

I met Pita on June 14, 1996. I remember because that was my first ever live performance. I didn't really know what I was doing but, at the end of it, there he was, cool and excited, with his human-squirrel body language and those huge eyes. A beer in one hand, a bunch of records in the other, shouting: "Let's make a record!". When someone from another label came to say hi, Pita laughed and said "Go away, I was here first!". That mixture of sheer enthusiasm and unpredictable sarcasm was roughly what it felt to be around him – from that day until the last day I saw him.

Peter's brain worked at a significantly higher rate than that of the average human, and for the past few days I've found myself trying to cling to that, thinking that he lived more than most of us because of it – but that's bullshit. There is no consolation there. He should have lived way, way longer, so that the total brain time at the end would have been astronomically higher than most. He was hyper in the best possible way. He pushed people hard, also in the best possible ways. Cause he oozed excitement, or whatever the opposite of apathy is. He was always thrilled about something, just as he was always complaining about something else. Never neutral, never dull, always sharp, corrosive and thought-provoking. Like a brutal version of Basil Fawlty, or a British Bill Hicks with good taste in music.

If we have something that we can remotely call a scene, it's because of him. Because he pushed in that direction from the beginning, enabling and accelerating many processes. He understood the business (or was reckless enough to plough ahead anyways) and behaved as if this was just music, not some odd thing that had to be kept in the margins. His unguarded passion helped a whole network of people flourish in the most amazing ways. He pushed festivals, promoters, distributors, other labels, but also friends and colleagues, with equal parts commitment and dark humour. If his music and labels touched a lot of people, it's because they were extensions of himself, of this unique blend of values, beliefs and his generosity.

These days I have tried to piece together as many fun memories with him as I could. Some are long gone, and that pisses me off. Some are not. Many talks about food, music, parenting, nerding out on hardware, sending funny faxes back and forth (that's how old we're getting, kids), and many surreal moments in a bunch of cities which often include other people. I've also been thinking of Zbigniew Karkowski, another huge loss for all of us in recent years. Him and Peter are entangled in my own timeline because I met Zbig through Peter. In fact, most of the people I met during those formative years, I met through Pita in one way or another. Because that's *also* what he did, he brought people together, as corny as it may sound. He was a lot more than a node in that network of people. Pita was an attractor. One of the weirdest, most wonderful strange attractors I have ever met.

The world is a far shittier place without him in it, but it's also a lot better thanks to him.



Putting the HP sauce back in the fridge, Vienna, 1997. Photo by Anna Ramos