



Profile of Otto Neals

OTTO NEALS, painter, sculptor, printmaker and illustrator, was born on December 11, 1930, to Gus and Della Neals, in Lake City, South Carolina. His family moved to New York when he was four years old. While studying commercial art in high school in Brooklyn, he developed his talents on his own with encouragement from his teachers. When Neals was four or five years old he recalls that his older cousin David who helped raise him used to draw. And as Neals watched him, he was fascinated and was motivated to imitate his cousin. After graduation from high school, Neals went to work in a couple of factory jobs before passing the exam for the United States Post Office where he started his career. In 1952 he was drafted into the U.S. Army for service in the Korean War. While he was never sent overseas, he served in Oklahoma and at Fort Bragg in North Carolina for two years.

Neals studied painting briefly at the Brooklyn Museum Art School with Isaac Soyer, and learned printmaking at Bob Blackburn's Printmaking Workshop in Manhattan with Krishna Reddy and Robert DeLomanico. In addition to painting and sculpting, he is proficient in the graphic arts, viscosity printing, etching, woodcut and lithography. His ability to paint and carve was largely self-taught. He was introduced to stone when he met painter and sculptor, Vivian S. Key (now deceased) who gave him his first set of stone carving tools, in 1974.

Neals worked at the Brooklyn Post Office where he created hundreds of signs and illustrations. But his favorite project began when he spied a discarded mahogany table in a hallway at the post office. He rescued the table and stored it in his office for several years. During the post office's search for artwork to commemorate the 1976 bicentennial, Neals sold the idea to the Postmaster of sculpting the table into a wood carving. As Neals began to work, he discovered that the table was oak covered with mahogany veneer. The resulting artwork is a beautiful wood carving titled "Spirit of '76" based on the commemorative stamp issued that year. The piece is permanently displayed at the main entrance of the Brooklyn Post Office. Neals spent thirty-six years with the Post Office before he retired.

In 1967, Neals and four other artists founded the now defunct "Weusi-Nyumba Ya Sanaa Gallery," in Harlem. He and Ernie Crichlow are the only two artists who have exhibited every year for thirty-five years in the Fulton Art Fair. His works have also been displayed in museums, galleries, universities and libraries across the country and are in public and private collections in Zambia, Barbados, Guyana, Italy, Ghana and the United States.

Neals' work is included in the book, **Black Artists of the New Generation** by the late Elton Fax, published by Dodd and Mead. He is also listed in **Who's Who In American Art**. He has illustrated several books including the **Adventure of Tony, David and Marc**, by Lenchen DeVane, **We Are the Children of the Great Ancient Africans**, by the late Barbara Jackson and the **African Heritage Cookbook**, by Helen Mendes.

Neals is co-director of the ACAA Art Gallery, a Brooklyn-based, not-for-profit, member-supported art organization dedicated to the promotion of excellence in the works of African, Caribbean and African-American artists. Neals has made numerous trips to West African countries including Ghana and Togo. He also travelled extensively in Egypt, Guyana and Barbados trying to foster stronger bonds with those countries.

Exhibitions:

Neals has been featured in numerous exhibitions including:

