JOY OF ART
NICHOLAS ROERICH

Introduction
by
RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Foreword
by
SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN

THE ART SOCIETY
IT is a matter of joy to find that in every country today young spirits are emerging who have the courage to accept the challenge of our suffering age and uncompromisingly serve the cause of our common unity.

——Tagore in a letter to Roerich.
Joy of Art

The voice that is just enough can speak and cry to the extent needed for everyday use but that which is abundant sings and in that we find our joy.

Nicholas Roerich

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Spring, 1942.

The Art Society Amritsar
THE name of Nicholas Roerich, in fact, needs no introduction to those interested in art anywhere in the world. Painter, poet, thinker, traveller, and scientist, his versatility is surprising and suggests something of Goethe and Da Vinci. His manifold genius coupled with his extensive travels all over the world has won for him an international reputation which few have achieved before him during their lifetime.

Roerich as a painter possesses a highly individualistic technique. As a colourist and a master of decorative design he has elicited prominent tributes everywhere. But while painting, Roerich does not stick to mere external detail of his subjects; he endeavours to dip his brush deep into the soul of the atmosphere. He is no apostle of "pure" art. Art for him is no mere aesthetic content or sentient apprehension. While possessing these characteristics he yet transcends their narrow limitations and appeals to the higher-self in man.

Tagore, after seeing his paintings, wrote to Roerich, "Your pictures... made me realise one thing... that truth is infinite. Your pictures are distinct and yet are not definable by words. Your art is jealous of its independence because it is great."

Roerich's ties with India are both strong and of a long standing. India has always attracted him irresistibly and his symbolic paintings of the infinite glory and panoramic variety of the Himalayas will ever live down the ages. His own words to Mr. Asitkumar Haldar sum up delicately and consummately his attitude towards this country,—he wrote, "Loving India and being a Russian, I am happy that in the history of Russian art the Himalayas and India shall be recorded with love and veneration."

THE EDITOR,

OUR friendly call comes to you at this time when the wave of low material forces and the great deluge are trying to sweep down the towers of Culture and Beauty, when the forces of Agni are engulfing us all around, when horrible strife is the order of the day. But under the benevolent ray of expanded consciousness all dangers may be surmounted. Let us transmute these dangers into blessings and in constant creation forever eject the conception of destruction.

Just before dawn, the night-cold becomes most intense. All laws of nature have their counterpart in the human-being, because as above, so below. Knowing these laws, we are confident that after this cold comes the glorious dawn. So instead of being terrified by this cold, we rejoice because the radiant victory approaches and the terror of ignorance and hypocrisy shall be transformed into the beneficent tremor of supreme viration.

Amidst the Eternal Values Art has a predominant place. Verily, be blessed all who inspite of difficulties gather and labour in the name of Beauty. They know that in this creative world is being born the majestic Renaissance of their Motherland.

In these noble efforts the young generation should be convoked as guardians of Beauty. And it is with special attention and great joy that we are watching the youth of to-day. Their hearts are sounding in a unique and quite new way. They are going to build the new world and it fills our hearts with hope.
Youth whose enthusiasm is not yet marred feels the might of colour and sound. It responds joyfully to the call of the Beautiful; it realises that in this temple of the Beautiful is enshrined all that is precious in life and it has determined to guard that temple against all dangers to the last of its life. Young co-workers, we know you. Your devotion for art is not an empty word. You are ready for fight and struggle when you see an onslaught by ignoramuses and destroyers.

Greetings to all young co-workers. We rejoice to witness many most enlightened associations of youth, who struggle towards Light in strenuous efforts. How heartily they strive towards the highest aims of mankind. We know what hardships they have to overcome. We know how they have to rise above local and family circumstances and yet they find inexhaustible strength to go by the higher path. And on all their trails they affirm blessed milestones. And all this common good is accomplished amid indescribable difficulties. And still the attainment takes place and when one wishes to think of something touchingly joyful, one recalls these affirmations of the young generation.

If youth itself realizes the joy of work and inspiring communion, then the more so should the wise elders encourage exactly this joy. One should not coldly condemn that which has given such beautiful evidence. If because of our times everybody finds it difficult, then one should jointly try to transmute these difficulties into joy. The young hearts understand this. Therefore, let us help in every way that the young may meet on the path of bliss and inspiration.

Knowledge and beauty are the real cornerstones of evolution, the gates to a world community. We affirm this, not only as a prayer, but even as a command, to all humanity. We know that in these spheres of knowledge & beauty all hearts must be united. Love, labour, and noble action are not abstract misty symbols for the enlightened workers in the beautiful fields of creation. Endlessly we must repeat this command of beauty and knowledge. We must insist that the creative sense of the beautiful should be applied in every-day life; that every household should be beautified; that in each home books should have the place of honour.

