if we were even going to have a vintage, but thankfully a few weeks of ideal temperatures in October saved the day. Our vineyards on the southern end of the Walla Walla Valley achieved optimum ripeness. As with most things in life, it takes some adversity to create something special. Our 2011 vintage is a prime example. I tasted over the course of a week and the ’11 continued to open up each day hitting its stride about day four. The wine shows the impeccable balance we look to achieve. Tannins are present but soft, bright red fruit is balanced by crisp acidity, and the long finish leaves you wanting another glass. This is a vintage we will be proud of for years to come (and not just because it’s 11).

Drew Bledsoe ~ PROPRIETOR

WINEMAKER NOTES

The coolest vintage since ’93 and a true vintage to separate the men from the boys in the vineyard. I know, #11…1993…please resist the temptation to extrapolate on the irony until I tell you this. Drew’s decision to focus his fruit sources on the Southern Walla Walla Valley, due to its warmer climate and more feminine fruit profile, paid off enormously. In a year when “generous” and “voluptuous” will apply to very few wines produced in the greater Columbia Valley, the ’11 Doubleback will be a rare exception. The color is saturated and gorgeous. The nose explodes with crushed and sautéed bramble fruit, crème brulee, and a dusting of allspice. The palate is long and sexy, with silk smooth tannin and a lovely background note of toasty French oak. The vibrant acid backbone cuts through its richness ending with a generously long finish. I believe it will be among the finest produced in 2011.

Chris Figgins ~ CONSULTING WINEMAKER

DREW’S TASTING NOTES

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Drew Bledsoe ~ PROPRIETOR

VINEYARD SOURCES

McQueen, Walla Walla Valley
Bob Healy, Walla Walla Valley
Seven Hills, Walla Walla Valley
LeFore, Walla Walla Valley
Waliser, Walla Walla Valley

BLEND PROFILE

90% Cabernet Sauvignon
5% Merlot
4% Petit Verdot
1% Malbec

PRODUCTION

Alcohol: 14.4%
Bottling Date: 7/17/13
Release Date: Early Spring 2014
Retail Price: $89
Cases Produced: 3000

CELLARING RECOMMENDATION: 5 years from vintage year or up to 15-20 years

DOUBLEBACK

PO BOX 518, WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON 99362  phone 509.525.3334  web www.doubleback.com
Chris and Drew go back many years. They grew up a stone’s throw away from each other in Walla Walla some 400 yards from Leonetti Cellar. The two reconnected in early 2007 when Drew made the decision to enter the wine business and selected the world-class wine region and his home town of Walla Walla as his first choice. Chris was certainly at the top of Drew’s list for a winemaker but was unsure of Chris’ interest outside of winemaking for Leonetti. The timing was very serendipitous as Chris had just started Figgins Enological and was looking for the perfect client for his first consulting collaboration. Chris, having a very high respect for Drew, seriously entertained taking on Doubleback as his client and their business relationship became official in the spring of 2007 just as Drew announced his retirement from the NFL. Chris consults on all winemaking and viticulture practices as well as assisted in the vineyard design and planting for McQueen, Drew’s estate vineyard in the Walla Walla Valley. It is a true collaboration from dirt to bottle.

"I have always been intrigued by the entire production process, from vine to bottle, far more than I was about the mere acquisition and consumption. I believe wine is a work of art but it is a work of art that is only truly expressed when it is opened and consumed with friends and family.” — Drew Bledsoe