

PARADISE RIDGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Exhibition "Return to Paradise" to Open at Paradise Ridge

SANTA ROSA, CA: Paradise Ridge Winery and the Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation are pleased to announce ***Return to Paradise*** – a sculpture exhibition celebrating Walter Byck and Marijke Byck-Hoenselaars' thirty year legacy of visionary leadership and community engagement through art and sculpture at Paradise Ridge.

Where: Paradise Ridge Winery – in Marijke's Grove, 4545 Thomas Lake Harris Drive, Fountaingrove, Santa Rosa, CA

When: Exhibition Opening and Reception – Sunday, June 15, 2025 from 2 - 4pm

About Return to Paradise

Paradise Ridge Winery and the Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation are pleased to announce ***Return to Paradise***, a new exhibition opening on Sunday, June 15, 2025. **Curated by Jeff Nathanson** (former director of the Museum of Sonoma County), the exhibition will showcase more than a dozen local artists, each with a unique and rich history of exhibiting at Paradise Ridge. In recognition of Walter Byck and Marijke Byck-Hoenselaars' enduring dedication to supporting local artists and to bringing sculpture to Sonoma County, the exhibition will serve as a celebratory return for the participating artists.

Confirmed artists (to date) include: **Roger Berry, Riis Burwell, Karen Cusolito, Catherine Daley, Briona Hendren, Robert Hudson, Bruce Johnson, Monty Monty, Jann Nunn, Moto Ohtake, John Pashilk, John Toki, and Doug Unkrey.** Artists also featured in other locations at Paradise Ridge include **David Best, Bryan Tedrick, Gale Wagner, and Laura Kimpton,** whose ***LOVE*** sculpture is a favorite for visitors.

The new exhibition will be presented in Marijke's Grove, the outdoor sculpture garden at Paradise Ridge where changing exhibitions have featured the work of hundreds of sculptors since 1996. *Return to Paradise* will be a semi permanent exhibition with plans to expand over the next three years to include additional artists. A series of artist talks, exhibition tours, and other public programs are being planned in the coming months.

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The opening date, Sunday, June 15, 2025, is Walter Byck's birthday. It also marks the one-year anniversary of his passing. A major celebration is planned that will include the kick off for the new **Byck-Hoenselaars Fund**, dedicated to celebrating and sustaining the artistic spirit of Sonoma County, established in partnership with the **Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation**. The Fund will support the upcoming exhibition, and continue Marijke and Walter's commitment to the arts, while supporting local artists and enriching public art for the community—now and for generations to come. The opening of the sculpture exhibition will also be the launch party for a book that recounts the love story of Marijke and Walter and the serendipity that brought them to their storied ranch on a perch high above Santa Rosa and the Russian River Valley. ***The Luck that Led to Paradise: Marijke's and My Charmed Path to Paradise Ridge Winery*** grew from Walter's friendship and many conversations with retired **Press Democrat columnist Chris Smith**. The book, full of Byck family and Paradise Ridge history, bears out what Walter called himself: a very lucky man.

About Marijke and Walter and Paradise Ridge:

It was in a sculpture garden that Walter Byck proposed to Marijke Hoenselaars in the Netherlands in 1961. Years later, after settling in northern California, Walter arrived home late one evening in 1978 and declared to his family, "I have found paradise!" That paradise was the 155 acres overlooking the Russian River Valley in Sonoma County that would become Paradise Ridge Winery.

After years of cultivating the land and grapevines, in 1994, Walter and Marijke opened Paradise Ridge Winery—a winery featuring exquisite wines, gorgeous views, a curated sculpture grove, and a welcoming community gathering space. In 1997, Walter retired from a successful medical career to focus on the winery alongside Marijke. Together, they poured their energy into nurturing their estate and championing philanthropic endeavors, particularly in social justice and the arts. For Marijke, community was a cornerstone of her life. In addition to being CEO of the winery, she worked tirelessly in leadership roles with organizations like UNICEF, Task Force on the Homeless, and the Catholic Worker, advocating for global peace and justice. Her compassion and dedication to improving lives, both locally and globally, remain an enduring legacy.

Walter and Marijke's passion for art and community came to life on the property, where they created an expansive outdoor gallery space among ancient oaks and lovely meadows. The inaugural exhibition opened to the public 1996 and the sculpture grove became a dynamic space for rotating exhibits and artistic exploration. In 2004, Walter spearheaded Sculpture Sonoma, a community-wide art initiative that provided a platform for local artists to showcase their work. After Marijke's passing in 2006, Walter named the peaceful wooded glen *Marijke's Grove* in her honor. In 2012, the Byck family began a partnership with the Voigt Family Sculpture Foundation to bring cutting-edge public art to Sonoma County's scenic foothills.

The estate faced devastating loss when a firestorm swept through the property in the 2017 Tubbs fire, but the family's resilience and commitment to sustainability prevailed. After a complete and modern rebuild, Paradise Ridge Winery reopened in December 2019, once again offering its signature blend of delicious wines, gracious hospitality and breathtaking views.

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Dr. Byck passed away in June 2024 at the age of 92. Today, the winery and sculpture program continues under the stewardship of Walter and Marijke's five children, who remain dedicated to their parents' vision.

For more information about the "Return to Paradise" exhibition contact Jeff Nathanson, curator: jhnathanson@comcast.net; cell: 609.510.4236

For more information about the Byck-Hoenselaars Fund and Paradise Ridge Winery contact Rene Byck: rene@prwinery.com; 707.528.9463

For more information about the new book *The Luck that Led to Paradise: Marijke's and My Charmed Path to Paradise Ridge Winery* email Chris Smith: csmith54@sonic.net

Return to Paradise representative images (for higher quality and additional images contact Jeff Nathanson):



Bruce Johnson "Void" 2014
Redwood, copper, steel base 8' x 8' x 7'



Riis Burwell "Bird" 2013
Stainless steel, bronze



Catherine Daley *Triad: Aurora*, 2022
Stainless steel, aluminum
120" x 75" x 52"



Jann Nunn *!(Exclamation Point)* 2018
Stainless steel, powder coat
104" x 38" x 12"

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