We have the right to regard beauty as a real motive force. For a moment, imagine the history of humanity without the treasures of beauty. For a moment, let us erase from our memories the majestic images of Assyria and Babylon, the dynamic symmetry of Egyptian art. Let us forget the beauty of the Gothic primitives, the enchantment of Buddhist glory and classic Greece. Let us disrobe the tales of heroes and rulers of the garb of beauty. Without the adornments of beauty how crude remain the pages of history. Truly, not a single heroic achievement, not one constructive victory may be imagined without the sense of the beautiful. In creative enthusiasm, the young generation attains the beautiful. And how else could illumined enthusiasm enter into our lives? Verily only from the creative fields of art where are expressed all spheres of the Supreme.

The history of humanity provides splendid evidences of how the creative thought of beauty was evaluated in ancient times.

From former days, perhaps in the fifteenth century in Russia, there has come down to us a legend in which Christ is proclaimed as the highest guardian of beauty. According to this legend, when Christ was ascending to heaven, some troubadours approached him and asked, "Lord Christ, to whom are you leaving us? How can we exist without you?" And Christ answered, "My children, I shall give you the golden mountains and silver rivers and beautiful gardens and you shall be nourished and happy." But then St. John approached Christ and said, "Oh Lord, give them not golden mountains and silver rivers. They do not know how to guard them, and someone rich and powerful will attack them and take away the golden mountains. Give them only your name and your beautiful songs and give the command that all those who appreciate the songs and who care for and guard the singers shall find the gates open to Paradise." And Christ replied, "Yes, I shall give them, not golden mountains, but my songs; and all who appreciate them shall find the gates open to Paradise."

Herein you have the essential and vital combination of world brotherhood through beauty, and you see that the highest symbol of human understanding becomes the highest guardian of beauty.

Again we have the quotation from the oldest Russian historical chronicles by the Monk Nestor, indicating how Prince Jaroslav appreciated knowledge and beauty: Jaroslav founded Kiev the Great and its Golden Gates with it. Loving the laws of beauty and of church and being a master in books he read them by day and by night and wrote them too, thus sowing literary seeds in the hearts of true men which we now reap. But books and images are rivers that carry wisdom through the world and are as deep as rivers. Also Jaroslav lovingly beautified the churches with images and with splendid gold and silver vessels and his heart rejoiced upon it.

Besides we have also beautiful quotations from some later chroni-les of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, teaching us that the best spiritual achievement for the rulers is to guard art and even to use art in their own life.

Knowing these quotations, one is not surprised to see in the opera "Snegouryotchka" that the Tsar is at the same time an artist, and is beautifying his own palace. This is not merely a sophisticated message for royalty, but the fundamental reverence for beauty of the people. For if you ask me what countersign and certificate you would have to show to be allowed to enter a strange village, I would give you the best advice: enter the village singing, and the more pleasing your song the
better your welcome. If they ask you for a certificate show them a drawing or a painting it is the certificate best understood, and you will be assured that you can remain there forever. You have your shield and your guard.

This we found also in Asia. With real joy we recollect how everywhere there the most beautiful traditions are dedicated to the meaning of creative art. These traditions are vital because in every country of Asia they regard and speak about works of art in the most beautiful way, using the most refined symbols, so that very often we have to learn these refined expressions dedicated to the beautiful. Let us recollect how the simple Mongol speaks of the perfection of art in the following legend:

In olden times in Kucha lived a celebrated painter. Once, as a deposit against a loan, he brought his painting, representing a head of cabbage and a butterfly to a merchant and asked three thousand sar. A boy, who was taking the place of the owner of the shop, gave him the requested loan. The owner returned. He was indignant that, for a cabbage and butterfly, the boy should have lent so much money. He chased away the boy and considered the money lost. Winter came and on the appointed day the artist brought the money and asked to have the painting back. They took out the painting and the owner, to his terror, saw that the butterfly had disappeared from the picture. The artist demanded his complete picture as described. The owner was upset. The painter said 'So you have unjustly thrown out the boy. But now only he can help you.' The owner called the boy. For three days the boy kept the picture near the fire and the butterfly appeared again. Then the boy said 'You have not appreciated the artist, but he is so perfect that his colours have all the qualities of nature. The butterflies appear in the warm summertime; for the winter they disappear. The same happens also in the painting. Only the warmth of the fire recalled the butterfly to life in winter as well. So perfect is this painter!' And the owner was ashamed and adopted the boy and made him rich for his wisdom.

The same simple Mongol repeats what the Buddha said in the Sutras: "The greatest crime is ignorance."

And let us again recollect all these beautiful legends and stories from the "Tao" and from the Buddhist world, that connect the meaning of art and knowledge with the supreme feelings. What beautiful lines "Tao" dedicated to the true scientists!

During five years of travel in Asia I have seen innumerable libraries in each monastery. In every temple, in every ruined Chinese watch tower, there was a library with a collection of most remarkable books—a collection of famous biographies, dictionaries, books of history and science.

