

I wish I could say I'm Matt Hanner's biggest fan. But Matt created such a spirit of conviviality that I think everyone out there who knew Matt thinks of himself or herself as Matt's biggest fan. Just when you think you were giving Matt a lot (of anything really), you received even more in return. He was a perpetual giving machine.

I wish I could say this to Matt. He died this last December. Not only can I not say this to him, I must admit, I usually stay silent when death is involved. Not out of repression, but I find talking about death takes me out of the feeling and the moments to which I need to attend in those moments. So I choose silence, and Matt's death was no different in this regard. This somehow feels appropriate too. Matt and I spent a lot of time together. What we didn't spend a lot of time doing was talking. We would at times, quite literally, sit or walk or ride public transportation or drive or install someone else's exhibition in silence. Not even music playing. Well often with music playing too. But often the music would end and we just wouldn't put anything else on. We would just appreciate and sit. Who knows what the hell we were ever thinking, probably something simple. This silence goes a long way in experiencing Matt's art. Like most good art it is always infinitely more intelligent than anything you could ever say in explanation.

Silence is a proper response to surprise and bleed. I received a lot of mailed material from Matt. Postcards, packages, drawings, CDs little scraps, slides, tapes, an honest to gosh actual oil painting, and who knows what else. So did a lot of people who knew Matt. He loved to send some outgoing mail. I loved to receive mail. Still do, kinda, except I know I won't be receiving mail from Matt. Because Matt only somewhat begrudgingly dealt with public exhibitions—he was always a little suspicious of art spaces and the people who run them unless he already knew the person—you never knew when you might see one of Matt's works. Come home, nope. Come home, nope. Come home, oh, three obscure photo postcards, must be Hanner. That next day would always hope for a couple more. Hold my tongue for the drop in the mail box. And what were the images? Drawings, song lyrics, mini ponies, bits of jokes, lists, snapshots taken by Matt and photographs or scraps he'd find on the street or in the garbage on walks. Sometimes an image would seem a document, for example, a photograph of a painted fan set up in a garage with the text "I'm your biggest fan" scrawled across the bottom. Maybe the fan was the work, or maybe its installation in the garage, or maybe the fan was only art when switched on, or maybe the little video he made of the fan, or maybe the video that seems to have been made from one of the blades as the fan spun, or maybe just the snapshot, or maybe all of the above. Documentation delivery and product were always a little scrambled in Matt's materials. I was never sure if I had a piece or something telling me there was a piece out there somewhere. So I always just held my tongue until the next drop. Still am.