

Furioso Vineyards | Dundee, Oregon | Waechter Architecture

# Wine Time

A signature building combines functions formerly scattered throughout an estate.

BY RANDY GRAGG

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LARA SWIMMER

In the Willamette Valley wine industry's furious climb to global prominence, its winery architecture has rarely striven to match the terroir. Visitors swished the latest vintages, at best, in humble industrial sheds and generic storefronts—and, at worst, in faux-Tuscan knock-offs and Pacific-Northwest lodges. But on Worden Hill Road in Dundee, Oregon, where some of the oldest vines grow, Portland-based Waechter Architecture, a 2016 Record Vanguard firm, recently completed a winery rehab for Furioso Vineyards that, in its synthesis of drama and modesty, stands with the handful of new architectural works worthy of the landscape and the pinot noir.

The vineyard itself is one of the valley's most storied. It began as the Juliard Vineyards, with some of Oregon's first and, soon, most sought-after pinot noir grapes cloned from the French Pommard and Swiss Wädenswil regions. When Washington, D.C., developer Giorgio Furioso bought the vineyard in 2014, the winery was classic valley non-architecture: a pinkish-red roadside shed that could have easily been mistaken for a village volunteer fire department.

But with his vines sweeping downward from the shed's south side, Furioso, a onetime art professor, had high aesthetic ambitions: to create a tasting room that “nestled, like a bird's nest” into the vineyard but that also “put you in the middle of the wine-making.” Oh, and he wanted to reuse the existing building and continue making wine in it while the new winery was being built.

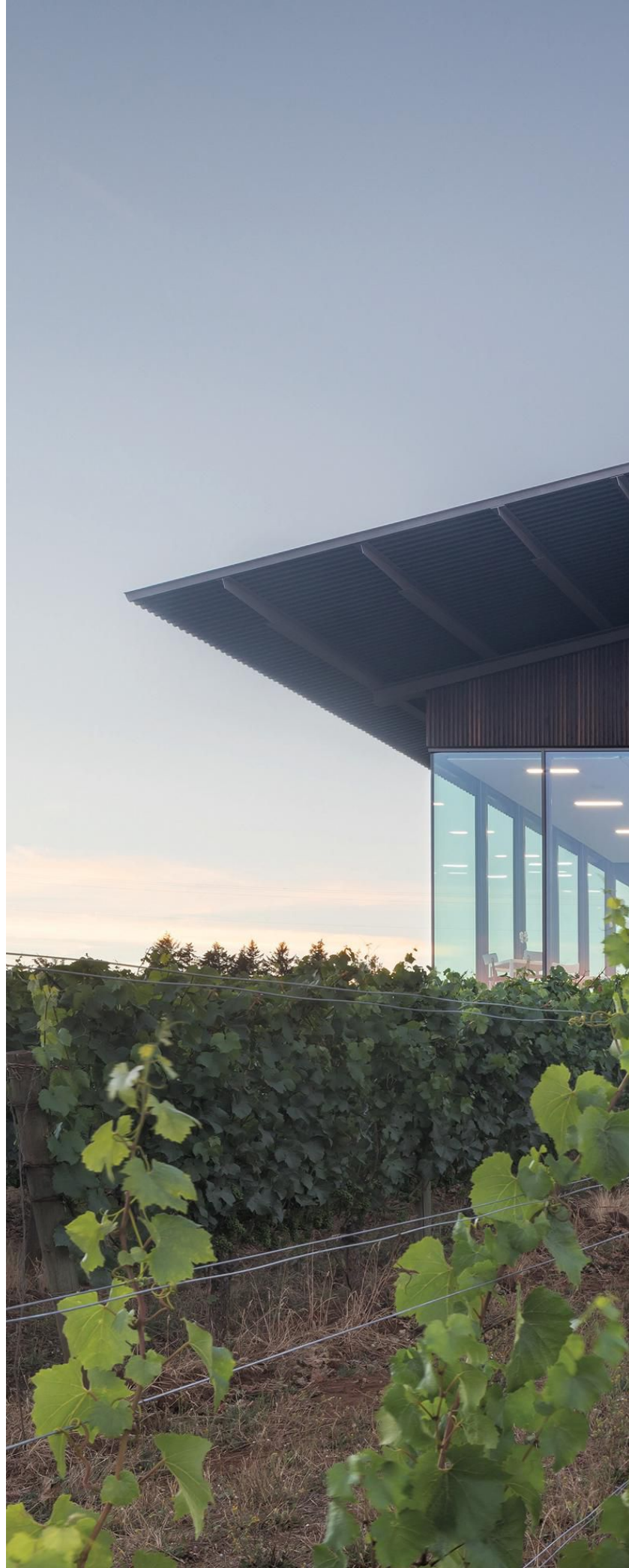
Out of these seemingly irreconcilable goals and limitations, Ben Waechter and project manager Rand Pinson conjured a distinguished work of Oregon roadside winery architecture.