When you see a lonely traveller in the mountains you may be sure that in his knapsack is a book and work of art. You may deprive him of everything, he will resign it; but he will defend his real treasure, the book or the work of art.

Studying the past, we may affirm that creative art has been the motive power for progress of life, the form of the synthesis of evolution. Is it not an inspiring thought to realize that the evolution of humanity culminates in beauty?

Verily, we can evaluate art and beauty as the great motive powers in the new conception of life and the service to humanity for the construction of the approaching and beautiful evolution. In this justified enthusiasm, we can proclaim beauty as a real motive power.

SHOULD someone ask why, in the melee of our days, one may be concerned with questions of Beauty, you may safely answer, "I know the way of the future." Friends, if we realize how vital beauty was during ancient times, what immense uses of the emanations of beauty we can make in our everyday life. If in the Middle Ages, beauty was considered as the "Gates of Paradise," and if even a modest old chronicler of the eleventh century could assert his joy before beauty, how necessary it is for us to take all practical advantage of this basis of life, and fully fortified by our contemporary discoveries, to repeat "Love, Beauty, Action!"

How all-embracing is Love; how profoundly must be felt the sense of Beauty; and how vitally must we understand the meaning of that virile expression, Action! This command must not be forgotten once we can introduce it into our daily life. The new era is not far off, and not a single day may be lost. Perhaps you will ask me why we must repeat constantly this prayer of Beauty—the crown of Action and Love. Beautiful are necessities and the responsibilities of our lives.

WE have always said, that the main thing is to collect and safeguard all the flowers of beauty. Affirming that the treasures of art and knowledge are the most important impulses in the growth of humanity, we must surround these milestones of mankind with vibrating love. Such is the task of the collector.
creators. In emphasizing the significance of collecting, we speak of something vital, something which gives living impetus to the beautiful. This broadened consciousness will lay the best foundations for a truly creative spirit in the new generation.

Collectors, as the antithesis of destroyers, form a special legion beyond epochs and nationalities. By no means are they retrogrades, imprisoned in their own egotistical desire of acquisition. Every true collector feels it necessary to share with understanding spirits his cultural treasures. In every collector has already flowered the seed of selfless joy towards beauty. Collecting becomes the cultural thermometer of each nation, and one may estimate the cultural level of nations by these revealing milestones.

The collector learns to protect the treasures of creative genius entrusted to him by destiny as an honorary guard. He is not a casual visitor of museums who transfers the complete responsibility upon a curator; he himself is the guard of those treasures which are before him, and which will radiate their light upon many after him. Absorbed in the life of creations, the collector extracts the true wisdom of his treasures. From the covetous Fafnir he is transformed into a guard who has won the right to possess the Ring of Achievement. The process of collecting is something like a dynamo of artistic creative power, which directly acts upon the spirit of the collector. And there is nothing extraordinary in the fact that artistic creations are rising in price even in this conventional, earthly valuta. During war and revolution the monetary values of the beautiful were conclusively revealed. Whole countries, whole cities who could not protect themselves with land or buildings, found the means of their existence in their artistic treasures. This is a fact of great cultural significance.

Time was when wives prevented their husbands from acquiring real art objects, preferring property with the belief that it was indestructible. They did not count upon earthquakes and bombs; to them, a printed bank-note was more valuable than a Rembrandt, an El Greco or a Da Vinci. One cannot blame them when one remembers that they simply did not understand the true unchangeable values. But now the age of womanhood has come; and woman will be the real protector and collector of the beautiful.

The records of collecting reveal that these never-to-be-repeated treasures enhance in earthly and spiritual values. Happy is the land where the movement of enlightened collecting has begun. There the human spirit will flower to reveal new evidences of fortune and place.

The names of many collectors are recorded in history inseparable from the creators, because in collecting, these men themselves became

Humanity in diverse ways is striving for peace, and everyone, in his own heart, realizes that this constructive work is a true prophecy of a new era. In view of this, it is certainly incongruous to hear discussions on the comparative desirability of various bullets, or on whether one type of ship is closer to the conceptions of world unity than the cannons of two battleships. Let us, however, consider these discussions as preliminary steps towards the same great peace that will tame the belligerent instincts of humanity by the resplendent and joyous creations of the spirit.

The fact remains, however, that the shells of even one of these cannons can destroy the greatest treasures of art and science as successfully as a whole fleet. We deplore the loss of the Library of Louvain and the unreplaceable loveliness of the Cathedral of Rheime. We remember the beautiful treasures of private collections which perished during the world’s misunderstandings. We do not, however, wish to inscribe above them words of enmity: let us simply say, “Destroyed by human error, and recreated by human hope.” Nevertheless, errors in this or any other form can be repeated and other precious milestones of human achievement can be destroyed.

