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Shuhe Hawkins and Kate Larsen have owned and operated Seven Sails since 2013. The pair also organizes the annual Portland Pirate Festival and named their wine label in reference to a seven-sailed "pirate ship" they are restoring. Hawkins will also be featured in "Red, White and Black."

Long before Hawkins ever met Faustin, he was often mistaken for him when he went to wine shops and restaurants on sales calls. Despite their starkly different features, statures, skin tones and personalities, Hawkins says people just couldn't believe there was more than one black guy who owned a vineyard on Germantown Road.

"I'm not actually truly African-American," says Hawkins, whose father was from Barbados. "The irony of it is just too weird. The confusion, I think, is part of the story."

He says, "The industry at large, the face of it, seems to be fairly predominantly Caucasian — quite predominantly — but a bulk of the work is done by people of a variety of ethnicities, so it's already there. It's always been there. There are more people of diverse ethnicity working in wine than anyone even thinks about."

The Oregon Wine Board is the semi-independent Oregon state agency responsible for marketing, researching and supporting the advancement of Oregon wines. It's funded by taxes paid to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission by all of Oregon's winemakers.

Faustin thinks the Oregon Wine Board's website perpetuates the idea that Oregon's wine scene is pretentious and predominantly white.

"Now, I'm in the game for eight years, and I've seen the story, I've heard the story, over and over again, but that's not really the face of Oregon wine. If you're from another state, that's what you're seeing. So when you come out here and see me," he says, "to me, I feel it makes my story even more difficult to believe — if that's the image that we're putting out."

A quick inventory of images displayed on Oregon Wine Board's website confirmed Faustin's perception — photos throughout portrayed a very white Oregon wine scene.

When asked about the lack of diversity on its website, Oregon Wine Board spokesperson Michelle Kaufmann told Street Roots, "Everyone who is featured in our photographs are people that live here and work here. These are not staged photographs."

"We are open to all people, of all ethnicities, all minority groups, as long as they're interested in wine. Most Oregon wine sells for more than \$14 a bottle, as long as that's the price point that they realize they're getting into, we welcome everyone," she says.

It's the price point of Oregon wines, she says, that "is going to sort of segment the consumer audience that would be interested in our wines."

Another Oregon winemaker, André Mack, worked as a sommelier in Texas, New York and Napa Valley, Calif., before launching his own label in Oregon. Today he's the proprietor of Mouton Noir, or Black Sheep — a nickname other sommeliers gave him when he arrived in New York. His portfolio includes O.P.P., also known as Other People's Pinot — both gris and noir, Knock on Wood Chardonnay and Love



PHOTO BY DIEGO DIAZ

The "Red, White and Black" film crew on set at Bertony Faustin's vineyard, about 20 minutes northwest of Portland on Germantown Road.

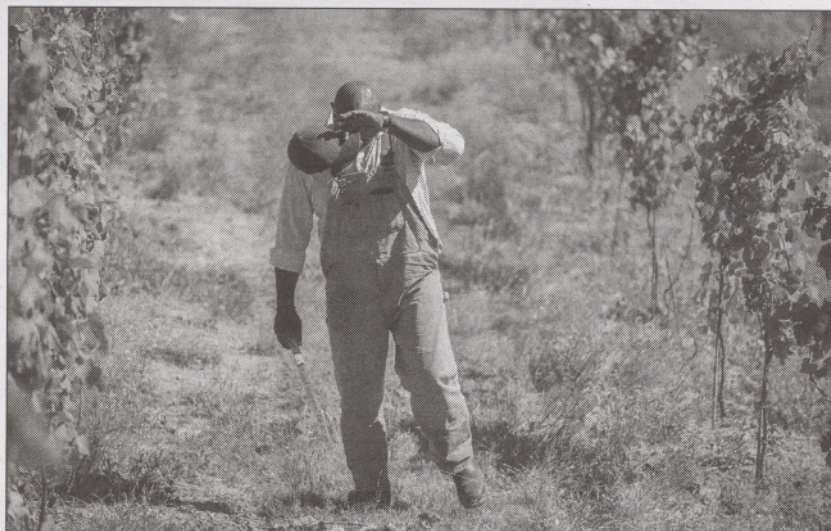


PHOTO BY DIEGO DIAZ

Bertony Faustin walks between rows of grapevines at his 15-acre vineyard. Due to the property's zoning, he transports the grapes to his tasting room 15 minutes away in North Plains, where he turns them into his line of Abbey Creek wines.

Drunk Rosé.

Mack's wines are sold in 47 states and 13 countries but are not currently available in Oregon because he's looking for a new distributor, he says.

As an African-American in the wine business, he says he's been an anomaly wherever he's worked, and that the face of Oregon's wine scene is not unique. When he worked as a sommelier, he says it was

typical for restaurant guests to ask for him, but then not recognize him as a sommelier when he arrived tableside, asking them if they were ready to talk about wine.

"They would say, 'Yeah. We're waiting for the sommelier,'" he remembers. He says he liked to have fun with the situation — sometimes he'd spin in a circle and then say, "Ta-dah."

"Fine wine, by its nature, is elitist," Mack says. "It's only grown in certain areas, the finished product is expensive; land is expensive. It generally gravitates to the haves and have nots — wine at the top level — and I think that's what most people see."

The first time he visited a vineyard in Napa Valley, he was already a sommelier, but regardless, he says he was slightly intimidated. Once he realized he was among farmers, he felt more at ease.

"It's not this pretentiousness that wine is portrayed as," he says. "I think a lot of people of color, for a lot of us, we have to see people like us doing those things to see that we can do them by assimilation."

When Faustin approached him about the film project, he says his initial reaction was, "Oh, wow. There are other African-American people in the wine business in Oregon besides myself!"

But the film doesn't focus solely on black winemakers. Faustin wanted to include other minority winemakers, as well as members of the LGBTQ community.

"I can't hide that I'm black," Faustin says. "Whether that affects you or not, you roll with it, but imagine a lesbian or gay person, being Caucasian, and not knowing if they should make that known. Imagine the internal stress that you have."

Also featured is Hispanic vintner Jesus Guillen, who made headlines in 2013 when his wines received high scores from The Wine Advocate; he tied the highest score ever given to an Oregon pino noir for his 2009 vintage.

According to The Oregonian, Guillen was the only Mexican winemaker in the state at that time. He started in the industry as a vineyard laborer at White Rose Estates. When he met the owner, he expressed an interest in learning more and was offered a job in the cellar. In 2008, he became the estate's winemaker.

Guillen says his experience in the Oregon wine industry has been positive, and he's received a lot of help and encouragement along the way. He says he hopes the documentary will "let the younger minority boys and girls know that there is an opportunity in the industry for them."

"The industry here is very friendly for anyone who wants to work in it," Guillen says. "If you know what you want, no matter what your race, you will find people that will help you achieve your goals, and that's what happened for me."

Faustin chose Jerry Bell Jr. to direct the documentary. Bell retired from a 16-year career with Intel about a year and a half ago to focus on acting and filmmaking. This will be his first feature-length film and the first film he's directed and produced.

Bell says he aspires not only to show there is a diverse range of people making wine but to educate people about the wine process so they are more familiarized with it, as well. "Also kind of loosen up that intimidation factor for a lot of people."