

As some of you will know, over the last several years Jeremy had been developing a career writing about wine. Although he started from nothing, he quickly became one of the wine industry's leading young voices.

I met Jeremy about 6 years ago because we both like wine. At the time, I was publishing my own horrifically obscure writing which, to my astonishment, Jeremy actually read and seemed to enjoy. I think I was grateful to have any readers at all, so when Jeremy suggested we meet for a coffee, I was curious and keen. He warned me via email that I should "keep my expectations low" but we hit it off immediately. From our very first meeting, where one coffee stretched into several hours, there just wasn't enough time to touch on everything we wanted to talk about. Thus began a pattern of perpetually running out of time. We'd meet regularly, and have furiously dense conversations over the course of several hours, then stagger home exhausted (and, I admit, often quite drunk). Then would come the emails and texts, reminding each other of all the things we forgot to talk about that we mustn't forget for next time. I mistakenly thought there'd be plenty of time to get to everything, eventually.

Such was his energy and passion that his influence quickly spread across the wine industry. This was a double-edged sword in some respects. His opinions rang out like gunshots and this distracted some people who perhaps preferred the quiet. I know this bothered Jeremy. He lamented the fact that his academic training, where he'd learned to form his own opinions and to challenge, didn't always translate to this new environment in which he was working. He felt on the outer much of the time, despite his profile and success, and wondered if he could remain true to his own ethics in a field that he found, at times, so full of compromise. But he never stopped trying. Even as he was taking a well-earned holiday from writing over the past few weeks, he was forming ideas on where to go next, how to build his work towards something he could be truly satisfied with.

What he perhaps never realised was how great an impact he really had on those around him, both those who were lucky to be his friends but also those who simply read and admired his work. The last few days have seen hundreds of messages of consolation and respect from all corners of the wine industry. I imagine this would have surprised Jeremy, and perhaps amused him too. Like all of us, he wanted to be acknowledged for his good work, and the fact this chorus of approval comes at a time when he can no longer hear it wouldn't have been lost on Jeremy, whose sense of irony was the keenest of anyone I've known.

Nonetheless, he was truly loved and admired by so many people in his line of work. I'd like to take a few moments now to read a selection of remembrances from his friends and readers across Australia.

Dudley Brown, Jeremy's good friend at Inkwel Wines in McLaren Vale, says: "Our friend had confronted the Rubicon of honesty and compromise. We spoke of it at length last week. His great heart could sadly bear no more. Coney Island Baby is blasting through the house right now. The glory of love of a great friend is what I choose to remember. And, the 3 hour phone calls at 10pm. It never even occurred to him it was a school night."

Andrew Graham, a fellow wine blogger who attended many of the same tastings as Jeremy, remembers one particular moment: "Our camaraderie was cemented at a wine media trip about three years ago, when Jeremy and I found ourselves on a table with one of the most obnoxious wine bores of the wine industry - both trying to defend the notions of what a good and bad wine entails in the face of someone who believed they knew everything. Brothers in arms, fighting the good fight."

Lastly Campbell Mattinson, one of Jeremy's wine writing mentors, remembers Jeremy's honesty and fragility: "He said what he thought, an unreasonable rarity, and his thoughts ran deep. Indeed many of his thoughts, impressions and feelings on wine would soak all the way through to his sleeve. He'd fought various personal battles in the past; you got the feeling that keeping his head entirely above water had never been easy for Jeremy. He cared about things, often too much. He seemed, at least in the dealings I had with him, incapable of dishonesty, and of compromise. Personally I loved his honesty, loved to disagree with him, loved his vulnerability, loved his view that much of what went on across the Australian wine landscape was a load of horse manure. Personally, I still haven't accepted that I can no longer dip into his well."

Julian Coldrey

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