Against such errors of ignorance we should take immediate measures. And even though these may be only preliminary measures of safeguarding, some very successful steps can be taken. No one can deny that the flag of the Red Cross proved to be of immeasurable value and reminded the world of humanitarianism and compassion.

It should be planned to create a flag which should be respected as International Neutral Territory, to be raised above museums, cathedrals, universities, and other cultural centres. This international flag for the protection of beauty and science would not in any way demean interests or lead to misunderstandings. On the contrary, it would elevate the universal consciousness which must be awakened. As the Red Cross flag needs no explanation to even the most uncultured mind, so would this new flag, guardian of cultural treasures, speak for itself. It is simple enough to explain, even to a barbarian, the importance of safeguarding art.

It is imperative to take immediate measures to preserve the noble heritage of our past for a glorious posterity. This can only come if all countries pledge themselves to protect the creations of culture, which after all, belong to no one nation but to the world. In this way we may create the next vital step for a universal culture and peace.

Each departure from the Beautiful, from Culture, has always brought about destruction and decay. On the contrary, all striving towards cultural constructiveness has created brilliant epochs of renaissance.
So long as Culture is a luxury and a Sunday repast, it cannot reconstitute our life. Can the consciousness, in the turmoil of daily life, exist without books, without the creations of beauty, without the entire multiform Museum—the Home of the Muses? Culture should become part of daily life, in huts as well as palaces. This clarified thinking will determine what is most necessary, inevitable and what is only the alluvia of passing waves. How benevolent is the touch of the wings of Culture, blessing the cradle to attainment and carrying the passing pilgrim to enlightened consciousness. In indescribable ways is the spirit ennobled through the touch of Culture. Not a confused hazy occultism and mysticism but the Light of the Great Reality shines there where the enlightenment of Culture has taken roots.

A friend enters singing a song. The artist expresses the quality of his spirit in painting. Thus we mutually affirm each other and rejoice at all manifestations of creativeness.

Humanity cannot continue to press downward along the way of disintegration and hatred, in other words, cannot hurry to brutality. Stop, Stop! The abyss is already at hand.

Let us gather around the conception of Culture, around the Great Service of Light. Realizing the unity of the Highest Light, we shall also find the capacity not to reproach, not to belittle, not to slander, but to praise Beauty, the Supreme.

Since time immemorial, the commandments about the Beautiful have been numberless. Whole kingdoms, whole civilizations were built by these great Ordinances. To beautify life, to ennable and to uplift it means to dwell in the good. All understanding and all-forgiveness and love and self denial are generated in the attainment of creativeness.

And should not all young hearts strive to creativeness? And so they do. What a quantity of the shares of vulgarity are required to stifle this sacred flame! How often by the single call, “Create, create”, can one open new gates to the Beautiful!

What decrepitude is expressed in the fossilized programmes: “First I shall learn to draw, then I shall go to colour, and after, I shall try to start composition.” Numberless are the cases when the flame of the heart became extinguished before the pupil reached the forbidden gates of creativeness. But how much joy, daring and vigilance is developed in the consciousness of those, who from childhood, dared to create. How enticingly attractive can be the compositions of children before their eyes and hearts become hardened by the death-inflicting conditions of standards.

Not for despair and tears, but for joy of spirit, have all universal evidences of beauty been created. But joy must be perceived, and how can joy set up its light-spreading haven, if bereft of the language of the heart? Where else if not in the heart, is the stronghold of joy?

He who has become conscious of the realm of the heart invariably reaches the shore of creativeness. In whatever way the pilgrim of the spirit expresses his creativeness, in essence it will be the same precious gem of which all the legends of humanity speak. The inspired Meistersinger, Wolfrom von Eschenbach, sings of the same precious stone, of which the immemorial wisdom of Tao speaks.

In what do the conditions of creativeness lie? In genuineness, in the imperative thrill of the heart, which calls forth constructiveness. Earthly conditions are of no importance for the creator who feels the call. Neither time, place or materials can limit this impulse of creativeness. “Even in the prison an artist will become an artist”—was one of the sayings of my teacher Kuidji. But he also used to say: “If you must be kept under glass, the sooner you disappear, the better; life has no need for such touch-me-nots.” He understood well the significance of the battle of life, the battle of light and darkness.

Each spiritual pauperisation is shameful. From the subterrestrial worlds, the great masters are sorrowfully watching, grieving over the folly of impeded possibilities. In previous articles, “Spiritual values”, “Revaluation”, and “Flame—The Transmute”, we spoke sufficiently of everything that should not be missed at the crossroads. I cannot forget the profound saying of my deceased friend, the poet Alexander Bloch, in regard to the Ineffable. Bloch ceased to frequent the Religious-Philosophical Society because, as he expressed it, “They speak there of the Inexpressible”. To be precise, there is a limit to words, but there is no limit to sentiments or the capacity of the heart. Everywhere is the Beautiful. All pilgrims in search of the good, all sincere seekers embark at this shore; people may quarrel greatly and may even become like animals, but still they will be silent in unity at the sound of a mighty symphony and will desist from all quarrels in a museum or under the dome of the Notre dame in Paris.

