

He Knew (In honor of Tommie Robinson)

As a child with pencil and a portrait of his father in tow
He knew
Time and time again
From his head and heart
It radiated through his hands

Draw through the pain
Sketch around the sorrow
Perfection not attainable at first
But there is always tomorrow

He kept going until he got it right
The image of his father who had transitioned from this life
Came alive on his paper
And it would serve as a foundation
The launch of an artist formidable
Of a career of greatness

And he knew early on
That he was on to something
More than just a hobby or simple talent
He was good- no, he was great
Greater than a child sketch artist
An early entrepreneur
Who wasn't willing to wait

To be paid
Or given permission
A child reading and learning everything that he could about the arts
Creative and inquisitive

There was something internal
Almost instinctual
His ability to use his art
In a world where Black creators weren't always given space
Where racism and discrimination were institutional

He still painted and drew
He still created
Murals and portraits
Art from his own mind
That would sustain him financially

This career that he always knew was possible
He was the master of his own destiny
Some might see a career like his
As Surrealism- fantasy
But his is a story of what happens when you know
And let your gifts remind you of who you are and who you one day can be

It's like bringing fish to the land
Watch them swim amongst the flowers
He is rare is talent
A creative king molded in the queen city
And he is ours

Homegrown artist
Living legend with Charlotte roots
Gifted the world with the opportunity to see life from his vision
Gave us the chance to witness what he already knew

That careers like his are possible
Art isn't reserved for a privileged class
He understood that he was possible
And we benefit for generations to come
Simply because he chose the artist's life...the creator's path.

He knew.