Waechter distilled the design into four basic parts: base, two middles, and a top. A concrete plinth covers a subterranean barrel room and provides the floor for the tasting room, a loggia-cum-crush pad where the grapes are pressed, and an adjacent “piazza.” The team wrapped the old building and a new equipment room in a 2-by-2-inch cedar screen, prefinished with a light Shou Sugi Ban-style charring. The tasting room is enclosed by 14-foot-high glass panels, hung on 6-by-6-inch steel columns. The ensemble is topped by two slightly offset, deeply cantilevered roof planes of 6-inch-deep corrugated steel.

“There's nothing really fancy about the building,” Waechter says. “It's a straightforward board-and-batten system, glass, and a metal roof.”

Yet the modesty gains its considerable muscle with a few simple moves. Backed by cedar boards around the original building, the screen becomes a tight board-and-batten siding, but around the equipment room it's left open for ventilation and backlit at night for an ethereal effect. Held 2 feet aloft from the walls by recessed steel posts and cantilevering up to 14 feet, this otherwise simple gable roof appears to hover like, as Waechter puts it, “a flying carpet.”

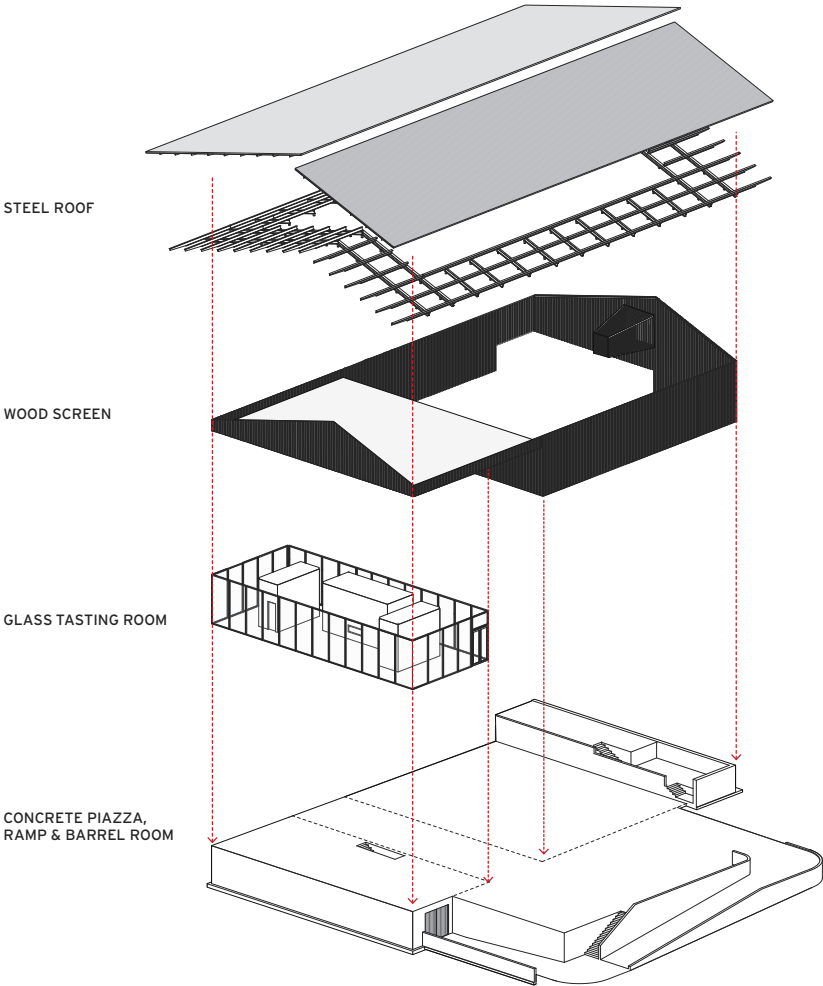
The design's concept is so clear that it overcomes such visual noise as the overabundance of Furioso's photographs crowding the interior and a few too many patched concrete cracks, misaligned batten screws, and splotches of silicone. With the curtain wall offset from the ceiling and walls covered in off-white patterned fabric, the tasting room feels like a cloud floating above