The same love of the heart is evoked when we read in all ordinances of the flashes of beauty. The Persian apocrypha about Christ is most touching: “As Christ walked with his disciples they came upon the carcass of a dog lying by the roadside. The disciples turned away with repugnance from the putrid corpse. But the Teacher found beauty also in this case and pointed out how beautifully white were the teeth of the dog.”

At the hour of his passing, Buddha the Lord remembered: “How beautiful is Rajagriha and the Cultured Cliff. Beautiful are the valleys and the mountains. Vaisali! what a beauty?” Beside all his other abilities, every Bodhisattva has to be perfect in art also.

The Rabbi Gamaliel says: “The study of the law is a noble work if connected with some art. This occupation leads away from sin. But each occupation which is not accompanied by art leads nowhere.” And the Rabbi Iehuna Adds: “He who does not teach an art to his
son, makes of him a highwayman.” Spinoza, who attained a considerable adeptness in art, truly answered to this covenant of the harmonization and ennoblement of the spirit.

Of course, the high codes of India also affirm the same basic significance of creative art. In ancient India, Art, Religion, Science were synonyms of Vidya, or Culture. Satyam, Shivam, and Sundaram, are the Eternal Triune manifestation of godhood in Man, the Immutable, the Blissful and the Beautiful.

Let us remember the Museon the home of the Muses, of Pythagoras, of Plato and all those great ones who understood the cornerstones of the foundations of life; and let us recall Plotinus, “On the Beautiful.” Out of the depths of life’s severe experiences, Dostoevski exclaims: “Beauty will save the word!” Ruskin, who has glorified the stones of the past, expresses the same. A well-known Ecclesiatic looking at paintings, exclaimed: “A prayer of earth to Heaven!”

The old unfailing friend of all creative searchers, Leonardo Da Vinci, says: “He who despises the art of painting despises the philosophical and sensitive contemplation of the world, for painting is the legitimate daughter, or rather, grand-daughter of nature. Everything that exists has been begotten of nature, which in turn has begotten the science of painting. For this reason, I maintain that the art of painting is the grand-daughter of nature and is related to God Himself. He, who defames the art of painting, defames nature.”

“The painter must be all-embracing. Oh, artist, may thy versatility be as infinite as the manifestations of nature. Continuing what God has begun, strive to multiply not the deeds of human hands, but the eternal creations of God. Never imitate. And may every creation of thine be a new manifestation of nature.”

Was not the “unyielding austerity” of Leonardo Da Vinci strengthened by the clear joy for the far off worlds, by the firm prayer of the heart in Infinity!

How many of the best of human beings have affirmed the prayer of the heart, the prayer of beauty, the beauty of creativeness, of victories of Light! From all lands, in all ages, everybody has proclaimed the significance of creativeness, as the leading principle of life. The ancient monuments have immortalised the glorious images of Egypt, India, Assyria, of the Mayas, and of China; and are not the treasures of Greece, Italy, France, Belgium, Germany, living witnesses of the significance of the highest creativeness?

How wonderful that even now, amidst all the spiritual and material crises, we can affirm the kingdom of the beautiful! And we can do this not as abstract idealists, but armed by the experience of life, strengthened by historical events and by spiritual tenets.

Remembering the significance of creativeness, humanity must also remember the language of the heart. Are not the parables of Solomon, the Psalms and the Bhagavat Gita and all the fiery commandments of the hermits of Sinai written in this language?

How precious it is to realize that all the convenants lead not to division, limitation, or brutality, but to ascent to the strengthening and purification of the spirit!

DR. Brinton has reminded me, that on leaving America in 1930, I said to him: “Beware of the barbarians!” Since then many barbarians have invaded and laid siege to the domain of Culture. Under the sign of the financial depression, many incorrigible crimes have been committed within the citadels of the spirit.

The stones of all ancient monuments may well cry out against all apostates of Culture, that is the source of everything blissful and precious. Do not the defilers of Culture trample their own well-being? Even the blind ones see more than these gloomy servants of darkness.

“Beware of the Barbarians!”

Still we cannot be reconciled with an uncertain valuta. We can unite only upon the step of Culture, in the name of everything inspiring, creative, beautiful. Still it will always be considered a good and noble deed to support everything creative and educational. Ascending these steps we ourselves become enlightened.

Gathering around the Sign of Culture, let us remember how we addressed Womanhood: “When there are difficulties in the home, we turn to the woman. When accounts and calculations are no longer of aid, when enmity and mutual destruction reach their limits, we turn to the woman. When evil forces overcome one, then woman is invoked. When the statistical mind becomes helpless, then one remembers the woman’s heart.”

