

*The nature of artwork created by Roland Smith Watts*



Mr. Watts titled this print "**End of a Prayer.**" He described the bearded priest praying as a vigorous study of a man in communication with his God. Similarly, a religious motif is evident in other selected prints.

"Woodblock printing" according to Mr. Watts is on the borderline of a **craft** and an **art**. It provides a lot of horizons and allows for delivery of a strong message. That's how he explained his comfort and productivity in a craft shop one weekend and a fine art show the next.

Like many artists, Mr. Watts found it difficult to step outside of his work far enough to verbalize the greater meaning of it. He said that he worked in "human emotion." "I try to cover all the traumas of human endeavor. I use my woodcuts to express my concern with society, my involvement with fellowmen in birth, love, play, frustration, struggle and my ultimate surrender to death. Every artist wants his work to live after him – I'm no different. I feel I'm leaving my mark; something that will have meaning after I'm gone. But what that meaning is...well, that depends upon who's looking at what particular piece."

One writer asserted that... "Mr. Watts is an artist whose conceptual vision is universal." Commenting on the quality of his work, Mr. Watts once said, "The more I do, the better I get – and that's the way it should be. An artist — or for that matter, any person — must progress. Today, I can do a cut in half the time and make a stronger statement than when I first began."

*Services and Arrangements*

**CLARK S. BROWN & SONS FUNERAL HOME**

SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE FOR

*Mr. Roland Smith Watts*



**TUESDAY, JULY 31, 2012**

**ONE O'CLOCK P.M.**

**MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH**

**950 File Street**

**Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

**Dr. Serenus T. Churn Sr., Pastor/Officiating**

## *Obituary*

Roland Smith Watts of Winston-Salem, NC and High Rock Lake died July 28, 2012, at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center . Mr. Watts was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 5, 1931. He was the son of the late Dr. Maurice L. Watts and Mrs. Garnelle Smith Watts. His early years were spent in Raleigh, NC where he attended public schools and was active in the Boy Scouts of America, earning the Eagle Scout Award. Also as a youth, he spent summers at Camp Atwater in East Brookfield, Massachusetts. Through these exposures he benefitted from many valuable experiences which fostered the development of life savvy.

After graduation from high school, Mr. Watts enrolled at A&T College (now NC A&T State University). His college career was interrupted by two years of service in the United States Army. After completing his military service, he returned to college and completed an undergraduate degree, subsequently receiving a Master of Science degree from NCA&T. Mr. Watts continued his studies and received the Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. He served as professor and chairman of the Fine Arts Department at Winston-Salem State University, and provided support for student organizations and a number of university committees. He retired from the University after 39 years.

Well-recognized for his extraordinary talent as an artist, Mr. Watts put together 10 one-man exhibitions and participated in 29 group shows in several cities in North Carolina and other states. He was said to be “one of the most productive and best known woodblock printers in the Southeast.” Moreover, he designed the Chancellor’s Mace for Winston-Salem State University, which is a rod with an ornamental head carried on ceremonial occasions such as Commencement. He also designed the Ram Plaque used for the development fund.

Mr. Watts was affiliated with many organizations in his field. He was a past board member of several organizations including the Gallery of Contemporary Art; Piedmont Craftsman, Incorporation; Arts and Crafts Association; and Art Gallery Originals. Also, he held previous memberships with Associated Artists of North Carolina and the North Carolina Art Education Association. Additionally, he was a member of Kappa Alpha Psi and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternities, and a former member of the Torch Club. He attended Wentz Memorial United Church of Christ in Winston-Salem, NC.

Throughout his adult life, Mr. Watts devoted considerable time to engaging in several hobbies. In particular, he derived special enjoyment from his extensive collection of model trains, photography, boating at his lake home, and national and international travel. Similarly, he was intrigued by classic cars.

Mr. Watts is survived by his loving wife of many years, Dr. Velma Gibson Watts; daughter, Rolonda Watts of Los Angeles, California; son, Brett Watts of Fort Lauderdale, Florida; goddaughters, Kelli Luck Slade, Esquire, Atlanta, Georgia and Susan Harrison, Laurel, Maryland; godson, Dr. Mark Oliver, Winston-Salem, NC; and Turquoise B. Erving of Winston-Salem, NC who was like a daughter; several other relatives, and a multitude of friends.

## *Acknowledgements*

*A special note of heartfelt gratitude is extended to Dr. David Jackson of the Wake Forest University Physicians for his excellent and persistent care throughout the years, and particularly during Mr. Watts’ recent period of illness. Appreciation is also offered to Dr. Brenda Latham-Sadler and the physicians and medical staff of Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center and for all other acts of kindness and concern.*

*In lieu of flowers, the family respectfully requests contributions to the Fine Arts Department at Winston-Salem State University and/or the Gordon Watts Scholarship at Wake Forest University School of Medicine.*

## *The Order of Worship*

Prelude Dr. Marion “Pete” Thomas, Organist

The Processional/Scripture Collect Dr. Serenus T. Churn Sr.  
Pastor, Mount Zion Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Congregational Hymn of Worship **“Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah”**

### The Holy Scriptures:

Old Testament Reading- **Psalm 23** Dr. Darryl Aaron  
Pastor, First Baptist Church, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

New Testament Reading- **Romans 8:31-39** Dr. Serenus T. Churn

The Prayer of Solace Reverend Renee’ Griffin  
Pastor, Wentz Memorial United Church of Christ, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Solo D’Walla Simmons-Burke  
Director of Choral and Vocal Studies, Winston-Salem State University

## *Memorial Tributes*

Dr. Maya Angelou  
Dr. Vivian H. Burke, Secretary, Board of Trustees, Winston-Salem State University

Solo D’Walla Simmons-Burke

The Eulogy Dr. Howard A. Chubbs  
Pastor, Providence Baptist Church, Greensboro, North Carolina

Hymn Medley Dr. Marion “Pete” Thomas

The Commitment Dr. Howard A. Chubbs

The Recessional Musical Affirmation

## *Fellowship Reception*

McNeil Banquet Hall  
The Anderson Center  
Winston-Salem State University