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|---------|---|------|--|
| 1958-93 | Fulton Art Fair, Brooklyn, NY | 1988 | Skylight Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1965 | Karibu Gallery, Brooklyn, NY | 1988 | Spiral Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1965 | Lubbock, Texas | 1988 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York |
| 1966 | Afro Arts Cultural Museum, NY | 1988 | Jamaica Art Center, Queens, New York |
| 1967 | Clyde Mack Gallery, NYC | 1989 | Hudson Guild Gallery, New York, New York |
| 1968 | Stony Brook State Univ, Stony Brook, NY | 1989 | Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, South Carolina |
| 1970 | Countee Cullen Library, Harlem, NY | 1989 | Jamaica Art Center, Queens, New York |
| 1971 | Studio Museum, Harlem, NY | 1989 | Lyman Allyn Art Museum, New London, CT |
| 1971 | Howard University, Washington, D.C. | 1990 | Hudson Guild Gallery, New York, New York |
| 1972 | Acts of Art Gallery, New York City | 1990 | Afro-Am Museum of Life & Culture, Dallas, Texas |
| 1972 | Brooklyn College, Brooklyn, NY | 1990 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York |
| 1973 | Bulart Art Festival, San Francisco, CA | 1990 | ACAA Art Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1973 | Nuremburg, Germany | 1990 | Jamaican Consulate, New York, New York |
| 1974 | Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY | 1990 | ACBAW Gallery, Mt. Vernon, New York |
| 1974 | Wesleyan University, Middletown, CO | 1991 | Borough of Manhattan Community College, NY |
| 1975 | Museo de Arte Moderno Gallery, Cali, Colombia | 1991 | ACAA Art Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1976 | Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, NY | 1991 | Great Neck Library, Great Neck, New York |
| 1977 | American Museum of Natural History, NY | 1991 | Hudson Guild Gallery, New York, New York |
| 1978 | Philadelphia Civic Museum, Philadelphia | 1991 | Fine Arts Museum of Long Island, Hempstead, NY |
| 1978 | Huntsville Museum of Art, Huntsville, AL | 1991 | Creative Concerns, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1979 | Martin Luther King Center, Atlanta, Georgia | 1991 | Gallery Obiagali, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1979 | Skylight Gallery, Brooklyn, New York | 1991 | Bronx River art Center, Bronx, New York |
| 1979 | Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York | 1991 | The Living Room Gallery, Jersey City, New Jersey |
| 1980 | Howard University, Washington, D.C. | 1992 | Great Neck Library, Great Neck, New York |
| 1980 | Jazzonia Gallery, Detroit, Michigan | 1992 | Columbia Museum, Columbia, South Carolina |
| 1980 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1992 | Spiral Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1982 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1992 | Pegasus Gallery, Chappaqua, New York |
| 1983 | Schenectady Museum, Schenectady, New York | 1992 | Hillwood Art Gallery, Brookville, New York |
| 1983 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1992 | Bronx River Art Gallery, Bronx, New York |
| 1984 | 843 Studio Gallery, Brooklyn, New York | 1992 | Queensboro College, Flushing, New York |
| 1984 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1992 | ACAA Art Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1984 | Dillard University, New Orleans, LA | 1992 | Dorsey's Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1984 | Du Sable Museum, Chicago, Illinois | 1992 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York |
| 1985 | New Muse, Brooklyn, New York | 1992 | CRT Craftery Gallery, Hartford, Connecticut |
| 1985 | Co-op Gallery, Jamaica Art Center, New York | 1992 | Fulton Art Fair, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1985 | Oval Gallery, New York | 1993 | Hudson Guild Gallery, New York City |
| 1985 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1993 | ACAA Art Gallery, Brooklyn, New York |
| 1986 | Dorsey's Gallery, Brooklyn, New York | 1993 | Museum of Art, Rockhill, South Carolina |
| 1986 | Plandome Gallery, Plandome, New York | 1993 | Gibbs Museum, Charleston, South Carolina |
| 1986 | African American Museum, Hempstead, New York | 1993 | Museum of Art, Florence, South Carolina |
| 1986 | Z Gallery, Greensboro, North Carolina | 1993 | Great Neck Library, Great Neck, New York |
| 1986 | Jacob K. Javits Federal Building, New York | 1993 | Hudson Guild, New York City |
| 1986 | Savacou Gallery, New York, New York | 1993 | NCA Masters Travelling Exhibit, NY |
| 1987 | Kenkeleba Gallery, New York, New York | 1993 | Museum of Art, Greenville, SC |
| 1987 | Spiral Gallery, Brooklyn, New York | 1993 | Gibbs Museum, Charlotte, SC |
| 1987 | Jamaica Art Center, Queens, New York | 1993 | ACAA Art Gallery, Brooklyn, NY |
| 1987 | Ajira Gallery, Newark, New Jersey | 1993 | Clinton Hill Simply Art Gallery, Brooklyn, NY |

COMMISSIONS:

- 1980 Commissioned to design and execute a piece of work entitled the "Spirit of '76" in oak 4'x 8' based on the U.S. Commemorative Stamp. The work is permanently displayed at the Brooklyn General Post Office.
- 1980 Created pen and ink montage for the United Way of New York depicting various United Way charities.
- 1984 Commissioned by Calvin College, Orangeburg, South Carolina to design and execute relief sculpture of Dr. David Moss.
- 1986 Commissioned to design and execute for a film festival a plaque of Paul Robeson which was presented to the Government of Burkina Faso.
- 1986 Neals was selected by Earl Graves, president and chief executive officer of Black Enterprise Magazine, to design and execute in stone the numeral 100 for the cover of the Special June Issue on 100 Black Businesses which was unveiled in Atlanta, Georgia, in a pre-publication ceremony.
- 1987 Commissioned by the late Barbara Jackson to design and illustrate two children's books depicting the strength of the African Family.
- 1987 Designed and executed six plaques for the First World Alliance Annual Awards Dinner.

AWARDS:

- 1949 Higgins Art Award
- 1985 Highbeam Business Systems Awards 1986 United Jersey Bank Award for Excellence
- 1989 Brooklyn Borough President Citation
- 1990 Artist-In-Residence, Bedford Stuyvesant Art & Cultural Center
- 1990 Vivian S. Key Award for Excellence
- 1992 Jamaica National Movement Edna Manley Award for Excellence in the Art
- 1993 Lloyd Van-Pitterson Community Service Award for Excellence
- 1993 Fulton Art Fair 35th Anniversary Community Service Award

COLLECTIONS:

The Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.
Ghana National Museum, Ghana
South Carolina National Collection
Hon. Joseph Ada, The Governor of Guam
Hon. Forbes Burnham, The late Prime Minister of Guyana

Sir Eric Gairy, Former Prime Minister of Grenada
Hon. David N. Dinkins, Mayor, The City of New York
Hon. Una Clarke, Councilmember, 40th District, Brooklyn
Columbia Museum, Columbia, South Carolina
Dr. & Mrs. John Henrik Clarke, New York
Hon. John Lewis, Congressman, Georgia
Hon. Bruce Wright, Supreme Court Judge, NY
Mr. Harry Belafonte, Singer-Actor, New York
Mr. Leon Thomas, Musician, New York
Ms. Teri McCants, Actress, New York
Mr. Babatunde Olatungi, Nigerian Drummer, Nigeria
Mr. Randy Weston, Musician, Brooklyn, New York
Mr. Gil Noble, Producer, "LIKE IT IS," New York
Dorsey's Gallery, Brooklyn, New York
Spiral Gallery, Brooklyn, New York
C. Vernon Mason, Esq., New York
Alton Maddox, Jr., Esq., New York
Michael Warren, Esq., New York
Margrett Ford, Esq., New York
Aubrey A. Rogers, Esq., Brooklyn, NY
Valerie Pilgrim Bell-Bey, Esq., Brooklyn, NY
Dr. Gloria Connell, Brooklyn, NY
Dr. Carlos Russell, Brooklyn, NY
Dr. Kay Brown, Artist-Author, NY
Dr. Ute Wachsmann, Columbia, SC
Mr. Gus Henningburg, New Jersey
Ms. Vernetta Honeywood, Artist, CA
Mr. Rudi Patterson, Artist, London, England
Mr. Emmett Wigglesworth, Artist, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Carlton B. Ingleton, Artist, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Grant Spears, II, Artist, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. and Mrs. Don Miller, Montclair, NJ
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Delsarte, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. James Denmark, Artist, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Enid Ford, Board 9, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Bill Jones, New York
Mr. Bill Marshall, New York
Ms. Natalie Jones, New York
Ms. Coral Barnett, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Emerson Tolbert, New York
Ms. Marge Hammock, New York
Ms. Marsha Goldman, New York
Ms. Dolores Carty, Brooklyn, New York
Mr. Teddy Gunn, Brooklyn, New York
Mr. Elombe Brath, New York
Ms. Lethia Robinson, New York
Mr. Hannibal Peterson, New York
Mr. Sam Pinn, New York
Langston Hughes Public Library, Corona, NY
Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Haversham, Great Neck, NY
Mr. and Mrs. Rodney Dent, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Harold Freeman, Bronx, New York
Wally and Ruby Nottage, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Ian Edwards, Washington, D.C.
Dr. Beverley Anderson, Ipswich, MA
Dr. Mavis Thompson, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Valerie Carter, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Yvonne Metcalf, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Keith Carr, Hartford, CT

