



## THE INSTITUTE OF MASTERS OF WINE ANNOUNCES THE FIRST SELECTION SCHWANDER SCHOLARSHIP WINNER

*London, 5 October 2009:*

The Institute of Masters of Wine and Selection Schwander today announced that Niels Rathjen was the first winner of this new Scholarship, created in 2009.

The Selection Schwander Scholarship is for the Master of Wine (MW) student who performs exceptionally well in the First Year Assessment and whose first language is not English. The award contributes to the winner's study, translation and examination costs up to a value of £3000.



Winner Niels Rathjen, 30, is Head of Purchasing and Quality Assurance at Tophi wine merchants in Hamburg, Germany. He is a past winner of the Austrian Wine Marketing Bureau Award for the best marketing paper in his Weinakademiker Diploma studies at Geisenheim, and last month was also awarded one of the inaugural AXA Millésimes Scholarships for MW students. **Niels Rathjen** said: 'this is a real boost to my motivation. If I can take an image from the world of wine, I feel a fine cuvée of joy and pride.'

Said **Philipp Schwander MW**: 'I am glad that Selection Schwander can assist this young and gifted candidate. During my preparation for the Master of Wine exam I received tremendous support from MWs and I am very happy now to be able to help students internationally.'

Speaking for the IMW, **Education Manager Peter Csizmadia-Honigh** said: 'the Selection Schwander Scholarship will be a great help to Niels as he prepares for the Examination. It also emphasises the commitment of the Institute to grow its membership internationally and to support those whose first language is not English.'

- Ends -

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## NOTES TO THE EDITOR

### **About Selection Schwander**

- Philipp Schwander MW founded Selection Schwander, a mail-order wine business, in 2003, following a career in the wine trade. He is also a columnist for the leading Swiss broadsheets *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* and *Tages Anzeiger*, and makes regular appearances on television and radio.
- He became an MW in 1996 and is so far the only Swiss to have achieved the qualification.

### **About the Institute of Masters of Wine**

- The Institute of Masters of Wine (IMW) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting excellence in the wine trade. It was founded in 1955.
- The IMW has 280 members (MWs), based in 23 countries.
- The IMW's education programme encourages a cross-disciplinary approach to understanding wine and communicating that knowledge at the highest level. The IMW holds annual study seminars in Napa Valley, USA; Adelaide, Australia; and Rust, Austria.
- The annual examinations take place in London, Napa and Sydney, over a four-day period. There are three practical papers, each with 12 wines. Candidates are required to blind taste and identify wines of varying quality levels and origins. In four theory papers, candidates need to demonstrate, through essays, a knowledge of a wide range of subjects, including winemaking, grape growing, business and social issues. Students also write a 10,000-word dissertation on a subject of their choice.
- In 2009, one-third of the students who sat the Examination were not native English speakers.
- The IMW also organises events of professional interest to the global wine trade, including an international symposium every four years. The next symposium, *Forging Links*, takes place from 24 to 27 June 2010 in Bordeaux; see [www.mwsymposium.com](http://www.mwsymposium.com).
- More information about the Institute and its activities, including full biographies and contact details of members, can be found at [www.mastersofwine.org](http://www.mastersofwine.org).

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