And so now, when times are difficult for the universal abode of Culture. And again we hope that the heart of woman will understand
the grief for impeded creativeness, for Culture. She will understand how one may grieve for spiritual treasures and come to the aid of all realms of the Beautiful.

In the days of distress we must especially affirm the prayer of the heart for the Beautiful. We must remember that the Beautiful is within the reach of everyone.

To rise from a shepherd lad to an honoured master like Kuindji, or from a far-off distant peasant to become a beacon light of science, like Lomonosov, is certainly not easy. Seemingly nothing aided them. Everything seemed to be against them, and yet “Light conquered darkness.” The life dramas of Van Gough, Gauguin, Ryder, Vrabel. Mares and many martyrs for the Beautiful constitute an unforgettable covenant to guide youth.

Gratitude is the virtue of great hearts. Let us not only remember the glorious names with gratitude, but let us arm ourselves with the whole of their experience in order to confront all destructive forces of darkness.

Now is an extreme hour, when one must be armed with all the experience of the past, in order not to surrender the stronghold of Culture. Now is the time to be aware of the whole spiritual treasure of creativeness, in order to repel the dark forces of ignorance with this “Armour of Light” and to move onwards fearlessly.

Per aspera ad astra.

Is it not joyful, that, notwithstanding varied partisipations we can address every sincere artistic group with hearty greetings, saying: “Still, despite all kinds of disunity, the human spirit again turns to positive constructiveness, when every sincere effort to co-operation is appreciated. Are there not numerous kinds of flowers growing upon the spring meadows and are they not superb in their variety? Does not this creative variation of form in its fragrance manifest the Festival of the Spring, which is celebrated by all people since time immemorial?

Nothing can take the place of the Divine multiformity. So also in art, the earthly reflection of Divinity, multiformity means bounteousness of the people's spirit. In the midst of human disaster, we feel the value of creativeness still more.

May there be a reverberation of constructiveness and the beautiful desire for the Good; in other words, of those forces which are to be set at the foundation of all the activities of cultural humanity. Every thinking man feels the oppression of conventional divisions, shocking in their pettiness; he is suffocated by the effluvia of ignorance, by the poison of unculturedness, which disintegrates and putrefies all existence.

All to whom human dignity is precious, all who strive towards a truly pre-ordained perfection, must naturally work together, casting off, like indecent tatters, the vocabulary of malice and lies, remembering that in the vocabulary of good there are many concepts that are not abstract, but really vitally applicable. And how undeferrably these conceptions must be applied in life, in order that the word ceases to be an empty sound, but becomes the actually strengthening factor of creative thought.

Everyone who strives towards the good, knows how valuable are all the so-called obstacles, which are only tests of strength to a virile spirit, and which by their tension evoke a new and transmuted energy.

We do not proclaim to make our plea for yesterday. It is only the absoluteness of the Future that one can proclaim. So long as we ourselves are not convinced at heart of the radiant constructiveness of the future, we will remain in a hazy abstraction. It is for the future that trees are planted along the roadside and milestones are set up. The builder would not set up milestones, if his heart would not know to where this path leads.

We affirm that the path leads to knowledge and to the Beautiful, but a knowledge freed from all prejudices, and irresistibly pursuing the aims of God. We affirm that this road leads to Beauty, not luxury, nor caprice, but daily necessity will impel striving and the realization of the beautiful on all paths. We shall not be afraid of the conception of reality. Those who strive in valour know all the conditions of this Path.

As the wise ones say: “On departing one does not utter unkind words”. The weak ones say: “The heart has become weary”. But that which lives in infinite love, aiming towards realization, with discipline of the spirit and with Beauty, will not become weary and overfilled.

By tension and the burdening of the heart we increase our experience. Let us be guided by the beautiful words of the Wisdom of the East:

“Tire me now, load me further, lay upon me the burden of the world.”

“But I will multiply my strength.”

“Dostn't thou hearken? The burden will blossom with roses and the grass will be cloaked in the rainbow of the morning.”

“Therefore tire me.”

“When I am approaching the garden of the beauty, I do not fear burdens.”

In wisdom everything is real; the morning is real; the Beautiful garden is real; and the burden and weariness of the world and transfigured attainment are also real.

One cannot better establish the importance of creativeness than with the dedication of Count A. Tolstoy, “To the Artist”: 
“Be ye blind as Homer and deaf as Beethoven.

“But strain more zealously thy spiritual ear and spiritual eye.

“And as if upon the flames of a secret writing faint lines emerge suddenly,

“Thus will the pictures suddenly emerge before thee.

“And more vivid will become the colours and more perceptible the paints.

“The harmonious correlation of word will interweave in clear morning.