Ms. Jennifer Stewart, Brooklyn, NY
Dr. Cynthia Barnes, Brooklyn, NY
Rev. Johnny Ray Youngblood, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Alfred Cain, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Billy Holliday, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Amiri Baraka, Poet, New Jersey
George Miles, Actor, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Jackie Woods, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Diane N'Diaye, Brooklyn, NY
Ms. Loretta Morgan, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald Hardy, Brooklyn, NY
Mr. Harold Appling, Brooklyn, NY
Jack Lazard, Jr., Former Postmaster, California

PUBLICATIONS:

- Elan Magazine
- Ebony Magazine
- Encore Magazine
- Phylon, Volume I
- Seminario Cultural
- Men of Achievement
- African-American Artists
- 1982 Printworld Directory
- Who's Who In American Art
- American Artists of Renown
- Ghana-East African Journal
- African American Literature
- Restoration, Volume 6, No 2
- College Board Review, No. 71
- 250 Years of Afro-American Art
- News Digest-U.S. Postal Service
- Black Artists of the New Generation
- The Printmaking Workshop Resume-1974
- The New York Teacher-Volume XVII, No.33
- Tendeze E Testimonianze del'Arte Contemporanea
- Brooklyn Local 802-Celebrating the 50th Anniversary
- Ademola Olugebefola: 25 Years of Classics in American Art 1965-90

NEWS MEDIA:

- Jet
- Big Red
- The Phoenix
- The City Sun
- Gallery Guide
- The Daily News
- The Journal News
- New York Newsday
- Long Island Press
- The New York Times
- The Brooklyn Trend
- The Daily Challenge

- Collections Magazine
- Springfield Daily News
- The New York Carib News
- The New York Amsterdam News
- The State (Columbia, South Carolina)
- The Atlanta Journal & Constitution Magazine

BOOKS ILLUSTRATED:

- African Heritage Cookbook, by Helen Mendes.
- Adventure of Tony, Marc, and David, by Lenchen C. DeVane
- We Are the Children of the Great Ancient Africans, by the late, author Barbara Jackson.
- Mighty African Children Move Victoriously Into the Twenty First Century, by the late, author Barbara Jackson.

APPEARANCES:

WABC-TV - "LIKE IT IS"
WBAI-FM Radio with Vincent Smith
Bennett College, Greensboro, North Carolina - LECTURED
South Carolina Public TV, Columbia, SC, with Pat Bennett
WLIB Radio, "The Diane Thompson Show" with Diane Thompson
WTGH-AM Radio, Columbia, SC - "Milestones" with Josh Lorick
WOIC-AM Radio, Columbia, SC - "The Urban Scene" with Ben Scott

AFFILIATIONS:

- Art Director, Fulton Art Fair, Inc.
- Founding Member - Weusi Artists
- Member - Co-op Gallery, Jamaica Art Center
- Board Member - Crown Heights Youth Collective
- Member, The Long Island Black Artists Association
- Founding Member and Vice President - ACAA Art Gallery
- Founding Member-The Nubians, Concerned Africans for African Concerns
- Board and Founding Member - Association of Caribbean American Artists, Inc.

PERSONAL:

Neals resides in Brooklyn with his wife, the former Vera Anita Brandis.

WORDS BY OTTO NEALS

- Neals states, "My talent as an artist, I believe, comes directly from my ancestors. I am merely a receiver, an instrument for receiving some of those energies that permeate our entire universe, and I give thanks for having been chosen to absorb those artistic forces. I try to paint and sculpt African people, working always to portray those characteristics that are true of their beauty, their power, and their love. We are but shadows of those who have gone before us and before I enter the world of the spirits, I hope by example, to touch a positive nerve in our youth."
- "The Creator, I believe, has allowed us, as artists to be a bit more perceptive than others. We are able to peer inside a block of stone and extract an image, or a log may reveal a form that others may not see."
- "When I stood at the base of the great temple of Ramses at Abu Simbel, it felt as though I was there before, as though I had a hand in its construction. Perhaps it is true. Perhaps some of the energy that had moved the hand of some great ancient African carver has this day moved mine. I would like to think so."
- "At a much younger age, I heard voices which I now believe were my ancestors speaking to me. Although I cannot remember the content of the messages, I am convinced that they have guided my life to this day."
- Neals' advice to young people: "Beyond art, there is a matter of personal carriage—pride and respect for oneself, one's elders and all others that they may enco

