by Margo Ashmore

What am I going to do, that no one else is doing? That’s how I’m making change goes, he mostly enjoys being, as he is for the Star Tribune, the perpetual observer.

Hanson is one of many full-career artists in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District who don’t expect sales to consumers, and in fact, are very private about their whereabouts given their renown. In the mid-1990s, he and a friend bought a duplex from another artist. His illustration studio is an enclosed back porch; there’s a separate office room. Between them, hundreds of pencils, thousands of books. The 77-year-old starts most days at Mng Coffer with a newspaper and conversation among California Building artists. Recalling other late-career or famous artists who’ve camped in Northeast, he remembered Perry Inglis’ tribulations in the early Art-A-Whirl years. “There are who-knows-how many artists who have a following but are not publicly known.” Gallery representation is fading in importance as artists rely more on social media, he said. Hanson will put work out on Facebook; not to sell it, but to make connections, to get people to say, “Oh, you’re the person who does that!”

He’s been all over the world; remembers sitting alone with only velvet ropes between him and the Mona Lisa (she’s behindplexiglass with a constant crowd of tablet and cell phone cameras now). Locally, he shops at Savers, enjoyed the Modern Cafe, goes to Elise’s because they were open during the pandemic, and loves Kieran’s. He’s sold work at a holiday pop-up at 2001 A Space, and his image “Butterfly Artist” is featured on the June calendar spread of the Northeast Calendar. But as the Northeast art exchange grows, he mostly enjoys being, as he is for the Star Tribune, the perpetual observer.

LH Hanson portrayed by C. Pillman. Hanson’s dry-erase seasonal cartoons “Farley at the Fair” ran in the Star Tribune from 1989 to 2006. Selections were exhibited at the Modern Cafe in late August 2011.

Remembering Spencer Silver

Described in the Casket Arts directory as a retired 3M chemist who has spent the last 30 years painting in acrylics and oils, Spencer Silver’s latest multi-canvas floral and natural works featured ideas about the prairie. When he passed away at age 80 on May 8, we learned (if we didn’t know already) of his fame as the co-inventor of the Post-It Note.

Silver invented the repositionable adhesive many years before colleague Art Fry put it to use bookmarking his choir music. Silver was named in dozens of patents and won many awards. “Spencer was a Casket Arts early adopter, a tenant in Casket Arts since 2007,” said building owners Jenni ter Young and John Kremer. “His kind and generous spirit was a quiet steady presence on the 3rd floor. Spencer was always willing to strike up interesting conversations, and share innovative ideas for making the building work better. He loved his studio and he will be deeply missed by many of his longtime friends in the building.” An article on the 3M website describes “Spen-cel” as a mentor to others at the company, a trait in evidence as a mem- ber of the Northeast Minneapolis arts community. His work was also exhib- ited at the Bloomington Center for the Arts and other venues. He also loved to cook and travel.

Art-A-Whirl® survived 2021

Art-A-Whirl® was a hybrid of on-line and in-person events May 14-16. The art markets were reduced to about 26,000 for Art-A-Whirl weekend, and a little less than 34,000 for the month of May as of May 31. While not all studies opened, Northeast King Building asked visitors to register and space out for a set time frame, and could stay as long as they wanted. Those keeping count of the ins and outs at the door said there was a steady population of about 800 guests each night for most of the time Saturday, and a maximum of 925.