“And ye, at this moment, behold, hearkening thy breath.

“And afterwards, creating, creating, recall the fleeting vision.”

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WHAT a beautiful word “creativness”. In various languages it rings out appealingly and convincingly. In its own way it speaks about something latent possible, about something triumphant and conclusive. So mighty and beautiful is the word ‘creativness’ that all conventional obstacles are forgotten in the face of it. People rejoice at this word as a symbol of advancement. The command of creativeness covers over all whisperings of the limited mind about rules, about materials, about all that so often answered with the suppressive word “impossible”. To creativeness all is possible. It leads humanity along with itself Creativeness is the banner of youth. Creativeness is progress. Creativeness is the mastery of new possibilities. Creativeness is peaceful conquest over stagnation and formlessness. Creativeness has already been implanted movement. Creativeness is expression of the fundamental laws of the universe. In other words, in creativeness is expressed Beauty.

It has been said that Beauty will save the world. People have smiled at this formula with sympathy or with derogation, but no one can refute it. There are certain axioms which may cause wonder but which one cannot overthrow. Humanity dreams about freedom; it inscribes this great hieroglyph upon the facades of buildings. At the same time mankind exerts every effort to restrict and reduce this concept. Great freedom of thought is manifested in true creativeness. That will be true which is beautiful and convincing. In the secret places of the heart, for which man himself is responsible, has been implanted trustworthy judgment as to what true conviction is, what creativeness is, what Beauty is.

As Velasquez said, “Not a picture but truth itself.”

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FOR the individual, what is the way for immediate application of Beauty? First of all, let us beautify our homes with the most sincere expressions of Beauty. As we repeat, perhaps these expressions will be fragmentary or they will be only fine reproductions of great creations. It does not matter, for even in small fragments of good reproductions great conceptions are reflected and can lead us to great understanding.

The sense of the Beautiful purifies our thoughts—nothing may be a greater stimulus for pure thought than this self-sacrificing enthusiasm. And finally, once for all, we must realize that thought, not deed, is the strongest force. And for this reason, the conception of pure thinking is the most practical one. We are not afraid even to use the word ‘practical’ because we must be constructive, using all material-matter as well as spirit—and in this way we can understand that even these two conceptions are one.

In this great understanding we may forget all pettiness, and without any sense of destruction we may beautify and build up the unfinished towers of Beauty. And in this way, little by little, we shall become accustomed to the great sense of infinity. And to the eternal Great Beginning—the beginning of light, the beginning of enlightenment, the beginning of labour and beautification that shall transform our everyday life, so isolated and timorous, into constant attainment, thus transforming the limited “I” into the unconquerable “We”.

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NOW in the time of action, not of discussion, let us remember this simple slogan. In our hard days of struggle and fight, humanity is growing weary of discussing all the conditional forms of contemporary life. But without a true conception of life proper, all the deliberations about its outward and casual signs are useless. You can talk about ways of communication, trade, production, monetary systems and innumerable subjects. But where do we arrive at, with all these ‘ways of communication’? Are they, in the synthesis, going to serve us even as a means for murder? No, while there is no peace, ‘ways of communication’ are doomed to be broken up and all the products of man will be wiped away from the face of the world. But there will be no peace until people learn how to discriminate between the ‘mechanical civilisation’ and the future culture of the spirit.

But how shall the conception of Culture which is so easily understood, but not transmuted, be brought into life? Certainly, not by words and proposals. What is needed now is harsh, practical and enlightened labour in its deep realistic meaning. The coming harvest of the forgotten forces of Nature will blossom only on the soil of this reality.
Through creation and knowledge this reality of culture will take its place in life. Only the great Beauty and Wisdom will strengthen the actual path of life. And now the time has arrived for concentrated work. And every worker should realize that he is not merely an insignificant part of a complicated apparatus, but that the highway of attainment lies open before him.

With hearts open to Beauty, in evoking young forces to a bright outlook, the people are deciding their future. During the present hard strife, the nations begin to understand why it is practical to retain the treasures of culture. They know that the new line should be erected according to these hieroglyphics on wisdom, because the past is but a window to the future. Through this window will come the joy of presenting to friends the new peaceful discoveries of Beauty.

Those who sit in pigeon holes may believe that all mottos about art are too idealistic and may doubt their practical application in our day, amidst our complex life. But this doubt comes only from the personalities of limited knowledge, narrowed by the stress of urban life. But our way is not with these, for we have seen how the buildings of their limited knowledge are easily destroyed. But take the simpler souls, not from the drab city, but those closer to nature, from town and village, from that universe where the wings of possibility are growing. From those you will have an entirely different response. Even simple Russian peasants understood that in the art object was the real valuta, more firm, than in any pecuniary possessions. In the same way, those peasants felt the significance of music and song, and really, if serpents can be charmed with music, how much greater importance has it for the human soul!