OTTO NEALS Favorite Poem

Forebears

*Hear more often things than beings,
The voice of the fire listening,
Hear the voice of the water.
Hear on the wind,
The bushes sobbing,
It is the sigh of our forebears.*

*Those who are dead are never gone,
They are in the thickening shadow.
The dead are not under the earth;
They are in the tree that rustles,
They are in the woods that groans,
They are in the water that runs,
They are in the water that sleeps,
They are in the hut, they are in the crowd,
THE DEAD ARE NOT DEAD.*

*Those who are dead are never gone;
They are in the breast of the woman,
They are in the child who is wailing,
And in the firebrand that flames.
The dead are not under the earth;
They are in the fire that is dying,
They are in the grasses that weep,
They are in the whimpering rocks,
They are in the forest, they are in the house,
THE DEAD ARE NOT DEAD.*

.....Birago Diop

STATEMENTS ABOUT OTTO NEALS AND HIS WORK

James B. Murphy, Manager of Communications,
United States Postal Service

"Otto Neals is someone you like right away. Warm, friendly, sincere, you feel you've known him all your life. And if an artist can be known by touching your soul, then Otto is indeed a close friend to Brooklyn art lovers. A mystical spirit permeates Otto's work. It lets you know him as an artist. When you attend one of Otto's exhibits, you get the sense you are seeing works by many different artists because Otto is not limited by one or two media."

Jackie Woods, Creative Concerns

"It is a fitting tribute to one of Brooklyn's masters. Beacon-like, the works of Otto Neals radiate everlasting, reminding us of the beauty and strength of our people."

Diana Baird-N'Diaye

"Otto Neals characteristically speaks with a quiet eloquence, whether in words or through the prodigious volume of paintings, sculpture, prints, and drawings he has produced in the past twenty odd years. His works consciously and consistently project a sense of dignity, inner power and beauty of his subjects. Add to this the character, integrity, and sincerity, spirituality and warmth of the artist himself and his commitment to conveying the positive images of African people throughout the world, and it is immediately apparent why Neals is beloved by collectors, artists, dealers and curators, and deserves the title of 'Master Artist'."

Beverley J. Anderson, PhD

Eastern Connecticut State University

"A true artist is both a historian and a prophet. He or she both chronicles the past and predicts the future. The true artist is a visionary one who is able to look at today and see tomorrow. The work of Otto Neals is a record of the past and vision of the future. Otto Neals is a historian and a visionary—Otto Neals is a true artist."

Nina Parrish, Columbia Museum of Art

"The unity of Otto Neals' work resides in his message which conveys the dignity of black people everywhere. In many of his portraits Neals captures a quiet dignity and strength which is reflected in his personality."

Mrs. Yvonne Wilson

"Otto the great one—one of a kind."

**Byrma Braham and Loris Crawford - Savacou
Gallery**

"Otto Neals has undoubtedly carved a place for himself among black contemporary masters. An artist who has created consistently for decades, always challenging his skills as an artist and not being afraid of tackling the most difficult of media and techniques, Otto Neals has come to possess an enviable mastery of the difficult media of sculpture and original graphics as well as acrylic, oils and watercolor."

Otto Neals is a man in great awe of the greatness of his ancestors; a man intently proud of his Africanness; a man with tremendous love and respect for human kind particularly the black female; an artist who has reached a high level of mastery and acclaim but remains humble and grateful for the gift of creativity—these are the elements that provide motivation for much of his work."

Margrett Ford, Esq., Brooklyn, New York

"Otto Neals is our Black Jesus of the Arts."

**Richard E. Green, Executive Director, Crown
Heights Youth Collective**

"Otto Neals is a contemporary elder—One who has journeyed in wisdom, but not necessarily in time."

