NEW COUNCIL ELECTED TO LEAD INSTITUTE OF MASTERS OF WINE

FIRST NON-BRITISH CHAIRMAN, AUSTRIAN PEPI SCHULLER MW

LYNNE SHERRIFF MW NAMED VICE CHAIRMAN

LONDON, UK: 11th September 2008:

The Institute of Masters of Wine has for the first time ever elected a non-UK Chairman, Austrian **Dr Josef (Pepi) Schuller MW**. Pepi is the head of the Austrian Wine Academy which provides wine education in Austria, Germany, Italy and Switzerland.

The Institute has also elected **Lynne Sherriff MW** as its new Vice Chairman. Lynne is an independent wine consultant based in London, working with a number of blue chip companies globally, on areas of production, blending and market requirements.

The Institute has also elected two new members to its council:

Dermot Nolan MW is based in Ireland, where he is a wine educator.

Sarah Jane Evans MW is a freelance wine and food writer, based in the UK.

Pepi said, "My appointment as Chairman is a signal the international wine community that the Institute of Masters of Wine is determined to continue to develop what started 20 years ago with the first non-British MW: to be a leading, truly global and relevant institute, promoting excellence in wine."

Lynne added, "I am very excited at the prospect of being the Vice Chairman who will serve as deputy to the Institute's first non-UK Chairman. I believe the Institute is at a key crossroads in its development and that it faces a lot of challenges going forward. It will be a privilege to be part of that development and growth."

Enquiries:

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Notes for Editors:

Background to the Institute
The Institute of Masters of Wine was established in London, England, in 1953, since when over 2000 candidates have sat its rigorous examination in the art and science of wine. In 1991, the examination was held on the same days in the UK, Australia and the USA, a pattern that continues today.

The Master of Wine qualification is achieved by passing three parts of the examination:

- Theory, comprising four three-hour question papers on viticulture, winemaking, the business of wine and contemporary issues
- Practical, comprising three 12-wine blind tastings of a range of international wines which are assessed for variety, origin, quality and style
- a 10,000 word Dissertation on a subject selected by the candidate, relevant to the international wine industry

Candidates come from all areas of the wine industry. The majority are active in a commercial capacity, as wholesalers, importers or retailers, from major multi-nationals to independent merchants. A growing number are involved directly with winemaking, while other occupations include journalism, public relations, the hospitality industry and wine education.

There are currently 278 members of the Institute, from 23 different countries. Although membership was opened up to non-UK members for the first time only in 1987, 93 members now come from outside the UK. The vast majority of the students are now non-British, and the Education programme is run annually in Napa Valley, California; Melbourne, Australia; Rust, Austria and Bordeaux, France.

Council of the Institute of Masters of Wine

The Council of the Institute is elected by the members to decide strategic direction and manage the overall Institute business. Current members of the Institute's council are:

Josef Schuller MW (Chairman) – Austria
Lynne Sherriff MW (Vice Chairman) – UK / SA
Laura Evans MW (Treasurer) – UK
Beverley Blanning MW – UK
Sarah Jane Evans MW - UK
Laura Jewell MW – UK
Jane Masters MW – France / UK
Kym Milne MW – Australia
Fiona Morrison MW – Belgium / France
Dermot Nolan MW - Ireland
Simon Thorpe MW – UK
Jean-Michel Valette MW – USA

Siobhan Turner, the Institute's Executive Director, is also a Council member.