

It's with the greatest of sadness that Brainwashed.com notes the passing of Tony Dale, founder of Camera Obscura Records, journalist for [Ptolemaic Terrascope](#) and all around enthusiast of life and culture.

In Tony's own words, as captured in an enjoyable, wide-ranging interview for *Perfect Sound Forever* in 2003, he grew up in Australia in a household surrounded by music both via his parents and the radio, starting a love that would define him for all his days, much as it did his brother Jon, a noted music scholar and author in his own right. Tony's youthful fandom became a more involved pursuit as the Internet provided him with wider access to not only the music he loved but the many musicians, writers and other fans around the world with similar passions.

His first efforts lay in writing about bands old and young for *Ptolemaic Terrascope*, a perfect outlet for his own wide-ranging musical interests within the realm of 'psychedelia' in its broadest sense. A song could be the quietest, most fragile of compositions or the most extreme, overdriven feedback monster around – if he loved it, he would say so, and want to share that with the world. It's what led him in 1996 to start Camera Obscura – to quote the label's site:

“(It began as a) conduit for the release of contemporary acid-folk, psych-pop and space-rock. That's still who we are, though the boundaries have always been allowed to stretch and blur.”

This 'stretching and blurring' was the heart of Camera Obscura and its associated label Camera Lucida, a home for those bands around the world that inspired Tony and that he wanted to share even more directly than he could with his writing. Beginning with Stone Breath's debut CD *Songs of Moonlight and Rain* through to Fell's *Incoherent Lullabies*, Camera Obscura explored everything from reissues of unjustly obscure bands to new acts inspired by the example of the label itself to start their work. Bands past and present that released work on Camera Obscura included Abunai!, the Azusa Plane, Black Sun Ensemble,

Brainwashed - TONY DALE – 1958-2010

Written by Ned Raggett

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the Dipsomaniacs, Alastair Galbraith, the Green Pajamas, Saint Joan, Christian Kiefer, Sharron Kraus, Tanakh, United Bible Studies and many more. No one band or one act could sum up Camera Obscura, much as it could not sum up Tony himself.

Tony's reputation as his own breed of talent spotter was equally matched by his reputation in general as one of the truly good people out there, both as a label boss—a rare thing in a business that Tony could be at pains to say he was not trying to be part of—and as a person. Attendees at the first, second and fourth incarnations of the rolling Terrastock festivals will remember both himself and his beloved wife Carol, a true partner in all senses, having a blast as they caught band after band performing the music he adored. His many interests beyond music—from cuisine to science, from classic cinema to modern TV, from sports to humor—all were captured in the many conversations had and friendships formed over the years.

In recent years, Tony's cancer diagnosis had slowed him but hadn't fully stopped him, and he fought it as best as he could with the close support of his family and friends, while still being in touch with that worldwide community he had been such a strong part of for years. With his trademark humor, his down to earth sense of perspective—he formally closed Camera Obscura shortly before his passing so it would not be a burden to his family—and his desire to continue exploring new creations and possibilities all remaining strong almost to the very end, he set an example for everyone who knew him, and while the sorrow among those left behind remains raw, it is tempered by the knowledge of everything he did for others and everything he was himself.

To quote a message board comment on the passing some years ago of Jason DiEmilio, lead figure of the Azusa Plane and one of the many bands who Tony helped bring to wider attention in the world: "one with the temporal continuum, at last."

Tony Dale is survived by his wife Carol, his brother Jon and 6 other siblings. Eldest son of June Dale. He was 51 years old.