Dolores Inniss-Carty

Reminiscence... "Otto and I grew up together, playing in Bedford Stuyvesant streets and attending neighborhood schools. We greeted each other as friends—ordinary children, doing ordinary things, accepting ourselves and others in an ordinary way. But it takes an extra-ordinary someone to step from that mold and move to another plane. Today one meets Otto Neals the man and is immediately taken with his warm, quiet, humble dignity. His paintings, sculpture and photography lend you only a glimpse into the soul of this man who used to be an ordinary child in our yesteryears; my ordinary friend has cleared his ground in the art world. We celebrate him this day, for we could not know, that child-time ago, who Otto Neals would be."

**Teddy Gunn, Director, Skylight Gallery, Bedford
Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation**

"God has sent us a gift in Otto. Let us support him and deal with his creativity positively. He is a gift to the planet—He's my brother before I ever set foot in Brooklyn."

Moyenda Soares

"Otto Neals is an outstanding artist and sculptor for which he is deservedly known and admired, but it is for his personal qualities that I hold him in particularly high esteem. He is a sincere, considerate, soft-spoken man who is always willing to help others. He is dependable, and can always be counted on to keep his word. He is a modest person, and one would never know from his con-

versions that he is so well known and so talented. In spite of his many achievements, he never attempts to put himself above others. Otto is one of those rare individuals who seldom has anything bad to say about anyone. Otto's consistency in using his art and his time to further our people's knowledge and appreciation of themselves as an African people—for these many years have been in that direction and he is as dedicated and energetic in this regard as he was when I first met him over thirty years ago. I am proud to call Otto my friend."

Vernal Reuben, Painter and Printmaker

"Otto Neals is a very efficient artist and a very quiet man. His personal qualities are seen long before his art—patience, quietness and honesty of purpose. He speaks very little about art, but his art speaks for itself."

Ernie Crichlow, Painter and Teacher, Brooklyn, New York

"Otto Neals is one of the champions of African-American art with an uncompromising commitment for its purity and preservation."

Lawrence Dorsey, Dorsey's Gallery, Brooklyn, New York

"I've known Otto Neals for over 25 years. He is one of the very best artists I've ever worked with—He is beautiful."

Glenwood Lawrence, Painter, Composer and Author, Brooklyn, NY

"Otto's being plays a mellow harmony in thought or presence. His work exudes evidence of an intimate relationship with love, as love moves the spirit! That relationship is a river of inspiration. Always. Thanks, Otto."

Elton Fax, Painter and Author, New York

"Otto Neals is quite an artist, and quite a man."

Carlton and Dulcie Ingleton - 843 Studio Gallery, Brooklyn, NY

"Otto is a fine man, an exceptionally talented artist whose work vividly celebrates the African American experience. With Otto you can't say much about his work, you have to see it—it's visual."

Aubrey A. Rogers, Esq. Regional Administrator, SBA, New York

"Otto Neals is a positive, powerful and passionate artist. Each piece of his work yields some sensitive linkage to our African heritage. His work gently urges those who would, to share, and experience his various subjects. This man is an artist in the most meaningful sense of the word."

Emmett Wigglesworth, Painter, Printmaker and Poet, Brooklyn, NY

"What is the measure of an artist? What is the measure of a man?"

Otto Neals is one who fits the Master's plan. And all of us who know him can bear testimony to this truth, and point him out as an example to all upcoming youth."

Norma Johnson, Brooklyn, New York

"Otto Neals—His work personifies the man and the artist that he is, gentle, and it is reflected in the treatment of his subject matter. He is careful and keen in the treatment of the human anatomy. He is a true artist."

Hon. Una S.T. Clarke, Councilmember, 40th District, Brooklyn

"Otto Neals is one of the greatest contemporary African-American painter and sculptor."

Audrey Hutchinson, Educator, New York

"Otto Neals' work is a source of inspiration to all."

Mrs. Enid Van-Pitterson, Painter and Printmaker, Florida

"I think the world of Otto, he is a good artist and an exceptional person."

Ademola Olugebefola, Painter, New York

"Otto Neals is undeniably one of America's finest artists. Having achieved notable success in the works of African American and Caribbean art, Neals is one of the most prolific artists working today. One has only to experience one of his exquisite oil paintings to realize his control of light, form and composition. His mastery of the different mediums is a joy to behold. Since 1968 I have had the pleasure of seeing Otto Neals develop into one of contemporary art's best sculptor. His exhilarating three dimensional works in wood, marble and stone stand as a testimony to the beauty, rhythm and eloquence of the African Diaspora and the immense talent and humanity of this modern day master artist."

