

# Events in the pages of my story

from Bill H. Ritchie's memoirs

*The best thing about having lived into the future is being able to write one's memoirs in machine language, a language compatible with computers, enabling me to share fragments from one's memoirs on the Internet. For example, whenever I have a moment I can look at the pages of my life on my smart phone Kindle app. In these occasional PDFs I can copy out a few lines about people whose lives touched mine and share the words from my memoirs. - Bill*

## 1979: Art Action!

Pp. 315-317

The Art Action invented by Carl Chew would be the way to raise money to pay for the tape-to-film transfer of The Hands of Carl Chew on My Father's Farm. The Art Action happened on Saturday, June 30th. I wrote a lengthy comment in my Journal, titled, "Art Action is Disruptive."

We'd originally thought of holding an art auction, but auctions required formidable legal hoops to jump through, and costs for permits we couldn't afford. Carl's idea was to stand the auction on its head, like a Dutch-style Auction. In an Art Action, we'd start with a high price and come down and let the audience decide the value of the art.

I would provide 200 prints from 1963 to 1979 for the Art Action to sell. Carl arranged with Kent Lovelace to use his Stone Press Gallery in Seattle's Belltown. He worked hard, installing all the prints on the gallery walls. Invitations went out to everyone on our mailing lists. The invitation included a triangular artiststamp in a little envelope commemorating the event.

Weeks before, a programmer,

John Methot, wrote code in Apple BASIC to run on a borrowed Apple II+. He made a color image of dollar amounts on screen which, when set off, started numbers counting down by pre-set amounts representing the opening, high bid. As the clock ticked down, someone who wanted the print and who could no longer stand to take the risk of los-

eo and we paid for Carl and John's work. Kent let us use his space for free.

As a bonus, the Art Action brought me new patrons - including some of Seattle's luminaries like the architect Viktor Steinbrueck, the renowned patron saint of the Pike Place Market. Carl would repeat the show for himself later.

The Art Action got me on my feet financially and grew our patron's list, but it didn't help our reputations with the art patronage elite. Local art dealers - Sam Davidson, for one, who at times represent our work in the past - felt burnt because in effect we had lowered the value of my art in the eyes of the collector community.

In my defense, I countered: Would any dealers have fronted us the money to upgrade a video art piece?

Not likely.

\*\*\*\*\*

-from Target Heart:  
Notes from the Ivory  
Tower - Memoir of  
Bill H. Ritchie, 1971-  
1980, pp. 315-317,  
paperback and Kindle  
available from amazon



The postcard mailer sent to people inviting them to the Art Action, "Stop the Clock" invented by Carl T. Chew to help finance their joint venture to publish their 1973 video, "The Hands of Carl Chew on My Father's Farm."

ing it, would shout: "STOP THE CLOCK!"

And that was it.

A few generous people brought beer to share. They enjoyed the Art Action immensely, and we raised about \$2,600. One-thousand was my goal to help finance stabilizing the original video transfer of our vid-

Thirty years later, Carl uploaded "Hands of Carl Chew on My Father's Farm"



Input the title or go to  
<https://youtu.be/LBcu1iMUXNU>