



PROPHET & POET

JESSE KATZ
WINEMAKER



Early adventures to legendary vineyards and wineries around the world with his family and father, photographer Andy Katz, gave Colorado-native Jesse Katz a profound respect for the creativity and art of winemaking.

It was through his father's work that Jesse recognized and fell in love with the importance of terroir, balance, and the beauty of a winemaker's influence—setting him on a path he has perused ever since. Today, Jesse creates distinct and nuanced wines for his brands, Aperture Cellars and Devil Proof Vineyards, while serving as a consulting winemaker for some of the world's elite wine programs. Since his debut as a first-generation talent out of college, he has emerged as one of the most exciting—and accomplished—winemakers globally.

Jesse's diverse experience spanning 24 harvests at wineries, along with a passion for travel, fueled his aspiration to learn from the best in the industry. After graduating from Fresno State's Department of Viticulture and Enology, he spent time studying at Pétrus in Bordeaux, Screaming Eagle Winery and Robert Foley Winery in Napa Valley, and Viña Cobos and Bodega Noemia in Argentina. In 2010, Jesse became the youngest head winemaker in the U.S. at Lancaster Estate. During his five-year tenure there, he orchestrated the building of the new Roth winery, production facility, and tasting room. Behind the scenes, he received 90+ scores on every wine scored by the Wine Advocate and secured Lancaster Estate's inclusion on the list of Wine Spectator's Top 100 Wines. In 2013, *Wine Enthusiast* named Jesse one of its 40 Under 40 Tastemakers, and he also earned the distinction of becoming the first winemaker on the *Forbes* 30 Under 30 list.

As a consulting winemaker for some of the biggest names in entertainment—including Von Miller, Tony Hawk, and Justin Timberlake. In 2017, Jesse's wine collaboration with Shep Gordon, under The Setting Wines label, earned the designation as the most expensive 750ml bottle of wine in the world ever sold. He then broke his own record in 2021, when a 6L of his Cabernet Sauvignon sold for \$1M setting the world record of most expensive bottle of wine ever sold.

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Jesse's wines have garnered superlative recognition over the years from the top wine critics in the industry. The Aperture Chenin Blanc has earned the highest Wine Enthusiast rating for the varietal in the history of California. In 2021, his work with Devil Proof's Farrow Ranch vineyard led him to joining the elite group of winemakers, receiving 100 points from both Robert Parker's The Wine Advocate and Jeb Dunnuck. "I'd put this in the running for one of the greatest Malbec ever produced," noted Dunnuck, while Erin Brooks from Wine Advocate has noted his wines are "The best example of 100% Malbec I've ever tasted." Subsequently, Jesse has gained multiple 100-point scores not only for his Devil Proof brand, but also for Aperture. For instance, Aperture's 2020 Del Rio Cabernet Sauvignon, scored by Jeb Dunnuck, stands as the only wine from the 2020 vintage to get 100 points and the first Cabernet Sauvignon in the history of the Alexander Valley region to get a perfect score. Jesse has also garnered 100-point scores for his consulting project with Valette and partnership in The Setting Wines.

Jesse finds joy in utilizing his craft to raise funds for charitable causes, non-profits, and charity events. Devil Proof, Aperture, and The Setting Wines actively donate and participate in a large variety of charitable auctions, donating numerous cases of wine and custom winery experiences to causes they firmly believe in each year. Jesse has raised over \$5.8MM for charities and foundations since starting his brand and has recently joined on the Board of Directors for the SommFoundation, an educational-based nonprofit benefiting professionals in the wine and spirits business.