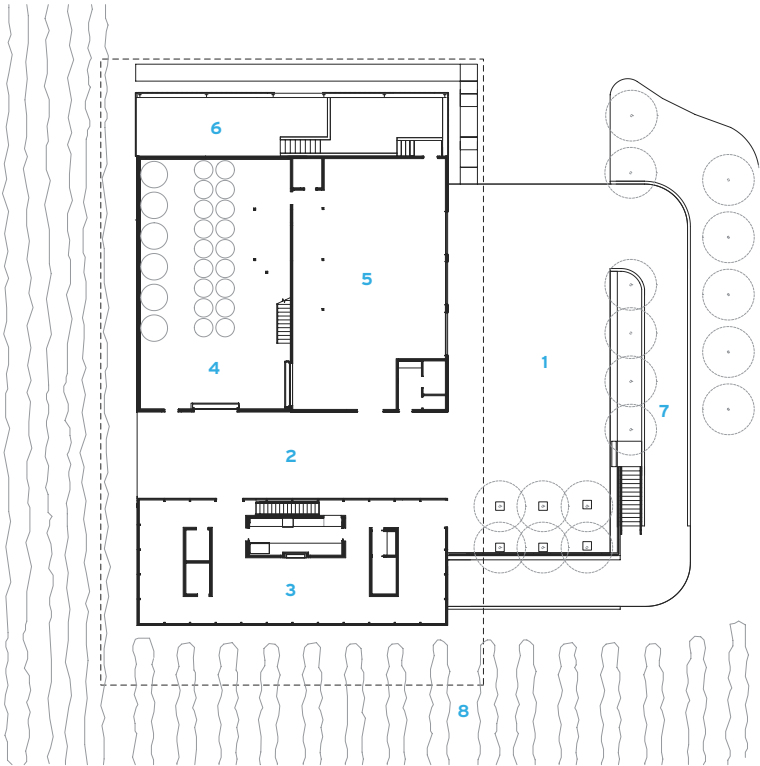




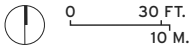




EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC DIAGRAM



FLOOR PLAN



- |                          |                              |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 PIAZZA/OUTDOOR SEATING | 5 WINERY PRODUCTION/STORAGE  |
| 2 CRUSH PAD              | 6 SCREENED EQUIPMENT STORAGE |
| 3 TASTING ROOM           | 7 RAMP TO BARREL ROOM        |
| 4 PROCESSING ROOM        | 8 VINEYARD                   |





the vineyard. Panoramic views of the valley and Cascade Range beyond unfold to the south while, to the north, harvest season offers an intimate experience of the crush. The roof marries performance and beauty, the recess below hiding mechanical equipment and allowing winter sun to warm the tasting room while protecting it in the summer. Windows in the floor reveal the barrel room. The lightly landscaped piazza easily converts from a truck-loading area to space for dinners and parties.

The winery exemplifies what Waechter describes as his ongoing “clarity project,” an effort to study and make experience-driven architecture. “It’s not some sort of intellectual idea; it’s about feelings,” he says. “Floor plans that are a mixture of columns, walls, and volumes don’t feel that good to be in. But a room that’s all columns, or all wall planes, or is volume-organized, feels better. The winery may not be a large building, but each part is one of those things.” ■

*Randy Gragg is a Portland, Oregon-based writer on landscape, urban design, and architecture.*

## credits

**ARCHITECT:** Waechter Architecture – Ben Waechter, principal; Rand Pinson, project manager  
**ENGINEERS:** Richmond So Engineers (structural); Standridge Design (civil); Interface Engineering (m/e/p)  
**GENERAL CONTRACTOR:** CD Redding  
**CLIENT:** Giorgio Furioso  
**SIZE:** 10,800 square feet  
**COST:** withheld  
**COMPLETION DATE:** June 2018

## SOURCES

**CURTAIN WALL:** Glasbox  
**SHOU SUGI BAN WOOD RAINSCREEN:** Cudahy Lumber  
**METAL ROOFING:** Metal Sales  
**GLASS:** Saint-Gobain  
**RAILING:** C.R. Laurence  
**METAL DOORS:** Steel-Craft  
**HARDWARE:** Sargent, Schüco, Rixson  
**PAINTS AND STAINS:** Sherwin-Williams  
**SOLID SURFACING:** Silestone  
**PLUMBING:** Delta, Kohler  
**LIGHTING:** Lithonia



**TASTE TEST** The tasting room offers views across the vineyard (opposite, left and right). Around the equipment room, the siding is left open for ventilation (top). The metal roof hovers, cantilevering up to 14 feet (above).