Bernard and Jackie Cully, Painters, and Designer

"This gentle, modest and multi-talented artist is totally committed to his craft and to the community. He has been an inspiration both creatively and spiritually. Otto's work expresses dedication to his heritage and addresses current social issues. In his soft spoken and helpful manner he is a beacon of light in an often restless environment."

Winston Huggins, PhD, Painter and Media Artist

"Otto Neals is most known for his quiet devotion to the creation of his art. He is a man who prefers to speak eloquently through his art."

Jide Ojo, EDD, Painter, Illustrator and Photographer

Ars Longa Vita Brevis—Art is long but life is short.

"For almost half of a century Otto Neals ("Daddy Otto") has devoted himself with unflagging energy and dedication. Art has always been life itself for Otto Neals while other artists who started with him had long abandoned this labor of love. Otto Neals has continued to produce and show unceasingly and uncompromisingly. In fact, to paraphrase William Faulkner's words, 'Otto Neals through his art has continued to show and demonstrate to us that our end is not here yet: but we will prevail.' He has shown via his art that we Africans are not only immortal but as a group we have soul. A spirit capable of compassion, sacrifice and endurance.

Otto Neals has made it his privilege to help us endure by reminding us of courage and honor, and hope, and pride, and compassion, and pity, and sacrifice which has been the glory of our past. Otto Neals is one of the foremost artists of our time."

Shola Akintolayo, New York

"Otto Neals is a prolific Pan-African artist whose work reaffirms the dignity of the African family. His grace and strength are reflected in his creations which evoke resistance to all things negative."

Tony Kelly, Kell-O-Graphics, Inc., Long Island, New York

"Otto Neals is a very prolific artist. His work is being enjoyed by an ever-increasing cross section of collectors across the country. He has touched a positive nerve in each and everyone of us, not only with his work but the man himself."

TRIBUTE TO OTTO NEALS—PIONEER AND VETERAN ARTIST

Coral B. Barnett, ACAA Art Gallery

THE THREE MANIFESTATIONS—Of Kahlil Gibran:

"Life without Love is like a tree without blossom and fruit and Love without Beauty is like flowers without scent and fruits without seeds...Life, Love and Beauty are three persons in one who cannot be separated or changed.

Life without Rebellion is like season without Spring. And Rebellion without Right is like Spring in an arid desert...Life, Rebellion and Right are three-in-one Who cannot be changed or separated.

Life without Freedom is like body without a soul, and Freedom without Thought is like confused spirit...Life, Freedom and Thought are three-in-one and are everlasting and never pass away. For that which Love begets, and that which Rebel creates; and that which Freedom fears are the three Manifestations of God; and God is the expression of the intelligent universe."

Otto Neals is an expression of the intelligent man of the universe—that cannot be separated or changed. He lives his life in the glory of Love, and Beauty, which can only be reflections of God. He is like a chemist who extracts elements and compounds them into one. With his honest imaginative personality Otto Neals has extracted and compounded character, compassion, kindness, joy, respect, happiness, strength, patience, sensitivity, dignity, beauty and pride into one and created an atom of—Love.

Otto Neals a multi-faceted artist; a painter, sculptor, illustrator and printmaker is a man of sound reason and knowledge. He has instilled in his fellow artists confidence and pride in their cultural heritage. His influence has such a strong hold on people that it seemed supernatural. When you are around him you can only feel joy. His creations will continue to remain in our minds as historical images. His works belong to all times and to all men. His altruistic spiritual love for humanity, black women in general and his ancestors in particular is a testament to his humanity. Through his work he came here to be for all and with all. He has become—A personal friend with sterling principles and character, a creative, imaginative wholesome artist and most of all—HE IS MY BROTHER

- Compiled by Coral B. Barnett, ACAA Art Gallery, 1993
- Produced by Tony Kelly of Kell-O-Graphics, Inc.
- Printing by Clock Printing

Special thanks to all who have helped to make this exhibit possible.