All possibilities of lower ways have already been tried. We have such superb poisons, and such all-destroying explosives, and our knives are so keenly sharpened that every heart can be destroyed. What must have reached to the second thousandth year of our era to achieve such perfect comity. At the same time hypocrisy is at its flood tide. From those you will have an entirely different response. Even simple Russian peasants understood that in the art object was the real valuta, more firm, than in any pecuniary possessions. In the same way, those peasants felt the significance of music and song, and really, if serpents can be charmed with music, how much greater importance has it for the human soul!

Should someone wish to dispute with me in this matter, denying the vital side of Beauty, I will gladly discuss with him. I have on my side the soundest historical facts and what I am saying is based only upon results. When people accuse me of being only an idealist, I can well say: "No, I am the realist, because I believe in knowledge and facts, in the synthesis of beauty, while you lay your faith on scraps of paper."

I believe always that the most idealistic ideas are the most practical and so it has proved in every organization in which I had the opportunity of participating during my artistic career. If anyone shall argue that something done is too idealistic and hence outside of life, one can say: "Excuse me, you are wrong. It is out of life because it is not high enough. It is as in mathematics, where we have to do with strange figures that seem to be not vital; but in their application these figures become magnetic forces attracting life in all its forms. And only in this way does one find the true ascent which leads us to the truism: from the highest mountain, one attains the brightest outlook. And from the clearest outlook one can discern how the seeming destruction is in reality the part of great constructive work."

I have many friends among the children and have always been especially proud of the little visitors to my exhibition. For who can grasp in the easiest way the vital power of Art?—the simple people, and the children, the people of nature. And in organizing the new international army of the New Era, we must not forget the simple people and the children. The new era must have its knights. And the best countersign of the army—the true passport for honour and eternity—is the sign of true culture. Before this countersign all communications shall be opened. And how simple and how beautiful shall be this vital sign!

We have noticed that the greatest enemies of Beauty are vulgarity, hypocrisy, selfishness, and above all, ignorance. The last one, although harmful, is not so dangerous. For this ailment may be cured, and my advice for remedy is to go to the first sources: the sincere outlook, based on real facts, will open the eyes of those afflicted. One woman whom I know, who lectures and sincerely attempts to interpret the meaning of art, once asked me what I would call her profession. I replied that the best title was probably a "window cleaner". And this is not entirely jest. For I assert that every human being has an open view into this realm of Beauty, if only the dust of life and the dirty windows do not obscure his vision.

Remember not dreams, but facts, and results. And from where comes the most bracing energy to grasp the vital ideas? My friends, only from the infinite power of the air, of the sun, only from the light comes this life-giving smile.

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There are many different friendships—traditional friendship, blood friendship, commercial friendship, and many others. But above them all stands the "Friendship Beautiful". In this friendship unbound by conventionalities, we can expand our best creative thoughts, our enthusiasm, our tolerance. And very this is needed, an intolerant man is an ignorant man. A non-creative mind is a dead mind.

Let the sacred flute of Sri Krishna resound again! Let us visualize that Peace in which the majestic frescoes of Ajanta were created! In
times of War let us think of future Peace, affirmed by Creativeness, Labour and Beauty. Travelling through Blessed India we once passed along a road in the shadow of mighty chinars. Our guide told us: 'The great Emperor Akbar thought of the future travellers who will be sheltered by these beautiful trees. He looked into the Future.'

'To regard the Beautiful means to improve'—said Plato. 'Man becomes that of which he thinks' preordained the Upanishads.

The great Swami Vivekananda tells us: 'Don’t you see I am above all a poet?' 'That man cannot be truly religious, who has not the faculty of feeling the beauty and grandeur of Art.'

'Non-appreciation of Art is crass ignorance'.

History records the manifold remarkable achievements of Leonardo DaVinci in all domains of life. He left amazing mathematical writings; he investigated the nature of flying; he conducted medical researches; and was a distinguished anatomist. He invented musical instruments, studied the chemistry of paint; he viewed the wonders of natural history. He adorned cities with magnificent buildings, palaces, schools, libraries; he built large military barracks, constructed one of the best ports in the Adriatic and planned and built great waterways; he founded mighty forts, constructed war machinery, sketched military plans...... Great was his versatility. But after all these remarkable achievements he remained in the memory of the world as an artist—as the great artist. Is this not a true victory of art?

Rabindranath Tagore finishes his book, *What is art*, with such words: "In Art the person in us is sending its answer to the Supreme Person, who reveals Himself to us in a world of endless beauty across the lightless word of facts."

There is no other way, O friends scattered! May my call penetrate to you! Let us join ourselves by the invisible threads of the Beautiful. I turn to you; I call to you; in the name of Beauty and Wisdom, let us combine for struggle and work. During the days of the Armageddon let us ponder on Eternal Values, which are the cornerstone of Evolution.