Aesthetics

PUBLISHED BY
YOUTHS' ART AND
CULTURE CIRCLE

EDITED BY
Mahesh Gupta

THE ARCHIVE OF
NICHOLAS
ROERICH
MUSEUM

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Two Poems

by NICHOLAS ROERICH

At The Last Gates

We were told "Forbidden!"
Yet we entered none the less.
We approached the gates.
Everywhere we heard "Forbidden!"
We wanted to see the signs.
We were told: "Forbidden!"
We wanted to kindle the light.
We were told: "Forbidden!"

Gray, seeing, knowing guards,
You are erring guards.
The Host has permitted to know,
The Host has permitted to see.
No doubt it is His wish
That we shall know, that we shall see.

Behind the gates a messenger stands.
He brings us something.
"Let us in, guards!"
"Forbidden!" we were told.
And the gates were closed.

But none the less many were the gate
We passed. We broke our way through
And "Permitted" remained behind us.
The guards at the gates halted us.
And they begged. And threatened.
And we were warned: "Forbidden!"
All forbidden? Forbidden all?
To all forbidden?

And only behind us "Permitted?"
But on the last Last Gates
It will be traced "Permitted!"
And behind us "Forbidden".
"Thus inscribe!" He commanded
Upon the Last Gates.

(From Russian).

TO US

In life there is so much of wonder,
Every morning near our shore
Sails by an unknown singer
Every morning slowly from behind the mist
Moves a light boat and
A new song always rings
And as always the singer
Is hiding behind the next crag.
And it seems to us we shall never
Know who he is—this
Singer—nor whereto he is directing his path
Every morning. And to whom
Does he always sing the new song?
Oh, what hope fills
The heart and to whom does he sing?
Maybe
To us.

(From Russian)